

# **State of Alaska FY2009 Governor's Operating Budget**

## **Department of Health and Social Services Children's Services Results Delivery Unit Budget Summary**

## Children's Services Results Delivery Unit

### Contribution to Department's Mission

The mission of the Office of Children's Services is to promote stronger families, safer children.

### Core Services

- Investigate protective service reports and ensure services to children and their families when necessary.
- Develop permanency plans for children in out-of-home care.
- Facilitate early intervention and treatment services.
- Prevent and remedy child abuse and neglect.

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) provides a range of services and support systems to prevent and remedy child abuse and neglect. These include child abuse and neglect prevention services, child protective services, foster care, residential care, family support and preservation services, adoption and guardianship, and permanency planning.

The Children's Services Management component delivers comprehensive program, managerial and financial support to the division's child protection services, family preservation services, and prevention services. This component has four primary units: the Director's Office, Resource Family Section, Service Array Section, the Program Eligibility Unit and Tribal IV-E Program Unit. This component also provides support services to the Online Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA) case management and financial/provider payment information management system. Other administrative functions provided for the OCS are located in Finance and Management Services under the department's Office of the Commissioner.

The Children's Services Training component provides education and training for OCS child protection social workers, licensing workers, supervisors, and managers to enhance their knowledge of child protection, abuse, and neglect. Required training increases employees' assessment skills in working with children and their families, and strengthens their ability to assess child safety and evaluate options to protect children when it has been determined that they would be unsafe remaining in their homes. Further, ongoing training allows workers to better ascertain the best interests of children as OCS pursues permanency for children who have been placed outside of their homes.

The Front Line Social Worker component delivers services to carry out the legal mandates of the department to prevent and remedy physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, mental injury, and the exploitation of children. For child protective services, primary activities include investigation of protective services reports; crisis intervention; assessment of the risk of future harm in the absence of intervention; family strength and needs assessment; and case planning. Additional functions include ongoing assessment toward achieving case plan goals, initiation of legal action to protect children, monitoring implementation of treatment plans, and the coordination services needed to reunify children with their families. Services of the Front Line Social Workers component also include arranging out-of-home care, when appropriate and necessary, in the least restrictive setting; and facilitating an alternative permanent home for children when their return to their home of origin is not possible.

The Family Preservation component awards grants statewide to non-profit agencies to provide services that keep children safe in their own homes; and to strengthen and support adoptive, foster, and extended families. Grantees provide family preservation services that help children at risk of foster care placement remain safely with their families, ensure after care once a child has been returned from foster care, and respite care to provide child care relief to families where a child is at risk of being abused or neglected.

Independent Living services support education, vocational training and life skills of youth in foster care as they enter early adulthood. These youths, 16 years and older, frequently lack the family or financial support and guidance needed to gain self-sufficiency as they enter adulthood. Services provided to help these youths gain self-sufficiency include life skills

assessments; transition learning plans; exit plans that identify a youth's goals for education, employment, housing, health care, mental health care, and family/community connections; financial assistance, and identification of additional resources the youth may require.

OCS's Foster Care Base Rate, Foster Care Augmented Rate and Foster Care Special Needs programs enable the state to find temporary homes for children who have been abused or neglected and cannot remain in their own homes. The OCS supports these foster care placements with services that meet both the needs of children in state custody and the department's statutory mandate to care for them. The Foster Care Base Rate program reimburses foster care providers for the basic ongoing costs of raising a child. The Augmented Foster Care Rate benefit covers extraordinary costs and higher levels of supervision not otherwise covered with base rate benefits. Foster Care Special Needs reimbursements are for pre-approved "one time" or "irregular" expenditures that are not covered through the Foster Care Base Rate program and that have been assessed on an as-needed basis.

OCS administers the Tribal Title IV-E Reimbursement Program. OCS, through agreements with Alaskan Tribes and Tribal Organizations, passes through approximately \$1.5 million of Title IV-E federal funds annually. In conjunction with OCS, Tribal staff provides child welfare services to Alaskan Native children in out-of-home placement and children at risk of out-of-home placement. Tribal organizations work closely with OCS to provide the federal government with the required, substantial documentation for IV-E determinations.

The Subsidized Adoption & Guardianship component furnishes permanent adoptive or guardianship homes and subsidies for children with special needs that are in custody of the state. These children would likely not be adopted without a subsidy because of their documented special needs. The program has been successful due to an increased emphasis on permanency planning and the commitment to move children from foster care to a permanent placement in as safe and as timely a manner as possible.

Residential Child Care facilities provide high quality, time-limited residential treatment services for abused, neglected, and delinquent children. These facilities deliver 24-hour care for children who are unable to remain in their own home or who need more structure and treatment than foster care provides. The OCS facilitates levels of residential treatment that include emergency stabilization and assessment, intensive residential treatment, residential diagnostic treatment and residential psychiatric treatment.

The Infant Learning Program ensures that young children who may have disabilities or developmental delays receive an evaluation to identify the potential need for early intervention services. Comprehensive, coordinated, home-based early intervention services include individualized family service plans outlining goals for the family and the child; child development information; home visits; physical, occupational, or speech therapy; specialized equipment; and/or referrals to other needed services.

The Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Project is a federally funded project that facilitates planning and implementation of strategies in the areas of access to home medical care, family support and parent education, early care and education, and social-emotional development of young children.

The Strengthening Families Initiative (SFI) is a child abuse prevention effort supported by the Doris Duke Foundation that targets children in early care and education programs (child care centers and Headstart) between the ages of birth through five years. The SFI works to develop the protective skills of families through these settings and by offering supportive services to parents.

The Alaska Children's Trust program generates funds and commits resources to community-initiated projects that strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect. The Alaska Children's Trust awards grants from the net income of the Trust Fund to community-initiated projects on a competitive basis, monitors the approved grant projects for compliance and effectiveness, and submits to the Governor a report describing the services provided and the annual level of income and expense for the Alaska Children's Trust. The Trust solicits contributions through fund-raising activities, gifts and bequests and applies for private and federal grants consistent with the purpose of the trust, to increase the value of the fund.

The Child Protection Legal Services component provides a small portion of OCS costs for services purchased from the Department of Law to support legal requirements from the point when a child is taken into custody through mandatory, periodic court reviews, and to permanency if all efforts to reunite a child with his or her family are unsuccessful. This particular component addresses the funding needed when a child cannot be reunified with his or her family and the child's best interests are supported through adoption.

End Result	Strategies to Achieve End Result
<p><b>A: To prevent children from abuse and neglect.</b></p> <p><u>Target #1:</u> Increase the number of Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program screenings for children age 0-3 to meet federal requirements.</p> <p><u>Measure #1:</u> The number of children age 0-3 screened annually.</p>	<p><b>A1: Improve the referral process from Children's Protective Services to Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program services.</b></p> <p><u>Target #1:</u> Increase the percentage of child protection services referrals provided to children ages 0-3 and attain federal compliance.</p> <p><u>Measure #1:</u> Change in the percentage of completed referrals.</p> <p><b>A2: To reunify children in out-of-home placements with parents or caretakers as soon as it is possible.</b></p> <p><u>Target #1:</u> Increase the rate of children reunified with their parents or caretakers within 12 months of removal.</p> <p><u>Measure #1:</u> The percent of children reunified with parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care in less than 12 months from the last removal.</p>

End Result	Strategies to Achieve End Result
<p><b>B: Safe and timely adoptions.</b></p> <p><u>Target #1:</u> Increase the annual number of completed adoptions.</p> <p><u>Measure #1:</u> Number of children placed in adoptive homes annually.</p>	<p><b>B1: Promote the use of adoption exchanges to recruit adoptive homes.</b></p> <p><u>Target #1:</u> Increase recruitment of resource family homes.</p> <p><u>Measure #1:</u> Number of resource family homes recruited annually.</p> <p><b>B2: Promote the adoption of older youth ages 12 - 18.</b></p> <p><u>Target #1:</u> Increase the number of adoptions for youth age 12-18.</p> <p><u>Measure #1:</u> The annual number of youth age 12-18 who are adopted.</p>

FY2009 Resources Allocated to Achieve Results							
<p><b>FY2009 Results Delivery Unit Budget: \$132,990,900</b></p>	<p><b>Personnel:</b></p> <table> <tr> <td>Full time</td> <td>475</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Part time</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>477</b></td> </tr> </table>	Full time	475	Part time	2	<b>Total</b>	<b>477</b>
Full time	475						
Part time	2						
<b>Total</b>	<b>477</b>						

## Performance Measure Detail

### A: Result - To prevent children from abuse and neglect.

**Target #1:** Increase the number of Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program screenings for children age 0-3 to meet federal requirements.

**Measure #1:** The number of children age 0-3 screened annually.

Year	No. of Screenings	Target
2003	113	800
2004	200	800
2005	225	800
2006	278	800
2007	352	800

2007 data represents ONLY the first 3 quarters of FY 2007, which already exceed prior year screening numbers. OCS is awaiting 4th data.

**Analysis of results and challenges:** The Early Intervention/Infant Learning program (EI/ILP) goal is to have every child under the age of three with a substantiated protective services report screened and thus achieve federal compliance within three years. Currently EI/ILP screens only 40 percent of the required screenings under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

In 2003 U.S. Congress passed the Strengthening Families Bill requiring all children birth through three years of age who have been abused or neglected to be referred to the Early Intervention/Infant Learning (EI/ILP) program. By referring all 0-3 year old children who have a substantiated finding of abuse or neglect, the EI/ILP program can conduct an initial screening to identify speech and language delays, cognitive and motor delays and social and emotional delays and then connect families to any needed services. By linking families with services aimed at remedying identified needs of very young children, further abuse and neglect can be negated as associated risk factors are alleviated. While called prevention services, abuse or neglect has already occurred, and by providing this screening and subsequent services, the likelihood of repeat maltreatment is reduced.

The program, as the number of screenings increase, is improving strategies to meet the 100% goal. This task becomes more complex as increased attention related to the behavioral health needs of very young children increases. In the past, the need for these services and a child's eligibility for these services were based on education based domains of development. Strategies must be developed to assure referrals of children who are not yet of school age.

In 2005 EI/ILP discovered that 58% of infants and toddlers enrolled in EI/ILP services had delays in social and emotional development greater than 15%. 182 children (10%) had social and emotional delays greater than 50%. Current programs do not have the capacity to provide adequate training and support to address the social and emotional needs of children currently enrolled in services, much less children with difficulties solely in social and emotional delays. Since 2003, Alaska has seen a 56% increase in the number of referrals from child protective services and expects this number to rise as child protection services and EI/ILP continue to improve communication and understanding of how best to provide supports to these children and families.

In 2007 EI/ILP continues to identify an increase in children demonstrating delays in social and emotional development and continues to promote resource development in the area of identification and appropriate treatment training for staff to address the issue. EI/ILP currently has a cohort of six providers receiving training in the treatment of social and emotional delays.

A total of 2,552 children were referred from all sources in FY 2007. Of the total, 525 children were referred specifically from Child Protective Services -- 21% of all referrals, whereas in 2004 there were 155 children referred to infant learning from child protective services. This represents a significant increase of close to 240% in referrals over a three year period with 2007 representing only three quarters of data.

Of 90 referrals in Fairbanks in FY 2007, 10 children were enrolled in the program. This was an increase of 2% enrolled over FY 2006 that showed 71 referrals and seven enrollments. In Mat-Su six children were enrolled out

of 30 referred in FY 2007 over 11 referrals and no enrollments in the program in FY 2006. Anchorage referred 178 children and enrolled 26 of those children in FY 2007. In FY 2006, Anchorage referred 128 children and enrolled 23 in the program.

### A1: Strategy - Improve the referral process from Children's Protective Services to Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program services.

**Target #1:** Increase the percentage of child protection services referrals provided to children ages 0-3 and attain federal compliance.

**Measure #1:** Change in the percentage of completed referrals.

#### Percent of Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program Referrals

Year	Total Referrals	CPS Referrals	Percent	Target
FY 2003	1879	169	8.9%	
FY 2004	2134	248	11.6%	
FY 2005	2201	280	12.7%	
FY 2006	2357	363	15.4%	
FY 2007	2552	525	20.6%	5% increase

Data Source: OCS Early Intervention/Infant Learning Unit

**Analysis of results and challenges:** The Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program (EI/ILP) goal is to continue to increase the percentage of referrals of children who come to the attention of Child Protection Services (CPS).

As shown above, the program has made steady progress for the past five years, but still has work to do. Not only do the number of referrals and screenings need to go up, but the availability of services required as a result needs to increase. Currently, programs do not have the capacity to provide adequate training and support to address the social and emotional needs of these children. Provider training is currently on-going.

The significant increase in the number of CPS referrals is a good indicator of increased understanding and communication.

### A2: Strategy - To reunify children in out-of-home placements with parents or caretakers as soon as it is possible.

**Target #1:** Increase the rate of children reunified with their parents or caretakers within 12 months of removal.

**Measure #1:** The percent of children reunified with parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care in less than 12 months from the last removal.

#### Rate of Reunification

Year	Alaska Rate	National Standard
FFY 2001	62.4%	76.2%
FFY 2002	53.3%	76.2%
FFY 2003	54.7%	76.2%
FFY 2004	54.7%	76.2%
FFY 2005	53.3%****	76.2%
FFY 2006	61.5%	76.2%
FFY 2007	50.7%	76.2%

This measure is based on children returned to parents or caretakers in less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal and is calculated annually.

Data Source: Alaska's Online Resources for the Children of Alaska submission to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System.

\*\*\*\*Introduction of the Online Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA) case management system. With the transition from the old case management system (PROBER) to the new ORCA system, data definitions, policies, and collection procedures have been changed to conform with federal requirements. While the underlying federal methodology for computing measures remains the same, measures computed from these two different systems should not be considered comparable.

**Analysis of results and challenges:** This measure represents the percentage of children that were returned to their parents or caretakers in less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal, known as the rate of

reunification. While the Office of Children's Services (OCS) did achieve its goal as mandated by the Federal Performance Improvement Plan, there is much room for improvement in reunifying children with their families in a twelve month period.

With so much effort being placed on the new rollout of the safety assessment and emphasis on the front end of an OCS intervention to keep children safe, outcomes aimed at achieving permanency for children have decreased.

Efforts to improve this measure include collaboration with the Court Improvement Committee to highlight the need for Assistant Attorney Generals, Guardians ad Litem, Court Appointed Special Advocates, and judges to assist in helping the OCS to achieve permanency goals more timely.

By implementing the new safety model, permanency workers will be better equipped to determine whether children can be returned to their families sooner if the safety threats have been remedied and risk factors are all that remain. The premise behind the new safety model encourages workers to continue to assess through the life of the case whether children can be safely returned to their parents before all of the case plan requirements are met. If the reason OCS took children into custody was due to the child being unsafe, then the threshold for their return ought to be the same. Ongoing case plans can be monitored with children in their homes more easily with the family reunified than by requiring the family achieve success by reducing all the risk factors as well.

This model provided that the grantees use an assessment process to be completed with the family upon entry into the program and at different intervals in the life of the case, in order to assess the progress and safety factors as well as increase family functioning to ensure reunification. The grantees also provide for an in-home component to provide face-to-face contact with the family to gather assessment information and formulate a reunification plan. Reunification data is being captured from quarterly narrative reports and results should be available January, 2008.

## B: Result - Safe and timely adoptions.

**Target #1:** Increase the annual number of completed adoptions.

**Measure #1:** Number of children placed in adoptive homes annually.

### Number of Children Adopted from State Custody by Federal Fiscal Year

Year	Children Adopted	Annual Change
FFY 2001	278	75
FFY 2001	222	-56
FFY 2003	201	-21
FFY 2004	179	-22
FFY 2005	191	12
FFY 2006	197	6
FFY 2007	221	24

Data Source: Online Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA)

This data is provided through the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Raw data provided by ORCA is sent to Washington DC for processing with results returned to Alaska in late October. This measure cannot be updated until that time.

OCS anticipates having the ability to report quarterly outside of the federal process for quarter ending September 31.

**Analysis of results and challenges:** Since the passage of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, Alaska has seen an increase in the number of finalized adoptions for children from the Office of Children's Services (OCS) custody. As of June 30, 2006, there were 1,989 children (approximately 87% federally funded and 13% state funded) in the subsidized adoption program. Each year the OCS sees at least 150 children who are able to achieve permanency through adoption in the OCS system. The chart above shows the number of finalized adoptions as reported by Federal Fiscal Year. It is anticipated that over the next year the adoptions of children in the OCS custody will increase as OCS places continued emphasis on meeting the 15 out of 22 month timeframes outlined in the Adoption and Safe Families Act.

**B1: Strategy - Promote the use of adoption exchanges to recruit adoptive homes.**

**Target #1:** Increase recruitment of resource family homes.

**Measure #1:** Number of resource family homes recruited annually.

**Number of Resource Family Homes Recruited Annually**

Year	Initial Inquiries	# of Families Processed	Percent Processed
2006	102	63	62%
2007	to come	to come	to come

Data Source: Office of Children's Services Adoption Subsidy Unit.

FY 2006 marks the first year this plan was administered by the Adoption Subsidy Unit.

**Analysis of results and challenges:** The Office of Children's Services (OCS) participates in a state, regional, and national adoption exchange to assist with the identification of potential adoptive families for children in the OCS custody. The exchanges provide an opportunity to list the child and describe the family that would be best suited to meet the child's special needs in an effort to locate a family to adopt the child.

In Alaska, the use of the Alaska, Northwest and AdoptUsKids exchanges allows for the OCS to reach a broader network of waiting adoptive families throughout Alaska and the United States.

A total of 102 potential resource families made initial inquiries to the OCS for information on becoming a licensed resource family with the OCS. Of these 102 families, 63 families (60% of the initial inquiries) continued with the resource family orientation, training and licensing process with the OCS. OCS intends to increase the percentage of resource families who initiate the resource family licensing process to 70% of the total number of initial inquiries during the next fiscal year.

**B2: Strategy - Promote the adoption of older youth ages 12 - 18.**

**Target #1:** Increase the number of adoptions for youth age 12-18.

**Measure #1:** The annual number of youth age 12-18 who are adopted.

**Number of Youth Age 12 - 18 Adopted by Federal Fiscal Year**

Year	# Adopted	Change
FFY 2005	36	0
FFY 2006	36	0
FFY 2007	35	0

Data Source: Online Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA) to the federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)

ORCA data is provided to the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) biannually. The data is processed by the ACF and results are returned to the state.

**Analysis of results and challenges:** In the summer of 2006, the national focus for adoption was on the adoption of older youth from the child protection system. In Alaska, the focus on the increase of older youth adoptions (children 12-18 years of age) is a specific target for the next fiscal year. National research studies have indicated that children who age out of the foster care system have greater life challenges than children who leave the foster care system with connections to significant adults (parents, mentors, adoptive parents, guardians). For this reason, the OCS has focused on assisting older youth with developing and maintaining permanent connections in their lives, and for many of these youth, the connections will need to be legally permanent as well.

In FFY 2005, 36 children between the ages of 12-18 were adopted through the OCS foster care system. In FFY 2006, this number remained consistent within the same age group. There was only 1 fewer child between the ages of 12 and 18 that was adopted in FY 2007.

In FY 2007 nearly 14% of the total new adoptions were of children age 12 - 18.



## Key RDU Challenges

In September of 2008, the OCS will undergo a federal on-site Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). These reviews are conducted by the Children's Bureau within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The purpose of these reviews is to help states improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families who receive services through the child welfare system. Compliance standards are set from 95% to 100% as the focus is continuous improvement. With standards geared toward continuous improvement, all ten states thus far reviewed have failed and are again under a Program Improvement Plan.

Adequate accommodations for OCS staff has, and will continue to be, a major challenge. While adequate space for Anchorage staff has been procured after four years of setbacks, original funds allocated for the purpose are inadequate. Outlying offices are in poor repair and in need of security updates.

An Anchorage pilot project related to a national Family-to-Family (F2F) initiative originally funded by the Rasmuson Foundation with technical assistance provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation has been successful. F2F works to change the child welfare system through support provided to resource families, building community partnerships, and team decision making that includes not just foster parents and caseworkers but families and community members. The Annie E. Casey Foundation reports that in Alaska, 70% of the children who participate in a team decision making services are able to stay in their own homes or in a relative home rather than be removed from their homes and placed in a foster home. The OCS is now challenged to implement F2F statewide.

*Medicaid Targeted Case Management for Infant Learning (ILP TCM):* The department sought and received a Medicaid State Plan Amendment to reimburse Medicaid eligible Infant Learning service providers for case management services. Alaskan EI/ILP providers began work to implement this program statewide in early FY 2007. Instruction manuals have been developed and approximately 95 percent of current grantees are engaged in billing TCM services. EI/ILP is pursuing the increased ability to provide services to Medicaid eligible children under targeted case management so that EI/ILP can ensure adequate use of resources for all eligible children.

*Continued Development, Implementation, and Maintenance of the Online Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA) Information Management System:* The ORCA project continues to work on meeting the challenges of building department capacity to maintain the system with less reliance on contracted services. Policy and procedures continue to be updated and a training curriculum has been developed in-house. It is, however, very clear that the department will not be able to provide all ORCA needs in-state. ORCA development will continue to require contracted assistance. As state and federal laws change and as child protection practices change, ORCA development needs increase.

*Child Advocacy Centers:* Since 2002, the federal government, through the U.S. Department of Justice, has provided funding for Alaska Child Advocacy Centers (CAC). That funding has not, as of this date, been re-appropriated. CACs provide child sexual abuse and severe physical abuse victims a safe, child-friendly place to interview children alleged to have been maltreated, receive forensic medical examinations, and mental health services or referrals to other agencies. CAC interviews are legally sound and the preferred method of investigation nationwide. They coordinate fact finding to avoid duplicative interviews by various agencies that can re-traumatize a child. CACs have been very successful in Alaska. Of 2,837 protective service reports screened-in by OCS, 1,378 were referred to a CAC. There are currently seven fully functioning CACs in the state with plans for six and possibly seven more CACs. This represents a significant challenge for OCS as federal funding is no longer available, CACs are extremely successful, and more are needed.

*Reduce High Caseloads:* The final Child and Family Services Federal Review included recommendations to improve Alaska's child protection system. One such recommendation was the need for additional child protection workers to reduce the high caseloads of the front line staff. The OCS, with the support of the Alaska State Legislature, has been able to increase staff by 63 positions over the past 4 years.

In 2006, Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc. completed a contracted OCS workload study to provide the basis for giving caseworkers reasonable workloads that allow them the time they need to achieve positive outcomes for children and families. Recommendations from the workload study included making a plan to fill existing vacancies and monitoring workloads over time to identify patterns of staffing needed by office location to enable the OCS to redistribute personnel as needed, with the bulk of the need in Anchorage and the Mat-Su valley.

*Training for Front Line Workers:* adequate training for frontline workers remains a challenge. Work is being done to update and enhance contracted services from the University of Alaska, and in-house training has been developed with a focus on ORCA. In 2006, OCS was provided one-time funding targeted at enhancing training services for all front line

staff. Two major initiatives were implemented. All front line staff were trained to complete more thorough initial assessments of families in an effort to assess the safety of children and prevent removal of children from their homes whenever possible with an emphasis on working with families in a more cooperative manner and through better partnerships with our community stakeholders. Secondly, OCS completed the rollout of the Resource Family Assessment (RFA) to improve the assessment of potential foster and adoptive parents. With the loss of this funding the OCS has been held to prior year levels of training.

*Staff Retention:* continues to be a challenge for OCS. High caseloads, salaries, and training have a direct impact on staff retention. An OCS staff survey conducted in September, 2007, indicate that 52.1% of those responding noted quality training as an area that needs immediate attention, 79.9% feel salaries are inadequate, and 69.2% of the staff responding has been in their positions for less than two years.

*Federal Title IV-E Revenue:* For the past several years, the OCS has focused on increasing opportunities to increase federal revenue under the IV-E programs. The OCS is reimbursed from the Federal Title IV-E program for direct services OCS provides when removal of a child from their home is necessary to protect the child. The OCS continues to fully implement the Federal Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) whereby all IV-E eligible claiming activities allowed by the Ninth Circuit Court ruling in *Rosales*, and for unlicensed relative placements, needed to be reversed. This was a major undertaking both on the practice and financial side of the OCS processes. In addition, the OCS IV-E licensing component has been placed on a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) as the result of a federal IV-E review completed in September. The PIP, once fully implemented, will bring licensing activities into full compliance with federal laws, including the DRA. The OCS will enjoy full implementation by May, 2008.

*Bring the Kids Home:* OCS continues to play an active role in the department's Bring the Kids Home initiative while working with Alaskan residential care facilities to ensure children in need of services are adequately supported, and in turn, enabling facilities to enhance program capacity. One of the primary challenges facing this initiative is establishment of adequate facility space and services in-state.

Federal law mandates that states have emergency response plans in place for children in state custody but provides no guidance, program instruction, format, and no funding for implementation or maintenance of a plan. This presents a challenge for OCS. Although a plan has been developed, no funds are available to implement the plan.

## **Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2009**

The Department of Health and Social Services, Office of Children's Services (OCS) has made some very difficult choices in an effort to prioritize all funding needs. Of first priority is full implementation of the 2006 Workload study recommendations. Children's Services outcomes pivot upon the ability to provide direct services required to keep children safe and families moving through the system without undue delay as a result of vacancies in front line workers. Without adequate numbers of frontline or other staff to provide and support these services, anticipated declines in service results should be anticipated.

The results published in the study recommended 19 additional workers. OCS has noted an error in the study accounting and determined the need to be 17 additional workers after adjustments for unassigned existing positions. The OCS received six additional workers in FY 2008 and is now requesting additional positions and administrative staff to continue implementation of the study and follow through with the recommendations.

The Online Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA) will continue to improve throughout FY 2008 under a capital appropriation. OCS is hopeful that funding will be available to continue to comply with federal and state mandates, keep pace with changes in business practices, continue to improve reporting capabilities, and simply maintain the day-to-day purposes of an electronic case management/financial system for child welfare. Just as with every state operating a child welfare system such as ORCA, a contractor will always be necessary to work the system well and to continue to grow where necessary. OCS is hopeful that the appropriate resources will become as much a part of the OCS base budget and operations as other information technology.

The upcoming on-site Child and Family Services Review to be conducted by the federal government with the goal of continued program improvement as the core concern will result in a program improvement plan supported technically and otherwise by the Administration for Children and Families. Provided with adequate support and resources to implement such a plan, OCS anticipates continued advancement toward best practice and better child protection services.

## Major RDU Accomplishments in 2007

*Provided for Children in Custody:* The OCS provided services to more than 2,100 children. Benefits provided include the customary ongoing cost of raising a child, along with critical services such as physical and/or psychological therapy, child care, and extraordinary clothing and incidental needs.

*Moved Children From Foster Care to Permanent Homes:* In FY 2007, the Subsidized Adoption & Guardianship program provided permanent homes for 251 adopted children with a total of 2,245 children in the program.

*Continued Enhancement of Front Line Worker Training:* Front line workers, supervisors and managers within the child protective services program have participated in continued safety assessment training and continue implementation of this practice change. A program-wide implementation plan for safety assessment was developed with technical assistance from the National Resource Center for Child Protection.

*Online Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA):* training has been developed and implemented. All new employees received in-house OCS training specific to ORCA process and use.

A quality assurance unit has been established and is in the process of implementation to assure appropriate use of Foster Care Special Needs funding. The unit is staffed with three full time positions that will provide pre-review of requests for funds within two hours of submission to the unit. While the unit will not have approval or disapproval authority, the review should provide clear instruction to field staff regarding each request submitted.

*Family Preservation Services Provided:* The OCS worked with non-profit service providers across the state and funded more than 40 Family Preservation, Family Support, and Time-Limited Family Reunification grants. OCS continues to work with grantees to implement a shift in quarterly narrative reporting to focus on outcomes from the number of families served. Grant requirements were revised to require a specific set of core services be provided to all families receiving services through these programs.

*Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Plan:* OCS began implementation of the ECCS Plan which was finalized in 2006. This first phase of implementation has focused on comprehensive developmental screening during well-child medical visits, early childhood mental health services and workforce development, family support in early care and learning programs through the Strengthening Families Initiative and promoting a comprehensive, integrated service system for young children prenatal to eight.

*Family-to-Family (F2F) Initiative:* This nationwide initiative funded by the Rasmuson Foundation in 2005 and 2006 and with technical assistance provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation has been very successful. F2F works to change the child welfare system through support provided to resource families, building community partnerships, and team decision making that includes not just foster parents and caseworkers but families and community members. The Annie E. Casey Foundation reports that in Alaska, 70% of the children who receive team decision making services are able to stay in their own homes or in a relative home rather than a foster home. Over the course of the next two years, OCS will expand F2F services statewide. The OCS is now planning to implement F2F statewide.

*Increased linkages with Child Protective Services and Infant Learning Program (ILP):* The number of child protection referrals to Early Intervention/Infant Learning programs increased from 363 in FY 2006 to 525 in FY 2007. This 5% increase represents the highest increase since 2004.

### Contact Information

**Contact:** Laura Baker, Budget Chief  
**Phone:** (907) 465-1629  
**Fax:** (907) 465-1850  
**E-mail:** Laura.Baker@alaska.gov

**Children's Services  
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	FY2007 Actuals				FY2008 Management Plan				FY2009 Governor			
	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds
<b>Formula Expenditures</b>												
Children's Medicaid Services	5,102.6	7,368.0	2.6	12,473.2	7,570.6	8,575.1	0.0	16,145.7	7,926.2	8,219.5	0.0	16,145.7
Foster Care Base Rate	7,016.4	1,326.9	1,742.7	10,086.0	5,575.8	2,927.4	1,742.7	10,245.9	5,632.9	2,870.3	2,342.7	10,845.9
Foster Care Augmented Rate	1,173.2	353.1	0.0	1,526.3	1,729.9	396.2	0.0	2,126.1	1,737.6	388.5	0.0	2,126.1
Foster Care Special Need	4,220.6	503.7	204.1	4,928.4	2,301.3	860.7	200.0	3,362.0	2,315.0	847.0	1,495.1	4,657.1
Subsidized Adoptions/Guardians	8,689.9	11,101.8	0.0	19,791.7	9,964.8	11,346.8	0.0	21,311.6	10,192.3	11,346.8	0.0	21,539.1
<b>Non-Formula Expenditures</b>												
Children's Services Management	3,321.1	2,551.8	215.0	6,087.9	2,201.5	5,365.2	442.7	8,009.4	2,263.3	5,460.3	449.8	8,173.4
Children's Services Training	268.6	543.3	0.0	811.9	642.7	755.1	0.0	1,397.8	1,011.8	813.0	0.0	1,824.8
Front Line Social Workers	19,602.9	13,646.9	1,331.1	34,580.9	21,552.8	13,329.0	2,507.4	37,389.2	23,662.8	14,325.0	2,133.1	40,120.9
Family Preservation	840.8	7,723.5	129.1	8,693.4	2,300.7	7,440.0	699.9	10,440.6	4,075.0	7,440.0	774.9	12,289.9
Residential Child Care	4,343.0	116.0	0.0	4,459.0	4,633.4	519.5	0.0	5,152.9	4,645.6	507.3	0.0	5,152.9
Infant Learning Program Grants	4,749.2	2,037.3	589.4	7,375.9	5,142.2	2,767.0	363.1	8,272.3	5,250.9	2,781.4	863.1	8,895.4
Children's Trust Programs	0.0	221.7	254.4	476.1	0.0	630.0	589.7	1,219.7	0.0	630.0	589.7	1,219.7
Women, Infants	739.9	21,852.7	3,735.5	26,328.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

**Children's Services  
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	FY2007 Actuals				FY2008 Management Plan				FY2009 Governor			
	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds
and Children												
Child Protection	227.5	0.0	0.0	227.5	227.5	0.0	0.0	227.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Legal Svcs												
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60,295.7</b>	<b>69,346.7</b>	<b>8,203.9</b>	<b>137,846.3</b>	<b>63,843.2</b>	<b>54,912.0</b>	<b>6,545.5</b>	<b>125,300.7</b>	<b>68,713.4</b>	<b>55,629.1</b>	<b>8,648.4</b>	<b>132,990.9</b>

**Children's Services**  
**Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component**  
**From FY2008 Management Plan to FY2009 Governor**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
<b>FY2008 Management Plan</b>	<b>63,843.2</b>	<b>54,912.0</b>	<b>6,545.5</b>	<b>125,300.7</b>
<b>Adjustments which will continue current level of service:</b>				
-Children's Medicaid Services	355.6	-355.6	0.0	0.0
-Children's Services Management	61.8	95.1	7.1	164.0
-Front Line Social Workers	1,070.0	591.8	-374.3	1,287.5
-Family Preservation	76.9	0.0	0.0	76.9
-Foster Care Base Rate	57.1	-57.1	0.0	0.0
-Foster Care Augmented Rate	7.7	-7.7	0.0	0.0
-Foster Care Special Need	13.7	-13.7	0.0	0.0
-Subsidized Adoptions/Guardians	227.5	0.0	0.0	227.5
-Residential Child Care	12.2	-12.2	0.0	0.0
-Infant Learning Program Grants	8.7	14.4	245.0	268.1
-Children's Trust Programs	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0
-Child Protection Legal Svcs	-227.5	0.0	0.0	-227.5
<b>Proposed budget decreases:</b>				
-Children's Trust Programs	0.0	0.0	-2.0	-2.0
<b>Proposed budget increases:</b>				
-Children's Services Training	369.1	57.9	0.0	427.0
-Front Line Social Workers	1,040.0	404.2	0.0	1,444.2
-Family Preservation	1,697.4	0.0	75.0	1,772.4
-Foster Care Base Rate	0.0	0.0	600.0	600.0
-Foster Care Special Need	0.0	0.0	1,295.1	1,295.1
-Infant Learning Program Grants	100.0	0.0	255.0	355.0
<b>FY2009 Governor</b>	<b>68,713.4</b>	<b>55,629.1</b>	<b>8,648.4</b>	<b>132,990.9</b>