



State of Florida

Department of Children and Families

**2006 ANNUAL REPORT ON
CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE**

**Department of Children and Families
Office of Family Safety
March 1, 2007**

**Robert A. Butterworth
Secretary**

**Charlie Crist
Governor**

**DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
ANNUAL REPORT ON CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE
FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2006**

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**DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
ANNUAL REPORT ON CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE
FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2006**

Executive Summary

The Annual Report on Children in Out-of-Home Care is required by section 409.1685, Florida Statutes. In the mid 1970s, the Florida Legislature first required a judicial review process that addressed permanency planning for children in out-of-home care. Federal guidelines for judicial reviews addressed reasonable efforts to prevent placement of children in out-of-home care and to assure timely reunification of children with their families. By the late 1990s, federal and state review requirements were amended to further strengthen timely permanency. In 2006, state statutes were amended, again, emphasizing timely permanency. The mandate for judicial reviews, found in section 39.701, Florida Statutes, was in response to an increasing number of children in foster care without a specific plan for securing timely permanency. The term “foster care” used in Florida Statutes has been interpreted to include all children in out-of-home care (both in licensed settings and in approved relative or non-relative settings). Therefore, this report provides current data regarding all children in out-of-home care, not only those who are in licensed foster care settings.

The legislature has established statutory requirements for achieving permanency for children in out-of-home care. The primary vehicle that guides permanency planning for children is a court approved case plan. A case plan is developed for each child in out-of-home care within 60 days following the child's removal from his or her parental home. The case plan outlines the specific tasks and services for the child, the family, and the department deemed necessary to facilitate safe reunification. If reunification is not possible, an alternate permanency goal for the child may be termination of parental rights and subsequent adoptive placement.

Judicial reviews are hearings in the juvenile division of the Circuit Court conducted at mandated intervals to assess the progress of parents, staff and others toward the permanency goal established for children in out-of-home care. Section 39.621, Florida Statutes, establishes five permanency goals: reunification, adoption, permanent guardianship of a dependent child under section 39.6221, permanent placement with a fit and willing relative under section 39.6231 and permanent placement in another planned permanent living arrangement under section 39.6241. At the judicial review the case plan is reviewed and may be amended by the court. Section 39.701, Florida Statutes, provides judges the option of returning the child to his or her family, continuing the child in out-of-home care or initiating termination of parental rights proceedings. Time frames and judicial options are consistent with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act.

Federal and state legislation require that a child's case plan be specific, goal oriented and time limited so that children move through foster care and achieve permanency as quickly as possible. When it is apparent that a child cannot return safely to his or her parents, a petition for termination of parental rights may be filed. Once the petition is granted by the court the child can legally be placed in a permanent adoptive placement.

2006 Statistical Summary

The following summary provides information required for this report and covers the reporting period for calendar year 2006:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. The number of judicial reviews completed during 2006: | <u>67,289</u> |
| 2. The number of children in foster care returned to a parent, guardian or relative as a result of a 6-month or annual judicial review: | <u>10,800</u> |
| 3. The number of termination of parental rights proceedings initiated which include: | |
| a. The number of termination of parental rights proceedings initiated pursuant to Section 39.703, Florida Statute*: | <u>1,794</u> |
| b. The number of terminations of parental rights ordered: | <u>2,829</u> |
| 4. The number of children placed for adoption during the calendar year 2006: | <u>3,028</u> |

*Section 39.703, Florida Statute, has been repealed effective July 1, 2006. The relevant statutes are now contained in Sections 39.701 and 39.8055, Florida Statute.

Judicial Reviews 2006

Month in 2006	District/Region															Total
	1	2	3	4	SC*	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Missing **	
January	396	294	221	608	1,448	507	169	282	619	667	176	474	443	176		6,480
February	267	234	195	593	1,604	514	157	228	472	606	140	388	411	225	1	6,035
March	345	313	211	580	1,599	611	125	271	486	535	155	450	431	213		6,325
April	304	258	225	565	1,443	552	194	241	461	529	188	377	387	152	1	5,877
May	279	298	213	631	1,430	545	213	262	472	659	140	363	449	198		6,152
June	406	315	216	568	1,278	556	155	265	389	673	170	425	393	148	3	5,960
July	387	257	217	503	1,385	344	150	244	490	539	182	333	369	207		5,607
August	342	332	203	630	1,557	523	130	288	331	633	121	452	354	144		6,040
September	308	237	208	565	811	545	118	297	370	449	129	331	343	231	1	4,943
October	332	277	168	564	1,190	425	210	285	397	457	160	380	371	137		5,353
November	332	221	142	616	964	531	135	200	312	422	130	251	329	170		4,755
December	330	186	139	369	731	351	123	103	302	311	161	234	273	149		3,762
Total	4,028	3,222	2,358	6,792	15,440	6,004	1,879	2,966	5,101	6,480	1,852	4,458	4,553	2,150	6	67,289

Source: *HomeSafenet* (HSn) Data Repository as of 1/10/07

*SC= Suncoast Region

** Missing District/Region: District/region number missing in *HomeSafenet* (HSn). Data clean-up has occurred. HSn has been improved to significantly reduce these errors.

Number of Children Returned to a Parent, Guardian or Relative 2006

Month in 2006	District															Total
	1	2	3	4	SC*	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Missing**	
January	74	43	36	78	141	89	15	25	42	56	11	75	56	41	3	785
February	53	43	43	77	161	121	26	37	61	92	11	87	72	37		921
March	53	111	48	85	143	90	25	49	44	74	20	112	49	38		941
April	66	58	40	79	153	117	13	32	61	62	31	107	76	52		947
May	70	64	28	123	147	142	21	44	36	64	27	104	81	47	4	1,002
June	84	65	59	102	177	150	21	45	58	71	20	106	81	30	6	1,075
July	79	44	43	60	173	103	21	35	41	76	29	71	112	25	1	913
August	86	79	72	110	169	143	18	48	44	63	32	96	80	23	1	1064
September	57	73	42	52	118	76	23	36	50	68	26	80	68	20	3	792
October	70	80	29	58	145	100	29	47	48	67	19	92	59	24		867
November	60	51	44	71	118	93	31	42	48	49	31	49	59	42	1	789
December	71	54	28	57	103	72	15	26	38	47	23	69	73	28		704
Total	823	765	512	952	1748	1296	258	466	571	789	280	1048	866	407	19	10,800

Source: *HomeSafenet* (HSn) Data Repository as of 1/10/07

*SC= Suncoast Region

** Missing District/Region: District/region number missing in *HomeSafenet* (HSn). Data clean-up has occurred. HSn has been improved to significantly reduce these errors.

Statewide Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) Proceedings and Adoption Placements 2006

Month in 2006	TPR's Filed *	TPR's Ordered *	Children Placed for Adoption *
January	184	254	185
February	213	278	275
March	254	301	270
April	154	261	271
May	169	235	315
June	170	243	370
July	122	230	196
August	123	256	197
September	131	250	214
October	84	234	254
November	115	173	319
December	75	114	162
Total	1,794	2,829	3,028

Source: * HomeSafenet (HSn) Data Repository as of 1/10/07

NOTICE OF FILING

Reporting Agency:	Department of Children and Families
Recipient Agency:	GOVERNOR, SENATE PRESIDENT, HOUSE SPEAKER, CHAIRPERSONS OF THE APPROPRIATE SUBSTANTIVE COMMITTEES AND APPROPRIATION COMMITTEES
Subject:	Children in Out-of-Home Care Annual Report for Calendar Year 2006
Report Due Date:	March 1, 2007
Statutory Requirements:	section 409.1685, Florida Statutes
Abstract:	<p>This is a legislatively mandated report on the status of children under the supervision of the Department of Children and Families and in foster care. The term "foster care" in Florida Statutes is interpreted to include all children in out-of-home care (both in licensed settings and those in approved relative and non-relative settings). The report concerns judicial reviews mandated by Part X, Chapter 39, Florida Statutes, and provides information for Calendar Year 2006 on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The number of 6-month and annual judicial reviews completed during Calendar Year 2006: <u>67,289</u>2. The number of children in foster care returned to a parent, guardian or relative as a result of 6-month or annual judicial review: <u>10,800</u>3. The number of termination of parental rights proceedings instituted which include:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. The number of proceedings initiated pursuant to section 39.703, Florida Statutes*: <u>1,794</u>b. The total number of terminations of parental rights ordered: <u>2,829</u>4. The number of foster care children placed for adoption during the Calendar Year 2006: <u>3,028</u> <p>*Section 39.703, Florida Statutes, was repealed effective July 1, 2006. The relevant statutes are now in ss. 39.701 and 39.8055, Florida Statutes.</p> <p>Copies of this report may be obtained by contacting:</p> <p>Department of Children and Families Office of Family Safety 1317 Winewood Boulevard Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700</p> <p>Attention: Linda D. Johns (850) 414-9982; e-mail Linda_D_Johns@dcf.state.fl.us</p>

LEGISLATIVELY MANDATED REPORT – STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

REPORT TITLE	STATUTORY REFERENCE	SPECIFICATIONS
Annual Report on Children in Out-of-Home Care for Calendar Year 2006	section 409.1685, Florida Statutes	<p>This is a report on the status of children who are under the supervision of the Department of Children and Families and are in foster care. The term “foster care” used in Florida Statute has been interpreted to include all children in out-of-home care (both those in licensed settings and those in approved relative and non-relative settings). The report concerns judicial reviews mandated by Part X, Chapter 39, Florida Statutes, and provides information for Calendar Year 2006 on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The number of six-month and annual judicial reviews completed during that period: 2. The number of children in foster care returned to a parent, guardian or relative as a result of a six-month or annual judicial review during that period: 3. The number of termination of parental rights proceedings instituted during that period which shall include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The number of termination of parental rights proceedings initiated pursuant to section 39.703, Florida Statutes*: b. The number of terminations of parental rights ordered: 4. The number of foster care children placed for adoption during that period: <p>*Section 39.703, Florida Statutes, was repealed effective July 1, 2006. The relevant statutes are now in ss. 39.701 and 39.8055, Florida Statutes.</p>