



Strengthening Families

FY 2018-2019
Monthly Caseworker Visits



2018 APSR- Monthly Caseworker Visit Formula Grants Report

The report below from CAPSS, the State’s Automated Child Welfare Information System compiled by the SCDSS Accountability, Data, and Research Unit, shows that the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) achieved a total of 97.2% of the total visits that would be made if each child were visited once per month for Federal Fiscal Year 2018-2019 (above the required compliance of 95%). (There was a very small increase from 96.8% for FFY 2017-2018.)

The report below also highlights that SCDSS achieved a total of 68.3% of the total number of monthly visits made by caseworkers to children in foster care in the child’s residence, exceeding the required compliance of at least 50%.

South Carolina Department of Social Services

Face-to-face Visits with Children in Foster Care (eff. 20191209 / ADR)

Period: October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019

The total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care during a fiscal year must not be less than 95 percent of the total number of such visits that would occur if each child were visited once every month while in care.

# children	Monthly Caseworker Visits	# Complete Calendar Visits	# Visits Months in the Residence	% of Visits on a Monthly Basis	% of Visits in the Residence
7,120	48,620	49,999	33,221	97.2%	68.3%

Monthly caseworker visits with Children

South Carolina continues to recognize the critical importance of caseworker visits and the impact of quality visits on contributing to the positive outcomes for children and families. Visits are the mechanism for monitoring safety, permanency, and the well-being of children. Visits enable staff to be proactive in meeting the needs of children and caregivers. In 2018-2019 South Carolina had the mantra, “what gets focused on, gets fixed”. South Carolina has moved beyond this mantra to bring quality to our workforce by focusing on the “WHY”. In shifting the focus on the “Why”, South Carolina has been able to identify barriers needed to improve casework practice and accountability. In 2019, the agency trained frontline professionals on the importance of child contact and family visitation. The training will be offered quarterly to promote frontline professional’s awareness of the impact caseworker visits and contacts have on improving outcomes.

South Carolina is updating policy for visitation and contacts. Creating work aids enables frontline professionals to have practice guides that ensure statutory performance standards are met. The agency is consistently communicating the agency’s values to staff and community partners. Establishing feedback loops to the frontline back to management provides oversight of the agency’s compliance with caseworker visits. The agency has three major work efforts that are playing vital roles in practice improvement (Michelle H. Consent Decree, Program Improvement Plan, and the GPS Practice Model).

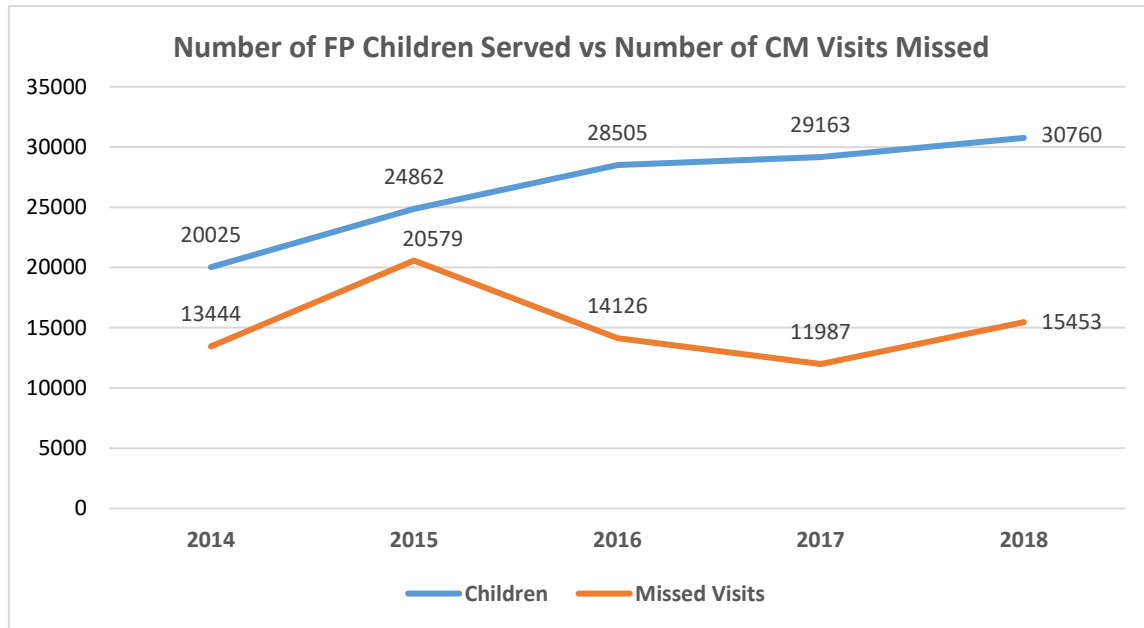
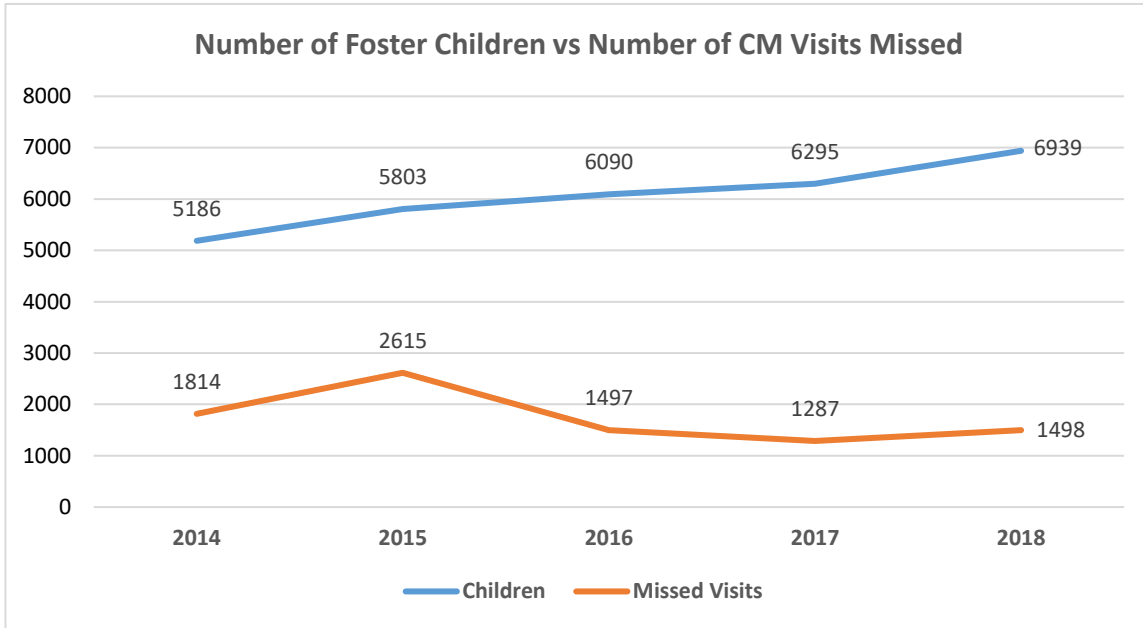
South Carolina is moving in the right direction when it comes to monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care and in family preservation:

- 23,616 open Foster Care and Family Preservation cases in 2018. (A case in family preservation may include multiple children whereas each foster care case represents a child.)

- 200,962 children had completed case manager face to face visits in open FC and FP cases during calendar year 2018 (not including additional visits conducted with a child during the same calendar month)
- a 26% increase in the number of Foster Care and Family Preservation cases from 2015 to 2018; there has been a -28% decrease in missed case manager visits for that same period.

Face to Face Visitation with Children in Foster Care					
Calendar Year	Number of children in foster care At least one complete calendar month (does not include youth 18 and older)	Number of face to face visits required (minimum of one visit per child each full month the child is in care)	Number of face to face visits completed	Number of Missed Visits	Percent of face to face visits completed for calendar year
2015	5,803	41,302	38,687	2,615	93.7%
2016	6,090	43,501	42,004	1,497	96.6%
2017	6,295	45,528	44,241	1,287	97.2
2018	6,939	48,463	46,965	1,498	96.9%

Face to Face Visitation with Children in Family Preservation					
Calendar Year	Number of children in FP case longer than complete calendar month	Number of face to face visits required (minimum of one visit per child each full month the FP case is open)	Number of face to face visits completed	Number of Missed Visits	Percent of face to face visits completed for calendar year
2015	24,862	138,229	117,650	20,579	85.1%
2016	28505	155,617	141,491	14,126	90.9%
2017	29163	157,894	145,907	11, 987	92.4%
2018	30,760	169,450	153,997	15,453	90.9%



Use of Monthly Caseworker Visit Grant

As of 9/30/2019, we closed the Monthly Caseworker Visits grant 2018 grant year, in which we expended a total of \$337,519. \$2,309.10 was spent on telecommunications and \$335,209.90 was spent on travel. The travel included expenditures related to leased state vehicles. The telecommunications expenditures included cell phone, data network, and video conferencing payments. Since this is a 2-year grant, these amounts are for the entire grant period (10/01/2017 through 9/30/2019).

Steps in FFY 2020 To Ensure Compliance

South Carolina recognizes the importance of monthly caseworker visits and the impact caseworker visits have on outcomes for children. Leadership in South Carolina will continue to communicate through Regional Directors, County Directors and Supervisors in their monthly staff meeting, weekly huddles, on-going training, and quarterly Visitation Matters newsletter the requirements of the law, policy, and best practice tips to improve our outcomes. South Carolina has developed a practice model that is in its early phases of rollout. The agency is excited to see the change it will bring to our work in the coming year and the guidance it will provide in improving our work.

South Carolina is focused on professional development for supervisory staff to improve oversight. These efforts will bring accountability to casework practice. Supervisors will have quarterly regional leadership meetings to review data, address barriers, and identify practice improvements. The impact of quality supervision will help improve practice and guidance for frontline professionals. To enhance frontline supervision, the agency has selected a coaching model. By enhancing supervision, it is the hope that supervisors will understand the impact their leadership and guidance have on frontline professionals.

Frontline professionals are critical to improving safety, permanency and well-being outcomes. Therefore, there must be an investment in developing the workforce, as frontline professionals need the knowledge, skills, and abilities in assessing the safety and risk concerns of children and families. The South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) understands that continuous quality improvement efforts must be ongoing in enhancing quality visitation. While training will not solve the issue alone, coaching and ongoing CQI processes will better position the agency to address practice concerns and any barriers that may arise.