

Children's Administration 2011 Year in Review



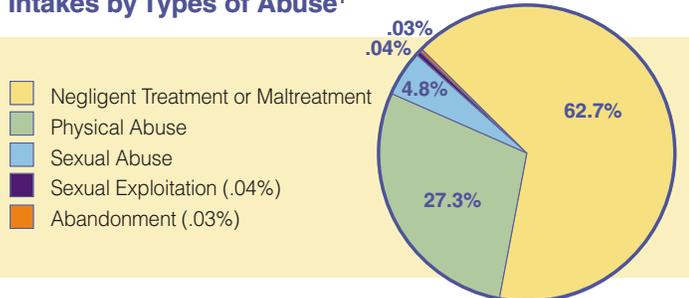
WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Introduction

This document highlights a review of Children's Administration's 2011 performance, areas of progress, and priorities moving forward. The Children's Administration is the public child welfare agency in Washington state that serves abused and neglected children and their families. Data in this document is for State Fiscal Year 2011, (July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011), unless otherwise indicated.



Intakes by Types of Abuse¹



Snapshot of Children and Families Served¹

There are approximately **1.55 million** children in Washington state²

Children's Administration received **77,882** reports alleging possible child abuse or neglect in State Fiscal Year 2011.

Of those referrals, **37,992** were screened in for investigation. (35,772 did not meet the legal criteria for abuse, neglect, or abandonment or were referred to Alternative Services.)

On June 30, 2011, there were **9,987** children in the care of Children's Administration.

Of those, **8,966** were in out-of-home care such as foster care or group homes. (1,021 were state dependent but living at home.)

Of those children placed in out-of-home care, **3,147** lived with relatives. (Approximately 10% of relative caregivers are licensed.)

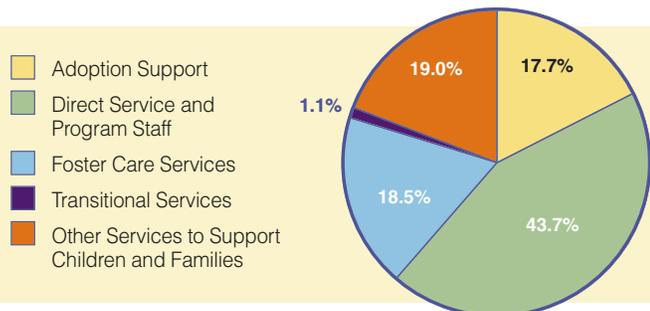
6,507 children exited care.

Guiding Principles Driving Budget Decisions

- Keep children safe in their own homes and in out-of-home care.
- Strengthen and expand home and community-based service delivery systems.
- Provide integrated case management services to high-need/high-cost children, youth, and families.
- Control General Funds-State expenditures while preserving services for our most vulnerable citizens.
- Maximize use of federal funds.

SFY11 Budget Distribution

- Of the \$532.3 million, FY 2011 Children's Administration budget, 45 percent was from federal funding and 56 percent was state and other funds.
- HB 2058 resulted in \$6.5 million general fund state reductions in State Fiscal Year 2012. Further reductions in the 2012 budget may be enacted during the current legislative session.



Child Fatalities

The death of a child is a terrible loss. Children's Administration examines certain child deaths to identify trends and evaluate training, policies and social work practice in an effort to improve child safety and well-being. In July 2011, the legislature revised the statute regarding child fatality review requirements. The revision requires fatality reviews when any child dies or experiences a near-death injury suspected to be caused by abuse and neglect, and the child has received services from the Children's Administration in the prior twelve months.

Child fatalities on open CA cases	18
Child abuse related fatalities	11
Abuse related fatalities in open CA cases	7

1. All data in this report is from FamLink unless otherwise noted. 2. www.census.gov

Safety is at the forefront of every aspect of our work; we endeavor to **Safely:**

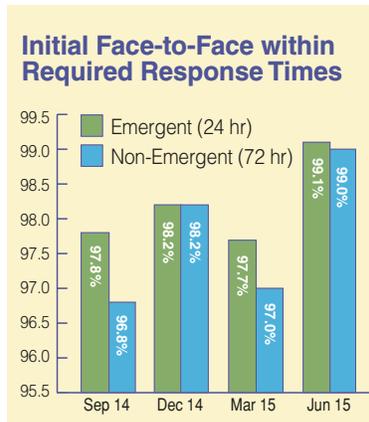
- Maintain children in their own homes, preventing out-of-home placement.
- Serve and support children in temporary out-of-home care.
- Return children home as quickly as possible.
- Support children in the homes of relatives.
- Secure permanent homes for children who cannot return home.
- Decrease the over-representation of children of color in the child welfare system.



Progress in Outcome Areas of Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being

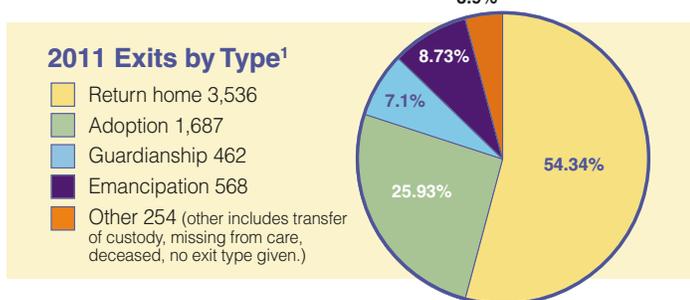
Safety

- Social workers made face-to-face contact with more than 95 percent of children in emergent referrals within 24 hours and with more than 95 percent of children in non-emergent referrals within 72 hours throughout FY 2011.
- Social workers completed monthly visits with more than 95 percent of children in their out-of-home placements throughout all of FY 2011.



Permanency

In most cases, children are able to safely return to their families following removal due to abuse or neglect. When families are unable or unwilling to make the life changes necessary to ensure they can safely parent their children, other permanent homes are sought. In 2,011, there were 6,507 children who exited from out-of-home care.



Well-Being

- **Education:** Completed Education Strategy Framework, a comprehensive report presenting the services and structures necessary to support the educational success of children and youth in foster care.
- **Preserving Family Connections:** Developed "Keeping Brother and Sister Connected" tool for caregivers and social workers to support planning and documentation of sibling visits in an effort to maintain contacts between siblings.
- **Adolescent Services:** Successfully implemented the National Youth in Transition database garnering Washington state national recognition for successfully engaging youth in service and transition planning.

Systemic Areas of Progress

- In partnership with the National Resource Center on Child Protection, developed an approach to assess and plan for child safety throughout the Children's Administration's involvement with a family. Trained staff and supervisors regarding the new safety framework and implemented a higher level of review for all safety plans.
- Implemented a new "toolkit" for mandated reporters to understand their roles and responsibilities and to place greater emphasis on reducing racial disproportionality in child welfare.

- Implemented policies and practices in accordance with new legislation to conduct reviews on child fatalities, near fatalities, and critical incidents involving children in incidents related to child abuse and neglect.
- Improved performance in a number of key areas covered by the initial Braam settlement agreement and negotiated a new agreement that narrows the focus of the agreement on 21 key child welfare outcomes that are aimed at improving the safety and welfare of foster children.
- Child Welfare Administrators and staff from Washington and Oregon met in Portland to assess the border agreement signed October 1, 2010 designed to speed up the process for safely placing abused and neglected children in the Portland/Vancouver area with relatives or other suitable persons. To date, 30 children have safely been placed through this agreement and the states are exploring expanding the agreement.
- The DSHS Fostering Well-Being Program provides health coordination for children in out-of-home placement. Children's Administration and Fostering Well-Being successfully implemented a process to ensure medically fragile children in out-of-home placement are connected to ongoing and appropriate health care.

Key Priorities Moving Forward

- Submit successful Title IV-E Waiver application to allow more flexible uses of federal funds. The waiver provides an opportunity to test new approaches to service delivery or financial structures designed to improve outcomes for children and families.
- Implement the strategies agreed upon in the federal Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan to improve safety, permanency, and well-being for vulnerable children and their families.
- In partnership with the Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee, maintain a strong focus on safely reducing the over-representation of children and families of color in the child welfare system.
- Manage to the priorities incorporated in the Braam Revised Settlement and Exit Agreement.
- Work collaboratively with expert community partners to better understand a cluster of cases of severe child abuse and neglect involving international adoption of children and children adopted from the foster care system to identify and implement recommendations for preventing similar abuses.
- Through collaborative government to government relationship with tribes, continue implementation of the Washington State Indian Child Welfare Act to improve outcomes for Native American children. Conduct the ICW case reviews.
- Recruit, train, and support a diverse pool of caring, qualified, and inclusive foster parents to care for children who need out-of-home care and continue emphasis on identifying and supporting fit and willing maternal and paternal relatives to care for children who enter out-of-home care.
- Implement statewide professional development training system with the University of Washington Seattle School of Social Work, University of Washington Tacoma Social Work Program, the Eastern Washington University, Partners for Our Children, and Children's Administration to enhance training for staff and supervisors at regional training hubs.

1. All data in this report is from FamLink unless otherwise noted.

To report child abuse or neglect, call 1-866-EndHarm

For more information about Children's Administration, call Marianne K. Ozmun at: (360) 902-7928 or visit our website at: www.dshs.wa.gov/ca