



# ANNUAL REPORT

State Fiscal Year 2022



**Georgia Department  
of Human Services**

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# SFY 2022 Major Events

Three of Georgia's Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) received awards from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), the highest honor presented by n4a to member agencies.

**August 2021**

Commissioner Broce joined Judge Ann B. Harris in Cobb County for the graduation for fathers who successfully completed the Parental Accountability Court (PAC) program.

**November 2021**



The Clark's Christmas Kids program provided more than 25,000 gifts, fulfilling the wish lists of more than 8,500 Georgia children in foster care. Thank you to all who donated!

**December 2021**



Commissioner Broce and her leadership team embarked on a three-day "roadshow" in Rome, where they joined legislators and local leaders for a tour of the Restoration Rome Center for Foster Care Services, among other site visits.

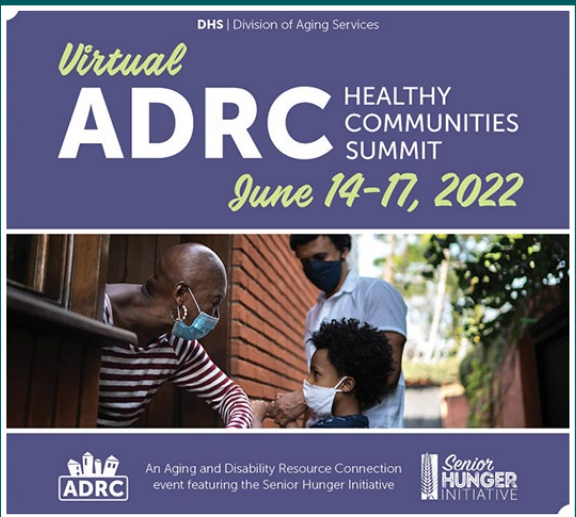
**April 2022**

The Division of Family & Children Services announced the implementation of mCase, an innovative mobile solution allowing child welfare caseworkers to electronically track and update their efforts in real time.

**April 2022**

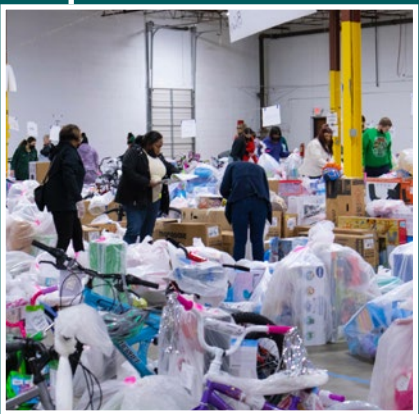
Commissioner Broce attended the presentation of the 2022 Foster Caregiver of the Year awards with DHS staff.

**May 2022**



**December 2021**

The Division of Aging Services' Light Up the Holidays gift drive for Georgians living under public guardianship was a huge success! Gifts were provided to more than 585 clients who would otherwise not receive a gift for the holidays.



**March 2022**

Clark Howard dedicated a Habitat for Humanity home in memory of Donna Pettigrew-Jackson, a long-time member of the DHS family.



**June 2022**

Over 500 Georgians attended Georgia's annual ADRC Healthy Communities Summit to learn about resources for seniors and adults with disabilities.



# Letter from Commissioner Candice L. Broce



I am proud to present the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2022 Annual Report for the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS). This report contains our financial and performance highlights for the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2022, and supports Governor Brian P. Kemp and First Lady Marty Kemp's initiatives and priorities for the state.

Each day, the men and women of DHS are proud to execute our mission to strengthen Georgia by providing individuals and families access to services that promote self-sufficiency, independence, and protect Georgia's vulnerable children and adults. We fulfill this mission through dozens of programs

across the Division of Aging Services, Division of Child Support Services, and Division of Family & Children Services.

Our daily work is guided by five core values: (1) provide access to resources that offer support and empower Georgians and their families; (2) deliver services professionally and treat all clients with dignity and respect; (3) manage business operations effectively and efficiently by aligning resources across the agency; (4) promote accountability, transparency, and quality in all services we deliver and programs we administer; and (5) develop our employees at all levels of the agency.

At DHS, we aim not just to perform the regular duties necessary to achieve our goals and make progress on our priorities, but also to transform our work and systems to achieve the same aims. DHS employees are proud to serve our fellow Georgians, both through accomplishing our goals and transforming our work to deliver on them even more effectively and efficiently in the future.

This report is a clear statement of our achievements and progress, as well as the opportunities we have to improve our programs to work better for the people we serve. In the years to come, we will continue to work closely with our stakeholders, agency partners, and

colleagues under the Gold Dome to overcome challenges and take bold steps to build stronger families for a stronger Georgia.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Candice Broce".

Candice L. Broce  
Commissioner

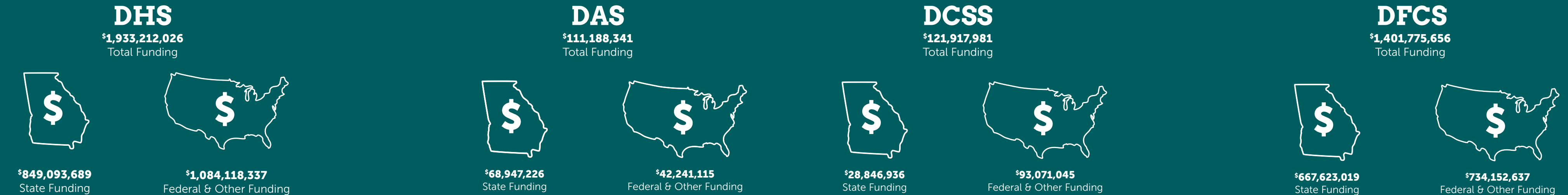
## About DHS Department of Human Services



The Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) serves more than 2 million Georgians and employs approximately 8,506 people. With an annual budget of \$1.93 billion, DHS delivers a wide range of services that protect and enhance the lives of Georgia's most vulnerable residents.

DHS comprises three divisions — the Division of Aging Services (DAS), the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS), and the Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS).

# SFY 2022 Budget Allocation and Funding





# About DAS

## Division of Aging Services



The Division of Aging Services (DAS) assists older individuals, at-risk adults, persons with disabilities, their families, and caregivers to achieve safe, healthy, independent and self-reliant lives. The Division works with its partners around the state to keep people in their homes and communities for as long as they desire, enabling them to function independently and avoid or delay placement in a long-term care facility.

DAS is also responsible for safeguarding vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The division investigates claims of abuse in the community setting (the Department of Community Health investigates claims of abuse in care facilities). DAS also provides services to advocate for adults under guardianship.

## DAS

### Aging and Disability Resource Connection

The Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) is a one-stop shop or “no wrong door” entry point staffed with counselors who help older adults and adults with disabilities navigate life changes and find resources to assist them with living a more self-sufficient life. The majority of these services are provided through the statewide network of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs).

#### Area Agencies on Aging

Through contracts with the 12 AAAs, the Division of Aging Services supports older adults, adults living with a disability, and their caregivers through a variety of home and community-based services, as well as other supportive services. AAAs are located across the state and support individuals and caregivers in every county. While specific services vary by region, the core programs in each AAA region are:

**Personal Care Assistance** Hands-on assistance with bathing, dressing, and similar daily living activities

**Transportation Services** Provides rides to and from Senior Centers, medical appointments, and quality of life trips such as shopping and other activities to remain engaged in the community.

**Assistive Technology** Tools that can help individuals perform everyday tasks, allowing them to remain in their own home or the community setting of their choosing and/or avoid long-term residential care.

**Home-Delivered Meals** Nutritious meals provided to qualified individuals in their homes

**Congregate Meals** Nutritious weekday lunches provided to older adults in a group setting.

**Chronic Disease Self-Management** Services that teach individuals with recurring conditions and illnesses how to monitor and care for themselves in a way that maximizes their quality of life.

**Respite Care** Services that offer a brief period of rest for family caregivers, either in the home or on a short-term basis in institutional settings.

**Elderly Legal Assistance Program** Legal representation, information and assistance for all civil matters including elder law, housing, elder abuse and neglect, and Supplemental Security Income.

**Money Follows the Person and Nursing Home Transitions Programs** Programs that assist individuals who reside in long term in-patient facilities with relocating back into a community setting of their choosing, when desired. Money Follows the Person is a federally funded program and Nursing Home Transitions is funded by the state.

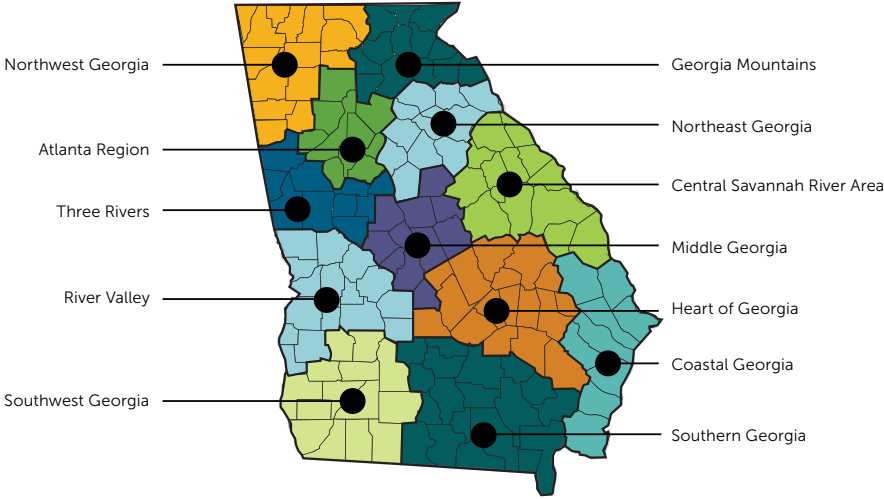
### Need Assistance?

Anyone seeking resources to support an older adult or individual living with a disability can call the ADRC’s toll-free number at **866-552-4464** to speak with a counselor or visit **[georgiaadrc.com](http://georgiaadrc.com)**.

Based on the individual’s needs, counselors provide unbiased information on resources and services that will support the individual and allow him/her to live in the setting of their choosing.

The toll-free number can also connect callers to the SHIP program, which provides free and unbiased counseling on Medicare, Medicaid, and other related health insurance. For more information on the SHIP program, please visit **[ship.georgia.gov](http://ship.georgia.gov)**.

AAA Regions



SFY 2022 Clients Served by Planning & Service Areas

Region	ADRC	Adult Protective Services	GeorgiaCares	Home & Community Based Services	Money Follows the Person	Nursing Home Transitions
Atlanta	24,212	10,933	5,450	11,399	38	32
Central Savannah River Area (CSRA)	3,520	2,016	764	2,507	0	0
Coastal Georgia	4,555	2,396	812	2,801	9	11
Georgia Mountains	4,873	2,515	2,011	3,811	1	14
Heart of Georgia	3,355	1,073	440	2,001	11	11
Middle Georgia	4,402	1,847	656	1,988	1	6
Northeast Georgia	4,637	2,043	1,154	2,925	2	14
Northwest Georgia	9,631	3,285	1,649	3,667	13	9
River Valley	3,698	1,366	564	1,792	1	6
Southern Georgia	4,663	1,526	891	2,242	17	10
Southwest Georgia	9,063	1,257	585	2,915	9	7
State DAS/CILs¹	-	-	-	-	42	52
Unavailable Planning and Service Area	-	309	-	-	-	-
Three Rivers	3,944	1,827	1,315	2,685	14	24
Statewide Total	80,553	32,393	16,291	40,733	158	196

DAS  
By the Numbers  
ADRC



80,553

customers and family members received free, unbiased counseling on resources and services specific to their needs



354

vulnerable adults transitioned from nursing homes and in-patient facilities back into their homes and communities through the Money Follows the Person and Nursing Home Transitions programs



\$962,145.57

in out-of-pocket expenses was saved by SHIP Medicare beneficiaries



4,769,577

meals were provided to older or disabled adults through home delivery and congregate settings



1,510

clients received assistive technology services



40,733

individuals received Home and Community-Based Services



\$75,348

is the average annual cost to provide residential care in a nursing home



\$23,009,915

was the value of legal services provided to older Georgians through the Elderly Legal Assistance Program



\$2,146

is the average individual annual cost to provide Home and Community-Based Services



3,582

individuals contacted the ADRC to receive information on assistive technology

FY  
22

# Georgia Memory Net

Georgia Memory Net (GMN) is a statewide program developed in partnership with Emory University to expand access to early and accurate diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias and to support those living with dementia, including caregivers.

Additionally, GMN trains physicians to properly screen for the disease and collect data in a manner that will allow the state to better support those living with dementia. Cognitive neurology and neuropsychology leads based in Emory’s Cognitive Neurology Program train and continuously work with Memory Assessment Clinics (MACs) to ensure the MAC providers have the tools and training they need to effectively and accurately diagnose Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias using evidence-based, clinically-proven tools.

Currently, five MACs are in operation across the state. The MACs are located at Augusta University in Augusta, Grady Health in Atlanta, Navicent Health in Macon, Piedmont Columbus Regional in Columbus, and Phoebe Putney Health System in Albany.

## Did You Know? MEDICARE

Medicare recipients can receive a free cognitive impairment assessment that measures memory loss and cognitive decline as part of their Annual Wellness Visit.

For more information, visit [georgiamemorynet.org](https://georgiamemorynet.org).

## By the Numbers GMN



**\$26,188**

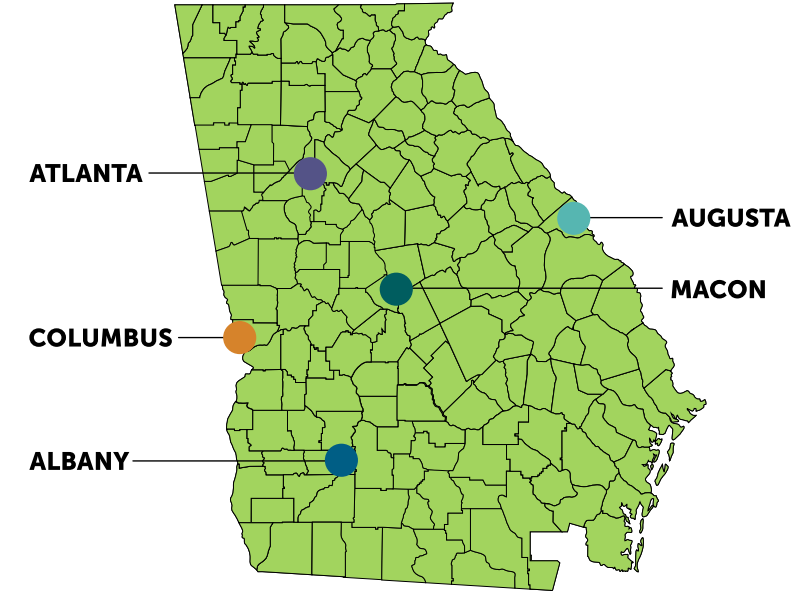
the amount of money Medicare spends per person diagnosed with dementia



**190,000**

residents are estimated to be living with Alzheimer’s in Georgia by 2025

## MAC Locations

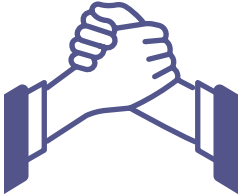


# DAS Dementia Friends

The Dementia Friends program began in June 2019, with the goal of increasing the number of Dementia Friends in Georgia. The campaign helps communities learn how they can become better friends, neighbors and relatives to people who live with dementia. Since FY 2020, each AAA has had at least one representative designated a Dementia Friends Champion.

These Champions host Dementia Friends Information Sessions to create more Dementia Friends across the state. Due to COVID-19, Dementia Friends USA permitted Information Sessions to be offered online. Because the sessions are meant to be interactive, they are encouraged to be used in small groups with chat features when administered online. This new format will allow the aging network to utilize Dementia Friends in a new and exciting way.

## By the Numbers Dementia Friends



**232**

Dementia Friends in SFY 2022



**28**

Information Sessions were hosted by Dementia Friends Champions in SFY 2022

## Sowega Council on Aging Breaks Down Walls with New Model to Serve Seniors

The Sowega Council on Aging was the first Area Agency on Aging (AAA) in Georgia to operate under the Senior Center Without Walls model. The brick-and-mortar operation of the traditional senior center model is a thing of the past, as the COVID pandemic forced AAAs to evaluate how to serve seniors at a distance. While some programs and activities are no longer taking place within the traditional senior center four walls, distance programming has become the new normal for engaging seniors across the 14-county region in southwest Georgia. Many were skeptical at first. Transitioning to a new model and serving seniors in a completely different way certainly came with its challenges. However, the Sowega Council on Aging turned these challenges into opportunities to serve more people, expand partnerships and community support, and engage clients in new ways.

“The new Senior Center Without Walls model offers a lot of opportunities for seniors that were not available before,” said Sowega Executive Director Izzie Sadler.

One of the biggest changes in the program is that participants now receive meals from a restaurant in their community rather than at a senior center. Sowega contracts with 22 restaurants throughout the region to provide seniors with meals that meet all dietary guidelines. Individuals can choose to dine on their own schedule and with anyone they choose. Restaurant dining also encourages community engagement. Since switching to this meal distribution method, the program has grown from 500 participants throughout the region to a peak of 1,500, with 1,000 more on the waiting list.

“We are extremely thankful to the Division of Aging Services for their support in developing this model and look forward to continuing to serve our region through innovative programming,” said Sadler.



# Senior Community Service Employment Program

Adults who are 55 or older, unemployed and looking to re-enter the workforce may qualify for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). Services are available in the majority of Georgia’s 159 counties. SCSEP is a program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that serves low-income persons who have a family income of no more than 125 percent of the federal poverty level and have poor employment prospects. Eligible individuals are placed in part-time community service positions with a goal of transitioning to unsubsidized employment. The program serves people whose yearly income meets the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Guidelines.

Participants’ training wages contribute to the local economy and reduce their dependence on public benefits programs. Participants provided a total of 109,836 hours of community services, including 62,207 hours of service to organizations that serve older adults.. Twenty-seven percent were individuals with disabilities. Twenty-seven percent of participants were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

## By the Numbers SCSEP



241

people participated in SCSEP in SFY 2022



47,629

hours of community service were provided by participants



27%

of SCSEP participants were homeless or at risk of homelessness



28

participants got a full-time job.



27%

of participants were individuals with disabilities



179

participants provided community service



# DAS Kinship Care

Through kinship support groups, DAS provides education and peer support for grandparents and relative caregivers raising children by focusing on positive parenting, effective discipline and healthy relationships. Other kinship care services include provision of material aid such as school supplies, respite through summer camps and case management for grandfamilies of children with disabilities.

## By the Numbers Kinship Care



\$412,605

was provided to AAAs for kinship care services using federal and state funds



5,564

people attended over 450 AAA-sponsored kinship support groups



31

ongoing kinship care support groups were held in six public service areas



## Georgia Fund for Children & Elderly

The Georgia Department of Human Services’ Division of Aging Services co-administers the Georgia Fund for Children & Elderly with the Department of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Program Division. The Division of Aging Services receives 50 percent of the fund’s donations each year, and those donations are distributed to Area Agencies on Aging for home-delivered meals and senior transportation. The remaining 50 percent is allotted to the Department of Public Health to provide grants for programs that serve children and youth with special needs. In SFY 2022, the Georgia Fund for Children & Elderly funded \$122,432.62 for programs for the elderly.

DAS

## Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) investigates reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of older persons or adults with disabilities who do not reside in long-term care facilities. Abuse involves physically harming or distressing an at-risk adult or depriving an individual of his/her basic needs, such as not providing necessary medications or withholding food.

APS case managers work with victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation to employ the least restrictive intervention for adults who are in need of support and have the capacity to engage in decisions about their well-being.

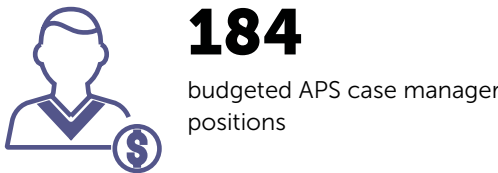
To report abuse of an older adult or a person with a disability in the community:

- Call **1-866-552-4464** or visit **aging.ga.gov**.

To report abuse of an older adult or a person with a disability in long-term care facilities:

- Call the Department of Community Health at **404-657-5700**. In case of emergency, call 911.

## By the Numbers APS



## SFY 2022 Top 5 Reasons for APS Reports

- 1 FINANCIAL ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION**  
Improperly or illegally using a person’s re-sources for the benefit of another person. **11,136 reports**
- 2 SELF-NEGLECT**  
Depriving oneself of necessities such as food, water, or medication. Consciously putting oneself in harm’s way or being unable to han-dle the needs of day-to-day living, because of medical problems, mental health, or other disabilities. **9,915 reports**
- 3 NEGLECT**  
Refusing or failing to provide essential services (food, water, shelter, medical care, etc.) to a person to the degree that it harms or threatens to harm them. **8,307 reports**
- 4 EMOTIONAL ABUSE**  
Using tactics, such as harassment, insults, intimidation, isolation or threats that cause mental or emotional anguish. Emotional abuse diminishes the person’s sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth. **4,329 reports**
- 5 PHYSICAL ABUSE**  
Using physical force to coerce or to inflict bodily harm. It often, but not al-ways, causes physical discomfort, pain, or injury. It may include the willful deprivation of essential services, such as medical care, food, or water. **3,245 reports**

DAS

## Public Guardianship

The Public Guardianship Office (PGO) is the guardian of last resort for Georgians who have been deemed by a probate court to be incapable of making or communicating decisions about their health or safety.

PGO case managers advocate for persons under guardianship, act as surrogate decision-makers and coordinate and monitor all services needed for the support, care, education, health, and welfare of guardianship clients.

## By the Numbers PGO



## Forensic Special Initiatives Unit

The Forensic Special Initiatives Unit (FSIU) aids DAS and other local, state and federal partners in their efforts to protect Georgia’s at-risk adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The unit provides technical assistance and case consultations and offers a two-day Certified Adult Crime Tactics Specialist (CACTS) certification course. The course trains professionals to identify and investigate cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The CACTS training is open to primary and secondary responders including:

- Law enforcement
  - Judges and prosecutors
  - Health care providers and medical erivices personnel
- Employees of financial institutions
  - Regulatory/social/victim service workers
  - Other professionals who respond to the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of at-risk adults

## By the Numbers FSIU





# About DCSS

## Division of Child Support Services



The Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) works to increase the consistency of financial support children receive from parents who do not have primary custody.

DCSS’ services include locating parents; establishing paternity; establishing, monitoring, and enforcing fair support orders; increasing health care coverage for children; and removing barriers to payment. In efforts to build stronger families, DCSS helps noncustodial parents find jobs that pay above minimum wage by connecting them with resources that help them meet their court-ordered obligation and be positively involved in their children’s lives.

### DCSS

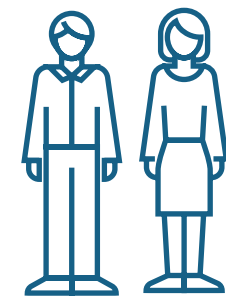
## Child Support Services

The Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) helps locate parents who owe child support, assists in determining paternity, collects support payments and provides resources to parents to ensure Georgia’s children receive financial and medical support from both parents. Children who receive support from both parents are more likely to experience financial and emotional stability and have a greater chance at success in adulthood.

In Federal Fiscal Year 2022  
(FFY 2022), **\$709,435,396.10**  
was distributed to Georgia’s  
children and families by DCSS.

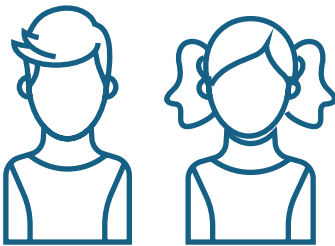
### By the Numbers

## Child Support Services



**267,991**

parents were under a  
court order for child  
support in Georgia



**449,070**

children were financially  
supported as a result of  
these orders





DCSS

Fatherhood program

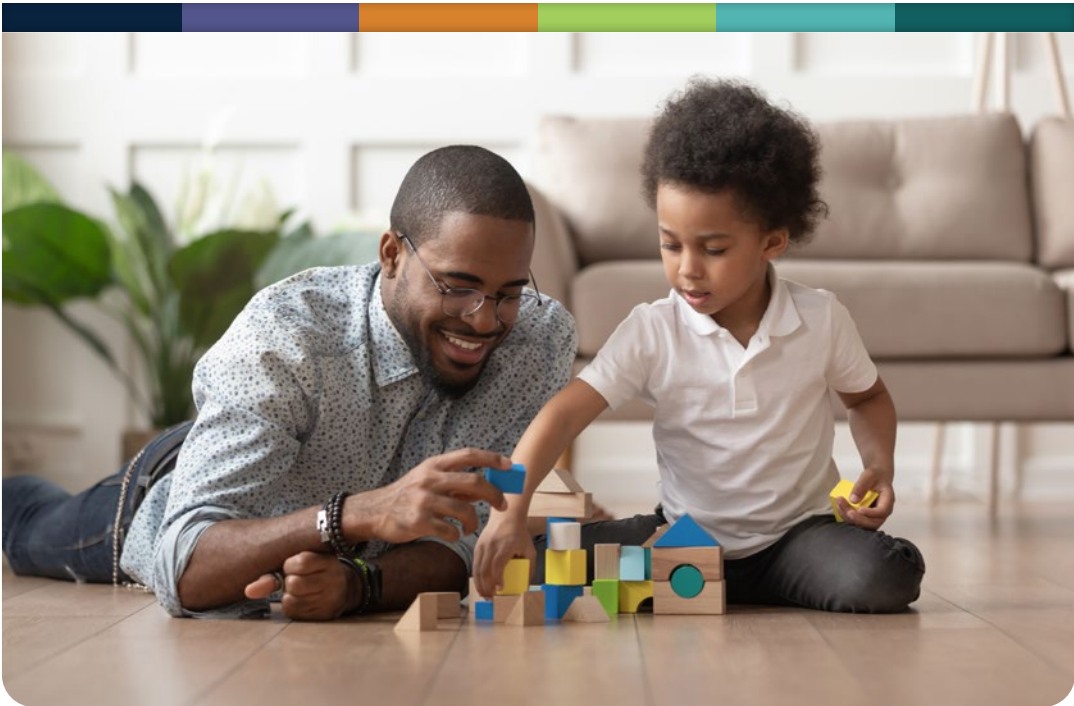
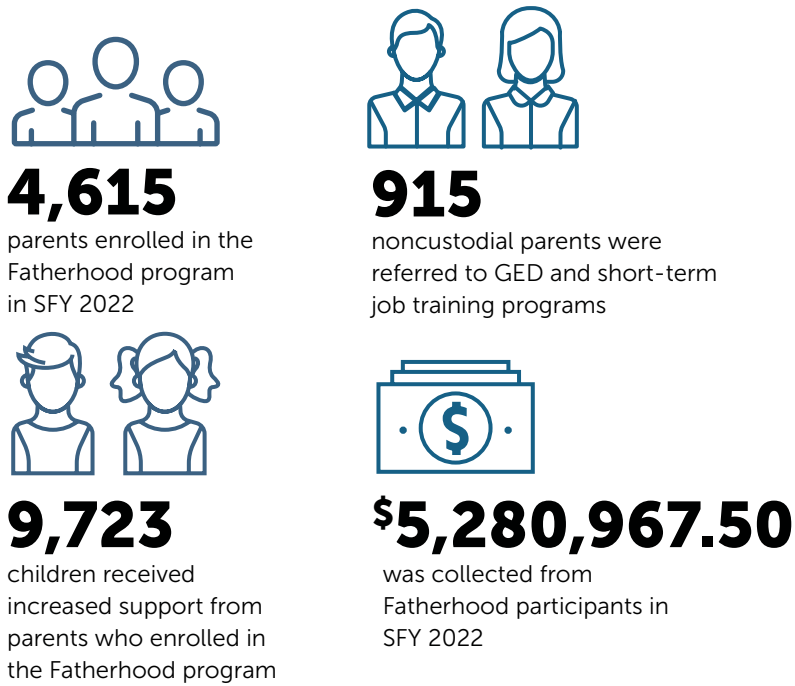
Noncustodial parents who are having difficulty paying child support may receive services that can help them achieve self-sufficiency and provide for their children to avoid contempt action on their support order.

The Fatherhood program offers assistance in accessing training and employment opportunities. The Fatherhood program also encourages parents to increase emotional, parental, and financial involvement in the lives of their children. Services include:

- Driver’s license reinstatement
- GED enrollment
- Job training
- Job search/placement
- Volunteer work opportunities
- Review and modification of support order

By the Numbers

Fatherhood program



DCSS

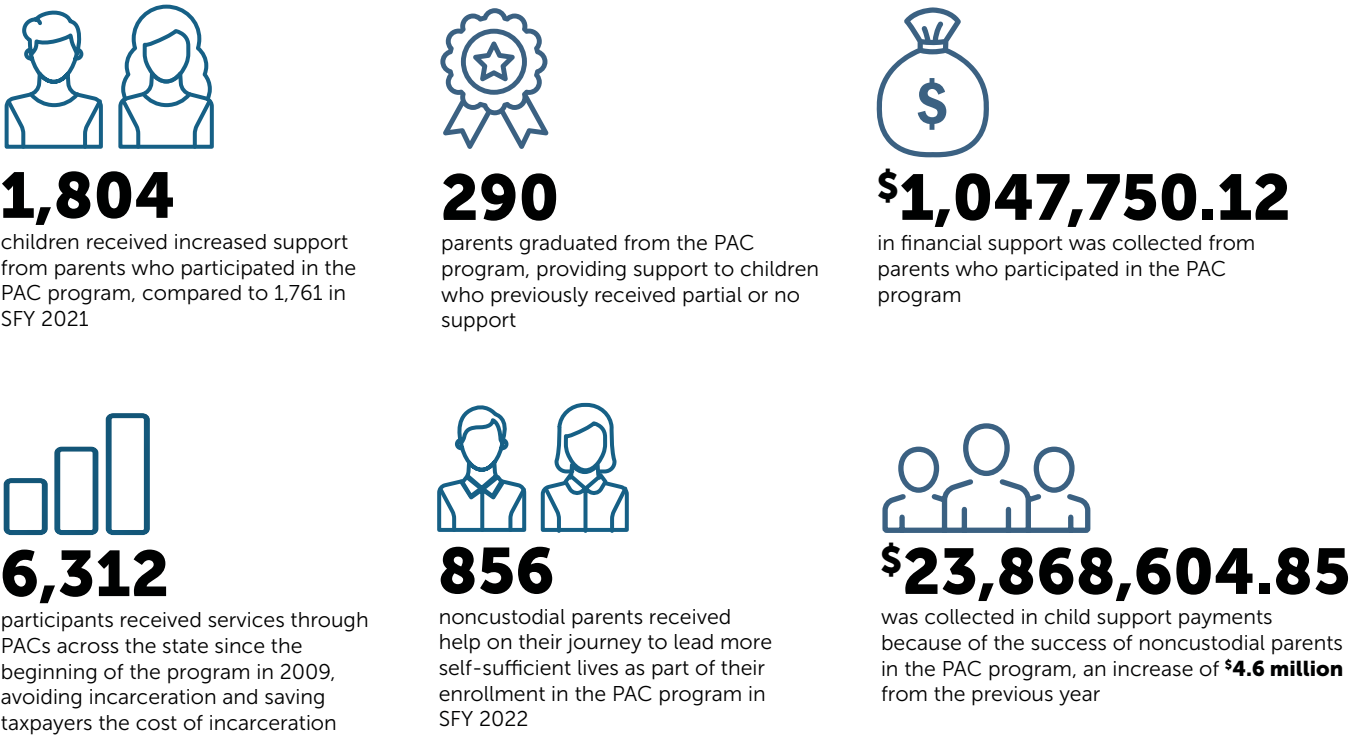
Parental Accountability Court Program

Incarceration for nonpayment of support can be counterproductive as it prevents parents from accessing employment that ultimately results in falling further behind on court-ordered child support. In 2009, DCSS and the superior court judges established Georgia’s first Parental Accountability Court (PAC). At the end of SFY 2022, 43 judicial circuits were offering the program as an alternative to incarceration. The program assists chronic nonpayers of child support with meeting their financial obligations through judicial oversight, parent accountability, employment, and education. Services offered through the PAC program include:

- Substance abuse treatment
- Job assistance and placement
- Short-term training
- Coaching and mentoring
- Educational services
- Employment training

By the Numbers

PAC



PAC Success Story

Mario Smith joined the Parental Accountability Court (PAC) Program on February 19, 2020, a few weeks before COVID-19 canceled all courts for an entire year. When Mario started the program, he was unemployed and without a GED or driver’s license. He obtained a support order of \$298 a month for his two children but was unable to make payments.

When regular court operations resumed, Mario had to become familiar with a new coordinator and judge, and thus, new expectations were set forth. He embraced the change, remained committed to the program, and received his driver’s license in April 2022. Mario was also referred to and participated in the Adult Readiness Program, which helps adults achieve soft skills, job training, career development, and obtain a high school diploma.

On May 3, 2022, he graduated from Ernest Saloom Academy, an accredited high school. After graduation, Mario was connected with great employment opportunities and continues to make his payments. Mario’s story is one of many that demonstrates how the PAC program can produce positive results for the people and families that we serve.





# About DFCS

## Division of Family & Children Services



The Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) investigates reports of child abuse and neglect; finds foster and adoptive homes for abused and neglected children; determines eligibility for and administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs; helps out-of-work parents get back on their feet; and provides numerous support services and innovative programs to help families in need.

DFCS operated 50 “hub” locations in SFY 2022. When this report was published in December 2022, all DFCS offices had reopened at least one day a week.

### DFCS | Family Independence Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federally funded program that helps low-income families pay for the cost of food. SNAP also provides recipients the opportunity to improve their economic standing with job skills training and other support.

#### SNAP Works

The SNAP Employment and Training Program, also known as SNAP Works, is a voluntary workforce development program designed to help SNAP recipients who are unemployed or underemployed with job placement assistance, thereby reducing and/or eliminating their dependency on SNAP. SNAP Works provides SNAP recipients with opportunities to gain skills, training and experience that will improve their ability to attain employment. The program offers supervised job search, job skills training, GED, and vocational training for specific jobs and work experience through partnerships with community-based organizations and educational institutions. SNAP Works participants include able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), single parents, families, refugees, senior citizens, and some individuals with disabilities.

### By the Numbers SNAP

Some DFCS programs report data for Federal Fiscal Year 2022 (FFY 2022), which runs from Oct. 1, 2021, to Sept. 30, 2022.



**1,557,936**

is the average number of individuals who received SNAP benefits each month



**381,416**

seniors and disabled adults received SNAP benefits



**252,227**

SNAP recipients participated in SNAP Works to improve their economic well-being and were not subject to ABAWD work requirements



**193,328**

is the number of able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) who could volunteer to participate in the program to meet federal work requirements



**162,592**

is the monthly average number of individuals who received Senior SNAP benefits



**\$38,816,790**

is the average amount of Senior SNAP benefits issued per month in SFY 2022



**194,899**

individuals received Senior SNAP\* benefits in SFY 2022



**\$473**

is the average monthly SNAP benefit (including P-SNAP) per household in FFY 2022



**901,513**

children benefited from the SNAP program in SFY 2022



**445,555**

SNAP recipients were served by the SNAP Works Program in FFY 2022

\*The Georgia Senior SNAP program is an elderly simplified application project designed to make it easier for seniors to receive SNAP benefits.

# Evolving Our Services Through Technology

## BOTs streamline the SNAP renewal process

Providing programs and services to vulnerable Georgians is one thing. Processing applications and renewals in a timely and accurate manner according to federal guidelines is another. Meeting those guidelines is challenging in the best of times, and since demand for services more than doubled because of the pandemic, it's become more so.

To meet these challenges and pave the way for greater system efficiencies, the state of Georgia began piloting a program using a new technology called Robotic Process Automation (RPA), also known as BOTs. The program, known as the BOTs Program, is managed by the Office of Family Independence System Enhancements team and the Office of Technology BOTs team.

The team identified SNAP recertification approvals as the area with the most performance issues. They set a goal to improve performance in DFCS programs with processing timeliness at or above 95 percent, and to improve accuracy with a six percent or below error rate using BOTs. RPA solutions are designed to boost productivity, improve accuracy and organizational growth by passing repetitive, manual work from humans to BOTs. This allows our caseworkers to focus their time on the important work of human interaction with customers.

The team worked with a company called UIPATH to implement a solution of 70 BOTs to process SNAP and Medicaid renewals before taking the program in-house. BOTs pull renewal caseloads daily from the eligibility system and prepopulate more than 120 system screens with data. BOTs complete prework for case managers, improving performance and accuracy in data collections, importing client reported changes, extracting data from interfaces, and documenting error-prone elements for case manager follow-up.

BOTs began assisting case managers with eligibility determinations in March of 2021 and the results have been astounding. What would take a case manager nearly an hour to do, BOTs can do in about 15 minutes. As a result, DFCS improved service and efficiency to customers applying for or renewing benefits, and

decreased caseload work for case managers. The program was so successful that the project the team now has 150 BOTs running in production and has expanded the use of BOTs for:

- TANF work participation report
- SSI – nursing home renewals
- Quality check (all programs)
- Applications
- Targeted change
- Issuances, notices, case notes
- ABAWD work requirements
- Modified adjusted gross income renewal

The BOTs Program Team continues to develop additional BOTs for use in cases like:

- SNAP Works step portal
- OSAH BOT – fair hearings
- Document understanding
- Attended BOTs

Because of the state’s forward-thinking actions using new technology to evolve our programs and services, the BOTs Program team was chosen to participate in a federal study of this pilot program.

### Did You Know?

#### FAMILY INDEPENDENCE

You can call DHS’ Customer Contact Center for assistance with Family Independence programs at **1-877-423-4746**.

# DFCS | Family Independence

## Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Adults who receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are required to participate in approved work activities a minimum of 30 hours each week. If the household has a child under age six, the weekly minimum requirement is 20 hours. Children and families exhibiting the greatest need can benefit from the TANF cash assistance program if their parents participate in qualified work activities.

This program is also available to children in the care of relatives. Adults who receive benefits on behalf of a relative child (called a “child-only case”) are not subject to work requirements. Activities that meet TANF work requirements include:

**Unsubsidized Employment** Full or part-time employment

**Work Experience** Work activity performed in return for public assistance that provides an individual with the opportunity to acquire the general skills, knowledge, and work habits necessary to obtain and retain employment

**On-the-Job Training** Training given to a paid employee that provides knowledge and skills essential to the performance of the job

**Community Service** Structured programs and activities for the direct benefit of the community. These programs are limited to projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social services, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, recreation, public facilities, public safety and/or child care

**Job Search and Job Preparedness Assistance** Act of seeking or obtaining employment, or preparation to seek employment, by undergoing life skills training, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or other rehabilitation activities. Treatment or therapy must be deemed necessary by a qualified medical, substance abuse, or mental health professional

**Vocational Training** Organized educational programs that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations. This activity is countable for up to 12 months

**Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment** Training or education required for employment to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace

# By the Numbers

## TANF



**10,182**

is the total number of TANF cases in SFY 2022



**\$260**

is the average benefit amount per month



**1,371**

caregivers – on average – receive TANF support each month and are subject to a work requirement



**5,463**

is the average number of child-only cases receiving TANF support each month, meaning the caregivers receive assistance on behalf of a child and are not required to participate in work activities

**11,904** children, on average, were supported by TANF each month.

### Pandemic Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (P-TANF)

is a program that provides a one-time payment for individuals who were eligible for and correctly received TANF cash assistance between April 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021. During SFY 2022, DHS distributed nearly **\$22 million** in P-TANF through additional issuances to eligible recipients.



## DFCS | Family Independence Medical Assistance

The Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids® programs provide a safety net for people who may not otherwise have access to health care.

**Family Medicaid** Low-income families with children under age 19 may qualify for Family Medicaid. These families may qualify at various income levels depending on family size and income. Families who qualify are entitled to the full range of Medicaid covered services including doctors' visits, health checkups, immunizations, dental and vision care.

**Aged, Blind, and Disabled Medicaid Program** The Aged, Blind, and Disabled (ABD) Medicaid Program in Georgia serves individuals who are age 65 and older, individuals who are legally blind, and individuals who are disabled, as defined by the Social Security Act. There are 19 different coverage categories known as Classes of Assistance (COA) for the ABD population. An individual's living arrangement, income, marital status, and prior Medicaid eligibility, among other factors, determine the most appropriate COA.

## By the Numbers Medical Assistance



**1,315,608**

is the average number of children who received Medicaid (excluding PeachCare) each month



**836,563**

is the average number of adults who received medical coverage through Medicaid each month



**1,063,995**

is the average number of families that received medical coverage through Medicaid each month



**188,197**

children, on average, received medical coverage through PeachCare each month



**565,182**

medical assistance applications processed in SFY 2022



## DFCS | Family Independence Benefit Integrity & Recovery Unit

The Benefit Integrity and Recovery Unit (BIRU) is charged with investigating recipient fraud in the agency's public assistance programs. Examples of suspected fraud include withholding or falsifying information in order to receive public assistance to which one is not entitled, and trading or selling Electronic Benefits Transfer cards in violation of program regulations. BIRU has five operating units throughout the state:

- Benefit Trafficking
- Claims and Recoveries
- Fraud Detection and Investigations
- Investigative Analytics and Knowledge Management
- Staff Development

## By the Numbers BIRU



**\$10,629,393**

is the value of of fraud claims investigated by the BIRU in FFY 2022



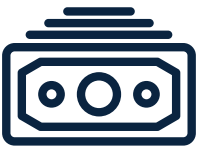
**7,644**

investigations were completed in SFY 2022



**2,930**

claims were established from the investigations in SFY 2022



**\$3,627.78**

was the average fraud claim in SFY 2022

## Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federally-funded program that helps low-income Georgians with home energy bills to reduce the risk of health and safety issues that occur as a result of disconnection.

Qualified individuals may be able to receive energy bill payment assistance, energy crisis assistance, weatherization, and energy-related minor home repairs. Applications are offered first to homebound individuals, individuals aged 65 and over, and those with life-threatening circumstances.

For more information, call **877-423-4746** or visit **[dfcs.ga.gov/services/low-income-home-energy-assistance-program-liheap](https://dfcs.ga.gov/services/low-income-home-energy-assistance-program-liheap)**.

## By the Numbers LIHEAP

In SFY 2022,  
**148,536** households received assistance from LIHEAP.

## Did You Know?

WASTE, FRAUD, OR ABUSE

You can report waste, fraud, or abuse at 1-844-694-2347 or **[dhs.georgia.gov/dhs-oig-fraud-and-abuse-reporting-form](https://dhs.georgia.gov/dhs-oig-fraud-and-abuse-reporting-form)**.

Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program

The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is a federally funded program that was created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and helps households pay for drinking water and wastewater for their homes. This program helps eligible customers experiencing a water burden pay their home water bill.



By the Numbers  
LIHWAP

In SFY 2022, **31,270** households received assistance from LIHWAP.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low income people in Georgia, including the elderly, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost.

Under TEFAP, commodity foods are made available to the states by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The states provide the food to local agencies they have selected for distribution to the needy. These agencies are food banks, soup kitchens, and food pantries. TEFAP supports food assistance programs with food banks in all 159 counties.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is a federal program that targets low-income seniors in Georgia, sixty years of age or older, to help supplement their diets by providing them with nutritious commodities and nutrition education information at no cost. CSFP operates in 28 counties through two food banks.

Did You Know?

COMMUNITY SERVICES  
BLOCK GRANT

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program is a federally funded program that is administered through a contractual agreement with a statewide network of 20 non-profit Community Action Agencies and four county governments designated as eligible entities. Services and programs are provided to all 159 counties. CSBG funding supports projects that lessen poverty in communities and addresses the needs of low-income individuals including the homeless and elderly. It also provides services and activities focused on employment, education, housing, nutrition, emergency services, and health.

Child Protective Services

In SFY 2022, child welfare programs continued to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, but all programmatic operations continued. Technology was leveraged to provide virtual services whenever possible, and when concerns about a child’s safety required face-to-face contact, pandemic health and safety measures were followed.

Child Protective Services (CPS) staff investigate reports of child abuse and neglect and work with caregivers, law enforcement, and judicial partners to ensure the safety of Georgia’s most vulnerable children. When an allegation of child abuse or neglect is confirmed, caseworkers partner with families and community organizations to address issues that affect child safety in the home. In most cases, DFCS can work with families to address the safety concern and stabilize the home environment.

By the Numbers

Child Protective Services



29,953

reports of abuse or neglect of children were investigated by CPS staff in SFY 2022



11

is the median number\* of cases a CPS worker manages at a time

\*Previously, this was reported as an average. Currently, the median figure is used, as it is less likely to be affected by extreme outlying values.



12,922

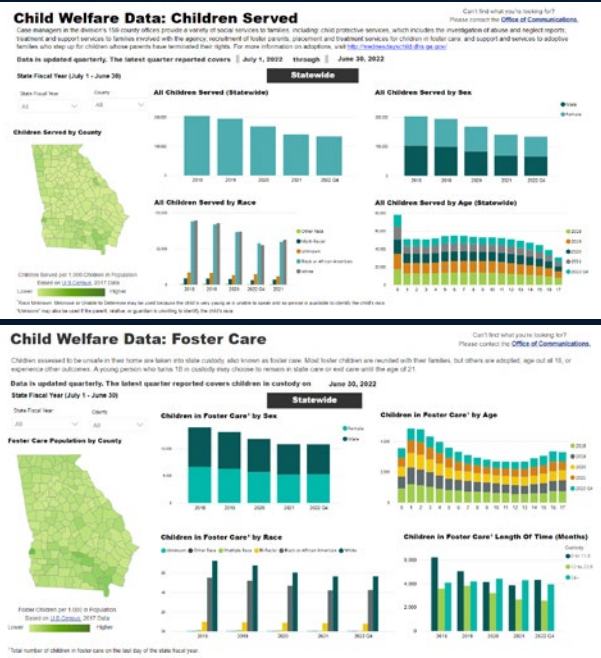
children received services without entry into foster care

Call **1-855-422-4453** 24 hours a day, seven days a week to report child abuse or neglect. In emergencies, or when a child is in imminent danger, you should always call 911.

Did You Know?

CHILD WELFARE DATA

You can find more child welfare data and sort by county at [dhs.georgia.gov/division-family-children-services-child-welfare](https://dhs.georgia.gov/division-family-children-services-child-welfare).





DFCS | Child Welfare

Foster Care and Adoption Services

When children are victims of abuse or neglect, and DFCS caseworkers determine they cannot remain safely in their homes, DFCS petitions the juvenile court to bring children into foster care to ensure their safety. Foster care is intended to be a temporary solution for children as the agency works with their families to eliminate the safety issues that required DFCS intervention. The Division’s goal is to return children safely to their families as soon as possible, but only after the safety issues have been resolved. When parents consistently demonstrate that they are unable or unwilling to care for their children, DFCS works with the courts to find loving adoptive homes for them.

By the Numbers

Foster Care and Adoption Services



15,895

children were in foster care at any point during SFY 2022



1,694

is the total number of children eligible for adoption in SFY 2022



20

is the median\* caseload for a foster care caseworker

*\*Previously, this was reported as an average. Currently, the median figure is used, as it is less likely to be affected by extreme outlying values.*



1,230

children were adopted by new families and given permanent homes

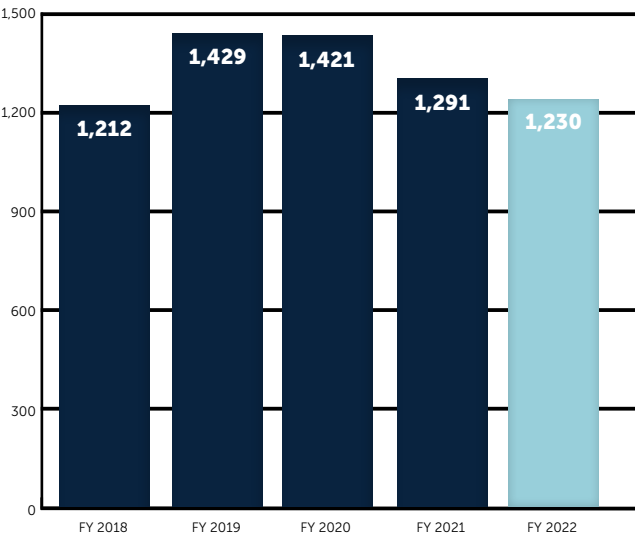


37.9%

of children in foster care were placed with a relative in SFY 2022, an increase of **1.3%** from the previous state fiscal year

Adoption Data

In the past five years, the number of children adopted by loving families and given permanent homes has continued to be successful. Despite the challenges faced during the pandemic, the number of adoptions have remained high.



DFCS | Child Welfare

Kinship Care

When a child is not able to safely remain in the care of their biological parents, relatives can step in to provide the stability they need during a difficult time. These arrangements are often called kinship care. Children who remain connected to their family, friends, school, extracurricular activities, and community through these kinship care arrangements fare much better and experience less trauma than children placed in traditional foster care arrangements.

Grant Highlight

In October 2021, the Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Children and Families awarded the State of Georgia \$613,060 in federal funding to enhance its Kinship Navigator Program. The DFCS Kinship Navigator Program serves as a one-stop shop for information and referral services to grandparents, relatives, and other caregivers who are currently raising a child. DFCS has used this grant to enhance the Kinship Navigator program infrastructure and further expand services and support for caregivers by allotting funding for kinship training and education, as well as program evaluation and system enhancements. The grant has also provided direct support to funding emergency assistance, kinship support groups, the Laptop Loaner Program development, and community awareness events.



Georgia Resilient, Youth-Centered, Stable, and Empowered

John H. Chafee Independent Living Program

DFCS bolsters children on their path to adulthood through a variety of programs that support their education, their readiness for the job market and their social well-being. The Georgia Resilient, Youth-Centered, Stable and Empowered (GA RYSE) John H. Chafee Independent Living Program seeks to bridge the gap between adolescence and adulthood and provide youth who are aging out of foster care with the social, educational, medical, and financial foundation they need to live independently as adults.

Afterschool Care Program

The Afterschool Care program provides federal funding to non-profit organizations and public agencies who serve youth and families during out-of-school time. It is designed to support DFCS’ goal of providing resources and services that promote self-sufficiency among children and families.

During SFY 2022, agencies funded through the Afterschool Care Program provided Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math- based (STEAM) opportunities which allowed children to learn about 21st century career and educational pathways.

By the Numbers

Afterschool Care Program



25,211

youth were served through the Afterschool Care program, an increase of **8,244 children** from the previous year



# The Family First Prevention Services Act

The agency submitted its Title IV-E Prevention Plan and will begin phased implementation of services in the beginning of 2023. During phase one of implementation, the Division will offer Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) in Chatham, Cherokee, Dekalb, and Richmond counties. An implementation team was assembled consisting of subject matter experts in the areas of child welfare practice, child welfare policy, workforce development and training, SHINES, CQI, and fiscal. The team has been working to support the phase one counties and operationalize Family First requirements to implement the evidenced-based programs. The Division will use data and staff feedback from phase one to inform planning for subsequent implementation phases, expanding services statewide over time.

## Advisory Councils

### Georgia Parent Advisory Council

In June 2019, the Georgia Parent Advisory Council (GA PAC) was formed to encourage meaningful partnerships between parents and staff throughout the child welfare system. GA PAC works alongside the Prevention and Community Support (PCS) section within DFCS to advise PCS on changes to child welfare services and systems, particularly prevention programming. The council is designed to ensure strong parent voices are present in shaping policies, services, and strategies to result in better outcomes for children and families.

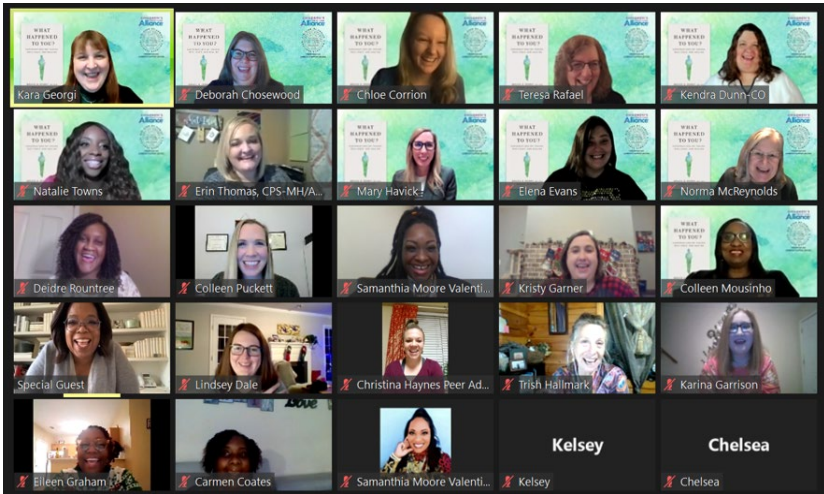
The council includes a diverse group of parents from across the state who have a range of expertise from personal experience within the child welfare system to success in strengthening community services for families. GA PAC members are active participants in Division meetings, conferences, presentations, and focus groups, as well as policy and proposal reviews.

### Georgia Peers Advocating for Change (GPAC) Youth Advisory Board

The DFCS Georgia Peers Advocating for Change (GPAC) Youth Advisory Board was established in September of 2020. GPAC’s mission is to empower and advocate for children and youth in Georgia’s foster care system through education, legislative action, and career empowerment with a strong community of peers to go beyond foster care. The board is a youth-led, adult-supported group whose members advise on child welfare policies and practices that directly impact them and their peers.



Members of the GA PAC.



GA PAC participated in a book club on “What Happened To You? Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing” by Bruce D. Perry, MD, PhD and Oprah Winfrey. Oprah Winfrey attended their final webinar, seen above.

## Kinship Care Success Story



In July 2019, Keshia Parris’ nephew was placed in her home. In the weeks following her nephew’s initial placement, Keshia worked alongside DFCS staff to gather information and resources to help her with the transition. During this time, Keshia knew her nephew would eventually need a permanent home, and she began taking steps toward permanency.

With help from her DFCS caseworker and kinship coordinator, Keshia attended training sessions and got her home approved. In January 2020, Keshia became an approved kinship foster parent, and in September 2021, she officially adopted her nephew.

Keshia shared that there were times when she felt overwhelmed and discouraged, but that she was able to lean on her caseworker and kinship coordinator for support and guidance. Keshia encourages future kinship caregivers to remember how valued their efforts are, and to reach out for help when they need it. “All of those people that you come in contact with are your allies and your support. Yes, it is a challenge, but who better to conquer the challenge than family?” – Keshia Parris

## DFCS Advisory Board

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DHS

# Residential Child Care Licensing


The Department’s Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) unit seeks to protect children in residential care by licensing and providing oversight for a variety of child care facilities to ensure that facilities have the resources to provide for children in their care and keep them safe.

Through its Tracking Residential Applications, Incidents and Licenses System (TRAILS), RCCL also keeps stakeholders and the public informed of the quality of residential child care programs. Facilities requiring a license from RCCL include Child Caring Institutions, Child Placing Agencies, Outdoor Child Caring Programs, Children’s Transition Care Centers and Maternity Homes. Child Caring Institutions and Child Placing Agencies make up the majority of state licenses.


Child Caring Institutions (CCIs) are commonly referred to as group homes and include any institution, society, agency, or facility that provides full-time care for six or more children through 18 years of age outside of their own homes. Child Placing Agencies (CPAs) are any institution, society, agency, or facility which places children in foster homes for temporary care or in prospective adoptive homes for adoption. Outdoor Child Caring Programs (OCCPs) are CCIs that provide outdoor activities designed to improve the emotional and behavioral well-being of children in a wilderness or camp environment. Maternity Homes (MHs) are any place that receives, treats, or cares for, within a six-month period, more than one pregnant woman whose child is born out of wedlock.

## By the Numbers


### Residential Child Care Licensing



**310**  
facilities were regulated by RCCL in SFY 2022



**6**  
new licenses were approved for child caring institutions



**6**  
new licenses were approved for child placing agencies

## Top 5 Reasons Facilities Received Citations in SFY 2022

- 1

Insufficient documentation of the involvement of the child and/or child’s guardian in the service plan
- 2

Incomplete service plans
- 3

Insufficient or untimely health screenings of personnel
- 4

Insufficient implementation and/or compliance with written policies
- 5

Missing or untimely service plans

# DHS Leadership

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Brian P. Kemp

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Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Finance

Jackie Tate  
Assistant Deputy Commissioner, External Affairs

Julie Walters  
Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Operations

Kylie Winton  
Director, Communications

CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTER

**1-877-423-4746** | Statewide toll-free number for customers with questions or concerns regarding the Division of Aging Services, Division of Child Support Services, Division of Family & Children Services, or DHS enterprise functions.  
Email: **customerservicedhs@dhs.ga.gov**

AGING SERVICES

**1-866-552-4464** | Statewide toll-free number serving older adults and individuals of all ages with disabilities for information and to make reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults. Callers may leave messages 24 hours per day.

OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE

**1-877-423-4746**. Statewide toll-free number for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Stamps), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and general inquiries.

Family Independence only: Self service available 24 hours per day. Agents are available 7:30 a.m.–2 p.m.

Reasonable modification: **dfcs.georgia.gov/adasection-504-and-civil-rights**  
Online form submission: **dhs.georgia.gov/dfcs-reasonable-modifications-and-communication-assistance-request-form-persons-disabilities**

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

**1-855-GACHILD (422-4453)** | Statewide toll-free number for all reports of child abuse and neglect, 24 hours per day, seven days a week  
Email: **cpsintake@dhs.ga.gov**  
(NOTE: This email is only for mandated reporters.)

ADOPTIONS & FOSTER CARE

**1-877-210-KIDS (5437)** | For information, visit **itsmyturnnow.dhs.ga.gov** or **fostergeorgia.com**  
Call center hours are Monday—Thursday: 8 a.m.–6 p.m., Friday: 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Saturday & Sunday: closed

DFCS COUNTY OFFICES

To find a DFCS office location and hours of operation, visit **dfcs.ga.gov/locations**.

ON THE WEB

Department of Human Services: **dhs.ga.gov**  
Division of Aging Services: **aging.ga.gov**  
Division of Child Support Services: **childsupport.ga.gov**  
Division of Family & Children Services: **dfcs.ga.gov**

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