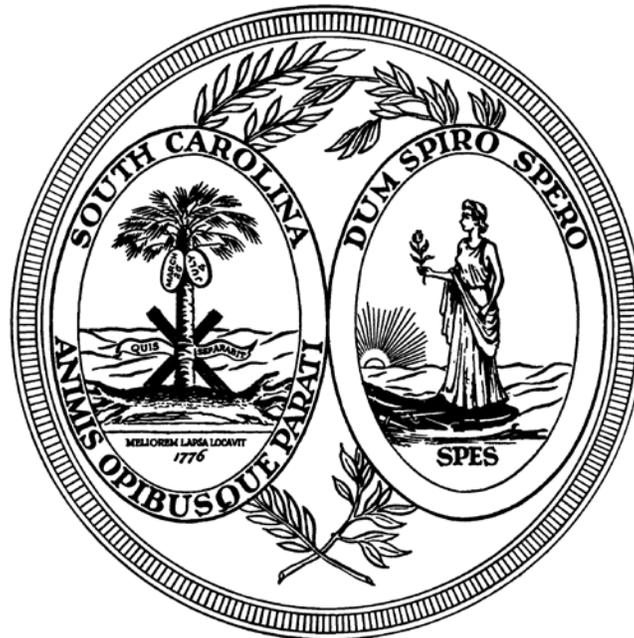# South Carolina Department of Social Services

Annual Accountability Report
Fiscal Year 2002 – 2003

September 2003

Kim S. Aydlette
State Director

Accountability Report Transmittal Form

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South Carolina Department of Social Services
2002 – 2003 Annual Accountability Report

Section I: Executive Summary

The agency entered fiscal year 2003-04 with $48 million less in state general funds than in 2000, which is approximately a 38% reduction in operating funds. We have reduced our workforce by more than 1,100 positions or staff through attrition, retirement incentives, voluntary separations, the elimination of non-mandated programs, and a reduction in force (to be implemented in August and September of 2003). This represents a 26% loss in personnel.

In an employee newsletter, Director Kim S. Aydlette told staff that the need to fulfill the agency's core missions was the foundation for decisions about reductions. Proportionately, the reductions to administrative staff have been much greater than the reductions to direct services staff. We are trying to mitigate the results of the cuts through management actions such as reorganizing the agency's structure, decreasing administrative staff, and decreasing the costs of operations. The agency's core missions were the key to deciding where staff are needed.

Due to the budget cuts, Director Aydlette had no recourse but to eliminate $15 million in contracts. In addition, a mandatory furlough is being implemented in fiscal year 2003-04 to minimize the impact of the agency's budget reductions. Additional management actions to reduce expenditures follow this section.

A strategic plan for the agency which outlines the DSS core programs, outcomes, measures and strategies was produced and posted on the DSS website in less than six months from the appointment of Ms. Aydlette. In addition, the County Operations staff, using a zero-based budgeting approach, developed a model for the delivery of services in each county that reallocated more positions to the front line and identified areas of savings. Although the model cannot be funded fully at this time, it provides a basis for a long-range strategic plan for staffing. This zero-based budgeting process will be used in all areas of the agency.

A threat to the agency is the lack of a federally-mandated automated child support enforcement system. The agency remains under federal penalties of about $8 million a year until the $80 million system is implemented. We are asking the Legislature for $27 million in state funds over three years to build a system. So far, the agency was appropriated $4 million for the system and was appropriated no funds to pay the penalties. Without these funds, the agency will be forced to run a deficit or decimate other programs such as child protective services and therapeutic services for severely disturbed foster children.

Achieving a permanent home for foster children whose plan is adoption is an area that represents a weakness for the agency. The problems that cause serious delays are complex. Although DSS officials and staff recognize the need to improve this agency's work processes and decisions, the delays cannot be blamed entirely on DSS. The entire system contributes to the lengthy time it takes to adopt a foster child as noted by the Child and Family Service Review performed by the Administration of Children and Families, the federal agency charged with a child welfare oversight. Their report stated, "A primary concern identified for adoption pertained to extensive delays in the agency filing for terminations of parental right (TPR), as well as court-related

delays due to overcrowded court dockets and the granting of continuances for TPR hearings." The federal government has put DSS on notice that we will be penalized if we do not improve adoption timeliness. Director Aydlette is working closely with Court Administration to identify improvements that can be implemented to speed up the adoption process. Governor Mark Sanford, hearing of the problems with the slow process of adopting foster children, pledged to work closely with Director Aydlette and the entire system of adoption so that children may be placed in permanent homes more quickly. The Court Administration also indicated an interest in helping to identify improvements that can be implemented to speed up the adoption process.

This recent federal review is an opportunity for the agency to systemically improve delivery of services, as it brings together all the stakeholders throughout the community to work with us in developing strategies for improvement. Unfortunately, the review does not take into consideration the severe budget cuts taken by DSS. The federal reviewers consider funding for child welfare services to be a state priority and responsibility – not just a DSS problem. If the state does not place child welfare services at a high priority for funding, then the state will suffer the consequences – poor child outcomes and financial penalties.

Fortunately, one of our best partners, the S.C. Foster Parents Association, has agreed to work with DSS on a resource family initiative aimed at recruiting high quality foster/adoptive homes, mentoring new families through the "bureaucracy", and helping them transition from foster care to adoption when appropriate. The Association is statewide and their partnership will be an asset for us. Our agency experts on foster care and adoption are working on a plan to make the process of becoming a resource family more user friendly.

The state has the opportunity to use a variety of recruitment and retention strategies including the Casey Family-to-Family model to increase and retain the number of quality foster/adoptive homes for children in care. Plans for recruitment and retention of foster care and adoptive families are to be developed in every county. Director Aydlette said in a newsletter to all staff, "I am very encouraged by the response so far to my plea to focus efforts on permanency planning as we set priorities in the agency."

Another opportunity for the agency's clients is our faith-based initiatives. Director Aydlette is encouraging South Carolina's faith-based organizations to join with the Department of Social Services in helping provide assistance to people in need. The agency's faith-based initiative – People Helping People – can help improve the quality of life for South Carolina's citizens across the state even as the agency is going through serious budget cuts.

Churches and other organizations can help by becoming or supporting adoptive and foster homes, by starting or supporting food pantries, by starting or supporting summer feeding programs, and after-school feeding programs, by providing transportation for welfare-to-work clients and by helping parents on welfare gain training and work experience so they can support their families. The agency has developed partnerships with 36 faith-based organizations, a positive step for the agency and our clients.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) is a block grant provided to the state to help move needy families off welfare and into work. A real problem for this state is the low amount of federal TANF dollars that we receive. We are locked into a federal allotment that is equal to what we could match under the old AFDC program. Since SC did not have the state dollars to provide a lot of match, we got fewer federal dollars in the AFDC program and we are still

receiving fewer dollars under TANF. This has resulted in inequities. Under the current allocation formula, a poor child in SC is allocated $509 in federal TANF resources while a child in Vermont is allocated $2,744 and the national average is $1,374.

Director Aydlette and the Governor's Office have pursued federal relief that would correct, at least in part, the inequities in the current funding formula. Increasing our TANF allotment per poor person is essential due to the upcoming federal reauthorization of TANF, which will increase significantly the percentage of clients that must be employed or in job-related activities. To date, South Carolina has met all our federal requirements in spite of our limited funds. We are re-engineering our welfare program to meet the challenges of reauthorization, but receiving $509 per poor child - less than half the national average allotment per poor child - makes our job much harder than it will be for most other states and our continued success uncertain.

However, another problem for us and other states is related to the federal mandate to maintain a state funding level. This requirement is called, "Maintenance of Effort," or MOE, in order to receive the federal TANF grant. Under welfare reform, states were no longer required to provide match in order to draw down federal funds, but they were required to continue MOE. For South Carolina the MOE amount is $38.5 million.

The MOE requirement seemed fair at the time, but its authors could not foresee massive budget reductions for social service agencies. Our social service agency has been cut $48 million in state funds - well over a third of its total state budget - over the past three years. Requiring an unchanged level of state effort forces DSS to cut disproportionately in other critical areas such as Adult Protective Services or child welfare.

Under the current rules, if we did reduce our MOE, our federal funds are cut proportionately and a penalty will be assessed. Penalties continue until the state pays back the state and federal portions of the reduction, which is unlikely to occur in today's economic conditions.

The number of food stamp households has risen from approximately 140,000 in fiscal year 2001-02 to 180,000 in fiscal year 2002-03, or an increase of more than 30%. Even with such a significant increase in recipients, DSS had one of the lowest error rates in the nation. We were recognized and rewarded by the federal Administration of Children and Families for our accuracy and accountability in determining eligibility for Food Stamps.

South Carolina's population is aging, which may lead over time to an increase in the reported cases of self-neglect, abuse/neglect or exploitation of vulnerable adults in the state. Our budget reductions have forced us to reduce the resources for Adult Protective Services. In fact, we are reviewing state statutes for ways to decrease the workload on our frontline APS workers. One issue we are studying involves transferring the responsibility for fiscal exploitation investigations to an entity more experienced in these complicated, time-consuming types of investigation.

The agency is also responsible for licensing child care facilities. With the support of our partners, primarily DHHS, we have been able to increase our monitoring visits – a key component for insuring safety. The Legislature has proposed moving child care licensing to DHEC and may re-visit that issue this year.

1. Mission and Values:
The mission of the South Carolina Department of Social Services is to ensure the safety and health of children and adults who cannot protect themselves, and to assist those in need of food assistance and temporary financial assistance while transitioning into employment.

Programs:
Child Welfare – The program administered to ensure the safety and health of children. This system of services includes Child Protective Services, Foster Care, Managed Treatment, Adoption Services, and Day Care Regulatory and Licensing.

Adult Protection – The program administered to ensure the safety and health of vulnerable adults.

Family Independence – The program that assists those in need of temporary financial and employment-related assistance.

Family Nutrition – The program that assists those in need of food assistance.

Child Support Enforcement – The program that enforces orders for child support, establishes paternity for children when paternity is an issue, and provides "locate" services when the whereabouts of a parent is unknown.

2. Key Strategic Goals

I. **Child Welfare**
   A. **Safety**
      1. First and foremost, protect children from abuse and neglect.
      2. Maintain children safely in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.

   B. **Permanency**
      3. Ensure that children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
      4. Preserve the continuity of family relationships and connections for children.

   C. **Child and Family Well-Being** (In-home and Out-of-home)
      5. Enhance the capacity of families to provide for their children's needs.
      6. Ensure that children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
      7. Ensure that children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

II. **Adult Protection**
      1. Reduce recurrence of abuse/neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults (person 18 or older who is either subjected to or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation).

III. **Family Independence (TANF)**
      1. Expedite Family Independence (FI) services to eligible children and families.
      2. Maximize number of clients placed in employment.

IV. **Family Nutrition**
      1. Maximize eligible families' access to the Food Stamp program.

V. **Child Support Enforcement**
      1. Establish paternity in a timely fashion for children who are born out of wedlock.

2. Make certain that children with one or both parents absent from the home receive adequate financial support from their absent parent(s).
3. Establish medical insurance coverage whenever such coverage is available at reasonable cost through the   non-custodial parent's or custodial parent's employer.

3. Opportunities and Barriers

Opportunities

- Recent statutory modifications increased the capacity of DSS to use all historical information on a family, thereby enhancing the assessment of safety and risk for children.
- There is a continued and ongoing emphasis in agency policy and practice on the integration of safety and risk assessment principles into the intake and investigative/assessment processes.
- Modifications to the assessment tools for safety and risk provide staff with a format to complete more comprehensive assessments of families across program lines. This information was provided to all staff statewide in fall of 2001 in coordination with program policy staff, county operations, and SD&T staff.
- Joint training for county directors, supervisors, and attorneys to enhance the effectiveness of treatment and concurrent planning began in March 2003.
- DSS, the Children's Law Office, and the Bench Bar Committee are collaborating to provide training for judges and attorneys to address delays in establishing permanency for children.
- Implementation of new strategies for recruitment, licensing and training of resource families should improve placement stability.
- Intensive technical assistance in the counties where children are in foster care for one year with a plan of return home or adoption. This is in 11 counties.
- Collaboration with Family Independence for Foster Care youth 16 to 21 years old to include educational and vocational assessment and provision of job skills services.
- The two-state initiative between Georgia and South Carolina (Tale of Two States) is addressing barriers to cross-jurisdictional adoptive placements.
- There is a focus on enhancing educational achievement and self-sufficiency for children in the child welfare system.
- Responsibility has been designated to a specific individual at the state level to coordinate the development and implementation of strategies to address barriers to educational achievement.
- Refurbished computers have been distributed to foster homes with school age children through a partnership of DSS, the Children's Law Office, and the Foster Parents Association.
- Work groups internal and external to the Department are exploring ways to collaborate and address budget cuts in services and resources available for parents and children in the child welfare system.
- The newly organized Child Welfare Advisory Committee merges existing task forces and steering committees to provide an integrated approach to planning.
- The Casey Family-to-Family model, which focuses on child welfare strategies, is expanding statewide.
- Prepared for loss of TANF waivers by developing new programs and work components for Family Independence recipients.

- Initiated a new automated work program tracking system to meet the new federal requirements of TANF without waivers.
- Developed the framework for a separate state program designed to support the critical needs of families experiencing difficulties in dealing with disabilities.
- Developed and coordinated training for the entire FI staff in order to present issues relating to loss of TANF waivers, including changes in policy and the impact of loss of future federal funding for failing to meet TANF requirements.

Barriers
- The population of 13-18 year olds in foster care continues to increase. Over the past five years, the number of teens in foster care has increased thirty-six percent. Due to significant budget reductions, DSS will monitor placements in foster care to determine when children are entering care inappropriately because of gaps in services from state agencies other than DSS.
- The agency needs to increase permanency options to include independent living services, reunification, and adoptive options.
- Due to the significant budget cuts, a reduction in the foster care board rates and adoption subsidy rate and non-recurring cost was continued. The agency will need to continue to closely monitor adoption placements.
- Barriers to timeliness in adoptions include a lack of implementation of concurrent planning, insufficient involvement of parents in the development of treatment plans, inefficiency of some attorneys and insufficient court time.
- Close monitoring of the impact of the reduction in APS staff due to budget reductions in and the trend of early retirements is necessary.
- Continual assessment of the agency's budget cuts in the services for abused and neglected children and vulnerable adults is critical.
- About one third of the Human Services Division staff is eligible for early retirement.
- Assess and evaluate current training program in light of budget reduction to include the method of delivery (i.e. online training, video conferencing) and address cross training issues with staff (Child Welfare Staff trained to handle APS cases).

4. Major Achievements
A recent federal review of South Carolina's child welfare system found that:
- The child welfare system of South Carolina exceeded national standards for safety.
- The child welfare system of South Carolina exceeded national standards for incidence of child abuse and neglect in foster care.
- The child welfare system of South Carolina exceeded national standards for foster care re-entries.
- The child welfare system of South Carolina exceeded national standards for length of time to achieve reunification.

Other achievements include:
- The number of youth in foster care receiving post-educational services has increased from 20 to 135.
- South Carolina is one of the first states to provide Medicaid coverage for foster youth who exit foster care after age 18.
- Enhanced foster home agency standards were passed in March 2003. The revisions provide an increase in the number of hours for both pre-service and in-service training;

provide for a reduction in the maximum number of children under the age of 18 within the household from six to five; and expand the components for the family home study.

- A contract with Clemson University and the SC Centers for Equal Justice to provide Food Stamp outreach activities throughout the state was continued. The Clemson University project includes formal partnerships with local community organizations and faith based organizations in the upstate.
- Hunger in low-income families was reduced by increasing food stamp participation by 21%.

The following list summarizes significant management actions taken during the first six months of 2003.

- Transitioning to Zero-Based budgeting
- Terminating consultant and service contracts not directly related to DSS mission ($15 million in annual TANF savings to date)
- Eliminating cell phones/pagers not essential to staff - Projected annual savings $100,000 ($33,000 state funds)
- Terminating phone and modem services to vacant offices, and eliminating unnecessary fax lines - Projected savings $30,000 ($10,000 state funds)
- Consolidating offices and eliminating leases - Projected savings $189,000 through June 30th and an additional $500,000 possible this year ($225,000 state funds)
- Returning 89 non-essential state vehicles - Projected annual savings $370,000 ($122,000 state funds)
- Eliminating same-day meal reimbursements - Projected annual savings $137,000 ($45,000 state funds)
- Implementing contract and procurement recommendations of recent LAC audit
- Redefining core programs and published agency strategic plan (June 13, 2003) with measurable outcomes
- Building community partners to assist in serving our clients, including a faith-based initiative

5. How is the accountability report used to improve organizational performance?
At DSS, the accountability report primarily has been used as a one-time report to document agency results at the end of the year. We are changing the way we do business, and the report will no longer be a document for staff to complete each September. Programs and administrative systems will be continuously analyzed and reviewed, with a goal of continuous improvement and increased efficiencies.

Section II: Business Overview

At SCDSS, we serve customers of all ages and from all walks of life. We have customers who want our services, customers who need our services such as children at risk and vulnerable adults, and customers who need but do not necessarily want our services. Because of our diverse customer base, we must be a flexible and agile organization - ready to serve when and where the need arises. Again, in 2002–2003, we met this challenge, successfully serving thousands of South Carolina citizens.

1. Number of Employees

Fiscal Year	Positions	Employees	Vacancies
2002 – 2003	4,559	3,854	705
2001 – 2002	4,562	4,206	356
2000 – 2001	5,125	4,831	294

2. Operation Locations – See Appendix A

3. Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

Major Budget Categories	01-02 Actual Expenditures		02-03 Actual Expenditures		03-04 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	$152,621,547	$36,752,712	$137,428,667.42	$34,069,204.19	$131,654,445.00	$29,822,802.00
Other Operating	117,383,853	14,826,458	98,399,476.00	14,096,369.85	118,350,429.00	6,088,234.00
Special Items	271,948	271,812	871,676.00	871,676.00	1,164,442.00	980,559.00
Permanent Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0
Case Services	486,942,052	37,742,773	578,883,388.98	37,278,659.19	553,552,739.00	38,963,045.00
Distributions to Subdivisions	10,512,826	113,348	11,732,248.41	246,575.00	13,776,776.00	1,718,333.00
Fringe Benefits	46,369,425	12,406,111	42,012,828.56	12,462,634.31	38,837,017.00	11,266,850.00
Non-recurring	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	$814,101,651	$102,113,214	$869,328,285.37	$99,025,118.54	$857,335,848.00	$88,839,823.00

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	01-02 Actual Expenditures	02-03 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	-0-	-0-
Capital Reserve Funds	-0-	-0-
Bonds	-0-	-0-

Interim Budget Reductions

Total 01-02 Interim Budget Reduction	Total 02-03 Interim Budget Reduction
$26,779,483.00	$12,253,946.00

4. Key Customer Segments Linked to Key Products/Services - DSS touches the lives of South Carolinians in a variety of ways, at many different levels. Historically, we have been viewed as an agency that only serves low resource families. In reality, we are a potential service provider for any individual in the state. Our key customers are as follows:

Child Welfare
- Children at risk for abuse/neglect and their families
- Foster children and foster parents
- Custodial and non-custodial parents
- Adoptive families, adoptees, birth families
- Day care providers and parents of children in day care
- Youth at risk for parenting or already parenting

Adult Protection
- Vulnerable adults and frail elderly individuals living alone
- Individuals age 60 and over

Family Independence and Family Nutrition
- Low-income children and families
- Hispanic customers and others with language barriers
- After school and summer program youth living in low income areas
- Public and private sector employers
- Education and training providers
- Refugees

Child Support Enforcement
- Family Independence families
- Custodial and noncustodial parents

5. Key Stakeholders (other than customers)
- Parents, childcare providers, faith-based organizations, general public, etc.

6. Key Suppliers
In serving children and families, it is critical that we maximize opportunities to partner with individuals, agencies, and organizations that can assist in meeting customer needs. The following are among our key partner suppliers:

- Community partners providing services to children and families including schools, law enforcement, employers, legislature (statute), and attorneys.
- Foster parents, group providers, and adoptive parents.
- State Agencies including Health and Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services, Governor's Office, State Tech Board, Employment Security Commission, Commerce, Education, Clemson University and Extension, University of SC, SC State University, Corrections, Health and Environmental Control, Council on Aging, State Department of Agriculture, and Disabilities and Special Needs.
- Federal Government including Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and Human Services – (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Administration for

Children and Families, Social Security Administration – all part of DHHS), Department of Commerce, and Department of Labor.
- Local Governments including county administrators and school districts.
- Private for-profit and private nonprofit individuals and groups desiring to operate child care centers, home day care, group day care homes and after school programs in South Carolina.
- Faith-based organizations.
- Centralized attorneys in general counsel roles, local attorneys, and child support enforcement legal services.

Major Products and Services - The products and services provided by our agency impact people's lives. Our objective is to deliver services in a way that can be most meaningful and least intrusive. The following are major products and services:

Child Welfare
- Identification of children at risk of abuse and neglect and their families, appropriate interventions, linkage to rehabilitative services and preventive services.
- Recruiting, training and licensing foster care homes and group facilities for children.
- Recruiting and training adoptive families; adoption subsidy program; and, direct services to adoptive families and adoptees.
- Foster Care Youth services to enable them to be self-sufficient.
- Young Parent Program provides case management, parenting skills and subsequent pregnancy prevention services to FI youth, ages 9-20, who have parented or are pregnant.
- Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiatives provide out-of-wedlock pregnancy prevention initiatives for adolescents.
- Day Care licensing, monitoring, inspection, training and technical assistance.

Social and Economic Self -Sufficiency
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) provides low-income children and families with cash assistance, counseling, case management, and support services including child care, transportation, employment and education training, job placement, life skills training, vocational training, and job search assistance.
- Child Support Enforcement enables custodial parents to receive child support from non-custodial parents.
- The Food Stamp Program provides food stamp benefits and case management to low-income families and individuals who meet federal and state requirements.
- The Food Stamp Program permits low-income households to obtain a more nutritious diet by providing food stamp benefits to low-income families and individuals who meet federal and state requirements.
- The Food Stamp Employment and Training Program provides an opportunity for education, training, and job search assistance to Food Stamp Program recipients. Other Food and Nutrition Services programs include Food Stamp Outreach, Temporary Emergency Food Assistance, At-Risk After School Snack, Summer Food Service, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Emergency Shelters Food Program, and Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.
- The Refugee Program provides intensive case management, cash assistance and services to eligible refugees.

7. Organizational Structure

Our agency is organized into functional areas that provide for clearly delineated roles and responsibilities, open communication and ease in collaborating across program lines. The following are the major divisions within DSS:

• **Office of the Director** • **Office of Fiscal and Information Systems** • **Office of General Counsel**	• **Office of Program Policy and Oversight** • **Office of Regional and County Operations** • **Office of Administration and Program Support**

See Appendix B for organization chart.

Section III: Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

1.0 - Leadership -
DSS State Director, Kim Aydlette, and the five DSS Deputy Directors recognize that an important part of their role is to provide purpose, direction, and motivation to influence others to accomplish the organization's mission. Together they work to create an environment where organizational goals are "owned" by all employees. Senior leaders understand DSS employees are the essence of the agency. In order to capture the corporate intellect and facilitate the advancement of agency goals, we must work to foster employee participation in the process and support and encourage their individual and professional development.

1.1 How do senior leaders set, deploy, and communicate: a) short and long term direction; b) performance expectations; c) organizational values; d) empowerment and innovation; e) organizational and employee learning; and, f) ethical behavior?
(a-f) Due to severe budget cuts, senior leaders were forced to critically examine all programs and major administrative processes in order to make some difficult funding decisions. Management met with key staff throughout all programs and counties and defined the core mission of the agency. Next, management established outcomes that meet the agency's mission. Action plans and strategies were developed. Management then created an optimal organizational structure to efficiently and effectively implement the action plans. Outcome measures were established, and a plan to review measures on a monthly basis was enacted.

The agency's plan has been placed on the DSS homepage for all staff and the public to review. The Deputy Director for Regional and County Operations conducts weekly teleconferences with all county directors and central staff to communicate expectations regarding values, empowerment, and behavior. The Deputy Director for Regional and County Operations has restructured and communicated the roles and responsibilities of central office staff and the expectations of them to respond to county needs in a timely manner.

1.2   How do senior leaders establish and promote a focus on customers?
Senior leaders stress public responsibility and citizenship. We work to engage local offices, and supporting administrative functions, in focusing on client outcomes and supporting the service delivery system to continuously improve performance by analyzing data and making programmatic process changes. Budget shortfalls have driven cost reduction efforts. This administration has taken great efforts to avoid the reduction of service-delivery staff. County operations staff recently went through a zero-based budget review that resulted in a 10% reduction in county expenses, and 200 positions were moved from indirect and supervisory positions to direct services.

1.3 What key performance measures are regularly reviewed by your senior leaders?
Each of our key program areas has outcome measures that are tracked and reviewed monthly by senior leaders and by staff at all levels. The following are key outcomes.

I. Child Welfare
      A. <u>Safety</u>
      Outcome 1 - Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
      Outcome 2 - Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.

B. Permanency
Outcome 3 - Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
Outcome 4 - The continuity of family relationships and connections are preserved for children.

C. Child and Family Well-Being (In-home and Out-of-home)
Outcome 5 - Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
Outcome 6 - Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
Outcome 7- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

II. Adult Protection

Outcome 1 - Reduce recurrence of abuse/neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults (person 18 or older who is either subjected to or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation).

III. Family Independence

Outcome 1– Expedite Family Independence (FI) services to eligible children and families.
Outcome 2 - Maximize number of clients placed in employment.

IV. Family Nutrition
Outcome 1- Maximize eligible families' access to the Food Stamp program.

V. Child Support Enforcement

Outcome 1- Children who are born out-of-wedlock have paternity established in a timely fashion.
Outcome 2 - Children with one or both parents absent from the home receive adequate financial support from their absent parent(s).
Outcome 3 - Children receive medical insurance coverage whenever such coverage is available through the non-custodial parent's or custodial parent's employer at reasonable cost.
Outcome 4 - Children with one or both parents absent from the home receive adequate financial support from their absent parent(s).

1.4 How do senior leaders use organizational performance review findings and employee feedback to improve their own leadership effectiveness and the effectiveness of management throughout the organization?
Performance measures and employee feedback are critical elements in our ongoing efforts to improve the quality of programs and services we provide to our customers. Senior leaders meet frequently to discuss current data, trends and outcome measures, and how to implement needed improvements. They utilize performance data to assist counties in determining areas with high levels of performance as well as areas needing improvement. Periodically, a cross-section of agency staff is brought together to discuss a specific area of agency operations, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and generating ideas for improvement.

The Deputy State Director for Regional and County Operations has a policy to respond to issues immediately and directly. A sense of the private sector has been instilled in staff to deal with problems as they arise and, if possible, respond with solutions immediately so problems do not fester.

Efforts have been made recently to make sure that all interested parties are brought to the table, ideas are discussed openly and are welcomed, and decisions are made. Also, responsibility is assigned and staff work together for the common good of the agency and the clients we serve.

1.5 How does the organization address the current and potential impact on the public of its products, programs, services, facilities, and operations, including associated risks?
Local staff are the eyes and ears of DSS. County directors, case managers, and other county staff interact with and receive feedback from our customers, the community, and the general public on a daily basis. This feedback is discussed and considered as we work to continuously refine and improve policies, processes, and operating practices. Other input is obtained through tracking constituent calls, analyzing customer questions and concerns, conducting current customer surveys and "leavers" surveys, and developing and conducting pilot projects to test new approaches.

1.6 How does senior leadership set and communicate key organizational priorities for improvement?
Senior leaders utilize workload indicators and outcome measurement data, designed around key strategic goals, to set organizational priorities. Senior leaders carefully review this data for anomalies and trends. Priorities are communicated through meetings and presentations with staff and community partners, in the agency's on-line newsletter, and through the DSS website.

1.7 How does senior leadership and the agency actively support and strengthen the community? Include how you identify and determine areas of emphasis. While we are indeed accountable for the health and well-being of the children and families we serve, we recognize that we must work with community partners to not only address the issues at hand but also alleviate root causes.

The agency has made a commitment to staff a community development effort. Through a faith-based community development effort, staff is dedicated for the purpose of creating opportunities for County directors to get the community involved. Senior leadership attend churches and functions to promote our efforts, a specific area on the agency web site lists local needs by county, and many community folks have volunteered time at the local offices.

2.0 – Strategic Planning
We view strategic planning as the process by which we analyze the mission and goals of our organization and determine what conditions must exist to best accomplish those goals. We then initiate a sequence of events that will create those conditions including the cost-efficient allocation of resources. The effectiveness of our strategic plan is measured periodically by comparing goals and objectives to actual results.

2.1 What is your Strategic Planning process?
DSS implemented a strategic programmatic plan in 2003, which is discussed later in this report. While further refinements and improvements are being studied, this year's process has been productive. The strategic planning process incorporated the ideas, thoughts and input of all key

staff, including direct service workers, supervisors, County directors and administrative staff. Staff met in a number of planning sessions and developed outcomes and measures that were challenging to all agency staff. In 2003, all 46 counties underwent a zero-based budget review. Expenses were reduced by 10%, and more than 200 staff were moved from administrative and indirect service functions into direct service delivery areas. For FY 2003-04, we will require all state office program and administrative divisions to undergo a complete zero-based budget review. In addition, a strategic plan that incorporates administrative and support services will be developed for 2003-04.

How does your Strategic Plan account for:
a) Customer needs and expectations?
We have a number of processes in place to gauge customer needs and expectations. We have obtained feedback from customers through food stamp survey cards, meetings with community advocate groups and through required federal reviews. Our constituent services staff routinely deal with customer problems and complaints. Outside review groups that provide input include the Citizen Review Panel, Children's Health and Safety Councils, the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force, and S.C. Fair Share. These entities provide regular reports that allow us to measure stakeholder satisfaction. In addition, we meet with service providers to discuss any issues or concerns.

b) Financial, societal and other risks?
We consider where communities would be without quality DSS services and whether benefits gained by families are worth the resources we expend to achieve those gains.

c) Human resource capabilities and needs?
We realize our employees are our greatest resource. With our financial resources stretched to the limit, staff have been required to do more with less. We undertook an initiative in early 2003 to equalize caseloads throughout the state.

d) Operational capabilities and needs?
Efforts to analyze workforce availability/caseworker workloads in all program areas have been ongoing since 1998, but the study was never finalized. Finalizing this process was made a top priority and it has been completed.

e) Supplier/contractor/partner capabilities and needs?
We strive for mutually beneficial relationships with all suppliers, contractors, and partners in order to improve the quality and speed with which our customers are served. Many agency partners (e.g., schools, courts, treatment agencies) are both sources of referrals and service destinations for some customers. Our orientation toward shared ownership places us in the position of constantly negotiating the terms of our partnerships, particularly shared responsibility programs dealing with teenagers, domestic violence, and substance abuse problems. Our focus on tracking needs and outcomes data helps us clarify referral guidelines and expectations we have for our treatment providers. Finally, our own workload analyses have provided a great deal of information about the costs of staffing for quality and client outcomes.

2.2 How do you develop and track action plans that address your key strategic objectives? (Include how you allocate resources to ensure accomplishment of action plans.)
Outcomes, developed jointly by program, planning and research, and operations staff, establish the major policy and procedural revisions.

2.3 How do you communicate and deploy strategic objectives, action plans, and performance measures?
The agency's strategic plan, along with all program outcomes and measures, was posted for the first time in June 2003 on the agency's Internet homepage. The plan has been provided to all program staff, and staff expectations have been explained.

2.4. What are your key strategic objectives?
Key objectives can be found in our strategic plan.

2.5. Website where agency's strategic plan can be accessed.
The agency's strategic plan can be found on the agency's homepage at
http://www.state.sc.us/dss/.

3.0 – Customer Focus (External Only)
Knowing and fully understanding the needs of current and future customers helps us to meet basic customer expectations and then go beyond to exceed their expectations. To ensure our success, we must research customer needs, communicate those needs throughout the agency, strive to meet those needs, and measure customer satisfaction on an ongoing basis.

3.1 How do you determine who your customers are and what their key requirements are?

Child Welfare
Children at risk of child abuse and neglect and their families are identified by community members, through other programs and agencies, and by direct reports to the agency. State statute defines child abuse and neglect, thus defining who these customers are once they are reported. Key requirements, determined by way of direct feedback from customers, county workers, community members and staff from other agencies, are accurate and timely individualized assessments, timely referral/acceptance to services appropriate to needs, and treatment with dignity and respect. Foster parents apply or are recruited. We provide training, staff support, and follow-up. Feedback from foster parents, focus groups, and task forces continually helps redefine key requirements.

Refugees in need of social services are generally referred by the agencies resettling them in the state. Eligibility is determined by criteria mandated by law. We provide financial assistance, medical services, and educational services.

Child day care customers are determined by the applications received to license new childcare facilities and re-license existing providers. Parents of children attending child facilities and the general public are also customers. Key requirements are safe and healthy childcare facilities for all children.

Adult Protection
Abused, neglected, or exploited adults who are unable to provide for their own care and protection are identified by law enforcement, neighbors, churches and other agencies and organizations. Key requirements are safety and having their needs met in the least restrictive way.

Family Independence
Low-income customers are generally identified when they seek services, are referred by other agencies or through outreach efforts. Their eligibility is determined by criteria as mandated by law, policy, and regulations. Key requirements are typically determined by caseworkers and needs assessment surveys and include income supplements, help with food, childcare assistance, health insurance and case management to include financial management. Youth at risk for parenting or already parenting are identified primarily by referral from or eligibility for other programs. Their key requirements are educational and counseling services in pregnancy prevention, family planning, and/or parenting skills.

Family Nutrition
Elderly citizens age 60 and older are recruited for the Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program through local agencies like senior centers, Councils on Aging and the United Way. Eligibility is determined by criteria mandated by law. Key requirements are financial assistance to obtain nutritional food, transportation and nutrition education. Agency customers include retail grocery stores that provide food for food stamp recipients, food banks, and homeless shelters.

Child Support Enforcement
Courts, employers, and Family Independence case managers refer customers. In addition, child support enforcement serves any citizen in need of services, regardless of income.

3.2 How do you keep your listening/learning methods current with changing customer/business needs?
We instituted a qualitative review process to assist local county offices in identifying best child welfare practices and in developing plans to address areas needing improvement. As a part of our listening/learning methods, we also seek and receive direct feedback from agency customers and business through such vehicles as community and professional meetings, exchange of information between professional entities, research and professional information on national trends, employer focus groups, participation in community and economic development organizations, conferences, surveys, foster care hot line, constituent services, indirect feedback through supervisors and workers, and Foster Care Review Board reports on performance.

3.3 How do you use information from customers/stakeholders to improve services or programs?
We utilize feedback from customers, community leaders, employers, staff, and others, along with local, state, and national data, to plan and/or modify programs, policies, and procedures to be congruent with good practice, statutes and federal regulations. We also utilize employer feedback, labor market data, economic data (such as hiring trends, jobs in demand, job announcements, plant closures and layoffs) in planning our approach to helping customers prepare for and secure employment. Financial resources are sought, as available, to design initiatives for gaps in current services or to augment current services.

3.4 How do you measure customer/stakeholder satisfaction?
The following are examples:
- Prepaid postcard surveys are being used in all counties to obtain feedback from food stamp clients.
- Outside review groups including the Citizen Review Panel, Children's Health and Safety Councils, the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force, and S.C. Fair Share provide

regular reports that allow us to measure stakeholder satisfaction. In addition, we meet
with service providers to discuss any issues or concerns.

- Quarterly surveys of former Family Independence customers have been conducted and
grants secured for studies of former FI and Food Stamp customers by nationally
recognized research organizations.
- Feedback from frontline workers also provides valuable information on customer
satisfaction.

3.5 How do you build positive relationships with customers and stakeholders? Indicate any key distinctions between different customer groups?

We believe the key to building positive relationships with customers, partners, and employers is
through one-on-one contacts. We actively seek out and build mutually beneficial partnerships
with customers and stakeholders such as our partnership with Florence-Darlington Technical
College to provide training to customers in the field of welding, thus helping local employers
meet their workforce needs. We have also partnered with faith-based organizations and rural
hospitals to pursue and secure joint grant opportunities through the Duke Endowment designed
to address rural workforce needs. Agency staff, including the Director, meet with groups of
stakeholders such as Foster Parent Associations, faith-based organizations, and service providers
from other agencies to discuss common concerns. Customers and stakeholders are also
incorporated into the agency's planning process.

Senior leaders convene focus groups or retreats with key stakeholders, client advocates, and
agency staff in order to look at ways to improve services to customers. Information and data
obtained from these discussions are then linked to our performance management system in areas
where program modification or service delivery redesign needs to take place. Regional and
county offices conduct customer satisfaction surveys, helping to build and enhance customer
relations. Staff also incorporate survey data when considering service delivery process changes
and improvements. A statewide advisory committee of former foster youth meets regularly with
staff to make suggestions on improving the foster care program.

4.0 – Information and Analysis

We strive to utilize reliable, verifiable information to make data-driven decisions in a timely
manner. Having pertinent information, including trend data, is critical to making decisions that
will positively impact our overall effectiveness.

4.1 How do you decide which operations, processes, and systems to measure?

We are required by federal and state law to measure certain aspects of the services we are
mandated to provide. The main mandated program areas are: Child Welfare, Adult Protective
Services, Family Independence, Child Support Enforcement, and Family Nutrition. Our strategic
goals, objectives, and priorities influence other operations, processes, and systems we measure.
We also gather feedback from advocacy groups, clients, and others to assist us in developing and
refining outcome measures.

4.2 How do you ensure data quality, reliability, completeness, and availability for decision-making?

Data, based on outcomes, is collected and compiled from local county offices on a monthly
basis. Because of frequent changes to program services, Information Systems cannot keep up
with the demand for system changes. (The agency has moved away from mainframe

applications for all data toward a PC-based data application to help fill the gaps. Data is collected locally when it is not available through Information Systems management reports.) Data is also used as a part of our qualitative review process. Other reliable data is accessed through such agencies as the Employment Security Commission, Department of Labor, and the US Census. We, along with state and federal auditors, audit our data to determine its reliability.

4.3 How do you use data/information analysis to provide effective support for decision-making?

Workload indicators and outcome measures data are reviewed on an ongoing basis and play a critical role in making decisions. The plan is to use the data to rank order the counties by outcome measure. The counties meeting or exceeding the most measures are the top performers. The counties meeting the fewest measures are the poorer performers. Once we identify the bottom ten performers we will concentrate resources, technical assistance, training, and other needed services to those counties in an effort to raise performance.

The data will identify which systems need to improve statewide and which counties have specific needs. With reduced resources in the state office to respond to needs, we will be forced to concentrate efforts more efficiently.

4.4 How do you select and use comparative data and information?

Much of our data is defined by federal regulation and can be compared across states for trends and problem definition. Data from other agencies can be used in an ad-hoc fashion to compare with our data to indicate effectiveness of services and unmet customer needs. The Budget and Control Board's Division of Research and Statistics provides the agency with crucial data analysis and cross-compilation of data from other sources that provides critical guidance when developing policy, determining if services are being delivered as planned and determining if services are meeting goals. We also utilize labor market hiring trends and other workforce data as we refine strategies for workforce development.

5.0 – Human Resource Focus

DSS employees and their deep commitment to serving our customers are a testament to the character of our agency. Involvement from employees at all levels helps develop a team spirit that motivates staff to move forward toward the agency's mission. This ownership of mission enables our leaders to capitalize on the collective knowledge and experience of our staff and utilize them to better serve our customers.

5.1 How do you and your managers/supervisors encourage and motivate employees (formally and/or informally) to develop and utilize their full potential?

Staff are encouraged to bring ideas and new approaches forward for consideration. Our extensive and comprehensive training program provides caseworkers and managers the necessary tools to do their jobs effectively as well as serves to empower staff with knowledge. Staff are encouraged to participate in ongoing, pertinent training that will provide them additional practice skills to better serve our customers. County directors understand that they are responsible for making sure their staff are recognized for performance. Studies show that pay is the third or fourth reason for staff being unhappy with or leaving their job. Lack of support and lack of recognition from their supervisor are at the top. The Deputy State Director for Regional and County Operations has offered his time to attend recognition programs in the counties, including "flipping hamburgers" for staff.

5.2 How do you identify and address key developmental and training needs, including job skills training, performance excellence training, diversity training, management/leadership development, new employee orientation, and safety training?
Training priorities are tied to the agency's mission, values, and strategic goals. Each program has specific training requirements for staff to ensure quality delivery of services. We identify key developmental and training needs by way of data from performance management reports across programs, quality review data from regional and county offices that identifies strengths/weaknesses, program quality assurance data, and employee exit surveys.

One example is the design and implementation of the Child Welfare Training Academy, a new training system for child welfare staff designed to ensure new and experienced workers in children's services receive the best, most complete training possible. Curriculum includes assessment and advanced training that is responsive to and respectful of participant needs, preferences, and cultural backgrounds. Areas of focus include issues surrounding domestic violence, mental health, and alcohol/drug abuse.

5.3 How does your employee performance management system, including feedback to and from employees, support high performance?
The Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) helps bring focus to the agency mission and values. Performance evaluations and ongoing input and feedback between staff and supervisors allow us to continuously refine our focus on meeting the needs of customers and fulfilling the mission of the agency. Performance is measured, and what gets measured gets done.

5.4 What formal and/or informal assessment methods and measures do you use to determine employee well-being, satisfaction, and motivation?
Surveys of employees are conducted to determine effectiveness of new initiatives. Also, exit interviews are mailed to every employee leaving DSS to determine the reasons for leaving and to help direct policy for the agency as it relates to employee satisfaction. County directors are brought into critical discussions that affect their offices or staff so that they feel that they are heard. Discussions include climate issues that may impact positively or negatively on performance.

5.5 How do you maintain a safe and healthy work environment?
We recognize our employees are our greatest assets. To enhance the safety and well-being of staff we: installed electronic entry security systems at both state office buildings; installed cameras on top of the buildings so that guards can monitor key areas including parking; and, installed public address systems that can be accessed from anywhere in the buildings via telephone. A DSS committee is dedicated to examining state and county office conditions and employee practices. Their purpose is to develop cost effective measures to improve safety and security throughout the agency.

Our wellness organization continues to work on expanding its efforts including hosting health and community related programs. Through our "brown bag lunch" programs, we conducted seminars on such topics as domestic violence and stress management.

5.6 What is the extent of your involvement in the community?
At DSS, we are very involved in the community with state and local employees representing agency and customer interests on county/community boards and committees such as the

Chambers of Commerce, local workforce investment boards, and community and economic development boards. We routinely work in the community to gather input on needed services, participate in resource sharing, and work to eliminate duplicative efforts among local agencies and organizations.

Through our wellness program, we participate in activities that promote health and well-being. Some activities help organizations raise funds for carrying out their missions. One example is the First Ladies' Walk for Life, Steps Against Breast Cancer   We open many of our programs to the community and have had great participation in our brown bag lunch seminars. Some of our comprehensive health screenings are also offered to the community including breast cancer screening and awareness. Flu shots are made available to staff and family members.

6.0 – Process Management
We utilize a process approach to more effectively achieve desired results around our mission and goals and to manage and allocate our resources. These processes are the building blocks of our systems approach to management that identifies, plans, and implements and manages interrelated processes that contribute to our overall, responsive delivery of services to customers.

6.1 What are your key design and delivery processes (including such activities as needs assessments and efforts at continuous improvement) for product/services, and how do you incorporate new technology, changing customer and mission-related requirements, into these design and delivery processes and systems?
Our targeted client groups are served by categorically funded, policy-based program designs including child protective services, foster care, adult protective services, and adoption. Federal funding sources, state statutes and regulations define acceptable service processes and products for each program. For example, a state law requires making initial contact within 24 hours of receiving a report that a parent or guardian has harmed a child.

The social work practice field offers a standard service process that constitutes "best practice," across all our program areas. The model process we use begins with Outreach (case finding), Intake (eligibility determination), and Referral. Early in all cases, we engage the client in an individualized needs assessment (problem identification) and negotiate mutually acceptable terms for an individualized case plan (training or service plan). Service delivery processes then vary with client needs, but may include numerous forms of intervention (e.g., crisis stabilization and support, counseling, education, training, treatment, behavior modification, etc.) that may be delivered directly by DSS or purchased from other providers. Good practice also requires ongoing case monitoring (quality review) and outcome evaluation (results checking) until discharge (services termination).

6.2 How does your day-to-day operation of key production/delivery processes ensure meeting key performance requirements?
The agency now measures how well we perform all key services. We measure implementation of treatment plans, error rates, the time it takes to process applications, the provision of relevant support services for customers, and many other key processes to ensure efficient and effective delivery of services.

6.3 What are your key support processes, and how do you improve and update these processes to achieve better performance?

We believe local managers and staff are in the best position to make decisions and recommendations that will achieve better performance. The following are some key support functions:

- Office of General Counsel: legal guidance and interpretation;
- Family Independence: coordination of programs and activities;
- Other Child Welfare: collaboration/coordination of planning and policies, interfacing of programs and activities, money distribution/accounting and grant writing for financial support;
- Division of Planning & Research: data retrieval and collaboration;
- County Operations: coordination of flow of information to county offices as well as input on policy/ procedure development;
- Information Resources: technology development and upkeep;
- Staff Development & Training: training and skills development for service delivery staff.

6.4 How do you manage and support your key supplier/contractor/partner interactions and processes to improve performance?

We believe partners must deliver customer services that adhere to the same process as our county offices. That is, we must work in concert with suppliers to establish client outcomes and suppliers must be given the necessary freedom to develop their own approach to service delivery to achieve those outcomes. Regional and county offices and suppliers of external products and services must collect, report and incorporate data in a continuous improvement approach.

7.0 – Business Results

We recognize that we cannot achieve our desired business results alone. We must develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with all of our partners, both public and private. This interdependent relationship with partners enhances the ability and worth of all involved and increases the speed, flexibility and responsiveness of service delivery to our customers.

7.1 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of customer satisfaction? Remember that a customer is defined as the recipient or beneficiary of the outputs of work efforts or the purchaser of products and services.

The agency has conducted surveys of food stamp recipients to gauge the quality of service provided. In addition, food stamp clients are interviewed at random. We have conducted welfare "leaver surveys" and food stamp "leaver surveys." Both were designed to track family economic circumstances and child well being. Also included were measures of service to customers and satisfaction with programs. For example, the welfare leaver surveys assess the extent to which customers knew of benefits for which they qualified, and their use of transitional benefits and other services.

7.2 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of mission accomplishment?

During this past fiscal year, the Federal Office of Children and Family Services (C&FS) initiated a review of South Carolina's child welfare programs. South Carolina met or exceeded the federal standards in four of the six criteria reviewed by C&FS in advance of the full review. At that time, data on 36 states had been collected. Five states, including South Carolina, met four standards. Two states met five. No state met all six standards. Table 1 indicates that South Carolina DSS is exceeding the national standards in:

- preventing recurrences of child maltreatment;
- preventing child abuse and neglect while a child is in foster care;
- preventing children reentering foster care once they are returned home; and,
- returning the children from foster care to their homes as soon as safely possible.

Category 7
Table 1

Children & Family Services - Federal Review

Data Indicator	National Standard (1999)	South Carolina Data (04/01/01-03/31/02)	Definition of Indicator
Recurrence of maltreatment	6.1% or less	3.4%*	Of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect, during the first 6 months of the reporting period, XX% had another substantiated or indicated report within a 6 month period.
Incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care	0.57% or less	0.51%*	Of all children in foster care during period under review, XX% were the subject of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff.
Foster care re-entries	8.6% or less	6.6%*	Of all children who entered care during year under review, XX% re-entered within 12 months of a prior foster care episode.
Stability of foster care placements	86.7% or more	76%	Of all the children who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home, XX% had not more than two placement settings.
Length of time to achieve reunification	76.2% or more	82.1%*	Of all the children who were reunified with their parents or caretaker, at the time of discharge from foster care, XX% were reunified in less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home.
Length of time to achieve adoption	32.0% or more	14%	Of all children who exited from foster care during the year under review to finalized adoption, XX% exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home

* Exceeded National Standard

DSS did not meet the national standards requiring stability in foster care placements and in time to finalize an adoption. During this coming fiscal year we will be working internally, with the Family Courts and with other state and community organizations to improve these outcomes, paying special attention to our adoption work processes.

The Department of Social Services developed and published agency outcome measures on June 13, 2003. Although this document was finalized on that date and not available to help plan the agency's work for fiscal year 2002-03, the principles used to develop the document have long been part of the agency. Because of this, we will use the outcomes in this document to help describe our performance during the last fiscal year. Data for all the new outcome measures are not available for this past fiscal year. We are in the process of developing a more formal data collection and evaluation process, based on our new outcomes, and expect to have that information available soon.

> Child Welfare Outcome I.A.1 - Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.

During this past fiscal year, DSS received more than 18,000 reports of suspected child abuse and/or neglect. Of those reports, a little more than one third were found to be cases where abuse, neglect or some other type of child maltreatment likely occurred.

## Total Child Protective Services Investigations
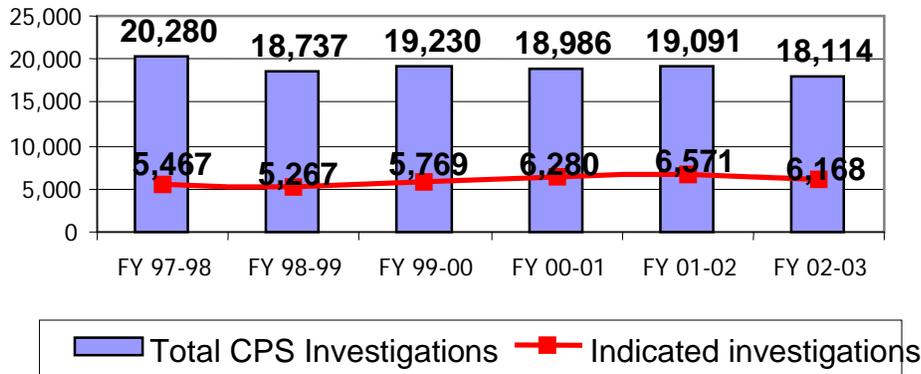
Child Welfare Outcome I.A.2. - Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Chart 2 reflects the number of child welfare cases South Carolina DSS had at the end of each fiscal year. This past fiscal year DSS's Child Welfare Services were serving 9,547 cases involving child maltreatment or children that were not safe without DSS intervention. Of those cases approximately half were receiving services in their homes.

Category 7
Chart 2

Child Welfare Services
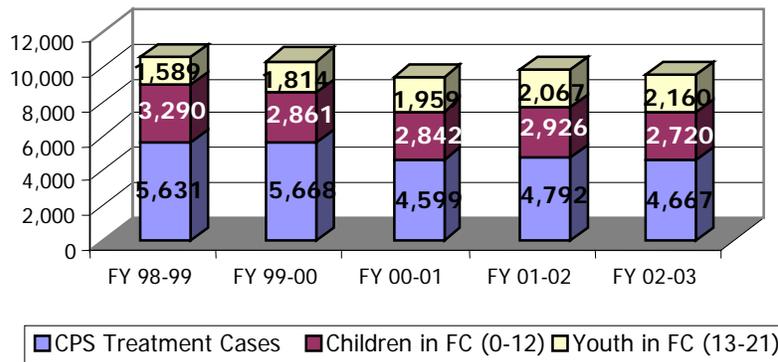
Child Welfare Outcome I.B.3. - Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

Charts 3 and 4 indicate there has been a decline in the number of children that have been freed each year for adoption and the number of adoptions finalized, while there was an increase last fiscal year in the number of children with plans of adoption but who have not been legally freed for adoption.
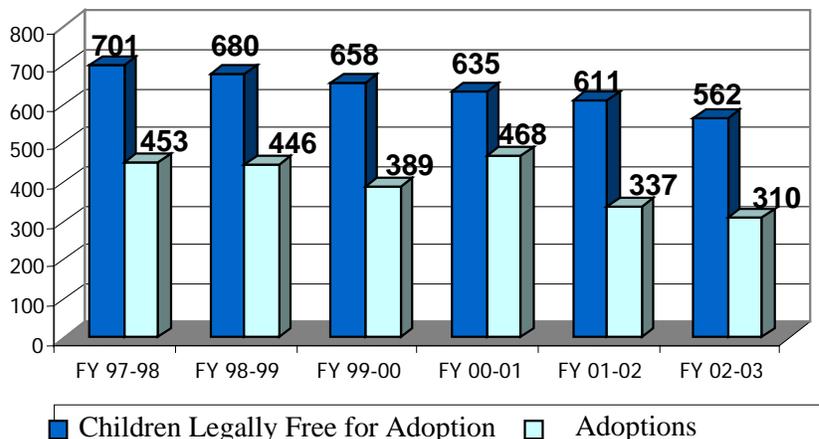
Category 7
Chart 3

Children Waiting to be Legally Freed for Adoption
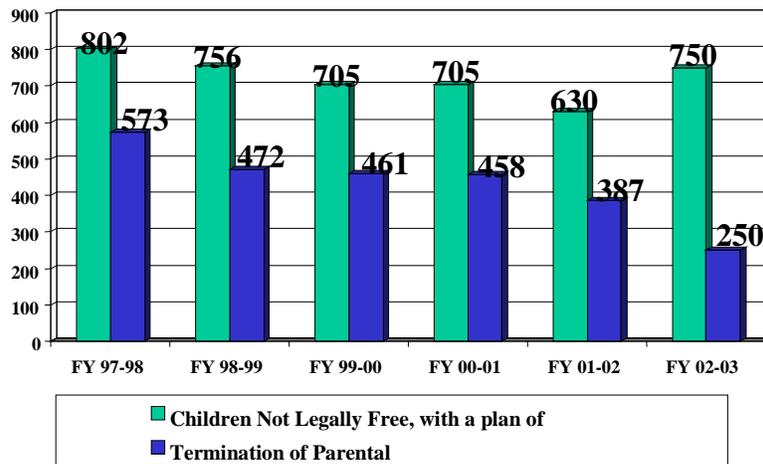
Category 7
Chart 4

Children Legally Free and Adopted

Months to Adoption

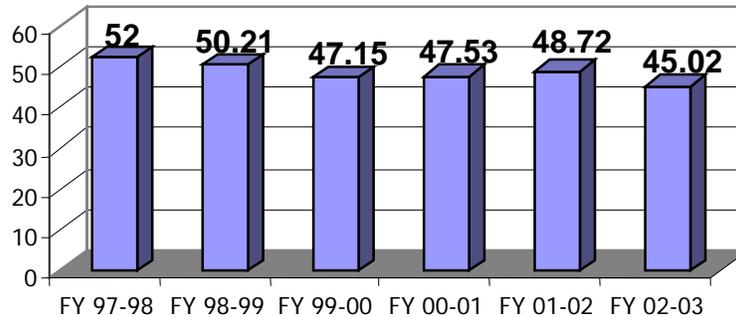|					
52	50.21	47.15	47.53	48.72	45.02
FY 97-98	FY 98-99	FY 99-00	FY 00-01	FY 01-02	FY 02-03

Chart 6 indicates a decline in DSS's adoption disruption rate during the last three fiscal years where data is available. The rate for fiscal year 2002-03 will be calculated after there is reasonable time to determine the success of the adoptive placements during that fiscal year. A disruption is defined as an adoptive placement that is not finalized because the child has to be moved. DSS's adoption disruption rate for fiscal year 2001-02 was 3.9%. The disruption rate for the nation is normally between 10 and 12%.

Adoption Disruption Rate

5.90%	4.40%	3.90%
FY 99-00	FY 00-01	FY 01-02
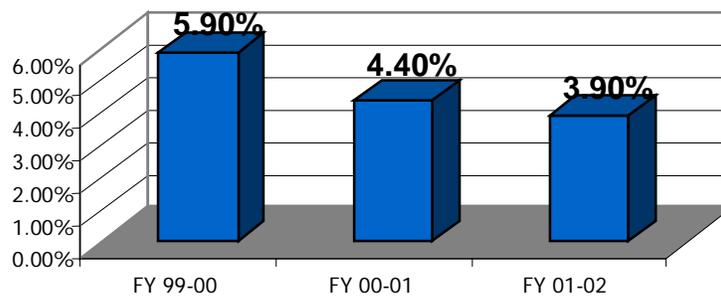
Notes: Disruption data is not yet available for FY 02-03.
The National Disruption rate is 10 to 12%.

Child Welfare Outcome I.B.4. - The continuity of family relationships and connections are preserved for children.   DSS is in the process of developing a system to collect data pertaining to this measure.

Child Welfare Outcome I.C.5. - Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

At the end of fiscal year 2002-03, DSS was paying 4,148 adoption subsidies at a rate of $1,689,659 per month. Annualized, the total adoption subsidies are approximately $20,276,000.
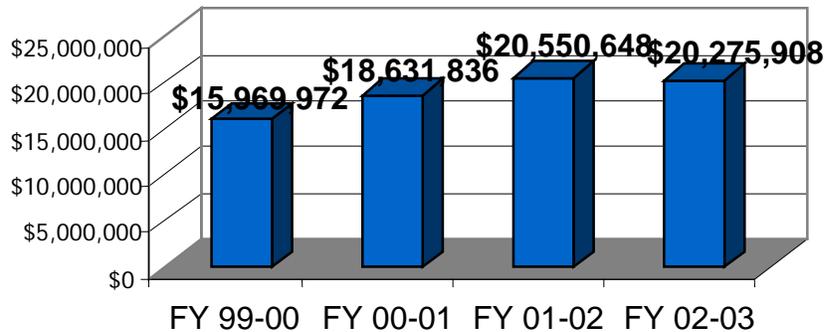
Category 7
Chart 7

Children Receiving Adoption Subsidies
(# of children at end of fiscal year)
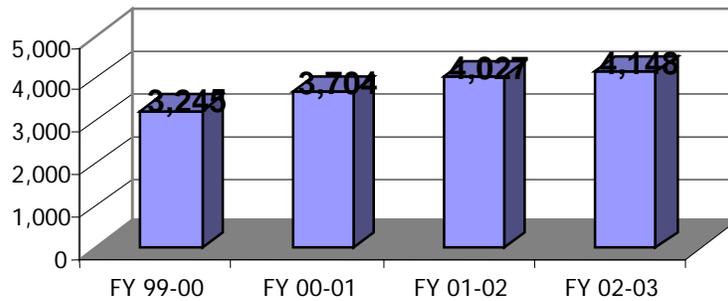

Category 7
Chart 8

Annual Adoption Subsidy Payments

Child Welfare Outcome I.C.6. - Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

During this past fiscal year, the department paid for 135 foster children to attend post-secondary education. This includes tech schools and colleges. In addition, when foster children are having difficulties in elementary, middle, and high schools and the appropriate services are not available from the school system, DSS will purchase the service, like tutoring, for the foster child. During the last fiscal year, DSS purchased educational support services for 205 foster children.

Category 7
Chart 9

Educational Services for Foster Children

Legend: ☐ Educational Support (tutoring,   ■ Post Secondary Educational Services
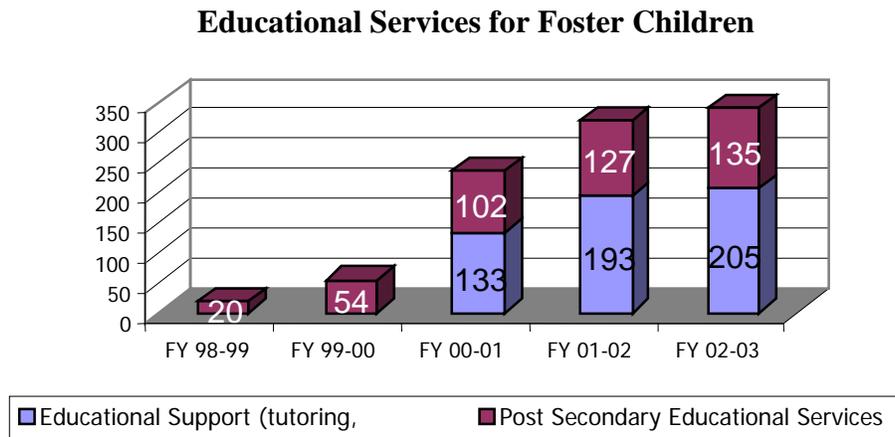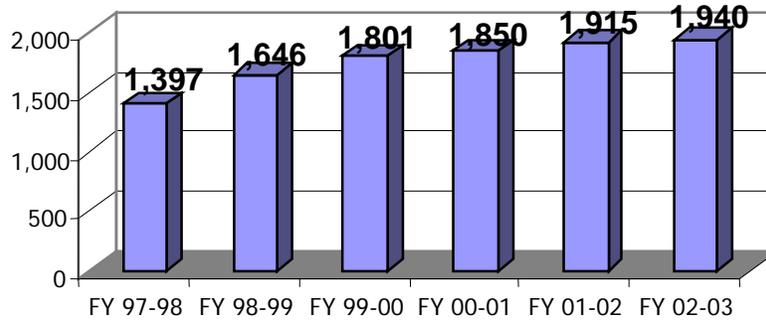
Child Welfare Outcome I.C.7. - Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

Managed Treatment Services (MTS) provides intensive case management for children in DSS custody (Foster Care) who require therapeutic placement. This service is for children who have emotional problems so severe they cannot function effectively at home or adjust in regular foster care. Chart 10 shows steady increase in the number of children receiving these services.

Managed Treatment Services
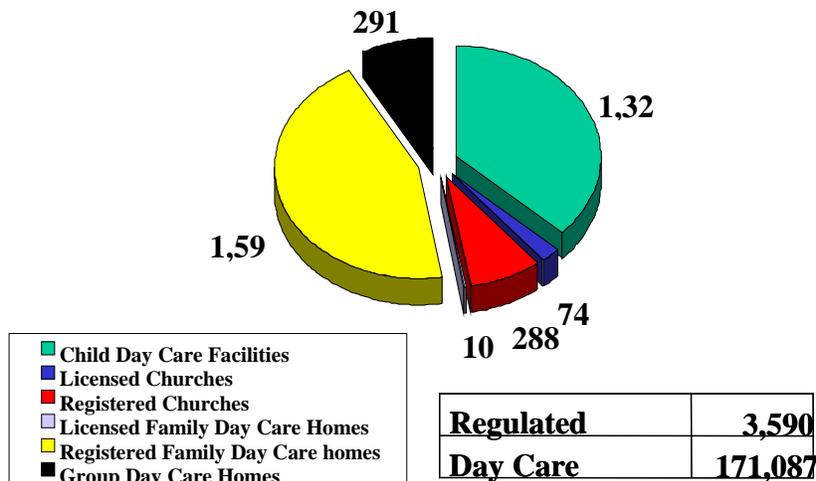**# Children Served**

Child Welfare Outcome I.C.8. - Children's health and safety will be protected in childcare settings to include the improvement of the quality of childcare facilities.

Last fiscal year, DSS provided licensing services to 3,590 facilities, which included 171,087 day care slots. There were 962 regulatory complaints that required investigations, of which 422 were found to be valid complaints needing corrective actions. DSS also completed 7,327 state and federal fingerprinting applications that are required for employment in child care facilities, foster homes, and other positions involved in caring for children.

Child Care Licensing

Types of Facilities Regulated

Legend:
- Child Day Care Facilities
- Licensed Churches
- Registered Churches
- Licensed Family Day Care Homes
- Registered Family Day Care homes
- Group Day Care Homes

Regulated	3,590
Day Care	171,087

Child Care

Regulatory Investigations
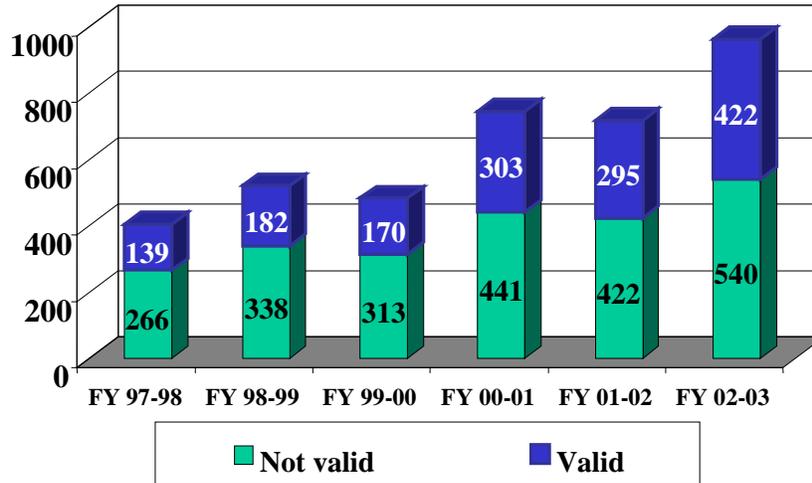
Child Care Licensing
## State and Federal Fingerprint Completed
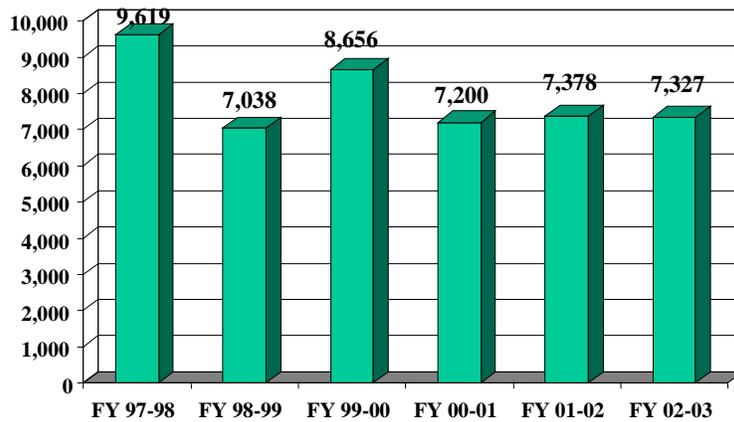
Note: FY 02-03 is an estimate based on preliminary reports.

Adult Protection Outcome II.1. - Reduce recurrence of abuse/neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults (person 18 or older who is either subjected to or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation).
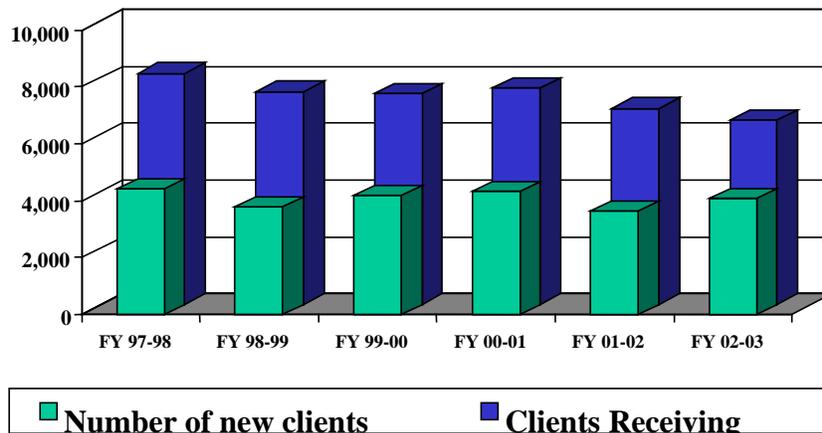
Category 7
Chart 14

Adult Protective Services

Types of Maltreatment of New APS
FY 02-03
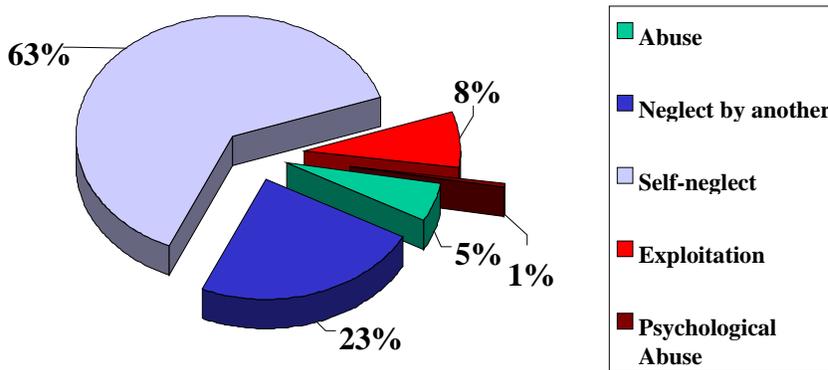
Category 7
Chart 15

Adult Protective Services

Clients Reported and Receiving Services

Category 7
Chart 16

Family Independence - TANF

Average # of FI Cases / month
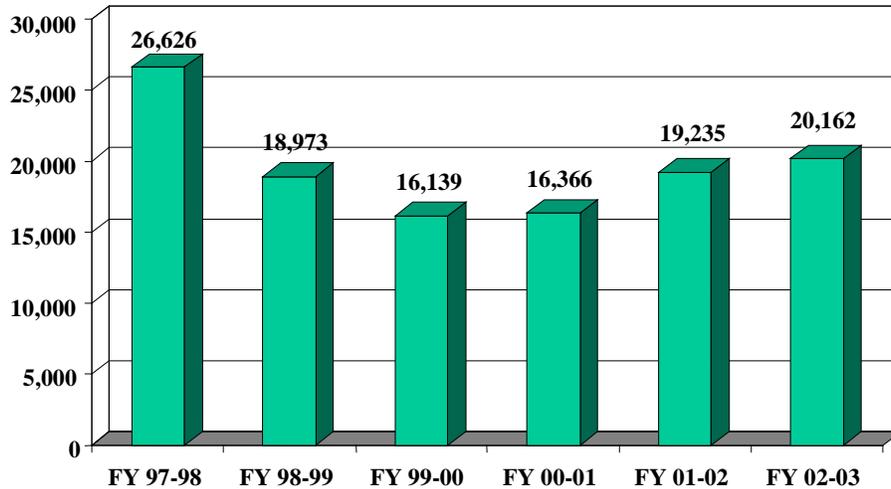
Family Independence Outcome III.2. - Maximize number of clients placed in employment

One of the primary objectives of the Family Independence program (TANF) is to assist families in becoming independent of state financial assistance when the families have members capable of employment. Last fiscal year, through education and employment training programs, DSS assisted almost 45% of those families with employable members in finding jobs. The average wage for those employed through DSS programs was $6.72 per hour, which is $1.57 above the minimum wage.

TANF — Employable Cases and People Employed

Legend: # Employed — # of Employable Cases
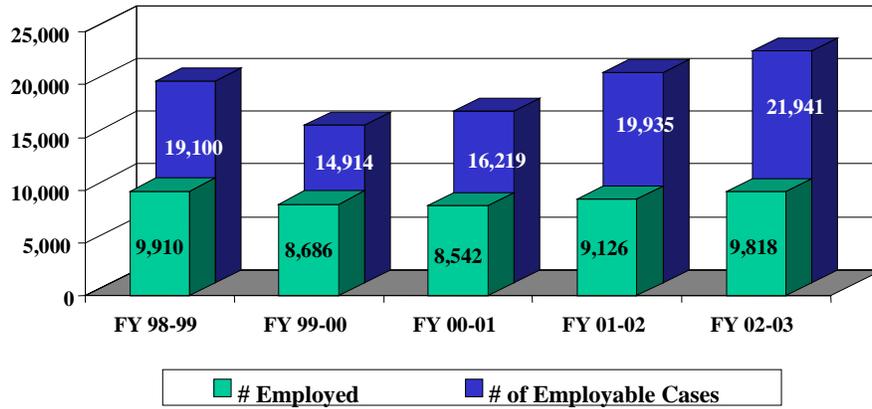
Average TANF Wages per Hour
(Minimum wage = $5.15)

Legend: Per Hour Average — Minimum Wage

* indicates data through May

TANF 30-Day Job Retention Rate
Southeast Comparison

South	80.05%
Kentucky	55.59%
Alabama	63.78%
Georgia	66.29%
North	76.94%
Mississipp	77.18%
Florida	79.98%
Tennessee	80.30%

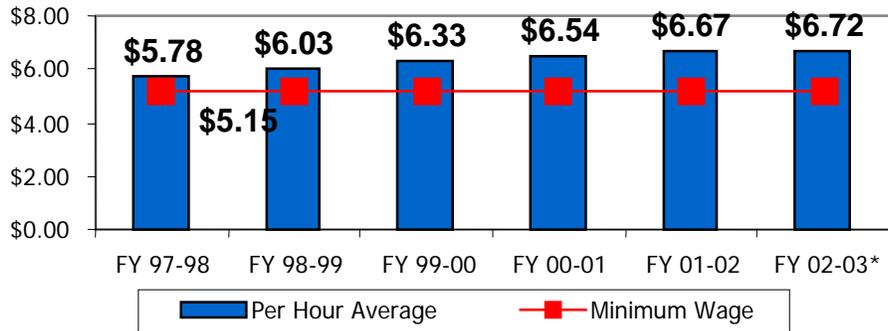Family Nutrition Outcome IV.1. - Maximize eligible households' access to the Food and Nutrition Programs

DSS administers a number of programs to help maximize the eligible households' access to the food and nutrition programs. The following is a list of programs we use to assist in achieving this outcome:

- Food Stamp Program
- Food Stamp Outreach Program
- Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Summer Food Service Program
- Emergency Shelters Food Program
- After-school Snack Program
- Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
- Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

The following two charts, charts 20 and 21, indicate there has been a significant increase in families receiving food stamps in South Carolina last year. More than 180,000 households received food stamps last fiscal year; and more than $450 million in food stamp benefits were issued.

Category 7
Chart 20

Average # of Food Stamp Households Served per Month
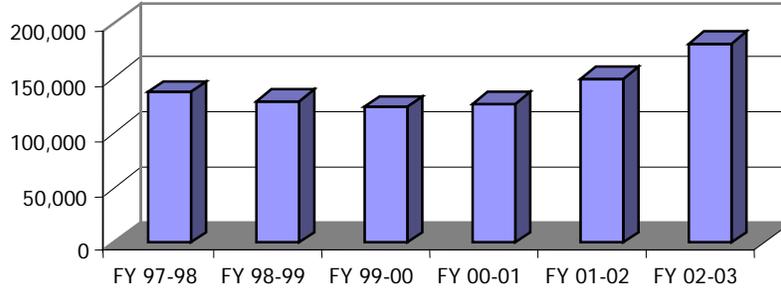
Category 7
Chart 21

Total Food Stamp Benefits by Fiscal Year

Millions
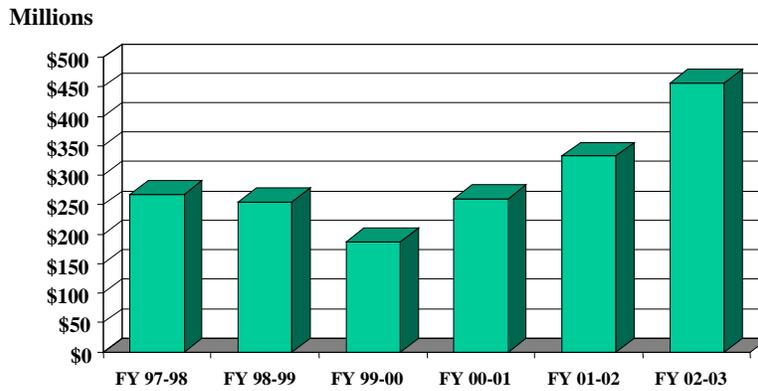
Note: FY 02-03 is projected total.

DSS's efforts to maximize the eligible persons receiving food stamps in South Carolina have been very effective. Chart 22 indicates that approximately 83% of the South Carolinians in poverty are receiving food stamps.

Individuals in Poverty in South Carolina
Receiving Food Stamps
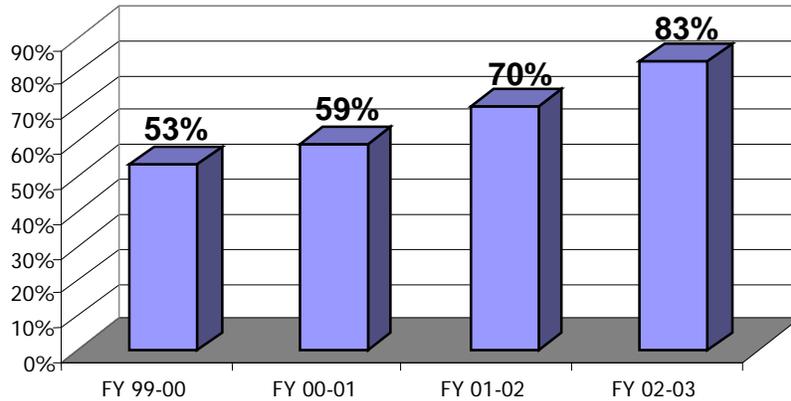
Child Support Enforcement Outcome V.1. - Children who are born out of wedlock have paternity established in a timely fashion.

Child Support Enforcement Outcome V.2. - Children with one or both parents absent from the home receive adequate financial support from their absent parent(s).

DSS's Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) had an objective this past fiscal year to increase the number of cases where paternity is established or acknowledged by an absent parent by 2% from the previous fiscal year's rate of 76.8%. This past fiscal year, 81.44% of the department's child support cases had paternity established which exceeds our objectives for last year by almost 5%.

Total Child Support Collections Distributed
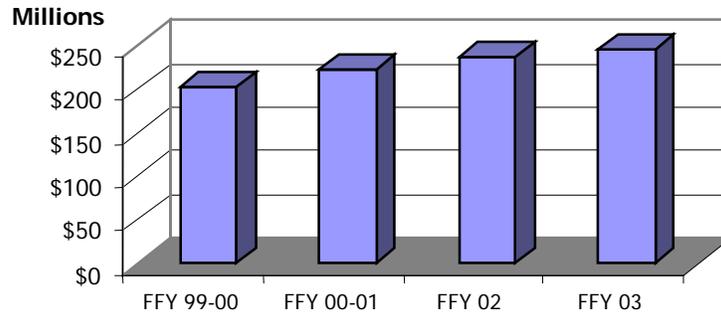
Child Support Enforcement Outcome V.3. - Children receive medical insurance coverage whenever such coverage is available at a reasonable cost through the non-custodial parent's or custodial parent's employer.

Child Support Enforcement Outcome V.4. - Funds expended by the program produce a reasonable rate of return in child support collected for the benefit of the dependent children.

The South Carolina OCSE collected $5.87 in child support last fiscal year for every $1 of expenditures. This was the ninth best cost effectiveness ratio in the nation. Table 2 shows performance objectives of the OCSE during federal fiscal year 2001-02.

Category 7
Table 2

Performance Criteria	Objective	FFY 2002
Support orders issued	At least 50%	66.71%
Paternity established or acknowledged	2% increase over previous FFY (76.8%)	81.44%
Current support paid	At least 40%	49.51%
Arrears cases paid	At least 40%	51.84%
Cost effectiveness (Collections/Expenditures)	At least $2.00	$5.87 (9th best in nation)

7.3 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of employee satisfaction, involvement, and development?

For this past fiscal year, 525 "exit interviews" were completed with employees leaving the agency. Approximately 80% of respondents provided favorable comments about their previous employment at DSS and indicated they would consider returning to work with the agency.

7.4 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of supplier/contractor/partner performance?

Our suppliers, contractors, and partners are expected to deliver quality customer services that adhere to the same performance levels as our county offices. We work in concert with our suppliers to establish client outcomes expectations and allow suppliers the freedom to develop their own approach to service delivery to achieve those outcomes. Regional and county offices and suppliers of external products and services must collect, report and incorporate data in a continuous improvement approach.

7.5 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of regulatory/legal compliance and citizenship? Note: For a governmental agency, this question would apply to compliance with laws and regulations other than the agency's central legal mandate. Results of the agency's legal mandate or mission should be addressed in question 7.2.

The Food Stamp Act of 1977 stipulates if a state's payment error rate is 5.9% or lower and its denial/closure rate did not exceed the national average rate, the state is eligible to receive additional administrative reimbursement for food stamp expenses. DSS met both of these criteria for federal fiscal year 2000-01 and qualified for enhanced funding in the amount of $4,392,948.

Category 7
Chart 24

Food Stamp Cumulative Error Rate
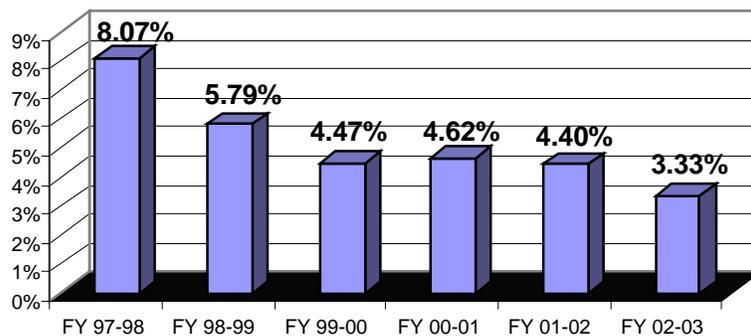
7.6 What are your current levels and trends of financial performance?

Faced with large budget shortfalls shortly after her appointment in early 2003, State Director Kim Aydlette ordered managers to conduct a complete review of major program and administrative processes used by the agency to determine if efficiencies and cost savings could be realized. As a result, a number of contracts that did not directly support the agency's mission

were terminated. State automobiles that were rarely used were returned to the state fleet. Leases for office space in outlying areas were terminated, and staff were relocated to state office buildings. Expenses for cell phones, pagers, and fax machines have been significantly reduced.

Appendix A

DSS Operation Locations

Abbeville DSS - Main Site - Human Services Bldg.

Aiken DSS - Main Site / North Augusta B T C / MTSC

Allendale DSS - Main Site - Agriculture Bldg. / Site 2 McSweeney Bldg. / McSweeney Annex

Anderson DSS Office Building / MTSC

Bamberg DSS - Main Site / MTSC / MTSC (2nd Site)

Barnwell DSS - Main Site / FIA

Beaufort DSS - Main Site / Hilton Head / MTSC

Berkeley DSS - Main Site / FIA

Calhoun DSS - Main Site / FIA and Region III

Charleston DSS - Main Site - PQA Chicora Center / FIA - Quality Assurance / MTSC / Child Support Enforcement / Adoption Office Chicora Center / Adoption Region VI-Day Care / Trident One-Stop Career Center / Record Storage

Cherokee DSS - Main Site

Chester DSS - Main Site

Chesterfield DSS - Main Site

Clarendon DSS - Main Site

Colleton DSS - Main Site – Bernard Warshaw / FIA

Darlington DSS James P. Mozingo Bldg. / Robert L. Grooms Bldg. / Society Hill Neighborhood Ctr. / Government Outreach / FIA

Dillon DSS - Main Site

Dorchester DSS - Main Site / St. George

Edgefield DSS - Main Site

Fairfield DSS - Main Site

Florence DSS - Main Site / Lake City / Adoption Services Region IV / MTSC

Georgetown DSS - Main Site

Greenville DSS - Main Site / MTSC / FIA / Child Support Enforcement / Adoption Services Region II

Greenwood DSS - Main Site / MTSC

Hampton DSS - Main Site / FIA

Horry DSS - Main Site / Loris / Myrtle Beach Complex / Myrtle Beach MTSC

Jasper DSS - Main Site / FIA

Kershaw DSS - Main Site – United Way Holstein Ctr.

Lancaster DSS - Main Site / FIA / Kershaw

Laurens DSS Main Site - Human Services Complex

Lee DSS - Main Site / FIA

Lexington DSS – Main Site / Adoptions Region V / Maxway Bldg.

McCormick DSS - Main Site

Marion DSS - Main Site / Site 2 Multi-Purpose Bldg.

Marlboro DSS - Main Site / Annex / Bennettsville MTSC

Newberry DSS - Main Site

Oconee DSS - Main Site / FIA

Orangeburg DSS - Main Site

Pickens DSS - Main Site

Richland DSS - Main Site / Eastover Office / FIA

SCDSS Central Office - North Towers Complex / State Office MTSC / Staff Dev. and Training / Records Storage / PQA – Investigations – SACWIS / Central Receiving and Issuance Center/ Midlands MTSC / Region II (CSE) / Child Support Enforcement Region I / CSE

Saluda DSS - Main Site

Spartanburg DSS - Evans Bldg. - Main Site / Montgomery Bldg. / MTSC / Children's Shelter / Teen Shelter

Sumter DSS - Main Site / MTSC

Union DSS - Main Site

Williamsburg DSS – Main Site

York DSS - Main Site / Rock Hill Satellite / Satellite - Apple Tree Center / Rock Hill Adoption Services Region I

Appendix B – SCDSS Organization Chart

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                              ┌──────────────┐
                              │   GOVERNOR   │
                              └──────┬───────┘
                              ┌──────┴───────┐
                              │STATE DIRECTOR│
                              └──────┬───────┘
   ┌──────────────┬─────────────────┼──────────────────┬──────────────┐
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────┐
│DEPUTY    │ │DEPUTY    │   │DEPUTY STATE  │   │DEPUTY STATE  │ │DEPUTY    │
│STATE     │ │STATE     │   │DIRECTOR      │   │DIRECTOR      │ │STATE     │
│DIRECTOR  │ │DIRECTOR  │   │REGIONAL AND  │   │ADMINISTRATION│ │DIRECTOR  │
│PROGRAM   │ │FISCAL &  │   │COUNTY        │   │AND PROGRAM   │ │GENERAL   │
│POLICY AND│ │INFORMATION│  │OPERATIONS    │   │SUPPORT       │ │COUNSEL   │
│OVERSIGHT │ │SYSTEMS   │   └──────────────┘   └──────────────┘ └──────────┘
└──────────┘ └──────────┘
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DEPUTY STATE DIRECTOR PROGRAM POLICY AND OVERSIGHT
- CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT
- FAMILY INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM
- HUMAN SERVICES
- PLANNING & RESEARCH
- STAFF DEVELOPMENT/ TRAINING

DEPUTY STATE DIRECTOR FISCAL & INFORMATION SYSTEMS
- BUDGETING/COST ALLOCATION
- FINANCE
- GAFRS
- GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
- INFORMATION SYSTEMS

DEPUTY STATE DIRECTOR REGIONAL AND COUNTY OPERATIONS
- COUNTY OFFICES
- MANAGEMENT SUPPORT
- MANAGED TREATMENT SERVICES
  - ADOPTION

DEPUTY STATE DIRECTOR ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM SUPPORT
- AUDIT SERVICES
- DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES
- COMPLIANCE
- HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
- CONSTITUENT SERVICES
- PUBLIC AFFAIRS
- INDIVIDUAL AND PROVIDER RIGHTS

DEPUTY STATE DIRECTOR GENERAL COUNSEL
- ASSISTANT GENERAL COUNSEL
  - INVESTIGATIONS
- HIPAA COORDINATOR