



184 N. Lancaster Street, Athens, Ohio 45701
(740) 797-2523 1-800-762-3775
<http://jfs.athenscountygovernment.com>

COMMISSIONERS: Lenny Eliason, Larry Payne, Mark Sullivan
DIRECTOR: Jack Frech

An Equal Opportunity Employer / Service Provider

For Immediate Release

Feb. 25, 2009

Contact: Nick Claussen, Community Relations Coordinator
(740) 797-2523

NEWS RELEASE

Job & Family Services Press Release

State budget cuts have forced Athens County Job and Family Services to eliminate two programs dedicated to preventing teen pregnancy and helping area residents receive dental care.

Both the Dental Program and Planet Teen will discontinue services in Athens County on March 1. Each program provided valuable information and resources to county residents.

The Dental Program linked Medicaid-eligible clients with the dental care they needed. The program's services included appointment reminders, referrals, transportation and dental education programs. For clients who were not Medicaid-eligible, the Dental Program also connected them with dental care services in the region.

In fiscal year 2008, the program served 1,357 people and helped to arrange a total of 1,410 dental appointments.

Medicaid recipients who are assigned to Managed Care Plans are now encouraged to contact their plans for assistance in accessing dental services. For those with no insurance, both Family Health Care in McArthur (1-800-709-6481) and the Meigs County Dental Clinic (740-992-3455) are able to provide services to individuals with no dental coverage. Both facilities have reduced fees for clients at certain income levels.

Planet Teen emphasized refusal skills, delay tactics and alternative actions that students could use to abstain or utilize protections.

The program also taught students interpersonal and social skills, and focused on how students can resist or change high-risk behaviors. In fiscal year 2008, Planet Teen provided pregnancy prevention information to 1,632 individuals.

Athens County Job and Family Services lost more than \$360,000 in state funding during this fiscal year and has had to lay off employees, reduce services in some areas and completely eliminate other programs. The programs that have already been eliminated include the portion of the Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) program that provided emergency funding for car repairs, work clothes and uniforms, and other expenses. The part of the PRC program that provides funding for expenses such as heating bills, electric bills and food is still available, but eligibility has been reduced from 150 percent of the poverty level to 100 percent of the poverty level.

Athens County Job and Family Services is also expecting to see additional budget cuts in the

next state budget, but no information is available yet on exactly how much funding the agency will receive. If significant cuts are received, it could mean more cuts in programs and staff at a time when caseloads are increasing and Athens County residents desperately need these services.

For more information on the budget cuts or on the services Athens County Job and Family Services provides, call Community Relations Coordinator Nick Claussen at 797-2523 or send an e-mail to clausn@odjfs.state.oh.us.