

2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT

**South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board
Office of the Governor**

**1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 734-0480
www.oepp.sc.gov/fcrb**

*“And how are the
children?”*

Citizens Advocating Safety and Permanence for Children

In the United States: ¹

- Over 500,000 children and youth are currently living in foster care.
- Over 3,000,000 children were investigated as potential victims of abuse or neglect last year.

In South Carolina: ²

- On June 30, 2008, 5,405 children were in foster care due to abuse and/or neglect.
- Over 18,000 children and youth were investigated as potential victims of abuse or neglect; 39% of these investigations were founded.
- As of June 30, 2008, there were a total of 1,889 licensed non-relative foster homes in South Carolina.

Between January 1 and December 31, 2008: ³

- The South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board conducted 9,069 reviews for 5,384 children.
- Violations of statute, policy or regulation were identified at 79% of all reviews held. Of these violations:
 - 33% reflected Agency policy violations.
 - 14% reflected legal barriers.
 - 8% reflected deficiencies in adoption service delays.
- 2,922 children entered foster care in South Carolina.
- One in four children reviewed by the Review Board for the first time in 2008 had previously been in foster care.
- 1,977 children left foster care in South Carolina. Of these children:
 - 37% were reunited with their birth parents.
 - 25% were adopted.

¹ www.casey.org

² South Carolina's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS)

³ Children's Foster Care Review Board Information System

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

50th

*SC's ranking in child welfare
per capita spending*

5 out of 1,000

*children are in foster care in
South Carolina*

3 birthdays

pass while a child is in foster

“And how are the children?” In East Africa, this is the traditional Maasai greeting. The Maasai people recognize the critical role that children play in their society. They know that children must be nurtured and supported, because they are the link between the present and the past. As of 2009 we still have not made that connection here in South Carolina, and it is starting to show on the faces of our children. Permanency and safety for children must become a priority for South Carolina before it's too late.

Casey Family Programs is a national foundation dedicated to Jim Casey's original vision that every child in America should have the opportunity to grow up healthy, happy and loved. Casey Family Programs echoes the Maasai greeting in their 2009 Annual Report, which outlines their 2020 Strategy. Simply put, the goal of the 2020 Strategy is to reduce the number of American children in foster care by 50% by the year 2020. I would love to see South Carolina accept that challenge.

For every 1,000 children living in South Carolina, five are in out-of-home placements. These children are spending nearly one-sixth of their childhood in the limbo of foster care. Children entering the foster care system in South Carolina can expect to see at least three birthdays pass before the responsible adults in their lives take any kind of action to free them from the uncertainty of foster care. One in four of these children have been in the foster care system before and one in four will age out of foster care without any permanent plans being made for them. We cannot continue to ignore the challenges and poor outcomes faced by these children. Our future depends on them.

Prior to the current downward spiral of the national and state economy, South Carolina was ranked 50th in the nation on per capita spending for child welfare. South Carolina made it no higher than 32nd on any national measure of child well-being. The devastating budget cuts experienced by all components of the child welfare system and the judiciary in South Carolina during the past year make it hard to see even a glimmer of light at the end of a very dark tunnel. It will not be easy, but we must find ways to improve the status of our children - the future will be determined by what we accomplish.

If we are to move forward, there should be no question that Casey's vision of permanent, safe homes for all children is our common goal. South Carolina must work together to become a strong, supportive and united voice for our children and their needs. We must continue to build on the small increments of improvement that were in progress before most of the resources with which to do this important work were eliminated. I think we can do it.

In this Annual Report, the South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board presents recommendations for two steps toward improvement. Both are based on the qualitative system knowledge and quantitative statistical data gathered by local Review Board volunteers at statewide case reviews. These suggested steps incorporate new ideas and build on what we know to be successful. Their implementation will move us past where we stand today and put us closer to the time when we can say, “the children are well.”

Let's get started.

*Denise Turbeville Barker
Executive Director*

MISSION AND VISION

Mission Statement:

The South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board provides an external system of accountability and advocacy for children and families involved with the foster care system; utilizes panels of community volunteers to promote safe, permanent homes for children in foster care in a timely manner; and increases public awareness regarding the impact of child abuse and neglect.

Vision Statement:

The South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board will be viewed by the Department of Social Services, the Family Court, the Legislature, other community partners, and the citizens of South Carolina as a valuable source of information regarding the status of the child welfare system.

Program Description:

During the early 1970s in South Carolina, many child welfare professionals and citizen groups began advocacy efforts on behalf of children in the foster care system. These efforts began as a result of their concern over the plight of children adrift in the foster care system. The ultimate accomplishment of these efforts was the establishment of the South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board System in 1974, the first such organization in the nation.

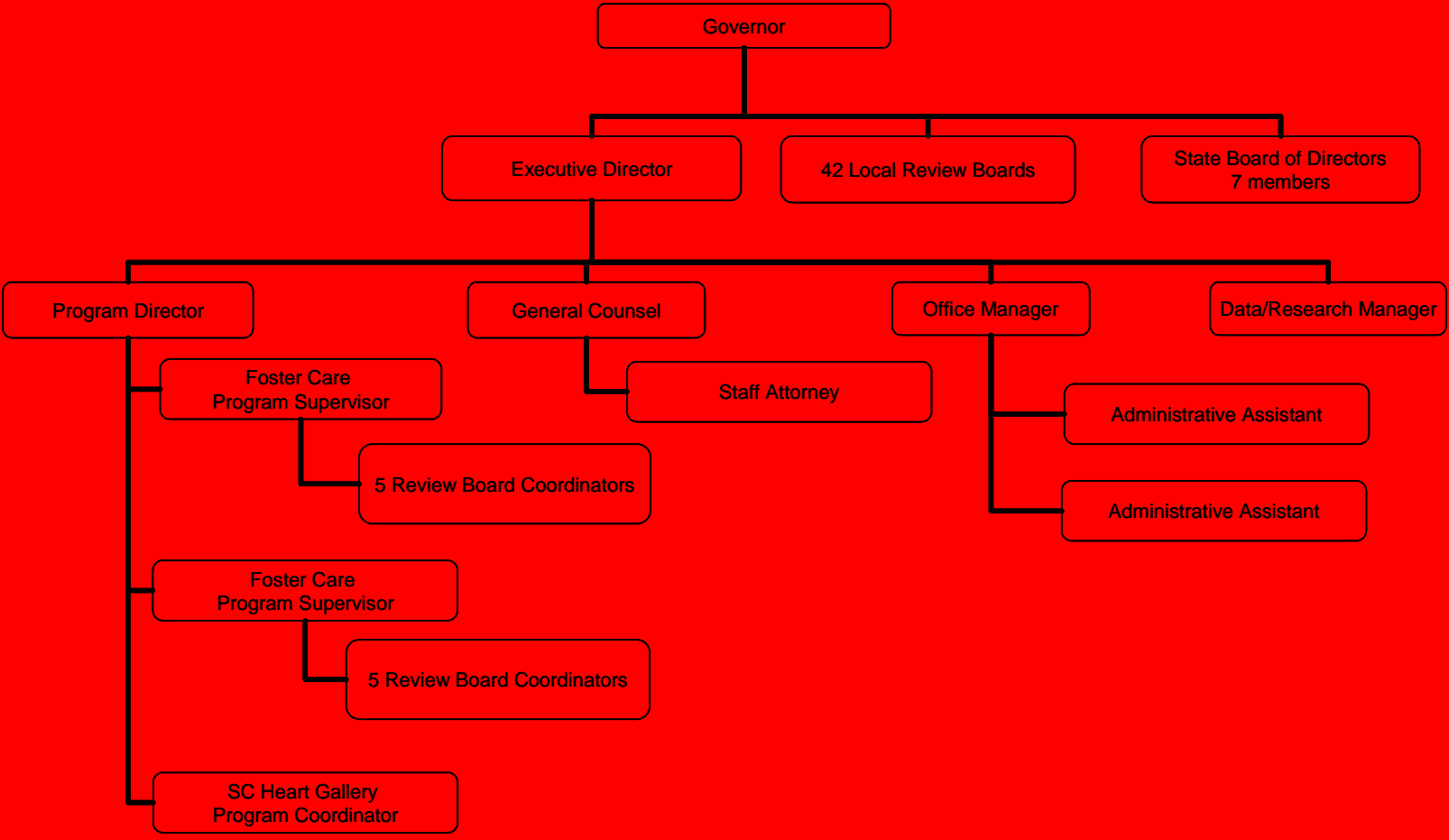
The purpose of foster care review is to recommend a permanent home for the child in foster care without unnecessary delay by returning the child home or placing the child in another stable, permanent home. Foster care review promotes safety and permanence, identifies gaps in services, and increases public awareness regarding abuse and neglect.

Each of South Carolina's sixteen judicial circuits must have at least one local review board. Citizen volunteers in each circuit review the cases of all children who spend longer than four consecutive months in foster care. Each child's case is reviewed every six months by a local review board until the child reaches the age of eighteen or is no longer in the custody of the South Carolina Department of Social Services. Following each child's review, a written recommendation is sent to the Family Court, the Department of Social Services, and other interested parties. Local review boards have five members, who are appointed by the Governor, upon recommendation of the local legislative delegation.

Additional information about the South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board is available on our website at www.oepp.sc.gov/fcrb/.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board



THE POWER OF VOLUNTEERS

Local Foster Care Review Boards donated 15,082 hours of volunteer service to the child welfare system during 2008. The 2008 national dollar value for volunteer time was \$20.25 per hour, which brought the total amount of in-kind donation by Review Board volunteers to \$260,856 for the state of South Carolina.

- **Partners' Meetings:** Thirty-three local Review Boards participated in quarterly local partners' meetings with representatives from the South Carolina Department of Social Services, the South Carolina Foster Parent Association, the South Carolina Volunteer Guardian ad Litem Program, and other community partners. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss solutions to systemic county concerns identified at local review board meetings that impact children in foster care, as well as issues and concerns raised by other partners.
- **Service Projects:** Thirty-three local Review Boards completed service projects in their respective counties. These projects filled needs and requests made by the Department of Social Services, providing support to the county's foster care system and addressing the needs of individual children.
- **County Legislative Delegations:** Twenty-seven local Review Boards implemented procedures to communicate regularly with their county legislative delegations about the status of children in foster care in their counties. This routine communication provides valuable feedback to the legislators who not only recommend volunteers for appointment to local Review Boards, but also propose legislation impacting child welfare in this state.
- **Annual Report Presentations:** Nineteen local Review Boards facilitated the presentation of the 2007-2008 Review Board Annual Report to county legislative delegations. These presentations are another important means of communicating the needs of the child welfare system to members of the South Carolina General Assembly.
- **Family Court Judges:** Fourteen local Review Boards met with Family Court Judges from their respective judicial circuits to discuss legal trends impacting children in foster care. Recommendations and data compiled by local Review Boards in each circuit provides judges with in-depth case and systemic information that can enhance legal processes for children.

15,082

hours of volunteer service

33

partners' meetings

33

service projects

- **Court Hearings:** Review Board legal staff advocated on behalf of children reviewed by local Review Boards at 134 court hearings across South Carolina in 2008.
- **Advocacy:** Review Board program staff provided targeted, post-review, supplemental advocacy on behalf of 1,228 children in foster care.
- **South Carolina Heart Gallery:** The South Carolina Children’s Foster Care Review Board entered into a contract with the South Carolina Department of Social Services to fund the South Carolina Heart Gallery, a traveling photo exhibit designed to raise awareness of the need for adoptive homes for legally free children in foster care.

Local Review Board 10C, Anderson County, “Buckets of Fun” service project for children and youth in foster care



Review Board 10C Board Members:
Jill McDonald, Robin Cromer, and Ed Zielinski



Review Board Member and Review Boards of the Year

Charles (Chuck) Koches (pictured right), Berkeley County Review Board 9B, was selected **“2008 Review Board Member of the Year.”** Known for his poise and professionalism at reviews, Chuck is a skilled collaborator who has established relationships with all community partners. Chuck is admired for his effective handling of difficult cases, treating all parties with respect, and keeping reviews focused on permanence for children.



Chuck Koches
2008 Review Board Member
of the Year

Local Review Boards 9B and 9E (pictured below), Berkeley County, were named **“2008 Review Boards of the Year.”** They exemplify what can be accomplished through leadership, shared vision, group commitment, and community involvement. All of these active board members have excellent attendance at reviews, frequently substitute for other boards, and routinely attend court.



2008 Review Boards of the Year

Standing:

Dr. David Fitzpatrick, 9E
Representative Joseph S. Daning
Senator Paul G. Campbell
Chuck Koches, 9B
Walter Mitchell, 9E
Jan Moore, 9B
Ronald Shepard, 9E
Gene Coon, 9E

Seated:

Kathleen Bounds, 9E
Rosetta Givens Mitchell, 9B
Lois Dennis, 9B

Not pictured:

Stephanie Easterling, 9B

Young Lawyer of the Year

Michelle Dhunjishah, General Counsel for the Children's Foster Care Review Board, was named by the Young Lawyer's Division of the South Carolina Bar Association *Young Lawyer of the Year* for 2008—2009. This award is given annually to recognize a young lawyer who exemplifies excellence in practicing law and public service.



Michelle Dhunjishah
Young Lawyer of the Year
2008—2009

Child Advocate of the Year

The Honorable George M. McFaddin, Jr. from the Third Judicial Circuit was selected as the Children's Foster Care Review Board's *Child Advocate of the Year* for 2008.

Upon seeing the backlog of cases of children awaiting adoption consummation hearings, Judge McFaddin initiated and devoted two days to making 25 children members of forever families. On May 27, 2008, the adoptions of 13 children were finalized, and on November 24, 2008, adoption was finalized for 12 children.

Judge McFaddin serves as chairperson of the Bench/Bar Committee. Denise Barker, Executive Director of the Review Board, and Michelle Dhunjishah, General Counsel for the Review Board, also serve on this committee and work with Judge McFaddin and other committee members to strengthen the legal system's representation of children and families.



The Honorable George M. McFaddin, Jr.
2008 Child Advocate of the Year

South Carolina's Waiting Children

Founded in New Mexico in 2001, the Heart Gallery is a national program that uses the power of photography to find homes for children lingering in foster care. More than 100 groups in 48 states provide public awareness of the need for adoptive families and, more importantly, help find permanent families for individual children.

Established in 2005, the South Carolina Heart Gallery is a collaborative program administered and supported by the Children's Foster Care Review Board, Office of the Governor, and the South Carolina Department of Social Services. This unique partnership enhances adoption recruitment opportunities for waiting children.

Heart Gallery portraits capture the spirit and individuality of children waiting in foster care, and community exhibits help advocate for their permanency, raise awareness about the need for foster care adoption, and attract potential adoptive families.

Local photographers donate their services to photograph and provide portraits of children, which are displayed in public venues around the state, as well as online at www.scheartgallery.org. During 2008, the total amount of in-kind donation by Heart Gallery photographers was valued at \$39,600 for the state of South Carolina. Portraits are displayed in hospitals, churches, libraries, shopping malls, restaurants, art galleries, and other businesses. Exhibits may be small or large and are designed to fit the participating location.

Since its inception, the South Carolina Heart Gallery has made great strides toward heightening public awareness of foster children awaiting adoption. A steady increase in the number of public exhibits during 2008 directly correlates with an increase in the number of visitors to the website and the number of inquiries received from families or individuals interested in adopting. Prior to 2008, the South Carolina Heart Gallery website averaged 97 daily visitors and received 44 inquiries regarding the featured children. The following indicators are evidence of the explosive growth of the Heart Gallery during 2008:

- ♥ 21 photographers donated their time and talents to photograph 92 children at 7 photo shoots
- ♥ Production of South Carolina Heart Gallery video
- ♥ 177 children featured in exhibits and on the South Carolina Heart Gallery website
- ♥ 432 average daily visitors to the South Carolina Heart Gallery website
- ♥ 380 inquiries received from interested families
- ♥ Local review board members donated over 100 volunteer hours to the South Carolina Heart Gallery

380 Heart  Gallery[®]
South Carolina

The number of SC Heart Gallery inquiries received from interested families



Photographer David Despeaux
Charleston



Family Court Judge Robert E. Guess and his wife, Vanda Guess, at the Heart Gallery Exhibit in Union County. Also present were Kim Sullivan, Mrs. South Carolina America 2008, and Dorothy Dixon of Review Board 16A.



Photographer Lynn Daly
Myrtle Beach



Photographer Allison Anderson
Greenville

“Joy bells are ringing, the house is alive with many new sounds.”

To his biological mom and dad, thank you for allowing us to bring him into our family and no matter what challenges we might face, we will endure them with love. Our child arrived and we have no midnight feedings, no diapers to change, no bottles to make, no potty training. He was born just for our household and we are thankful.”

Arthur & Wilma L.
Adoptive parents of a
13 year old featured on the
SC Heart Gallery website

2008—2009 State Board of Directors Recommendations

Pursuant to South Carolina Code Section 60-11-700 *et seq.*, the State Board of Directors for the Children's Foster Care Review Board makes recommendations to the Governor and to the General Assembly concerning the foster care policies, procedures, and practices of public agencies which arrange for the foster care of children. These recommendations are determined from the State Board of Director's Strategic Plan and through data collection and analysis of foster care cases reviewed by the forty-two local review boards.

The personal, first-hand interviews with caseworkers, children, parents, foster parents, and other interested parties give local board members an in-depth look at individual cases. The statistical data compiled from the review of foster care cases allows the local boards to develop a general view of how the system operates on behalf of the individual children. Based upon the combined analysis of 2008 review-related information and information obtained from the Review Board's participation in other aspects of the child welfare system, the State Board presents the following recommendations:

Recommendation I

The South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board recommends that appropriate South Carolina child welfare professionals and relevant legal partners come together to develop a child welfare attorney specialization to improve and enhance the overall quality of legal representation currently available to South Carolina's children and youth in foster care.

- The American Bar Association recognized child welfare law as a legal specialty in 2001, and accredited the National Association of Counsel for Children as the child welfare law certifying bode in 2004.
- In 2008, the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators passed a resolution supporting the Child Welfare Attorney Specialty Certification Program, and encouraged its members to authorize the Program in their states.
- The purpose of the Child Welfare Law Specialty Certification Program is to improve outcomes for children and families involved in the foster care system by improving the quality of legal representation. Overwhelming caseloads, limited support and resources, and inadequate compensation negatively impact professional interest in working in this field.
- To advance the safety, permanence, and well-being of South Carolina's children, efforts must be made to raise the level of interest, professionalism, and compensation for attorneys who practice child welfare law. Establishing a Child Welfare Law Specialty Certification Program is a critical first step toward realization of these goals.

Why it matters:

Lack of effective legal representation creates significant barriers to providing safety and permanency to children entering foster care. Ineffective representation resulting from attorney turnover, overwhelming caseloads, and lack of preparedness affects not only the evidentiary record of abuse and neglect, but also affects the timeliness of hearings. For example, 44% of the children reviewed in 2008 did not have timely removal or permanency planning hearings. Children in foster care wait an average of three years for permanent placement. By improving the quality of legal representation in South Carolina's Child Welfare System, children in foster care would be more likely to obtain permanency in a timely manner.

Recommendation II

The South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board recommends that the current structure of the South Carolina Heart Gallery, a collaborative program between the South Carolina Department of Social Services and the South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board, be expanded in order to build on the success already achieved by this program.

- Of the 358 children photographed between 2005 and 2008, 113 have had families identified. This 32% success rate is indicative of the impact of the South Carolina Heart Gallery.
- During 2008, 380 inquiries were received from interested families and individuals. During the first quarter of 2009, 354 inquiries were received, nearly as many as in all of 2008. This increase in inquiries demonstrates an important aspect of the effectiveness of this innovative program.
- Expansion of the South Carolina Heart Gallery would build capacity to schedule additional photo shoots and secure additional exhibit venues. Program expansion would also allow for a faster response to inquiries and more expedient referrals to the South Carolina Department of Social Services. It would also provide time for marketing, recruitment, and succession planning.
- Program expansion would assist the South Carolina Heart Gallery in achieving its overriding goal of enhancing community educational opportunities about adoption and foster care, and identifying more adoptive homes for South Carolina's waiting children.

Why it matters:

In South Carolina, there are 1,001 legally free children currently in foster care waiting for adoptive homes. Many of these children are older, have unique challenges, or are part of a sibling group. Traditional recruitment efforts have not identified families for many of these children. The success of creative and innovative programs, such as the South Carolina Heart Gallery, is encouraging and must be enhanced if we hope to provide more children with the permanent families they need and deserve.



*"I play football and
I'm going to college,
why wasn't adoption
an option for me?"*

Kwanmay
Foster Youth

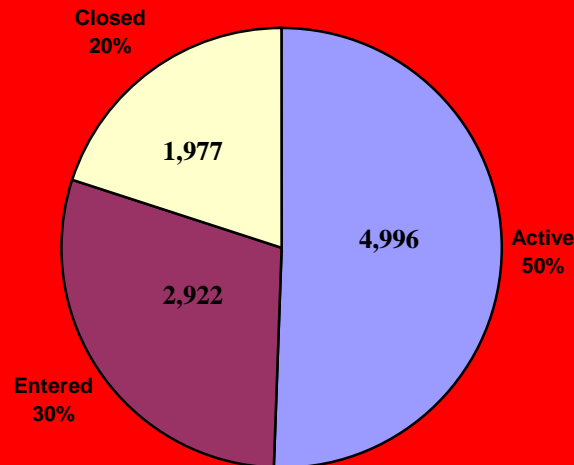
Statistical Information

The South Carolina Children’s Foster Care Review Board supports an extensive data management system on information collected for each child reviewed by local review boards. The system is updated as necessary to refine the quantity and quality of data collected and in order to provide enhanced statistical analysis of recorded information. Questions related to statistical information provided in this report should be referred to the South Carolina Children’s Foster Care Review Board.

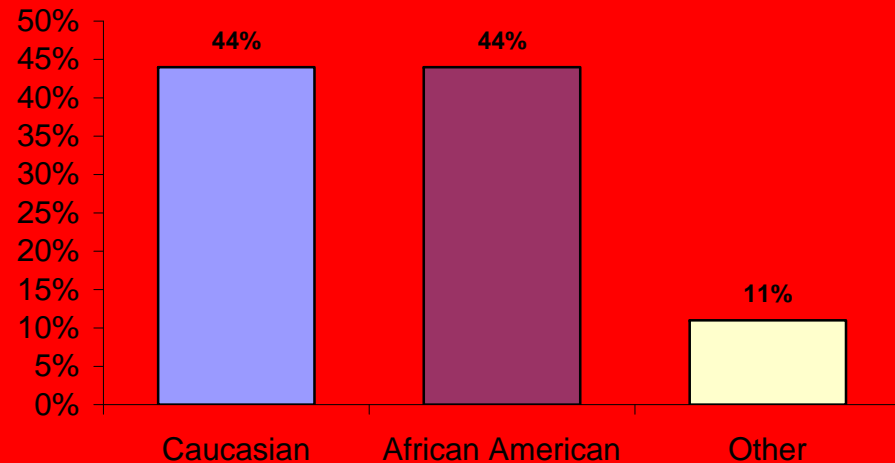
Data regarding initial entry into foster care for 2,922 children was received and entered into the Review Board data management system during 2008. Local boards reviewed 1,056 children for the first time during 2008 and closed 1,977 children upon receipt of reports indicating that they left foster care during the time period. There were 4,996 children who remained active in the Review Board data management system as of December 31, 2008.

The following graphs illustrate the status of children in foster care in 2008, and the race of children reviewed by local review boards in 2008.

Status of Children in Foster Care



Race of Children Reviewed

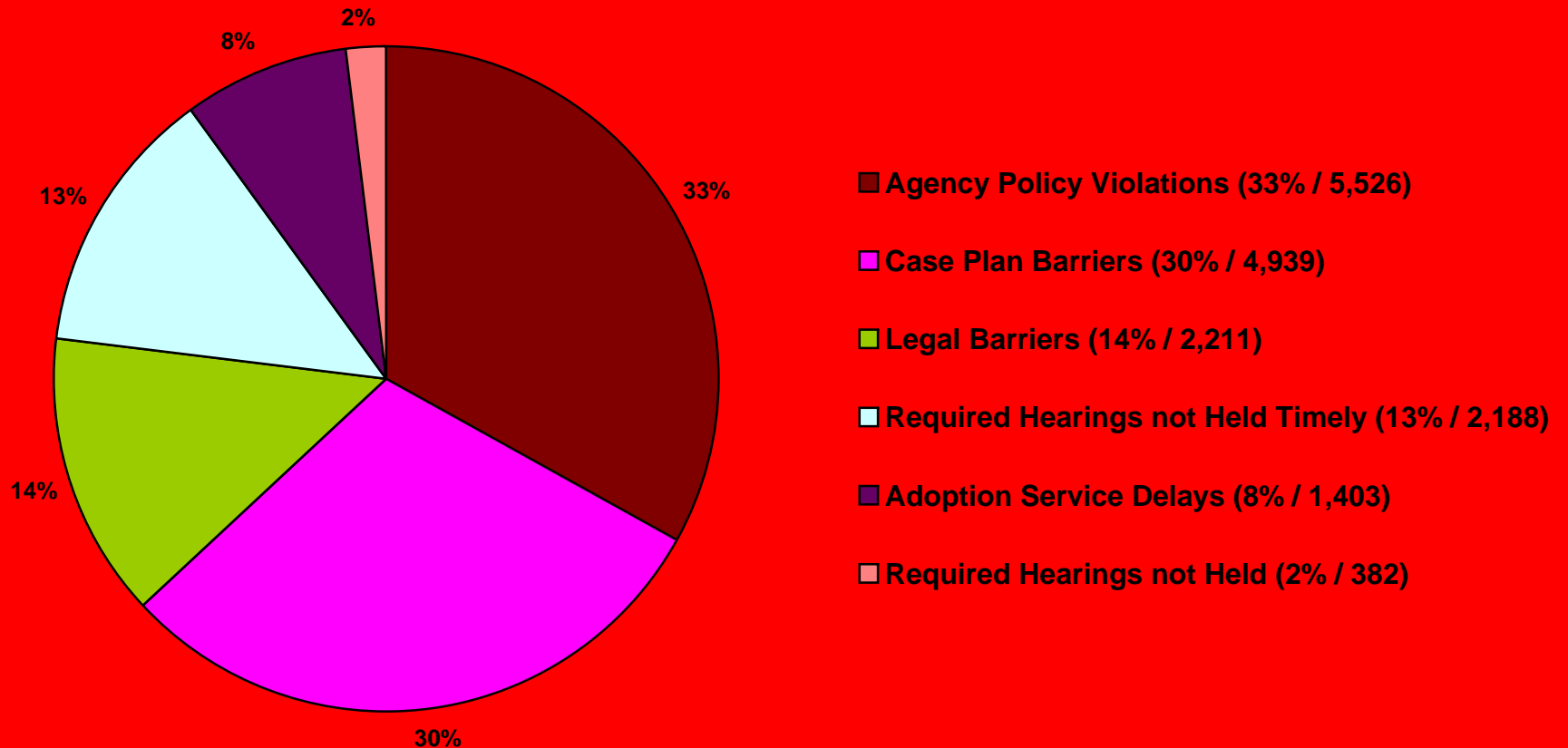


Annually, the Review Board tracks and monitors on-going, comparative statistical data related to children’s placements in foster care in order to gain a better understanding of the trends impacting the system, as well as future implications related to permanence, well-being and safety. The following section provides chronological comparisons of systemic issues impacting these factors for children reviewed by local boards.

In 2008, local review boards conducted a total of 9,068 reviews for 5,384 children in public foster care. As indicated in the following table, the number of children in foster care reviewed by local boards increased by 11% over the last four years.

Areas of Concern, defined as violations of law and/or policy identified by local review boards in their review of a child's case, have increased by 36% since 2004. The Department of Social Services receives monthly reports on aggregate, as well as specific Areas of Concern. The following table and graph illustrate Areas of Concern by major group headings.

INDICATOR	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
CHILDREN REVIEWED	4,802	4,853	4,976	5,347	5,384
REVIEWS HELD	8,411	8,317	8,464	8,981	9,068
REVIEW BOARD MEETINGS	441	431	436	464	465
AREAS OF CONCERN IDENTIFIED AT REVIEWS	10,706	9,816	11,168	14,864	16,649
REVIEWS WITH AREAS OF CONCERN IDENTIFIED	65%	62%	68%	75%	79%



Case Decisions and Recommendations

Local review boards carefully consider input from interested parties, as well as written materials prepared for the review, prior to issuing a recommendation on each child's case. After board members hear from all parties present for the review, parties are excused and the board meets privately to formulate the recommendation for the child. Board members are required by statute to consider the most appropriate permanent recommendation possible for each child. They also determine if all parties involved in the child's case are taking the steps necessary to achieve the plan in a timely manner. Local review boards and the Department of Social Services were in agreement as to the best permanent plan in 73% of the children's cases reviewed during 2008.

If a required interested party is not invited or if additional information is needed for the board members to make a permanent recommendation, no recommendation is made and the review is continued. Additionally, if no information is provided to board members, no recommendation is made and the review is not held. Reviews that are continued or not held are rescheduled within three months of the original review date. For each child reviewed, local review boards issue a written recommendation for a permanent placement. Recommendations are sent to the Family Court, the South Carolina Department of Social Services, and Guardians ad Litem.

The table below describes the frequency, type, and percentage for each of the recommendations issued by local review boards for children reviewed in 2008. A recommendation was made in 96% of the reviews scheduled. In 4% of the reviews, sufficient information was not provided for local review boards to make a decision.

REVIEW BOARD RECOMMENDATION	NUMBER	PERCENT
TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS	4,027	45%
ADOPTION	1,830	20%
RETURN TO PARENT	1,561	17%
INDEPENDENT LIVING	919	10%
PERMANENT FOSTER CARE	245	3%
NON-PARENT LEGAL CUSTODY	63	1%
OTHER	5	<1%
CASE CONTINUED	160	2%
NO REVIEW HELD	258	2%
TOTAL	9,068	100%

Entering / Re-entering Foster Care

In 2008, data regarding initial entry into foster care for 2,922 children was received and entered into the Review Board data management system. The primary reasons children enter foster care in South Carolina are neglect, physical abuse or sexual abuse. For children entering care and being reviewed for the first time in 2008, 56% entered due to neglect and 25% entered foster care as a result of physical or sexual abuse. Other reasons (19%) children entered foster care included abandonment, relinquishment, dependency, or voluntary placement. Substance abuse by one or both parents was indicated for one in four children entering foster care in 2008.

Re-entry into foster care occurs for a variety of reasons. During 2008, nearly 25% of children in foster care or entering foster care had previously been in foster care. Forty-five percent (45%) of children re-entering foster care returned after having been placed with relatives and 43% returned after having been placed with their parents. Only 3% of children placed adoptively returned to foster care.

Leaving Foster Care

In 2008, 1,977 children in the Review Board data system were closed upon receipt of reports indicating that they left foster care during the time period. Nearly 10% more children left foster care in 2008 than in 2007. Sixty-two percent (62%) of children leaving foster care returned to a parent or had a finalized adoption; 22% of children leaving foster care were emancipated or turned 18; and 16% were placed with a relative. For children leaving foster care, the average time in care was 2.6 years. Seventy-two percent (72%) were in care less than 3 years and 28% were in care more than 3 years.

In 2008, 21% of all adoptions finalized were within the federal standard of 24 months from entering foster care. This is a significant increase from 14% in 2005. However, the average length of time a child spends in foster care before a finalized adoption remains at 3 years. In 2008, adoptions were finalized for 56 teenagers—10 more than in 2007.

INDICATOR	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
CHILDREN LEAVING FOSTER CARE	1,559	1,520	1,679	1,797	1,977
PERMANENCY OUTCOMES					
RETURNED TO PARENT	35% (550)	33% (495)	37% (624)	35% (632)	37% (721)
FINALIZED ADOPTION	24% (367)	27% (408)	25% (427)	25% (444)	25% (495)
OTHER OUTCOMES					
RELATIVE CUSTODY	16% (242)	17% (252)	15% (254)	17% (305)	16% (323)
EMANCIPATED OR TURNED 18	25% (390)	23% (353)	22% (371)	23% (410)	22% (422)
OTHER	<1% (10)	<1% (12)	<1% (3)	<1% (6)	<1% (16)

COUNTY DATA

The following table compares 2008 Review Board data for South Carolina's 46 counties for children reviewed, children entering and leaving care, and permanency outcomes. Permanency is defined as being a child returned to a parent or having a finalized adoption. The majority of children who did not achieve permanency during 2008 either turned 18 or were emancipated.

COUNTY	# REVIEWS HELD	# CHILDREN REVIEWED	# CHILDREN ENTERED FC	# CHILDREN LEFT FC	PERMANENCY OUTCOMES		OTHER OUTCOMES	
					% RETURNED TO PARENT	% ADOPTED	% RELATIVE CUSTODY	% OTHER
STATE TOTAL	9,069	5,384	2,922	1,977	37% (721)	25% (495)	16% (323)	22% (438)
ABBEVILLE	52	27	19	4	25% (1)	0% (0)	75% (3)	0% (0)
AIKEN	259	158	81	54	22% (12)	35% (19)	19% (10)	24% (13)
ALLENDALE	21	11	12	4	50% (2)	50% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
ANDERSON	758	428	149	155	56% (86)	22% (34)	10% (16)	12% (19)
BAMBERG	31	20	18	6	67% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	33% (2)
BARNWELL	103	53	15	17	53% (9)	29% (5)	18% (3)	0% (0)
BEAUFORT	125	81	45	31	45% (14)	26% (8)	22% (7)	7% (2)
BERKELEY	310	178	93	90	29% (26)	32% (29)	14% (13)	25% (22)
CALHOUN	24	18	16	6	50% (3)	0% (0)	17% (1)	33% (2)
CHARLESTON	985	584	241	203	31% (63)	24% (48)	12% (25)	33% (67)
CHEROKEE	149	92	83	36	36% (13)	19.5% (7)	19.5% (7)	25% (9)
CHESTER	61	38	12	13	31% (4)	15% (2)	46% (6)	8% (1)
CHESTERFIELD	97	69	67	31	55% (17)	6% (2)	36% (11)	3% (1)
CLARENDON	106	55	28	17	53% (9)	11% (2)	18% (3)	18% (3)
COLLETON	89	46	45	10	10% (1)	10% (1)	10% (1)	70% (7)
DARLINGTON	180	109	68	40	48% (19)	12% (5)	25% (10)	15% (6)
DILLON	148	97	45	30	23% (7)	40% (12)	23% (7)	14% (4)
DORCHESTER	130	82	74	34	50% (17)	18% (6)	9% (3)	23% (8)
EDGEFIELD	53	30	7	9	22% (2)	56% (5)	22% (2)	0% (0)
FAIRFIELD	22	13	12	6	17% (1)	0% (0)	66% (4)	17% (1)
FLORENCE	277	165	109	44	41% (18)	14% (6)	18% (8)	27% (12)
GEORGETOWN	110	49	17	19	10% (2)	32% (6)	26% (5)	32% (6)
GREENVILLE	881	505	233	197	30% (59)	32% (64)	20% (39)	18% (35)
GREENWOOD	46	28	10	16	6% (1)	25% (4)	25% (4)	44% (7)

COUNTY	# REVIEWS HELD	# CHILDREN REVIEWED	# CHILDREN ENTERED FC	# CHILDREN LEFT FC	PERMANENCY OUTCOMES		OTHER OUTCOMES	
					% RETURNED TO PARENT	% ADOPTED	% RELATIVE CUSTODY	% OTHER
STATE TOTAL	9,069	5,384	2,922	1,977	37% (721)	25% (495)	16% (323)	22% (438)
HAMPTON	22	14	29	6	16.66% (1)	16.66% (1)	16.66% (1)	50% (3)
HORRY	567	349	204	104	41% (42)	21% (22)	20% (21)	18% (19)
JASPER	48	23	10	12	16% (2)	42% (5)	0% (0)	42% (5)
KERSHAW	86	51	27	17	35% (6)	35% (6)	6% (1)	24% (4)
LANCASTER	111	71	27	35	29% (10)	31% (11)	17% (6)	23% (8)
LAURENS	83	51	33	19	32% (6)	32% (6)	4% (1)	32% (6)
LEE	62	39	16	10	30% (3)	50% (5)	0% (0)	20% (2)
LEXINGTON	366	220	133	72	32% (23)	33% (24)	14% (10)	21% (15)
MARION	167	101	48	49	55% (27)	10% (5)	16% (8)	19% (9)
MARLBORO	76	53	30	33	18% (6)	18% (6)	43% (14)	21% (7)
MCCORMICK	17	11	4	5	0% (0)	100% (5)	0% (0)	0% (0)
NEWBERRY	74	40	27	15	66% (10)	20% (3)	7% (1)	7% (1)
OCONEE	248	144	55	47	43% (20)	36% (17)	4% (2)	17% (8)
ORANGEBURG	156	98	56	37	41% (15)	16% (6)	24% (9)	19% (7)
PICKENS	227	147	90	48	44% (21)	19% (9)	10% (5)	27% (13)
RICHLAND	626	372	269	171	33% (56)	22% (38)	13% (22)	32% (55)
SALUDA	14	9	9	3	0% (0)	0% (0)	67% (2)	33% (1)
SPARTANBURG	516	298	173	85	38% (32)	33% (28)	16% (14)	13% (11)
SUMTER	145	97	47	54	52% (28)	20% (11)	0% (0)	28% (15)
UNION	55	31	42	6	17% (1)	33% (2)	0% (0)	50% (3)
WILLIAMSBURG	70	48	12	18	11% (2)	44% (8)	28% (5)	17% (3)
YORK	316	181	82	59	34% (20)	17% (10)	22% (13)	27% (16)

“Too many older youth and youth of color are allowed to languish in long term foster care without ever being connected to a forever family.”

2008 National Convening on Youth Permanence
Recommendations of Youth & Young Adults

COUNTY DATA

The following table compares 2008 Review Board data for South Carolina's 46 counties for children reviewed, average length of time in foster care, children legally free for adoption, and age of children reviewed.

COUNTY	# CHILDREN REVIEWED	AVERAGE LENGTH OF TIME IN CARE (YEARS)	LEGALLY FREE	AGE OF CHILDREN REVIEWED		
				BIRTH—5	6—12	13—18
STATE TOTAL	5,384	2.8	19% (1,001)	33% (1,755)	29% (1,574)	38% (2,055)
ABBEVILLE	27	3.0	7% (2)	22% (6)	52% (14)	26% (7)
AIKEN	158	2.5	25% (39)	37% (58)	26% (42)	37% (58)
ALLENDALE	11	2.5	9% (1)	9% (1)	36% (4)	55% (6)
ANDERSON	428	2.6	18% (73)	35% (150)	35% (150)	30% (128)
BAMBERG	20	3.6	15% (3)	20% (4)	40% (8)	40% (8)
BARNWELL	53	3.0	37% (17)	42% (22)	34% (18)	24% (13)
BEAUFORT	81	2.3	15% (12)	49% (40)	25% (20)	26% (21)
BERKELEY	178	2.9	32% (57)	31% (55)	29% (52)	40% (71)
CALHOUN	18	2.8	28% (5)	22% (4)	33% (6)	45% (8)
CHARLESTON	584	3.0	19% (108)	29% (169)	29% (170)	42% (245)
CHEROKEE	92	2.3	13% (12)	33% (30)	30% (28)	37% (34)
CHESTER	38	3.0	34% (13)	42% (16)	16% (6)	42% (16)
CHESTERFIELD	69	1.5	9% (6)	44% (30)	30% (21)	26% (18)
CLARENDON	55	2.7	11% (6)	31% (17)	31% (17)	38% (21)
COLLETON	46	3.4	22% (10)	20% (9)	28% (13)	52% (24)
DARLINGTON	109	2.5	19% (21)	32% (35)	26% (28)	42% (46)
DILLON	97	2.4	17% (16)	29% (28)	29% (28)	42% (41)
DORCHESTER	82	2.2	5% (4)	29% (24)	27% (22)	44% (36)
EDGEFIELD	30	1.8	7% (2)	23% (7)	30% (9)	47% (14)
FAIRFIELD	13	4.2	39% (5)	31% (4)	23% (3)	46% (6)
FLORENCE	165	2.3	13% (22)	29% (48)	30% (50)	41% (67)
GEORGETOWN	49	2.8	18% (9)	57% (28)	12% (6)	31% (15)
GREENVILLE	505	2.7	21% (108)	40% (204)	28% (141)	32% (160)
GREENWOOD	28	2.9	18% (5)	43% (12)	21% (6)	36% (10)

COUNTY	# CHILDREN REVIEWED	AVERAGE LENGTH OF TIME IN CARE (YEARS)	LEGALLY FREE	AGE OF CHILDREN REVIEWED		
				BIRTH—5	6—12	13—18
STATE TOTAL	5,384	2.8	19% (1,001)	33% (1,755)	29% (1,574)	38% (2,055)
HAMPTON	14	2.3	7% (1)	29% (4)	29% (4)	42% (6)
HORRY	349	2.3	13% (46)	37% (130)	30% (106)	33% (113)
JASPER	23	3.3	9% (2)	26% (6)	35% (8)	39% (9)
KERSHAW	51	2.6	8% (4)	24% (12)	25% (13)	51% (26)
LANCASTER	71	2.4	35% (25)	21% (15)	28% (20)	51% (36)
LAURENS	51	2.9	22% (11)	28% (14)	31% (16)	41% (21)
LEE	39	2.4	31% (12)	48% (19)	26% (10)	26% (10)
LEXINGTON	220	2.4	10% (21)	39% (87)	33% (72)	28% (61)
MARION	101	2.2	6% (6)	28% (28)	29% (29)	43% (44)
MARLBORO	53	2.9	19% (10)	28% (15)	30% (16)	42% (22)
MCCORMICK	11	1.9	18% (2)	73% (8)	9% (1)	18% (2)
NEWBERRY	40	3.0	8% (3)	55% (22)	25% (10)	20% (8)
OCONEE	144	2.2	20% (32)	44% (63)	23% (33)	33% (48)
ORANGEBURG	98	2.5	15% (15)	40% (39)	27% (27)	33% (32)
PICKENS	147	2.1	16% (22)	37% (55)	28% (41)	35% (51)
RICHLAND	372	3.8	22% (83)	23% (85)	24% (91)	53% (196)
SALUDA	9	1.7	0% (0)	11% (1)	22% (2)	67% (6)
SPARTANBURG	298	2.6	21% (61)	25% (75)	34% (102)	41% (121)
SUMTER	97	4.0	28% (27)	18% (17)	30% (29)	52% (51)
UNION	31	2.1	3% (1)	36% (11)	16% (5)	48% (15)
WILLIAMSBURG	48	3.3	35% (17)	29% (14)	31% (15)	40% (19)
YORK	181	2.7	24% (44)	19% (34)	34% (62)	47% (85)

“I never realized how much I needed a father until I became a dad. By that time I was 19 and nobody cared anymore.”

Foster Youth

COUNTY DATA

The following table compares Review Board data for South Carolina's 46 counties for total number of Areas of Concern, as well as number and percent of total by major group headings for Areas of Concern identified at reviews held in 2008.

COUNTY	TOTAL AREAS OF CONCERN	AGENCY POLICY VIOLATIONS	CASE PLAN BARRIERS	LEGAL BARRIERS	HEARINGS NOT HELD TIMELY	ADOPTION SERVICE DELAYS	REQUIRED HEARINGS NOT HELD
STATE TOTAL	16,649	33% (5,526)	30% (4,939)	14% (2,211)	13% (2,188)	8% (1,403)	2% (382)
ABBEVILLE	138	17% (23)	40% (55)	7% (9)	14% (20)	11% (15)	11% (16)
AIKEN	603	45% (269)	40% (241)	4% (25)	5% (28)	6% (39)	<1% (1)
ALLENDALE	45	44% (20)	38% (17)	16% (7)	2% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
ANDERSON	2,009	33% (666)	25% (518)	13% (260)	10% (198)	11% (214)	8% (153)
BAMBERG	61	42% (26)	38% (23)	10% (6)	3% (2)	7% (4)	0% (0)
BARNWELL	196	47% (93)	32% (62)	5% (9)	10% (20)	6% (12)	0% (0)
BEAUFORT	189	39% (75)	21% (40)	18% (34)	10% (18)	9% (17)	3% (5)
BERKELEY	658	35% (233)	31% (202)	5% (36)	22% (142)	6% (36)	1% (9)
CALHOUN	41	12% (5)	39% (16)	12% (5)	17% (7)	10% (4)	10% (4)
CHARLESTON	1,861	30% (556)	20% (380)	19% (351)	20% (363)	9% (172)	2% (39)
CHEROKEE	375	36% (136)	23% (84)	20% (75)	6% (24)	9% (33)	6% (23)
CHESTER	72	40% (29)	39% (28)	10% (7)	4% (3)	7% (5)	0% (0)
CHESTERFIELD	208	43% (89)	41% (86)	4% (8)	8% (16)	4% (9)	0% (0)
CLARENDON	194	22% (42)	44% (85)	18% (37)	5% (9)	11% (21)	0% (0)
COLLETON	231	37% (88)	21% (48)	24% (54)	14% (31)	4% (10)	0% (0)
DARLINGTON	208	37% (77)	20% (43)	12% (25)	23% (47)	8% (16)	0% (0)
DILLON	215	33% (70)	52% (112)	5% (11)	3% (6)	7% (16)	0% (0)
DORCHESTER	327	40% (130)	29% (95)	13% (44)	9% (29)	7% (23)	2% (6)
EDGEFIELD	144	47% (69)	33% (48)	9% (12)	3% (4)	8% (11)	0% (0)
FAIRFIELD	43	46% (20)	14% (6)	14% (6)	12% (5)	14% (6)	0% (0)
FLORENCE	629	45% (285)	28% (175)	7% (48)	12% (74)	7% (43)	1% (4)
GEORGETOWN	137	25% (34)	50% (69)	10% (14)	11% (15)	4% (5)	0% (0)
GREENVILLE	1,455	26% (386)	27% (393)	17% (233)	20% (298)	8% (111)	2% (34)
GREENWOOD	70	24% (17)	34% (24)	10% (7)	19% (13)	12% (8)	1% (1)

COUNTY	TOTAL AREAS OF CONCERN	AGENCY POLICY VIOLATIONS	CASE PLAN BARRIERS	LEGAL BARRIERS	HEARINGS NOT HELD TIMELY	ADOPTION SERVICE DELAYS	REQUIRED HEARINGS NOT HELD
STATE TOTAL	16,649	33% (5,526)	30% (4,939)	14% (2,211)	13% (2,188)	8% (1,403)	2% (382)
HAMPTON	74	38% (28)	26% (19)	17% (13)	8% (6)	11% (8)	0% (0)
HORRY	1,187	32% (377)	33% (396)	8% (88)	15% (182)	12% (143)	<1% (1)
JASPER	80	37% (30)	23% (19)	24% (19)	8% (6)	8% (6)	0% (0)
KERSHAW	156	41% (64)	43% (68)	6% (9)	5% (8)	5% (7)	0% (0)
LANCASTER	60	37% (22)	25% (15)	12% (7)	20% (12)	6% (4)	0% (0)
LAURENS	157	25% (39)	34% (53)	17% (28)	17% (27)	6% (9)	1% (1)
LEE	61	31% (19)	28% (17)	11% (7)	13% (8)	17% (10)	0% (0)
LEXINGTON	794	26% (211)	37% (293)	7% (51)	19% (153)	9% (72)	2% (14)
MARION	264	34% (89)	21% (55)	22% (59)	7% (19)	16% (42)	0% (0)
MARLBORO	147	37% (55)	42% (61)	13% (19)	0% (0)	8% (12)	0% (0)
MCCORMICK	22	41% (9)	32% (7)	5% (1)	9% (2)	13% (3)	0% (0)
NEWBERRY	179	17% (31)	46% (83)	9% (15)	17% (31)	6% (10)	5% (9)
OCONEE	320	30% (95)	20% (63)	12% (37)	28% (91)	6% (20)	4% (14)
ORANGEBURG	132	23% (30)	31% (41)	30% (41)	9% (12)	3% (3)	4% (5)
PICKENS	369	29% (109)	35% (129)	16% (59)	14% (50)	3% (12)	3% (10)
RICHLAND	912	31% (276)	29% (262)	19% (178)	10% (93)	10% (96)	1% (7)
SALUDA	69	45% (31)	28% (19)	10% (7)	4% (3)	13% (9)	0% (0)
SPARTANBURG	877	32% (284)	33% (291)	16% (138)	6% (55)	10% (83)	3% (26)
SUMTER	78	44% (34)	27% (21)	10% (8)	9% (7)	10% (8)	0% (0)
UNION	52	38% (20)	25% (13)	23% (12)	10% (5)	4% (2)	0% (0)
WILLIAMSBURG	57	42% (24)	28% (16)	17% (10)	4% (2)	9% (5)	0% (0)
YORK	492	42% (211)	30% (147)	17% (83)	9% (43)	2% (9)	0% (0)

“Assuring that every child, and especially every youth, has a family that he or she can turn to in good times and bad, should become a national rallying cry. Families for children and youth in foster care is possible, it is powerful, and it must be a priority. It is what we know our own children need and deserve; our foster children should have no less.”

Raymond L. Torres, Executive Director, Casey Family Services

South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board

Office of the Governor

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1205 Pendleton Street, Suite 436 • Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Phone: (803) 734-0480 • Fax: (803) 734-1223 • E-mail: fcrb@oepp.sc.gov • Website: www.oepp.sc.gov/fcrb/