

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE



New Jersey Child Placement Advisory Council

2015 CPAC Annual Report and Recommendations for 2016

New Jersey

Child Placement Advisory Council (CPAC)

Executive Board

Officers 2014-2015 and 2015-2016

Chair	Lorene S. Wilkerson	Middlesex County
Vice Chair	Eunice I. Salton	Middlesex County
Secretary	Susan Rodgers	Mercer County
Treasurer	Russell Lake	Ocean County

Voting Members 2014-2015

Lila Bernstein	Morris County
Ronald Keith England	Essex County
Michael Krasner	Union County
William T. Noll	Union County
Frank E. Petrucci	Essex County
Mary Polizzi	Bergen County
William Wallis	Essex County
Fred Washington	Essex County

Non-Voting Members 2014-2015

Emeritus	Connie D. Jenkins-Buwa
Honorary	Darrell L. Armstrong

Voting Members 2015-2016

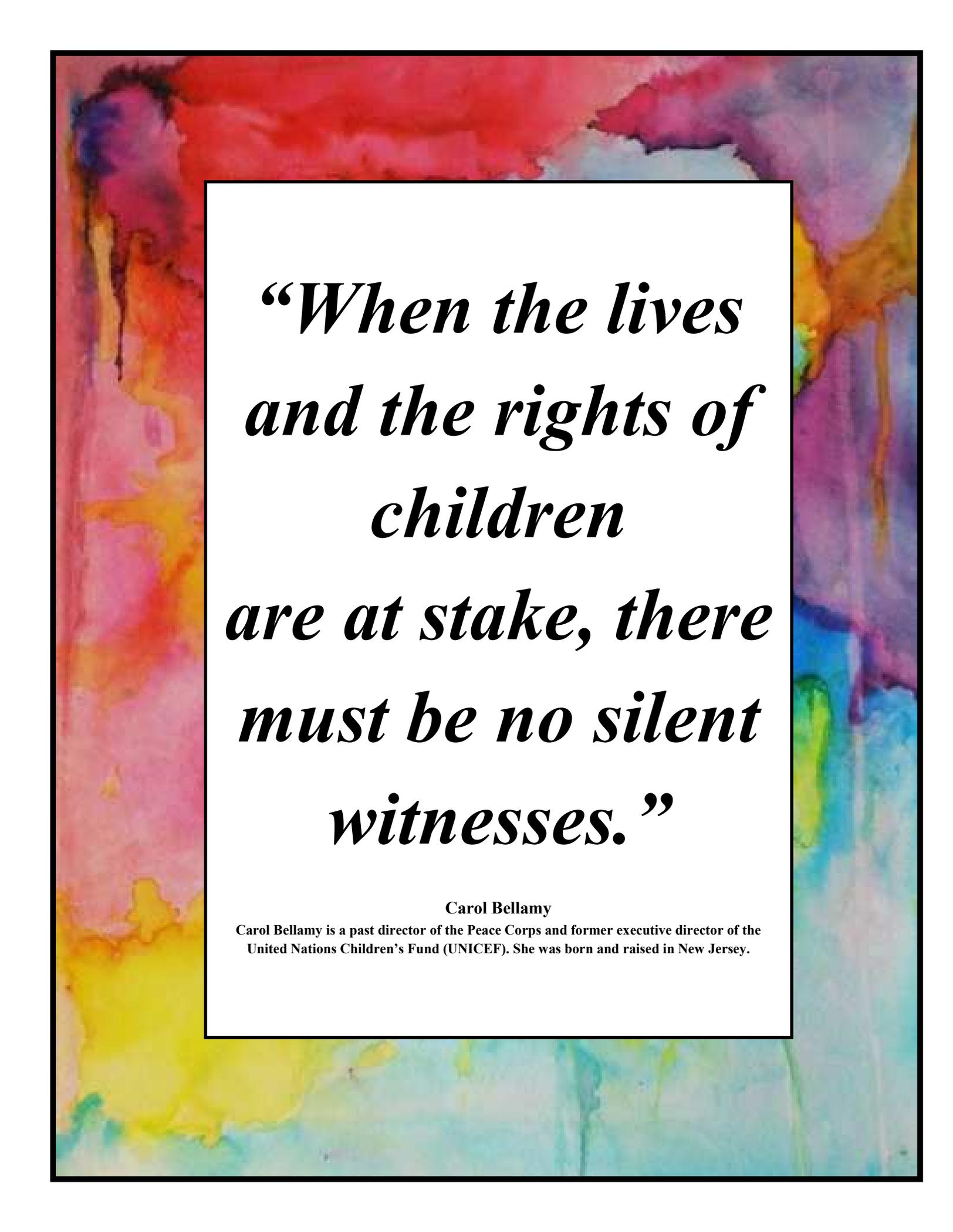
Lila Bernstein	Morris County
Ummil Khair Sameerah Lewis-Diabb	Middlesex County
Ronald Keith England	Essex County
Michael Krasner	Union County
Sandra Wilson Moss	Passaic County
William T. Noll	Union County
Frank E. Petrucci	Essex County
Mary Polizzi	Bergen County
William Wallis	Essex County
Fred Washington	Essex County

Non-Voting Members 2015-2016

Emeritus	Connie D. Jenkins-Buwa
Honorary	Darrell L. Armstrong



COVER ART used with permission of the artist, Nancy Pochis Bank, at www.nancypochisbank.com. Nearly 30 years ago CPAC adopted a drawing of a child sheltered from a rainstorm by a large umbrella as its logo. CPAC continues to use variations of this image to emphasize its heritage of advancing the safety, well-being and protection of all New Jersey children in foster care.



*“When the lives
and the rights of
children
are at stake, there
must be no silent
witnesses.”*

Carol Bellamy

Carol Bellamy is a past director of the Peace Corps and former executive director of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). She was born and raised in New Jersey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Letter from the Chair.....	1
CPAC Activities and Accomplishments for Court Year 2015	2
Training events.....	2
Evaluation of Directive #04-10.....	2
CPR volunteer training manual	3
CPAC website.....	3
Ambassador program.....	3
Concerns Identified by CPAC as Requiring Attention in Court Year 2016.....	4
Children in out-of-home placement longer than five years	4
Timing of the 45 day review.....	4
CPR Board Activities and Accomplishments for Court Year 2015.....	5
CPR board reviews.....	5
Children in Placement (CIP): Statistics, Analyses and Comments.....	9
How many CIP are placed	9
Why children are placed.....	13
CIC demographics.....	16
Types of placement	21
How many times children are placed.....	22
Number of years spent in out-of-home placement.....	23
Reasons why CIP cases are closed.....	27

LIST OF CHARTS

CHART 1: THE NUMBER OF CPR REVIEWS FROM 2011 THROUGH 20155
 CHART 2: THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF CPR BOARD VOLUNTEERS IN 20158
 CHART 3: THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT ON JUNE 30, 20159
 CHART 4: THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES (FC) OPENED, CLOSED AND PENDING ACTIVE FROM 2011 THROUGH
 201511
 CHART 5: THE AGE OF CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT ON JUNE 30, 201516
 CHART 6: THE GENDER OF CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT ON JUNE 30, 2015.....16
 CHART 7: THE PROPORTION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN, HISPANIC, CAUCASIAN AND ALL OTHER RACES IN
 OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT ON JUNE 30, 201517
 CHART 8: THE CHILDREN UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT BY TYPE OF PLACEMENT ON
 JUNE 30, 201521
 CHART 9: THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF TIME CHILDREN REMAINED IN OUT-OF HOME PLACEMENT VS 201423

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF CPR BOARD ACTIVITIES FROM 2011 THROUGH 2015.....5
 TABLE 2: THE NUMBER OF CPR BOARD MEETINGS AND REVIEWS BY COUNTY VS. 20146
 TABLE 3: STATUTE REQUIREMENTS VS. 2015 PERFORMANCE.....7
 TABLE 4: THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO ENTERED PLACEMENT IN 1995, 2005 AND FROM 2011 THROUGH
 2015.....10
 TABLE 5: THE NUMBER OF NEW CASE FILINGS (FC) OPENED BY COUNTY FROM 2011 THROUGH 2015 12
 TABLE 6: THE TOP FIVE REASONS WHY CHILDREN WERE PLACED VS. 1995, 2005, AND 2014 13
 TABLE 7: THE TOP REASONS WHY CHILDREN WERE PLACED FROM 2012 THROUGH 201515
 TABLE 8: THE AGE, GENDER AND RACE/ETHNICITY OF CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT
 VS. 201518
 TABLE 9: THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS PER CHILD FROM 2013 THROUGH 2015.....22
 TABLE 10: THE COUNTIES WITH THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT FOR
 LONGER THAN FIVE YEARS..... 23
 TABLE 11: AVERAGE TIME CHILDREN AGES 0 TO 24 SPENT IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT VS. FROM 2012
 THROUGH 201424
 TABLE 12: HOW CASES (FC) WERE RESOLVED VS. 2014.....27

Letter from the Chair

To the Esteemed Members of the New Jersey Supreme Court, Governor and Legislators:

Court Year 2015 saw the completion of the evaluation of Directive #04-10: Better Protection for Children-Improved Oversight of Abused and Neglected Children in Foster Care. Presented by the Child Placement Advisory Council (CPAC) chair and vice chair at their annual meeting with the acting administrative director of the courts and the chief justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court, the final report was reviewed and submitted to the CPAC executive board. CPAC is now asking the legislature to pass an amendment to the Child Placement Review (CPR) Act to change the time of the initial review of a child in out-of-home placement from 45 days to at least 60 days. By increasing this time frame it is anticipated that CPR boards will have all of the necessary information from the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) to render meaningful recommendations to the judge. In addition, a working group has been established to revise the forms required of CPR boards to complete for each review.

As reported in the 2014 annual report, the CPR Volunteer Training Manual Committee, composed of Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) staff and CPAC members, conducted a mock review of the revised CPR training manual and the accompanying PowerPoint to members of the CPAC executive board. It is anticipated that the training materials will be sent to the presiding judges for review and endorsement. Mid-2016 is the target for that endorsement. After final approval of the training materials, family division staff will conduct the training in each of the 21 counties. CPR board volunteers going forward will receive the same training, which will enhance their ability to conduct meaningful reviews.

With the assistance of the AOC Information Technology (IT) Unit, a vendor has been selected for the CPAC website. CPAC is providing the vendor with the information, data and design requirements. The CPAC Website Committee will continue to monitor the progress of this initiative and provide requested information to the vendor.

CPAC is pleased to have added two members to its executive board. One, a former deputy attorney general who represented the DCP&P, will be an invaluable asset due to her legal background and knowledge of the child welfare system. The other new member, an employee of Foster and Adoptive Family Services, will provide invaluable insight into the foster care and adoption systems. These two additions to the CPAC executive board will enhance our ability to advocate on behalf of the children of New Jersey.

It is rewarding to see the aforementioned initiatives move forward. CPAC looks forward to continued collaboration with the AOC on initiatives that will enhance the lives of the children of New Jersey.

Lorene S. Wilkerson
Chair, New Jersey Child Placement Advisory Council

CPAC Activities and Accomplishments for Court Year 2015

Training events

The New Jersey Child Placement Advisory Council (CPAC) held one half-day training and an annual full-day training in court year 2014.

On Nov. 6, 2014, CPAC sponsored a half-day training entitled *Child Placement Review (CPR) and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA): Working Together Towards Permanency*. Executive Director of CASA New Jersey, Rita M. Gulden, and Associate Director of CASA of New Jersey Liza M. Kirschenbaum, presented attendees with an overview of the CASA program. Attendees were informed of how a child is assigned a CASA worker by a family court judge. In addition, the types of cases a CPR board may recommend assignment of a CASA worker at the 45 Day Review was explored.

CPAC held its annual training session on May 7, 2015. Entitled *Youth in Crisis: How We Can Help*, the all-day event featured six workshops covering such topics as aging-out youth; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and questioning youth; and group homes, residential treatment centers and therapeutic foster homes. The keynote speaker for the event was Kevin M. Ryan, president and chief executive officer of Covenant House International, which serves homeless, trafficked and sexually exploited youth. CPAC was also honored to have as a guest lunch speaker Assemblywoman Valerie Vanieri Huttie, deputy speaker and human services chair. CPAC recognized national foster care month 2015 by including proclamations from President Barack Obama and Gov. Chris Christie in the program packets.

Evaluation of Directive #04-10

As a result of the completion of the evaluation of Directive #04-10: Better Protection for Children – Improved Oversight of Abused and Neglected Children in Foster Care and its recommendations, two major issues will be addressed in court year 2016. First, a working group was established to review and make suggestions for changes to the 45 Day Review Checklist and the Recommendation to the Judge form. This working group consists of AOC staff, family court staff and the CPAC chair. Changes to the forms will focus on reducing topics on the checklist and revising the “barriers to permanency” section of the recommendation form. Secondly, based on feedback, it was determined

that revising the timeframe for the initial review of children in placement from 45 days to at least 60 days is worth pursuing. To that end, the CPAC vice president will be the lead in engaging the legislature during the 2016 court year to amend the Child Placement Review Act of 1978.

CPR volunteer training manual

The CPR Volunteer Training Manual committee, consisting of AOC staff and CPAC members, completed the training manual and the accompanying PowerPoint presentation. In October 2014, a mock training was presented to members of the CPAC executive board and several AOC staff. The training materials have been referred to the conference of family presiding judges for review. Upon completion, the family practice division staff, in conjunction with identified CPAC staff, will conduct train-the-trainer for Children in Court (CIC) staff.

CPAC website

The AOC IT unit has continued to work with the AOC Purchasing and Property unit to secure a vendor to re-establish CPAC's website presence. CPAC continues to provide the AOC IT Unit the basic information to be included on the website. The AOC has included on the New Jersey Judiciary website a description of CPAC and information regarding CPAC's training events.

Ambassador program

The Ambassador Program executive summary was shared with the presiding judges this past court year. As a result, CPR board volunteers will be recognized for their efforts by CIC judges through informal meetings.

Concerns Identified by CPAC as Requiring Attention in Court Year 2016

Children in out-of-home placement longer than five years

Prior annual reports provided statistical information about children in out-of-home placement longer than five years. The 2014 annual report identified three counties where the percentage of children in out-of-home placement more than five years was significantly greater than other counties. There is some anecdotal information indicating that a child who is in out-of-home placement longer than five years is more likely to remain in foster care. This is an issue that concerns CPAC and one that requires further investigation. Through its seat on the Protection Subcommittee of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse/Neglect, CPAC will pursue establishing a working group to identify why children remain in out-of-home placement more than five years and to develop strategies that will combat system barriers that may be preventing children from finding permanent homes.

Timing of the 45 day review

Feedback from stakeholders in the child welfare system indicates that reviewing a child's placement 45 days after placement out-of-home is not practical. Frequently the DCP&P is not in possession of information and documents currently required at the 45 day review. As a result, CPR boards often lack all of the information on a family needed to make an appropriate recommendation to the judge. To address this issue, CPAC will engage the legislature in proposing an amendment to the CPR Act, which mandates that the initial review of a case be 45 days after the child is placed out-of-home. Changing the 45-day review to a 60-day review will allow for a more comprehensive review. This can only result in better outcomes for children.

CPR Board Activities and Accomplishments for Court Year 2015

CPR board reviews

Statewide, the number of cases reviewed by CPR boards during 45 day reviews decreased from June 2014 to June 2015. During the same period, the number of meetings decreased.

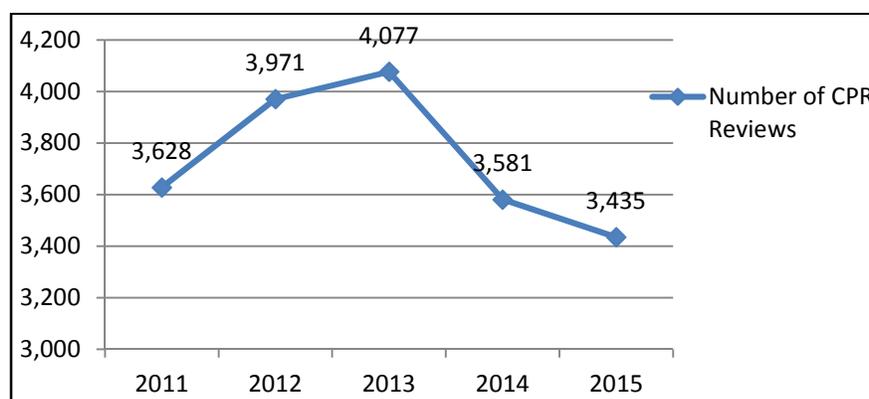
Table 1: Summary of CPR board activities from 2011 through 2015

Court Year	CPR Board Meetings	Reviews
2011	581	3,625
2012	562	3,971
2013	512	4,077
2014	466	3,581
2015	429	3,435

Source: AOC casa8_rpt2.fex. Run 08.03.2015.

The next chart highlights that the sharp decline in reviews began in court year 2013. There is no direct link between the number of reviews and a 2013 change in CPR practices. A mix of complex factors and interconnected events likely contributed to the precipitous slide.

Chart 1: The number of CPR reviews from 2011 through 2015



Source: AOC casa8_rpt2.fex. Run 08.03.2015.

Table 2: The number of CPR board meetings and reviews by county vs 2014

County	2014 CPR Board Meetings	2015 CPR Board Meetings	% Change	2014 Reviews	2015 Reviews	% Change
Atlantic	15	25	+67	153	282	+84
Bergen	22	24	+9	201	172	-14
Burlington	36	31	-14	312	218	-30
Camden	68	61	-10	520	438	-16
Cape May	9	8	-11	75	55	-27
Cumberland	13	11	-16	136	158	+16
Essex	25	22	-12	242	293	+21
Gloucester	12	17	+41	107	159	+49
Hudson	39	32	-18	306	275	-10
Hunterdon	9	4	-55	39	14	-64
Mercer	18	20	+11	229	178	-22
Middlesex	34	22	-35	246	198	-20
Monmouth	41	37	-10	199	207	+4
Morris	14	11	-21	65	51	+22
Ocean	23	22	-4	280	237	-15
Passaic	17	19	+12	126	179	+42
Salem	11	11	0	40	62	+55
Somerset	7	6	-11	39	45	+15
Sussex	17	15	-12	53	30	-43
Union	23	19	-17	161	137	-15
Warren	13	12	-8	52	47	-10
Total	466	429	-8	3,581	3,435	-4%

Source: AOC casa8_rpt2.fex. Run 08.03.2015.

The CPR Act requires every county to have at least one CPR board. The number of boards in each county is based on the number of reviews in the previous year. There should be at least one board for approximately every 200 reviews. Each board must consist of five court-appointed volunteers. The next table shows that most counties, with the exceptions of Burlington, Camden and Ocean, met these requirements for 2015, reflecting the work by court staff to retain and recruit volunteers.

Table 3: Statute requirements vs. 2014 performance

Each county must have at least one CPR board for every 200 reviews held in the prior year and each CPR board must consist of no fewer than five (5) volunteers.

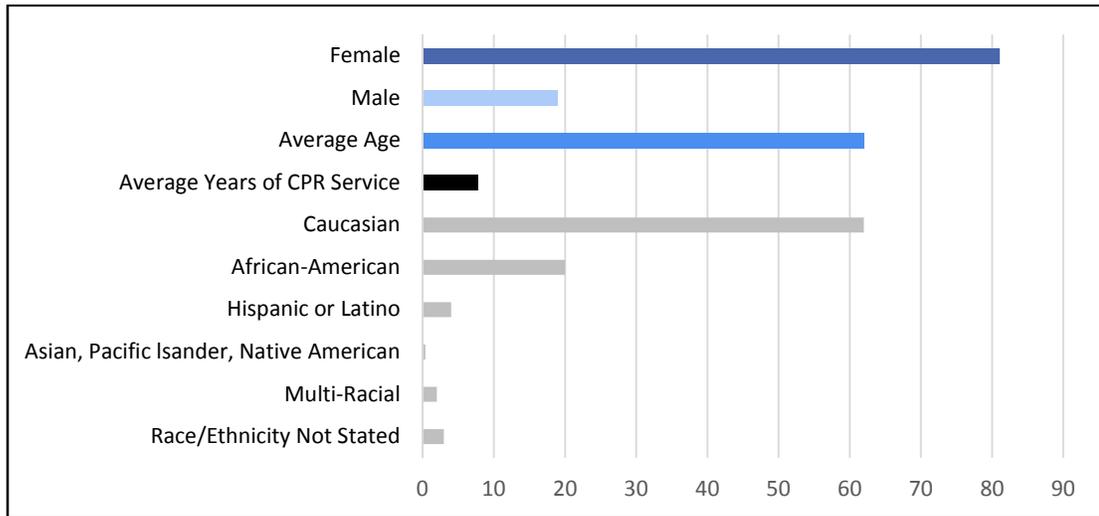
County	Reviews By CPR Boards 2014	Minimum CPR Boards Required 2015	Actual CPR Boards 2015 ^a	Check if Met Mandated Minimum Number of CPR Boards	Minimum CPR Board Volunteers Required 2015	Actual CPR Board Volunteers 2015 ^b	Check if Met Mandated Minimum Number of CPR Volunteers
Atlantic	153	1	2	✓	5	13	✓
Bergen	201	2	2	✓	10	15	✓
Burlington	312	2	1		10	7	
Camden	520	3	2		15	14	
Cape May	75	1	1	✓	5	6	✓
Cumberland	136	1	2	✓	5	13	✓
Essex	242	3	3	✓	15	33	✓
Gloucester	107	1	2	✓	5	9	✓
Hudson	306	2	2	✓	10	15	✓
Hunterdon	39	1	1	✓	5	4	
Mercer	229	1	3	✓	5	22	✓
Middlesex	246	2	2	✓	10	20	✓
Monmouth	199	2	4	✓	10	13	✓
Morris	65	1	1	✓	5	6	✓
Ocean	280	2	1		5	7	✓
Passaic	126	2	2	✓	10	17	✓
Salem	40	1	2	✓	5	11	✓
Somerset	39	1	1	✓	5	9	✓
Sussex	53	1	1	✓	5	5	✓
Union	161	1	2	✓	5	13	✓
Warren	52	1	1	✓	5	4	
Total	3,581	32	38		155	256	

^a Data for this column is collected from CPR Coordinators at the close of court year 2015.

^b Data for this column was collected by the Volunteer Management Information System in November 2015.

The average length of time served by CPR volunteers has steadily increased from 5.7 years in 2011 to 7.8 years in 2015, indicating that more volunteers are remaining in the program. In February 2015 the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics released a report on volunteering in the United States. In 2014, Caucasians volunteered at a higher rate than did African-Americans, Asians and Hispanics. This national finding is consistent with the race and ethnicity data collected on CPR volunteers in 2015 as shown in Chart 2.

Chart 2: The demographics of CPR board volunteers in 2015



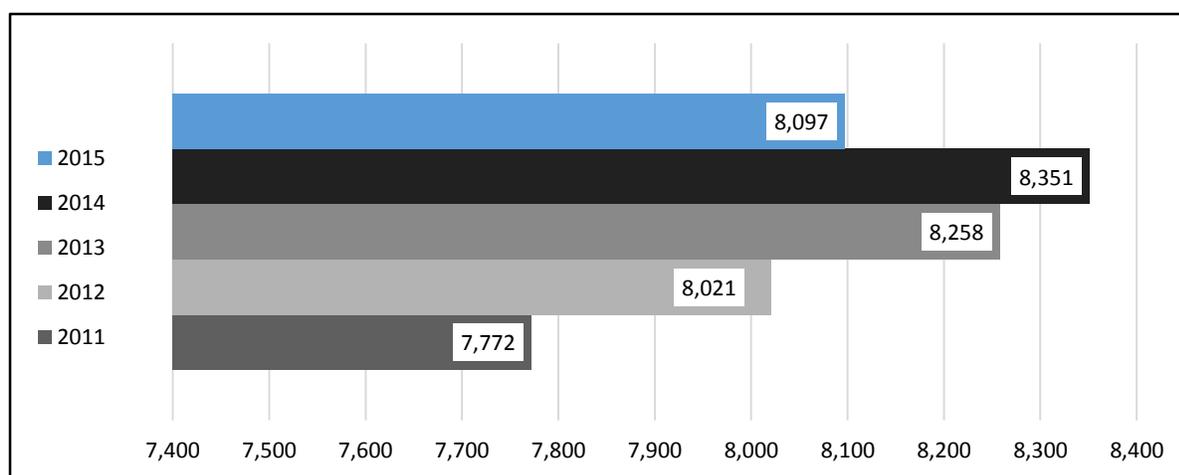
Note: Percentages based on the total number of individuals (256) in the Volunteer Management Information System on Nov. 5, 2015.

Children in Placement (CIP): Statistics, Analyses and Comments

How many CIP are placed

Statewide, less children were in out-of-home placement in 2015, after four successive years of steady increases. It is impossible to extract valid conclusions based on the one year reversal.

Chart 3: The number of children in out-of-home placement on June 30 of each year



Source: AOC Casa3_rpt2.fex. 07.10.15.

Conclusion: The number of children who are in out-of-home placement decreased from 8,351 in 2014, but are still significantly more than in 2011.

Table 4 below shows that the number of new case (FC) filings declined in 2015. There is no identifiable event or reason that would account for this. Likely a set of interrelated factors influenced the findings. The last time the total number dipped below 5,000 was in 2011. To further place the total number of children entering placement in historical context, Table 4 includes data from 1995 and 2005.

Table 4: The number of children who entered placement in 1995, 2005 and 2011 through 2015

Court Year	Number of New Filings	Number of Active Cases
1995	4,378	8,445
2005	5,688	11,872
2011	4,501	7,772
2012	5,501	8,021
2013	5,632	8,258
2014	5,430	8,351
2015	4,920	8,097

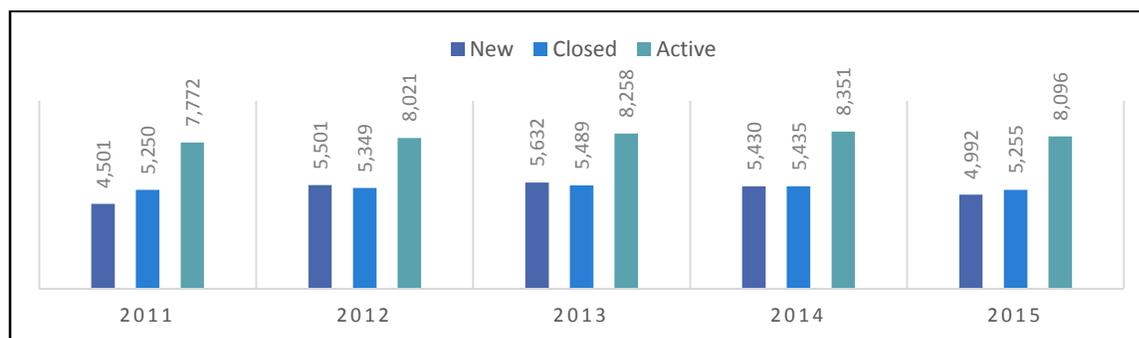
Source: AOC New Filings of FC Dockets. AOC casa9_rpt.fex. Run 7/22/15. MSFCT. Run 2/22/15.

It is necessary to look at the number of children exiting the system to more fully understand how many of the children entering placement are achieving the goal of permanency. Chart 4 on the next page provides this information.

Chart 4: The total number of cases (FC) opened, closed and pending looks at the flow of cases into and out of the system. It depicts the number of cases entering the system, the number of active cases and the number of cases that have been closed at the end of each court year. A child’s case can be closed for reasons that might have nothing to do with the child achieving permanency. For example, the child could have reached the age of 18, or the case might have been transferred to another county.

Chart 4 shows that the gap between new cases, closed cases and active cases has not appreciably changed for at least five years. Nine years of federal oversight, reforms in the DCP&P practice and increased federal and state funding have contributed to significant, measurable improvements in the quality of care to children, youth and families. CPAC commends the division for its continued commitment to performance improvements.

Chart 4: The total number of cases (FC) opened, closed and pending active from 2011 through 2015



Source: AOC New Filings of FC Dockets. AOC casa9_rpt.fex. Run 7/22/15.

Note: Active pending cases include new cases filed.

The following table provides information on how many new cases were opened during the same 2011 through 2015 period by county.

Table 5: Number of new case filings (FC) opened by county from 2011 through 2015

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Up ↑ Down ↓ Flat ↔
Atlantic	181	321	336	295	357	↑
Bergen	206	273	255	230	196	↓
Burlington	199	358	381	438	349	↓
Camden	733	825	852	820	744	↓
Cape May	102	118	88	87	111	↑
Cumberland	201	176	205	195	210	↑
Essex	537	748	687	645	550	↓
Gloucester	194	231	287	260	267	↑
Hudson	454	416	411	445	394	↓
Hunterdon	41	41	46	43	36	↓
Mercer	156	223	301	280	238	↓
Middlesex	241	365	391	358	223	↓
Monmouth	241	258	301	272	271	↓
Morris	120	118	101	99	85	↓
Ocean	151	268	295	288	278	↓
Passaic	263	254	221	193	249	↑
Salem	102	102	85	63	80	↑
Somerset	102	60	80	83	91	↑
Sussex	55	80	92	73	37	↓
Union	173	194	161	185	159	↓
Warren	49	72	56	78	67	↓
Total	4,501	5,501	5,632	5,430	4,992	↓

Source: AOC New Filings of FC Dockets. AOC casa9_rpt.fex. Run 7/22/15.

Conclusion: *The number of children entering placement declined in 2015 for all counties, with the exceptions of Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Passaic, Salem and Somerset, which saw increases. Sussex experienced a significant drop, 51 percent, in 2015.*

Why children are placed

Before any conclusions are made about the circumstances leading to placement of a child out-of-home, it is necessary to know that in New Jersey the legal definition of abuse and neglect includes abandonment (N.J.S.A. 9:6-1, abuse, abandonment, cruelty and neglect of child). Children usually enter placement for more than one reason, such as when a parent simultaneously experiences mental illness and substance abuse.

Table 6 below shows that in 2015 abandonment became the primary reason for placement of a child out-of-home, surpassing abuse/neglect. For at least two decades, abuse/neglect has held the top position, with abandonment first appearing in 2014 in the top five list of why children are removed. Data from the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) does not support that more parents are willfully abandoning their children (www.njsafehaven.org). According to the DCF, from 2000 to January 2014, “38 children have been illegally abandoned, which averages less than three abandoned children per year. This is a more than 60 percent reduction in illegal child abandonment compared to the year before Safe Haven was passed.” The Safe Haven Information Protection Act allows a person to give up an unwanted infant anonymously and without fear of arrest or prosecution as long as the infant has not been abused.

Table 6: The top five reasons why children were placed vs. 1995, 2005 and 2014

Rank	1995	2005	2014	2015
1	Abuse/Neglect	Abuse/Neglect	Abuse/Neglect	Abandonment
2	Parent's Drug/Alcohol	Parent's Drug/Alcohol	Abandonment	Abuse/Neglect
3	Other Parent/Child	Other Parent/Child	Inadequate Housing	Inadequate Housing
4	Child's Behavior	Inadequate Housing	Incarceration	Incarceration
5	Inadequate Housing	Child's Behavior	Parent's Drug/Alcohol	Child's Behavior

Source: AOC Casa6_rpt2.fex. Run 7/22/15.

Table 7: The top reasons why children were placed from 2012 through 2015 provides additional information. It reveals that for the 2012 through 2015 period, the combined total number of children placed for reasons of abandonment and for abuse/neglect has dropped by nearly 50 percent, from 3,531 in 2012 to 1,751 in 2015. This is a significant trend and could be the result of the establishment of a statewide network of Family Success Centers. Funded by the DCF, Family Success Centers serve as "one-stop" centers that provide wrap-around resources and support for families before they find themselves in crisis.

Another downward trend illustrated in Table 7 is the decline of parent's drug/alcohol abuse as the reason for placement. The drop from 1,413 in 2012 to 367 in 2015 could be due in part to the success of the New Jersey Judiciary's voluntary drug court program, which began in the mid-1990s, and the expansion of the Judiciary's mandatory drug court program, which is entering its third year. The New Jersey Substance Abuse Monitoring System (NJ-SAMS) tracks admissions by "level of care" received for alcohol/substance abuse treatment care (*Substance Abuse 2014 Statewide*, New Jersey Department of Human Services, 2015.). NJ-SAMS reported that 13 percent entering treatment in 2014 are involved in a court drug program and nine percent are with a DCP&P case

CPAC is concerned about the availability of affordable and timely treatment for all individuals seeking alcohol and substance abuse treatment, which includes individuals who have successfully completed the drug court program but could remain at risk for relapse. Generally, treatment under the state's drug program lasts from 12 to 24 months (www.judiciary.state.nj.us, drug court brochure). As per the National Institute on Drug Abuse (www.drugabuse.gov), "because drug addiction is typically a chronic disorder characterized by occasional relapses, a short-term, one-time treatment is usually not sufficient. For many, treatment is a long-term process that involves multiple interventions and regular monitoring." While there is no consistent data on the number of individuals in New Jersey waiting for treatment, a recent *Star Ledger* analysis of state and local data on opiate addictions revealed a "troubling relationship between the number of people being treated, the number of people heroin is killing and the number of people unable to find the help they immediately need." (*Dying for help: Treatment options don't meet demand of growing N.J heroin and opiate epidemic*, July 27, 2014). Alternative methods to the 12-step program should also be available.

CPAC does not have access to the racial and ethnicity data the Judiciary collects on drug court program participants. The Judiciary should continuously monitor these programs to ensure that unfair disparities do not exist among minority groups.

In 2015, New Jersey Public Radio (NPR) reported on a recent study on racial disparity in the New Jersey foster care system. Of the 25,713 children who entered foster care in the state between 2009 and 2013, nearly a third did so at least in part because of parental drug use. African-American children were more than twice as likely as white children to enter foster care when drugs are at least one factor. (*When Race and Drugs Intersect*, Gonzalez, 2015). The issue of disproportionality is further addressed in the next section, under *CIC Demographics*.

Table 7: The top reasons why children were placed from 2012 through 2015

Based on the Notices of Placements filed by the DCP&P; there can be several reasons for placement.

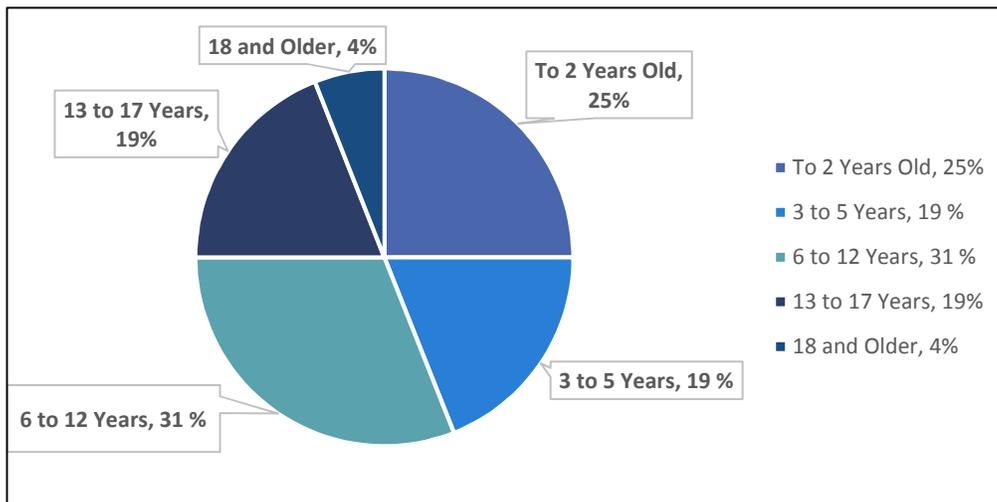
	2012 Total	2013 Total	2014 Total	2015 Total	+/-	% Change
Parent-Related Reasons for Child's Out-of-Home Placement						
Abandonment	729	832	884	890	+6	+7
Abuse/Neglect	2,802	1,913	1,258	861	-397	-46
Death	69	75	82	54	-26	-32
Drug/Alcohol Abuse	1,413	838	491	367	-124	-25
Financial Problems	17	8	5	1	-4	-80
Inadequate Housing	704	668	649	631	-18	-3
Incarceration	463	582	566	508	-58	-12
Mentally Disabled	194	111	63	31	-32	-51
Physically Disabled	31	20	10	8	-2	-20
Surrender of Child	36	39	52	49	-3	-6
Child-Related Reasons for Child's Out- of-Home Placement						
Behavioral Issues	516	498	448	430	-18	-4
Delinquency/FJ Case	109	93	41	30	-9	-41
Disability	58	50	62	50	-12	-10
Drug/Alcohol Abuse	6	7	2	2	0	-0
Other Reasons for Child's Out-of-Home Placement						
Other Reasons	355	219	139	90	-49	-54

Source: AOC Casa6_rpt2.fex. Run 7/22/15.

CIC demographics

Statewide, the majority of New Jersey children who are in out-of-home placement are under 13 years of age.

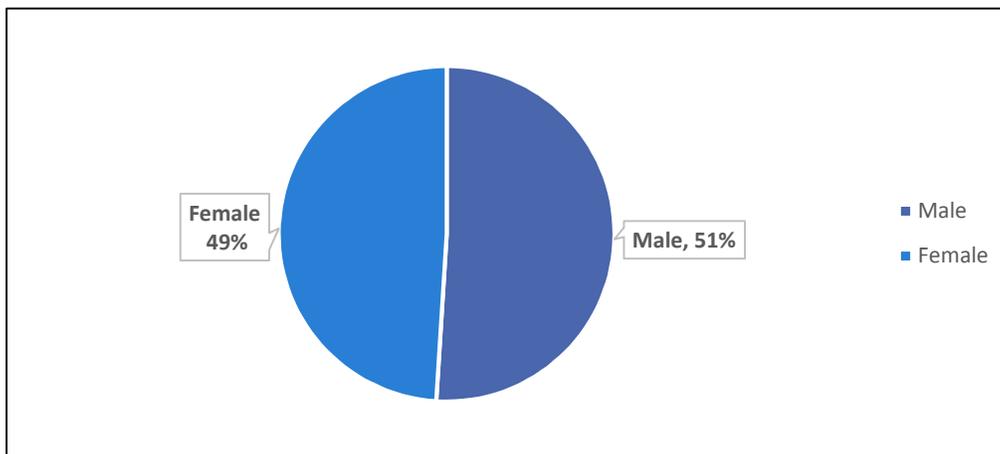
Chart 5: The ages of children in out-of-home placement on June 30, 2015



Source: The New Jersey Department of Children and Families, <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/>

The next chart shows that more than half of the children who enter placement in New Jersey are male.

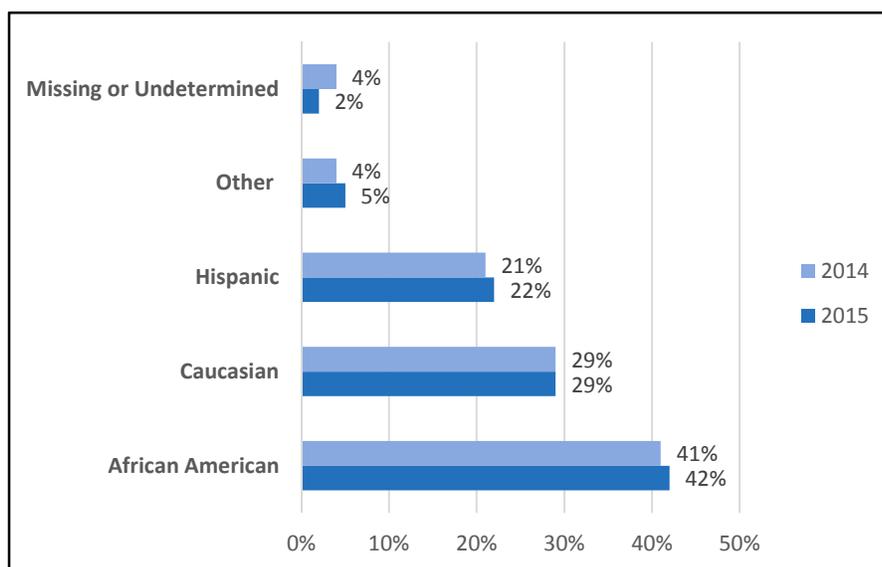
Chart 6: The gender of children in out-of-home placement on June 30, 2015



Source: The New Jersey Department of Children and Families, <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/>

In 2013, CPAC first reported that the gaps between the numbers of African-American and Hispanic children in New Jersey foster care and the number of Caucasian children in foster care, are shrinking as more Caucasian children enter the system. Chart 7 below illustrates that the percentage of children for all race and ethnicity categories deviated little from 2014 through 2015. The largest category, the percentage of African-American children in out-of-home placement, remains nearly double the percentage of Hispanic children. In 2007, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) published a report that identified theories regarding the factors contributing to the disproportionate number of African-American children in foster care. These factors included higher rates of poverty in African-American families, challenges in accessing support services, racial bias in services provided, and difficulties in finding appropriate permanent homes. (African-American Children in Foster Care, www.gao.gov.)

Chart 7: The proportion of African-American, Hispanic, Caucasian and all other races in out-of-home placements on June 30, 2015



Source: The New Jersey Department of Children and Families, <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/>.

Note: Based on a 2015 population of 7,501 children aged 0 to 21 and a 2014 population of 7,660 children aged 0 to 21.

The following table provides information about children ages 0 to 18 in out-of-home placement on June 30, 2015 as captured by the AOC based on information provided by all 21 counties. The table highlights the challenges of developing strategies to address the ongoing issue of disproportionality of minority children and youth in placement and other state systems.

Table 8: The age, gender and race/ethnicity of children in out-of-home placement vs. 2014

Year	Age	Gender	Black	Caucasian	Hispanic	Alaskan Native	Asian/Pacific Island	Native American	Not Stated	Other	Total
2015	<1	F	109	116	11	0	1	0	52	6	295
		M	136	118	8	0	1	0	36	3	302
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
2014	<1	F	126	125	6	0	1	0	57	5	320
		M	125	119	12	0	3	0	54	12	325
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
2015	1	F	162	142	8	0	1	0	44	6	363
		M	155	136	8	0	2	0	51	8	360
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	1	F	126	128	10	0	3	0	77	4	348
		M	133	142	16	0	2	0	83	10	386
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	2	F	130	112	9	0	2	0	46	5	304
		M	145	131	11	0	1	0	41	6	335
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
2014	2	F	129	130	19	0	1	0	57	6	342
		M	125	122	10	0	2	0	69	3	331
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	3	F	119	109	7	0	1	0	28	2	266
		M	113	114	11	0	2	0	35	4	279
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
2014	3	F	97	114	12	0	0	0	40	7	270
		M	99	120	21	0	1	0	46	5	292
		U	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
2015	4	F	88	104	12	0	0	0	19	6	229
		M	89	111	17	0	1	0	31	4	253
		U	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2014	4	F	96	100	15	0	3	0	30	6	250
		M	102	120	13	0	2	0	47	1	285
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	5	F	80	90	16	0	1	0	20	4	211
		M	100	100	9	0	0	0	28	3	240
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	5	F	104	89	8	0	0	0	26	1	227
		M	107	105	18	0	3	0	31	5	269
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The New Jersey Child Placement Advisory Council (CPAC)

Year	Age	Gender	Black	Caucasian	Hispanic	Alaskan Native	Asian/Pacific Island	Native American	Not Stated	Other	Total
2015	6	F	97	78	7	0	0	0	16	1	199
		M	95	101	10	0	1	0	22	3	232
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
2014	6	F	87	95	11	1	0	0	22	4	220
		M	102	96	11	0	0	0	30	0	229
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	7	F	82	76	12	1	0	0	21	5	197
		M	86	77	9	0	1	0	26	1	200
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	7	F	90	96	21	0	0	0	18	1	227
		M	84	94	14	0	1	0	17	3	202
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	8	F	94	92	16	0	1	0	13	2	218
		M	96	80	9	0	0	0	16	1	202
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	8	F	67	58	5	0	2	0	14	1	147
		M	66	75	14	0	0	0	14	1	170
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	9	F	60	61	10	0	0	0	10	0	141
		M	60	84	8	0	0	0	11	2	165
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	9	F	65	60	8	0	0	0	17	3	153
		M	67	66	13	0	1	0	20	2	169
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	10	F	68	59	12	0	0	0	13	2	154
		M	63	65	6	0	1	0	19	0	154
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	10	F	49	49	6	0	0	0	15	0	119
		M	77	56	11	0	1	0	8	2	155
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	11	F	54	61	6	0	0	0	10	0	131
		M	66	56	11	0	0	0	13	0	146
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	11	F	60	53	6	0	1	0	20	0	140
		M	64	35	11	0	1	0	14	1	126
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	12	F	57	54	2	0	1	0	15	0	129
		M	62	40	5	0	0	0	11	0	118
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	12	F	49	53	12	0	1	0	11	2	128
		M	55	34	11	0	1	0	10	0	111
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	13	F	49	50	13	0	1	0	10	2	125

The New Jersey Child Placement Advisory Council (CPAC)

Year	Age	Gender	Black	Caucasian	Hispanic	Alaskan Native	Asian/Pacific Island	Native American	Not Stated	Other	Total
		M	58	39	8	0	2	0	9	0	116
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	13	F	56	48	13	0	0	0	18	0	135
		M	42	36	7	0	0	0	13	3	101
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	14	F	71	51	12	0	1	0	13	1	149
		M	52	42	9	0	0	0	12	2	117
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
2014	14	F	70	46	13	0	0	2	12	3	146
		M	65	47	11	0	0	0	9	1	133
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	15	F	75	51	11	0	0	1	11	2	151
		M	75	39	9	0	1	0	9	0	133
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	15	F	82	53	15	0	0	0	12	2	164
		M	89	51	17	0	0	0	17	1	175
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	16	F	98	59	13	0	1	0	10	3	184
		M	86	50	15	0	0	0	10	1	162
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	16	F	85	53	16	0	1	0	22	5	182
		M	85	52	18	0	0	0	12	1	168
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	17	F	92	57	12	0	2	0	16	3	182
		M	84	54	20	0	1	0	12	0	171
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
2014	17	F	105	59	13	0	1	0	22	2	202
		M	97	62	22	0	2	0	11	2	194
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	18	F	94	38	11	0	1	0	16	1	161
		M	67	51	9	0	2	0	8	0	137
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	18	F	95	41	21	0	2	0	21	0	180
		M	88	38	14	0	0	0	12	0	152
		U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Key: F = Female; M = Male; U = Unknown or Not Documented.

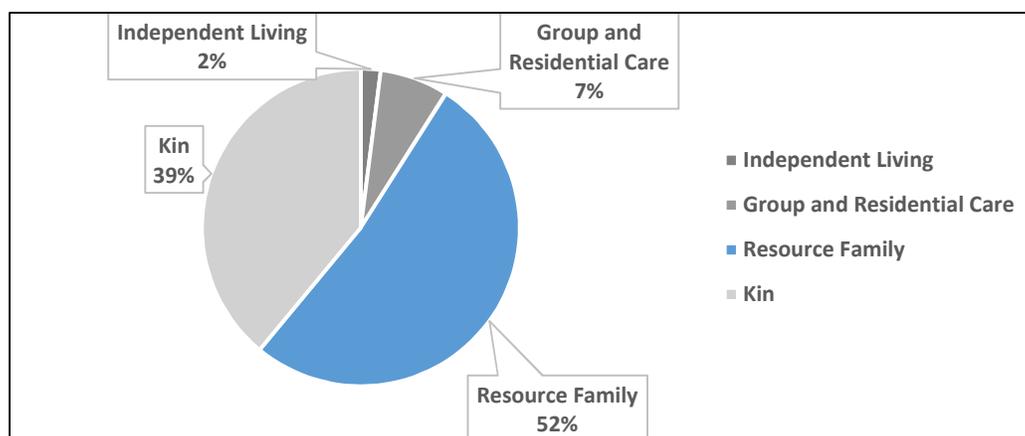
Source: AOC Casa1_rpt2.fex, 07/27/15, 10.22.26

Last year, CPAC called for changes in how the Judiciary reports race, ethnicity and gender. This year, CPAC requests that the legislature provide all branches of government with sufficient funding levels to ensure all legacy systems can conform with the 1997 data collection standards of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (www.whitehouse.gov/omb). While standardizing electronic data collection will not reduce disparities of race, ethnicity and gender, it is central to understanding their causes.

Types of placement

Chart 8 shows that in the majority of cases, the DCP&P is not achieving its goal of kinship placement. The percentage of children who were placed with family members, 39 percent, was less than the percentage placed with resource families, 52 percent, on June 30, 2015. Chart 8 raises the question as to whether the DCP&P could do more to identify potential and appropriate family members. Additional data supports that the DCP&P needs to focus on hastening the licensing of new kinship homes. According to a recent federal monitor report (Progress of the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, January 2015, *Monitoring Period XV Report for Charlie and Nadine H. v. Christie*), “The DCF receives more applications from kinship family homes than non-kinship homes and that those applications take longer to resolve than the non-kinship family home applications...once children are placed with relatives there is not as much incentive for relatives to conform to the rigors of the application process.”

Chart 8: The children under 21 years of age in out-of-home placement by type of placement on June 30, 2015



Source: The New Jersey Department of Children and Families, <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/>.

How many times children are placed

The CPR Act (NJSA 30:4C-53.2) uses the terms “repeated placement” and “placed again” to define a child who has been placed multiple times with a single resource family or multiple resource families, or “as a result of a voluntary placement agreement, released into the custody of the child’s parents or legally responsible guardian at the conclusion of the placement and is once again temporarily removed from the child’s place of residence and placed under the division’s care and supervision.”

Child advocates can use alternative phrasing to describe repeated placements, such as “multiple placements,” “recidivism,” or “a child being replaced.” All refer to the same concept. The New Jersey Judiciary tracks repeated placements by the number of new placement cases (FC) it opens for the same child. The Judiciary opens a new placement case (FC) every time the division files a Notice of Placement to place the minor outside of the home. Refer to Table 7 presented earlier for reasons why the division places a child out of their home and why a child may experience multiple placements. Table 9 below, which provides a data snapshot of the number of placements experienced by children on June 30 for the years 2013 through 2015, indicates lack of progress in attaining placement stability.

Table 9: The average number of placements per child from 2013 through 2015

Court Year	In 1st Placement	In 2nd Placement	In 3rd Placement	In 4th Placement	In 5th Placement	In 6th Placement	In 7th Placement	In 8th Placement
2013	5,971	1,758	376	110	26	9	4	1
2014	6,165	1,691	360	97	24	9	4	0
2015	6,015	1,597	359	85	28	7	4	0

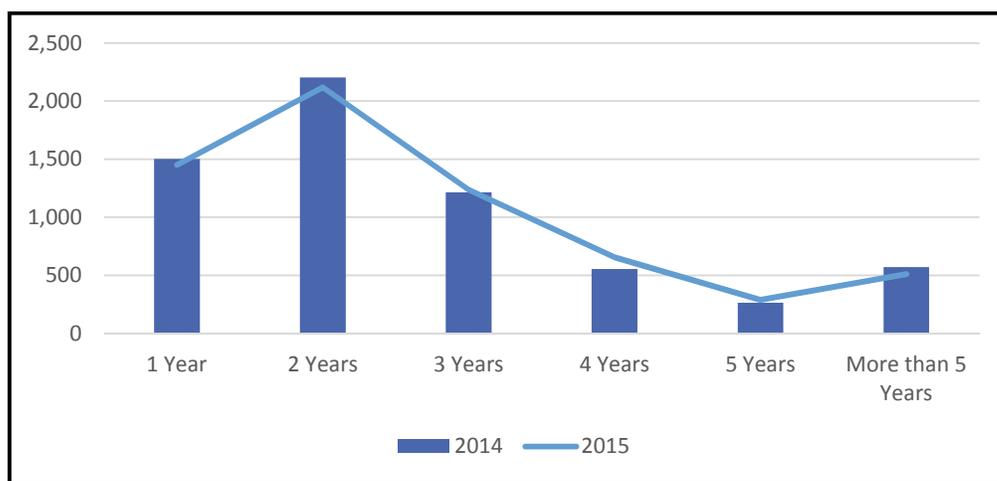
Source: AOC Casa5_rpt2. Run 07/28/2015, 13.17.56

Note: As of June 30 of each year listed. Includes prior placements and current placement.

Number of years spent in out-of-home placement

Chart 9 below and Tables 10 and 11 show that in court year 2015, there was no noticeable improvement in achieving permanency for children who have been in out-of-home placement for more than five years. For CPAC’s comments, refer to *Concerns Identified by CPAC Requiring Attention in Court Year 2016, Children in Out-of-Home Placement Longer than Five Years*.

Chart 9: The average length of time children remained in out-of-home placement vs. 2014



Source: AOC Casa7_rp72.fex 2005, 2014, 2015

Conclusion: The number of children remaining in out-of-home placement drops significantly at two years as the number exiting the system increases.

Table 10: The counties with the highest percentage of children in out-of-home placement for longer than five years

Rank	2012	2013	2014	2015
1st	Essex (16%)	Mercer (14%)	Union (16%)	Union (15%)
2nd	Union (14%)	Union (12%)	Warren (14%)	Warren (14%)
3rd	Mercer (13%)	Essex (12%)	Essex and Mercer (13%)	Essex and Hudson (12%)

Conclusion: Warren County retained its position and Hudson made the 2015 list for the first time as the counties with the highest percentages of children in placement after five years. Mercer Count, 8 percent, dropped off the 2015 report.

Table 11: The average time children ages 0 to 24 years spent in out-of-home placements vs. 2012 through 2014

County and Years	6 Months	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	More than 5 Years	Up ↑ Down ↓ Flat ↔	Children in Placement	Percentage in Placement for More than 5 Years
Atlantic										
2012	129	73	94	63	29	8	28		422	7
2013	100	97	117	67	29	14	22		446	5
2014	85	77	123	62	36	14	14		411	3
2015	133	108	94	59	23	15	10	↓	442	2
Bergen										
2012	103	97	89	52	13	7	27		388	7
2013	89	79	110	47	34	7	23		389	6
2014	108	68	103	67	18	11	19		394	5
2015	88	57	93	60	45	8	17	↓	368	5
Burlington										
2012	150	108	69	49	17	7	36		436	8
2013	151	82	148	39	25	10	30		485	6
2014	162	103	125	91	20	9	21		531	4
2015	126	87	127	79	47	11	18	↓	495	4
Camden										
2012	284	141	169	78	36	17	51		776	7
2013	233	176	182	97	44	19	45		796	6
2014	251	155	190	94	46	15	42		796	5
2015	207	166	200	96	50	25	37	↓	781	5
Cape May										
2012	60	34	43	24	11	5	13		190	7
2013	36	39	65	27	5	6	7		185	4
2014	30	23	59	35	13	2	9		171	5
2015	43	39	37	35	18	5	9	↔	186	5
Cumberland										
2012	67	27	72	27	21	15	18		247	7
2013	90	38	41	41	9	12	20		251	8
2014	71	45	91	31	17	5	22		282	8
2015	74	57	46	50	17	9	16	↓	269	9
Essex										
2012	306	305	302	154	111	53	241		1,472	16
2013	301	285	452	200	95	54	194		1,581	12
2014	270	266	423	278	91	33	162		1,523	11
2015	240	228	371	238	146	54	129	↓	1,406	9

County and Years	6 Months	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	More than 5 Years	Up ↑ Down ↓ Flat ↔	Children in Placement	Percentage in Placement for More than 5 Years
Gloucester										
2012	87	54	71	38	23	16	15		305	5
2013	90	77	86	43	29	16	18		359	5
2014	112	81	95	43	25	16	16		388	4
2015	103	88	129	69	26	16	22	↑	453	5
Hudson										
2012	138	133	195	90	48	21	46		671	7
2013	168	101	140	117	54	23	45		648	7
2014	137	144	173	65	67	33	41		660	6
2015	157	101	174	102	39	37	44	↑	654	7
Hunterdon										
2012	17	12	16	6	4	1	5		61	8
2013	18	11	13	12	3	1	1		59	2
2014	10	15	11	2	0	0	1		39	2
2015	8	9	19	6	0	0	0	↓	42	0
Mercer										
2012	79	57	46	39	21	23	40		305	13
2013	119	73	75	25	20	8	50		370	14
2014	105	75	110	50	8	9	42		399	16
2015	94	61	112	60	35	2	29	↓	393	7
Middlesex										
2012	121	73	60	45	10	16	34		359	9
2013	110	81	82	40	24	4	32		373	9
2014	104	85	109	49	24	16	21		408	5
2015	56	72	115	67	22	15	25	↑	372	7
Monmouth										
2012	103	61	92	34	21	21	40		372	11
2013	113	63	103	60	17	14	37		407	9
2014	112	68	99	53	40	12	33		417	8
2015	82	77	84	57	22	23	28	↓	373	8
Morris										
2012	43	31	56	43	10	4	5		192	3
2013	43	30	32	38	32	5	4		184	2
2014	46	26	49	20	12	19	7		178	4
2015	39	23	43	34	11	6	15	↑	171	9
Ocean										
2012	107	93	72	36	17	8	39		372	10
2013	107	98	132	29	25	10	28		429	7
2014	113	115	134	86	12	9	22		491	4
2015	114	86	143	66	43	3	15	↓	470	9

County and Years	6 Months	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	More than 5 Years	Up ↑ Down ↓ Flat ↔	Children in Placement	Percentage in Placement for More than 5 Years
Passaic										
2012	111	115	126	51	41	18	22		485	5
2013	85	74	117	65	21	17	27		406	7
2014	102	44	87	58	24	17	28		360	8
2015	102	80	86	48	32	12	26	↓	386	7
Salem										
2012	38	25	38	8	3	2	11		125	9
2013	21	20	30	28	3	1	6		109	6
2014	24	15	23	18	19	0	9		106	8
2015	17	16	23	10	6	13	6	↓	91	7
Somerset										
2012	25	16	49	24	14	13	8		149	5
2013	31	31	28	35	17	8	9		159	6
2014	49	10	47	20	27	9	7		169	4
2015	51	16	40	23	13	13	8	↑	164	5
Sussex										
2012	30	15	18	10	2	2	5		82	6
2013	38	18	22	13	4	1	4		100	4
2014	25	7	32	15	3	2	4		88	5
2015	10	11	25	14	8	0	3	↓	71	4
Union										
2012	97	61	103	91	24	20	65		461	14
2013	64	65	93	64	55	10	54		405	13
2014	92	47	96	58	43	29	36		401	9
2015	74	49	114	45	45	16	41	↑	384	11
Warren										
2012	21	33	30	21	14	16	10		145	7
2013	30	12	35	25	7	6	17		132	13
2014	26	29	32	21	11	5	15		139	11
2015	26	18	42	17	8	6	12	↓	129	9
(2012-2015) Total	7,223	6,061	8,241	4,349	2,254	1,093	2,851		32,082	

Source: AOC Casa7_rp72.fex 2015

Conclusion: With the exceptions of Gloucester, Hudson, Middlesex, Morris, Somerset and Union, all counties had fewer numbers or the same numbers of children with more than five years in placement than in court year 2014.

Reasons why CIP cases are closed

The number of case closings decreased in court year 2015. The majority of children in out-of-home placement were returned home or adopted. The decrease in the total number of children returned home could be due to a number of factors, including families being given more time to remedy the circumstances leading to placement. Not reflected in Table 12 are instances when the FC file is closed and replaced with a different FC file for the identical child, which can happen when an aged-out youth who has stopped receiving services decides to opt back in.

CPAC is pleased that the number of children reported as missing declined in 2015. CPAC encourages the division to ensure that compliance with all laws and policies are adhered to by staff.

The number of deaths increased in 2015. CPAC believes that retaining reasonable caseloads will enable caseworkers to spend more time with children and families; thus ensuring that children are being parented appropriately and are safe from harm.

Table 12: How cases (FC) were resolved vs. 2014

Reason Case Closed	CY 2014 Cases Closed	CY 2015 Cases Closed	Change + or -	% Change
Child Reached 18	336	351	+15	+4
Child Died	3	6	+3	+100
Adoption Finalized	1,080	1,063	-17	-2
Placement with Relative Finalized	431	413	-18	-4
Placement with Friend Finalized	18	7	-11	-61
Child got Married	0	1	+1	+100
Child Under Division of Developmental Disabilities	3	3	0	0
Child in Mental Health Facility	2	2	0	0
Child Returned Home	3,113	2,982	-131	-4
Kinship Legal Guardianship Granted	188	217	+29	+15
Child Missing	29	22	-7	-24
Child Transferred to Care Maintenance Organization	20	19	-1	-27
Other	168	123	-45	-27
Child Transferred to Another County	111	84	-27	-24
Child Transferred to Another State	4	1	-3	-75
Total Cases Closed	5,506	5,294	-212	-4%

Source: AOC MSFCFT. 07/22/2015.



**Child Placement Advisory Council
Administrative Office of the Courts
Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex
P.O. Box 983
Trenton, NJ 08625-0983
609-633-2581
www.njcpac.org
njcourts.com/volunteer**