

**The Citizen's Foster Care Review Board, Inc.  
2014 Annual Report**



**CRCRB Inc.**

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**Naples FL 34101**

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Willie West, MSN

**Vice President**

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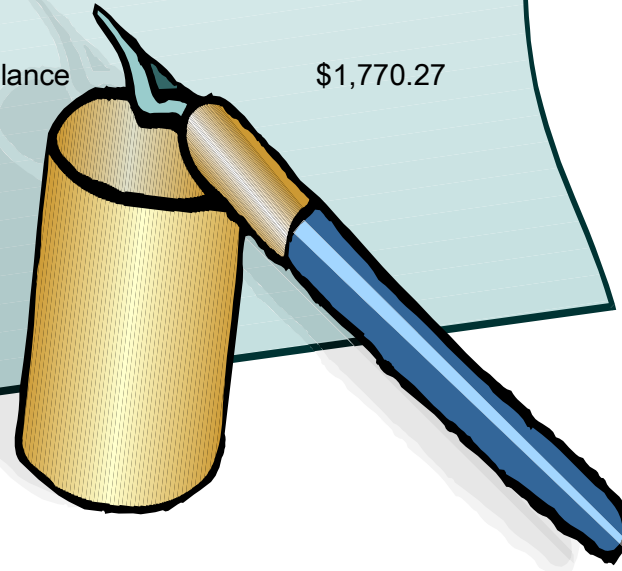
Felix Padron, PSYD

Cpl. Tom Wedlock

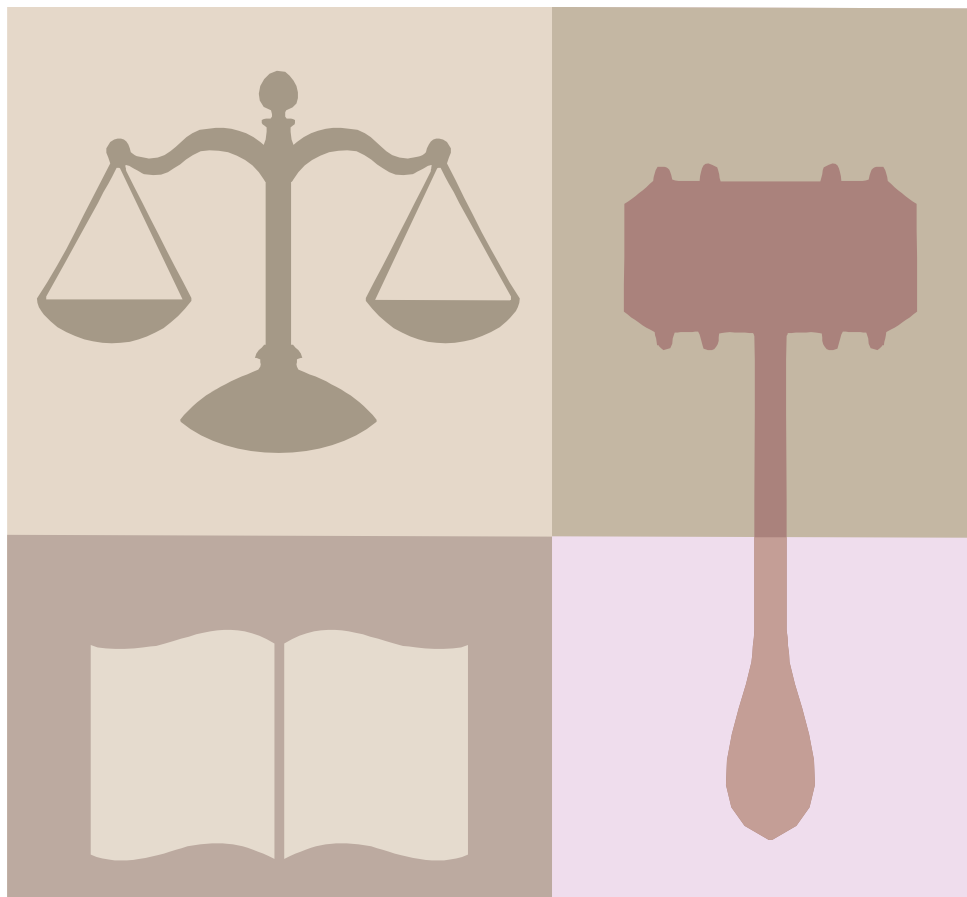
### Financial Statement

Year Ending 12/31/13

Opening Balance:	\$2,971.26
Deposits:	
Donations	\$2,155.05
Expenses:	
Accounting Fees	\$165.00
Annual Filings	\$ 61.25
Background Checks	\$192.00
Donations for in-service	\$100.00
Insurance (D&O)	\$1,376.87
Meetings	\$576.00
Office Supplies/Printing	\$ 34.57
Printing	\$370.00
PO Box	\$ 60.00
Training/Education	\$133.35
Website Hosting	\$287.00
Total Expenses	\$3,356.04
Closing Balance	\$1,770.27



**The Citizen's Foster Care Review Board, Inc.  
is a court appointed volunteer organization  
that promotes timely, positive, and  
permanent outcomes for  
dependent children.**



## Executive Summary 2014

For twenty two years the Citizen's Foster Care Review Board (CFCRB) has served the Collier County Dependency Court and community by providing judicial reviews for children in foster care and out of home placements. This past year we were privileged to serve under the direction of The Honorable Elizabeth V. Krier, and then under the direction of the Unified Family Court Judges The Honorable Christine Greider, Joseph Foster and Fred Hardt. With the assistance of dependency court case manager Judy Groos, our thirty one, highly trained, court appointed volunteers conducted **268** judicial reviews, involving **444** children. Our goal in performing these reviews remains unchanged—to insure for the safety and best interests of each child and family within the guidelines of dependency statutes. Thus fulfilling our mission to promote timely, positive, and permanent outcomes for dependent children.

The CFCRB is an important community partner to the Dependency Court in Collier County. Panels of five volunteers perform the majority of judicial reviews at 3-6 month intervals. All parties to the case have the opportunity to be in attendance and heard at reviews. This allows for accurate, precise and complete recommendations that, upon signature from the dependency judge, become an order of the court.

The 2014 annual report highlights the activities of the CFCRB and the data collected during reviews. Positive changes and areas of concern including barriers to permanency are identified. The report also provides information over many years so that trends can easily be identified. The information gathered becomes an important guide to CFCRB in identifying trends and changes within our community. This awareness allows us to target our educational programs to relevant issues thus enhancing the quality of the judicial review process. Other stakeholders and community organizations report that this information is also a helpful tool for them in evaluating their programs. Our desire and challenge remains to work collaboratively with others in order to effect positive change and attain our goals.

For twenty years the CFCRB was administered and fully integrated into the Collier County Dependency Court. A review of the FL State Statutes on Citizen Review Panels (39.702) called this practice into question and a plan for separation of the non-profit 501(C)3 administrative roles from the panels court "magistrate" roles was implemented last year. This dichotomy presents new challenges as well as opportunities.

To date, many of the administrative functions are performed by the volunteers of the Board of Directors (BOD) and the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee provides seven in-service programs each year, and recruits and trains new panel members and chairs, as well as addressing any operational aspects that may arise ( i.e. changes in scripts or policies). The in-services are a critical component in keeping volunteers updated and skillful. Guardian-ad-Litem (GAL) and other stakeholders are invited when appropriate. All efforts are made to recruit Board and panel members that reflect the composition of our community.

As our role as an independent non-profit organization continues to evolve, the CFCRB BOD recognizes the need to find a source of funding for part time administrative support to our volunteers to ensure that we can most effectively continue to meet the needs of the children and families we are here to serve.

At the same time that the structure of CFCRB has been changing, Collier County's Dependency Court has led the State in implementing a Unified Family Court (UFC). Dependency, family law, domestic violence, and delinquency are now fully integrated. Families involved in these courts are coordinated to be heard by one judge. We are honored to be a part of this change and have the privilege to work with Judges Christine Greider, Joseph Foster, Elizabeth V. Krier and Fred Hardt who was succeeded by Judge Mary Evans on January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Judicial reviews have operated seamlessly this past year. Only one exception was filed to recommendations made by the CFCRB. This exception was subsequently withdrawn. Our success is due in large part to the unwavering continued support and resources of our Dependency Court Judges. A major key to this success is the commitment of Ms. Groos, Dependency Court Case Manager, who coordinates reviews, works tirelessly with our organization, and ensures the integration of the Court with CFCRB.

There remain many challenges facing us. This year, a new FL State "decision making methodology" program to improve the dependency system was implemented. It remains imperative that all of us who are involved in keeping children safe, work together to provide the best possible oversight and outcomes for our most vulnerable children.

### **Barriers to Permanency and Concerns**

In 2014 the Department of Children and Families (DCF) implemented the new Safety Decision-Making Methodology. The focus of the program is to ensure that children and families are safer. The role of the Child Protective Investigator (CPI) has increased significantly in the ability to gather information and make decisions and referrals on behalf of at-risk children. All individuals involved in dependency in Collier County received extensive training on this new program. While it is too early to assess, it is hoped that it will lead to a reduction in child injuries and deaths and better outcomes.

The very high turnover rate of case managers at Providence Human Services (formerly Family Preservation Services) and Children's Legal Services (CLS) attorneys continues to be one of the most pressing problems. When there is a lack of continuity in case management, everyone suffers. As a result, children, parents, foster parents and caregivers are confused about what is happening with their case. The case may not move forward and needed or required services may not be provided. Judicial Reviews are more difficult and less effective; progress cannot be made on a case when information is lacking or case management tasks have not been fulfilled. When tracking barriers to case progress, our data indicates that 15% were due to lack of preparedness or insufficient management oversight. The case plans provided to us under the old judicial report style remain lacking in quality. The new computer generated reports are now being utilized as new cases enter the system. We welcome this change and find the new reports a significant improvement. In addition, there also appear to be more evidence based evaluations.

Another critical area of concern is the lack of foster homes in Collier County. This has been an ongoing problem with little progress. Too many children are still placed in outlying counties which place additional stress and hardship on all concerned. Parents may have difficulty visiting and needed services to children may not be conveniently accessible. When this is the case, transportation needs to be made available for parents and siblings to allow for sufficient visitation and access to services.

The demographic data collected in 2014 is attached to this report. Our observations and analysis are noted on each graph, however, there are some metrics that need special mention. Most troubling is the increase in number of cases involving domestic violence and sexual abuse. We see this trend as a cause for community concern. Also, the goal of adoption decreased from 29% to 18%. The reason for this is not clear, but may be due in part to the increase in reunification and concurrent goals. Also, we do not track if adoption was part of the concurrent goal. When weighing permanent guardianship versus adoption, the goal of adoption, according to statute, remains the preferred permanency goal and must always be considered prior to allowing a less permanent goal.

We are pleased to note that the metrics for the GAL program continue to improve. 84% of cases have a GAL assigned with 100% of reports received. Attendance at JR's by the assigned GAL also increased by 24% to 86%. When a GAL was not able to attend a review, a well informed supervisor was present. For panel members, the input from GAL reports, remains one of the most highly valued documents we receive.

Many of the goals for 2014 have been met. CFCRB has integrated into the UFC and has worked more closely with Providence Human Services and established quarterly meetings that address mutual concerns. We hope to build on the positive trends seen in the past year and will continue to work with all stakeholders to implement solutions and promote positive outcomes for children and families.

### **Goals**

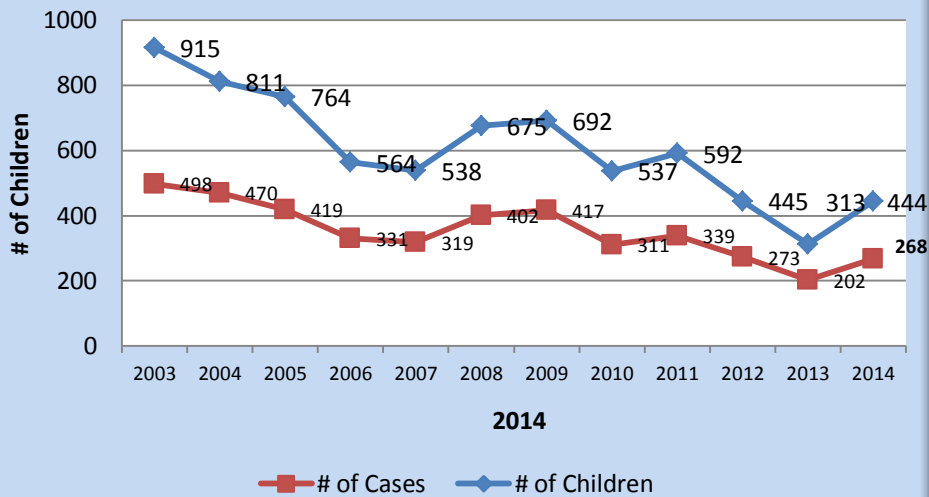
Our goals in the coming year are as follows:

- Find a solution for sustaining the administrative functions of the CFCRB
- Refine the existing "children in court" policy to reflect present UFC practices and implement appropriate changes
- Provide ongoing, relevant data collection
- Monitor and continue to adjust the CFCRB judicial review schedule to align with the UFC schedule
- Support Children's Network of SW FL and Providence Human Services in reducing re-entry of cases into the system
- Work collaboratively with Providence Human Services in providing guidance and support to new case managers at judicial reviews

Willie West  
President



## # of Judicial Reviews/# of Children



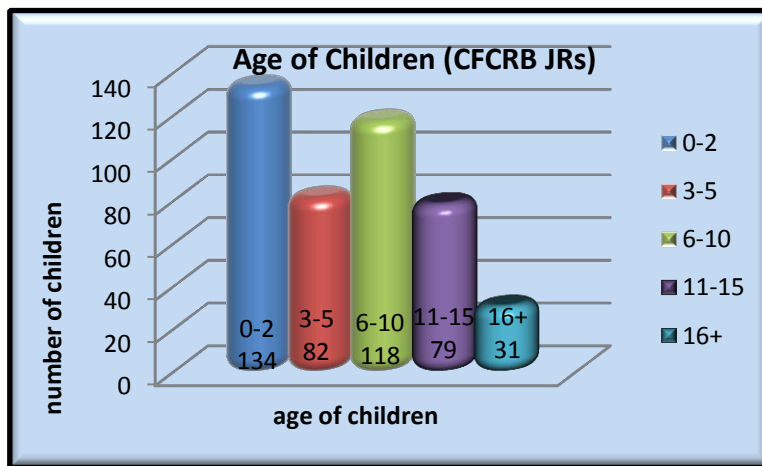
### CFCRB

**268** Judicial Reviews were conducted by the CFCRB involving **444** children. Of these, **243** Judicial Reviews were non-duplicated during the year.

**Observation:** The number of Judicial Reviews conducted in 2014 increased by 25%. This is a return to the levels observed in 2012. When viewed over a 10 year period, there has been a steady decline in judicial reviews and the number of children involved in dependency by approximately 85%; this, in spite of an increase in population in Collier County.

Possible factors influencing this change:

- Increased focus and changes in community based services and family preservation at the Federal, State and Local levels
- A move to more timely permanency



**Observation:** Children from ages 0 – 5 years of age continue to be the largest grouping by age followed by the 6–10 group. This year, the 11–15 group increased by 6%.

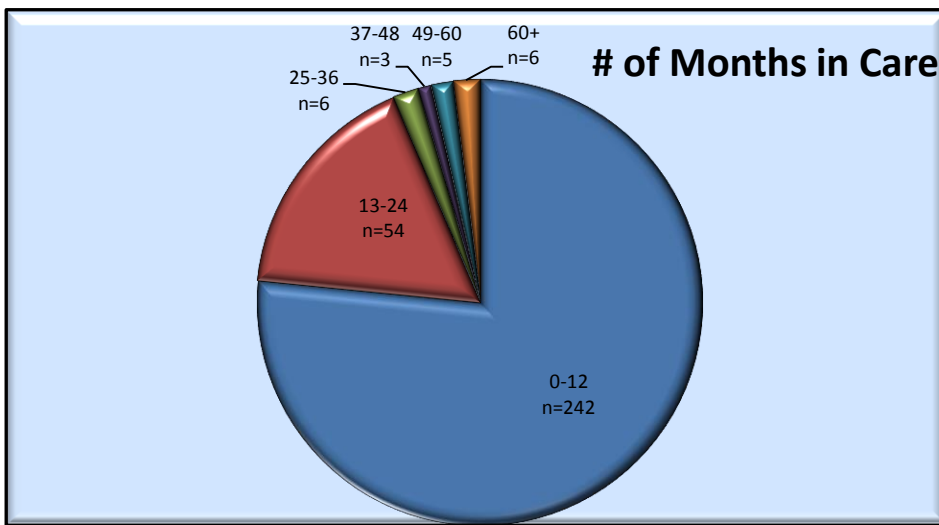
In general, the age groups of children involved in CFCRB judicial reviews over a 10 year period have remained fairly consistent.

# of Children	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Age 0 – 2	134 30.18%	85 27.16%	117 26.29%	166 28.04%	158 29.42%	211 30.49%	180 26.67%	155 28.81%	183 32.45%	185 24.21%	182 22.44%
Age 3 – 5	82 18.47%	75 23.97%	114 25.62%	143 24.16%	138 25.70%	185 26.73%	157 23.26%	112 20.82%	111 19.68%	154 20.16%	165 20.35%
Age 6 – 10	118 26.58%	85 27.16%	115 25.84%	153 25.84%	135 25.14%	150 21.68%	155 22.96%	127 23.61%	114 20.21%	199 26.05%	214 26.39%
Age 11 – 15	79 17.79%	37 11.82%	68 15.28%	110 18.58%	78 14.53%	98 14.16%	126 18.67%	105 19.52%	111 19.68%	164 21.47%	172 21.21%
Age 16+	31 6.99%	31 9.90%	31 6.97%	20 3.38%	28 5.21%	48 6.94%	57 8.44%	39 7.25%	45 7.99%	62 8.12%	78 9.62%
Total for Year	444	313	445	592	537	692	675	538	564	764	811

**Concern:** The 0-5 group is at higher risk because they:

- Are less visible within the community
- Are not in school or attend daycare

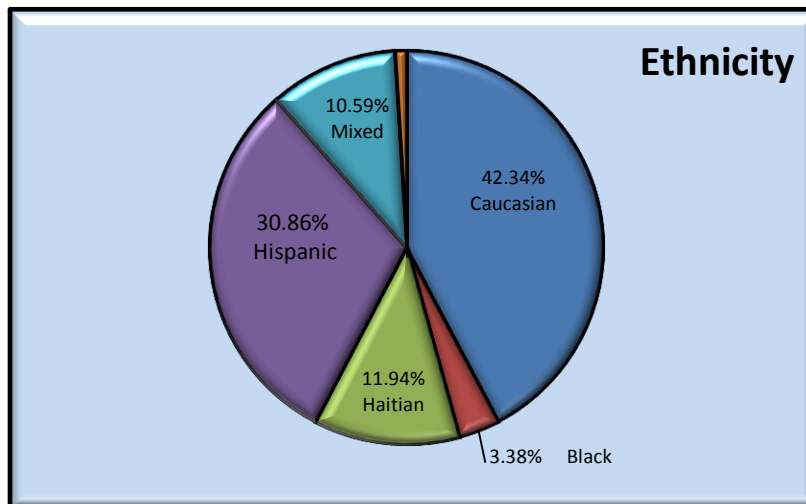
May not have GAL Assigned  
Are too young to express themselves



**Observation:** The number of months in care continues to decrease. Over 76% of children are in care from 0-12 months and 17% from 13-24 months.

**Trend:** This positive trend toward more timely permanency has been observed for the past five years.

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
0-12 Months	242 76.58%	135 63.08%	101 51.53%	123 46.24%	65 30.37%	140 49.12%	163 51.1%	132 48.48%	65 36.52%	149 35.48%	147 27.22%
13-24 Months	54 17.1%	49 22.90%	57 29.08%	88 33.08%	101 47.20%	70 24.56%	84 26.33%	79 28.42%	58 32.58%	122 29.05%	180 33.33%
25-36 Months	6 1.9%	17 7.94%	18 9.18%	29 10.90%	20 9.35%	31 10.88%	29 9.10%	24 8.63%	20 11.24%	54 12.86%	110 20.37%
37-48 Months	3 1.0%	2 .93%	4 2.04%	9 3.38%	11 5.14%	17 5.96%	11 3.45%	18 6.47%	12 6.74%	17 4.05%	47 8.7%
49-60 Months	5 1.6%	3 1.40%	1 .5%	7 2.63%	6 2.81%	4 1.40%	16 5.02%	5 1.80%	7 3.93%	17 4.05%	23 4.26%
60+ Months	6 1.9%	8 3.74%	15 7.65%	10 3.76%	11 5.14%	23 8.07%	16 5.02%	20 7.19%	16 8.99%	61 14.52%	33 6.11%



**OBSERVATION:**

Largest % group is white (42%) followed by Hispanic (31%)

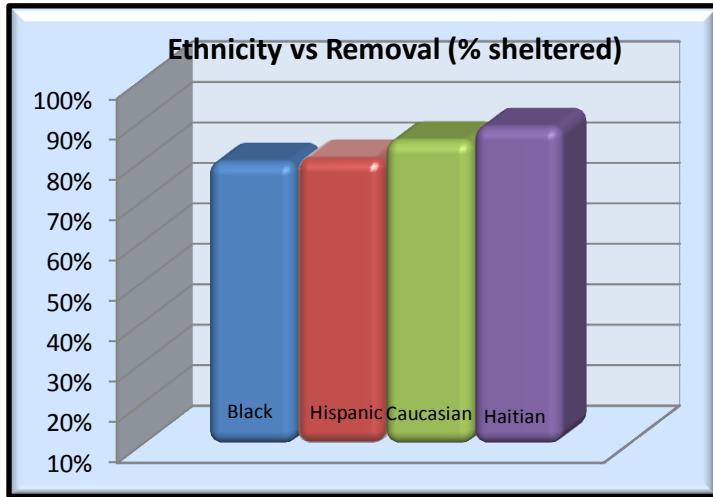
The percent of cases in the Hispanic population increased by 4%.

White, Black, Haitian and Mixed showed very little change from previous years.

When comparing these numbers with those in the Collier County schools, the percentage of white children in the schools is lower than that seen in the court, whereas in the Hispanic population the percentage is higher in the schools.

% of Cases by Ethnicity				
For comparison purposes, the percentage numbers of current Collier County Schools were used.				
	Current Collier County Schools	2014	2013	2012
Caucasian/White	37%	42.34%	43.5%	46.5%
Hispanic	47%	30.86%	26.5%	26.1%
Haitian	Not reported separately	11.94%	11.8%	9.6%
Black/Afro American	12%	3.38%	5.1%	6.7%
Mixed	2%	10.59%	8.9%	9.9%
Other	2%	.90%		

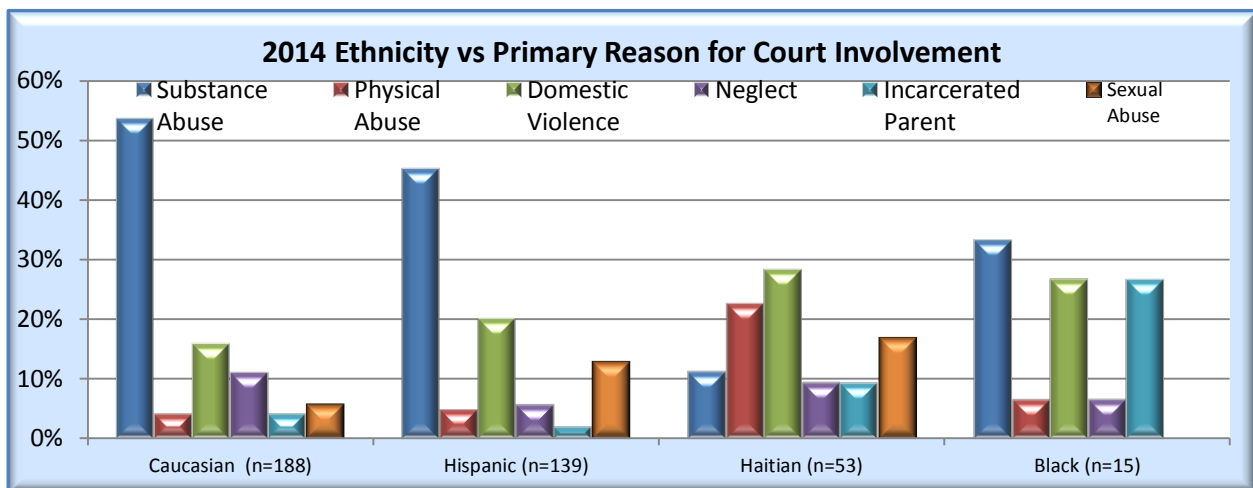
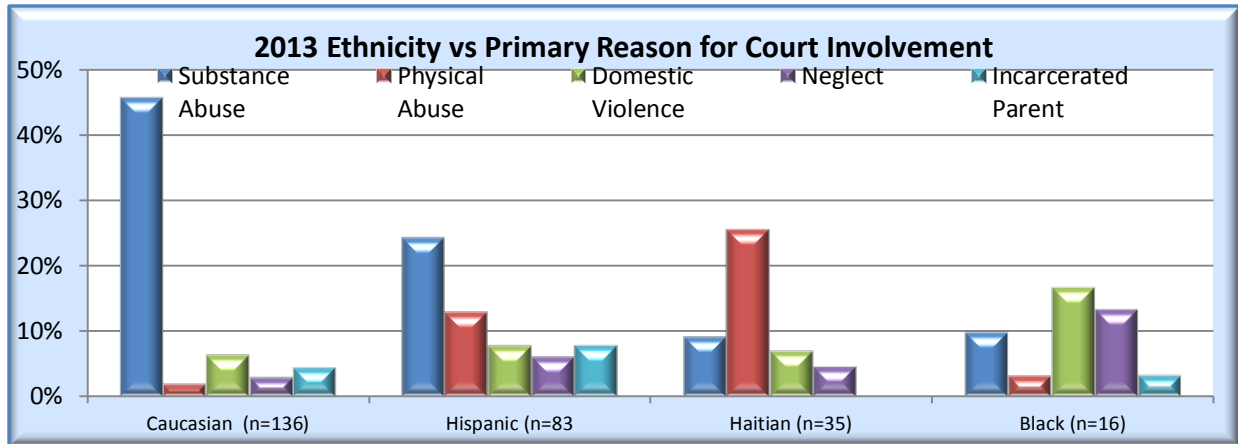




Percent of Children Sheltered	2014 (%)	2013 (%)	2012 (%)	2011 (%)
Black	80	88	77	83
Hispanic	81	86	73	62
Caucasian	85	88	77	78
Haitian	89	86	98	87

**OBSERVATION:** The percent of children sheltered from their families is almost the same across all racial groups, an indication that there does not appear to be any disparity in the court’s decision making.



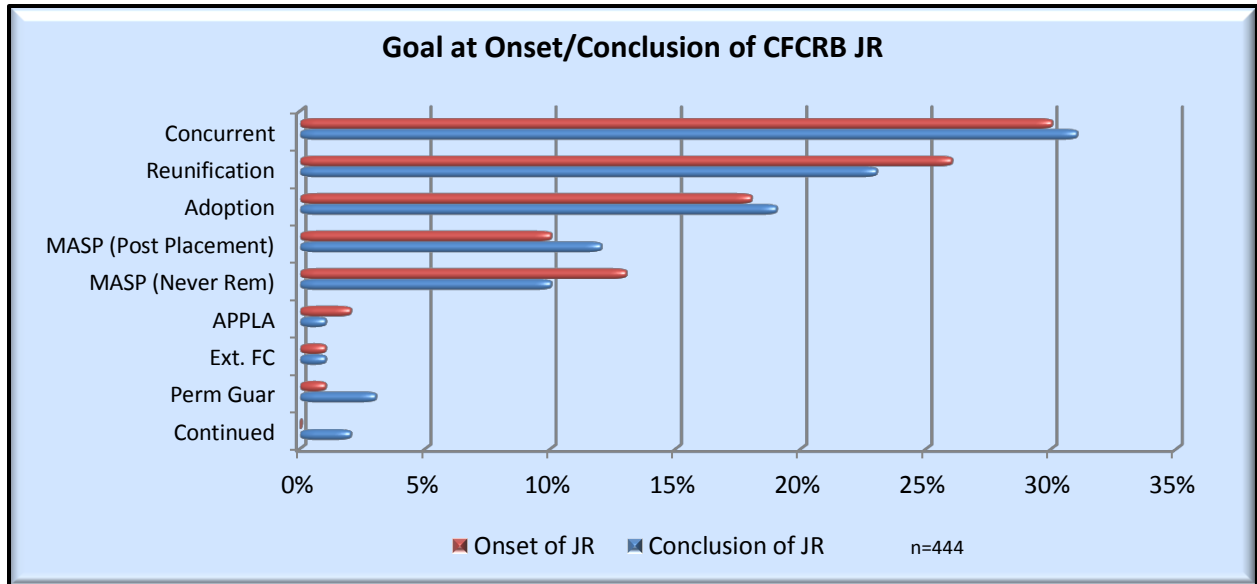


	Substance Abuse		Physical Abuse		DV		Neglect		Incarc. Parent		Sexual Abuse	
	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013
<b>Caucasian</b>	54%	46%	4%	2%	16%	6%	11%	3%	4%	4%	6%	n/a
<b>Hispanic</b>	45%	24%	5%	13%	20%	8%	6%	6%	2%	8%	13%	n/a
<b>Haitian</b>	11%	9%	23%	26%	28%	7%	9%	5%	9%	0%	17%	n/a
<b>Black</b>	33%	10%	7%	3%	27%	17%	7%	13%	27%	3%	0%	n/a

In order to highlight the changes observed from 2013, both charts are shown. Only the primary reasons for court involvement are listed. Often these are combined with other reasons. Not shown are: Mental Health, Abandonment and Deceased Parent.

#### Observations and Trends:

- Substantial changes in primary reason for court involvement were seen in the Hispanic, Haitian, and Black groups.
  - Substance abuse increased 21% in the Hispanic group and domestic violence doubled to 20%
  - In the Haitian group, domestic violence had a fourfold increase (28%). Incarcerated parent increased.
  - In the Black group, substance abuse tripled to 33% and there were more incarcerated parents
  - Sexual abuse increased in Haitian, Hispanic and Caucasian groups. In previous years it was too low to list
  - Domestic violence increased in the Caucasian group
- Substance abuse remains the leading cause for court involvement in the Caucasian, Black and Hispanic groups.
- Domestic violence has increased in all of the groups and is now the second highest reason for court involvement.
- Physical abuse, which was a leading cause in the Haitian group last year, has decreased



**Goal does not reflect the final outcome of case, but rather the recommended goal of CRCRB Panel**

**Observation:**

The most frequent goal was concurrent at 30% (reunification with PG or adoption), followed by reunification at 26%.

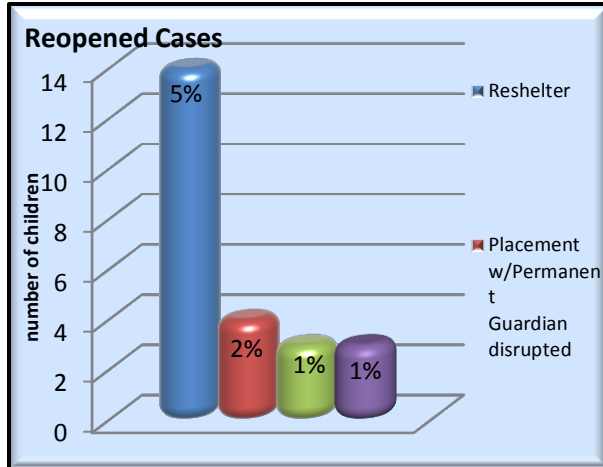
**Trend:**

- The goal of adoption decreased to 18% of cases from last year's high of 29%.
- The reunification goal increased 13% and concurrent goal 10%.
- MASP(Maintain and Strengthen Placement (post placement)) continues to decrease.

**Concern:** The decrease in MASP goal with increase in concurrent and reunification goals, brings into question if 12 months is sufficient time for completion of case plan tasks and successful reunification.

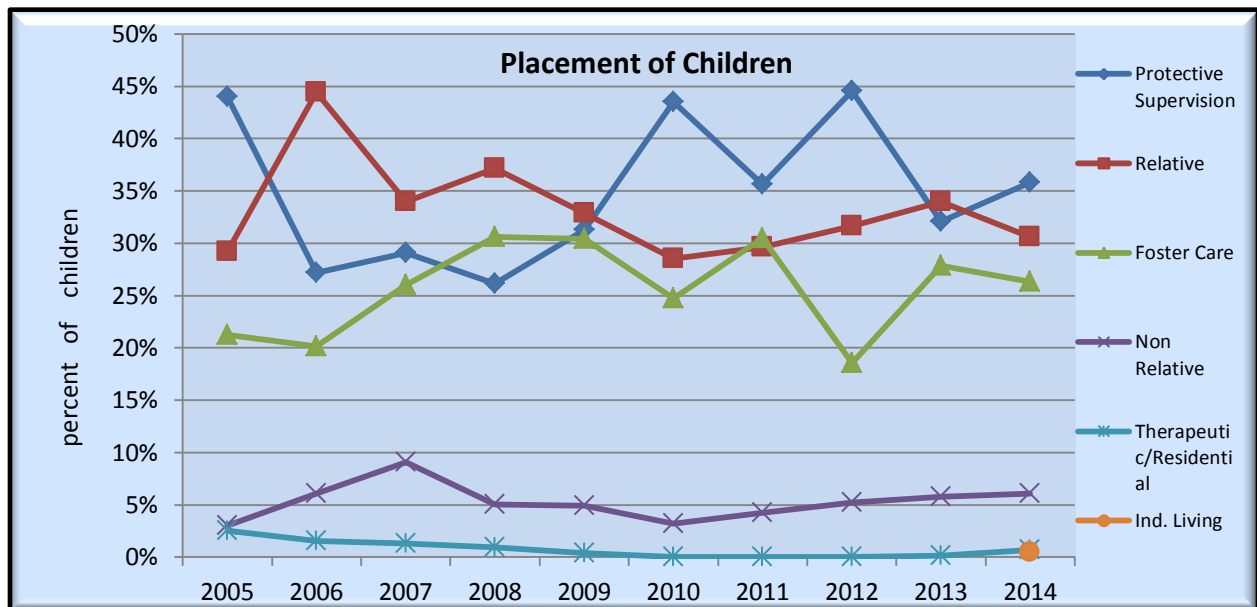
	MASP (Never Removed)	MASP (Post Placement)	MASP (combined)	Adoption	Concurrent	Reunification	Perm Guard.	APPLA	Continued	Cancelled	Perm Placed Fit Relative	Ext. Foster Care
2014	58 13%	45 10%	103 23%	78 18%	134 30%	114 26%	5 1%	7 2%	0	0	0	3 .5%
2013	38 12%	51 16%	89 28%	91 29%	64 20%	42 13%	10 3%	10 3%	6 2%	0 0%	0	0
2012	91 20%	90 20%	181 40%	82 18%	77 17%	76 17%	13 3%	10 2%	4 1%	1 .5%	0	0
2011	N/A	N/A	183 31%	134 23%	126 21%	95 16%	25 4%	15 3%	12 2%	2 <1%	0	0
2010	N/A	N/A	169 31.47%	93 17.32%	128 23.84%	79 14.71%	22 4.10%	8 1.49%	30 5.59%	1 .19%	7	1.30%
2009	N/A	N/A	151 21.82%	116 16.76%	156 22.54%	133 19.22%	27 3.90%	23 3.32%	81 11.71%	5 .72%	N/A	
2008	N/A	N/A	145 21.48%	90 13.33%	130 19.26%	147 21.78%	20 2.96%	43 6.37%	96 14.22%	4 .59%	N/A	



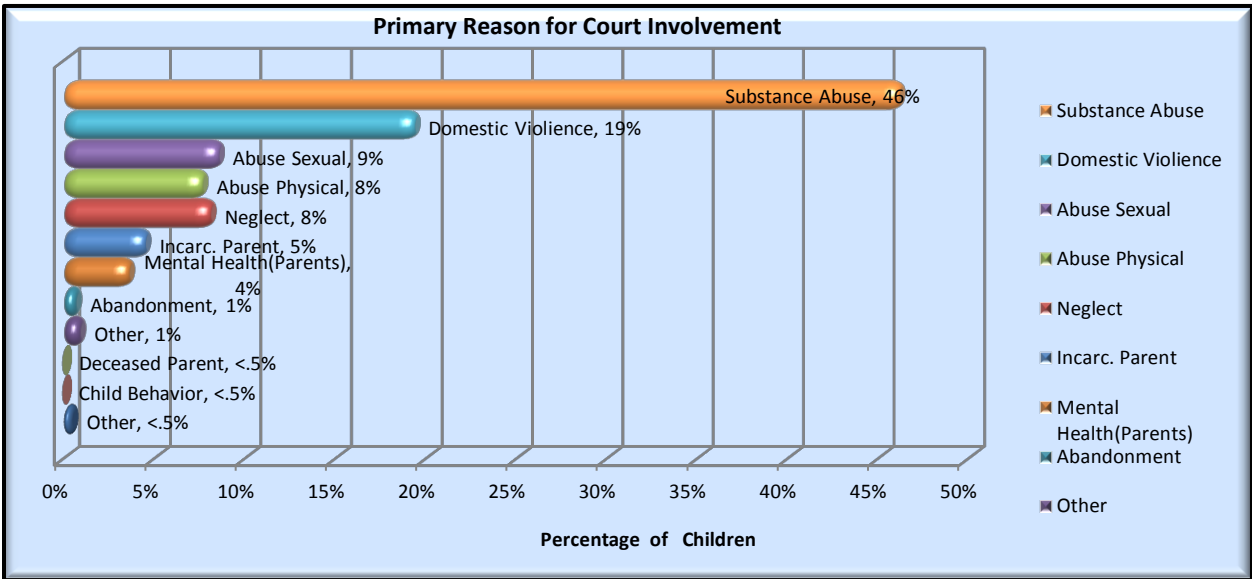


Year Reopened	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Re-sheltered	14	19	8	15	16	14
Parent(s) Petitioned to Reopen	3	3	8	7	1	7
Perm. Guard. Reopened to Adopt	3	0	4	4	5	2
Perm. Placement Disrupted	4	4	2	3	3	6
Total (# of cases)	24	26	22	29	25	29
	8.96%	12.87%	8.06%	8.56%	8.04%	6.96%

**Observation:** Twenty four (9%) out of the 268 judicial reviews were reopened cases. Of these, 55% were due to re-shelter. These numbers have remained consistent over the last five years.



**OBSERVATION:** There were only slight shifts in the placement of children. 64% were in out of home placement and 36% in protective supervision.



The data reflects only “primary” reason for entry into care. Frequently other factors may exist along with substance abuse.

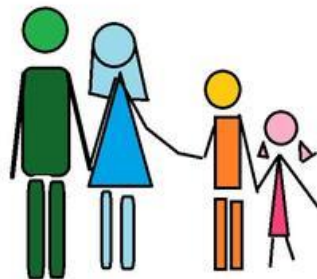
**Observations:**

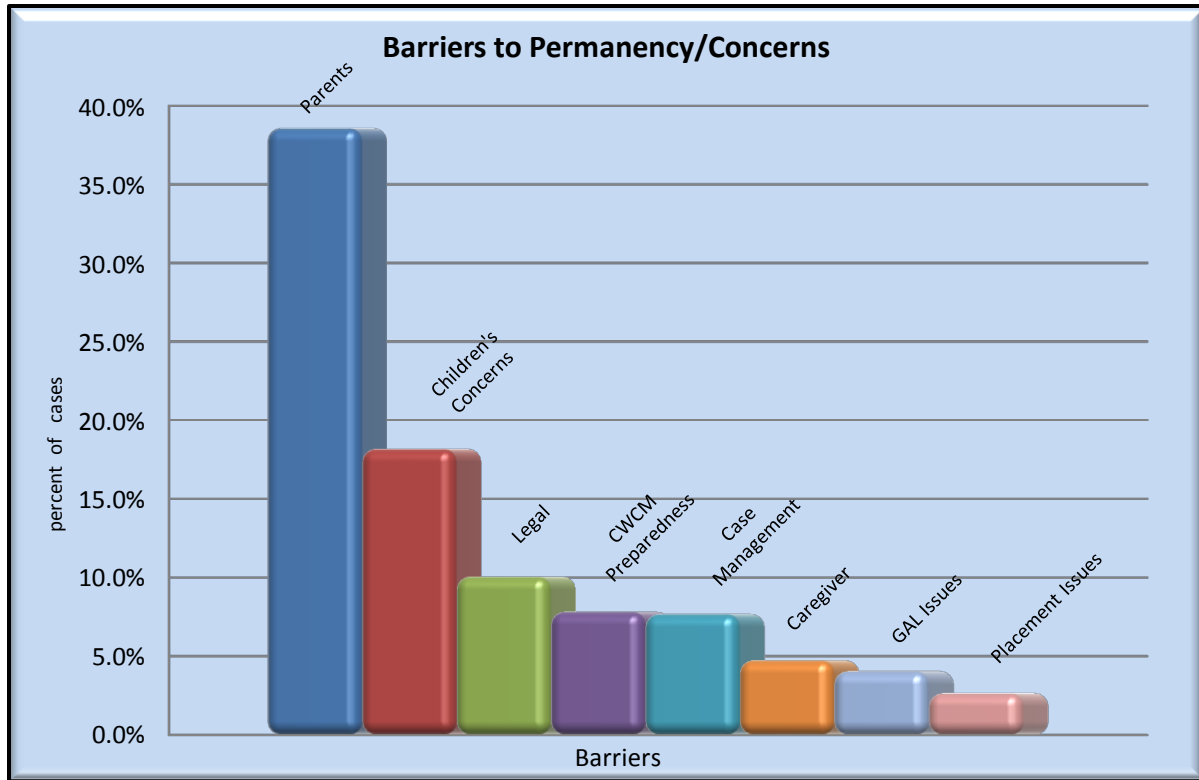
- Substance abuse remains the most frequent reason for court involvement.

**Trends:**

- Domestic violence increased by 9% from 2013
- Sexual abuse cases were up 6% from 2013

	Substance Abuse	Abandonment	Abuse Physical	Abuse-Sexual	Child Behavior	Deceased Parent	Domestic Violence	Incarcerated Parent	Mental Health Parents	Neglect	Other	Comb.
2014	205 46%	3 1%	34 8%	38 9%	2 <.5%	0	86 19%	20 5%	16 4%	36 8%	4 1%	0
2013	147 47%	14 4%	32 10%	10 3%	1 <.5%	1 <.5%	31 10%	20 6%	20 6%	31 10%	1 <.5%	5 2%
2012	170 38.2%	7 1.6%	62 13.9%	16 3.6%	1 .22%	2 .45%	66 14.83%	16 3.6%	24 5.4%	71 16%	6 1.35%	4 .9%
2011	228 38.5%	8 1.4%	95 16.0 %	21 3.5%	1 .2%	6 1.0%	72 12.2%	25 4.2%	38 6.42%	82 13.9%	15 2.5%	1 .2%
2010	237 44.13%	10 1.9%	59 10.99%	18 3.35%	1 .19%	2 .37%	49 9.12%	26 4.84%	44 8.19%	76 14.15%	11 2.05%	4 .74%
2009	286 41.33%	11 1.6%	71 10.26%	31 4.48%	0 0.0%	2 .29%	81 11.7%	35 5.06%	25 3.61%	128 18.5%	8 1.16%	14 2.02%
2008	264 39.11%	21 3.1%	114 16.89%	30 4.44%	1 .15%	5 .74%	33 4.89%	19 2.81%	20 2.96%	143 21.19%	15 2.22%	10 1.48%



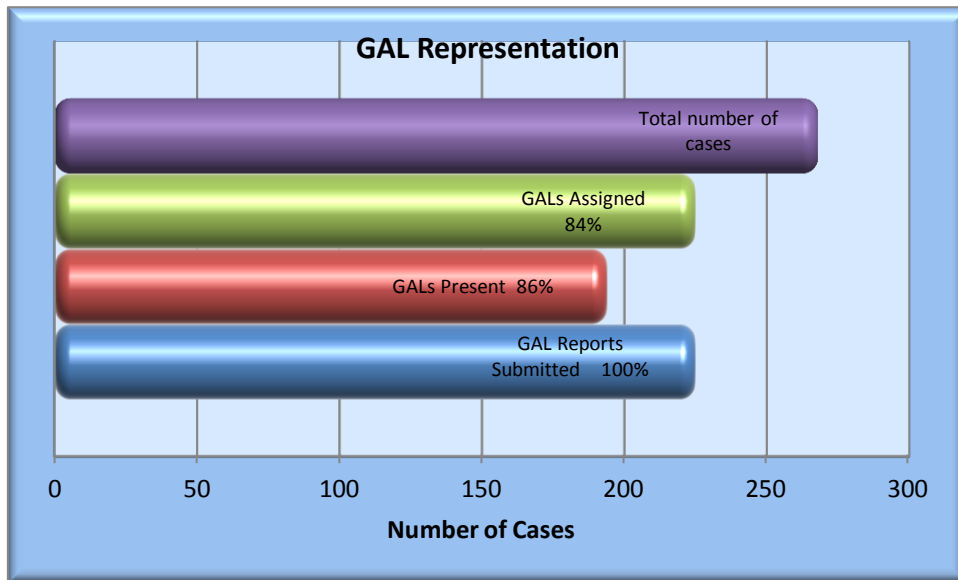


**Observations:**

- The parent's lack of compliance with case plan tasks (drug screens, incarceration, no contact, not present, visitation and protective capacities lacking) remains the leading barrier to case closure (39%).
- Children's issues are next at 18% (not present, runaway, unhappy in placement, education, health, immigration or not involved).
- When case management issues and preparedness of case managers are combined, it accounts for 15% of cases.

CATEGORY	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Parents	276 38.6%	180 36.8%	306 46.5%	313 37.3%	249 36.09%	131 20.7%	125 19.1%
Children's Concerns	130 18.2%	105 21.5%	99 15%	97 11.6%	36 5.22%	5 ≤ 1%	9 1.4%
Legal	72 10.1%	43 8.8%	65 9.9%	113 13.5%	112 16.23%	147 23.3%	165 25.2%
GAL Issues	29 4.1%	19 3.9%	44 6.7%	81 9.7%	107 15.51%	22 3.4%	54 8.3%
Caregivers	34 4.8%	40 8.2%	44 6.7%	58 6.9%	48 6.96%	10 1.6%	11 1.7%
Case Management	55 7.7%	28 5.7%	43 6.5%	53 6.3%	31 4.49%	47 7.4%	54 8.2%
Preparedness of Case Manager	56 7.8%	19 3.9%	40 6.1%	64 7.6%	62 8.99%	46 7.2%	75 11.5%
Placement Issues	19 2.7%	15 3.1%	17 2.6%	10 1.2%	45 6.52%	223 35.3%	160 24.5%
Cases with no Barriers/Concerns	44 6.2%	40 8.25	36 5.47%	50 6%	29 9.32%	Statistic not kept	Statistic not kept





**OBSERVATION:** 84% of cases had guardian-ad litem assigned of which 100% of reports were submitted. Attendance at judicial reviews of GALs was up 24% from last year. In the absence of an assigned GAL, well-informed supervisors were in attendance to provide updates.

**GAL reports are a critical component in the JR process and input at this level is greatly valued.**

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
GAL's Assigned	225	164	183	249	241	274	249	170	167	158	151
% of Cases with GAL assigned	84%	81%	67%	73.45%	77.49%	65.71%	61.94%	53.29%	50.45%	37.71%	32.13%
% of assigned GALs who attended JRs	86%	62%	78.69%	71.49%	74.69%	71.53%	73.90%	79.41%	68.86%	68.99%	73.51%
Report submitted	100%	99%	182 99.45%	199 79.92%	134 55.60%	176 64.23%	202 81.12%	144 84.71%	130 77.84%	137 86.71%	138 91.39%
Total JRs	268	202	273	339	311	417	402	319	331	419	470



# 2014 Panel Member Volunteers

**Terry Abraham-Whalley**

**Tom Becker**

**Bob Bogle**

**Stephen Brazina**

**Ann Campbell**

**Lisa Cannon**

**Lori Cohen**

**John D'Alimonte**

**Jennifer Devries**

**Mike Dias**

**Jan Eustis**

**David Goldstein**

**Liz Hayes**

**Newton Hoilette**

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