

FaDSS

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM

2003 ANNUAL REPORT

Mission: Improve the lives of families at risk of long-term welfare dependency or family instability by creating opportunities for self-sufficiency.



By Dakota, age 8, Davis County

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Iowa FaDSS: Strengthening Iowa's Families. Strengthening Iowa's Economy.

Iowa's Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) Grant Program was created by the 1988 Iowa General Assembly to assist Family Investment Program (FIP) families with significant or multiple barriers reach self-sufficiency. FaDSS provides services that promote, empower, and nurture families towards economic and emotional self-sufficiency.

The foundation of FaDSS is regular **home visits** with families, using a strength-based approach. Core services include support, goal setting, and assessment. **Support** is given in many ways such as referrals, group activities, linking families to communities and advocacy. **Assessment** aids the family to identify strengths that they possess that may be used to eliminate barriers to self-sufficiency. **Goal setting** helps families break down goals that seem out of reach into small steps that will lead to success. Participation in FaDSS is a voluntary option for people receiving Family Investment Program (FIP) benefits.

In FY 2003, FaDSS provided services **in all 99 Iowa counties** through a network of eighteen grantees providing services to 3,470 families, including nearly 6600 children. During FY2003, FaDSS families earned total **wages of \$5,199,109** resulting in a **FIP savings of \$1,606,599**.

The Department of Human Services contracts with the Department of Human Rights, Division of Community Action Agencies to administer the FaDSS Grant Program. During fiscal year 2003, FaDSS was funded through an appropriation of \$5,133,042 in TANF block grant funds. In addition, local and in-kind funds of \$1,407,418 were provided to supplement FaDSS services.

Families in FaDSS:

- ★ *Stay off Welfare*
- ★ *Achieve Educational Goals*
- ★ *Become Employed*
- ★ *Improve Their Housing*
- ★ *Earn Higher Wages*
- ★ *Provide a Return on Investment*

FaDSS GRANTEE FISCAL DATA FY2003
(7/1/02 to 6/30/03)

| Grantee | Family Capacity | # of Counties | Base FaDSS Funds | Local Funds | In-Kind | Total Program Costs |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Four Oaks | 283 | 8 | \$732,019 | \$46,600 | \$98,405 | \$877,024 |
| TRAIN | 118 | 5 | \$305,396 | \$6,218 | \$5,658 | \$317,272 |
| LSS | 54 | 4 | \$139,877 | \$850 | \$5,300 | \$146,027 |
| MATURA | 41 | 6 | \$104,907 | \$5,746 | \$12,400 | \$123,053 |
| MICA | 162 | 10 | \$419,629 | \$36,143 | \$2,400 | \$458,172 |
| Mid-Sioux | 57 | 5 | \$146,870 | \$1,954 | \$26,200 | \$175,024 |
| NICAO | 90 | 9 | \$233,127 | \$14,797 | \$37,258 | \$285,182 |
| Operation Threshold | 81 | 2 | \$209,814 | \$14,979 | \$0 | \$224,793 |
| Polk County FEC | 150 | 1 | \$389,322 | \$799,343 | \$30,374 | \$1,219,039 |
| SCICAP | 68 | 5 | \$177,176 | \$433 | \$1,297 | \$178,906 |
| SEICAO | 104 | 4 | \$270,427 | \$3,274 | \$6,959 | \$280,660 |
| SIEDA | 126 | 7 | \$326,378 | \$502 | \$3,790 | \$330,670 |
| UDMO | 99 | 8 | \$256,440 | \$5,000 | \$4,800 | \$266,240 |
| West Central | 131 | 10 | \$338,034 | \$12,457 | \$28,991 | \$379,482 |
| Winneshiek | 86 | 7 | \$221,471 | \$4,923 | \$0 | \$226,394 |
| Woodbury | 54 | 1 | \$139,877 | \$6,616 | \$79,692 | \$226,185 |
| YSS | 108 | 10 | \$279,753 | \$29,064 | \$13,795 | \$322,612 |
| YWCA | 72 | 1 | \$186,501 | \$49,200 | \$12,000 | \$247,701 |
| TOTALS | 1884 | 99* | \$4,877,019 | \$1,038,099 | \$369,319 | \$6,284,437 |

*More than one program is in Boone, Marshall, Polk, Story and Counties

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| FaDSS Appropriation | <u>\$5,133,042</u> |
| less 5% administration - DHR | \$216,652 |
| - DHS | <u>\$40,000</u> |
| Total available for grants | \$4,877,019 |

All funds are TANF: 47% state - \$2,412,530
53% federal - \$2,720,512

Progress to Family Stability

Families in FaDSS face many barriers, in addition to poverty. FaDSS assists families to address these barriers in a supportive manner. As families become more stable they are able to concentrate more fully on becoming economically self-sufficient. FaDSS is designed to work with the most vulnerable and multi-barrier families in Iowa.

Barriers Facing Families

| Barrier | % of ALL FAMILIES |
|--|-------------------|
| Current* or past victim of domestic violence | 65 |
| Adult survivor of sexual abuse, incest, physical or emotional/neglect as a child | 63 |
| Current* or past substance abuser | 56 |
| Have mental health issues | 56 |
| Head of household lacks HS diploma/GED or literacy skills | 37 |
| Child in home is a survivor or is currently* experiencing sexual, physical, or emotional abuse | 35 |
| Homeless or near homeless during the year | 26 |
| Current* or past child abuser/neglector | 26 |
| Have a child with special needs | 23 |
| Families face 2 to 4 barriers | 38 |
| Families face 5 or more barriers | 38 |
| Families face 2 or more | 76 |

*Currently is defined as experiencing the barrier during the last twelve months

3 out of 4 FaDSS families during FY 2003 experienced two or more barriers that affected their ability to achieve self-sufficiency.

Substance Abuse

56% of FaDSS households in Iowa have a current or past substance abuser. The national average for welfare recipients is 28%. Substance abuse causes or exacerbates 7 out of 10 cases of child abuse or neglect. **In FY 2003, 363 or 78% of FaDSS families with a substance abuse barrier were successfully engaged in substance abuse treatment.**

Mental Health

56% of FaDSS families have mental health issues. A key strategy to promote healthy mental development in infants and toddlers is by strengthening the mental health focus in home visiting programs. FaDSS made 23,536 home visits in FY 2003. **In FY 2003, 1,277 or 80% of individuals in FaDSS with mental health barriers received mental health treatment.**

Child Protection

One in three FaDSS households have a child in the home that has survived sexual, physical, or emotional abuse. The top priority placed on child protection resulted in over 333 children in FaDSS homes being placed out last year, while at the same time, family development services allowed 94 children to return to their homes. **FaDSS Specialists and Supervisors are mandatory reporters.**



Housing

Approximately 900 or 26% of families involved with FaDSS were homeless or near homeless during FY 2003. 1,507 families enrolled in FaDSS this past year are now living in Section 8 or subsidized housing which is safe and affordable. **689 or 70% of families with a housing goal significantly improved their housing at the time they exited FaDSS.**



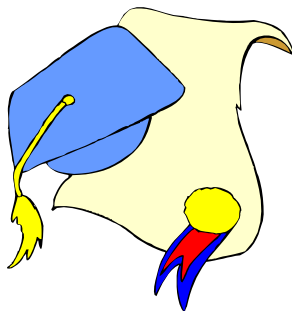
EDUCATION

Nearly 30% of families in FaDSS had an adult member who lacked a high school diploma or GED.

In FY 2003, FaDSS assisted families in achieving:

- 235 High School Diplomas or GEDs
- 129 certificate programs
- 82 associate degrees
- 17 Bachelors degrees

646 or 65% of adult family members made progress toward an educational goal. 463 families achieved a major educational goal.



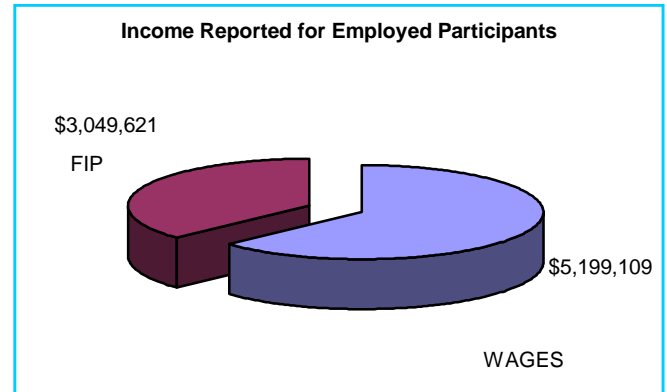
Progress Toward Self-Sufficiency

Families face severe barriers to becoming self-sufficient. **Despite these barriers, more than 75% of families who exited FaDSS in FY 2002 had not received any FIP one year later. ***

Approximately 1,825 families participating in FaDSS were employed at some point during the year.

The number of families with at least one person employed tripled from the time they enrolled in FaDSS to the time they exited.

Employment



Wages and Income

The average hourly wage of head of households employed at exit from FaDSS was \$7.54. The statewide target for FIP in 2003 is \$7.00.

FaDSS families had a monthly income increase of 47% from enrollment to exit in the Program.



While participating in FaDSS, families earned total wages of \$5,199,109 in FY 2003. This resulted in a FIP savings of \$1,606,599.

For every dollar invested in FaDSS \$1.33 is returned in the form of wages and FIP savings. Every dollar earned in wages regenerates in the community five to six times by consumer spending and taxes paid.

*Above figures provided by the Iowa Department of Human Services are based on a year-to-date average.

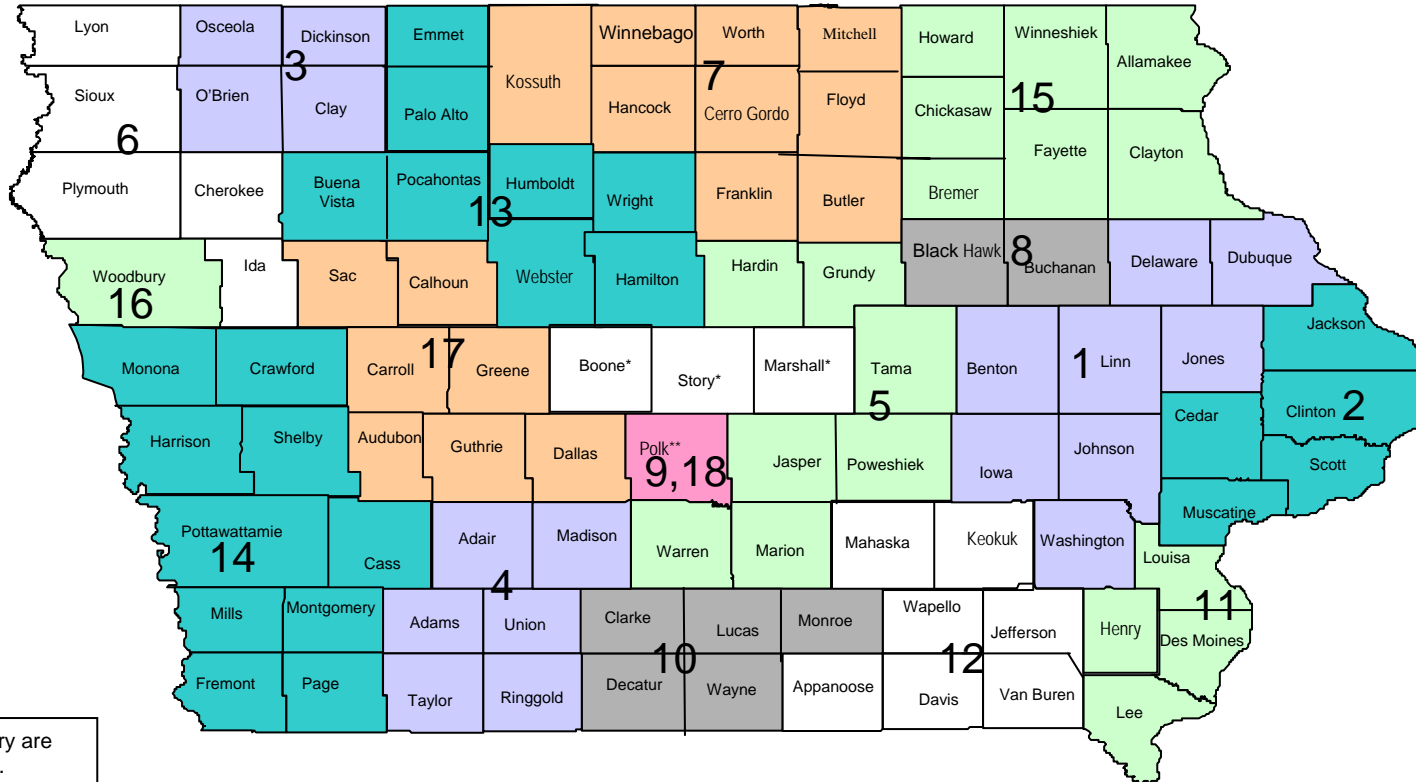
FaDSS Year End Summaries

for FY 2003

as prepared by FaDSS Grantees

1. Four Oaks
2. Iowa East Central TRAIN
3. Lutheran Social Service of Iowa
4. MATURA Action Corp.
5. Mid-Iowa Community Action
6. Mid-Sioux Opportunity
7. North Iowa Community Action Org.
8. Operation Threshold
9. Polk County Family Enrichment Center

10. South Central Iowa Community Action Program
11. Southeast Iowa Community Action Org.
12. Southern Iowa Economic Development Association
13. Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.
14. West Central Development Corp.
15. Winneshiek County Board of Supervisors
16. Woodbury County Community Action Corp.
17. Youth and Shelter Services, Inc.
18. YWCA of Greater Des Moines



•Boone, Marshall and Story are served by YSS and MICA.

**Polk Co. is served by the Polk Co. FEC and the YWCA

FaDSS Grantee Service Areas

Four Oaks, Inc. - Cornerstone

Service Delivery Area: Benton, Delaware, Dubuque, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Washington

Capacity: 283

Successful Goals: 1) Mental Health/Substance Abuse: 285 families have substantiated mental health issues. Of those 73% (210 families) of the families are accessing appropriate treatment; of the 97 families who identified substance abuse issues, 62% or 61 have received help. 2) Employment: Of the 421 families served, 66% (277 families) were employed either part or full-time during this fiscal year. The savings in FIP dollars totaled \$257,368.50. 3) Education: Of the 15 families enrolled in a four-year program, 27% (4 families) have completed their four year degree this fiscal year.

Partnering with Community Agencies: (1) Parents As Teachers: Due to the success of the PAT program administered in Dubuque County, Linn County is pleased to offer this programming to Cornerstone families in the Oakhill-Jackson, Moundview, and Wellington Heights neighborhoods. A Linn County part-time family support worker became full-time the beginning of this fiscal year. She will be serving families from both FaDSS and PAT. Our goal is that she will be serving 13 FaDSS families and 15 PAT children. Dubuque County will continue to maintain their goal that 30% of FaDSS families will be dually enrolled in both FaDSS and PAT.

(2) Achievement Academy: Four Oaks prevention programming (Cornerstone, PAT, and The Bridge) and Jane Boyd have partnered together to form an Achievement Academy for children birth through 18 years of age. The goals of the Academy are: 1) To develop community support systems which promote family success. 2) To positively impact youth in their efforts to be socially and academically successful. 3) To assist parents in providing their children with the support they need to overcome social or financial barriers to success. 4) To create a culturally inclusive environment. **(3) DHS/FaDSS Collaboration:** Linn County continues to strengthen their partnership with SDR10 Income Maintenance. The Linn County FaDSS Program Coordinator has taken a proactive role in addressing capacity issues. All SDR10 Income Maintenance Supervisors, FaDSS Coordinators, and Promise Jobs supervisors met together to address FaDSS capacity. It was established that each county would meet with their local IM and PJ staff to discuss potential referrals to FaDSS. As a result, referrals are being given to each of the sub-contracting counties. Quarterly the supervisors meet to discuss any updates/issues of each program. Twice a year the staff and supervisors in the region are meeting for joint trainings.

Success With Families: Misty, a 23-year-old single parent of three children, entered the FaDSS program when she was living with her mother and was unemployed. Due to domestic violence issues, Misty had poor self-esteem. The family shared the barriers she was facing with her PROMISE JOBS worker who then referred her to Cornerstone. During her six-month involvement with Cornerstone, her family support worker assisted her in believing in herself and her strengths, interviewing daycare providers and in obtaining and maintaining full-time employment. Shortly before her successful graduation from Cornerstone, the family was approved for an FHA loan and is in the process of purchasing their own home. The family summed up her participation with FaDSS with the following comment: "My family support worker has taught me my dreams of today will be my reality for tomorrow—if only you believe...and I do believe!"

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Iowa East Central T.R.A.I.N.

Service Delivery Area: Cedar, Clinton, Jackson, Muscatine and Scott Counties

Capacity: 120 families

Successful Goals:

- Thirty-six individuals participated in GED or high school programs, with 11 completing their programs.
- Sixty-two individuals were enrolled in post-secondary education programs, and 14 completed their education programs.
- One hundred twenty-three individuals were employed, earning \$270,796 in wages, and saving Iowa \$76,535.
- Ninety-nine of the 130 individuals who reported mental health issues accessed appropriate treatment.
- Sixty-six families accessed Section 8 or other assisted housing programs.

Partnering with Community Agencies:

This year a number of FaDSS families in Scott County were able to benefit from a program through one of our local newspapers, the Quad City Times. The Times sponsors a program called the Quad City Times Wish List. Each year the paper seeks donations from subscribers to meet the special needs of individuals in the community. Stories about the recipients are published in the paper (with the recipient's permission). We submitted a number of requests for FaDSS families with a wide range of needs. Seven families were granted "wishes" totaling over \$4000. Items included beds, kitchen furniture, a washer and dryer, car seats, children's clothing, and engraving on a child's headstone. This connection extended to many vendors in the community who partnered by giving reduced prices on items. Local vendors included Mattress Outlet, Bruce's Furniture, Sears, and Art Monuments in Stone.

We have also had community support for group activities this year. Muscatine Community College has donated classroom space for group activities in Muscatine County. Police and fire officials from Muscatine and Clinton provided speakers for Safety Workshops for participants in those counties. A church youth group helped families with crafts and refreshments at a group in Scott County. Local vendors donated pumpkins in Muscatine and Scott County for their annual family pumpkin painting event.

Success with Families:

Eileen is a 34-year-old single mother with three children ranging from ages 15 months to 11 years. Eileen and her family relocated to Iowa from an urban area in Illinois. When Eileen enrolled in the FaDSS Program she did not have a job and she was dealing with depression. She knew that she wanted to change the course of her life for herself and her children. She needed support and encouragement to help her to realize that her goals were attainable.

Eileen had worked as a certified nurse assistant previously in Illinois and decided that she would like to do that again. In order to be certified in Iowa she needed to attend CNA class. Eileen decided to go for her dream and enrolled in CNA class. Eileen attended class and studied hard but just missed passing the course. However, this barrier didn't stop her. Eileen was certain she could pass the certification exam. With her FaDSS Specialist, Eileen was able to secure funding for the exam from a local agency. She took the test, passed, and secured a full time job as a certified nurse assistant in a local nursing home.

It was Eileen's hard work and determination that made this possible for her family. In spite of the challenges and barriers, Eileen has maintained her tenacity and spirit for success. She has proven that with the support and encouragement of the community, success is possible and attainable.

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Lutheran Services In Iowa (formally known as: Lutheran Social Service of Iowa)

Service Delivery Area: Clay, Dickinson, O'Brien and Osceola Counties

Capacity: 54 families

Successful Goals: 57 out of 100 families served this contract year increased their income. We serve families struggling with extreme barriers so this is a huge success. 76% of families with substantiated mental health issues sought treatment. At one point in the year we had 11 families on a waiting list for services.

Partnering with Community Agencies: Our relationship with PROMISE JOBS is the strongest that it has been in the history of our program. We are a very strong team and meet on a regular basis to discuss families. We have had open communication and they have been strong advocates for us in reaching capacity and continuing to provide excellent services to families even during rough times.

Success with Families: R. went back to college through Vocational Rehabilitation to get his degree in computer science. He was suffering with many health concerns and job displacement as he worked towards this degree. He has currently been placed in employment in which his salary is \$40,000 a year.

K. was a chronic alcoholic who had given birth to a premature baby with fetal alcohol syndrome. She was breast-feeding and continuing to use alcohol. Through FaDSS intervention she and her child were sent to a women and children's recovery center that she successfully completed. She has a full year in sobriety and will be eligible to be a counselor at the center where she received treatment. She has relocated and is extremely active in her recovery process. Her son is very healthy and thriving. The bond between mother and child is extremely strong.

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MATURA Action Corporation

Service Delivery Area: Adair, Adams, Madison, Ringgold, Taylor and Union Counties

Capacity: 41 families

Successful Goals: During FY03 we achieved the following goals:

- 29 families were employed either full or part time throughout the year
- 41 families accessed Section 8 or other formal assisted housing
- 34 families were accessing treatment for mental health issues
- 46 families were promoting health and well being of their children

Partnering with Community Agencies: Throughout the past year, the MATURA FaDSS program has worked closely with the Rural Iowa Crisis Center. Domestic violence issues are difficult, but finding an advocate for FaDSS families has proved to be very positive. Not only are we able to more readily keep the lines of communication open, but offering as much support as possible to families with these issues, helps them tremendously. Mutual referrals benefit both the Rural Iowa Crisis Center and MATURA – FaDSS Program.

Success with Families: A 38-year-old single mother of three boys, ages 14, 10 & 9, re-enrolled in the MATURA FaDSS Program in August of 2001. She was shortly thereafter diagnosed with rapidly cycling bipolar and panic disorder. Not only was it difficult to raise 3 boys while suffering from extreme mood swings, but it was even more difficult for mom to explain the nature of her illness in terms the boys could comprehend. Due to her mental health issues, making simple decisions, disciplining her children or cleaning her house was difficult. With the help of FaDSS, this mom was able to gain some much-needed self-esteem and get connected with the appropriate resources in the community to assist her towards her self-sufficiency goal. FaDSS helped her to consolidate her student loan, worked on budgeting skills and helped mom to become more organized. She has since exited from the FaDSS program but stops by the office often to let us know how well things are going. She feels that the world needs more people like her FaDSS Specialist.

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Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc.

Service Deliver Area: Boone, Grundy, Hardin, Jasper, Marion, Marshall, Poweshiek, Story, Tama and Warren counties

Capacity: 162 families

Successful Goals:

- Families who were employed at some point during the year:
 - 122 families obtained part time employment
 - 76 families obtained full-time employment
- 269 families had improved health care patterns
- 233 families improved their support networks

Partnering with Community Agencies:

One of MICA's most successful partnerships continues to be with PROMISE JOBS. Conscientious efforts continue to maintain informal and formal contacts allowing increased communication with an active referral process. MICA sends monthly updates to inform PROMISE JOBS staff of families' goals and significant changes. Creating an environment that is supportive, informational and a true collaborative effort gives the family an opportunity to access not only positive programs but an increased network of support. This creates an enhancement to the relationships with families. MICA will continue to work closely with PROMISE JOBS with a strong dedication to join efforts to support families to self-sufficiency.

Success with Families:

The road to success often has many twists. Renae joined MICA's FaDSS program in Dec. 1999. A single mom, she faced significant barriers: no transportation, unhealthy family relationships, recovery from substance abuse, and limited job skills. She was taking small steps towards a better future. As part of her substance abuse recovery, Renae attended a court-mandated treatment program regularly and enrolled in college computer programming courses. In Jan. 2000 Renae dropped out of college, overwhelmed by personal and family issues. She turned to drugs for support and began skipping her treatment program. Due to not meeting the requirements outlined, she was put in jail and her daughter was sent to live with her father. For the next year, Renae was in and out of jail on various drug-related charges. She was removed from a housing program, forced to move in with her mom and struggled to gain control over her addiction.

In Aug. 2000 Renae gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. Pressure mounted. Renae chose to take the more difficult road of building a better life. She recommitted herself to FaDSS, and began setting and achieving more goals. She followed through on her drug treatment plan, planning to continue her education after finding transportation. She pursued membership in a local program designed to help welfare recipients become self-sufficient. In April 2001 she received a car through the program and began making payments to purchase the vehicle.

Renae completed her coursework. Renae's life took one more curve as she learned she had failed to pass her last test and wouldn't receive her degree. Renae chose to dive into the challenge of finding a job. Her search was difficult with her troubled past. She sought employment for more than a year. In July 2002, Renae went back to school to become a certified nurse's aide. In November, she began working at a local nursing home. In Jan. 2003, Renae became a certified nurse's aide. She received a \$1.10/hour raise. Renae has been off FIP since Jan. 2003. She enjoys the work and plans to continue her education to be a registered nurse. She is proof that determination and vision can overcome any bump in the road.

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Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc.

Service Delivery Area: Cherokee, Ida, Lyon, Plymouth and Sioux counties

Capacity: 57 families

Successful Goals:

We have seen a dramatic increase in the number of families that we serve who experience and live with mental health issues. Our goal that families would receive necessary and appropriate treatment for mental health issues was a success. We had a goal of helping 30 families access services and in reality the number of families accessing services for mental health services was 59. In rural areas the ability to access mental health services can be difficult, but we feel good about the fact that we were able to help link these families with services.

I was encouraged by the number of our families who are able to choose education as a way to a brighter future. We have 17 families that are involved with getting a 2 year degree and 6 families that are in the process of getting a 4 year degree.

Partnering with Community Agencies:

FaDSS has strengthened its linkage with a newer community program, ATLAS. The ATLAS program is expanding its service area over the past year. This program assists families with funding if there is no other resource available. ATLAS provided one young FaDSS mom a "baby shower" by supplying the young mom with a new car seat, safety equipment to safety proof the home, onesies, diapers, and baby food.

The families that we have served over the past year have a high incidence of mental health issues. While we are not involved in the therapy component of their treatment we have built linkages with the community mental health centers and their therapists in an effort to better coordinate and engage families in services. In rural areas it can be a difficult task to engage individuals in mental health services both because of location of where the service is provided as well as the limited number of therapists available. With one family we were able to link them with a seasoned psychiatrist who reevaluated the husband's diagnosis and medication. We were also able to link this same family with a child psychiatrist who reevaluated the son's ADHD diagnosis and consequently his medication so that the mother was no longer getting calls daily from the school because of disruptive behavior. The son is also doing well in school academically.

Success with a family: A family, until 5 years ago, had been a fully viable, upper middle-class family. The father had a breakdown at work, was treated for exhaustion and soon was unable to function or get up for work. He would sleep up to 5 days in a row. He lost his job and was hospitalized several times. His family was young and his four children did not understand. His wife was encouraging and supportive and helped him access mental health services. She managed all aspects of her family's life. She was accepted into a doctorate program and saw it as a chance to bring some stability to her family's life. Meanwhile, her husband was unable to function at all. When FaDSS entered she was contemplating leaving her husband and moving the children out of state where she could get help from her family. They had lost everything. He had not worked in 5 yrs. We discussed the pressures and frustrations that she was under and discussed the possibility that perhaps he needed to be reevaluated. We began looking for another psychiatrist who ultimately changed his diagnosis, medication and treatment. He found a job and has been able to work at least 40 hrs a week. He makes enough money that they withdrew from FIP. She will graduate at the top in her doctorate program with honors in a year.

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North Iowa Community Action Organization

Service Delivery Area: Butler, Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Franklin, Hancock, Kossuth, Mitchell, Winnebago and Worth

Capacity: 90 Families

Successful Goals:

- 95 individuals participating in FaDSS were employed during the fiscal year.
- 132 children (0 to five years of age) have completed all required childhood immunizations demonstrating family stability and preventative health care.
- 85 individuals accessed necessary and appropriate treatment for mental health issues.

Partnering with Community Agencies: North Iowa Community Action and the NICAO-FaDSS Program entered into a new partnership with the Mason City Youth Task Force, Prairie Ridge Addiction Treatment Services, Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health, the YMCA Teen Leadership Program, Francis Lauer Youth Services, the Avalon Center, and the Mason City public and parochial schools during the 2003 fiscal year. The community partnership was successful in obtaining a State Incentive Grant (SIG) from the Iowa Department of Public Health in order to provide a variety of activities focused on enhancing the capacity of the community to address substance abuse prevention issues and to decrease substance abuse by youth ages 12 to 17 years. North Iowa Community Action FaDSS staff received training provided by Iowa State University Extension staff for the *Strengthening Families* parenting and substance abuse prevention program. As a result, North Iowa Community Action recruited FaDSS families to participate in the seven-week program, which includes a youth, parent and family session. The program is designed to help parents build on their strengths in showing love and setting limits; to help youth develop skills in handling peer pressure and building a positive future; and to help families grow together. The curriculum will be integrated into services available to families enrolled in FaDSS during FY04 as well.

Success with Families: In a letter written "to whom it may concern" on January 17, 2003, FaDSS participant Shelly described her feelings about her involvement with FaDSS when she decided to speak out on behalf of the program to legislators "On behalf of my family, I want to say thank you. The Family Development & Self-Sufficiency Development Program (FaDSS) has been a tremendous blessing to our family. The support, encouragement and assistance we received have been absolutely outstanding! Words cannot express how grateful we are for such a program! From heating assistance and health insurance applications, to helping me maintain my vehicle, to helping me obtain legal advice...my personal caseworker has been a wonderful support for me. She has helped me to set monthly goals for myself and for my children. She gives me a heads up on resources that are available and she provided a shoulder to lean on during a very difficult transition in my life. I highly recommend the FaDSS program to any family that is trying to get a fresh start and trying to get back on their feet. It is an awesome feeling to know that people really do care and that the State of Iowa has a desire to give people a second chance to start over. Keep up the good work. I am very grateful." During her involvement, FaDSS also assisted Shelly in obtaining childcare so she could continue her employment. At the time of her exit, Shelly has improved her work schedule by switching to days and has increased her income by receiving a raise at work and she is now receiving child support. As a result, she has been able to end her FIP participation.

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Operation Threshold

Service Delivery Area: Black Hawk and Buchanan Counties

Capacity: **81 families**

Successful goals:

- 37 participants were involved in Basic Education programs.
- 113 participants were employed either full time or part-time during the year.
- 59 participants were involved in post education programs.
- 125 participants were assisted with Section 8 housing.
- 67 participants received professional treatment for mental health problems.
- 14 participants received professional treatment for substance abuse.

Partnering with Community Agencies: During the past fiscal year, four FaDSS staff were trained to facilitate family team meetings. Two of them have subsequently been involved with collaborative efforts to establish and promote a Community Partnership program in our area. We also continue to have an amicable relationship with the PROMISE JOBS staff in Black Hawk and Buchanan counties.

FaDSS staff have been developing good working relationships with several area landlords through the Tenant Based Rental Assistance program that provides assistance with deposit and 70% of the first month's rent. This relationship-building has proven to be invaluable in helping participants find safe affordable housing and helping the landlords invest in limited-income tenants.

Success with families: T.P. is a mother of two children, a 13-year-old daughter and a 10-year-old son. She is a victim of domestic violence. T.P. enrolled in the FaDSS program in September of 2000. At that time she had left her husband of 14 years and was living in the basement of her grandmother's house. She started working at Burger King for 15-20 hours per week. While she was living with her grandmother, her cousin (a registered sex offender) moved into the home. She was concerned about her children's safety and decided it would be best to move into her own place. She applied for HUD and got assistance with a rent deposit from the Domestic Violence Program in Buchanan County. She secured housing at Lexington Square Apartments in Independence. She took herself off FIP in November of 2000 because she started receiving child support.

T.P. re-enrolled in FaDSS in October 2001 because she had to reapply for FIP benefits due to her estranged husband losing his job. During this time in FaDSS, T.P. enrolled in Hawkeye Community College and received a degree in accounting in May, 2003. She has been very active in FaDSS activities such as attending the FaDSS Day on the Hill and being a speaker at the Operation Threshold Board meeting in July. T.P. is an excellent advocate of the FaDSS program. She invited her FaDSS Specialist and the FaDSS Coordinator to speak to her class at HCC.

T.P. is a self-motivator and has worked extremely hard (despite all of the adversity in her life) to stabilize her family and to get her life together. She has been actively searching for a job in Accounting. She is currently employed at K-Mart until she can find employment in her field. We are very proud of her accomplishments.

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Polk County Family Enrichment Center

Service Delivery Area: **Polk County**

Capacity: **150**

Successful Goals: Nearly all program and participant goals were met or exceeded for FY03. Family outcomes were impressive. Notable accomplishments included:

- 110 participants in post secondary education programs
 - 46 in GED or High School
 - 30 in a less than 2-year program
 - 32 in a 2-year program
 - 2 in a 4-year program
- 144 participants in employment
 - 88 in full-time employment
 - 91 in part-time employment
- 118 families increasing income
- 177 families improving housing safety and/or affordability

Partnering with Community Agencies: FEC continues to maintain a strong collaborative relationship with a coalition of family support providers in the community. The core group of providers are connected through Empowerment but the agencies represented include a broad range of service providers who have a common vision for healthy and successful children and families. The collaboration has many opportunities for training of case managers and supervisors in a variety of areas related to home visiting, i.e. developmental assessment of children, screening tools for depression and substance abuse and "best practices" in delivery of services.

The Family Enrichment Center and the Child Abuse Prevention Council continued a long-term partnership in providing parenting classes open to the community.

The third annual Job Fair, open to the community and specifically marketed to families being served by social service agencies, was a collaborative effort between FEC and the business community.

Success with Families: A thirty-two-year old mother with two children, ages ten and six, enrolled in the program in September 2002. The biological father was separated from the family and ultimately the parents divorced. Issues in the family included mental health concerns and sexual abuse of one of the children. The family struggled to cope with emotional and legal issues surrounding the sexual abuse and continue to receive counseling. FEC assisted the family with support in working with child protective workers and the court system as well as referrals for resources to maintain the family home. The family took advantage of all opportunities available through FEC. The mother regularly attended Pathways groups to maintain a focus on her goals and was available for scheduled home visits. The mother became employed in December of 2002 and is proud to be supporting her family without public assistance.

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South Central Iowa Community Action Program

Service Delivery Area: Clarke, Decatur, Lucas, Monroe and Wayne Counties

Capacity: 68 Families

Successful Goals:

- 48 families became actively involved in their child's education through helping with homework, attending school conferences or volunteering in the classroom.
- 73 families were employed either part time or full time during the year for a FIP cost savings of \$63, 139.
- We began working with the Hispanic population in Clarke County.

Partnering with Community Agencies: We've experienced much new collaboration with community partners during the past fiscal year. With the assistance of Head Start staff and teachers we were able to prepare and distribute "We Care About You" bags for each Head Start Family. The bags contained information about community resources targeted at alleviating poverty. Secondly, we've enhanced our partnership with the community college by offering parent education classes for parents of children 5 -18. Both of these ventures were quite successful and we plan to continue into the next fiscal year. Additionally, we have enhanced our partnerships with the local Decat & Empowerment Boards with out Coordinator serving in an advisory capacity to the Clarke & Decatur County Empowerment areas. Thanks to generous donations from local sources we were able to continue operating our Family Store where families can earn points to purchase taxable household items. This program has been well received by families and the community. We are excited to continue offering this opportunity to FaDSS participants.

Success with Families: We'd like to share the story of Shelley with you. Her family enrolled in the FaDSS program during 2001. At the time she and her two children had recently separated from an abusive husband. She had moved from a big city to rural southern Iowa and was living with family. When we met Shelley she had many goals, but not much hope that things would ever improve for her and the children. After enrolling in the FaDSS program, with the collaborative assistance of PROMISE JOBS, Shelley was able to move into income subsidized housing, started college and began the divorce process. She was proceeding along successfully despite all the obstacles and challenges she faced as a result of the abuse. When, at the urging of her husband, she felt she needed to give the marriage one last chance and began visitation with him. Over time, visitations went well so they decided to begin living together again.

After a period of time, Shelley stopped meeting with FaDSS, her grades went down, and she wasn't turning in her time and attendance reports for her PROMISE JOBS Worker. FaDSS continued to send her notes and attempt to visit with her unsuccessfully. One day Shelley contacted FaDSS, sharing that the violence had started again and she was drinking more in an effort to manage the physical, mental and emotional pain of the abuse. Her statement to us was "Enough is enough I want to be done with this for good." She pulled herself up, continued with the divorce, sought counseling for the violence and substance abuse issues as well as continued with her education. Shelley is an inspiration to all families who are facing the oppression of domestic violence and poverty. Though there were many times she has been ready to give up, she carries on with her weekly goal sheets remembering that their future is bright and she never wants to return to the wreckage of the past.

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Southeast Iowa Community Action Organization

Service Delivery Area: Des Moines, Henry, Lee, Louisa Counties

Capacity: 104 families

Successful Goals:

- 106 families were involved in activities to increase their work preparedness skills
- 71 persons were employed during the year
- 68 families accessed formal assisted housing programs
- 104 persons were accessing appropriate treatment for mental health issues
- 138 families engaged in activities to promote health and well-being of children
- 137 families took steps to enhance the efficiency and affordability of energy consumption

Partnering with Community Agencies:

We have had great success partnering with the New Horizons Program through Young House Family Services. Their Family Specialist works with families that have children from newborn to 5 years old. She has helped many families with food, including driving from one county to another to make sure the family receives the food when it is most needed. When the FaDSS Specialist is unable to find enough money to keep utilities on, New Horizons has helped with finding extra money for rent and utilities. She has been able to locate beds, furniture and clothing, and is willing to help wherever she is needed. She also speaks Spanish and acts as an interpreter, which is a big plus. Working together has made a big difference in our families' lives.

Success with Families:

Jan is a single mother with two small children. Before entering the FaDSS Program, the father of her children physically abused her and he is now incarcerated. Working with her FaDSS Specialist, Jan overcame many obstacles. She has learned to deal with the domestic violence issues and now knows what she wants in a significant other. With the assistance of FaDSS she was able to work off the majority of her driving fines through community service and reacquired her driver's license. She was also able to make repairs to her vehicle and solve the rest of her transportation problem so that she was able to maintain employment. We worked on a written budget and Jan now follows it closely and has been able to catch-up on overdue bills. Jan has found full-time employment and has her children in Head Start while she works. Jan is now off FIP and has made a good home for herself and her children.

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Southern Iowa Economic Development Association (SIEDA)

Service Delivery Area: Appanoose, Davis, Jefferson, Keokuk, Mahaska, Wapello and Van Buren

Capacity: 126 families

Successful Goals:

During fiscal year '03 our main goal was to increase caseloads to serve the population in the seven counties that we served and become more visible in the community. We began several new partnerships which have increased our visibility and effectiveness in the community. Our capacity remained at 100% for three out of four quarters of this fiscal year.

We had a goal of 100% of our caseload/exited families being referred to appropriate agencies that could address the families needs and barriers. We were able to meet and exceed this goal.

Partnering with Community Agencies:

Over the last year we have partnered with the Women's Resource Center/Crisis Shelter in Ottumwa. FaDSS staff were housed in the Women's Resource Center on a rotating basis one afternoon per week to talk with residents and other women about the FaDSS program.

New partnerships were formed with the KIDS Partnership - Mahaska CPPC, Wapello CPPC and the Indian Hills Educational Opportunity Center. The Community Partnership for the Protection of Children is in cooperation with DHS and is funded with grant money from the Edna Clark Foundation. Several of the FaDSS staff were trained as facilitator's for family meetings. The Indian Hills Educational Opportunity Center is funded through a grant which provides assistance to students to get the help they need in achieving their educational goals. They are proving to be a valuable serve to our families as they guide them through all of the process of getting enrolled in college and GED programs.

Another new partnership was with the Drug Affected Children Task Force. Again, this is a joint effort among many agencies and local leadership to address the concerns of children who are physically effected by parental drug use and also the environmental effects of drug abuse.

We entered into another agreement with Head Start to complete the Family Participation Agreements with Head Start families. Families developed goals with the FaDSS counselor at the beginning of the school year and a follow up goal setting meeting was held to update the goals with the family.

Success with Families:

Our largest success was not found in the self-sufficiency of a family but the saving of a child's life that otherwise would probably have ended in tragedy if the FaDSS Counselor had not been involved.

One of the Wapello Counselor's visited in the home with a new family that was referred to FaDSS. The Counselor observed a baby that was a few months old who was allowed to have cats crawl around it and leave cat hair on it, particularly the child's mouth, the child's hands were covered with socks and tape to keep the baby from removing it's pacifier from it's mouth. The counselor also learned that the pacifier was also being taped to the child's mouth. A complaint of child abuse was immediately filed and the child was quickly removed by DHS. The parent's voluntarily relinquished their parental rights to the baby. The child was adopted and is now in a stable, loving environment. This child was saved due to the expedited action taken by the FaDSS staff.

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Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc. Program

Service Delivery Area: Buena Vista, Emmet, Hamilton, Humboldt, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, Webster, and Wright counties

Capacity: 99 families

Successful Goals: We developed a team goal to increase the total wages earned by those employed during the year. Last year we reported \$248,351 in wages earned and this year we report \$263,503 in wages earned. This is an increase of over \$15,000.

Another goal is our recruitment rate. This year we averaged a 79% recruitment rate. Although, we would like to bring this percentage up some, this means that 3 out of 4 families volunteered to participate in our FaDSS program.

Under Family Stability: We take pride in our program for 170 children are current on immunizations, 159 children have been screened for lead levels, and 83 families have taken steps to enhance environmental awareness with their children. 61 out of 72 people (85%) who declared a mental health issue sought necessary treatment and 16 out of 25 people (64%) who declared a substance abuse issue sought necessary treatment.

Partnering with Community Agencies: This past spring, we organized a Community Wide Back to School Bash for the community. We invited various agencies that also serve families in other ways to come to a round table discussion. Out of these meetings came a huge event at the middle school and over 500 children received a book bag filled with school supplies. The planning of this event allowed for brainstorming, networking, and a best practice discussion between FaDSS staff and other agencies on how together we can best serve families.

One other relationship that has become stronger is our connection with Child Protection. Specialists have great insight into child abuse, as do Child Protection workers. Working together with child abuse and family stressors can be a huge benefit to families. We have developed a relationship strong enough to call them each time when we have a concern (suspected cases). At times, we can help the worker to understand the family makeup and other times they help us to understand the system and how we can better serve the family.

Success with Families: Belinda is a 40-year-old mother of four. When she first enrolled into the FaDSS program she had just moved out of the local domestic violence shelter. Belinda was not only hurting on the inside; she had several physical injuries, which needed time to heal as well. Belinda had been in an abusive marriage for about 10 years, during which she was hospitalized several times. She had not been employed for a while and had never been in charge of the household income. Belinda was behind in all her bills and did not have anyone to turn to. Belinda was referred to the FaDSS program by PROMISE JOBS soon after. Each week a specialist worked with Belinda on self-esteem, budgeting, general life skills and finding her dreams. Belinda was of Hispanic origin and had the dream of having her own translating and interpreting business. The FaDSS specialist worked with Belinda on setting goals to reach this dream. Belinda's dreams became a reality-she is the owner of her own translating business and often gets calls from the court house, police officers, and other community agencies for her assistance. Once she got started she was able to rent a small office downtown. Belinda has also become employed with Planned Parenthood as the Community Educator. She is debt free and completely on her own.

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West Central Development Corporation

Service Delivery Area: Cass, Crawford, Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Montgomery, Page, Pottawattamie, and Shelby Counties.

Capacity: 131

Successful Goals: Twenty-one (21) families experiencing domestic violence threats completed a safety plan.

Other significant accomplishments include:

- 91 participants were employed full or part time
- 75 participants increased their income while in FaDSS
- 72 individuals received appropriate treatment for mental health issues
- 20 persons accessed necessary and appropriate treatment for substance abuse
- 2 individuals completed a 4 year degree
- 3 individuals completed a two-year degree program
- 396 round trips were provided by Specialists for doctor appointments, Job Club, job interviews, and appointments with DHS and PROMISE JOBS
- 2177 home visits and quality visits with families took place during the year

Partnering With Community Agencies: WCDC's most successful partnerships have always been the PROMISE JOBS staff in the three (3) service delivery regions West Central operates the FaDSS Program in. The FaDSS and PROMISE JOBS staff meet regularly in order to maintain and nurture this relationship. PROMISE JOBS has always provided adequate referrals to maintain full capacity.

The FaDSS Specialists developed strong relationships with a number of churches and community based agencies that yielded \$16,491.00 for direct assistance money for families. Agencies included the Red Cross, United Way, Mohm's Place, The Salvation Army, Interfaith, and other churches in the community. In addition, families utilized FSSG funds totaling \$11,750.00.

Success with Families: Mary, a single mother of a daughter age 15 was homeless and unemployed when she entered the FaDSS Program. Mary developed a plan with her FaDSS Specialist. Mary made a list of job opportunities and her FaDSS worker took her to pick up and fill out applications. On the second day of interviewing Mary was offered a position for 30 hours. With confirmation of a job Mary, with the help of her PJ Worker, accessed FSSG funds. Monies were made available to reinstate her license and insure her car. Her Specialist advocated with a local landlord bringing landlord and Mary together to resolve barriers of credit and rental history. Salvation Army provided funds to clean up an outstanding utility bill so service could be turned on in the apartment. Today, Mary holds a position she likes. She and her daughter have their own apartment for the first time in over a year. PROMISE JOBS, Salvation Army, a local landlord, and FaDSS worked together to make a positive impact on this family.

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Winneshiek County Board of Supervisors

Service Delivery Area: Alamakee, Bremer, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek

Capacity: 86 Families

Successful Goals: It has been our observation that mental health and substance abuse are two factors that make family self-sufficiency difficult to achieve. Both tend to impair the very qualities that are necessary to be successful in the work place. Our FY 03 snapshot indicates 35% of our families have some degree of mental health impairment. It shows nearly 45% as past or current substance abusers. Our goal in the mental health area was to identify 45 individuals and to get 30 of them in appropriate treatment. At the end of the year we identified 60 families and 57 of them accessed some level of appropriate treatment. We had a goal of identifying 15 individuals with substance abuse problems and got 10 of them into treatment. In fact, we identified 16 with all of them entering treatment. This success can only reduce the number of barriers or abuses and increase the opportunity for safe healthy self-sufficient homes in Northeast Iowa. Our Specialists report that as appropriate treatment is implemented other barriers become easier to overcome.

Partnering with Community Agencies: NEICAC/FaDSS recognizes the need for strong linkages with Agencies, both local and State. We dialogue with these agencies on a continuing basis. Attending and presenting at various county interagency meetings has been a NEICAC/FaDSS tradition. Our FaDSS Advisory committee is composed of individuals representing several different agencies. That makes it a strong tool for partnering. We still continue our full collaboration with a local Community Sustainable Agriculture supplier and private donors. The CSA provides 20 weeks of highly subsidized garden fresh deliveries directly to our participants. This year one of our Specialists found themselves with a participant who was attending a local Community College. Daycare became a barrier as it frequently does. In this case PROMISE JOBS could pay some but not all of the costs. Travel time and class time was all they could pay. Study time between classes or library time were not included. A night course presented the problem of nighttime in home care as well. In a creative effort the PROMISE JOBS worker, the FaDSS specialist, NEICAC and a local church put together a package unique to this family. The church under the condition of anonymity contributed \$500 for this purpose. NEICAC became the fiscal agent who disbursed the money. Claim forms were created. These claims are submitted through the FaDSS Specialist who verifies that the claims are indeed authentic. NEICAC's comptroller issues checks directly to the provider.

Success with Families: At the time this mother joined FaDSS she was purchasing a home and did have a car but no insurance on either of the car or the home. Her family consisted of two teenage boys. Her education was outdated and did not include today's technology. As she and the specialist explored the possibility of updating her education she found she would be amassing debt for both school and living. She was not sure what direction she should go in school. She had a wide variety of work experience. She had worked on construction, in a factory and on a dairy farm. With the specialists input she began to look for a job on a dairy farm. She had several interviews and job offers. She accepted a job milking cows on a farm about 60 miles from home. Her son sold his bicycle to get money for car insurance. She left home at 3:00 AM and returned home at noon. The specialist continued home visits at the work site. The participant did get paid enough to get off FIP. In a few months she was offered more hours and a place to stay at work during the week. She has neighbors and friends providing oversight for her boys. Both of the boys are on the honor roll at school and one of them has a part-time job as well. They all have cell phones and she can be home in an hour if she needs. She is off on weekends and spends them at home organizing for the next week. She tells us she loves her job. Her employers tell her they appreciate her dedication and hard work.

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Woodbury County Community Action Agency

Service Delivery Area: Woodbury County

Capacity: 54 families

Successful Goals: Our goal was that 15 families would be off FIP due to increased income. 44 families increased their income. 20 families were off of FIP due to increased income. Proposed goal for employment was 15 part-time and 24 full-time. For the year 26 families were employed part-time and 34 full-time.

Proposed goal for families to receive necessary and appropriate treatment for mental health and substance abuse issues was 16 families. For the year 54 families received the necessary treatment.

Partnering with Community Agencies: We have a new unique and very much needed program that we partnered with this year. The program is Cars for Christ. It is a ministry of Friendship Community Church designed to provide a service to the Siouxland area in assisting individuals or families to attain personal and/or financial self sufficiency by providing trusted used cars for employment purposes or health reasons.

Vehicles are donated to Cars for Christ, they are thoroughly checked out and repaired as needed to ensure they are safe for families that receive them.

FaDSS families have received cars from the Cars for Christ program.

Success with Families: Melissa, mother of six suddenly found herself single at the age of 25. Faced with the challenge of supporting her family, Melissa moved into public housing and arranged for help from FIP. Melissa had no college education or work experience when she enrolled in the FaDSS Program. She started in an administrative office management program at the local community college, worked out childcare and other issues so she could work on her degree. With the help of her Family Development Specialist, Melissa set goals for the future. Melissa started working for Head Start in April 2002.

Melissa was selected to receive one of the eleven Rose McCay 2002 Parenting Achievement Awards and a \$625 scholarship. The Rose McCay Awards are given annually by Youth and Shelter Services. The awards acknowledge young parents statewide who have achieved a major goal such as moving from homelessness to safe, permanent housing; completing school; moving from welfare to self-support; or in some other way, turning their lives around. Melissa said "it feels really weird but amazing to get an award for loving your children." She used the scholarship for a down payment of a van. After one year with the program, Melissa has successfully exited FaDSS.

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Youth and Shelter Services, Inc.

Service Delivery Area: Audubon, Boone, Calhoun, Carroll, Dallas, Greene, Guthrie, Marshall, and Sac, Story

Capacity: 108

Successful Goals: During FY03 many of our educational goals were attained. Seven out of nine adult educational goals were met. 18 individuals were involved in GED/HS programs and 7 individuals completed their GED/HS. 38 individuals were involved in post-secondary educational programs and 12 completed post-secondary programs.

Partnering and Community Agencies: The Youth and Shelter Services FaDSS program continues to build collaborations and partnerships. An example is the efforts by Dallas County human services entities to establish a family resource center in a centrally located and accessible location. Our FaDSS Specialist has been instrumental in this process. She is a member of numerous Dallas County boards and committees that are assisting in the collation building. FaDSS will be a part of the family resource center, providing a FaDSS staff for participants to visit with and to accept referrals.

Youth and Shelter Services FaDSS staff has also developed a strong working relationship with the local Area Education Agencies (AEA). Our partnership with the AEA has provided families with early intervention programs to assist their children before entering school. Our partnership has been an integral part of many pre-school children being identified with special needs and receiving early in-home services to address those needs.

Success with Families: At enrollment a 23-year-old single mother was in a domestic violence relationship. The first step she and her FaDSS Specialist took was to acquire housing to provide a safe environment for her and her children. The FaDSS Specialist took extra steps to expedite housing for the family. After months of creating a support system, and one-on-one with her FaDSS Specialist, her self-worth began to evolve. Through FaDSS resources she was able to obtain legal assistance and is now legally divorced. With her family safe, she was able to concentrate on her personal goals. With the assistance of FaDSS, she created a goal for education, and enrolled in the local community college. This was not without barriers. Her FaDSS Specialist advocated for her to put in place childcare, and transportation assistance, that otherwise would not have been available. She attended classes, carried 25 credits, and earned all A's. She earned her AS degree, completed her CNA, and is working. She has set a new goal to further her education and earn her nursing degree. She tells us that without the advocacy and support of FaDSS, she would not be where she is now.

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YWCA of Greater Des Moines

Service Delivery Area: Polk County

Capacity: 72

Successful Goals: One of the things we consider a success is the continuation of our parenting classes. All FaDSS families are encouraged to attend. Referrals to parenting come from PROMISE JOBS and DHS as well. We feel this component of our program is important for FaDSS and the community. We were very pleased to be able to continue to offer these 7-week classes that are held twice a year. Childcare is provided. A certificate of achievement is awarded at the end of the session.

Another success has been the FaDSS Coordinator position and the Residence Coordinator position being held by one person. The Residence Program at the YWCA now works even more closely with the FaDSS Program. When families move into the Residence Program, an automatic referral can be made to FaDSS. At any given time, over 50% of the moms and kids living at the YWCA are FaDSS referrals. This has enabled FaDSS specialists and Residence specialists to work together to better serve families.

The amount of FIP savings our families have realized is a real success. FaDSS employment translated into \$479,230 in wages during the year, with a total FIP savings of \$187,466 for the state of Iowa. These families were able to become productive members of the community and given the chance to feel a sense of accomplishment. When we saw the families after they started work, they felt proud of themselves and their accomplishments. This was an opportunity for our families to serve as a positive role model for their children and to break the cycle of welfare assistance.

Partnering with Community Agencies: One of our continuing successful collaborations is a quarterly meeting with members of the Head Start staff. We take turns scheduling meetings at different sites. These meetings provide an opportunity to share updates on our programs. It also provides a good forum to discuss mutual problems our family's share and community resources that can be accessed. This has also provided a good basis for mutual referrals.

Another successful collaboration has involved utilizing Representative Services. This service works with families that may be appropriate for SSI. They have worked closely with our families in helping them obtain SSI and assist in appeal if they have been denied SSI. We are able to get our families in for evaluations quickly, usually within a week. After evaluations, we found that some of our families were capable of working with appropriate job monitoring. They were referred on to services such as Vocational Rehabilitation. Others were found to have IQ scores in the 50-60 range (100 being average). These families have been helped through the process of obtaining SSI by Representative Services. We have received referrals from both Representative Services and Vocational Rehabilitation.

Success with Families: Becki, a 37-year old mother of one, age 1 year, moved into the YWCA Residence Program. She had been staying at an emergency shelter and with friends after her mother asked her to move out. After moving into the YWCA, a referral was made to FaDSS. While in FaDSS, she has participated in parenting class and other FaDSS family activities. She began working at UPS on a part-time basis and has now been hired full-time. Her son is in childcare on-site at the YWCA Aliber Childcare Center. Becki applied for Section 8 housing and has recently received her housing certificate. She is currently looking at affordable apartments for herself and her son. Becki continues to be very involved with FaDSS for support and looks forward to continued success. She credits FaDSS with being her partner in success.

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