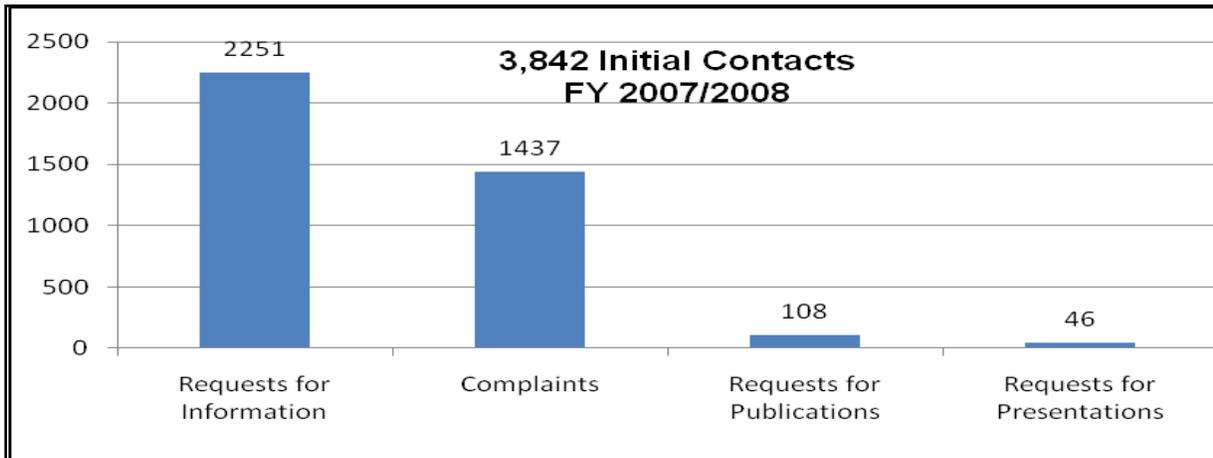
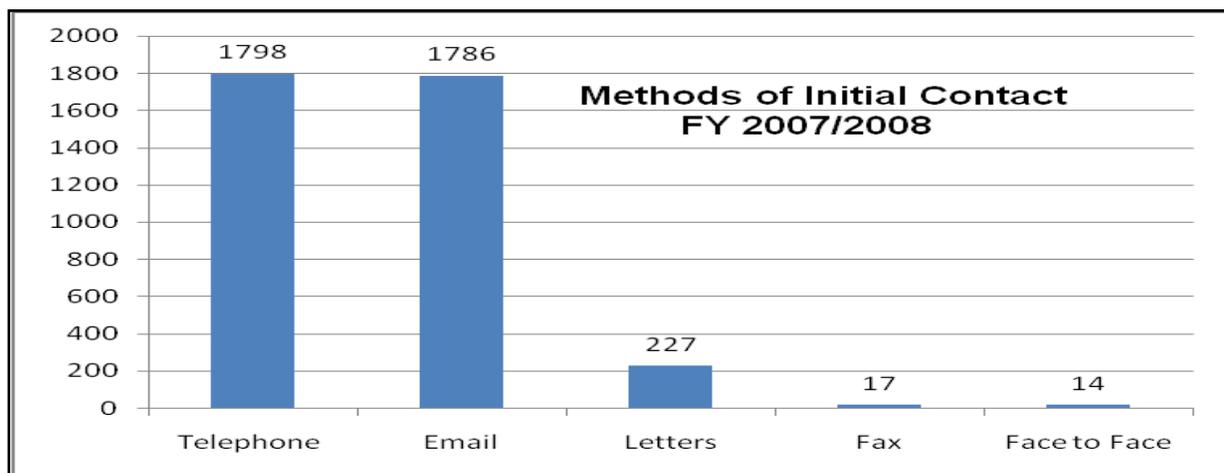


**Foster Care Ombudsman Office  
Data Summary  
Fiscal Year 2007/2008**

The Office of the California Foster Care Ombudsman (Ombudsman Office) received 3,842 initial contacts during Fiscal Year (FY) 2007/2008. Each contact is an opportunity for the Ombudsman Office to respond to the issues impacting the foster care population and gather information to identify recurring problems in California’s foster care system.

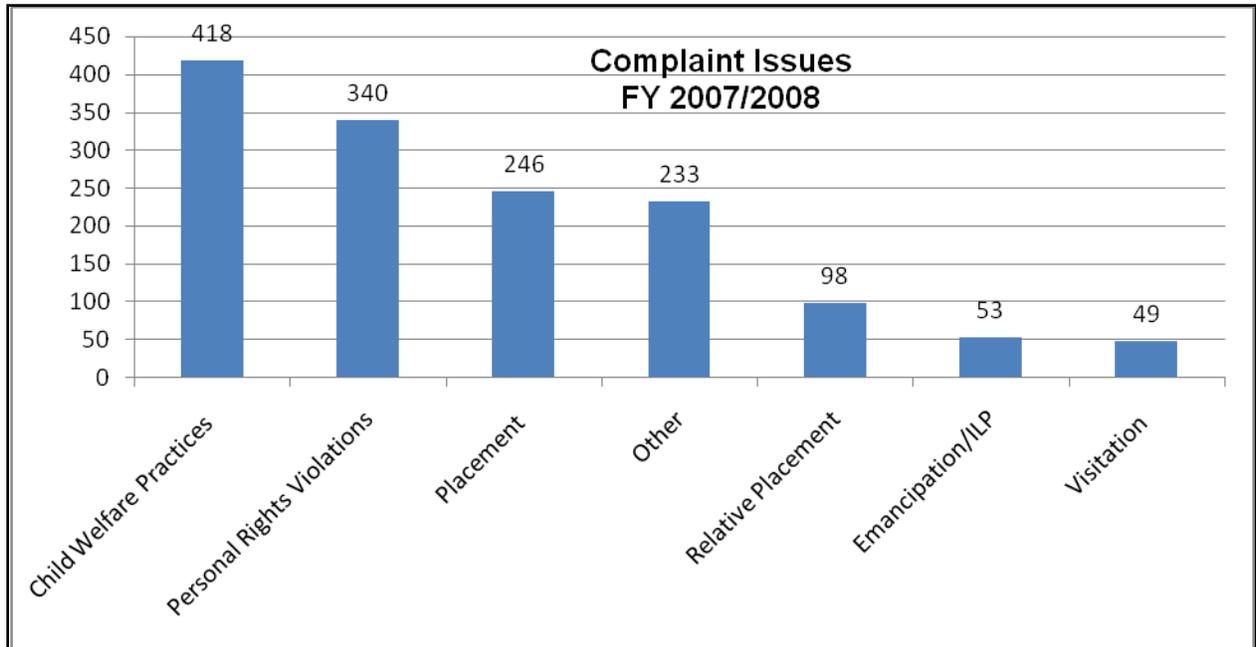


The telephone and email are the predominant means of contacting the Ombudsman Office. However, as the graph below demonstrates, other methods of contact are used.



## Complaint Issues

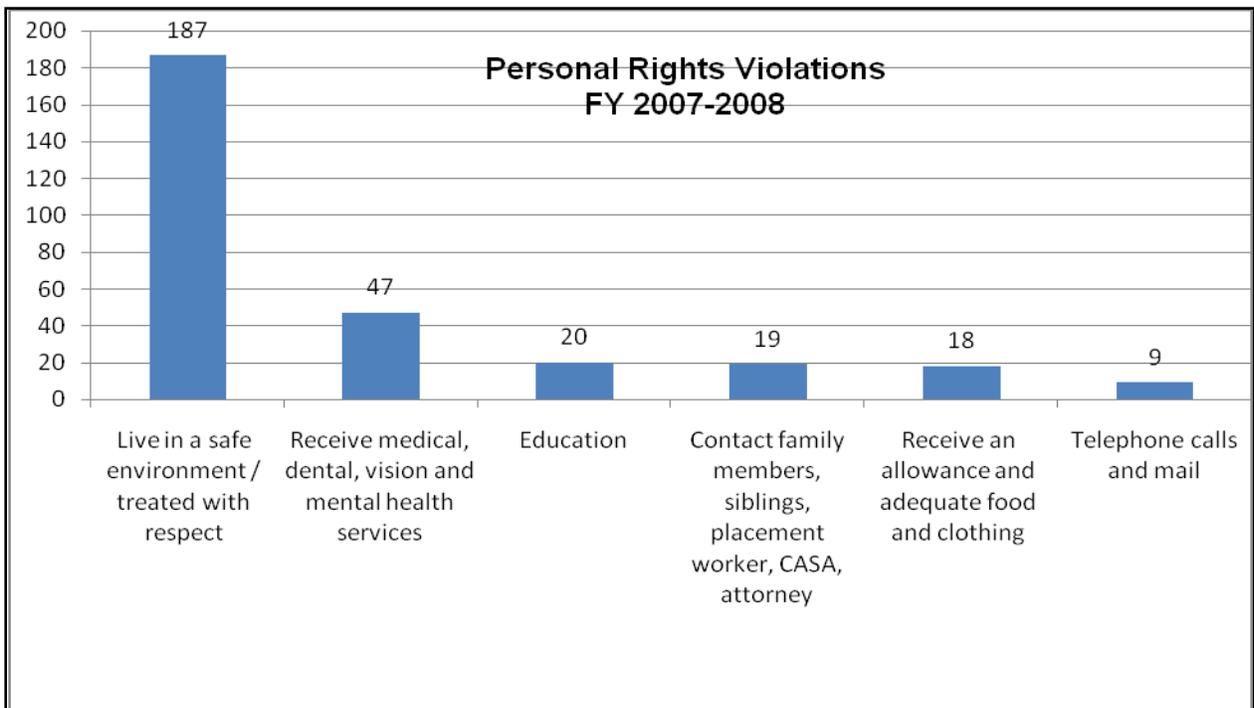
Throughout FY 2007/2008 the Ombudsman Office received 1,437 complaints. The seven most frequent complaint issues were related to child welfare practices; personal rights violations, placement, other, relative placement, emancipation and county Independent Living Program (ILP), and visitation.



## Personal Rights of Foster Children and Youth

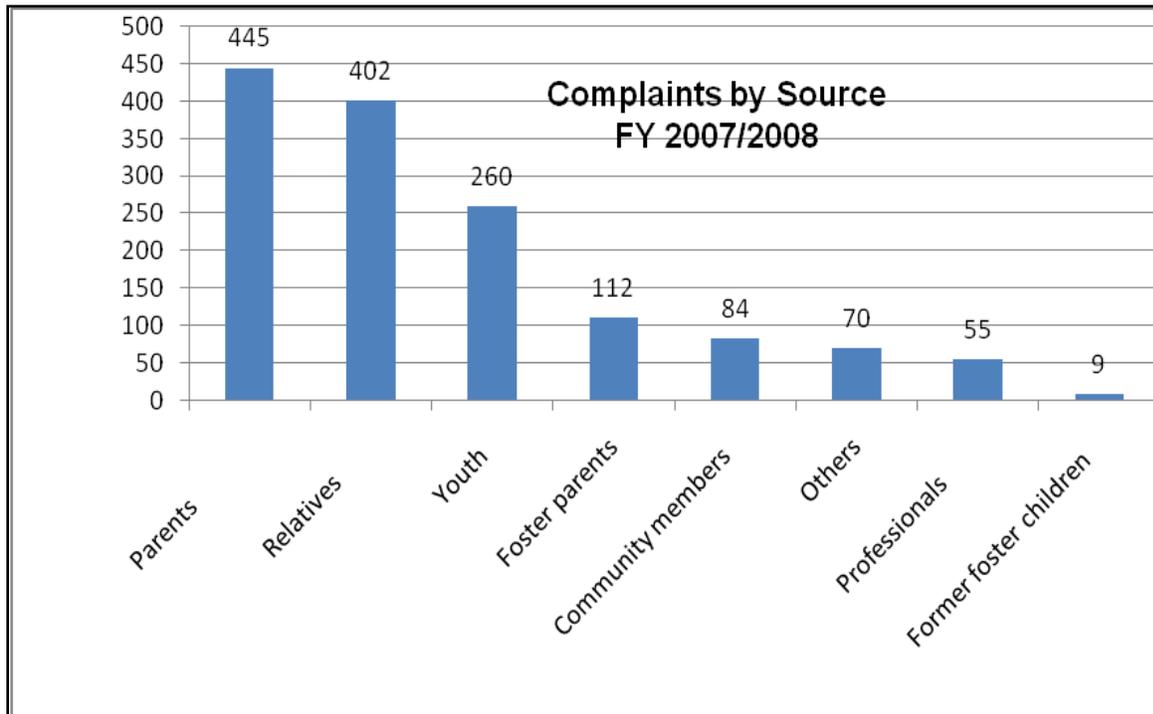
The rights of children and youth in foster care were established by AB 899 (Chapter, 683, Statutes of 2001) as specified in W&IC section 16001.9. The bill requires the Ombudsman Office to design posters regarding these rights and provide the posters to every foster care facility that cares for six or more children and youth. Social workers are mandated by the bill to explain the rights to every child and youth in foster care, in age-appropriate language, at least every six months, and that licensed homes housing six or more foster children and youth post the rights within easy and regular access for the children and youth living there.

As foster children and youth became familiar with their rights, they began contacting the Ombudsman Office regarding violations of their rights. Personal rights complaints continue to be one of the highest categories of complaints received by the Ombudsman Office. The chart below indicates the six most frequent complaints regarding violations of the rights of children and youth in foster care for FY 2007/2008.



## Complaints by Source

Identified below is the total number of complaints that were made by or on behalf of children and youth in foster care during FY 2007/2008 by the caller's relationship to the children and youth in the foster care system.



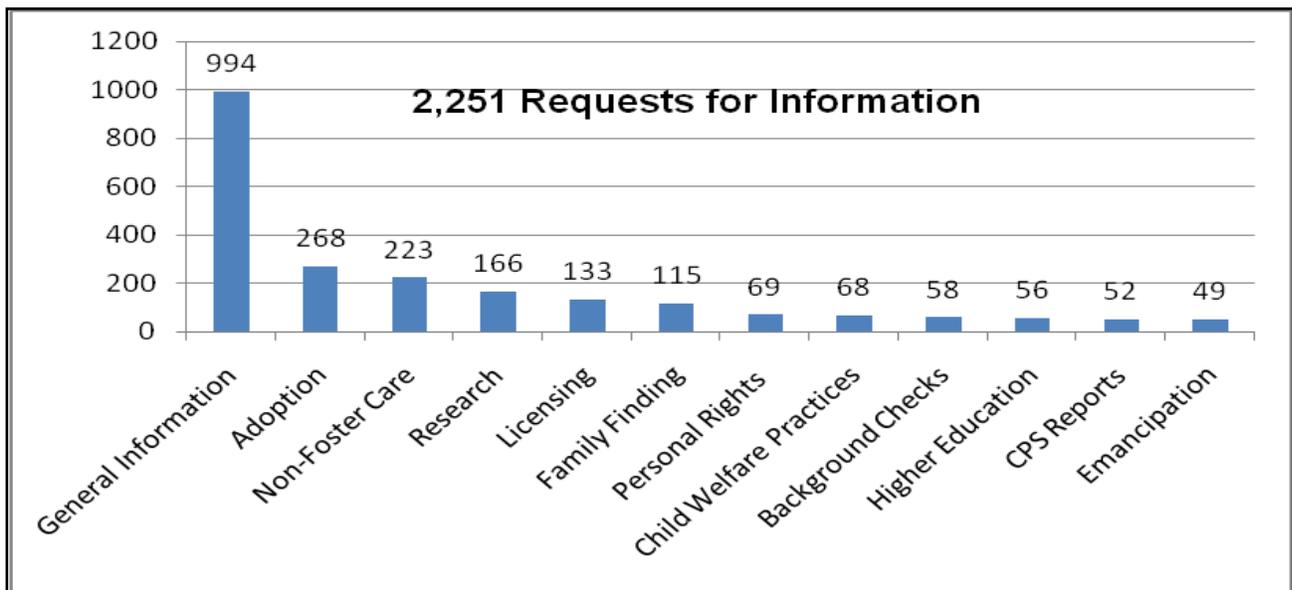
## Requests for Information

During FY 2007/2008 the Ombudsman Office received 2,251 requests for information. Individuals who call the Ombudsman Office are as diverse as California's population. People call for information on the child welfare system, foster care or children's issues in general. Many requests for information are received by email through the CDSS and the Children and Family Services Division website.

Some examples of information requests include:

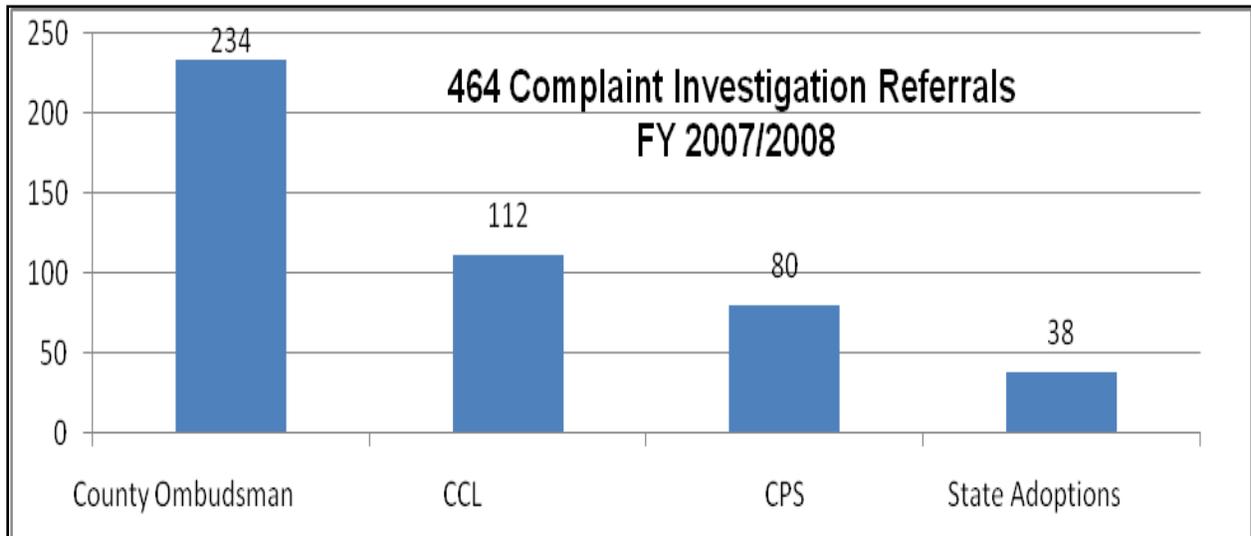
- ❖ How to become a foster parent.
- ❖ How to adopt a child in foster care.
- ❖ How to find siblings that were adopted from foster care.
- ❖ Where to get information on the Safely Surrendered Baby law.
- ❖ How to become a social worker.
- ❖ How to request a reduction of child support payments.
- ❖ The location of child care programs.
- ❖ Whether services are available for defiant teenagers.
- ❖ Requests for child welfare statistical data.

All callers are provided with appropriate information and referrals to other agencies. The Ombudsman Office provides the highest level of customer service possible.



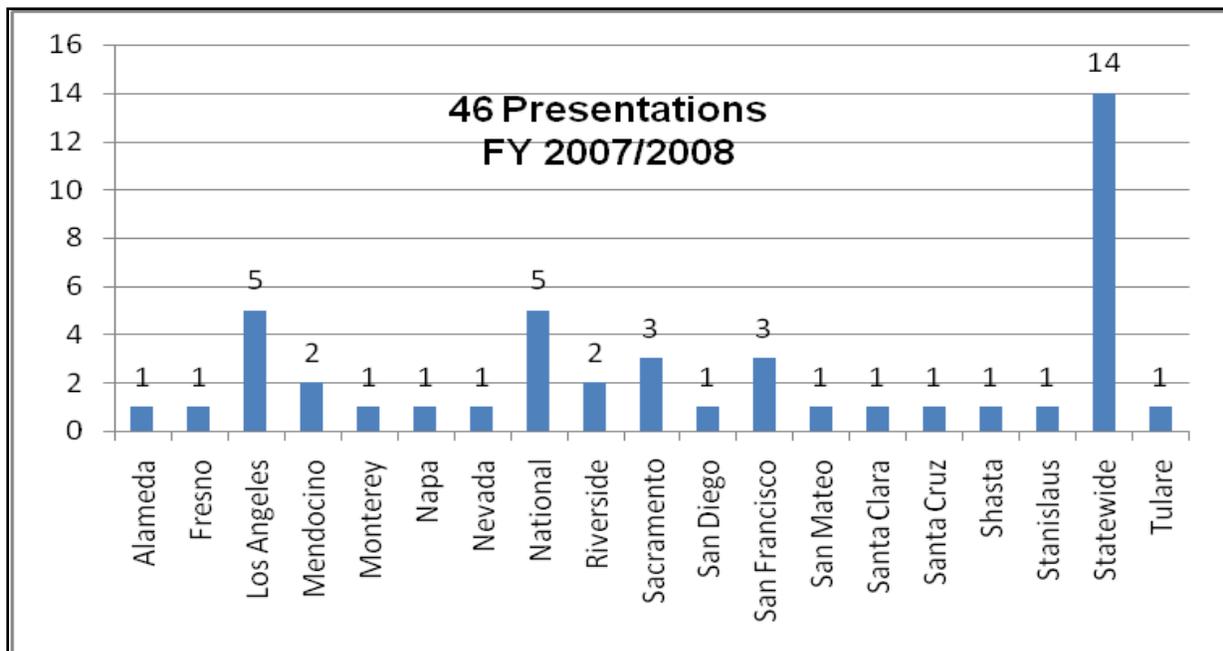
## Referrals

In addition to resolving specific complaints, the Ombudsman Office refers some complaints for investigation to other agencies and departments such as: county ombudsman offices, CCL, CDSS Adoptions Services Bureau (Adoptions), and CPS. When the referred agency responds to the Ombudsman Office of their investigation outcome, the Ombudsman Office contacts the complainant to see whether the matter has been resolved satisfactorily or if further investigation is necessary.



## Presentations

During FY 2007/2008 the Ombudsman Office conducted 46 presentations to audiences in 17 counties, 14 statewide conferences and other audiences. The hosts included organizations such as the California Youth Connection Policy Conference, Child Welfare Director's Association, the Judicial Counsel, the United States Ombudsman Association, various foster parents associations, Foster Family Agency Conference, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). The Ombudsman Office is committed to providing education and information on the foster care system, and more specifically on foster youth rights.

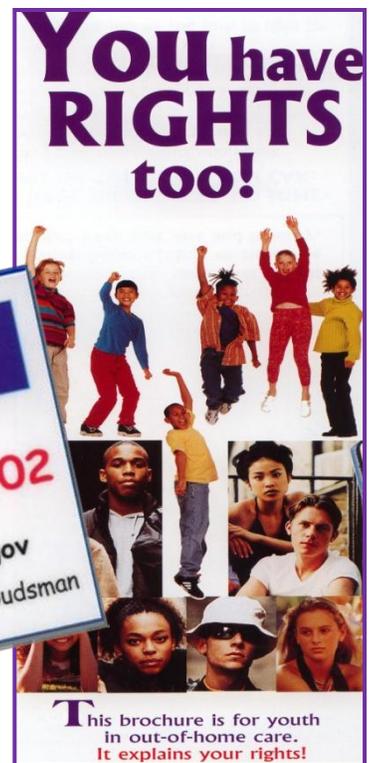
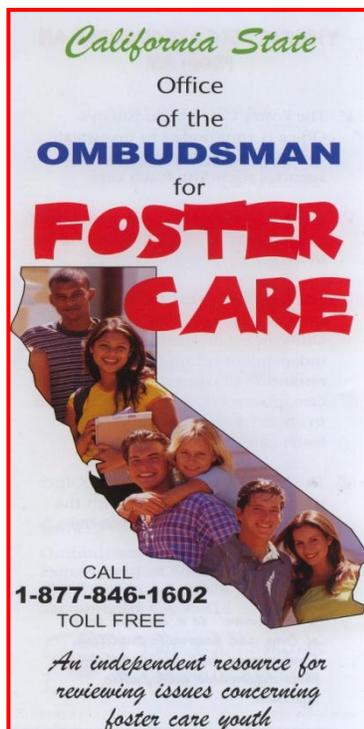


## Publications

During FY 2007/2008, the Ombudsman Office distributed more than 37,733 publications. The Ombudsman Office receives calls requesting publications and materials that educate the state-wide community regarding the rights of children in out-of-home care, the child welfare system and the supportive services and resources available for foster children, youth, their families and caretakers.

Publications disseminated by the Ombudsman Office include brochures on Foster Youth Rights in English and Spanish, the Foster Care Ombudsman Office, College Financial Aid, Help-Line Cards, and Foster Youth Rights Posters. In addition to these publications, the Ombudsman Office distributes a Resource Directory and information packets.

[www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov](http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov)



## Child and Family Services Review

### Federal Outcome Measures

The United States Department of Health and Human Services administers the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the State of California. This process assesses the performance of state child welfare agencies with regard to achieving positive outcomes for children and families, and identifies the following specific outcome measures: Safety, Permanency, Child and Family Well-Being and Systemic Factors such as Statewide Information System, Case Review System, Quality Assurance System, Training, Service Array, Agency Responsiveness to the Community and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention. The focus of the CFSR process is on continuous quality improvement; high standards are set to ensure ongoing attention to the goal of achieving positive outcomes for children and families. The Ombudsman Office tracks this type of information in its Call-Tracking Database. The Ombudsman Office will continue to follow and document inquiries and complaints, as well as refine our data gathering tools and processes to meet legislative mandates and discover trends and issues in foster care and the child welfare system in general.

