

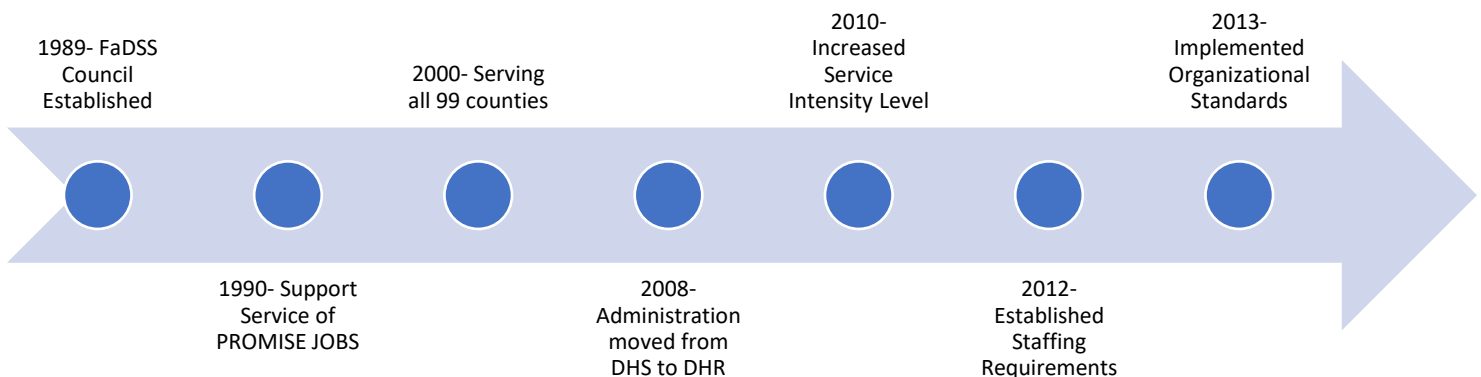
# FaDSS CONCEPT PAPER

## History

During the 1988 legislative session, the Iowa General Assembly established a Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) Council to study, fund and evaluate programs, which provide developmental services to families who are at risk of long-term welfare dependency. In addition to these duties, the FaDSS Council awards grants to public or private organizations for provision of FaDSS services.-Each FaDSS grantee is given flexibility in designing programs that best respond to the unique needs of its community. Initially, seven three-year demonstration grants were awarded, with program services beginning in early 1989. In 1990, FaDSS became a support service of the PROMISE JOBS program. By 2000 the FaDSS program was available in all of Iowa's 99 counties.

In 2008, the legislature changed the responsibility of the FaDSS program in Iowa Code from Department of Human Services to Department of Human Rights. In 2010, the program increased intensity of home visits when a family begins the program. Families receive a minimum of two visits for the first three months of service. Increased accountability in supervision was also part of the changes this year. In 2012, the program implemented requirements for staffing. In 2013, additional program and organizational standards were implemented to enhance FaDSS.

## Timeline



## Program Design

The FaDSS program design recognizes that at-risk families face many issues and respond well to long-term, intense personal interaction with trained staff to move to emotional and economic independence. FaDSS believes that all families have strengths and with the right supports can become self-sufficient members of their community. In partnership with the family, FaDSS develops a comprehensive system of services and support that promotes, empowers, and nurtures the family to self-sufficiency.

FaDSS emphasizes the strengths of families and builds upon those strengths, assisting families to set and attain goals, while recognizing that families seek to address their multiple needs in a way that least threatens the integrity of the family unit.

This strong belief in the family unit is the foundation of the Certified Family Development Specialist's partnership with each family. This belief leads each grantee to tailor the design of program services to best meet the needs expressed by each family in a manner most comfortable to the family. As such, each grantee's services are unique, but the following core components are consistent in all grantee programs.

## **CORE SERVICE COMPONENTS**

### ***HOME VISITS***

Home Visits are the foundation for all FaDSS services. During these visits a trusting relationship is fostered between the FaDSS Specialist and each family member. The home visits continue until the family requests them to end or until seven months after the family is no longer receiving cash assistance from the Family Investment Program (FIP). Families receive a minimum of two home visits per month for the first three months and a minimum of monthly thereafter.

### ***ASSESSMENT***

Assessment is an intense self-reflection process completed with each family. Three assessments are required to be conducted with each family enrolled in the FaDSS program: The General Family Function screening, the Relationship Assessment Tool and the Child Development screening. Other assessment tools that may be used include the genogram (family tree), ecomap (depicts family support system) time line (significant events), and a basic strengths assessment. All families are assessed using the FaDSS Self-Sufficiency Matrix. Other assessments may be used depending on the specific criteria outlined in the grantee application or the families' unique situation.

### ***GOAL SETTING***

Goal setting is directed by the family with guidance from the Family Development Specialist. The family develops short- and long-term goals aimed at family stabilization (short-term) and achieving economic self-sufficiency (long-term). Goal setting complements the Family Investment Agreement (FIA) goals developed with PROMISE JOBS.

### ***SUPPORT***

Support provided by the Family Development Specialist is ongoing, strength-based and solution focused.

### ***REFERRALS & COLLABORATION***

Referrals made by the Family Development Specialist assist families in accessing community resources to better meet their needs. Family Development Specialists collaborate with other programs and services to strategize case planning efforts

### ***ADVOCACY & SELF-EMPOWERMENT***

Family Development Specialists partner with families to develop self-advocacy skills through a combination of modeling and empowerment with the goal of ensuring that services are equitable, inclusive and

## **CORE PROGRAM COMPONENTS OF FaDSS**

### **Staffing**

Family Development Specialists and their Supervisors are certified through a training program that has been approved by the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Council.

- In addition to the required educational qualifications for supervisors, FaDSS grantees have the flexibility to develop additional staff qualifications that reflect their localized design.
- Grantees maintain a high level of professional development through the Iowa Community Action Association, the Iowa Family Development Alliance and other state, national, regional and local training opportunities. In addition to the Family Development Certification Training, FaDSS has implemented a set of required trainings for staff including confidentiality, ethics, mandatory reporter, and the Self-Sufficiency Matrix. Staff are also required to attend 10 hours of training each year.

### **Program Capacity**

The complex nature of the FaDSS program and the multiple issues faced by families volunteering for FaDSS services necessitate that programs limit their capacity to a range of 18 to 21 families on average per full time Specialist.

### **Community Linkages**

Beyond formal linkage with the PROMISE JOBS program, FaDSS grantees have developed local community linkages with other area resource providers in addition to participating on local advisory boards, coordinating committees, etc.