



Report: York County reunites more children with families

New figures looks at foster care issues statewide.

By ANGIE MASON
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York County reunited more children in foster care with their families than the state, and the rate of those children returning to foster care also remained lower, according to a new welfare report.

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children on Tuesday released its 2009 "State of Child Welfare" report, which looks at issues including foster care and child abuse.

The report also makes policy suggestions to reduce the number of children in foster care and work toward finding children permanent families, said Joan Benso, president and CEO of the organization.

York County should be commended for its efforts to reunify children with their birth families, Benso said. York County's rate of reuniting children and families is higher than the state's, she said, and the rate of children who re-enter foster care after that is still lower than others.

"(York County is) on absolutely the right pathway," she said.

On the downside, more than half of county children who stay in foster care for a year to 23 months stayed in three or more placement settings, which is a higher rate than the state.

Here's a look at some of the report's numbers from York County compared with the state. Data is from April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009.

Children in foster care for the first time reunified with their parents or other relatives within 12 months

York County -- 55.7 percent

State -- 48.2 percent

Children who re-entered foster care within one year after being reunified with family

York County -- 21.5 percent

State -- 27.8 percent

Children leaving foster care by discharge reason

Reunification with family

York County -- 66.6 percent

State -- 57.8 percent

Adoption

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York County -- 10.9 percent

State -- 15.7 percent

Guardianship

York County -- 7.1 percent

State -- 5.9 percent

Emancipation

York County -- 4.7 percent

State -- 6.6 percent

Children in foster care for 12 to 23 months with three or more placement settings

York County -- 52.9 percent

State -- 33.3 percent

Online

Want more information? Visit www.porchlightproject.org to read the State of Child Welfare report.

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