



Family Court Services

PRESENTATION TO FULL BOARD 9/11/24

STAFF MAKE UP

- ▶ 1 Director
- ▶ 8 counselors, APSW (3), LPC (2), LMFT (3), LCSW (1)
 - ▶ 5 staff are licensed psychotherapists and two have additional training as an Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist and a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor
- ▶ 1 Admin Assistant (Clerk IV)
- ▶ 2 LTEs

- ▶ 1 unfilled Clerk III position
 - ▶ Reclassification/Reallocation?
 - ▶ Additional Counselor?
 - ▶ Supervisor?

WHAT WE DO

- ▶ Statutorily required programming to assist the judiciary in resolving complex family court cases through the following:
 - ▶ Education
 - 2x per month orientation
 - ▶ Mediation
 - parents decide
 - ▶ Evaluation; study or brief focused assessment
 - parents decide or Judge makes an order

REFERRAL NUMBERS

2022		2023		2024 as of 9/6	
MEDIATION	494	MEDIATION	477	MEDIATION	279
STUDY	166	STUDY	159	STUDY	98
BFA	8	BFA	10	BFA	4
RELO MED	12	RELO MED	31	RELO MED	14
RELO STUDY	9	RELO STUDY	12	RELO STUDY	10

SPECIAL CASE CONCERNS

as of 9/6/24 numbers tentative at this time

2022

Documented Domestic Abuse

62

Domestic concerns raised

13

2023

Documented domestic abuse

60

Domestic concerns

21

Documented Domestic Abuse

24

Domestic concerns raised

22

Interpreter needed

24

FEE SCHEDULE

THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR FEES SHALL BE SET BY FCS ACCORDING TO THE FEE SCHEDULE ESTABLISHED BY DANE COUNTY ORDINANCE:

\$100 Repeat Mediation Fee per party

Tier 1 Study Fee waived for parties when combined annual gross incomes of both households is less than \$60,000

Tier 2 \$1000 Study Fee for parties when combined annual gross incomes of both households is \$60,000 to \$99,999

Tier 3 \$1,500 Study Fee for parties when combined annual gross incomes of both households is \$100,000 to \$139,999

Tier 4 \$ 2,000 Study Fee for parties when combined annual gross incomes of both households exceeds \$140,000

Fees continued

Brief Focused Assessment fee for parties based on combined annual gross household incomes. Please see above tier reference in deciding fee:

Tier 1 Waived **Tier 2** \$600 **Tier 3** \$900 **Tier 4** \$1200

ADDITIONAL FEES COLLECTED

- ▶ Parent Education is \$40 per person, with attendance required every 4 years
- ▶ First mediation is **free**
- ▶ Repeat mediation is \$100 per parent
- ▶ Copy fees following file review are .50 per page
- ▶ Study update is ½ the original fee

Beginning in 2023 Tier 1 fees were waived by ordinance

- ▶ As of Sept 6, 2024 \$28,750 in Tier 1 study fees and \$1000 in brief focused assessments have been waived in 23/24
- ▶ Other fees waived
 - ▶ Parent Education \$2,492
 - ▶ Extended Mediation \$0
 - ▶ Repeat Mediation \$1,755
 - ▶ Brief Focused Assessment \$2,250
 - ▶ Study Other Tiers \$24,700

Numbers tentative at this time

FCS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- ▶ We have staff meetings with community groups such as DAIS, Freedom Inc. and Unidos to share information and trends
- ▶ We provide community presentations on the Dane County FCS process to agencies when requested, including WISPIC fellows, Rape Crisis Center, and Edgewood College marriage and family therapy students
- ▶ Daily “on call” counselor to answer in person, phone or email questions and provide education to members of the public including other professionals such as teachers, attorneys, law enforcement and mental health professionals

LOOKING AHEAD

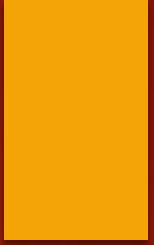
- ▶ Space needs
- ▶ Increased efficiency WITH LEGAL FILES
- ▶ New method for file review electronic copy charges
- ▶ Looking at the administrative team and departmental structure

SPACE

- ▶ We are located at the Courthouse, on the second floor by the Doty Street end of the building.
- ▶ A space study was completed by O'Kroley 646 Design LLC, and Public Works, to better utilize space after 18 years in the same area and after back scanning paper files. We have received blueprints with 4 different options.
- ▶ Goals are to expand our playroom (current observation room is the conference room), add a conference room, add another office, relocate the kitchen area and add dedicated file review space.

FRONT ENTRANCE

INSIDE TO OUT OUTSIDE TO IN



CURRENT PLAYROOM

DESIGNED FOR LITTLES

CROWDED WITH LARGER FAMILIES

BRIGHT LIGHTING

GETS LOUD

NO SNUGGLE SPACE



Current kitchen area

Directly off hallway in front of counselor offices

Noisy and sometimes rambunctious (which can be good, but not in this location)

No room for full sized fridge



Former file storage area

ONLY 3 SHELVES LEFT!!



AWKWARD SPACE





Moving forward with a new case management system

Legal files is working to customize a system to increase efficiency which will benefit FCS customers and all staff member which will help us better support the judiciary

Staff have been learning the scanning process to support electronic files

CLOSING THOUGHTS

- ▶ FCS staff work with some of Dane County's most vulnerable, delicate residents, parents struggling with severe mental illness or addictions, and children in difficult, complicated and confusing circumstances
- ▶ Family court counselors are immersed in conflict day after day
- ▶ Staff follow current research, and continue learning about their own biases and strengths as we navigate these complex family systems
- ▶ We have a dedicated, knowledgeable staff who work hard to determine what is in the best interest of children