



Thomas Chapmond
Commissioner

Department of Family & Protective Services

House Select Committee on Child Welfare and Foster Care

Representative Suzanna Gratia Hupp
Chair

Adoption Overview

March 24, 2004



Select Committee on Child Welfare and Foster Care Charge

Charge 1: Determine barriers to adoption, specific to minority children, in foster care. Determine activities that will increase the recruitment and retention of racial and ethnic minority families as foster care providers.



DFPS Presentation Overview

- Adoption Overview
- Recruitment and Family Perspective
- Data on Consummated Adoptions
- Services to Families
- Data on Children Awaiting Adoptive Placement
- Adoption Initiatives



Who

Children in the CPS System in FY 2003

- Intake-*186,160 reports of alleged child abuse and neglect*
- Investigation-*131,130 child abuse or neglect investigations*
- Out-of-Home Care-*15,707 children in foster care*
- **Adoption-3,766 children awaiting adoptive placement at end of FY 2003**



What

DFPS Role in Adoption

- DFPS is not a traditional adoption agency
- DFPS seeks families for abused and neglected children in state conservatorship



When

- Courts have 12 months to issue a final order with a 6 month extension available in special circumstances
- Upon termination of parental rights the court appoints a permanent managing conservator:
 - Relative, or
 - DFPS



How-Recruitment

Ongoing recruitment efforts by DFPS to locate families for children

- Regional and Statewide Recruitment Plan
 - Framework to build capacity
 - Provides consistent guidelines
 - emphasizes collaboration with local stakeholders
- Texas Adoption Resource Exchange
 - Web site providing information on adoption and children in DFPS care awaiting adoptive placement (www.adoptchildren.org)
 - Families from throughout United States with current and approved home studies can submit interest forms on children listed in TARE



Darlasha



Name: Darlasha

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: African American

Child ID: 10944

Date of Birth: January 2000

TARE

Personal Profile:

Darlasha is a victim of shaken baby. Darlasha has a sweet disposition and does not interact with anyone. Darlasha is medically fragile, non-mobile and does not react to visual or sound stimulation. Darlasha only cries when she is hurting or upset about her physical or occupational therapy. She is non-mobile and uses a wheelchair. She does not turn over unless she is participating in physical and occupational therapy. Darlasha is non-verbal and was in Speech therapy that was discontinued because of her inability to make sounds. Darlasha does have muscle spasms and seizures. She has respiratory problems and sometimes has to be placed on oxygen. She needs regular breathing treatments to minimize congestion in her lungs. Her spine is also curving as a result of not being mobile and active. She wears a back brace and has to have head supported when she is in her wheelchair. Darlasha has a g-button and sometimes has to be placed on continuous IV feeding. She also has problems with reflux and is on medications. Darlasha receives nursing hours because she needs continuous care. Even though she prefers to be left alone, she does enjoy being held. She has a hearing aide, but there is no response from her to distinguish that she is hearing sounds or understands what is being said. She is cordially blind, but sometimes it appears that she is tracking certain colors.

Special Needs:

Developmental Special Needs: **Severe**

Emotional Special Needs: **Moderate**

Physical Special Needs: **Severe**

Medical Special Needs: **Severe**

Desired Family Profile:

Darlasha needs a family who has experience in meeting the needs of a child with her medical needs. The family should also understand that she does not interact and who is willing to follow through with her ongoing medical appointment and the continuous care that she needs.



TARE

Jasper



Name: Jasper

Gender: Male

Ethnicity: African American

Child ID: 16015

Date of Birth: September
1993

Special Needs:

Developmental Special Needs: **Moderate**

Emotional Special Needs: **Mild**

Physical Special Needs: **Mild**

Medical Special Needs: **Mild**

Personal Profile:

Jasper is a shy little boy around strangers, but when he gets to know you he can talk up a storm. He enjoys playing video games and riding his bike around his neighborhood. He loves to play with other children his age. Jasper has a lovely smile and is a caring and thankful child. Jasper is helpful around the house and takes direction well (he does his chores with out question!). Jasper does not have a significant discipline problem. Jasper likes to go to church and actively participates in church activities. Jasper does well in school and is in regular classes as well as resource classes for his learning disability. Jasper enjoys alone time with caregivers so he can have attention showered on him, but he is not overly needy for attention. He would love to have a family that can take around town for fun activities (like an amusement park or zoo!) and can also have a nice time just relaxing at home. Jasper does well with other children, so he would love siblings. Jasper greatly desires a permanent home with caregivers that can show unconditional love. His greatest hope is that a loving family will meet and fall in love with him and give him a home to call his own, forever.

Desired Family Profile:

Jasper needs a family who can devote a lot of time to his needs and can provide activities to stimulate him developmentally, emotionally, and socially. Jasper's needs would be best met with family where there is a strong male figure. Jasper does well with other children and would love siblings to play with. He needs a caregiver who can take an active interest in his schooling.



TARE

Group Profile:

These five siblings are very closely bonded to each other. They enjoy being together and share many interests and activities. All of them like animals, especially cats. Although they may appear shy when each is alone, put them together and they are talkative, lively and entertaining. The children often speak about each other. Carlos is the oldest and seems to set the example for the younger ones. He is polite, does well in school and enjoys trying new things. Miranda is the second oldest. She is polite and respectful too. She is very close to Jacinda and Ozzy and is often seen cuddling them. Jacinda is outgoing and talkative. She loves to play outdoors and enjoys roller-skating. Josh is the next oldest. He follows in his older brother's footsteps and is very curious. He likes to collect toy cars and has acquired quite a collection. Ozzy is the youngest of the children. He is talkative, funny and loves to chase his siblings. He is also outgoing and has a high level of energy. All five share the strong desire to be adopted together.



Related Siblings
Ozzy
Joshua
Jacinda
Miranda
Carlos



TARE

Berlinda



Name: Berlinda

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: Hispanic/Latino

Child ID: 11831

Date of Birth: August 1992

Personal Profile:

Berlinda, who prefers to be called Jazmine is a strong little girl with a tender heart. An affectionate, thoughtful and polite child, she has a wonderful sense of humor and likes to joke and play around. Jazmine enjoys outdoor activities and shopping. She likes sweets, pizza, and Mexican food, especially tacos. In school, she is in special education for assistance with learning caused by severe depression in the past. Her IQ is average, but she has a delay in her reading abilities. However, Jazmine is making progress in this area with the help of a tutor. She takes medication for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, depression, and a thyroid problem. Jazmine has younger sisters who were adopted when she was not ready for placement and a brother who died as an infant. She has been unable to maintain contact with them. She is still in the grieving process for loss of her family. Jazmine is working hard in therapy to help address these issues from her past. She wants a permanent, loving home to call her own.

Special Needs:

Developmental Special Needs: **Mild**

Emotional Special Needs: **Moderate**

Physical Special Needs: **None**

Medical Special Needs: **Mild**

Desired Family Profile:

Jazmine needs parents who will be patient, compassionate, kind and understanding about her needs. She needs nurturance and affection from her new family. She needs parents who can deal with and understand the kind of trauma she has suffered and how it manifests itself into acting out behaviors. A family will need to be resourceful and able to access on going services for her.



TARE

Matthew



Name: Matthew

Gender: Male

Ethnicity: Hispanic/Latino

Child ID: 16455

Date of Birth: May 1990

Personal Profile:

Matthew is a quiet child with a big heart, sweet smile and good sense of humor. He does very well in school and loves to read. He also lists science among his favorite subjects in school, where he was recently recognized with the "Student of the Year" award. He often gets straight A's; his teachers are very fond of him. Among the activities he enjoys engaging in are playing board games, talking with his friends and listening to music. Matthew does not have preference for any specific type of music. He likes all kinds. A typical teenager he says he likes eating pizza and lasagna. Matthew is not much of a sports fan. He does, however, like to watch TV and would prefer to be indoors and close to a television. He is able to adjust to his environment and says he is used to living either in the city or in the country. He is able to attach to others with little to no difficulty. Matthew gets along well with peers, but does not have a lot of friends. This may be due to the fact he is shy and often lacks the initiative to seek new friendships. He says he enjoys spending time with peers and talking with his friends.

Special Needs:

Developmental Special Needs: **None**

Emotional Special Needs: **Mild**

Physical Special Needs: **None**

Medical Special Needs: **None**

Desired Family Profile:

Matthew would like to live with a mother and father. He says he can live in the city or in the country. He also says he does not mind having dogs and cats around the house. Matthew needs a family that will encourage him to excel in school and push him to pursue a higher education.



Sadae



Name: Sadae

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: African American

Child ID: 15497

Date of Birth: Oct. 1988

TARE

Personal Profile:

Sadae is a very sweet, caring and affectionate young lady. She is an active adolescent who likes to fix her hair and paint her fingernails. A typical teenager, Sadae likes to listen to rap music, dance, play basketball, read magazines, spend time with friends and eat out with her family.

Her favorite food is pizza. She is friendly, playful and eager to please. Sadae is an average student who likes school. She is in regular education classes and says her favorite subject is chemistry. She is a good student, both academically and behaviorally.

Sadae interacts appropriately with both adults and peers and is very sociable. She is able to take responsibility for her actions. Although she will occasionally test boundaries, she will also accept her consequences for any wrongdoing. Sadae has had behavior problems in the past, but with help in therapy, she has made many positive changes. She is on medication for anxiety.

Sadae loves animals and would like an adoptive family that lives in the city and has pets, especially dogs. She hopes for a career in the medical industry.

Special Needs:

Developmental Special Needs: **None**

Emotional Special Needs: **Mild**

Physical Special Needs: **None**

Medical Special Needs: **None**

Desired Family Profile:

Sadae has a strong desire to be adopted by a caring family that will love her. She should transition into a new family easily. She loves animals, so pets are a plus. She does not have a preference if there are other children in the home or not. She will require a lot of attention and support from her family. Sadae responds positively with structure and stability.



How-Family Perspective

Steps toward becoming adoptive parent

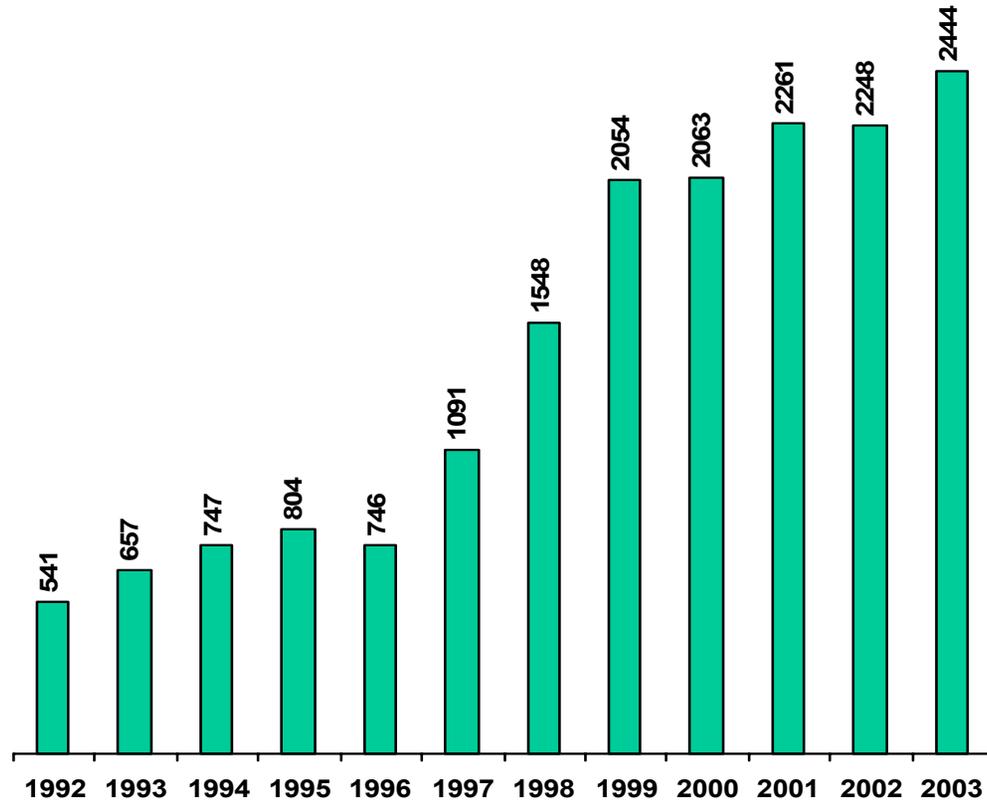
- Family inquires about adoption
- Family attends pre-service training
- Home study completed
- Family approved to adopt

Cost to adopt

- DFPS does not charge fees
- Legal fees associated with finalizing the adoption (court petition/filing fees) are paid by the family



Accomplishments-Historical Perspective



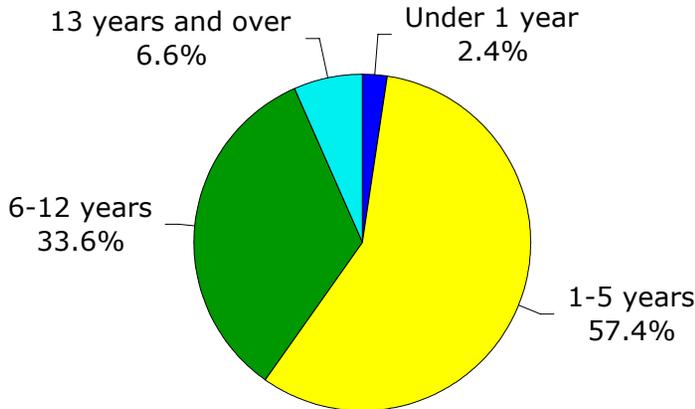
Consummated Adoptions By Fiscal Year



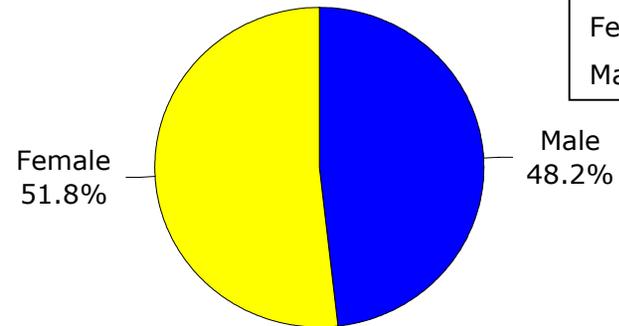
Accomplishments-Children in Consummated Adoptions, FY 2003

Total 2444

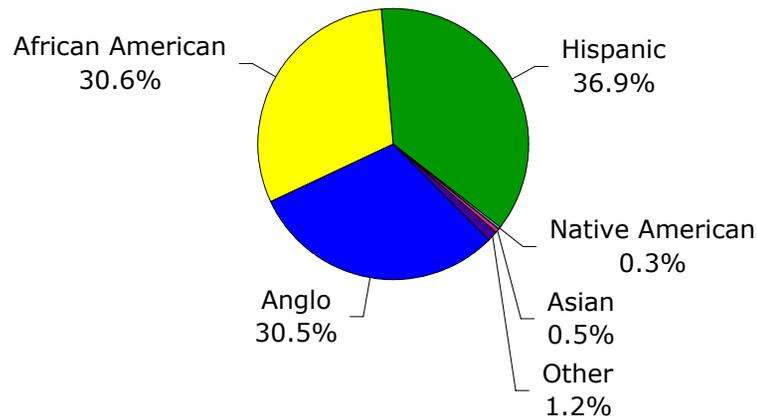
Age



Gender



Ethnicity



<u>Age</u>	
Under 1	59
1-5	1403
6-12	821
13 and over	161

<u>Gender</u>	
Female	1266
Male	1178

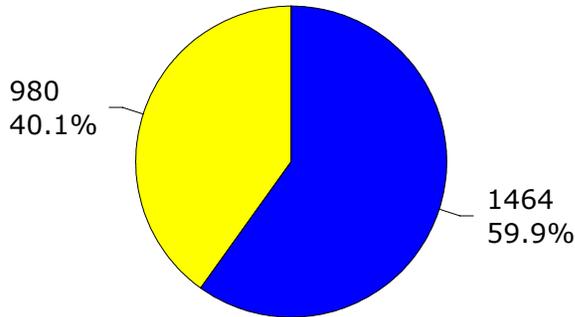
<u>Ethnicity</u>	
Anglo	746
African American	748
Hispanic	902
Native American	7
Asian	12
Other	29



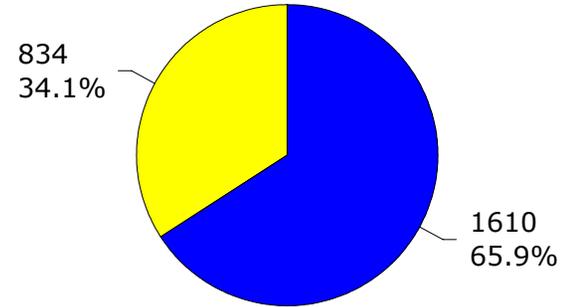
Accomplishments-Children in Consummated Adoptions, FY 2003

Total 2444

Special Needs



Sibling Groups

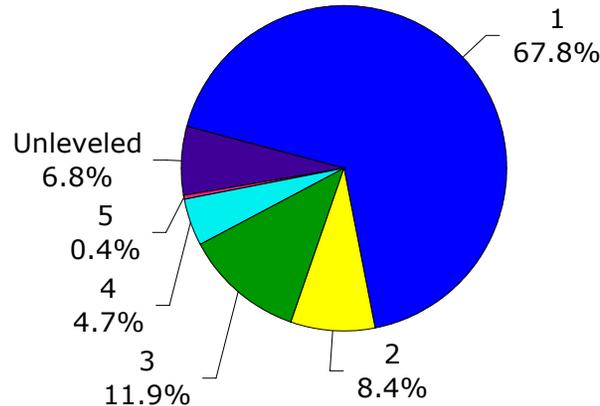


■ Disabling Condition ■ No Special Characteristics

■ Part of a Sibling Group ■ Not Part of a Sibling Group

Level of Care

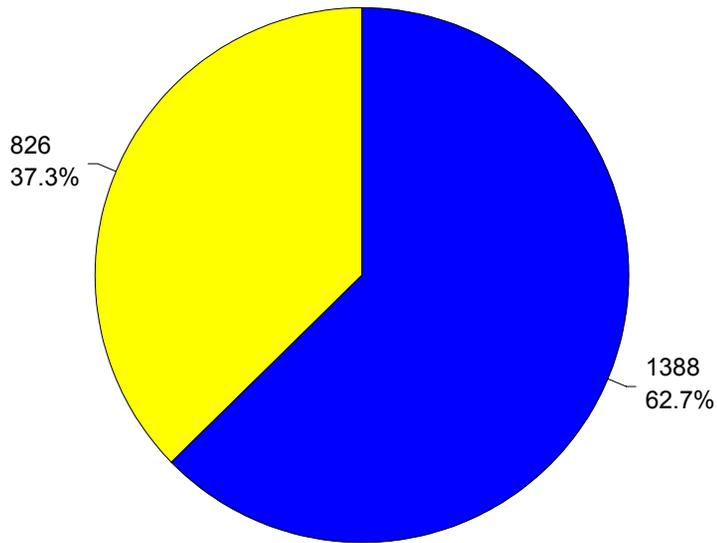
<u>Level of Care</u>	
LOC 1	1656
LOC 2	205
LOC 3	292
LOC 4	115
LOC 5	9
LOC 6	0
Unleveled	167





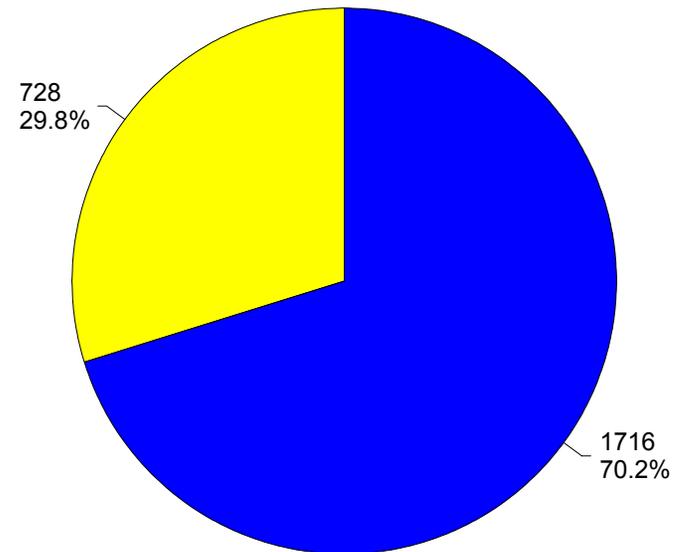
Accomplishments-Children in Consummated Adoptions in FY 2003

Race/Ethnicity of Children and Adoptive Parents



- Race/ethnicity of parent(s) is same as child
- Race/ethnicity of one or both parents differs from child's

Adoptions by Type of Agency



- Children adopted by DFPS families
- Children adopted by non-DFPS families*

(* Non DFPS includes private agency adoptions, relative adoptions and out of state adoptions.)



Services-Adoption Assistance

All DFPS children adopted are eligible to receive:

- Post Adoption Services

Criteria to qualify for other benefits:

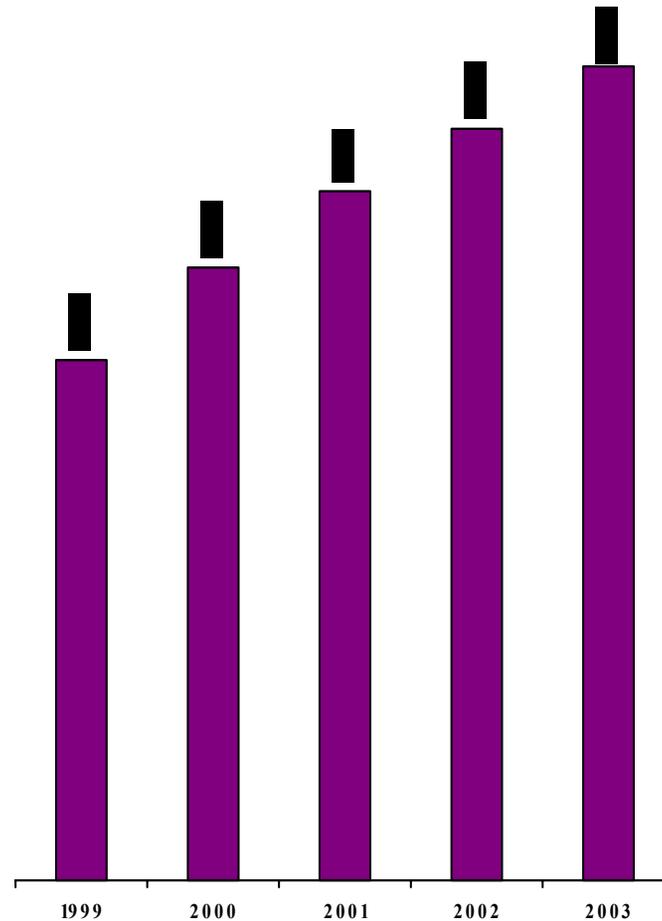
- Over 2 and a minority;
- Over 6 and Anglo;
- Sibling group; or
- Diagnosed medical or emotional disability.

Other Benefits may include:

- Adoption Subsidy
 - Monthly stipend
 - Non-recurring adoption expenses
- Medicaid
- Tuition Waiver



Next Steps-Historical Perspective



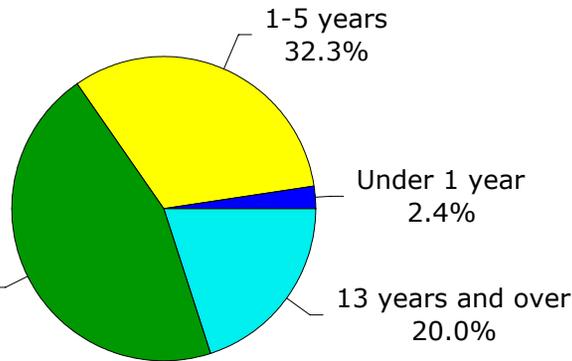
Children Awaiting Adoptive Placement at the end (Aug. 31st) of each Fiscal Year



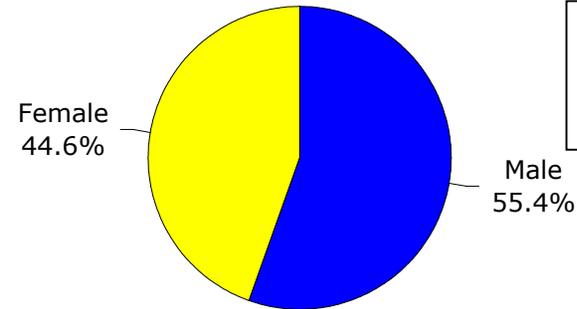
Next Steps-Children Awaiting Adoptive Placement as of August 31, 2003

Total Children 3,766

Age



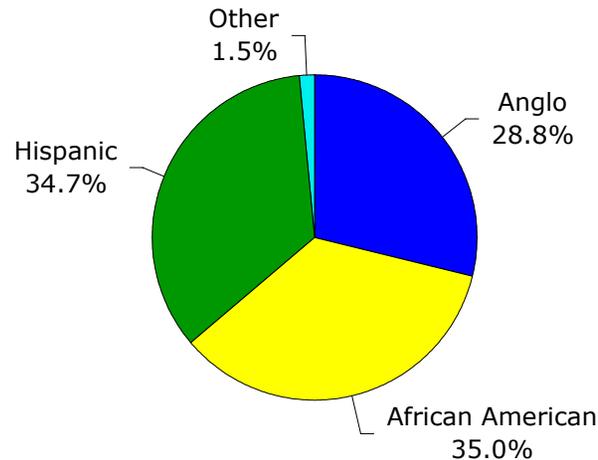
Gender



<u>Age</u>	
Under 1	90
1-5	1216
6-12	1707
13 and over	753

<u>Gender</u>	
Female	1678
Male	2088

Ethnicity



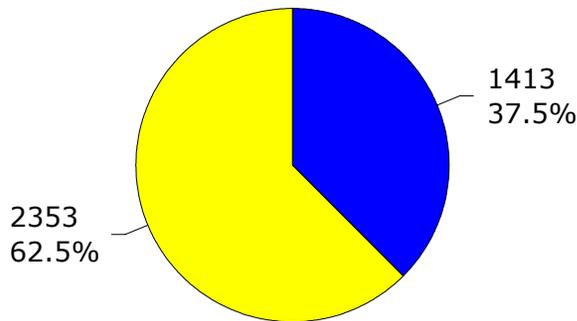
<u>Ethnicity</u>	
Anglo	1086
African American	1317
Hispanic	1306
Other	57



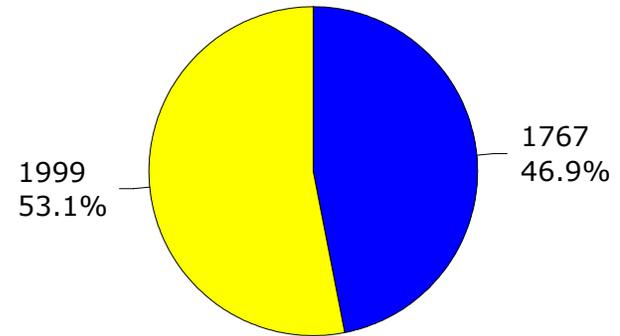
Next Steps-Children Awaiting Adoptive Placement as of August 31, 2003

Total Children 3,766

Special Needs



Sibling Groups

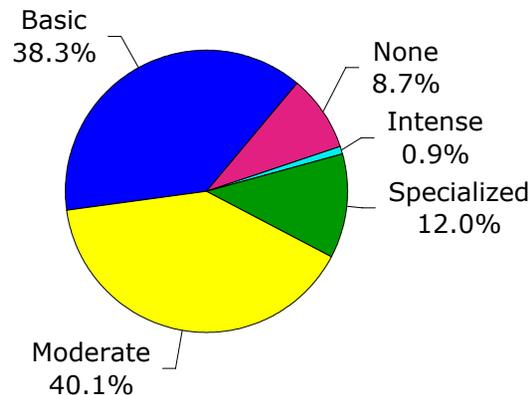


■ Disabling Condition ■ No Special Characteristics

■ Part of a Sibling Group ■ Not Part of a Sibling Group

Level of Care

Level of Care	
Basic	1442
Moderate	1512
Specialized	451
Intense	33
Unleveled	328





Removing Barriers to Adoption

DFPS Initiatives:

- Faith Based Recruitment
 - recruit and verify two families per congregation
 - develop support services for these families within the congregation
 - expands community-based partnerships

- Targeted Recruitment
 - child specific recruitment efforts
 - efforts are focused on reaching out to families with similar demographics of children waiting
 - highlight older children, children with disabilities and siblings



Removing Barriers to Adoption

Additional DFPS Initiatives:

- Participate in national recruitment efforts of AdoptUSKids
 - national campaign starts May 2004
 - receive and respond to inquiries from prospective foster and adoptive families
 - potential to increase families interested in fostering or adopting our children



Removing Barriers to Adoption

Possible Legislative Initiatives:

- Expand adoption benefits
- Create three tiered subsidy
- Increase post adopt services
- Increase contracted adoptions