H&SS INDICATORS

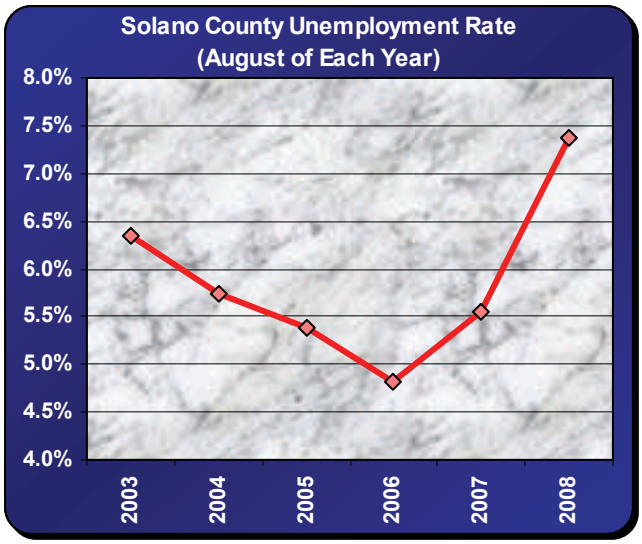
A Bi-Monthly Look at Health & Social Service Trends Shaping Solano County

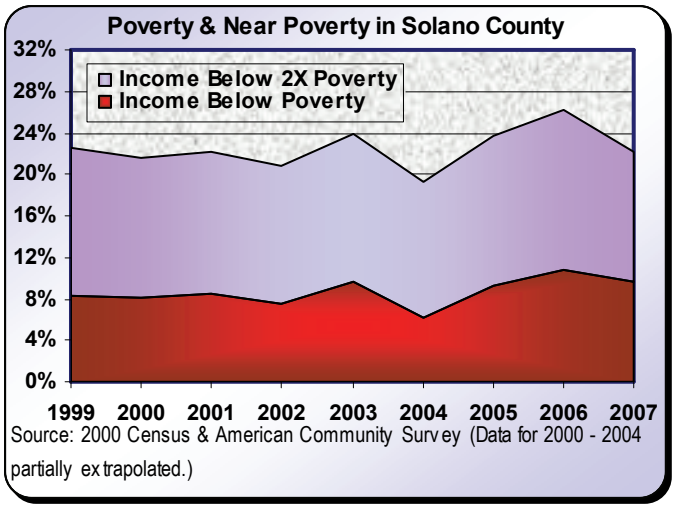
OCTOBER 2008

ECONOMY

Indicator	June	July	August
Labor Force	214,000	215,300	215,700
Number Employed	199,300	199,600	199,800
Number Unemployed	14,700	15,700	15,900
Unemployment Rate	6.9%	7.3%	7.4%

- Solano County's unemployment rate rose to its highest level since February 1997. Because the County has grown since then, 15,900 Solano residents were unemployed in August compared to 13,000 in 1997.
- The US Census released new poverty and income figures in early September. The percentage of Solano County residents living below the poverty line fell slightly between 2006 and 2007 (from 10.8% to 9.6%). However, the proportion of persons living below or near poverty has not varied by much over the past decade. A future edition of the H&SS UPDATE newsletter will feature the new census data.





H&SS INDEX

The **Health & Social Services (H&SS) Index** has seen a steady decline over the past several years as more people request assistance and H&SS client counts continue to rise. The index combines workload data from 14 key services provided by H&SS, along with data on unemployment in Solano County, to provide a monthly indicator of community demand for health and social services.

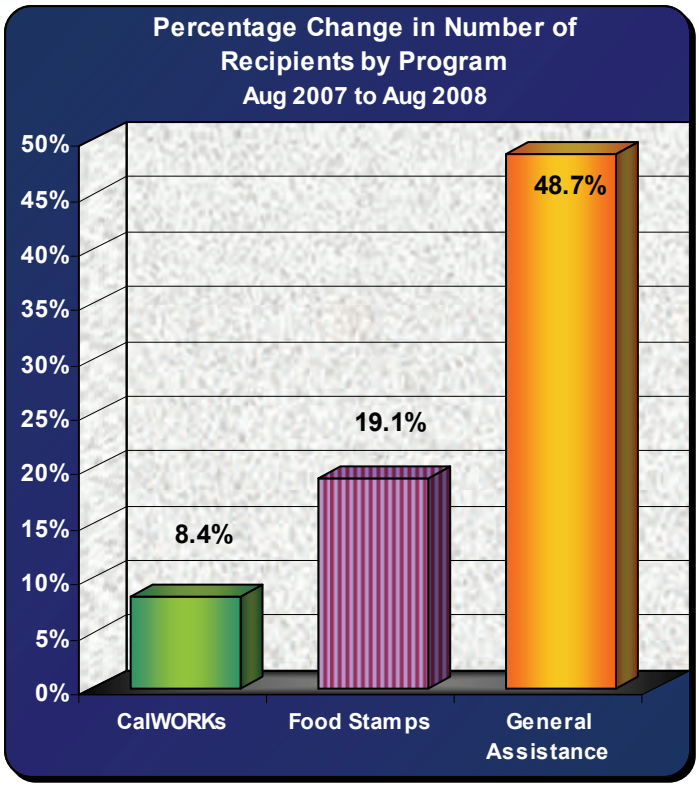
All of the monthly numbers are added together and converted into an index score with January 2003 as the index bench line figure of 1,000. Like the Dow Jones, higher scores suggest positive developments — for example, fewer people looking for work or requiring the services that H&SS provides. Falling numbers suggest increasing need for H&SS's services.

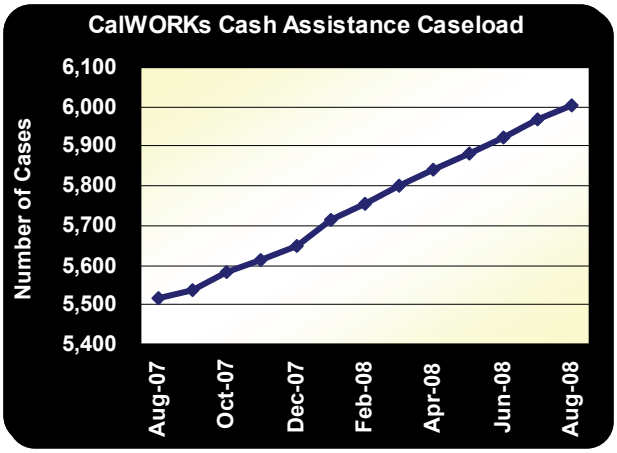
Through the first eight months of 2008, the **Index has continued its generally slow and steady decline**. The number of unemployed has risen and the number of Solano County residents receiving services through H&SS has generally continued to grow.

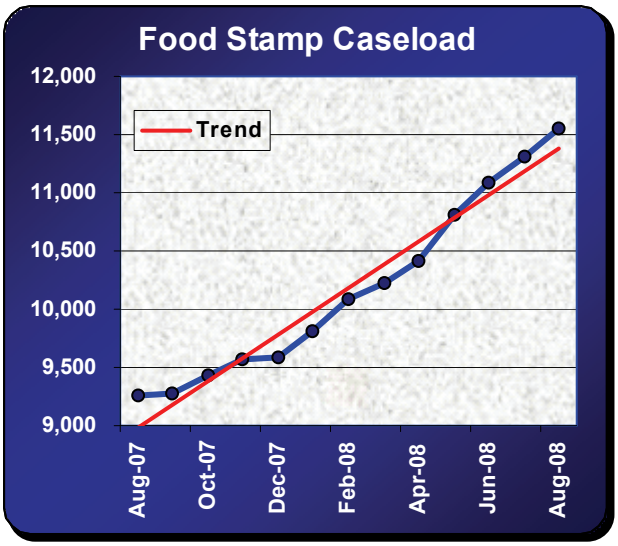
EMPLOYMENT & ELIGIBILITY SERVICES

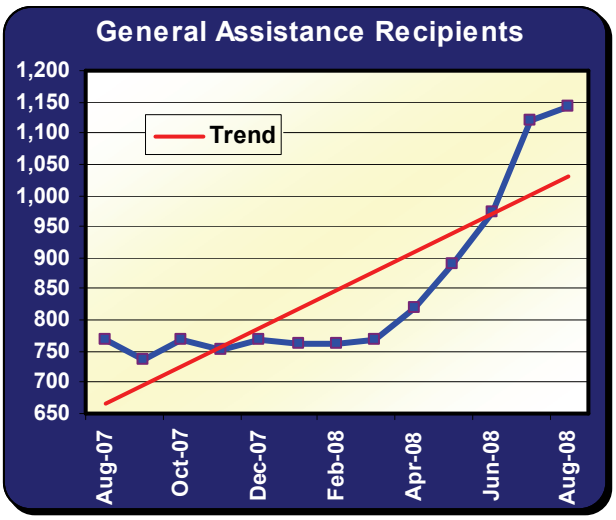
Indicator	June	July	August
CalWORKs Cash Assistance Caseload	5,922	5,969	6,005
New CalWORKs Applications & Restoration Requests	477	563	586
Food Stamp Caseload	11,093	11,316	11,552
General Relief Recipients	974	1,119	1,142

- Caseloads for all of the principal public assistance programs have continued to rise.
- Between August 2007 and August 2008, the number of persons receiving General Assistance increased nearly 50 percent. During the same period, the food stamp caseload count was up by 19.1 percent. CalWORKs rolls increased by a more modest 8.4 percent.
- General Assistance caseloads track local economic conditions most closely because of the emergency nature of the program. The food stamp program — which provides supplemental income support — also tends to grow more rapidly during downturns in the economy.
- About 1 of every 17 County residents rely on food stamps.









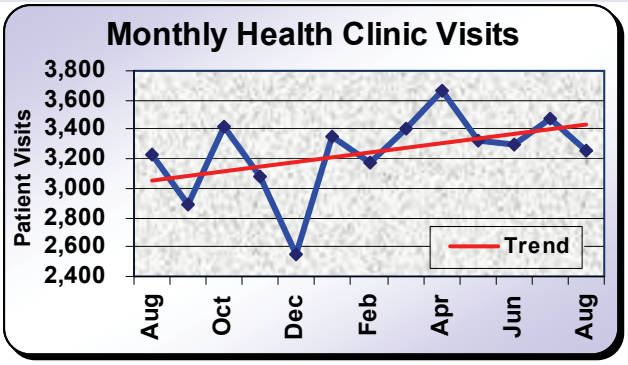
H&SS INDICATORS is produced every other month by the Planning, Research and Quality Management Division of the Solano County Health & Social Services Department, 275 Beck Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

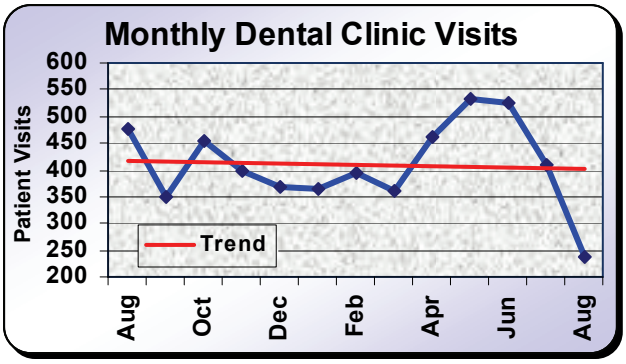
PUBLIC HEALTH

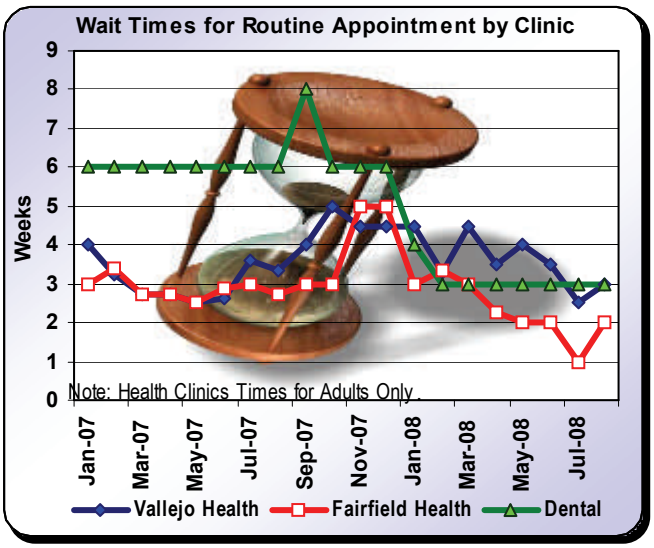
- The number of health clinic visits has been trending up over the past year. Dental visits declined sharply in August but the decrease was due to the fact that the dentist was away for half of the month for military training.
- Wait times for a routine appointment have fallen in recent months. The County's target is 2 weeks.
- The number of reported communicable diseases rose in August. Much of the rise was due to an increase in Hepatitis C cases at the Vacaville state prisons.

Indicator	June	July	August
Average Wait Time for Routine Appointment Fairfield Clinic (Adults)	2 weeks	1 week	2 weeks
Average Wait Time for Routine Appointment Vallejo Clinic (Adults)	3.5 weeks	2.5 weeks	3 weeks
Medical Clinic Visits	3,302	3,480	3,255
Dental Clinic Visits	526	408	239
Reported Communicable Disease Cases	349	327	376
WIC[1] Clients	10,236	10,234	10,192

1. Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children.



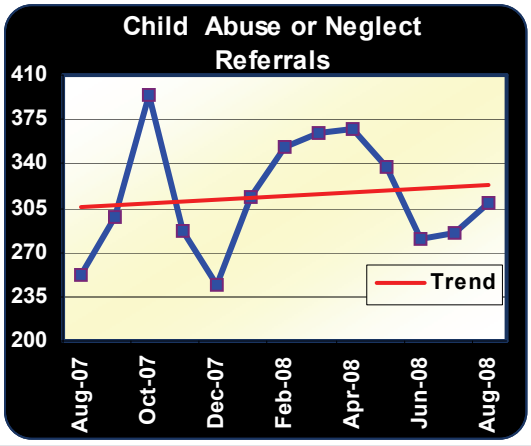




CHILD WELFARE

Indicator	June	July	August
Child Abuse or Neglect Referrals	281	286	309
Children in Supervised Foster Care[1]	399	396	382

[1] Children in placement for 17 of the last 22 months (15 months plus a 60 day grace period).

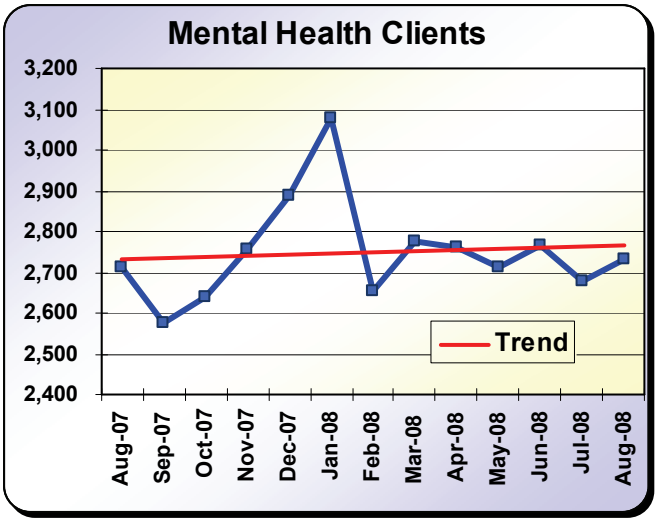


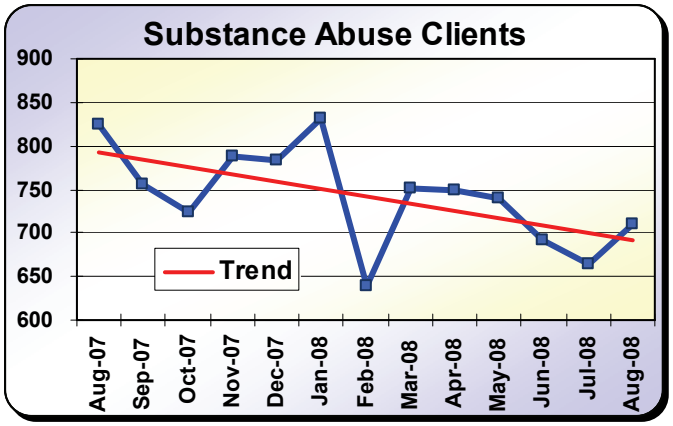
- The number of referrals for child abuse or neglect has trended upward slightly over the past year . The number of referrals in August 2008 was 22.6 percent higher than for the previous August.
- The number of children in supervised foster has continued to decline. Among the reasons: More child victims of abuse and neglect are receiving intensive services without experiencing the trauma of being removed from their homes.
- CWS has significantly decreased the number of neglected children who have been placed into foster care by providing their families with two new services, Voluntary Family Maintenance Services (VFM) and Team Decision-Making Meetings (TDM). VFM provides willing families with intensive supportive services to assist them in correcting the problems that have led to their children's neglect, without removing the children from the home. TDM brings the family, their support network, and community resources together to address safety concerns and develop the best plan for a child. As a result, in 2008, the number of children newly placed into foster care was 56 as compared to 93 for the same period of time in 2007 (January through August).

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

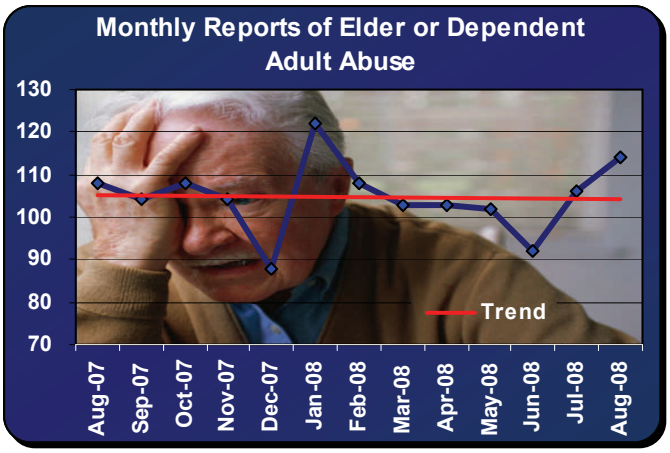
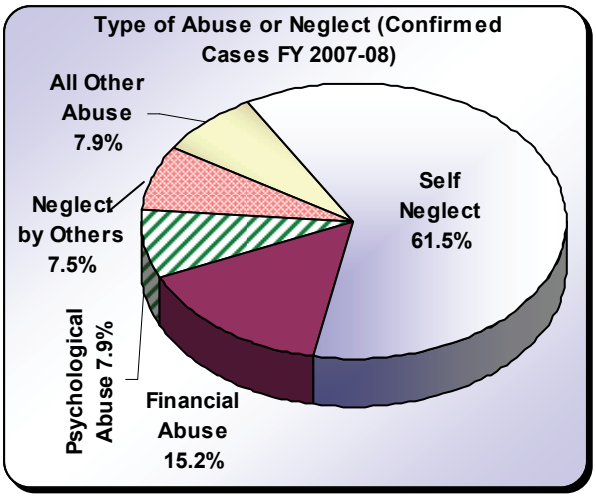
Indicator	June	July	August
Mental Health Clients	2,768	2,679	2,733
Substance Abuse Clients	692	665	711

- After rising steadily between September 2007 and January 2008, the number of Mental Health clients has declined and returned to a level consistent with the trend during most of the previous year. State budget problems are among the reasons for the drop off.
- Substance Abuse client counts have trended down over the past year. The client count was down 13.7% in August 2008 from the previous year.





OLDER & DISABLED ADULTS

Indicator	June	July	August
Elder or Dependent Adult Abuse Reports	92	106	114
Elder or Dependent Adult Abuse Confirmed	32	40	23
In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Authorized Cases	2,796	2,800	2,813

- The number of authorized IHSS cases in August 2008 was up 7.1 percent from the previous August.
- The number of reports of elder or dependent adult abuse or neglect was fairly constant over the past 12 months but did show a slight increase in July and August.
- Self-neglect is the most common type of confirmed report followed by financial abuse.