



Department of  
**Children's Services**

# Annual Report

State Fiscal Year July 2016 – June 2017

Tennessee Department of Children's Services | December 2017



# Table of Contents

---

Contents	Pages
Agency Vision, Mission and Strategy	3
Organization Chart	4
2016-2017 Regional Map	5
A Letter from the Commissioner	6
Commissioner's Office	8
Office of Child Safety	11
Office of Child Programs	14
Office of Juvenile Justice	16
Office of Child Health	18
Office of Training and Professional Development	21
Office of Information Technology	23
Office of Human Resources	25
Office of Continuous Quality Improvement	26
Office of Finance and Budget	28
Office of General Counsel	29
Office of Administrative Procedures Division	30
Office of Customer Focused Services	30
Office of Child Welfare Reform	31
Office of Communications	33
Legislative Office	33
Office of Facilities Management	34
DCS By the Numbers	35

# Agency Vision, Mission and Strategy

---

## ***Vision Statement:***

Tennessee's children and youth are safe, healthy and back on track for success.

## ***Mission Statement:***

Ensure forever families for children and youth by delivering high-quality, evidence based services in partnership with the community.

## ***Strategic Priorities:***

1. **Safety, Health, and Permanency:** Ensure every child is safe, healthy and supported in a forever home through quality practice and case management.
2. **Learning Organization:** Use data and continuous quality improvement to ensure practices of DCS and its providers are repeatable, sustainable and produce the best outcomes.
3. **Customer Focused, High-Performing Workforce:** Ensure high-quality customer service that is responsive, engaged, and customer focused.
4. **Partnerships:** Strengthen our work through collaboration with stakeholders and community partners.
5. **Communications:** Foster trust and credibility with internal and external audiences through reliable, accurate, transparent, and timely two-way communication.

**Commissioner  
Bonnie Hommrich**

**Child Safety  
Dimple Dudley**  
Deputy Commissioner

**Carla Aaron**  
Executive Director

- Community Partnerships
- Internal Quality Control
- CPS Investigations
- Child Abuse Hotline

**Child Health  
Lisa Pellegrin, Ph.D**  
Executive Director

- Education
- Child Death Review
- Nursing
- Safety Analysis
- Psychology
- Advocacy

**Juvenile Justice  
Debbie Miller**  
Deputy Commissioner

**Misty Neeley**  
Executive Director

- JJ Regional Coordinators
- YDCs

**Child Programs  
Sherri Hale**  
Deputy Commissioner

**Child Permanency  
Sandra Wilson**  
Executive Director

**Network Development  
Susan Mitchell**  
Executive Director

**Continuous Quality Improvement  
Jennifer Williams**  
Assistant Commissioner

**Finance & Budget  
Doug Swisher**  
Assistant Commissioner

**Legislation  
Russell Marty**  
Director

**Communications  
Rob Johnson**  
Director

**Human Resources  
Martha Shirk**  
Executive Director

**Administrative Review  
Tara Moore**  
Commissioner Designee & Admin. Judge

**Facilities Management  
Mike Boshers**  
Executive Director

**General Counsel  
Doug Dimond**

**Customer Focused Services  
Tammy Feldman**  
Director

**Information Technology  
Stuart Clements**  
Chief Information Officer

**Child Welfare Reform  
Brittany Binkowski**  
Special Assistant

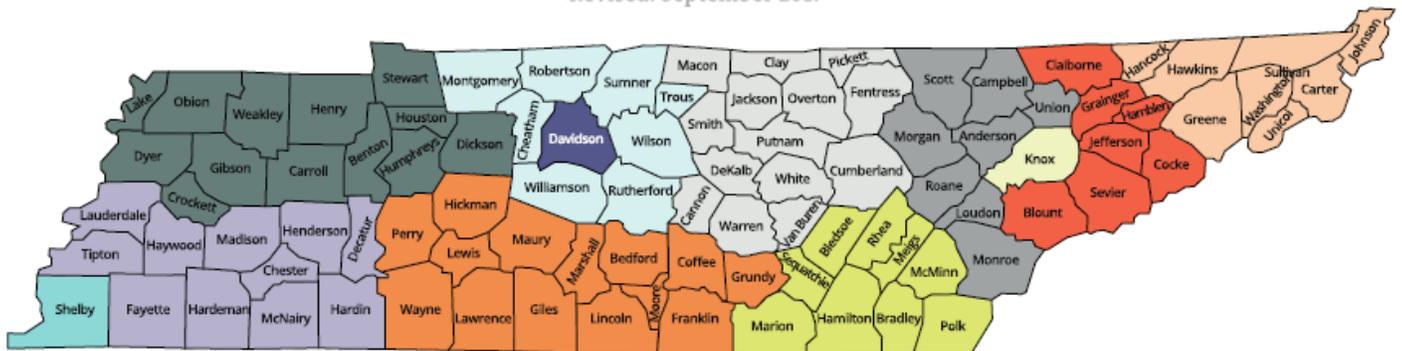
**Regional Support  
Julie Rotella**  
Executive Director

**Learning & Development  
Christina Fly**  
Executive Director

# Department of Children's Services SFY 2016-2017 Regional Map

## Department of Children's Services Regional Administrators Contact Information

Revised: September 2017



 <b>Northwest, 13 Counties</b> RA Camille Legins (731) 364-3149	 <b>Davidson County</b> Twana Woods (615) 532-4009	 <b>East Tennessee, 8 Counties</b> RA Marcy Martin (865) 425-4451
 <b>Mid-Cumberland, 8 Counties</b> RA Lisa Brookover (615) 360-4396	 <b>Upper Cumberland Region 14 Counties</b> RA Cheri Richards (931) 646-3004	 <b>Northeast, 8 Counties</b> RA Lucretia Sanders (423) 854-5130
 <b>Shelby County</b> RA Merlene Hyman (901) 578-4371	 <b>South Central, 14 Counties</b> RA Lisa Williamson (931) 490-6115	 <b>Tennessee Valley, 9 Counties</b> RA Sandra Holder (423) 296-2266
 <b>Southwest, 11 Counties</b> RA Teresa Harrison (731) 421-2000	 <b>Smoky Mountain, 7 Counties</b> RA Wendy Forster (865) 981-2366	 <b>Knox County</b> RA Charles Baumgardner (865) 201-2463

**Wilder Youth Development  
Center (West)**  
Somerville, TN  
Jane Hayes, Superintendent  
(901) 465-7359

**Gateway to Independence (Middle)**  
Nashville, TN  
Darrell Pannell, Superintendent  
(615) 532-2000



# A Letter from the Commissioner

---

January 31, 2018

Dear friends,

This year has been one of the most exciting in Children's Services' history.

Most importantly, we fulfilled our promise to reform public child welfare in Tennessee by successfully exiting the Brian A. federal consent decree, a 17-year-effort that has transformed the department and the outcomes for the children and families we serve.

This summer, U.S. District Court Judge Waverly D. Crenshaw approved the historic agreement between the state and Children's Rights, the New York-based advocacy group that in 2000 filed litigation known as the Brian A. lawsuit.

Tennessee now has a thoroughly reformed foster-care system. The reform comes after years of collaboration with Children's Rights and the Technical Assistance Committee, a panel of nationally recognized child welfare experts that served as the federal court monitor for the Brian A. consent decree.

This stage in our journey represents the hard work, commitment and innovation it has taken to get here. But the work goes on. We will always have tough problems before us. At DCS, we promise to bring our full energy and attention to whatever lies ahead, and we will use the same focus and dedication that has brought us to this point in 2017.

As you can read in this annual report, that work has indeed been energetic. For instance:

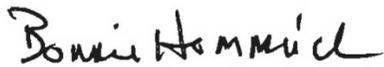
- Tennessee experienced an increased number of drug exposed children, particularly in the eastern portion of the state. Due to this increase and the challenges in responding to the opioid issues, OCS created a Drug Exposed Child Team implementing it in March 2017. This team is charged with responding to allegations of drug exposed infants in a manner that is more knowledgeable about addiction, the recovery and relapse cycle and uses a host of community resources to provide services to parents.
- Legislation was passed in the spring of 2017 which mandated the Department of Children's Services, in collaboration with the Administration of the Courts, to establish Safe Baby Courts in five jurisdictions by January 2018 and five additional jurisdictions by January 2019.
- In Juvenile Justice, two significant developments were the transition of Woodland Hills YDC to the National Guard for the development of the Youth ChalleNGe program. Youth from Woodland Hills were moved to the New Visions building in February 2017, now called Gateway to Independence. Mountain View Youth Development Center was transitioned to private administration effective July 1, 2017 to assist with the development of more community based beds for juvenile justice youth.

- TNFosters, a statewide campaign linking government, faith, non-profit, business and creative communities was developed to support our state's foster care system. Only some are called to foster or adopt, but we all have the opportunity to make a difference in the life of child in foster care.
- More than 2,000 iPhones were deployed to make our workforce more mobile.

We owe a huge thanks to our staff, our partners, the state's juvenile courts and our many friends and advocates across Tennessee. This past year has been both exhilarating and humbling.

I am very proud of the work we have done.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonnie Hommrich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bonnie Hommrich  
Commissioner

# Commissioner's Office

This summer, U.S. District Court Judge Waverly D. Crenshaw approved the historic agreement between the state and Children's Rights, the New York-based advocacy group that in 2000 filed litigation known as the Brian A. lawsuit.

**Commissioner Bonnie Hommrich**

**Executive Director of Regional Support**

**Julie Rotella**

Tennessee now has a thoroughly reformed foster-care system. The reform comes after years of collaboration with Children's Rights and the Technical Assistance Committee, a panel of nationally recognized child welfare experts that served as the federal court monitor for the Brian A. consent decree.

"This is monumental not only for the state, but for Tennessee's children. After years of intervention, the federal government is saying that Tennessee is providing service to children in a way that models what it should look like for the rest of the country," Governor Bill Haslam said.

The reform follows intense work with a wide range of institutions, including Tennessee's private provider network, the state's leading universities, the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall Center for Children, the state's juvenile courts and the Tennessee General Assembly.

DCS achieved its court-required performance during 2015, and the Brian A. agreement stipulated that Tennessee maintain that performance throughout 2016.

Highlights of the reform include:

- Among the nearly 140 foster-care benchmarks DCS achieved are measures of time to reunification, time to adoption, re-entry into the foster-care system, length of time in placement, parent-and-child visits and case-manager caseloads.
- DCS emphasizes family-style placement for youth in foster care, in place of institutional settings such as orphanages.
- DCS has become a national leader in timeliness to adoption and in implementing a child-and-family teaming model that encourages birth parents, case managers, care providers and foster families to work together on behalf of a child.
- Tennessee has developed a state-of-the-art child death review that seeks to understand all of the factors that led to a child's death in order to create safer outcomes for children and the people who serve them.
- DCS has developed a process that has put the department on a path to a more professional workforce, with bachelor's and master's degree programs for case managers and supervisors.
- DCS has built a robust, modern case-management computer system (TFACTS) that handles everything from case notes, management tools to billing days. It replaced a patchwork of computer systems that did not always work together reliably.

- Tennessee is the first state in the U.S. to offer independent living services to 100 percent of the youth who age out of foster care. This program is an outgrowth of pioneering work with private provider Youth Villages.



Deputy Governor Jim Henry and Governor Bill Haslam celebrate with the DCS staff after the successful exit from the Brian A. consent decree.

Beyond Brian A., the department also began exploring new programming and learning opportunities, in partnership with Casey Family Programs and Vanderbilt University. The Commissioner's Office is involved in multiple special projects and engages in planning and coordination with other divisions within the agency as well as with Community Partners and Providers.

## ***Highlighted Special Projects***

- **Preservation of All Children:** DCS is working with an outside consultant to conduct intensive reviews of cases with a population of five and under in which the allegation was Drug Exposed Child and/or Lack of Supervision. Comparison of cases will be completed to determine differences, trends, barriers, and systemic issues on decisions to place a child into State custody. Upon completion, recommendations will be made to Senior Leadership to enhance focus on the preservation of children in their homes/communities.
- **Tennessee Therapeutic Foster Care:** Partnership between DCS and providers to create standards/criteria to promote consistency in delivery of services. Criteria were established and a Self-Assessment tool was developed for use by both providers and DCS. Fourteen distinct providers chose to participate in the self-assessment process.
- **Eckerd Rapid Safety Feedback:** Model developed by Eckerd Agency in Florida that utilizes Predictive Analytics in order to identify children at high risk of an unsafe outcome. The identified cases undergo extensive case review followed by a coaching session with an established team. The case manager and Supervisor of the case will work with the Coach to develop an action plan to ensure safety for the child. Tennessee DCS will be looking at the most vulnerable population of three years old and under for this review process. The team is in place and practice sessions have been initiated.
- **Simulation Labs:** Partnership between Casey Family Programs and Los Angeles County DCFS to implement Simulation Learning Labs in Tennessee as part of a learning experience for staff. This will allow staff to experience real life situations in a safe environment. Simulation Labs will be used with both experienced staff and new hires to develop and practice skills to better serve children and families.



**ON THE JOB:** CPS worker Ericha Baskerville arrives for a home visit in Cheatham County.

## Office of Child Safety

Child Protective Service staff from the Office of Child Safety are responsible for conducting investigations involving allegations related to serious or severe child abuse and neglect. Many of the investigations are coordinated with law enforcement, child advocacy centers, prosecutors, and juvenile court representatives. Additionally, the Special

Investigations Unit investigates allegations of abuse and neglect in settings (such as schools, day cares or foster homes.) where an employee or volunteer acting as a caregiver is involved

The Child Abuse Hotline accepts, screens and assigns referrals of child abuse and neglect.

The Multiple Response System approach is used to address child abuse and neglect issues. This system addresses the variety of familial situations and the premise that not all child protection cases require the

### **Deputy Commissioner Dimple Dudley** **Executive Director Carla Aaron**

*25,274 CPS Investigative cases handled*  
*2,337 CPS Third Party Special Investigations*  
*134,757 Child Abuse Hotline Calls Handled*

same types of response or intervention. Sometimes children are at extreme risk and need the immediate attention of investigators while some families may not require the intensive intervention of an investigation but will benefit from the assistance and support of DCS or other community partners to reduce risk and ensure child safety.

## ***The Year's Highlights***

- Development of a Drug Team in East Tennessee in Collaboration with UT Children's Hospital. Tennessee experienced an increased number of CPS allegations of drug exposed children, particularly in the eastern portion of the state. Due to this increase and the challenges in responding to the opioid issues, OCS created a Drug Exposed Child Team, in March 2017. This team is more knowledgeable about addiction, recovery, and relapses and uses a host of community resources to provide services to the parent(s). Partnerships have increased and strengthened which have enhanced the support and service delivery resources for the families.
- Per federal statute, Tennessee is mandated to have a due process system for substantiated perpetrators of Child Abuse/Neglect. This system, which has been in place for several years, was updated and revised this year. The notification process to substantiated perpetrators was centralized, resulting in increased compliance to approximately 90 percent.
- CPS Training Academy was designed for Child Protective Services workers. The Academy is a non-consecutive three-week program that focuses on how to conduct thorough investigations and assessments. The Academy was created in collaboration with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, the Vanderbilt Center of Excellence, the DCS Office of Professional Development, and the DCS Office of Child Safety. All CPS workers graduate from this Academy.
- Alternative Workplace Solutions is an initiative for a mobile statewide workforce that creates a physical and cultural transformation using non-traditional workspaces to promote productivity, efficiency and flexibility across state government that improves the management of the state's real estate portfolio. The Department is utilizing AWS as an opportunity to align practices and workspaces to better support a mobile workforce. The program aims to increase retention of existing employees and improve recruitment of top talent. For more information on the Statewide AWS Initiative, visit [Alternative Workplace Solutions](#).
- DCS continued to enhance SafeMeasures dashboards. The dashboards are tools to assist staff in managing workflow to better meet the needs of children and families by reducing administrative work and prioritizing critical tasks to be more timely and efficient.

- Legislation was passed in the spring of 2017 which mandated the Department of Children’s Services, in collaboration with the Administration of the Courts and the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse to establish Safe Baby Courts in five jurisdictions by January 2018 and five additional jurisdictions by January 2019. The courts will be modeled after the Zero to Three core components focusing on babies from the age of birth through three years. DCS, in collaboration with the AOC has established courts in Grundy, Davidson, Knox, Madison, Stewart, Coffee and Johnson counties.



Aurelie ‘Lee’ Jackson has opened her Upper Cumberland home to children since 2003. In addition to the many children she has fostered, she has adopted three adolescent youth and accepted guardianship of another young man.

# Office of Child Programs

The Office of Child Programs provides leadership and oversight for three divisions- Custodial/Non-Custodial Child Permanency, Network Development, and Regional Operations. Staff and partners in these divisions promote, implement and guide a model of practice that is trauma informed, family focused, strengths based, culturally sensitive, and collaboratively engaged.

**Deputy Commissioner Sherri Lawson**

**Executive Director of Child Programs**

**Sandra Wilson**

**Executive Director of Network Development Susan Mitchell**

## ***Permanency***

The Division of Permanency provided departmental leadership for three key partnerships:

- The launch of TN Fosters. With the support of the Governor and First Lady, TN Fosters, a joint initiative of the Department of Children's Services, America's Kids Belong, and the Tennessee Alliance for Children & Families launched in December 2016. Guided by a vision that strong partnerships with faith communities and others, could support the common goal of increasing existing pools of foster/adoptive homes, and the wrap-around supports to those families. All DCS foster parent support staff across the state have received updated refresher training on recruitment and retention of foster/adoptive parents from nationally recognized experts on the subject. Through recently recouped adoption savings dollars, foster and pre-adopt families now have enhanced training and counseling to support the sustainability of placements. Awareness campaigns have been held in all parts of the state, with promising results. DCS became a partner in
- Expansion of the Children's Cabinet Multiple Agency Collaboration (Single Team/Single Plan) Multiple Agency Collaboration planning in late 2014 as part of the Children's Cabinet systems alignment effort. Together with the departments of Health, Mental Health & Substance Abuse, Education, Human Service, and TennCare, since January, 2017, five additional DCS regions have implemented single team plans in at least one county in each region, bringing the total participating regions to seven, with the remaining roll-out to be complete by the end of fiscal year 2018.
- Extension of Foster Care Services is a voluntary program that supports and prepares youth ages 18-21 that have aged out of custody as they transition to adulthood. EFCS offers a variety of services and resources including case management, direct financial assistance, housing supports, educational scholarships and opportunities to develop independent living skills. Extension of Foster Care Services served 743 youth reflecting the total youth participation, regardless of the year they accepted. Of the total aged out population eligible for EFCS, 349 youth accepted voluntary services after aging out. Through the statewide Youth Villages LifeSet program 1,658 youth were served. Both the federal Education and Training Vouchers and state Bright

Futures scholarship maintained high utilization providing 483 total scholarships (346 ETV, 137 BF) with the majority of scholarships, 391, being used toward traditional four year and/or community colleges and 92 scholarships toward technical/vocational schools. Direct services provided to custodial and EFCS youth through IL Wraparound Services continued to grow with 749 youth served. Driver's education, graduation packages and good grades incentives remain some of our most popular categories accessed.

## ***Network Development***

Approximately half of the children and youth in care at any given time are served by a private provider. The Office of Network Development plays a critical role in ensuring that those children and youth needing out of home care are appropriately served.

Just a few of the issues addressed and projects undertaken by the Office of Network Development include:

- A continued focus on reducing lengths of stay in detention and Primary Assessment Centers along with timely community placement. Daily regional placement assistance calls were implemented during this period and have proven to be an effective method for Network Development staff to stay abreast of regional placement needs and challenges.
- The management of the Mountain View transition of its East Tennessee campus to the private provider network. The facilitation of this project ran through the close of SFY and resulted in a right-sized Youth Development Center in the eastern portion of the state as well as 60 Level 3 Juvenile Justice residential beds. Network Development operated as an integral part of multidisciplinary team dedicated to ensuring that educational and therapeutic services are provided in Detention Centers.

## ***The Year's Highlights***

- Highest number of adoption finalizations on record totaled 1,113, exceeding the established goal by almost 30 percent.
- Launched an expanded partnership to offer/provide front-end training and in home counseling to all pre-adopt families in support of sustainability of adoptions
- Successfully implemented the federal mandate for credit checks on youth 14 and older (to protect their future credit histories), including a roll-out of training and system tracking

# Office of Juvenile Justice

Youth adjudicated as delinquent may be served by DCS through pre-trial diversion or probation supervision, or as custodial youth in residential placement. Overall the number of diversion and probation cases has declined since 2012 and the number of custodial youth has experienced similar declines. These declines follow state and national trends of fewer youth entering custody for delinquent offenses. Today, although there are over 1,000 juvenile justice youth in custody in Tennessee, only 190 are served in hardware

secure youth development centers – this is a 44 percent decline in YDC population since 2012. The average length of stay for youth in a YDC is 9.5 months, a decrease of three percent since 2012. And, in 2016 Tennessee became the first and only state to have hardware secure facilities accredited by Council on Accreditation.

While all of these statistics are positive, DCS recognizes that much more can be done to better serve juvenile justice youth and their families. Working with legislative leadership a joint task force on Juvenile Justice was created and worked to identify areas for improvement. Representatives from other state departments, the Administrative Office of the Courts, juvenile courts, law enforcement, district attorneys and public defenders provided testimony regarding record keeping, placement options, mental health, disproportionate minority confinement, detention stays, placement stability and education services. Following these public hearings, the Task Force requested technical assistance from Pew Charitable Trusts to assist in developing a long range strategic plan and policy initiative for Tennessee. The work of this Task Force will continue through the end of the 2017 calendar year.

Two significant developments were the transition of Woodland Hills YDC to the National Guard for the development of the Youth ChalleNGe program. Youth from Woodland Hills were moved to the New Visions building in February 2017, now called Gateway to Independence. Mountain View Youth Development Center was transitioned to private administration effective July 1, 2017 to assist with the development of more community based beds for juvenile justice youth.

## **Prevention Services**

The Office of Juvenile Justice provides funding to prevent youth from entering custody. Thirty-two grants were awarded this year to juvenile courts and community agencies that serve youth at risk of entering state custody for delinquency, truancy and other status offenses. Funded services include juvenile court intake, county probation, educational programs that provide an effective learning environment and a continuum-of-care for at-risk students.

**Deputy Commissioner Debbie Miller**

**Executive Director Misty Neeley**

*9.5 months – average length of stay in a Youth Development Center*

*\$453 – average cost per day at a Youth Development Center*

*549 – number of youth served in YDCs*

*\$23.19 – average cost per day of a JJ youth on probation*

In accordance with TCA § 37-1-162, each year the OJJ distributes a State Supplement grant to counties for the improvement of juvenile court services. This year 98 juvenile courts were eligible to receive state supplement funding.

### ***Interstate Compact for Juveniles***

The Office of Juvenile Justice administers the Interstate Compact for Juveniles. ICJ allows for the return of runaways from state to state and for Tennessee to transfer juvenile justice probation and custody cases to other states for supervision when the family decides to move to another state. Tennessee also accepts supervision of these types of cases from other states when families move into this state. This program accepted 124 Probation cases and 24 Parole cases for supervision in Tennessee. Tennessee sent 102 Probation cases and 28 Parole cases to other states for supervision. The Office also returned a total of 115 runaway youth to and from Tennessee; this is an increase from last year when 96 runaways were returned.

### ***Public Chapter 1005***

The Tennessee State legislature passed Public Chapter 1005 in 2016. This law requires DCS to collect information on the number of local and state probation cases; the total number of children in juvenile justice placements by type of placement; recidivism rates of children served by probation; the number of juvenile justice receiving evidence-based treatment and a listing of juvenile courts that receive prevention grants from the department. This report is submitted annually to the General Assembly by January 31. A copy of this report can be found here: <http://share.tn.gov/sos/acts/109/pub/pc1005.pdf>

### ***The Year's Highlights***

- Transition of Woodland Hills Youth Development Center to the National Guard for the Youth ChalleNGe Program. This program serves youth who have dropped out of school and may be at risk of state custody.
- Transition of Mountain View to private administration and development of new community based resources for juvenile justice youth.
- Decrease in number of youth served in hardware secure beds.
- COA accreditation of hardware secure facilities.

# Office of Child Health

The Office of Child Health is responsible for the health of children served by DCS. Health is defined broadly to encompass physical, emotional, behavioral, and educational well-being.

DCS serves in the capacity of the caretaker ensuring children/youth in care receive proper healthcare and educational services from community providers, much as a parent makes sure that medical and dental appointments are made and kept, educational services meet needs, and appealing to insurance companies when services are denied.

**Deputy Commissioner Michael Cull**

**Executive Director Lisa Pellegrin**

*96% Statewide EPSD&T screening rate*

*90% Dental screening rate*

*1286 Number of times that custody was averted with intervention from Crisis Management Team*

DCS functions as a Managed Care Contractor along with the other managed care organizations for Medicaid covered services. DCS serves as the MCC for medical/clinical services within residential, and continuum of behavioral healthcare services for children in state custody as other managed care organizations, such as TennCare Select, do for community medical and behavioral healthcare services. The OCH develops clinical guidelines for contract provider services and monitors services delivered on both an individual and system-wide basis. DCS serves as the Local Education Agency for school services to children in state custody provided by contracted providers.

OCH is divided into six divisions; Nursing, Psychology, Health Advocacy, Education, Child Death Review and Safety Analysis. OCH administratively is located within Central Office; personnel are located in Central Office as well as regionally. Regionally, each of the six divisions is represented by a Licensed Mental Health Practitioner, Regional Nurse, Health Advocacy Representative, Services and Appeals Tracking Coordinator, Educational Specialist, Safety Nurse and Safety Analyst.

## ***Nursing***

The Nursing Division is led by the Director of Nursing within Central Office. Regional Health Nurses are located in all 12 regions and Safety Nurses are located in three locations across the state. Child Health Nurses serve to support FSWs, parents/guardians, foster parents, and providers with guidance and technical assistance in navigating the health care system. They provide consultation and education to case managers on medical medication issues related to children and the impact of a child's medical condition on a child's care, abilities and behaviors. They assist with coordination of children's health services with community partners, including hospitals, pediatricians, and other health care providers and interface with TennCare regarding service and accessibility issues, medical necessity, and case management services for custodial children. The nurse monitors children in custody who are designated as a child with special health care needs. The Child Safety Nurse has an integral role in the reviews of child deaths, near deaths, and critical incidents in Tennessee

## ***Psychology***

Regional Psychologists/ Licensed Mental Health Clinicians are located in each of the 12 DCS regions and in the YDC's. The Regional Psychologist/ Licensed Mental Health Clinician reviews the history obtained in the Well Being Information and History form, among other resources, to determine recommendations for mental healthcare needs and provides prompt feedback to the DCS worker so services can be implemented in a timely manner.

Managed Care Contractor responsibilities include development and oversight of behavioral healthcare policies, development of service standards for DCS contract providers, consultation prior to receipt of congregate care Level 3 and Level 4 services, participation with utilization review of Level 3 and 4 services, authorization of medically necessary Crisis Management residential services. Regional Psychologist/ Licensed Mental Health Clinicians also monitor child/youth specific emotional/mental health care incidents, including seclusion, restraint, and mental health crisis, and monitor behavioral services of DCS contract providers in conjunction with Quality Control, Risk Management, and Child Programs. The Regional Psychologists/Licensed Mental Health Clinicians provide clinical consultative support to DCS staff within their regions, interfacing with staff in 60-80 meetings/month and interface with the regional Centers of Excellence on case consultation.

## ***Health Advocacy***

The Health Advocacy Division, is responsible for health care advocacy and assuring needed behavioral and medical services are provided to children in custody, both TennCare-eligible and non-TennCare eligible.

- Principle services are covered through the Early, Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment program. The Department achieved and sustained an adjusted periodic screening rate for medical services greater than 96 percent statewide and for dental services achieved an adjusted screening rate of 89 percent.
- Effective January 1, 2017 the Department was released from provisions of the federal Grier Lawsuit Consent Decree. However, due process rights still apply for timely delivery of services and appeals for denial, delay or diminution of services.

The Division coordinates the network of five Centers of Excellence for Children In or At Risk of State Custody, which are tertiary care academic medical centers and one partner designated by the state as possessing expertise in child behavioral healthcare.

- Over 1000 children and youth were provided services in the following categories: case consultations; case management and follow-up; on-site reviews; psychological evaluations.
- Trainings were provided in the following areas: Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy; PICT; Attachment, Self-Regulation, Competency Building model.
- Stakeholders were convened to begin new learning collaborative on Child/Parent Psychotherapy.

## ***Education***

The Education division of the department advocates for students in state custody who are educated in Youth Development Center schools, provider in-house schools, and public schools. The division is led by the Director of Education and includes 15 regional Education Specialists, five Central office consultants, and one support staff person. Caregiver/Advocacy efforts include: attending educational meetings,

consulting with DCS staff, resource parents, and schools, as well as, providing educational training to departmental personnel and schools. The Education division provided consultation to Child and Family Teams, Family Services Worker, and public/non-public schools over 75,000 times. Education staff participated directly in nearly 2000 Child and Family Team Meetings and over 1300 Individual Education Plan/504 Meetings. Additionally, the Education Specialists advocated for students in over 250 disciplinary hearings and over 150 specialized foster care review board meetings. Staff also provided 251 educational training sessions for over 2,700 surrogate parents, resource parents, FSWs, and school staff.

### ***Child Death Review: Safety Systems Analysis***

Using Safety Science, the DCS' Child Death Review process was created to increase safe outcomes by identifying and learning from those factors which influence the quality and delivery of services provided to children and their families. The Child Death Review process is a supportive, in-depth, qualitative review conducted in a collaborative relationship with multidisciplinary participants from various DCS program areas and community partners.

Calendar year 2016, 170 deaths and near deaths were reviewed. This included 126 deaths of children not in DCS custody, 34 near deaths of children not in DCS custody, and 10 deaths of children in DCS custody. In many cases, reviewers invite Case Managers who worked with the family, either past or present, to participate in a voluntary debriefing during the review. These debriefings are supportive, facilitated opportunities for professionals to learn and share pertinent information. In calendar year 2016, 193 debriefings were conducted.

### ***The Year's Highlights***

- Implementation of the Vanderbilt Psychotropic Medication Monitoring program to improve the ability to monitor and improve prescribing practices.
- Successful development and launch of the statewide Trauma-informed and Resilient Workforce Breakthrough Series Collaborative. Over the next 12 months, regional teams will receive training and support to implement specific tools and tactics to support a safe and engaged workforce.
- Sustained Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment medical rates remained at or above 95 percent and dental rates at or above 90 percent for this SFY.
- Completed the statewide roll out of Safe Sleep policies and practices with each region. With these new protocols, Regions have committed to not leaving a home without ensuring that every infant in that home has safe sleep furniture and that caregivers have been educated of Safe Sleep.
- Expansion of the systems analysis team to non-death/ near death related systems challenges.
- Support for the development and implementation of a new treatment and education model at Gateway to Independence Youth Development Center.

# Office of Training and Professional Development

The Office of Training and Professional Development is responsible for the development and delivery of training to DCS staff, Foster Parents and Contract Agency Trainers.

## **Executive Director Christina Fly**

*82 New Supervisors Certified within 6 months.*

*328 New Case Managers Certified within 90 days*

*1596 New Foster Parents Certified*

Over the course of the fiscal year, the division has brought new learning opportunities to DCS staff and foster parents. To include; Building Strong Brains; Family Support Services Specialty Training, Question; Persuade, & Refer – Suicide Prevention Training, Your Money Your Goals; Developing Quality Permanency Plans; Caring for Children who have Experienced Trauma; Kinship to Traditional Foster Care; and Trauma Informed Parenting Strategies.

The division launched an Intranet website for staff and Internet website for foster parents that act as a training resource including training calendars with registration information, training curriculum and online learning.



3rd Annual Commissioner's Cornerstone Leadership Academy began in February 2017.

The Cornerstone Leadership Academy is a nine month leadership training journey where experienced supervisors participate in professional development to enhance competency in a variety of leadership skills. A key feature of the Academy includes a project to improve agency outcomes and final presentation to the Executive Leadership Team. Forty-four Leadership participants graduated from the Academy on October 5, 2017.

## ***The Year's Highlights***

- Tennessee adopted the National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training. An online curriculum that was developed by the Center for Adoption Education and Support. The curriculum is eight modules that focuses on casework practice. Activities and best practice approaches to working with children are provided to support healing and well-being. Strategies and tools are also provided for working with parents to support their children and understand and manage challenging behaviors. Almost 1,000 staff have completed all eight modules.
- Your Money, Your Goals is a set of financial empowerment materials designed to help people meet their financial goals by increasing their knowledge, skills and resources. The toolkit was designed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for use with Social Services clients and offered as a resource for foster youth in partnership with the Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative. The department trained 129 DCS and Contract Agency staff and foster parents to use the toolkit in partnership with the CFPB and Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative. The department hosted a Training for Trainers with non-child welfare participants from other States and shared this experience as the first State to offer this training to foster parents nationally.
- In partnership with the Vanderbilt Center for Excellence DCS hosted a training for trainers for the Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma. This is an eight module, sixteen hour trauma informed training for foster and kinship parents created by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. The training improves foster parent's ability to communicate and connect with a child with trauma needs. It also positively influence behaviors and teaches ways to reduce the stress of parenting a traumatized child. Thirty-eight foster parents have received this training.

# Office of Information Technology

The Office of Information Technology is responsible for the delivery, operation and support of information and communication technology services for the Department of Children's Services.

By far, the largest and most complex application supported by OIT is the Tennessee Family and Child Tracking System, or TFACTS, which is the mission-critical statewide information system that supports child protection, adoption, foster care, juvenile justice and prevention services provided to the children and families served by DCS.

## Chief Information Officer Stuart Clements

*OIT supports approximately:*

*6,200 users of DCS Technology*

*4,500 Computers*

*8,000 Telecommunications devices*

*30 custom and 170 commercially-available computer applications*

OIT is led by the Chief Information Officer and is made up of six interrelated units:

- Information Technology (IT) Operations
- Business Solutions Development
- Business Relationship Management
- Project Management Office
- IT Governance & Administration
- Information Management

The Department's Management Advisory Council (MAC) provides executive management oversight of information technology activities to ensure that they support business priorities. The MAC meets regularly and is chaired by the DCS Commissioner. DCS Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and other executive staff appointed by the Commissioner to serve as voting members. Key MAC responsibilities include:

- a) Providing leadership and management of the Department's IT portfolio;
- b) Providing an opportunity for project sponsors to present their technology needs;
- c) Establishing technology priorities and strategies;
- d) Approving the initiation of all major IT projects;
- e) Monitoring the progress of all major IT projects;
- f) Ensuring business level participation in technology solutions; and
- g) Evaluating project performance relative to scope, schedule, budget and risk with authority to make any necessary changes and/or end the project.

Information technology projects may also be subject to oversight by other state entities, such as the Solution Review Board, Enterprise Portfolio Investment Committee and the Information Systems Council. Projects that impact TFACTS are subject to additional oversight of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

## ***The Year's Highlights***

- *Credit Checks for Youth*- This project was implemented in June 2017, and was the nation's first state social services automated project to automatically retrieve credit reports for youth from Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. Credit reports are automatically requested on the youth's birthday (age 14 and older), and are generated, combined, and returned to DCS through an automated process and updated in TFACTS.
- *iPhone Deployment*- This project which was completed in June 2017, resulted in the deployment of more than 2,000 iPhones to case management staff across the state.
- *Exchange (MS Outlook) in the Cloud*- This DCS project was completed in December 2016 and was part of an overall statewide STS project to convert email to Exchange in the Cloud. Implementation provided enhanced email security, improved email disaster recovery capabilities, and enhanced future integration with other cloud product offerings, including Skype for Business.
- *Skype for Business*- This project completed in March 2017, provided case management staff additional tools to support our dedication to removing obstacles, which could possibly prohibit the commitment of our agency to meet with children, youth and families. Should weather or distance not permit travel to a meeting location, case managers can establish a video connection with youth, parents, and others who are required in order to conduct a successful face-to-face meeting.
- *Dell Venue Tablet Replacement* – DCS successfully negotiated with Dell to replace approximately 2,500 defective, unreliable Dell Venue tablets that are being used by case managers statewide. Dell agreed to replace the Dell Venue tablets with a more dependable and reliable device (the Dell Latitude 5289) at no cost to DCS – a savings of approximately \$4 million. In addition to replacing the tablets the docking stations will also be replaced.
- *Super-utilizers of Youth Social Services*- This project was completed in November 2016 and involved delivering TFACTS data for research purposes. DCS was asked to participate in a pilot effort to evaluate subpopulations of children and youth in State care. Casey Research and Mathematica Policy Research identified data gathered from subpopulations of children and youth who are continuously using intensive or frequent services, which may reflect not receiving the proper types of support at critical junctures, being placed in overly restrictive placements, receiving too many ineffective services, or having extensive needs that should be met in better and different ways.
- *Upgrade to DCS Intranet*- A major upgrade to the DCS Intranet was completed in December 2016. A focus group was used to determine user needs and expectations for content and presentation. Using Expression Engine to create attractive webpages allowed for efficient and timely updating of content and ensures employees are informed and connected to events at DCS.

# Office of Human Resources

DCS Human Resources manages all departmental human resource functions for over 4,000 DCS employees (This number reflects all staff) located in offices and facilities across the state. This includes managing recruitment, selection and hiring of staff; administering employee benefits; assuring that positions are correctly classified and staff appropriately compensated; and working with leaders to develop strategies for enhancing levels of employee engagement.

## **Executive Director Martha Shirk**

*2,555 Total Case Manger Staff*

*1,503 DCS Case Manager 2: Salary: \$3294.00/month*

*651 DCS Case Manager 3: Salary: \$3613.00/month*

*401 DCS Case Manager 4: Salary: \$3895.00/month*

Fifteen staff in Central Office Human Resources (HR) serve as business partners to Central Office leaders, in addition to providing HR support for Central Office employees. Central Office HR staff provides functional technical assistance to local HR staff. Thirty-three field HR staff in each DCS Region/YDC serves as business partners to Regional/YDC leaders in addition to providing HR support for all DCS field employees.

The Office of Civil Rights is responsible for investigating all complaints where discrimination is alleged is located in HR. The scope of OCR's investigative jurisdiction is not limited to DCS staff, but also includes complaints submitted by DCS clients and/or providers who are under contract with DCS. OCR has the responsibility of responding to local, state and federal complaints (EEOC, DHHS, etc.) which are levied against the department. OCR also had the responsibility of processing forty-seven employee Step I Appeals and twenty-three written warning reviews.

## ***The Year's Highlights***

- During the past year, DCS Human Resources strongly supported the administration of the Performance Management process and trained and assisted DCS leaders to improve SMART Individual Performance Plans.
- DCS Human Resources continues to be more analytical and strategic by basing decisions on facts and data via Human Resource KPIs to include headcount percentage, overtime use, leave of absence (Worker's Compensation, FMLA, etc.) use, etc.
- HR worked to significantly decrease the timeframe for administering disciplinary action from the date of the incident which resulted in disciplinary action to the date the discipline is administered.
- HR developed a partnership with the Office of Professional Development on talent management initiatives led by the Department of Human Resources.

# Office of Continuous Quality Improvement

The Office of Continuous Quality Improvement focuses on assessing child welfare practices, outcomes and compliance by using data and

**Assistant Commissioner Jennifer Williams**

analysis to guide and change policies and practices for casework staff and outcomes for families. Several key division fall under the umbrella of the Office of Continuous Quality Improvement. These include Program Evaluation, Performance and Quality Improvement, Risk Management, Policy Development, Due Process, Program Accountability Review, Child Welfare Licensure, Provider Quality Team and Organizational Culture.

**Program Evaluation** is responsible for the administration of the Child and Family Service Review. The CFSR is a requirement of the Children’s Bureau of the United States Department of Health and Human Services and was establish to determine conformity to federal standards for state child welfare systems receiving funding through Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Administration Act of 1935. The CFSR evaluates outcomes for children and families for Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being. The CFSR process includes an assessment of the child welfare system across seven systemic factors: Statewide Information System; Case Review System; Quality Assurance System; Staff and Provider Training Program; Service Array and Resource Development; Agency Responsiveness to the Community; and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention.

**Performance and Quality Improvement** is responsible for guiding the Department through the re-accreditation process with the Council on Accreditation. All twelve regions and two Youth Development Centers are in compliance with the COA standards. PQI is responsible for monitoring and responding to contract provider safety/well-being concerns and contractual non-compliance performance findings for both residential and non-residential providers. In addition, they monitor foster homes ability to provide safety and promote the well-being of children. The oversight includes safety, medical and behavioral health concerns. PQI also monitors and conducts quarterly fidelity reviews of Case Process Reviews of DCS client records, conducts quality case reviews, lean events, participates in IV-E waiver implementation and monitors data quality on a variety of data entry points. The PQI staff provides technical assistance to the regional and YDC CQI programs.

**Child Welfare Licensing** is a regulatory authority established under the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act providing oversight to those child welfare programs that fall within the purview of applicable state licensing statutes and regulations. These programs are regulated by DCS Child Welfare Licensing staff through a process mandated by state licensing laws and rules promulgated by the Department through committee. Licenses are issued on an annual basis and routine and unscheduled visits are conducted throughout the year to review physical conditions, safety and well-being of youth served in residential settings and foster care, consumer protection and agency compliance with all pertinent state regulations. Regulated services include all domestic and international adoptions; residential services; private foster care; runaway houses; maternity services; child abuse prevention education and child

advocacy centers; hardware secure juvenile services and temporary holding centers. 239 Individual Licenses Issued in FY2017:

- 3 Runaway Houses
- 4 Maternity Homes
- 4 Temporary Holding Resources
- 18 Juvenile Detention Centers
- 20 Family Boarding/Group Care
- 31 Residential Child Care Agencies
- 44 Child Abuse Prevention Agencies
- 115 Child Placing Agencies

**Policy and Forms Division** works with all DCS programs and divisions to develop policies, procedures, manuals and related forms to provide guidance to employees on practice requirements and to make decisions in accordance with applicable laws and rules. Policies and procedures increase accountability and transparency and are fundamental in the continuous quality improvement process. All policies are reviewed annually and revised as needed. All policy revisions and new policies are vetted through a policy review process that includes review by the Policy Review Committee, public preview, and executive and legal review. The department had 98 policies, 25 protocols/work aids, 16 manuals/handbooks/guides and 331 forms revised. In addition, eight new policies, nine new protocols, one new manual and 47 new forms were approved and implemented. All DCS policies are available for preview and review at: <http://tn.gov/dcs/topic/policies-procedures>.

### ***This Year's Highlights***

- DCS obtained COA Reaccreditation and was the first state to obtain accreditation for Youth Development Centers.
- Approved by Children's Bureau to complete a self-review and completed 75 CFR Case Reviews.
- Achieved full compliance with the Comptroller's Office Sunset Audit.
- Successful implementation of Strategic Plan and developed standardized outcomes.
- Recognized at Children's Bureau Region Four meeting as having an outstanding continuous quality improvements process and shared with other states.
- Hosted Alabama and Utah for site visits to observe Tennessee's review process.

# Office of Finance and Budget

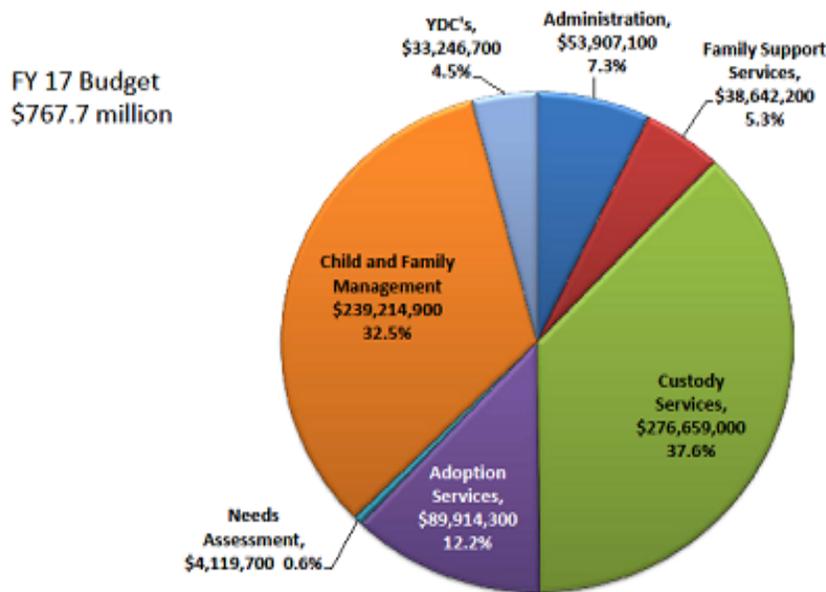
The Office of Finance and Budget provides a comprehensive set of fiscal services including general accounting, accounts payable, financial planning, budgeting, revenue maximization, trust accounting, child eligibility services, regional fiscal services, and procurement and contracts administration. In this SFY, DCS managed a total of \$767,687,600 in budgeted resources.

**Assistant Commissioner Douglas Swisher**  
**Fiscal Director 3 | Revenue Maximization**  
**Mohamed El-Kaissy**

*Budget for SFY \$767.7 million*

## The Year's Highlights

- The department successfully met and exceeded its SFY reversion requirement.
- The department successfully met all Finance and Administration Fiscal year end closing deadlines.
- The department increased Targeted Case Management for Custody and Non custody Penetration rates.
- This division has become National experts in Cost allocation and Performance Based Contracting.
- The division collaborated with DHS to ensure additional recurring child support collections.



# Office of General Counsel

The Office of General Counsel (OGC) provides the highest level of legal advice and representation to the Department of Children’s Services. OGC serves Central Office legal needs and leads more than one hundred field attorneys and staff.

**General Counsel Douglas Dimond**

**Deputy General Counsel Sophia Crawford**

In Central Office, OGC offers a wide range of advice and counsel to DCS leadership in all program areas. OGC reviews, summarizes, and analyzes all legislation that could affect the agency. OGC liaises with the Attorney General’s Office on federal litigation and state court appellate and trial litigation. OGC also works with a wide range of external stakeholders, including the Supreme Court’s Administrative Office of the Courts and the Tennessee Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, to whom the General Counsel provides a semi-annual review of recent decisions from the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals.

In the field, OGC lawyers ably represent the Department in thousands of child abuse and neglect cases every day in juvenile courts across Tennessee. Field lawyers advise local DCS leadership; draft pleadings and conduct trials of dependency and neglect cases and termination of parental rights cases; and provide training and legal guidance to case managers and other employees. They assist with educational, employment, and juvenile justice issues.

OGC remains heavily involved in rule redesign efforts for several program areas, notably those administered by the Child Safety, Foster Care, and Administrative Procedures divisions. OGC partners with other stakeholders in the child welfare legal field, including the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Tennessee Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services, and the Children’s Justice Task Force.

Region	Total Number of Attorneys and Paralegal Staff	Number of Attorney Slots	Number of Attorney filled slots	Number of paralegal slots	Number of paralegal filled Slots
Central Office	8	7	7	1	1
Davidson	5	5	5	0	0
East	7	6	6	1	1
Knox	8	7	7	1	1
Mid-Cumberland	11	10	9	1	1
Northeast	8	7	7	1	1
Northwest	6	5	5	1	1
Shelby	8	7	5	1	1
Smoky Mountain	7	7	7	0	0
South Central	6	6	6	0	0
Southwest	6	5	5	1	1
TN Valley	11	9	9	2	2
Upper Cumberland	8	7	7	1	1

Table accurate as of 10-3-2017

# Administrative Procedures Division

The three attorneys sit as Administrative Judges and preside over the department's contested cases governed by the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act and the Rules of the department. These cases include substantiated child abuse cases where the Appellant is employed in a paid or volunteer position working with children; adoption assistance cases where the department has denied, reduced or terminated adoption assistance to adoptive parents; foster care removal cases where the child(ren) has been in the home 12 consecutive months or longer and post adoption cases where the department has denied access to a sealed adoption record. During this annual report period, the attorneys also sat as Commissioner's Designees for employee disciplinary appeals governed by the Rules of the Tennessee Department of Human Resources. We presided over the Step 1 appeal discussions, conducted reviews of written warnings and reviewed performance evaluation appeals.

## **Attorney IV Tara S. Moore**

*91 Substantiated Child Abuse Appeals Filed*

*54 Adoption Assistance Appeals Filed*

*13 Foster Care Removal Appeals Filed*

*2 Post Adoption Appeals Filed*

*42 Employee Disciplinary Appeals Filed*

# Office of Customer Focused Services

The Office of Customer Focused Services (OCFS) is dedicated to responding to questions, comments, concerns, and/or grievances of internal and external customers. OCFS listens to issues, answers questions and addresses a variety of matters for the benefit of children each year.

## **Director Tammy Feldman**

*2,501 Complaints/concerns/inquires cases handled from January 1, 2017 to October 31, 2017*

*Customer Relations Hotline: 1-800-861-1935*

OCFS also conducts investigative research and serves as an internal/external liaison and agency representative. The staff in the OCFS provides objective and neutral analysis of data, while maintaining confidentiality and working collaboratively with others. The OCFS is also focused on providing timely, thorough, and accurate responses to inquiries and complaints that come to DCS.

# Office of Child Welfare Reform

The Office of Child Welfare Reform was created to coordinate efforts to help the Department exit the Brian A. lawsuit. The Office has expanded the scope of work and is now focused on activities that sustain these important welfare reform efforts and continue to improve practice through use of data and research using the following strategies:

**Special Assistant to the Commissioner for  
Child Welfare Reform Britany Binkowski**

The Assessment Integration division oversees the standardized tools such as Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths to assist front line staff in developing plans for children and their families based on their individually identified needs and strengths. This division is responsible for supporting staff to complete high quality, timely assessments and to use what they learn to develop informed plans to help children and families achieve positive outcomes.

The IV-E Waiver is a Federal Demonstration Project that provides an opportunity for states and tribes that administer Title IV-E funding to use the funds more flexibly in order to test innovative approaches for child welfare service delivery and financing. The Tennessee IV-E Waiver uses evidence based strategies to reduce to number of children in out of home care. These include:

- Keeping Foster and Kinship Parents Trained and Supported (KEEP), is an evidence-based support and training program for foster and kinship parents caring for children ages 4 to 12. The goal of the KEEP program is to provide practical tools for dealing with a child's behavioral and emotional problems and to support foster and kinship parents in the implementation of these tools. The program is voluntary and is delivered in a group setting over 16 weeks. KEEP was initially implemented in the East, Knox, Northeast and Smoky regions of East Tennessee in the fall of 2015. In April 2017, implementation of KEEP expanded into three additional locations in Middle Tennessee, to include the Davidson and South Central Regions, and Sumner County in the Mid Cumberland Region.
- Nurturing Parenting Program. NPP is an evidence-based program with proven effectiveness in treating and preventing the recurrence of child abuse and neglect. NPP is delivered in a family's home over a 16-week period, and lessons are individualized based on the child and family's specific needs. The Nurturing Parenting Program pilot is currently being implemented in the following six regions: East, Knox, Northeast, Smoky, Northwest, and Shelby.

EDGE is a training program developed in collaboration with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. The training brings together theory and practice to help EDGE students use data and research to improve their daily work. Students participating in EDGE explored a number of mission-critical issues to identify opportunities for system improvement. The 2017 class researched placement stability, entry rates, permanency for infants, re-entry for the juvenile justice population, and placement with kin. Their findings and suggestions provided innovative solutions to challenges at the regional and statewide level. Forty-three staff including regional leadership and front line staff have graduated from the EDGE training.



*Class picture of 2017 EDGE students*

An example of an EDGE project in the Davidson region, a targeted review of children with high propensity to experience placement moves were discovered to share certain characteristics on their initial assessments. This information is being used to develop a process for wrapping additional support around these children to increase placement stability.

# Communications

The Communications Office often serves as the public face of DCS. It is the key clearinghouse for internal communications, helping to ensure the statewide staff is in sync with the department's goals and principles.

**Director Rob Johnson**

**Deputy Director Carrie Weir**

This is often the first place the press, researchers and the public turn to, in order to find information and answers about the department. The staff consists of a director, a deputy director and a communications coordinator who doubles as a legislative liaison.

The Communications Office continues to maintain the department's online presence. It updates [tn.gov/dcs](https://www.tn.gov/dcs) and keeps in touch with the social media world on Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr. The office tells the department's stories, especially through the eyes of children and the foster parents who serve them.

Communications works closely with the department's foster-care staff and a team of outside volunteers who are dedicated to TN Fosters, the department's high-profile outreach for the foster-care community.

# Legislative Office

Each year when the General Assembly convenes for its legislative session, DCS brings legislation forward that enhances its mission or preserves current practices. The Legislative Office manages the Department's legislative package with input and guidance from the DCS executive team. Staff meets with members of the General Assembly to advocate for legislation and discuss policy.

**Director of Legislation Russell Marty**

**Legislative Liaison Alli Williamson**

144 bills tracked and analyzed in 2017

The Office also monitors and tracks legislation daily that may directly or indirectly impact Department operations. The Legislative Office collaborates with program staff to seek input on the impact that legislation will have. The Office ensures that DCS complies with various statutory reporting requirements. It also works to build and foster strong relationships with state legislators, staff, and industry and association representatives.

In consultation with the Department of Education, DCS brought forward and passed into law a bill to ensure that students who are incarcerated in juvenile detention centers around the state receive consistent education services for the duration of their stay.

# Office of Facilities Management

The DCS Office of Facilities Management is an integrated multifaceted organization devoted to the coordination of current and future Alternative Work Solutions construction plans, space allocation issues, security, real estate contracts/renewals, space reconfiguration, fire and safety issues, maintenance and repairs, testing, building inspections, and emergency response relocation. Facilities Management's Administrative Analysis oversees all purchase orders, bids and requests related to Facilities, while the Facilities Management Investigator oversees all building incident and inspections which are required by State of Tennessee Real Estate and Asset Management, a division of the Department of General Services.

Facilities Management has played an important role in implementing Alternative Workplace Solutions by collaborating with STREAM to design new floor plans to support the AWS work culture, develop a "DCS standard" which will be the template for all new offices and renovations when future leases are procured, and monitor STREAM office renovations and moves. Some features of the DCS standard office will include: card access entry systems with electric strike, more secure reception window design, secure zones in which clients and employees can safely interact, and viewing rooms adjacent to all visitation rooms. Moves occurring this past year were Warren County/ McMinnville and Hamblen County/Morristown offices.

Facilities Management acts as the security liaison for the Department of Children Services. Our goal is to provide physical protection statewide for all DCS staff by providing security personnel when needed. The department is also responsible for developing and implementing solutions chosen by Central Office that increase the day to day security of the operation. Facilities Management is one of the major contacts for Metro, TBI and other protective agencies.

## ***The Year's Highlights***

- Completion of the transition of Woodland Hills into the Gateway to Independence.
- Successful prepping of offices scheduled for COA review was accomplished. All selected COA locations passed their respective site assessments.
- Upgrades to the methodology of recording field inspection reports were established. The development of a standardized record keeping process for Facility Safety Officers to more easily communicate information to central office was created.

## **Director Mike Boshers**

*Operates, either directly or through its county regional offices;*

- *99 locations in Tennessee;*
- *Maintains 2 Youth Development Centers;*
- *Real estate portfolio contains approximately 1,453,235 square feet of space across the state-either leased or owned;*
- *The YDC building values total approximately \$42,316,600.00 (buildings only, not including contents).*

# DCS by the Numbers

Foster Homes with At Least 1 Vacancy on 6/30/2017			
Residence Region	DCS	Contract Provider	Grand Total
Davidson Region	54	105	159
East Tennessee Region	64	99	163
Knox Region	94	151	245
Mid Cumberland Region	127	238	365
Northeast Region	156	166	322
Northwest Region	69	46	115
Shelby Region	102	255	357
Smoky Mountain Region	87	117	204
South Central Region	95	102	197
Southwest Region	63	141	204
TN Valley Region	94	165	259
Upper Cumberland Region	98	64	162
(blank)	7	5	12
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>1,654</b>	<b>2,764</b>

Children In Custody SFY 2016-2017 by Adjudication*				
Region	DELINQUENT	DEPENDENT/NEGLECT	UNRULY	Grand Total
Davidson	144	783	0	927
East	71	750	9	830
Knox	56	1,237	1	1,294
Mid Cumberland	329	1,342	55	1,726
Northeast	157	1,115	33	1,305
Northwest	119	651	42	812
Shelby	363	1,225	0	1,588
Smoky Mountain	144	1,247	4	1,395
South Central	216	903	46	1,165
Southwest	154	514	12	680
TN Valley	177	1,078	39	1,294
Upper Cumberland	214	1,139	52	1,405
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,144</b>	<b>11,984</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>14,421</b>

\*Adjudication reported as of 6/30/17 or last day of custody if sooner

Children In Custody SFY 2016-2017 by Age*				
Region	0 to 4	5 to 12	Age 13 and Over	Grand Total
Davidson	185	212	530	927
East	189	236	405	830
Knox	442	460	392	1,294
Mid Cumberland	358	454	914	1,726
Northeast	367	410	528	1,305
Northwest	206	266	340	812
Shelby	384	366	838	1,588
Smoky Mountain	379	424	592	1,395
South Central	236	318	611	1,165
Southwest	137	190	353	680
TN Valley	329	384	581	1,294
Upper Cumberland	383	432	590	1,405
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,595</b>	<b>4,152</b>	<b>6,674</b>	<b>14,421</b>

\*Age reported as of 6/30/17 or last day of custody if sooner

Children in Custody SFY 2016-2017 by Race									
Region	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian	Black/African American	Multi-Racial	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Unable to Determine	White	(blank)	Grand Total
Davidson	1	3	558	93	2	2	265	3	927
East	0	0	16	31	1	0	782	0	830
Knox	1	2	231	173	2	0	885	0	1,294
Mid Cumberland	2	4	354	164	5	0	1,193	4	1,726
Northeast	0	0	38	71	0	0	1,195	1	1,305
Northwest	0	0	139	72	0	0	601	0	812
Shelby	2	4	1,334	41	0	0	207	0	1,588
Smoky Mountain	3	2	53	80	0	0	1,254	3	1,395
South Central	0	1	104	90	1	0	969	0	1,165
Southwest	1	0	234	68	1	0	376	0	680
TN Valley	1	0	294	96	0	2	899	2	1,294
Upper Cumberland	0	1	46	83	0	1	1,274	0	1,405
<b>Grand Total</b>	11	17	3,401	1,062	12	5	9,900	13	14,421

Time to Permanency for Custody Exits by Time Frame SFY 2016-2017									
Region	0 to 12 Months	% 0-12 Months	12 to 24 Months	% 12 to 24 Months	24 to 36 Months	% 24-36 Months	Greater than 36 Months	% Greater than 36 Months	Grand Total
Davidson	181	69.9%	58	22.4%	12	4.6%	8	3.1%	259
East	178	75.1%	47	19.8%	11	4.6%	1	0.4%	237
Knox	163	61.5%	79	29.8%	18	6.8%	5	1.9%	265
Mid Cumberland	425	73.8%	128	22.2%	13	2.3%	10	1.7%	576
Northeast	240	69.6%	81	23.5%	21	6.1%	3	0.9%	345
Northwest	222	67.9%	85	26.0%	10	3.1%	10	3.1%	327
Shelby	367	64.2%	152	26.6%	39	6.8%	14	2.4%	572
Smoky Mountain	176	58.9%	98	32.8%	16	5.4%	9	3.0%	299
South Central	157	69.8%	53	23.6%	10	4.4%	5	2.2%	225
Southwest	197	66.6%	78	26.4%	17	5.7%	4	1.4%	296
TN Valley	233	69.6%	82	24.5%	11	3.3%	9	2.7%	335
Upper Cumberland	251	60.9%	130	31.6%	24	5.8%	7	1.7%	412
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,790</b>	<b>67.3%</b>	<b>1,071</b>	<b>25.8%</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>4,148</b>

\*Includes Custody Exits to Reunification, Exit Custody to Relatives/Kin and Permanent Guardianship

## Juvenile Justice Probation Caseload Data

Region	JJ Probation Only				JJ Probation w/Custody, Aftercare, ICJ and Diversion				Filled Positions w/Assignments
	Probation	Average	Low Caseload	High Caseload	Probation-Custody-ICJ-Diversion	Average	Low Caseload	High Caseload	
Davidson	41	2.4	1	14	141	8.3	1	17	
East	125	11.4	6	18	182	16.5	7	25	
Knox	22	7.3	5	9	56	18.7	16	23	
Mid Cumberland	333	7.6	1	20	505	11.5	1	24	
Northeast	282	11.3	1	29	402	16.1	1	34	
Northwest	135	8.4	1	18	215	13.4	1	22	
Shelby	47	2.8	1	46	219	12.9	1	46	
Smoky Mountain	222	12.3	1	20	329	18.3	1	24	
South Central	187	8.9	1	21	341	16.2	1	34	
Southwest	137	9.1	1	19	240	16	1	23	
Tn Valley	69	6.3	1	12	204	18.5	1	25	
Upper Cumberland Total	262	12.5	1	32	418	19.9	1	39	
Unassigned	11	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>1,873</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>3,265</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>46</b>	

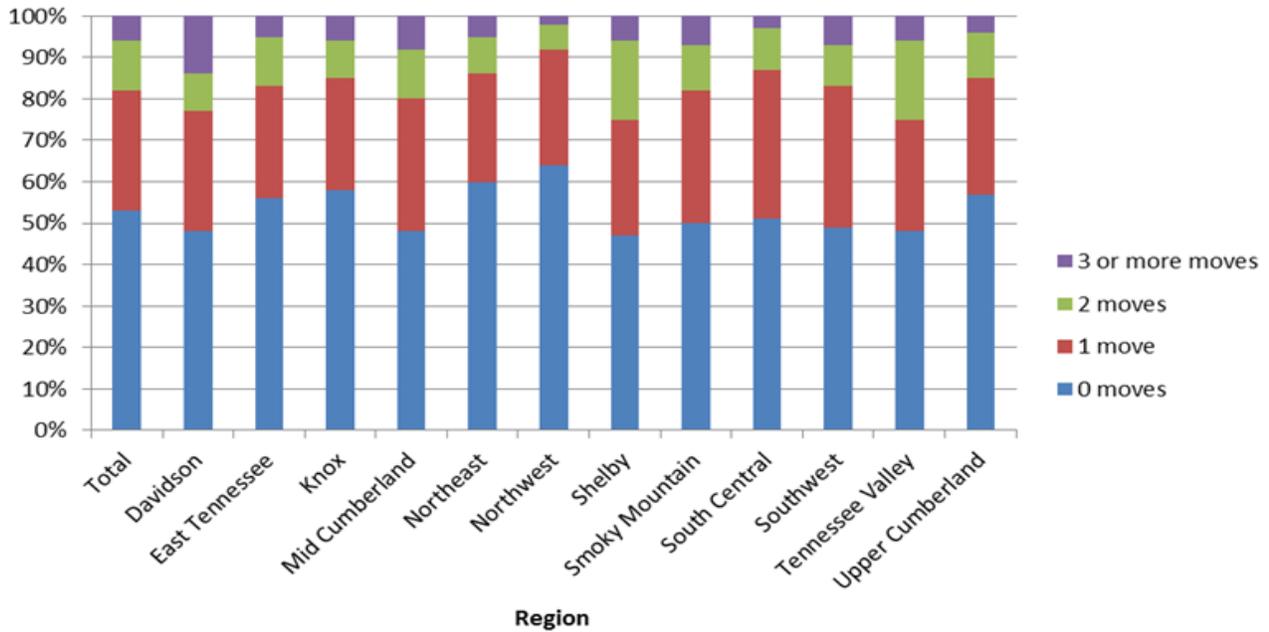
Region	JJ Probation Only				JJ Probation w/Custody, Aftercare, ICJ and Diversion				Positions (Vacant and Filled)
	Probation	Average	Low Caseload	High Caseload	Probation-Custody-ICJ-Diversion	Average	Low Caseload	High Caseload	
Davidson	41	2.7	1	14	141	9.4	1	17	
East	125	10.4	6	18	182	15.2	7	25	
Knox	22	3.7	5	9	56	9.3	16	23	
Mid Cumberland	333	10.4	1	20	505	15.8	1	24	
Northeast	282	15.7	1	29	402	22.3	1	34	
Northwest	135	11.3	1	18	215	17.9	1	22	
Shelby	47	2.6	1	46	219	12.2	1	46	
Smoky Mountain	222	13.1	1	20	329	19.4	1	24	
South Central	187	10.4	1	21	341	18.9	1	34	
Southwest	137	7.6	1	19	240	13.3	1	23	
Tn Valley	69	6.3	1	12	204	18.5	1	25	
Upper Cumberland Total	262	12.5	1	32	418	19.9	1	39	
Unassigned	11	0.0	0	0	13	0.0	0	0	
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>1,873</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>3,265</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>46</b>	

## Social Services Caseload Data

Region	Social Services Custody Only				SS Custody with FSS and FCIP				Filled Positions w/Assignments
	Custody	Average	Low Caseload	High Caseload	Custody-FSS-FCIP	Average	Low Caseload	High Caseload	
Davidson	452	6.1	1	20	759	10.3	1	30	
East	406	6.8	3	16	548	9.1	1	22	
Knox	662	10.9	2	20	739	8.3	1	41	
Mid Cumberland	760	5.9	1	20	1,076	11.7	1	22	
Northeast	653	7.5	1	20	1,020	7.9	1	38	
Northwest	372	5.4	1	20	549	8.9	1	29	
Shelby	744	8.2	1	18	807	11.4	1	24	
Smoky Mountain	780	9	1	20	996	8	1	45	
South Central	494	5.6	1	20	707	8	1	23	
Southwest	309	4.8	1	20	448	7	1	21	
Tn Valley	678	8.3	1	19	731	8.9	1	19	
Upper Cumberland Total	691	7.4	1	20	852	9.2	1	21	
Unassigned	47	0	0	0	43	0	0	0	
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>7,048</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9,275</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45</b>	

Region	Social Services Custody Only				SS Custody with FSS and FCIP				Positions (Vacant and Filled)
	Custody	Average	Low Caseload	High Caseload	Custody-FSS-FCIP	Average	Low Caseload	High Caseload	
Davidson	452	10.8	1	20	759	18.1	1	30	
East	406	8.0	3	16	548	10.7	1	22	
Knox	662	11.2	2	20	739	12.5	1	41	
Mid Cumberland	760	13.8	1	20	1,076	19.6	1	22	
Northeast	653	12.6	1	20	1,020	19.6	1	38	
Northwest	372	12.0	1	20	549	17.7	1	29	
Shelby	744	10.1	1	18	807	10.9	1	24	
Smoky Mountain	780	13.4	1	20	996	17.2	1	45	
South Central	494	10.5	1	20	707	15.0	1	23	
Southwest	309	11.4	1	20	448	16.6	1	21	
Tn Valley	678	12.6	1	19	731	13.5	1	19	
Upper Cumberland Total	691	11.1	1	20	852	13.7	1	21	
Unassigned	47	0.0	0	0	43	0.0	0	0	
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>7,048</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9,275</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45</b>	

Percent of youth entering custody during fy16-17 by number of moves categories (as of 7/30/17)

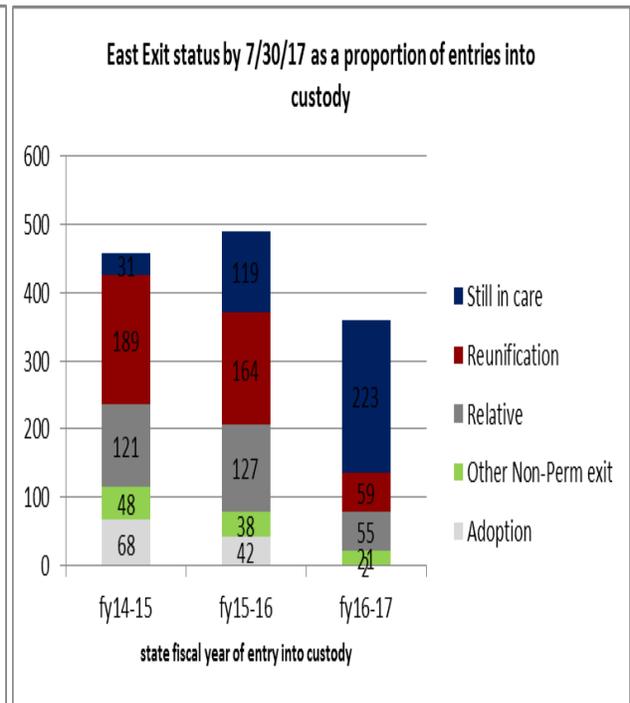
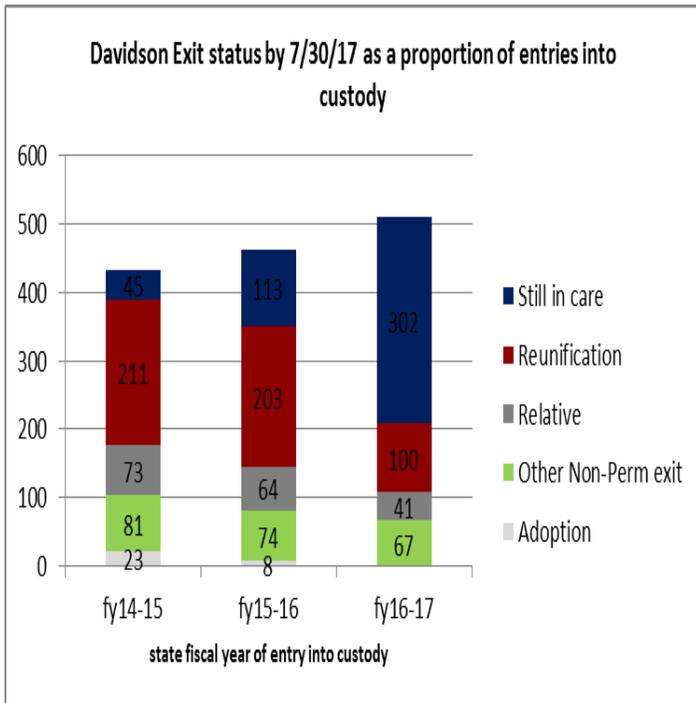
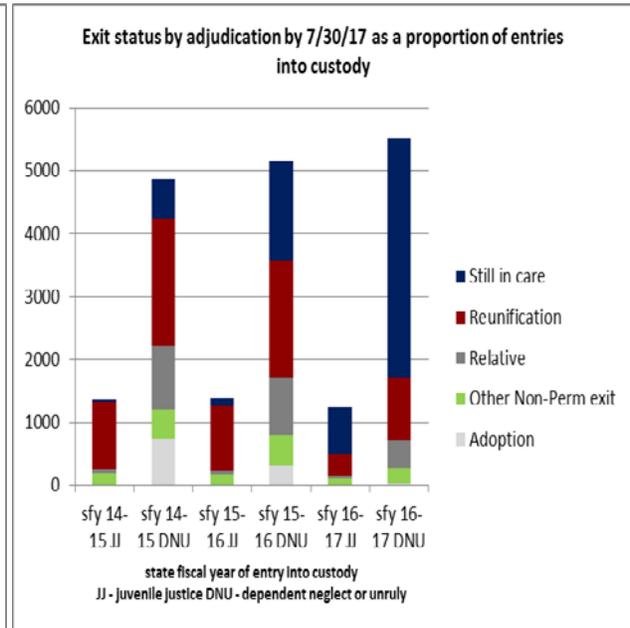
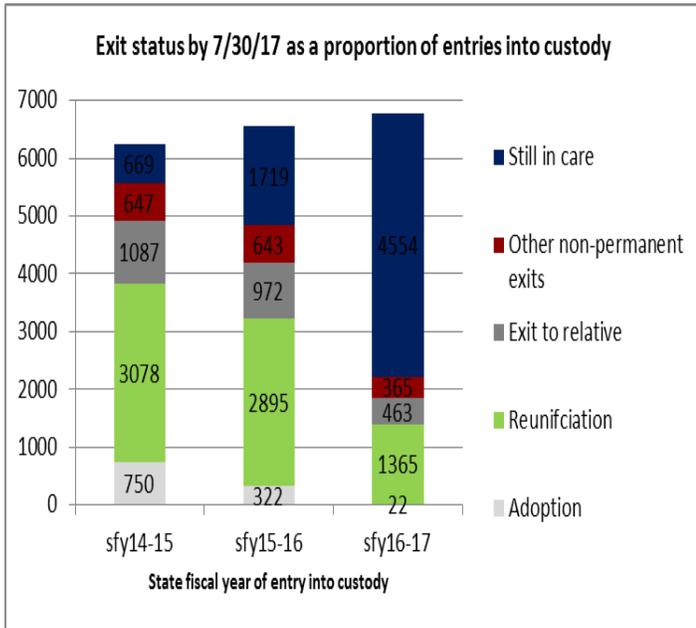


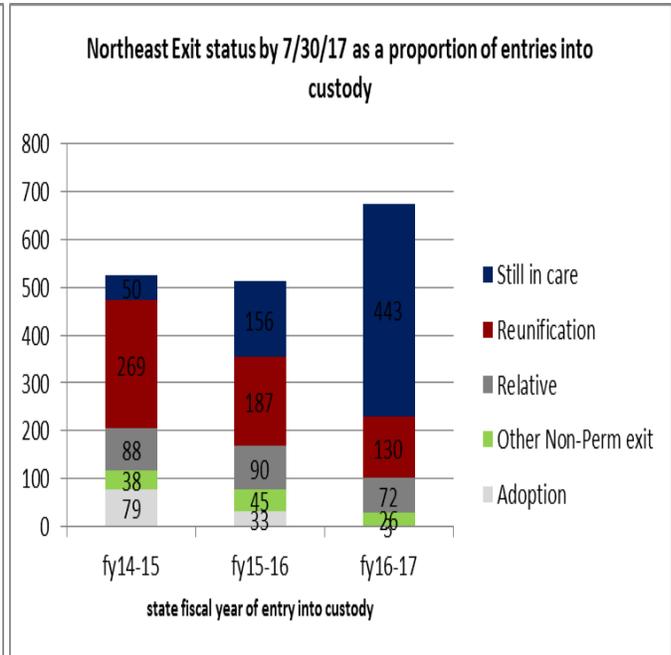
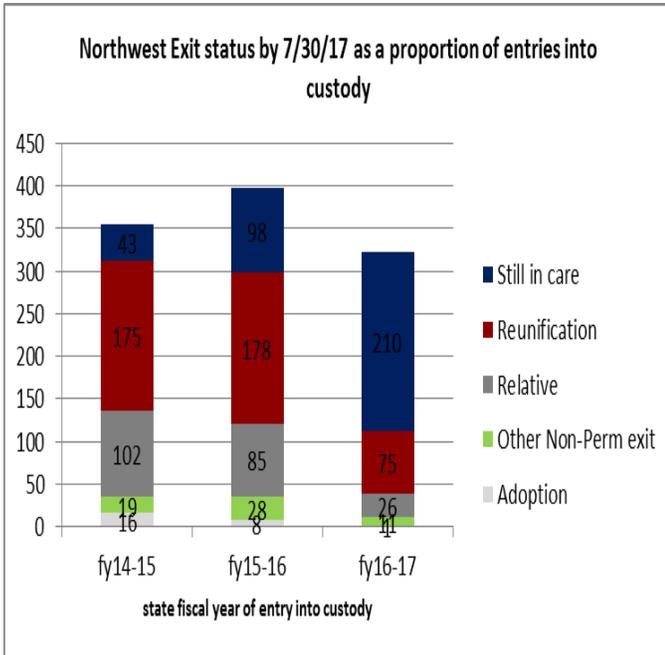
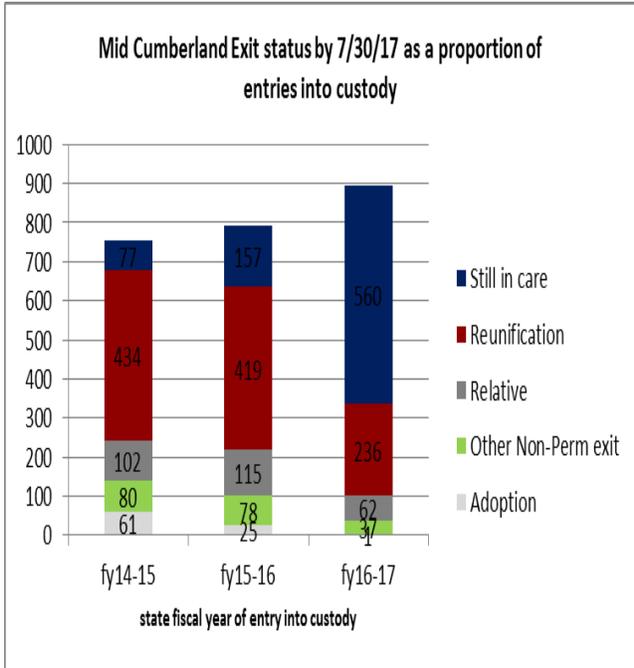
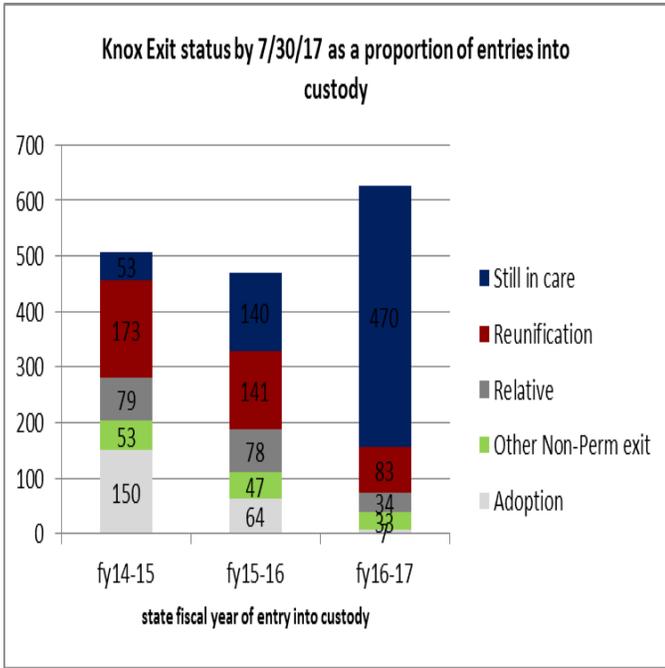
Active Placements During SFY 2017  
by Region, Level, and Placement Type

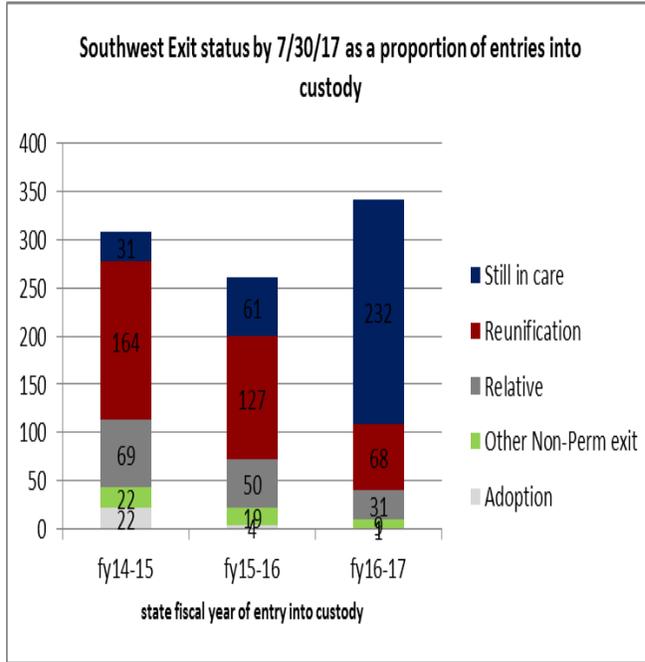
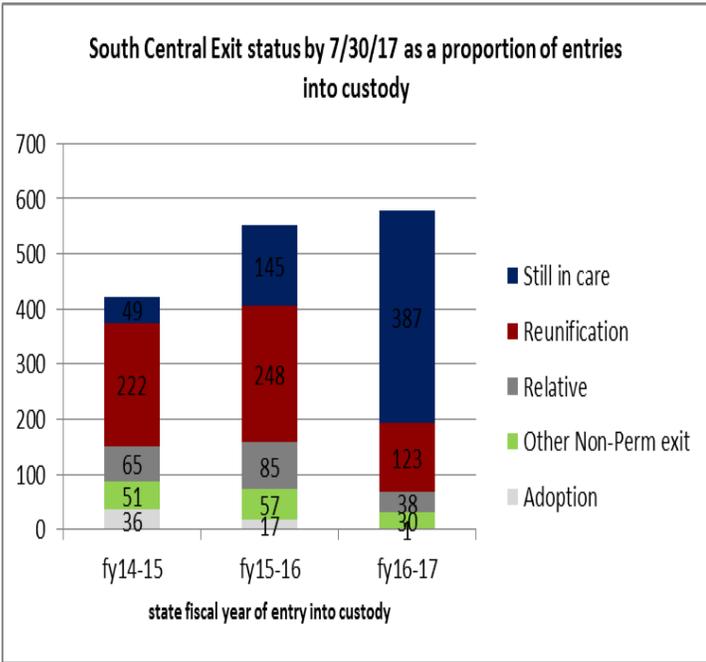
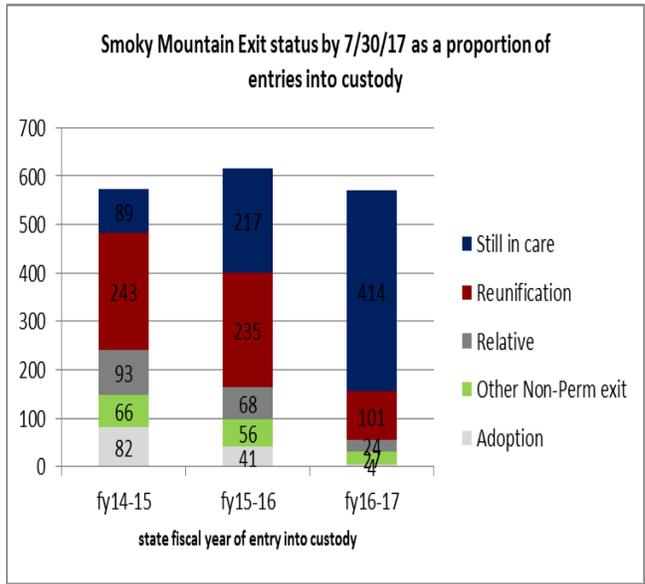
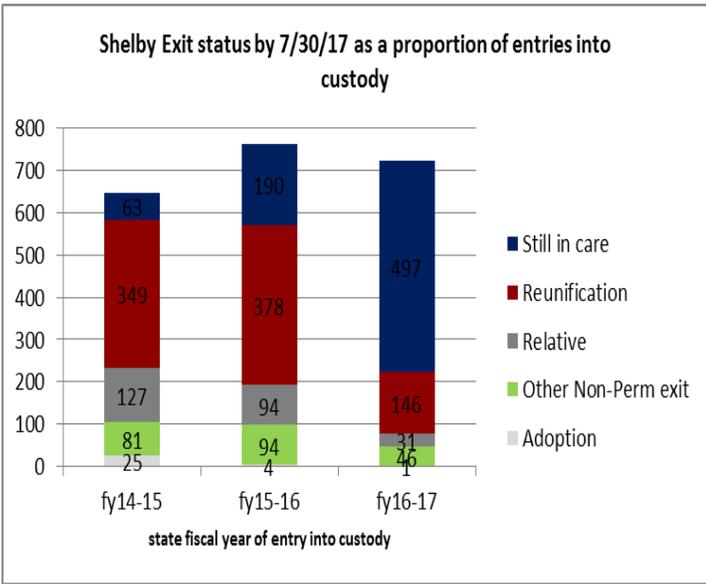
Placement Type	Davidson	East	Knox	Mid Cumberland	Northeast	Northwest	Shelby	Smoky Mountain	South Central	Southwest	TN Valley	Upper Cumberland	(blank)	Grand Total
<b>Level 1</b>	1,348	1,049	1,697	1,823	1,265	807	1,348	1,259	1,307	760	1,234	1,529	184	15,610
Foster Home	981	773	1,235	1,243	933	561	991	936	918	516	923	1,017	134	11,161
Pre-Adoptive	41	103	182	90	136	41	48	147	64	50	102	193	23	1,220
Trial Home Visit	326	173	280	490	196	205	309	176	325	194	209	319	27	3,229
<b>Level 2</b>	2	2	1	11	4	6	10	7	1	4	11	2	0	61
<b>Level 2 Continuum</b>	508	280	471	1,172	499	363	785	680	730	327	759	634	69	7,277
Foster Home	344	113	243	611	218	198	528	344	312	179	446	273	50	3,859
Group Home	103	98	115	357	167	83	188	184	299	111	199	273	12	2,189
Other	1	1		4	1		1	3	2	0	1	1	0	15
Pre-Adoptive	12	27	55	43	22	23	23	60	6	3	41	47	4	366
Trial Home Visit	48	41	58	157	91	59	45	89	111	34	72	40	3	848
<b>Level 3</b>	153	116	68	303	139	51	75	142	112	77	155	130	13	1,534
<b>Level 3 Continuum</b>	332	272	213	565	523	338	578	565	291	259	336	365	29	4,666
Foster Home	107	70	102	262	245	186	296	231	132	94	165	95	17	2,002
Group Home	169	150	81	222	177	68	183	233	109	107	124	182	9	1,814
Other	1	2		0	0	1	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	10
Pre-Adoptive	2	10	12	9	37	17	10	21	5	0	8	19	0	150
Trial Home Visit	53	40	18	72	64	66	84	80	45	58	38	69	3	690
<b>Level 4</b>	57	26	29	81	58	25	37	63	41	20	36	37	5	515
Other	797	251	289	727	519	153	1,007	436	488	311	621	402	37	6,038
<b>Grand Total</b>	3,197	1,996	2,768	4,682	3,007	1,743	3,840	3,152	2,970	1,758	3,152	3,099	337	35,701

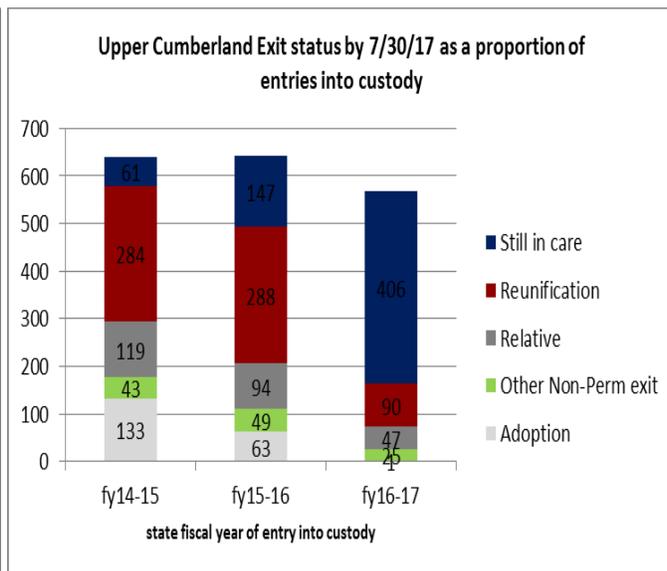
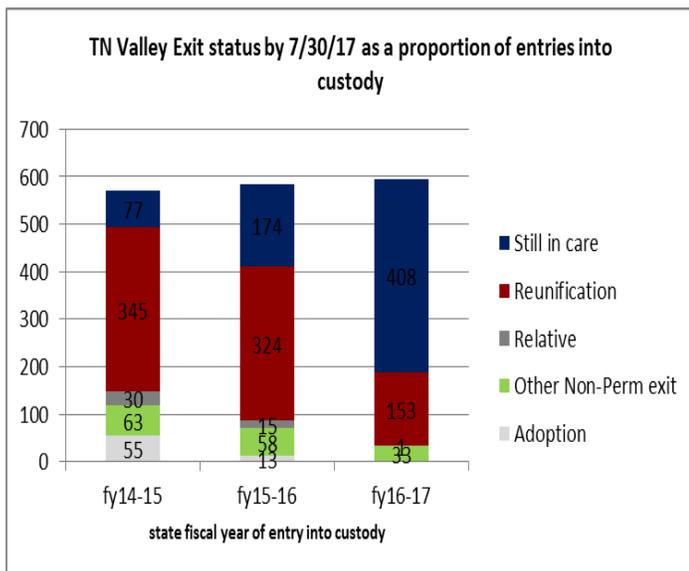
# Exits

TNDCS tracks exit types as a proportion of all entries into custody. The following charts show the exit status of all youth who have entered custody in Tennessee during the three most recent state fiscal year periods, which includes those still in care. The charts provide this information for the state as a whole, by adjudication for the state, and for each of the 12 regions of DCS.









## Average Length of Stay

TNDCS measures the length of time to exit for our population using a median duration in days. This measurement provides the most complete and accurate picture of time in care and is akin to an average length of stay. The following table provides the median duration in days for youth entering custody in Tennessee during the three most recent state fiscal year periods. The first table is for all entries, and the next two tables show median duration in days by adjudication.

Median Durations in days (the # of days it took half of the entries to leave care)			
All Entries			
Entry year:	SFY15	SFY16	SFY17
State	93	281	*
Davidson	242	246	*
East Tennessee	222	225	*
Knox	387	328	*
Mid Cumberland	257	225	*
Northeast	275	322	*
Northwest	291	247	*
Shelby	309	309	*
Smoky Mountain	304	*	*
South Central	249	279	*
Southwest	260	255	*
Tennessee Valley	323	251	*
Upper Cumberland	379	315	*

\* Half of the entries have not yet exited so the median duration cannot be calculated yet.

<b>Median Durations in days (the # of days it took half of the entries to leave care)</b>			
<b>Dependent Neglect and Unruly</b>			
Entry year:	SFY15	SFY16	SFY17
State	343	323	*
Davidson	224	270	*
East Tennessee	226	229	*
Knox	413	*	*
Mid Cumberland	311	285	*
Northeast	330	*	*
Northwest	337	260	*
Shelby	365	331	*
Smoky Mountain	353	*	*
South Central	342	338	*
Southwest	284	343	*
Tennessee Valley	400	273	*
Upper Cumberland	417	355	*

\* Half of the entries have not yet exited so the median duration cannot be calculated yet.

<b>Median Durations in days (the # of days it took half of the entries to leave care)</b>			
<b>Juvenile Justice</b>			
Entry year:	SFY15	SFY16	SFY17
State	228	219	*
Davidson	278	242	*
East Tennessee	180	190	*
Knox	274	225	*
Mid Cumberland	202	192	*
Northeast	191	220	*
Northwest	221	220	*
Shelby	269	273	*
Smoky Mountain	220	206	*
South Central	205	203	*
Southwest	228	207	*
Tennessee Valley	232	190	*
Upper Cumberland	207	200	*

\* Half of the entries have not yet exited so the median duration cannot be calculated yet.

# Placement Moves

