

# Annual Public Report

## Implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Amendment Act of 2000 in the District of Columbia



MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE DISTRICT'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF DC ASFA



**District of Columbia Government  
Child and Family Services Agency**



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## Executive Summary

The federal Adoption and Safe Families Act, Public Law 105-89 (ASFA), was signed into law on November 19, 1997. At the time of its passage, it was the first substantive change in federal child welfare law since the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, Public Law 96-272. ASFA encouraged state child welfare agencies to achieve a balance of safety, well-being and permanency for children in foster care.

Following passage of the federal ASFA, the *District of Columbia Adoption and Safe Families Amendment Act of 2000* (DC ASFA) became District law in March of 2000. DC ASFA reinforces the service delivery requirements and best practices outlined in the federal legislation, and it requires CFSA to implement and maintain system-wide operational improvements in the District's child welfare system, leading to more positive outcomes for abused and neglected children. In accordance with the reporting requirements of the *Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) Establishment Act of April 2001*, CFSA's *2009 Annual Public Report (APR)* details the Agency's efforts to meet the requirements of DC ASFA.

Included in the report are:

- An overview of the methods of internal and external evaluation and assessment of Agency functioning. CFSA uses the findings from these various processes to determine its areas of focus to improve CFSA case practice and outcomes;
- Highlights of the Agency's DC ASFA-related accomplishments during FY 2009 and an overview of areas of focus and future strategies for FY 2010;
- Analyses of FY 2009 data related to the foster care population, placements and exits; and,
- Recommendations for potential legislation or needed services.

During FY 2009, CFSA made significant progress in a number of key program areas related to DC ASFA, including:

- Reforming permanency planning for older youth in foster care to improve outcomes;
- Providing youth in foster care with a forum to voice their insights on how best to prepare them for the transition to adulthood;
- Expanding the range of local placement options for children and youth with special needs;
- Improving and expanding agency training;
- Enhancing mental health services for children and youth in foster care;
- Accessing a new source of federal funding for guardianship subsidies;
- Improving performance on visitation; and,
- Continuing to administer the very effective Grandparent Caregiver Program.

Among the DC ASFA-related areas of focus for FY 2010 are:

- Continuing the improvements to services for older youth in foster care;
- Administering the Rapid Housing Program;
- Further expanding the existing range of local placement options for children and youth with special needs;
- Enhancing mental health services for children in foster care;
- Continuing to implement the action steps and requirements of the Child and Family Services Review;

- Continuing to Implement the provisions of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008; and,
- Reinforcing the practice improvements introduced by the Out-of-Home Practice Protocol.

CFSA's accomplishments and ability to attain its goals are, in large part, due to the active participation and continued support of stakeholders and partners including the Mayor and the District's Council as well as the children, families, and communities of the District. The Agency will continue to work closely with all partners to serve the District's most vulnerable citizens.

## Introduction

### Requirements of D.C. ASFA

1. Abused and neglected children shall have case plans that are reviewed periodically to determine safety and progress toward achieving permanence.
2. Reasonable efforts are made to reunify children with their families, unless contrary to the child's safety.
3. Reports of abuse and neglect are expeditiously investigated, and appropriate action is taken.
4. Families of abused and neglected children are provided the necessary services to ameliorate problems and, when possible, to reunify children with their families.
5. If family preservation or reunification services are unsuccessful, quick action is taken to implement a permanency plan of adoption or another appropriate alternative planned permanent placement.
6. Criminal records checks are performed for all individuals seeking approval or licensure as kinship caregivers, foster or adoptive parents, or legal guardians.
7. Administrative reviews and permanency hearings are held in a timely manner for all children adjudicated as neglected.
8. Notice and Opportunity to be Heard in neglect and parental termination cases is provided to certain individuals.
9. Procedures related to interstate adoptions and medical assistance are established.

The federal Adoption and Safe Families Act, Public Law 105-89 (ASFA) was signed into law on November 19, 1997. At the time of its passage, it was the first substantive change in federal child welfare law since the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, Public Law 96-272.

ASFA encouraged state child welfare agencies to achieve a balance of safety, well-being and permanency for children in foster care. Through its requirements, and the federal funding that is tied to District compliance with those requirements, ASFA promotes safety and permanency for children who are alleged or determined to be abused and neglected, and it intends to ensure that children do not languish in out-of-home placements. Ultimately, ASFA's intent is to ensure that children in foster care are moved swiftly to either reunite with a parent or move to a permanent alternative living situation.

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CFSA utilizes formal reports and programmatic assessments that internal and external stakeholders publish periodically to take a close look at its own operations. These quantitative and qualitative assessments provide the Agency with an effective feedback loop and they regularly provide senior management with insight into the needs of CFSA's service population as well as the strengths and challenges of system-wide case practice. Findings and recommendations from these processes assist CFSA to develop sound policy and implement best case practices to better serve children and families.

In addition to program evaluations, statistical analyses of cases help to frame the Agency's accomplishments and challenges with respect to DC ASFA implementation. The APR provides highlights and trends revealed by the statistical analyses of foster care cases. As is required in statute, the analyses break down the number of children who entered and exited care during the year across various criteria.

Legislative support from the Council is essential to assist CFSA in its efforts to best serve those who become involved with the District's child welfare system. The Agency's legislative agenda details specific items of importance for clients and stakeholders. CFSA works closely with the Council and the Executive Office of the Mayor to ensure that each item on the agenda is given consideration by local lawmakers.

## 1: Evaluation of CFSA Services to Children and Families

Annually, CFSA uses findings from internal and external evaluations of services and processes to develop or amend policy and to improve Agency operations and practice. During FY 2009, CFSA's evaluation of services to children and families explored accomplishments and challenges during the year from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective.

In FY 2009, CFSA combined a number of its internal quality improvement evaluations into a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan. Published in June 2009, CFSA's CQI Plan describes CFSA's regular CQI activities as well as numerous other studies and special review activities employed by the Agency to assist with "analyzing and improving the quality of [CFSA's] practice and operations through a consistent and structured review of all program areas."<sup>1</sup> These activities that make up the CQI Plan are detailed below individually.

### Methods of Assessment and Evaluation

The following evaluative processes during FY 2009 gave Agency management insight into the needs of CFSA's service population as well as the strengths and challenges of system-wide case practice:

- Administrative Review
- DC ChildStat
- Quality Service Review
- Child Fatality Review
- Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)
- Resource Development Plan
- Court Monitor's Report

Findings and recommendations from these evaluative processes assist CFSA to develop sound policy and to implement best case practice protocols to better serve children and families.

### Administrative Review

The Administrative Review is the Agency's primary case practice review. It assesses CFSA's (and/or its private agency partners') overall progress in achieving case goals at regular intervals throughout the duration of a child's placement in foster care. The initial Administrative Review occurs 150 days after a child has been placed into foster care. They continue to be held once every six months thereafter for the remainder of the child's stay in foster care. Each review examines child and family well-being indicators, focuses on permanence for children, identifies emerging issues, triggers timely responses from program management staff, reexamines Agency performance and progress, and affords the direct service staff involved with the case an independent assessment of the case progress. Because various stakeholders are invited to participate in the process, the Administrative Review also provides a forum to allow all participants voice opinions and concerns, and to reach agreement on recommendations for future plans to ensure the child's permanency. The Administrative Reviews provide

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<sup>1</sup> "Protecting our Children and Families in the District of Columbia." D.C. Government Child and Family Services Agency, 2009 Comprehensive Quality Improvement Plan, p. 3.

an ongoing opportunity to assess whether children, youth, families and foster families are receiving the services and supports they need, and it is a dependable mechanism for tracking achievement of necessary action steps toward permanency.

The Administrative Review process is an effective quality management vehicle. Therefore, CFSA periodically integrates special review projects into its framework to assess Agency operations on specific initiatives. Among those undertaken in FY 2009:

- CFSA conducted an enhanced Administrative Review of 600 cases of youth with a goal of APPLA. An overview of the process and results of this review is included later in this report on page 13.
- In September 2009, Administrative Review staff launched a Fathers Participation Enhancement Project which located 26 additional fathers whose information was initially missing or incomplete and were able to be invited to the Administrative Reviews. During the scheduling of Administrative Review meetings, staff continue to reach out and engage fathers to encourage participation in decision-making for their children. The initiative dovetails with CFSA's federal Program Improvement Plan (PIP) requirement to improve family engagement in case planning, especially with respect to fathers and paternal kin.

### **DC ChildStat**

The DC ChildStat is a regular senior staff meeting at which participants explore case practice through the intensive review of individual cases open with CFSA. The DC ChildStat promotes open and frank discussion and provides an opportunity for direct staff to learn from others in the room, and to inform administrators and senior management of issues affecting daily practice. This macro case review process looks at both system and practice issues by reviewing a case in the context of agency performance and critically looking at how decisions are made, what promotes effective-decision making and what components of the system need improvement.

The process occurs continuously throughout the year. Cases are selected using a stratified random sampling process from all CFSA administrations and private agencies. Each month, one private agency and one CFSA-managed case are reviewed in this manner. The case management team, consisting of the social worker, supervisor, program manager (or equivalent) and other persons critical to the case, makes a written and verbal presentation on the case. The presentation is followed by a discussion of case practice issues, obstacles to permanency, systemic barriers and other related issues.

### **Quality Service Review (QSR)**

The QSR is a case-specific review process whereby trained specialists and their peers provide a consistent and standardized analysis of case practice on selected cases. QSR specialists utilize a uniform review tool to rate child and family status and agency performance on specific process and outcome measures. Over the course of two days, pairs of reviewers go through the case record and interview as many stakeholders and case participants as possible, beginning with the social worker and including the child, birth parent(s), caregiver(s), guardian ad litem, family members, school staff, service providers, and other stakeholders. Reviewers rate the case using the uniform review



tool and then conduct a debriefing with the social worker and supervisor to share case practice strengths and/or challenges, and to identify immediate next steps regarding the case. For each case in the sample, reviewers write a narrative or “case story” that highlights effective case practices and areas in need of improvement.

As in FY 2008, the QSR/Case Practice Unit continues to conduct unit-based QSRs. The unit-based approach is more inclusive of supervisors and social workers. One major benefit is that social work staff receives immediate feedback on case practice issues. Two months after the review, QSR specialists return to evaluate the extent to which the case management team implemented practice improvement recommendations resulting from the QSR review. One new element introduced in 2009 has been the increased involvement of program managers, who are responsible for overseeing the response to the QSR and ensuring that next steps are implemented.

In March 2008, the QSR unit partnered with the Department of Mental Health to participate in their Consumer Service Reviews (CSR’s) and collect QSR data. These data became part of the aggregate QSR data and were incorporated in the annual findings report at the end of year 2008. This partnership was repeated in March 2009, and reflects the agencies’ shared interest in sharing resources and maximizing the impact that they have on families in need.

### **Child Fatality Review**

CFSA internally reviews all deaths of District residents under the age of 21 where the Agency had contact with the child or the child’s family within the previous four years. The term “contact” includes (1) current, active cases; (2) cases active within the past four years, but now closed; and (3) reports to CFSA’s 24-hour abuse/neglect hotline that were investigated and determined to be unfounded (i.e., the report was made maliciously, in bad faith, or had no basis in fact).

Every month, the Agency conducts an Internal Child Fatality Review meeting. A multidisciplinary panel of representatives from CFSA (Training Services, Office of Clinical Practice, Office of Planning, Policy, and Program Support (OPPPS), Program Operations, Quality Assurance, and Office of the Attorney General) and external stakeholders (Center for the Study of Social Policy, citywide Child Fatality Review Committee (CFRC), and the community) reviews child welfare involvement with the child and family, identifies issues, and recommends immediate actions and long-term strategies for improving case practice, enhancing child protection, and minimizing preventable deaths. CFSA’s Child Fatality Review Unit collects and reviews these recommendations and suggestions. A special committee consisting of CFRU staff and representatives from other programs within the agency reviews and prioritizes these recommendations on a quarterly basis, and forwards them to relevant administrators and staff for follow-up.

In January 2009, CFSA completed and published *Child Fatality Report-Statistics, Analyses, and Recommendations* which includes analysis of FY 2007 child fatality data to identify trends related to children and families known to the child welfare system.

Highlights of findings from this report include:

- No child known to CFSA died due to abuse by a parent or caregiver in 2006 or 2007.

- Both the number and percentage of children known to CFSA who died declined sharply compared to 2006.
- Accidental deaths of children known to CFSA declined for the fourth straight year.
- The number of children known to CFSA who died as a result of co-sleeping incidents did not change from 2006.

The report noted that CFSA Internal Child Fatality Review Committee reviewed a total of 64 child fatality cases (41 from 2007 and 23 later reports from earlier years) and made recommendations across various program and operational areas where CFSA needed to focus attention, such as Case Practice, Training, Policy, and Overall System.

### **Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)**

The CFSR is an extensive federal evaluation process of the entire spectrum of CFSA's program operations. The cyclical CFSR process begins with a comprehensive Self Assessment whereby the Agency reports to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on its progress implementing the various requirements and provisions of Titles IV-E and IV-B of the Social Security Act. CFSA completed its last Self Assessment in January 2007. It continues with the CFSR On-Site review, whereby a team of federal reviewers conducts an intensive review of a sample of CFSA foster care and in-home cases to evaluate its overall functioning. The last On-Site Review occurred in June 2007. The process concludes with the Program Improvement Plan, whereby CFSA sets out a series of action steps to address any programmatic areas in need of improvement highlighted by federal reviewers during the first two aspects of the CFSR process.

In January 2009, CFSA received federal approval for its CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP), which outlines achievable benchmarks and goals for practice improvement and enhanced child and family outcomes across the entire child welfare continuum. The PIP is a partnership with the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF), and it introduces increased accountability for the entire system by tying financial support and penalties to performance.

Three of the PIP's central themes are directly related to the requirements and provisions of DC ASFA: Engaging Families and Kin in Case Planning, Achieving Permanency, and Improving Educational Outcomes. Within these PIP themes, CFSA prescribes a series of benchmarks and action steps that must be achieved within the two-year PIP period. The Agency submits quarterly progress reports to ACF to demonstrate its progress on each action step, benchmark, and theme. CFSA has submitted three quarterly reports to ACF. Among the achievements highlighted in those reports are the following:

#### *Engaging Families and Kin in Case Planning*

With the intent of improving its efforts and processes to engage family members who have been historically absent from or uninvolved with the case planning process, CFSA formalized guidance for social workers to:

- conduct diligent searches for absent parents or family members;
- appropriately engage incarcerated parents; and,
- appropriately and sensitively engage victims and/or perpetrators of domestic violence.

Moving forward into the PIP period, CFSA will be strengthening policy and practice with respect to engaging the family members of CFSA “legacy cases”, which involve children who have essentially grown up in foster care and who may have had limited contact with family members during their stay in foster care.

### *Improving In-Home Services*

CFSA social workers and supervisors have co-located with the Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives, to provide intensive services to children and families in the communities where they live. This co-location initiative means better accessibility for both clients and workers, which improves visitation and accountability and leads to better outcomes for families.

### *Improving Educational Outcomes*

Educational needs are a critical indicator of a child’s well being; it is therefore important to look at educational performance for children on an ongoing basis. One way the Agency addresses educational needs is through the development of Education Assessments for in-home and out-of-home cases, a strategic tool for obtaining essential information on a child’s educational needs and progress. During the PIP period, CFSA further developed these comprehensive tools and formalized guidance for social workers as to how and when to use it on behalf of children in foster care as well as in-home cases.

## **Resource Development Plan**

The *2009 Resource Development Plan (RDP)* is not an evaluative document in and of itself. Rather, it is designed to inform CFSA and its stakeholders of the 2008 RDP progress to-date, as well as hold all stakeholders accountable for the continued implementation of action steps that address the critical areas highlighted in the *2007 Needs Assessment*. On an annual basis, the RDP updates are completed in the context of the significant tasks the Agency is committed to achieving, for example:

- Development of the Agency’s Strategic Plan;
- Implementation of the federally-approved CFR Performance Improvement Plan;
- Implementation of the Partnership for Community-Based Services;
- Implementation of the Human Care Agreement process for soliciting foster care placement services; and,
- Completion of the bi-annual (2009) Needs Assessment.

CFSA’s approach to service delivery continues to emphasize strengthening those services and operations that are already in place, identifying additional service and resource requirements, and developing and implementing strategies to better meet the needs of the children and families who enter into, or who are at-risk of entering the District’s child welfare system. Following up on the findings of the ChildStat, the Quality Service Reviews, and especially the Needs Assessment, the RDP outlines and supports the Agency’s ongoing efforts to provide the range of services and resources that will best meet the needs of its service population.

## **Court Monitor's Reports**

CFSA's Court Appointed Monitor, the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP), publishes periodic reports and assessments, either on specific elements of service delivery or on the Agency's general performance across the entire spectrum of child welfare services. CSSP's critical eye and insight provide CFSA leadership with valuable input in its effort to improve agency practice, operations, and performance.

In April 2009, CSSP published *An Assessment of the District of Columbia's Child Welfare System (as of January 31, 2009)*. The report outlined CFSA's accomplishments and areas of need with respect to the performance benchmarks and expected outcomes of the LaShawn A. v. Fenty Amended Implementation Plan (AIP). The report highlighted the progress that CFSA made at the end of 2008 and into 2009 as it emerged from an investigations crisis stemming from the Jacks/Fogle tragedy of January 2008.

CSSP noted that under the direction of Dr. Roque R. Gerald, CFSA had stabilized from the crisis of 2008 and was moving in the right direction in several key areas. At the same time, CSSP noted that the Agency had much work to do in the DC ASFA-related areas of mental health services for children in foster care, placement stability for children in foster care, and timely achievement of permanency, all of which are areas of focus for CFSA into FY 2010.

## 2: Agency Accomplishments in FY 2009

During FY 2009, CFSA made significant progress in a number of key program and administrative areas. Its achievements reflect the Agency's stability, maturity, and momentum following the child investigations crisis that occurred in FY 2008, the impact of which continued into FY 2009. Among the notable achievements of the year:

- CFSA met all of the required benchmarks of the LaShawn 90-Day Stipulation Order;
- An effective top leadership team is fully in place;
- The vacancy rate for case-carrying social workers remains low;
- The Agency improved performance in ensuring initial health screenings, Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) examinations, and dental exams for all children and youth entering foster care; and,
- CFSA's Child Protective Services (CPS) Administration kept the investigations backlog in low double digits throughout the year.

Beyond the accomplishments highlighted above, CFSA also made considerable progress in addressing (and further implementing) the requirements of DC ASFA to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in out-of-home care. In the paragraphs below, CFSA outlines the accomplishments from FY 2009 that specifically touch upon the provisions and requirements of DC ASFA.

### ***CFSA implemented significant and far-reaching reforms to improve permanency outcomes for older youth in foster care.***

Federal reviewers noted during the June 2007 CFSR that there were various instances where a youth's permanency goal of Alternative Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) appeared to be inappropriate given the circumstances of the case. In FY 2009, CFSA leadership embarked on a series of action steps to address the APPLA goal issue specifically, and to improve permanency outcomes generally for older youth in foster care.

#### ***New Policy and Protocol on APPLA Goal-Setting***

Recognizing that too many youth in care had a goal of APPLA, in October 2008, the Director promulgated a new Administrative Issuance affirming APPLA as the permanency goal of "last resort" and prescribing a series of circumstances that must occur before the agency takes action to change any youth's goal to APPLA. The Administrative Issuance was expanded into formal Agency policy in June 2009. This policy, which has been incorporated into the newly developed Out-of-Home Practice Protocol, instills a uniform case practice (and case planning) standard to which all social workers must adhere. It requires social workers to document their efforts to affect the outcomes of reunification, guardianship, or adoption before recommending a goal change to APPLA, and it requires the approval and signature of the Director in every instance of a recommended goal change to APPLA.

#### ***Special APPLA Review***

While the APPLA Administrative Issuance and subsequent policy publication addressed the issue of prospective goal changes to APPLA, CFSA embarked on a concurrent

initiative to review the cases of youth in foster care who already had a goal of APPLA. The Agency was charged with completing 600 reviews of cases with a goal of APPLA between January 1<sup>st</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup> (2009). The purpose of these reviews was to actively involve youth and families in assessing legal permanency options (adoption, guardianship, and reunification) and to collaboratively pinpoint next steps to identifying and securing permanent, legal relationships for youth and children that have a permanency goal of APPLA. The ultimate objective is to reduce the number of youth who age out of care at age 21 without achieving permanency.

The Administrative Review Specialists led this massive effort and as of June 30, 2009, the Specialists had successfully completed work plans for 615 APPLA Reviews, all of which resulted in recommendations and action steps toward permanency that were to be revisited with the social worker at the next review. As a direct result of implementation of the new APPLA goal plan policy and the special APPLA review, by the end of FY 2009, CFSA reduced the number of youth in care with a goal of APPLA from 38% to 33%.

Following the success of the special APPLA review project, CFSA began integrating the APPLA review process into standard case practice so that cases can be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis, and so that permanency can be achieved in a timely manner for these cases. The new APPLA review protocol assigns specific responsibilities to Administrative Review and program staff and builds in accountability measures to ensure timely action and follow-up on all APPLA review recommendations.

***CFSA committed to give youth in foster care a voice in determining how to best transition to independent living and adulthood.***

Giving youth a voice in determining their own case goals and action steps reinforces personal accountability in case planning and leads to improvements in case-specific outcomes. Moreover, recent studies also assert that child welfare systems should partner with youth and solicit their input to make improvements in systemic approaches to working with older youth in foster care.<sup>2</sup>

In FY 2009, CFSA committed to providing youth a forum and venue to voice their concerns (at both the case-specific level as well as the macro level) and to utilizing youth's feedback and insights to strengthen programs and services.

***Youth Voice at the Case Level***

In FY 2009, CFSA integrated the Listening to Youth and Families as Experts (LYFE) Conferences into its case practice. The LYFE conference is a key process step before a youth's permanency goal can be changed to APPLA. LYFE conferences bring together the youth, family and kin, social workers and supervisors, and a trained facilitator at a critical juncture in the youth's case. The youth personally identifies key family members who are then invited to the meeting. During the conference, facilitation is designed to let the youth play an active role in decision-making by identifying his/her strengths, communicating his/her needs, discussing his/her family's strengths and needs, framing permanency options, and determining action steps to achieve desired outcomes. If it is

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<sup>2</sup>“Partnering with Youth: Involving Youth in Child Welfare Training and Curriculum Development”. Morse, Joan. 2003. <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/rcpdfs/partneringguide.pdf>

determined during the conference that APPLA is the most appropriate course of action, then a recommendation for such a change will be sent to the Director's office for approval. One of the key outcomes of LYFE conferences is achieving consensus among the youth and family members as to the youth's skills, and laying out a formal roadmap and framework for the Individual Transitional Independent Living Plan with assigned roles and responsibilities for key stakeholders.

The LYFE conferences mark the beginning of a new continuum for the youth, whereby subsequent independence-focused family involved meetings occur and the Youth Transition Plan is formally established. Following the LYFE conference, social workers hold the youth, the family, and other collaterals accountable to the agreements of the LYFE conference by facilitating periodic family-initiated meetings to discuss the progress of all stakeholders vis a vis the agreed upon action steps and services.

When the youth turns 20 years old, formal Youth Transition Conferences occur. These Conferences provide a forum for the youth to make known his/her individual concerns about moving on to independence, and it promotes open dialogue with other stakeholders in the case (family, friends, community-members, service providers) to develop and enhance the Youth Transition Plan, when necessary, or to refocus the youth on his/her goals, as appropriate. In FY 2009, CFSA held 355 Youth Transition Conferences for youth who were preparing to age out of foster care.

Beginning in FY 2010, CFSA is implementing the Youth Transition Conference model for youth soon after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. This allows more time for the youth and key stakeholders to understand the complexities of the youth's upcoming transition, and extend the time available for them to gather the skills necessary to live self-sufficiently and independently following exit from the foster care system.

### ***Youth Voice at the Macro Level***

In FY 2009, the Director committed to making sure that youth are regular participants in the CFSA's ongoing programmatic review and planning efforts.

- CFSA's 2009 Needs Assessment included youth focus groups to gain insight on the strengths and challenges for CFSA-involved youth, and to identify specific areas of need. Their participation and feedback is integral to the Agency's ongoing self-assessment and program improvement efforts.
- Approximately forty-five youth comprise CFSA's Youth Leadership Council where they receive leadership skills training. The YLC elects officers to participate on the CFSA Director's Youth Advisory Board, which provides feedback and recommendations on program planning to the Office of Youth Empowerment<sup>3</sup>. In September 2009, Dr. Gerald committed to meeting directly with the Youth Advisory Board to discuss concerns on youth services.
- Two members of the Youth Leadership Council participate on the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council, which provides direct feedback to the Mayor for macro-level planning purposes on issues pertaining to all District youth.

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<sup>3</sup> Formerly the Office of Youth Development (OYD).

- In May 2009, the District's 2<sup>nd</sup> Youth Permanency Convening brought together current and former foster care youth, representatives from the public sector, business leaders, the faith community, non-profits and community child advocates to provide recommendations regarding achieving permanency for older youth in foster care. The all-day conference focused on such issues as education, community safety, housing and providing services and permanent connections for youth who are exiting foster care. CFSA will continue to host the bi-annual event to further the discussion of issues and barriers to permanency faced by youth in foster care and to work to improve youth permanency outcomes for District youth in foster care.

***CFSA expanded the range of local placement options capable of serving children and youth with special needs.***

The expansion of placement resources has been a consistent area of focus and emphasis for CFSA over the past year, and it will remain an area of focus into FY 2010. The Agency's 2007 Needs Assessment indicated that the shifting demographic of children in foster care (toward a generally older population) would lead to a modest increase in the need for specialized and/or congregate care placements, and for emergency placements, barring any mitigating actions to reduce entries into care or support youth in family-like settings.

To address this emerging issue, CFSA has developed and expanded a cadre of placement services directed toward children in foster care who have a higher level of need than can be addressed by traditional family-based providers. The descriptions of the programs enumerated below reflect utilization as of September 30, 2009.

***Stabilization and Respite (ST\*A\*R) Homes***

ST\*A\*R homes provide around-the-clock placement capability for any child or youth who is medically cleared for placement and not in need of acute psychiatric services. ST\*A\*R homes provide placement following initial home removals, placement disruptions, returns from abscondence, and/or other circumstances where a child may require emergency assistance. The program is designed to serve children and youth of any age, but most children in ST\*A\*R beds are teenagers. The ST\*A\*R Program also provides 5- to 10-day emergency placements in a family setting for children who come into placement after regular work hours (with the average stay being 7 days). During this time, services and resources are put into place to facilitate a smooth transition into an appropriate foster home. The first ST\*A\*R home opened in August 2006. As of the end of FY 2009, CFSA has 18 ST\*A\*R beds (3 of which were added in FY 2009) throughout the District. Moving into FY 2010, the Agency will maintain 18 to 21 ST\*A\*R slots.

***Placements for Medically Fragile and Developmentally-Delayed***

To address the particular needs of medically fragile (MF) and/or developmentally delayed (DD) children in need of placement, the Agency has 35 available MF/DD beds. These family-based caretakers are specially trained and equipped to deal with the sensitive and complex needs of medically fragile children. CFSA also contracts for 51 congregate care slots (five of which are designated for medically fragile while the remaining 46 are for children with developmental disabilities) for those children whose needs are too acute for family-based care.



### ***Teen Bridge Program***

The *Teen Bridge Program* is designed to serve teens in need of support and assistance to prepare for independence but who are not ready for traditional Independent Living Programs (ILPs). The program bridges the gap between ILPs and traditional group homes. It is staffed by trained workers who are familiar with the particular needs and challenges of the residents. Typically, residents had behavioral issues in previous placements, and most have been in foster care for years. Many tried traditional ILP placements and did not adjust well to the lack of structure. The program has proven highly effective at stabilizing volatile placement situations. The program started as a pilot for females in FY 2007, expanded to males in FY 2008, and increased capacity for both populations in FY 2009. The Teen Bridge Program has 18 slots (12 for females and 6 for male youth), with plans to add another 6 slots for males during FY 2010.

### ***Teen Parent Program***

As of September 2009, CFSA maintains 72 contracted slots for adolescent mothers and their children through its contracted *Teen Parent Program*. The Teen Parent Program providers work with CFSA social workers on achieving sustainable safety, permanency and well-being for these young mothers as well as their children. In FY 2010, CFSA will expand the capacity of the Teen Parent Program to 95 slots.

### ***Placements for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth***

CFSA expanded capacity within the family-based foster care model to address the particular needs of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) population by adding a foster home that accepts up to 3 cross-dressing males.

### ***Mockingbird Family Model Project***

The Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) Project is an “extended family” support model for CFSA resource parents based on Seattle’s MFM. The program is designed to increase quality support and respite services for resource parents, and to further secure the permanency, well-being and safety of children. Under this model, a “constellation” is formed out of a cluster of five (5) to ten (10) resource homes or “satellites”, each of which may house one or two children or youth in foster care. In each constellation, the parents in one central resource home (the “Hub home”) are responsible for providing various support services to the satellite parents and the foster children in their care. The MFM provides foster children with a sense of safety and well-being while they form supportive relationships with caring adults who can both nurture and protect them outside of their immediate placement.

As of September 2009, CFSA has four fully operational Mockingbird constellations, with plans to add two more constellations in FY 2010.

***CFSA expanded the breadth of its training to improve social worker recruitment and retention, to increase awareness of abuse and neglect issues in the community, and to diversify competencies for social workers.***

The June 2007 CFSR noted that CFSA's training operation was a systemic strength. In 2009 the Agency built upon that strong foundation to enhance the transfer and reinforcement of knowledge. OTS has focused on two critical areas to support overall practice improvement over the past year, and they are outlined in the sections below.

### ***Student Training and Education-to-Practice (STEP) Program***

In January 2009, the STEP Program began educating its first cohort of social work students. The program is a partnership with three area universities (Howard University, Catholic University, and the University of the District of Columbia) to offer a Title IV-E funded Master of Social Work program. In exchange for a two-year work commitment, CFSA funds the degree program for qualified candidates. The program is designed to:

- Encourage highly qualified students to pursue careers in public child welfare;
- Develop core competencies to offer quality child welfare and social work services;
- Increase CFSA's capacity to serve a diverse population through educating program participants to serve and advocate in a culturally competent manner;
- Enhance retention rates for program graduates once they are employed at CFSA or one of its partner agencies;
- Serve as a source for long-term recruitment of social work students for the participating universities and a hiring source for qualified social work professionals for CFSA and its partner agencies; and,
- Bridge knowledge, skills, and direct practice in the area of child welfare among the local schools of Social Work and CFSA.

At the end of FY 2009, there were 19 students enrolled in the program.

### ***Mandated Reporter Training***

To ensure that CFSA employees and other members of the general public are equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect and to make a report when appropriate, CFSA rolled out a new online training at <http://dc.mandatedreporter.org>. This online course reaches many more people than can access the classroom trainings formerly offered by CFSA's Office of Training Services, usually in response to inquiries for such training from the community. The online training allows any interested parties to receive all the relevant information on mandated reporting. Because CFSA relies heavily on reports to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (202-671-SAFE) to find out about children and youth who may be at risk, every mandated reporter or other community member who takes the training strengthens the local safety net.

### ***Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth***

CFSA serves a number of children and youth that self-identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning (LGBTQ). Over the past two years, community-based partners have provided training to foster parents; the Agency's comprehensive curriculum will standardize the training being provided to both social workers and providers. In March, a two-day "train the trainers" session focused on using the trainer's guide, power point and providing training tips and strategies to improve the transfer of learning from the classroom into practice. In May, CFSA sponsored in-service training

for CFSA and private agency social workers on competencies for working with LGBTQ youth.

***CFSA and its District partners made significant progress implementing the multi-year mental health services plan to address the particular needs of children in foster care.***

CFSA and the District's Department of Mental Health (DMH) developed a multi-year plan to build the District's capacity to effectively meet the mental health needs of children and youth in foster care. The plan integrates action steps to expand the repertoire of available services, targets increasing reimbursement rates to ensure appropriate service compensation, and expands the number of potential service providers through provider requirements, training and incentives.

During year one of the Plan (FY 2008), CFSA and DMH assessed the array of existing services to determine the extent to which they met the needs of the population they served. In year two (FY 2009) the following services were implemented:

- Crisis Mobile Response: Services are immediately put into place to stabilize a child's in-home living situation or foster home placement to prevent a placement change. In the event that the child needs to be removed, 4 Crisis Beds are available for short-term, emergency placement.
- Choice Providers: Through contracts with DMH, providers have formed a dedicated network of mental health providers to provide diagnostic, assessment, and therapy services to CFSA clients and parents in D.C. and Maryland.
- DMH Assessment Center: CFSA and DMH made psychiatric, psychological, neuropsychological, and psycho-educational assessments available for CFSA youth at the Assessment Center.
- Co-located staff: DMH clinicians co-located at CFSA perform mental health status examinations of children and youth entering CFSA's care and custody.
- Community-Based Wraparound Services: Youth at risk for placement in a Residential Treatment Center or who have experienced multiple placement disruptions, receive community-based interventions to prevent the need for more restrictive placements.
- Family-Based Education and Support Services: CFSA contracted with Total Family Care Coalition (TFCC) to provide this service.

In addition to the above, rate increases for counseling/therapy and medication management services went into effect in November 2008, which allows providers more flexibility in hiring additional full-time therapists, reducing turnover and enhancing continuity of service for the children, youth, and families on CFSA's caseload.

***CFSA made program and systems improvements to take advantage of federal funding opportunities afforded by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.***

Prior to passage of the *Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008*, the District funded guardianship subsidies exclusively with local dollars. However, in March 2009, CFSA updated its Title IV-E State Plan to demonstrate its compliance with the requirements of the new Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP), and to take advantage of newly available federal reimbursement for

guardianship subsidies. The State Plan Amendment is currently under review at the Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families.

For guardianships finalized after January 1, 2009, CFSA now performs Title IV-E eligibility determinations to maximize federal reimbursement for children who meet the eligibility requirements. Following federal approval of the IV-E State Plan Amendment, CFSA will begin to claim federal reimbursement for eligible children. The subsidy continues until the child leaves the home or reaches age 18. The District is looking forward to moving ahead with this new federal partnership, which will allow CFSA to make greater use of limited local dollars to provide guardianship subsidy services.

***CFSA improved its performance in child/worker, child/parent, and separated sibling visitation for children in foster care<sup>4</sup>.***

In FY 2009, CFSA continued to make practice improvements regarding visitation.

***Child/Worker Visitation***

Social workers are required to personally visit all children in foster care at least two times monthly, and at least one of these visits is to occur in the home. In FY 2007, an average of 76% of children in foster care received at least two visits from their CFSA or private agency social worker (92% had one visit). During FY 2008, the percentage receiving two visits grew to 87% (and 91% received one visit). In FY 2009, this percentage grew once again, with an average of 89% of children in foster care receiving twice monthly visits (while an average of 92% received at least one visit).

***Child/Parent Visitation***

During FY 2008, an average of 39% of children in foster care (with a goal of reunification) had weekly visits with their parent(s), and 67% had monthly visits<sup>5</sup>. During FY 2009, an average of 50% of children in care had weekly visits, and 74% had at least monthly visits. It is also important to note that toward the end of FY 2009, CFSA's performance on this measure trended upward, and the Agency intends to build upon this momentum in the coming year.

***Sibling Visitation***

At the end of FY 2008, an average of 59% of children in foster care whose siblings were also in care, but in different placements, experienced twice monthly visitation (71% had one monthly visit). During FY 2009, an average of 66% of these children had twice monthly visits with their siblings (and 78% had one monthly visit). CFSA makes efforts to assign the same social worker to siblings whenever possible, which facilitates visitation for siblings placed apart.

***Grandparent Caregiver Program (GCP)***

The District's kinship care system has also been strengthened through the *Grandparent Caregivers Pilot Program Establishment Act of 2005*, which became effective on March

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<sup>4</sup> These data and percentages are not reflective of federal caseworker visitation requirements, but rather CFSA data depicting visitation from month-to-month.

<sup>5</sup> Excluded from this calculation are children/youth whose visits with parents have been suspended by court order.

8, 2006. When parents are unavailable to take care of their children, grandparents often step in. The Grandparent Caregivers Program provides monthly financial assistance to low-income grandparents and other relatives residing in the District of Columbia who are raising grandchildren, great grandchildren, or great nieces or nephews outside the child welfare system. This financial assistance enhances the stability of the child's placement in a capable, familiar, and loving home, and reduces the likelihood of the family's involvement with the child welfare system.

In FY 2007, CFSA received \$4.5 million in local dollars to fund the program, and the FY 2010 budget is approximately \$5.5 million. As of September 30, 2009, the program was running at capacity with 337 families and 521 children, which includes 101 children newly enrolled during this year. The waiting list has 88 families and 144 children.

#### ***Continue the improvements to service delivery for older youth in foster care.***

In FY 2010, CFSA's Office of Youth Empowerment (OYE), including the Center of Keys for Life (CKL) program, will complete reform of its organizational structure and service delivery model. The newly formed OYE moves away to a great extent from the case-carrying model. In the near term, OYE social workers will maintain case management responsibility for some youth between the ages of 18 and 21 who have a goal of APPLA. However, OYE social workers will also serve as consulting partners with ongoing social workers for youth. It is an integrated approach intended to reach and positively impact a greater number of youth than the former structure, and to reduce the number of youth who require a goal of APPLA. OYE social workers will develop and administer an array of services that social workers and youth can access in support of permanence, well being, and mastery of life skills.

In FY 2009, CFSA-involved youth played a key role in the program redesign, beginning with a "listening tour" conducted during the summer by a group of teens. The findings from this activity, which highlighted youth needs and preferences, have influenced CFSA plans and actions. Feedback from the youth will play an integral role in shaping OYE.

The goals of the OYE service delivery redesign are:

- improved engagement of youth in skills development programs and permanency planning;
- strong partnership between OYE staff and case carrying social workers (both within CFSA and in the private agencies) to move older youth to permanency while promoting a full complement of life skills; and,
- establishment of a service and consultative resource for case-carrying social workers.

With the changes to its structure and approach to service delivery, the OYE is building capacity to be more supportive of, and effective for, youth in care.

#### ***Continue support for housing assistance through the Rapid Housing Program.***

In FY 2010, CFSA continues to fund the Rapid Housing Program (RHP). The Program is a partnership with the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP), and the Healthy Families/Thriving Communities (HFTC) Collaboratives. RHP provides short-term assistance to families in need of housing for preservation or reunification. The program also assists youth aging out of foster care with time-limited assistance to facilitate their transition out of foster care and into adulthood and independence.

CFSA funds the program, TCP administers the assistance payments, and the Collaboratives provide case management and support services. Youth referred to the program must be employed and have income that will allow them to maintain their housing after RHP financial assistance ends. In FY 2007 and FY 2008, CFSA assisted approximately 200 transitioning youth (82 of these were teen parents with a total of 118 children). In FY 2009, approximately 134 families and youth received services through RHP and CFSA looks forward to serving as least as many families and youth in FY 2010.

***Expand the existing range of placement options that best meet the needs of children in foster care through use of Human Care Agreements.***

Historically, CFSA's primary contracting vehicle with the provider community has been through competitive sealed proposals in response to Requests for Proposals (RFPs). In FY 2010, CFSA is shifting away from traditional contracting methods and moving toward the use of Human Care Agreements (HCAs) to procure placement resources. Providers must demonstrate capacity to meet all requirements under specialized scopes of work for each placement setting, including performance requirements tied to the achievement of positive outcomes for children and youth in foster care.

Prospective providers must demonstrate capacity to ensure that children are provided services which employ a family-centered approach to care; ensure culturally competent services that build upon ethnic, socio-cultural and linguistic strengths; utilize community-based services to assist youth in maintaining connections with schools, churches, friends and family members; and develop a community-based network of services and affiliations that will facilitate supportive services for youth and their families in their community of origin as well as their community of placement.

The use of HCAs is expected to support expansion of the existing range of placement providers, giving CFSA more flexibility and choice in identifying placements for children that best respond to their individual needs.

***Continue working to address mental health needs of children in foster care.***

Moving forward into FY 2010, DMH intends to develop additional mental health services capacity for services including but not limited to:

- Training for Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) and Child Parent Interaction Therapy; and,
- Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

CFSA and DMH continue to build the clinical capacity to treat children with mental health needs locally and to further mitigate the frequency of distant out-of-state placements in specialized facilities.

***Continue implementing practice and process improvements related to the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR).***

CFSA has built significant forward momentum in meeting the requirements and benchmarks of the CFSR PIP. Looking ahead to FY 2010, the Agency has a number of significant benchmarks to fulfill in order to affect significant improvements for the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children it serves:

- For in-home families, CFSA will begin to measure social worker performance on the completion of FACES.net family strength and needs assessment tools, as well as risk and safety assessment tools, within 30 days of the opening of a case. Thereafter, CFSA will continue to monitor compliance with completion of these tools every six months for as long as the case remains open.
- CFSA will continue developing and publishing protocols to improve practices around family engagement in case planning, especially regarding family



connections for “legacy cases” in which the focal child or youth has effectively “grown up” in foster care.

- CFSA will work with the Court Improvement Project (CIP) of the DC Superior Court to align expectations and approaches to permanency planning with respect to concurrent planning and achievement of timely permanency, and to develop policies and procedures to support case practice for concurrent planning.
- On an ongoing basis, CFSA will monitor social worker utilization of the In-Home and Out-of-Home Education Assessments, which are the Agency’s comprehensive assessment tools for identifying every child’s particular educational service needs.

The PIP quarterly reporting process allows CFSA to provide tangible and measurable evidence to its federal partners of the Agency’s progress toward meeting its process benchmarks, plan goals, and practice and outcome objectives.

***Continue implementation of the provisions of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.***

In October 2008, Congress passed the *Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act*, the most significant child welfare reform law since ASFA. Fostering Connections is a wide-ranging and multi-faceted law that imposes new requirements on child welfare case practice and procedures.

The law has numerous mandatory provisions that impact case practice on behalf of children in foster care in various areas, including:

- establishing and maintaining family connections;
- making reasonable efforts to place sibling groups together;
- coordinating health care services;
- promoting educational stability; and,
- supporting youth transitioning to independence and adulthood.

Within the framework of its existing programming and processes, CFSA was already in compliance with many of the provisions of Fostering Connections at the time it became law. For instance, the Agency’s practices regarding Family Team Meetings and Diligent Search for absent family members were well aligned with the relative notification provisions of the law. Moving forward into FY 2010, the Agency will continue aligning the appropriate policies, procedures, and practices with new federal requirements.

In addition to its mandatory provisions, Fostering Connections also allows the District increased access to Title IV-E federal funding to support:

- subsidies for children and youth who have achieved permanency through kinship guardianship; and,
- child welfare training to external stakeholders such as guardians ad litem, attorneys, court personnel, and court appointed special advocates.

In FY 2009, CFSA modified its FACES.net management information system to determine Title IV-E eligibility for children who achieve permanency through guardianship. The Agency looks forward to increasing federal revenues in the coming year through this new federal partnership. Also in FY 2010, CFSA will be collaborating with the appropriate stakeholders within the District to determine training needs, delivery



methods, and funding mechanisms to take advantage of the new federal funding opportunity for training.

### ***Continued Implementation of the New Out-of-Home Practice Protocol<sup>6</sup>***

In July 2009, CFSA published its new Out-of-Home Practice Protocol, which outlines key attributes and commitments of Agency case practice, and serves as a guide for CFSA and private-provider social workers, support workers, and supervisors in understanding these attributes and commitments and applying them to their daily work with children and families. The practice elements outlined in the Out-of-Home Practice Protocol are teaming, engagement, assessment, case planning, placement, visitation, permanence, and court. It articulates overarching values and goals and presents practice standards within each element for achieving timely, positive outcomes for children, youth, and families with out-of-home cases.

During FY 2009, CFSA introduced and oriented social workers and staff to the new protocol. The challenge for the Agency moving forward into FY 2010 is successful system-wide integration, support, and reinforcement of the tenets of the new protocol, and effective measurement of the Agency's progress with its implementation. Toward that end, CFSA will employ an implementation approach featuring modifications to social worker training and supervision to ensure buy-in from social workers and staff across the District's child welfare system.

### ***Training***

CFSA has integrated the core elements of the new Practice Protocol into the pre-service training program for newly hired social workers, as well as in-service trainings for social workers. The case practice guidelines will be continually communicated and reinforced through the Agency's existing training process and vehicles. The key outcomes of CFSA's training vis a vis the Practice Protocol are:

- Social workers will demonstrate growth in competencies outlined in the protocol, including clinical skills. They will assemble and lead teams to assess risk and safety, develop goals and plans, and make informed case-closure decisions.
- Supervisors will use quantitative and qualitative data to set performance goals, assess results, and help social workers understand the relationship between performance measures and child welfare obligations to children, youth, and families. They will have the capacity to direct their units for maximum performance.

### ***Supervision***

Formal training sessions are forums for the introduction and communication of new approaches to case practice, but supervision is the primary forum for the support and reinforcement of the application of those approaches. Formal supervision occurs in various venues and under various circumstances, but for Practice Protocol support and reinforcement, CFSA will leverage four existing required supervisor activities:

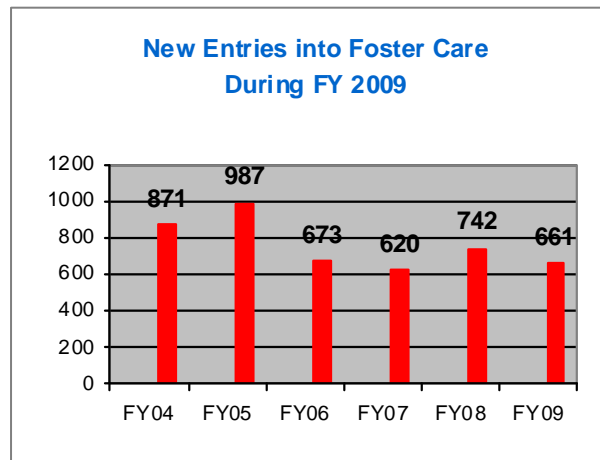
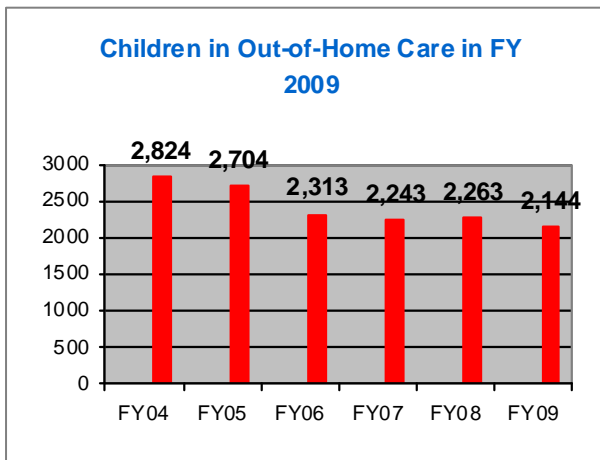
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<sup>6</sup> The entire Out-of-Home Practice Protocol is available online at:  
<http://newsroom.dc.gov/show.aspx/agency/cfsa/section/2/release/18245>

- *One-on-One Supervision* – Regular one-on-one meetings allow social workers and supervisors sufficient time to review case-specific concerns as well as practice-related issues. During one-to-one supervision meetings, which should occur weekly for at least an hour, supervisors and social workers conduct in-depth reviews of child-specific cases, paying special attention to clinical issues. One-on-one is a prime forum for practice coaching and modeling, and for counseling social workers on case-related next-steps.
- *Group Supervision* – Facilitated group discussion is another practical venue to reinforce new ideas and best case practice approaches. Within the context of a case-specific discussion, the supervisor fosters a positive and solution-focused atmosphere and manages the group dynamic to help generalize learning for all involved. Unit meetings are also excellent vehicles for communicating Agency updates and directives, such as new policies, procedures, administrative issuances, or other practice changes or modifications.
- *Performance Measurement* – Supervisors are responsible for regularly tracking social worker performance to identify norms, trends, and outliers among the workers in their units. This information, when combined with qualitative data or experiences of staff, assists in identifying populations, families, or individual children or youth who are experiencing success or consistent challenges. It also assists social workers in identifying reasons for success or challenges, such as their performance or practice approaches. The information gives the supervisor a strong basis for providing guidance and supporting the efforts of their social worker toward their individual performance goals. The key vehicles for measuring social worker performance are the management reports produced by the FACES.net management information system.
- *Promoting Professional Development* – Either directly or by way of referral to appropriate trainings, seminars, and/or other professional development opportunities, supervisors bear the responsibility for helping social workers attain their individual performance goals by promoting their professional development.

## 4: Statistical Analysis of Foster Care Cases and Permanency Outcomes

In compliance with requirements for this report established in DC ASFA, a number of detailed tables appear in this section. Following are highlights of 2009 findings about children and youth in the District child welfare system.



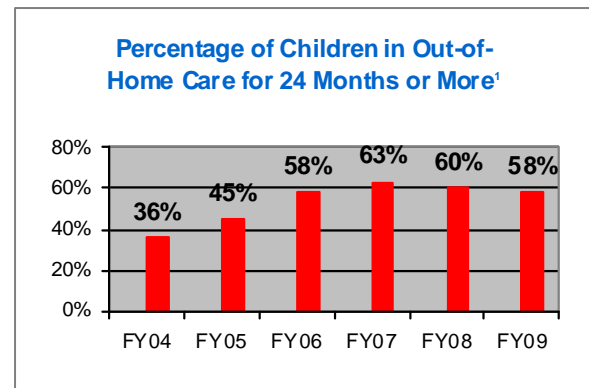
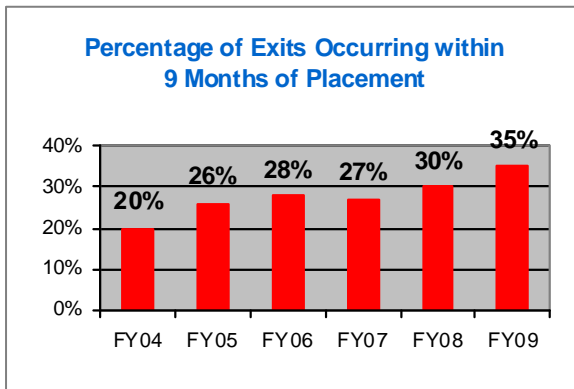
***By the end of FY 2009, the number of children in out-of-home placement decreased by 5% since the end of FY 2008.***

Prior to FY 2008, CFSA had been experiencing a consistent downward trend both in the number of new entries into foster care each year, and in the total number of children in out-of-home care. Both statistics rose in FY 2008 following the increase in reports of child maltreatment. However, in FY 2009, CFSA again saw significant reductions in both the number new entries into foster care and in the total number of children in out-of-home care.

Also, for the first time since CFSA began publishing its Annual Public Report, the agency experienced a slight reduction in the percentage of youth age 13-21 years who make up total foster care population. Success in reducing this previously growing percentage may be attributable to CFSA's partnership with the Casey Strategic Consulting Group (CSCG) to implement the Permanency Opportunities Project. Through this partnership, the Agency conducted a manual review of over 600 cases of children and youth in foster care who have a permanency goal of Alternative Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) for the purpose of identifying a permanent family connection for each youth.

**In FY 2009, CFSA increased the percentage of exits occurring within 9 months of placement and decreased the percentage of children in foster care for 24 months or more.**

The longer a child remains in out-of-home care, the less likely he/she is to reunify with family. The vast majority of children who leave care within nine months of entry reunify with their primary caretaker. Of the 789 children/youth who left foster care during the FY 2009, 35% left within nine months of entry.



At the same time, for the second consecutive year<sup>7</sup>, CFSA saw a decrease in the percentage of children in Out-of-Home care for 24 months or more. CFSA continues to make progress toward the ASFA goal of reducing the number of children languishing in out-of-home care.

### Statistical Analyses

The following tables are based on management information reports from FACES as of November 19, 2009, which reflected the status of children on the last day of FY 2009 (September 30, 2009). Groups of tables address information requirements for this report as listed in the Child and Family Services Agency Establishment Act of April 2001 (Appendix A).

<sup>7</sup> Please note that in the FY 2008 Annual Public Report, CFSA erroneously reported that its percentage of children in foster care for greater than 24 months in FY 2004 and FY 2005 was 68% and 63% respectively. Those figures have been corrected to 36% and 45% respectively in the FY 2009 report.

**Information requirement:**

**Total number of children in care, their ages, legal status, and permanency goals<sup>8</sup>**

**At the end of FY09 . . .**

- A total of 2,144 children and teens were in out-of-home care, a decrease of 5% compared to the previous year.
- The percentage of older children in foster care declined compared to previous years, as 56% of all children in out-of-home care were ages 13-21 (compared to 58% in FY08).
- The permanency goal of Alternative Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) applies only to children/youth whose other permanency options have been explored and exhausted. In FY08, 37% of all children in out-of-home care had a goal of APPLA, but by the end of FY09, CFSA reduced that percentage to 33%.



<b>District Foster Children by Legal Status</b>	
<i>Point in Time: End of FY09</i>	
<i>Status</i>	<i># of Children</i>
Committed	1,845
Shelter Care	233
Administrative Hold	60
Data Unavailable#	4
Relinquished	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,144</b>

#Data entry errors prevent actual statuses from being reflected.

<b>District Foster Children by Age</b>	
<i>Point in Time: End of FY09</i>	
<i>Age (in years)</i>	<i># of Children</i>
<1	47
1	95
2	95
3	84
4	77
5	78
6	69
7	59
8	64
9	68
10	64
11	60
12	85
13	85
14	106
15	122
16	172
17	182
18	198
19	173
20	161
21	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,144</b>

<b>District Foster Children by Permanency Goal</b>	
<i>Point in Time: End of FY09</i>	
<i>Goal</i>	<i># of Children</i>
Alternative Planned, Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)*	700
Reunification	577
Adoption	491
Guardianship	284
Legal Custody**	4
Data Unavailable#	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,144</b>

\* APPLA includes goals of Independent Living, Long-Term Foster Care, and Long-Term Residential Treatment.  
 \*\* For these four children, the goal is custody with the non-custodial parent.  
 # Of these 88 children, 56 entered care within the previous 90 days and did not yet have a permanency goal entered into FACES.net. The remaining 32 children are system anomalies whose permanency goals should be distributed among the various permanency goals.

<sup>8</sup>FY 2009 figures reflected in these tables were extracted from the FACES.net management information system on 11/19/2009. Due to the dynamic nature of FACES.net live database, the FY 2009 totals reported may differ slightly from previously reported figures.

**Information requirement:**

**Number of children who entered care during the year (by month), their ages, legal status, and primary reasons for entering care<sup>9</sup>**

**In FY09 . . .**

- A total of 661 children and teens entered out-of-home care, a decrease of 11% from the prior year's figure.
- As has been the case since 2005, the three most prevalent issues precipitating children's entrance into foster care were neglect, physical abuse, and parental drug abuse.



<b>District Children Entering Care by Age and by Month, FY09</b>													
Age	2008			2009									Total by age
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	
<1	8	6	6	8	9	10	3	13	13	6	11	4	97
1	5	6	8	4	5	2	5	0	6	2	5	4	52
2	4	4	6	4	5	5	3	7	3	5	4	4	54
3	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	3	3	7	3	1	41
4	6	5	4	3	5	1	6	6	2	3	3	5	49
5	3	7	1	2	4	0	2	6	1	3	2	2	33
6	3	1	2	3	2	2	2	3	1	2	3	0	24
7	5	3	5	3	3	1	3	4	1	2	3	1	34
8	4	1	3	2	3	1	2	2	3	2	1	2	26
9	4	2	2	4	2	3	1	2	0	1	4	2	27
10	3	2	1	0	5	1	0	4	0	1	0	2	19
11	6	3	0	1	1	3	3	3	0	0	4	0	24
12	5	3	4	4	4	2	2	0	3	1	2	2	32
13	3	2	2	1	0	3	4	4	4	1	1	3	28
14	6	3	4	0	1	6	2	0	6	6	1	2	37
15	4	3	1	2	2	5	0	1	4	3	0	4	29
16	1	3	7	4	1	4	2	2	5	1	2	2	34
17	3	1	2	4	0	5	2	2	1	5	2	3	30
18**	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	7
19**	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
20**	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total by mo.</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>679*</b>

\* CFSA actually placed 661 unique children in FY09, but 18 of these children entered, exited, and re-entered out-of-home placement during the year.  
 \*\* These young people were in care before the start of FY09 but are included in this data because they entered into foster care following a third-party placement or abscondence.

<sup>9</sup> FY 2009 figures reflected in these tables were extracted from the *FACES.net* management information system on 11/19/2009. Due to the dynamic nature of *FACES.net* live database, the FY 2009 totals reported may differ slightly from previously reported figures.

<b>District Children Entering Care by Legal Status and by Month, FY09</b>													
<i>Status</i>	<i>2008</i>			<i>2009</i>									<i>Total by status</i>
	<i>Oct.</i>	<i>Nov.</i>	<i>Dec.</i>	<i>Jan.</i>	<i>Feb.</i>	<i>Mar.</i>	<i>Apr.</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>July</i>	<i>Aug.</i>	<i>Sept.</i>	
Administrative Hold	42	40	35	28	29	32	31	40	35	28	36	28	404
Data Not Available	18	14	18	8	14	7	11	14	8	5	1	10	128
Shelter Care	9	2	7	7	5	10	1	4	6	6	9	3	69
Protective Supervision	7	3	1	5	7	0	0	1	4	7	2	1	38
Committed	3	2	0	4	0	6	3	4	3	3	2	1	31
Private/Third-Party Placement	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
Conditional Release (parent or other)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	5
<b>Total by month</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>679*</b>

\* CFSA actually placed 661 unique children in FY09. These data reflect 18 children who entered, exited, and re-entered out-of-home placement during the year.

<b>Primary Reasons for Entry into Foster Care in FY09</b>	
<i>Reason for Entry into Foster Care</i>	<i>Number of Placements in which Primary Reason was a Factor*</i>
Neglect (alleged/reported)	456
Physical Abuse (alleged/reported)	131
Drug Abuse (parent)	79
Incarceration of Parent(s)	58
Caretaker Ill or Unable to Cope	38
Child's Behavior Problem	22
Inadequate Housing	21
Abandonment	17
Alcohol Abuse (Parent)	13
Sexual Abuse (alleged/reported)	12
Voluntary**	9
Drug Abuse (Child)	6
Relinquishment	5
Death of Parent(s)	3
Alcohol Abuse (Child)	1
Child's Disability	1

\*Children may have multiple Primary Reasons for entering care. CFSA actually placed 661 unique children in FY09.

\*\* CFSA obtained court custody of all children in this category. "Voluntary" describes the mindset and attitude of the parent/caretaker but is not a descriptor of the legal custody status of the child. These were not voluntary placement agreements.

- **Information requirement:**

Number of children in care for 24 months or longer by length of stay in care including: length of stay by permanency goal, number of children who became part of this class during the year, and ages and legal status of these children

**In FY09 . . .**

- 1,253 children and youth were in care for 24 months or more, which is a 2% decrease from FY 2008.
- Just over half of these youth had permanency goals of Alternative Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA), and 31% had a goal of adoption.
- In FY 2009, a total of 252 children and youth reached or passed the 24-month mark in care, which is a reduction of 15% from the number of children who reached that threshold the year before. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of these young people were ages 14 to 21.

<b>District Children in Care for 24 Months or Longer by Permanency Goal and Length of Stay</b>					
<i>Point in Time: End of FY09</i>					
<i>Goal</i>	<i>Length of Stay in Months (FY08)</i>				<i>Total Children</i>
	<i>24-35</i>	<i>36-47</i>	<i>48-59</i>	<i>60+</i>	
APPLA*	82	77	90	384	633
Adoption	90	82	62	161	395
Guardianship	49	43	27	22	141
Reunification	26	14	9	13	62
Data Unavailable	4	8	4	4	20
<b>Total Children</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>1253</b>

\* Alternative Planned, Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) includes goals of Independent Living, Long-Term Foster Care, and Long-Term Residential Treatment.



**District Children in Care for 24 Months or Longer by Age and Length of Stay**

Key: ■ Entered class of children in foster care for 24 months or more in FY09

Age (in years)	Length of Stay in Months (FY09)				Total Children
	24-35	36-47	48-59	60+	
2	24	0	0	0	24
3	13	17	0	0	30
4	9	10	6	0	25
5	11	9	10	1	31
6	7	6	6	1	20
7	9	10	6	4	29
8	10	8	3	3	24
9	8	9	6	5	28
10	11	4	6	17	38
11	12	8	4	14	38
12	7	6	10	22	45
13	7	10	12	23	52
14	14	9	9	39	71
15	9	14	9	47	79
16	17	20	14	70	121
17	23	24	16	52	115
18	24	16	29	92	161
19	23	24	25	92	164
20+	14	20	21	103	158
<b>Total Children</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>1253</b>



**District Children in Care for 24 Months or Longer by Legal Status and Length of Stay**

Key: ■ Entered class of children in foster care for 24 months or more in FY09

Goal	Length of Stay in Months (FY09)				Total Children
	24-35	36-47	48-59	60+	
Commitment	252	224	192	583	1251
Relinquishment	0	0	0	2	2
<b>Total Children</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>1253</b>

**Information requirement:**

Number of children who exited care by month, number of children in this class who had been in care for 24 months or longer, ages and legal status of these children, and reasons for their exit from care<sup>10</sup>

**In FY09 . . .**

- A total of 789 children and teens exited out-of-home care. The ratio of exits to initial entries was 1.19:1, which is an increase from last year's ratio of 1.05:1, but still not as high as the 1.33:1 ratio of FY 2007.
- 49% of the children who exited had been in care for 24 months or more, whereas in FY08, 54% of all exiting children had been in care for 24 months or more.



District Children Exiting Care by Length of Stay and by Month, FY09													
Stay (in months)	2008			2009									Total by stay
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	
<1	15	9	8	12	10	9	6	16	15	10	2	11	123
1-4	16	6	12	8	22	7	1	7	4	3	9	3	98
5-8	1	7	6	9	7	0	3	3	9	2	4	2	53
9-12	2	1	1	1	3	1	4	3	8	5	3	0	32
13-23	4	4	10	5	6	6	8	4	13	10	19	7	96
24+	36	36	27	32	28	21	37	25	40	23	44	38	387
Total exits by mo.	74	63	64	67	76	44	59	58	89	53	81	61	789

Exits from Foster Care by Age and by Month, FY09													
Age (in years)	2008			2009									Total by age
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	
<1	6	4	0	2	3	3	1	2	6	2	1	4	34
1-5	20	16	13	11	20	12	9	17	26	13	22	17	196
6-12	16	13	24	21	19	9	22	20	28	11	17	17	217
13-15	8	11	6	10	11	3	2	5	8	9	6	6	85
16-18	8	7	9	10	6	2	3	4	7	6	7	6	75
19+	16	12	12	13	17	15	22	10	14	12	28	11	182
Total exits by mo.	74	63	64	67	76	44	59	58	89	53	81	61	789

<sup>10</sup> FY 2009 figures reflected in these tables were extracted from the FACES.net management information system on 11/19/2009. Due to the dynamic nature of FACES.net live database, the FY 2009 totals reported may differ slightly from previously reported figures.

<b>Exits from Foster Care by Legal Status and by Month, FY09</b>													
<i>Status</i>	<i>2008</i>			<i>2009</i>									<i>Total by status</i>
	<i>Oct.</i>	<i>Nov.</i>	<i>Dec.</i>	<i>Jan.</i>	<i>Feb.</i>	<i>Mar.</i>	<i>Apr.</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>July</i>	<i>Aug.</i>	<i>Sept.</i>	
Committed	47	45	42	44	42	33	48	37	65	36	69	45	553
Administrative Hold	19	10	7	11	13	9	6	15	16	13	3	12	134
Shelter Care	7	7	13	10	16	2	5	5	7	3	9	4	88
Conditional Release (3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Placement)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Non-Ward	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Data Unavailable*	1	0	2	2	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	11
<b>Total by month</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>789</b>

\*Data entry anomalies prevented the child's actual legal status upon exit from being reflected. Children in the category should be distributed among the other legal status categories reflected in this table.

<b>Exits from Foster Care by Primary Reason and by Month, FY09</b>													
Note: Primary Reason may not directly correlate to Permanency Goal of the child.													
<i>Reason</i>	<i>2008</i>			<i>2009</i>									<i>Total by reason</i>
	<i>Oct.</i>	<i>Nov.</i>	<i>Dec.</i>	<i>Jan.</i>	<i>Feb.</i>	<i>Mar.</i>	<i>Apr.</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>July</i>	<i>Aug.</i>	<i>Sept.</i>	
Reunification	35	28	39	28	43	21	18	26	42	24	35	19	358
Emancipation	16	12	10	13	15	14	22	10	14	12	24	13	175
Adoption	8	11	8	16	8	3	8	7	13	7	3	16	108
Guardianship	9	10	3	2	7	3	7	7	13	5	13	9	88
Placement/Custody with Other District Agency*	2	1	3	3	3	2	4	7	5	3	3	2	38
Living with Other Relatives	3	1	1	5	0	1	0	1	1	2	2	1	18
Death of Child	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	4
<b>Total exits by month</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>789</b>

\* Examples of Other District Agencies to which these children exit include (but are not limited to): Department of Mental Health, Department of Disability Services, Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, and Department of Corrections.

**Information requirement:**

**Number of children who left care by permanency goal, their length of stay in care by permanency goal, number of children whose placements disrupted by placement type, and number of children who re-entered care<sup>11</sup>**

**In FY09 . . .**

- **Children living in Traditional Foster Care are four times more likely to experience a placement disruption than children living in Kinship Care.**
- **One Hundred and Fifty children re-entered out-of-home care during the year.**

<b>Exits from Foster Care by Permanency Goal and by Month, FY09</b>													
<i>Goal</i>	<i>2008</i>			<i>2009</i>									<i>Total by goal</i>
	<i>Oct.</i>	<i>Nov.</i>	<i>Dec.</i>	<i>Jan.</i>	<i>Feb.</i>	<i>Mar.</i>	<i>Apr.</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>July</i>	<i>Aug.</i>	<i>Sept.</i>	
Reunification	21	21	25	27	30	14	12	22	35	16	32	12	267
APPLA†	22	13	13	13	17	15	22	10	16	14	29	13	197
Data Unavailable††	14	7	8	8	15	8	7	12	11	10	3	10	113
Adoption	7	11	8	16	4	3	9	7	14	7	3	16	105
Guardianship	10	11	8	2	10	4	9	7	13	6	13	9	102
Other#	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	5
<b>Total by month</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>789</b>

† Alternative Planned, Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) includes goals of Independent Living, Long-Term Foster Care, and Long-Term Residential Treatment.  
 †† 99 of the 113 children for whom data was unavailable in the FACES.net system exited care within a month of entry, before a permanency goal is required to be established.  
 # "Other" includes goals of Family Stabilization, Relative Placement, and Legal Custody.

<b>Exits from Foster Care by Permanency Goal and Length of Stay, FY09</b>							
<i>Goal</i>	<i>Length of Stay in Months (FY09)</i>						<i>Total Children</i>
	<i>&lt;1</i>	<i>1-4</i>	<i>5-8</i>	<i>9-12</i>	<i>13-23</i>	<i>24+</i>	
Reunification	22	87	46	26	55	32	267
APPLA†	0	2	2	0	3	190	197
Adoption	0	0	0	1	5	99	105
Guardianship	0	4	0	4	31	63	102
Data Unavailable††	99	5	5	1	1	2	113
Other#	3	0	0	0	1	1	5
<b>Total Children</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>789</b>

† Alternative Planned, Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) includes goals of Independent Living, Long-Term Foster Care, and Long-Term Residential Treatment.  
 †† 99 of the 113 children for whom data was unavailable in the FACES.net system exited care within a month of entry, before a permanency goal is required to be established.  
 # "Other" includes legacy goals of Family Stabilization, Relative Placement, and Legal Custody.

<sup>11</sup> FY 2009 figures reflected in these tables were extracted from the FACES.net management information system on 11/19/2009. Due to the dynamic nature of FACES.net live database, the FY 2009 totals reported may differ slightly from previously reported figures.

<b>Children who Experienced a Placement Disruption, FY 2009</b>	
<i>Total # of Children in Foster Care at Some Point During FY 2009</i>	<i># Who Experienced at Least One Placement Change</i>
2,844	2,092

<b>Placement Change* Report, by Placement Type, FY 2009</b>	
<i>Placement Type</i>	<i>Ratio of Placement Changes to Total Placements</i>
Kinship	.17 to 1
Independent Living	.49 to 1
Non-Kinship/Traditional Foster Care	.57 to 1
Residential Treatment Facility	.64 to 1
Group Homes	.83 to 1

\*IMPORTANT NOTE: While CFSA attempts to maintain the placement stability of all foster children, in many cases, placement changes are planned with the intent of furthering the child's progress to permanency. In other cases, unforeseen circumstances or crises arise that require CFSA to make an unplanned placement change to a more stable living environment for the child.

CFSA's FACES information system does not track unplanned placement changes (or "disruptions") specifically. Rather, the system tracks only placement changes in general, be they planned or unplanned. Therefore, statistics in this table reflect the total number of placement changes that occurred for all children during FY 2009.



## 5: Recommendations for Additional Legislation or Services to Overcome Challenges

CFSA's intent in FY 2010 is to work with the Mayor's office in ushering through the legislative process the following:

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Justification of Need</b>
<p>Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (HR 6893)</p>	<p>In October 2008, Congress created a series of new requirements regarding Title IV-E eligibility for Foster Care payments, and for Adoption and Guardianship subsidies. Most of the requirements are still to be clarified in forthcoming federal regulations before state agencies can project anticipated costs and benefits associated with implementation of the Act.</p>	<p>CFSA believes that many of the requirements of the act can be addressed through updates/amendments to existing Agency policy. However, CFSA requires the Council to pass local legislation to update the required contents of case plans of foster children.</p> <p>Specifically, the new federal legislation introduced a series of formal requirements regarding the manner in which CFSA addresses each child's educational stability.</p> <p>The legislation also provides that CFSA must take additional steps to ensure the safety and well-being of children placed with kinship guardians. The District must document why a guardianship arrangement is the best permanency option for a foster child as opposed to adoption and provide reasons for separation of any siblings.</p>

## Appendix A: Excerpt from the CFSA Establishment Act of 2001

(10) Prepare and submit to the Mayor, the Council, and the public a report to be submitted no later than February 1 of each year; which shall include:

- (A) A description of the specific actions taken to implement the Adoption and Safe Families Amendment Act of 2000, effective June 27, 2000 (D.C. Law 13-136; 47 DCR 2850);
- (B) A full statistical analysis of cases including:
  - (i) The total number of children in care, their ages, legal statuses, and permanency goals;
  - (ii) The number of children who entered care during the previous year (by month), their ages, legal statuses, and the primary reasons they entered care;
  - (iii) The number of children who have been in care for 24 months or longer, their length of stay in care, including:
    - (I) A breakdown in length of stay by permanency goal;
    - (II) The number of children who became part of this class during the previous year; and
    - (III) The ages and legal statuses of these children;
  - (iv) The number of children who left care during the previous year (by month), the number of children in this class who had been in care for 24 months or longer, the ages and legal statuses of these children, and the reasons for their removal from care; and
  - (v) The number of children who left care during the previous year, by permanency goal; their length of stay in care, by permanency goal; the number of children whose placements were disrupted during the previous year, by placement type; and the number of children who re-entered care during the previous year;
- (C) An analysis of any difficulties encountered in reaching the goal for the number of children in care established by the District;
- (D) An evaluation of services offered, including specific descriptions of the family preservation services, community-based family support services, time-limited family reunification services, and adoption promotion and support services including:
  - (i) The service programs which will be made available under the plan in the succeeding fiscal year;
  - (ii) The populations which the program will serve; and
  - (iii) The geographic areas in which the services will be available;
- (E) An evaluation of the Agency's performance;
- (F) Recommendations for additional legislation or services needed to fulfill the purpose of the Adoption and Safe Families Amendment Act of 2000, effective June 27, 2000 (D.C. Law 13-136; 47 DCR 2850); and
- (G) The comments submitted by a multidisciplinary committee that works to prevent child abuse and neglect and which the Mayor designates to receive and comment on the report.