

Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Program Overview

Elizabeth Patten, FaDSS
Program Manager

February 5, 2026



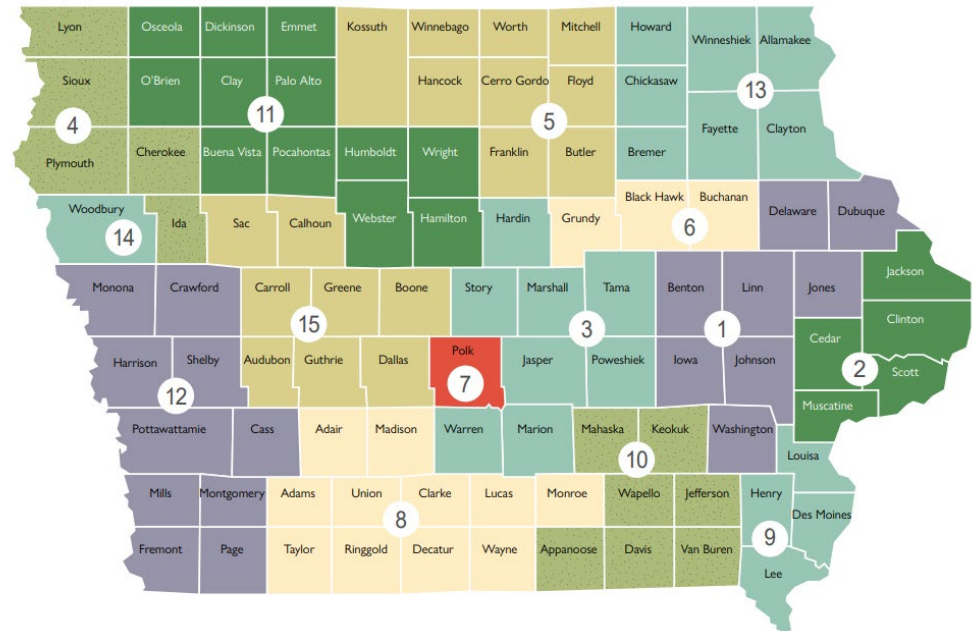
Health and
Human Services

Who does FaDSS serve?

Statewide program
serving families in all 99
counties

15 local agencies

All members of the
family: Parents,
caretakers, & children



<https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/8285/download?inline>

Eligibility Criteria at Enrollment

- ▶ Family gross income at or below 175% FPL
- ▶ Dependent child(ren)
- ▶ Resides in Iowa
- ▶ U.S. citizenship or legal immigrant status
- ▶ At-risk criteria

*Priority of Service for Families Receiving Family Investment Program (FIP) assistance

FaDSS Vision

To engage families in dynamic partnerships to address their basic needs, improve child well-being, and develop career opportunities that, in turn, improve lives, families and communities



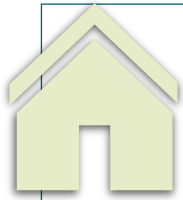
We do this by...

Reducing sources of stress that destabilize families

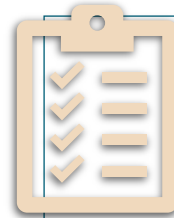
Strengthening core skills that are essential for work, school and life

Creating responsive relationships that are safe and supportive

Core Program Components



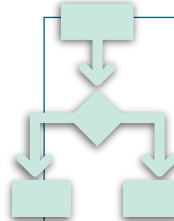
Structured home visits



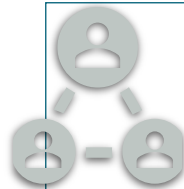
Assessments and screenings that support healthy self-exploration



Science-informed goal pursuit



A framework and process for skill development



Connecting families to stabilizing supports and opportunities in their communities

Domains of Self-Sufficiency

Housing

Transportation

Mental Health

Substance Abuse

Health

Income

Employment

Parenting, Nurturing & Attachment

Child Care

Support of Child Development

Adult Education

Language (non-English speaking families)

Support Network

Relationship with Partner

Legal

FaDSS Goal Setting Framework

Goal

- Draw out motivation
 - What is most important and why?
- Visualize - What would success look like?

Plan

- Detailed plan to get there
- If/then planning to reduce barriers

Do

- Actively work towards goal
- Specialist provide reminders and positive support

Review & Revise

- Reflection on what worked well and what didn't
- Plan for what is next

Skill-Building Activities to Support Goal Attainment

► Employment

- Career exploration
- Resume preparation
- Interview preparation
- Networking
- Soft skills
- Career advancement

► Parenting

► Life Skills

► Financial Management

► Education and Training

► Wellness

How to Get Connected

- ▶ Self-Referral or Provider referral
- ▶ For questions contact: FaDSS@hhs.iowa.gov
- ▶ For more information: [Family Development & Self-Sufficiency \(FaDSS\)](#) | [Health & Human Services](#)





Questions

Elizabeth Patten
FaDSS Program Manager
Elizabeth.patten@hhs.iowa.gov



Health and
Human Services