

**County of Santa Cruz
Human Services Department
FY 2010-11 Annual Report**

Dedicated to Making a Difference



Director's Message

The Human Services Department is proud to serve the Santa Cruz County community. The Department provides a wide range of safety net services to **protect the county's most vulnerable populations and provides assistance to** individuals and families struggling to make ends meet in these difficult economic times. This report provides a snapshot of the many ways the Department served residents of Santa Cruz County during the 2010-11 fiscal year.



The need for safety net services in our community continued to grow in FY 2010-11 with high unemployment due to **the lingering recession. Unemployment rates reached near record highs in March 2011 with the County's rate at 14.7% and the City of Watsonville's unemployment rate climbing to 29.3%. In FY 2010-11**, 56,000 people, or one out of every five county residents, received aid from one or more of our public assistance programs. To respond to this increased need for services, the Department launched a new website, www.benefitscalwin.org, to provide members of the public with 24/7 access to information about public assistance benefits and an online application for Medi-Cal, Cal-Fresh (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) and CalWORKs cash aid. The Department also worked with the local business community to promote employment and job training opportunities for the unemployed and continued to work with our partners in the community to protect vulnerable children, the elderly, and dependent adults at-risk of abuse and neglect.

This report highlights accomplishments of the past year and also includes strategic priorities for the year ahead. Guided by our vision that every child, adult and family in the County is safe, healthy, and financially secure, our dedicated staff will continue to work to lift individuals and families out of poverty, protect the vulnerable from abuse and neglect, and improve the quality of life in our community.

Cecilia Espinola, Director
Human Services Department

County of Santa Cruz Human Services Department

Our Vision:

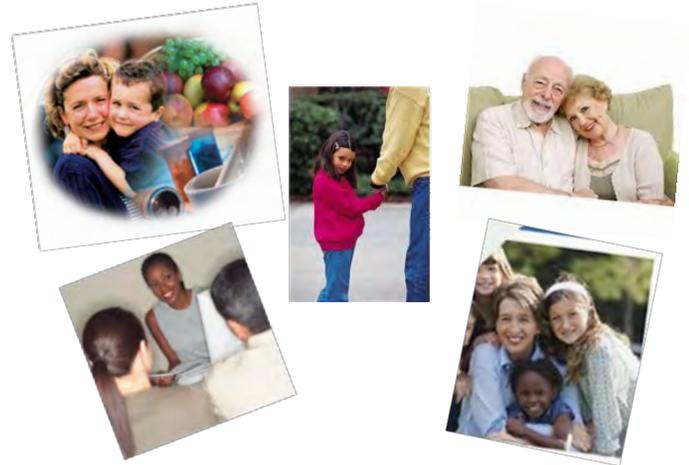
Every child, adult, and family in Santa Cruz County is safe, healthy, and financially secure.

Our Mission:

We strengthen our community by protecting the vulnerable, promoting self-sufficiency, alleviating poverty, and improving the quality of life.

We Value:

- ◆ Excellent Service
- ◆ Compassion
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Partnerships
- ◆ Effective Practice



Dedicated to making a difference

Human Services Department Overview

Our Goals

Increase economic potential and decrease poverty

Reduce abuse and neglect

Improve well being and quality of life

Improve health and mental health

What We Do and Who We Serve



36,864

Assisted an average of 36,864 people receive Medi-Cal benefits monthly



19,455

Helped an average of 19,455 people receive CalFresh benefits monthly



8,402

Provided employment services to 8,402 job seekers at the Career Centers



2,885

Received 2,885 reports of suspected child abuse/neglect



547

Responded to 547 reports of suspected elder abuse or neglect



2,286

Provided In-Home Supportive Services to an average of 2,286 seniors and dependent adults monthly



41

Provided 41 children with a permanent home through the adoption program

FY 2010-13 Strategic Plan Accomplishments

In FY 2010-11 the Human Services Department made significant progress implementing strategies to better serve our clients. The following are some of the accomplishments supporting the Strategic Plan goals:

Strengthened Community Supports

- ◆ Increased community support for children in foster care and recruited more resource families
- ◆ Participated in county-wide effort to provide Positive Parenting Parent education to child welfare families
- ◆ Strengthened supports for victims of elder and dependent adult abuse before closing APS cases

Provided Self Service Options

- ◆ Launched Benefits CalWIN with an online application for public assistance programs
- ◆ Launched Access CalWIN with 24/7 telephone access to public assistance benefit information

Conducted Outreach to People in Need

- ◆ Refreshed public website making information more accessible to the public
- ◆ Restored Palo Alto VA Medical Outreach Team weekly visits to help veterans access health care

Coordinated Seamless Services

- ◆ Helped child welfare families obtain public assistance benefits and employment services.

Improved Access to Information & Data

- ◆ Enhanced client data reports to promote efficiencies and better serve clients



*Dedicated to making a difference
for people in need in Santa Cruz County*

Created New Paths to Employment

- ◆ Provided skill assessment workshops to help job seekers upgrade or learn new job skills
- ◆ **Supported the Workforce Investment Board's efforts** to continue the Summer Youth Employment Program as a local effort.
- ◆ Expanded on the job training opportunities for laid off workers

Prepared for Health Care Reform

- ◆ Developed plan for MediCruz Advantage with the Health Services Agency

Family and Children's Services Division

FY 2010-11 Program Highlights

- ◆ **Worked to strengthen community supports for children in foster care and increase the number of resource families, particularly for older youth**
- ◆ **Received federal grant funding to provide intensive evidenced based services for young children whose parents are in recovery from methamphetamine use**
- ◆ **Participated in county-wide effort to provide Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) evidenced based parent education services to child welfare involved families**
- ◆ **Completed the 2010 Child Welfare Self-Assessment and the 2011-2013 System Improvement Plan**

Strategic Priorities for FY 2011-12

- ◆ **Provide specialized developmental assessments and home visiting and therapy services to young children affected by their parents' methamphetamine use.**
- ◆ **After State regulations are finalized for the new State law AB 12, begin providing voluntary placement and support services to youth ages 18 to 21.**
- ◆ **Restructure the division to streamline practice, increase efficiency and equalize workload. Expand Team Decision-Making meetings to the Emergency Response program to enhance collaboration with service providers, birth parents, and community members.**

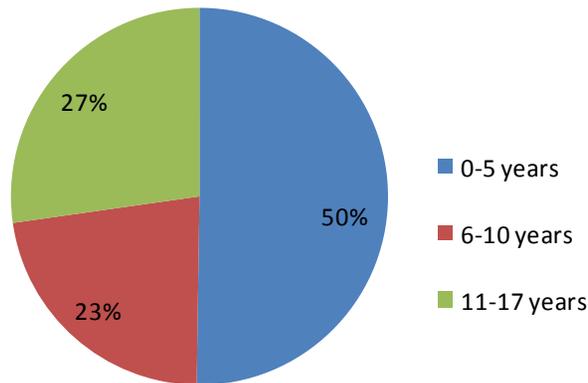
Protecting children from abuse & neglect and strengthening families

Child Welfare Services

Family & Children's Services is required by State and Federal law to provide child welfare services to children who have been abused, neglected, or who are at risk of abuse or neglect.

Emergency Response Dependency Investigations	FY 10-11
Abuse/Neglect Referrals (families)	2,885
Children Referred (unduplicated)	2,872
Children with Substantiated Referrals (unduplicated)	422

Percent of Children with Substantiated Referrals by Age



In any given month, approximately **430 children** were receiving services in an ongoing program of child welfare.

Types of Child Welfare Services

- ◆ *Emergency Response & Dependency Investigations*
- ◆ *Family Maintenance or Family Preservation*
- ◆ *Family Reunification & Permanency Planning*
- ◆ *Licensing & Adoptions*



Supportive Adolescent Services

Supportive Adolescent Services is a collaborative program that offers a broad continuum of services including specialized social work and mental health services as well as independent living skills services to assist teens in accomplishing their educational and employment goals. Transitional housing and other specialized services are provided to assist youth in the transition to an independent adult life.

Youth Served in FY 10-11:

Independent Living Program.....	130 youth
Transitional Housing	33 youth

Promoting permanent homes and permanent relationships for children

Foster Care

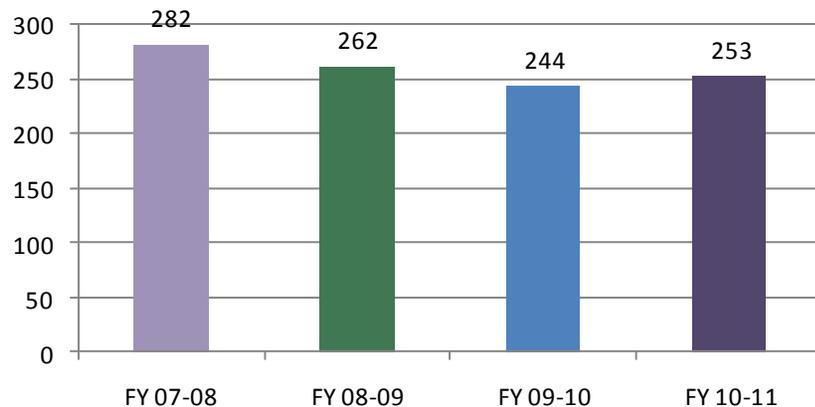
Foster parents and relative caregivers, also known as resource parents, are a very important source of support for children when they are not able to remain safely in their own homes. They share their lives with children in need and provide a nurturing stable home environment for children while their parents receive counseling, parenting education and other services to enable them to be reunited with their children.

In any given month, approximately **253 children** were in out-of-home placement and about half were placed with relatives. Approximately three out of four children were placed with some or all of their siblings.



If parents cannot provide a safe environment, the children must be placed in foster care or relatives' homes until they can safely be returned to their own homes or placed with an adoptive family.

**Number of Children in Foster Care
Monthly Average**



Forever Families Adoption Program

As a licensed Adoptions Agency, we place children in permanent homes. Services include recruiting and screening prospective adoptive parents, finalizing adoptions, and providing post adoption services, including the Adoption Assistance Program (AAP). We also provide services for children whose parents voluntarily relinquish their parental rights.

Adoptions & Adoption Assistance	FY 10-11
Finalized Adoptions	41
Adoption Assistance Cases	517

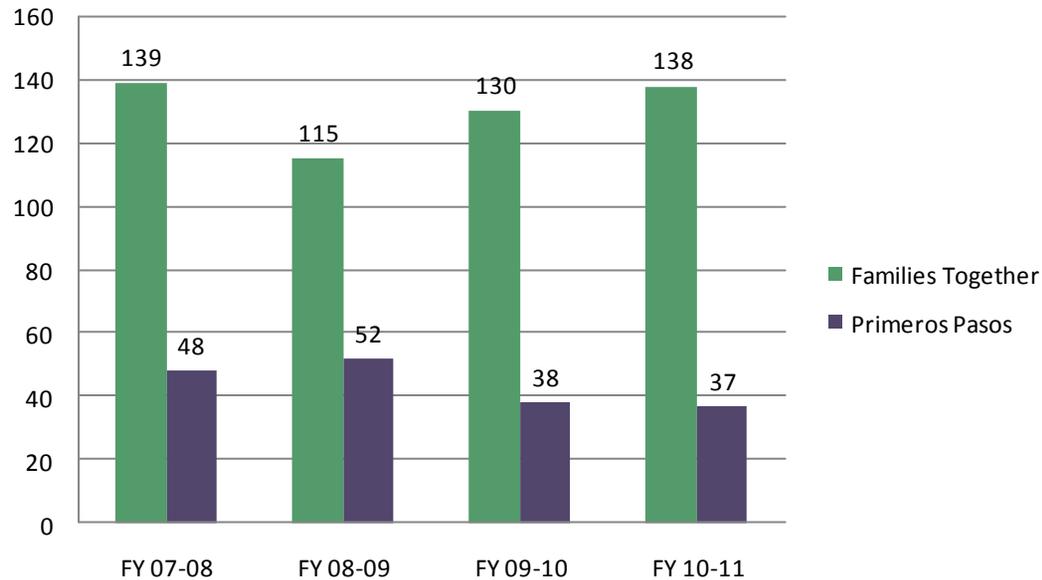
Reducing risk factors for abuse and neglect

Prevention & Early Intervention Programs

Grant-funded prevention and early intervention programs served 175 families in FY 10-11. The programs offer supportive services and provide resources to struggling families *before* they become a child welfare case.



Prevention Programs



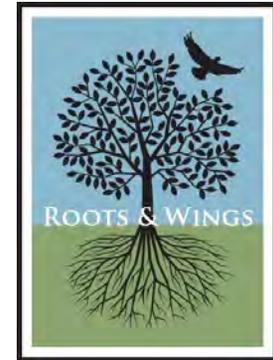
Families Together serves pregnant women and families who have at least one child under the age of five. High risk families referred to child welfare but evaluated out are also eligible to participate. The program is a collaborative effort between First Five, Santa Cruz Community Counseling Center, and the Human Services Department.

Primeros Pasos serves Latinas who are pregnant and/or have a young child and are struggling with substance abuse issues. Grant funding supports this program led by the Santa Cruz Community Counseling Center.

Reducing risk factors for abuse and neglect

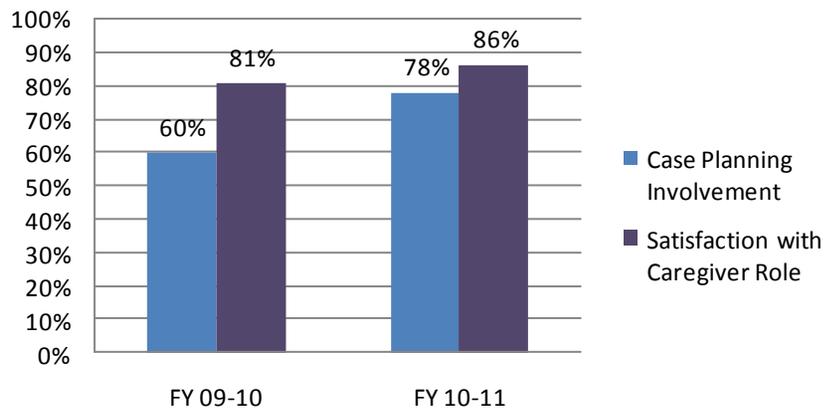
Roots & Wings

With the support of a five-year federal grant, the Roots and Wings program has enabled Family & Children's Services to reach out to the community to recruit more foster parents in neighborhoods throughout the County so children in foster care can remain in their schools and local communities. The program also provides enhanced support to foster parents to promote lifelong connections and forever families.



Focused on community based solutions, Roots & Wings helps children develop strong roots to their families, communities, and cultures to help them thrive and give them wings to fly.

Improvement of Resource Parent Support & Level of Satisfaction



Resource Family Liaisons are stationed at Live Oak Family Resource Center and La Manzana Community Resources in Watsonville. They provide intensive supportive services to foster parents and relative caregivers, including:

- ◆ Home visits
- ◆ Referrals to support groups and mentors
- ◆ Trainings and workshops

In FY 10-11, **213 resource families** were served by Roots & Wings Resource Family Liaisons.

Roots & Wings staff also work to recruit new foster parents, especially for older and hard to place youth, so that children in foster care can remain in their own neighborhoods, attend local schools, and maintain familiar community supports. 10

Adult & Long Term Care

FY 2010-11 Program Highlights

- ◆ **Ensured that all IHSS providers complete new In Home Supportive Services (IHSS) enrollment requirements, including background checks and orientation sessions to strengthen IHSS program integrity**
- ◆ **Established stronger partnerships and community supports to ensure that elders and dependent adults with confirmed or suspected abuse have services in place prior to Adult Protective Services (APS) case closure**
- ◆ **Restored weekly visits of the Palo Alto Veterans Administration Medical Outreach Team to increase access to health care assistance for veterans**

Strategic Priorities for FY 2011-12

- ◆ **Refine screening procedures for Adult Protective Services (APS) to enhance risk assessment for prioritization of APS referral responses.**
- ◆ **Implement new on-line enrollment system to ensure that new IHSS providers meet all program enrollment criteria.**
- ◆ **Improve response time for IHSS referrals to ensure timely access to IHSS services.**
- ◆ **Develop strategies to address expanded eligibility for veterans' benefits.**

Protecting the elderly and disabled from abuse and neglect

Adult Protective Services

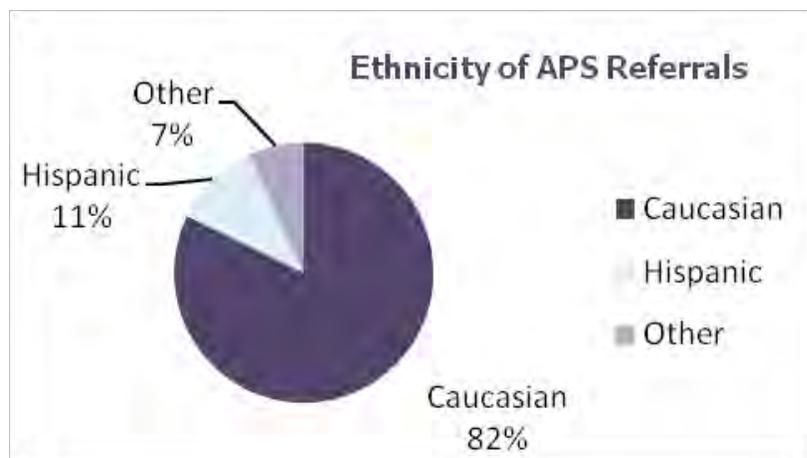
Adult Protective Services (APS) is a state mandated program that provides investigation and intervention services to protect elderly or dependent adults who may be victims of physical, emotional, or financial abuse or neglect or who may be self-neglecting due to physical or mental decline.

Approximately three-quarters of the people referred to APS are elders with the remaining one-quarter dependent adults.

In FY 10-11, APS responded to 547 reports of adult or elder abuse and neglect and 29% of those reports did not receive an in person investigation due to staffing constraints.



APS Referrals	FY 10-11
Abuse/Neglect referrals	547
Investigations	362



Elder Financial Abuse

Financial exploitation of both elderly and dependent adults continues to be a growing concern, representing 26% of reports of abuse by others. APS collaborates with the District Attorney's Office and law enforcement as members of the Financial Abuse Specialist Team to respond to reports of elder financial abuse.

In FY 10-11, APS and the Financial Abuse Specialist Team intervened in approximately 100 cases of financial exploitation of elderly and dependent adult residents of Santa Cruz County. These efforts resulted in the successful protection of over **\$4 million** in assets belonging to elderly and dependent adults.

Helping seniors and people with disabilities stay safely in their homes

In-Home Supportive Services Program (IHSS)

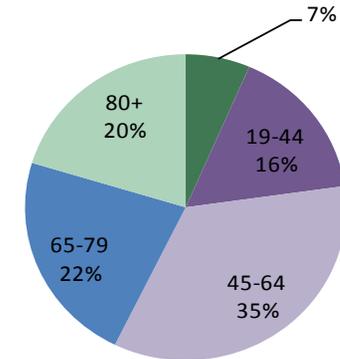
The In-Home Supportive Services Program (IHSS) is a state mandated program that provides assistance to a monthly average of 2,286 low income frail elderly adults and disabled persons of all ages to enable them to remain safely in their own homes. The need for out-of-home care can often be prevented through provision of services that support daily living activities. For income eligible individuals, IHSS Social Workers conduct assessments and authorize payment for necessary services based on need.

IHSS provides a cost effective alternative to institutional care for the elderly and people of all ages with disabilities.

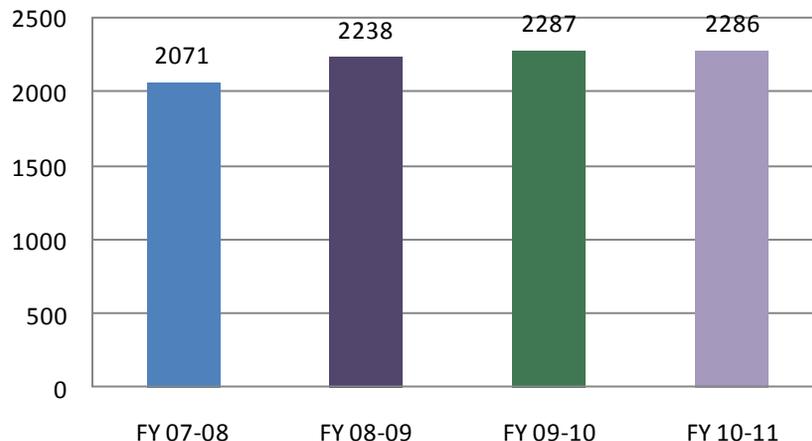
IHSS services are provided by approximately 1800 care providers every month and 91% work more than 25 hours per month. Approximately 354 providers who met eligibility requirements elected to participate in the health insurance program, a slight decrease from FY 09-10 due to a change in plan providing improved coverage but at a greater cost.



IHSS Recipients By Age



Average Monthly IHSS Caseload



In Home Supportive Services Support Activities of Daily Living

- ◆ Basic Housekeeping
- ◆ Meal Preparation & Clean-up
- ◆ Personal Care

Helping local veterans access benefits and services

Veterans Services Program

The Veterans Services Office (VSO) provides a range of services to Santa Cruz County veterans and their families including helping veterans access benefits accrued from military service from local, state, and federal governments, providing information and referral and **veterans' advocacy services, and providing claims and appeals assistance.**

Assistance is provided in a variety of areas, including:

- ◇ Compensation and pensions
- ◇ Health and dental care
- ◇ Vocational rehabilitation
- ◇ Homeless services
- ◇ Educational assistance
- ◇ Home loans
- ◇ Government life insurance

Veterans Services also provides information and assistance with separation proceedings, discharge upgrades, referrals for alcohol and drug abuse, and readjustment counseling.

Trends observed in FY 10-11:

- ◇ More veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are seeking assistance than in the past years.
- ◇ More Vietnam veterans continue to seek assistance obtaining service connected disability compensation, non-service connected wartime pensions, and access to VA health care.



Palo Alto Veterans Administration Medical Services & Medical Outreach Team

The Human Services Department coordinates the provision of medical services through the Veterans Administration (VA) to the County's most vulnerable veterans. In FY 10-11, the VSO arranged transportation for approximately 240 riders to the Palo Alto VA Medical Center in VA vans driven by VA volunteers providing approximately 110 round trips.

The VA Medical Outreach Team provides initial access to VA Healthcare, medical screenings, referrals to medical and mental health care specialists, and referrals to substance abuse and rehabilitation program with the Palo Alto VA Health Care System. In FY 10-11, the VSO hosted 50 outreach team visits to the Emeline campus, providing assistance to 370 veterans.

Employment & Benefit Services Division

FY 2010-11 Program Highlights

- ◆ **Continued the subsidized employment program**
- ◆ **Implemented an automated telephone system providing clients with access to information about their public assistance benefits 24/7**
- ◆ **Launched an online application for CalFresh, Medi-Cal and CalWORKs to provide the public with increased access to public assistance benefits**
- ◆ **Strengthened access to employment services and benefit programs for child welfare families**

Strategic Priorities for FY 2011-12

- ◆ **Promote online enhancements for public access to public assistance program applications and client access to case information and online report submission.**
- ◆ **Integrate Workforce Investment Act service delivery into the Employment & Benefits Services Division.**
- ◆ **Prepare for Health Care Reform.**

Responding to meet basic needs during difficult economic times

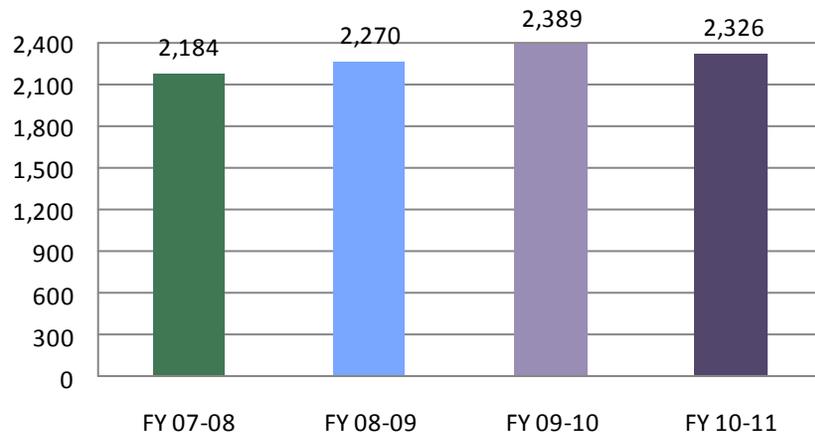
CalWORKs & Welfare to Work

CalWORKs offers employment services and cash assistance to needy families who have children under 19 years of age. The program helps meet basic needs for shelter, food, clothing, while increasing job readiness skills. Most adult recipients must meet work participation requirements as a condition of receiving cash assistance. Adults have had a lifetime limit of 60 months for cash aid benefits; however, due to new state regulations the lifetime limit is reduced to 48 months in FY 11-12.

In an average month in FY 10-11, 1,459 people were subject to Welfare to Work requirements and approximately 48% were exempt for good cause.



CalWORKs Cash Aid
Average Monthly Caseload

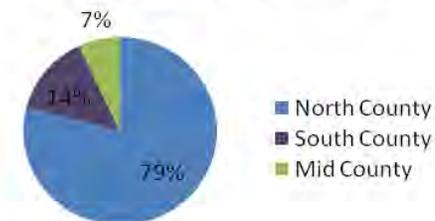


General Assistance

The General Assistance program is mandated by the State Welfare and Institutions Code. The program is 100% County funded and provides cash assistance to eligible disabled or unemployed county residents who are ineligible for other aid programs and provides disabled individuals with SSI application assistance.

In FY 10-11, the average monthly General Assistance caseload was 162.

General Assistance Recipients
Geographical Area of Residence

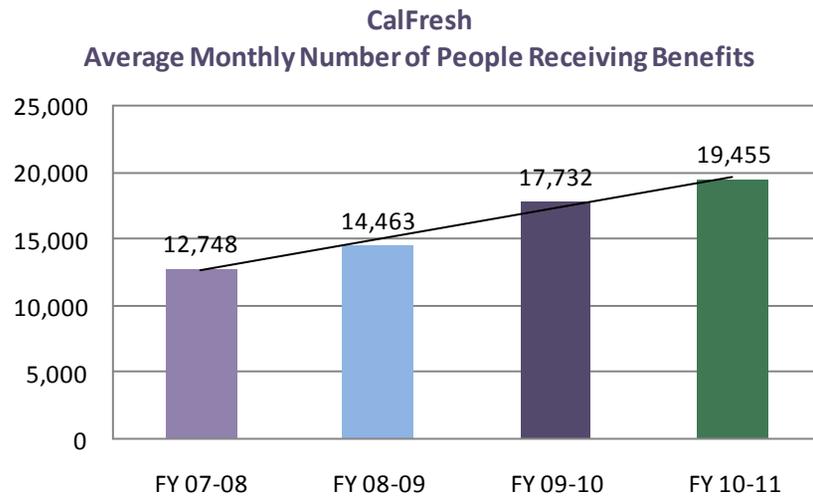


\$1.21 million in CalWORKs benefits were provided to county residents every month, or approximately **\$14.6 million** per year, in state and federal money that stimulates the local Santa Cruz County economy.

Working to ensure that no one goes hungry

CalFresh

CalFresh, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, serves as the first line of defense against hunger. CalFresh benefits provide critical basic support to low income families and individuals enabling them to buy nutritious food with an Electronic Benefit Transfer card. Due to the lingering economic recession, CalFresh applications continued to increase in the 2010-11 fiscal year.



New Website Improves Access to Benefits

In FY 10-11, www.mybenefitscalwin.org was launched to provide the public with greater access to information about public assistance programs. With the new website the public can also apply online for assistance 24/7.

*In FY 10-11, the County issued **\$2.9 million** in CalFresh benefits every month. Total CalFresh benefits issued for FY 10-11 was over **\$34 million**.*

Approximately 23,000 Santa Cruz County residents were eligible for CalFresh in FY 10-11 but didn't receive benefits because they did not enroll in the program.

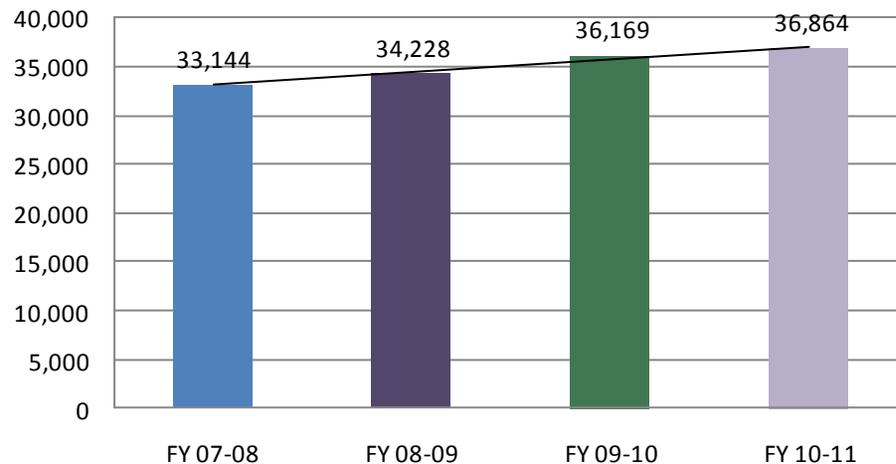
Providing medical insurance for needy families

Medi-Cal Program

The Medi-Cal program is a health insurance program for low income families and disabled and aged adults. The Central California Alliance for Health is the county's Medi-Cal managed care health plan that helps recipients access health care from local participating providers.



Medi-Cal
Average Monthly Number of People Served



Planning for Health Care Reform

In FY 10-11, the Department partnered with the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency to plan for health care reform. A new low income health care program for those who do not qualify for Medi-Cal is scheduled to begin in FY 11-12.



Medi-Cal is the largest public assistance program, with about half of the total cases receiving Medi-Cal only. On a monthly basis, approximately 37,000 people were served by the Medi-Cal Program in FY 10-11.

Workforce Investment Board

FY 2010-11 Program Highlights

- ◆ **Received a regional National Emergency grant to provide On-the-Job Training employment to workers displaced as a result of the ongoing recession.**
- ◆ **Conducted six Job Fairs serving over 1900 local job seekers.**
- ◆ **Completed all American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funded trainings, including Summer Youth Employment Program and two Green job training programs.**
- ◆ **Helped retain 87 jobs and preserve \$506,381 in unemployment funds with a \$50,000 lay-off aversion contract**

Strategic Priorities for FY 2011-12

- ◆ **Pilot a new Summer Youth Employment Program and revitalize the Youth Council by adding more business members.**
- **Convene businesses in potential regional growth clusters and promote strategies for economic and workforce development.**
- **Review Watsonville Career Center service delivery model to:**
 - ⇒ **Promote more opportunities for internships, work experience, on the job training, and skill building workshops.**
 - ⇒ **Develop regional strategic plan for employment and training programs, including assessment and skill upgrade tools.**

Responding to the needs of local employers and local job seekers

Workforce Investment Board

The Workforce Investment Board (WIB) helps connect local job seekers with employers who are seeking qualified job applicants. Working with members of the business and education communities, local Government, and community members, the WIB provides resources to respond to the needs of local employers and County residents seeking employment. The ongoing recession resulted in 78% more business closures and layoffs in FY 10-11 over the prior year.



Adult & Dislocated Worker Services

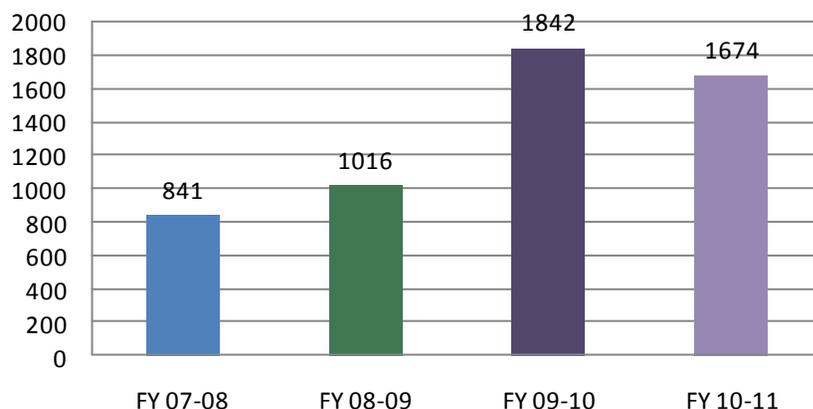
In partnership with Shoreline Workforce Development Services, Cabrillo College, the Employment Development Department, Adult Schools and local partners, services and training scholarships were awarded to assist workers dislocated as a result of layoffs, plant closures, or downsizing. With FY 10-11 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and ARRA funds, **967** job seekers were enrolled in case managed WIA funded job search services and **815** in job training. ARRA funded training services ended on June 30, 2011.

Santa Cruz County Unemployment Rates Reached Near Record Highs

Santa Cruz County unemployment rates reached near record highs in March 2011 with 21,600 people out of work.

- ◆ Santa Cruz County 14.7%
- ◆ City of Watsonville 29.3 %

Participants in WIA Enrolled Services
Adults, Dislocated Workers, & Youth



FY 10-11 Youth Employment Services

- ◆ **234** low income youth, 14 to 21 years of age, received services through the WIA funded Sueños Program in FY 10-11.
- ◆ **473** youth, 14 to 24 years of age, were employed and participated in career readiness activities through the American Reinvestment & Recovery Act (ARRA) 2010 Summer Youth Employment Program.

Community Partners

In partnership with the community, we provide services that support and protect adults, children and families, the elderly and dependent adults and provide resources and job training opportunities for the unemployed.

In FY 10-11, the Human Services Department contracted with the following nonprofit agencies and organizations in our community to provide services and support to clients.

Cabrillo College	Santa Cruz Community Counseling Center
Child Development Resource Center	Santa Cruz County Office of Education
Community Action Board	Second Harvest Food Bank
Community Bridges	Senior Network Services
Court Appointed Special Advocates	Shoreline Occupational Services
El Pajaro Community Development Center	United Way of Santa Cruz County
Families In Transition	Walnut Avenue Women's Center
Homeless Services Center	Watsonville Law Center
Parents Center	Women's Crisis Support

In FY 10-11, the Human Services Department participated in collaborative workgroups to improve the quality of life for members of the Santa Cruz County community.

Child Welfare System Improvement Plan Steering Committee	Healthcare Outreach Coalition
Children's Network	Healthy Kids
Financial Abuse Specialist Team	Homeless Action Partnership
First Five Commission	United Way of Santa Cruz County
Go For Health Collaborative	2-1-1 Steering Committee

Together we work to promote the health and well-being of the people we serve, promote self-sufficiency, strengthen families, and create nurturing homes and safe communities.

Report Child Abuse
1-877-505-3299

Report Elder Abuse
1-866-580-4357

Contact the Human Services Department

Visit our website at www.santacruzhumanservices.org



For Public Assistance Programs, call the Benefits Call Center at 1-888-421-8080 or TTY 454-4763
Or
Apply for CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and CalWORKs Online at www.mybenefitscalwin.org

Family & Children's Services	1400 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 12 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	454-4222 763-8800	TTY 454-4233
Adult & Long Term Care	1400 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 12 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	454-4101 763-8800	TTY 454-4774
Employment & Benefit Services	1020 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 119 and 18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	888-421-8080	TTY 454-4763
Veterans Services	1400 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 215 E. Beach Street, Watsonville	454-4761	CA Relay Service 711

Workforce Santa Cruz County Career Centers

Capitola

2045 40th Avenue
464-6286
TTY 464-4358

Shoreline Santa Cruz

350 Encinal Street
429-6415
CA Relay Service 711

Watsonville

18 W. Beach Street
763-8720
CA Relay Service 711

www.santacruzhumanservices.org