

State of the Youth Report and Combined Plans Report
Executive Summary
July 2003

This complete report consists of two parts: State of the Youth Report and Combined Plans Report. The State of the Youth Report contains a brief overview of Region 1; specific county profiles for each county in Region 1 including information regarding population, business and geography; and statistics which describe the overall status of youth in Region 1 and how each county compares to state and regional averages, as well as with the other counties in Region 1. The Combined Plans Report contains an introduction to the Community Action Partnership; detailed overviews of twenty-four multiple county youth-related initiatives, including implementing agencies and organizations, overall goals, specific objectives, and strategies; and information about several additional unique county-specific initiatives which also relate to youth.

Region 1, located in the Northwest corner of Georgia, has a population of 722,867 and consists of the following fifteen counties: Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker and Whitfield.

Overall, Region 1 scored higher than the state averages primarily for many indicators that define at-risk behaviors and self-sufficient families, including repeat births to teens; detention of medium and high DAI (Detention Assessment Instrument) scoring youth; children living in poverty; children eligible to receive free or reduced lunches; female headed households living in poverty; children living with married couples; and adults over the age of 25 who are high school graduates.

However, Region 1 scores lower than the state averages for many other key indicators, especially those that define healthy children, school success, and strong families. Some of the major indicators that are worse than state averages include the healthy start index; school absences; high school completion; youth not in school and not working; norm referenced tests; teen pregnancy rates; new family index; and child abuse and neglect.

Each of the fifteen counties in Region 1 is concentrating on several of the overall Family Connection benchmarks: Healthy Children, Children Ready for School, Children Succeeding in School, Strong Families, and Self Sufficient Families. The most common benchmarks that are being addressed by these counties include increasing the percentage of infants born healthy; reducing teen pregnancy rate and repeat birth rate; reducing percentage of students absent 10 days or more; increasing the percentages of students who graduate on time; reducing the percentage of high school students that drop out; and reducing the incidence child abuse or neglect.

All fifteen counties are focusing on many initiatives, programs, and activities that directly address improving these benchmarks which are detailed in this report. Best practice approaches that build assets in youth to promote health, education, employability and community service are being recommended.