

## MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

MYTH	FACT
If I received benefits or assistance from the Department then I will not be able to become a citizen.	Food assistance programs, health insurance and daycare assistance do not affect your immigration status because they are only for eligible people – citizens, legal residents, political asylees or refugees. Only monetary assistance programs like TANF can affect your immigration status. Applying and receiving assistance from the government will not affect your immigration/legal status and/or custody of your children.
The government will take away your children and give them to other families to sell. The government receives money when they take away your children.	We believe children belong with their families. The Department receives no financial “bonus” for children in foster care. The First goal when a child enters foster care is to return the child to their biological home or to an appropriate relative. The Department receives no additional funds or bonuses when a child is placed in foster care.
If I need help with domestic violence, alcohol, drugs, financial difficulties, homelessness or mental health issues I have to find it on my own.	The Department’s employees are professionals who want to help you and your family. We will work together to find you and your family the help you need.
Parents who abuse or neglect their children are bad and unloving people. Child abusers are easy to identify.	Most parents love their children and do not mean to hurt them. They discipline their children because they want them to behave well. Many parents feel frustrated with their children’s behavior and do not know any other way to discipline them, but are open to learning ways to help their children. Child abusers look like you and me. In fact, many offenders are up-standing community citizens. Most abuse is committed by someone the victim/survivor knows and trusts.

***If your child or someone you know tells you they have been abused or neglected report it to the local department of social services. Should you, someone you know and/or love need additional assistance please do not hesitate to contact the Fredericksburg Department of Social Services, we are here to help you and the community of 22401!***

***Here are some additional contact numbers and resources for a time in need:***

<b>Fredericksburg Department of Social Services</b> Main: 540-372-1032 Intake Line to report abuse/neglect: 540-940-2401 Monday-Friday 8-4:30pm except for major holidays	<b>Fredericksburg City Police</b> 911 in event of emergency Non-emergency 540-373-3122	<b>Adult Protective Services 24/7 Hotline</b> 888-832-3858
<b>Rappahannock Area Community Services Board Crisis Emergency</b> <b>24/7</b> 540-373-6876	<b>Coordinated Assessment Line for Homelessness</b> 540-358-5801	<b>Child Protective Services 24/7 Hotline</b> 800-552-7096