

## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Family & Children Services



# About Division of Family & Children Services

The Georgia Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) investigates reports of child abuse; finds foster and adoptive homes for abused and neglected children and provides several support services to help families in need, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS).

## CHILD WELFARE

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In State / Federal Fiscal Year 2016:

- Hired 175 additional field staff, reducing the statewide caseload average to 19 per worker
- Developed and launched Georgia's Child Abuse Registry
- Increased the number of finalized adoptions of children in foster care by 25 percent to more than 1,000
- Traveled the state seeking feedback from stakeholders, staff and policymakers on reform plans for child welfare
- Re-established the Kinship Navigator program, establishing regional liaisons to help caregivers access resources to support them as they care for a relative child
- Successfully developed a new practice model based on Solution-Based Casework (SBC) called Georgia's Practice Model and began implementation in metro Atlanta
- Began implementation of exit strategy for the Kenny A. Consent Decree (December 2016)
- Collaborated with Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (REACH), the state's first needs-based mentorship and college scholarship program, and key stakeholders to provide foster youth the support needed to graduate from high school, access college and achieve postsecondary success
- Collaborated with CarePortal to launch a pilot program in Colquitt County to identify resources for foster parents and children. CarePortal is an interdenominational network of churches that works with local child welfare stakeholders for the benefit of at-risk children.

### GOALS FOR SFY17

- Continue working toward a statewide caseload average of 15 per worker
- Place 50 percent of children who come into foster care with a relative caregiver
- Continue implementation of Georgia's Practice Model statewide

## OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In State / Federal Fiscal Year 2016:

- Improved the timeliness of SNAP application processing so that applications are consistently processed within federal timeliness standards
- Closed 19 previous findings from a U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Management Evaluation of the SNAP program
- Released from 2014 FNS Advance Warning Penalty and the potential loss of \$70 million in federal support
- Began implementation of work activity requirements for adult SNAP recipients who are able to work and who do not have dependent children living in their homes in 12 counties

### GOALS FOR SFY17

- Launch, pilot and implement new eligibility software that integrates all economic assistance programs across the state, called Georgia Gateway
- Continue expansion of the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents program, reaching an additional 21 counties by year end
- Maintain progress in process improvements for administration of SNAP, TANF, Medicaid and CAPS

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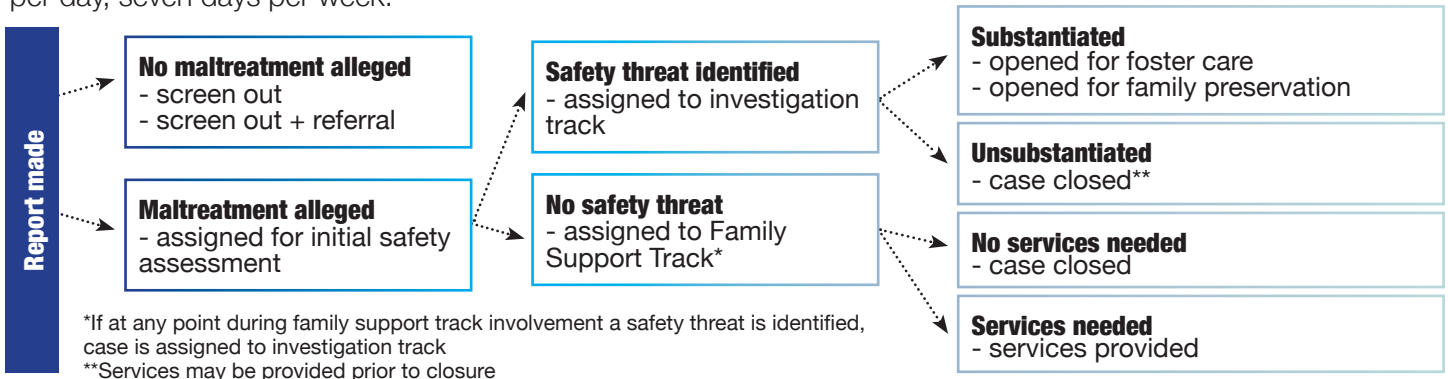
# Child Protective Services

Strengthening Georgia by protecting its children from abuse and neglect.

## Reporting



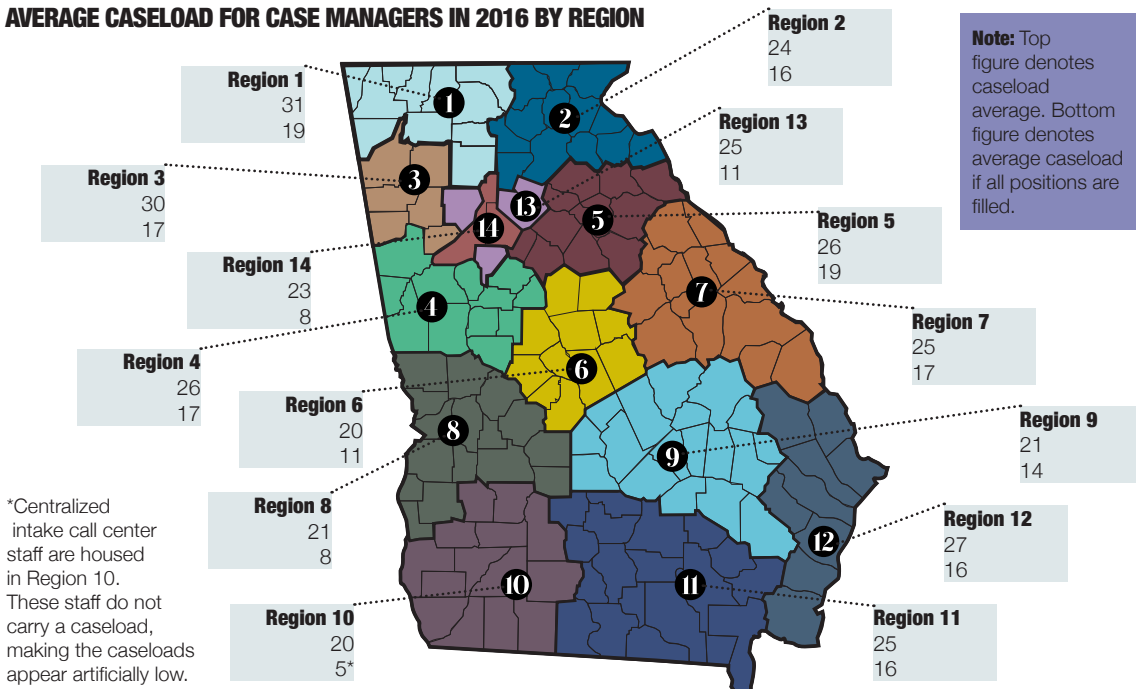
DFCS receives reports of abuse and neglect through a centralized line (1-855-GACHILD) that operates 24 hours per day, seven days per week.



## Increased Community Awareness & Impact on DFCS Caseloads

Since the implementation of a centralized reporting system for child welfare concerns in April 2014, reports of abuse and neglect have risen tremendously, causing caseloads to rise. Gov. Nathan Deal and the General Assembly have committed resources allowing the Division to hire additional staff and reduce average caseloads statewide. The Division continues to work toward a caseload of 15 per worker—a nationwide best practice—by hiring additional staff and implementing strategies to address high caseworker turnover.

### AVERAGE CASELOAD FOR CASE MANAGERS IN 2016 BY REGION



**148,127**

Number of reports of abuse and neglect received in SFY16

**\$35,388**

Starting salary for a child protective services caseworker

**19**

Average caseload for a child protective services worker statewide

**32%**

Turnover rate for child welfare employees

» To report abuse or neglect call **1-855-GACHILD** (1-855-422-4453). «

**Bobby Cagle**, Director

**Virginia Pryor**, Deputy Director, Child Welfare | **Jon Anderson**, Deputy Director, Family Independence | **Carol Christopher**, Deputy Director, System Reform

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# Foster Care & Adoptions

# 13,070

Approximate number of children in DFCS custody as of November 2016

Approximately **400** foster youth in Georgia are available for adoption and waiting on a family to call their own.

**1,033** children transitioned from state custody into adoptive families in SFY16.

## Reasons for Entry

Top 5 reasons children entered DFCS custody (SFY16):

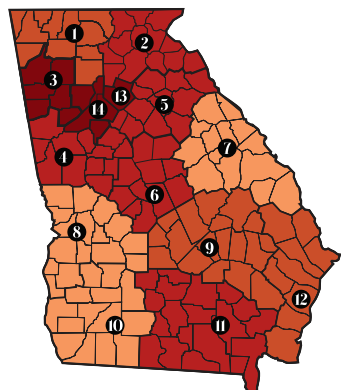
NEGLECT	4,440
SUBSTANCE ABUSE	3,397
INADEQUATE HOUSING	1,928
INCARCERATION	994
ABANDONMENT	992

## Children placed outside region

Steady growth in Georgia's foster care population has increased the need for foster homes statewide. As a result, a growing number of children who have had to come into foster care have been displaced from their communities.

Keeping children connected to their communities limits the trauma of foster care and supports successful outcomes for families.

The map to the right shows where the most children are placed outside their region and where the need for foster homes is greatest.



0-10% placed outside region
11-20% placed outside region
21-30% placed outside region
31-40% placed outside region
41-50% placed outside region

Those interested in foster parenting can call **1-877-210-KIDS** or visit **fostergeorgia.com**



## SFY16 Adoptions

In 2016, DFCS launched an initiative called **There's No Place Like Home** to direct resources toward eliminating administrative barriers to the finalization of pending adoptions. The initiative resulted in an increase of approximately **200** finalized adoptions from the previous year.

### FINALIZED ADOPTIONS BY COUNTY

Atkinson	3	Effingham	10	Morgan	8
Baldwin	10	Fannin	7	Murray	3
Banks	7	Floyd	55	Muscogee	8
Barrow	9	Forsyth	10	Newton	11
Bartow	48	Franklin	2	Oconee	1
Berrien	5	Fulton	47	Paulding	14
Bibb	41	Gilmer	2	Peach	3
Bleckley	1	Glynn	26	Pickens	9
Brantley	4	Gordon	29	Pierce	4
Brooks	5	Grady	3	Pike	5
Bulloch	4	Gwinnett	15	Polk	15
Butts	1	Habersham	3	Putnam	14
Camden	6	Hall	48	Rabun	2
Candler	1	Haralson	16	Richmond	16
Carroll	12	Heard	1	Rockdale	10
Catoosa	16	Henry	5	Spalding	11
Chatham	15	Houston	13	Stephens	5
Chattooga	2	Jackson	10	Sumter	3
Cherokee	26	Johnson	3	Thomas	7
Clarke	25	Jones	6	Tift	14
Clayton	11	Lamar	2	Toombs	3
Cobb	47	Lanier	6	Towns	5
Coffee	4	Lee	3	Treutlen	1
Colquitt	13	Liberty	1	Troup	6
Cook	2	Lowndes	22	Turner	1
Coweta	6	Lumpkin	1	Union	3
Crawford	9	Macon	1	Upson	20
Crisp	1	Madison	10	Walker	9
Dade	3	McDuffie	1	Walton	4
DeKalb	53	Meriwether	3	Ware	2
Dodge	2	Mitchell	1	White	8
Douglas	9	Monroe	4	Whitfield	41

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# Family Independence

Strengthening Georgia by providing individuals and families access to services that promote self-sufficiency and independence.



## Nutritional Assistance

### SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as the food stamp program, provides low-income Georgians help with their monthly food costs.

# \$2.64 billion

Amount food stamps added to Georgia's economy in SFY16

# 2.15 130%

Average size of household receiving food stamps

Gross income must be of the federal poverty level to qualify for benefits.

# 810,670

households receive food stamps in Georgia.

## Medicaid

# 868,788

families received Medicaid services in SFY16.

Medicaid provides health coverage to low-income families, pregnant women and adults who are determined to be aged, blind or disabled. DFCS is a contractor of the Department of Community Health, providing eligibility determinations to applicants of the program. Apply for or renew benefits online at [www.compass.ga.gov](http://www.compass.ga.gov).

## Childcare and Parent Services

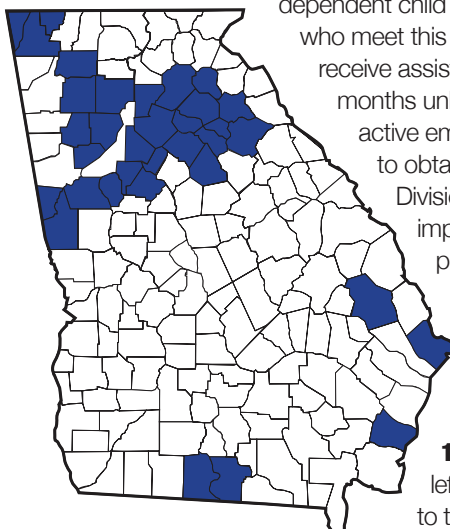
DFCS continues to provide eligibility determinations for applicants of the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program operated by the Department of Early Care and Learning. Georgia residents can apply for CAPS at [www.compass.ga.gov](http://www.compass.ga.gov).

### CONTACT

For information on economic assistance or to report fraud, call **1-877-423-4746**.

### SNAP Works | Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents

Since January 2016, DFCS has been providing employment and training services to SNAP recipients in 12 counties, using funds from a federal demonstration grant and a federally required program aimed at helping able-bodied adults find employment. The program targets adult recipients of food stamps between the ages of 18 and 49 who are able to work and do not have a dependent child in their home. Recipients who meet this criteria are eligible to receive assistance for only three months unless they demonstrate active employment or efforts to obtain employment. The Division is working to implement the SNAPWorks program statewide as resources become available. The program will grow to cover an additional **21** counties beginning **Jan. 1, 2017**. The map to the left depicts areas subject to the program requirements as of Jan. 1, 2017.



## Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program was created in 1996 as part of welfare reform legislation. The program provides time-limited cash assistance to Georgia's neediest families. During SFY16, Georgia had a total of **20,119** families who received TANF; **9,732** were child-only cases, including foster children in the care of relatives and **2,918** were adult recipients. Adults must participate in a work program, unless there are special circumstances. The average benefit amount is **\$208.94** per month.

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