

STATE OF NEVADA
Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Child and Family Services



Nevada
Annual Progress and Service Report
(APSR)

SFY 2012

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Nevada Demographics

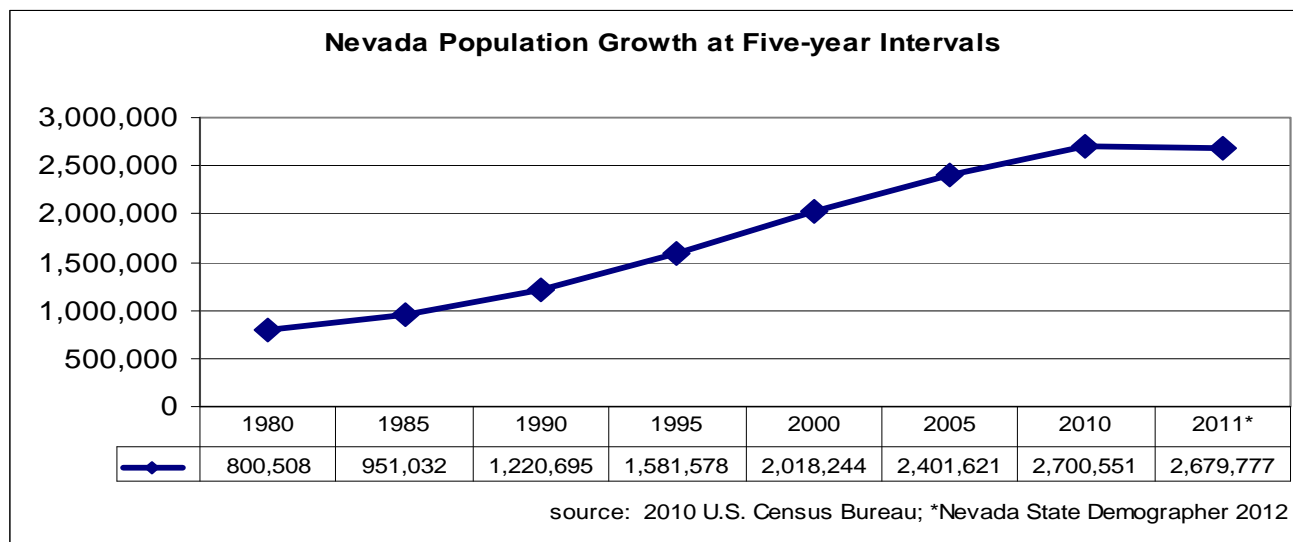
Population and Geography

Nevada is made up of an area of 110,567 square miles making it the 7th largest state geographically yet the 35th in terms of population. Eighty seven percent of the population is found in Clark County (Las Vegas/Henderson) and Washoe County (Reno/Sparks). The remaining 13% of the population is spread across 95,925 square miles.

The Nevada State Demographer has set the 2011 population for Nevada at 2,679,777 reflecting a decrease of -0.77% from 2010 to 2011. Clark County (Las Vegas/Henderson area) has a population of 1,934,871 (making it 72% of the overall state population). Washoe County (Reno/Sparks area) has the second most populous area, with 409,680 residents (15% of the overall state population). The remainder of the state is made up of 15 rural and frontier counties with a population of 335,226 or 13% of the population.

Clark County and Washoe County have seen a slight decrease in population while Rural Nevada has seen a slight increase. Clark County has decreased from 1,951,269 in 2010 (per the US Census) to 1,934,871 in 2011 (Per NV State Demographer) a decrease of 0.8%. Washoe County had a population of 421,407 in 2010 (US Census) and 409,680 in 2011 (NV State Demographer) reflecting a decrease of 2.7%. Rural Nevada's population in 2010 was 327,875 (US Census) and 335,226 in 2011 (NV State Demographer) for an increase of 2.2%.

Figure 01: Nevada Population Growth at Five-Year Intervals



Nevada's population has a varied racial background that has changed considerably over the last ten years. Data from the US Census Bureau (2010) reports that the majority of the population in 2010 was Caucasian (66.2%) down from 75.2% in 2000, followed by some other race alone 12%; African Americans (8.1%); Asian Americans (7.2%); multiracial persons (4.7%); American Indian and Alaska Native persons (1.2%) and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (.6%). The Hispanics/Latino population has increased by 81.9% over the last decade growing from 19.7 % to 26.5 % of Nevada's total population.

Economy

For years, Nevada's economy had grown at rates well in excess of national norms, regardless of the health of the national business cycle. Since the late-1990s, for instance, job growth in Nevada had averaged 3.1 percent vs. just 0.5 percent in the nation as a whole. Much the same was true for nearly every other economic indicator, including personal income and population growth.

Nevada's economy has suffered more adverse affects, as a result of the recession, than any other state, and continues to have a delayed recovery. Having the highest unemployment rate in the nation at 12%, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report as of April 20, 2012, Nevada's unemployment rate is 50% higher than the national average of 8%. The high unemployment rate has led to a decrease in the population as workers leave the state in search of employment. A decreasing population has led to an eroding tax base creating budgetary hardships on the government and delaying the recovery.

The Nevada State Demographer has made projections using both Moody's and REMI (Regional Economics Model, Inc.) Moody's and REMI do not show the Nevada economy recovering until 2016 at the earliest and possibly not until 2020.

Nevada's public finances have been significantly impacted by the lagging recovery.

- The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) information reveals that in April of 2012 28,215 individuals were receiving assistance, and since April 2011 the level of assistance has decreased 5.5 percent or 1,644 fewer recipients.
- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly known as "food stamps" reveals that in April of 2012 353,983 Nevadans were participating in the program. Over-the-year the number of participants receiving assistance has increased 6.7% or 22,360 additional participating persons. Nevada's all time high was February 2012 with 354,081 participating persons.

Child Welfare Administrative Structure

Nevada uses a state-administered and county-operated structure for the management of child welfare services, except in the rural counties of the state, where the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services operate child welfare services. The Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, under the umbrella of the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, provides oversight to child welfare and direct child welfare services.

State Agency Administering Plans

The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) is responsible for Children's Mental Health (in Clark and Washoe, the two largest populated counties), Youth Corrections, Child Welfare Services and Child Care Licensing. As such, the implementation and administration of the Child and Family Services Plan is the responsibility of DCFS. This includes: Title IV-E, Title IV-B, Subpart I (Child Welfare Services) and Subpart 2 (Promoting Safe and Stable Families), Child Abuse and Treatment Act (CAPTA), and the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP).

Protection and Permanency for Children: DCFS creates opportunities and programs that prevent and respond to issues of parental/caregiver maltreatment, mental health, and delinquency. DCFS strives to support permanency within the child's biological or primary and extended family so children may grow and develop within stable environments. DCFS also recognizes the responsibility to create and support alternative permanent environments when biological or primary families are unable or incapable of caring for their children. DCFS will collaboratively craft public policies to promote the strength and well-being of families.

Preservation of Families: DCFS supports the value that the family is the best structure to assure stability, nurturing, care, and safety of its members and communities. Services are designed to build upon family strengths, honoring the family's traditions, history, and culture.

Juvenile Justice Services for Youth: DCFS recognizes that services must balance youth rehabilitation, treatment, and

community safety. Many juvenile offenders have been victims of maltreatment and therefore accountability must be balanced by the provision of services addressing trauma, loss, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Juvenile offenders are held accountable through a comprehensive system of graduated sanctions that include commitment to state-operated juvenile facilities.

Children's Mental Health: DCFS uses a system of care model that strives to provide creative, individualized, strength-based, and culturally responsive services for families with children that experience severe emotional disturbances. A developing continuum of care focuses on meeting the needs of children and families in the least restrictive environment, including utilization of the wraparound process to coordinate effective service delivery that enables children to reside with families when possible and with the assistance of informal supports rather than dependency on government or paid providers.

Mission

DCFS, together in genuine partnership with families, communities and county governmental agencies, provide support and services to assist Nevada's children and families in reaching their full human potential.

Nevada Initiative Statement for Family Centered Practice

Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invite participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family.

Vision

DCFS recognizes that Nevada's families are our future and families thrive when they:

1. Live in safe, permanent settings;
2. Experience a sense of sustainable emotional and physical well being; and
3. Receive support to consistently make positive choices for family and common good.

Guiding Principles

Service principles guide our work towards achieving this vision and are consistent with children and family services principles specified in federal regulations [45 CFS 1355.25(a) through 1355.25(h)]. These practice model principles are:

- Protection - Children's safety is paramount;
- Development - Children, youth, and families need consistent nurturing in a healthy environment to achieve their full human potential;
- Permanency - All children need and are entitled to enduring relationships that provide a family, stability and belonging, a sense of self that connects children to their past, present and future;
- Cultural Responsiveness - Children and families have the right to be understood within the context of their own family, traditions, history, culture, and community;
- Partnership - The entire community shares accountability for the creation of an environment that helps families raise children to reach their full potential;
- Organizational Competence - Effectively structured and managed organizations with committed, trained, skilled staff are necessary to achieve positive outcomes for children and families.
- Continuous Quality Improvement - Strategic sequencing of continuous quality improvements must occur to reach Nevada's child and family services vision; and
- Professional Competence - Children and families need a relationship with skilled and empathetic case managers who can provide ethical support, confront difficult issues, and effectively assist them towards positive change that reinforces safety, permanency, well-being, and community safety.

Purpose

DCFS is responsible for accomplishing the following purposes:

- Protecting and promoting the welfare and safety of all children, including individuals with disabilities; homeless, dependent or neglected children;
- Preventing or remedying, or assisting in the solution of problems that may result in the neglect, abuse, exploitation, or delinquency of children;
- Preventing the unnecessary separation of children from their families by identifying family problems and assisting families in resolving their problems and preventing the breakup of the family where the prevention of child removal is desirable and possible;
- Restoring to their families' children, who have been removed and may be safely returned, by the provision of services to the child and the family;
- Assuring adequate care of children away from their homes in cases where the child cannot be returned home or cannot be placed for adoption; and
- Placing children in suitable adoptive homes in cases where restoration to the biological or primary family is not possible or appropriate.



Figure 02: County Map of Nevada

Child Welfare Agencies

The organizational structure of DCFS and program delivery of child welfare services are influenced by the state size and concentration of county population. NRS 432B.325 states that in counties where population is 100,000 or more, that the county shall provide protective services for children in that county and pay the cost of those services in accordance with standards adopted by the state. In 2001, the state legislature expanded the county's responsibility to include all child welfare services of child protection, foster care and adoption (NRS 432B.030 and NRS 432B.044). Figure 02 provides a map of the state with each county outlined.

Also, SB 480 was passed during the 2011 Legislature. Prior to this legislation the law required DCFS, in counties whose population is less than 100,000 (currently all counties other than Clark and Washoe counties) to provide directly or arrange for the provision of child welfare services, including protective services, foster care services and adoption services. The new legislation requires each of those counties to pay to DCFS an assessment for the provision of child protective services not to exceed the limit of legislative authorization for spending on child protective services by DCFS in each county. Furthermore,

this legislation allows a county to request an exemption from the assessment by submitting a proposal to the Governor for the county to carry out child protective services for the county. If the Governor approves the proposal, the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) must consider whether to approve the exemption. If the exemption is approved, the county is required to carry out child protective services for the county in accordance with standards adopted by DCFS, and pay for the cost of those services.

Agency Regional Coverage

The Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS), located in Las Vegas, provides child welfare services to all children and families in Clark County in the Southern most part of the State. Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) located in Reno, Nevada provides child welfare services directly to all children and families located in Washoe county in the northwestern part of the State, and DCFS provides child welfare services to the remaining 15

counties in the state through its Rural Region offices.

The DCFS Rural Region is separated into four districts, each providing services to multiple counties each. District 1 covers the northern part of the State with its main office based in Elko. This District provides services to Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln and White Pine Counties. District 2 covers the western/central part of the state and is based in Carson City. This District provides services to Carson City, the State's Capitol, Douglas County, Storey County, and a portion of Lyon County. District 3 covers the eastern/central part of the state and is based out of Fallon. This office provides services to Churchill, Lyon, Pershing and Mineral Counties. District 4 covers the southern rural part of the state and is based out of Pahrump. This office provides services to Esmeralda and Nye Counties. For the most part, growth in Nevada's rural counties has been fairly stable. Elko has seen substantial growth in the past few years.

Staff and Work Load:

There are currently 543 caseworkers and 117 supervisory/management positions in child welfare filled statewide.

Clark County Department of Family Services: CCDFS currently has 413 caseworkers, 77 Supervisory/Management positions filled and 98 vacancies. CCDFS reports the following caseload ratios: Investigative caseworkers 1:12, in-home caseworkers 1:11, and permanency caseworkers 1:17. CCDFS reports a turnover rate of 65%* based on a running average of 3 separations per month (for an 11 month period) and 491 employees. Staff separations during this time period included 5 retirements, 6 dismissals, 13 lateral or promotional moves and 44 voluntary resignations.

Washoe County Department of Social Services: WCDSS currently has 79 caseworkers, 29 Supervisory/Management positions filled and 6 vacancies (positions held in abeyance). WCDSS reports the following caseload ratios: Investigative caseworkers 1:12, and permanency caseworkers 1:22. WCDSS reports there were 76 filled intake, assessment and permanency workers on May 15, 2011. A year later, May 15, 2012, 21 staff (or 27.63%) were no longer in their position. Staff separations during this time period included, 2 dismissals, 6 lateral or promotional moves and 13 voluntary resignations.

DCFS – Rural Region: DCFS currently has 51 caseworkers and 11 Supervisor/Management positions filled. There are currently 16 casework positions vacant and 1 supervisory position vacancy. The DCFS Rural Region reports the following caseload ratios: Investigative caseworkers 1:20, and permanency caseworkers 1:22. There can be a great disparity in these numbers in frontier offices. The Rural Region reports that during this time period 20 Social Work Staff were hired, and 25 Social Work staff transferred did not meet probationary requirements or were terminated to take other employment.

** For further information concerning Nevada's Child Protective Services Workforce see Appendix E*

Children in Care in Nevada

For the State Fiscal Year period of July 1, 2011 through May 31, 2012; Nevada had an aggregate total of 7,435 children in care. Table 01 shows a variety of aggregate information on children in care during this time frame: how many entered and left care during this time period and how many had previous exposure to the foster care system. Compared to SFY 2011 data for the same time period (July 1 – May 31); there was an aggregate total of 7224 children in care during the same time period. Nevada's aggregate total of children in care for the same time period SFY 2011 is relatively unchanged.

Table 01: Foster Care Summary Information

Summary	Total	Rural	Washoe	Clark
Total during this current time frame	7435	704	1159	5572
Total Entering	2761	266	416	2079
Entered with less than 2 placements in first year	2293	224	358	1711
Total with prior Foster Care Experience	14	0	5	9
Total Leaving Care During this time frame	2532	217	473	1842

Source: UNITY Report CFS721 for July 1, 2011 – May 31, 2012.

In Table 02, Age groups as a percentage of the total aggregate number of children in care are relatively unchanged from SFY2011 to SFY2012. The largest aggregate cohort is 0 to 4 yrs at 44.59%, 5 to 9 yrs 25.18%, 10 to 14 yrs 19.31% and the smallest aggregate cohort is 15 to 19 yrs 10.92%.

Table 02: Age Facts of Children in Care

Age	Total Number	Percent	Upon	Percent	Upon	Percent
			Entering		Leaving	
0 to 4 year	3315	44.59	1465	53.06	1066	42.1
5 to 9 years	1872	25.18	617	22.35	728	28.75
10 to 14 years	1436	19.31	488	17.67	525	20.73
15 to 19 years	812	10.92	191	6.92	213	8.41
20+ years	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7435		2761		2532	

Source: UNITY Report CFS721 July 1, 2011 to May 31, 2012

A summary of children in foster care Table 03 shows the breakdown of children and youth by race/ethnicity in Foster Care. It is expected that there would be a similar breakdown of ethnicity in foster care as there is in the general population. However, based on a comparison of data from Nevada's SACWIS System – UNITY and information provided by the Nevada State Demographer for estimated population characteristics for children age 0-18 for 2011, there are a disproportionate number of African American children in Foster Care in Nevada. It is expected that approximately 8% of the children in care would be of African American heritage; however, currently there are 28% of children in care of this ethnicity.

Table 03: Statewide Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Children Entering Foster Care by Fiscal Year

	SFY	SFY	SFY	SFY	SFY	SFY	SFY	**2011 Estimated Population Children age 0- 18
Race/Ethnicity	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
African American	2150 21%	2472 22%	2531 22%	2475 23%	2246 28%	2251 28%	2323 28%	55550 8.2%
American Indian/Native American (includes Eskimo or Aleut)	148 1%	177 2%	184 2%	209 2%	217 3%	205 3%	216 3%	8648 1.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	302 5%	356 6%	332 5%	303 5%	154 2%	170 2%	176 2%	45974 6.8%
Caucasian	5899 58%	6336 56%	6465 55%	5859 54%	5225 65%	5222 66%	5385 65%	310936 45.9%
Hispanic (All Races)	1683 17%	2011 18%	2170 19%	2085 19%	1879 25%	1917 27%	1880 23%	256028 37.8%
Statewide Total*:	8499	9371	9512	8846	7842	7963	8226	677,136

*Excludes Hispanic as these individuals are counted in other races.**Source: Nevada State Demographer
Source: UNITY Report CFS721 figures run from July 1 through May 31 for each fiscal year

Legislative Activities

Nevada's legislature meets every biennium. Nevada entered its 76th regular session in 2011. In the Spring of 2011, several bills were enacted during this 76th regular legislative session that have had an impact on child welfare and have brought about new initiatives. Table 04 lists the Bills that passed during the session that affect child welfare. Some of these have required regulation and policy development and/or revision.

Table 04: Legislative Bills enacted in 2011

Bill	REQUESTOR/COMMITTEE	ID	SUBJECT
<u>SB371</u>	Senator Cegavske	Psychotropic Medication	Makes various changes concerning the protection of children.
<u>AB147</u>	Assemblywoman Mastroluca	Inheritants rights	Revises provisions relating to the termination of parental rights.
<u>AB110</u>	Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice (NRS 218E.705)	Kinship Guardian Assistance	Establishes provisions relating to assistance for certain guardians.
<u>AB111</u>	Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice (NRS 218E.705)	Adoption Residency Requirements	Revises provisions relating to adoption.
<u>SB113</u>	Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice (NRS 218E.705)	Disaster Response	Revises provisions relating to the care of certain children during disasters.
<u>SB112</u>	Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice (NRS 218E.705)	Sharing of Records	Revises provisions relating to the release of certain records of children in the custody of an agency which provides child welfare services.
<u>AB536</u>	Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice (NRS 218E.705)	Background Checks	Revises provisions relating to background checks of certain persons who work with children.
<u>SB167</u>	Senator Leslie	Share report with Guardian	Revises provisions governing the confidentiality of certain reports of child welfare agencies.
<u>SB66</u>	Attorney General	AG Child Death Review	Authorizes the Attorney General to organize or sponsor multidisciplinary teams to review the death of a victim of domestic violence.
<u>SB57</u>	Attorney General	AG Custody	Revises provisions concerning missing, abducted, removed or concealed children.
<u>SB23</u>	Child and Family Services, Division of-Health and Human Services	Retroactive Adoption Subsidy	Clarifies the entity responsible for notifying a potential adoptive parent of the availability of adoption assistance during a private adoption.
<u>AB148</u>	Assemblywoman Mastroluca	Safe Haven	Revises provisions governing the delivery of a newborn child to a provider of emergency services.
<u>SB111</u>	Senator Settlemeyer	Austin's House	Makes various changes concerning the placement of a child into protective custody.
<u>AB350</u>	Assemblywoman Mastroluca	Fictive Kin	Revises provisions governing children in foster care.
<u>SB246</u>	Senator Leslie	Medication Training	Revises provisions concerning governmental facilities for children.
<u>AB154</u>	Assemblyman Frierson	Foster Care Bill of Rights	Enacts the foster care children bill of rights.

<u>SB370</u>	Senator Horsford	Placement priorities and parental incarceration parole conditions	Revises provisions governing family preservation and restoration.
<u>SB447</u>	Budget and Planning, Division of-Administration	Block Grant	Implements an annual capped block grant to support child welfare services.
<u>SB480</u>	Budget and Planning, Division of-Administration	Rural CPS Assessments	Provides for assessment of rural counties for the cost of child protective services provided by the State.

SECTION II: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND METHODS OF MEASURING PROGRESS

Nevada has had an established process for measuring the safety, permanency and well-being of children in the child welfare system for the past six years. This process was modeled after the federal Child and Family Services Review of state cases. However, due to consistent budget reductions over the last several years this process that was projected to be expanded to all 45 items in the next five year cycle as part of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) is being truncated to accommodate for the diminished resources available.

Overall Goal

- **To ensure that the child welfare system in Nevada is meeting compliance in all Safety, Permanency, Well-Being and Systemic Outcomes as outlined in individual 45 performance indicator items.**

Overall Objectives

The overall objective of the state in its five year plan is to ensure a comprehensive ongoing review process using a variety of methods for examining compliance on Safety, Permanency, Well-Being and Systemic Performance Indicators. This is planned to be accomplished by redesigning the existing Quality Improvement Framework for Nevada to include a variety of processes. Each of the 45 performance indicators include key elements, such as statewide policy review and revision; development and monitoring of quantitative reports to address specific performance indicator questions; and the development and implementation of a qualitative process to answer those questions that cannot be measured through quantitative reporting. This includes the potential of developing targeted case reviews, stakeholder surveys, and other methods for gleaning the performance on individual items. The overall process also includes the provision for ensuring ongoing coordination and collaboration with key child welfare stakeholders to be involved in all levels of the Quality Improvement Framework process.

Progress on the individual methods outlined in Section III of the Nevada Child and Family Services Plan are included in several systemic performance indicator items and are highlighted below.

- **Coordinating and Collaborating with Stakeholders:** Throughout the quality improvement process for the State of Nevada; Family Programs Office (FPO) representatives, child welfare agency representatives and key external stakeholders have been and continue to be involved in the process. Current progress on this item is reported out on in Item 38: State Engagement in Consultation with Stakeholders and Item 40: Coordination of CFSP Services with other Federal Programs. Current stakeholder involvement has included members from a variety of areas including representatives from the judiciary, child advocates, caregivers (foster parents, adoptive parents, relative caregivers, etc.), foster youth, tribal representatives, educational representatives, medical/behavioral health representatives, differential response representatives, service providers (substance abuse, domestic violence, etc.) and other members as identified. A number of existing stakeholder groups are regularly collaborated with to ensure consistent involvement in the CFSP process.
- **Review, Revision and Development of Policies and Procedures:** The State uses a collaborative process to develop statewide policy. To accomplish the review, revision or new development of statewide policies and procedures related to Safety, Permanency, Well-Being and Systemic Performance Indicators collaborative workgroups are convened with members from DCFS, the child welfare agencies and applicable external stakeholders in accordance with federal and state laws.