



FACTS ABOUT FOSTER KIDS Greenwood County 2006 (2005 Data)

A Publication of the South Carolina Governor's Office – Division of Foster Care Review

OVERVIEW

Facts About Foster Kids is intended to provide annual data about children in foster care for every county in South Carolina. It covers: **Demographics** -- how many children there are in foster care, their characteristics and whether their prevalence is increasing or decreasing; **Areas of Concern** -- legal and program shortcomings identified at monthly citizen reviews; and **Progress Measures** -- length of time in care, number of placements, achieving permanency, and recidivism rates. Information is collected from local volunteer citizen review boards that review the cases of all children who have been in foster care at least four months; each case is then reviewed every six months thereafter until the child leaves care. The 2006 edition includes complete information about children who were reviewed at least once in 2005. It also includes demographics on those children who entered foster care late in the year and were not reviewed until 2006, but does not yet incorporate them into progress measures or areas of concern.

DEMOGRAPHICS

For Greenwood County, the number of foster care children reviewed decreased slightly in 2005. In 2005, the number of children entering also decreased, and the number leaving care increased 50%.

Children in Foster Care, 2002 – 2005, Greenwood County					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	Average
Number of Children Reviewed	33	36	33	49	38
Change from Prior Year	-3	+3	+16		
Number Entering	3	4	8	5	5
Number Leaving	8	4	4	11	7

Characteristics of Children in Foster Care, 2005, Greenwood County						
	Children Reviewed		Children Entering		Children Leaving	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
ALL CHILDREN	33	100%	3	100%	8	100%
Race						
African-American	18	55%			3	37.5%
Caucasian	12	36%	3	100%	5	62.5%
Other	3	9%				
Gender						
Male	18	55%	2	67%	4	50%
Female	15	45%	1	33%	4	50%
Age						
5 and Younger	10	30.3%			3	37.5%
6 to 9	1	3%				
10 to 15	7	21.2%	3	100%		
16 and older	15	45.5%			5	62.5%

AREAS OF CONCERN

In 2005, Review Board members held 12 meetings and 58 reviews. Of the 58 reviews held, 33 (57%) had at least one area of concern cited by the local Review Board. The most often cited legal violations were *No Court Order at Review/Non-Compliance with Court Order* and *Other Statutory Issues*. The most often cited program violations were *No Progress Reports* and *Lack of Progress in Permanency Planning*.

Frequently Cited Areas of Concern, 2002 - 2005, Greenwood County				
	2005	2004	2003	2002
<u>Legal:</u>				
No Timely Permanency Plan Hearing	10	7	3	23
No Timely Merits Hearing	1	6	2	3
No Timely Probable Cause Hearing				
No Face to Face Contact	1		1	
No Court Order at Review/Non-Compliance w/Court Order	11	24	5	
No Thorough Adoption Assessment/Specific Child Recruitment		6		1
Other Statutory Issues	11	16	4	2
<u>Program:</u>				
No Progress Report	9	4	1	1
Lack of Progress Permanency Plan	9	13	10	12
Incomplete/Inappropriate Case Plan	4	7		2
No Advance Packets				1
Interested Parties Not Invited	2	2	1	
No Timely FCRB Hearing	2	3		
No Copy of Pleadings	2			
Other Policy/Procedure Violation		1	2	
TOTAL	62	89	29	45

PROGRESS MEASURES

Four main indicators are used to measure progress towards better outcomes for children in foster care. For each, comparison data for the previous four years are provided.

LENGTH OF TIME IN CARE:

The longer a child is away from their home or a nurturing family environment, the more damaging it can be to the normal development of the child. For this reason, a major goal of the Review Board is to ensure that children achieve permanency as quickly as possible. In 2005, the average length of time in care in Greenwood County remained at 4.2 years.

NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS:

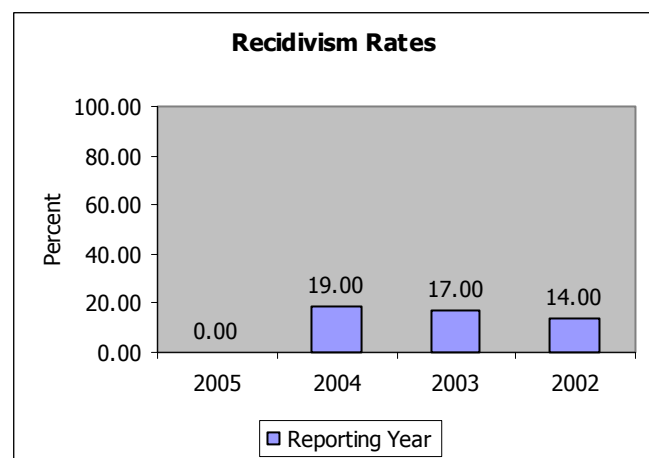
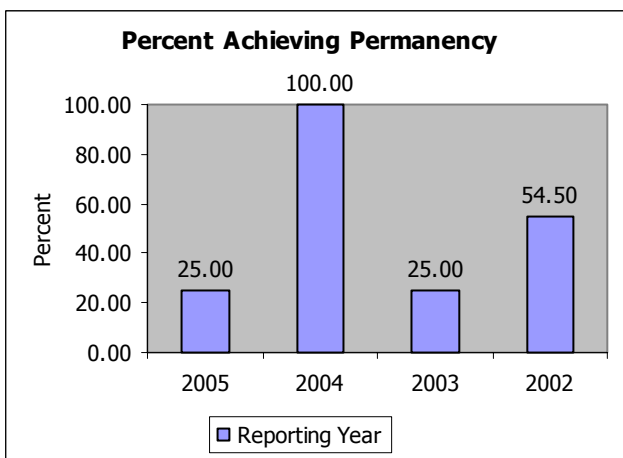
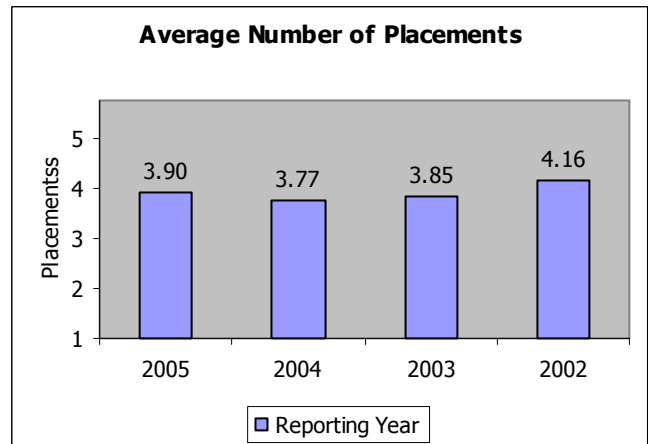
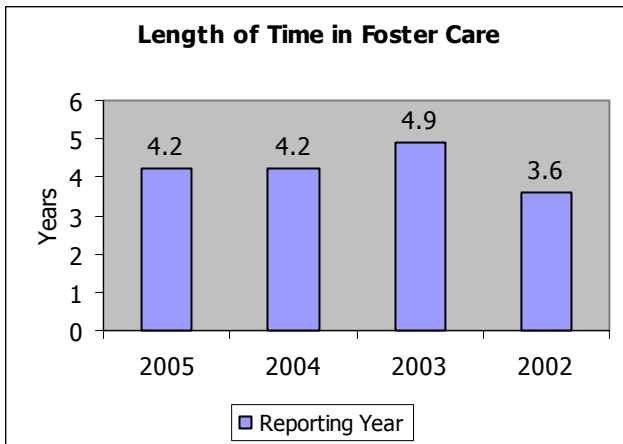
Research shows the initial placement in foster care is extremely traumatic for a child. Additional changes in placement once in the foster care system can be detrimental to children's development, affecting their ability to learn, establish relationships and develop as stable, secure individuals. In 2005, Greenwood County's average number of placements increased to 3.9.

PERCENT ACHIEVING PERMANENCY:

Permanency for a child means placement with a "forever family." A child can achieve legal permanency upon leaving the foster care system either by returning home to their natural parent or by being adopted. In 2005, of the eight children leaving care, none were adopted and two returned home to their natural parent.

RECIDIVISM RATES:

Children who re-enter care are some of the most vulnerable children in foster care because they have been in custody more than once. In 2005, none of the children entering foster care in Greenwood County had previously been in custody.



Inquiries about this report and requests for copies of this and other counties' reports should be made to:
Lisa Vosburgh, Data and Research Manager or to Denise Barker, Division Director
Division of Foster Care Review, 1205 Pendleton St., Columbia, SC 29201 Phone: (803) 734-0480 Fax: (803) 734-1223.
Comparable reports for other counties and for the state can also be found on the World Wide Web at:
<http://www.govoep.state.sc.us/children/foster.htm>