

Services Benefitting Prince George's County Children & Families

Prince George's County Department of Social Services



About PGCDSS



- ▶ **The Mission:** Prince George's County Department of Social Services (PGCDSS) is in the business of providing opportunities for residents of the County to become independent, responsible, and stable members of the community. We do this by providing intervention services that ***strengthen*** families, ***protect*** children and vulnerable adults, ***encourage*** self-sufficiency, and ***promote*** personal responsibility.
- ▶ **The Vision:** PGCDSS will be the ***leader in social services***, working to significantly improve the lives of the citizens of this County. We will achieve this by ***building community*** capacity, identifying gaps in service, developing ***community-based solutions***, and building ***a collaborative and competitive network*** of providers that includes PGCDSS. We will hold our partners and ourselves accountable.

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(1) Prevention: Office of Strategic Partnerships and Community Solutions



- ▶ **The Office of Strategic Partnership and Community Solutions (OSPSCS)**. Created in August 2020, OSPSCS serves to strengthen the connection between PGCDSS, local government agencies, and community-based organizations.
- ▶ The Department of Social Services supports 15 middle schools within PGCPSS. The participants typically experience challenges navigating adolescent development and often times require additional support as they develop their own personal identities, strengthen relationships with peers and family members. PGCDSS Human Service Navigators will conduct regular individual check-ins, home visits, and small student group sessions to support each schools' effort to positively impact students personal and academic growth.
- ▶ During the 2019-2020 school year, OSPSCS collaborated with eight partners to provide crisis intervention, behavioral health, college and career readiness, and social-emotional support to students. Since as early as April 2019, OSPSCS receives a **weekly runaways report** from Prince George's Police Department to contact families of students that may attend schools that Human Service Navigators support. Navigators make every effort to contact families, offer referrals to necessary intervention/prevention services and coordinate school-based wraparound support for runaway youth.
- ▶ **Multi-service Centers**
 - ▶ Langley Park Multi-Service Center
 - ▶ The Solutions Center at Southview
 - ▶ Bridge Center at Adam's House
 - ▶ Employ Prince George's American Jobs Center

(1) Prevention: Office of Strategic Partnerships and Community Solutions

2019-2020 School Year: An Overview

▶ General Referrals

- 2,163 students were referred for general support needs
- 330 students were referred for clothing, technology, educational materials, and holiday assistance

▶ Behavioral Health

- 4,385 students received therapy
- 67% of students successfully met treatment goals

▶ Intensive Case Management

- 1,672 students received case management support related to homelessness, group interventions and connections to culturally and linguistically appropriate resources

▶ College and Career Readiness

- 505 students participated in dropout prevention programming
- 60 students participated in a youth employment training academy

(1) Prevention: Family Preservation and Kinship Care

- ▶ **Family Preservation** is a home-based service designed to meet the specific needs of individual families whose children are at imminent or high risk of an out-of-home placement.
 - ▶ Goals:
 - To enhance the parent's ability to create a safe, stable, and nurturing home environment that promotes healthy child development.
 - To prevent out-of-home placement where safety can be promoted.
- ▶ **Kinship Care** is a home visiting program specifically designed to provide caregivers with needed emotional support, guidance, counseling, and financial assistance. DSS provides, both directly and through a contractor, case management and supportive services to families residing in the county and caring for a relative's child.
 - ▶ By providing weekly home visits, resources, referrals family advocacy, crisis intervention we increase the likelihood that children will remain in the care of loving relatives.
 - ▶ Families can participate for up to 2 months. Participating families are better equipped to continue raising children in their care if the bio parents are unwilling or unable due to substance abuse, domestic violence, incarceration, unemployment, or other crises.



(2) Child Protective Services: Alternative & Investigative Response, Child Advocacy Center



- ▶ **Child Protective Services (CPS)** is a state-mandated program responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of children and families in the community through the receipt and investigation of allegations of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and mental injury of children under the age of 18.
- ▶ CPS investigations are conducted in a ***trauma-focused, child-friendly*** manner by professionals trained to assess and discern the safety and wellbeing of child victims of abuse and maltreatment. PGCDSS follows the laws, policies, and practices set forth by federal, state, and local government.
- ▶ The Child Advocacy Center (CAC) led by DSS and including the county police department, State's Attorney Office, and other partners is a child-friendly facility where child victims of sexual abuse and maltreatment have forensic interview, undergo medical exams, linked with a family advocate and receive family therapy.

(3) Foster Care & Adoption: Brief Overview

- ▶ **Foster Care** provides short-term care and supportive services to children who are unable to live at home due to child abuse and neglect. Children are placed in family foster homes, kinship care, as well as congregate care.
- ▶ Foster Care is the response of last resort to abuse and neglect. The goal of Prince George's County child welfare agency is to keep children with their families. Under the recently implemented Family First Prevention Services Act states, territories, and tribes with an approved Title IV-E plan have the option to use these funds for prevention services that would allow "candidates for foster care" to stay with their parents or relatives. States can be reimbursed for prevention services for up to 12 months.



(3) Foster Care & Adoption: AFFIRM Program



- ▶ The **AFFIRM** program at PGCDSS gives LGBT+ youth and their families the support and resources necessary to help youth improve their coping skills and provide peer support. It also gives the parents and caregivers the tools to celebrate, honor and validate LGBT+ identities and experiences and recognize the impact of discrimination and stigma on the well-being of youth.
- ▶ In the last year, 23 youth self-identified as LGBT+ and participated in AFFIRM. Twelve of these youth received mental health services. None of the 23 youth had any known encounters with law enforcement.
- ▶ In partnership, with the Human Rights Campaign, all PGCDSS staff participate in mandatory training to improve the services provided to LGBT+ youth.

(3) Foster Care & Adoption: Crossover Youth Program

- ▶ The Prince George's Model Court which includes the Circuit Court, PGCDSS, the Department of Juvenile Services and many other partners implemented the **Crossover Youth Program** to provide better care for all children who are involved with child welfare and juvenile services.
- ▶ Of the 152 youth served since inception, the Crossover Youth program has **successfully diverted 57%** from subsequent court involvement. There has been a noticeable reduction in the number of child welfare youth arrested and significant increase in joint case planning between the systems for youth formally adjudicated.
- ▶ For FY '21 there are six (6) participants in the Crossover Youth Program. All have experienced encounters with law enforcement; however, there are no negative interactions reported. All 6 are currently receiving behavioral health services.

(3) Foster Care & Adoption: Ready by 21

- ▶ The **Ready by 21** initiative is an expansion of the continuum of services provided by PGCDSS through the strategic realignment of relationships with public and private sectors to ensure that youth are provided with the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes as an adult.
 - ▶ Services Overview:
 - Preparing youth for approaching adulthood
 - Providing supportive services to youth as they age out of care
 - Providing tailored strategies for each youth to best support their needs
 - Offering career development and job placement assistance to eligible youth
- ▶ As part of the Model Court program, each youth is assessed for independence based on a checklist developed by Model Court partners. Ready by 21 seeks to ensure that every young adult is appropriately prepared for independence once they leave foster care.



(4) Youth Homelessness: Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project



- ▶ Prince George's County is committed to preventing and eliminating homelessness whenever and wherever possible and ensuring that when homelessness does occur, those episodes are rare, brief and non-recurring. PGCDSS and other Continuum of Care partners operate shelters for families, women and children, men, and unaccompanied youth who are homeless.
- ▶ PGCDSS is proud to be a part of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) **Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project** (YHDP), which is designed to drastically reduce the number of youth experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied, pregnant and parenting youth.

(4) Youth Homelessness: Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project



- ▶ As part of the Department of Social Services led Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP), seven projects have been selected and submitted to HUD for final approval and will serve unaccompanied youth and young adults aged 24 or younger who are experiencing homelessness. The projects include new capacity in the following areas:
 - ▶ Drop-In Center
 - ▶ Street Outreach
 - ▶ Crisis beds for those experiencing a significant behavioral health crisis
 - ▶ Joint transitional and Rapid re-housing
 - ▶ Joint transitional and Rapid re-housing for high education students
 - ▶ Permanent Supportive housing for those significant somatic, behavioral, or intellectual challenges

(4) Current Resources for Youth Experiencing Homelessness:



Promise Place, St. Ann's, Maryland Multicultural Youth Services

- ▶ **Promise Place** is an emergency youth shelter that provides homeless, abandoned, abused, neglected and runaway youth a safe place to stay as alternative to the streets and/or unstable housing. Operated in partnership with Sasha Bruce, Inc., Promise Place is open 24 hours a day and serves up to 20 youth at one time. On-site services include crisis intervention; individual, group, and family counseling; case management, support for shelter graduates, and temporary respite care.
- ▶ **St. Ann's Center** supports families and youth on their journey to stability. On-site services include teen mother and baby programs, transitional housing, life skills, and an education center.
- ▶ **Maryland Multicultural Youth Services** offers a family-based or host home model for youth with short-term housing needs and youth who could benefit from long-term placement with a family. It provides emergency shelter to homeless and runaway youth.

(5) Eligibility Services: Food and Cash Assistance

- ▶ **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** (SNAP) is the Federal Program for Maryland's Food Supplement Program, SNAP offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and provides economic benefits to communities. SNAP is the largest program in the domestic hunger safety net.
- ▶ **Temporary Cash Assistance** (TCA) provides need-based supportive services to families with minor children; it has a requirement that all work mandatory applicants seek employment and be involved in work activities from the day they apply.
- ▶ **Emergency Assistance to Families with Children** (EAFC) provides emergency cash assistance to families who need emergency help paying rent, utilities, or other emergency bills. Customers may only receive one grant within a 24-month period. Each family situation is assessed to determine the type of emergency help needed. Families must have one or more children under 21 and living with them.

(5) Eligibility Services: Affordable Care Act

- ▶ **Prince George's County Health Connect** (PGCHC) The Department of Social Services is the administrator for Prince George's County health insurance marketplace; providing enrollment assistance, education, and outreach to Prince George's County residents. PGCHC uses certified navigators to provide in-person assistance to help residents learn about, apply for, and enroll in health insurance; including Medicaid (MA), *Maryland Children's Health Program* (MCHP), and private insurers.
- ▶ **Medicaid** is a program that pays the medical bills of certain low-income individuals. Administered by the State, it pays medical bills with Federal and State funds. While most Medicaid applications are handled through the State, PGCDSS remains responsible for eligibility and management of special populations such as ineligible immigrants, SSI households, persons ages 65 and over, *children in foster care, and juvenile justice systems*.

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