

Iowa Child Welfare by the Numbers in Calendar 2012

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Unless otherwise noted, data are for calendar 2012

Assessments, abuse findings

- 28,918 assessments for child abuse or neglect in calendar 2012, down 6 percent.
 - ✓ 68 percent of assessments resulted in a finding of “no abuse,” similar to past years.
- 11, 637 children subject to abuse or neglect, down 1 percent from 2011. Of those children:
 - ✓ 8,801 were subject of “founded” abuse, up 0.5 percent.
 - ✓ 2,836 were subject of a “confirmed” abuse, down 5 percent. A “confirmed” abuse is minor, isolated, and not likely to re-occur, and the perpetrator is not placed on the child abuse registry.
- 51 percent of abused or neglected children were age 5 or younger (similar to past years).
- Of all child abuse or neglect:
 - ✓ 79 percent was neglect (denial of critical care), similar to past years.
 - ✓ 9 percent was physical, similar to recent years.
 - ✓ 4 percent was sexual, similar to past four years.
 - ✓ 6 percent was presence of illegal drugs in body (5 percent in 2011, 4 percent in previous two years).

Assessing abuse, caseload

Allegations of abuse – intakes – are evaluated by a central intake unit in Des Moines. The intake is accepted if the allegation would be abuse if proven true. Accepted intakes are assessed in person by county-based DHS child protective workers. Most allegations are not founded. When abuse is founded, a separate group of DHS case managers supervise ongoing services for children and their families. Those services are performed by non-government social service agencies under performance contracts. The monthly *average* DHS caseload in 2012:

- ✓ 186 DHS child protective workers were assigned an average of 14 new cases a month, including cases alleging adult abuse. Similar caseload to year before.
- ✓ 389 DHS case managers had an average child welfare caseload of 27, similar to year before. In addition to supervising child welfare services, these workers attempt to visit every child on their caseload and every child’s parent every month.

Strategies and Results of Iowa’s Child Welfare System

- Consistent best-practice assessment of risk and safety.
- Pursue permanency and family connections for at-risk children.
- Optional, free, and “non-DHS” help for families where re-abuse risk is low. This is the “Community Care” program.
- Reduce racial disparities. Gap is narrowing for both African American and Native Americans.
- Focus on best-practice results (lowering rates of re-abuse, children have permanency and stability, etc.)
- Transparent results. https://secureapp.dhs.state.ia.us/CWIS_DigitalDashboard/. In quarter ending 12/12:
 - ✓ 92 percent of all abused or neglected children were abuse-free in following six months.
 - ✓ 90 percent of children leaving foster care did not re-enter foster care within a year.
- Engage families in plan for improvement, especially via family team meetings and parent mentors.
- Provide performance-based contracts aligned with safety and permanency outcomes for families.
- Keep once-abused children at home if safe to do so. 74.6 percent of abused children remained in the family home with the support of services in 2012.

The cost of child welfare: FY12 actual expenditures

Major Services	State dollars	All other dollars	Total*	Average Monthly Number Served (FY12)
Family centered services	- \$ 5.4	\$23.1	\$28.5	4,836 families served (at least one child per family)
Family foster care	- \$11.1	\$ 9.6	\$20.7	2,068 children in licensed foster care
Group care	- \$18.8	\$ 9.5	\$28.3	796 children in highly structured group settings
Adoption subsidies	- \$35.5	\$30.9	\$66.4	8,960 (subsidies paid until adopted child reaches 18)
Aged-out program (PAL)	- \$ 3.1	\$ 0.0	\$ 3.1	286 aged-out youth receiving stipends, counseling
Shelter care	- \$ 6.9	\$ 1.2	\$ 8.1	154 children served in average month
DHS social workers	- \$21.5	\$37.0	\$58.5	* millions