

SOCIAL SERVICES TRENDS

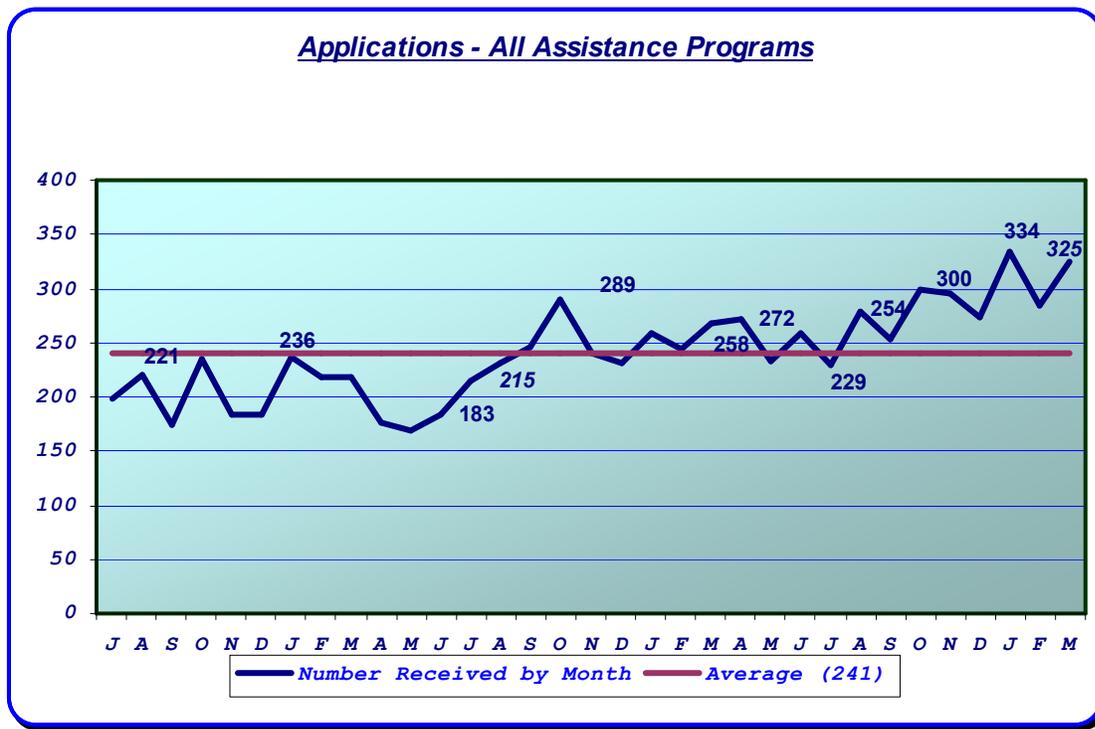
Quarter Ending: March 31, 2010

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, 2010. The Department welcomes questions regarding the information contained in this report or about our programs and services. Additional information is available by calling (530) 283-6350 or by accessing our web site at www.countyofplumas.com/depts.htm.

I. WELFARE TO WORK & PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DIVISION

A. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

The depth of the recession continues to be exemplified through historic high application counts. The unprecedented count of applications exceeding 200 per month is now in its 21st consecutive month. In December we noted that going back to 1997, there has been no month where the application count had reached 300. Now, in three of the past six months we have seen application counts of 300 or more topping out at 334 applications for assistance in January. The current average of 241 applications per month is also unprecedented.



CONTINUING CASES

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

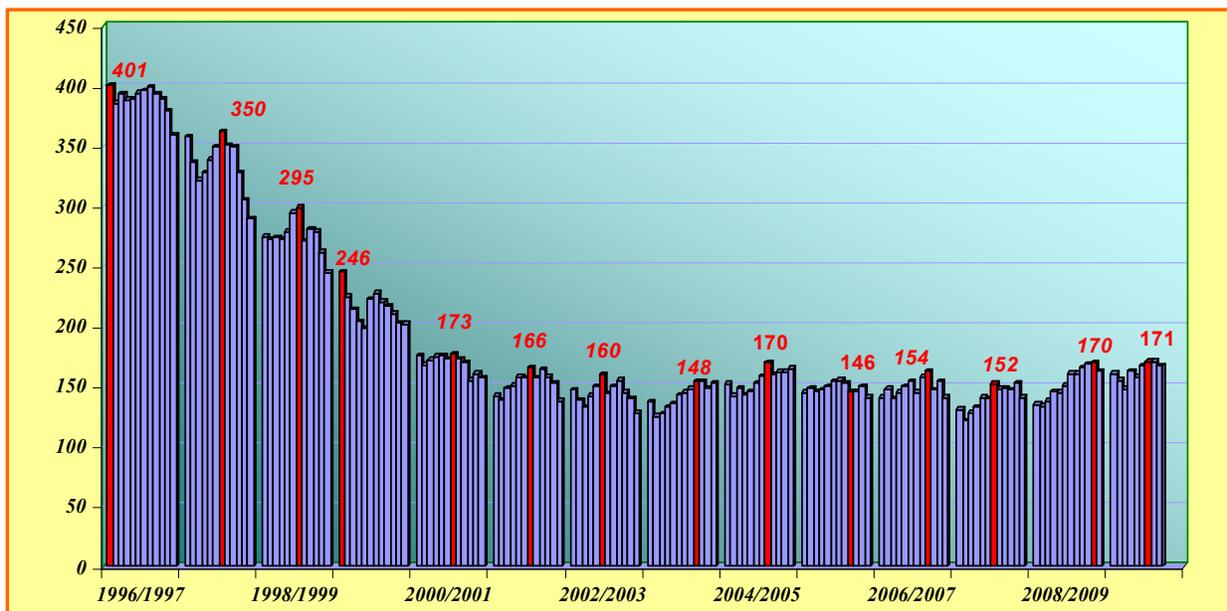
Considering the historic high volume of applications that have been received by the Department it would be expected that some growth would have occurred in the CalWORKs cash assistance program. That expectation has not materialized in a significant way in this program although case counts at the 170 per month level are comparatively high.

The 162 average monthly case count for the first nine months of the fiscal year represents an eight year high and is a near 16% increase over the average monthly count just two years ago.

Average Monthly Caseload

2007/2008	140
2008/2009	153
2009/2010	162

AFDC/CalWORKs Open Cases at End of Month



(2). Food Stamp Assistance

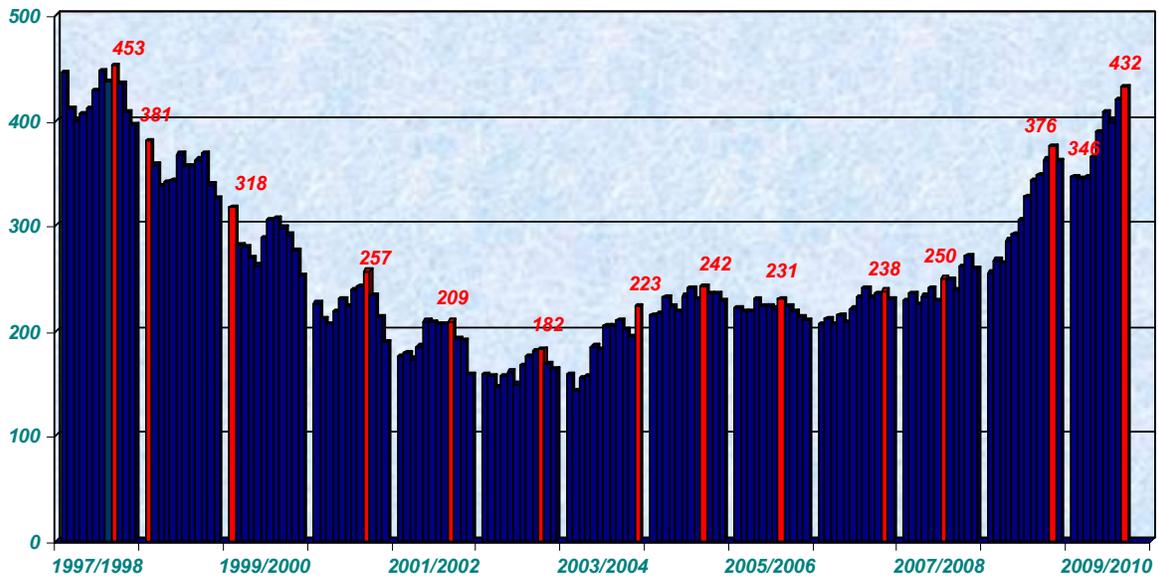
A. Case Count

One need look no further than the graphic representing growth in the Foodstamp program to gather a depiction of the recession's profound impacts on Plumas County residents. In July of 2008 the case count was 255 cases. In March of 2010 (twenty-one months later) the case count has grown by 70% to 432 cases. Growth of this type is truly unprecedented. While in some areas of the country the recession is said to have eased, clearly in Plumas County it has not and we expect it to be some time before any significant improvements evidenced by a decline in this case count to materialize.

Average Monthly Caseload

2007/2008	243
2008/2009	316
2009/2010	384

Food Stamp Open Cases at End of Month

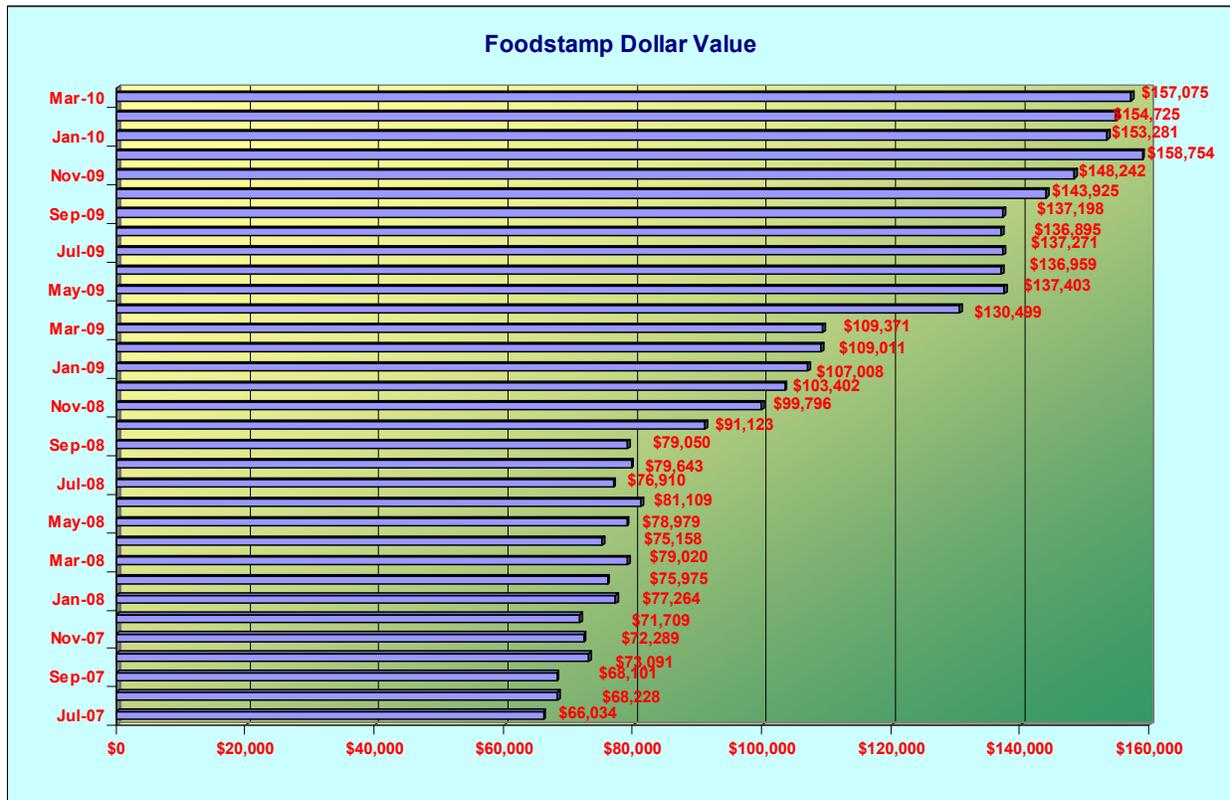


B. Foodstamp Dollar Value

As has been reported in prior Trends the dollar value of Foodstamp benefits issued is more than 80% higher than it was just twelve months ago.

In December the Department issued supplemental benefits for prior months which accounts for some of the growth shown in December.

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 case count for Medi-Cal has continued a steady upward climb reaching a level of 967 cases at the end of March. The program has grown by 17% (141 cases added) in a span of 21 months.

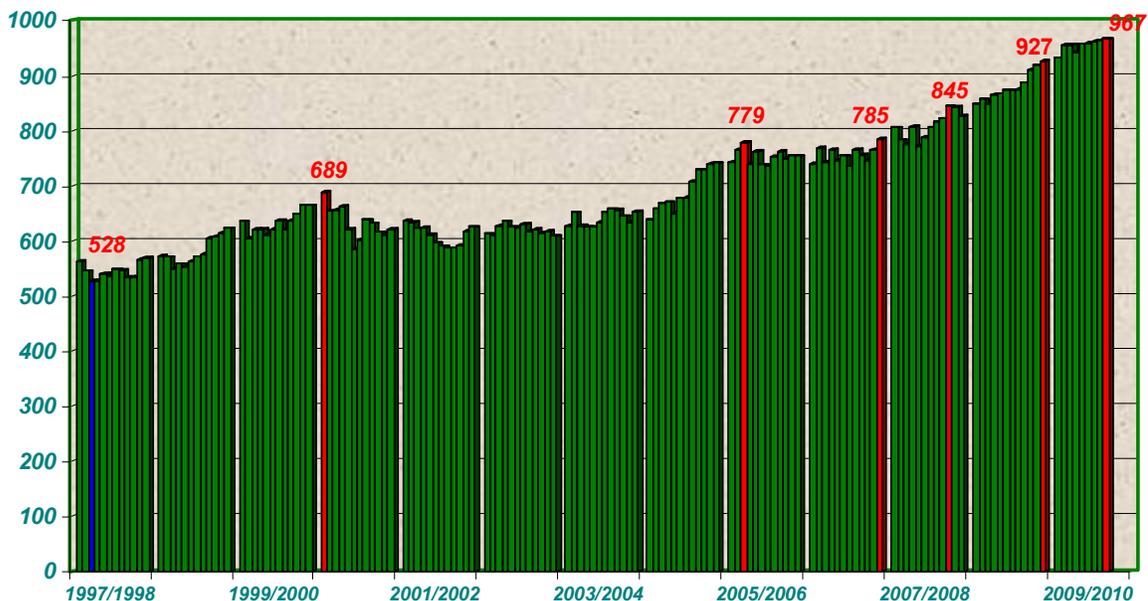
The economic downturn is leading to increased numbers of children and families without health insurance coverage who qualify for the Medi-Cal program. This is because adults will lose jobs that have health benefits associated with them.

While the rate of growth in the program has slowed some the Department continues to believe that we will reach the 1,000 case threshold in the near term. The average monthly case count for this program exceeds the count for last year by 76 cases per month or by nearly 10%.

Average Monthly Caseload

2006/2007	808
2007/2008	879
2008/2009	955

Medi-Cal Open Cases at End of Month



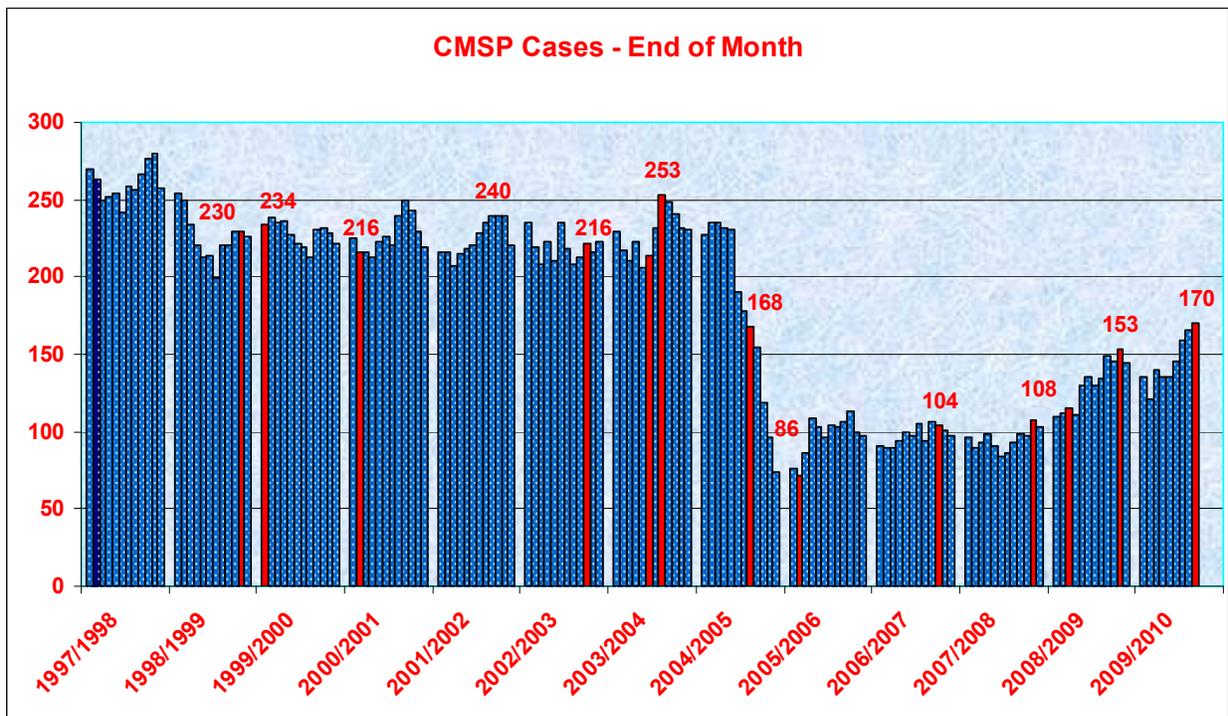
(4). County Medical Services Program (CMSP).

The County Medical Services Program (CMSP) meets the mandate to provide care for medically indigent persons who are the County's responsibility under Section 17000 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

The case count has dropped during the first part of the fiscal year. Now it is on the rise again. The Department believes that some of the growth is accounted for as a product of the Federal Health Care Reform debate in Washington. It is anticipated that some, if not most, of the indigent persons who receive coverage for their medical needs through the CMSP program will likely be absorbed into the reform system, although probably not until 2014. As this situation emerges and is clarified we will continue to update progress through Trends and other means.

Average Monthly Caseload

2007/2008	95
2008/2009	131
2009/2010	145

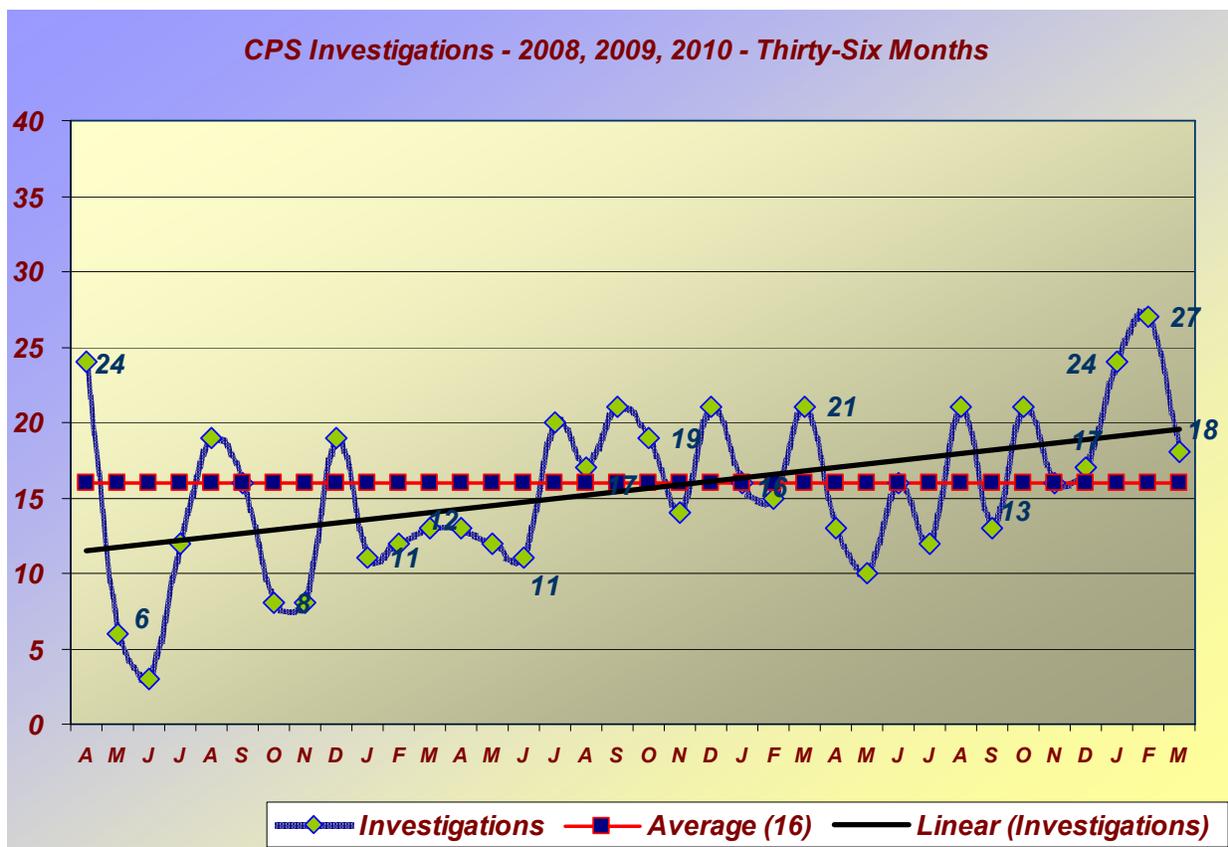


II. SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

A. Child Welfare Services

The January through March 2010 quarter brought a total of 69 referrals for investigation, more than we have received for any other three month period in the past thirty-six months. Twenty-seven referrals received in February is also a 36-month high count for any single month.

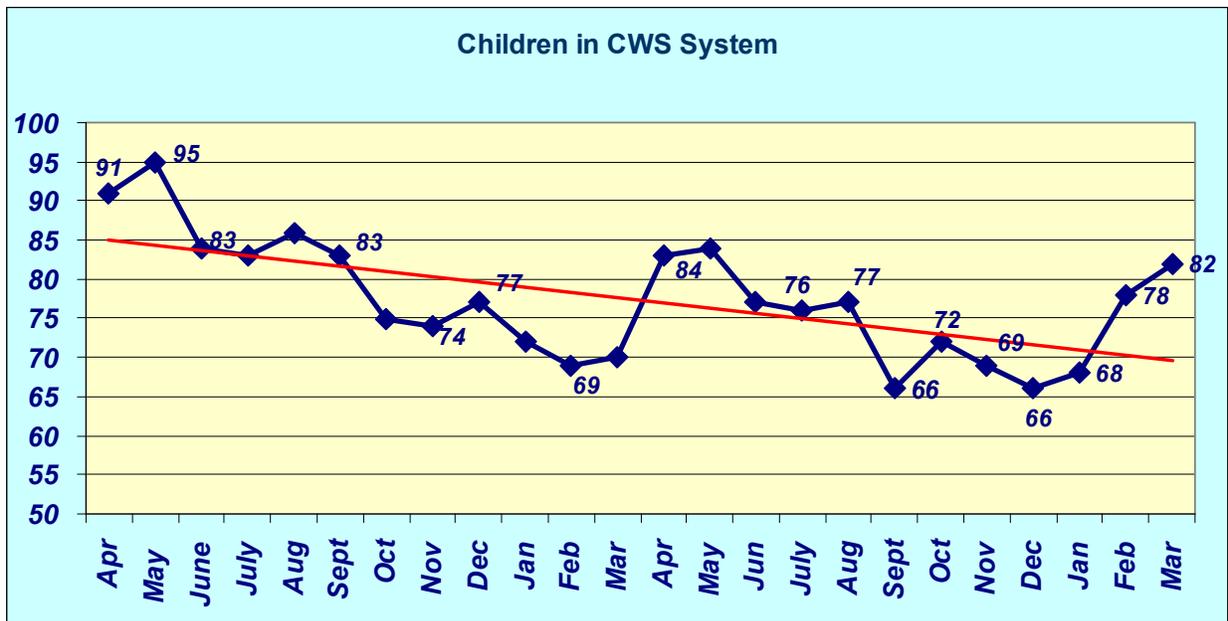
As we have reported previously, the Department has continued to experience significant numbers of cases where the precipitating factors leading to abuse and neglect are associated with drug or alcohol use, in particular methamphetamine but also alcohol abuse. We have also had an unusual number of older children (children over the age of 10) referred during this period.



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. With the approval and support of the Board of Supervisors, the Department has engaged in a set of structured system improvements that are targeted to meeting this objective. The Department is now in its fourth year of implementing the elements of the Child Welfare Services Outcome Improvement Program (CWSOIP).

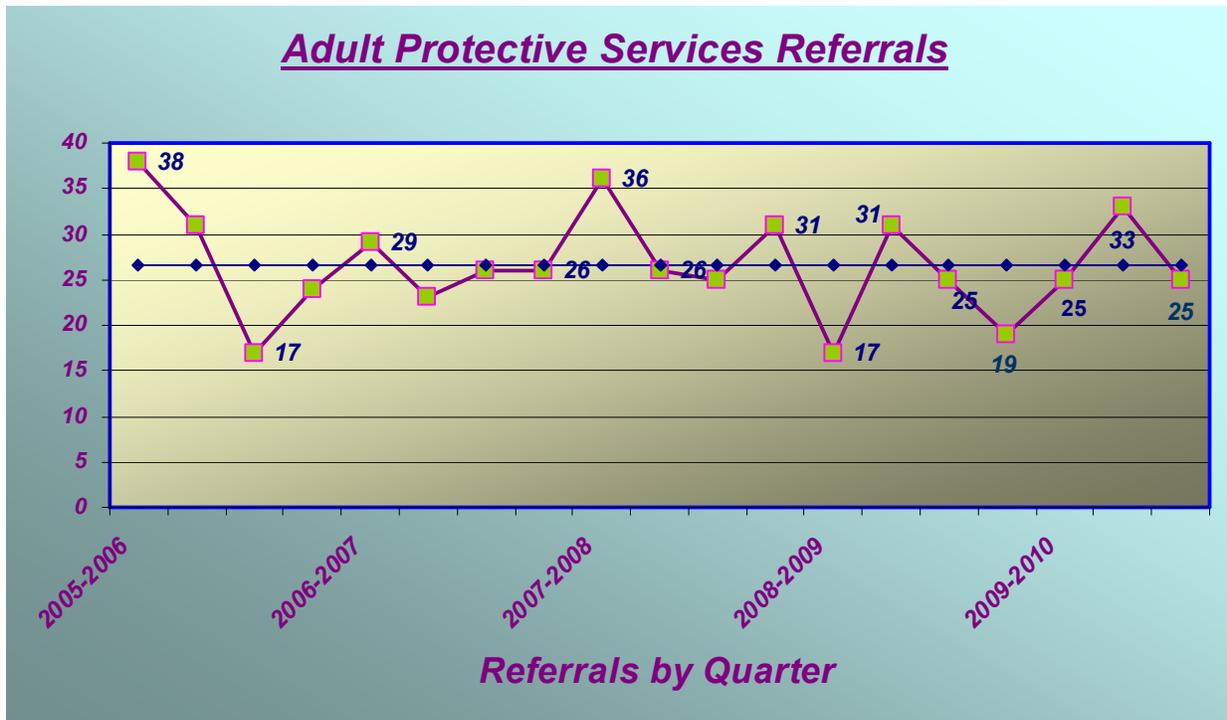
The twenty-four month trend line for children in the CWS system has been headed downward. When the Department receives increased referrals for investigation as we have for the past six months, we are likely to see increasing numbers of children in placement out of their homes. While the Department would prefer to see our counts drop, our primary emphasis continues to be child safety which dictates that a child may have to stay out of their home until it is deemed to be safe to return to.



C. Adult Protective Services

The Department received 25 referrals in the most recent three month quarter. The average has been about 27 referrals per quarter.

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.



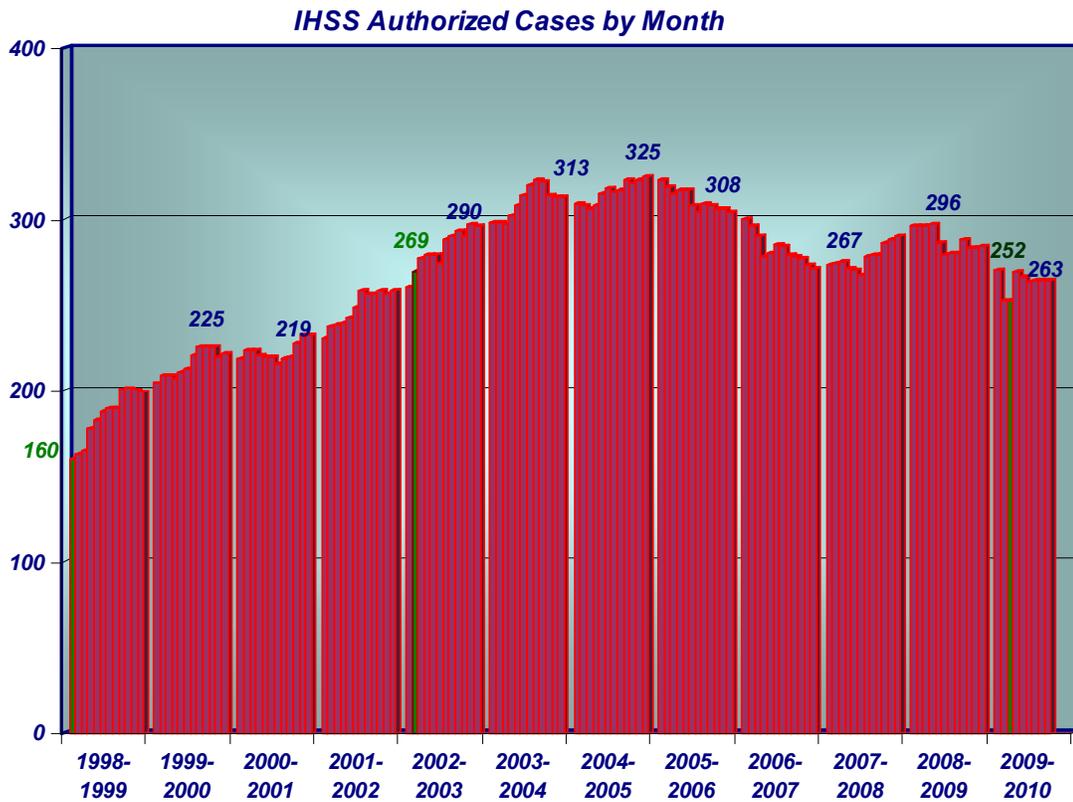
D. In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS).

The case count for the past four months has been steady at about 263 cases. Those recipients who lost eligibility for the program due to the Governor’s mid year cuts have been discontinued.

In accordance with the Governor’s program integrity initiative, all providers of IHSS must be finger printed by the end of June.

Average Monthly Case Count

2007/2008	278
2008/2009	287
2009/2010	262



III. PUBLIC GUARDIAN

Public Guardian currently provides guardianship and conservator services to a total of 7 LPS and Probate conservatees. The guardian also serves as representative payee for 6 SSI recipients.