

Division of Child Welfare Annual Report 2006

State Fiscal Year 2005-2006



On behalf of the Division of Child Welfare Services, I am pleased to present this summary of performance for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2005-2006. This report reflects the efforts of Colorado's 64 County Departments as well as judicial, providers, child advocates and most importantly, our families. We acknowledge and honor everyone's efforts on behalf of children and families.

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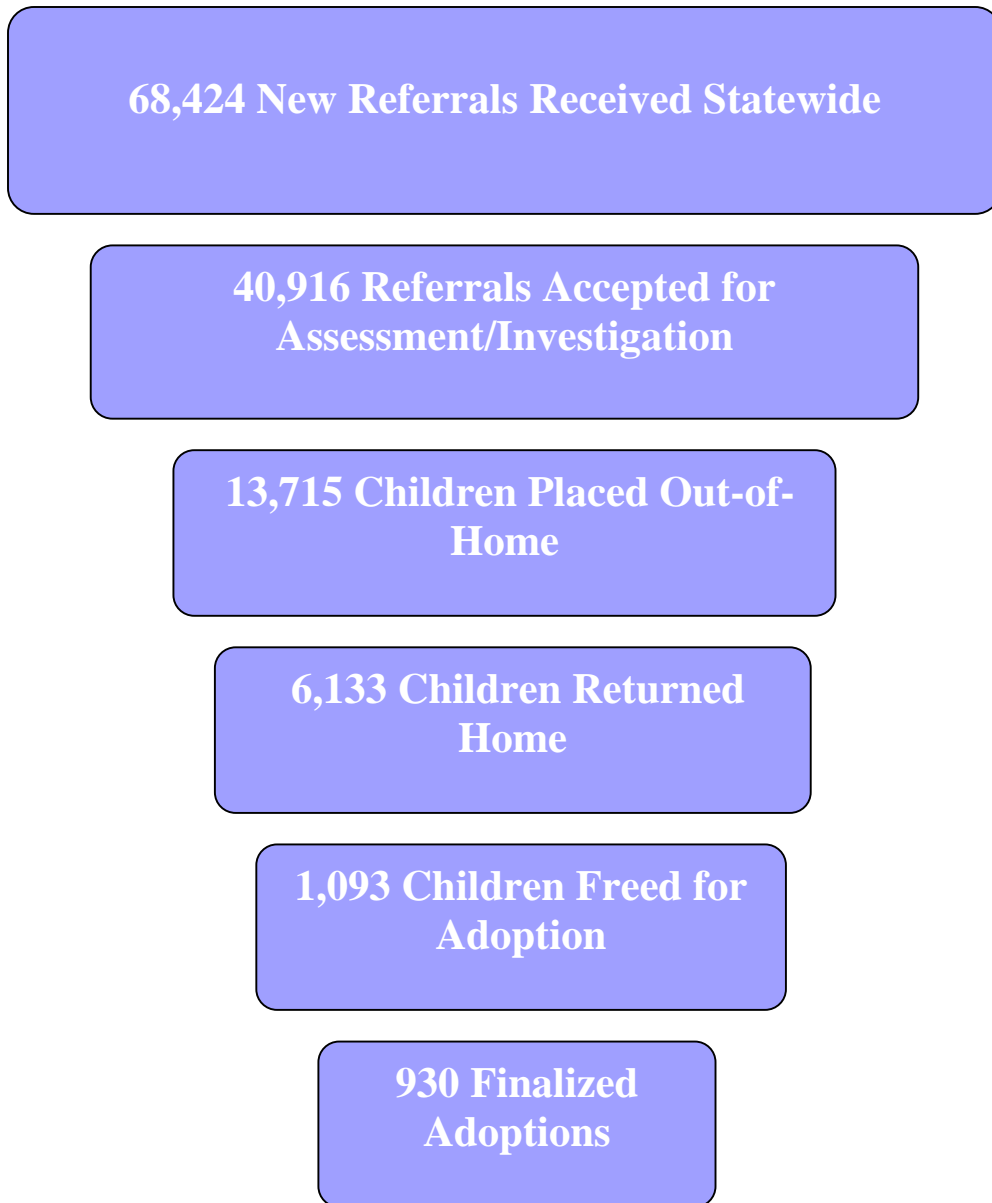
State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2006
July 1, 2005- June 30, 2006

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
CHILD WELFARE SERVICES	4
SAFETY - ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH HAVE A SAFE HOME AND FAMILY.	5
PERMANENCY – ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH HAVE A FOREVER FAMILY.	6
WELL-BEING – CHILDREN AND YOUTH HAVE THEIR HEALTH AND EDUCATION NEEDS MET. ..	7
COLORADO’S CHILDREN	8
COLORADO DEMOGRAPHICS	9
COLORADO OOH DEMOGRAPHICS BY AGE GROUP	9
REFERRALS	10
ASSESSMENTS	11
CASES	12
FATALITIES RELATED TO CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT	12
OUT-OF-HOME (OOH) POPULATION	13
ADOPTION	14
FREE FOR ADOPTION	14
ADOPTION	15
FOREVER FAMILIES	15
ADOPTION SUBSIDIES	16
ADOPTION SUBSIDY PAID DAYS	16
ADOPTION SUBSIDY COST	17
CHILD WELFARE FISCAL IMPACT	18
CHILD WELFARE BUDGET OVERVIEW	18
STATE/LOCAL/FEDERAL SPLIT	18
CHILD WELFARE SERVICES BLOCK	19
AVERAGE COST AND LENGTH OF STAY	20
COST OF OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS	20
PAID DAYS	21
NEXT STEPS FOR CHILD WELFARE	22

Child Welfare Services

This Annual Report reflects the State of Colorado’s performance and activities in the areas of child and family safety, permanency, and well-being for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006. Colorado is a state supervised, county administered system whose mission is “everything we do enhances the delivery of child welfare services so that Colorado’s children and families are safe and stable”. Sixty-four counties, their community partners, the State Department, and the courts are responsible to keep children safe and moving towards permanency.



Safety - All children and youth have a safe home and family.

The safety of children in Colorado was promoted through efforts of county departments, their partners, judicial and state staff in the following ways:

- 68,424 calls were responded to for services or referrals of abuse/neglect.
- 27,201 children were maintained in their own homes.
- 13,715 children were served in various out-of-home placements including relatives.
- 50 initial monitoring visits were conducted with licensed 24-hour care facilities and there were 498 follow-ups on incidents that occurred in those facilities.
- 4 program reviews were performed of county departments in the areas of foster home programs, and child safety practices.
- 144 complaint calls and 644 information and referral contacts were addressed.
- Over 350 caseworkers were trained in a more comprehensive approach to safety decision-making. Caseworkers are using a new method to assess family functioning during a crisis and plan with the community how to keep a child safely at home or to return a child home safely.
- The Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) tool was implemented. This tool allows for a uniform method of completing adoption, foster care and kinship family evaluation. This tool will also be useful in cross state placements to assure safety and consistency in evaluations.
- The use of “Family to Family” principles was expanded across the state. These principles involve the family and the community in decision-making regarding the child, which encourage the safe placement of children within their communities and neighborhoods.
- On July 1, 2006, Residential Treatment Centers (RTC) in Colorado were replaced with Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF) and Therapeutic Residential Child Care Facilities (TRCCF).
- Through local grants, the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program (PSSF) promotes permanency, safety and stability for families in Colorado. Currently there are 43 counties and one tribe receiving PSSF dollars.
- The total number of children served in Core Services Programs was 19,006. The total number of services provided was 46,394. The statewide monthly average cost for providing Core Services was \$118.00 per child, per service.



Photo: Kit Hedman

Permanency – All children and youth have a forever family.

Sixty-four counties, their community partners, the State Department, and the courts kept children safe and moving towards permanency in the following ways:

- Through a collaborative effort between CDHS, courts, judges, attorneys, advocates, Project 1.27, and the Statewide Faith-Based Community Collaborative, Colorado held it's first ever National Adoption Day to celebrate and finalize 58 adoptions.
- Two events were sponsored to recognize Foster Care parents for National Foster Care Month. On May 3, 2006 the Division of Child Welfare, Division of Child Care and the Colorado State Foster Parents Association sponsored an annual foster parent recognition event. Child Welfare, Colorado Foster Parent Association, Center for Governmental Training, Colorado Association of Family and Children Agencies (CAFCA) and Destiny Ranch held the first Foster Parent Celebration to thank our Foster Parents on May 13th, 2006. There were over 375 people in attendance.
- The new Post-Adoption Resource Center was launched to meet the needs of adoptive families across Colorado that have adopted children from the public child welfare system.
- Colorado joined 42 States across the nation in having an active Heart Gallery. Our first



Photo: Kit Hedman

effort in 2005 was very successful; many valuable and productive partnerships were developed to find forever families for fifteen children. This annual exhibit features professional photographs of the children in Colorado who have been waiting the longest for an adoptive family.

- The first "Colorado Youth Permanency Summit" in November 2006 was held and there were 46 participants.
- Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) training was held at several locations around the

State to improve permanent connections with Tribes. The trainings were also held to assure workers are knowledgeable of federal and state requirements.

Well-Being – Children and youth have their health and education needs met.

The well-being of children in Colorado was promoted through efforts of county departments, their partners, judicial and state staff in the following ways:

- Collaborative Management Program (CMP), CRS 24-1.9, is designed to promote collaboration between county departments, judicial, mental health, public health and education in integrating and simplifying service delivery to families and children. This program had participation from six counties in this inaugural year, SFY 2006. Local areas can earn incentives for improving outcomes. Participants are reporting greater success in integrating service delivery that is resulting in better outcomes for children and families.
- Youth Empowerment Systems (YES!) Academy provided self-sufficiency services for 75 youth that were experiencing homelessness after aging out of child welfare foster care. It is a “social investment model” where public and private organizations contribute to helping these youth.
- The Chafee Foster Care Independence Programs Annual Teen Conference included 44 Chafee Youth (out of 1189 youth served in the program), 25 Chafee Counselors, AmeriCorps Members and 5 Foster Club All-Stars.
- On June 6, 2006, Colorado celebrated the achievements of 257 graduates in its 8th Annual Celebration of Educational Excellence, a ceremony that celebrates youth in out-of-home placement who have completed their High School Diploma, GED, Vocational Program or College degree.
- The 2nd Annual Spring Forum for the Educational Success of Children and Youth in Out-of-Home Care was held on April 25-26, 2006. The event provides opportunity for county departments of human services and their school districts to network, discuss local issues, and plan to address educational challenges that occur for children and youth in out-of-home care. A panel of foster care alumni provided more than 200 participants with their experiences, including opportunities and challenges, as they worked to receive their education. The audience also included foster parents, judicial staff, guardians ad litem and several State agencies and organizations.
- Colorado partnered with the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement to develop and pilot a curriculum called Educational Advocacy for Children in Out-of-Home Care. The curriculum focuses on caseworkers and their supervisors, though the information is applicable to many disciplines. The purpose of the training is to identify and provide strategies to address some of the educational barriers that occur with children in out-of-home care. In order to provide a highly skilled and balanced curriculum, two trainers are used; one with expertise in education and the other with expertise in child welfare.



Colorado's Children

This chart shows an estimate of the population for Colorado's children ages 0 – 17, the number of children in open cases, and the number of children in an out-of-home placement (paid or unpaid) that were open during SFY 2006, by Race, Hispanic Origin, Age and Gender.

Colorado's Children	Colorado Census Population Estimate		Colorado's Children in Open Cases		Colorado's Children in Open OOH Placement	
Race						
White	1,059,568	88.1%	31,627	78.2%	11,177	81.5%
African American	56,406	4.7%	4,437	11.0%	1,590	11.6%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	14,122	1.2%	564	1.4%	203	1.5%
Asian	29,557	2.5%	244	0.6%	75	0.5%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	2,032	0.2%	86	0.2%	26	0.2%
Two or More Race Groups	41,294	3.4%	1,404	3.5%	600	4.4%
Missing Data			2,059	5.1%	44	.3%
Total	1,202,978	100%	40,421	100%	13,715	100%

Hispanic Origin						
Non-Hispanic or Latino Origin	879,194	73.1%	27,215	67.30%	8,303	60.5%
Hispanic or Latino Origin	323,784	26.9%	13,206	32.70%	4,882	35.6%
Unknown					520	3.8%
Missing Data					10	0.1%
Total	1,202,978	100%	40,421	100%	13,715	100%

Age Groups						
Birth to Age 2	210,137	17.5%	5,159	12.8%	2,553	18.6%
Age 3 to 5	208,559	17.3%	5,950	14.7%	1,850	13.5%
Age 6 to 8	194,805	16.2%	5,959	14.7%	1,581	11.5%
Age 9 to 11	191,576	15.9%	5,446	13.5%	1,394	10.2%
Age 12 to 14	196,043	16.3%	6,596	16.3%	2,144	15.6%
Age 15 and older	201,858	16.8%	11,311	28.0%	4,193	30.6%
Total	1,202,978	100%	40,421	100%	13,715	100%

Gender						
Male	616,160	51.2%	21,483	53.1%	7,400	54.0%
Female	586,818	48.8%	18,938	46.9%	6,315	46.0%
Total	1,202,978	100%	40,421	100%	13,715	100%

*The percentages for the Population Estimate are approximated based on the previous year

**The data for the Children in Open Cases reflected in this table was pulled in March 2007

These numbers are pulled from the Allocations Data Trends and Full Placement Equivalency (FPE) Reports for SFY 2006.

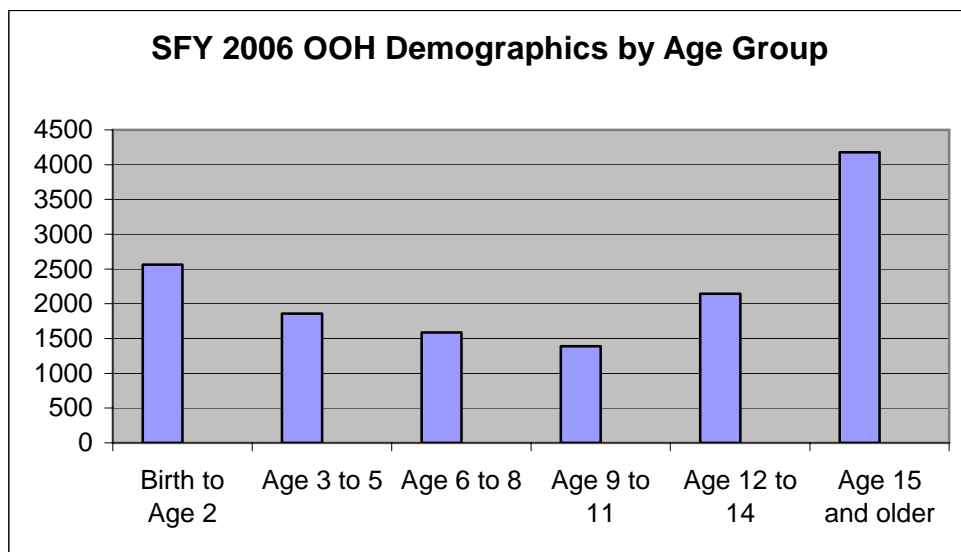
Colorado Demographics

- Over the last four years, 2002 – 2006, the child population in Colorado has increased nearly 4 percent.
- 67% of the children involved in cases for SFY 2006 are of Non-Hispanic Origin.
- For SFY 2006, nearly 47% of the child welfare children were female, and 53% were male.
- In Colorado, 78% of the children and youth participating in a case are Caucasian.



Colorado OOH Demographics by Age Group

- In Colorado, there are 13, 715 Children and Youth in Out of Home Placement
- Youth ages 15+ make up the largest single age group placed out of the home with the total number of 4,193 representing nearly 31 percent of Colorado’s Out-of-home Population.
- The high number of youth, as well as the intensity of family problems, results in more difficult cases that take longer to resolve.



Referrals

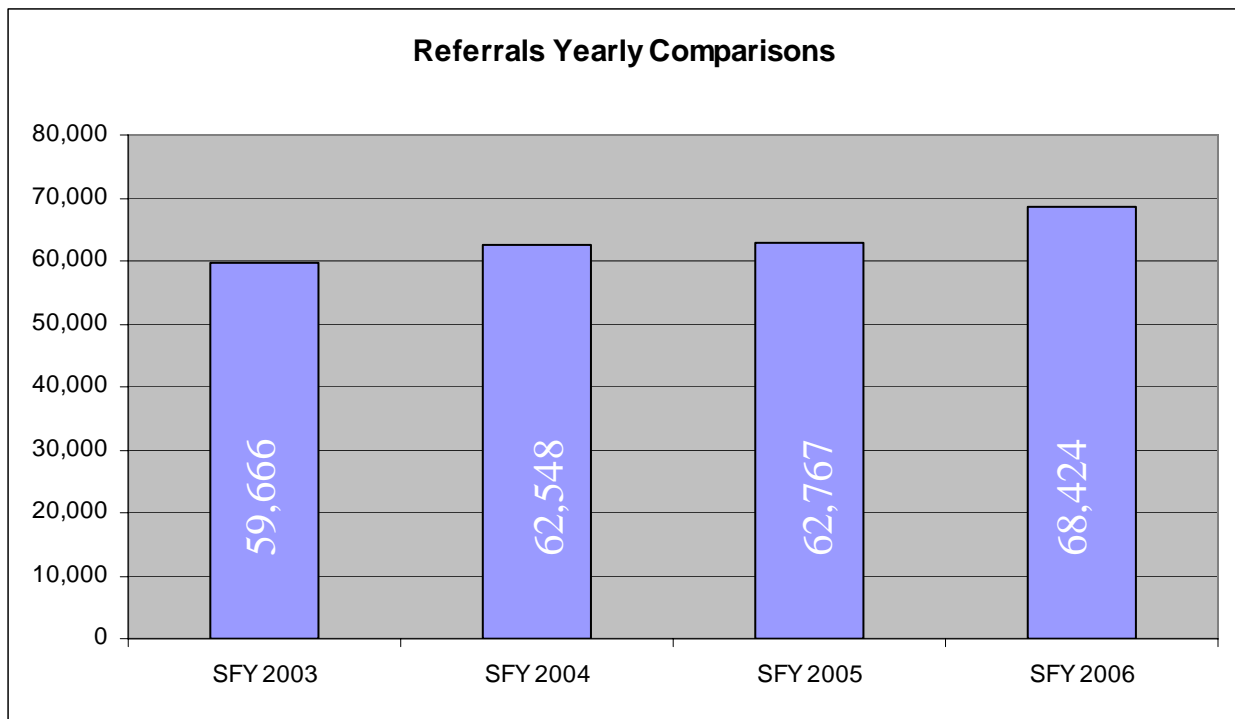
This data reflects the number of initial reports of abuse/neglect regarding a child and his/her family received during SFY 2006. This number reflects families and not children. Children may be involved in more than one referral at any given time.

In SFY 2006 the Division of Child Welfare received 68,424 reports of suspected abuse or neglect. This is an increase of nearly 15% over the last 4 years.

In SFY 2006, county departments of human services reported to the Division of Child Welfare that they received 68,424 reports of suspected child abuse/neglect. In SFY 2003, the county departments

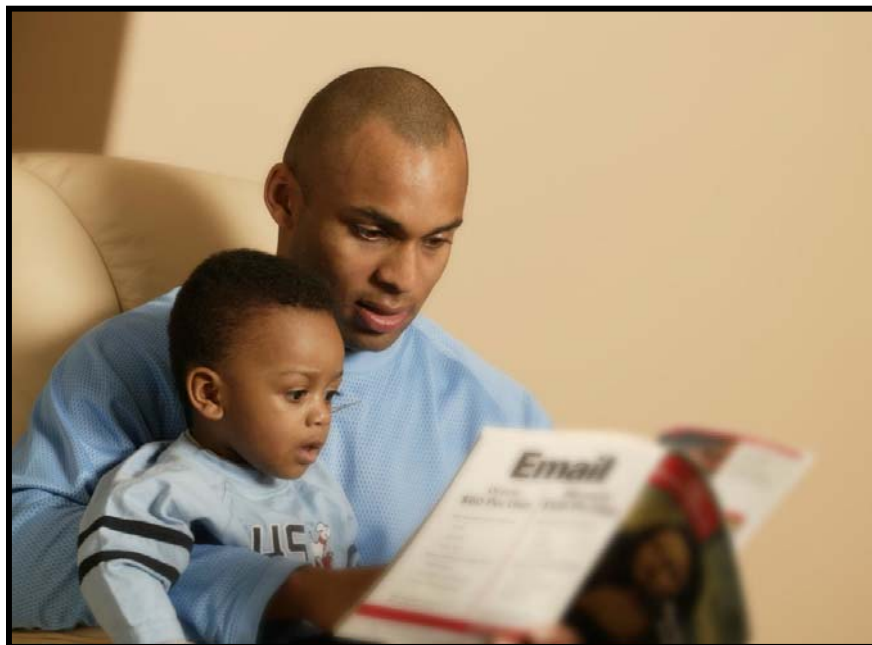
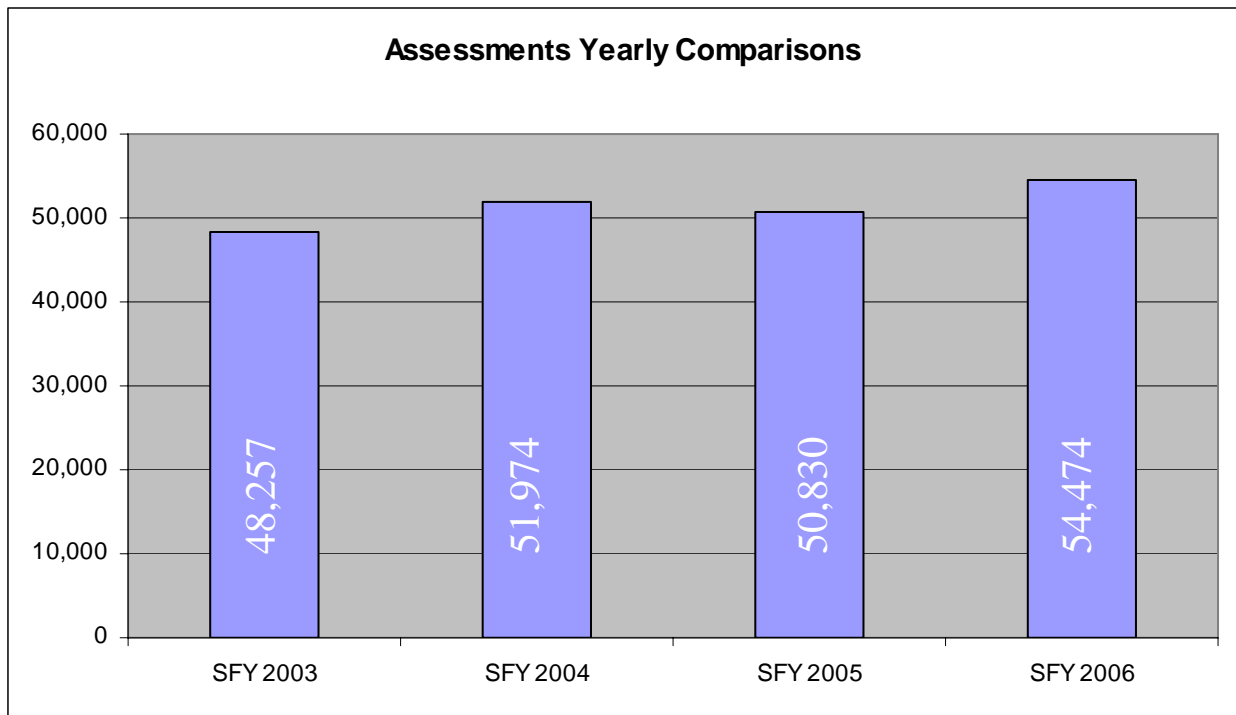


reported to Division of Child Welfare that they received 59,666 reports of suspected child abuse/neglect. This is an increase of nearly 15 percent over this time period. Part of the increase is attributable to a change in policy where referrals were included as a factor in the formula for allocating funding to county departments. This continuing rise in reports, as well as the intensity of family problems, presents a challenge to CDHS and community partners to meet the needs of children.



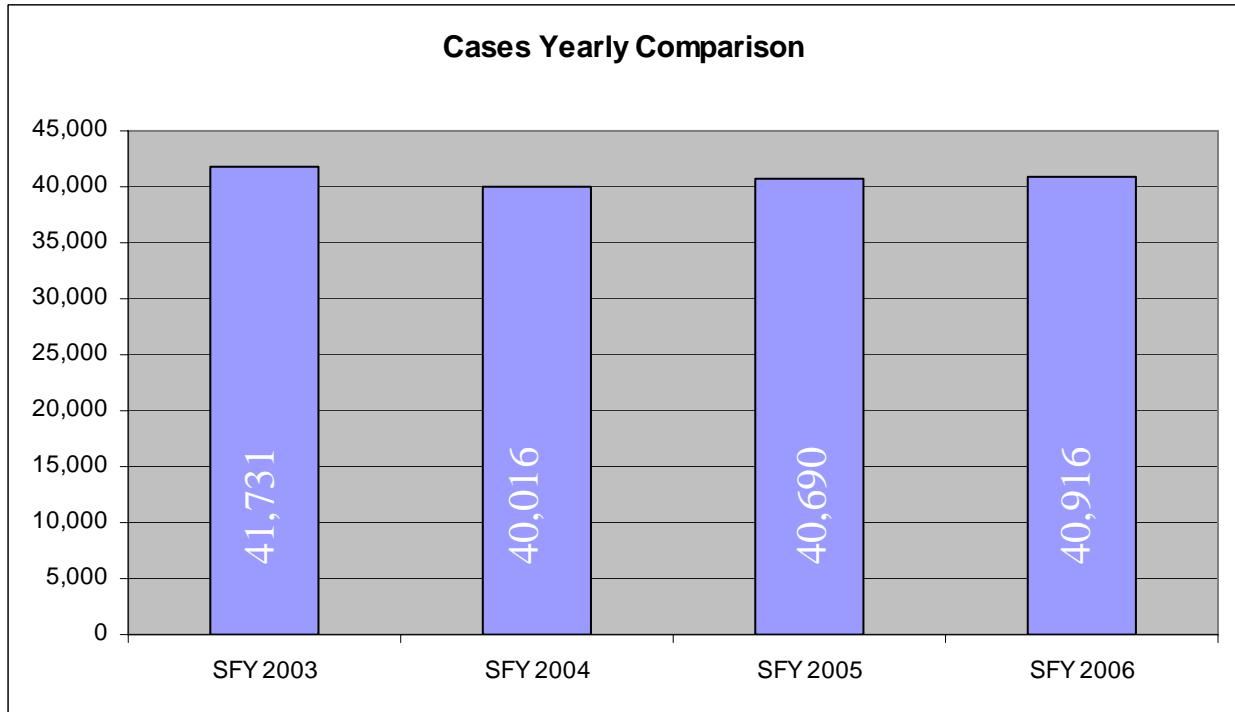
Assessments

This data represents the number of children reported in referrals that were accepted for assessment during SFY 2006. Assessment is the stage during which a worker investigates an incident or allegation further, by assessing the child's safety, risk of future maltreatment, family situation, and other factors, or by gathering additional information about Youth in Conflict. This may also begin the process of arranging services for the child and /or family. Assessment is the stage formerly called "investigation" or "intake".



Cases

This information reflects the number of children in open cases during SFY 2006. This is the number of children, participating as a child, for whom the Involvement Start Date falls within the time period. It is important to note that children may be duplicated across the state if the family moves from one county to another and receives services in both counties.



In FFY 2006, data show 24 children died from causes related to abuse and/or neglect.

Fatalities Related to Child Abuse/Neglect
Regrettably and with sympathy for families who have lost these loved ones, 24 children died in Colorado in FFY 2006 as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The fatalities were attributed to actions by parents, legal guardians or custodians, or persons responsible for providing out-of-home care, including a foster parent, an employee of a residential child care facility, and a provider of family child care or center-based child care.

Colorado reports this data based on federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) so the data is consistent with federal fatality data, which is published and tracked for all states.



Out-of-home (OOH) Population

Children are placed in out-of-home placements when their family cannot assure their safety in the family's home. Out-of-home placements include foster care providers (including kinship care providers), Residential Treatment Centers, Residential Child Care Facilities, or Group Homes. This figures the number of children in an out-of-home placement (reimbursed or non-reimbursed) that was open during SFY 2006. Children are counted once for each county but may have been placed by more than one county during the year, in which case they are counted once for each placing county.

Although Colorado's Child Population increased by nearly 4% over the last few years, the number of child abuse/neglect victims in out-of-home care decreased by 2.3%.

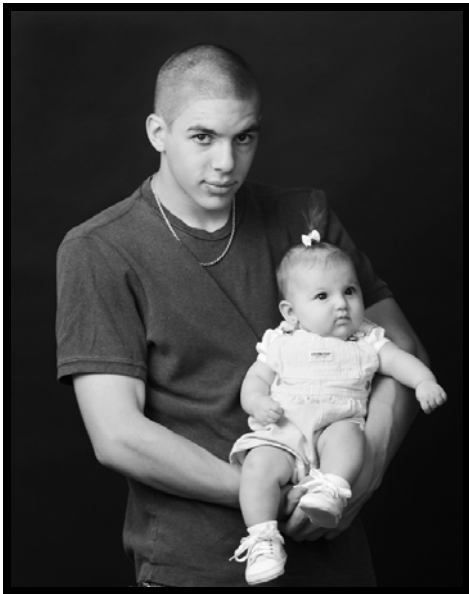
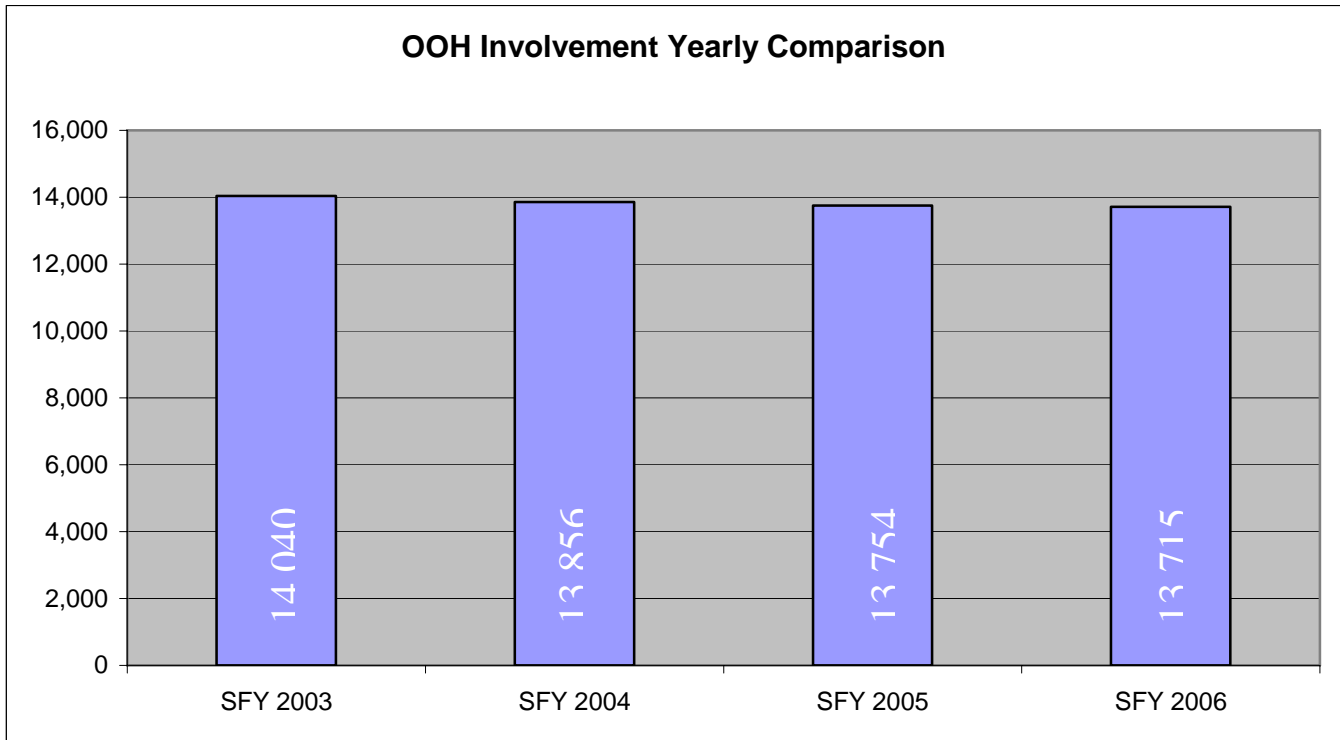


Photo: Kit Hedman

The decrease in placements was 2.3% over four fiscal years. For SFY2005 and SFY 2006, the total number of placements was stable with a decrease of 39 placements. The number of children who are placed in informal or uncertified kinship has increased over the past several years, and may be one factor accounting for the decrease in formal placements where the county department retains custody of the child. In addition there has been increased practice in county departments to partner with community agencies that can provide services for families informally and assure the safety of the child rather than formal services from the county department.



Adoption

Colorado Department of Human Services and county departments are committed to promoting safety, permanency and well-being. One of the ways this occurs is moving children quickly from temporary foster care to permanent living arrangements. When adoption is the goal, a family is recruited that best matches the child's needs. CDHS places a high value on preserving and promoting relationships between siblings, placing them together in the same adoptive family whenever it is safe and possible to do so.

There were 1093 children legally freed for adoption in SFY 2006, either by relinquishment or termination of parental rights, and 930 finalized adoptions. Out of the 1093 children that were legally freed for adoption, 584 were under the age of three. As children get older, the chances for an adoptive placement decrease dramatically, creating a critical need for adoptive homes for older children.



Free for Adoption

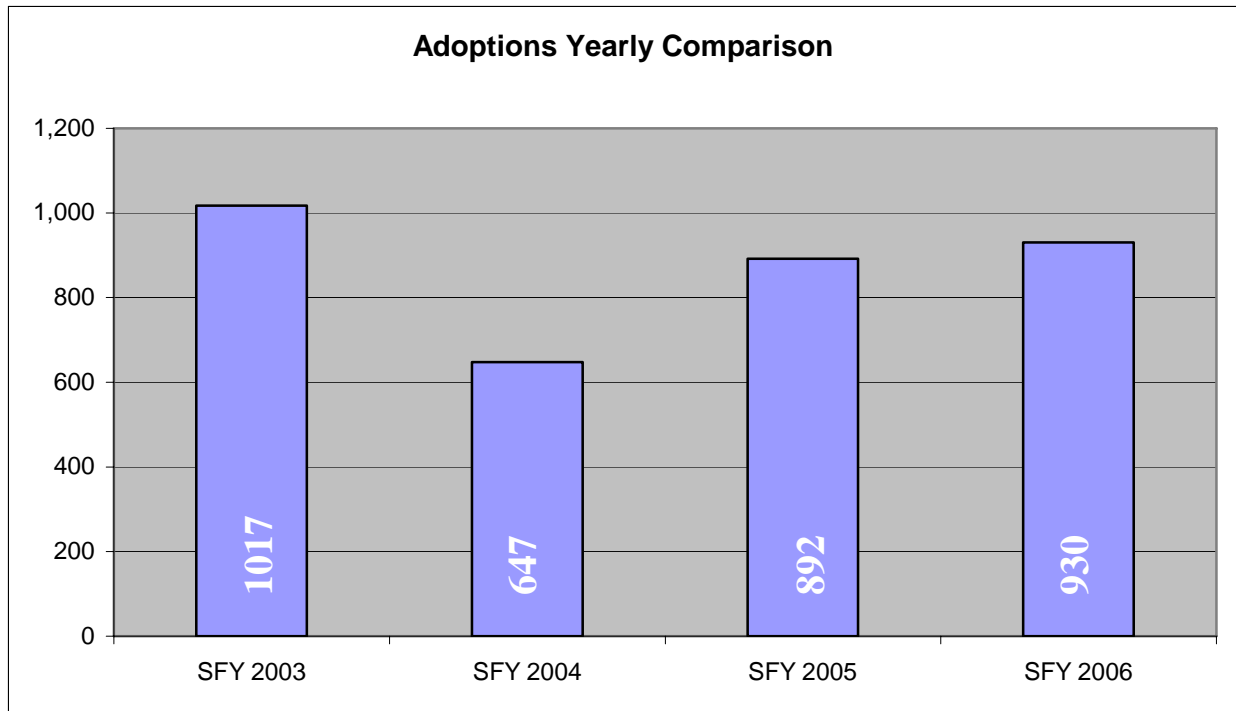
There were 1093 children legally freed for adoption in SFY 2006.



Age Group	Statewide Totals
0-1	350
2-3	234
4-5	143
6-7	125
8-9	79
10-11	58
12-13	47
14-15	37
16-17	20
Total Count	1093

Adoption

This information represents the number of adoptions that were finalized from SFY 2003 – SFY 2006.



Forever Families

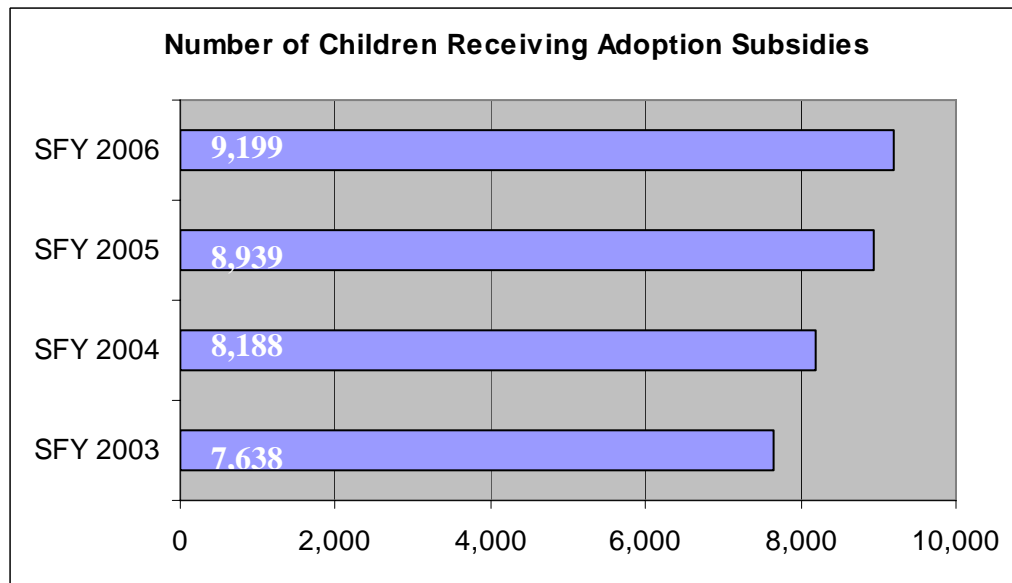
Many of the children placed for adoption by child welfare have special needs. These special needs often create barriers for families who would like to adopt due to medical, emotional or physical needs of the child. Colorado has assisted these families by providing services, monetary assistance and/or medical insurance that are designed to remove or reduce the barriers for adoptive families.

In a partnership with The Adoption Exchange, the Department of Human Services has created the Colorado Post Adoption Resource Center. The Center provides information, referrals, financial help and education to the families who have adopted through the public child welfare system. This agency is intended to support families across Colorado so that adoption creates a “forever family”.



Adoption Subsidies

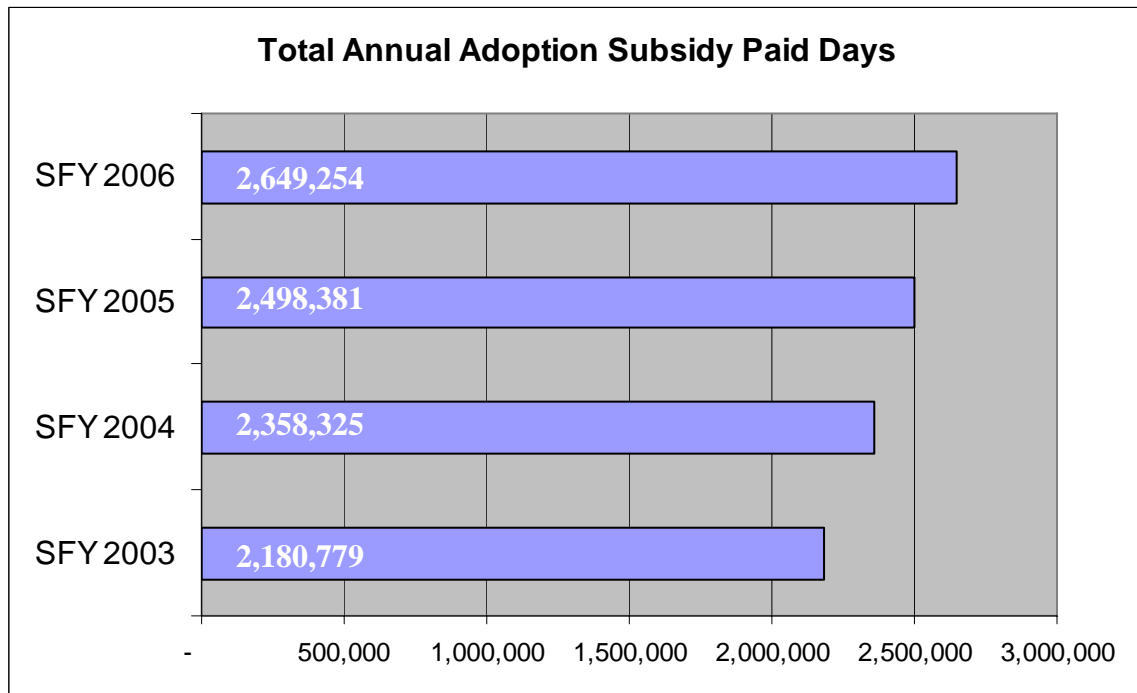
This information reflects the number of children receiving adoption subsidies for SFY 2006. The number of children receiving subsidies has increased by 1561 children, representing an increase of 20% over the last few years.



In SFY 2006, data shows the annual number of children receiving subsidies has increased 20%. The cost for the subsidies has also increased over the last few years by about 10%.

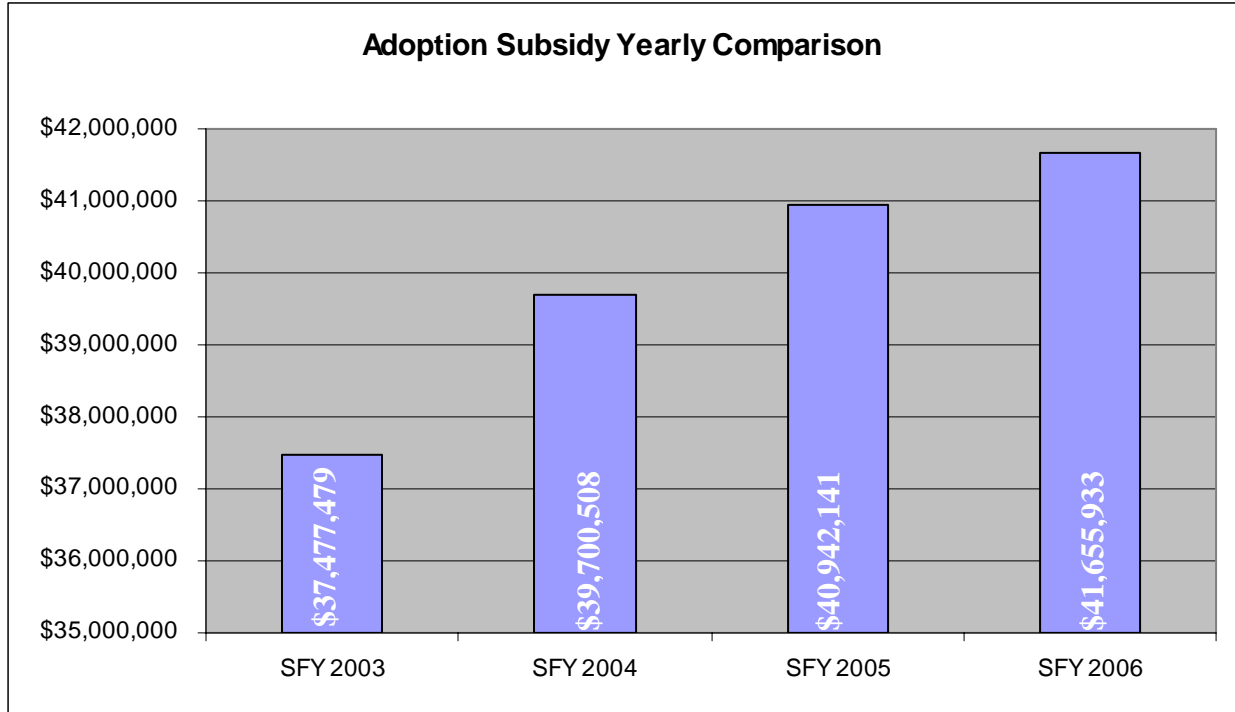
Adoption Subsidy Paid Days

The number of days an adoption subsidy was paid per child over the last few years has increased by 468,475, an increase of more than 21%.



Adoption Subsidy Cost

The number of annual subsidy paid days has increased by over four million dollars, which represents an increase of over 10% for the past few years.



Child Welfare Fiscal Impact

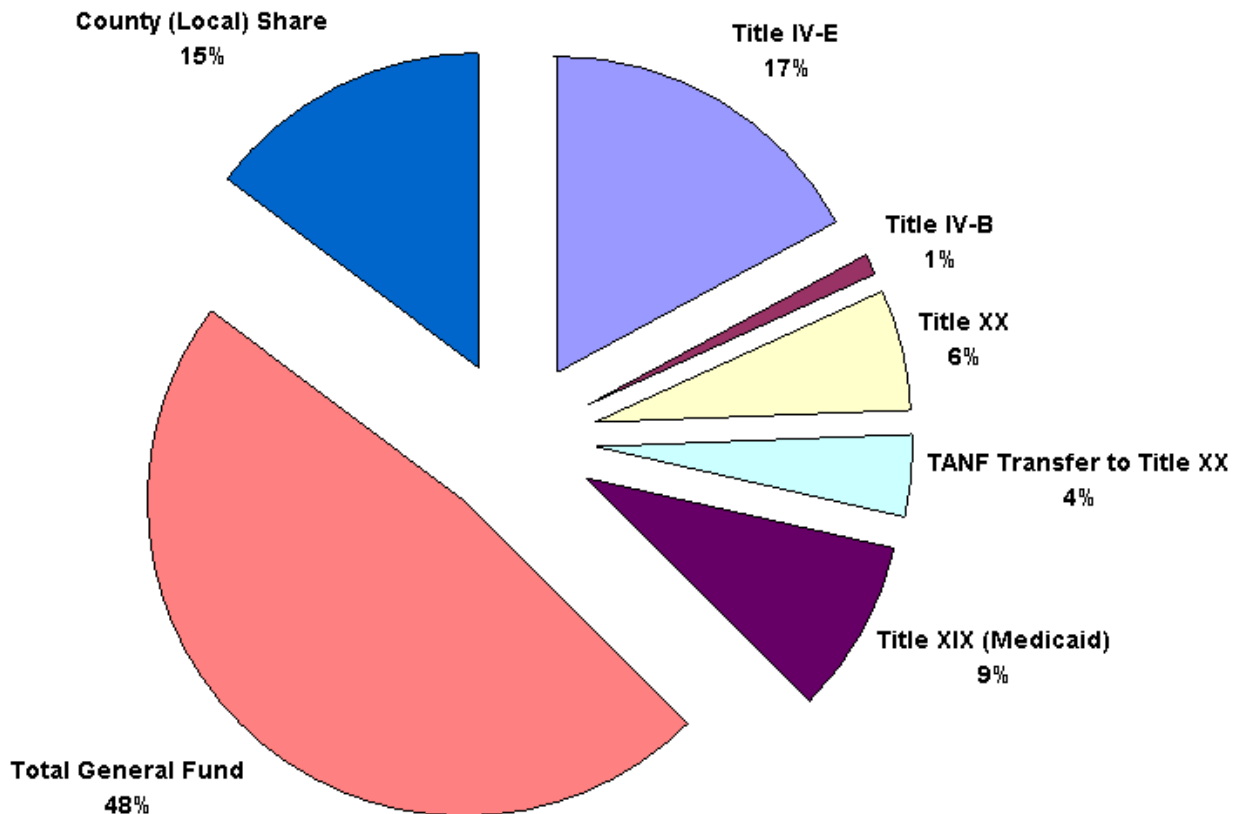
Child Welfare Budget Overview

Funding for Child Welfare services is comprised of county share, state general fund and federal funding. The information below reflects the funding splits for SFY2006.



State/Local/Federal Split

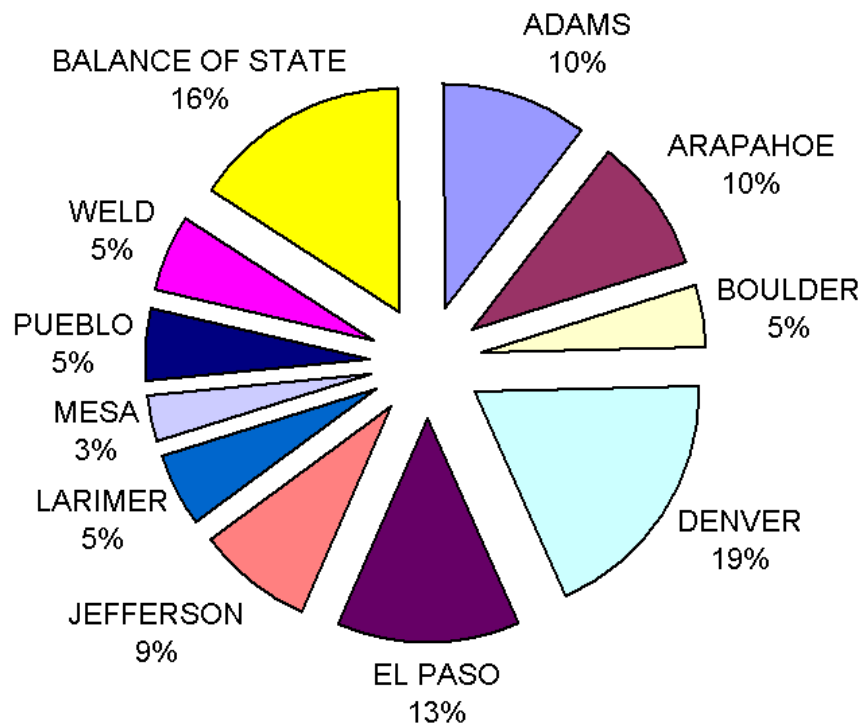
Funding	Amount
Title IV-E	\$63,009,690
Title IV-B	\$4,019,549
Title XX	\$22,690,313
TANF Transfer to Title XX	\$15,130,950
Title XIX (Medicaid)	\$32,610,055
Total General Fund	\$174,647,807
County (Local) Share	\$53,770,114
Grand Total Child Welfare/Core/Chafee Expenditures	\$365,878,478



Child Welfare Services Block

The Department allocates funds to county departments in a block which the county may spend without categorical restriction, such as a set dollar amount for out-of-home or for staffing. The following data represents the Child Welfare Block as allocated to the various counties, broken out by the Ten Large Counties and the Balance of the State.

PERCENTAGE OF THE CHILD WELFARE SERVICES BLOCK LINE		
ADAMS	\$ 32,389,007	10.47%
ARAPAHOE	\$ 30,138,679	9.74%
BOULDER	\$ 14,338,591	4.64%
DENVER	\$ 57,524,811	18.60%
EL PASO	\$ 39,657,865	12.82%
JEFFERSON	\$ 26,489,892	8.56%
LARIMER	\$ 16,019,831	5.18%
MESA	\$ 10,183,655	3.29%
PUEBLO	\$ 16,609,638	5.37%
WELD	\$ 16,564,260	5.36%
BALANCE OF STATE	\$ 49,383,051	15.97%
	\$ 309,299,280	100.00%



Average Cost and Length of Stay

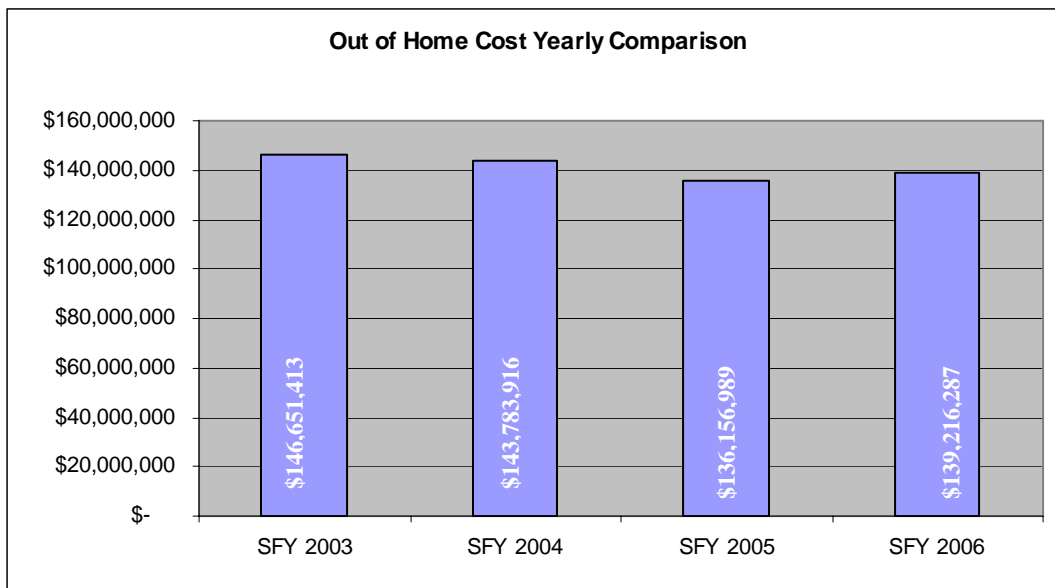
Over the last four years, the cost per day for children in out-of-home care has risen but the average length of stay and out-of-home placement expenditures has decreased.

Cost for OOH Placements				
	SFY 2003	SFY 2004	SFY 2005	SFY 2006
Total Payments for OOH Placements	\$146,651,413 .00	\$143,783,916 .00	\$136,156,989 .00	\$139,216,287.00
State Total Paid Days	2,375,447.00	2,259,541.00	2,168,599.00	2,157,735.00
Average Cost Per Day	\$61.74	\$63.63	\$62.79	\$64.52
Unique Count of Clients in Placement	14,040.00	13,856.00	13,754.00	13,715.00
Average Length of Stay	169.20	163.10	157.70	157.30



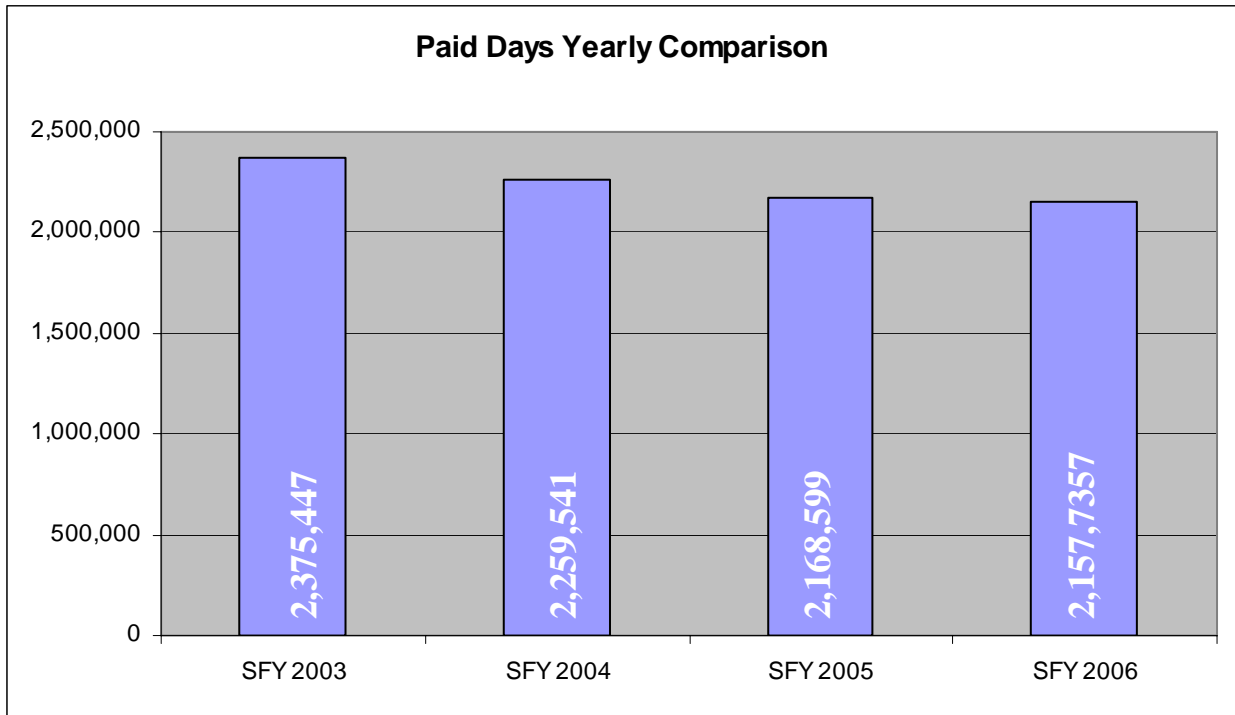
Cost of Out-of-Home Placements

The expenditures for out-of-home placement have decreased by more than 5% in the last four years, as the number of children placed in out-of-home care has also decreased. There has been more emphasis on children and families receiving services and support through their communities as county departments increase their community based partnerships. Additionally, counties are providing an expansive array of services to keep children safely with their families.



Paid Days

This data represents the number of paid days of Out-of-Home placement, which has steadily declined over the last four years.



The number of paid days of placement decreased over the last four years (SFY 2002-2006).



Next Steps for Child Welfare

- ❑ 2008-2010 Colorado Department of Human Services and will work in partnership with policymakers, community leaders and other public and private agencies to improve outcomes for children and families to by participating in the second round of the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR).
- ❑ The Department will continue to advocate for and assure the educational success of children in out-of-home care.
- ❑ Additional curriculum for foster parents and education staff regarding educational advocacy for children in out-of-home care will be developed and delivered.
- ❑ Analysis of kinship care and county practices that support children's care by their family members will occur.
- ❑ More emphasis will be placed on foster families being included as a valued team member in decision-making and participation in the development of the child's family service plan.
- ❑ The State will continue to evaluate county practice that promotes placement stability of children.



Additional information about Child Welfare policies, procedures and initiatives is available through Child Welfare's web page at:

<http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/childwelfare>

In closing, the Department is working with county departments, judicial and other child serving agencies to improve outcomes for children, youth and families. We thank our partners for their many and diverse efforts towards Colorado's success.

Upon request this publication can be furnished electronically.

This report is also available on the Web:

<http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/childwelfare/reports.htm>

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Photo: Kit Hedman