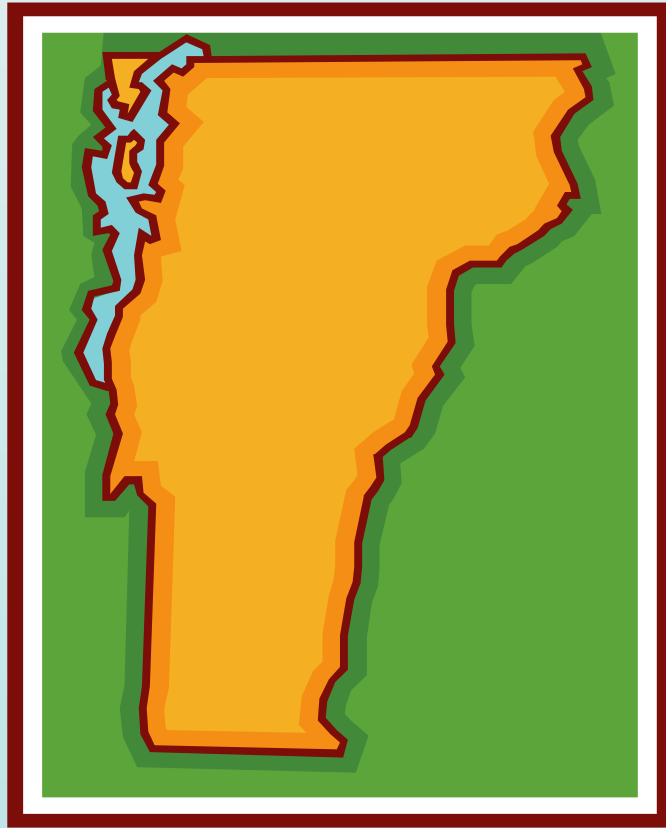


# DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



# The Department for Children & Families



# Our Vision



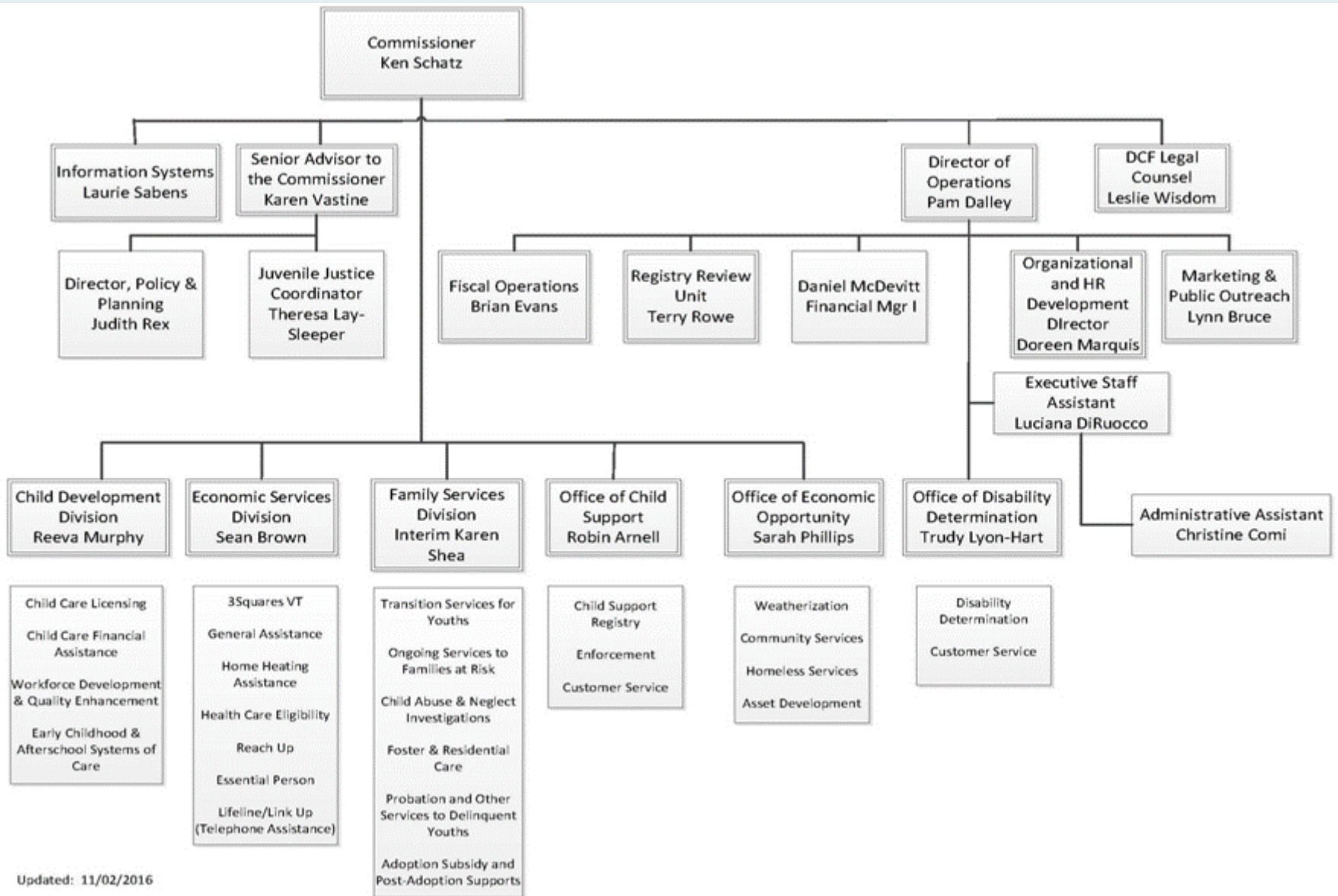
**Vermont is a place where people prosper; children and families are safe and have strong, loving connections; and individuals have the opportunity to fully develop their potential.**

# Our Mission

**The Department for Children and Families, as part of an integrated Agency of Human Services, fosters the healthy development, safety, well-being, and self-sufficiency of Vermonters.**



# DCF Organizational Chart II





# CHILD DEVELOPMENT DIVISION (CDD)

# CDD Clients

- Pregnant and postpartum women
- Children from birth – age 6 and their families
- Children 6 – 13 in after school programs
- Early childhood and afterschool programs and professionals



# CDD Programs and Services

Direct services for children and families that CDD provides or supports include:

- Licensing and monitoring early childhood and afterschool programs;
- Step Ahead Recognition and Improvement System (VT STARS)
- Child Care Financial Assistance Program;
- Children's Integrated Services including early intervention and home visiting;
- Parent information and education;
- Community Based Child Abuse Prevention; and
- Family support services.

CDD administers technical assistance, professional development, and mentoring opportunities to Vermont's early childhood and afterschool professionals.





# Systems and Partnerships

**CDD** is a collaborative partner in developing integrated early childhood and afterschool systems in Vermont.

- Race to the Top –Early Learning Challenge Grant
- Vermont Early Childhood Framework and Action Plan
- Building Bright Futures Statewide Advisory & Regional Councils
- Parent Child Centers
- Head Start Collaboration Office/ VT Head Start Grantees
- Community College of Vermont
- Universal Preschool with AOE
- Vermont Afterschool
- Prevent Child Abuse Vermont

# CDD Strategic Outcomes



- All Vermont children are healthy, happy and successful.
- Vermont is a great place to be a child and raise a family
- The well-being of Vermont's children is improved through CDD partnerships with families, communities, schools, providers and state and federal agencies that increase affordable access to high quality services that are developmentally beneficial for children and strengthen families

# Economic Services Division



Helping low income Vermonters  
meet their basic needs

# The Programs of ESD:

- ~ 3SquaresVT (SNAP)
- ~ Reach Up, Reach First, and Reach Ahead (RU,RF, and RA)
- ~ General and Emergency Assistance (GA and EA)
- ~ Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP)
- ~ Essential Persons (EP)
- ~ Phone Assistance (Lifeline)
- ~ Utility Assistance (UDEU)



## ESD provides services in 12 District Offices

- In SFY16 ESD served 70,914 households.
- The Benefits Service Center (Call Center) receives 35,000 to 40,000 calls per month.
- The Application Document Processing Center mails out 8,000 to 10,000 reviews and applications per month.



Last year the State of Vermont issued the following benefits to Vermonters in need of assistance:



\$118 million in food benefits.



\$20 million in fuel benefits.



\$8 million in general assistance benefits.



\$40 million in TANF benefits.



**Family Services Division  
Child Welfare and Youth Justice**

# Outcome Focus

**Safety is our paramount concern.**

## **Permanency**

- Return home, Adoption, Guardianship
  - Timely
  - Safe

## **Well-being**

- Measured by health, mental health and school success.

## **Law abidance**

- Youth are free from delinquent behavior





# Family Services Division

- 12 District Offices
- Direct Service Units in Central Office
  - Residential/Foster Care Licensing
  - Centralized Intake
  - Special Investigations
  - Emergency Services Program
- Woodside
  - Only locked juvenile facility in Vermont–30 beds
- Central Office
  - Provides support to the field, oversees policy and practice, manages budgets, grants and contracts, maintains communication with federal partners



# Child Abuse and Neglect: Investigations & Assessments

Specialized social work staff conduct child abuse investigations and assessments, with primary focus on the immediate safety of children.

- Districts conduct most assessments.
- Special Investigations Unit focuses on regulated facilities and schools.



5,508 in 2016

*\*Source: 2013 Child Protection Report*

# Family Support Cases

District social workers provide services to families who are at high risk for child abuse and neglect. This support is targeted at the reduction of risk and the promotion of protective capacities.

**523 families point in time Dec 2016**

# Placement Statistics

as of June 30, 2014

Foster Care ~49.8%

Kin Care ~30.8%

Residential Care ~11%

Institutions ~1.7%

Independent Living ~0.7%

Parent ~ 5%

Runaway ~ 0.07%



# Children in DCF Foster Care

- **Reasons for foster care:**
  - Abuse/Neglect
  - Child Behavior
  - Delinquency
- **Numbers are declining yet still higher than the national rate of entry**
  - From 1,453 in 2006 to 1,087 as of 6/30/2014
  - 1,196 children/youth in custody as of 1/2015
  - 1,322 children/youth in custody as of 12/2016
  - 597 families involved through conditional custody orders as of December 2016

# Youth Justice

Unlike child protection agencies in most other states, FSD also serves as the state's youth justice agency. In this role, we:

- Work with youth whose own behaviors put them at risk;
- Supervise youth who are on probation for committing delinquent acts;
- Assess youth to determine their challenges and strengths;
- Place youth in temporary out-of-home care when necessary;
- Work with the youth and parents towards their safe return home; and
- Find permanent homes for youth who cannot safely return home, preferably with extended family members or known connections.

Social workers supervised 277 youth (point in time)  
in December 2016

# Disability Determination Services

Mission:

To provide all applicants with

- ❖ *Accurate decisions following Social Security statute, regulations, and policy*
- ❖ *Completed promptly & cost effectively*
- ❖ *With full & fair consideration of all case facts, respect and compassion for each applicant*

# Medical Eligibility Requirements

- ❖ *Inability to do any substantial work in the national economy*
- ❖ *Due to an objectively documented medical condition*
- ❖ *Lasting at least a full year (or resulting in death)*



# DDS Location and Staffing

*One State Office in Waterbury  
staffed with*

- ❖ *Disability Adjudicators*
- ❖ *Disability (Technical) Specialists*
- ❖ *Medical Consultants*
- ❖ *Other Supporting Staff*

Total of 57 classified employees & contractors (≈ 40 FTE)

# Disability Determination Programs

- ❖ *Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)*
  - ✓ Applicants have worked and paid FICA
- ❖ *Supplemental Security Income (SSI)*
  - ✓ Applicants meet low income/resource limits
- ❖ *Medicaid*
  - ✓ Adults who must be found disabled to qualify
  - ✓ Children under Katie Beckett waiver (disabled and requiring institutional level of care)

# Myths and Facts

- ❖ Myth: *“Everyone gets denied the first time”*
- ❖ Myth: *“It takes years and requires a hearing with a judge to get disability”*
- ❖ Fact: *Over 40% of new cases are allowed by the Vermont DDS with no judicial hearing necessary. The average DDS processing time to allow these cases is 50 days.*

# DDS Outcomes FFY 2016

- ❖ Casework Performance Accuracy – **97.1%**  
*- In the top 6 nationally*
- ❖ Average Processing Time – **71 days**  
*- 6<sup>th</sup> fastest in the nation*
- ❖ Total Workload Processed – **9,507 cases**
- ❖ Initial Allowance rate – **42%** *(National rate is 33%)*

The Vermont DDS is a national leader in accuracy, timeliness, and public service. It regularly accomplishes its workload within budget targets.

# Office of Economic Opportunity

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Partnering to develop local  
solutions to end poverty



# Our Mission

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Working in partnership with the private sector, community-based organizations, government agencies, and others to

- Increase self-sufficiency of Vermonters
- Strengthen Vermont communities
- Eliminate the causes & symptoms of poverty

# How We Work

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- Manage programs and grants
- Training and technical assistance
- Identify & develop resources for communities
- Advocate for community partners

# Poverty & Homelessness in Vt

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**About 1 in 8 Vermonters living below the poverty level (12%) – that's about 72,000 people.**

**Nearly 1 in 3 Vermonters are low income (30.4% < 200% FPL) – includes those working, but often not making enough to get by.**

**About 1 in 4 Vermont families are “asset poor” (27%), not enough to get by at the poverty level for 3 months without income.**



# Community Collaboration

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OEO works closely with  
Community Action Agencies



# Asset Building

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Helping low income Vermonters to save and invest in their future

- Individual Development Accounts
- Micro Business Development Prog.
- Integrating Financial Empowerment



Savings and assets are the building blocks for economic mobility and security

*Income helps people get by, Assets help people get ahead*

# Homeless Assistance Programs

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Help for people in crisis to find or keep stable, safe housing

## Housing Opportunity Program:

- Year-round and seasonal emergency homeless shelters;
- day shelters;
- domestic violence shelters;
- transitional housing for youth & vets;
- homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing programs

## Family Supportive Housing



On any given night,  
486 people are staying  
in a shelter,  
including 114 children

Last year 4,143 people  
were sheltered:  
3,263 adults & 880 children

# Weatherization

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Warmer, safer and more energy efficient homes.

- **Energy audit** to identify where improvements can be made
- **Energy renovation** (e.g., insulation, sealing up drafts, improving ventilation)
- **Coaching** on energy saving best practices
- **Referrals** for health & human services
- **Heating system** upgrades & replacements



*DCF New Worker Orientation*

# *Office of Child Support*



# Why Child Support?



Almost **40%** of Vermont children born to unwed parents



More than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all kids will live in a **single parent household** at some point



Average cost of raising a child in low income family: **\$250,000**



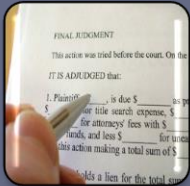
# OCS Mission



The Office of Child Support works to improve children's economic security by:



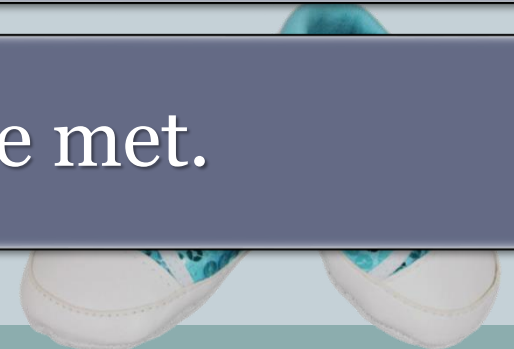
Establishing parentage,



Establishing child support and medical obligations, and



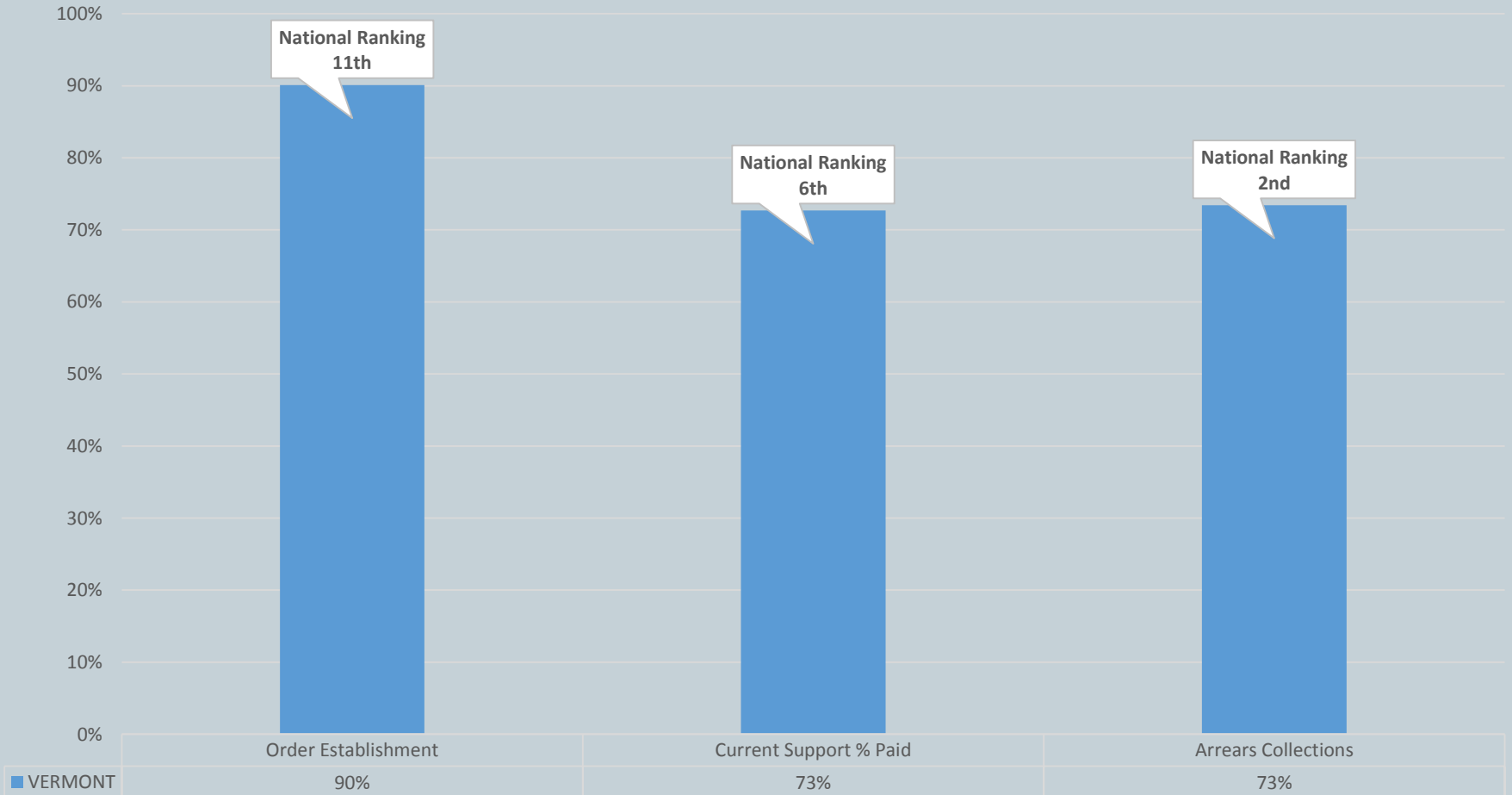
Ensuring obligations are met.



# How is Vermont Doing?



## Key Performance Measures, FFY 2015





# How do we do it?



Locate Actions



Genetic Testing



Child Support Guidelines



Wage Withholding, Admin intercepts, Liens, etc



Civil Court Actions



Criminal Non Support

