

March 2005

CCDJFS

E-Alert

A Newsletter of the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services

Turning Lemons Into Lemonade

Robert Suver, Director**Clark County Department of Job and Family Services**

Over the last year or so we have purposely been preparing for the possibility of ever worsening financial news. The bad news we have already received includes: a current no-growth state budget that has had trouble delivering on the funds promised, Children's Service placement pressures that are just beginning to ease off of record high cost levels, insufficient state funding for Child Support Enforcement that had stayed the same or declined the past six years,

and ODJFS improperly using TANF funds for Food Stamps and Medicaid services that has resulted in the end of the county consolidated flexible funding stream.

The as-yet unknown 06-07 state budget is the next upcoming event that has the potential of being a tsunami of red ink. So how prepared are we to withstand these financial pressures?

We are currently carrying about \$450,000 in TANF performance incentives that can assist us in getting through some rough spots. We have set ourselves up to redirect \$800,000 annually from the 10 - 15 youth at the Children's Home, to the 200 youth in other

Out-of-Home placements. We are well along in the conversion of our 10 million paper documents to digital images, and using the latest in software technology to work with them. This will save time and money by eliminating numerous steps and duplication, while providing better service. We've implemented a one-year early retirement buyout with a one-time cost of \$700,000, and annual savings of 1.4 million dollars. This has allowed 26 staff to retire, and our staff-to-supervisor ratio to move from 7 - 1, to 10 - 1. This is similar to how Montgomery County DJFS has been operating for sometime. It is also twice the 5 to 1 ratio the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has in their



Human Services STATISTICS for Clark County

Children under our protection who remain in their own homes

December 2002	December 2003	June 2004	December 2004
403	600	640	658

Children under our protection who are in our custody

December 2002	December 2003	June 2004	December 2004
203	182	140	143

Children receiving a subsidy for child care

December 2002	December 2003	June 2004	December 2004
770	638	725	679

Families receiving on-going cash assistance

December 2002	December 2003	June 2004	December 2004
711	770	673	674

Individuals receiving health insurance through Medicaid

December 2002	December 2003	June 2004	December 2004
23,345	24,229	24,620	25,129

Individuals receiving food stamps

December 2002	December 2003	June 2004	December 2004
13,493	14,827	14,752	15,485

Individuals receiving job training assistance

December 2002	December 2003	June 2004	December 2004
311	521	447	599

Individuals paying on child support orders

December 2002	December 2003	June 2004	December 2004
7,927	7,876	8,347	7,938

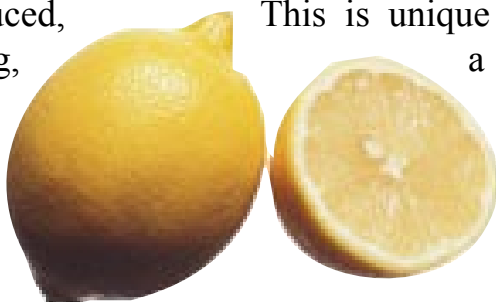
Turning Lemons Into Lemonade [continued]

state offices. We have been merging certain common functions across program divisions, which include Central Records, Customer Service, and the M.I.S units. Ultimately as merges are fully affected, costs in general will be reduced, while maintaining, or improving customer service.

With the end of the consolidated flexible funding concept it was essential that we have sufficient matching funds so that each separate program's funding stream is adequate to meet the varied needs of our community. State and county resources are not as available as we would like

to ensure that customers are provided with what is needed to make a difference, not just what we might have to offer. For this reason, we sought out and were able to establish a collaborative partnership with the Turner Foundation.

This is unique in that a private multi-



faceted foundation,

and a public multi-faceted entity such as ourselves, have joined together to utilize a portion of their respective resources to the maximum extent possible, so as to address the pressing needs of the community we both serve. This partnership

provides us with the matching funds necessary to maximize federal funding resulting in upwards of \$1 million annually coming into the community across all program divisions that otherwise would not be possible.

The changes made to prepare have been significant: 7% staff reduction, more output through technology, reorganization in every division, and new collaboration and partnerships. We are better prepared to meet the challenges that may come because of the changes we have made, and that's how you make lemonade out of a lemon. #

The Child Support Agency has been the entry point for a pilot program designed by Marriage Savers of Clark County (MSCC), and Clark County Department of Job and Family Services (CCDJFS), for the purpose of providing couples who have a child with the tools to improve the health and quality of their relationship and the ability to focus on a common bond, their child.

Parents as Partners

This program is based on the book entitled, "Before You Tie the Knot, Let Us Show You the Ropes," by Rudy and Faith Buettner with Mike and Harriett McManus. The starting point is a survey, which allows the couple to determine what strengths each person

brings to the relationship. During seven sessions, the results of the survey are used to discuss communication skills, personality issues, problem solving, parenting issues, managing money, developing trust and respect, love and values, commitment and planning the future well being of their child – emotionally, spiritually, mentally and financially.

[See PARENTS, Page 6]

The Clark County Department of **Job and Family** **S E R V I C E S**

On March 16, sixty three employees were recognized for their many years of service and fine contributions to our county. The Clark County Department of Job and Family Services is grateful for the dedication these employees have given to the residents of Clark County.

30 **Years of Service**

Kathy Coss
Henrietta Curry
Mary Beth Turner
Rebecca Wilson

25 **Years of Service**

Cathy Appel
Rebecca Crislip
Paula Duncan
Mary Manning
Mark Miller
Sandi O'Connor
Kim Pandin
Darlene Sullivan
Denise Terrell

20 **Years of Service**

Nicia Burton
Cynthia Couser
Frank Crist
Gladys Islam
Sue Russell
Joe Sweeney
Linda Turner

15 **Years of Service**

Gina Berry
Karla Bray-Townsend
Sandra DePriest
Angela Evans
Dan Howard
Ann Mann
Tami Marshall
Melissa McGee
Billi Sue Miller
Holly Payne
Jonica Perkins
Betsy Shaw
Lori Sims

10 **Years of Service**

Brenda Beard
Linda Booth
Nikki Cherry
Marjorie Conley
Susan Crozier
Scott Cutlip
Julia Downey
Wendy Fitzgerald
Bob Freeze
Mary Hall
Deborah Martineau
Sandra Penwell
Robert Severt
Lynn Smith
Brenda Wallace

5 **Years of Service**

Mike Cleelan
Scott Copeland
Cheryl Estep
Leann Griggs
Barb Kingery
Brian Leathley
Nancy Mahoney
Jack McKee
Rhonda Reveal
Janine Rouch
Connie Smith
Michelle Terry
Kathi Thomas
Patricia Turner
Brooke Williams



Taxes

VITA Site Now Available at Clark County DJFS

This tax season, the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services has opened an IRS Certified VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) Program. CCDJFS employees and partners from OIC and Del Pueblo have joined together to provide free tax services for our community. The VITA site workers obtained IRS Certification after taking seven hours of tax law and basic tax preparation training, as well as successfully passing a test. A local CPA, Ed Garrity, from Clark Schaeffer Hackett & Co., graciously volunteered his time to provide the training necessary.

The site is electronically filing basic 1040EZ and 1040A returns with no itemized deductions and no retirement, pension, or social security income. Community

members may call 327-1770 for a screening process. An appointment time will be given if the caller meets eligibility. Appointments are required and are based on a first come, first served basis, and take 45 minutes or less. Hours of operation are Monday and Wednesdays from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.. Saturday hours are also available from 8:00 a.m. to noon if needed. The site will be open thru April 13th.

The VITA Site is also educating the community on the Federal Earned Income Credit (EIC). This is a refundable federal tax credit for low and moderate income working individuals and families who have income under certain levels. Many people have heard of the program, but do not understand if they qualify. The requirements are few and filing for the credit is simple.

[See VITA, Page 6]

Who qualifies for EIC?

Filing Status	No Qualifying Children	One Qualifying Child	Two or More Qualifying Children
Single or Head of Household	\$11,490	\$30,338	\$34,458
Married Filing Joint	\$12,490	\$31,338	\$35,458



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VITA Site Now Available at Clark County DJFS

Other rules that must be met are:

- * Employees and qualifying child(ren) must have social security cards.

- * Filing status cannot be married filing separately.

- * Must be U.S. citizens or resident aliens.

- * Income reported cannot include foreign earned income.

- * Investment income must be \$2,650 or less.

- * Must have earned income.

- * Taxpayer or spouse cannot be the dependent of another person.

- * With no qualifying child the taxpayer (or spouse if filing a joint return) must be at least age 25 but under age 65.

- * Taxpayer must have lived in the U.S. more than half of the year. #

Parents as Partners

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Incentives in the form of Walmart or Meijer's gift cards in \$10, \$20, and \$25 increments are given to individuals completing sessions one, four, and seven.

Marriage Savers and Clark County Department of Job and Family Services believe that commitment is the foundation of healthy relationships. Trust, respect, and dependability evolve from commitment, and children who are raised in healthy relationships become responsible adults. #

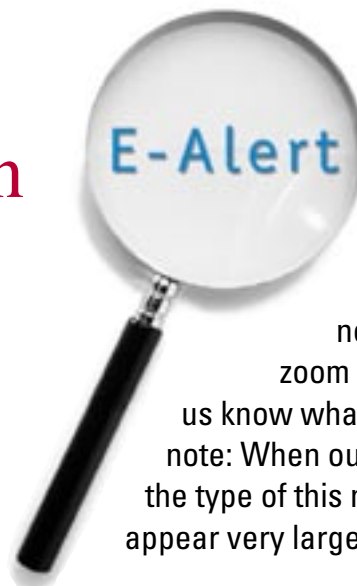
Special Large Print Edition

This issue of E-Alert was produced using larger size type for better readability. Because "electronic"

newsletters, like E-Alert, are viewed on different size computer screens, larger type sizes

reduce the need for readers to zoom in and out. So, let

us know what you think. Special note: When output on your printer, the type of this newsletter will appear very large.



YES ON ISSUE 1

Mental Health Levy

On May 3 the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Clark County will have a 1.65 mill levy on the ballot. We encourage you to vote YES on MENTAL HEALTH.

Here's why:

- During 2004, approximately 6,200 patients/clients received services.
- *1 in every 23 residents* of Clark County receives services supported by the levy.
- 26% of those receiving levy supported services are children.
- The number of seniors receiving services has doubled in the last 5 years.
- We anticipate seeing over 30% more people in 2005 than we saw 5 years ago.

**Election Day
May 3**

Here's what happens if the levy doesn't pass:

- \$800,000 to \$1,000,000 will be cut from services.
- Waiting times for services will increase dramatically.
- Programs that serve children and teenagers, victims of domestic violence and senior citizens will be cut or eliminated.

Here's how much it costs:

- Less than an additional 10 cents a day for a \$100,000 home.

These Clark County agencies receive levy dollars to provide services to your friends, neighbors and family.

Center of Restoration and Empowerment
Clark County Educational Service Center
D.A.R.E.
Family Service Agency
McKinley Hall
NAMI of Clark County
Project Woman

Catholic Social Services
Clark County Family & Children First
Elderly United of Springfield & Clark County
Matt Talbot House
Mental Health Services for Clark County
Oesterlen Services for Youth
Springfield Metropolitan Housing



The Clark County
Department of
Job and Family
S E R V I C E S

Want to mail E-Alert to a friend or co-worker?

Forward this pdf. file as an attachment,
and encourage them to contact Robin Maynard at 937/327-1859,
or at rmaynard@clarkdjfs.org
to be put directly on this newsletter distribution list.