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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.

The FaDSS Council awards grants to agencies to provide Family Development Services to families at risk of long term welfare dependence and family instability. In FY 2005, FaDSS provided services in all 99 Iowa counties through a network of eighteen grantees providing services to 3,847 families, including nearly 7600 children. During FY2005, FaDSS families earned total wages of \$5,220,251 resulting in a FIP savings of \$1,698,578.

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 2005, FaDSS was funded through an appropriation of \$5,133,042 in TANF block grant funds. In addition, local and in-kind funds of \$1,202,416 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 FUNDING FY 2005

Grantee	Family Capacity	# of Counties	Base FaDSS Funds	Local Funds	In-Kind	Total Program Costs
Community Action of Siouxland	54	1	\$139,877	\$6,616	\$1,700	\$148,193
Community Action of Southeast Iowa	104	4	\$270,427	\$2,625	\$2000	\$275,052
Four Oaks	283	8	\$732,019	\$32,383	\$85,189	\$849,591
TRAIN	118	5	\$305,396	\$6,137	\$25,801	\$337,334
LSI	54	4	\$139,877	\$258	\$6,190	\$146,325
MATURA	41	6	\$104,907	\$8,050	\$14,135	\$127,092
MICA	162	10	\$419,629	\$80,422	\$15,740	\$515,791
Mid-Sioux	57	5	\$146,870	\$21	\$7,200	\$154,091
NICAO	90	9	\$233,127	\$13,162	\$44,668	\$290,957
Operation Threshold	81	2	\$209,814	\$12,861	\$0	\$222,675
Polk County FEC	150	1	\$389,322	\$617,416	\$50,174	\$1,056,912
SCICAP	68	5	\$177,176	\$34	\$288	\$177,498
SIEDA	126	7	\$326,378	\$230	\$18,577	\$345,185
UDMO	99	8	\$256,440	\$4,245	\$4,800	\$265,485
West Central	131	10	\$338,034	\$21,541	\$18,414	\$377,989
Winneshiek	86	7	\$221,471	\$20,147	\$0	\$241,618
YSS	108	10	\$279,753	\$32,183	\$0	\$311,936
YWCA	72	1	\$186,501	\$37,209	\$12,000	\$235,710
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1884</b>	<b>99*</b>	<b>\$4,877,019</b>	<b>\$895,540</b>	<b>\$306,876</b>	<b>\$6,079,435</b>

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

FaDSS Appropriation	<u>\$5,133,042</u>	All funds are TANF: 47% state - \$2,412,530
less 5% administration - DHR	\$216,023	53% federal -\$2,720,512
	- DHS \$40,000	
Total available for grants	<u>\$4,877,019</u>	

## Progress Toward Self-Sufficiency

Families face severe barriers to becoming self-sufficient. **Despite these barriers, nearly 76% of families who exited FaDSS in FY 2004, and were off FIP at the time, had not received any FIP one year later.** \*

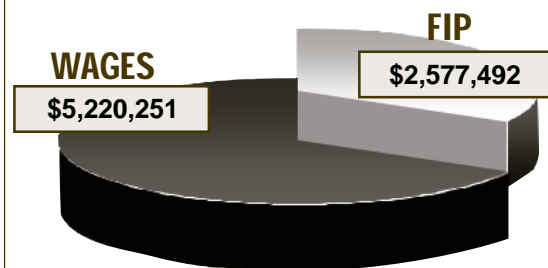
### Employment

Approximately 1,838 families participating in FaDSS were employed at some point during the year.

The number of families with at least one person employed increased by 131% from the time families enrolled in FaDSS to the time they exited.

While participating in FaDSS, families earned total wages of \$5,220,251 in FY 2005. This resulted in a FIP savings of \$1,698,578.

### Income Reported for Employed Participants



### Wages and Income

The average hourly wage of head of households employed at exit from FaDSS was \$7.62. The statewide target for FIP in 2005 is \$7.38.

FaDSS families had a monthly income increase of over 45% from enrollment to exit in the Program.

For every dollar invested in FaDSS \$1.35 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.

## 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	64
Adult survivor of sexual abuse, incest, physical or emotional/neglect as a child	60
Head of household lacks HS diploma/GED or literacy skills	35
Child in home is a survivor or is currently* experiencing sexual, physical, or emotional abuse	37
Current* or past child abuser/neglector	26
Have a child with special needs	22
Families face 2 to 4 barriers	34
Families face 5 or more barriers	30
Families face 2 or more	64

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

**2 out of 3 FaDSS families during FY 2005 experienced two or more barriers that affected their ability to achieve self-sufficiency.**

## 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 312 children in FaDSS homes being placed out last year, while at the same time, family development services allowed 122 children to return to their homes. **FaDSS Specialists and Supervisors are mandatory reporters.**

## Substance Abuse

Substance abuse causes or exacerbates 7 out of 10 cases of child abuse or neglect. **In FY 2005, 399 or 76% of individuals with a substance abuse barrier were successfully engaged in substance abuse treatment.**

## Mental Health

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 23,526 home visits in FY 2005. **In FY 2005, 1,353 or 82% on individuals in FaDSS with mental health barriers received mental health treatment.**

## Education

**Nearly 28% of families in FaDSS had an adult member who lacked a high school diploma or GED.**

In FY 2004, FaDSS assisted families in achieving:

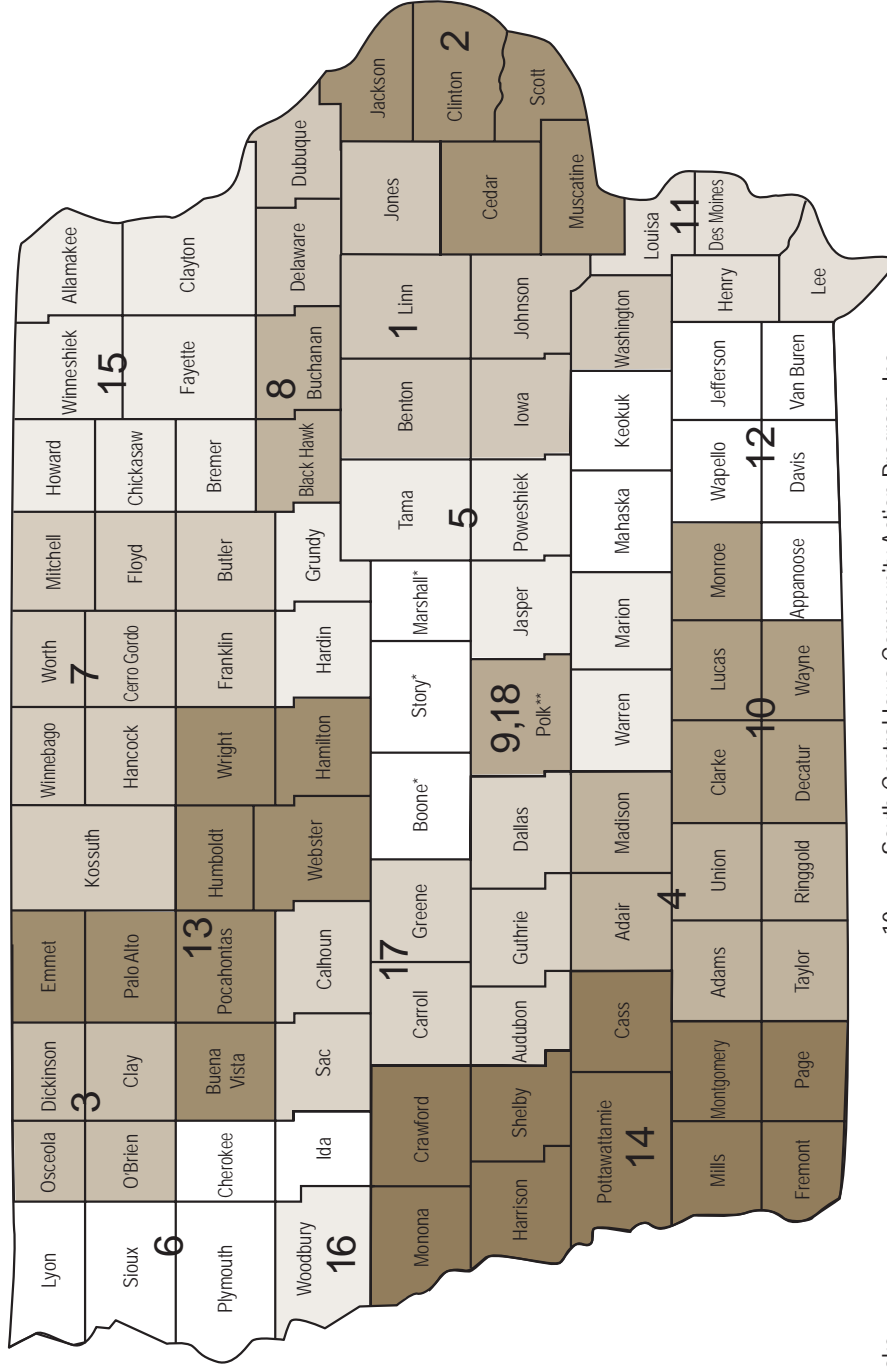
- ☞ 148 High School Diplomas or GED
- ☞ 117 certificate programs
- ☞ 72 associate degrees
- ☞ 9 Bachelors degrees

**784 or 65% of adult family members made progress toward an educational goal. 347 families achieved a major educational goal.**

## Housing

1,356 families enrolled in FaDSS this past year accessed Section 8 or subsidized housing which is safe and affordable. **897 or 71% of the families with a housing goal significantly improved their housing at the time they exited FaDSS.**

# FaDSS Grantee Service Areas



1. Four Oaks
2. Iowa East Central T.R.A.I.N
3. Lutheran Social Service of Iowa
4. MATURA Action Corp.
5. Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc.
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, Inc
11. Community Action Southeast Iowa
12. Southern Iowa Economic Development Association
13. Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.
14. West Central Development Corp.
15. Winneshiek County Board of Supervisors
16. Community Action Agency of Siouxland
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 Year End Summaries  
for FY 2005**  
as prepared by FaDSS Grantees

## **COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY OF SIOUXLAND**

**Service Delivery Area:** Woodbury County

Capacity: 54 families

**Successful Goals:** Our goal was that 24 families would be off of FIP due to increased income. Sixty-six families increased their income with 29 of them being off of FIP. Our proposed goal for employment was 37 part-time and 29 full-time.

Sixty-six families were employed for the year.

Proposed goal for families to receive necessary and appropriate treatment for mental health and substance abuse issues was 18 families. For the year 32 families received the necessary treatment.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** Partnering with the school district is very important for all concerned. The FaDSS Specialists and the school district work to achieve the full potential of all students.

If a situation arises and the student might be in need of some additional assistance, a team conference is called. The team members consist of the principal, the student's teachers, Liaison Officer (if applicable), FaDSS specialist, student and parents. With input from all, a plan is put into place to help the student reach his full potential. It may include tutoring, stricter rules at home, counseling, etc. After two weeks the plan is evaluated to determine the effectiveness and, if necessary, changes are made.

**Success with Families:** After Betty joined FaDSS she began a paid work experience at a local cafeteria. Betty worked a six-hour day during the early morning shift. She did not have a driver's license so transportation was paid for her to get her two children to day care and to get to her job.

Betty had simply let her license expire so acquiring her driver's license was included as a part of the first larger goal to secure regular employment and become self-sufficient.

Betty met with her FaDSS Specialist on a regular basis and was a willing participant. She thanked the Specialist for listening and for her feedback. The Specialist gave her a Driver's Manual and encouraged her to study for her written driver's exam. Betty took the test, passed and received her driver's license. She secured insurance for her car and was able to supply her own transportation.

The Specialist recommended to Betty that she apply at the restaurants in town that utilized prep cooks. Betty secured a position earning \$7.00 an hour and working 36 hours per week. She is now self-sufficient and doing well.

Betty had the desire for success but at times appeared to be depressed and discouraged. Through the Home Visits and with the Specialist there to listen and offer encouragement, she seemed to gain some self-esteem. Writing her goals for accomplishments with the time frame included helped in their completion. With every goal she met it seemed to add a little more self-assurance. Betty thanked her Specialist and the FaDSS Program for all the encouragement and assistance she received.

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## **COMMUNITY ACTION OF SOUTHEAST IOWA**

**Service Delivery Area:** Des Moines, Henry, Lee (North and South), and Louisa Counties

Capacity: 104 families

### **Successful Goals:**

- \* 67 families have written a monthly budget
- \* 9 persons are accessing necessary and appropriate treatment for substance abuse issues
- \* 60 persons are accessing necessary and appropriate treatment for mental health issues
- \* 168 families took steps to enhance the efficiency and affordability of energy consumption

### **Partnering with Community Agencies:**

We have recently partnered with Iowa Extension Office within the four counties for our support groups. Family Nutrition Program Assistants in each county partner with the Family Development Specialists from FaDSS to offer a support group for all participants. In North Lee, Louisa and Henry counties, the extension office provides office space for the groups which allow children a space to play during the meeting. The Nest in Des Moines County has provided space for support groups along with opportunities to present FaDSS information to various groups.

### **Success with Families:**

Jennifer is a single mother with one small child. On her wedding night, her new husband began a cycle of physical and emotional abuse which put her in the hospital more than once. She decided to leave the abuse after he attacked her while she was holding their new baby. After she left their home together, he began to verbally threaten her life and stalk her to the point where he was seen two blocks from her home with a fire arm. She had no luck with the local police department and, in turn she had fallen into a serious depression. Working with her FaDSS specialist, she started regular therapy appointments to help her deal with the abuse and the ongoing stalking. Together they wrote letters to Senator Harkin and Governor Vilsak; they were so moved by her story they set her up with a lawyer, pro-bono, who helped her deal with the legal issues she was facing. She was able to get a restraining order and finally a permanent no contact order from her husband and finalized her divorce. While dealing with the legal issues she has continued to raise their small child. She has enrolled her son in Early Head Start and is an active mother. She was awarded sole custody of their son, keeping him out of harms way. The FaDSS worker has also helped her enroll in college and apply for grants; she has been on the Dean's list with a 3.59 GPA. She is currently majoring in Criminal Justice. She believes she is where she is today because of her family development specialist and all the support she provided her throughout her time enrolled in FaDSS.

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## **FOUR OAKS CORNERSTONE**

**Service Delivery Area:** Benton, Delaware, Dubuque, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Washington  
Capacity: 283 families

**Successful Goals:** Capacity: As reported by the state, Cornerstone averaged 104% capacity for FY05, with waiting lists in both SDR regions. In person visits: In FY05 we increased our personal contacts with families by 279, for a total of 5079 in person visits. Employment/FIP savings: Out of 540 families served, 312 families were either employed full or part-time during this year, for a total FIP savings to the state of \$226,988.00. On-sight review: Four Oaks/Cornerstone met all state requirements, including new recruitments that measured quality of programming.

### **Partnering with Community Agencies:**

\* Presence in rural counties: In our rural counties, staff has become part of the County Resource Coalitions. This has helped to increase community awareness about the FaDSS program. In turn, community partners are making referrals to the FaDSS program. This is also a way for staff in rural counties to build a supportive network of community service providers that will benefit both the families and the program.

\* McKesson: Over the fiscal year, McKesson, a local health care agency, partnered with Four Oaks in several ways. McKesson donated space and clothing for our "Dress for Success Program." McKesson employees also completed a fund raising drive for "Back to School" as well as an "Adopt a Family" drive for Christmas. This helped to meet the needs for approximately 50 Cornerstone children. Additionally, McKesson employees participated in the "Community Days Event", where they were given the opportunity to volunteer with our Dubuque Four Oaks programs for two days. Some volunteer activities included: holding a reading group for children, arts and crafts group for school age children, as well as helping with construction on the HEART house. In turn, Four Oaks employees participated and helped host a local blood drive. In addition, after all other resources are exhausted; Cornerstone families have the opportunity to apply for assistance through a previously awarded McKesson grant. This fund continues to build revenue as a McKesson employee has chosen to do payroll deduction to donate to our sponsorship.

\* YWCA: In the past two years, Four Oaks has housed the "Dress for Success" program. Families can choose an outfit and accessories to help prepare them for the work force. Due to space becoming more of an issue, potential partnerships were explored to see how space and staff time could be better utilized. Cornerstone approached Waypoint (formerly YWCA) who has a second hand clothing store called Y's Buys. It was determined they had an interest in partnering with the "Dress For Success" program in their current facility, allowing Cornerstone families to have a place where they may go and access clothing. This partnership allows a greater selection of clothing and sizes for our families. It also allows Waypoint to increase their donations as we refer potential clothing donors to them.

Success with Families: I think the FaDSS program does so much good for so many people. Since joining Cornerstone, I have gained so much confidence to accomplish my goals and I couldn't have done that without this program. I have learned how to be a better mom and a stronger person. I know how to stand up for myself in a positive way. I know about resources in the community and my life and my kids' lives are better because of our involvement with Cornerstone.

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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:**

- \* We provided FaDSS services to a total of 250 families.
- \* 30 individuals participated in GED or high school programs.
- \* 60 individuals were enrolled in post-secondary education programs, and 5 completed their education programs this year.
- \* 121 individuals were employed, earning \$269,972 in wages, and saving Iowa \$62,281.
- \* 110 of the 139 individuals who reported mental health issues accessed appropriate treatment.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** We were fortunate again this year to be contacted by a variety of local organizations who were interested in helping families during the winter holidays. While there are several community agencies that provide holiday assistance, some families do not choose to utilize them. Some are uncomfortable asking for help, others don't ask because they view holiday items as a "extra" rather than a "necessity." When organizations offer to provide some holiday items, we are able to help these families who would not otherwise seek assistance. Illinois Casualty Company provided a Thanksgiving meal and Christmas gifts for a couple with one young child, as well as a Christmas meal and gifts for a second family of five. The National Bank provided gifts and clothing for a single mother and her three children. Riverside United Methodist Church Shepherding Group provided gifts and a food basket for a mother and her son. Dutrac Credit Union provided gifts and food for a family of five.

**Success with Families:** Originally from the Chicago area, Sharon relocated to the Clinton, Iowa. When she started FaDSS, she was working as a manager at McDonald's and enrolled in the nursing program at Clinton Community College. Sharon was finding it a challenge to work full time, maintain classes, and manage her family. She felt she needed to be more present in her children's activities, so she gave up her job at McDonald's to focus all her attention on her family and her education. The decrease in income created a dilemma for Sharon. It became a challenge to pay for car repairs and insurance so she could get to school and take care of her family.

We provided financial assistance to Sharon to purchase car insurance. She applied for and received SSI for her youngest son. Sharon was also approved for Section 8 housing assistance. Our agency was able to provide Sharon's family with energy assistance and school supplies. Sharon and her family participated in FaDSS family activities which kept them from being so isolated. We also provided energy counseling and an energy savings kit to Sharon and her family. As she approached the end of her courses, we were able to provide her family with a recycled agency computer. Connections with these resources combined with Sharon's determination helped her to provide a stable home for her family.

Sharon graduated in May and completed her preceptorship. She was a keynote speaker at her Pinning Ceremony for the Nursing Program; she also sang "It's So Hard to Say Goodbye to Yesterday." She plans to take her board exams. PROMISE JOBS will pay for the test and her license. In the meantime, Sharon is working at McDonald's again while she studies for her board exams. (McDonald's would like her to come back as a part of the management team.)

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## **LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA**

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

Capacity: 54 families

### **Successful Goals:**

\* In our counties this grant year for every \$1.00 spent on the FaDSS grant there was a return of \$1.61.

\* 45 families reported substantial mental health issues. Of these 45, 41 actually accessed necessary services. This gives us a rate of 91%. This is an increase from last year's 83%. This is a big accomplishment considering we felt our success rate was because of having counseling services offered at LSI and those services were not offered this grant year because of the counseling program ending.

### **Partnering with Community Agencies:**

Our spotlight on partnering this year has been with early childhood programs especially in Osceola and O'Brien counties. Our specialist in that area has staffings with Best Care for Better Babies, AEA, and Parents as Teachers once a month or two. Their intentions with these meetings are to make sure that families that are served by them are getting the best care and that services are not being duplicated. This has helped families and agencies make sure that all needs are being addressed in the most efficient amount of time. It has also increased the flow of referrals between the participating agencies.

### **Success with Families:**

\* P was a middle age female who had spent the majority of her life depending on a husband to care for her needs. She had never worked outside of the home, did not have her GED, and was separated from her 5 children and husband with no contact while trying to raise an infant on her own. She had been confused about HUD requirements so was using the majority of her FIP to pay rent due to losing HUD. She was able to achieve full-time employment and re-establish a relationship with her estranged husband and children. Even after being off of FaDSS for several months, she will share progress and has pride in her accomplishments.

\* V was married to a man who was not a United States citizen and had returned from living in his country. While in his country she discovered the extent of his drug addiction which caused poverty like conditions and neglect issues for her and her daughter. When starting with our program she was living with her parents, divorced from her husband she had left for the second time, and pregnant with her second child but still struggled with codependency of feeling she needed to return to the father of her children even though not in her or her children's best interest. Through work with FaDSS she made huge progress in setting boundaries with her ex, established counseling for herself and her oldest daughter, established her own housing, transportation and returned to schooling with a focus on massage therapy. She is off of FaDSS and working towards a license as a massage therapist.

\* J was in a relationship with a woman in which he had two children. They fought often and decided to end their relationship. He had always struggled with back problems and mental health issues. Through the help of FaDSS he enrolled in school, took over full care of his son, sought mental health treatment and is working towards resolving issues with his physical injuries. He recently graduated with degrees as a Computer Specialist and in Information Technology. He is currently working to find employment in his new profession.

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## **MATURA ACTION CORPORATION**

**Service Delivery Area:** Adair, Adams, Madison, Ringgold, Taylor and Union Counties  
Capacity: 41 families

**Successful Goals:** During FY05, 45 households had someone working either full or part time. Due to this employment, a total of \$111,729.00 in wages were earned by FaDSS families. Some other year to date totals for FY05 are as follows:

- \* 61 households had children in formal education
- \* 66 families developed a written budget
- \* 44 families accessed Section 8 or other formal assisted housing
- \* 48 families were accessing treatment for mental health issues
- \* 76 families were promoting health and well being of their children

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** As always, we work closely with many local agencies and programs, and this year is no exception. One of the most recent partners we've developed to help us better serve families, is with the Rural Iowa Crisis Center. R.I.C.C. is the domestic violence program within our area, and most recently they have opened a domestic violence shelter in Creston. Violence is unfortunate, but it's real, and it needs the attention of the FaDSS program and the community. Not only do we refer families to R.I.C.C., we have also developed great working relationships with many of the R.I.C.C. advocates. This is helpful to the FaDSS program, and empowering to families, especially those that have issues with violence. Trust is a huge issue with many men and women whose lives are affected by domestic violence, but showing them that two programs/agencies can work closely together for their betterment, is incredibly valuable.

**Success with Families:** Christina, the 28 year old mother of two children, had been on FIP off and on since her son James, now 9, was a baby. Once she moved back to Iowa in 2003, she was referred to the FaDSS program. Christina knows that there have continued to be ups and downs in her life, but believes there to be more "ups" since she became involved with FaDSS. Christina and her family were living with her parents when they first enrolled in the FaDSS program, but have since applied for and attained housing assistance and found a place to rent that they could afford. Christina already had her CNA certification, but was not using it, so with the help and support of FaDSS, Christina gained the confidence she needed to continue applying for work until she got hired as a CNA. When Christina isn't working her full time job, she fills in at the local Dari Sweet and volunteers in her daughters Head Start classroom. Christina got a loan for a reliable vehicle and FaDSS accompanied her to the bank so she could open a checking account. Christina prides herself in balancing her checkbook every day and does not hesitate calling the bank if she has a question about her account. In her spare time, Christina studies for her GED, and attends class once a week, when she can. Christina believes that FaDSS has truly helped her along the way. She appreciates having someone to vent to, someone to listen and not judge her, someone to support her in her many endeavors. Christina has given herself the credit she deserves for making a better life for herself and her family. She is truly a FaDSS success story.

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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:**

- \* 256 families improved support networks
- \* 287 families improved health care patterns
- \* 210 families increased community participation
- \* 283 families promoted health and well-being of their children

### **Partnering with Community Agencies:**

Mid-Iowa Community Action FaDSS program has developed a partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. FaDSS makes conscientious efforts to maintain informal and formal contacts to allow for increased communication, relationship building and support to families receiving those services. FaDSS has referred several families with mild to severe disabilities.

Vocational Rehabilitation's objective is employment for eligible families receiving counseling and guidance while choosing an employment goal based on their interest and abilities. FaDSS works to create an environment that is supportive and informational, as well as a true collaborative effort giving each family an opportunity to access positive programs and develop a greater network of support. FaDSS works closely with Vocational Rehabilitation Services by coordinating efforts to: (1) assist the family to access services and complete applications; (2) provide resource information; (3) attend intake appointments; and (4) create employment timelines to assist with evaluation efforts. MICA FaDSS will continue to work closely with Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

### **Success with Families:**

\*Jenny overcame many barriers on her way to finding a full-time job, housing for her family, and reaching other goals she set for her family. When Jenny came into FaDSS, she was homeless and unemployed after losing her previous job. She also had no child support for her two children.

Jenny enrolled in and completed a Certified Nurse Aide course at a community college. She applied for and landed a CNA job a short time later. After Jenny found her CNA job, her FaDSS specialist helped her work through monthly budgets. "Jenny is always a month ahead and knows what areas she needs to work on," the FaDSS specialist reported. Jenny has also established a circle of support through Beyond Welfare, an agency the FaDSS specialist recommended for her. She has also started the process for getting child support from the father of her two children.

"I think the main thing my FaDSS specialist did was just listening to me and trying to come up with different resources if I didn't know where to turn," Jenny said. Her FaDSS specialist, for example, helped Jenny to find a free dental clinic and a food pantry. "She also gave me a lot of emotional support. It helped me to have someone else on my side," Jenny said. "I am so thankful for the help my family received."

Jenny has set several goals for the future for herself and her family. She wants to continue full-time employment, get involved in her church and community, continue working on the monthly budgets, and learn to manage the stress of caring for her children. (\*name has been changed)

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## **MID-SIOUX OPPORTUNITY, INC**

**Service Delivery Area:** Ida, Cherokee, Plymouth, Sioux and Lyon counties  
Capacity: 57 families

### **Successful Goals:**

- \* Number of families attending a workshop to enhance their work skills - 23
- \* Number involved in obtaining GED or high school diploma – 21
- \* Number involved in 2 yr degree program was 11 and 3 completed the program
- \* Number involved in a 4 yr degree program - 2
- \* Number of individuals who were employed during the year (unduplicated) - 87
- \* Number of families increasing their income while in FaDSS – 64
- \* Number of persons accessing necessary and appropriate treatment for substantiated mental health issues - 78

### **Partnering with Community Agencies:**

Our FaDSS program again partnered with PROMISE JOBS, Healthy Families, and Iowa Extension Services to provide a “Girls Day Out” in Ida County. The families were invited to a day which was set up to provide them some job skills along with a little pampering.

### **Success with Families:**

A young mother of 20 with two small children. The mother has had a difficult up bringing. When she was younger had a lot of problems with substance abuse and issues with authority. Eventually her at-risk behavior landed her in an out of home placement in a residential treatment facility for several years. When she was released, she began having some of the same issues as before. In her words, “thankfully” she became pregnant. This forced her to reevaluate issues in her life and she stopped the destructive substance behavior and risk taking activities. When FaDSS began with this young mom, she was 17, caring for a small infant, living on her own and going to school to get her diploma from high school. She was able to graduate from high school with her diploma. She became the only child in her family to receive a high school diploma. She went on to go to college for a year. She did well in college, but became pregnant during her second semester. She had many complications with her pregnancy and after completing the semester, she decided to take some time off. She struggled with wanting to be home with her children and not have a daycare provider raise them. She fought against the idea of having to work full time. She was also struggling with issues of managing her finances on a small budget and getting further and further in the hole financially. She was making decisions about her relationship with the babies father. He was unwilling and unable to hold a job for more than a couple of weeks at a time. In the past, he had also been physically abusive to her. During her time with FaDSS we addressed many issues with child development and the Specialist assisted the mother in enrolling both of her children in the Early Head Start program. We also addressed relationship issues as a family once the baby’s father moved in with the mother and their children. We addressed employment issues with both of them. Another issue we addressed in each visit was fiscal responsibility, budgeting and repayment of outstanding debts. When the mother exited from FaDSS she was employed in a full time job earning \$9.25 an hour and the children’s father was enrolled fulltime at a community college. The children were attending school daily. They had developed a budget which included repaying outstanding bills. Her plan is work for several years and be debt free and then return to college to complete a four year degree in a human service field where she can help teenagers overcome struggles.

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## **NORTH IOWA COMMUNITY ACTION ORGANIZATION**

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

Capacity: 90 Families

**Successful Goals:** Achievements recorded in the areas of Education, Employment and Family Stability:

- \* One-third of the adults enrolled in GED classes completed their GED program
- \* (24) Adults enrolled in post-secondary educational programs (less-than-two years)
- \* (33) Adults enrolled in two-year programs and almost half of those enrolled had successfully completed their post-secondary two-year degree programs by the end of the fiscal year.
- \* (93) Adults obtained part-time employment and (45) individuals obtained full-time employment
- \* (137) Parents demonstrated appropriate parenting techniques during home visits
- \* (10) Families (parents and children) completed the Strengthening Families Parenting Program
- \* More than 90% of FaDSS families reporting serious mental health issues sought and obtained mental health treatment and counseling.
- \* More than 80% of FaDSS families reporting concerns about substance abuse issues sought and obtained substance abuse treatment before the end of the fiscal year.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** Our partnership with the Kossuth County C.A.R.E. Team has flourished for almost a decade. The C.A.R.E. Team is a Child Assistance Resource & Education program made up entirely of community volunteers who supervise the Loving Hands Nursery in Algona and the Parents Actively Caring (PAC) Program at Kossuth Regional Health Center. The primary focus of the organization is to promote better childcare by parents and adoptive parents and to prevent child abuse in families through respite childcare services, parenting education, and parenting support. The Executive Director of the organization is currently serving her second term on North Iowa Community Action's Board of Directors. She is a significant advocate for the FaDSS Program. As a result of this partnership, FaDSS families are able to access school supplies, gas vouchers, and grocery vouchers as well as respite childcare from the Loving Hands Nursery. The C.A.R.E. Team works hand in hand with the FaDSS Program to bring an extraordinary level of community support to our FaDSS families.

**Success with Families:** "LeAnn" is a single mom with two children and a recovering drug addict. Her Parole Officer referred her to FaDSS in December 2002. During her enrollment in FaDSS, LeAnn earned her GED and went on to complete her CNA certification. She followed through with recommendations made from Drug Court and received praise from her probation officer for her hard work. Her FaDSS Specialist was successful in advocating for LeAnn as she applied for subsidized housing while she demonstrated to the housing agency that she had completed her drug treatment program. FaDSS provided a lot of positive feedback, education and support to LeAnn as she improved her parenting skills. While working on her employment goals, LeAnn first obtained part-time employment through a local "temp" agency. Based on her experience in that position she was able to obtain permanent part-time employment and was able to graduate successfully from Drug Court. LeAnn worked very hard during her enrollment in FaDSS to meet her probation officer's deadlines and to complete restitution requirements by paying all of her driving fines. The FaDSS Specialist assisted LeAnn in devising a "spending plan" that allowed her to pay a portion of her driving fines with each paycheck until the fines were each paid. She exited from the FaDSS Program in January 2005 well on her way to self-sufficiency and following her success in obtaining child support for her children to supplement her income from employment.

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## Operation Threshold

Service Delivery Area: Black Hawk and Buchanan

Capacity: 81 families

**Successful goals:** Educational goals for enrollment in two and four year educational programs exceeded over 100%. FaDSS staff was instrumental in providing information and referrals to UNI-CUE (University of Northern Iowa Center for Urban Education) that provided the tools to apply for college and financial aid assistance. GED enrollments also exceeded 100%. Employment goals were down due to the high increase of participant enrollment in GED and post secondary education. However, we did surpass our goal of total number of unduplicated families employed for the year. We continued to provide job listing to families seeking full and/or part time employment.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** The dissolution of the Tenant Based Rental Assistance grant fostered a housing partnership with the House of Hope (transitional housing program). FaDSS staff was able to get families in safe, affordable housing. A family can stay at the House of Hope for a maximum of two years. They are required to participate in a self-sufficiency activity and be involved in other programs offered at the House of Hope. We were also able to refer families to Family Service League for assistance with rental deposits. We continue to maintain our relationships with area landlords and the local housing authorities.

**Success with Families:** S.J. is a Caucasian female, mother of two boys, and a past victim of domestic violence. S.J. enrolled in the FaDSS program in December, 2003. She was living with her significant other who is the father of her children and a perpetrator of domestic violence. She was afraid to leave her abuser and sought the assistance of her FaDSS worker to devise a safety plan. The FaDSS Specialist made contact on her behalf with the domestic violence shelter but S.J. was afraid that he would find and kill her. Her only alternative was to move from the area where they lived.

The FaDSS Specialist helped S.J. to find a house in a neighboring city. TBRA funds were used to pay the deposit and 70% of the first month's rent. The landlord was sympathetic to her cause and let her move in making arrangements to pay the remaining rent later. She signed up for Section 8 housing assistance, applied for LiHEAP, began counseling, and enrolled in classes at Hamilton Business College. She also found safe and secure daycare for the boys.

S.J.'s abuser found out where she lived and with the assistance of her FaDSS Specialist, she was able to find shelter at the House of Hope. This provided a safe and secure environment for her family.

She found employment at a telemarketing firm and was able to get off FIP. Her abuser attended Batterer's Education Classes and is now teaching other men with the propensity for violence.

S.J. is currently employed and serves on the House of Hope Board. She is an advocate against domestic violence. In her own words, "FaDSS saved my life".

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Operation Threshold

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## **POLK COUNTY FAMILY ENRICHMENT CENTER**

Service Delivery Area: Polk County

Capacity: 150

**Successful Goals:** We saw increases this year in several areas, including the number of individuals completing educational programs, number of adults in employment and the number of families improving housing safety and/or affordability. Our return on investment of \$1.92, \$.44 higher than the statewide average. Average household wage at exit was \$8.51. Participant achievements included:

- \* 77 participants were enrolled in education programs
  - 34 in GED or High School, 7 completing
  - 18 in an educational program <2 year, 11 completing
  - 24 in a 2-year college, 4 completing
  - 1 in a 4-year college
- \* 161 participants were employed
  - 88 in full-time employment
  - 89 in part-time employment
- \* 202 families improved housing safety and/or affordability
- \* 146 families increased family income

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** The Family Enrichment Center and the Child Abuse Prevention Council have a long-term partnership in providing parenting classes to the community. FEC provided space, meals and childcare. CAPC provided facilitators. Three series of classes were completed this year.

The Family Enrichment Center has an Empowerment/Healthy Start contract to provide case management services for non-English speaking Hispanic families. FEC has membership on the Family Support Advisory Group and the Case Management Task Force which represents 11 agencies that provide Empowerment/Healthy Start case management. The collaboration with other agencies has been valuable for FEC and our families. We have taken advantage of joint training opportunities, Healthy Start resources, "best practice" information and assessment tools that have been made available.

Community, Family & Youth Services, the umbrella organization for the Family Enrichment Center, has representatives on committees that are involved in the human services planning for the community. FEC has a representative on the Youth Development Partnership, the Housing and Homeless Coalition and the Economic Self Sufficiency Committee. Committees develop business plans and strategies to achieve positive movement toward outcome targets.

The fifth annual Job Fair was a collaborative effort between FEC and the business community. Seventeen businesses participated.

**Success with Families:** A single mother and two children, an infant and a two year old, enrolled in the program in 2001. The mother was raised in a family that received public assistance, became a teen parent and dropped out of high school. At the time of enrollment, the family was living in Section 8 housing but it was in poor condition and unsafe. The mother was enrolled in GED classes but struggled with attendance due to major health problems of her youngest child that resulted in frequent hospitalizations. She had very limited work history, never maintaining employment for more than six months.

During the past four years, the family has made great progress. They have moved to safe, affordable housing. The daughter's health issues are under control. The mother completed her GED and a two year human services degree from an area community college. She obtained a job in the health care field and has maintained employment for one year. The family is no longer receiving public assistance. In addition to working full time and caring for her children, this mother has found the time to join FEC's Participant Leadership Team and has volunteered to help with special events. The children are doing well in school and at home. We expect this family to continue to make progress and to maintain their self sufficiency.

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## **Southern Iowa Economic Development Association**

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

Capacity: 126 families

**Successful Goals:** During fiscal year we strived to work more effectively and efficiently within our own agency. We began several new initiatives in our agency such as utilizing our in-house referral form and working toward total caseload management within Divisions. We are working with the Head Start Family Support Workers and Parents As Teachers in working on effective home visiting with families and have also worked out systems for utilizing information already obtained on mutual families so that staff are not duplicating work with the families thus we have better program integrity.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** Over the last year we have worked to strengthen our collaboration with DHS and with Promise Jobs. It appears that we are probably communicating more than we ever have in the past. FaDSS Staff communicate on a weekly basis with the Promise Jobs staff. Supervisory staff meet quarterly to discuss any issues or concerns. FaDSS staff have better communication with DHS staff and referrals from DHS have increased slightly over this last year in several of our counties.

We have also built a successful relationship with the Bridge of Hope located at Ottumwa Regional Hospital Alta Vista site. This is an inpatient treatment center for women with substance abuse problems. Their children are also allowed to be housed with them while they undergo treatment. We are able to visit with the women/children in the unit and assist staff with some of the discharge plans that are established for the women once they leave the facility.

**Success with Families:** Our success story for this year involves a Wapello County family. It was a UP couple that were both struggling with substance abuse issues. The father was receiving substance abuse treatment via SIEDA Substance Abuse Services and the mom was housed at the Bridge of Hope with the children.

The FaDSS Counselor in providing in-home services was able to assist the family in making and keeping their goals of moving toward self sufficiency verses falling back into the cycle of substance abuse. She encouraged them to continue with follow up appointments and to work toward continuing to strengthen their family.

Both of them successfully completed their treatment programs and set goals for their family of becoming self reliant and refraining from substance abuse again. The FaDSS Counselor who worked with them, encouraged them to apply for positions that became available through Pella Corporation. The starting salaries for these entry level positions began at 10.50 an hour and increased after six months. Both parents applied for the positions and were hired. The family was able to secure better housing, a vehicle and was paying off old debt.

The family successfully completed their transition period and is now free from substance abuse and is self sufficient.

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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:**

- \* 91% of families declaring mental health issues sought necessary and appropriate treatment
- \* 85% of families declaring substance abuse issues sought necessary and appropriate treatment
- \* 61% of enrolled families participated in one or more activities promoting the health and well being of their children

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** This has been a successful year for improving existing community partnerships and developing new ones. In two of our five counties the DHS Income Maintenance worker automatically refers all new FIP families to FaDSS and we have been able to assist families with the 150 mile round trip to their Promise Jobs FIA writing and in many cases our staff attends those FIA meetings.

In the Wayne Community School District the Principal and Teachers are aware of our services and often call with referrals as well as asking for our assistance with coordination of services for enrolled families. Additionally, Southeast Iowa Case Management has begun providing technical assistance to FaDSS staff for families we've referred to them that don't meet their requirements for services. There is also a great deal collaborations going on for dually enrolled families. Both agencies also call on our Specialists to assist in coordinating staffings and family team meetings. We have made our office space available to hold those meetings.

**Success with Families:** Mary and Brian are 24 year old parents of twin boys. The children were born while Mary was enrolling in college and Brian was completing High School. Their DHS Income Maintenance worker referred the family to FaDSS services stating they were motivated, but need some guidance and assistance to maintain their motivation.

The family was facing barriers of being young parents, lack of education and unreliable transportation. FaDSS immediately engaged the family who was very open to services and they began setting goals to overcome the above barriers. Both parents enrolled in secondary education and recently completed their bachelor degrees in just a little over two years. Mary received an accounting degree and Brian received a secondary education degree with a coaching certification. Throughout college Brian continued to work and assist with the family farm. Mary was instrumental in planning and opening a local coffee house for college students.

FaDSS assisted the family with connections to community resources to improve their transportation as school required them to drive 50 miles one way. FaDSS also connected them with parenting resources to manage the daily task of raising their twins. Both parents are active with our Nest and Parents as Teachers program, rarely missing any of their meetings despite their hectic schedule.

FaDSS nominated the family to receive a parenting achievement award. They won and were honored at a dinner with a \$2,000 check and our local newspaper published an article outlining their accomplishments. These young parents are to be commended. They demonstrate that barriers to self sufficiency are only obstacles that can be overcome with determination and hard work. It is with great pride that we will exit this family from FaDSS as they have both found full time employment in their educational fields and will have a family income of just over \$4500 monthly.

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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:** Out of 69 people who declared to have a mental health issue, 61 sought treatment (88%) and out of 34 people who declared to have a substance abuse issue, 28 sought treatment (82%).

**Other goals accomplished include:**

- 105 participants were employed at some point during the year (unduplicated)
- 55 families exhibited improved self-advocacy skills
- 104 households were involved in their children's formal education

53% of the families we served gained employment experience and 55 families learned to advocate on behalf of themselves and their families, along with these two experiences specialists observed families displaying a sense of pride and self-confidence.

When families are involved in their children's education they are more involved in their child's life in general. We have found by encouraging this to families recognize the importance of education.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** The last couple of year's we set a goal to organize two informal meetings with other providers to present the FaDSS program and discuss how we can better work together in assisting families. The following is a list of those we have met with this year: CAASA, Emmet Co. Public Health, ISU Extension, Community Resources, Childcare Resource and Referral, Legal Aid, Early Head-Start, LaJames, Noon Kwanians, HOPES, Hamilton Co. Public Health, DSAOC, Emmet and Webster County DHS, and Butler School. Another partnership has been with the Wheels to Work program in our area. This program was handed over to our outreach office and UDMO staff are coordinating the efforts. This has increased the partnership, given the fact that FaDSS specialists are able to make referrals on site. The concept is that used cars are donated to the United Way and our families can apply for the car through the FaDSS specialist.

**Success with Families:** Upon enrolling into our FaDSS program, this single mother was unemployed, lacked a GED, driver's license, and was dealing with legal issues due to a domestic violence situation. She was also facing the possibility of becoming homeless with three children under the age of five. After working day in and day out and partnering with her specialist, she has paid off all her fines and has gotten her driver's license reinstated. She has taken and passed three GED tests. She has put a permanent no contact order in place against her abuser. She didn't stop there; this courageous mother secured full time employment and has been off of FIP for six months.

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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:**

Six (6) families experiencing domestic violence threats completed a safety plan. One hundred eighty-one (181) heads of households were involved in some type of formal or structured education or training that would increase employability or salary.

Other significant accomplishments include:

- \* 120 participants were employed full or part time
- \* 118 participants increased their income while in FaDSS
- \* 73 individuals received appropriate treatment for mental health issues
- \* 23 persons accessed necessary and appropriate treatment for substance abuse
- \* 36 participants obtained their GED
- \* 6 participants completed a program of less than 2 years
- \* 1 participant completed a 2 year program
- \* 269 round trips were provided by Specialists for doctor appointments, Job Club, job interviews, and appointments with DHS and PROMISE JOBS
- \* 1,858 home and quality visits with families took place

### **Partnering With Community Agencies:**

FaDSS Staff continues to partner with other agencies to bring needed services to our families. A new partnership this year was with Loess Hills, Area 13 Agency. A six-week workshop, "Guiding Good Choices" was presented to FaDSS families. To meet a need in Parent Education, FaDSS staff partnered with Iowa State University Extension and presented four weeks of parenting workshops to FaDSS and Lutheran Services families. FaDSS relationship with PROMISE JOBS remains strong. The primary source of referrals remains PROMISE JOBS.

### **Success with Families:**

Jane Doe, a divorced mother of two sons, ages eight and ten entered the FaDSS Program near homeless, unemployed, and with unreliable transportation. She was struggling to stay in school.

While in FaDSS Jane found safe, affordable housing. She graduated with a Medical Assistance Degree and found full-time employment. She accessed FSSG funds and obtained reliable transportation.

Today Jane is working full-time and is married. She is off all assistance. She and her family are doing well and looking forward to the future.

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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:** This could be titled "The Evolution of a Goal". NEICAC/FaDSS began with a goal of developing a method of gathering input from Participants and past Participants. In a very few years we adapted one staff meeting each year into an information gathering session. Clients come to this meeting and interact with the whole staff in an informal setting. The next challenge seemed to be how to put their knowledge to practical use in our program. The opportunities were not immediately evident. In 2005 we took the next step by involving a former participant in the process of rewriting our FaDSS Brochure. She was able to offer much insight into using words that communicated the meaning we wanted to the families we wanted to reach. We became more cognizant of the plethora of information we had not been accessing. Beginning the first of the year we began an exit survey to determine the need of a "post FaDSS" program. We asked for areas of focus, length of program and any further information the exiting family would supply. The fact that we have experienced "The Evolution of a Goal" makes this, in our eyes a successful goal.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** The annual FaDSS Snapshot points out the frequency with which families come into the program facing multiple barriers. Our Partnering & Success segments feature clients with multiple barriers. This mother of four had experienced sexual abuse as a child, raised by an alcoholic parent, multiple foster homes, domestic abuse, lack of jobs, homeless, transportation and education. After years of addressing many of these issues with her specialist the client became ready to pursue her GED. Her Specialist put her in contact with the local Community College. They were able to negotiate the following special accommodations for her: Tutoring, audio tests with no time limits, free use of a calculator and a free gas card for transportation to GED classes. The outcome of this effort is the completion of three of the five tests required. She still has two tests to go but she has a year in which to do it. The special efforts of support, advocacy skills and knowledge of community resources directed toward her by her Specialist have empowered this woman to realize she has potential. She has learned to self-advocate. She has become aware that she is capable of learning. Each test passed has erased some of what she perceived as a lifetime of failure and opened the door to the possibility of a lifetime of success.

**Success with Families:** This mother of a two year-old enrolled in FaDSS with several barriers. Among them were: inadequate housing, inadequate education and a partner who had a prior felony conviction, abused substances (self-disclosed) and abused her. With her FaDSS Specialist as her primary support system she called police about one abuse incident and her partner was incarcerated. Next, for her came a bout with depression. Strongly encouraged by her worker she found day-care for her child and enrolled in a Community College her goal was an LPN. Upon achieving that goal she raised her sights to becoming a Registered Nurse. She reached this goal in the spring of 2005. Her specialist nominated her for the Rose McKay award and she is scheduled to receive a \$700 award in August 2005. This ceremony will be held in Ames, Iowa. Her Specialist is transporting her and the participant's father will attend as well. She is now making her own good decisions. Her most recent decision was to apply for a nursing position at Covenant Hospital in Waterloo. She interviewed and was offered and accepted a staff position. Her employment will begin as soon as the background check is complete. She now sets her own goals and follows through on them. We think she is a shining example of how the empowerment model is meant to work.

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## **YOUTH AND SHELTER SERVICES, INC.**

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

Capacity: 108

### **Successful Goals:**

Our outcome indicators for our goal of supporting participants in moving towards self-reliance prove success of program services. 38% of participants increased their household income, 48% of participants were employed during FY04/05 and 43% of participants enrolled in a GED/HS diploma program. Our outcome indicator for increasing parenting skills has been successful of families participating in or demonstrating an enhancement of in their in parenting skills.

### **Partnering and Community Agencies:**

Youth & Shelter Services, Inc. continues to be a strong community collaborator. Each year YSS/FRC continues our efforts to explore new areas for networking and collaborating. Several of our FaDSS staff stay involved in local Empowerment areas while others developed and continue our collaboration with newly developed county Family Resource Centers (Boone and Dallas). In other service areas we have developed new relationships with entities that are providing services to the Latino population. YSS currently has a program that provides outreach and translation assistance when needed to assist FaDSS families. We have developed an in-agency "Family Development Team (YSS FDT)." The YSS FDT includes programs and staff members whose focus is on adolescent and family program services. The group includes staff from Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, Youth Employment, HIV/AIDS Education, and Lighthouse for homeless pregnant and parenting adolescents, Transitional Living Program, Healthy Futures pre/postnatal visiting program, FaDSS, and a staff counselor whose expertise is with adolescent females.

### **Success with Families:**

A single mother referred to Youth and Shelter Service's (YSS) Family Development to Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program in December 2002 and enrolled in the FaDSS Program in February 2003. She had recently moved to our area from Chicago, leaving behind her family in order to make a better life for her toddler daughter.

She informed her Specialist of her desire to finish her education. It was while she was in Chicago that she became pregnant and gave birth to her daughter. She knew if she was to be successful, she would need to leave behind her family in Chicago and make a fresh start. She and her daughter relocated to central Iowa.

After her enrollment in FaDSS, her Specialist assisted her with information, resources, and contacts for three educational opportunities. She chose to pursue a degree in cosmetology at PCI. The program she entered would take fifteen (15) months of educational training. She began the program at PCI July 2003 and finished the program October 2004. This young woman went through the program in the top ten percent of her class, with an "A" average. She is now preparing to take her state licensure test.

Her FaDSS Specialist supported her with parenting information and materials suited for single working parents. With the assistance of her FaDSS Specialist, a day care was located within a block of PCI. This allowed her to take her break times to play with her daughter at the park, set in on day care activities; practicing the alphabet, colors, numbers, and body parts; and make library trips. This young Mom actively seeks out educational opportunities for her daughter. In addition to achieving her goals to self-sufficiency, she has become a spokesperson for the FaDSS program at the local and state level. She participates in the "FaDSS Day on the Hill," eloquently sharing her story while asking for continuing support for the FaDSS program of legislators. She has been an invited guest to speak to other low-income families and single parents. She is truly a FaDSS success story.

For More Information Contact:

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## **YWCA OF GREATER DES MOINES**

**Service Delivery Area:** Polk County

Capacity: 72

Successful Goals:

65 families are involved in their children's formal education

70 families accessed affordable housing while in FaDSS

67 families have a written budget

92 children (0-5) are current on immunizations

78 families engaged in activities that promote health and well-being of their children

70 families exhibited improved self-advocacy skills

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** A twenty-five year old single mother of three enrolled in the FaDSS Program. The family was homeless and the mother did not have a favorable rental history. She was at risk of having her children removed. The FaDSS worker recognized that the mother was low functioning. FaDSS worker asked mother if she would allow a doctor to evaluate her IQ. Mother agreed. FaDSS worker took the mother to Dr. Bruce Dawson to be evaluated. He has worked successfully with our families in the past. Mother was diagnosed with low IQ. FaDSS worker then referred mother to Golden Circle and went with the mother to the appointment at Golden Circle. The mother qualified for MR-DD Wavier. Golden Circle was then able to help family get subsidized housing through HUD. Family moved into a three-bedroom apartment within six weeks of the first appointment with Golden Circle. Family is now stable, and mother is working with Easter Seals to improve organization and nutritional skills. FaDSS worker continues to collaborate with Golden Circle and Easter Seals to help the family become self-sufficient.

**Success with Families:** A forty-four year old mother enrolled in the program. At the time of enrollment, mother had already had rights terminated on four of her children. She had custody of the baby she had just given birth to. The family was homeless and the mother was unemployed. Mother reported that she did not have any source of support. The FaDSS worker assisted the mother in accessing Section 8 housing and parenting classes. Once the mother was able to move into affordable housing, she could concentrate on her goal of finding employment. Through parenting classes, the family was able to develop some informal support systems and improve her parenting skills. The FaDSS worker helped the family to develop goals centered around finding safe childcare and securing full-time employment. The mother obtained a good paying job that enabled her to care for herself and her son. She enrolled her son in Aliber daycare here at the YWCA. She was also able to access the Family Self-Sufficiency Grant to purchase a car to get her back and forth to work and daycare. The FaDSS worker also assisted family in developing a written budget. At the time of exit, the mother was no longer receiving FIP, had obtained housing and employment, and increased her parenting skills so that her son was no longer considered a Child In Need of Assistance.

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