

DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



The Department for Children & Families

Serves approximately 170,000 people

or

Approximately 1 in 4 Vermonters



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.



Who We Are and What We Do

- **Child Development Division**
 - Child care licensure, child care subsidy
- **Office of Child Support**
 - Child support enforcement, Work4Kids
- **Disability Determination Services**
 - Determines SSA eligibility for disability
- **Economic Services**
 - Welfare benefits, Reach Ahead
- **Family Services**
 - Child protection, adoptions



CHILD DEVELOPMENT DIVISION (CDD)

Our Vision:

All Vermont children are healthy, happy and successful. Vermont is a great place to be a child and raise a family.



Our Mission:

To improve the well-being of Vermont's children. We do this through partnerships with families, communities, schools, providers and state and federal agencies that increase access to high-quality, sustainable, child development services.

Our Goal:

To increase access to high-quality services that are developmentally beneficial for children and strengthen families.

CDD Clients

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



What CDD Does

Direct services for children and families:

- Licensing and monitoring early childhood and afterschool programs;
- Child Care Financial Assistance Program;
- Children's Integrated Services (CIS);
- Parent information and education;
- Family support services; and
- Community Based Child Abuse Prevention.

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

Collaborate & partner to develop integrated early childhood and afterschool systems in Vermont.

Outcomes Focus

- Effective and open communication internally and externally.
- Data informed and forward thinking
- High quality services for children and families
- Protective factors in families
- Resilience and optimal development for children
- World class workforce
- Excellent customer service
- Well aligned services and programs.



How Many ? How Much?



- Serves ~ 36,600 children under 6 in Vermont
- 1,400 + regulated CC programs (registered family homes and licensed centers)
- Capacity for ~ 34,335 children (all ages) in regulated CC programs
- 1,054 programs participate in STARS
- 368 are qualified Prekindergarten Education Programs
- 7,000+ professionals work in programs
- 1,600 trainings delivered across the state
- 8,000 children (5,000-6,000 families) benefit from CC FAP
- 6,245 annual referrals to Children's Integrated Services (CIS)
- \$47.3 million investment in CCFAP
- Over \$3 million investment in professional development and quality supports

How Well?



- Streamlined and integrated services reducing the number of separate grants and contracts by half over 5 years
- Converting grants and contracts to align with Results Based Accountability (RBA)
- Redesigned website, blog and email list
- 15% increase in ECL Programs with more than 3 STARS (67% Centers and 26% FCC Homes are 3 – 5 STARS)
- 9% increase in number of programs receiving annual licensing visit (99% of centers visited, 77% of FCC Homes)
- 56% of CCFAP assisted children are in 3-5 STAR programs
- Transformation of Professional Development System
- Full update of Child Care Regulations
- PCC Master Grants

Economic Services Division (ESD)



“Taking pride in providing assistance, supporting Vermonters,
and strengthening communities.”

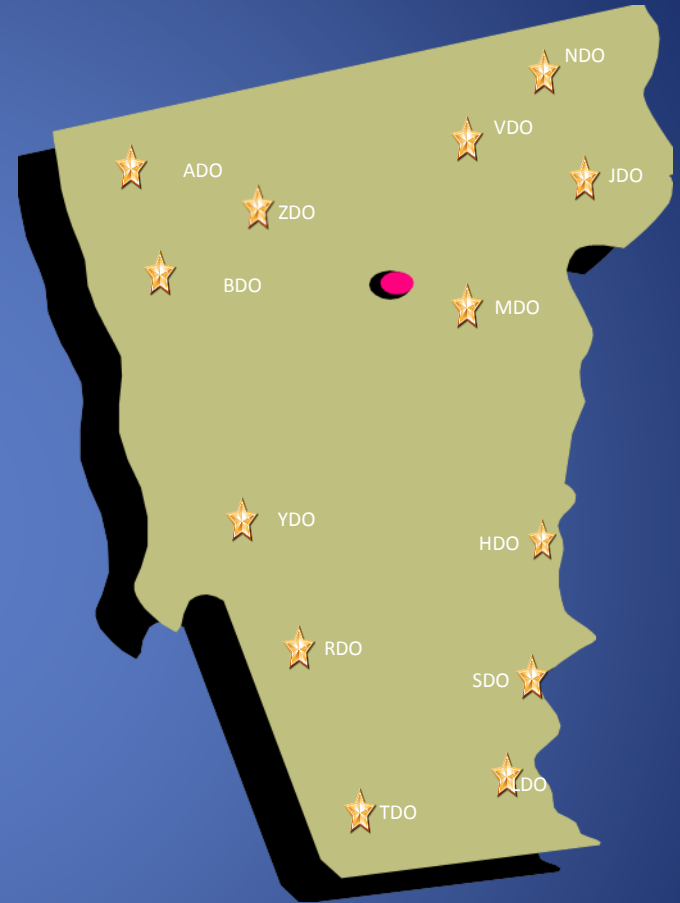
Population Served

- Our programs provide a safety net for individuals experiencing life-changing events.
 - Children and Youth
 - Families w/children
 - Seniors
 - People w/physical disabilities
 - Low and moderate-income families & individuals
- ESD serves over 111,000 individuals per year
- 1 in 6 Vermonters will benefit from ESD programs this year.



ESD Organizational Structure

- We have 12 District Offices throughout the state with 352 employees
- Benefits Service Center (Call Center) to help manage workload
 - 14,000 calls/month
- Application Document Processing Center (ADPC)
 - Receives ~11,500 applications/month
 - Scans & indexes over 300,000 pages/month
- Central Office
 - Deputy Commissioner
 - Operations
 - Training Unit
 - Programs Team
 - QC
 - Fraud
 - Grants and Contracts
 - BASU



ESD Programs



3SquaresVT

Helps folks to put three healthy meals on their tables every day.



Crisis Fuel

Helps with a heating crisis during the winter months.



Emergency Assistance

Helps individuals & families with emergency basic needs.



Energy Assistance

Helps GMP & VT Gas customers to afford home energy.



Essential Person

Helps people to pay for essential, live-in care at home.



Farm to Family

Helps you to buy locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables



Fuel Assistance

Helps people to pay part of their home heating bills.



Lifeline Program

Helps people to afford either phone or internet service.



Post-Secondary Education

Helps parents get a college degree directly related to employment.



Reach Up

Provides supports to households with dependent children.



Reach Up Child-Only

Helps adults care for the minor children of relatives or friends



Reach Ahead

Helps families transition from Reach Up or PSE to work.



VSNIP

Helps people afford to spay or neuter their pets.



EBT Card

A safe and easy way to use benefits from some programs.



Apply for benefits

Use our online application to apply for certain benefits.

Last year the State of Vermont issued the following benefits to the 1 in 6 Vermonters in need of assistance:



\$103 million in food benefits.



\$20 million in fuel benefits.



\$7 million in general assistance benefits.



\$22 million in TANF benefits.

How to apply for ESD programs

Online at www.mybenefits.vt.gov

Many of our Community Partners have access to applications and can help Vermonters apply for assistance.

Request an application through the Benefits Service Center at
1-800-479-6151

To learn more about these and other ESD programs visit us on the web at <http://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/>



Department for Children and Families–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

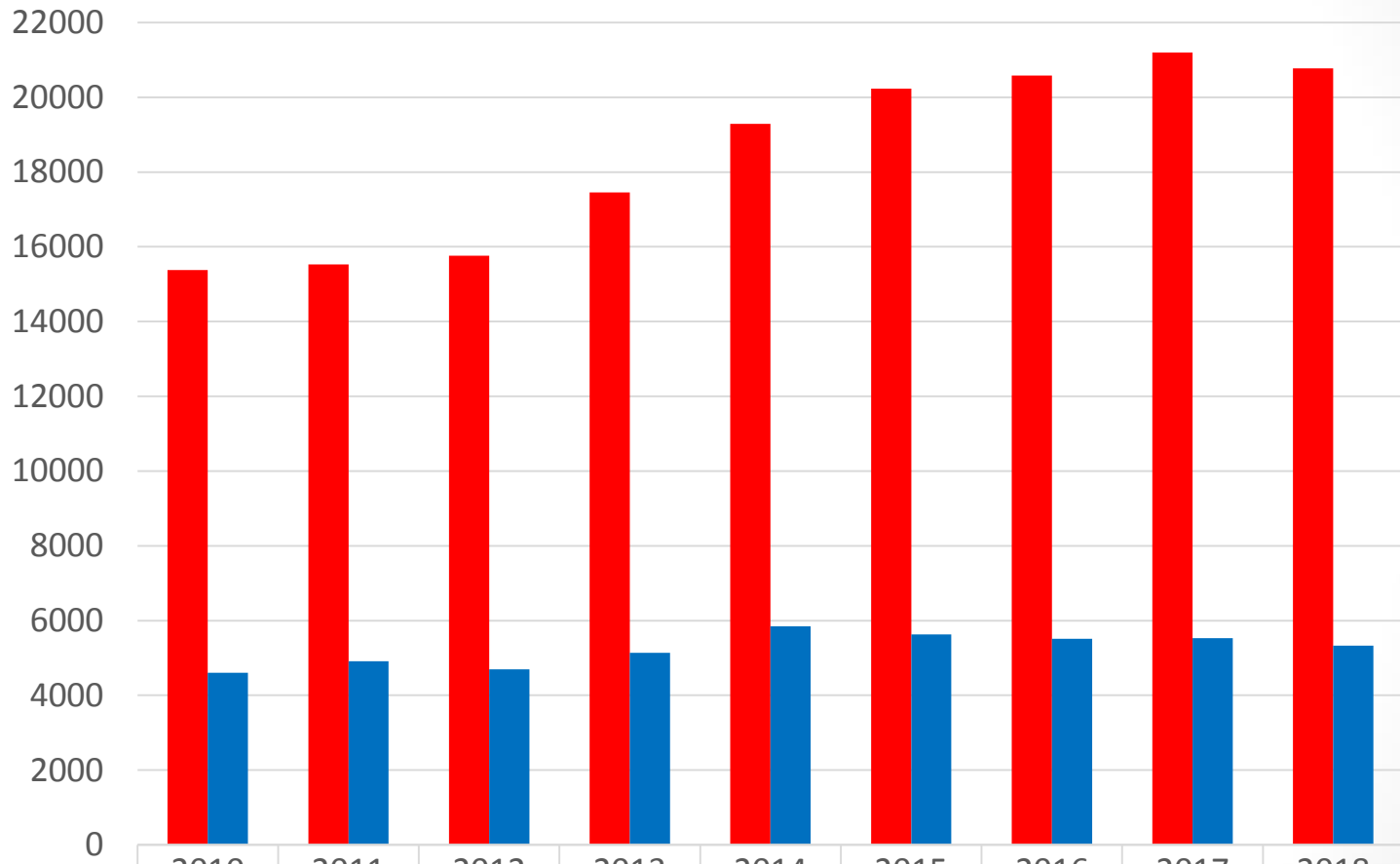
- Youth are free from delinquent behavior

Family Services Division

- 12 District Offices, 180 Social Workers
- Statewide Direct Service Units
 - Centralized Intake & Emergency Services
 - Child Protection Hotline
 - After hours emergency response
 - Residential Licensing & Special Investigations
 - Licenses foster home and residential programs
 - Conduct child abuse investigations in regulated settings.
- 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



Trends – Intakes & Accepted Reports



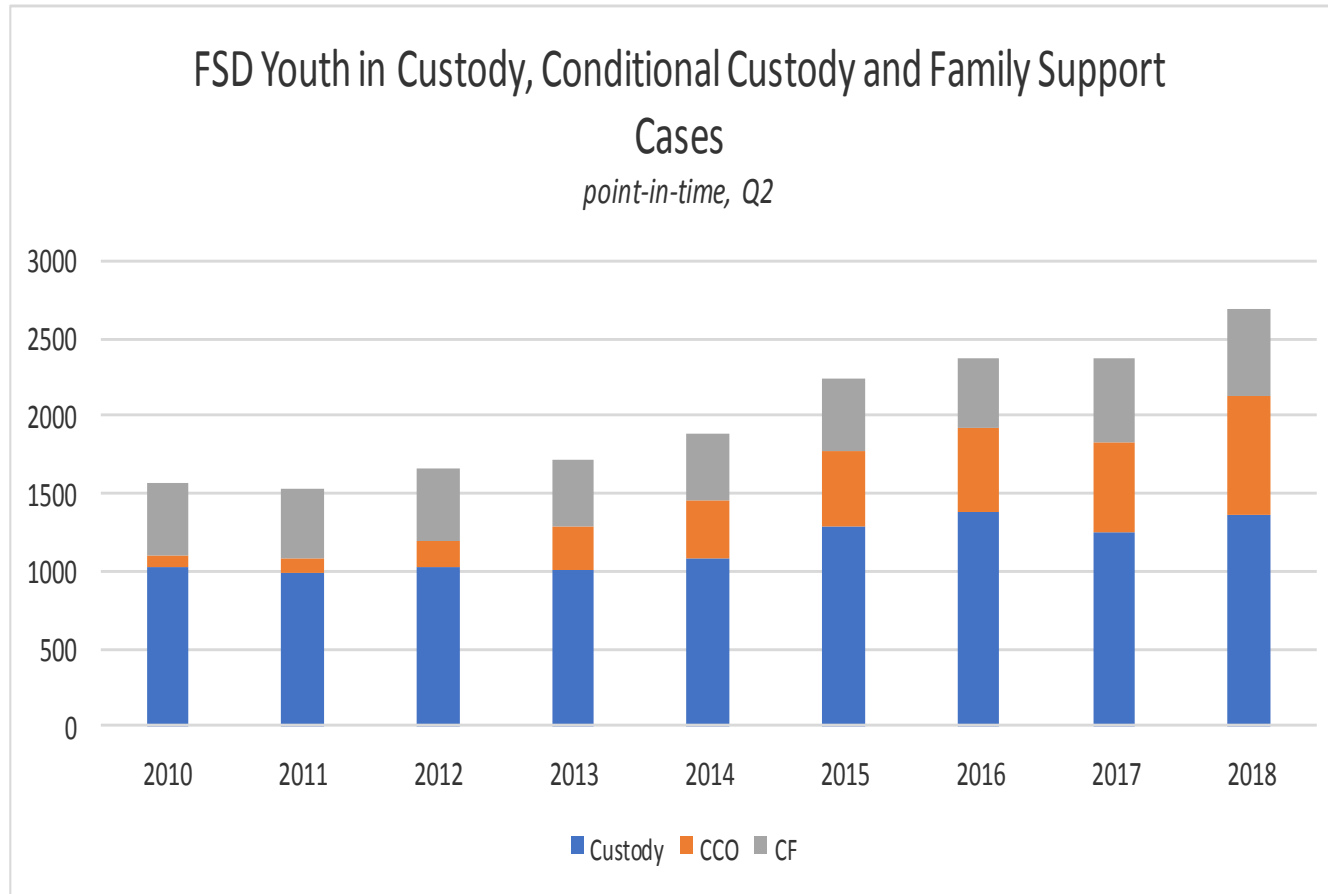
■ Intakes	15379	15526	15760	17458	19288	20233	20583	21201	20770
■ Accepted Reports	4601	4911	4699	5135	5846	5630	5509	5527	5327

Caseload Composition

- Children in State's Custody:
 - Due to abuse/neglect
 - Delinquency
 - Behavior
- Family Support Cases
- Conditional Custody Orders
- Delinquent/probation

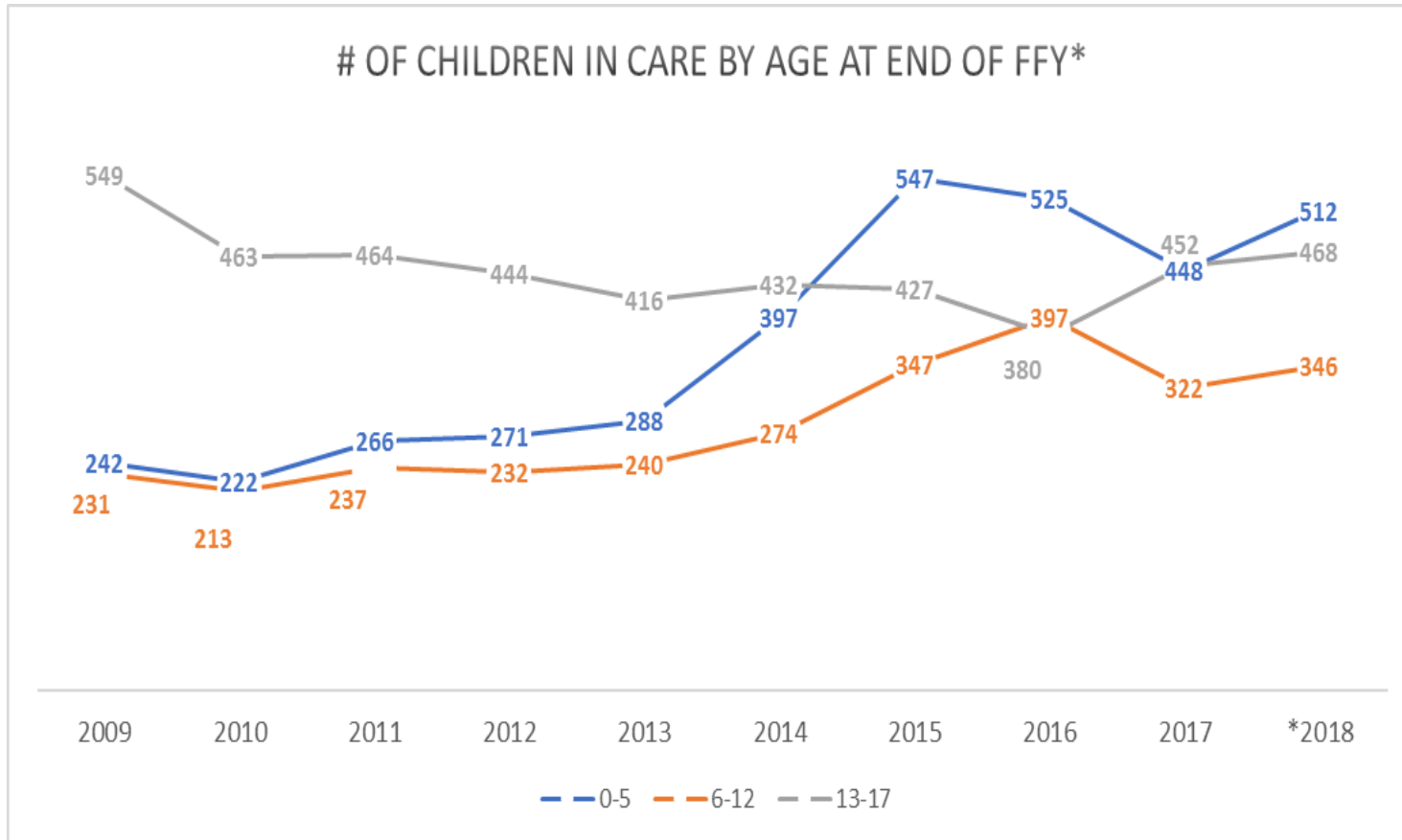


Caseload Trends



Data Source: FSD Quarterly Management Reports (2010-2017)-last day of Q2; FSD Report Catalog-Full Caseload & CCO Reports (2018)
Data note: 2018 is as of 7/2/2018.

How Old Are They?



Data Source: FSD Quarterly Management Reports (2009-2017)-last day of Q3; FSD Report Catalog-All Open Custody Cases with Case Detail (2018)
 Data note: 2018 is point-in-time as of 8/21/2018.

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.



4,405 in 2017*
4,256 in 2016*

**Source: 2017 Child Protection Report*

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 are NOT probation officers—rather they are social workers who are tasked by Vermont statute with overseeing probation conditions as set by the court.

Social workers supervised 141 youth (point in time) in 2018

Disability Determination Services (DDS)

Mission: *To provide all applicants with determinations that are*

- ❖ ***Accurate***
- ❖ ***Promptly completed***
- ❖ ***Cost-effectively processed***
- ❖ ***With full, fair, compassionate consideration of each applicant's situation***

DDS Location and Staffing

***One State Office in Waterbury
staffed with***

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

Decides 9,000-10,000 cases a year

Disability Determination Programs

- ❖ ***Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)***
 - ✓ Applicants have worked and paid FICA tax
- ❖ ***Supplemental Security Income (SSI)***
 - ✓ Applicants meet low income/resource limits
- ❖ ***Medicaid***

Federal – State Relationship

DDS employees work for a federal program

- SSA rules govern the way we do all our work
- SSA funds all DDS operations, salaries and benefits, case costs, and indirect costs of maintaining a DDS
- SSA controls our budget, workload volume, and staffing
- SSA closely monitors our performance against national standards
- We work on the SSA computer network
- The confidentiality of the cases we work is governed by the Federal Privacy Act.

Myths and Facts

Myths:

- ❖ *“Everyone gets denied the first time”*
- ❖ *“It takes years and requires a hearing with a judge to get disability”*

Facts:

- ❖ *Vermont DDS finds over 40% of its new cases medically eligible – no judicial hearing necessary.*
- ❖ *Vermont DDS case processing time averages less than 3 months.*

DDS Performance Outcomes

FFY 2018

- ❖ *Casework Performance Accuracy – 97%*
 - *Vermont ranked 4th highest in the nation*
- ❖ *Average Case Processing Time – 76 days*
 - *11 days faster than the national average*
 - *5th fastest DDS in the nation for SSI; in the top 13 for SSDI*

The Vermont DDS is regularly a national leader in accuracy, timeliness, and public service. It regularly meets its workload & service goals within its federal budget limits.

Office of Economic Opportunity

Partnering to develop local
solutions to end poverty



Our Mission

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

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

How We Work

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

What we do

- Asset Building
 - Individual Development Accounts
 - Micro Business Development Prog.
 - Integrating Financial Empowerment
- Homelessness Assistance Programs
 - Shelters
 - Transitional Housing
 - Family Supportive Housing
- Weatherization
 - Energy audits and renovations
 - Coaching and Referrals
 - Heating system upgrades and replacements

Poverty & Homelessness in Vt

\$25,100

US Federal Poverty Guideline, Family of 4

\$46,585

“Housing Wage” to afford 2 bedroom apartment in Vermont

\$84,674

Vermont Livable Wage (2 working adults, 2 children)

Poverty & Homelessness in Vt

About 1 in 10 Vermonters living below the poverty level (11.6%) – that's about 70,000 people.

Nearly 1 in 3 Vermonters are low income (29% < 200% FPL) – includes those working, but often not making enough to get by.

On any given night, 1,291 people in Vermont are homeless (in a shelter, motel or unsheltered).

Our 50 community partners work with more than 80,000 low income Vermonters

Office of Child Support



Our Vision

Every child has the resources needed to be safe, secure, and stable.

Our Mission

The Vermont Office of Child Support promotes the well-being of all families by strengthening their financial safety net. We provide quality services and information to parents, caregivers, and community partners involved in the child support process.

Our Values

Our values reflect how we treat our customers, partners, and each other. They include:



How are we structured?

- ▶ 110 Full-Time Employees, 5 Regional Offices
- ▶ 66% Federally Funded

Units:

- ▶ Intercept Unit (Administrative Collections)
- ▶ Record Center
- ▶ Cash Receipts Unit
- ▶ Customer Service Unit
- ▶ Central Office Operations and Administrative Staff
 - 16,443 cases in FY17
 - Collected and Disbursed \$42,563,121



Office of Child Support Regional Offices

Northwest Burlington

Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle

Northeast St. J

Lamoille, Caledonia, Orleans

Southwest Rutland

Addison, Bennington

Central Barre

Washington, Essex, Orange

Southeast Springfield

Windsor, Windham



Who Vermont OCS Serves

- ▶ Parents who pay support
- ▶ Parents who receive support
- ▶ Guardians
- ▶ Parents in other states seeking assistance in Vermont Courts



What Vermont OCS Does

Educate	Educate families about parentage and how to establish, enforce, and modify child support
Assist	Assist families to calculate support guidelines, determine and collect money owed, prepare agreements that work for everyone, and compose court filings
Review	Review families' changes in circumstances, striving for realistic orders and consistent payments
Refer	Refer family members to community and State programs, including employment and life skills services



How do we do it?

Traditional Methods:



Locate Actions



Genetic Testing



Child Support Guidelines



Wage Withholding, Admin intercepts, Liens, etc



Civil Court Actions



A Good Investment

Studies show that receipt of child support -

- ▶ Increases economic independence of parents
- ▶ Reduces child poverty
- ▶ Reduces reliance on public assistance benefits
- ▶ Encourages parents to exit and remain off public assistance
- ▶ Increases parental involvement of paying parents



More than ½ of all kids will live in a **single parent household** at some point



Innovative Practices

- ▶ Work 4 Kids Program
- ▶ Behavioral Interventions for Child Support
- Federal Experimental Grant
- ▶ Collaborating with other government and private sector partners



How is Vermont Doing?

Key Performance Measures, FFY 2017

