Department of Human Services
Bureau of Child Welfare

Adoption Program

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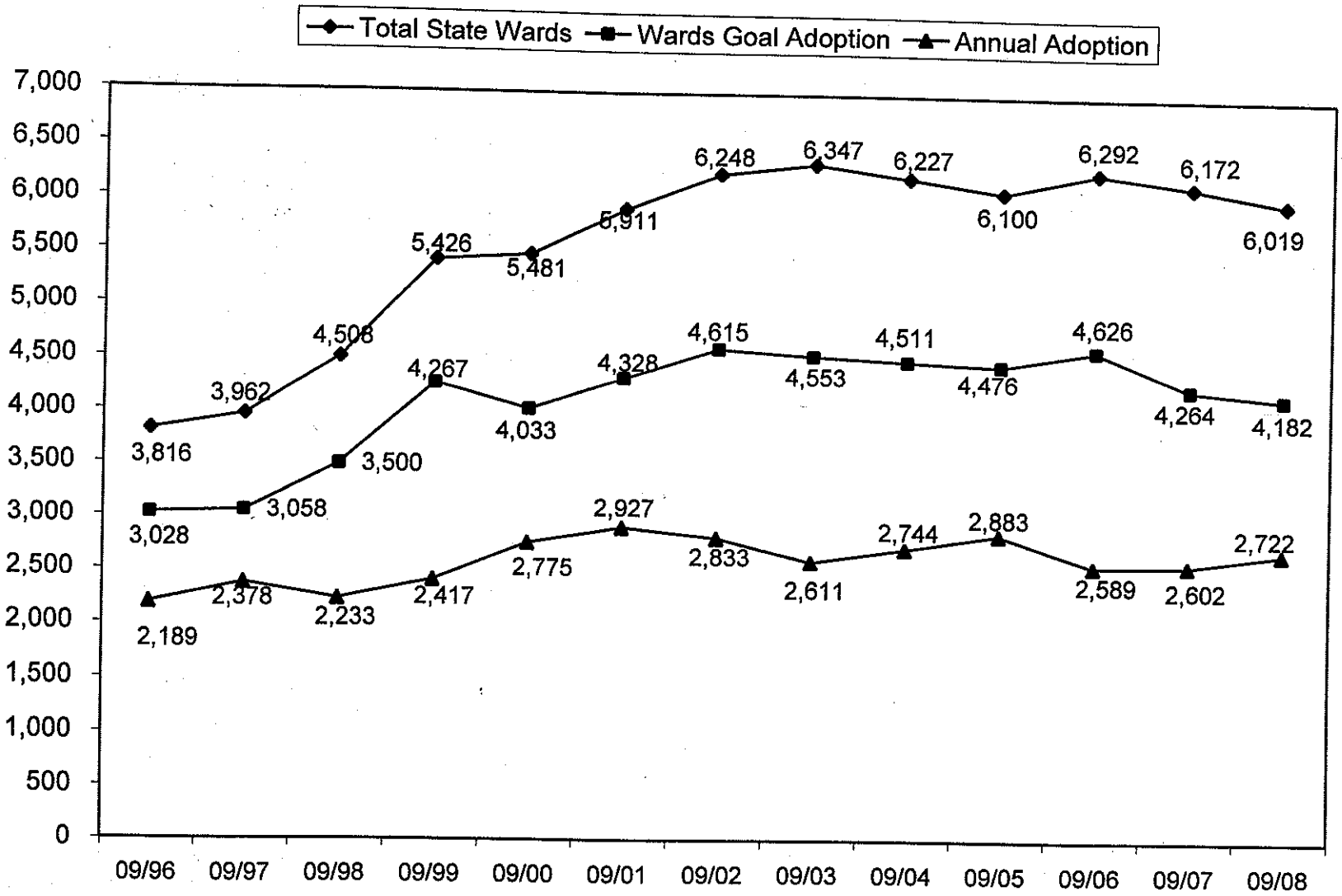
ADOPTION GOALS

Continue to increase the total number of adoptions completed annually.

- Focus on permanency for older youth, sibling groups and children with disabilities.
- Educate communities and increase recruitment.

TOTAL STATE WARD POPULATION, WARDS GOAL ADOPTION, ANNUAL ADOPTIONS



Total State Wards	3,816	3,962	4,508	5,426	5,481	5,911	6,248	6,347	6,227	6,100	6,292	6,172	6,019
Wards Goal Adoption	3,028	3,058	3,500	4,267	4,033	4,328	4,615	4,553	4,511	4,476	4,626	4,264	4,182
Annual Adoption	2,189	2,378	2,233	2,417	2,775	2,927	2,833	2,611	2,744	2,883	2,589	2,602	2,722

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Adoptions in 2008

- 82% of children were placed with one or all of their siblings
- 47% were adopted by a relative
- 47% were adopted by foster parents
- 6% were adopted by a recruited family

This represents a 9% increase in relative adoptions since 2006.

Permanency Backlog Cohort

Baseline cohort data, as of 9/30/08:

- Temporary Court Wards (TCW): 5178
  - Total Closed: 1065 by 12/31/08
  - Closed By Adoption: 75 (7.04%)
- Terminated Parental Rights (TPR): 4396
  - Total Closed: 560 by 12/31/08
  - Closed By Adoption: 393 (70%)

Backlog Cohort TPR

Timelines for permanency:

- 50% of children over 1 year since termination of parental right on 1/1/09 will have permanency by 9/30/09,
- 75% by 9/30/10,
- 100% by 9/30/11.

Adoption Program Collaboration

- In 2008 DHS reduced the number of adoption staff and transferred cases to the private agencies.
- In 2008 private agencies completed 1,482 adoptions, 54% of finalized adoptions.
- DHS completed 1240 adoptions, 46% of finalized adoptions.
- This is a significant change from the past 4 years when adoptions were close to a 50/50 split between DHS and POS agencies.

Goal: Annual Increase in Adoptions

- In 2006 there were 2,589 adoptions
  - 56% of youth with goal of adoption.
- In 2007 there were 2,602 adoptions
  - 61% of youth with goal of adoption.
- In 2008 there were 2,722 adoptions
  - 65% of youth with goal of adoption.

Goal: Increase Adoption of Children of 9 Years and Older

The state's baseline for adoption of children 9 years and older was established by the Adoption Promotion Act. Michigan's baseline is 994. There were:

- 986 youth +9 adopted in 2005.
- 872 youth 9+ adopted in 2006
- 819 youth 9+ adopted in 2007
- 836 youth 9+ adopted in 2008

Goal: Increase Stability of Adoptions

- The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange contract includes data collection on disrupted and dissolved adoptions.
- Surveys of workers, parents and youth are being collected and will be analyzed by MSU to assist in determining what services can be provided to support families and maintain adoptive placements.

Dual Assessment for Foster and Adoptive Parents.

- The Bureau of Child and Family Licensing (BCAL) developed a more in-depth evaluation for foster care licensing.
- Based on the information now required on the BCAL 3130 it was determined that this format can also serve to approve a home for adoption.
- The dual evaluation was instituted on October 1, 2008.
- The dual evaluation will streamline the process for families moving from foster care to adoption.

Adoption Contract 2009

- The majority of contract changes are based on the Children's Rights settlement requirements that apply to private contracted agencies in the same manner as DHS. These include:
- Adoption caseworker and supervisor training
- Caseload requirements
- Requirements for timely referrals from foster care and increased recruitment activities
- Backlog reporting requirements and placement requirements

Adoption Contract 2009

- All contract amendments implemented in 2008 are continued in the new contract.
- Rates include the 4% increase established
- Children photo-listed on MARE increased rate to $16,000
- Per diem payments

Adoption Contracts 2009

- The 2009 contract includes assignment of cases by DHS to contract agencies on a rotational basis.
- Contracted private adoption agencies are required to accept cases that are referred to ensure adequate statewide service provision.
- Each county DHS office will work with private agencies to determine an equitable referral process.

Guardianship Assistance Program

- The Michigan Public Act 260 of 2008, enacted in August, allowed for the development of a guardianship assistance program for foster children.
- On Oct 7, 2008, the President signed and enacted Public Law No: 110-351, the "Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act" which included provisions for the relative guardianship assistance program.
- The federal relative guardianship assistance program provides title IV-E funding for payments to qualified licensed relative foster care providers.

Guardianship Assistance Program

- On December 24, 2008, the Administration for Children and Families provided initial program instructions to the states. Additional clarifications are expected in February.
- Based on the approval of the required changes to the title IV-E State Plan, budgetary and statute changes, development of court forms, and the development of system changes for payment of guardianship assistance has delayed implementation until April 1, 2009.

Adoption Program Improvements

- Foster care must refer cases to adoption within 14 days of filing a petition for termination of parental rights.
  - This will allow time prior to termination to establish if there is an identified adoptive family.
  - If no family has been identified an individual recruitment plan must be developed.

Adoption Program Improvements

- If no identified family is available the child must be photo-listed 7 days after termination.
- A meeting must be held for children who do not have an identified family 6 months after termination and include a person with specialized training in adoption.
- At one year from termination a national expert in adoption must be consulted.

Adoption Program Improvements

- A statewide plan for recruitment of families is under development.
- Agency level recruitment plans must specifically address sibling groups, older youth and children with disabilities.
- Availability of foster and adoptive homes will be monitored to determine the types and geographic areas where a need exists.

Initiatives in 2009

- Development of RFQ for:
  - assessments of applicants for approval to adopt
  - post adoption assessment and referral for families requesting services.

Many of the services needed by families is covered by medical subsidy but families often don't know how or where to access.