

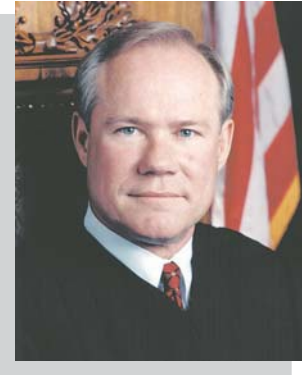


# Citizen Foster Care Review Board

Working for Kentucky's Future ...  
Our Children



## 2004 ANNUAL REPORT



**T**here are more than 500,000 children in our nation's foster care system. More than 6,400 of these children reside in Kentucky. One of the most important ways the Kentucky Court of Justice responds to the needs of children in foster care is through its support of the 142 Citizen Foster Care Review Boards located throughout the state.

Every year Citizen Foster Care Review Boards conduct thousands of case reviews in order to advocate for the safety, permanency and well-being of children making their way through our court system. In the past year alone, the boards set an all-time record by conducting 23,133 case reviews of children in out-of-home care. In doing so, these boards provided an invaluable contribution to youth in our foster care system.

I extend my appreciation to the hundreds of volunteers who contribute their time and energy to Kentucky's children.

*Joseph E. Lambert*  
*Chief Justice of Kentucky*

# **FY 2004 CFCRB Annual Report**

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*From the Manager's Perspective:*

## Highlights and Summary FY 2004

*Kevin Smalley*

*Manager, Division of Dependent Children's Services  
Administrative Office of the Courts*

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the 2004 Annual Report of the Citizen Foster Care Review Boards. I believe this report provides a clear picture of how children are faring in Kentucky's foster care system and showcases the tremendous dedication the 746 volunteer reviewers have for Kentucky's children.

It has been a record-breaking year for the Citizen Foster Care Review Boards. During fiscal year 2004, CFCRB volunteers set an all-time record by conducting 23,133 case reviews of 8,333 individual children in Kentucky's foster care system. I applaud this remarkable effort.

I invite you to read this entire report as it presents an in-depth look at the Citizen Foster Care Review Boards organization and the children making their way through Kentucky's foster care system. Nevertheless, I would like to highlight what I believe are the significant findings of 2004:

- Since 1996 there has been a 105 percent increase in the number of reviews conducted by Citizen Foster Care Review Boards.
- There are more than 500,000 children in foster care in the United States; 6,455 of these children currently reside in Kentucky.
- Of the children in foster care, 79 percent are white, 18.4 percent are African-American and the remaining 2.6 percent are other races.
- African-American youth are disproportionately represented in our foster care system. They make up just 9 percent of Kentucky's

juvenile population yet are 18.4 percent of all children reviewed the past year.

- The average length of time children spend in foster care in Kentucky has decreased by seven months in the past four years.
- There has been a reduction in the number of active children who have been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months. In 2002, more than 70 percent of active children had been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months and this year it was 61 percent. The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 requires that termination of parental rights petitions be filed on behalf of children who have been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months, unless certain conditions exist.
- In 2003, 16.1 percent of children exited care to finalized adoption in less than 24 months. This year it was 19 percent.
- Children exiting care through reunification are doing so more quickly. Last year the average length of time spent in foster care for children exiting care through reunification was 14.5 months. This year, children averaged 12.4 months in care prior to reunification.
- There has been a decrease in the average number of placements experienced by all children reviewed this year. Last year children experienced an average of four placements while in foster care and this year the average was 3.7 placements.

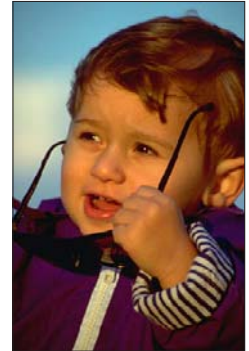
## FY 2004 Findings and Conclusions: State of the CFCRB

Citizen Foster Care Review Boards are required to conduct case reviews for every abused, neglected and dependent child committed to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services at least once every six months until a permanent placement is attained.

Copies of reviews become part of the child’s court record and Cabinet for Health and Family Services’ case file, and are used to disseminate case facts and the recommendations of the board to the judge assigned to the case.

During fiscal year 2004, Citizen Foster Care Review Board volunteers set a record by conducting 23,133 case reviews of 8,333 individual children in Kentucky’s foster care system.<sup>1</sup> CFCRB volunteers also conducted a record 1,106 board

meetings during the fiscal year. Volunteer reviewers expended tremendous time and energy to achieve these records. As a result, the Citizen Foster Care Review Boards program is stronger than it has ever been in its 22-year history.



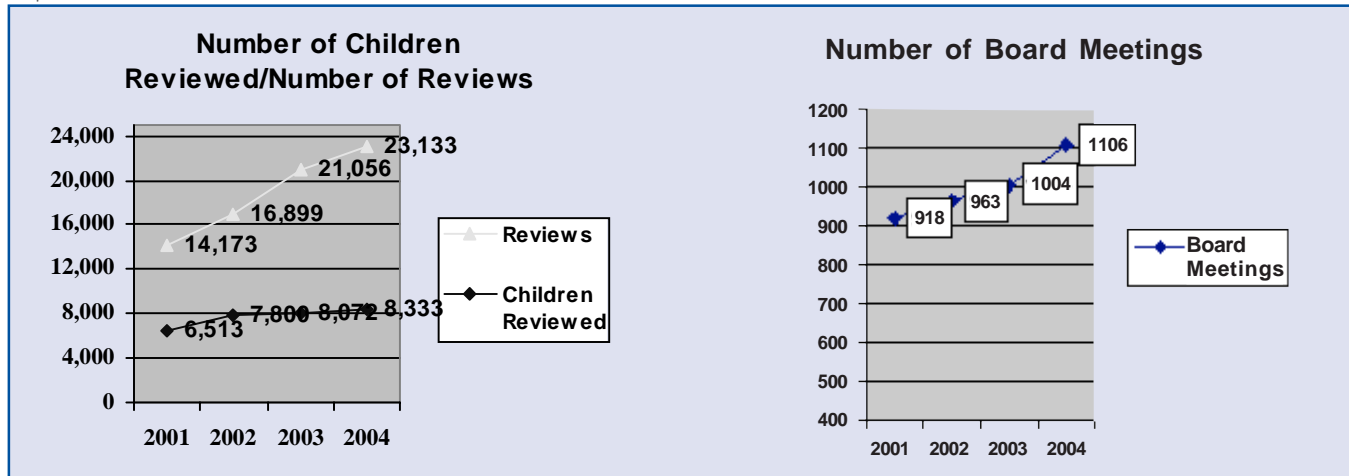
<sup>1</sup>A case review occurs when 1) findings, recommendations and comments pertaining to a child in foster care are provided to judges and the staff of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and/or 2) the status of a child in foster care, or his or her file is determined and reported to the AOC Central Office.

### Then and Now: An 8-Year Timeline

1996 Citizen Foster Care Review Boards	2004 Citizen Foster Care Review Boards	Percentage of Change
CFCRB volunteers conduct <b>11,301</b> reviews.	CFCRB volunteers conduct <b>23,133</b> reviews.	<b>105 percent</b> increase in the number of reviews.
CFCRB volunteers review <b>5,686</b> children.	CFCRB volunteers review <b>8,333</b> children.	<b>47 percent</b> increase in the number of children reviewed.
CFCRB volunteers conduct <b>753</b> board meetings.	CFCRB volunteers conduct <b>1,106</b> board meetings.	<b>47 percent</b> increase in the number of board meetings conducted.



## CFCRB Activity Highlights



- Active volunteers have served on Citizen Foster Care Review Boards for an average of five years.
- A total of 299 (40 percent) of volunteers have served on boards for five years or more and 100 (13 percent) have served for 10 years or more.
- 115 new volunteers were appointed during the fiscal year.
- The volunteer population is 82 percent female and 18 percent male.
- 291 (39 percent) of volunteers come from the professions of law, medicine, psychology, social work and education.<sup>2</sup>
- The average age of a volunteer is 47 and 60 volunteers are under the age of 30. Last year the average age of a volunteer was 50, with 46 volunteers under the age of 30.
- The volunteer base is 94 percent Caucasian and 16 percent African-American.
- A total of 249 files requested by local boards were not provided for review.

- Statistics indicate that board members are the most effective method of recruiting new volunteers. Thirty-two percent of new volunteers are most likely to hear about the CFCRB from existing volunteers. Newspaper articles and announcements are also effective. Twenty-six percent of new volunteers hear about the CFCRB through the newspaper.

<sup>2</sup> Kentucky statute specifies that when practical, at least two members of each review board should come from the professions of law, medicine, social work and education (KRS 620.190).

### What Is a Case Review?

Case reviews occur when:

1. Findings, recommendations and comments pertaining to a child in foster care are provided to judges and the staff of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and/or
2. The status of a child in foster care, or his or her file is determined and reported to the AOC Central Office.

## Citizen Foster Care Review Boards Activity Summary for Fiscal Year 2004

Board Name	# of Children Reviewed	# of Reviews	# of Board Meetings	Board Name	# of Children Reviewed	# of Reviews	# of Board Meetings
ADAIR/CASEY	43	64	4	JEFFERSON 10	38	93	12
ALLEN	30	70	6	JESSAMINE	75	222	10
ANDERSON	41	117	5	JOHNSON	51	87	5
BALLARD/CARLISLE	20	57	4	KENTON A	96	274	11
BARREN	103	211	10	KENTON B	136	341	10
BATH/MENIFEE	29	75	5	KENTON C	129	418	11
BELL	42	73	3	KENTON D	112	248	9
BOONE/GALLATIN	72	273	11	KENTON E	158	399	10
BOURBON	46	214	12	KNOTT	31	90	5
BOYD	146	478	12	KNOX	70	157	9
BOYLE	98	282	12	LARUE	33	73	4
BRACKEN/ROBERTSON	26	68	4	LAUREL	100	167	6
BREATHITT	26	64	4	LAUREL B	56	110	6
BRECKINRIDGE	30	69	6	LAWRENCE	41	175	9
BULLITT	82	186	7	LEE/OWSLEY	37	102	7
BUTLER	30	91	8	LESLIE	27	58	5
CALDWELL	12	28	4	LETCHER	44	123	6
CALLOWAY	72	144	6	LEWIS	11	54	5
CAMPBELL A	37	149	11	LINCOLN	58	149	7
CAMPBELL B	84	243	12	LIVINGSTON	6	15	4
CARTER	59	201	9	LOGAN	50	81	4
CHRISTIAN A	33	69	9	LYON	9	31	6
CHRISTIAN C	52	91	11	MADISON A	106	287	10
CLARK	40	135	8	MADISON B	64	196	12
CLAY	77	142	8	MAGOFFIN	24	52	4
CLINTON	17	28	4	MARION/WASHINGTON	18	46	4
CRITTENDEN	8	31	4	MARSHALL	62	135	5
CUMBERLAND	3	6	3	MARTIN	36	136	7
DAVISS A	114	213	11	MASON	22	66	4
DAVISS B	99	216	12	MCCRACKEN A	75	359	11
EDMONSON	31	66	5	MCCRACKEN B	95	419	11
ELLIOTT	17	70	6	MCCREARY	104	193	11
ESTILL	32	78	6	MCLEAN	19	44	6
FAYETTE A	89	305	12	MEADE	37	81	6
FAYETTE B	84	346	11	MERCER	63	154	10
FAYETTE C	88	290	11	METCALFE	14	44	5
FAYETTE D	84	277	11	MONROE	18	47	4
FAYETTE E	64	225	8	MONTGOMERY	15	36	4
FAYETTE F	78	281	11	MORGAN	25	71	6
FAYETTE G	78	345	11	MUHLENBERG	43	78	6
FAYETTE H	84	359	12	NELSON	38	100	6
FAYETTE I	91	292	10	NICHOLAS	9	27	4
FLEMING	36	78	4	OHIO	67	146	6
FLOYD	52	143	5	OLDHAM	25	104	11
FRANKLIN	136	357	10	OWEN/CARROLL	34	212	12
FULTON/HICKMAN	46	85	6	PERRY	133	356	12
GARRARD	17	60	6	PIKE	73	160	5
GRANT	23	86	10	POWELL	30	152	10
GRAVES	52	114	12	PULASKI	41	144	3
GRAYSON	75	262	10	PULASKI A	95	185	8
GREEN	18	43	5	PULASKI B	86	180	8
GREENUP	44	146	7	ROCKCASTLE	97	212	9
HANCOCK	15	43	6	ROWAN	56	131	12
HARDIN A	73	308	11	RUSSELL	31	59	3
HARDIN B	88	314	12	SCOTT	84	240	9
HARLAN	63	120	10	SHELBY	76	157	10
HARRISON/PENDLETON	38	126	4	SIMPSON	38	75	4
HART	39	72	4	SPENCER	7	18	4
HENDERSON	71	156	10	TAYLOR	27	189	10
HENRY	31	82	4	TODD	15	32	4
HOPKINS	78	165	12	TRIGG	22	46	5
JACKSON	25	32	2	TRIMBLE	10	49	4
JEFFERSON 1	142	494	12	UNION	23	50	4
JEFFERSON 2	133	386	12	WARREN A	131	278	12
JEFFERSON 3	143	542	12	WARREN B	105	268	11
JEFFERSON 4	123	314	12	WAYNE	21	75	5
JEFFERSON 5	131	292	12	WEBSTER	11	31	4
JEFFERSON 6	161	441	13	WHITLEY A - CORBIN	64	122	6
JEFFERSON 7	124	336	12	WHITLEY B - WILLIAMSBURG	81	166	6
JEFFERSON 8	103	286	12	WOLFE	12	22	4
JEFFERSON 9	68	220	12	WOODFORD	44	111	10
				<b>STATEWIDE TOTALS</b>	<b>8333</b>	<b>23133</b>	<b>1106</b>

## Initiatives to Enhance the CFCRB Program

In addition to conducting 23,133 case reviews of 8,333 individual children in Kentucky's foster care system, Citizen Foster Care Review Board volunteers made several advances to strengthen the program in fiscal year 2004.



- Volunteers reviewed and screened other volunteers from across the state who were nominated to fill vacancies in the state CFCRB offices of vice chair, secretary, treasurer and regional representatives. More than 20 volunteers were nominated for these offices. This required all 746 volunteers to be polled and the election results reported to the state board.
  - The volunteer training handbook was updated to reflect current procedures.
  - A Resource Lending Library is being developed to provide additional educational opportunities for volunteers.
  - *The Caring Difference*, the CFCRB quarterly newsletter, has new features which focus on education and volunteer retention, such as the "Spotlight a Resource" column.
  - The CFCRB section of the Court of Justice Web site at [www.kycourts.net](http://www.kycourts.net) is being updated to be more user-friendly and provide enhanced information.
- The CFCRB bylaws were rewritten and approved by the state board to reflect current procedures.
  - The Policy and Procedure Manual was expanded to include previously unwritten and undocumented policies.
  - The internal operation of the state board was examined to facilitate efficiency in communication and accomplishing goals. A new Biennial Calendar was created to allow all standing committees to access required scheduled tasks more easily. The calendar combined existing operating procedures with new streamlined procedures, which is eliminating delay for the state board.
  - Inconsistencies in practices with CHFS were identified throughout the state and brought to the attention of the Commissioner of the Department for Community Based Services.
  - A volunteer recruitment plan has been modified to accommodate the needs of local boards.
  - Efforts continue to get legislation passed that would require official documentation of a child's release from foster care and increase the notice of the cabinet's intention to release a child from foster care to the court's requirement date from 14 to 45 days.





- Strategies are being developed to build alliances with child advocacy groups in the state that address children's issues.
- A Review Committee has been convened to explore the possibility of creating a more specialized type of review.
- New public relations materials were developed including brochures, posters, bookmarks, press releases and other community outreach materials.
- Lifetime achievement awards were created for volunteers who have devoted more than a decade of service to Kentucky's children.
- The 2004 Citizen Foster Care Review Board State Conference, *Kids – 1<sup>st</sup> in Kentucky*, took place Nov. 5-7 in Owensboro and offered numerous opportunities for volunteers to learn about topics relating to children in foster care.

## Child-Friendly Initiatives

There are currently a number of other child-friendly initiatives under way in Kentucky that will help address the issue of timely permanence for children. Some of these initiatives include:

- Expansion of Family Court.
- Use of permanency mediation.
- Collaboration with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to implement Kentucky's Program Improvement Plan.
- Developing a Dependency Law Clinic at each of Kentucky's three law schools for potential guardians *ad litem*.
- Enhance judicial, guardian *ad litem* and cross-professional training.
- Develop procedures to expedite termination of parental rights appeals.



**H**ow are Citizen Foster Care Review Boards benefiting Kentucky's foster children? Are we making progress toward achieving more timely permanency?

To answer that question, the following section looks at what the case reviews tell us about the children in Kentucky's foster care system.

## FY 2004 Findings and Conclusions: *How Foster Children Fare in Kentucky*

According to Kentucky statute, review boards are required to review the cases of all children who are in the custody of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services due to abuse, neglect and dependency at least once every six months. The following pages provide detailed statistics pertaining to the children reviewed by Citizen Foster Care Review Boards during FY 2004. When applicable, longitudinal data highlights historical trends relating to permanency for children.<sup>3</sup> Findings are divided into three sections:

- Demographics
- Permanency and Stability
- Service Delivery



### *Demographics for the Nation and Kentucky*

#### Foster Children: A National Profile

- There are more than 500,000 children in foster care in the United States. Fifty-two percent are male and 48 percent are female.<sup>4</sup> The median age of a child in foster care is 10.6 years. Thirty-eight percent are African American/non-Hispanic, 37 percent are Caucasian, 17 percent are Hispanic and 8 percent are other races/ethnic origins.



#### Foster Children: A Kentucky Profile

- There are currently 8,333 children in foster care in Kentucky.<sup>5</sup> The average age of an active child is 10.4 years old. The average age at release for a child is 9.7 years old. Last year the average age at release for a child was 10.4 years old.

- Almost 29 percent of active children are age 15 or older and 23 percent of active children are 5 years old or younger. The foster care population is 50.7 percent male and 49.3 percent female.

- Seventy-nine percent of youth in foster care are white, 18.4 percent are African-American and 2.6 percent are other races. African-American youth are disproportionately represented Kentucky's foster care system. They make up just 9 percent of Kentucky's juvenile population yet constitute 18.4 percent of children in foster care.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics pertain to all the children whose cases were reviewed between July 1, 2003 and July 1, 2004. **Active** cases represent those children whose cases were reviewed at some point during the fiscal year who were in state custody as of Aug. 1, 2003, and **inactive** or "released" cases represent those children whose cases were reviewed at some point during the fiscal year, but were no longer in the custody of the state as of Aug. 1, 2004. Individual statistics represent the number of cases that had the required information necessary for their computation and some statistics are based on a representative sampling of cases (3000, or 35 percent, of the children reviewed). Children who were in temporary custody for 45 days or less were not applicable to CFCRB review and therefore have been excluded from the analysis.

<sup>4</sup> National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information. Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Foster Care National Statistics. June 2003.

<sup>5</sup> As of Oct. 1, 2004.

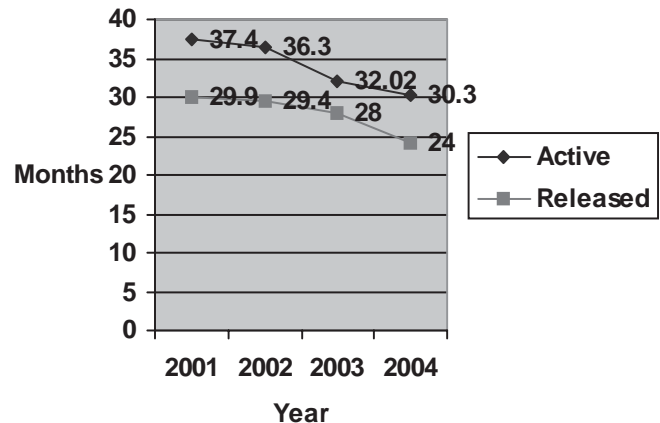
## Permanency and Stability

According to the most recent Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) report published by the Administration for Children and Families in 2003, children in care in the United States in 2001 had been in foster care for an average of 33 months. More than 17 percent of children had been in care for five or more years. In 2001, children in Kentucky averaged more months in foster care than children nationally. However, a trend is emerging of children attaining permanency<sup>6</sup> faster in Kentucky.

### Less Time to Permanency in Kentucky

- Active children spend an average of 30.3 months in foster care. The median length of stay for active children is 20.5 months.
- Inactive children spent an average of 24 months in foster care. The median length of stay for inactive children is 14.5 months.
- The average length of time children spend in foster care in Kentucky has decreased seven months in the past four years.
- There has been a reduction in the number of active children who have been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months. In 2002, more than 70 percent of active children had been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months. In FY 2004 the number was 61 percent.<sup>7</sup>
- A little more than 26 percent of the active children have spent 12 months or less in foster care and over 36 percent of released children attained permanency in 12 months or less.
- Only 13.4 percent of the active children have spent five years or more in foster care. Last year 15.9 percent of the active children had spent five years or more in foster care.
- Children who are 15 years or older have spent an average of 42.3 months in foster care. Children who are 5 years old or younger have spent an average of 16.6 months in foster care. As age increases so does length of stay.

Average Length of Stay



Length of Stay by Age

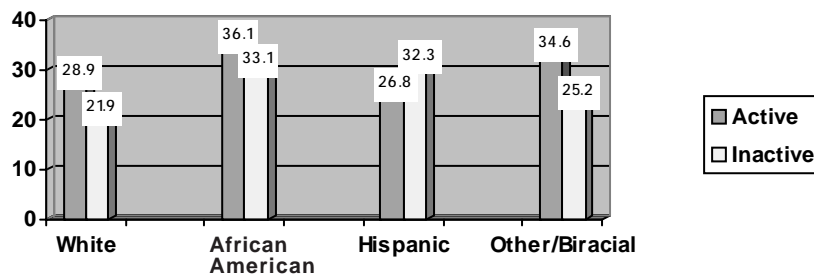
Age	Active	Released
0 to 5	16.6 Months	14.3 Months
5 to 10	24.1 Months	22.5 Months
10 to 15	34.3 Months	25.1 Months
15+	42.3 Months	35.5 Months

- Not only are African-American children disproportionately represented in the foster care system, but they are also likely to experience longer lengths of stay in foster care. Active African-American youth spend an average of 36.1 months in foster care while active Caucasian children spend an average of 28.9 months in foster care. Inactive African-American youth spent an average of 33.1 months in foster care while inactive Caucasian children spent an average of 21.9 months in foster care.

<sup>6</sup> Length of stay for active children is calculated from the date the child entered state custody until Aug. 1, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 requires that termination of parental rights petitions be filed on behalf of children who have been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months, unless certain conditions exist.

### Race and Length of Stay

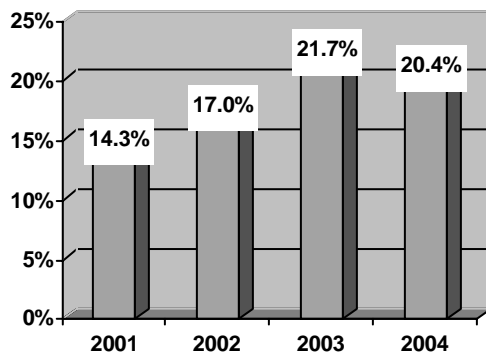


### Exit From Foster Care Method and Percentage for Inactive Children

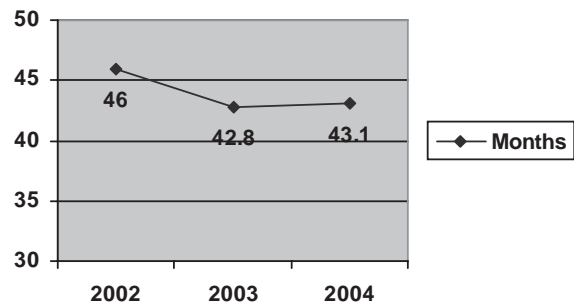
In 2003, 16.1 percent of children exited care to finalized adoption in less than 24 months. In FY 2004, 19 percent of children exited care to finalized adoption in less than 24 months.<sup>8</sup>

Parent(s)	Relative(s)	Adoption	Other Guardian	Aged Out	Deceased	Independent Living	Unknown/No Reason Specified
40.1%	21.4%	20.4%	1.3%	6.4%	.2%	3.2%	7%

### Adoptions



### Length of Time to Finalized Adoption



- The average length of time between entry into care and finalized adoption has decreased since 2002, when it was 46 months. In fiscal year 2004, it was 43.1 months.

- The percentage of Kentucky children exiting care by adoption also remained fairly consistent with last year's percentage, which was 21.7 percent. This year 20.4 percent of children exited care through adoption. On a national level, 17 percent of children who exited care were adopted in 2000, according to the most recent Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System report published by the Administration for Children and Families in 2003.

- Children exiting care through reunification are doing so more quickly. Last year the average length of time spent in foster care for children exiting care through reunification was 14.5 months. This year, children averaged 12.4 months in care prior to reunification.

- Last year 59 percent of children were reunified within 12 months or less. This year more than 65 percent of children were reunified within 12 months or less.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The national standard set forth in the Child and Family Services Review is that 32 percent of children exiting care to adoption will do so in less than 24 months.

<sup>9</sup> The national standard set forth in the Child and Family Services Review is that 79 percent of children should be reunified, if appropriate, within 12 months or less.

## Neglect is Primary Cause for Removal

Both nationally and in Kentucky, neglect is the most common reason for removal, followed by dependency issues on the part of the caretaker(s).

	Abuse	Neglect	Dependency	Abuse & Neglect	Status
Active	10.6%	42.6%	34.2%	11.8%	.8%
Inactive	9.4%	47.2%	31.1%	11.4%	.9%

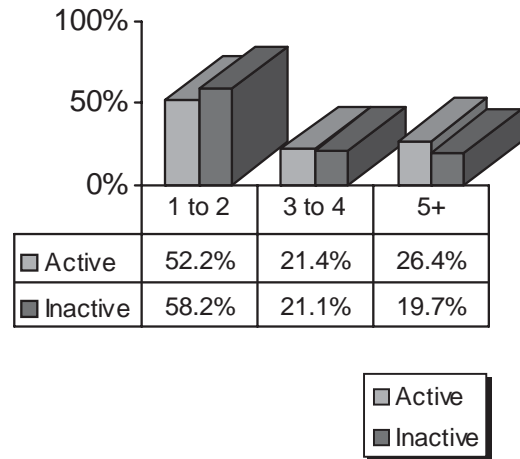
## Placement Activity

- There was a decrease in the average number of moves in foster care experienced by all children reviewed this year. Last year children averaged four placements and this year children averaged 3.7 placements while in foster care. Children who were adopted experienced an average of 3.5 placements during their episodes in foster care. Children who were reunified experienced an average of 2.5 placements during their episodes in foster care.

- Children who aged out of the foster care system or were released to live independently experienced an average of 7.3 placements during their episodes in foster care.

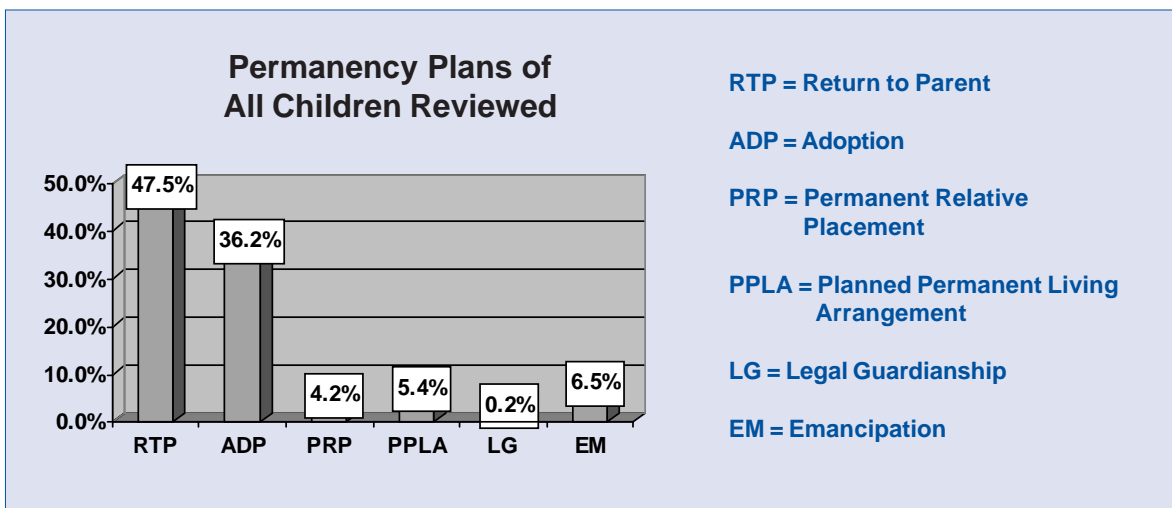
- Children who were released to relatives averaged 2.1 placements during their episodes in foster care.

Number of Placements



## Service Delivery: Permanency Plans

Volunteers agreed with the permanency plan for the child 85.4 percent of the time.



### Volunteer Agreement and Disagreement With Permanency Plans for All Children Reviewed

Permanency Plan	RTP	ADP	PRP	PPLA	LG	EM
Agree	72%	97.1%	88.6%	97%	94.7%	98.1%
Disagree	28%	2.9%	11.4%	3%	5.3%	1.9%

### Percentage of Permanency Plans Broken Down by Active and Inactive Children

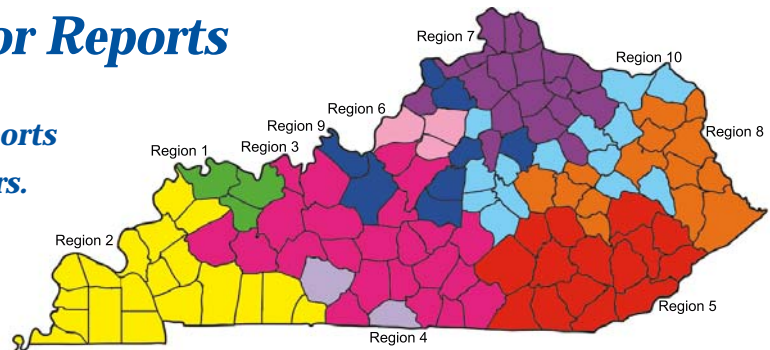
Permanency Plan	RTP	ADP	PRP	PPLA	LG	EM
Active	39.5%	44.9%	3.1%	6.1%	.1%	5.9%
Inactive	57.5%	24.7%	5.5%	4.5%	.4%	7.3%

Exit From Foster Care Method and Percentage for Inactive Children	Percentage of Inactive Children With the Applicable Permanency Plan
Parent(s)	RTP 40.1% 53.3%
Relative(s)	PRP 21.4% 4.6%
Adoption	ADP 20.4% 26.8%
Other Guardian	LG 1.3% .5%
Aged Out/Independent Living/ Deceased/Unknown	EM and PPLA 16.8% 14.8%

- Reviewers reported that only 5.1 percent of the children reviewed changed placements more than three times in the six months prior to their review. Last year the number was 4.6 percent.
- Reviewers reported that the placement log was not in the CHFS case files 9.9 percent of the time. Last year the number was 9.2 percent.
- Of the files provided to local boards for review, 2,124 did not have enough current information for a sufficient review to be conducted.
- Reviewers cited many reasons for placement changes including finding an appropriate relative, sibling placement, health, a change in the permanency plan and behavior problems. The most commonly reported reason for moves was “more structure.”
- Reviewers reported that children who have siblings visit with them more than 98 percent of the time.
- A survey of 2,046 case reviews of individual children revealed that reviewers indicated that the medical, psychological and educational needs of children were being met more than 99 percent of the time.
- Reviewers reported that the permanency hearing had been held or was scheduled on or before the appropriate due date for 89 percent of the children.
- Reviewers reported that the parent(s) did not sign the most recent out-of-home case plan for 44 percent of the children reviewed. Last year, the number was 40 percent.
- At the time of the review, reviewers are asked if the social worker has changed since the last review. This year reviewers reported that 15.3 percent of the time the social worker had changed since the last review while last year it was 18.1 percent.

## CFCRB Statewide Regional Updates: *Field Coordinator Reports*

*We are pleased to present regional reports  
from our dedicated field coordinators.*



### Region 1 Update

*Submitted by Dolores Smith*

At the beginning of this fiscal year, Region 1 consisted of 11 boards. However, with the creation of an additional field coordinator area after January 2004, McCracken County was shifted to Region 2. Currently, Region 1 consists of 60 volunteers serving on the following nine boards: Ballard/Carlisle, Crittenden, Daviess A, Daviess B, Henderson, Livingston, McLean, Union and Webster. All of the boards in Region 1 are active and in compliance with statutory guidelines.

The volunteers in Region 1 eagerly attended the Regional Trainings conducted in fall 2003. The training sessions took place Oct. 18 in Owensboro, Nov. 1 at Ken Lake and Nov. 15 in Bowling Green. Four initial trainings and three continuing education trainings were also conducted this fiscal year.

Both Daviess A and Daviess B Citizen Foster Care Review Boards have incorporated the interested party review process into their board schedules. These two boards conducted five interested party reviews this fiscal year.

The Ballard/Carlisle Citizen Foster Care Review Board organized a suitcase drive for children in foster care. The local Department for Community Based Services was hoping to collect five suitcases but ended up with 16, thanks to the Ballard/Carlisle CFCRB, which also enlisted the aid of the Ballard County Homemakers for this successful drive.

The Host Committee was active in Region 1 this fiscal year. The volunteers on this committee devoted much time and energy to make the 2004 state conference in November a pleasurable experience for all who attended.

### Region 2 Update

*Submitted by Danielle Meyer*

Region 2 experienced many changes in December 2003, including a reallocation of counties and a change in field coordinators. I gladly took on new responsibilities by accepting the field coordinator position previously held by Kari Hutchison.

Region 2 is comprised of 17 counties and 18 boards. During the reallocation of counties, Allen, Barren and Edmonson were redistributed to Melissa Huffman. Kari Hutchison retained Warren and Monroe, and Region 2 absorbed McCracken County. This region currently has 102 volunteers who have dedicated their time and made a difference in the lives of children.

From December through June 2004, two initial trainings were conducted in Marshall and Warren counties. Many new volunteers were trained and many current volunteers attended to complete their six-hour continuing education requirement. I also assisted with the regional meeting at Ken Lake in November 2003.

The volunteers in my area make my job enjoyable and I appreciate greatly the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the local District, Circuit and Family Court judges for their continuing support.

### Region 3 Update

*Submitted by Melissa Huffman*

The 2004 fiscal year brought many changes. I started as field coordinator in January and was given 16 counties to supervise after the counties were reallocated. These counties are Adair, Allen, Barren, Breckinridge, Casey, Cumberland, Clinton,

Edmonson, Grayson, Green, Hart, Larue, Metcalfe, Russell, Taylor and Wayne. Each county has its own Foster Care Review Board except Adair and Casey, which is currently a combined board. These 15 boards are composed of 60 volunteers, all of whom are active and meet statutory guidelines. From January to July 2004, I attended 46 board meetings.

Two initial and regional trainings were held in this region since I took this position in January. I was pleased that 22 new and current volunteers attended my first initial training in Glasgow.

Many of my boards created theme baskets for the 2004 state conference in November and were excited about attending. In addition, there are several board members from this region who have agreed to volunteer on the Interested Party Review pilot project in the Barren River Region. They attended an initial training in August and are eager to begin this new program.

## **Region 4 Update**

*Submitted by Kari Hutchison*

The last fiscal year was filled with exciting change for me. In December 2003, my job title changed from field coordinator to education specialist. My new focus became implementing the Interested Party Review (IPR) Program statewide. In January, I traveled to Oregon and Arizona to observe their IPR programs. These states are considered to have model Interested Party Review programs and I learned a great deal during my visits.

I am confident that the dependent, neglected and abused children in Kentucky will benefit from our new endeavor. I also felt fortunate to be able to continue my field coordinator duties for Monroe and Warren counties. The volunteers on these boards hold a special place in my heart and I look forward to working with them in the coming year.

## **Region 5 Update**

*Submitted by Michael Broughton*

Region 5 is comprised of 18 boards in 15 counties in Southern and Eastern Kentucky. All of the boards are up to date on all case reviews in my area. As always, I am making an effort to attend all Citizen Foster Care Review Board meetings in my area. I attended more than 125 board meetings this past fiscal year.

I am still active in my recruitment and have held several trainings this past year for new CFCRB volunteers.

In the past I have been responsible for overseeing the "one legal voice" program in Laurel and Knox counties. While this grant program ended July 1, 2004, it lasted two years longer than was scheduled due to its exceeding all expectations. Our judges were disappointed to see the project end. However, the Office of Council has taken over the termination of parental rights cases as they had prior to the grant. I am confident they will be able to expedite the cases in as timely a manner as did the commonwealth's attorney office in Laurel and Knox counties.

I want to thank all of the volunteers in my area, especially the board chairs and vice chairs for helping make my job much easier. It is wonderful to work with so many great people who have one thing in mind: helping make the lives of children better.

## **Region 6 Update**

*Submitted by Amy Smitha*

During the last fiscal year I covered the boards in Franklin, Henry, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer and Trimble counties. All of these boards are in great standing. We trained many new volunteers, which has strengthened the current boards. More than 100 current and new volunteers were trained at our three initial trainings. The regional training in Lexington was also well attended. Beth Lucas was our presenter and did a wonderful job.

The Interested Party Review Program is being implemented statewide. Shelby County is the site for the IPR Program in my area. We held two reviews this fiscal year. The board seems to enjoy this type of review and the DCBS office is very helpful, which makes this review easier for us.

During the last fiscal year, Jefferson, Bullitt and Nelson Counties were covered by Field Coordinator Karma Childress. When Karma resigned in September, I assumed the responsibility of Jefferson County along with Spencer and Shelby counties. This change was effective in October.

Because Jefferson County is new to me, I have attended meetings of all boards to assess their needs for new volunteers. I have already begun recruiting and planning training sessions for Jefferson County.

Although Bullitt and Nelson are not my counties, I have been in touch with the chairs during the



transition period. Field Coordinator Melissa Huffman will be taking over these counties.

Jefferson County has 10 boards that meet monthly and each board is assigned its own Family Court judge. The biggest challenge will be recruiting new volunteers. I welcome the opportunity to work with the Jefferson County boards and look forward to positive activity during the next fiscal year.

## Region 7 Update

*Submitted by Bruce Jones*

The Northern Region is comprised of 21 counties with 21 local boards. Because the caseloads in the urban areas are heavier than in the rural areas, the urban boards meet month and the rural boards meet bimonthly and quarterly.

This past year, I spent a lot of time in Kenton and Campbell counties. The caseload in these two areas has increased tremendously within the past year. John Burgess, Hanna Harvey and I met with DCBS supervisors on several occasions to resolve this matter. I recruited volunteers for Bourbon, Campbell, Fleming, Kenton, Montgomery, and Scott counties. As of March 2004, I was no longer coordinator for Bath, Menifee and Rowan counties.

Mae Philbeck, education specialist, and I facilitated continuing education training in Bourbon County for the social workers/supervisors there. This training covered all policies and procedures that the Cabinet for Health and Family Services is expected to follow regarding the review boards.

Kevin Smalley, manager for Dependent Children's Services, and I were asked to participate in Northern Kentucky's Program Improvement Plan (PIP)/ Family to Family (F2F) conference in June. Kentucky's Child Welfare System underwent a federal audit in 2003 and the state stands to lose federal funding that supports important services for Northern Kentucky.

In response, Kentucky has developed the PIP, which sets goals for services and outcomes. If the Cabinet for Health and Family Services doesn't achieve the goals outlined in this plan, Kentucky will see significant cuts in funding and reductions in services. Kevin and I served on the Planning Committee and as moderators at the conference. CFCRB volunteers from Boone, Campbell, Gallatin and Kenton counties were also on hand.



As a result, Mary Lou Ringo, Kenton county chair, and I are members of the Communications Strategy Team. DCBS Protection & Permanency (P&P) staff in the Northern Kentucky will be trained in F2F outcomes, goals and strategies. The goal for the communications team is for 100 percent of P&P staff to have a thorough understanding of how F2F processes affect their work with families.

I am currently attending the scheduled review board meetings and working on recruitment strategies. I am also working on boards that have interested party reviews scheduled and encouraging all boards to do enhanced reviews.

## Region 8 Update

*Submitted by Debbie Laferty-Bennett*

When writing this summary I could brag a little about where we've come in the last year. Many miles have been driven and many hours have been recorded. Without the many dedicated volunteers who fill the boards in Region 8, I could not do the job that I do. *We are a family!* When we can't sleep or are troubled about "our children," we are there for each other. These volunteers are willing to go as many miles and give as many hours as it takes. My Eastern Kentucky volunteers keep me passionate for what I do. *You guys are wonderful.*

In fall 2003 we held regional trainings at Natural Bridge and Carter Caves state parks. There have been five volunteer trainings this fiscal year which secured 35 new volunteers for the region. Trainings for interested party reviews were conducted in Lee/Owsley and Carter counties. Powell, Lee/Owsley and Carter counties all have successfully completed interested party reviews.



We have increased awareness of the Citizen Foster Care Review Boards through our involvement with the Floyd County Professionals for a Better Community, Eastern Kentucky United Way and Carter County Schools.

Active support from our District and Family Court judges, court personnel and community leaders has

produced a stronger commitment and dedication from volunteers in this region. We are "healthy" in Eastern Kentucky have set our goals high for the next year.

## Region 9 Update

*Submitted by Billy Stover*

Region 9 consists of 14 boards made up of more than 100 volunteers. All 14 boards are in compliance with statutory requirements. I attended 127 board meetings during fiscal year 2004.

Three initial trainings for new and current volunteers were conducted and 96 volunteers completed training. Family Court Judge Bruce Petrie, who serves Boyle and Mercer counties, and Family Court Judge Reed Rhorer, who serves Franklin County, assisted at these trainings. A regional training was also conducted during this fiscal year. Beth Lucas did an outstanding job as the presenter for the 57 volunteers who attended this training in Lexington.

Four interested party reviews occurred during this fiscal year. Hardin County Board B conducted three, and Fayette County Board I conducted one. Both boards will continue to conduct these reviews in the next fiscal year.

## Region 10 Update

*Submitted by Mae Philbeck*

The past year has yielded many changes. Patrick Yewell is now general manager of the Department of Juvenile Services and Dependent Children's Services became a division of that department. Kevin Smalley joined DCS as manager and brought with him many new and innovative ideas.

The distribution of counties changed late last year and my area shifted to the east. Because I was

previously assigned to that area, I was familiar with the offices and the local boards, although some significant changes had occurred. Most notably is the addition of Family Court in Magoffin County with Judge Julie Paxton presiding. Judge Paxton and James Carpenter, the family services office supervisor in Magoffin County, have drastically improved the service and protection to the children and families in Salyersville. Their dedication and involvement brought the best interest of the child to the forefront.

The Hancock County Board was actively involved with the 2004 state conference in November and served as host of the Hospitality Suite. These ladies continue to amaze me with their dedication to the children of Kentucky. Boyle County has a terrific board and the DCBS office is phenomenal.

The Mercer County Board has added several new board members and they have been a huge asset; the new FSOS, Tina Hagenbach, has been a wonderful addition. Lincoln County has added four new volunteers and they are now meeting monthly. Garrard County continues to meet on a bimonthly schedule and the board is committed to the children. Jessamine County also has added new members and continues to meet faithfully each month.

Clark County has added two new board members and is conducting interested party reviews. Wolfe County meets on a quarterly schedule and the DCBS office continues to be very helpful. The Bath/Menifee County area continues to be a challenge for recruitment but the DCBS office is wonderful. The Lewis County Board has a light caseload and the board remains devoted to the children in care. The Greenup County board has grown considerably in the past six months. They are always involved in some new project aimed at child advocacy.

The progress of our program is, in large part, due to the steadfast volunteers who come month after month to review the files. Without the volunteers, we would not be where we are today and could not provide the children of the Commonwealth the oversight they need and deserve.



## **Citizen Foster Care Review Boards**

### ***2004 Legislative Committee Recommendations***



- \* Support legislation that would require official documentation of a child's release from foster care and increase the time frame from 14 to 45 days for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to provide the courts with notice of intent to release a child from foster care.
- \* Support efforts to reduce the number of children who age out of the system and have not been provided with an adoptive or other permanent home.
- \* Support policies and procedures that are designed to place sibling groups together in the least restrictive and most appropriate placement.
- \* Increase the number of foster and pre-adoptive homes.
- \* Support the creation of a task force to develop ways to enhance and expedite the recruitment and certification process for foster and pre-adoptive parents.
- \* Promote more education in the area of child protection for all professionals in the juvenile court system.
- \* Increase the amount and improve the quality of treatment and support services for children and families.
- \* Support the expansion of Family Court and increase the number of Family Court judges in Kentucky.
- \* Support the continued collaboration between the judiciary and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services which is necessary to implement and sustain Kentucky's Program Improvement Plan.



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