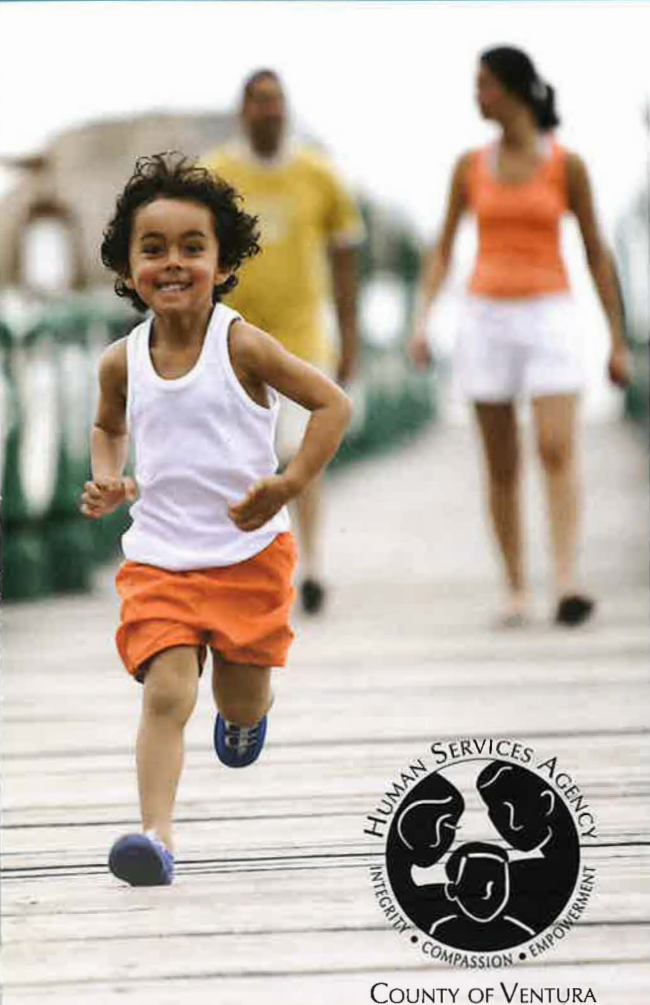


County of Ventura

Human Services Agency



Mission Statement

We strengthen families, support self-sufficiency and promote safety, health and well-being.



2015-2016 *Annual Report*

Snapshot – Fiscal Year 2015-2016



The Human Services Agency strives to strengthen Ventura County by administering programs that have a positive impact on key community concerns including food insecurity, limited access to health care and insurance, child and elder abuse, unemployment and homelessness. The Human Services Agency serves as a foundation for improved career paths and family lives, and as a safety net for individuals facing temporary setbacks due to loss of a job, illness or other challenges.

Between 2006 and 2016, the percentage of county residents receiving support services has grown significantly: from 1 in 10 in 2006 to 1 in 4 in 2016.



226,883	Helped 226,883 individuals receive health care through Medi-Cal benefits
77,611	Helped 77,611 individuals supplement their diets with CalFresh benefits
5,493	Investigated 5,493 reports of suspected child abuse or neglect
5,373	Assisted 5,373 individuals who receive In-Home Supportive Services
3,888	Responded to 3,888 allegations of adult abuse or neglect
667	Helped 667 homeless residents find housing
127	Facilitated adoptions for 127 children

Ventura County
BOARD
of Supervisors,
CEO &
Human Services Agency
DIRECTOR

Steve Bennett
Supervisor, District 1

Kathy I. Long
Supervisor, District 3

Peter C. Foy
Supervisor, District 4

Linda Parks, Chair
Supervisor, District 2

John C. Zaragoza
Supervisor, District 5

Michael Powers
County Executive Officer

Barry L. Zimmerman
Director, Human Services Agency

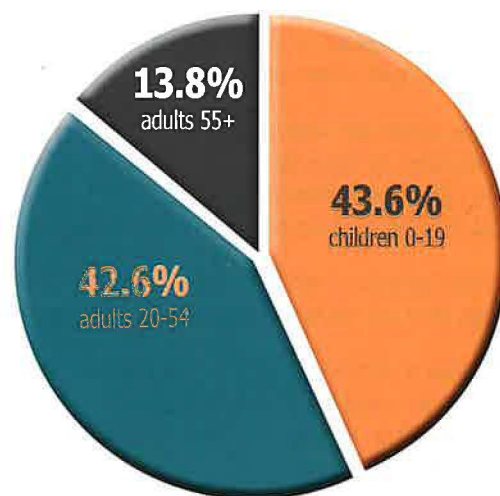
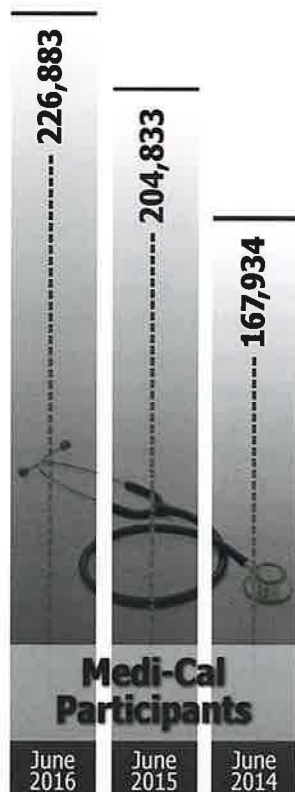
Ventura County Profile – *Key Caseload Trends 2016*

During the economic crisis, Ventura County experienced a rise in caseloads for many assistance programs such as CalWORKs, CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and In-Home Supportive Services. Current trends show that while caseloads in Medi-Cal and In-Home Supportive Services continue to rise, CalFresh and CalWORKs have begun to decline.

Key Caseload Trends for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 include the following:

- Individuals receiving CalFresh benefits fell slightly, with the number of participants decreasing from 77,778 in June 2015 to 77,611 in June 2016.
- Individuals receiving In-Home Supportive Services rose from 4,912 in June 2015 to 5,373 in June 2016, an increase of over 9 percent.

- Comparing caseloads from June 2015 and June 2016, the monthly average of individuals receiving CalWORKs decreased by nearly 8 percent, falling from 13,504 to 12,431.
- With the expansion of health care coverage under the Affordable Care Act, individuals receiving Medi-Cal increased 11 percent, rising from 204,833 in June 2015 to 226,883 in June 2016. The majority of Medi-Cal clients are children with 43.6 percent of clients between the ages of 0-19, 42.6 percent between the ages of 20-54, and 13.8 percent age 55 or older. To date, a total of 44,319 residents have obtained health care through a Covered California insurance plan.



Individuals Receiving Medi-Cal by age group

Human Services Agency
PROGRAM
*Participants**
BY CITY
June 2016



Camarillo.....	4.9%	Simi Valley.....	10.1%
Fillmore.....	3.2%	Thousand Oaks.....	7.7%
Moorpark	3.2%	Ventura.....	12.9%
Ojai.....	2.1%	Other	3.3%
Oxnard.....	42.7%		
Port Hueneme	3.4%		
Santa Paula	6.5%		

*Enrolled in Medi-Cal and other programs concurrently

Foster Health Link Electronic Health Records System



Ventura County Foster Health Link is a web and mobile application that gives foster parents access to health records and resources to support foster children's needs.

The Foster Health Link (FHL) Network of Care includes common medical terms, provides reliable information about prescription medications, and makes it simple for caregivers to search for and contact local service providers such as therapists and counselors. This past year the FHL electronic health records system was enhanced and now pulls health information from the

state-administered Child Welfare Services Case Management System regarding immunizations, allergies, medical conditions, dental exams, and more. Additionally, the system pulls e-records from the Ventura County Health Care Agency's patient portal, including real-time summaries of doctor visits and lab results. The integration between the Network of Care and electronic health records portions of FHL helps caregivers link easily between the two to gain a better understanding of children's health conditions.

Foster parents and relative caregivers no longer need to rely on incomplete, outdated, paper medical records when caring for foster children. Now with FHL, some 500 caregivers can access updated health information about the 1,000 foster children in their care 24/7 from a computer or mobile device. Ventura County social workers can also view the same information, which facilitates better sharing and planning to meet children's needs.

"Foster parents are front and center in nurturing vulnerable children, and they deserve access to information that helps them give the best care possible," said Human Services Agency Director Barry Zimmerman.

A review of digital information sharing platforms conducted by The Children's Partnership shows that FHL is the only system in California that allows foster parents and caregivers to access foster children's health records online. Recently, the Center for Digital Government presented the "Best of California Awards" which recognize state and local government organizations for innovative technology initiatives. Ventura County's "Foster Health Link" project was honored and received one of the awards. Watch this video to learn more about the Foster Health Link project.



www.fostervckids.org/fhl

Landlords Offering Housing for H

Research shows that stable safe housing is critical for the well-being of children and families. The Ventura County Human Services Agency's need of housing including the CalWORKs Housing Supportive Services and Re-Housing Program. Both programs provide services and offer funding from federal, state, and local sources to assist residents who are currently homeless or facing homelessness. Assistance includes intensive support and case management and may include rental and utility deposits, credit counseling, and moving costs. Over the past several years, these programs have housed over 1,000 children and adults in Ventura County.

The cost of living and soaring rental prices contribute to the scarce inventory of affordable housing in Ventura County. In large part, the success of the county's homeless programs depends on developing strong partnerships with landlords who are willing to go the extra mile to help these vulnerable individuals and families find a home in Ventura County. To recognize property managers who have stepped forward, the Human Services Agency's Homeless Services Department along with the agency's Homeless Services Manager "Building a Community" Appreciation Breakfast.

Some 35 representatives from the county, non-profit, and private sectors participated in the breakfast, a critical work of local property managers in partnering to address homelessness. The event featured inspirational testimonials from clients who got a "new home" and property managers. At the breakfast, three



Landlords Offering Housing for Homeless Recognized by County

Research shows that stable safe housing is critical for the well-being, health, and long-term success of children and families. The Ventura County Human Services Agency operates several programs that assist residents in need of housing including the CalWORKs Housing Support Program and the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program. Both programs provide services and offer funding from federal, state, and local sources to assist residents who are currently homeless or facing homelessness. Assistance includes intensive support and case management and may include rental and utility deposits, credit counseling, and moving costs. Over the past several years, these programs have housed over 1,000 children and adults in Ventura County.

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Some 35 representatives from the county, non-profit, and business sectors gathered to acknowledge the critical work of local property managers in partnering to alleviate homelessness in Ventura County, and to hear inspirational testimonials from clients who got a "new lease on life" through the joint efforts of social workers and property managers. At the breakfast, three property management companies were honored

with certificates of recognition for their ongoing partnership in helping individuals and families facing homelessness secure and maintain stable housing: Troop Premier Property Management; Pacific Point Apartments; and Gateway Plaza Apartments.

Marissa Mach, Deputy Director of the Adult & Family Services Department is encouraged by the support of local property managers. "Willing landlords and property managers are key players in our effort to offer stable and appropriate housing to homeless clients. We've seen great success with the partnerships we have in place."



Photo by Rob Varela, Ventura County Star staff photographer



New Programs & To



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- Unifies approval standards for
- Includes a comprehensive ps including relatives
- Prepares families to better m
- Allows seamless transition to

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Homeless Recognized by County

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New Programs & Tools Launched for Foster Family Recruitment



Photo by Chuck Kirman, Ventura County Star staff photographer

This year, Foster VC Kids began a new approach to foster parent recruitment and training with the implementation of two programs: Resource Family Approval (RFA) and the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI).

Ventura County is one of 13 counties chosen as early implementers of the RFA process. RFA is a family-friendly and child-centered caregiver approval process

that combines elements of the current foster parent licensing, relative approval, and approvals for adoption and guardianship processes and replaces those processes with a single approval standard. RFA:

- Is streamlined and eliminates the duplication of existing processes
- Unifies approval standards for all caregivers, regardless of the child's case plan
- Includes a comprehensive psychosocial assessment, home environment check, and training for all families, including relatives
- Prepares families to better meet the needs of vulnerable children in the foster care system
- Allows seamless transition to permanency

The Quality Parenting Initiative is an approach to strengthening foster care by refocusing on excellent parenting for all children in the child welfare system. QPI is an effort to rebrand foster care, not simply by changing a logo or an advertisement, but by changing the expectations of and support for foster parents and other caregivers. When QPI is successful, caregivers have a voice, not only in issues that affect the children they are caring for, but also in the way the system treats children and families.

To reach out more effectively to the community, Foster VC Kids convened several Town Hall and Informational meetings. In January, over 200 people attended an informational session followed by a non-denominational informational meeting hosted at Oxnard's All Saints Episcopal Church in May. Organizers see the meetings as an effective way to educate people about the need for foster parents, caregivers, and mentors, and encourage them to help provide the housing, healing, support, and guidance that can give children in the system a sense of normalcy. Additionally, online information sessions are now available in both English and Spanish. There are 200 active foster parents and 300 relative caregivers countywide. Foster VC Kids is aiming to recruit more, especially in Ventura and Oxnard, from which more than 80 percent of foster youths in the county originate.

Child Welfare Continuum of Care Reform In Ventura County

On October 11, 2015 Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed legislation that comprehensively reforms placement and treatment options for youth in foster care. Assembly Bill 403, sponsored by the California Department of Social Services, builds upon years of policy changes to improve outcomes for youth in foster care and mandates that the child welfare system transition to the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR). To establish and operationalize CCR policy and practice locally, Ventura County has convened both an Executive and a Steering Committee, as well as multiple topical working groups which have been meeting regularly since early 2016.



CCR calls for improvements to ensure that more children who have been abused or neglected receive care in family settings, rather than shelter or group settings, until they can reunite with their parents. This reform effort is focused on improving outcomes and requires significant changes to current out-of-home care placements and supports. This reform effort will improve the assessment process and alter the roles of various placement settings and their service arrays, and occurs in the context of other system changes that serve to increase access to existing federally-entitled services. Key provisions of CCR include:

- Prioritizing home-based delivery of services
- Redefining the purpose of group care to short-term residential treatment
- Teaming service providers with children and families in a manner that ensures that families' voices are heard

- Ensuring children's early access to specialized mental health services irrespective of their placement setting

CCR Accomplishments to date include:

- **Family Preservation:** Developed a child welfare family preservation model that keeps children safe with their families of origin instead of entering foster care whenever possible
- **Family Team Meetings:** Determined the function and design of Family Team Meetings that will take place at least every 90 days for each child to ensure that progress is made on plans that benefit the child and family, and that critical decisions are made with input from all who will be affected; clinicians, public health nurses, the child's family of origin and safety network, and other service providers as needed
- **Mental Health Screenings & Services:** Agreed to conduct mental health screenings for all children who enter child welfare, and to begin federally-funded mental health services for children shortly after entry, as needed based on assessment
- **Family Finding:** Improved child welfare processes for contacting relatives early on after children's removal from their homes to help ensure that children are placed with relatives when possible and that safety networks are established to support children and their families
- **Training for Resource Families:** Expanded training for foster parents, relative caregivers and adoptive parents to help these resource families parent and co-parent through a trauma-informed lens and support relationships with birth families that enhance reunification efforts
- **Services Targeted to Children's Needs:** Estimated the numbers of children who will fall into each of the six levels of care established by the state, and analyzed the mental health treatment services and child welfare contacts that will be required; children with characteristics that place them in higher levels of care will receive more frequent, intensive, in-person services and contacts

- **Group Home Transition:** Met with group home representatives to review local and state certification and accreditation procedures for transitioning to Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs), which have stricter criteria for initial placement, increased standards of care, and shorter durations of stay

Continuum of Care Reform Next Steps

Critical next steps for successful Continuum of Care Reform implementation in the coming year include:

- Expanding planning groups to include more stakeholders and partners
- Implementing a streamlined assessment tool that facilitates the provision of mental health services to children early on
- Assisting group homes by requesting state extensions for group homes that are in the process of converting to STRTPs but will not complete the process by January 2017
- Developing child-specific plans to transition children currently residing in congregate care to family settings whenever possible



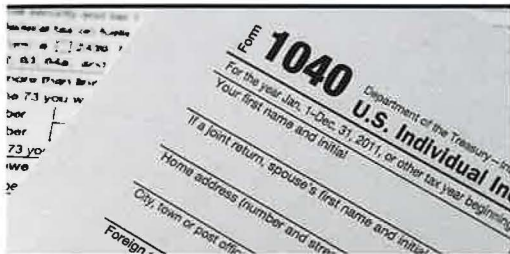
Ventura County will team service providers with children and families in a manner that ensures that families' voices are heard.

Fiscal Year 2015-2016 – Accomplishments

Provided services to

226,883

Medi-Cal clients under the Affordable Care Act's expanded eligibility criteria, further reducing the number of uninsured county residents.



Assisted Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program participants with filing 2,118 free tax returns, a 14 percent increase from the prior year. The total tax refunds amounted to \$2,708,760, with 626 filers receiving the Earned Income Tax Credit, which represents

\$1,243,583

for low-income households

Began using

"Textizen"

to communicate more efficiently with clients by texting reminders about services and upcoming deadlines.



County of Ventura, Human Services Agency, Ventura County Public Authority for IHSS

Senior & Caregiver CONFERENCE

Information, Workshops, Community Resources, Refreshments, & Door Prizes

Mental Health: it begins with ME

Providing Support & Understanding

Saturday, November 21, 2015
8 a.m. – 12 noon

Ventura Adult & Continuing Education (VACE)
5200 Valentine Road, #101, Ventura 93003

Sponsored the 10th Annual Senior Caregiver Conference which focused on mental illness.

130

providers and consumers
attended the event

Successfully applied for and received

\$792,000

from the state to administer the CalWORKs Housing Support Program.



Provided services to 4,653 veterans, processing 3,266 federal Veterans Administration claims and 585 California College Fee Waivers. Local veterans received benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs equating to an economic impact of over

\$18.5

million dollars

Human Services Agency

REVENUE



Expenditures

Fiscal Year 2015-2016
\$253.6 million

Fiscal Year 2014-2015
\$237.2 million

Fiscal Year 2013-2014
\$225.5 million

Revenue

Federal & State Funds.... \$233.2 million
County Funds \$20.4 million
Total \$253.6 million

Expenditures

Staff Salaries & Benefits. \$110.6 million
Direct Client Assistance \$92.8 million
Services & Supplies \$50.2 million
Total \$253.6 million

State & Local Outlook – *Human Services Agency*

State Budget

Last June, the Legislature passed the budget bill for the 2016-17 fiscal year. The budget package, which reflects an agreement between lawmakers and Governor Brown, includes support for a broad range of policies that will improve the lives of Californians in the year ahead, particularly residents who are struggling to make ends meet on low incomes. While the state's economy continues to generate significant new revenue, the 2016-17 budget balances new and ongoing commitments with building the state's fiscal reserves and spending on one-time items—such as infrastructure and affordable housing.

The budget includes \$820 million to cover 5 percent of the cost of optional Medi-Cal expansion under the federal Affordable Care Act, plus an additional \$188 million to enroll 185,000 undocumented children in Medi-Cal. The budget allocates \$266 million to restore funds to In-Home Supportive Services and \$437 million to comply with federal regulations regarding caregiver overtime. The budget dedicates \$95 million to repeal the maximum family grant rule under the state's assistance program for low-income families (CalWORKs), which denied aid to 130,000 children conceived while their parents were receiving aid. In addition, the state portion of the federal SSI/SSP grant providing income assistance for elderly and disabled individuals will increase by 2.75 percent after a decade of remaining flat or being cut.

Modest advances in other key public supports include increasing reimbursement rates for child care and preschool providers and funding a number of programs that seek to promote housing stability and reduce homelessness. The budget provides an expansion of housing stability programs through the creation of the Bringing Families Home Program as well as an increase to the CalWORKs Housing Support program. The budget deal also includes an Assembly proposal to allow CalWORKs families to access Homeless Assistance Program services once every 12 months, replacing the current once-in-a-lifetime limit on access to these services.*

*Source: "First Look: The 2016-2017 State Budget." CA Budget & Policy Center, June 2016

Local Impacts of Legislation

Veterans Housing & Health Care

Several recent funding awards and new mental health legislation will have a positive impact on the lives of local veterans. Ventura's Congresswoman Julia Brownley, who is a member of the House Veteran Affairs Committee, secured over \$113,000 in housing vouchers to provide rental assistance and supportive services for homeless veterans. Brownley has also advocated for \$6.2 million for a new veteran's outpatient clinic in Oxnard, a facility that would offer new and expanded services to keep pace with the needs of the increasing veteran population in Ventura County. Additionally, Congresswoman Brownley authored "The Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act" which was recently signed by the President and will lead to a better understanding of the factors that contribute to the alarmingly high suicide rates among women veterans. In order to serve approximately 41,000 local veterans more effectively, the Human Services Agency recently opened a larger facility that assists veterans with claims filing and other services.

The Affordable Care Act—3 Years Later

In January of 2013, prior to full implementation of the Affordable Care Act, approximately 113,000 Ventura County residents received insurance through California's Medi-Cal program. Just three years later, under the expanded eligibility criteria, that figure has doubled with over 226,000 residents now enrolled in Medi-Cal. Additionally, 44,319 residents have obtained health care by purchasing an insurance plan through Covered California.

While new enrollments have begun to taper off, the Human Services Agency continues to actively engage with community partners to enroll vulnerable and traditionally hard to reach residents. With a grant from Assembly Bill 82, the Human Services Agency's Medi-Cal Outreach & Enrollment team targets populations of homeless, individuals with mental health disorders, individuals with substance use disorders, and those with limited-English speaking abilities. Through a partnership with Community Action of Ventura County and the Mixteco Indígena Community Organizing Project, 1,072 hard to reach residents were enrolled in Medi-Cal this past year.



Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Initiatives

In the coming year, the Ventura County Human Services Agency will continue to focus on:

- Implementing AB 403, the Continuum of Care child welfare system redesign
- Actively recruiting potential foster families to begin the Resource Family Approval process
- Exploring new state funding for homeless populations with community partners on the Homeless Continuum of Care and expanding outreach to identify landlords who accept low income housing vouchers
- Implementing an inter-agency collaborative model that addresses the needs of child labor and sex trafficking victims
- Assessing the needs of the County's growing senior population, and exploring targeted services and approaches
- Establishing pilot programs in the Human Services Agency's "Social Mobility Project" which track the relationship between a child's starting point in life with the occupation, wealth and social status they achieve as adults