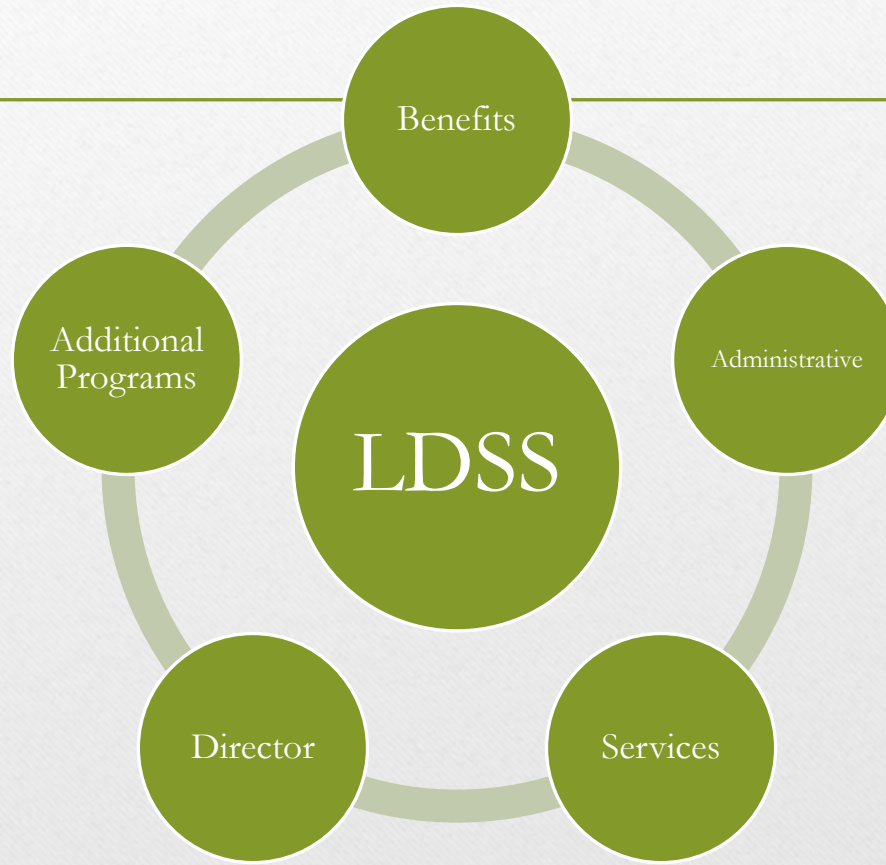# DSS and CSA

Working together for a brighter future for Virginia's most vulnerable youth and families.

Structure of Department of Social Services

- Virginia is a State-Supervised/County Administered System

- Virginia DSS (State) is responsible for promulgating regulations and guidance based on Federal and State laws and regulations

- This includes the Richmond office and five (5) Regional offices

- Local DSS are responsible for implementing the various programs

Local DSS current structure

Benefit Programs

- TANF – Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

- Medicaid

- SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as Food Stamps)

- Energy Assistance

Service Programs

- Prevention
- CPS – Child Protective Services
- Foster Care
- Adoption
- IL - Independent Living
- ICPC – Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
- ICAMA – Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance

Systemic Efforts for Permanency

The Learning Collaborative Series

- Goal

    - Supported by Casey Family Programs, the goal of the Virginia Learning Collaborative Series (VLCS) was to bring together 21 VA LDSS teams to learn about and apply innovative practices and strategies to improve their ability to support abused and neglected children and their families.

- Outcome

    - The VLCS focused on best practices in monitoring psychotropic medications, trauma-informed practice, and coaching supervision.

    - The major product of the VLCS is the Practice Profiles – 11 core skill sets which put the Virginia Children's Services Practice Model into action.

Concurrent Planning in Foster Care

- A foster care casework practice that involves identifying and working towards a child's primary permanency goal (such as reunification) while simultaneously identifying and working on a secondary goal (such as custody transfer to a relative.)
  - Structured case work practice: at each contact address both plan A and plan B
  - Service plan addresses needs and services for both plan A and B (more than just identify Plan B)
  - Family and extended family are actively involved in decision-making
  - Relationship between foster parents and birth family is promoted
  - Full disclosure meetings
  - Many similar elements to FPMs

Family Search and Engagement

- Family engagement requires a shift from the belief that agencies alone know what is best for children and families to one that allows the family to fully participate in decision-making. LDSS are encouraged to:

  - Explore all of a child's extended networks of people

  - Search both maternal and paternal sides of the child's family

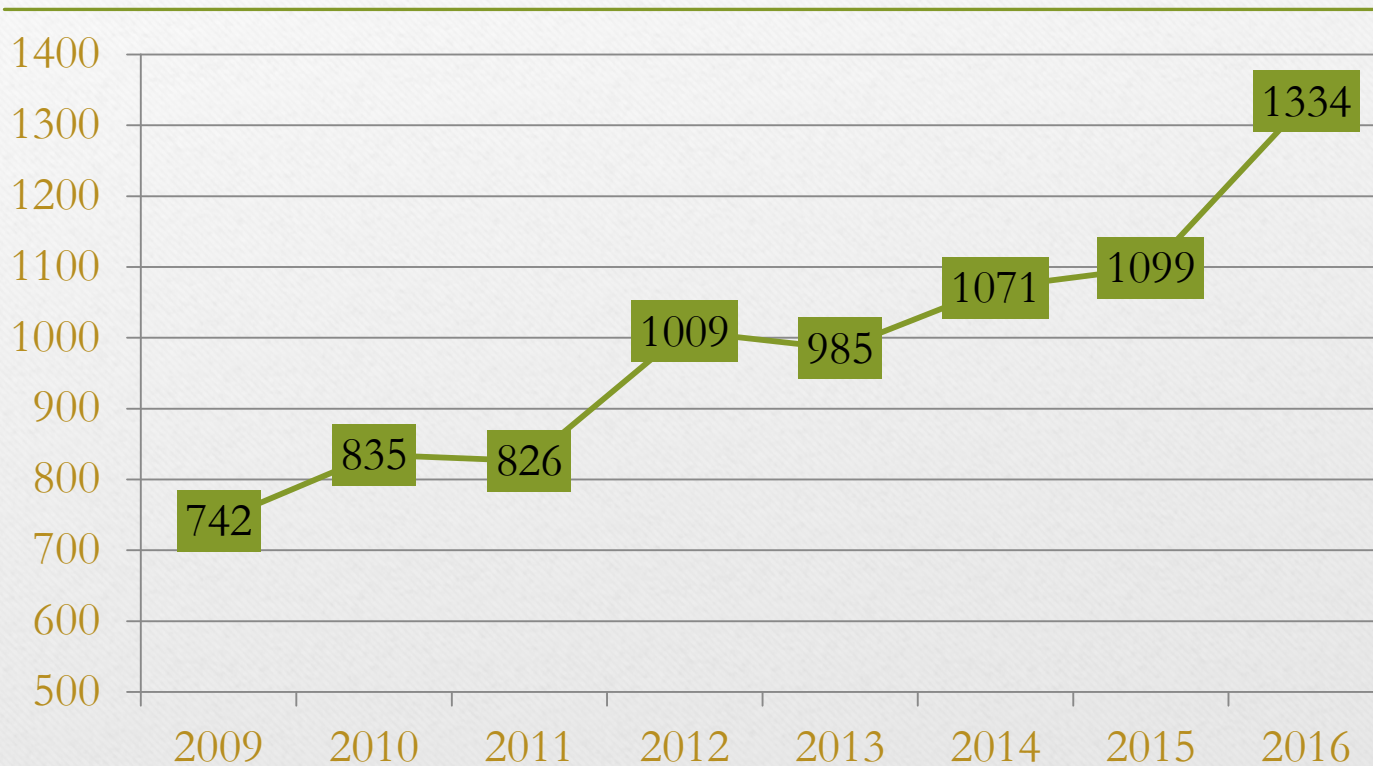 - Utilize the family engagement toolkit

Prevention Services

- Preventing maltreatment and out of home care can begin prior to a valid referral to CPS.

- Prevention continues once a child comes into care by preventing maltreatment and the trauma of multiple moves in both foster care and adoption.

- Prevention funding is relatively non-existent in local departments, so many of these cases are served through Medicaid and/or CSA funds.

Child Protective Services

- Family Assessments/Investigations

- Foster Care Prevention

- Family Preservation funding

- Promoting safe and stable families funding (PSSF)

Substance-Exposed Infant (SEI) On the Rise

SEI

- In response to the rise in SEI, CPS will:
  - Modify regulations, guidance, and informing brochures
  - Lead the efforts of a state-wide work group:
    - Identify barriers to the identification, reporting, and treatment of SEI
    - Make legislative, budgetary, and policy recommendations
  - Require that physicians report SEI if a child is affected or experiencing withdrawal symptoms, regardless of whether the drug is legal or illegal or prescribed.

Three Branch Institute
Improving Child Safety and Reducing Child Fatalities
Sponsored by the National Governor's Association

Provides an opportunity for three branches of government to foster cross-system collaboration and leverage programs, initiatives and funding streams to support a comprehensive approach for improving the safety of children known to, or at risk of entering the child welfare system

Virginia's Work Plan focuses on children under the age of 4, with a special focus on children under the age of 1:

- Increase understanding of risk and protective factors that are predictive/associated with child maltreatment and child fatalities
- Assess the effectiveness of existing screening, safety and risk tools and explore the development of new or expanded policies, practices and protocols
- Strengthen existing efforts to enhance child safety through primary prevention and family engagement strategies across the systems
- Enhance child welfare recruitment and retention efforts in order to create and sustain a culture of safety in the workforce

Foster Care

- Removals

- Court Orders

- Service Plans

- Foster Parents

- Achieving Permanency –Permanency goals

Title IV-E

- Federal Program
- IV-E/AFDC eligibility criteria
- State Policy
- Allowable Cost
- Reasonable Efforts/Contrary to the welfare
- Licensed Placements
- Non-Custodial Foster Care Agreements
- IV-E Adoption Subsidy

VEMAT

- Why is VEMAT necessary?
- VEMAT Tool
- VEMAT Rate Sheet
- VEMAT Process

Adoption

- Adoptive Process
- AREVA - http://www.adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx
- Adoption resources and CSA resources
- Adoption Funding

Adoption Initiative

- The Division continues to promote activities geared toward identifying safe and appropriate families to adopt youth in foster care.

- Streamlining the Adoption process

- Strategies include working collaboratively with the Adoption Champion and other adoption stakeholders to increase public awareness of the foster care adoption process.

- Increasing visibility of youth legally free for adoption through the Adoption Resource Exchange of Virginia and AdoptUSKids website. http://www.careadvantageinc.com/ to learn more.

- We presently have 600+ children who are free for adoption in Virginia.

Independent Living/ETV

- Independent Living placements

- ETV (Education and Training Voucher)

- ETV Brochure

ICPC/ICAMA

- ICPC process

- ICPC documents

- ICAMA (Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance)

- ICJ (Interstate Compact on Juveniles)

- ICMH (Interstate Compact on Mental Health)

Driving factors in our localities

- Service gaps

- Money

- Politics

- Silos (locally)

- Regional dynamics

- Staff turnover

The need for collaboration

- Families are at stake

- Societal change and awareness of mental health and family discord.

- Affects the future of the cost of services in localities

- Strong functioning families = strong functioning communities.

- We are all in this together for the purpose of improving the lives of those we serve.

Current Issues

- Fostering Futures

- SEI Increase

- Adoption

- Diversion

- Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KGAP)

Training
Federally Mandated Training for CPS, Foster Care, Adoption and Supervision

Improving Transfer of Learning with new blended courses:

    CWSE2020/CWS2020: On-call for Non-CPS

    CWSE4015/CWS4015: Trauma Informed Practice in Child Welfare

New Classroom Courses:

    CWS4040: Advanced FPM Facilitation – Domestic Violence Issues

    CWS3095: Child Welfare Practice with LGBTQ Youth and Families

New eLearning Courses:

    CWSE5502: Working with Families of Substance Exposed Infants

    CWSE3030: Normalcy for Youth in Foster Care

    CWSE4040: Diligent Search & Family Engagement

    CWSE3020: Educational Stability for Youth in FC

    CWSE3015: Adoption Assistance

    CWSE1500: OASIS Adoption

    CWSE3042: Orientation to ICPC

    CWSE4050 Psychotropic Medications Monitoring in Foster Care

Mandated Training Analysis & New Services Training Task Force

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