

November 2016



ANNUAL REPORT
July 2015 - June 2016

**Stronger families. Safer communities.
A better future for all of Pitt County.**

WE PROTECT VULNERABLE PEOPLE

And we do it in several different ways.

On the following pages you can learn about our agency's responsibilities toward people who are vulnerable due to youth, old age, impairment, illness, lack of resources, and lack of opportunity. Virtually all of our responsibilities are required by state or federal law.

We are also financially accountable to the citizens of Pitt County. The illustration below helps to show how we use the money entrusted to us.

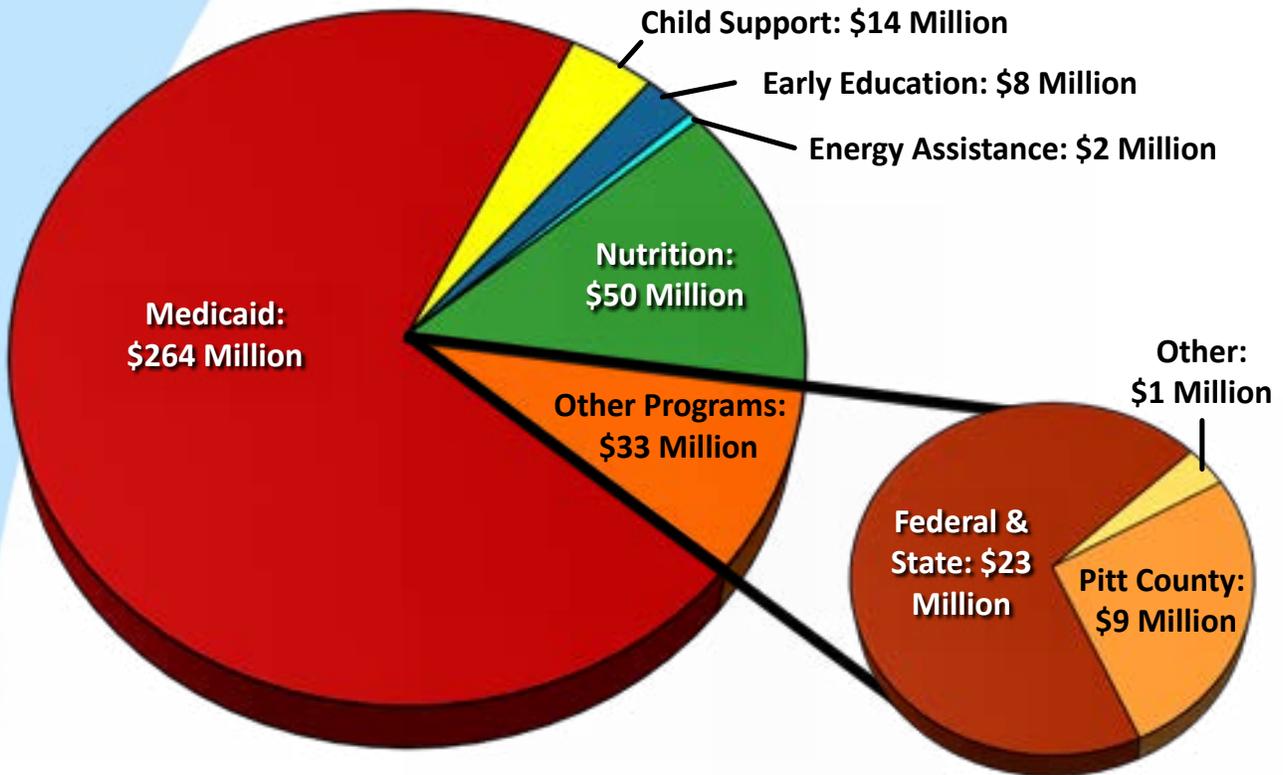
Each year, we manage more than a third of a billion dollars. Less than 10% of the money we manage flows through the agency's budget. Most of these budgeted funds are used for programs that protect children, the elderly, and other vulnerable adults.

For each dollar we manage, 94 cents come from federal and state appropriations. This includes funds for Medicaid, Nutrition Services, and Early Education, as well as most of the \$33 million that flows through the agency's budget.

Of the remaining 6 cents, 4 cents are collected in child support from non-custodial parents of Pitt County children. Only 2 cents come from Pitt County taxes. This is equivalent to about \$135 per household.

In return, we try to ensure that our most vulnerable citizens can live safer, more promising lives. And that all of Pitt County's citizens can enjoy stronger, more secure communities.

THE AGENCY MANAGED \$371 MILLION DURING THE PAST YEAR. THIS INCLUDED THE AGENCY'S \$33 MILLION DOLLAR BUDGET, OF WHICH \$9 MILLION (2 CENTS OF EVERY MANAGED DOLLAR) CAME FROM PITT COUNTY TAXES.



ALL FUNDS MANAGED BY DSS:
\$371 Million, of which \$9 Million is collected through county taxes

SOURCES OF FUNDS USED FOR OTHER PROGRAMS SUCH AS CHILD PROTECTION, FOSTER CARE, ADOPTION, & THE PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS: \$33 Million

BUT WE CAN'T DO IT ALONE

We need and encourage others to work with us. No government agency can be a regular substitute for family and community. But our agency can help families and communities to deal with crises and to overcome obstacles.

We are grateful to all of the people and organizations who join us in protecting and assisting our citizens. We encourage people to become our partners by:

REPORTING ANY ABUSE, NEGLECT, OR EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN, OR OF ADULTS WHO ARE VULNERABLE DUE TO AGE OR IMPAIRMENT.

Each year hundreds of Pitt County citizens of all ages are physically abused or neglected by family members, and by others entrusted with their care. Children are often sexually abused, and the elderly or impaired are sometimes financially exploited

We investigate possible abuse, neglect, and exploitation in cooperation with law enforcement. But there's not much we can do if nobody reports it. If you suspect it may have occurred, please call us at 252-902-1110. The identity of all callers is kept confidential.

BUILDING AND SUPPORTING FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE FAMILIES.

Consider enlarging your family to include foster or adoptive children. Or consider talking with members of your church about how you can help a foster family. To learn more, call Under Our Wings at 252-902-1110.

WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS, INCLUDING:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

- Churches Outreach Network
- Community Unity Network
- Greene Lamp Agency
- Northern Pitt County Improvement Assn.
- Pitt County Council on Aging
- Salvation Army
- United Way of Pitt County

EDUCATION:

- East Carolina University
- Literacy Volunteers - Pitt County
- Pitt Community College
- Pitt County Schools

EMPLOYMENT:

- LIFE / STRIVE
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- NCWorks Career Center
- Workforce Development Board

FAMILIES & CHILDREN:

- Center For Family Violence Prevention
- Children's Home Society
- Martin-Pitt Partnership for Children
- Pitt County Guardians ad Litem
- TEDI BEAR Children's Advocacy Center
- Youth Villages

HEALTHCARE:

- Access East
- Community Care Plan
- Bernstein Community Health Center
- Trillium Health Resources
- Vidant Health

HOUSING:

- Community Crossroads Center
- Farmville Housing Authority
- Greenville Housing Authority
- Habitat for Humanity

PROTECTING CHILDREN

ALL CHILDREN NEED CARE, SAFETY, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORT. SADLY, THEY DON'T ALWAYS GET IT.

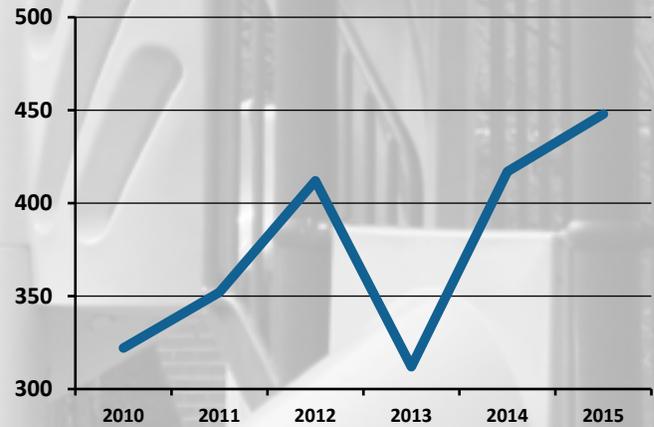
Most people have heard or read about children who are abused or neglected. We see it first hand.

More importantly, we are responsible for stopping it. The Pitt County Department of Social Services receives hundreds of calls each year from people who suspect that children may be suffering abuse or neglect. We investigate, often in cooperation with law enforcement.

Although we try to preserve families, sometimes it is just not safe for an abused or neglected child to stay in the home. These children need foster care, either with foster parents or in a specialized group home. Some homes provide therapeutic services for children who have suffered trauma. Some of these children are eventually adopted.

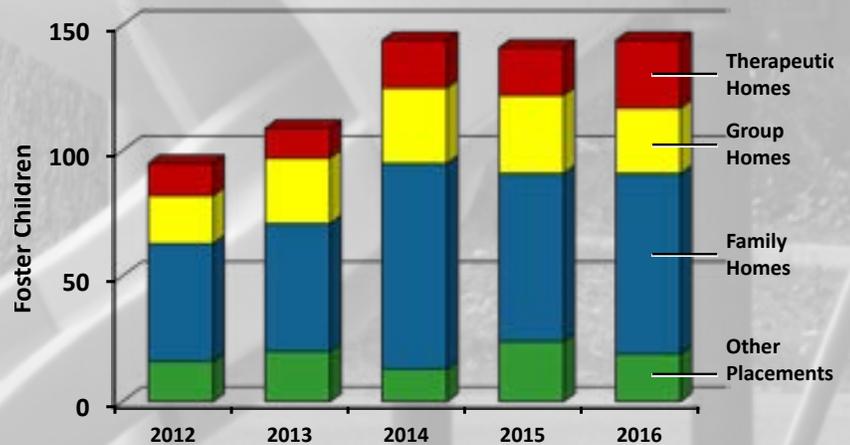
The agency is also responsible for collecting child support from absent parents, and for encouraging these parents to be more involved in their children's lives.

CHILDREN DETERMINED TO BE ABUSED, NEGLECTED OR OTHERWISE IN NEED OF PROTECTIVE SERVICES, 12 MONTHS ENDING IN JUNE OF EACH YEAR

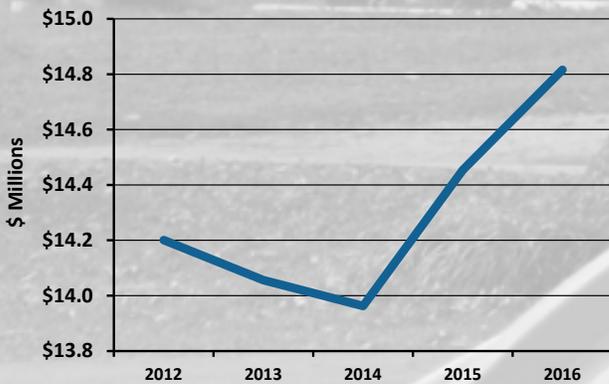


Note: Complete Fiscal Year 2016 data is not yet available.

PLACEMENTS OF FOSTER CHILDREN AS OF JUNE 30 OF EACH YEAR



CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS, 12 MONTHS ENDING IN JUNE OF EACH YEAR



PROTECTING VULNERABLE ADULTS

Sometimes adults who cannot care for themselves are abused or neglected by their families, or by others who are responsible for them. Often, they are also exploited financially.

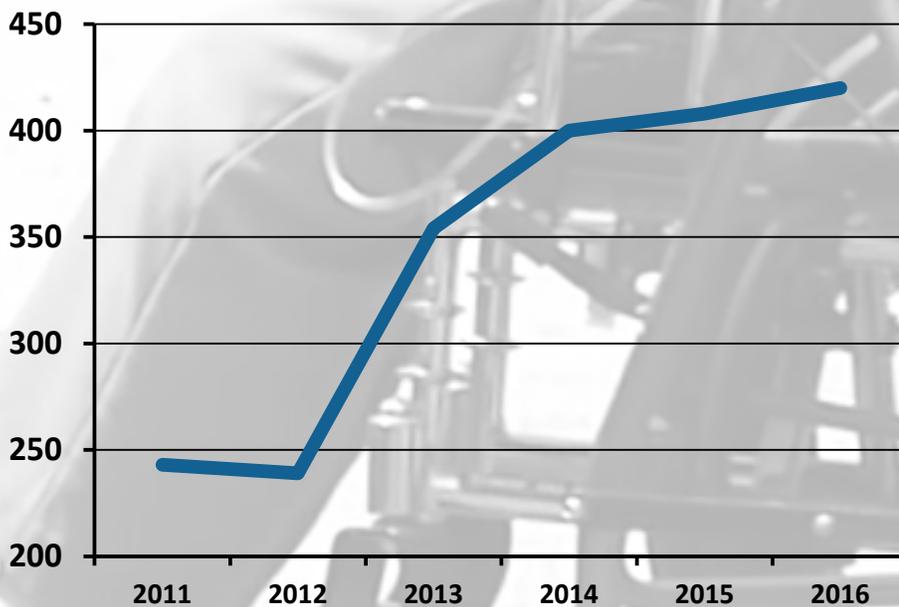
The agency investigates these reports, just as we do with reports of abused or neglected children.

If no family members are available to help, adults who cannot care for themselves are often placed under the agency's legal guardianship.

In addition to abuse and exploitation, individuals and families can face crises caused by nature. These may include hurricanes, floods, and extremely hot or cold weather. Each year the agency uses federal funds to provide thousands of such households with emergency food and utility assistance.

ADULTS WHO ARE IMPAIRED BY AGE, DISABILITY, OR POVERTY MAY ALSO NEED PROTECTION.

REPORTS OF ELDERLY OR IMPAIRED ADULTS BEING ABUSED, NEGLECTED, OR EXPLOITED, 12 MONTHS ENDING IN JUNE OF EACH YEAR



MANAGING MEDICAL INSURANCE

One of the agency's largest responsibilities is ensuring that people who need Medicaid insurance coverage can get it. About 35,000 Pitt County citizens rely on Medicaid for their medical insurance. Most are children. Others include the parents on whom those children depend.

Pitt County can be proud of the fact that 95% of its children are insured, either through Medicaid or other medical plans. According to the most recent census data, Pitt County is doing better than the state as a whole.

More than 9,000 other Medicaid enrollees are elderly or disabled. They include most of the 500 residents of the county's skilled nursing facilities, and many residents of the county's rest homes.

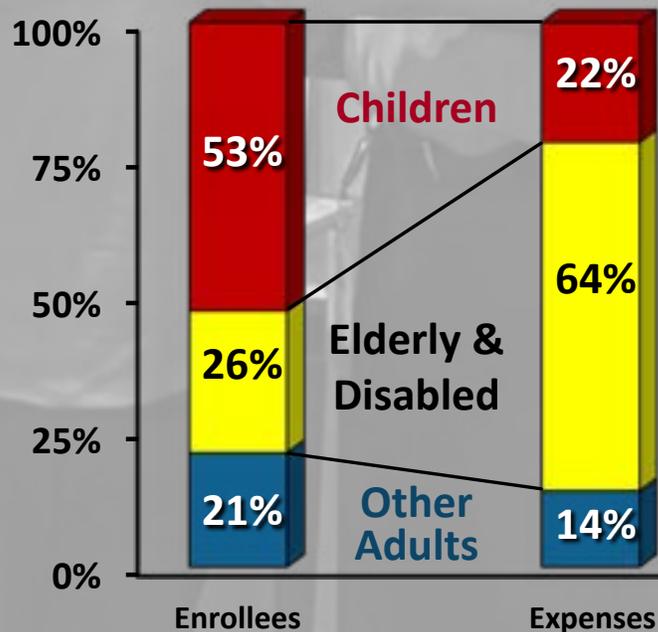
Although the elderly and disabled comprise only about a quarter of enrollees, they use about two thirds of all Medicare services.

The Department of Social Services works closely with Vidant Health and other medical professionals to be sure that Medicaid enrollees receive the care they need when they need it.

This helps to prevent not only personal suffering and family breakdown, but the development of more serious – and more expensive – medical conditions. DSS employees also raised money for Riley's Army, which helps children with cancer.

WHEN PEOPLE NEED MEDICAL CARE FOR THEMSELVES OR THEIR FAMILIES, NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO THEM.

PROPORTIONS OF MEDICAID ENROLLEES AND EXPENSES



Note: Proportional expenses are estimates subject to audit.

PROMOTING BETTER NUTRITION

It is the only thing that everyone must have each day. If people don't have food, then it doesn't matter what else they have or don't have.

Good nutrition is especially important for children: Their ability to grow, learn, and develop depends on it. That's why the agency's Nutrition Services program focuses on low-income families that include children, and on other vulnerable groups such as the elderly.

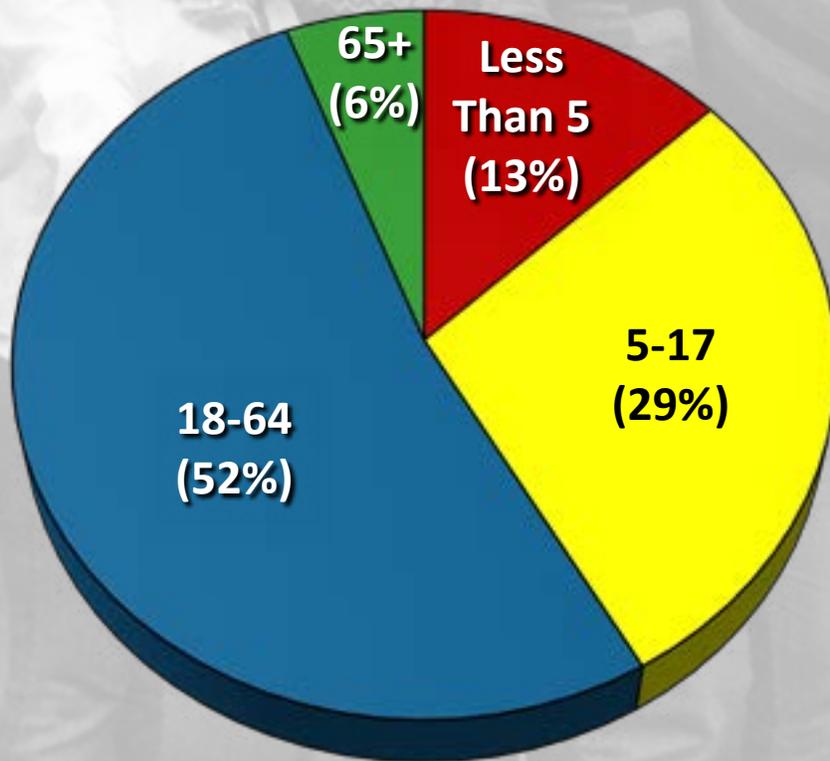
For example, children comprise 42% of the people who receive Nutrition Services in Pitt County, although they comprise only 22% of our county's population.

Nutrition Services is only part of the solution to the problem of hunger in Pitt County. That's why the agency works with the Food Bank of Central and Eastern Carolina, more than 25 church food pantries, and other partners.

But even with all of these efforts, University of North Carolina researchers estimate that more than a quarter of Pitt County's children lack food security.

DSS staff also contributed to Hump Day for Hunger and other food charities, which allows participating agency employees to "dress down" in return for helping to raise money for the hungry.

FOOD & NUTRITION CLIENTS BY AGE, MAY 2016

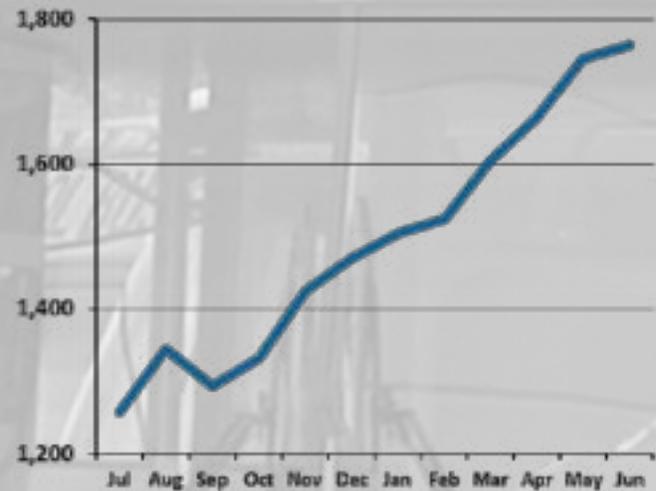


EDUCATING YOUNG CHILDREN

On any given day, about 4,400 Pitt County children receive early education and after-school services. More than 1,700 are members of low-income families who qualify for state early education assistance.

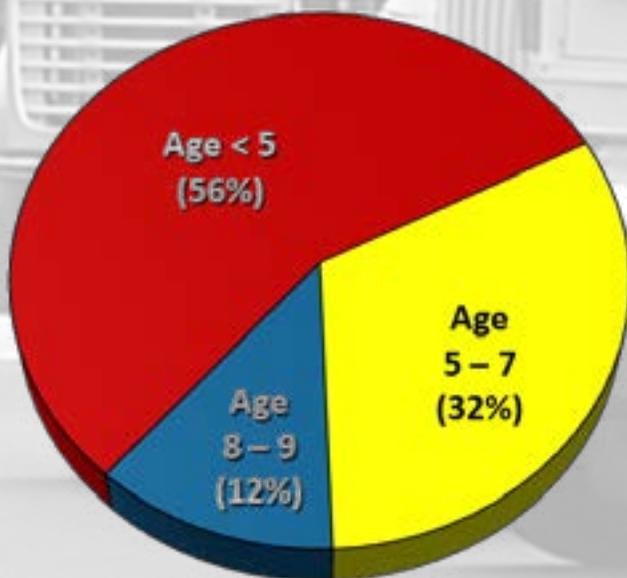
The Pitt County Department of Social Services works with families and service providers to make it happen.

CHILDREN IN EARLY EDUCATION, JULY 2015 – JUNE 2016



FOR CHILDREN, EARLY EDUCATION MEANS THE FREEDOM TO LEARN. FOR PARENTS, IT MEANS THE FREEDOM TO WORK.

AGES OF CHILDREN IN EARLY EDUCATION, AUGUST 2016

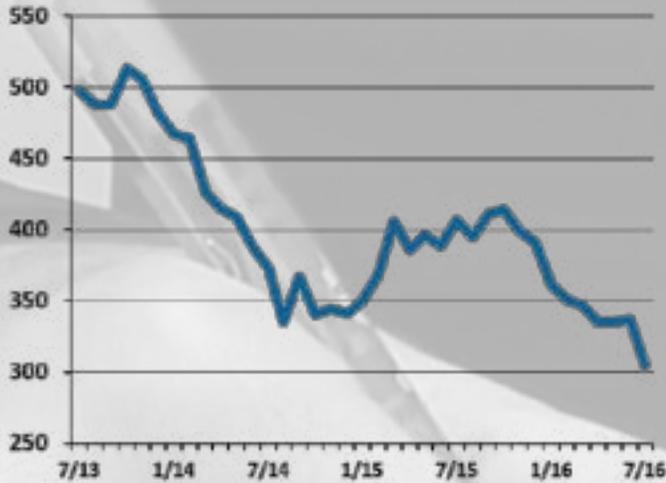


The agency has worked hard this past year to extend assistance to more qualifying families than ever before.

Without it, most of our early education families would be forced to choose between staying home to care for their children or relying on alternatives that may be less safe – and less able to give kids a good start in life.

PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT

CASES OF TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES,
JULY 2013 – JULY 2016



Ultimately, it is up to each of us to provide for ourselves and our families, and to contribute to our communities. That's why the Pitt County Department of Social Services emphasizes training and employment as the path to a more secure future.

For example, over the past three years the agency has reduced its cases of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families by 40%. Much of the credit goes to the agency's Work First Employment Services, which help people to participate in building Pitt County's economy.

INDEPENDENCE IS THE ULTIMATE GOAL.

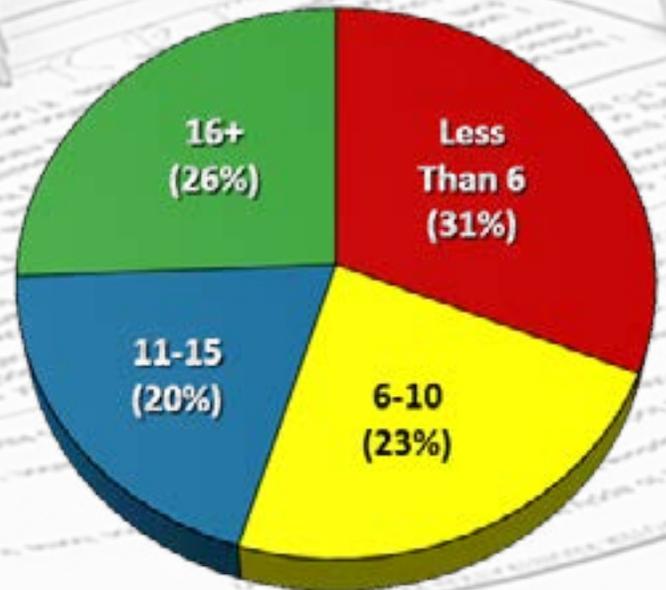
As with several of its other programs, the agency ensures that Temporary Assistance to Needy Families is focused on children.

Most recently, Employment Services has expanded its services for recipients of Nutrition Services, in cooperation with Pitt Community College and the NCWorks Career Center.

The agency has also launched a website that is especially designed to help Pitt County citizens find training and jobs:

www.pittcountync.gov/PITTworks.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES,
BENEFICIARIES BY AGE, MAY 2016



THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

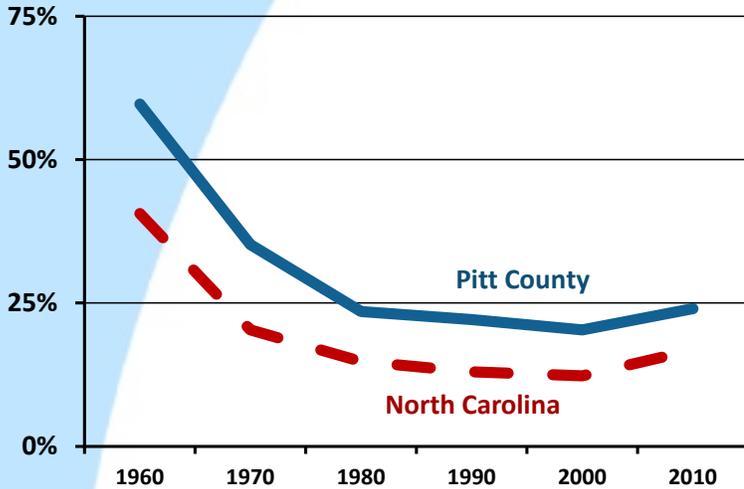
PITT COUNTY HAS MADE PROGRESS IN REDUCING POVERTY, BUT ...

- IT IS STILL POORER THAN MOST OF THE REST OF NORTH CAROLINA.
- THE DOWNWARD TREND IN POVERTY HAS REVERSED SINCE 2000.
- THE PROBLEM OF REDUCING POVERTY IS MADE MORE DIFFICULT BY OTHER CHALLENGES SUCH AS FAMILY BREAKDOWN AND LAGGING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH LESS EDUCATION.

Pitt County has much to be proud of, including its dramatic reduction of poverty during the past half century. But our county's poverty rate continues to exceed that of the state as a whole - and, like the wider state and national poverty rates, it is increasing.

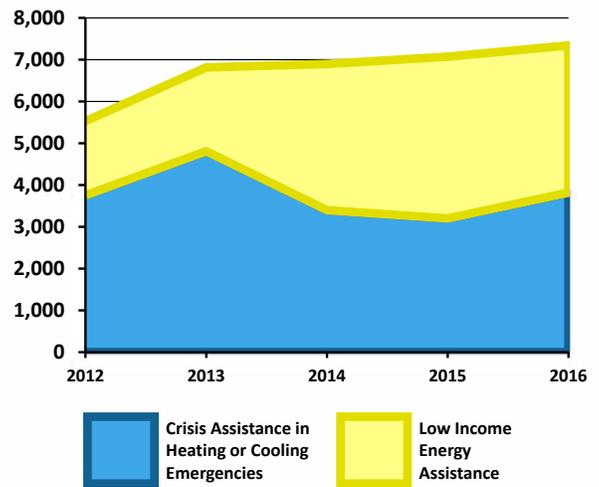
Two important solutions to these problems are education and job placement. If more people can be trained and placed in jobs that will help them to achieve family stability, they can better interrupt the chronic cycle of poverty.

PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY, 1960 - 2010

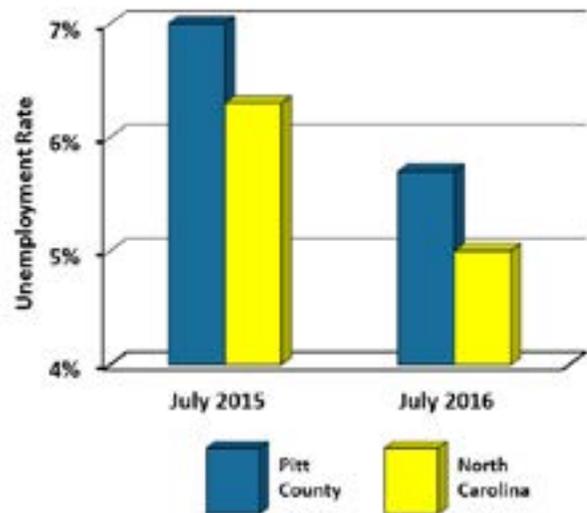


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING FEDERAL ENERGY ASSISTANCE, 12 MONTHS ENDING IN JUNE OF EACH YEAR



UNEMPLOYMENT IN PITT COUNTY vs. NORTH CAROLINA AS A WHOLE, 2015 - 2016



Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce

THE FUTURE

IN THE FUTURE, OUR AGENCY WILL CONTINUE OUR FOCUS ON:

- SAFETY FOR OUR MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS.
- MAKING HEALTH CARE ACCESSIBLE FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES.
- HELPING PEOPLE TO GET EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT TO SECURE THEIR FUTURES AND BUILD STRONGER COMMUNITIES.

We are always trying to improve the quality, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of our services. That includes anticipating new challenges that Pitt County will face in the future.

One big challenge will be our county's aging population: By 2022, Pitt County will be home to 24% more people aged 65 and above. The rest of the population is not expected to increase at all. This may create more need for Adult Protective Services, including guardianship for people who have no one else to help them stay safe.

It also means more efforts to ensure medical care for the elderly and disabled, and to provide adequate nutrition and other assistance for low income seniors.

Other trends may contribute to other challenges. The need for foster homes is expected to continue to increase. The cost of healthcare and energy will continue to be a problem for many in Pitt County.

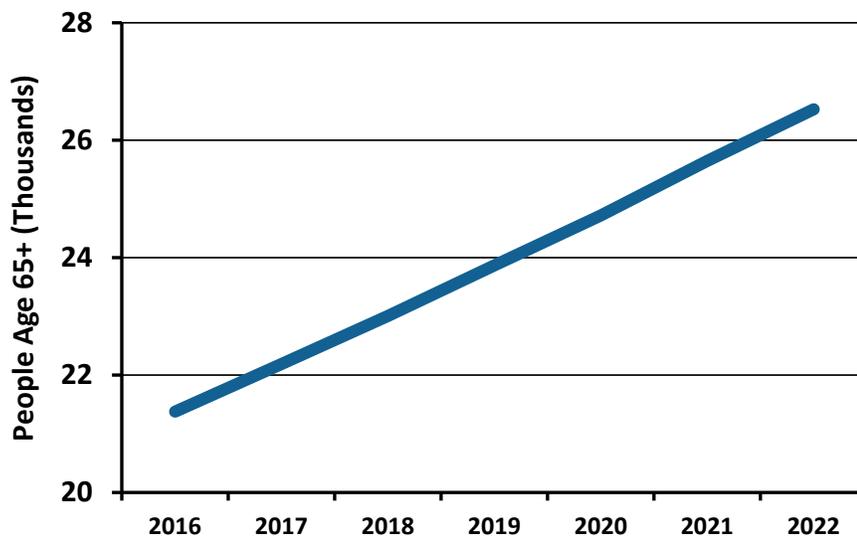
And one of our foremost priorities will continue to be serving as good stewards of public resources.

There are also some proven strategies on which we will continue to rely: working with our partners in the community, and helping people to become as independent and self-sufficient as possible.

We deeply appreciate the cooperation and trust of our partners, and of all the citizens of Pitt County. Please let us know if you would like to work with us, or if you have any input about how we could better serve the county.

DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS, PITT COUNTY'S OLDER POPULATION IS EXPECTED TO GROW BY 24%. THE REST OF THE POPULATION WILL INCREASE LITTLE, IF AT ALL.

PROJECTED GROWTH OF PITT COUNTY'S
AGE 65+ POPULATION, 2016 – 2022



Source: North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management



www.pittcountync.gov/dss

PHONE: 252-902-1110 FAX: 252-413-1299

OFFICE LOCATIONS:

County Office Building

1717 West Fifth Street • Greenville, NC 27834

- Administration
- Child & Adult Protection
- Early Education
- Employment Services
- Foster Care & Adoption

Human Services Center

203 Government Circle • Greenville, NC 27834

- Child Support
- Medicaid
- Nutrition Services
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families ("TANF")

BOARD LEADERSHIP:

CHAIR: Melonie Bryan

252-752-2394

mtbryan@embarqmail.com

VICE CHAIR: Coral Whichard

252-758-6956

coralwhichard@outlook.com

Mary Perkins-Williams Becky Starkey James Cox

STAFF LEADERSHIP:

DIRECTOR: Jan Elliott

jan.elliott@pittcountync.gov

Administrator, Economic Support Services
(including Medicaid, Nutrition Services, and TANF):

Bryan Averette • bryan.averette@pittcountync.gov

Administrator, Child & Adult Services
(including Child & Adult Protection and Foster Care & Adoption):

Margaret Dixon • margaret.dixon@pittcountync.gov

Administrator, Family Support Services
(including Child Support, Early Education, and Employment Services):

Michele McCorkle • michele.mccorkle@pittcountync.gov

DEPUTY DIRECTOR: Gwendolyn Burns

gwen.burns@pittcountync.gov