

Division of Child Welfare ***Annual Report*** ***2009***



Safety • Permanency • Well-Being

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Our Mission: “Everything we do enhances the delivery of child welfare services so that Colorado’s children and families are safe and stable.”


Positive Outcomes

This Annual Report reflects the performance, activities and accomplishments of Colorado's Division of Child Welfare Services (DCWS) for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009 and the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) October 1, 2008 - September 30, 2009.

- Colorado's child and adolescent population increased by 3% in the last three years, with the current population estimate for children ages 0 - 17 at 1,258,823. Of this number, 41,918 children were served in open child welfare cases this year.
- 77% of these children are from the ten largest counties, including Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Denver, El Paso, Jefferson, Larimer, Mesa, Pueblo, and Weld counties. 23% of the children were served by the 54 small and mid-sized counties.
- The total number of new child welfare cases (14,459) decreased by 9% over the last three years, and by 13% since 2004.
- Colorado is placing more children with kin, a more permanent choice than foster care.
- The number of children in open out-of-home placement decreased by 14% since 2003, and is at a low of 12,342.
- 93% of all children served in their own homes through Family Preservation (Core) Services were maintained in their own home.
- 1,033 children in the legal custody of the department of human services were adopted in SFY 2009.
- 102 children are featured in the 2009 Heart Gallery, which will be Colorado's largest so far.
- The 11th Annual Celebration of Educational Excellence honored 262 foster care youth who completed high school or equivalent.
- Monthly caseworker contacts with families have increased by 3% from the previous year.
- Twenty-four Colorado counties participated in the Collaborative Management Program this year and met 78% of their identified outcomes.
- DCWS and Focus on the Family sponsored the 2008 "Wait No More" adoption recruitment event that successfully attracted over 1,300 people. "Wait No More" aims to reduce the time it takes children and youth to find their "forever" families.
- In June of 2009, Rocky Mountain Audio/Video Productions, Inc. received a silver "Telly", the highest award, from the 30th Annual Telly Award Council for its production of "The Child Welfare Choice." The Realistic Job Preview video assists applicants for child welfare casework positions in Colorado to learn more about what this kind of work entails prior to proceeding with the application process.
- Child Welfare sponsored a recruitment booth at the KOSI 101 Women in Business Breakfast on Thursday, September 18, 2008. 230 women attended, many who stopped by the booth to learn about the fostering and adoption programs.
- WorldVenture, an international faith-based organization headquartered in Littleton, Colorado, joined DCWS in sponsoring a 5K-benefit walk on September 13, 2008. Proceeds of over \$13,000 were divided equally between children in need in Uganda and educational needs of Colorado's foster children.
- The 2002 Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan was successfully completed and no sanctions were applied.
- Colorado applied to become one of the first national sites under the Mountain and Plains Child Welfare Implementation Center (MPCWIC) initiative by the Children's Bureau.
- DCWS in conjunction with the Office of Information Technology Services (OITS) successfully implemented several outcome and management reports that utilize COGNOS Reporting Software.



The number of children in open out-of-home placement decreased by 14% since 2003, and is at a low of 12,342.



Key Issues

Child Welfare Action Committee - Since July 2008, the Governor's Child Welfare Action Committee has been working on recommendations to improve Colorado's child welfare system. Thirteen recommendations were presented to Governor Bill Ritter, Jr. on October 31, 2008.

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) - The 2009 Statewide Assessment was completed January 28, 2009. Colorado's CFSR was held March 16 - 20, 2009 in Denver, Larimer and Fremont counties. General themes from the review indicate inconsistencies in: family assessment, timely permanency for children, and the availability of services for children, youth and families in all areas of the state. Colorado had a number of areas that were rated as strengths. Substantial conformity was achieved on two of the seven systemic factors. The concerted efforts Colorado has dedicated to improving child welfare policy and practice since the first round of the CFSR in 2002 were clearly reflected in the Statewide Assessment and onsite review. It is anticipated that the final report on Colorado's Child and Family Services Review will be available in September 2009.

Caseworker Contacts - In SFY 2009, twenty-two Colorado county departments of human services received \$340,000 in funding to increase caseworker contacts by implementing digital pen technology for caseworkers who make monthly client visits. The intent was to assist with efficient documentation to free caseworkers' time and increase quality face-to-face contacts with their clients. The Caseworker Contact Report for FFY 2009 shows that 72% of caseworkers made timely monthly client visits, a 3% increase from last year. Individual monthly samplings show compliance rates of caseworker contacts as high as 85%. Ninety% compliance is the goal for caseworkers to achieve.

Federal Triennial Title IV-E Review - In April 2008, the new automated Title IV-E Eligibility Module rolled-out statewide with the Initial Eligibility Determination component. In November 2008, the Ongoing and Redetermination of Title IV-E eligibility components were finalized, completing the Title IV-E eligibility module for foster care in Colorado Trails, Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). The Title IV-E Review by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) was held June 22-26, 2009, which Colorado passed.



Collaborative Efforts



Heart Gallery - The Heart Gallery is one of Colorado's most effective tools in matching older children with adoptive families. In June 2009, 20 photographers donated their time and services to photograph 102 children and youth at the Denver Zoo for the 2009 Heart Gallery Opening on October 26, 2009 at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Faith-Based Initiatives - This year, the collaboration between the public, private and faith-based organizations created the first "Wait No More" event in Colorado Springs. "Wait No More" refers to the plan, that as a result of events like these, there will be no more waiting for children to find their "forever" (adoptive) families. 1,300 people traveled to New Life Church on a chilly November morning to find out about adoption in Colorado and the many ways that they could be a part of caring for these waiting children. As a result of this occasion, over 250 families signed up with the intent to begin the adoption process in their respective communities.

Fatherhood Initiative - The Colorado Department of Human Services and the Colorado Promoting Responsible Fatherhood Initiative continue to host father engagement trainings for child welfare caseworkers. Paternal involvement is a key component of a child's development. The father engagement trainings highlight the goals and value of engaging fathers in child welfare cases, services available from fatherhood programs for caseworkers and dads, father engagement strategies, and a child welfare perspective from the eyes of a Colorado dad.

Collaborative Management Program (CMP) - The Collaborative Management Programs (HB04-1451) demonstrated a reduction in recidivism, increase in successful probation terminations, improved school attendance, reduction in truancy, reduction in use of inpatient services, reduction in substance abuse, and improvement in interagency collaborative processes. The CMP was highlighted as a cutting-edge program by reviewers in the Federal Child and Family Services Review. The CMP has grown from an initial 6 counties in 2006 to 24 Colorado counties for SFY 2009. The Collaborative Management Programs served nearly 12,718 children in SFY 2009.

Applied Research in Child Welfare Project - Child Welfare continues to work in partnership with twelve Colorado counties and Colorado State University conducting outcome studies, most recently in the area of outcomes for children in out-of-home care by type of placement.

Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) - Colorado's PSSF Program provides funding to thirty-three program sites, which includes forty-one counties and one tribe. These areas represent nearly 90% of the children under the age of 18 in Colorado. Approximately 17,417 families received a service that was funded in part from PSSF funding. Services provided in each program site vary and depend on the needs of the community.

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) - For SFY 2009, there were 969 Native American children or youth in child welfare cases.

Safety

Referrals and Assessments - County departments of human services received 76,144 referrals of possible child abuse or neglect. Of that number, 82% were received by the ten largest counties. 64,735 referrals were accepted for assessment (See chart below).

Fatalities - Regrettably and with sympathy for families, 34 children died in Colorado in FFY 2009 as a result of abuse or neglect. Efforts are being made statewide to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of Colorado's children.

24-Hour Monitoring - The 24-Hour Monitoring Unit was responsible for conducting 72 on-site monitoring visits. This allowed the unit to spend over 185 days within facilities assuring children were placed within safe and nurturing home environments. The unit also provided over 65 days of technical assistance and specialty training to staff and administrators within these facilities.

County Foster Care Program Reviews - During SFY 2009, four county foster care program reviews were completed.

Institutional Abuse Review Team - The Institutional Abuse Review Team (IART) reviewed 693 reports.

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) - There were approximately 1,800 incoming and outgoing ICPC requests.

Referral, Information and Complaints - DCWS staff processed 139 complaints to the counties for follow-up. 807 information and referral contacts were received.

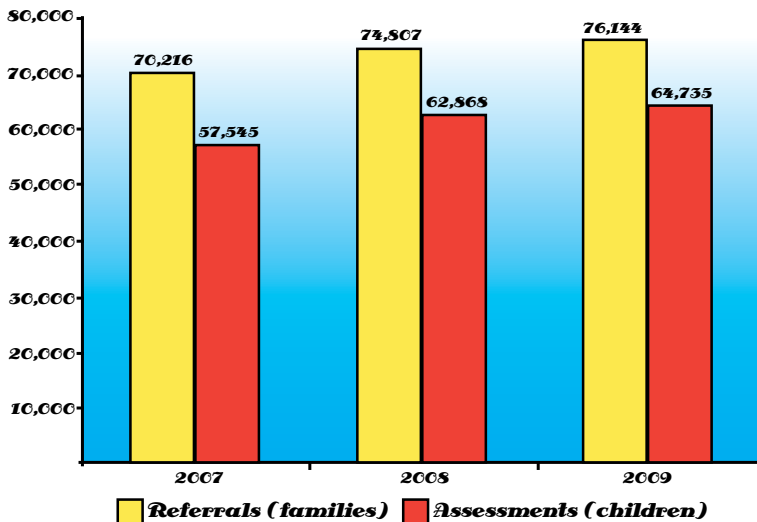


Core Services - The Core Services Program was established within the Colorado Department of Human Services in 1994 and is statutorily mandated to provide strength-based resources and support to families when children are at imminent risk of out-of-home placement and/or are in need of services to maintain a least restrictive setting. The menu of Core Services includes: mental health services, substance abuse treatment, intensive family therapy, home-based intervention, life skills, day treatment, sexual abuse treatment, special economic assistance, and county designed services.

For SFY 2009, \$45,956,710 was allocated to the Core Services Program and a total of 16,066 children (unduplicated count) received at least one Core Service. Of the children served 10,558 began new service episodes during the state fiscal year. Over 50,000 services (duplicated count) were provided to children and families throughout the year.

Nearly all children (93%) with discharges in SFY 2009 who were at home at the time Core Services began, were maintained in their home during their Core Service episodes. In addition, children who received Core Services were less likely to experience an out-of-home placement during the 12 months following discharge from services. Of those children discharged from Core Services during the state fiscal year, 20% were in an out-of-home placement on the date they began Core Services. Close to two-thirds (64%) of these children left the out-of-home placement and stepped down to a less restrictive setting (including returning home) during their Core Services episode.

Colorado Count of Referrals and Assessments for Child Welfare



Permanency & Well-Being

County Departments served 41,918 children in open child welfare cases this year. There were only 14,459 new child welfare cases opened in Trails, which is a decrease of 9% over the last three years, and a decrease of 13% since 2004 (see chart below). 12,342 children and youth were in out-of-home care at least one day during SFY 2009, which is a decrease of 6% since SFY 2007. Of these:

- 5,576 were in non-relative family foster care homes
- 660 were in group home care
- 730 were in kinship family foster care homes
- 18 were in receiving home care (short-term crisis family foster care home)

Out-of-home Expenditures

The cost for family foster care:

- County department certified family foster care, kinship family foster care, and receiving homes was \$16,934,013
- Child Placement Agency (CPA) certified family foster care homes was \$32,224,604 (CPAs contract with county departments to provide family foster care homes and there are administrative overhead costs for these agencies)
- The total cost for foster care was \$49,158,617
- The total cost for group homes/centers was \$11,573,360

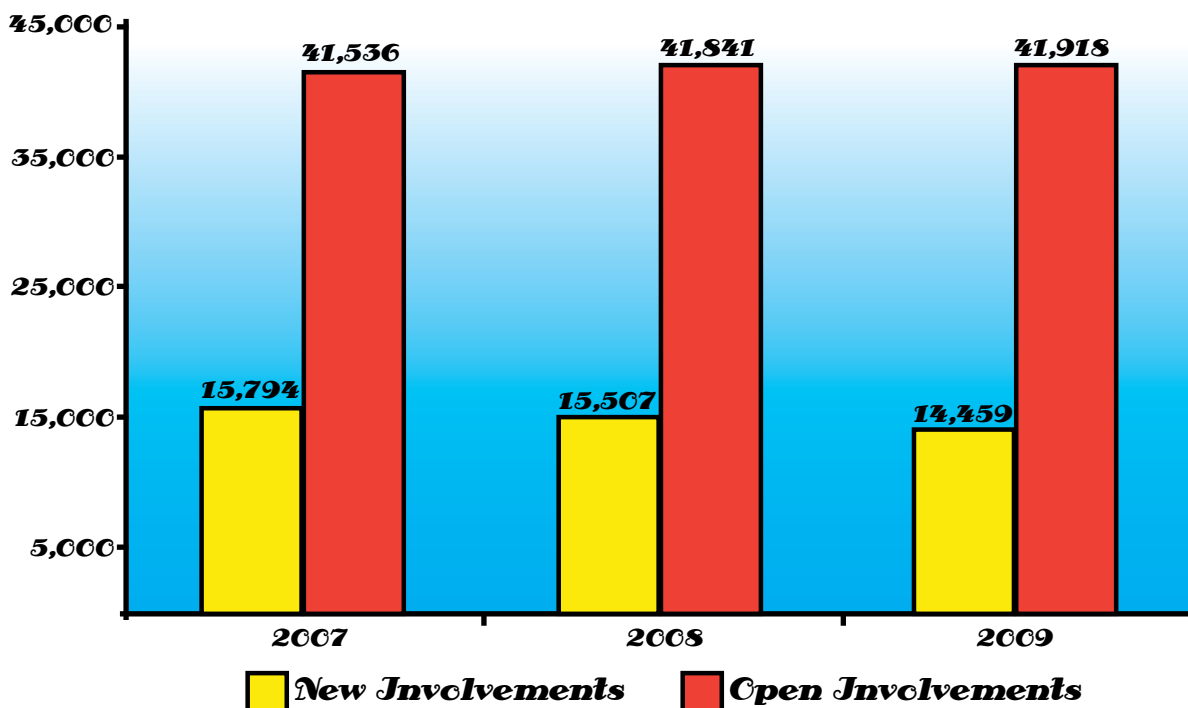
Residential Care - There were 2,238 children in residential care including children placed in Therapeutic Residential Child Care Facilities (TRCCF), Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF), Residential Child Care Facilities (RCCF), and Hospital Care. On any given day, there were approximately six children in a PRTF placement and 899 in TRCCF placement. The number of children in residential care is declining from previous years, as is the number of children placed in all out-of-home care. Children in TRCCF placements comprise approximately 14% of all out-of-home care.

Adoption - 120 adoptions were finalized on National Adoption Day, November 20, 2008. Nine counties celebrated Adoption Month by finalizing 165 adoptions. Across the state, 1,033 adoptions were finalized this year. There continues to be about 550 children whose parental rights have been terminated, for whom an adoptive family has not been identified.

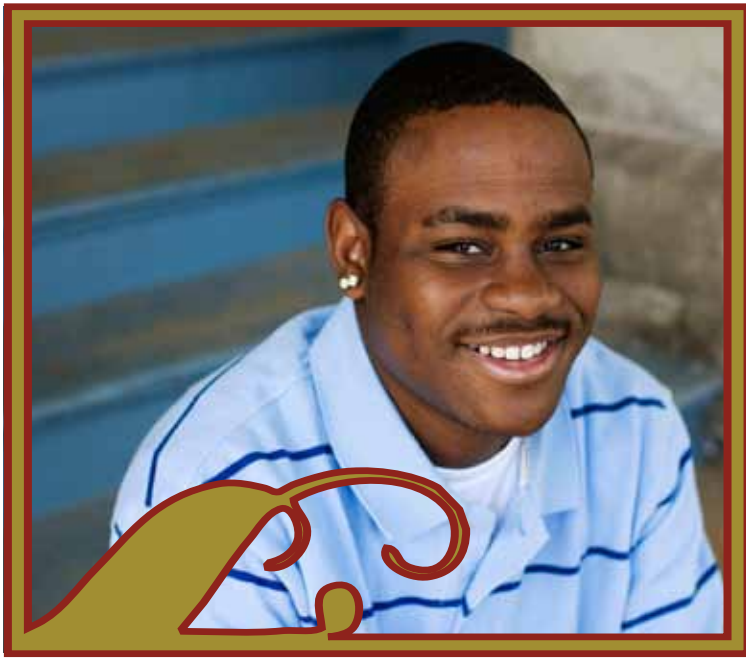
Children's Habilitation Residential Program (CHRP)

- A total of 160 children between the ages of 5 and 21 were served during SFY 2009.
- The CHRP waiver is up for renewal with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid on July 1, 2009.
- Fifty-one % (51%) of the 160 children served had intensive needs and were able to remain in a community setting.
- Total program expenditures were \$5,814,473.

Colorado New and Open Involvements in Child Welfare



Spotlight on Youth



Supportive Services for Runaway and Homeless Youth (SSRHY) Program - This program received a grant for \$200,000 per year for October 1, 2008 - September 30, 2013 to provide runaway and homeless prevention and intervention services for youth, including undocumented youth, ages 16-21 years. The Colorado "Safe Places" Continuum of Care (Rural Collaborative) was awarded four grants totaling approximately \$2.5 million for rural youth and families homelessness prevention. This Rural Collaborative is composed of six rural regional Colorado sites.

Rural Coalition for Homeless Youth (RCHY) - Colorado was one of three states to receive the RCHY Services Grant. This grant helped Alamosa, Huerfano, Garfield, Moffat, Montezuma, and Montrose counties strategically plan, network, and integrate community, regional, and statewide services. These services assist at-risk 16-21 year old youth and young adults, promote self-sufficiency, and prevent runaways or homeless youth migrating from rural areas to strained and limited urban resources.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) - The CFCIP offers emancipation preparation services to youth in all counties. This year, CFCIP allocated \$2,112,690 to 19 regions serving 41 counties, and to the YES! Academy Transitional Living Program serving urban, rural, and Native American youth. The CFCIP providers offer a wide array of services including assistance to make life long connections, support for secondary and post-secondary education, leadership and employment skills to eligible youth.

Emancipation Medicaid - Eligible youth, between age 18 and 21 who were in foster care or adoption assistance at age 18 continue to receive medical care through Emancipation Medicaid. Youth report that medical stability

offers an additional effect of financial, housing and employment stability.

Youth Housing - Family Unification Program (FUP) - DCWS and Supportive Housing & Homeless Programs secured priority housing for youth through 90 federal housing vouchers.

Youth Empowerment Systems (YES!) Academy - The YES! Academy is a statewide service safety net which provides services to help transitioning youth avoid homelessness and human trafficking victimization. There are approximately 1,500 youth and young adults ages 12-24 that are homeless. The highest priority of the YES! Academy is to empower youth to succeed through securing housing, education and employment. The YES! Academy is also a collaborative member of the Advisory Council for Homeless Youth.

Youth Leadership Team (YLT) - Colorado's Youth Leadership Team is a positive youth development program that informs public policies, programming and practice development. It is composed of "youth-young" adult leadership teams whose members are known as consultants who help improve the child welfare system statewide. There are currently 30 members from various counties across the state. Colorado's YLT members had several milestones this year:

- Celebrated their one year anniversary
- Assisted with the development of the Supportive Services for Runaway Homeless Youth (SSRHY) grant
- 11 youth testified at the Governor's Child Welfare Action Committee
- Testified at the State Board of Human Services on the proposed rule requiring vital identification documents they will need to receive critical services after discharge
- 9 youth aided in the Child and Family Services Review
- 9 members enrolled in the Youth Congressional Awards Program
- 2 members were selected for the Metropolitan Mayors and County Commissioners Award

Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) - are administered by the Orphan Foundation of America. ETVs provide up to \$5,000 per student per year for eligible emancipated foster care or adoption assistance youth attending college or vocational school. The vouchers can be used for tuition and fees, books, supplies and educational equipment, on and off campus housing, child care, transportation and health care. The students receive strategic coaching to increase college retention.

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) - The Independent Living module in Trails was launched this year and completes the first data collection phase of the NYTD Project. Beginning October 1, 2010, states receiving federal Chafee funds are required to collect and submit data through this database.

Federal Data

Colorado reports the following data based on the Federal Fiscal Year (October 1, 2008 - September 30, 2009). This data is consistent with federal maltreatment and foster care data, which is published and tracked for all states.

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) - For FFY 2009 Colorado, was in compliance on all but two foster care elements (Periodic Review and Timeliness of Removal Data Entry). Colorado is working to improve these elements.

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data (NCANDS) System - For FFY 2009, there were 9,416 child victims:

- 71.2% involved neglect (6,700 out of 9,416)
- 15.6% involved physical abuse (1,471 out of 9,416)
- 8.4% involved sexual abuse (794 out of 9,416)
- 3.1% involved psychological/emotional maltreatment (294 out of 9,416)
- 1.1% involved medical neglect (103 out of 9,416)
- .5% were unknown or missing data (51 out of 9,416)
- 0% involved no alleged maltreatment (3 out of 9,416)

NCANDS Incidence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care - Out of the 14,479 children in foster care for FFY 2009, 14,402 or 99.47% did not experience abuse or neglect while in care.

NCANDS Absence of Recurrence of Maltreatment - Out of the 5,350 children that had a founded abuse or neglect allegation, 5,079 or 94.9% did not have a recurrence of abuse or neglect in six months.

CFSR Permanency Outcomes - For FFY 2009, Colorado is in compliance with two of the four Permanency Outcomes: "Timeliness of Adoption" and "Length of Time to Achieve Permanency". Colorado is below the national standard for "Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification" and "Stability of Foster Care Placements" and is working to improve these outcomes.

CFSR Safety Outcomes - For FFY 2009, preliminary estimates are that Colorado is in compliance with "Recurrence of Maltreatment" and out of compliance with "Incidence of Abuse/Neglect in Foster Care".

Financial Services

Division of Child Welfare Services Overall Budget - The total funding for DCWS was \$419,809,245 and of that, approximately 97% was allocated to the county departments. 93% of those funds were for the Child Welfare Services Block and Core Services line items.

Parental Fees and Refunds - For SFY 2009, \$2,860,259 was collected in parental fees to offset the cost of out-of-home placement.

Child Welfare Services Block
The following data represents the SFY 2009 Child Welfare Block as allocated to various counties, broken out by the Ten Large Counties and the Balance of State.

Percentage of the Child Welfare Services Block Line		
Adams County	\$ 33,163,578	9.76%
Arapahoe County	\$ 32,724,034	9.64%
Boulder County	\$ 15,460,401	4.55%
Denver County	\$ 64,271,668	18.92%
El Paso County	\$ 40,523,569	11.93%
Jefferson County	\$ 28,924,188	8.52%
Larimer County	\$ 16,321,370	4.81%
Mesa County	\$ 11,780,587	3.47%
Pueblo County	\$ 18,753,135	5.52%
Weld County	\$ 17,960,782	5.29%
Balance of State	\$ 59,734,224	17.59%



Next Steps

Reform Efforts - Colorado is actively engaged in reform efforts that build on the work of the Governor's Child Welfare Action Committee and focuses on improving Colorado's child welfare system. The State plans to use the numerous assessments and audits of child welfare to prioritize the actions to be taken to improve outcomes for children and their families.

Citizenship Options for Undocumented Children, Youth, and Families - Colorado served 152 undocumented children and youth in SFY 2009. Although immigration law often adds more complexity to a child welfare case, there are several "Citizenship Options" or pathways for a child to receive a special classification. These may include unaccompanied minor refugee, asylee, a victim of human trafficking, special immigrant juvenile status, dual citizenship, military service, work or education visas, etc. The Division is committed to ensuring immigration is fully developed as a Colorado child welfare best practice in 2010.

Green Light Project - In November 2009, the "Green Light" project will kick-off in honor of the National and State Runaway and Homeless Youth Awareness Month. Showing support for homeless and runaway youth is as easy as flipping a switch! Porch lights across the country will glow green during November to raise awareness and show support for homeless and runaway youth.

Child and Family Services Review - Colorado has begun developing a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) which is required to address each outcome and systemic factor determined not to be in substantial conformity. The PIP will reflect changes needed to improve Colorado's outcomes. Major elements are projected to include each area of non-conformity, necessary action steps associated with improving each of these areas, identification of individuals responsible for carrying out the various steps, and establishment of time frames for completing the required improvements. Colorado will establish short and long-term goals that will have positive effects on children and families, as well as long-term goals establishing a plan for lasting reform. The PIP is anticipated to be submitted to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) by the end of December 2009.

Mountain and Plains Child Welfare Implementation Center (MPCWIC) - DCWS applied to become a pilot site through the Mountain and Plains Child Welfare Implementation Center. The goal of this initiative is to improve child and family outcomes at every level of the system by collaboratively designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating a child welfare practice model. This model will identify, align, and reflect core practice principles, skills and intervention strategies at the State and in the counties. Managerial, supervisory, and employee levels of staff will be involved, and the Initiative is inclusive of clients, stakeholders, providers and other child and family serving systems.



Acknowledgments

A special thank you to the Division of Child Welfare staff for their efforts and contributions in creating this year's Annual Report. Without the dedication, commitment and hard work of the staff, the creation of this document would not be possible. The Division would like to acknowledge the hard work of all child welfare staff around the state including state and county workers, community stakeholders, youth, families, volunteers and all others who ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of our children.

Photography:

Thanks to the photographers whose generosity, dedication, and creativity provided the pictures for the 2009 - 2010 Heart Gallery. Special thanks for the photos used in this 2009 Annual Report:

Cover - Joanna, Mario, and Steven by Susan English

Page 1 - Ajehnai by Patrina Odette

Page 3 - Demetrious by Paula Onofrio

Page 4 - Dashelle by Colleen Baz

Page 5 - Brandon by Heidi Muller

Page 7 - Dontae by Bree Leonard

Page 8 - Isis by Dana Gaertner


Page 9 - Dajane & Tniya & Sukiya by Pauline Fortuna

Back Cover - "It's Cool to Be Square" by Anastacia P. Bunte featuring Artwork by 2009 Chafee State Teen Conference Attendees

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