



**ONEIDA COUNTY WISCONSIN**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**2020**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**SELF-SUFFICIENT PEOPLE LIVING IN A SAFE,  
FINANCIALLY SECURE ENVIRONMENT.**



## OUR MISSION

In partnership with our community and in response to public need and legal mandates, our mission is to serve and assist Oneida County residents in ways that strengthen and preserve families, encourage personal responsibility, and foster independence. We recognize the rights of each individual. Our goal is to serve all persons with dignity, respect, and confidentiality.

## DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES

Trauma Informed Care Committee

Long Range Planning Committee

Volunteer Committee

Safety Committee

## SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Alan Van Raalte Chair

Steven Schreier, Vice Chair

Jim Winkler

Bob Thome, Jr.

### Oneida County Social Services Committee Social Services Director

#### Children & Family Services Youth Justice Services

- ◇ **Children and Family**
  - Ongoing CPS Services
  - Child Welfare Services
  - Out of Home Placement for Children & Youth
  - Kinship Care
  - Coordinated Service Teams
  - Family Preservation & Support
  - Post Reunification
- ◇ **Youth Justice**
  - Juvenile Court Intake
  - Out of Home Placement for Youth
  - Ongoing Youth Services
  - Youth Reunification
  - Early Intervention Services
  - Aftercare Services

#### Child Protective Services Adult Services

- ◇ **Child Protective**
  - Child Abuse & Neglect Access and Initial Assessment
  - In Home Safety Services
  - Foster Home Licensing
  - Kinship Care Licensing
  - Drug Endangered Children Program
- ◇ **Adult Services**
  - Adult Protective Services Access & Investigation
  - Adult Welfare Concerns
  - Guardianship
  - Protective Placement
  - Supportive Home Care

#### Economic Support Services

- Member of IM Central Consortium: Langlade, Marathon, Oneida, & Forest Counties
- Food Share
- Medical Assistance (Medicaid/Badgercare)
- Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program
- Program Integrity
- Fraud Prevention

#### Child Support Services

- Child Support Enforcement
- Establish Paternity
- Modification of Child Support Orders
- Establish Orders for Financial & Medical Support

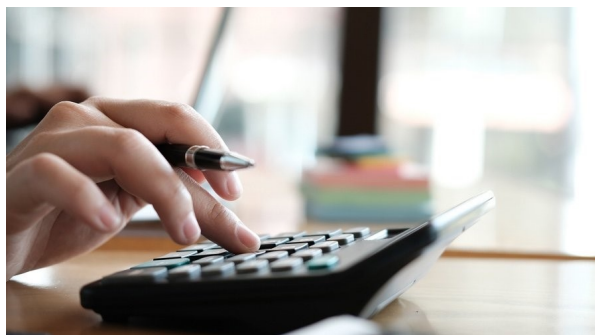
#### Fiscal, Administrative, & IT Services

- Budget Preparation and Monitoring
- Monitor Funding Contracts
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Financial Reporting to County, State, & Federal Agencies
- Clerical Support
- Reception
- Office Administration
- Information Technology Support

# FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Financial Services Unit provides accounting and clerical support to the Department of Social Services. In addition to responding to the needs of internal staff, the unit adapts to changing federal, state and local requirements. Other areas of support include:

- Budget preparation
- MA Targeted Case Management billing
- Provider contract management
- Financial reporting to the county and state
- Receptionist duties
- Document processing and transcription
- Maintaining agency records



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**2020 Budgeted Tax Levy \$1,846,687**

**2020 Actual Tax Levy \$1,660,590**

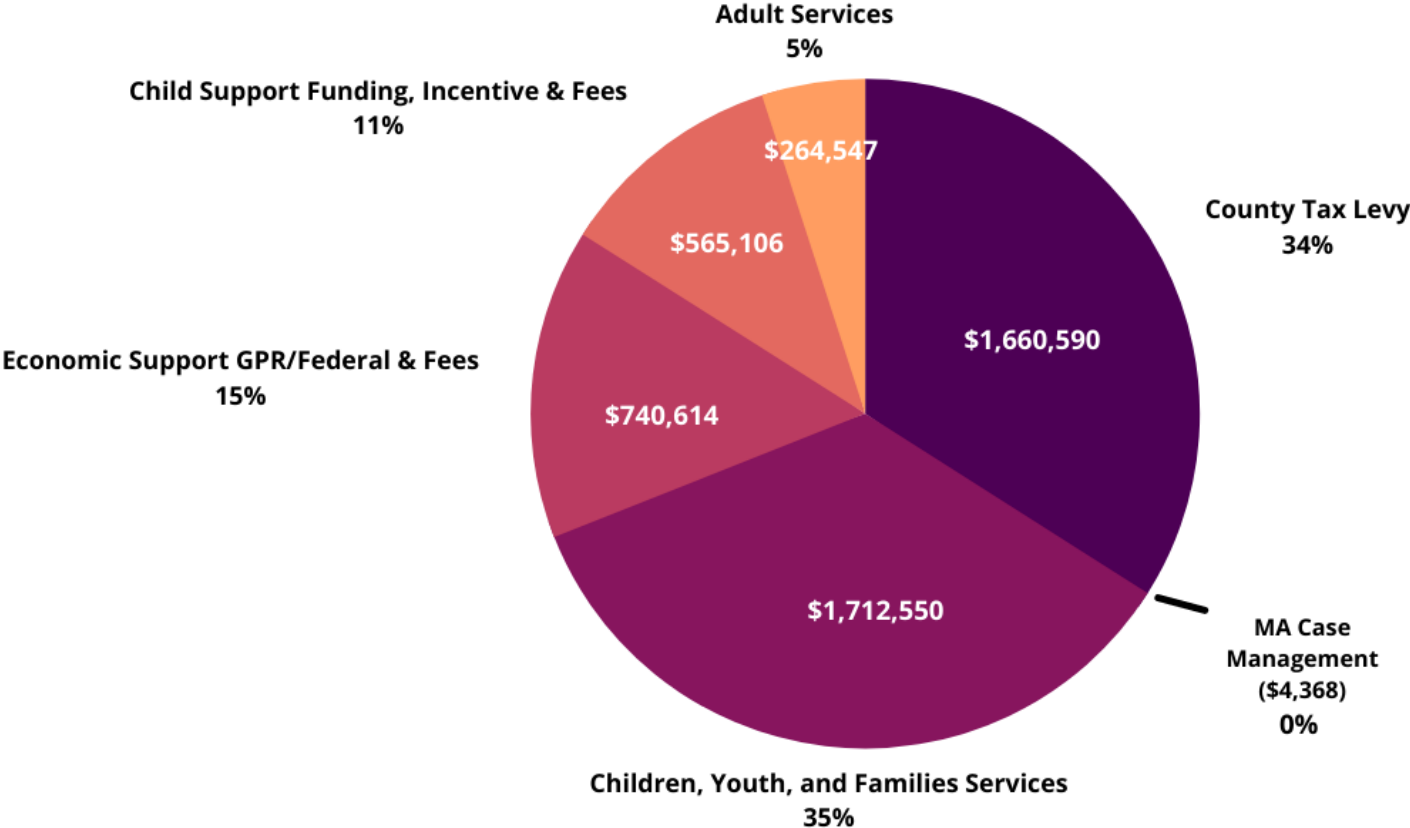
**Surplus \$265,245**  
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The Department of Social Services experienced a surplus of \$265,245. The agency was able to obtain \$199,541.32 in additional state and federal funds due to the continued high costs of out of home care. Throughout the year we research additional funding opportunities to maximize funding received by the agency to allow for a return of county tax levy.

In 2020, we implemented an electronic case file system for Social Services files. This will reduce the use of paper, storage space and create efficiencies within the department. COVID-19 required us to quickly get staff technology to allow them to work from home. With special funding we were able to purchase additional lab tops that will allow for future efficiencies and cost savings. The unit will continue to work on increasing the use of data to track outcomes and performance in program areas.

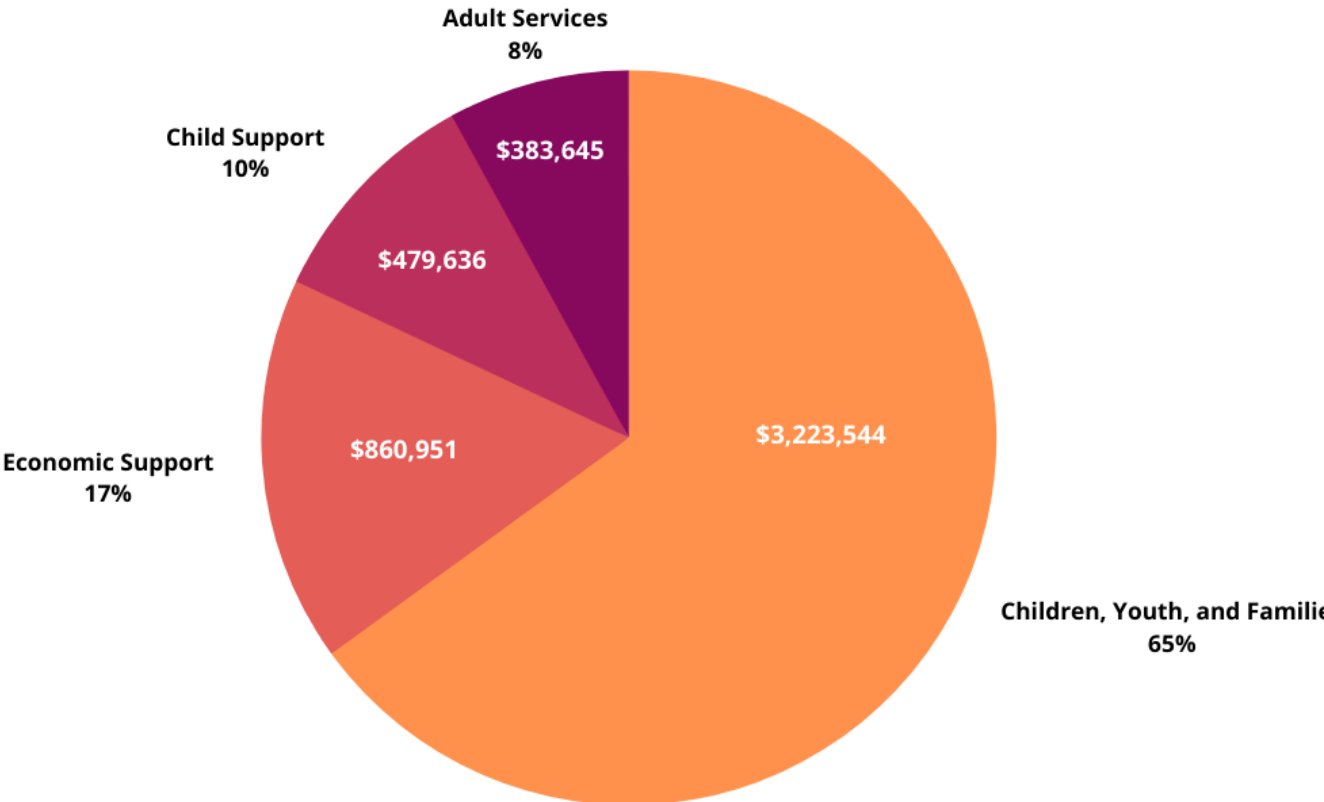
# 2020 Social Services Revenue

## Total Revenue Recieved: \$4,947,776



# 2020 Social Services Expenditures

## Total Expenditures: \$4,947,776\*



\*Expenditures do not include Indirect Costs



# ADULT SERVICES



## Clients Served—Adult Unit

- Supportive Home Care 14
- Elder Abuse Direct Service 7
- Elder/Adult Abuse Investigations 57
- Guardianships 17
- Protective Placements 28
- Adult Welfare Concerns 34

Oneida County Department of Social Services receives a lot of calls from the public and our partner agencies related to the process for obtaining a guardian when Protective Placement is needed. The Department, in collaboration with Corporation Counsel's office, put on a virtual training on this topic in 2020. Hospitals, MCO agencies, and other partners were invited to attend. This training has been recorded and a link is available on the OCDSS website for all those with questions on the process.

The Elder Abuse Interdisciplinary Team (I-Team) is created by counties for a number of reasons.

These reasons include a need for informal resources to be developed, better education on the prevention of abuse before incidents occur and an interest in becoming aware of the legal, financial, and social ramifications of elder abuse.

The goal of the I Team is to improve the response to victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Oneida County's I team consists of members from a number of agencies such as local banks, The Human Service Center, ADRC, Family Care, and Law Enforcement, among others.

This group met virtually in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. The group experienced improved attendance with the Zoom meeting format. The group will continue utilizing this format in 2021.



# CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

## Access - Intake

Access is the process of receiving, analyzing and documenting reports of alleged child maltreatment. The functions of Access are as follows:

- Receive and document reports of alleged maltreatment from the community
- Identify families that the child protective services (CPS) system must respond to
- Determine the urgency of the response time
- Initiate an assessment of child safety and family strengths

## Initial Assessment - Investigations

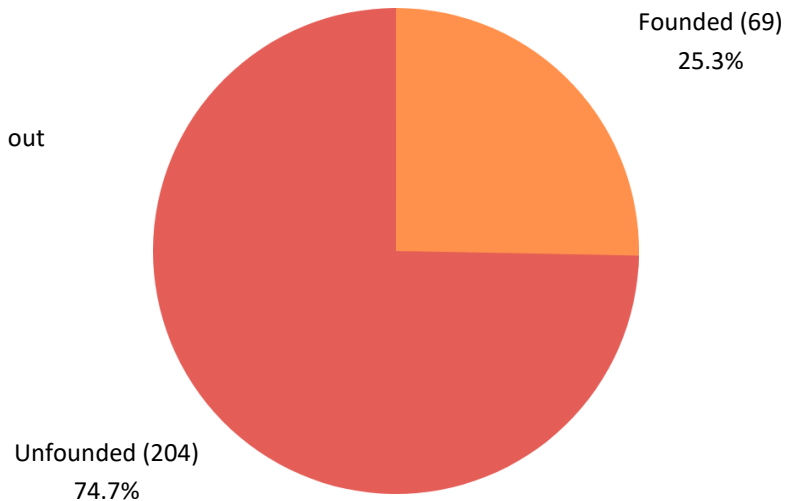
Initial assessment is the process of:

- Investigating alleged maltreatment
- Assessing the family condition to determine if the conditions and/or behaviors in the home pose a risk to a child's safety
- Determining what services may be needed to help the family enhance parental protective capacities to establish a safe environment for the child(ren)

## 2020 CHILDREN & FAMILY REFERRALS



## 2020 INITIAL ASSESSMENTS



## Clients Served Children, Juveniles and Families

- Child Protective/Child Welfare Services 703
- Youth Justice Services 74
- Community Based Service Programs 199
- Youth Intervention Programs 14
- Out of Home Care 79
- Kinship Care 57



## **On-going Services - Children in Need of Protection and Services (CHIPS)**

Services for children and their families who come under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court because the child or unborn child is in need of protection and services which can be ordered by the court (48.13 and 48.133 Wis. State Statutes).

Services typically include:

- Assessment, diagnosis, case/treatment planning, safety planning
- Monitoring and review
- Drug Testing
- Arranging counseling and therapy services
- Arranging physical and mental health services
- Monitoring of school attendance, involvement with IEPs
- Working with families on daily living skills, including parenting, child care, and discipline techniques
- Working with families on clean safe housing, budget management
- When child safety cannot be managed in the home -Out-of-home placement services
- Determining what services may be needed to help the family enhance parental protective capacities to establish a safe environment for the child(ren)

## **In-Home and/or Community Services**

The Department has an array of services to offer families to maintain children safely in their homes and their communities. The following services were provided to children, youth and families in 2020:

Intensive Aftercare Program

Early Intervention Program

TSSF (Targeted Safety Support Funds)

CST (Coordinated Service Team)

Parenting Education – individual and groups

Parent Aids/Mentors

ART (Aggression Replacement Therapy)

Mentor/Tutor Program

Going Forward

Supervised Visitation

CAST (Coping & Support Training)

Transportation Assistance

Drug Testing

Child Care Assistance

Independent Living

For details regarding these programs,  
please visit <https://ocdss.co.oneida.wi.us>

Click the Reports and Forms page – Service Listing



# CHILD WELFARE

Oneida County receives Child Welfare Referrals when Child Abuse and Neglect referrals do not meet the danger threshold of abuse or neglect; however, families may still need services.

When a referral comes in, the Social Worker engages the family to see if they are in need of any services. The Agency goal is to engage these families and refer them for services before it becomes an abuse or neglect referral.

In the later part of 2019, the Agency revamped the way the Agency handles child welfare referrals in an attempt to engage families in a more trauma informed way. If families are looking for services, the Agency can then open a limited service case to provide the family with the support/services they need.

In 2020 the Agency served 39 families with voluntary services.





# FOSTER CARE AND KINSHIP CARE

When a child cannot safely remain in their home, every effort is made to place a child with a relative or like-kin caregiver. When that is not possible, the next preference is to place children with foster families.

In the last two years Oneida County has experienced an increased number of children and youth in out of home care. This is for the most part attributable to parental/caregiver substance use. The Kinship Care program is where relatives of a child placed in their home can apply for a benefit to assist with costs associated in caring for the child. In 2020, this benefit was \$256.00 per month per child.

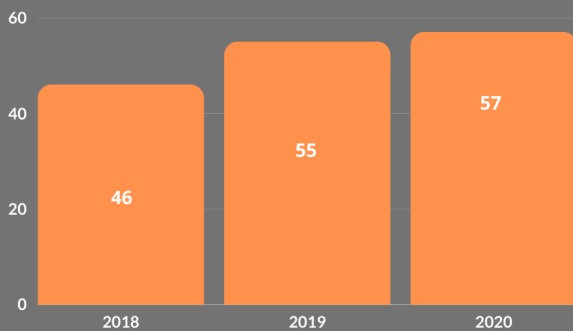
**24%**

Increase in  
children placed  
from 2018 to  
2020

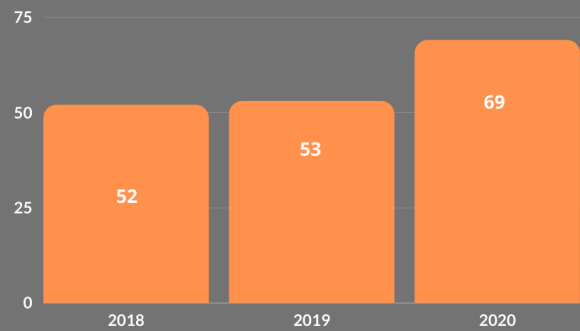
**33%**

Increase in  
children placed  
from 2018 to  
2020

CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE



CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE



Kinship Care families agree as a part of the application process to become licensed as a level one Foster Home. In 2020, there were 23 requests for Foster Care licensure either as a result of a Kinship Care placement or an individual or family submitting to be a Foster Home.

Due to the large number of requests and the significant amount of documentation and interviews involved, the Department contracted with Lutheran Social Services to complete a number of the home studies for Foster Homes. In addition, Vilas County Department of Social Services agreed to complete two Foster Home studies.

# YOUTH JUSTICE

Youth Justice Social Workers provide services to the court, youth, and families in cases in which the youth has committed an act that is against the law or for a behavioral issue. Our agency receives referrals from law enforcement, schools, and parents and caregivers and confers with the District Attorney's Office regarding the disposition of the case. An Intake Inquiry is conducted for each case and a decision is made on how to proceed. The agency received a total of 97 youth justice referrals in 2020.



The social worker can recommend a number of services to the District Attorney's office to resolve the case. These include but are not limited to: payment of restitution, community service, apology letters to victims, Early Intervention Services, Parenting classes, ART (Aggression Replacement Therapy), counseling for AODA or Mental Health issues, and regular supervision appointments with the social worker to discuss progress on these recommendations.

## Children and Youth in Out-of-Home Care

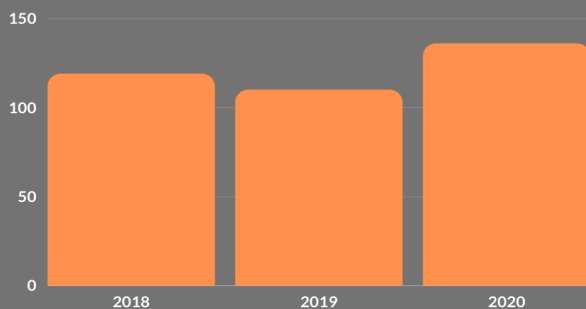
**14%**

Increase in children placed from 2018 to 2020

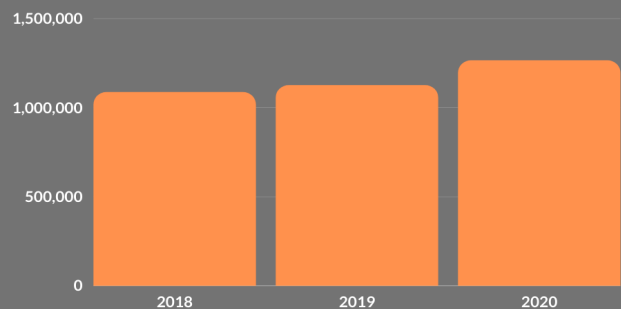
**16%**

Increase in cost from 2018 to 2020

YOUTH IN OUT OF HOME CARE



COST OF OUT OF HOME CARE



# DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN

58%

OF REFERRALS IN 2020  
WERE DEC REFERRALS

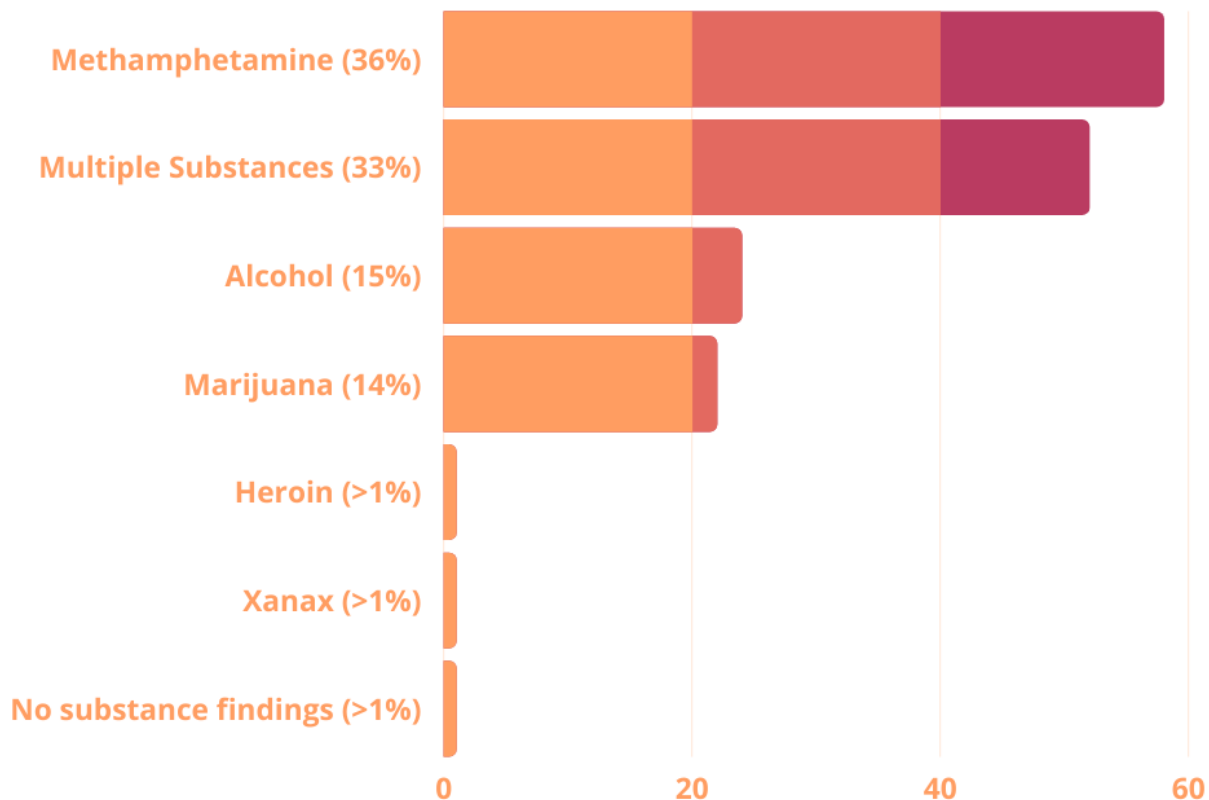
Oneida County has had very active participation in the DEC program in 2020. The purpose of the DEC Team is to collaboratively intervene on behalf of children who have been exposed to drug-endangered environments and are unsafe in those environments. Members of the Oneida County DEC team include Law Enforcement, schools, Human Service Center, the DA's Office and Corporation Counsel, Probation and Parole, Public Health and our Department among others.

DEC team meetings are held bi-monthly to discuss protocols, debrief cases, and plan community education events. Protocols were improved with the goal of reducing the number of interviews children have to go through during an investigation. This significantly reduces trauma.

In 2020, the DEC Team continued to meet virtually. Some partners expressed concerns that due to virtual schooling and Safe at Home orders, many clients who were normally seen regularly were not being seen as often due to the pandemic. A number of agencies had restrictions in place due to COVID-19 that reduced their ability to meet with clients. The DEC team was able to overcome some of these barriers by assisting with face to face contacts and drug tests for clients that agencies had in common.



## DEC REFERRALS SUBSTANCE FINDINGS





# ECONOMIC SUPPORT

The Economic Support (ES) Section administers the financial assistance programs mandated by the Federal government and State of Wisconsin. These programs include Medical Assistance (MA) including BadgerCare, Food Share (FS), Childcare, and the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP).

Due to the global pandemic, the State made significant changes to policy and procedure. This included suspending reviews for recipients of Food Share and Badger Care. Because of this, recipient's benefits did not end nor were they able to close their own benefits. There was a visible increase in all benefits, especially Food Share. Households were receiving maximum benefits for their family size which minimized numbers at food pantries.

Economic Support received an additional \$23,608.87 in Federal funding from the state due to a surplus caused from Random Moment Time Studies completed by Economic Support staff across the state. This revenue was a refund of county tax levy used to fund Economic Support.

There was an increase in the average number of cases for all programs served under Economic Support.

- Food Share- 10% increase
- Medical Assistance- 7% increase
- Child Care- 2% increase
- Energy Assistance- 1% increase

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Oneida County served on average 5,951 clients in 2020 for Medical Assistance benefits. Adults under 100% Federal Poverty Level and children under 300% Federal Poverty Level are potentially eligible for MA services.

2020 Average Monthly Cases	4,116
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## FOOD SHARE

Food Share eligibility is based on household income, number of family members in the household, and shelter expenses. The FSET (Food Share Employment Training) program assists FS clients in training for and finding employment. In 2020, 95 new jobs were gained due to FSET participation, at an average starting wage of \$12.32. In 2020, Oneida County provided FS benefits to an average of 3,535 individuals. Total FS issuance for 2020 for Oneida County was \$6,758,994, an 82% increase from 2019.



# ECONOMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS



## WISCONSIN SHARES CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In 2020, the Agency hired a new economic support specialist who would specifically specialize in Child Care. IM Central Consortium's Child Care Team is able to coordinate case processing and training to better assist clients. Caseload sizes continue to decrease and this appears to be due to a lack of approved childcare facilities in the area. Increased requirements for certification as well as low reimbursement rates deter involvement from childcare providers in becoming certified to care for children eligible for Wisconsin Shares Child Care assistance. However, in 2020 there was an average of 49 childcare cases in Oneida County. This is an increase from the 2019 average of 48 cases.

## WISCONSIN HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (WHEAP)

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) assists individuals with energy costs. There were 1,585 households that received energy assistance during fiscal year 2020 (October 1, 2019-September 30, 2020). In response to the COVID-19 Crisis, the Department of Administration (DOA) adjusted the eligibility requirements for residents who are seeking heating and electric assistance through the WHEAP. Eligibility was based on the household's previous month of income, rather than the former requirement of the previous three months of income. This move was made to ensure those who were recently affected by the COVID-19 response are able to receive assistance quickly. The State also did not end the winter moratorium which prevented any disconnections. Further, crisis funding is available for clients that have a disconnect or no heat situation. With a co-payment, funding is provided to assist clients with a re-connection. In fiscal year 2020, 226 clients received crisis funding. Assistance is also provided for furnace repairs and replacements, of which 77 clients benefited from this service. The following are the amounts for each service area:



- \* Energy Assistance           \$852,833
- \* Crisis Assistance            \$80,538
- \* Furnace Assistance         \$126,041

Staff provided Outreach services in Minocqua, Three Lakes, and Nokomis, to assist clients who have difficulty getting to Rhinelander to apply for services.

# CHILD SUPPORT

Child Support program goals, as set by the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, are “to assure that assistance in obtaining support (both financial and medical) is available to children through locating parents, establishing paternity and support obligations and enforcing those obligations.”

## Performance

Child Support Unit caseload average	1,864
Arrears Collected	\$1,015,577.43
Current Support collected for NIVD cases	\$1,378,371.18
Current Support collected for IVD cases	<u>\$2,972,910.00</u>
Total Child Support collected in 2020	\$5,437,853.41
+\$253,688.51 vs. 2019	

To see all of the functions the Child Support unit provides, see the **OCDSS 2021 Service Listing**.

COURT ORDER ESTABLISHED RATE (% OF TOTAL CASES)		PATERNITY ESTABLISHED RATE (% OF TOTAL CASES)		CURRENT SUPPORT COLLECTION (% COLLECTED VS. ORDERED)		ARREARS COLLECTION (% OF CASES W/ ARREARS OWED & PAYMENT TOWARD ARREARS)	
PERCENT	GOAL	PERCENT	GOAL	PERCENT	GOAL	PERCENT	GOAL
90.17%	80%	104.34%	80%	77.20%	80%	77.64%	80%
+0.61% vs 2019		-0.16% vs 2019		+0.67% vs 2019		+1.68% vs 2019	

## Children First

Children First is an employment and training program for Non-Custodial Parents (NCPs) who have a court-ordered child support obligation. Children First is a state funded program authorized by statute. The goal of Children First is to help clients gain and retain employment while strengthening their relationship with their children.

NCP's owing support who are unemployed or underemployed, but able to work, may be court ordered to participate in the Children First program. Children First agencies provide case management and employment services to parents who are court ordered to participate in the program.

For a participant to satisfy Children First program requirements, they must complete one of the following within 12 months of enrollment:

1. Make three consecutive monthly child support payments for the court-ordered amount (partial payments do not count); -or-
2. Successfully and fully complete all assigned Children First activities for 16 weeks within a 12-month period.

Children First case managers work with the court ordered NCP to improve their ability to make regular child support payments by improving their employability. This is completed by working with the NCP in resume development, interview skills, job search as well as many other things including building and improving soft skills.

In 2020, Children First served 9 clients total. 6 were referred in 2020, and an additional 3 were referred in 2019, but still participating in 2020. Of those 9 clients, 4 successfully completed the program, 4 are still participating and only 1 was disenrolled due to non-participation. Of the 8 who participated in Children First, 7 are currently making at least some payments towards their child support obligation.





# INTERNAL DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES

## LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Our LRP Committee made up of agency staff meets every three months to review progress and make plans for future identified goals. 2020 was the second year of 2019-2021 Long Range Plan. Updates to the plan are reviewed annually by the Social Services Committee. Some accomplishments in 2020 were:

- Creating a Facebook page
- Updates to Policies to provide flexibility to staff
- Developed new staff recognition programs
- Provided training to staff on evaluation process
- Applied for a Recovery Coach to utilize in 2021
- Updated agency brochures.

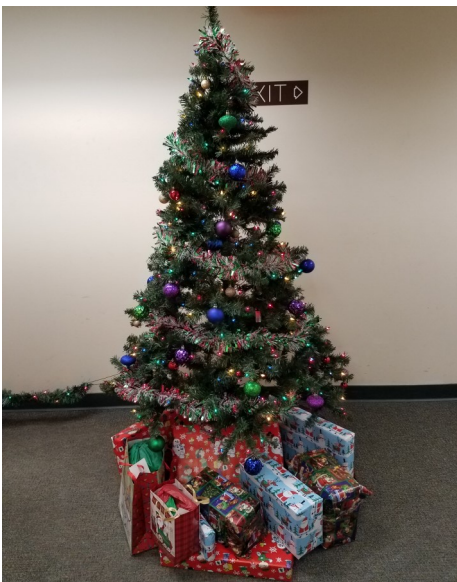


## SAFETY COMMITTEE

Our internal safety committee is tasked with reviewing agency policy and procedure to determine if we are maintaining a safe environment for clients and staff. The committee meets to discuss safety issues both within the department and out in the field. In 2020, safety measures were implemented to protect Social Services employees and clients from COVID-19 exposures with the installation of protective barriers, use of Personal Protective equipment, social distancing measures, and remote work. Additionally, members of the safety committee participated in recurring meetings with emergency management to monitor the ongoing COVID-19 crisis and provide input from the Social Services perspective.

## VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE

Social Services Staff are dedicated to our residents on a professional and personal level. With that in mind, our staff have taken advantage of multiple volunteer opportunities to give back to the community. Starting in 2019, staff were allowed to wear jeans the second Friday of every month if they donated to the designated cause for that month. In 2020, donations were made for:



- Boys and Girls Club of Oneida County—\$117.00
- Christmas donations for families—\$150.00
- Alzheimer's Walk—\$195
- Rhinelander Food Pantry—\$80.00 & non-perishable items
- Essential Needs Pantry—\$80.00 & needed items
- Feed WI —\$108.00
- NATH Homeless Shelter— 4 meals for residence
- Humane Society—\$120.00
- Lakeland Food Pantry—\$190.00
- Salvation Army—\$55.00

Total cash donations for the year of \$1,095.00

# TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

The Trauma Informed Care (TIC) Committee is made up of agency staff, Oneida County school district personnel, staff from Oneida County Public Health, the Human Service Center, the UW-Extension, representatives from Vilas and Forest Counties Department of Social Services, and interested citizens that have been involved in system of care in Oneida County.



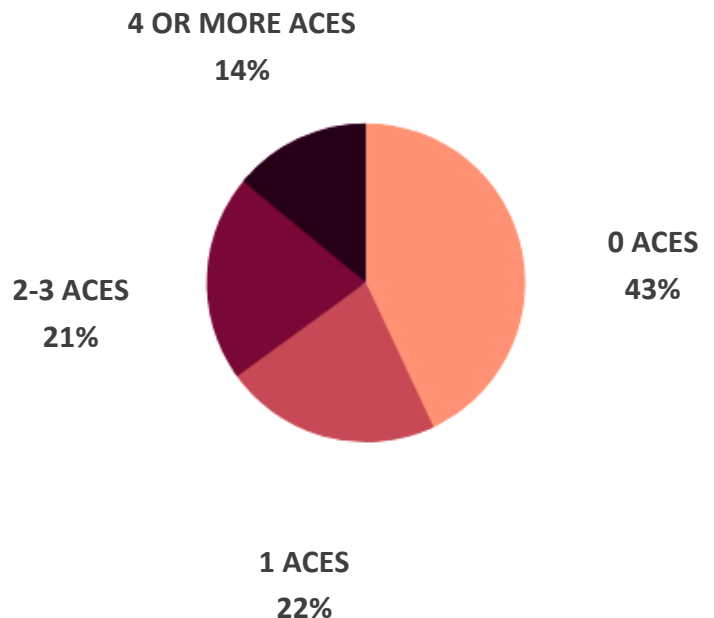
Our mission is to build a trauma-informed agency by incorporating specific strategies across each level of the agency. Develop trauma-specific services that match clients' needs to enhance understanding of the impact of trauma on individuals, families, staff, and the community as a whole. The committee will match learned strategies to the needs and strengths of families and staff. The TIC Vision: Supporting resilient and healthy lives in the Northwoods through trusting and compassionate partnerships.

2020 was an interesting year for our Trauma Informed group as the focus was shifted from future goals to what needed to occur to get clients, customers, and employees through COVID.

## 2020 Accomplishments:

- ◆ Added a member of the YMCA of the Northwoods to our team
- ◆ Discussed concerns with the schools and the effects the pandemic will have on the community's children
- ◆ Gathered artwork from the surrounding schools to display in our Agency's hallways to make it a more inviting place
- ◆ Developed a Facebook page to reach outside audiences to get them information regarding learning material, community information, etc.
- ◆ Created a "LOL Zone" where staff can share good news, funny jokes, and thank you cards in the Agency
- ◆ Developed a Sunshine Club to focus on the work environment and make it a happier place in the time of a global pandemic

## DISTRIBUTION OF ACE SCORES AMONG WISCONSIN ADULTS 2011-2015



\*ACE: Adverse Childhood Experiences