

SOCIAL SERVICES TRENDS

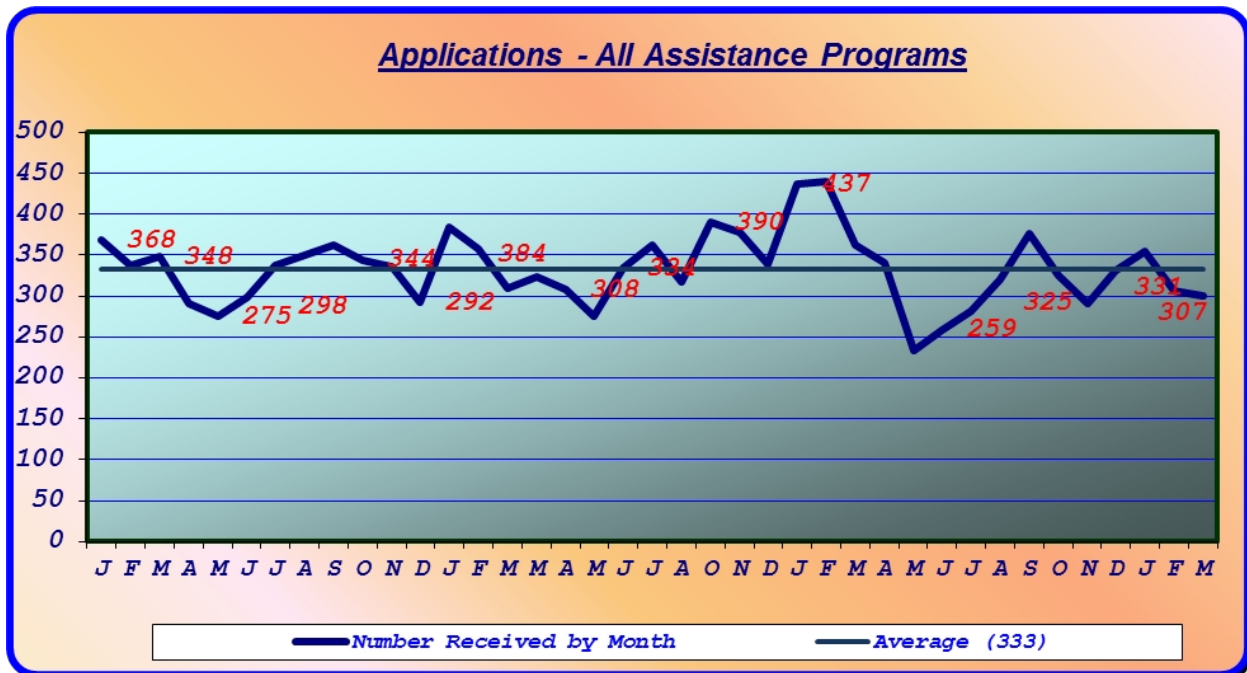
Quarter Ending: March 31, 2015

Social Services Trends is a quarterly report to the Plumas County Board of Supervisors and members of the public. This report provides case counts, application data, referrals for services and other workload information in the Department of Social Services. This edition of *Trends* includes case counts and workload data for the three-month quarter that ended March 31, 2015. The Department welcomes questions regarding the information contained in this report or about our programs and services. Additional information regarding our programs is available by calling 530-283-6350 or by accessing the Plumas County web site at www.countyofplumas.com.

I. WELFARE TO WORK & PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DIVISION

A. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Application counts have remained comparatively stable if not declined some. Where in the recent past, applications for assistance could be in the range of above 350 per month, more recently the counts have been in the range of under 350 per month. The Department continues to believe that these reductions are associated with a slow improvement in the local economy. If this assessment is correct, we might expect to continue to see further decline in the application counts as we move into warmer months and the service and construction sections of the economy improve.



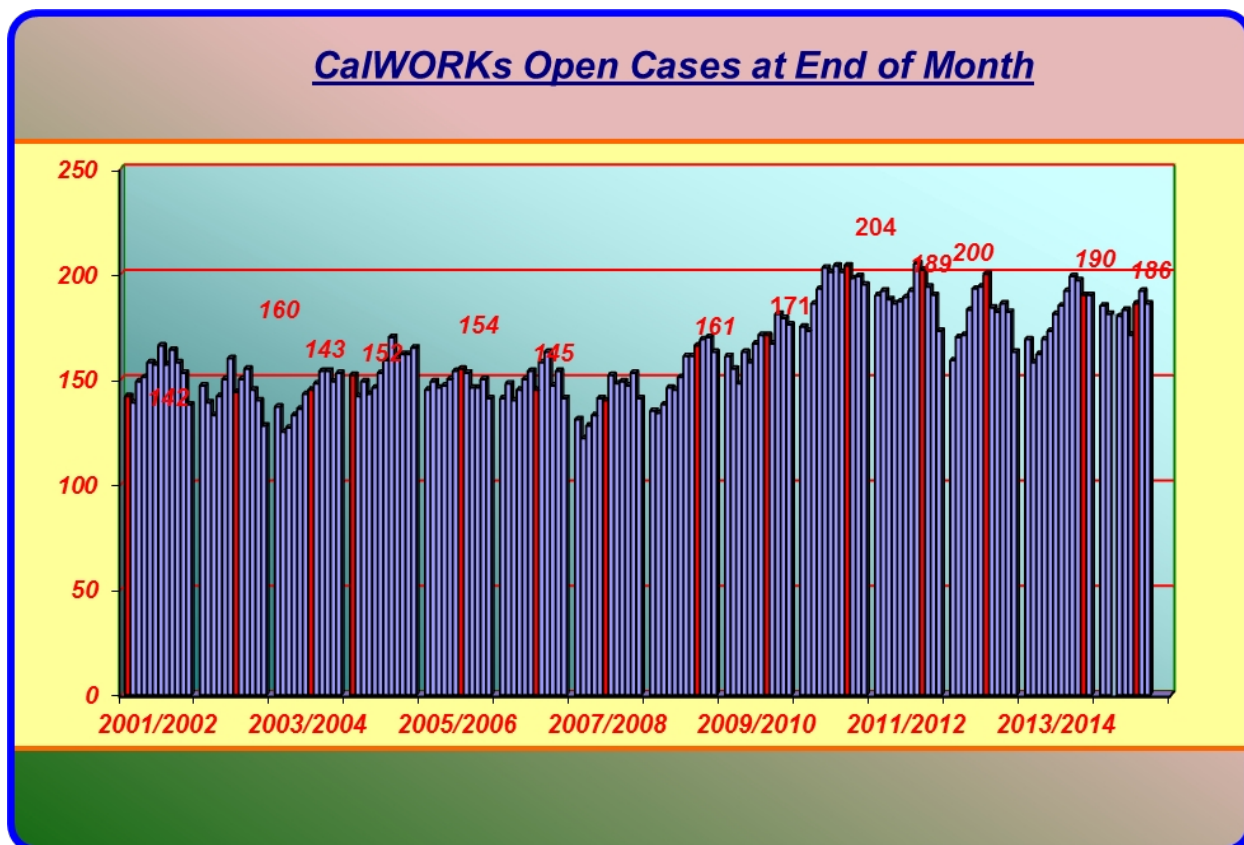
B. CONTINUING CASES

(1). Cash Assistance (AFDC/CalWORKs)

The case count has shown a remarkable amount of stability during the past four years and, more recently, slight signs of a decline. It is noted that the monthly average caseload for the past three years hasn't changed significantly despite the economic downturn. We believe that the perceptible drop in case count more recently is quite likely associated with slow improvements in the local economy. If that is correct, we might expect to see a slow, but continuing decline in case count for this program.

Average Monthly Caseload

2012/2013	181
2013/2014	180
2014/2015	183



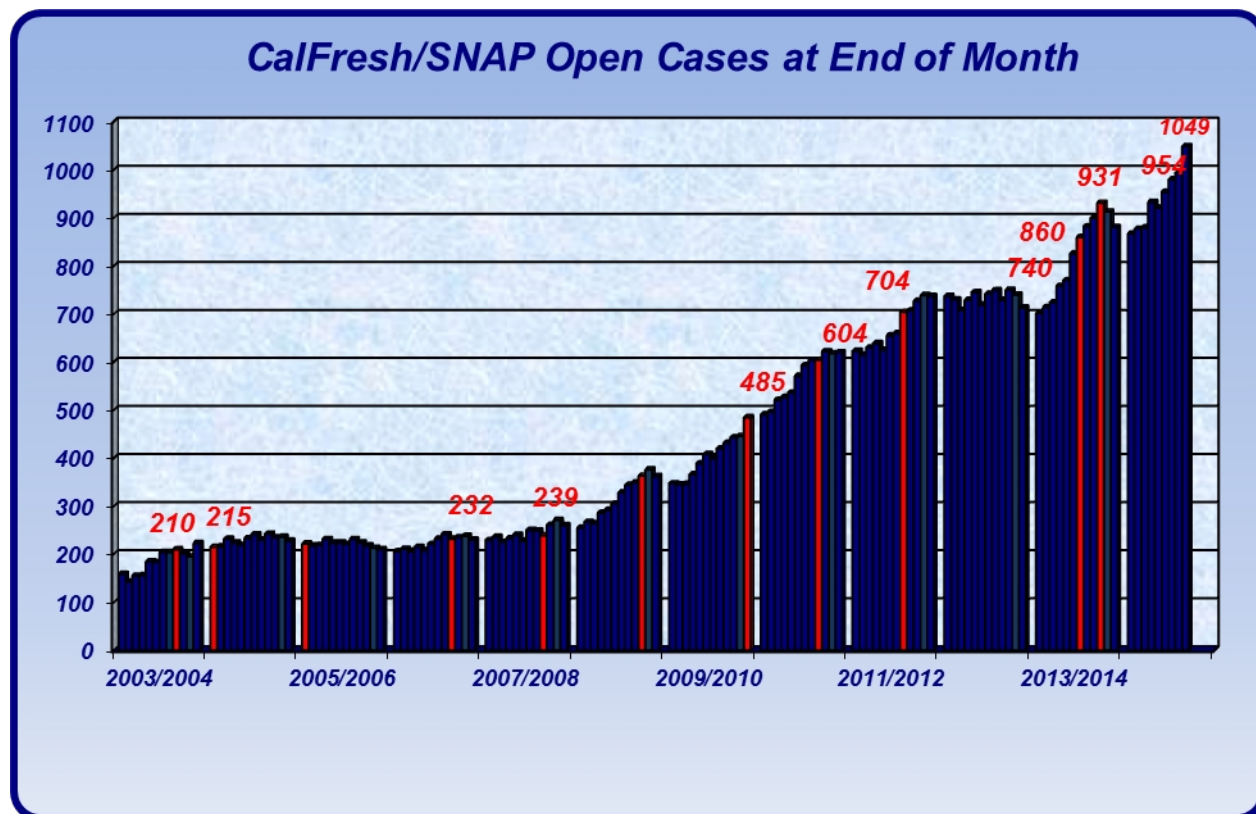
(2). CalFresh (Food Stamps) Assistance

A. Case Count

The snapshot of CalFresh recipients continues to be that the typical customer is more likely to have earnings. That means that while people are employed, their earnings aren't enough to disqualify them from receiving CalFresh benefits. It is also true that we are beginning to see more people in the "over 50" demographic who are part of the "new normal". We may not know for sure what the "new normal" looks like for a period of time yet to come. But clearly it will include higher case counts than we have seen in the past.

Average Monthly Caseload

2012/2013	733
2013/2014	822
2014/2015	939

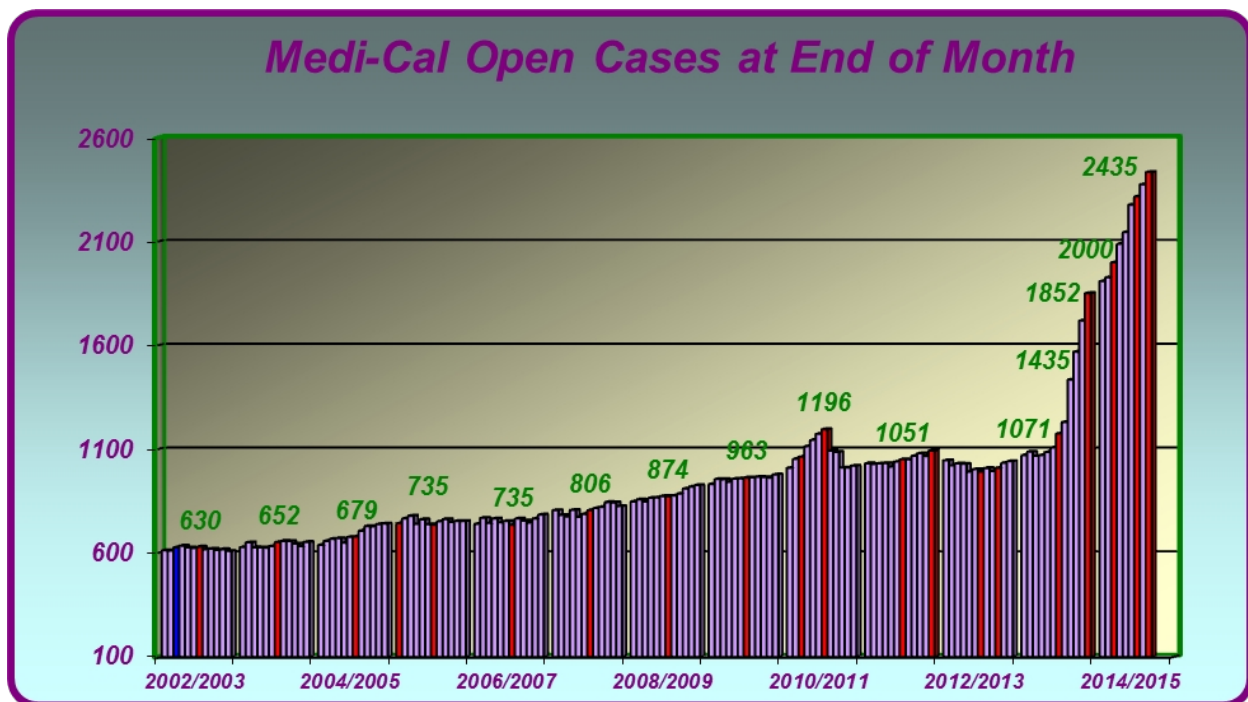


(3). Medi-Cal

The first year of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) resulted in adding just under 1,000 new cases to the Medi-Cal case count. While a good number of these new cases came from the former CMSP and Path2Health programs, many of the new Medi-Cal members are people who did not have any form of coverage prior to the ACA. A new open enrollment period for Covered California opened last November and closed at the end of April. During the new open enrollment period the case count grew by about 435 new cases, not nearly the growth level from the prior period, but significant none-the-less.

Average Monthly Caseload

2012/2013	1017
2013/2014	1459
2014/2015	2164

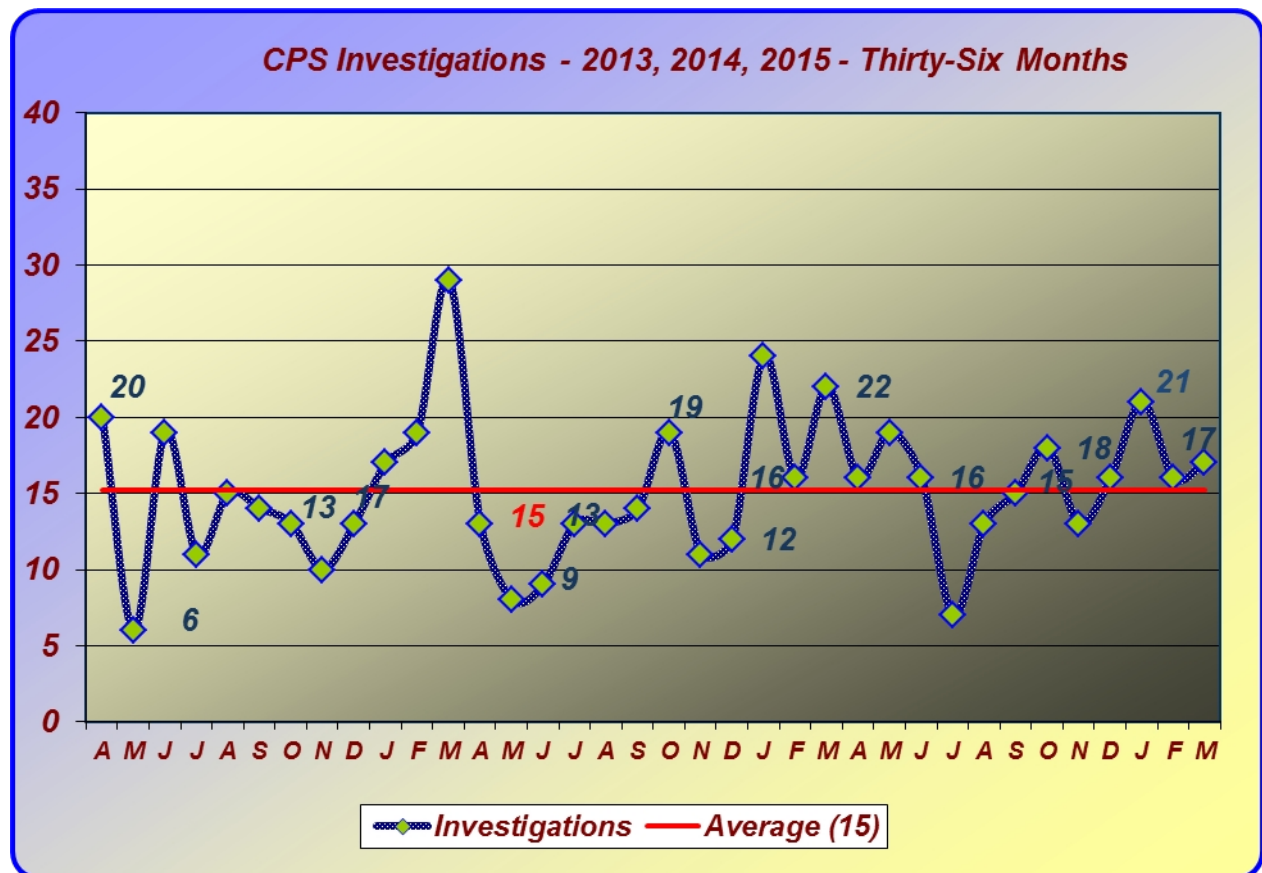


II. SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

A. Child Welfare Services

The Emergency Response component of Child Protective Services averages in the range of about 15 child abuse investigations per month. During this most recent quarter, the number of investigations has hovered around the average closing the quarter with 17 investigations in March.

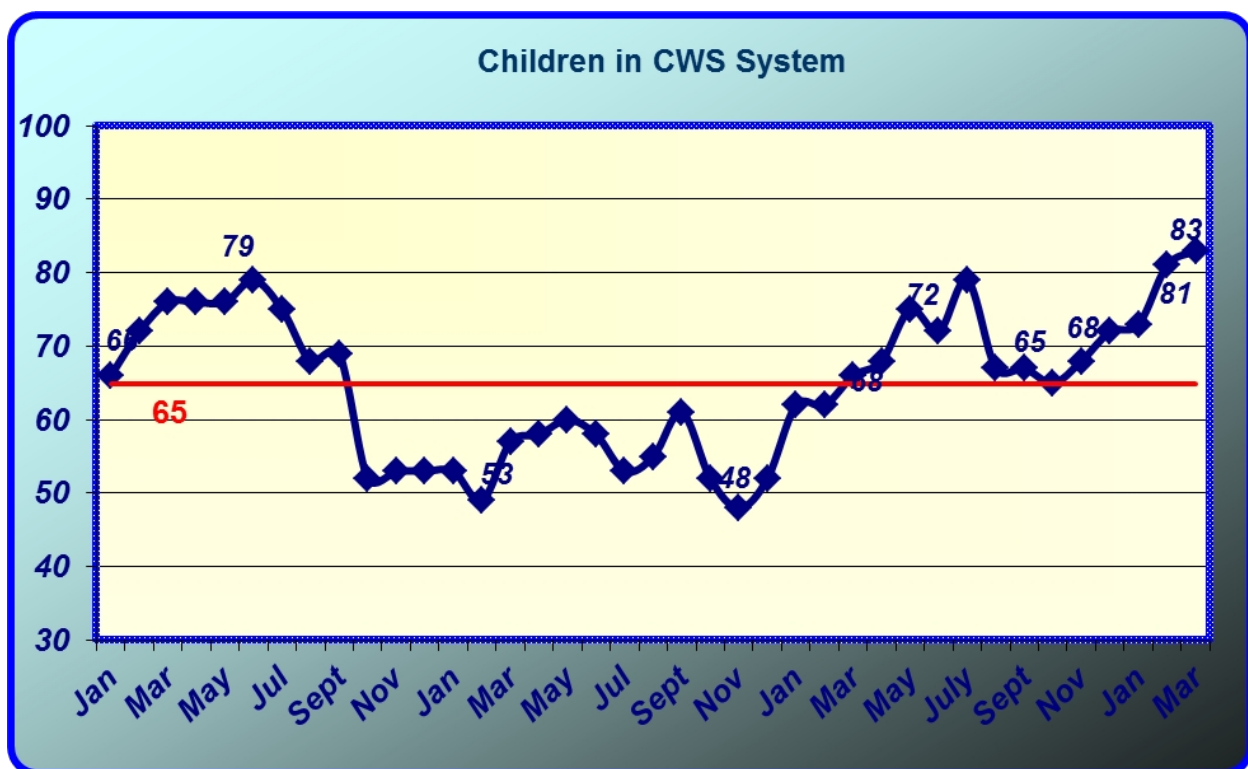
As the Department has noted previously, we have continued to experience significant numbers of cases where the precipitating factors leading to abuse and neglect are associated with substance abuse, in particular methamphetamine but also alcohol and other drugs. Substance abuse is the foremost reason that children are removed from unsafe environments.



B. Children in the Child Welfare Services System

As has been reported previously, under changes in the law associated with Assembly Bill 12 of 2012, some children will stay in the Child Welfare System longer enabling them to complete education or to secure independent housing. This had led to some growth in the count of the number of children in our system. At the end of March there were 83 children in the Child Welfare system which is a higher count than we might prefer to have.

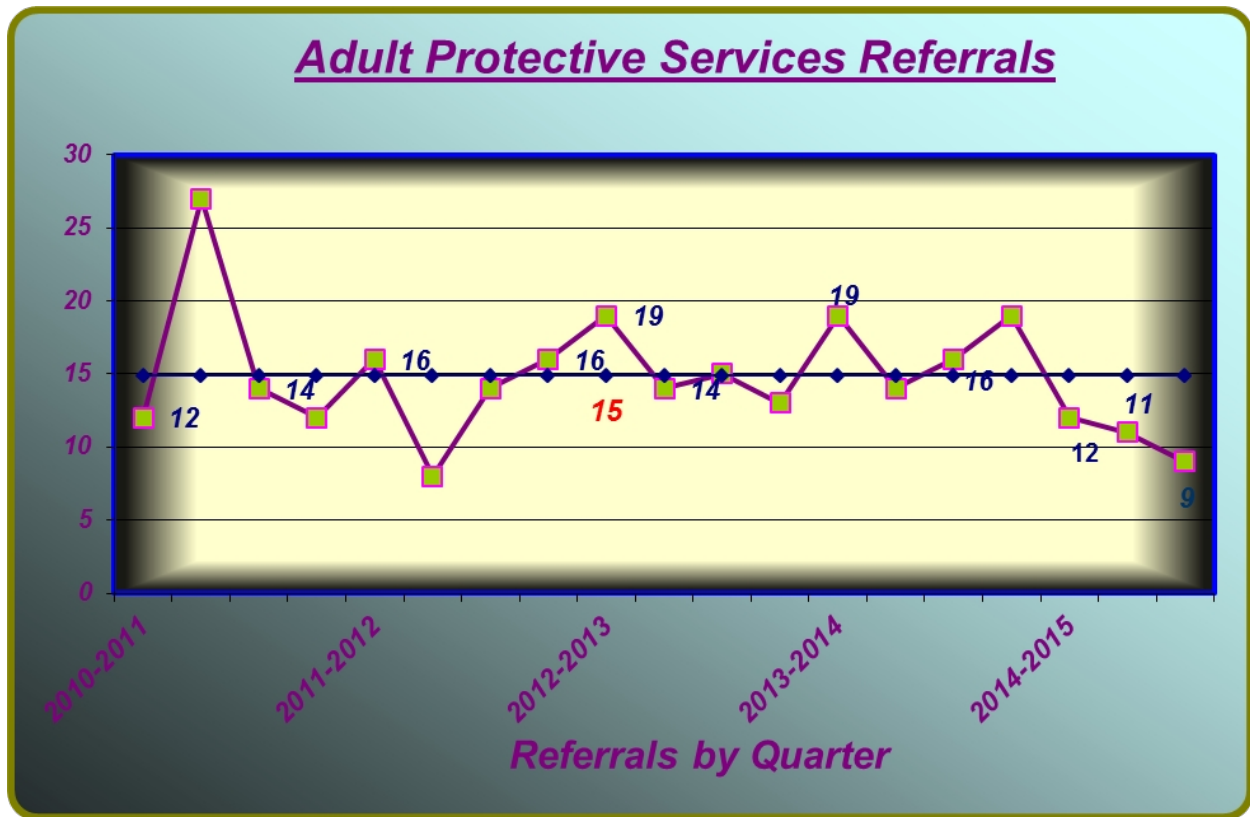
The Department has continued its trend toward placing foster children with relatives and with non-related extended family members. This has placed us in a position where we are less reliant on foster family agencies and foster homes for placement resources. While we expect that trend to continue, there remains a need for Foster Homes for children who come into our system.



C. Adult Protective Services

Referrals for investigation of adults who've been abused or neglected generally have been at or below average levels during the past thirty-six months. The average rate has been about 15 referrals per quarter. For the three month quarter that ended in March, the Department received 9 referrals.

Referrals from financial institutions regarding suspicious circumstances connected with an elderly or disabled person's bank account have continued to account for many of the requests for investigation we receive. The Department also receives referrals that are for self-neglect. In some of these situations it is not always possible to intercede because the referent still has a right to self-determination.



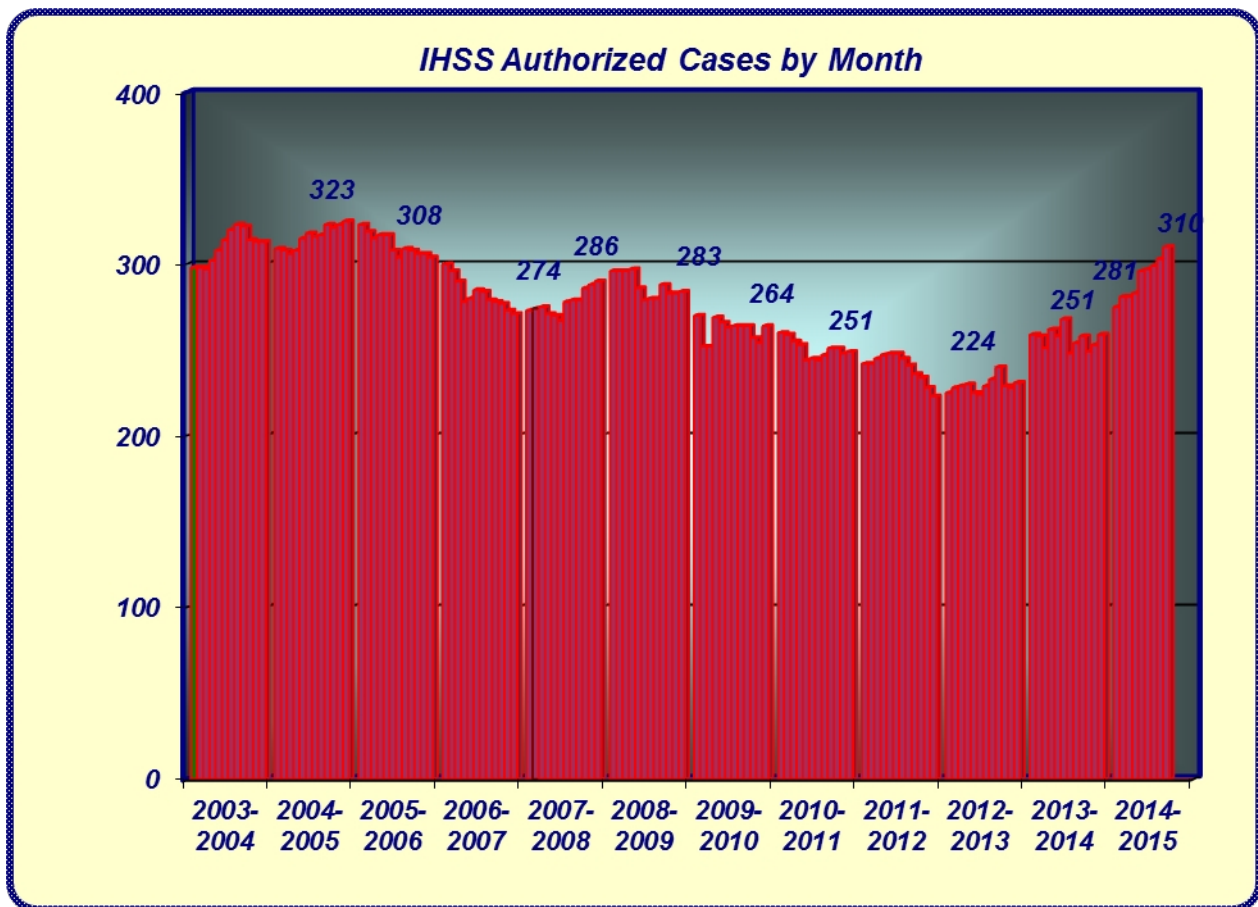
D. In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

The IHSS program experienced a fairly steady period of case count decline from around 2009 to mid-2013. Those reductions in case count were linked to several state regulation and legislative changes that both changed eligibility requirements and reduced the number of authorized hours that could be approved under some circumstances.

With the advent of the Affordable Care Act, the Department determined that it would be likely that the case count might grow some due to people becoming eligible for Medi-Cal (federal Medicaid), as IHSS is funded by Medicaid dollars. That has turned out to be a correct prediction. We believe that we will continue to see some growth in this program due to the ACA.

Average Monthly Case Count

2012/2013	229
2013/2014	256
2014/2015	292



III. PUBLIC GUARDIAN

The Public Guardian currently provides guardianship and conservator services to a total of 10 LPS and Probate conservatees. The Public Guardian also serves as representative payee for 7 SSI recipients.