



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
ANNUAL REPORT
FY 2022-2023

Rosella Stanley, Executive Director of Social Services

There are seven Divisions within the Department of Social Services: Child and Family Services, Community Supportive Services, Child Support Agency, Domestic Abuse, Youth Services, Tribal Aging Unit, and Independent Living.

Mission Statement

The Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Social Services shall provide guidance, supportive and preventative services using Ho-Chunk culture to promote and maintain a safe, healthy, non-abusive lifestyle.

Social Services Administration

The focus this fiscal year has been on maintaining staff, and providing excellent service delivery in ways that accommodate the fiscal budget. We are blessed to have a large team of experts full of compassion and dedication on our Social Services team. This year has been about building new collaborations and strengthening existing relationships. We are looking forward to this summer's Family Healing Camp, breaking ground on the childcare building, working with the Peacekeepers, and continuing our work to refocus child welfare on prevention with the assistance of the Capacity Building Center for Tribes. We remain grateful for the support from the Ho-Chunk Nation government.

Youth Services Division

Accomplishments During the Prior Fiscal Year:

- Called back more employees.
- Managed to provide online services as well as face to face when permitted.
- Continued to utilize our NB3 grant.
- Maintained community engagement when we were unable to meet face to face.
- Increased our community outreach.
- Learned to utilize more resources outside of the Ho-Chunk Nation.
- Built stronger connections with other departments inside the Ho-Chunk Nation.
- Changed our focus to more cultural, physical activities, and the mental well-being of our youth and their families.
- Wanaisguni Hikurus Hajawi 5K St. Paul
- MMIW 5k Lacrosse
- Sugarbush camp
- Beading, Regalia, ribbon skirts and attire
- Community Gardens
- Parent Café- Training and implementation in our centers
- Language Baseball Host
- Healing Camp
- Suicide Prevention
- Destination Walk
- Healthy and Nutritious recipe presentations
- Youth Games and Social Dance (Memorial Day)

Pandemic Problems and Corrective Actions Taken:

- Problem: Small Budget. Corrective Action: We utilized other departments, NB3 grant, reached out to outside resources, and got creative with our programming in order to make up for our shortages. We have also sought grants in lieu of using NPD funding.
- Problem: Short Staffed. Corrective Action: We limited daily programming participation numbers. Currently youth attend on days scheduled by age or school, instead of k-12 coming every day. We also provide more online instruction and videos for our youth and their families
- Problem: COVID with our staff. Corrective Action: With the strict restrictions and many of our youth unable to receive the vaccine at the beginning of the fiscal year, we were challenged with how we were going to run programming. Centers had to close for a couple of weeks and were limited to online programming only. Staff that were able to come to work, provided activity baskets and meals/snack kits for our families. All were distributed to our youth and their families that were enrolled in the program.
- Problem: Gathering Restrictions. Corrective Action: The amount of people that were allowed to gather put a strain on our NB3 grant and how we were going to follow safety guidelines and fulfill our grant. We hosted online events, got creative and handed out kits or baskets to families to be able to participate in activities for our grant.

Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year:

- The mission of the Ho-Chunk Youth Services Division is to meaningfully enhance the lives of our youth through cultural learning opportunities, collaborations, and exposure to sustainable living practice.

Our strategy is to continue educating our youth and their families on Ho-Chunk Culture. We will have hands on presentations, virtual classes, online videos, accessible by all, and all while incorporating language online to all who wish to participate. We are building the relationship with the language division who will provide an online course that students and their families can work on at their own pace.

- The vision of the Ho-Chunk Youth Services is to empower our youth and families through Hoocąk culture, creating productive members of societies in which they live by working to develop and preserve a positive identity, through quality and holistic programming for future generations.

Our strategy is to continue to offer presentations, online learning and videos, and hands on learning.

Alternative Funding Sources and Partnerships:

- NB3 Grant
- Ho-Chunk Health Department, HCN Life Skills Program, HCN Behavioral Health, HCN Nutrition Division, HCN DNR, HCN Heritage Preservation, HCN Legislators
- Walking Classrooms
- WCASA
- Franciscan Sisters
- Pearl Street Books
- City of Lacrosse Parks Recreation & Forestry
- Town of Lacrosse- Mayor's Office
- F.A.S.T. Program (Families and Schools Together)
- HIR Wellness institute (Healing Intergeneration Roots)
- First Nation's Studies (through title 6)
- Indian Health Center (Milwaukee)
- Parent Café
- Kids Ranch (Rock Springs) Dells
- WI MMIW Taskforce
- YWCA LaCrosse

Photos of Accomplishments, Events, etc.

HENRY VILAS PARK

On July 1st, we sent out flyers to be at go to Henry Vilas park for an outing of fishing, heading and painting. We mainly did heading and fishing, since it took about an hour to string beads together.



COTTAGE GROVE

On July 8th, we ventured out to Cottage Grove Community Park, student learned how to play the xylophones, cooked a burger, on the Buddy Burner, also used their creative skills to build a marshmallow castle, did some paintings with acrylic and watercolors, played with the stacking cups, as we if they could stack cups fast. Also sculpture with clay, all their art & craft projects were taken home!



Child Support Agency

Accomplishments During the Prior Fiscal Year:

- The HCN CSA collected \$316,889.75.
- The CSA Director is a board member of the National Tribal Child Support Association (NTCSA) and an Executive Board member of the National Association of Tribal Child Support Directors (NATCSD).
- The CS Director is currently on the Child Support Modernization committee with the state of Wisconsin to provide input on how KIDS child support system has an impact on tribal payments and how the modernization will assist with better processing for tribal payments. This is an on-going project estimated to take 6 years.
- The CSA was able to have child support garnished from the GWEA HELP Payments with the passage of Resolution 02-23-2022B.
- Attorney Elysia Rodriguez and Division Director Linda Moser-Buse spoke at the NTCSA regarding, A Tribal Perspective on the Impact of the Pandemic for Child Support Agencies. They also held a session regarding, The Disestablishment of Paternity for a Marital Child; Overcoming the Marital Presumption.

Problems and Corrective Actions Taken:

- Problem: Restrictions on the NPD budget that made the match for grants unobtainable. Corrective Action: The CSA filed for a waiver of the non-federal share for Federal Fiscal Year 2022 which is \$137,395.00. This was filed on April 11, 2022.
- Problem: Due to unclear language, payments from GWEA was allowed to be deducted from payments as of January 1, 2022. Corrective Action: The child support agency proposed a new resolution to clarify and allow child support be deducted from the \$700.00 HELP payments. This resolution passed February 23, 2022. The first payments for child support from GWEA funds occurred on April 1, 2022.
- Problem: COVID Safety. Corrective Action: For most of the year, the child support agency worked remotely, with 1-2 staff in the office. The CSA attended hearings virtually using ZOOM. Genetic test were conducted in the parking lot using the same precautions as a COVID test. As of May 1, 2022, the CSA is completely open, the staff have returned to the office and the tribal elder is again working at the front desk.

Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year:

- Work with National Organizations to change the regulations reducing the non-federal share of the Tribal Child Support Grant. It is currently at 20%.
- Write down all of the procedures for federal reporting of the child support grant.
- Set up all CS staff with OKTA Verify as a secondary verification source for logging into the State System, KIDS.

Alternative Funding Sources and Partnerships:

- The HCN CSA is completely funded by the federal entitlement grant.
- The HCN must provide 20% In-Kind cash contribution. The HCN CSA uses services provided from other departments within the Nation that are NPD funded as the in-kind cash contribution.
- The HCN CSA costs the HCN \$0.00 dollars from the general fund.

Independent Living Facility

Accomplishments During the Prior Fiscal Year:

- The Division's 22/23 NPD Fiscal Year budget has been approved to cover the Director's salary and partial utility payments.
- The Division has been seeking new exercise machines for the facility. The Community Health Division has graciously granted a new recumbent machine for the occupants at Independent Living.
- The start of re-establishing community living with chair exercising with HCN's exercise physiologist on a weekly basis due to some of Covid-19 restrictions lifted.
- Monthly virtual viewing (and sometimes interaction) of the District One's area meeting for the occupants of the Independent Living Facility.
- New security cameras purchased and installed.

Pandemic Problems and Corrective Actions Taken:

- Problem: Since the Independent Living project is a first of its kind, there are still many unknowns and new challenges this last fiscal year. Corrective Action: Creating new policy.

Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year:

- Continue efforts to have all 8-units occupied.
- Engage in collaboration across departments and divisions to offer culturally appropriate activities for elder occupants and family, as long as they are available.
- Seek opportunities to continue growth and development.
- Continue to provide maintenance of Independent Living Facility community and grounds. At times, with the help of TAU.

Alternative Funding Sources and Partnerships

Although the Independent Living Facility is 100% funded by NPD, a maintenance fee and restrictive account was established to assist with utilities and the high tech maintenance of the building.



Domestic Abuse Division

Accomplishments During the Prior Fiscal Year:

- Completed the transition to mobile advocacy. During this transition, the DA Division has secured four (4) mobile advocate positions: two (2) specific for domestic violence and two (2) for sexual assault.
- Services have expanded to include Stalking, Dating Violence, Teen Dating Violence, and Sex/Human Trafficking.
- Addition of Prevention programming. The HCN DA Division prevention program has been able to create and implement community outreach events in the scope of services, and the DA Division now has a full-time Community Education & Prevention Coordinator on staff to provide community education opportunities to tribal community members on the areas of the five (5) scope of services.

Pandemic Problems and Corrective Actions Taken:

- Problem: COVID created barriers to in person client services. Corrective Action: Advocates were able to be creative in ways to meet client needs effectively through electronic delivery of supportive services, social distance delivery of supportive services, and most importantly, all clients were served who sought services and support.
- Problem: COVID created a significant barrier in housing. Corrective Action: Despite longer hotel stays, domestic violence shelters filled to social distance appropriate capacity, and even some hotels who are reluctant to work with supportive service agencies due to the demand of so many families in need of safe housing options, we continued to provide housing support.

- Problem: Client fear of contracting the virus. Corrective Action: The DA Division worked with safety planning to remain safe and maintained confidentiality.
- Problem: COVID safe protocol slowed prevention program development. Corrective Action: The majority of the events that were implemented were either virtual or social distanced events, which was effective, yet, community members expressed interest in more in person events that were conducted in the past.

Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year:

- Continue to develop the Prevention Program through community education and outreach events. These will include trainings on the five (5) areas of violence to both community members, non-tribal DV programs/agencies, and tribal departments.
- Create collaboration between the DA Division and HCN gaming facilities in creating awareness of Sex Trafficking.
- Creating a transitional housing program specific to DA Division clients to work towards self-sufficiency and safe housing for clients and families.
- Continue to strengthen the mobile advocacy program.
- Open up outreach offices within Ho-Chunk tribal communities, starting with the Wisconsin Dells/Baraboo area within the next fiscal year.

Alternative Funding Sources and Partnerships:

The HCN DA Division has transitioned to 95% grant funding to support and expand the DA Division. During this current year, the DA Division is supported and funded by six (6) different grants:

- OVW – Tribal Governments Program
- VOCA – Victims of Crime
- OVC – Tribal Victim Set Aside Grant
- GLTIC – Intimate Partner Violence Grant
- National Congress of American Indians – IPV
- WI DCF – Sexual Assault Supportive Services

The HCN DA Divisions continues to seek out grant opportunities as they become available to ensure continued sustainability and expansion of services. Grant opportunities are readily available in support of Domestic Violence in tribal communities.

Photos of Accomplishments, Events, etc.



Child and Family Services Division

Accomplishments During the Prior Fiscal Year:

- Retained staff with only one individual leaving to move closer to family and one individual retired.
- Partnership with Tribal Capacity Building Center
 - Resolution in support of continued working with TCBC.
 - Trauma and Resilience Training provided by the Trauma Capacity Building Technical Assistance and University of Montana Trauma Center in July. The training was full and zoom capacity was 300.
 - The Executive Director, CFS Division Director and CFS Supervisors attended the Tribal Leadership Training through the Tribal Capacity Building Center in October.
 - The CFS Direct Line Staff attended the Tribal Child Welfare Practice Pathway Training through the Tribal Capacity Building Center as a pilot group. Division Director was part of the NICWA Conference Panel that presented on the Tribal Child Welfare Practice in April 2022.
 - All current CFS attended the Ages and Stages-3 training, as paid for by the Birth to 3 grant funding, in order to better recognize developmental concerns in young children. In addition, CFS is working to build partnerships with the county Birth to 3 Programs to better assist tribal members to receive services, if needed.
 - Continued to enhance the skills of working remotely to provide effective safe services and successfully balance working remotely and from the office.
 - CFS has had an average of 30 staff working remotely to provide intake, investigative (assessments child, adults at risk and elders), on-going services Indian Child Welfare cases in the county/state systems, Trial Court on-going for child protection and administrative duties.
 - Placement Assistance line item increase for the NPD Budget for 2022-2023.
 - Tribal Court cases that have closed to this point since 7-2021.
 - Aged out: 3
 - Reunification: 4
 - Permanence (guardianship) 1

Pandemic Problems and Corrective Actions Taken:

- Problem: Technical issues until August 26, 2021. Corrective Action: There was email access through the Ho-Chunk Nation website through the Employee emails. Initial Response was able to complete intakes through cell phones and Ho-Chunk Nation web email during this challenge.
- Problem: Impact of fiscal constraints. Corrective Action: Current moratorium on transfers of cases from the County Courts to the Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Court and a focus on maintaining programs rather than growing programs.

Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year:

Child and Family Services Division's goals for the next year are set below. Our goals are based on continuing the focus of the Scope of Services for the Division.

The scope of Child and Family Services Division is to protect the children of the Ho-Chunk Nation from abuse and neglect and to protect the adults at risk and elders of the Ho-Chunk Nation from abuse, neglect, self-neglect and exploitation by:

- Receiving and responding to reports of abuse and neglect of Ho-Chunk children
- Receiving and responding to reports of abuse, neglect, self-neglect and exploitation of Ho-Chunk adults and elders at risk and in need of protection
- Offering and establishing services for children, families, adults at risk and elders based on safety and harm reduction by using appropriate least restrictive available methods.
- Engaging the individuals in defining skills and services they need to strengthen and stabilize their life or family according to Ho-Chunk tradition and customs.
- Facilitating goals for effective outcomes as to have as minimal length of time in the lives of the individuals as possible.

FY 2022-2023 Division Goals:

- Will maintain an organizational structure that retains educated and knowledgeable staff that will engage at risk individuals and families in defining skills and creating opportunities for changes that reduce harm and creates safe homes according to the purpose and authority of the Ho-Chunk Nation Protection codes.
- Will provide education and services to the Community reflecting the importance of early intervention for families that are solution based to prevent removals of children.
- Will provide education and services to the Community reflecting the importance of early intervention for adults at risk and elders that are solution based on harm reduction and safety measures in the least restrictive environment.

- Will develop a plan and start implementation of a training curriculum to advance the skills of current placement home families to be able to work with the children in out of home placement providing a higher level of trauma informed care.
- Will continue to seek out appropriate funding sources available. We will also work to grow the programming in a direction of working with the community to receive referrals earlier to hopefully have less removals. And for those that are removed working on more education to Ho-Chunk families to provide trauma informed care for the relatives they are providing care.

Alternative Funding Sources and Partnerships:

- **Submitted funding applications and completed reports during 2021-2022**
 - State of WI-DCF: Independent Living Skills, Kinship, High Cost Pool and submitted time study reporting for Title IV-E pass through funds.
 - State of WI-DHS: Alzheimer Caregiver, Birth to Three and ADRS
 - Administration for Children and Family: Title IV B Part 1 and Part 2
 - BIA: ICW 638 Contract
- **Financial highlights**
 - Title IV-E funding pass through claim from DCF for quarter 1 was \$84,543.95, quarter 2 was \$120,220.57 and quarter 3 was \$86,481. Quarter was just completed and we do not have an amount from the State yet. Total of the three quarters is \$291,245.52. This funding is designated for child welfare services needs for Tribal Court cases other than placement assistance.
 - High Cost Pool application has been sent to the State of WI and is in the process of determination.

Tribal Aging Unit

The Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Aging Division's purpose is to provide quality services to enhance the quality of life to our Tribal Elders in a timely fashion. We believe Ho-Chunk Elders deserve respect, advocacy and assistance with their daily needs. Their precious and valuable experience provides needed guidance for current and future tribal leadership so that their knowledge and wisdom is protected and preserved for those yet unborn.

Accomplishments During the Prior Fiscal Year:

- Keeping the program up and running during the pandemic with limited staff and funding.
- Providing services to 63,729 total Elder contacts.
- From July 1st of 2021 to June 30th of 2022 the Tribal Aging Division provided 37,091 home delivered meals to 331 Tribal Elders.
- Providing the means to distribute valuable information to our Elders. From information on the availability of the vaccine, to rental and housing assistance

programs to snow removal applications, the Tribal Aging Division has proven to be the only means of disseminating this information to homebound Elders.

- Utilizing all other resources within and outside the Ho-Chunk Nation to better serve our Elder population.
- Staying within the confines of our NPD Fiscal budget, yet providing all the services that are requested of TAU.
- TAU has worked throughout the pandemic and provided services to the Elder with ongoing efforts to keep our Elders protected and safe at home.
- Resumed the Elder Advisory Board meeting by WebEx.
- Elders have started to meet with The Great Lakes Native Elder Association.
- June 20, 2022, target date to resume congregate meals at our local feeding sites.

Pandemic Problems and Correction Action:

- Problem: Short Staffed. Corrective Action: Work on solutions for wages within the structure and frame work of the Ho-Chunk Nation’s governing bodies.
- Problem: Food money. Corrective Action: Move grant funding to cover the fiscal shortages within the Tribal Aging Unit.

Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year:

- To monitor the budget within the fiscal year and capitalize on grant funding sources.
- Curve spending where needed and where possible.

Alternative Funding/Partnerships:

Title III Older Americans Grant:

Title III B Supportive Services:	\$27,143	
Title III C1 Congregate Meals:	\$18,609	
Title III C2 Home Delivered Meals	\$26,272	
Title III D Preventative Health	\$1,352	
AFCSP	\$5,685	*allotted to CFS
SCSP	\$2,024	
ARPA	\$34,102	

Title III NSIP: \$10,309

Title VI Grant:

Parts A&B	\$146,760	
Part C	\$42,420	*allotted to Health

Title VI NSIP: \$13,916

Dept. of Transportation Grant: \$39,600

GWAAR SHIP Grant: \$3,500
 GWAAR SPAP Grant: \$1,000

Service Units:

	WI Dells	Black River	Nekoosa	Tomah	Wittenberg	Milw	La Crosse	MN	Madison	Totals
Home Delivered Meals	9990	16424	2258	4468	3951					37091
Congregate Meals										0
Total Meals	9990	16424	2258	4468	3951					37091
Nutrition Education (HDM)	581	1053	380	241	647					2902
Nutrition Education (Cong)										0
Nutrition Supplements	9	25	16	46	5		23			124
Homemaker	5	14		240	193					452
Outreach		70			93					163
Visiting by phone	48	11	474	447	549					1529
Visiting in home	112	192		784	144					1232
Telephone	1236	2397	607	574	699					5513
Information/Referral	2071	2338	1106	1019	2696					9230
Assisted Transport (escort)	23	466	6	8						503
Transportation	137	648	40	13	294					1132
Recreation/Socialization		92			1					93
Shopping	6	121	1	58	53					239
Family Support		1	3	408	9					421
Home Repair/Modification	140	5	34	46						225
Chore (lawn, snow, etc)	199	690	323		10		1			1223
Energy Assistance	16	89	2	87						194
Insurance/EBS	4	21	1	225	3					254
Assistive devices (lifeline, etc.)	52	944	1	13	4		1	1		1016
Consumable Supplies (depends)	43	145	3	1			1			193
Totals	14672	25746	5255	8678	9351	0	26	1	0	63729

Community Supportive Services

Programs of CSS:

Economic Assistance Program, Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), Family Services Program/Life Skills Coordinators, Clan Mothers, Coordinated Services Team (CST).

Activities: Prevention, intervention and community support, which can include financial assistance as well. All programming includes culturally infused work to satisfy family service grant contracts. Reallocating funds, building good collaborative work relationships and finding new funding to support our work as a division.

Accomplishments During the Prior Fiscal Year:

- Received nearly \$1.5 million dollars to be used for the build of a child care center.
 - Completed application to utilize these funds for construction.
 - An architect and contractor have been selected through the bidding process.

- Work has been done to get the final details/blueprints created and then the final quote from the architect/contractor.
- CCAP Program Manager and Division Director are currently working with the Land Development Team (LDT) to get the preferred sites rezoned.
- District meetings and public hearings have been attended and information provided to those in attendance.
- Breaking ground by September 2022.
- Family Services Program/Life Skills have been able to continue to grow their collaborative partners and have begun direct services within the Nekoosa, Madison, Milwaukee, Green Bay, Wittenberg and St. Paul communities.
- Completed training to run Parent Cafés. One has been completed in collaboration with HCN Youth Services.
- Currently running Mending Broken Hearts programming in BRF and the Dells.
- FSP/LSC provided t-shirts, paper products, and bagged up cultural activities for participants in the Family Healing Camp, September 2021. LSC's also provided a YouTube video to assist with activity completion since the event had to be virtual due to COVID cases increase.
- Clan Mothers Program returned to provide services to our women, as well as cultural trainings for those inside and outside the nation who work with our tribal members. We found BIA funds to bring the program manager back.
- Economic Assistance served a record number of tribal members in need in the first quarter of the fiscal year. More funds were requested, but have not been utilized due to collaboration with HHCD. We are also still utilizing DCF funds for other assistance needed.

Pandemic Problems and Corrective Actions Taken:

- Problem: Strain on Economic Assistance Program. Corrective Action: Reprioritizing funds to pay wages as well as cover utility assistance needs as well as collaborating with HHCD to utilize their grant funding to provide temporary lodging services. Continual changes to the application/program policies are necessary in order to best serve those truly in need during these times as well as best utilize the funds we have available. We have kept this program running with as little dependence on the nation as possible while still providing the needed services to those struggling in these times.
- Problem: Budget constraints. Corrective Action: We worked with grantors to get a percentage of additional staff's wages approved to be paid from grants. Again, we have taken some of the financial strain off the nation while ensuring we can provide the services needed to stay in compliance with the grants our programs utilize and depend on.

Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year:

- Continue to offer services in as many communities as we can with the staff we have.
- Strengthen the CSS team.

- Continue to build collaborative partnerships in order to reach the larger targeted populations.
- Maintain grant compliance and continue editing our grant plans to reflect the current needs of our people.
- Complete child care center build by the end of FY23.
- Rebuild our Clan Mothers Program to best meet the needs of our people.
- Prioritize staff wellbeing by checking in with one another and continue wearing the many hats we wear to get the work done for each program in CSS as a team.

Alternative Funding Sources and Partnerships:

- FSP/DCF/DHS state grants.
- BIA
- CCDF
- HHCA
- DCF

There have been and continue to be a lot of internal collaborations that work to help us better serve our tribal members/clients such as: Domestic Abuse, CFS, Youth Services, Branch office managers and Social Services Administration among others.

Photos of Accomplishments, Events, etc.



Cultural coping skills for our teens. Life Skills workshop.



Life Skills workshop 2022. Mom made Hoocak Moccasins for her baby.