

## SOCIAL SERVICES TRENDS

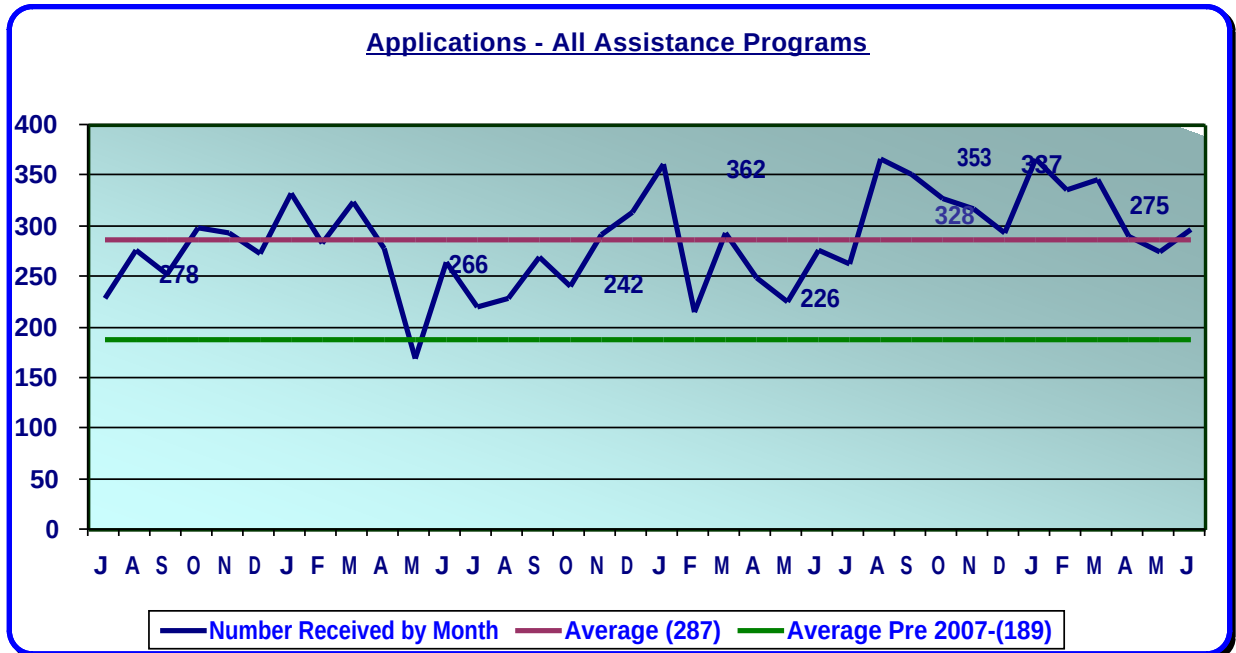
**Quarter Ending: June 30, 2012**

**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 June 30, 2012. 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](http://www.countyofplumas.com).

### **I. WELFARE TO WORK & PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DIVISION**

#### **A. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Applications for assistance (CalWORKs, CalFresh, Medi-Cal) have trended downward now for six months. As has been the case during the economic downturn, nearly one-third of the applications are for CalFresh benefits (formerly Food Stamps). From 2000 through 2007, the period prior to the recession, the Department averaged 189 applications per month (indicated by the green line below). For the period following the recession, the average has been 287 per month shown by the red line below.



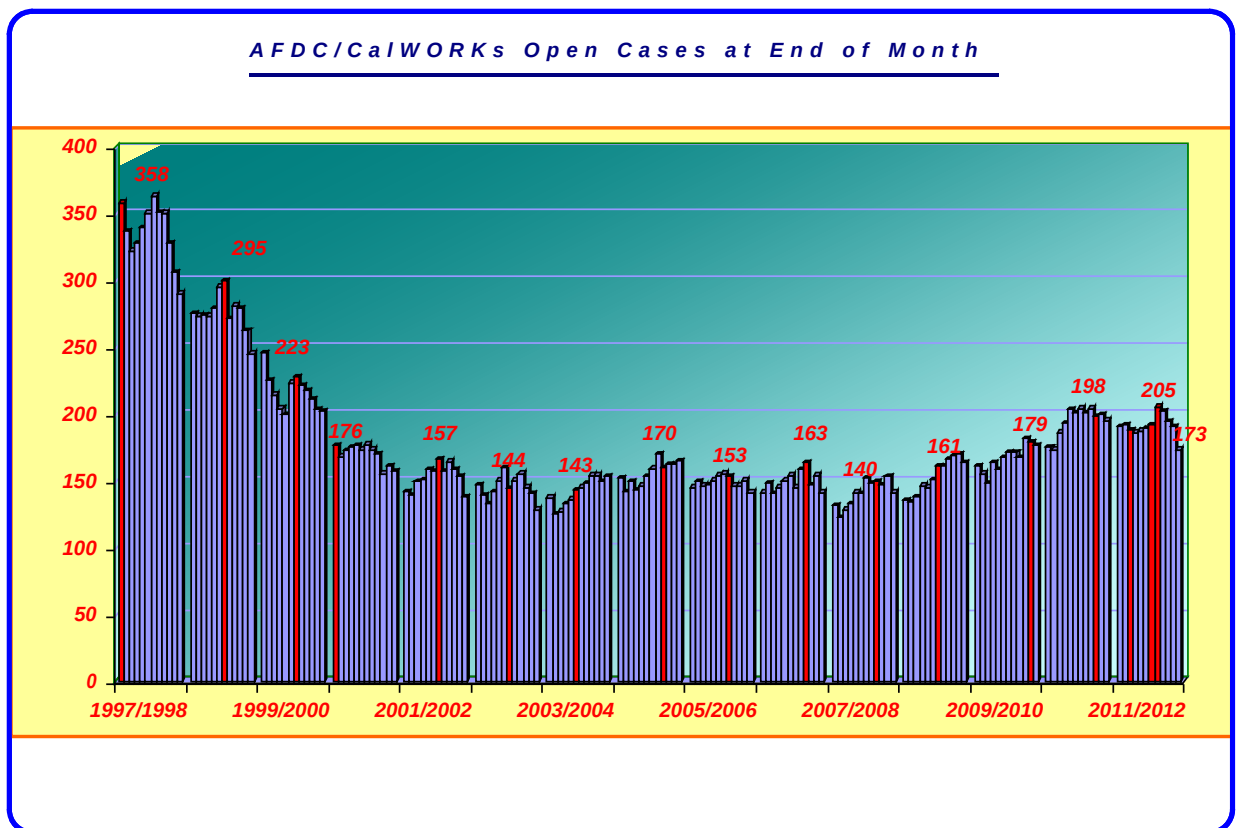
## CONTINUING CASES

### (1). Cash Assistance (AFDC/CalWORKs)

The count for CalWORKs has been holding steady in the range of about 175-200 cases during the past twenty-one months. The case count of 173 at the end of June represents a 15% drop in case count compared to this year's high of 205 cases last February. That is a good sign.

#### Average Monthly Caseload

|           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| 2009/2010 | 166 |
| 2010/2011 | 194 |
| 2011/2012 | 191 |



## (2). CalFresh (Food Stamps) Assistance

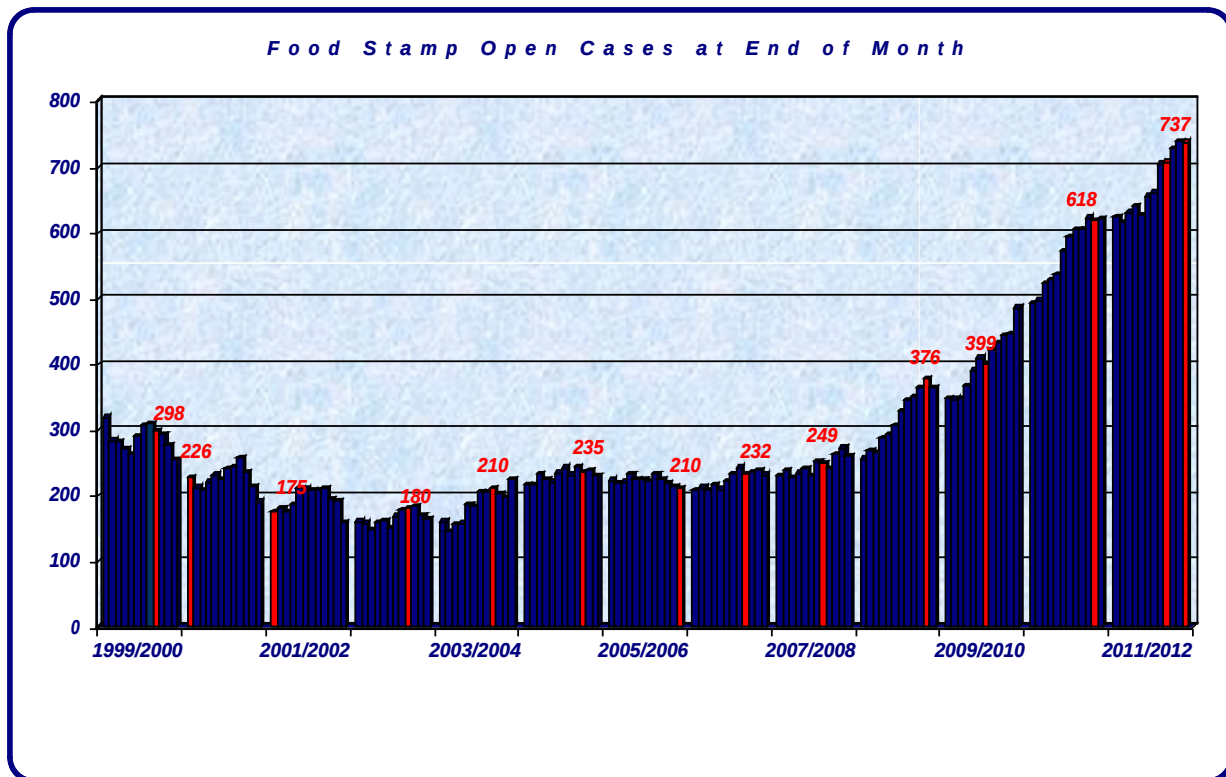
### A. Case Count

The unprecedented growth in CalFresh assistance continues. The average monthly case count for the past twelve months has grown by more than 18%.

Applicants for CalFresh (Food Stamps) must be residents of Plumas County in order to receive assistance.

#### Average Monthly Caseload

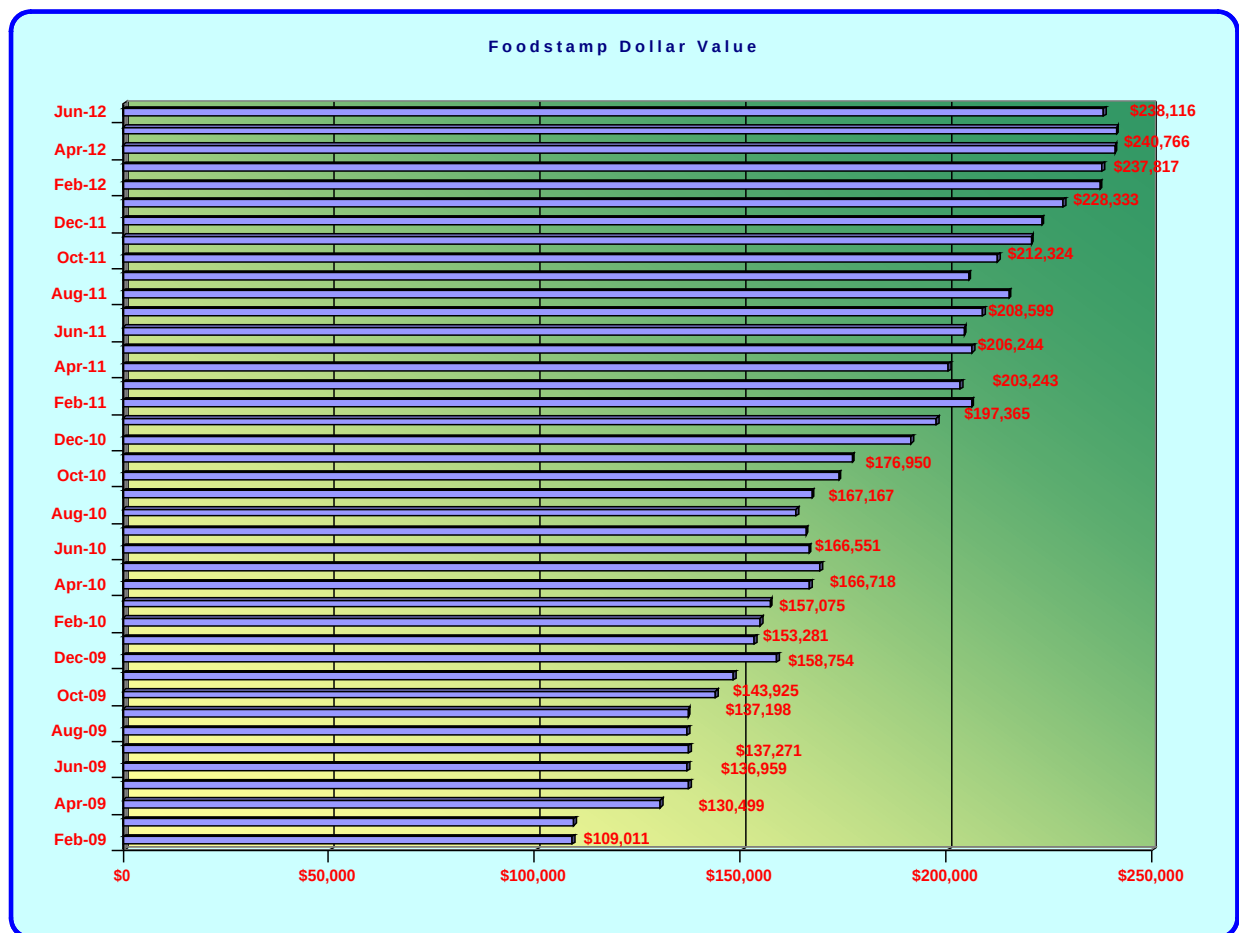
|           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| 2009/2010 | 402 |
| 2010/2011 | 567 |
| 2011/2012 | 672 |



## B. Foodstamp Dollar Value

On average, an eligible household receives about \$320 in CalFresh (Foodstamp) benefits per month. These benefits are intended to supplement food purchasing power. In just over a two and a half year period the value of CalFresh assistance has more than doubled. As with the case count the value of benefits issued is being driven by the recessionary economy. Many of the people we see have had longer term connections with the labor force.

As has been reported elsewhere by the Department, about 67% of the total Foodstamp benefits issued are spent at local grocery outlets.

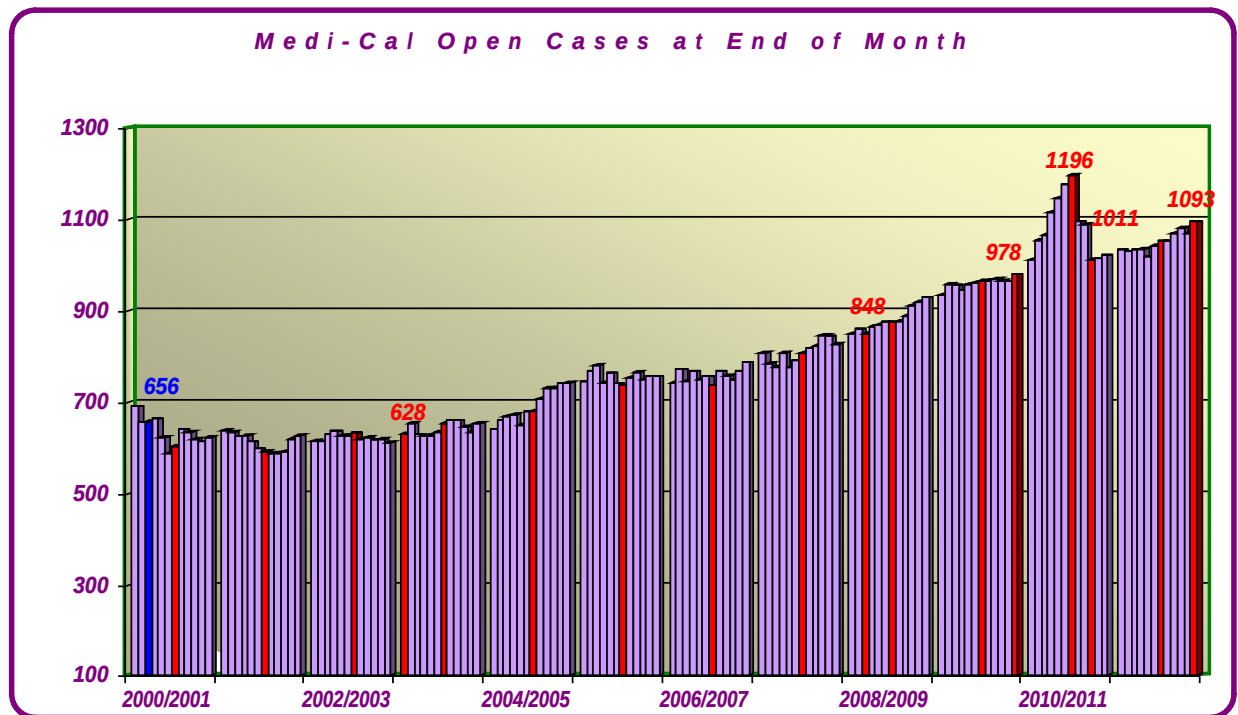


### (3). Medi-Cal

The Medi-Cal case count is growing again following a brief downturn last year. Many of our Medi-Cal recipients can be generally characterized as working poor families: Families whose income is below 150% of the Federal poverty level and where there are no employer provided health insurance benefits. Increased focus on health care policy at the national level has also contributed to growth in the program.

#### Average Monthly Caseload

|           |      |
|-----------|------|
| 2009/2010 | 958  |
| 2010/2011 | 1081 |
| 2011/2012 | 1049 |

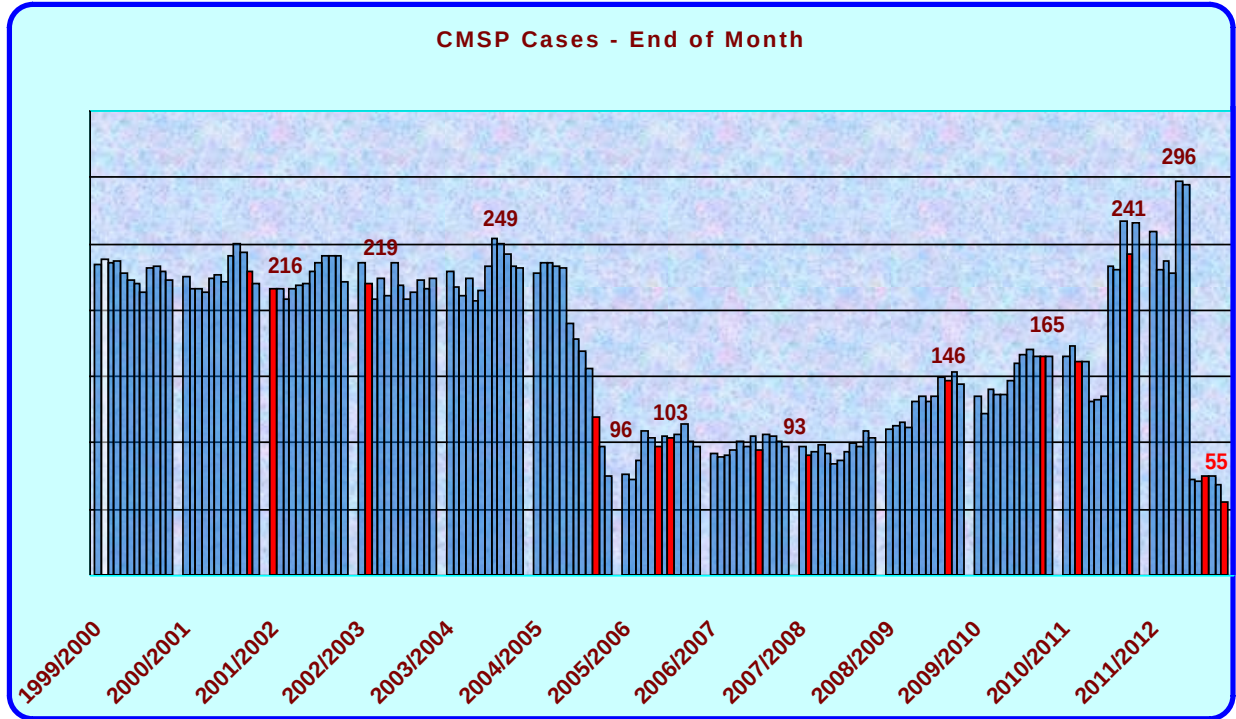


#### (4). County Medical Services Program (CMSP)

As has been reported to the Board and the public, California applied for and received a waiver to implement certain elements of Federal Health Reform under the Bridge to Reform program. For CMSP counties, such as Plumas County, this has resulted in the former CMSP program being split into two components. The first component is Path2Health (see following page) for those individuals who are low income and qualify for federally assisted services. The second component is residual CMSP for persons who don't qualify for federal assistance. Those who don't qualify yet are typically individuals who have not provided proof of US citizenship. As such, they would only qualify for emergency department services. Because the majority of former CMSP members have been transferred to the Path2Health component, CMSP now shows a significant decline in the case count.

##### Average Monthly Caseload

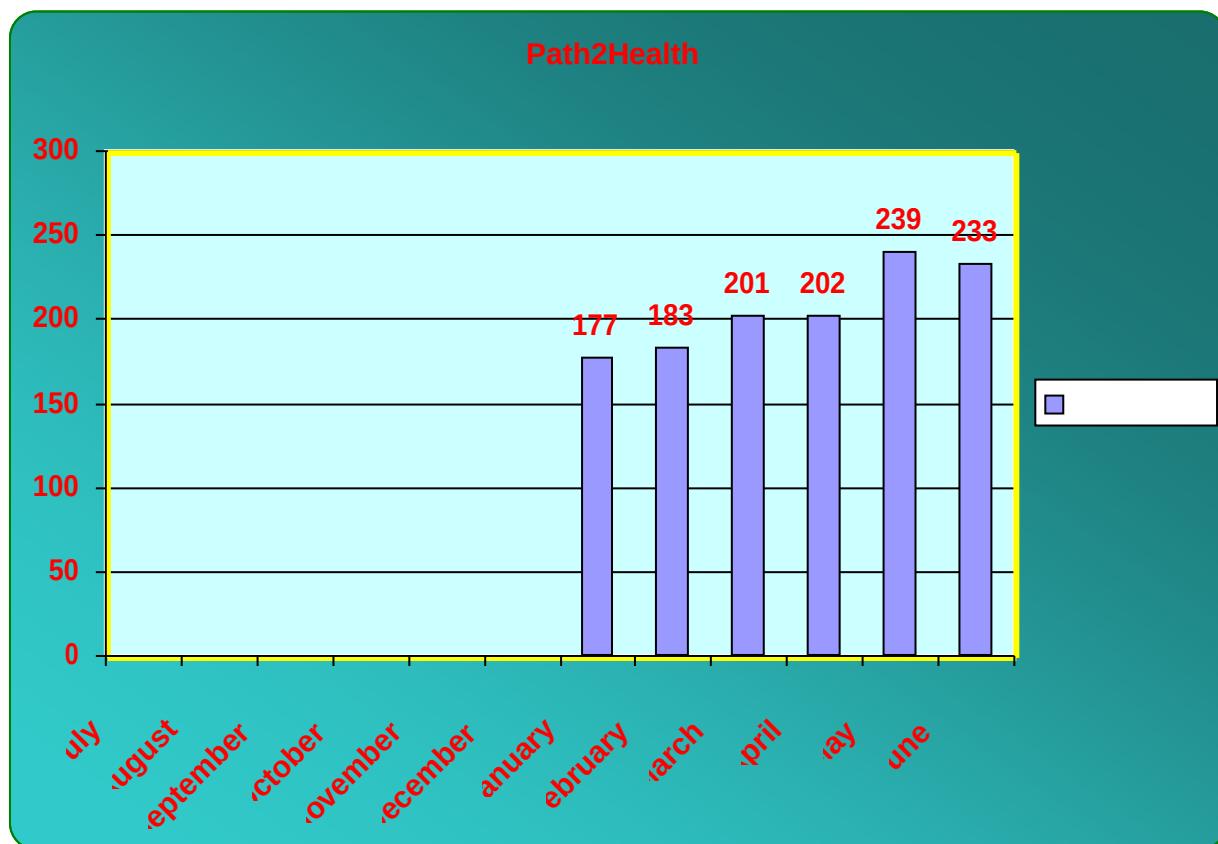
|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| <b>2009/2010</b> | <b>150</b> |
| <b>2010/2011</b> | <b>191</b> |
| <b>2011/2012</b> | <b>69</b>  |



## (5). Path2Health

When the Congress passed Federal Health Reform under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, they included a provision which allows states to request a waiver to become an early implementer of some of the provisions of the Act. The waiver, titled the Bridge to Reform, enables states (for our purposes here, counties) to utilize the non-Federal dollars they otherwise spend on health care for county citizens as a match to draw down Federal dollars to expand health care to low income populations that are uninsured.

The 34 CMSP counties submitted a waiver request to operate a low income health project which is referred to as Path2Health. The program received Federal approval and was implemented January 1, 2012. Most of the prior CMSP members have been transferred to this program.

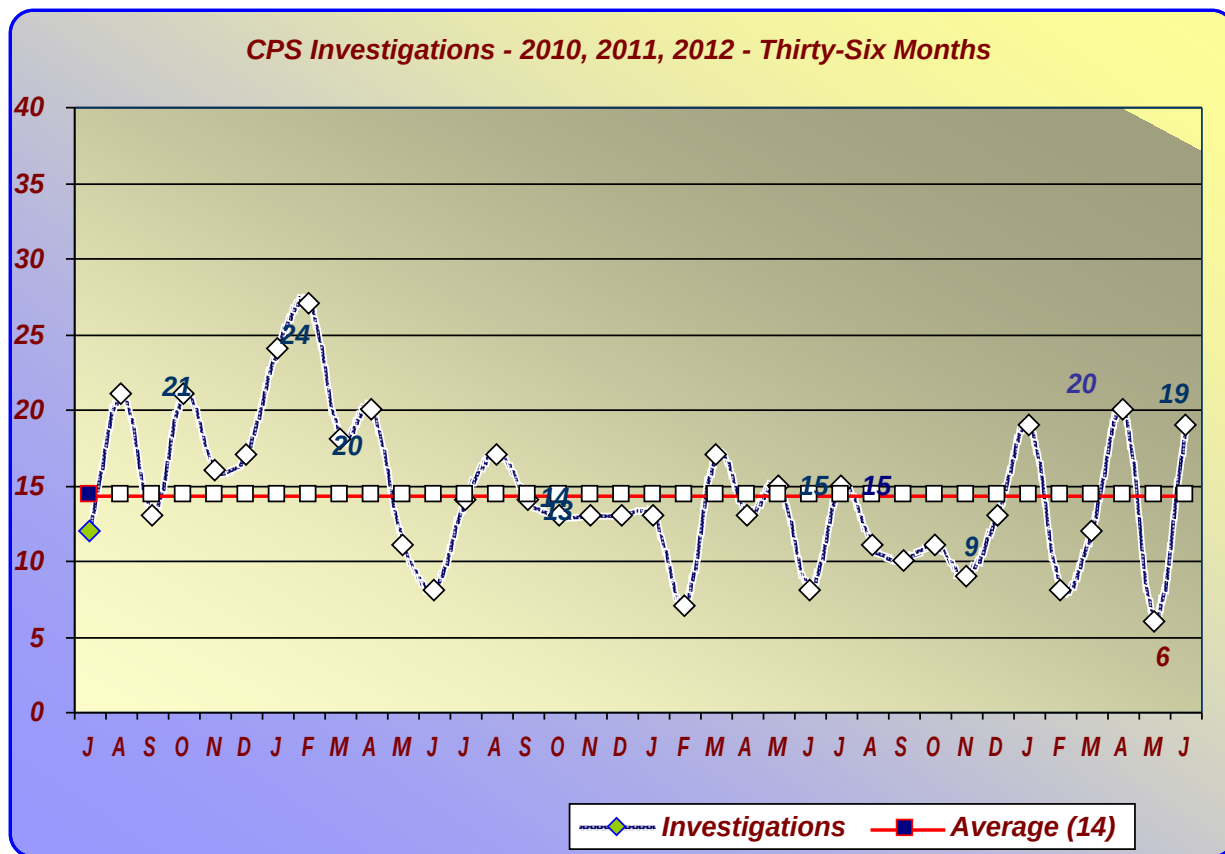


## II. SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

### A. Child Welfare Services

The Emergency Response component of Child Protective Services averages in the range of about 14 child abuse investigations per month. During the most recent six month period, referrals for investigation have reached or exceeded 19 per month three times. While that is too many we may be experiencing a short term anomaly that will right itself during the next few months.

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.

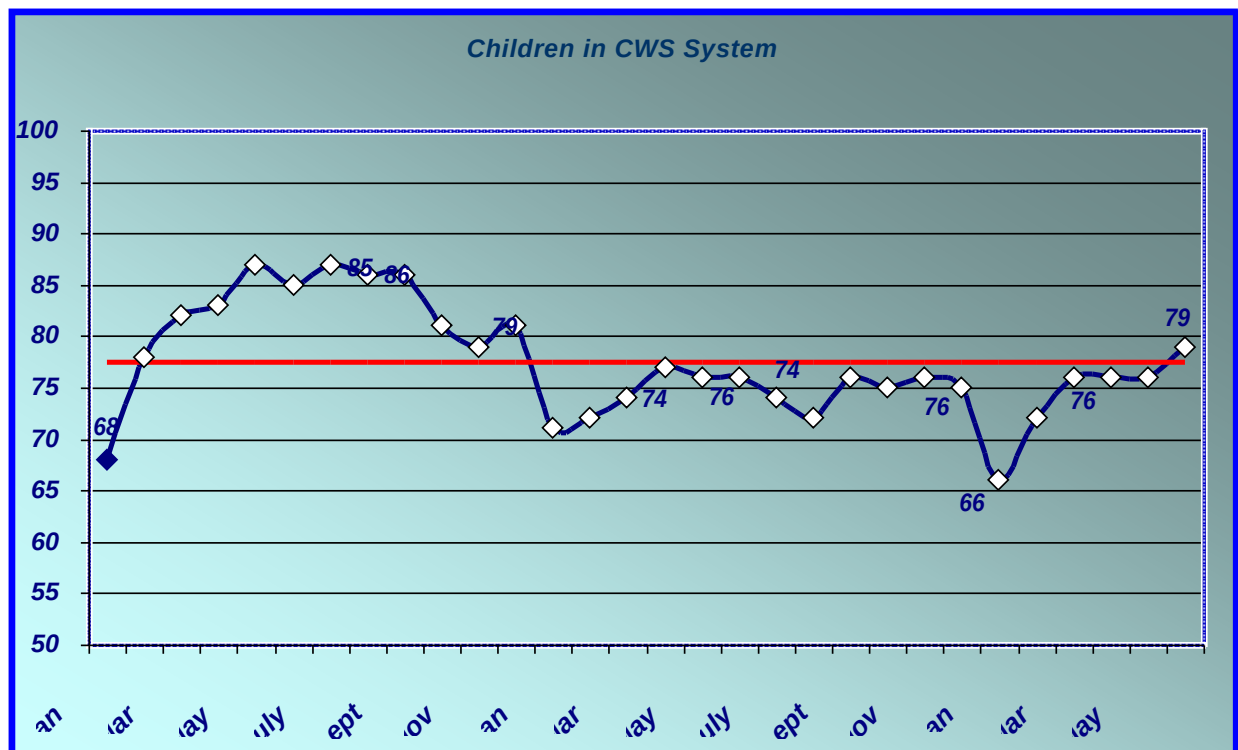




## **B. Children in the Child Welfare Services System**

The goal of the Child Welfare System is first and foremost to secure a safe environment for children so that they are able to remain in or be quickly returned to their own home. The trend for children who are in the CWS system has leveled off to an average that fluctuates at around 77 children in the system at any particular time. Recently, the count has been consistently below average although it did rise to 79 in June.

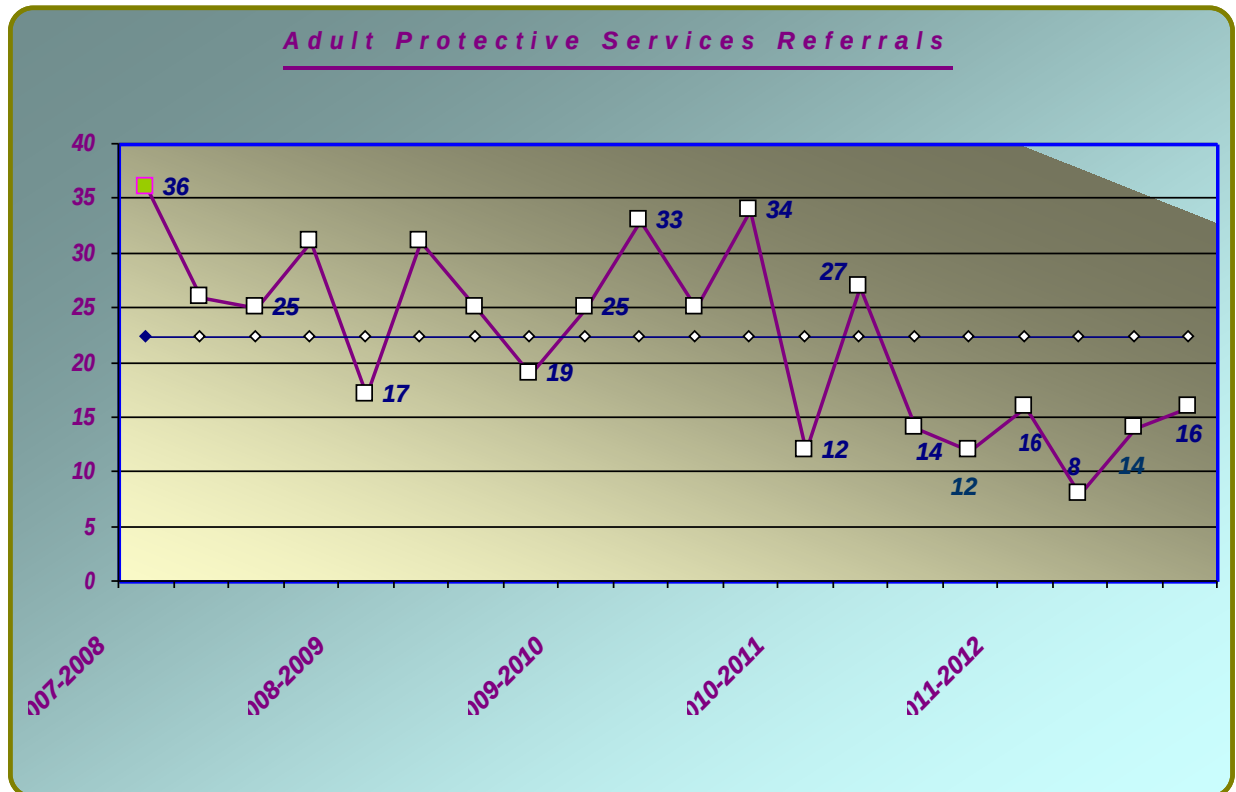
A continuing emphasis in the program now is to make efforts to achieve less restrictive placements for children that are placed in group home care.



### C. Adult Protective Services

The average number of referrals for this program tends to be in the range of about 22 referrals per quarter. For the past fifteen months, referrals for investigation of abused or neglected adults have run below the average.

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 referrals we receive.

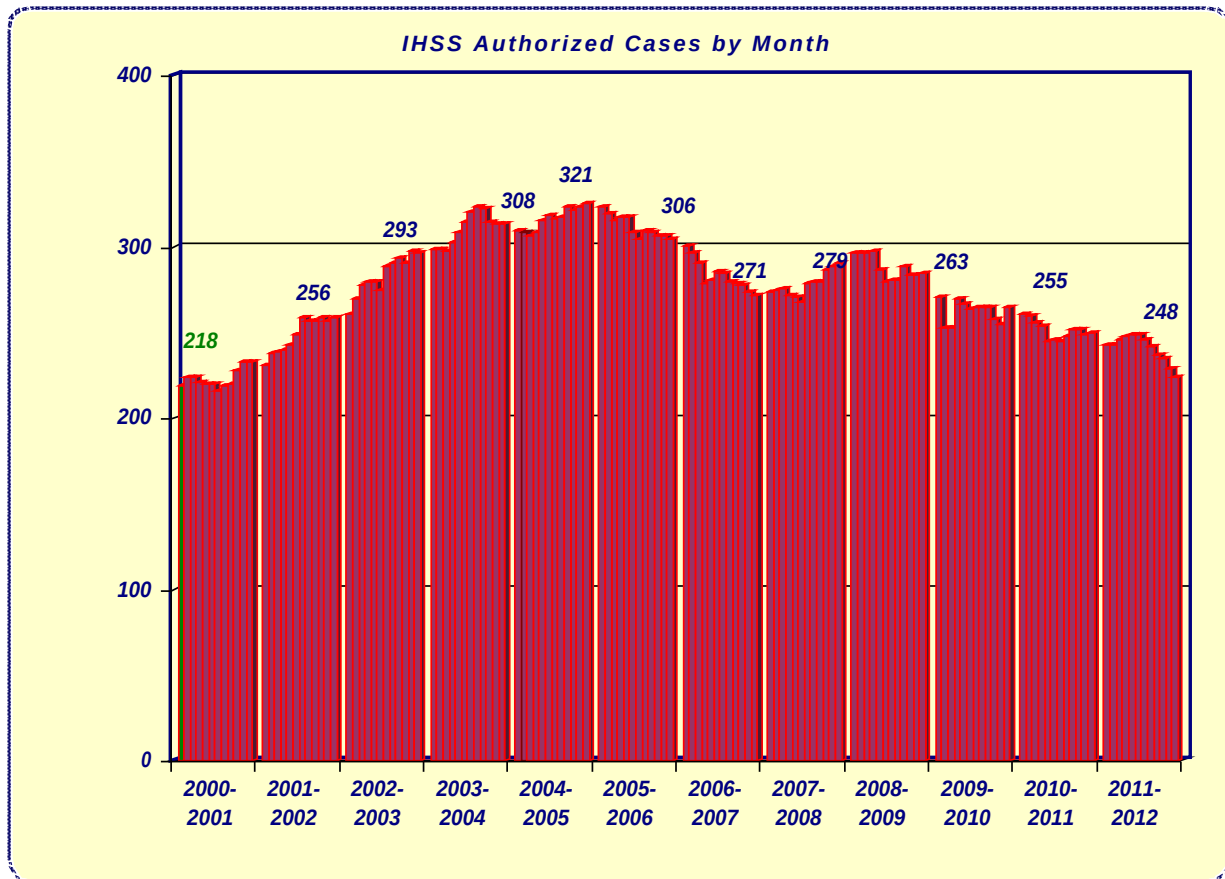


#### D. In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

The case count for IHSS flattened for a period of about 12 months and is now headed downward. This is likely the result of continued reductions in hours that are the result of state budget cuts. Presently we see no indication in the near term that there will be growth in this program. There has been about a 10% reduction in the average case count from two years ago.

##### Average Monthly Case Count

|           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| 2009/2010 | 262 |
| 2010/2011 | 251 |
| 2011/2012 | 240 |



### **III. PUBLIC GUARDIAN**

The Public Guardian currently provides guardianship and conservator services to a total of 9 LPS and Probate conservatees. The Public Guardian also serves as representative payee for 6 SSI recipients. The Office has one new LPS referral that has been received for evaluation for potential conservatorship.