



---

2006 Children's Administration

# Performance Report

---

Public and Legislative Accountability for Child Safety, Permanency, and Well-being  
Robin Arnold-Williams - Secretary, DSHS / Cheryl Stephani - Assistant Secretary, Children's Administration



CA Children's Administration

## Letter from the Assistant Secretary

It is my pleasure to present the tenth annual Performance Report for the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Children's Administration. This report covers Fiscal Year 2006, from July 1, 2005, through June 30, 2006.

The administration is focused on achieving long-lasting results that improve the lives of children and families. To that end, we are engaged in building a strong child welfare system to enhance our performance. During Fiscal Year 2006, we identified a strategic direction and began building a sound foundation that supports and sustains fundamental changes in our social work practice, the services we provide, and our organizational culture and structure. We have made significant progress in our four key reform areas.



### **Strong child welfare practice that protects children and works to strengthen families**

The administration's primary goal is to keep our state's children safe and secure in nurturing and well-functioning families.

- Met the September 2006 child safety goal of face-to-face contact for 90 percent of children in emergent CPS referrals within 24 hours, and are on track to meet the same goal for non-emergent referrals within 72 hours.
- Improved the frequency of social worker visits with children, and initiated a phase-in plan for all children to receive monthly visits from their social workers.
- Made practice more consistent and effective by redesigning the flow of Child Protective Services (CPS) and Child Welfare Services (CWS).
- Chartered a team and engaged field practitioners in a process to identify a clinical framework for our practice. This framework will be the basis for the construction of an overall approach to practice—a practice model—that will include increased skills-training for all staff, ongoing clinical support, automated tools, and the supporting administrative infrastructure.

### **Strong array of services to meet clients' needs**

We must use current research to identify and contract for effective and efficient services that have demonstrated outcomes and that match the needs of the children and families we serve throughout the state.

- Strengthened our business partnerships, business practices, financial accountability, and the services provided to children and families through an independently-led contracts review process.
- Established performance-based contracts with service providers.
- Contracted for two evidence-based programs (EBPs). In Fiscal Year 2007, we will add two more EBPs and begin new services for families referred for child neglect.

### **Strong workforce**

Our employees provide crucial services for vulnerable children in Washington State and must be well-trained and well-supported to do their jobs.

- Contracted for a workload study of direct service employees.
- Completed an initial draft of statewide critical incident response protocols and equipped social workers with satellite phones or radio access in areas without cell phone coverage.
- Established yearly employee safety training.

### **Strong business strategies**

We must demonstrate that we are accountable and can effectively budget limited resources.

- Worked on strengthening fiscal processes.
- Partnered with Process Improvement Consultants from the The Boeing Company on organizational and leadership development issues.
- Prepared a Request for Proposals to replace our outdated Case and Management Information System (CAMIS) with a federally-approved State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS).

Successful pursuit of our reform agenda requires the involvement of employees, other DSHS administrations, government agencies, courts, Tribes, foster parents and relative caregivers, community organizations, contracted service providers, and child advocates. Our commitment is to work with our partners to strengthen Washington's overall approach in child welfare and assist families and caregivers to meet the safety, permanency, and well-being needs of children.

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Cheryl Stephani". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary



## Table of Contents

Message From the Assistant Secretary	i
Table of Contents	1
Vision and Mission	2
Guiding Principles	3
Introduction	4
Overview-Children's Administration Activities	5
Overview-Comprehensive Service Delivery	6
Overview-Child Demographics	7

### 2006 Results

<b>Achieving Results - Safety</b>	8
Safety Overview (CPS Referrals)	9
CPS Referrals by Type of Abuse or Neglect	10
The Legal Definition of Child Abuse and Neglect	11
Initiate Timely Investigations	13
Children Who Are Re-Abused	14
Improve Safety When Returning Children Home	15
Children Who Are Abused or Neglected in Out-of-Home Care	16
Foster Homes Receiving Health and Safety Checks	17
Child Fatality Review Process	18

<b>Achieving Results - Permanency</b>	20
Permanency Overview	21
Children Reunified With Their Families	22
Children Reunified Within 12 Months of Placement	23
Children Adopted	24
Children Adopted Within 24 Months of Placement	25
Children Placed in Guardianships	26
Length of Stay for Children in Care	27
Children Reentering Care	28
Children With No More Than Two Placements	29
Minority Children in Care for More Than Two Years	30
Children Placed With Relatives	31
Children Wait	32

<b>Achieving Results - Well-being</b>	34
Well-Being Overview	35
Children Visited Every 90 Days by Their Social Worker	36
High School Diploma, GED Diploma, or Educational or Vocational Enrollment	37
Youth in Care Who Receive Independent Living Services	38

<b>Achieving Results – Supporting Client Outcomes</b>	39
Supporting Client Outcomes Overview	40
Licensed Foster Homes Available for Children	41
Availability of Minority Foster Homes	42
Foster Homes That Take More Than 90 Days to Fully License	43

<b>Resources – Important Numbers and Links</b>	44
Strategic Plan Summary	45
Glossary and Acronyms	46
Organizational Structure	47
Region and Field Office Map	48
Acknowledgements	49



**VISION** The Children's Administration seeks to be an organization that provides excellent services, which produce successful safety, well-being, and permanency outcomes for children and families. We strive to be innovative, results driven, responsive to changing needs, accountable, and guided by a commitment to professionalism and excellence in the field of child welfare. We promote teamwork and embrace our partnerships with parents and kin, Tribes, foster parents, and communities in the design and delivery of child and family services we would be proud to offer our own families.

**MISSION** The mission of the Children's Administration is first to protect abused and neglected children, to support the efforts of families to care for and parent their own children safely, and to provide quality care and permanent families for children in partnership with parents and kin, Tribes, foster parents, and communities.

Protecting Children  
Supporting Families  
Providing Quality Care with our partners

## **Guiding Principles of the Children's Administration**

The Children's Administration's values reflect our agency's mission. Our values demonstrate our commitment to keep children safe while strengthening and preserving families and a commitment to our partners, Tribes, communities, and colleagues. We are individually and collectively responsible for upholding these values.

### **DIVERSITY**

We value the diversity of our clients, staff, providers, and communities. We demonstrate a commitment to diversity when we consider their viewpoints and contributions, and courageously confront lack of equity in opportunities and outcomes for children, families, and staff.

### **RESPECT**

We demonstrate a commitment to a respectful workplace when we communicate with common courtesy and active listening, encourage divergent opinions, and value and accept differences.

### **INTEGRITY**

We demonstrate a commitment to act with integrity when we follow through with commitments, have the courage to act with honor, are trustworthy, and consistently act in ways that reflect the values, goals and decisions of the agency.

### **COMPETENCE**

We are competent when we use knowledge, skills, understanding, and practical ability to perform effectively in our work. We demonstrate our commitment to competence through continued training, reviewing and reflecting on our work, meeting or exceeding performance standards, achieving outcomes, and fulfilling our legal mandate as a public service agency.

### **CRITICAL THINKING**

We use critical thinking when we make decisions by actively seeking out facts and information, considering the opinions and observations of others, recognizing our biases and assumptions, and remaining open to new information even after decisions are made.

### **TEAMWORK**

We demonstrate teamwork through a collaborative approach to achieve common work goals and outcomes. As team members, we respectfully acknowledge the beliefs and experiences of our colleagues, we value the differences and are considerate when we express opinions and challenge issues.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

We demonstrate accountability when we do all we can to get the job done right while being consistent with our mission and applicable laws and policies. We are accountable when we self-monitor, take responsibility by being vigilant and following through, admit our own mistakes and address those of others constructively.

### **LEARNING COMMUNITY**

We demonstrate that we are a learning community when we seek diversity of thought and approach, make time for reflective thinking, promote and participate in educational opportunities and share what we learn. We demonstrate that we are a learning community when we use data and research to continuously improve, are open to different solutions, and learn from experiences.