

Georgia Division of Family & Children
Services:

Update on Programs & Initiatives

Presenter: Sharon Hill, PhD, DFCS Director

Presentation to: DHS Board of Directors

Date: March 19, 2014



Georgia Department of Human Services

Agenda for DFCS Overview

An update will be provided on the following items:

- DFCS Strategic Plan for 2014: SOAR
- Status of Office of Family Independence Concerns (primarily timeliness of work)
- IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project
- Teens are for Me Conference

Additional Items to Note

- Transition of children in foster care & adoption assistance from fee-for-service Medicaid to Medicaid CMO began March 3, 2014
- Child Protective Services (CPS) Centralized Intake System implemented in 9 of 15 regions

DFCS Strategic Plan for 2014

Values	Focus & Outcomes
Child safety and family well-being are at the core of every thing we do.	Focus I. Safety & Well-being of Children DFCS meets or exceeds critical outcomes related to the safety and well-being of the children and families we serve.
A stable, competent, and professional workforce is essential to quality outcomes.	Focus II. Employee Development Staff perform in an exceptional manner and have opportunities for growth because we invest in them.
Our commitments and obligations will be carried out with integrity, quality, and transparency.	Focus III. Accountability, Commitment & Integrity We demonstrate integrity , maintain fidelity to our plans and operate with a strong sense of commitment to permanency for our children in care and thus make adjustments to plans when needed in a timely and transparent manner.
We are most effective in achieving our mission when we partner, develop, and maintain strong relationships with our clients, customers and external stakeholders.	Focus IV. Strong External Partnerships We develop and maintain strong partnerships, alliances, and strategic relationships in order to meet shared goals and objectives for children and families..



Georgia Division of Family & Children Services

Priorities for 2014

Safety & Well-being

Opportunities for
employees

Accountability,
Commitment &
Integrity

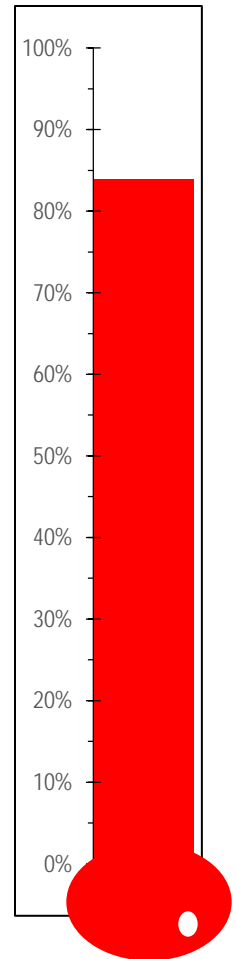
Relationships with our
Partners

Update & Background on Office of Family Independence

- The Division's restructured, centralized system - termed Georgia One - aims to streamline eligibility processes and use technology to maximize use of staff statewide to manage the 55% increase in caseloads over the past 5 years without a comparable increase in staff.
- Issues with technology, staffing and logistics have resulted in unacceptable and frustrating service for thousands of Georgians.
- An intensive effort is underway to address the backlog. This effort includes IT support, consultation from other states that have faced similar issues and overtime for all OFI staff.
- Approximately 80% of the backlog has been eliminated during the past two weeks through this intensive effort.

OFI Solutions to Current Concerns

- Aggressive recruitment of staff is being done by our Office of Human Resources in an effort to add a substantial number of new staff in the next 90 days to ensure that we remain within timeliness standards.
- A self-service option is available that allows customers to access case status and benefit information without waiting for a call agent. This was launched in February.
- Work continues with national subject matter experts, Cambria Solutions, to review the Georgia One business model for effectiveness, efficiency and to recommend changes for improvement.
- Solutions for technology needs are being explored to locate an adequate system that will better meet the needs of DFCS and its customers.
- Overtime will continue until all backlog has been eliminated.



IV-E Waiver Demonstration Projects

- The Child Welfare Demonstration Project authority was first authorized by Congress in 1994 and then was expanded and extended as part of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997 (P.L. 105-89). ASFA authorized the Department to approve up to ten State child welfare demonstrations in each of the five fiscal years (FYs) 1998 – 2002.
- The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act, P.L. 112-34, signed into law on September 30, 2011, provided the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with authority to approve up to 10 title IV-E child welfare waiver demonstration projects in fiscal year (FY) 2012–2014. These demonstration projects involve the waiver of certain requirements of titles IV-E and IV-B of the Social Security Act.
- This year, 2014, is the last year for states to participate in the IV-E Waiver demonstration projects (there will be ten states selected).
- On February 28, 2014, Georgia submitted an application to participate in the IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project.

Cost Neutrality Provision

- Section 1130 (h) requires that the demonstration project be cost-neutral, that is, the total amount of Federal funds used to support the demonstration will not exceed the amount of Federal funds that would have been expended by the title IV-E agency under the State/Tribe plans approved under Parts B and E of title IV of the Act, if the Demonstration project were not conducted.
- Therefore, if a project incurs expenses exceeding the Federal cost-neutrality limit, the title IV-E agency is responsible for amounts above that limit. The Administration for Family & Children Services and Department of Human Services will work with and determine at the beginning of each demonstration that the project can be reasonably expected to be cost-neutral.

Georgia's Target Population for IV-E Waiver

Target populations in which services/interventions may be provided to prevent foster care entry

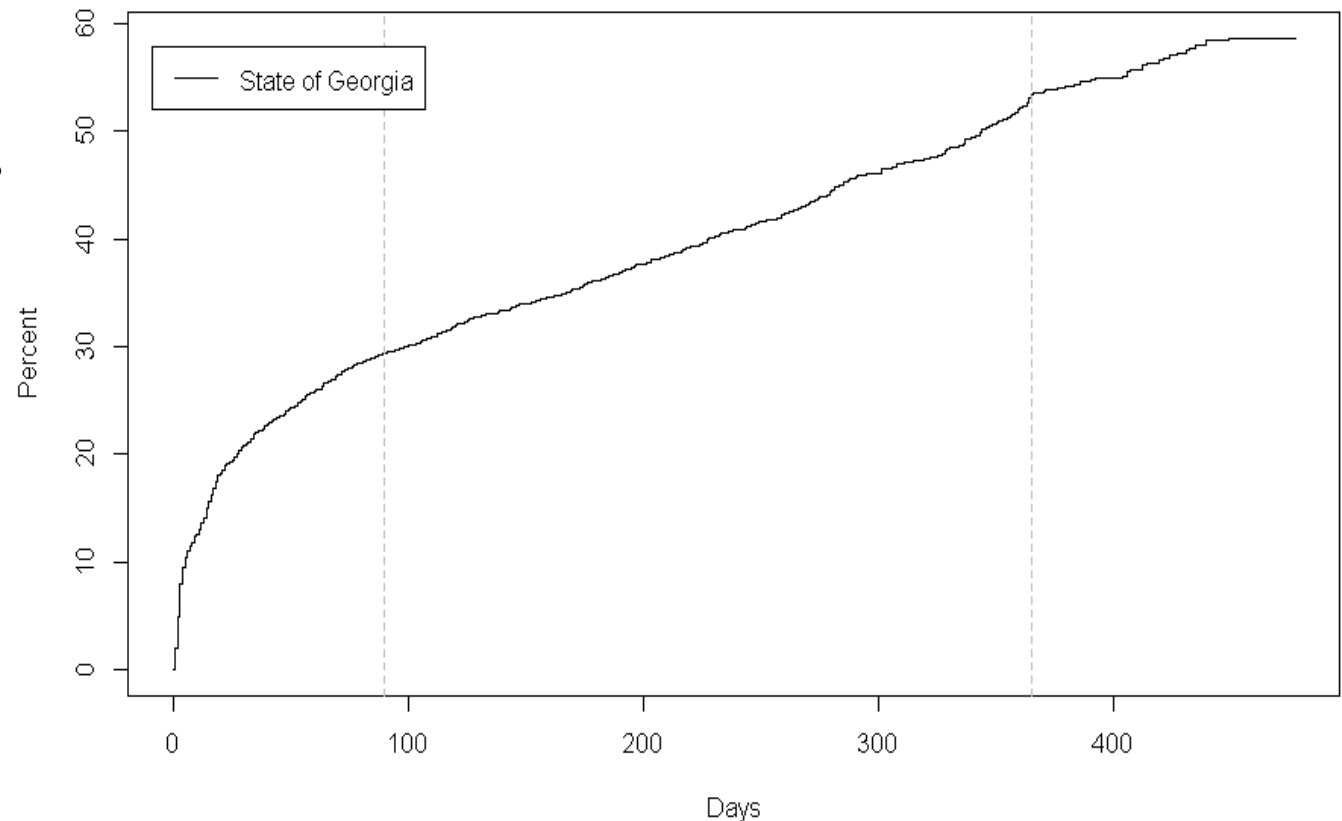
- Short Stayers. Children and youth in foster care for short periods of time (90 days or less).
- Children in Need of Services (CHINS). Youth who commit various status offenses but may be provided with community services.

Target population in foster care that services may be provided to “step them down” to a less restrictive setting or placement in foster care or exiting to a positive permanency option such as reunification, adoption or guardianship.

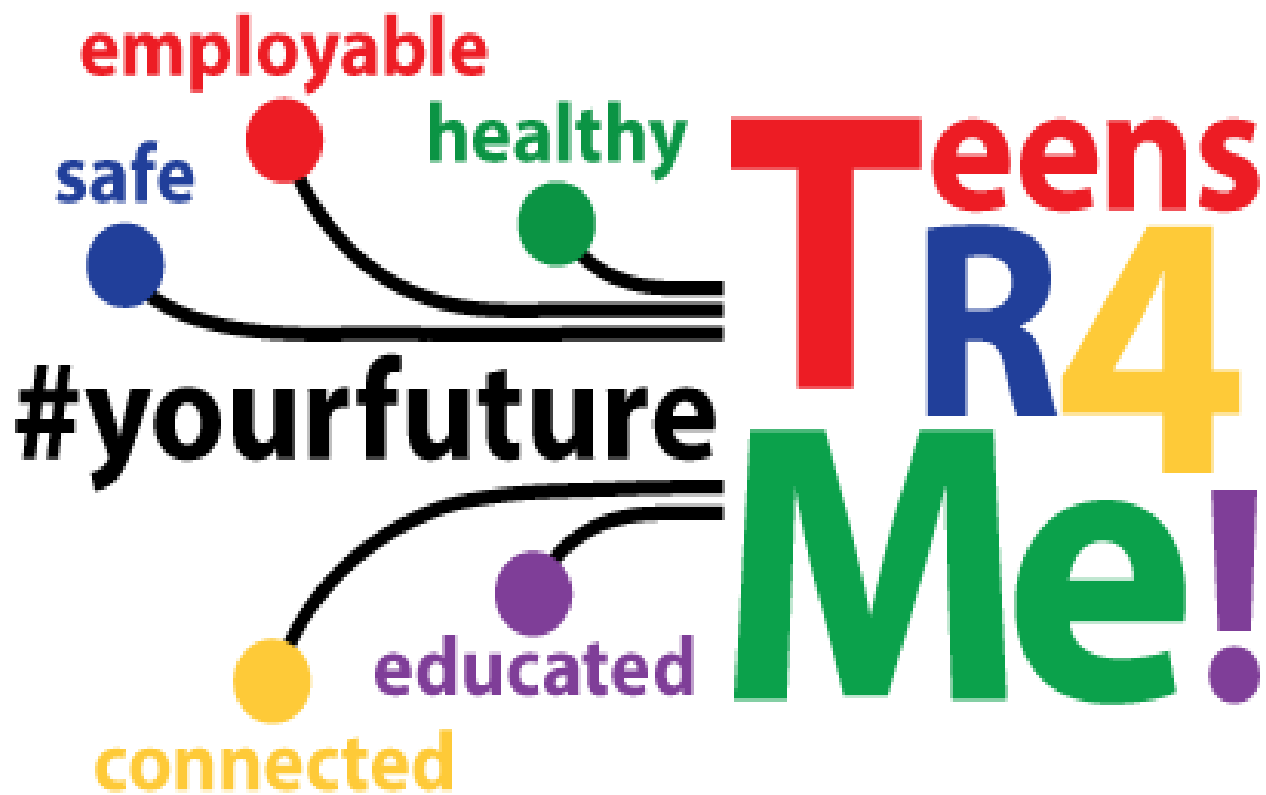
- Children in Congregate Care Settings. These are institutional or group home settings.

Number of Days Children in Foster Care Before Exiting (FFY 2013)

Appropriate assessments of and interventions needed for children in foster care for short periods of time in order to prevent the foster care entry.



Note: Approximately 30% of children who left foster care in FFY 2013 did so within 90 days of entering care.



Two-day conference held on March 7th & 8th with a focus on the needs of youth in foster care aged 14 to 21. Practitioners attended on the first day and our youth attended on the second day.

Teens Are For Me Strategies

- Greater Focus on Education & Job Readiness
- Stabilizing Living Situation: No Reject, No Eject Policies
- Strategies to Decrease Involvement with Law Enforcement
- Changing Practice: Opt out of Care

Increase number of youth who remain in care between 18
– 21 if no positive permanency plan

Life Readiness Plan (example of possible strategy)