THE STATE OF CHILD WELFARE IN GEORGIA: UNDERSTANDING THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Melissa D. Carter, Esq.
Executive Director
Barton Child Law & Policy Center
Emory University School of Law
## Child Welfare System Considerations

### OUTCOMES

- **Safety**
  - Parental prerogative v. compelling state interest
  - Children’s rights?
- **Permanency**
  - Family preservation/reunification v. adoption
  - Adoption v. guardianship
  - Aging-out
  - Preference for relatives
- **Well-Being**
  - Health
  - Education
  - Life skills
  - Family (including sibling) and community connections

### DRIVERS

- Federal and state law
- Federal and state funding
- High profile cases
- Class action litigation
- Emerging/best practices
- Leadership philosophy
- Erosion of public confidence
From Referral to Removal

*How it Works*

Child Abuse in the Community

Not Reported to DFCS

Reported to DFCS

Investigated

Substantiated

Not Removed to FC

Removed to FC

Unsubstantiated

Family Support
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES
Children Reported to DFCS for Abuse or Neglect

- Refer to Family Support
- Investigate for Abuse or Neglect
  - Report is Substantiated
  - Report is Unsubstantiated
Georgia CPS Dynamics
Jan 2000 to Sept. 2013
Measuring Child Safety

Children Reported to DFCS for Abuse or Neglect

- Refer to Family Support
- Investigate for Abuse or Neglect

Report Substantiated
- Subsequent Report is Made

Report is Unsubstantiated
- Subsequent Report is Made

Subsequent Report is Made
Recurrence of Accepted Intake
By Initial Disposition, Jan 2001 to June 2013
National Perspective: Recurrence of Maltreatment

FFY2011 6-Month Recurrence of Maltreatment (%)

http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data
FOSTER CARE
Georgia’s Foster Care Profile

• See handout
Georgia Foster Care Dynamics

- **2004:**
  - 11,964 children removed (4.2/10K);
  - 14,511 children in care;
  - **4,631 (9%)** re-abused in 6 months (*6 times* today’s).

- **2012:**
  - 6,108 children removed (1.8/10K);
  - 7,663 children in care;
  - **812 (4.1%)** re-abused in 6 months.
The Stories Behind the Numbers:

- 2000: Terrell Peterson, cover of Time Magazine
- 2001:
  - Governor’s Task Force
  - CFSR Round 1
  - House of Prayer
  - $110 million annual increase
- 2002: Kenny A Class Action Filed
- 2004: DFCS Mandatory Reporter Investigation Policy Change
- 2006: Safe Reduction
National Perspective: Children in Foster Care

FFY2011 In-Care per 10K

Percent of National Rate

Georgia
FFY2011

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES
Challenges and Opportunities

• Safety
  • Detecting Child Abuse in the Community
  • CPS Workforce Challenges

• Permanency
  • Placement Stability

• Well-Being
  • Health
  • Education
  • ILP
  • Family and community connections
  • Youth engagement
  • Trauma-informed care
SAFETY
Detecting Child Abuse in the Community

Figure 2-1. Levels of Recognition of Child Abuse and Neglect.
CPS Caseload Trends

GA Statewide Investigative Average Daily Cases by Month

Month 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Average Daily Cases during Month

2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 5,000 6,000 7,000 8,000 9,000
PERMANENCY
Georgia CFSR Permanency Composite Scores

1. Timely Reunification
2. Adoption
3. Long Stays in Foster Care
4. Placement Stability

Graph showing composite scores over time with national standards.
Placement Stability

- 2 or fewer placement changes for children in foster care:
  - In care less than 12 months: 79.2%
  - In care less than 24 months: 55%
  - In care longer than 24 months: 33%

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>DFCS Foster/Adopt Homes</th>
<th>Non-DFCS Foster/Adopt Homes</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2328</td>
<td>1538</td>
<td>3866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2579</td>
<td>1749</td>
<td>4328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2544</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>4428</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2439</td>
<td>2215</td>
<td>4654</td>
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WELL BEING
Focusing on Well-Being

- Health
  - Psychotropic medications

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Age Group:</th>
<th>Under 5 yrs</th>
<th>5-9 yrs</th>
<th>10-13 yrs</th>
<th>14-17 yrs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% w/ Rx:</td>
<td>3.08%</td>
<td>30.05%</td>
<td>45.87%</td>
<td>48.40%</td>
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</table>

- Educational achievement
- Independent and transitional living (self-sufficiency)
- Sibling, family, and community connections
- Youth engagement
- Trauma-informed care
ILP Funded Supports/Services

**Education & Enrichment Expenses**
- Tutoring, Summer School, Community Activities, Driver's Education, GED Preparation

**Transitional Living**
- Partial Rental Reimbursement, Utility Deposits, Rental Deposits, Emergency Assistance

**Post Secondary Educational Expenses**
- Tutoring, Tuition, Books, Room and Board, Transportation Assistance.

**Individual Development Account (IDA)**
- Savings Account Matching, Stipends.
Q&A

Melissa Carter, melissa.d.carter@emory.edu