

DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH & WELFARE
SECRETARY LAURA HOWARD | 1.30.2024

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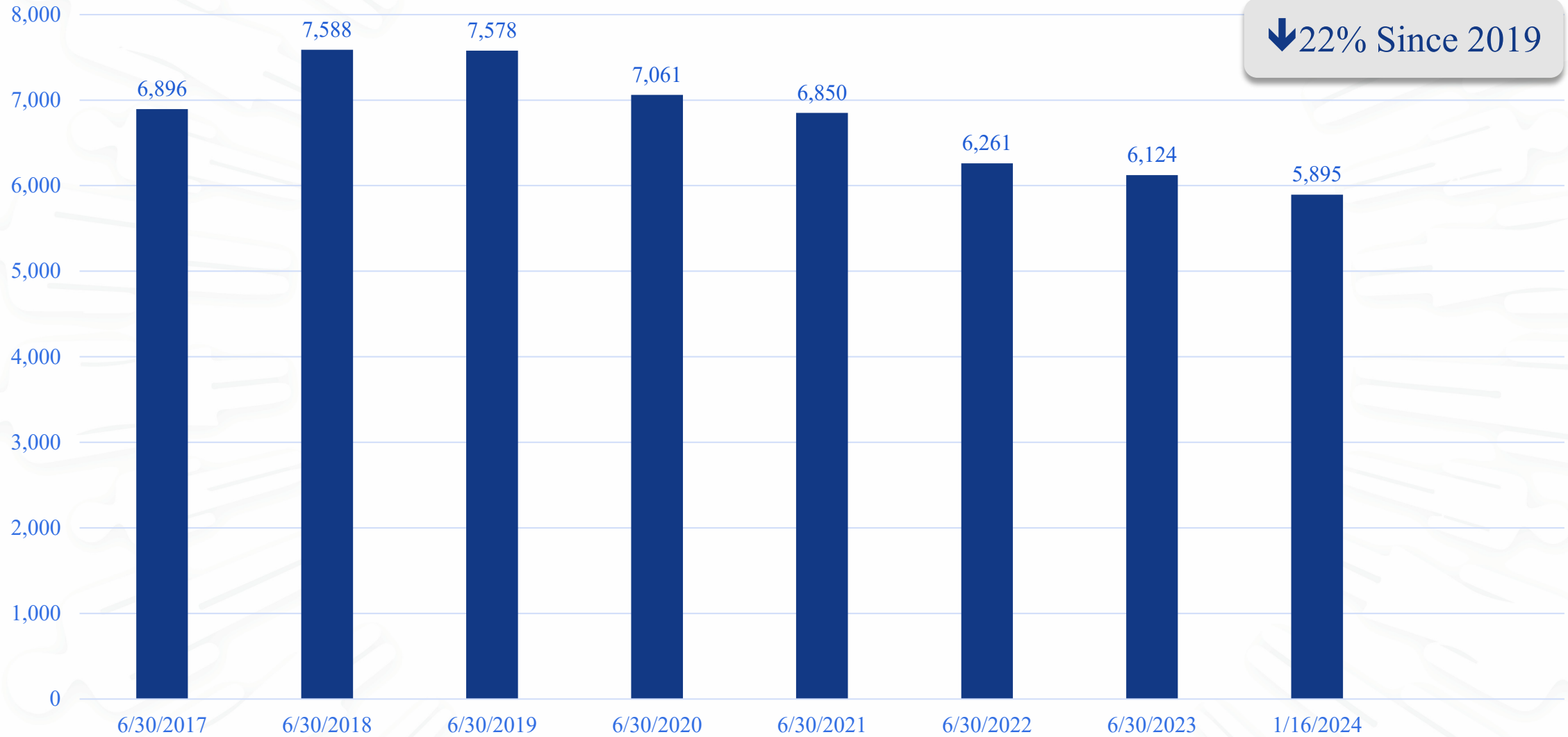
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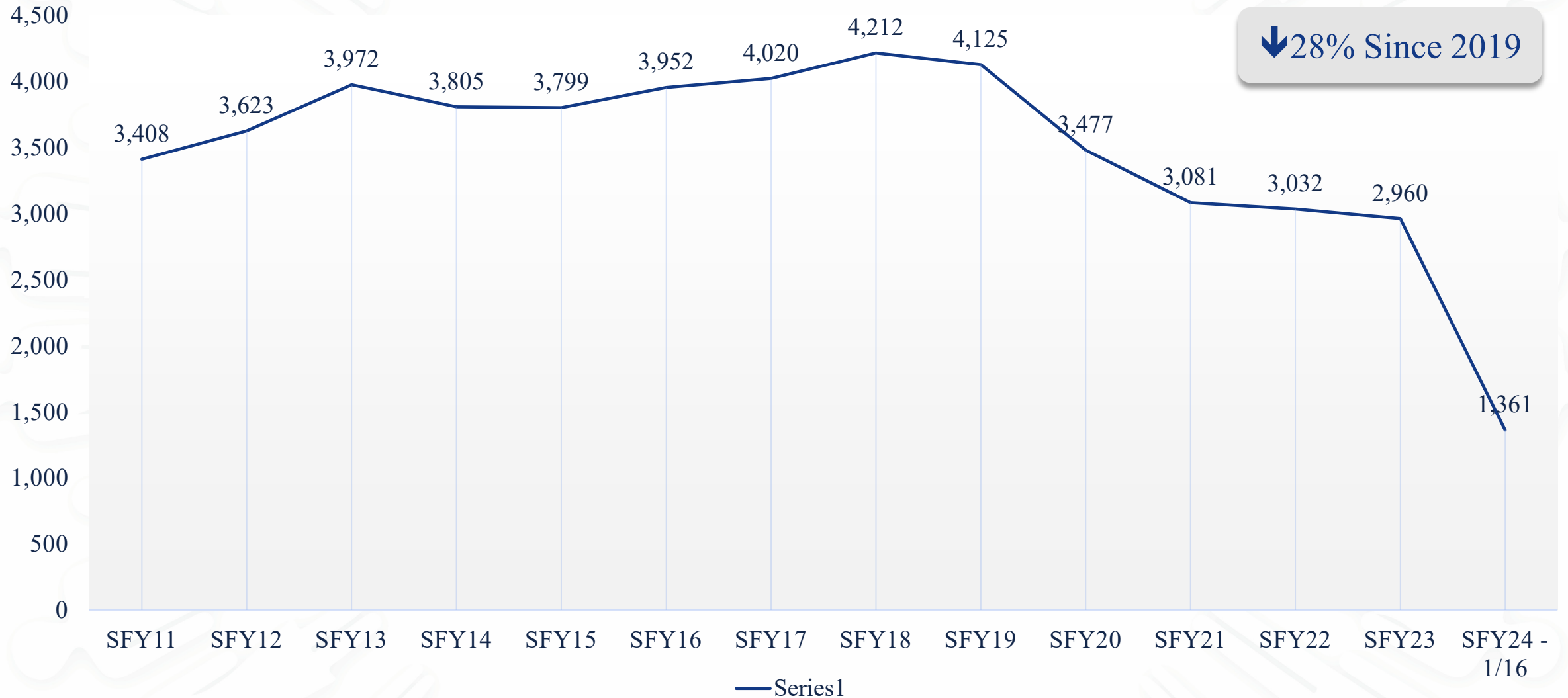
BY THE NUMBERS

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE



■ Number of Children In Foster Care

CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE ACROSS YEARS




28% Since 2019

Children Entering & Exiting Foster Care Across Years



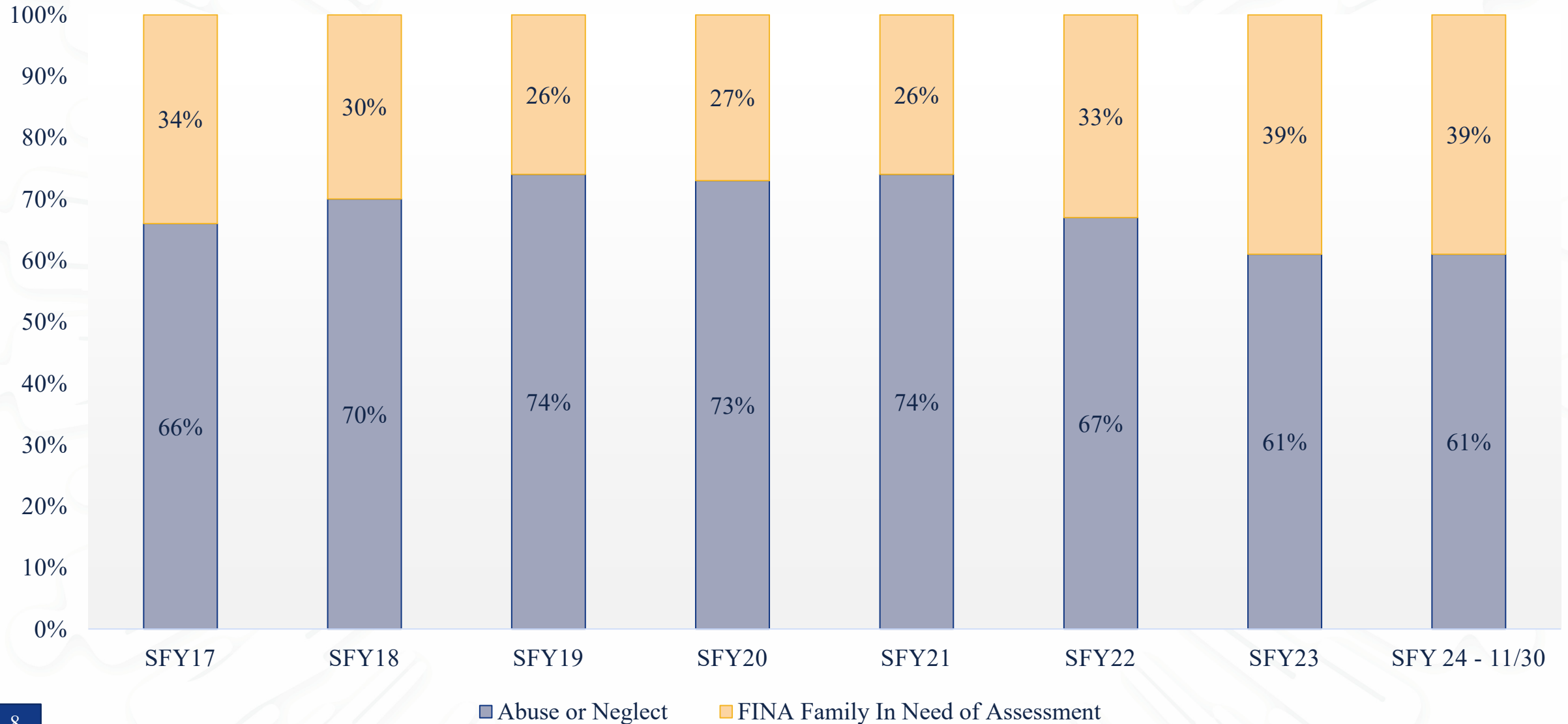
RATE OF ENTRY INTO FOSTER CARE

FEBRUARY 2023 DATA PROFILE

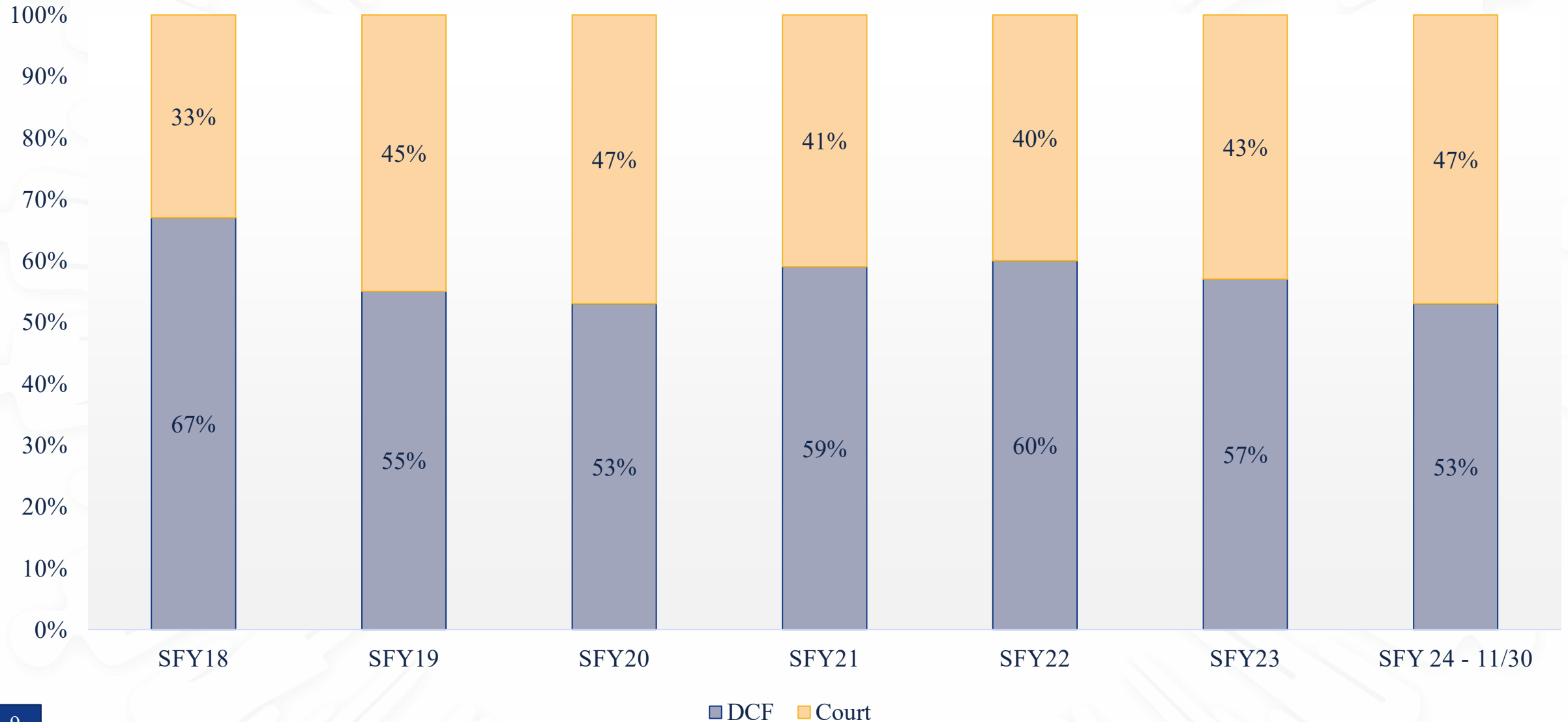


- The National rate of entry into foster care is 2.37 per 1,000 child population.
- Data from February 2023 shows the Kansas' rate of entry into foster care at 4.36 per 1,000 child population.
- Kansas ranks 46 of 52 jurisdiction for the rate of entry into care.

STATEWIDE CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE PRIMARY REMOVAL REASON



STATEWIDE CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE REQUESTOR SOURCE



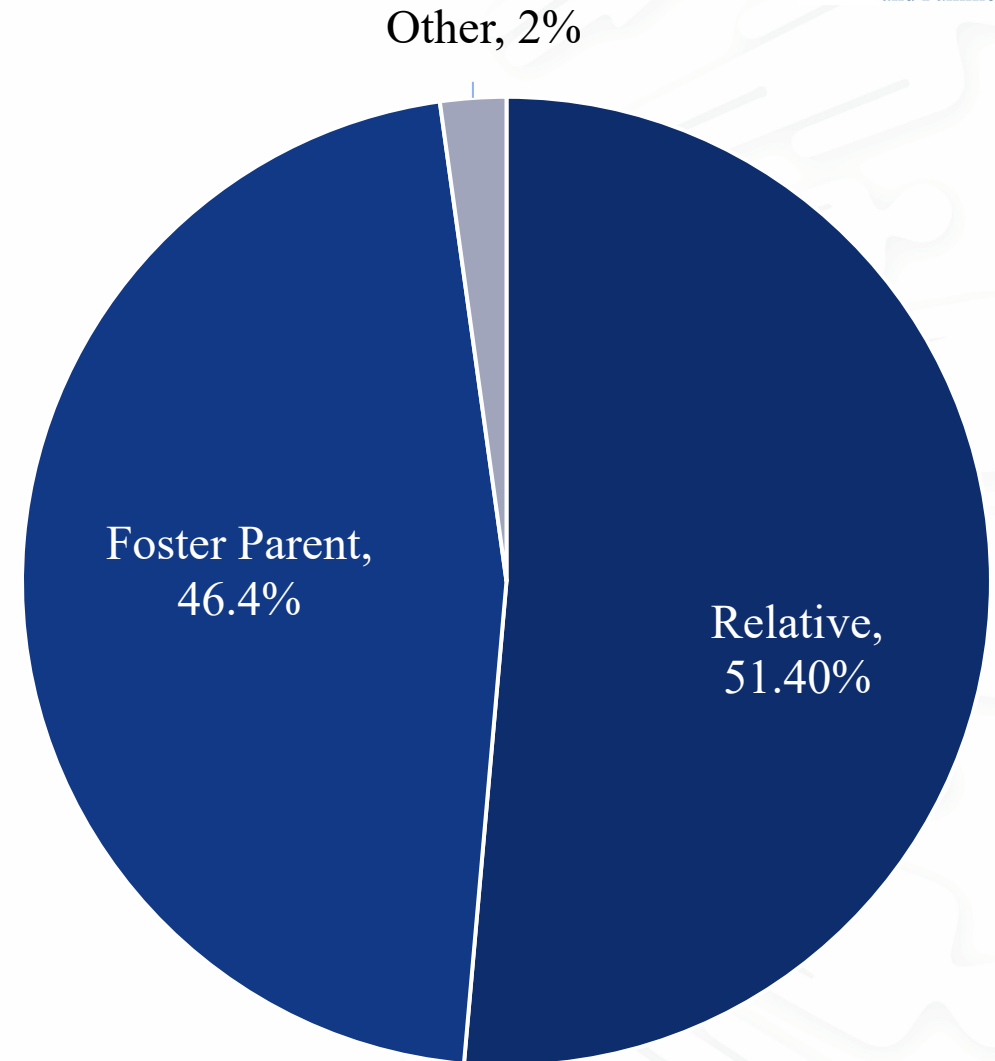
FINALIZED ADOPTIONS

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2023 DATA

Adoptions increased in SFY2019 averaging just over 1,000 annually the past 4 years.

- The average age of a child at the time of the finalized adoption is 8 years; 59% of children adopted were age 8 or younger.
- The average length of time in care is 41 months and over half of children (58%) are adopted as part of a sibling group.

In SFY 23, nearly all 880 adoptions were finalized with a relative or foster parent and 46.4 % were with a foster family and 51.4% were with a relative.



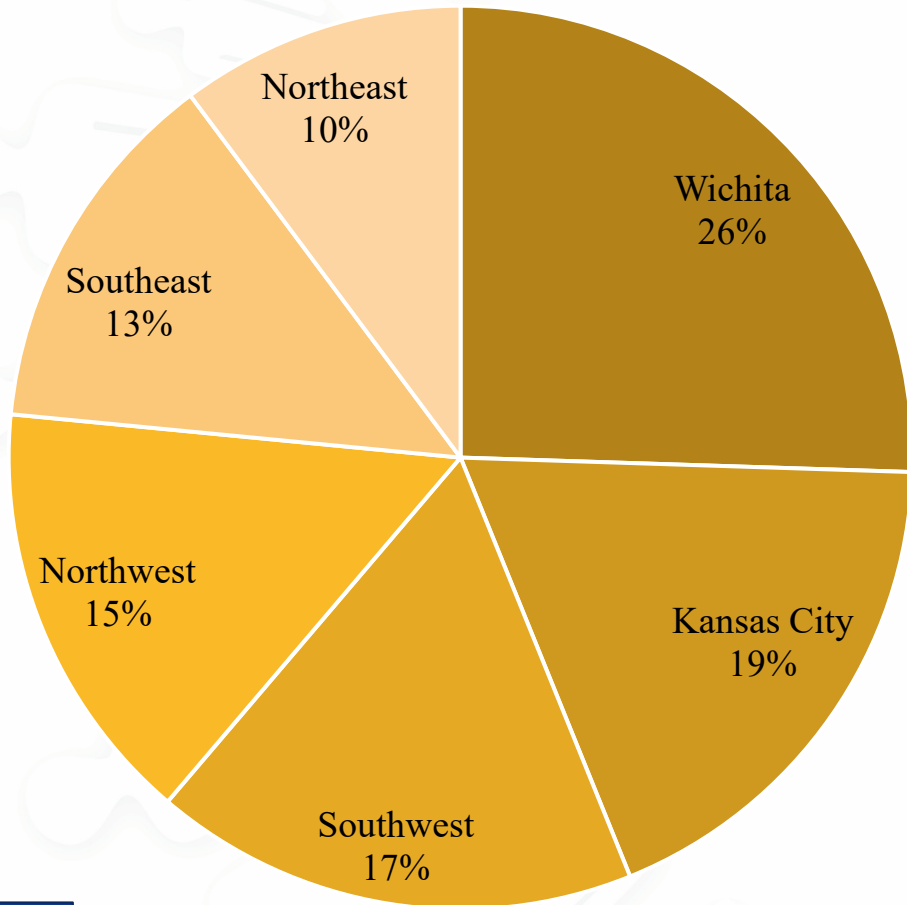
Adoptive Parent Relationship, SFY 2023

PREVENTION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

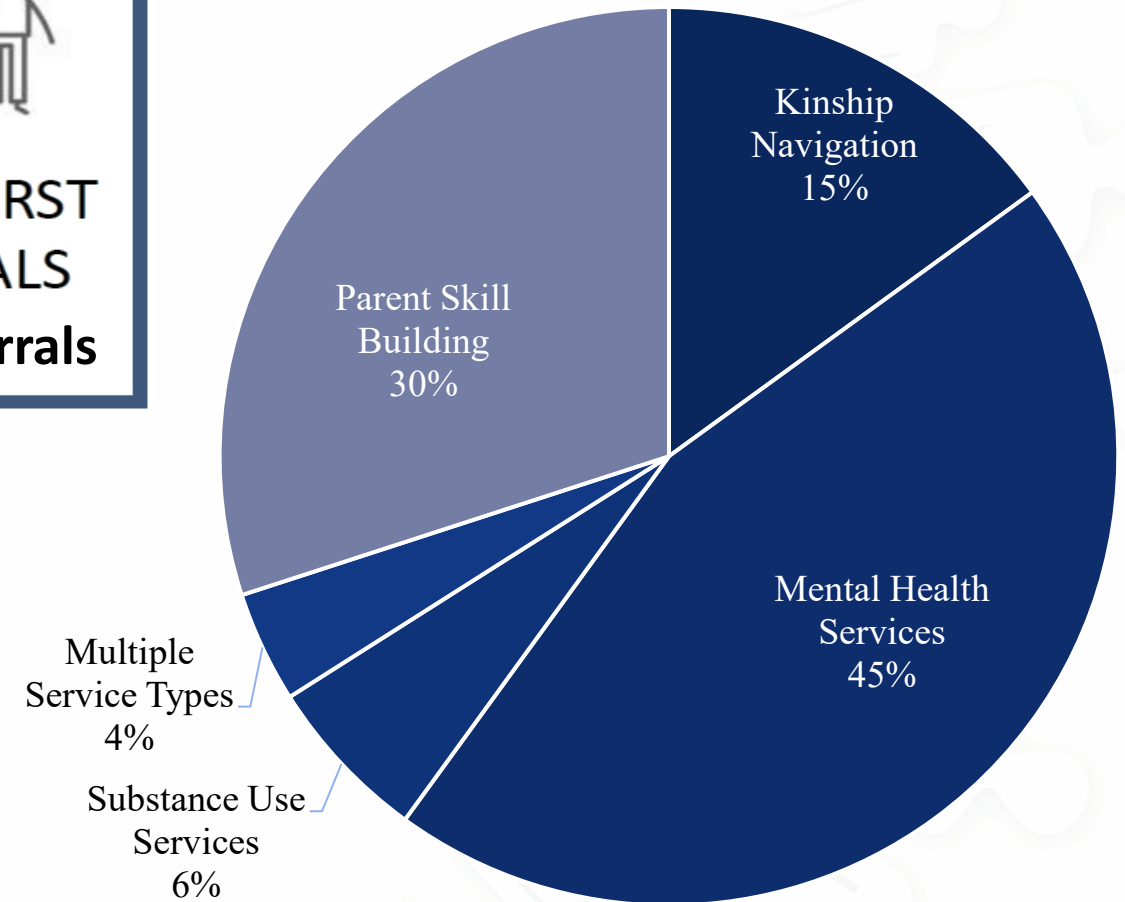
FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES

ACTIVITY: OCTOBER 2019 – DECEMBER 2023

REFERRALS BY REGION

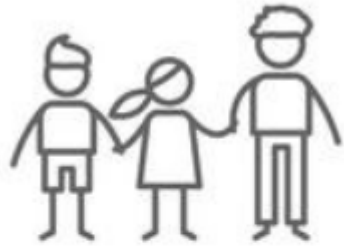


REFERRALS BY SERVICE TYPE



FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES

OUTCOMES: OCTOBER 2019 – DECEMBER 2023



FAMILY FIRST
REFERRALS
4,280 Referrals

90% 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

76% of families referred to Family First were engaged timely in services (within 2 days)

48% 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

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION GRANTS

SFY 2024 FAMILY FIRST EXPANSION

- Total funding is almost \$21M from all fund sources (\$12.5M SGF) with the Governor's 2022 enhancement of \$7M for expansion & legislative appropriations of \$2.34M
- Legislature appropriated an additional \$972,000 (included in funding above) to KCSL Healthy Families America for expansion in 15 counties
- 15 programs through 12 providers began 7/1/23
 - What's New :A Substance Use Disorder service in each region: DCCCA Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams [START](#) program of SUD. ("Supported" rating on IV-E clearinghouse) and KVC [Strengthening Families](#) SUD
 - Multisystemic Therapy Extended Statewide
- Family First Outcomes have been consistent for 3 years: low % of children removed during services as well as after a year from referral date

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

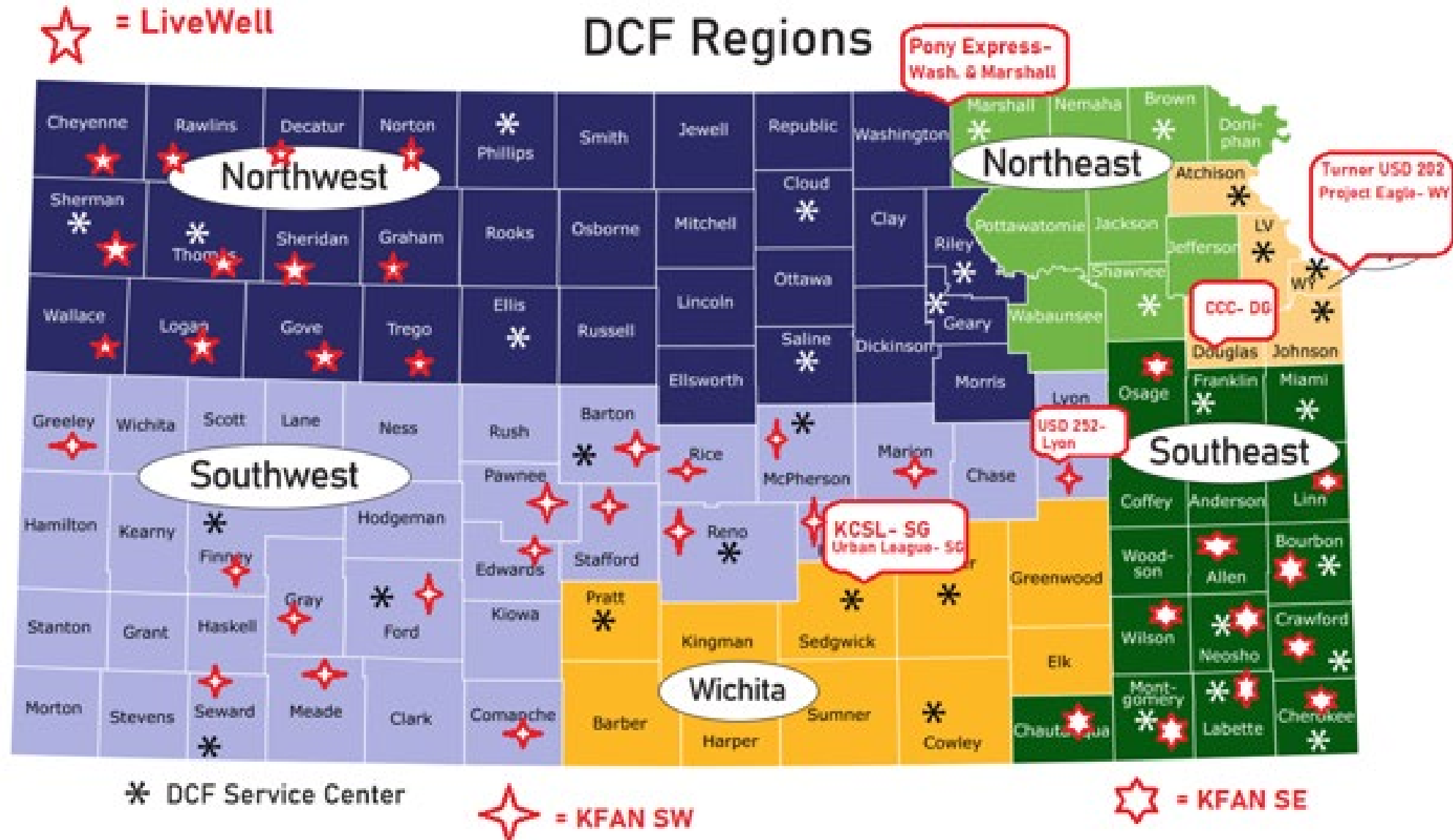


FRCs are community based or school-based hub of support and services for families and reduce likelihood of child abuse and neglect.

- 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
- July 2021 DCF granted with KCSL to expand current and support new FRCs in gaining certification from National Family Support Network. KCSL is committed to connecting all FRCs across Kansas by hosting meetings to share resources/successes in addition to monthly grantee meetings.
- FRCs serve communities through individual zip code, county or counties, whole family, or early childhood.
- FRCs have created parenting classes, multigenerational classes, teen fathers' programs, host bilingual offerings, and are active within their communities participating in trunk or treat, school, and community resource fairs.
- July 2023 DCF awarded University of Kansas a grant to evaluate the impact of the FRCs. The grants include the following components:
 - FRCs connect clients to goods or resources (such as diapers, clothing closets, food, transportation, etc.)
 - Family experience based pre- and post- surveys.
 - Service array in relation to longer term services, such as parenting classes, etc.
 - Well-being measured two times throughout the year to understand impact and value in communities.

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS

CONT.



4 QUESTIONS IOWA PILOT PROGRAM

The 4 questions have been shared with the courts and are utilized in Team Decision Making when separation is being considered.



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?

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4QUESTIONS & KINVEST



- KU School of Social Welfare received supplemental (federal KINVEST grant) funding to work with the Racial Equity Collaborative and DCF's 6 regions
- Supplemental grant funding will support the work of *4 Questions* dialogue in communities.
 - \$48,000 for all regions to partner with KU on communication (statewide) strategies
 - Each region can determine the best use of these funds according to their current work around the *4 Questions*.
 - For example, use these funds to provide incentives to community members to participate in meetings and events, cover expenses for meetings and events, etc.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4 QUESTIONS –REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION



WEST:

FOUR Questions (Round 1 in the Courts and Round 2 with schools, multidisciplinary teams, and other community partners) is making huge impacts.

For example, courts, county attorneys asking if the 4Questions' were considered, courts using our language, and Courts allowing DCF time from the point a child comes into PPC/exparte custody to set up a Team Decision Meeting.

- **TDM** Team and model are key in the West region in supporting working to safely reduce the need for foster care as well as increase NRKin and family placements:
 - Junction City: 89% of their meetings had mothers in attendance.
 - Salina: 89% of their home recommendations included NO court involvement.

NORTHEAST:

Police Protective Custody cases continue to be staffed in Shawnee County as well as monthly continued meetings with Court Services.

- Anticipated results from practice intensive with educators in becoming more aligned in our approach with families.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SOUTHEAST REGION - AGENCIES WORKING TOGETHER



We learn together through a virtual monthly meeting between agencies that go into homes, schools, and the community to work alongside children and families. During these calls we may introduce community partner programs, highlight recent data or discuss a family need that DCF or a partner agency is working with.

- includes DCF, Greenbush Community Liaisons, CHCSEK Community Health Workers, Family Strong Response Advocates, KFAN and many others.

We support families through a continuous virtual chat that allows us to quickly identify resources. Agencies can post family needs including financial or behavioral supports on the Team chat, *without identifying information*. This has resulted in amazing supports from multiple agencies who are able to quickly wrap resources around families.

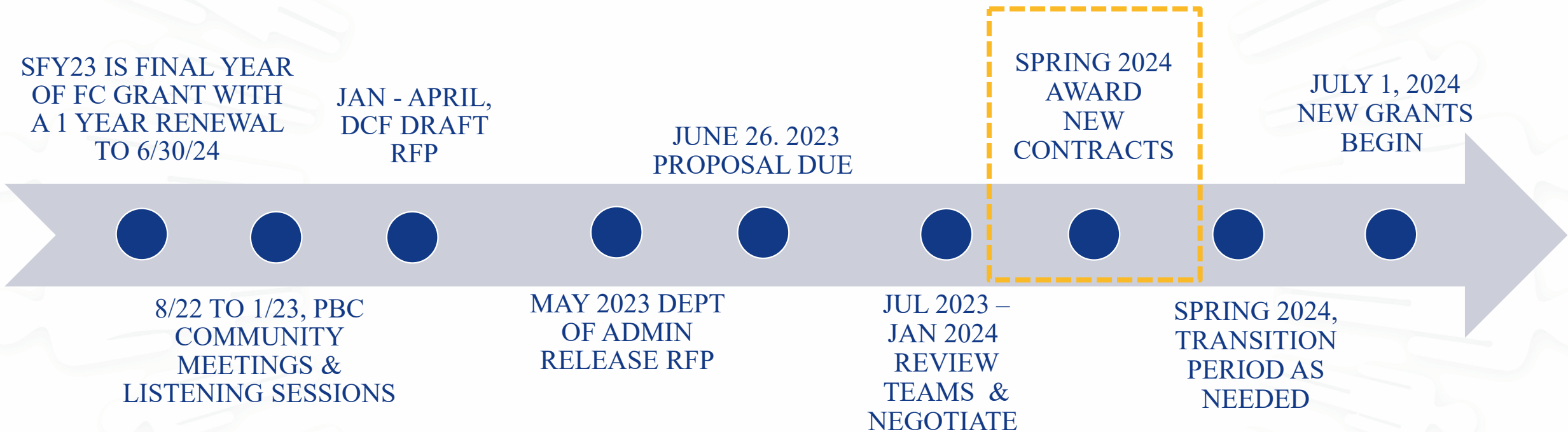
We support each other. Agencies Working Together is a great way for new staff and experienced staff to learn about community resources and offer support to each other in this very important and sometimes difficult work we are doing in our communities. We are all in this together!

We stay connected, we have quick access to each other and hear from those with expertise in the areas that we are not as familiar with. There are so many resources in our communities and new ones being added daily. It is difficult to know all the resources, but this team can help us know someone that knows someone that can help families.

FOSTER CARE UPDATES

FOSTER CARE CASE MANAGEMENT

FOSTER CARE CONTRACT UPDATES



Bidders were KVC of Kansas, Saint Francis Ministries, TFI Family Services, Cornerstones of Care, and EmberHope.

CCWIS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL UPDATES



- The new system would standardize programmatic practices, lead to consistent and improved services, and lead to more informed management decisions.
- Additional enhancement was included in the Governor’s Budget Recommendation’s to develop the new Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS). The federal match for the new system is 50 percent.
 - An Estimated \$17M (\$8.5M SGF) per year over a four-year period, or \$68 million (\$34 million SGF) is required.
 - In addition to the \$68 million enhanced funding, \$41 million is projected to be spent from the DCF base budget over the four-year period for a total development cost of \$109 million.
- The project includes 3 RFPs, internal staff costs, hardware and licenses. The RFPs are for Design, Development and Implementation (DDI), a Quality Assurance Contractor (QI), and an Independent Verification and Validation Contractor (IVV).
 - Three of the four RFPs have closed and are under review. The Design Development, and Implementation RFP is the largest contract providing a majority of the work.
 - There were 11 bidders for the DDI contract. We have narrowed the bidders and are completing program demonstrations. We plan to award the DDI contract in March 2024 and the other contracts in April 2024.
 - Because the project is currently under a competitive bid process, we are unable to give additional details.

FAMILY TREATMENT COURTS

FOSTER CARE UPDATES



Family Treatment Courts (FTC) are family-centered court dockets for cases of child maltreatment in which parental substance use is a contributing factor. These evidence-based programs are effective at helping individuals into recovery and reducing out-of-home placements and incarcerations.

Program interventions are assessed by 5 outcomes: Recovery, Reunification, Repeat Maltreatment or Re-Entry, Remain at Home.

The Chief Justice of the Kansas Supreme Court has convened a workgroup focused on Family Treatment Courts to reduce the time in care where there is youth or parent substance use or co-occurring mental health/substance use issues.

Three jurisdictions – Cowley, Lyon, and Miami Counties – will implement family treatment courts beginning in September 2024.

CHILD WELFARE SUMMIT



WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE LASTING IMPROVEMENT IN CHILD WELFARE

The Child Welfare Summit is a two-day event designed to allow teams to collaborate and create action plans while highlighting the need to work across , while respecting each partner’s role, to create lasting improvement in child welfare. April 15 – 16, 2024.

In person teams include:

- CINC Judge, CINC Prosecutor, Guardian ad Litem, Parent Attorney, DCF Staff, CMP Staff, CASA, Citizen Review Board (CRB) and Law Enforcement
- DCF Staff invited to serve on Judicial Teams represent a cross section of DCF Practice.

Summit topics include:

- Collaboration between Child Welfare Partners
- Disproportionality
- Safety and Risk
- Permanency
- Engagement with youth, families, and placement providers (relatives, nonrelative kin, and foster parents)
- Child Welfare Partner Well-Being
- Kansas Mental Health Resources

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE

FOSTER CARE UPDATES

Therapeutic family foster homes, originally introduced in July 2022, provide 24-hour care for children and youth with high acuity needs in out-of-home placement maintaining a goal of their safety and well-being in their communities.

These specialty homes are limited to no more than 2 children and are required to complete additional targeted, child tailored annual training than the basic and intensive family foster parents. The homes are also provided enhanced support through the Child Placing Agency and the Child Welfare Case Management Providers to ensure optimal success in the program

TFC's provide placement for youth at risk of:

- DCF Custody
- PRTF Treatment

TFC's provide step down care for youth from:

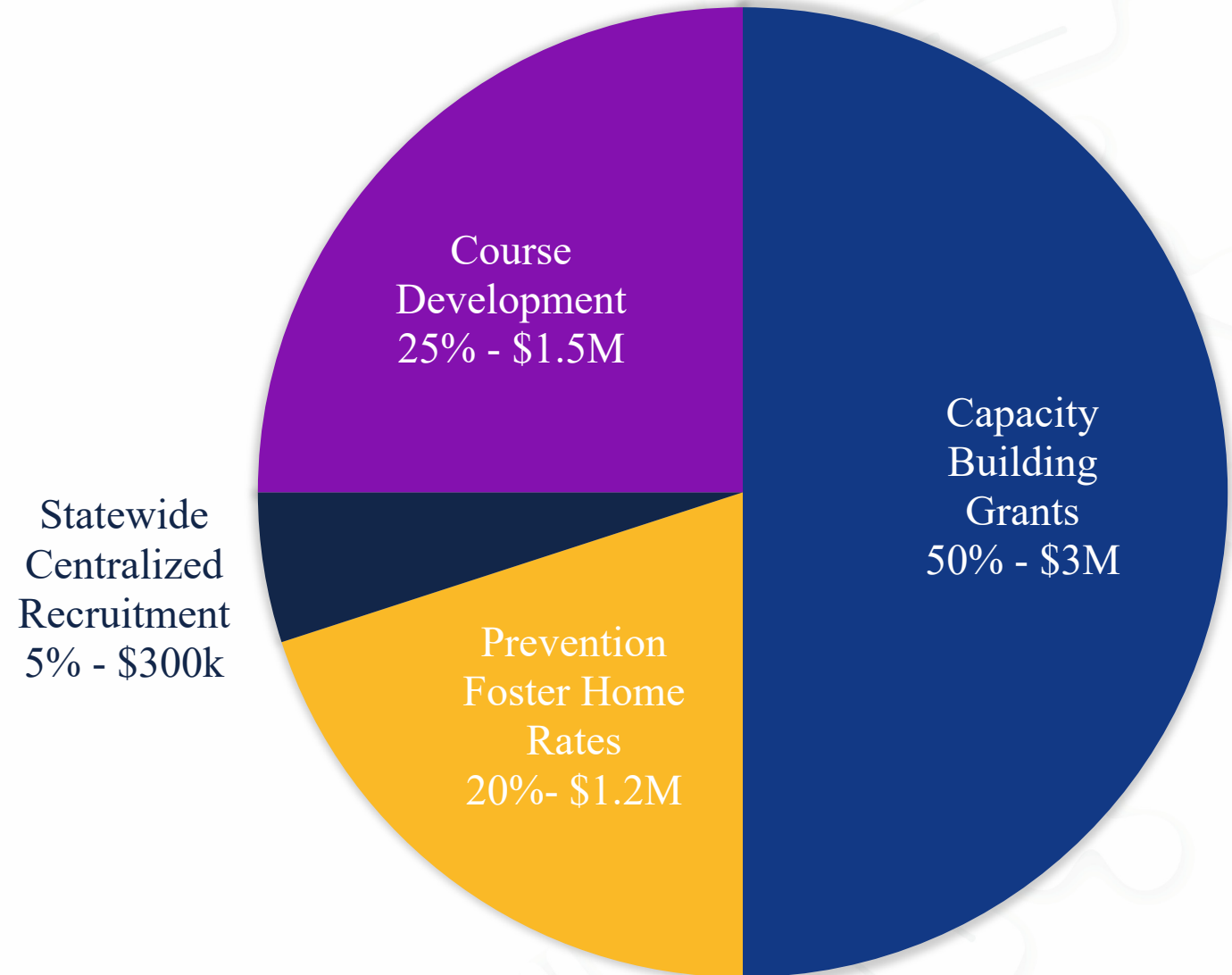
- Youth Residential Center (YRC II)
- Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP)
- Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF)
- Acute bed – 3-5 days short term

THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Last year the Governor signed into law \$6million for DCF to expand the Therapeutic Foster Care program as an integral piece in achieving stability and timely permanency.

The funds will be invested on a nationally recognized training curriculum and capacity building grant awards to be announced later this year.



JUVENILE CRISIS INTERVENTION CENTERS

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION

- Treatment service resource for up to 30 days all (any) youth experiencing a behavioral health crisis.
- DCF Licensing Regulations for JCIC published with notice of March 2024 hearing.
- Memorandum of Agreement between KDOC and DCF is fully executed ready to transfer the \$2M in funds for JCIC.
- DCF will enter into provider agreements with willing providers to operate a JCIC and establish/ set a daily rate of payment for JCIC for youth in the custody of the Secretary.
- Providers will be able to access the \$2M in funds for their business plan - start-up or other related operating costs that fall outside of health care coverage and the daily DCF rate for youth in the custody of the Secretary and foster care
- JO and SG Counties have expressed interest to DCF in the past 12-18 months in operating a JCIC facility.

FAMILIES TOGETHER – I/DD

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



- Last year the Governor signed into law \$1M for foster care prevention of children living with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability
- Stakeholder meetings were held with provider & community agencies as well as families with lived experience to determine service needs
- DCF granted with Families Together to provide family support, parenting workshops, resource connections and client assistance funds
- Any person or agency can make a referral to Families Together
- Services are accessible statewide and may be in the home based on the family's needs and provider availability

FUNCTIONAL FAMILY THERAPY

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – 2023 BUDGET ENHANCEMENT

The Governor signed into law \$2Million to support Evidence-based Functional Family Therapy (FFT) grants through the three agencies who provide FFT for KDOC.

DCF completed awards with EmberHope, Cornerstones of Care, and Eckerd Connects to provide FFT services. DCF is utilizing these current KDOC-JS FFT Providers with the same service catchments used for KDOC-JS.

- Cornerstones of Care is fully staffed is currently providing services to 8 families.
- Eckerd plans to be fully staffed and trained by mid February.

- EmberHope is still in the process of recruiting and training staff.

Eligible youth are those who are

1. between 11-18 and,
2. are adjudicated in need of care with high acuity, complex needs, or behaviors that are challenging for caregivers; or
3. in custody and reintegration home can be accelerated by use of FFT; or
4. previously reintegrated from out of home placement and who are at risk of re-entering foster home placement without FFT availability.

HB 2021 EVIDENCE BASED ASSESSMENT FOR REFERRAL



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- KDOC- JS, DCF , foster care case management agencies and community juvenile services agencies collaborated summer/ fall 2023 to develop, plan & implement a referral form for the services.
 - Monthly collaboration meetings continue around implementation. Some referrals began Dec 2023.
- The Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS) is used as the assessment instrument related to a referral of child who meets the following criteria:
 - Age 10 and older AND
 - Receives FPS or foster care case management AND
 - A youth identified as exhibiting behavior that could lead to juvenile offender charges related to physical violence, aggression, damage to property or use of life-threatening drugs during a CINC proceeding. AND
 - Meets scoring of 20 on CAFAS subscales (sections) OR total score of 50 across subscales.

2024 DCF LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Remaining from 2023 Session:

- HB 2247 - Foster Youth Bank Accounts: for youth 16 + in the custody of the Secretary without a cosigner.
 - This bill passed the house and is in the Senate Financial Institutions Committee

New Proposals

- Codifying DCF authority to provide mental health screenings & treatment for pre-adjudicated youth.
- Removing the mandatory requirement for foster care child support collection orders
- Allowing DCF to release information to the public related to child fatality caused by abuse or neglect when criminal charges have been filed.
- Public Assistance Accessibility Package with several changes to K.S.A. 39-709

S.O.U.L.

SUPPORT – OPPORTUNITY – UNITY – LEGAL RELATIONSHIPS



In partnership to create a new legal permanency option for older youth, Kansas young leaders with lived experiences alongside OJA, advocates, case management / other providers, DCF, and Annie E. Casey Foundation have proposed the introduced statute language – HB 2536.

Ideally, young Kansans, age 16 and older, will have the ability to choose one or more caregivers to be their SOUL Family without severing their biological family ties.

QUESTIONS?
