

Fiscal Year 2019

**FAMILY DEVELOPMENT AND
SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT**



Prepared by:

Iowa Department of Human Rights
Division of Community Action Agencies
Lucas State Office Building
321 E. 12th St.
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
515-281-3861

<https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/fadss>

Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Council

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Iowa Family and Self-Sufficiency Program (FaDSS)

Strengthening Iowa's families. Strengthening Iowa's Economy.

INTRODUCTION

Iowa's Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Program (FaDSS) was created by the 1988 General Assembly to assist Family Investment Program (FIP) families with significant or multiple barriers reach self-sufficiency. FaDSS provides services that promote, empower, and nurture families toward economic self-sufficiency and family stability.

Participation in FaDSS is a voluntary option for families receiving FIP benefits. Eligible families are identified and referred to the program primarily by Iowa Workforce Development's PROMISE JOBS program. However, referrals to FaDSS may also originate with the Department of Human Services, other social service providers, or as self-referrals. The program is provided to families in all 99 Iowa counties through a network of 17 community action and non-profit social services agencies.



Utilizing a strength-based approach, the program is delivered to families through home visits by certified Family Development Specialists. Core services include assessment and screening, family-driven goal setting, referrals to community resources and supports, and advocacy and self-empowerment.

FaDSS ADMINISTRATION

The FaDSS program is administered by the Iowa Department of Human Rights, Division of Community Action Agencies via a memorandum of understanding with the Iowa Department of Human Services. Funds from federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) legislation along with state appropriations support the provision of FaDSS services.

The Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Council, established to study, fund, and evaluate programs which provide developmental services to families at risk of long-term welfare dependency, is tasked with issuing a grant renewal application, reviewing proposals, and approving funding decisions every three years.

FaDSS Overview

Families that participate in FaDSS receive in-home services that support:

- ✓ Increased employment
- ✓ Increased income
- ✓ Decreased Family Investment Program (FIP) payments
- ✓ Achievement of educational goals
- ✓ Increased access to services and treatment for identified domestic violence
- ✓ Increased access to services and treatment for identified mental health concerns
- ✓ Increased access to treatment for identified substance abuse

Services are tailored to each family, using identified strengths to address barriers to self-sufficiency through six core program components:

- 1) Assessment
- 2) Goal Setting
- 3) Home Visiting
- 4) Referrals and Collaboration
- 5) Support
- 6) Advocacy and Self-Empowerment

HOW SERVICES ARE PROVIDED

The FaDSS program is provided to families in partnership with 17 community action and non-profit social service agencies. The program employs approximately 80 home visitors; over 90% of all FaDSS staff (home visitors and supervisors) have achieved at least a Bachelor's degree. All specialists complete an eight-day Family Development Certification program with the University of Iowa's National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice. All FaDSS staff are mandatory child abuse reporters and are required to complete criminal and child abuse background checks at hire and every two years.

Home visits serve as the foundation for all FaDSS services. The family development specialist with input from the family and supervisor determine the level of services the family will receive. Families are provided a minimum of two home visits and one additional contact per month during the first three months and at least one home visit and two additional contacts per month after that. If the family needs are determined to be greater than the minimum, the level of home visits and contacts will be adjusted. Families may receive FaDSS services while receiving FIP benefits and for six months post-FIP.

NUMBER OF FAMILIES SERVED

At any point in time, the FaDSS program may serve 1,530 families. In fiscal year 2019, a total of 2,384 families received services. A total of 4,346 individuals completed the program during the reporting period, including 2,576 children (under the age of 18). Most families (82%) are referred for FaDSS services by the PROMISE JOBS program.

FAMILY WAGES AND FIP SAVINGS

During FY 2019, FaDSS families earned total **wages of \$6,080,305** resulting in a **FIP savings of \$920,628**.

Fiscal Year 2018 – Selected Outcomes

Increased Employment

- In FY 2019, 17% of FaDSS households had at least one adult employed at program entry. At exit, 54% of households had at least one adult employed.
- 1,327 families were involved in activities designed to increase work preparedness skills. These activities, provided by FaDSS, include resume writing, mock interviews, and assistance with completing job applications.

Increased Income

- In FY 2019, families that improved their level of employment at exit had an average monthly family income of \$1,562, an increase of \$1,058.

Decreased Family Investment Program (FIP) Payments

- At entry, families averaged \$380 in FIP payments. At exit, the average FIP payment for families was \$121, a decrease of \$256.

Achievement of Educational Goals

- 155 adults that exited the FaDSS program in FY 2019 achieved a change in their education status.
 - 43 families completed a GED/HS Diploma
 - 49 families completed some college courses
 - 43 families completed a certification program
 - 11 families completed an Associate's Degree
 - 7 families completed a Bachelor's Degree
 - 2 families completed a Master's Degree

Increased Access to Services and Treatment - Domestic Violence

- In FY 2019, 155 FaDSS families that exited the program had experienced domestic violence.
- 94% of those families accessed necessary and appropriate assistance. The FaDSS program assisted 75% of families with accessing domestic violence assistance.

Increased Access to Services and Treatment - Mental Health

- In FY 2019, 519 adults that exited the program had a substantiated mental health issue.
- 87% of those adults with a mental health barrier accessed treatment. The FaDSS program assisted 84% of adults with gaining access to treatment.

Increased Access to Treatment - Substance Abuse

- In FY 2019, 187 adults that exited the program had a substantiated substance abuse issue.
- 86% of those adults with a substance abuse barrier accessed treatment. The FaDSS program assisted 61% with gaining access to treatment.

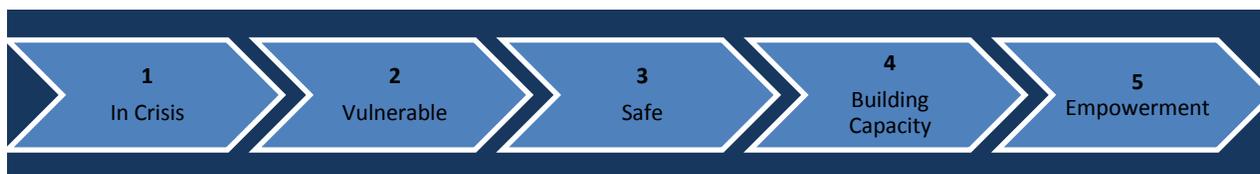
The Self-Sufficiency Matrix

Families participating in the FaDSS program often face multiple barriers to self-sufficiency. Through an in-depth assessment process (including both formal and informal assessment), Family Development Specialists work with families to identify areas of strength that are then used to address barriers. The Self-Sufficiency Matrix provides a mechanism for program staff to measure changes in a family’s situation from entry (within 60 days of enrollment) to program exit. The Self-Sufficiency Matrix measures family stability across 14 life domains. Answering a series of questions for each family domain, Family Development Specialists rate stability on a scale of 1 through 5 based on his/her observation and assessment.

Self-Sufficiency Matrix – Domains

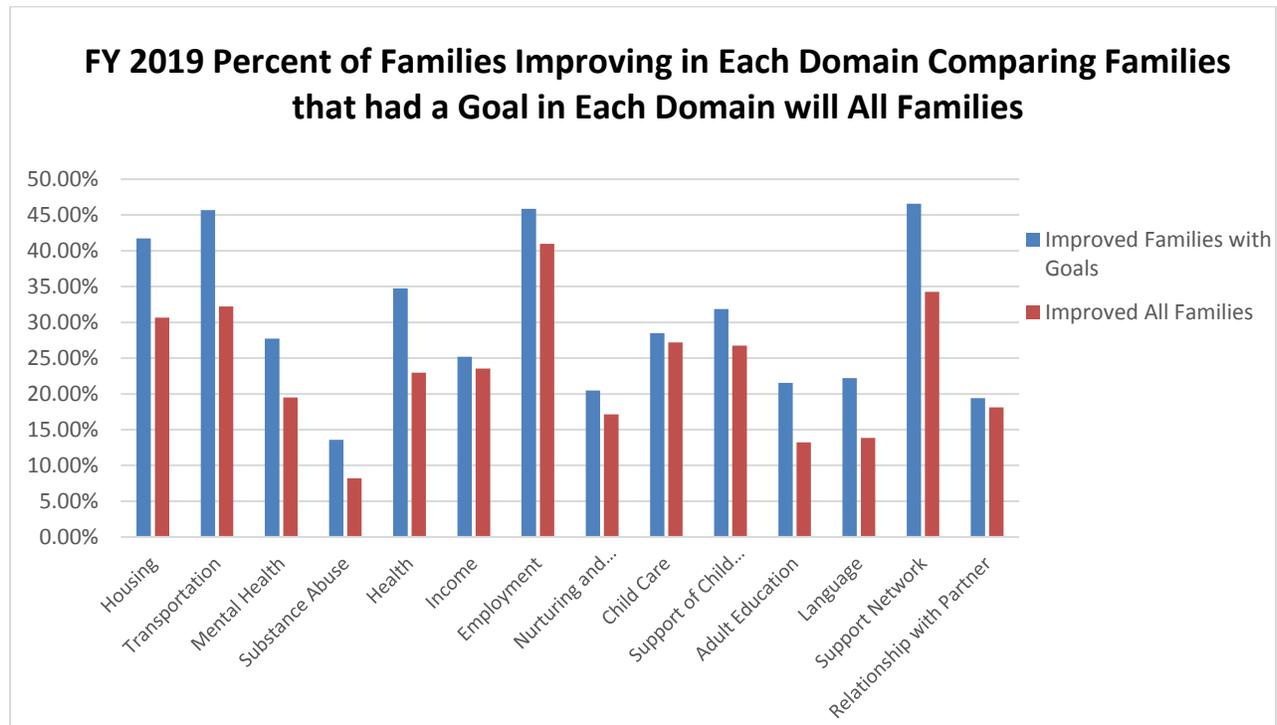
1. Housing	8. Parenting, Nurturing and Attachment
2. Transportation	9. Child Care
3. Mental Health	10. Support of Child Development
4. Substance Abuse	11. Adult Education
5. Health	12. Language
6. Income	13. Support Network
7. Employment	14. Relationship with Partner

Self-Sufficiency Matrix - Stability Scale



SELF-SUFFICIENCY MATRIX RESULTS

By comparing scores for each family domain at entry and at exit, we can gain insight into the cumulative impact of FaDSS services on self-sufficiency and stability measures. For the current reporting period, a total of 1,220 families had both entry and exit scores.



A key component of FaDSS is helping families learn to set goals to meet the needs of their families. The chart above shows the difference between the improvements of families in each domain compared to those who established goals within each domain. Below are examples of how goal setting has made marked improvement in families' lives.

Transportation

Many families struggle to access reliable transportation for such things as work and appointments. Overall, thirty-four percent of families in FaDSS improved their transportation. Forty-six percent of families who established goals to help meet their transportation needs improved.

Support Network

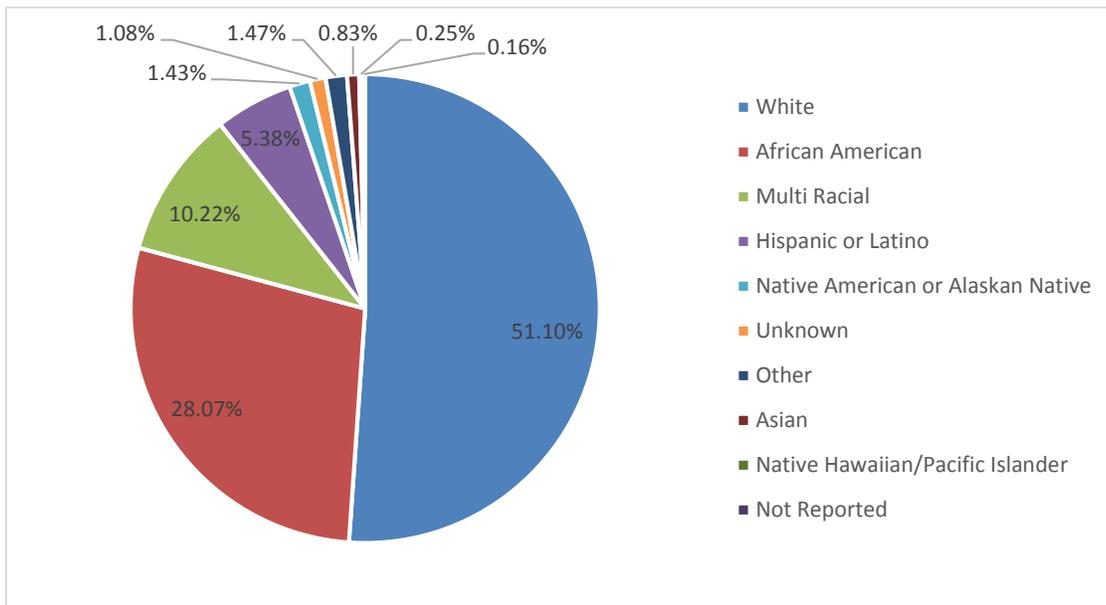
FaDSS assists families in identifying support networks. Thirty-one percent of all families improved their support networks while in FaDSS in FY 2019. Forty-seven percent of families who established a formal goal for support networks improved.

Fiscal Year 2019 – Selected Demographics

CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILIES SERVED

Demographic information about FaDSS participants is collected at the family (rather than individual) level, though the program often narrows in on characteristics of the designated “Head of Household” to identify and understand trends related to family structure and progress toward self-sufficiency. Overall, 91% of families are headed by a female; 52% are headed by an individual aged 24-34. The chart below provides insight into the racial and ethnic composition of FaDSS families. Overall, families of color are disproportionately represented in the FaDSS program when compared to Iowa’s general population, but reflective of the disproportionate representation of families of color in the FIP program.

Race and ethnicity of family heads of household



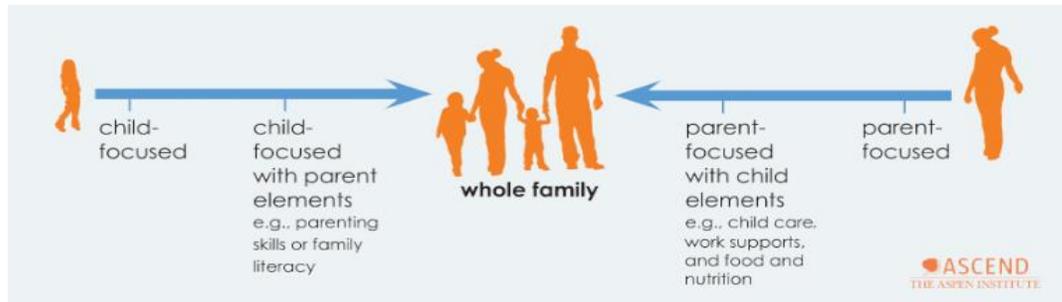
Educational levels, heads of household

Head of Household Education Level at Enrollment	Individuals	Percent
Less than High School	324	26%
High School Diploma / HI Set	472	38%
Some College	266	21%
Trade/vocational Training	66	5%
Two year college degree (Associate)	76	6%
Four year college degree (Bachelor)	22	1%
Master degree or above	4	<1%
TOTAL	1,230	100%*

*Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Two-Generation Initiative

A Two-Generation approach seeks to ensure that programs and policies are designed and implemented with a mindset that understands the intersecting needs of parents and their children. Applying a “2-Gen lens” facilitates the strategic alignment of existing systems and services, allowing for a whole family approach to moving families out of poverty. This approach does not require development of new programs or services, but it does require a shift in thinking about how existing services and programs are provided.



Iowa's 2-Gen Vision

Iowa's families thrive, empowered through integrated, comprehensive services that support adult and child success.

Iowa began its TANF 2-Gen initiative to improve the lives of families in poverty who are enrolled in the Family Investment Program (FIP), specifically families participating in the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) Program and PROMISE JOBS (PJ).

Iowa seeks to implement promising 2-Gen strategies, policies, and practices to help break the cycle of poverty and improve the overall well-being for Iowa families. To this end, the Steering Committee and Core Team developed a plan that included gathering input and feedback from a variety of stakeholders. This information is to be formulated into strategies and corresponding outcomes to be tested as part of a pilot project.

Pilot Development

A major contribution to Iowa's plan for a more integrated system was to gather input from families participating in PROMISE JOBS and FaDSS. Family focus groups were designed to gather feedback from the families' unique perspective. PROMISE JOBS and FaDSS staff provided input through surveys and a focus group. This information and feedback from additional stakeholders was used to develop specific strategies for a pilot.

The pilot sites are Community Action Agency of Siouxland, Lutheran Services of Iowa, Mid-Iowa Community Action, Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation and Operation Threshold. Over the last year, the five pilot sites have co-created the pilot program with a staff working group, including local staff from PROMISE JOBS and FaDSS with support from state agency staff from those programs.

The 2-Gen pilot incorporates strategies for foundational training on 2-Gen concepts and practices, family leadership development, and system collaboration and data sharing. Pilot sites are identifying target populations, service strategies, and outcome measures. Sites will continue to place emphasis on the input of families, frontline staff, and other stakeholders throughout the timeframe of the pilot and beyond.

Fiscal Year 2019 Capacity and Funding

During FY 2019, FaDSS was funded with an appropriation of \$6,192,834 in TANF and state general funds. In addition, other supports of \$1,416,316 were provided to supplement FaDSS services.

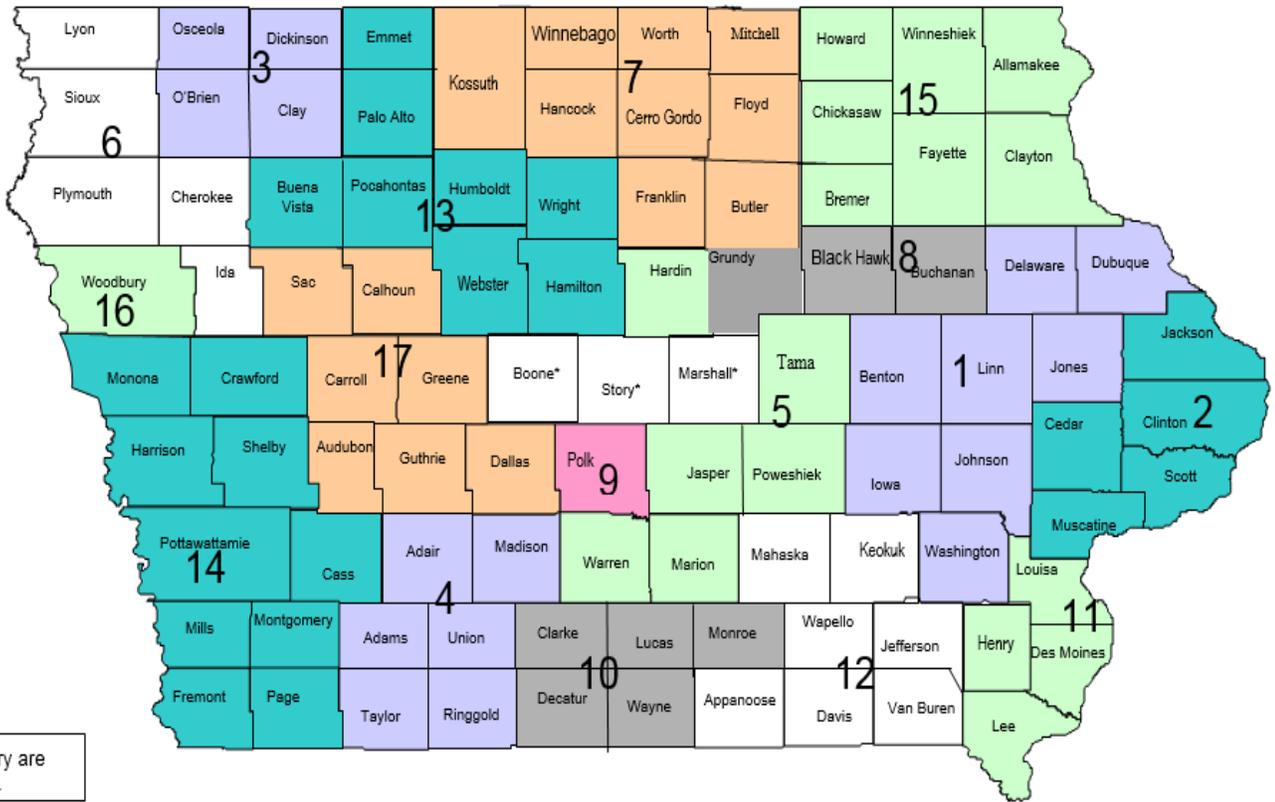
Grantee	Family Capacity	Total Grant	Other Support	Total FaDSS
Community Action Agency of Siouxland	40	\$159,513	\$6,594	\$166,107
Community Action of Eastern Iowa	98	\$374,591	\$0	\$374,591
Community Action of SE Iowa	90	\$344,012	\$12,470	\$356,482
Four Oaks	222	\$855,763	\$0	\$855,763
Lutheran Services of Iowa	39	\$159,264	\$3,737	\$163,001
MATURA Action Corporation	29	\$121,755	\$200	\$121,955
Mid Iowa Community Action	134	\$512,196	\$0	\$512,196
Mid-Sioux Opportunity	35	\$142,105	\$2,259	\$144,364
Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation	77	\$293,293	\$15,544	\$308,837
North Iowa Community Action Organization	72	\$275,210	\$0	\$275,210
Operation Threshold	79	\$286,677	\$364	\$287,041
Polk Family Enrichment Center	189	\$722,425	\$1,337,843	\$2,060,268
South Central Iowa Community Action Program	53	\$202,585	\$2,978	\$205,563
Sieda Community Action	105	\$394,147	\$0	\$394,147
Upper Des Moines Opportunity	75	\$289,446	\$7,500	\$296,946
West Central Community Action	105	\$401,347	\$26,827	\$428,174
Youth and Shelter Services	88	\$336,367	\$0	\$336,367
Total	1530	\$5,870,696	\$1,416,316	\$7,287,012
DHR Admin @5%	-	\$309,642	-	-
Technology	-	\$ 12,496	-	-
Total Appropriations	-	\$6,192,834	-	-

Selected program features, FY2019



FaDSS Grantee Service Areas

1. Four Oaks
2. Community Action of Eastern Iowa
3. Lutheran Service in Iowa
4. MATURA Action Corp.
5. Mid-Iowa Community Action
6. Mid-Sioux Opportunity
7. North Iowa Community Action Org.
8. Operation Threshold
9. Polk County Family Enrichment Center
10. South Central Iowa Community Action Program
11. Southeast Iowa Community Action Org.
12. Southern Iowa Economic Development Association
13. Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.
14. West Central Community Action
15. Northeast Iowa Community Action Corp.
16. Community Action of Siouxland
17. Youth and Shelter Services, Inc.



FaDSS Grantee Service Areas

Service Area #	FaDSS Grantees	Service Area #	FaDSS Grantees
1	Four Oaks Family and Children's Services Dubuque- Julie Weber– 563-557-3100 QCJweber@fouroaks.org or Cedar Rapids-Amber Mercil amercil@fouroaks.org 319-247-4834	10	South Central Iowa Community Action Program Jamie Swearingin 641-3441045 jswearingin@scicap.org
2	Community Action of Eastern Iowa Roger Pavey 563-324-3239 ext. 1202, rpavey@caeiowa.org	11	Community Action of Southeast Iowa Rita Luder 319-753-0193 rita.luder@caofseia.org
3	Lutheran Services in Iowa Jennifer Dykshoorn 712-262-4083 jennifer.dykshoorn@lsiowa.org	12	Southern Iowa Economic Development Association Rebecca Falck 641-682-8741 bfalck@sieda.org
4	MATURA Action Corp. Katie Christensen 641-782-8431 kchristensen@maturaact.org	13	Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc. Alisa Schlieff 515-576-7774 aschlieff@udmo.com
5	Mid-Iowa Community Action Mindy Clayton 641-236-3923 Mindy.Clayton@micaonline.org	14	West Central Community Action Molly Cummings 712-322-5966 mhoran@westcca.org
6	Mid-Sioux Opportunity Laura Benson 712-786-3483 lbenson@midsioux.org	15	Northeast Iowa Community Action Corp. Karli Schmelzer 563-382-8436 lmathews@neicac.org
7	North Iowa Community Action Organization Lori Brandt 641.423.7766 lbrandt@nicao-online.org	16	Community Action of Siouxland LaRae Lyons 712-274-1610 llyons@caasiouxland.org
8	Operation Threshold Mindy Dolan 319-291-2065 MDolan@operationthreshold.org	17	Youth and Shelter Services, Inc. Peg Ragner 515-233-3141 x4405 PRagner@yss.org
9	Polk County Family Enrichment Center Doug Stodgel 515-286-3406 doug.stodgel@polkcountyiowa.gov		

FaDSS Success Stories

MATURA Action Corporation

My name is Bethany Merrifield, I currently reside in rural Madison county, with my husband and three kids, Hunter (13), Beau (11), and Kayleigh (5). I began working with FaDSS in the early spring of 2017. At that point in my life I was a single mom, recently separated from a very toxic relationship, and only a few months sober following a more than 8-year addiction to methamphetamine. I was homeless; I had nothing to my name but the car I left in and the clothes on our backs. I had absolutely no confidence in myself that I could be a successful independent mother. I felt I was at a dead end with no options on how to start over and create a normal life for my children and myself.



I was able to sign up for the program PROMISE JOBS out of the Polk county office, which allowed for childcare to be financially covered and in return I was able to effectively job search. I quickly gained employment at a small café in Winterset but due to the café hours I was unable to make the mandatory 30-hour requirement. In addition, I found another option that would allow for me to work and compensate the remaining hours by volunteering at a local youth center all while getting to also spend time with my own children.

After a few months at the Polk County office I requested to be transferred to the Creston office. I was set up with a FaDSS worker to further help me in finding the appropriate aid. Little did I know at the time she was going to be the most influential, inspiring person to my success story. Within a few months I was able to get an apartment and with the support of my FaDSS worker I quickly went from a small 2-bedroom apartment to a spacious three-bedroom home. At the time I was on an extensive waiting list for Section 8, Kristie (my FaDSS worker) was able to accommodate the difference in rent by signing me up for another program supported by grants that paid for our rent as well as utilities until Section 8 was approved. I was earning minimal wages and tips, but becoming stronger and more independent by the week.

In 2018 I was able to move back to our small farm and in August I got married. I am happy to say with the assistance and guidance received from these programs we are able to financially provide for our family. I am 2 years clean from meth, active in my local church and giving back by volunteering at our local Community Action Agency while building healthy long-lasting relationships with friends and family. I am grateful for the opportunity to have met and worked with Kristie and the FaDSS program as well as all of the valuable life lessons I've learned while going through this journey.

Community Action of Eastern Iowa



Eudora is a single mother of two daughters. While she was enrolled in training to become a nurse at her local community college, Eudora was unable to support her family and was referred to the PROMISE JOBS program. She was approved for FIP and was referred to FaDSS. Eudora began working part-time while attending school. With the help of these two programs, Eudora was able to access transportation and child care assistance. She also set goals for herself which included finishing her nursing degree and obtaining a good job. Eudora

worked hard to reach her goal starting off as a CNA and moving up to an LPN position after passing her nursing boards.

In March 2019, Eudora accepted a full-time position earning \$19.23 per hour plus benefits. Due to her new job, she was no longer eligible for PROMISE Jobs but remained active in the FaDSS program. Eudora has had some health issues but with the help of her FaDSS worker and a supportive employer, she has remained in school and employed. Her employer recently told her that she hopes Eudora will accept an Administrator position when she completes her RN degree.

Recently, Eudora purchased a home and she and her two daughters are thriving in their communities. She sent an email to her FaDSS worker stating, "Thank you so much for helping me reach one of the most important goals. I wouldn't have been able to do it without help from you and PROMISE Jobs. Please let everyone in the office know that there are people like me who benefit from the program and to keep up the good work. I will be forever grateful because I now have a career that is in high demand".

Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation

Paige moved from Minnesota to Iowa with her teenage daughter Sarah. A single mother, Paige has a history of domestic violence, multiple physical disabilities and mental illness. She enrolled in the FaDSS program and applied for disability through Disability Connections. During this time, Paige and Sarah became homeless. They lived with friends for a short time until Paige found a subsidized apartment and was able to pay the deposit with the help of Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation.

With the help of the FaDSS program, Paige attended many doctor's appointments and followed through with her doctor's recommendations. She was referred to Representative Services for legal assistance appealing her disability decision. Paige struggled with anxiety and depression and was referred to Northeast Iowa Behavioral Health where she received regular counseling. She and her FaDSS worker set many goals including getting a mentor for her daughter, finding stable long-term housing, managing her mental health, and accessing community resources. Paige's FaDSS worker referred her to 28 community resources!

With help from FaDSS and a lengthy list of community resources, Paige is now receiving SSDI, has a stable place to live, access to reliable transportation and is managing her health successfully. Her daughter Sarah is also thriving, succeeding in school and participating in extracurricular activities.

SIEDA Community Action



Fatrie was born to a very poor family in the country of Albania. At the age of 17, against her wishes, Fatrie's father arranged her marriage to a 34 year-old recently divorced man. Shortly after, Fatrie gave birth to her daughter Fatima followed by two sons and another daughter.

Fatrie stayed at home and cared for the children while her husband worked. Although Fatrie longed to work and be part of her community, her husband would not

allow it and isolated Fatrie who was prohibited from even grocery shopping. A prisoner in her own home, Fatrie was at the mercy of her husband who controlled everything and shared no information with her.

In June 2015, Fatrie's husband left her for another woman. Fatrie had no money, no income, and no support. Because she had been so isolated, Fatrie had little understanding about how to survive in the United States, a place where customs were not familiar to her. Fatrie had no money or knowledge of what was required to live on her own, what bills needed paid, or how to pay them. It was at perhaps her lowest point that Fatrie met her first friend in the U.S., a woman named Louise. Louise connected Fatrie with public assistance. In January 2018 the family began receiving assistance.

It was determined that Fatrie and the children were eligible for FIP and Food Stamp benefits. A few months later, Fatrie met her FaDSS worker. Together, they developed goals and worked on things like leaving the house, navigating the public bus system, and learning American customs. Fatrie began taking ESL classes and learning to speak, read and write English. Now fluent in three languages, Fatrie has become an involved community member taking an active role her children's education. In April 2019, Fatrie was hired at the local meatpacking plant; it was her first job. Today, Fatrie is the sole bread winner in her home and is no longer receiving any public assistance. She works long hours at the plant and is proud of her success. Fatrie's job also provides health insurance for her and her family as well as the opportunity to meet people and make friends. Fatrie typically earns more than \$4,000 per month. She is now financially literate and has checking and savings accounts. She recently applied and was approved for a car loan. Although she is still studying for her driving exam, Fatrie is looking forward to the independence and freedom that come with driving.

Fatrie attributes her success in large part to the support she received from the FaDSS program.