

2011

ANNUAL  
REPORT

# Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Program

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





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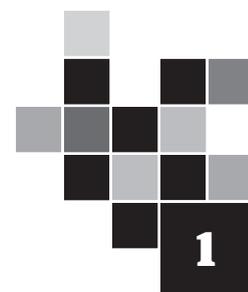
### **Council Staff**

#### **Department of Human Rights**

Marcia Thompson, Administrative Assistant  
Tim Fitzpatrick, Program Manager  
Lorie Easter, Program Manager

#### **Department of Human Services**

Janet Shoeman, Program Manager



## 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 toward economic and emotional self-sufficiency.

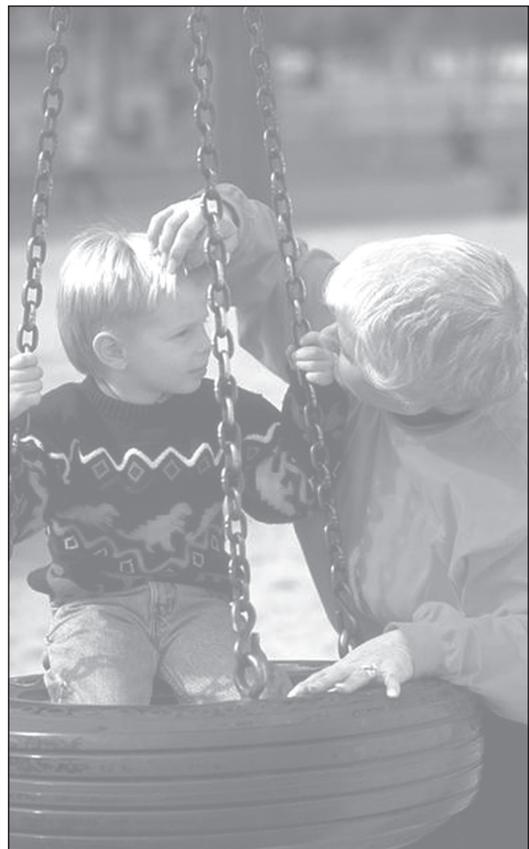
The foundation of FaDSS is regular **home visits** with families. Using a strength-based approach, FaDSS made 24,444 home visits in FY 2011. Core services include support, goal setting, and assessment. **Assessment** aids the family to identify strengths that they possess that may be used to eliminate barriers to self-sufficiency. **Goal setting** helps families break down goals that seem out of reach into small steps that will lead to success. **Support** is given in many ways such as referrals, group activities, linking families to communities and advocacy. 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 welfare dependence and family instability. In FY 2011, FaDSS provided services in **all 99 Iowa counties** through a network of seventeen grantees providing services to 3,020 families, including over 5,000 children. During FY 2011, FaDSS families earned total **wages of \$3,515,084** resulting in a **FIP savings of \$1,284,523**.

During fiscal year 2011, FaDSS was funded with an appropriation of \$5,342,834 in TANF and state general funds. This reflects a restoration of cuts from previous years of \$395,583. The additional funds resulted in grantees being able to serve more families. In addition, local and in-kind funds of \$1,194,384 were provided to supplement FaDSS services.

### Families in FaDSS:

- Stay off Welfare
- Become Employed
- Earn Higher Wages
- Increase Their Income
- Access Treatment for Domestic Violence
- Access Treatment for Substance Abuse
- Access Treatment for Mental Health
- Improve Their Housing
- Achieve Educational Goals
- Provide a Return on Investment

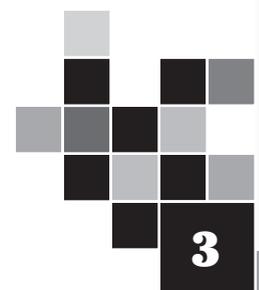


## FaDSS Grantee Final Funding Amounts (7/1/10 to 6/30/11)

<b>Grantee</b>	<b>FaDSS</b>	<b>local funds</b>	<b>In-kind</b>	<b>Total</b>
Community Action Agency of Siouxland	\$145,482	\$4,981	\$1,500	\$151,963
Community Action of Eastern Iowa	\$317,905	\$0	\$0	\$317,905
Community Action of SE Iowa	\$280,187	\$1,500	\$20,000	\$301,687
Four Oaks	\$767,819	\$43,300	\$0	\$811,119
LSS	\$145,482	\$3,500	\$0	\$148,982
MATURA	\$110,458	\$7,000	\$10,790	\$128,248
MICA	\$452,610	\$31,223	\$2,950	\$486,783
Mid-Sioux	\$129,317	\$2,000	\$15,000	\$146,317
NICAO	\$242,470	\$8,500	\$20,125	\$271,095
OT	\$237,081	\$19,079	\$0	\$256,160
Polk FEC	\$598,091	\$709,880	\$156,900	\$1,464,871
SCICAP	\$148,176	\$500	\$500	\$149,176
SIEDA	\$350,233	\$0	\$0	\$350,233
UDMO	\$266,717	\$4,245	\$4,800	\$275,762
WCCA	\$352,927	\$16,886	\$24,225	\$394,038
NEICAC	\$239,776	\$31,000	\$0	\$270,776
YSS	\$290,964	\$32,914	\$21,086	\$344,964
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,075,695</b>	<b>\$916,508</b>	<b>\$277,876</b>	<b>\$6,270,079</b>

**FaDSS Administration** **\$267,139**

**Total** **\$5,342,834**



## PROGRESS TOWARD SELF-SUFFICIENCY

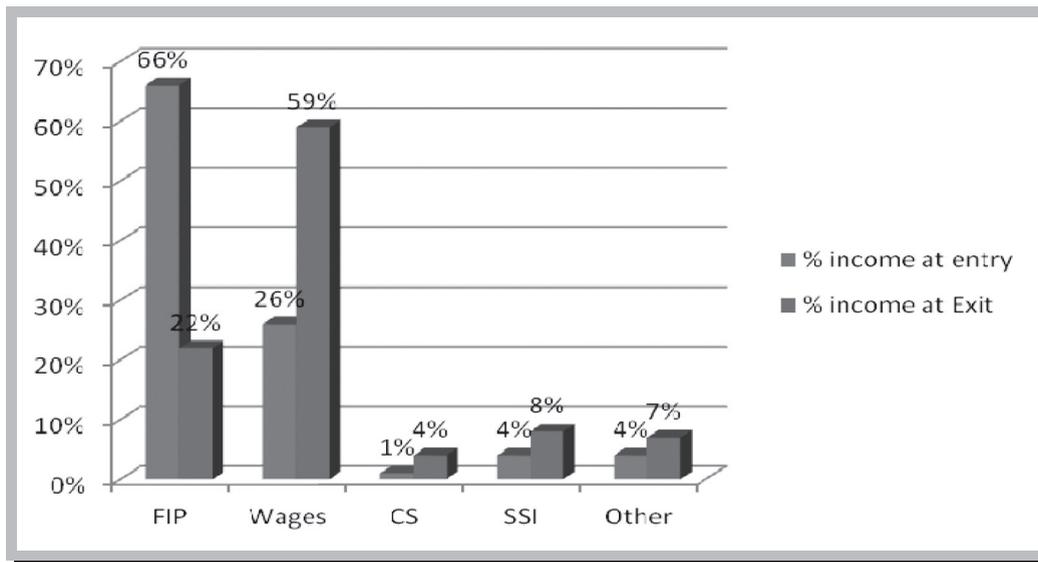
Of the families who were in FaDSS for three months after leaving FIP in FY2009, **76% had not received any FIP one year later**. This compares to 66% of families in FaDSS who were cancelled from FIP and received no transitional support.

### EMPLOYMENT

In FY 2011, 16% of FaDSS head of households were employed at program entry. Of those exiting FaDSS in FY 2011 36% were employed.

1,597 families were involved in activities offered by FaDSS, designed to increase work preparedness skills. Activities include resume writing, mock interviews, and assistance with completing job applications.\*

### WAGES AND INCOME



In FY 2011, employed families exiting FaDSS increased their average monthly income to \$1,087, an increase of \$535.

### EDUCATION

In FY 2011, FaDSS assisted families in achieving a major educational goal.

127	GED/HS Diploma
106	Certification Program
64	Associate Degree
27	Bachelor Degree

\*The percent references the total number of families served during the year. Families may have utilized work preparedness activities from other sources, or may not have been in need of this activity.

\*\*Return on Investment is calculated by adding the wages earned by employed families during the year to the amount of FIP saved for those families and dividing that amount by the grant funding amounts. FIP saved is calculated by taking the amount of scheduled FIP (FIP that would have been received if not employed) minus the actual amount of FIP received for employed families. Return on Investment does not include families that may have income from other sources and a FIP savings may have resulted from that other income. Other income would include such things as child support and social security.

## PROGRESS TO FAMILY STABILITY

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

### BARRIERS FACING FAMILIES

Barrier	% of All Families
Current* or past victim of domestic violence	54.5
Adult survivor of sexual abuse, incest, physical or emotional neglect as a child	49.8
Head of household lacks HS diploma/GED or literacy skills	31.6
Child in home is a survivor or is currently* experiencing sexual, physical, or emotional abuse	25.9
Current* or past child abuser/neglector	23.4
Families face 2 to 4 barriers	35.0
Families face 5 or more	20.6

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

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH

A key strategy to promote healthy and stable families is strengthening the mental health focus in home visiting programs. **In FY 2011, 1,280 or 82% of adults with a substance abuse or mental health barrier were successfully accessing treatment.**

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In FY 2011, 495 FaDSS families experienced domestic violence. **69% of those families accessed necessary and appropriate assistance.**

### CHRONIC PHYSICAL ILLNESS

In FY 2011, 580 or 94% of adults with a chronic physical illness were successfully accessing treatment.

### CHILD CARE

92% of working families addressed a lack of safe, reliable child care.

## FAMILIES IN FaDSS

Ethnicity	Individuals	
White	5204	62%
African American	1681	20%
Hispanic or Latino	582	7%
Multi Racial	494	6%
Other	168	2%
Native American or Alaskan Native	112	1%
Asian	47	1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders	7	0%
Not Reported	39	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8334</b>	<b>100%*</b>

The average size of families exiting FaDSS in FY 2011 was 2.97.

There were 253 two parent FIP families enrolled.

### Head of Household Education Level at Enrollment

Elementary or Middle	38	1%
Some High School	884	29%
High School Diploma / GED	1031	34%
Some college	822	27%
Two year college degree(Associates)	112	4%
Four year college degree(Bachelors)	38	1%
Masters degree or above	5	0%
Trade/vocational Training	79	3%
Unknown/Not Reporting	11	0%
	<b>3020</b>	<b>100%*</b>

98% of families had yearly income of \$20,000 or less. 88% of families had yearly income of \$10,000 or less.

### Gender

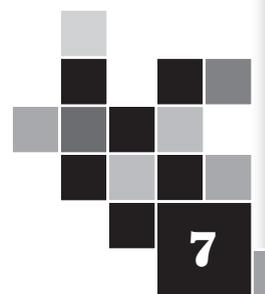
female	5094	61%
male	3221	39%
Other/not reporting	19	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8334</b>	<b>100%</b>

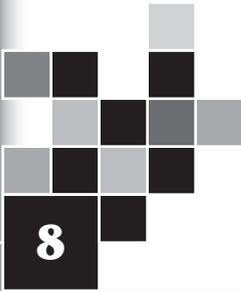
\* Percentage may not add to 100% due to rounding.

**FADSS YEAR END  
SUMMARIES**

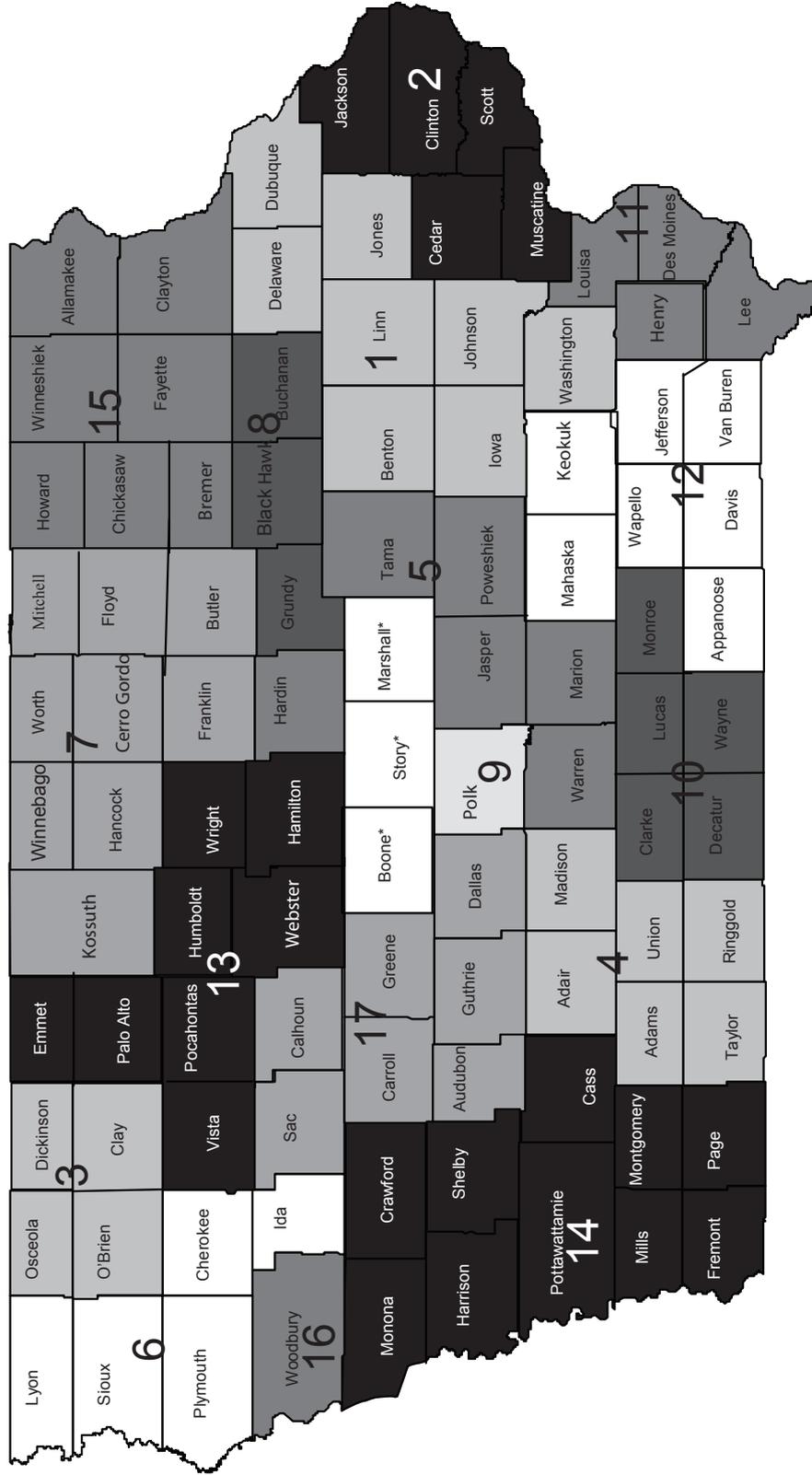
**FY2011**

**AS PREPARED BY FaDSS  
GRANTEES**





1. Four Oaks
2. Community Action of Eastern Iowa
3. Lutheran Service in Iowa
4. MATURA Action Corp.
5. Mid-Iowa Community Action
6. Mid-Sioux Opportunity
7. North Iowa Community Action Org.
8. Operation Threshold
9. Polk County Family Enrichment Center
10. South Central Iowa Community Action Program
11. Southeast Iowa Community Action Org.
12. Southern Iowa Economic Development Association
13. Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.
14. West Central Community Action
15. Winneshiek County Board of Supervisors
16. Woodbury County Community Action Corp.
17. Youth and Shelter Services, Inc.



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

# FaDSS Grantee Service Areas

## COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY OF SIOUXLAND

**Service Delivery Area:** Woodbury County

**Capacity:** 40

### **Successful Goals:**

We are very pleased that more than half of the families we serve were involved in activities designed to increase work preparedness. By being involved this can help to secure employment that will pay more than minimum wage.

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

We have always been involved with Woodbury County ISU Extension (WCE) and the many educational programs they offer. Recently we met with the Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNP) staff. A new partnership developed. EFNP staff also goes into the home. They assist families with shopping on a budget, cooking and eating healthier. We will be making mutual referrals. We are hoping we can schedule appointments so EFNP staff and FaDSS Specialists could go together on the first visit.

### **Success with Families:**

I first became involved with FaDSS when I moved back to Iowa. I was a recently divorced mom with two sons. I was co-dependent, had no self-esteem and was on welfare. I was at a point where I was not sure what I was going to do with my life when a Family Development Specialist knocked on my door. She explained how FaDSS could help families set goals, offer support and become self-sufficient. Not trusting her I sent her on her way. She didn't give up on me. She came back a couple of times and I finally allowed her to come into my home. From that point on she stood by me. I stayed with FaDSS which helped me gain skills to become self-sufficient, including completing my GED, work skills, regaining my self-esteem. Everything you need to be a successful productive woman and mother. Because of the guidance and support provided by FaDSS, I have been able to reach my goals and today find myself in a great place. I have remarried, own my own home, have two wonderful sons, I am a foster parent and have adopted three young children.



### **For more Information Contact:**

LaRae Lyons, FaDSS Coordinator  
2700 Leech Avenue  
Sioux City, IA 51106  
712-274-1610 ext. 215 Fax 712-274-0368  
llyons@caasiouxland.org

## COMMUNITY ACTION OF EASTERN IOWA

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

**Capacity:** 98 families

### **Successful Goals:**

- We provided FaDSS services to 203 families.
- We provided 1,428 home visits and 161 quality visits.
- We re-enrolled twenty families.
- Thirty one individuals participated in post-secondary education programs, with 5 completing their programs.
- Forty five families increased their income during the year.
- Eighty nine families had someone employed in their household during the year.
- Sixty two engaged in activities designed to increase work skills.

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

Community Action of Eastern Iowa works extensively with other community agencies to make referrals and connections to better the quality of life of FaDSS participants. The partnership that has the strongest direct effect to families is the Embrace Iowa program through the Des Moines Register. Funds are used to assist families with requests that help improve the family's quality of life. FaDSS Specialists take the lead on submitting applications for funds. Many FaDSS families request furniture items such as beds and kitchen tables and other basic items that increase the potential for self sufficiency. The FaDSS staff developed a business partnership with Bruce's New and Used Furniture store in the Quad Cities. Bruce's willingly works with the families to provide quality furniture at reduced rates and agreed to delivery at no cost. Working with Bruce's New and Used Furniture through the Embrace Iowa program allows FaDSS families to meet some basic physiological needs.

During FY2010 Community Action received CSBG ARRA funding which allowed scholarships for many youth and family programs. Although the funding is no longer available, programs through local YMCA's and individual dance/ sport programs continue to be a strong referral source for FaDSS specialists and participants.

Through these community partnerships the FaDSS program is able to advance families on the hierarchy of needs.

### **Success with Families:**

Joe entered the FaDSS Program in January of 2011 for additional job search assistance and family support during a stressful transition. He received emergency custody of his four children in December while simultaneously being laid off from his job as a truck driver. Joe did a thorough job search within a fifty mile radius of his home while making necessary arrangements for his child care needs. His children came to him from another state with only the clothes on their backs. Joe pursued duplicates of their necessary documentation, enrolled them in school, pursued medical visits, obtained eye glasses and made every effort to get them settled in their new home. The FaDSS specialist assisted him with numerous job leads, an application for bunk beds, provided information about assistance for necessary job supplies, and advocated for him with Promise Jobs to permit alternative participation verification.

Joe gained employment rapidly and established a stable home for his family. With the assistance of the FaDSS program he was able to get back on his feet.

### **For More Information Contact:**

Christina Kelly, FaDSS Program Director  
Community Action of Eastern Iowa  
500 East 59th Street  
563-324-3239 ext. 1361 FAX: 563-324-7736  
ckelly@iacommunityaction.org

## COMMUNITY ACTION OF SOUTHEAST IOWA

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

**Capacity:** 90 families

### **Successful Goals:**

- 67 children (0-5) are enrolled in an early childhood program
- 133 families are involved in activities designed to increase work preparedness skills
- 105 families are involved in their children's formal education
- 48 families worked in a part-time job during the year
- 34 families worked in a full-time job during the year

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

The FaDSS Program worked extensively, throughout the four county service areas, developing partnerships with other agencies. We have co-sponsored and/or participated in many community events. We work within our agency along with local churches and other community based organizations to provide items such as clothing, furniture and infant products for our families to assist them in achieving self-sufficiency.

### **Success with Families:**

Family #1 – Ms. J is a 21 year old single mother of three small children ages 4, 2 and 1 year of age. She enrolled in FaDSS in November 2009. When she first moved to the area she did not know very many people and was depressed and would have anxiety attacks and seeing a therapist. When the Family Development Specialist began working with her she had obtained a job at a local hotel on the weekends working the overnight shift. When she was not busy at work she would study her driver's manual so that she could obtain her license; she did eventually get her driver's license and was able to purchase a used vehicle. She was also able to obtain a full time position at another local hotel and has been praised by the management staff for her work ethic. She is now working 40 hours a week, 2nd shift and was able to end her FIP assistance in May 2011. Her FaDSS specialist was able to support and recommend other community resources to assist her in reaching her goals such as LiHEAP Energy Assistance, Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing program, Parents as Teachers and Head Start. Ms. J received water, food pantry, rental, LiHEAP assistance and also a Thanksgiving basket for her family. The Specialist did make referrals to the following programs: Young House Family Services for baby proofing items, HPRP program for appropriate housing, Head Start for the children's educational needs, Child Care Resource and Referral for safe and reliable child care and Assurance Wireless to assist her with finding a job and in case of emergencies at home or with the children. Ms. J is engaged to her boyfriend of two years and they plan to get married in the near future.

### **For More Information Contact:**

Pamela Bloomer-Pinkston, FaDSS Coordinator  
2850 Mount Pleasant Street  
Burlington, Iowa 52601  
Telephone: 319-753-0193 ext.230 fax: 319-753-0687  
E-mail: pam.bloomerpinkston@caofseia.org

## FOUR OAKS CORNERSTONE

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

**Capacity:** 222 families

### Successful Goals:

One of this year's highlights of the Four Oaks Cornerstone program is the increased linkages we have developed with area resources to broaden the array of supportive services that are available as supports for families. Some examples of linkages that help meet these needs are partnerships with Equal Justice Project to provide legal advocacy for families who have experienced domestic violence; United Fire and Casualty Scholarship program in partnership with Kirkwood Community College to offer financial assistance to FaDSS families; Slumberland 40 winks project which offers beds to some FaDSS families who have none; The Telegraph Herald, the local newspaper in the Dubuque area features FaDSS families twice a year in their series on low income families. This partnership brings in a number of donors for the family as well as the program and also increases awareness of barriers low income families may face; Various back to school linkages occur across our 8 county area to help meet some of the new school needs for children; as well as various linkages we offer within our organization that improve staff skills and offer additional support services to families who may need them. Examples of this nature are Four Oaks Behavioral Health Intervention Services offering one on one skill development and therapy services.

FaDSS staff continues to strive to reach new levels of success within their home visits, teams, programs, sites, and communities. This year the Four Oaks FaDSS program was very proud to share that not only did we have a very strong onsite review with our funder but we were also awarded the Iowa Family Support Credential as recognition for following best practice standards around family support. Our agency was also recertified through the Council on Accreditation.

### Partnering with Agencies:

Four Oaks Cornerstone is very proud to showcase a recent partnership with Iowa Legal Aid. The Equal Justice Project has allowed Iowa Legal Aid the opportunity to expand services to FaDSS families in a new way. Local attorneys are able to take referrals directly from the FaDSS staff for any family who has been a victim of domestic violence. After a comprehensive assessment of the families' needs, the assigned attorney will represent the family on a variety of issues. This has been extremely helpful to families and to staff as they truly learn from the process. Examples of issues that have received representation include issues with evictions, custody cases, parental rights, and accommodations for special needs. This project began in Linn County but will expand to our entire service area next fiscal year.

### Success with Families:

Sharon is a single mother with one 5 year old son who has been enrolled in Cornerstone since September 2010. She is currently a full time student at Kirkwood Community College majoring in Business Management, scheduled to graduate in May 2012. She is one of the recipients of the United Fire Scholarship award. Sharon is working very hard to maintain a path of success but among other things is working to address her son's severe allergies to foods, which cause severe physical and emotional reactions. Sharon advocates for her son within the child care/preschool program to help them make some accommodations for him so he is safe. She routinely carries a 4.0 GPA and has used scholarship dollars to offset excessive food costs due to the allergies.

### For More Information Contact:

Danielle Peterson, Program Manager  
180 W. 15th St.  
Dubuque, IA 52001  
dmpeterson@fouroaks.org  
563 557-3100 ext 2307  
Fax 866-292-7260

# LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA

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

**Capacity:** 39 families

## **Successful Goals:**

- 31 families reported a substantiated mental health issue in adults. Of these 31, 31 were accessing necessary treatment. This gives us a rate of 100%. This is an increase over last year in which 89% of adults with mental health issues were receiving necessary treatment. This statistic is important because adults who receive treatment are more likely to be able to complete goals with a higher success rate and their families function more effectively.
- 49% of our adults this year were employed. This is a higher percentage from the previous year with 43% of the adults employed. We were pleased that the rate of employment has gone up. Adults who are working are more likely to be able to provide for their families and feel proud of their accomplishments.
- 62.2% of families served this grant year were facing 5 or more barriers that are listed on the snapshot. Last year's statistic was 61.7% so families are facing more barriers this year. This proves the importance of our services for these high need families.

## **Partnering with Community Agencies:**

- As reported in past years child abuse continues to be a barrier that families in our service area are struggling with. We continue to partner with other community agencies to lower this barrier for families and provide a continuum of support. Between the two Specialists and the Program Supervisor we attend our County DHS Child Protective meetings and County Prevent Child Abuse Councils. At the meetings we discuss how we can wrap our current programs and services around the families to prevent abuse in these high risk families. From the past program year to the current year the rates of child abuse have gone down. This proves the success of our partnerships.



## **Success with Families:**

- J is a single mother of two children who moved to Iowa with hopes of finding a job in a field that related to her 4 year degree. J found that she could not gain employment at all and had to pay student loans on top of her other bills. With the help of her FaDSS Specialist J found a job as an Office Manager for a Wind Mill Technology Company. J has now gone off of FIP due to income and loves her job.
- Two years ago R was struggling with a drug addiction and his children were removed by DHS and put into foster care. R then went to treatment and upon getting out he enrolled with the FaDSS Program. With the help and support of his FaDSS Specialist he was able to get a job as a Parent Partner helping other parents with drug addictions and also was working part time with the Fatherhood Program teaching fathers how to become a positive father figure in their child's life.

## **For More Information Contact:**

Carly Caravan, FaDSS Coordinator  
1812 24th Ave. W., Suite 303  
Spencer, Iowa 51301  
Telephone: (712)-262-4083  
E-mail: carly.caravan@lsiowa.org

## MATURA ACTION CORPORATION

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

**Capacity:** 29 families

### **Successful Goals:**

During FY11, 45 households had someone working either full or part time. Due to this employment, a total of \$74,333.00 in wages was earned by FaDSS families. Some other year to date totals for FY11 are as follows:

- 31 children were enrolled in early childhood programs
- 17 adults were involved in higher education
- 45 adults were involved in activities to increase their work preparedness

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

The MATURA FaDSS program and the SCICAP FaDSS program have in the past year become very close partners. With both programs being very small in size and sharing of local Promise Jobs workers it was decided that both programs could offer assistance to each other. Brenda Fry and PJ West developed a great working relationship and sharing of supervisory meetings in which they discussed their caseloads and any supervisory issues that came about. In PJ West leaving the MATURA FaDSS program it has been a continued effort between the new coordinator Kristie Davidson and Brenda. We discuss caseload and intensity of service with caseloads that Brenda and Kristie both have. Brenda and the SCICAP FaDSS Team have assisted in the training of the new FaDSS Specialist, Katie Christensen and Brenda has assisted Kristie with her new duties as Coordinator. The group has recently starting doing Team Meetings together as well. They are sharing in the planning of these meetings and taking turn hosting the meetings. It has made the transition of the new duties for Kristie much more manageable and has given Katie a variety of ideas on how to manage her duties as a Specialist. By the continued efforts between the two programs we are all able to stay focused, keep updated on resources and feel knowledgeable in handling issues that families have every day.

### **Success with Families:**

For the past two and a half years Natasha has been a single mom trying to make a future for her and her two small boys ages 1 and 2. Natasha went thru every struggle possible raising 2 small children, going to college full time and trying to make ends meet. Natasha joined the FaDSS program during her last 2 semesters of college. During hard times, Natasha feels that the FaDSS program was there to help her set goals, meet those goals and above all stay positive. Natasha always had Kristie encouraging her and giving her that little extra push to help her succeed. Natasha felt that her worker knew when she was struggling and always went out of her way to assist. The FaDSS program is there to help those who want to succeed. The FaDSS workers guide you and are very resourceful. Since graduation in May Natasha has become employed full time and is no longer receiving FIP. She is in the transition stage of the program. Natasha and her boys are looking at houses to buy and she says that without the program she does not feel she would be as successful as she is today!

### **For More Information Contact:**

Kristie Davidson – FaDSS Coordinator  
300 East Montgomery, Suite 3  
Creston, Iowa 50801  
Telephone: 641-782-2315 Fax: 641-782-6287  
Email: kdavidson@maturaact.org



## MID-IOWA COMMUNITY ACTION

**Service Delivery Area:** Boone, Hardin, Jasper, Marion, Marshall, Poweshiek, Story, Tama and Warren counties

**Capacity:** 134 families

**Successful Goals:**

- 100% of children with chronic & acute illnesses accessed treatment
- 56 adults were involved in a 2 year education program
- 155 families were involved in their children's formal education

**Partnering with Community Agencies:**

Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc. has a long-term relationship with Iowa Legal Aid to represent low income Iowans in civil legal matters. Within Iowa Legal Aid, a specialized project "The Equal Justice Project" primarily represents family members who have been victims of domestic abuse. A special relationship developed with this project and the FaDSS program. As a FaDSS specialist identifies a family member with either current or past domestic abuse who need legal support, a referral form is completed and sent to the lawyer. They focus on identifying and addressing as many legal issues as possible to ensure provision of comprehensive legal services. If appropriate, they may provide representation to the family. Some of the legal issues they can assist with are family law (divorce, custody, protective orders), housing, unemployment, public benefits, and consumer law, amongst others.

In one case, a family member, who is a victim of domestic violence, sustained many physical injuries throughout her marriage. After relocating and enrolling with FaDSS, she was able to address her needs, working with doctors and surgeons, undergoing several painstaking surgeries. The FaDSS program referred her to the Equal Justice Project. The lawyer accepted the case and is in the process of fighting for disability on behalf of the woman.

**Success with Families:**

\* Patrick and Allison have overcome many challenges in their journey to self-sufficiency. These barriers included lack of education, unemployment, drug abuse and an unsafe home environment. When the family enrolled in FaDSS, they were living in a double-wide trailer in a trailer park that was about to be condemned. Their FaDSS specialist helped them search for employment, find transportation, and create a budget to help better their future prospects. With better paying jobs, a way to get to work, and the financial skills needed to save money, the family was able to move out of the nearly condemned trailer park.

Patrick, who spent months searching for full-time work while taking the occasional odd job, is now a full-time manager (in training) with benefits at a local restaurant. Allison, who used to work part-time jobs with little-to-no chance of advancement, enrolled in college and graduated with a business degree in March of 2011. Their FaDSS specialist helped one of the family's children receive counseling to address problems he was having in school.

Patrick and Allison are now purchasing a home in a nearby town. The house is large enough for their family of five, and has a fenced-in backyard so the children can play. Through goal-setting, focus, and hard work, Patrick and Allison have overcome personal struggles and broken through barriers to provide for their family and make a safe home and stable future for their children.

\*Patrick and Allison are pseudonyms. Their real names were not used to protect their privacy.

**For More Information Contact:**

Debra Halverson, MICA FaDSS Coordinator  
1001 S.18th Ave.  
Marshalltown, Iowa 50158  
Telephone: (641)752-7162 ext. 122/FAX: (641)752-9724  
Email: deb.halverson@micaonline.org



## MID-SIOUX OPPORTUNITY, INC.

**Service Delivery Area:** Cherokee, Ida, Lyon, Plymouth and Sioux Counties

**Capacity:** 35 families

### Successful Goals

- 100% of families with a child with special needs in their home have accessed adequate care for that child.
- 63% of adults that lack their HS diploma/GED were working on obtaining it.
- 100% of persons with substantiated substance abuse issues accessed necessary and appropriate treatment for these substance abuse issues.

### Partnering with Community Agencies

Plains Area Mental Health Center (PAMH) provides mental health services to people in Northwest Iowa. This year FaDSS and therapists at PAMH collaborated with one another to help a family work through their struggles. The FaDSS couple attended therapy to achieve direction in their relationship and to help them build a stronger bond with their children. FaDSS worked with the family on financial stability and parenting skills, as well as helped reinforce the goals set in therapy. DHS was also involved with the family. FaDSS and the family's therapists also communicated with DHS and created a plan to help this family move forward. Building a relationship with this agency has allowed more communication to happen when there are other shared families. PAMH now has a better understanding of the FaDSS program and there is more appreciation for the support each of the agencies provide.

### Success with Families

Megan is a single mother who enrolled in the FaDSS program for the first time when she was 17 years old. At that time, Megan was working on finishing high school while parenting her 16 month old daughter. It became too much for Megan so she then began taking GED classes, which she completed. Megan gained full time employment, which took her off FIP and she was exited from the FaDSS program. Megan obtained her CNA license after exiting the FaDSS program and later decided to begin college to pursue a degree in nursing. At that time, she reapplied for FIP to assist her through the schooling process and she reenrolled in the FaDSS program. Megan now attends college full time and works part time as a CNA at a hospital in order to gain experience in her field. She and her boyfriend are currently in the process of purchasing a home. Megan's boyfriend recently returned from Afghanistan after being deployed for the last year. During this difficult time without him, Megan has had a tremendous amount of support from her mom, grandma, her boyfriend's family, as well as FaDSS. Through Megan's time in the program, her FaDSS Specialist has assisted her with parenting issues, finding child care and preschool, and resource information. Megan's daughter is now 3 and will begin preschool this fall. Megan is on her way to self-sufficiency as she continues with her nursing classes. She hopes to have her LPN by May of 2012.

### For more information Contact:

Laura Benson, FaDSS Coordinator  
Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc.  
418 S. Marion St, Remsen, IA 51050

Telephone: (712) 786-3483  
FAX: (712) 786-3250  
E mail: lbenson@midsioux.org

## NORTHEAST IOWA COMMUNITY ACTION CORPORATION

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

**Capacity:** 77 Families

### **Successful Goals**

70 out of 73 adults and 36 out of 36 children with substantiated mental health issues accessed necessary and appropriate treatment, 95% and 100% respectively. 13 out of 15 and 1 child with substantiated substance abuse issues accessed necessary and appropriate treatment, 86% and 100%! 37 families involved in GED/high school, 17 families involved in a less than 2 year education program and 27 families involved in a 2 year program and 4 involved in a 4 year education program.

### **Partnering with Community Agencies**

This family was only in FaDSS for eight months but made big strides in a short time. The couple has four children, the oldest child, five years old, had been diagnosed as bipolar. Upon enrollment the mother disclosed that she was bipolar and suffers from anxiety and had yet to receive her GED. The husband was working part-time for a building contractor in the area. Previous alcohol abuse on his part has caused past problems in the family and there have been several separations. While enrolled in FaDSS, the family worked with Families First Counseling. The mother received mental health counseling from Northeast Iowa Behavioral Health and the son with bipolar had a full-time aide at school as well as attended counseling. Her main goal was to find better housing for her family, keep the family healthy, and move forward with her educational goals. During her time in FaDSS, she worked toward and later received her GED through classes at Northeast Iowa Community College in Calmar. She successfully received her CNA license, secured a full-time job at a local nursing home, and had revealed that she received a full scholarship through Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN to become an RN. She had filed for Social Security Disability for her son and while enrolled in FaDSS received notification that the disability went through. Her personal accomplishments have been nothing but monumental. She achieved all of these accomplishments over an eight month period through determination, belief in herself, and hard work. The road was not perfect though, while in FaDSS, her husband suffered a setback with alcohol abuse and lived separately from the family until he attended counseling and proved to her that he would be an asset to the family. He worked hard and within a few months was back with the family. They have found better housing, a 4-bedroom home. Now the children have more room, space to run, and they are out of the apartment that was hazardous due to high lead levels. She went off FIP because the combined income of both their jobs and her son's Social Security. She is positive, family-oriented, focused and has overcome many barriers and will continue to do so in the future. She partnered well with all agencies involved.

### **Success with Families**

Upon enrollment, this was a two-parent household with one son. The couple later divorced. She was suddenly a single parent with a young son to raise. While participating in the program, her primary goals were to finish high school, find better housing, find employment and increase her parenting skills. She attended alternative school and graduated. She found new housing (subsidized) and increased her parenting skills. She also went on to take classes to become a CNA. Nervous about passing she completed the state written exam and clinicals with averages in the mid 80%. She then went on to find employment at a local nursing home making a decent wage. She said that her participation in FaDSS helped her improve her parenting skills, kept her on track to graduate from high school and with encouragement and support from her FaDSS Specialist she had belief in herself to get her CNA license. During her time in FaDSS, she overcame her negativity and increased her self-esteem.

### **For More Information Contact:**

Lisa Mathews, CCAP  
FaDSS Director  
305 Montgomery  
PO Box 487  
Decorah, Iowa 52101

Telephone - (563) 382-8436 X128  
FAX - (563) 382-9854  
E-mail - lmathews@neicac.org

## NORTH IOWA COMMUNITY ACTION ORGANIZATION

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

**Capacity:** 72 Families

**Successful Goals:**

- 45 Individuals increased their income by the time they exited the FaDSS program.
- 49 adults and 19 children accessed necessary and appropriate treatment for mental health.
- 755 home visits and 150 other quality visits were conducted.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** A successful partnership with Stacie Lancaster, a certified Nurtured Heart Trainer, helped us enhance our capacity to assist FaDSS families with parenting skills. The Nurtured Heart Approach was developed by a therapist to intervene with children who were demonstrating very intense and difficult behaviors and is based on the book: *Transforming the Difficult Child* by Howard Glasser and Jennifer Easley. The goal of the approach is to teach parents, teachers and other caregivers to practice strategies that increase coping skills, mood regulation, as well as initiative and responsibility through on-going experiences of success for the children in their lives. The strategies outlined in the book and taught during the training are also being successfully transferred to other adult relationships whether in a personal or professional capacity. The training provides the tools necessary to transform a negative focus into a positive focus while transforming challenging behaviors by focusing on positive behaviors and by setting appropriate and effective limits. The partnership provided an opportunity for our staff to receive training and follow-up consultation services with the trainer. They have utilized the training to teach new parenting skills to our FaDSS clients and have discovered that the training has enhanced their own personal and professional lives.

**Success with Families:** Sarah is a single teen mother of a 7 month old boy. After discovering she was pregnant, Sarah dropped out of school and moved to Iowa from Minnesota to live with relatives. She completed her GED while she was pregnant. Sarah does not have a relationship with her son's father, and he has made no effort to see his son. When Sarah's FaDSS Specialist began working with her, she was indecisive about her future and was still living with relatives. With the help of her specialist and a significant amount of goal setting, Sarah considered and reviewed all of her options. She wasn't sure in which direction to go. The FaDSS specialist brought to her attention CNA classes and the immense need for CNA's in this region. It intrigued Sarah and she decided to look into it and then made the decision to take the classes. She was enrolled in CNA classes that started earlier this year. Her FaDSS Specialist also referred her to North Iowa Regional Housing. Sarah completed an application for subsidized housing and her Specialist assisted her in finding a rental housing unit. She has since moved out of her relative's home and into her own apartment and is well on her way to becoming self sufficient. She has arranged suitable childcare for her son and has almost completed her CNA courses. She plans to take Job Readiness classes to help polish her resume and interviewing skills. Sarah has conquered a number of barriers in spite of her youth and inexperience. She had to leave behind her family and move to a different state to begin a family of her own. She is a motivated and hard working individual. With the help and encouragement of her FaDSS Specialist she has made excellent decisions and considered all her options. She listens and takes advice well and then acts on it. She's very optimistic and has a drive to succeed. Sarah's FaDSS Specialist provided her with the support she needed to make those changes in her life and Sarah has done so successfully and continues to set and accomplish her goals.

**For More Information Contact:**

Wendy Balles, FaDSS Team Coordinator  
Bambi Urich, FaDSS Team Leader  
1190 Briarstone Drive, Suite 2  
Mason City, IA 50401  
Telephone: 641-423-7766 Fax: 641-423-7767  
wballes@nicao-online.org  
or burich@nicao-online.org

Barb Kellogg, FaDSS Project Director  
218-5th Street SW  
P.O. Box 1627  
Mason City, IA 50402-1627  
641-423-8993 Fax: 641-494-1716  
bkellogg@nicao-online.org

## OPERATION THRESHOLD

**Service Delivery Area:** Black Hawk, Buchanan, Grundy Counties

**Capacity:** 75 families

### Successful Goals:

During Fiscal Year 2011 approximately 40% of FaDSS participants were employed throughout the year. Given the state of the economy and the competition of the job market, this was a great accomplishment. Also, many chose to go back or finish school. There were twenty-five participants enrolled in GED classes, nine enrolled in certificate courses at Hawkeye Community College, and fourteen working on a two year college program and four that decided to continue on with their four year degree.

### Partnering with Community Agencies:

In March 2010 FaDSS formed a partnership with Iowa Legal Aid and the Equal Justice Project. This collaboration was established to assist FaDSS participants who are current and/or past victims of domestic violence. The goal of the project is to educate and refer participants to Legal Aid to obtain assistance in addressing legal issues such as child custody, LBP appeals, landlord /housing issues, and to gain a better understanding of the impact of civil legal services in breaking the cycle of domestic violence.

One of the participants that we referred was being evicted because a neighbor called the police when she heard noise coming from her apartment from a domestic dispute. Together the attorney and FaDSS Specialist were able to work with the participant to insure that she knew her rights as a tenant. The Specialist was also able to assist with transportation to appointments and made sure any information that would help in her case was faxed to the attorney. The attorney at Iowa Legal Aid was able to advocate for her and the participant was able to stay in the apartment.

### Success with Families:

T.S. is a single mother with three young children. One of the children is severely handicapped from shaken baby syndrome. When T.S. first enrolled in FaDSS, she was unemployed and without a high school diploma. Since being in the program she completed her GED and one semester of college. She also became employed full time and made enough to successfully exit off of FIP. T.S. was able to do this while maintaining weekly appointments with the visiting nurse for her son as well as Iowa City appointments almost every month. The FaDSS Specialist assisted with finding a local pediatrician that would see all three of her children so she wouldn't have to make as many trips to Iowa City. The Specialist was a positive support for the family as well.

While in FaDSS T.S. was able to take advantage of our Asset Building Retention Funds to purchase a vehicle. The Specialist advocated and assisted her with the application process. T.S. was able to pay the remaining balance to purchase a car, which made it easier to get back and forth to work and get her kids to school/daycare and doctor's appointments. T.S. also took part in some of the Family Development groups that the FaDSS program had to assist with job readiness.

### For More Information Contact:

Mindy Dolan, Family Development Manager  
PO Box 4120  
1535 Lafayette St, Waterloo, IA 50703  
p (319) 292-1806  
f (319) 232-6484  
mdolan@operationthreshold.org

## FAMILY ENRICHMENT CENTER

**Service Delivery Area:** Polk County

**Capacity:** 189

**Successful Goals:**

- 151 participants increased their level of education
- 79 in GED or High School, 21 completing
- 22 in an educational program <2 year, 10 completing
- 45 in a 2-year college, 10 completing
- 5 in a 4 year college, 1 completing
- 160 participants were employed
- In FY 2011, received additional funding to expand services. 59 slots were added and 2 full-time FTE's. Within 6 months FEC reached our new capacity of 189 families.
- In FY 2010, FEC started the process of developing a new data-base to track referred and enrolled participants in the FaDSS Program. The system will eliminate duplication of paperwork for the Specialists and increase reporting capability. The new system went live July 1, 2011.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:**

FY2011 was the third year of a partnership between FaDSS and Iowa Legal Aid through the "Equal Justice Project". Many families have received legal assistance through the project for a variety of issues. It has become one of the best resources that we have to offer to families.

We continue our ongoing partnership with the Child Abuse Prevention Council in offering parenting classes that are open to the community.

**Success with Families:**

A 26 year old single mother of a 5 year old daughter enrolled in the FaDSS program in September, 2008. At the time of enrollment, she was a student at DMACC pursuing her Associate of Arts Degree. She had been working part time but quit to focus on her education. She struggled to pay her rent, but the stress of working, go to school and trying to spend quality time with her daughter was too much. In July, 2009 she applied for Section 8 Housing. In December of 2009, she graduated from DMACC and transferred to Iowa State University to pursue her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Human Services. In May of 2010, she received her Section 8 certificate. In May 2011, she graduated from Iowa State University. She is now looking for full-time employment in the Human Service field.



A 28 year old single mother of a 2 year old boy enrolled in the FaDSS program in June, 2009. At the time of enrollment, she was living with relatives. She had a 10th grade education and was relying on family members to provide childcare for her, which was unreliable. She had also never had a driver's license and was hoping to obtain that as well. In July, 2009 she enrolled in GED classes at the Workforce Development Center. Her attendance was not consistent due to various medical and childcare issues that came up from time to time. In September of 2009 she secured her own housing. She was very proud and stated that she had never had a place of her own before. The various medical issues continued off and on for nearly 2 years. In April of 2011, she decided to pursue GED classes on-line. The following month, she completed her GED. Over the next 3 weeks, she secured her driver's license, purchased a car and secured full time employment. Her son is enrolled in a childcare center and thriving.

**For More Information Contact:**

Marcia Blize, Program Administrator  
2309 Euclid Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50310  
Telephone: 515-286-3556  
Marcia.blize@polkcountyiowa.gov

## SOUTH CENTRAL IOWA COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

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

**Capacity:** 53

### **Successful Goals:**

- Our team provided FaDSS services to 86 families.
- Nine individuals participated in GED or high school programs, with 6 completing those programs.
- We served 97, 0-5 year old children, of those, 66 were enrolled in early childhood programs.
- Thirty-one families increased their income during the year saving Iowa \$54,730.

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

South Central Iowa Medical Clinic has proven to be a successful partnership with FaDSS this past year in making positive changes for the families we serve. One of our single mothers overdosed and was life-flighted to Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines. She received medical treatment and was later released because House of Mercy had no openings. One of our specialists contacted her local doctor with concerns. He considered the overdose an attempted suicide and couldn't believe the hospital was releasing her to go home. The doctor wrote a referral recommending hospitalization with intense counseling and therapy for addiction behaviors, chronic pain problems and depression. House of Mercy found room for this FaDSS participant with the collaboration of the medical center and our specialist. We believe this mother is alive today due to this partnership. The local hospital now makes referrals to our FaDSS program.



### **Success with Families:**

A single mother with two small children joined FaDSS in July 2010. She was expecting her third child at the end of the month. The children's father had just been deported to Mexico. He was living in an area with no running water that lacked many modern conveniences.

During her time in FaDSS she has learned to identify her strengths and address the issues that were preventing her progress. She has set high goals for herself and made tremendous progress. She earned her CNA and completed medication management training. She found a full time job at a local nursing home and worked part time at a fast food restaurant. She is taking an online course to become a pharmacy technician through the community college. She volunteers her time at a missions store and is active on our Head Start Policy Counsel. She worked hard and was able to earn enough money to bring the children's father back to Iowa. She is no longer on FIP and is completing her 3 month transition.

This young lady is very busy but continues to spend quality time with her three children. She loves photography and is very creative making photo books for the children. She values education and has made the children a playroom with several learning stations.

### **For More Information Contact:**

Brenda Fry, FaDSS Coordinator  
1711 Osceola Ave. Suite 103  
P.O. Box 715  
Chariton, IA 50049  
641-774-8133 ext. 228  
Fax: 641-774-8139  
Scifadss@scicap.org

## SOUTHERN IOWA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (SIEDA)

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

**Capacity:** 104

### Successful Goals:

- Provided services for 230 families this fiscal year, of which 100 individuals were involved in some form of education advancement, 64 were employed, and 59 families increased their income
- 46.1% of the families were facing 5 or more snapshot issues/barriers, of which 98% of adults with substantiated chronic or acute physical illness, 92% of adults with substantiated substance abuse issues and 83% of adults with substantiated mental health issues accessed necessary and appropriate treatment
- Served 159 children 0-5, of which 94 (60%) were enrolled in early childhood programs and 117 of the families were involved with their child/ren's formal education

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** FaDSS staff concentrated special effort this year, to improve the communication and partnering with DHS Social Workers in each of the counties served. Many of our FaDSS families are already involved with DHS services and sometimes Juvenile Court or Family Treatment Court, when they are referred to the program. At other times, our FaDSS families become involved with these DHS services while already in the program. In either situation, the FaDSS Specialist worked to obtain a Release of Information to contact the assigned Social Worker. The FaDSS Specialist contacted the DHS Social Worker or Child Protective Worker by email, letter and/or phone; several attempts if needed. Progress has been noted over this grant year. For example, FaDSS Specialists have attended Family Team Meetings, Family Treatment or Juvenile Court and home visits that have included the DHS Social Worker. FaDSS Specialists have also been provided with Family Permanency Plans several times this year. This effort has fostered more effective communication between the Family, Social Worker, and FaDSS Specialist.

**Success with Families:** Stacy was involved in an emotionally abusive relationship with the father of her infant son. Both adults were using drugs. DHS became involved and Stacy was faced with the choice of losing her son or making changes. With the support and encouragement of her FaDSS worker, Stacy began substance abuse treatment. To prove her ability to maintain a home, she applied for Section 8 Housing and to General Relief for help with the rent deposit. To improve employment opportunities, Stacy enrolled and completed the Administrative Assistant Program at the local community college. She then decided to continue toward an AA degree. Stacy remained clean and sober, and participated in outpatient substance abuse treatment for a year. She also began mental health counseling. During this time, she parented a healthy, toddler son. The DHS case was closed. Over a period of 20 months, Stacey's FaDSS worker has provided assistance and information about any community service that might help her, including LiHEAP, Christmas Gift Program, PAT and Embrace Iowa. Stacy applied to Embrace Iowa and was awarded money for a bed, as hers was broken. More recently Stacy has experienced some health concerns. Her FaDSS worker has continued to stress and encourage her to pursue the answers to her medical questions; which Stacy has done. Stacy completed her AA degree and is now working on a BA in Human Resources. She was recently exited from FaDSS and stated, "I am happy to be the woman I am today and I know my son and I will have the life we deserve---together!" Stacy has made many steps toward self-sufficiency and with her determination, will soon achieve it!

### For More Information Contact:

Rebecca Falck, Family Development Director  
226 W. Main St. Ottumwa, IA. 52501  
E-mail: [bfalck@pcsia.net](mailto:bfalck@pcsia.net)  
FAX: (641) 682-2026  
Telephone: (641) 682-8741 Ext. 227

Deborah Shubat, FaDSS Supervisor  
226 W. Main St. Ottumwa, IA. 52501  
E-mail: [dshubat@pcsia.net](mailto:dshubat@pcsia.net)  
FAX: (641) 682-2026  
Telephone: (641) 682-8741 Ext. 259

## UPPER DES MOINES OPPORTUNITY, INC. PROGRAM

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

**Capacity:** 75

### **Successful Goals**

Out of 64 people, who declared to have a mental health issue, 61 sought treatment and out of 34 people who declared to have a substance abuse issue, 28 sought treatment.

### **Other goals accomplished include:**

- 81 participants were employed at some point during the year (unduplicated)
- 28 families reported a lack of quality daycare and 27 families accessed this by the end of the year.
- 79 households were involved in their children's formal education  
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, families recognize the importance of education.
- 42 families we were involved in some sort of educational experience (GED, 2 year or 4 year program) specialists observed families displaying a sense of pride and self-confidence.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** This year our team attended a combined total of 40 Family Team Meetings. These continue to be an important part of the planning process of family success. Our FaDSS team has become highly involved in these meetings. We are not only invited but called upon to assist the family in determining their strengths and areas of concerns. By partnering with these other agencies and family members (I.e. DHS, probation, domestic abuse counseling centers, school personnel, Head Start, Public Health, and various others) in this type of format, breeds faster change for families. As the family takes the "wheel" and us as professionals are all in the same room change happens faster and the family feels the support from all involved.

**Success with Families:** When I was 16 I was blessed with a wonderful daughter- met what I thought was the man of my dreams and we were married and were blessed with two more children. The abuse started right after we were married. Then 7 years ago I put the plan into place. I was going to leave my husband of ten years because of the abuse that now was occurring almost every day. I put my two week notice in at work and rented a house in a different town. My now ex-husband left for work that day and I packed up my three kids and whatever else I could fit in the car and we left. I had saved some money that he did not know about but then that quickly ran out. I had to go on public assistance which was a foreign world to me. That is when I met my FaDSS worker. I had no idea all the services that were out there-but she always knew where to send me or how to help me. Throughout the process I learned to budget-which was very important because I was on a very fixed income. I learned new skills to better help me find employment. I had a few part time jobs at various places since I had moved but nothing that was going to make me and my family self sufficient. No matter what the problem was big or small I could always call my FaDSS worker and she would make the time to meet with me and help me. She never made me feel like I was a no body or an inconvenience to her. She was always there for me and if she could not help she would find the resources that would. I learned to become independent, gained self esteem and confidence that was taken from me in my marriage. I am now remarried, working full time as a registered daycare provider and own our home. I can say without the help of FaDSS that I would not be where I am today.

### **For More Information Contact:**

Nicole Jones, FaDSS Coordinator,  
1440 E. Second Street  
Webster City, Iowa 50595  
(515)-832-6451 Fax- (515)-832-5078  
njones@udmo.com

## WEST CENTRAL COMMUNITY ACTION

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

**Capacity:** 105

### **Successful Goals**

A WCCA sponsored Parenting class began in October, 2010. The class runs every 6-8 weeks, alternating between day classes and evening classes. PROMISE JOBS has determined the Parenting class fulfills their parenting skills requirement.

Core components of the FaDSS Program is advocating for Families and providing referrals to other Service Providers. Specialists reported 657 advocacies on the behalf of families and provided 914 referrals to families during the Program year.

Connecting Families to other support services is a top priority. Increasing a family's community involvement and expanding their social support system is provided by connecting families to support groups in their community. 54 households attended a support group during the program year.

### **Partnering with Community Agencies**

WCCA FaDSS Program is committed to working with other Agencies to meet the needs of families. In Council Bluffs the FaDSS Program joined with HOPE-Net Ministries, Municipal Housing, Heartland Family Services, Micah House, Mohm's Place, and Boys and Girls Club to provide school supplies to over 700 school age children. 72 FaDSS, school age children were outfitted with back packs and school supplies.

### **Success with Families**

Jane Doe was a 45 year old single mother with a 12 year old daughter, June. She entered FaDSS with untreated depression, suspended drivers license, fines, and no employment. A tragic accident had taken the life of a ten year old son a few years ago. Dealing with the loss of her son, led to Jane's depression and use of alcohol. Jane was unable to meet the emotional demands of her 12 year old daughter.

Jane began working with a Family Development Specialist. She was connected to a Mental Health Worker, and was evaluated and began therapy. Jane was referred to Vocational Rehabilitation. With her FaDSS Worker and Voc Rehab Jane was able to get her nursing license reinstated. The FaDSS worker assisted her in setting up payment plans for her fines, getting her Drivers License reinstated and getting her car installed with a breathalyzer. The FaDSS Specialist referred Jane and her daughter June to TSI for counseling. With Jane and June, the FaDSS Specialist met with the Schools Truancy Officer and worked on a plan to improve June's attendance.

Jane initially worked part time, but has recently secured full time employment. She is no longer on FIP. She continues paying on her fines. With her EITC Jane hopes to pay off her fines. She and her daughter continue counseling. June is no longer truant and is doing well in school. .

### **For More Information Contact**

Molly Cummings, FaDSS Program Director  
300 W. Broadway, Suite 35, Omni Business Centre  
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501  
Phone: 712-322-5966, ext 26 Fax: 712-323-0038  
Email: [mcummings@westcca.org](mailto:mcummings@westcca.org)

## YOUTH AND SHELTER SERVICE

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

**Capacity:** 88

**Successful Goals:** Our goal for increasing work preparedness meets the states average. This year's program outcomes show an increase of participants moving towards self-sufficiency by exceeding the target goal for work participation by 11.3%. 37% of families received a three month transition and 20% of families off FIP increased their income. Resulting in both goals exceeding the state averages of 43% of total households increased their income at exit, meeting the state average and exceeding our YSS program outcome goal of 30% (in each of the ten counties served). Our work participation rate for all families exceeds the state average by 9.3%. We attribute the continuing trend to more families obtaining full time employment versus part time employment. We have a significant increase in families accessing treatment for acute and/or physical illness. Youth and Shelter Services maintain a strong collaboration with our local medical communities to advocate for our FaDSS families'. Of families reporting a domestic violence issue, 67% took steps to address and/or develop a safety plan for their family.

**Partnering with Community Agencies:** YSS has developed a strong working relationship with the local Domestic Violence advocates and service providers. The collaboration has assisted families in increasing steps to providing safe and secure emergency and /or short term housing, long range safety planning, and child advocacy, court advocacy, counseling, and addressing legal issues for their families. Through this collaboration participants are increasing their attendance at meetings and counseling sessions to address mental health and treatment issues. We have seen an increase in awareness among our FaDSS participants regarding their knowledge of the progression of the power and control wheel. Their increased knowledge has proven successful for families to provide a safe environment for their family members.

**Success with Families:** A 23 year old single mother of 4 children enrolled in FaDSS. She was unemployed, did not have a high school education, or a driver's license. The family was living in a two bedroom home in poor condition with a non-working furnace. She had outstanding light bills and worried the power would be turned off. FDS talked to the Mother about income based housing, HUD Housing and HPRP Programs. Because she was renting to own, she did not want to move. FDS suggested she look at enrolling in an educational training program. She signed up for CNA classes through PROMISE JOBS but did not have childcare or transportation for the classes. FDS suggested to the Mother to look into Head Start for the children and explore who could provide childcare. The grandmother agreed to watch the children. The FDS was able to purchase cab fare for the Mother. Once she started classes, her spirits improved and she looked forward to completing the CNA and becoming employed. The mother contacted MICA HPRP Program for rent assistance and was accepted into the program. The FDS referred her to the Housing Authority office to locate a larger home. After being in FaDSS for a few months the family is now living in a four bedroom home. The mother was able to make a payment plan for her past due electric bill. The Mother is working part time as a CNA, and will move to a fulltime position as soon as one become available. Both children are enrolled in Head Start programs. During a recent home visit the Mother shared that she feels there is a light at the end of the tunnel, and she no longer feels like she wants to give up. FDS and the Mother talked about the progress she has made and how she will not be able to get out of debt quickly, but as long as she has the support of FaDSS and keeps working towards her goal she will be successful.

**For More Information:**

Deborah R. Arringdale – Associate CYFD Director  
420 Kellogg Ave. Ames, Iowa 50010  
515-233-3141 Fax: 515-232-2440  
Email: [darringdale@yss.ames.ia.us](mailto:darringdale@yss.ames.ia.us)







Prepared by:  
Division of Community Action Agencies  
Iowa Department of Human Rights  
Lucas State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
515-281-3861  
[www.iowafadss.org](http://www.iowafadss.org)