



CRBC
Citizens Review
Board for Children

Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report

Table of Contents

Citizens Review Board for Children.....	3
History Synopsis.....	3
Mission Statement.....	3
Vision Statement.....	3
Summary of Values and Principles.....	4
Discrimination Statement.....	5
Confidentiality.....	5
Letter to CRBC Volunteers.....	6
Acknowledgements.....	7
Annual Report Introduction.....	9
Legislative Overview.....	9
CRBC Volunteer Summary.....	9
Children in Out-of-Home Care in Maryland.....	10
CRBC/DHR/SSA Review Criteria.....	11
Permanency Plan Hierarchy.....	12
Family Centered Practice Model.....	12
Fiscal Year 2014.....	13
Jurisdictions.....	13
Large Jurisdictions.....	13
Medium Jurisdiction.....	14
Small Jurisdiction.....	14
Demographics.....	15
Overall Permanency Plans Reviewed.....	16
Reunification.....	16
Reunification Recommendations.....	24
Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA).....	25
APPLA Recommendations.....	39
Adoption.....	43
Adoption Recommendations.....	53
Additional Systemic Recommendations.....	55
Children’s Legislative Advocacy Committee (CLAC).....	56
2014 CRBC Supported Legislation.....	56
CRBC Volunteers Fiscal Year 2014.....	57
CRBC Staff Members.....	58
The State Board.....	59
References.....	60



Citizens Review Board for Children

History Synopsis

In Maryland during the 1970's a number of children in foster care were being placed from one foster home to another—as well as remained in care for extended periods of time. Therefore, in 1978 legislation was passed by the Maryland General Assembly creating the Maryland Foster Care Review Board.

Moreover, in 1999 new legislation was passed by the Maryland General Assembly establishing the State Board as the governing body and renaming the Maryland Foster Care Review Board to the Citizens Review Board for Children (CRBC, 2013).

Mission Statement

To conduct case reviews of children in out-of-home care, make timely individual case and systemic recommendations; and advocate for legislative and systematic child welfare improvements to promote safety and permanency.

Vision Statement

We envision the protection of all children from abuse and neglect, only placing children in out-of-home care when necessary; and providing families the help they need to stay intact; children will be safe in a permanent living arrangement.



CRBC
Citizens Review
Board for Children

Summary of Values and Principles

The Citizen Review Board for Children is rooted in a number of core values, which relate to society's responsibility to children and the unique developmental needs of children.

We have a strong value of believing that children need permanence within a family, and that their significant emotional attachments should be maintained. We know children develop through a series of nurturing interactions with their parents, siblings and other family members, as well as culture and environment. Therefore, a child's identity or sense of selfhood grows from these relationships.

In addition, we believe children grow and are best protected in the context of a family. If parents or kin are not able to provide care and protection for their children, then children should be placed temporarily in a family setting, which will maintain the child's significant emotional bonds and promote the child's cultural ties.

The CRBC review process upholds the moral responsibility of the State and citizenry to ensure a safe passage to healthy adulthood for our children, and to respect the importance of family and culture.

As case reviewers, CRBC values independence and objectivity, and we are committed to reporting accurately what we observe to make recommendations with no other interest in mind but what is best for children. In addition, CRBC provides an opportunity to identify barriers that can be eradicated and can improve the lives of children and their families; and improve the services of the child welfare system (CRBC, 2013).



Discrimination Statement

The Citizens Review Board for Children (CRBC) renounces any policy or practice of discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, or sexual orientation that is or would be applicable to its citizen reviewers or staff or to the children, families, and employees involved in the child welfare system (CRBC, 2013).

Confidentiality

CRBC local board members are bound by strict confidentiality requirements. Under Article 88A, § 6, all records concerning out-of-home care are confidential and unauthorized disclosure is a criminal offense subject to a fine not exceeding \$500 or imprisonment not exceeding 90 days, or both. Each local board member shall be presented with the statutory language on confidentiality, including the penalty for breach thereof, and sign a confidentiality statement prior to having access to any confidential information.

CRBC Location

We are currently located at 1100 Eastern Boulevard, Essex, Maryland 21221.

Please visit us on our Facebook page and on DHR website.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Maryland-Citizens-Review-Board-for-Children-CRBC/>
and http://www.dhr.state.md.us/blog/?page_id=4750 .



CRBC
Citizens Review
Board for Children

Letter to CRBC Volunteers



To: All Governor Appointed CRBC Volunteers

January 1, 2015

Re: Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report

Dear CRBC Volunteers:

We want to thank you for the shared commitment to promote deep, broad, and rapid individual case, as well as a wide-range of Child Welfare systemic recommendations to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being for children and their families!

The State Board, with the Department of Human Resources (DHR) including the Social Services Administration (SSA) has taken the necessary steps to reinforce our Volunteer-force. This was accomplished by adding a Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator position to the CRBC Staff. This positive and innovative personnel move will help to increase our Volunteer-force and ultimately aid in the case review process.

Again, we want to thank each and every one of you for your longstanding commitment and dedication to serve our vulnerable children and their families throughout Fiscal Year 2014. We could not fulfill our mission with you!

Sincerely,

Nettie Anderson-Burrs

Nettie Anderson-Burrs
Chairperson State Board

George Randall

George Randall, Ph.D, MSW, LGSW
Administrator



Acknowledgements

The Citizens Review Board for Children (CRBC) are extremely thankful for the commitment from each of its public, private, and community partners and their efforts in striving to make Maryland's children safe and protected against abuse and neglect.

DHR/SSA:

CRBC thanks you for the continuous public child welfare leadership, as well as the never-ending commitment to serve Maryland's vulnerable children and their families. Moreover, CRBC could not carry out its mission without your continued support and collaboration.

Family Courts:

CRBC thanks you for the unremitting request to review individual cases of concern within each jurisdiction. CRBC takes solace in knowing that you acknowledge and value the importance of our mission.

Appointed Volunteers:

CRBC fully understands and acknowledge at the core of why you serve in the capacity of Volunteer is a personal compassion to serve, as well as caring for all of Maryland's children. We thank each of you for all of your individual and collective untiring commitment to attend the scheduled local board case reviews, CRBC committee meetings and special events. In addition, your case and systemic advocacy and recommendations are essential to the overall CRBC mission and goals!

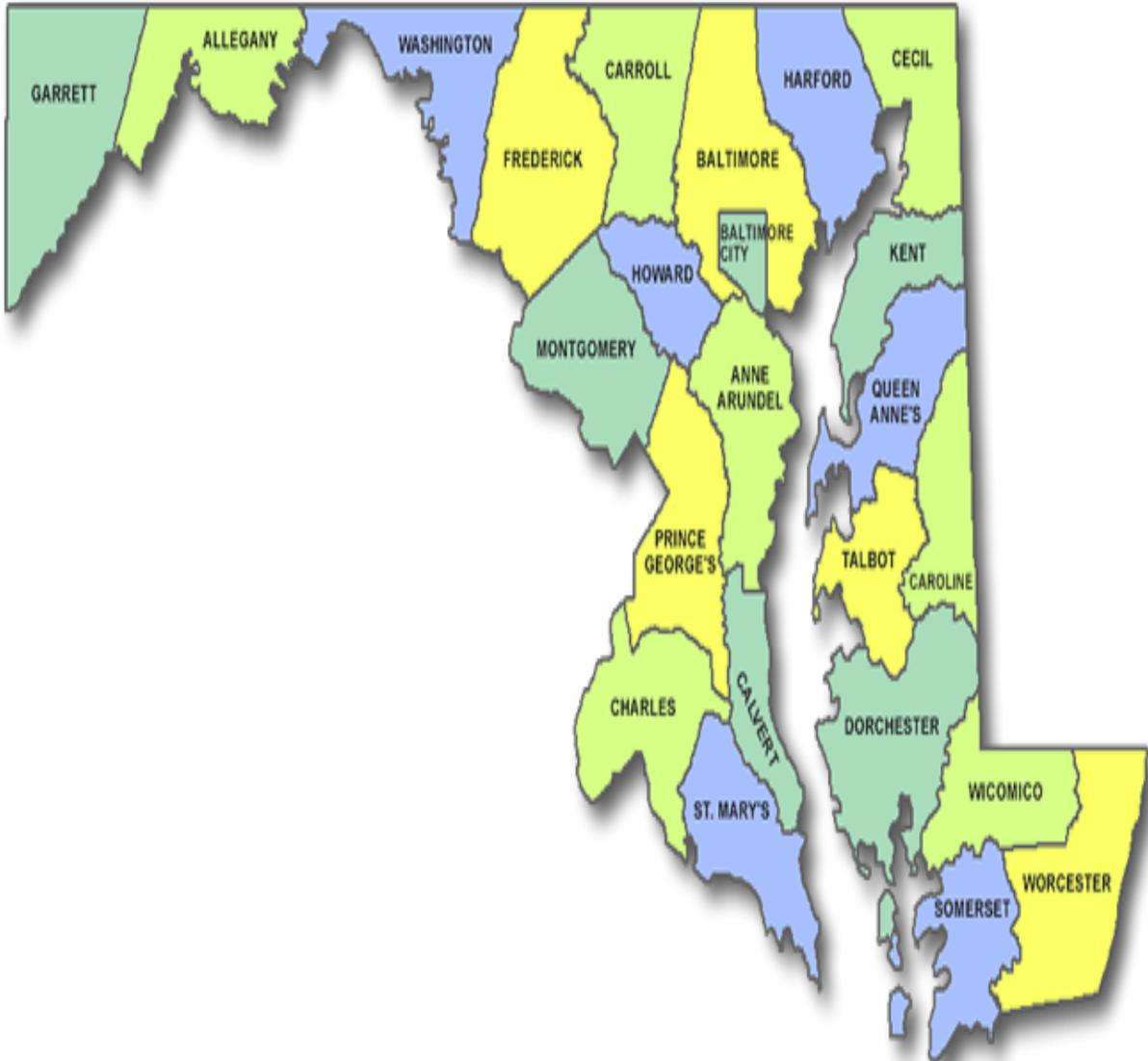
Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children (CPMC):

CRBC are so very thankful to be an organizational member of a coalition that combines and amplifies the power of organizational and individuals who are working together to keep children safe and from abuse and neglect. More importantly, we are also thankful for your efforts to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measureable improvements in safety, permanence, and well-being.



CRBC
Citizens Review
Board for Children

The State of Maryland with Counties



In Fiscal Year 2014, the Citizens Review Board for Children conducted targeted case reviews for all 23 counties and Baltimore City¹.

¹ Caroline and Worcester County was not included in CRBC's data analysis for FY2014.



Annual Report Introduction

Throughout Fiscal Year 2014, the Citizens Review Board for Children (CRBC) has continued to conduct individual out-of home placement case reviews selected by targeted review criteria in accordance with the Work Plan Agreement with the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Social Services Administration (SSA). In addition, the State Board continued to examine policies, procedures, and practices of State and local agencies, as well as made findings and recommendations in accordance with Family Law §5-539.1 and COMAR 07.01.06.05.

Legislative Overview

The Citizens Review Board for Children including its Children's Legislative Advocacy Committee (CLAC) has continued to engage in legislative advocacy that has a direct impact on children. In addition, CRBC is an organization member of the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children (CPMC). As an organizational member, CRBC has weighed-in on relevant Child Welfare issues and topics throughout Fiscal Year 2014.

CRBC Volunteer Summary

CRBC has governor appointed volunteers who serve on Local Boards in all ²23 counties and Baltimore City. Throughout the Fiscal Year 2014 CRBC functioned with a critical shortage of State-wide volunteers. There were on average 136 CRBC volunteers in the State of Maryland during the Fiscal Year 2014. Moreover, CRBC has never had to function with this limited amount of volunteers.

In response to this critical volunteer shortage CRBC received approval from the Department of Human Resources to hire a Volunteer Recruitment Specialist to recruit potential volunteers throughout the State including all 23 counties and Baltimore City. These recruitment efforts will place emphasis on those counties with zero volunteers or critical shortages first including Allegany, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, Prince Georges, Queen Annes, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties; as well as Baltimore City.

² There was no governor appointed volunteers in Worcester County.



Children in Out-of-Home Care in Maryland

Number of Children in OOH Care													
Goal = 5,621 or less													
	Goal	Jul-2013	Aug-2013	Sep-2013	Oct-2013	Nov-2013	Dec-2013	Jan-2014	Feb-2014	Mar-2014	Apr-2014	May-2014	Jun-
State Total	5,621	5,887	5,848	5,830	5,815	5,723							
Allegany	81	92	95	93	89	90							
Anne Arundel	173	169	167	167	161	162							
Baltimore City	2490	2,724	2,703	2,698	2,690	2,642							
Baltimore County	586	576	583	593	600	580							
Calvert	97	106	101	100	95	97							
Caroline	40	43	41	41	41	42							
Carroll	48	47	46	49	47	45							
Cecil	144	156	156	152	161	153							
Charles	113	112	109	108	105	107							
Dorchester	24	24	25	25	25	25							
Frederick	156	151	147	150	151	138							
Garrett	39	39	39	39	43	41							
Harford	235	246	250	250	250	254							
Howard	65	68	65	67	68	64							
Kent	6	6	6	6	7	9							
Montgomery	401	394	392	399	398	400							
Prince George's	538	543	533	532	528	519							
Queen Anne's	15	14	13	12	12	13							
St. Mary's	93	92	93	88	87	91							
Somerset	31	32	34	32	32	29							
Talbot	25	28	34	27	27	26							
Washington	162	167	156	148	143	141							
Wicomico	35	34	35	32	33	33							
Worcester	23	24	25	22	22	22							
Source:	MD CHESSIE/SSW OOH Served file (except Baltimore City, which provides raw data)												
Extract date:		Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13							

Data definition: The number of children in out of home care, on the last day of the month. Counted as the number of children with an open removal episode at the end of the month. Source: MD CHESSIE/SSW OOH Served file; Baltimore City raw data.

[\(return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Highlighting Key	
Green	meeting targeted goal or having fewer children in care than established goal
Yellow	up to 15% higher than targeted goal
Red	more than 15% higher than targeted goal

Source: Maryland Department of Human Resources State Stats



CRBC
Citizens Review
Board for Children

CRBC/DHR/SSA Review Criteria

Reunification:

- ★ *Already established plans of Reunification for youth 10 years of age and older.* CRBC will conduct a review for a child 10 years of age and older who has an established primary permanency plan of Reunification, and has been in car 12 months or longer. The review will be conducted within 3 months of the next court hearing.
- ★ *Newly changed plans of Reunification for youth 10 years of age or older.* CRBC will conduct a review of a child that has a plan of Reunification within 3 months before the child's 18-month court hearing.

Adoption:

- ★ *Existing plans of Adoption.* CRBC will conduct a review for a child that has had a plan of Adoption for over 12 months. The purpose of the review is to assess the appropriateness of the plan and identify barriers to achieve the plan.
- ★ *Newly changed plans of Adoption.* CRBC will conduct a review of a child within 3 months of the establishment of Adoption as a primary permanency plan. The purpose is to ensure that there is adequate and appropriate movement by the local departments to promote and achieve the Adoption.

Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA):

- ★ *Already established plans of APPLA for youth 16 years of age and younger.* CRBC will conduct a full review for a child 16 years of age and younger who has an established primary permanency plan of APPLA. The primary purpose of the review is to assess appropriateness of the plan and review documentation of the Federal APPLA requirements.
- ★ *Newly established plans of APPLA.* CRBC will conduct a review of a child within 3 months of the establishment of APPLA as the primary permanency plan. Local Boards will review cases to ensure that local departments made adequate and appropriate efforts to assess if a plan of APPLA was the appropriate recourse for the child.



- ★ *Older youth aging-out or remaining in care of the State between the ages of 17 and 20 years old.* CRBC will conduct a review of a youth that are 17-20 years of age. The primary purpose of the review is to assess services provided to prepare the youth to transition to adulthood.

Re-Review Cases:

- ★ *Assessment of progress made by LDSS.* CRBC will conduct follow-up reviews during the previous three months of the current fiscal year of any case where the Local Board identified barriers to adequate progress. The purpose of the review is to assess status and any progress made by LDSS to determine if identified barriers have been removed.

Permanency Plan Hierarchy

In 2005, Maryland House Bill 771 adjusted the state permanency goals to align with the federal standards. The permanency plan hierarchy in Maryland is as follows: (Social Services Administration, 2012):

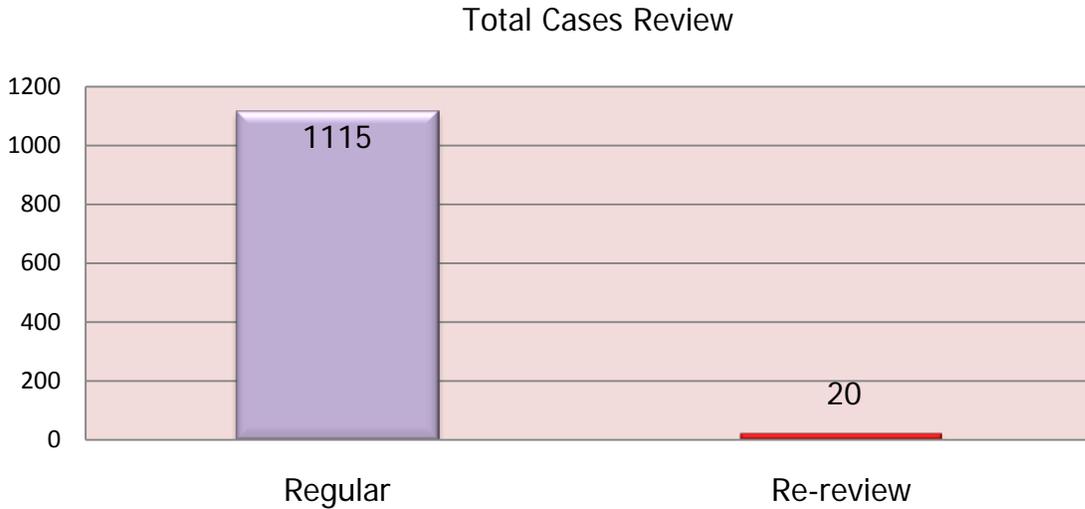
- Reunification with parent(s) or guardian
- Placement with a relative for adoption or guardianship
- Adoption by a non-relative
- Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)

Family Centered Practice Model

According to the Social Services Administration, Family Centered Practice assures that the entire system of care engages the family in helping them to improve their ability to adequately plan for the care and safety of their children. The safety, well-being and permanence of children are paramount. The strengths of the entire family are the focus of the engagement (2010).

Fiscal Year 2014

In Fiscal Year 2014 the Citizens Review Board for Children (CRBC) conducted 1115 regular out-of-home care case reviews and 20 re-review cases totaling 1135 case reviews.



Jurisdictions

Maryland is comprised of 23 counties and Baltimore City. The Department of Human Resources (DHR) identifies jurisdictions according to caseload size such as large, medium, and small.

Large Jurisdictions

	Reunification	Guardianship ³	Adoption	APPLA	Total Cases
Baltimore City	69	53	53	280	455
Baltimore County	22	0	12	73	107
Montgomery	21	5	7	58	91
Prince Georges	22	18	12	68	120
Total	134	76	84	479	773

*Large: 500 cases or more

There were a total of 773 (68%) out of the 1135 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed in Fiscal Year 2014 who were placed within large jurisdictions of Maryland.

³ Includes Relative and Non-relative

Medium Jurisdiction

	Reunification	Guardianship	Adoption	APPLA	Total Cases
Allegany County	9	2	1	6	18
Anne Arundel	8	1	11	28	48
Cecil County	2	0	9	12	23
Charles County	6	0	5	5	16
Frederick	4	2	11	17	34
Harford County	12	3	9	22	46
Saint Mary's	6	8	2	4	20
Washington	10	0	4	14	28
Wicomico	0	0	7	8	15
Total	57	16	59	116	248

** *Medium*: 300-500 cases

There were a total of 248 (22%) out of the 1135 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed in Fiscal Year 2014 who were placed within medium jurisdictions of Maryland.

Small Jurisdiction

	Reunification	Guardianship	Adoption	APPLA	Total Cases
Calvert County	7	3	9	11	30
Caroline County	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll County	6	0	5	2	13
Dorchester	2	0	0	2	4
Garrett	0	1	2	5	8
Howard County	11	0	3	10	24
Kent County	4	1	0	1	6
Queen Anne	3	2	2	2	9
Somerset	6	0	6	2	14
Talbot County	1	0	2	2	5
Worcester	0	0	0	0	0
Total	40	7	29	37	113

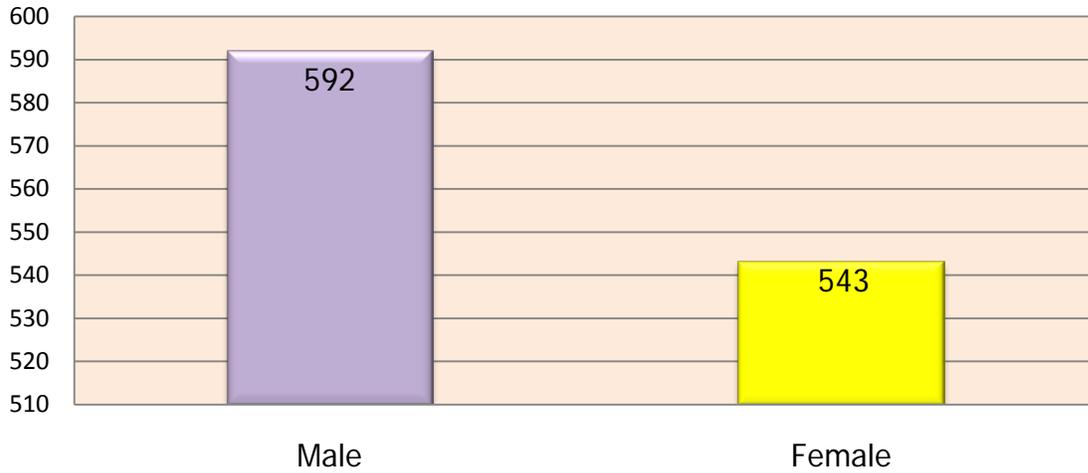
Note: *Fewer than 100 cases*

There were a total of 113 (10%) out of the 1135 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed in Fiscal Year 2014 who were placed within small jurisdictions of Maryland.



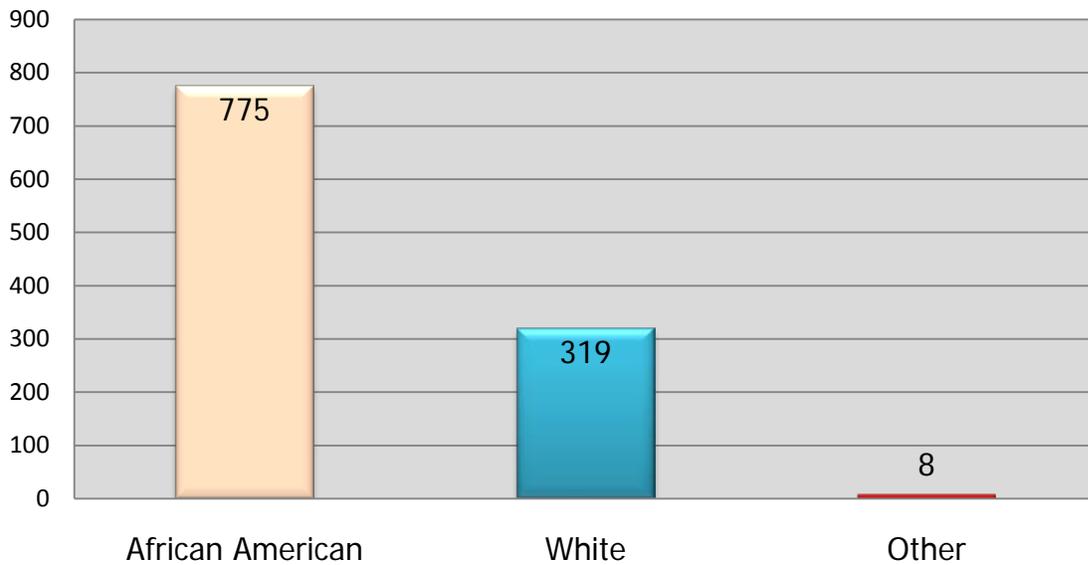
Demographics

Gender



There were 1135 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed in the FY2014, consisting of 592 (52%) males, and 543 (48%) females.

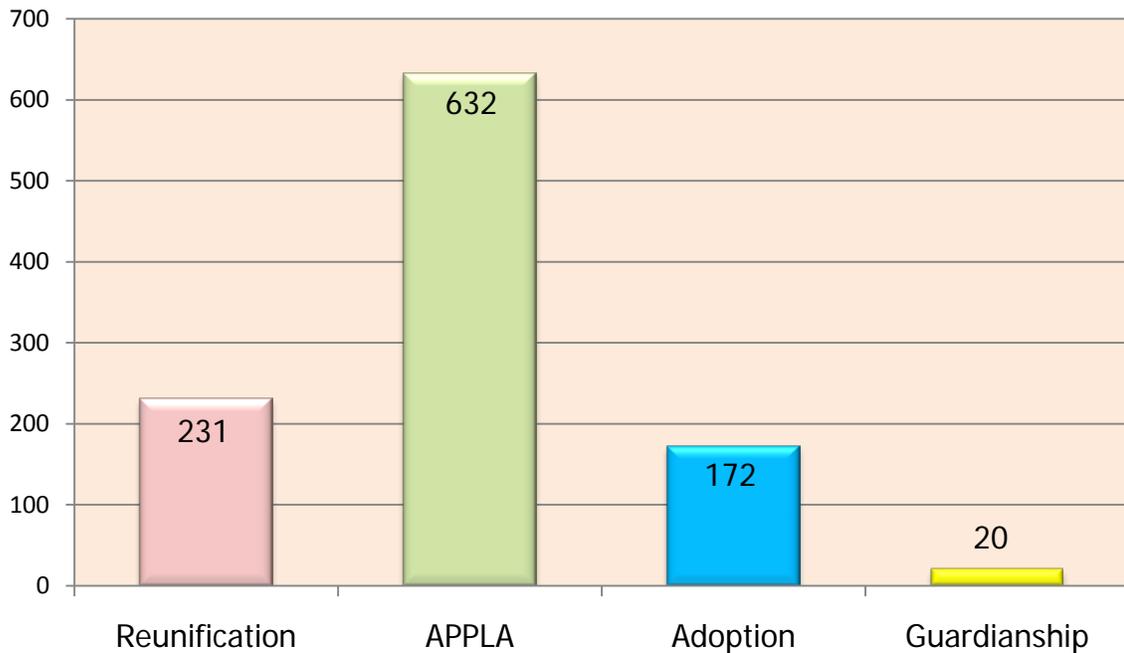
Ethnicity



Of the 1135 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed in the FY2014, there were 775 (72%) who were African American, 319 (28%) who were Caucasian, and 8 (4%) identified as other.



Overall Permanency Plans Reviewed

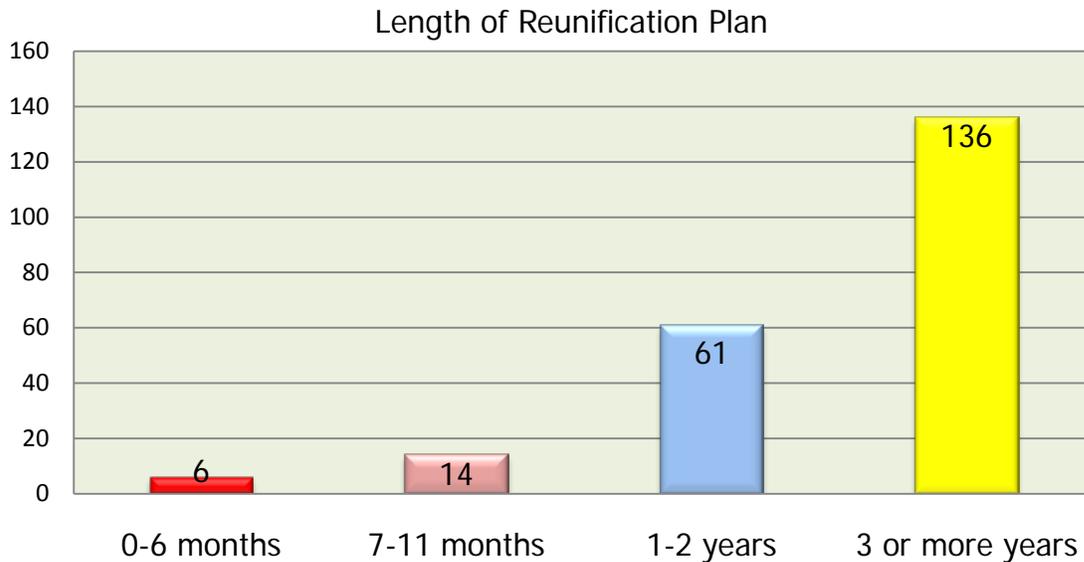


The goal of permanency planning is to establish a safe, permanent placement for all children who have been removed from their homes due to maltreatment. Of the 1135 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed in the FY2014, there were 231 (20%) Reunification, 632 (57%) APPLA, 172 (15%) Adoption, and 20 (2%) who had Guardianship as a permanency plan. In accordance of Family Law §5-545 CRBC submits the following findings and recommendations.

Reunification

A plan of Reunification shall be pursued with a reasonable expectation that the plan will be achieved within 15 months from the date of entry into out-of-home placement excluding trial home visits and runaway episodes (Social Service Administration, 2012). The goal of having Reunification as a permanency plan is to expeditiously return the child safely to their own family whenever possible.

CRBC reviewed 231 (20%) out of 1135 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Reunification in FY2014.



- There were 6 (3%) out of the 231 child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification from 0 to 6 months.
- There were 14 (6%) out of the 231 child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification from 7 to 11 months.
- There were 61 (26%) out of the 231 child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification from 1 to 2 years.
- There were 136 (59%) out of the 231 child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification from 3 or more years.

Local Board and Permanency Plan of Reunification:

- The Local Boards did agree with the permanency plan of Reunification for 146 (64%) out of the 231 cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification.

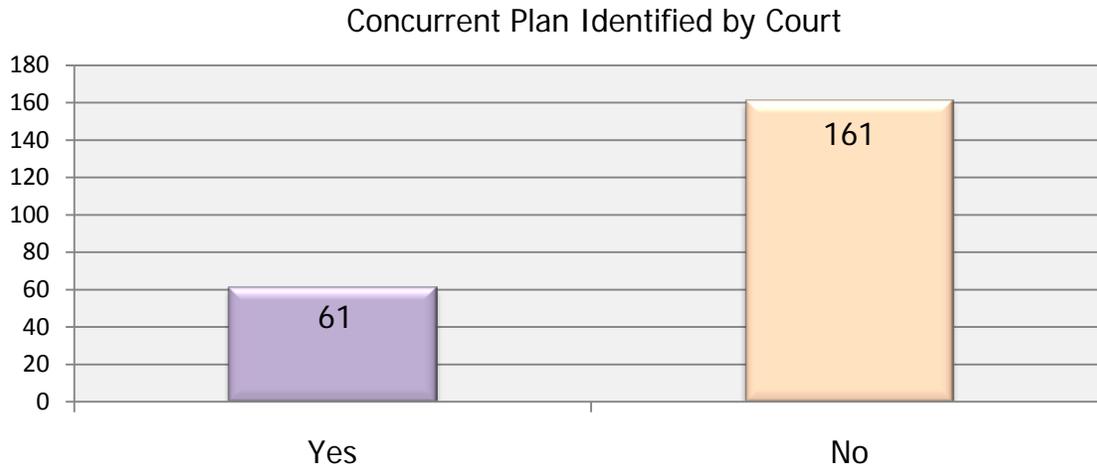
The Local Boards recommended the remaining 85 (36%) of cases with a plan of Reunification be changed to:

- Relative Placement (25)
- Adoption (14)
- APPLA (45)

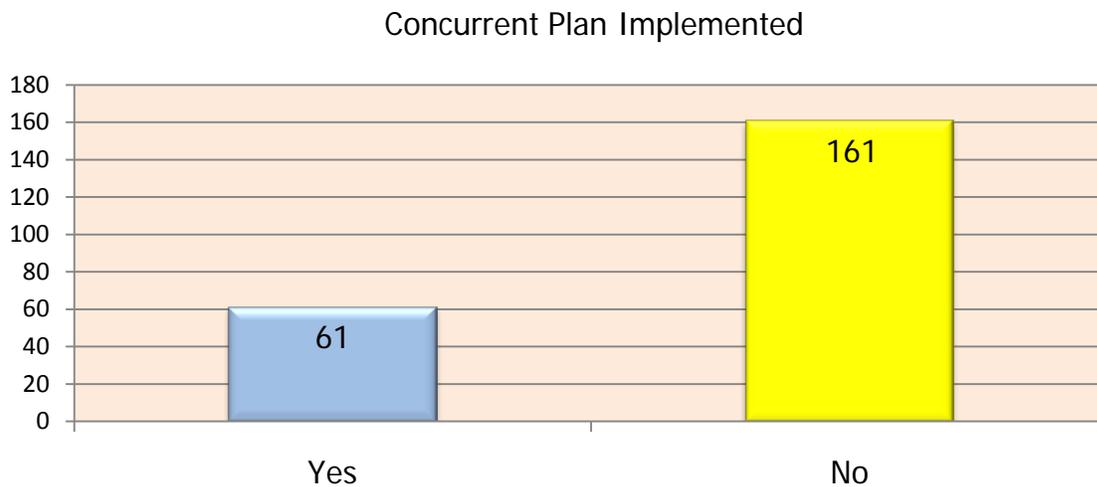
Concurrent planning:

The goal of concurrent planning in the state of Maryland is the simultaneous pursuit of two permanency goals in order to achieve permanence for the removed child as safely and expeditiously as possible. Concurrent permanency planning is defined by COMAR

07.02.11.03 as “the process of taking concrete steps to implement both primary and secondary permanency plans”.



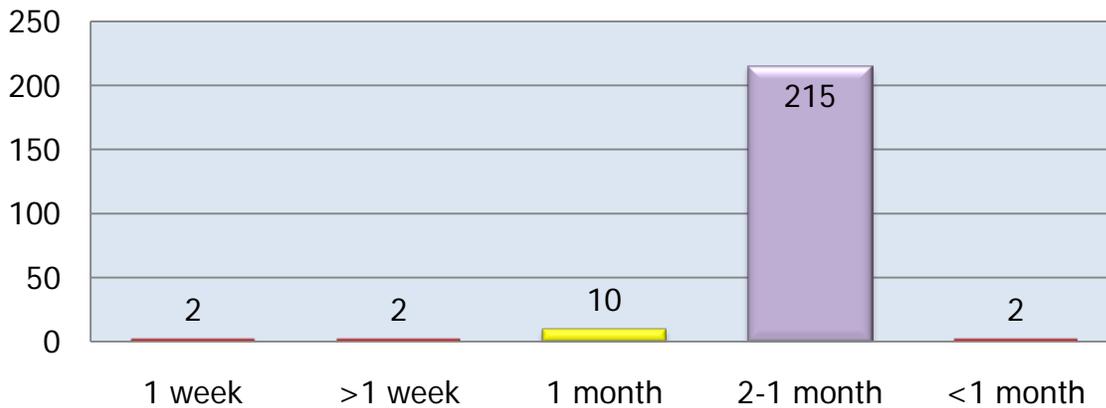
- There were 61 (24%) out of the 231 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification that had an identified concurrent permanency plan by the courts.
- There were 161 (70%) out of the 231 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification that did not have an identified concurrent permanency plan by the courts.



- All of the 61 (24%) out of the 231 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification that had an identified concurrent permanency plan by the courts were also implemented by the local departments.

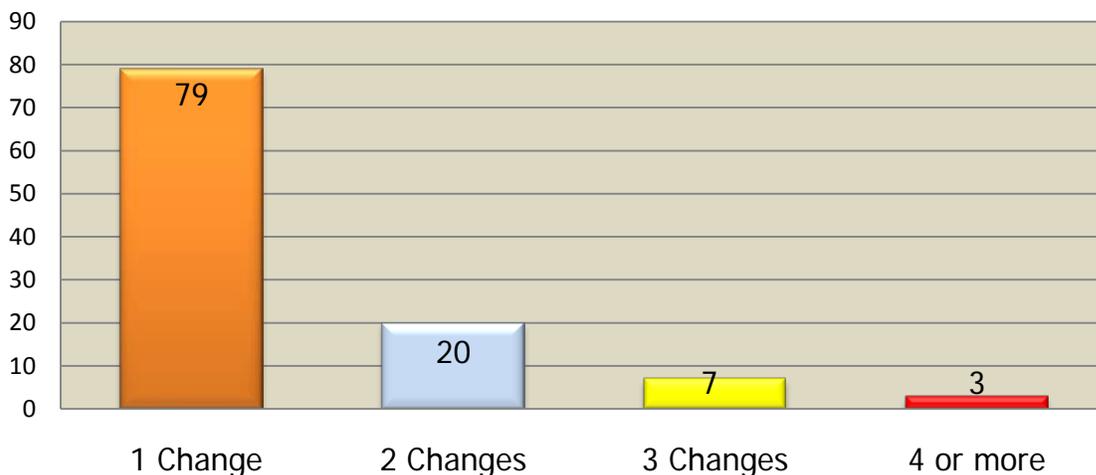


Reunification - Home Visits



- There were 215 (93%) out of the 231 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification that received a worker visit at least once a month and/or less than twice a month.
- There were another 10 (4%) out of the remaining 16 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification that received a worker visit at least once a month and/or less than twice a week.
- There were 15 (6%) out of the 231 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Reunification that received a worker visit with the children reported by the caseworker without supporting documentation.
-

Reunification Placement Changes - Last 12 Months



- There were 122 (53%) out of 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed without a placement change in the last 12 months.



- There were 79 (34%) out of 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification with 1 placement change in the last 12 months.
- There were 20 (9%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with 2 placement changes in the last 12 months.
- There were 7 (3%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with 3 placement changes in the last 12 months.
- There were 3 (1%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with 4 or more placement changes in the last 12 months.

Family Involvement Meeting:

- The 109 (47%) of the 231 in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a placement change in the last 12 months.
 - Out of the 109 children with a placement change there were 55 (50%) that had a FIM take place with the placement change.

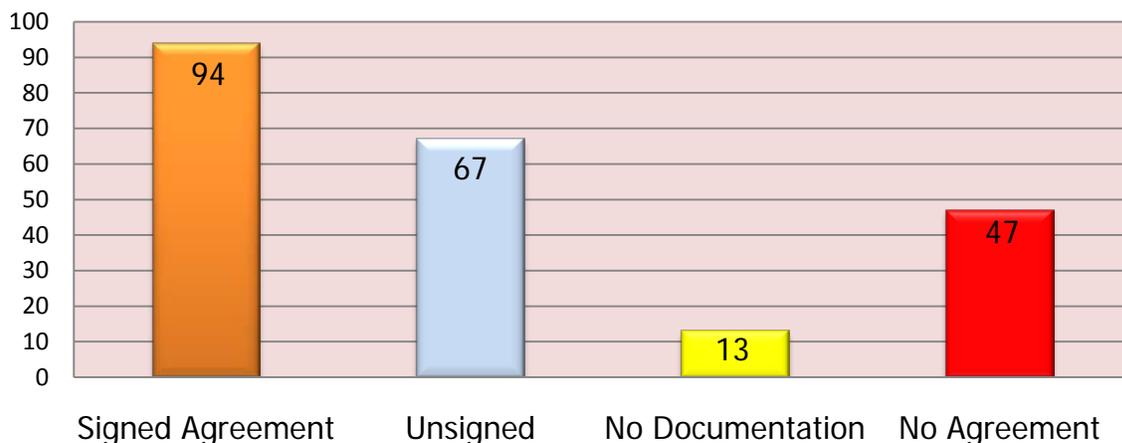
Matching children’s needs:

- There were 215 (96%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with information indicating that the provider was able to meet the needs of the children placed with them.

Local Boards and placement plan:

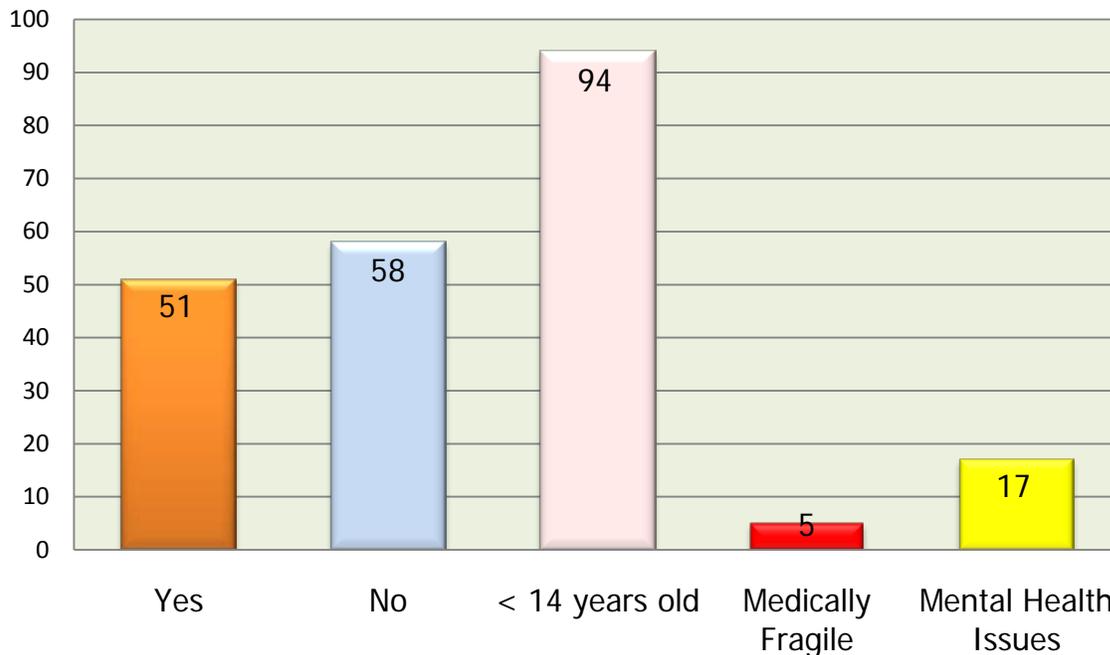
- The Local Boards agreed with 219 (95%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases with a permanency plan of Reunification placement plans.

Reunification - Service Agreements



- There were 94 (41%) out of the 231 cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification with a signed service agreement by the parents.
- There were 67 (29%) out of the 231 cases reviewed with an unsigned service agreement by the parents.
- There were 47 (20%) out of the 231 cases reviewed being reported that there was a signed service agreement by the parents without the required documentation.
- There were 13 (6%) out of the 231 cases reviewed without a service agreement.

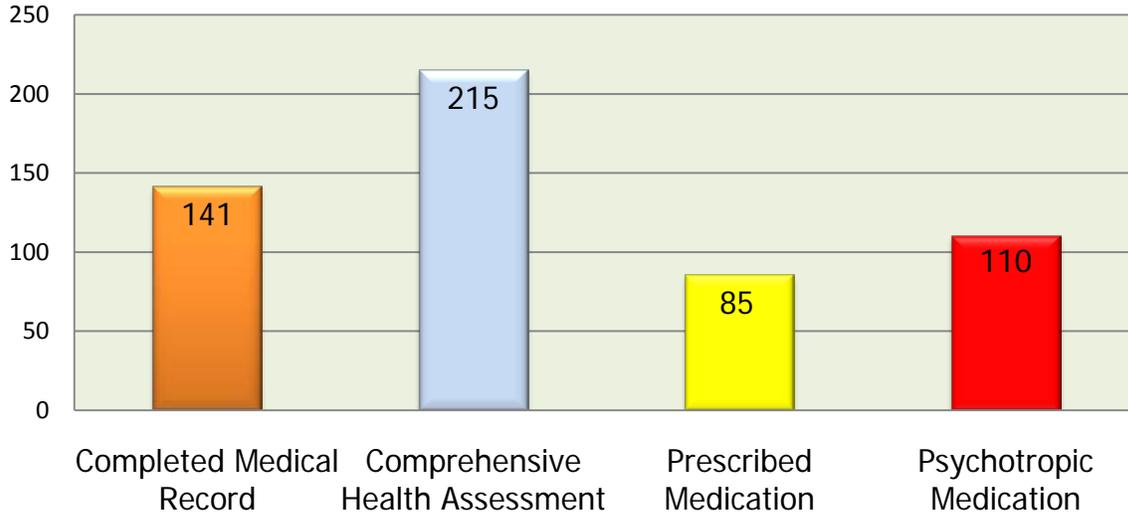
Reunification - Life Skills Services



- There were 109 (47%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification that were age appropriate for independent living assessments and services.
- There were 51 (47%) out of the 109 age appropriate children assessed and receiving life skills services.
- There were 58 (53%) out of the 109 age appropriate children assessed but did not receive life skills services.
- There were 94 (41%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification that were not age appropriate for independent living assessments and services.

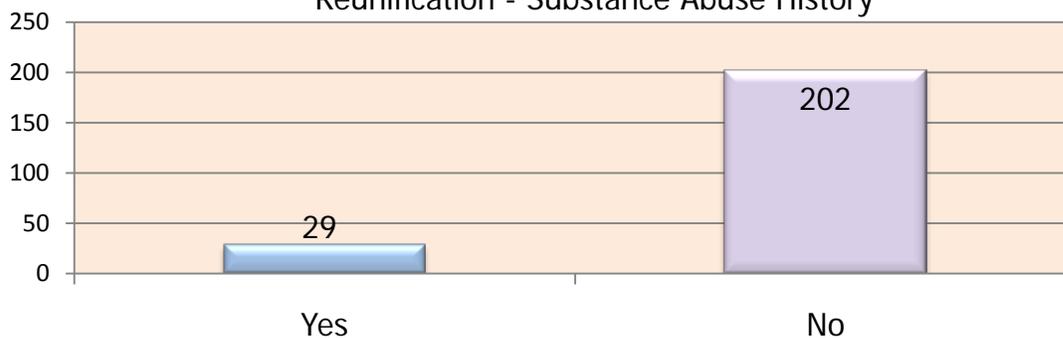


Reunification - Medical and Mental Health

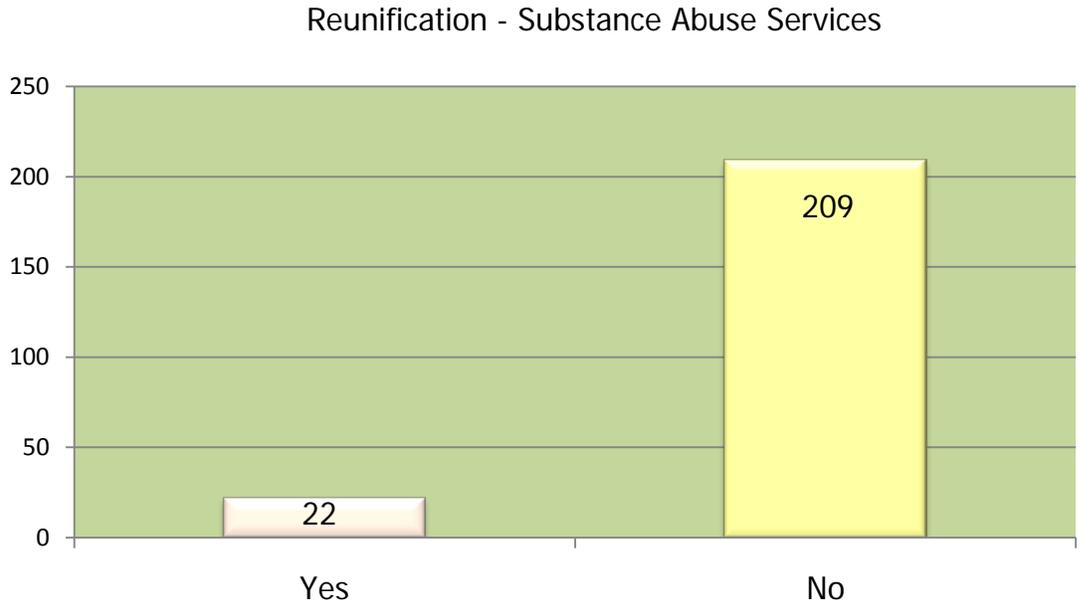


- There were 141 (61%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification with completed medical records in the file, including physical, dental, vision, and immunization.
- There were 90 (39%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification without completed medical records in the file, including physical, dental, vision, and immunization.
- There were 215 (93%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases with a comprehensive physical and mental health assessment.
- There were 85 (37%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed that were taking prescribed medication.
- There were 110 (48%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed that were taking prescribed psychotropic medication.

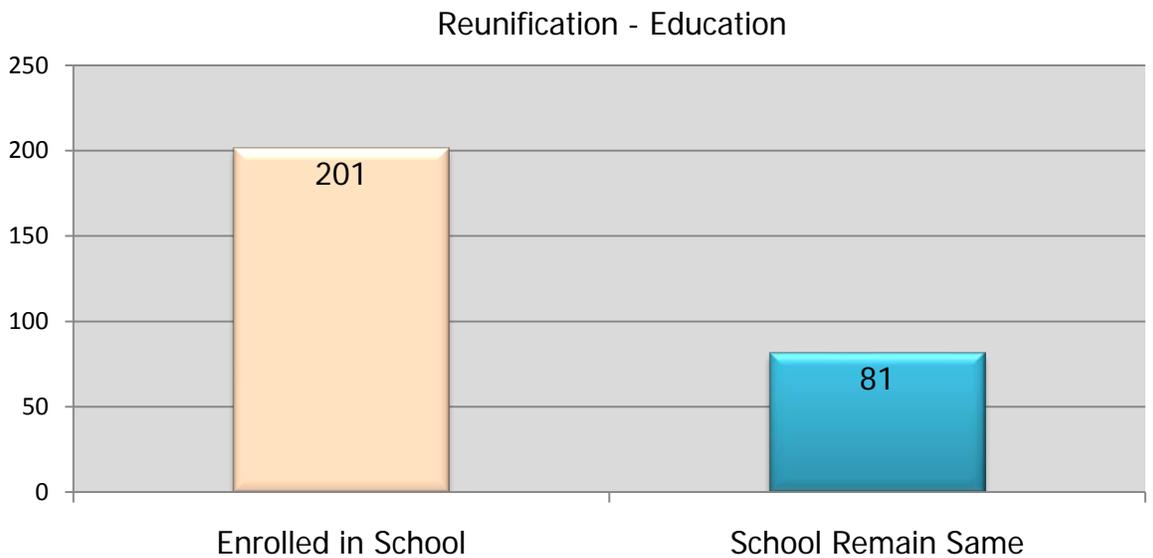
Reunification - Substance Abuse History



There were 29 (13%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification that were identified as having a history of substance abuse problems.



- There were 22 (76%) out of the 29 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification that were identified as having a history of substance abuse problems who received substance abuse services.



- There were 201 (87%) out of 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification that were enrolled in school.
- There were 81 (35%) out of 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification that were not transferred into a different school.

Local Boards and Education:

- The Local Boards agreed that the education needs of 211 (91%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of Reunification were being met.

Reviewed timely:

- CRBC did review 207 (90%) out of the 231 children in out-of-home placement cases with a permanency plan of Reunification were reviewed in a timely manner.

Reunification Recommendations

In accordance with Family Law § 5 539.1 the following CRBC Recommendations are based on the children in out-of-home care case reviews conducted during Fiscal Year 2014 with a permanency plan of Reunification.

- All jurisdictions are encouraged to make reasonable efforts to improve outcomes for children by reducing the median length of time children stay in out-of-home placement⁴ (COMAR 07.02.11.02 B 2); and increase the number of reunifications achieved within 12 months of entry into an out-of-home placement (COMAR 07.02.11.02 C 1).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to make reasonable efforts to increase the identification and development of an appropriate concurrent permanency plan⁵ (COMAR 07.02.11.13 B 1).

⁴ There were 59% of Permanency Plan of Reunification cases for 3 or more years (pg. 17).

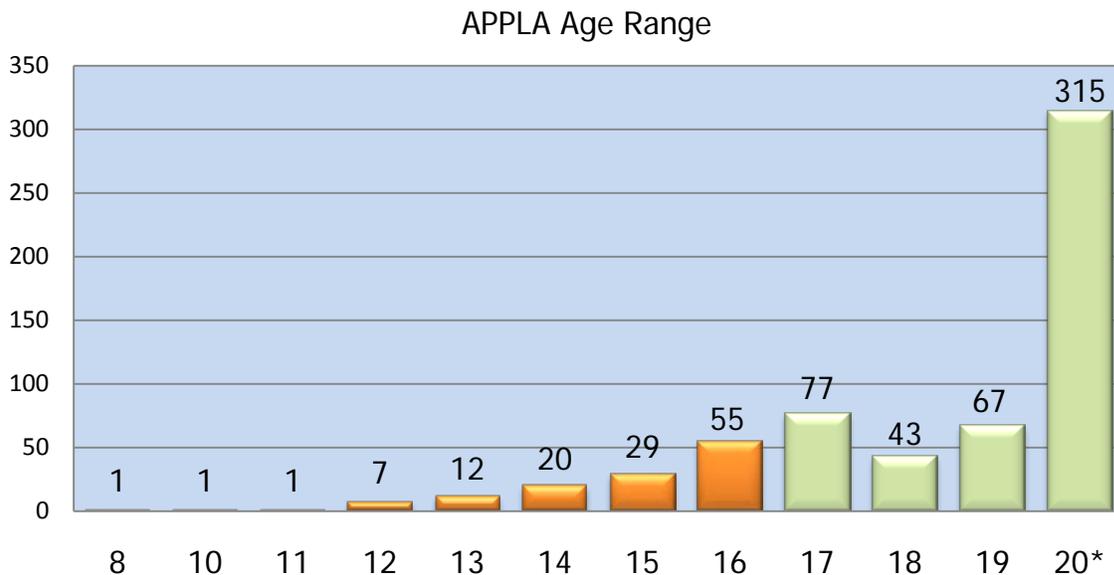
⁵ There were 70% of Reunification cases without an identified concurrent permanency plan (pg. 18).

- All jurisdictions are encouraged to make reasonable efforts to improve documenting health care information such as the Health Passport and MDCHESSE⁶ (Social Security Administration, 2014).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to make reasonable efforts to improve substance abuse services to all children identified as having a problem with substance abuse⁷ (COMAR 07.02.11.08 S 1 and 2).

Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)

Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) is a permanency plan option for youth in out-of-home placement which is to be used only when all other options have been ruled out. (Social Security Administration, 2012).

The Citizens Review Board for Children reviewed 632 (56%) out of 1135 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of APPLA in the Fourth Quarter of FY14. In accordance of Family Law §5-545 CRBC submits the following findings and recommendations.

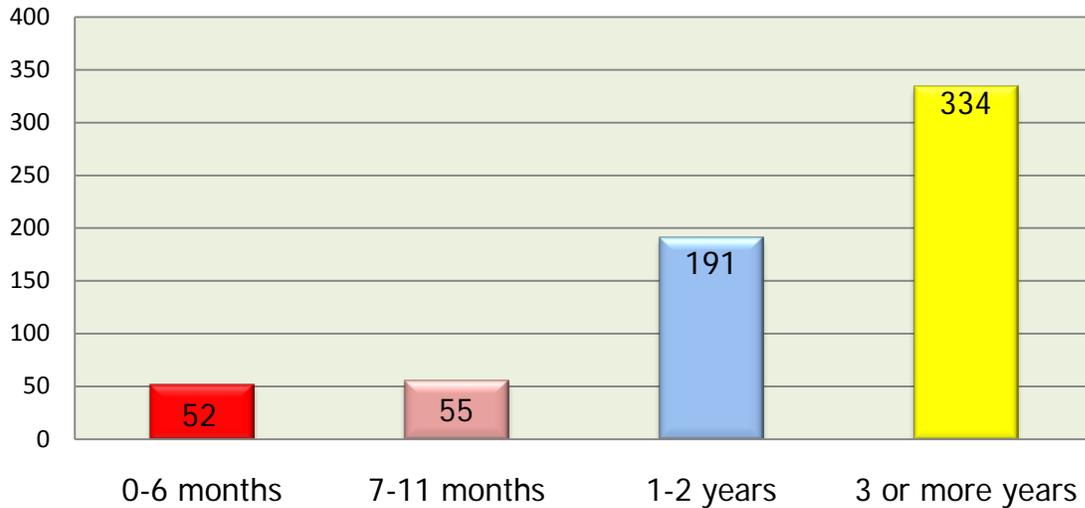


Note: *Typically the age for aging-out of the public child welfare system.

⁶ There were 39% of Reunification cases without completed medical records in the file (pg. 23).

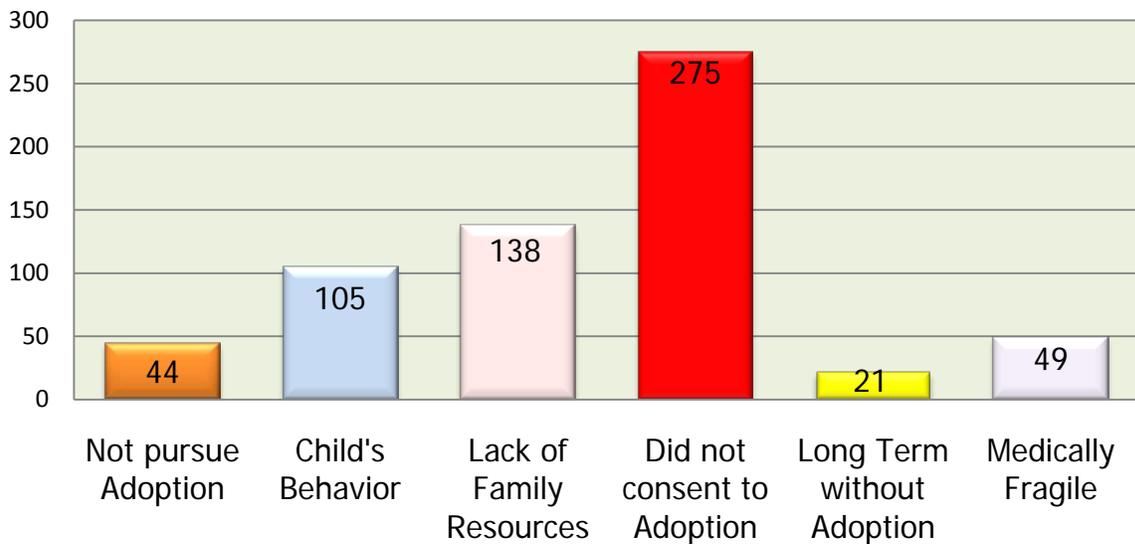
⁷ There were 24% of Reunification cases identified as having substance abuse problems not receiving substance abuse services (pg. 24).

Length of APPLA Plan



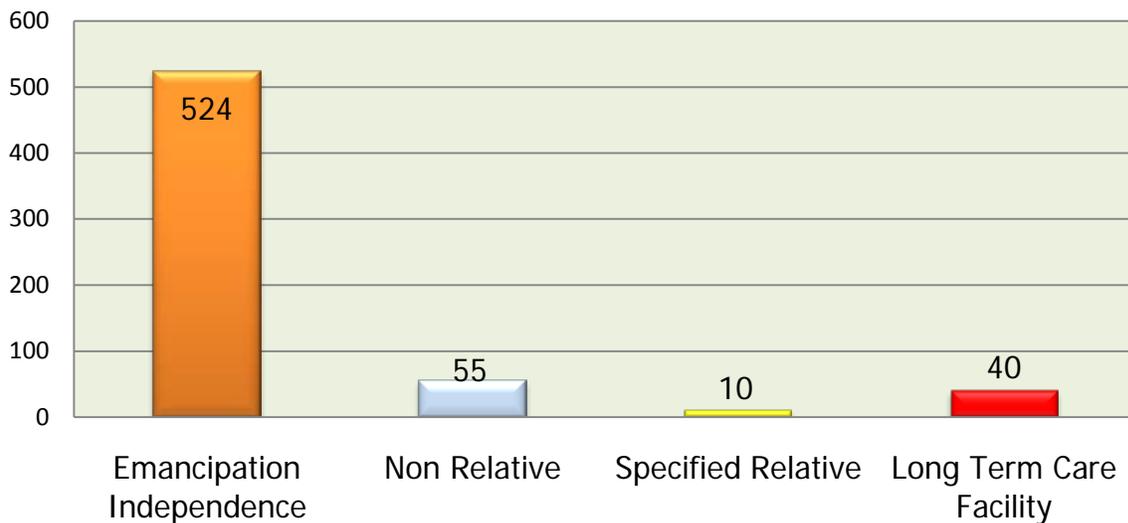
- There were 52 (8%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA from 0 to 6 months.
- There were 55 (9%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA from 7 to 11 months.
- There were 191 (30%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA from 1 to 2 years.
- There were 334 (53%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA from 3 or more years.

Why APPLA



- The agency saw 44 (7%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA as having age as a barrier and did not pursue Adoption.
- There were 105 (17%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA as having behavioral issues.
- There were 138 (22%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA with a lack of family resources.
- There were 275 (44%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that did not consent to Adoption.
- There were 21 (3%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA placed with long term resources and does not want to adopt.
- There were 49 (8%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA who were medically or mentally fragile.

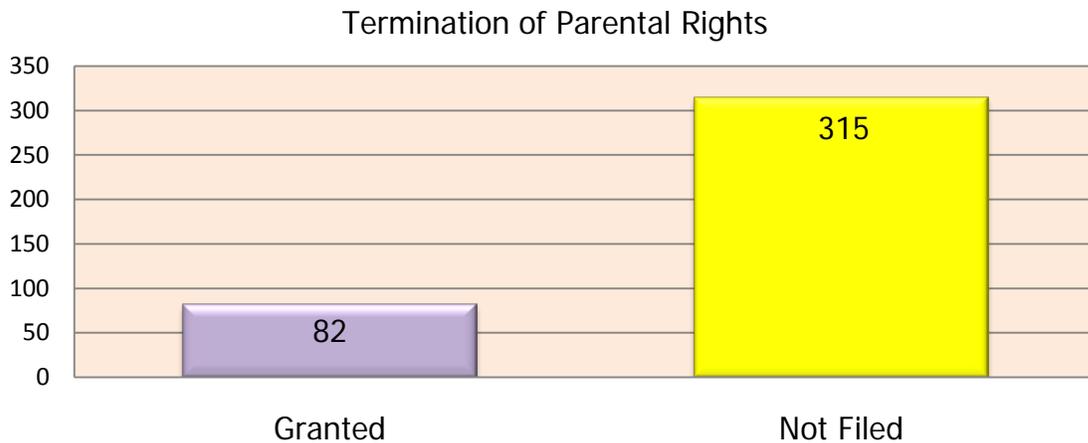
APPLA Category



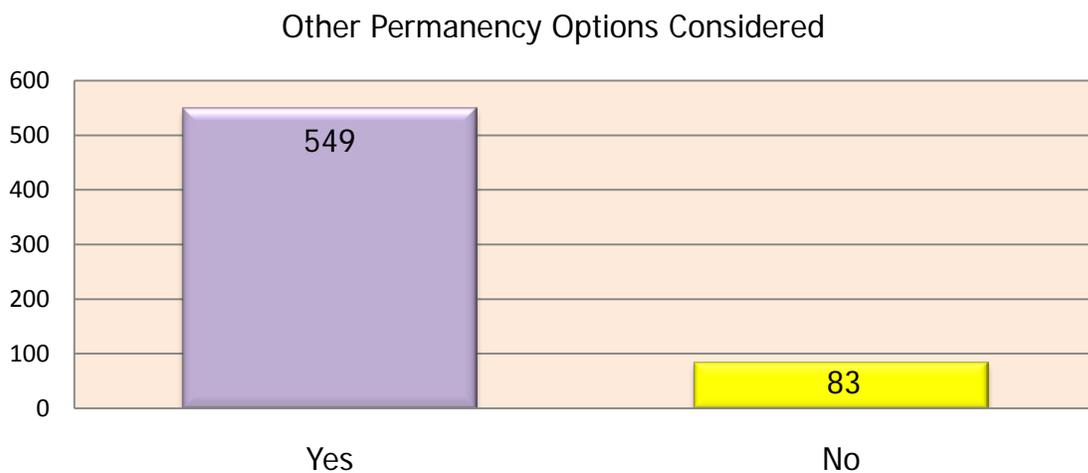
- There were 524 (83%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that are expected to remain in existing placement until they reach the age of majority (emancipation/independence).
- There were 55 (9%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that were in long-term out of home care with a non-relative.



- There were 10 (2%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that were in long-term out of home care with a specified relative.
- There were 40(6%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that were placed in a long-term care facility until transition to an adult facility.

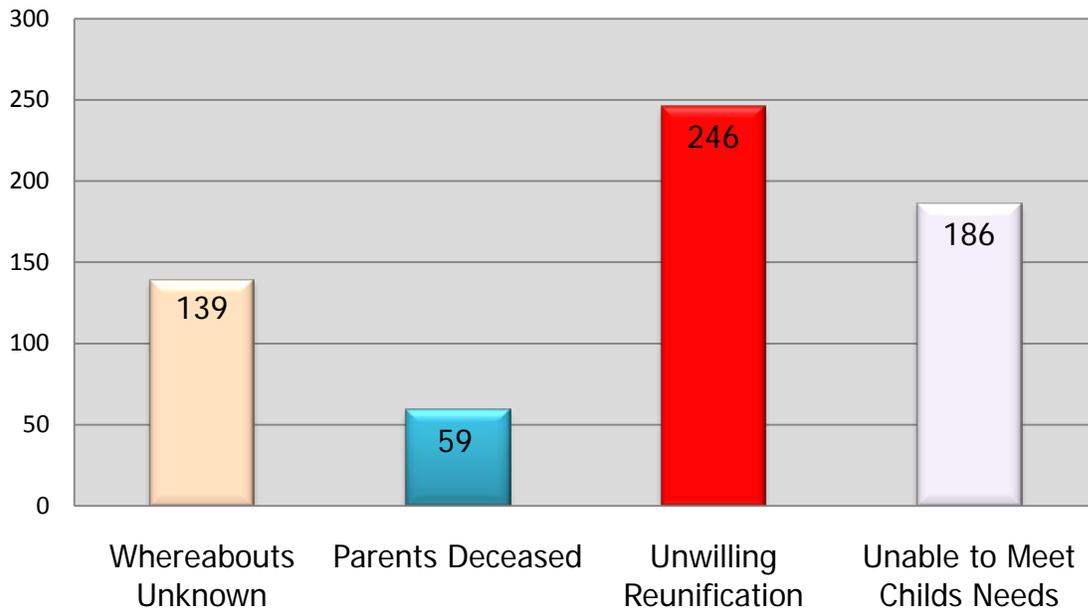


- There were 82 (13%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that had TPR granted.
- There were 315 (50%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA without TPR being filed.



- Reunification was considered as a possible option before the plan of APPLA for 512 (81%) out of the 632 overall cases reviewed.
- Relative placement was considered as a possible option before the plan of APPLA for 463 (73%).
- Adoption was considered as a possible option before the plan of APPLA for 381 (60%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA.

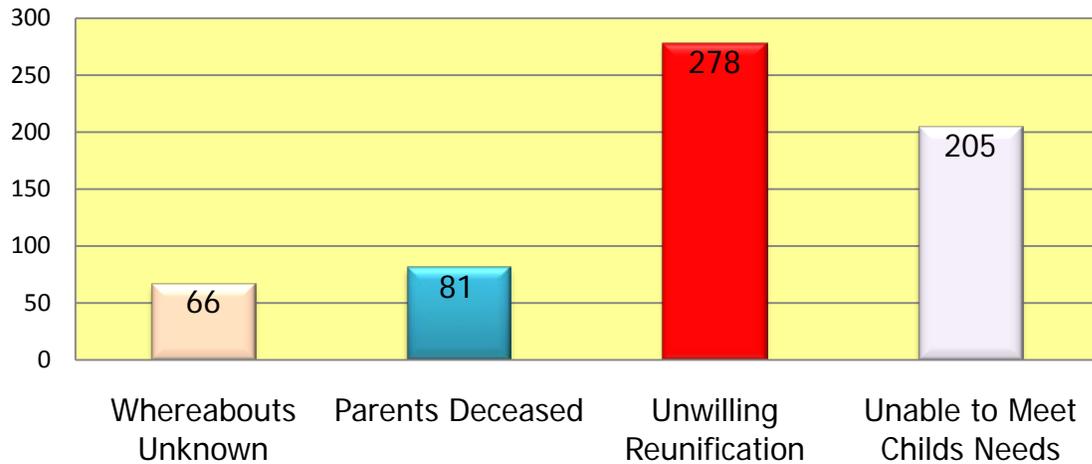
Why Father Ruled Out



- The father's whereabouts were unknown for 139 (22%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA.
- The father's were deceased for 59 (9%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA.
- The father's were unable or unwilling to work towards Reunification for 246 (39%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA.
- The father's were unable to meet the child's needs for 186 (29%) of the children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA.

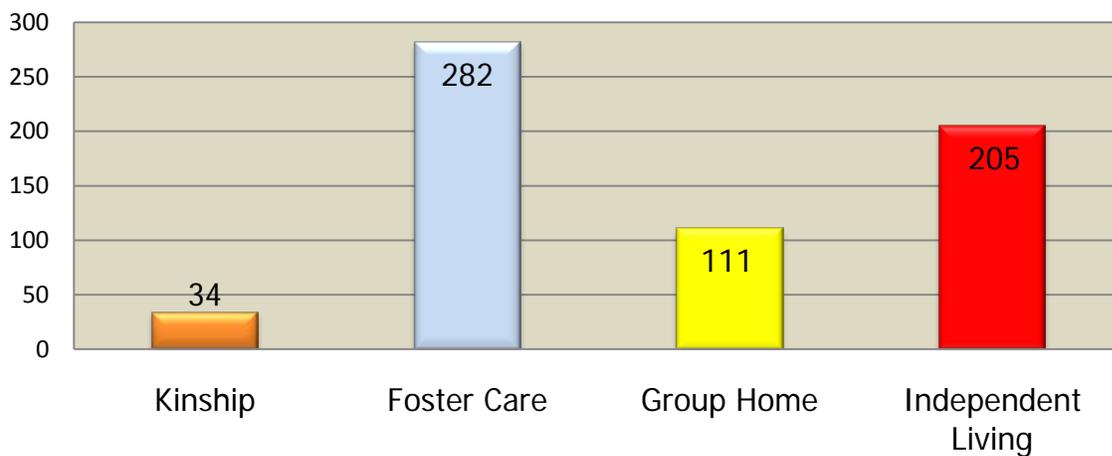


Why Mother Ruled Out



- The mother’s whereabouts were unknown for 66 (10%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA.
- The mother’s were deceased for 81 (13%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA.
- The mother’s were unable or unwilling to work towards Reunification for 278 (44%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA.
- The mother’s were unable to meet the child’s needs for 205 (32%) of the children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA.

APPLA Placements



- There were 34 (5%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA placed in formal kinship care⁸
- There were 282 (45%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA placed in foster care⁹.
- There were 111 (18%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA placed in group homes¹⁰.
- There were 205 (32%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA placed in independent living¹¹.

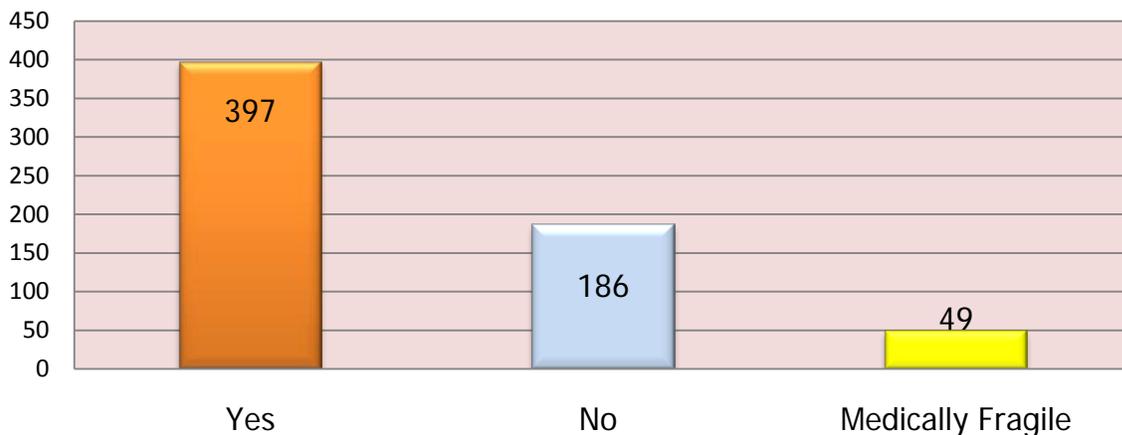
Placement match with child needs overall:

- There were 580 (91%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA with a match between the children's needs and the provider's ability to meet those needs.

Board and placement plan overall:

- The Local Boards agreed with the placement plan of 580 (91%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA.

APPLA Case Planning Involving the Child



⁸ Includes Formal Kinship Care and Restrictive (Relative) Foster Care.

⁹ Includes Regular, Treatment, and Private Treatment Foster Care.

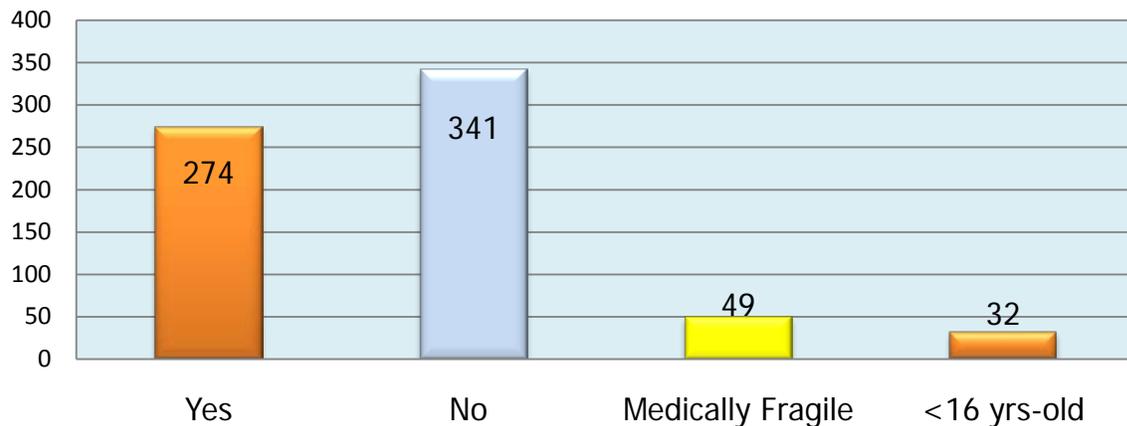
¹⁰ Includes Residential, Therapeutic, and Residential Treatment Centers.

¹¹ Includes Teen mother programs, and Independent Living Residential Programs.



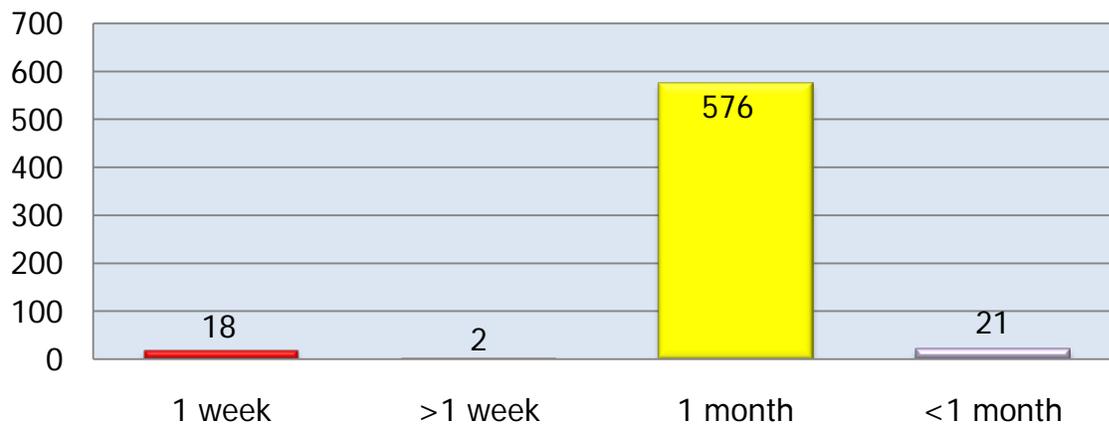
- There were efforts made to involve 397 (63%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA in the case planning process.
- There were no efforts made to involve 186 (29%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA in the case planning process.

APPLA Service Agreement



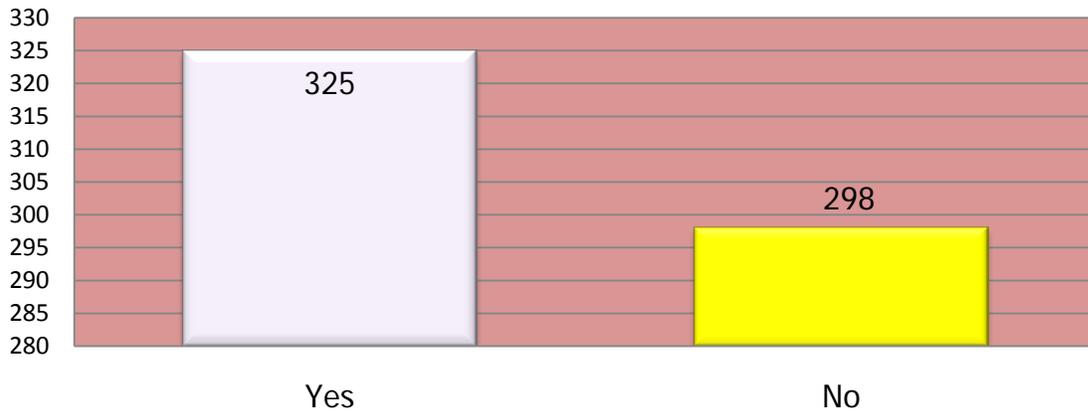
- There were 274 (43%) out of the 632 overall children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that had a service agreement.
- There were 341 (54%) out of the 632 overall children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA without a service agreement.

APPLA - Home Visits



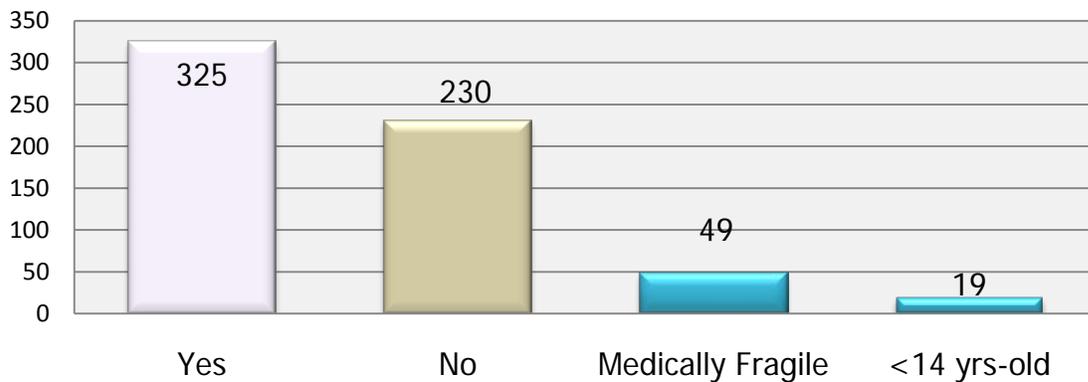
- There were 576 (91%) out of the 632 overall children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that received caseworker visits at least once a month.
- There were 21 (3%) out of the 632 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA that received a caseworker visit less than once a month.

APPLA Permanent Connection Identified



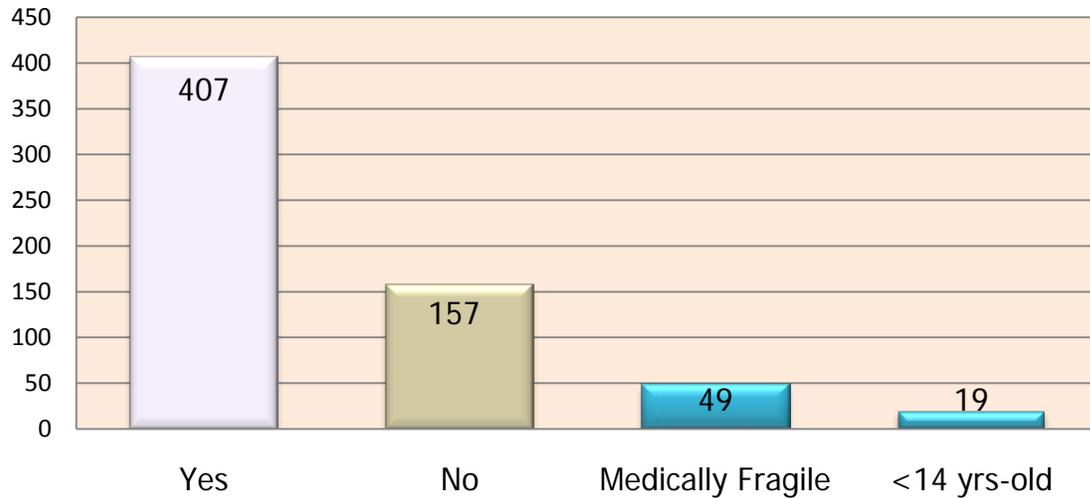
- There was a permanent connection identified for 325 (51%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA.
- There were 298 (47%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA without a permanent connection identified.

APPLA Independent Living Skills - Assessed



- There were 325 (51%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA assessed for independent living skills.
- There were 230 (36%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA without being assessed for life skills.

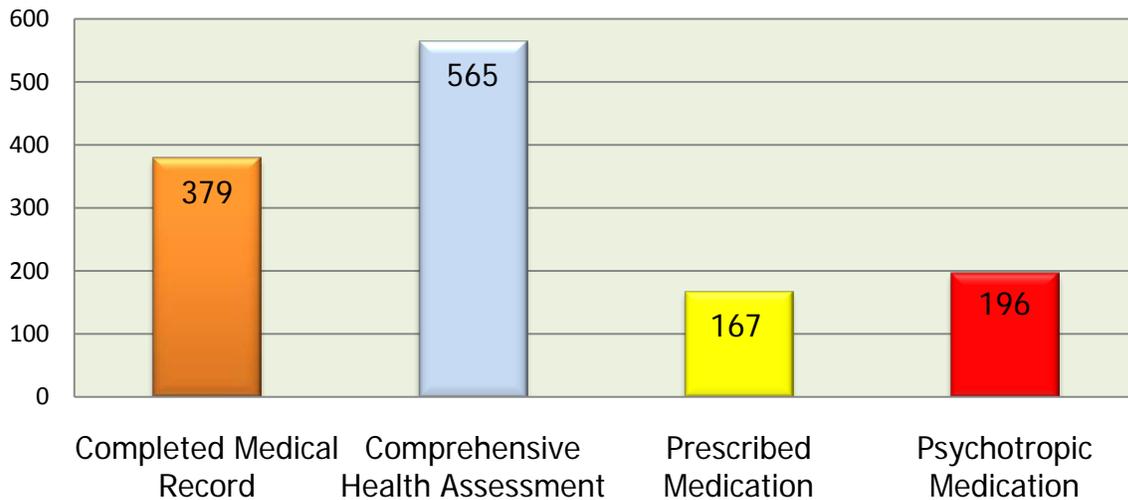
APPLA - Independent Living Skills Services



- There were 407 (64%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that received appropriate life skills services to prepare for independent living.
- There were 157 (25%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that did not receive appropriate life skills services to prepare for independent living.



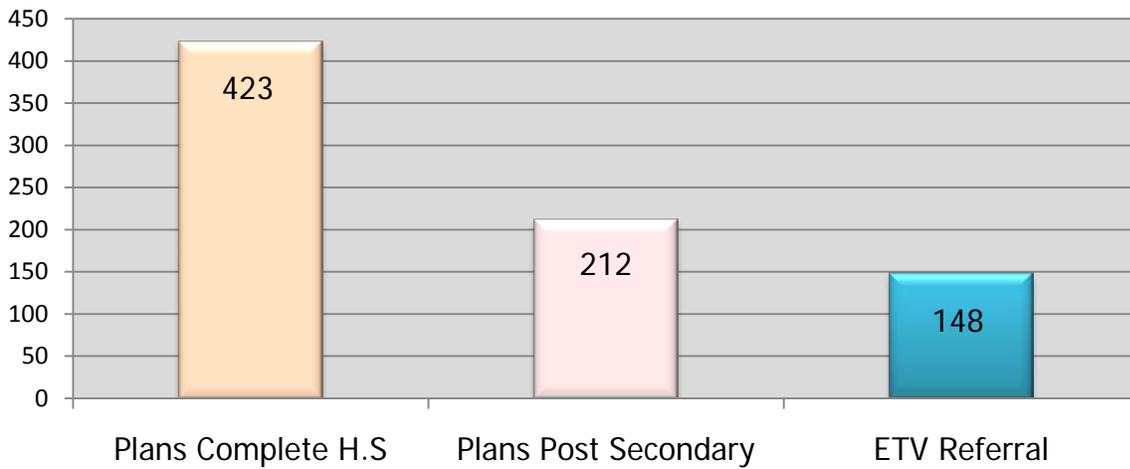
APPLA - Medical and Mental Health



- There were 379 (60%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA with completed medical records in the file.
- There were 253 (40%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA without completed medical records in the file.
- There were 565 (89%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA received comprehensive physical and mental health assessments in a timely manner.
- There were 167 (26%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA being prescribed non-psychotropic medications.
- There were 196 (31%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA being prescribed psychotropic medications.

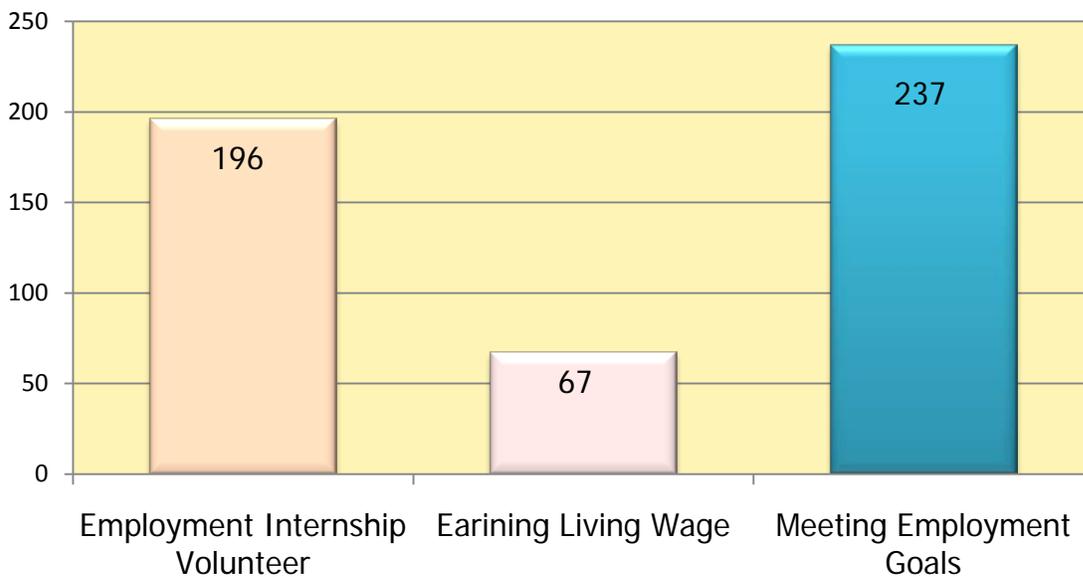


APPLA - Education



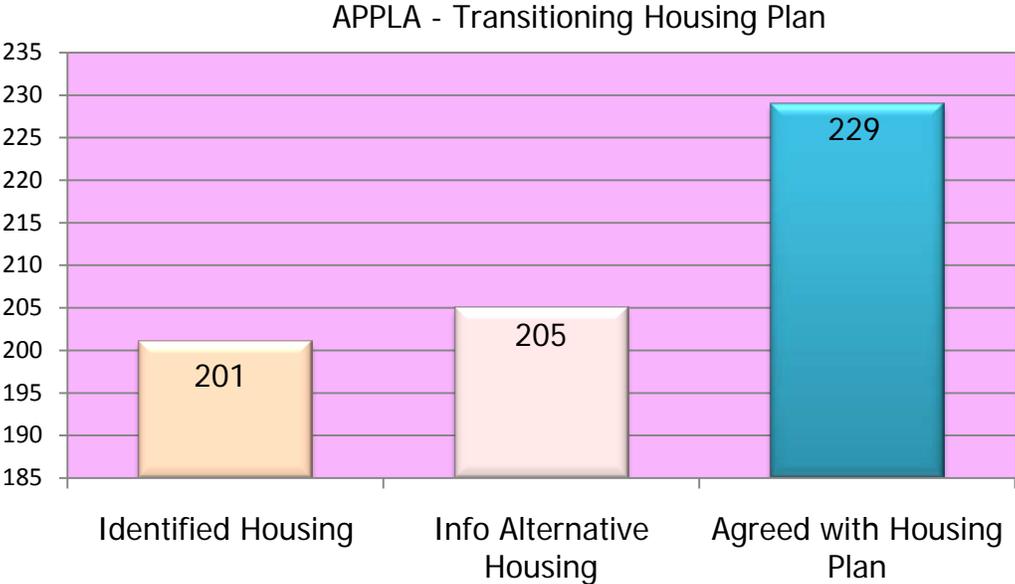
- There were 423 (67%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA had plans to complete high school.
- There were 212 (34%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA had plans of post secondary education.
- There were 148 (23%) out of 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA had referral to an Education and Training Voucher for post secondary education.

APPLA - Employment/Intern/Volunteer



Note: There were 557 children who were employment appropriately aged¹².

- There were 196 (35%) out of the 557 children age appropriate in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA working/internship/volunteer.
- There were 67 (12%) out of the 557 children age appropriate in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA earning a living wage of at least \$10 hour.
- The Local Boards agree there were 237 (43%) out of the 557 children age appropriate in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA were meeting employment goals.



Note: There were 315 children identified as age appropriate¹³ to transition out of care.

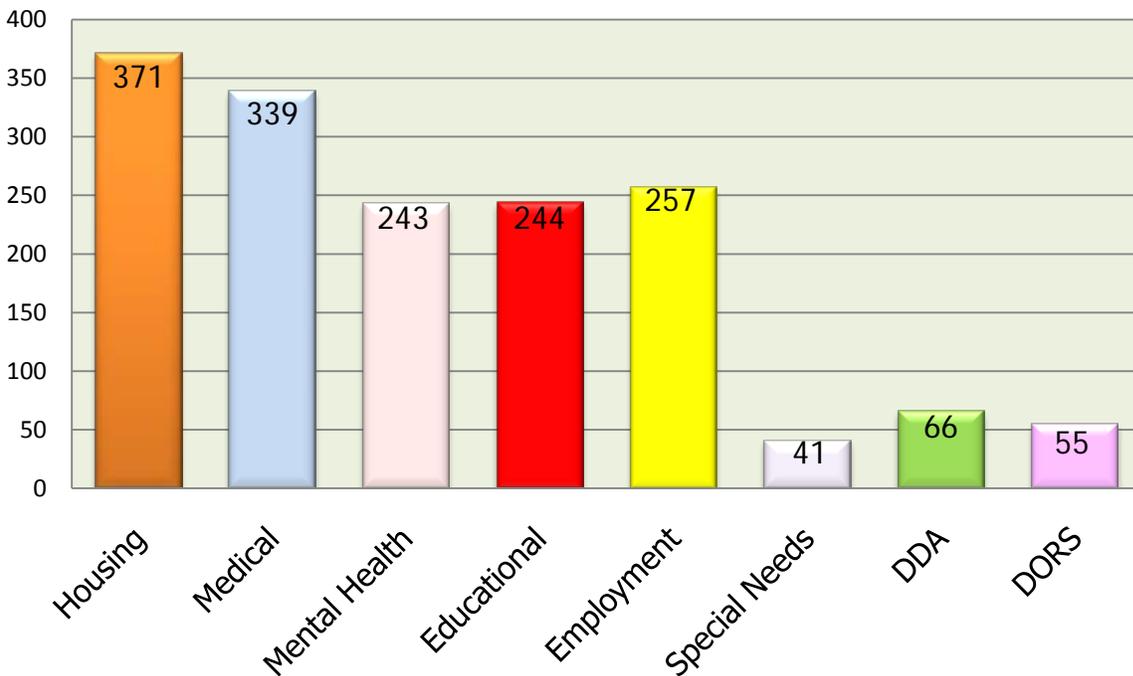
- There were 201 (64%) out of the 315 children age appropriate in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA identified as transitioning, with identified housing.

¹² Youth were 16 years of age or older.

¹³ 20 years old at the time of the case review.

- There were 114 (36%) out of the 315 children age appropriate in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA identified as transitioning, without identified housing.
- There were 205 (65%) out of the 315 children age appropriate in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA identified as transitioning received information on alternative housing options.
- The Local Boards agreed with the transitional housing plans of 229 (73%) out of the 315 children age appropriate in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA identified as transitioning.

APPLA Services Needed for Discharge



- There were 371(59%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed housing services for discharge.
- There were 339 (54%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed medical services for discharge.
- There were 243 (38%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed mental health services for discharge.



- There were 244 (38%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed educational services for discharge.
- There were 257 (41%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed employment services for discharge.
- There were 41 (6%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed special needs services for discharge.
- There were 66 (10%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed Developmental Disabilities Administration services for discharge.
- There were 55 (9%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed Department of Rehabilitation Services for discharge.

Reviewed timely:

- CRBC reviewed 595 (94%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA in a timely manner.

APPLA Recommendations

APPLA requires an individual plan for permanency that aims for the most secure and stable arrangement possible, considers not just the child's immediate needs but future needs and promotes the development of supportive community relationships (Social Services Administration, 2012).

The establishment of APPLA as a permanency plan for a youth requires the caseworker to document reasonable efforts made to finalize a preferred permanency plan and must clearly articulate the plan to maximize stability, meet future needs, and encourage the development of enduring support relationships in the community (Social Services Administration, 2012).

The permanency plan of APPLA is not achieved until the youth exits care. APPLA is the least preferred choice among the permanency plan hierarchy and should be used only when all other plans have been completely exhausted. (Social Services Administration, 2012).

In accordance with Family Law § 5 539.1 the following CRBC Recommendations are based on the children in out-of-home care case reviews conducted during Fiscal Year 2014 with a permanency plan of APPLA.

- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children involved in the case planning process¹⁴. Every youth 14 years of age or older shall have Family Involvement Meeting (FIM) that includes transitional planning or independent living service. These meeting should be held annually after the youth's 14th birthday until commitment is rescinded (Social Security Administration, 2009).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have a signed service agreement with all youth who are 14 years of age or older¹⁵.
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have caseworkers have a face-to-face visit with the child as least once a month¹⁶. The local department caseworker shall have regular visits with the child in out-of-home placement (COMAR 07.02.11.17).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have an identified permanent connection for all children with a permanency plan of APPLA¹⁷. When a youth has a permanent adult connection the youth experiences less rejection, trauma, and emotional instability because of failed placements (Social Services Administration, 2012).

¹⁴ There were no efforts made to involve 186 (29%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA in the case planning process (pg. 32).

¹⁵ There were (54%) out of the 632 overall children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA without a service agreement (pg.32).

¹⁶ There were (3%) out of the 632 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA that received a caseworker visit less than once a month (pg. 33).

¹⁷ There were (47%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA without a permanent connection identified (pg. 33).



- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of APPLA assessed for life skills¹⁸. Every youth age 14 to 21 must have a life skills assessment to determine their strengths and needs in order to develop steps for preparation toward adulthood (Social Services Administration, 2013).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of APPLA with a need for life skills training provided with appropriate trainings¹⁹. The local department of social services shall ensure when possible all youth 14 to 21 years of age participate in group life skills classes (Social Services Administration, 2013).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have complete medical records for all children in out-of-home placements²⁰. The local department shall ensure that the child's case record contains the child's medical history and the most recent copies of the child's health care documents (COMAR 07.02.11.08).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of APPLA have an appropriate transitioning planning that includes identified housing²¹. To properly identify the needs of Maryland's youth and ensure that youth obtain the resources and skills needed to be self-sufficient, local departments should be administering the Maryland Youth Transitional Plan at age 14 to align with the state case plan and Maryland's Ready by 21 Benchmarks (Social Services Administration, 2013).

¹⁸There were (36%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA without being assessed for life skills (pg. 34).

¹⁹ There were (25%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA that did not receive appropriate life skills services to prepare for independent living (pg. 34).

²⁰ There were (40%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency plan of APPLA without completed medical records in the file.

²¹ There were (36%) out of the 315 children age appropriate in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a plan of APPLA identified as transitioning, without identified housing (pg. 38).

- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of APPLA and are about to transition out of care be provided the needed housing services for discharge²². The caseworker should ensure that youth find adequate and affordable housing for discharge (Social Services Administration, 2013).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of APPLA and are about to transition out of care be provided the needed medical services for discharge²³. The caseworker should ensure that youth be provided with appropriate medical services for discharge (Social Services Administration, 2013).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of APPLA and are about to transition out of care be provided appropriate medical services for discharge²⁴. The caseworker should ensure that youth be provided the needed mental health services for discharge (Social Services Administration, 2013).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of APPLA and are about to transition out of care receive the needed educational services for discharge²⁵. The caseworker should ensure that youth be provided the needed educational services for discharge (Social Services Administration, 2013).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of APPLA and are about to transition out of care receive the needed educational services for discharge²⁶. The caseworker should ensure that youth be provided the needed employment services for discharge (Social Services Administration, 2013).

²² There were (59%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed housing services for discharge (pg. 38).

²³ There were (54%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed medical services for discharge (pg. 38).

²⁴ There were (38%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed mental health services for discharge (pg. 38).

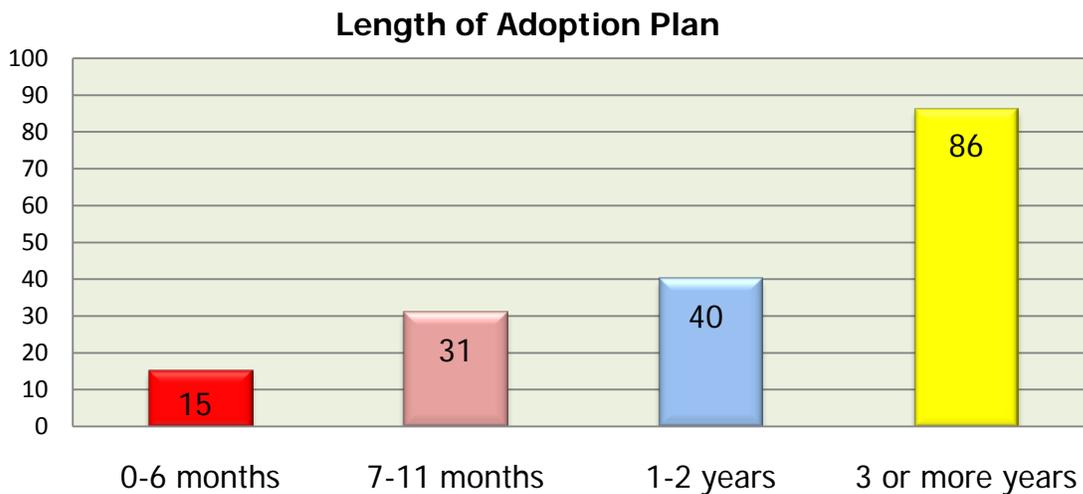
²⁵ There were (38%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed educational services for discharge (pg. 39).

²⁶ There were (41%) out of the 632 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA needed employment services for discharge (pg. 39).

Adoption

According to the Social Service Administration, Adoption is the preferred placement when a child cannot be returned to his or her parents because it gives the child a new permanent legal family with the same legal standing and protection as a family created by birth (SSA, 2012). However, Adoption by a relative is preferred over Adoption by a non relative; a growing number of children are adopted by their relatives, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and older siblings (SSA, 2012).

Overall CRBC reviewed 172 (15%) out of 1136 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption in the Fourth Quarter of FY14. In accordance of Family Law §5-545 CRBC submits the following findings and recommendations.



- There were 15 (9%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption from 0 to 6 months.
- There were 31 (18%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption from 7 to 11 months.
- There were 40 (23%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption from 1 to 2 years.
- There were 86 (50%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption from 3 or more years.

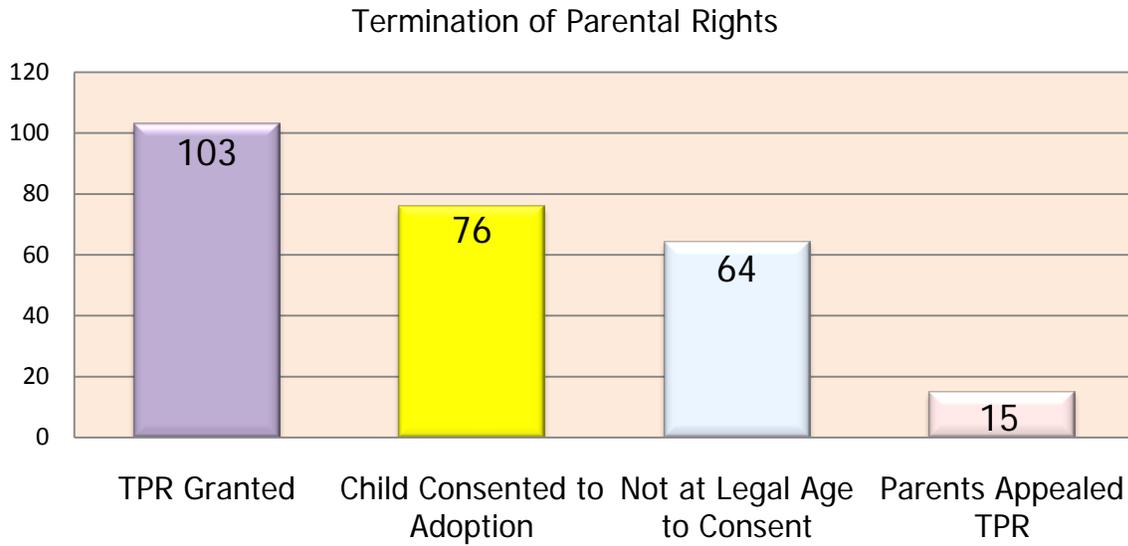
Local Board and Permanency Plan:

- The Local Boards agreed with the permanency plan of Reunification for 156 (91%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a



permanency plan of Adoption.

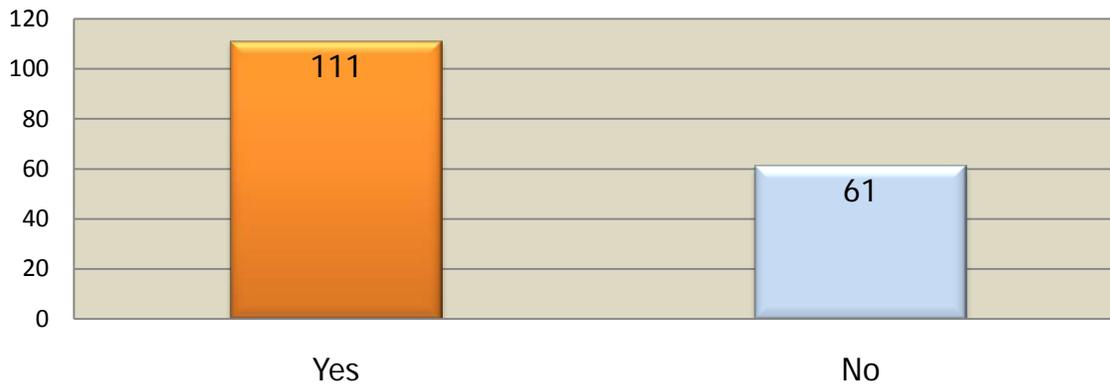
- The permanency plan of Adoption was established in a timely manner for 153 (84%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption reviewed.



- There were 103 (60%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption with TPR granted.
- There were 76 (44%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption that consented to being adopted.
- There were 26 (35%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption not at legal age to consent.
- There were 15 (9%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption with parents who had appealed TPR.

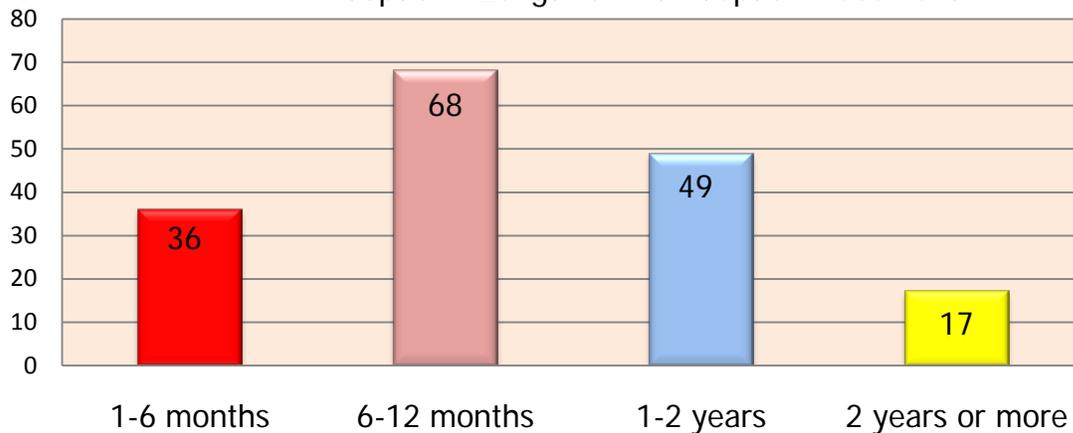


Pre Adoption - Placement



- There were 111 (65%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption placed in a pre-adoptive placement.
- There were 61 (35%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption were not in a pre-adoptive placement.

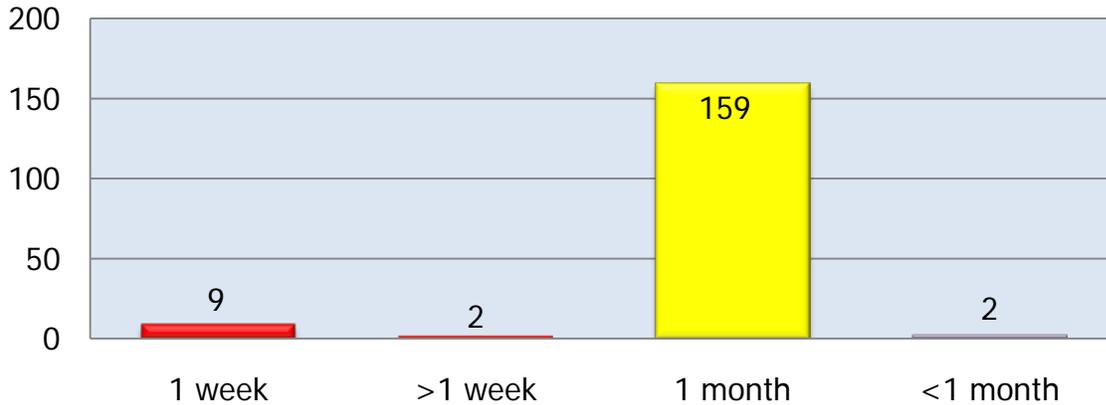
Adoption - Length of Pre Adoption Placement



- There were 36 (21%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption from 1 to 6 months.
- There were 68 (40%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption from 6 to 12 months.
- There were 49 (28%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption from 1 to 2 years.
- There were 17 (10%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption from 2 or more years.

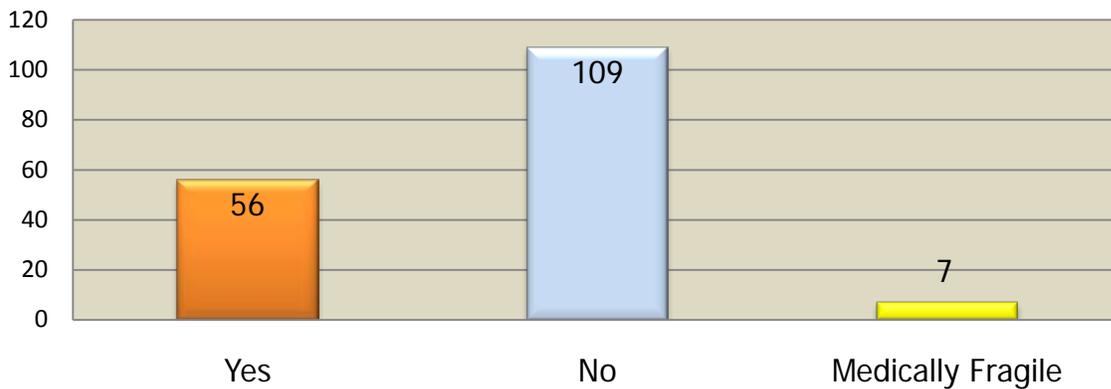


Adoption - Home Visits



- There were 159 (92%) out of the 172 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Adoption that received a worker visit at least once a month and/or less than twice a month.
- There were another 11 (6%) out of the remaining 16 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Adoption that received a worker visit at least once a month and/or less than twice a week.

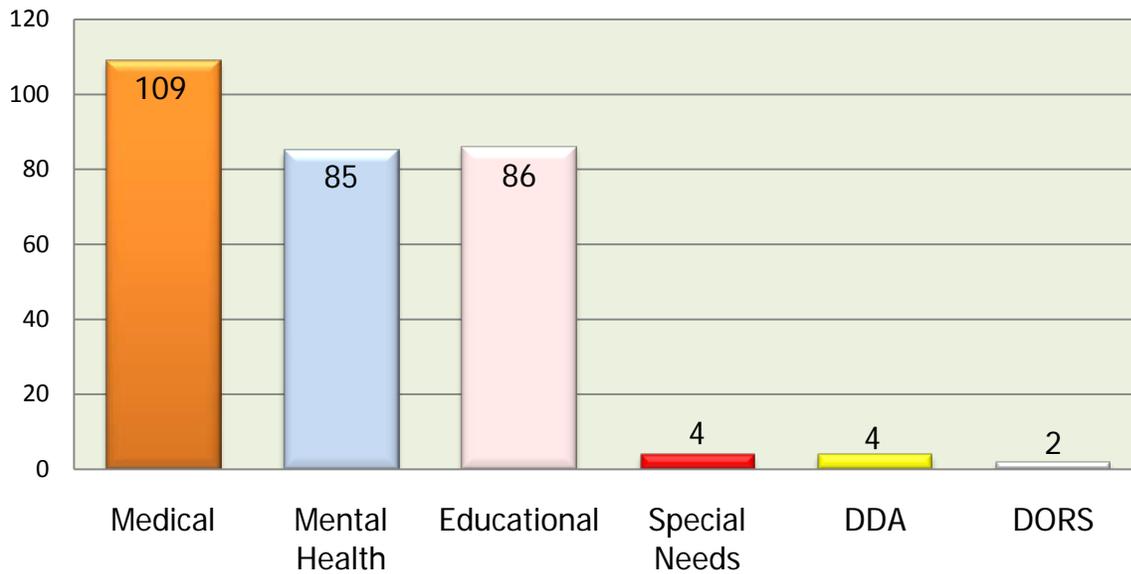
Adoption Counseling



- There were 56 (33%) out of the 172 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Adoption received Adoption counseling services.
- There were 109 (63%) out of the 172 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Adoption received Adoption counseling services.



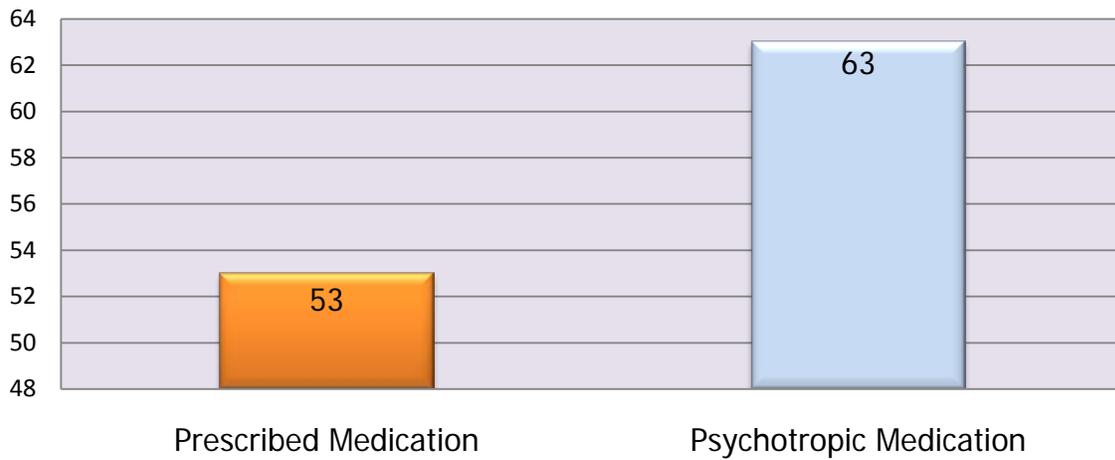
Post Adoptive Services Needed



- There were 109 (63%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of ADOPTION needed medical services for discharge.
- There were 85 (49%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of ADOPTION needed mental health services for discharge.
- There were 86 (50%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of ADOPTION needed educational services for discharge.
- There were 4 (2%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of ADOPTION needed special needs services for discharge.
- There were 4 (2%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of ADOPTION needed Developmental Disabilities Administration services for discharge.
- There were 2 (1%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of ADOPTION needed Department of Rehabilitation Services for discharge.

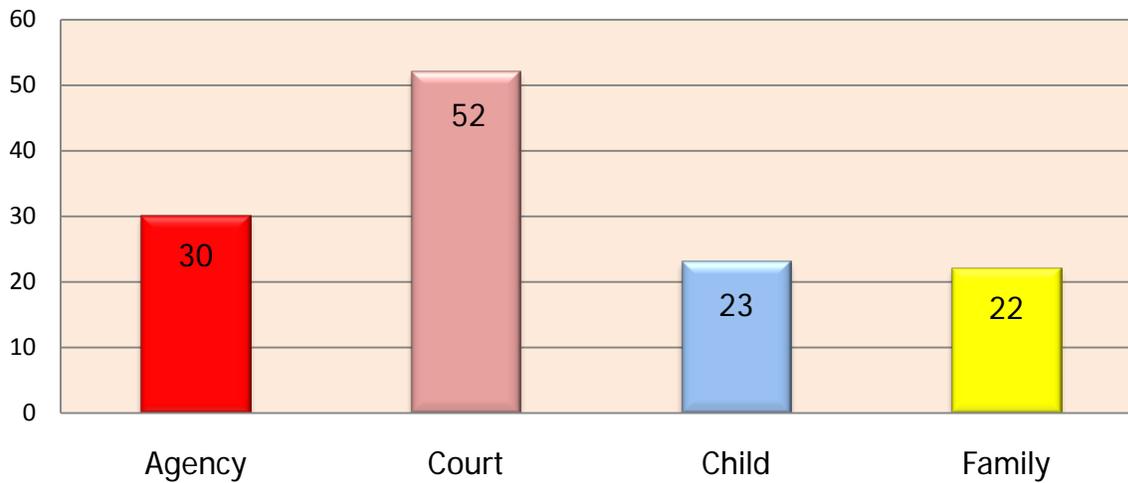


Adoption - Medication Prescribed

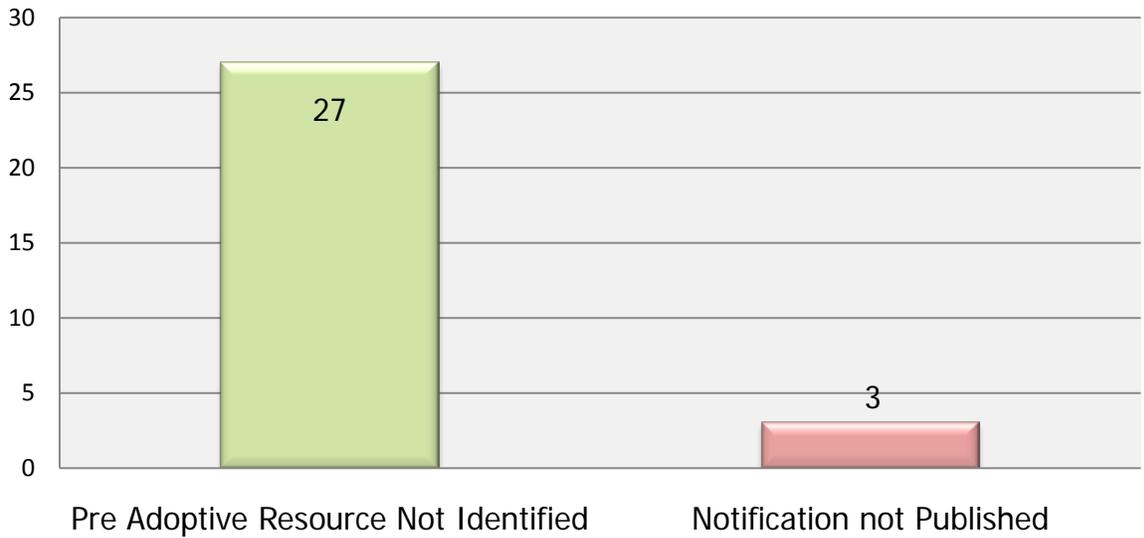


- There were 53 (31%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption prescribed medication.
- There were 63 (37%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption prescribed psychotropic medication.

Overall Barriers to Adoption

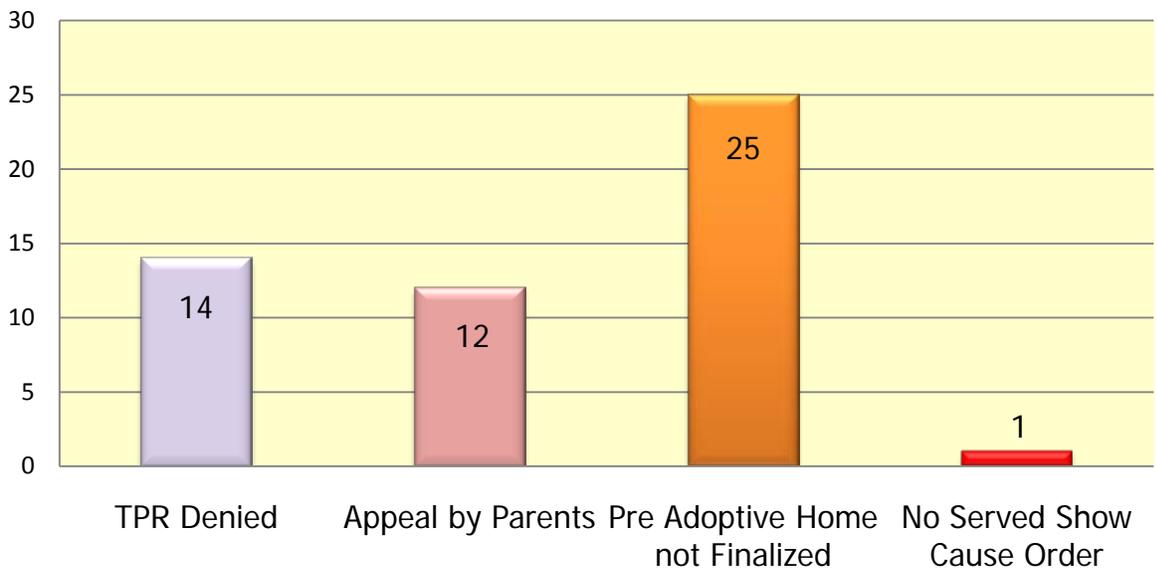


Agency Related Barriers to Adoption



- There were 27 (13%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption with no pre-adoptive resource identified.
- There were 3 (2%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption without a notification being published.

Court Related Barriers to Adoption



- There were 14 (8%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption with TPR denied.
- There were 12 (7%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption with parents appealing TPR.
- There were 25 (15%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption without a finalized pre-adoptive home.

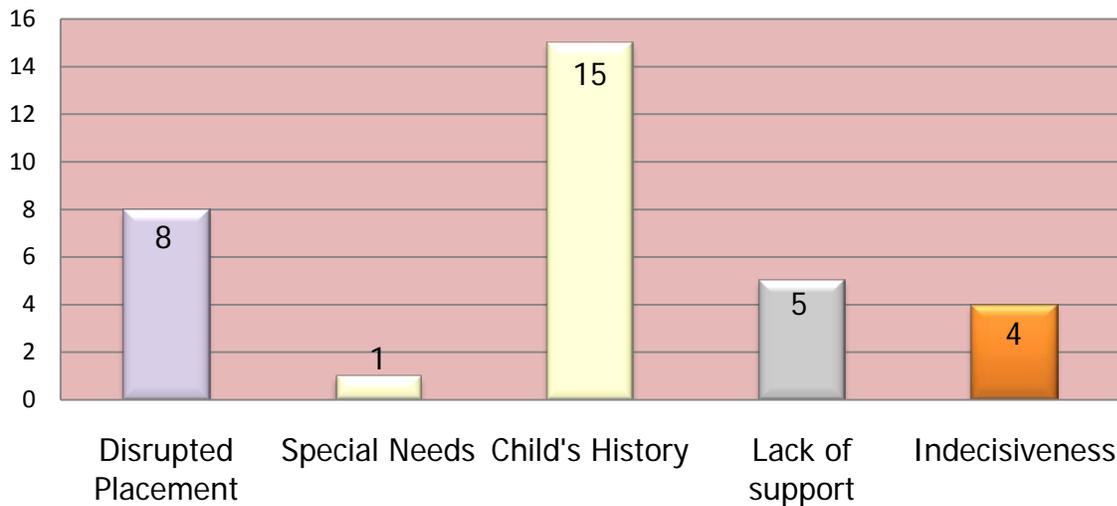
Child Related Barriers to Adoption



- There were 7 (4%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption did not consent to being adopted.
- There was 1 (1%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption needed siblings to be placed together.
- There were 15 (9%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption had behavior problems in the home.



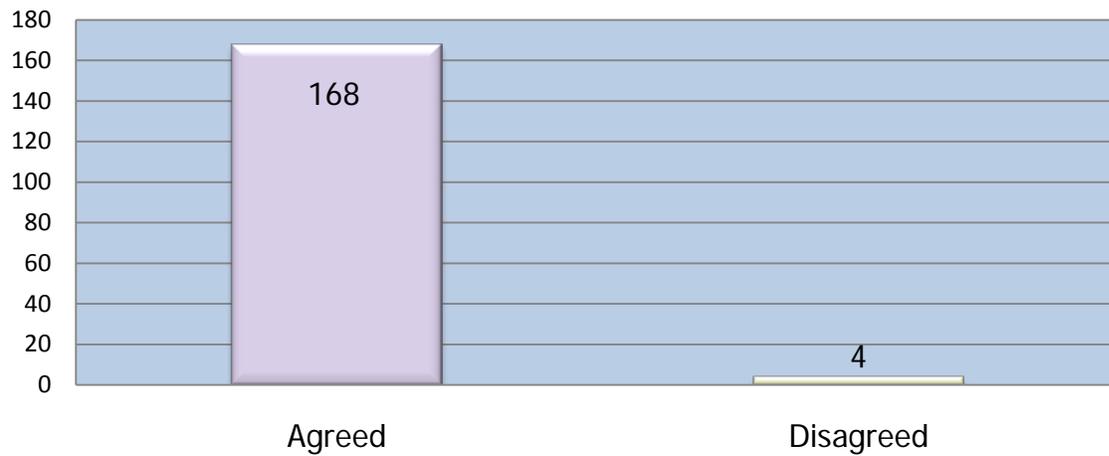
Family Related Barriers to Adoption



- There were 3 (2%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption with a disrupted pre-Adoption placement.
- There was 1 (1%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption with family who wanted child with little special needs.
- There was 15 (10%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption with an inability to accept certain characteristics in child's history or background.
- There were 5 (3%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption with family unwilling to adopt because of lack of services or financial support.
- There was 4 (2%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption with pre-adoptive foster parents who could not decide to adopt.



Local Board and Adoption Permanency Plan



- The Local Boards agreed with 168 (98%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption.

Pre-adoptive home overall:

- The Local Boards recommended the permanency plans of the remaining 4 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption be changed to Reunification (2), and Guardianship (2).

Reviewed timely:

- CRBC reviewed 158 (92%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of APPLA in a timely manner.



Adoption Recommendations

When children in out-of-home care cannot be safely reunited with their birth families, adoption is often the most desirable goal. Adoption provides the most stable, legally binding relationship for these children and their adoptive parents (Social Services Administration, 2014).

In accordance with Family Law § 5–539.1 the following CRBC Recommendations are based on the children in out-of-home care case reviews conducted during Fiscal Year 2014 with a permanency plan of Adoption.

- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of Adoption move in a timely and effective manner through the legal process to obtain permanence²⁷ (Family Law § 5–545).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of Adoption who are age appropriate to receive adoption counseling services²⁸. The local departments should provided adoption supportive services to the child (COMAR 07.02.12.04).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of Adoption receive needed medical services for discharge²⁹. The caseworker should ensure that any child whose placement changed from foster care placement to pre-adoptive out of home placement receives appropriate physical and mental health care (COMAR 07.02.11.08).

²⁷ There were (50%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases that had a permanency plan of Adoption from 3 or more years (pg. 43)_

²⁸ There were (63%) out of the 172 out-of-home placement child cases reviewed with a plan of Adoption received Adoption counseling services (pg. 46).

²⁹ There were (63%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of ADOPTION needed medical services for discharge (pg. 47).



- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of Adoption receive needed medical services for discharge³⁰. The caseworker should ensure that any child whose placement changed from foster care placement to pre-adoptive out of home placement receives appropriate physical and mental health care (COMAR 07.02.11.08).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of Adoption receive needed educational services for discharge³¹. The caseworker should ensure that youth be provided the needed educational services for discharge (Social Services Administration, 2013).
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have all children with a permanency plan of Adoption have an identified pre-adoptive resource³². The local departments are responsible for making every effort to locate an adoptive family for any child who cannot be reunited with his/her birth family (Social Services Administration, 2014).

³⁰ There were (49%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of ADOPTION needed mental health services for discharge (pg. 47).

³¹ There were (50%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of ADOPTION needed educational services for discharge (pg. 47).

³² There were (13%) out of the 172 children in out-of-home placement cases reviewed with a permanency of plan of Adoption with no pre-adoptive resource identified.



Additional Systemic Recommendations

It is CRBC's goal to provide useful and timely information about the adequacy and effectiveness of efforts to promote child safety and well-being, and achieve or maintain permanency for children, as well as provide plans and efforts to improve services. Therefore, the following systematic recommendations are all geared towards ensuring the safety and permanence of children in out-of-home placements, as well as improving the services needed to promote well-being.

- All jurisdictions are encouraged to continue bringing case records and/or supportive documentation to *all CRBC case reviews*.
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to continue supplying CRBC with the most recent and current contact information for all interested parties, including professionals and family members.
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to include the paternal family members as possible resources for all children who are in out-of-home care.
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to improve their efforts with getting parents to sign service agreements for those children in out-of-home placement cases with a permanency plan of reunification.
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have children in out-of-home placement cases that are age appropriate assessed for independent living skills, and linked with identified needed life skills training.
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to improve their efforts with identifying permanent connections for those children in out-of-home placement cases with a plan of APPLA.
- All jurisdictions are encouraged to have children in out-of-home placement cases that are age appropriate with a permanency plan of Adoption linked with Adoption Counseling services.

Thank you for your considerate attention to this report and the above recommendations!

Children's Legislative Advocacy Committee (CLAC)

The Children's Legislative Advocacy Committee is a subcommittee of the State Board. Each year CLAC is responsible for deciding on CRBC legislative priorities for the current Maryland Legislative Session.

2014 CRBC Supported Legislation

- Senate Bill 0064 – Children in Need of Assistance – Educational Stability
- Senate Bill 1055 – Family Law: Child Abuse and Neglect – Expungement of Reports and Records – Time Period (with amendments)
- House Bill 1344 – Task Force on Preventing Child Sexual Abuse
- House Bill 0794 – Maryland Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Young Adult Count Demonstration Project
- Senate Bill 0914 – Family Law: Protecting the Resources of Children in State Custody
- Senate Bill 0685 – Family Law: Child Abuse and Neglect – Provision of Information to Health Care Provider
- House Bill 1307 – Children in Out-of-Home Placement – Annual Notice of Benefits
- Senate Bill 1018 – Task Force to Study Housing and Supportive Services for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth – Continuation, Membership, Stipend, and Duties
- House Bill 0362 – Criminal Law – Part-time School Employees, Contractors, and Coaches – Sexual Contact With Minors Prohibited
- Senate Bill 0455 – Higher Education – Unaccompanied Homeless Youth – Tuition Exemption
- House Bill 0315 – Equity Court Jurisdiction – Immigrant Children – Custody or Guardianship



CRBC Volunteers Fiscal Year 2014

Delores Alexander	Carol Geck	Mae Kastor
Nettie Anderson-Burrs	Bernard Gibson	Gail Kaufmann
Pamela Baer	Walter Gill	Janet Kay Cole
Anna Mae Becker	Betty Golombek	Fatai Kazeem
Juanita Bellamy	Carolyn Goodrich	Clarice Knotts
Roberta Berry	Carolyn Gregory	Janice Lake
Fred Bowman	Lauretta Grier	Bernard Lake
Sarah Boyd-Walker	Jeffrey Grotsky	Evelyn Lawson
George Braxton	Sharon Guertler	Pat Latkovski
Kay Brazile	Susan Gross	Denise Lienesch
Barbara Brown	Susan Haberman	Mary MacClelland
Erwin Brown	Kirkland Hall	Dian MacNichol
Otanya Brown	Rosina Handy	Cathy Mason
Michele Burnette	Brad Hartin	Dianne Mayfield
Heidi Busch	Rebecca Hartman	Claire McLaughlin
Frances Carr	Ruth Hayn	Deanna Miles-Brown
Carol Carson	Lettie Haynes	Cynthia Miraglia
Jacqueline Coe	Virginia Heidenreich	Sadie Nelson
Bernice Cohen	Doretha Henry	Nakia Ngwala
John Coller	Leon Henry	Judith Niedzielski
Mary Jo Comer	Cathy Hodin	Tanya Oakes
Emily Cooke	Sandra Dee Hoffman	Franklin Parker
Nicole Cooksey	Wesley Hordge	Melissa Parkins-Tarbon
Phyllis Cooper	Robert Horsey	Janice Patterson
Beverly Corporal	Holly Hutchins	Mary Patton
Barbara Crosby	Reed Hutner	Marcella Peters
Cherra Culbreath	Judith Ingold	Ann Phillips
Janet Dickerson	Carmen Jackson	Iris Pierce
Ardena Dixon	Kenneth Jackson	Ella Pope
Jackie Donowitz	Beulah Jackson	Donald Pressler
Patricia Duncan	Britonya Jackson	Stephanie Quinn
Scott Durum	Ernestine Jackson-	Gail Radcliff
Russell Ebright	Dunston	Margaret Rafner
Cheryl Emery	Eunice Johnson	Carol Rahbar
Sandra Farley	Helen Johnson	Janet Ramsey
Susan Fensterheim	Roslie Johnson	Phyllis Rand
Allyn Fitzgerald	Portia Johnson-Ennels	Davina Richardson
Robert Foster	Rita Jones	Aundra Roberts
Dianne Fox	Denise Joseph	Valerie Sampson
Nina Gallant	Gilda Kahn	Norma Sappington



Patricia Scanlon
Shirley Scurry
Carmen Shanholtz
Carolyn Smith
Sylvia Smith
JoAnn Staples
Barbara Starke
Geraldine Stearn
Laura Steele
Mildred Stewart
Catherine Stewart-
Rosemarie Mensuphu-Bey

Barksdale
Nelle Stull
Patricia Sudina
William Taylor
Jane Theodore
Joyce A. Thomas
Tracey Todd-Estep
James Trent
Wanet Tyson
Clarence Vaughn
Adolph Vezza

Curdell Ward
Patricia Whitmore-
Kendall
Charlotte Williams
Edith Williams
Elizabeth Williams
Bryant Wilson
Herbert Wilson
Kathleen Worthington
Norma Lee Young

CRBC Staff Members

Fran Barrow
Eric Davis
Jerome Findlay
Michele Foster
Desiree Gold
Cindy Hunter-Gray
Marlo Palmer-Dixon
George Randall
Denise Wheeler



The State Board

Nettie Anderson-Burrs (Chairperson)

Representing Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties

James Trent (Vice Chairperson)

Representing Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties

Delores Alexander

Representing Baltimore and Harford Counties

Heidi Busch

Representing Anne Arundel, Carroll, and Howard Counties

Doretha Henry

Representing Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties

Sheila Jessup, Ph.D

Representing Baltimore City

Helen Diane Johnson, MSW

Representing Frederick and Montgomery Counties

Mary MacClelland

Representing Caroline, Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties

Sylvia Smith

Representing Baltimore City

George Randall, Ph.D, MSW, LGSW

Administrator



References

Citizens Review Board for Children (2013). *Policy and Procedures Manual*. Baltimore, MD: Department of Human Resources.

COMAR 07.02.11.01. *Purpose of Out-of-Home Placement Program*. Title 07 Department of Human Resources.

COMAR 07.01.06.05. *Procedures for Conducting the Citizen Review of Out-of-Home Placement*. Title 07 Department of Human Resources.

COMAR 07.02.11.03. *Out of Home Placement: Definitions*. Title 07 Department of Human Resources.

COMAR 07.02.11.08. *Out of Home Placement: Medical Care*. Title 07 Department of Human Resources.

COMAR 07.02.12.04. *Post Adoption Services*. Title 07 Department of Human Resources.

Family Law §5-539

Family Law §5-545

Maryland Department of Human Resources (2013). *State Stats*.

Social Security Administration (2013). *Out of Home Placement Services – Ready By 21 Manual* (FY2014 Edition). Baltimore, MD: Department of Human Resources.

Social Security Administration #12-32 (April 15, 2012). *Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)*. Baltimore, MD: Department of Human Resources.

Social Security Administration #14-17 (April 15, 2014). *Oversight and Monitoring of Health Care Services*. Baltimore, MD: Department of Human Resources.

Social Security Administration (2010). *Out of Home Placement Program Manual*. Baltimore, MD: Department of Human Resources.

Social Security Administration #10-08 (August 14, 2009). *Family Involvement Meetings (FIM)*. Baltimore, MD: Department of Human Resources.