

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT FY 11-12
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Budgeted Personnel		50	50
Expenditures:			
Current	\$2,900,110	\$2,728,631	\$2,870,945
Capital	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$2,900,110	\$2,728,631	\$2,870,945
Revenue	\$12,962	\$13,038	\$24,590

Note: Fifty-two budgeted positions in 2011-12 were filled (23 full-time and 29 part-time, seasonal, and temporary). Expenditures included \$2,681,110 in operating expenses plus \$219,000 to External Entities. Operating expenses were increased by (\$171,479) over last fiscal year. Revenues, generated only through Homemaker services, were \$12,962 for the fiscal year. The above summary reflects a 4% increase in staffing over a 2 year period, and a 1.0% increase in budget over the same period.

STATEMENT OF DEPARTMENT MISSION, GOALS, AND TARGET POPULATION

Mission: The mission of the Department of Social Services is to enhance the quality of life of Greenwich residents through support in meeting basic human needs and promoting services that foster self-sufficiency and economic independence.

Goals: To provide for basic human needs; maintain the integrity of families; strengthen self-reliance and self-sufficiency; and promote positive social development and emotional adjustment for residents unable to access these services elsewhere.

Target Population: Greenwich’s economically-disadvantaged residents; children and youth at risk of poor social or emotional adjustment; residents with confusion, dementia, and other declining abilities due to age and health conditions; those with intellectual disabilities and chronic mental illness; and those of limited income with physical and medical needs whose needs are not fully met by other agencies.

Oversight: The Department is overseen by the seven-member, policy-making Board of Social Services. Board members serve three year terms. Board officers this year were: Mr. Jim McGuire, Chairperson; Ms. Barbara Nolan, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Steve Gross, Secretary. Other board members were: Ms. Victoria deBary; Ms Maryann Ramos, Mr. Abbott Jones; and Ms. Angelica Arenas.

KEY DEPARTMENT OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN 2011-2012

Accountability: The Greenwich Department of Social Services (GDSS) management and Board are monitoring the Department's accountability by using data extracted from the Evolv^{CS} system. These reports assist in measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of staff's productivity, clients' services, as well as balancing services and the cost of delivering these services. The Commissioner's monthly dashboard report to the Board of Social Services and Town leaders provides Town's stakeholders (including the First Selectman, and BET) a better understanding of the Departments' activities and accomplishments.

A major project for the Department was the establishment of client service plans. A service plan was created for each client that established needs, goals, objectives, progress notes and timelines for achieving goals. By establishing service plans the department will be able to develop a results-based accountability report.

Meeting Community Needs: The increased demand for social services, due to the recession and slow job market, continued during this past fiscal year. This is reflected in the 3,484 client's served during FY '11-12. With the slower than expected economic recovery, we expect the need and demand for services to grow. The Greenwich United Way's "Assessment of Human Service Needs Assessment Report", states, "Assistance meeting basic human needs, emergency shelter for families, and health services for the underinsured or uninsured were among the issues tagged by service providers, community leaders and residents as high priority concerns that are not adequately being addressed in the community".

Following the goals established in its strategic plan and responding to the needs of the community, GDSS has organized several task force groups to assist in developing an effective network of community agencies.

Mental Health Provider Group - In collaboration with the United Way of Greenwich, organized a Mental Health Provider Group. The group brings together Town, community organizations and consumer support groups, with the goal of provider collaboration, and establishing a more effective network of mental health services to assist those who need help by linking them with local resources. Over a dozen agencies are participating, and meeting on a monthly basis. In October 2011, GDSS continued its participation in the National Depression Screening Day, offering screenings and referrals to residents.

Workforce Development Group – Was formed to develop a better organized approach in linking under and unemployed clients with vocational and employment training programs. Agencies such as Inspirica, Jewish Family Services, Family Centers, Laurel House and Goodwill began to meet and share information about their respective programs. Planning began on organizing a jobs fair in the fall of 2012.

Hoarding Task Force – This group began to form in the spring of 2012. GDSS identified hoarding as an issue with some clients and began to organize a group of Town departments to share ideas on how to approach this challenging issue. A presentation from the Milford Department of Health was given in April on how that Town created a Hoarding Task Force. The Greenwich Hoarding task Force began to develop in the spring/summer to discuss strategies for collaboration among Town departments.

Byram Family Enrichment Program – Brings together Town Departments and community agencies to discuss an organized approach on developing programs to meet the needs of the Byram community. A project established by this group was the development of an evening ESL program at BANC for adults. Enrollment greatly exceeded expectations and more teachers had to be recruited for additional classes. The program includes an evening meal for families and childcare activities during the class. The plan is to continue the program in FY '13 and possibly expand to a 2 evening a week program.

Conservator Group – Because of a dearth of conservators, GDSS is working with community agencies and the Probate Court in establishing a plan for encouraging more professionals to become conservators. A group of community agency professionals have formed to provide support services and advice to conservators to decrease the burden of time and effort that sometimes consumes conservators and causes them to drop out. The group is

reaching out to lawyers and lawyers groups in the community. One lawyer has stepped up and is doing a very effective job of working with mentally ill clients in the community.

In April, GDSS once again in collaboration with Lower Fairfield Regional Action Council facilitated a conference on co-occurring disorders.

Strategic Planning: The Board of Social Services completed the development of a Department three year strategic plan for FY '11-13 with the aim of delivering services in the most cost efficient and socially effective manner. The Department has very effectively followed the attainment of goals and objectives of the strategic plan and accomplished many of the objectives set by the plan in FY '12. Implementation plans for the entire Department were developed based off of the strategic plan and measured the effectiveness and performance of the Department.

KEY SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY IN 2011-2012

The Department provides various direct and indirect services to Greenwich residents.

- I. **Direct Services.** In FY '11-12 GDSS provided services to 3,484 clients. The monthly departmental caseload over the year, per FTE was 224. 1,665 new admissions to the Department.

The greatest needs were for assistance with housing and utility assistance; food, Energy Assistance; counseling; financial assistance; assistance with entitlements; and seasonal programs such as Community Gifts. Other major services included: conservatorship and protective services for seniors; clinical case management and supportive group therapy to the chronically mentally ill; and homemaker services to seniors and the disabled.

Service:	# Clients Served	% Total
Client Evaluation & Ongoing Support Services	2,772	36
Personal Sustenance	2,161	28
Community Gifts	1,420	18
Financial Aid	623	8
Education Services	367	5
Protective/Legal Services	214	3
Homemaker	120	2
Total	7,677	100

Ethnicity:	# Clients Served	% Total
Hispanic/Latino	1,510	43
White	1,287	37
African American	372	11
Asian	121	3
Other	194	6
Total	3,484	100

Age Distribution:	# Clients	% Total
0-17	1,133	30
18-24	313	8
25-44	814	21
45-64	825	22
65+	713	19
Total	3,798	100

Gender:	# Enrolled	% Total
Female	2,281	60
Male	1,517	40
Total	3,798	100

- **Casework and Case Management Services:** The Department continues to be the major portal of entry for case management services to individuals and families who have basic human needs, (clothing, food, health care, and personal safety) and little economic and/or emotional ability to address them. The Department services are for those residents who exhaust all other viable options for self-sufficiency. Those able to pay are referred to the appropriate community agencies. Caseworkers make all efforts to locate and engage other community resources in meeting clients' needs. Services are delivered through two teams, one focusing on adults and families, and one focusing on seniors.
 - The A&F team provides services to families and individuals under age 50. The team served 2,300 clients in this fiscal year.
 - The Senior Team provides services to those over 50 years of age. The team served 1,184 clients. Of the 3,483 total clients served, 23% or 805 were 60 and above, showing the need for homecare services. Serving this population often necessitates going where the client is, be it in the home, Senior Center, doctor's office, or elsewhere.
- **Mental Health Services:** Both the Adult and Family, and the Senior teams share in the provision of mental health services to the chronically mentally ill population. Services include individual on-going support and clinical case management. The Department served 160 individuals this past fiscal year. A mental health caseworker was hired who concentrates her efforts on serving this client group and taking a leadership role in establishing a more effective network of services.
- **Senior Protective Services:** 155 residents received services designed to safeguard people 60 years and older from physical, mental and emotional abuse, neglect and abandonment and/or financial abuse and exploitation.
- **Food Insufficiency:** GDSS screens and refers clients to Greenwich's food and clothing bank, Neighbor-to-Neighbor (N-to-N). In addition, GDSS provides emergency food from the Department's Food Pantry. There were 453 households/families, or 1,092 individuals, enrolled in N-to-N. This represented 639 adults, of which 112 were seniors, and 453 children. This year, an average of 601 households received food monthly.
- **Town Financial Aid:** In FY '11-12 the Department distributed \$203,576 in Town Financial Assistance to over 406 households. The four most urgent needs addressed were: Eviction prevention - \$73,688 (39%) distributed among 102 households; Assistance with utility shut-offs - \$38,311 (22%) were allocated to 134 households; Payment for Meals-on-Wheels and food cards - \$34,207 (18%); Transportation for seniors and disabled adults- \$10,871 (6%) were distributed to over 147 households. The balance of the funds was used to pay for Lifeline alert for seniors, medical emergencies, medication, and miscellaneous emergencies such as bed bugs, etc.
- **Youth Services:** The A&F team oversees two programs geared to Greenwich youth: The Greenwich Youth Conservation Project (GYCP), a 72-slot, summer employment, educational, and socialization program for 14 and 15 year-olds; and the Byram Archibald Neighborhood Center After-School Program (BANC), for children in kindergarten through 5th grade. BANC served 82 children in FY '11-12. The program applied for and was awarded a license as an after-school day care program.
- **Homemaker Services:** The Department provides Homemaker Services for low-income seniors and disabled individuals who meet criteria, on a small sliding scale. Services include light housekeeping, laundry, meal preparation, and, with a doctor's authorization, bath assistance to clients unable to manage these tasks themselves due to frailty or illness. Homemakers provided over 11,044 hours of service to 119 seniors and individuals with disabilities, for an average of 8.0 hours per month per client.
- **Escorted Transportation:** Transportation is provided for the physically and mentally challenged clients who receive casework services from the Department. These services help many clients to access their medical providers, food, and to meet other needs such as medication pick-up or translation during medical or legal appointments. Our case aides also provide a physical assist to frail clients for a door through door service, whereas most of the alternate providers have door to door service. Case Aides provided 1,764 hours of service to 149 unduplicated clients, for an average of 1 hour and 10 minutes per month per client. GDSS contracted with TAG for Neighbor-to-Neighbor food deliveries.

- **Elderly/Disabled Renter's Program and Energy Assistance Program:** State law provides a renters rebate program for Connecticut renters who are elderly or totally disabled, and have resided in the state for at least one year, and have incomes below certain limits.
 - **Renters Rebate '11-12:** GDSS submitted 380 applications for renters' rebate. 100% were granted with benefits to applicants totaling \$176,929.40. The number of applications increased by almost 2% and dollars awarded decreased by 11% compared to last year.
 - **Energy Assistance '11-12:** GDSS accepted 395 applications, a 3% decrease over last fiscal year. 303 awards were granted with total awards distributed were \$213,165, a 1% increase from last year. Over 78% of applicants received awards as opposed to 80% last year. The citizenship documentation differed from that required last year which may account for the decrease in applications and awards.
- **Operation Fuel:** Operation Fuel is a privately funded 501C-3 not-for-profit organization providing financial assistance to eligible low-income families with fuel or utility emergencies via a network of 100 fuel banks. GDSS administers the program locally. Via the Greenwich Operation Fuel bank, over \$9,627 was awarded to 29 Greenwich households.
- **Community Gifts Program:** The A&F team oversees this program involving Town and private sector collaboration, distributing toys, food, cash, clothing and shoes to Greenwich families in need. There are several component programs:
 - The *Holiday Aid Program* provided for 938 households, a 1% (13) decrease over last year's 951 eligible households (2,782 individuals) during the Thanksgiving and December Holidays.
 - The *Campership Program* provided partial and full scholarships to summer camps for 236 children ages four to fourteen, and 16 seniors, totaling 252 campers.
 - The *Boots and Shoes Program* provided families with vouchers toward back-to-school footwear for 309 children, ages five to fifteen, through the *Salvation Army Emergency Aid Program*. The Salvation Army also provides other assistance, such as food vouchers, and financial assistance regarding specific needs.

II. Indirect Services: The Department works in collaboration with community agencies to identify human service needs and responds accordingly.

- **Community Partnership (External Entities):** Since 2006, GDSS has had the responsibility for oversight of local Human Services Organizations that receive Town funding. In FY '11 – 12, \$219,000 was distributed to eight community agencies. There was an addition of one new agency: YWCA Domestic Violence Program. Other agencies funded were: Liberation Programs; Shelter for the Homeless; United Way (Town share toward-Youth Coordinator); Family Centers, Child Guidance Clinic; Kids-In-Crisis; and SW Regional Mental Health Board.
- **Community Involvement:** The Department provides access to needed resources for clients through collaboration with various community organizations, and participation on Boards and Committees in the community. Such committees include Child Protection team, School Readiness Committee, Youth Council, JRB, and Teen Pregnancy Prevention Committee. Staff participates at the Senior Provider Network, the Commission on Aging, and Partnership and Elderly Services. GDSS Staff is also a member of the Greenwich Hospital Utilization Review Committee. Other leading collaborative partners include Greenwich United Way, Greenwich Housing Authority, Family Centers, Pathways, the Dubois Center, Neighbor-to-Neighbor, Board of Directors of Operation Fuel, Advisory Committee of the Norwalk Transit Authority, and the Program Committee of Abilis. GDSS staff also works closely with other Town departments, including the Office of the First Selectman, Police Department, Department of Health, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation, to coordinate services, such as evictions and condemnations, services for youth, and general public safety.

DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011–2012

- **Strategic Planning:** The Board of Social Services completed its three year plan in fiscal year 2011-2012. This plan will now be used as a roadmap for the Department in its delivery of services to the Greenwich community. The strategic planning process included a rigorous needs assessment with multiple Town officials and leaders of not-for-profit organizations active in the provision of social services. It outlines five goals with objectives that will establish implementation plans to be used throughout the Department. Department progress will be measured by accomplishment of Strategic Plan objectives.
- **Department Service Plan:** The Board of GDSS with staff support reviewed and evaluated all GDSS programs: Casework, Homemaker, Escorted Transportation, Community Gifts, and Community Partnership.
- **Measurement of Service Outputs:** With the EVOLV^{CS} implementation, the Department developed a monthly statistical report to quantify service delivery, produce statistical analysis, assess ongoing needs, and improve accountability. The plan is to summarize all of the most important data into a dashboard report.
- **Student Interns:** GDSS provided the opportunity of internships for Masters level Social Work students. This year two students, one from University of Connecticut, and one from New York University, interned in the Department. Both Interns successfully implemented projects that benefitted the community. Both Interns successfully implemented projects that benefitted the community. One intern was instrumental in organizing a support group for older adults at the Senior Center. The other intern working with the Probate Court established a support group for conservators in an effort to encourage more volunteers that are greatly needed for clients. The Department also had a summer intern from University of Connecticut working on special projects.

SPECIAL PROJECT PLANS FOR 2011-2012

- **Collaborative Projects:** As stated in the Department's strategic plan, collaboration with community agencies in meeting the Town's strategic needs will be a top priority. The United Way Needs Assessment Report identified the need to improve mental health services to seriously mentally ill clients. The Department in collaboration with the United Way formed a Mental Health Provider Group that has brought together mental health providers from Greenwich and Stamford that serve Greenwich residents. The goal of the group is to establish a continuous information flow among agencies and improve communication. The next collaboration group planned for formation is a workforce development group.