

Overview of Louisiana's Foster Care Geographical Information System

Presented By Terry Skaggs
Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services
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How GIS Can Be Utilized to Improve the Practices of Child
Welfare Operations, Practices, and Analytical Research

2011 National Child Welfare Evaluation Summit

GIS History in DCFS

- ❖ 2001 Began with geographical mapping functionality to spatially plot location of TANF clients
- ❖ 2003 Added plotting of food stamp recipient location, stores and EBT transactions.
- ❖ 2005 Following Hurricane Katrina, DCFS dramatically expanded use of geographic data to better assess the displacement of people, service providers and workers.
- ❖ 2007 Extended to provide front-line child welfare staff and supervisors visual cues as to client location in context of family, placement, school and service providers.
- ❖ 2008 Received Recognition Award for Excellence in Human Services by APHSA IT Solutions Management for Human Services (ISM)

Reported Problems

- ❖ Finding most appropriate foster home in a timely manner was hit or miss
- ❖ Maintaining accurate manual paper lists of available resources was burdensome
- ❖ The distances between child and biological family members were lengthening
- ❖ Issues with transportation to resources were constant
- ❖ Children were too frequently placed in settings requiring school changes.

Requested Solution

- ❖ Web accessible, intuitively searchable
- ❖ Geographically referenced
- ❖ Online Map of clients and resources

Louisiana's GIS Characteristics

- ✦ Available statewide to 1,800 child welfare field staff since 2007
- ✦ Includes over 18,000 child welfare clients such as foster children, adoptive children and their parents
- ✦ Includes over 5000 child welfare related providers such as foster parents, adoptive parents, child care centers and therapy resources
- ✦ Includes both custom-added and commercially available points of interests such as schools, hospitals, courts and landmarks
- ✦ Synchronized with child welfare information system data daily
- ✦ Supported by a staff of four full time IT developers and occasional use of contractors



Technical Characteristics

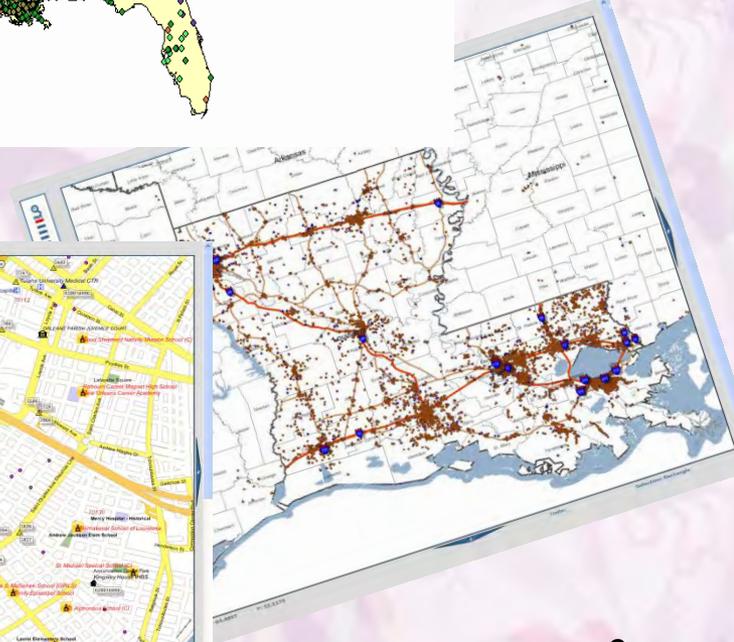
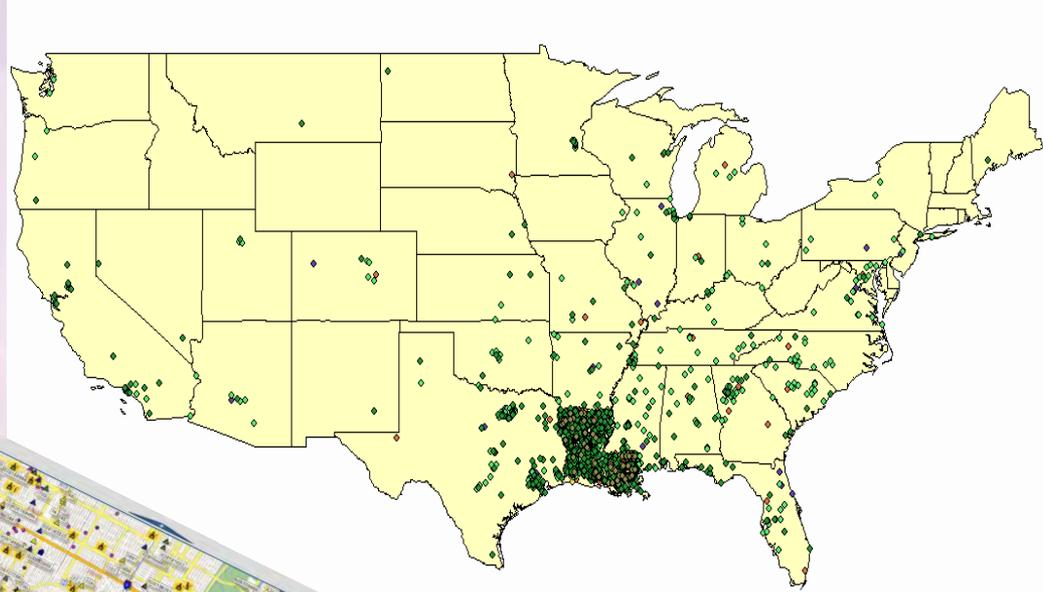
WebFOCUS is a comprehensive enterprise business intelligence platform whose architecture, integration and simplicity makes data available, accessible, manipulative and meaningful. WebFOCUS includes:

- ✦ an integrated development environment
- ✦ ad hoc and self-service reporting
- ✦ chart generation features
- ✦ OLAP (On Line Analytical Processing)
- ✦ report distribution capabilities and
- ✦ multiple output formats including MS Excel, Adobe PDF, XML, MS PowerPoint, & HTML.

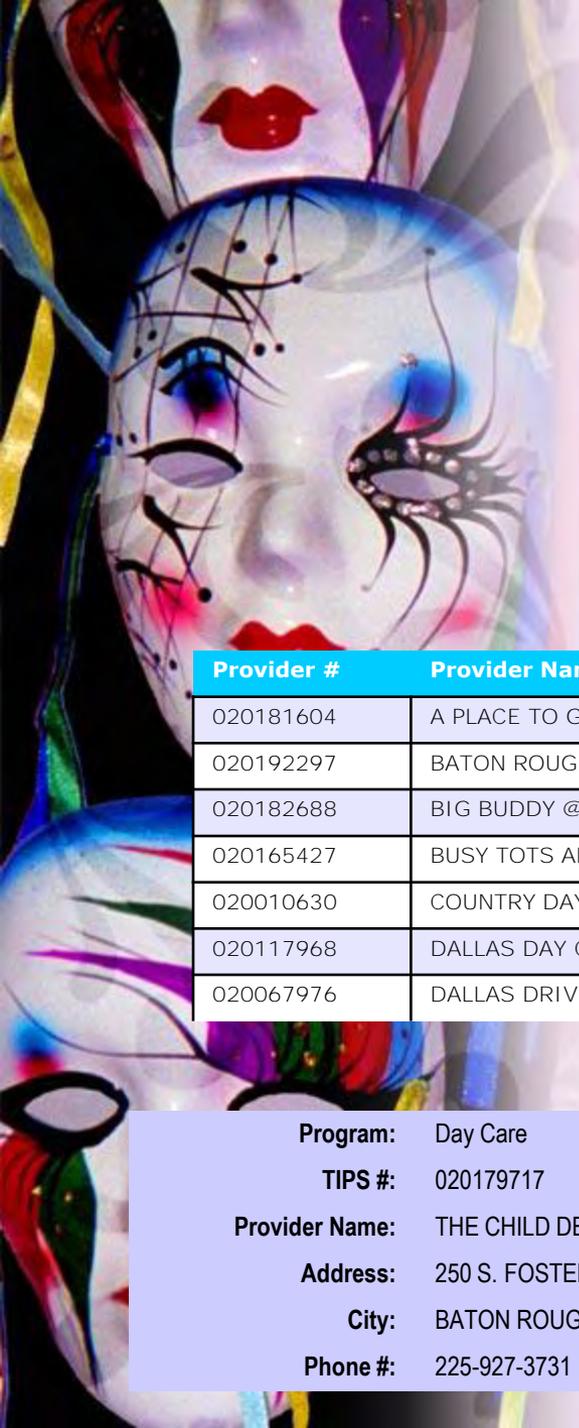
ESRI ArcGIS Product Suite is a mapping solution that distributes maps, models and tools which allows users control over spatial data and its visualization.

Tele Atlas GDT Matchmaker, American Digital Cartography and Synergos are geo-coding products that matches addresses to points on a map and provides a pre-loaded set of points of interests and census-type data.

Views and Reports



One Example: Mapping results for Day Care Providers in zip code 70806 serving children 0 to 12.





Department of
Children & Family Services
Building a Stronger Louisiana

Provider Search Form

Name:

Address:

City: ALL

Parish: EAST BATON ROUGE

Region: ALL

Zip Code: 70806

Search Criteria

Genders served by Provider: Male Female

Min Age: Male Female

Max Age: Male Female

Program: DC

Report Format: HTML

Number
 Name
 Program

Address
 City
 Parish

State
 Zip Code
 Male

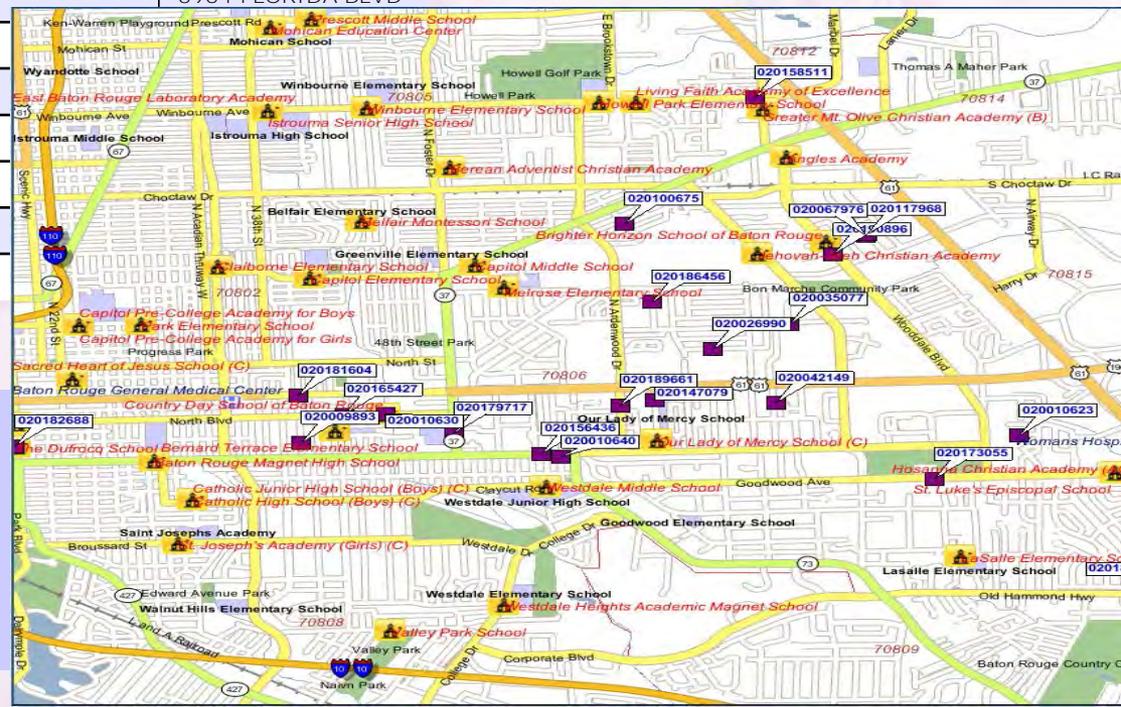
Female
 Min Age Male
 Max Age Male

Race Served
 Min Age Female
 Max Age Female

Availability
 Approved Capacity
 Current Occupancy

Include Hyperlinks

Provider #	Provider Name	Address
020181604	A PLACE TO GROW CDC LLC	3954 FLORIDA BLVD
020192297	BATON ROUGE CHILD DEVELOPM	
020182688	BIG BUDDY @ THE DUFROCC SC	
020165427	BUSY TOTS AND TODDLERS	
020010630	COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL OF B.R.	
020117968	DALLAS DAY CARE CENTER # II	
020067976	DALLAS DRIVE DAYCARE & LC	



Program: Day Care

TIPS #: 020179717

Provider Name: THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT COOP

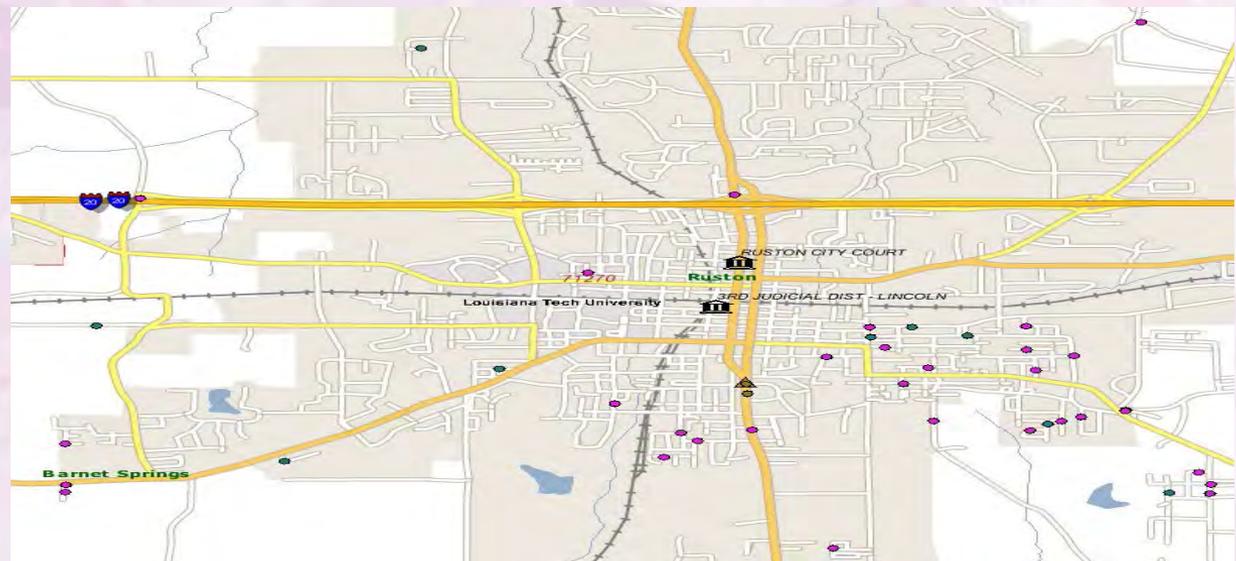
Address: 250 S. FOSTER DR.

City: BATON ROUGE

Phone #: 225-927-3731

Views and Reports

- ✦ Reports are responsive to the filters created by user selections and the generated results can be displayed in lists or on maps.
- ✦ The details of map data can be depicted in a report by specifying the area on the map to see the details in a list form.
- ✦ Mapping of data reveals trends. For example, below is map of location of families (pink dot) from whom children were removed and the location of the child in foster care (green dot) or residential care (orange triangle).



Benefits and Results

Based on mapping of clients, providers, families and resource location the following benefits have been realized:

- ❁ Front-line staff and managers have the visual capability of viewing client location as well as potential placement of service provider locations in their area to meet the needs of a child placed in foster care
- ❁ Home Development recruiters use GIS to target recruitment of foster home efforts in areas where needed
- ❁ Providing more efficient planning of travel and trips by staff in the field
- ❁ Better planning and execution of Hurricane evacuations maximizes the safety of children and minimizes the confusion and disruptions caused by disasters.

Benefits and Results

Based on mapping of clients, providers, families and resource location the following benefits have been realized:

- ❖ Readily locating foster homes, group homes, day care, medical facilities, mental health services, community resources and placement resources for a child near their current residence
- ❖ Meeting family and child's needs by keeping the child in the same school thus reducing number of transitions child must encounter
- ❖ Ability for all staff to generate ad hoc reports across a number of factors and see data displayed graphically
- ❖ Providing Program Staff with the tools and census-type data to explore, analyze and visualize through spatial and thematic mapping over a million DCFS clients and three hundred thousand providers

Contact Information

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