

DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES UPDATE

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM OVERSIGHT
SECRETARY LAURA HOWARD | 3.31.2023

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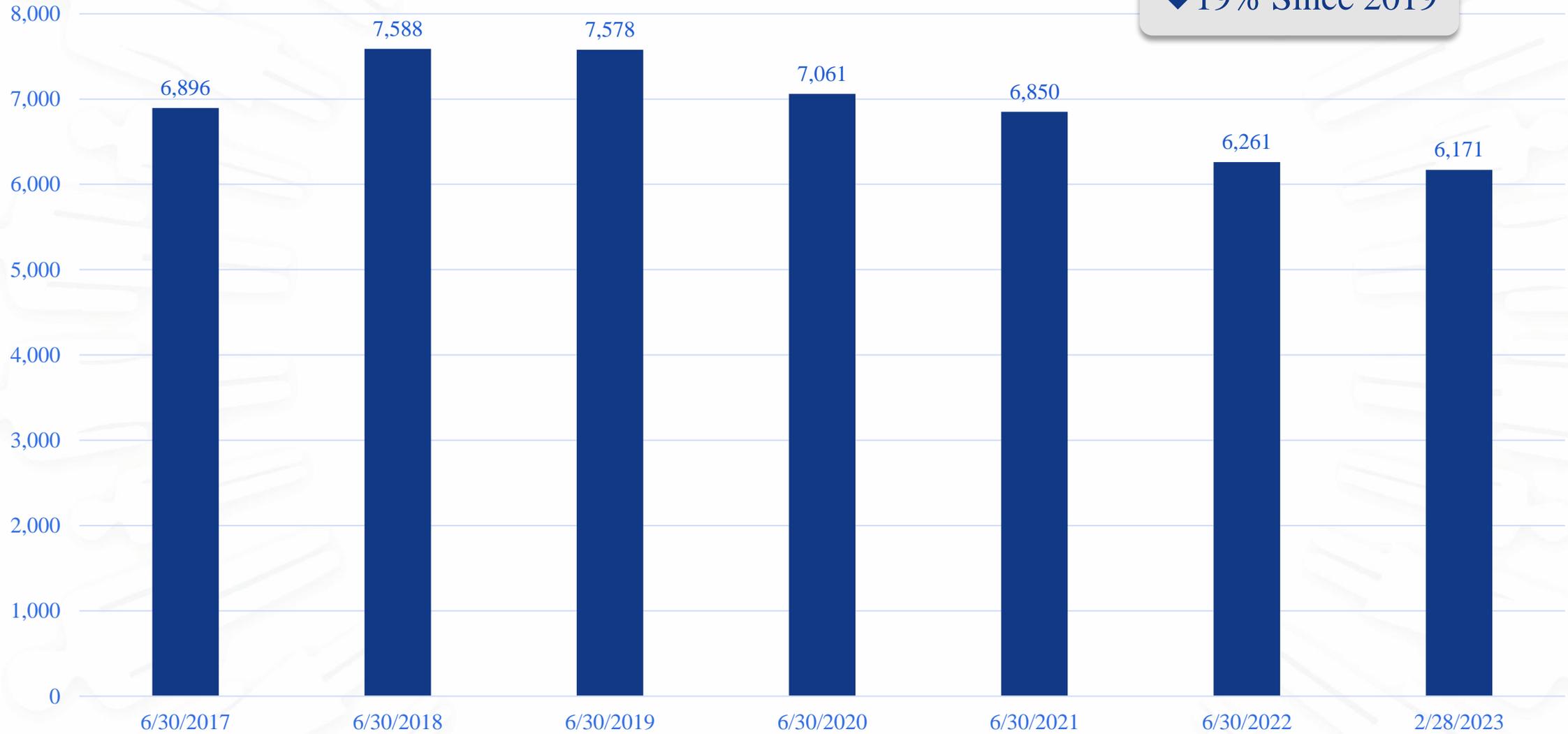
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BY THE NUMBERS

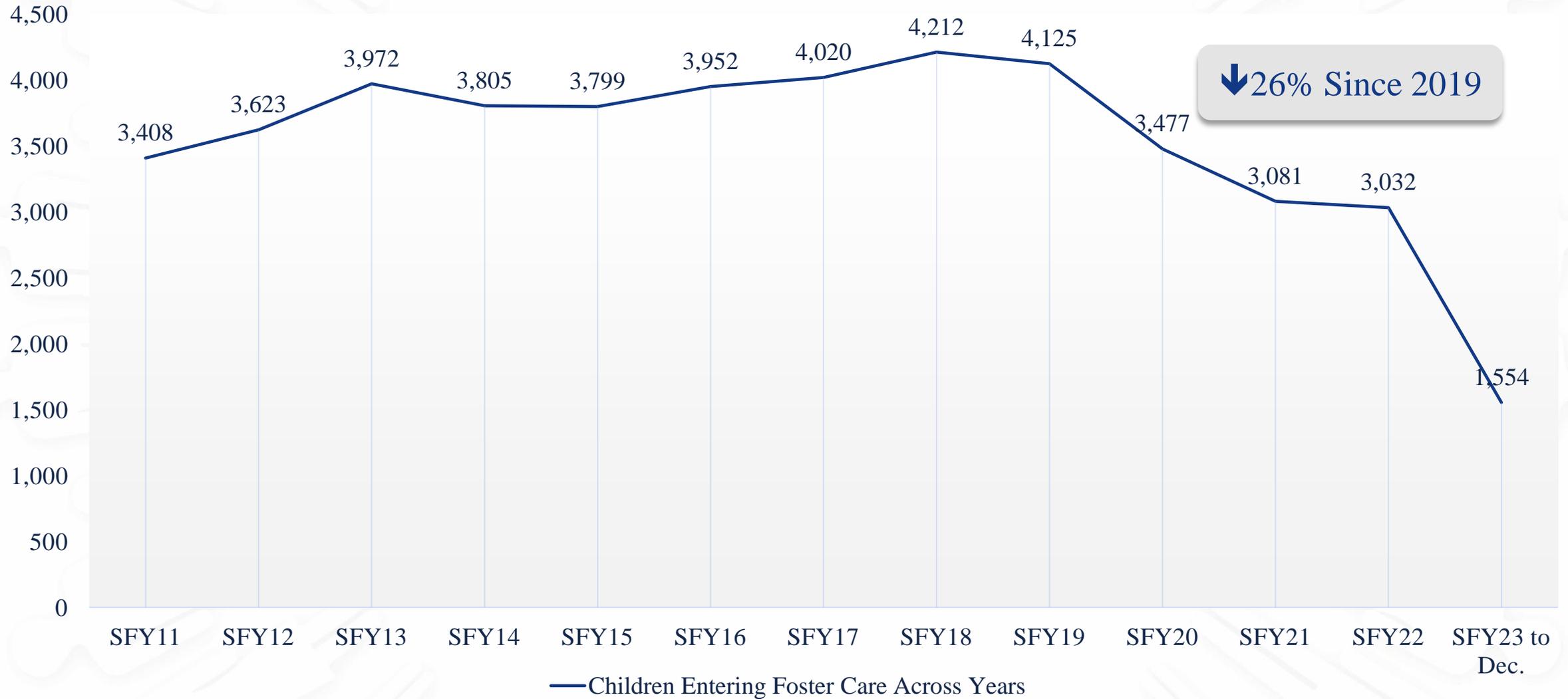
NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

↓ 19% Since 2019

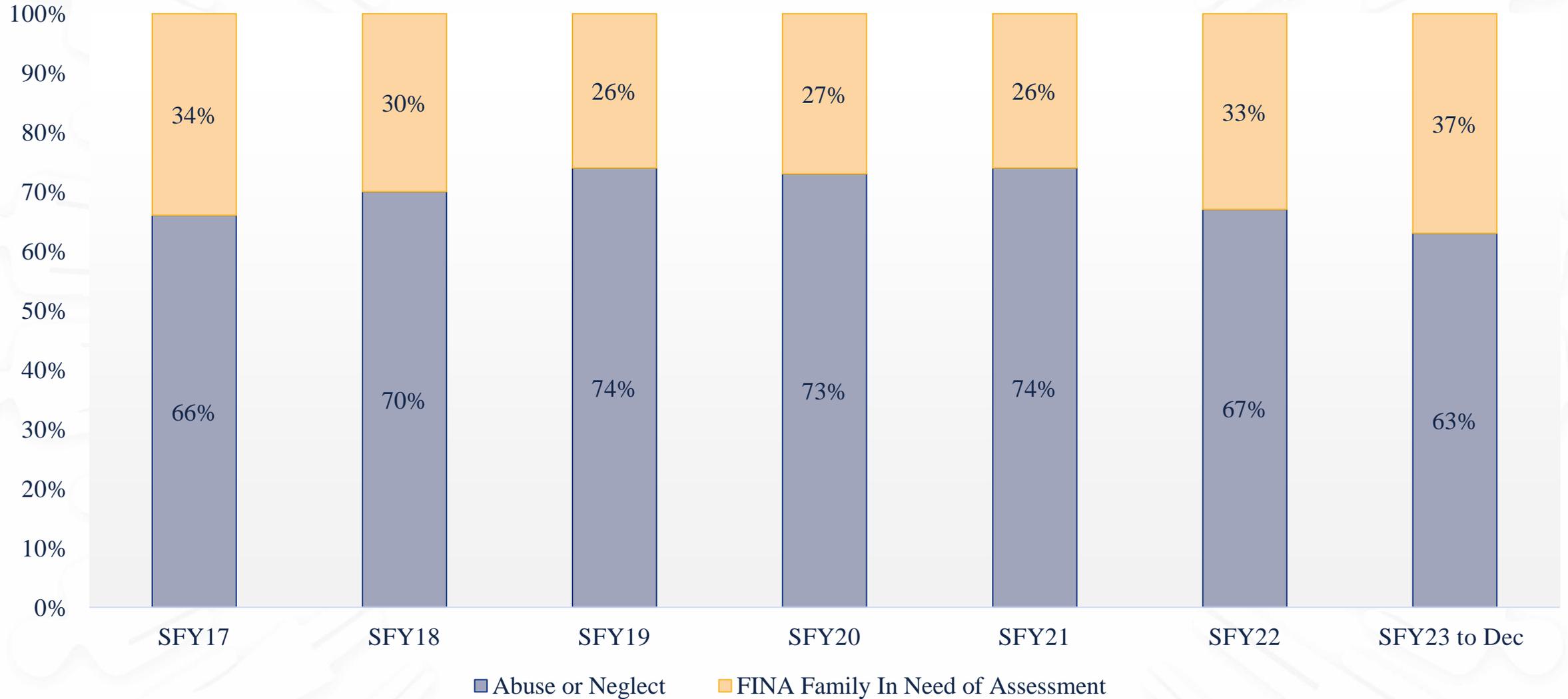


■ Number of Children In Foster Care

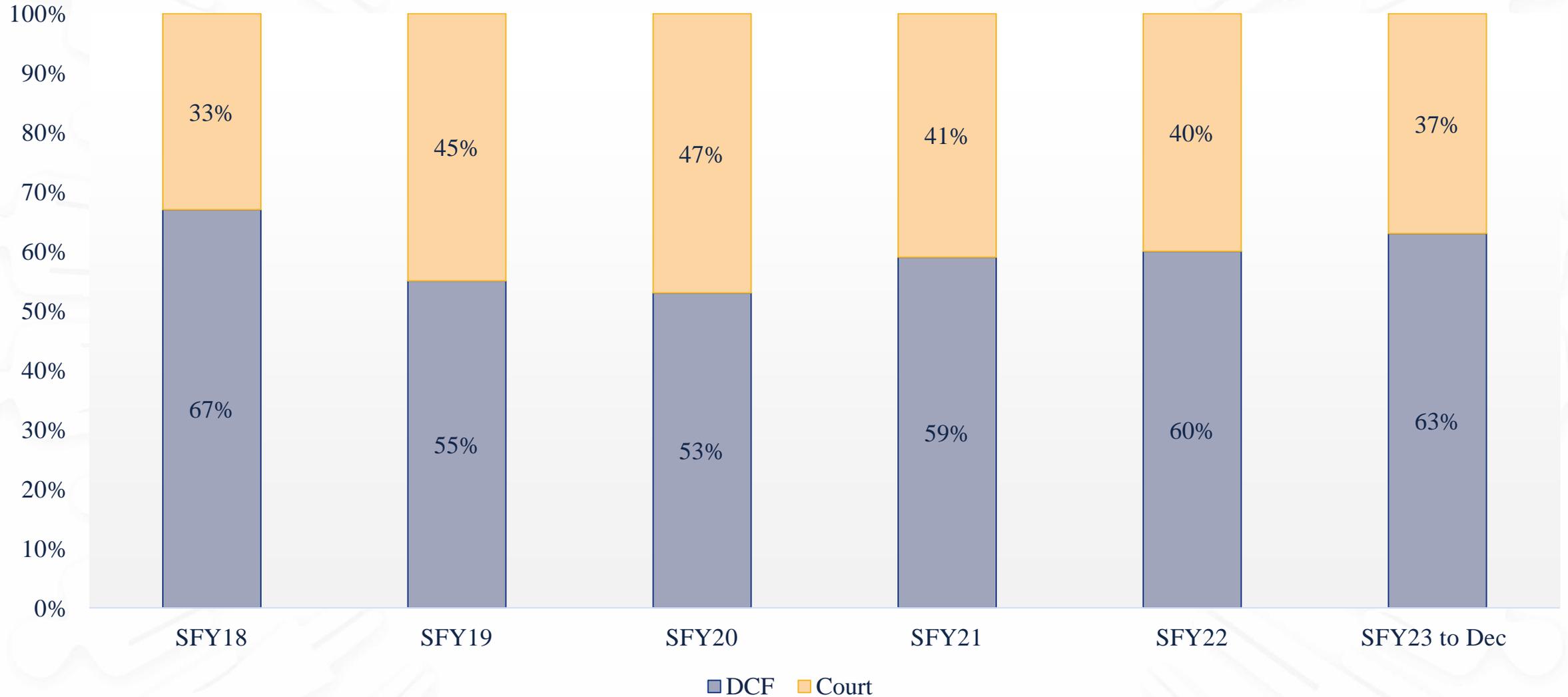
CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE ACROSS YEARS



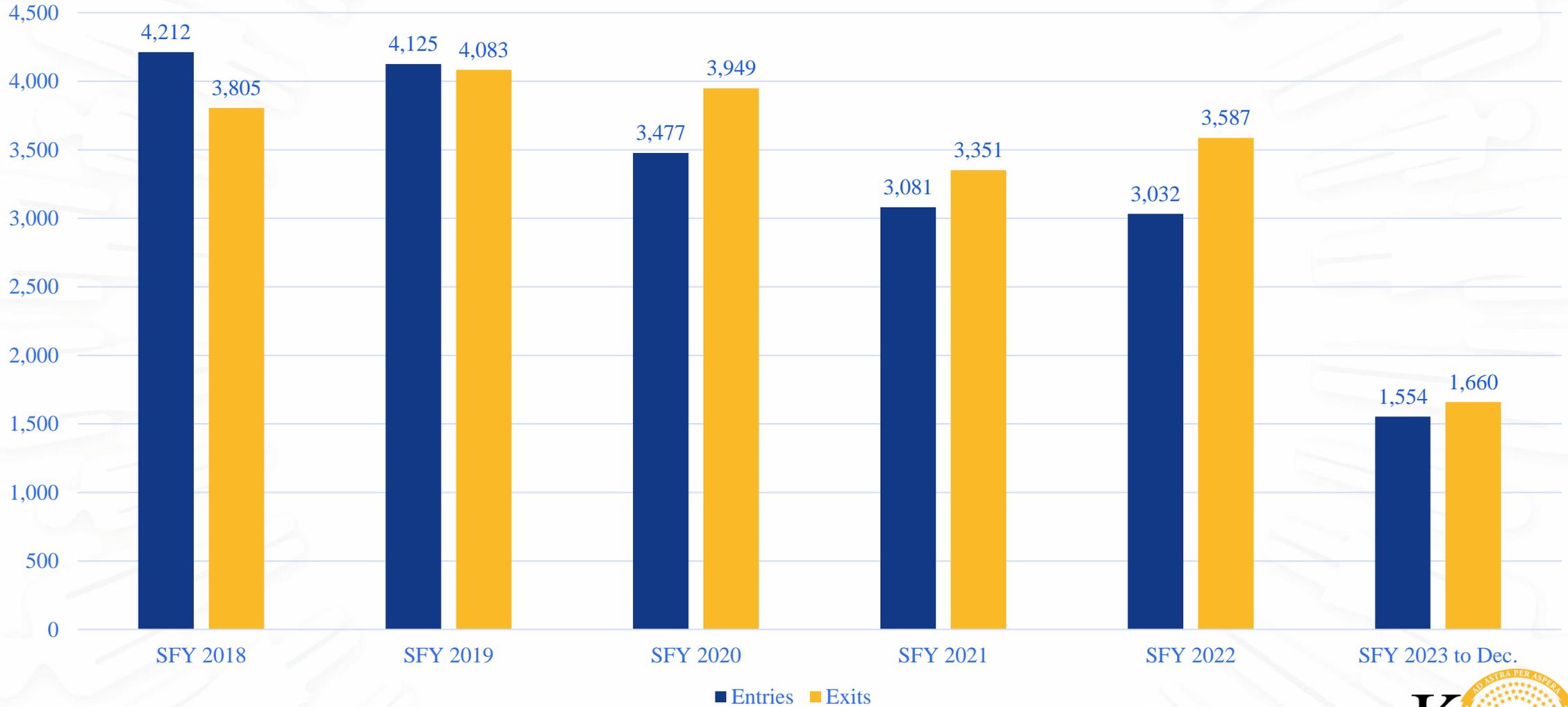
STATEWIDE CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE PRIMARY REMOVAL REASON



STATEWIDE CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE REQUESTOR SOURCE



Children Entering & Exiting Foster Care Across Years



PREVENTION

ASSESSMENT & PREVENTION CONVERSATION TOOLS & OPPORTUNITY

HOW IOWA JUDGES & 4 QUESTIONS ARE KEEPING FAMILIES SAFE & TOGETHER

- Iowa judges presented in the Nov. Kansas Practice Model Legal and Social Connection series “How Iowa Judges & 4 Questions are Keeping Families Safe & Together” in Nov. 2022.
- DCF regions are continuing the conversation locally about 4 important questions to ask the families and providers before a child has a need to enter foster care.
- Asking these 4 questions can help preserve the safety AND relationship of kids with their families. **Families** create **opportunities** which are supported by **unique relationships** (F.O.U.R)



Before removing a child from a home, have you asked:



1. What can we do to remove the **danger** instead of the child?



3. Can the caregiver and the child go **live with a relative** or **family friend**?



2. Can someone the child or family knows **move into the home** to remove the danger?



4. Could the child **move temporarily** to live with a relative or family friend?

Questions sourced from: *4 Questions, 7 Judges*, an Iowa-based Judicial Pilot Program. Read more in: Tabor, M., 2020. Transformation in Child Welfare. *The Iowa Lawyer*, 80 N5(June 2020), pp.10-12.

WHAT HAPPENED IN IOWA?



A legislative change that requires to order a removal, the court is **required to find by “substantial evidence”** the need for removal outweighs the potential harm removal would cause the child



A legislative change that requires a judge to seek: “the **least restrictive care** for the child with a preference for placement with a child’s family or a fictive kin.”



A pilot project resulted in a **50% reduction** of children coming into care



An increase in the initial placement with **family and relatives**

HOW WILL COMMUNITIES BEGIN TO SEE THE 4 QUESTIONS?

- DCF practitioners asking these questions when engaging with families
- Family engagement – in TDMs and Safety discussions
- DCF Court Recommendations
- DCF Grantees
- Legal Trainings – past and future
- Court engagement
- Court partner discussions
- Community engagement

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS (FRC)

PRIMARY PREVENTION AND THRIVING FAMILIES

- July 2021 DCF contracted with KCSL to expand current and support new FRCs in gaining certification from National Family Support Network.
- What are FRCs:
 - Community based or school-based hub of support and services for families
 - Support families with children of all ages to be strong, healthy and successful
 - Reduce likelihood of child abuse and neglect
- DCF is exploring KS FRC evaluation plan
- National FRC Outcomes
 - Significantly lower rate of child abuse investigations
 - 65% reduced rate of substantiated child abuse cases
 - 73% reduction in the number of children in foster care
 - Improves in children's educational success
 - Gains in family self-sufficiency
 - \$4.93 social return on investment for every dollar invested

UPDATE: FRC GRANTS

10 FRC Providers Announced



AGENCY	COUNTIES SERVED	AWARD AMOUNT
Community Children’s Center	Douglas County	\$208,300
Kansas Family Advisory Network SE	Allen, Bourbon, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Crawford, Labette, Linn, Montgomery, Neosho, Osage, and Wilson Counties	\$208,300
Kansas Family Advisory Network SW	Barton, Comanche, Edwards, Finney, Ford, Gray, Greeley, Harvey, Lyon, Marion, McPherson, Meade, Pawnee, Reno, Rice, Seward, and Stafford Counties	\$208,300
Kansas Children’s Service League	Sedgwick County	\$208,333
KU Project Eagle	Wyandotte County	\$208,095
Live Well NWKS	Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Norton, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Graham, Wallace, Logan, Gove, and Trego Counties	\$208,300
Pony Express	Marshall and Washington Counties	\$197,443
Turner USD 202	Wyandotte County; USD 202	\$84,000
Urban League of Kansas	67214 zip code in Sedgwick County	\$124,999
USD 252 Lyon Co.	Lyon County communities of Neosho Rapids, Harford and Olpe	\$106,142
		Total awarded: \$1,762,212

UPDATE: FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES & MEDICAID

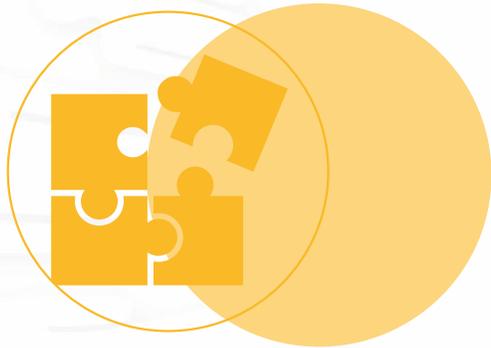
2023



- Working in 2023 with KDHE to have **Children's Behavioral Interventionist** established as Medicaid covered service for an in-home support to parents and caregivers of children manage high and emotional crisis needs.
- **Family Preservation Services (FPS)** Request for Proposal will be released May-June 2023 for award effective 7/1/24.
 - Available to families in all 105 counties
 - Proposals may be for one or more of the 6 DCF regions
 - Proposals may include emerging, promising and/or evidence based approaches to maintain children at home

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION ACT

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT (FFPSA)



Created reimbursement pathway for federal funds to provide services to keep children safely with their families.



When foster care is needed, allows federal reimbursement for care in family-based settings and certain residential treatment programs.

UPDATE: FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION GRANTS



SFY 2024 FFPSA PROVIDERS ANNOUNCED

- Total funding is \$20M from all fund sources (\$12M SGF) with the Governor's 2022 enhancement of \$7M for expansion & legislative appropriations of \$1.37M
- 15 programs through 12 providers totaling begin 7/1/23
- Expands statewide an intensive mental health program called Multisystemic Therapy.
- Funds new substance use disorder services.

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION GRANTS



PARENT SKILL BUILDING AND KINSHIP NAVIGATION GRANTEEES

Parent Skill Buidling Agency	Evidence-Based Program	FY 2024 Award
Child Advocacy and Parenting Services, Inc.	Family Mentoring	\$414,353.92
Great Circle (acquired by KVC in 2023)	Healthy Families America (HFA)	\$395,475
Kansas Children's Service League	Healthy Families America (HFA)	\$1,555,000
FosterAdopt Connect	Fostering Prevention	\$543,134
Kansas Parents as Teachers Association	Parents as Teachers Bright Futures Program	\$1,000,000
Saint Francis Ministries	Family-Centered Treatment	\$4,798,000
Kinship Navigation Agency	Evidence-Based Program	FY 2024
Kansas Legal Services	Kids 2 Kin	\$324,158

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION GRANTS



SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER, MENTAL HEALTH & PRIMARY PREVENTION GRANTEES

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER AGENCY	EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM	FY 2024
DCCCA	Substance Treatment and Recovery Teams (START)	\$921,606
Kansas Children's Service League	Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP)	\$310,344.98
KVC	Strengthening Families	\$200,000
Saint Francis Ministries	Seeking Safety	\$700,000

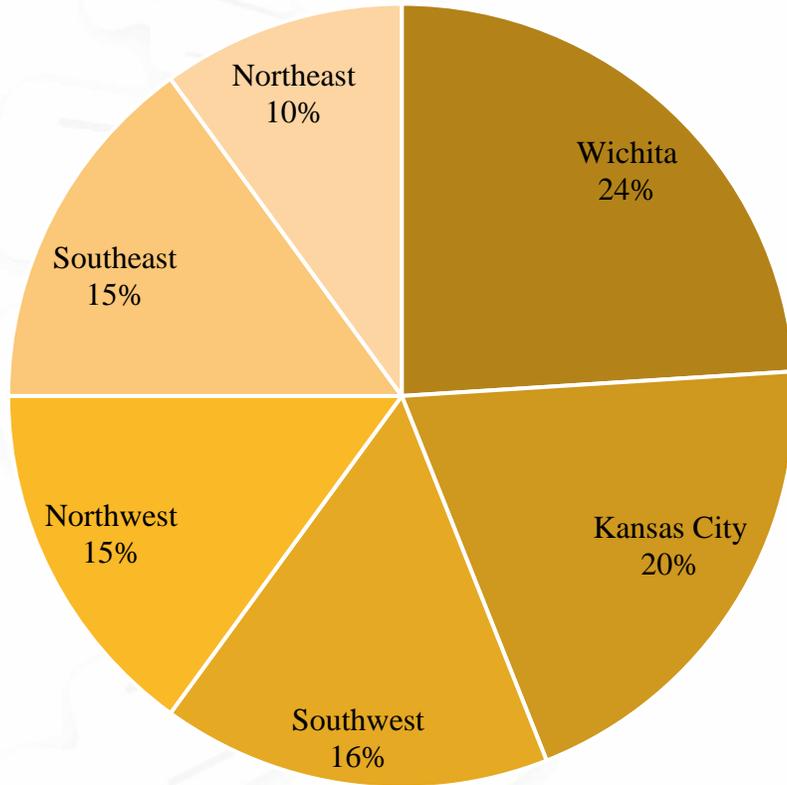
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE AGENCY	EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM	FY 2024
Community Solutions, Inc.	Multisystemic Therapy (MST)	\$6,409,472
TFI Family Services	Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)	\$1,150,000

OTHER PRIMARY PREVENTION	PROGRAM	FY2024
Kansas Legal Services	Parent Advocate Program	\$1,094,577
Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office	Community Support Specialist	\$85,359

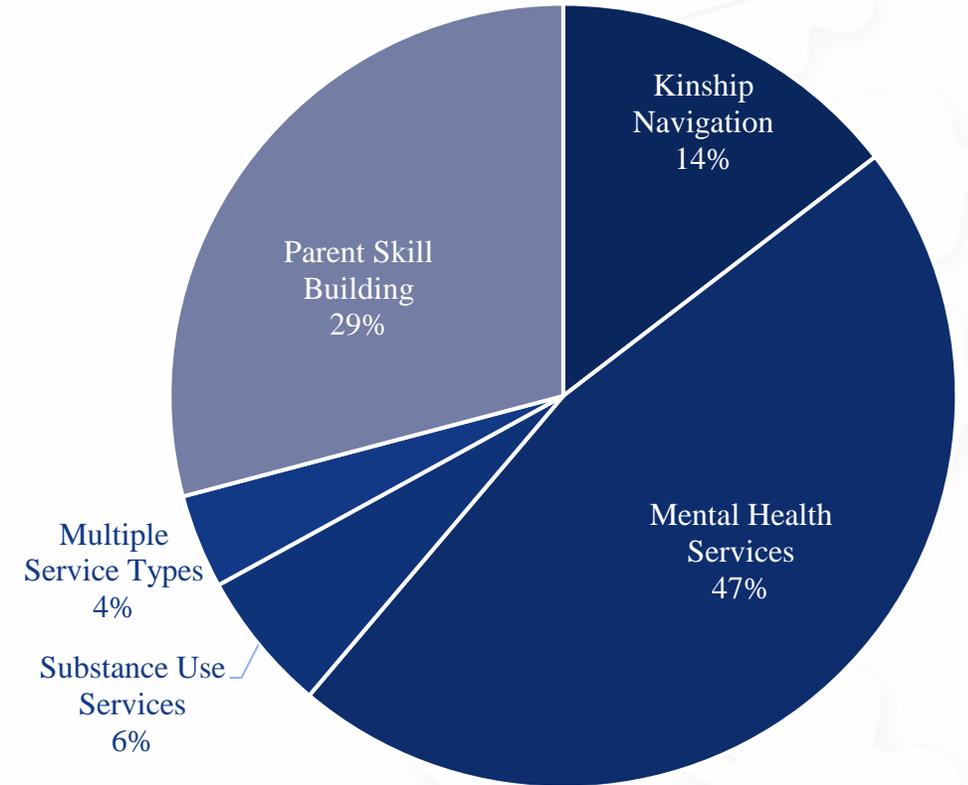
FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES

ACTIVITY: OCTOBER 2019 – DECEMBER 2022

Referrals by Region

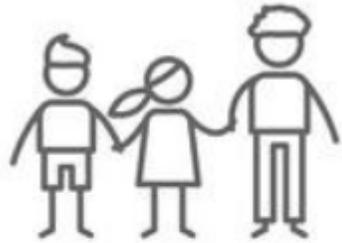


Referrals by Service Type



FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES

OUTCOMES: OCTOBER 2019 – DECEMBER 2022



FAMILY FIRST
REFERRALS
3,645 Referrals

88% of target children and youth who have reached 12 months from the time-of-service referral remained together at home without need for foster care

74% of families referred to Family First were engaged timely in services (within 2 days)

46% of cases serviced and closed had successfully completed the referred service

5% of target children and youth served have been placed in foster care during an open Family First case

FOSTER CARE

FOSTER CARE CASE MANAGEMENT

GRANT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Release date in May 2023 with an effective date of 7/1/24

SFY23 is final
regular year of
FC grant with
a 1 year
renewal to
6/30/24

Jan - April,
DCF draft
RFP

Aug, 2023
proposal
due

Dec. 2023
award new
contracts

July 1,
2024 new
grants
begin

8/22 to 1/23,
performance based
contracts
community
meetings and
listening sessions

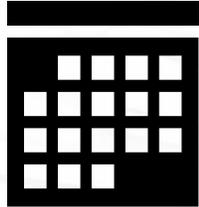
May, 2023
Dept of
Admin
Release
RFP

Aug-Nov
2023 review
w
teams and
negotiate

Jan-Jun
2024,
transition
period as
needed.

FOSTER CARE CASE MANAGEMENT

8 RFP LISTENING SESSIONS



<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>ATTENDEES</u>	<u>Format</u>
January 17	1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	KC Community Partners	Hybrid
January 19	1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Congregate Care Providers	Online
January 19	4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	CMHCs	Online
January 20	10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Legal	Online
January 25	1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Tribal	Online
January 26	1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Wichita Community Partners	Hybrid
January 31	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Topeka Community Partners	Hybrid
January 31	1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	MCOs	Online

REDUCTION IN NEED FOR FOSTER CARE

SFY 23 UPDATE



Geary, Johnson, Saline, & Wyandotte counties are reducing the need for foster care.

- Between July and December 2022, Geary County reduced the need for foster care about 16% to less than 70 children. In 2019, there were over 100 children in care in Geary.
- Between July and December 2022, Johnson County reduced the need for foster care about 16% to just over 400 children.
- Saline County reduced the need for foster care 55% over the past 3 years to less than 100 children in care in Dec. 2022.
- Wyandotte County reduced the need for foster care 40% in the past 3 years to about 360 children in Dec. 2022.

The resulting reduction of our Foster Care numbers can be attributed to many factors and efforts that have impacted the ability to safely reduce our need for foster care. These factors are as follows and include but not limited to:

- Implementation of the Kansas Practice Model
- Community Partnerships
- Team Decision Making
- Front-line staff transparency and training
- Open communication with the judicial and county court systems
- Family First Prevention Services Act
- Truancy Review Process

PLACEMENT STABILITY

REDUCING YOUTH ABSENT FROM PLACEMENT



- Support this year from special response teams and additional efforts by the local SG county team have reduced the average number of youth in foster care who are experiencing a run episode.
 - In past years, there may have been over 25 youth on run daily in SG county and in recent months that number has been steady near or under 15 youth.
- Since December 2022, the average number of youth absent from placement daily is 59 with a few days experiencing 53 youth absent from placement.

PLACEMENT STABILITY

THERAPEUTIC FAMILY FOSTER HOMES



Therapeutic Family Foster Homes (TFFH) went live July 1, 2022. This new level of care has been created to enhance the continuum of care for children and youth with high acuity physical and mental health needs in out-of-home placement with the goal of meeting their safety and well-being needs in a family setting within their community. The TFFH level of care was developed for children who will benefit from this level of care which will include children and youth who are at risk for needing placement in congregate care or treatment PRTF.

Since going live, DCF has approved **12** Therapeutic Foster Home.

Program Success Indicators:

- 80% of children leave TFFH to a family-based placement within 9 months of beginning program placement start date.
- 90% of children will not experience a move to DCF group care within 180 days after TFFH placement ends.

PLACEMENT STABILITY

PREVENTING FAILURE TO PLACE



Definition: A child or youth is considered to have experienced a failure to place (temporarily housed or maintained overnight at a case management provider office) when that child has arrived at a case management agency office before 12:00 a.m. midnight of one day and there is failure to place the child in an appropriate placement before 6 a.m. of the following calendar day absent extraordinary circumstances

- No placement is located; or
- Placement located, but youth declines the placement

Efforts to Eliminate instances:

- Added 1 full time recruiter to each CPA for foster parent recruitment.
- Created the option to join the prevention network for failure to place
 - Grants cover costs of stand by services of an available bed
 - Incentive grants for every month when their catchment area has zero (0) failure to place instances

PLACEMENT STABILITY

RESULTS: FAILURE TO PLACE PREVENTION NETWORK



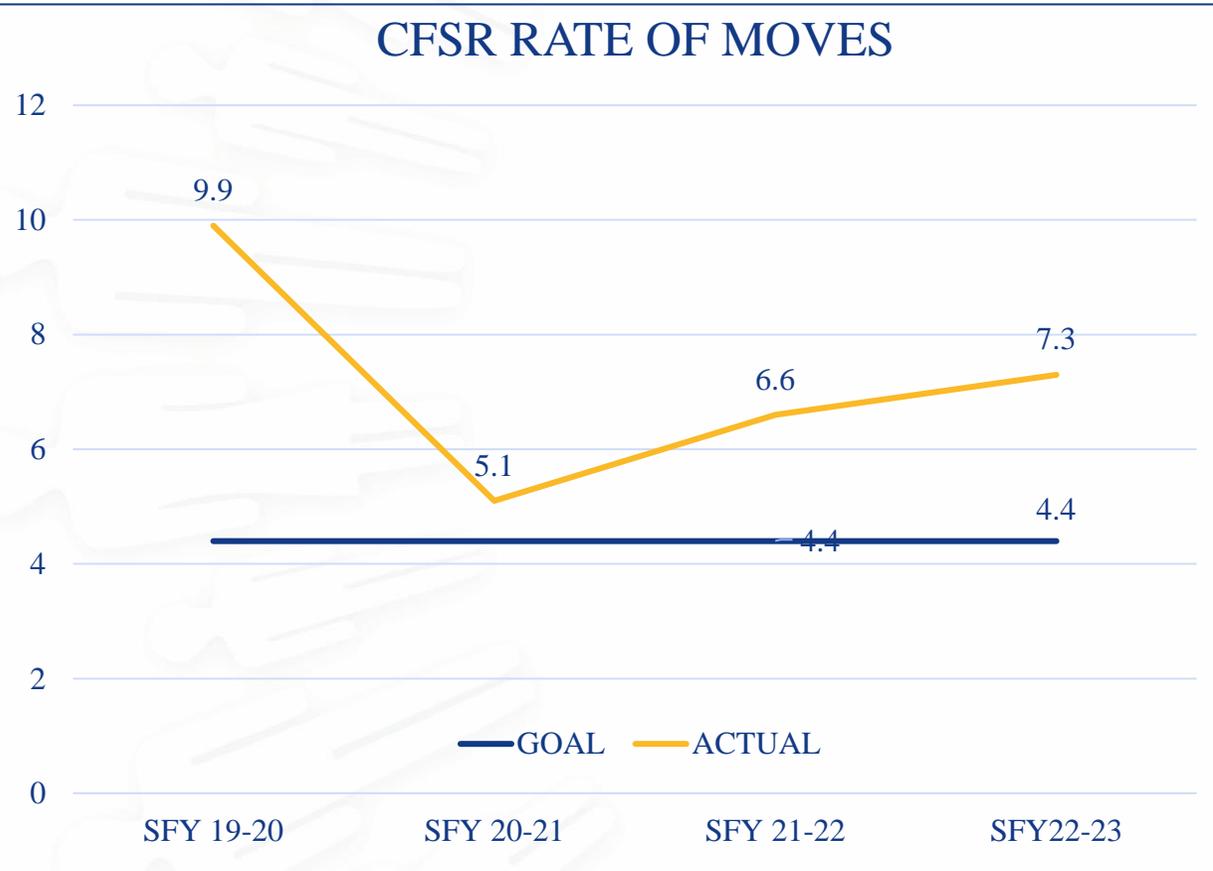
- Failure to Place instances have reduced about 50% since October 2022
- Since October 2022
 - 82 youth have been placed in a reserved stand-by bed (93 stand by bed uses) to avoid a failure to place
 - In network: 24 family foster home placement beds and 12 facility placement beds
 - 42 failure to place instances since October 1, 2022 across 28 youth.
 - 42 instances is about half the number of instances for the same time period of October 2021-March 2022 (n=86 instances)

PLACEMENT STABILITY

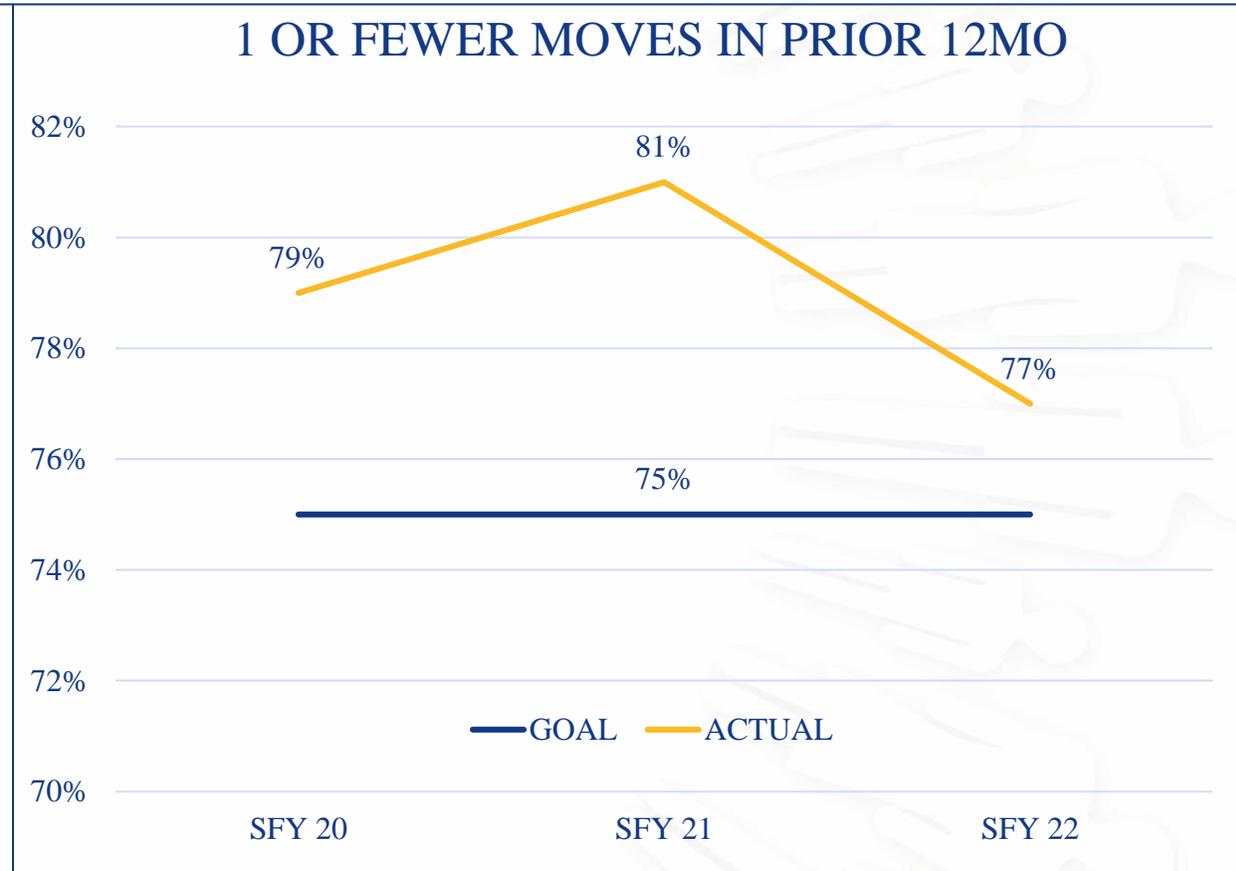
FOSTER CARE



CFSR RATE OF MOVES



1 OR FEWER MOVES IN PRIOR 12MO



CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE REVIEW

APRIL 17-21, 2023



- Federal review by Administration for Children and Families (ACF) every 4-5 years for all states for in home and out of home families receiving services
- Reviews outcomes, indicators and systemic factors through various tools and case reads
- Site selection
 - Sedgwick County & Crawford County
 - A collection of NE counties : Brown, Doniphan and Nemaha.
 - Sampling period is 4/1/22 to 9/30/22
- On-site review the week of April 17, 2023.
- State hears preliminary results on site and awaits final report to finalize any plans for improvement.

SOUL

SUPPORT - OPPORTUNITY - UNITY - LEGAL RELATIONSHIPS

This partnership with Annie E Casey Foundation (AECF) is based on a proposed permanency option for older youth.

Ideally, young Kansan, age 16 and older, could chose one or more caregivers to be their SOUL Family without severing their biological family ties.

Forming a SOUL Family creates a circle of caring adults who provide lifelong support, opportunity, unity and legal relationships for young people.

SOUL has 4 workgroups to collaborate on CINC code changes and implementation needed for Kansas. Proposed pathway of changes possibly ready for review summer 2023 and happy to engage committee at appropriate time.

Work groups include:

- Youth and young adult leaders with lived experiences,
- OJA, advocates, case management and other providers, DCF, and Annie E. Casey Foundation

2022-23 LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

COMPREHENSIVE CHILD WELFARE INFORMATION SYSTEM



STATUS UPDATE

- The new Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) will modernize state child welfare systems and develop interfaces between the various agencies serving the Child Welfare and Adult Protectives Services programs.
- Currently, there are five legacy systems of varying ages and capabilities supporting child welfare programs. Major components of the existing systems use aging mainframe technology, unsupported operating systems, and obsolete programming languages. This makes the present systems difficult and costly to maintain, modify, or improve.
- On 3/20/23, Department of Administration (D of A) released CCWIS Request for Proposals
 - The Independent Verification & Validation procurement is through Task Proposal Request (TPR) management through D of A
 - The Quality Assurance Consultant RFP for CCWIS closes 4/19/23
 - The CCWIS design RFP closes 5/17/23

PERFORMANCE-BASED CONTRACTS

LANGUAGE FROM SB 12; HB 2510



DCF collaborated with stakeholders through August community meetings in Hays, Topeka, Emporia, Wichita and Pittsburg to jointly develop a plan to implement performance-based contracts to provide “an array of evidence-based and prevention and early intervention services” for families who are at risk for “out of home placement or have a child in out-of-home placement and for children who are awaiting adoption”.

The implementation plan was provided to required committees and is located on the DCF webpage under legislative testimony [DCF PBC Implementation Plan 2023.pdf \(ks.gov\)](#)

In the community conversations, discussion tables visited by meeting participants helped gather information on evidence-based services, local capacity, service array and what needs to happen toward performance-based contract and grants. We heard from community stakeholders:

- Build capacity for prevention
- Convene regular community conversations in regions like the August discussion opportunities
- Strive for holistic service delivery between providers

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE OVERSIGHT REPORT TO THE 2023 LEGISLATURE



DCF RELATED ACTIVITIES

REPORT RECOMMENDATION:

The Legislature should explore codifying caseworker accredited standard caseloads in statute and add a statutory cap on the number of cases that caseworkers can have while maintaining accreditation standards. (HB 2371 introduced 2.8.23)

DCF ACTIVITY:

Maintaining Council on Accreditation standards and context guidance for foster care caseload will be included in the foster care grant RFP. Generally,

- 12-15 children in foster care or kinship care, and their families; and
- 8 children in treatment foster care, and their families
- When workers manage a blend of case types, caseloads should be weighted and adjusted accordingly.
- Caseloads may be higher when organizations are faced with temporary staff vacancies.
- New personnel should not carry independent caseloads prior to the completion of training.

QUESTIONS?
