

2007 budget request would *simply* restore JFS to 2001 funding level

F.Y.	Amount	% of General Fund
2006	\$2,067,750.00	7.35%
2005	\$2,020,114.00	7.86%
2004	\$2,422,569.00	8.68%
2003	\$2,408,538.00	8.32%
2002	\$2,339,000.00	8.36%
2001	\$2,386,292.00	9.54%

As hard as it is to believe, JFS's 2007 general fund budget request seeks only to restore the agency to a 2001 funding level. While JFS has "weathered the storm" of severe reductions in state and local revenue since 2002, service delivery systems agency wide are now stretched to the breaking point and can no longer be asked to do "more with less".

In order to protect abused and neglected children, avoid the loss of critical *performance-driven* revenue, and to comply with federal and state statutory program requirements, it is important for JFS to modestly increase local operating revenue. A dramatic increase in county population since 2001 has resulted in skyrocketing caseloads and increased demand for services in all systems operating under the umbrella of JFS. Local revenue is presently insufficient to meet the basic needs of our residents and to comply with statutory service requirements. Most concerning, existing funding levels for child protective services cannot reasonably assure child safety in Fairfield County and will continue to place the county at great risk.

JFS is responsibly requesting only a level of local revenue equivalent to the amount the agency received in 2001. Understanding the current financial constraints of the county, JFS has successfully obtained alternative private revenue sources to provide enhanced services and new programming to support the most vulnerable children and families in our county. Unfortunately, these revenue sources **cannot** be used to offset current operational expenses. Be assured that:

- o No additional local resources will be requested to increase services in the areas of public assistance, food stamps, entitlements, Medicaid, subsidized childcare, adult protective services, workforce services, or administrative services.
- o All additional local resources requested will be reserved for the increased costs of protective substitute care (safe placement) for child victims of sexual abuse, serious physical abuse, and neglect.

JFS to unveil the *New LINK* in June

Early next month, Fairfield County Job & Family Services will unveil a *new quarterly* agency newsletter, the JFS-LINK.

The LINK will highlight all aspects of agency service delivery and operations, and is intended to educate and inform the community about the mission, vision, goals, and activities of the agency.

The LINK will be distributed to customers, community partners, key stakeholders, and interested residents of Fairfield County, and will be available both electronically and in hard copy. Agency leadership officials will develop, print, and distribute the newsletter, in an effort to reduce production costs.

We want your feedback! Please let us know if there are topics that you would like to read more about.



Partner Recognition
Event
June 2
11:30 am-1:00 pm
At JFS

Publication of the new
LINK
June 15, 2006

Accreditation Site Visit
June 26-28

CAPP-Orientation
June 27
8:00 am-9:30 am
Lancaster Community
Church

Quarterly Meeting with
the Board of
Commissioners
July 6
9:00 am





JFS Vision Statement

JFS, through state and local partnerships, will be Ohio's premier family support and workforce development system, contributing to skilled, safe, healthy Fairfield Countians, successful businesses and a strong community.

JFS Mission Statement

Through a spirit of community cooperation, the mission of Fairfield County Job and Family Services is to provide services that encourage productivity, develop competencies, ensure accountability, and promote self-reliance, family stability, and child safety.

JFS Strategic Goal Areas:

1. FCJFS will responsibly obtain, maximize, and allocate financial resources according to agency priorities.
2. FCJFS will value and respect employees as our greatest asset.
3. FCJFS will provide exceptional public service to the community.
4. FCJFS will demonstrate, inspire, and empower leadership.
5. FCJFS will continue to improve and measure performance in all areas, utilizing technology and available resources.
6. FCJFS will initiate, promote, and enhance community and inter-governmental relationships to further our mission.

JFS Community Advisory and Planning Panel (CAPP) to kick-off on June 27

On June 27, 2006, agency officials will host the first meeting of the JFS Community Advisory and Planning Panel (CAPP). Pursuant to requirements of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 329.06 and Board of County Commissioner Resolution, the (CAPP) shall serve as an advisory body to the Board of County Commissioners with regard to family and workforce development services provided in the county.

The objectives of the CAPP include :

- o To provide JFS officials with constructive feedback and counsel related to service delivery and to offer recommendations for quality enhancements.
- o To educate consumers, partners, and stakeholders about services and programs provided under the umbrella of JFS.
- o To increase and improve communication between JFS and our community partners, customers, and stakeholders.
- o To solve problems.
- o To identify needs.
- o To conduct public hearings on proposed county profiles for the provision of social services under Section 5101.46 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC).
- o At the request of the Board of Commissioners, the CAPP will make recommendations and provide assistance regarding the family services provided in the county.
- o The CAPP-Executive Committee will review and consider for approval Fairfield County PRC plans, on an as-needed basis.

This **156-member** community advisory body is comprised of 12 representatives from each of the following 13 work group areas:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1. Community Planning and Funding | 6. Business Partners | 10. Faith partners |
| 2. Government Partners | 7. Foster and Adoptive parents | 11. JFS Employee-CQI Team |
| 3. Criminal Justice/Courts | 8. Schools and Education | 12. Legal Services |
| 4. Medical Provider | 9. Early Childhood Services | 13. Community partners/Service Providers |
| 5. JFS Consumers | | |

These 13 CAPP work groups will meet separately on a **quarterly basis** and will serve for three (3) year terms.

A **13 member** guiding group (comprised of chairpersons of each of the workgroups) will convene as necessary to provide more direct organizational oversight. (*'CAPP CHART' attached*)

JFS to request Commissioner approval for Children Services levy in 2008

It is expected that JFS leadership officials will soon seek Commissioner approval for a 1.5 mil Children Services levy in 2008. Significantly increased costs for protective substitute care (safe placement) for seriously abused and neglected children in Fairfield County has placed a heavy burden on the agency budget.

Since 2004, more than 40 abused and neglected Fairfield County children have been prematurely removed from placement due to budget constraints, leaving them at serious risk of re-victimization. The revenue generated from a successful levy would be reserved for placement costs, and for the coordination of protective and treatment services for child victims of sexual and serious physical abuse.

JFS CUSTOMER WALK-IN STATS

Client Count for Apr 1 – 30	2006	2005	2004
Community Services	4924	5113	4778
Child Support	610	626	732
Children Services	721	591	721
WorkNet	1358	917	985
YTD (Jan 1 – Apr 30)	40821	33632	29403

This chart reflects agency walk-in customers only. Many departments have more phone intensive case loads, not requiring walk-in visits by customers.



The Community Services caseload for April is 5,439 open cases. This includes Healthy Start/Healthy Families, Food Stamps, and Ohio Works First. This is the highest open caseload in more than five years.

In April there were 186 scheduled intakes; 146 attended intake appointments. (families who do not currently have an open case requesting assistance). Twenty-eight customers were a no show to the appointment and 12 customers rescheduled.

Help Desk staff answered 1,426 requests from families. Of those 425 were walk-in customers and 1,001 were phone contacts.

Food Stamp cases totaled 2,566 open cases in Community Services.

Families receiving only Medicaid benefits such as Healthy Start, Healthy Families, or Transitional Medicaid total 3,352 open cases in April. The majority of these families have employment in the household.

In April, 767 families are receiving Ohio Works First (ongoing cash assistance).



Food Stamp Program Receives High Marks

From April 6 through April 24, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services conducted the Management Evaluation Review of the Fairfield County Food Stamp program. The review is performed to ensure compliance with program regulations, state and federal laws and to evaluate payment accuracy. Both the Adult Unit in Social Services and the Community Services Department were evaluated. Areas such as program access, customer service, civil rights, timeliness of application processing, correctness of denials and terminations, payment accuracy, safeguarding of confidential information, and acting on reported changes. Below is a summary of the key areas:

Positive Areas Cited by the Reviewer

- Although cubicles do not offer total confidentiality for the customer, **the reviewer noted no instance in which confidentiality was compromised.**
- The reviewer observed the agency routinely opened much earlier than the scheduled operating hours. Because the agency is flexible with appointment times, **the working population of the county is adequately accommodated.**
- **The receptionists at all levels of reception did an exceptional job assisting visitors** within the agency, ensuring they were directed to appropriate areas. At no time, did the reviewer note any breach of confidentiality specific to social security number or any other personal information which could be garnered for identity theft purposes.
- **An outstanding initiative related directly to program access and customer service is the "Help Desk" area in Community Services.** The agency is commended for this excellent intake/screening initiative designed to assure expedited food stamp customers are seen for a face-to-face appointment in a timely manner.
- **The reviewer commends the agency for continually striving to create new and better initiatives relative to enhanced customer service and program access for the applicant.**
- In general, interview observations of Eligibility Referral Specialists were found to be well done. Those specialists observed were found to be knowledgeable, informative and helpful to customers. **Eligibility Referral Specialists are commended for assisting customers in a professional manner.**
- A total of fifteen randomly selected cases were reviewed specific to food stamp termination processing standards. **Of the fifteen, 100% were found to be processed correctly.** CLRC running record comments were determined to be sufficient in explaining actions taken. The agency is commended.
- Reception staff provided clear, concise information to potential applicants, explaining the screening process and other information. **The agency is commended.**
- **Interviews with five randomly selected customers indicate overall approval with customer service at this agency.**
- FCJFS has an excellent website available to those individuals with internet access. **The agency is commended for initiatives directed toward improving customer services via their website.**

5th Annual Candlelight Walk

To formally kick off Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, our 5th Annual Candlelight Walk was held on April 6, 2006. More than 200 community members, service providers, JFS staff and customers participated in this event designed to draw attention to the issue of child abuse and neglect in Fairfield County. **The Honorable Steven O. Williams**, Fairfield County Juvenile Court Judge, was the keynote speaker and addressed the need for comprehensive services for victims and their families. Judge Williams also acknowledged appreciation for the staff of Children Services in the daily work of fulfilling the mission of the agency. He added that it was imperative that all community leaders commit to and provide resources for abused children. Particularly poignant was the presentation of a young lady sharing her experience of her interaction with Children Services and of her time in foster care. The number of individuals taking time to demonstrate the commitment to care for children and families touched by abuse and neglect indicates the residents of Fairfield County do value the importance of child abuse and neglect prevention and intervention. This truly does "Light the Way of Hope" for so many.

Accreditation

The Peer Review Team from the Council on Accreditation will be at JFS the week of June 26 for the on-site evaluation as part of the accreditation process. To prepare for the on-site visit, teams of JFS staff have worked for 16 months to complete the requirements for provision of pre-site evidence. Thus far, the accreditation process has been characterized by team building, policy and procedure review and development, assuring fiscal accountability and the examination of best practice related to JFS customer service. Accreditation is one more way Fairfield County Children Services is fulfilling the mission of "Through a spirit of shared responsibility and advocacy, we are committed to ensuring quality outcomes, strengthening families, and providing education to our community, to assure safety and stability for all children in Fairfield County."

R.E.A.L.I.T.Y. Program

Recently, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services notified Fairfield County JFS of the award of a TANF (Temporary Aid for Needy Families) demonstration grant totaling \$210,253.40. The R.E.A.L.I.T.Y. Program (Realistic Education and Living Independently Training for Youth) will consist of a transitional living program for an emancipating youth placed in foster care and for other youth who need training in living independently following emancipation from foster or kinship care. The project goals include: increasing the numbers of youth achieving graduation from high school or achievement of the G.E.D., increasing the number of employed youth, providing comprehensive training with pre and post tests regarding basic living skills knowledge, decreasing the number of youth experiencing homelessness after leaving foster care, decreasing the number of out of wedlock pregnancies and assisting in asset accumulation. Comprehensive programming for youth aged 16 to 21 is essential assuring less dependence upon the entire community service system, now and in the future.

2006 YTD Reports Statistics:

2006	Phy Ab	Sex Ab	Neglect	Em Mal	At Risk	Info Otr	Totals
Jan	9	8	21	3	67	222	330
Feb	23	11	24	0	68	189	315
Mar	16	14	27	0	63	222	342
Apr	15	9	20	2	55	190	291

2006 YTD	Total Children in Agency Custody
Jan	167
Feb	164
Mar	167
Apr	167

April 2006



Fairfield County received support from the Office of Child Support regarding a submission for a special improvement grant. Such a grant is fully funded federally. The application for the project known as **"Empowering Parents for Child Support"** will be made on May 19, 2006. Here is an executive summary of the initiative: *Empowering Parents for Child Support* is an innovative approach designed to increase the involvement of parents in their own child support cases. The approach is multi-faceted, with an overall theme of increasing a parent's information about child support while also increasing a parent's access to child support and related community resources. Four components of the project include:

- Website enhancements for education and outreach about child support program procedures,
- A satellite office to provide additional, proactive customer service in a growing area of the county,
- "Customer care calls" for all new cases, utilizing the strategies of early intervention, proactive case management, and customized customer service, and
- The development of an organized method of making referrals for healthy marriage resources, both for parents who have not married one another and for parents who are considering separation, dissolution, or divorce.

The agency mission statement expressly includes the values of customer service, community collaboration, and accountability. These values will be the foundation of the project, which will focus on increasing outreach and active parental participation, in order to increase compliance with courts orders for financial and medical support.

There are several points of interest for child support associated with the passing of the Federal Deficit Reduction Act.

- The Administrative Match stays at 66%. (There is no impact to "Federal Financial Participation". This is helpful to Ohio, which invests in child support as a state and locally. The federal government was going to reduce FFP to 50%, which would have been harmful.)
- On 10.01.06, the genetic testing reimbursement rate goes from 90% to 66%. This will cost counties in the state overall about \$820,000 annually, and Fairfield County, about \$8,000.
- On 10.01.07, the state is mandated to charge an annual fee of \$25 for "never TANF cases" when at least \$500 is collected. There are lots of discussions going on about potential ways to accomplish this mandate. There are many alternatives, pros, and cons, regarding the mandated fee.
- On 10.01.07, we are required to begin a new medical program, including collecting cash medical support. This is a new mandated service with no new funding source. We will be able to show cost recovery, though, for the state.
- On 10.01.07, we will not be able to use "earned incentives" as a local match any longer. This is for FFY 2008. We are on a calendar budget year, with the County expenditures, which means that the impact will be felt in 2008 and beyond. OCDA is developing strategies for filling the gap and communicating important facets of the funding structure to all stakeholders and legislators.
- An update of the IV-D contract totals will be made once the final local government contract has been approved by the state. The County Auditor has already been made aware of potential changes in estimated revenue, although not material to the overall general revenue fund.

Collections for the first quarter of 2006 increased 6.36% in 2006 as compared to 2005. Quarterly collections in 2006 totaled \$5,447,572, as compared to \$5,121,739.

Points Of Interest

89% of all CSEA customers are currently not on public assistance. This statistic draws attention to the fact that those served by the agency are largely working parents who depend on the CSEA for vital services.

The CSEA serves citizens across all socio-economic groups. Referrals to workforce development programs are common and important.

The Child Support Program touches more children than any other public program, except Education.

The Fairfield County caseload at the end of 2005 exceeded 8,415. The current caseload is more than 8,500.

Collections for 2005 were \$21.058 Million. Collections for the same time period at the Drive-Thru Payment Center exceeded \$775,617.



Customer service surveys provide positive feedback!

All units of the Social Services Departments use customer satisfaction surveys to gauge the effectiveness of service delivery for the department. The **Adult Medicaid Unit** has compiled the results of surveys returned during the first quarter of 2006.

A total of **233** customer satisfaction surveys were returned, evaluating all ten of the Adult Unit Caseworkers. Of those 233, **85%** of the customers **Strongly Agree** that they are treated with dignity and respect, that all calls are returned within one business day, and that they are given assistance in a timely and clear manner. **14%** of the customers **Agree** that the services they receive are excellent, and **less than 1%** of the customers disagree or marked "not applicable."

From the first quarter customer satisfaction survey results, it is clear that **99%** of the Adult Unit customers are satisfied with the customer service they receive. In 18% of the surveys, the customers added comments that indicated they were happy and grateful for the manner in which they were treated.

Child Care Expenditures Increase By 90% In 2006

During the first three months (first quarter) of 2006, expenditures for subsidized child care showed an increase of 89.9% over the first quarter expenditures in 2005. In 2005, expenditures totaled \$409,004 from January through March; for the first three months in 2006, expenditures totaled \$776,573.

The \$367,000+ increase is due to several factors, including the state-mandated change from daily to weekly rates, an increase in provider rates, and a 40% increase in the number of applicants and children. Child Care dollars are a "pass through" fund allocated to JFS for assistance to working families who are eligible for subsidized child care.

Elders working with law enforcement

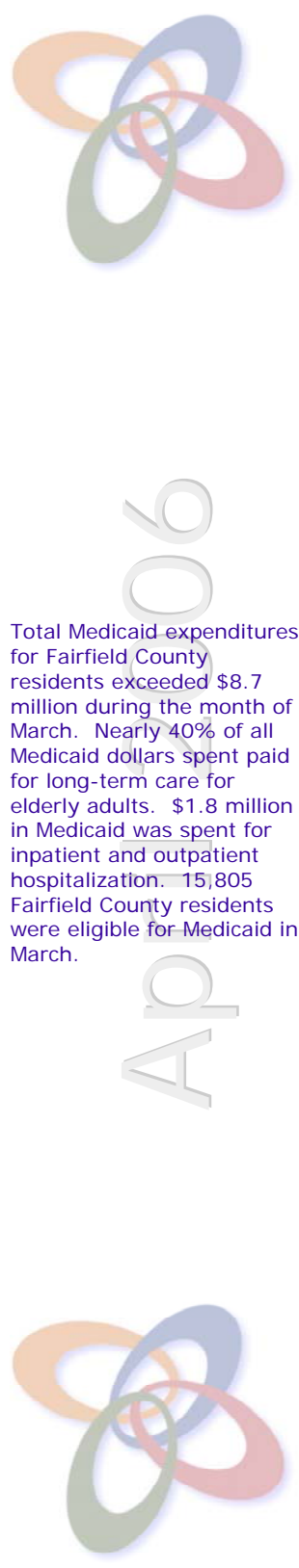
On June 15, "World Elder Abuse Awareness Day," the Adult Protective Services Division, in collaboration with the Lancaster Police Department, Faith in Action-Fairfield County, Meals on Wheels-Older Adult Alternatives, and Olivedale will present an informational session regarding the TRIAD program.

TRIAD, a partnership of senior citizens, law enforcement, and community agencies, works to prevent crimes against seniors through education and community involvement. Lieutenant Dale Gillette from Ross County Sheriff's Department will present an overview of their TRIAD program during the session, which will be held at Olivedale on June 15 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. A light lunch will be provided by the Abuse Prevention Fund.

Inspiring children

Jenny Ruff, Coordinator of the Kinship Navigator Program, felt honored to be invited to attend the East and South School presentation honoring April as National Poetry month. On behalf of JFS, Jenny presented a book of poetry from JFS to each of the elementary schools' libraries.

A Family of Poems by Caroline Kennedy was the gift from our agency to the schools and, as Jenny so fittingly stated, the poems in this book "remain with you through your lives," and inspire children to dream and view the world in a more positive light. One of the students from South Elementary reported to her mother that same evening, "Mom, something really nice happened today...Jenny Ruff came to our school and gave us a book for our library."



Total Medicaid expenditures for Fairfield County residents exceeded \$8.7 million during the month of March. Nearly 40% of all Medicaid dollars spent paid for long-term care for elderly adults. \$1.8 million in Medicaid was spent for inpatient and outpatient hospitalization. 15,805 Fairfield County residents were eligible for Medicaid in March.

Landscaping by TeenWorks

The youth program, TeenWorks recently embarked on a project to improve the looks of the JFS landscaping. Armed with shovels, weed pullers and wheel barrels, the TeenWorks kids went to work on the JFS grounds. Fifteen participants spent a week pulling weeds and mulching. The results were very impressive.

This project allowed the participants to get first-hand work experience in landscaping. They were involved in all aspects of the planning and implementation of this project and several decided to further explore this line of work for a possible future career. Wages were paid to the participants through federal workforce investment funds.

WorkNet Sets New Record

WorkNet set a new record for customers with 1,895 visitors during the month of March. The previous record was 1,752 in August of 2005. WorkNet's customer count has continued to increase steadily since opening their doors and has shown a dramatic increase (over 20%) since moving to its current location on the 1st floor of the JFS Building.

There are likely to be a number of factors contributing to the increased traffic in WorkNet including stepped-up marketing efforts, increased use among the business community, and word-of-mouth referrals. Despite the increased workload, WorkNet staff continue to receive extremely positive feedback from customers through satisfaction surveys.

Youth Programs to be Renewed

Job & Family Services recently released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for youth programming beginning July 1, 2006 and running through June 30, 2007. RFP's were distributed to all current and past providers and legal notice was published in the Lancaster Eagle Gazette. Only two proposals were received and they were both for continuation of current programs. The good news is that these are both valuable and successful programs. JFS will contract with both providers (Business Systems Solutions and Workforce Services Unlimited) to continue providing their respective programs (TeenWorks and Dropout Recovery).

WorkNet Customer Count

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	-	749	958	924	1580
February	-	651	846	699	1419
March	-	807	1004	1184	1895
April	592	943	985	917	1305
May	547	748	989	979	
June	371	1100	1126	1165	
July	447	1129	877	1180	
August	492	992	1015	1752	
September	566	906	1020	1334	
October	683	895	689	1277	
November	442	757	767	1172	
December	452	712	811	1106	

April 2006

Our Mission:

The mission of the Family Support and Visitation Center is to support children and families who have been affected by divorce, separation, abuse, neglect or domestic violence. Through education and provision of a safe, comfortable environment, our focus is to promote family engagement and healthy, meaningful adult/child relationships.

1st Quarter 2006 Statistics

New Referrals	Supervised Visits	Monitored Exchanges	Total
Children Services	44	1	45
Domestic Relations Court	7	0	7
Self	5	1	6
Attorney	0	0	0
Other	5	0	5
Total	61	2	63

Supervised Visits	584
Monitored Exchanges	263

	January	February	March
Children Served	128	130	123
Adults Served	260	260	242
Noncustodial Parents Served	114	119	108

Cooperative Parenting and Divorce	
Number of referrals to date	202
Number of referrals 2005	64
Number of participants	51
Number attaining Certificate of Completion	43
Number of sessions completed	4 (#10, 11, 12, 13)

Parent Education Services/Open House Stand for Children Day

Stand for Children Day is celebrated annually on or near June 1st. Every year, local events are held across the nation in Support for Stand for Children's efforts to give every child a fair chance in life. Stand for Children Day celebrates the event that inspired the founding of Stand for Children on the anniversary of an historic rally held on June 1, 1996 in Washington D.C. More than 300,000 people attended this event, making it the largest rally for children in American history. More than 6,000 local, state and regional events have been held around the country since then.




This year, the Family Support and Visitation Center will celebrate Stand for Children Day by holding an Open House to introduce Parent Education Services to the service provider community in Fairfield County. The event will be held on Thursday, June 1st, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm in the Family Support and Visitation Center. Tours of the Center, program information and light refreshments will be available.

April 2006



April 2006

The Newest Additions to the JFS Staff

	<p>Sharma Tate comes to JFS as a Transportation Specialist within our Community Services department. Sharma recently worked for Berne Union School District and The Center for Disabilities as a Bus Driver. Sharma has over 11 years of experience in the transportation field. Sharma's strong work ethic and experience make her a great addition to the JFS team.</p>
	<p>Alissa Price, joins JFS as a Case Management Assistant with our Child Support Enforcement Department. Alissa has extensive experience in banking, customer service, and loan administration. This background makes her an ideal fit for assisting our Child Support customers.</p>
	<p>Nancy Hunter, a Clerical Specialist 4 with Information Systems, comes to JFS after working in both the private and public sector workforce. Nancy has held Administrative Assistant positions for the last 15 years and most recently worked with us at JFS as a temporary employee. We are pleased to have Nancy join us on a full-time basis.</p>

TANF Grants Bring New Program Opportunities and New Employees

Fairfield JFS was awarded several TANF grants from The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. In an effort to staff these grants, we will be hiring 11 new staff. The grants are in the following areas:

Pay It Forward- This grant is focused on employment retention and asset accumulation for families who are receiving cash assistance. Two employees will be dedicated to this area.

Breaking Out- This grant targets former offenders with employment programs that are tailored to meet their needs. One employee will be dedicated to this area.

Family Stability – This grant provides one-on-one support and resources to Children Services families who have been identified as needing assistance. The goal of this program is to provide immediate services to those families that are at risk for becoming an open Children Services case. Eight employees will be dedicated to this area.

Next month we will highlighting the new employees that will be working with these grants.

