

DSS

South Carolina Department of Social Services

Lillian Koller, State Director



South Carolina
Annual Progress and Services Report
FFY 2012

Amended December 31, 2012

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I. INTRODUCTION

The South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) continues to serve more than 875,000 of South Carolina's neediest citizens. Under the new leadership of Director Lillian B. Koller, SCDSS is building upon the numerous successes of SFY 2011, clarifying the core values, establishing new and measureable goals, and focusing on close, energizing teamwork to achieve better outcomes.

Mission, Vision and Goals

The State has set the following Vision, Mission, and "Wildly Important Goals" (WIGs) for FY 2012:

SCDSS Vision

- Jobs for parents and other adults living in poverty.
- Safe and thriving children with life-long families.

SCDSS Mission

- To effectively and efficiently serve the citizens of South Carolina by ensuring the safety of children and adults who cannot protect themselves and helping families achieve stability through child support, child care, financial and other temporary benefits while transitioning into employment.

Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) for FY 2012

- **Increase "positive closures for families on welfare" 100% better than FY 2010 by June 30, 2012.** "Positive closures" means families become ineligible for welfare due to increased household income, primarily by getting jobs. This goal doubles last year's (2010) 10-month total of 5,060 positive closures to 10,120.

As of July 1, 2012, Economic Services had 10,594 positive closures, or 105%, exceeding the Wildly Important Goal for positive closure for families on welfare.

- **Reduce the number of children who experience maltreatment within six months of an unfounded investigation of abuse and neglect from 4.3% (700) to no more than 2.8% (446) by September 30, 2012.**
- **Increase positive permanency for children in foster care 17 months or more by 50% better than last year (FY 2010) by June 30, 2012.** This means increased reunifications, adoptions, and legal guardianships for children in foster care who have waited the longest for life-long families.

In FY 2010, 789 children in foster care 17 months or more exited to positive permanency. A goal of 50% would increase this number by an additional 395 children, for a total of 1,184 children reaching positive permanency. SCDSS surpassed the positive permanency goal by June 30, 2012.

- **Increase adoptions by 50% better than FY 2010 by June 30, 2012.**

Approximately 615 children in foster care are legally free and have not yet been adopted. At the time this WIG was established, only 53.5% of children who are legally free become adopted less than 12 months from termination of parental rights.

In FY 2010, 533 children were adopted. The WIG increased this number by 50%, resulting in an additional 266 children being adopted, for a total of 799. SCDSS surpassed this goal and achieved 835 adoptions by June 30, 2012.

SCDSS is now guided by this powerful definition of accountability, borrowed from *The Oz Principle: Getting Results through Individual and Organizational Accountability*: "A personal choice to rise above one's circumstances and demonstrate the ownership necessary for achieving desired results."

Major Achievements

Human Services

Through the new leadership and the focus on accountability, SCDSS continues to work through the use of data. Below are some examples of management through data and the results:

- On September 4, 2011, 30.45% of cases statewide were overdue for a Permanency Plan Hearing (PPH) at the 12-month standard
 - On June 10, 2012, **2.02%** of cases were overdue for PPH at the new standard of nine months
- On May 29, 2011, the number of statewide investigations over 60 days was 211 cases
 - On June 10, 2012, the number of statewide Investigations over 60 days was **nine** cases
- For FFY 2011, there were a total of 3,797 children in foster care
 - For FFY 2012a, there were a total of 3,255 children in foster care, a **14.3%** reduction
- The number of Family Group Conferences (FGC) held in the 18 months prior to June 30, 2011, was 265 families
 - The number of FGC held from June 30, 2011 to mid-June 2012 was **740** families (1,040 children)

Following are additional agency accomplishments:

1. In an effort to achieve timely permanence for more children in custody (foster care), SCDSS has set a priority for its Wildly Important Goal, or "WIG", related to positive permanency. Positive permanency is defined as reunification, adoptions or permanent custody with a relative/ guardianship. The WIG is to increase positive permanency by 50 percent better than FY 2010 by June 30, 2012, for children in care 17 months or more.
2. SCDSS finalized adoptions for 799 children - exceeding the previous fiscal year for the fourth consecutive time.
3. Following the onsite Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) conducted by the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF), SCDSS has begun implementing strategies as part of its Program Improvement Plan (PIP) in conjunction with continuous program improvement efforts already in process. Four innovation counties were selected to implement the State's PIP strategies: Greenville, Oconee, Aiken and Spartanburg. Each innovation county has a set of specific strategies to be implemented. Once the strategies are refined in the innovation counties, they will be shared with all other counties for statewide implementation. Strategies outlined in the PIP build upon four major themes:
 - Improve capacity of supervision based on the South Carolina Child Welfare Services Practice Model for Child Welfare
 - Improve the ability of staff to identify and critically assess the risk and safety of children

- Improve the overall engagement of families in the child welfare process
 - Improve the permanency of children in the foster care system
4. SCDSS continues to contract with the University of South Carolina's Children's Law Center to provide training to mandated reporters. The Children's Law Center provides the mandated reporter training through a retired State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) officer who specialized in child abuse investigations and later trained at the State Criminal Justice Academy on child abuse investigations. This trainer has trained close to 20,000 mandated reporters over the past five years. During the past fiscal year, 3,227 professionals and mandated reporters were trained in recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect in 79 separate sessions. The sessions included school teachers, school nurses and guidance counselors, law enforcement, medical personnel, nursing and social work college students, childcare staff, clergy, and church school classes. The majority of persons trained were in the education field, but participation from other professional areas is growing as more people become aware of this resource. For FY 2010-2011, the training sessions included four one-half day regional sessions, a "training of trainers" session for disabilities professionals and a one-week institute for school counselors. In addition to these sessions, a one-hour online session is available to the public through the Children's Law Center website. Three hundred and seventy-five persons completed the online training during FY 2010-11.
 5. Through funding from the Casey Foundation to Georgetown University's Public Policy Institute Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, South Carolina continues as one of 11 jurisdictions across the nation to implement a practice model that strengthens the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. The Crossover Youth Program Model is targeting crossover youth known to both systems. One of the main components of the practice model is the establishment of a guiding coalition composed of key leaders and community partners with a focus or interest in improving outcomes for crossover youth. Three counties are participating (Charleston, Berkeley, and Georgetown). SCDSS and the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) legal and program staff are collaborating to develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) regarding information sharing (from the state level) and are working with Georgetown to develop a model county-level MOU. The State MOU will be used for information sharing to effect changes in policy and case management. Desired practice model results include the following: reduction in the number of youth reentering child welfare from the juvenile justice placements; reduction in the youth using out-of-home placements; increases in youth and parent satisfaction with the case management process; reduction in the rate of recidivism; a reduction of children in foster care becoming involved with the DJJ system; inclusion of the family voice in decision-making; and an increase in interagency information sharing.
 6. Child Welfare Services continues to implement the joint Child Protective Services, Foster Care, and Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services initiative to improve safety and risk assessment through comprehensive family assessments and service plans and the evaluation of progress through an integrated process. For the past five years, SCDSS has collaborated with the National Resource Centers for Child Protective Services and Family Centered Practice and Permanency. Collaboration with the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare was added specifically to help improve policies and procedures related to the handling of child protection cases where substance abuse is an issue. During FY 2010-2011, the assessment and planning tool was incorporated into the agency's SACWIS system (CAPSS) to simplify the process and make the system more user-friendly. Work with the National Resource Center for CPS and Permanency Planning will continue over the next two-year PIP period. The agency has requested that the Center review and assess the child protective services policy for the safety framework to enhance the risk and safety assessment process. Additionally, the Center for CPS will work with the four innovation counties, starting with Aiken County on guided supervision. Technical assistance from the National Resource Centers involved direct

mentoring and consultation on cases to build critical thinking skills and help program supervisors and state office staff gain confidence in applying policy and best practice guidelines to different situations. Implementation of the guided supervision model will assist the counties in preparing for the safety roundtables. Safety roundtables will be facilitated and supported by Casey Family Programs.

7. SCDSS continues its implementation of Family Group Conferencing (FGC). Family Group Conferencing (FGC) and Family Group Decision-Making (FGDM) are a intervention tools for all child protection families to keep children safely in their own home and increase responsibility of the family for their child and at other critical decision points throughout the time the family is involved in the child welfare system. A Casey Family Programs grant and federal funds provide the financial resources to deploy FGC throughout the state and more intensively in the 10-county Upstate region. These funds enable SCDSS to begin making a cultural, philosophical and practice model shift in how the agency engages and collaborates with family members in the assessment, planning and service delivery to its children.
8. The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Workgroup consisting of state and private organizations was organized in May 2010 to address concerns about infant injury and death due to maternal alcohol use and to develop strategies to combat the problem. Four goals were identified. The SCFASD Collaborative completed the State FASD strategic plan in September 2010. The Strategic Plan involves prevention, intervention, knowledge/ awareness, and mobilization. These goals involve community partnership and advocacy to decrease alcohol-exposed pregnancies within South Carolina. The project is currently training professionals and parents with the assistance of a consultant provided by FASD Center for Excellence to be FASD trainers of trainers. A host of events are also scheduled to raise FASD awareness for professionals and the public in 2012.
9. The agency continues to collaborate with the Urban League's Summer Leadership Institute which serves Foster Care and TANF youth. Participants are prepared with introductory employment skills before beginning six weeks of summer employment. Youth continue in the leadership program throughout the year to prepare further for job readiness.
10. The South Carolina Heart Gallery, managed by the Foster Care Review Board and operated in collaboration with SCDSS, continues to be used as a statewide recruitment tool connecting waiting children with adoptive families. The Gallery features professional quality photographs of children displayed at venues around the state such as public libraries, art galleries, performing art centers, stores and other sites. The Heart Gallery also maintains a website featuring available children for adoption. The agency also collaborates with Children Unlimited, which manages the "Wendy's Wonderful Kids" through the Dave Thomas Foundation.
11. The agency continues to collaborate with the SC Immigrant Victim Network (SCIVN). SCIVN, a program of the SC Victim Assistance Network (SCVAN), serves as a collaborative network of dedicated partners working together to better help immigrant victims of crime by finding culturally and linguistically competent resources and providing direct legal assistance. Through this collaboration, the agency is developing revised policy to ensure that the needs and services of those immigrant families are provided for in a culturally competent and professional manner.
12. SCDSS continues its collaboration with the Center for Fathers and Families on expanding services to non-resident fathers and/or parents whose children are receiving child welfare services. This public/private partnership has worked on several key strategies under the state's Program Improvement Plan. The agencies developed a Memorandum of Understanding, protocol for child welfare staff on how to engage fathers, and a father-friendly curriculum and training. Additionally, Greenville County, one of four innovation counties for the PIP, has a close working relationship with its local fatherhood organization. Staff from the fatherhood organization are involved in the family engagement strategy of family meetings and family group conferencing.

Fathers are located and referred to the local organizations for services such as employment, counseling and enhanced visitation with the children.

13. Recommended by Oconee County leadership (one of four innovation counties for the PIP), SCDSS adopted the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute Leadership Model and related Leadership Academy for Supervisors (LAS) online training curriculum as platforms for building supervisory core competencies. One of the core competencies includes a focus on the quality of caseworker visits as well as the overall wellbeing of children in child welfare.
14. An innovative demonstration project, Connecting for Kids, continues to help SCDSS engage families, build on their strengths, provide resources for families and relatives, and ensure that all children have a permanent connection with kin or fictive kin as they get older. The project, funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services Children's Bureau, continues through September 2012. The SC Guardian ad Litem Program is providing family finding (locator) services to increase relative/fictive kin connections by initially targeting youth who are in danger of aging out of foster care without a supportive adult. The eleven intervention counties for the family finding (locator) services are Aiken, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Dorchester, Greenville, Greenwood, Newberry, Oconee, Orangeburg, and Spartanburg. The SC Association of Children's Home and Family Services contracts with providers in six counties to provide Kinship Navigator services to relative/fictive kin caregivers of children diverted from foster care. Services are available for up to three months. These services are designed to assist caregiver relatives in navigating the complex social service systems that serve these children and to help stabilize these placements and avoid multiple moves. The six intervention Counties for the navigator component are Aiken, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Dorchester, and Greenville. The USC Center for Child and Family Studies and its subcontractors are developing and delivering specific training/learning opportunities for kin caregivers. The United Way of SC expanded the 211 system statewide during the first year of the grant and is receiving funds to support maintenance of the 211 system through September 2012. The grant also funds an evaluation of the grant components to be completed by the Center for Child and Family Services at the University of South Carolina.
15. The state regularly convenes the Family Court Bench Bar Committee, a group that focuses on making and supporting improvements in the legal processing of child abuse and neglect cases. The committee continues to include Family Court judges, the Director of South Carolina Court Administration, private attorneys, and attorneys who represent the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, SCDSS, guardians ad litem, and the South Carolina Foster Care Review Board. A Family Court judge is chair of the Family Court Bench-Bar Committee and the State Director of the SCDSS is co-chair of the committee. During this FFY, the Family Court Bench Bar Committee approved a measure that allows the State Director of the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to serve on the committee. The current Director of DJJ serves as an ex-officio member of the committee. The Family Court Bench Bar Committee has updated and published the *Best Legal Practice Guide*, a guide that sets forth best legal practice standards in child abuse and neglect proceedings. This guide continues to receive the support of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in South Carolina.
16. In September 2010, SCDSS convened and facilitated an outsourcing study group with public and private partners in response to Proviso 26.26 Outsourcing Child Welfare Services. The resulting Outsourcing Study was released in FY 2010-11.

The link to the SC APSR 2012 will be published on the public website on the DSS Home Page (dss.sc.gov) in the About DSS - News and Publications section (<https://dss.sc.gov/content/about/news/index.aspx>). Internally, it will

be published on Unite under Program Area > Human Services > Shared Documents
(<http://unite/HumanServices/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx>).

The State's contact for the APSR is:

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Organization and Service Delivery System

SCDSS is the agency responsible for coordinating IV-B and IV-E funding and related child welfare plans and services. The unit responsible for the plan and related reports is Human Services. It is one of fifteen cabinet agencies under the Governor.

The agency employs a county-based, state-administered service delivery system in which one or more SCDSS offices are located in all 46 counties. Each county office is managed by a county director who is hired by and under the authority of the state director and the state deputy director for Human Services. SCDSS also has specialized treatment and support services for foster children who have emotional and behavioral problems (Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services). The Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services (IFCCS) assists counties through 15 offices spread throughout the four SCDSS regions of the state. When a child is identified with emotional/behavioral problems, he/she is referred by the county office to the IFCCS office who will arrange for an interagency staffing on the child to determine whether the child needs services through the Interagency System for Caring for Emotionally Disturbed Children (ISCEDC); see state statute section (63-11-1510), and to identify the most appropriate placement for the child and recommend the services that can best meet the individual child's needs.

The child's case management is transferred from the county worker to the IFCCS worker, who will carry the case from that point forward. An array of services may be provided through the use of Medicaid and state funding: therapeutic child treatment, clinical day programming, therapeutic foster care, residential therapeutic services, specialized treatment services for sexual offenders, supervised independent living, and wrap-around services. Additionally, adoption services are provided in four regional offices. Adoption regional staff work in conjunction with county foster care staff until the child is freed for adoption. Cases are transferred from foster care staff in the counties to regional adoption caseworkers after termination of parental rights is completed. There is direct coordination and cooperation between the IFCCS, the adoptions program, and the counties.

The following chart describes SCDSS program areas.

Child Welfare	Child Welfare Programs ensure the safety and health of children. This system of services includes Child Protective Services, Foster Care, Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services, and Adoption Services.
Adult Protection and Domestic Violence	The Adult Protective Services Program protects the health and welfare of elderly and disabled adults. Services are provided to meet the adults' basic needs and to ensure their safety.

Services	Domestic Violence Services provide support to victims of family violence, their children and abusers through a network of community-based/nonprofit service providers. Programs are designed to provide crisis intervention and prevention services.
Public Assistance	The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program assists those in need of temporary financial and employment-related assistance. The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides cash assistance to low-income individuals and families so they can purchase food. The Family Nutrition Program consists of a network of food assistance programs that improve the health and well-being of children and adults who cannot provide adequate nutrition for themselves.
Child Care Services	The SCDSS Child Care Services Program increases the availability, affordability, accessibility, quality and safety of child care throughout the state. It includes the Federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), Federal Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and Child Care Licensing.
Child Support Enforcement	The Child Support Enforcement Program establishes and enforces orders for child support, establishes paternity for children when paternity is an issue, locates absent parents when whereabouts are unknown, and collects and distributes child support payments.

As one of the largest public agencies in the State, SCDSS provides a vast array of services ranging from the investigation of child and adult abuse reports, the distribution of food to hungry families, the collection of child support for custodial parents to the staffing of emergency shelters during catastrophes.

Child Protective and Preventive Services are provided to families by SCDSS, which is mandated by law to protect children from abuse or neglect within their families, in foster care, or by persons responsible for the child's welfare as defined by statute. Services are provided to strengthen families and to enable children to remain safe in the home. If these services cannot ensure that children can safely remain in the home or if a child is at imminent risk of harm, then the temporary removal of children is necessary. Once a child is removed, the agency, along with the court system and the family, develops and implements a permanency plan to ensure safe, timely and positive permanency. The following goals for children and families have been defined by federal law and good practice standards:

- *Every child deserves a safe, loving and forever family.*
- *Only those children who cannot safely remain at home should enter care and not one more child after that.*
- *Foster care can save a life but it should never be a way of life for any child.*
- *We can get it right-- every service we provide should be accurate, timely and properly documented.*

The agency will focus on these values and outcomes for children in child welfare by creating a movement for excellence by making the values clear and holding ourselves accountable for acting on those. The agency has held "Data Tuesday" meetings since March 14, 2011. These weekly meetings were originally held with the state office (Office of Human Services and Planning and Research, regional managers) leadership and county directors in four innovation counties (Aiken, Greenville, Oconee and Spartanburg) leading practice improvement strategies under the State's Program Improvement Plan (PIP). Attendance at the "Data Tuesday" meetings is voluntary. The meeting has grown from the state office staff, innovation county directors, and the four regional managers to more than 60 individuals, to include agency partners. Key county directors, supervisors and regional managers from around the state attend these weekly meetings. The "Data Tuesday" meetings are divided into two parts. There is a review of

key permanency data indicators in order to impact the state's "Wildly Important Goals." The second half of the meeting is focused on leadership and accountability training. The training and accountability discussion is led by State Deputy Director Isabel Blanco.

Additionally, the agency has held "Palmetto Power" (P2) meetings monthly since July 27, 2011. The power of the "P2" approach lives at the intersection of people and data, influenced by leadership and energized by "imperatives" (values). Imperatives are a set of values so powerful it cannot help but drive new behaviors. Additionally, it compels the conversation about what the right work is and how to do it. The imperatives force individuals to make decisions in which behaviors are inextricably linked to what is right, removing ambiguity and renders the previously acceptable as unacceptable.

Following are the State's Emerging Imperatives:

- At all times, the child's immediate and enduring safety and well-being must take precedence over the comfort of adults.
- Children must never be left to protect or provide for themselves or others; that is the role of all responsible adults.
- Children do not "disrupt;" adults fail to provide the adequate level of response to meet the children's needs.
- Child safety will always improve when the adults who care for them work together and support each other.
- Shared understanding and meaning always propels actions and drives results.

The Supervisor Emerging Imperatives include:

- No one ever works well unsupervised or without support, including (fill in the blank with your name)
- Tools, Forms, Policies or mandates never replace judgment and critical thinking
- Others may be a problem, but that does not mean YOU are powerless

The P2 is a culture change strategy that has "Sweet Spot" behaviors that require the participants to act and speak as if they believe that they are not enslaved to the current reality and that encourage participants to articulate a new and enlightened view of what is possible. Through P2, the community of child welfare practitioners makes space in each inquiry for the talents and thinking of all who want to contribute. The P2 "Sweet Spot" specific behaviors are:

- Create "Aha moments"
- Use your presence to coax new potentialities from the willing as well as the unwilling
- Sign up for homework: learn by trying
- Make the data transparent and the process accountable for results

Participants of P2 can expect to work to create joint understanding and meaning through presenting data and information on specific outcomes, develop hypotheses and develop strategies and action steps to affect the specific outcomes and desired results. Leaders will implement strategies, follow up on the strategies and then report back to the participants on the outcomes of those strategies.

Leadership and Accountability Sessions

State Deputy Director Isabel Blanco facilitates the discussion on accountability and leadership for change in child welfare practice. Agency leadership from the four innovation counties, state office staff and over 60 managers from county and regional offices are working through leadership publications, including *The Oz Principle: Getting Results through Individual and Organizational Accountability*, *Switch: How to Change When Change is Hard*, and *Crucial Conversations*. Additionally, the leaders of the agency have implemented the *Four Disciplines of Execution*. The discussions are focused on enhancing the skills of the agency's top managers to improve their effectiveness. The discussions include diving deeply into the definition of accountability in order to implement positive permanency goals for children in foster care. Accountability is defined as a "personal choice to rise above one's circumstances and

demonstrate the ownership necessary for achieving desired results.” There is regular discussion of agency leadership (state and county) assuming accountability for the desired positive permanency results on behalf of children in foster care. Goals will be achieved through the *Four Disciplines of Execution* for practice:

- Focus on the wildly important goals for your program.
- Know what to do to reach the goal.
 - Discussion of data and accountability at the weekly data Tuesday meeting.
 - Bi-monthly meetings with county and regional managers and legal staff to stay focused on the goal along with discussion of accountability to impact change in child welfare practice.
 - Use data to guide decision-making.
 - Build capacity for sustainable change, to include closure of practice gaps in counties.
 - Leverage all available resources (both staff and financial).
- Keep score (monitoring and evaluation of progress toward the goal).
- Hold a cadence of accountability to include a focus on desired outcomes.

II. SERVICE DESCRIPTIONS

Child and Family Services Continuum

South Carolina’s service array can be divided into three major categories:

- In-home prevention and intervention services (child protective services);
- Permanency services (including safe and timely reunification services, foster care services, kinship care, intensive foster care and clinical services, independent living and youth transition services); and
- Adoption and post-adoption services.

Services are coordinated across the state through the local county SCDSS offices, SCDSS regional Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services offices, and regional Adoption offices. The case management and agency services are supplemented by other organization resources and services within counties.

STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES CHILD WELFARE SERVICES (TITLE IV-B, PART1)

The agency is using these funds to protect and promote the welfare of all children;

- Prevent the neglect, abuse or exploitation of children;
- Support at-risk families through services which allow children, where appropriate, to remain with their families or return to their families in a timely manner;
- Promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in foster care and adoptive families; and
- Provide training, professional development and support to ensure a well-qualified workforce.

The majority of case management services are provided by agency staff and that which is not provided by the agency is contracted. Child protective and preventive, foster care, and adoption services are provided statewide without regard to income. SCDSS limits expenditures for administrative costs to 10 percent or less under this program. Program details are provided in this report and on financial forms.

IV-B Subpart 1

- a) The amount spent for child care, foster care maintenance and adoption assistance payments in 2006 and budgeted for 2013 is \$951,000.

- b) The amount of state expenditures of non-federal funds for foster care maintenance payments for 2006 and budgeted for 2013 is \$317,000.
- c) Administrative cap - \$ 4,806,518 @ 10% = \$ 480,651

PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES (PSSF) PROGRAMS (TITLE IV-B, PART2)

The agency is using these funds, in accordance with prescribed limits and conditions of Administration for Children and Families, to support programs and services related to family support and preservation, safe and timely reunification and adoption support services.

IV-B Subpart 2 services:

- a) **Family Preservation Services = 20%**, utilization of Family Preservation Services funds includes training for DSS staff and SC foster parents, and parent training for biological and extended family members, funding agency personnel and other Family Preservation services:
 - i. Family Group Conferencing statewide - Family Group Conferencing is an intervention tool for families served in child protection to keep children safely in their own home and at other critical decision points throughout the time the family is involved in the child welfare system; to increase parental capacity and responsibility of the family for their child.
 - ii. Reimbursement to adoptive families for medical expenses for the children who they have adopted or intend to adopt
 - iii. Adoption workers that work to support families who have adopted to access appropriate family preservation services to keep children safely in their homes (post-legal support services)
 - iv. Principles of Parenting Successfully (POP) Home Visiting
 - v. The "Principles of Parenting Successfully" {POPS} program is a voluntary, holistic, long-term in-home parenting education prevention program where staff are sent into the homes of the most "at risk" families with children birth through five to conduct visits on a long-term basis for the purpose of parenting education; assisting parents in becoming their child's "first and best teacher"; and helping prepare young children to start kindergarten/first grade on target.
 - vi. Training
 - vii. Permanency Roundtable training that focuses on reunification as the first explored avenue for positive permanency for children in foster care
 - viii. Working with Birth families to increase protective capacity
 - ix. Enhance meaningful involvement and the continuity of relationships and connections of fathers in case planning and in the lives of their children
 - x. Enhancing the continuity of family relationships and connections through interventions strategies and techniques to enhance the involvement of family members and ensuring sibling connections
 - xi. Progressive visit process for parents and children served by the SCDSS
 - xii. Family Preservation Training
 - xiii. Engagement/assessment/planning/services and supports

- b) **Family Support Services = 20%**, utilization of Family Support Services funds includes services provided by community support organizations to strengthen families, kinship navigator services and other Family Support Services:
 - i. Leadership Development Institute
 - a. Provide life skills and transition support for reunification to youth and their families.
 - ii. Resource family Training

- a. Utilizing the resource family model, SCDSS maximizes opportunities to recruit, train and support resource families who understand their role as providers of safe temporary care of children in the care of the State, and provide support to birth families. Through this model, resource families engage the birth families in the case planning and support the positive permanency goals of reunification, adoption or legal guardianship. Resource Families reinforce the connection with Birth Families and the child making the process of reunification successful.
 - iii. Resource family peer-to peer support
 - a. Mentoring services to resource families are offered. Once a new parent is licensed to be a resource parent they are assigned a “buddy” who is an experienced licensed resource parent. This “buddy” makes himself/herself available to answer any questions or concerns the new resource parent may have. A resource parent “buddy” provides the peer-to-peer support that new parents need to navigate the system and assist with in clarifying their role as a resource parent. Monthly peer-to-peer support groups are provided to resource families, making experienced resource families available to advise new resource families.
 - iv. Community Education
 - a. Conference on protective factors in the community
 - b. Community training to raise awareness of abuse and neglect prevention
 - c. Statewide Parent Cafes
 - i. Directly engages participants in discussions about protective factors that strengthen families and build community.
 - ii. Structured as a series of five sessions that can happen wherever parents feel comfortable coming together—early childhood centers, churches, schools, community centers, any friendly environment— parents meet in small group conversations, facilitated by a “host”, to discuss questions and issues important to them.
 - d. Statewide training and support services of signs of safety practice model to make system improvement and create constructive working partnerships between frontline workers and community partners, health professionals and service providers
 - e. Provide regional forums facilitated by SCACHFS and SCDSS to engage private service providers to improve quality practices, ensure evidence based practice are used through a data driven service delivery system to work with families whose children have been placed in foster care so that reunification may occur in a safe and stable manner
 - v. Parents mutual support groups
 - a. Parents Anonymous mutual support groups meet weekly in ongoing mutual support programs, which are co-led by parents and professionally trained facilitators and are free of charge to participants. While the parents are meeting their children participate in a structured Children’s Program to promote their healthy emotional growth and development.
- c) **Time-Limited Family Reunification Services = 20%**, utilization of Time Limited Reunification Services funds includes training for DSS staff and SC foster parents, and parent training for biological and extended family member, and other Time-Limited Reunification services:
 - i. Resource Family Training
 - a. Utilizing the resource family model, SCDSS maximizes opportunities to recruit, train and support resource families who understand their role as providers of safe temporary care of children in the care of the State, and provide support to birth families. Through this model, resource families engage the birth families in the case planning and support the positive permanency goals of reunification, adoption or legal guardianship. Resource Families

- reinforce the connection with Birth Families and the child making the process of reunification successful.
- ii. Resource family peer-to-peer support
 - a. Mentoring services to resource families are offered. Once a new parent is licensed to be a resource parent they are assigned a “buddy” who is an experienced licensed resource parent. This “buddy” makes himself/herself available to answer any questions or concerns the new resource parent may have. A resource parent “buddy” provides the peer-to-peer support that new parents need to navigate the system and assist with in clarifying their role as a resource parent. Monthly peer-to-peer support groups are provided to resource families, making experienced resource families available to advise new resource families.
- d) **Adoption Promotion and Support Services = 20%**, Adoption Promotion and Support Services funds include out-of-state adoptions services, services to support and train adoptive parents, funding agency personnel and other Adoption Promotion and Support services”
- i. Targeted Recruitment
 - a. The South Carolina Heart Gallery currently accepts referrals of legally free children from DSS. Professional photographs of these children are featured on the SCHG website, and in multiple community venues, providing broad-based, child-specific adoption recruitment. The SCHG provides specialized recruitment services for all children reported by DSS as legally free for adoption for whom an adoptive resource has not been identified. SCHG coordinates services with the SC Foster Parents Association and any other vendor the DSS contracts with in providing recruitment services.
 - b. The SCHG currently responds to telephone and website inquiries and forwards child-specific inquiries to the assigned DSS Regional Adoption Specialist for follow-up, provides general information about the foster care/adoption process, and generates referrals for new South Carolina families to the appropriate DSS Regional Adoption.
 - c. The SCHG will expedite the application and home study process, utilizing current DSS protocol, for new South Carolina families responding to Heart Gallery recruitment.
 - d. The SCHG partners with DSS Adoption staff to formulate recruitment plans targeted to appropriate geographic areas and/or faith communities.
 - ii. Reimbursement to adoptive families for medical expenses for the children who they have adopted or intend to adopt
 - iii. Training and support of adoptive parents - SCFPA Director of Family Services works one-on-one with families and children to remove barriers to successful adoption and the SCFPA Annual Conference
 - iv. Medically fragile training for adoptive parents - Training for workers and foster parents on medically fragile children is provided by SCDSS and the state foster parent association. Additionally, the USC medical school and the Palmetto Hospital have a special interest in the medically fragile and offer specific training related to caring for these children for foster parents and workers.
- e) For Fiscal Year 2013 the total for other service related activities is budgeted at \$600,000 a portion of which will be used for the documentation of service delivery provided by Parents Anonymous of South Carolina

for improved reporting of program outcomes for individual clients who are referred by their caseworkers (recording progress notes).

- f) For Fiscal Year 2013 the total Administration budget plan is = \$6,121,854 @ 10% = \$612,185

The above summary reflects the current use of the agency's budget and is subject to change based on revision of programmatic emphasis. Due to the changes in the definitions of family support services and time-limited reunification services to include peer-to-peer mentoring and support groups for parents and primary caregivers the SCDSS plans to increase collaboration with Parents Anonymous of South Carolina to increase statewide utilization of and the population served by the peer-to-peer mentoring and support groups for parents and recording progress notes on the individual clients. SCDSS will also explore working with additional community partners to develop services and activities to facilitate access and visitation with parents and siblings.

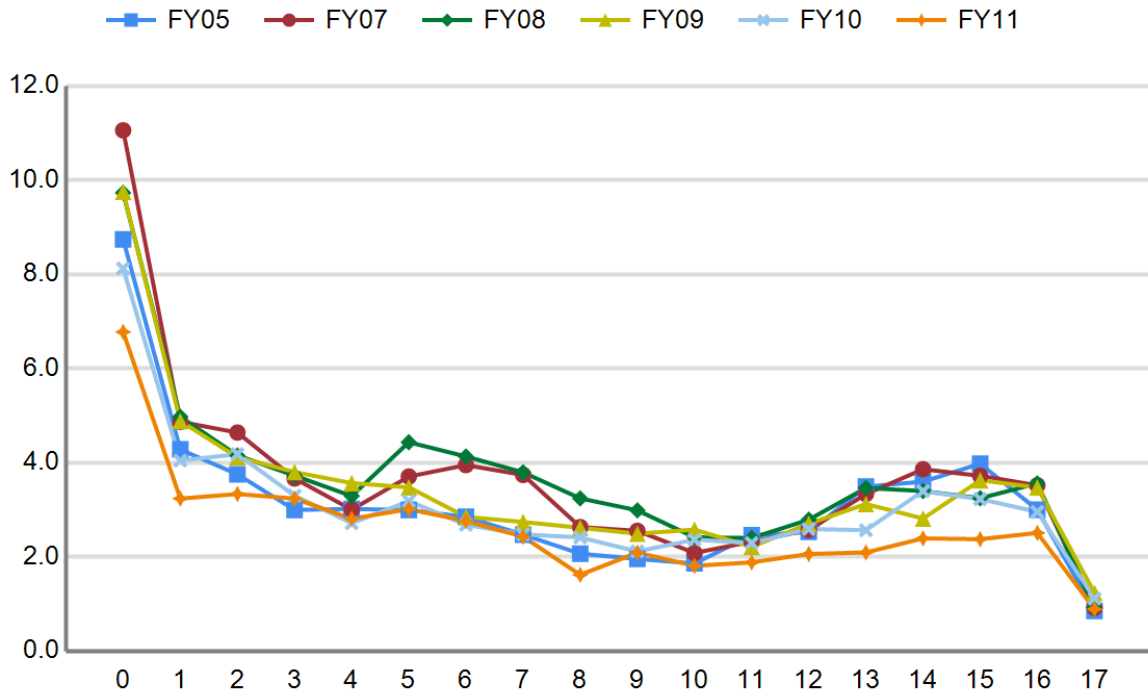
South Carolina's 1992 base year amount Preventive/Supportive Services \$236,000, Foster Care Services/Family Support \$477,000.

Population at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment

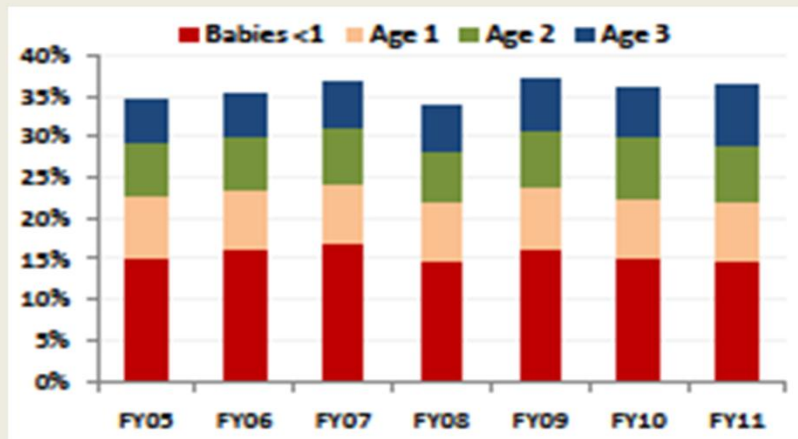
The state has identified children under the age of three as the greatest risk of maltreatment. The state has been using monthly reports in looking at the age, reason and length of stay in foster care. The state has targeted this population in looking at preventive services through collaboration through the Children's Trust Fund and other state and non-profit partners.

The following charts present data on victims of maltreatment by age, children age 0 to 3 in foster care by age, and removal by reason by age group.

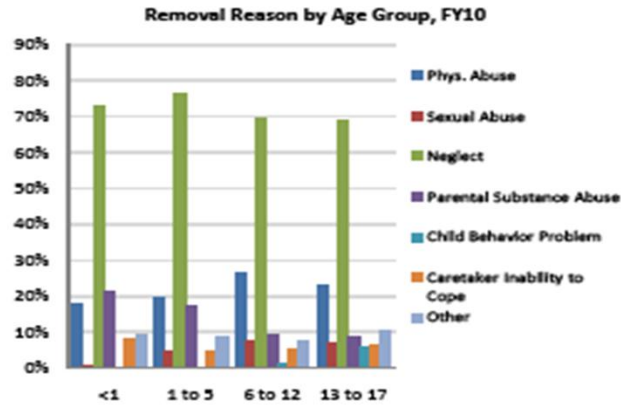
Entry Rate by Age Group



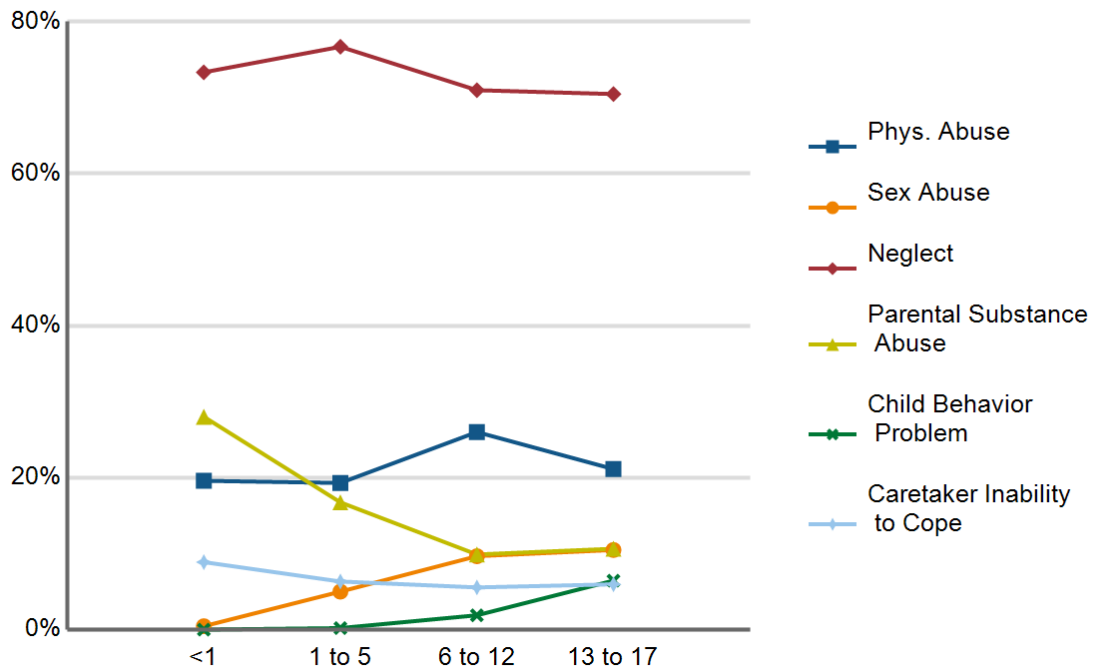
Children 0 To 3 Make Up Approximately
36% Of All Children Entering Care



Removal Reasons by Age Group, FY10



Removal Reason by Age Group, FY11



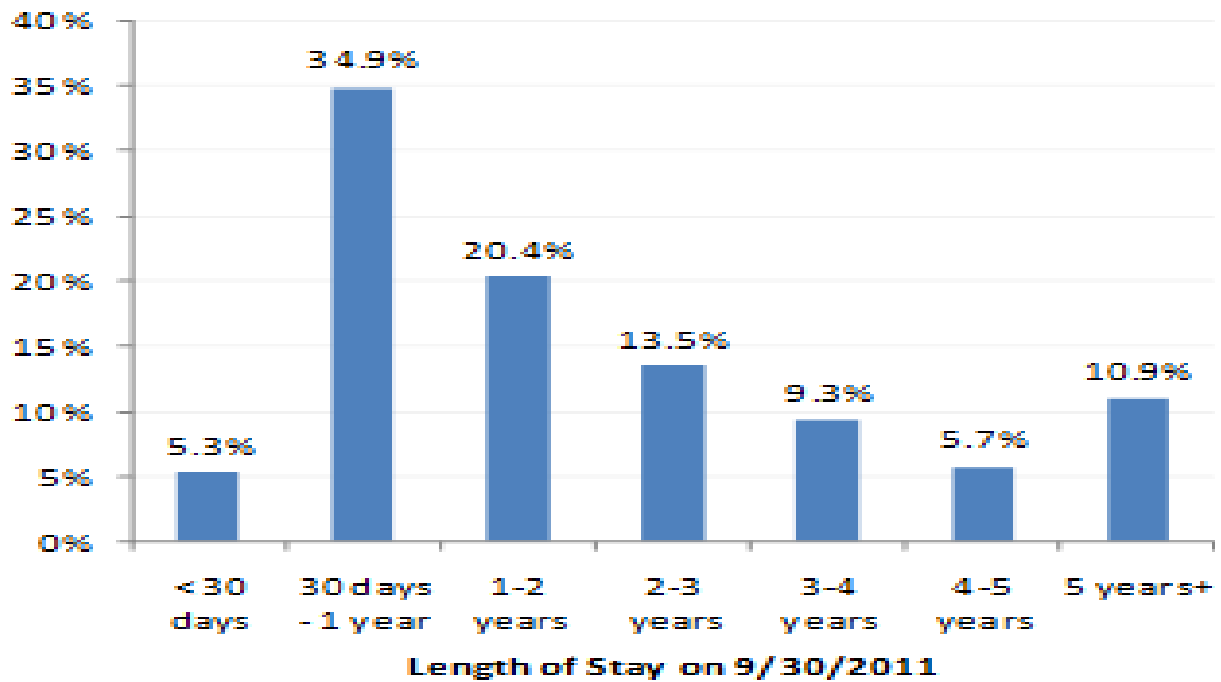
Based on the analysis of data the children under the age of 3 years make up 35% of all children entering foster care and with all age groups the overwhelming reason that children enter foster care is physical neglect. Through continued analysis and discussion about the improved assessment of risk and safety management provided by the SCDSS and the Child Welfare System it is anticipated that the children in this age group will receive additional services and resources to support healthy development and reduce the likelihood of maltreatment.

Children That Entered Foster Care in 2010 and Exited Early
Reported by County Where Child Entered Foster Care
(Accountability, Data and Research / Effective 20110801)

region	origin #	origin name	# that entered FC in 2010	Children in care				
				3 or fewer days	7 or fewer days	35 or fewer days	60 or fewer days	180 or fewer days
		region 1	1160	56	96	248	341	527
1	001	ABBEVILLE COUNTY DSS	22	1	2	6	15	18
1	004	ANDERSON COUNTY DSS	182	3	8	14	19	39
1	011	CHEROKEE COUNTY DSS	69	0	0	19	24	41
1	023	GREENVILLE COUNTY DSS	361	33	46	87	124	190
1	024	GREENWOOD COUNTY DSS	26	2	5	8	13	18
1	030	LAURENS COUNTY DSS	77	3	7	29	36	50
1	036	NEWBERRY COUNTY DSS	45	0	0	1	1	20
1	037	OCONEE COUNTY DSS	37	0	0	4	4	4
1	039	PICKENS COUNTY DSS	157	7	13	37	43	56
1	042	SPARTANBURG COUNTY DSS	184	7	15	43	62	91
		region 2	961	129	223	403	463	591
2	002	AIKEN COUNTY DSS	80	6	7	17	21	38
2	005	BAMBERG COUNTY DSS	16	1	1	1	1	5
2	006	BARNWELL COUNTY DSS	26	3	3	7	12	13
2	012	CHESTER COUNTY DSS	19	2	4	9	10	14
2	019	EDGEFIELD COUNTY DSS	13	0	1	3	9	9
2	020	FAIRFIELD COUNTY DSS	7	0	0	2	2	2
2	028	KERSHAW COUNTY DSS	49	8	8	15	19	25
2	029	LANCASTER COUNTY DSS	51	0	2	12	17	24
2	032	LEXINGTON COUNTY DSS	197	26	55	79	87	101
2	033	MCCORMICK COUNTY DSS	4	0	1	2	2	2
2	040	RICHLAND COUNTY DSS	351	63	118	191	208	263
2	041	SALUDA COUNTY DSS	9	3	3	5	5	6
2	044	UNION COUNTY DSS	29	0	0	7	12	14
2	046	YORK COUNTY DSS	110	17	20	53	58	75
		region 3	653	42	74	148	180	278
3	003	ALLENDALE COUNTY DSS	9	0	0	0	0	2
3	007	BEAUFORT COUNTY DSS	61	3	5	6	10	24
3	008	BERKELEY COUNTY DSS	103	11	16	28	28	37

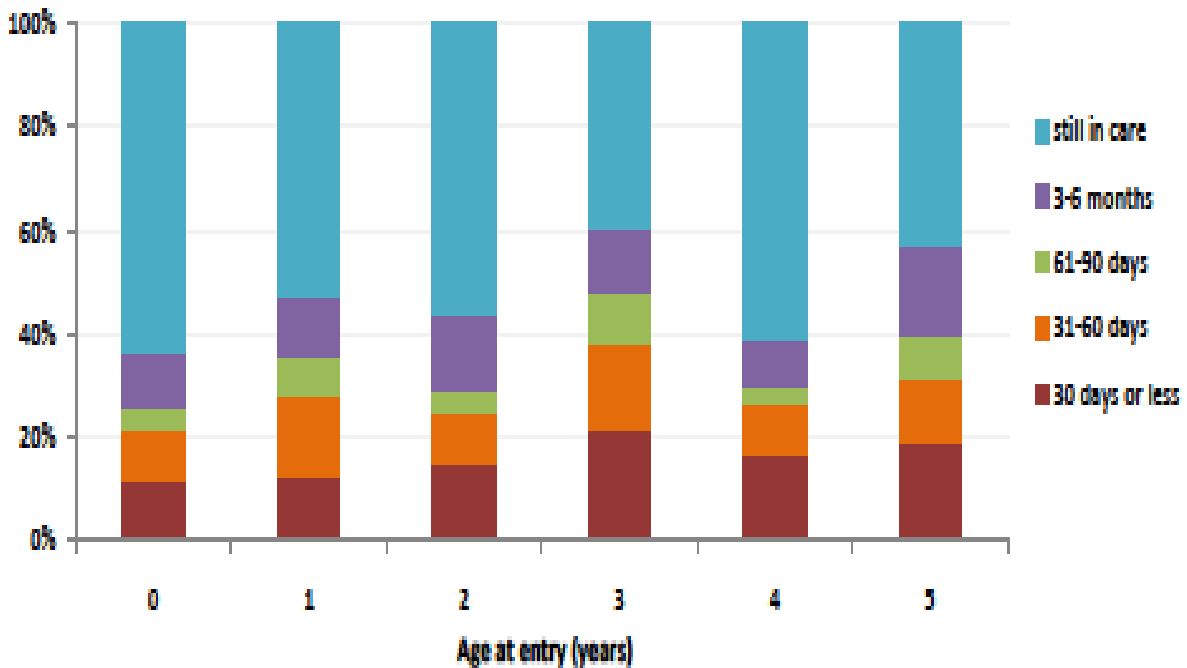
3	009	CALHOUN COUNTY DSS	11	0	1	1	2	4
3	010	CHARLESTON COUNTY DSS	263	13	28	62	67	112
3	015	COLLETON COUNTY DSS	36	0	0	1	2	4
3	018	DORCHESTER COUNTY DSS	69	7	16	26	31	44
3	025	HAMPTON COUNTY DSS	13	0	0	1	1	2
3	027	JASPER COUNTY DSS	11	0	0	4	6	8
3	038	ORANGEBURG COUNTY DSS	77	8	8	19	33	41
		region 4	703	33	56	188	235	330
4	013	CHESTERFIELD COUNTY DSS	79	8	8	28	30	36
4	014	CLARENDON COUNTY DSS	22	7	7	12	12	12
4	016	DARLINGTON COUNTY DSS	109	2	8	40	46	62
4	017	DILLON COUNTY DSS	44	1	1	9	15	18
4	021	FLORENCE COUNTY DSS	91	0	0	0	8	20
4	022	GEORGETOWN COUNTY DSS	30	2	2	6	8	14
4	026	HORRY COUNTY DSS	179	9	22	55	66	85
4	031	LEE COUNTY DSS	15	0	0	5	5	10
4	034	MARION COUNTY DSS	71	1	5	19	23	39
4	035	MARLBORO COUNTY DSS	25	2	2	3	6	13
4	043	SUMTER COUNTY DSS	32	1	1	11	14	18
4	045	WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY DSS	6	0	0	0	2	3

**Distribution of Children In Care at Year End,
by Length of Stay At Year End (9/30/2011)**



Short Stayers (FY11)

About 45% of all children who entered between the ages of 0 and 3 left care within 6 months.



As demonstrated by the CAPSS data examples above there is an overwhelming number of children entering foster care under the age of 5 years and remain in care a short period of time. Data analysis conducted by the SCDSS prompted the issuing of several contracts to provide in-home family preservation services based on a triage approach for children who are not at imminent risk of harm or have evident safety concerns. These community-based services provide the following services to children and families who may not have received community-based services in the past.

The Family Strengthening Services (FSS) consists of a comprehensive array of short-term (three to six months in duration) supportive services designed to assist families, who appear at initial intake with no safety issues, but with a low-risk of potential abuse or neglect, to resolve the issues that have brought them to the attention of the DSS. Services provided through the array of service partners can range from simple Information and Referral to Parenting Education, anger management and/or substance abuse treatment. It is important to note that these are but a few examples of services that are part of a comprehensive array of services. The objective is to enable families—through a set of focused brief interventions—to resolve the difficulties they may be experiencing and to provide a safe and nurturing environment for their children. Childcare must be provided onsite, if needed, for activities involving solely the parents versus family activities.

The Family Strengthening Services conducts a Re-Evaluation of Risk by completing online the common Safety and Risk Assessment instrument based upon the initial interview and observations of the family. If the providers' evaluation of the level of risk posed by the family's circumstances substantially differ from that identified in the referral from the DSS, the provider shall immediately inform the DSS and ascertain a mutually agreed plan of action. If the initial family interview and observations identify any safety issue within the family, responsibility for the case will be returned to the DSS for purposes of completing a full investigation of the safety issue.

Like the Family Strengthening Services component described above, Voluntary Case Management (VCM) services encompasses a similar comprehensive array of support services and focused interventions adapted to the needs of each particular family and designed to assist them in successfully resolving the issues with which they are confronted and to enable them to provide a safe, nurturing and suitable home for their child(ren).

The Voluntary Case Management Services conducts a Re-evaluation of Risk: In contrast to the families referred to FSS, however, the families referred to VCM services pose a higher risk (although still a moderate one) of potential safety issues if risk factors are not resolved. The services and interventions contemplated in VCM, therefore, are more intensive in nature and of somewhat longer duration (six months to a year). The primary goal is to provide the necessary supports (both to the children and the parents) to diminish the risk factors within the home and enable the children to continue to reside there safely, while preventing their removal into foster care. If there are no identified safety issues present in the home, upon completion of the initial contact and family assessment, the provider will complete online the common Safety and Risk Assessment tool based upon the initial interview and observations of the family. If the Providers' evaluation of the level of risk present within the family substantially differs from that identified in the referral from the DSS, the provider shall immediately inform the DSS and ascertain a mutually agreed plan of action. If the caseworker's assessment of risk is lower than that initially established by the DSS, the provider may (with the consent of the DSS) refer the family to the FSS program. If the caseworker's assessment determines the family to be at high risk of future abuse or neglect, the provider will return responsibility for the case back to the DSS.

VCM/FSS providers collaborate with other contract agencies to provide the at-risk population of ages 0-3 and parents with services, such as Head Start, BabyNet, Child Care services, Parent Anonymous

Child Care Services provide care, education, supervision, and guidance for children on a regular basis. SCDSS through an agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services may authorize child day care for families who are the subject of an abuse/neglect report. This service raises the child's visibility in the community, and can be an additional safeguard in preventing the child from entering foster care. This service can be utilized as a prevention mechanism for a child remaining at home, or as a way to support relative caregivers who, without child care assistance, might not be able to maintain the child in their home, thus resulting in the child entering into state custody. The Head Start Program is also hosted at the agency. The Head Start program, Child Care Services, Foster Care and SCDSS are working jointly to distribute information to foster parents regarding Head Start programs for foster care children.

Head Start is a comprehensive school readiness program serving kids 0-5 that has a strong focus on ensuring that they start school ready to learn. They offer many other services to these children to help them and to support their families. Families may enroll their children in Head Start programs based on their income and a number of other factors. There are Head Start programs available in every county.

Head Start programs are federal-to-local programs, which mean that the funding goes directly from the federal government to the local agencies providing Head Start services. A Head Start Collaboration Office is provided in every state. In South Carolina that office is located at the Department of Social Services. This federal grant funds a Head Start Collaboration Director, who ensures that all low-income children are served. The Director also encourages partnerships between Head Start and other agencies involved in the care and education of young children.

Children's Trust

In November 2011, two federal agencies combined the EBHV and MIEC grants under one umbrella. Maternal, Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIEC) provided SC with an opportunity to develop a continuum of home visitation services to match needs of families with the most appropriate level and intensity of home visitation service. These programs serve, at any time, 1,100 at-risk families. The programs promote maternal and family health, early education and child abuse prevention. Services offered through these programs include screening for risk factors for abuse, home visits from pregnancy through the child's fifth birthday, child development training for parents, school readiness for children and parents, parenting education, along with referral for well-baby screenings, immunizations and developmental screenings and smoking cessation. The program is voluntary and serves families involved with SCDSS as well as those referred by hospitals and other agencies. This grant incorporates a "hub-n-spoke" approach connecting more richly-resourced areas to contiguous, high-risk areas that lack strong resources. It also incorporates infrastructure building, workforce development and a strong, unified, evaluation process.

In January 2010, to enhance the importance of the BabyNet referrals for the above identified children as well as any child known to the agency and suspected of having developmental delays, a separate section in the CPS policy manual devoted to BabyNet referrals was created (719.01, *BabyNet Referrals*). It was the intent of this separate section to provide added guidance regarding the importance of BabyNet and the importance of encouraging families to participate in the services. DSS monitors these referrals through Program Quality Assurance reviews and supervisory reviews of case files. The collaborative meetings held quarterly on the local level between BabyNet, county DSS, Headstart and other service providers help to ensure timely referrals and response to referrals.

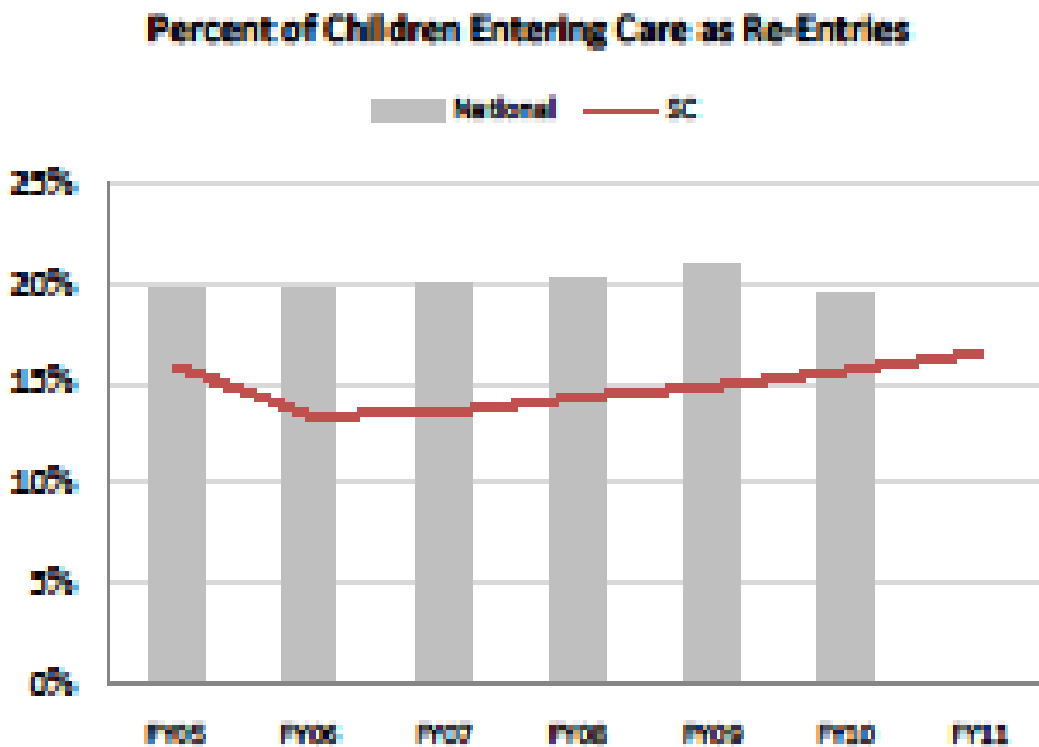
Foster Care and Adoption services also work closely with BabyNet as service providers to ensure the service needs for any child under age 3 are being met. To ensure compliance across program areas, in October 2010 SCDSS

added a section (818.05.02 *BabyNet*) to the foster care manuals. This section also provides the CAPTA requirements and step-by-step instructions to follow to enhance foster and adoptive parents' understanding of *BabyNet* and the importance of following up with these appointments. Agency staff are to request and file the results of the *BabyNet* assessment and services in the child's file and document in dictation future services needed based upon the assessment.

Should the child continue to need similar services after age 3, these services are often coordinated through Head Start. If Head Start is not an option for the child, other referrals for providers should be sought in collaboration with *BabyNet* staff. If neither *BabyNet* nor Head Start are options, staffing with the local school district's developmental specialist should be arranged.

SCDSS has not captured *BabyNet* referrals through its automated CAPSS system except in dictation. The future goal would be to add a method of automation to the referral process and to capture monthly the referrals and acceptance by *BabyNet*. This would assist the agency in measuring the child's well-being goals and monitor compliance with federal and state regulations and policies.

Through the data analysis to identify the approach and services that would reduce the likelihood of unnecessary entry into foster care, the SCDSS also monitors children re-entering foster care and the percent of children entering care as re-entries in SC is lower than it is nationally:



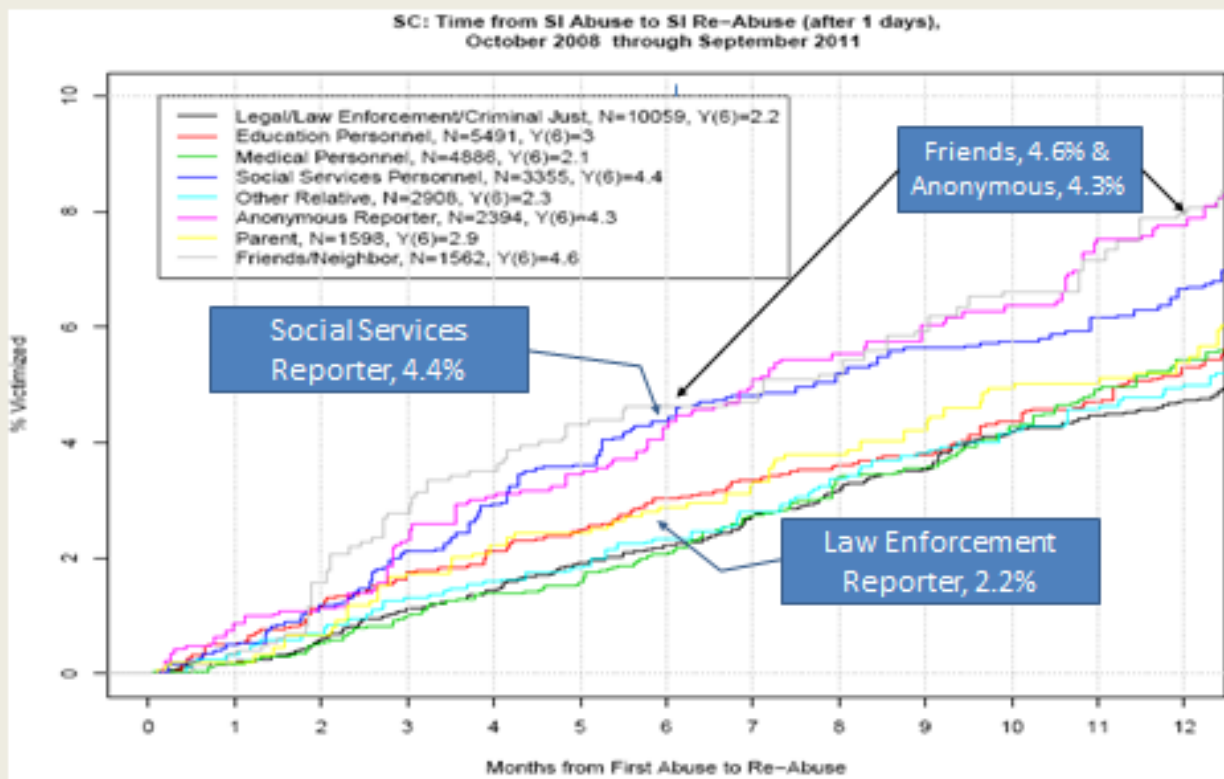
If only those children who needed to be removed from their homes were removed and not one more child after that there would be a reduction in the trauma experienced by these children and the long-term effects of the removal would not be experienced by the child. If instead services to prevent child maltreatment among families at risk were provided to the child and family to safely prevent removal and enhance the parents' capacity to protect. This SCDSS

has demonstrated a commitment to this effort by the services that have been put in place statewide. If none of the children in care fewer than 30 days entered care, it would result in a 39.9% reduction in children entering care and experiencing trauma associated with the removal, as it is likely the children who remain in care for fewer than 30 days may not have needed to be removed from their family to begin with instead with services the children could have safely remained within their home and preserve intact families when the family's problem can be addressed effectively with services. As demonstrated in the above chart SC continues to have fewer children re-enter foster care than the National average; and as SC provides the in-home family preservation services to enhance the parental capacity the number of children traumatized by removal will continue to diminish.

SCDSS is also looking at reporter type as a practice improvement approach for the triage procedures for the intake staff to consider the reporter type as an indicator for likelihood of risk of recurrence. Particular attention is paid if the reporter is anonymous and the SCDSS intake policy has been updated so that the "motivation of the reporter" language has been changed to be more proactive in nature to engage the reporter to be able to gain as much information as possible to determine the level of risk or any safety concerns.

Risk of Recurrence Differs by Initial Reporter

Reports by friends and anonymous reporters more likely to result in recurrence



Following are brief, general descriptions of services delivered by the agency as well as partner agencies. More detailed information is provided in subsequent sections.

In-Home Prevention and Intervention Services

The agency's primary mechanism for providing supportive preventive services to families is through contracts with local non-profit providers. These contracts are written at the state level and include services for intensive in-home based services, a variety of counseling; parent education services, parent aide services, flexible funding, and child care services through the CCDBG Voucher program. While some of the major services are described below, the agency also contracts for services that may be unique to a particular county such as Parents Anonymous of South Carolina for local chapter development (statewide) to counseling through Family Services, Inc. The following services are also available to meet the needs of intact families and to prevent placement in state custody.

CPS in-home prevention and intervention services related to indicated cases of abuse or neglect are provided on a statewide basis through each county office.

Child Protective Services for children under the age of 18 who are or are alleged to be abused, neglected, or exploited or who are at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation and require services to prevent this from happening is the main focus of the SCDSS county offices. The services include receiving reports; assessing those reports as to occurrence of alleged incident and occurrence of future abuse, neglect or exploitation; assessment of family strengths, needs, and risk to child's safety; referral to services and case management services to address the factors causing or contributing to the maltreatment.

Child Care Services provide care, education, supervision, and guidance for children on a regular basis. SCDSS through an agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services may authorize child day care for families who are the subject of an abuse/neglect report. This service raises the child's visibility in the community, and can be an additional safeguard in preventing the child from entering foster care. This service can be utilized as a prevention mechanism for a child remaining at home, or as a way to support relative caregivers who, without child care assistance, might not be able to maintain the child in their home, thus resulting in the child entering into state custody. The Head Start Program is also hosted at the agency. The Head Start program, Child Care Services, Foster Care and SCDSS are working jointly to distribute information to foster parents regarding Head Start programs for foster care children.

Child Welfare Services continues to implement the joint Child Protective Services, Foster Care, and Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services initiative to improve safety and risk assessment through comprehensive family assessments and service plans and the evaluation of progress through an integrated process. For the past five years, SCDSS has collaborated with the National Resource Centers for Child Protective Services and Family Centered Practice and Permanency. Collaboration with the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare was added specifically to help improve policies and procedures related to the handling of child protection cases where substance abuse is an issue. During FY 2010-2011, the assessment and planning tool was incorporated into the agency's SACWIS system (CAPSS) to simplify the process and make the system more user-friendly. Work with the National Resource Center for CPS and Permanency Planning will continue over the next two-year PIP period. The agency has requested that the Center review and assess the child protective services policy for the safety framework to enhance the risk and safety assessment process. Additionally, the Center for CPS will work with the four innovation counties starting with Aiken County on guided supervision. Technical assistance from the National Resource Centers involved direct mentoring and consultation on cases to build critical thinking skills and help program supervisors and state office staff gain confidence in applying policy and best practice guidelines to different

situations. Implementation of the guided supervision model will assist the counties in preparing for the Safety Roundtables. Safety Roundtables will be facilitated and supported by Casey Family Programs.

Prevention Services

The Children's Trust of South Carolina is the primary prevention agency in the state and is the CBCAP lead. The Children's Trust received a five-year Evidence-Based Home Visitation (EBHV) grant from the Administration of Children and Families in 2008. This grant builds infrastructure and provides evaluation of six Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) model sites (two located at hospital sites and two located at health clinics). Private funders Duke Endowment and Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation are currently funding these services, which are leveraged through CBCAP. Nearly \$3 million was leveraged during SFY 2011-2012. The six NFP sites are coordinated by the SC First Steps to School Readiness program, with a clinical nurse dedicated to these sites at the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). Currently, six NFP sites cover 12 counties:

- Upstate: Anderson, Greenville, and Spartanburg
- Midlands: Lexington and Richland
- Lowcountry: combined sites for Horry, Georgetown and Williamsburg, and for Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton and Dorchester.

In June 2010, Children's Trust was designated as the Maternal, Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIEC) designee for the state. In November 2011, two federal agencies combined the EBHV and MIEC grants under one umbrella. MIEC provided SC with an opportunity to develop a continuum of home visitation services to match needs of families with the most appropriate level and intensity of home visitation service. These programs serve, at any time, 1,100 at-risk families. The programs promote maternal and family health, early education and child abuse prevention. Services offered through these programs include screening for risk factors for abuse, home visits from pregnancy through the child's fifth birthday, child development training for parents, school readiness for children and parents, parenting education, along with referral for well-baby screenings, immunizations and developmental screenings and smoking cessation. The program is voluntary and serves families involved with SCDSS as well as those referred by hospitals and other agencies. This grant incorporates a "hub-n-spoke" approach connecting more richly-resourced areas to contiguous, high-risk areas that lack strong resources. It also incorporates infrastructure building, workforce development and a strong, unified, evaluation process.

A total of \$12.5 million is expected for five years. Currently, MIEC supports five of the nine evidenced-based programs with high fidelity (Healthy Families America, Healthy Steps, Nurse Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers and Family Checkup) in the following counties: Abbeville, Aiken, Barnwell, Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester, Edgefield, Greenville, Greenwood, McCormick, Pickens, Saluda, Spartanburg and Union.

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Intervention (Child Protective Services)

Child Protective Services (CPS) Intake

Intake is completed at each county for Child Protective Services Reports. There is also a statewide CPS hotline where calls are received and distributed to the correct county office for investigation. Each county has an after-hours number and on-call emergency intake workers. The goal for CPS intake is to ensure a thorough assessment is completed as a result of the intake call or maltreatment report to ensure adequate information is obtained to make an appropriate decision about services needed for the family.

As part of the CAPTA requirements to develop a triage system that requires the acceptance and assessment of child abuse and neglect reports to determine the level of intervention for family assessment and referral for services, SCDSS has worked with the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services (NRC-CPS) to develop an Appropriate Response system for assessment of all child abuse and neglect (CAN) referrals. Contracts have been completed for two agencies (who subcontract with other agencies) to provide a tiered response to referrals of CPS cases that do not rise to the level of investigation based on safety factors for the child but for whom there are risk factors that indicate the family needs services to improve their protective capacity and reduce the risk factors of an occurrence or reoccurrence of abuse or neglect.

Appropriate Response

The goal for SFY 2012 will be to fully implement Appropriate Response statewide and to ensure all reports are assessed and routed to the best possible agency for a family assessment for safety and risk factors for children who are reported as possible CAN victims. The families who are assigned for a full investigation of the alleged abuse or neglect are referred to the appropriate SCDSS staff, and the investigation is initiated timely according to the level of safety. CPS reports that indicate low or moderate risk to the child are referred to a contract agency for assessment and services. The agency's goal is to assist the family in meeting their needs and protecting the child from further abuse or neglect in the least intrusive manner and in a manner that will provide them with a support network for the future.

SCDSS has engaged in a systematic and comprehensive review of its Child Welfare Services program based on the most recent Child and Family Services Review. To fulfill SCDSS responsibility to protect and promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of South Carolina's children and families, SCDSS has established collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations. These partnerships work to enhance protective factors in families and communities, allowing SCDSS to provide the most appropriate, efficient, and effective response possible to the families brought to the attention of SCDSS.

CAPTA requires that states establish a triage system that:

- Accepts, screens, and assesses reports received to determine which such reports require an intensive intervention and which require voluntary referral to another agency, program, or project;
- Provides, either directly or through referral, a variety of community-linked services to assist families in preventing child abuse and neglect; and
- Provides further investigation and intensive intervention where the child's safety is in jeopardy. (Section 105(2) amended June 25, 2003).

The CAPTA Reauthorization of 2010 requires state and local systems to implement an alternative response approach in preventing child abuse and neglect and to protecting children from harm.

A request for proposal (RFP) was released to the community in August 2011 to invite community-based organizations to work with SCDSS to strengthen families. The initial offering was for the 10 Upstate counties. This RFP encouraged organizations to form coalitions under a master contractor to provide integrated services. This RFP was awarded in late October to Specialized Alternatives for Youth (SAFY). As a starting point, SAFY effectively developed coalitions in the three largest counties in the Upstate - Greenville, Anderson and Spartanburg.

At the heart of this model is an automated Safety and Risk Matrix that is used at intake to guide the proper or appropriate response to the report. Theresa Costello, Director, National Resource Center for Child Protection (NRC-CPS), and consultants came to South Carolina to train both SCDSS workers and the community providers. This training was comprised of recognizing the difference between safety and risk and training on the philosophy, development and implementation of the intake tool. This is an evidence-based tool which has been successfully implemented and validated in Hawaii.

NRC-CPS also helped SCDSS design a comprehensive safety and risk assessment. This assessment uses the same safety questions and risk matrix that is used in the intake process. In addition, the assessment includes components from the Connected Families “Signs of Safety” training. Training is also provided on the assessment for both SCDSS staff and the provider staff. The safety and risk was based on the assessment of the safety, vulnerability of the child or children, and the protective capacity of the parents and/or caretakers.

SCDSS investigates all cases where there is a safety issue or the risk level is high. If the risk level is moderate, then one of the community partners is contacted to assess for safety and risk issues in the family. This level of service is known as Voluntary Case Management (VCM) and is available to a family for six to 12 months. If the risk level is low, then a referral is made to a community partner to assess the safety and risk issues in the family. This service is called Family Strengthening Service (FSS). This service is available to a family for three to six months.

The core component is that safety of the children is the first thing that is assessed by all levels of response. If any safety issues are identified by VCM or FSS, then they immediately refer the case back to SCDSS. If no safety issues are identified, then the VCM or FSS assess the risk factors in the family. Once the potential risk factors to children are known, the VCM or FSS staff work with the family to construct a service plan that will reduce the identified risk factors. The risk factors are re-assessed every 90 days to measure improvement. Safety is assessed each time a worker visits.

The array of treatment services includes counseling, referrals for alcohol and drug counseling, parenting classes and mentoring, financial counseling, domestic violence intervention and counseling, family group decision-making services (family group conferencing available statewide and family team meetings available in the four innovation counties), educational support, developmental counseling services for children (e.g., BabyNet, the early intervention system for children under three years of age with developmental delays or conditions associated with developmental delays; the SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs; and others).

Cases can be changed to either a higher level or lower level based on the ongoing safety and risk assessment. This is true even for SCDSS cases that start as an investigation. If the safety issues are resolved or the risk level is reduced, and the children and family could be better served by a community provider, then the case can be transferred after engaging the family and having them agree that the service would be beneficial.

In order to track all the referrals, SCDSS has created a provider portal into the SCDSS SACWIS system. This portal allows the referral to be made straight to the provider once the intake supervisor has signed off on the decision. The portal allows the providers to put dictation in the system which is accessible to SCDSS. The safety and risk comprehensive assessment is also in the portal. The services that are provided to the family and the progress made on the services are included in the system as well.

After the initial success of the model in Region 1, RFPs were released in Regions 2, 3 and 4. Growing Homes was awarded the contract and has developed collaborative partners for these Regions. Region I rolled out the model to six of its ten counties. Region II, which is in the middle of the state, rolled out in March 2012. Region III and IV and the rest of Region I are scheduled to be rolled out by the end of May, completing the statewide effort.

Appropriate response began in Region I in January 2012. Region II counties began Appropriate Response in March 2012, and Region III and IV will begin on May 7, 2012. The staff in both SCDSS and contract agencies are being trained on the CPS intake assessment and the referral process for appropriate response. Forms and intake tools in the CAPSS system are being updated to incorporate appropriate response. Policy and procedures are being developed for CPS Intake to incorporate appropriate response. It is the goal of the agency to complete and publish revised policy by June 30, 2012. The policy and procedures will continue to be revised and enhanced as the State continues its Appropriate Response system development and learns from the statewide roll-out.

When all 46 counties are actively involved in Appropriate Response, the process will be added to the Child Welfare Basic training, and all new employees of both SCDSS and the contract providers will be expected to receive training on the process and practice implications.

Currently the NRC-CPS and consultants are assisting with assessments of the intake process, the referral process, and the monitoring of the private providers assessments to ensure SCDSS is remaining true to the model and implementing the tools as provided. Screen-outs will continue to be reviewed and training will be provided as needed.

CPS Intake Accomplishments

The following chart indicates the number of CPS intake reports received by the agency in FFY 2011 and the number of reports received in the first half of FFY 2012. It is noteworthy that in FFY 2011, 62% of the intakes were accepted for investigation. Thus far in FFY2012, approximately 68% of the intakes were accepted for investigation or family assessment by one of the private provider agencies through appropriate response.

Statewide CPS Intake Decisions FFY 2011 and the first six months of FFY 2012

FFY in which Referral Decision Was Made	Total Referrals for which a Decision was Made	Decisions for Referrals Received			
		Accepted/ Approved	Information and Referral Only	Not Accepted/ Denied	Referred to Economic Services
FFY 2011	27,657	17,214	22	10,420	1
FFY 2012 (October 2011 – March 2012)	14,083	9,649	24	4,409	1

Aiken County DSS is the innovation county for CPS intervention and improvement. Through case reviews, the agency is reviewing all screened-out referrals to ensure that the intake unit is appropriately assessing the report and asking enough questions to make a sound safety decision about whether the case is accepted for investigation. Through the work with the NRC-CPS, Aiken county intake staff received additional guidance and supervisory support in assessing the intake information to make these decisions. Supervisors were alerted by technical assistance staff if there were any patterns or concerns noted during the reviews of the intakes.

Multiple meetings were conducted in SC in three locations in July and August to inform private sector providers of the pending RFPs for Appropriate Response and other services that would be contracted for SCDSS families. Administration also began in November 2011 a “Palmetto Power” Meeting for Private Providers (P3) to enhance communication between the agency and the communities as well as to engage the private sector in an effort to understand and assist the agency in the agency goals for children. These *free* Palmetto Power for Providers Meetings (P3) are an opportunity for providers to meet with DSS regional and county directors and staff to examine ways to work as partners jointly committed to positive outcomes for the children and families being served. Providers and DSS professionals can discuss the challenges and opportunities they encounter in improving local coordination in order to meet the goal of making sure all children are safe and live in a positive, permanent home. The intention of these meetings is to move to the next step in the collaboration process. In FFY12 the format of these P3s shifted is to encourage and enable providers and DSS to work together to accomplish the common goal of making sure all children are safe and live in a positive, permanent home. Two “Closer Look” meetings will *be* held during the prior month, where DSS staff and local providers sit down and discussed specific cases in detail. The P3 meeting will explain the Closer Look process, describe the cases that were discussed, and be an opportunity for attendees to explore ways to work as partners on other cases.

Accountability, Data and Research (ADR) staff will continue to review the county offices on a rotating schedule to ensure the intake and roll-out of Appropriate Response has occurred as the model suggests as well as to ensure the service delivery to the clients is consistent and meeting the client’s needs. ADR has begun reviewing the Private Provider Contract Agency regarding their role in the family assessment and service delivery. Additionally, since implementation in January 2012, the intakes and referrals have been reviewed by both consultants and NRC-CPS.

Child Protective Services to Children in a Child Care Facility

Out-of-Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN) unit investigations are done when a child protective services report has been made for a child in a child care facility such as a day care facility, foster home or residential facility. During FY 2011, the Citizens Review Panel and SCDSS worked closely in reviewing OHAN investigations and developed the following goals:

- Improve quality of Out-of-Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN) investigations (the investigation of child abuse neglect of a child in a child care facility, residential facility or foster home).
- Improve quality of the communication between OHAN division and the other divisions of the agency, i.e., the Licensing, Regulatory, and Foster Care Units of the agency. An effort to ensure that all children in a facility are safe and that not only is the incident of abuse to the victim child evaluated, but in every incident of a report on a facility, all children’s safety in the setting is assessed for similar abuse or neglect.

During FY 2011, the Citizens Review Panel and SCDSS have become increasingly concerned with the number of reports of child abuse or neglect in either the group home facilities or in foster homes. The quality of the investigation and the number of screened out reports were higher than the average of screen outs in general CPS intake and the percentage of unfounded reports were of particular concern. Through assessment and collaborative efforts, SCDSS has evaluated the policy and has rewritten said policy, as well as, worked to help educate the panel members and SCDSS staff on the fact that out-of-home investigations are a systemic issue that crosses over child protective services, foster care staff and licensing/regulatory staff to ensure that the safety of children in care in either a child caring institution, foster home or day care facility are free from additional dangers. Policy is being re-written to require communication and collaboration between divisions of service delivery to ensure the protection of not only the victim child but all children in the facility. Policy revisions were expected to be completed by April 30, 2012, and training with all staff will be completed within the year to ensure appropriate implementation.

In the past, OHAN investigations have on occasion been treated in isolation of the licensing, regulatory or case worker staff for the children in foster care. The purpose of having an OHAN unit was to eliminate any bias that a licensing/ regulatory or county CPS worker familiar with a family or facility might have, should a CPS report be made on the family/facility. However, while the investigation does need to be done in an impartial setting, it cannot be done without the input from licensing or case managers for the victim child. Communication guidelines are being addressed not only in written policy but in collaborative contacts within and between the agency divisions and community resources. Policy is in the process of being finalized and it will be published in calendar year 2012. Evaluation of policy and its application will continue through the partnership with the South Carolina Association of Children's Homes and Family Services. The Accountability, Data and Research (ADR) staff will also begin pulling OHAN-specific cases for review and compliance measures.

After the policy changes are complete, training will be conducted with OHAN and Licensing / Regulatory Units. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of communication to ensure all children, not only the victim child, in the facility are safe. Additionally, regulatory issues and corrective action plans must be closely monitored and all parties need to be aware of the issues.

The following statewide trends and data showed a clear need for policy and communication changes in the area of OHAN (1) intake rate, (2) indication rates, and (3) lack of communication in the past between divisions and the community. These concerns required the State to evaluate its processes and make improvements.

The following chart provides data on OHAN investigations for the past five fiscal years.

OHAN	FY 06-07		FY 07-08		FY 08-09		FY 09-10*		FY 10-11**	
Total # of Referrals	894		834		968		990		781	
Investigation Type	Accepted	Indicated	Accepted	Indicated	Accepted	Indicated	Accepted	Indicated	Accepted	Indicated
Not documented	4	1								
Day Care	195	15	146	15	162	22	190	17	85	17
Foster Home	214	16	178	14	253	18	111	5	2	0
Group Home / Institution	159	15	106	5	122	11	132	7	70	2
State Total	572	47	430	34	537	51	433	29	157	19
Indication Rate		8.2%		7.9%		9.5%		6.7%		12.1%

* In January 2010, as a means to manage budget reductions, the Department reduced the number of staff in the OHAN unit and transferred the responsibility of investigating family foster homes from OHAN to the county offices.

**Preliminary information

Accountability, Data, and Research (data from CAPSS on November 1, 2011)

Monitoring of the results of indications of the findings of abuse or neglect will continue through the CAPSS system, as well as through collaborative meetings with the South Carolina Association of Children's Homes and Family Services and Citizens Review Panel.

OHAN now has access to the names of children in foster homes/ relatives homes or group homes that have been placed in SC through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). This ensures that, for any child in the custody of another jurisdiction but placed in a SC foster home (relative or non-relative) or group care facility, the placing state will be contacted and the custodial agency made aware if any additional maltreatment has occurred. This alerts the other state to any increased need for monitoring or decision-making regarding the child's continuation in the placement.

Earlier this year, the child welfare director and the SCCRP panel chairs presented on their collaborative work at the 2012 National Citizen Review Panel Conference in Washington, DC. The title of the presentation was "How the SCCRP Impacts Repeat Maltreatment." The presentation focused on how the SCCRP and SCDSS worked together to strengthen the policies, procedures and practices of the agency regarding Out of Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN). The presentation was well received and resulted in invitations for the SCCRP facilitator to share information about the work being performed in SC.

On October 25th, the SCCRP and key SCDSS staff will participate in a Fall Retreat that will be attended by both groups' partners. The Child Welfare Director will be the Keynote Speaker and will address SCDSS initiatives and collaboration among those who serve children who are abused and neglected.

In-Home Prevention and Intervention (CPS Treatment) Services

In-home CPS treatment services are available to all children and families in SC for whom an indicated case of child abuse or neglect has been determined. In-home treatment cases receive services designed to eliminate the child abuse or neglect and to improve the protective capacity of the parents. The goal of in-home treatment services is to prevent removal of a child from their family of origin, to increase the child's safety and to mitigate risk factors.

The array of treatment services includes counseling, referrals to alcohol and drug counseling, parenting classes and mentoring, financial counseling, domestic violence intervention and counseling, educational support, developmental counseling services for the child, such as BabyNet, the early intervention system for infants and toddlers under three years of age with developmental delays or conditions associated with developmental delays; the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (SCDDSN); and others.

SCDSS continues to focus attention on the caseloads of in-home treatment workers as the State moves to count cases by children rather than by families. Struggling to see all children in the case, the agency strives for quality visits and to ensure the child is safe regardless of whether the child was the identified victim, a child placed with an alternative caregiver or relative, or a child living in the home of the parent. With 4,243 open treatment cases in SFY 2011, the agency acknowledged the need to improve the quality of services. In March 2012, the number of open treatment cases increased to 4,731. This increase is a concern for the agency, and an evaluation of the increase is being completed. Hypotheses are being formulated and tested to determine if, through attention and increased quality services, the State can decrease this number during the remainder of the year.

The agency deputy director for Human Services implemented "Palmetto Power" (P2) Meetings in July 2011. The purpose of these collaborative meetings with key stakeholders, private provider agencies, and county and state office

DSS staff is to focus on the state's data to analyze how to improve outcomes in SC Child Welfare Services. Beginning in February 2012, the focus of the P2 has been in-home treatment cases and the improvement of visitation frequency with all children involved in a case. The improvement is being measured on a monthly basis by each county director to ensure compliance with policy and to evaluate the improvement in the safety and well-being of the children.

Following is an example of a monthly report on visitation for open CPS treatment cases.

CPS Treatments - Open Treatment Services
From 07/01/2012 To 07/31/2012 (Run date 7/29/12)

	Number of Open CPS Treatment Services	Services with No Activity Number	Percent	Children In An Open CPS Treatment Service	Children with no Face to Face Number	Percent
Region 1	1, 541	439	28.49%	3, 240	1, 632	50.37%
004 - ANDERSON	279	55	19.71%	582	251	43.13%
023 - GREENVILLE	686	263	38.34%	1,445	835	57.79%
037 - OCONEE	128	53	41.41%	252	179	71.03%
039 - PICKENS	218	37	16.97%	427	162	37.94%
042 - SPARTANBURG	230	31	13.48%	534	205	38.39%
Region 2	626	80	12.78%	1, 338	353	26.38%
011 - CHEROKEE	96	10	10.42%	196	127	64.8%
012 - CHESTER	31		0%	65	3	4.62%
013 - CHESTERFIELD	26		0%	54	3	5.56%
020 - FAIRFIELD	13		0%	31		0%
028 - KERSHAW	57	47	82.46%	104	97	93.27%
029 - LANCASTER	72	4	5.56%	152	29	19.08%
040 - RICHLAND	153	9	5.88%	342	29	8.48%
044 - UNION	37		0%	75	8	10.67%
046 - YORK	141	10	7.09%	319	57	17.87%
Region 3	879	235	26.73%	1, 972	865	43.86%
003 - ALLENDALE	14	7	50%	34	19	55.88%
007 - BEAUFORT	42	10	23.81%	91	30	32.97%
008 - BERKELEY	151	13	8.61%	316	83	26.27%
010 - CHARLESTON	414	143	34.54%	969	492	50.77%
015 - COLLETON	43	13	30.23%	104	49	47.12%
018 - DORCHESTER	159	45	28.3%	320	158	49.38%
025 - HAMPTON	34	1	2.94%	85	21	24.71%
027 - JASPER	22	3	13.64%	53	13	24.53%
Region 4	625	106	16.96%	1, 394	487	34.94%
014 - CLARENDON	42	5	11.9%	94	44	46.81%
016 - DARLINGTON	92	15	16.3%	187	60	32.09%
017 - DILLON	51	3	5.88%	116	21	18.1%

	Number of Open CPS Treatment Services	Services with No Activity Number	Percent	Children In An Open CPS Treatment Service	Children with no Face to Face Number	Percent
021 - FLORENCE	72	8	11.11%	161	41	25.47%
022 - GEORGETOWN	29	9	31.03%	60	25	41.67%
026 - HORRY	111	15	13.51%	225	62	27.56%
031 - LEE	19	2	10.53%	48	16	33.33%
034 - MARION	74	15	20.27%	170	66	38.82%
035 - MARLBORO	40	14	35%	115	63	54.78%
043 - SUMTER	70	3	4.29%	165	42	25.45%
045 - WILLIAMSBURG	25	17	68%	53	47	88.68%
Region 5	743	233	31.36%	1, 654	757	45.77%
001 - ABBEVILLE	10	1	10%	23	2	8.7%
002 - AIKEN	85	21	24.71%	204	69	33.82%
005 - BAMBERG	35	10	28.57%	90	52	57.78%
006 - BARNWELL	35	9	25.71%	75	21	28%
009 - CALHOUN	13	2	15.38%	27	10	37.04%
019 - EDGEFIELD	24	4	16.67%	54	20	37.04%
024 - GREENWOOD	29	10	34.48%	57	27	47.37%
030 - LAURENS	55	8	14.55%	112	30	26.79%
032 - LEXINGTON	367	163	44.41%	800	490	61.25%
033 - MCCORMICK	4		0%	5		0%
036 - NEWBERRY	30	2	6.67%	64	11	17.19%
038 - ORANGEBURG	53	3	5.66%	137	25	18.25%
041 - SALUDA	3		0%	6		0%
State Totals	4, 414	1, 093	24.76%	9, 598	4, 094	42.65%
Managers should also review the weekly CAPSS Batch Reports SC130-R01, -R02 and -R03 for more specific details on client and caseworker activity in CPS treatment cases.						

Safety Roundtables

Beginning in April 2012, the agency has collaborated with Casey Family Programs to train staff to conduct safety roundtables. The purpose is to reassess the service needs of the families with CPS treatment cases and to develop a plan of action for each case to ensure the safety of the children and to assess their continued risk and need for services. Safety roundtables are a supportive process to enhance case staffing to ensure a supported and comprehensive decision regarding safety.

Family Engagement Strategies

All families involved with SCDSS are to receive Family Group Conferencing (FGC) services through SC Families First services (SCFF) and Family Finding/Children's Conferencing, which were implemented in Region I in January 2012. In December of 2011, a contract was awarded to the South Carolina Youth Advocacy Program (YAP) for Region I to provide family group decision-making (FGDM) with the addition of family finding services. Children's

conferencing is being deployed with families as children enter care as well as with those in care 17 months or longer. Region I will be reporting on the deployment of these specific FGDM interventions.

With funding through Casey Family Programs' annual investment and applying the federal match using IV-E and IV-B Subpart 2, SCDSS was able to have the financial resources to deploy FGC throughout the state over a four-year roll-out period. Funds enabled the agency to begin a cultural, philosophical and practice model shift in how the agency engages and partners with family members in assessment, planning and service delivery to their children. Even though the intent of Casey Family Program (CFP) funds is to promote the specific deployment of FGC, the shift in philosophy and practice enhanced other engagement strategies throughout the agency, such as family team meetings (FTMs) on the "front end" as families come to the attention of the agency and on the "back end" as children transition out of the foster care system. FTM was deployed in FY 2011 focusing on the four PIP innovation counties: Aiken, Greenville, Spartanburg and Oconee.

FGDM Accomplishments

Families being served include those undergoing investigation and those where children are receiving Treatment Services, Foster Care, Adoption and Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services. As of November 2011, FGC services were available in all 46 counties. As of March 31, 2012, a total of 811 FGCs had been completed, including 186 follow-up FGCs.

- Hired program staff and developed an implementation schedule to roll out to all counties statewide.
- Developed SC Model of Family Group Conferencing and training curriculum with programmatic support from Texas Department of Family Protective Services, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Phoenix Possibilities American Humane Association and Casey Family Programs. As of March 31, 2012, 226 professionals representing 54 different agencies, schools, faith-based organizations, public and private youth and family service community organizations and residential facilities have been trained. Their knowledge of the model and process enables cooperation for attending FGC and will lead toward larger systems change.
- Developed and implemented a successful business model to ensure community-based service and support for FGC, with reimbursement rates for FGC, partial FGC and follow-up FGC published in the Fixed Price Bid. Adequate revenue for the service was provided, enabling seasoned FGC coordinators to be recruited as FGC providers. On average, FGC coordinators trained have 15 years of experience providing services to children and families.
- The Family Group Conferencing certification process was implemented to ensure competence and model fidelity. Developed by the University of SC, this instrument used during the coaching/mentoring stage of certification enables all to evaluate skill sets while ensuring model fidelity. The certification process includes a comprehensive three-day FGC coordinator training curriculum as the initial component of the FGC coordinator certification process. Participants completing the three-day training must score 80% or higher on the competency exit exam. Following the training, new FGC coordinators are assigned to a SCFF regional coordinator. The SCFF regional coordinator observes the FGC coordinator throughout the initial conferencing process to ensure model fidelity while evaluating the coordinator on core competencies toward final certification.
- Recruitment efforts for FGC providers were established and continue to identify potential FGC service providers. The South Carolina Association of Children's Homes and Family Services was specifically targeted as a recruitment source of member providers. As South Carolina continues to address the need for alternatives to congregate care, FGC provided an opportunity for many service providers to diversify and

expand their service array into more community-based family targeted services. Other recruitment efforts included attending provider meetings and professional organizations meetings, and presenting at conferences inviting professionals and service providers to join SCFF efforts.

- Referral and service delivery process completed using Business Process Mapping facilitated by Casey Family Programs.
- Internal communications plan completed – SCFF in-service training completed with county staff in all 46 counties.
- External communication plan completed to include community stakeholder training with CEUs offered, press releases and brochures developed. This is an area needing improvement as all counties have not completed their community stakeholder meetings.
- Program efforts evaluated by the USC Center for Child and Family Services.

Program Evaluation

- The evaluation component was changed to eliminate the comparison analyses, changing the evaluation design and thereby limiting the scientific value of findings. A summary report analyzing participant surveys with trends is expected to be available in 2012.
- As of August 31, 2011, over 2,250 participant surveys from 256 Family Group Conferences were received from 30 counties with the following breakdown:
 - Family/friend (1,397) 62%
 - Professionals/providers (245) 11%
 - SCDSS caseworkers and supervisors (335) 15%
 - Coordinators (266) 12%
 - Of the 1,397 survey responders who identified themselves as family or friends, 127 did not identify themselves as either paternal or maternal kin.
 - Of the 1,397 participants who identified themselves as family/friends, 36.8% self-identified as maternal kin and 21.8% identified as paternal kin.

Overall, most respondents found the Family Group Conference to be a positive experience based on responses (5 point scale with five being very positive). Mean scores were 4.6 for family/friends, 4.5 for providers, 4.6 for SCDSS staff, and 4.8 for conference coordinators.

Ratings were mostly consistent on all the survey items regardless of the role participants played.

- 94% of family members, 94% of providers and 96% of SCDSS staff said the conference was well explained and that the coordinator took the lead in explaining the purpose and reason for the conference to participants.
- Family members said they were well prepared for the conference by completing a genogram and ecomap with the coordinator. *Both items received a mean score of 4.5 out of 5.0 possible points.*
- Discussions with the FGC coordinator prior to the conference were rated as more helpful than other types of preparation (mean ratings of 4.8 and 4.7). Letters of invitation to the conference were rated as least helpful (mean ratings of 4.3 to 4.4 out of 5.0 possible points).
- Most respondents said that overall the conference helped to address the concerns for this child and for the family. (Mean scores ranging from 4.6 to 4.8 out of 5.0 possible points for both child & family.)
- Most respondents found the discussions of family strengths, concerns and desires and possibilities helpful. (Mean scores ranging from 4.7 to 4.8 on all items.)

- 95% of family/friends, 95% of providers and 99% of the SCDSS staff felt respected by the FGC coordinator.
- 94% of family/friends, 81% of providers, and 94% of SCDSS staff said that by the end of the conference they had a clear idea of the plan for the child. (It should be noted that Providers do not often stay until the end of the conference which may have influenced this response.)
- 78% of family/friends, 65% of the providers, and only 61% of SCDSS staff thought that all the people who needed to be included in the decision-making process for the family *attended the conference*. Most often fathers or paternal relatives were cited as missing, but there was a wide range of responses to this question including mothers, grandparents and other relatives, other providers like teachers, therapists, probation officers, and other agencies like DDSN, DJJ, and BabyNet. A few respondents thought that the CPS removal worker should have attended.
- Family responses to private family time were generally positive although there were some negative responses. 81% of respondents said that it was helpful to talk without professionals present and 90% said that they had a chance to say what they wanted to say.
- However, 17% of the respondents did think that one person dominated the process and 19% indicated they would have preferred to have a facilitator present. It is possible that many families are not accustomed to communicating with each other in this way and may tend to rely on professionals or providers when dealing with these types of family problems.

Program Changes

- While there are no specific changes in policy, there has been a significant change in practice affecting FGC. The agency, under new leadership, has established Wildly Important Goals with specific targets impacting FGC:
 - Goal #1: Increase positive permanency by 50% over FY 2011 accomplishments by 6/30/12 for children in care 17 months or more.
 - Goal #2: Increase FY 2012 adoptions by 50% over 2011 accomplishments by 6/30/12.
 - FGC has been identified as a lead measure on these goals as well as a new requirement for family reunification – seven out of 10 children will have a FGC prior to their ninth month in care.
 - Permanency Roundtables were also instituted in 2011 with FGC often included as an action item for these youth.
- FGC became available statewide during FY 2011. This was a year earlier for the last 12 counties to implement to meet the service needs of children as identified during the permanency roundtables.

FFY2011 Activities

- FTM implemented in all PIP innovation counties – Aiken, Greenville, Spartanburg and Oconee counties – position classification identified, funding secured through SC Families First CFP funds, FTM facilitators selected, FTM curriculum developed and training completed. Business Process Mapping was completed on referral and service delivery for families where children were not in state custody and families where children are in state custody (EPC and Ex Parte).
- Internal communication plan activities included county DSS in-services in all 46 counties, adoption and IFCCS on FGC and ongoing in-services recruiting referrals continued throughout 2011. Roll-out plan was ahead of schedule due to implementation of Permanency Roundtables bringing counties scheduled for 2012 on in 2011. Tools developed for internal training included power point, access to FGC video, brochure, referral forms and procedures, and scripts for explaining and marketing the program. Professional CEUs provided to attendees. In-service presentations were also held at all levels of leadership to include: Senior

Management Team, Child Welfare Council, Human Services Supervisory Council and Advisory Committee meetings. Also presented at the agency's Meeting the Challenge, statewide policy meeting introducing the agency's new practice model of care.

- Regional Advisory Committees were established in the initial implementation regions (I and III) to assist with program implementation efforts and county communication. Membership included county leadership and direct line staff. Representatives participated in Business Process Mapping sessions.
- External communication plan included SCFF education efforts through presentations on Family Group Decision-making and the SC Model of FGC to community partners and stakeholders. Tools developed included PowerPoint presentation, access to FGC video, handouts, brochure, press releases and professional CEUs for attendees. Presentations included:
 - SC Mental Health Child and Adolescent Director's Council
 - SC Foster Parent Association meetings, which included GAL volunteers as well as foster parents (York, Charleston, Chester, Anderson, Calhoun, Aiken, Orangeburg, Newberry, Horry, Colleton, Lee, Clarendon, Laurens, Berkeley, Georgetown, Spartanburg, Oconee, Allendale, Barnwell, Bamberg, Beaufort, Pickens, Hampton, Kershaw, Edgefield/Saluda, Sumter, Dorchester and Greenville Counties)
 - GAL staff and volunteers (state coordinators meeting, Lexington, Georgetown, Horry, Colleton, Lee, Clarendon, Laurens, Pickens, and York)
 - Children's Law Center – presentations to attorneys and judges in Charleston, Hilton Head and Columbia for CLE credits
- State and national conferences:
 - GAL Annual Conference
 - SC Foster Parent Association Annual Conference
 - SC Children's Trust Annual Conference (2010 and 2011)
 - SC Citizen Review Panel state meeting
 - National Citizen Review Panel Conference
 - 34th Annual Cross Cultural Conference
- Local conferences and meetings
 - Foster Care Review Board state meeting and local presentations
 - Greenville Parent Collaborative meeting
 - York County community stakeholders meeting
 - Greenville County Rape Crisis/CAC Center
 - Greenville County stakeholders/partners meeting
 - Calhoun County stakeholders meeting
 - Catawba Nation
 - Greenville Non-profit Association
 - Barnwell Parent Summit
 - Low Country Citizen's Review Panel
 - Greenwood County community stakeholders meeting
 - Pendleton Place Board meeting
 - Williamsburg County Interagency Council
 - Hampton County Interagency Council
 - Chesterfield County Interagency Council
 - Newberry County Interagency Council

- Laurens County Interagency meeting
- Oconee County Partner Meeting
- Spartanburg County Partner Meeting
- Berkeley County community meeting
- Allendale County community meeting
- Barnwell County community meeting
- Clarendon County Interagency meeting
- Beaufort Interagency Council
- Colleton County community meeting and celebration
- Dorchester County community stakeholders meeting
- Charleston County community stakeholders meeting
- Webinars to the SC Center for Fathers and Families fatherhood initiatives statewide on SC Model of FGC and American Humane Association - Fathers in Child Welfare curriculum
- Participation on the planning committee of the National Fathers in Child Welfare Network and assisted with webinar – Reaching Out to Incarcerated Fathers
- Family/Sibling Connections/Visitation plan added to FTM and FGC facilitated guide as agreed to in PIP renegotiations. The curriculum was developed and training was held with FTM facilitators and their supervisors, FGC coordinators and SCFF regional coordinators. The FGC and FTM agenda and structures and Family Plans were revised to ensure these connections and visitation plans were addressed at FTMs and FGC.

Service improvement areas continuing in 2013:

- Timeframe to FGC – movement toward a quicker turn-around time while adhering to values and principles of FGDM – family driven with sufficient preparation time to ensure needed attendance, involvement of the widest circle (family group), healing and transformation process necessary for families to develop best plan for their children. Timeframes reported in weekly logs.
- Ensure the FGC service is available for all families regardless of whether the parent(s) are willing to proceed. Implementation of Family Connections Act ensures that parents are not necessarily the gatekeepers of the process. Seven out of 10 children will receive a FGC prior to their ninth month in care. Reported in weekly logs and WIG meetings.
- We currently experience a low rate of follow-up FGC that varies from region to region with length of time of program implementation as a variable i.e. higher rate of follow up in regions with longer history of implementation. Data will continue to be collected and analyzed with county office. American Humane Association and CFP will also be consulted regarding national FGC follow-up rate trends for comparison.
- Public scoreboard - data tracked, obtained, and reported publicly through WIG on My4DX WIG software and CFP quarterly reports

Most recent CFSR results clearly indicated the need to improve the overall engagement of families in the child welfare process, “A need to strengthen family engagement” as evidenced in the following outcomes: Safety Outcome 2 – Items 3, 4; Permanency Outcome 2 – Items 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and Well-Being Outcome 1 – Items 17, 18, 19, 20.

The following table presents case review results for the four SC CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP) innovation counties (Aiken, Greenville, Oconee and Spartanburg).

Outcome Measures (Percent of Cases Reviewed for Which Item Was Rated as Strength)		Baseline Results Quarter 4	QA Results Quarter 5	QA Results Quarter 6
Item 1	Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment	89.4%	79.6%	74.5%
Item 3	Services to families to protect children in home and prevent removal	77.8%	67.5%	71.3%
Item 4	Risk of harm to child	70.0%	69.2%	60.0%
Item 7	Permanency goal for the child	67.7%	47.7%	66.2%
Item 10	Permanency goal of other planned living arrangement	85.7%	76.9%	76.9%
Item 12	Placement with siblings	78.4%	70.6%	79.1%
Item 13	Visiting with parents and siblings in foster case	41.1%	36.7%	40.4%
Item 18	Child and family involvement in case planning	44.3%	47.5%	45.5%
Item 19	Worker visits with child	72.3%	70.8%	71.5%
Item 20	Worker visits with parents	33.6%	34.6%	28.2%

The following table presents case review results for reviews in all counties.

FFY 2012 Outcome Measures (Percent of Cases Reviewed for Which Item Was Rated as Strength)		FFY 2012 QA Results for Quarter 1	FFY 2012 QA Results for Quarter 2	FFY 2012 QA Results for Quarter 3
Item 1	Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment	89.3	82.9	69.3
Item 2	Re-occurrence of maltreatment	97.2	89.3	97.2
Item 3	Services to families to protect children in home and prevent removal	79.3	73.0	66.0
Item 4	Risk of harm to child	70.4	69.2	65.0
Item 5	Foster care re-entries	93.8	100.00	96.9
Item 6	Stability of foster care placement	71.5	60.3	66.4
Item 7	Permanency goal for the child	67.8	50.3	51.7
Item 8	Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives	68.0	63.1	44.0
Item 9	Adoption	28.3	34.3	30.2
Item 10	Permanency goal of other planned living arrangement	75.0	62.5	64.4
Item 11	Proximity of foster care placement	97.8	95.8	94.8
Item 12	Placement with siblings	82.7	72.1	84.8
Item 13	Visiting with parents and siblings in foster case	45.0	38.3	33.0
Item 14	Preserving Connections	67.4	73.0	69.0
Item 15	Relative Placement	41.6	41.7	48.7
Item 16	Relationship of child in care with parent	19.5	22.0	17.3

FFY 2012 Outcome Measures (Percent of Cases Reviewed for Which Item Was Rated as Strength)		FFY 2012 QA Results for Quarter 1	FFY 2012 QA Results for Quarter 2	FFY 2012 QA Results for Quarter 3
Item 17	Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	42.0	53.3	39.0
Item 18	Child and family involvement in case planning	44.6	50.0	37.6
Item 19	Worker visits with child	72.9	72.7	74.0
Item 20	Worker visits with parents	33.8	36.2	20.8
Item 21	Educational needs of the child	87.3	92.0	78.5
Item 22	Physical health of the child	77.8	75.3	49.6
Item 23	Mental health of the child	66.3	62.8	66.8

Strategies for the above items include:

- Diligent efforts to identify, locate, assess, and engage non-custodial parents and relatives at the initiation and throughout the life of the case are necessary – fatherhood initiatives as described earlier have been implemented in Greenville County and will expand to other innovation counties.
- Casework staff have strategies to engage and involve youth, foster parents, family members, relatives (and other potential partners such as GALs, churches, etc) in helping a youth maintain connections through visitations and other activities – FTM and FGC are being successfully implemented addressing these areas.
- Strengthen policy and practice on assessing relatives and promoting stability of relative placement – relative/fictive kin options are being identified in the FTM and FGC for agency to complete home studies with identified needs for support which has increased relative placement options.
- Strengthen engagement of, and planning with, youth and families through family meetings and visits. FTM and FGC being successfully implemented and increasing family identification, involvement and participation in developing family plans.

SCDSS has enhanced and strengthened family engagement approaches and strategies using family group decision-making models. These proven models are assisting in achieving a more comprehensive and effective service delivery system for children and families that is coordinated, integrated, family-centered and culturally sensitive. Results include increased early family engagement and increased positive permanency for children.

Key family engagement strategies have been developed to address the following CFRS outcomes for which South Carolina was not in substantial conformity.

Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children. Several concerns were identified under this outcome:

- Children were not consistently placed with their siblings.
- The frequency and quality of visitation between children in foster care and their parents and siblings were insufficient to meet the needs of children and families.
- Children’s connections with extended family, school, and community were not consistently preserved.
- The agency had not made concerted efforts to search for either maternal or paternal relatives as potential placement resources.

- The agency had not made concerted efforts to support the child's relationship with the mother or father while the child was in foster care.

Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs. Concerns identified in this outcome include:

- The State was generally effective in assessing and meeting the needs of children receiving foster care services. However, the State was not consistent in assessing and meeting the needs of children receiving in-home services, foster parents, mothers, and fathers.
- The agency did not make concerted efforts to involve children, mothers, and fathers in case planning in both the foster care and in-home services cases, although children in the foster care cases were more likely to be involved than children in the in-home services cases.
- The frequency and quality of caseworker visits with children were not sufficient to ensure the child's safety and well-being.
- The frequency and quality of caseworker visits with parents were not sufficient to monitor the safety and well-being of the child or promote attainment of case goals.

In addressing these outcomes, the primary strategy of increasing child, older youth and family involvement has been implemented. Greenville was selected as the lead innovation county for this strategy under the PIP, and implementation in all innovation counties within South Carolina will move forward. Evaluation results, lessons learned and other feedback obtained through the work with Greenville and other innovation counties will be used in "Best Practice" policy and practice model development for all counties.

FGDM strategies will continue with an increase in service goals as identified in the agency's WIGs – seven out of 10 children will receive a FGC before their ninth month in care. The intent is to engage families as partners in developing a plan for the care and protection of their children. This will result in an increase in positive permanence for children – reunification, relative guardianship or adoption. These services are available statewide. As noted earlier, human services managers, supervisors and staff in all 46 counties received two hours of in-service training on FGDM. Follow-up and ongoing in-service trainings are being held with most counties modeling the marketing of FGC to families, staffing and completing referrals.

Family/Domestic Violence Program

SCDSS, through its Domestic Violence and Batterer Intervention Programs, provides assistance for victims of intimate partner violence and perpetrators, including domestic violence, dating violence, and sexual assault as it occurs in the context of domestic or dating violence. The program is designed to provide support for crisis intervention and prevention services to victims of family violence, their children and abusers through a network of community-based nonprofit and private service providers. The guiding principle is that community resources will work together to promote quality services and to promote healthy lives for families experiencing domestic violence.

Each shelter program is required to provide locally-based services for residents of its assigned service area, including, but not limited to, locally-based individual crisis counseling, legal and/or client advocacy, and locally-based support group counseling for each county in the entity's service area.

The Batterer Intervention Program (BIP) provides therapeutic treatment services to persons convicted of criminal domestic violence throughout the state. Program treatment services are based on quality standards, which are utilized for intervention with clients who have been identified as perpetrators of domestic violence.

Domestic Violence (DV) Programs continue to monitor a statewide regional network of 13 contractual emergency shelters with a total of 18 units, and eight contractual BIPs that operate within the 13 regions of the state. Some programs have established satellite locations that offer advocacy and counseling services. Batterer Intervention Programs are located in all 46 counties. Recipients of domestic violence services must be victims of domestic violence, their children, or batterers. These providers are listed on the SCDSS website and are updated as needed to reflect any provider changes.

The following chart provides statistics on SC domestic violence programs.

Number emergency shelters funded	13 programs with 18 shelters
Number Batterer Intervention Program Funded and Non-funded	8 funded programs and 29 non-funded programs
Number individuals receiving emergency shelter	3,103
Number women, children and men receiving a myriad of services	18,590
Number of hotline calls	27,841
Number of approved Batterer Intervention Programs	37
Number of batterers receiving counseling services	4,205

Source: Monthly statistics are collected from each of the DV shelters and BIP programs. The date range for the purpose of the accountability report was 7-1-11 through 6-30-12. Because program data are collected on the federal fiscal year (Oct-Sep), the appropriate months from the collected information are combined.

The goals of the domestic violence intervention programs and Family Violence Prevention and Services Programs are to prevent and/or reduce the incidence of family violence and ensure accessible emergency shelter and related assistance as it relates to those in need of services for the prevention of Intimate Partner Violence as well as for treatment for perpetrators; including Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Sexual Assault as it occurs in the context of Domestic or Dating violence. SCDSS is responsible for strategic planning, policy development, technical assistance, monitoring and administration of the State's Family Violence Intervention Program.

Proposal Process

SCDSS, along with the SC Materials Management Office (MMO), processes the request for proposals (RFP) with community providers (offerors) every five years for 13 regions within the state; an award is granted for each region. All interested community providers submit their competitive offers to provide services to victims of family violence, their families, and abusers. These offerors agree to be bound by the terms of the Solicitation. Awards resulting from the competitive offerors are awarded to the responsive and responsible offerors whose proposal is determined to meet the requirements of the State and is most advantageous to the State. Notably, in 2006, SCDSS provided five-year contracts based on this process; SCDSS is working with the SC MMO on this process once again for 2012.

Planned Expansion for 2013

The scopes of services for both the shelter and batterer intervention programs have been updated and reflect adherence to the federal guidelines per Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) grant. The scopes identify several outcomes to be measured, including that at least 4% of each identified underserved population is provided services. However, the agency recognizes that due to varying demands of each individual sub-grantee, large discrepancies may occur between the statewide goal and the locally measured percentages; therefore, the agency is also in the process of providing a statistical analysis for each individual shelter/non-residential program which will assist them in identifying the underserved populations for the communities they serve.

The agency will follow procedures outlined in the South Carolina Procurement Code. This requires that a Request for Proposal (RFP) be developed. SCDSS will develop a request for proposal that requires proposers to delineate:

- The underserved population whose needs they plan to address
- Current barriers in meeting the needs of the designated target populations
- Objectives and expected outcomes
- The activities to be undertaken
- A plan to measure the extent to which objectives have been met
- Exhibit evidence of the project's cultural competence regarding the target population
- Ensure confidentiality of all records of service delivery to victims of family violence

The agency collects a variety of statistical information from each of its funded shelter/non-residential and batterer programs on a monthly basis. Based on the statistical analysis of the information provided in shelter program reports for the last three fiscal years, the following populations have been identified as underserved:

- Youth Intimate Partner Violence Victims
- Victims with a mental or physical disability (including those with substance use addictions)
- Immigrant victims/refugees/asylum seekers
- Victims with Limited English Proficiency
- Adults ages 56 and older
- Children ages 13-17
- Victims from traditionally underserved racial/ethnic populations

In previous years, all agencies receiving state and/or Family Violence Prevention and Services Act funds and the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault were asked to identify the underserved populations and to stipulate preferences for usage of Family Violence Prevention and Services Act funds. Those populations identified are:

- Rural victims
- Child witnesses/victims
- Teens
- Spanish speaking populations
- Disabled women
- Substance addicted victims
- Migrant farm workers
- Victims with large families
- Victims of charismatic or fundamentalist faiths

- Elderly victims
- Victims from the LGBTQ communities
- Incarcerated and/or recently paroled victims
- Offenders

Each agency is required to provide information on the specific service needs of each of the identified underserved populations and specified training to direct service providers in its assigned region.

Domestic violence services are provided to populations based on federal guidelines and SC state domestic violence statutes. Yearly statistical data assist the agency in targeting populations that may be underserved. Statewide coverage continues; however, geographic areas and service coverage are based on grants awarded through the RFP process.

The agency contracts with the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (SCCADVASA) to provide regional trainings on domestic violence topics for the agency, members of the community, legal professionals, healthcare professionals, law enforcement, advocates, batterer intervention providers, social workers, mental health professionals, etc. This year, two of these trainings have been designated to address the needs of underserved populations. All trainings are planned in conjunction with the agency and with input from community partners who serve the underserved populations addressed by the particular training.

To meet the overall domestic violence training needs, SCCADVASA has agreed to:

- Through collaboration with SCDSS and community providers, offer four one-day trainings on domestic violence, including dating and sexual assault as it occurs in the context of domestic or dating violence.
 - One of these trainings will be dedicated to the topic of Batterer Intervention
- Through collaboration with SCDSS and community providers, offer one-day statewide training conference on domestic violence, including dating and sexual assault as it occurs in the context of domestic or dating violence.

2012 trainings on underserved populations include:

- Responding to the Needs of Survivors with Disabilities and Substance Use Concerns
- Effective Batterer Intervention Strategies

Additional trainings will be on the following topics:

- Advocacy Beyond Leaving
- Financial Empowerment
- Effects of DV on Children

Previous trainings have included:

- The Keys to Reaching Underserved Communities: Understanding Culture and the Impacts of Oppression
- Interpersonal Violence in Later Life
- Teen Dating Violence
- Partnering with Men to end Domestic Violence

Additionally, the University of South Carolina, in conjunction with SCDSS, provides the following related training:

- Family Violence: The War Behind Closed Doors.....This foundation course on family violence offers a comprehensive overview of the dynamics of violence between intimate partners and its implications for the safety and well-being of children as well as self-sufficiency. Special emphasis is placed on how to work effectively with adult victims of domestic violence to protect themselves and their children; case study is used to practice assessment and case planning.
- Family Violence: Case Management Advance Skills – Building.....This interactive training is designed to build case managers’ skills in working with adult and child victims of domestic violence to overcome barriers, plan for safety, and link with community resources. Participants will hear from a panel of representatives from agencies and organizations in the community that serve victims of domestic violence.
- Family Violence: Understanding The Effects Of Domestic Violence -Training for Child Day Care Staff.....This training is designed to prepare child care staff to recognize and respond appropriately to children and their families who may be experiencing domestic violence. Brief lectures, discussions, learning activities, and video presentations are used to encourage interactive learning among participants.

The goal of the domestic violence training is to develop an understanding of domestic violence and its impact on the family. This training will assist case managers in identifying and assessing need of the families. Planning intervention strategies, safety assessment and service planning activities are included in this learning experience.

Funding source				
Direct to SSBG				
Venue/setting of training				
Regional training				
Duration of Activity				
6 hours				
Who was the audience and # of attendees				
Family Violence: The War Behind Closed Doors: This foundation course on family violence offers a comprehensive overview of the dynamics of violence between intimate partners and its implications for the safety and well-being of children as well as self-sufficiency.				
Name of Training	Date		DSS	Non-DSS
Intimate Partner Violence: The War Behind Closed Doors	December 14-15, 2010		17	17
Family Violence: Understanding The Effects Of Domestic Violence -Training for Child Day Care Staff: This training is designed to prepare child care staff to recognize and respond appropriately to children and their families who may be experiencing domestic violence.				
Name of Training	Date	Location	DSS	Non-DSS
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	October 5, 2010	Columbia	32	32
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	November 19, 2010	Florence	14	14
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	December 14, 2010	Florence	25	25
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	January 19, 2011	Aiken	10	10
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	January 20, 2011	Columbia	20	20
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	February 16, 2011	Charleston	27	27
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	February 25, 2011	Columbia	24	24
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	May 3, 2011	Columbia	9	9
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	May 4, 2011	Columbia	11	11
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	May 7, 2011	Darlington	10	10
Domestic Violence for Child Care Workers	June 7, 2011	Greenville	20	20

The agency continues operating and monitoring its DV Liaison Project, which is a collaborative effort between the agency and SCCADVASA. This project pairs a domestic violence advocate from each shelter program with the SCDSS office in the county in which they serve. The original and ongoing purpose of this project is to ensure that victims of domestic violence and their children seeking or receiving services from the agency would be appropriately assessed and that their safety and security would be ensured in their contacts with the agency. In order to achieve this goal, the agency decided to utilize the expertise of the domestic violence advocate community in South Carolina. These advocates are available to inform, consult and advise agency staff statewide.

The Liaison Project started in 2001. Since that time, liaisons have provided continuing services to supervisors and case managers in Child Protective Services, Family (financial) Independence, and Adult Protective Services Programs across the state. The roles and responsibilities have been refined; the reporting process has been updated and streamlined. Liaisons and the Department will be meeting quarterly in regional meetings throughout the state

Tasks include:

- Annual communication with county director and supervisors
- Providing annual training on domestic violence to case managers
- Attending agency case staffing/meetings as needed involving domestic violence
- Distribution of information (such as brochures on shelter services, the impact of domestic violence on children, legal options, etc.) on an as-needed basis to the agency

Liaison responsibilities:

- Will be available to agency staff and, upon request, liaison will meet with and personally consult with agency client who may be in danger as a result of domestic violence and will facilitate the connection between the client and the domestic violence services
- Will assist Department staff in developing safety plans and individual self-sufficiency plans for clients who may be victims of domestic violence
- Will participate, as requested, on case staffing teams when cases involve domestic violence
- Will provide information and referral materials for clients and for Department staff on domestic violence
- Will provide a minimum of one annual training on Domestic Violence to case managers
- Will be available to consult with Department staff on cases of domestic violence of particular difficulty or danger

Foster Care and Permanency

South Carolina foster care and permanency services include regular foster care, intensive foster care, kinship care, reunification services, and independent living and youth transition services. Permanency work is driven by the State's "Emerging Imperatives." These imperatives are a set of values so powerful it cannot help but drive new behaviors and compel the conversation about what the right work is and how to do it. The imperatives force individuals to make decisions in which behaviors are inextricably linked to what is right, removing ambiguity and rendering the previously acceptable as unacceptable. Following are the State's Emerging Imperatives:

- At all times, the child's immediate and enduring safety and well-being must take precedence over the comfort of adults.
- Children must never be left to protect or provide for themselves or others; that is the role of all responsible adults.
- Children do not "disrupt;" adults fail to provide the adequate level of response to meet the children's needs.

- Child safety will always improve when the adults who care for them work together and support each other.
- Shared understanding and meaning always propel actions and drive results.

Following are descriptions of specific programs for foster care and permanency. The Foster Parent Bill of Rights is included as an appendix to this report.

Foster Parent Communication Plan

SCDSS has been working diligently with the South Carolina Foster Parent Association to map out a coherent communication plan. It is a requirement for each county director/or designee to develop a Foster Parent Communication Plan to provide guidance to staff and notice to foster parents regarding how the agency will work with the foster parents to provide services for foster children.

A Foster Parent Communication Plan is necessary because:

- Foster parents play a key role in the agency's ability to protect and care for children.
- In order to achieve the goals of safety, permanency and well-being for children in care of the agency, foster parents must be included as members of the care and treatment team.
- Foster parents are valuable resources for the agency and must be treated with respect.

The Communication Plan must address the following:

- A listing of staff and telephone numbers for foster parents to use when they need to contact the SCDSS office including provisions for after-hours calls and calls during business hours. There must be provisions for periodically updating the listing and distributing it to foster parents.
- During office hours, there must be provisions for staff to respond to foster parents in person rather than having messages sit in voice mail with no response.
- Phone calls must be returned within one business day by the worker, the supervisor or another designated staff person.
- Foster parents must be invited to participate in team decision-making and service planning for the children in care.
- Foster parents are to be given a copy of the foster child's treatment plan.
- Foster parents must receive notice of court hearings for the children in their care.
- A member of the county staff must be designated to serve as liaison with the county foster parent association.
- Foster parents must be given contact information and be invited to speak with the program coordinator and the county director if problems cannot be resolved at the worker and supervisor level.

Relative Placement

To notify relatives of placement of a child in foster care, the agency uses form 30241 Notice to Relatives of Foster Placement which states in part:

The Department of Social Services is required to notify you as SCDSS has been told that you are a relative of this child. If you would like to be considered for placement or be considered for participation in the care of this child, please contact us immediately by calling or emailing the caseworker as indicated below.

*If you are a relative and want to have this child live with you, you may want to consider becoming a licensed foster parent. The enclosed brochure explains how to do this and the benefits that come with licensure. In addition, there is information on the agency's website at **www.dss.sc.gov**.*

Children in SCDSS custody need placement while their parents are working on a court ordered plan that must be completed for the child to return home. Most children return home to their parents. For children who cannot return home, the Department will be looking for a permanent home to last to adulthood for the child.

If we do not hear from you timely, we will be unable to include you in planning for the child. Failure to act promptly may jeopardize your chance to have the child come live with you or for you to participate in the care of the child.

The SCDSS county office has the responsibility to identify, locate and engage a child's non-custodial, non-resident biological parent (NCP). This effort should begin at the point of intake and should continue throughout the case. If the SCDSS county office has removed a child from his/her home or is contemplating removal, potential placement with the NCP must be considered. The Protocol for Locating, Notifying and Engaging Non-Custodial Parents was issued March 2011.

The Foster Care Manual Section 810.01.06 - Diligent Search explains agency procedures for diligent search for parents and adult relatives of a foster child. Diligent search is the term used to describe the efforts to locate absent parents or other adult relatives of a foster child. The worker is advised to obtain as much identifying information as possible as to names, date of birth, work history or previous addresses of absent parents and other relatives. This information is sent to the SCDSS Office of Child Support Enforcement (CSE) for an electronic search of multiple state and federal systems.

SC Connecting for Kids

The SC Connecting for Kids grant provides funding for two important family engagement strategies:

- Finding Families
- Kinship Navigator

The goal for Finding Families is to conduct search and engagement activities for family connections for children and youth with two or fewer enduring connections expected to last beyond foster care and into adulthood.

Finding Families services delivered through the Connecting for Kids grant include search and discovery of potential connections (by mining SCDSS and GAL case files and using search engines); support for establishing relationships by facilitating meetings with involved parties to promote the connection and engagement process; and continued facilitation of support team to help maintain the relationship established.

This program, which targets foster youth ages 12-17, received 237 referrals in FFY 2011 and 104 in FFY 2012 through March 2012. Cases include youth whose county of court jurisdiction is one of the grant intervention counties (Aiken, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Dorchester, Greenville, Greenwood, Newberry, Oconee, Orangeburg, and Spartanburg).

The objectives are that the Family Connections coordinators will complete at least 100 family searches per year; each child will have at least three enduring connections; and kinship placement will be greater in the grant intervention counties than in the baseline counties.

The Kinship Navigator Service provides navigators who assess for needs to support care giving and who refer for services. In FFY 2011, the program served 201 caregivers living in one of the intervention counties (Aiken, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Dorchester, and Greenville); 90 were served in FFY 2012 through March 2012.

There are two primary goals for the Kinship Navigator Services:

1. Kinship caregivers will know about and be able to access needed services to supported continuation of the placement, such as counseling. Objectives included that the 2-1-1 system would be expanded statewide by grant start-up in January 2010. United Way SC reported statewide access as of December 31, 2009; 2-1-1 is updated and validated according to AIRS standards (reports from UWSC as of 03/31/11; as of September 29, 2011; March 31, 3012). Other objectives are for:
 - o Caseworkers to make referrals to the navigators for caregivers in the target population
 - o Navigators to assess needs of the caregivers, identify services to meet the needs of the caregivers, assist the caregivers in connecting with services, and follow up with caregivers regarding the services identified
 - o Caregivers to access at least one available service; caregivers will be satisfied with the service(s) received. (Services are voluntary.)
2. Learning Opportunities to support caring for “kin” will be available for caregivers. As part of completing the objectives, caregivers identified information needed to support kinship care; Learning Opportunities (training) have been specifically developed and presented to meet those needs. Other objectives are that:
 - o Caregivers in the project would attend one or more trainings (referred to as learning opportunities for marketing)
 - o Caregivers who attended would show an increase in knowledge.

Another goal relates to both components of the Connecting for Kids grant: Finding Families and Kinship Navigator: Fewer children who live with kin in the intervention counties will enter or reenter foster care when compared with children in the baseline counties.

One policy deficit was identified by Finding Families staff. There is no standard for background checks to be made prior to youth and their connections having initial contact. A new standard, developed by the SCDSS Division of Standards and Practice Management, is awaiting approval for release.

Connecting for Kids Grant: Finding Families Accomplishments

There was an increase in the number of referrals for Finding Families during FFY 2011. There were 53 referrals for the grant start-up in FFY 2010. During FFY 2011 (Year 2 of the grant) there were 237. Over 95% of the referrals met the grant criteria and were accepted for services. The target population was not expanded since there was a backlog of completing search and engagement activities for the referrals. For FFY 2012 (Year 3 Quarters 1-2 of the grant), there were six referrals accepted.

For the counties served by the grant, there was an increase in completion of search activities and cases moving into establishing and sustaining the relationship between the youth and connections. At the end of FFY 2011 (September 30, 2011), there were 112 cases for which search activities had not been initiated; in FFY 2012 as of March 31, there were 29 for which search activities had not been completed. Adding Seneca Search as a tool to identify and locate potential connections contributed to progress made in the searching and discovery of potential connections.

At the end of FFY 2011, there were seven youth for whom at least one relationship was being actively supported in the engagement process for an enduring relationship after the youth left foster care. As of March 31, 2012, there were 22 youth with at least one such relationship.

The trend is that connections are being identified; however fewer than three connections are actively engaged in establishing or re-establishing ongoing relationships that are expected to lead to positive permanency. To date, none of the relationships being supported have resulted in the youth exiting foster care to positive permanency with a relative identified by Finding Families. Based on data (September 30, 2011), there was a slightly higher percentage of children in the baseline counties leaving foster care to live with relatives; this would be attributed to casework practice in the baseline counties.

Connecting for Kids Grant: Kinship Navigator Accomplishments

Based on data analysis for the grant reporting period April 1, 2011 – September 30, 2011, the trend is that children placed with kin (alternative caregivers) are likely to remain with the alternative caregiver and not enter foster care. The caregivers are most likely grandparents with lower incomes and a high school education. The caregivers receive a thorough assessment of needs. There are two types of services provided by navigators: referrals based on assessment of needs (70%) and navigators providing supportive listening (88%). The caregivers are likely to be satisfied with the navigator service (55 %) although 44% had not accessed the services when navigator services ended.

The trend for children in the intervention counties who were living with the alternative caregiver when the protective services case was closed is that the children are not entering foster care. However, there is no significant difference between the intervention and baseline counties.

The number of caregivers participating in learning opportunities has been extremely low, 34 participated in 28 opportunities despite being offered gift cards to offset costs, such as child care. However, those who participated were found to have significantly increased their knowledge on the topic presented.

Connecting for Kids Service Expansion

The SC Connecting for Kids grant will end September 29, 2012. SCDSS is awarding grants in the private sector to provide Finding Families services statewide and to a larger target population that includes families at the beginning of the family becoming known to Child Protective Services and all children in care 17 months or longer. In addition, SCDSS is planning to include Kinship Navigator services in the service array included in an RFP to be released later this federal fiscal year.

Connecting for Kids CFSR Areas Needing Improvement

South Carolina's current PIP includes strategies to improve family engagement. Implementation of Finding Families and Kinship Navigator are included as strategies.

In PIP Quarter 3 (FFY 2011), the task was to provide learning opportunities in two PIP innovation counties to build readiness and promote family engagement through Finding Families and Kinship Navigator. The learning opportunities focused on linking and integrating multiple initiatives into practice (i.e., the grant components on family meetings); and to identify and resolve practice barriers related to Finding Families and Kinship Navigator Services. There was an increase in the completion of search activities, which led to an increase in the number of connections

established and then supported.

In PIP Quarter 4 (FFY 2011), Greenville County reported on the county's implementation/progress and evaluation of Family Finding and Kinship Navigator Services. The county has exhausted referrals to Finding Families. There continued to be a backlog of referrals accepted by the project in completing search and identification of connections. For Kinship Navigator Services, the referral for navigator services was not fully integrated into casework processes, and a concern regarding navigators' knowledge of resources was being analyzed.

In PIP Quarter 5 (FFY 2012 / March – May 2012), Aiken County will report on its implementation, evaluation, and progress for SC Connecting for Kids. There will also be an update of progress in Greenville County.

Several system/process needs were not available during the implementation of the grant.

- Consistent statewide tracking of use of alternative or kinship caregivers. For example, data could not be extracted from CAPSS for reports on the specific caregiver with whom the child was living.
- Data could not be extracted for reports to indicate which foster children were referred to Finding Families.

Family Finding

Family Finding, a contractual service developed in the fall of 2011 and begun in January 2012, serves children in Region 1 Upstate who enter agency custody either from Emergency Protective Custody (or Ex Parte) court orders. The goal is to ensure children who cannot remain in their birth home can be placed with a familiar relative or fictive kin. The contract agency exhausts all avenues to identify relatives of a child who has been taken into emergency protective custody in an effort to locate a member of the family who can provide for the child's needs immediately or no later than the 72 hour emergency hearing. The goal for FFY 2013 is that the program can prove effective and be expanded across the state.

The agency contracted with SC Youth Advocacy Program (SCYAP) for Family Finding, which subcontracted with Carolina Family Services for Family Group Decision-making. When a child is taken into emergency protective custody (EPC), YAP's goal is to find a suitable relative for placement of the child within 60 hours. The desire of the agency is to be able at the 72 hour probable cause hearing, to identify to the Family Court an alternative caregiver for the child while the agency continues the investigation. If the child cannot return to the birth parent after the investigation, the ideal situation would be to allow the alternative caregiver to either be licensed or obtain legal custody of the child, while services are being provided to the parent to remedy the condition that caused the child's removal.

If the child is not immediately placed with an alternative caregiver, the SCDSS caseworker makes a referral within five days to Carolina Family Services (CFS) who must set up a family conference within 10 days of the referral. The purpose of the family conference is to identify strengths and areas of concern that need to be resolved and how the extended family may be able to assist the birth parents with the issues that caused the removal. Placement of the child is also addressed, as well as services that are needed for reunification. Permanency is discussed and parents and family members clearly informed of the need for timely permanency for the child.

CFSR identified the lack of family involvement as an area needing improvement. It is the goal of the agency that through Family Finding, Family Group Decision-making and Family Conferencing, more family members will be involved, service needs will be addressed and absent or non-custodial parents will be empowered to accept responsibility for their child and to understand their child's need for the connection.

Location of relatives as early as possible in the process of a child's entry into care is crucial. Services for 2013 include:

- Identification of immediate placements for a child with a familiar member of their family as early as possible for all children, especially the younger ones ages birth to five years
- Family Decision-making involving more than the parent or primary caregiver, but any family member or support system that the child or parent might identify as being of assistance to them to enhance their success of permanency for their child.
- Quicker identification of family needs and service delivery by having additional persons available who know the family and can identify the problems that will present barriers to reunification.

In December 2011, Region I staff were trained by consultants from Ohana Conferencing on the importance of Family Finding and the immediacy of the placement with the alternative caregiver. As the program expands, this will be added to the basic curriculum, and there will be training for existing staff as the contracts are extended to other parts of the state.

Description:
Consultants from Ohana Conferencing conducted a training of trainers for the contractor, subcontractor and select DSS staff. This training was conducted jointly on how to refer to family finding and how to conduct family finding, including tools and role play. This training provided realistic expectations for all parties. The second part of the training, also conducted jointly, was on how to conduct a family conference. Participants learned the principles of family conferencing. Participants were able to try different roles and learn about reporting requirements. After the training the presenter facilitated a discussion on how to begin implementation in South Carolina. This discussion centered on designing a process that would work under the South Carolina system. The discussion also helped clarify roles of both DSS staff and the contractors
Funding source Direct to SSBG
Venue/setting of training This was presented in Greenville and workers came for a one day training
Duration of Activity One day – 6 hours

Sibling Connections

Separation of siblings, lack of frequent visitation with siblings and extended family connections was cited as an area needing improvement in the last CFSR. The agency's goal is to have siblings placed in the same foster home whenever possible. For children in the foster care system with a sibling in foster care, efforts to ensure siblings are placed together include the following:

- Recruitment of foster homes who are willing to accept sibling groups
- Contact with other private foster agencies who have foster parents willing to accept sibling groups

If the siblings cannot be placed together, efforts include:

- Sibling visitation – a family/sibling connections visitation plan was added to the FTM and FGC facilitator guide as agreed to in PIP renegotiations to ensure that the agency was taking appropriate and timely action to ensure family and sibling connections. The family/sibling connections/visitation curriculum was developed, and FTM facilitators and their supervisors, FGC coordinators, and SCFF regional coordinators

were trained. The FTM and FGC agenda, structures and family plans were revised to ensure these connections and visitation plans are addressed at FTMs and FGCs and included in the family plan.

- Encouragement of foster parents to allow telephone contact, day and overnight visits among siblings; inclusion of siblings in special events.

The SC Foster Care Manual section 819.01.01 Permanency: Continuity of Relationships & Parent/Child Visitation, Item 3, requires that SCDSS must make reasonable efforts to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation is necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

For purposes of meeting the requirements of federal legislation, *if siblings must be separated*:

- Reasonable efforts are made to promote quality visitation and frequent visitation between the child and his/her siblings unless visitation/contacts are contrary to the safety and best needs of any of the siblings.
- Reasonable efforts are made to place the siblings in close proximity of each other, including the same community, school, church, or the like.
- The child should be placed with caregivers who are committed to helping the siblings stay in regular contact (visits, phone calls, correspondence) unless it is clearly not in the best interest of one or more of the children to stay in touch.
- There is continual review/assessment and efforts to reunite the siblings in placement and/or to maintain a sibling relationship unless there is documentation why this should not occur.

Monitoring of “efforts to place siblings together or facilitate visits” is included in quality assurance reviews as a part of child “well-being.”

During 2011, a bill was introduced in the SC legislature that would require children who are siblings to be placed together in an adoptive family; this measure has not yet passed. Should this legislation pass, the agency would continue current efforts to place siblings in the same adoptive and foster placements. The current lack of foster homes available for large sibling groups (four or more children) is one of the barriers to placing all siblings in one home.

SCDSS is working with contracted agencies on the recruitment of families willing to accept larger sibling groups. In developing and training the private provider contract agency, SC Youth Advocacy Program (SCYAP), emphasis was placed upon the need for recruitment of families who are willing to accept large sibling groups. The contract with the Foster Parent Association, which is responsible for recruitment and training of foster parents, also emphasizes the need for families who can care for siblings.

Education of Foster Children

There were 4,734 school-age children in foster care in SC in July 2010. In March 2012, there were 3,425 school-age children in foster care.

To minimize the trauma of the child entering foster care, efforts are made to allow the child to remain in the same school district and connected to the home community whenever possible.

The SC Foster Care Manual Section 819.01.01, Item 1: Proximity of Placement to Child's Home Community requires educational stability at the time of each placement change. For the purpose of meeting the requirement of close proximity of placement:

- At the time of entry, proximity of placement refers to placement of the child within the child's home community or school attendance zone.
- For subsequent placement changes, the placement should be close enough to maintain the contacts needed to achieve the permanency plan, to promote continuity of family relationships, including relationships with siblings as long as the child's safety is not threatened and is in the child's best interest, and to promote educational stability.

In July 2011, the agency introduced a CAPSS enhancement that would capture the academic information of the child and assist in monitoring the school district for which the child is placed. Training was completed and efforts are being made to monitor compliance through Accountability, Data and Research reviews. Thus far, the agency has not been able to pull a report on academic information, and the CAPSS system does not have a report. The school system will assist the agency with a report in FFY 2013.

Reviews have been increased internally to assist with monitoring of permanency services. The agency is seeing improvement on the frequency of visitation with the child and parents. This is monitored by dictation entries into CAPSS on a monthly basis, and a monthly report is provided to each administrator to assist them in monitoring their staff's compliance with policy and statute and continue to improve practice.

Permanency Roundtables

The last CFSR, the state's quality assurance reviews, and the state's data indicated that the State was not meeting the guidelines for permanency within established timeframes. In the last CFSR, it was noted that SC did not always work on a concurrent plan simultaneously. Although the child's file indicated a concurrent plan, it appeared the agency completed all attempts at one plan prior to initiation of action steps for the concurrent plan.

The National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections (NRC-PFC) assisted the innovation county of Spartanburg with guidance and direction on concurrent planning in March 2011. Data analysis and reviews focused on the implementation of both plans and help to identify areas where additional attention was needed for improvement.

Concurrent planning was incorporated into the State's original CFSR PIP. The State completed the first action step related to concurrent planning: *evaluating practice and policy with assistance from the NRC Judicial and Legal and Permanency and Fostering Connections specifically on operationalizing concurrent planning in order to quickly assess the permanency goal for the children in foster care to include reunification and adoption as a permanent goal in Spartanburg County.*

In January 2012, the PIP strategy to improve permanency was renegotiated in an effort to expedite permanency and have a more quantitative as well as qualitative outcome. The strategy changed from working with the court system on concurrent planning to the utilization of the Casey Family Programs Permanency Roundtable (PRT) process to identify the appropriate permanency goal and remove barriers to achieving positive permanency. Spartanburg is serving as the lead innovation county for this PIP strategy.

Background

SC Department of Social Services (DSS) is using the Casey Family Programs (CFP) Permanency Roundtable process to address the need to expedite permanency for children, establish appropriate permanency goals and address barriers to permanency. The purpose of permanency roundtables is three-fold:

- To develop a permanent plan and concurrent plan for each child/youth that can realistically be implemented over the next six months
- To stimulate thinking and learning about pathways to permanency for these and other children (including thinking “outside the box” to identify potential family connections for children who have lingered in the DSS system)
- To identify and address barriers to permanency through professional development, policy change, resource development, and the engagement of system partners

The permanency roundtable is a structured, professional case consultation that provides support to the caseworker while taking an in-depth look at the child’s situation. This structure includes a welcome and overview, an oral case presentation, clarification and exploration (question and answer), brainstorming, creating a permanency action plan, and a debriefing. The permanency roundtable is a professional case consultation that provides support to the caseworker while taking an in-depth look at the child’s situation by applying the following five questions:

- (1) What will it take for this child to achieve permanency?
- (2) What can we do that has been tried successfully before?
- (3) What can we do that has never been tried?
- (4) What can we do concurrently to help this child achieve permanency?
- (5) How can we engage the child in permanency planning?

One goal of the PRT is to establish a broader understanding of the need for permanency and to help case managers “think outside the box” for identification of potential family connections for these children who have lingered in the SCDSS system. Concurrent planning will be considered for every child’s plan.

In 2011, five counties with the largest number of children in care for 17 months¹ were initially selected to participate in the permanency roundtable process, including PIP innovation counties Spartanburg and Greenville. These counties were initially trained by Casey Family Programs (CFP) on the concepts and aspects of permanency roundtables.

PRT skill-building training was provided by CFP August 1-3, 2011. This training included the PRT values and orientation and the PRT skill-building process. Twenty-eight staff members were trained in Spartanburg; the training also included staff from PIP innovation counties Greenville and Oconee, and Adoption staff. Training focused specifically on the purpose of the PRT and the roles and responsibilities PRT team members in the development of an effective Permanency Action Plan for each child. Master practitioners, facilitators, and “barrier busters” were identified from among the participants, and permanency consultants from CFP were available to provide external consultation. This preparation was essential for the supervisors and staff who participated in PRTs.

Community partners were also invited to the PRT values and PRT training that was held on August 1, 2011. The purpose of the invitation was to set the expectations regarding the focus on permanency goals. The local guardian ad litem program, Foster Care Review Board members and foster parents were invited to participate in the roundtables. In anticipation of a potential impact on the court system, i.e., additional requests for hearing time for judicial reviews, permanency planning hearings, termination of parental rights or adoptions, follow-up meetings were held with a local Chief Administrative Judge for Family Court regarding legal timelines as well as county practice changes.

¹ Anderson, Greenville, Horry, Richland, and Spartanburg

Each master practitioner assigned to a PRT follows up with the case manager to ensure that the plans and goals established in the PRT are being implemented and to act as a barrier-buster when there appears to be a delay in the implementation. The master practitioner serves as an ongoing consultant to the foster care worker who knows the PRT recommendations and ensures the worker knows how to implement the plan, monitors for barriers, and attempts to assist the worker in overcoming those barriers to achieve the desired outcome. Additionally, master practitioners assist in monitoring the PRT progress and documenting outcomes.

The roundtables were initially facilitated by Casey Family Programs and conducted by agency staff. SCDSS staff were trained by Casey Family Programs to serve as facilitators, master practitioners and scribes during a two-day training in August 2011. These SCDSS staff have since trained additional SCDSS staff on each of these roles in preparation for implementing permanency roundtables statewide.

Spartanburg participated in the initial permanency roundtables conducted using the Casey Family Programs Permanency Roundtables process to help identify the appropriate permanency goal and remove barriers to achieving positive permanency.

Spartanburg experienced some success with these initial roundtables. Between August 23 and November 30, 2011, as a result of the roundtables, TPR hearings and/or relinquishments had been accepted on 18 children. Eight children had a finalized adoption, relative custody/guardianship was awarded for another three children, and four children were reunited with their parents. During the fourth quarter of the PIP (November 2011 – January 2012), an additional 11 of these children had a finalized adoption, one was reunified with a birth parent, and two were placed with a relative.

Incorporation of PRTs into the CFSR PIP

The PRT strategy was subsequently incorporated into the State's CFSR PIP. As part of the PIP, permanency roundtables are being used to assist the State in meeting permanency and well-being goals. Spartanburg developed criteria for prioritizing children for permanency roundtables (PRTs) as follows:

- 1) Children with APPLA as a permanency goal
- 2) Children in care more than 12 months
- 3) Children in care for 12-17 months with a permanency goal of adoption but no identified adoptive family
- 4) Children in care more than 17 months with a plan of reunification
- 5) Children in care more than 17 months with a permanency goal of adoption but no identified permanency resource

Under the PIP, permanency roundtables will be rolled out sequentially in 2012 in Greenville, Oconee and Aiken Counties using the above-described priorities. In FFY 2013, the agency anticipates rolling out permanency roundtables statewide as one method to ensure timely permanency planning for all children in the foster care system. Progress on this item will be measured by the length of time a child remains in the foster care system without a permanent legal family or connection to a significant adult in their lives willing to commit to the youth into adulthood. Data will be monitored monthly, and Casey Family Programs will continue to act as a consultant on PRTs. The greatest need is the ongoing role and support for the master practitioner to assist in the follow-up of the action plan steps.

Adoption and Post-Adoption Services

Adoption Services (adoption promotion, support and post-adoption services)

The agency has also implemented a number of program enhancements in the provision of adoption services to children in need of permanence through adoption, to adoptive families during and after finalization of an adoption, as

well as to birth parents who wish to make a voluntary plan for their child. Adoption workers are located in six regional offices to concentrate on adoption activities for all counties. These staff respond to and provide services to birth families who wish to make an adoption plan for their children; prepare children for the adoption experience; recruit and prepare adoptive families; and provide pre-placement, placement and post-placement adoption services to families and their children.

The service delivery between the county foster care units and the regional adoption offices is coordinated by holding regularly scheduled staffings. The county may refer a child for adoption services at any point in the case, including prior to the merits hearing if the child's plan appears to be Termination of Parental Rights (TPR)/ Adoption. Concurrent planning staffings are held within 60 days of the child's entry into care. If at that point or any point in the foster care case, the parent appears to be failing to meet the treatment plan, adoption services will begin. Adoptions will simultaneously work with the child toward a family connection that may lead to adoption to ensure timeliness in the achievement of a permanent plan. During this pre-TPR status, the adoption services staff and the county foster care staff are working as a team to provide services to the family and child to ensure permanency (enduring safety). Concurrent planning also includes an assessment of the child's therapeutic needs, and if indicated, the child may also receive intensive foster care and clinical services.

The agency provides financial support to stabilize adoptions through supportive services such as non-Medicaid medical services, post-adoption and respite services placement/permanency planning, and to assist staff in developing a plan that would bring these children to permanence. Medicaid coverage for all children eligible for Adoption Assistance is provided. The Medicaid coverage is dependent on applicable state policy and the special needs of the child. Services such as medical, psychological, and psychiatric services (including counseling, residential and hospitalization services) are available to support the adoptive placement.

SCDSS provides post-legal adoption services to families who have adopted children from the foster care system. The service array may include internal referrals for FGC and external referral for services provided by private therapists, group support; private agencies, Children Unlimited for teen retreats, and education and support to families. Payment for out-of-home therapeutic treatment may be offered if needed. The State will offer voluntary case management services to post-legal families as well as families working with a child with therapeutic needs while in a pre-adoptive placement agreement.

Adoption Subsidy Assistance

Adoption subsidy assistance is available for families adopting special needs children placed in SCDSS foster care and qualifying families adopting special needs children in the private sector.

Services provided:

- Assistance to regional adoption offices in preparing and submitting adoption assistance financial folders to the state office for a subsidy determination.
- Onsite technical assistance to regional adoption office staff.
- Determination of IV-E or State Supplemental Benefits Adoption Subsidy Assistance for each child with an open adoption file.
- Verifying Adoption Subsidy Agreements for payment and processing for payment.
- Compile complete financial files for each child when the adoption is finalized, storing them in state office.
- Preparing financial files for microfilming when children have reached 21 years of age.

- Processing payment of non-recurring costs and medical subsidy to qualifying adoptive families.
- Letters to adoptive families of children turning 18 years old notifying them of termination of IV-E or State Supplemental Benefits Adoption Assistance pending receipt of qualifying documentation to continue subsidy to a maximum of 21 years old.
- Respond to questions from adoptive parents concerning adoption subsidy payments.
- Monitoring out-of-home placements when child is receiving an adoption subsidy payment to ensure compliance with adoption subsidy regulations.
- Assisting adoptive families moving into and out of SC in establishing Medicaid (ICAMA).
- Assisting regional offices in obtaining Medicaid for children being placed out-of-state.

The Adoption Subsidy Assistance unit strives to:

- Provide Adoption Subsidy Assistance determinations to regional adoption offices in a timely manner to enable adoptive placements when available.
- Verify and process adoption subsidy agreements for payment to adoptive families to be received in the month following placement.
- Provide assistance to parents and agency staff in a timely manner in regard to their questions about monthly subsidy and medical subsidy.
- Process medical subsidy reimbursement requests in a timely manner.
- Make sure that all adoption subsidy payments are in compliance with the applicable regulations.
- Obtain necessary documentation from adoptive families, regional offices, and other agencies, and submit to the appropriate state agency to establish Medicaid for the child.

While there is no expected expansion of services, population served, or area served, the monitoring of Regional Adoption Offices' financial files submitted and technical assistance training will be ongoing. The unit will continue in FFY 2013 to strive for improvement in the preparation and submission of financial files arriving at the Adoption Unit with the necessary and appropriate documentation.

Several system/process updates have been identified. Revisions in the CAPSS, Adoptive Services Program area, Title IV-E Adoption Subsidy, Funding Eligibility Determination mode need to be made in order to make an accurate final determination electronically. CAPSS needs to alert state office adoption subsidy staff when a child who is receiving an adoption subsidy payment is moved to an out-of-home placement, so staff can monitor for program compliance. Also, CAPSS needs to alert state office adoption subsidy staff when a child in a pre-adoptive placement is moved (placement changed) or disruption occurs to help avoid subsidy overpayments.

Adoption Tax Credit

All persons who adopted a child from the custody of the SCDSS and qualified persons who adopt a child through a private action or agency are mailed a letter informing the parent of both the federal adoption tax credit and the state tax deduction. The letter is sent to the parent after the adoption is finalized. The appropriate regional adoption office mails letters for agency adoptions, and the state office mails letters to private adoptions. Letters were mailed to all adoptive parents who finalized an adoption during the FFY 2011 and FFY 2012.

III. CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Child and Family Services Program Improvement Plan

South Carolina has completed one year of its Program Improvement Plan (PIP) in response to findings from the last federal Child and Family Services (CFSR) review. The agency chose four innovation counties to implement the state's PIP, which began February 1, 2011. The innovation counties are Greenville, Oconee, Aiken and Spartanburg. (Greenville and Aiken counties had been selected for the onsite CFSR review.) Aiken, Oconee and Spartanburg counties were chosen based on then-current child welfare staffing levels, strong leadership and experience of the county directors (all county directors have a long history and experience in child welfare) and the desire for system reform in child welfare. The counties selected represent a sample of small, medium and large offices in both rural and urban communities. Greenville County is the largest metropolitan county in the state. Greenville was chosen in order to show continuous improvement in the largest metropolitan county.

South Carolina's continuing intent is to implement the PIP in conjunction with continuous quality improvement efforts already in process. South Carolina recognizes that true system improvement and reform can only be accomplished and sustained with efforts that extend beyond the two-year PIP implementation period.

Even though each innovation county serves as the lead innovation county for set of specific strategies to be implemented, each innovation county will implement all strategies over the course of the PIP. Once the strategies are refined in each of the innovation counties, those strategies will be shared with all other counties for statewide implementation as a part of the state's continuous improvement plan. The following table shows the PIP improvement strategies assigned to each implementation county.

PIP Implementation Lead Innovation County Assignments	
Oconee	Improve the capacity of supervisors based on the SCCWS Practice Model for Child Welfare by way of coaching/mentoring competency through modeling to ensure that worker visitation with children includes an evaluation of educational, health and mental health needs and services
Greenville	Improve the overall engagement of families in the child welfare process
Aiken	Improve the ability of staff to identify and critically assess the risk and safety of children
Spartanburg	Improve the permanency outcomes of children in the foster care system

South Carolina's CFSR PIP included seven primary strategies and more than 60 specific action steps for implementing the above improvements. The State renegotiated one goal and several action step statements in the fourth quarter of the PIP. Following are the primary PIP strategies:

- Through coaching and mentoring and support, strengthen child welfare supervision capacity/ skills in Innovation counties.
- Strengthen risk and safety assessments and safety planning during intake, investigation and treatment through additional support and with other service providers in the innovation counties.
- Implement family engagement techniques and enhance the practice of family engagement through a multitude of intervention strategies to include but not limited to family meetings, team decision-making and Family Group Conference in the innovation counties.

- Expedite permanency for children by improving the timely decision-making to ensure that children have the appropriate permanent plan.
- Improve the placement stability for children through communication efforts and analysis of data.
- Enhance the continuity of family relationships and connections through intervention strategies to include collaboration with the Center for Fathers and Families.
- Utilize supervisors and data to ensure timeliness and notification and appropriate permanency plan.

After the fourth quarter of the PIP, which ended January 31, 2012, South Carolina had completed all action steps for primary strategies 5, 6 and 7, and the federal Children’s Bureau had accepted as completed 54% of the 67 action steps in the renegotiated plan. After the fifth quarter, which ended April 30, 2012, 72% of the action steps were accepted as completed.

Leadership meetings with innovation county leaders offer opportunities to share lessons learned from their PIP strategy implementation efforts. Participants include county, regional and program administrators, along with state office program improvement and quality assurance staff and training, technical assistance and quality assurance partners. Additionally, the State’s Child Welfare director and the Office of General Counsel Attorney assigned to the PIP conduct weekly conference calls with innovation county directors and staff to discuss progress and challenges in implementing strategies and action steps.

PIP Outcome Measures

The State worked with the Children’s Bureau and the Administration on Children and Families to determine PIP outcome targets and the quality assurance (QA) review process to be used for measurement in the four innovation counties covered by the PIP. The outcome measure baselines were established by QA reviews conducted in the fourth quarter of the PIP. With the completion of the fifth quarter reviews, the State has met one of nine outcome targets. The following chart shows the outcome measure items, baselines, targets and fifth quarter results.

Outcome Measure (Percent of Cases Rated as Strength)	Baseline Measurement	Negotiated Improvement Goal	PIP Quarter 5 Measurement
Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations	89.4%	92.8%	79.6%
Item 3: Services to protect children and prevent removal	77.8%	81.2%	67.5%
Item 4: Risk of harm to child	70.0%	73.0%	69.2%
Item 7: Permanency goal for the child	67.7%	72.0%	47.7%
Item 10: Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement	85.7%	92.7%	76.9%
Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents and foster parents	41.5%	44.7%	53.1%
Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	44.3%	47.7%	47.5%
Item 19: Worker visits with child	72.3%	75.2%	70.8%
Item 20: Worker visits with parents	33.6%	36.9%	34.6%

In addition to continuing to implement improvement strategies outlined in the PIP, the State is working closely with its university partner in conducting the quality assurance reviews and identifying areas in which practice may be improved based on review findings; debriefings are conducted in the innovation counties following completion of reviews. (See Quality Assurance section for information on the review process.)

Child Welfare Quality Assurance and Continuance Quality Improvement

Traditionally, quality assurance systems in South Carolina's child welfare agency have focused on auditing case records to monitor and report on the extent of compliance with state and federal requirements. This focus paralleled federal approaches to monitoring state child welfare programs that often were directed towards assessing compliance with procedural requirements. Given the historic auditing focus in the child welfare field, small quality assurance staffs on the margins of agencies usually carried out the monitoring function, and their reports often had minimal impact on the services delivered by the agency.

In South Carolina today, the child welfare agency is developing systems that move beyond compliance monitoring. This system's attempt is to gather and assess a range of information on quality, and then work to implement needed improvements on an ongoing basis. As a way of differentiating these efforts from traditional compliance monitoring, the new approaches often are called continuous quality improvement systems. Moreover, recent federal initiatives, such as the new Child and Family Service Reviews, also support and encourage the move towards continuous quality improvement processes.

The new approach improves upon traditional compliance monitoring in three ways. First, quality improvement programs are broader in scope, assessing practice and outcomes, as well as compliance. Second, they attempt to use data, information and results to affect positive changes in policy and case practice, along with compliance with federal, state and agency requirements. Third, these programs engage a broad range of internal and external partners in the quality improvement process, including top managers, staff at all levels, children and families served and other stakeholders.

The State has some serious concerns related to the quality assurance reviews for CFSR Item 7 and 10 outcome measures. Because cases with a permanency goal of APPLA are few in number, the State has to repetitively review these cases.

Contracted Services

A budget proviso, State Proviso 2626, was issued with the SFY 2011 budget that SCDSS conduct a study on outsourcing of child welfare services:

26.26 SCDSS: Child Welfare Outsourcing Study

"From funds appropriated to the department for child welfare, the department shall conduct a study with provider and stakeholder participation to determine the feasibility of child welfare outsourcing initiatives. The study should include, but not limited to, a review of other states contract monitoring and quality assurance models for private providers, to include performance measures and outcomes; a description of all services which might be effectively outsourced to include case management; an analysis of state procurement requirements; an analysis of cost savings or potential costs avoided that may accrue to the state; and a review of provider and state system data measures which can monitor private provider accountability and

compliance and assist in rate setting. The department shall provide a report of the finding to the Governor, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee no later than January 31, 2011."

The Outsourcing Committee was divided into four subcommittees: Front-End Services, Child Protective Services, Permanency, and Independent Living. Each subcommittee met numerous times, assessing what other states have outsourced, what was believed to have a positive impact on child welfare outcomes, and the potential financial impact to SC should the State elect to implement any of the Outsourcing Committee recommendations.

The following were recommendations from the various subcommittees:

Front-End Services Subcommittee recommendations:

- Utilization of evidence-based home visiting
- Respite care for at-risk families
- Family Support and Family Strengthening

Child Protective Services Subcommittee recommendations:

- Parent-Child Interaction Therapy Treatment (PCIT), which is a clinician directed parent training module that addresses actual behavioral changes. PCIT involves teaching new skills and actual observation of parents practicing these skills with their children.
- Community-Based Resource Development and Brokering

Permanency Subcommittee recommendations:

- Family Visitation Centers
- Family Assessment
 - Comprehensive Child and Family Assessment - stand alone
- Duplication of Existing Services
 - Specialized Foster Home Services
 - Home Studies for potential foster families
 - Initial Foster Parent Training
 - Foster Parent Recruitment
 - Independent Living Recommendations:
 - Regional Independent Living Coordinator Specialist
 - Transitional Housing and Supportive Services
 - Employment Preparation and Training Services

The full report was submitted to the Governor's Office in January 2011. While many of these recommendations were evaluated by the new Governor and SCDSS administration, some were not considered feasible at the time. However, many changes were implemented in FFY 2011 and 2012 that mirrored the recommendations of the Outsourcing Committee, and several request for bids for services were completed in August and September of 2011.

The Foster Parent Recruitment and Training was contracted through the Foster Parent Association in the fall of 2011. The South Carolina Youth Advocacy program began licensing and recruitment of all foster parents in Region I in January 2012. Contracts for outsourcing family assessments for Appropriate Response of Child Protective Services

also began in January 2012. Prevention of removal and out-of-home placement through the identification of family members, called “Family Finding,” began in January 2012.

Each of these contracts was awarded based on performance standards. Each provider is subject to SCDSS internal and external reviews through the agency’s existing quality assurance reviews. Additionally, the agency has built in random moment time studies and a review by contract liaisons to ensure accuracy in compliance with each of the models of practice.

In the last Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) in SC, CPS intake, recurring reports of child maltreatment and permanency were identified as areas of concern. All of the above contracts for services were aimed at addressing these concerns.

IV. COLLABORATION ACROSS THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

SCDSS will continue its collaboration with agencies within and outside of South Carolina to improve the Child Welfare System of reporting, investigating and treating children and families identified with child abuse and neglect concerns. This includes but is not limited to the following Child Protective Services, Foster Care and Adoption Activities. The following is a list of key stakeholders:

- Adult Learning Center
- Advocacy Center
- AID Upstate
- Alliance for Quality Education
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters of the Upstate
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Spartanburg
- Campaign to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy – Faith Matters Partnership
- Casey Family Programs
- Center for Child & Family Studies, College of Social Work, USC
- Center for Community Services
- Child Advocacy Centers (SC Network of)
- Child Fatality Review Teams/Health & Safety Councils
- Child Welfare Advisory Committee
- (A) Child’s Haven
- Children’s Justice Act Task Force
- Children’s Law Center, USC
- Children’s Trust of South Carolina (CBCAP, EBHV, ACA MIEC HV and Kids Count)
- Citizen Review Panel (CRP)
- Columbia Urban League
- Compass of Carolina
- Connected Families
- Daily Bread Ministries
- Diligent Hands Gracious Hearts
- DDSN (Department of Disabilities and Special Needs)

SCDSS/DJJ Breakthrough Series
Domestic Violence Organizations
Duke Endowment Foundation
Fatherhood Coalition
Foothills Family Resources
For Our Children
Foster Care Review Board (Governor's Office)
(SC) Foster Parent Association
Gleaming House Ministries
Glams
Goodwill Industries of the Upstate
Greenville Family Partnership
Greenville Literacy Association
Greenville Rape Crisis and Child Abuse Center
Greer Relief
Growing Homes Southeast, Inc.
Guardian ad Litem Program for SC (Governor's Office) and Richland County CASA
Home Works of SX
(SC) Housing Authority
Immigrant Victim Network Statewide Coalition
Law Enforcement Protocols
Liberty Employment Security
Little Steps
Loaves and Fishes
Mary's House
Meals on Wheels
Mental Health
Medical University, Palmetto Richland and Palmetto Easley Hospitals
Miracle Hill Ministries
Mount Moriah Baptist
National Policy Academy on Safely Reducing Numbers of Children in Care
PACE Center
Parents Anonymous of South Carolina
Phoenix Center
Pickens County Lifelong Learning/Adult Education
Piedmont Care
Piedmont Emergency Relief Center
Pro Parents
Project Host Soup Kitchen
REACH Upstate
Richland School District I (Mentoring)
Safe Home Rape Crisis Center
Second Presbyterian Church
Senior Action

Serenity Place
Seneca Family of Agencies
Sexual Trauma and Counseling
SHARE
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
South Carolina Association of Children's Homes and Family Services
South Carolina Heart Gallery
South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families (Fatherhood Organizations)
South Carolina Youth Advocate Program
Spartanburg Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
Spartanburg Interfaith Hospitality Network
Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth of SC, Inc.
"Sponsor a College Kid" (Pack a SACK Project)
South Carolina Court Administration and Bench-Bar Committee
Sterling Community Center
Taylors Free Medical Clinic
Teen Parent Program
The Parenting Place: Prevent Child Abuse
United Christian Ministries
United Way
Urban League of the Upstate
Vocational Rehabilitation
Westgate Training and Consultation
YMCA of Greenville

Agency and Tribal Connections – Catawba Indian Nation
Agency and Youth Connections – Youth Involvement Opportunities
Advisory Committees:

- Independent Living Advisory Committee
- The Youth Advisory Committee – GOALL (Go Out and Learn Life)
- SC Foster Parent Association
- The Center for Child and Family Studies (University of South Carolina)
- The Youth Leadership Development Institute—Columbia and Charleston Urban League

APSR Collaboration

South Carolina actively engages partners and stakeholders across the spectrum of child welfare. Specific to the APSR, stakeholders are invited to participate in joint planning meetings and review draft documents. A joint planning meeting held April 5, 2012, drew dozens of participants and featured presentations by key stakeholders/partners, including:

- Children's Trust of South Carolina
- Catawba Tribe
- Citizen Review Panels
- Foster Care Review Board

- South Carolina Association of Children's Homes and Family Services
- Court Improvement Project
- South Carolina Foster Parent Association
- Guardians ad Litem and Court-Appointed Special Advocates
- University of South Carolina

Prevention Collaboration

Children's Trust of South Carolina

Child abuse and neglect prevention statewide is an educational focus in SC to ensure parents understand the need to protect children, communities learn how to build protective factors, mandated reporters know how to recognize the signs of and how to report child abuse and neglect, and agency staff are trained to respond appropriately.

Preventive services for child abuse and neglect are critical to the agency's goal to reduce the number of children who are abused or neglected in SC and to ensure that re-occurrence of abuse is minimal and that the State meets the national standard for repeat maltreatment.

SCDSS and Children's Trust of South Carolina have worked collaboratively for the past 11 years to promote awareness during Child Abuse Prevention Month. SCDSS and Children's Trust will continue their collaboration to promote awareness during Child Abuse Prevention Month and throughout the year. CAPTA funds will be leveraged with other funds at Children's Trust to support statewide prevention messaging throughout the year, culminating with Child Abuse Prevent Month (April) activities, including a Heroes for Prevention campaign and web-based interactive county map promoting the local service array throughout South Carolina communities.

Children's Trust also assisted in assessment of evidence-based service delivery models. Many programs were reviewed and evaluated to determine the most comprehensive array for the needs of SC's children and families. *Strengthening Families* is the program believed to have the greatest potential for positive impact in SC outcomes for child welfare services for the following reasons: 1) many private service agencies in SC are currently utilizing this model; 2) the program includes components for substance abuse issues; and 3) it has a guide to services for children age 6-16 and for families whose lives are affected by criminal domestic violence.

Statewide continuous education is offered by SCDSS, Children's Trust, Children's Law Center, Foster Parent Association and Children Come first. Each of these public and private organizations work together to encourage child safety and well-being through multiple media venues, trainings, public speaking, drafting of legislation to improve child safety and well-being. Children's Trust has a website, active social media presence and blog that are used for statewide outreach to multiple audiences. It also publishes a well-received policy newsletter at least every two weeks.

Each year, SCDSS and Children's Trust conduct the "Pinwheels for Prevention" promotion in Child Abuse Prevention Month (April), which features multiple media events across the state to promote awareness of child abuse. During April, the state's media networks are asked to feature public service announcements on the awareness of child abuse and neglect. A statewide media campaign (radio, print, television and online) is used to increase awareness of proven protective factors that keep children safe from abuse and neglect. Additionally, Children's Trust planned to build on an inaugural pinwheel city model in Greenville County and expand to a second metro area. Children's Trust will assist grass-roots community organizers in finding and promoting multiple pinwheel gardens, promote local

organizations working within the protective factor framework, host a media event around the planting of pinwheels, and seek local government support through proclamations. Children's Trust will also offer messaging tools, tips and technical assistance for communities and non-profits to help them talk about Child Abuse Prevent Month and prevention throughout the year.

Baby Net/First Steps

BabyNet is the IDEA Part C Early Intervention program for South Carolina as of January 1, 2010, and SC First Steps for School Readiness is the lead agency. All state agencies with a role in serving children with educational or developmental disability concerns, as well as parents and community representatives, are represented on the SC Interagency Coordinating Council (SCICC). Each involved agency participated in the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that outlines statutory requirements and responsibility of each entity involved in services to children under the IDEA. As part of ongoing collaboration with First Steps regarding the implementation of IDEA Part C and CAPTA, state-level CPS, DDSN, DOE, DHEC, and Baby Net program managers meet quarterly to discuss issues and concerns regarding communication and collaboration. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss overall management concerns from county offices regarding the referral and service delivery system. In addition, the local BabyNet offices meet monthly to discuss issues relating to specific cases and service delivery barriers. County SCDSS staff are invited and encouraged to participate with the county BabyNet program managers to discuss specific cases and to reduce barriers and enhance communication between agencies regarding the needs of children and families. BabyNet is a statewide program.

Intervention Collaboration

CPS Collaboration

Collaborative efforts are made with the Department of Mental Health, Department of Health and Environmental Control, Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, Court Administration, and Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services, Guardian ad Litem/Court-Appointed Special Advocate, the Foster Care Review Board, and the SC Foster Parent Association. SCDSS has local and state provider partner meetings on a regular basis to address client service needs and availability of services among the providers.

OHAN Stakeholders and Collaboration

Group homes, child care facilities, and DDSN facilities have all received an investigation for an out-of-home child abuse allegation. Licensing and Regulatory Divisions of both SCDSS and DDSN work collaboratively to ensure the safety of children in a residential facility, child care facility or foster home. Additionally, the Citizen Review Panel has been instrumental in review and comment on draft policy for Out-of-Home Investigation.

Family Group Conferencing Collaboration

One of the critical elements of a successful FGC initiative is for community agencies to participate and support families through services and resources. To accomplish this, SC Families First (SCFF) created and sought opportunities to educate stakeholders and key partners in the FGDM process. Both formal presentations and informal discussions were used to educate and involve stakeholders and partners in every step of the process. The decision of an inclusive business model recruiting from the provider and community network as FGC coordinators not only connected with many stakeholders and private providers but provided a revenue stream for them to diversify their service array to include community-based family-centered services. The intent is that providers will begin using these principles and practice with their own clients creating a true child welfare cultural shift toward family group inclusiveness.

Increasing awareness and understanding of a family-inclusive approach opened up additional possibilities through several creative initiatives:

- SC Foster Parent Association – development of the Building a Bridge curriculum connecting foster parents with biological parents toward family reunification and healthy connections. Connecting foster parents to biological families through FGC and to Casey Family Programs provided opportunities to experience and to reinforce the advantages of this inclusive approach, as well as provide consultative and funding support.
- SCFF – provision of FGC in-service training to foster parents statewide through monthly county Foster Parent Association meetings focusing on their roles and participation in the FGC process.
- SC Connecting for Kids – provision of FGC to families where connections were made through family finding efforts by the SC Guardian ad Litem Program as well as connecting families with kinship navigators through providers with the SC Association of Children’s Homes and Family Services.
- SC Center for Fathers and Families – An MOU between SCDSS and the SC Center for Fathers and Families was developed to provide staff training and specific services to non-custodial parents through the Center’s county-based fatherhood programs. SCFF took the lead in developing the father friendly curriculum – Engaging the Non-Custodial Father and assisted in delivering the training to Greenville County. This initiative along with specific services will be implemented in all innovation counties. SCFF is an active member of the National Fathers in Child Welfare Network and participates on the planning committee.
- SCFF– joined the Crossover Youth Project bringing FGC as a service option to families where children have crossed over from child welfare to juvenile justice (Charleston, Berkeley and Georgetown Counties). While CFP has discontinued funding for the State to participate in the CFP/Georgetown University project , county offices continue to jointly staff cases with SCFF providing FGC to many of these families.
- SCFF – received a grant from the Greater Savannah River Community Foundation in partnership with Ashleigh Place Group Home to increase FGC for families in Allendale, Barnwell and Bamberg Counties prior to the official roll-out date for these counties.

SCFF provided several presentations to judges around the state and provided training through the Children’s Law Center as part of the training faculty training attorneys and judges in the FGDM approach and FGC intervention at three sites around the state – Columbia, Hilton Head and Charleston. Continuing Legal Education credit hours were awarded for participation. One judge, especially supportive of the intervention, has ordered FGC at the Probable Cause with FGC prior to the Hearing on the Merits.

Contact was made with Catawba Nation to address First Nation children involved with SCDSS. Presentation and meeting with the newly elected Chief and Social Work staff was provided. Members of the social work staff attended FGC coordinator training and were certified as SCFF FGC coordinators to provide this service for all First Nation children referred to child protection.

Description:
Staff training on engaging and serving non-custodial parents through the SC Center for Fathers and Families’ (SCFF) county-based fatherhood programs. SCDSS partnered with SCFF in developing the <i>Engaging the Non-Custodial Parent</i> father friendly curriculum and in providing this training to the innovation counties. During this reporting period Greenville County staff were trained and began implementing these services through the Upstate Fatherhood Coalition. The trainers included representatives from the Upstate Fatherhood Initiative, DSS state office and SC Families First.
Funding source

Direct to TANF
Venue/setting of training Greenville County DSS office
Duration of Activity 2.5 hours
Who was the audience and # of attendees 61 DSS staff attended the 2 sessions

Domestic Violence Collaboration

Department of Education

A legislative mandate, South Carolina School Code Section 59-1-475, states “The Department of Education and South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault [SCCADVASA], with the review and approval of the Department of Social Services, shall develop guidelines and materials for continuing education concerning domestic and family violence...” SCDSS worked to bring the Department of Education (DOE) and SCCADVASA together to create the “Teacher Education Training Project”. SCDSS was already providing training to all licensed daycare operators throughout the state about how to recognize and assist children who witness domestic violence. SCDSS researched several curricula and presented them at a group meeting. The curricula will be used to train teachers and staff at the following educational stages: Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle, and High School. Once the five curricula were selected by the group, SCDSS obtained copyright permission from each publisher. SCDSS then edited each publication to include SC domestic violence statistics, information, and resources.

The DOE provided funding to SCCADVASA to print and distribute the manuals to three shelters who volunteered to pilot the project in schools from the counties they serve. These three shelters are: Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Persons, My Sister’s House, and Safe Harbor. Additionally, SCCADVASA gained financial assistance from The Verizon Wireless Foundation to help support the project. The pilot started in 2010 and will last two years. It is hoped that more funding will be available at the end of the pilot period. SCCADVASA is hoping to raise additional funding for the project. A press conference was held by the state superintendent, the SCDSS director, and the SCCADVASA executive director to announce the start of the project.

Additionally, several DV shelter programs have their own programs designed to educate youth in the school systems about domestic/dating violence and healthy relationships. Schools contact the Shelter Program and invite them to speak to their students. Other DV shelter programs without a specific youth education program will also provide this same information to their local school systems when invited to speak.

Immigrant Victim Network

The agency will continue to work with the South Carolina Immigrant Victim Network (SCIVN) to address the needs of youth and adult immigrant victims of family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence. The agency has been attending the quarterly SCIVN meetings since February of 2010. SCIVN is a collective network of professional and community partners ranging from immigrant communities, victim service providers, healthcare, legal, and law enforcement professionals whose purpose is to better serve immigrant victims of crime by ensuring meaningful access to culturally and linguistically competent resources, benefits, justice, and available services.

Coalition members work both as a large group on issues of concern to immigrant victims as well as in breakout groups such as 1) outreach to immigrant communities, 2) abused children, 3) domestic violence and sexual assault, 4) legal services and law enforcement education, and 5) human trafficking.

The agency, as a member of the domestic violence/sexual assault work group, continues to work with other Coalition members to reach the following goals:

- Development of a Cultural Competency manual for domestic violence programs
- Provide workshops and training on issues affecting immigrant populations who are experiencing domestic violence
- Identification of specific immigrant communities and location within the state
- Create a network of qualified interpreters for identified immigrant communities so that programs don't have to rely solely on language lines or have to wait to find a qualified interpreter

Faith Leaders Advisory Council

The agency was an active participant in the Faith Leaders Advisory Council which met bi-monthly and was hosted by the SCCADVASA. Members of the council were made up of faith leaders or their designated representative from across the state as well as other members of the community interested in addressing domestic violence in the faith community.

Outreach to faith communities was facilitated by the council through:

- Writing and distributing a manual on domestic violence dynamics and appropriate intervention for faith communities
- Training and workshops for faith leaders provided by council members around the state
- Participation in the Attorney General's Silent Witness Program to reach out to families and their faith communities who lost loved ones to domestic violence

While council meetings are currently on hold, the agency will continue to be an active participant once meetings resume. Agencies that provide services to clients currently maintain working relationships with solicitors and courts in their service area. In addition to working with the court systems, they also work with local SCDSS offices, probation and parole, PTI, and law enforcement.

SC Network of Children's Advocacy Centers

Under state statute, the South Carolina Network of Children's Advocacy Centers has codified the standards established by the National Children's Alliance. The SC Network of Children's Advocacy Centers is an accredited chapter of the national network. The work of Children's Advocacy Centers in SC, the CAC network is supported by the South Carolina Children's Justice Act Task Force and grant funds as described in the report of the CJA Task Force. This joint funding and mutual support of the CAC network goes toward improving and enhancing the investigations of child abuse and neglect in South Carolina. Local SCDSS offices use the children's advocacy centers located in their areas to assist in the forensic interviewing of child victims particularly in sexual abuse cases, although they can assist in any case. The coordinated investigations and interviewing of victims enhances the quality of sex abuse, serious physical abuse or physical neglect investigations.

The South Carolina Network of Children's Advocacy Centers (the Network) has continued to formalize and improve its organizational structure, including incorporation as a nonprofit corporation. Through coordination with the Network, the Duke Endowment made grants available to accredited centers and worked toward development of common outcome measures for an evaluation process Such as Project Best. The Network is also working collaboratively with the South Carolina Children's Hospital Collaborative to fully implement the Child Abuse and Neglect Medical

Response System, which will provide and coordinate medical resources statewide for response to victims of child maltreatment. As part of this effort, SCDSS and the Network are currently working to finalize a working protocol to define and guide the coordination of services. The increased visibility and utilization of Children's Advocacy Centers is expected to lead to more fully coordinated investigations with a reduction of the number of interviews children must experience, and ultimately to improved outcomes for child victims. The Network serves all of the state through 18 centers, thirteen of which are fully accredited Children's Advocacy Centers with five associate members. Every county DSS office has a CAC reasonably accessible to its office in order to quickly serve children and families.

South Carolina Association of Children's Homes and Family Services

The SC Association of Children's Homes and Family Services (SCACHFS) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) membership organization composed of private providers. Private sector members offer a continuum of services that benefit the agency, including: residential treatment, group care intensive, group care intermediate and low management residential care, therapeutic foster care, supervised independent living, wrap-around and intensive family services. The association has a unique identity in the state and is actively involved with policy and program development as it relates to its members and their needs. It is also aggressively involved in child welfare legislation and appropriations, and helps members keep abreast of current best practices and their application to the state's service providers. The Association sponsors training events and frequently invites presenters to South Carolina to stimulate thinking and to improve the ways in which service providers are trained.

Additionally, SCACHFS is a strong advocacy partner for SCDSS with the legislature and in the community. The organization assisted the agency with the passage of the Foster Care Children Education Bill of Rights. The organization is a key partner in the implementation of SC Connecting 4 Kids grant. SC Connecting 4 Kids is an ACF grant recipient under the Fostering Connections Act.

This partnership is strong because both are committed to developing a continuum of care for all children and to assuring that children do not grow up in foster care. Organizations and the agency are jointly developing strategies to create and fund an array of services that strengthens families and all organizations that work with foster children.

Both partners believe in working to improve assessment instruments and processes to determine what placement arrangements best meets the needs of the child. Workers need flexibility and access to an appropriate continuum of services for children and families. Some children experiencing more serious behavioral issues may require a more structured residential placement setting where they can receive intensive treatment services. The placement of children requires an ongoing assessment process that allows children to freely move to less restrictive settings as soon as possible in the treatment process. Permanency should be the goal for all foster children and family reunification or placement with a family is the best option for many children.

Most, if not all, providers offer some type of service to families through charitable donations or as a qualified provider of Medicaid-reimbursable rehabilitative behavior health services. The members coordinate local safety net services in the counties where services are provided.

Because training is a quality assurance cornerstone, the Association aggressively promotes and provides training on critical topics of importance to the delivery of services. Creating competencies is the basis for training. Training influences resources and skills. Ideally, the training opportunities provided through this MOU foster positive and functional relationships at work, improve communications with service providers and children and families, improve

decision-making and trust, assist in conflict resolution, and enhance teambuilding as a foundation for improving the lives of children. The Association encourages the development of training opportunities to enhance the skills of trainees in their duties while they provide services to children. Each trainee is a stakeholder in the child welfare system. There have been many new education and learning initiatives during this past (federal) fiscal year and these training opportunities almost surely create better child outcomes. As trainees are exposed to new ideas and concepts regarding child treatment and best practices, they develop their own internal compass regarding the relevance of the training to treatment and improved child outcomes.

The following two charts list trainings conducted in 2011 and 2012 (with legend following second chart).

2011

January 19, 2011	Personal Pathways to Success
February 2-4, 2011	Annual Conference (That One Thing)
February 2	Just Because You're Smart Doesn't Mean Your Life Works: What About Emotional and Social Intelligence? - Reid Lehman, MBA
February 2	All Tied Up - Timothy J. Duncan, MS, MPA, and Dennis Erskine, BA
February 2	Creative Approaches to Helping Young People Become Successful (How Many Ways Are There to Teach a Youngster to Make Their Bed?) - Becky Butler, M.A.
February 2	From Here to There: Bridging the Gap Between Therapy and Home - Gaye Allen-Cook, B.S., M.A., LPC
February 2	NYTD - Toni Jones, MSW, and Monique Mitchell, Ph.D.
February 3	Achieving Organizational Excellence - Patton McDowell, MBA
February 3	Faulty Circuits: How Trauma Rewires the Brain - Caroline Davis, M.Ed.
February 3	How to Advocate for Children in Foster Care - Louise Cooper
February 3	Walking the Tightrope of Adolescent Needs, Program Expectations, and Principles of Best Practice in Out-of-Home Care - Becky Butler, M.A.
February 3	Taking Positive Steps to Replace Negative Behavior - Joel Weintraub, M.Ed.
February 3	Mission Critical: Real Children, Real Problems, and Real Solutions - Kenston J. Griffin, MSW
February 3	Building Bridges: How the Private Provider Community Can Integrate CFSR & Evidence Based Outcomes to Help Child Welfare Agencies Meet Their Mandates - John T. Wilson, MA
February 3	Using the Power of your Attention to Help Children and Youth Change in Positive Ways - Michael B. Kelly, M.A., Ph.D.
February 3	Really Understanding Their Trauma: Getting in the "Skin" of the Abused Child - Kelli Scurry, LMSW
February 3	Focusing on the Child—Not the Diagnosis - Gaye Allen-Cook, B.S., M.A., LPC

February 22, 2011	Promoting Positive Transitions
March 31, 2011	ABC's of Autism and Asperger's
April 14, 2011	Three Timely Topics
April 26, 2011	The Cultural Messages We Communicate (ESIG)
May 12, 2011	Working with Teens
May 19-20, 2011	TCI Update
May 23-27, 2011	TCI Training of Trainers
May 31, 2011	In Spite of...She's Still My Mother (ESIG)
June 15-17, 2011	Executive Conference (Where the Road Leads)
June 15	Employment Law Clarified – <i>Hagood Tighe, Esq.</i>
June 15	Risky Business: How to Protect Your Employees, Clients, and Agency – <i>Drake Evans</i>
June 16	DHHS – <i>Anthony R. "Tony" Keck</i>
June 16	Succession Planning – <i>Rhonda Victor, PHR</i>
June 16	DSS – <i>Lillian B. Koller, J.D.</i>
June 16	DJJ – <i>Margaret Barber</i>
June 16	Part 1: Outcomes in Congregate Care, Therapeutic Foster Care, Emergency Shelters, PRTFs, and Family Services – <i>Jeff Bormaster, MSW</i>
June 17	Part 2: Outcomes – <i>Jeff Bormaster, MSW</i>
June 23, 2011	Building Rapport (ESIG)
August 11, 2011	Process for Reporting Outcomes Part 1
August 12, 2011	Employee Engagement
August 30, 2011	Process for Reporting Outcomes Part 2
August 31, 2011	Writing Practice Guides
September 23, 2011	How to Plan for Family Reunification – <i>Jeanne Ferguson, MSSW, LISW, Manager, Family Assessment Response, American Humane Association</i>
September 26, 2011	Strengthening Families Program – <i>Henry O. Whiteside, Ph.D., Lutra Group, Salt Lake City, Utah</i>
September 27, 2011	Using Triple P to Provide Families with Positive Parenting Skills – <i>Rita Bostick, M.A., LPC, Triple P America</i>
September 28, 2011	The South Carolina Fatherhood Initiative – <i>Ricky Barr, SC Center for Fathers and Families, and Family Finding – Children's Home Society of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC</i>
October 6, 2011	HR Workshop with Hagood Tighe: Valuable Tips & Effective Advice for Providers of Out-of-Home Care to Children

December 1, 2011	P3 for Region 1 (Greenville)
December 12, 2011	Improving Family Engagement – <i>Jeff Bormaster, MSW</i>

2012

January 19, 2012	P3 for Region 2 (Columbia)
February 28-29, 2012	Annual Conference (Restoring Children to Healed Families)
<i>February 28, 2012</i>	Barnett Address: The Vital Importance of the Family - <i>Richard Barr, M.A.</i>
<i>February 28, 2012</i>	Panel presentation: Lessons Learned from the Roll Out of the Region 1 RFP - <i>Robin Kubler, Keonte Jenkins-Davis, and John Connery</i>
<i>February 28, 2012</i>	Panel: Successful Family Engagement Strategies - <i>Tim Duncan, Christy Jamison, Rhonda McCurry, Deborah McKelvey, and Nichole Pierce</i>
<i>February 29, 2012</i>	Panel: Resources to Help You Help Families - <i>Kim Preston (PRO-Parents), Terri Pope (IL), Walter Simmons (Palmetto Youth Connections), and Cherie Walker (GAL)</i>
<i>February 29, 2012</i>	Nancy K. Perry Address: Families and Faith - <i>Rev. Neal Jones, M.Div., Psy.D.</i>
<i>February 28, 2012</i>	Outcomes: The Missing Piece - <i>Cynthia Brock, MBA</i>
<i>February 28, 2012</i>	Children Don't Disrupt: Structuring Your Program to Avoid Disruptions - <i>Jerry Allred, MSW, Laura Erickson, and Roger Smith, Ph.D.</i>
<i>February 28, 2012</i>	The Practical Implications for Working with a DJJ Population - <i>Steve Dean, M.Ed., and Tom Foley, LMSW</i>
<i>February 28, 2012</i>	Human Resources and Social Networking - <i>Karen L. Luchka</i>
<i>February 28, 2012</i>	Safety First, Last, and Always - <i>Jessica Hanak Coulter, MSW</i>
<i>February 28, 2012</i>	Healthy Sexual Development - <i>Tammy Bryant, MSW, and Chris Rollison</i>
<i>February 29, 2012</i>	Including Substance Abuse Treatment in Family Engagement - <i>Natalie Fryar, M.Ed., and Leslie Wilson</i>
<i>February 29, 2012</i>	Did You Not Hear What I Said? (Helping Our Listeners Hear and Respond) - <i>John Holler, M.Div., Ed.S.</i>
<i>February 29, 2012</i>	The Fatherhood Initiative - <i>Richard Barr, M.A.</i>
<i>February 29, 2012</i>	Finance Panel - <i>Ed Young, Stephanie O'Cain, John B. Merritt, Mark Hobbs, Priscilla C. Green</i>
<i>February 29, 2012</i>	Receiving Assistance for Victims of Crime - <i>Ethel Douglas Ford, Genita Snipes, and Gail Washington, M.A.</i>
<i>February 29, 2012</i>	How Trauma Informed Are Your Services? - <i>Niki Chapman, LMSW, Deborah Hanna, M.Ed., and Anthony Houston</i>
<i>February 29, 2012</i>	Helping Families Navigate the System - <i>Kathryn Kendrick, LMSW, and Debbie McKelvey</i>

February 29, 2012	Independent Living - Kathleen McLean-Titus, MSW, and Terri Pope, MSW
March 29, 2012	P3 for Region 3 (North Charleston)
April 19, 2012	A Conversation with the Fire Marshal – Ed Roper and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) – Van Henson
April 26, 2012	Straight Talk About Sex
May 3, 2012	The Inside Scoop on Addiction: How Addiction and Recovery Affects Teens and Families – Bryan Fox, M.Ed., Ph.D., and High Times: Current Trends in Adolescent Substance Abuse – Laura L. Truesdale, LISW-CP
June 7, 2012	P3 for Region 4 (Florence)
June 14, 2012	Building a Bridge: Partnering with Birth Parents for Positive Outcomes – Rene Sharkey
June 19-20, 2012	Executive Conference (Building and Maintaining Constructive Relationships)
June 19	Perspectives from The Duke Endowment – Rhett Mabry
June 19	How to Adapt CARE to Other Programs – William Martin, BSW, MHSA
June 20	Being In the Know – Mark Hammond, South Carolina Secretary of State)
June 20	Guiding Your Board Toward Innovation – Charles C. Weathers, The Weathers Group
June 20	Ethics in the Age of E-Mail, Texting, and Social Networking – Karen Luchka, Fisher & Phillips, LLP

Legend:

- Title IV money claimed
- Title IV for Emergency Shelters only claimed
- P3s
- No Title IV money

Regional Forums

SCACHFS coordinated four Palmetto Power provider meetings; one meeting per quarter held in different regions of the state. The meetings, for SCDSS and private providers, were facilitated by SCDSS staff and Jeff Bormaster, MSW, a consultant with the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA). Bormaster is an expert on outcomes and has worked with numerous states (including South Carolina) to engage private providers in robust conversation on an intercept of people and data. The expectation at each meeting was to have a highly participatory, interactive discussion focused on quality practice improvements and to ensure those providing services to children and families in SC are using evidence-based practices and data-driven systems. The discussions focused on SCDSS' Wildly Important Goals (WIGs); (1) Increase positive permanency by 50% by June 30, 2012 for children in care 17 months or more and (2) Increase SFY 10 adoptions by 50% by June 30, 2012. Opportunities for localized discussions were also provided to give attendees a chance to meet and begin the collaboration process.

“Sponsor a College Kid” (Pack a SACK Project)

This partnership with the SC Foster Parent Association, SCDSS state office, and local participating organizations, serves foster care students in college. Faith-based and/or community organizations are identified to take part in this effort by sponsoring college students who have been in foster care by supporting them and providing various items

for them while they are away at college. Many of these students have overcome many obstacles and situations in their short lives and this project is designed to support them as they continue to strive for success in life. College can be a wonderful experience but it can also be lonely, especially for someone with limited family connections. Providing this ongoing support and care items for students can enhance relationships and maintain connection with their community. A supporting organization can “Pack a Sack” with toiletries, school supplies, snacks for study, entertainment items, greeting cards, etc.

Permanency Collaboration

Connecting for Kids Collaboration

Finding Families is provided by a contract with the SC Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Program, (the Cass Elias Carter Guardian ad Litem Program). Navigator Services are provided through the SC Association for Children’s Homes and Family Services in a public-private partnership. The Association sub-contracts for direct services. A steering committee with stakeholder representatives meets for updates, sharing of successes and problem solving. An advisory committee made up of steering committee members and community stakeholders meets for input from stakeholders and status report of implementation. The advisory committee and/or steering committee both met monthly until October 2011. Then the steering committee began to meet every other month and the advisory committee, twice per year.

During FFY 2011 and FFY 2012 (up to March 31, 2012) the state GAL program trained search volunteers to complete case file mining to assist coordinators in case file mining. In addition, the state GAL program and Richland County CASA trained search volunteers to do case mining for SCDSS offices not in the grant.

The SC Guardian ad Litem Program and Richland County CASA both completed memoranda of agreement for the search volunteers to have access to case file information necessary for completing the case mining.

Family Finding Collaboration

Law enforcement, court administration, and private sector agencies have all assisted in the development of the Family Finding Plan. Law enforcement has assisted in timely records checks and safety checks of relatives to determine the potential risk of placement with an alternative caregiver. At the 72-hour hearing, the Family Court has accepted alternative caregiver placements found by the locators prior to having a full home study completed. Region I county directors have met with the chiefs for Family Court to obtain their cooperation regarding placement of a child with a relative or fictive kin pending a further court action and home study. Courts in Region I have been cooperative and very receptive to facilitating safe familial placements.

Recruitment Collaboration

The South Carolina Foster Parent Association, SCACHFS, GAL and FCRB (Foster Care Review Board) have all been supportive of utilization of the Foster Parent Association as a recruiter for additional foster homes.

Foster Care Review Board (Governor’s Office)

The state coordinator meets monthly with state-level SCDSS staff to discuss systemic issues or concerns (in conjunction with GAL and state foster parent association leaders). Additionally, similar meetings are held at the local level in an effort to resolve case-specific or local systematic issues. The agency consults with the Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) for their input and assistance on federal and state legislative issues. Additionally, the agency

has a contract with FCRB for the SC Heart Gallery, a collaborative effort for the recruitment of adoptive homes. The FCRB has a “targeted advocacy goal” that complements the agency’s positive permanency WIG.

Foster Care Reviews

SCDSS has been designated by the Office of the Governor of South Carolina as the single state agency responsible for administration of federal funds specified in the Title IV-B State Plan. Whereas the Foster Care Review Board, a Division of the Office of the Governor, is mandated by state statute to perform foster care case reviews every six months. The United States Department of Health and Human Services has allocated monies to the State of South Carolina for the provision of services for eligible persons.

The FCRB provides case review services in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws, rules and regulations. In order to ensure state compliance for foster care review of Title IV-E children, SCDSS contracts for administrative review of all Title IV-E children with the Office of the Governor, Division for Review of Foster Care of Children. The administrative review is the point at which the principal parties to a foster care placement and in the child’s life have the opportunity to discuss the case plan, to discuss progress made toward resolution of problems and achievement of goals, and to reach some understanding about the child’s current and future status.

Additionally, the GAL program and SCDSS have decided to implement a program improvement review to be conducted by both the SCDSS law enforcement division, DOI, and an agreed-upon non-SCDSS employee.

Foster care review requirements:

- The review will be open to the participation of the biological/legal parent(s) of the child; legal guardian; guardians ad litem; parties holding legal custody or having held legal custody at the time of placement, if other than one of above; foster parents; and treatment providers.
- A foster child 10 years of age or older shall be provided the opportunity to be a part of the administrative review.
- A review of each child’s status will be made no less frequently than once every six months.
- A minimum of one local Foster Care Review board in each of the 16 judicial circuits in the state will be maintained.
- The review will be conducted by a panel of citizens who are appointed by the governor to serve as local review board members upon recommendation of the legislative delegation of each county.

The review shall include, but is not limited to, the following determinations:

- Determine the continuing need for and appropriateness of the placement.
- Determine the extent of compliance with the case plan and the court ordered treatment plan.
- Determine the extent of progress made toward alleviating or mitigating the causes necessitating
- The placement, and
- Project a likely date by which the child may be returned home, or placed for adoption.

The Foster Care Review Board will submit three quarterly reports and an end of the year report. The reports will include the number of children reviewed, how many reviews were held and identify areas of concern especially around issues dealing with permanency outcomes.

The South Carolina Heart Gallery

The Heart Gallery is a national program that uses the power of photography to help find homes for legally free children lingering in foster care. Through community exhibits and internet photo display, this recruitment tool increases public awareness of the need for adoptive families.

The South Carolina Heart Gallery (“SCHG”), through a contractual agreement, is a collaborative program administered and supported by the Children’s Foster Care Review Board in collaboration with the Office of the Governor and the South Carolina Department of Social Services. SCHG program staff work with SCDSS Regional Adoption staff to arrange photography sessions as needed, plan community exhibits, track and respond to any resulting inquiries from interested families, and provides targeted, child-specific recruitment and family engagement.

DSS provides significant financial support through IV-B, subpart 2 funds. FCRB contributes the required provider match. In addition to financial support, DSS:

- Allows SCHG complete access to all information regarding legally free children in the custody of DSS for whom no adoptive family has identified
- Transports children to and from each photo shoot
- Identifies children who have special needs that prevent inclusion at photo shoots so the SCHG can arrange for individual photo sessions for those children
- Approves the biographical sketch of the child that accompanies the picture
- Follows-up with inquiries received by the SCHG
- Works with SCHG Adoption Recruiters for intensive child-specific recruitment
- Provides access the child’s recruitment summary and background characteristics

The South Carolina Heart Gallery will partner with the SCDSS to meet its Wildly Important Goal of increasing finalized adoptions of legally free children 50% by June 30, 2012. The 2011 – 2012 MOU includes two additional areas of focus for the SCHG — enhanced targeted recruitment and family engagement.

I. Targeted Recruitment

The SCHG currently accepts referrals of legally free children from SCDSS. Professional photographs of these children are featured on the SCHG website, and in multiple community venues, providing broad-based, child-specific adoption recruitment.

- The SCHG provides specialized recruitment services for all children reported by SCDSS as legally free for adoption for whom an adoptive resource has not been identified. SCHG coordinates services with the SC Foster Parents Association and any other vendor the SCDSS contracts with in providing recruitment services.
- The SCHG provides intensive child-specific recruitment campaigns targeted to appropriate geographic areas and/or faith communities. One or more SCHG Adoption Recruiters partner with the SCDSS regional adoption specialist and child (when appropriate) to comprise a recruitment team focused on formulating a child-specific recruitment plan. Each photographed child’s complete recruitment summary, including background factors and specific family supports required for a successful adoption, is made available to the SCHG. The SCHG provides detailed quarterly reports to the adoption specialist concerning the number, location, and type of recruitment activities. A maximum of 10 children per Regional Adoption Office may be selected for intensive Heart Gallery recruitment based on age, length of time in care, and/or special needs.

II. Family Engagement

The SCHG currently responds to telephone and website inquiries within three working days, forwarding child-

specific inquiries to the assigned SCDSS Regional Adoption Specialist for follow-up, provides general information about the foster care/adoption process, and generates referrals for new South Carolina families to the appropriate SCDSS Regional Adoption Division via an intake request.

- SCHG developed and implemented a dedicated database to track and manage inquiries and referrals from families. The database enables the SCHG to develop standardized recruitment response strategies, and provide assistance to SCDSS in identifying and resolving inquiry follow-up issues.
- The SCHG expedited the application and home study process, utilizing current SCDSS protocol, for new South Carolina families responding to Heart Gallery recruitment. The SCHG provides intake services, coordinates enrollment into orientation and pre-service training provided by SCDSS, and completes home studies for these families.
- For approved families inquiring through the SCHG (in- and out-of-state), the SCHG serves as “first reviewer”; receiving and pre-screening home studies against child’s background factors and placement needs. The SCHG forwards appropriate studies to the SCDSS regional adoption specialist for consideration, handles the response to families who do not appear to be appropriate for the child, including suggesting other children who may be a more appropriate fit for the family. The SCHG maintains family background information/study for potential future use.

Description of Services

1. SCDSS allows the SCHG complete access to all information regarding legally free children in the custody of SCDSS for whom no adoptive family has been identified.

Outcome: The SCHG provides photography services and photographs for 100% of children identified by SCDSS in this category. SCHG follows an established SCDSS protocol for placing a child’s recruitment status on Hold and/or removing the child’s photograph from the Heart Gallery

2. The SCHG recruits professional photographers willing to volunteer their time and services to provide photographs of children for the purpose of recruitment of adoptive families for these children.

Outcome: The SCHG ensures an adequate number of photographers are available to complete photographs for 100% of identified children within the specified timeframes.

3. The SCHG arranges for regional photography sessions for children through coordination with the respective SCDSS Regional Adoption Offices. SCDSS is responsible for providing transportation to and from each photography session for children scheduled for photographs. The SCHG provides additional volunteers as needed for the safety and supervision of the children during photography sessions. All volunteers must be screened by State Law Enforcement (SLED) criminal record checks and child abuse registry checks to ensure the safety of the children. Children who have special needs that prevent inclusion at regional sessions may be accommodated through individual sessions as coordinated by SCHG and the SCDSS Regional Adoption Office.

Outcome: The SCHG arranges a minimum of six photo sessions annually, at least one in each region. The SCHG photographs each child transported to the scheduled photo shoot. The SCHG also provides individual photography sessions for children with special needs that prevent inclusion at scheduled regional photo shoots.

4. The SCHG coordinates the collection, printing and framing of photographs for each child or sibling group photographed. SCDSS ensures that written credit be given to the photographer, as outlined in the Heart Gallery Photographer’s Statement of Agreement, when SCHG photographs are published in non-SCHG recruitment resources.

Outcome: The SCHG selects a minimum of two photographs for each child or sibling group. All

photographs are to be framed and ready for exhibit within 12 weeks of the photo shoot or individual photography session. The SCHG provides each worker with an electronic photograph for non-SCHG recruitment.

5. The SCHG coordinates the collection and printing of a brief description of each child to accompany the child's photograph. All descriptions must be approved by the SCDSS Regional Adoption Administrator or her designee.

Outcome: The SCHG includes an approved biographical sketch with each child's framed photograph.

6. The SCHG provides a photo album to each child photographed. For children photographed as part of a sibling group, each child is provided with a picture of the sibling group.

Outcome: The SCHG provides photo albums to children photographed within 12 weeks of the photography session.

7. The SCHG arranges venues for display of the Heart Gallery photographs of the children included in the Gallery. The term "venue" includes, but is not limited to, any presentation, speaking engagement, public appearance, or meeting where Heart Gallery photos are presented or displayed. In conjunction with SCDSS Regional Adoption Administrators, the SCHG ensures the protection of the children's interest in deciding which children to include in a particular geographic area of the state. With possible exceptions, children photographed in one adoption region are featured in another region of the state. In an effort to maximize exposure for children featured in the Gallery, SCHG strives to have pictures in as many venues as possible.

Outcome: The SCHG will arrange a minimum of sixteen venues displaying Heart Gallery photographs; one venue per quarter in each Adoption Region in the state. A quarterly report of these activities is made available to SCDSS.

8. The SCHG includes a fully developed and maintained website for posting photographs and descriptions of children photographed; and tracking and managing inquiries from interested families. The assigned adoption specialists regularly update the SCHG program regarding the status of featured children. When adoption services are placed on hold or closed unexpectedly, the Adoption Specialist should notify the Regional Adoption Recruiter or designated staff and the Heart Gallery Program coordinator. Heart Gallery recruitment may continue if appropriate and agreed upon by the SCHG and the Regional Adoption Specialist or foster care case-manager. When other circumstances apply, the program indicates the time frame in which removal of photos from online and public displays can be accomplished.

Outcome: The SCHG manages the website to ensure timely and accurate posting and updating of photographs and descriptions of children. Photographs are available on the website within 12 weeks of the photography session. The SCHG updates the online photograph, upon receipt of notification from SCDSS, for any child with an identified family. Upon notification of an adoptive placement, SCHG removes the framed photograph from public exhibits and provides the framed photograph to SCDSS for the adoptive family.

9. Inquiries from interested families are received and tracked both by the Heart Gallery and the designated regional adoption staff. Information-sharing is necessary as each entity may receive inquiries separately. Inquiries received by the program are forwarded to assigned adoption specialists and regional adoption recruiters or SCDSS designees at the time of receipt. Adoption specialists are responsible for follow-up and should report results to regional adoption recruiters and/or other designated staff on a schedule determined by SCDSS. The SCHG assists regional adoption staff in identifying and resolving issues for an inquiring family not receiving appropriate follow-up.

Outcome: The SCHG responds to website inquires and make referrals to designated SCDSS Regional

Adoption Office staff within three working days of receipt of inquiry. The SCHG tracks website activity and produces reports of website activity and results. A quarterly report of these activities is made available to SCDSS. The SCHG communicates regularly with regional SCDSS adoption staff to ensure the website listing of children is current and accurate and to track any Heart Gallery inquiries going directly to the SCDSS regional adoption offices. The SCHG provides assistance to SCDSS regional adoption offices in identifying and resolving issues with family inquiry and follow-up.

10. Utilizing established SCDSS protocols, the SCHG expedites the application and home study process by providing intake services, coordinating enrollment into Orientation and Pre-Service Training provided by SCDSS, and completing home studies for new South Carolina families responding to Heart Gallery recruitment. The SCHG adoption specialists are to be Certified Investigators (CIs).
Outcomes: The SCHG provides intake services; including the mailing of the approved SCDSS application for foster care/adoption and required forms to families within three working days. The SCHG contacts the appropriate regional adoption office to coordinate enrollment into orientation and pre-service training provided by SCDSS. The SCHG provides SCDSS completed home studies for new South Carolina families responding to Heart Gallery recruitment.
11. The SCHG provides family engagement services for in-state and out-of-state families with an approved home study expressing interest in a child through the SCHG. SCDSS provides the SCHG access to the child's recruitment summary and background characteristics.
Outcomes: The SCHG follows all established SCDSS protocols as first reviewers for approved home studies. The SCHG pre-screens the received home study against the child's background factors and placement needs. The SCHG forwards appropriate studies to the SCDSS regional adoption specialist for consideration and handles the response to families who do not appear appropriate for child including suggesting other children who may be more appropriate for the family. The SCHG maintains family background information/study for potential future use.
12. The SCHG provides intensive, child-specific recruitment campaigns for specific populations of children from each regional adoption office. The SCHG partners with SCDSS adoption staff to formulate recruitment plans targeted to appropriate geographic areas and/or faith communities.
Outcomes: A maximum of 10 mutually agreed-upon children per regional adoption office may be selected based on age, length of time in care, and/or special needs. A quarterly report detailing the number, location, and type of recruitment activities for designated children is provided to regional adoption staff.
13. The SCHG conducts outreach activities, as available, with civic organizations, community partners, and the faith community for the purpose of promoting adoption and educating the community.
Outcome: The SCHG educates the public about children who are waiting for adoption through speaking engagements, public appearances and participation in recruitment activities. A quarterly report of these activities is made available to SCDSS.
14. The SCHG actively participates in Heart Gallery of America events for the purpose of promoting adoption and enhancing the South Carolina Heart Gallery.
Outcome: The SCHG actively participates in Heart Gallery of America events through social media, attendance at offered trainings and workshops. A quarterly report of these activities is made available to SCDSS.
15. The SCHG provides a detailed inventory of in-kind contributions, donated materials, and/or cash donations for the program.
Outcome: The SCHG manages and maintains a comprehensive inventory of all contributions and donations, including the name of contributor, amount or values of the contribution, and the purpose of the contribution.

A quarterly report is made available to SCDSS.

South Carolina Foster Parent Association

South Carolina Foster Parent Association (SCFPA) representatives meet monthly with state-level SCDSS staff to discuss issues or concerns (in conjunction with FCRB and GAL leaders) and provide feedback. Local SCFPA representatives meet at least quarterly with local SCDSS, FCRB, and GAL staff to discuss issues or concerns.

The SCFPA has a leadership role in the development, coordination and delivery of training for foster parents. It has a strong partnership with the State, developing and implementing many programs over the years, including the scholarship program, which provides several scholarships yearly for foster youth; coordination of a “buddy” system of support; and program support for county FPAs. Additional programs include Independent Living Showers, Pack a SACK, On the Road Again, Laptop Bundles, Striving for Excellence, Teen Recognition, Smart Summers, and participation on the Independent Living statewide advisory committee. Following are brief descriptions of these programs.

- **Independent Living Showers.** Independent Living Showers are provided by SCFPA to all foster care youth transitioning to college or out of care. These showers provide basic household items such as linens, dishes and kitchen items.
- **“Sponsor a College Kid” (Pack a SACK Project).** This partnership with the SC Foster Parent Association, SCDSS state office, and local participating organizations, serves foster care students in college. Faith-based and/or community organizations are identified to take part in this effort by sponsoring college students who have been in foster care by supporting them and providing various items for them while they are away at college. Many of these students have overcome many obstacles and situations in their short lives and this project is designed to support them as they continue to strive for success in life. College can be a wonderful experience but it can also be lonely, especially for someone with limited family connections. Providing this ongoing support and care items for students can enhance relationships and maintain connection with their community. A supporting organization can “Pack a Sack” with toiletries, school supplies, snacks for study, entertainment items, greeting cards, etc.
- **On the Road Again.** On the Road Again is a project of the SCFPA which provides donated cars to foster care youth who are at least 18 and not yet 21 years old, actively employed, pursuing a GED or engaged in a post-high school education program. With adequate transportation, these young people are able to pursue their goals of continuing education and employment, allowing for a more successful transition into adulthood.
- **Laptop Bundles.** Laptop Bundle is a partnership between the SCFPA and SCDSS which provides an opportunity for foster youth to access a laptop computer bundle that includes a computer with a one-year service agreement, software, printer and carry case.
- **Striving for Excellence.** Striving for Excellence is an initiative of the SCFPA designed to recognize students within resource families who have identified and are pursuing goals that will ensure a successful transition into adulthood.
- **Teen Recognition.** Teen Recognition is a program in which teens in high school (grades 9-12) with a 2.0 or better GPA, who are involved in after-school activities, community service, church or other worthwhile activities may be nominated by school personnel, a pastor, employer, a resource parent or social worker for this award. The winner is recognized at the SCFPA Annual Training Conference with a monetary award.
- **Smart Summers, Strong Kids.** Smart Summers, Strong Kids is designed to provide foster children and youth with the same opportunity as their peers to engage in a variety of educational and confidence-building

activities. The SCFPA works to enlist camps across the state that are willing to provide scholarships or discounted rates to children in care. In addition, the SCFPA works to secure funding from the private sector as well as available grants to offset the cost of this program.

The SCFPA, as a well-organized and long-standing support for foster parents across the state, is uniquely positioned to help SCDSS to achieve its goals of positive permanency for children who have been in care for 17 months or more and to increase adoptions by 50% for children who are legally free for adoption.

SCFPA provides services to the SCDSS. The services include responsibility for providing and coordinating statewide pre-service training for resource and adoptive families; provider training and support for resource/adoptive families; recruitment of resource families; child-specific recruitment for permanent families; and distribute computers and software for children in foster care as well as providing “showers” for children transitioning into independence. In the longer term, these initiatives are intended to improve the safety, permanency and well-being for South Carolina’s children into the future. Following are descriptions of these services

Component A: Pre-Service Training for Resource Families and Recruitment of Resource Families

The SCFPA is responsible for pre-service training for resource and adoptive families in South Carolina. SCFPA has developed and will continue to update the training curriculum, Heartfelt Calling. The responsibility also includes designing the process for how training will be delivered and coordinated across the state, and actual implementation and oversight of the training delivery.

SCFPA provides a standardized, consistent framework for the competency-based training of resource families. They work with all 46 counties to deliver recertification training for foster parents, using local contacts to help coordinate the delivery of the pre-service training across the state. SCFPA currently maintains a database for individuals who have participated in SCFPA training. This system can provide confirmation of completion of pre-service training; certificates of completion will be awarded at the end of each training session. SCFPA provides oversight of its contract trainers to ensure accountability and accurate delivery of materials and maintains regular contact with all contract staff.

In addition, SCFPA is fully committed to recruiting of resource families. The approach used by SCFPA is described below.

Ethnic discrepancies and collaboration to remedy the imbalance: For general identification and recruitment of resource families, the recruitment campaign, as pieces are developed and put into play, must be targeted realistically for children in the SCDSS system, among whom ethnic minorities are disproportionately represented. These demographics are continuously tracked, and SCFPA stays aware of them to keep the campaign realistically aimed at identifying and recruiting resource families from within these children’s communities, though in full and demonstrable compliance with all applicable points of the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994. The families recruited are to reflect and respect the varied cultural values and experiences of SCDSS children. SCFPA coordinates efforts with all SCDSS and community initiatives intended to identify and solicit resource families, including nonprofits and representatives of the faith-based community. This further ensures that every attempt is being made, in every community and culture, to create and maintain a viable pool of resource families.

The SC Youth Advocate Program has been awarded the recruitment contract for the Upstate Region 1 as an

extension of the SCFPA's recruitment efforts; three of the most populous counties in the state are in this 10-county region. SCFPA collaborates closely with SCYAP to develop mutually workable and acceptable procedures to ensure that recruitment activities are consistent and that all phone calls and other forms of inquiry about possibly becoming a resource family (see below) are handled within the next working day and in the same manner. Any direct inquiries received by SYCAP are forwarded to SCFPA for entry into the central recruitment database.

Quick response is necessary for inquiries about fostering and adoption. In the past, potential resource parents who got no response or a greatly delayed response to inquiries have either gone to other organizations to find children or have given up and lost interest altogether in the idea.

To address this concern, SCFPA developed a recruitment program. The program was named Heartfelt Calling to maintain consistency from first contact through pre-service training as the curriculum shares the name. In addition to the need for quick response, the need for consistency and continuity in recruitment of resource/foster and adoptive parents has a significant role in turning inquiries into licensed resource/foster and/or adoptive homes. Therefore, SCFPA created a new position, hiring a recruitment coordinator with more than sixteen years of experience in child welfare to respond daily to phone calls, e-mails, and any other form of inquiry about possible resource parenting. The recruitment coordinator is able to answer inquiries in one working day, respond in a warm and welcoming manner, and answer questions regarding foster care and adoption of children in SCDSS custody. The recruitment coordinator sends the application packet, or other appropriate information to each inquirer within one working day, notifies the appropriate SCDSS office, and follows up to ensure that connections have been made and the process is moving along. Additionally, SCFPA implemented a new toll-free telephone number to ensure all calls received are inquiries concerning resource parenting or adoption. This also allows for ease in tracking the success of its public relations efforts.

Existing SCDSS materials may be used to inform potential resource and adoptive parents about the advantages and details of fostering and adoption, but SCFPA may develop additional brochures or pamphlets. As a part of the revised pre-service, SCFPA has developed an introductory video to resource parenting and adoption and to the training itself. The video is part of the packet sent out in appropriate situations and can get interested parties started at once on the requirements necessary for certification.

Approaches:

- *Internet.* Use of the Internet continues to grow significantly during each measuring period. It is both extremely cost effective and capable of approach through several avenues including Websites, YouTube, and social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn. It is also important that Internet-savvy adoptive families are recruited so that the children they adopt are given the benefits of a major learning tool in today's world. SCFPA reaches out to prospective resource parents via the Internet with 10 Internet advertisements.
- *Public Relations.* A statewide public relations campaign is being coordinated to reach the faith-based community as well as the business community. SCFPA is working to build relationships among churches, civic groups, corporations, and other bodies. As the current corporate climate is trending toward a "giving back" mentality, SCFPA capitalizes on that by enlightening these entities as to South Carolina's children in need—with concentration toward positive permanency for the children who fall within this category of need. A solid public relations campaign combined with a strategic Internet marketing plan will produce the greatest results in recruiting prospective resource parents.
- *Other Advertising Vehicles.* SCFPA is also using traditional media vehicles such as outdoor billboards and

television and radio commercials as the budget permits and/or when suitable sponsors are identified.

Much of the advertising overlaps through several media but is carefully coordinated to reach the areas of greatest need and to avoid duplication of expense and effort. A public relations professional oversees and manages this, under the aegis of the SCFPA. SCFPA may develop a bulletin for potential resource families that can be generally and broadly distributed.

Component B: Training and Support for Resource/Adoptive Families

The SCFPA sponsored a statewide Foster Care Conference. The conference was intended to improve the State's program in caring for, and treatment of children by foster (resource) parents associated with the SCFPA. The agenda should have sessions that reinforce and enhance basic knowledge and skills for the performance of specific functions related to the caring of children served in foster homes settings. Additionally, the conference provided an environment where foster parents and SCDSS case workers and staff could interact and develop relationships that will lead to the improvement of the foster care system in South Carolina.

The SCFPA coordinates and provides statewide ongoing local training sessions throughout the year and collaborates with SCDSS on the annual Independent Living Conference.

Component C: Child-Specific Recruitment

Child-specific recruitment refers to finding adoptive homes for children and youth who are already legally free for adoption. In some cases they are with foster families that might be interested in adoption if they could meet the requirements and be assured they could provide for the children's needs.

Referrals are made by SCDSS Regional Adoption Offices to SCFPA. These are names of children and youth cleared for adoption and the contact information for their current foster parents and workers. SCFPA family services director (FSD), who is certified for and experienced in clinical supervision, is directly involved in this process. The FSD meets regularly with all regional adoption offices, is present during home visits, is on call for consultation or any situation of need on a daily and nightly basis, and coordinates all necessary interaction between parties to finalize adoptive homes at a faster pace for the benefit of these children. In addition, the FSD monitors the process and keeps records of their visits and progress.

Some current foster parents are leery of adopting the children and youth in their care, primarily because of behavioral problems and other special needs. The SCFPA and its FSD are acutely aware of the kinds of needs these children have and the difficulties caregivers face in meeting them, especially in thinking of undertaking the process of adopting them and providing stable, safe, and loving permanent homes. The people working with them will be aware of resources to meet these needs and understand that SCDSS will look at cases on an individual basis to consider whatever it would take to achieve and sustain adoptions on the part of existing foster families and other possible adoptive parents. The face-to-face workers network on their behalf with SCDSS and whatever resources are available in the community to find or create resources where existing ones are inadequate, and then to follow up to help ensure that the families continue to get the resources required to sustain permanence.

When foster parents and others who inquire about possible adoption decide they cannot take this step, they can serve as recruiters along with the SCFPA team. They know others in the community, their churches, and other organizations and may be aware of some of the people in children's lives who are potential adoptive parents. Also,

even after foster children and youth have left their homes, they can remain a more or less formal part of these children's families, post-adoption and into the future.

Some children, especially teens, may not want to be adopted. Part of SCFPA's focus is to work directly with these youth to help them understand the advantages of adoption. This may require connecting them socially with others who have been adopted as teenagers so that they can hear positive stories. SCFPA may also develop materials that would appeal to young people, such as a video with music and stories about families and adoption. To whatever extent possible, however, SCFPA uses any existing SCDSS materials that convey the message about supports for permanence.

Component D: Distribute computers and software for children in foster care as well as providing "showers" for children transitioning into independence.

SCFPA helps with distributing computers and software and provides "showers" for children transitioning into independence as described previously under "Laptop Bundles" and "Independent Living Showers."

Guardian ad Litem Program for SC (Governor's Office)

The state coordinator meets monthly with state-level SCDSS staff to discuss issues or concerns (in conjunction with FCRB and FPA leaders) and provides feedback. Several GALs are chairpersons for local Citizen Review Panels (CRPs). Local GAL staff meet at least quarterly with local SCDSS, FCRB, and FPA staff to discuss issues or concerns. Consult with GAL program staff for their assistance and input on federal and state legislative issues. Additionally, the GAL program is a key partner in the Fostering Connections Grant that includes family locator program for older youth.

Permanency Roundtables Collaboration

In August and September 2011, GAL, CASA, and FCRB were invited to Casey Training for permanency roundtables (PRTs). The GAL was invited to attend the individual PRT for the child they represented. Efforts were made to help GALs recognize the need for other forms of permanency besides reunification.

Coker College

The college facilitates monthly meetings for foster youth group (Growing Up and Out) from five counties (Darlington, Florence, Chesterfield, Lee, and Marion). For more information, see the "Agency and Youth Connections" section of this report.

Columbia Urban League

The Urban League handles the Youth Leadership Development Institute, a project undertaken to offer agency youth to include foster care children a curriculum encompassing summer employment, career counseling and individualized counseling, transportation, and a year round mentoring and tutoring program. Staff from the Urban League also attends the quarterly CWA meetings and the IL Advisory Committee meetings.

Medical University, Palmetto Richland and Palmetto Easley Hospitals

In partnership with the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and Palmetto Health Richland and Palmetto Health Easley Hospitals, the agency secures intensive specialized care and care coordination services for medically complex children in foster care or adoption who reside in or near Charleston, Richland, and Greenville Counties. The program serves as the medical home for these children. In addition, SCDSS contracts with these children's hospitals

to provide specialized training to foster parents of medically fragile children. The specialty medical and developmental training, including pediatric CPR training, is made available to other foster parents as well.

Pro-Parents

The agency has a partnership with Pro-Parents to address the special education issues affecting foster care children. The agency has a “LINKS” curriculum taught by pro-parents directly to foster care parents. The curriculum outlines special education issues for foster parents including advocacy tools to be used at the school district level.

Adoption Collaboration

South Carolina Heart Gallery

Hundreds of foster children in the custody of SCDSS are legally free for adoption. In a collaborative effort with the Foster Care Review Board to locate permanent adoptive homes, Heart Gallery photographers volunteer their time and talents to create unique portraits showcasing these children. The portraits are displayed at various locations around the state in order to raise public awareness. (For details on this collaboration, please see preceding section on the Heart Gallery.)

Inter-Country Adoptions

In order to adopt internationally, all of these stakeholders - certified investigators, child placing agencies, adoption Citizens and Immigration Services, Homeland Security and the US State Department as well as adoption attorneys – play a role in the inter-country adoption and work with SCDSS/ICPC Unit. Each entity has a service to provide and has to coordinate efforts for an inter-country adoption to happen. Child placing agencies and certified investigators provide home studies and steer the families through the process. SCDSS reviews the home studies to see if South Carolina criteria as stated in SC law are met. The US governmental departments review and assure that US laws have been followed with the provision of home studies and other stipulated documents.

At least once a year, Citizens and Immigration Services (CIS), Homeland Security, and the US State Department will either participate in or provide training through workshops or via teleconferences to ICPC staff, along with child placing agencies, certified investigators and adoption attorneys, to review any new procedures; to make sure that procedures are understood; to discuss the standards for an international study; and to assure state partners are providing appropriate services to adoptive parents who wish to adopt and bring children into the US for an inter-country adoption. Also, the SC Association of Licensed Adoption Agencies (SCALAA) provides training to its members about inter-country adoptions, and ICPC staff participate as presenters in these workshops.

Adoption Assistance Collaboration

USC Children’s Law Center collaborated with the agency in preparing and presenting technical assistance training to Regional Adoption Offices in FFY 2011 and provided ongoing technical assistance to the Adoptions Unit in FFY 2012 as needed. In FFY 2012, the unit provided all regional offices a refresher training to include updated information related to IV-E determinations, adoption subsidies, and ICAMA. The agency’s Office of General Counsel helped to ensure that court orders filed in removal proceedings contain findings that are necessary to establish IV-E eligibility.

Other Collaboration

SC Citizen Review Panels

During the past year the SCCRP and SCDSS have worked to strengthen their collaborative work. An updated Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the DSS state Director, Child Welfare Director, SCCRP Chairs and the representatives from the University of South Carolina, College of Social Work, The Center for Child and Family Studies. The document laid the foundation for guiding the work of all the parties involved. As part of the agreement, the group holds regular meetings to facilitate their work. The three SCCRP panel chairpersons, the State Deputy Director, the Child Welfare Director and the USC panel facilitator, meet monthly for information sharing, and to discuss current SCCRP projects.

Collaboration with the SC Citizen Review Panels (SCCRP) with a focus on Out of Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN) policies, procedures and practices and kinship care is ongoing with the agency. While the establishment of Citizen Review Panels is required under CAPTA, the State recognizes that the panels provide a unique opportunity for collaboration and community support, voices full support for the panels, and values their input. The purpose of the panels is to provide new opportunities for citizens to play an integral role in ensuring that States meet their goals of protecting children from abuse by reviewing the child protection system. South Carolina has three panels: the Midlands CRP, the Low Country CRP, and the Upstate CRP. The panels are supported and facilitated through the agency's contract with the University of South Carolina, College of Social Work, and Center for Child and Family Studies. In the coming year, emphasis will be placed on a variety of topics relating to the safety and well-being of children and increasing membership.

South Carolina hosted the Tenth Annual National Citizen Review Panel Conference on May 18-20, 2011 in Charleston, SC. The SCCRP used the conference to share information about their collaborative efforts with DSS and others in the community who make up the child welfare system. The event was attended by the Mayor of Charleston, The US Department of Health and Human Services Director for Region 4, The Columbia Police Chief, and others who spoke about being a "Force for Change" in the child welfare system. The event's meet-and-greet was hosted and paid for by Parents Anonymous of SC. SC presentations included:

- "Family Group Conferencing" by SC Families First
- "How One Child Protection Agency works with its CRP to Make Recommendations a Reality" by the SCCRP chairs and the former Child Welfare Assistant Director
- "Laying the Groundwork for a National Health and Education Passport;" a collaborative presentation by the SCCRP and Wyoming CRPs

During the past year, the SCCRP and SCDSS have worked to strengthen their collaborative work. An updated Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the DSS State Director, Child Welfare Director, SCCRP chairs and representatives from the University of South Carolina, College of Social Work, Center for Child and Family Studies. The document laid the foundation for guiding the work of all the parties involved. As part of the agreement, the group holds regular meetings to facilitate their work. The three SCCRP panel chairpersons, the State Deputy Director, the Child Welfare Director and the USC panel facilitator meet monthly for information-sharing and to discuss current SCCRP projects.

The annual joint fall CRP retreat will be held in October 2012, and the agenda will include information on the panels' project interests.

Center for Child & Family Studies, College of Social Work, USC

SCDSS contracts with The Center for Child and Family Studies (CCFS) for a multitude of activities in the areas of training, research, program evaluation, and program development. CCFS collaborates with SCDSS Staff Development and Training (SD&T) to develop and evaluate training curricula, and to deliver training to foster and adoptive parents and to SCDSS staff members providing services in child welfare, managed treatment services, adult protective services, homemaker services, and family independence. CCFS plans and delivers conferences and legal education seminars, develops media, and is working with SCDSS in development of capacity for e-learning opportunities for staff. A CCFS staff member facilitates the youth advisory committee called GOALL (“Go Out and Learn Life”), coordinating monthly meetings and managing specific tasks related to its program planning. This staff member works closely with the SCDSS Independent Living coordinator to identify opportunities for youth to have a voice in agency programs and planning. CCFS provides interpretation and translation services and training through SCDSS HABLA and the Interpreter Qualification Project (IQP). The E-Tech program addresses educational needs of foster children through its work with foster parents, and continues to provide computers for children and youth in foster care. CCFS staff members work with the SCDSS education liaison through the Education Subcommittee on education issues related to training, policies, and procedures. E-Tech is working with various agencies that are involved in providing or monitoring educational services to identify and address service gaps and establishing guidelines for addressing educational needs of children and youth in foster care.

Child Fatality Review Teams/Health and Safety Councils

Local child fatality and near fatality review teams were established through a collaborative effort of the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED), the South Carolina Department of Social Services and the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). The State Child Fatality Advisory Committee has statewide impact, serving all citizens of South Carolina. The Child Death Review coordinator, position funded by CAPTA, reports that currently there are local child death review teams in 11 of the 46 South Carolina counties. There are 10 Children’s Health and Safety Councils and one child death review team associated with the Safe Kids county organization. Local child death reviews take place in Richland, Charleston, Greenville, Greenwood, Dillon, Horry, Lancaster, Kershaw, Marion, York, and Hampton counties. Jasper and Lexington Counties have requested assistance in forming and re-establishing child death reviews teams for their respective counties. The protocol for death review developed by the National Center for Child Death Review is provided to each county with a local team or to a county that wants to start a local team.

In an effort to address Shaken Baby Syndrome, state law was passed to encourage reduction of child deaths due to shaken baby syndrome. The statute requires state agencies to create a training video specifically about shaken baby syndrome and is expected to reduce fatalities through education of the general public and foster and adoptive parents. The videos have been made available to hospitals throughout the state. Additionally, videos were duplicated and made available during FY 2011 on request from individuals and county DSS and public health offices. SCDSS published the video on its website under resources for ease of access.

SCDSS/DJJ Breakthrough Series

SCDSS and DJJ worked together under grant funding to improve and establish working relationships around children and families being served by both agencies. The process included developing protocols and procedures to facilitate communication between families, agencies and the court, delivery of services and transfer of cases for youth that are served by both child welfare and juvenile justice. Georgetown, Charleston and Berkeley counties are participating in this program for cross-over youth. A key component of this initiative is the use of the family engagement model for other both agencies.

Law Enforcement Protocols

State statute requires that SCDSS and local law enforcement agencies collaborate to develop protocols to address at a minimum the sharing of information and communication between and among agencies, staffing of cases, and the development of procedures to handle removal of children and immediate placement when necessary.

In coordination with the Governor's Office, federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS), Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and other medical facilities, and the Children's Law Center, the Drug Endangered Children Protocol (SCDEC) was completed.

The SCDEC Protocol is designed to guide intervention particularly in situations when children are found in homes or situations where methamphetamine is being manufactured exposing children to hazardous materials. Because the number of cases reported by state law enforcement involving methamphetamine has increased in the past few years, the State believed this protocol was necessary to ensure coordinated services to children.

Description:
The State Committee for Endangered Children (a partner in the protocol) has provided training annually at a conference on substance abuse. This conference is well attended by CPS program and county staff, law enforcement, medical personnel, emergency services and alcohol and drug abuse specialists
Funding source
A modified Base 11 was developed which included only county and regional staff who perform children services: FC, CPS and Adoptions. Staff was allocated using applicable bases, i.e. FC - B17, Adpt - B13, CPS - B4, IFC - B18 to derive weighted % for each cost objective. Funding: IV-E FC Trng -- 25.39%, IV-E Adpt Trng -- 5.93%, SSBG -- 9.35%, TANF -- 31.89%, Other Fed 1.03%, Other Non-Fed -- 26.41%
Venue/setting of training
The conference is presented in Columbia over a 2 ½ day training
Duration of Activity
2 ½ day training that provides 14 hours to participants.
Who was the audience and # of attendees
Participants are front line DSS workers, law enforcement, DEA agents, Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug workers, and other stake holders.

State Department of Mental Health

DMH staff are co-located in several SCDSS county offices. Additionally, there is continued collaboration between child welfare and mental health to enhance services available for children and families.

Agency and Youth Connections – Youth Involvement Opportunities

Advisory Committees

The **Independent Living Advisory Committee** provides oversight, technical assistance, and guidance to the Independent Living Program. The composition of the committee currently consists of agency (administrative, supervisory and direct service) staff, university staff, Foster Parent Association, Association of Children's Homes and Family Services, group care providers, and representatives of other child serving agencies. Membership also includes two slots for youth (one currently in foster care and a foster care graduate). Issues affecting youth in foster care and Aftercare are addressed and supported across agencies, and program information is shared for further

dissemination statewide. Currently, the advisory committee is reviewing the agency foster care policy and ways to enhance the program for older youth in foster care.

The Youth Advisory Committee – GOALL (Go Out and Learn Life) consists of youth who are or have been in foster care who represent the voice of youth in care. This committee continues to provide the youth perspective on the foster care program, its impact on their lives and needed changes. GOALL assists in conference planning for the annual youth training as well participate in the panel discussions at a variety of professional events throughout the year.

The SC NYTD Advisory Panel. The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is a federally-mandated data collection for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. This database is used to track the independent living services and supports provided to youth in foster care. Effective January 1, 2012, the advisory panel, consisting of a maximum of 10 youth in foster care or previously in foster care (17 years or older) from the State of South Carolina, will provide advice about NYTD, the surveys, and IL services offered to youth in foster care. Members of the panel will also be invited to participate in discussions and presentations at state and national conferences, as needed (including the National NYTD Technical Assistance Meeting). The SC NYTD Advisory Panel will meet quarterly at the University of South Carolina and is facilitated by the SC NYTD research director and SC NYTD project coordinator from USC – Center for Child and Family Studies.

Youth Advisory Committees—Local Boards

In addition to the State Youth Advisory Committee, there are several local youth advisory committees (sometimes referred to as youth associations, boards or youth groups). Of South Carolina's 46 counties, 22 are represented by youth advisory committees. These youth groups consist of 13 – 21 year old youth who are in foster care, and they function as liaisons between the youth in the counties and the county directors and supervisors. Members participate in the development of training for youth and leadership classes for themselves.

The SC Foster Parent Association has a contractual agreement with the agency to provide household showers for youth who will be emancipated from the foster care system or who will be attending college. When an adolescent has been identified, the foster parent association plans a household shower to include current and former caseworkers, foster families, and other attendees identified by the youth. This program continues to be extremely successful. During the period 2011-2012, the SCFPA has provided over 60 showers for youth either setting up an apartment or moving into a college dorm. In addition, the Foster Parent Association, along with the USC College of Social Work is assisting in the purchase of computers to be accessed by youth in foster homes in ten disadvantaged counties in South Carolina. Youth access to transportation was determined to be barrier for possible self-sufficiency (education and employment). The SCFPA developed the "On the Road Again" program to provide youth exiting foster care with automobiles. To date this program has awarded 30 cars to youth.

Limestone College has the multi-county youth association (Growing Up and Out), which meets on the Limestone campus with an average attendance at the monthly meetings of 20 – 30 youth from the counties of Darlington, Florence, Chesterfield, Lee and Marlboro.

Independent Living staff continue to support youth in educational pursuits by providing information regarding available resources, educational advocacy such as services of PRO-Parents, coordinating educational activities with the SC Department of Education, local school districts, and the SC Commission on Higher Education.

Collaboration with Courts

SCDSS continues to recognize the need for enhanced collaboration with Court Administration. The Bench Bar Committee, Court Administration, SCDSS, and the Children's Law Center meet regularly to discuss common issues and to enhance practice and improve outcomes for children's cases involved in the legal system.

Throughout FFY 2011, many opportunities occurred to enhance the work among the two agencies. In December 2010, Family Court judges, SCDSS attorneys, directors and management received training through the Children's Law Center and University of SC at a Judicial Summit where Judge Joanne Brown of the NRC for Legal, Judicial and Permanency presented the value of evaluating the parent's behavioral changes versus attendance at services, such as parenting classes or counseling sessions. The Benchmark Cards were shared with Judges as a quick reference guide for inquiring of both the parent and agency of changes in behavior issues that had created the court intervention.

Spartanburg County DSS, an innovation county for the CFSR PIP, worked with Judge Brown of the NRC for Judicial and Legal in 2011. Judge Brown attended court hearings, observed court docketing and social workers' presentations in court. She provided feedback to the agency and to Family Court judges regarding improvement of case plans, avoiding court continuances, concurrent planning language, and permanency accountability for all parties involved. In 2012, Judge Brown has provided other information and assistance to staff and to judges within South Carolina.

In March 2011, a one-day training was held for foster care, Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services and adoption staff to expand the understanding and critical need for permanency planning with a concurrent plan actively being utilized to ensure a reduction in the child's time in foster care without permanency. This training was followed with Judge Brown and Stephanie Boyd-Sefrin with the NRC for Concurrent Planning meeting with foster parents, adoptive families, attorneys (both SCDSS and private) SCDSS staff and Family Court Judges on the importance of concurrent planning and permanency for children.

Work with GALs, court-appointed defense attorneys, SCDSS attorneys and staff will continue throughout the next year with the goal of enhanced permanency plans and timely implementation of plans of either reunification or termination of parental rights.

Children's Law Center, Court Administration, and USC have all worked to take the information learned from the NRC to make changes in training and improve communications among all needed agencies to ensure the goals of positive permanency are being met. The result in Spartanburg County has been to improve the frequency of meetings between the court administration and SCDSS County Leadership. Docketing of SCDSS cases has been improved. NRC consultant Judge Brown has met several times with the Judges from Spartanburg County. She has trained not only staff and staff attorneys, but also met with the private sector attorneys who represent the defendant parent to aid everyone's understanding of the need for urgent completion of treatment plans, prevention of court continuations, and expediting the use of concurrent planning. State Court Administration was involved with these meetings and was instrumental in assisting with efforts to facilitate change in docketing. At the annual judge's conference, Judge Brown presented about concurrent planning and the importance of using the Benchmark Cards and asking case workers specific questions.

Additionally, Court Administration has been instrumental in reviewing backlogs of CPS treatment cases that need court involvement due to failure of the parent to comply with the treatment plan for the protection of the children. Court Administration has worked diligently with each local county office to ensure as much Family Court time as possible is set aside for the SCDSS cases.

Children's Law Center, USC

The Children's Law Center (CLC) of University of South Carolina has been an integral part of agency partnerships since its founding in the early 1990s as the Children' Law Office. SCDSS and USC School of Law were the primary partners in establishing the CLC. A major achievement for the CLC was to attain "Center" status at the University of South Carolina which goes toward validating its presence and acknowledging its importance in the community.

The Children's Law Center (CLC) continues to provide logistical support to the SC Children's Justice Act Task Force and interfaces between the child protection agency (SCDSS) and the Task Force to ensure coordination and communication between and among all agencies and entities in the child welfare system in South Carolina. Staff from CLC also actively participate in the quarterly Child Welfare Advisory (CWA) meetings and meet regularly with the CWA subcommittee for Permanence. The CLC is under contract with the agency to deliver a multitude of training opportunities for child welfare and legal staff, as well as community child welfare professionals, especially guardians ad litem and attorneys participating in the child welfare system. In addition CLC is additionally sub-contracting with Court Improvement Program (CIP) on a specific training grant that expands the training opportunities for attorneys and family court judges.

Child First (formerly Finding Words) South Carolina: South Carolina continues to deliver the training on forensic interviewing and investigation team building now known as Child First, a comprehensive forensic interviewing training curricula modeled after the training originally developed through the National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse. This training is provided through the Children's Law Center of the University of South Carolina, which receives funding through the Children's Justice Act. CJA funds assist with the Child First forensic interviewing course. -

Another important collaboration with the Children's Law Center is through the SCDSS training contract with USC through this contract, the CLC in the USC School of Law provides training to mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. This is a substantial increase in the training effort to equip professionals who are mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect as well as major collaboration effort and partnership.

Children's Justice Act Task Force

The South Carolina Children's Justice Act Task Force serves the state and has been fully functioning since its establishment in 1995. Committees currently established are : (1) Children with Disabilities; (2) Criminal Systems/ Prosecution; (3) Child Protection; and (4) Legislative. In addition, the SC Alliance for Children's Advocacy Centers, a state chapter of the National Children's Alliance, began as a sub-group of the Task Force and continues to be represented. The Children's Law Center provides office space for the Network as recommended by the Task Force. SCDSS child protection and foster care staff serve on the CJA Task Force and incorporate recommendations into agency policy and practice.

In early 2010, the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at the Georgetown University's Public Policy Institute in partnership with Casey Family Programs selected 13 sites to implement the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) with three counties in SC being among those chosen to participate. The three counties were Georgetown, Berkeley, and Charleston Counties. The Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (Stewart, Lutz, and Herz, 2010) defines *crossover*

youth broadly as youth who experience both maltreatment and delinquency—regardless of whether the maltreatment and/or delinquency becomes known to one or both systems. *Dually-involved youth* is a subset of crossover youth representing youth who are known to both systems. The CYPM focuses on dually-involved youth with the intent to improve the handling of these youth within and across both systems.

The Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) is an initiative intended to build and enhance communication and collaboration across multiple systems in order to improve the handling and outcomes of youth who penetrate the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. This effort, in turn, is connected to the desire to improve the well-being of children who experience maltreatment and delinquency.

The CYPM work has two desired, interrelated “results.” The first is to improve communication and collaboration across multiple systems through the implementation of promising practices, particularly within and between the child welfare system and the juvenile justice system. The second desired result is to improve outcomes for youth who are victims of maltreatment and arrested for a delinquency.

During SFY2011, there were 32 youth in Charleston and four in Georgetown who were involved in the CYPM model. Neither SCDSS nor DJJ have a method or database to compare the children who move from one system to another.

Lessons learned from this project are the increased and invaluable communication that has occurred between the DJJ, SCDSS and the court systems. Cases are being evaluated earlier for dual maltreatment and delinquency issues, and services to address the family dynamics are being put in place to prevent the child from returning to the dysfunction in the family that may have contributed to the delinquent behaviors.

While this was viewed as a valuable program and service delivery model, at the present time there are no plans for expansion of this program. Due to lack of resources and budget cuts on both agencies, the decision was that neither agency could produce enough data to justify the change in practice to offset the time and energy that went into this project.

The Department of Juvenile Justice, Family Court, SCDSS, and the GAL program collaborated on this project. The courts were aware and involved in the project. The Family Court Judges were made aware in the three counties of the collaborative efforts of the SCDSS & DJJ system. Family Court Judges were asked to ask if both agencies had recommendation for the youth and if the two agencies had staffed the youth and to come up with a combined plan that meet the youth and family’s needs.

V. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND OTHER PROGRAM SUPPORT

SCDSS has trained 33 managers in the *4 Disciplines of Execution*. This leadership model holds four disciplines or principles from which the agency now operates. These four disciplines are designed to ensure execution. Great teams must have the following:

1. They are clear about the goal (WIG)
2. They know what behaviors are needed to accomplish the goal (Lead Measures)
3. They create a Scoreboard (People play differently when you keep score)
4. They hold each other accountable (Weekly WIG Sessions)

The SCDSS leadership has as its core of operation these four disciplines that influence the behaviors that propel action. The SCDSS Human Services has used program support from FranklinCovey, Inc., Casey Family Programs, Connected Families (Signs of Safety Framework), NRC-CPS, NRC-OI and NRC-Judicial. SCDSS structural changes are intended to move the agency in a direction that would remove internal silos that may have caused barriers in the past. The team approach is paramount to achieving the goals SCDSS has on behalf of children and families. SCDSS created a leadership structure that supports the efforts in a common direction. SCDSS created two positions that encase much of the administrative and process functions under the direct supervision of the Child Welfare Director. These positions are the Director of Safety and Permanency Management and Director of Knowledge Management and Practice Standards. These two positions are responsible for the following administrative and process functions:

- 1) Director of Safety and Permanency Management
 - a. Oversees statewide IFC-CS and Adoptions direct service
 - b. OHAN direct services
 - c. Support of the Appropriate Resource Implementation
 - d. Data Support and CAPSS documentation liaison
- 2) Director of Knowledge Management and Practice Standards
 - a. Oversees the statewide IV-E eligibility determination
 - b. Oversees the policy and practice standards development
 - c. Incorporates the QA feedback into clarification and training
 - d. Collaborates with training partners for statewide training initiatives

Updates to Training Plan

Mandated Reporter Training provided by Children's Law Center

All mandated reporters such as teachers, medical personnel, day care employees, police, etc. are targeted for training. These mandated reporters are trained to observe and identify dynamics of abuse and neglect and to ensure they are reporting any suspicions of abuse or neglect.

South Carolina legislation to broaden the definition of who is considered a mandated reporter was introduced in 2011; however, it has not passed into statute. Should this legislation pass, the language increases the number of persons who are mandated reporters if they have knowledge of a child being a victim of abuse or neglect. Since the proposed language is very broad to include individuals who are not currently mandated reporters, a public awareness campaign would have to be developed and additions to the mandated reporter training be completed.

The training of mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect is a constant in the child protection program. This ongoing effort to improve the knowledge of persons mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect in South Carolina is the best and most noticeable way to identify and reach children suspected of being abused or neglected and will be part of any plan developed by SCDSS.

SCDSS continues to contract with the University of South Carolina's Children's Law Center to provide training to mandated reporters. The Children's Law Center provides the mandated reporter training through a retired State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) officer who specialized in child abuse investigations and later trained at the State

Criminal Justice Academy on child abuse investigations. This trainer has trained close to 20,000 mandated reporters over the past five years. During the past state fiscal year, 3,227 professionals and mandated reporters were trained in recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect in 79 separate sessions. The sessions included school teachers, school nurses and guidance counselors, law enforcement, medical personnel, nursing and social work college students, childcare staff, clergy, and church school classes. The majority of persons trained were in the education field but participation from other professional areas is growing as more people become aware of this resource. For SFY 2011, the training sessions included four one-half day regional sessions, a “training of trainers” session for disabilities professionals and a one-week institute for school counselors. In addition to these sessions, a one-hour online session is available to the public through the Children’s Law Center website. Three hundred and seventy-five persons completed the online training during SFY 2011.

USC Children’s Law Center Training

The University of South Carolina, School of Law, Children’s Law Center (CLC) provides legal training services to the SCDSS for its children’s services programs. The programs are offered throughout the regions and also offered to providers and outside stakeholders.

A. Training for County Casework Staff

A. 1. Legal Component of Basic Caseworker Training / Mock Trial

CLC provided the three-day legal component of initial caseworker training which includes a didactic segment on the family court system and mock hearings in which participants testify and are cross-examined. Training topics include evidence, child protection hearings, termination of parental rights, and courtroom appearance. The training also includes a video-taped presentation of effective testimony. After testifying, participants receive feedback on their performance and are given a DVD of their testimony. The training is conducted in small groups to allow participants to testify and receive individual feedback. A retired family court judge and CLC attorneys, who perform the roles of SCDSS attorney and parents’ attorney, comprised the training team for each mock trial.

During this period, in which hiring was limited, three sessions were held with 10 – 14 participants per session. Two sessions were scheduled for April-May 2012; more participants are anticipated in reflection of recent increases in hiring of caseworkers.

A. 2. Advanced Legal Training for Caseworkers

This one-day training was held for county casework staff who have completed the initial legal training and have experience appearing in family court. This training was designed to reinforce workers’ skills and confidence in preparing for court and handling legal aspects of the case process. General topics emphasize the importance of substantive preparation for appearing as a witness, and include development of a case theory, understanding the court system, rules of evidence, MEPA requirements, and family court rules. It includes testifying in contested hearings and handling sensitive issues such as disagreement between worker/supervisor/agency positions on case. Advanced legal training sessions emphasized areas identified as needing improvement in the CFSR, such as concurrent planning; the timeliness of permanency planning hearings; the selection of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) as a permanency goal; the use and scheduling of intervention hearings; involvement of the parent and child in development of the case plan; the importance of visitation with parents and siblings; and diligent search efforts. Three regional

sessions were held during this period involving 27 caseworkers. An additional one-day session was conducted for staff of Richland County.

April 14, 2011	Union	9 caseworkers
April 29, 2011	Lexington	11
May 6, 2011	Manning	7
September 16, 2011	Columbia	30 (Richland County Targeted Training)

The CLC is in the process of hiring regional attorney trainers who will expand and focus advanced legal training. CLC staff will observe caseworkers and attorneys in court to design county-specific advanced legal training to improve performance.

A. 3. Physical Abuse Investigation Training

This training for assessment workers covers the nuts and bolts of investigating physical abuse reports, including indicators of abuse, distinguishing between inflicted and accidental injuries, working with law enforcement, preserving evidence, and documenting investigative findings. Photographic images of various injuries and accidents are presented. This training, presented by a CLC trainer who has extensive law enforcement experience, is consistently rated very highly by participants. Eight one-day sessions were conducted throughout the state, with 192 SCDSS staff attending. Co-training with law enforcement officers will be emphasized in the coming year.

October 22, 2010	Rock Hill	31
November 30, 2010	Dillon	24
January 21, 2011	Mt. Pleasant	20
February 17, 2011	Pickens	28
March 31, 2011	Aiken	19
May 18, 2011	Anderson	20
June 3, 2011	Beaufort	10
January 19, 2012	Greenville	40

A. 4. Training on Forensic Interviewing

The CLC, in partnership with the Assessment & Resource Center of the Department of Mental Health, the National Child Protection Training Center, and Corner House, offers a basic one-week course on forensic interviewing of sexually abused children. This is an intensive course, which requires attendance at all sessions, completion of advance reading assignments, participation in mock interview sessions involving adult actors who portray the roles of sexually abused children, and passing a comprehensive end of course examination. The format of the course limits participation to 24 trainees per session, with eight slots reserved for SCDSS staff who conduct forensic interviews. Three one-week basic sessions were held during this time period, with 12 SCDSS caseworkers attending. End of course and follow-up evaluations, along with feedback from prosecutors, indicate that it is significantly improving the quality of forensic interviews. A three-day advanced course was held April 2012. The basic course is conducted at least 3 times per year, and either a fourth basic session or an advanced course is offered each year, depending upon need. All sessions were held in Columbia.

October 25-29, 2010	Total 16	DSS 3
March 14-18, 2011	Total 15	DSS 3
January 23-27, 2012	Total 12	DSS 6

A.5. Training on Multi-Ethnic Placement Act

CLC provided comprehensive training for SCDSS staff involved in foster and adoption placements on the requirements of the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act and Title VI. All training sessions addressed federal and state law, regulations, and relevant policy on racial discrimination, application of the law, the harm of racial discrimination, and the harm that delayed placements cause to children. Training sessions also included SCDSS disciplinary policies, including the whistleblower provisions. Thirty-one sessions were held throughout the state, with a total of more than 800 SCDSS staff participants.

October 6, 2010	Sumter	33
October 18, 2010	Greenville	18
October 12, 2010	Greenwood	35
October 14, 2010	Beaufort	23
October 28, 2010	Florence	35
November 3, 2010	Columbia	44
November 9, 2010	Lexington	49
November 10, 2010	Spartanburg	28
November 16, 2010	Charleston	38
December 3, 2010	Horry County	31
December 7, 2010	Rock Hill	36
December 9, 2010	Greenville	42
December 15, 2010	Anderson	32
January 7, 2011	Darlington	30
January 18, 2011	Aiken	39
February 18, 2011	Dillon	8
February 23, 2011	Sumter	5
March 1, 2011	Laurens	7
March 10, 2011	Walterboro	13
March 16, 2011	Columbia	28
March 17, 2011	Florence	11
March 22, 2011	Winnsboro	14
April 12, 2011	Rock Hill	19

April 14, 2011	Greenville	12
April 26, 2011	Aiken	9
May 17, 2011	Charleston	45
May 25, 2011	Spartanburg	35
June 1, 2011	Orangeburg	49
June 8, 2011	Oconee	16
June 17, 2011	Columbia	62
September 30, 2011	Columbia	42
October 7, 2011	Charleston	14
October 19, 2011	Spartanburg	19

A.6. Training Conferences

SCDSS staff has access to applicable general training events sponsored by the CLC, such as the annual Children’s Law Conference held each fall. The 2011 event focused on childhood trauma, beginning with a presentation by Judge Michael Howard on a trauma-informed court. Additional workshops included identifying signs of trauma in children, effects of trauma, and accessing appropriate treatment. Nearly 300 multi-disciplinary professionals attended each year’s conference, with SCDSS staff representing approximately one-third of these. 2010 Annual Conference: focused on the theme of substance abuse, child maltreatment, and delinquency. Michael Nerney presented the morning keynote on adolescent brain development.

November 5, 2010	Columbia	94 caseworkers, 25 attorneys, 114 non-DSS
2011 Annual Conference: focused on childhood trauma, beginning with a presentation by Judge Michael Howard on a trauma-informed court. Additional workshops addressed identifying signs of trauma in children, effects of trauma, and accessing appropriate treatment.		
November 4, 2011	Columbia	66 caseworkers, 24 attorneys, 185 non-DSS
DMC Conference: focused on the over-representation of minority children in the juvenile justice system		
January 20, 2012	Columbia	24 DSS staff, 236 non-DSS

A.7. Immigration Issues

CLC offered joint training for casework staff and attorneys on handling cases that involve immigrant children and/or parents. Special immigrant juvenile status and the specific responsibilities of caseworkers and attorneys were discussed. Four one-half day regional sessions were held, with 33 participants.

May 23, 2011	Greenville	4
June 22, 2011	Florence	16
July 8, 2011	Rock Hill	5
July 15, 2011	Charleston	8

A.8. Educational Needs of Children in Foster Care

CLC offered training on meeting the educational needs of children in foster care, including aspects of the Fostering Connections for Success and Adoption Act of 2008. The training addresses both children who are eligible for special education services and those who are not. Topics included efforts to maintain child in the same school; the importance of obtaining school records; attending school meetings, especially IEP meetings; transferring records between schools; obtaining a surrogate parent when applicable; and ensuring that the educational needs of children with in-home services are also addressed. Four one-half day sessions were held, in conjunction with the training on immigration issues.

May 23, 2011	Greenville	4
June 22, 2011	Florence	16

July 8, 2011	Rock Hill	5
July 15, 2011	Charleston	8

A.9. Improving the Response to Children Who Are Maltreated and Have Disabilities

Two regional one-day training sessions were conducted during this period for professionals who work with abused and neglected children on the identification of disabilities, modifications in intervention methods, and resources available. The morning session began with an overview of disabilities, including suggestions for interacting with children. The remainder of the morning session focused on investigation, interviewing, and court processing of abuse and neglect cases involving children with disabilities. This session addressed how methods may need to be modified when a disability is present, rather than providing basic techniques. The afternoon session addressed intervention needs and services available, including a resource fair of statewide and regional service organizations. The target audience was professionals who work in the child protection or criminal justice system, including SCDSS child protective services workers, law enforcement officers, guardians ad litem, SCDSS attorneys, assistant solicitors, mental health staff, therapeutic foster care providers, group home staff, and staff of residential treatment facilities. This training was designed to improve the system's response to children who are abused or neglected and also have disabilities.

October 2, 2010	Florence	11 DSS staff, 14 total
October 8, 2010	Greenville	18 DSS staff, 21 total

B. Training for Child Care Licensing Staff

The CLC assisted SCDSS in conducting four regional training sessions for child care licensing staff. The portion presented by the CLC focused on mandated reporting responsibilities and basic interviewing techniques.

June 7, 2011	Florence	11
June 9, 2011	Charleston	10
June 21, 2011	Greenville	12
June 23, 2011	Columbia	13

C. Training and Services for County Attorneys

C.1. Annual Children's Law Conference

SCDSS attorneys have access to applicable training events sponsored by the CLC, such as the annual Children's Law Conference. Attorneys participated in the 2011 event, which focused on childhood trauma.

C.2. Family Court Mini Summit

The CLC, in collaboration with SCDSS and Court Administration, sponsored a one-day Family Court Mini Summit involving family court judges, SCDSS county directors, and county attorneys. The Mini-Summit was designed in part to address areas identified as needing improvement in the CFSR. Sessions focused on safety assessment, permanency, educational needs of children in foster care, youth and foster parents being heard in court, and best practices. In December 2, 2010, 45 SCDSS attorneys 52 Family court judges, 53 DSS county directors and other for a total of 150 people participated in this special training event.

C.3. Immigration Issues

Description: CLC offered joint training for casework staff and attorneys on handling cases that involve immigrant children and/or parents. Special immigrant juvenile status and the specific responsibilities of caseworkers and attorneys were discussed. Four one-half day regional sessions were held.

C.4. Educational Needs of Children in Foster Care

CLC offered training on meeting the educational needs of children in foster care, including aspects of the Fostering Connections for Success and Adoption Act of 2008. The training addresses both children who are eligible for special education services and those who are not. Topics included efforts to maintain a child in the same school; the importance of obtaining school records; attending school meetings, especially IEP meetings; transferring records between schools; obtaining a surrogate parent when applicable; and ensuring that the educational needs of children with in-home services are also addressed. Four one-half day regional sessions were conducted.

C.5. Continuing Legal Education

The CLC assisted the Office of General Counsel in conducting continuing legal education programs for county attorneys. In December 2010, a CLC Senior Resource Attorney presented a segment on combating defenses in abusive head trauma cases. The CLC also coordinated a one-day session in December 2011.

December 9, 2011

Columbia

49

C.6. Basic Training for New County Attorneys

The CLC developed and conducted an initial training session for attorneys on their responsibilities and duties, and the agency's role. This "Boot Camp" training provided information on the child welfare system, applicable federal and state laws, and the purposes and requirements of each hearing. Part 1 was held in January 2012 with 18 attorney participants, and Part 2 was held in February with 39 participants.

C.7. Resource Materials

In addition to the training sessions conducted, the CLC developed the following resource items to assist attorneys:

- Guide for Use of Expert Witnesses
- Updated SCDSS Attorney Orientation Manual
- LCMS Quick Guide
- Guide to Special Juvenile Immigrant Status

C.8. Information and Assistance

CLC maintains a listserv for SCDSS attorneys and provides information on relevant issues. CLC resource attorneys are also available to assist SCDSS attorneys with legal research upon request.

D. Continuing Legal Education for Child Support Enforcement Attorneys

CLC sponsored a CLE program in October 2011 specifically designed for attorneys in the Child Support Enforcement Division. Topics and speakers were selected in coordination with the Child Support Enforcement Division director. In an effort to promote closer coordination, child support enforcement attorneys are now invited to CLE programs for county attorneys and have been added to the attorney listserv.

E. Training for Foster Parents

Training is offered on legal issues relevant to foster parents, such as the rights of foster parents in child protection proceedings, an overview of the legal process, permanency planning, termination of parental rights, subsidies available (pre-and post-adoption), medical coverage, visitation rights for parents and siblings, participation in case planning, education needs and services available. This training is offered in partnership with the SC Foster Parent Association's training collaborative and meets requirements for foster parent recertification. Local or cluster sessions are scheduled in coordination with county foster parent associations, licensure workers, or the state foster parent association. Ten sessions were conducted, with 145 participants.

F. Training for Mandated Reporters

The CLC provides extensive training to professionals statutorily required to report child abuse or neglect. Topics include indicators of maltreatment, legal requirements related to reporting, handling the report, interface with SCDSS intake, documentation, brief summaries of the child protection and criminal justice systems, and discussion of reasons professionals may fail to report. The CLC is in the process of hiring additional training staff in order to expand this program. Specialized sessions will be offered to law enforcement officers, to include their responsibilities as mandated reporters, emergency protective custody procedures, and investigation of physical abuse. (See preceding section of this report for additional information on mandated reporter training.)

F.1. In-service Training

An overview of mandated reporting is offered as in-service training to school districts, medical facilities, and other groups of mandated reporters. Training is also offered to USC students who work with children in internships or are in a field of study rendering them likely to become mandated reporters. Seventy-two sessions were conducted, with a total of nearly 3,000 participants.

F.2. Online Mandated Reporter Training

An overview of mandated reporting is available online through the CLC website. Participants may choose from two options: (1) accessing the session, or portions of it, informally as frequently as desired; or (2) participating in the entire session for one hour continuing education credit. The second option requires registration and completion of an end-of-course test; certificates can be printed upon completion. During this reporting period, 792 individuals completed the online training program.

F.3. Regional Mandated Reporter Training

The regional training program involves one-half day sessions which provide more intensive training for selected mandated reporters. These trainings often include a training-for-trainers segment, equipping professionals to provide training within their agencies or communities. Seven regional sessions were held, with a total of 286 participants.

F.4. Summer Institute for School Counselors

This annual six-day course provides an overview of laws affecting children and issues that counselors are likely to encounter, and equips counselors to respond appropriately to situations related to the law or court system. The course addresses laws affecting children, school specific laws, the juvenile justice system,

abuse and neglect, child interviewing techniques, and mandatory reporting. A training-of-trainers session related to mandated reporting is included, and participants receive a power-point presentation and other training materials that they can utilize in presenting in-service sessions in their schools. Participants must research and prepare a reaction paper on a selected topic and develop and present a project. Participants received recertification credit and have the option of earning three graduate credits through Winthrop University. Twenty-five school counselors participated in June and July of 2011. Preparations are underway for the summer 2012 session.

F.5. Online Daniel's Law Training

South Carolina's "Safe Haven for Abandoned Babies Act," known as Daniel's law, provides civil tort immunity to persons who relinquish care of their unharmed infants to hospitals, churches and law enforcement agencies. The CLC developed an online training session on Daniel's Law for hospitals, law enforcement, EMS, fire departments and churches to address the responsibilities of these "safe havens" under the provisions of Daniel's Law. A link to SCDSS forms is provided. This online training became available in July 2011 and has had 433 participants.

G. Training for External Legal Community

G.1. Training on Multi-Ethnic Placement Act

In ongoing continuing legal education programs offered to attorneys and guardians ad litem, the CLC includes information on the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act whenever applicable. A specific session on MEPA was held for a county guardian ad litem group in January 2011, with 12 volunteers in attendance.

G.2. Continuing Legal Education on Handling SCDSS Adoptions

This training serves as a primer for private attorneys who handle SCDSS adoptions. It includes a step-by-step description of the process and the attorney's responsibilities, and emphasizes the importance of timeliness. A half-day session was conducted in Conway involving 40 attorneys.

G.3. Parents' Attorneys

In collaboration with Spartanburg County DSS, the CLC sponsored a one-day workshop for attorneys who represent parents in child protection proceedings. The session provided a guide to the court process in these cases and practice tips for parents' attorneys. Twenty-five local attorneys attended the session. Additionally, the CLC assisted in sponsoring a brief continuing legal education program for parents' attorneys on concurrent planning.

G.4. Family Court Judges

At the request of SCDSS, the CLC developed a written Guide to IV-E Requirements and distributed it to all family court judges. The Guide explains requirements for contrary to the welfare and reasonable efforts findings. The CLC also assisted in providing a brief session on concurrent permanency planning for family court judges at their summer meeting in June 2011. Judge Joanne Brown, a consultant with the National Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues, presented this session.

H. Law School Courses

H.1. Course on Children and the Courts

A semester course on Children and the Courts is conducted one semester each year through the USC School of Law. This course, which meets two hours weekly, addresses issues related to children in the courts, with particular attention to children who are in criminal or family court as witnesses (including victims of abuse and neglect) and to children who are in family court as delinquents. Specific issues covered include an overview of legal systems, the role of counsel in representing children, evidentiary rules, and systemic issues involving children and the courts. Twenty-five second- and third-year law students participated in the spring 2011 course, and 25 students are also currently enrolled in the spring 2012 session.

H.2. Law Student Externship

The CLC initiated a child law externship during the 2011 spring semester for a limited number of third-year law students. The externship program includes placements in county SCDSS offices and provides students an opportunity to observe the handling of cases, gain a practical perspective, and further their interests in children's law. In addition to their externship placements, students participated in a weekly class session to integrate learning. Eight students completed the externship in 2011, including two who were placed in county SCDSS offices. Three students are enrolled in the spring 2012 externship program.

H.3. Assistance to the Children's Advocacy Law Society

The CLC provided assistance to the Children's Advocacy Law Society, a law student organization that promotes interest in children's legal services. Assistance has included coordination of guest speakers, provision of information on careers in children's law, and assistance with special fundraising events.

H.4. Termination of Parental Rights Clinic

The CLC assisted the State in developing a termination of parental rights (TPR) clinical program in which law students, under supervision, handle TPR cases in the Midlands Region. Procedures for assignment and case management were developed in coordination with SCDSS' Office of General Counsel. The Law School hired a clinical instructor in late 2011, who established the first clinic session in the 2012 spring semester. Ten students are enrolled in the program. The first trial was held in March 2012, successfully obtaining TPR. Additional cases are scheduled for court in April and May. At the conclusion of the spring semester, the Law School, CLC, and SCDSS will assess the program to determine whether any modifications are needed, and plan its expansion for the 2012-13 school-year.

Spring 2012: 10 law students

Funding source for Children's Law Center

A modified Base 11 was developed which included only county and regional staff who perform children services: FC, CPS and Adoptions. Staff was allocated using applicable bases, i.e. FC - B17, Adpt - B13, CPS - B4, IFC - B18 to derive weighted % for each cost objective. Funding: IV-E FC Trng -- 25.39%, IV-E Adpt Trng -- 5.93%, SSBG -- 9.35%, TANF -- 31.89%, Other Fed 1.03%, Other Non-Fed -- 26.41%

Child Welfare Training

SCDSS and the University of South Carolina (USC) Center for Child and Family Studies enhanced the basic child welfare training curriculum in December 2011 with the assistance of the NRC-CPS. NRC-CPS will continue to assist the agency in the evaluation of in-home treatment cases and services needed. Casey Family Programs will continue to assist the agency with the implementation of Safety Roundtables in an effort to ensure that safety and protective capacity are accurately assessed and services developed as needed to increase the family capacity to protect the children.

Description:				
Child Welfare Services Basic Training is an intensive certification course required for all new workers in Child Welfare Services programs. This course includes nineteen (19) days of classroom instruction, six weeks of bridgework assignments, multiple quizzes and in-class assessments. In-class instruction covers CPS, Foster Care, and Adoption, including "best practice" skills in social work, legal policy, procedure, CAPSS and casework processes for the agency. Bridgework assignments are completed in the county between in-class instruction weeks to practice knowledge and skills attained.				
Funding source				
A modified Base 11 was developed which included only county and regional staff who perform children services: FC, CPS and Adoptions. Staff was allocated using applicable bases, i.e. FC - B17, Adpt - B13, CPS - B4, IFC - B18 to derive weighted % for each cost objective. Funding: IV-E FC Trng -- 25.39%, IV-E Adpt Trng -- 5.93%, SSBG -- 9.35%, TANF -- 31.89%, Other Fed 1.03%, Other Non-Fed -- 26.41%				
Venue/setting of training				
This training is presented in Columbia and on line.				
Duration of Activity				
This training is for all new child welfare employees that are enrolled in a 6 weeks of training.				
Who was the audience and # of attendees				
New Child Welfare Workers				
Name of Training	Date	Location	DSS	Non-DSS
CWS Basic Training	April 4-8, 18-22, 2011	Columbia	8	8
CWS Basic Training	October 10-14, 24-28, 2011	Columbia	19	19
CWS Basic Training	February 6-8, 13-17, March 12-16, 2012	Columbia	25	25
CWS Basic Training	March 26-28; April 9-12, 23-25; May 7-9, 21-24; June 4-5, 2012	Columbia	25	25
CWS Basic Training	April 30-May 2, 14-17, 29-31; June 11-13, 25-28, July 9-10, 2012	Columbia	26	26
CWS Basic Training	June 18-22; July 2-3; 16-18; 30-August 1, August 13-16, 27-28, 2012	Columbia	25	25
			Grand Total:	128

Training Cost Allocation

SC DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
2012-2013 TRAINING BUDGET FOR APSR

FUNDING SOURCE	(A)	(B)	(C) (A)+(B)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G) (E)+(F)	(H)	(I)	(J) (C)+(D)+(G)+(H)+(I)
	STAFF DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING	USC COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK	SUBTOTAL PHASE I - PHASE IV	CHILDREN'S LAW CENTER CONTRACT	FOSTER PARENT TRAINING	ADOPTIVE PARENT TRAINING	SUBTOTAL FOSTER / ADOPTIVE TRAINING	SC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONSORTIUM	EXTERNAL LEGAL COMMUNITY	TOTAL ALL TRAINING
IV-B, PART 1	197,809	-	197,809	-	-	-	-	-	-	197,809
IV-B, PART 2	59,888	-	59,888	-	835,148	214,500	1,049,648	-	-	1,109,536
CAPTA	-	114,784	114,784	-	-	-	-	-	-	114,784
CHAFEE	-	146,877	146,877	-	78,160	-	78,160	-	-	225,037
IV-E FC/ADOPTION ASSISTANCE	-	517,056	517,056	418,599	25,200	-	25,200	-	260,024	1,220,879
SSBG	-	854,751	854,751	785,205	49,500	-	49,500	-	-	1,489,456
TANF-EA	-	1,478,093	1,478,093	418,102	-	-	-	-	-	1,896,195
OTHER FED	-	455,387	455,387	16,024	-	-	-	-	-	471,411
STATE/OTHER NON FEDERAL	85,899	1,661,478	1,747,377	427,589	306,323	71,500	377,823	-	-	2,552,789
TOTAL	343,696	5,028,428	6,372,022	2,066,518	1,294,330	286,000	1,680,331	-	260,024	9,277,896

Program-Specific Support

CPS Program Support

Training

- Two regions of the state have received training from the NRC-CPS (Teresa Costello) and other consultants on the Appropriate Response system.
- Contract services and training were provided by Dan McCormick on the "Signs of Safety" in 2011.

Technical Assistance

- TA staff are assigned to work with designated counties to improve the quality of intake and to review screened out intakes. TA staff participate in quality assurance reviews of counties and address items that are found to be of concern as they are identified.
- NRC has assisted with the Guided Supervision in Aiken County.
- NRC has also assisted in the development of protocol for the Appropriate Response for CPS intake and the referral of low and moderate risk cases for a family assessment and service delivery.
- The State will continue to request TA from the NRC-CPS as it continues to implement Appropriate Response throughout the state.

Description:						
Appropriate Response						
Appropriate Response (AR) is an approach that ensures children and families receive appropriate assessment and services to meet their specific needs. It provides an array of approaches to ensure access to needed and appropriate services to increase the protective capacity of families to ensure that all children are safe. SC Department of Social Services with their partners will offer both traditional investigations and assessment alternatives to families reported for child abuse and neglect, depending on the severity of the allegation and other considerations. This training provided information about Appropriate Response, the tools that aid in the decision-making process and the process for determining risk and safety from national experts.						
Funding source						
A modified Base 11 was developed which included only county and regional staff who perform children services: FC, CPS and Adoptions. Staff was allocated using applicable bases, i.e. FC - B17, Adpt - B13, CPS - B4, IFC - B18 to derive weighted % for each cost objective. Funding: IV-E FC Trng -- 25.39%, IV-E Adpt Trng -- 5.93%, SSBG -- 9.35%, TANF -- 31.89%, Other Fed 1.03%, Other Non-Fed -- 26.41%						
Venue/setting of training						
The setting of this venue was provided by USC in county offices and at the Children's Center in Columbia 3 classes at Spartanburg DSS 5 classes at Children Center in Columbia 2 classes in Charleston at the Marriott						
Duration of Activity						
Each class last 2 days with a combined number of hours to equal 12						
Who was the audience and # of attendees						
Name of Training	Date	Location	DSS	Non-DSS	Total	
Appropriate Response Training	December 16, 2011	Spartanburg			3313	46
Appropriate Response Training	January 9-10, 2012	Spartanburg			6217	79
Appropriate Response Training	January 11-12, 2012	Spartanburg			641	65
Appropriate Response - Training	February 21, 2012	Columbia		57	18	75
Appropriate Response - Computer Instructions	February 22, 2012	Columbia			28	13
Appropriate Response - Training	February 23, 2012	Columbia		49	16	65
Appropriate Response - Computer Instructions	February 23, 2012	Columbia			6	1
						7

Appropriate Response - Computer Instructions	February 24, 2012	Columbia	44	12	56
Appropriate Response Training	April 23-24, 2012	Charleston	84	19	103
Appropriate Response Training	April 25-26, 2012	Charleston	65	11	76
Grand Total:					613

Description: Signs of Safety
The training consisted of an introduction to Harm and Danger statements. Participants were then introduced to the concept of using harm and danger statements, family engagement techniques, and strength based assessment tools to create family mapping. Family mapping is a simplified version of a plan for the family. It is based on the harm and danger statements, along with what is working well in the family, and finally what behaviors need to change in order to provide safety for the child or children in the home. Training was provided by Connected Families
Funding source Direct to IV-B Pt. 2
Venue/setting of training Greenville – First Baptist Church in Simpsonville (Oct. 4 2011) Columbia – Brooklyn Baptist Church (Oct. 5, 2011) Charleston – Hotel (October 6, 2011)
Duration of Activity 6 hours MSW
Who was the audience and # of attendees There were 700 participants that attended the trainings.

Family Group Conferencing (FGC) Program Support

Training

- The agency's TAs were trained in the SC FGC model process and provided some assistance in certifying new FGC coordinators due to the large volume of FGC and need to significantly increase coordinators quickly to meet the need. This also had the advantage of training TAs on the intervention as an option in their support and role at county staffing.

Technical Assistance

- Ongoing TA regarding FGC and FTMs is provided by Casey Family Programs (CFP) and the Texas Department of Protective and Family Services, the State's TA match identified by CFP. In addition, TA on FTMs was provided by the Child and Families Service Agency in Washington, DC, to the Family Meeting Committee, because they originally developed this front-end intervention. A Texas site visit for selected members of the family meetings committee was arranged and funded by CFP to observe and participate in the FTM, FGC and Circle of Support for additional training.
- SCFF made a series of FGC webinars from American Humane Association available for agency staff and FGC coordinators throughout calendar 2011.
- SC is continuing its TA relationship with CFP and the Texas Department of Family Protective Services.
- SCFF staff provide ongoing TA support and guidance to county staff on the FGDM process in case staffing and referral recruitment for FTMs and FGCs.
-

Description:

Family Team meetings - A specific and unique type of family group decision making model designed to enhance the family meeting process to more actively engage and involve families in the care and protection of their children. Using this proven model delivered by trained non case carrying facilitators, family members are identified and engaged, family resources are tapped and the adversarial tension between the family and the agency is reduced. Training includes intense training in family group decision making by attending the Family Group Conferencing Coordinators training providing a solid foundation plus specific training on the FTM model with coaching and regular support calls. Upon completion of the training, the Family Team Meeting facilitator is trained to implement this strategy in the 4 PIP innovation counties.

Funding source

IV-E Foster Care Admin -- 33.34%, IV-B Pt. 2 -- 66.66%

Venue/setting of training

Completion of the Initial Family Group Conference Coordinator training is required for sound foundation followed by half day training focusing on this model. On the job training is also included with experienced FTM facilitators. FTM facilitator then trained their county offices and provided ongoing in-services and staff consultative support.

Duration of Activity

Three day training plus observation and coaching by seasoned FTM facilitator and support calls.

Who was the audience and # of attendees

FTM facilitators and their supervisors completed all phases of training. Initial staff FTM training was provided to the Greenville County office as required in the PIP.

Family Team Meeting training - Feb. 1-3, 2-11 and May 17 – 19, 2011

4 Non DSS and 4 DSS trained – total 8

Greenville County FTM Training – 46 DSS staff trained

Total trained 54

Description:

Family Group Conference Training - South Carolina Families First program is a relatively new edition to the SC Department of Social Services. Funded by Casey Family Programs, the program uses Family Group Conferencing as the primary intervention tool. The Family Group Conference is a facilitated family group meeting that supports the family, extended family, and family friends in developing the child’s treatment plan. In this family focused, culturally sensitive, goal oriented and problem solving process, families are allowed to systematically make decisions about their children’s care and protection through the family group meeting. The goal of this approach and specifically the family group meeting is to develop a plan that addresses safety, permanence and well-being for children in the child welfare system.

Service providers are important partners in the Family Group Conference and are always invited to attend the family group’s meeting when the children are in their care. Their observations, participation and input are important for the success of the Family Group Conferencing process. This workshop will describe the program, the Family Group process and structure and how DSS, service providers and members of the family group are connected and included throughout the conferencing experience.

Funding source

IV-E Foster Care Admin -- 33.34%, IV-B Pt. 2 -- 66.66%

Venue/setting of training

FGC Coordinator training (3 days) – agency setting

Basic training and orientation to DSS staff in agency setting – 2 hours

Basic training to agency partners and stakeholders range from 1 hour to 2 hour workshops depending on the community setting or specific conference referenced

Duration of Activity from 2 hour basic training and orientation on values, principles, benefits and the SC FGC model structure and 3 day FGC training for contracted Coordinators to implement the SC FGC model

Who was the audience and # of attendees
930 – see the following training grid

FGC Training	October 28, 2010	Citizen Review Panel Annual Meeting	App. 55	App. 9	64
FGC Training	November 18, 2010	York County Community Stakeholders	27	9	36
FGC Training	November 9, 2010	York County GAL	18		18
FGC Training	December 1, 2010	Greenville Children's Advocacy Center	12		12
FGC Training	December 2, 2010	Bamberg County stakeholders meeting	App. 45	App. 4	49
FGC Training	January 15, 2011	Bamberg County First Steps	App. 12		12
FGC Training	January 20, 2011	Chesterfield County Interagency Council	App. 50	1	51
FGC Training	January 21, 2011	SC Bar Association	App.35		35
FGC Training	February 1-3, 2011	Statewide (Cola site)	14		14
FGC Training	February 28, 2011	Greenville DMH	9		9
FGC Training	March 7, 2011	Cross Cultural Conference	App. 25		25
FGC Training	May 4, 2011	Greenville County FCRB	4		4
FGC Training	May 17-19, 2011	Statewide (Cola site)	16		16
FGC Training	May 23, 2011	Laurens GAL	8		8
FGC Training	May 23, 2011	Laurens County	4		4
FGC Training	June 21, 2011	Dorchester GAL	App. 15		15
FGC Training	August 9-12, 2011	Statewide (Cola site)	25		25
FGC Training	August 26, 2011	Children's law Center (Chas)	40		40
FGC Training	October 11, 2010	Rock Hill IFCCS		12	12
FGC Training	November 19, 2010	Rock Hill County DSS Tx		12	12
FGC Training	November 22, 2011	Greenwood County		4	4
FGC Training	February 11, 2011	Laurens County DSS		12	12
FGC Training	February 18, 2011	Calhoun County DSS		5	5
FGC Training	March 5, 2011	Region 4		12	12
FGC Training	March 11, 2011	Dillon DSS		11	11
FGC Training	March 28, 2011	Greenville County IFCCS		7	7
FGC Training	April 11, 2011	Anderson County DSS		29	29
FGC Training	April 11, 2011	Horry DSS		App. 12	12
FGC Training	April 25, 2011	Horry DSS		9	9
FGC Training	April 26, 2011	Pickens County		25	25
FGC Training	April 27, 2011	Sumter DSS		22	22
FGC Training	May 2, 2012	Florence DSS		App. 18	18
FGC Training	May 25, 2011	Lancaster DSS		6	6
FGC Training	June 20, 2011	Williamsburg DSS		7	7
FGC Training	June 29, 2011	Marion DSS		14	14
FGC Training	July 1, 2011	Florence County DSS		16	16
FGC Training	July 11, 2011	Midlands IFCCS			
FGC Training	September 1, 2011	Fairfield County DSS		App. 5	5

FGC Training	September 19, 2011	Richland County DSS		App. 20	20
FGC Training	September 6, 2011	Pickens County DSS		App. 35	35
FGC Training	October 5-7, 2011	Statewide (Florence site)	25		25
FGC Training	October 17, 2011	Saluda and Abbeville County DSS		App. 8	8
FGC Training	October 16, 2011	Chesterfield, Dillon, Marlboro County DSS		App. 24	24
FGC Training	October 24, 2011	Union County DSS		App. 5	5
FGC Training	November 1-3, 2011	Statewide (Cola site)	25		25
	March 27-29, 2011	Statewide (Cola site)	17		17
FGC Training	March 23, 2011	SC Mental Health Child and Adolescent Directors Council training	App. 15		15
FGC Training	April 9, 2011	Clarendon County Interagency meeting	App. 23	1	24
FGC Training	June 9, 2011	Chas. County DJJ	App. 20		20
FGC Training	June 16, 2011	Calhoun County	App. 10		10
FGC Training	August 18, 2011	Williamsburg County		7	7
FGC Training	September 8, 2011	York County GAL	App. 20		20

Family Violence Prevention Program Support

The agency has received technical assistance from Family Violence Prevention and Services Act grant administrators via emails, conference calls, and attendance to the yearly federal grant administrators' conference. Federal grant administrators are available on an as-needed basis and continue to communicate with the agency.

Connecting for Kids Program Support

Training

- During FFY 2010 and FF 2011 (up to March 31, 2012), SC Connecting for Kids provided learning opportunities focusing on integrating Finding Families and Kinship Navigator with other initiatives into practice; and to identify and resolve related family finding and kinship navigation practice barriers. These learning opportunities occurred during grant steering committee advisory committee meetings. There were five opportunities in FFY 2011 and one in FFY 2012 separate from the committee meetings devoted to Finding Families and Kinship Navigator.

Technical Assistance

- Committee meetings and specific conferences with Finding Families coordinators and county staff are coordinated to update the status of cases, resolve barriers, and identify successful actions.
- The Children's Bureau Program Grant Specialists provided Technical Assistance for adjustments to approved activities needed to enhance implementation.

Permanency Roundtable (PRT) Program Support

Technical Assistance

The National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections (NRC-PFC) provided technical assistance regarding concurrent planning, and Casey Family Programs provided technical assistance and support for permanency roundtables implementation. Regional Administrators and TAs were designated as contacts for support to the counties who initiated the PRTs. Policy and Foster Care TA were assigned to act as barrier busters during the

weeks of the PRTs to assist with getting policy clarifications or legal assistance as needed to make an immediate plan for a child. Following the initial round of PRTs, a question-and-answer section was developed on the intranet for staff to review and to assist with ideas for other cases and to dispel inaccurate information.

Training

The USC Division of Training discusses the use of the PRT to assist in assuring permanency is being achieved for youth. This includes the purpose and the structure/phases of the roundtable sessions, the roundtable participants and their roles, and brainstorming discussion questions. An example is shared from the Casey training about a worker locating a cafeteria worker in order to establish a positive connection for the child.

A training of trainers is scheduled for July 2012, and the plan is to have full permanency roundtable trainings offered regionally for new workers and to serve as a refresher for other workers. These trainings will also incorporate safety roundtables.

Description:					
PRT skill-building training was provided by CFP This training included the PRT values and orientation and the PRT skill-building process. Safety Roundtables (SRT) Safety Roundtables in an effort to ensure that safety and protective capacity are accurately assessed and services developed as needed to increase the family capacity to protect the children. Discuss the use of the PRT to assist in assuring permanency is being achieved for youth. This includes the purpose and the structure/phases of the roundtable sessions, the roundtable participants and their roles, and brainstorming discussion questions.					
Funding source					
A modified Base 11 was developed which included only county and regional staff who perform children services: FC, CPS and Adoptions. Staff was allocated using applicable bases, i.e. FC - B17, Adpt - B13, CPS - B4, IFC - B18 to derive weighted % for each cost objective. Funding: IV-E FC Trng -- 25.39%, IV-E Adpt Trng -- 5.93%, SSBG -- 9.35%, TANF -- 31.89%, Other Fed 1.03%, Other Non-Fed -- 26.41%					
Venue/setting of training					
Roundtables were offered in Greenville, Columbia, Horry and Charleston					
Duration of Activity					
One day – 5 hours					
Who was the audience and # of attendees					
Permanency Roundtable: Values and Orientation	August 1, 2011	Greenville	112	26	138
Permanency Roundtable: Values and Orientation	August 3, 2011	Columbia	101	36	137
Permanency Roundtable: Values and Orientation	August 4, 2011	Horry	638	71	
Permanency Roundtable: Skills-Building	August 2, 2011	Greenville	54	54	
Permanency Roundtable: Skills-Building	August 8, 2011	Horry	16		16
Permanency Roundtable: Skills-Building	August 22, 2011	Columbia	58	58	
Grand Total:					474
Safety Roundtable: Orientation	April 4, 2012	Greenville	101	32	133
Safety Roundtable: Skills-Building	April 5, 2012	Greenville	35	4	39
Safety Roundtable: Orientation	May 8, 2012	Charleston	74	11	85
Safety Roundtable: Skills-Building	May 9, 2012	Charleston	28	3	31
Safety Roundtable: Orientation	June 5, 2012	Columbia	165	8	173
Safety Roundtable: Skills-Building	June 6, 2012	Columbia	55	55	
Grand Total:					516

Adoption Assistance Program Support

Training

- In March and April FFY 2011, the unit provided onsite technical assistance training twice at each Regional Adoption Office in monthly IV-E and State Supplemental Benefits Adoption Subsidy Assistance eligibility criteria and determinations, Adoption Subsidy Agreement verification and payment processing, Medical Subsidy, Non-Recurring Costs Subsidy reimbursement, and financial folder preparation and the determination process.

Technical Assistance

- In FFY 2011 and 2012, ongoing technical assistance to Regional Adoption Offices' staffs through telephone and email communication was provided as needed. Formal and informal technical assistance enabled regional staff to more consistently provide all or most of the required documentation needed to provide a conditionally approved determination or a final determination of the Adoption Subsidy Assistance funding source. This enabled the state office to process financial files to final determinations of funding status more expeditiously, enabling more financial files to be processed more quickly than before the training. Formal and informal technical assistance was provided to SCDSS Information Technology Unit in the development of the CAPSS Adoption Subsidy Assistance determination program.
- The unit received informal technical assistance from the SCDSS Information Technology Unit and from the IV-E Foster Care Unit in the use of CHIP program and funding eligibility determinations. This enabled the unit to more speedily acquire information needed to make determinations of adoption subsidy assistance funding source for "non-applicable" children.

VI. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN TRIBES AND STATE

According to the 2010 census data, less than one percent of South Carolina's population is of an American Indian or Alaska Native race.

The Catawba Indian Nation is the only federally recognized Indian tribe in South Carolina. The Catawba Nation is located in the vicinity of York County where Department county and regional offices are located for agency services. The Catawba Nation social service representative, Allison McCormick, had meetings with the counties in which the reservation is located or borders.

The Catawba Indian Nation has not chosen to serve as an IV-E agency at this time. However, the agency stands ready to work and collaborate with the Catawba Indian Nation if they chose to participate as an IV-E agency. Invitations have been extended to the Catawba Nation Director of Social Services, first Allison McCormick, and now Linda Love, to participate in the Independent Living Advisory Committee and the Child Welfare Advisory Committee. The tribal representative, Allison McCormick, has been an active member of these committees and has previous work experience with the agency. Linda Love is now the Director of Social Services for the Catawba Nation and will be participating in various committees. The tribe has participated in several national meetings to include the implementation center update and Court Improvement.

Members of the tribal staff participate in both the basic and on-going training for child welfare. Catawba Nation staff members are in the process of being approved as certified investigators by the agency. The staff will upon approval will have the ability to conduct home studies for both foster care and adoptive families for the Catawba Nation as well as other nationally recognized tribes. The agency continues to consult with the Catawba Indian Nation regarding Indian adolescent foster youth and pertinent issues.

The Catawba Nation, in association with the agency, will continue working on the development and delivery of a culturally competent training curriculum for foster families within their home county, as well as other activities that will provide a culturally sensitive linkage between the child's culture and the state foster care system. Staff of the IL program provided information to the Catawba Nation on a training curriculum, *A Native Pathway to Adulthood* that is available through the National Resource Center on Youth Development.

Catawba Nation has been advised that funding for mentors of Indian heritage is available through services of the Independent Living Program. The Catawba Nation and the agency will work together to provide post foster care services for Indian children emancipating from foster care after reaching age 18. The Catawba Nation social worker and Department staff have agreed that self-identification of older youth be further addressed in collaborations with Catawba Nation to ensure that youth fully realize the benefits that they are entitled to receive through the Catawba Nation such as scholarships, housing and medical services. A representative of the Catawba Nation is the contact for youth mentor support and can be reached through contacting the Catawba Nation office.

The State continues its collaborative efforts with the tribe, including notification of tribal representatives when a Native American family is involved in child welfare. There are three counties in close proximity to the Catawba Nation (York, Lancaster and Chester). County staff will contact the ICWA representative during the initial investigation for all tribal families. The State has policy and training in place for the same protocol for the rest of the State.

The tribe currently has two licensed foster parents for placement of Native American children. With the assistance of the counties, the tribe has been able to place five foster care children in Native American homes. The tribe is currently providing assistance to nine Native American children in foster care. The Catawba Nation and the counties have worked collaboratively to provide reasonable efforts to include due diligence search for relatives prior to children being placed in foster care. There are currently 12 children in relative placement rather than foster care.

The State has provided the tribe with a copy of its 2009-2014 CFSP and provides copies of the APSR to the tribe each year

VII. HEALTHCARE SERVICES

In coordination with experts in healthcare and child welfare services, South Carolina is developing a healthcare services plan that addresses the mental and physical health needs of children in care, including the appropriate use and monitoring of psychotropic medications and issues related to emotional trauma associated with maltreatment and removal. The State's health care services plan is included as an appendix to this report.

VIII. DISASTER PLAN

The State works closely with DHEC, Red Cross, National Guard and the State Emergency Operations, Law Enforcement (county and state) on disaster planning and response. The South Carolina Emergency Operations Plan published in April 2012 is included as Attachment E.

State Disaster Plan for Foster Parents Overview

- All foster homes, per regulations and policy, must have written disaster plans in place prior to licensure and these plans are monitored for updates during quarterly visits by licensing staff. The plans must identify where the family plans to relocate during an evacuation or if there is a need for them to leave their residence. A Disaster Plan template for foster homes was finalized and given to all field staff and child placing agency staff. That form has been incorporated into policy.
- All foster homes have been given disaster brochures with pertinent information and the emergency hotline number and are required to contact this number to report their location upon evacuation.
- Staff are required to locate an alternative placement for any foster child in the event an evacuation order has been issued and a foster family is refusing to evacuate.
- Staff are required to follow up with foster families and to further ensure their safety in their residences or new locations.
- All group homes and child caring institutions in the state are required per regulations and policy to have disaster plans in place. These are monitored by state-level licensing staff at SCDSS. Copies of disaster plans for all group homes and all child placing agency foster homes have been submitted to state licensing staff at SCDSS and are on file.
- State-level SCDSS foster home, group home, and child placing agency licensing staff are required to be on call to assist in communication and relocation efforts for any displaced children.
- Child welfare (and other programs) staff statewide were required to be certified with specific online training courses and must keep their personal contact information updated in the event of an emergency. Staff is also certified with this coursework so they may assist in shelter operations when called upon.
- In order to respond to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, all reports of an emergency nature received during a time of disaster will be coordinated through local law enforcement to assist CPS to respond. State statute provides that reports of suspected child abuse and neglect can be made to law enforcement as well as to the Department of Social Services. Local law enforcement routinely provides coverage for after normal business hours emergency reports and this system is established in all counties. Reports of concern for a child's safety will be made to the local law enforcement emergency number. Child Protective Services offices will continue to have on-call staff that will be available to assist if the need arises.

Situations reported during a disaster are treated as emergencies, as everyone in the community likely will be affected by the disaster. Law Enforcement and other emergency services personnel may be the only people who are allowed to be at their place of work, and law enforcement will be needed to make the necessary response to imminent danger, such as emergency protective custody action. If a child must come into care, this process into the foster care system is as described above.

Ongoing services to a family in an active in-home treatment case will be triaged during the disaster period so that only emergency services will be provided, and other situations will be responded to as soon as the immediate crisis is

reduced. It is anticipated that few other routine services will be available during the time of disaster, so the focus must be on responding to emergencies. Each county has been directed by Directive Memo to update the statutorily mandated SCDSS/Law Enforcement Protocol to clarify procedures for emergency responses in times of natural or man-made disasters.

As part of the plan to remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster; and to preserve essential program records:

- SCDSS has a disaster response plan in place as relates to telephone service and computer system access. The agency's data network allows for agency staff to access program systems and information from locations outside of their own specific counties – should county staff need to relocate into other county offices. In this way, the majority of client information already on file, and the eligibility processes needed to process new referrals, can still be accessed after a disaster.
- SCDSS Disaster Response staff have been meeting with the SC Emergency Management Division to further develop an "All Hazards Disaster Emergency Operations Plan Development Guide". Mock disaster exercises are being held throughout the year to enhance the staff's knowledge of procedures.

There were no disasters requiring implementation of the disaster plan in the past year.

SCDSS State Office Disaster Recovery Contacts

Primary Contact: Tim Smith
Title: Network and Communications Management Director
Office Phone: 803-898-7260
Work Cell Phone: 803-315-6051
Pager: N/A
Email: Tim.Smith@SCDSS.sc.gov

Secondary Contact: Charles Reese
Title: Data and Telecommunications Manager
Office Phone: 803-898-7158
Work Cell Phone: 803-315-4484
Pager: N/A
Email: Charles.Reese@SCDSS.sc.gov

Other Contact: Johnny Brunson
Title: Network Manager
Office Phone: 803-898-7322
Work Cell Phone: 803-315-6025
Pager: N/A
Email: Johnny.Brunson@SCDSS.sc.gov

Other Contact: Elaine McGwier
Title: Database Administration Manager
Office Phone: 803-898-7395

Work Cell Phone: N/A
Pager: 803-698-4012
Email: Elaine.McGwier@SCDSS.sc.gov

Other Contact: Carla Brooks
Title: Database Administration
Office Phone: 803-898-7316
Work Cell Phone: 803-315-4710
Pager: N/A
Email: Carla.Brooks@SCDSS.sc.gov

Other Contact: Gregg Tanner
Title: Network Administration
Office Phone: 803-898-7328
Work Cell Phone: 803-315-6078
Pager: N/A
Email: Gregg.Tanner@SCDSS.sc.gov

Each county has a disaster recovery contact as well; a list is available upon request.

IX. FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT RECRUITMENT

Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment Strategies

In its efforts to recruit, support and retain families as prospective foster parents and licensed foster parents, SCDSS has taken the following steps to increase the number of usable and appropriate foster home families to match the needs of children in foster care.

- SCDSS has contracted with SC Youth Advocate Program (YAP) to recruit 200 new resource families by end of December 2012. YAP is concentrating in Region I to recruit at least 200 homes by the end of 2012. For March 2012, there were eight new families licensed. For April 2012, there were 12 new families licensed.
- Heartfelt Calling – the SC Foster Parent Association developed a new website (www.heartfeltcalling.org) and implemented a separate and specific toll-free number for recruitment purposes. Since the website and toll-free number have been in place (mid-November 2011), there have been over 3,000 calls and over 100 emails inquiring about becoming resource or adoptive parents. There have been 355 information packets sent out to inquiries. Please note that some of the 3,000 calls are repeat calls by people calling back to check the status of their application. Approximately 120 completed applications from the referral packets have been returned.
- Partnerships have also been formed with local churches that allow SCDSS to use their facilities for training and support group meetings for foster parents.
- Media Recruitment – Newspaper recruitment is done monthly. Various children's profiles are sent to 22 different newspaper outlets throughout the state. Approximately 41 children are featured monthly in the various newspapers. Union County DSS features 15-25 children in local newspaper each month. WACH Fox News produces a weekly segment entitled "Fox Waiting Child". Tapings are done at various locations throughout the state.

- Brochures and other collateral materials have been developed. A media plan is pending and will include outdoor/billboards and radio spots. An additional plan to produce public service announcements with television stations is being developed.
- FCRB features a waiting child/youth on its website.
- Foster parent referrals continue to be the most dependable referral source.

The SC Foster Parent Association provides support to currently licensed families to increase retention of foster families; receives intake referrals for prospective families statewide, contacts prospective family, and forwards intake referrals or applications to respective counties for local follow-up and approval; tracks referrals from point of intake to full licensure. SCDSS contracts with SC Youth Advocate Program (YAP) in its recruitment initiative to increase the number of foster home families in a region (10-county area).

Foster Parent Training

Foster Parent Training is provided through SC Foster Parent Association, the Center for Child & Family Studies at the University of South Carolina, Children's Law Center and other providers in the community.

Training and Staff Development

1. Training through the SC Foster Parent Association

- Annual Conference for foster parents and licensing workers and licensing supervisors. Topics Include:
 - The Rights and Roles of Foster Parents in Family Court
 - Educate – Advocate – Celebrate
 - Developing Habits That Lead to Success
 - Child Empowerment
 - Adoption Assistance
 - Independent Living/NYTD
 - ADHD: Solutions Once and For All
 - The Power of Family: Involving the Family in Decision-Making
- Pre-Service Training (14 hours)
- Love and Logic – provides parenting tools to lessen parental stress

2. Training through Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Children's Hospital

Audience: Foster Parents & Licensing Workers or Foster Care Workers

- CPR & First Aid
- ADHD 101
- Common Skin Rashes
- Introduction to Type II Diabetes
- Money Management
- Tummy Troubles
- Foster Care Support Clinic Conference: Bridging the Gap Between Foster Parents, Social Workers and Health Care

3. Training through Pediatric TEAM Center

Audience: Foster Parents & Licensing Workers or Foster Care Workers

- Don't Flip Your Lid! – A Positive Discipline Parent Training

4. Training through Palmetto Health Special Care Center

Audience: Foster Parents & Licensing Workers or Foster Care Workers

Education Seminar topics include:

- Sniffles, Sneezing and Wheezing
- Management of Common Pediatric Emergencies in Children
- Health Care Basics

5. Training through Families First

Audience: Foster Parents

- The Power of Family – Using family group decision-making practices through FGC in involving the family group, guardians ad litem, foster parents and community agencies as partners with families in developing a plan of care and protection for their children; training focused on the unique and empowering role of foster parents at this family gathering. Sharing family strengths along with concerns enables the family to develop a more realistic positive permanency plan for their children.

Description:					
<p>South Carolina Families First program, funded by Casey Family Programs, uses Family Group Conferencing as the primary intervention tool with families involved with DSS. The Family Group Conference is a facilitated family group meeting that supports the family, extended family, and family friends in developing the child's treatment plan.</p> <p>In this family focused, culturally sensitive, goal oriented and problem solving process, families are supported to systematically make decisions about their children's care and protection through the family group meeting. The goal of this approach and specifically the family group meeting is to develop a plan that addresses safety, permanence and well-being for children in the child welfare system.</p> <p>Foster parents along with other service providers are important partners in the Family Group Conference and are always invited to attend the family group's meeting when the children are in their care. Their observations, participation and input are important for the success of the Family Group Conferencing process. This workshop will describe the program, the Family Group process and structure and how foster parents are connected and included throughout the conferencing experience.</p>					
Funding source					
IV-E Foster Care Admin -- 33.34%, IV-B Pt. 2 -- 66.66%					
Venue/setting of training					
Foster Parent training on Family Group Conferencing through the South Carolina Foster Parent Association monthly county based training sessions around the state and annual conference workshops					
Duration of Activity					
Training averaged two hours per site.					
Who was the audience and # of attendees					
The audience primarily foster parents - 461 attended the trainings					
S C FPA FGC	January 12, 2010	Annual conference	52	29	81
SC FPA FGC	February 7, 2011	Oconee County	App. 10		10

SC FPA FGC	February 7, 2011	Allendale, Bamberg and Barnwell Counties	App. 10		10
SC FPA FGC	February 8, 2011	Horry County	70	4	74
SC FPA FGC	February 10, 2011	Colleton County	18		18
SC FPA FGC	February 15, 2011	Laurens County	13		13
SC FPA FGC	February 17, 2011	Lee County	4		4
SC FPA FGC	February 24, 2011	Clarendon County	8		8
SC FPA FGC	March 8, 2011	Calhoun and Orangeburg Counties	40		40
SC FPA FGC	April 4, 2011	Berkeley County	14		14
SC FPA FGC	April 12, 2011	Fairfield County	5		5
SC FPA FGC	April 18, 2011	Greenwood County	4		4
SC FPA FGC	April 26, 2011	Pickens County	9		9
SC FPA FGC	May 2, 2011	Hampton County	App. 8		8
SC FPA FGC	May 12, 2011	Dorchester County	App. 25		25
SC FPA FGC	May 24, 2011	Greenville County	41		41
SC FPA FGC	June 14, 2011	Sumter County	15		15
SC FPA FGC	June 16, 2011	Lexington County	15		15
SC FPA FGC	July 5, 2011	Lancaster County	2		2
SC FPA FGC	July 14, 2-11	Aiken County	12		12
SC FPA FGC	July 26, 2011	Newberry County	App. 15		15
SC FPA FGC	November 17, 2011	Anderson County	16		16
SC FPA FGC	November 27, 2011	Georgetown County	6		6

The Foster Parent Association has a contractual agreement with the agency to provide foster parent training, pre-service training for foster and adoptive parents, a statewide professional development conference, household showers for youth who will emancipate from the foster care system or who will be attending college, laptop computers for these youth who are attending college, recruitment of foster and adoptive parents, and adoption

assistance to foster families. In addition to these services, the South Carolina Foster Parent Association uses private donations and additional funding resources to offer other programs to support the agency’s work, foster parents, and children in care.

South Carolina Foster Parent Association (SCFPA) is a key collaborator with the agency and is the primary provider for foster care provider recertification training and provider of pre-service training for foster/adoptive parents. SCFPA has a position for a director of education who works collaboratively with agency staff, other contract providers, and local and state organizations. SCFPA’s ultimate goal is to make educational opportunities more accessible to foster and adoptive parents thus making it more likely that they will take advantage of the opportunities to expand their skills and knowledge. This will lead to the creation of a better prepared and equipped foster parent pool for SCDSS to call upon when needed. Foster parents are required to attend annual training for professional development at a minimum of 28 hours within a two-year period in order to maintain certification. This training may include up to eight hours of online training and eight hours of home study modules as well as access to other training events. Generally these trainings are offered in the locality of their local SCDSS and under the sponsorship of their Local Foster Parent Association. Instructors for training include “SCFPA contracted” trainers and trainers from local and state organizations such as Pro-Parents (specific training to address special education needs), Children’s Law Center, SC Guardian ad Litem Program, Palmetto Health, Baptist Easley, Children Unlimited, Heath’s Heaven, etc. SCFPA also sponsors a foster parent professional development conference each year. An estimated 600 foster parents and agency staff attend this conference on a yearly basis.

From January 1 to December 31, 2011, the Collaboration group presented 475 trainings. 78 of these were cluster (3-hour or 6-hour) trainings. For those trainings that had sign-in sheets, a total of 3,499 (range from 1 to 61) foster parents participated in the training. In addition to the information contained in SCFPA database the following has been reported to SCFPA:

- Pro-parents trained an additional 669 foster parents and 47 SCDSS workers during this time period through SCFPA.
- Palmetto Health trained 1,048 foster parents and 237 agency staff.
- Baptist Easley trained 129 foster parents, 22 agency staff, and six biological family members.

The total number of foster parents who have participated in training offered by the collaboration group for this period that were documented is 5,345. (Foster parents may have participated in more than one training session and are counted each time they participate in training.) In addition to the foster parents, the collaboration group has trained 752 others including SCDSS workers, GALs, and other agency staff. The total number trained is 6,097.

Description:
SCDSS contracts with Palmetto Health and Baptist Easley children’s hospitals to provide specialized training to foster parents of medically fragile children. The specialty medical and developmental training, this includes medical and behavioral modules. These modules are made available to all foster parents.
Funding source
IV-E Foster Care Trng -- 50%, IV-B Pt. 2 -- 50%
Venue/setting of training
Home modules from Palmetto Health Richland and Palmetto Health Easley Hospitals
Duration of Activity
These are home modules that foster parents can complete at their leisure. They are each 1 credit.

Who was the audience and # of attendees

Palmetto Health received 2,892 completed Home Study Modules; 628 foster parents completed these modules.

Baptist Easley received 1,312 completed Home Study Modules

*Please note figures in this report are based on what has been reported to SCFPA at this time – these figures do not reflect all services provided by individual agencies.

From January 1, 2012 – March 31, 2012 SCFPA and their collaborators provided 128 trainings. For those trainings that SCFPA received sign-in sheets from a total of 860 participants: 809 were foster parents, 44 were SCDSS workers, and there were seven others. There were no training reports from other groups for this time period.

The SC Foster Parent Association works with individual counties to identify needs related to ongoing training for provider families. An online training calendar is available for all providers. Examples of key areas of focus:

SCFPA Curricula:

The following training was developed or adapted 2008 – April 2012 by SCFPA staff:

- Discipline 101: Why We Do It and How We Approach It

This training is intended to:

- show how important discipline is in helping to prepare children for a successful future
- present discipline as teaching, not punishment
- help foster parents understand how their experience affects how they view and perform discipline
- present the points on discipline that are given in the handbook Time for Learning About Foster Care
- promote respect for the child in all discipline
- help foster parents understand proactive and reactive approaches to discipline
- understand the special discipline challenges foster parents face and how they can meet these challenges

- Helping Foster Children Develop Self-Esteem

This training is intended to:

- show the importance of self-esteem to children's development and well-being
- help foster parents understand what approaches do and don't promote self-esteem in children
- teach some specific techniques foster parents can use to help the children in their care develop self-esteem

- Parenting Children with Attachment Disorders

This training is intended to:

- Define and explain attachment disorders
- Help foster parents recognize problem behaviors associated with attachment disorders and why affected children behave as they do
- Give foster parents some basic information and strategies for parenting children with attachment disorders

- Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment (The ACLSA)

This training is intended to:

- introduce foster parents to the ACLSA tools
- prepare foster parents to participate in the assessment and learning plan process
- prepare foster parents to assist youth in achieving their goals

- introduce foster parents to the resources available online
- Meth-Affected Children in Care

This training is intended to:

 - explain the problems methamphetamine poses for children
 - explain points from the official protocol for treating and placing meth-affected children
 - offer practical advice to caregivers on safely settling these children into care and helping them with meth-related issues
- Rights & Responsibilities in Foster Care: Foster Parents & SCDSS

This training is intended to:

 - demonstrate the importance of foster parents in their foster children's lives
 - outline and distinguish between the rights and responsibilities of foster parents and SCDSS in placing and caring for foster children
 - help foster parents understand the importance of the working partnership between foster parents and SCDSS in clarifying everyone's rights and responsibilities and seeing that they are fulfilled
 - emphasize the importance of keeping records on foster children's activities, needs, treatments, and progress
 - address specific questions that foster parents are unclear about
- Internet Safety for Children, Teens, and Families

This training is intended to:

 - explain the ways the Internet can be both helpful and harmful to children, teens, and families
 - present ways children, teens, and families can avoid potential problems from Internet use
 - acquaint foster parents with suitable resources to help children, teens, and the whole family keep Internet use safe and fun
- Dust & Clutter & Bugs & Other Facts of Life: A Family Affair

This training is intended to:

 - facilitate discussion of home maintenance challenges as common problems to help foster parents talk openly and honestly about them
 - stress the importance and present the benefits of keeping these things under control
 - offer and facilitate sharing of tips on handling the challenges and taking advantage of the teaching opportunities they present
- SC Education and Health Passport for Children in Care

This training is intended to:

 - familiarize foster parents with South Carolina's Education and Health Passport, its benefits, and its use
 - present South Carolina policy on the Passport
 - show how the Passport fits into the comprehensive documentation accompanying a child through foster care
- Vying with Lying: Best Parenting Approaches

This training is intended to:

 - help foster parents understand children's lying
 - offer best parenting approaches to dealing with lying
- Dealing with Stealing: Best Parenting Approaches

This training is intended to:

 - help foster parents understand children's stealing
 - offer best parenting approaches to dealing with stealing

- **Connections: Present Safety, Future Support**
This training is intended to:
 - Explain the meaning and importance of personal connections for children in care
 - Define and distinguish between healthy and unhealthy connections and look at ways of assessing them
 - Suggest effective ways to encourage and preserve healthy connections
 - Emphasize the shared responsibility of the child, worker, foster parents, and agency in assessing and documenting connections
 - Provide practice in documenting connections, as mandated, in the SC Education and Health Passport
- **Working with the Schools for Educational Success**
This training is intended to
 - Stress the importance of ongoing parental involvement in foster children's schooling
 - Offer tips and facilitate discussion on how to be involved in foster children's education
 - Explain and facilitate discussion on Personal Pathways, within the context of the new education laws
 - Share Personal Pathways guidelines for each level of schooling, from kindergarten to adulthood
 - Give foster parents links to additional resources
- **Living and Working with Teens Yes You Can**
This training is intended to
 - Engage participants' memories of what it was like to be a teen and help them apply those memories to parenting and working with teens
 - Present a general outline of adolescent development
 - Facilitate discussion on the developmental challenges of adolescence, with emphasis on additional challenges for many foster teens
 - Present the "ten tasks of adolescence" as a guide for what teens need to accomplish for successful and happy adulthood
 - Emphasize the importance of relationship and connection in helping teens develop optimally and prepare for a successful future
 - Offer a problem-solving model that can be taught to teens for their present and future use
 - Present and facilitate sharing and discussion on tips for parenting and working with teens
- **Child Sexual Abuse and Its Implications for Foster Parents**
This training is intended to
 - Define child sexual abuse
 - Explain and facilitate discussion on the signs and symptoms of child sexual abuse and how these fit into patterns of behavior
 - Remind foster parents about online predators
 - Offer some suggestions on parenting children and teens who have been sexually abused
- **Sticks and Stones: Labels, Labeling, & Better Ways**
This training is intended to help participants
 - Understand what labels are and how we use them
 - See how labels affect all of us, with emphasis on the children in our care
 - Use label-free ways of thinking and communicating
 - Begin to undo the harm that earlier labeling has done
- **The Adoption Option: Creating & Maintaining Permanent Families**
This training is intended to help participants
 - Understand the advantages of adoption for children, youth, and families

- Examine concerns related to adoptions
- Know South Carolina's resources for the successful achievement and maintenance of adoptions
- Let's Eat—Or Not: Eating Problems in Foster Children
This training is intended to help participants:
 - Be familiar with eating problems and disorders most commonly seen among children in care
 - Understand how eating problems have developed and are manifest in children in their care
 - Deal with “fussy” eating, hoarding, and other common problems
 - Know when to get professional help
- Fostering Fundamentals: Rights and Responsibilities
This training is intended to:
 - demonstrate the role and importance of foster parents in their foster children's lives
 - help foster parents understand what they are responsible for, what SCDSS is responsible for, and how the two should work together, including birth parents whenever possible, as part of the childcare team
 - list and clarify foster parents' rights as part of the childcare team, based on the Foster Parent Bill of Rights
 - emphasize the importance of keeping records on the activities, needs, treatments, and progress of children in care
 - address specific questions that foster parents are unclear about
- Helping Our Children Deal with Anger
This training is intended to help participants:
 - Understand the nature and complexity of anger
 - Distinguish between the emotions and the behaviors involved in anger
 - Understand additional trauma-associated anger factors for many foster children
 - Deal effectively with anger felt and expressed by the children in their care
 - Help the children in their care learn to understand their anger and handle it constructively
- Parenting with Cultural Competence
This training is intended to help participants:
 - Understand the meaning of culture and diversity
 - Become aware of their cultural biases and able to deal with them positively
 - Understand what cultural competence is and why it matters in life generally and parenting in particular
 - Understand why it's important for the children they're parenting to develop cultural awareness, identity, and acceptance.
 - Be able to parent with greater cultural awareness and competence
 - Help their foster children develop their own cultural identity and become culturally competent in their own right
- Parenting Children Who've Been Sexually Abused
This training builds on the earlier curriculum Child Sexual Abuse and Its Implications for Foster Parents. It is intended to help participants:
 - Review the nature, signs, and symptoms of child sexual abuse and how it affects development and behavior
 - Understand the challenges and risks of foster parenting children and teens who have been sexually abused
 - Know the best ways of helping children and teens who are sexually acting out

- Lessen the risks while helping children and teens who've been sexually abused get back on path developmentally and socially
- Building a Bridge: Partnering with Birth Parents for Positive Outcomes
This is a training curriculum and practice developed by the SC Foster Parent Association from materials developed by RISE in 2011 with programmatic and funding support from Casey Family Programs. It stems from the growing recognition that collaboration between foster and birth parents can promote the best outcomes for children in foster care. Shared parenting is a departure from traditional practice, which in many cases undermined birth parents, isolated children, and created additional hurdles to overcome for the best case resolutions. There are increasing numbers of positive reports on partnering between families and, as a result, a strong push to promote this practice in child welfare services. The objectives of this training are to help participants:
 - Identify their feelings about birth families
 - Identify barriers to partnering with birth families
 - Understand the benefits of working with birth families, or shared parenting
 - Know some ways they can forge partnerships with birth families, to the extent possible
 - Set specific personal goals toward shared parenting

The following trainings were developed by others and presented by SCFPA contract trainers:

- Connect: Supporting Children Exposed to Domestic Violence
SCFPA contract trainers currently deliver this curriculum which was developed by the Family Violence Prevention Fund with support from Annie E. Casey Family-to-Family Initiative.
- The Multiethnic Placement Act and Title VI: Training for SC Foster and Adoptive Parents
SCFPA contract trainers currently deliver this curriculum which was developed by The Center for Child and Family Studies, USC College of Social Work for SCDSS.

The following trainings were developed and presented by SCFPA contract trainers:

- Working with Teens
This training is intended to help foster parents focus on the services provided for pre-adolescence, middle adolescence, and late adolescence. It consists of three sections, outlined below with objectives for each:
 - I. Coaching
 - a. Foster parents will be able to demonstrate the ability to encourage and motivate teens to reach potentials based on their strengths.
 - b. Foster parents will be able to create an environment that provides information and goal setting initiated by teens.
 - II. Independence vs. Socialization
 - a. Foster parents will be able to identify the critical role they play in helping teenagers deal positively with their feelings about their birth families.
 - b. Foster parents will be able to assist the teenager in developing social skills that will create positive relationships.
 - III. Health and Safety Issues
 - a. Foster parents will be able to communicate to the teen issues of Universal Precautions, Blood Borne Pathogens, and the importance of daily hygiene.
 - b. Foster parents will be able to provide the teen with pertinent information regarding gangs, safe sex, and an awareness of security at home, at school, and in the community.

- Relationships in 3-D
Do you want to understand yourself better? Are you growing weary of being annoyed by children, judges, attorneys, GALs, therapist, doctors, teachers, caseworkers and others? Then Relationships in 3-D is for you! This workshop provides information on three essential components of individuality that shape how we interact with others. By looking at theories that explore Personality Styles, Learning Styles, and Love Languages participants will gain a greater appreciation for themselves, their clients, and their co-workers and will be better prepared to interact with others. Using an interactive approach to present this dynamic information, Relationships in 3-D provides instruction that will help participants move beyond mere tolerance to an understanding and appreciation of others. The workshop brings together literally volumes of information that has been transformed into practical useful strategies for creating an environment of respect and appreciation at work and home.
Participants will receive a reflective workbook as a reference tool.
- Cultivating the Spirit of the Child
This training will:
 - Aid participants in building awareness of trauma and its effects on children
 - Assist the participants in developing intervention skills
 - Discuss different approaches to understanding the pain children experience when they are separated from their mothers
- In Spite of.... She's Still My Mother
Objectives:
 - Aid the participants in understanding that the mother is the first, the basic caretaker
 - Understand how losing Mother -in a physical or emotional way- starts a nightmare of deprivation for a child. In a way, it never ends
 - Understand many negative conditions and feelings experienced later in life may have their roots in this extremely traumatic experience: the early childhood abandonment or rejection by Mother

BUILDING BLOCKS THE FAMILY FOUNDATION

Day One Agenda Day Two Agenda

- I. Session One: Understanding Your Child's Behavior
 - A. Purpose of Parents: Job Duties
 - B. Clear, Reasonable and Realistic Expectations
 - C. Behavior
 - D. Introduction of Five Love Languages of Children
- II. Session Two: Listening and talking to your child
 - A. Cultivating a healthy relationship with your child
 - B. Completion of Five Love Languages of Children
- III. Session Three: Discipline for Children
 - A. Tools for Successful Parenting
 - B. Introduction of Personality Styles
- IV. Session Four: Becoming the expert on your child
 - A. Building the bond between you and your child
 - B. Ages and Stages
 - C. Basic Brain Development
 - D. Personality Styles continued

- V. Session Five: Parenting Styles
 - A. What's your style?
 - B. Conclusion of Personality Styles
- VI: Session Six Rules
 - A. Rule Making 101
 - B. Enforcing the rules
 - C. Setting Limits
 - D. Dealing with conflict
 - E. Anger Management

The following chart presents 2011 trainings offered by topic with number trained.

Training Title	Training Provider	Total # of Participants
Adoption	Attorney at Law	24
Anger Management	Heath's Haven	5
Anger Management	SCFPA	14
Building a Bridge: Partnering with Birth Parents for Positive Outcomes	SCFPA	542
Building Blocks 1	SCFPA	33
Building Blocks 2	SCFPA	19
Building Blocks III & IV	SCFPA	3
Child Sexual Abuse and Its Implications for Foster Parents	SCFPA	95
Coaching Part I	SCFPA	31
Coaching Part III	SCFPA	36
Connections: Present Safety future supports	SCFPA	65
Cultivating the Spirit of the Child	SCFPA	54
Dealing with Stealing	SCFPA	52
Discipline 101	SCFPA	41
Dust, Clutter, Bugs and other facts of life: a family affair	SCFPA	3
Education and Health Passport	SCFPA	41
Families First	Families First	255
Five Languages of Love	Heath's Haven	1
Foster Care Review Board	FCRB	54
Foster Parent Association	SCFPA	11
From Your Home to Another	Children Unlimited	197
GAL	GAL	98
Going Platinum Intro to Healthy Relationships	SCFPA	12
Growth and Development - first five years	Baptist Easley	26
Heath's Haven	Heath's Haven	2

Training Title	Training Provider	Total # of Participants
Helping Children Develop Self-Esteem	SCFPA	7
Helping Foster Children Develop Self-Esteem	SCFPA	8
Helping Our Children Deal with Anger	SCFPA	328
Helping Them Grow	SCFPA	24
High Times: New Trends in Adolescent Substance Abuse	Adolescent Recovery Center	6
I Live in a Zoo	SCFPA	5
In Through the Out Door	SCFPA	24
Internet Safety	SCFPA	7
Intro to Relationships in 3-D	SCFPA	42
It Is What It Is	SCFPA	20
Kickoff for youth association	York FPA	23
Language of Apology	Heath's Haven	8
Learning Styles	Heath's Haven	5
Lifebooks	Children Unlimited	8
Living and Working with Teens Yes you can!	SCFPA	58
Love and Logic	Children Unlimited	141
Mandated Reporting	Children's Law Center	6
Merchants of Hope	SCFPA	24
Meth Affected Children in Care	SCFPA	283
Meth-affected Children in Care & dealing with Stealing	SCFPA	10
Parenting	SCFPA	22
Parenting children who have been sexually abused	SCFPA	43
Parenting Children with Attachment Disorder	SCFPA	47
Parenting with Cultural Competence	SCFPA	15
Parenting with Love and Logic	Children Unlimited	3
Personality Styles	SCFPA	2
Play: The Work of Children	SCFPA	15
Rights and Responsibilities in Foster Care & Working with the Schools for Educational Success	SCFPA	8
Rights and Responsibilities of Foster Parents	SCFPA	34
Rulemaking 101	SCFPA	9
SC Families First Group Conferencing	Families First	6
Sexual Abuse and Its Implications for Foster Parents	SCFPA	7

Training Title	Training Provider	Total # of Participants
Sexual Abuse and its implications for foster parents	SCFPA	40
SF Mod 6	Heath's Haven	4
Sticks and Stones	SCFPA	131
Teens & Drug Abuse	Palmetto Health Adolescent Recovery Center	15
The Yellow Brick Road	SCFPA	22
Visitation	SCFPA	28
Vying with Lying	SCFPA	76
When "it" Hits the fan	SCFPA	7
Working with Teens	SCFPA	10
Working with Teens Part II	SCFPA	48
Working with the Schools for Educational Success	SCFPA	123
Zen at the Zoo	SCFPA	21

Trainings provided January – March 31, 2012 are in the following table.

Training Title	Training Provider	Total # of Participants
Building a Bridge: Home Visits and A second Chance	SCFPA	158
Building a Bridge: Partnering with Birth Parents for Positive Outcomes	SCFPA	111
Child Sexual Abuse and It's Implication for Foster Parents	SCFPA	22
Children's Law Office	Children's Law Office	63
Dealing with Stealing	SCFPA	93
Discipline 101	SCFPA	28
Discipline for Children	Heath's Haven	9
Eating Smart and Moving More	Arnold School of Public Health	20
Helping Children in Foster Care build self-esteem	SCFPA	4
Helping Foster Children Develop Self-esteem	SCFPA	10
Helping our children deal with anger	SCFPA	28
Learning Styles	Heath's Haven	2
Listening and Talking to your child	Heath's Haven	5
Parenting Children Who Have Been Sexually	SCFPA	10

Training Title	Training Provider	Total # of Participants
Abused		
Parenting Children with Attachment Disorders	SCFPA	12
Parenting One	Heath's Haven	9
Parenting with Cultural Competence	SCFPA	39
SC Education and Health Passport	SCFPA	50
Sticks and Stones	SCFPA	117
Vying with Lying	SCFPA	14
Vying with Lying and Dealing with Stealing	SCFPA	8
Working with the Schools for Educational Success	SCFPA	8
York FPA	York FPA	38

SCFPA coordinates and provides recertification training to include more than 440 training sessions through local associations and cluster groups for the 41 local foster parent association meetings and IFCCS by the end of 2012. SCFPA works closely with the agency to ensure that core topics are developed and delivered statewide.

Pre-Service Training for Resource Families

The SCFPA is responsible for pre-service training for resource and adoptive families in South Carolina. This process involves revising the current Foundations of Care-Giving training curriculum, designing the process for how training will be delivered and coordinated across the state, and actual implementation and oversight of the training delivery. In addition to the philosophical and practical changes that must be made, SCFPA plans to make training more adaptable to improve its access to prospective resource families and to develop an orientation video that can be given to everyone interested in becoming a resource family. This video will cover basic requirements for becoming a resource family, such as home inspections, fire marshal and health requirements, and eligibility requirements. It will also deal directly with what it really means to be a resource family, including expectations, the type of children who will be coming into the home, working with agency personnel, working with birth families, time commitments, and rewards and joys as well as challenges of being a resource family. SCFPA wants to give a true picture to those interested in becoming resource families to help them make an informed decision about committing to this process. The pre-service training will provide resource families with the skills and techniques to respond in a culturally-competent manner to the needs of children and their birth families and to ensure children's continued identification with their families of origin and ethnic heritage. The availability of support services will be included in pre-service training to let prospective resource families know that despite their experience, at some point they are likely to need help, and help will be available.

SCFPA currently has 78 pre-service training sessions scheduled for 2012 and is working closely with SCDSS and their contractors to ensure that additional sessions will be offered as necessary. SCFPA provided 50 individuals with pre-service training during December 2011, the first month it was offered. Between January 1, 2012, and March 31, 2012, SCFPA has provided 186 individuals with pre-service training.

Other SCFPA Supports

Independent Living Showers .When an adolescent who will emancipate from the foster care system or who will be attending college has been identified, the foster parent association plans a household shower to include current and

former caseworkers, foster families, and other attendees identified by the youth. The association then purchases concrete items from a wish list prepared by the youth, e.g. pots, pans, linens, sheets, silverware, microwave, etc. which are necessary to establish housekeeping. This program continues to be extremely successful. Between January 1, 2011, and December 31, 2011, SCFPA provided 103 Independent Living Showers 32 of these were College showers and 71 were emancipation showers. Between January 1, 2012, and April 11, 2012, SCFPA provided 16 emancipation showers.

Laptop Bundle. A partnership between the SCFPA and the agency provides an opportunity for foster youth who are attending college to access a laptop computer bundle that includes a computer with a three-year service agreement, software, printer, and carry case. Between January 1, 2011, and December 31, 2011, SCFPA ordered 13 Laptop Bundles. Between January 1, 2012, and April 11, 2012, SCFPA ordered two Laptop Bundles.

In addition to the above-mentioned programs, SCFPA sponsors the following:

Striving for Excellence Award. Through this initiative the South Carolina Foster Parent Association recognizes a different college student each month from September thru May. Recipients of this award receive a special gift. Between January 1, 2011, and December 31, 2011, SCFPA recognized nine youth. Between January 1, 2012, and March 31, 2012, SCFPA recognized three youth.

SCFPA Teen Recognition. The Teen Recognition Committee of the SCFPA identifies a teen(s) currently in foster care that meets the set criteria and is deserving of this recognition for the contribution they make to their community, school or church. The winner(s) is recognized at the SCFPA Annual Professional Development Conference with a monetary award. SCFPA honored three youth at their 2011 conference.

SCFPA Scholarship. The Scholarship Committee of the SCFPA identifies a graduating high school senior(s) currently in foster care that meets the set criteria and is deserving of this recognition. The winner(s) is recognized at the SCFPA Annual Professional Development Conference with a scholarship that can be used for any academic or training program that helps recipient meet his or her goals. SCFPA awarded four scholarships at their 2011 conference.

Smart Summers, Strong Kids. In a state-wide needs assessment, foster parents named summer programs as their number one need for the children in their care. SCFPA responded with Smart Summers, Strong Kids, an initiative to:

- Help foster parents find the best summer opportunities for their children
- Promote local capacity-building in identifying and maximizing resources
- Establish a fund to help with program costs that can't be met otherwise
- Enable kids to take part in programs that can make them smarter and stronger

A summer program really can be a step out of the woods for a child when it's most needed. In all, SCFPA was able to help 15 children and teens in 2011 enjoy overnights and day programs. One of the changes was widening the scope of support to year-round rather than just summer. The Smart Summers, Strong Kids coordinator has negotiated numerous scholarships and discounts from camps for the children and youth; this includes 10 scholarships from Clemson's Youth Learning Institute.

On the Road Again. SCFPA, in collaboration with Cooperative Ministries, accepts donated cars, repairs them, and gives them to foster care youth who are at least 18 and not yet 21 years old, actively employed, pursuing a GED, or

engaged in a post-high school educational program. This project enables these youth to pursue their goals of continuing education and employment. Through this partnership SCFPA has provided 30 youth with cars since October 2009.

Pack A Sack. The SCFPA provides sacks for individuals and community groups to fill to help foster youth with needed items while they are away at college. The Sacks are returned to SCFPA and mailed to college students all around the state. Between January 1, 2011, and December 31, 2011, SCFPA provided college students with 14 sacks.

Child-Specific Recruitment for Children Who Are Legally Free for Adoption

The SCDSS has several initiatives regarding child specific recruitment. These efforts include ongoing features across the state in newspapers, newsletters, and television. Children on referral are videotaped and featured on a regular, rotating schedule in newspapers and segments on television newscasts. Families who identify a child in whom they have an interest may call a toll-free number and talk with an adoption recruitment coordinator who will assist them by providing information and linking them with the child's adoption specialist. Children are also featured on our SCDSS website and the national website Adopt Us Kids. Interested families can either contact the agency by e-mail or toll-free number.

SCDSS has a contract with the Foster Care Review Board, which manages the SC Heart Gallery. The SC Heart Gallery has special exhibits throughout the state to display waiting children. They speak personally with interested families who contact them either by phone or e-mail. They then either complete a home study on the family or refer approved families to SCDSS for consideration.

SCDSS also partners with Wendy's Wonderful Kids to do specialized intensive recruitment for difficult to place children. Currently 30 children have been referred for services. Each recruiter will have a maximum of 20 active cases to provide specific recruitment services.

SCDSS contracts with the South Carolina Foster Parent Association (SCFPA) to target foster families who have legally free children for adoption currently residing in their homes. Through the SCFPA director of family services, will work one on one with these foster families to determine if adoption of the children in their care is an option. Currently the SCFPA director of family services is working with 40 families, 10 from each region of the state. In the case of children who say they do not want to be adopted, the SCFPA director of family services will work directly with them to look at the pros and cons of adoption and help them focus on the future and what it would be like without a permanent family versus with a permanent family. SCFPA will do its best to influence these children to at least explore the possibility of adoption.

Foster parents need to be aware of their options regarding adopting the children in their care under the current administration. Through local Foster Parent Associations, SCFPA will, as a first step, provides training about the agency's streamlined adoptions process and its willingness to work with foster families in ways to help them transition into permanent families for the children in their care. This training will impart general information to engage these families in an informed exploration of adoption as a viable and exciting option, given the family-tailored supports being offered.

In working with families and children, SCFPA, in collaboration with SCDSS, will target foster families who have children who are legally free for adoption and currently residing in their homes. Often what stops a possible adoption is a family's fear that it cannot meet a child's special needs, which can be multiple and entrenched. Through the director of family services, SCFPA will work one-on-one with these foster families to determine if adoption of the child or children in their care is an option, provided families can receive the necessary assistance from SCDSS. SCFPA staff will work with each family to develop an individualized adoption incentive package that would allow it to comfortably commit to becoming a permanent family for the child or children. Once the family has identified its needs and this package has been designed, the SCFPA staff will serve as both broker and mediator between the family and SCDSS to insure that the family's needs are being met and that the best interest of the child remains in the forefront of everyone's mind. SCFPA is not limiting its activities to a geographic area but is targeting those foster families that could become permanent adoptive families for the children residing in their care. Currently the SCFPA director of family services is working with 40 families, 10 from each region of the state, and this number will be increasing since SCDSS sent a letter to all foster parents currently caring for a child who is free for adoption encouraging them to consider making the child a permanent part of their family.

In the case of children who say they do not want to be adopted, the SCFPA director of family services will work directly with them to look at the pros and cons of adoption and help them focus on the future and what it would be like without a permanent family versus with a permanent family. SCFPA will do its best to influence these children to at least explore the possibility of adoption.

In the case of a foster family that does not want to become a permanent family for a child in its care, the SCFPA director of family services will work directly with the child to determine the best recruitment strategies to find him or her a permanent family. Each child will be heavily involved in deciding which recruitment activities are to be used in the creation of an Individualized Recruitment Plan. Individuals with whom the child currently feels connected – whether relatives, teachers, friends, current or previous foster parents, or others who have been part of the child's life – will be approached to see if they are interested in possible adoption. If these individuals are not interested in adopting the child, they will be invited to join a "Recruitment Team" to help locate an appropriate family for the child through their connections in the community. For children who indicate they would like to participate in the South Carolina Heart Gallery and/or the televised adoptions program *Wednesday's Child*, SCFPA will make the arrangements through Permanence Team connections.

Additionally, SCDSS is currently focusing on finding families for children 13 years and older. In February, 2012 a SCDSS employee was selected as one of ten national participants to attend the Minority Adoption Leadership Development Institute in Detroit, MI. Building upon this national initiative, a position of statewide Adoption Recruitment Coordinator is being developed to focus on specialized recruitment activities for finding families for older children and other special populations.

Since SCDSS contracts with several outside entities who deal with specialized recruitment, a committee, Adoption Partners, has been formed. The committee meets on a quarterly basis to discuss activities and address issues surrounding recruitment. We have developed a work flow process so that services are not being duplicated and so we can provide the best possible services to children and families in the state of South Carolina.

Identification and Recruitment of Resource Families

SCFPA has implemented a new toll-free telephone number. A new number, as opposed to an existing or previously used number, ensures all calls received are inquiries concerning resource parenting or adoption. Also, the new and

entirely separate number allows for ease of tracking the success of the public relations efforts. SCFPA hired a recruitment coordinator to respond daily to phone calls, e-mails, and any other form of inquiry about possible resource parenting. The recruitment coordinator is able to answer inquiries in one working day, responds in a warm and welcoming manner, and is able to answer questions regarding foster care and adoption of children in SCDSS custody. This coordinator sends the application packet, or whatever information is appropriate, on its way to each inquirer within one working day, notifies the appropriate SCDSS office, and follows up to ensure that connections have been made and the process is moving along.

SCFPA, in collaboration with SCDSS, created an introductory video to resource parenting and adoption and to the training itself. This video is part of the application packet that is sent out by the recruitment coordinator. 465 packets were sent out from December 16, 2011, to March 31, 2012, and 114 applications were received.

Below is the breakdown of the areas from which the application packets were received:

- Region I Adoptions - 45
- Region II Adoptions - 11
- Region III Adoptions - 9
- Region IV Adoptions - 18
- YAP - 14
- Lexington Co. DSS - 1
- York Co. DSS - 3
- Richland Co. DSS - 2
- Darlington Co. DSS - 2
- Orangeburg Co. DSS - 1
- Berkeley Co. DSS - 1
- Lancaster Co. DSS - 1
- Florence Co. DSS - 1
- Charleston Co. DSS - 1
- SCFPA from Children Unlimited - 2

The application was missing pages and when followed up the people did not follow through

- Denied - two after obtaining more information about receiving food stamps

The association works closely with the faith-based community, foster parents and other stakeholders in the community to recruit families and train them.

Description:
SCFPA Annual Conference and ongoing statewide trainings SCFPA Annual Training Conference. The conference was intended to improve the State's program in caring for, and treatment of children by foster (resource) parents associated with the SCFPA. The agenda should have sessions that reinforce and enhance basic knowledge and skills for the performance of specific functions related to the caring of children served in foster homes settings. Additionally, the conference provided an environment where foster parents and SCDSS case workers and staff could interact and develop relationships that will lead to the improvement of the foster care system in South Carolina.
Funding source
IV-B Pt. 2 -- 84.54%, Chafee IL -- 7.75%, Adoption Incentive -- 4.22%, SSBG -- 3.49%

Venue/setting of training

The conference is always offered at the Marriott in Greenville, SC. The ongoing training is offered regionally throughout the state.

Duration of Activity

This is a full 2 days of training along with a dinner and speaker at the banquet. This provides 14 hour of ongoing training for participants.

From January 1 to December 31, 2011, the Collaboration group presented 475 trainings. 78 of these were cluster (3-hour or 6-hour) trainings. For those trainings that had sign-in sheets, a total of 3,499 (range from 1 to 61) foster parents participated in the training. In addition to the information contained in SCFPA database the following has been reported to SCFPA:

- Pro-parents trained an additional 669 foster parents and 47 SCDSS workers during this time period through SCFPA.

- Palmetto Health trained 1,048 foster parents and 237 agency staff.

- Baptist Easley trained 129 foster parents, 22 agency staff, and six biological family members.

The total number of foster parents who have participated in training offered by the collaboration group for this period that were documented is 5,345. (Foster parents may have participated in more than one training session and are counted each time they participate in training.) In addition to the foster parents, the collaboration group has trained 752 others including SCDSS workers, GALs, and other agency staff. The total number trained is 6,097.

From January 1, 2012 – March 31, 2012 SCFPA and their collaborators provided 128 trainings. For those trainings that SCFPA received sign-in sheets from a total of 860 participants: 809 were foster parents, 44 were SCDSS workers, and there were seven others.

SCFPA provided 50 individuals with pre-service training during December 2011, the first month it was offered. Between January 1, 2012, and March 31, 2012, SCFPA has provided 186 individuals with pre-service training.

Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA)

In compliance with the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA), SCDSS provides the following services:

- Provide oversight and evaluation of SCDSS compliance with the Corrective Action Plan (CAP)
- Conduct onsite visits to SCDSS offices to monitor compliance
- Prepare MEPA Site Visit Compliance reports
- Interview staff, foster and adoptive parents
- Review Licensing and Child Case Records, and maintain records
- Provide refresher training to Human Services staff, sub-recipients, family court judges, attorneys, volunteer Guardians ad Litem, Foster Care Review Board, Citizen Review Panels, foster/adoptive parents and new SCDSS Human Services staff
- Provide technical assistance as needed

SCDSS is committed to providing services and ensuring program accessibility and equality in participation and benefits for all clients regardless of race, color or national origin. The county or regional office will provide access to the services of the Adoption and Foster Care Programs without discrimination based on race, color or national origin (RCNO) or on any other illegal basis.

- The county or regional office has employed recruitment strategies to reach people of all races, colors, and national origins.

- The county or regional office has ensured that persons of all races, colors and national origins are given the opportunity to foster and/or adopt a child without regard to race, color and/or national origin.
- The county or regional office has ensured that all placement options for children are considered and used regardless of the child's or prospective parent's race, color and/or national origin.
- The agency has ensured that all staff involved in foster care and adoption placement have been trained in the provisions of MEPA, Title VI, and the CAP and that staff can identify hypothetical situations which constitute a violation of MEPA, Title VI or the Plan.

In 2007, SCDSS entered into a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to resolve the violations of SCDSS's Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 concerning the placement decisions made on behalf of children in foster care and adoption. The Corrective Action Plan ends on January 2, 2013. However, training, monitoring and technical assistance are ongoing as needed. Beginning in October 2010, SCDSS arranged for refresher trainings for all SCDSS staff involved in foster and adoptive placements according to the CAP. These trainings were conducted by members of the USC Children's Law Center staff who had been pre-approved by ACF & OCR. Refresher training was also provided for Human Services staff involved in the placement of children. Monitoring is ongoing for not only counties and regional offices, but also for sub-recipients. Technical assistance is ongoing and effectiveness of improvements will be measured by the monitor's office.

MEPA Stakeholder/Collaborations:

The University of South Carolina has been invaluable in the training of SCDSS staff and other groups outside SCDSS, including members of the legal community, Guardians ad Litem, Foster Care Review Board, Citizen Review Panels and foster/adoptive parents on MEPA guidelines. SCDSS will continue to collaborate with the University of South Carolina for all MEPA training. Members of the legal community who are involved in the placement of children are continually being trained by the USC Children's Law Center.

MEPA Training/TA:

As mentioned earlier, USC CLC has been involved in the training of human services staff, the legal community and other stakeholders. New foster/adoptive parents are being trained under a contract between the USC College of Social Work and the SC Foster Parent Association. As mentioned earlier, CLC has provided formal training statewide to county and regional offices and one-on-one technical assistance as needed on an ongoing basis.

X. MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISITATION

Monthly Caseworker Visit Data

The department met the federal standard of 90% of children in foster care having caseworker visits every month with at least 50% of the visits in the home for the last two federal fiscal years.

Face-to-face Contacts with Children in Foster Care October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011

Effective December 1, 2011 / Accountability, Data, and Research

# Children	# Visited Every Month	% Visited Every Month	Visit Months	Visit Months in Home	% of Visit Months in Home
6,117	5,485	90%	41,564	32,802	79%

DSS is currently providing line staff, supervisors, and administration with two types of reports from CAPSS that will assist the state in ensuring monthly face-to-face visits are held:

- Each month workers will receive *two push reports*. These reports allow the worker and supervisor to see which children have not been seen yet in the current month. This may mean the worker has seen the child but has not yet entered the dictation, and, if so, it is a reminder to enter the dictation. If the child has not been seen, the worker is reminded to ensure the visit occurs in the remaining time period before the end of the month. These reports also indicate which children were seen in the home or residence and which adults were seen as well.
- The second report is the monthly *Batch Report # 180*, which is a report of which children were not seen in the previous month. This report, while effective and necessary, does not allow the supervisor or management to take necessary actions to correct a deficiency from the previous month.

Both reports are designed to assist the agency in getting to the 95% mark of monthly visits by federal fiscal year 2015.

In addition to these reports, the agency will monitor progress toward permanent plans by assessing the decrease in the number of children who remain in an open child protective services treatment case for more than nine months. For children in the foster care system, the data will measure time to reunification completed within 12 months, TPR filed timely and heard by 18 months, and adoption when appropriate within 24 months. The hypothesis is that quality and purposeful monthly visits will have an immediate impact on the length of time in care or in an open treatment case.

SC believes that not only the frequency, but the quality of the visits are essential to ensuring the child's safety, permanency and well-being. Training, Permanency and Safety Roundtables, enhanced policy guides, and Guided Supervision techniques are all being utilized to assist workers in understanding that behavioral changes by the worker as well as the families are needed to reach safety and permanency goals for children.

Use of Caseworker Visit Formula Grants

When SCDSS developed the allocation of caseworker visit funds, the agency's aim was to provide caseworkers with the tools they need to most efficiently and effectively provide quality case management to the children and families in SC. The increased travel funds, cell phone charges, wireless internet access and laptops all contribute to increased mobility for the caseworker while at the same time giving them the ability to communicate in a timelier manner with providers, supervisors, and related parties involved with the case. This allows them to gather information, alter visitation arrangements, and make quick in-the-moment decisions.

The ways in which SCDSS has used and plans to use caseworker visit funding to satisfy the new requirement to improve the quality of caseworker visits with an emphasis on case manager decision-making and caseworker recruitment and retention are listed below. South Carolina has thus far utilized the funding for caseworker visits in the following ways:

- Increased travel funds for the monthly visits
- Monthly cell phone charges for caseworkers for more effective communication
- Increased the contracts for additional wireless internet access cards

- Transitioned many of the agency staff computers from desktop to laptops to increase the mobility of the workers Utilized video conferencing equipment to allow caseworkers to discuss case management with other offices and program staff in the state office
- Utilization of P2 to provide guidance into quality caseworker visit

The SCDSS provides specific training and guidance into quality caseworker visits with children and families with the following details:

- Shift focus from examining only the performance of families (for example, did the parent attend the substance abuse treatment offered?) to assessing both the performance of the agency and caseworker (for example, did the agency ensure that the treatment matched the needs, age and gender of the intended recipient and was available at a time and location appropriate to their schedule?) and how well the family is functioning relative to the support and services provided by the agency

Visits are how workers ensure children are safe and that their evolving needs are being met.

- Allows the worker to continually assess children's emotional, physical and social well-being
 - Should focus on pertinent issues and allow the children to be involved in decisions
 - Should occur at a time and place that is most favorable for the children
 - Focused on the child and family's case plan and the completion of actions necessary to increase appropriate behaviors and protective capacities.
 - Individualized; for example, providing separate time for discussions with children and parents. This provides the opportunity to privately share their experiences and concerns and to ensure that domestic violence or other issues that might not be disclosed when other family members are present are identified and addressed, as needed.
 - Exploratory in nature, examining changes in the child's or family's circumstances on an ongoing basis.
 - Supportive and skill-generating, so that children and families feel safe in dealing with challenges and change and have the tools to take advantage of new opportunities
- Significant relationship has been found between caseworker visits with children and the following:
- Providing services to protect children in the home and prevent removal
 - Managing the risk of harm to children
 - Establishing permanency goals
 - Achieving reunification, guardianship and permanent placement with relatives

This year, SCDSS has used forms of technology purchased through visitation funding to enhance and implement new practices that improve caseworker decision-making. Currently, in the implementation of documentation, safety, and permanency roundtables, caseworkers are using laptops to gather information on cases and to assist with decision-making. Caseworkers are using video conferencing for peer-to-peer support sessions to discuss approaches to more effective and efficient case management and decisions. Video-conferencing equipment is employed as a tool to discuss case management practice with other offices and program staff from the state office and to provide opportunities for peer-to-peer sessions. In these sessions, caseworkers discuss/share case management approaches. All of this has and will continue to have an impact on the quality of caseworker decision-making. Providing this array of technological, supervisory, and peer support to the caseworkers was intended have a positive effect on the State's ability to recruit and retain caseworkers.

In the next fiscal year, South Carolina plans to continue utilizing caseworker visitation funding to purchase the types of technology listed above in order to support caseworkers in improving the quality of caseworker visits, with an emphasis on caseworker decision-making and caseworker recruitment and retention. Although South Carolina has and will continue to use the caseworker visitation funding for these forms of technology, SCDSS is constantly changing and improving the ways in which we use these forms of technology to meet the needs of the caseworkers.

The utilization of peer-to-peer mentoring through video conferencing is underutilized; therefore SCDSS plans to increase its increase use and effectiveness through expanded awareness and training. In the future, trainers will use video conferencing to train caseworkers to use the guided supervision tool effectively, aiding caseworkers in decision-making around risk and safety. Video conferencing reaches a larger number of caseworkers efficiently, resulting in quicker and more widespread implementation. In the implementation of “Signs of Safety,” SCDSS will use video conferencing to share feedback on the approach, how it has been implemented, and ways to utilize the approach effectively. SCDSS has determined the current allocation of visitation funding has had an effective influence on decision-making and visitation but has not had a significant impact on caseworker retention; nor has there been a particular focus on caseworker recruitment in the allocation of these funds. Therefore, in the coming year DSS will be determining ways in which funds can be reallocated or alter the way current services or technology purchased through these funds can be used to address these issues.

Description:					
Palmetto Power (P2), an intercept of people and data, is a series of highly participatory and interactive discussion sessions dedicated to the planning of positive permanencies for children in foster care. These sessions include presentation of data and information that allow participants to develop hypotheses to case situations as well as develop strategies and action steps for these cases. Implementation of strategies and follow-up are also part of the process to ensure improved outcomes for families and children.					
Funding source					
Direct to Monthly Caseworker Visits					
Venue/setting of training					
USC provided the venue at the Columbia Metro Center – all training were completed in one day sessions					
Duration of Activity					
4 hours each					
Who was the audience and # of attendees					
Name of Training	Date	Location	DSS	Non DSS	Total
Palmetto Power (P2)	July 28, 2011		170		
Palmetto Power (P2)	August 25, 2011	Columbia	71	104	275
Palmetto Power (P2)	September 22, 2011	Columbia	179	82	261
Palmetto Power (P2)	October 27, 2011	Columbia	209	108	317
Palmetto Power (P2)	November 18, 2011	Columbia	210	108	318
Palmetto Power (P2)	January 26, 2012	Columbia	229	90	319
Palmetto Power (P2)	February 23, 2012	Columbia	177	70	247
Palmetto Power (P2)	March 22, 2012	Columbia	181	83	264

XI. ADOPTION INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

In FFY 2011, adoption incentive funds were used for local adoption promotion activities, contracting with the SC Foster Parent Association to focus on adoption recruitment activities, improve adoptions data collection and reporting capacity to improve the efficiency of the adoption process and microfilming adoption records for archiving purposes. Specific recruitment activities that were not effective (i.e. billboards) will be discontinued, and those proven to be effective will be continued in FY 2012.

In FFY 2012, funds will support the implementation of concurrent planning as a strategy to increase adoption of

children at the earliest point in time. As of March 2012, under a memorandum of understanding between SCDSS and USC and a task order agreement between USC and Winthrop University, a work plan is to be developed in consultation with SCDSS to provide training, technical assistance and research services needed to implement policies, procedures and system changes needed to improve concurrent planning and full disclosure practices in SC. Additional uses for the Adoption Incentive Funds will include:

- Addressing legal barriers
- Assessment of adoption process improvement (including process mapping)
- Enhancing the collaboration with SCDSS staff and community partners (SCFPA, SCHG and other) to address barriers for the family or the child to consider adoption (Unpacking the “No”)
- Statewide Recruitment and Marketing to include staff

XII. CHILD WELFARE WAIVER DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITIES

South Carolina does not have a waiver demonstration project.

XIII. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

South Carolina state law (§43-1-115) states, in part:

The state department shall conduct, at least once every five years, a substantive quality review of the child protective services and foster care programs in each county and each adoption office in the State. The county's performance must be assessed with reference to specific outcome measures published in advance by the department.

The Accountability, Data and Research (ADR) section for South Carolina child welfare services engages in a review of child welfare services in each county to determine to what degree services are delivered in compliance with federal and state laws and agency policy and to assess the outcomes for children and families engaged in the child welfare system. The frequency of the reviews for FFY 2012 is as follows: every five years in each county and each adoption office according to statute, quarterly in the four PIP innovation counties, with an additional five counties projected for review at the request of management.

The information obtained by the child welfare services review process:

- Gives county staff feedback on the effectiveness of their interventions.
- Directs state office technical assistance staff to assist county staff with areas needing improvement.
- Informs agency administrators of systemic factors which impair county staff's ability to achieve specific outcomes.
- Directs training staff to provide training for county staff specific to their needs.

The county-specific review of child welfare services has been both quantitative and qualitative. The review is **quantitative** because it begins with an analysis of child welfare outcome reports for that county for the period under review. The outcome reports reflect the performance of the county in all areas of the child welfare program: CPS Intake, CPS Investigations, CPS In-Home Treatment, Foster Care, Foster Home Licensing, Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services (IFCCS), and Adoptions.

Some of the reviews have also been **qualitative** because these reviews included an analysis of information obtained from agency clients and stakeholders, as well as information obtained from a review of client records. Client and stakeholder information was obtained through interviews. The questions posed to clients and stakeholders were designed to elicit information about the quality of the services rendered and the effectiveness of those services. Some concerns, however, were noted with the interview process. Consequently, the interviews have been placed on hold while revisions in the interview questions and the determination of a more effective manner in which to integrate the findings into the QA results occur. The plan is to develop a better system and to get this component back into place during FFY 2013.

The QA process for South Carolina Child Welfare Services had previously been modeled after the federal CFSR. In June 2011, however, the Children's Bureau and the National Resource Center on Organizational Improvement provided consultation on the local child welfare QA process via onsite technical assistance to review the state's QA method, including case sampling, review instruments, the onsite review process, and the reporting process.

As a result, the QA process for South Carolina Child Welfare Services began to evolve in August 2011, with the use of the same review instrument that is used by the federal CFSR. Additionally, South Carolina is now using teams for reviews, debriefings for the provision of quicker feedback to the county and final reports that more closely model the federal CFSR processes.

Also, a partnership was developed with the Center for Child and Family Studies, College of Social Work, University of South Carolina (USC), to increase the number of QA reviews with the objective of integrating "lessons learned" that derived from an analysis of the reviews into staff development and training that promotes continuous improvement.

USC staff members became involved in the actual review process in October 2011. They began performing many of the logistics duties of the review process, such as selection of the random sample, set-up, data entry, some automation of data, and completion and dissemination of the final reports; and they also began to serve as reviewers, lead, and co-leads on the review teams. This resulted in review teams that are now composed of reviewers and team leaders from the SCDSS Quality Assurance Review Department, staff members from USC, and staff members from county and state offices.

Additionally, a computer coding system was obtained by USC from JBS that will be utilized to develop a software program in an attempt to more efficiently automate results of the QA process. Better automation of results is expected to increase the reliability of results, which were previously calculated and completed manually. An additional staff person also now serves as a final reviewer when entering data to ensure accuracy, which also increases the reliability of the process. IT staff members from USC have reviewed the computer coding. USC is still in the process of attempting to determine the best manner in which to complete the process of developing the programming so that more automation can occur.

Four innovation counties were selected by the agency as part of the PIP. Baseline reviews were conducted in these four innovation counties using the new process to develop a more comprehensive, continuous improvement process. The baselines were completed in December 2011, and quarterly reviews are presently being conducted in these counties to measure performance on safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes. The same new process is being

used for county-specific reviews statewide, with the exception that additional categories (foster home licenses and screened-out intakes) also reviewed for non-innovation counties.

All case samples are selected via random sampling that is developed from agency data that utilizes a Case Elimination Protocol. The Case Elimination Protocol was created in 2011 and revised in January 2012 based on discussions with ACF.

For non-innovation counties, forty-five (45) cases are selected for each county review as follows:

Foster Home Licenses	10
Foster Care	10
CPS Treatment	10
Screened-Out Intakes	10
Unfounded Investigations	<u>5</u>
Total	45

For the four innovation counties, the case samples are drawn in the same manner but include 30-40 cases selected from Foster Care and CPS Treatment cases as noted below:

Three innovation counties (Aiken, Spartanburg, and Oconee) have the following sample sizes:

CPS Treatment	15
Foster Care	<u>15</u>
Total	30

The larger innovation county (Greenville) has the following sample size:

CPS Treatment	20
Foster Care	<u>20</u>
Total	40

Accomplishments/Progress

Changes have occurred during this FFY to include collaboration with the Center for Child and Family Studies, College of Social Work, USC, to increase the number of qualified reviewers, to increase frequency of reviews to quarterly in the four innovation counties, to include more federal CFSR instruments and processes, and to begin using the computer coding software.

Major accomplishments include:

- The number of reviews completed has increased.
- A more efficient process has been instituted.
- Results have increased in consistency and reliability and provide better statistical information to the agency for decision-making on the provision of services.

QA reviews have increased in number from six reviews during FFY 2011 to 26 reviews projected for FFY 2012.

The collaboration with USC has provided 21 additional staff members to assist in the review process of the counties. This increases the quality and effectiveness of reviewers through more consistency in the process. A new director of

Child Welfare Quality Reviews was hired to increase monitoring of the process and to implement changes needed to continue to promote further improvements in the review process.

Three external reviewers, who also have experience as federal CF SR reviewers, are presently involved in QA through their review of completed instruments and cases during the onsite review weeks in order to provide feedback to the Quality Assurance Review Department to build consistency and accuracy of assessments and to identify needs for follow-up/training as they relate to QA reviews. These consultants also provide a second tier of QA through reviews of the QA team leads' audits of completed instruments and cases, which continues to train team leaders and also increases accuracy in the review process. An additional three external reviewers have been identified and are now providing consultation in the review process for the non-innovation counties.

The use of the JBS computer program by USC improves the reliability of the reports that are utilized to affect systemic issues and the quality and delivery of services for families and children with continued increases to be noted as programs for the system are obtained.

Service Expansion/Improvement

The new review process will continue for the innovation counties according to the PIP and is expected to continue to expand by increasing the number of QA reviews and in increasing the frequency of reviews for other counties as well.

In addition, USC plans to add four additional QA reviewers during FFY 2013. There are plans to expand the Quality Assurance Review Department by an additional staff member to take on many of the processing and/or clerical type duties of the review process to allow the team leads to devote more time to training and guidance to team members and in their quality audits of reviewed cases. Expansion of the number of staff members who can serve as leads, co-leads, and second-level reviewers for the QA review teams is planned as well.

Moreover, the Quality Assurance Review Department has been piloting off-site reviews in non-innovation counties. Off-site reviews provide the capability to increase the number of reviews completed, to increase the manpower for the reviews, and yet also reduce expenditures of the review week, all of which can be used to improve services to children and their families.

Furthermore, USC has purchased a computer program from JBS that has been used in the federal CF SR that has the capability to automate more reports and information from the data entered. This has the potential to reduce man-hours of the Quality Review team members, reduce time required to generate feedback through various reports, and further improve the reliability of the reports generated. This should result in a more efficient system for providing information that can improve the quality of services delivered through the child welfare system, once the decisions concerning computer programming issues are resolved by the USC staff members.

Quality will be indicated by the number of additional staff members hired, increases in ratings obtained from the review instruments due to changes that have occurred based on issues identified in QA reviews, and by the number of quality reviews that occur during a 12-month period.

Services to be provided in FFY 2013 should remain the same with the following exceptions:

- To increase the number and frequency of QA reviews for all counties and in any counties identified by administration as needing special reviews

- To continue to improve the quality of the reviews to reduce the need for external oversight
- To revise the stakeholder interview process for better information and means of including input into the QA review results.
- To finalize the programming of the computer system purchased by USC and to train QA reviewers on its use.

Quality Assurance Training

Staff members from the Quality Assurance Review Department, USC, and various counties and state offices across the agency have been trained to be reviewers with the initiation of the new federal instrument and processes. These trainings began in June 2011 during the evaluation of the process and continued in September 2011 and October 2011 to train staff members in the implementation of the process changes.

Training was again provided in March 2012, May 2012, June 2012, and August 2012, to train more reviewers, to refresh reviewers who were trained previously, and also to train staff throughout the state in the Quality Assurance Review Process so that these staff members could obtain knowledge first hand to utilize in their supervision and/or delivery of services at the county level.

Staff members across the state have been trained to be qualified reviewers. Others have been trained on the review instrument and the process to promote a better understanding of the requirements in order to support/affect changes necessary to accomplish goals and objectives in their county and/or state offices.

Quality Assurance Technical Assistance

In June 2011, the Children's Bureau and the National Resource Center on Organizational Improvement provided consultation on the local child welfare quality assurance process via onsite technical assistance to review the quality assurance methods, including the case sampling, the review instrument, and the onsite review process. These groups also provided technical assistance again in September 2011, October 2011, and on March 2012.

Changes in the review process have been made, and, as a result, reviews will provide better information to the agency on the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children involved in the child welfare system. The new computer program purchased by USC from JBS will generate automated reports that can assist the agency in the improvement of services once programming issues are resolved.

Further technical assistance will be requested in FFY 2013 for continued improvements in the new Quality Assurance Review process through the National Resource Center on Organizational Improvement for the final reporting process to assure optimal benefits to those in the counties and/or state offices making practice and/or policy changes based on the QA reviews. Technical assistance will also be requested for implementing the computer program system with training for QA reviewers in the actual use of this system once the appropriate programming is completed either by the IT Department at USC or via consultation with another agency.

The largest challenge for the QA department for FFY 2012 has been in assuring proper training on the instrument and the accurate completion of the instrument. External reviewers continue to provide assistance in this area as do administrators of USC and the QA department when specific issues of training are identified. This will be an ongoing effort for FFY 2013.

Another challenge was in assuring accurate and consistent results in the QA process that revolved around agency policy. To assure that correct policies were being applied and applied with the correct interpretation and to ensure that questions of external reviewers were answered appropriately to increase consistency, a staff member of the policy and practice staff is now participating in the QA reviews, onsite in innovation counties and in non-innovation counties through email/phone consultation. This has also established a communication line that has provided policy and practice staff members a better opportunity to be made aware of QA issues that were related directly to policy. This allows for immediate feedback regarding policy that may need revision so that changes can be made.

One example of an area that has been clarified in this process is the SC requirements for diligent searches for family members. Previously there had been some inconsistency noted in the application of policy surrounding diligent efforts/searches in QA reviews.

After baselines and two rounds of the QA process were completed in the PIP innovation counties, concerns were noted in the number of cases being re-reviewed and the fact that the original sample period of 12 months allowed cases in the sample that had closed and thus could not reflect improvements in casework practices or outcome measures. As a result, the department has revised the sample period to three months beginning in the seventh quarter of the PIP to eliminate the cases closed prior to the sample period and provide a better representation of actual progress being made under the PIP.

QA reviews have effected some change in policies and procedures and have also affected management/oversight, and specific goals in various areas to affect positive outcomes for children and families.

For FFY 2013, counties will begin to develop corrective action plans based on QA results that will identify specific actions and plans to correct practice issues that are noted as concerns from each QA review. This will provide guidance and lead measures that can be used for corrective action. Information will be shared so that other counties will be aware of identified issues and the actions necessary to correct each issue so they can begin to make changes to improve quality rather than waiting on their county to have a QA review.

XIV. INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Department of Social Services Division of Information Services Plans

Division of Human Services Dashboards

The agency's Division of Information Systems recognizes the need to provide the Office of Human Services staff the ability to analyze and report on data captured in the Legal Case Management System (LCMS) and the Child and Adult Protective Services System (CAPSS). The use of dashboard reports will improve the ability for executive, regional, and county staff to provide quality services and make effective decisions. The first release of these dashboards, scheduled to go live on July 1, 2012, will focus on the LCMS (Legal Events and Actions) and CAPSS 'provider portal' (Appropriate Response).

Legal Events and Actions

The Legal dashboards will provide information to agency paralegals and attorneys who are tasked with the day-to-day activities of agency legal case management. The dashboards will capture the following milestones:

- Hearing Timeliness
 - Probable Cause hearing not held within 72 hours
 - Merit hearing not held within 35 days
 - Permanency Planning hearing not held within nine months
 - Permanency Planning hearing not held within 12 months
 - TPR hearing not held within 120 days
- Hearing Preparedness
 - Cases 15 days out without Opposing Council Notification
 - Cases 15 days out without Caregiver Notification
 - Cases 15 days out without Defendant Notification
- Hearing Outcomes
- Status of Orders Last seven Days

The dashboards will also provide drill through capabilities to pin-point the cases that require attention.

Appropriate Response Dashboard

The Appropriate Response dashboard will deliver data collected from the CAPSS 'Provider Portal'. The dashboard will capture:

- The number of intakes by region and decision
- The percentage of provider closures by reason
- The percentage of cases referred back to SCDSS by reason
- Caseload and capacity information that includes a monthly trend indicator
- The number of days in which a case was referred back to SCDSS
- The number of Face to Face contacts that were attempted and completed
- The number days in which initial contact was made

In addition, this dashboard will provide drill-through capabilities to view the details of the underlying data.

The purpose of this tool is to ensure that the agency's processes and procedures for handling Child Protective Services initial intake responses and referrals are meeting the agency's goals and expectations.

Next Steps

There is an ongoing initiative by the Division of Information Systems and Office of Human Services to identify additional metrics and indicators into division-wide dashboards supporting Child Protective Services, Foster Care, and Adoptions. Workshops have been conducted pulling together input from county directors, regional managers, and top-level executives. Elaboration efforts will include assessing, analyzing, and categorizing these metrics into effective analysis tools.

The estimated date of completion of this effort is October 1, 2012. The purpose of the subsequent dashboards is twofold:

- To provide risk analysis supporting the safety and well-being for children in care, as well as the advancement of positive permanency, and
- To provide a level of accountability and predictability in support of the agency's Wildly Important Goals.

The Human Services dashboards will be available to users with appropriate credentials through the agency's SharePoint intranet, 'Unite!'

Agency Security

As part of the Division of Information Systems Strategic Plan for July 1, 2012 – December 2, 2016, the agency's technology experts will be engaged in research and planning for the following components:

Security Focus

The implementation of a comprehensive and ongoing system security methodology for ensuring data protection for the agency will be implemented by December 2, 2016. The objectives set forth as part of the comprehensive strategy are:

- The institution of application security testing as a mandated procedure for all outward-facing interfaces. These interfaces will include any and all applications, processes, or other information sharing that must be provided to the agencies clients, employee's on a need to know basis, or public and private vendors that have a working partnership/relationship with the agency.
- The expansion and execution of a comprehensive Security Plan for protecting the agency's client, employee, and vendor information. The plan will include all aspects for data and infrastructure protection, disaster recovery, business continuity and information sharing. The plan will also include a timeframe and methodology for testing all aspects of the plan with supporting documentation as mandated.

Infrastructure Focus

Increase the agency's effectiveness for communication and technical productivity through the use and leverage of current and future technology by December 2, 2016. The objectives as part of the comprehensive and ongoing strategy are:

- The research and development of a proposal and plan to move to a more mobile workforce for the front-line workers of the agency. This proposal and plan will consider the use of Virtual Desktop, BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), Cloud Services, or any other feasible recommendation as deemed appropriate. The proposal will include necessary timeframes for implementation as well as a comprehensive ROI, (Return on Investment), implementation methodologies, training procedures, and future product maintenance strategies.
- A strategic direction will be developed for the allowance of third party partners, clients or staff to access information from outside the agency network on an as needed basis without the need for specialized hardware or software to be provided by the agency.
- The use of mobile devices such as tablets, iPads, cell phones and necessary software for adaptability should also be considered with the associated cost of replacement.

Disaster Planning

The SCDSS Division of Information Services provides network access and PC support to approximately 4,000 end users located at 78 locations throughout the State of South Carolina. This responsibility includes the Hardware and Software components of the Physical Networking, Wan Protocols, LAN Protocols, LAN Operating Systems and PC Operating Systems.

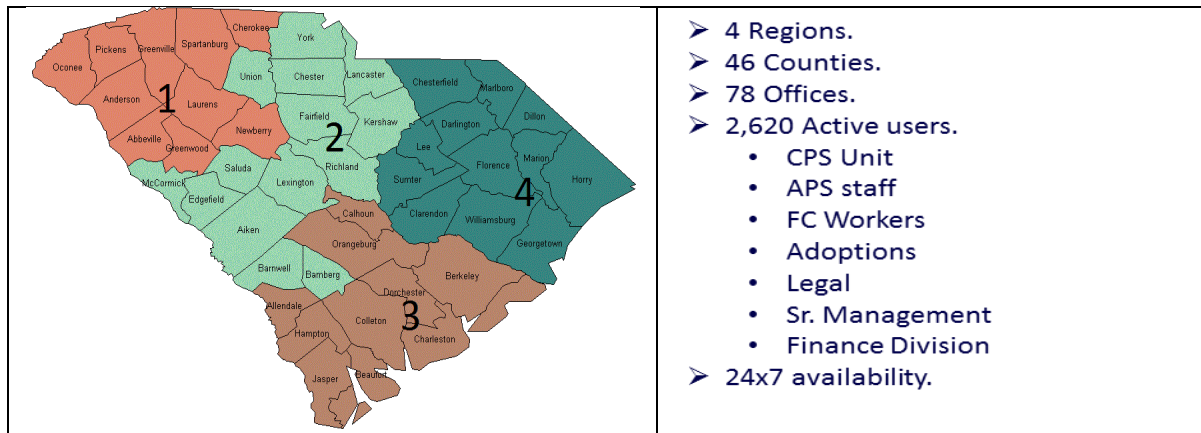
In the event of total loss of a SCDSS county office, employees would be redirected to other SCDSS offices for system access until needed county hardware and software were replaced and operational. By using Microsoft

Windows 7 Enterprise with Direct Access, Microsoft Outlook email, an employee could access their information from any SCDSS agency computer. Microsoft Windows 7 Enterprise with Direct Access allows computers that have previously been members of the SCDSS network to securely access internal networks without the need to enable a VPN or Dial-In connection. Once internet access has been established, the pre-configured equipment will contact the SCDSS network directly. Note this feature will only function if the equipment configured by the SCDSS IS staff. This prevents unauthorized access from other computers that may be configured with Microsoft Windows 7 Enterprise with direct Access.

Department of Social Services Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS)

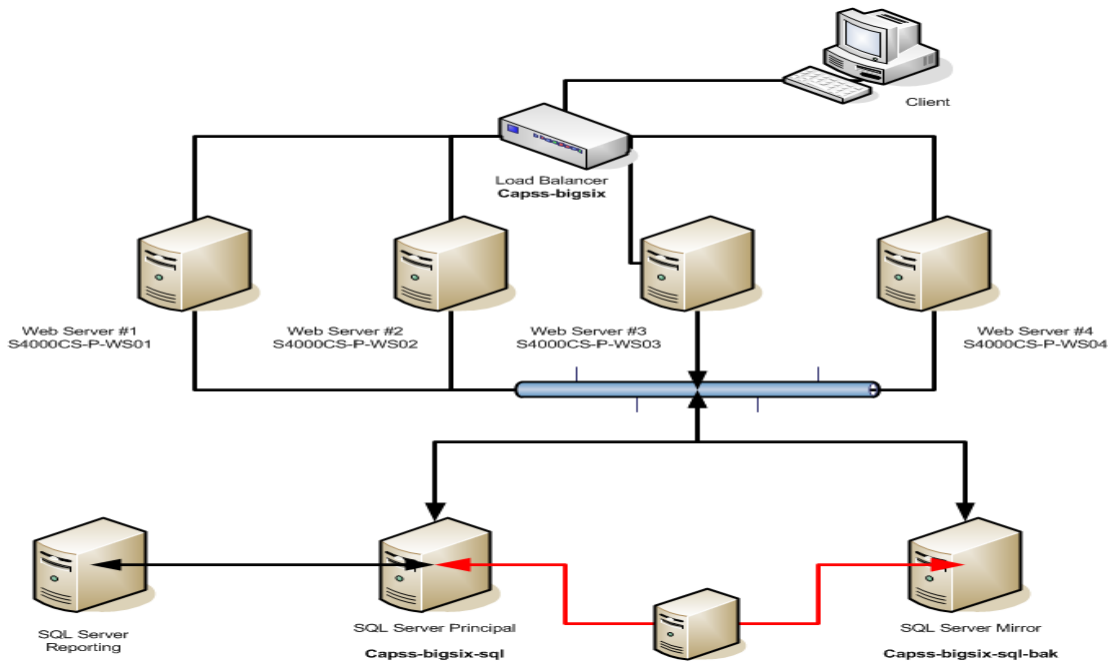
CAPSS (Child and Adult Protective Services System) is the agency's statewide automation system for child welfare. CAPSS Big 7 (Assessment and Planning, Eligibility, Support Services, Provider, Payments, Contracts and ICPC) initiatives moved to production on July 11, 2011. The Big 7 initiative included 88 SACWIS requirements. The expected outcome of the enhancements is to increase efficiency in the caseworker work process and make the system more user-friendly. Caseworkers are encouraged to document more comprehensively in the system. The federal SACWIS review for South Carolina was conducted on September 21-24, 2011. Review results are pending. The Advanced Planning Document for SACWIS will be submitted to ACF by 07/31/2012.

CAPSS User Group



CAPSS Hardware Configuration for Big 7 Release

CAPSS moved from ADABAS database to SQL Server 2008 R2 on July 11, 2011. (See following diagram.)



SACWIS Review

Based on the September 21-24, 2011 SACWIS review, a draft document was received from ACF on 11/29/2011. Out of the 88 SACWIS requirements outlined on the review, the State was compliant on 24 of them, conditional on 38, non-compliant on 16 and not applicable (N/A) on 10. On 12/9/2011, SC DSS responded to the draft/findings. The State is awaiting the final document, and from that, workgroups will be scheduled to draft the plan of actions to be reported to ACF.

Human Services Program and Information Technology developed a CAPSS and Practice Workgroup that meets each Friday to discuss improvements needed. Through discussion, the Workgroup developed three subcommittees: 1) risk and safety assessment integration, 2) list of priorities, and 3) tracking of supervision within CAPSS. These subcommittees work together to develop recommendations to leadership to move the decisions forward.

AFCARS Improvement Plan

SC's latest onsite AFCARS review occurred in September 2010. In July 2011, DSS submitted to ACF the outline for its AFCARS improvement plan (AIP), containing a response to the data elements findings and the estimated completion date for the changes that the State agreed to complete. The update submitted on 01/31/2012 included changes completed by 01/15/2012. They were mostly (95% of them) SQL extraction code changes. ACF responded to the 01/31/2012 update on 04/27/2012. Updates to the AIP are submitted to ACF as requested.

AIP tasks identified and accomplished thus far:

- FC#5 Date of Most Recent Periodic Review
Task - Modify the extraction code to report only the legal actions "permanency plan hearing" and "judicial review."
This was accomplished by revising the AFCARS Foster Care extract to include only the legal actions of "permanency plan hearing" and "judicial review." This task was documented as complete 04/2012 on the AFCARS Improvement Plan matrix received from Angelina Palmiero dated 04/27/2012.

- FC#16 Has this child ever been adopted?
 Modify the program code to map this element to blank when data are missing.
 This was accomplished by revising the AFCARS Foster Care extract to map this field to blank if data are missing. This task was documented as complete 04/2012 on the AFCARS Improvement Plan matrix received from Angelina Palmiero dated 04/27/2012.
- FC#17 If yes, how old was the child when the adoption was legalized?

 - a. Modify the screen with an edit that will not allow the selection of “yes” in #16 and “not applicable” or “unable to determine” for element #17.
 This was accomplished by modifying the screen to not allow “Not Applicable” for Age Range at Adoption if Child Ever Adopted is “Person has been legally adopted.”
 This task was documented as complete 04/2012 on the AFCARS Improvement Plan matrix received from Angelina Palmiero dated 04/27/2012.
 - b. If either “not applicable” or “unable to determine” are selected in #17, modify the extraction code to map these to blank.
 This was accomplished by modifying the AFCARS Foster Care extract to map “unable to determine” to blank if Child Ever Adopted is “Person has been legally adopted.” This task was returned on the AFCARS Improvement Plan matrix received from Angelina Palmiero dated 04/27/2012 with comments. This will be resubmitted in the next AFCARS Improvement Plan Update.
 - c. Modify the program code to map this element to blank when data are missing.
 This was accomplished by modifying the AFCARS Foster Care extract to map Element #17 to blank when the Age Range at Adoption field is blank. This task was returned on the AFCARS Improvement Plan matrix received from Angelina Palmiero dated 04/27/2012 with comments. This will be resubmitted in the next AFCARS Improvement Plan Update.
- FC#24 Number of Previous Placement Settings in This Episode
 Modify the program code to set the placement count to zero if the only living arrangement is a runaway.
 This was accomplished by modifying the program code to set the placement count to zero if the only living arrangement is a runaway. This task was returned on the AFCARS Improvement Plan matrix received from Angelina Palmiero dated 04/27/2012 with comments. This will be resubmitted in the next AFCARS Improvement Plan Update.
- FC#25 Manner of Removal From Home for Current placement Episode
 Modify the program code to continuously report the manner of removal as “voluntary” if that was the original manner of removal for the current removal episode.
 This was accomplished by modifying the program code to report the original manner of removal. This task was documented as complete 04/2012 on the AFCARS Improvement Plan matrix received from Angelina Palmiero dated 04/27/2012.
- FC#49 Foster Family Structure
 Modify the extraction code to map missing information to blank.
 This was accomplished by modifying the program code to map missing Family Structure Code to blank. This task was documented as complete 04/2012 on the AFCARS Improvement Plan matrix received from Angelina Palmiero dated 04/27/2012.
- FC# 58 Reason for Discharge
 Modify the program code to set the records of children still in foster care to “not applicable.”

This was accomplished by modifying the program code to map records of children with an open foster care case to "not applicable." This task was documented as complete 04/2012 on the AFCARS Improvement Plan matrix received from Angelina Palmiero dated 04/27/2012.

Training/Policy/Oversight AIP Accomplishments

- AD#19 Date of Mother's TPR
AD#20 Date of Father's TPR
 - a. Identify steps the State is taking to work with the judicial system to ensure timely signature of court orders.
This was accomplished by:
 1. Providing laptops and printers to the county attorneys in order to have the orders typed and processed at the hearing.
 2. Assuring that copies of the court order formats are sent out to each private attorney who files a petition for adoption finalization.
 3. Requesting the Chief Justice place priority on the TPR orders and Adoptions Decrees being signed by the judges.These tasks were submitted on the AFCARS Improvement Plan Update dated 01/31/2012. SCDSS is awaiting a response from the CB on the status of these tasks.
 - b. Describe, develop, and implement a method to ensure the accurate and timely entry of this data.
This was accomplished by:
 1. Program staff reviewing the Legal Case Management System to CAPSS updates to ensure that each date is correctly coming over from LCMS to CAPSS.
 2. Identifying key staff to ensure that data entry is completed timely.
 3. Providing refresher training on the key data entry points.
 4. Evaluating Dashboard data on a monthly basis to ensure consistency and improvement.

Planned Changes due to AIP Findings

Changes planned to be implemented between July 2012 and September 2013 include:

- Revise the Relationship component in CAPSS to identify relationships of each person to all other persons in the case
- Revise Disabilities and Characteristics to be located in one area in CAPSS and to expand the choices for disabilities
- Revise Placements and Temporary Placements in CAPSS to better identify the cottages of group homes located on the same campus, identify trial home visits and to enhance the definition and mapping of hospital stays as temporary or not
- Revise race and ethnicity as identified in NYTD
- Incorporate data for reporting on non-recurring costs for adoptions
- Identify the Medicaid only Adoption Supplement Agreements
- Identify children entering foster care due to Daniel's Law
- Identify if a child has a permanent connection if their case plan is APPLA
- Identify if data that is unknown is due to child abandonment or incapacity of child/parent
- Develop a method to receive direct data input from Foster Care Review Board
- Incorporate policy development, training, and supervisory and case review oversight as these changes are developed and implemented

- Revisions as identified in the AIP to address changes in the AFCARS program code

MTS Integration

The current Managed Treatment Service data currently exists on PARADOX and Approach databases. The State plans to convert that data to SQL 2008. A new DB was created S4000cc21\MTS that holds all of the tables currently used in production by the MTS front end (front end in Approach and MS-ACCESS). The project scope is to incorporate the functionality of MTS billing and the interface with COC within CAPSS.

Child Support Interface

SCDSS will interface CAPSS with the CFS system. It will send and/or receive a total of six types of data via this interface. The CFS System actually consists of three major components:

1. Child Support Enforcement System;
2. Family Court Management System; and
3. State Disbursement System (thus the acronym CFS).

CAPSS/CFS testing is scheduled to begin July 2, 2012 – August 16, 2012.

Legal Case Management System (LCMS)

A legal case management system (LCMS) was implemented in June 2010 to enable the agency to efficiently manage the statewide legal cases, court documents and court dates. In addition to the basic capabilities of this self-contained software, it interfaces with CAPSS to either extract necessary data from CAPSS or to provide necessary data to CAPSS.

Trainings/enhancements that occurred between July 2011 and June 2012

- A refresher training session as well as a subject matter expert refresher training was held in July 2011.
- A copier was procured for Anderson County and printers were ordered for Richland County (3), Newberry County (1), Anderson County (1), and Spartanburg County (1).
- Improved the quality of the data moving from LCMS to CAPSS.
- A workflow was designed by the adoptions staff to facilitate timely adoptions.
- Notice to be sent to Foster Parent Report was modified so that only those foster parents that are not defendants are reflected on this report. Foster parents who are defendants have already received notice when they received the Summons and Complaint.
- Notice sent to Foster Parent Report was modified to include a selector on the report menu so that the user may expedite search for Filing Type (eliminates user having to scroll through numerous filings).
- The trigger button change which validates data being transferred from LCMS to CAPSS was tested and migrated to production.
- Additional hearings codes were added to the LCMS/CAPSS translation table.
- The vendor supplied training on the LCMS database structure for SCDSS database administrators and applications developers. This training will permit SCDSS applications development staff to create reports using SQL reporting tools.
- A legally free letter date field was added to both LCMS and CAPSS. This field documents the official date of termination of all parental rights.

Planned enhancements/trainings between July 2012 and September 2013

- The vendor has provided a Statement of Work for allowing legal staff to produce/update court orders while in the court room (In Court module). The goal is to provide both web access and standalone access in the event that the court facility does not support network connectivity.
- A decision was made to begin the In Court module with the larger counties. OGC staff continues to meet with these counties to discuss system issues and business processes.
- The In Court module (both with and without network access) will be tested and implemented.

CAPSS/LCMS Support

There is a CAPSS Support unit designated to assist field staff in data entry and corrections in system. This unit responds directly to CAPSS and LCMS users in the field – providing instruction and technical assistance on system usage. When field staff are unable to make certain file fixes or corrections, or need changes made for user access, CAPSS support staff do this for them. Additionally the CAPSS support staff do user testing on new developments or changes to the system and act as liaisons with other divisions involved with CAPSS – requirements, information technology, training, and requests for computer services. There are also legal staff experts in the field that assist with any technical or user questions regarding the use of LCMS.

The various procedure manuals for child welfare contain instructions regarding data elements or information that are to be entered into CAPSS and when to enter such information. These instructions also identify the various CAPSS screens used to access the record for pertinent data entry. Additionally there is a CAPSS Users Guide online with easy access to the users' guide while one is working with specific data entry. Also, a SharePoint portal has been established to document, track, monitor and address system issues as they arise.

XV. SERVICES FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE

Developmentally-Appropriate Services for Children under Age 5

Children in agency custody are being staffed on a bi-annual basis to ensure that a permanent plan is being developed for them on a timely basis and whether a concurrent plan is being actively pursued simultaneously. Well-being factors such as developmental delays are also being reviewed and discussed at these staffings and referrals made to ensure children are receiving services through BabyNet, Head Start and the school system for assessment of developmental milestones and when developmental delays are identified services are being implemented in a timely manner. The State is also fortunate to have an Early Head Start Program for children birth to three years of age that provides year-round services to children who need to enhance their social, emotional, physical or intellectual development.

The agency is working with the school system in an effort to address the children from birth to five years of age. The agency utilizes many services offered currently through the public education system to address developmental, physical, emotional or intellectual delays in children who are in this age range. The agency also works closely with BabyNet for in-home services to families with children from birth to three years of age. Every child from 0-3 years of age entering SCDSS custody will be referred to BabyNet for an assessment. Services are provided as needed and followed by both agencies for as long as the needs assessment identifies a concern.

Early Head Start is the free, early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support program for low-income families with children from birth to age three. Services are provided on a year-round basis to

enhance the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of infants and toddlers and pregnant women through the provision of health, educational, nutritional, social, and other services. Early Head Start's program design also supports parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles, as well as aiding in self-sufficiency skills of the child. Parent and community development is the cornerstone of the program. SCDSS refers children to Head Start and works closely with them in assessing the child's progress in their developmental milestones and readiness for school. Should a child who is in need of such services enter the foster care system, a referral is made, and every effort is made to ensure that child's participation in the Head Start programs.

Policy Requirements

- Foster Care in the least restrictive, family-like environment which is in close proximity to the birth family
- Medical, emotional and developmental assessments to ensure services are provided based on the child's specific needs
- Referrals for services to appropriately address any developmental delays
- Permanency Planning and Concurrent Planning to ensure children in this age range are quickly and safely reunified with birth family or TPR and adoption is completed in a timely manner to ensure consistency and permanency in the child's life
- Goal is less than 24 months in care for a minimum of 32 % of all children

The Child and Family Services Innovation Improvement Act (PL 112-34 Section 422(b)(18)) requires services to recognize the distinct developmental needs of infants, toddlers, and children. Policy section 818.05.01 regarding referral to the Department of Mental Health for an assessment includes the requirement that the assessment be completed within 24-48 hours of entry into foster care.

Section 815.05.01 also addresses assessment and referrals to Baby Net; EPSDT, medical and dental evaluations on entry into care. Section 832 address the Education and Health Passports that are to follow the child from time of entry into foster care.

Policy Manual 818.05.01 Medical and Mental Health Assessment & Follow-Up Schedule (revision published 10-6-10) addresses physical and developmental needs of young children.

- Coordination for completion of initial assessments
The initial comprehensive medical assessment is completed within 24 hours or no later than five days of entry into care and the initial mental health assessment is completed within 24-48 hours of entry into care. The worker coordinates and arranges completion of any services identified in the assessment.
 - For the child under age 3, a BabyNet referral form is completed and forwarded to BabyNet within two working days of learning of the suspected developmental delay. This referral is required by federal statute PL 108-36 Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). For BabyNet guidelines, see Section 818.05.02
 - The child's plan (SCDSS 30231) is updated as necessary according to the Child and Family Assessment and Service Plan Instructions and Practice Guide.
 - Service providers are given a copy of the portion of the child's plan that relates to the service they are to provide.
- Ongoing EPSDT Medical Screening Schedule
The worker arranges for completion of ongoing medical assessments for the foster child according to the EPSDT Guidelines.

Note: The guidelines are intended to clarify the minimum standards for a child having medical screenings. Always defer to the child's physician if more frequent or intensive medical care is recommended.

- Ongoing Monitoring

The worker monitors service delivery providers to determine if services are addressing the needs of the child by:

- Obtaining current information on status of the outcome of service being provided based on the specific needs of the child.
- At least monthly follow up with providers for updates on progress / success in addressing the physical or mental health needs.
- Following up as needed to ensure receipt of quarterly written reports for the purpose of evaluation and providing copies of reports to GAL and FCRB.
- Revising the plan (SCDSS 30231) as necessary, i.e. indicating when needs have been met or alternative or additional services are needed.
- The Education and Health Passport (SCDSS-30245), CAPSS and child's SCDSS paper case file are updated with the most recent medical information.

Referrals of Children under 3

SC has developed and amended its policies regarding referrals of children under 3 for developmental screening and assessment to meet evolving CAPTA requirements. Required referrals are made to BabyNet, the State's Early Intervention Services agency under Part C of the IDEA.

In 2004, the first policy requirement for referrals to BabyNet was added to SCDSS policy. In 2005, the policy, which required staff to refer all children under the age of three years who were involved in a substantiated or indicated case of child abuse or neglect to BabyNet, added the requirement that any infant or child under age 3 who was suspected of illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms from prenatal exposure must also be referred.

In January 2010, to enhance the importance of the BabyNet referrals for the above identified children as well as any child known to the agency and suspected of having developmental delays, a separate section in the CPS policy manual devoted to BabyNet referrals was created (719.01, *BabyNet Referrals*). It was the intent of this separate section to provide added guidance regarding the importance of BabyNet and the importance of encouraging families to participate in the services. DSS monitors these referrals through Program Quality Assurance reviews and supervisory reviews of case files. The collaborative meetings held quarterly on the local level between BabyNet, county DSS, Headstart and other service providers help to ensure timely referrals and response to referrals.

Foster Care and Adoption services also work closely with BabyNet as service providers to ensure the service needs for any child under age 3 are being met. To ensure compliance across program areas, in October 2010 SCDSS added a section (818.05.02 *BabyNet*) to the foster care manuals. This section also provides the CAPTA requirements and step-by-step instructions to follow to enhance foster and adoptive parents' understanding of BabyNet and the importance of following up with these appointments. Agency staff are to request and file the results of the BabyNet assessment and services in the child's file and document in dictation future services needed based upon the assessment.

Should the child continue to need similar services after age 3, these services are often coordinated through Head Start. If Head Start is not an option for the child, other referrals for providers should be sought in collaboration with

BabyNet staff. If neither Babynet nor Head Start are options, staffing with the local school district's developmental specialist should be arranged.

SCDSS has not captured BabyNet referrals through its automated CAPSS system except in dictation. The future goal would be to add a method of automation to the referral process and to capture monthly the referrals and acceptance by BabyNet. This would assist the agency in measuring the child's well-being goals and monitor compliance with federal and state regulations and policies.

Reducing Time in Care without a Permanent Family for Children under Age Five

In July 2011, one of the Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) created by the agency was to increase adoptions and/or permanency placements of children by 50% for the SFY 2012. The number of children with a permanency plan of adoption or reunification to be accomplished by June 30, 2012, is 1,184 children. Of those 1,184 children, at least 799 children (68%) are to have their adoption finalized.

As of March 31, 2012, the goal of finalizing 799 children before June 30, 2012 appears to be within reach. Thus far, 727 children have been adopted since July 1, 2011. The goal was clearly stated to all aspects of the agency, court system, GAL and FCRB to assist in any aspect of increasing permanency that fell within their venue. The SCDSS's attorneys' supervision and appointing authority was changed; Judges assisted by providing additional court time; GALs were asked to support the agency's request not to allow for court cases to be continued by the family's attorney; assistance was provided in ensuring home studies and children's background summaries were completed timely; and judges provided the agency with Adoption Day Hearings to allow for as many children as possible to be addressed.

In SFY 2011, there were 2,985 children under the age of five in foster care. In that same year, 606 children were adopted. Of those, over half, or 350, were five years of age or less.

SCDSS does not anticipate a large number of children under five to have a delay in their permanency in 2013. The anticipated number of children who may not be placed in a permanent home is 22. These are children who have been legally free for more than 90 days and have yet to be placed in an adoptive family. All of these children are in a higher level of foster care or have a diagnosis of medically fragile. The agency has a specialized program for the medically fragile children to ensure they are followed closely for multiple medical, developmental or psychological issues by specialized social work staff who have lower caseloads and receive clinical support from the state's psychiatrist and from the child's medical team.

In looking forward to 2013, the agency will continue to monitor through the agency SACWIS system the number of children under five years of age who enter foster care. Monthly reports draw attention to children who do not have a permanent plan accomplished within nine months of entering care and indicate the age of children legally free for more than 90 days. The agency will require each adoption director to report quarterly to the division director all attempts to local an adoptive resource for these children. Recruitment strategies are included in the Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment section of this report. Adoption specialists are available to discuss children awaiting adoption with approved prospective adoptive families and to encourage families to consider children who are older or have developmental delays.

Training for workers and foster parents on medically fragile children is provided by SCDSS and the state foster parent association. Additionally, the USC medical school and the Palmetto Hospital have a special interest in the medically fragile and offer specific training related to caring for these children for foster parents and workers. County staff are to emphasize the importance of reunification to families immediately upon removal; implement a Family Group Conference; and ask for court intervention when the parent is not complying with the treatment plan. The concurrent plan is to be changed to the primary plan and the case fast tracked to monitor the outcome of the plan in a timely manner. These are monitored by monthly dash reports, conferences with country directors, permanency roundtables for children, meetings by the deputy director with the legal staff, and contacts with all agency involved parties such as GAL, FCRB and court administration when needed to set priorities or resolve conflicts within the cases.

SCDSS recognizes that approximately 60% of all children adopted from foster care are adopted by their foster parents. In the past year, emphasis has been placed on recruitment and retention of foster parents. Concurrent planning to identify a pre-adoptive family as early as possible into the child's placement into foster care was encouraged so the child could have earlier stability in their permanent placement when reunification was not likely.

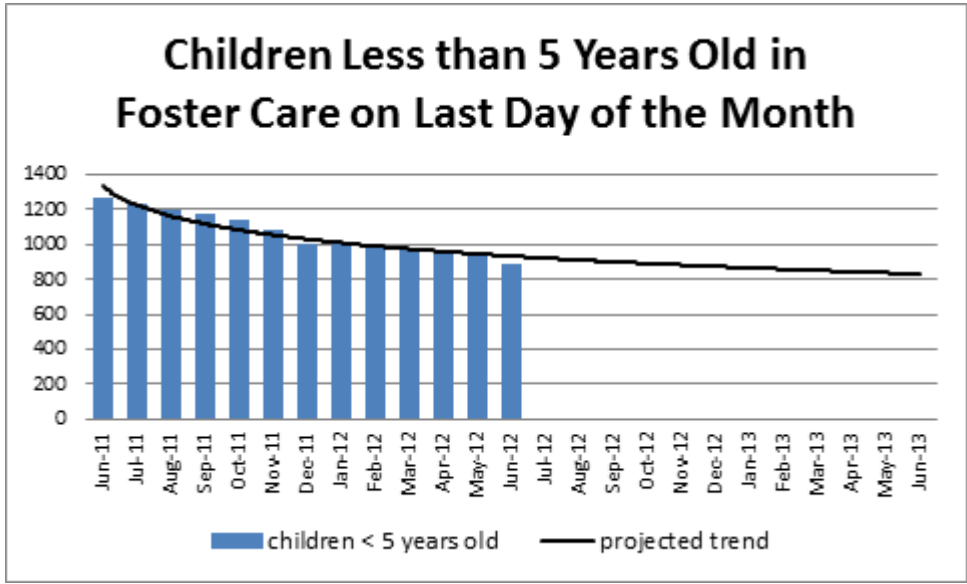
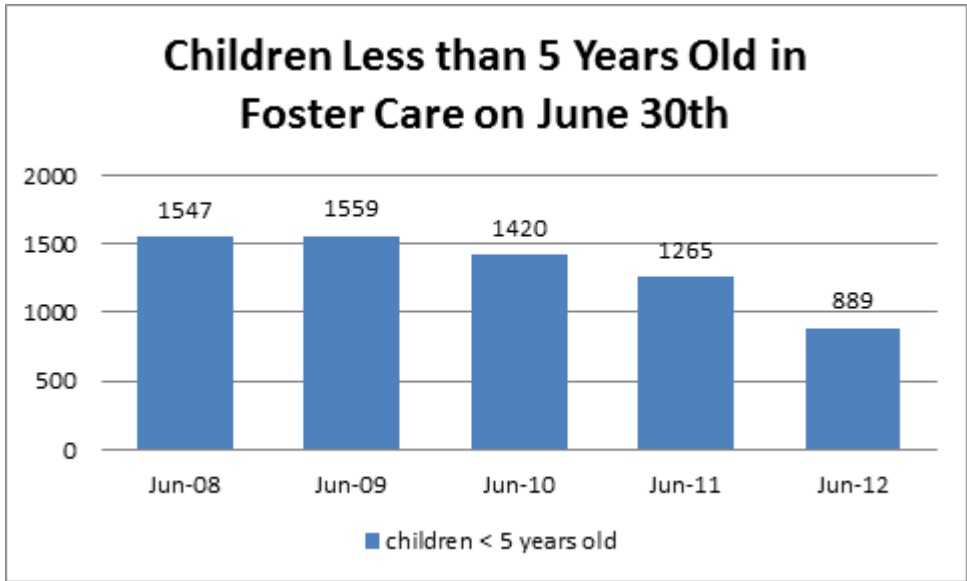
The agency, during SFY 2012, emphasized to foster parents the importance of developing a relationship with the birth family when possible to act as a resource family or a peer to peer role model to the birth family. The goal is to provide the child, who may be reunified with birth family, with a relationship which allows for ongoing contact and support to the family from their foster parents. Should the parent's rights be terminated, the goal would be for the relationship to allow the child to have first-hand knowledge of the birth parents and the medical and social information as the child grows into adulthood. This topic was the closing presentation of the State Annual Foster Parent Association in April 2012.

SCDSS does not anticipate a large number of children less than five years of age to have a delay in their permanency in 2013. The anticipated number of children who have been legally free for more than 90 days and have yet to be placed in an adoptive family is 22 children. These children are all in a higher level of foster care or have a diagnosis of Medically Fragile yet. SCDSS has continued to work through all possibilities for these children to help them be connected to a life-long family.

The plan to monitor these children is through the CAPSS system and to have each adoption director to report regularly to the division director all attempts at locating an adoptive resource for the child. Recruitment of an adoptive family for these children will be on Adopt-Us-Kids, State Seedlings, Heart Gallery, Foster Parent Association and all forms of state child-specific recruitment activities.

SC DSS is monitoring all children in the foster care system to ensure they receive permanency more expediently than in the past. An emphasis has always been on moving the younger children to permanency as quickly as possible, and traditionally, the children under the age of five years have reached permanency quicker than the older children in the foster care system. For fiscal year 2013, SC will need to develop a method of ensuring the children in this population are measured and their plans are closely monitored to enhance the services needed to achieve permanency.

The following charts show the trend of children in foster care under age 5 from June 2008 through June 2012. The first two charts are of all children in foster care under the age 5.



The second group of charts shows the number of children in foster care with a plan of TPR/ Adoption under age 5 listed by regional adoption offices.

**Foster Children Less Than 5 Years Old Who Have a Plan of Adoption
But Are Not Yet Placed in an Adoptive or Pre-Adoptive Home**

Accountability, Data, and Research (data from CAPSS on May 1, 2012)

Plan of Adoption is Primary Permanency Plan

Region Number	Total # Children < 5 Years Old	# of Children with No Date in All TPRd	# Children who Have Been TPRd for 90 Days or Less	# Children who have been TPRd for More Than 90 Days
STATE TOTAL	225	186	9	30
1	84	69	3	12
2	46	36	2	8
3	47	38	2	7
4	48	43	2	3

Plan of Adoption is Secondary Permanency Plan				
Region Number	Total # Children < 5 Years Old	# of Children with No Date in All TPRd	# Children who Have Been TPRd for 90 Days or Less	# Children who have been TPRd for More Than 90 Days
STATE TOTAL	112	106	3	3
1	35	32	2	1
2	28	26	1	1
3	21	20		1
4	28	28		

The third group of charts shows the children for whom TPR has been completed but who are not currently placed in an adoptive or pre-adoptive placement in CAPSS. The reports are located in the internal SCDSS system in the Adoption / TPR database. The reports can be drilled down to reveal "child specific" demographic information, with a line for each child that shows the child's race, gender, and other information for use by workers and to assist in monitoring of the child's progress or delays in permanency. Each report may be broken down by name and tracked by supervisors and administration as to the status of their permanent plan, services delivered and placement type. The CAPSS data can also indicate which of these children's legal status may be on appeal for the TPR finding. SCDSS will be working in the near future to incorporate summary data for the demographic characteristics of the children in this population.

**Foster Children Less Than 5 Years Old Who Have a Plan of Adoption
But Are Not Yet Placed in an Adoptive or Pre-Adoptive Home**

Accountability, Data, and Research (data from CAPSS on May 1, 2012)

Plan of Adoption is Primary Permanency Plan				
Age on Download	Total # Children < 5 Years Old	# of Children with No Date in All Parents TPRd	# Children who Have Been TPRd for 90 Days or Less	# Children who have been TPRd for More Than 90 Days
STATE TOTAL	225	186	9	30
< 1 Year Old	22	19	2	1

1 Year Old	51	43	2	6
2 Years Old	51	45	3	3
3 Years Old	56	46	2	8
4 Years Old	45	33		12

Plan of Adoption is Secondary Permanency Plan				
Age on Download	Total # Children < 5 Years Old	# of Children with No Date in All Parents TPRd	# Children who Have Been TPRd for 90 Days or Less	# Children who have been TPRd for More Than 90 Days
STATE TOTAL	112	106	3	3
< 1 Year Old	22	21	1	
1 Year Old	32	31		1
2 Years Old	22	20	2	
3 Years Old	13	13		
4 Years Old	23	21		2

Services planned for FFY 2013 for children under the age of five with developmental delays include:

- Assessment of the children reflected in the numbers in the above charts to determine which special needs may be causing a delay in adoptive placements and thus the child's ability to reach permanency. Steps include:
 - Research all children by name and length of time in care in population under age 5
 - Hold a Permanency Roundtable for these children
 - Determine how many are members of a larger sibling group to determine if that has had an impact on the length of time in care
 - Determine the number of children's whose legal status is on appeal
- Referrals for services to enhance developmental capacities. Steps include:
 - Determine through the Permanency Roundtables if the children are receiving the services needed to address their particular need
 - Identify any service needs that are not being met and identify a resource to assist with meeting the needs
- Referrals for Family Strengthening and Support for either the biological parent, relative or adoptive parent to enhancement timely placements. Steps include:
 - Ensuring that all relatives have been sought and evaluated for potential placement
 - If Medicaid Waivers or other funding sources could assist in the family in meeting the child's special needs
- Referrals for adoption recruitment that are more specific to the needs of the child:
 - SCFPA has developed a contractual position with the agency to assist the foster parent with considering adoption for a child that perhaps in the past they were hesitant to adopt
 - Heart Gallery has also entered into a contractual agreement with the agency to assist in specialized recruitment activities for a number of hard-to-place children. They have also contracted to complete home studies on families who inquire about a specific child

- GAL, Children Come First, and Foster Care Review Board will all work collaboratively in efforts to identify an adoptive family for these children
- Ensuring that recruitment referrals to national exchanges such as AdoptUSKids are completed as early as possible for every child who does not have an available, identified adoptive family

The agency has developed protocol to staff every child's case with a plan of reunification at six months and to address barriers to reunification that would prevent the completion of that plan by 12 months.

Once the barriers are identified, if there are services that could enhance the family's behavioral changes within an additional three months, they must be implemented. If at nine months the situation is not showing marked improvement, a Permanency Planning Hearing is to be held and the plan for the child changed to TPR and adoption when appropriate. Full disclosure at the Family Group Conference is a must and key to helping parents and extended family members understand the importance of permanency for the children. Currently, SC's budget does not provide the necessary state funding match to provide subsidized Kinship care. Acknowledging this is a barrier for many relatives to accept legal custody/guardianship for a child in agency custody, the state hopes to re-evaluate ways in which the agency might assist relatives. For 2013, the goal is to explore such cases and ensure families are aware of such services as TANF child-only benefits, Medicaid, navigation services, and other services that might assist the family financially and emotionally in meeting the needs of the child.

The SCFPA provides training on developmental milestones for foster parents. USC Training Center provides a course for staff on Developmental Milestones and recognizing developmental delays in children

- SC Foster Parent Association has a contract with the agency to provide pre-licensure training as well as ongoing training to foster parents throughout the year. Each year, statewide foster parent association training is held and multiple topics are available for foster parents and DSS staff to attend.
- SC Association of Children's Homes and Family Services provides training for state public and private foster homes as well as group homes and institutions in SC.
- Each Certified Placing Agency provides additional training for therapeutic foster parents who provide care for medically or emotionally fragile children.
- Children's Trust, USC Medical Center and Children's Law Center each have yearly conferences that multi-disciplinary speakers attend to address a different dynamic for special needs children. Topics such as brain injuries, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, and Autism are examples of topics addressed in past conferences. Both professional staff and foster parents may attend these conferences.

SCDSS staff receive training opportunities both from external contracts, such as USC Children's Studies, which provides Child Welfare Basic Training, and ongoing multi-level training related to specific typologies and issues. One of the required courses for basic training for all staff is childhood development. For fiscal year 2013, SCDSS plans to develop policy-related changes as well as additional staff training. The training calendar has not yet been completed. The multi-agency approach, as outlined in the state healthcare plan will be used to identify the best trauma assessment tools and training to be implemented in 2013.

SCDSS, SCFPA, SCHG, GAL, Children Come First, and SCFCRB will all work collaboratively in efforts to identify an adoptive family for these children. Children in this age group for whom the plan is reunification will also receive priority with the agency. Baby Net, SC Department of Education, Head Start, Department of Disability and Special

Needs (DDSN) and DHEC are all providers of services that work closely with SCDSS to ensure the agency is meeting the developmental needs of the children in agency custody.

Training has been developed to encourage worker understanding of the importance of permanency and stability on the development of the child five years of age and younger. SCDSS training partners, USC and the SC Foster Parent Association, have existing training curriculum for both foster parents and workers on the developmental milestones of children as well as the lags in development that should receive attention of a developmental specialist. SCDSS also has been including trauma-informed practice and the effects of trauma on children, including developmental delays, in training for staff and foster parents.

XVI. CHILD MALTREATMENT DEATHS

SCDSS completes an internal review on every case in which a child dies while either in foster care, receiving in-home treatment services or an active investigation. The purpose of the agency's internal review is to assess quality of casework in an effort to change practice and policy, when needed, to prevent future such deaths and to ensure workers have adequate training to investigate child abuse and to provide safety services once abuse is identified.

Local child fatality and near fatality review teams were established through a collaborative effort of the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED), the South Carolina Department of Social Services, Department of Disabilities and Special Needs and the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). The State Child Fatality Advisory Committee has statewide impact, serving all citizens of South Carolina. The Child Death Review coordinator, a position funded by CAPTA, reports that currently there are local child death review teams in 11 of the 46 South Carolina counties. There are ten Children's Health and Safety Councils and one child death review team associated with the Safe Kids county organization. Local child death reviews take place in Richland, Charleston, Greenville, Greenwood, Dillon, Horry, Lancaster, Kershaw, Marion, York, and Hampton counties.

The State Child Fatality Committee meets six times per year to review all children's deaths that were not the result of natural causes. During the period under review, the State Fatality Committee reviewed 152 children's deaths in FY 2011 and 84 children's deaths in the first half of FFY 2012. In FFY 2012, there were 78 children who died due to safe sleep issues, 12 suicide deaths and six child deaths due to child abuse and neglect (CAN). From October 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012, there were 36 unsafe sleep fatalities, six suicides and three child deaths due to CAN. Unsafe sleep seems to be on the rise, and educational efforts will need to be added to public awareness to improve parents' understanding of such practices.

SCDSS reviews all cases where the child or family may have been known to the agency prior to and since the child's death and participates in the state review. The review also determines if practice needs to be enhanced or changed as a result of the lessons learned from the child's death.

In SFY 2011, SCDSS had internal reviews as follows: 30 summary reviews and one full review. A summary review is completed when a child in the custody of DSS or in an open treatment case dies of medical reasons. A full review is conducted when the child's death is believed to be a result of child abuse or neglect. Both are completed by the Office of General Counsel and the Division of Investigation. In the first half of FFY 2012, the agency completed 14

summary reviews and one full review. Each review evaluates the circumstances surrounding the child's death and evaluates if any actions could have been taken differently by the agency to prevent the child's death or serious injury.

Following are the data sources for reviews.

- SC reports NCANDS from the following sources:
SACWIS system (CAPSS) has a code for child death due to maltreatment, which is utilized for all cases in which DSS investigates a death that was alleged to have been due to maltreatment. If the maltreatment has a determination of founded, the child is reported to NCANDS as a maltreatment death. This child would be reported in the child file and included in the cumulative counts in the agency file.
- The coroner, medical examiner, law enforcement, and DHHS (Bureau of Vital Statistics Division) report all child deaths that were not the result of natural causes to the State Law Enforcement Division for an investigation. SLED refers their findings to the State Child Fatality Committee for a review. The committee then reviews the cases and makes any suggestions to members of the committee and agency they represent if any further action is needed, including training for staff, public awareness issues, etc.
- The children whose deaths appear to have been a result of child maltreatment are reported to DSS by SLED following their investigation. This list is compared to the agency SACWIS system by name, date of birth, date of death, and parents' names to ensure child maltreatment deaths are reported accurately and not duplicated. The children that were not included in the NCANDS child file are reported in the NCANDS agency file. This includes children that are reported to DSS from SLED from previous reporting periods if they were not reported on a previous NCANDS child file.

The State does contract with Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) to complete a report of child deaths based upon death certificates and cause of death. This report is currently late, and steps have been taken to address the contract compliance with DHEC.

The agency recognizes the need to ensure that policy and protocol for child fatalities is up-to-date and that, in all 46 counties, the situation was handled per policy. Manual revisions are in the process of being completed. Protocol that follows policy has been developed and tools for reviews are being completed. These manual revisions drafted in April 2012 are designed to replace existing sections 736 *Child Death in a CPS case* published 8-17-2004 and 836 *Death of a child in Foster Care* published 9-2-2003. The revisions are currently being reviewed by the Office of General Counsel and the Division of Investigation for further compliance with statute and protocol compliance. The current online published manual sections address the worker's role in completion of a safety investigation for any other child in the home as well as the steps they should take to ensure the file is reviewed by their immediate supervisor, county director and regional director as well as the immediate notification of the internal Division of Investigation for their review of the case. (See above regarding internal reviews and types of reviews for a child fatality when the child is or has been known to the agency.) The revised policy manuals are expected to be released in 2012.

The State Law Enforcement Division (SLED), the South Carolina Department of Social Services, Department of Disabilities and Special Needs and the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) work to improve services from all agencies in an effort to prevent child fatalities that are not due to natural causes or automobile accidents.

Because of the number of deaths due to drowning during this fiscal year, the State Child Fatality Committee worked collaboratively to complete a public awareness campaign for water safety. Billboards and state parks publishing a

guide to parents about water safety around lakes and streams were two items used to educate and encourage parents to provide safety standards around water.

The increase of unsafe sleep deaths will be addressed in 2013. The agency hopes to work with media and public service announcements to continue to emphasize the importance of safe sleep habits. Collaboration with state and non-profit agencies will help to educate new mothers about the use of cribs versus allowing the infant to sleep in the same bed with adults or other children, not placing infants on soft surfaces or comforters and not placing toys in bed with infants.

XVII. CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT (CAPTA) PLAN

For FFY 2011, CAPTA funds were used for education and training, spreading the message of Child Abuse Prevention Month through the Children's Trust of South Carolina, and funding CPS staff positions.

In FFY 2011, Children's Trust hosted training in all counties except Chesterfield, Clarendon, Dillon, Marion, and Marlboro; an annual total of 65 trainings, 1261 non discrete participants. These trainings focused on prevention content and strategies for professionals who support and strengthen families and were based on two curricula for content:

- *Strengthening Families with Protective Factors*, a research-based, cost-effective strategy to increase family stability, enhance child development, and reduce child abuse and neglect. It builds five protective factors are proven to reduce child maltreatment; parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and the healthy social and emotional development of children; and
- *Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect through Parent-Provider Partnerships (PCAN)*, a training series that goes beyond typical mandated reporter training to offer concepts, information and practice focused on helping those involved in child care to recognize the importance of their relationships with very young children and their parents in reducing some of the risk factors associated with abuse and neglect. PCAN consists of ten units focused on three overarching areas, 1) Building effective relationships with parents and their very young children; 2) Understanding the impact of abuse and neglect on infants and toddlers; and 3) Helping directors build workplaces that support staff in reducing the risk for child maltreatment.

Children's Trust also began training Parent Café Hosts (facilitators), with a total of 16 trained in this period. Parent Cafes are a series of structured small group conversations that bring parents together to discuss issues important to them. The goal is to directly engage parents in building the protective factors needed to prevent maltreatment and promote healthy outcomes for their children.

Children's Trust also hosted its biennial Prevention Conference in September 2011 with a total of 32 sessions, 232 participants.

For FFY 2012, CAPTA funds are being used for education and training, spreading the message of Child Abuse Prevention Month through the Children's Trust of South Carolina, and funding CPS staff positions. In the first half of

FFY 2012, Children's Trust continued to work within the above curricula and added an online presence, *elearning.scchildren.org*, an open-source site for computer-based training.

During this period Children's Trust reached personnel in all counties except Cherokee, Chester, and Fairfield via 16 trainings and 210 non-discrete participants. An additional 32 additional Parent Café Hosts were trained, with four café hosts having conducted at least one series of parent cafes in Greenville, Aiken, Pickens, and Darlington counties. The first computer-based training module went live in March 2012, *Keeping Families Safe From Fire: Fire Safety for Parents*, and six people have participated in the course to date. Promotion to the professional community will roll out summer 2012.

During this period the SCDSS used CAPTA funding to pay for 3 Technical Assistant positions that assist in moving the practice of the counties on behalf of the children and families served by the Child Welfare System, with particular focus on the intake, assessment practice of the workforce to help strengthen and support families that are brought to the attention of DSS. These positions were utilized to assist counties in achieving the child welfare outcomes using analysis of data and qualitative reviews with particular focus and attention on risk and safety assessment tools and protocols. Provided technical assistance to the counties based on the data analysis and qualitative reviews to improve outcomes for children and families served.

NRC-CPS also helped SCDSS design a comprehensive safety and risk assessment. This assessment uses the same safety questions and risk matrix that is used in the intake process. In addition, the assessment includes components from the Connected Families "Signs of Safety" training. Training is also provided on the assessment for both SCDSS staff and the provider staff. The safety and risk was based on the assessment of the safety, vulnerability of the child or children, and the protective capacity of the parents and/or caretakers. Training conducted by the NRC-CPS and the Connected Families "Signs of Safety" trainings included information that CAPTA requires that states establish a triage system that:

- Accepts, screens, and assesses reports received to determine which such reports require an intensive intervention and which require voluntary referral to another agency, program, or project;
- Provides, either directly or through referral, a variety of community-linked services to assist families in preventing child abuse and neglect; and
- Provides further investigation and intensive intervention where the child's safety is in jeopardy.

The training included information about the need for strong interagency collaborations to provide prevention related activities to help strengthen and support families that are brought to the attention of DSS. The training included the policies and procedures that address the needs of drug-exposed infants, the process to notify a family who has been brought to the attention of the DSS. For the trainings conducted by the NRC-CPS and Connected Families the SCDSS Form 2100 Training Record (sign-in sheet) was completed (included information on the sign-in sheet - name of employee and program area or organization). These trainings were supported by USC Center for Child and Family Studies.

The State's current CAPTA coordinator (State Liaison Officer) is:

Jessica Hanak-Coulter, CAC, LMSW
SCDSS Child Welfare Director

PO Box 1520
Columbia, SC 29202
Jessica.Hanak-Coulter@dss.sc.gov

Legislative Changes that Impact CAPTA

There were no legislative changes affecting the state's CAPTA eligibility.

Citizen Review Panel Reports and Response

South Carolina has three Citizen Review Panels (CRP) representing the Lowcountry, Midlands, and Upstate regions of the state. The 2011 CRP Annual Report and the state's response are attached as Appendix F.

XVIII. CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM (CFCIP)

Youth ages 13-21 in the Department's custody who have independent living as a services plan and who have signed a Voluntary Aftercare Placement Agreement are eligible for Chafee funds. Independent Living is an additional service plan for youth in foster care, but it is not a permanent plan. Youth who are adopted from foster care at age 16 or above are eligible for certain Chafee funds. There are two exceptions. Youth are eligible for Chafee funds that left the foster care system after reaching age 18. These youth are in need of independent living services before reaching the age of 21. Youth are entitled to these services if they aged out of foster care in other states at age 18 and moved to South Carolina for residency or educational purposes. The youth must complete the P.A.T.T.Y (providing assistance to transitioning youth) form as a part of joint planning and assessment with the foster care staff. The following factors are considered in assessing for Chafee funds:

- The goal for which the funds are to be used and the plan for meeting the goal
- Whether the funds serve as a one-time expense that will lead to a greater independence for the youth
- Total amount of the request
- Foster care youth who are undocumented aliens are ineligible for CFCIP services and funds

Effective January 1, 2012, youth who leave care at age 16 or older to positive permanency of adoption, kinship with relatives and/or guardianship will be eligible for Education and Training Vouchers for educational or vocational purposes only.

The Foster Care Manual, Section 832.01.01, Transition Planning Prior to Emancipation, has been revised to include the following federal requirement (P.L. 112-34):

- Each youth age 16 and older in foster care must receive a copy of any consumer credit report each year until discharged from care and must be assisted in interpreting the credit report and resolving any inaccuracies. A copy of any report received is given to the youth and a copy is kept in the case file.

A transition plan is required to be developed within 90 days of the youth's 17th birthday and must be reviewed 90 days prior to the youth's 18th birthday. The caseworker must make monthly face-to-face contact with all youth who

exit care and continue to receive any IL funding, except that face-to-face contact may be quarterly for youth living in college housing.

Accomplishments and Progress in Seven Purpose Areas

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is a federally mandated data collection for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and is used to track the independent living services and supports provided to youth in foster care. In August of 2011, South Carolina was recognized by ACF as being a leading state in NYTD reporting of both the survey and the services. The SC NYTD team was invited to present its reporting process at the August 2011 Independent Living Conference held in Washington, DC.

Effective January 1, 2012, the SC NYTD Advisory Panel, consisting of a maximum of 10 youth in foster care or previously in foster care (17 years or older) from the State of South Carolina, will provide advice about NYTD, the surveys, and IL services offered to youth in foster care. Members of the panel will also be invited to participate in discussions and presentations at state and national conferences, as needed (including the National NYTD Technical Assistance Meeting). The SC NYTD Advisory Panel will meet quarterly at the University of South Carolina and is facilitated by the SC NYTD research director and SC NYTD project coordinator from the USC Center for Child and Family Studies.

The overall purpose of the South Carolina IL Program is to provide the developmental skills necessary for foster youth to live healthy, productive, self-sufficient and responsible adult lives. The program's overall goal is to provide foster youth with opportunities to learn needed independent living skills and increase the likelihood of successful transition from the foster care system. Positive outcomes are more likely to occur if youth are supported in achieving the following basic premises of positive youth development:

- Identifying interests
- Developing skills
- Experiencing competence
- Gaining a sense of self-worth
- Having a voice in one's life – empowerment

Purpose 1: Help youth transition to self-sufficiency

Each foster youth 13 and older must have independent living goals as a part of their case plan, regardless of the permanency plan. Youth in foster care, ages 13 and older, are to complete an annual life skills assessment. The assessment now required by SCDSS is the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA). The ACLSA provides an individual evaluation of the youth's skill levels and the services needed to improve the youth's skills, resulting in goals in the case plan.

Daily Living Skills services funded through the Chafee IL Program to promote independence by teaching social skills and other life skills include the following:

- Life skills classes
- Mentoring services/expenses
- Esteem building activities that are connected with the youth's school or employment
- Summer camps that are school sponsored and required related to a youth's participation in such activities as ROTC, band, chorus, cheerleading or team sports.

For FY 2011-2012, other community camps will be considered for funding that directly relate to building connections and sustaining lifelong relationships such as Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, camps associated with leadership and/or religious affiliations.

The agency and the SCFPA partnered to develop and grow independent living groups for youth in foster care. To contribute to measurable outcomes, the association's five-year goal is for youth throughout South Carolina to have access to an IL group. Youth in (22) counties are now served and a youth group for one (1) additional county is in formation. Five of the state's counties are targeted in the next fiscal year. Youth groups are created to support the development of the following life skills:

- Provide opportunities to learn and practice independent living skills
- Provide support for post-secondary education
- Provide support for postsecondary education career planning
- Provide career preparation training and support, including development of a portfolio documenting experiences and skills that can be used in applying for postsecondary education programs or in career planning
- Provide training to develop and enhance budgeting and financial management skills
- Provide health education and risk-reduction training
- Provide housing and home-maintenance preparation and training
- Enhance social skills development by offering opportunities for youth to learn and practice appropriate communication skills, negotiation and compromise, making friends, and behaving responsibly
- Improve such leadership skills as decision-making, problem solving, conflict resolution, goal setting, and working with others
- Normalize the foster care experience by providing a safe haven for youth to vent frustrations and examine gaps in service and support in the foster care system
- Provide an opportunity for youth to serve in leadership roles, take initiative in their own lives, and envision a pathway to independence
- Provide an opportunity for youth to be of assistance to other youth and to the foster care community

Purpose 2. Help youth receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment

IL staff continued to emphasize the agency directive in making referrals of youth who either enter the 11th grade or who reach age 17 to the local Workforce Investment Agency (WIA) One Stop Centers for orientation services. Youth are eligible to receive such services as job readiness, career interest assessments, employment assistance, job placement, and access to the Work Keys Program through the local One Stop Centers.

The IL program provides or obtains limited support services to include the following services needed by youth to obtain or maintain employment:

- Apprenticeship Programs if available
- Access to employment (transportation – time limited)
- Certification courses (such as electronic, plumbing, first aid, life guarding, etc.)
- Time limited child care
- Interview clothing
- Initial supply of work uniforms & footwear
- Car repair (if older youth has a personal car that is needed to access employment or education)
- Job skills training classes that relate to the youth's goals

- Vocational equipment
- Birth certificate necessary for employment
- Summer job opportunities
- Licenses/certification fees
- Job mentor as available
- Bicycles used for transportation to work or education

For FY 2011-2012, a provision to fund leadership programs/camps that will provide youth with opportunities to develop work force training and skills was added. Additionally, funding for professional attire for work/school is being provided to youth who are eligible for Chafee funding.

Purpose 3. Help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions

Education is an integral part of becoming self-sufficient. An Education Subcommittee of the Independent Living Advisory Committee was implemented to determine ways to increase the graduation rate. The Committee continues to assess the services needed to support youth educational goals.

Examples of Chafee funded Education Support Services and Supplies needed to meet a youth's educational goals include the following:

- Tutoring – up to \$1,000 yearly
- Summer school to retake a class or to accelerate studies
- Books and supplies for specialized classes such as lab fees, special calculators, uniforms for classes such as cosmetology, nursing, etc.
- Expenses for school sponsored educational field trips
- Birth certificate necessary for school
- Senior expenses (with capped category amounts)
- Special recognition – funds for tuition, uniforms or other items needed to recognize
- and develop special achievements or talents of youth
- Pre-college expenses such as college applications and SAT/ACT fees

Adult Education services help the youth to attain a high school diploma or its equivalent, or youth may receive funding assistance to complete supplemental coursework to achieve goals include the following:

- Adult education
- GED programs
- Alternative educational schools
- Non-ETV college coursework
- Non-ETV vocational coursework

As an incentive to encourage youth to graduate from high school and to pursue further education, a graduate award is presented upon graduation. The award for high school students is currently \$100 whether by diploma, certificate or GED. Vocational and technical school graduates are eligible for a \$200 award, and college graduates are eligible for a \$250 award.

Upon graduation, many youth are eligible to receive scholarships and federal grants based on high school academic performance. Youth in foster care have priority status for the state's need-based grant. As a means of tracking and

intervention, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and SCDSS formed a partnership. Youth entering post-secondary education complete a waiver form on the Commission website. The waiver requests permission to track the youth's personal demographics, institution selection, academic performance and financial information. The tracking allows the Commission to ensure that eligible foster youth attending a public institution are identified as eligible to receive financial aid assistance through the SC need-based grant.

Youth interested in furthering education through college, technical school or other training programs, have been provided the following assistance within funding guidelines:

- An annual college scholarship/ ETV Funds up to \$5000
- College Dorm Shower (provided by SC Foster Parents Association)
- Financial aid resource materials
- Educational information for youth, staff and providers regarding higher education opportunities
- Academic camps
- Workshops and the publication, True Independence, purchased through the National
- Resource Center for Youth Services

Purpose 4. Provide personal and emotional support to youth aging out of foster care through mentors and the promotion of interaction with dedicated adults

Independent Living is viewed within the context of permanence and as an adjunct to permanency planning and not as an alternate permanent plan. Current policy stipulates that Independent Living services are concurrently provided with continuing efforts to achieve return to parents, relative placement or adoption. Emphasis continues to be placed on identifying dedicated adults who will serve as ongoing connections to youth as they transition from care.

In keeping with implementation of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, the agency developed policy outlining transitioning planning with all youth age 17 and up. A transition plan is to be developed with each youth, including services necessary for transition from care at age 18. Youth are to be assisted in identifying family and permanent connections to invite to the planning sessions for an ongoing system of support beginning at age 17 and continuing until the youth exits from care.

While mentor relationships can exist at an informal level, formal mentor relationships continue to be funded through services of the Independent Living Program for mentors who are identified to meet the needs of individual youth, thus increasing self-esteem and/or achieving goals through the support of the mentoring relationship. County and regional offices match mentors with mentees and develop life skills learning plans by accessing the Casey Life Skills Guidebook. Relationships are supported by assisting with expenses of identified activities.

Purpose 5. Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to ensure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition into adulthood.

Aftercare services have been developed through input from staff, providers, youth surveys, focus groups, interviews, and youth self-identified needs. When youth emancipate from the foster care system, they are eligible to receive supportive Aftercare services up to age 21. If an individual leaves the system at or after age 18, they are also eligible to apply for an Education and Training Voucher (ETV) until the age of 21 and until age 23 if enrolled at age 21 and already receiving ETV.

Housing and transition expenses are related to establishing a residence after becoming age 18. Youth are expected to be employed or working on education. The agency has assisted with rental deposits, furniture stipends, utility deposits, and limited rental housing payments. Basic household necessities through a household or dorm room shower are provided through the Foster Parents Association.

Youth have the option to request a Voluntary Aftercare Placement Agreement with the agency upon reaching age 18 if they have no other alternative permanent option available; are involved in further education, job skills program or new employment, or due to a disabling condition. Youth may also request a Voluntary Aftercare Placement Agreement within twelve (12) months after their emancipation up to age 21, dependent upon placement availability and status with legal justice system. Otherwise, youth who emancipate from care on or after their 18th birthday may return to the agency and complete a P.A.T.T.Y. interview for assistance at any point until their 21st birthday without re-entering the system.

Youth who are in care at age 18 and have current Medicaid eligibility retain their Medicaid coverage up to age 21. There is no application or reapplication process that the youth must complete.

Purpose 6. Make available vouchers for education and training, including post-secondary education, to youth who have aged out of foster care.

Independent Living coordinators have promoted the ETV program through technical assistance visits, statewide training and distribution of information to SCDSS offices, foster parent association meetings, community organizations, youth groups, the youth conference, Independent Living Advisory Committee, and the State Youth Advisory Committee. The booklet, Pathways to success, Chafee Independent Living Program and Educational and Training Voucher Program (ETV), is distributed to youth, caretakers and providers. The revised edition, June 2012, will be introduced at the 2012 IL Pathways Training Conference.

Education and Training Vouchers have been provided for foster youth pursuing post-secondary education in an approved educational program. Only youth in the custody of the Department of Social Services with independent living goals as a part of the case plan, youth who were in custody of SCDSS at 18 years of age, and youth adopted or exit to kinship/guardianship on or after the 16th birthday, are eligible for these funds. Youth are eligible to apply for ETV funds as long as he/she is in college and has not reached the age of 21. Youth are eligible until age 23 if they are enrolled in a post-secondary education at age 21, already receiving ETV funds, and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program. Youth are awarded up to \$5,000 per year through the Education and Training Voucher Program.

Purpose 7. Provide to youth who, after attaining 16 years of age, have left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption.

Youth who reach age 16 in foster care and leave care due to adoption or kinship/guardianship will be eligible for the following CFCIP education services:

- Tutoring – up to \$1,000 yearly
- Summer school to retake a class or to accelerate studies
- Books and supplies for specialized classes such as lab fees, special calculators, uniforms for classes such as cosmetology, nursing, etc.
- Expenses for school sponsored educational field trips

- Birth certificate necessary for school
- Senior expenses (with capped category amounts)

National Youth in Transition Database

The NYTD population includes all youth receiving Independent Living services. The NYTD baseline population includes all youth in SCDSS foster care who turned 17 between October 1, 2010, and September 30, 2011. The NYTD follow-up population includes all youth who completed at least one answer on the NYTD survey. Data collection for the 19-year-old follow-up population will begin on October 1, 2012 and continue until September 30, 2013. Youth are required to be surveyed regardless of foster care status and residency location throughout the United States.

The agency contracted with the Center for Child and Family Studies (CCFS) in the College of Social Work at the University of South Carolina (USC) to conduct the data collection for the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) outcome measures which will be used to assess States' performance in operating their independent living programs. The NYTD data collection began on October 1, 2010. The first reporting period ended on March 31, 2011. The second reporting period ended on September 30, 2011.

The CCFS NYTD Team developed a protocol for entering NYTD data and ensuring accuracy of data entry. The state NYTD research director and state NYTD coordinator held internal data tracking meetings on a weekly basis to discuss issues related to locating and surveying specific youth, follow up of return of surveys, and ongoing clarifications with SCDSS staff and Administration for Children and Families (ACF) NYTD staff. Daily phone calls and email communication with youth, group home staff, foster parents, caseworkers, counselors and therapists were made by CCFS NYTD staff to ensure that each youth in the baseline population received a birthday card and information letter, and received, completed, and returned a survey. This intensive communication with caseworkers, foster parents, and group home staff on a daily basis served to educate stakeholders about NYTD and strengthen partnerships. Daily communication with caseworkers was used to obtain the most recent information on youth in the baseline population that was not captured in CAPSS. This process assisted in the tracking and management of youth in the baseline population. An "UPDATE" folder for SCDSS was created to provide updated contact information about youth that the CCFS NYTD Team received from caseworkers or other parties that was not captured in CAPSS. This information was provided in the CCFS-SCDSS shared electronic folder and was updated on a case-by-case basis.

CCFS received baseline population estimate files on a daily and weekly basis from SCDSS. Weekly estimate files were reviewed, documented, analyzed and entered into CCFS internal data tracking system. The CCFS internal data collection system was monitored, assessed, and updated on a daily basis. Completed surveys were tracked and recorded on a daily basis. The outcomes data were inputted into the data information management system and submitted to SCDSS on a monthly basis. The multi-phase data collection procedure involves delivery of information forms to youth and their providers three weeks before their 17th birthday, phone calls to youth two weeks before their 17th birthday, administration of federal and supplementary survey on a youth's 17th birthday, survey follow-up ten days after a youth's birthday, and delivery of a \$50 gift card and the NYTD Transition Resource Kit upon receipt of a youth's survey.

The NYTD federal survey includes six outcome measures: financial self-sufficiency, experience with homelessness, educational attainment, positive connections with adults, high-risk behavior, and access to health insurance. The CCFS NYTD Team developed a supplementary survey that is an extension of the NYTD survey. The additional

survey further enhances the understanding of a youth's transition by examining five additional outcome areas: educational attainment; relational connections and permanency; social support; concerns; and personal aspirations. In March 2011, IRB and SCDSS approval was granted and the supplemental survey was incorporated into the data collection system.

Goals for FFY 2013 involve tracking, locating, and surveying all youth in the NYTD 19-year-old follow-up population, and providing a \$75 gift card for those completing the NYTD survey.

NYTD services are being tracked through an ongoing report through CAPSS and monitored monthly. A booklet was developed and distributed statewide (SCDSS 30255) that describes the NYTD services and categories. A provider form (SCDSS 30254) was developed and distributed to providers to record services on a monthly basis for ease in tracking. Case managers are to use the information on the form to enter the services into CAPSS on a monthly basis. The award letter for funded services was amended to include the NYTD service category.

NYTD Accomplishments

South Carolina is recognized as a national leader in terms of survey methodology, youth-centered resources (e.g. NYTD website), youth outreach (SC NYTD Youth Voice and youth focus groups) and practice-centered training.

The SC NYTD website (www.NYTDstayconnected.com) also received national recognition. The website was designed specifically to meet the needs of youth in foster care making decisions about their futures and then later as youth begin their adult lives with continuing education, finding work, and/or finding a place to live. The SC NYTD Team at CCFS has reviewed, assessed, researched, and included valuable and relevant resources on the SC NYTD website. These include, but are not limited to, SC high school diploma requirements, scholarships, higher education website links, county directories, hotlines, NYTD FAQs, etc. The website offers an opportunity for youth to stay connected with the Center and SCDSS staff members who are interested in assisting them. South Carolina considers the data collection to not only serve as a means to drive future program development but to also serve in the present as a means of intervention and maintaining contact with youth.

The 2011 Independent Living Pathways to Success Training (formerly the IL Conference) was the NYTD Kick-Off. The CCFS NYTD Team was responsible for managing and developing the content and workshops for the IL/NYTD! Kick-Off. All workshops were based on the 14 NYTD Independent Living categories. Youth workshop attendance was tracked and recorded by the CCFS NYTD Team. The data was delivered to SCDSS to assist caseworkers in recording the June 2011 independent living services received by youth in SCDSS care.

Reporting the outcomes results to youth and engaging them in the recommendations process is a NYTD federal requirement. The SC NYTD Team at CCFS conducted workshops with youth in foster care throughout the state. During these workshops, the results of the federal and state outcomes data were disseminated to youth. The implications of the findings were discussed through focus groups to acquire an understanding of youth's interpretations of the data and suggestions for improvement and change.

Effective for FY 2012-2013, the NYTD Summer Leadership Grant will be awarded to youth who have demonstrated leadership through any one or more of the following activities: community outreach, mentorship, positive teambuilding, professional, personal, and/or spiritual growth and development. The scholarship will be awarded to youth in the summer and will be used towards Independent Living needs, as defined by the Chafee Independent Living

Program. Recipients of the award must be 17 to 20 years of age at the time the grant is awarded. The leadership grant will be awarded by a panel made up of agency and community partners.

Training

The theme of the 2011 Independent Living Pathways to Success Training (formerly the IL Conference) was NYTD, National Youth in Transition Database. This conference targeted youth in foster care ages 15 to 21, providers and case managers. Attendance was recorded at approximately 900 participants.

The SCDSS/CCFS NYTD Team was responsible for managing and developing the content and workshops for the IL/NYTD Kick-Off. All workshops were based on the fourteen NYTD Independent Living categories. The all-day workshop was held at the Columbia Conference Center; adults were awarded up to 4.5 CEUs for attending sessions. Workshop attendance of youth was tracked and recorded by the CCFS and an electronic file was uploaded into the state CAPSS system for services tracking.

<p>Description: IL/NYTD Kick-Off Annual Pathways to Success Training: Education, Employment & Opportunity June 17, 2011 – Columbia, SC</p> <p>The Independent Living Program, with USC, sponsored a one-day NYTD! Kick-Off for youth ages 15-21 in foster care, foster care caseworkers, IFCCS and Regional Adoption supervisors and case managers, foster parents, and group home providers. The Pathways to Success Training: Encouraging Education, Employment and Opportunity, was entitled NYTD Kick-Off for the 2011 annual event for the National Youth in Transition Database. Through NYTD, the federal government is requiring all states provide services and to gather information about the experiences of youth in care when they turn 17, again when they turn 19, and again at age 21. The NYTD-Kick-Off was designed to promote positive youth development and life skills development.</p>						
<p>Funding source Chafee IL -- 93.98%, Non-Federal -- 6.02%</p>						
<p>Who was the audience and # of attendees</p> <table> <tr> <td>Youth</td> <td>367</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adult</td> <td>523</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL:</td> <td>890</td> </tr> </table>	Youth	367	Adult	523	TOTAL:	890
Youth	367					
Adult	523					
TOTAL:	890					

Independent Living/ NYTD Training

Event: Ongoing Independent Living/NYTD Training

Description of Curriculum: The purpose of this training is to provide information about the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act and its impact on youth in foster care between the ages of 13 and 21, and to provide an understanding of how the Chafee Independent Living Program is implemented in South Carolina. The curriculum includes information about the Chafee legislation as well as research and current trends relevant to youth who are in care and who have emancipated from foster care after age 18. We discuss the importance of engaging the youth in collaborative case planning, helping them to gain a feeling of confidence and empowerment by using a Positive Youth Development approach. In addition we discuss the federal legislations regarding youth in transition, the importance of effective transition planning, and the need for strong social and emotional supports through lasting connections with adults who will help the youth to develop and implement their individualized transition plans. Finally, we discuss the importance of the National Youth in Transition Database, its impact on youth in South Carolina and other states, and the importance of accurate and timely data collection in order to develop programs and policies that promote successful transition to adulthood.

Presenters:

Terri D. Pope, MSW

Mrs. Pope is the SCDSS Independent Living Program coordinator for the SC Chafee Independent Living Program and NYTD Services Specialist. She has a BSW in Social Work from Columbia College and a Masters of Social Work from the University of South Carolina.

Erica Bowman, M. Ed.

Ms. Bowman is the SCDSS Independent Living Program coordinator for SC Chafee Independent Living Program and is the Foster Youth Associations Specialist. She received her Bachelor's of Science in Criminal Justice from South Carolina State University and a Masters of Education from Troy State University.

This training was conducted in county and regional offices for foster care case managers and supervisors and adoption workers; it was conducted at state conferences for group care providers, foster parents and CASAs and guardians ad litem. The number trained was 473 plus an estimated 180 for a total of 653.

NYTD Technical Assistance

The state NYTD research director and project coordinator consulted with the Administration for Children and Families about NYTD federal regulations and rules on a monthly basis. The state NYTD research director provided the workshop, *Strategies for Improving Your State's NYTD Youth Outcome Survey Instrument and Methodology*, at the 2011 National Youth in Transition Database national technical assistance meeting.

The SC NYTD Team at CCFS provides regular consultation to state and federal government regarding survey methodology. Financial support will be needed for the CCFS NYTD Team to continue providing consultation at county, state, and national levels.

Medicaid Coverage for Former Foster Youth Age 18-20

Information is to be provided to youth regarding continued Medicaid eligibility and how to maintain this coverage until 21 years of age, including information about Medicaid providers in the community. If youth return for P.A.T.T.Y. Aftercare services after emancipating from foster care and do not have Medicaid coverage, they are advised they are still eligible by virtue of having been in foster care at age 18. Continuance of Medicaid, however, is contingent on continued funding by the legislature. The staff member who oversees the Medicaid Program for the SC Department of Health and Human Services serves on the Independent Living Advisory Committee and provides updates to the committee and the IL Program.

Indian Tribe Consultation

A representative from the Catawba Indian Nation has participated in the IL Advisory Committee, and the tribe has worked very hard this year on IL services and adoptions, although they do not administer the program. Any tribal youth are case managed by a county office with the tribe being a party if they choose to intervene.

The Catawba Nation has been advised that funding for mentors of Indian heritage is available through the Independent Living Program. The Catawba Nation and the agency will work together to provide post-foster care services for Indian children emancipating from foster care after reaching age 18. The Catawba Nation social worker and Department staff have agreed that self-identification of older youth be further addressed in collaborations with Catawba Nation to ensure that youth fully realize the benefits that they are entitled to receive through the Catawba Nation such as scholarships, housing and medical services. A representative of the Catawba Nation is the contact for youth mentor support and can be reached through contacting the Catawba Nation office.

XIX. STATISTICAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Education and Training Vouchers

The South Carolina Department of Social Services is the designated state agency that administers, supervises and oversees the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program. County and IFC&CS offices and other approved providers throughout the state prepare ETV applications with youth (youth signature is required before approval of any application) and submit applications to Independent Living staff located at central office. The applications are reviewed to ensure that the total amount of educational assistance to a youth under this and any other Federal assistance program does not exceed the total cost of attendance and to avoid duplication of benefits under this and any other Federal assistance program. The funding application is then submitted to the SCDSS Finance Department. The Independent Living Program maintains a database on youth in college and the SCDSS Finance Department manages funds and files federal and state reports. The SC Commission on Higher Education works in partnership with the agency in tracking youth in college that are receiving the state's need-based grant.

Determining Eligibility for Benefits and Services

Chafee Funds: Only youth, ages 13 – 21, in SCDSS foster care who have independent living as part of their case plan, or who have signed an Aftercare Voluntary Placement Agreement, are eligible for Chafee funds. There are three exceptions. Youth are eligible for Chafee funds that left the foster care system after reaching age 18 and are in need of independent living services before reaching age 21. Youth are also eligible that aged out of care in other states at age 18 (subject to verification) and moved to SC for residency or for educational purposes. Youth who were adopted or left care to kinship/guardianship at age 16 are eligible for certain Chafee funds.

- The goal for which the funds are to be used and the plan for meeting the goal;
- Whether the funds are a onetime expense that will lead to greater independence for the youth, and the cost.

Notation 1: CFCIP funds are supplemental funds that are designed to provide services related to independent living preparation and to finance needs that cannot be funded elsewhere. If similar services are available within the community, these resources must first be requested.

Notation 2: The amount of money received by recipients can vary. Guidelines have been established, but special circumstances may warrant staffing and consideration.

ETV Funds: Only youth in the custody of the Department of Social Services with independent living as part of the case plan or youth who were in the custody of SCDSS at 18 years of age are eligible for ETV funds as long as they are in college and have not reached the age of 21, even if they are not in an Aftercare placement. Youth are eligible until age 23 if they are enrolled in post-secondary education and already participating in the ETV program. If a foster youth was adopted or exited care to kinship/guardianship on or after his 16th birthday, then they are eligible for ETV funds. The following other factors may be considered in determining ETV eligibility: (1) Acceptance to a technical school, college, university, or other program that meets the ETV criteria; (2) Students who demonstrate academic achievement or show a marked improvement in educational functioning, and (3) the long term goal and plan for meeting that goal.

Youth from other states are to apply for ETV funds from their state of origin. Youth who are undocumented aliens are ineligible for ETV services.

Annual Reporting of State Education and Training Vouchers Awarded

	Total ETVs Awarded	Number of New ETVs
<u>Final Number:</u> 2010-2011 School Year (July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011)	134	108
2011-2012 School Year* (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)	159	83

Inter-Country Adoptions

The State serves adoptive parents, children from other countries, the State Department, Citizenship and Immigration Services. The State has served over 179 families and an estimated 300 children within the last year with pre-adoptive placements.

No children have had their placements disrupted or dissolved from inter-country adoptions.

The ICPC Unit of SCDSS reviews international studies before they are submitted to Citizen and Immigration Services or Homeland Security. As of July 2011, the names of these individuals from these home studies are being entered into the CAPSS systems as prospective adoptive parents who are submitting home studies for review to SCDSS and the State Department; and adoption agencies are being identified. When there is a report of neglect or abuse, the counties will be able to identify the home as an adoptive placement and ask appropriate questions in reference to the adoption and ascertain the plans for the child and the reasons for the disruption or dissolution. The most common reason for disruptions and dissolution are children acting out behaviorally and the families being unable to cope or get services they need. The CAPSS system does not presently have appropriate coding or a way to link this information. That is an improvement that is being requested.

SCDSS continues to improve the quality of home studies, and the agency has been recognized as the best in the nation by Citizenship and International Services.

Child Welfare Workforce

The SCDSS does not have an active recruitment program for recruiting workers for human services. Most employees search and apply for the positions after they have worked with other state agencies and/or completed social work or related bachelor's programs and are interested in working with families and children. The following positions and descriptions are currently in child welfare. Most positions require a bachelor's degree and experience in child welfare or related fields. The supervisory, state and regional positions require a bachelor's with three years of experience or a master's degree in social work or a related field.

Qualifications and Training

Following are education qualifications and training requirements for entry and advancement:

- GA40- Human Services Specialist II Band 4C

- Bachelor's degree and one year of experience in clerical, administrative, social work, correctional, business administration or general business.
- GA50 - Human Services Coordinator I Band 5
- GA60- Human Services Coordinator II Band 6
- GA70- Human Services Coordinator III Band 7
 - Master's degree and one year of professional experience in human services or social services programs. A bachelor's degree and experience in social services programs may be substituted for all or part of the requirements (a degree in social work, social welfare or behavioral science may substitute for one year experience).

The following table presents education levels of current casework staff.

Position	College/ University	K-12 School	Technical School/ College	Total
Human Services Specialist II	297	1	43	341
Human Services Coordinator I	71	1	5	77
Human Services Coordinator II	24	0	0	24
Total	392	2	48	442

All child welfare workers are required to successfully complete a six-week basic training through University of South Carolina that focuses on working with children, families, courts and providers. After the basic they attend a Trial Prep course and obtain 10 additional hours of training. All trainings ensure competencies are identified in each module. The workers are required to take a pre-test and then posttest to test their competencies in each area. Advanced and Intermediate trainings are offered through many partners in South Carolina so to enhance the workers' and supervisors' knowledge in their job. Each certified worker/supervisor is required to obtain 20 additional hours each year in child welfare in order to remain certified.

Child Welfare Position Descriptions

Human Services II – Income range: \$25,627 to \$47,413

- Conduct intake, screenings, investigations, and assessment of reported child abuse/neglect, or exploitation cases within the time frames established by agency policy and law. Determines validity of such reports and investigation circumstances surrounding the alleged child neglect and/or abuse.
- Remove children from abusive or neglectful homes and place them in protective environment. Assist law enforcement and Family Court in emergency removal of children and place in a protective environment.
- Provide permanency planning services to children in a licensed foster care home or licensed facility.
- Provide continuous family assessment to carry out the family service intervention plan by monitoring services to the family of origin, foster children and foster parents or placement providers.
- Participate in legal proceedings as necessary, which may include removal of children intervention, judicial reviews, permanency planning hearing and contempt hearings in compliance with applicable laws, policies, and regulations.
- Prepare necessary summaries, home studies, home studies, judicial reviews, petitions and make recommendations as needed. Represent the agency in Court which may include providing testimony.

- Maintain case records, case narrative recording written and electronically (into agency designated system for documentation purpose as required by agency policy in a timely and accurate manner.
- Participate in agency and professional staffing on cases as required. Participate in staffing to determine the best possible plan for children in agency care.
- Develop comprehensive case plan to include counseling, referrals for foster children, families or origin and foster families or alternative placements as appropriate.
- Complete agency reports as required.
- Perform intake on after hours on call duties and respond to after hour calls as required.
- Perform Red Cross shelter duty or other emergency shelter duty/services as directed.
- Acts as a liaison for the Human Services Program in the community; handles complaints of clients and community stakeholders.
- Provide casework consultation to supervisors and staff on all cases; provide direction and supervision in personnel matters, casework procedures and completes performance evaluations for Human Service Supervisors.
- Monitors sample of case records to ensure compliance with agency policies and procedures and quality service delivery.

Human Service Coordinator I – Income range: \$31,182 to \$57,695 (supervisor, regional or state office level worker)

- Provides intensive case management services to a caseload of emotionally disturbed foster children to ensure appropriate therapeutic interventions. Ensures that a permanent plan is developed for each child; participates in court and Foster Care Review Board hearings as required by state statute and agency policy. Monitors parental compliance with their Parent Treatment Plan.
- Assumes a leadership role in the preparation of a comprehensive, individualized service/treatment plan for each child in collaboration with an inter-disciplinary team of professionals from such areas as education, medicine, psychology, juvenile justice, legal, etc. Monitors the effectiveness of treatment interventions and develops creative approaches if non-traditional methods fall.
- Develops and maintains close working relationships with the client, family, other agencies and all service providers to ensure the appropriate delivery of services.
- Maintains case records on client, documenting contacts, service activities and other required information within agency case management standards and guidelines.

Human Service Coordinator II – Income range: \$37,945 to \$70,204 (supervisor)

- Coordinates, supervises and evaluates the implementation of Child Protective Services, Foster Care, Foster Home Licensing and Adult Protective Services.
- Provides leadership and direction to the staff, ensuring that policies of all program areas are interpreted correctly and adhere to by all subordinates.
- Ensures timely referral of cases of Legal/Adoption staffing's to ensure timely consideration of TPR/Adoptions.
- Gathers and analyzes data from program performance measures and implements action plans as necessary to achieve program outcomes, establishes goals for service delivery to assure that agency is making progress in meeting Federal Standards for program areas for subordinates.
- Consult with State Office/Regional personnel regarding programs, policies, changes and provide them with feedback from county level

Performance Appraisal System

The Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) appraisal document is officially maintained in the employee's personnel file. All performance appraisals shall be made in writing by the employee's supervisor (the rater) who has direct experience or knowledge of the work being performed. The appraisal shall be reviewed by the next higher level supervisor (the reviewer), unless the rater is the agency head, prior to the appraisal being discussed with the employee. The reviewer may attach additional comments to the appraisal, where the reviewer may take exception to any of the rater's appraisal points. However, the reviewer may not change the appraisal completed by the rater unless it is a County Director or Regional Manager's appraisal.

Whenever an employee's job responsibilities change significantly, the appraisal document should be revised to reflect the changes. The final appraisal shall bear the signature of the rater, the reviewer, and the employee. If any party refuses to sign the appraisal, a notation shall be made on the performance appraisal of this refusal. A witness (another supervisor other than the rater or reviewer) should sign on the bottom of the front page to acknowledge that the party refused to sign the appraisal.

The Human Resources Management Division will provide each county or division a listing, four to six weeks in advance, of employees who are due an annual performance appraisal. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the supervisors to know when appraisals are due on each of their employees and to plan their schedules accordingly.

Supervisors and reviewing supervisors are responsible for ensuring that their employees' evaluations are completed in advance. This includes the preparation of the employee's planning stage. These are mandatory duties of supervisors and should be included as an essential element on each supervisor's EPMS. Supervisors should ensure that an internal procedure is established to evaluate employees under their supervision in a timely manner.

All covered employees shall be given an annual appraisal no more than ninety (90) calendar days prior to the employee's official review date. The official review date marks the beginning of a new review period. If an employee does not receive an appraisal prior to the official review date, the employee shall receive a "successful" rating by default. A covered employee may not be issued an overall "unsuccessful" appraisal at any time during the annual review period without following the "Substandard Performance Process."

All performance appraisals shall become a permanent part of the employee's official personnel file. The supervisor shall furnish the employee with a copy of the performance appraisal and copies of all pertinent attachments. The EPMS, when used properly, is an effective management tool for communicating duties, evaluating performance, and encouraging improvement. As a result, the EPMS can have a dramatic impact on the overall quality of care and service provided by DSS.

The purposes of the Employee Performance Management System are:

1. To provide an accurate, objective, and constructive method to evaluate employees performance;
2. To improve the work performance of employees in order to enhance efficiency and productivity for the South Carolina Department of Social Services;
3. To assist management in assigning work and delegating responsibilities based on a mutual understanding of the employee's skills, abilities and the requirements of the job;
4. To encourage continued growth and development of all employees;
5. To maintain a documented history of the employee's performance in order to support recommendations for performance pay increases, promotions, reassignments, transfers, demotions, and dismissals;
6. To provide for a formal method of communication between supervisors and employees; and

7. To provide a written agreement between the employee and DSS identifying specific job duties, performance characteristics, and objectives on which the employee will be appraised.

The SCDSS Human Resources Division, in collaboration with the Human Services Division, will be working to identify turnover concerns and analyze workforce strengths and areas needing improvement through the utilization of EPMS. SCDSS is making a concerted effort to utilize the tools to enhance support for the workforce in the coming year.

Juvenile Justice Transfers

The CAPSS system does not track transfers of Foster Children coming from and going to the Juvenile Justice system, as the child remains in the custody of SCDSS.

XX. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The CFS 101, Parts I, II, III, is submitted as an appendix to this report. The additional historical information requested follows:

- The amount spent for child care, foster care and adoption assistance payments in 2005 was \$951,924.
- The amount of state expenditures of non-federal funds for foster care maintenance payments for 2005 was \$317,308.
- South Carolina's 1992 base year amount for state and local share expenditures were \$713,000, while 2010's amount was \$2,192,383.