

# State Custody

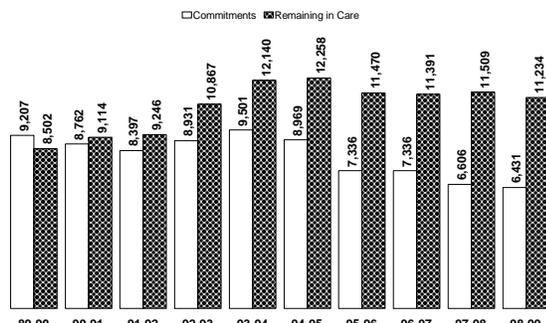
- Family Crisis Intervention Teams, providing services to all unruly youth and requiring certified referrals to juvenile courts before any unruly youth can be placed in state custody. This program has been successful in avoiding custody for 89 percent of youth served, allowing more funds to be devoted to prevention and family support services (TDES, 2000).

## Principles that work in an effective Child Welfare System:

- Child Safety and Family Support.** Keeping families together by actively reaching out to parents to support their strengths as caregivers. If it becomes apparent that parents or caregivers cannot provide a safe environment then agency intervention to provide an alternate permanent home.
- Child and Family Well-Being.** Child well-being means meeting the child's basic needs so they have an opportunity to grow and develop in an environment that provides consistent nurture, support, and stimulation. Family well-being means that a family has the capacity to care for its children and fulfill their basic developmental, health, educational, social, cultural, spiritual, and housing needs.
- Community Supports for Families.** Healthy communities that offer support to families in providing a safe and nurturing child-rearing environment. Healthy communities offer both formal and informal supports to families that prevent harm to children.
- Family Centered Services.** Responsive child welfare services directly address the needs and interests of individual children and families. When families are actively involved in making key decisions, it is more likely that the family's capacity to care safely for its children will be increased.
- Cultural Competence.** A culturally competent child welfare system is one that develops behaviors, attitudes, and policies to promote effective cross-cultural work. By engaging in a cultural self-assessment process, the system begins to address a) how the agency worker values may affect the clients that they serve, and b) improving access, availability, acceptance, and quality of services to all cultural groups.
- System Accountability and Timeliness.** The system's effectiveness is measured in terms of its ability to produce defined and visible outcomes for children and families through a continuum of resources that can be shown to prevent problems from occurring in the first

place, increase and maintain children's safety and families' emotional health and ability to care for children during transition, and prevent revictimization or other family problems.

**Children Committed to and Remaining in State Custody  
FY 1989-90 through FY 1998-99**



Source: Tennessee Department of Children's Services, Office of Policy, Planning and Research

- Coordination of System Resources.** Organization of system resources to ensure consistent, reliable, coordinated service delivery, along with the availability of informal supports for families in their own communities (Assessing Outcomes in Child Welfare Services, 1998).