

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Response to
Assembly Budget Committee Follow-Up Questions
Fiscal Year 2012

Assemblyman Greenwald:

- Please provide your comments with respect to the child care center inspection process. Specifically, is the current three-year inspection cycle adequate to ensure the centers are in compliance with the regulations? Should additional inspections be required for certain types of child care centers or with centers that have a history of problems?

Response: The Department of Children and Families' Office of Licensing (OOL) conducts a licensing renewal and inspection every three years consistent with the licensing cycle. Should the OOL cite violations during the renewal inspection it conducts reinspections at the center until all the violations are abated. Additionally, the OOL conducts complaint investigations and other types of inspections based on requests from the centers such as changes in sponsorship or increases in the licensed capacity. These circumstances increase the amount of inspections at centers during the three year cycle. The OOL also conducts more frequent inspections at centers in which a more significant concern has been identified, particularly where a complaint or renewal inspection triggers an enforcement action.

Currently, DCF believes that the existing licensing cycle, renewal inspections, and enforcement of child care center regulations provide appropriate supervision of our child care centers.

- Please provide a written response to the specific concerns that the Assembly Human Services Committee has raised concerning the in-home service reduction implemented by the department.

Response: See Attached letter

Assemblyman Chiusano:

- Please provide information as to the number of finalized adoptions realized by the department over the past several years.

Response: The Division of Youth and Family Services finalized adoptions is as follows:

- Calendar Year 2010: 1,171 Adoptions
- Calendar Year 2009: 1,418 Adoptions
- Calendar Year 2008: 1,374 Adoptions
- Calendar Year 2007: 1,540 Adoptions
- Calendar Year 2006: 1,402 Adoptions

The decrease in adoptions in Calendar Year 2010 is based on the decreasing number of children who are legally free for adoption. This is due to the improvements in case practice which allows more children to remain safely in their homes and the timely implementation of permanency planning which allows children who must go into foster care to be reunified with their birth families.

These statistics are available and periodically updated on the statistics and data page of the Department's website, <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/>.

Assemblyman Schaer:

- Please provide information as to the organizations the department currently works with in attempting to recruit foster families for children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Response: It is important to emphasize that DYFS has been most successful in keeping children within familiar ethnic, religious and cultural setting by significantly expanding its use of kinship homes thereby placing children directly with close family and friends with whom they identify. However, through contracts and DYFS local office staff, DYFS continues to develop resource homes to support children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds when kinship homes are not an option.

DYFS currently contracts with organizations to recruit foster families for children who may need out of home placement. Unless otherwise noted, all of these organizations listed below focus on establishing homes that meet the diverse populations served by DYFS. Two of these organizations, Kean University and Spanish Speaking Peoples Community Center focus on the recruitment of Spanish speaking resource homes.

Agency	County Served	Special Populations
Atlantic Behavioral Health	Atlantic, Cape May, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Salem	
Babyland Family of Services, Inc.	Essex	
Calvary Baptist Community Center	Passaic (Paterson)	Focus on recruiting specialized homes for siblings, medically fragile children, and teenagers
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen	Essex, Middlesex, Union	
Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc.	Statewide	Focus on recruiting specialized homes for medically fragile children
The Children's Home Society of NJ	Statewide	Focus on recruiting specialized homes for medically fragile children; pregnant adolescents or adolescents with children
Churches In Cooperation, Inc.	Essex and Union	
Family Intervention Services	Various, mostly Essex	
Family Service Bureau of Newark	Essex	
Family Services of Burlington County	Statewide	
Harvest of Hope Family Service Network	Statewide	
Hispanic Information Center	Passaic, Hudson	Focus on recruiting homes for children with extreme behaviors.
Independence: A Family of Services	Essex	
Just Babies, LLC.	Statewide	
Kean University	Essex, Hudson, and Union	Assists with recruiting Spanish speaking resource families
Lutheran Social Ministries	Essex and Union	
Plainfield Area YMCA	Union	
Robertson Resource Center	Union	
The Spanish Speaking People's Community Center	Cumberland	Assists with recruiting Spanish speaking resource families
Tipelin, Marsha, LCSW	Hunterdon, Somerset, Warren	
Tri-City Peoples Corporation	Essex	Focus on recruiting therapeutic homes and homes for adolescents and infants
Youth Consultation Service	Essex, Union, Bergen, Passaic, Hudson, Morris, Sussex, Warren	

In addition, DYFS Local Office staff are responsible for recruitment of resource homes that will meet their needs for children that are in the neighborhoods and communities where our children reside. This includes the recruitment and retention of resource homes for underserved religious, ethnic, or racial groups, as well as other underserved populations such as adolescents, pregnant teens, teens with children, medically fragile children, and particularly large sibling groups.

One example is our ongoing efforts to engage the Muslim Community. We have met with the NJ Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR). Executive Staff from both the Department and DYFS attended cultural sensitivity training provided by CAIR. We have arranged for the DYFS Resource Development Specialists and Resource Home Recruiters from Passaic County to present at the two larger mosques located in Passaic. Their recruiters are in the process of planning introductory mailers to be sent to local Islamic Centers within their area.

Another example is our ongoing efforts to expand our pool of Orthodox resource homes. Department Executive Staff have met numerous times with Lakewood Orthodox religious leaders, and facilitated meetings between these leaders and the DYFS leadership in Ocean County. Additionally, in March 2011, the Ocean County Local Office published an advertisement for resource families in a local newspaper circulated in the Lakewood Orthodox Jewish community. Upcoming events are also planned with the Congregation Beth Hztivah in Summit, New Jersey.