

Family Court 2014 Annual Report

Superior Court of the District of Columbia



Honorable Lee F. Satterfield

Chief Judge

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the enactment of the District of Columbia Family Court Act of 2001, Pub.L. 107-114 (D.C. Official Code, 2001 Ed. § 11-1101 *et seq.*), the Family Court has achieved many of the goals set forth in its Family Court Transition Plan submitted to the President and Congress on April 5, 2002. The following summarizes some of the measures, aimed at improving services for children and families, taken by the Family Court in 2014 in its continued efforts to achieve each goal.

- **Make child safety and prompt permanency the primary considerations in decisions involving children.**
 - Continued to track and monitor key performance measures throughout the Family Court including compliance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)¹ and the performance measures in the *Toolkit for Court Performance Measures in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*.
 - Implemented a comprehensive case management and scheduling plan for all neglect cases in the Family Court. The Procedures Memorandum is designed to ensure the most expeditious disposition of cases brought before the court, while providing fairness and due process to the parties, to promote the use of best practices in all phases of court involvement, and to achieve permanency for all children before the court in as timely a manner as possible.
 - Continued development of a handbook and video for fathers involved in child welfare or child support cases in the D.C. Family Court. The handbook is designed to help men understand their rights and responsibilities, and to navigate the court system.
 - Redesigned the Family Treatment Court program to more closely align with the current continuum of substance abuse services in the District of Columbia. The most notable shift is the movement away from a solely residential substance abuse model for mothers and children to one that is based on an individual assessment of need that includes intensive out-patient treatment and provides services to fathers.
 - Issued an Administrative Order establishing timelines for the resolution of motions and entry of written findings of fact and conclusions of law in neglect, adoption and termination of parental rights cases.
- **Provide early intervention and diversion opportunities for juveniles charged with offenses to enhance rehabilitation and promote public safety.**
 - Coordinated with the District of Columbia's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), other juvenile justice, public schools, and public chartered school stakeholders to ensure appropriate cases were brought before the

¹ "ASFA" refers to the federal statute P.L.105-89 unless otherwise specified.

judiciary and the needs of the youth and families for whom cases were brought forward were met.

- Developed in each quadrant of the city a satellite or Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) Center maintained by the Family Court Social Services Division (Court Social Services or “CSSD”). The BARJ centers provide a detention alternative for medium to high-risk juveniles awaiting trial, as well as juveniles who have violated probation, to receive afterschool services in a structured community-based environment which facilitates family support and involvement.
- Began large-scale screening of youth, under the supervision of Court Social Services, for human-trafficking and exploitation, to address a growing area of concern for the community. In April, during the D.C. Public Schools Spring Break, the court collaborated with other juvenile justice agencies to provide youth with a variety of strengths-based, pro-social activities to encourage them to stay out of trouble; CSSD also participated in supervising youth at several high schools, which reduces crime on school campuses. During the summer, the court joined other agencies in additional curfew checks and monitoring of youth.
- Convened a working group referred to as the “JM-15 Workgroup” to improve the juvenile intake and arraignment process. The group includes Family Court judges and staff as well as representatives from the D.C. Office of the Attorney General (OAG), the Public Defender Service (PDS), the D.C. Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS), and the U.S. Marshals Service.
- Collaborated with the DYRS to improve and monitor community-based Family Reunification Homes (shelter homes) designed to house pre-trial and pre-disposition youth.
- **Assign and retain well-trained and highly motivated judicial officers.**
 - Continued to promote the participation of Family Court judicial officers in national training programs on issues relating to children and families. Such programs have included courses sponsored by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ), the National Judicial College, the American Bar Association’s National Conference on Children and the Law, and the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare.
 - Conducted mandatory monthly luncheon trainings on Cyber Bullying, Urgent Care Services in the District of Columbia, “A Home Within” therapy services for youth in foster care, Unaccompanied Refugee Minors in Neglect System, and the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act - UCCJEA.
 - Hosted the Family Court’s 11th Annual Interdisciplinary Conference entitled “Preventing Teen Pregnancy: Systems Collaboration.” The conference provided an overview of current services available to support teen parents in foster care. In addition, it discussed methods of preventing teen pregnancy and helping teen parents take care of their children while still achieving their educational and career goals and avoiding a second pregnancy.

- Participated in the 5th Annual Juvenile Justice Summit held in September 2014. The theme for the Summit was “Transforming Youth, Families, and the Juvenile Justice System to Build a Stronger and Healthier Community.”
- Conducted the annual in-service training on Recent Developments in Family Law and Recently Enacted Legislation Affecting Family Court, Sensible Steps to Enhance Your Personal Security and That of Your Family, A View from the D.C. Court of Appeals, Making the Record and Writing Findings, Family Court Case Law and Family Court Performance Standards.
- **Promote Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).**
 - Provided ongoing training for Multi-Door’s existing corps of mediators in both the Child Protection and Family Mediation programs, as part of ensuring a continued high level of proficiency.
 - Launched the study *Intimate Partner Violence and Custody Decisions: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Outcomes from Family Court, Shuttle Mediation, and Video-Conferencing Mediation* in September 2014. The three year study grew out of a need to accommodate cases that are typically denied for mediation due to intimate partner violence/abuse (IPV/A). The Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division’s Family ADR Program partnered with a team of researchers from Indiana University and the University of Arizona to conduct a study that will assess the best method to address IPV/A in domestic relations cases referred for mediation.
 - Participated in court and community-based programs designed to increase awareness about the role of mediation in resolving conflicts. Multi-Door staff participated in the Government Pro Bono Fair hosted by the Department of Justice in April 2014 where they shared information on the various opportunities for pro bono work in the Multi-Door Division. In May, staff participated in the Mini Taste of the Courts, an event created primarily to help court employees gain a fuller understanding of the work of the court. Both opportunities provided Multi-Door an avenue to promote its programs and services to the community. In October 2014, Multi-Door hosted an interactive informational booth and distributed brochures and handouts about the various ADR services offered by the Division in celebration of Conflict Resolution Day. This day is set aside to promote awareness of ADR and to educate the public about mediation and other creative, peaceful means of resolving conflict.
- **Use technology effectively to track cases of children and families.**
 - Continued development of Family Court Dashboard to provide meaningful information and analysis to judicial, managerial, and operational staff for more effective decision-making.
 - Upgraded the court’s ten-year-old interface with the District’s Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) that exchanges data on scheduled events and alerts CFSA social workers of upcoming court hearings.

- Implemented a computerized intake system in the Marriage Bureau which enables customers, upon arrival, to electronically sign in for services. The information then appears on the clerks' computer screens and customers are called in turn. Important data such as wait times, office efficiency, and customer needs are collected by the system, enabling the Bureau to monitor its performance and improve customers' experiences.
 - Implemented a new customer intake system in the Family Court Central Intake Center. In the new system, customers are greeted upon arrival by a deputy clerk who collects their information and assesses their needs. This process should reduce wait times and streamline customer service.
- **Encourage and promote collaboration with the community and community organizations.**
 - Continued to meet regularly with stakeholders and participated on numerous committees of organizations serving children and families, including the Family Court Implementation Committee, the Abuse and Neglect Subcommittee, Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI), the Domestic Relations Subcommittee and the Juvenile Intake and Arraignment workgroup.
 - Continued assessment of the recommendations from the D.C. Bar Family Law Task Force and the D.C. Bar Board of Governors to expand access to justice and improve the administration of justice in Family Court for pro se litigants involved in domestic relations and paternity and child support cases. Many of the recommendations have been implemented.
 - Worked collaboratively with the DYRS and MPD to facilitate a third public safety forum for high-risk youth.
 - Collaborated with the Family Law bar, Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, the D.C. Bar Pro Bono program, Neighborhood Legal Services program, Bread for the City and others to develop a revised case management plan for Domestic Relations cases.
 - Participated in the Public Defender Service's annually sponsored "Community Reentry and Expungement Summit." Participants learned about reentry support services available in D.C. including the work of the Self-Help Center and the kinds of services it provides.
- **Provide a family friendly environment by ensuring materials and services are understandable and accessible.**
 - Completed development of an informational video for families with child abuse and neglect cases. The video is designed to explain the court process, the persons involved in neglect proceedings, the timeframe for addressing issues in neglect cases, as well as possible outcomes for children and families. The video is available in English and Spanish on the court's website.

- Published online and in paper, the “Handbook for People who Represent themselves in Divorce, Custody, and Child Support Cases”. The handbook provides basic information about divorce, custody, and child support cases in the Domestic Relations Branch of the Family Court of the District of Columbia. Further, it explains some of the basic rights and responsibilities of those who choose to represent themselves in such a case. It also contains information about other legal resources available to parties in such cases, including the Family Court Self-Help Center, a free, walk-in clinic located in the courthouse that provides assistance to self-represented parties in their family law cases.
- Updated the Family Court calendar distributed to parties involved in abuse and neglect cases. This calendar which is produced annually was designed to help families understand the court process while offering them a tool to help keep track of court hearings, appointments for them and their children, and other important dates. It includes an overview of the court process, family court terminology, court-room etiquette, and community resources available to assist them in meeting their family’s needs.
- Commenced development of a parent handbook to educate parents about the process in juvenile delinquency cases from intake and arraignment to disposition and post-disposition.

We continue to implement new initiatives and sustain past initiatives to better serve children and families in our court system.

INTRODUCTION

The District of Columbia Family Court Act of 2001, Pub.L. 107-114 (D.C. Official Code, 2001 Ed. § 11-1101 *et seq.*, hereinafter the “Family Court Act” or “Act”) requires that the Chief Judge of the Superior Court submit to the President and Congress an annual report on the activities of the Family Court. The report, summarizing activities of the Family Court during 2014, must include the following:

- (1) The Chief Judge’s assessment of the productivity and success of the use of alternative dispute resolution (see pages 16-21).
- (2) Goals and timetables as required by the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 to improve the Family Court’s performance (see pages 32-40).
- (3) Information on the extent to which the Family Court met deadlines and standards applicable under Federal and District of Columbia law to review and dispose of actions and proceedings under the Family Court’s jurisdiction during the year (see pages 21-26).
- (4) Information on the progress made in establishing locations and appropriate space for the Family Court (see pages 12-16).
- (5) Information on factors not under the Family Court control which interfere with or prevent the Family Court from carrying out its responsibilities in the most efficient manner possible (see pages 98-100).
- (6) Information on: (a) the number of judges serving on the Family Court as of December 31, 2014; (b) how long each such judge has served on the Family Court; (c) the number of cases retained outside the Family Court; (d) the number of reassignments to and from the Family Court; and (e) the ability to recruit qualified sitting judges to serve on the Family Court (see pages 3-7).
- (7) An analysis of the Family Court’s efficiency and effectiveness in managing its caseload during the year, including an analysis of the time required to dispose of actions and proceedings among the various categories of Family Court jurisdiction, as prescribed by applicable law and best practices (see pages 63-98).
- (8) A proposed remedial plan of action if the Family Court failed to meet the deadlines, standards, and outcome measures prescribed by such laws or practices (see pages 98-100).

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives outlined in our Transition Plan continue to guide our mission as a Family Court.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Family Court of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia is to protect and support children brought before it, strengthen families in trouble, provide permanency for children and decide disputes involving families fairly and expeditiously while treating all parties with dignity and respect.

Goals and Objectives

The Family Court, in consultation with the Family Court Implementation Committee, established the following goals and objectives to ensure that the court's mission is achieved. They remained the goals and objectives for continued improvement in 2014.

1. Make child safety and prompt permanency the primary considerations in decisions involving children.
2. Provide early intervention and diversion opportunities for juveniles charged with offenses to enhance rehabilitation and promote public safety.
3. Appoint and retain well trained and highly motivated judicial and non-judicial personnel by providing education on issues relating to children and families and creating work assignments that are diverse and rewarding for Family Court judicial officers and staff.
4. Promote the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in appropriate cases involving children and families to resolve disputes in a non-adversarial manner and with the most effective means.
5. Use technology to ensure the effective tracking of cases of families and children; identification of all cases under the jurisdiction of the Family Court that are related to a family or child and any related cases of household members; communication between the court and the related protective and social service systems; collection, analysis and reporting of information relating to court performance and the timely processing and disposition of cases.

6. Encourage and promote collaboration with the community and community organizations that provide services to children and families served by the Family Court.
7. Provide a family-friendly environment by ensuring that materials and services are understandable and accessible to those being served and that the waiting areas for families and children are comfortable and safe.

JUDICIAL RESOURCES IN THE FAMILY COURT

On January 1, 2015, the Family Court consisted of 14 associate judges and 14 magistrate judges, nine of whom are assigned to abuse and neglect caseloads. One additional associate judge was awaiting confirmation.

Length of Term on Family Court

In December 2012, Public Law 112-229, the D.C. Courts and Public Defender Service Act of 2011 became effective. Section 4 of the law amends D.C. Code § 11-908A to reduce the term of current and future Family Court associate judges from five years to three. Public Law 112-229 established a three year requirement for all judges in the Family Court. The following are the commencement dates of associate judges currently assigned to the Family Court. The names of associate judges who continue to serve in the Family Court beyond the minimum required term have been marked in bold.

<u>Associate Judges</u>	<u>Commencement Date</u>	
Judge Dalton	August	2008
Judge Puig-Lugo	January	2009
Judge Smith	August	2010
Judge Raffinan	January	2011
Judge DiToro	October	2011
Judge Rigsby	January	2012
Judge Dayson	April	2012
Judge Krauthamer	January	2013
Judge Knowles	January	2013
Judge Pan	January	2013
Judge Epstein	January	2014

Judge Pasichow	January	2014
Judge Iscoe	January	2015

The following are the commencement dates of magistrate judges currently assigned to the Family Court:

<u>Magistrate Judges</u>	<u>Commencement Date</u>	
Magistrate Judge Gray	April	2002
Magistrate Judge Johnson	April	2002
Magistrate Judge Breslow	October	2002
Magistrate Judge Fentress	October	2002
Magistrate Judge Albert	January	2006
Magistrate Judge Parker	January	2006
Magistrate Judge Rook	October	2006
Magistrate Judge Melendez	January	2008
Magistrate Judge Arthur	January	2011
Magistrate Judge Nolan	January	2011
Magistrate Judge Seoane-Lopez	August	2012
Magistrate Judge Rohr	October	2012
Magistrate Judge Staples	January	2014
Magistrate Judge Epps	January	2015

Reassignments to and from Family Court:

The Chief Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia made judicial assignments for calendar year 2015 in November 2014. Those assignments, which encompassed changes in Family Court judicial staff, became effective on January 1, 2015. As part of the reassignment, Associate Judge Irving left the Family Court. He was assigned to another division in the Superior Court. In addition, Magistrate Judge Harnett retired.

Associate Judge Iscoe and Magistrate Judge Epps began their tenure in the Family Court. Magistrate Judge Nooter is awaiting Senate confirmation before assuming a position as an associate judge. All newly assigned judicial officers met the

educational and training standards required for service in the Family Court. In addition, a pre-service training for newly assigned judicial officers was held in December 2014.

Detailed below is a brief description of the education and training experience of judicial officers newly assigned to the Family Court:

Judge Iscoe

Judge Craig Iscoe was appointed an associate judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia in 2003. He was born and raised in Austin, Texas, where he attended the Austin public schools. He graduated with High Honors from the University of Texas in 1974. He received his law degree from Stanford Law School in 1978 and Master of Laws from Georgetown in 1979.

Following law school, Judge Iscoe began a fellowship at Georgetown University Law Center's Institute for Public Representation. He later joined the Federal Trade Commission, where he worked on cigarette advertising issues and then became an Assistant to the Director of the FTC's Bureau of Advertising Practices. In 1982, Judge Iscoe joined the law firm Arent Fox, working on communications issues and general litigation.

Judge Iscoe became an Assistant United States Attorney in 1984 after a semester as a Visiting Professor at Georgetown. At the U.S. Attorney's Office, he tried a wide variety of criminal cases in Superior Court, such as armed robbery, drug distribution, and homicide.

Judge Iscoe served as an Assistant Professor at Vanderbilt Law School for a year, directing the Juvenile Law Clinic and the Trial Practice program. In 1991, he returned to

the U.S. Attorney's Office, where he handled several significant public corruption, national security, and white collar cases.

Judge Iscoe has served as an adjunct professor at Georgetown, teaching Trial Practice and Professional Responsibility and has taught at various programs for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. In addition, he writes an annual summary of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. Judge Iscoe is a Master in the Edward Bennett Williams Inn of Court.

Diana H. Epps

Judge Epps was sworn in as a magistrate judge on September 7, 2003 and assigned to the Family Court in January 2004. She served as a magistrate judge in the Family Court overseeing child support matters until December 31, 2005, when she transferred to the Domestic Violence Unit. Upon her return to the Family Court in January 2007, she was reassigned to a child support calendar.

Prior to her appointment as a magistrate judge, she served as an attorney with the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia for 12 years. In that capacity, she prosecuted countless violent offenders. Prior to joining the United States Attorney's Office, Magistrate Judge Epps worked for the Office of the Corporation Counsel in the Juvenile Section. While there, in addition to prosecuting some of the most violent juvenile offenders, she volunteered as a mentor-tutor to local high school students and served on a city-wide multi-agency committee whose goal was to design and develop alternative community-based programs for the District's juvenile offenders. Judge Epps received her B.A. degree from Cornell University and her J.D. from the Faculty of Law and Jurisprudence at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

The ability to recruit qualified sitting judges to serve on Family Court

Since its inception, the Family Court has successfully recruited qualified judges to serve on the Family Court. Recruitment efforts were aided by the passage of Public Law 112-229 in 2012, which reduced the term of current and future Family Court associate judges from five years to three. As required by the Act, all associate judges currently serving in the Family Court volunteered to serve on the court. As the terms of associate judges currently assigned to the Family Court expire, the court anticipates that some may choose to extend their terms, as did four whose terms expired in 2014. Based on the term of service required, six associate judges, including the presiding and deputy presiding judges, are eligible to transfer out of the Family Court at the end of 2015. A two-fold process has been implemented to replace those judges who choose to transfer out. First, there is an ongoing process to identify and recruit associate judges interested in serving on the Family Court, who have the requisite educational and training experience required by the Act. Second, Superior Court associate judges who are interested in serving but do not have the requisite experience or training required by the Family Court Act are provided the opportunity to participate in a quarterly training program developed by the Presiding Judge. The training is designed to ensure that these judges have the knowledge and skills required to serve in the Family Court.

Given the overwhelming response from the bar for the magistrate judge positions previously advertised, no recruitment difficulties are envisioned for future magistrate judge vacancies.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The Chief Judge of the Superior Court and the Presiding and Deputy Presiding Judges of the Family Court, in consultation with the Superior Court's Judicial Education Committee, develop and provide training for Family Court judicial staff through the Training and Education Subcommittee of the Family Court Implementation Committee. This interdisciplinary committee consists of judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, social workers, psychologists, and other experts in the area of child welfare.

Family Court judicial officers took advantage of a number of training opportunities in 2014. In December 2014, all Family Court judicial officers participated in an extensive three-day training program updating them on current substantive family law practice and new procedures in Family Court. In addition, judicial officers new to the Family Court and judicial officers changing calendars participated in a mandatory in-service training on their respective calendars. Family Court judicial officers also participated in trainings sponsored by organizations outside the Family Court such as: the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and the annual conferences of the American Bar Association, the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, and the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative Juvenile Justice System Forum. In addition to participating in educational and training opportunities, a number of Family Court judicial officers provided their expertise on family court related matters as trainers, presenters or panelists in 2014.

In 2014, the Presiding Judge convened weekly lunch meetings and mandatory monthly meetings for Family Court judicial officers to discuss issues involving family court cases and to hear from guest speakers on a variety of relevant topics. Family Court

judges also participated in several multi-disciplinary and collaborative trainings with child welfare and juvenile justice stakeholders on areas of mutual concern.

The 2014 Annual Family Court Interdisciplinary Training entitled “Preventing Teen Pregnancy: Systems Collaboration” was held on April 10, 2014. The conference provided an overview of current services available to support teen parents in foster care. It discussed methods of preventing teen pregnancy and helping teen parents take care of their children while still achieving their educational and career goals and avoiding a second pregnancy.

In addition to the annual training, the Training and Education Subcommittee has established a training series on topics related to the Family Court for judicial officers and the other stakeholders in the child welfare system. The seminars were well attended from all sectors relating to family law practice. The 2014 seminars included:

- The New DSM V: What’s Changed and How Does It Affect Your Clients?
- What You Need to Know About Truancy and the Court
- Multi-Jurisdictional Issues in Family Court

The Family Court continues to promote and encourage participation in cross-training and, in collaboration with others, conducts periodic seminars and workshops. The Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect Branch (CCAN) of the Family Court, which oversees the assignment of attorneys in child welfare cases, conducts training for new child abuse and neglect attorneys, holds an annual two-day Neglect Practice Institute, and facilitates a brown bag lunch series on topics of importance in child abuse and neglect practice. The series employs the skills of a number of stakeholders involved in the child welfare system and is designed to be interdisciplinary in nature. Topics covered in 2014 included:

- International Aspects of Neglect Cases: Immigration Issues for Parents and GALs
- Everything You Need to Know About the CFSA RED Team Process
- Crafting a Stipulation in Cases with Criminal Implications
- Adoption and Guardianship Subsidies
- A Conversation with the D.C. Ombudsman for Public Education
- CFSA Financial Literacy Program for Foster Youth
- Everything You Need to Know About Legal, Expert, DNA and other Vouchers
- CFSA Information for the CCAN Bar: Pre-Removal Legal Services
- CFSA Post Permanency Services and Accessing Mental Health Services
- A Conversation with Youth from the Young Women's Project
- Parent/Foster Parent Icebreakers and Other FAPAC Programs
- Ethics for Parent Attorneys
- Obtaining Records and Other Information from Children's and Other Hospitals
- The Assessment Center: Mental Health Evaluations
- Using Investigators in CCAN Cases
- New Pre-Trial Procedures
- Interactive Evaluations and Attachment Studies
- Special Education Training: Litigation Strategies for Due Process Hearings
- Annual Case Law Update

Children's Law Center Training

- CFSA's Office of Youth Empowerment presentation on Pre-College Services and updates to the Foster Club Toolkit.
- CCAN Trial Skills Training including Objections, Hearsay, Impeachment, Cross Examination, and Child Witness Issues.
- Ethical Representation of Clients with Mental Health Issues and Diminished Capacity.

Family Court non-judicial staff participated in a variety of training programs in 2014. Some of the topics covered included building empathy for a better customer service experience, conflict management and resolution, high impact decision-making skills, customer service, making the service connection, driving innovation, quality control and error reduction in case filings, managing difficult conversations and learning how to discuss what matters most in the workplace. These educational opportunities focused on a variety of topics, all with the goal of moving the court toward improved

outcomes for children and families. In addition, Family Court non-judicial staff participated in training opportunities sponsored by organizations outside the court including the National Association of Court Management's (NACM) Mid-year and Annual Conferences, the Child Welfare League of America's (CWLA) National Kinship Care Conference, the National Child Support Enforcement Association's (NCSEA) Annual Conference, the American Bar Association Annual Conference and Equal Justice Conference, the Mid Atlantic Association of Court Managers Annual Conference and the Court Improvement Program Annual Conference.

Family Court Self-Help Center staff attended a number of trainings and conferences directly relevant to the topics they confront daily. The Center held its semi-annual volunteer training, with the help and support of the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program, adding nearly 20 new volunteers in the process. Additionally, Center staff participated in the Resource Fair at the Public Defender Service Community Reentry and Expungement Summit.

The Family Court continues to provide opportunities as well as encourages its staff to gain knowledge on finding more effective ways to streamline caseload processes and administrative procedures. As such, non-judicial staff throughout the Family Court attended a variety of in-house workshops and seminars on topics relating to improving and modernizing case flow and record keeping, leadership development, diversity in the workplace, ethics, sexual harassment, and Microsoft Office applications and systems.

FAMILY COURT FACILITIES

The Family Court Act of 2001 required the District of Columbia to establish an operating Family Court as a separate component of the District of Columbia Superior Court System. Upon receiving Congressional direction, the District of Columbia Courts established a fully functional Family Court with accommodating interim facilities, and undertook a campus-wide facilities realignment to establish a physically consolidated Family Court within the H. Carl Moultrie Courthouse. Construction of the C Street Addition will reunite the Family Court to one campus from its present off-site locations.

The 116,000 net square foot expansion project will rise six stories along the south facade of the Moultrie Courthouse providing over 30,000 square feet of Family Court offices and support space. The expansion will include space for social services, the children's center and supervised visitation, and six courtrooms and chambers for 20 Superior Court judges. The addition will be fully integrated with the JM level space for the Family Court Mental Health and Habilitation Unit, CCAN, Juvenile Intake, Probation Supervision, Drug Court and the immediate offices for the Family Court Operations Division and Court Social Services Division.

This effort is a phased multi-year endeavor based upon a Facilities Master Plan initiated in 2003 with its most recent update in 2014. The 2012 update sought to capture changes in court technology, organization and operations due to the growth of the District's population. These changes affected all aspects of the courts including Family Court, Social Services, and other court support functions. In 2002, the District's population had been in steep decline for three decades. More current census

data indicates the population is growing and the courts are responding to those expanding demands. Central to the Master Plan and the Family Court consolidation will be the C Street Addition to the Moultrie Courthouse.

Construction of the foundation commenced in November 2013. The anticipated completion date for the foundation is March 2015. The construction of the superstructure and interior spaces will be accomplished in two phases, beginning in September 2015. Phase 2A of the C Street Addition includes construction of all six levels of the west side of the building which will be completed before construction of the addition's east facade begins.

Design of swing space to move court components out of the way of construction as well as cable clean-up and removal planning is also in progress. New facilities will provide ADA accessibility, accommodation of technology, adjacency to genetic testing and the Mayors Liaison Office, improving all aspects of Family Court operations.

The Family Court's facilities are now approaching the vision embodied in the spirit of the Act as construction of the C Street Addition to the Moultrie Courthouse proceeds.

The D.C. Courts are at a critical point having achieved major regulatory approvals and having begun construction of the C Street Addition foundations. In a parallel effort, major precursor projects are in various stages of design and construction. The following is a summary of major milestones achieved and initiated in 2014:

Summary of Milestones

Completed

- Submission and receipt of C Street Addition Permit Documents and Final CFA Approval

- Construction of Phases 1-7 of the Criminal Division reconfiguration/upgrade (4th Floor Moultrie Courthouse) and attendant swing spaces
- Final design and permit acquisition for Marriage Bureau Relocation
- Final design and permits acquisition and award for Prisoner Corridor Extension including a new IT Help Desk
- Final design and permit acquisition for Reconfiguration of Suites 2440 and 3440 (required to remove judges from construction zone)
- Final design and permit acquisition for the 6th Floor ASD Call Center, and swing space
- Construction of 5th Floor Associate Judge Chambers, Court Reporters offices and Senior Judges Chambers
- Final design, permit acquisition and contract award of C Level Renovations and Cable Clean Up
- 2013 Update of the Facilities Master Plan

In Progress

- Completion of C Street Addition Bid Documents for the Superstructure
- Completion of C Street Addition Bid Documents for Interior (tenant) Spaces
- Preparation of Construction Documents for secure corridors directly abutting the construction of the C Street Addition
- Construction of C Level Precursor Projects
- Foundation construction: anticipated completion date March 2015
- Construction of Suites 2440 & 3440
- Construction of Infrastructure Upgrades: Domestic Water and Electrical
- Construction of the IT Help Desk
- Various life safety upgrades and adjustments to allow for continued building use during construction
- Continuation of design for an expanded central control room to accommodate expanded security requirements for the C Street Addition
- Completion of the Criminal Division renovations
- Preparation of Construction Documents for the fourth floor swing spaces to house court components currently in the zone of construction for the C Street Addition.



C Street Expansion Looking Northwest



C Street Expansion Entry

Interior Views of Indiana Avenue Waiting Area



ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION IN FAMILY COURT

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in the Family Court is provided through the Superior Court's Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division (Multi-Door). Both the Child Protection Mediation and Family Mediation programs facilitated by Multi-Door have proven to be highly successful in resolving child abuse and neglect cases and domestic relations cases, respectively. The programs had an equally positive effect on court processing timeframes and cost. These results provide compelling support for the continuation of these valuable public service programs.

ADR Performance Measures

The Multi-Door Division relies on output and outcome measures to assess the quantity and quality of ADR performance. Three performance indicators measure the quality of ADR:

- **ADR Outcome** – measures clients' satisfaction with the outcome of the mediation process (including whether a full agreement on the case was reached or if specific contested issues were resolved), fairness of outcome, level of understanding of opposing party's concerns, impact upon communications with other party, and impact upon time spent pursuing the case;

- ADR Process – measures clients’ satisfaction with the overall mediation process, including their ability to discuss issues openly, fairness of the process, length of session, and whether the participants perceive coercion by the other party or mediator; and
- Mediator Performance – measures clients’ satisfaction with mediators’ performance in conducting the process, including explaining the process and the mediator’s role, providing parties the opportunity to fully explain issues, the mediators understanding of the issues, whether the mediator gained the parties’ trust, and any perceived bias on the part of the mediator.

These quality performance indicators are measured through participant surveys distributed to all participants in ADR processes at Multi-Door. Statistical measures include the satisfaction level of respondents with the overall ADR process, ADR outcome, and mediator performance. Multi-Door staff holds periodic meetings to review these statistical measures and determine initiatives to improve overall program performance. Performance indicators provide a measure of the extent to which ADR is meeting the objectives of settlement, quality and responsiveness.

Child Protection Mediation Under The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)

In 2014, 416 new abuse and neglect cases were filed in the Family Court². Eighty-seven percent of those cases (232 families with 362 children) were referred to mediation, consistent with the mandate in the Family Court Act to resolve cases and proceedings through ADR to the greatest extent practicable consistent with child safety.³ Of those 232 families, 8 families (3%, representing 10 children) whose cases were filed in 2014 were offered mediation in 2015.

² Each case represents one child in family court. In mediation, however, each case represents a family often with multiple children.

³ These multi-party mediations are structured so as to enhance safety: pre-mediation information is provided to participants; parents are included in the sessions; appropriate training is provided; and a layered domestic violence screening protocol is implemented for cases with a history of domestic violence by Multi-Door staff and mediators.

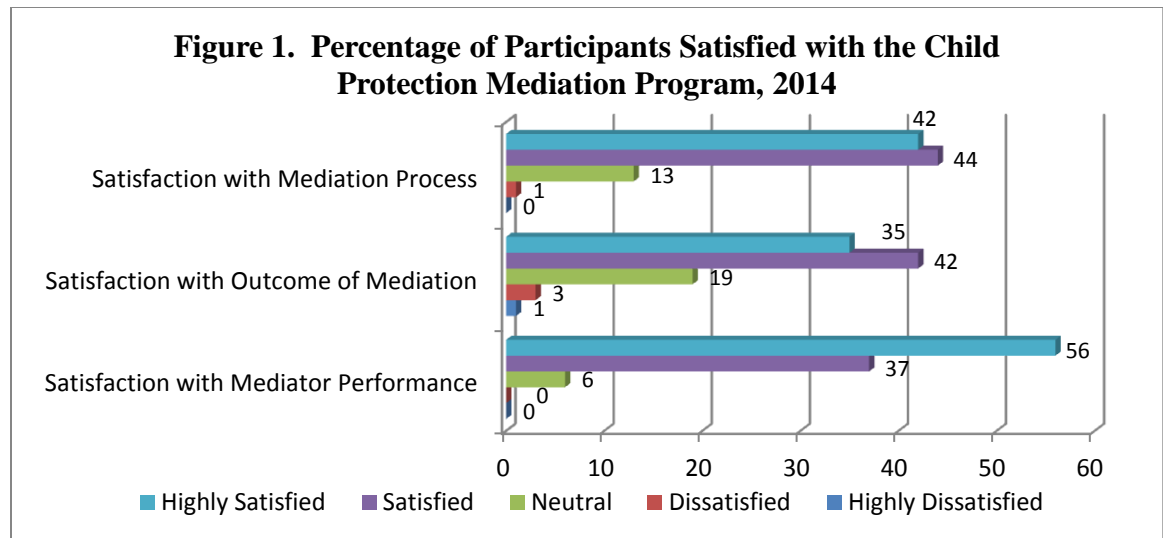
Seventy-one percent of the families (160 cases, representing 254 children) offered mediation in 2014 participated in the mediation process; twenty-nine percent of the families (64 cases, representing 98 children) did not participate and their cases were not mediated.⁴ As was the case in 2013, for families participating in mediation, the court continued to settle a substantial number of cases through the mediation process.⁵ Of the 160 cases mediated, 77 (48% of cases representing 109 children) resulted in a full agreement. In these cases, the issue of legal jurisdiction was resolved, and the mediation resulted in a stipulation (an admission of neglect by a parent or guardian). In addition, a case plan was developed and presented to the court as part of the mediation agreement. In 82 cases (51% of the cases, representing 144 children) the mediation was partially successful, resulting in the development of a case plan even though the issue of jurisdiction was not resolved. Only one case of all cases which went to mediation failed to reach an agreement of any level.

Qualitative measures, shown in Figure 1, illustrate substantial satisfaction measures of 86% for the ADR process, 77% for ADR outcome, and 93% for the performance of the mediator(s).⁶

⁴ Scheduled cases may not be held for the following reasons: (a) case dismissed by the court; (b) case settled prior to mediation; (c) case rescheduled by the parties; (d) case cancelled (e.g., domestic violence); and (e) case scheduled in 2014 for mediation in 2015. Family Court and Multi-Door have implemented measures to reduce the number of rescheduled cases in order to expedite case resolution.

⁵ In addition to the new abuse and neglect referrals 97 post adjudication cases were referred with issues of permanency, custody, visitation and/or post adoption communication. Of these cases, 74% (72 cases representing 103 children) mediated, 26% (25 cases representing 34 children) did not participate. Of the 72 cases mediated 36% (26 cases representing 39 children) reached settlement on custody or adoption. Partial settlement was reached in 35% of the mediated cases (25 cases representing 35 children). No agreement was reached in 29% of these cases (21 cases representing 29 children).

⁶ These statistics are based on data provided by the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division. In 2014, participant survey responses were expanded to include the option of selecting neutral.



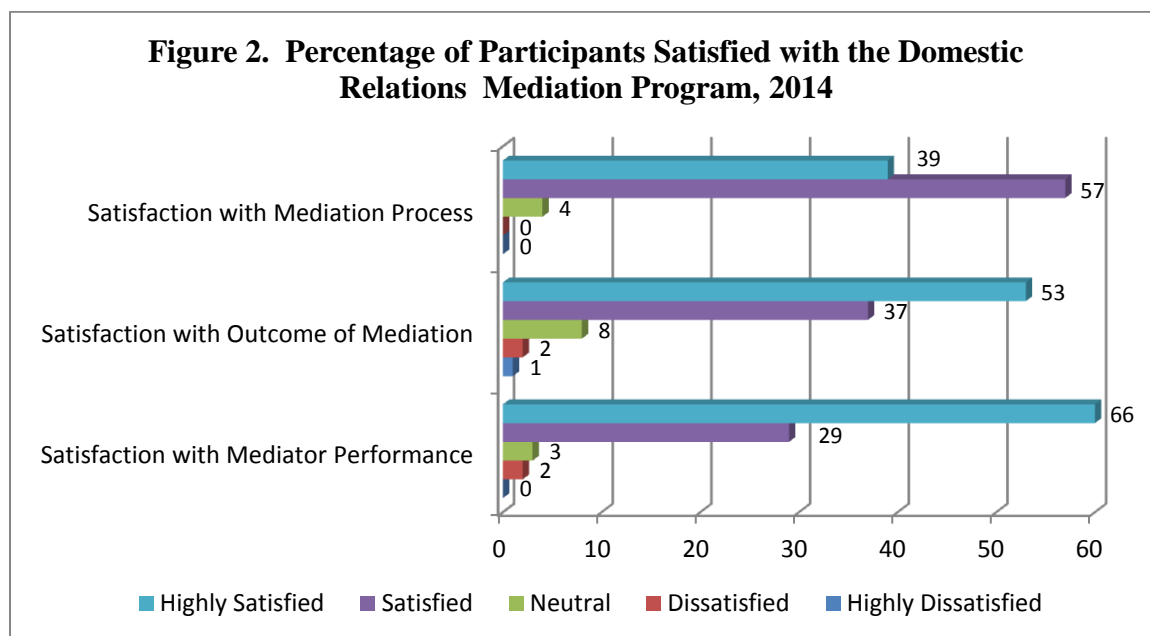
Domestic Relations Mediation

Mediation in domestic relations matters requires several sessions and typically covers issues of child custody, visitation, child and spousal support, and distribution of property. Domestic relations matters often are characterized by hostility and limited communication which exacerbate the level of conflict.

A total of 631 domestic relations cases were referred to mediation in 2014. Forty-eight percent (301) of the cases referred were mediated and completed in 2014. The remaining fifty-two percent (330) of cases referred to mediation did not participate in mediation because they were found to be either inappropriate or ineligible for mediation or parties voluntarily withdrew from the process.

Of the 301 cases mediated, 142 (approximately 47%) settled in mediation and 159 (approximately 53%) failed to reach an agreement. Among the 142 cases that settled in mediation, full agreements were reached in 81 (57%) cases and partial agreements were reached in 61 cases (43%).

Qualitative outcome measures, Figure 2, show satisfaction rates of 85% for ADR outcome, 97% for ADR process, and 96% for the performance of the mediator(s).



District of Columbia Bar ADR Program

In addition to those domestic relations cases mediated through Multi-Door, the court also has a partnership with the District of Columbia Bar to conduct ADR in domestic relations cases. The judge decides on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the parties and the lawyers whether it is appropriate to refer a case to a mediator in this program. The parties and counsel agree to attend and participate in ADR for up to three hours if property is at issue and four hours if issues of custody are involved, and the parties agree to pay the mediator at a rate of \$150 per hour.

The program employs experienced family lawyers, who must have at least 10 years experience in domestic relations practice and who have had mediation training or experience. Their experience allows them to provide the parties and their counsel with a neutral evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of their respective positions. In 2014, the court ordered 30 families to participate in this ADR program.

Family Court ADR Initiatives

The Family Court and Multi-Door have coordinated efforts to implement initiatives to support ADR consistent with the Act. These initiatives are as follows:

- In an effort to accommodate cases that are typically denied for mediation due to intimate partner violence/abuse (IPV/A), the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division's Family ADR Program has partnered with a team of researchers from Indiana University and the University of Arizona to conduct a study that will assess the best method to address IPV/A in domestic relations cases referred for mediation. The study, *Intimate Partner Violence and Custody Decisions: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Out-comes from Family Court, Shuttle Mediation, and Video-Conferencing Mediation* began on September 22, 2014. The three year study examines the effectiveness and safety of two types of specialized mediation—specifically, shuttle and video-conferencing mediation—in family cases with high levels of intimate partner violence/abuse (IPV/A). Each mediation type will be compared to the traditional, adversarial court process regarding both outcomes (e.g., settlement or court decree) and process. No empirical study to date has examined whether mediation of any kind is safe and effective for family disputes involving high levels of IPV/A. As the first of its kind, this study will impact not only local families but also families nationwide. The study is funded by the National Institute of Justice.
- The Program for Agreement and Cooperation in Contested Custody Cases (PAC) educates parents to reduce conflict and adverse effects on their children and helps prepare parents for mediation. In 2014, twenty-four education seminars helped 773 parents and 178 children understand the impact of custody disputes on their children.

FAMILY COURT OPERATIONS CASE ACTIVITY

There were 3,972 pending pre-disposition cases in the Family Court on January 1, 2014. During calendar year 2014, there were a total of 12,654 new cases filed and 250 cases reopened in the Family Court. During the same period, 12,568 cases were disposed. As a result, there were 4,308 cases pending in the Family Court on December 31, 2014 (Table 1.)

Table 1. Family Court Operations Case Activity for 2014

	Abuse & Neglect	Adoption	Divorce & Custody	Juvenile ^a	Mental Health	Mental Habilitation	Paternity & Child Support	Total
Pending Jan. 1 ^b	102	188	1,447	671	161	2	1,401	3,972
New Filings	411	252	4,239	2,594	2,699	1	2,458	12,654
Reopened	2	1	55	39	127	0	26	250
Total Available for Disposition	515	441	5,741	3,304	2,987	3	3,885	16,876
Dispositions ^c	412	239	4,046	2,557	2,820	2	2,492	12,568
Pending Dec. 31	103	202	1,695	747	167	1	1,393	4,308
Percent Change in Pending	1.0%	7.4%	17.1%	11.3%	3.7%	-50.0%	-0.6%	8.5%
Clearance Rate ^d	100%	94%	94%	97%	100%	200%	100%	97%

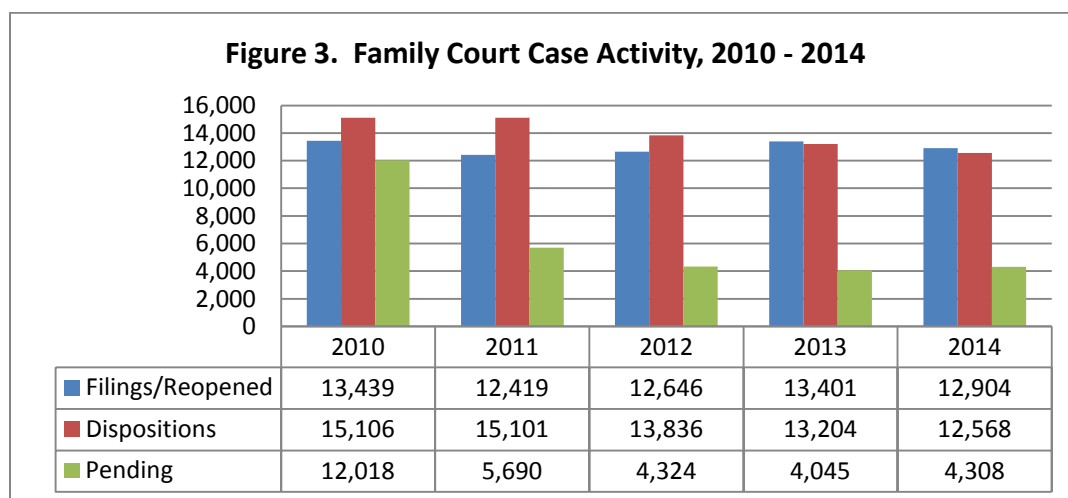
a. Includes cases involving Delinquency, PINS (Persons In Need of Supervision), and Interstate Compact.

b. Figures for Abuse & Neglect, Adoption, Divorce & Custody, and Paternity & Child Support were adjusted after an audit of these caseloads.

c. A case is considered disposed when an order has been entered in Family Court.

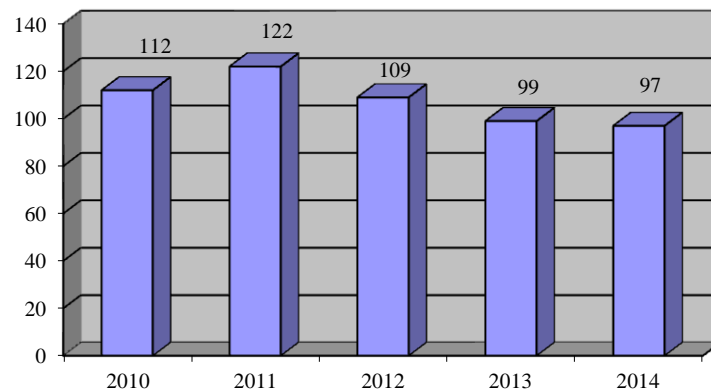
d. The clearance rate, a measure of court efficiency, is the total number of cases disposed divided by the total number of cases added (i.e., new filings/reopened) during a given time period. Rates of over 100% indicate that the court disposed of more cases than were added, thereby reducing the pending caseload.

Over the five year period from 2010 through 2014, the number of filings (including cases reopened) and the number of dispositions has shown significant variation (Figure 3.) Filings ranged from a low period of 12,419 in 2011 to high period of 13,439 in 2010, down to 13,401 in 2013 and 12,904 in 2014, down to 12,646 in 2012. During the same period, there has been a steady reduction in the number of cases disposed. The number of cases disposed decreased from 15,106 cases disposed in 2010, to 15,101 disposed in 2011, to 13,836 disposed in 2012, to 13,204 disposed in 2013, and 12,568 disposed in 2014.



Because filings and dispositions can vary significantly from year to year, the best assessment of whether a court is managing its caseload efficiently is its clearance rate (Figure 4.) A clearance rate of 100% indicates that a court is very efficient and has disposed of as many cases as were filed during the year. Disposing of cases in a timely

Figure 4. Clearance Rates in Family Court, 2010-2014



manner helps ensure that the number of cases awaiting disposition (pending caseload) does not grow. This performance measure is a single number that can be used to compare performance within the Family Court over time and by case type. The overall clearance rate for the Family Court in 2014 was 97%, the lowest over the five year period. Prior year clearance rates ranged from 99% in 2013 to 122% in 2011.

The clearance rate demonstrates that the Family Court is doing a good job of managing its caseload, nearly disposing of a case for each new case filed or reopened. In 2015, the Family Court will strive to improve its performance to reach a 100% clearance rate by better monitoring of its case processing standards with the goal of ensuring that each of the individual branches within the Family Court reaches that rate.

FAMILY COURT CASE ACTIVITY FOR 2014

New case filings in the Family Court decreased 4% between 2013 and 2014 (13,164 filings in 2013 and 12,654 filings in 2014). The decrease was largely attributable to the decrease in new juvenile filings (-19%). Among other case types there were small fluctuations. Abuse and neglect filings increased by 1% while adoption filings decreased by 1%; similarly divorce and custody filings decreased by 2% and paternity and support filings increased by 2%.

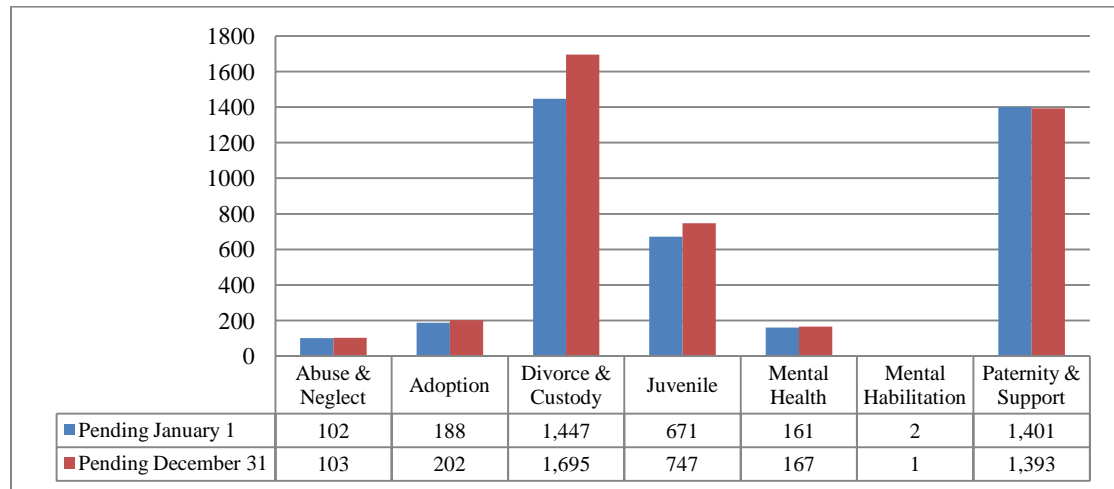
During the year, the Family Court resolved more than 12,500 cases, including: 4,046 divorce and custody cases, 2,557 juvenile cases, 2,820 mental health cases, 2,492 paternity and child support cases, 412 child abuse and neglect cases, 239 adoption cases, and 2 mental habilitation cases. There was a 5% decrease in dispositions between 2013 and 2014. However, changes in the percentage of dispositions by case type varied more. Dispositions decreased in juvenile cases (-16%), domestic relations cases (-8%) and mental habilitation cases (-71%). On the other hand dispositions increased in abuse and neglect cases (12%), mental health cases (6%), and adoption cases (2%) and remained the same in paternity and support cases.

The overall clearance rate for all Family Court case types was 97%, down from a clearance rate of 99% in 2013 and 109% in 2012. The clearance rate was 100% for paternity and support, mental health, and abuse and neglect cases. In mental habilitation cases, where two cases were disposed and one was filed, the clearance rate was 200%. The clearance rate for juvenile, adoption and divorce and custody cases was less than 100%. However, it is important to note that although the rate did not reach 100%, it was higher than it was in 2013 for both adoption and juvenile cases. On the other hand the

clearance rate for divorce and custody cases was lower in 2014 (94%) than in 2013 (100%). The lower clearance rate in 2014 may be related to the Court having one less Domestic Relations judge than in previous years.

When measuring the number of dispositions in Family Court, it is important to note that a disposition does not always end the need for court oversight and judicial involvement. In many Family Court cases, after an order is entered, there is significant post-disposition activity. For example, among the 2,557 juvenile cases resolved during 2014, 696 juvenile offenders were placed on probation. Those 696 juveniles, as well as the nearly 1,000 other active juvenile probation cases, require continuous monitoring by judicial officers to ensure compliance with probation conditions and community safety. Cases of youth under intensive probation supervision and those in the Behavioral Health Court are reviewed even more frequently. Dispositions in paternity and support cases include cases resolved through the issuance of either a temporary or a permanent support order. Those cases resolved through issuance of a temporary support order often have several financial reviews scheduled after disposition until a permanent support order is established. In addition, all support cases are subject to contempt and modification hearings that require judicial oversight. Mental habilitation cases are considered disposed once an order of commitment or an order of voluntary admission is entered. These cases, numbering over 700 in 2014, remain open and require annual judicial reviews to determine whether there is a need for continued commitment. Similarly, there are more than 1,200 post-disposition abuse and neglect cases that remain open and require regular judicial reviews until the child reaches permanency either through placement in a permanent living situation or ages out of the foster care system.

Figure 5. Family Court Pending Caseload, 2014



On December 31, 2014, there were 4,308 pending cases in the Family Court.

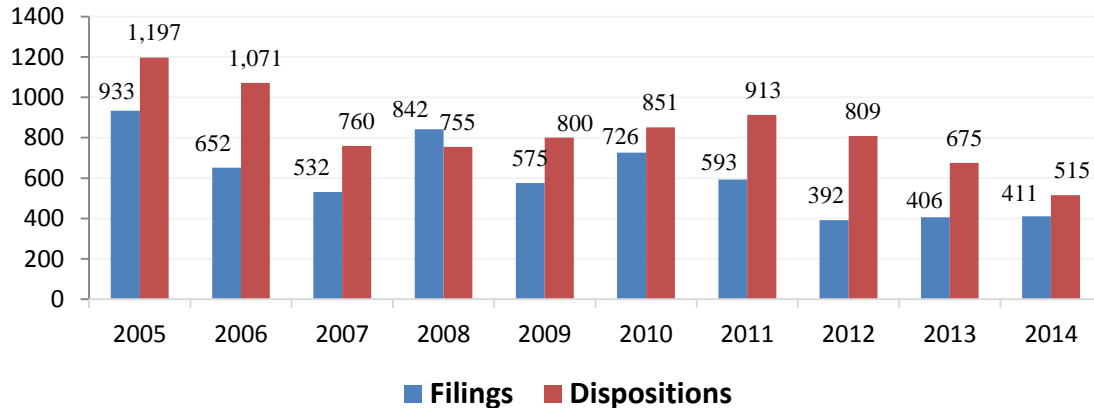
Pending cases are defined as cases that are pending an initial disposition. Pending cases consisted of 1,695 divorce and custody cases, 1,393 paternity and child support cases, 747 juvenile cases, 202 adoption cases, 167 mental health cases, 103 child abuse and neglect cases, and one mental habilitation case (Figure 5.)

ABUSE AND NEGLECT CASES

In 2014, there were 411 new child abuse and neglect referrals to the Family Court, a 1% increase in filings from 2013 (Figure 6.) Over the ten-year period from the start of 2005 to the end of 2014, new child abuse and neglect referrals decreased by 56%. Referrals ranged from a high of 933 in 2005 to a low of 392 in 2012. Fluctuations in the number of referrals to Family Court are most often attributable to policy changes at CFSA. For example, the implementation of Family Team Meetings resulted in an agency decision to handle more cases as “in home” cases. In-home supervision of cases by CFSA dispenses with the need to petition or officially charge a parent or caretaker with neglect or abuse, and thus such cases are not subject to supervision by the Family Court.

In 2012, CFSA’s strategic agenda known as the “Four Pillars” looked to improve outcomes for children and families by reducing the number of children coming under Family Court

Figure 6. Number of Children Entering and Exiting Family Court Jurisdiction, 2005 - 2014

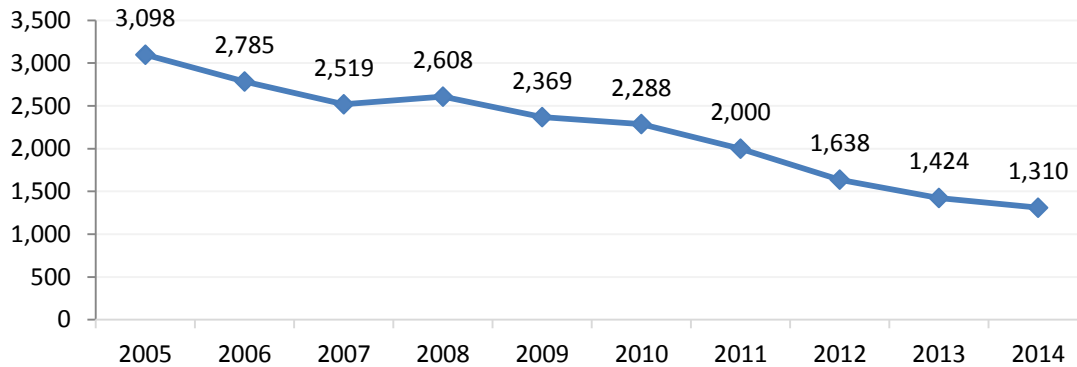


jurisdiction through adoption of “Pillar One: Narrowing the Front Door.” This pillar was designed to reduce the number of entries into foster care through differential response and placement with kin. On the other hand, the high number of filings in 2008 likely resulted from an intense review by CFSA of all cases awaiting investigation, the result of which was a significant increase (58%) in filings from 2007 to 2008. Continued fluctuations in referrals to Family Court are anticipated as a result of the full implementation of the District of Columbia’s recent approval as a Title IV-E waiver site in 2013.

The number of children, involved in abuse and neglect cases, under the jurisdiction of the Family Court decreased 8% from the end of 2013 to the end of 2014. Moreover, the number of children under the jurisdiction of the Family Court has steadily declined from 2005 – 2014 (Figure 7.) Over that period, there has been a 58% decrease

in the number of children under court supervision.

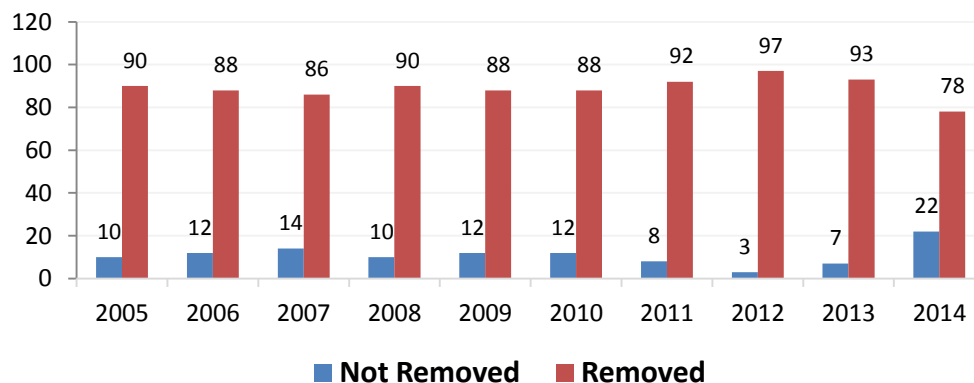
Figure 7. Number of Children Under Family Court Jurisdiction, on December 31, 2005 - 2014



Children Referred to Family Court in 2014

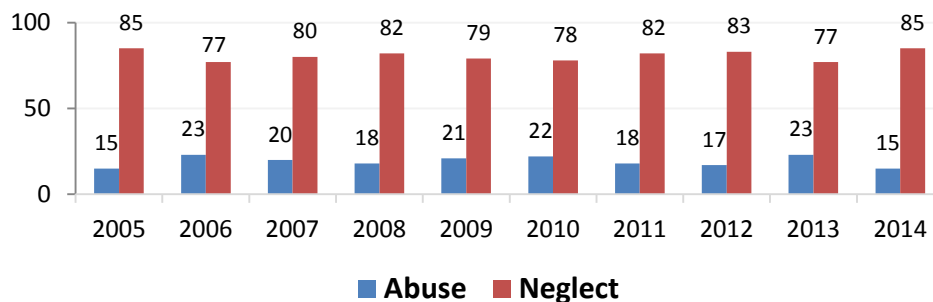
In 78% of the cases filed in 2014, children were removed from the home and 22% remained in the home under protective supervision (Figure 8.) The percentage of cases in which children were removed from the home was at its lowest level in 10 years. Prior to 2014, the percentage of children removed from the home had ranged from a low of 86% in 2007, to a high of 97% in 2012. The lower removal rate may be related to CFSA's decision to community paper more cases that had been unsuccessfully served in community through in home services.

Figure 8. Percentage of Children Entering Family Court Jurisdiction, by Removal Status, 2005 - 2014



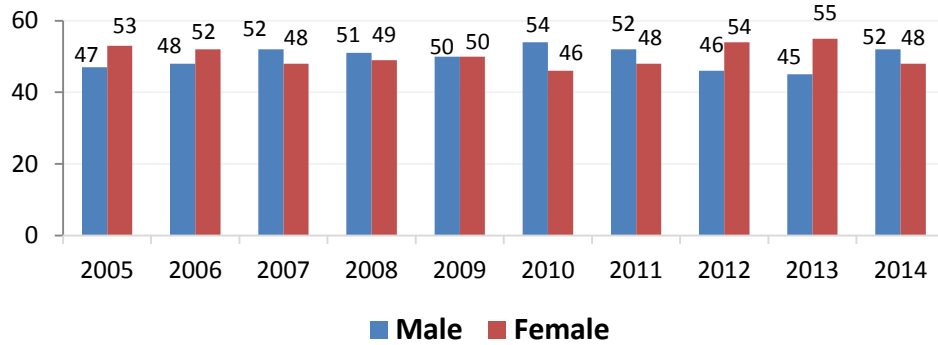
In 2014, an allegation of neglect was the most likely reason for a youth to be referred to the Family Court (Figure 9.) Eighty-five percent of new referrals were for allegations of neglect and fifteen percent for abuse. The percentage of youth who were referred to Family Court as the result of a neglect allegation ranged from a low of 77% in 2006 and 2013 to a high of 85% in 2005 and 2014. In contrast, during the ten-year period from the start of 2005 to the end of 2014, the percentage of children referred for an allegation of abuse has ranged from a low of 15% in 2005 and 2014 to a high of 23% in 2006 and 2013.

Figure 9. Percentage of Children Entering Family Court Jurisdiction, by Primary Reason for Entering Care, 2005- 2014



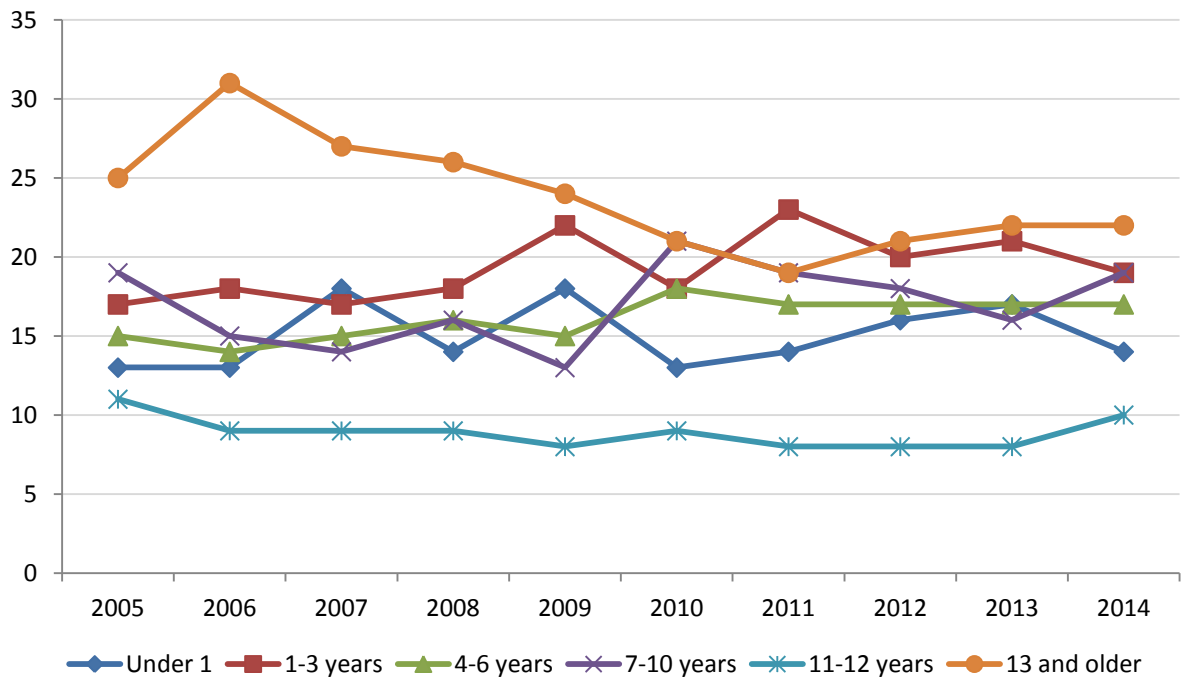
In 2014, females comprised 48% of all new referrals (Figure 10.) Over the ten-year period (2005 – 2014), the percentage of female new referrals varied considerably. From 2005-2006, the percentage of females referred exceeded that of males. From 2007-2011, referrals of males exceeded that of females. Reversing the trend in 2012 and 2013, female referrals again exceeded that of males, and in 2014 referrals of males again exceeded that of females. In 2014, females accounted for 48% of the referrals for abuse and 47% of the referrals for neglect.

Figure 10. Percentage of Children Entering Family Court Jurisdiction, by Gender, 2005 - 2014



More than a fifth (22%) of new referrals to Family Court, in 2014, involved children 13 years of age and older at the time of referral (Figure 11.) The percentage of referrals of older children, although high, steadily declined in each year from 2006 to 2011 (31% to 19%) before increasing slightly from 2012 and 2014.

Figure 11. Percentage of Children Entering Family Court Jurisdiction, by Age at Entry, 2005 - 2014



Notwithstanding, the Family Court, CFSA, and other child welfare stakeholders continue to examine the implications of large numbers of older youth coming into care. The examination includes an assessment of resources in the District to assist parents and caregivers in addressing the needs of this segment of the population before they come into care, as well as the need to identify and develop appropriate placement options once they are in care.

Over the ten-year period, about a third of new referrals were children less than four years old at the time of referral. Given the vulnerability of children in this age group, the Family Court and CFSA are also reviewing the needs of this population, especially as it relates to educational and developmental services and access to other early intervention programs.

TRANSFER OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT CASES TO FAMILY COURT

The Act required that all child abuse and neglect cases assigned to judges outside the Family Court be transferred to Family Court judges by October 4, 2003. Of the 5,145 cases pending at the time of the Act's initiation, 3,500 were assigned to judges not serving in the Family Court. Since then, all of those cases have been transferred into Family Court or closed. Today, non-Family Court judges supervise four open cases each of which is being retained with the approval of the Chief Judge who determined, pursuant to criteria set forth in the Act, that: (1) the judge retaining the case had the required experience in family law; (2) the case was in compliance with ASFA; and (3) it was likely that permanency would not be achieved more quickly by reassigning the case within the Family Court.

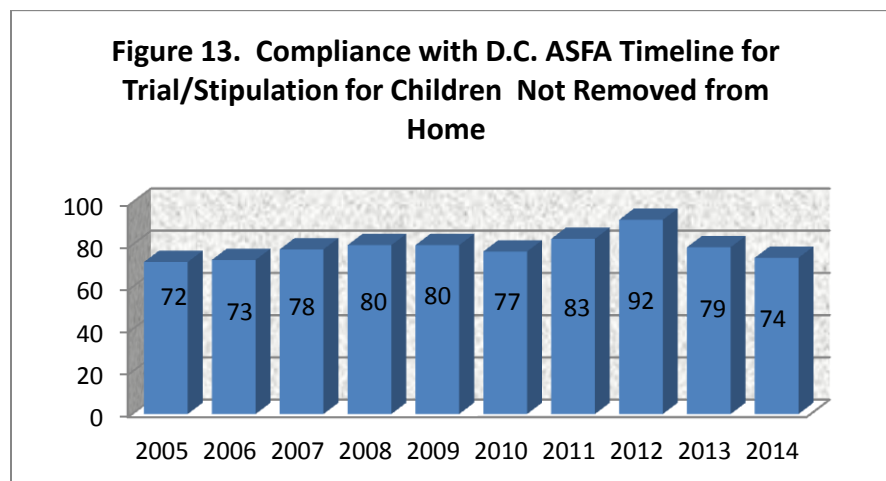
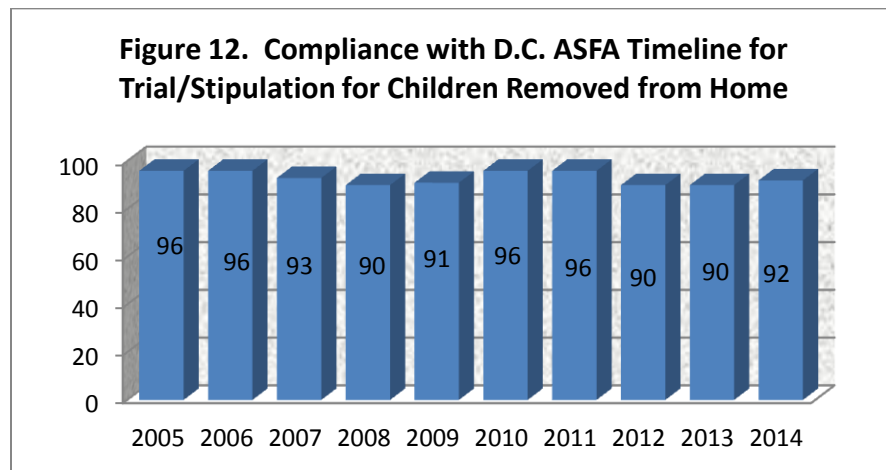
COMPLIANCE WITH D.C. ASFA REQUIREMENTS

The District of Columbia Adoption and Safe Families Act (D.C. ASFA) (D.C. Official Code Sections 16-2301 et seq., (2000 Ed.)) establishes timelines for the completion of the trial and disposition hearing in abuse and neglect cases. The timelines vary depending on whether the child was removed from his or her home. The statutory timeframe between filing of the petition and trial or stipulation is 105 days for a child who is removed from the home and 45 days for a child who is not removed. The statute requires that trial and disposition occur on the same day, whether the child has been removed or not, but permits the court 15 additional days to hold a disposition hearing for good cause shown.

TRIAL/STIPULATION OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT CASES

Figures 12 and 13 highlight the level of compliance with the statutory requirement for trial/stipulation for both removed and non-removed children over a ten-year time period. As can be seen from Figure 12, from 2005 through 2014 the court made significant progress in completing trials/stipulations within the established timelines for children removed from home. In each year, at least 9 out of 10 cases filed had a fact-finding hearing in compliance with the ASFA timeline for trials in removal cases (105 days). In 2014, the compliance rate increased slightly to 92% suggesting that the court's monitoring and tracking of this performance area is showing some success in re-establishing the court's high level of performance on this measure. In addition to high rates of compliance with the statutory timeline requirements, many cases reached trial or stipulation in considerably less time than the 105 day statutory requirement. The median time for a case to reach trial or stipulation was 62 days, which was six days more

than the 56 day median in 2013. Over the ten-year period from 2005 to 2014, the median time for a case to reach trial or stipulation ranged from a high of 62 days in 2014, to 59 days in 2009, 57 days in 2005, 56 days in 2013, 55 days in 2008 and 2012, 45 days in 2011, 43 days in 2006 and 2007 and to a low of 41 days in 2010.

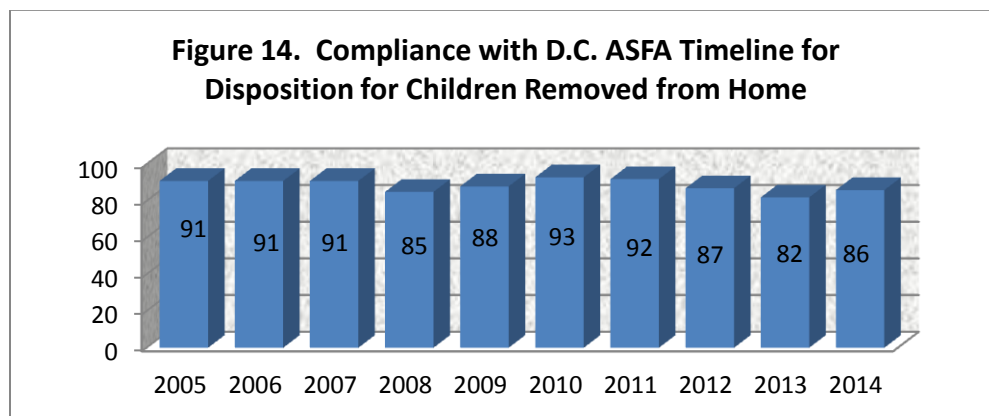


For children not removed from home, compliance with the timeline to trial or stipulation (45 days) continued to decline from 79% in 2013 to 74% in 2014 after improving in each of the three previous years. As indicated in Figure 8, the majority of children (almost 80%) referred to the court are removed from their homes. In 2014, 85 children were not removed from home. It is important to remember that with small caseloads, a few cases can have a significant impact on compliance rates as was the case in previous

years. The court will continue to monitor and track this performance area and implement appropriate measures to improve the court's compliance rate.

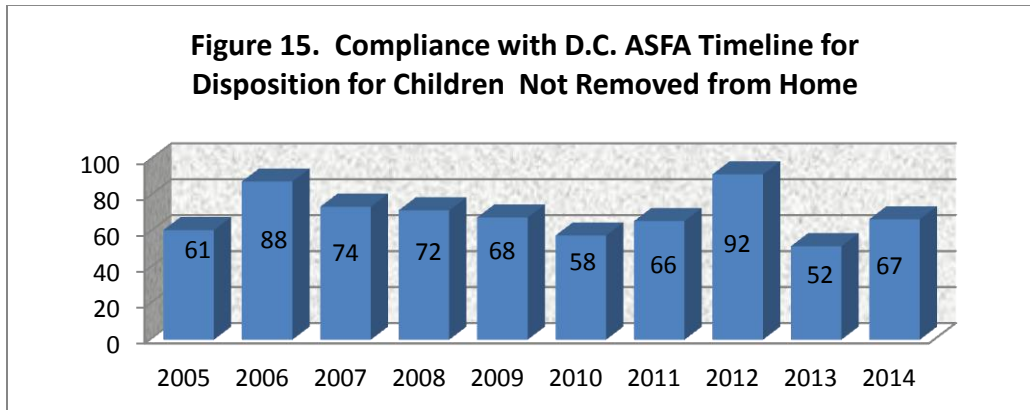
DISPOSITION HEARINGS IN ABUSE AND NEGLECT CASES

Eighty-six percent of cases filed in 2014, in which the child was removed from home, had disposition hearings held within the 105 day timeline (Figure 14). The compliance rate, however, may rise as cases filed late in 2014, which are still pending disposition, have their hearings. Over the ten-year period (2005-2014) more than 4 out of 5 children removed from home had their disposition hearings held in compliance with the timeline. Moreover, more than 9 out of 10 of those hearings were held in a timely fashion in years 2005 to 2007 and years 2010 and 2011. In 2014, the median time to reach disposition was 76 days and the average was 59 days, both well below the 105-day statutory timeline.



As was the case for reaching trial/stipulation for children not removed from home in a timely manner, the compliance rate for conducting disposition hearings for children not removed can also be impacted by a small number of cases. Due to the generally small number of children who are not removed from home, the compliance rate has fluctuated considerably over the ten-year period (Figure 15). The compliance

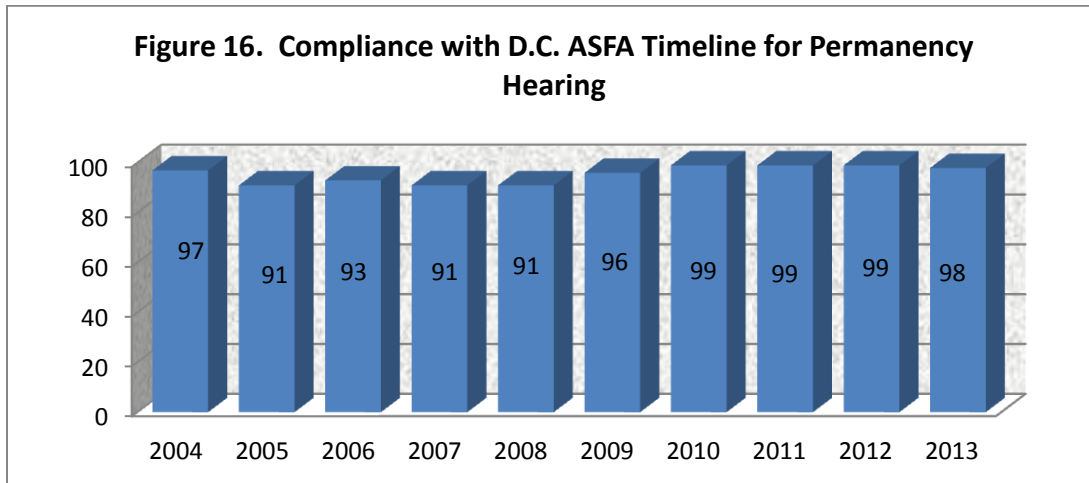
rate in 2014 (67%) while low was an increase over the compliance rate in 2013 of 52%. The median time to reach disposition was 44 days and the average was 42 days. As with time to trial and stipulation, the Family Court will continue to monitor and track compliance in this area throughout 2015, and where appropriate, will institute measures to improve compliance.



COMPLIANCE WITH ASFA PERMANENCY HEARING REQUIREMENTS

Both D.C. and Federal ASFA require the court to hold a permanency hearing for each child who has been removed from home within 12 months of the child's entry into foster care. Entry into foster care is defined as either 60 days after removal from the home, resulting in a net requirement for a permanency hearing 14 months after a child is removed from his or her home, or one year after a finding of neglect. The purpose of the permanency hearing, ASFA's most important requirement, is to decide the child's permanency goal and to set a timetable for achieving it. Figure 16 shows the court's compliance with holding permanency hearings within the ASFA timeline. The level of compliance with this requirement has remained consistently high. Since 2004, more than

90% of cases had a permanency hearing or were dismissed within the required timeline. No case filed in 2014 had reached the statutory deadline for having a permanency hearing by December 31, 2014.



Goal Setting and Achievement Date

In addition to holding permanency hearings in a timely manner, ASFA also requires that the Family Court set a specific goal (reunification, adoption, guardianship, custody, or another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA)) and a date for achievement of that goal at each permanency hearing. The Family Court has made significant progress in meeting the requirement of setting a specific goal at the hearing and has improved in its requirement of ensuring that a specific date for achievement of that goal is set at each hearing.

In addition, judges are required to raise the issue of identified barriers to the permanency goal. The early identification of such issues has led to more focused attention and earlier resolution of issues that would have caused significant delays in the past. Although barriers still exist, the resulting periods of delay have shortened.

Data from 2014 indicates that a permanency goal was set at every permanency hearing and a goal achievement date was set 98% of the time. To ensure that the court maintains a high level of compliance in this area, the Family Court will continue to require its attorney advisors to review every case after a permanency hearing to ensure that these two requirements are being met. If not, the assigned judicial officer and the Presiding Judge of Family Court will be notified that the hearing was deficient and recommendations will be made to bring the case into compliance.

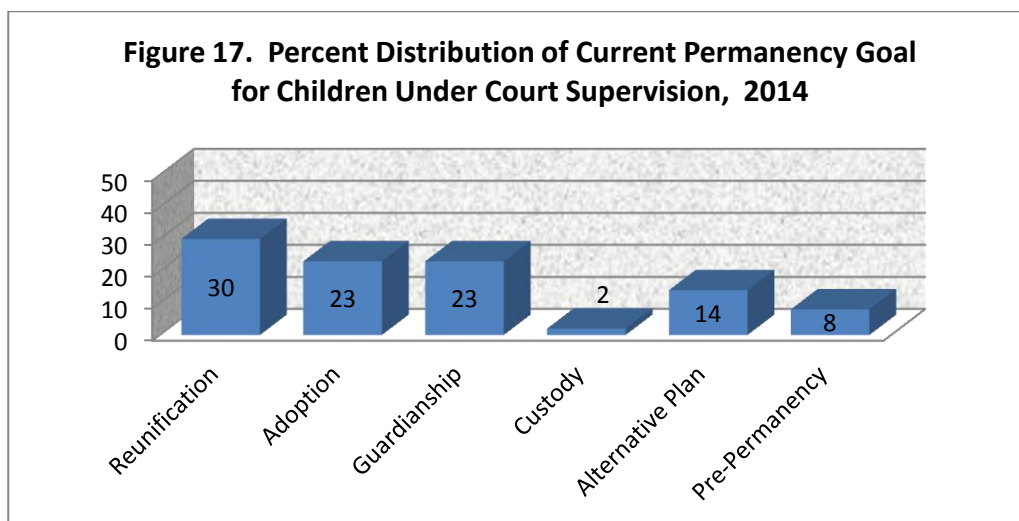
The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) and the American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law have established best practices for the content and structure of permanency hearings mandated by ASFA, including the decisions that should be made and the time that should be set aside for each hearing. In its publication, *Resource Guidelines: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, the NCJFCJ recommends that permanency hearings be set for 60 minutes. Family Court judges continue to report that the length of their permanency hearings meets or exceeds this standard.

To ensure continued compliance with ASFA and to assist Family Court judges in ensuring that the content and structure of the permanency hearing are consistent with best practices, judicial officers are required to use a standardized court order for all permanency hearings. As required by ASFA, the form requires the judge to set a specific goal and achievement date at each hearing. The use of this standard form continues to contribute to an increase in compliance with best practices and legal requirements. In its ongoing effort to ensure that the structure and content of permanency hearing orders are consistent with best practices and easy to use, the Family Court Implementation

Committee, through the Abuse and Neglect Subcommittee, reviewed, revised, and piloted the official court forms for proceedings in these cases in 2012. The revised orders became effective on January 1, 2013. The orders meet not only the requirements of ASFA but also the requirements of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-351), the Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-239), and the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). These orders are now used in every courtroom.

Barriers to Permanency

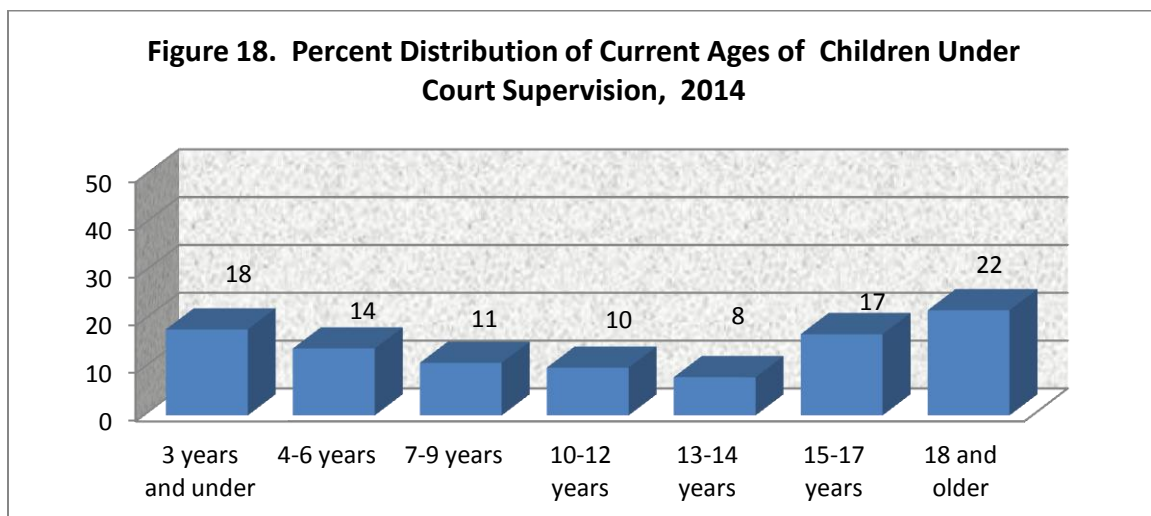
Under ASFA, there are four preferred permanency goals for children removed from their home: reunification, adoption, guardianship or custody. Figure 17 identifies the current permanency goal for children under court supervision. Cases involving children identified as pre-permanency have yet to have a disposition hearing, the earliest point at which a goal would be set. Although the court has improved significantly in establishing goals for children, the achievement of those goals still remains a challenge.



For children with the goal of reunification, the primary barrier to reunification was related to the disability of a parent, including the parent's mental health issues and

the need for the parent to receive substance abuse treatment to obtain life-skills training. The lack of adequate housing also presented a significant barrier to reunification. For children with the goal of adoption, procedural impediments, including the completion of adoption proceedings and housing issues, were the most frequently identified barriers to permanency. Other frequently cited barriers to reaching permanency through adoption included the lack of adoption resources and issues related to the adoption subsidy. Similarly, procedural impediments including the completion of guardianship proceedings were the major barrier to guardianship. Disabilities of the parent/caretaker including the need to receive substance abuse and other treatment and issues related to the guardianship subsidy were also significant barriers.

Another significant barrier to permanency was the percentage of cases which involved older children for whom the court has found compelling reasons to set a goal of APPLA. As Figure 18 shows, more than a fifth of all youth in foster care are over the age of 18 and nearly 4 out of 10 youth under court supervision are 15 years of age or older. Many of them cannot be returned to their parents, but do not wish to be adopted or considered for any other permanency option, making permanency difficult to achieve.



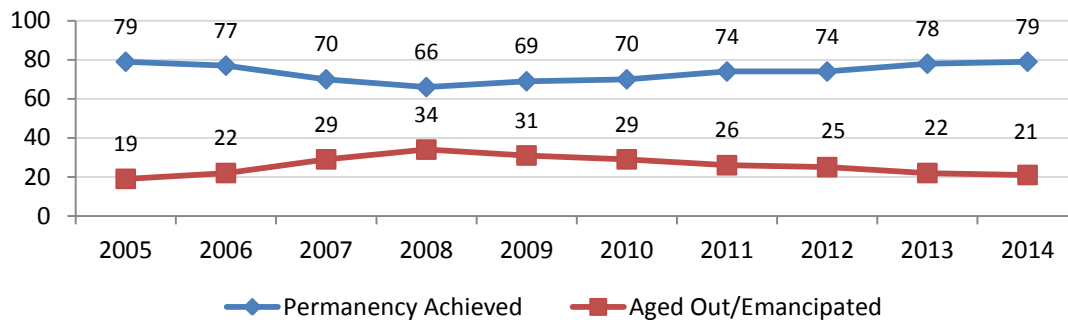
The agency and the court continue to work to review permanency options and services available for older youth, including reducing the number of youth with a goal of APPLA and the number of youth aging out of the child welfare system.

The Family Court's *Preparing Youth for Adulthood Initiative* has been an effective tool in helping to ensure that older youth in the program who remain in care receive the necessary support in setting concrete goals for achieving independence, establishing timeframes for the completion of specific tasks, and connecting the older youth with at least one adult who has committed to remaining in the youth's life after emancipation. Significant changes at CFSA's Office of Youth Empowerment have also led to improved outcomes for older youth. New initiatives undertaken in 2014 include an improved focus on youth transitional planning, independent living services, educational and vocational training, and improved life skills training.

PERMANENCY OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

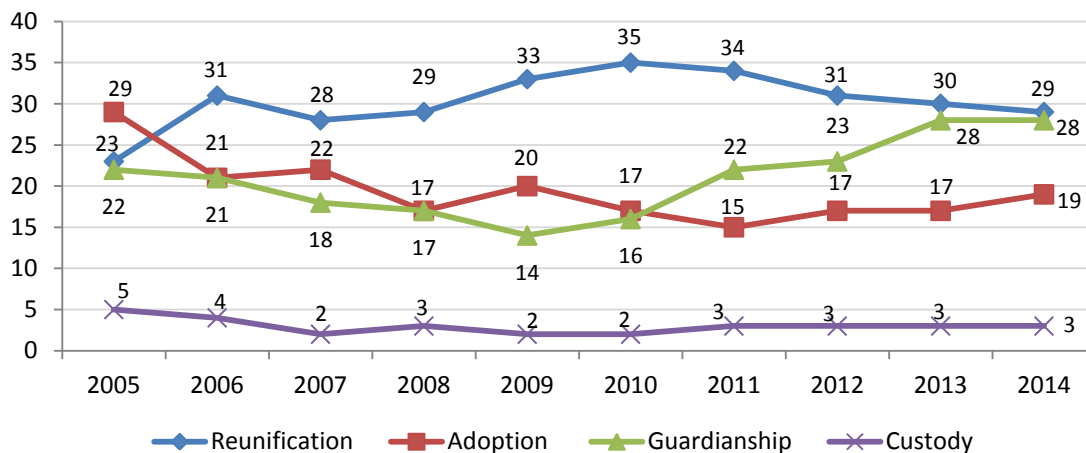
In 2014, Family Court judicial officers closed 503 post-disposition abuse and neglect cases. As can be seen from Figure 19, 79% were closed because permanency was achieved. Twenty-one percent of the cases were closed without reaching permanency, either because the child aged out of the system or their cases were closed because they no longer desired to have services provided by CFSA; three cases closed because the respondent died. The percentage of post-disposition cases which were closed due to a child reaching permanency continued its slight increase.

Figure 19. Percent Distribution of Children Exiting Family Court Jurisdiction, Post Disposition by Exit Reason 2005 - 2014



As shown in Figure 20, the percentage of cases that closed due to reunification continued to decrease and the percentage of cases closed to adoption, which had been relatively stable over the last four years, increased slightly to 19% in 2014. The percentage of cases that closed because the child was placed with a permanent guardian, which increased steadily between 2009 and 2013, leveled off at 28% in 2014.

Figure 20. Percent Distribution of Children Exiting Family Court Jurisdiction After Achievement of Permanency Goals, 2004 - 2013



In 2012, both the court and the agency undertook a thorough examination of cases in which the goal was adoption. The agency's review was designed to determine if there were policies and procedures that should be enforced or implemented to ensure

that the child reaches permanency in a timely manner. The examination also included a review of children with a goal of adoption that had not been placed in a pre-adoptive home and the timeliness of filing a termination of parental rights motion (TPR) once the goal was changed to adoption. The court's review focused on the timeliness of adoption proceedings and an identification of barriers at each step in the process that serve to delay the adoption and hence delay timely permanency for children. In 2015, the court will undertake a further analysis of adoption and termination of parental rights cases, including time to trial and disposition and, if appropriate, develop policies and procedures to address potential problem areas.

As stated earlier, 21% of all post-disposition cases were closed without the child achieving permanency. This was due to the child reaching the age of majority or the child refusing further services from CFSA. This finding is not surprising given that, at the end of 2014, 39% of children under court supervision were 15 years of age or older. Many of these children, who have a permanency goal of APPLA (14%) have been in care for a significant period of time, are unlikely to be reunited with their parents and do not wish to be adopted. As indicated earlier, to ensure that the maximum number of children reach permanency, CFSA issued new guidelines and procedures for social workers wishing to recommend a goal of APPLA. To help ensure that the new policy was followed, the court agreed to work with the agency to help monitor compliance with the requirements for recommending a goal change to APPLA. The agency's policy and the court's monitoring are designed to ensure that only those children for whom no other permanency option is appropriate will receive a goal of APPLA. In 2014, a social worker's recommendation to change a youth's permanency goal to APPLA was not

considered by the court unless the youth had participated in a Listening to Youth and Families as Experts (LYFE) conference and the Director of the agency approved the recommendation.

As required by the Act, the court has been actively involved in developing a case management and tracking system that would allow it to measure its performance and monitor the outcomes of children under court supervision. Using the performance measures developed by the American Bar Association, the National Center for State Courts and the NCJFCJ (in “Toolkit for Court Performance Measures in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases”) as a guide, the court has developed baseline data in a number of areas critical to outcomes for children. The “Toolkit” identifies four performance measures (safety, permanency, timeliness, and due process) against which courts can assess their performance. Each measure has a goal, outcomes, and a list of performance elements that courts should consider when developing performance plans that will allow them to assess their performance in meeting the identified goals.

In 2014, the Family Court continued to measure its performance in two areas: permanency and timeliness. Data for each area of performance is measured over a five-year period. Data presented is restricted to cases filed and/or disposed of within a specific timeframe. As such, it may differ from data presented elsewhere in the report. Such an analysis, using a cohort approach based on when a case was filed, allows the court to examine its performance over time in achieving permanency for children as well as allowing an assessment of the impact of legislative and/or administrative changes over time.

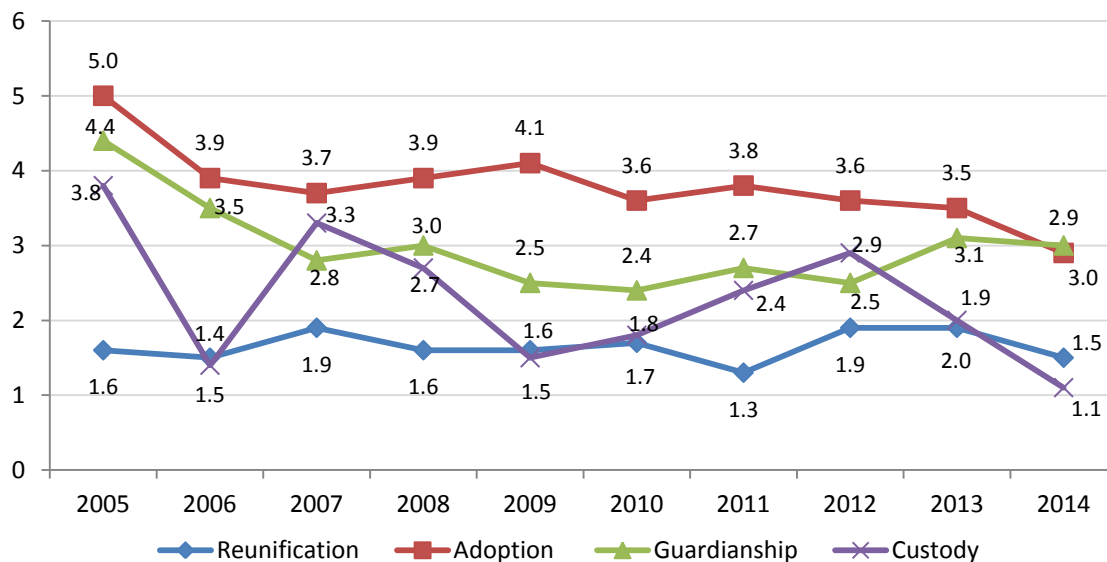
Performance Measure 1: Permanency

Goal: Children should have permanency and stability in their living situations.

Measure 1a: Percentage of children who reach legal permanency (by reunification, adoption, guardianship, custody, or another planned permanent living arrangement) within 6, 12, 18, and 24 months from removal.

In 2014, the median time to achievement of permanency was: 1.5 years for children whose cases closed due to reunification, 2.9 years to reach a goal of adoption, 3.0 years for cases to close due to guardianship, and 1.1 years to reach permanency through a goal of custody. In 2013, the comparable figures were 1.9 years to reunification, 3.5 years to adoption, 3.1 years to guardianship, and 2.0 years to custody. Figure 21 reflects comparative data on median time to closure for cases closed from 2005 through 2014.

Figure 21. Median Time (in Years) from Removal to Achievement of Permanency Goal, 2005 - 2014

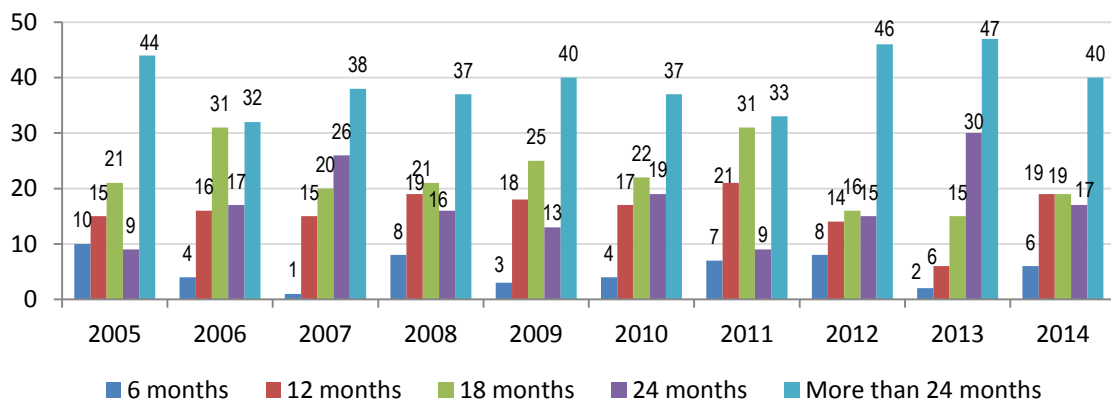


Irrespective of method of disposition, the median time to reach permanency decreased between 2013 and 2014. The median time required to reunify children with

their parents for cases that closed in 2014 was 1.5 years, down from 1.9 years in 2012 and 2013. In 2014, the median time to closure for cases closed to adoption was 2.9 years, the first time the median was below 3 years. The median time to adoption was 3.6 years in 2012 and 3.5 years in 2013. The median time to the achievement of permanency for children whose cases closed due to guardianship was 3.0 years, a slight decrease from 3.1 years in 2013. It is important to remember that many of the cases which closed were older cases in which the children had already been in care for extended periods of time. As these older cases close, they will continue to drive the median time to closure and keep it high over the next several years.

As would be expected, children who were reunified with their parents spent less time in foster care than those whose cases closed through other permanency options (Figure 22.) In 25% of the cases closed due to reunification in 2014, children were reunified with their parents within 12 months of removal, 44% were reunified within 18 months, and 61% within 24 months or less.

Figure 22. Percent Distribution of Time Between Removal and Reunification, 2005 - 2014



In 2014, for the first time, more than a fifth of children whose cases closed to adoption spent two years or less in care waiting to be placed in a permanent adoptive

home. In 2012, 15% of children spent two years or less in care. In contrast, in each year between 2005 and 2011 and in 2013, over 90% of children in care spent more than 24 months waiting to be placed in a permanent adoptive home (see Figure 23).

Figure 23. Percent Distribution of Time Between Removal and Adoption, 2005 - 2014

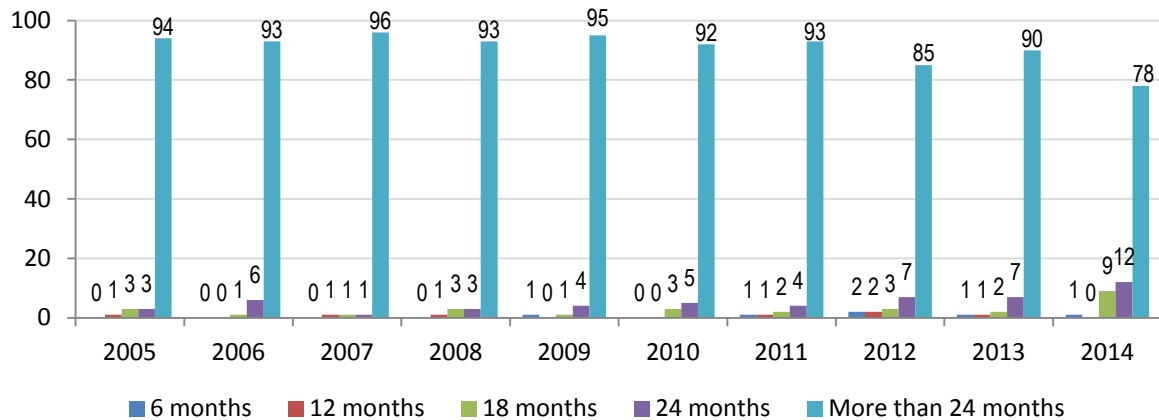
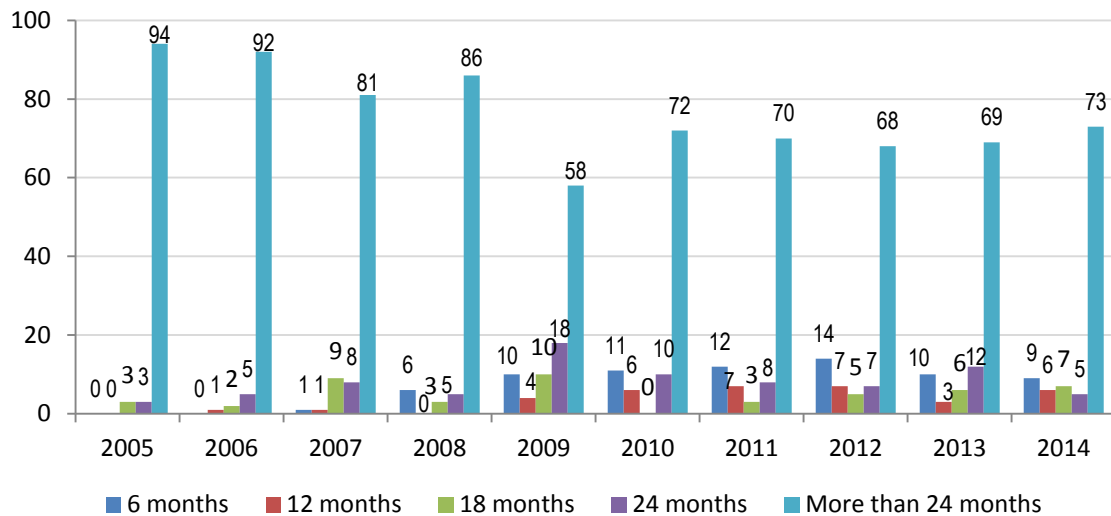


Figure 24. Percent Distribution of Time Between Removal and Guardianship, 2005 - 2014



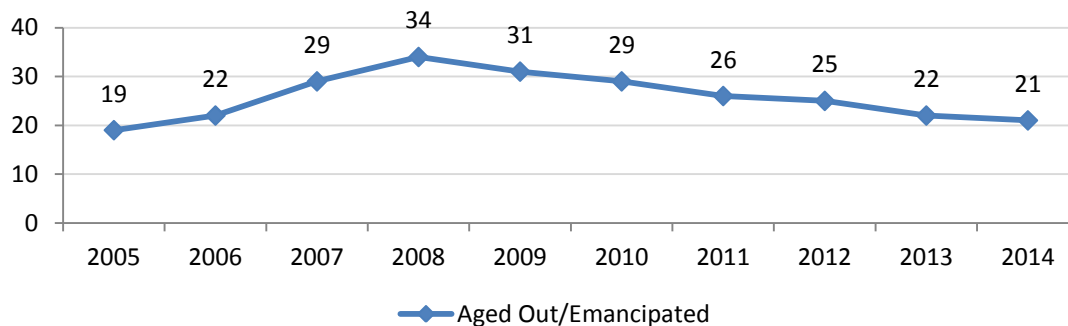
There was a slight increase in the number of youth who spent more than 24 months in care before being placed with a permanent guardian. However, the percentage of youth waiting more than two years for placement for the period from 2009

to 2014 is significantly improved over the percentage of youth waiting more than two years for the period from 2005 to 2008 (See Figure 24).

Measure 1b. Percentage of children who do not achieve permanency in the foster care system.

In 21% of the cases (105 cases) closed in 2014, the children did not achieve permanency either because they aged out of the system or were emancipated (Figure 25). The percentage of cases closed in this category in 2014 was lower than in previous years.

Figure 25. Percent Distribution of Children Exiting Family Court Jurisdiction, Post Disposition by Exit Reason, 2005 - 2014



Reentry to Foster Care⁷

Measure 1c. Percentage of children who reenter foster care pursuant to a court order within 12 and 24 months of being returned to their families (See Table 2).

Table 2. Children who reenter foster care pursuant to a court order after being returned to their families

Year	Number of Cases Closed by Reunification	Number of Children Returned to Foster Care after Reunification	Number of Months Before Return		
			12 Months	24 Months	More than 24 Months
2010	233	10	5	2	3
2011	242	10	7	1	2
2012	221	10	8	1	1
2013	184	7	6	1	0
2014	144	3	3	0	0

⁷ All reentry rates are based on the number of youth returned to care in the District of Columbia. Excluded are those youth returned to care in other jurisdictions.

Ten of the cases closed to reunification in 2010, 2011, and 2012 have returned to care, as did seven of those whose cases closed in 2013 and three whose cases closed in 2014. At least 50% of those who reentered foster care did so within 12 months of being returned to their families.

Measure 1d(i). Percentage of children who reenter foster care pursuant to a court order within 12 and 24 months of being adopted (See Table 3).

Two children whose cases closed to adoption in 2010 returned to care in this jurisdiction. Both returns occurred more than 24 months after the child was adopted. No other such cases have occurred in the past four years.

Table 3. Children who reenter foster care pursuant to a court order after being adopted

Year	Number of Cases Closed by Adoption	Number of Children Returned to Foster Care after Adoption	Number of Months Before Return		
			12 Months	24 Months	More than 24 Months
2010	112	2	0	0	2
2011	110	0	0	0	0
2012	122	0	0	0	0
2013	106	0	0	0	0
2014	95	0	0	0	0

Measure 1d(ii). Percentage of children who reenter foster care pursuant to a court order within 12 and 24 months of being placed with a permanent guardian (See Table 4).

Table 4. Children who reenter foster care pursuant to a court order after being placed with a permanent guardian

Year	Number of Cases Closed by Guardianship	Number of Children Returned to Foster Care after Guardianship	Number of Months Before Return		
			12 Months	24 Months	More than 24 Months
2010	108	23	7	8	8
2011	158	47	18	7	22
2012	160	33	18	7	8
2013	162	23	14	8	1
2014	140	6	6	0	0

Twenty-three cases closed due to guardianship in 2010 disrupted after placement, fifteen within 24 months. Of the 47 cases closed to guardianship in 2011 that were disrupted, 25 occurred within 24 months. Similarly 25 of the 33 cases closed

due to guardianship in 2012 disrupted within 24 months of placement. Twenty-two cases closed due to guardianship in 2013 have been disrupted, 14 within 12 months of placement with a permanent guardian and eight within 24 months of placement. Of the 140 cases closed due to guardianship in 2014, only six have disrupted. In many instances these guardianship placements disrupt due to the death or incapacity of the caregiver. Consistent with statutory requirements, successor guardians are named and those placements are approved by the court. The cases are reopened to conduct home studies to ensure child safety prior to placement with the successor guardian.

Performance Measure 2: Timeliness

Goal: To enhance expedition to permanency by minimizing the time from the filing of the petition/removal to permanency.

Measures 2a-2e. Time to adjudication, disposition hearing and permanency hearing for children removed from home and children that are not removed.

See discussion under ASFA compliance, pages 32-39.

TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

Federal and local law require that when a child has been placed outside of the home for 15 of the most recent 22 months, a motion for termination of parental rights (TPR) must be filed or an exception must be documented. In the District, to comply with this requirement the OAG is mandated to take legal action or file a TPR motion when children have been removed from home in two instances. First, when the child has been removed from the home for 15 of the most recent 22 months as indicated above and second, within 45 days of a goal of adoption being set. Since passage of the Act the number of TPR motions filed has varied considerably.

Measure 2f(i). Time between filing of the original neglect petition in an abuse and neglect case and filing of the TPR motion.

Table 5 provides information on compliance with the timely filing of TPR motions for the five-year period, 2010 through 2014. A review of the time between the filing of the original neglect petition in a case and the subsequent filing of a TPR motion in that case indicates that the median number of days between these two events was between 17 to 19 months. There were a total of 52 TPR motions filed in 2014. Nearly two-thirds of those motions were filed within 22 months, as had at least 60% of the motions filed from 2010 through 2013. Table 5 also indicates in several cases the TPR motion was filed after the case had been open for more than three years. In most cases where the TPR is filed after the 22 month timeline, a goal of adoption has been set late in the case, and the motion is filed within the 45 day timeframe. The OAG continues to track permanency goals of children removed from home very closely to ensure that whenever a goal changes to adoption, a timely TPR motion is filed. In addition, the status of TPR cases is reviewed by both the court and the OAG on a quarterly basis. This collaborative review process has resulted in improvement in the timely filing of such motions.

Table 5. Time Between Filing of Original Neglect Petition and Filing of TPR Motion, by Year TPR Motion Filed, 2010 – 2014

Year Filed	Total TPR Motions Filed	Median Days To Filing	Average Days To Filing	Number of Motions Filed Within :				
				15 months	22 months	36 months	60 months	More than 60 months
2010	83	559	750	26	25	22	4	6
2011	67	532	664	22	26	13	4	2
2012	77	517	693	31	15	19	11	1
2013	66	496	614	28	20	12	6	0
2014	52	549	952	17	16	10	5	4

The following Tables 6, 7 and 8 provide information on the court's performance as it relates to the handling of TPR motions.

Measure 2f(ii). Time between filing and disposition of TPR motions in abuse and neglect cases.

**Table 6. Termination of Parental Rights Motions Filed, by Year
Motion Filed and Method of Disposition, 2010 – 2014**

Year Filed	Total Filed	Total Undisposed	Total Disposed	Method of Disposition			
				Granted	Dismissed	Withdrawn	Denied
2010	82	0	82	8	45	29	0
2011	67	0	67	12	29	23	3
2012	80	6	74	8	40	25	1
2013	68	6	62	1	40	21	0
2014	52	34	18	0	6	12	0

**Table 7. Time Between Filing and Disposition of TPR Motions,
by Year Motion Filed, 2010 – 2014**

Year Filed	Total Motions Disposed of	Median Days to Disposition	Average Days to Disposition	Number of Motions Disposed of Within:				
				120 days	180 days	270 days	365 days	365 + days
2010	82	376	437	4	10	16	9	43
2011	67	510	498	6	6	8	6	41
2012	74	413	380	2	4	15	8	45
2013	62	299	287	8	7	8	22	17
2014	18	148	176	7	2	5	4	0

**Table 8. Time Between Filing and Disposition of TPR Motion, by Year
Motion was Filed and Type of Disposition, 2010-2014**

Year Filed	Total Motions Disposed of	Time to Disposition, by Type of Disposition					
		Motion Granted			Other Disposition of Motion*		
		Number of Motions Granted	Median Days to Disposition	Average Days to Disposition	Number of Other Dispositions	Median Days to Disposition	Average Days to Disposition
2010	82	8	786	682	74	338	411
2011	67	12	488	423	55	554	502
2012	74	8	379	451	66	423	371
2013	62	1	329	329	61	299	273
2014	18	0	-	-	18	148	176

Table 6 shows that there are a total of 46 TPR motions pending that were filed during the five-year period 2009 to 2013. All TPR motions filed in 2010 and 2011 have been disposed. There are six motions pending from 2012 and six motions pending which were filed in 2013. Seventy-four percent of the pending TPR motions were filed in 2014. Table 6 also highlights information on disposition of TPR motions by method of

disposition. The relatively low number of motions that were granted is largely a reflection of the practice in the District of Columbia of terminating parental rights within the adoption case. As a result, most TPR motions are disposed of through dismissal or withdrawal of the motion after an adoption has been finalized.

Case processing performance standards for the disposition of TPR motions were established by the Chief Judge in Administrative Order 09-12, issued in October 2009. The standard, requires that 75% of TPR motions be resolved within nine months and 90% within 12 months. As indicated in Table 7, 18 of the 52 TPR motions filed in 2014 (35%) have been disposed. Seventy-eight percent were disposed of within nine months and 100% within 12 months. Compliance with the performance standard has improved over the five-year period but continued improvement is needed. Thirty-nine percent of motions filed in 2011 and 2012 were disposed of within one year, compared to 48% of those filed in 2010 and 72% of those filed in 2013. In 2014, the court began to develop tools that will allow it to better monitor compliance with this performance measure in 2015.

Measure 2g. Time between granting of the TPR motion and filing of the adoption petition in abuse and neglect cases (Table 9).

Table 9. Time Between Granting TPR Motion and Filing of Adoption Petition in Abuse and Neglect Cases, by Year TPR Motion Granted, 2010 – 2014

Year Filed	Number of TPR Motions Granted	Number of Adoption Petitions Filed	Median Days to Disposition	Average Days to Disposition	Number of Adoption Petitions Filed Within:				
					1 month	3 months	6 months	12 months	12 + months
2010	19	6	172	302	0	1	2	1	2
2011	15	5	442	382	0	0	1	1	3
2012	8	4	263	221	0	1	0	3	0
2013	11	10	132	170	3	1	3	2	1
2014	5	1	13	13	1	0	0	0	0

Over the period from 2010 through 2014, the median number of days for an adoption petition to be filed after a TPR motion had been granted ranged from a low of 132 days in 2013 to a high of 442 days in 2011. Only one adoption petition had been filed in a case that was granted a TPR in 2014. The calculation of the median does not include those cases in which an adoption petition was filed before the TPR motion was granted, or those cases in which a TPR motion was granted and no adoption petition has been filed.

Measure 2h. Time between filing of adoption petition and finalization of adoption in abuse and neglect cases (Tables 10 and 11).

Table 10. Adoption Petitions Filed by CFSA, by Year Petition Filed and Method of Disposition, 2010 - 2014

Year Filed	Total Filed	Total Undisposed of	Total Disposed of	Method of Disposition			
				Granted	Dismissed	Withdrawn	Denied
2010	168	0	168	115	17	34	2
2011	132	0	132	88	11	33	0
2012	144	5	139	110	10	17	2
2013	155	33	122	95	8	19	0
2014	146	106	40	31	0	9	0

Table 11. Time Between Filing and Finalization of Adoption Petition of Children in Foster Care, by Year Petition Filed, 2010 - 2014

Year Filed	Total Adoptions Finalized	Median Days to Finalization	Average Days to Finalization	Number of Adoptions Finalized Within:				
				6 months	12 months	18 months	24 months	>24 months
2010	115	403	462	10	34	37	17	17
2011	88	404	453	5	32	31	10	10
2012	110	308	355	20	49	25	8	8
2013	95	293	304	15	49	26	5	0
2014	31	226	227	8	23	0	0	0

A quarter of the adoption petitions filed in 2014 have been disposed. In nearly 8 out of 10 cases disposed, the adoption petition was granted (Table 10). As Table 12 indicates, for those cases in which the petition was granted, the median time between filing and finalization was slightly longer than 7 months (226 days). For adoptions finalized in 2013, the median was 293 days or almost ten months. As can be seen from

Table 11, almost all adoption petitions filed from 2010 to 2012 have been disposed. The median time between the filing of the adoption petition and finalization decreased steadily. It was approximately 13 months in 2010 and 2011 and 10 months in 2012.

Performance Measure 3: Due Process

Goal: To deal with cases impartially and thoroughly based on the evidence brought before the court.

Measure 3d. Percentage of children receiving legal counsel, guardians *ad litem* or CASA volunteers in advance of the initial hearing.

D.C. Code §16-2304 requires the appointment of a guardian *ad litem* who is an attorney for all children involved in neglect proceedings. Guardians *ad litem* were appointed for all children in advance of the initial hearing.

Measure 3e. Percentage of cases where counsel for parents are appointed in advance of the initial hearing.

D.C. Code §16-2304 also entitles parents to be represented by counsel at all critical stages of neglect proceedings, and if financially unable to obtain adequate representation, to have counsel appointed for them. In all cases that met the eligibility criteria, counsel was appointed for parents on the day of the initial hearing.

MAYOR'S SERVICES LIAISON OFFICE

The Mayor's Services Liaison Office (MSLO), located on the JM level of the Moultrie Courthouse, was established pursuant to the Act. The mission of the MSLO is to promote safe and permanent homes for children by working collaboratively with stakeholders to develop readily accessible services based on a continuum of care that is culturally sensitive, family-focused and strength-based.

The objectives of the Mayor's Services Liaison Office are to:

- Support social workers, case workers, attorneys, family workers and judges in identifying and accessing client-appropriate information and services across District agencies and in the community for children and families involved in Family Court proceedings;
- Provide information and referrals to families and individuals;
- Facilitate coordination in the delivery of services among multiple agencies; and
- Provide information to the Family Court on the availability and provision of services and resources across District agencies.

The MSLO serves children, youth and families who are involved in Family Court proceedings. The Office is supported by 12 District of Columbia government agency liaisons that are familiar with the types of services and resources available through their agencies and can access their respective agencies' information systems and resources from the courthouse. The agency liaisons respond to inquiries and requests for information concerning services and resources, and consult with the assigned social worker(s) or case worker(s) in an effort to access available services for the child and/or family. Each liaison is able to provide information to the court about whether a family or child is known to its system and what services are currently being provided to the family or child.

The following District of Columbia government agencies have staff physically located in the MSLO, during specific, pre-assigned days of the week:

- Child and Family Services Agency
- Department of Behavioral Health
- District of Columbia Public Schools
- District of Columbia Housing Authority
- Department of Disability Administration
- Hillcrest Children's Health Center
- Rehabilitative Services Administration
- The Fatherhood Education, Empowerment and Development Program

The following District of Columbia government agencies do not physically locate staff at the MSLO, however, they have designated MSLO liaisons that respond to requests for services and requests for information:

- Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
- Economy Security Administration
- Department of Human Services: Strong Families Division
- Department of Employment Services
- Metropolitan Police Department: Youth and Preventive Services Division
- Department of Behavioral Health: Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration

Referral Process to the Mayor's Services Liaison Office

Cases are referred to the MSLO from a variety of sources, including through a court order, self-referral, referral from a guardian *ad litem*, social worker, family worker, attorney, judge, and/or probation officer (See Figure 26). The goal of the interagency collaboration within MSLO is to create a seamless system of care for accessing client information, appropriate services, and resources supporting families and children.

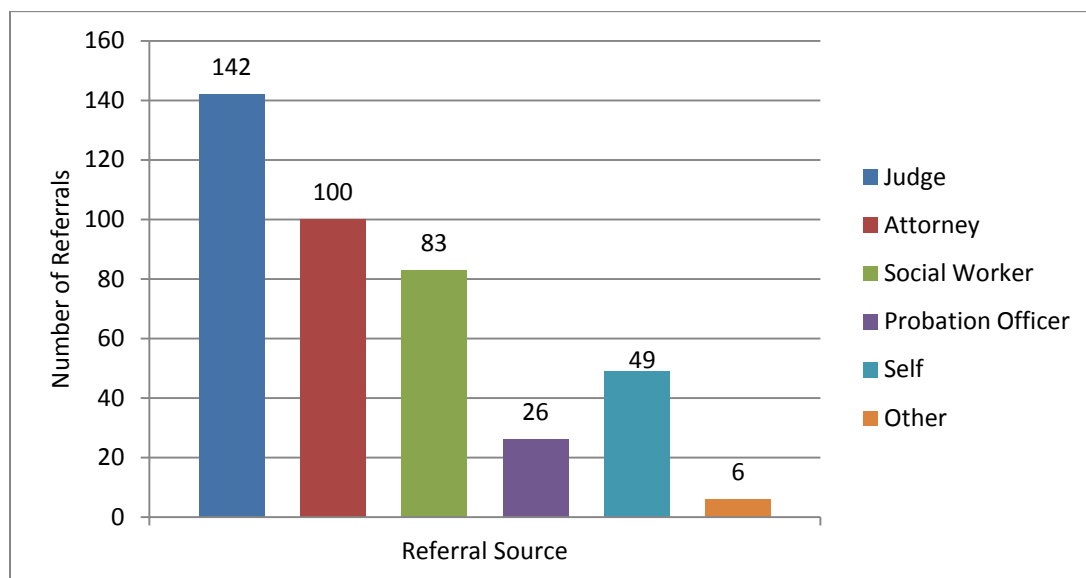
In 2014, the MSLO received 406 referrals, a 22% percent decline from the 518 referrals received in 2013. The decline in referrals may be attributed to a variety of factors including fewer children being referred to the court and the reorganization of the Office of Well Being at CFSA which is providing more services to families upon first contact.

Ninety percent of referrals (364) were for families with a currently open case in Family Court and 10% involved walk-in clients or clients with a previous history in the Family Court. Among referrals with open court cases, 66% (241) were court involved families referred by the court to seek the services of the MSLO. The remaining 34% of those seeking services had been ordered to the MSLO by a judicial officer to be

connected with a specific service. Family Court judicial officers (35%) were the most likely to refer families to the MSLO, followed by attorneys (25%) and then social workers (20%). Twelve percent of referrals were self referred, and another six percent were referred by their probation officer.

Of the 406 referrals for service, over 350 families and children were successfully connected to the services and resources they needed.

Figure 26. Referrals to MSLO by Referral Source, 2014

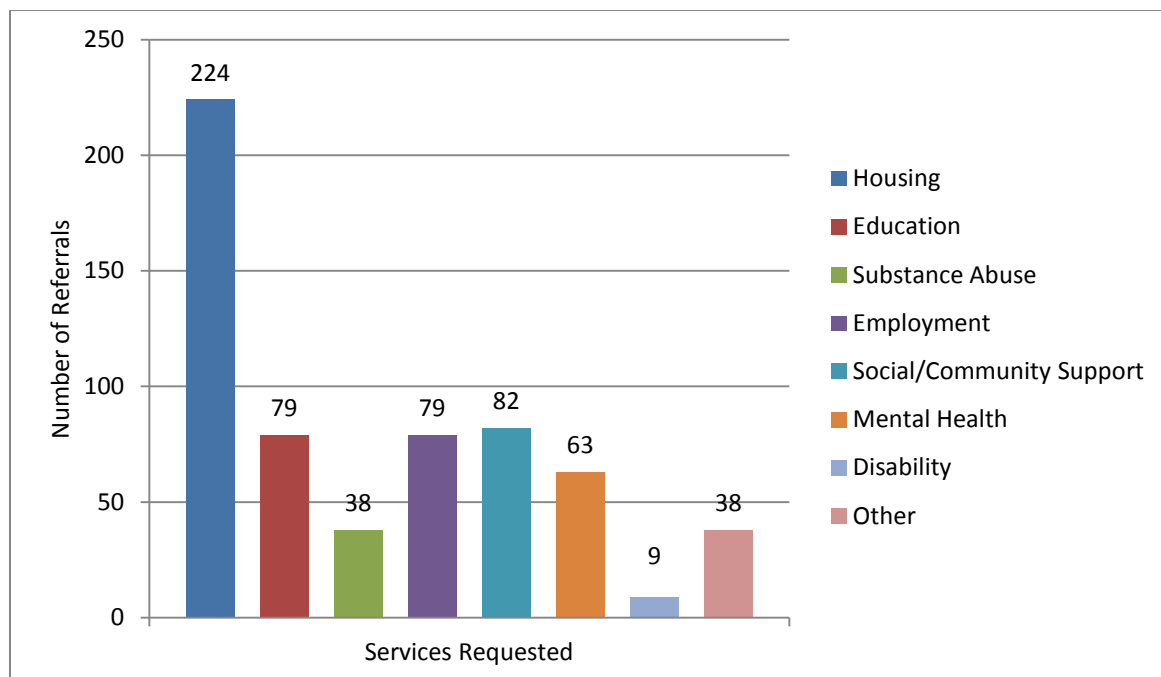


Cases seeking the services of the MSLO required assistance with: (a) issues related to housing, such as transfers, inspections, emergency housing; (b) mental health evaluations and assessments; (c) individual and family therapy; (d) substance abuse treatment; (e) school placements; (f) IEP's and other special education issues, including testing and due process; (g) general education; (h) TANF assistance; (i) medical assistance; (j) financial assistance; (k) food assistance; and (l) employment and literacy information (See Figure 27). The MSLO effectively linked these families and children to a variety of services, chief among them was housing, education and employment. In

addition, the MSLO provided several resources to women in the Family Treatment Court program, such as housing assistance, including assistance with the Housing Voucher Client Placement program (D.C.H.A.), eviction prevention, TANF assistance, and medical assistance.

In general, service requests to the MSLO are immediately assigned to the appropriate agency liaison. The agency liaison meets with the family and provides the services and the resources necessary to resolve the issue(s), usually within 24 to 48 hours of meeting with the party. In many instances, services are provided in the MSLO at the time of the request.

Figure 27. Referrals to the Mayors Services Liaison Office, 2014



MSLO staff participated in several new projects in the Family Court including: the Case Expediting Project, the D.C. Fathering Court, Grandparents program, the Fatherhood Education Empowerment and Development (FEED), and the Family Treatment Court.

NEW INITIATIVES IN ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Neglect Case Closures – Administrative Order 14-03

Administrative Order 14-03 was issued by the Chief Judge of the Superior Court and became effective on February 7, 2014. The order authorizes the Juvenile and Neglect Branch to administratively dispose of neglect cases upon a child's 21st birthday without the need for a court order. The goal is to ensure that cases are closed in a timely manner.

Timeline for Resolution of Motions and Entry of Written Findings – Administrative Order 14-20

On November 21, 2014, the Chief Judge of the Superior Court issued Administrative Order 14-20 "Timeline for Resolution of Motions and Entry of Written Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law in Neglect, Adoption, and Termination of Parental Rights Cases." The Administrative Order establishes a timeline to ensure that decisions on motions and the entry of written findings are made in a timely and efficient manner. The Administrative Order is designed to promote the timely resolution of issues and to provide certainty of outcome for families and children in the Family Court.

Trial Schedule Workgroup

In September 2014, the Presiding Judge of the Family Court created the Trial Schedule Workgroup. The multi-agency workgroup is charged with recommending measures to improve the calendaring of neglect trials, including the feasibility of requiring consecutive trial dates.

Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (Public Law 113-183)

Enacted on September 29, 2014, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act amends the title IV-E foster care program to address trafficking, limits another planned permanency living arrangement (APPLA) as a plan for youth, and

reauthorizes and amends Family Connections Grants and the Adoption and Guardianship Incentives Program. Specifically the Act:

Revises title IV-E/IV-B case plan and case review requirements for youth with a plan of APPLA and children over age 14

The Act eliminates Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) as a permanency goal for children under the age of 16 and adds additional case plan and case review requirements for older youth with a permanency goal of APPLA. For children in foster care under the responsibility of an Indian tribe, these changes do not apply until three years after the enactment of this Act. At each permanency hearing, the Act requires the state agency to: document the efforts to place a child permanently with a parent, relative, or in a guardianship or adoptive placement and the intensive, ongoing and unsuccessful efforts for family placement, including efforts to locate biological family members using search technologies (including social media); implement procedures to ensure that the court or administrative body conducting the permanency hearing asks the child about the child's desired permanency outcome, make a judicial determination explaining why APPLA is still the best permanency plan and why it is not in the best interest of the child to be returned home, adopted, placed with a legal guardian, or placed with a fit and willing relative; and specify the steps the agency is taking to ensure the reasonable and prudent parent standard is being followed, and that the child has regular, ongoing opportunities to engage in age or developmental appropriate activities.

Children age 14 and older have authority to participate in: (1) the development of their own case plans, in consultation with up to two members of the case planning team other than a foster parent or social worker; as well as (2) transitional planning for a

successful adulthood. Case plan requirements are specified, including the child's rights with respect to education, health, visitation, and court participation, the right to be provided with certain documents, and the right to stay safe and avoid exploitation.

Information for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

Foster children aging out of the system (unless in foster care less than 6 months) must be provided with a copy of their birth certificate, Social Security card, health insurance information, copy of medical records, and a driver's license or equivalent state-issued identification card. This provision will take effect one year after enactment.

Encourages the placement of children in foster care with siblings

Adds clarifying language that all parents of siblings to the child (where the parent has legal custody of the sibling) also be identified and notified within 30 days after the removal of a child from the custody of the parent(s). This includes individuals who would have been considered siblings if not for the termination or other disruption of parental rights. Nothing in this section shall be construed as subordinating the rights of foster or adoptive parents of a child to the rights of the parents of a sibling of that child. Requires a state to spend at least 30% of specified savings on post-adoption services, post guardianship services, and services to support and sustain positive permanent outcomes for children who otherwise might enter into foster care under the responsibility of the state, with at least 66% of the spending to comply with such 30% requirement.

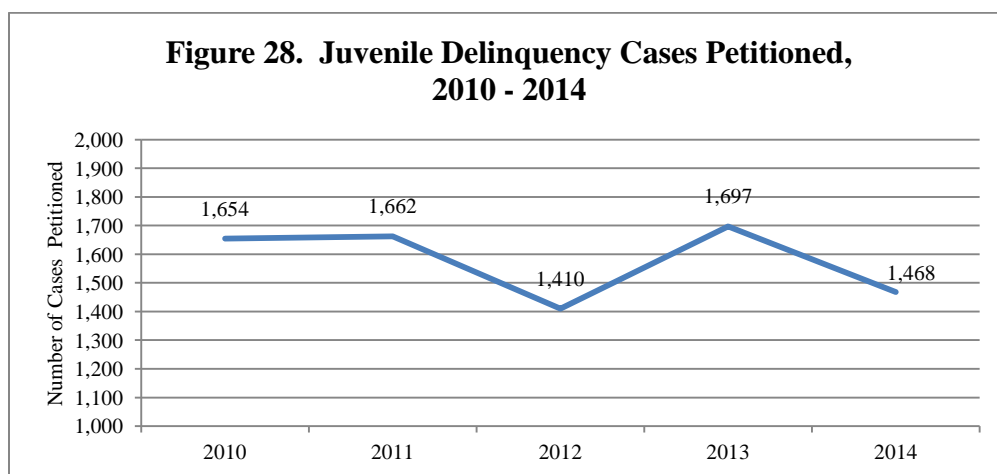
Preserves the eligibility of a child for kinship guardianship assistance payments when a guardian is replaced with a successor guardian.

Children who are receiving Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Program can continue receiving such payments in the event that their legal guardian dies or is no longer able to care for them and they are placed with a successor guardian. This provision

would ensure that children can continue to be cared for by another legal guardian who is named in the kinship guardianship assistance agreement (including an amendment to the agreement) if their relative guardian dies or is otherwise unable to care for the child.

JUVENILE CASES

In 2014, there were 2,594 new juvenile complaints filed in the Family Court, a 19% decrease from 2013 (3,194). Eighty-five percent (2,205) of the complaints filed were based on an allegation of delinquency, four percent (97 cases) pursuant to an Interstate Compact Agreement (ISC)⁸, and 11% (292 cases) on a person in need of supervision (PINS) allegation. Seventy-one percent of complaints filed (1,835) resulted in a formal petition being filed by the OAG. The remaining cases were either “no papered” or the petition has yet to be filed. Of the petitioned cases, delinquency cases comprised 80% (1,468), PINS cases (290) accounted for 16%, and ISC cases (59) accounted for 3%. The remainder of this section focuses on the 1,468 delinquency cases petitioned in 2014.



⁸ Interstate Compact cases are comprised of juvenile residents of the District of Columbia who were adjudicated in other jurisdictions, but who are referred to the Court to serve their probation under the supervision of the Court Social Services Division, as a courtesy to the referring jurisdiction.

As shown in Figure 28, the number of delinquency cases petitioned decreased by 13% between 2013 (1,697) and 2014 (1,468). The decrease occurred among both males and females. Petitions for males decreased by 14%, while petitions for females decreased by 12%. Unchanged from 2013, males accounted for 78% of cases petitioned in 2014. Similarly, the percentage of females among petitioned cases remained the same – 22%. However, the percentage of females among petitioned cases has increased over the last five years -- from 12% in 2010 to 17% in 2011 to 20% in 2012 to 22% in 2013 and 2014.

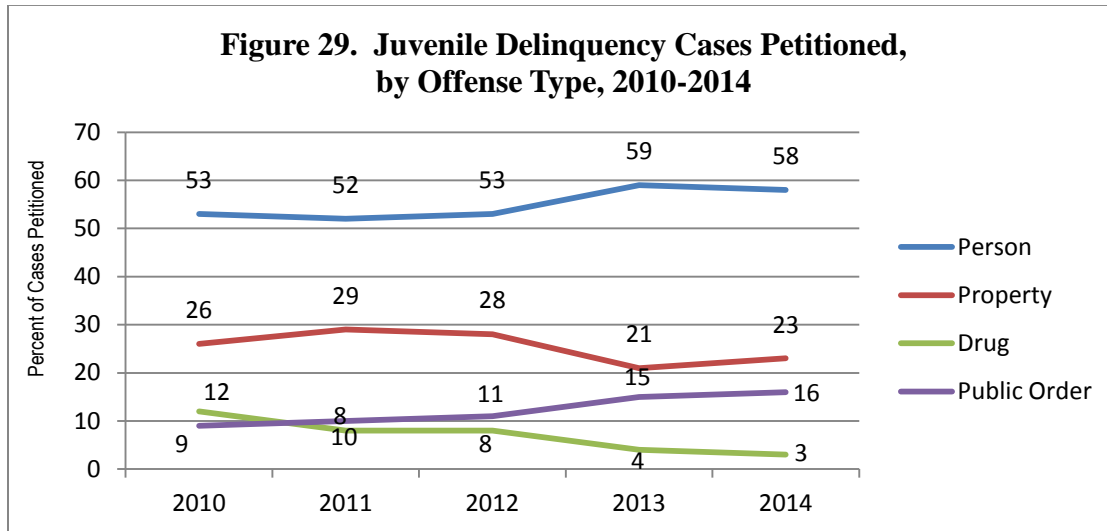
Four percent of cases petitioned in 2014 involved youth aged 12 or younger. A quarter involved juveniles who were 13 or 14 years old, 46% were 15-16 years old at the time of petitioning, and another quarter were 17 or over. Among youth petitioned in 2014, 50 percent were aged 15 and younger and 50% were aged 16 or older. The percentage of juveniles petitioned who were 15 and younger continued to increase. In 2010, 45% of youth were 15 and younger at the time of petitioning in comparison to 44% of youth in 2011, 48% of youth in 2012, 49% of youth in 2013, and 50% of youth in 2014. Forty-six percent of juveniles (670 cases) were detained at the time of their initial hearing (18% in non-secure facilities or shelter houses and 28% in secure detention facilities). Males comprised 80% of those detained and females 20%.

MOST SERIOUS OFFENSE⁹

Fifty-eight percent of new delinquency cases petitioned in 2014 were for a violent crime, 23% for a property offense, 3% for a drug law violation, and 16% for a

⁹Juveniles charged with multiple offenses are categorized according to their most serious offense. For example, in a single case where a juvenile is charged with robbery, simple assault and a weapons offense, the case is counted as a robbery. Thus data presented in this table does not provide a count of the number of crimes for which a juvenile was charged.

public order offense (See Figure 29). In 2014, the most common juvenile charges resulting in a petition was for a charge of aggravated assault (17% of referrals) or simple assault (16%), followed by robbery (12%). Larceny/theft, assault with a dangerous weapon, and weapons offenses each accounted for 7% of new referrals followed by unauthorized use of a vehicle at 6%.



Juveniles charged with assault accounted for nearly 7 out of 10 new petitions for acts against persons (aggravated assault (30%), simple assault (27%), and assault with a dangerous weapon (12%)). Robbery (25%) was the second leading offense petitioned for acts against persons (5% armed robbery and 20% unarmed).

Nearly thirty percent of all juvenile cases petitioned for acts against property involved larceny/theft, followed by unauthorized use of a vehicle (25%), burglary II (16%), property damage (12%), and unlawful entry (10%).

The majority of youth charged with acts against public order were charged with either weapons offenses (44%) or obstruction of justice (30%). Among juveniles charged with a drug law violation, two-thirds were charged with drug possession and a third were charged with drug sale or distribution.

Most serious offense by age

Table 12 and Figure 30 provides information on new referrals by age and most serious offense. New referrals were younger in 2014 than those in the previous three years. In 2014, 50% of all delinquency cases petitioned by the Family Court involved youth 15 years of age or younger at the time of referral compared to 49% in 2013, 48% in 2012, 44% in 2011, and 45% in 2010. Referrals of youth 15 or younger represented a larger proportion of offenses against persons (56%) and property (48%) and smaller proportions of public order (35%) and drug offenses (28%). In 2014, there was little difference among the age groups in the most common reasons for referral. The most likely reason for petitioning a youth 15 or younger was a charge of simple assault (20%) or aggravated assault (20% of referrals), followed by robbery (11%), assault with a dangerous weapon (8%) and larceny/theft (7%). Similarly, the most common charge for a youth age 16 or older was aggravated assault (15%), robbery (12%) or simple assault (12%), followed by weapons offenses (9%), assault with a dangerous weapon (7%), and unauthorized use of auto (7%).

A review of most serious offense by age at time of petitioning within specific offense categories reveals some significant differences. As was the case in 2013, in 2014 the percentage of youth charged with crimes involving acts against persons decreased as youth became older. Specifically, 76% of juveniles aged 12 or younger were charged with a crime against a person as compared to 68% of juveniles age 13-14, 58% of those age 15-16, and 48% of those age 17 or older at referral. In contrast, the percentage of youth charged with property offenses, public order offenses, and drug law violations increased with the age of the offender. The percentages of property offense

charges, by age group, were: 12 and younger, 17%; ages 13-14, 21%; ages 15-16, 23%; ages 17 and older, 26%. Similarly, youth charged with public order offenses and drug law violations increased with age.

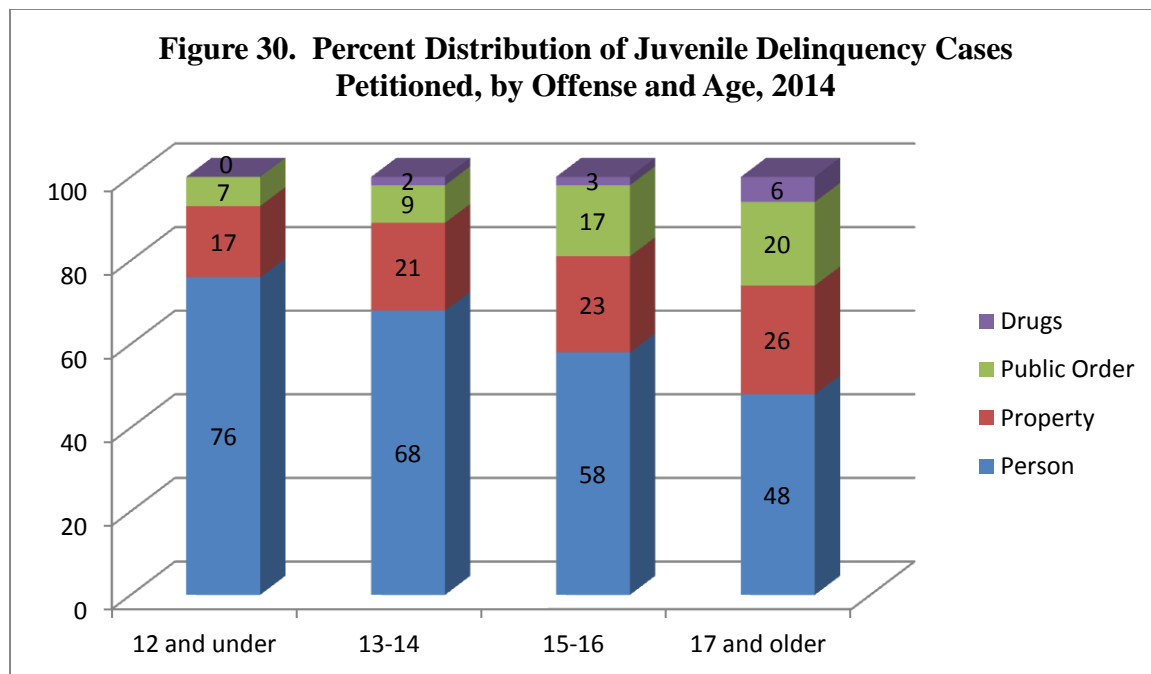
**Table 12. Juvenile Delinquency Cases Petitioned in 2014,
by Age and Most Serious Offense**

Most Serious Offense ¹⁰	Age at Time of Petition								
	Total cases	Under 10 years	10-12	13-14	15-16	17	18 and over ¹¹	15 and younger	16 and older
Acts against persons	857	0	44	248	392	167	6	479	378
Murder	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Assault with Intent to Kill	6	0	0	1	2	3	0	1	5
Assault with Dangerous Weapon	104	0	5	30	47	20	2	56	48
Aggravated Assault	253	0	15	72	117	49	0	145	108
Armed Robbery	39	0	2	6	18	13	0	19	20
Robbery	169	0	6	47	77	38	1	80	89
First Degree Sexual Abuse (Rape)	19	0	4	8	7	0	0	16	3
Other Violent Sex Offenses	8	0	0	5	2	1	0	6	2
Car Jacking	9	0	0	1	6	2	0	4	5
Burglary I	8	0	1	1	2	3	1	3	5
Simple Assault	232	0	11	74	110	36	1	144	88
Other Acts Against Persons	9	0	0	2	4	2	1	4	5
Acts against property	334	0	10	77	154	88	5	160	174
Burglary II	55	0	1	14	25	13	2	22	33
Larceny/Theft	97	0	3	23	48	21	2	51	46
Unauthorized Use of Auto	83	0	0	15	39	29	0	34	49
Arson	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Property Damage	40	0	5	9	16	10	0	23	17
Unlawful Entry	35	0	1	12	13	9	0	18	17
Stolen Property	13	0	0	4	7	1	1	8	5
Other Acts Against Property	9	0	0	0	5	4	0	3	6
Acts against public order	230	0	4	35	117	74	0	81	149
Weapons Offenses	102	0	1	14	51	36	0	33	69
Disorderly Conduct	8	0	1	1	5	1	0	3	5
Obstruction of Justice	68	0	1	9	36	22	0	22	46
Other Acts Against Public Order	52	0	1	11	25	15	0	23	29
Drug Law Violations	47	0	0	7	18	21	1	13	34
Drug Sale/Distribution	16	0	0	0	6	10	0	2	14
Drug Possession	31	0	0	7	12	11	1	11	20
Other Drug Law Violations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Delinquency Petitions¹²	1,468	0	58	367	681	350	12	733	735

¹⁰ See Footnote 9.

¹¹ See D.C. Code §16-2301(3)(c)(2001).

¹² This table excludes new referrals whose cases were not petitioned by the OAG after a complaint was filed. It also excludes juveniles 16 and over who were charged as adults.

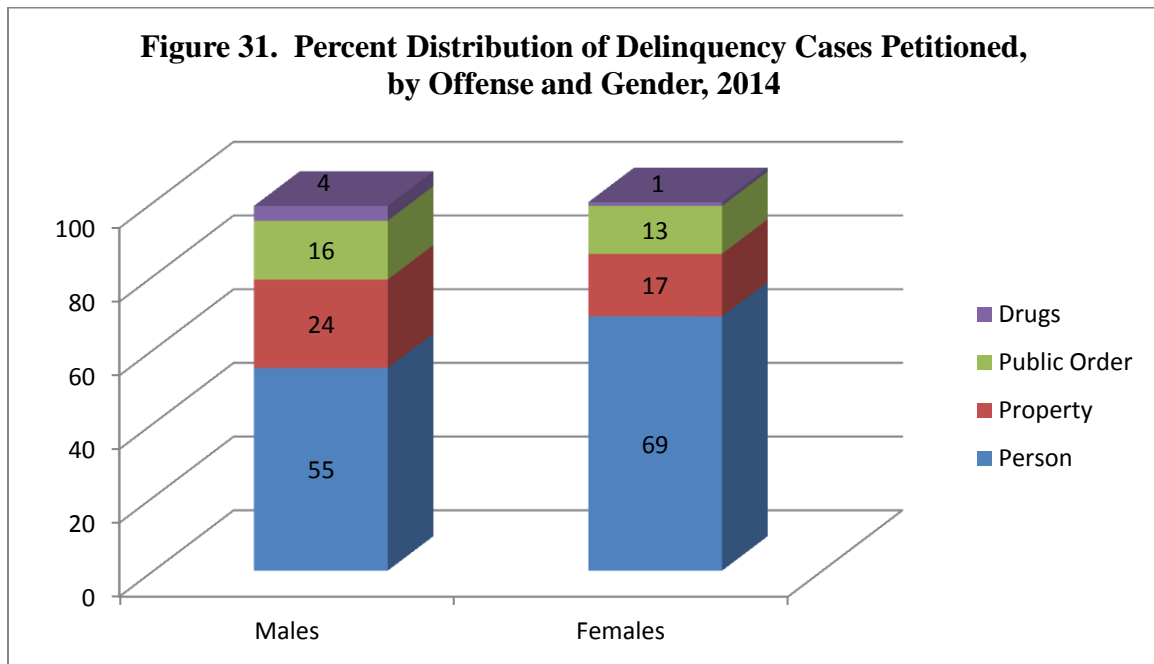


Most serious offense by gender

As in the past, when looking at data relative to the gender of youth in petitioned cases, there were significant differences in the types of offenses by gender (Figure 31). A larger percentage of females were charged with offenses against persons than were males – 69% of females compared to 55% of males. Conversely, a greater percentage of males than females were charged with acts against property (24% and 17%, respectively), acts against public order (16% and 13%, respectively), and drug law violations (4% and 1%, respectively).

Within major crime categories, there were also significant differences in the offenses for which males and females were charged (Table 13). Among male offenders charged with crimes against persons, 61% were charged with some form of assault, and 29% were charged with some form of robbery. In comparison, among females charged with crimes against persons, 88% were charged with some form of assault, and 10% for

some form of robbery. Among males charged with property offenses, unauthorized use of a vehicle (29%) was the leading charge followed by larceny/theft (28%) and burglary II (17%). For females, the leading property charge was larceny/theft (35%) followed by property damage (26%) and burglary II (16%). Nearly half (47%) of the males charged with public order offenses were charged with a weapons offense and 29% with obstruction of justice. Females, on the other hand, were equally as likely to be charged for obstruction of justice (33%) as weapons offenses (31%). In contrast, while 4% of males were charged with drug offenses, only 1% of females were charged with a similar offense. As in 2013, drug possession was the most likely charge for both males (66%) and females (67%).



**Table 13. Juvenile Delinquency Cases Petitioned in 2014,
by Most Serious Offense and Gender**

Most Serious Offense ¹³	Total cases	Male	Female
Acts against persons	857	631	226
Murder	1	1	0
Assault W/I Kill	6	5	1
Assault Dangerous Weapon	104	72	32
Aggravated Assault	253	172	81
Armed Robbery	39	34	5
Robbery	169	152	17
First Degree Sex Abuse	19	18	1
Other Violent Sex Offenses	8	8	0
Carjacking	9	9	0
Burglary I	8	8	0
Simple Assault	232	145	87
Other Acts Against Persons	9	7	2
Acts against property	334	277	57
Burglary II	55	46	9
Larceny/Theft	97	77	20
Unauthorized Use Auto	83	80	3
Arson	2	1	1
Property Damage	40	25	15
Unlawful entry	35	31	4
Stolen Property	13	11	2
Other Acts Against Property	9	6	3
Acts against public order	230	188	42
Weapons Offenses	102	89	13
Disorderly Conduct	8	8	0
Obstruction of Justice	68	54	14
Other Acts Against Public Order	52	37	15
Drug Law Violations	47	44	3
Drug Sale/Distribution	16	15	1
Drug Possession	31	29	2
Other Drug Law Violations	0	0	0
Total Delinquency Petitions	1,468	1,140	328

Most serious offense by detention status

A child shall not be detained pending a trial or disposition hearing unless he is alleged to be delinquent or in need of supervision and it appears that detention is required to protect the person or property of others or of the child, or to secure the child's presence at the next court hearing. *See* D.C. Code §16-2310 (a). In addition, a

¹³ See Footnote 9.

child shall not be placed in shelter care pending a trial or disposition hearing unless it appears that shelter care is required to protect the child or because the child has no parent, guardian, custodian, or other person or agency able to provide supervision and care for him or her, and no alternative resources or arrangements are available to the family to safeguard the child without requiring removal. *See* D.C. Code § 16-2310 (b). In order to detain the child, the judicial officer must also have probable cause to believe that the child committed the offense. In determining whether a youth should be detained or not, judicial officers, exercising their discretion, consider a myriad of factors before making the detention decision. Factors taken into consideration include but are not limited to:¹⁴

- the nature and circumstances of the pending charge;
- the record of and seriousness of the child's previous offenses, if any;
- whether there are allegations of danger or threats to any witnesses;
- the emotional character and mental condition of the child;
- indication of the child's drug/alcohol addiction or drug/alcohol use;
- any suicidal actions or tendencies of the child;
- any other seriously self-destructive behavior creating imminent danger to the child's life or health;
- the length of, and community ties related to, the child's residence in D.C.;
- the child's school record and employment record (if any);
- record of the child's appearances at prior court hearings; and
- the record of, and circumstances of, any previous abscondences by the child from home.

If the judicial officer determines that detention appears to be justified, he/she has discretion to consider whether the child's living arrangements and degree of supervision might justify release pending adjudication. Notwithstanding the above factors, there is a rebuttable presumption that detention is required to protect the person or property of others if the judicial officer finds by a substantial probability that the child committed a

¹⁴ See Superior Court Juvenile Rule 106.

dangerous crime or a crime of violence while armed, as defined in D.C. Code § 16-2310 (a-1)(2), or committed the offense carrying a pistol without a license.

Table 14 shows that in 670 (46%) of the 1,468 juvenile delinquency cases petitioned in 2014, the youth was detained prior to trial.¹⁵ The percentage of youth detained prior to trial remained the same between 2013 and 2014 but was higher than it was in 2012 (42%) and 2011 (39%). Table 14 presents information on the number of juveniles detained at initial hearing by offense, one of the many factors judges must consider when making a decision to detain a youth.

In 2014, 49% of those charged with acts against public order (i.e. weapons offenses) were detained prior to trial, compared to 47% of those charged with acts against persons, 41% of those charged with property crimes, and 30% of those charged with drug offenses. The comparable figures for 2013 were 56%, 46%, 41%, and 35%, respectively. With regard to specific offenses, 100% of juveniles charged with murder, assault with intent to kill, and arson were detained prior to trial, as were 82% of those charged with armed robbery, 74% of those charged with first degree sexual abuse, 71% of those charged with obstruction of justice, 67% of those charged with carjacking, and 63% of those charged with other violent sex offenses and burglary I. On the other hand, less than a third of those charged with disorderly conduct, drug possession, unlawful entry, and stolen property were detained prior to trial.

After three years of increase, the percentage of males detained prior to trial in 2014 (47%) decreased slightly. In 2013, 48% of males were detained prior to trial. In 2012, 44% of males were detained prior to trial as were 40% in 2011. Prior to that, 47%

¹⁵ For purposes of this report, a juvenile's pre-trial detention status is based on the detention decision made at the initial hearing. It does not reflect the movement of juveniles from one placement status to another either prior to or after adjudication.

of males were detained in 2010. On the other hand, the percentage of females detained prior to trial continued to increase in 2014. In 2014, 41% of females were detained prior to trial compared to 37% in 2013, 35% in 2012, and 31% in both 2011 and 2010.

In 2014, 61% of those detained were held in secure detention facilities and 39% in non-secure facilities (referred to as shelter houses). The percentage of those detained held in secure detention facilities increased for the second year after a three year period of decline. Fifty-eight percent of those detained were held in secure detention facilities in 2013, compared to 54% in 2012, 55% in 2011, and 68% in 2010. In 2014, males accounted for 81% of those detained in secure facilities and 78% of those detained in shelter houses. The percentage of females among those detained continued to increase. In 2014, 20% of those detained were females compared to 18% in 2013, 17% in 2012, 14% in 2011, and 8% in 2010.

Among those detained, there were also differences in the type of detention facility utilized based on the offense charged. Of youth detained, 100% of those charged with murder, car-jacking and arson were detained in secure facilities, as were 88% of those charged with obstruction of justice and 83% of those charged with assault with intent to kill and 81% of those charged with armed robbery. On the other hand, among detained youth, more than half of those charged with burglary I, other violent sex offenses, drug sale/distribution, simple assault, and aggravated assault were detained in shelter houses.

**Table 14. Juvenile Delinquency Cases in which the Juvenile Was Detained
Prior to Trial, by Offense and Type of Detention, 2014**

Most Serious Offense ¹⁶	All Detained Delinquency Cases						
	Total detained	Securely Detained			Non-Securely Detained		
		Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Acts against persons	406	233	189	44	173	123	50
Murder	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Assault With Intent to Kill	6	5	4	1	1	1	0
Assault with Dangerous Weapon	57	45	36	9	12	10	2
Aggravated Assault	95	43	32	11	52	29	23
Armed Robbery	32	26	25	1	6	4	2
Robbery	84	49	42	7	35	30	5
First Degree Sex Abuse (Rape)	14	9	9	0	5	4	1
Other Violent Sex Offenses	5	2	2	0	3	3	0
Carjacking	6	6	6	0	0	0	0
Burglary I	5	2	2	0	3	3	0
Simple Assault	96	43	30	13	53	36	17
Other Acts Against Persons	5	2	0	2	3	3	0
Acts against property	137	85	66	19	52	48	4
Burglary II	22	11	11	0	11	10	1
Larceny/Theft	35	22	14	8	13	12	1
Unauthorized Use Auto	40	25	25	0	15	15	0
Arson	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
Property Damage	21	15	6	9	6	4	2
Unlawful entry	10	5	4	1	5	5	0
Stolen Property	4	3	3	0	1	1	0
Other Acts Against Property	3	2	2	0	1	1	0
Acts against public order	113	85	71	14	28	24	4
Weapons Offenses	55	37	34	3	18	15	3
Disorderly Conduct	2	2	2	0	0	0	0
Obstruction of Justice	48	42	32	10	6	5	1
Other Acts Against Public Order	8	4	3	1	4	4	0
Drug Law Violations	14	6	5	1	8	8	0
Drug Sale/Distribution	6	2	1	1	4	4	0
Drug Possession	8	4	4	0	4	4	0
Other Drug Law Violations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of detained cases	670	409	331	78	261	203	58

TIMELINESS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY CASE PROCESSING

Many states and the District of Columbia, have established case-processing timelines for youth detained prior to trial. In addition to individual state timelines, several national organizations, including the American Bar Association, the Office of

¹⁶ See Footnote 9.

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the National District Attorneys Association have issued guidelines for case processing in juvenile cases.¹⁷

The guidelines both at the state and national levels address the time between key events in a juvenile delinquency case. In general, these guidelines suggest that the maximum time between court filing and adjudication for youth detained prior to trial be 30 days or less, and from filing to disposition for detained youth be 60 days or less.

In August 2005, the NCJFCJ published “*Juvenile Delinquency Guidelines: Improving Court Practice in Juvenile Delinquency Cases.*” The Guidelines establish national best practices in the handling of juvenile delinquency cases, in addition to establishing time parameters from initial hearing to disposition for both detained and non-detained youth. Suggested timeframes range from two weeks to six weeks depending on the child’s detention status.

District of Columbia Code §16-2310 (e), in part, establishes timeframes for the trial or fact-finding hearing for youth detained prior to trial in secure detention facilities. When a youth is securely detained, the timeframe for the fact finding hearing is either 30 or 45 days from the date of detention, depending on the seriousness of the charge. If a youth is securely detained and charged with murder, assault with intent to kill, first degree sexual abuse, first degree burglary, or armed robbery the case must go to trial within 45 days of the child’s detention. For all other securely detained youth, the case must be tried within 30 days. In certain instances, however, the court may extend the time limit for the fact finding hearing for one additional 30 day period. See D.C. Code

¹⁷ See “Delays in Juvenile Court Processing of Delinquency Cases” by Jeffrey A. Butts conducted under the sponsorship of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (1997) and “Waiting for Justice: Moving Young Offenders Through the Juvenile Court Process” by Jeffrey Butts and Gregory Halemba conducted under the sponsorship of the National Center for Juvenile Justice (1996).

§16-2310(e)(2)(A). In addition, upon good cause, the Attorney General may move for further continuance in 30-day increments.

In 2007, the District of Columbia City Council implemented emergency legislation which amended D.C. Code §16-2310 (e) by establishing a 45 day trial timeframe for youth detained in non-secure detention facilities or shelter houses. The Juvenile Speedy Trial Equity Act of 2008 was enacted on January 5, 2009. Since 2007, the Family Court began monitoring compliance with the 45 day trial timeline for non-secure detention cases based on internally developed court-wide performance measures.

Superior Court Juvenile Rule 32 requires that the disposition hearing in cases of securely and non-securely detained youth may be held immediately following adjudication but must be held not more than 15 days after adjudication. The D.C. Court of Appeals has held that the 15-day time requirement of Juvenile Rule 32 is directory rather than mandatory and that the trial court does not err when it extends the 15-day time period for a reasonable length of time to obtain the predisposition report. *See, In re J.B.*, 906 A.2d 866 (D.C. 2006).

Since 2007, the court has monitored the adjudication and disposition timeframes for youth held in non-secure detention facilities or shelter houses, in addition to timeframes for juveniles held in secure detention facilities. Beginning in 2010, the court began monitoring the adjudication and disposition timeframes for youth released prior to disposition. As a result, this report examines case processing standards for youth in four categories: (1) securely detained juveniles charged with murder, assault with intent to kill, armed robbery, first degree sex abuse, and first degree burglary -- the statute allows 45 days to reach adjudication and Juvenile Rule 32 allows 15 days from adjudication to

disposition, for a total of 60 days from initial hearing to disposition; (2) securely detained juveniles charged with any offense other than those identified in (1) -- the statute allows 30 days from initial hearing to adjudication and Juvenile Rule 32 allows 15 days from adjudication to disposition, for a total of 45 days from initial hearing to disposition; (3) non-securely detained juveniles charged with any offense -- the statute allows 45 days from initial hearing to adjudication and Juvenile Rule 32 allows 15 days from adjudication to disposition, for a total of 60 days from initial hearing to disposition; and (4) released youth – Administrative Order 08-13, issued by the Chief Judge in 2008, allows 270 days for disposition.

Beginning in 2011, performance data on time to adjudication and time to disposition is calculated using different performance metrics. Data on time to adjudication is based on the detention status of the respondent at the time of the initial hearing. In contrast, data on time to disposition is calculated based on the detention status of the respondent at the time of the disposition hearing. In addition, court performance on time to disposition takes into account excludable delay resulting from the absence or unavailability of the child (custody orders) and the period of delay resulting from examinations related to the mental health of the respondent.

Securely Detained Juveniles

Forty-three out of the 409 securely detained juveniles in 2014 were charged with murder, assault with intent to kill, armed robbery, first degree sexual abuse, or first degree burglary. As such, they were required to have their cases adjudicated within 45 days and their disposition hearing within 15 days of adjudication, for a total of 60 days. Throughout this report they will be referred to as “Secure Detention 45-day cases.” The

remaining 366 securely detained juveniles were required to have their cases adjudicated within 30 days and their disposition within 15 days of adjudication for a total of 45 days; they will be referred to as “Secure Detention 30-day cases.” Table 15 shows the adjudication status and Table 16 provides information on the time to adjudication for both categories of securely detained juveniles in 2014.

Of the 43 securely detained juveniles charged with the most serious offenses (45-day cases), 28 have been adjudicated. Nineteen of the 28 adjudicated cases (68%) met the 45 day adjudication timeline. The percentage of cases adjudicated within the timeline was 53% in 2013 and 43% in 2012. The median time from initial hearing to adjudication continued to decrease from 48 days in 2012 to 44 days in 2013 to 41 days in 2014.

Table 15. Adjudication Status of Securely Detained Youth, 2014

Adjudication Status	Secure Detention - 45 day Cases	Secure Detention - 30 day Cases	Total
Adjudication Hearing Held	28	276	304
Dismissed before adjudication	4	78	82
Pending Adjudication	9	13	22
Total	43	366	409

Table 16. Time to Adjudication for Securely Detained Youth, 2014

Securely Detained	Cases in Which an Adjudication Hearing Was Held								Percentage of cases within timeframe ¹⁸	Percentage of cases exceeding timeframe
	Days Between Events									
	Total cases	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-90	91 or more	Median	Average		
*Initial Hearing to Adjudication (Statutory Timeline 45 days)	28	8	11	4	3	2	41	45	68	32
Initial Hearing to Adjudication (Statutory Timeline 30 days)	276	150	54	29	26	17	29	38	54	46

*Includes juveniles charged with murder, assault with intent to kill, first degree sex abuse, armed robbery, and first degree burglary.

For other securely detained juveniles (30-day cases), the Court was in compliance with the 30-day statutory requirement for adjudication in 54% of the cases, a 13% decrease from both 2012 and 2013 when the compliance rate was 62%. As a

¹⁸ This table uses straight time in determining cases within the timeframe. As such, periods of delay resulting from statutorily allowed continuances have not been excluded from the calculation.

result, the median number of days to reach adjudication increased to 29 days. It was 28 days in 2011, 2012 and 2013 and 27 Days in 2010.

In 2014, a number of factors contributed to the inability to adjudicate cases of securely detained youth in a timely manner. Those factors included but were not limited to: the absence of an essential witness, unavailability of evidence, lack of availability of attorney, incomplete psychological, psychiatric and neurological tests, and difficulties in scheduling. The court will continue to monitor and track how requests for continuances are addressed with the goal of reducing the number of continuances requested and granted.

Table 17 provides information on the time between initial hearing and disposition for both categories of securely detained juveniles in 2014, based on detention status at the time of disposition.

Table 17. Time from Initial Hearing to Disposition for Securely Detained Youth, 2014

Securely Detained	Cases With Disposition Hearing or Closed Before Disposition Hearing								Percentage of cases within timeframe	Percentage of cases exceeding timeframe
	Days Between Events									
	Total cases	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-90	91 or more	Median	Average		
Initial Hearing to Disposition* (45 Day Cases – 60 days)	13	2	1	2	0	8	113	95	38	62
Initial Hearing to Disposition (30 Day Cases – 45 days)	150	67	27	8	21	27	34	53	63	37

*Includes juveniles charged with murder, assault with intent to kill, first degree sex abuse, armed robbery, and first degree burglary.

As explained earlier, securely detained youth are required to have their cases disposed/resolved within either 60 or 45 days depending on the nature of their charges. The calculation of time to disposition includes cases that moved through the system from initial hearing to adjudication to disposition, as well as cases that were dismissed either prior to or after adjudication. Approximately forty percent of securely detained juveniles with the most serious charges (45-day cases) were disposed within the 60 day

timeframe. The median time from initial hearing to disposition was 113 days and the average was 95 days.

For other securely detained juveniles (30-day cases), sixty-three percent of cases disposed were disposed of within the 45 day timeframe. The median time between initial hearing and disposition was 34 days. The average was 53 days.

As was the case with delays in the timely adjudication of cases for securely detained youth, delays in the timely disposition of cases were also attributable to a variety of factors. A major factor contributing to delays in disposition was the need to identify and obtain services or programs for the youth prior to disposition. Other factors included delays related to DYRS ability to obtain placement, delays in receipt of required psychological and psychiatric reports, respondents who were not in compliance with court orders, and respondents who were involved in other proceedings before the court.

Non-Securely Detained Offenders

Two hundred sixty-one (261) youth were detained in non-secure facilities or shelter houses prior to adjudication in 2014. Two hundred (200) had adjudication hearings held, 46 were dismissed before adjudication, and 15 were awaiting adjudication. In 57% of cases, adjudication hearings were held within the 45 day timeframe for non-securely detained youth. The compliance rate was 58% in 2013, 65% in 2012, 72% in 2011, and 67% in 2010. The median days to adjudication (42 days), decreased slightly between 2013 and 2014. It was 43 days in 2013 and 42 days in 2014 (Table 18).

Table 18. Time Between Initial Hearing and Adjudication for Youth Detained in Non-Secure Facilities, 2014

Non-Securely Detained	Cases in which an adjudication hearing was held								Percentage of Cases within timeframe ¹⁹	Percentage of Cases exceeding timeframe
	Days Between Events									
	Total cases	1-15	16-30	31-45	46-60	61 or more	Median	Average		
Initial Hearing to Adjudication (Timeline 45 days)	200	31	41	41	37	50	42	48	57	43

One hundred eleven (111) (86%) cases of youth detained in non-secure detention facilities at the time of disposition were in compliance with the time standard of 60 days from initial hearing to disposition (Table 19). The median number of days from initial hearing to disposition was 33, the average was 38 days. In 2015, through rigorous monitoring, the court intends to improve in meeting adjudication and disposition timelines.

Table 19. Time Between Initial Hearing and Disposition for Youth Detained in Non-Secure Facilities, 2014

Non-Securely Detained	Cases in which a disposition hearing was held or case closed before disposition								Percentage of Cases within timeframe	Percentage of Cases exceeding timeframe
	Days Between Events									
	Total cases	1-15	16-30	31-45	46-60	61 or more	Median	Average		
Initial Hearing to Disposition (Timeline 60 days)	129	26	37	32	16	18	33	38	86	14

Released Offenders

In 798 (54%) of the juvenile delinquency cases petitioned in 2014, the youth was released prior to adjudication. Among released youth, 584 had their cases adjudicated and 162 had their cases closed prior to adjudication (Figure 20). Adjudication has not yet occurred in 52 cases. In 2014, 100% of the cases adjudicated had hearings held in compliance with the timeline (255 days) – the compliance rate as in 2013. More than 99% of cases adjudicated in 2011 and 2012 were also adjudicated within the timeline.

¹⁹ See Footnote 18.

The median number of days to adjudication was 45 days in 2014, compared to 46 days in 2013, 45 days in 2012 and 46 days in 2011.

Table 20. Time Between Initial Hearing and Adjudication for Released Youth, 2014

Released	Cases in which an adjudication hearing was held								Percentage of Cases within timeframe ²⁰	Percentage of Cases exceeding timeframe
	Days Between Events									
	Total cases	1-85	86-170	171-255	255-270	271 or more	Median	Average		
Initial Hearing to Adjudication (Timeline 255 days)	584	490	80	13	0	1	45	54	100	0

Currently there is no Family Court statute or rule that dictates time standards for either adjudication or disposition for cases of youth released prior to adjudication, however, Administrative Order 08-13 did establish a 270-day time standard for disposition of these cases.

In 2014, 864 youth were released at the time of their disposition hearing (Figure 21). Ninety-nine percent of cases of youth released at the time of their disposition hearing were in compliance with the timeframe of 270 days from initial hearing to disposition. The median number of days to disposition was 58 days, the average was 72 days.

Table 21. Time Between Initial Hearing and Disposition for Released Youth, 2013

Released	Cases in which a disposition hearing was held or case closed before disposition								Percentage of Cases within timeframe	Percentage of Cases exceeding timeframe
	Days Between Events									
	Total cases	1-85	86-170	171-255	255-270	271 or more	Median	Average		
Initial Hearing to Disposition (Timeline 270 days)	864	629	175	43	7	10	58	72	99	1

²⁰ See Footnote 18.

FAMILY COURT SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION (CSSD)

Pursuant to Public Law 91-358, the Family Court's Social Services Division (CSSD) is responsible for screening, assessing, and presenting juvenile delinquency cases in the New Referrals courtroom (JM-15), and status offender cases in courtroom JM-5, managing cases, as well as serving and supervising all pre- and post- adjudicated juveniles involved in the front-end of the District of Columbia's juvenile justice system. Juveniles involved in the front-end of the system include: all newly arrested youth entering the Family Court system in juvenile delinquency cases, youth eligible for diversion, status offenders (e.g. persons in need of supervision (PINS), truants, run away, and ungovernable behavior cases) and post-disposition probation youth.

CSSD is responsible for conducting psychological, psycho-educational, comprehensive clinical risk assessments, and, when necessary, competency evaluations on all front-end youth. The division also conducts home studies on all families involved in contested domestic custody disputes and is responsible for conducting psycho-sexual evaluations on all youth pending adjudication for sexual offenses. On average, CSSD supervises approximately 1,550 juveniles. This total represents approximately 70% to 75% of all youth involved in the District's juvenile justice system.

In 2014, CSSD successfully achieved all of its objectives consistent with statutory requirements delineated in the District of Columbia Code, as well as best practice and emerging practices within the field of juvenile justice. Working with a variety of juvenile justice stakeholders (e.g., the Presiding Judge of the Family Court, the OAG, the Public Defender Services, and the Department of Behavioral Health), the Division continued to successfully operate the Juvenile Behavioral Health Services and Supervision component

of the Family Court's larger Juvenile Behavioral Health Court (JBHC). Additionally, the Division continued working in collaboration with the Capitol Projects and Facilities Management Division (CPFMD) on the development and construction of the Superior Court's fourth and fifth Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) Drop-In Centers both located in the northeast quadrant of the city. One center will serve status offenders (truants and PINS) along with youth involved in the JBHC. The other will serve all girls under the supervision of CSSD.

Working in coordination with the District of Columbia's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), the CSSD continued its focus on high risk youth through the "Partnership 4 Success" program. The program targets and provides special services to high risk youth under the supervision of CSSD and DYRS. The program also relies upon resources provided by the stakeholders from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Roving Leaders, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and D.C. Public Chartered Schools (DCPCS). Other coordinated efforts included: facilitating a host of pro-social delinquency prevention initiatives during Spring Break, including community service projects throughout the city, educational trips, including a trip to New York city (where youth had an opportunity to visit the historic African-American burial ground, Ground Zero, the Five Irish Points, the Betty and Malcolm X Memorial, the Apollo Theater, and sporting venues) and an effective cross-agency community supervision and monitoring program at the National Zoo; a highly successful cross- agency community supervision initiative at several high schools during dismissal from school, which significantly reduced crime on school campuses during peak times for juvenile crime; successful continuation of the

Summer Safety City-Wide Curfew Checks; and authoring several publications on juvenile services and supports facilitated by the CSSD.

The CSSD also continued its efforts to screen all referred youth to identify children and youth who may be subjected to human trafficking and exploitation. The screening tool, which encompasses components adopted from other jurisdictions and the Conner Screening tool is administered 24 hours a day at three locations by contractors specifically hired to perform the screening. Once 500 youth have been screened, CSSD will begin the process to validate the instrument.

Working in collaboration with the DYRS, CSSD continued to monitor and improve community-based Family Reunification Homes - FRH (or shelter homes), designed to house pre-trial and pre-disposition CSSD youth. In 2013, the DYRS reached out to the CSSD to request assistance with monitoring because of the frequent contact between CSSD, youth, and staff operating the homes. CSSD assessed its human capital resources and designated seven senior managers to monitor the 14 homes. The FRHs are monitored regularly through site visits, correspondence, and frequent meetings with DYRS leaders. Formal communications regarding programming and redressing issues of concerns are facilitated by the DYRS. This process has resulted in an increase in school attendance, a reduction in truancy, a reduction in absconders among court-ordered youth at the sites, and an increase in pro-social programming and engagement among the FRH and CSSD youth.

Other highlights include the creation of a Blacks in Wax Museum at the Southwest BARJ Drop-In Center to honor African-Americans during Black History month. Additional activities and efforts conducted by the CSSD include expanded

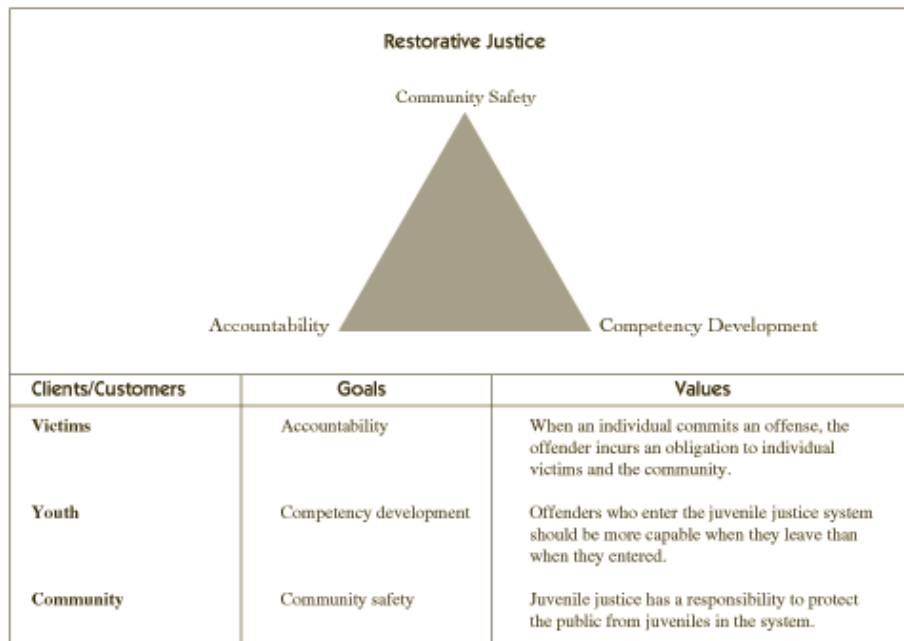
weekend summer curfew checks, weekly community supervision visits, escorting youth to several Washington Nationals, Wizards and Mystics games, and also attending a number of Georgetown Basketball games. The CSSD also escorted more than two hundred fifty youth to plays at the Kennedy Center.

The CSSD continued its commitment in ensuring that the vast majority of staff completed a Food Prep Course and also launched a Division-wide training with a focus on Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) Philosophy Principles. The purpose of the trainings, which will run across several contract years, is to build and expand the knowledge and skills of CSSD staff such that we are operating our services and supervision as well as signature programs, including our BARJ Drop-In Centers, with an all-inclusive construct of BARJ Principles. At its core, restorative justice principles hold that when a crime is committed, the victim, offender, and community are all impacted. Because the victim and community are impacted the offender must be held accountable. However, the victim, offender, and community must all be restored. Guiding BARJ principles include, but are not limited to:

- All human beings have dignity and worth, and accountability for juveniles means accepting responsibility.
- Parties (the victim, offender, and community) should be a central part of the response to the crime.
- The community is responsible for the well-being of all its members.

Below is a graphic representation of the balanced approach mission:

Figure 1. The Balanced Approach



Adapted from Maloney, D., Romig, D., and Armstrong, T. 1998. *Juvenile Probation: The Balanced Approach*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

CSSD is comprised of four branches, three of which house probation satellite offices/units designated to specific populations, and two (2) administrative units. Branches include: Juvenile Intake and Delinquency Prevention Branch, Child Guidance Clinic, Region I Pre- and Post-disposition Supervision, and Region II Pre- and Post-disposition Supervision. The three administrative units include: Juvenile Information Control Unit, Contract, Data and Financial Analysis Unit, and the Co-Located Custody Order Unit.

Juvenile Intake and Delinquency Prevention Branch

The Intake Branch is comprised of Intake Units I (day intake) and II (night intake), and the Delinquency Prevention Unit (responsible for electronic monitoring and community relations). The Branch is responsible for screening, investigation, recommendation, and case presentment for all newly referred youth for delinquency

cases. The Branch is also responsible for screening and determining the status of all status offender referrals and also the operation of all electronic monitoring services for CSSD youth. In 2014, the Intake Branch exceeded its goals and objectives outlined in accordance with statutory duties and CSSD's Management Action Plans (MAPs). In accordance with core requirements of the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act, all youth referred to CSSD following arrest must be screened (resulting in a preliminary detention/release recommendation) within a four hour period, prior to presentment of the case in courtroom JM-15. Building on accomplishments over the past three years, CSSD successfully:

- Screened 100% (nearly than 3,130 youth) of all newly arrested youth utilizing a valid Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI), a pre-trial social assessment. Among the youth screened for juvenile crimes, 28% were females and 72% were males. Among youth referred for a status offense (truancy), the CSSD received and screened approximately 1,350 referral packages, approximately 87% of which were returned to the referring school due to failure to demonstrate efforts to intervene and abate the truancy.
- Participated in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiatives, Juvenile Data Subcommittee, which seeks to collect and interpret juvenile arrest, diversion, court involvement and overall front end data. Providing stakeholders with data trend analysis and other observable facts enables stakeholders to provide timely interventions and address specific delinquency issues occurring in the District of Columbia.
- Collaborated with the Superior Court's Identity Consolidation Unit, encompassing the Integrated Justice Information System (IJIS) team, DYRS, and the Central Intake Center (CIC) to identify and correct errors in Courtview such as multiple social files, incorrectly spelled names or dates of birth, and duplicate x-reference or family ID numbers. Personal credentials are received such as birth certificates, social security cards, etc., and are scanned into Courtview.
- In 2013, successfully transitioned youth participating in electronic monitoring to a new provider which included new Global Position System (GPS) equipment and software with expanded tracking and reporting capability. In 2014, the CSSD installed 3,051 GPS devices on court-involved youth a 144% increase over the number of devices installed the

previous year. Similarly, there were 254 cases active on a monthly basis, a 36% increase over monthly active cases in the previous year.

- Increased collaboration with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) by reviewing and responding to their daily report that lists youths who have committed Type I offenses such as Murder, Robbery, Assault of Police Officer, and Assault with a Dangerous Weapon (gun, knife, etc.). Intake Units I and II also review MPD daily lock-up lists, identify youth who are court involved, and verify their court status and current contact information. The Delinquency Prevention Unit cross references crime location information provided by MPD utilizing GPS technology and provides a daily report.
- CSSD is a stakeholder on the Truancy Taskforce, a citywide initiative to address the causes and reduce the incidents of truancy in public and private educational institutions through coordinated efforts and meaningful interventions. The Juvenile Intake and Delinquency Branch is responsible for screening truancy referrals, making recommendations for petitioning/not petitioning, data collection and reporting, and providing technical assistance to stakeholder members.
- Participated in the Juvenile Intake and Arraignment workgroup tasked with analyzing and refining current stakeholder (MPD, DYRS OAG, CSSD, and Juvenile Clerk's Office) processes to create better workflow for cases that are presented in the Juvenile New Referrals (JM-15) courtroom.
- In an effort to build upon the information sharing with stakeholder agencies, a monthly list is compiled of CSSD youth that are also being supervised by the Pre-Trial Services Agency (PSA). PSA is provided with the youths' current CSSD probation officer and their contact information. It is the hope that this will minimize the duplication of services and forge a stronger collaboration between agencies.

Child Guidance Clinic: Post Doctoral Internship Program

The Child Guidance Clinic (CGC) continued to operate its nationally recognized pre-doctoral psychology internship training program accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA). Welcoming the 2014 new class of interns from universities and colleges across the country, three (3) interns, representing Howard University, Indiana University, and the American School of Professional Psychology at Argosy, were selected from a pool of over 150 applicants.

Because of the internship program, working under the auspices of the Clinic's licensed psychologists, nearly 700 psychological evaluations (e.g., general psychological, psycho-education, neuropsychological, sex offender, violence risk, competency, and Miranda Rights competency) were completed during the year. The CGC also secured six contractors to administer the Conner instrument and the newly developed Mental and Environmental Health screening tool, which will be used to identify youth likely involved in commercial sex trafficking. The CGC also continued to successfully operate its Juvenile Sex Offender Program. Other accomplishments include:

- Presented workshop to Family Court Judicial Officers entitled "How the DSM 5 Impacts Children of the Court: A Collaboration between the Child Guidance Clinic and The Assessment Center (DC Department of Behavioral Health-DBH)."
- Attended training sponsored by the American Academy of Forensic Psychologists on Forensic Assessment, May 2014.
- Facilitated three presentations at the Mid-Atlantic States Corrections Association (MASCA) Conference: SAVE for Juveniles (Sex Abuse Violates Everyone): Evaluation and Treatment in the Cyber Age with Parents in the Mix; Competency to Stand Trial for Juveniles and What Happens When They are Not; and Why Can't I Control my Brain and Behavior: Head Trauma and its Impact on Juvenile Misbehavior.
- Attended advanced training on Competency to Stand Trial for juveniles sponsored by the Institute of Law and Psychiatry.
- Ushered in the first complement of youth in the COOL (Creating Other Options for Life) House at Boys Town, Washington, DC.
- Continued to co-chair the Internal Residential Review Committee (IRRC). The IRRC places suitable youth in short-term intensive psychiatric and behavioral treatment programs without having to commit that youth in order to obtain necessary brief interventions.

- Continued to serve as a member of the DC Ombudsman Office, Clinical Subcommittee. This committee reviews clinically-related insurance appealed cases.

Region I Pre and Post Disposition Supervision

Region I Pre- and Post-Disposition Supervision (Region I) entails four office/units: Southwest Satellite Office (SWSO); Interstate Probation Supervision; Southeast Satellite Office/Balanced and Restorative Justice Drop-In Center (SES0/BARJ); and the Ultimate Transitions Ultimate Responsibility Unit (UTURN) for high risk youth. Region I continued to experience success in virtually all areas of operation. Highlights from Region I's year include:

- Successful pre-trial and post-disposition supervision for roughly 700 youth, of which an average of 10% were under intensive supervision.
- Continued facilitation of the following groups for CSSD youth: *Accelerating the Aptitude of Children; Adopt A Block; Topical Review and Civic Empowerment; Drug Awareness Responsibility and Education; Developing Leaders and Creating Legacies; Life Skills Influencing Future Empowerment, Juvenile Anger Management, Saturday Sanctions, Monthly Parent and Youth Orientation, Probation Offering Life options - POLO* and implemented the following new groups: *When In Rome and Life Support*
- Continuation of the *Real Men Cook Program*, which enabled CSSD BARJ youth to assist in preparing dinner for BARJ youth and staff throughout the year.
- Coordinated *Fifth Annual Back to School Drive* at the Southeast (SE) BARJ Drop-In Center and hosted the seventh (7th) *Annual Costume Halloween Party*, where all staff members dressed in costumes and participated in a holiday gathering with CSSD youth.
- Adopted several blocks along the Martin Luther King Jr., Avenue, for which CSSD youth completed hundreds of hours of community service by cleaning weekly.
- Continued to do monthly community services with *DC Central Kitchen and Adopt-A-Block* cleanup and provide community and cultural enrichment outings on a weekly basis.

- Coordinated with the MPD to facilitate the Safe Passage Program at Anacostia High School. This program provides security/coverage on Friday evenings throughout the school year to ensure students are able to exit school and go home safely.
- Coordinated several community service initiatives during Spring Break, which allowed youth to clean several neighborhood blocks in the Southwest quadrant of the city, as well as portions of the Anacostia Park, located in Southeast quadrant of the city.

Region II Pre and Post Disposition Supervision

Region II Pre- and Post-Disposition Supervision (Region II) entails four office/units: Northwest Satellite Office (NWSO); Status Offender/Juvenile Behavioral Diversion Program; Northeast Satellite Office/Balanced and Restorative Justice Drop-In Center (NESO/BARJ); and the adolescent female unit: *Leaders of Today In Solidarity (LOTS)* unit. Region II continued to experience success in virtually all areas of operation.

Highlights from Region II's 2014 year include:

- Successful pre-trial and post-disposition supervision for roughly 850 youth, of which an average 20%-25% are status offenders, actively under CSSD supervision.
- Co-Chaired the Juvenile Behavioral Diversion Program (JBDP) Suitability Committee, and participated in the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Committee (CSEC) monthly meetings.
- Attended various Police Service Area (PSA), Area Neighborhood Commission (ANC), and other community based public safety meetings. Staff also made a series of presentations during these meetings, and interacted with the community ensuring information germane to the goals, objectives, and duties of the CSSD regarding youth and families were conveyed.
- Participated in the monthly Citywide Child Fatality Committee charged with investigating and uncovering the causes of child fatalities in the city.
- Continued operating the "Red Door" closet providing a supply of new and gently used clothing and other items to the Division's female adolescent population as needed. Donations of casual wear, formal wear, coats, shoes, baby supplies, and toiletries are received from employees court wide. Significantly, the young ladies under supervision in this unit earn community service hours organizing the donations and keeping the closet neat.

- Establishment of a “Book Shelf” which serves to provide CSSD youth with a variety of novels and other reading materials. These donated items help encourage reading and can assist the young ladies with school assignments.
- Coordinated participation of many youth in a Job Readiness Workshop facilitated by CSSD staff. Youth were exposed to resume writing and application completion, interviewing preparation, and how to dress and present during interviews. The workshop also included an overview of work ethic and conduct.
- Participated in the CJCC sponsored forum “Uncovering Crisis Care.”
- Youth hosted the Family Engagement Night program at DC Prep Charter School, earning five hours of community service.
- Attended various community, PSA, and ANC meetings to share information with the community about court-involved youth.
- Hosted a back to school drive to secure supplies for youth.
- Collaborated with Cardozo Senior High School to facilitate an *Attendance Blitz*.
- Conducted presentations across various local schools throughout the academic year regarding the PINS referral process and procedures.
- Ensured 90% of all Status Offender and Behavioral Health cases were connected to a Core Service Agency (CSA) for mental health services and interventions.

New Initiatives in Juvenile Delinquency

Marijuana Possession Decriminalization Amendment Act of 2014

Enacted on March 31, 2014, the Marijuana Possession Decriminalization Amendment Act of 2014 makes the possession or transfer without remuneration of one ounce or less of marijuana a civil violation subject to a fine. This law also makes the smoking of marijuana in public and marijuana impairment in public or on someone else’s property crimes subject to a fine or imprisonment.

CHILD SUPPORT AND PATERNITY CASES

This year there were 2,458 child support and paternity actions filed in the Family Court, and 26 cases that were reopened. In cases seeking to establish or modify child support, D.C. Code §46-206 requires the court to schedule an initial hearing within 45 days from the date of filing. In 2014, 90% of all initial hearings in paternity and support cases were scheduled within 45 days, 98% within 60 days. For initial support hearings in domestic relations cases 53% were scheduled within 45 days and 59 within 60 days.

Federal regulations mandate that orders to establish support be completed in 75% of the cases within six months of the date of service of process and 90% of the cases within 12 months of the date of service (see 45 CFR §303.101). Data for cases filed in 2014 indicate that the court performed well in meeting these standards: 96% of cases were disposed or otherwise resolved within six months (180 days) of service of process, and 100% were disposed or otherwise resolved within 12 months (365 days) of service of process. Going forward, the court will continue to monitor compliance with these mandated timeframes and performance measures as it continues to collaborate and share information with the Child Support Services Division of the OAG, the city's designated IV-D agency.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS AND CUSTODY CASES

The Domestic Relations Branch has responsibility for all cases involving divorce, legal separation, annulment, child custody, and adoption. In 2014, 4,239 domestic relations cases were filed and 55 cases were reopened.

Court performance measures in domestic relations cases are as follows:

- Uncontested divorce cases and uncontested custody cases - 30% of the cases should be disposed within 30 days, 70% within 45 days, and 95% within 60 days;
- Contested divorce and custody I cases, which are cases scheduled to take more than a week to try due to the complexity of legal issues involved – 75% should be disposed within nine months and 98% with a year; and
- Contested divorce and custody II cases, which are disputed cases expected to require less than a week for trial - 75% should be disposed within six months and 98% with nine months.

In 2014, 88% of contested custody II cases reached disposition within 6 months and 98% with nine months. In 2014, both the six and nine month compliance rates were slightly lower than in either 2012 or 2013. The average time to disposition was 110 days. Similarly, the average was higher than in 2012 (90 days) or 2013 (92 days). Ninety-two percent of contested divorce II cases reached disposition in 6 months (180 days) and 99% within nine months (270 days). In both instances, the compliance rate met or exceeded the established case processing goal. The average time to disposition was 105 days, a 7% decrease from 2013 (113 days).

Compliance with case processing goals in uncontested cases continued to challenge the court in 2014. In 2013, for the first time since reporting began, all uncontested divorce cases were resolved within the time standards. However, fifty-five percent of uncontested divorce cases reached disposition within 30 days, 86% within 45 days, and 94% within 60 days. The average number of days to dispose of a case also increased in 2014 to 36 days, compared was 32 days in 2013, 38 days in 2012, 43 days in 2011, and 46 days in 2010. On the other hand, thirty-seven percent of uncontested custody cases reached disposition within 30 days, 56% within 45 days, and 59% within 60 days. The average days to reach disposition was 61 days. For uncontested custody

cases, the performance did not meet established standards. In early 2014, the court began an analysis of uncontested custody cases. Preliminary findings indicate that many of these cases were, in fact, third party custody cases and often both parents had not consented to the custody arrangement. In 2015, the court will continue to review and monitor compliance with time to disposition standards for uncontested custody cases to improve performance in these case types. In addition, the court is working to properly identify uncontested custody matters, to differentiate them from contested third party filings.

THE FAMILY COURT SELF HELP CENTER

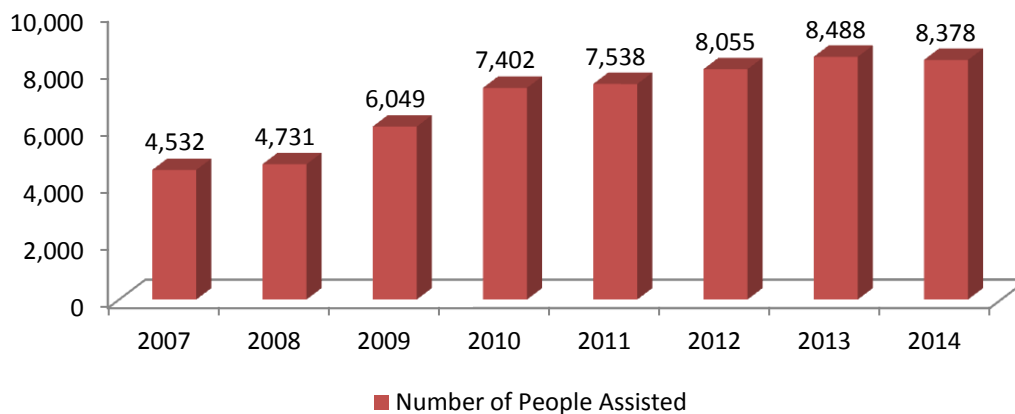
The Family Court Self-Help Center (SHC) is a free walk-in service that provides people without lawyers (self-represented parties) with general legal information in a variety of family law matters, such as divorce, custody, visitation, and child support. Although the SHC does not provide legal advice, it does provide legal information and assistance to litigants allowing them to determine which of the standard form pleadings is most appropriate, how to complete them, and how to navigate the court process. When appropriate, the SHC staff and volunteer facilitators will refer litigants for legal assistance to other helpful clinics and programs in the community.

Detailed below are a few of the findings from data collected for 2014:

- In November 2014, the SHC served its 60,000th customer. After years of steady increases, the SHC served fewer people in 2014 than 2013. The 8,378 people served in 2014 were a 1% decrease from the number of clients served in 2013 (8,488). On average, the Center served 698 individuals per month in 2014, compared to 707 individuals per month in 2013, 671 individuals per month in 2012, 628 individuals per month in 2011, and 617 individuals served per month in 2010.

- As has been the case since 2006, a large majority of the parties seeking help from the SHC had issues related to custody (53%), visitation (25%), child support (23%), or divorce (21%).
- Ninety percent of the parties visiting the Center sought general information; 67% needed assistance with the completion of forms; 8% came in seeking a referral; and 3% sought assistance with trial preparation.
- Eighty-nine percent of the parties served indicated that their primary language was English; eight percent (8%) identified themselves as primarily Spanish speakers and 3% had another primary language.
- Among parties providing data on income, 53% of those assisted reported monthly incomes of \$1,000 or less; 19% had a monthly income between \$1,001 and \$2,000; and 14% had monthly incomes between \$2,001 and \$4,000. Fourteen percent reported monthly incomes above \$4,000 (figure 32).

Figure 32. Self-Help Center



Family Court Self Help Center Computer Room

On December 16, 2013, the SHC opened a computer room for the use of self represented individuals in their Family Court cases. Users of the room are able to:

- Look at selected websites to try to find the address for a party in their case.
- Read legal information concerning family matters such as custody, child support, divorce, alimony, and annulment.
- Complete court forms such as complaints, motions, answers, and oppositions.
- Determine the appropriate amount of child support to be paid by using the OAG's child support calculator.

- Access information that will assist them in finding the right place to file their child custody or child support case.
- Help litigants find legal representation using lawhelp.org/DC.

New Initiatives in Domestic Relations

Marriage License Issuance Amendment Act of 2014

Enacted on August 1, 2014, the Marriage License Issuance Amendment Act of 2014 repeals D.C. Code §46-409 to eliminate the three-day waiting period for the issuance of a marriage license and also repeals D.C. Code §46-418, the section which allowed a judge to waive the waiting period.

Civil Marriage Dissolution Equality Clarification Amendment Act of 2014

The Civil Marriage Dissolution Equality Clarification Amendment Act of 2014 was enacted on November 6, 2014. The Act amends D.C. Code §16-902 (b) to expressly include legal separation as one of the actions available to nonresident same-sex couples; makes a conforming amendment to D.C. Code §16-911; and further amends D.C. Code §16-902 (b) to clarify that any action under this section may include any accompanying petition for alimony, assignment and equitable distribution of property, *pendente lite* relief, or a child custody determination if the District of Columbia has jurisdiction under the requisite statutes (D.C. Code §§ 16-4602.01 or 16-4602.03).

CONCLUSION

Since passage of the Family Court Act, the Family Court of the D.C. Superior Court has improved significantly in the services and resources provided to the families that come before it. These improvements have occurred across the Family Court including: better trained and more knowledgeable judicial and non-judicial staff,

increased use of alternative dispute resolution, enhanced diversion programs for juveniles, development of educational materials for parents, creation of programs to reconnect fathers with their families, implementation and tracking of case-processing standards, and improved cooperation and collaboration with our partners in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

In 2014, the court continued its focus on older youth in the child welfare system through its *Preparing Youth for Adulthood* (PYA) initiative. This initiative along with several other initiatives by CFSA including the establishment of the Office of Youth Empowerment, is designed to increase the array of services available to older youth while at the same time reducing the number of youth with a goal of APPLA and the number of youth aging out of foster care. The impact of the increased focus has already shown excellent results. In 2014, fewer than 400 youth had a goal of APPLA down from the more than 800 youth with this goal when the PYA initiative was created. To further address this issue, the court continues to participate in the Permanency Forums developed by CFSA to gain greater insights into the challenges impacting permanency for older youth.

The court recognizes that work must continue on several levels if we are to be successful in moving children to permanency sooner. The Family Court and CFSA both accept responsibility for ensuring adequate and timely case processing in abuse and neglect cases and share a strong commitment to achieving outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families. In 2015, we will continue to prioritize the barriers to permanency and expect to make significant improvements in the coming year for children with all permanency goals.

The same factors that have historically affected the Family Court's ability to carry out its responsibilities in the most effective manner possible continued to be factors in 2014. CFSA has continued to show improvement in many areas but some of the same challenges that existed in 2013 still remain: lack of adoption resources for older children, the lack of sufficient drug treatment resources for children and parents, and the inability of the District of Columbia Public Schools to provide educational assessment services (such as Individual Education Plans) in a more timely manner. The District's need to further build service capacity to meet the changing and complex needs of juveniles and their families also continue to impact the effectiveness of the court in improving outcomes in delinquency matters.

In 2014, the Family Court continued to improve its ability to serve the community and to collaborate with other members of the justice system to protect, support, and strengthen families. Where goals have not been met, the court maintains a strong commitment to improve. The Family Court remains committed to its mission to provide positive outcomes for children and families in the District of Columbia.

