



DEPENDENT CHILDREN
IN THE
ARIZONA COURT SYSTEM
FISCAL YEAR 2005

July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005

Arizona Supreme Court

Administrative Office
of the Courts



Dependent Children's Services
Division



ARIZONA SUPREME COURT DEPENDENT CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIVISION

William Stanton, Director

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Robert Shelley, Program Coordinator

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA) PROGRAM

Linda Wright, Program Manager

FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD (FCRB)

Caroline Lauth-Owens, Program Manager

DIVISION MISSION STATEMENT

The Dependent Children's Services Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts advocates, on a statewide level, for appropriate services and safe, permanent homes for children in foster care and works to ensure timely permanency for these children by:

- Evaluating and improving dependency case processing in the juvenile court;
- Recruiting and training community-based volunteers who advocate for the best interests of abused, neglected, and abandoned children;
- Acting as a referral source to the community for information regarding foster care, adoption, parent assistance, volunteer opportunities, volunteer training, and the child welfare and juvenile court processes.

Dependent Children in the Arizona Court System
Fiscal Year 2005
July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	vi
Court Improvement Program.....	1
Mission.....	1
Program Background.....	1
Accomplishments.....	2
Current and Future Projects.....	2
Program Statistics.....	4
Tables and Figures:	
Arizona Dependency Process.....	5
Table 1: Petitions Filed During FY05.....	6
Table 2: Number of Children with Open Dependency Petitions FY05.....	7
Table 3: Preliminary Protective Hearing FY05.....	8
Table 4: Adjudication FY05.....	9
Table 5: Permanency Hearing FY05.....	10
Table 6: Average Time in Dependency System FY05.....	11
Table 7: Juveniles in a Dependency with Current or Historic Delinquency Activity.....	12
Table 8: Dependency Summary Report FY05.....	13
Figure 1: Parent Assistance Hotline (PAH).....	14
Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program.....	15
Mission, Vision, Values.....	15
Program Background.....	15
Program Organization.....	16
CASA Duties and Responsibilities.....	16
Accomplishments.....	17

Current and Future Projects.....	18
Program Statistics.....	18
<i>Tables and Figures:</i>	
Figure 1: CASAs Serving Per County.....	19
Figure 2: Gender of CASAs Serving During the Year.....	20
Figure 3: Ethnicity of CASAs Serving.....	20
Figure 4: Employment of CASAs Serving During the Year.....	21
Figure 5: Education of CASAs Serving During the Year.....	21
Figure 6: 3-Year Comparison of CASAs Serving.....	22
Figure 7: 3-Year Comparison of Hours Donated.....	22
Figure 8: 3-Year Comparison of Reports to the Court.....	23
Figure 9: Reasons for Leaving the CASA Program.....	23
Figure 10: Child's Age at Closing or on 6/30/05.....	24
Figure 11: Gender of Children Served During the Year.....	25
Figure 12: Ethnicity of Children Served During the Year.....	25
Figure 13: Reason for Child Closure.....	26
Table 1: Website.....	27
Foster Care Review Board.....	28
Purpose.....	28
Mission.....	28
Standards of Conduct.....	28
Program Background.....	28
State Board.....	29
Accomplishments.....	30
Current and Future Projects.....	31
Program Statistics.....	32
<i>Tables and figures</i>	
Table 1: Number of boards Per County – As of June 30, 2005.....	32
Figure 1: Active Volunteers.....	33
Table 2: Removal Review Volunteers by District.....	34
Figure 2: Active Volunteers Tenure in Years.....	35
Figure 3: Volunteer Exit Reason.....	36
Figure 4: Training Hours by county (Population Over 200,000).....	37
Figure 5: Training Hours by County (Population 120,000 and 200,000).....	37
Figure 6: Training Hours by County (Population Less than 120,000).....	38

Figure 7: Board Member Ethnicity.....	39
Figure 8: Volunteer Education.....	39
Figure 9: Volunteer Occupation.....	40
Figure 10: Volunteer Household Income.....	40
Table 3: Number of Children / Cases FY 2004.....	41
Table 4: Number of Children / Cases FY 2005.....	42
Figure 11: Children Registered in FY 2005.....	42
Figure 12: Children Opened / Closed During FY 2005.....	43
Figure 13: FCRB Active Children.....	44
Figure 14: FCRB Active Children by Gender.....	45
Figure 15: FCRB Active Children by Ethnicity.....	45
Figure 16: FCRB Active Children / County (Population Over 200,00).....	46
Figure 17: FCRB Active Children / county (Population 120,00 to 200,000).....	47
Figure 18: CRB Active Children / County (Population Less than 120,000).....	47
Figure 19: Children Closed by Reason.....	48
Table 5: Findings / Possible Determinations.....	50
Figure 20: Finding #1 Were There Efforts to Prevent Removal.....	51
Figure 21: Finding #1 Were There Efforts to Prevent Removal.....	52
Figure 22: Finding #1 Efforts to Prevent Removal / FY 05.....	53
Figure 23: Finding #2 Is Out-of-Home Placement Still Necessary.....	54
Figure 24: Finding #2 Is Out-of-Home Placement Still Necessary.....	55
Figure 25: Finding #2 Out-of-Home Placement Necessary / FY 05.....	56
Figure 26: Finding #3 Is the Placement Safe, Appropriate, and Least Restrictive.....	57
Figure 27: Finding #3 Is the Placement Safe, Appropriate, and Least Restrictive.....	58
Figure 28: Finding #3 Is the Placement Safe, Appropriate, and Least Restrictive.....	59
Figure 29: Finding #4 Is There an Appropriate Case Plan for Each Person.....	60
Figure 30: Finding #4 Is There an Appropriate Case Plan for Each Person.....	61
Figure 31: Finding #4 Appropriate Case Plan / FY 05.....	62
Figure 32: Finding #5 Progress Toward Case Plan Tasks.....	63
Figure 33: Finding #5 Progress Toward Case Plan Tasks.....	64
Figure 34: Finding #5 Progress Toward Case Plan Tasks / FY 2005.....	65
Figure 35: Finding #6 Is There Progress Toward Permanency.....	66
Figure 36: Finding #6 Is There Progress Toward Permanency.....	67
Figure 37: Finding #6 Is There Progress Toward Permanency / FY 2005.....	68
Figure 38: Finding #7 Realistic Target Date.....	69
Figure 39: Finding #7 Is There a Realistic Target Date for the Case Plan.....	70
Figure 40: Finding #7 Realistic Target Date / FY 2005.....	71

Figure 41: Finding #8 Board Finds Reasonable Efforts.....	72
Figure 42: Finding #8 Does The board Find That the Agency Made reasonable Efforts.....	73
Figure 43: Finding #8 Reasonable Efforts / FY 2005.....	74
Figure 44: Finding #9 Child's Education Being Implemented.....	75
Figure 45: Finding #9 Is The Child's Education Being Implemented.....	76
Figure 46: Finding #9 Child's Education Implemented / FY 2005.....	77
Figure 47: Finding #10 Are There Significant Service Gaps and System Problems.....	78
Figure 48: Finding #10 Are There Significant Service Gaps and System Problems.....	79
Figure 49: Finding #10 Significant Service Gaps and System Problems / FY 2005.....	80
Figure 50: Removal Reviews – Cases by DES District.....	81
Figure 51: Removal Reviews – Children by DES District.....	82
Figure 52: Removal Reviews – Cases (Population over 200,000).....	82
Figure 53: Removal Reviews – Children (Population over 200,000).....	83
Figure 54: Removal Reviews - Cases (Population 120,000 to 200,000).....	83
Figure 55 Removal Reviews – Children (Population 120,000 to 200,000).....	84
Figure 56: Removal Reviews – Cases (Population Less Than 120,000).....	84
Figure 57: Removal Reviews – Children (Population Less Than 120,000).....	85
Appendix.....	86
Glossary of Dependency Terms.....	89

DEPENDENT CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIVISION

INTRODUCTION

The data for this report are drawn from the fifteen juvenile court's On-line- Tracking System (JOLTS) and the Dependent Children Automated Tracking System (DCATS).

JOLTS is the juvenile court information management system and has been tracking dependent children for five years. Each juvenile court actively participates in collecting and maintaining the data to ensure quality and accuracy. DCATS is used by the Foster Care Review Board and Court Appointed Special Advocate Programs. This system has been operational for nine years. Foster Care Review Board Program Specialists collect and maintain information in DCATS regarding each case reviewed by the Foster Care Review Board. County CASA offices are responsible for entering their volunteer and case information into the DCATS database.

The following report provides a statewide overview of children in the dependency system during Fiscal Year 2005 (July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005). Selected breakdowns of unduplicated counts are presented herein from the three programs.

Note that not all of the children entered the system during Fiscal Year 2005. Some may have entered in previous fiscal years but have not yet achieved permanency. Each child included in this report was the subject of a hearing at least once during the fiscal year.

The number of children involved in the juvenile court system is influenced by several factors, including legislative actions, economic trends, parenting skills, and the number of children ages birth to 18 years old. Through Fiscal Year 2005, the number of children in the dependency system has continued to increase, a trend that is apparent in several of the tables and figures presented herein.

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Mission

The Court Improvement program was established federally to evaluate and improve dependency case processing in the juvenile courts throughout the nation. Arizona is one of the leading states in the nation in addressing many aspects of the dependency process to increase efficiency. This has been accomplished through active judicial oversight, timely case processing and shorter temporary placements for children. The child's safety, permanency and well being are addressed as the foremost priority.

Program Background

The passage of the federal Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (Public Law 96-272) in 1980 compelled the juvenile courts to take a more active role in child maltreatment cases. However, Public Law 96-272 did not address the resources required to implement the expectations delineated in the statute. Therefore, the courts and child protective services found it difficult to meet the mandates of the law and subsequent increase in dependency cases. In 1993, Congress passed the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (Public Law 103-66) which established a grant program to address the handling of child abuse cases. Prior to Arizona establishing its Court Improvement Program, an assessment of the juvenile courts' handling of dependency cases was completed by the National Center for Juvenile Justice. The findings and recommendations were the basis by which the Court Improvement Program was created.

The Court Improvement Program was established to address the following:

- Provide state appropriated funding to assist dependency caseflow in counties based upon the previous fiscal year's new petition count. The Arizona legislature approved state appropriated funding for dependencies starting in fiscal year 1998. The funding was minimal but was a big step in recognizing that child abuse and neglect cases were important. The funding has continued, although there has been minimal increase in the funding level while the number of dependency petitions has grown more than 77% since 1998.
- Provide technical assistance and training to counties as they revise local dependency practices. The program has provided dependency training to numerous clerks, attorneys, and other child welfare-related individuals in rural counties. This has assisted tremendously in improving efficiency in dependency cases.
- Provide oversight of mandated introductory training for judicial officers new to the dependency bench. In January 1999, the Chief Justice mandated that judges new to the dependency bench would complete such training. Twenty-three judges participated in the 2005 training. Additionally, the Court Improvement Program provides dependency-related training to all juvenile judicial officers to enhance their knowledge of the process and the child welfare system.
- Develop and modify the juvenile rules and benchbook to reflect any changes to federal and/or state statutes regarding dependencies. There is a Committee on Juvenile Courts (COJC) subcommittee which addresses all changes. This is an ongoing project given continued statutory changes.

- Implement an operational review process which evaluates the dependency process and compliance with governing statutes. The program is currently conducting the second round of reviews. The tool being utilized has been modified to address the changes suggested by the counties following the initial reviews. The results of the review are utilized to assist the juvenile courts in improving their management of dependency cases.
- Develop and continually upgrade the Juvenile On-Line Tracking System (JOLTS) as it relates to the cases of dependent children. This statewide dependency data collection system compiles information on children and families in the dependency system. JOLTS undergoes frequent updates to improve management of and reporting on the data stored in the system.

Accomplishments

A joint effort between the Division of Children, Youth and Families and the Court Improvement Program has resulted in a renewed focus on many key child and family issues. As a result of the execution of the Program Implementation Plan generated by the recent Child and Family Service Review, these collaborative efforts have helped to make significant changes possible including:

- The dependency court process has become more substantive.
- The dependency process has become less adversarial.
- Parents are now more involved in making decisions regarding their children and the future of their families.
- Attorneys are meeting with their clients earlier in the process and are more knowledgeable about their cases.
- Services are being provided to children and their families earlier in the process.

Current and Future Projects

- Dependency attorney training is being conducted in the rural counties to meet the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requirement that all guardians ad litem/attorneys attend dependency training prior to representing children in a dependency.
- Dependency judge training will be held in March 2006. The first day of the training will be open to all juvenile court judges and will feature two notable presentations on the dependency caseflow process and therapeutic jurisprudence. The Honorable Nancy Salyers will share on her extensive experience with juvenile dependency cases as the Presiding Judge in Cook County, Illinois. Judge Salyers assisted in the development of a "national curriculum" for dependency caseflow management which has already been successfully implemented in three of Arizona's fifteen counties. The second presenter for the first day of the training is Michael Schafer, PhD from the Department of Applied Behavioral Health Policy at the University of Arizona. Dr. Shafer will speak on the topic of therapeutic jurisprudence with specific emphasis on the methamphetamine difficulties

being seen in our state. The two final days of the training will allow judges to focus on issues basic to their day to day processing of dependency cases.

- The annual judicial conference to be held in June of 2006 will feature, for the first time, a learning track devoted entirely to dependency issues. Four workshops will cover issues such as court performance measurement, the 0 to 3 population in foster care, permanency for children and the importance of a child's voice in the dependency process.
- A revamped juvenile database, JOLTSaz, continues to be developed. Court Improvement staff is consistently involved in discussions with the JOLTSaz team to ensure that the needs of dependency users are addressed from the start of the development process. JOLTSaz will replace the current JOLTS system and will provide more flexibility and efficiency in entering and retrieving data relating to dependent children under the supervision of the court.
- Ongoing changes to the juvenile rules and benchbook continue to enhance judges' understanding of the dependency statutes and process.
- A prospective appellate rule change will be filed with the Supreme Court before the end of the 2005 calendar year. This petition will address the rules of procedure relating to cases appealed upon the termination of a parent's rights. The intent of the petition will be to shorten the delay associated with these appeals, a delay that finds parties waiting for more than a year after the initial termination of parental rights before they can proceed with the adoption process.
- The open court pilot program will draw to a close and reporting on the outcome of this process is to be submitted to the Legislature by the end of November 2005. Continuing efforts have been made to compile and forward to the assigned researcher information on open court hearings throughout the state.
- Pursuant to recent statutory changes, jury trials will continue to be an option for parents in the termination of parental rights matters until the end of 2006. Court Improvement will be contracting for the completion of a study to analyze the second full year of the TPR jury trial process and the results of this analysis will be made available on the Court Improvement website, www.azcip.org.
- Court Improvement Program staff has begun the planning process needed to implement the statewide rollout of the Caseflow Management model introduced during a September 2004 pilot. Cochise, Maricopa and Yavapai Counties participated in the September pilot and have since reported on county successes relating to this effort. Court Improvement staff will work to identify appropriate funding and will empanel a statewide committee to assist with the implementation process.
- Staff continues to provide help to the general public through the Parent Assistance Hotline and remain committed to assisting individuals who have questions and/or concerns regarding CPS's removal of children from their home, custody issues, or various other topics of interest to the callers.

Program Statistics

Program statistics for fiscal year 2005 are found on the following pages. Data quality assurance is ongoing throughout the state. Quality assurance efforts continue to improve the accuracy of all data represented in the system. Such ongoing efforts, coupled with the creation of a new data tracking system, promise to significantly enhance the quality of information to be shared regarding Arizona's dependent children.

Arizona Dependency Process

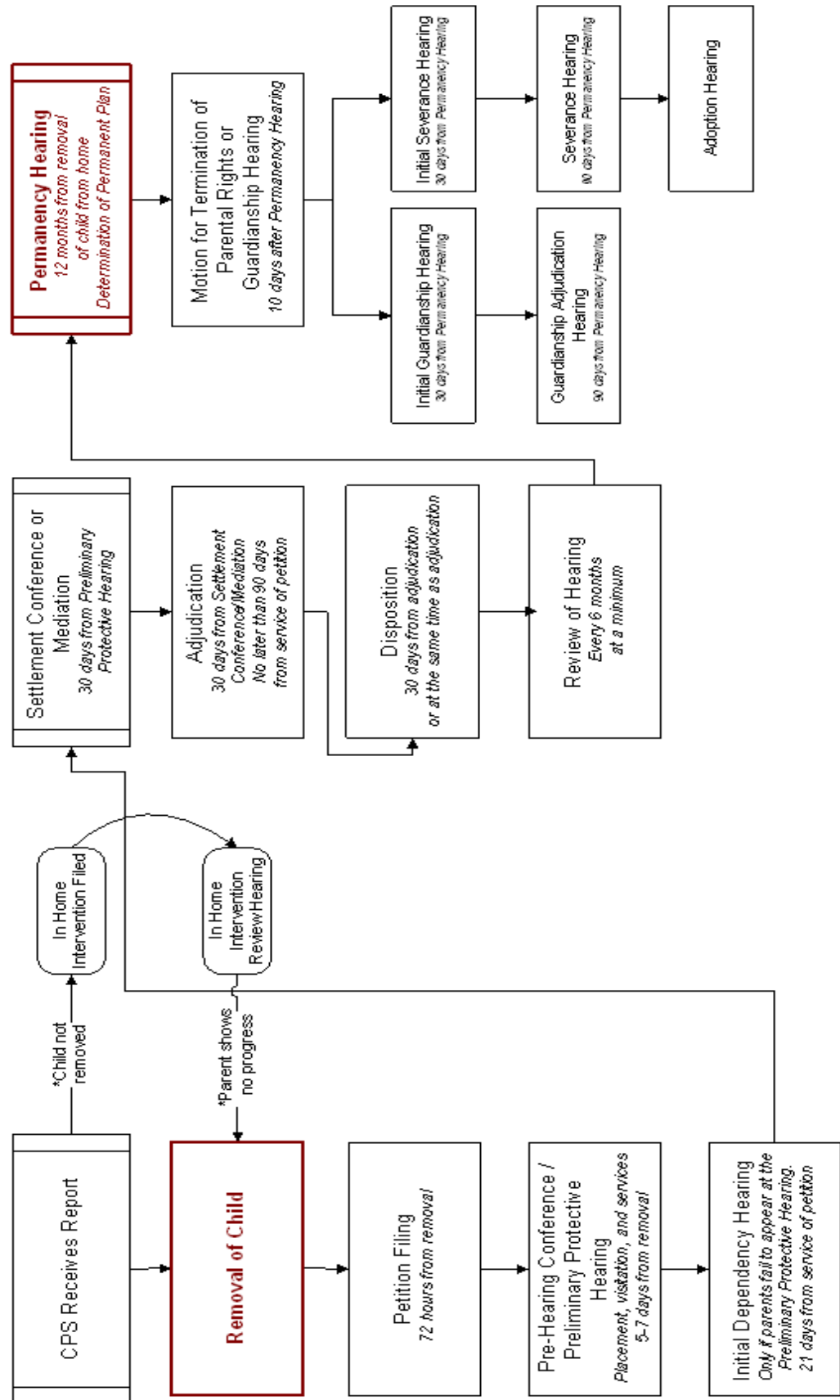


Table 1 refers only to dependency petitions filed by the Arizona Attorney General's office. Petitions are filed because of allegations of abuse or neglect. Allegations are brought by Child Protective Services and presented before the juvenile court to determine the best interests of the child. The following table lists all dependency (excluding severance or adoption petitions) filed during this period. Totals are actual petitions and should not be confused with the number of children that might be associated with each petition.

Table 1: Petitions Filed During FY05	
<i>County</i>	<i># Petitions Filed</i>
Apache	18
Cochise	101
Coconino	51
Gila	51
Graham	19
Greenlee	10
La Paz	0
Maricopa	1,870
Mohave	63
Navajo	48
Pima	922
Pinal	228
Santa Cruz	9
Yavapai	164
Yuma	78
Totals	3,632

A dependency petition is closed when either a child is reunified with the parent(s) or an alternative permanent placement is found and the court dismisses the case. Table 2 provides a count of children who were active in the dependency process during the fiscal year.

Table 2: Number of Children with Open Dependency Petitions FY05	
<i>County</i>	<i>Children with Open Dependency Petition</i>
Apache	99
Cochise	472
Coconino	170
Gila	196
Graham	116
Greenlee	37
La Paz	12
Maricopa	7,663
Mohave	286
Navajo	259
Pima	4,291
Pinal	851
Santa Cruz	52
Yavapai	678
Yuma	695
Totals	15,877

The Preliminary Protective Hearing is scheduled within 5-7 business days of a child's removal from the home and focuses on placement, services, and visitation. Table 3 provides the number of children with petitions meeting preliminary protective hearing requirements (within 5-7 business days of removal from home) and the number outside the parameter.

Table 3: Preliminary Protective Hearing FY05		
County	7 Days or Less	Greater Than 7 Days
Apache	14	10
Cochise	103	16
Coconino	67	4
Gila	79	17
Graham	30	6
Greenlee	12	8
La Paz	0	0
Maricopa	1,309	1,491
Mohave	42	62
Navajo	85	0
Pima*	807	586
Pinal	367	34
Santa Cruz	13	3
Yavapai	252	8
Yuma	133	21
Total Children	3,313	2,266

*The Pima County juvenile court reports that the majority of children had a PPH held within twelve days of removal from home due to justified five day continuances. This may be the case in some of the other counties as well.

It should be noted that the JOLTS database may be computing the days to hearings on supplemental petitions in such a way as to increase the number of days represented in this report. This reporting concern is being addressed.

It is during the dependency adjudication hearing that the court determines whether the allegations set forth in the dependency petition are sustained by the evidence and legally sufficient to support state intervention on behalf of the child. Table 4 provides a count of children adjudicated dependent as to one or both parents, the average number of days to dependency adjudication from removal from home date or petition filing, and the number of children whose petitions have been dismissed.

Table 4: Adjudication FY05			
County	Children Adjudicated (As to One or Both Parents)	Average Days to Adjudication (As to One or Both Parents)	Children with Dismissed Petitions
Apache	19	39	1
Cochise	148	80	6
Coconino	60	55	2
Gila	85	54	13
Graham	45	51	0
Greenlee	20	41	3
La Paz	0	0	0
Maricopa	2,380	55	119
Mohave	72	29	9
Navajo	72	46	4
Pima	1,261	59	161
Pinal	287	46	14
Santa Cruz	20	143	0
Yavapai	163	41	0
Yuma	138	20	2
Totals	4,770	54	334

It should be noted that some counties may indicate in the tracking system that a child is dependent when adjudication occurs as to the first parent while other counties may wait until the child is found dependent as to both parents.

According to the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), the decision regarding the permanent placement of a child involved in a dependency petition must be made within twelve months of removal from home. Table 5 shows the number of children with petitions in which a permanent plan was ordered within twelve months of the removal from home.

Table 5: Permanency Hearing FY05		
<i>County</i>	<i>Eligible Children</i>	<i>Children with permanent plan in 365 days or less</i>
Apache	21	12
Cochise	109	89
Coconino	35	34
Gila	52	42
Graham	45	38
Greenlee	9	6
La Paz	0	0
Maricopa	2,022	1,589
Mohave	56	42
Navajo	56	45
Pima	957	459
Pinal	92	62
Santa Cruz	12	11
Yavapai	138	100
Yuma	51	38
Totals	3,655	2,567

Due to the agreed upon business rules regarding data entry into JOLTS, the data collected in this table is derived from the case plan entered into the tracking system and not necessarily the date of the permanency hearing.

The length of time children are involved in the dependency process varies and is influenced by numerous factors, many of which are beyond the control of the court. The amount of time that a child spends in the dependency system can be useful information as the court seeks to address and improve upon the efforts being made to care for a dependent child. The following table considers the time from a child's removal to the dismissal of the dependency petition filed on their behalf. A number of the petitions were dismissed prior to the child being adjudicated.

Table 6: Average Time in Dependency System FY05			
County	<i>Petitions Dismissed Prior to Dependency Adjudication (days)</i>	<i>Petitions Dismissed Following Dependency Adjudication (days)</i>	<i>Total Number of Children Dismissed</i>
Apache	92	1308	26
Cochise	227	635	148
Coconino	89	582	42
Gila	109	586	48
Graham	0	519	36
Greenlee	267	541	9
La Paz	Na	Na	Na
Maricopa	68	848	2,239
Mohave	37	757	102
Navajo	651	648	108
Pima	105	819	1,349
Pinal	112	608	161
Santa Cruz	Na	1733	10
Yavapai	583	772	167
Yuma	Na	827	46
Totals	195	799	4,491

The courts have historically been concerned about dual jurisdiction children; those who are involved in a dependency petition and have current or prior court involvement on a delinquency matter. Dual jurisdiction children often require multiple agency involvement and are at a greater risk of subsequent issues. The following table shows the number of children in each county who are found to be dependent or have been temporarily subject to court jurisdiction pending an adjudication of a dependency petition and who are alleged or found to have committed a delinquent or incorrigible act.

Table 7: Juveniles in a Dependency with Current or Historic Delinquency Activity FY05		
County	Total Number of Dually Adjudicated Children	Percentage of Children with an Open Dependency Petition
Apache	9	9%
Cochise	42	9%
Coconino	21	12%
Gila	23	12%
Graham	4	3%
Greenlee	3	8%
La Paz	8	67%
Maricopa	817	11%
Mohave	20	7%
Navajo	17	7%
Pima	495	12%
Pinal	105	12%
Santa Cruz	5	10%
Yavapai	90	13%
Yuma	138	20%
Totals	1,797	14%

Table 8: Dependency Summary Report FY05

County	<i>Children Open at end of FY05*</i>	<i>Petitions Open at Start of FY05</i>	<i>Petitions Filed FY05</i>	<i>Petitions Closed FY05</i>	<i>Petitions Open at End of FY05</i>
Apache	73	44	18	14	48
Cochise	324	182	101	89	194
Coconino	127	64	51	31	84
Gila	146	48	51	27	72
Graham	80	40	19	19	40
Greenlee	28	13	10	6	17
La Paz	12	9	0	0	9
Maricopa	5,403	2,859	1,870	1,394	3,335
Mohave	180	111	63	53	121
Navajo	150	92	48	51	89
Pima	2,932	1,677	922	793	1,806
Pinal	681	241	228	84	385
Santa Cruz	42	20	9	7	22
Yavapai	496	239	164	93	310
Yuma	647	432	78	31	479
Totals	11,321	6,071	3,632	2,692	7,011

*This represents the number of children who had an open case at the end of the fiscal year (as of 6/30/05).

Parent Assistance Hotline (PAH)

PAH receives inquiries from the general public regarding a variety of topics. Below is a summary of the inquiries processed by hotline staff during FY04.

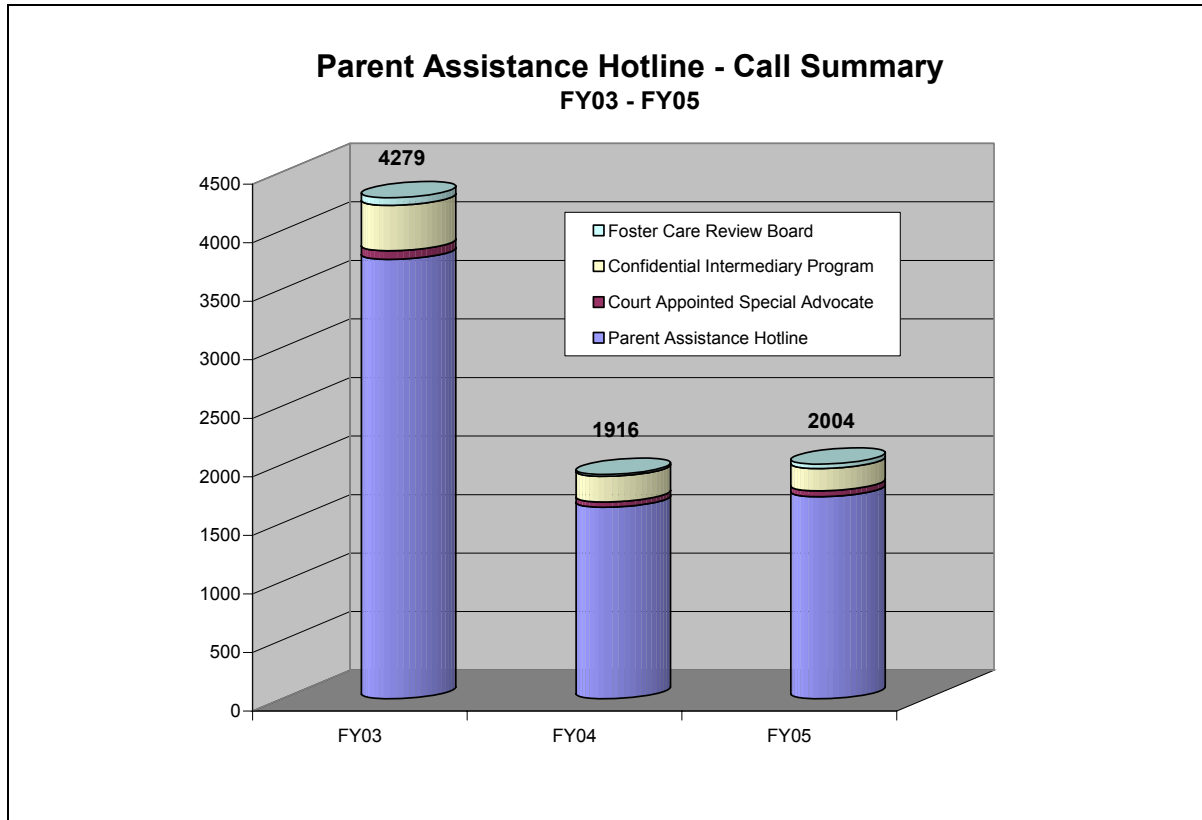


Figure 1

Included in the PAH category are those relating directly to dependent children issues as well as calls relating to an assortment of other topics.

ARIZONA COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA) PROGRAM

Mission

The mission of the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program is to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children who are involved in the juvenile courts.

We promote and support community-based volunteers, certified by the Supreme Court, who provide quality advocacy to help assure each child a safe, permanent, nurturing home.

Vision

Change the world—Invest in the future—Bring the gift of hope to all abused and neglected children—*one child at a time*.

Values

We will provide independent, objective, factual information to the juvenile court through quality court reports.

We will be an active participant in the child's case management team.

We will keep our commitment to the children.

We will conduct ourselves and our work with competency and professionalism.

We will be persistent in our work.

We will continue to improve ourselves through education and experience in order to improve the lives of the children we serve.

The Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program is established by Arizona statute to provide specially trained community volunteers to advocate for children who are wards of the court. A CASA gathers and provides independent, factual information about a child's dependency case to aid the court in making decisions regarding what is in the child's best interest and in determining if reasonable efforts are being made to achieve permanency for the child. The CASA volunteer provides advocacy to ensure that appropriate case planning and services are provided for the child.

Program Background

The first Court Appointed Special Advocate program was formed in Seattle, Washington in 1976 by Superior Court Judge David Soukup, who felt that he had insufficient information to allow him to make critical decisions in dependency cases. He believed that people of the community could be assigned to the cases, research the facts surrounding each case, and provide him with information about the child and family, advocating for what was in the best interest of the child. That first year, 110 volunteers were trained and advocated for 498 children in 376 dependency cases. Following this early model, CASA-like programs were developed across the United States.

The Arizona Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program was established in 1985 in Maricopa County. In 1987, Arizona Rules of Court, Juvenile Court Rules, Rules 22 and 22.1 were written that required the appointment of a guardian ad litem in any dependency action in which the petition includes an allegation that the child was abused or neglected. Also in 1987 the Arizona Supreme Court Administrative Order No. 87-11 was implemented. It described the policies and standards governing the creation and administration of the Arizona Court Appointed Special Advocate Program and minimum performance standards of volunteer special advocates.

In 1991 House Bill 2419 was signed into law amending Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) Sections 5-518 and 8-522, amending Title 8, Chapter 5, Article 1, and adding Sections 8-522, 8-523, and 8-524. This legislation statutorily established the authority, duties, and responsibilities of the Supreme Court, local juvenile courts, and volunteer special advocates, and provided for 30% of the unclaimed lottery winnings as the funding source for the CASA Program. By January 1993, every county juvenile court had established a CASA program.

The Arizona CASA Program is an active member of the National CASA Association.

Program Organization

All fifteen counties in Arizona have a CASA Program located within their juvenile courts, under the administration of the Arizona CASA Program. Fifty-two staff personnel make up the county CASA Programs, and the state administrative staff of six brings the total FTEs to fifty-eight.

CASA Duties and Responsibilities

A CASA volunteer is appointed to a specific child or sibling group by an Order of the Court issued by a juvenile court judge. Once appointed, the CASA is considered an officer of the court and serves as a “friend of the court.” The court order gives the CASA authority to access all information pertaining to the child and any extended family members of the child, without consent of the child, parents, or family members.

CASA Duties and Responsibilities are defined in A.R.S. § 8-522, which state that the CASA is to:

- Meet with the child
- Advocate for the child’s safety as the first priority
- Gather and provide independent, factual information to aid the court in making its decision regarding what is in the child’s best interest and in determining if reasonable efforts have been made to prevent removal of the child from the child’s home or to reunite the child with the child’s family.

In the performance of these duties, the CASA must maintain the confidentiality of the case, develop and maintain a relationship with the child, fully document all case activity, participate as a member of the case management team and participate in all agreements or case plans, monitor the child’s placement, ensure that educational needs are met, attend court hearings and provide written court reports to the judge for all Report and Review and Permanency hearings, and attend Foster Care Review Board meetings to update them on the progress of the case.

Accomplishments

Training

Ongoing efforts are pursued to build on the CASA's foundation of life experiences and knowledge of various topics pertaining to the needs of CASA children. The state CASA program provides the initial 30 hours of training for volunteers, and CASAs are then required to obtain 12 hours of in-service training each year thereafter.

- Six volunteer Orientation Training sessions were held during the year, at which 283 new volunteers were trained.
- County CASA Programs continually offer in-service training to their volunteers. Topics offered this year included joint training sessions with CPS, foster care agencies, and probation staff; panel discussions with behavioral health providers; special education; brain development in children; the Early Intervention Program; and drug awareness and treatment.
- The Helping Older Youth Project, which was initiated with a commencement training conference in FY03, held a half-day training in May. This featured a former foster youth, and offered sessions on Adolescent Physical, Social, Emotional and Cognitive Development and Transition Programs for Youth Aging Out of the Foster Care System. In addition, the Maricopa County CASA Program completed and began implementation of an Independent Living CASA manual for CASA volunteers to aid them in effective advocacy for older youth. The program also implemented an age-appropriate checklist for CASA court reports that identifies problem areas for older youth.
- Legislative Day Training was offered again this year for CASAs and FCRB volunteers. This half-day training offered information on the Role of Advocacy in the Legislative Process and Current Issues in the Legislature regarding Child Welfare.
- Two state CASA staff participated in the "It's My Life" train-the-trainer session offered by Casey Family Programs.

Community Outreach

State CASA staff continued to participate in the planning, implementation and presence at the DES Blue Ribbon event, which highlights May as Foster Care Month.

State and county CASA staff participated in the Celebrate Adoption events throughout the state. The state CASA/FCRB Community Outreach Specialist was an integral part of the implementation of the event in Maricopa County, and CASA programs in other counties throughout the state have a big part in the success of this event held by their juvenile courts.

County CASA programs held events in conjunction with the National CASA Light of Hope recognition of April as Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month. Maricopa County CASA Program held an event at the Old Courthouse in downtown Phoenix which featured Attorney General Terry Goddard and the Phoenix Boys Choir. Pima County CASA Program held its first "Rally for Children," which included speakers from their juvenile court and other community collaborators.

CASA staff in the county offices serves on numerous committees and workgroups for their courts, including drug court, dependency case flow, domestic violence, and behavioral health.

Current and Future Projects

The state CASA office will be re-examining its current 30-hour Orientation Training for new CASA applicants to better serve all of the counties of Arizona. The training specialist will be holding focus groups to discuss new techniques and service delivery methods to enhance the initial training program.

The Arizona CASA Program will hold a statewide 20th Anniversary Conference to celebrate CASA's 20 years of service in Arizona.

The state office will be refreshing the look of the current CASA website to modernize it and make it more attractive to users, and also to enhance the information provided for the 15 counties throughout the state. The Resource Library will be updated to make the check-out process more efficient and user-friendly.

Program Statistics

CASAs

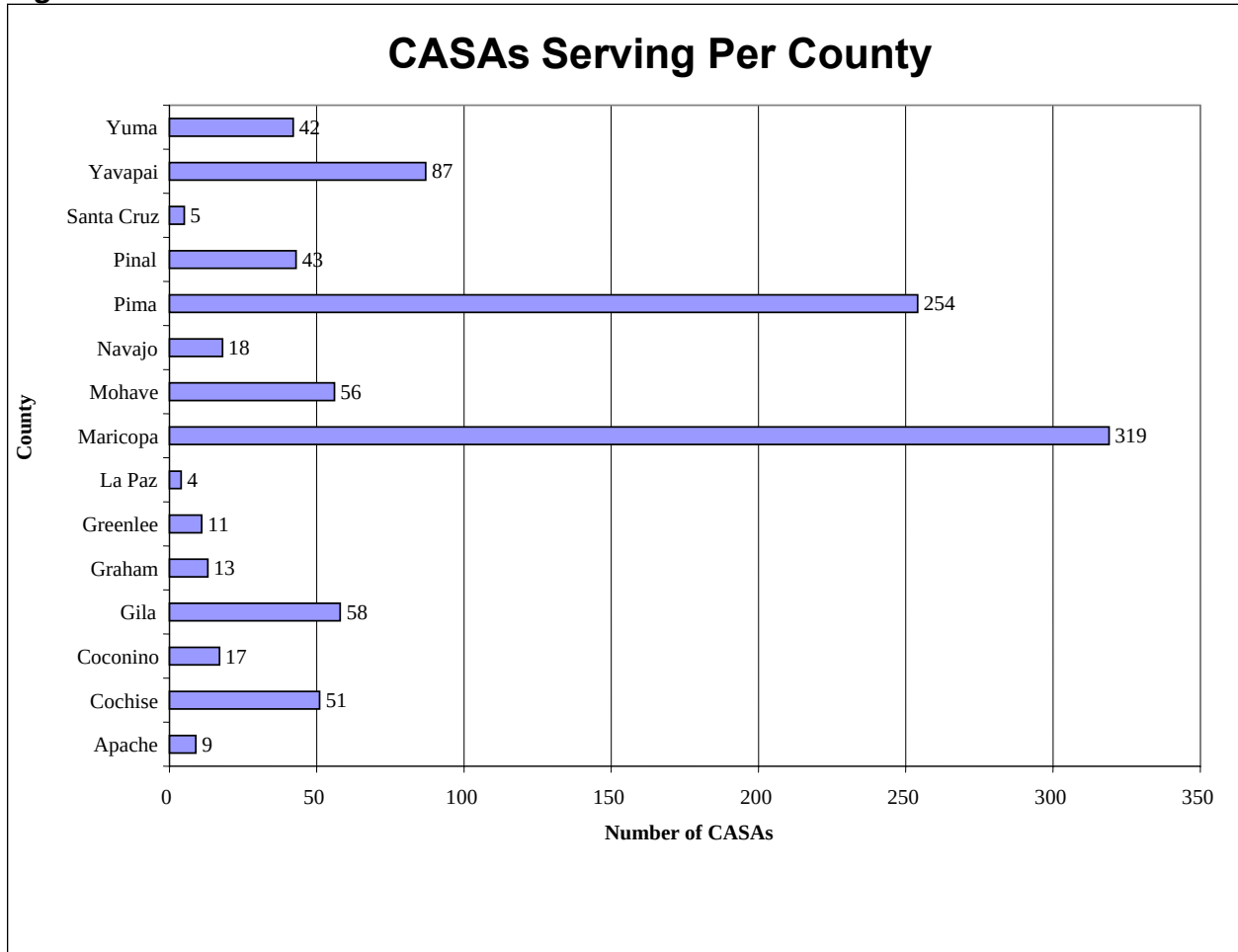
During fiscal year 2005, 987 CASAs donated their time to help Arizona's children who were in the court system. As of June 30, there were 815 CASAs.

In fiscal year 2005, 987 CASAs reported the following while performing their advocacy duties:

1,713 children served
64,667 hours of service donated
1,676 reports to the court written
588,541 miles driven

The number of CASAs who served throughout the fiscal year in each county is depicted by the following figure.

Figure 1



The following figures provide the gender, ethnicity, employment, and education breakdown of the 987 CASAs who served during fiscal year 2005.

Figure 2

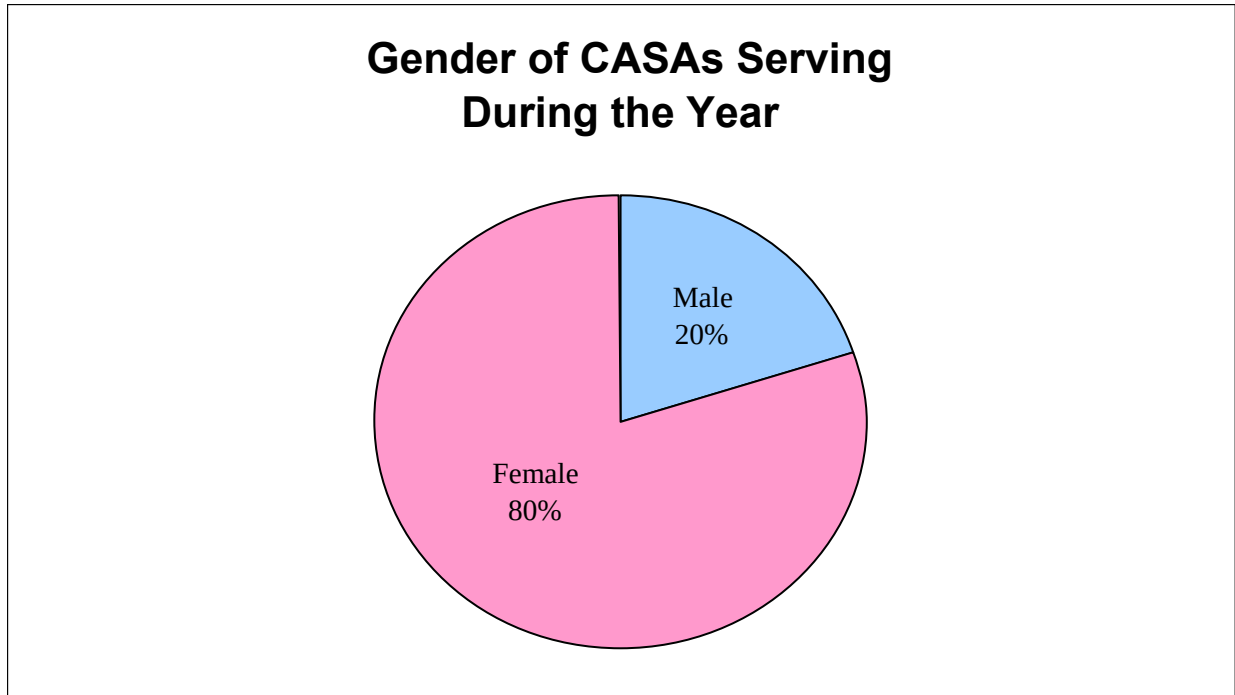


Figure 3

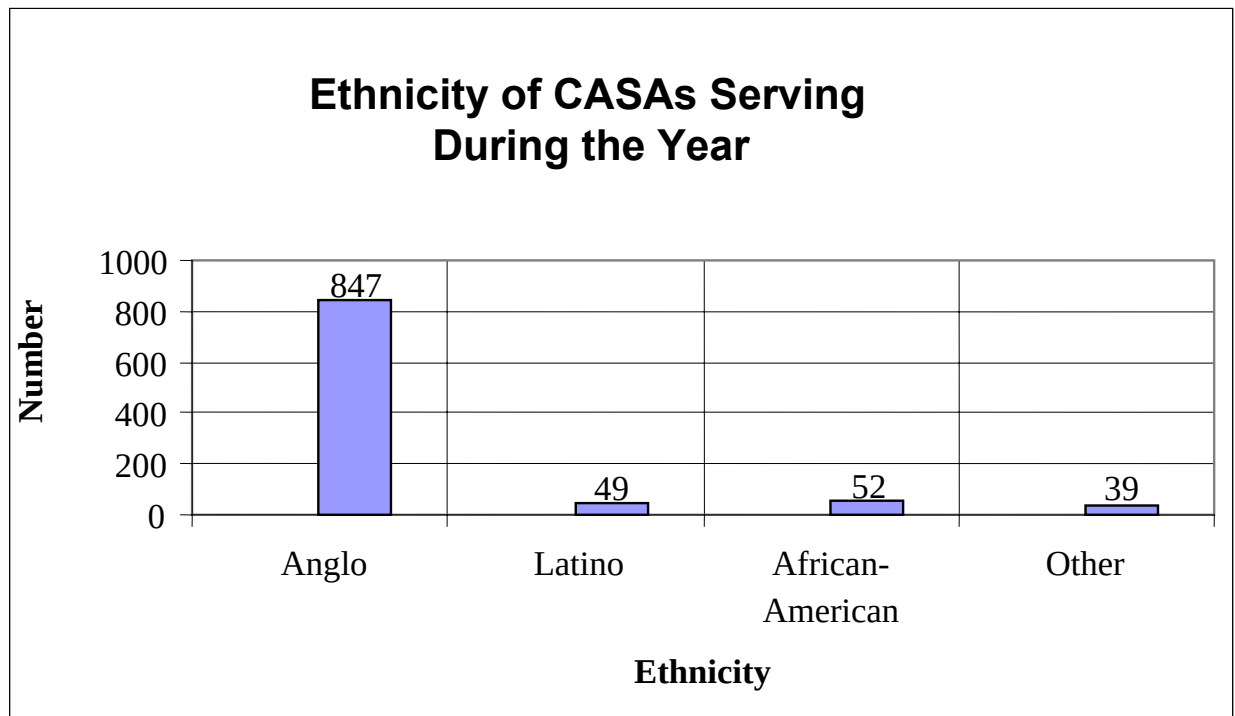


Figure 4

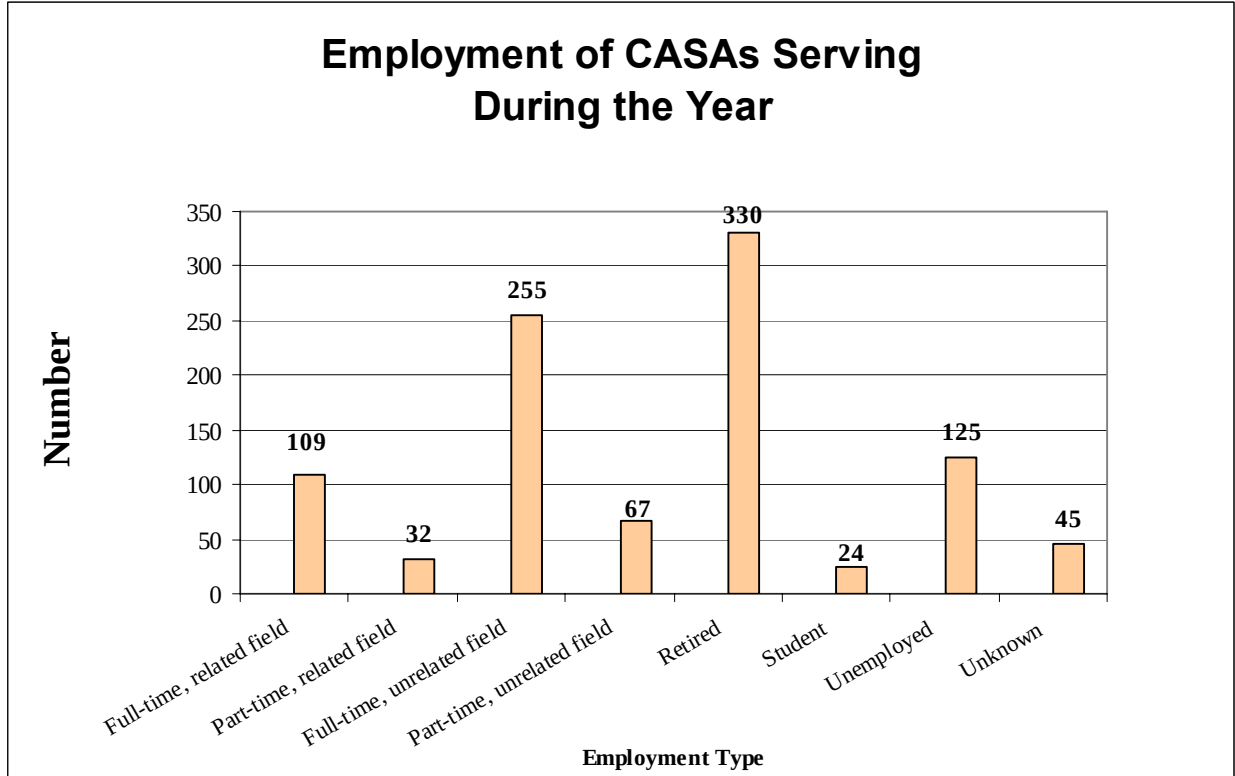
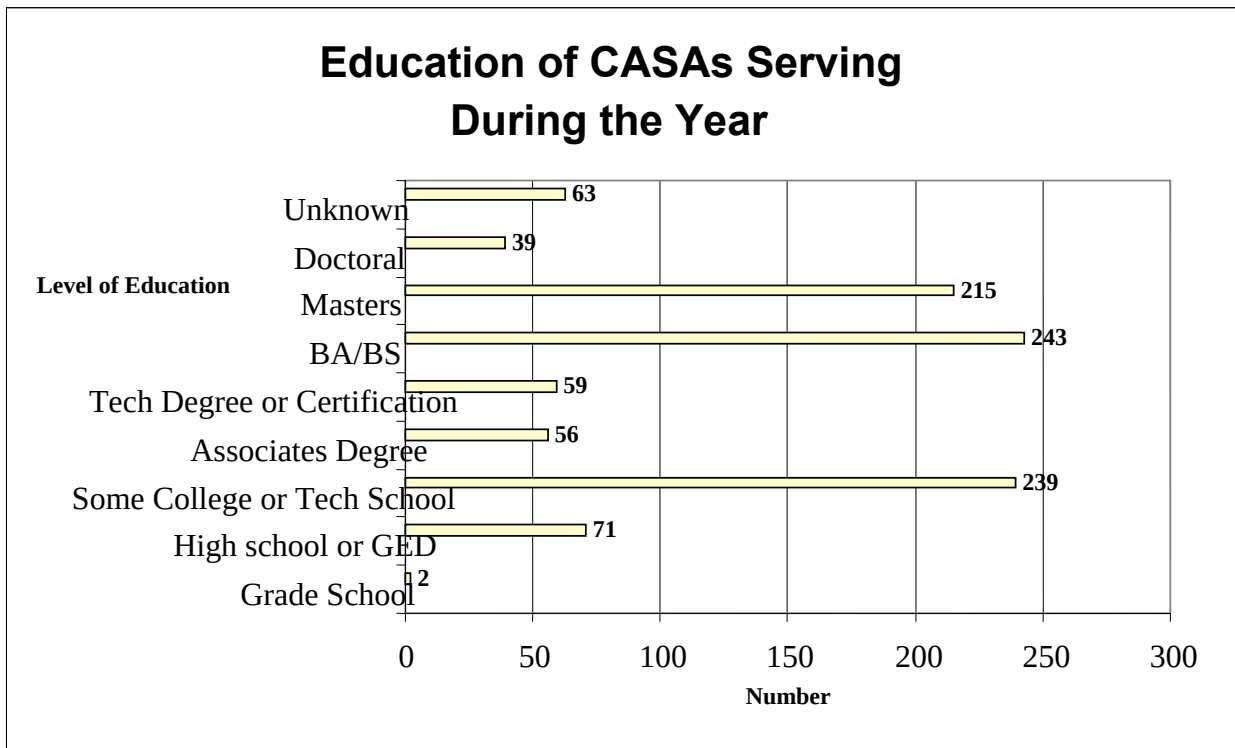


Figure 5



The following figures provide a three-year comparison of the number of CASAs serving, the number of hours donated, and the number of reports to the court.

Figure 6

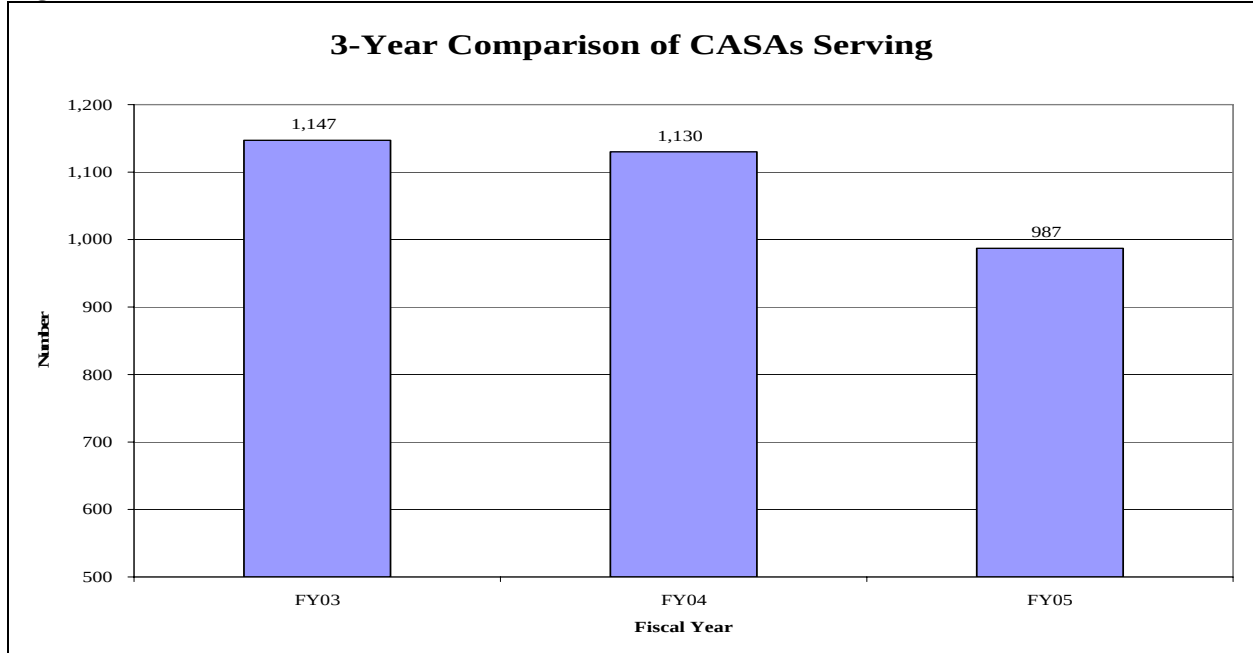


Figure 7

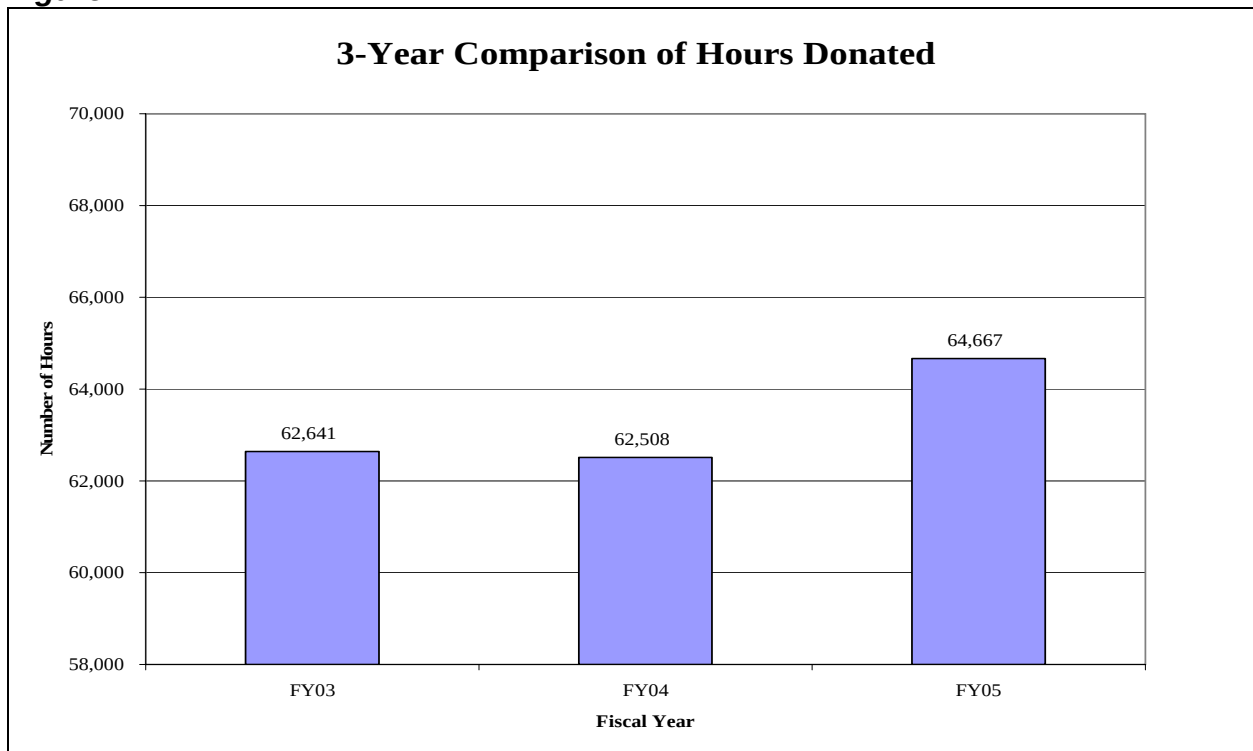
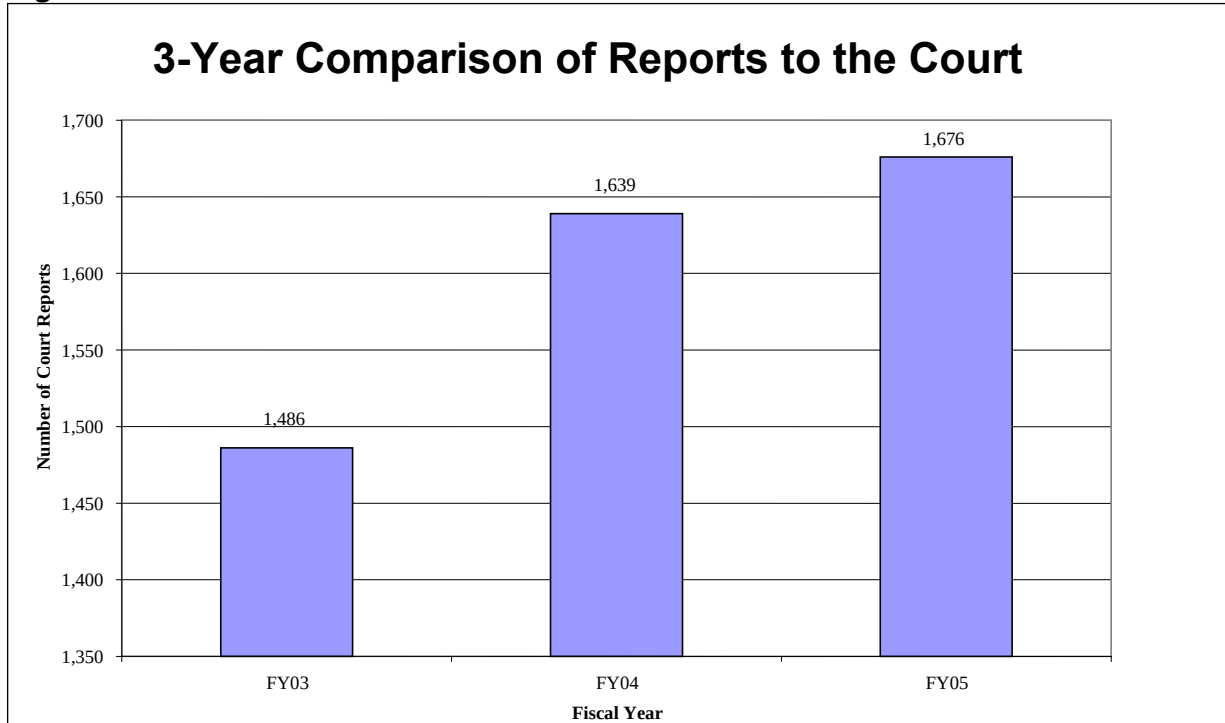


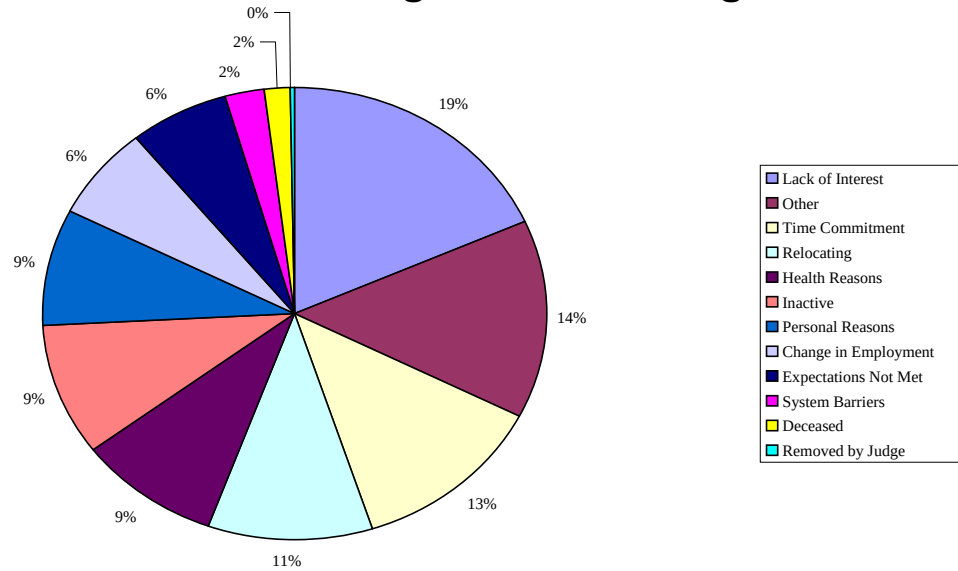
Figure 8



As with any volunteer organization, there is an attrition of volunteers during the year. In FY05, 247 CASAs discontinued their involvement with the Arizona CASA Program. The following figure depicts the reasons individuals gave for leaving the program.

Figure 9

Reasons for Leaving the CASA Program



Children

During the fiscal year, 1,713 children had a CASA advocating on their behalf. Some children had their cases “closed” at some point during the year, meaning they no longer had a CASA assigned to them. Other children’s cases remained opened, meaning they continued to have a CASA assigned to them on June 30, the last day of the fiscal year.

The following figures provide a look at the ages, gender, and ethnic breakdown of all children serviced during the year.

Figure 10

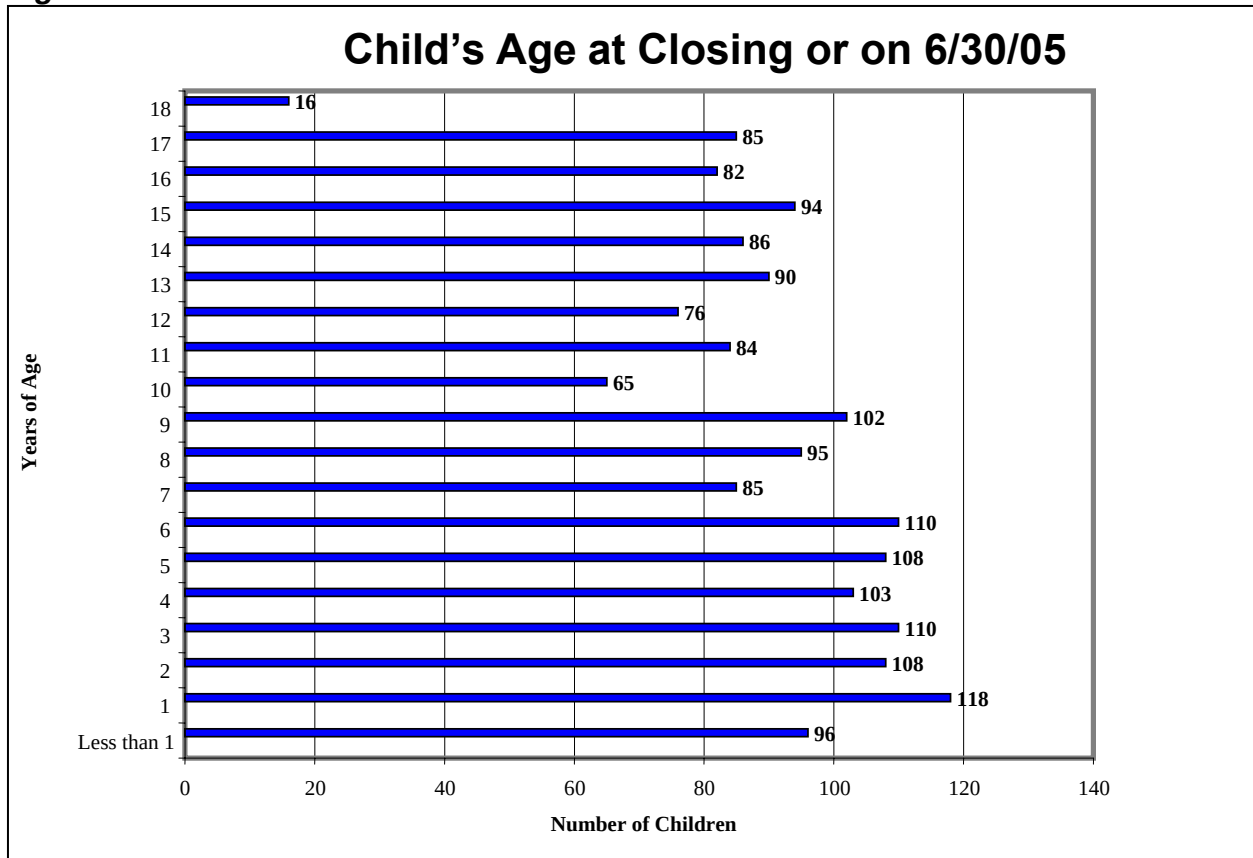


Figure11

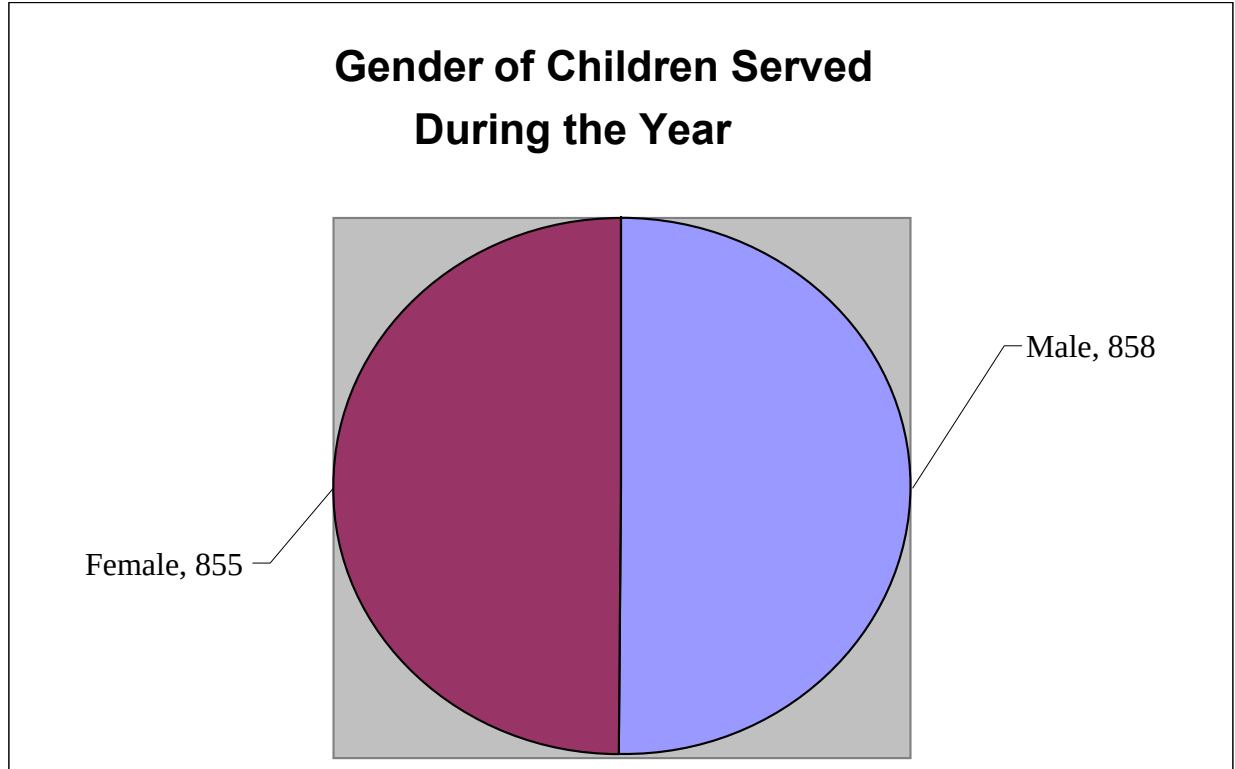
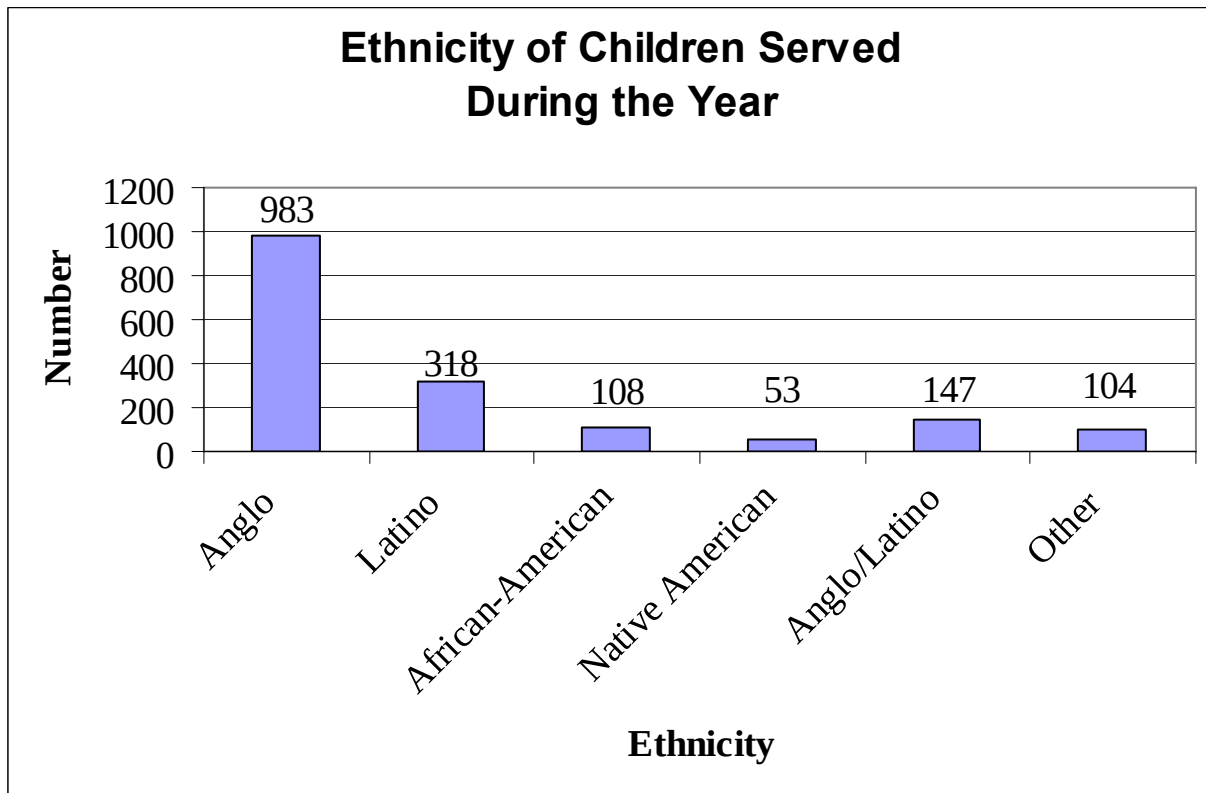
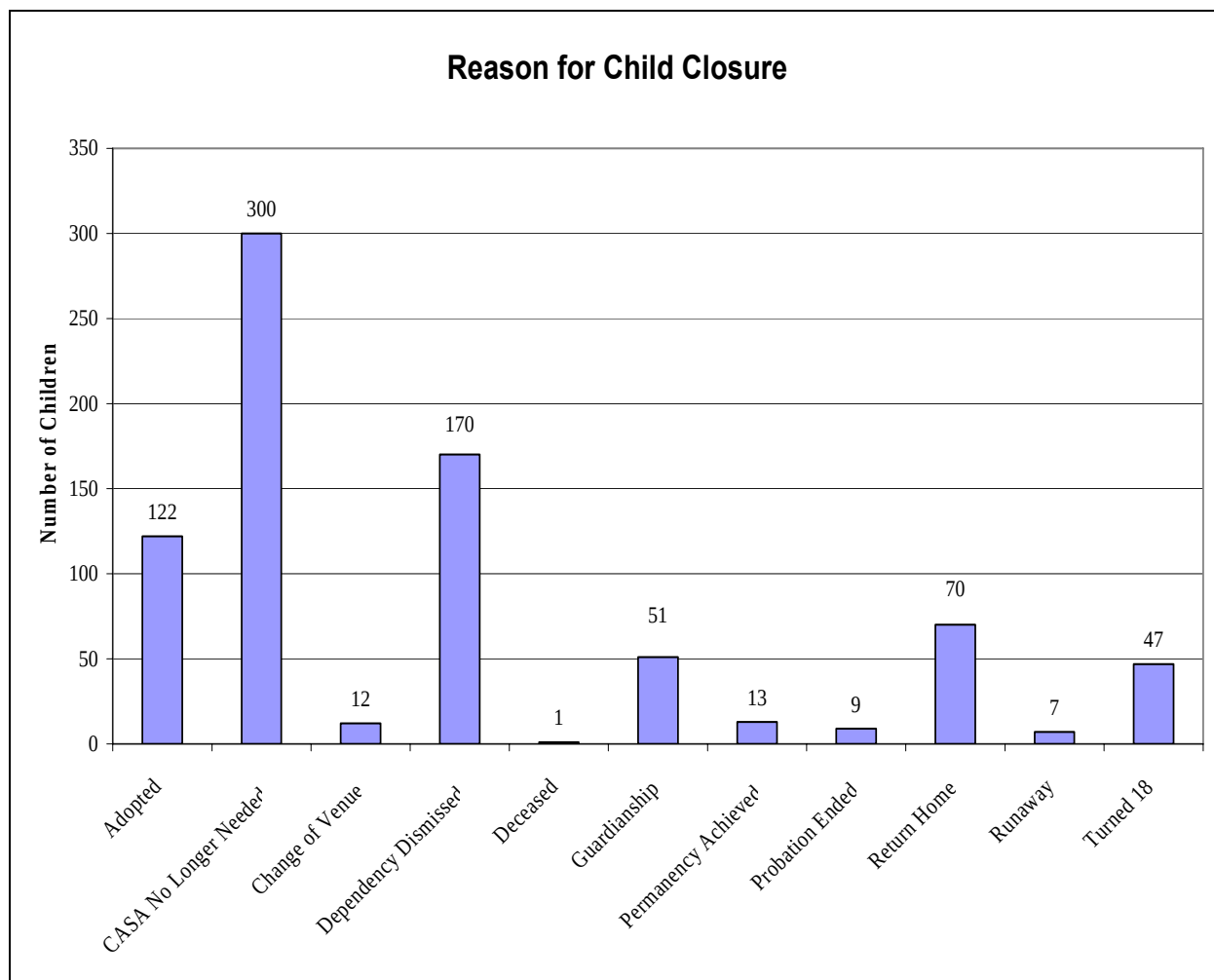


Figure 12



Eight hundred two children had their cases closed for CASA services during the fiscal year. The following figure provides the various reasons for their closure from the CASA program.

Figure 13



Website

The Arizona CASA Program maintains a website providing useful information for CASA volunteers, CASA programs, and the community. The community can find information about child welfare issues and the CASA program in its county. CASA program staff can find program resources on-line to provide more efficient delivery of program services. CASAs can access distance learning modules on topics related to their advocacy work for which they can obtain training credit. They will also find links to community and information resources to assist them in their work.

Table 1 provides some statistical information on the use of the website.

Table 1:
Website

FY05 Monthly	Total Visitors	Training Visitors	Electronic Volunteer Inquires	Total Tests Taken	Total Credit Hours Awarded	Resource Library Requests	Information Requests	Other Email Requests
Jul-04	1206	476	17	65	35.5	9	4	29
Aug-04	1135	392	23	85	43	2	4	13
Sep-04	1582	703	25	44	22	6	4	14
Oct-04	986	415	17	90	50.5	9	3	11
Nov-04	1576	821	14	153	85.5	7	1	12
Dec-04	1132	618	30	178	80.5	1	0	10
Jan-05	1247	695	8	88	51	11	4	11
Feb-05	1280	619	7	52	48	11	4	12
Mar-05	1883	790	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apr-05	1797	884	14	76	54.5	1	7	9
May-05	520	233	3	127	76	0	3	1
Jun-05	1614	608	8	118	105	0	0	1
Totals FY05:	15958	7254	166	1076	651.5	57	34	123

FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD

■ Purpose

The Foster Care Review Board is established by Arizona Statute to review at least every six months the case of each child in foster care. The purpose of these reviews are to determine and advise the juvenile court of the adequacy of efforts and progress toward placement of the child in a permanent home; to encourage and facilitate the return of each dependent child to his/her family whenever possible; to promote and encourage stability in the child's placement; and, to assist in informing parents and others of their rights and responsibilities regarding a dependent child in foster care

■ Mission

The mission of the Foster Care Review Board is based upon a belief that each child has a right to and is deserving of a permanent home that provides nurturing, love and protection. Toward this end, the mission of the Foster Care Review Board is accomplished in an atmosphere of trust, with dignity and respect maintained through participatory involvement of all those having interest in the welfare of the child. Though the plan for each child must be tempered by a reality of what may be attainable from resources available, the best interest of the child always remains of paramount importance to the Foster Care Review Board.

■ Standards of Conduct

Foster Care Review Board Citizen members voluntarily serve by judicial appointment, pursuant to Arizona Statute, to review the cases of children in foster care. Because of the special trust and confidence conferred and the responsibility placed upon Foster Care Review Board members, those so appointed to this public trust shall at all times observe the highest standards of integrity, commitment, and respect for others. Foster Care Review Board members will keep secure any and all information of a confidential nature that is presented to them unless disclosure is required in the performance of official duties. Each board member is expected to be fully prepared to review each and every case assigned to their board, to attend all scheduled board reviews and required training sessions, to assume positions of board leadership when called upon by fellow board members, and to follow the policies and rules established by the State Board and the Arizona Supreme Court. Consequently, only those people who are willing to abide by these principles and standards of conduct will be nominated for retention; conversely, failure to abide may result in a recommendation to the court for removal from the board.

■ Program Background

As one of the first states in the nation to establish citizen review boards, Arizona's Foster Care Review Board program is housed within the Dependent Children's Services Division of the Arizona Supreme Court, Administrative Office of the Courts and is comprised of 37 FTEs and approximately 475 volunteers.

The Arizona Legislature established the Foster Care Review Board in 1978 to address concerns that:

- Children in-care were not receiving medical attention;
- Children in-care were staying in the system too long; and
- Children in-care were getting lost in the system.

Foster Care Review Boards address these concerns by reviewing the cases of children placed out of the home who are the subject of a dependency petition. Cases are reviewed at least once every six months to ensure that progress is being made towards permanency. During each review, local boards across the state collect and process information from individuals who have an interest in the child whose case is being reviewed, and make recommendations regarding the case to the juvenile court judge.

Through the existence of the Foster Care Review Board, Arizona meets federal requirements of Public Law (PL) 96-272, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act. PL 96-272 mandates states to provide independent reviews of children who are the subject of a dependency action and in out-of-home care. Under this law, the Foster Care Review Board is mandated to make determinations at each review in the following four key areas:

1. Safety, necessity and appropriateness of placement;
2. Case plan compliance;
3. Progress toward mitigating the need for foster care; and
4. A likely date (target date) by which the child may be returned home or placed for adoption or legal guardianship.

A board is established by the Presiding Juvenile Court Judge of each county for every 100 children, or fraction thereof, in out-of-home care and subject to a dependency action. There is at least one board required in each county, and there may be more than one in certain geographically large counties, in order to accommodate volunteers who may otherwise have to travel long intra-county distances to attend boards.

■ State Board

When establishing Arizona's Foster Care Review Board program, the Legislature also established the State Foster Care Review Board. This board was established in April 1979 and is made up of Foster Care Review Board representatives from each county, as well as some ad hoc committee members who have a background in the child welfare system. The State board is established by A.R.S. § 8-515.04 and is responsible for reviewing and coordinating the activities of the local review boards as well as establishing training programs for volunteers.

The State Foster Care Review Board has established three standing committees that meet throughout the year to address goals adopted by the State Board as well as committee goals centered on their specified purpose:

- √ The Continuing Education Committee, whose primary function is to establish training programs to assist volunteers in meeting annual training requirements;
- √ The Community Outreach Committee, whose primary function is to raise public awareness of child welfare, as well as assist in volunteer recruitment efforts;
- √ The Advocacy Committee, whose primary function is to be responsible for planning and accomplishing general advocacy education for volunteers and the public.

An Executive Committee of the State Foster Care Review Board also exists and is comprised of State Board representatives, the State Board Chair and the Foster Care Review Board program manager. This committee is the leadership branch of the State Board and acts on its behalf between State Board meetings, if needed.

■ **Accomplishments**

Fiscal Year 2005 proved to be another busy year for the program. Despite the continued increase in caseloads, the program was still able to focus efforts on various projects;

- *Youth Information Form* – In an effort to encourage youth to participate in the Foster Care Review Board process, and at the same time realizing that there are barriers that prohibit some youth from attending FCRB reviews, a program workgroup created a form that allows youth to submit statements to the Board. The form, which can be accessed and submitted online, encourages youth to answer some basic questions that give the Board a better understanding of the youth's perspective and needs.
- *Substance Abuse Curriculum* – Last fiscal year, the Continuing Education Committee and the State Board committed to developing a two-year Substance Abuse Training curriculum. The curriculum was divided into five separate topic modules; the first two modules were developed this fiscal year and have been posted on the FCRB website.
- *Sunset Audit* – The Foster Care Review Board is currently undergoing a Sunset Audit that began in November of 2004; the audit will continue through most of next fiscal year, when the Auditor General's report is presented to the Legislature in October of 2005.
- *New Boards* – Due to the continued increase in cases statewide, the Foster Care Review Board opened 6 additional boards during this fiscal year to ensure that the case of each child in out-of-home placement who is also the subject of a dependency petition is reviewed; Three of the six additional boards were opened in Maricopa County, one was opened in Pima County and the other two were opened in Pinal County.
- *Sibling Visitation Day* – Once again, the Foster Care Review Board was happy to collaborate with the Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation to host the

foundation's third Sibling Visitation Day. The event took place in Maricopa County on October 2 and was well attended.

- *Effectiveness Study* – A partnership with Glendale Community College resulted in the development of an Effectiveness Study that was conducted over the last two fiscal years (for a six month period). The information gathering component of the Study concluded this fiscal year and the final report is currently being prepared. The program is looking forward to receiving the final report.

- *Electronic Document Management System* – The Foster Care Review Board is in the beginning stages of piloting an Electronic Document Management System (EDMS).

To date, one board has been moved to the new system. Complete conversion to EDMS is not anticipated to happen soon, but eventually will allow the program to electronically send documents to board members, eliminating numerous hours of copying and postage expense.

- *Finding 10* – Last fiscal year, an ad hoc committee was put together to address Action 6.0 of the Governor's Action Plan for Reform of Arizona's Child Protection System. The result was the creation of a 10th Finding to the FCRB Findings and Determinations Guidebook that reports service gaps and system problems. The Finding took effect July 1 of this fiscal year and a report was created to support the Finding. The report has been generated and distributed to appropriate stakeholders throughout the year. Follow up work on the Finding and report will take place in fiscal year '05.

- *Findings and Determinations Review* – A workgroup, consisting of Foster Care Review Board volunteers and staff, as well as representatives from Child Protective Services, was created to review and update the Foster Care Review Board Findings and Determinations Guidebook. Work will now follow to implement the revised Guidebook.

■ **Current and Future Projects**

- *Electronic Document Management System (EDMS)* – The Foster Care Review Board will continue working with the Electronic Document Management System and hopes to convert more boards to the new system by the end of next fiscal year.

- *Review and Updating of the Findings and Determinations* – The program will begin work on the roll-out of the new version of the Findings and Determinations Guide as well as the update of the automated system that tracks the Findings results.

- *Refinement of Finding 10 and its Quarterly Report* – After one year of implementation, Finding 10, specifically, will be reviewed and revised as necessary. An ad hoc committee consisting of volunteers, staff and various

stakeholders will be pulled together to work on the Finding as well as the report that supports the Finding.

- *Sunset Audit* – The program will continue working the Auditor General's Office to complete the Sunset Audit as well as begin its work with the Legislature, in support of the continuation of the program.
- *Substance Abuse Training Curriculum* – The development of the final three Substance Abuse Training modules will take place during the next fiscal year and will be available online by December 2005.
- *CHILDS Access* – The Foster Care Review Board Program is currently working with Child Protective Services to obtain access to their automated system (CHILDS), which will provide Boards with the most updated information about placements, etc.

■ Program Statistics

There are currently 95 local boards across the state, an increase of six boards than at the end of last fiscal year. Three new boards were opened in Maricopa County; one new board was opened in Pima County; and two new boards were opened in Pinal County. While the program strives to maintain five volunteers on each board, volunteers do resign and it is not possible to have five volunteers on each board throughout the year. *Table 1* reflects the breakdown of current boards per county, as well as the number of volunteers that should be appointed to accommodate those boards.

Table 1

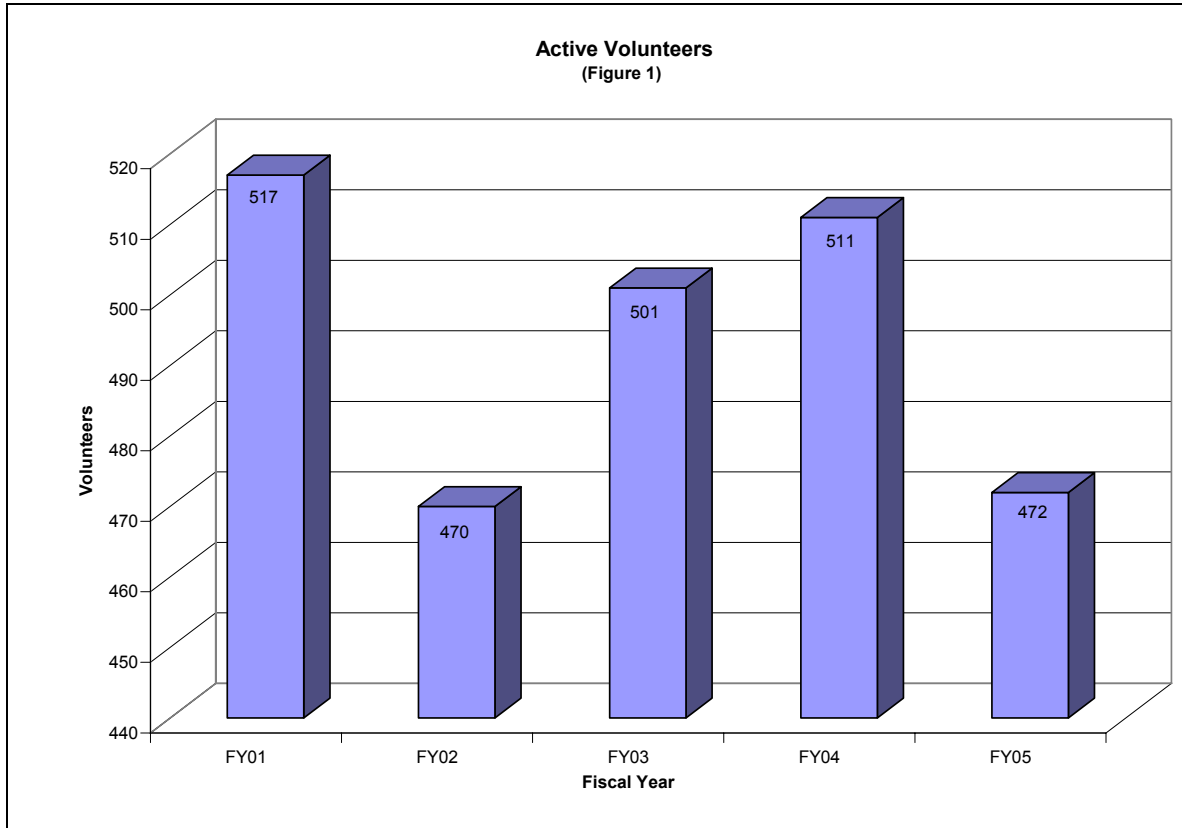
NUMBER OF BOARDS PER COUNTY – AS OF JUNE 30, 2005		
County	Number of Boards	Number of Volunteers
Apache	1	5
Cochise	4	20
Coconino	1	5
Gila	2	10
Greenlee	1	5
Graham	1	5
La Paz	1	5
Maricopa	42	210
Mohave	3	15
Navajo	2	10
Pima	25	125
Pinal	5	25
Santa Cruz	1	5

Dependent Children in the Arizona Court System
Fiscal Year 2005 • July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005

Yavapai	4	20
Yuma	2	10
Total	95	475

The following figure (*Figure 1*), reflects the number of Foster Care Review Board volunteers that were “Active” during fiscal years 2001 - 2005. Active is defined as appointed to a board as either a regular board member or an alternate board member.

Figure 1



To better utilize resources, several Foster Care Review Boards were closed when caseloads decreased. Volunteers from closing boards were moved to boards with existing vacancies. As the number of children in care continues to increase, the number of needed volunteers increases as well, thus the decrease in active volunteers in FY 02 and the increase in active volunteers during fiscal years 03 and 04. During fiscal year 2005, the program experienced a decrease of 39 volunteers.

The Removal Review Team, which was established by the Legislature in 2000, is governed by A.R.S. § 8-822. The statute governing this team requires the Department of Economic Security (DES) to review the case of each child removed from the care of their biological parents, legal guardian or custodian prior to the dependency petition being filed with the court. The team includes the investigating case manager, the case manager's supervisor, an assistant program manager from the DES/Child Protective Services and, up until January 2004, a member of the Foster Care Review Board. New legislation that passed during the fall 2003 Special Session mandates two FCRB volunteers serve on the Removal Review Team.

The Removal Review Team assesses options other than continued out-of-home placement including in-home services to the family. The role of the Removal Review volunteer is dramatically different than that of the Foster Care Review Board volunteer, as questions being asked concern removal rather than long term case management issues.

Removal Review volunteers are also called to serve on Foster Home Transition Case Conferences. These conferences take place when a licensed foster parent disagrees with the removal of a child from his or her home and decides to request a review of the planned removal. Legislation that passed during the fall of 2003 Special Session also mandates that two FCRB volunteers serve on the Foster Home Transition Case Conferences.

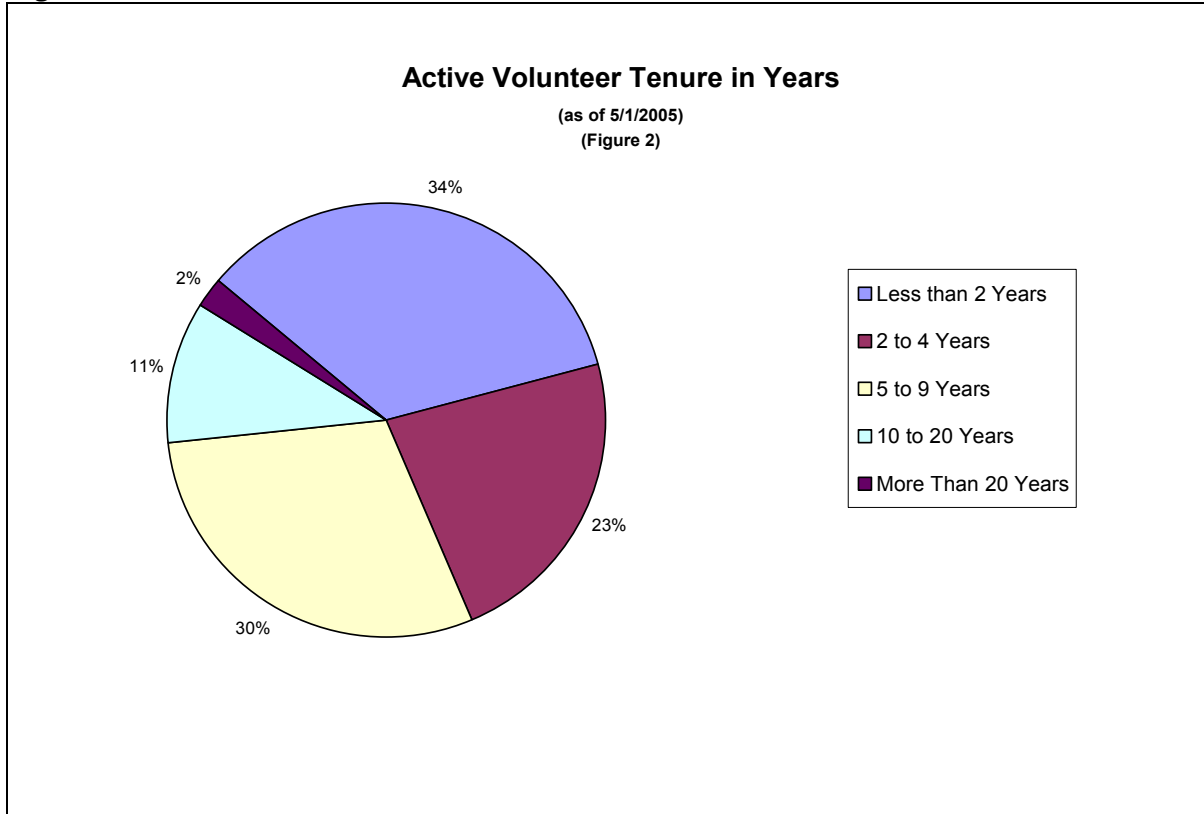
There are currently 100 Removal Review Volunteers, many of whom also serve on the local Foster Care Review Boards. While Maricopa and Pima County volunteers only serve in their respective counties, the other county volunteers serve within the districts defined by Child Protective Services. *Table 2* provides the breakdown of current Removal Review volunteers by district.

Table 2

District	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS
District 1 (<i>Maricopa</i>)	37
District 2 (<i>Pima</i>)	19
District 3 (<i>Apache, Coconino, Navajo, Yavapai</i>)	19
District 4 (<i>La Paz, Mohave, Yuma</i>)	10
District 5 (<i>Gila, Pinal</i>)	8
District 6 (<i>Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, Santa Cruz</i>)	7
Total	100

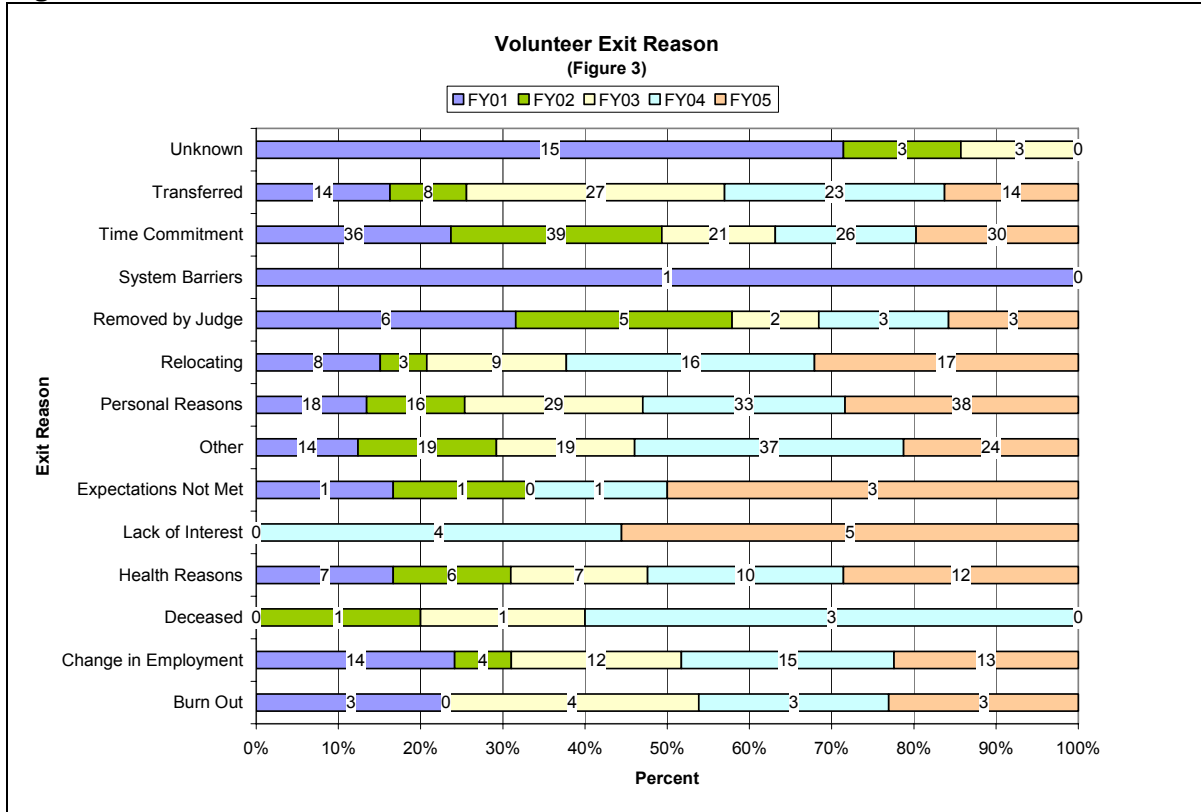
The Foster Care Review Board realizes that its volunteers and staff are the foundation of its success and works hard to retain them. While volunteering for an organization for a one or two-year term is very common, the Foster Care Review Board has been able to retain forty three percent of its volunteer base for five – nine years, and thirteen percent of its volunteer base for ten or more years (*see Figure 2*). The program actively seeks input from departing volunteers through exit survey forms. The survey form asks for feedback regarding the volunteer's experience with the program, what they felt the program's strengths were, as well as the program's weaknesses. The survey also inquires about the reason the volunteer is leaving the program.

Figure 2



While there are a number of reasons volunteers resign, including change in employment, relocation, burnout, etc., the majority of the volunteers who resigned during the last fiscal year cited personal reasons and time commitment as the reason for their resignation. A number of volunteers listed “other” as their reason for leaving the program. Of those who resigned in fiscal year 2005, over twenty-three percent resigned due to personal reasons and nineteen percent resigned due to the time commitment involved with being a Foster Care Review Board volunteer. *Figure 3* reflects the total number of reasons volunteers gave for resigning during the last five fiscal years.

Figure 3



The Foster Care Review Board volunteers are required per, A.R.S. § 8-515.01(D) and §8-515.04, to participate in training established by the State Board. Volunteers have a very important role and impact the lives of children and families. By keeping current with training requirements, volunteers are keeping abreast of relevant topics, expanding their knowledge of child welfare issues, and are enhancing the program's credibility in the child welfare community. Like every professional in the field, a volunteer's continued education is essential in ensuring that they are at the forefront of the issues families and children are coping with, and in turn are contributing to the most effective review process possible.

Figures 4, 5 and 6 reflect the training hours that volunteers across the state obtained during the last five fiscal years. Statewide, FCRB volunteers obtained 5,919 hours of training during fiscal year 2005.

Figure 4

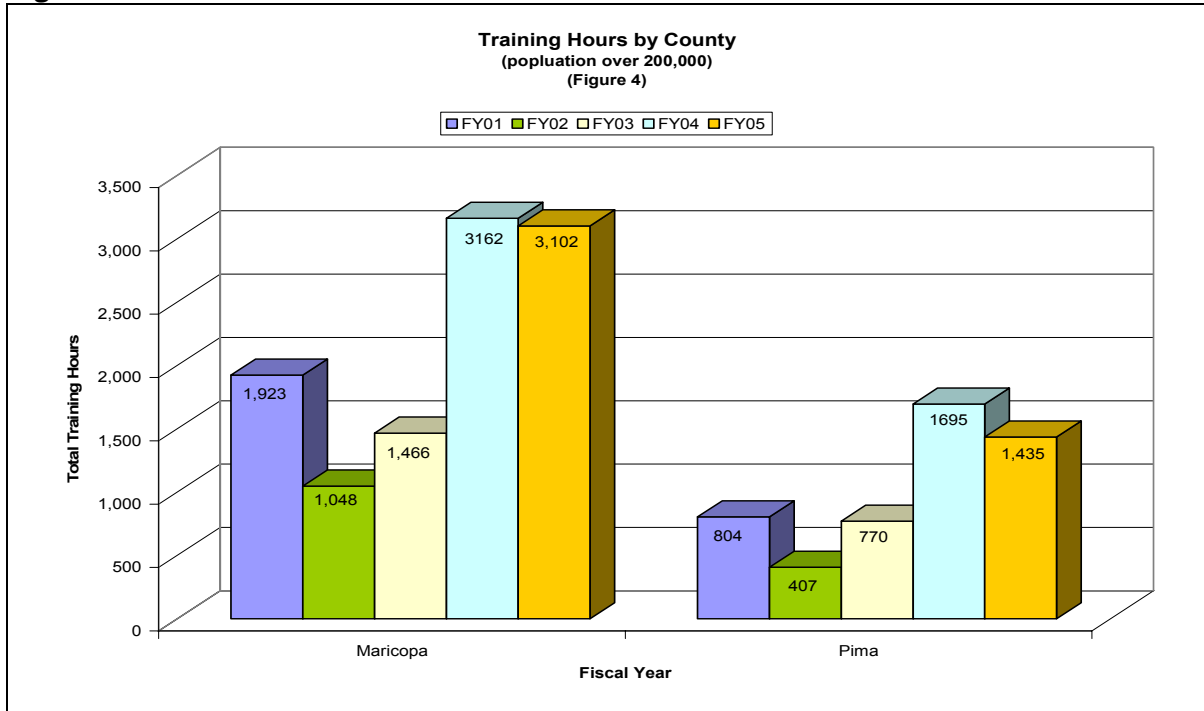


Figure 5

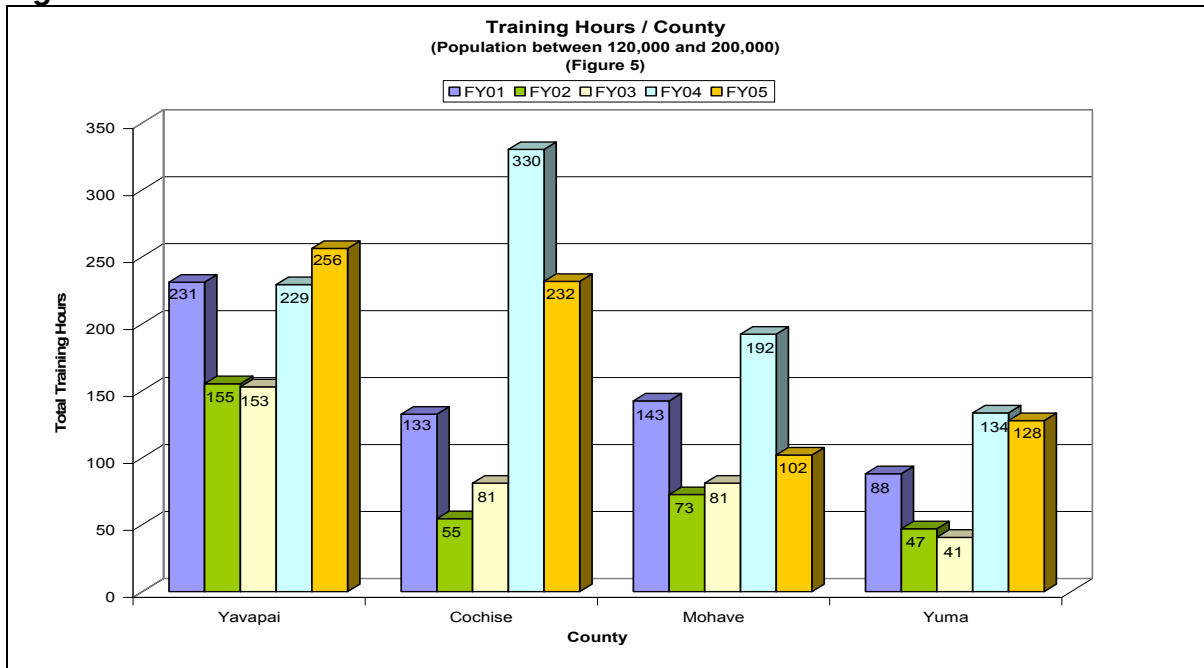
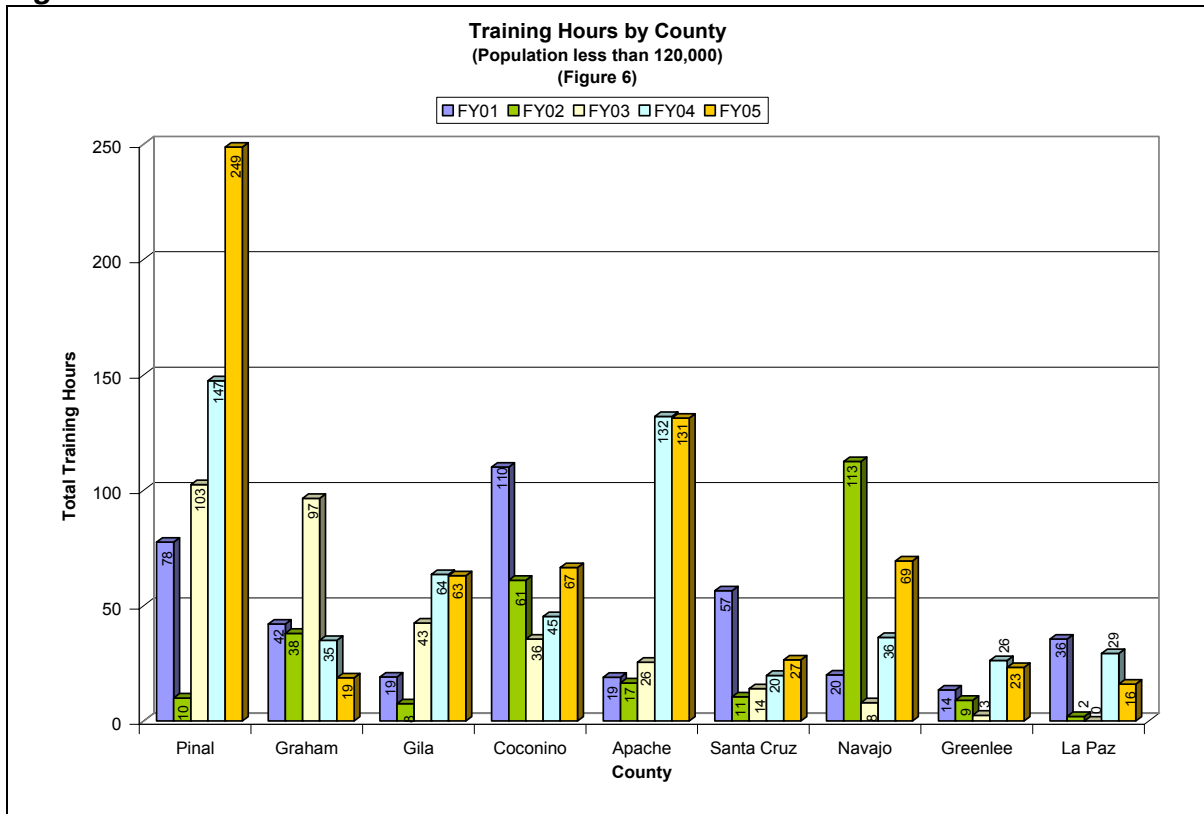


Figure 6



Arizona Revised Statutes § 8-515.01 mandates that “Each board shall, to the maximum extent feasible, represent the various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups of the county in which it serves.” In this vein, the program obtains demographical information from volunteers so that it is able to check its progress in this area. *Figures 7, 8, 9 and 10* reflect the ethnicity, education, occupation and income of board members, respectively. This data is provided as a point-in-time query on currently active volunteers. It should be noted, however, that the data range regarding education, occupation and income may be somewhat dated, as volunteers provide this information at the time they apply for the program, and are not required to provide updates. A change in policy effective January 1, 2006, will ask each board member, at the time of their reappointment, to update their demographic information, so that more current data can be queried.

Figure 7

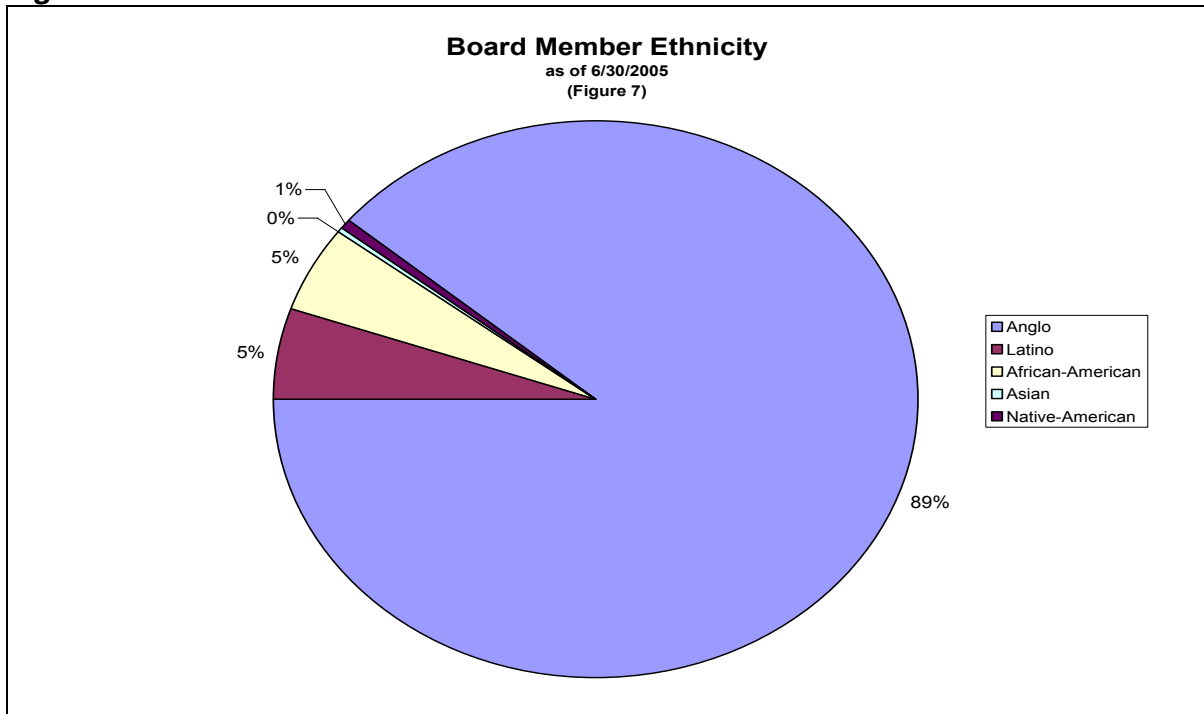


Figure 8

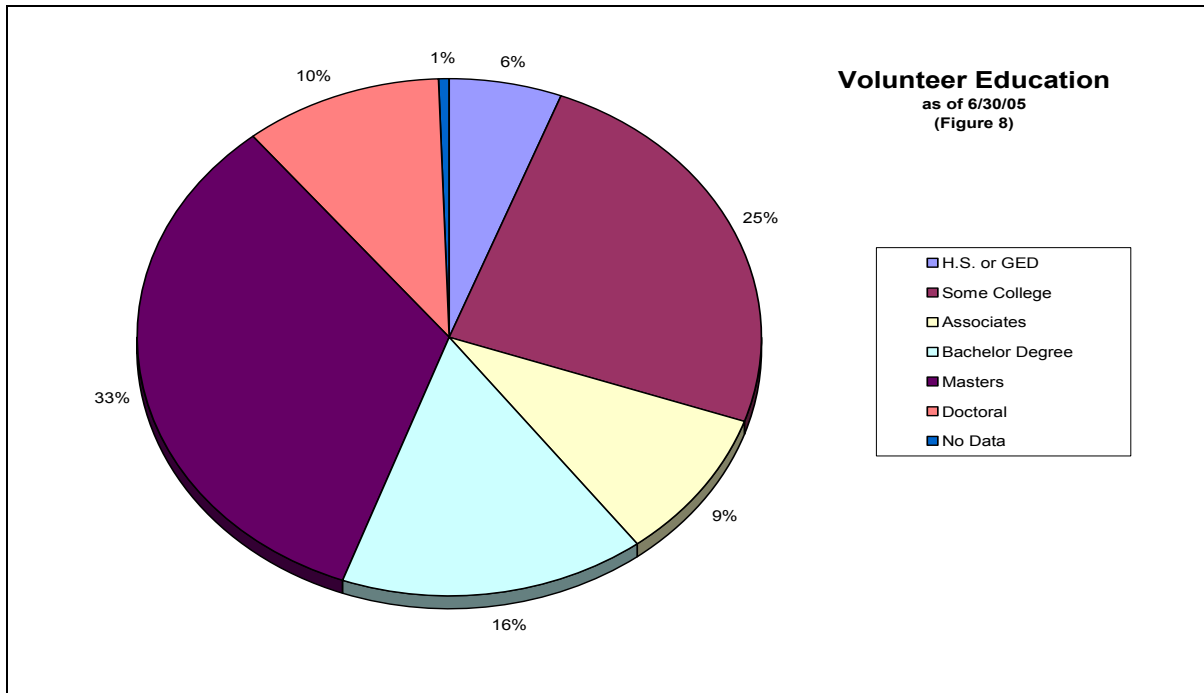


Figure 9

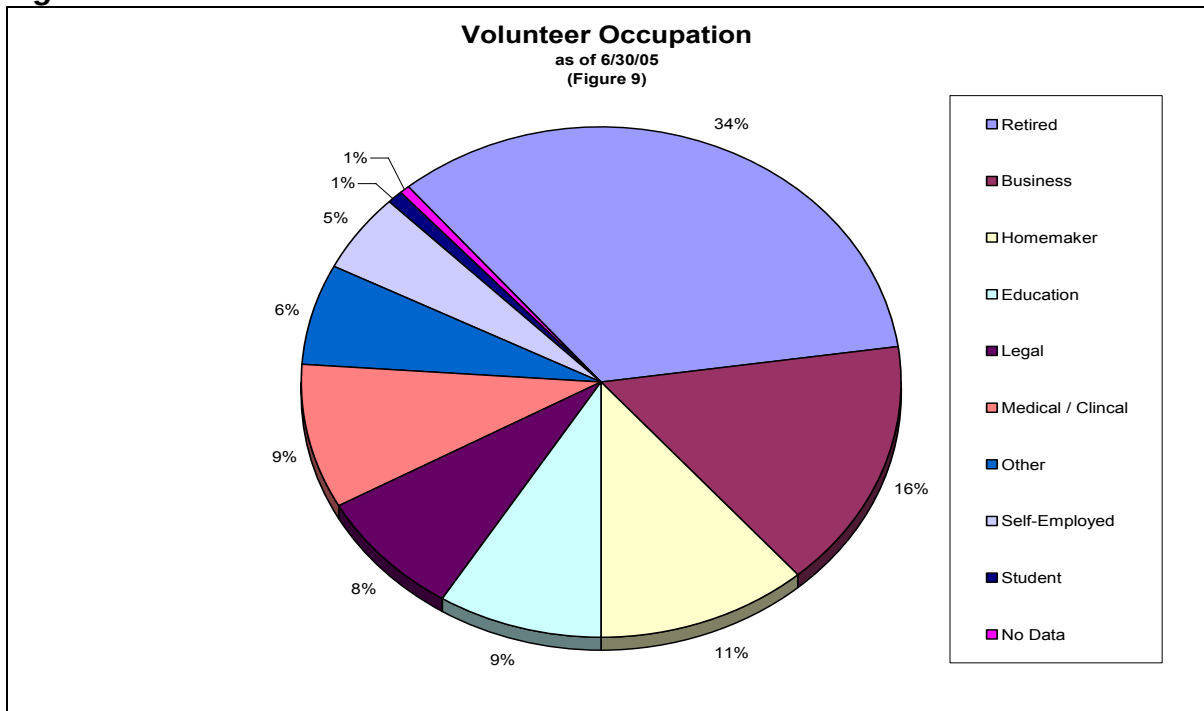
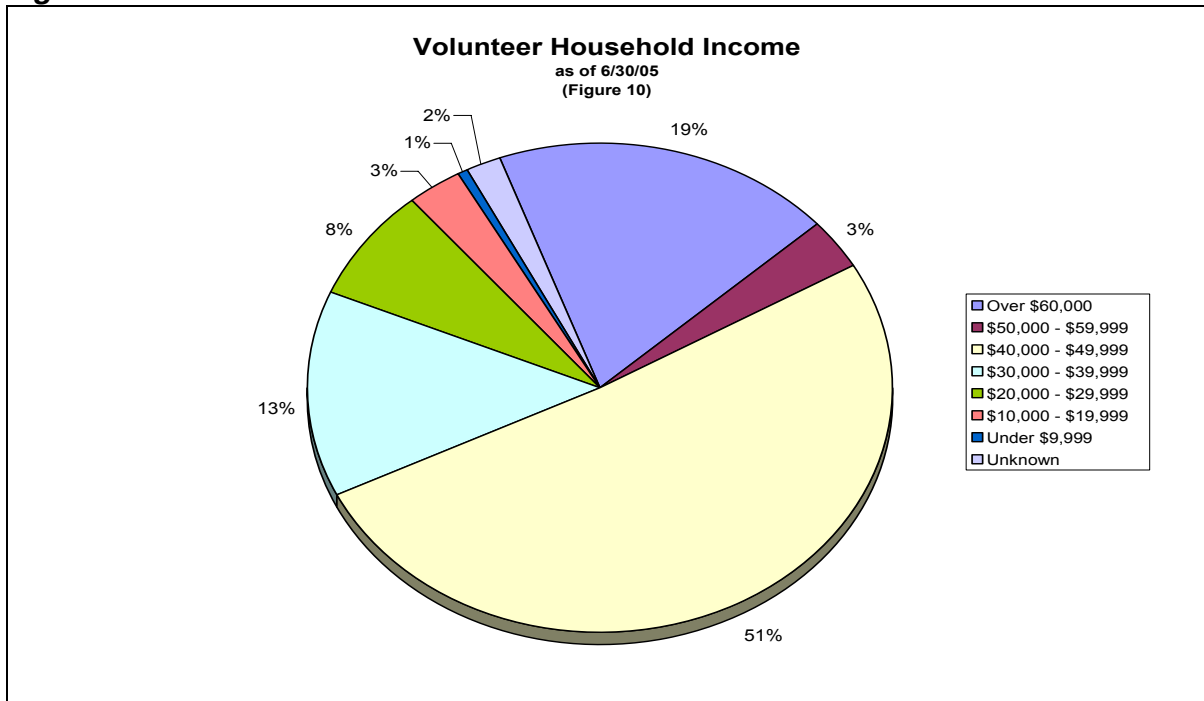


Figure 10



At the end of fiscal year 2005, there were over 9,000 children statewide being reviewed by the Foster Care Review Board. The program tracks the number of children under review statewide on a monthly basis, as a predictor of when new boards need to be opened. This number is queried from the Foster Care Review Board program's Dependent Children Automated Tracking System (DCATS) at the beginning of each month as a point-in-time reference. *Table 3* reflects the point-in-time queries for both the number of children, and the number of cases, that were reviewed in fiscal year 2004, while *Table 4* reflects the same numbers for fiscal year 2005.

The monthly queries over the last two fiscal years shows a steady increase in both the number of children and the number of cases that are coming before the Foster Care Review Board.

The program ended fiscal year 2005 with 1,029 more children and 513 more cases under review than in fiscal year 2004. These increases represent a 12.8 percent and 10.8 percent increase in children and cases, respectively.

Table 3

*Dependent Children in the Arizona Court System
Fiscal Year 2005 • July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005*

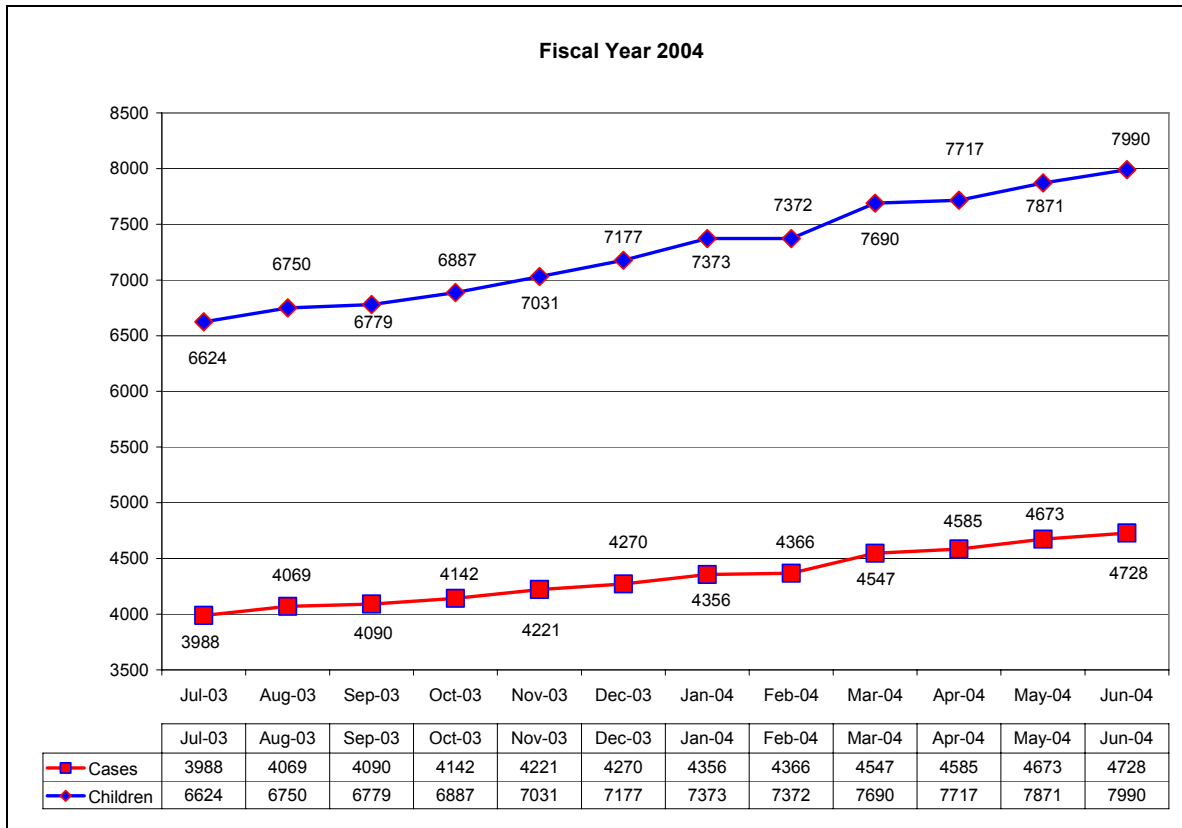


Table 4

*Dependent Children in the Arizona Court System
Fiscal Year 2005 • July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005*

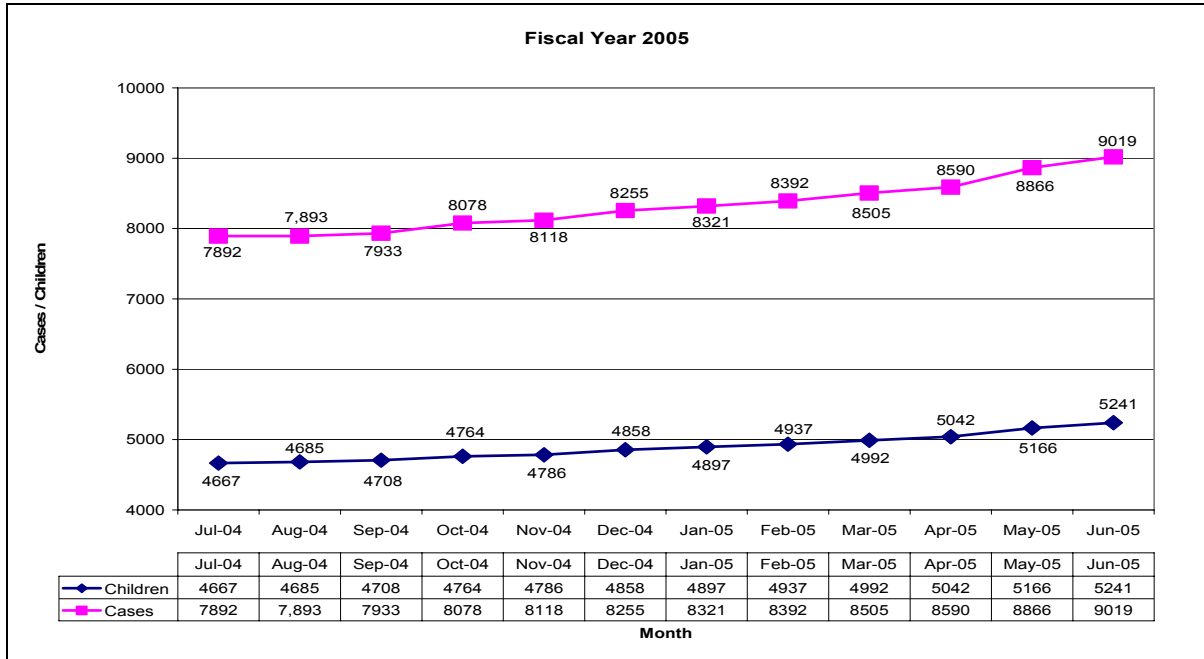
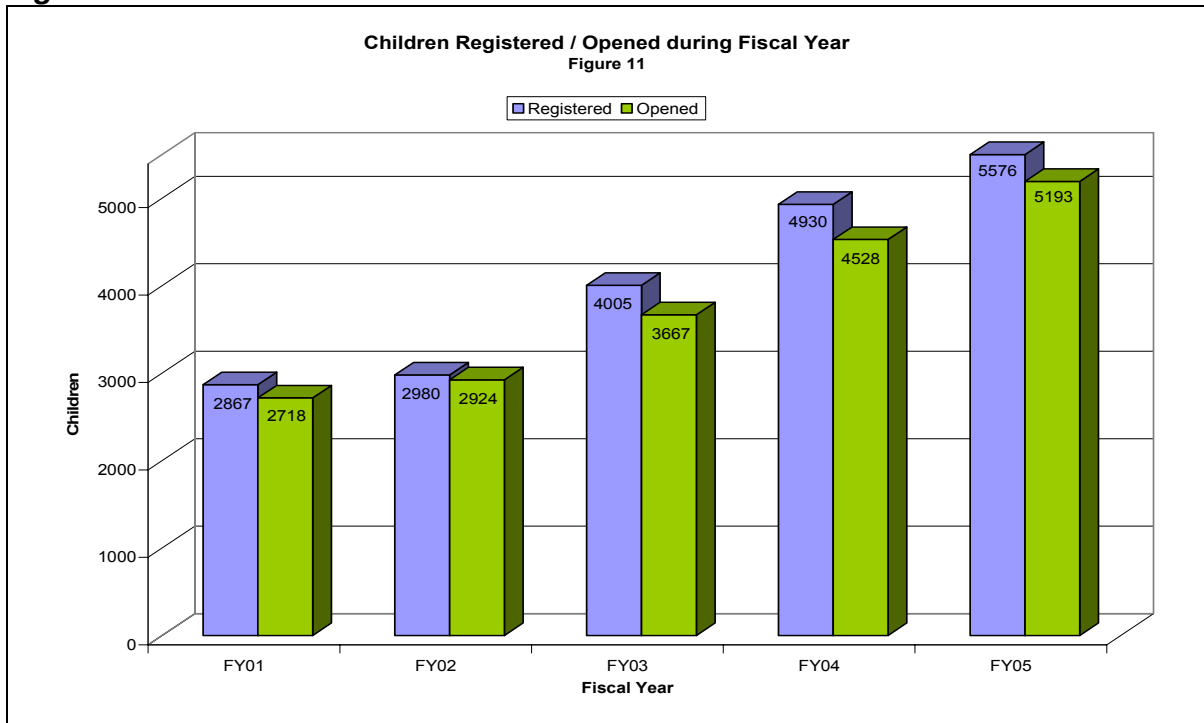


Figure 11 reflects the number of children who were registered versus the number of children opened during each of the last five fiscal years. This data was queried for a date range.

Figure 11



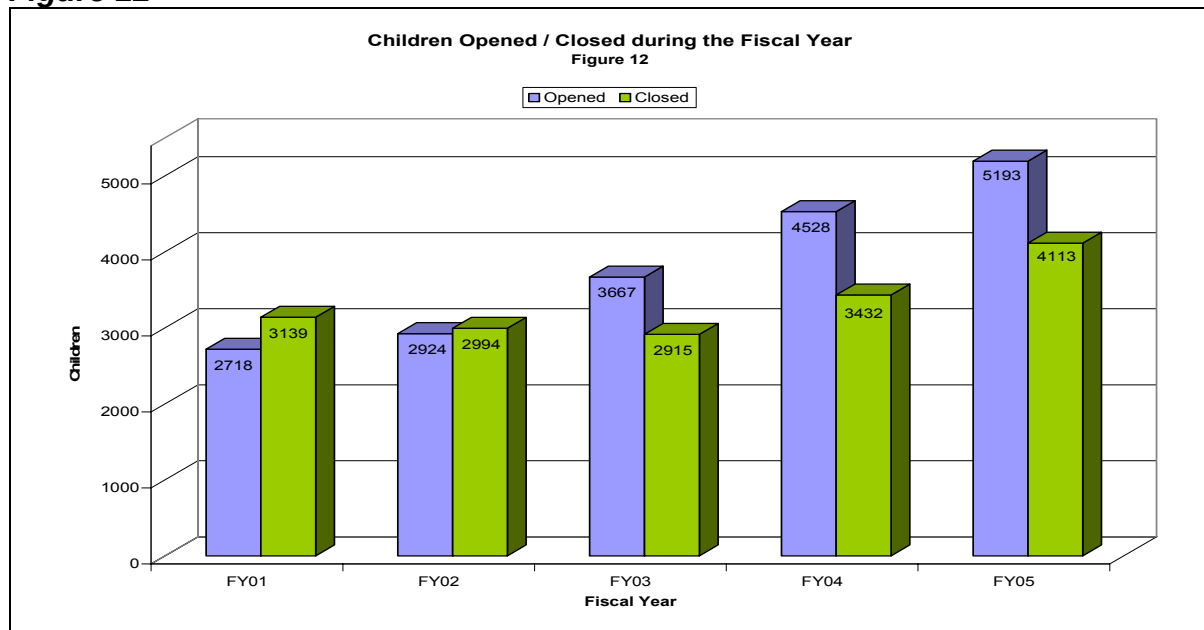
Children who are classified as “registered” are those who are in out-of-home placement and whose case is subject to board review. Generally, this happens when a dependency petition is filed. The Foster Care Review Board “registers” these children in the Dependent Children Automated Tracking System (DCATS) where they remain until their cases are either canceled or are ready to be scheduled for a review, at which time they are “opened”. A child’s case can be canceled for a number of reasons, including because the child has been returned home or the dependency was dismissed.

Of the 5,576 children’s cases that were registered in fiscal year 2005, 5,193, or 93.1 percent of them were subsequently opened. Of the 4,930 children’s cases that were registered in fiscal year 2004, 4,528 or 91.8 percent of them were subsequently opened. In the three fiscal years prior to 2004, the percentage of cases opened to cases registered was 94.8 percent in fiscal year 2001, 98 percent in fiscal year 2002, and 91.5 percent in fiscal year 2003.

This fiscal year, like the last four, the program experienced an increase in both the number of children’s cases registered and the number of children’s cases opened. The program opened 13% more cases in fiscal year 2005 then it did in fiscal year 2004. And while the Foster Care Review Board program has experienced a continued increase each fiscal year since 2000, this year’s increase represents a 47 percent increase in the number of cases opened over fiscal year 2001 (five years ago).

Figure 12 reflects the number of children whose cases were opened versus those closed. In fiscal year 2005, the program realized a 79.2 percent closure rate, which was a slight increase from fiscal year 2004, when the program realized a 75.7 percent closure rate. However, the program has experienced a significant decrease in closure rates over the last three fiscal years, when compared to fiscal years 2001 and 2002, at which time the closure rates were 115 and 102 percent, respectively.

Figure 12



The following three *Figures (13, 14 and 15)* reflect the number of children who were considered Active or Open, during the last five fiscal years (2001–2005). For the purpose of this report, “Active” refers to children whose cases have come to the attention of the Foster Care Review Board, are opened and scheduled for a Foster Care Review Board review. This number is queried as a date range (as opposed to a point-in-time query) to track how many children were active at a given time during the fiscal year. This number is generally slightly higher than the number of children actually reviewed, as some reviews are vacated because the court relieves the FCRB from reviewing a case for various reasons or because a child is returned home prior to the review.

While the number of children who were considered “Active” remained somewhat steady during fiscal years 2001, 2002, and 2003, a 21 percent increase was experienced between fiscal years 2003 and 2004, and an 8 percent increase was recorded between fiscal years 2004 and 2005. This increase in “Active” children can be directly linked to the decrease in case closure rates over the last three fiscal years.

Figure 13 provides the total number of Active children during each fiscal year, while *Figures 14 and 15* provide a break down of these numbers by gender and ethnicity.

Figure 13

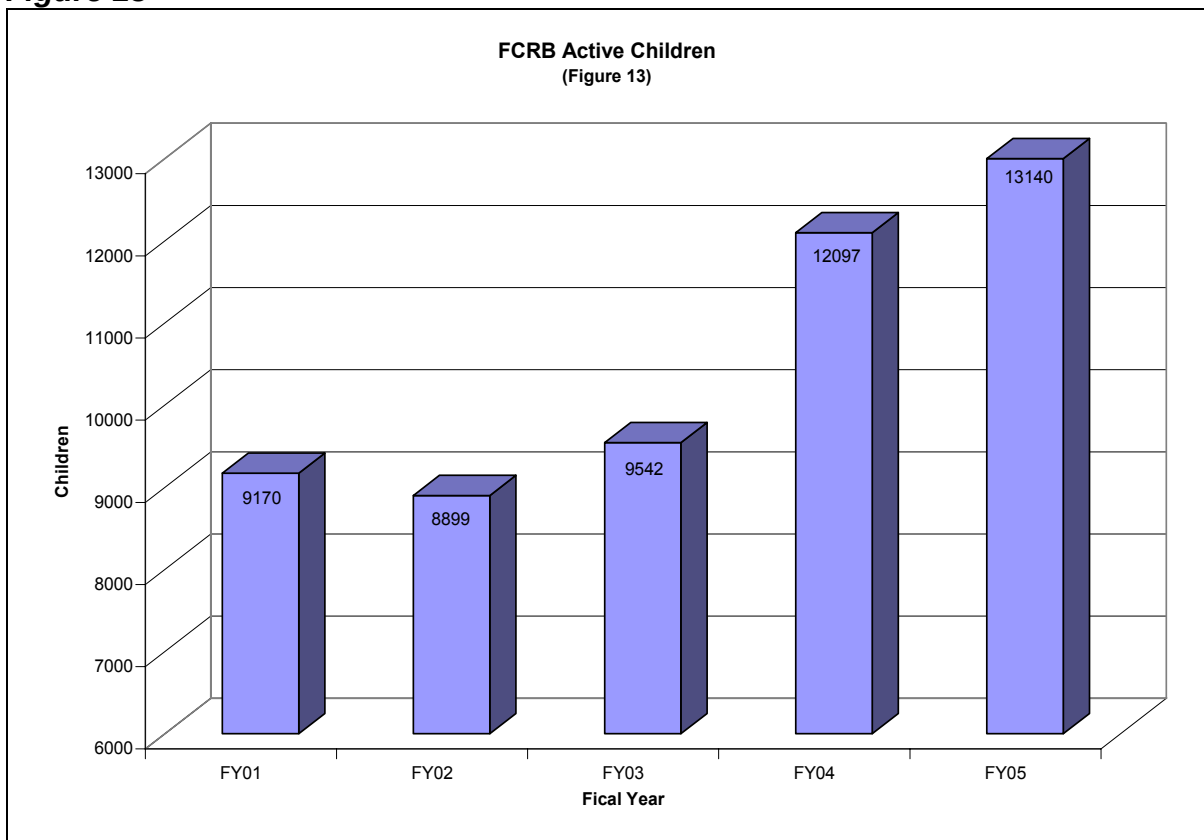


Figure 14

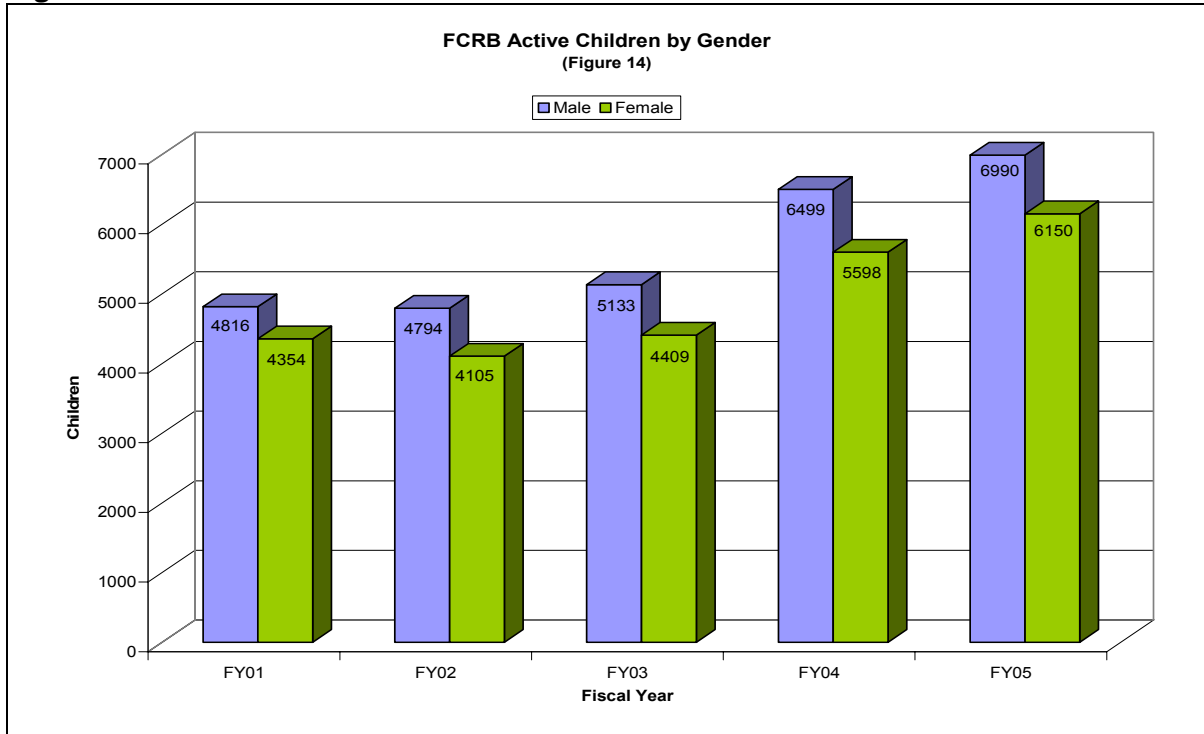
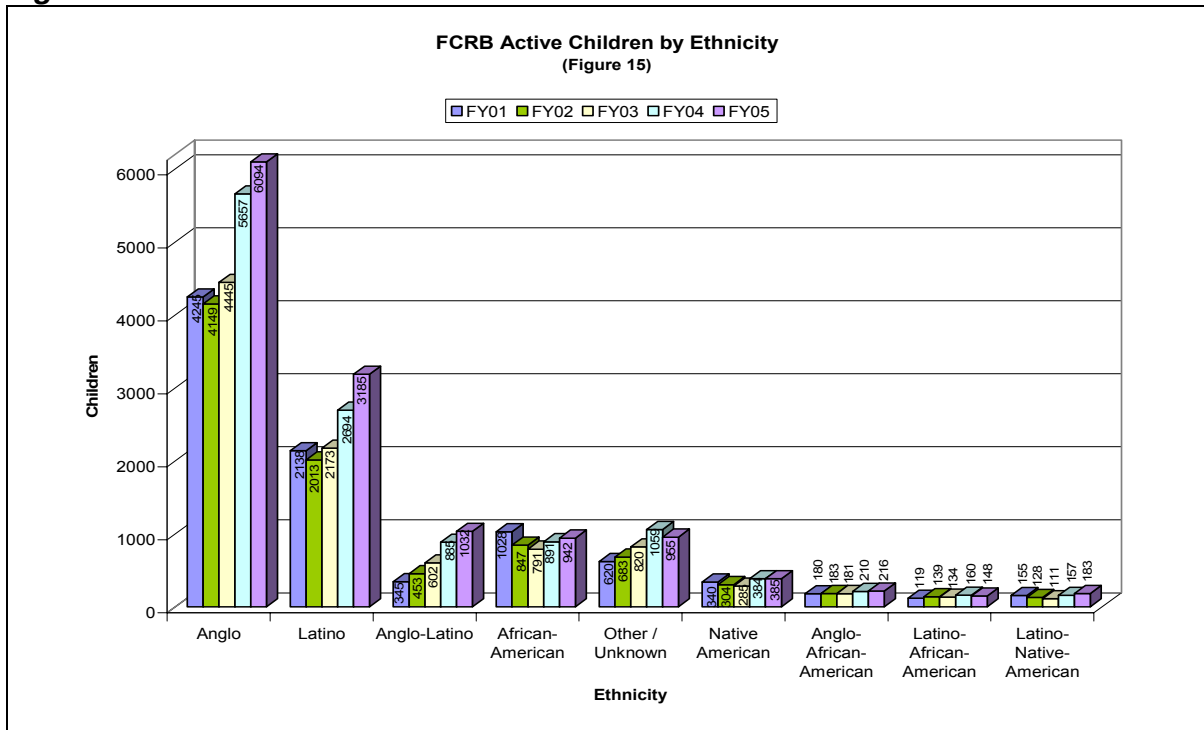


Figure 15



The following three *Figures (16, 17 and 18)* reflect the number of “Active” children by county, for the last five fiscal years. Every county except Pima and Coconino, which experienced a slight decrease in the number of active children during fiscal year 2005, experienced an increase in the number of active children over fiscal year 2004. The largest percentage increase was experienced by Greenlee (56 percent), Santa Cruz (40 percent), Pinal (35 percent), and Gila (32 percent) counties.

Figure 16

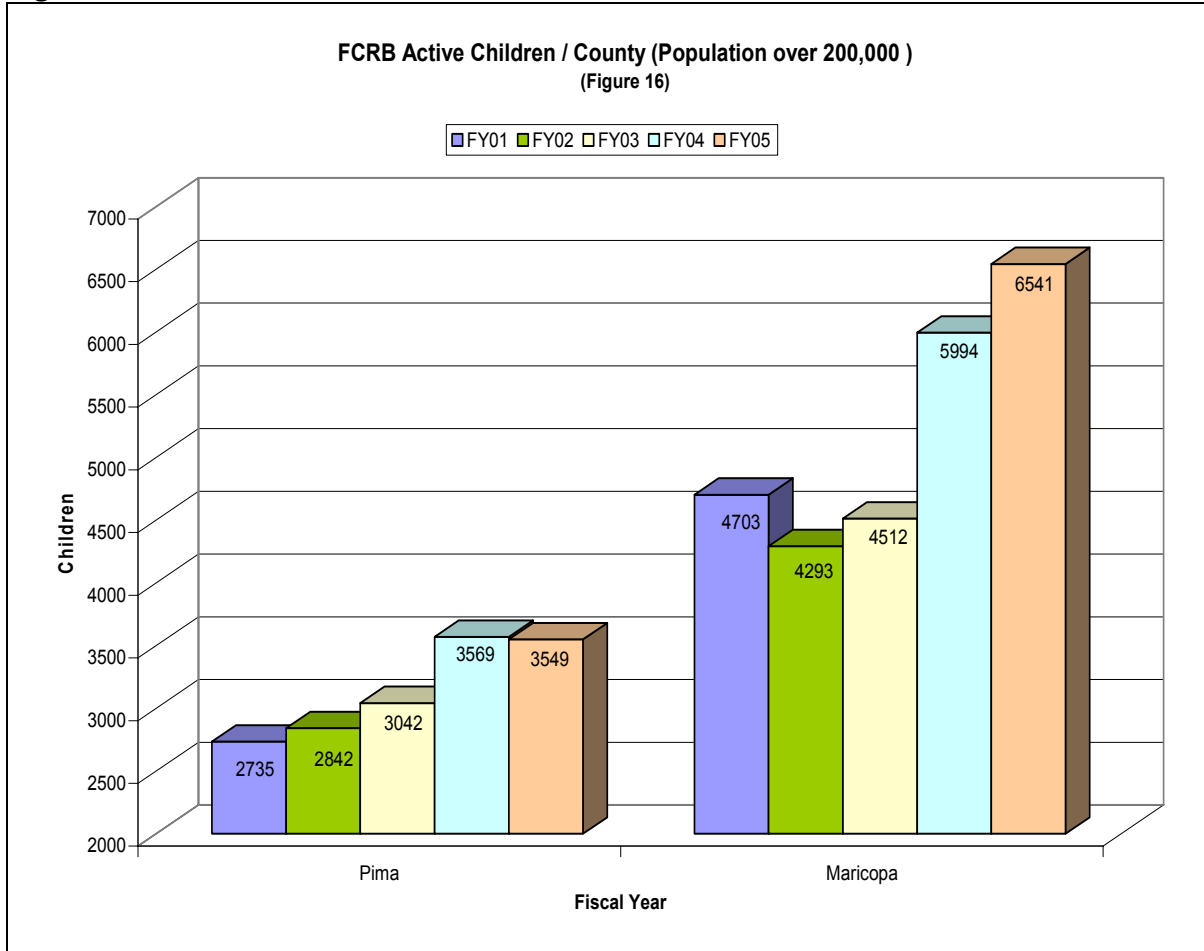


Figure 17

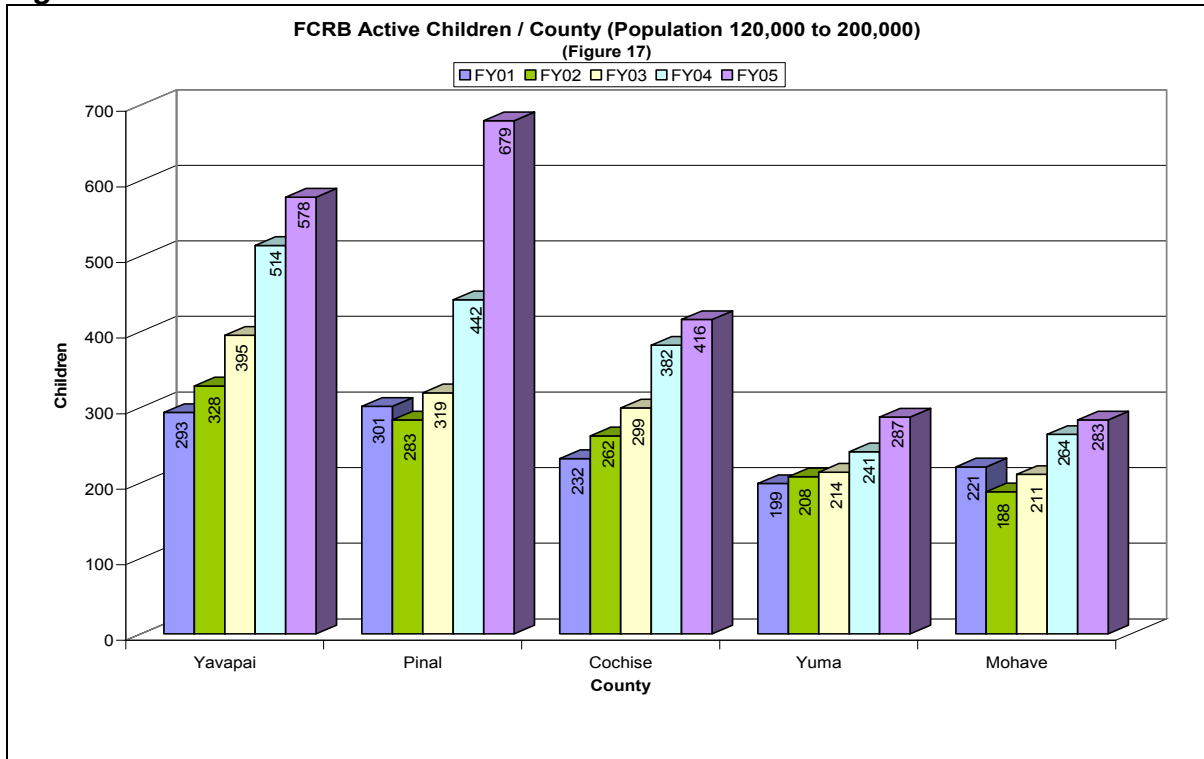
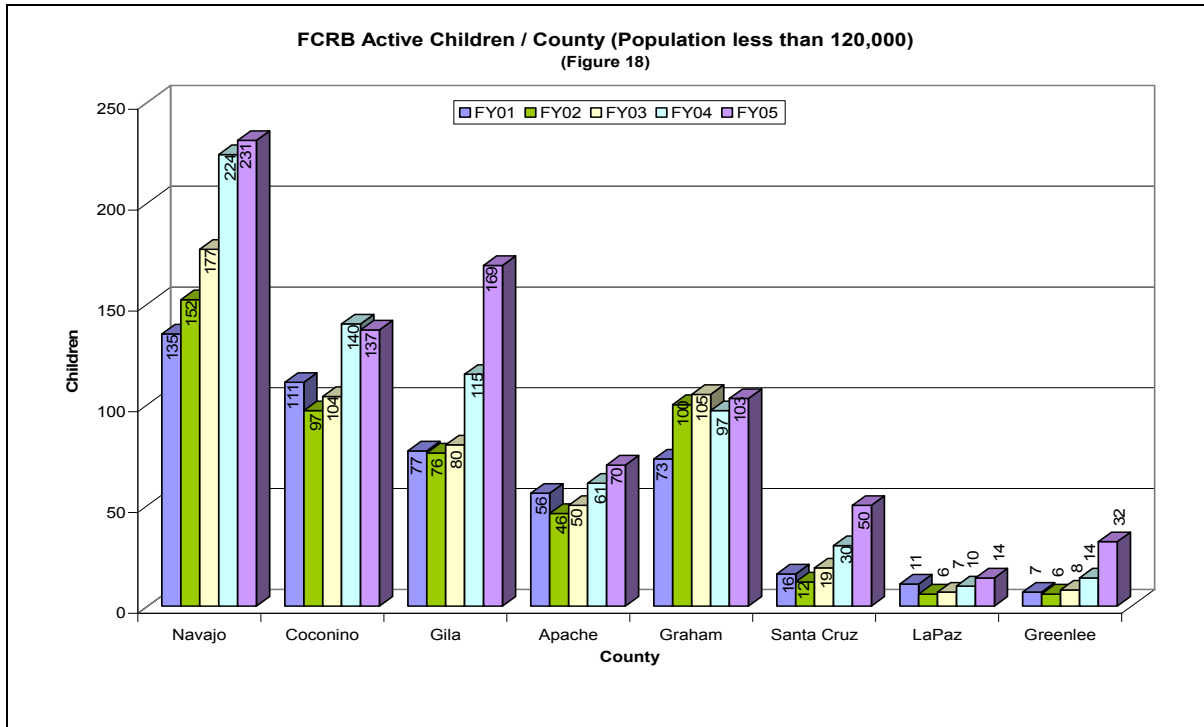


Figure 18



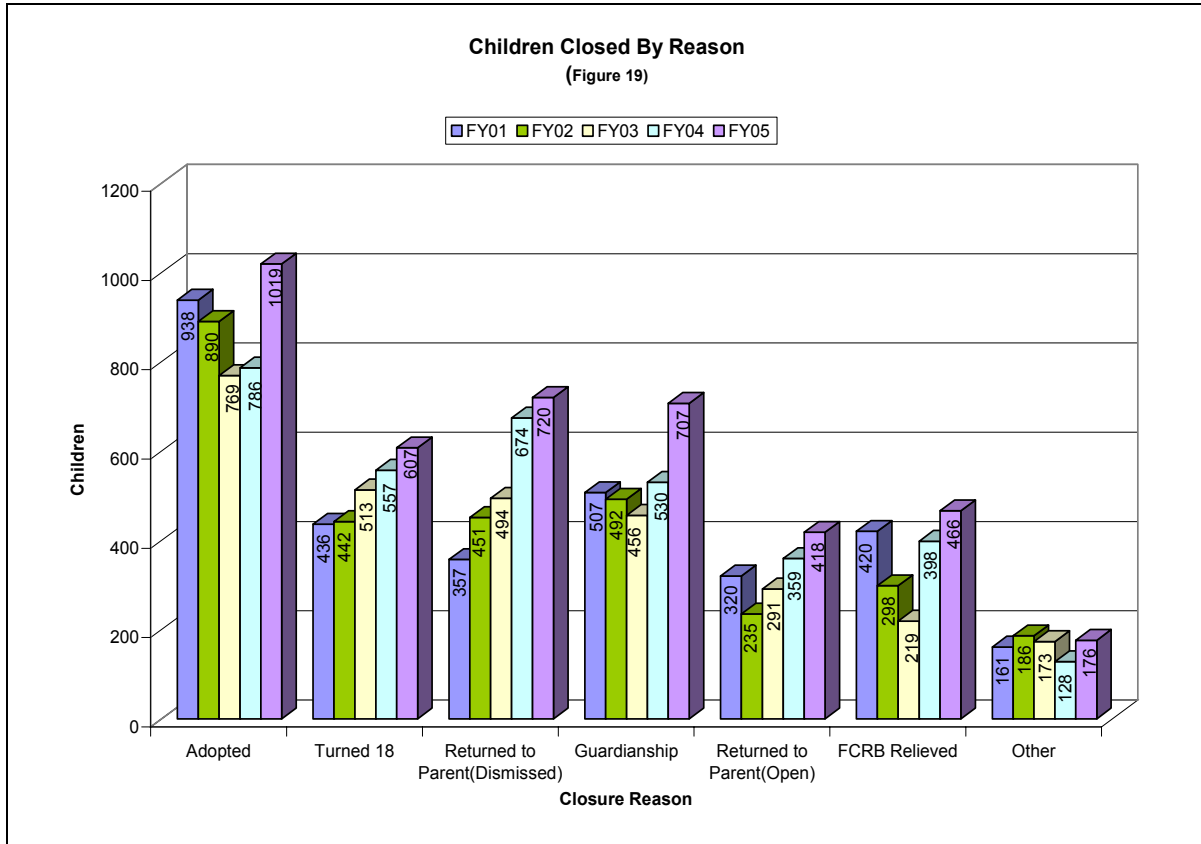
The reasons Foster Care Review Board cases have been closed over the last five fiscal years are displayed in *Figure 19*. As stated earlier, the data presented in the Foster Care Review Board portion of this Dependency data book, including that in *Figure 19*, is data extracted from the Dependent Children Automated Tracking System (DCATS) and refers only to those cases that came before, or at one time were scheduled to come before, the Foster Care Review Board. It is important to note that just because a case is closed for the Foster Care Review Board, it may still be Active to the Court.

Over the past five fiscal years, 26.5 percent of the Foster Care Review Board children's cases that were closed were closed as a result of adoption and 26 percent of the cases were closed because the children were returned home. Some of these children were returned home and their dependency cases were closed while others were returned home but their dependency cases remained open.

In fiscal year 2005, 27.6 percent of the cases were closed because the child was returned home; of that 27.6 percent, 63 percent were returned home and their dependency case was closed and the other 37 percent were returned home but their case remained open.

In fiscal year 2005, 24.7 percent of the children's cases closed were closed as a result of adoption.

Figure 19



All Foster Care Review Boards are provided with a Findings and Determinations Guidebook. The guidebook is not a checklist, but rather is provided to volunteers and staff as a tool to assist when preparing for case reviews as well as when conducting the reviews.

This guidebook provides ten Findings that serve as the board's formal response to issues that require review, as mandated by federal or state laws, as well as child welfare agency and Foster Care Review Board program policy. Boards are required to answer yes, no, partial, unknown, not applicable, or insufficient information to each of the ten Findings. The first 9 Findings are listed in *Table 5*, and Finding 10, which was established July 1, 2004, is discussed below *Table 5*.

Should the board determine that the appropriate response to any of the Findings is something other than "yes", the board is required to consider specific elements to support their determination. Each Finding is accompanied by a list of elements. Succinct comments can be made to the Findings if the listed elements do not apply. Further discussion of a Finding or an element to a Finding, specific to the case and/or interested parties is completed as an Observation, Comment, Concern or Recommendation later in the report. This manner of capturing the board's Findings and Determinations provides the means and mechanisms needed to track and query statistical data to ensure review boards are addressing federally mandated questions as well as aid in the Foster Care Review Board's advocacy efforts for children in out-of-home care.

Table 5

	FINDINGS	POSSIBLE DETERMINATIONS
Finding 1	Reasonable efforts were made to prevent the removal of the children from the home and that continuation therein would be contrary to the welfare of the children	Yes, No, Partial, Unknown
Finding 2	The Board makes a determination that continuation of the child(ren) in out-of-home placement is necessary.	Yes, No, Partial, Unknown, Not Applicable
Finding 3	The Board makes a determination that the placement(s) is/are safe, appropriate and least restrictive.	Yes, No, Partial, Unknown, Not Applicable
Finding 4	The Board makes a determination that there is an appropriate case plan(s) which outlines tasks for each participant in the case.	Yes, No, Partial, Unknown, Insufficient Information

Finding 5	The Board makes a determination that each case participant is following the tasks out lined in the case plan.	Yes, No, Partial, insufficient information
Finding 6	The Board makes a determination that progress is being made toward removing the causes necessitating out-of-home placement.	Yes, No, Partial, Insufficient Information
Finding 7	In cases other than long term foster care or independent living, the Board makes a determination that a realistic target date for the completion of the permanency goal is established.	Yes, No, Partial, Not Applicable, Insufficient Information
Finding 8	The Board recommends that a judicial determination be made that reasonable efforts are being made by the Agency to implement the permanency plan for the child(ren).	Yes, No, Partial, Not Applicable, Insufficient Information
Finding 9	The child(ren)'s education is being implemented successfully.	Yes, No, Unknown

Finding 10

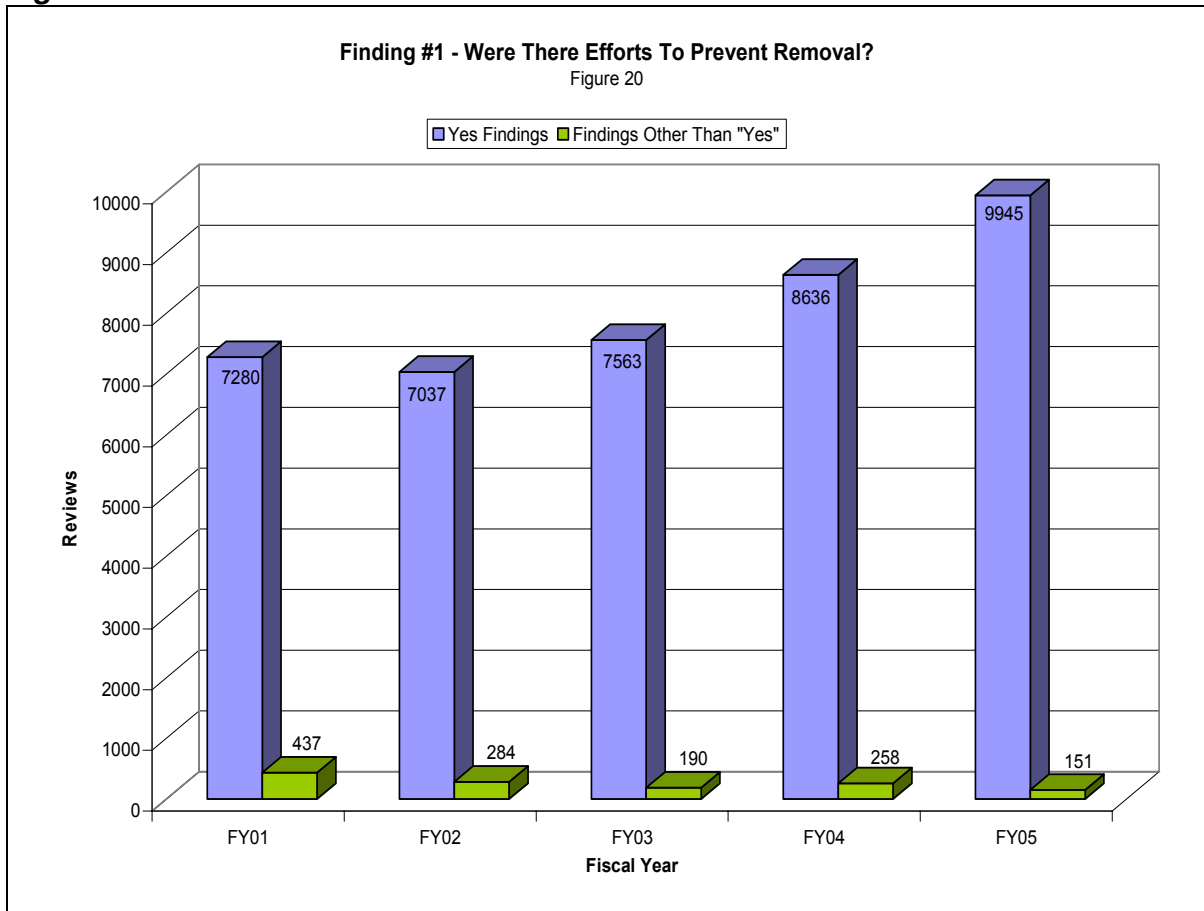
In 2005, as a result of an ad hoc committee assembled to address Action 6.0 of the Governor's Action Plan for Reform of Arizona's Child Protection System, a new Finding, Number 10, was added to the FCRB Findings and Determinations Guidebook. This Finding was designed to reveal service gaps and system problems that may be adversely affecting a child's path to permanency. Data collected on Finding 10 dates back only to the beginning of this fiscal year. A summary of data collected regarding Finding 10 will be presented later after an analysis of the other nine pre-existing Findings.

The Findings and Determinations data in this report extends back to fiscal year 2001. Prior to fiscal year 2001, the number of Findings and Determinations was reduced from 11 to 8. Extensive rewording was completed to ensure the Findings and Determinations not only met federal and state laws, but also to provide succinct information to the Court.

The following three *Figures (20-22)*, provide statistical data captured over the last five fiscal years regarding *Finding One: Reasonable efforts were made to prevent the removal of the child(ren) from the home and that continuation therein would be contrary to the welfare of the child(ren).*

Figure 20 reflects the number of times Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that reasonable efforts were made to prevent the removal of a child from their home and that continuation in the home would be contrary to the welfare of the child. The chart also reflects the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded something other than "yes" to the Finding. The various types of negative findings (no, partial, inapplicable, unknown, insufficient information), have been totaled and are included in the "no" column of this chart to ensure clarity and easy readability.

Figure 20



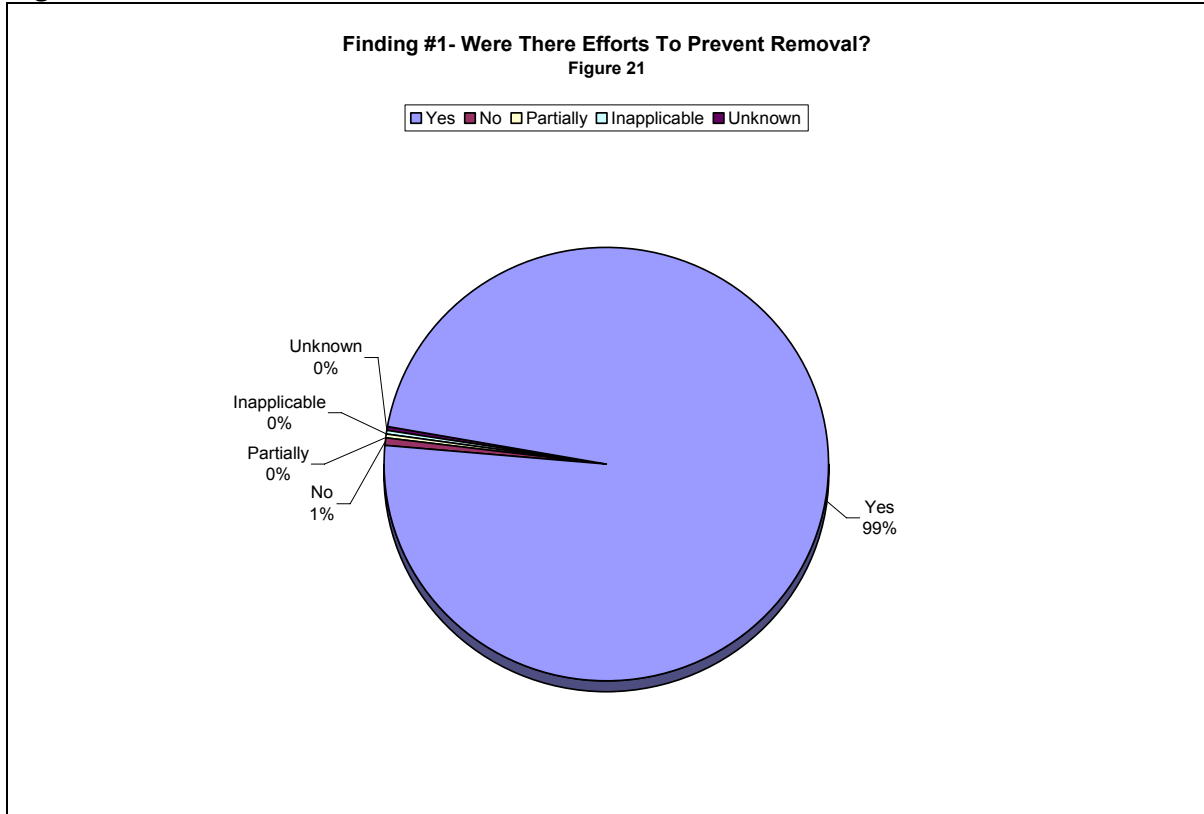
** The "no" column includes all responses other than "yes"; for example, if the board had insufficient information, the Board would respond "no" to this Finding. Responses included in the "no" column include: no, partial, inapplicable, unknown and insufficient information.*

Over the last five fiscal years, Foster Care Review Boards across the state, when considering Finding One, have consistently determined that reasonable efforts to prevent the removal of a child from his or her home were made the majority of the time.

The Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that reasonable efforts to prevent removal of a child from his or her home were made 94 percent of the time in 2001; 96 percent of the time in fiscal year 2002; 97.5 percent of the time in fiscal year 2003; 97 percent of the time in fiscal year 2004, and 99 percent of the time in fiscal year 2005.

Figure 21 breaks out the negative determinations within Finding One and shows the percentage of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded “no,” “partially,” “inapplicable,” etc., to the Finding. All 151 comments were in the “no” category.

Figure 21



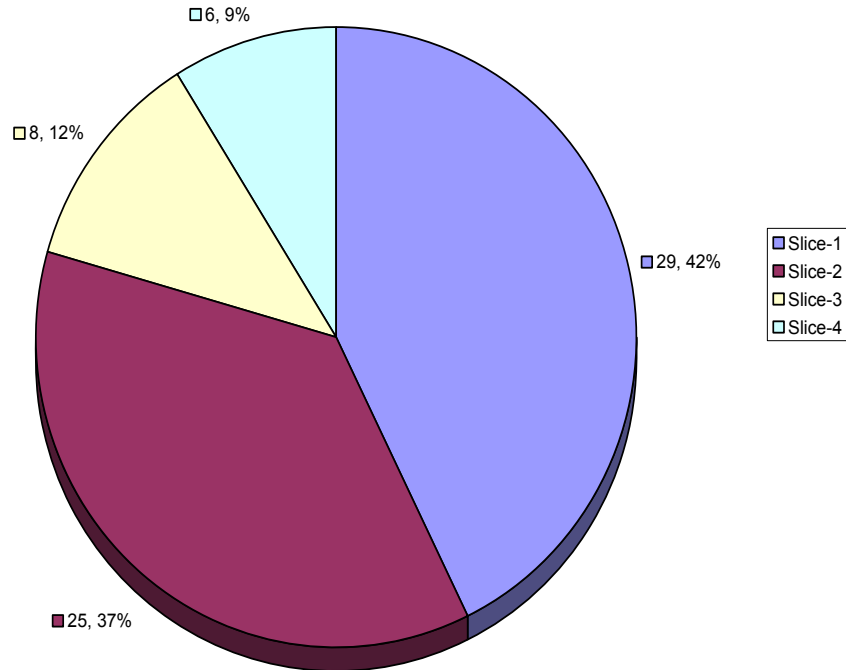
While the number of times Foster Care Review Boards determined that reasonable efforts to prevent the removal of a child from his or her home were not made was minimal during fiscal year 2005, the reasons for those determinations were still tracked by the program and are included in this report as *Figure 22*.

Figure 22

Finding #1 - Efforts to Prevent Removal / FY05

(For Findings not answered 'Yes', the breakdown of the reasons are as follows)

Figure 22



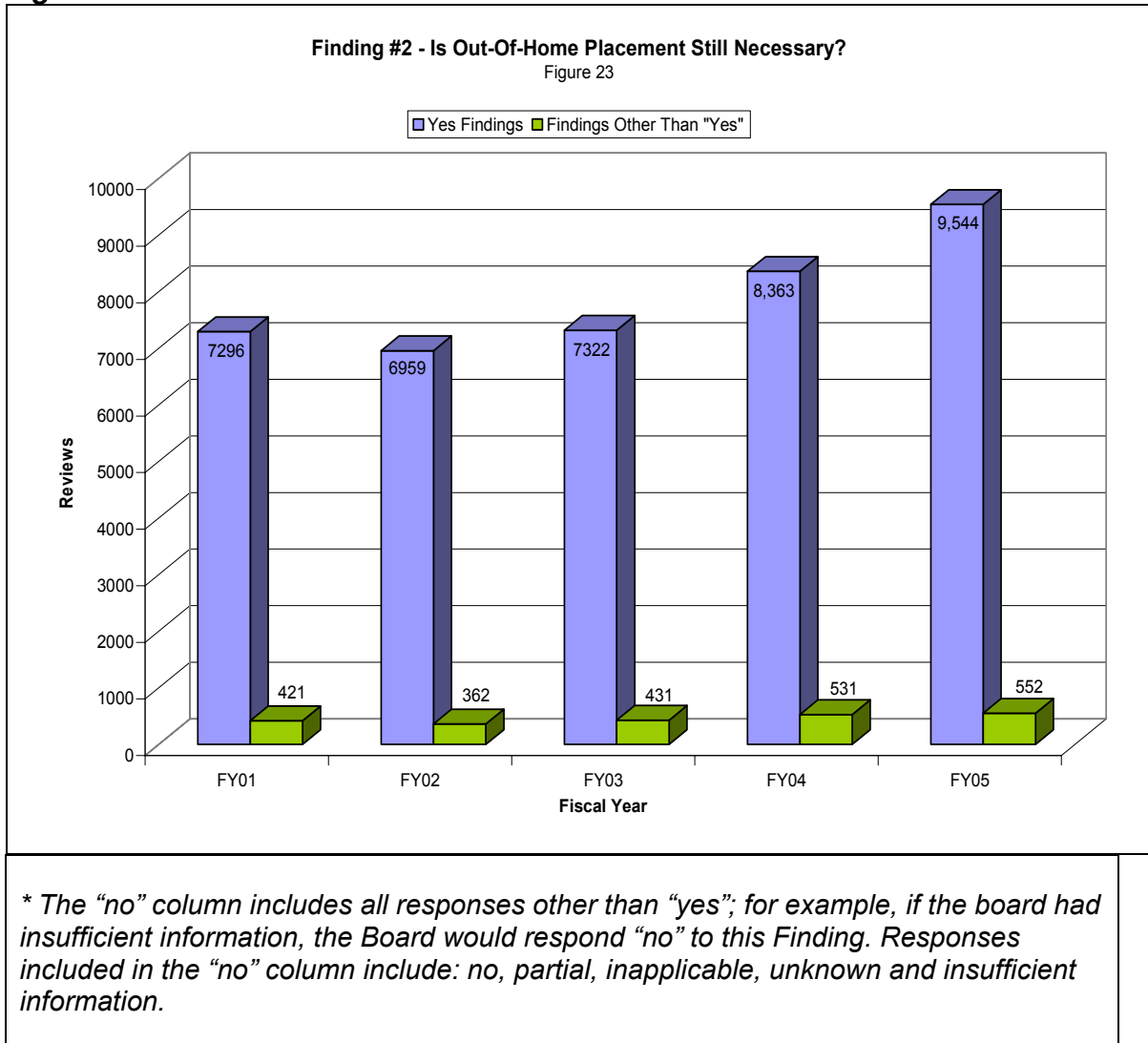
** It is important to note that several determinations can be made towards one case/child; therefore, the numbers represented above are a total of all determinations, not of children.*

Slice 1	The Court made a finding that the removal of the child(ren) from the home was the result of a Judicial determination to the effect that continuation therein would be contrary to the welfare of the children; however, the Court did NOT make a finding that reasonable efforts have been made prior to the placement to prevent removal
Slice 2	The child(ren) are currently temporary wards of the Court. The initial dependency hearings have not been completed, and to date the Foster Care Review Board is unaware of any Judicial findings regarding reasonable efforts.
Slice 3	There is not a copy of the initial dependency minute entry in the Foster Care Review Board file. Therefore, the Board is unable to determine if the Court made a finding that reasonable efforts were made to prevent or eliminate the need for removal of the child(ren) from the home; and that continuation therein would have been contrary to the welfare of the child(ren).
Slice 4	At the initial dependency hearing, to the Board's knowledge, the Court did NOT make a finding regarding whether or not reasonable efforts were made to prevent removal of the child(ren); and that continuation in the home would be contrary to the welfare of the child(ren).

The following three *Figures (23–25)*, provide statistical data captured over the last five fiscal years regarding *Finding Two: The Board makes a determination that continuation of the child(ren) in out-of-home placement is necessary.*

Figure 23 reflects the number of times Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that continuation of child in out-of-home placement was necessary. The chart also reflects the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded something other than “yes” to the Finding. The various types of negative responses, (unknown, partially, etc.), have been totaled and are included in the “no” column of the table to ensure clarity and easy readability.

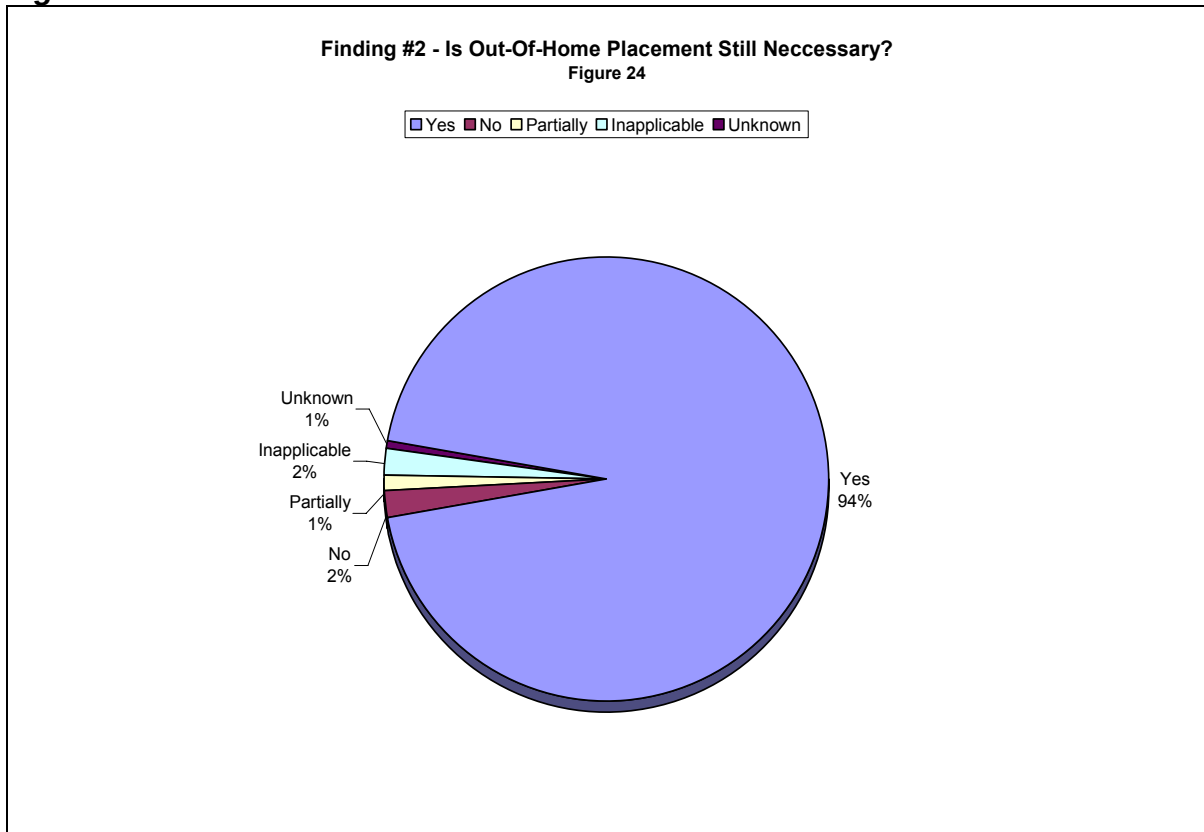
Figure 23



When reviewing cases and considering *Finding Two*, the Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined during fiscal year 2005, that the continuation of a child in out-of-home placement was necessary for 94.5 percent of the children reviewed. Of important notation is the fact that the results of this Finding have been consistent over the last five fiscal years; in fiscal year 2004, the boards agreed with this Finding 94 percent of the time; in fiscal year 2003, the boards agreed with this Finding 94 percent of the time; and 95 percent of the time in each of fiscal years 2002 and 2001.

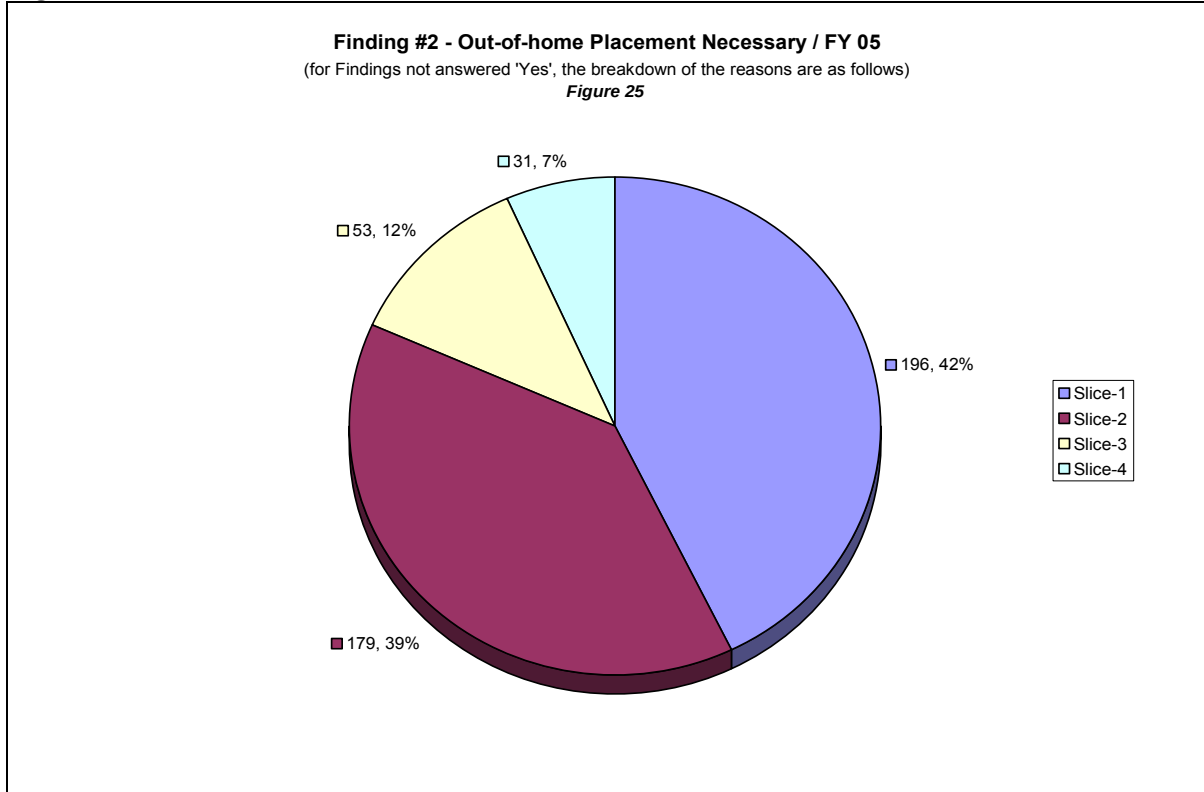
Figure 24 breaks out the negative determinations within Finding Two and shows the percentage of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded “no,” “partially,” “inapplicable,” and “unknown” to the Finding.

Figure 24



While the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards determined that out-of-home placement was no longer necessary was minimal during fiscal year 2005, the reasons for those determinations were still tracked by the program and are included in this report as *Figure 25*.

Figure 25



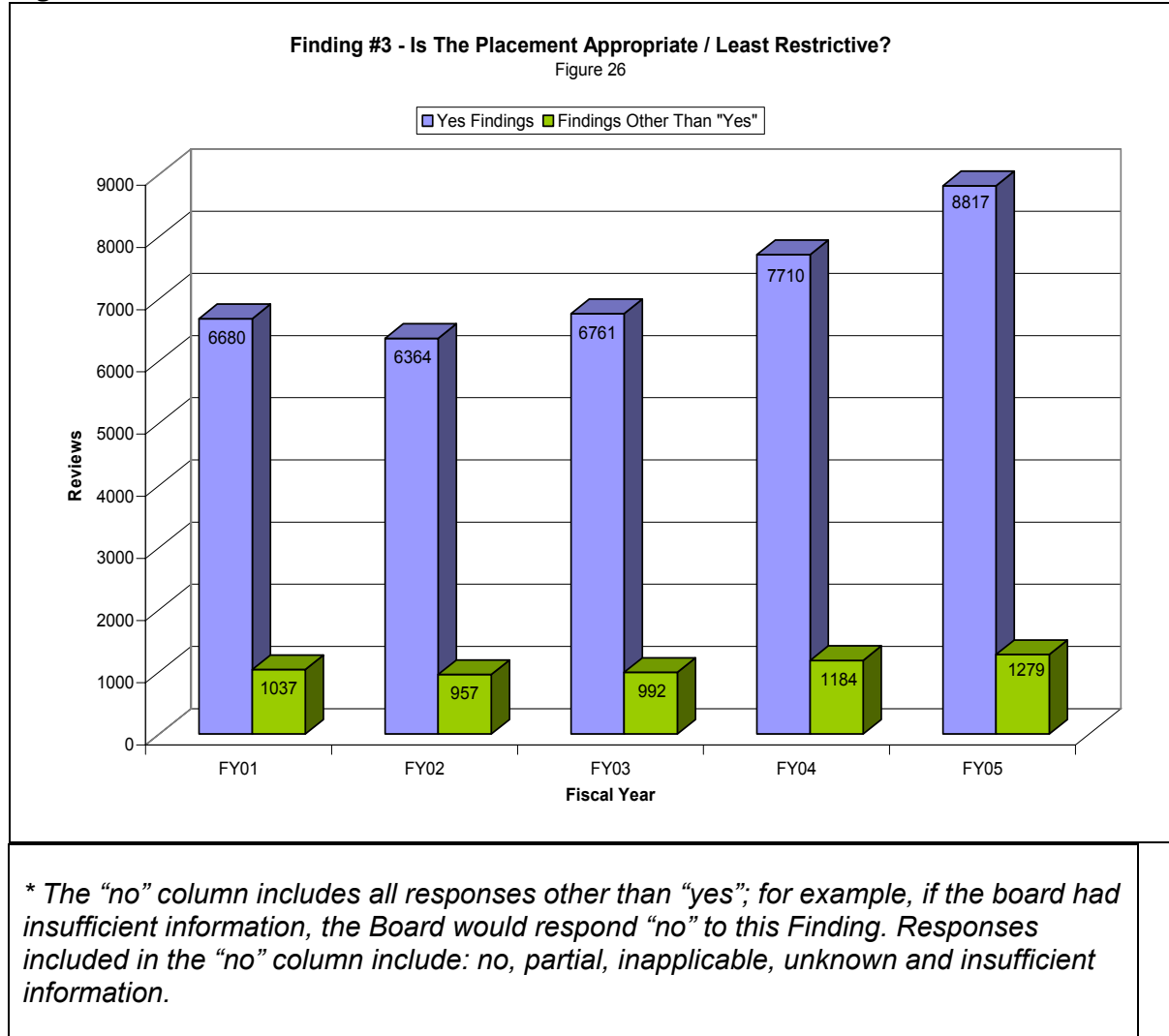
** It is important to note that several determinations can be made towards one case/child; therefore, the numbers represented above are a total of all determinations of not children.*

Slice 1	The causes or circumstances responsible for the child(ren) being placed in out-of-home care have been mitigated and reunification is possible.
Slice 2	The parent(s) or guardian(s) has achieved the case plan objectives to an extent that reunification is possible.
Slice 3	The child(ren) has progressed sufficiently to consider returning him/her home.
Slice 4	The Board believes there is no imminent risk of abuse and/or neglect if the child(ren) is returned home.

The data captured regarding *Finding Three: The Board makes a determination that the placement(s) is/are safe, appropriate and least restrictive*, is presented in Figures 26–28.

Figure 26 reflects the number of times Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that a child's placement was safe, appropriate and least restrictive. The chart also reflects the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded something other than "yes" to the Finding. The various types of negatives findings (no, partial, inapplicable, etc.), have been totaled and are included in the "no" columns of the table to ensure clarity and easy readability.

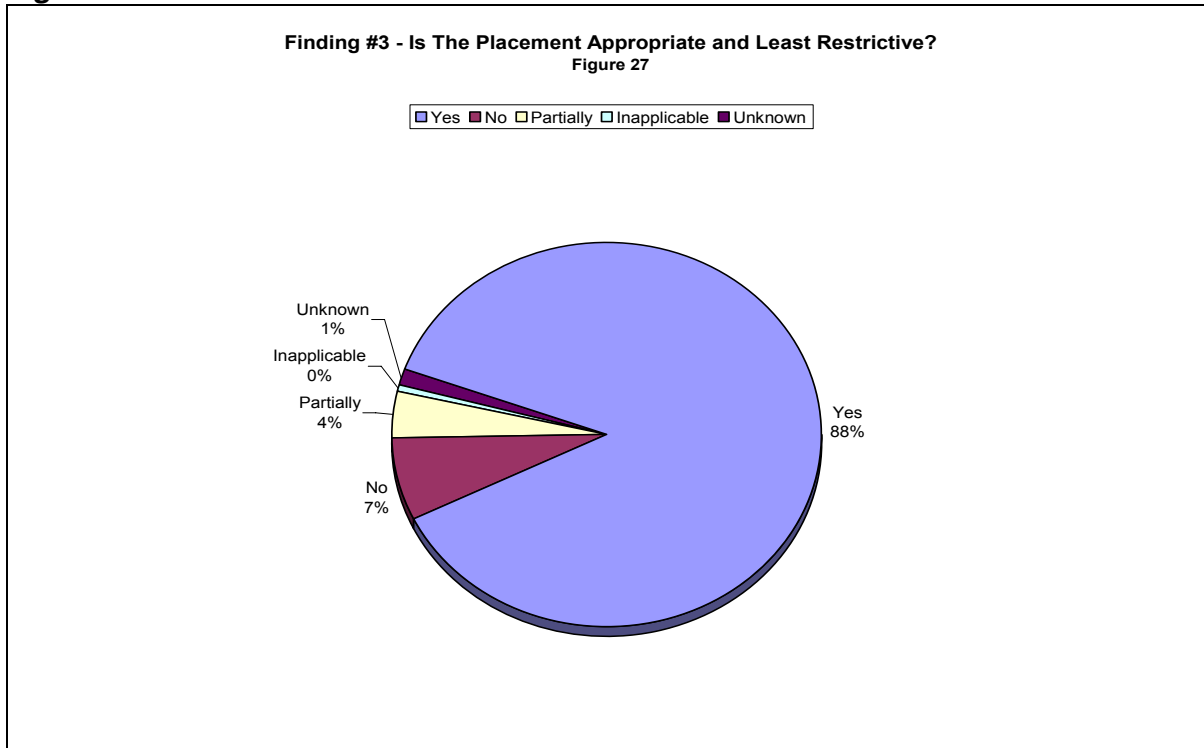
Figure 26



When reviewing cases and considering *Finding Three*, the Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that in fiscal year 2005, children had appropriate placements 87 percent of the time. In fiscal years 2001-2004, Boards found appropriate placement in 87 percent of the cases each year.

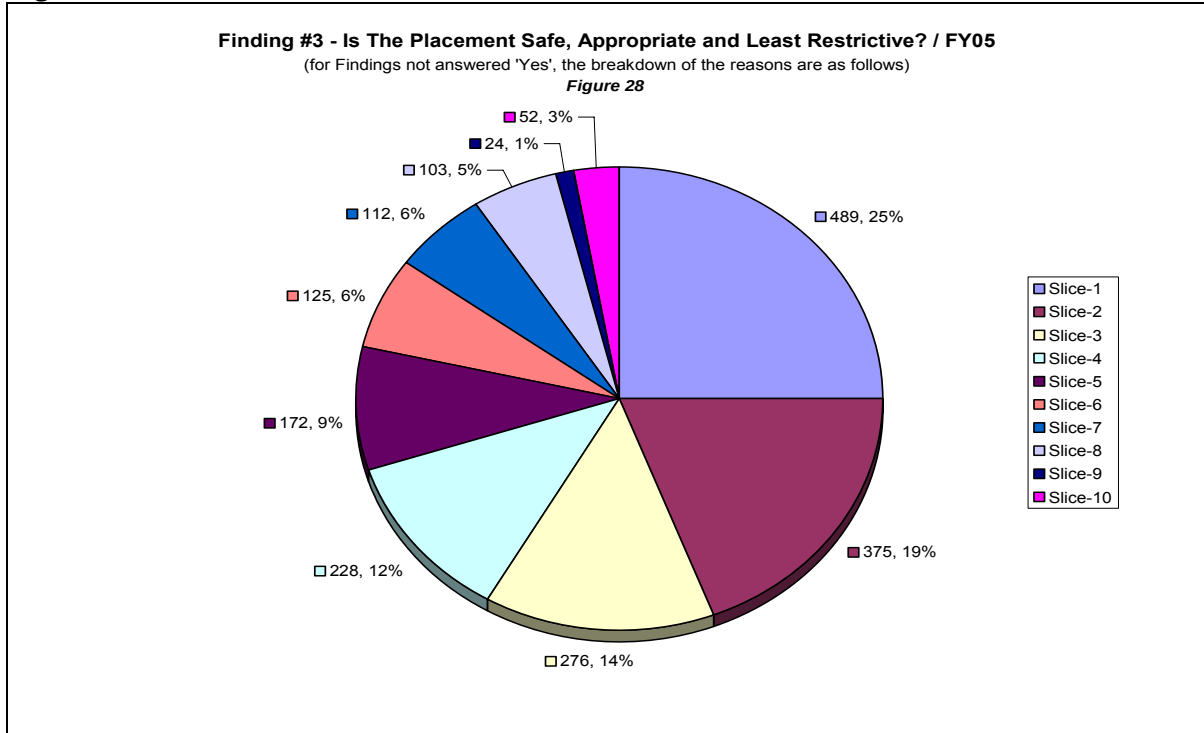
Figure 27 breaks out the negative determinations within Finding Three and shows the percentage of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded “no,” “partially,” “inapplicable,” etc., to the Finding.

Figure 27



While the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards determined that the placement was not safe, appropriate and/or least restrictive was only 7 percent, the reasons for that determination were tracked and are included in this report as *Figure 28*.

Figure 28



Slice-1	Child is on runaway status.
Slice-2	The child(ren)is not in the most family-like setting possible.
Slice-3	This placement is not being considered as a long-term placement.
Slice-4	The current placement does not meet the significant needs of the child(ren).
Slice-5	The safety of the child(ren) is not assured in the current placement.
Slice-6	The Board has insufficient information to assess the appropriateness of the placement.
Slice-7	There have been unusual incident reports in the placement during the past six months.
Slice-8	This is not a step toward permanency.
Slice-9	The investigation of the placement has been inadequate.
Slice-10	Other

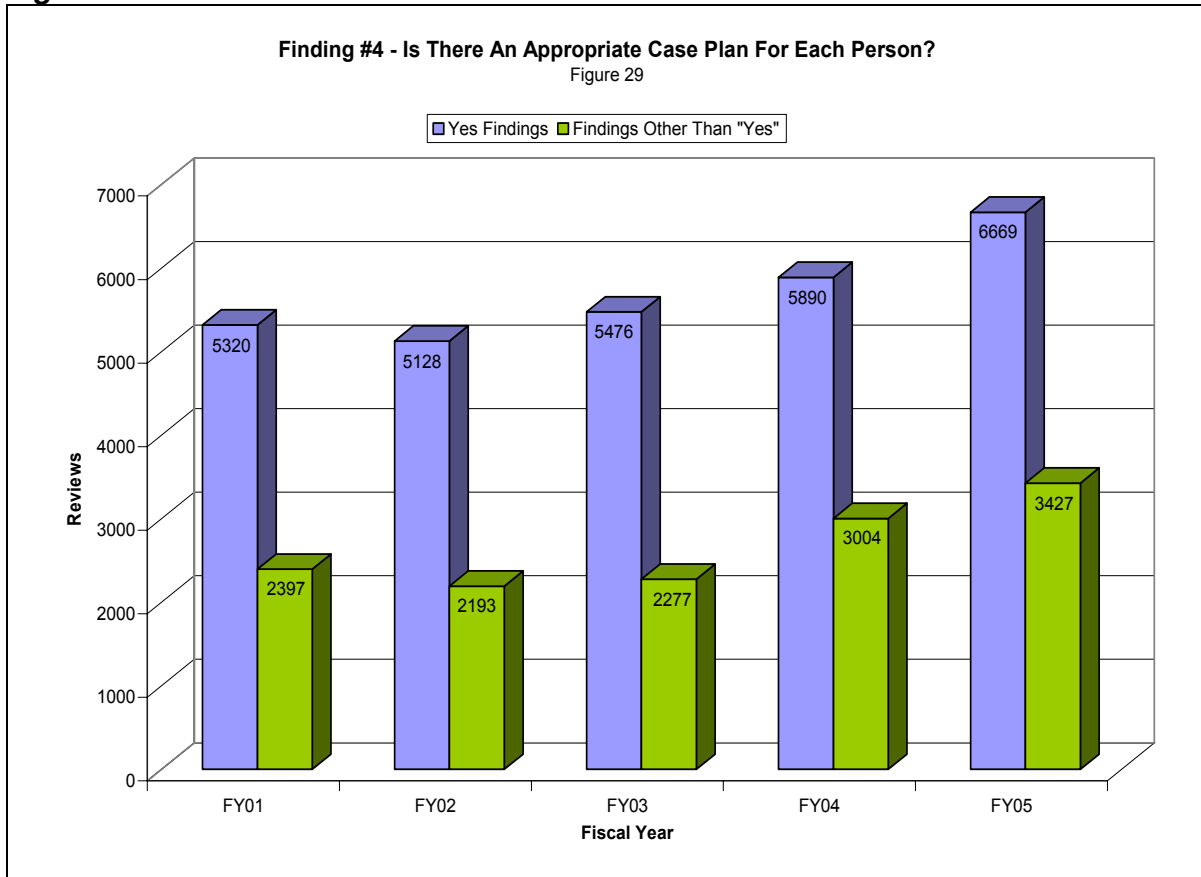
Samples regarding slices 5,7, and 8 may be found in the appendix

The data captured regarding *Finding Four: The Board makes a determination that there is an appropriate case plan(s) which outlines tasks for each participant in the case*, is presented in *Figures 29–31*.

Figure 29 reflects the number of times Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that there was an appropriate case plan which outlines tasks for each participant in the case. The chart also reflects the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded something other than “yes” to the Finding. The various types

of negative findings (no, partial, inapplicable, unknown, etc.), have been totaled and are included in the “no” columns of the table to ensure clarity and easy readability.

Figure 29

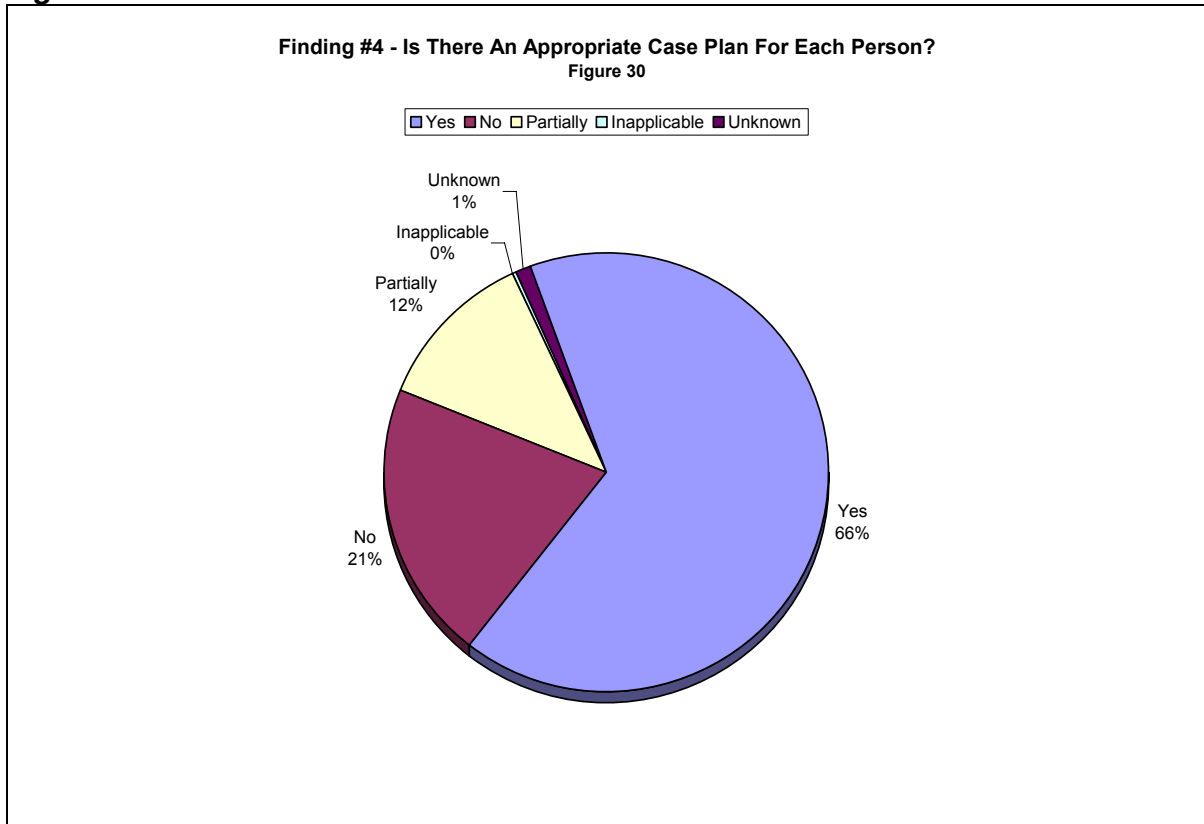


* The “no” column includes all responses other than “yes”; for example, if the board had insufficient information, the Board would respond “no” to this Finding. Responses included in the “no” column include: no, partial, inapplicable, unknown and insufficient information.

When reviewing cases and considering *Finding Four*, the Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that in fiscal year 2005, there was an appropriate case plan which outlined tasks for each participant in the cases reviewed 66 percent of the time. The Boards reached the same determination 69 percent, 70 percent, 71 percent, and 66 percent of the time in fiscal years 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004, respectively.

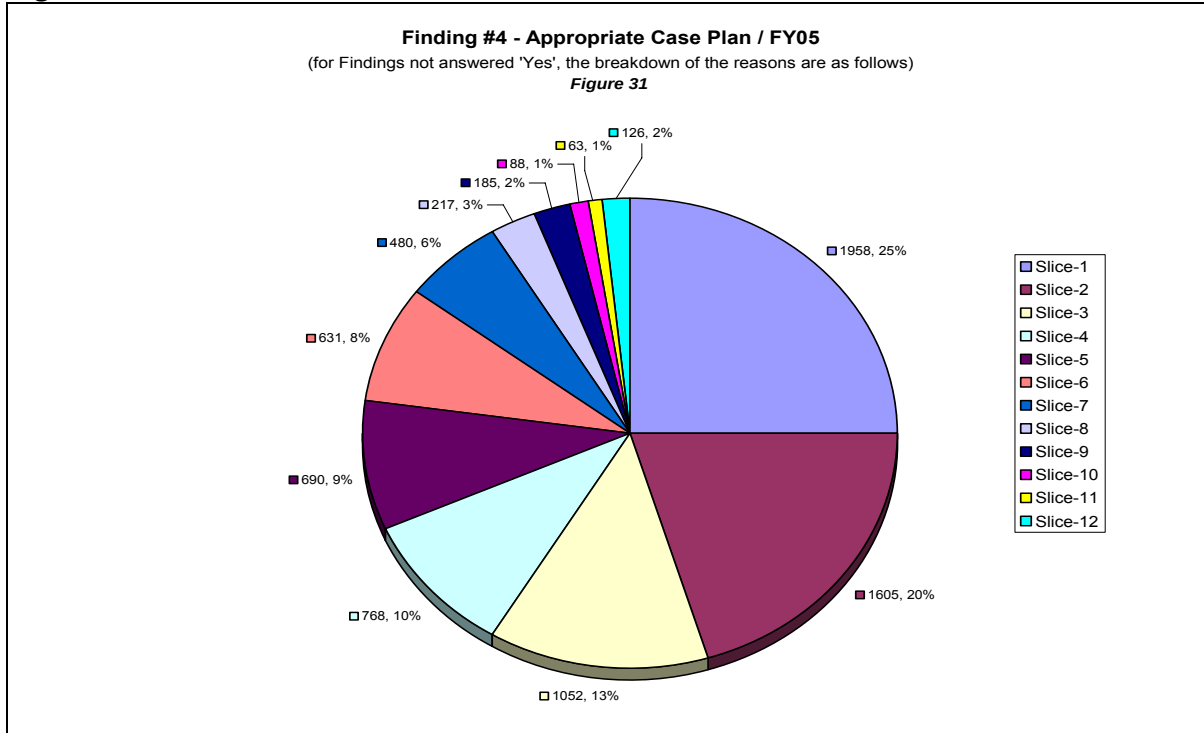
Figure 30 breaks out the negative determinations within Finding Four and shows the percentage of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded “no,” “partially,” “inapplicable,” etc., to the Finding.

Figure 30



The Foster Care Review Boards determined 21 percent of the time that there was not an appropriate case plan which outlined tasks for each of the participants in the cases reviewed. The reasons for these determinations are presented in *Figure 31*.

Figure 31



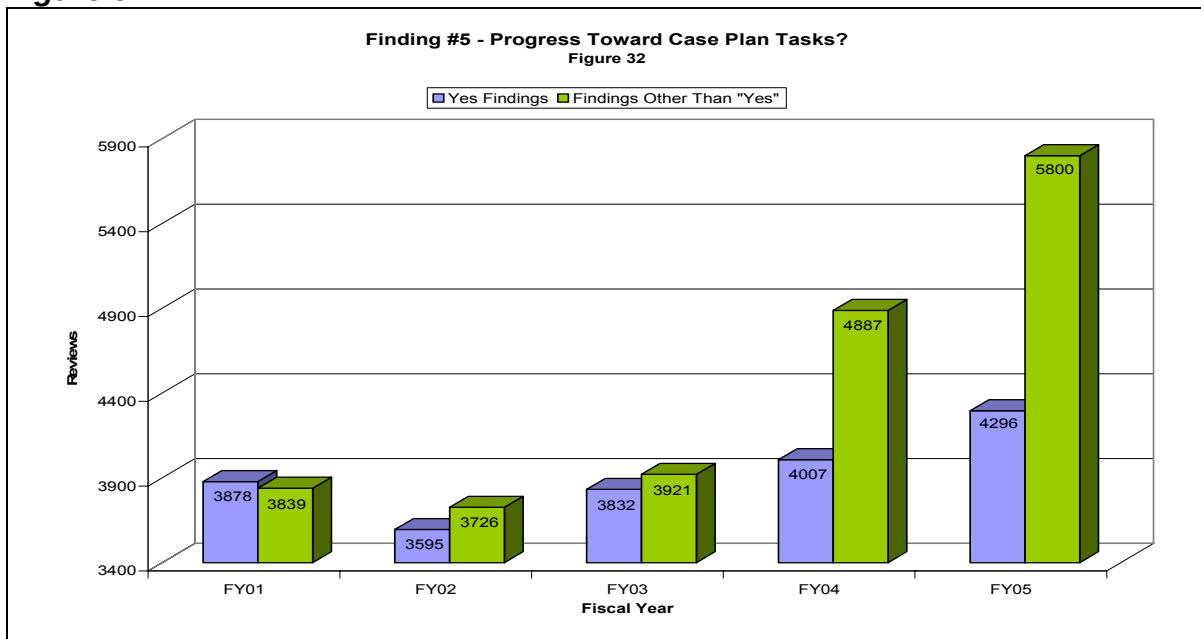
** It is important to note that several determinations can be made towards one case/child; therefore, the numbers represented above are a total of all determinations, not of children.*

Slice-1	While the Board does not have a copy, the case manager verbally identified the contents of the case plan. The Board recommends that the case manager send a copy of the case plan to the FCRB.
Slice-2	The permanency goal needs to change because the parents have failed to, or cannot, correct the problems leading to the placement.
Slice-3	The permanency plan/goal is unrealistic.
Slice-4	A more permanent goal is possible.
Slice-5	The Board does not have documentation of the current case plan/goal, and case plan with objectives, and tasks. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case manager send a copy of the case plan documentation to the FCRB.
Slice-6	The Board disagrees with the Agency's stated plan/goal.
Slice-7	There is sufficient evidence to justify the termination of the parent-child relationship in the best interest of the child. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case plan be changed to adoption.
Slice-8	There is no written case plan. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case manager develop a written case plan and send a copy to the FCRB.
Slice-9	The case plan is more than six months old. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case manager develop a current case plan and send a copy to the FCRB.
Slice-10	One or more of the siblings has inappropriate permanency goals.
Slice-11	The case plan does not include all involved family members and/or involved household members.
Slice-12	Other

The data captured regarding *Finding Five: The Board makes a determination that each case participant is following the tasks out lined in the case plan* is presented in Figures 32–34.

Figure 32 reflects the number of times Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that each case participant was following the tasks outlined in the case plan. The chart also reflects the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded something other than “yes” to the Finding. The various types of negative findings (no, partial, inapplicable, unknown, etc.), have been totaled and are included in the “no” columns of the table to ensure clarity and easy readability.

Figure 32



* The “no” column includes all responses other than “yes”; for example, if the board had insufficient information, the Board would respond “no” to this Finding. Responses included in the “no” column include: no, partial, inapplicable, unknown and insufficient information.

When reviewing cases and considering *Finding Five*, the Foster Care Review Boards across the state have consistently determined that each case participant was following the tasks outlined in the case plan approximately 50 percent of the time over fiscal years 2001, 2002, and 2003, but a greater frequency of negative findings has been observed in fiscal years 2004 (55 percent) and 2005 (57 percent).

It is important to remember that the “no” column in *Figure 32* includes all responses other than “yes.”

Figure 33 breaks out the negative determinations within Finding Five and shows the percentage of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded “no,” “partially,” “inapplicable,” etc., to the Finding.

Figure 33

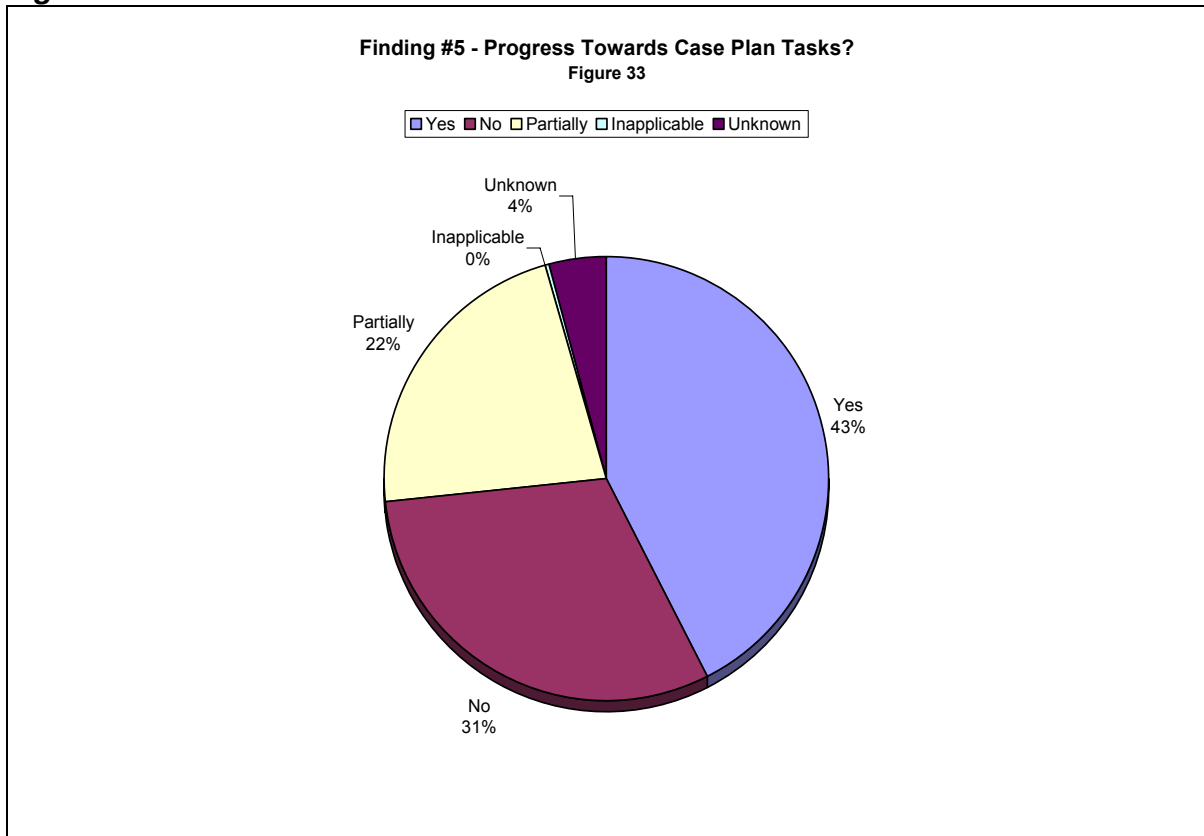
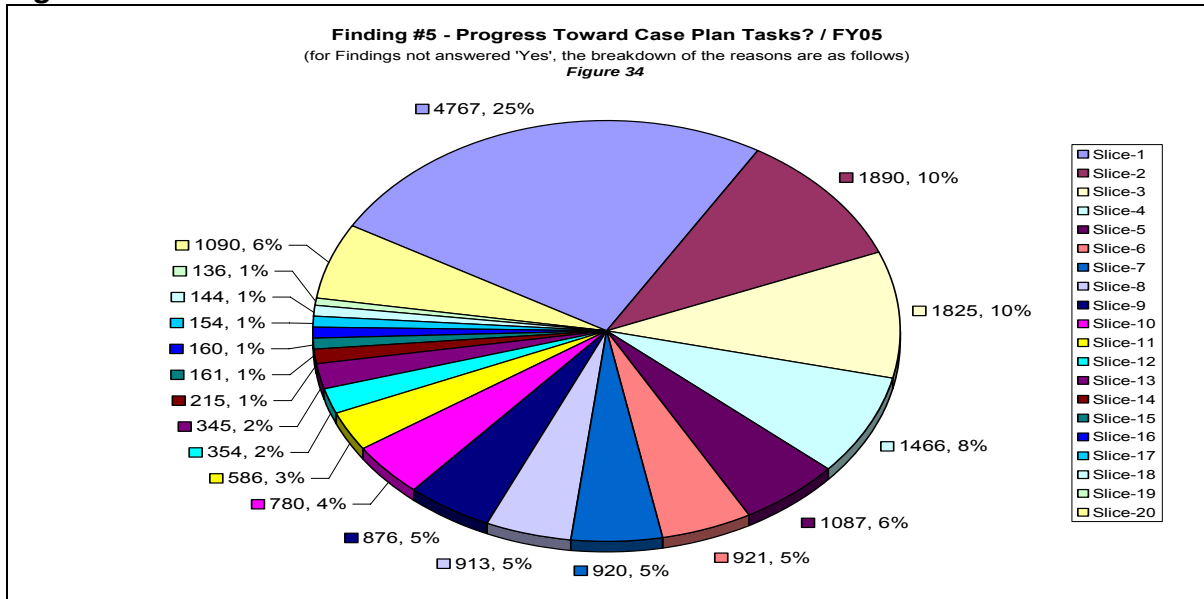


Figure 34 presents the break out of the negative responses to Finding 5.

Figure 34



** It is important to note that several determinations can be made towards one case/child; therefore, the numbers represented above are a total of all determinations, not of children.*

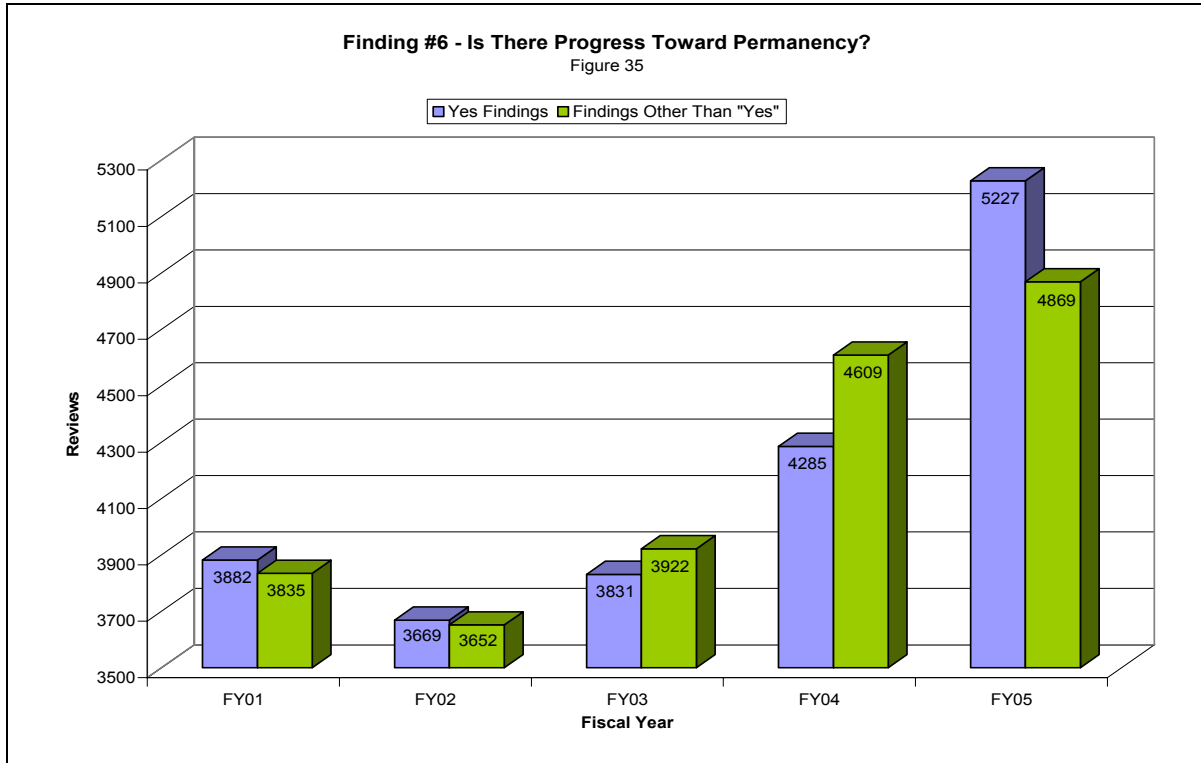
Slice-1	The parent(s) is not in compliance with participation in services.
Slice-2	The parent(s) is not in compliance with securing needed treatment services.
Slice-3	The parent(s) is not in compliance with required drug screens.
Slice-4	While the Board does not have a copy, the case manager verbally identified the contents of the case plan.
Slice-5	The parent(s) is not in compliance with securing adequate employment.
Slice-6	The parent(s) is not in compliance with securing adequate housing.
Slice-7	The Board does not have a copy of the case plan and cannot assess compliance at this time. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case manager send a copy of the case plan to the FCRB.
Slice-8	The parent(s) is not in compliance with attending scheduled visits.
Slice-9	The parent(s) is not in compliance with parent aide services.
Slice-10	The child is not in compliance with the requirements not to runaway from the placement.
Slice-11	The parent(s) is not in compliance with completing a needed psychological evaluation.
Slice-12	The child is not in compliance with following the rules of the placement.

12	
Slice-13	The parent(s) is not in compliance with a requirement(s) of the case plan which is more fully explained in the “observation/Comments/Concerns & Review Board Recommendations” section of this report.
Slice-14	The parent(s) is not in compliance with participating in the staffing process.
Slice-15	The child is not in compliance with participation in services.
Slice-16	The parent(s) is not in compliance with avoiding contact with a person who represents a risk to the child(ren).
Slice-17	Child is incarcerated.
Slice-18	The parent(s) is not in compliance with the terms of probation/parole.
Slice-19	The child is not in compliance with the terms of probation/parole.
Slice-20	The child is not in compliance with working toward a high school diploma/GED.

The data captured regarding *Finding Six: The Board makes a determination that progress is being made toward removing the causes necessitating out-of-home placement*, is presented in *Figures 35–37*.

Figure 35 reflects the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that progress was being made toward removing the causes necessitating out-of-home placement. The chart also reflects the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded something other than “yes” to the Finding. The various types of negative findings (no, partial, inapplicable, unknown, etc.), have been totaled and are included in the “no” columns of the table to ensure clarity and easy readability.

Figure 35



* The "no" column includes all responses other than "yes"; for example, if the board had insufficient information, the Board would respond "no" to this Finding. Responses included in the "no" column include: no, partial, inapplicable, unknown and insufficient information.

When reviewing cases and considering *Finding Six*, the Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that in fiscal year 2005, 51 percent of the cases evidenced some progress toward permanency. By contrast, during fiscal year 2004, Boards found that progress was *not* being made toward removing the causes necessitating out-of-home placement in 52 percent of the cases. In fiscal years 2001 and 2002, Boards determined that there was progress being made toward permanency just over 50 percent of the time, but in fiscal year 2003, they found that progress toward permanency was *not* being made 51 percent of the time.

Figure 36 breaks out the negative determinations within Finding Six and shows the percentage of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded “no,” “partially,” “inapplicable,” etc., to the Finding.

Figure 36

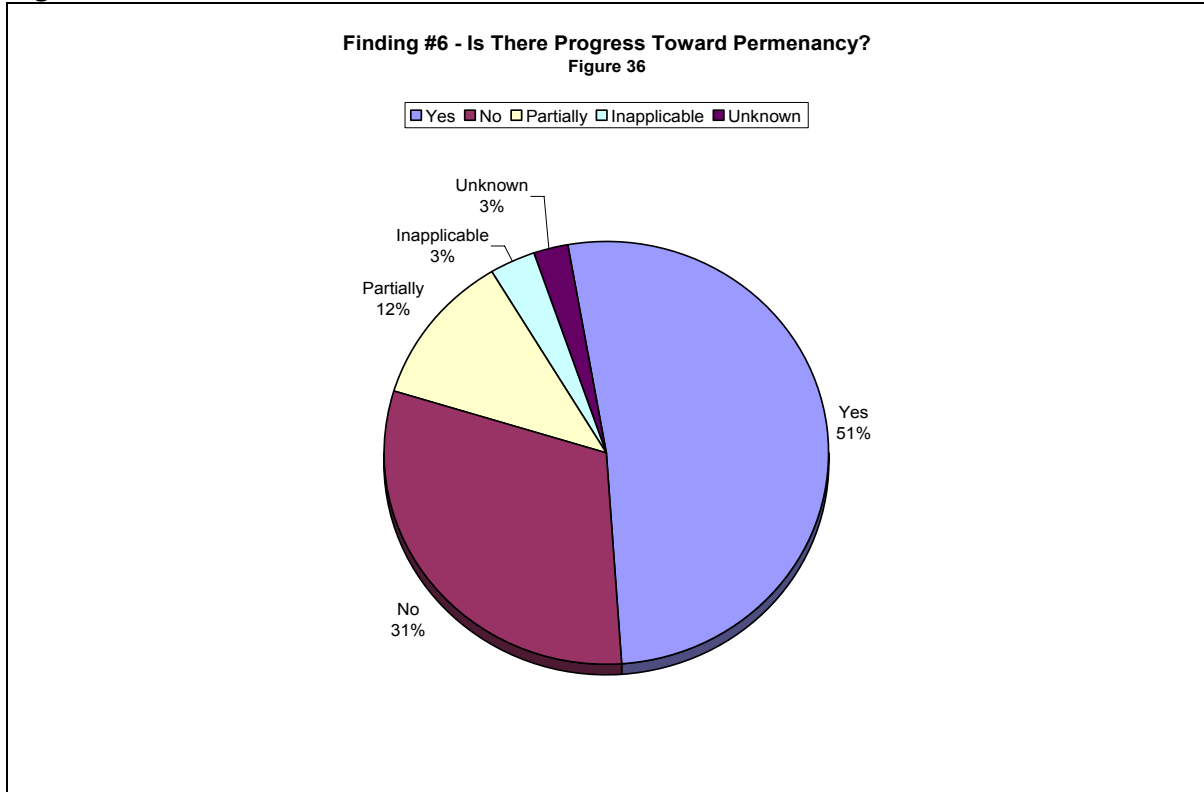
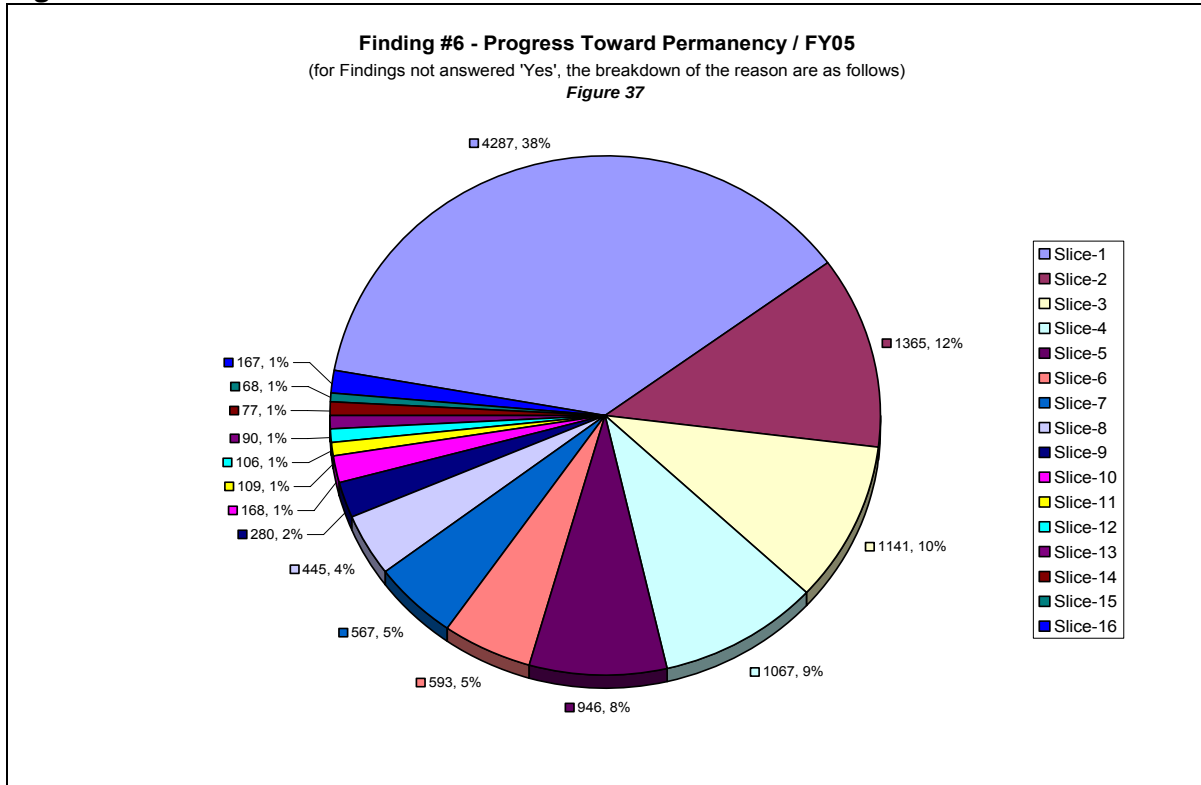


Figure 37 presents the break out of the negative responses to Finding 6.

Figure 37



** It is important to note that several determinations can be made towards one case/child; therefore, the numbers represented above are a total of all determinations, not of children.*

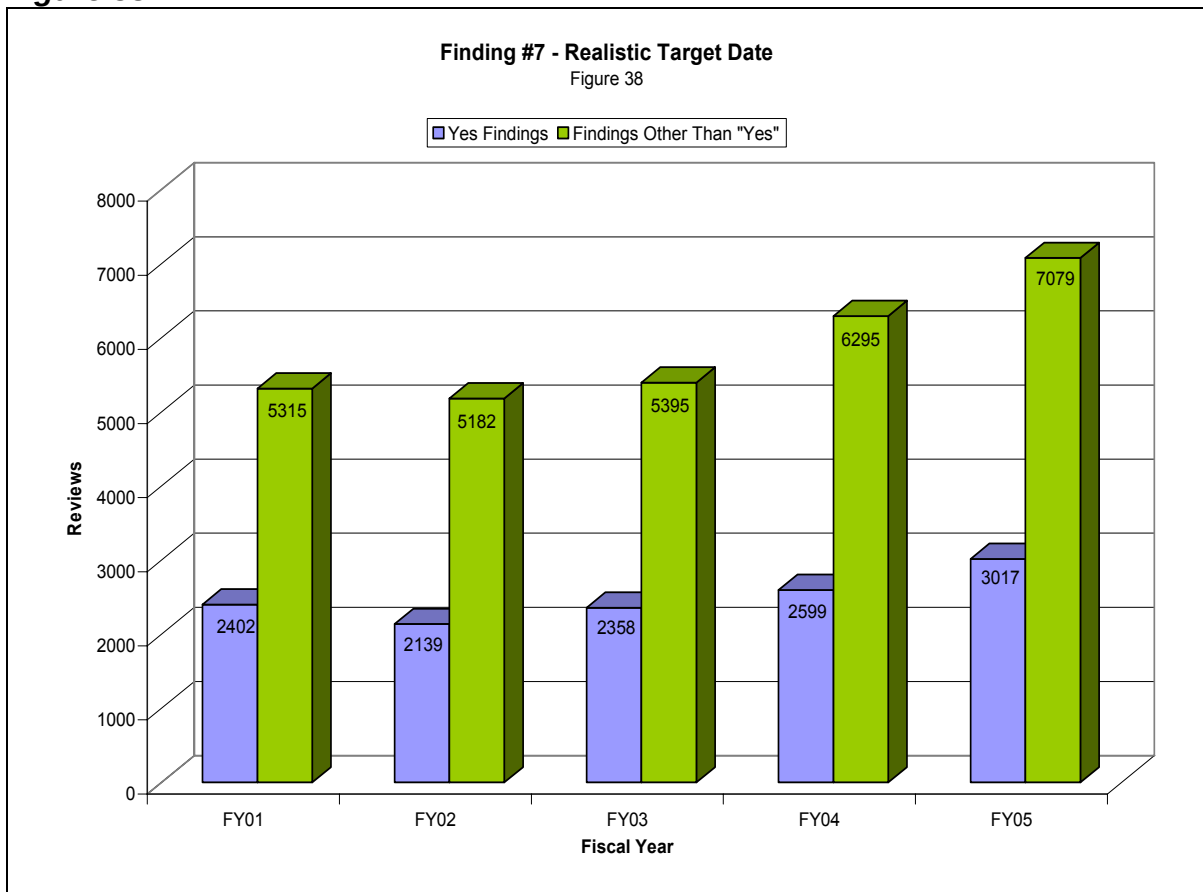
Slice-1	The parent(s) is not participating in services.
Slice-2	The attitude of the parent(s) toward the service is preventing progress.
Slice-3	Long term foster care/relative care is the only feasible plan at this time.
Slice-4	The ability of the parent(s) to benefit from services is limited.
Slice-5	The current plan/goal is not appropriate.
Slice-6	The parent is incarcerated.
Slice-7	The Board does not have documentation that enables an assessment of progress. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case manager send the FCRB a copy of the appropriate documentation.
Slice-8	Child is on runaway status
Slice-9	The child(ren) is not participating in services.
Slice-10	Child is incarcerated.
Slice-11	The inability of the child(ren) to benefit from services is preventing progress.
Slice-12	The case plan has not been in place long enough to assess progress
Slice-	Placement is impeding progress

13	
Slice-14	Changes in case managers have impeded progress
Slice-15	No placement available
Slice-16	Other

The data captured regarding *Finding Seven: In cases other than long term foster care or independent living, the Board makes a determination that a realistic target date for the completion of the permanency goal is established*, is presented in Figures 38–40.

Figure 38 reflects the number of times Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that a realistic target date for the completion of the permanency goal was established. The chart also reflects the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded something other than “yes” to the Finding. All determinations, other than “yes”, (no, partial, inapplicable, unknown, etc.), have been totaled and are included in the “no” columns of the table to ensure clarity and easy readability.

Figure 38



* The “no” column includes all responses other than “yes”; for example, if the board had

insufficient information, the Board would respond “no” to this Finding. Responses included in the “no” column include: no, partial, inapplicable, unknown and insufficient information.

When reviewing cases and considering *Finding Seven*, the Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that in fiscal year 2001, only 31 percent of the children’s cases reviewed had a realistic target date established. In fiscal years 2002, 2003 and 2004, the Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that only 29 percent, 30 percent, and 29 percent, respectively, of the children’s cases reviewed had a realistic target date established. This trend continued in fiscal year 2005, when only 30 percent of the cases reviewed were deemed to have a realistic target date.

When analyzing the percentage of cases in which the Foster Care Review Boards did not determine that a realistic target date had been established, one must consider *Figure 39*, which breaks out the specific determinations and reflects that in fiscal year 2005, the actual number of “no” determinations equaled 44 percent.

Figure 39 breaks out the negative determinations within *Finding Seven* and shows the percentage of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded “no,” “partially,” “inapplicable,” etc., to the Finding.

Figure 39

Finding #7 - Is There A Realistic Target Date For The Case Plan?
Figure 39

■ Yes ■ No ■ Partially ■ Inapplicable ■ Unknown

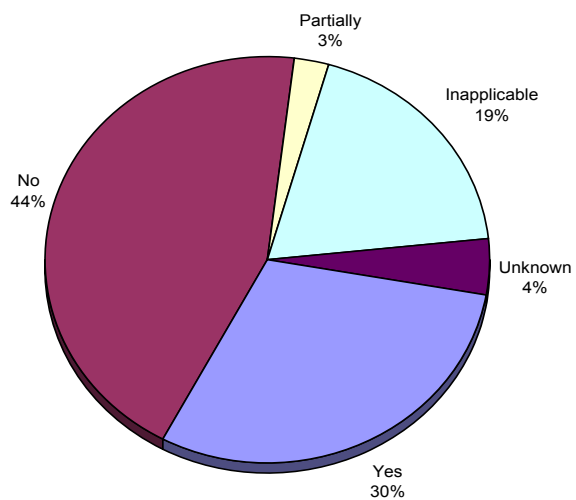


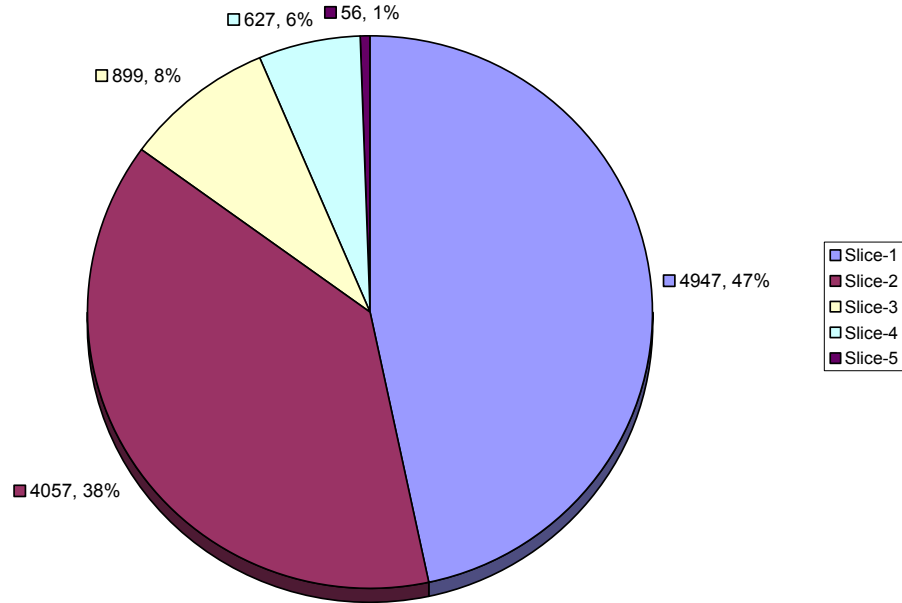
Figure 40 reflects the 44 percent and presents the specific reasons a “no” determination was reached.

Figure 40

Finding #7 - Realistic Target Date / FY05

(for Findings not answered 'Yes', the breakdown of the reasons are as follows)

Figure 40



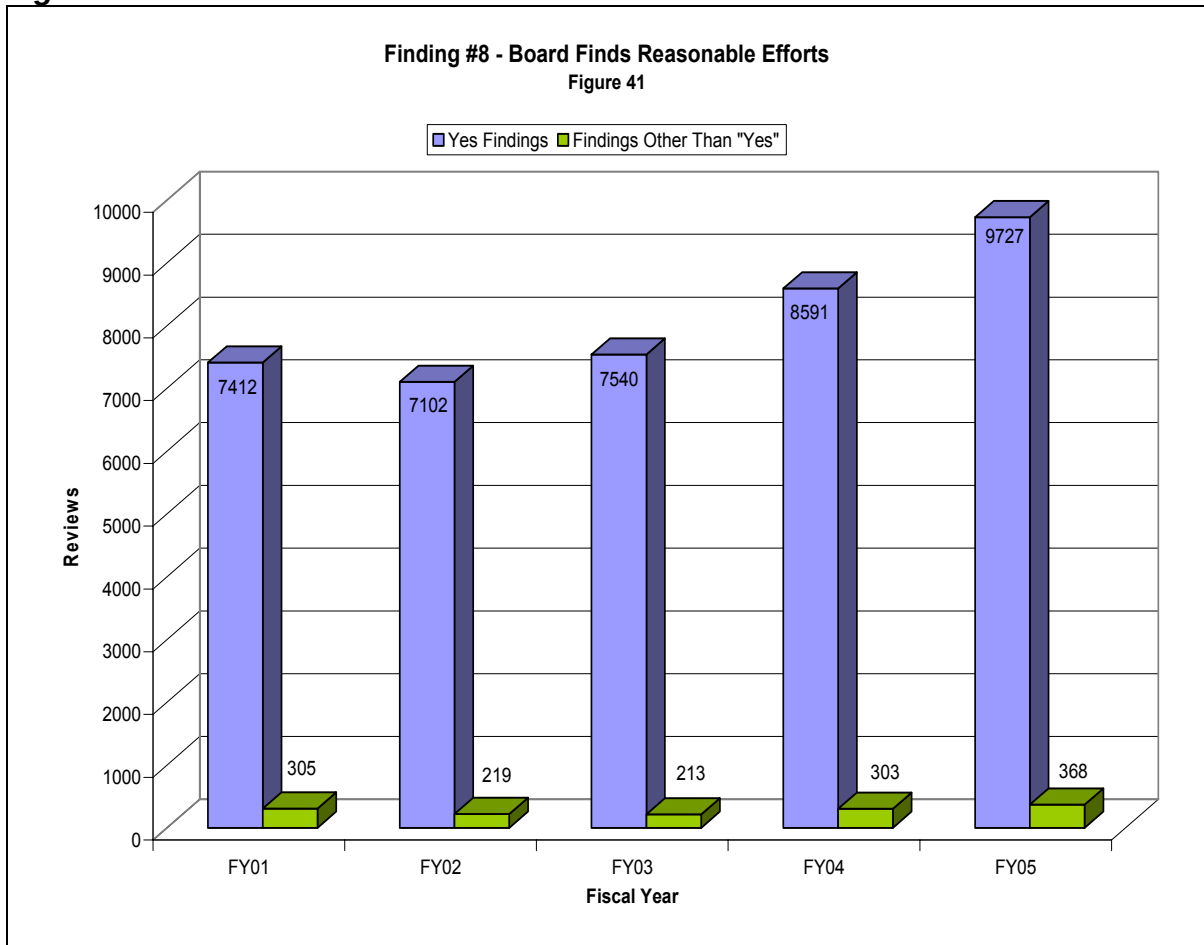
** It is important to note that several determinations can be made towards one case/child; therefore, the numbers represented above are a total of all determinations, not of children.*

Slice-1	The target date is unrealistic for the requirements of the case plan.
Slice-2	The target date is unrealistic due to the lack of progress toward the case plan.
Slice-3	The target date is unrealistic due to the lack of service provision.
Slice-4	To the Board's knowledge no case plan documentation of the case plan target date exists. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case manager document the case plan target date and send a copy to the FCRB.
Slice-5	There is not established target date. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case manager document the case plan target date and send a copy to the FCRB.

The data captured regarding Finding Eight: The Board recommends that a judicial determination be made that reasonable efforts are being made by the Agency to implement the permanency plan for the child(ren), is presented in Figures 4–43.

Figure 41 reflects the number of times Foster Care Review Boards across the state recommended that a judicial determination be made that reasonable efforts were being made by the Agency to implement the permanency plan for the child(ren). All determinations other than “yes” (no, partial, inapplicable, unknown, etc.) have been totaled and are included in the “no” columns of the table to ensure clarity and easy readability.

Figure 41



* The “no” column includes all responses other than “yes”; for example, if the board had insufficient information, the Board would respond “no” to this Finding. Responses included in the “no” column include: no, partial, inapplicable, unknown and insufficient information.

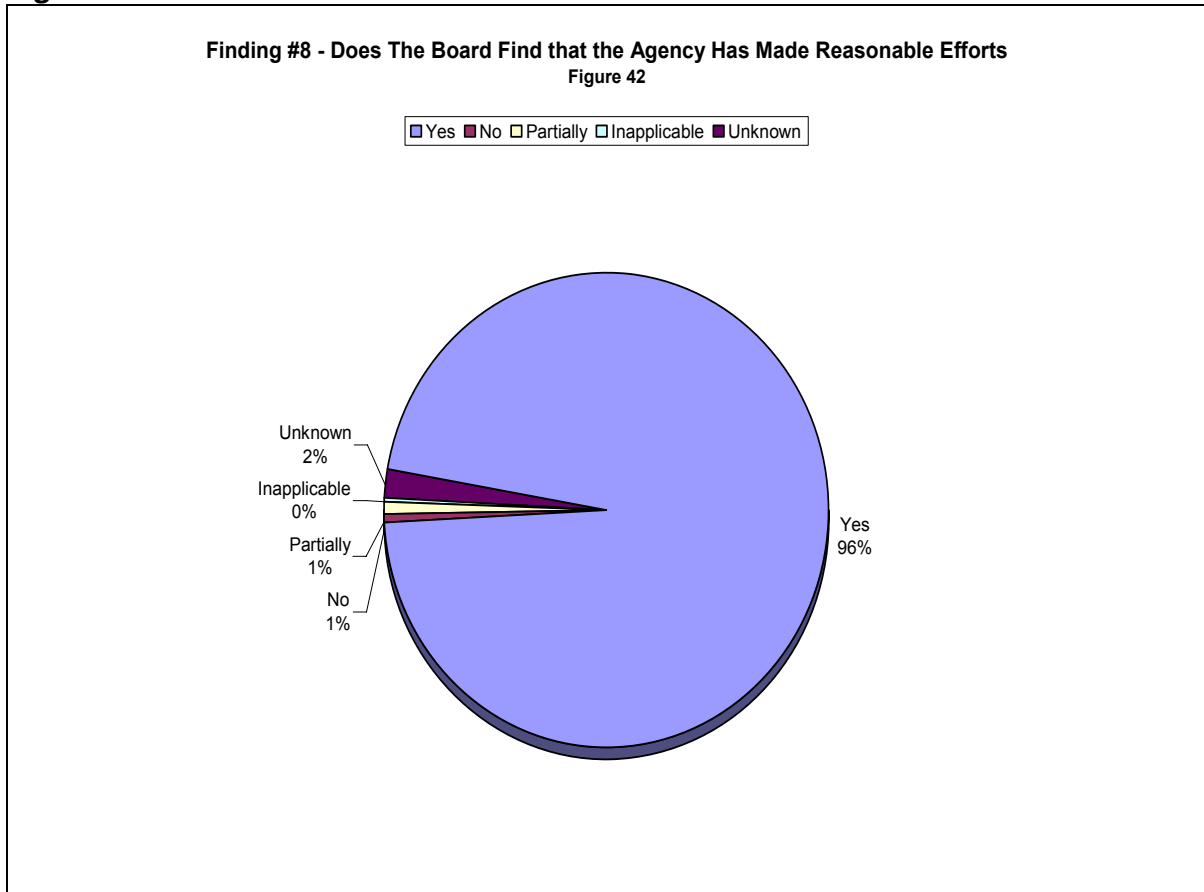
When reviewing cases and considering *Finding Eight*, the Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that a judicial finding should be made that reasonable efforts were being made by the Agency to implement the permanency plan for the children reviewed in 96, 97, 97 and 96.6 percent of the cases during fiscal years 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004, respectively.

While the percentage of times the Foster Care Review Boards determined that a judicial determination should be made that reasonable efforts were not being made by the

Agency to implement the permanency plan for the child(ren) being reviewed over the last four fiscal years was minimal, the data is present in the *Figures 42 and 43*.

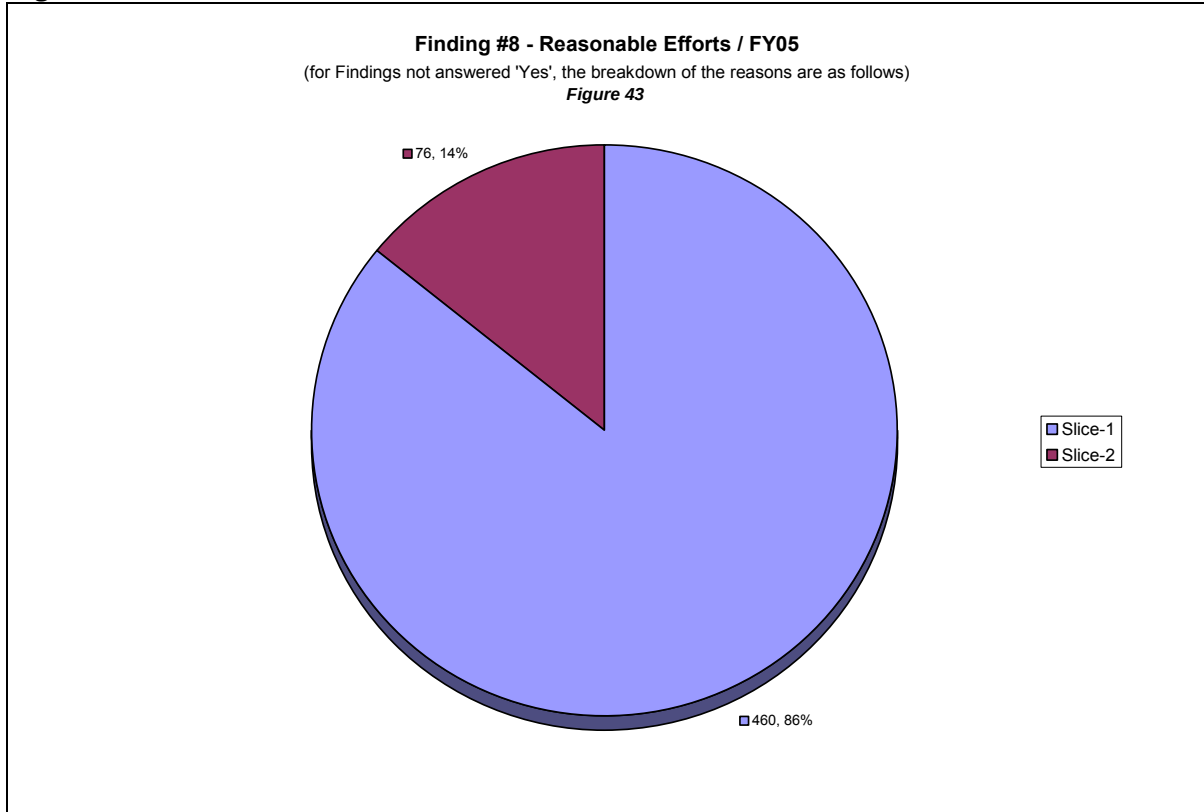
Figure 42 breaks out the negative determinations within Finding Eight and shows the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded “no,” “partially,” “inapplicable,” etc., to the Finding.

Figure 42



When analyzing the percentage of cases in which the Foster Care Review Boards determined that a judicial determination should be made that reasonable efforts were not being made by the Agency to implement the permanency plan for the child(ren) being reviewed, one must consider *Figure 43*, which breaks out the specific determinations.

Figure 43



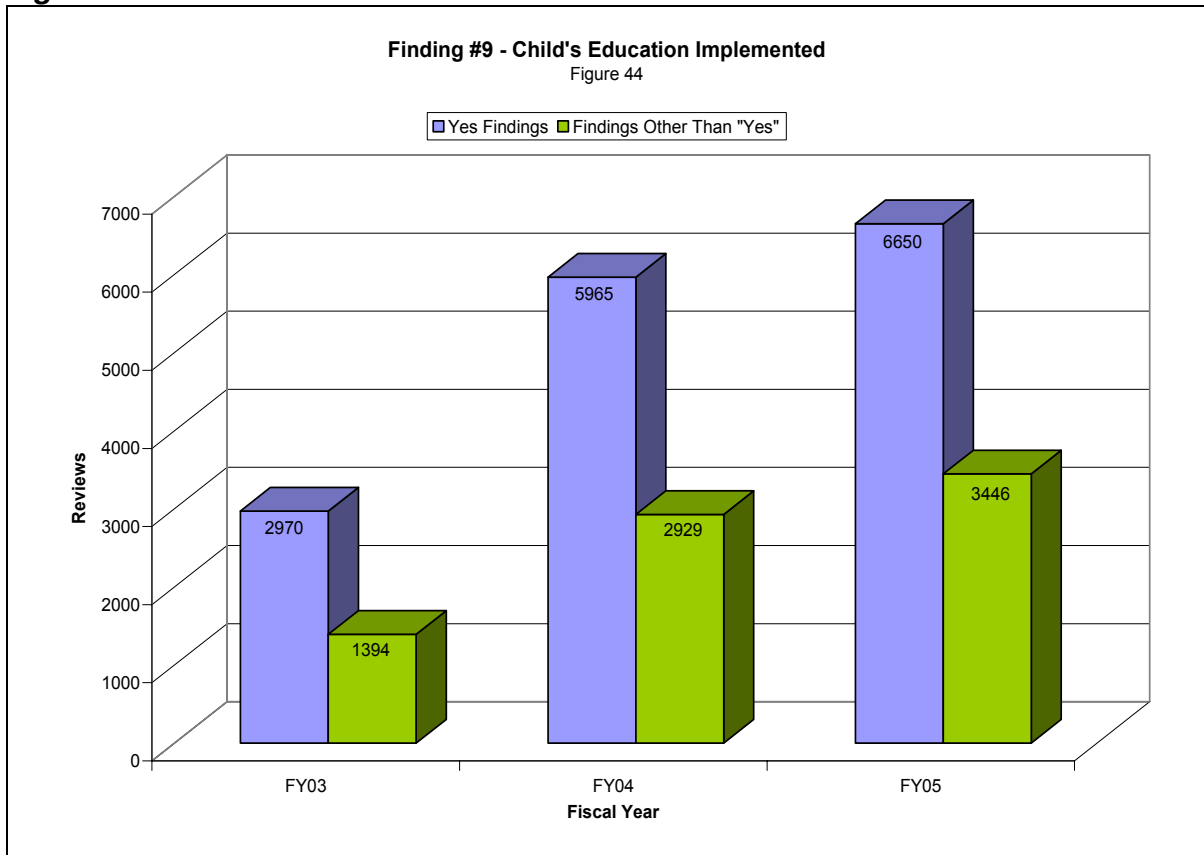
** It is important to note that several determinations can be made towards one case/child; therefore, the numbers represented above are a total of all determinations of not children.*

Slice-1	The Board does not recommend the Court find that reasonable efforts have been made for the reasons cited in the above findings and/or cited in the "Observations/Comments/Concerns * review Board Recommendations" section of this report.
Slice-2	The Board has insufficient information with which to make a recommendation regarding whether or not reasonable efforts are being made buy the Agency t o implement the permanency plan/goal for the child(ren).

The data captured regarding Finding Nine: The child(ren)'s education is being implemented successfully, is presented in *Figures 44–46*. Finding Nine was added to the Foster Care Review Board Findings and Determinations Guidebook in January 2003. Thus, the data presented for fiscal year 2003, reflects only last six months of the fiscal year.

Figure 44 reflects the number of times Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that the child(ren)'s education was being implemented successfully. All determinations other than "yes" (no, partial, inapplicable, unknown, etc.), have been totaled and are included in the "no" columns of the table to ensure clarity and easy readability.

Figure 44

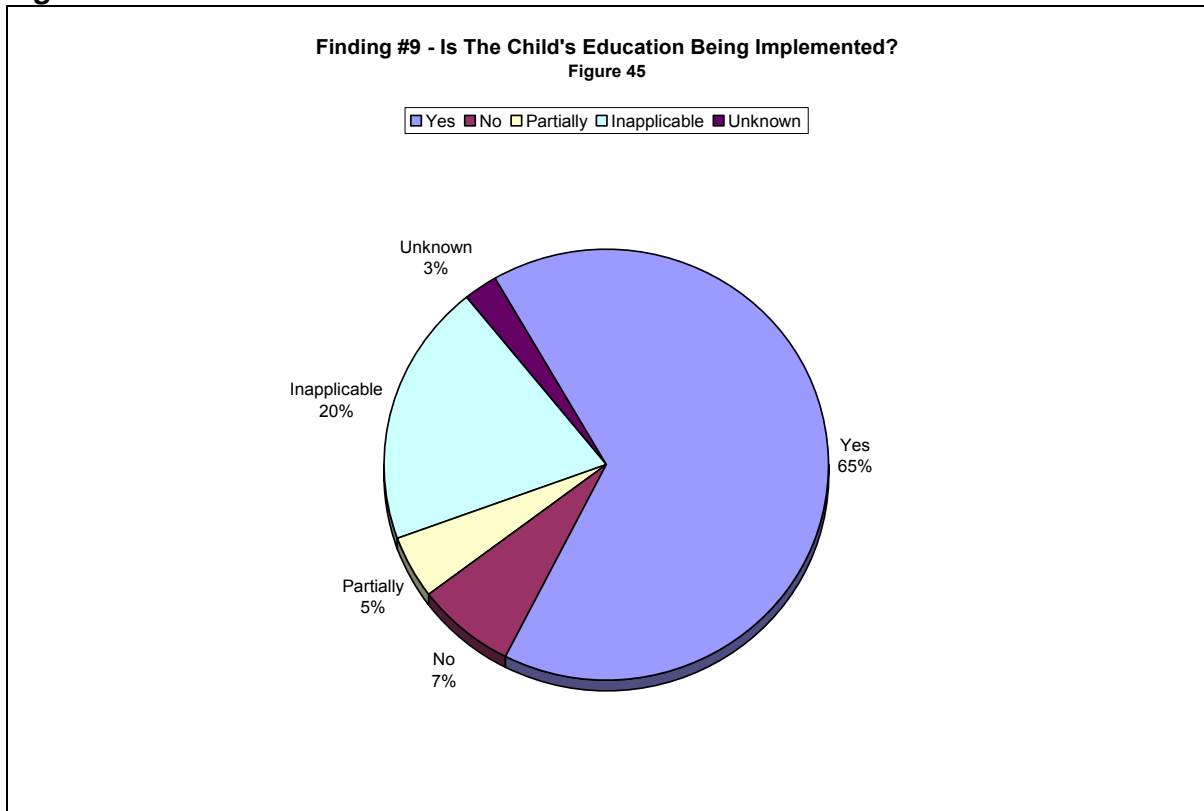


* The "no" column includes all responses other than "yes"; for example, if the board had insufficient information, the Board would respond "no" to this Finding. Responses included in the "no" column include: no, partial, inapplicable, unknown and insufficient information.

When reviewing cases and considering *Finding Nine*, the Foster Care Review Boards across the state determined that in 67 percent of the cases, the child(rens)'s educational needs were being implemented successfully during fiscal year 2004.

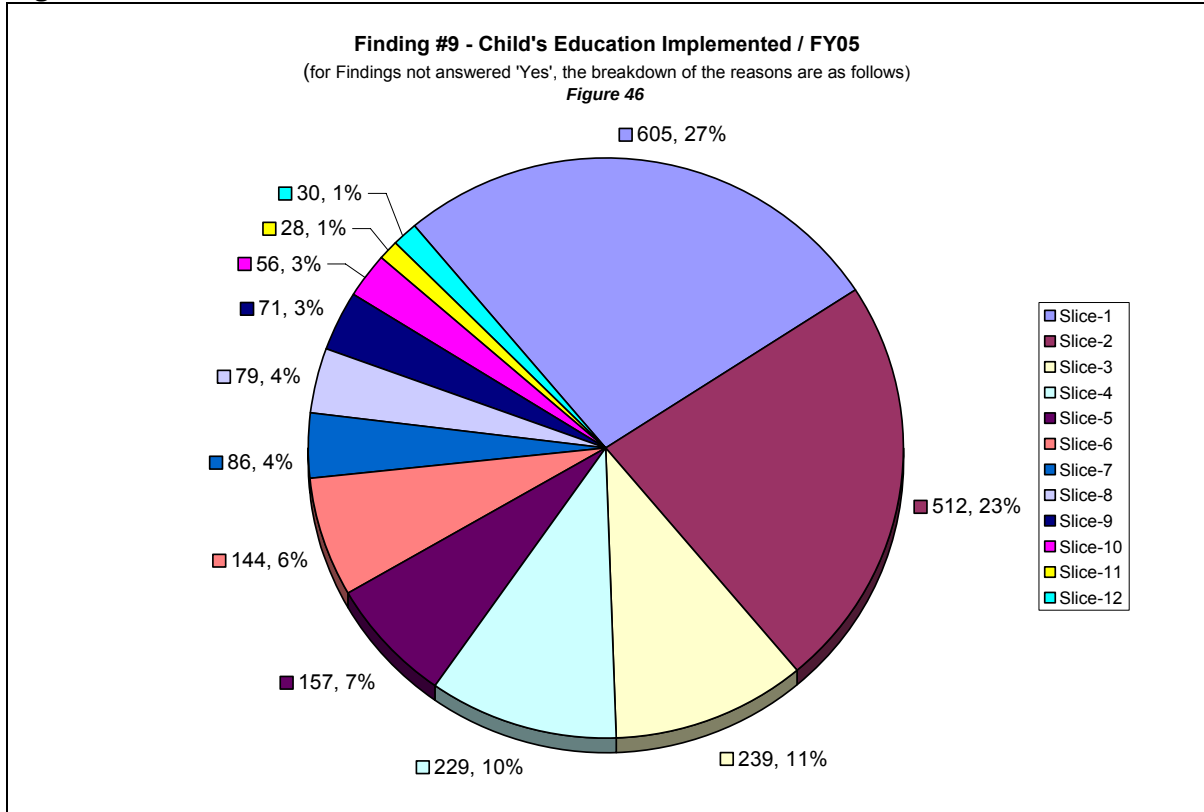
Figure 45 breaks out the negative determinations within Finding Nine and shows the number of times the Foster Care Review Boards responded "no," "partially," "inapplicable," etc., to the Finding.

Figure 45



When analyzing the percentage of cases in which the Foster Care Review Boards determined that a child's education was not being implemented, one must consider *Figure 46*, which breaks out the specific determinations.

Figure 46



** It is important to note that several determinations can be made towards one case/child; therefore, the numbers represented above are a total of all determinations, not of children.*

Slice-1	No one in attendance at the review could speak to the implementation of the child(ren)'s education.
Slice-2	The child(ren) is/are on runaway.
Slice-3	The child(ren) may be eligible for an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and do not have a current IEP.
Slice-4	The child(ren) is/are not attending school on a regular basis.
Slice-5	The child(ren) is/are not completing appropriate tasks that will lead to a high school diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED).
Slice-6	The child(ren) need(s) additional tutoring.
Slice-7	The child(ren) need(s) an early intervention assessment. (only used for children up to the age of five years)
Slice-8	The child(ren)'s behavior at school as resulted in suspension.
Slice-9	Changes in the school attended is impeding the child(ren)'s education.
Slice-10	The child(ren) need(s) a surrogate parent appointed.
Slice-11	The child(ren) need(s) to be enrolled in Head Start or other pre-school program to prepare the child for entry into school.
Slice-12	Other

The data captured regarding *Finding Ten: The Board makes a determination that this case is without significant service gaps or system problems*, is presented in Figures 47–49. Figure 47 represents the number of times Foster Care Review Boards across the state recommended that a judicial determination be made that a case has significant service gaps or system problems. Figure 48 reflects that boards found service gaps and system problems in 79 percent of the cases reviewed in fiscal year 2005.

Figure 47

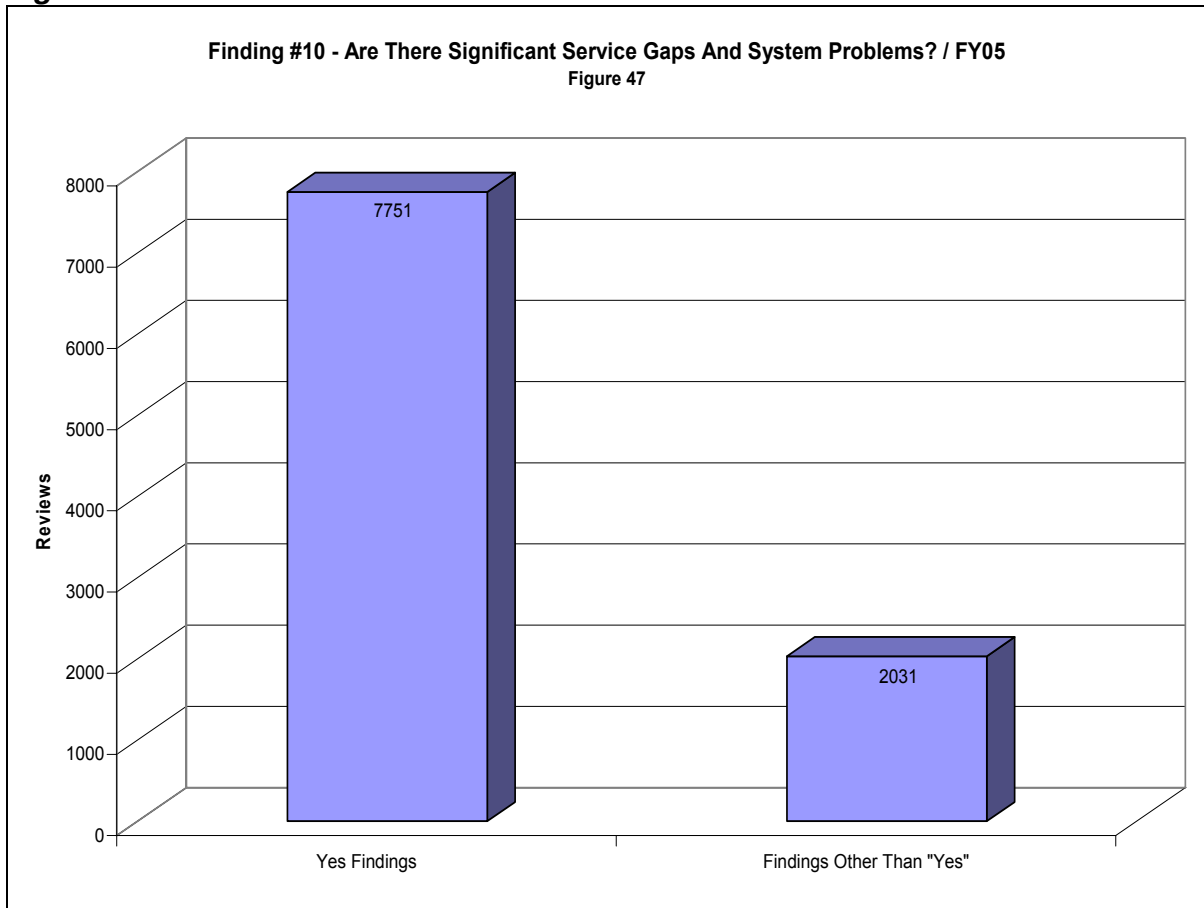
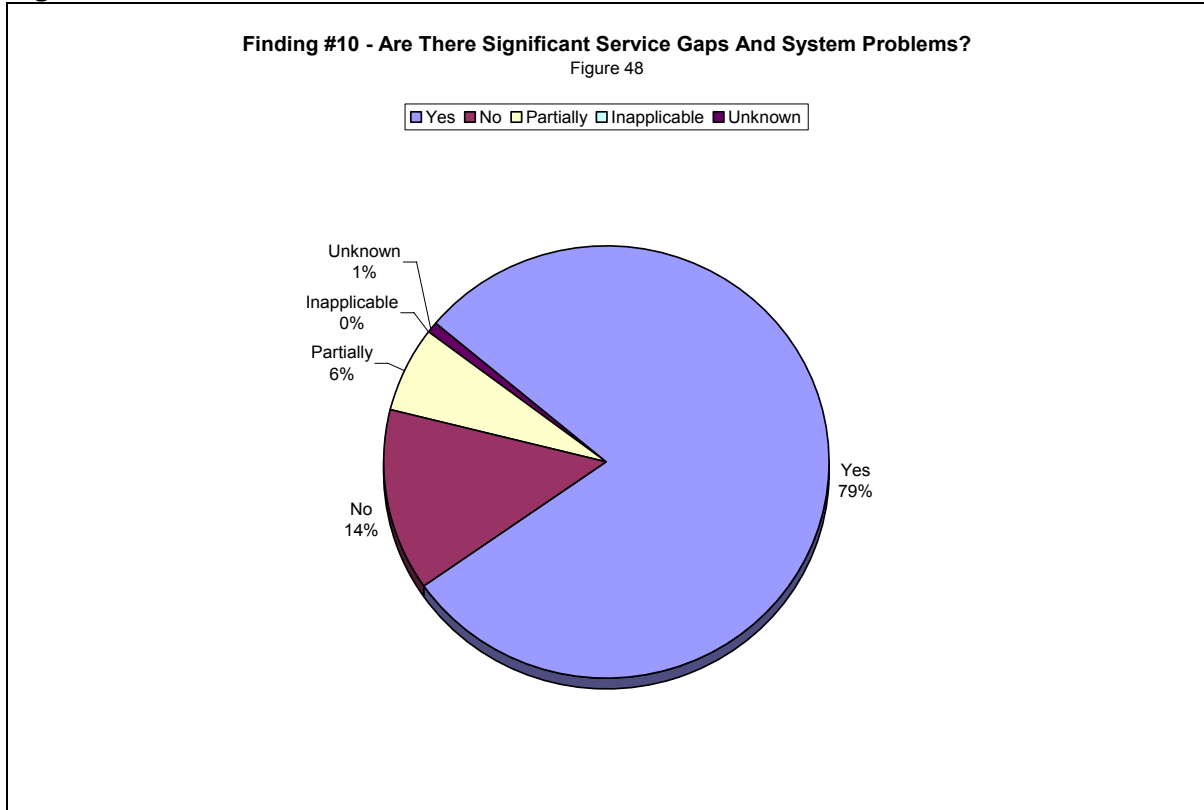
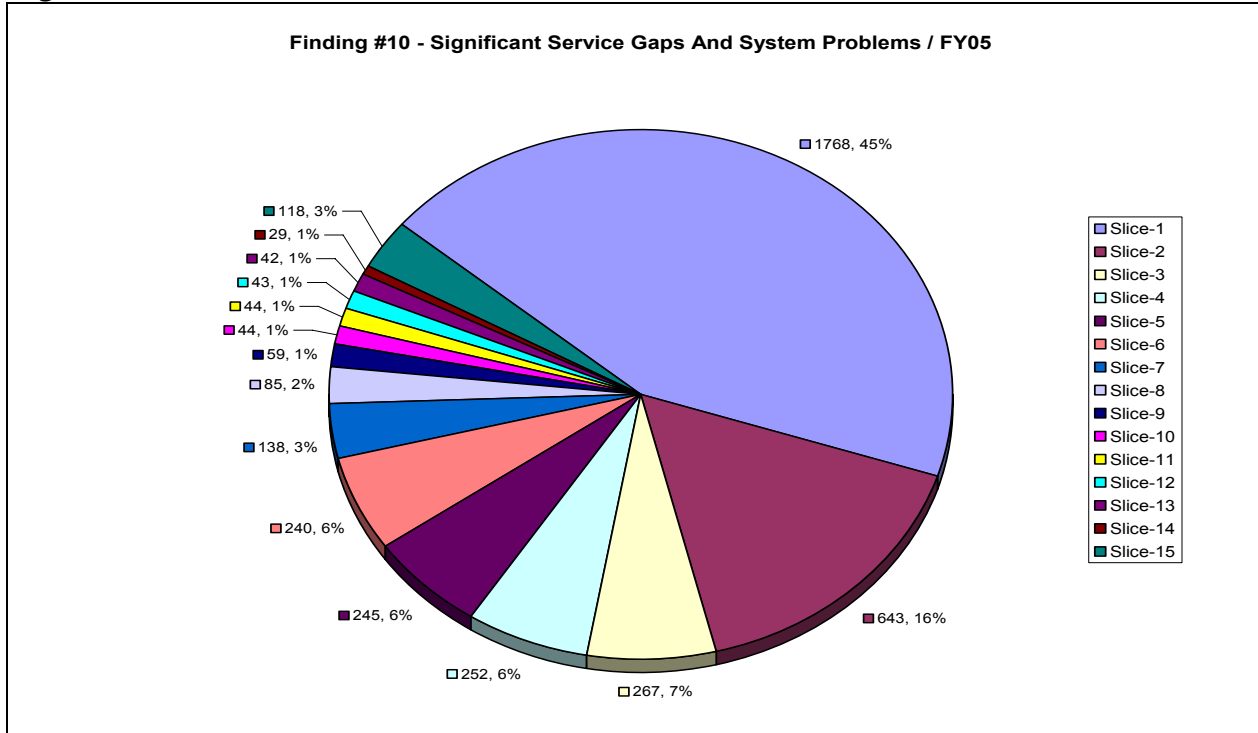


Figure 48



When analyzing the percentage of cases in which Foster Care Review Boards determined that service gaps and system problems existed, one must consider Figure 49, which breaks out the specific determinations.

Figure 49



Slice-1	The Agency is not in compliance with submitting its required progress reports and/or case plans to the FCRB.
Slice-2	The case manager did not appear either in-person or telephonically at the FCRB.
Slice-3	The RBHA is not providing the required services.
Slice-4	Changes in case manager(s) is impeding service provisions.
Slice-5	The recommended treatment services(s) is not adequately available.
Slice-6	The child's therapeutic needs are not being met through the services the RBHA is providing.
Slice-7	The child has not been visited by the case manager on at least a monthly basis.
Slice-8	Agency staffing problems are impeding service provisions.
Slice-9	A waiting list for counseling is inhibiting service delivery.
Slice-10	The child(ren)'s medical and/or dental care/coverage has not been adequately arranged.
Slice-11	The parent is incarcerated and the recommended services are not being provided.
Slice-12	Visits between the child(ren) and parents/siblings have not been facilitated by the case manager.
Slice-13	The RBHA has denied the requested service(s).
Slice-14	A waiting list is inhibiting an appropriate placement.
Slice-15	Other

As noted earlier, the Removal Review Team process was established effective July of 2000. In order to capture a full year of removal review activity, statistics must be pulled

by calendar year. Hence, the data presented in this report reflects Removal Review activity for calendar years 2003, 2004, and 2005.

Figures 50 and 51 reflect the number of Removal Reviews that were held in calendar years 2003, 2004, and 2005. Figure 50 represents the number of cases that had a Removal Review while Figure 51 represents the number of children associated with those reviews. Because Removal Review volunteers in the rural counties cover Removal Reviews in neighboring counties (by Child Protective Services Districts), this information is presented by District, rather than county. An explanation of Districts was provided earlier in Table 2.

Note: The Removal Review data is captured through data sheets completed by the Removal Review Volunteers. In 2003, some volunteers did not provide their county information, which has resulted in an “unknown” category.

Figure 50

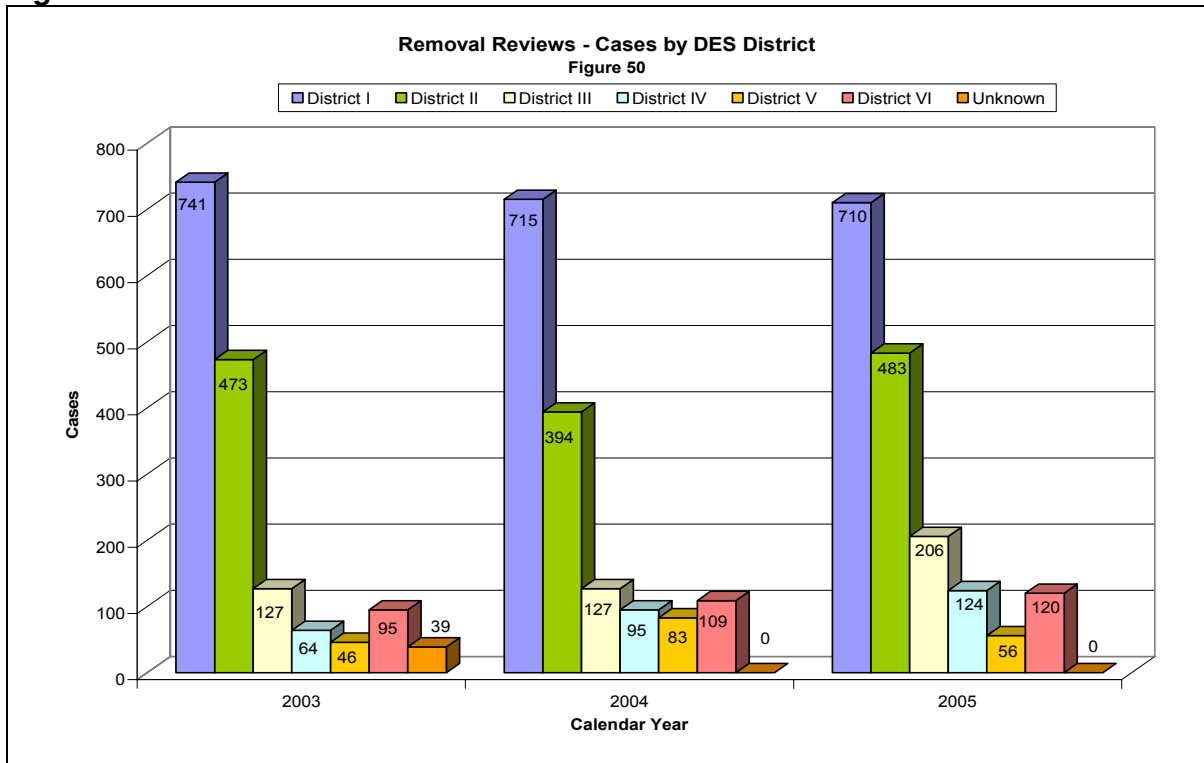
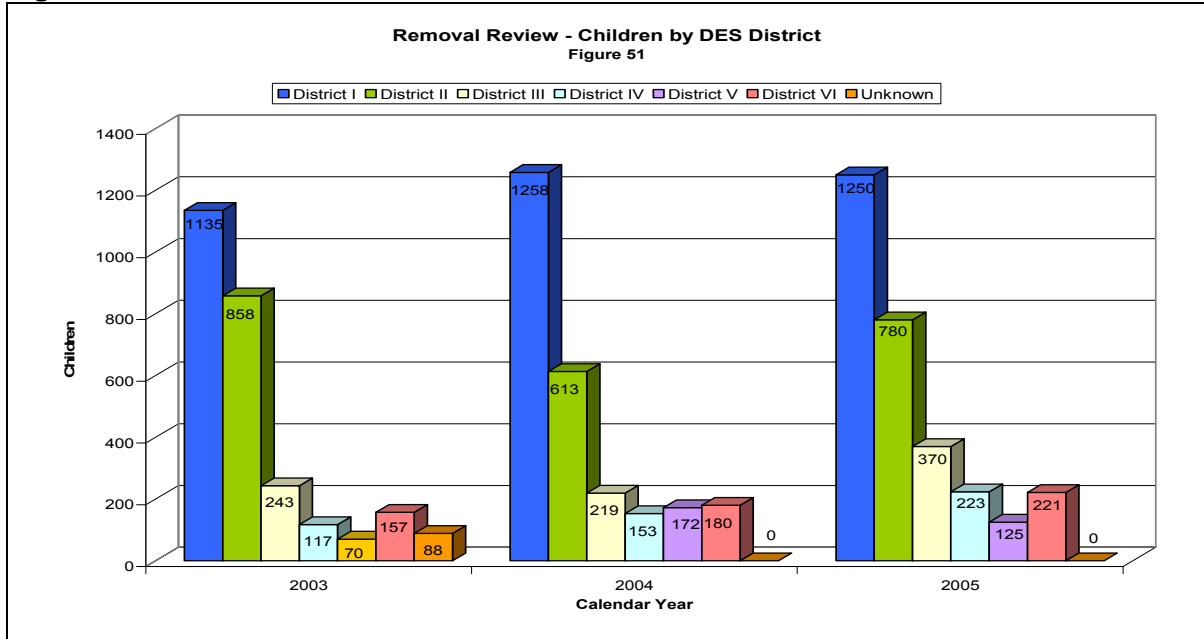


Figure 51



The following Figures represent the number of removal review cases conducted in the last three years in counties with more than 200,000 in population (Figure 52) for the last three years. The number of children who were the subject of those reviews is represented in Figure 53.

Figure 52

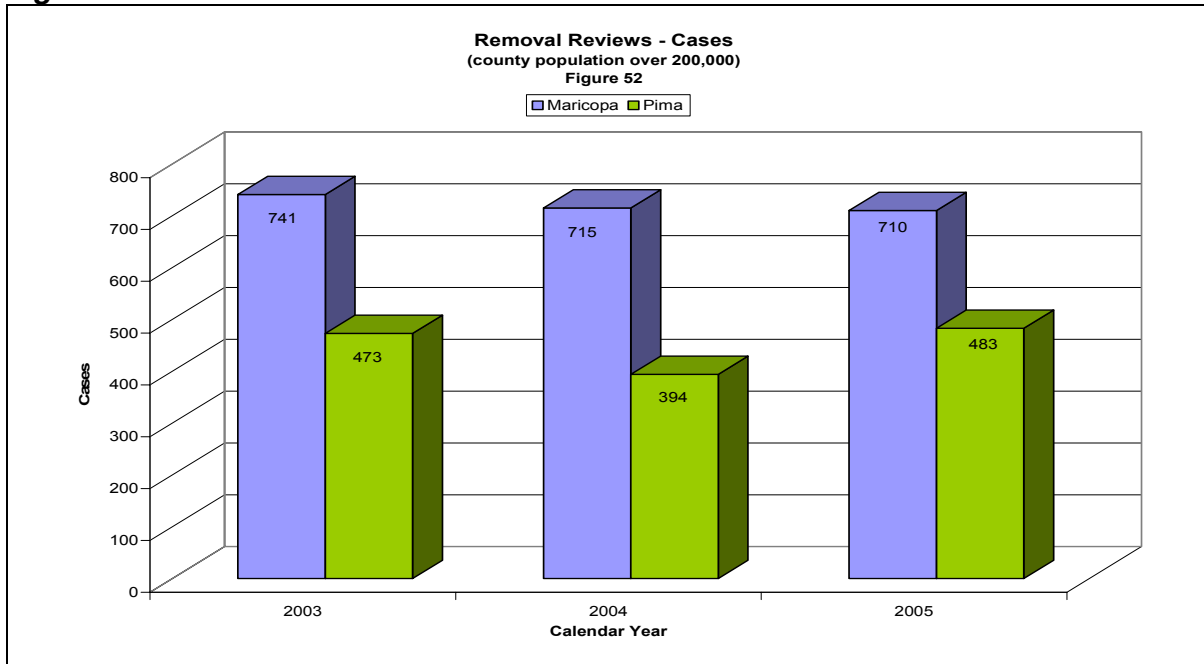


Figure 53

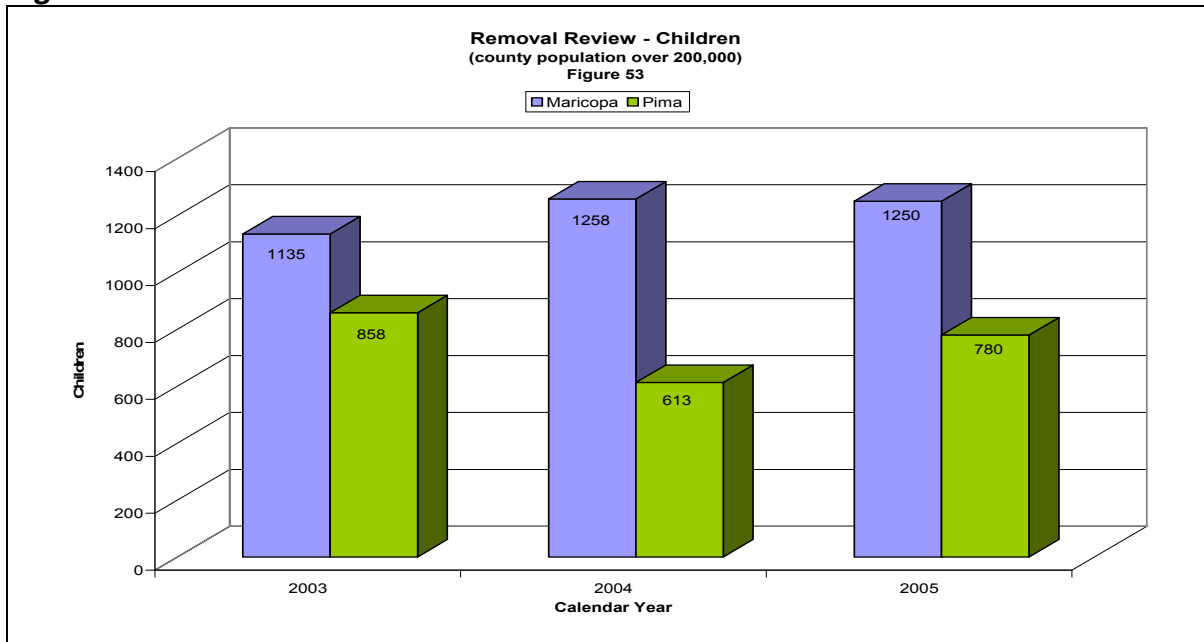


Figure 54 represents the number of removal reviews conducted in the last three years in counties with populations between 120,000 and 200,000. The number of children who were the subject of those reviews are represented in Figure 55.

Figure 54

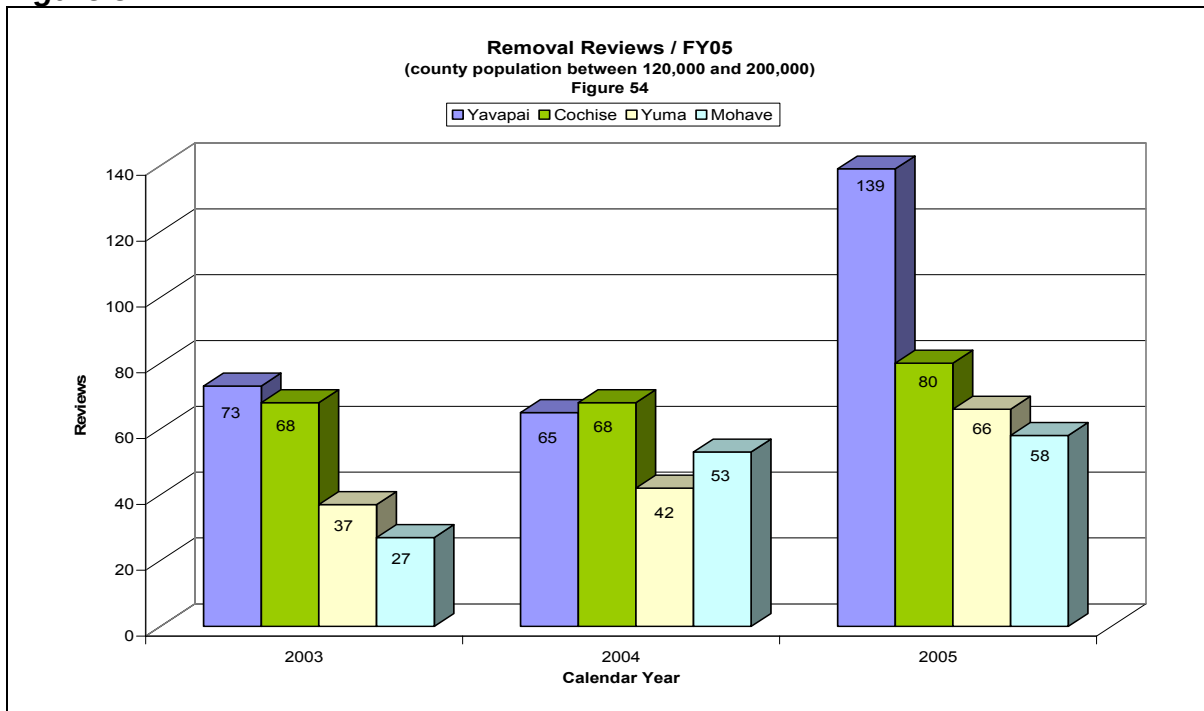


Figure 55

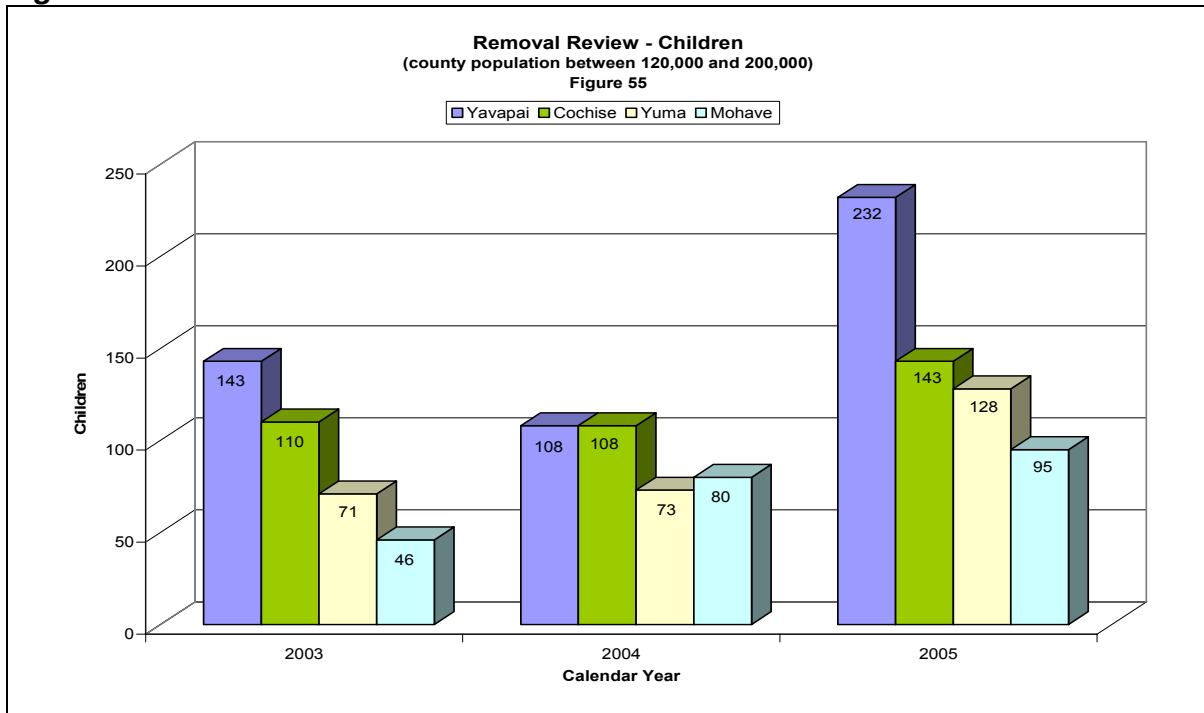


Figure 56 represents the number of removal review hearings conducted in the past three years in counties with populations less than 120,000. Figure 57 represents the number of children who were the subject of those reviews.

Figure 56

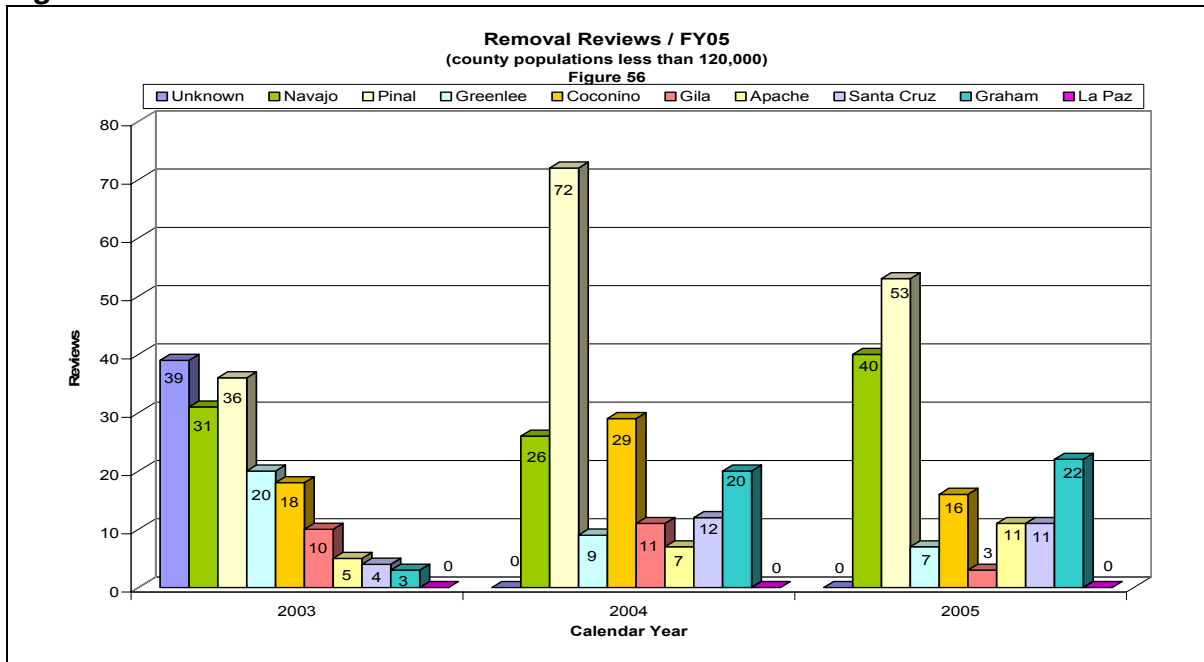
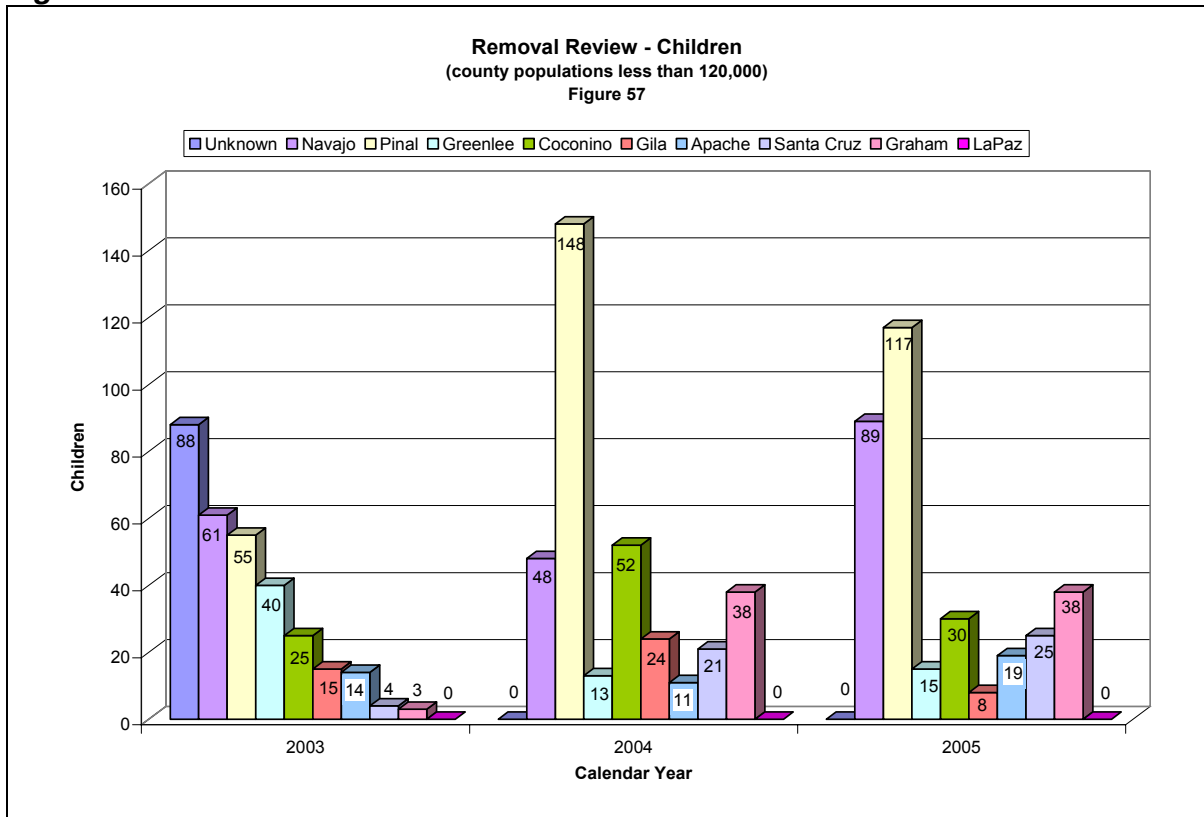


Figure 57



APPENDIX

The following samples are taken from Foster Care Review Board Observations/Concerns and Recommendations regarding Finding 3:

SLICE 5: Safety of the child is not assured.

1. The Board is concerned about the safety of the group home placement due to the injuries the child received while in the group home's care. Therefore, the Board supports the case manager in her efforts to investigate the safety of the group home and the training and qualifications of its staff.
2. The Board is concerned regarding the child's current placement. The Board notes that all parties agree that the current placement is not appropriate due to the child's behaviors. Therefore, the Board encourages all parties, including Value Options, to diligently search for an appropriate placement that is capable of addressing his behaviors.
3. The Board is concerned that the case manager had very little knowledge about the allegations of physical abuse in the foster home. The Board strongly encourages the case manager to monitor this case closely and become more familiar with what is occurring in the foster home.
4. The Board is concerned about the current placement with the maternal grandmother. The Board notes that there is a concern about the lack of supervision and safety in the maternal grandmother's home. Additionally, the Board notes that the maternal grandmother is unable to effectively set boundaries for the children or address their aggressive behaviors at the daycare center. Furthermore, the Board notes that the maternal grandmother and biological mother were allegedly planning to use a housing and guardianship subsidy inappropriately in order to establish a home for the biological mother to reside with the children. Therefore, the Board encourages the case manager to attempt to locate a more suitable placement for the children as soon as possible.

SLICE 7: There have been unusual incident reports in the placement during the past six months.

1. The Board is concerned about the biological father's ability to protect the children based on his statement that he was aware that possible sexual abuse was occurring and did nothing to prevent it. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case manager request a professional assessment to determine the best possible placement for all the children that are currently placed with the biological father.
2. The Board is concerned that the case is in a crisis situation and that the child's behavior has regressed. The Board acknowledges that the safety of the foster family is at risk due to the child's behaviors and that he needs to be removed from their home immediately. The Board concurs with the case manager

- supervisor that residential treatment services are needed in this case situation. Therefore, the Board encourages the case manager to continue his efforts to locate an appropriate placement for the child and that he utilize law enforcement officials to transfer the child to the placement once it has been arranged.
3. The Board notes that there continues to be concerns about the appropriateness of the current relative placement. At the last FCRB, six months ago, there were concerns about an adult child residing in the home who had a criminal history. Now, at this review, the Board is learning of more criminal history of the maternal grandparents themselves, including a current DUI as recent as May 2004. The Board is extremely frustrated that the girls were removed from a loving, stable, appropriate home, which was willing to adopt them, and now their placement may not be appropriate. The Board respectfully recommends that the Court carefully reconsider proceeding with the adoption by this family, as the former foster parents are still eager to regain custody of the girls. The Board would support the reunification of the girls with their former foster parents.
 4. The Board is extremely concerned about the child's recent regression, as he tried to drown the family dog, has been physically harming his brother, and has demonstrated sexually inappropriate verbal responses to his peers at school. The Board notes that it strongly concurs with the case manager that he needs to be placed in a higher level of care immediately. Therefore, the Board recommends that Value Options not delay in providing residential services for the child to ensure the safety of the foster family and the children and to prevent any further harm from occurring.

SLICE 8: This is not a step toward permanency.

1. The Board is concerned that the child continues to reside in a group home. The Board notes that this is not a step toward permanency. Additionally, the Board notes that the placement is not considered as a long term placement for Shawn. Therefore, the Board recommends the case manager seek a more appropriate placement that would lead to permanency for Shawn.
2. The Board encourages the child to consider making better choices and consider the consequences of his actions before he acts. The Board commends the case manager for her diligent efforts. The Board commends the child's attorney's office for their advocacy.
3. The Board is concerned that the biological parents are not participating in the case plan. The Board notes that the children have been in foster care for nearly two years. Additionally, the Board notes that the biological parents were unsuccessful when the children were returned to their care in early 2004. The parents have not visited the children or worked toward completing case plan tasks since that time. The biological father is currently incarcerated due to a plea bargain he accepted in the abuse of the children. The biological mother does not maintain contact with the Agency or inquire about the well-being of her children. Therefore, the Board recommends that the case manager immediately change the case plan goal to adoption and pursue severance of the biological parents' parental rights so that permanency can be established for the children.

4. The Board is concerned that the paternal aunt is not meeting the child's educational needs, because of her unwillingness to allow him to attend Head Start. The Board strongly urges the Agency to locate a permanent placement for the child as soon as possible.

The Board supports continued contact between the child and his current placement after he is placed permanently.

GLOSSARY

Abandonment	The failure of a parent to provide reasonable support and to maintain regular contact with the child, including providing normal supervision, when such failure is accompanied by an intention on the part of the parent to permit such conditions to continue for any indefinite period of time in the future. Abandonment includes a judicial finding that a parent has made only minimal efforts to support and communicate with the child. Failure to maintain a normal parental relationship with the child without just cause for a period of 6 months constitutes prima facie evidence of abandonment (ARS § 8-201(I)).
Abuse	Infliction or allowing of physical injury, impairment of bodily function or disfigurement, or the infliction of or allowing another person to cause serious emotional damage as evidenced by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or aggressive behavior and which emotional damage is diagnosed by a medical doctor or psychologist pursuant to ARS § 8-821, and which is caused by the acts or omission of an individual having care, custody, and control of a child.
Addendum	A report or information that is added to an initial report or information; a list or section consisting of added material.
Adjudication Hearing	The trial stage at which the court determines whether allegations of dependency, abuse, or neglect concerning a child are sustained by the evidence and, if so, are legally sufficient to support state intervention on behalf of the child; provides the basis for state intervention into a family, as opposed to the disposition hearing which concerns the nature of such intervention.
Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)	The administrative arm of the Arizona Supreme Court.
Adoption Hearing	Judicial proceedings in which a relationship is legally established between an adult individual(s) and a dependent child.
Aged Out	Child reached 18 years of age and is no longer considered a ward of the Court.
Allegation	An assertion, declaration, or statement of a party to an action, made in a pleading, setting out what he/she expects to prove.

Arizona Department of Education, Special Education Section (ADE/SES)	The state agency which oversees special education programs and issues special education vouchers.
Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)	Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System is Arizona's version of the national Medicaid program. Medical services for the poor or near-poor (indigent) can be obtained through a formal application process.
Assault	A demonstration of an unlawful attempt by one person to inflict immediate injury on the person of another.
Assault and Battery	The unlawful touching of a person with the intent and purpose of actually doing physical injury, with a reasonable ability to carry the intention into execution.
Attorney	An individual trained in the law, admitted to practice before the bar of a given jurisdiction, and authorized to advise, represent, and act for other persons in legal proceedings.
Attorney General (AG)	Attorney and legal counsel for the Department of Economic Security and Child Protective Services.
Office of Court Appointed Counsel (OCAC)	This department provides legal representation to indigent defendants (usually parents). Can be counsel for the child when the Legal/Public Defender's Offices are unable.
Office of the Legal Defender	Generally provides legal representation to the custodial parent as identified in dependency petition.
Office of Legal Advocate	Serve as guardian ad litem for dependent children, advocating for the best interests of the child.
CASA	A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a specially screened and trained community volunteer, appointed by the court, who conducts an independent research of child abuse, neglect, dependency or delinquency matters. The CASA volunteer submits a formal report offering objective and factual information with specific recommendations as to the best interests of the child.
Case Flow	Administrative and judicial processes designed to reduce delays in

Management	litigation; processes which assist the court in monitoring child welfare agencies to make sure dependency cases are moved diligently and decisively toward completion.
Case Manager/ Case Worker	A trained professional employed by DES or by an agency under contract with the DES. The case manager manages the development of the plan for services for the child and the family and arranges for and monitors services to see that the needs of the child and/or family are met.
Case Plan	A plan developed by the case manager (DES) regarding placement of a child including services, placement, and visitation for the child and to include the requirements of the parents and deadlines for completion.
Case Plan Staffing	A planned, scheduled, and documented meeting arranged to share information, develop and/or review the case plan, and evaluate services and case progress. The staffing includes the case manager, the family, and members of the service team.
Child Abuse	To hurt or injure a child by maltreatment. As defined by statutes in the majority of states, generally limited to maltreatment that causes or threatens to cause lasting harm to a child.
Child Custody	Legal authority to determine the care, supervision, and discipline of a child; when assigned to an individual or couple, includes physical care and supervision. Includes guardianship of the person of a minor such as may be awarded by a probate court.
Child Neglect	To fail to give proper attention to a child; to deprive a child; to allow a lapse in care and supervision that causes or threatens to cause lasting harm to a child.
Child Protective Services	A division of Division for Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). The entity within DCYF that accepts and investigates referrals about child abuse or neglect.
CHILDS	The Children's Information Library and Data Source is the part of DCYF automated child welfare record keeping system.
Clerk of the Court	An elected or appointed court officer responsible for maintaining the written records of the court and of supervising or performing the clerical tasks necessary for conducting judicial business; also, any employee of a court whose principle duties are to assist the court clerk.

Commissioner	A judicial officer who is responsible to hear all juvenile matters except contested dependency cases.
Comprehensive medical Medical Dental Plan (CMDP)	The Comprehensive Medical Dental Program is the basic insurance that is provided to all children under DES supervision and officially placed outside of their home. Physical exams, medications, surgery, supplies, and even baby formula can be obtained for foster children through CMDP. The case manager obtains a CMDP card for the child, to be used throughout the duration of time in foster care, residential treatment, or other placement.
Contested	A position taken on a case which implies a disagreement of relevant issues.
Continuation	A hearing that is re-scheduled to a later date. Any party in the case can request a continuance, but only the court may grant such a request.
Contracted Provider	The State of Arizona and its Department of Economic Security cannot provide all types of services to all of the citizens in need of them. Therefore, the state lets out contracts to private agencies and individuals who provide a needed service (e.g., counseling). The employees of the provider agency are not state employees, but their work must fall within the guidelines of the formal contract. All contracted providers are required to report progress of the client family to the case manager.
County Attorney	Refer to Attorney General.
Court	An officially designated place where justice is administered. A court is presided by a judge, who is sometimes referred to as the Court. Appellate A judicial tribunal that reviews cases from lower tribunals, acting without a jury and is primarily interested in correcting errors in procedure or in the interpretation of law by the lower courts. Appeals A legal proceeding by which a case is brought from a lower to a higher court for rehearing. Bankruptcy A federal court, capable of hearing bankruptcy cases, within a state.

Criminal	The criminal division of the superior court when exercising its jurisdiction over criminal matters.
J.P.	Courts of limited jurisdiction, usually in a specific geographic area, presided over by a Justice of the Peace.
Juvenile	The juvenile division of the Superior Court when exercising its jurisdiction over children in any proceeding relating to delinquency, dependency, or incorrigibility.
Municipal	Courts of limited jurisdiction, usually within a municipality, presided over by municipal judges.
Probate	Various state courts having jurisdiction in the matter of proving wills, appointing executors and administrators, and supervising the administration of estates.
Superior	Courts of general jurisdiction, usually geographically associated with counties, that can be divided in different divisions.
Supreme	Court of highest jurisdiction in the state, hears all appeals of lower courts, all sentences where capital punishment is imposed and has administrative responsibility.
Court Order	A legal document originating with a judicial officer ordering something to occur on a case.
Custody	The full authority to determine care, supervision and discipline of a child.
Legal Custody	A status embodying all of the following rights and responsibilities: (a) The right to have physical possession of the child. (b) The right and the duty to protect, train and discipline the child. (c) The responsibility to provide the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, education and

medical care, provided that such rights and responsibilities shall be exercised subject to the powers, rights, duties and responsibilities of the guardian of the person and subject to the residual parental rights and responsibilities if they have not been terminated by judicial decree.

Physical Custody	The physical care and supervision of a child.
DCATS	DCATS (Dependent Children Automated Tracking System) is a statewide database used by CASA program staff to track information on CASA volunteers and the dependency cases to which they are assigned.
Delinquent	The term used to describe the legal status of a child who has committed an offense that is unlawful and would be punishable by law if the child were an adult.
Department of Economic Security (DES)	Division for Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is part of the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES)
Division for the Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF)	Division for Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is part of larger state organization, the Department of Economic Security (DES). Child Protective Services (CPS) is one of the programs under DCYF.
Disposition Hearing	The stage of the juvenile court process in which, after finding that a child is within jurisdiction of the court, the court determines who shall have custody and control of the child; elicits judicial decision as to whether to continue out-of-home placement or to remove a child from home.
Health Services (DHS)	Behavioral health of all Arizonans through education, intervention, prevention, delivery of services, and the advancement of public policies. It also addresses current and emerging health issues in a manner that demonstrates efficiency, effectiveness, integrity, and leadership.
Dependency Petition	A formal notice to a court that a child is in need of proper parental care/control and there is no parent willing or able to care for the child. The petition itself contains allegations which tell the court exactly what statutes have been broken and/or why a child is believed to be dependent. The formal written pleading asking the court to find a child dependent and enter appropriate orders.

Dependent child	A person under 18 years of age subject to the jurisdiction of the court because of child abuse or neglect.
Detention	(1) The legally authorized temporary holding in confinement of a person subject to criminal or family court proceedings, until the point of commitment to a correctional facility or release; (2) the legally authorized temporary holding of children in confinement or licensed open, non-secure settings while awaiting completion of juvenile or family court action. This includes custody while awaiting execution of a court order.
Disposition Hearing	The stage of the juvenile court process in which, after finding that a child is within jurisdiction of the court, the court determines who shall have custody and control of a child; elicits judicial decision as to whether to continue out-of-home placement or to remove a child from home.
Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)	An agency within DES that provides services for both adults and children who have certain conditions that limit their ability to fully participate in society. These services are obtained only after formal application and assessment.
FCRB Board (FCRB)	Foster Care Review Boards are made up of five, specially trained, volunteers by the presiding juvenile court judge in each county. Review boards serve in a quasi-judicial function and review, within six months of placement and every six months thereafter, the case of each child who remains in out-of-home placement and who is the subject of a dependency action. Boards determine what efforts have been made by the social services agency with whom the child has been placed, to carry out the plan for the permanent placement of the child. Review boards submit recommendations to the presiding juvenile court judge in each county to assist in their court review and decision making process.
Facilitator	A person who is responsible for conducting a meeting of the courts. Responsible for assuring appropriate issues are addressed.
Foster Care	Temporary residential care provided to a child placed pursuant to a neglect or dependency hearing; can include care by a non-biological foster family, group care, residential care, or institutional care.

Guardian ad litem	In certain dependency matters, a person with formal legal training appointed by a judge to represent the best interests of an allegedly abused or neglect child; differs from the legal advocate for the child who specifically represents the child's wishes before the court. See Legal advocate for the child.
Incorrigible	Unmanageable; uncontrollable, such as a perpetual criminal or a habitually delinquent minor.
Indigent	An inability to support oneself: poor; needy.
Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)	The Act is in effect throughout all 50 states. It returns to Native Americans the primary responsibility or opportunity for involvement for any Indian child who comes to the attention of an Arizona social service agency.
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	A written statement for providing special education services to a child with a disability under IDEA and required for initiation and termination of special education services. It includes the child's present levels of educational performance, annual goals, short-term measurable objectives for evaluation progress toward those goals, specific special education and related services to be provided in the least restrictive environment, and exit criteria. It must be developed by a team of persons, including the parent, who are knowledgeable about the child, at a meeting convened by the parent or the public school district.
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	A federal law which mandates a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for children with disabilities. It outlines services (including IEPs) and procedural safeguards for children needing special education.
Initial Dependency Hearing	This hearing is held only for parents or guardians who did not appear at the preliminary protective hearing, and must be held within 21 days after service is complete.
Interested Party	A person granted the right to notice of and participation in any review or hearing concerning the child such as

therapists, foster parents, relatives, and friends, etc., not to be confused with legal party.

**Interstate Compact
on Placement of
Children (ICPC)**

This compact facilitates the interstate movement or placement of children involved with court and social service agencies. Its purpose is to ensure that a child is not moved out of one setting and into another that may not be appropriate or adequate (e.g., a sending state has a child in foster care and wants to place the child with grandparents in another state). Before any such move can take place by the courts, the receiving state must agree with the plan. Usually, home visits and evaluations take place with a compact administrator either approving or rejecting the move. If the move is approved, a child can remain a ward of the court in the sending state, even though he/she resides elsewhere. In most instances, the state agencies have worked out supervision/treatment services for the child.

JOLTS

Juvenile On-Line Tracking System (JOLTS) is a statewide database used by juvenile court staff to track information on dependency and delinquency cases of juveniles.

Judicial Officer

Person who serves in an appointive capacity at the pleasure of an appointing judge, and whose decisions are subject to review by the judge; referred to in some jurisdictions as associate judges; magistrates; referees; special masters; hearing officers; commissioners.

Settlement Conference

A judicially-mandated meeting in which the judge is present, which involves all attorneys and parties to a proceeding. The meeting typically occurs at a fixed time and place at least 10 days before a trial, and provides identification of issues to be tried, experts to be called, necessary reports, and witness availability.

Juvenile Court

The Juvenile Division of the Superior Court which has jurisdiction over dependency and delinquency proceedings involving children under the age of 18.

**Juvenile Probation
Office (JPO)**

An office established within the juvenile court to supervise juveniles who have been referred for delinquent or incorrigible offenses.

Legal Parent

The parent who is entitled to have legal custody of the child.

Legal Status	The courts definition of adjudication of a child. A status could be: dependent, delinquent, incorrigible, dependent-delinquent (dually-adjudicated), or dependent-incorrigible (dually-adjudicated).
Mediation	A process by which a neutral mediator assists all of the parties in voluntarily reaching consensual agreements; a process of facilitated communication between parties designed to resolve issues and agree upon a plan of action.
Minute Entry	The court minute entry is an official summary of the activity and court decisions that took place on a particular date, at a particular time, concerning a particular case. The document will detail any orders of the court and describe what is to happen next regarding the case (e.g., when the next court hearing is to take place, by what date certain tasks are to be accomplished, etc.)
Misdemeanor	An offense, other than a traffic infraction, for which a sentence to a term of imprisonment not to exceed one year, to be served in a jail, may be imposed.
Motion	An application to a court made in reference to a pending action, addressed to a matter within the discretion of a judge.
Neglect	The inability or unwillingness of a parent, guardian, or custodian of a child to provide that child with supervision, food, clothing, shelter, or medical care if that inability or unwillingness causes substantial risk of harm to the child=s health or welfare, unless that inability of a parent or guardian to provide services to meet the needs of a child with a disability or chronic illness is solely the result of the unavailability of reasonable services (ARS §§ 8-201(21); 8-531(11)).
Non-Custodial Parent	With respect to a dependent child, a parent who does not reside with that child and, if there has been a determination of legal custody with respect to the dependent child, does not have legal custody of the child.
Notification	This term usually pertains to the mandated procedures involving the notification of a parent or other party in the case of an upcoming court date.

Ongoing Case Manager	A DES case manager assigned to a unit, usually in Child Protective Services, who works with families after the initial investigation is completed. Such work may entail months or years of involvement with the family.
Parole	A method of prisoner release on the basis of individual response and progress within the correctional institution, providing the necessary controls and guidance while serving the remainder of their sentences within the free community.
Permanent Guardianship	Unlike the guardianship established by the probate court, which can be revoked by a parent or guardian, a permanent guardianship, pursuant to Title 8, is established by the Juvenile Court and cannot be revoked without court order.
Permanency Hearing	A special type of post-dispositional proceeding designed to reach a decision concerning the permanent placement of a child; the time of the hearing represents a deadline within which the final direction of a case is to be determined. Held no more than 12 months after removal.
Perpetrator	The chief actor in the commission of a crime;.i.e., the person who directly commits the criminal act.
Petition	A formal, written request for a certain thing to be done.
Physical Abuse	Infliction of non-accidental physical injury, impairment of bodily functions, or disfigurement by another person.
Pre-Hearing Conference	The preliminary protective hearing shall be preceded by a pre-hearing conference occurring out of the presence of the court. The preliminary protective hearing shall occur immediately following the pre-hearing conference. The pre-hearing conference shall be conducted with the objective of maximizing the opportunity for non-adversarial resolution of issues. The pre-hearing shall be conducted by a person designated as a facilitator by the court to discuss the primary issues. The primary issues are temporary custody and placement; visitation, if appropriate, and the provision of services to the child and family. At the conclusion of the pre-hearing conference the participants shall attend the preliminary protective hearing. At the preliminary protective hearing the court may consider any

	agreements reached by the parties during the pre-hearing conference and, if approved, order them into effect.
Preliminary Protective Hearing (PPH)	A hearing is scheduled within 5-7 days of the child's removal from home. The issues required to be addressed are placement, services, and visitation.
Presiding Judge	A judge of the superior court appointed by the chief justice responsible for county administrative duties as well as court actions.
Pro Tempore	A judicial officer assigned temporarily to perform the duties of a judge on a temporary basis. This officer hears all juvenile matters except contested dependency cases.
Probable Cause	A set of facts and circumstances which would induce a reasonably intelligent and prudent person to believe that an accused person had committed a specific crime.
Public Defender	A lawyer appointed by the court to defend, advise, and counsel an individual who is not financially able to pay for the services.
Putative Father	The alleged or supposed male parent; the person alleged to have fathered a child whose parentage is at issue
Reasonable Doubt	The standard used to determine the guilt or innocence of a person criminally charged. To be guilty of a crime, one must be proven guilty "beyond a reasonable doubt." Reasonable doubt, which will justify acquittal, is doubt based on reason and arising from evidence or lack of evidence, and it is which a reasonable person might entertain.
Reasonable Efforts	Public Law 96-272, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 requires that "reasonable efforts" be made to prevent or eliminate the need for the removal of a dependent, neglected, or abused child, from the child's home and to reunify the family if the child is removed. The reasonable efforts requirement of the federal law is designed to ensure that families are provided with services to prevent their disruption and to respond to the problems of unnecessary disruption of families and foster care drift. To enforce this provision, the juvenile court must determine, in each case where federal reimbursement is

	sought, whether the agency has made the required reasonable efforts.
Recidivism	In its broadest context, recidivism refers to the <i>multiple</i> occurrence of any of the following key events in the overall criminal justice process: commission of a crime; arrest; charge; conviction; sentencing; incarceration.
Regional Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA)	Separate organizations under contract with DHS to implement, coordinate, maintain, and monitor the delivery of a unified system of mental health and substance abuse services for a geographic area statewide.
Remanded	Returned to custody, or sent back to court (or agency) for further action.
Review Hearing	Court proceedings which take place after disposition in which the court comprehensively reviews the status of a case, examines progress made by the parties since the conclusion of the disposition hearing, provides for correction and revision of the case plan, and makes sure that cases progress and children spend as short a time as possible in temporary placement.
Residential Treatment Center (RTC)	A licensed treatment facility where children receive care, treatment, and supervision on a 24-hour basis. The child actually lives in residence at the center where a treatment team assists the child and family in working through difficult behavioral, emotional, social, or psychological problems. Such treatment is very expensive and is reserved for children who cannot be cared for in a less restrictive setting.
Rules Of Court	Various orders established by a court for the purpose of regulating the conduct of business of the court such as civil, criminal or appellate procedures.
Service Plan/ Individual Service Plan (ISP)	A specific written plan developed by a RBHA, in concert with a DES case manager, describing specific services to address mental health or substance abuse needs of a specific client.

Settlement Conference	A meeting or hearing of attorneys and interested parties for the purpose of negotiating an agreement on dependency allegations. A judicial officer oversees this action.
Severance	The termination of a parent-child relationship. A severance is not an adoption or dependency action. The severance of a child does not automatically mean that any form of adoption is going to take place. The statutes set out a limited number of grounds (reasons) for a severance action.
Statute	A law enacted by a legislative branch of government.
Surrogate Parent	A qualified, trained person who is court-appointed by a juvenile court judge. The parent substitute is to represent the interests of a child requiring special education services on behalf of the parent unwilling or unable to do so. By law, DES case managers and other DES employees and subcontractors cannot be surrogate parents (refer to ARS §§ 15-761 and-763.01).
Temporary Custody Notice	A written notice by the department or law enforcement to parents, guardians, or custodians outlining reasons why the child has been taken into temporary custody, and advising them of their rights to petition the court within 72 hours (excluding week-ends and holidays) of receipt of the written notice, for a hearing. The hearing reviews temporary custody, or to advise the parent or guardian of the date, time, and location of a Preliminary Protective Hearing held within 5–7 days per ARS § 8-823.
Temporary Orders	A dependency petition will usually request that the court issue temporary orders regarding the placement and care of the child. Before issuing such orders, the court must review the petition and the affidavit to determine if the facts alleged support a finding that "reasonable grounds exist to believe that temporary custody is clearly necessary to protect the child from suffering abuse or neglect."
Temporary Ward of the Court	This term refers to the legal status of a child after a petition has been made to the court. In reality, there is very little difference between a temporary ward and a "full" ward of the court. Both can receive essentially the same types of

service and supervision. A child can remain a temporary ward for months or years, if the situation warrants.

Termination of Parental Right Hearing	A formal proceeding usually sought by a state agency at the conclusion of dependency proceedings, in which severance of all legal ties between child and parents is sought against the will of one or both parents, and in which the burden of proof must be by clear and convincing evidence; the most heavily litigated and appealed stage of dependency proceedings; also referred to in some states as a 'severance,' 'guardianship with power to consent to adoption,' 'permanent commitment,' 'permanent neglect,' or 'modification' hearing.
Title XIX	The Medicaid section of the federal Social Security Act that includes the provision of Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) of the physical and mental health status of Title XIX eligible children.
Vacate	To annul; to set aside; to cancel or rescind; to render an act void; as, to vacate an entry of record, or a judgment.
Voluntary Agreement for Care	Arrangement with a public child protection agency for the temporary placement of a child into foster care, entered into prior to court involvement, and typically used in cases in which short-term placement is necessary for a defined purpose such as when a parent enters inpatient hospital care; a method of immediately placing a child in foster care with parental consent prior to initiating court involvement, thereby avoiding the need to petition the court for emergency removal.