



# Lyon County Human Services

## Annual Report to Our Community

### Fiscal Year 2007 - 2008



**Mission:** To be a committed, progressive leader promoting opportunities for individuals to prosper  
**Vision:** All individuals are valued, cared for, and have opportunities to maximize their potential

Lyon County Human Services provides services which assist individuals and families to achieve a greater level of self-sufficiency and well being. The Department is committed to strengthening maximum independence through comprehensive Senior Services, Social Services, and Recreation Services.



### A Message from the Director

*Edrie LaVoie*

We are pleased to present this first annual report to our community. This report characterizes the growth and change within the Department. It also defines the Department’s accomplishments and sets the stage for the next year.

As we reflect on our growth and development, it is important to recognize our most valuable asset – our staff. Each of the three divisions, including administration, has enjoyed success and has made many program improvements throughout the year.

We would also like to recognize the Board of County Commissioners, the various County Departments that support our efforts, and our many community member and agency partners.

This year, the Department made a conscious effort to enhance our public visibility and to highlight our work with multiple community partners. Through these partnerships, we have renewed our mission and vision.

We look forward to new opportunities and successes in the coming year as we continue to work together to address the human service needs of individuals, children, and families.

### Table of Contents

Message from Director.....1

Department History.....2

Department Structure.....3

Recreation Services.....4

Senior Services.....5

Social Services.....6

Strategic Plan.....8

# Lyon County Human Services Department History



The Lyon County Human Services Department is the outcome of a successful effort to increase access to services in Lyon County. In 1994, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners authorized and directed the consolidation of county-wide social services and county-sponsored senior services. The consolidation set the stage for developing and implementing a variety of prevention programs in Lyon County.

In the 14 year history of Human Services, the Department has continued to restructure in ongoing efforts to improve service delivery. The Department has expanded resources available to the communities and now provides services in several locations throughout the County.

The timeline of new program implementation shows the substantial growth the Department has experienced since its inception. In addition to several new programs, and one new division, the staff has more than doubled since 2005.

- 1994 ~ Department Established
- 1995 ~ Family Resource Center
- 1997 ~ Family to Family Connection
- 2001 ~ Independent Living Program
- 2003 ~ Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- 2005 ~ Community Health Nursing Support  
~ Family Enhancement Program
- 2006 ~ Recreation Division
- 2007 ~ Circles™ Initiative

The growth in programs, staff, and services has taken Lyon County Human Services in a new direction. The Department began a transformational planning process in 2006. Through that process, Human Services developed its first Strategic Plan.

Our mission and vision are now being expressed through new strategic goals which will guide our work in the years ahead. These goals are presented in our 2007-2010 Strategic Plan, which may be found at [www.lyon-county.org](http://www.lyon-county.org).

Lyon County Human Services will face many challenges in the coming year. In particular, the current state of the economy, with influence on State and County budgets, will take the Department in yet another direction. The Department will meet these challenges as a committed, progressive leader promoting opportunities for individuals to prosper.

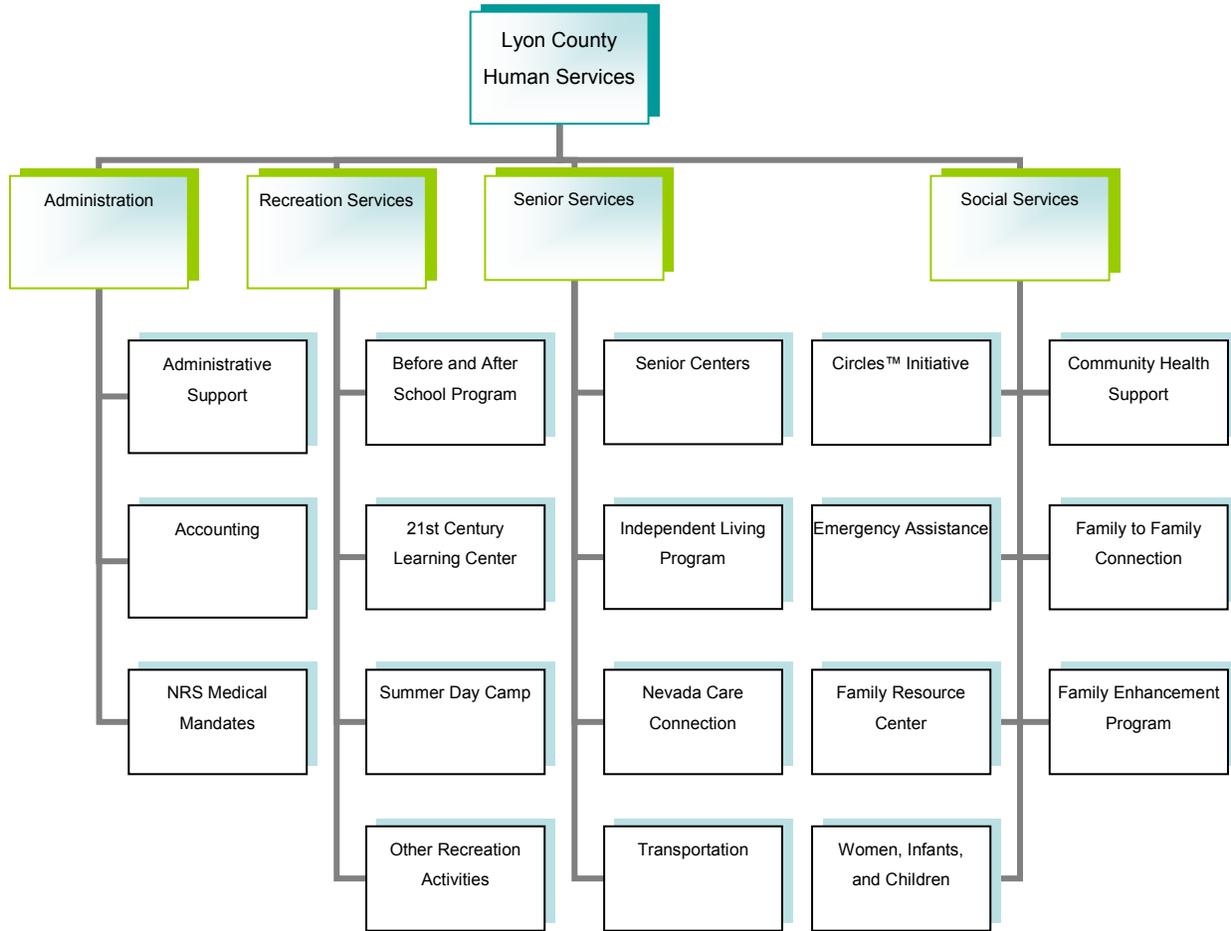


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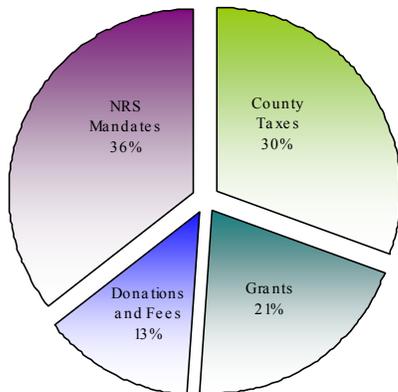
## Constitutional Responsibility

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) Section 428.010 requires that "To the extent that money may be lawfully appropriated by the board of county commissioners for this purpose...every county shall provide care, support and relief to the poor, indigent, incompetent and those incapacitated by age, disease or accident, lawfully resident therein, when those persons are not supported or relieved by their relatives or guardians, by their own means, or by state hospitals, federal or private institutions or agencies."

# Lyon County Human Services Department Structure



## 2007 - 2008 Budget



	County Taxes	Grants	Donations and Fees	TOTAL
<b>Administrative</b>	\$ 316,990	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 316,990
<b>Recreation Services</b>	63,703	112,500	431,253	607,456
<b>Senior Services</b>	656,239	355,690	176,699	1,188,628
<b>Social Services</b>	434,916	538,250	36,418	1,009,584
<b>NRS Medical Mandates</b>	1,714,071	0	0	1,714,071
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 3,185,919</b>	<b>\$ 1,006,440</b>	<b>\$ 644,370</b>	<b>\$ 4,836,729</b>

# Recreation Services

*“To provide a safe, interactive, fun, and affordable service through the spirit of partnerships”*



## Just Kids

Provides a before and after school program for elementary school youth, encouraging exploration, learning, and socialization in a safe, fun, and educational atmosphere. There are three program locations in Dayton, three in Fernley, and one in Silver Springs. During the school year, 782 children participated in the program.

## 21st Century Learning Center

Provides students with academic enrichment opportunities, as well as socialization and other services designed to complement their regular academic program. Certified instructors offer math, literacy and other related educational development programs. The program is offered in Silver Springs, where 127 students participated during the school year.

## Summer Day Camp

Camp Tumbleweeds provides an action-packed, fun-filled summer day camp. More than 200 children, ages 5-11, enjoyed activities scheduled around a different theme each week, incorporating arts and crafts, swimming and water play, organized games, and field trips.

## Other Recreation Activities

Coordinates other community events offering recreation opportunities in individual communities, e.g., dog obedience classes, various youth and adult dance classes, karate classes, soccer camps, etc.



## Accomplishments

- Partnered with the National Recreation and Park Association and the Golf Course Builders Association of America to become a Sticks for Kids organization, providing youth the tools and opportunities necessary to encourage the game of golf in rural Nevada
- Collaborated with the Nevada Shakespeare Company to offer Camp Tumbleweeds youth the opportunity to experience a Shakespeare performance through tickets provided by the Shakespeare For A New Generation Initiative
- Participants were introduced to the art and significance of African Masks, presented by an Artist from New Mexico, and had the opportunity to design and display their own masks
- Developed an Intergenerational partnership by learning the significance of the 13 folds of the American flag and presenting flag folding ceremonies to the community, including one ceremony at the senior center

## Success Story 21st Century Program

During the first quarter of the school year, a seventh grade student earned a D in Math. The Coordinator of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Center, while entering the grades into the system, became concerned.

The Instructor, in accordance with the grant criteria, provided the student with tutoring and homework assistance during non-school hours. The student also benefited from other academic enrichment opportunities designed to support her learning and development. She stated, “I enjoyed the program and believe it helped improve my grade.” She also emphasized her Mom really wants her to go back when school starts.

At the end of the third quarter, the student’s Math grade had risen to an A. In fact, 82% of the students completing the third quarter with the program either increased, or maintained their first quarter Math grade.

# Senior Services

*“Working together to provide opportunities for an independent and healthy aging population”*



## Senior Centers

The Senior Centers offer opportunities for education, socialization, and participation in a variety of programs and activities.

Nutritious meals are served in group settings, as well as delivered to eligible seniors.



During the past year, the Dayton, Fernley, and Silver Springs Senior Centers served 70,549 meals.

## Transportation

Provides transportation for participation in senior center activities and meals, personal errands, and local shopping.

During this fiscal year, 12,246 rides were provided to seniors living in Lyon County.

## Independent Living Program

Provides case management and advocacy, connecting seniors with resources and services needed to live healthy and independent lives within the community. Nearly 800 seniors received services through this program.

Transportation is also offered to medical appointments in local and outlying communities. During the past year, 2,034 medical appointment rides were provided to seniors.

## Nevada Care Connection

Provides resources and information that support and assist seniors and their caregivers.

## Extended Care

Provides reimbursement for alternative living arrangements for those who are unable to live independently. Extended Care includes adult group care homes and long term care facilities.

## Accomplishments

- Developed intergenerational partnerships with the local Intermediate Schools, Student Councils, Junior City Council, Piano Club, and Teen groups
- Partnered with University of Nevada, Reno, Sanford Center for Aging to teach seniors how to access the internet, search for resources, and communicate using email
- Worked closely with the Social Security Administration to ensure many seniors, not typically eligible for income tax returns, received the 2008 Economic Stimulus Payments
- Initiated a partnership with University of Nevada, Reno, School of Social Work to design an Intern practicum for a field placement within the Department
- Implemented and upgraded computer labs in each of the Senior Centers
- Developed new community partnerships with the focus on expanding opportunities for seniors to live independent and healthy lives

## Success Story

### Independent Living Program Case Management

An 81 year old woman, living on limited Social Security income, was responsible for the care of her disabled adult son. She was struggling to make ends meet, and regularly misplaced bills, which resulted in utility disconnect notices and late rental payments. The bank account became overdrawn and they were in danger of losing their home. The Senior Center Manager referred the family to the Independent Living Program.

The Case Manager met with the mother and son to assess their needs and develop a comprehensive care plan. The Case Manager partnered with Nevada Medicaid for food stamp assistance, Social Services for immediate assistance with the disconnect notices, and with the Energy Assistance Program for payment of ongoing utility bills. Additionally, direct deposit of their Social Security checks and automatic deduction of their rent payment were set up with their bank. As a result of these resources, the mother and son were able to continue living independently in their home.

# Social Services

*“To build healthy relationships with families to enhance personal growth”*



## Community Health Support

Provides support to community health nurses in offering low-cost healthcare services. In 2008 nearly 800 patients were seen each month to receive medical care with such services as immunizations, family planning, and HIV/STD testing.

## Emergency Assistance

Provides assistance to individuals and families with such emergency needs as food, shelter, rent, utilities, gasoline, prescriptions, and emergency medical services. Over 682 families were assisted with one or more of the above services.

## Family Enhancement Program

Provides intensive case management and housing assistance for low-income families to become more self-sufficient. Sixteen families graduated from the Family Enhancement Program after at least six months of participation.

## Family to Family Connection

Provides a support system for families with children up to 48 months, offering programs focused on health, safety, support, and development. Over 350 individuals participated in Family to Family activities this year, including car seat installations, parenting classes, playgroups, and CPR/First Aid trainings.



## Accomplishments

- Partnered with the community to develop the Circles™ Initiative
- Developed transitional housing program to assist homeless persons in acquiring housing
- Partnered with Computer Corp with the “Every Home is a Classroom” program to provide computers to families through community volunteer hours
- Created a 12 week Life Skills Curriculum for teen parents
- Started a Spanish playgroup “Vamos a Jugar” for English and Spanish-speaking children
- Implemented an 8 week course titled Cooperative Parenting and Divorce to help children transition through a divorce
- Partnered with Amazon.com to distribute donated infant products to low-income families
- Partnered with Food Bank of Northern Nevada to provide food stamp outreach in each of the Lyon County communities
- Partnered with C.O.W. Bus to provide classroom space two days a week in Fernley for pre-school classes
- Fourteen “Circle Leaders” graduated from 15 week Getting Ahead sessions to begin Circles™
- Coordinated First Annual Ladies Day fundraiser to support Circles™

## Success Story

### Family Enhancement Program

A 23 year old single mother of two young children was referred to the Family Enhancement Program. Her husband had recently left the family, and with an already unstable financial situation, the family was further placed at risk of losing their home. Through her participation in the Family Enhancement Program, she found a job at a local retail store, and during the program, received three promotions, earning herself a management position. She also made monthly progress on her past debt through newly acquired budgeting skills, and was able to pay off over \$2,600 worth of debt, subsequently improving her credit score. This mom significantly increased her income; improved her credit score; purchased a reliable vehicle; improved her parenting skills, and most importantly, gained the self worth and confidence to be a strong role model for her children. Upon graduating from the program, she wrote, “I think this program is designed to help people realize they have the ability to change their life and situation.”

# Social Services

*“To build healthy relationships with families to enhance personal growth”*



## Health Care Assistance Program

Provides payment for emergency medical care and other necessary services rendered in a medical facility. This program also provides for burial/cremation.

## Family Resource Center

Provides case management, eligibility determination, and information and referral to community services. This program was instrumental in partnering with several community agencies to support such projects as holiday toy and food drives, the Bridges Out of Poverty training, the Point in Time homeless count and the Salvation Army Summer Camp.

## Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Provides supplemental nutritious foods, nutrition education, and referrals to other health and social services. WIC distributed food vouchers to over 1,038 participants providing cheese, milk, cereal, formula, and other nutritious items to low-income families.

## Circles™

Circles™ is a community-based initiative to build relationships across class and race lines to end poverty. Unlike programs that typically provide short term solutions, Circles™ focuses on building relationships to create a support system for struggling families. Through their participation, families gain the knowledge, skills, and support to make a difference in their own lives. Not only do low-income families benefit from this process, but Circles™ impacts everyone by breaking down the barriers of isolation, prejudice, and oppression, to connect the entire community.



Fourteen individuals successfully completed 15 weeks of workshops to investigate the causes of poverty, including the consequences of their personal choices and decisions and the economic and social factors that exist within their community. At the end of the workshop series, each participant had an individual plan of how they would move out of poverty. Each participant will soon be teamed up with three to five volunteers (or “allies”) within the community who will assist them in reaching their goals by supporting the family in finding practical solutions.

## Success Story Circles™

A 25 year old mother was referred to Circles™ by her landlord after noticing the mom had three children and was emotionally and financially struggling. The family could no longer afford the \$1,100 rent at their existing home and knew they had to find something more affordable. The family was extremely unstable, and feeling completely isolated with no family or friends to support them. Through her participation in the 15 week workshops for Circles™, this mom gained a significant amount of self-esteem and confidence, and she and her husband developed a new commitment for their family. Where at one time, they fought constantly and were ready to walk away, they now are committed to one another and create goals as a family unit. This mom is now a community leader and has found employment as the Fernley Community Coalition Coordinator and Youth Prevention Team Leader to help advocate for other children and families.



# Lyon County Human Services

## Community Strategic Plan



### Key Results of Strategic Planning Process

Lyon County Human Services worked diligently this year in order to implement several projects related to the community strategic plan to end poverty and addiction. The Strategic Planning Leadership Team, consisting of members from Human Services and the Healthy Communities Coalition, met every two weeks throughout the year, and actively participated in monthly Task Force meetings at the community level. The following were key results of that process:

- New mission and vision statements were developed for the department, as well as each of the three divisions
- The department was aligned with the community Strategic Plan through increased partnerships and intentional program and service delivery
- Staff at all levels actively participated in community meetings and projects associated with the Strategic Plan
- The Circles™ Initiative was developed and implemented in Fernley
- 92 public meetings, which addressed poverty and substance abuse, were held in Lyon County
- 52 articles were submitted to local newspapers to increase community awareness
- Partnerships were initiated with community organizations to develop a re-entry program
- Partnerships were established with community agencies to implement the Summer Teen Program in Fernley
- Six local Task Forces were aligned with the community strategic plan:
  - A resource bank was developed in Dayton to help children access sports, band, choir ,and other enrichment programs
  - The Fernley Community Thrift Store was opened in Fernley
  - A barter system was created in Silver City for community members to trade services and skills
  - Educational workshops, focused on self-sufficiency skills, were offered in Silver Springs
  - New community leaders in Yerington provided presentations, about poverty and addiction, to the community



### 2008 - 2009 Goals

- A reciprocal safety net will be maintained by each community
- Seniors will have opportunities for a quality, independent life
- Youth will have opportunities for positive youth development
- Poverty and barriers to substance abuse treatment will be viewed as intolerable issues
- Communities will have diversified leaders to end poverty and reduce substance abuse