

Early Intervention Unit:

Caseworkers serve as case managers. An initial assessment is conducted with each family, gathering information from any service provider working with the family. Once the assessment is complete, the family may be referred for other appropriate additional services to ensure child safety and to promote family preservation.

Frequently used services may include, but are not limited to day care, parenting classes, parent aide services, mental health counseling, specialized sex abuse treatment, public health nursing, transportation, Family Group Counseling, mentoring and Community Maternity Services.

The caseworker assists the family in accessing needed services and monitors the delivery of services by other service providers. Caseworkers also provide casework counseling to help families identify and enhance family strengths and empower them to utilize community supports in order to provide safe, stable home environments on their own, without continued intervention from social services.

Adolescent Preventive Unit:

This unit administers the PINS Adjustment Program, wherein youth who are deemed to be ungovernable and/or incorrigible are referred to the agency for adjustment services. The Designated Assessment Services Team (DAS) comprised of professionals from the mental health community, alcohol and substance abuse community, as well as other human service agencies assess for service needs and subsequently develop a treatment plan which is then monitored by the unit staff.

The Adolescent Preventive Unit also provides pre-court assessments on all Juvenile Delinquents in order to assist in making any appropriate referrals, as well as to assist the County Attorney in determining the necessary terms and conditions to be set forth by the court. Additionally, as the Commissioner of Social Services is the County Detention Administrator, detention services as coordinated by this unit as well.

The Family Resolutions Program and the Juvenile Drug Court are also a part of this unit.

**Caregivers Guide To:
Preventive Services and
Preventive Respite
Washington County
Department of Social
Services**

**Building B at the Municipal
Center
383 Broadway
Fort Edward, NY 12828
518 746-2300**



**Tammy DeLorme, Commissioner
Sheryl Allen, Director of Children's
Services
Eileen Irwin, Preventive Services
Supervisor**

Preventive Respite

Respite Care is NOT Foster Care. You, as the parent or legal guardian, retain custody of your child/children. DSS has elected to use certified foster parents to provide respite. Respite care may be provided for a maximum of 21 days.

Family resources should be thoroughly explored before respite is offered.

To be eligible for respite:

- **Families must be eligible for mandated preventive services**
- **A preventive caseworker and supervisor must determine that preventive respite is needed to “maintain or restore family functioning”**

Conditions for which respite may be offered include the following:

- **The child has special needs, which have placed unusual stress on the family**

- **The parent has a physical, mental or emotional condition which impairs his or her ability to appropriately manage the family**
- **The child has been referred for PINS Adjustment. and overall family functioning would be improved with some time apart and some crisis intervention**
- **The parent is participating in an inpatient substance abuse rehabilitation program**
- **It is determined that a child is temporarily not safe to return to their parents’ home**

Respite care is not appropriate if a child’s behavior presents a serious danger to himself or others.

No good will be accomplished with Preventive Respite if the child returns home to the same situation and the same set of problems that made respite necessary in the first place. Preventive Respite is NOT a vacation for parents.

A signed permission form, providing pertinent information regarding your family and your child will be required. Consent release forms for involved service providers may also be required. In addition, a written contract will be required, outlining what the agency and the parent will be expected to do during the 21 day respite period (in order to restore family functioning and prevent foster care placement.)

***A Family Team Decision Meeting will also be required when a child is placed in respite. The purpose of this meeting will be to gather family members and community supports to discuss and plan for the child’s return home.**