

VOLUME 34 HOT SUMMER 2025

Scoops of Information & Inspiration!



DURHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES



CHIME IN

We would love to hear from you! Feel free to share celebrations, tips or suggestions. Send us a selfie, and it might make it in SCOOPS! We like recognizing friends of DCoDSS. 🍷💖🍷

To get your SCOOPS delivered to your inbox, email:

DCoDSSPublicInformation@dconc.gov

You Are Forever Young!

Our Aging & Adult Services Division held the ***Aging Gracefully Resource Fair*** on June 12th and what a time we had! Over 30 vendors, both private and public participated with our agency providing important information on aging gracefully at whatever stage they were in life. Several seminars were presented, from Caregiving and finance, to transitioning from employee to retiree benefits, exercise & fitness, Medicaid, Social Security & more! To inquire about services from our Aging & Adult Services Division, call **(919) 560-8588**

Be Cook-Out Ready with this Potato Salad!



This delicious recipe is from Chef Kolby Kash. He grew up in the kitchen with his “PawPaw”. Now from that Creole kitchen, Chef Kolby is reimagining the recipes he learned from his PawPaw and presenting them to the world. He is a former contestant on MasterChef & Top Chef Amateurs. To learn more about him visit: kolbykash.com



The Best Potatoes for Creamy Potato Salad

The type of potatoes you use makes all the difference. Here are my top picks for the best potato salad recipe:

- **Russet Potatoes:** Soft and flaky, these starchy potatoes become tender when cooked. They mash easily which is what you want for super creamy potato salad.
- **Yukon Gold Potatoes:** These sturdy potatoes keep their firm texture, even after being cooked. If you prefer a denser potato salad, opt for this.
- **Red Potatoes:** The waxy residue on these tiny potatoes helps them keep their shape. They have a slightly sweet taste and the skin is so thin, you don't have to peel it.

Creamy Potato Salad Ingredients

- **Potatoes:** I use two 8 oz russet potatoes.
- **Eggs:** I can't imagine a potato salad recipe without hard-boiled eggs. It makes the dish hearty and adds some creaminess due to the yolk.
- **Onion:** Use diced red or white onions.
- **Celery stalks:** If you like your potato salad to have a little crunch, use fresh celery.
- **Red Onion:** (Optional) adds a sweet touch and pop of color
- **Bread n Butter Pickle Relish:** This adds a sweetness that complements the other ingredients but you can use a dill pickle relish if you prefer.
- **Mayonnaise:** Aside from the potatoes themselves, this ingredient is crucial to the overall texture of the dish. Use your favorite brand.
- **Mustard BBQ Sauce:** This adds a sweet, savory, spicy quality to this recipe. If you can't get ahold of this delicious sauce, use dijon mustard or yellow mustard instead.
- **Red Wine Vinegar:** This adds dimension to the overall flavor.
- **Seasoning:** I keep it simple with sea salt and cracked black pepper to taste.
- **Garnish:** Once the potato salad is set, I top it off with smoked paprika and green onion for taste and a colorful presentation.

You can feel proud at the cookout if you bring this potato salad! #iykyk 😊

Check out Chef Kolby Kash
make his Creamy Potato
Salad Video below:

bit.ly/4llrQ7r



Prepare Potatoes

Peel and dice potatoes into ½ inch cubes. Place cut potatoes in a bowl of cool water as you cut them in order to prevent them from turning brown.

Set aside.

Boil Potatoes

In a large pot add water and bring to a boil and season the water with salt. With a slotted spoon add potatoes to the water. Boil just until the potatoes are tender to the bite but still hold their shape, about 10 minutes. Drain potatoes and let potatoes cool off.

Boil, Peel, and Dice Eggs

While the potatoes are chilling, boil and peel the eggs. Dice the egg whites up and place them into the bowl.

Mix and Mash

Stir in onions, relish, mayo, and mustard in with potatoes in a large bowl. Gently mash a few of the potatoes, while stirring to create a creamier, thickened texture. Taste again and add more salt and pepper if needed.

Garnish and Serve

Place in a casserole dish and garnish the top with paprika and chives if desired. Refrigerate and serve cool.



Stretch Your Money This Summer



Reduce household expenses

- **Optimize air conditioning usage:** Set your thermostat a few degrees higher to save on cooling costs. Even a small adjustment can make a difference.
- **Utilize fans:** Ceiling or portable fans can make a room feel cooler, allowing you to raise the thermostat setting without sacrificing comfort.
- **Close doors and vents:** In rooms that aren't being used, close the doors and vents to prevent conditioned air from escaping, increasing cooling efficiency.
- **Close blinds and curtains:** Block direct sunlight from entering your home during the hottest parts of the day to reduce heat gain and lighten the load on your AC.
- **Unplug devices:** Even when turned off, many electronics consume energy in "standby mode." Unplugging them when not in use can contribute to savings over time.

Explore affordable entertainment

- **Focus on free activities:** Look for free events like outdoor concerts, festivals, and library programs in your area. [Yelp lists top 10 free things to do near Durham, NC](#) and [Best of the Bull features 23 free things to do in Durham this summer](#).
- **Visit local parks:** Enjoy hiking, biking, picnics, and playgrounds at your local parks.
- **Explore museums and historical sites:** Many smaller museums and historical sites offer free or discounted admission days.
- **Have at-home entertainment:** Revisit hobbies, read books, or enjoy your DVD collection.



Working Quietly in the Background, While Impacting the Community



Community Social Services Assistants -CSSA's are those professionals who are the secret element of the successful implementation of our programs in Child Welfare and in Aging & Adult Services Divisions. To the left are Crystal Owens & Cecilia Owens the dynamic duo from our AAS Division. Thank you ladies for taking clients to medical & dental appointments, grocery shopping and so much MORE!

This awesome group to the right are CSSA's for our Child Welfare Division.

They provide transportation & supervise visits. They assist parents to find employment and housing and so much MORE! Thank you! Back row

L to R: Henoc Maurice, DeCorrey Jones, Erica Parker-Williams, Darius Grafton & Malcolm Toby. Front Row L to R: Derek Weatherington, Tamika Cannady, & Shequonna Cherry. Not shown: Tina Morton.



You CAN Age Gracefully!

Our Aging & Adult Services Division held their first Aging Gracefully Resource Fair, complete with over 30 vendors, seminars on Alzheimer's, Caretaking & finance, Retirement to Medicare, Long-Term Care, Food & Nutrition and MORE!



Our new friends from AARP, with DurhamSkywriter Patricia A. Murray & TikTok famous vocabulary maven "Auntie Bev" repping an AARP shirt!



Our hardworking Medicaid staff presented on Long-term care, & Contessa Sawyer promoted the Fair on ABC11

The Aging Gracefully Resource Fair Brought It!



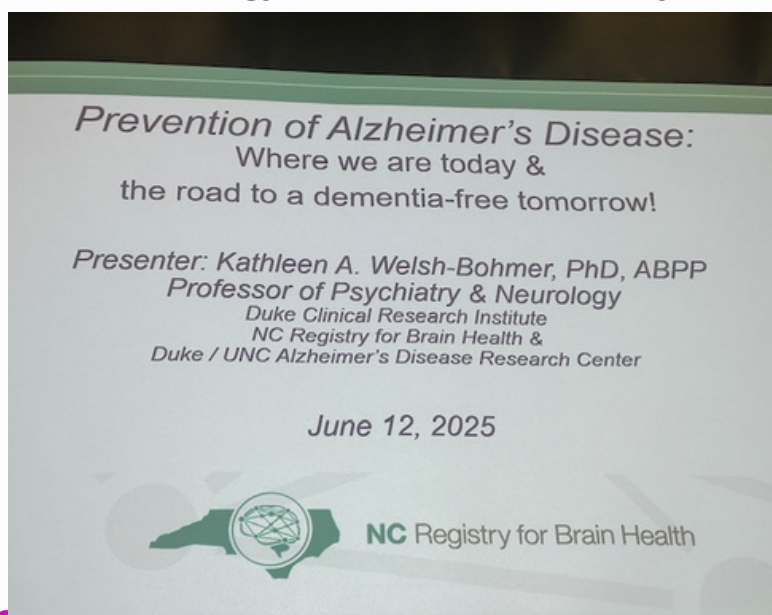
Dr. Kathleen Welsh-Boehmer gave an insightful seminar on Alzheimer's Disease. She is a professor of Psychiatry & Neurology from Duke University.



Our Director Maggie Clapp being interviewed by Jamie Price from ABC11.

At our Aging Gracefully Resource Fair we had the experts providing seminars, we gave away some wonderful door prizes, and we had some fun! It was truly a private-public sector collaboration! Special thanks to ALL of our vendors and partners who made the event a success.

Thank you to ABC11, CBS17, Spectacular Magazine, & WPTF Radio who informed the public about the Fair!



The LINKS Program Produces Success



The Durham County LINKS program works in collaboration with child welfare staff, caregivers, and community members to support teens and young adults in foster care to build independent living skills so that they can successfully transition to adulthood. This year the LINKS meetings covered topics such as teen dating violence, car maintenance, apartment hunting, college access and resume writing. The LINKS have enjoyed numerous other activities. Our Durham LINKS Youth Leadership Council has worked hard to provide feedback about LINKS programming and plan meetings and events throughout the year.



We Celebrate Success!



We are proud to celebrate 8 LINKS youth to graduate from high school this year! These graduates are acknowledged at the end of the year celebration at Frankie's Fun Park. There were plenty of games to play and go-karts to race at Frankie's. Good food and fellowship too! Board Chair Dr. Charles Mitchell & Director Maggie Clapp enjoyed the festivities as did our staff & community partners from the Life Skills Foundation. L to R: Paul Grabowski, TaQuan Lynch, Michael Convoy, Nichole Wilson & Tanza Moye.

Men Make Awesome Social Workers!



Too often, the field of social work is depicted as a “woman’s profession”. As if only women can be compassionate, empathetic, and caring. We don’t subscribe to gender stereotypes at DCoDSS. We have an awesome team of men who serve in the field of social work with honor. This photo is just a few of our great men who were available to take a group photo. We hope to see you next time Mark Deer & Cody Lallier & others!

Enjoy this article about Male Social Workers in DCo

Honoring the Men of DSS: Celebrating Male Social Workers in Durham County

March marks Social Work Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the tireless efforts of social workers who serve our communities with dedication, compassion, and resilience.

This year, Durham County Department of Social Services (DSS) is proud to shine a spotlight on a unique and often underrepresented group within the profession – the Men of DSS.

Breaking Stereotypes in a Female-Dominated Field

Social work has long been viewed as a female-dominated profession. National statistics confirm that women overwhelmingly comprise the majority of the workforce. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of 2023, approximately 83% of social workers are women, leaving men representing a modest 17% of the profession.

Despite their smaller numbers, male social workers play a critical and impactful role. Durham County DSS stands out by boasting a significantly higher representation of men across various departments, including Child Welfare Services, Foster Home Licensing, and Aging and Adult Services. These men bring unique perspectives and strengths to their roles, helping to foster trust, promote diversity, and address the complex needs of the community.

The Importance of Male Representation

Representation matters. Research has shown that the presence of male social workers can be especially influential in areas like child welfare and family services. Male social workers often serve as positive role models for young boys and male clients, helping to break cycles of generational trauma, absenteeism, and negative stereotypes.

A 2021 study published in the Journal of Social Work highlighted that male clients are more likely to engage in services when they see themselves reflected in the professionals assisting them. Furthermore, male social workers are crucial in engaging fathers in family systems, supporting male clients' mental health, and challenging societal norms around masculinity and vulnerability.





A Diverse Range of Services, A Unified Commitment

At Durham County DSS, our male social workers serve on the frontlines daily — advocating, protecting, and empowering individuals and families across the county. Whether it's conducting home visits, developing permanency plans for children, licensing foster homes, or ensuring the well-being of older adults, the men of DSS demonstrate unwavering dedication and a commitment to service.

Their work spans:

- Child Welfare Services: Ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of children.
- Foster Home Licensing: Recruiting and licensing foster families that provide stable, nurturing environments.
- Aging and Adult Services: Advocating for vulnerable adults, ensuring access to essential resources and services.

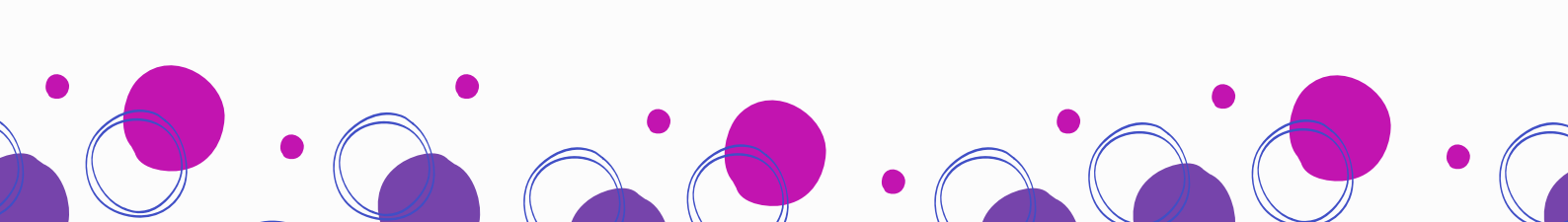
Recognizing Their Contributions

In a field where compassion, patience, and empathy are paramount, the contributions of male social workers cannot be overstated. Their presence enriches the workforce, fosters diversity, and strengthens the fabric of our social services.

Durham County DSS is honored to celebrate the Men of DSS — trailblazers who continue to challenge the status quo and uplift the community every single day. Their service is a testament to the transformative power of social work and the positive change that results when dedicated individuals, regardless of gender, come together in the pursuit of equity, justice, and well-being.

**Narrative Completed by:
Ernest M. Johson II, FSW, BS, MBA**

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Ernest Johnson A DCoDSS Star



“Ernest Johnson is my personal definition of a social worker: always helpful, a great listener, and KIND. One day Ernest stopped by my desk and I was saying how I wish I could get the male social workers to cooperate with me and take a group photo. Ernest silently went into action, emailing every male social worker in the agency to get them organized and on a schedule for the photo opp. The next thing I knew he had a bunch of affirmative replies, and the fellas came through! Of course we didn’t get 100% participation due to scheduling, but we got positive results! Thank you Ernest for listening to me, and taking action! I appreciate you more than words can say!”

Submitted by: Pamela R. Purifoy, Sr. Public Information Officer

Our FEI Division Serves the Community



The month of June is Hunger Awareness Month, and our FEI Division faithfully collects food from staff in the agency, and this year received very generous donations from grocery chains, PUBLIX and Wegman's! This year the team modified some bags of food distributed by tailoring them with pop-top cans so that the unhoused could more readily have access to their food. Our team thinks of everything!

The FEI Division: Service Leadership In Action



Our FEI team gave food away in the Human Services Bldg. lobby, the Super Compare Supermarket, and the Durham LGBTQ Center.



This year we had our DCo Public Health colleagues from the DINE program who provides nutrition education & information. We are stronger together!

Celebrating 50 Years of Child Support



Social Services



50

Years of ensuring children
have the financial and
medical resources they need!
1975-2025

Every August we recognize Child Support to bring awareness of this vital service that ensures that children receive financial support from their non custodial parents.

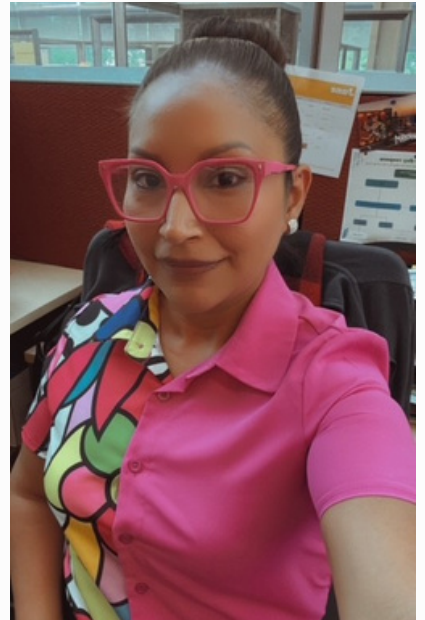
In this fiscal year 2025, our Durham County Child Support Division has collected \$14.7 million dollars providing financial stability to thousands of children.

On Monday, August 4, 2025 the Durham County Child Support agents will host “Ask An Agent” in the lobby of the Human Services Bldg. 414 E. Main St. from 9 am until 1 pm. They will have applications, information on all aspects of child support for both custodial and non custodial parents!

We celebrate **PRIDE**



Thanks Katrina & Kim!



Thanks Maria!



Thanks Ernest!



**Thanks to
Shatana, Ara ,
Shakemma,
& Christopher!**



Thanks Dana!

Durham county supports PRIDE. Durham held the first documented PRIDE parade in the state of NC. Our staff & allies are always ready to take a photo for a cause!

Where 'Dem Fans At?



We work hard, but know how to have fun too! Our director issued a Boots on the Ground challenge to other DSS's across the state! We feel that we did an excellent job! See the link below and let us know what you think. Special thanks to **Jasmine Jordan** and **Reese Weaver** for teaching the dance and coordination!

Get Social With Us!

Check out our new website!

DCONC.gov/DSS



@DcoDSS.bsky.social



@DCoDSS



/DurhamDSS



DurhamCountyDepartmentofSocialServices



Here's a picture of our leadership team issuing the Boots on the Ground Challenge! Click the link to enjoy the dance!

bit.ly/4o6mXR0