



# ***San Luis Obispo County Department of Social Services Semi-Annual Report***

Report Period: July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011

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# Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles



## Vision

*A responsible and caring community:  
Safe, Resilient and Healthy.*



*community*

## Mission

*We partner with the community to enhance self-sufficiency while ensuring that safety and basic human needs are met for the people of San Luis Obispo County.*



*growth*

## Guiding Principles

*We strive to eliminate poverty and abuse*

*We believe all people have strengths*

*We work together to assist in removing barriers and finding solutions*

*We strive to meet the unique needs of each community, family, and individual*

*We commit to fairness and equality*



*unity*



*home*



*stability*

# Recent Efforts and Changes

## *Integrated Document Management (IDM)*

***The Department has taken its first steps to introduce electronic document storage. IDM provides document storage, retention, retrieval, indexing, version control, security, and printing capabilities.***

***Simply put, IDM allows us to scan, store, retrieve, and if needed print almost any document at any time.***

Along with IDM comes changes in business procedures to adjust to the end goal of an almost paperless environment.

IDM will transfer administrative, fiscal and participant/client records to electronic format just as DSSNet, our Intranet site, succeeded in converting DSS from paper to electronic resources for items such as Desk Guides, training documents, and forms.

### **Roll out**

The intent is to gradually roll out IDM throughout the Department to both Administrative and Program areas.



### **Human Resource Personnel Records nearly completed!**

The Department has nearly completed the scanning and indexing of the Human Resource personnel records for our more than 400 employees.

### **Next: IT Purchasing Records**

We are about to begin scanning Information Technology Purchasing Records, and then we will be moving on to the next area slated for "electronification."

**It is anticipated this project will generate cost savings both due to the reductions of direct paper-related costs and the reduction of storage costs for our current paper documents and cases.**

# Recent Efforts and Changes

## *Knoodle*

# **Knowledge + Thinking Creatively = KNOODLE**

The name Knoodle (pronounced as “noodle” with a silent “K”) comes from combining the letter “K” for knowledge with the word “noodle”, defined as the action of thinking creatively. Knoodle enables you to do just that by infusing presentations with rich media and social interactivity with the audience.

Knoodle provides a cloud-based social presentation, training, and learning management system in a single platform. It delivers effective and engaging online trainings and presentations to a target audience within minutes, by using a combination of slides, video, audio, images, surveys, tests, multiple delivery options, and data analytics.

How will Knoodle help DSS? Knoodle will be used for department wide trainings, such as Confidentiality. The Knoodle presentation can be sent to different areas at different times to be viewed. The audience is able to watch the presentation in their own environment, then they can test their knowledge and even leave feedback, make comments and grade the presentation. Knoodle will keep track of who watches the video and who takes the quiz.

Sending the trainings electronically to staff will cut down on travel and time, ultimately saving the county money. The Participant Services Employment Resource Specialist Induction class will also be using Knoodle. At first, Knoodle will be used for self-learning topics and overviews. The students can watch the presentation then the trainer can follow up with discussion. This gives a few extra minutes for the trainer to work on other duties or for the team to meet.



# Recent Efforts and Changes

## *Innovative Technology Support*

**Led by Department of Social Services' Senior Software Engineer, Julie Lemen, the DSS Information Technology Team (ITT) has been providing innovative technology support in several areas, which has made many employees' jobs easier and helped to improve our department's outcomes.**

### **Linkages:**

A re-evaluation of Linkages resulted in an extensive overhaul of internal information systems. This technology has filled a gap in data collection and introduced a strong information system network to support staff in working together to serve families.

An outcome success based on this technology:

**In May 2011, Participant Services staff attended 75% of the CWS Team Decision-Making Meetings that involved their families.**

### **Participant Intake Schedule:**

This is a duty calendar and a participant appointment tracking system enabling efficient and equitable scheduling of intake applications among the Employment Resource Specialists by region.

### **Testing Application:**

The Test Manager application allows staff to create online tests, save tests and test questions for future use, score tests, follow student performance, and create reports.

### **DSSNet:**

Department-wide intranet provides easy access to over 7600 internal and state documents and over 100 in-house applications. DSSNet is considered the single most valuable DSS automation resource.

### **More examples of innovative ITT support:**

- ❖ Adult Services Intake
- ❖ CalWIN Help Desk and Reporting
- ❖ CWS Intake and Response
- ❖ Foster Care Administration
- ❖ Fraud Investigations
- ❖ Fair Hearings
- ❖ IHSS Support
- ❖ Internal Employee Support
- ❖ Administrative Review Team



# Recent Efforts and Changes

## *Extended Foster Care (AB 12)*

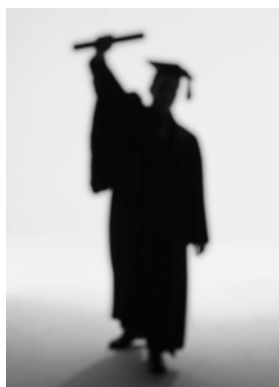
***This program is designed to provide a secure and supervised home for young adults to begin to experience some level of independence, while pursuing educational or employment training goals.***

### **To be eligible, the young adult must:**

- **Be receiving Foster Care, Kin-Gap or Adoptions Assistance when turning 18**
- **Opt to continue court dependency as a “Non Minor Dependent”**
- **Sign an agreement**
- **Live in an approved home**
- **Be doing one of the following:**
  - ✓ **Completing high school or GED**
  - ✓ **Enrolled in college or vocational education**
  - ✓ **Participating in a program designed to assist in gaining employment**
  - ✓ **Working 80 hours per month**
  - ✓ **Unable to do the above because of a diagnosed medical condition**

Started: January 2012

The full program will be phased in over 3 years



### **Benefits:**

- **Foster Care Rate Cash Benefits**
- **Medi-Cal Eligibility**
- **Annual clothing allowance**
- **Continued Independent Living Program Services**
- **For many, continued Child Welfare Services support**

# Recent Efforts and Changes

## *Children Affected by Methamphetamine (CAM) Grant*

SLO County Drug and Alcohol Services was recently awarded a CAM grant. This will allow the Dependency Drug Court (DDC) to expand their treatment program for children affected by the methamphetamine addiction of a parent.

- SLO County is one of only two pilot sites awarded a CAM grant
- \$370,000 per year for 4 years
- Will serve 60 children per year

**Meth** abuse affects over a quarter of our children in active Child Welfare Service cases. See more on Page 13.



### ***Specialized Children's Services funded by the grant:***

- ❖ ***Celebrating Families! (Cognitive Behavioral Support Group curriculum)***
- ❖ ***Court Appointed Special Advocate – C.A.S.A. (One-on-one mentoring)***
- ❖ ***Outpatient and In-home behavioral health counseling interventions***
- ❖ ***Services Coordination***
- ❖ ***Case management services to interface and coordinate with a variety of services including school services, developmental services and primary care.***

### **Goals:**

- ✓ **To improve the quality of life for children participating in DDC**
- ✓ **To increase the number of DDC families able to create a stable, healthy family environment**
- ✓ **To reduce the length of time DDC children are in foster care**
- ✓ **To increase the number of families that complete the DDC program**

# Recent Efforts and Changes

## Child and Family Services Review

*In 2011, the Child Welfare Services and the Juvenile Probation Department completed the Child and Family Services Review. This review is required by the federal and state governments every three years and is comprised of three parts.*

*During the Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR), Social Workers, Deputy Probation Officers, supervisors, and community partners discussed case practice with peers from other counties to identify strengths and areas needing improvement, and to share successful practices.*

*After the PQCR, the County Self-Assessment was held. Through a series of community forums and online surveys, the County worked with community partners to identify strengths and areas needing improvement.*

*The areas needing improvement are addressed in the System Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP states the outcomes Child Welfare Services and Probation will work to improve, and identifies strategies and tools that will be implemented to achieve these improvements. The SIP has been approved by the Board of Supervisors.*

### AREAS of FOCUS

Through the Child and Family Services Review process, these outcomes were identified as most in need of improvement:

- No recurrence of maltreatment – Child Welfare Services will implement strategies to prevent the recurrence of child abuse and neglect.
- Reunification within 12 months – Probation will implement strategies to reunify youth with their families in a timely and safe manner.
- Placement stability – Child Welfare Services will implement strategies to reduce the number of placement moves for children in foster care.

Child Welfare Services and Probation are now implementing the improvement ideas presented in the SIP, which is available online at:

<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assets/DSS/Reports/2011+SLO+SIP+Report.pdf>

San Luis Obispo County Summary of Data for period ending 12/31/2010					
Measure	Federal Standard	CWS Performance		Probation Performance	
		Percent	Count	Percent	Count
No recurrence of maltreatment	94.6%	90.9%	229/252	n/a	
Reunification within 12 months	75.2%	69.1%	65/94	36.4%	4/11
Placement stability (at least 24 months in care)	41.8%	40.7%	48/118	27.8%	5/18

# Recent Efforts and Changes

## *In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Cuts*

**Due to the State budget crisis, the IHSS program has faced reductions in the hours of paid services that can be provided to eligible disabled adults and/or senior citizens.**



IHSS helps to pay for services which allow senior citizens and disabled individuals to remain safely in their own home, rather than be placed into a Board and Care or Long Term Care (LTC) facility.

### **3.6% Cut in February 2011**

As a result of a 2010 legislative change, AB 1612, the total “paid” IHSS hours that a person can receive was cut by 3.6%.

### **Unmet Need**

Some people need more hours of IHSS services than the county is able to authorize. These additional hours are considered “unmet need”. When there are hours of “unmet need”, the 3.6% cut comes out of those hours first.

### **Current injunction stopping an additional 20% cut:**

An additional 20% cut in hours was proposed to begin in January 2012. At the time of this report, a preliminary injunction is in place prohibiting the State from implementing this cut. The State plans to appeal this court decision.



# Recent Efforts and Changes

## CalWORKs Changes

**Several CalWORKs changes took effect on July 1, 2011.**



### **CALWORKS GRANT REDUCED:**

- 8% reduction to the Maximum Aid Payment
- Earned Income Disregard reduced from \$225 to \$112

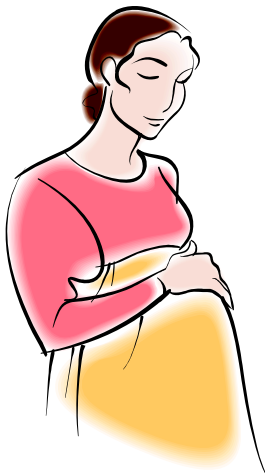
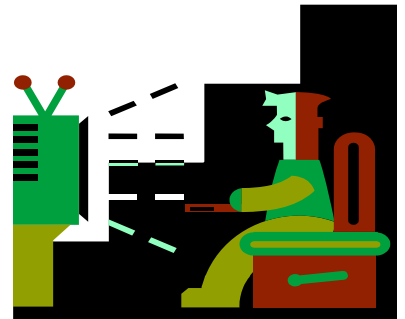
### **LIFETIME LIMIT DECREASED:**

The lifetime limit for the number of months a family can receive CalWORKs changed from 60 months to 48 months.

Note: The Safety-Net program continues to provide benefits to children whose parents have reached their lifetime limit.

### **CHILD CARE SERVICES CUT:**

Child care services were cut for 11 and 12 year old children.



### **CAL-LEARN PROGRAM SUSPENDED:**

The Cal-LEARN program, which provides specialized services for pregnant and parenting teens who are attending high school, was suspended for a year. Teens who would normally be in this program are currently required to participate in the Welfare-to-Work program.

# Recent Efforts and Changes

## SNAP-ED – Nutrition Education Grant

***The San Luis Obispo County Department of Social Services and Health Agency both received SNAP-ED grants, and will be working together to provide nutrition education to community members who are either receiving CalFresh or potentially eligible to receive CalFresh during the federal fiscal year ending 9-30-2012.***

**SNAP: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Federal Program)**

**CalFresh: California's SNAP Program (formerly called Food Stamps)**

### **SNAP-ED Goals:**

- ❖ Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables
- ❖ Increase physical activity
- ❖ Increase healthy meal choices
- ❖ Decrease consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks



### **Activities:**

- ❖ A five series nutrition class for 350 individuals
- ❖ Several single session classes
- ❖ Media events
- ❖ Posters, brochures, coloring books
- ❖ Harvest of the Month newsletters
- ❖ Nutritional education mailings to CalFresh participants
- ❖ One-Stop workshops
- ❖ Creation of a restaurant guide to healthy meals in SLO County



### **How will we know if our efforts are successful?**

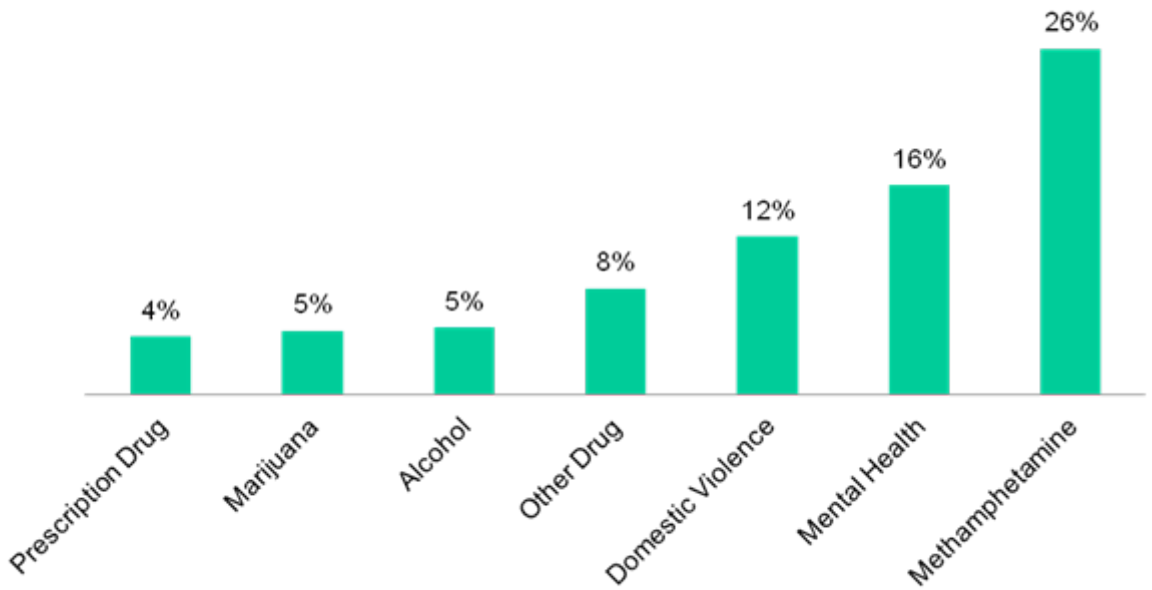
**A pre and post-survey is being sent to all CalFresh participants, so we can evaluate the impact of the SNAP-ED project.**

# Statistics

## Contributing Factors in Child Welfare Cases

**The top three contributing factors affecting the families of children with open Child Welfare Services (CWS) cases are Methamphetamine abuse, Mental Health issues, and Domestic Violence.**

Contributing Factors in CWS Cases



- Approximately 70% of the children with open CWS cases have drug abuse, domestic violence, and/or mental health issues within their family.
- Additionally, 2/3 of the families working towards reunifying with their children have a mix of two or three of these issues.

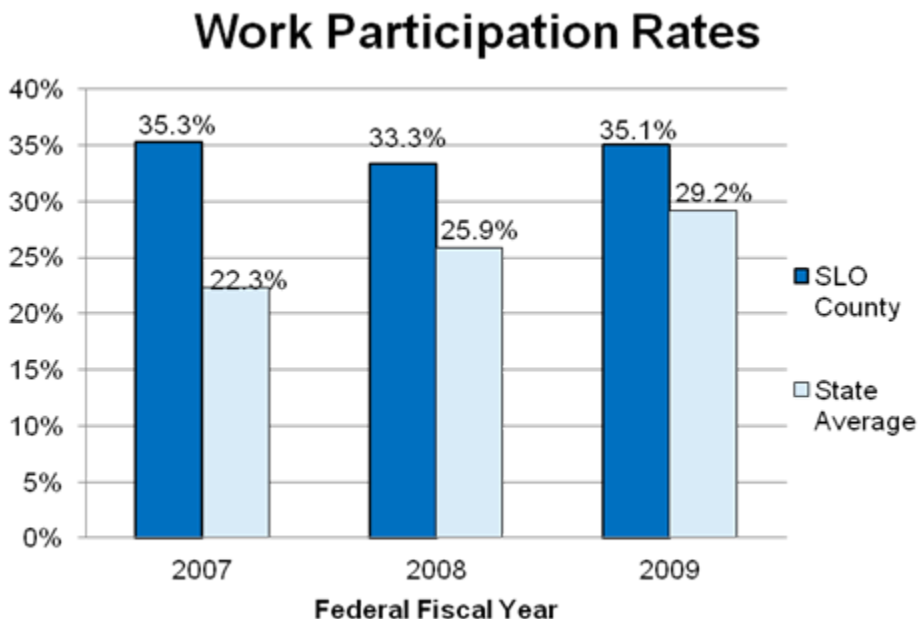
**The Dependency Drug Court program has been successful in working with our CWS families toward earlier reunification/permanency by helping them to follow through with drug and alcohol treatment while appearing and being accountable before a judge once a month (instead of once every six months).**

# Statistics

## Work Participation Rate (WPR)

**San Luis Obispo County has one of the highest CalWORKS work participation rates in the State.**

Annually the State computes each County's WPR, based on monthly information provided by Employment Resource Specialists on randomly selected cases.



### Understanding the WPR

- Federal rules are used to establish the WPR
- Federal and State work participation rules are not the same
- State rules provide many adults an exemption from participating in work activities, such as when they are a single parent with a young child - the Federal rules do not
- The WPR denominator is a count of all federally work eligible adults (which includes most of our state exempt adults)
- The numerator is a count of the adults in the denominator who are meeting federal work participation requirements:
  - Single parent with a child under 6: 20 hrs/wk in work-related activities
  - Single parent without child under 6: 30 hrs/wk in work-related activities
  - Two-parent families: 35 hrs/wk in work-related activities

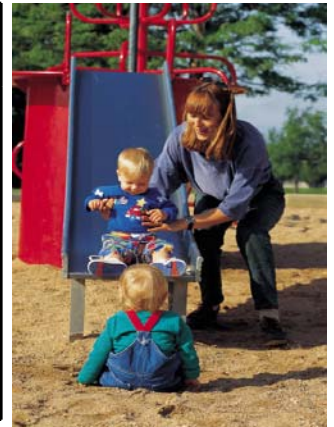
# Statistics

## Caseload Averages Per Month



<b><i>Child Welfare Services</i></b>	Referrals Received	317
	Referrals Responded by CWS	210
	Family Maintenance Cases	82
	Family Reunification Cases	249
	Permanency Planning Cases	172

<b><i>Participant Services</i></b>	CalWORKS	2,116
	CalFresh (Food Stamps)	8,687
	Medi-Cal Only	11,145
	Foster Care	359
	General Assistance	215



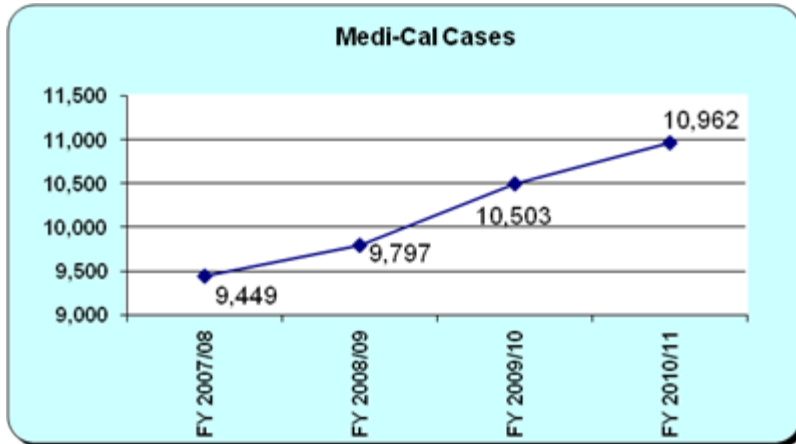
<b><i>Adult Services</i></b>	In-Home Support Services (IHSS) - Applications	75
	In-Home Support Services (IHSS) - Active Cases	1593
	Adult Protective Services (APS) - Investigations	74
	Adult Protective Services (APS) - Number Served	91

\*Categorically eligible Medi-Cal (associated with CalWORKs and Foster Care cases) is no longer being considered in the Medi-Cal caseload average.

# Statistics

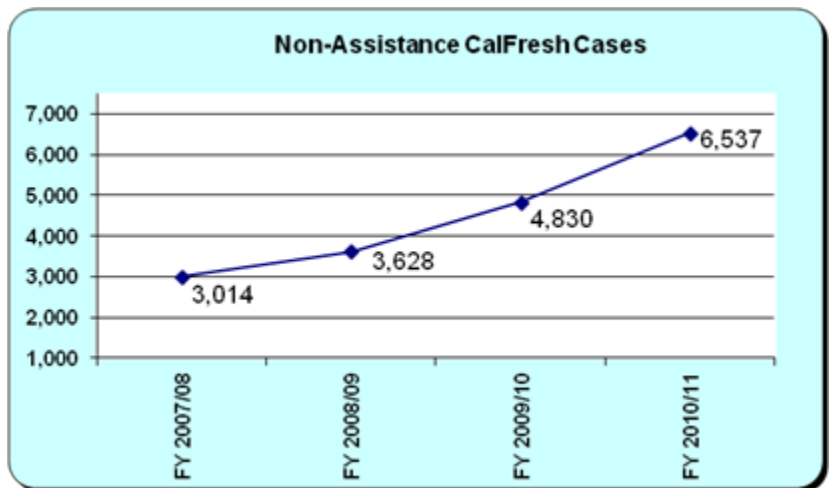
## Participant Services Case Trends

Due to the recession, over the past four fiscal years the number of Participant Services cases has been steadily rising.



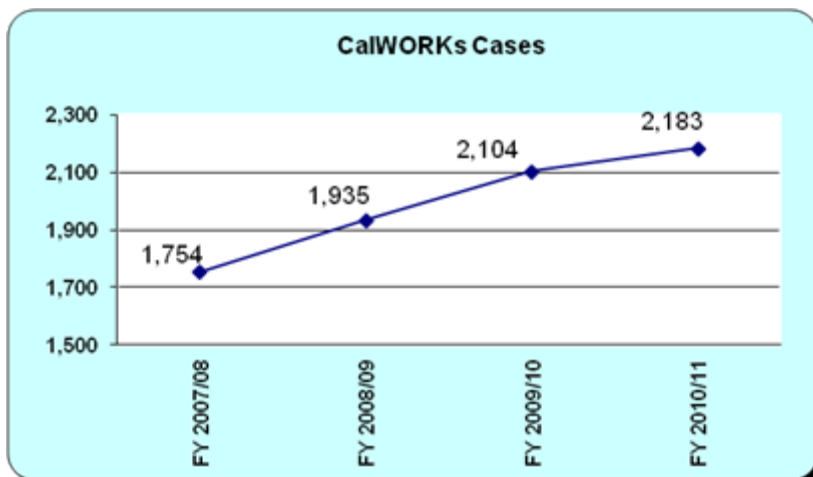
**16% increase in Medi-Cal cases**

**117% increase in CalFresh (Food Stamp) cases**



**25% increase in CalWORKs cases**

Note: For the first half of FY 2011/12, the average number of CalWORKs cases has dropped to 2,116. This is due to the time limit changes that were effective July 2011.



# Department Services and Locations

## Programs and Services

### **CASH, HOUSING, FOOD, AND MEDI-CAL BENEFITS**

**CalWORKs:** *Temporary, time-limited cash assistance to families and children who are deprived of support or care due to the death, incapacity, unemployment, or continued absence of one or both parents.*

**Diversion:** *One-time cash assistance or services, when such services will prevent a family from needing to apply for ongoing assistance.*

**Welfare-to-Work Employment and Training Program:** *Training and/or education activities to assist adults who are receiving CalWORKs in finding employment and becoming self-sufficient. This program is mandatory for non-exempt adult CalWORKs participants.*

**Supportive Services:** *Services such as childcare, transportation, and work clothing, for adult CalWORKs participants seeking work, working, and/or in training.*

**CalWORKs Child Support:** *A program administered by the District Attorney's Office to increase CalWORKs families' self-sufficiency by obtaining financial support from absent parents.*

**AFDC – Foster Care:** *Cash assistance to caretakers of foster children.*

**Medi-Cal:** *Comprehensive medical benefits to all public assistance recipients and to certain other eligible persons who do not have sufficient funds to meet the costs of their medical care.*

**CalFresh:** *Benefits for low income families to improve their diet and food purchasing power.*

**General Assistance:** *Temporary assistance for needy persons not eligible for benefits through other Federal and State aid programs. Also provides for mortuary services for indigent persons, when necessary.*

**For more information on program requirements and benefit levels, please visit our website at: <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/dss>**

# Department Services & Locations

## Programs and Services

### **CHILD AND ADULT WELFARE PROGRAMS**

**AB12 (Fostering Connections to Success Act):** Providing services and financial benefits for youth in foster care past age 18.

**Adoption Services:** Finding safe, stable, permanent families for children who are unable to be reunified with their birth parents.

**Foster Home Licensing:** Finding and licensing nurturing homes for foster children.

**Child Welfare Differential Response:** Responding to allegations of abuse or neglect in a timely and appropriate manner, in order to provide for the safety and stability of the children in our county.

**Child Welfare Family Maintenance:** Providing child welfare services to families, while the children remain in the home under the supervision of a Social Worker.

**Child Welfare Family Reunification:** Providing child welfare services after a child has been separated from his/her parents due to abuse or neglect, in order to stabilize the family and hopefully reunify the child back into the home.

**Child Welfare Permanency Planning:** Providing child welfare services to children who can not return to their birth parents' home. This may include adoption, guardianship, or the establishment of a planned permanent living arrangement for the child.

**Adult Protective Services:** Responding to allegations of abuse or neglect in a timely and appropriate manner, in order to provide for the safety and stability of the elderly and/or dependent adults in our county.

**Adult In-Home Supportive Services:** Providing personal care services and domestic services to eligible elderly and/or disabled individuals in our county, to enable them to remain living in their own homes.

**For more information on these and more programs, please visit our website at: <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/dss>**

# Department Services & Locations

## Office Locations

City	Office	Address	Phone #
Arroyo Grande	Dept. of Social Services	1086 Grand Ave.	805-474-2000
	South S.A.F.E. Family Resource Center	1086 Grand Ave.	805-474-2105
	Five Cities One-Stop	1800 E. Grande Ave. Grover Beach	805-270-3100
Atascadero	Dept. of Social Services - Main Office	9415 El Camino Real	805-461-6000
	Dept. of Social Services - Annex	9485 El Camino Real	805-461-6181
Nipomo	Dept. of Social Services	681 W. Tefft St. Suite 1	805-931-1800
Paso Robles	Dept. of Social Services	406 Spring St.	805-237-3110
	North S.A.F.E. Family Resource Center	1802 Chestnut	805-237-3196
	Estrella Career Center	2800 Buena Vista Dr., Building 4000	805-237-3014
San Luis Obispo	Dept. of Social Services	3433 So. Higuera St.	805-781-1660 or 1-800-834-3002
	Business and Career One-Stop	880 Industrial Way	805-903-1400
<b>CHILD ABUSE REFERRALS: 1-800-834-5437</b>			
<b>ADULT ABUSE REFERRALS: 1-800-838-1381</b>			