

## SOCIAL SERVICES TRENDS

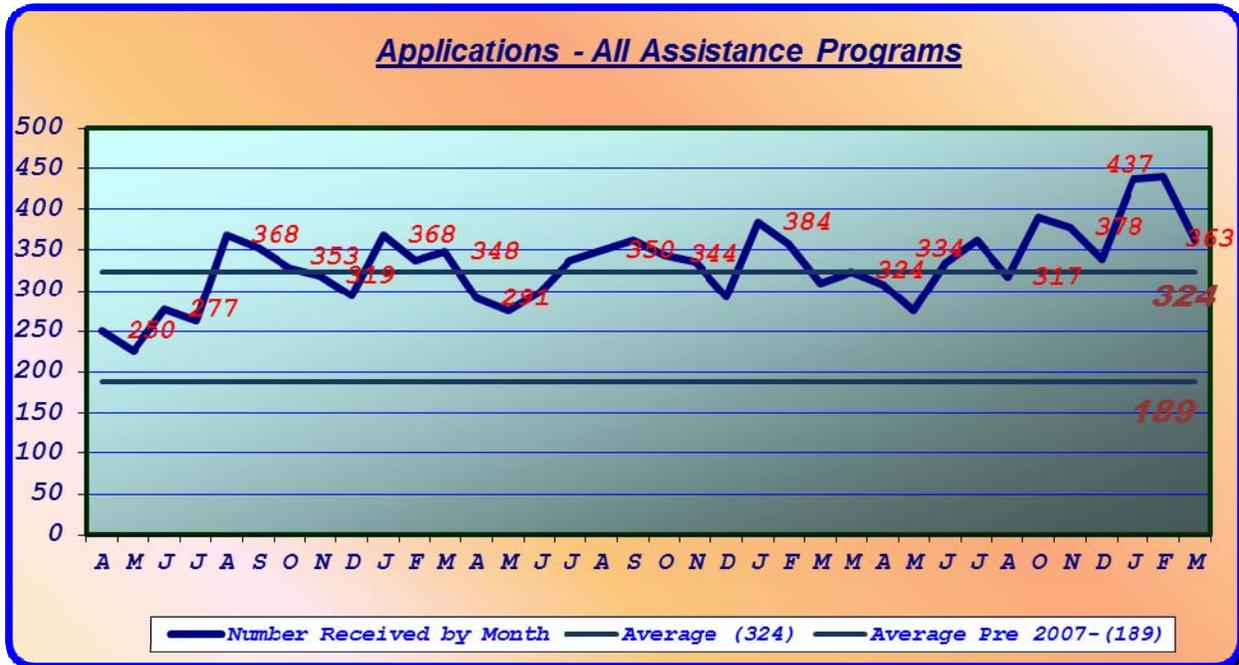
Quarter Ending: March 30, 2014

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 30, 2014. 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

For the first time since the Department has been reporting Trends data (dating back to 1997) applications for assistance (CalWORKs, CalFresh, Medi-Cal) reached counts exceeding 400 per month (437 in January and 440 in February). Higher case counts have been a feature of the Department's experience since the recessionary economy began in 2007. Added to that now is the influx of applications from persons who are eligible for the Affordable Care Act (the ACA). The average monthly application count for the thirty-six month period shown below has reached 324 per month. Prior to 2007, the average was 189 per month, or about 135 fewer per month.



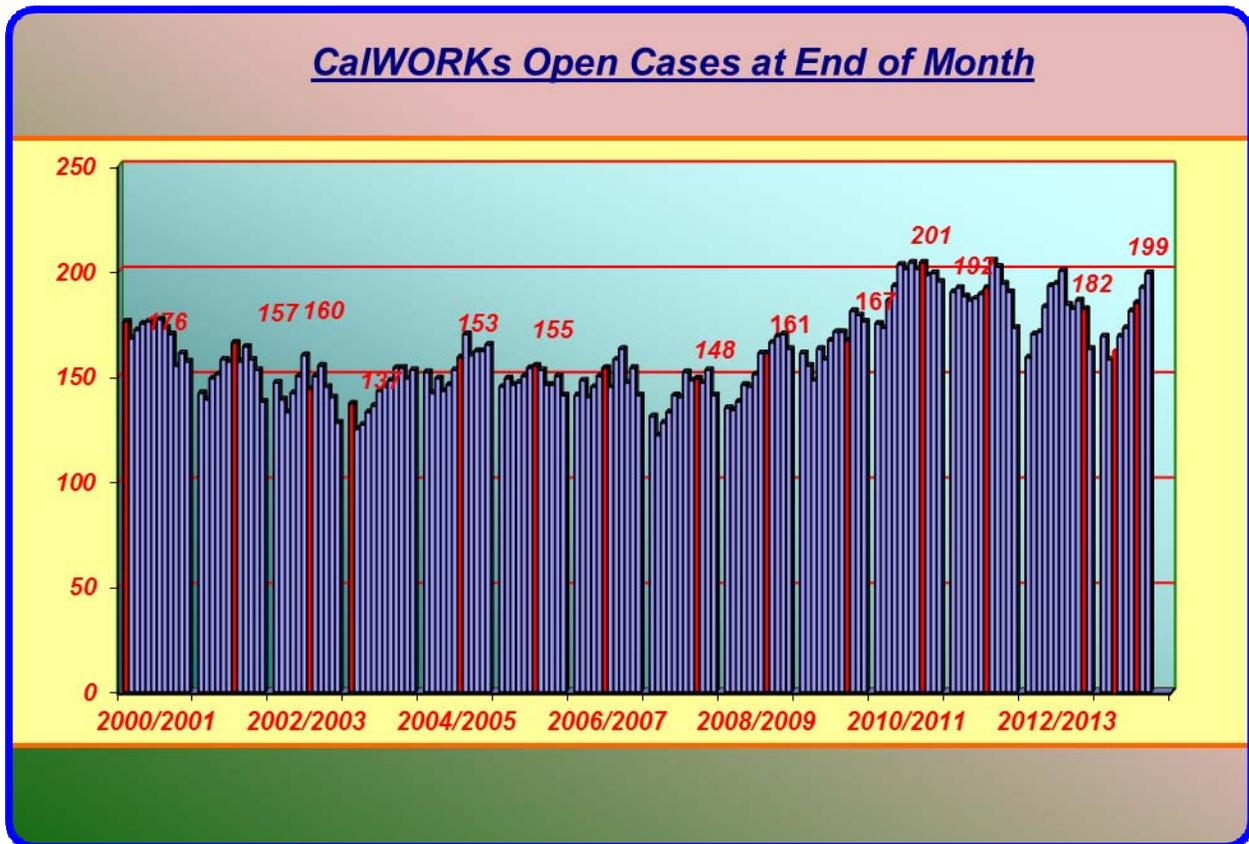
## CONTINUING CASES

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

The case count for CalWORKs assistance has been staying in a range that fluctuates between 150-200 cases. A growth trend that began in the October through December quarter has continued into this most recent three month period. One-third of the CalWORKs cases are “child only” cases meaning that the adult has another source of income and is likely a non-needy adult relative. Nearly all of these cases involve children who’ve been placed in the home of a relative or a non-relative extended family member. Those children remain eligible for CalWORKs assistance during the entire period of their placement.

#### Average Monthly Caseload

<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>181</b>
<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>176</b>



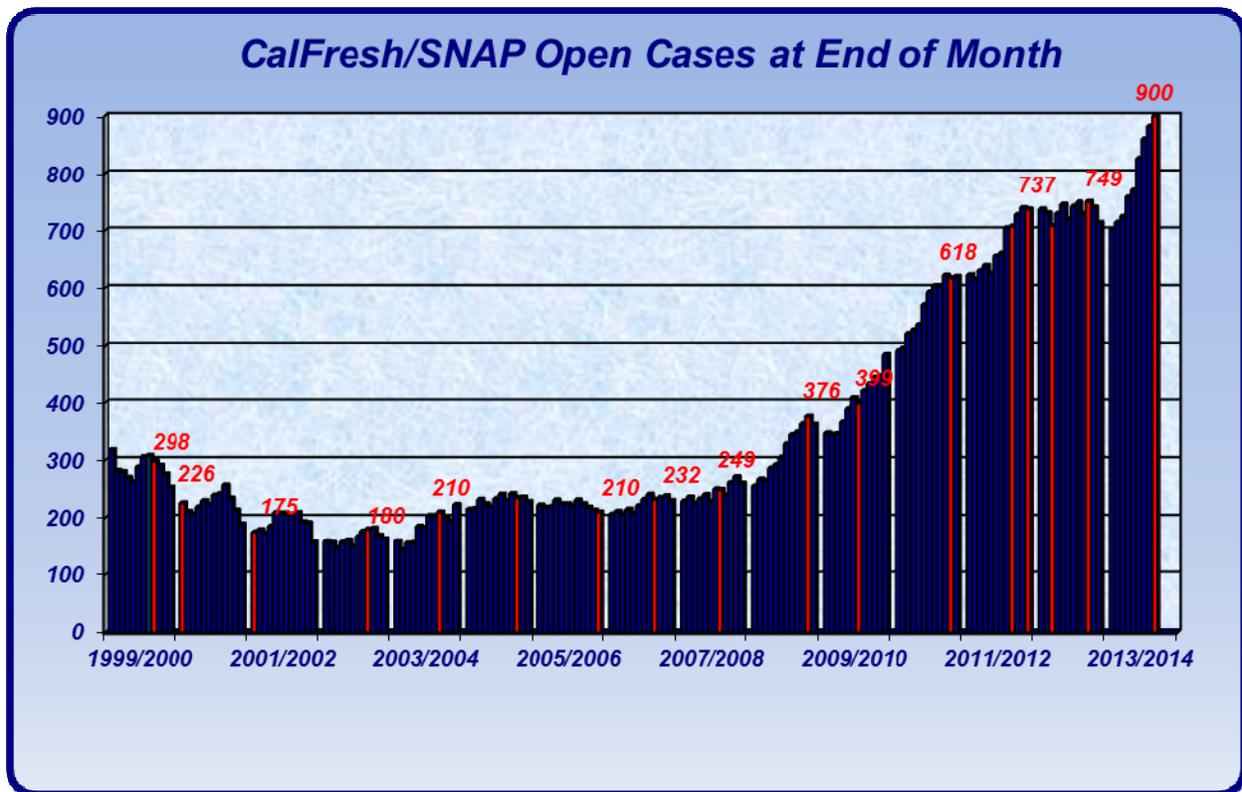
## **(2). CalFresh (Food Stamps) Assistance**

### **A. Case Count**

For just the briefest period, the continual climb of the case count dropped for a three month period during the last quarter of 2012-2013. Now, that short term dip has been offset again by more growth. The Department believes that two elements contribute to the caseload growth. First, while the economy is in recovery, we believe that residual impacts still remain leading to people remaining on the program longer than they might otherwise have. Second, with the influx of new applications associated with the Affordable Care Act, there is an associated group of these same applicants who will also be eligible for the CalFresh program. Taken together, these impacts yield an historic high count of 900 cases at the end of March.

#### **Average Monthly Caseload**

<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>672</b>
<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>733</b>
<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>749</b>



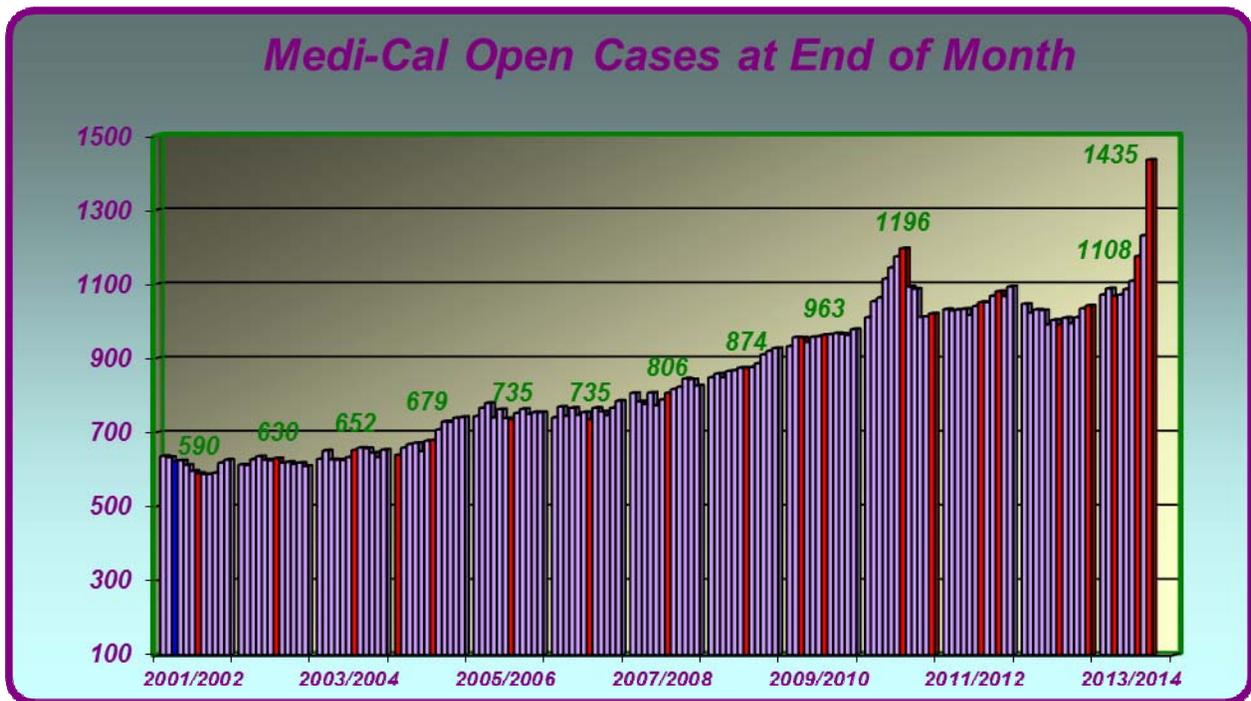
**(3). Medi-Cal**

In our December Trends report, the Department estimated that as many as 500 new eligibles would become eligible for the Medi-Cal program by the end of March (when the open enrollment period ended for the Affordable Care Act). This new group of eligible recipients would be the result from new eligibles (people whose income is below 167% of poverty) and those who transfer from the prior County indigent population (those who were previously on Path2Health).

At the end of December, 2013, the Medi-Cal case count was 1108 cases. At the end of March, our count was 1435 or an increase of 327. Not all of the applications received in the open enrollment period have been processed yet, so our estimate of 500 could very well be accurate.

**Average Monthly Caseload**

<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>1049</b>
<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>1017</b>
<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>1148</b>



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

For the present, the Department will no longer display a graphic for the residual CMSP caseload. The residual caseload for this program represents those individuals who do not qualify for expanded Medi-Cal. Typically, those individuals would be people who are not able to verify legal residence in the United States. For those individuals, the County Medical Services Program would still have responsibility for any emergency department care that person might receive.

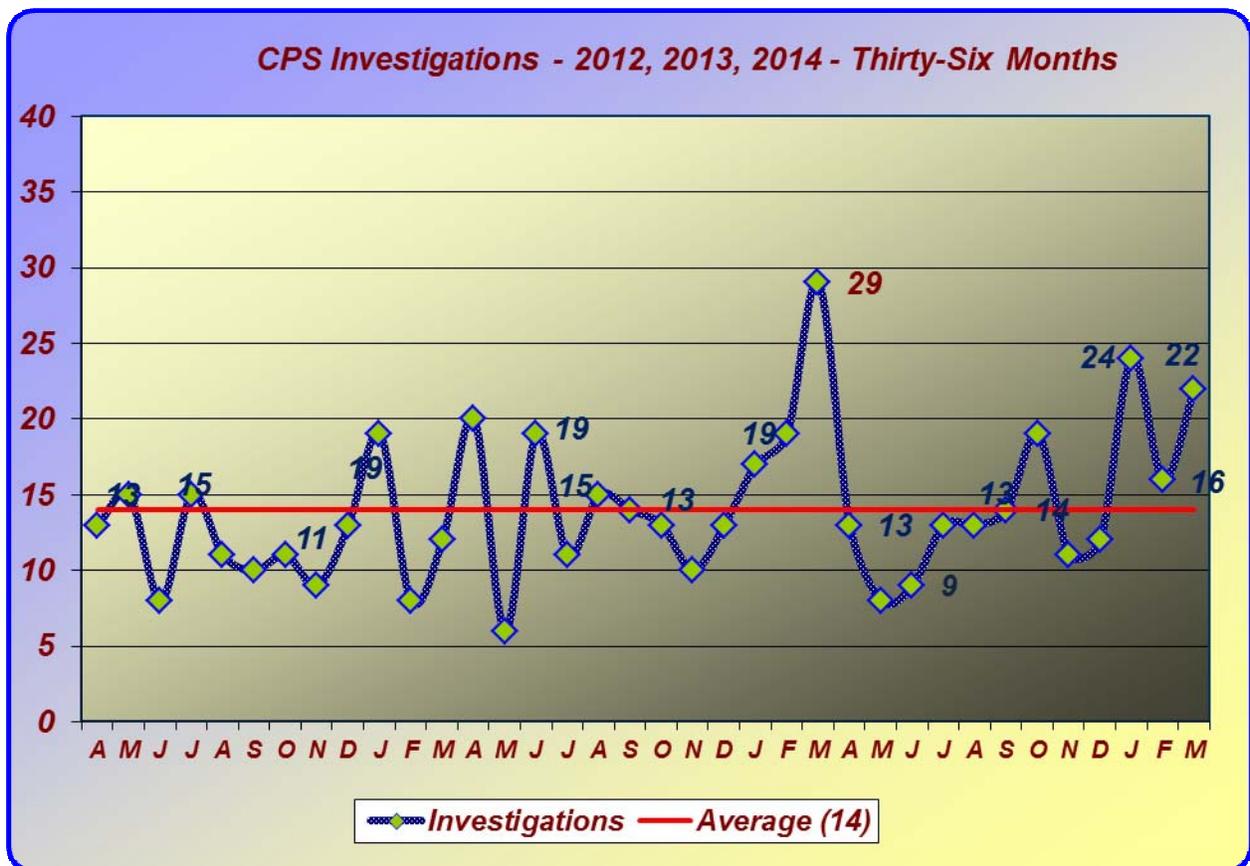
At the end of March, the CMSP program served three such individuals.

## 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 three month period from January through March the Department investigated a total of 62 allegations of child abuse. Part of the increase can be attributed to investigations involving family groups.

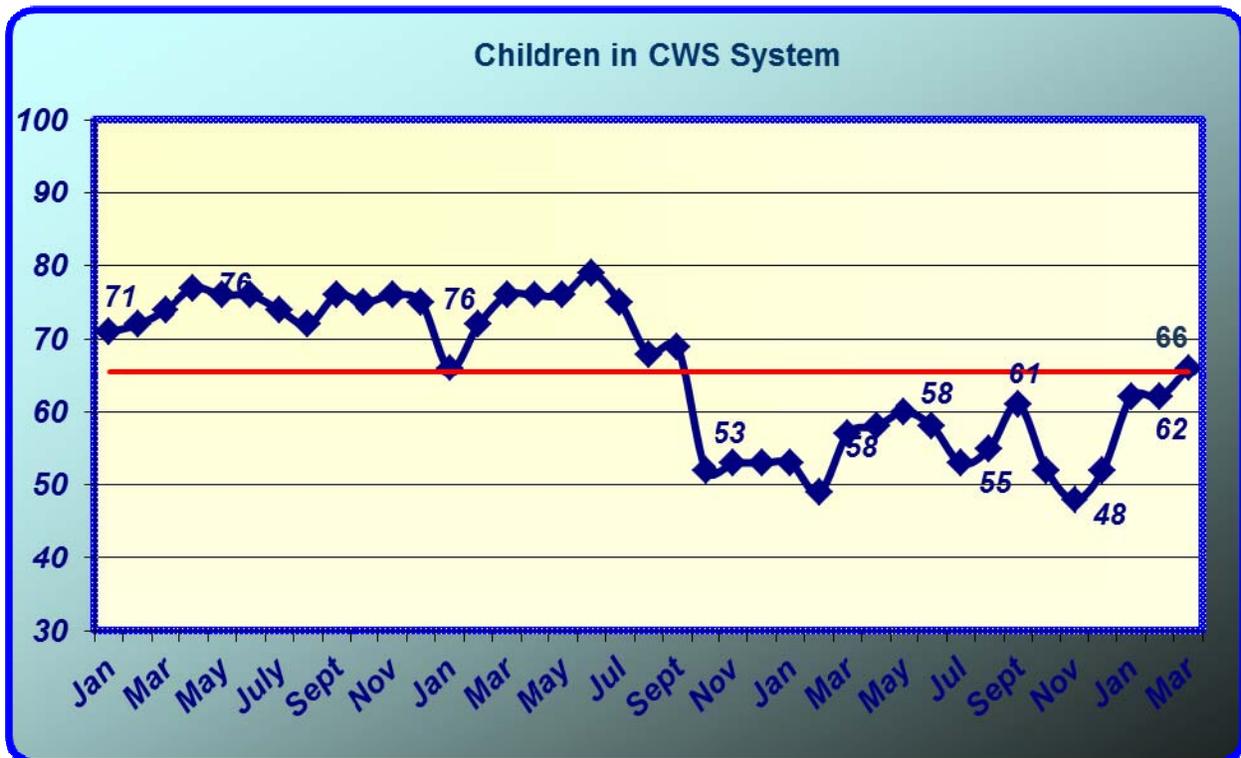
As the Department has noted previously, we have continued to experience significant numbers of cases where the precipitating factors leading to abuse and neglect are associated with substance abuse, in particular methamphetamine but also alcohol and other drugs.



## B. Children in the Child Welfare Services System

There has been some slight growth in the number of children in the child welfare system. The Department notes two elements that contribute to this growth. First, the number of investigations performed during this period was higher than average, in the range of about 20 per month compared to about 15 per month prior to that. Second, under Assembly Bill 12 children can remain in foster care until they are 20. Under prior law the age limit was 18. The Department has 5 foster youth who are AB 12 youth.

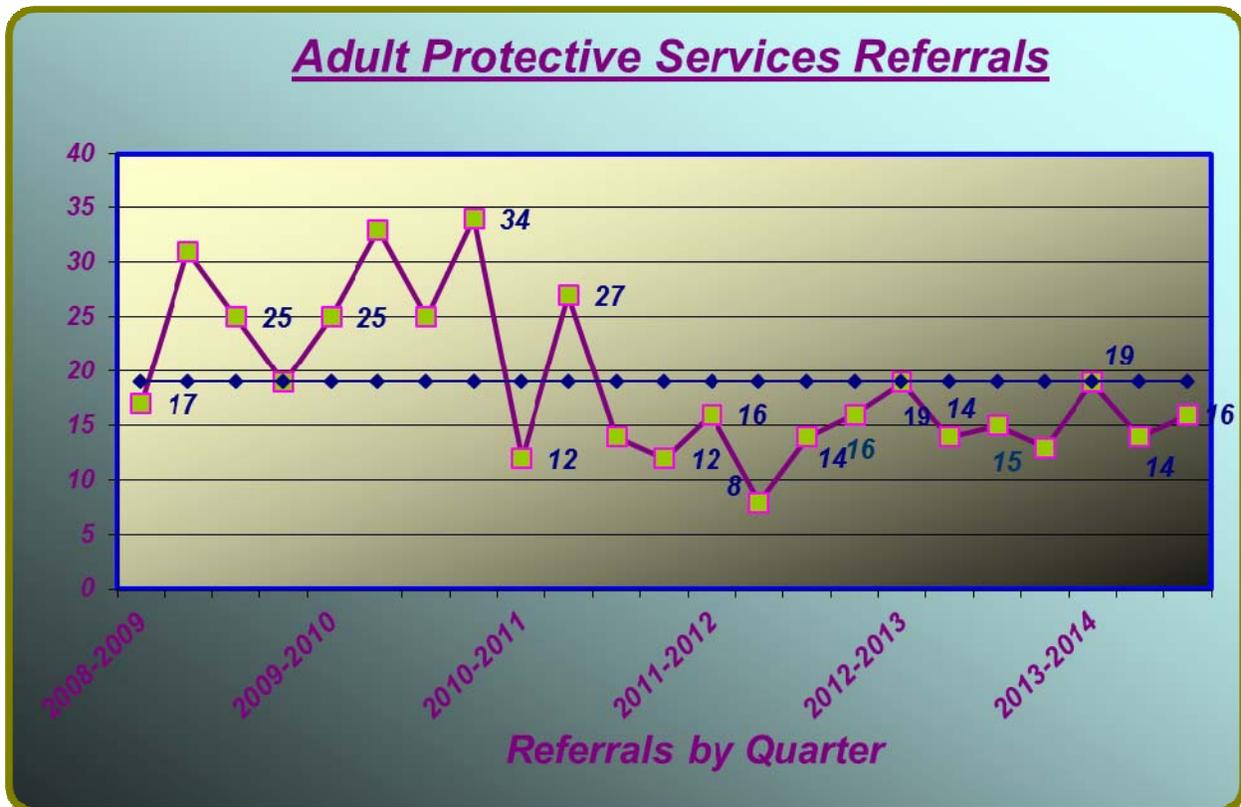
The Department has continued its trend toward placing foster children with relatives and with non-related extended family members. This has placed us in a position where we are less reliant on foster family agencies and foster homes for placement resources. We expect that trend to continue.



### C. Adult Protective Services

The average number of referrals for investigation of elderly and disabled persons has run in the range of about 19 referrals per quarter. For the past three and a half years, the number of referrals has been at or below average. There are instances where adults may live in situations that don't meet a community standard for what would otherwise be considered healthy or safe. However in many of these situations the Department can't assist the individual unless they voluntarily agree to it.

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.

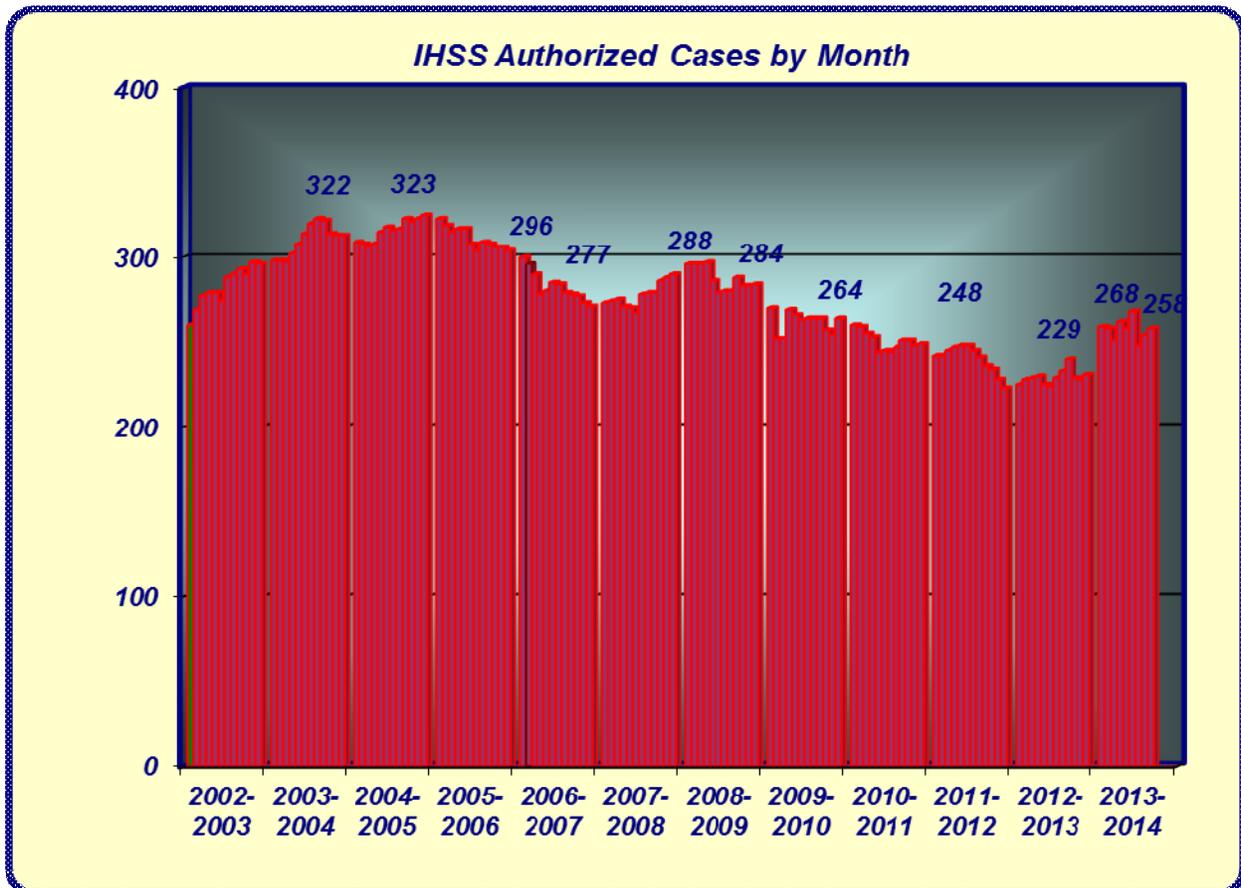


**D. In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)**

Since 2005 the case count for IHSS has generally been on a downward trend due to continued reductions in hours and services that are the product of state budget cuts. More recently the case count has begun to increase. While it is uncertain as to what impacts, if any, could come from increasing numbers of people who are eligible for Medi-Cal, there is speculation that the case count could grow. That remains to be seen.

**Average Monthly Case Count**

<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>240</b>
<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>259</b>



### **III. PUBLIC GUARDIAN**

The Public Guardian currently provides guardianship and conservator services to a total of 12 LPS and Probate conservatees. The Public Guardian also serves as representative payee for 10 SSI recipients.