

Foster Care Review Board

2013—2014 Annual Report and Recommendations

Advocating
permanent families for children

2013 DATA SNAPSHOT

STATS AT-A-GLANCE

- 2,988 CHILDREN ENTERED FOSTER CARE
- 25% OF CHILDREN HAD PREVIOUS OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS
- 2,916 CHILDREN LEFT FOSTER CARE
- 37% OF CHILDREN REVIEWED RETURNED HOME
- 34% OF CHILDREN REVIEWED ADOPTED

2013 REVIEWS

- 5,876 REVIEWS HELD
- 3,475 CHILDREN REVIEWED
- 403 REVIEW BOARD MEETINGS

AREAS OF CONCERN

- 34% CASE PLAN BARRIERS
- 23% LEGAL BARRIERS
- 22% AGENCY POLICY VIOLATIONS
- 10% LEGAL HEARINGS NOT HELD TIMELY
- 6% ADOPTION SERVICE DELAYS
- 5% LEGAL HEARINGS NOT HELD

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE 17 MONTHS OR LONGER

- 857 CHILDREN
- 71% LEGALLY FREE FOR ADOPTION
- 22% IN CARE SIX OR MORE YEARS

SC HEART GALLERY

- 109,360 WEBSITE VISITORS
- 1,222 INQUIRIES
- 303 EVENTS
- 221 CHILDREN PHOTOGRAPHED
- 51 VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHERS

ADOPTIONS

- 539 FINALIZED ADOPTIONS
- 31% WITHIN 24 MONTHS
- 16% AGE 13 AND OLDER

PEOPLE POWER

- 189 VOLUNTEERS
- 9,068 CASE REVIEW HOURS
- 15,658 TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS
- 35 BOARDS COMPLETED SERVICE PROJECTS

REVIEW BOARD OF THE YEAR 2013

- REVIEW BOARD 8A

REVIEW BOARD MEMBER OF THE YEAR 2013

- MARYANN RILEY, REVIEW BOARD 7C

Data contained in this annual report represents children reported by the South Carolina Department of Social Services, who remain in foster care at least four consecutive months and are reviewed by the South Carolina Foster Care Review Board.

RECOMMENDATION

The South Carolina Foster Care Review Board is supported by a seven-member State Board of Directors who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The State Board meets quarterly and is responsible for reviewing and coordinating the activities of local review boards. It makes recommendations in an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW FOR FAMILY PRESERVATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA

2014 State Board Recommendation

Since 1975, the Foster Care Review Board ("FCRB") has provided an external, third-party review system for all children residing in foster care in South Carolina. This independent system of accountability has successfully utilized citizen volunteers to promote safe, permanent homes for children in foster care in a timely manner and has increased public awareness regarding issues faced by children and families impacted by the child welfare system.

The Department of Social Services ("DSS") and the FCRB will develop an independent review system for Family Preservation cases that will provide routine, child-specific reviews in order to ensure immediate and enduring safety for children within the Department of Social Services' oversight.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In order for a state social service system to receive federal matching funds for its foster care program, the state must have a “case review system.” Federal law defines a case review system as a procedure for assuring that (1) each child has a case plan and (2) the status of each child is reviewed at least every six months by either a court or an administrative review. In South Carolina, the Foster Care Review Board is the state agency statutorily charged with providing the federally mandated case review system.

Review Board members are community volunteers nominated by their local legislative delegation and appointed by the Governor. At reviews, Board members gather information from, and meet with, the Department of Social Services’ case manager, parents/legal guardians, Guardian ad Litem, child (10 or older), foster parents, and any interested party (e.g. counselor, teacher). The Review Board determines the progress being made toward returning the child to his or her parents, or if that is not possible, whether DSS is making maximum efforts toward adoption. The Board then meets privately to discuss case-specific information and to formulate its recommendation. The Board presents its recommendation and any areas of concern to the persons who attended the review.

Review Board coordinators, who are employees of the Foster Care Review Board, directly support each of the 42, five-member Review Boards. They prepare information prior to the review, document information at the review, and produce the Board’s recommendation after the review. The Board’s recommendation is sent to the Family Court, DSS, and the Guardian ad Litem.



Once a child’s case is reviewed, Review Board members and staff advocate to address case-specific concerns that create barriers to permanency for a particular child. In addition to that, the data collected at reviews is compiled and utilized to identify trends within the system that unnecessarily delay returning children home or delay adoptions for those children who cannot return home. Having an independent entity collect and review this information is a critical check and balance to ensure the safety and well-being of some of South Carolina’s most vulnerable children.

SUMMARY OF REVIEWS

5,876

The Review Board analyzes ongoing, comparative data related to children in foster care in order to gain a better understanding of the trends impacting the system, as well as future implications related to each child reviewed by local review boards.

During calendar year 2013, local review boards held 403 local review board meetings, completing 5,876 case reviews for 3,475 children in foster care. In 2013 there was a slight increase in the number of reviews held, while the number of children reviewed continued to decrease.

Data regarding entry into foster care for 2,988 children was received from the Department of Social Services (“DSS”) and entered in the Review Board data-management system during calendar year 2013. Twenty-five percent (25%), or 752 children had at least one previous out-of-home placement. Local review boards held reviews for 1,568 of these children, while 1,420 children left foster care prior to a case review.

INDICATOR	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
CHILDREN REVIEWED	5,424	4,986	4,427	3,716	3,475
REVIEWS HELD	8,961	8,130	7,149	5,794	5,876
REVIEW BOARD MEETINGS	450	434	432	405	403
CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE AND REVIEWED	1,248	1,514	1,332	1,565	1,568
CHILDREN RE-ENTERING FOSTER CARE AND REVIEWED	504	558	513	724	661
CHILDREN LEAVING FOSTER CARE AND REVIEWED	1,964	2,175	2,163	1,916	1,676

AREAS OF CONCERN

5,813

The monthly review process allows local review boards to identify system concerns that are barriers to permanence for children in foster care. These system deficiencies, or areas of concern, are items that are not in compliance with law or policy.

In 2013, local review boards identified 5,813 areas of concern. Legal barriers, including delayed and late hearings, accounted for 38% of all areas of concern. No court order at review was the most frequently noted legal concern in 2013 (838), followed by removal hearings not held timely (267). The most frequently identified program area of concern, lack of progress toward permanency, accounted for 16% (910) of all areas of concern. Agency policy violations, including case plan barriers, accounted for 56% of all areas of concern, and delays in adoption services accounted for 6%.

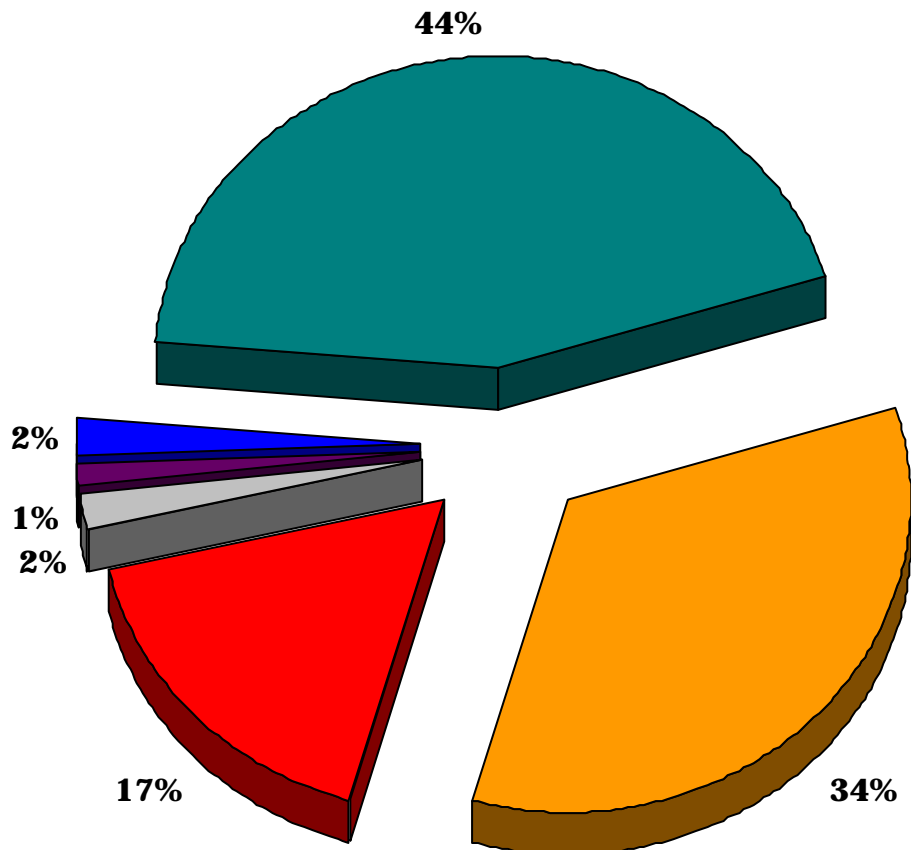
SUMMARY OF REVIEWS

CASE DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Local review boards carefully consider input from interested parties prior to issuing a recommendation on each child's case. Board members are required by statute to consider the most appropriate permanent recommendation possible for each child. Recommendations are sent to the Family Court, DSS, and Guardians ad Litem.

The graph below illustrates the percentage and type for each recommendation issued by local review boards for children reviewed in 2013.

Review Board Recommendations



44% Termination of Parental Rights

34% Adoption

17% Reunification

2% Other

2% Case Continued/No Review

1% Relative Placement

ENTERING FOSTER CARE

2,988

This is the number of children who entered foster care between January and December 2013, 7% more than in 2012.



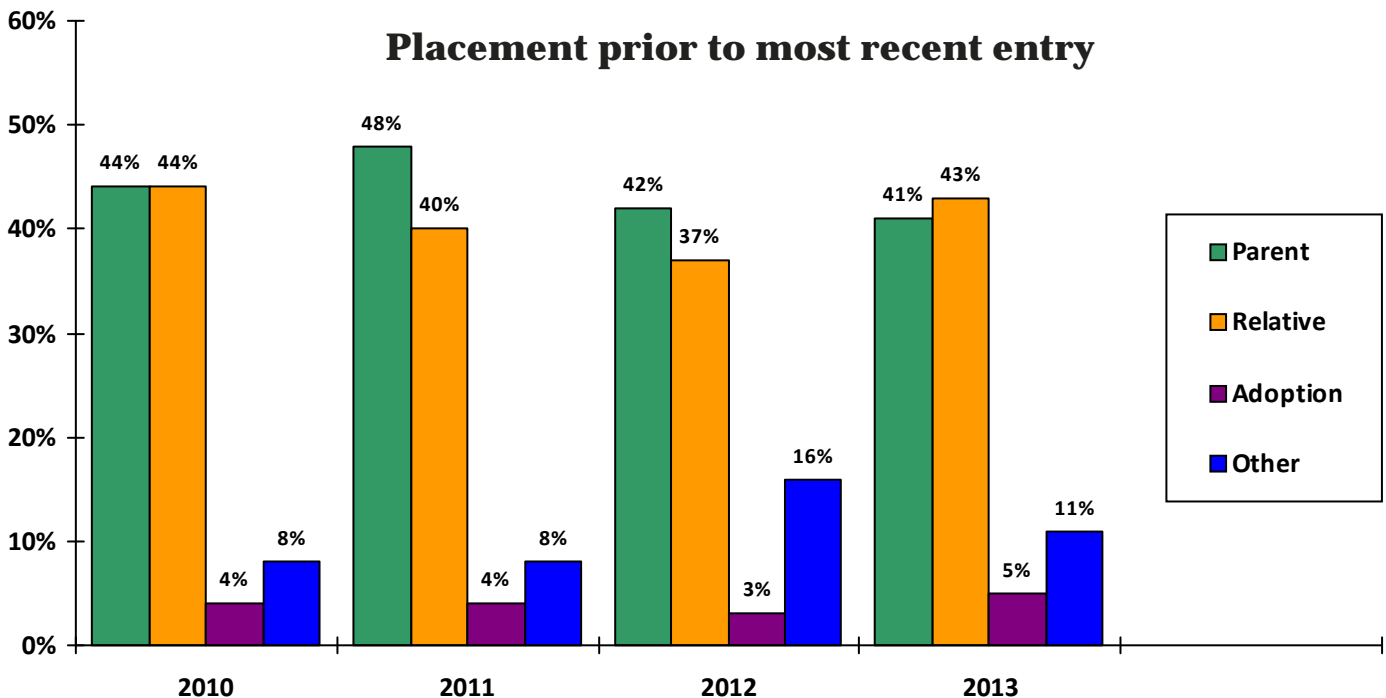
Thirty-nine percent (39%) of children entering foster care in 2013 entered due to physical neglect, while 30% entered care due to abuse. The remaining children entered foster care due to drug exposure/testing positive for drugs (22%), reason not reported (5%), abandonment (3%), and voluntary placement (1%).

Previous Out-of-Home Placements

752

Of the 2,988 children reported to have entered foster care in 2013, 25% (752), had at least one reported previous out-of-home placement. Forty-one percent (41%) returned to foster care from the home of a parent, 43% from the home of a relative, and 5% returned to foster care from an adoptive home.

The Review Board reports on all out-of-home placements for children who enter foster care because moving from home to home, or coming in and out of foster care, creates additional trauma for a child. The chart below displays prior placement data for the most recent entry to foster care by calendar year.



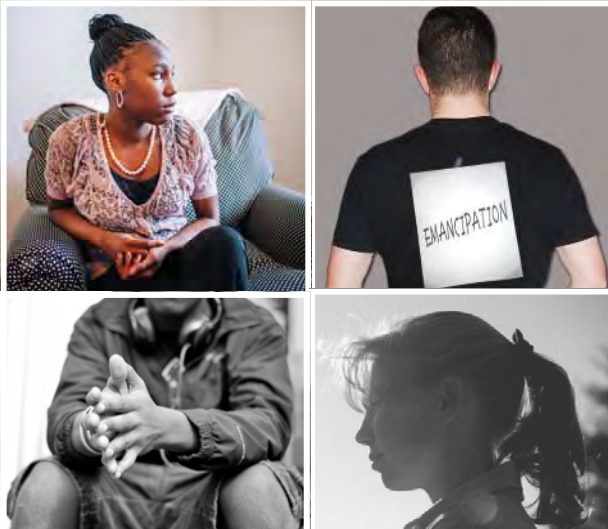
LEAVING FOSTER CARE

2,916

DSS reported that 2,916 children left the foster care system in 2013. Of these 2,916 children local review boards reviewed 1,586 children prior to their leaving foster care. The remaining children left foster care prior to a case review.

Returning a child to a parent or finalizing an adoption are the most permanent options for children who leave foster care. In 2013, 71% of children reviewed were returned to a parent or had a finalized adoption. The following table summarizes data for all children leaving foster care in 2013.

INDICATOR	ALL CHILDREN	CHILDREN REVIEWED	CHILDREN NOT REVIEWED
CHILDREN LEAVING FOSTER CARE	2,916 (100%)	1,586 (54%)	1,330 (46%)
PERMANENCY OUTCOMES			
RETURNED TO PARENT	1,197 (41%)	594 (37%)	603 (45%)
FINALIZED ADOPTION	539 (18%)	534 (34%)	5 (1%)
OTHER OUTCOMES			
RELATIVE CUSTODY	864 (30%)	279 (18%)	585 (44%)
EMANCIPATED OR TURNED 18	248 (8%)	149 (9%)	99 (7%)
OTHER /NOT REPORTED	68 (3%)	29 (2%)	39 (3%)



The faces of youth leaving foster care by "aging out" or emancipation is sobering. Like all young people, youth in foster care deserve and benefit from enduring, positive relationships with caring adults. Without these permanent connections, former foster children are far more likely than their peers to experience homelessness, poverty, compromised health, unemployment, incarceration and other adversities after they leave the foster care system. They deserve better outcomes.

REMAINING IN CARE

857

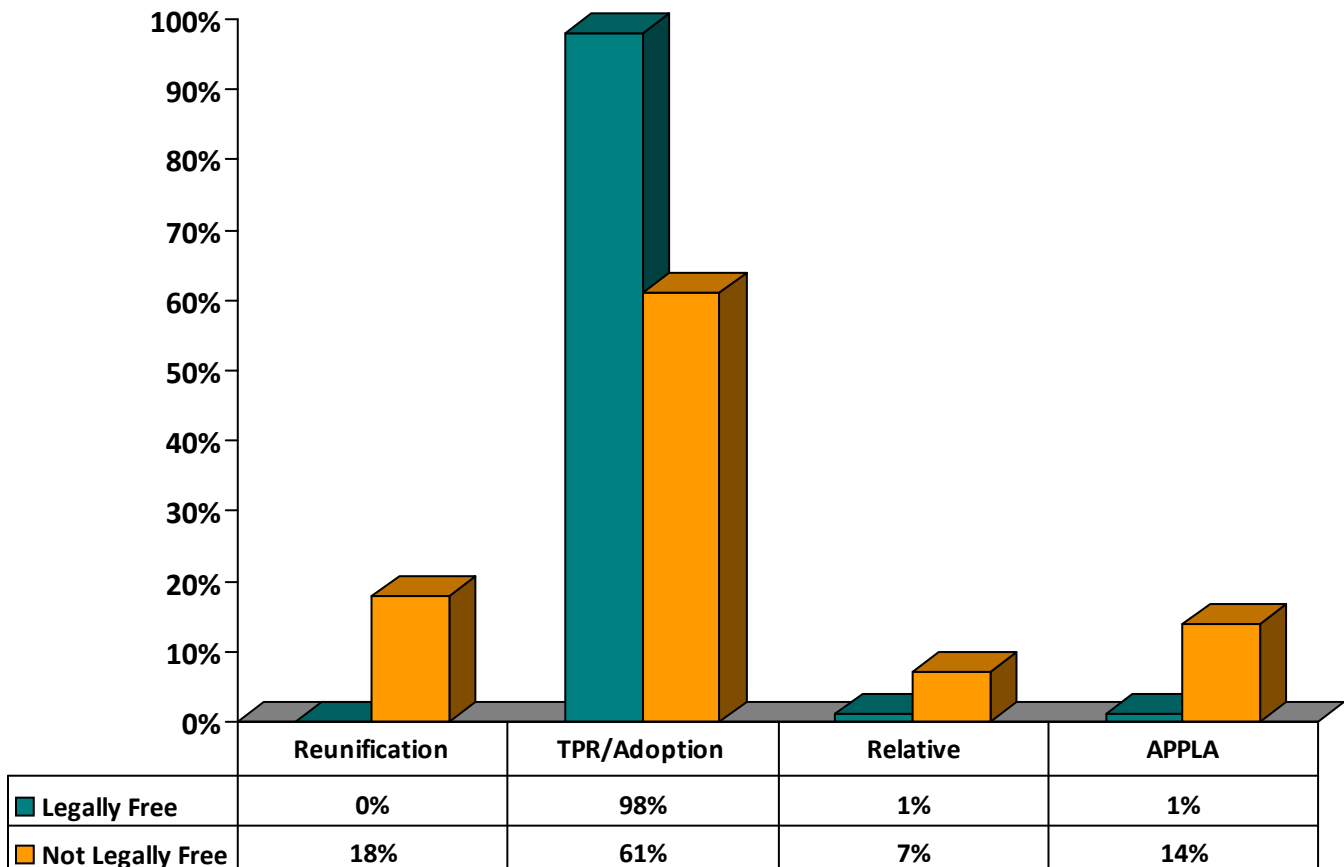
There were 3,067 children in foster care reported to the Review Board by DSS, as of December 31, 2013. Of these, 28% (857 children) have been in the foster care system for their most recent foster care entry for 17 continuous months or longer.

LEGALLY FREE:

Of these children remaining in care 17 months or longer, 71% (607) are currently legally free for adoption. The average length of time in care for these children is 4.8 years, or 58 months. The length of time in foster care ranges from 21 months to 15.4 years ; and 44 children have spent 10 or more years in foster care.

The following graph compares the DSS plan at the last foster care review for children who have been in foster care for 17 months or longer and whether they are currently legally free for adoption.

DSS PLAN FOR CHILDREN IN CARE 17 MONTHS OR LONGER

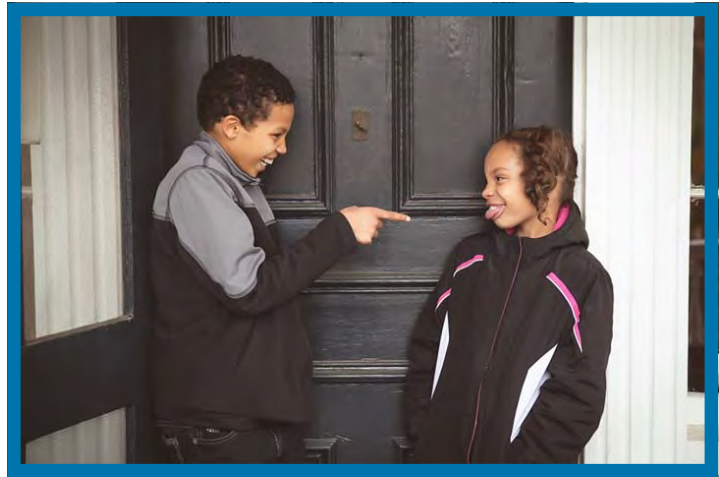


ADOPTIONS

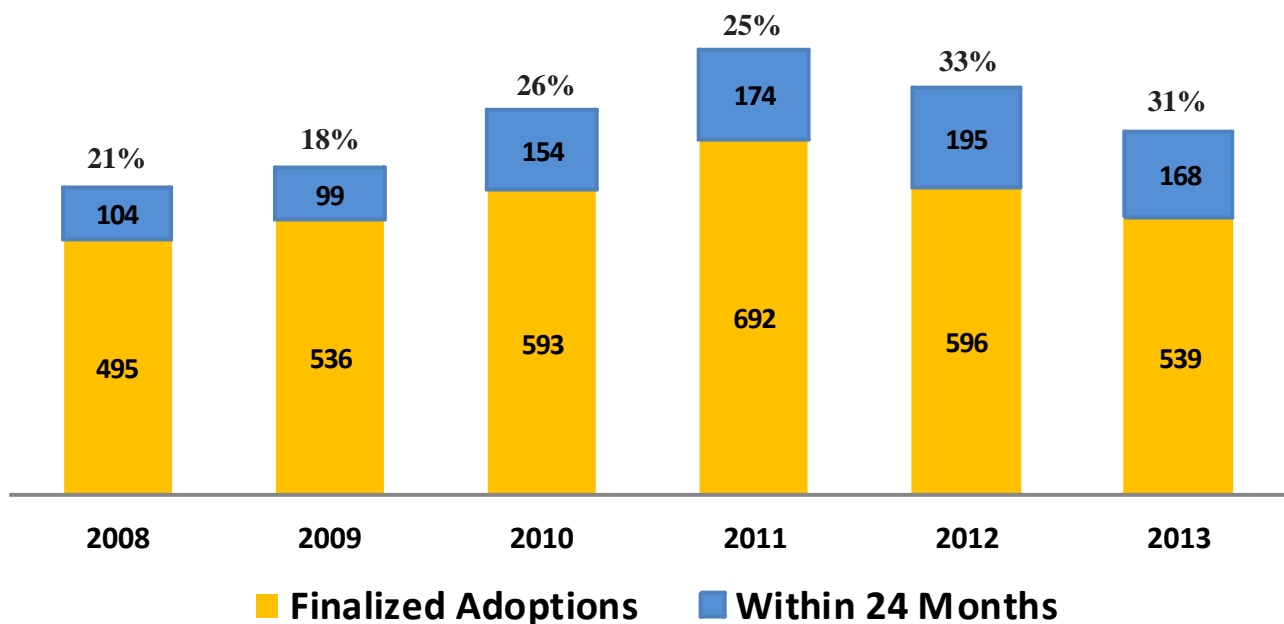
539

Of all children who left foster care in 2013, 18% (539) had finalized adoptions; thirty-one percent (31%) , or 168, of these adoptions were completed within the federal standard of 24 months, significantly more than previous years. The average length of time a child spends in foster care before a finalized adoption remained at 38 months (3 years).

The average age at adoption was 7.3 years, and in 2013 adoptions were finalized for 84 children age 13 and older. Teen adoptions accounted for 16% of all finalized adoptions, another substantial increase over previous years. Positive permanency for these young people should continue to be a priority for the child welfare system in South Carolina.



FINALIZED ADOPTIONS BY CALENDAR YEAR



HEART GALLERY

Heart Galleries across the United States provide public awareness of the need for foster care adoption and help find forever families for individual children.

The South Carolina Heart Gallery continues to benefit from the generosity of local photographers who donate their time and talent to provide beautiful portraits of waiting children, and from public exhibit space offered by faith communities, libraries, restaurants, and other businesses.

2013 STATISTICS:

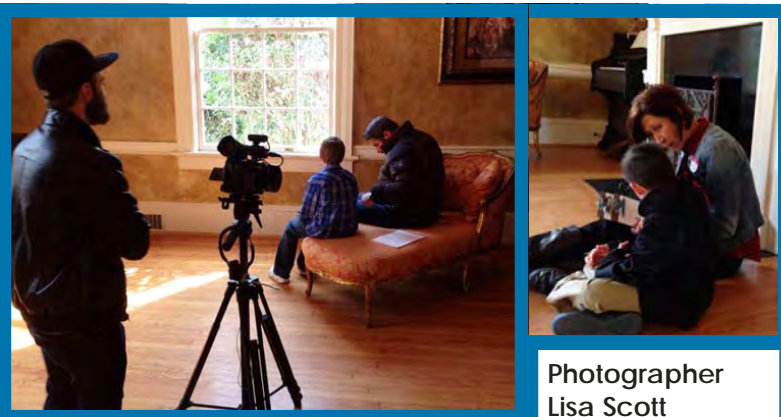
221	CHILDREN PHOTOGRAPHED
303	PUBLIC EXHIBITS/MEDIA FEATURES
109,360	WEBSITE VISITORS
1,222	INQUIRIES RECEIVED FROM FAMILIES INTERESTED IN ADOPTING
52	CHILDREN MATCHED WITH FAMILIES
51	VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHERS
73	NEW SC FAMILIES INITIATED THE ADOPTION PROCESS
36	HOME STUDIES COMPLETED AND ACCEPTED FOR APPROVAL



Photographers Susan Cinquemani and Mike Baker



Board Member Jack McCall and photographer Emilie Uphoff



Photographer Lisa Scott

Heart Gallery Foundation member Clark Smith And Videographer Eric Graham

OUTCOMES BY COUNTY

The following table compares 2013 Review Board data for South Carolina's 46 counties for children reviewed, children entering/re-entering, children leaving care, and permanency. Permanency is defined as a child being returned to a parent or having a finalized adoption. For children who did not achieve permanency, 30% (864) went to the custody of a relative and 8% (248) turned 18 or were emancipated.

For children entering and leaving care, these numbers reflect all children reported to the FCRB by DSS. They include children who were reviewed and children that DSS reported leaving care prior to a review being held. All numbers are rounded to the highest whole number.

County	Reviews Held	Children Reviewed	# Entered FC	Previous Out-of-Home Placement	# Left FC	Permanency		Other Outcomes	
						% Returned to parent	% Adopted	% Relative Custody	% Other
State Total	5,876	3,475	2,988	25% (752)	2,916	41% (1,197)	18% (539)	30% (864)	11% (316)
Abbeville	50	29	14	0	24	50% (12)	8% (2)	38% (9)	4% (1)
Aiken	127	82	71	42% (30)	67	45% (30)	6% (4)	36% (24)	13% (9)
Allendale	9	6	4	75% (3)	1	100% (1)	0	0	0
Anderson	402	216	103	29% (30)	123	26% (32)	41% (51)	15% (18)	18% (22)
Bamberg	14	9	6	17% (1)	11	45.5% (5)	0	45.5% (5)	9% (1)
Barnwell	41	23	14	64% (9)	16	37.5% (6)	25% (4)	37.5% (6)	0
Beaufort	65	37	36	19% (7)	50	70% (35)	14% (7)	10% (5)	6% (3)
Berkeley	189	112	118	20% (24)	123	59% (73)	7% (9)	24% (29)	10% (12)
Calhoun	23	12	13	31% (4)	8	63% (5)	0	12% (1)	25% (2)
Charleston	572	327	258	30% (77)	247	34% (83)	16% (41)	37% (91)	13% (32)
Cherokee	121	75	67	22% (15)	64	48% (31)	20% (13)	27% (17)	5% (3)
Chester	44	22	17	47% (8)	12	50% (6)	25% (3)	17% (2)	8% (1)
Chesterfield	84	58	40	40% (16)	30	53% (16)	10% (3)	31% (9)	6% (2)
Clarendon	58	27	14	21% (3)	14	43% (6)	43% (6)	14% (2)	0
Colleton	59	36	35	6% (2)	48	46% (22)	25% (12)	19% (9)	10% (5)
Darlington	138	92	70	31% (22)	89	55% (49)	26% (23)	9% (8)	10% (9)
Dillon	57	38	38	24% (9)	37	68% (25)	8% (3)	19% (7)	5% (2)
Dorchester	109	63	67	15% (10)	71	56% (40)	9% (6)	21% (15)	14% (10)
Edgefield	28	15	5	60% (3)	6	33% (2)	50% (3)	0	17% (1)

OUTCOMES BY COUNTY

County	Reviews Held	Children Reviewed	# Entered FC	Previous Out-of-Home Placement	# Left FC	Permanency		Other Outcomes	
						% Returned to parent	% Adopted	% Relative Custody	% Other
State Total	5,876	3,475	2,988	25% (752)	2,916	41% (1,197)	18% (539)	30% (864)	11% (316)
Fairfield	37	18	7	29% (2)	10	20% (2)	40% (4)	40% (4)	0
Florence	164	97	43	49% (21)	76	46% (35)	17% (13)	21% (16)	16% (12)
Georgetown	41	27	20	20% (4)	31	48% (15)	23% (7)	23% (7)	6% (2)
Greenville	680	391	306	15% (46)	302	36% (109)	23% (68)	31% (95)	10% (30)
Greenwood	38	17	21	10% (2)	21	29% (6)	14% (3)	52% (11)	5% (1)
Hampton	13	8	6	50% (3)	10	70% (7)	0	20% (2)	10% (1)
Horry	275	167	168	23% (39)	139	60% (84)	17% (23)	14% (19)	9% (13)
Jasper	29	18	10	20% (2)	8	50% (4)	0	37.5% (3)	12.5% (1)
Kershaw	91	60	56	43% (24)	55	49% (27)	13% (7)	29% (16)	9% (5)
Lancaster	72	49	35	37% (13)	39	38% (15)	44% (17)	10% (4)	8% (3)
Laurens	166	109	107	21% (22)	88	32% (28)	30% (26)	35% (31)	3% (3)
Lee	15	8	3	0	7	72% (5)	14% (1)	0	14% (1)
Lexington	287	172	157	27% (43)	148	31% (46)	16% (24)	45% (67)	8% (11)
Marion	77	38	7	71% (5)	23	30% (7)	44% (10)	4% (1)	22% (5)
Marlboro	30	19	7	43% (3)	16	43% (7)	19% (3)	19% (3)	19% (3)
McCormick	5	3	5	20% (1)	6	0	0	67% (4)	33% (2)
Newberry	73	38	51	26% (13)	46	13% (6)	22% (10)	61% (28)	4% (2)
Oconee	173	87	58	14% (8)	41	61% (25)	20% (8)	7% (3)	12% (5)
Orangeburg	101	61	53	25% (13)	55	39% (21)	16% (9)	29% (16)	16% (9)
Pickens	294	176	150	29% (44)	127	29% (36)	17% (22)	43% (55)	11% (14)
Richland	387	230	290	22% (64)	255	39% (99)	9% (23)	38% (96)	14% (37)
Saluda	16	8	8	50% (4)	7	0	43% (3)	57% (4)	0
Spartanburg	315	198	244	25% (62)	177	30% (52)	19% (34)	41% (74)	10% (17)
Sumter	43	25	14	29% (4)	18	56% (10)	5% (1)	17% (3)	22% (4)
Union	32	22	17	24% (4)	19	37% (7)	42% (8)	10.5% (2)	10.5% (2)
Williamsburg	50	28	13	8% (1)	23	9% (2)	56% (13)	22% (5)	13% (3)
York	182	122	142	23% (32)	128	49% (63)	9% (12)	30% (38)	12% (15)

BARRIERS BY COUNTY

The FCRB is statutorily mandated to report on deficiencies in the child welfare system. One tool for measuring deficiencies are areas of concern. These are defined as non-compliance with law and/or policy and are identified during the review of a child's case.

The following table summarizes data collected during reviews held in calendar year 2013. The data compares areas of concern of individual counties. All numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.

County	Total Areas of Concern	Case Plan Barriers	Agency Policy Violations	Legal Barriers	Hearings Not Held	Hearings Not Held Timely	Adoption Service Delays
State Total	5,813	34% (1,978)	22% (1,296)	23% (1,346)	5% (289)	10% (546)	6% (358)
Abbeville	58	43% (25)	19% (11)	22% (13)	7% (4)	9% (5)	0
Aiken	128	39% (50)	30% (39)	16% (20)	1% (1)	3% (4)	11% (14)
Allendale	15	27% (4)	34% (5)	13% (2)	0	13% (2)	13% (2)
Anderson	244	32% (78)	26% (63)	22% (53)	1% (3)	10% (25)	9% (22)
Bamberg	15	54% (8)	33% (5)	0	0	0	13% (2)
Barnwell	16	56% (9)	13% (2)	25% (4)	0	0	6% (1)
Beaufort	72	40% (29)	31% (22)	11% (8)	0	10% (7)	8% (6)
Berkeley	313	36% (114)	13% (42)	12% (36)	19% (60)	12% (37)	8% (24)
Calhoun	30	37% (11)	3% (1)	30% (9)	13% (4)	17% (5)	0
Charleston	633	33% (211)	15% (96)	24% (152)	7% (45)	14% (88)	7% (41)
Cherokee	136	24% (33)	13% (18)	39% (52)	0	19% (26)	5% (7)
Chester	47	15% (7)	45% (21)	40% (19)	0	0	0
Chesterfield	57	16% (9)	35% (20)	47% (27)	0	2% (1)	0
Clarendon	51	29% (15)	43% (22)	28% (14)	0	0	0
Colleton	64	36% (23)	13% (8)	17% (11)	23% (15)	8% (5)	3% (2)
Darlington	75	24% (18)	37% (28)	23% (17)	8% (6)	5% (4)	3% (2)
Dillon	42	19% (8)	12% (5)	55% (23)	0	5% (2)	9% (4)
Dorchester	236	43% (102)	9% (20)	22% (52)	6% (15)	17% (40)	3% (7)
Edgefield	26	65% (17)	23% (6)	4% (1)	0	4% (1)	4% (1)

BARRIERS BY COUNTY

County	Total Areas of Concern	Case Plan Barriers	Agency Policy Violations	Legal Barriers	Hearings Not Held	Hearings Not Held Timely	Adoption Service Delays
State Total	5,813	34% (1,978)	22% (1,296)	23% (1,346)	5% (289)	10% (546)	6% (358)
Fairfield	31	42% (13)	29% (9)	10% (3)	10% (3)	6% (2)	3% (1)
Florence	75	44% (33)	22% (16)	20% (15)	1% (1)	13% (10)	0
Georgetown	12	33% (4)	33% (4)	17% (2)	0	0	17% (2)
Greenville	428	24% (103)	22% (96)	37% (157)	3% (14)	12% (50)	2% (8)
Greenwood	16	43% (7)	13% (2)	13% (2)	18% (3)	13% (2)	0
Hampton	17	53% (9)	12% (2)	23% (4)	0	12% (2)	0
Horry	266	44% (118)	27% (71)	11% (29)	6% (17)	7% (19)	5% (12)
Jasper	19	26% (5)	0	53% (10)	0	16% (3)	5% (1)
Kershaw	116	28% (32)	31% (36)	21% (25)	4% (5)	1% (1)	15% (17)
Lancaster	26	12% (3)	54% (14)	19% (5)	0	15% (4)	0
Laurens	261	47% (123)	21% (55)	15% (38)	3% (9)	8% (20)	6% (16)
Lee	13	38% (5)	31% (4)	23% (3)	0	8% (1)	0
Lexington	578	38% (222)	25% (142)	16% (92)	6% (32)	7% (42)	8% (48)
Marion	74	68% (50)	5% (4)	19% (14)	0	8% (6)	0
Marlboro	7	14% (1)	0	43% (3)	0	14% (1)	29% (2)
McCormick	6	66% (4)	0	0	0	17% (1)	17% (1)
Newberry	59	54% (32)	20% (12)	15% (9)	0	7% (4)	4% (2)
Oconee	85	13% (11)	6% (5)	39% (33)	18% (15)	21% (18)	3% (3)
Orangeburg	72	23% (17)	10% (7)	23% (17)	11% (8)	23% (16)	10% (7)
Pickens	367	27% (98)	28% (104)	30% (110)	1% (4)	4% (14)	10% (37)
Richland	573	28% (158)	34% (192)	21% (122)	4% (22)	5% (32)	8% (47)
Saluda	37	46% (17)	51% (19)	0	0	3% (1)	0
Spartanburg	254	33% (83)	17% (42)	33% (83)	1% (3)	13% (34)	3% (9)
Sumter	11	73% (8)	18% (2)	0	0	0	9% (1)
Union	20	40% (8)	20% (4)	35% (7)	0	5% (1)	0
Williamsburg	21	19% (4)	57% (12)	5% (1)	0	0	19% (4)
York	111	35% (39)	7% (8)	44% (49)	0	9% (10)	5% (5)

AWARDS

The State Board of Directors selects a Review Board and Review Board Member of the Year. Community partners, staff, and Review Board members nominate boards and individual review board members. The Professional Development and Awards Committee of the State Board reviews all nominations and makes recommendations to the State Board.

Local Review Board 8A: Abbeville, Greenwood, Laurens and Newberry Counties, was selected as the 2013 Review Board of the Year. Review Board members are **Faye Halfacre, George Jones, Angela Shiflet, Anita Smith, and Sue Summer**.

The accomplishments of Review Board 8A included 18 days of foster care reviews in 2013. They have conducted two days of reviews each month since July 2013 due to the surge in the number of children in foster care in Laurens County.

The Review Board members attended Foster Parent Association meetings, quarterly Partners Meetings, and the "Working Together for Children" seminar of the Children's Law Center. The entire Review Board attended Annual Professional Development Day. They made donations to purchase holiday gifts and necessities for children, provided refreshments for children being photographed for the South Carolina Heart Gallery, and refreshments for all participants at both review dates in December.

Review Board 8A Review Board of the Year



Pictured above from left to right are Faye Halfacre, Angela Shiflet, George Jones, Anita Smith, and Sue Summer.

The Review Board met with State Representatives Michael Pitts and Mark Willis regarding concerns from constituents and included the County DSS Director in the discussion. Their thoughtful reviews and decision-making on behalf of children in foster care continued in the extra meeting dates to ensure that all children received timely, high-quality reviews in the Eighth Judicial Circuit, until appointments are completed for the new Foster Care Review Board 8B.

AWARDS

MaryAnn Riley of Review Board 7C: Spartanburg County, was selected as the 2013 Review Board Member of the Year. MaryAnn served on Foster Care Review Board 7C for 18 years. Her dedication to children far exceeded her excellent record of participation in foster care reviews. She supported the South Carolina Heart Gallery and photo shoots for children awaiting adoption since the formation of the Heart Gallery in 2005.

MaryAnn and her husband, Wayne, sponsored many children, as well as vulnerable adults, to make their holidays special, and provided all types of supplies for their benefit. MaryAnn was always interested in supporting changes in the child welfare system. She attended Partners Meetings, Legislative Delegation meetings, and events at DSS for children. She acted as an advocate for case managers by attending meetings and expressing concern for the difficulties they encountered in their daily work with families.

In her nomination of MaryAnn, Katie Brophy, Director of the Spartanburg County Department of Social Services, expressed appreciation for all that MaryAnn did as a strong supporter of the child welfare system and the many lives she enriched. Her service and contributions far exceeded the scope of expectations for a review board member. MaryAnn concluded her service on Foster Care Review Board in 2014, but her many contributions will endure as a shining example of volunteerism.

**MaryAnn Riley
Review Board 7C
Review Board
Member of the
Year 2013**

MaryAnn was recognized at a Legislative Delegation meeting on August 4, 2014. Pictured left to right are Spartanburg DSS County Director Katie Brophy, MaryAnn Riley, and State Board Member Sissy Brock.



PEOPLE POWER

15,658 VOLUNTEER HOURS

The total number of volunteer hours, 15,658, contributed by nearly 200 volunteers statewide was valued at \$321,846 to the state of South Carolina. The hours spent reviewing cases and providing additional services to Board members' individual communities is highly appreciated by the FCRB Program Staff and State Board.

FCRB volunteers are objective, independent reviewers of children in foster care. Local review boards held **403** meetings and spent **9,069** hours reviewing cases for **3,475** children in foster care. The Review Boards issued Advisory Recommendations to DSS and Family Court for permanent placement plans for each child reviewed and identified violations of policy or statute in each case. Review Board members also generously donated an additional **6,589** hours supporting and strengthening services to expedite safe, permanent families for children. Local review boards contributed the following in 2013:

- **35** Review Boards completed service projects to support programs and events for children in foster care and those who serve them.
- **26** Review Boards sponsored Heart Gallery exhibits, or donated refreshments and assisted at photo shoots where children who are legally free for adoption had professional photographs taken for adoptive recruitment.
- **6** Review Board members volunteered as actors in a day-long filming of videos by the USC Center for Child and Family Studies for training DSS about FCRB.
- **34** Review Boards participated in quarterly meetings with child welfare partners to discuss trends and issues impacting children in foster care.
- **22** Review Boards provided quarterly reports to legislators on Review Board activities and trends impacting children in foster care.
- **10** Review Boards presented the Foster Care Review Board's Annual Report to legislative delegations to inform legislators of trends in the foster care system.
- **13** Review Boards participated in innovative initiatives with the Department of Social Services including Permanency and Placement Roundtables. Each county Department of Social Services had a "Huddle" in 2013 with FCRB. The "Huddles" were a program improvement approach to discuss and analyze Review Board data. The groups identified strengths, trends, challenges, and formulated action plans to resolve systemic barriers to the goal of safe and thriving children with forever families.

WHO WE ARE

STATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2nd Congressional District, Richland County
1st Congressional District, Berkeley County
3rd Congressional District
4th Congressional District, Spartanburg County
5th Congressional District, Cherokee County
6th Congressional District
7th Congressional District
Member-at-Large, Greenville County

Jo Hecker, Chairperson
Charles (Chuck) Koches
Vacant
Monica Hill
Martha (Sissy) Brock
Vacant
Vacant
Vernon McCurry

STATE OFFICE STAFF

Executive Director/General Counsel
Program Director
Program Supervisors

Michelle Dhunjishah
Robin Campbell
Kathryn Bozik
Stephen Clyburn
Jennifer Anstead
Tiffany Brand
Doretta Crosson-Irby
Shirel Frazier
Dawn Mike
Angel Sbardella
Nina Spinelli
Stephanie Spink
Michelle White

Review Board Coordinators

Millie Qualls
Selina Joyner
Amanda Blackmon
Hayley Salley
Vacant
Lisa Vosburgh
Jeanette Davis
Corlette Minor
Heather Valentine

Heart Gallery Coordinator
Heart Gallery Program Assistant
Heart Gallery Recruitment Specialists

Staff Attorney
Research and Planning
Business Manager
Administrative Assistants

This report was prepared by the Foster Care Review Board, South Carolina Governor's Office. For additional information please contact Lisa S. Vosburgh, Data and Research Administrator, at the address listed on the back cover, telephone 803.734.4194; e-mail: lvosburgh@oepp.sc.gov; or web: www.oepp.sc.gov/fcrb.

FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD

Advocating Permanent Families for Children

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VISION

South Carolina will make child well-being a top priority by assuring safe, permanent families for all children in foster care.

MISSION

The mission of the South Carolina Foster Care Review Board is to provide external accountability for the foster care system and to advocate on behalf of children in foster care.