

# TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



## Annual Report Fiscal Year 2012 - 2013

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



*Helping shape Tennessee lives.*

## ***OUR MISSION***

*To improve the well-being of Tennesseans who are economically disadvantaged, vulnerable or living with disabilities through a network of financial, employment, protective and rehabilitative services.*

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## A WORD FROM THE COMMISSIONER



Greetings, fellow Tennesseans,

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the Department of Human Services. Our vision is to be a leader in partnering with human service customers in their efforts to establish or re-establish self-sufficiency to create a better quality of life.

Our Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Annual Report will reflect the continued commitment of our staff to serving more than 2 million Tennesseans in service to that mission.

The Department of Human Services continues to maintain momentum in fulfilling the Governor's vision of a Customer Focused Government. Customer Focused Government is a statewide initiative (attitude/mindset) whose aim is to make Tennessee the best managed state in the country by providing the very best service at the lowest cost. DHS continues to be well aligned with the Governor's priorities with a special focus on the following highlights of accomplishments from FY 2013:

### **Jobs and Economic Development**

- Vocational rehabilitation clients who attained employment increased from 1,821 in FY 2012 to 2,001 in FY 2013, representing a 9.9% increase.

### **Education and Workforce Development**

- Families First Redesign phase one strategies were identified and developed in collaboration with DHS staff, customers and partners.
- The Commissioner's Office initiated and conducted several Customer, Employee and Partner Connection Events. The purpose of this program is to develop and implement various strategies to ensure the Commissioner's Office stays connected to the people we serve and those who help us fulfill the mission.

### **Fiscal Strength and Efficient Government**

- Information Technology assisted the Child Support Program to eliminate the printing of the Custodial Parent Monthly Notice. On average, 115,000 notices were printed each month. This task made the information available for inquiry through the Internet. The savings associated with no longer producing the paper notice: \$582,000 a year.
- Information Technology implemented a web service known as Address Verification that automatically interacts with the ACCENT system and verifies and corrects addresses in real time. This saves more than \$200,000 in licensing fees per year.

### **Health and Welfare**

- For FY 2013, total child support collections by Tennessee reached an all-time high with a total of \$664,824,069. This was an increase of 1.53% over FY 2012 and represents a collection rate of \$1.8 million per day. Every month, an average of 144,000 Tennessee children benefit from the child support payments the DHS Child Support Division collects.
- DHS led development of the Human Trafficking Services Coordination and Service Delivery Plan, in partnership with other state departments, community partners, law enforcement, survivors,

faith-based organizations, service providers and others. The plan serves as an excellent foundation and framework for the state to conduct additional due diligence, which is crucial to further develop the state's approach and ensure success once implemented.

We recognize that some of the people we serve will need our services and support for longer periods. We are always working to find ways to improve the safety net for these individuals. We know that DHS is just one partner in this very important process. To truly support and move families forward it takes a collaborative approach that starts at the community level whereby everyone is doing their part to contribute. A key focus for us is growing capacity and reducing dependency.

We recently worked with our staff to refine our core values, clarify our service philosophy, and our commitment to being a learning organization. We are sharing this information with you as well.

### **Our Purpose**

*To offer temporary economic assistance, work opportunities, and protective services to improve the lives of Tennesseans.*

### **Our Vision**

*The Department's vision is to be a leader in effectively partnering with human service customers in establishing or re-establishing self-sufficiency to create a better quality of life.*

### **Our Core Values**

- Mission Driven
- Customer Focused
- Respect & Integrity
- Compassion
- Accountability & Responsibility

### **Tennessee Department of Human Services will:**

- Maintain the trust of our customers, partners, and the public by demonstrating excellence in service delivery, results, and effective fiscal stewardship.
- Operate from a strength perspective.
- Operate in a manner that reflects the importance of public-private partnerships in human service.
- Maintain ongoing efforts to be a learning organization.
- Be transparent, agile, innovative, and responsive.
- Engage employees and customers as strategic partners.
- Recruit, retain, and reward high performing employees.

### **Tennessee Department of Human Services Adheres to a Strength Perspective**

- Every individual, group, family, and community has strengths.
- Trauma and abuse, illness and struggle may be injurious but they may also be sources of challenge and opportunity.
- Assume that you don't know the upper limits of the capacity to grow and change and take individual, group, and community aspirations seriously.
- We best serve clients by collaborating with them.

- Every environment is full of resources

*The Strength Perspective in Social Work Practice by Dennis Saleebey*

### **Tennessee Department of Human Services Adheres to the Disciplines of a Learning Organization**

**Shared Vision:** A common purpose and atmosphere of excitement and enthusiasm regarding the vision and direction of the organization. The organization provides mechanisms for people to connect their personal vision to the organizational vision.

**Systems Thinking:** A smooth and open flow of information which sends a message of inter-relatedness between all parts of the organization and how each part has an impact on the other parts of the organization.

**Mental Models:** The organization provides a supportive environment, which encourages people to think about, interpret and characterize situations and circumstances. People then review and revise appropriately their own views, beliefs, values, and biases in a "critical thinking" and more creative fashion.

**Team Learning:** Based on the foundation of Personal Mastery and Shared Vision, this component focuses a great deal on interpersonal skills and effective communication. People learn from and teach each other in an atmosphere of open dialogue, flexible mental models and conflict resolution.

**Personal Mastery:** Every member of the organization operates as a continual learner. Staff members are empowered to stretch and broaden their comfort zones to realize their potential.

*The Fifth Discipline, Peter Senge*

I want to take this opportunity to thank the employees of the Department of Human Services for their dedication and commitment. Please know that we appreciate all that you continue to do on behalf of DHS, for those we serve and for the State of Tennessee. I also want to send a special thank you to the people of Tennessee for your support of these much-needed services for adults and families. Finally, thank you to our partners, advocates and many other stakeholders who play an integral role in our fulfillment of the DHS mission. We look forward to our continued work with you, those we serve and our DHS team in our combined efforts to transform our system of support focused on moving Tennessee families forward.

In Service to Others,



Raquel Hatter, MSW, Ed.D.  
Commissioner

## OFFICE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

Our Office of Customer Service (OCS) was created spring 2012 to address the internal and external customer experience at the Department of Human Services. The OCS helps address needs identified through Governor Haslam's Customer Focused Government Initiatives. The Department serves more than 2 million Tennesseans and daily receives a significant volume of customer issues and inquiries.

The OCS works closely with all divisions to help ensure customers served throughout the Department and state receive services in a professional, respectful and timely manner. The Department receives inquiries through a variety of sources, including via the Governor's Office, Legislators and direct contact from customers. The OCS works with division heads and program staff to help address customer issues and to provide timely and appropriate responses. The OCS also receives compliments and complaints through the Customer Feedback Form, available to everyone online at the DHS website.

The (OCS) is leading the effort to ensure all DHS staff from across the state receive the G.R.E.A.T. Customer Service Training. A result of the Governor's Customer Focused Government Initiative, the G.R.E.A.T Training is based on Bruce Loeffler's book, **One Minute Service**. In his book, Loeffler discusses the five keys to G.R.E.A.T. customer service – Greet, Relate, Exceed, Affirm and Thank. The OCS, in collaboration with the Office of Learning and Professional Development, has trained more than 80% of the DHS staff, and we are well on our way to reaching our target completion date of December 2013.

The Commissioner's Office started a Customer Connection Program in 2012. The purpose of this program is to develop and implement various strategies to ensure the Commissioner's Office stays connected to the people we serve. The OCS plays a lead role in ensuring the success of this program. Given that we serve more than 2 million customers, it is highly unlikely that we will connect with all of them. However, we will make ongoing efforts to stay connected in some manner.

### TESTIMONIAL/SUCCESS STORY:



*The Office of Customer Service routinely works to provide excellent customer service to anyone contacting the Department for information. Typically this assistance would include explaining program policy, researching particular case details, taking the time to explain processes in detail, following up with customers and helping them move forward in the*

*process of receiving needed resources. In one instance described by Ramona Tharpe, a customer contacted the Department through the DHS Customer Service Email address for a status update on their SNAP application. The person had been employed but the company shut down and then she fell ill. Due to a job loss in addition to increased medical expenses and monthly bills, the person could not afford food and applied for SNAP benefits. The person hadn't ever applied for assistance and needed help understanding what to do. Ramona took the person's case on, by forwarding the inquiry to the county office to ensure all information that was needed was received and following up with the customer addressing further questions/concerns and providing additional resource information. After working closely with the client, SNAP benefits were awarded and the client received the help needed. This is just one example of the assistance the Office of Customer Service provides to the many individuals and families we have the privilege to serve.*

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- GREAT Customer Service Training – trained 3,920 DHS Staff from across the state, August 2012 to June 2013. We are on target to train DHS Staff by December 2013.
- Conducted more than 10 Connection Events with customers, partners and DHS employees, most of which initiated by the Commissioner's Office, aimed at sharing ideas and continuing dialogue on topics related to service delivery.

### **DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT**

Tennessee's Child Support program has offices in each of the state's 31 Judicial Districts providing the following core services: locating parents; establishing paternity; establishing and enforcing financial and medical support orders; reviewing and adjusting support orders; and collecting and disbursing child support collections. In addition to these core services, the Child Support program impacts families in other significant ways. The following success story illustrates the impact that Child Support has on Tennessee's children and families.

In recent years, the Child Support program has given greater attention to providing services that strengthen the entire family unit, including non-custodial parents. Last year, the State of Tennessee became one of eight States awarded a grant to operate a five-year program to assist unemployed noncustodial parents find training and work. This multi-site program will be operational in three major cities (Chattanooga, Nashville and Memphis) and will provide

services to individuals who previously had nowhere to turn for help. Working across agency lines with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, as well as with local fatherhood groups and other employment service providers, we will help find employment for those who are struggling to support their families. In the coming years, we expect to demonstrate how the Child Support program can help improve outcomes for children by helping to strengthen the economic realities of their custodial and non-custodial parents.

#### **SUCCESS STORY:**

*“Kenneth”, a non-custodial parent, had been unemployed for six months, when he went to his local child support office to discuss his child support debt. He was given information about the Parent Support Program and decided to sign up for the services this grant program provides. After orientation, Kenneth was referred to one of our partner agencies. He worked hard during the 10-week training program; and after he successfully completed it, Kenneth was hired full-time. Once he was gainfully employed and had a regular income, he was able to rent an apartment. Since starting his new job, he has been able to make regular child support payments and to finally begin paying off his outstanding child support debt.*



Kenneth’s story illustrates the family-centered approach of the child support program. Grant programs that focus on helping non-custodial parents overcome barriers to employment create win-win situations by providing education, job training and life skills. A non-custodial parent who has stable employment is better able to make regular, predictable child-support payments, which in turn improves the financial stability of the entire family unit.

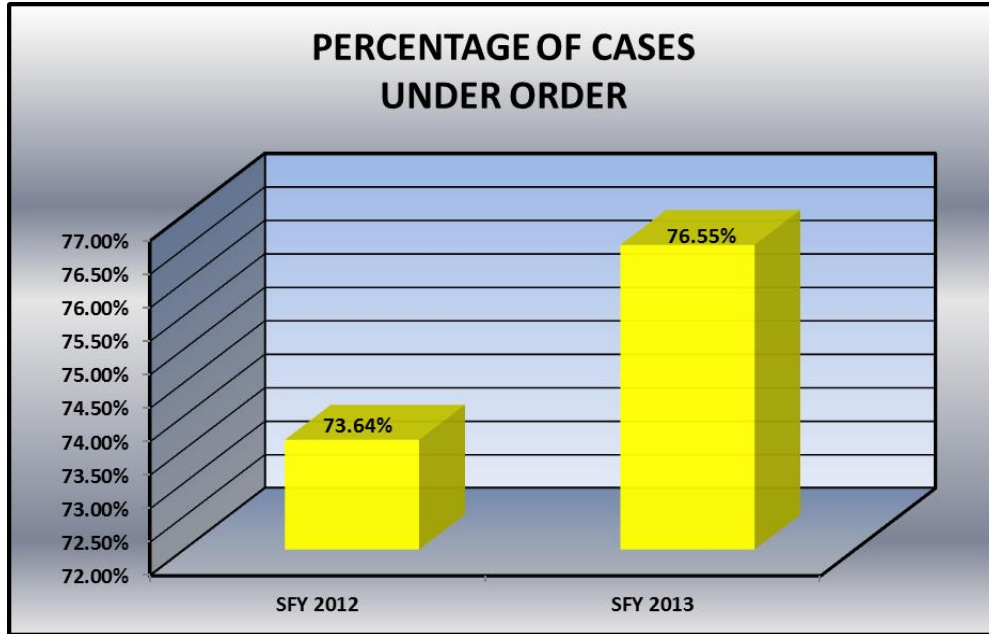


*When “Brett” contacted his local child support office, he was unemployed and owed child support for his child. He was looking for a way to improve his situation but needed some assistance and guidance. The local child support office staff were able to refer Brett to a grant program that had been set up specifically to help non-custodial parents overcome barriers to employment so they could achieve financial stability. Brett immediately enrolled in the Building Assets for Families and Fathers (BAFF) program and it turned out to be a good fit. He completed the financial education course and learned some soft skills to improve his chances of finding employment. He also set up a savings account to start putting money aside for his*

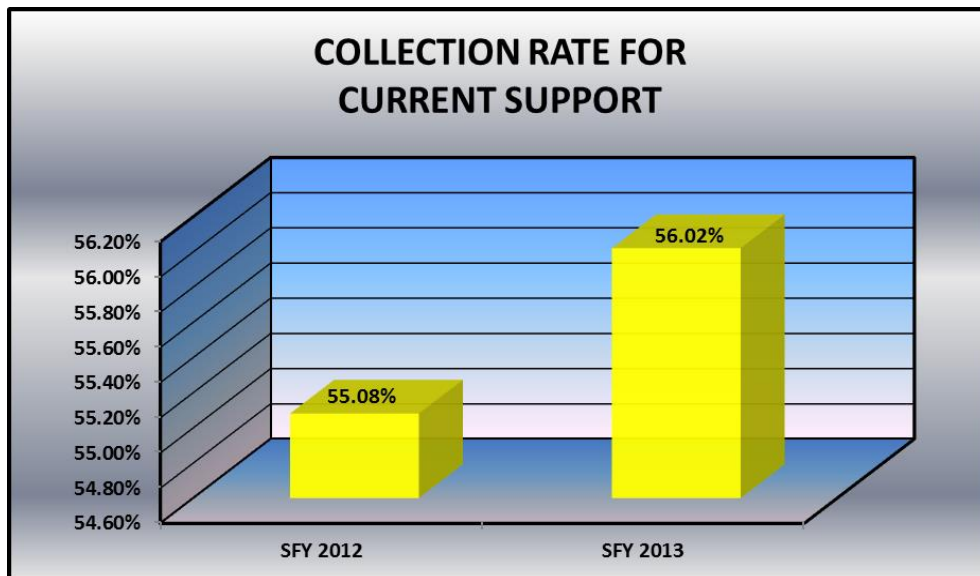


future education. Brett's counselor then told him about a local job fair for which he felt Brett was ready for. Brett attended the job fair and a job offer resulted, which he accepted. Brett is now enjoying his new career as a customer service representative.

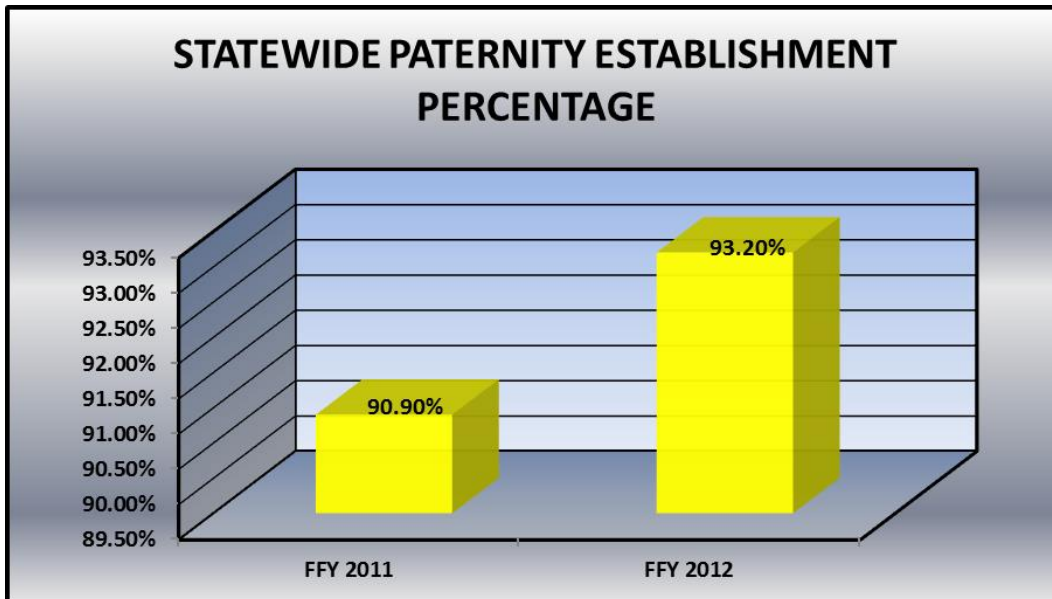
**STATISTICS:**



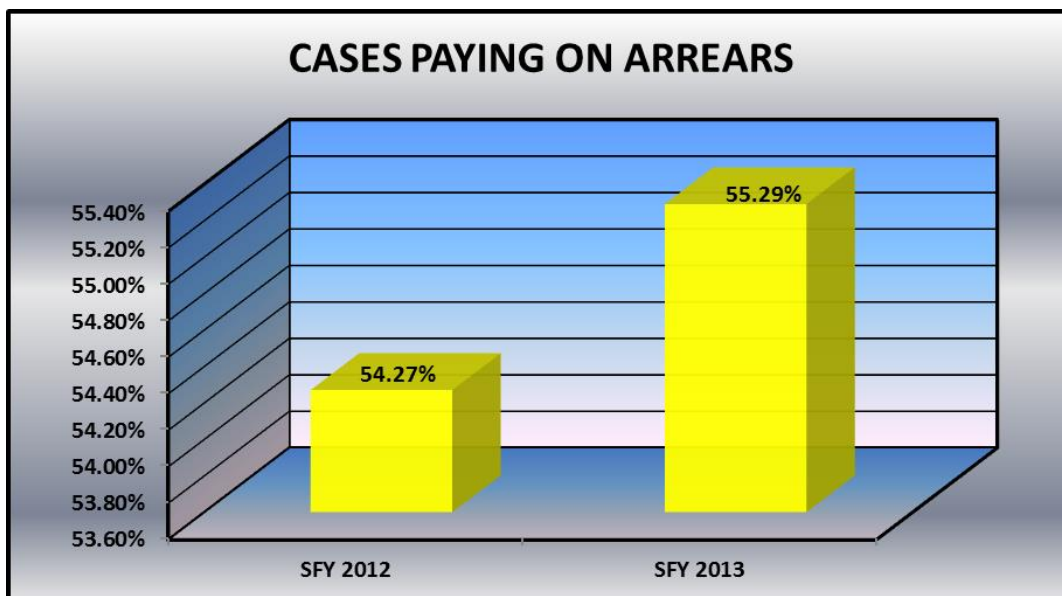
The percentage of cases under order increased in FY 2013 over FY 2012 by 3.9%.



The child support collection rate for current support rose in FY 2013 from FY 2012 by 1.7%.



For FFY 2012, the rate of paternity establishment in IV-D child support cases increased over the previous FFY rate by 2.5%.



The rate of cases paying on child support arrears rose from FY 2012 to FY 2013 by 1.9%.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- For FY 2013, total child support collections by Tennessee reached an all-time high with a total of \$664,824,069. This was an increase of 1.53% over FY 2012 and represents a collection rate of \$1.8 million per day. Every month, an average of 144,000 Tennessee children benefit from the child support payments the DHS Child Support Division collects.
- The collection rate for current, court-ordered child support has increased annually from 52.61% in FY 2011 to 55.08% in FY 2012 to 56.02% in FY 2013.
- The percentage of our cases for which a court order has been established has also increased annually from 70.08% in FY 2011 to 73.64% in FY 2012 and 76.55% in FY 2013.

## DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) includes Vocational Rehabilitation, Tennessee Rehabilitation Center in Smyrna, Tennessee Technology Access Program (TTAP), Disability Determination Services and the Tennessee Council for Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

### VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is responsible for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, which includes the determination of eligibility, the determination of the nature and scope of VR services and the provision of employment-focused rehabilitation services for individuals consistent with their strengths, priorities and resources.

### SUCCESS STORIES:

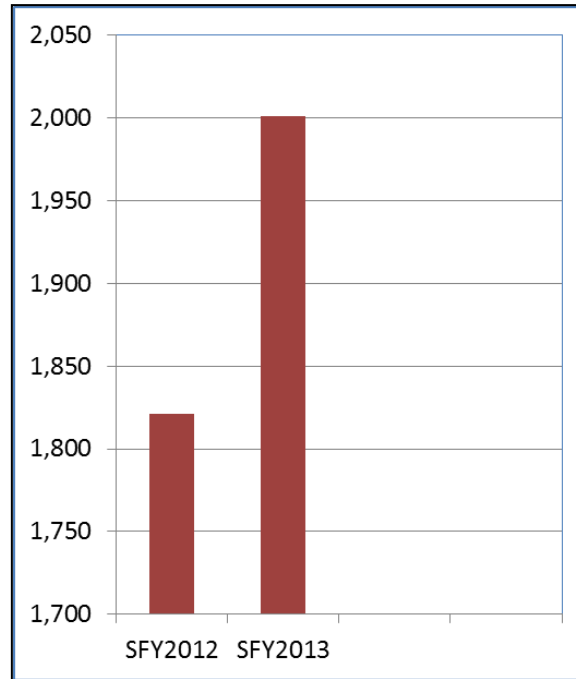


*After “Eric” graduated from high school he participated in VR’s Transition School to Work program. Eric’s story of his disability, the challenges he has faced and the successes he has made are remarkable. In 2003, when he was 16, Eric was struck by a hit-and-run driver, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down. Eric did not give up but rather became an advocate for other individuals. While in VR, Eric received individualized assessment, counseling and guidance, tuition and maintenance support, skilled nursing and therapy services, adaptive equipment, vehicle modifications, job readiness training and job search assistance. He went to college and obtained a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Business Administration. He became successfully employed and*

*has received the honor of a commemorative day for his efforts to continue to identify and address the challenges and struggles faced by individuals with disabilities.*

**STATISTICS:**

**Successful Employment Outcomes**



**Clients who attained employment increased from 1,821 in FY 2012 to 2,001 in FY 2013, representing a 9.9% increase.**

**HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Successfully began collaboration with Walgreens. The Walgreens REDI project has trained 14 clients, and four have been successfully employed in the Knoxville area. The project is being expanded into at least two more areas of the state.
- As of the Fiscal Year 2013, the Tennessee VR program is active in three national initiatives to employ persons with disabilities: Employment First, Partnerships in Employment Systems Change (Tennessee Works) and Disability Employment Initiative (DEI).

## **SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED and SERVICES FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) and Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing are integral parts of the Division of Rehabilitation Services. This unit provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with vision and/or hearing loss. Additionally, the unit provides specialized independent living services to individuals who are blind, and also operates the Tennessee Business Enterprises Program (TBE), which provides entrepreneurial opportunities for legally blind individuals who are operating food service facilities in government buildings. Rehabilitation Teachers and Assistants enable clients they serve to live more independently in their homes and communities.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- From October 2012 to June 30, 2013, Rehabilitation Instructors for the Blind provided independent living services to 821 customers across the state, which led to increased independence and self-sufficiency.
- This year, much effort has been put into helping individuals who have a combined vision and hearing loss in our state to be assessed and to apply for the iCan Connect program. The iCan Connect program, part of the National Deaf-blind Equipment Distribution Program, helps ensure qualified individuals have access to the Internet and to advanced communication systems.

## **TENNESSEE COUNCIL FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

The Tennessee Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TCDHH) exists to serve as an advocate for services affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind persons through coordination, public awareness, and consultation in areas of public service, health care, education, and employment.

### **STATISTICS:**

- 620 Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing individuals across the state were assisted with contracts provided through the council. Services and amounts are as follows:
  - Employer Training 51
  - Pre-Employment Training 37
  - VR Counselor Training 11

○ Technology Training	48
○ Independent Living Training	119
○ Sign Language Classes	28
○ Interpreter Training	9
○ Coordination of Interpreting Services	970
○ Unpaid Interpreting Services	93
○ In Service Training	5
○ Information & Referral	314
○ Deafness Awareness Activities	46
○ Public Relations	25

### **COMMUNITY TENNESSEE REHABILITATION CENTERS**

Seventeen community Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers across the state provide employment-related services to applicants and eligible clients of Vocational Rehabilitation. Vocational evaluation, employee development and employment services are designed to assist individuals with disabilities to reach gainful employment. The process involves identifying an appropriate vocational goal and assisting them with attaining essential work behaviors to achieve and maintain employment.

#### **STATISTICS:**

The 17 Community Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers successfully partnered with 51 local employers across the state to secure contract work in the Employee Development (ED) program.

The Community TRCs received referrals to assist 743 new VR clients with employment activities including career counseling, employment readiness training, job search activities and job placement assistance in fiscal year 2013.

- 336 clients were successfully employed
- 396 clients were placed and are being monitored to ensure successful placements.

## TENNESSEE REHABILITATION CENTER AT SMYRNA (TRC)

Serving all 95 counties across the state, the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center in Smyrna is a residential facility that provides vocational rehabilitation services. TRC in Smyrna provides comprehensive vocational evaluation, pre-vocational and vocational training, training for vision impairment and traumatic brain injury, physical rehabilitation and transitional life skills training services.

### SUCCESS STORY:

*“Michael,” a 21-year old young man on the Autism Spectrum, was referred to TRC by his Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Michael completed Job Objectives and Behavioral Skills (JOBS) and subsequently graduated from the Warehouse Training Program. After graduating from TRC, Michael was able to get a job stocking shelves nightly at a grocery store near his home. He drives his own car and works approximately 30 hours per week.*

*Michael feels that his experience at TRC was valuable in learning the work skills he needed to succeed at his job, such as punctuality and hard work. He also believes his two-week internship at a battery warehouse was instrumental in preparing him for employment.*

*Michael found work speed to be his greatest challenge at his job. This was difficult for him at first, but after seeing how dedicated and reliable Michael was, his employer was willing to give him time to increase his pace. The Store Manager later discovered that Michael excelled at blocking and conditioning shelves, a task that requires more attention to detail than speed. Michael now spends the majority of his work time on these duties.*



*Michael has just marked his one-year anniversary at his job. "I'm glad to have a job. I like earning money and it helps me feel like I'm making progress in the world of work," he said. In addition to working, Michael has been taking one class per semester at a community college, where he gets good grades. He loves to write, and recently published his first fiction book for middle grade readers. "My long-term goal is to make my living as an author," says Michael. "I work nights and, even though I have to sleep during the day, I still find time to work on writing."*

### HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- The Campus Upgrade Phase 1 Project was completed, addressing architectural and environmental issues. The project provided improvements in building systems, lighting,

and space utilization, making the campus more energy-efficient, accessible and functional.

- A Para-Transit Vehicle was purchased to provide increased ability to transport individuals in wheelchairs to appointments and events. The new vehicle is capable of seating 8 clients in wheelchairs or 15 passengers, preventing the need to make multiple trips during an outing.
- The Traumatic Brain Injury Program received two new ProForm Power 995 Treadmills to assist students in improving gait, endurance, and lower extremity strength.
- Stakeholder satisfaction results for this fiscal year were very high, with an average rating of 99% for students exiting program services, an average rating of 92% for students receiving support services and an average rating of 95% for family members of graduating students
- The Vocational Training Program expanded services to offer a variety of individualized hands-on experiences to better prepare students for employment. The additional services include *Special Projects* that enable upcoming graduates to apply, interview and be selected for a work assignment from a list of scheduled campus projects, *Internal Training Opportunities (ITO)* that enable students to shadow and work with staff from different TRC sections who are employed in their area of study throughout their program, and *External Training Opportunities (ETO)* that enable students to receive training at several businesses in the community as part of the class curriculum.

### **TENNESSEE TECHNOLOGY ACCESS PROGRAM (TTAP)**

This program provides community-based programs and services to individuals with disabilities (and their families) who may benefit from assistive technology to increase or maintain their independence and support their integration into the workforce.

#### **SUCCESS STORY:**

*“Ms. T.” has not been able to see well enough to read or write for the last four years because of myopic degeneration. Living alone, she noted one of her biggest challenges was “not being able to read mail and not trusting anyone else to do it.” Ms. T. visited the Tennessee Technology Access Program (TTAP) in Nashville and tried several Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) systems which magnify printed material and small objects for those who have low vision.*

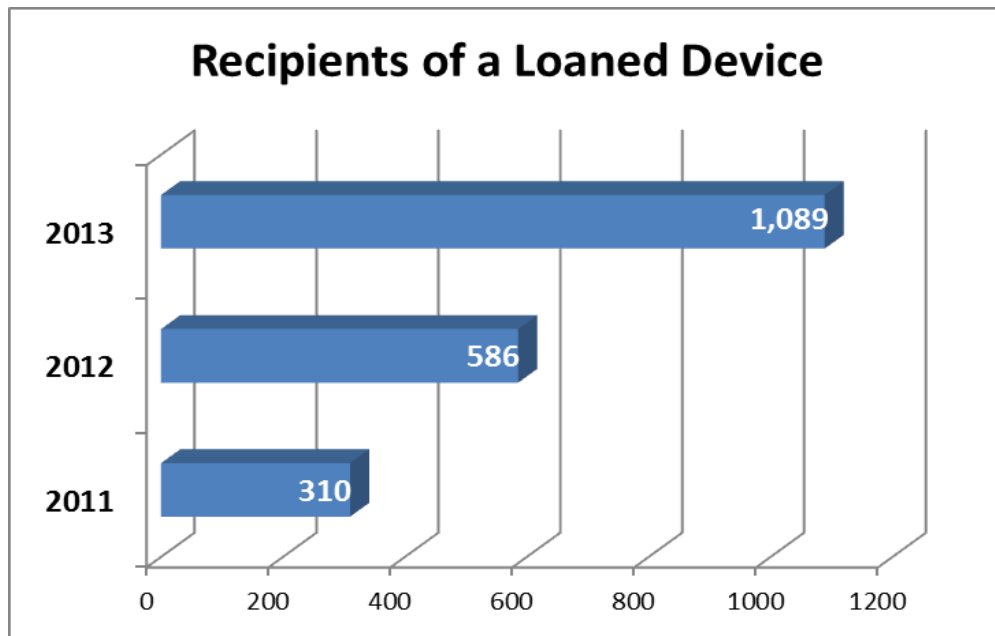


As soon as she viewed printed material on the first CCTV that she tried, she burst into tears of joy because she could, for the first time in four years, do what she loved—read. She was thrilled to use the CCTV to independently fill out the TTAP client satisfaction form and sign her name. Upon finishing it, she loudly proclaimed, “I did it. I did it!”

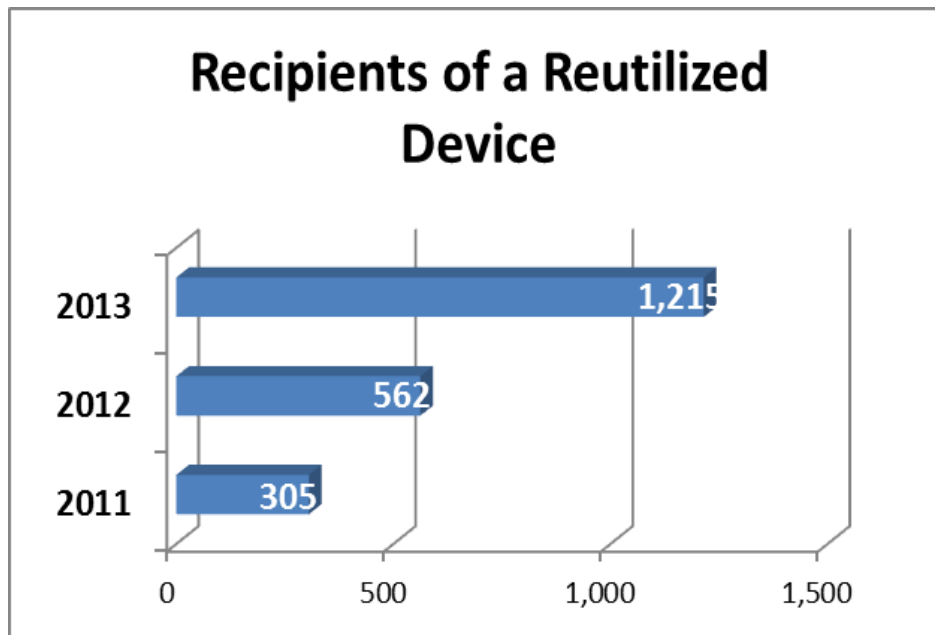


On the day her CCTV was delivered to her home, she proudly declared: “This right here is my independence. I can write! I can actually put a check under there and write.”

**STATISTICS:**



The number of recipients of a loaned TTAP device increased from 586 in FY 2012 to 1,089 in FY 2013, representing an increase of 85.8%.



**The number of recipients of a reutilized device increased from 562 in FY 2012 to 1,215 in FY 2013, representing an increase of 116.2%.**

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Provided 1,452 reutilized devices, saving an estimated \$235,505 for the 1,215 individuals or families who received those devices.
- Loaned 1,407 devices to 1,089 individuals or their families.

#### **DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES (DDS)**

DDS is fully funded by the Social Security Administration and processes the medical adjudication portion of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) applications filed with the Social Security Administration (SSA).

#### **SUCCESS STORY:**

DDS staff partners with advocates in processing disability claims for homeless individuals. These are the words of one applicant:

*“There’s no secret – I’ve been homeless most of my life, on the streets since I was 13 years old with the exception of when I served in the military. A few years back, I was sitting in a Waffle*



*House and I struck up a conversation with a gentleman there who worked for the state. We talked a little while and he suggested I speak to someone about my disability. From that moment on, my life has changed dramatically. I got the medical attention that I needed and received the financial assistance I needed through the help of DDS. Really, I'm so grateful. I was diagnosed with colon cancer. If it wasn't for this program, I wouldn't be where I am now. I'm so appreciative. I still pinch myself."*

Individuals who are approved for disability benefits through this application and adjudication process received cash benefits and, after a period of time, medical assistance benefits. These benefits can impact them over a number of years and, many times, prove to be life-improving.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- DDS has designated staff to participate in the Cooperative Disability Investigations (CDI) unit, which is funded by the Social Security Administration, and utilizes the investigative skills of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and SSA's Office of Inspector General. During the 2011-12 fiscal year, staff investigated 116 claims and saved taxpayers a total of \$24,368,696. The reports of the CDI unit led, in part, to a denial of those claims.

## **DIVISION OF APPEALS AND HEARINGS**

The Division of Appeals and Hearings processes administrative appeals for all programs administered by the Department of Human Services. In addition, the division is responsible for disqualification hearings covering the Food Stamps and Families First programs, and fourth-level employee grievance, due-process hearings. When an applicant for or recipient of assistance or services is dissatisfied with any action taken by the Department of Human Services, he/she has the right to file an appeal for a fair hearing before an impartial hearing official.

#### **STATISTICS:**

- Processed 35,838 appeal requests
- In Fiscal Year 2013, the Division of Appeals and Hearings:
  - Processed 35,838 appeal requests

- Completed 10,841 appeals resolutions
- Entered 16,890 Initial Orders

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Created the Clerk's Office as a neutral entity that performs many of the administrative functions associated with the appeals process. Any documents that need to be filed with the Department in association with an appeal can now be emailed, eliminating duplication of efforts by different appeals units and greatly reducing the likelihood of misplaced documents. Examples include petitions or documents a party may seek to be entered into evidence in an upcoming hearing.
- Implemented the SNAP Oral Withdrawal Policy – SNAP is the only program that can legally accept oral appeal withdrawals. The SNAP Oral Withdrawal Policy implementation is expected to provide significant convenience for clients who no longer want to proceed with a SNAP appeal by allowing the acceptance of withdrawals over the phone and not requiring customers to submit SNAP withdrawals in writing. Oral withdrawals also reduce the time that was previously required to keep a case open or to convene a hearing when a written withdrawal was not timely submitted.

### **OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

The Office of Inspector General includes oversight of the department's independent accountability functions. Those functions include quality control, internal audit, investigations, program review and child care licensing. This office conducts compliance and quality control reviews of DHS programs, investigates referrals of (possible) fraud and abuse in the programs, handles adjudication and processes collections of claims overpayment, and conducts internal audits and investigations for the department.

The Quality Control section is responsible for conducting a statistically valid sample of SNAP cases as required by United States Department of Agriculture and outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations. In addition, the Quality Control section is responsible for operating the State's Management Evaluation Plan, reviewing TennCare/Medicaid, and a sample of TANF aid groups. DHS Quality Control data enables the State to remain aware of its accuracy, identify trends, and prepare appropriate corrective actions. The Investigations division provides oversight in the detection, deterrence and prevention of fraud, waste and abuse within the programs that DHS administers.

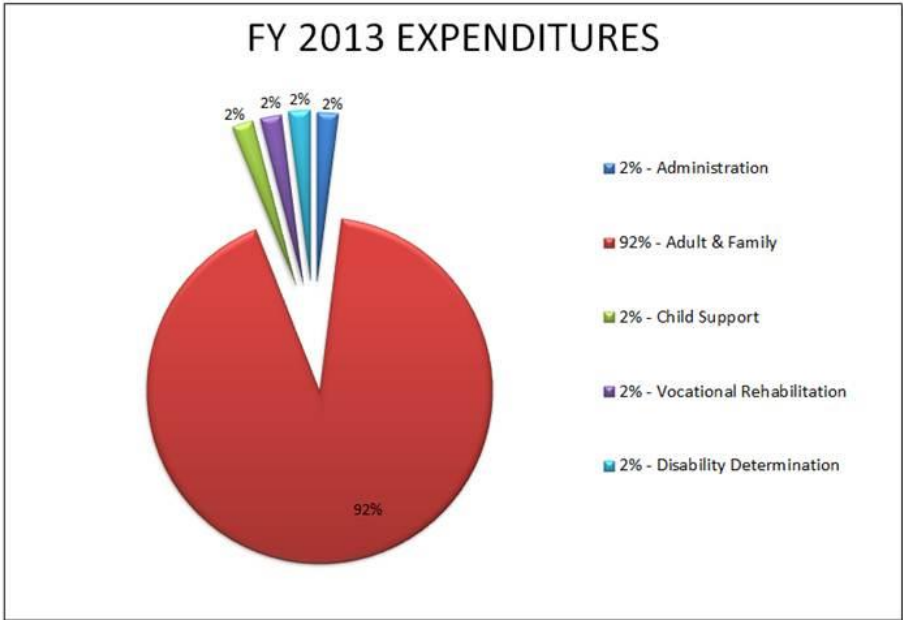
The Internal Audit section assists the Department in complying with federal, state and departmental laws, regulations and rules by conducting regularly scheduled and random audits of all programs. The Internal Audit section helps DHS management ensure program dollars are being used for their intended purposes by conducting audits of DHS partners. Additionally, through the use of a comprehensive risk assessment, Internal Audit helps identify areas that may require increased monitoring and support. The Office of External Review ensures that any entity that has a contract with the Department of Human Services provides quality services to DHS. It further ensures that DHS clients and partners work in accordance with all contract terms, current state and federal laws, rules, policies and procedures all payments are valid and adequately documented. The unit also provides assurance that state and federal funds are used appropriately and that proper services are provided to DHS clients. Monitoring also gives DHS the opportunity to receive feedback from contracting entities regarding service quality and the contractor's relationship with the State of Tennessee.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Internal Audit staff conducted Safeguarding of Federal Tax Information reviews at 71 county offices and judicial districts.
- Implemented SNAP trafficking monitoring program with a focus on multiple Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card issuances.

## **DIVISION OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

The Division of Finance and Administration oversees five areas of operation within DHS: Budget, Fiscal Services, Information Technology, Facilities, and Procurement. Within these various areas, the department is responsible for preparing the annual department budget, performing fiscal analysis, monitoring federal programs for cash management, preparing federal expenditure reports, processing contractor/vendor payments, ensuring the procurement of all goods and services, providing support for such functions as mail operations and telecommunications, providing technical support to meet operational needs, overseeing a variety of IT projects simultaneously, as well as performing a variety of other duties. The Department of Human Services' approved budget for FY 2013 was approximately \$3 billion.



**HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- The Central Procurement Office’s goal is to drive 80% of the office supplies/toner/paper spending to the negotiated core market basket items. The DHS Office of Procurement is utilizing the market basket at a 97% rate, exceeding the goal by 17%, as well as exceeding the overall State rate of 61% by 36%.

- The Budget Office processed and presented quarterly budgets to Executive Leadership on an average of 23 business days after the closing of books, with a goal to process within 30 days after closing.
- Fiscal Services processed more than 550,000 bills in FY 2013, of which 99.8% of them were processed in less than 7 business days.
- IT created a web-based Enrollment and Attendance Verification Scanning system, for viewing/verifying scanned images of child care enrollment and attendance records. This improved staff productivity by enabling them to view scanned documents from a single repository.
- IT implemented a web service known as Address Verification that automatically interacts with the ACCENT system and verifies and corrects addresses in real time. This saves more than \$200,000 in licensing fees per year.
- IT assisted the Child Support Program to eliminate the printing of the Custodial Parent Monthly Notice. On average, 115,000 notices were printed each month. This task made the information available for inquiry through the Internet. The savings associated with no longer producing the paper notice: \$582,000 a year.

## **DIVISION OF ADULT & FAMILY SERVICES**

The Division of Adult and Family Services provides public assistance to citizens with low-income directly through county offices and indirectly through contracts with social services agencies across the state.

AFS has offices in all 95 Tennessee counties, offering resources to citizens across the state. This division provides assistance for families to meet basic needs – including paying living expenses, offering assistance through Families First, the department’s TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) program, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps). TennCare Medicaid, the State and federal medical assistance program for families with children, elderly and/or disabled citizens, has partnered with this division to help determine client eligibility.

AFS partners with community agencies to assist families with additional income/resources to obtain employment and increase the likelihood of becoming self-sufficient. In addition, sections under Adult and Family Services are responsible for protecting vulnerable adults.

## **FAMILY ASSISTANCE**

### **FAMILIES FIRST**

Families First, the states Temporary Assistance for Needy Families The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or TANF, was created as part of the larger Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 (commonly referred to as “welfare reform”). It replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program and is the federal funding source for Tennessee’s TANF Program.

Families First is a workforce development and employment program. It is temporary and has a primary focus on gaining self-sufficiency through employment. The Families First program helps participants reach this goal by providing transportation, child care assistance, education, job training, employment activities, and other support services. Temporary cash assistance is also provided to families with dependent children when at least one parent is incapacitated, unemployed, dead, or absent from the home, and the family is unable to pay for essential living expenses.

To be eligible for the program, participants must meet technical and financial eligibility standards and must agree to follow a Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP). As part of the PRP, the participants agree to keep immunizations and health checks up-to-date for their children, to keep their children in school, to cooperate with child support services and, if not exempt, to participate in work and/or training for at least 30 hours per week.

### **SUCCESS STORIES:**

*The “Taylor’s” household had both parents in college when they started. They are now living in Spring Hill, after the wife graduated and landed a job with a major cable network. The husband completed his master’s degree this spring. The wife recently has gone back to school while maintaining her employment to pursue her CPA’s license. The family used 52 months of Families First prior to closure. They have two children, ages 6 and 10 months. They also are not using Transitional Child Care, because they are able to pay those expenses on their own.*







*Families First client, “Jason,” applied for Families First in April 2013 for himself and his two children. Jason had just been laid off from his job and had no source of income. After being approved for Families First, Jason attained his GED in May 2013 and is now enrolled in online college courses. Subsequently in June 2013, Jason reported working a job by which he can support his family without the help of Families First.*

*“Monica” came into the Families First program as a single mother of three young children, new to Chattanooga and unemployed. She had her high school diploma and a strong desire to better herself for her children. She stated often that she wanted to find a job so that she could provide a better life for her family. She applied for jobs through the job referral program, completed two resumes and networked. She had several job interviews that went well but no job offers. She then began volunteering while still networking and seeking assistance with locating an employment placement. She was determined, and in March 2013 she got a job working 40+ hours a week and no longer needed Families First. She committed to finding employment and did not give up in her search.*



#### **STATISTICS:**

- The Families First caseload for July 2012 through June 2013 decreased to 50,099, a 15.5% decrease, compared with the FY 2011 through 2012 caseload of 59,253.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Families First Redesign phase one strategies were identified and developed in collaboration with DHS staff, customers and partners.
- The Department conducted several Customer, Employee and Partner Connection Events focused on the Families First Redesign.

#### **SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps)**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program helps supplement monthly food budgets of families with low-income to buy the food they need to maintain good health and allow them to

direct more of their available income toward essential living expenses. DHS staff determines eligibility of applicants based on guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The primary goals of the program are to alleviate hunger and malnutrition, and to improve nutrition and health in eligible households.

#### **STATISTICS:**

- At the end of Fiscal Year 2013, there were 536,650 children and 832,316 adults receiving SNAP across 676,113 Tennessee households.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Each day during State Fiscal Year 2013, the SNAP program helped put food on the tables of more than 600,000 Tennessee households containing 1,350,000 individuals of which more than 530,000 were children.
- USDA allocated funds to the State to increase the number of farmer's markets participating in SNAP. In a partnership with Food and Nutrition Services and the TN Department of Agriculture, an on-location application event was held at the Ellington Agriculture Center in Nashville on June 26, 2013. Approximately 20 farmers attended the event and were assisted with applications to become Farmer's Market vendors. DHS also facilitated the reimbursement of funds for the purchase of POS devices to the farmers. This endeavor enables SNAP participants to have access to fresh fruits and vegetables, promotes better nutrition and increases the customer base for farmers.

#### **TENNCARE/MEDICAID**

The Department of Finance and Administration's TennCare Bureau contracts with DHS to determine Medicaid and TennCare Standard (including Standard Spend Down) eligibility. DHS determines eligibility, the possible categories of coverage and sends data to the TennCare Bureau via an electronic interface between the ACCENT and InterChange systems. These data are used by TennCare to open Medicaid or TennCare coverage when an individual has been approved, and to terminate coverage when an individual is no longer eligible to receive Medicaid or TennCare Standard.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- DHS staff approved 367,621 Medicaid cases in Fiscal Year 2013. On average, DHS staff processed 57,783 Medicaid applications per month and approved 30,635 cases per month.

## **CHILD CARE SERVICES**

The Child Care Services section plans, implements, and coordinates activities and programs to ensure quality, accessibility and the health and safety of children in care.

Child Care Assessment staff use a quality measurement instrument to assess each licensed provider annually and establish the Star-Quality Report Card Rating and Evaluation System for facilities.

The Child Care Certificate Program provides assistance to families who need help paying for child care in order to meet the requirements of the Families First program. Child care assistance not only gives Families First parents/caretakers peace of mind while they participate in work and work-related activities but also provides quality child care for children.

Within the Child Care Services section, statewide early childhood-related services are managed through child care partners including Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R), Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA), and Tennessee's Outstanding Providers Supported through Available Resources (TOPSTAR). These services provide a support system for improving and maintaining the overall quality of child care across the state and help provide parents and families with safe, healthy and developmentally appropriate child care options.

## **STATISTICS:**

- Currently there are 2,871 family, group and center licensed agencies. About 1,864 have three-star ratings, 353 have two-star ratings and 51 have a one-star rating.
- The number of children receiving the child care certificate and enrolled in child quality facilities was 35,101 in June 2012 and 36,535 in 2013.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Conducted a successful Child Care Strategy session on March 27, 2013, with a focus on child outcomes and parental engagements. Tennessee First Lady Crissy Haslam, Education Commissioner Kevin Huffman and child development consultant Dr. Carol

Brunson-Day were featured speakers. The Department fostered a dialogue on how to strengthen the program to improve child outcomes and parental engagement. Participants included parents, child care providers, partners and Licensing, Assessment and Child Care Certificate Program staff.

- Child Care Licensing reduced travel costs within one year by \$46,081.00.
- Child Care Aware of America/We Can Do Better completes an annual survey of State child care licensing program requirements and oversight. Tennessee ranked No. 10, along with Minnesota.

### **FAMILY ASSISTANCE SERVICE CENTER**

The Family Assistance Service Center (FASC) responds to client inquiries and changes reported by clients in the Family Assistance programs.

#### **STATISTICS:**

- In Fiscal Year 2013, 1,405,920 calls were served.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- The FASC has completed approximately 1,051,964 work orders in this fiscal year.
- The FASC implemented a triage queue that better directs calls to the appropriate representatives for assistance.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)**

The CSBG program is funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is administered through a statewide network of 20 nonprofit and local government agencies designated by Health and Human Services as eligible to provide services. Agencies conduct annual needs assessments, develop a community action plan, and offer services based on identified local needs. The goal of the program is to provide services to eligible low-income individuals and families to improve their health and well-being.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- 210,199 low-income individuals received services under the regular CSBG program in FY 2013.

#### **LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)**

The LIHEAP program is funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is administered through a network of 19 local nonprofit and governmental agencies. The program is designed to assist eligible low-income households with their home energy costs through credits to their energy supplier accounts.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- 125,127 households were assisted through the LIHEAP.
- The program prevented utility disconnection for 22,257 households.

#### **SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (SSBG)**

The SSBG program is funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is administered by 15 local nonprofit and governmental agencies across the state. The program functions as the primary support network for elderly and disabled adults to help them maintain independence or prevent adult abuse, neglect and exploitation.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

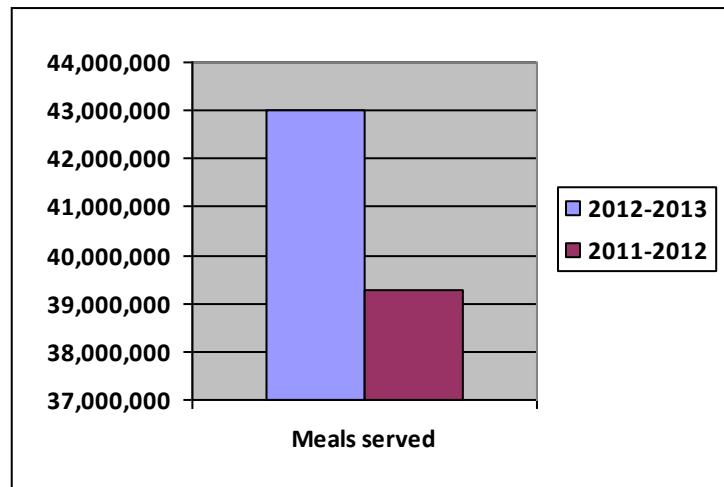
- Funded 15 agencies statewide more than \$4.1 million in Federal money to provide low-income and disabled Tennesseans with Adult Day Care and Homemaker services.

#### **CHILD & ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)**

The CACFP provides reimbursements for nutritious meals served to participants who meet age and income requirements. Eligible participants include children enrolled in child care institutions who are 12 and younger; children of migrant workers who are 15 and younger; persons of any age with one or more disabilities who are enrolled in an institution or child care facility serving a majority of persons who are 18 and younger; and adults who are enrolled in

adult care institutions that serve functionally impaired adults or persons who are 60 or older. Eligible institutions include child and adult care centers, child care homes, emergency shelters and afterschool care programs for at-risk children.

**STATISTICS:**

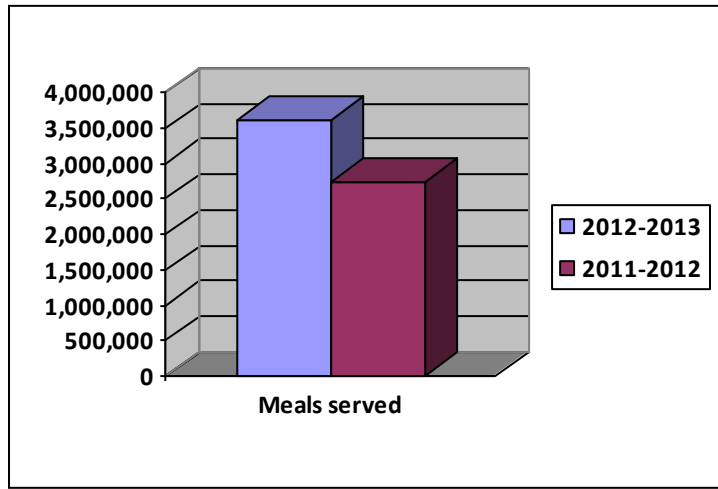


**The number of CACFP meals served increased from 39,293,733 in FY 2012 to 42,997,517 in FY 2013, representing a 7.6% increase.**

**SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM (SFSP)**

The SFSP provides reimbursements for nutritious meals served to participants in needy areas during periods when their schools are closed for vacation. The program primarily serves children 18 or younger in areas where poor economic conditions exist and in residential camps where children are determined individually to be eligible. Persons older than 18 who are mentally or physically disabled and who participate in school programs for the disabled are also eligible to participate. Sponsorship of the SFSP is limited to public or private, nonprofit school food authorities; State, local, municipal or county governments; residential public or private, nonprofit summer camps; public or private, nonprofit colleges or universities administering Upward Bound Programs; and private, nonprofit organizations. Eligible feeding sites include public parks, recreation centers, schools, churches, playgrounds, residential camps and public housing complexes.

**STATISTICS:**



**The number of SFSP meals served increased from 2,725,470 in FY 2012 to 3,614,358 in FY 2013, representing a 32.6% increase.**

**ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

Adult Protective Services (APS) is the only service in Tennessee mandated to intervene when adults with mental and/or physical impairments are in danger because they are unable to provide for their own needs, or when others, who are responsible for the care of those adults, either abuse, neglect or exploit them.

**STATISTICS:**

- In fiscal year 2013, APS received 14,728 referrals through intake unit, resulting in 11,202 cases meeting the criteria for the investigation.
- Types of abuse, neglect or exploitation investigated in FY 2012-2013:
  - Self-neglect – 44%
  - Neglect by others – 47%
  - Physical abuse – 13%
  - Sexual abuse – 2%
  - Emotional abuse – 18%

- Financial exploitation – 19%

\*Categories are not mutually exclusive. More than one factor can appear in a single investigation.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- The APS Title VI Implementation Plan had a result of 0 findings from the Tennessee Human Rights Commission
- DHS/APS, along with community partners, celebrated World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15, 2013. To promote awareness of the social problem involving abuse, neglect and exploitation of elders, the Capital cupola was lit purple the week of WEAAD.
- October 2012 was proclaimed as Fraud and Financial Awareness Month by Governor Haslam.

### **OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL**

The Office of General Counsel (OGC) provides legal advice and legal representation in judicial and administrative litigation affecting all Department programs. Attorneys with the OGC prepare Departmental rules affecting program implementation; conduct analyses of legislation affecting the Department, prepare legislation for the Department, and represent the Department before the Tennessee General Assembly. The OGC reviews contract proposals for the provision of services for implementation of department programs. The OGC also provides compliance oversight and training involving Titles VI, VII, and IX, ADA, HIPAA, and Motor Voter Registration, as well as processing civil rights, EEOC and Human Rights Commission complaints involving program services and department employees. Attorneys with the OGC also review proposed disciplinary actions involving employees and litigate department personnel actions. The OGC provides ongoing legal training for legal and program staff in the Adult Protective Services, Child and Adult Care Licensing and Child Support programs. Additionally, the OGC works closely with the State Attorney General's office in federal and appellate litigation involving department programs.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Developed new legal referral and management review process to improve processing of employee discipline actions under the TEAM Act.



- Developed new Step 1 appeal process under the TEAM Act and provided training to Commissioner’s Designees who hear those appeals.
- Provided initial and updated training to 50 child support attorneys.
- Provided TEAM Act training to participants of the New Supervisor Academy since its implementation of the law.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The Division of Organizational Performance Management (OPM) was established in 2011. It creates a structural location for DHS sections directly responsible for monitoring and improving the efficiency and productiveness of DHS employee performance through goal setting, targeted training and professional development, employee feedback, with an increased emphasis on effective management and supervision. Each section in OPM works collectively to support employees in all DHS divisions across the State with the goal of improving employee performance. The OPM Division comprises four sections: Human Resources, Office for Learning and Professional Development, Performance Management and Research and Planning.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

Human Resources manages the Departmental process through which all employees are hired, promoted, evaluated, disciplined and paid. The central point for employee relations, HR is a critical partner for promoting staff development and encouraging the effective application of employee improvement plans. DHS Human Resources is a team of 35 employees in three State Office units: Employee Relations, Transactions/Class Comp and Time, and Labor/Benefits, and HR field analysts who are stationed in strategic locations across the State. The DHS HR team provides services, support and employee information directly to 5,550 DHS staff, including: new employee orientation, employee relations, hiring process transactions, time and compensation, benefits and other employee-related services.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- DHS HR trained all DHS Hiring Managers were trained on the new TEAM Act hiring process through webinars and meetings.

- DHS HR, in collaboration with the Performance Management Unit, completed Job Analysis with KSAC's on 70 job classifications within 6 months.

## **OFFICE FOR LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The DHS Office for Learning and Professional Development (OLPD) coordinates, develops, and presents “blended-learning” training opportunities, accessible online policy manuals, and online, “finger-tip” policy information tools for all DHS staff. Adult learning models are used to prepare new DHS employees to provide quality customer service through the correct application of policy and provision of timely services for DHS external customers, in addition to providing continuing education on new policy and procedures, refresher policy training, soft skills training, and computer training for all staff. The OLPD staff delivers DoHR leadership and general training, as well as DoHR-approved DHS professional development training. The comprehensive training programs that are provided to DHS employees enable them to fulfill the Department's mission which is to assist customers in achieving self-sufficiency, enhances the employee's job skills, and prepares staff to evolve in a progressive direction in their profession with DHS.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Completed New VR Counselor training curriculum, which includes policy and procedural training incorporated in the case management process; soft skills training; TRIMS documentation computer training; and supervised on-the-job training throughout the training curriculum.
- Collaborated with DHS Creative Services to create an ACCESS database for tracking VR counselor continuing education, individual education plans, Comprehensive System for Personnel Development (CSPD), and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credential.
- At the end of State fiscal year 2013, 275 new supervisors have successfully completed the program with 25 enrolled in the current session.

## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT UNIT (PMU)**

Performance Management is responsible for assisting all Departmental divisions with developing organizational performance goals; quality review processes; monitors productivity, accuracy, and timeliness; provides reports on performance measures for all employees in

Family Assistance; and assists managers to create and effectively use SMART performance evaluations to improve employee performance. Other responsibilities include

providing technical performance management assistance to management and field offices; collecting, analyzing, and generating monthly data reports for Family Assistance for each individual, unit, section, county and district/region; developing strategies, in collaboration with the divisional management teams, to address issues with performance; and working closely with OLPD to identify training needs to address gaps in performance.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Made progress toward developing performance standards for every DHS division.
- Supported successful implementation of Four Disciplines of Execution, resulting in achieving the goal of reducing the SNAP active error rate from 3.8% to 1.3%.

#### **RESEARCH AND PLANNING**

Research and Planning strives to provide quality quantitative and qualitative data support analysis for the purpose of ensuring best program practice implementation, conducting research, policy analysis, program planning and program evaluation. The primary responsibility of Research and Planning is to ensure that all DHS divisions have the data necessary to design effective policies and to implement new strategies. R&P collects and analyzes program information from a variety of sources, distributes scheduled and ad hoc reports, and works with DHS Information Systems to ensure that data is transmitted correctly to various Federal and State agencies, and to the appropriate DHS divisions.