

# KANSAS DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM OVERSIGHT

SECRETARY LAURA HOWARD | 6.2.2025

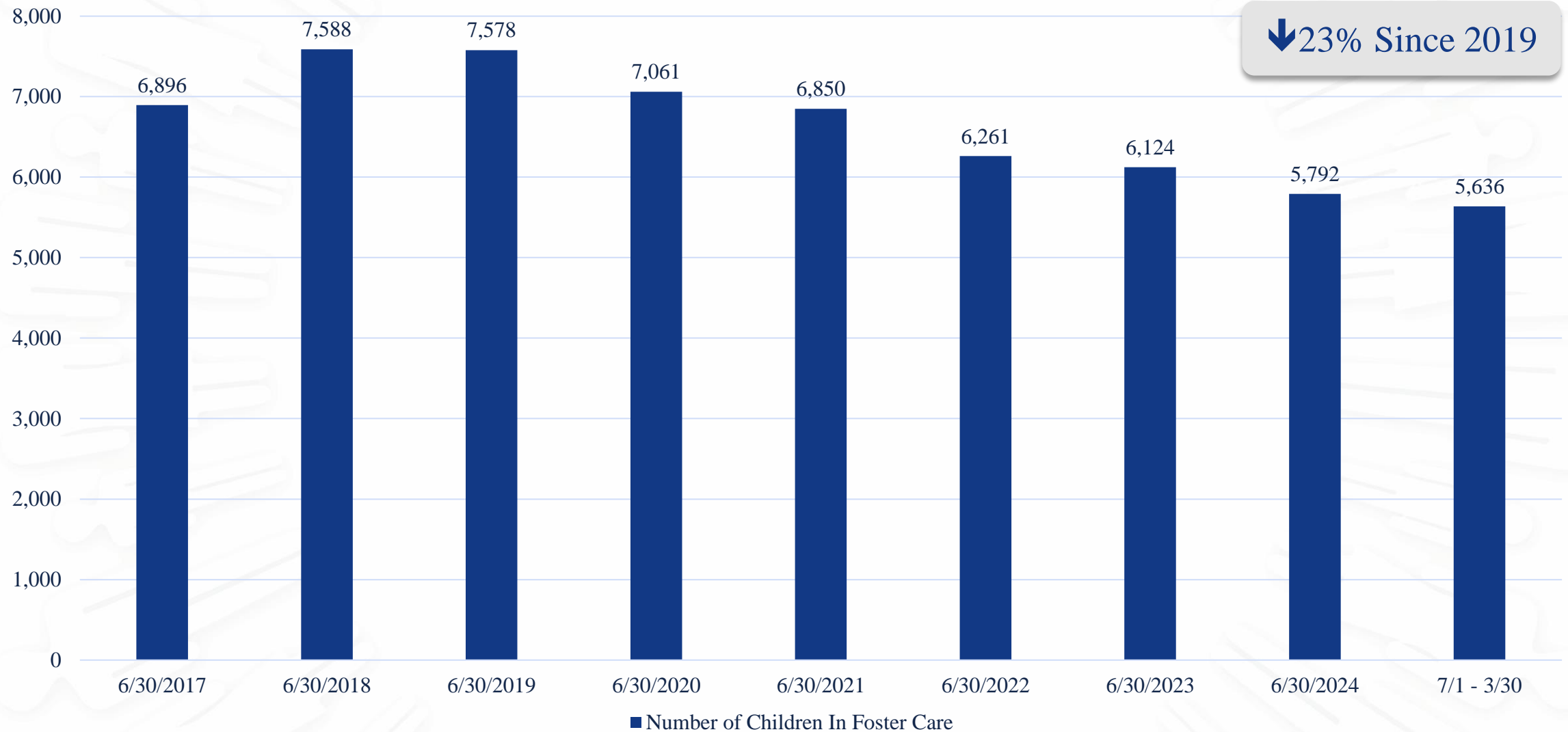
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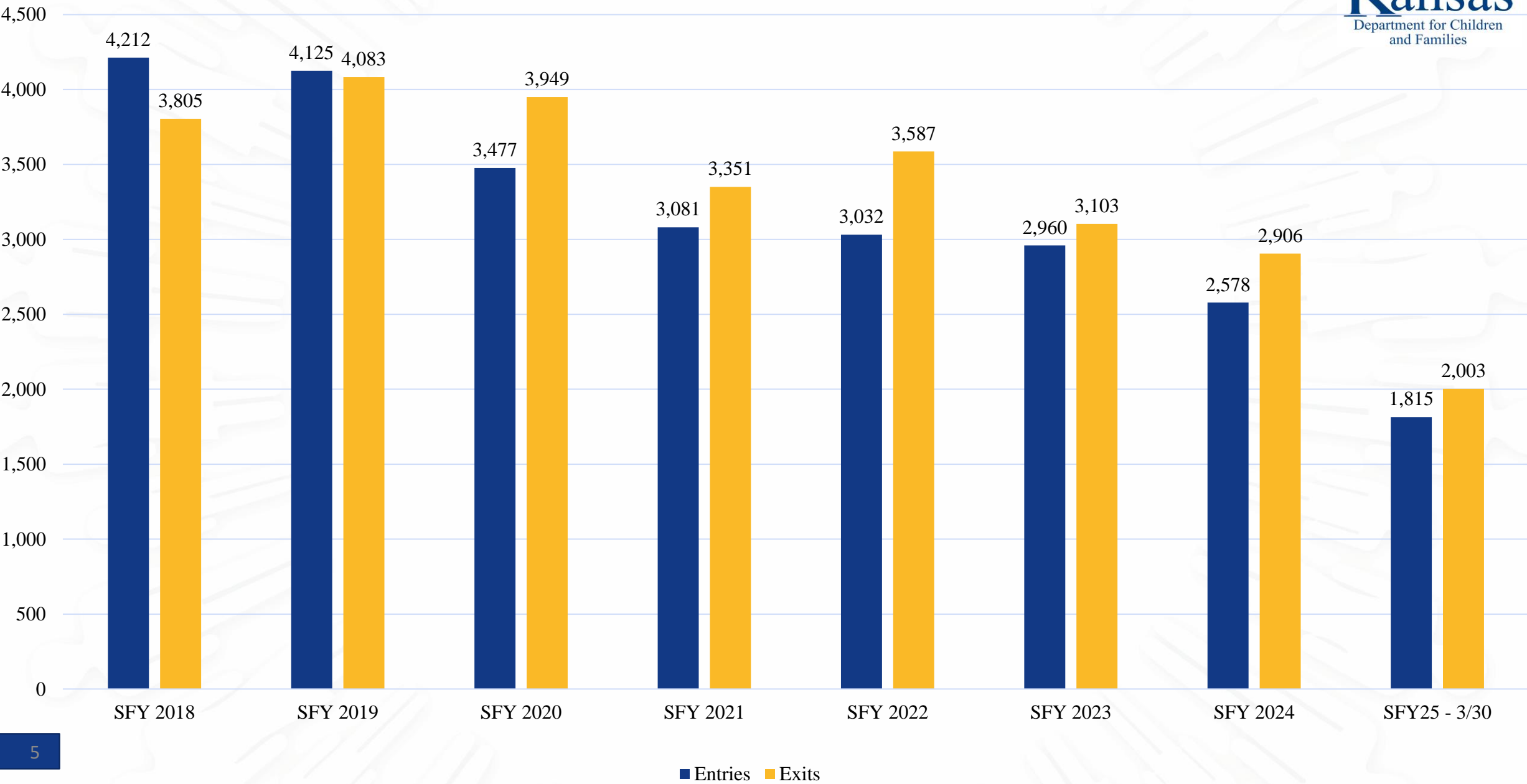
# BY THE NUMBERS

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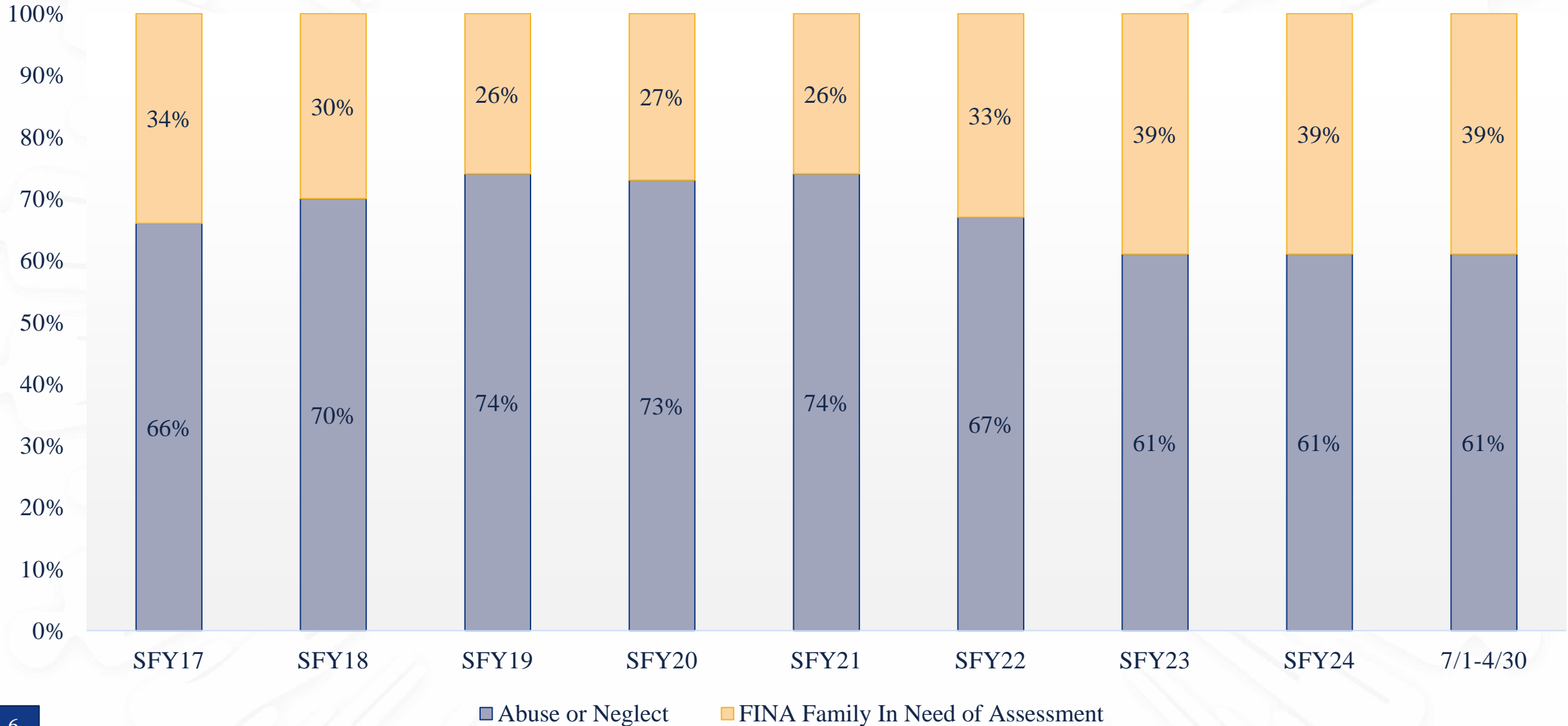
## NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE



# CHILDREN ENTERING & EXITING FOSTER CARE ACROSS YEARS



## STATEWIDE CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE PRIMARY REMOVAL REASON



# REQUESTED QUARTERLY DATA

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# “HOW THE CASE CAME TO DCF”

2024 Q4, 2025 Q1

Requests for removal										
Quarter	Abuse Neglect					FINA				
	DCF		Non DCF		Total	DCF		Non DCF		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	#	%	#	%	#
<b>2024 Q4</b>	228	64%	125	35%	<b>355</b>	114	48%	122	51%	<b>238</b>
<b>2025 Q1</b>	210	63%	119	36%	<b>332</b>	137	59%	93	40%	<b>232</b>

Removals With and Without PPC (LE Plan) Prior to Removal										
Quarter	Abuse Neglect					FINA				
	No PPC		PPC		Total	No PPC		PPC		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	#	%	#	%	#
2024 Q4	<b>130</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>238</b>
2025 Q1	<b>121</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>232</b>



# "AVERAGE LENGTH PER STAY"

2024 Q4 & 2025 Q1

2024 Q4 (October 1, 2024-December 31, 2024)							
	Total	Max Age	Min Age	Avg Age	Max Days	Min Days	Avg Mos
Adoption	199	17	1	7	3,643	239	43
Emancipation	99	22	16	18	6,224	29	50
Custodianship/Guardianship	23	19	4	12	1,792	77	25
Other	5	18	2	12	4,462	166	52
SOUL Family	3	17	16	16	3,534	73	47
Reunification	363	18	0	9	1,830	1	11
Transfer	6	9	2	5	1,476	4	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6,224</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>35</b>

2025 Q1 (January 1, 2025-March 31, 2025)							
	Total	Max Age	Min Age	Avg Age	Max Days	Min Days	Avg Mos
Adoption	101	16	1	8	3,409	442	47
Emancipation	96	21	18	18	5,011	23	41
Custodianship/Guardianship	29	17	0	10	1,757	20	18
Other	6	19	0	10	700	43	15
SOUL Family	7	19	16	17	1,889	238	28
Reunification	271	18	0	8	2,619	2	10
Transfer	12	18	1	11	1,527	8	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>16,912</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>174</b>

# “WHAT PREVENTATIVE SERVICES WERE PROVIDED”

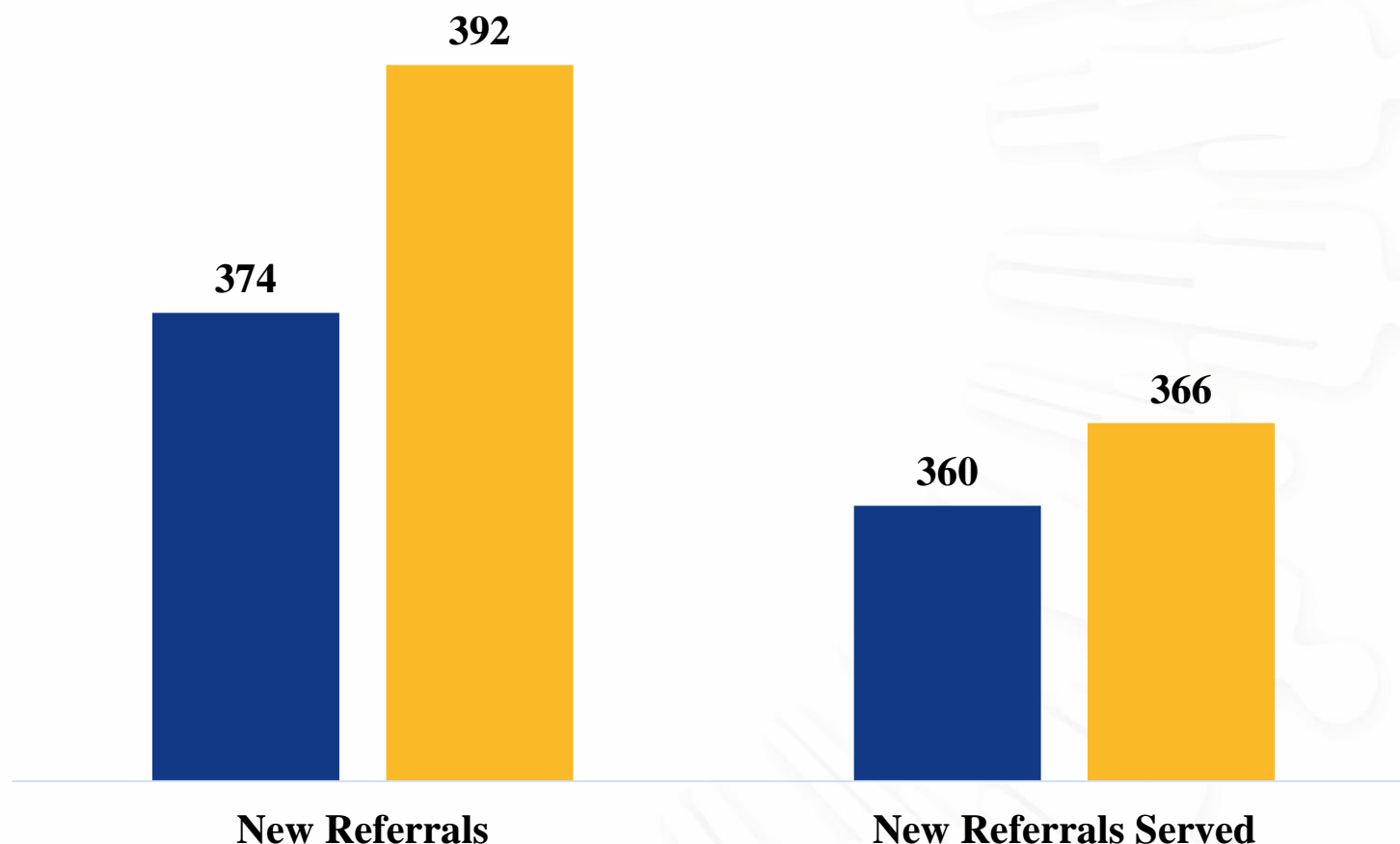
2024 Q4, 2025 Q1

## Family Preservation

provides voluntary services alongside families to build on family strengths and reduce the risk of children being placed in foster care. Family Preservation providers will determine with family the intensity of service provided

### Family Preservation In Home

■ 2024 Q4 ■ 2025 Q1



# “WHAT PREVENTATIVE SERVICES WERE PROVIDED”

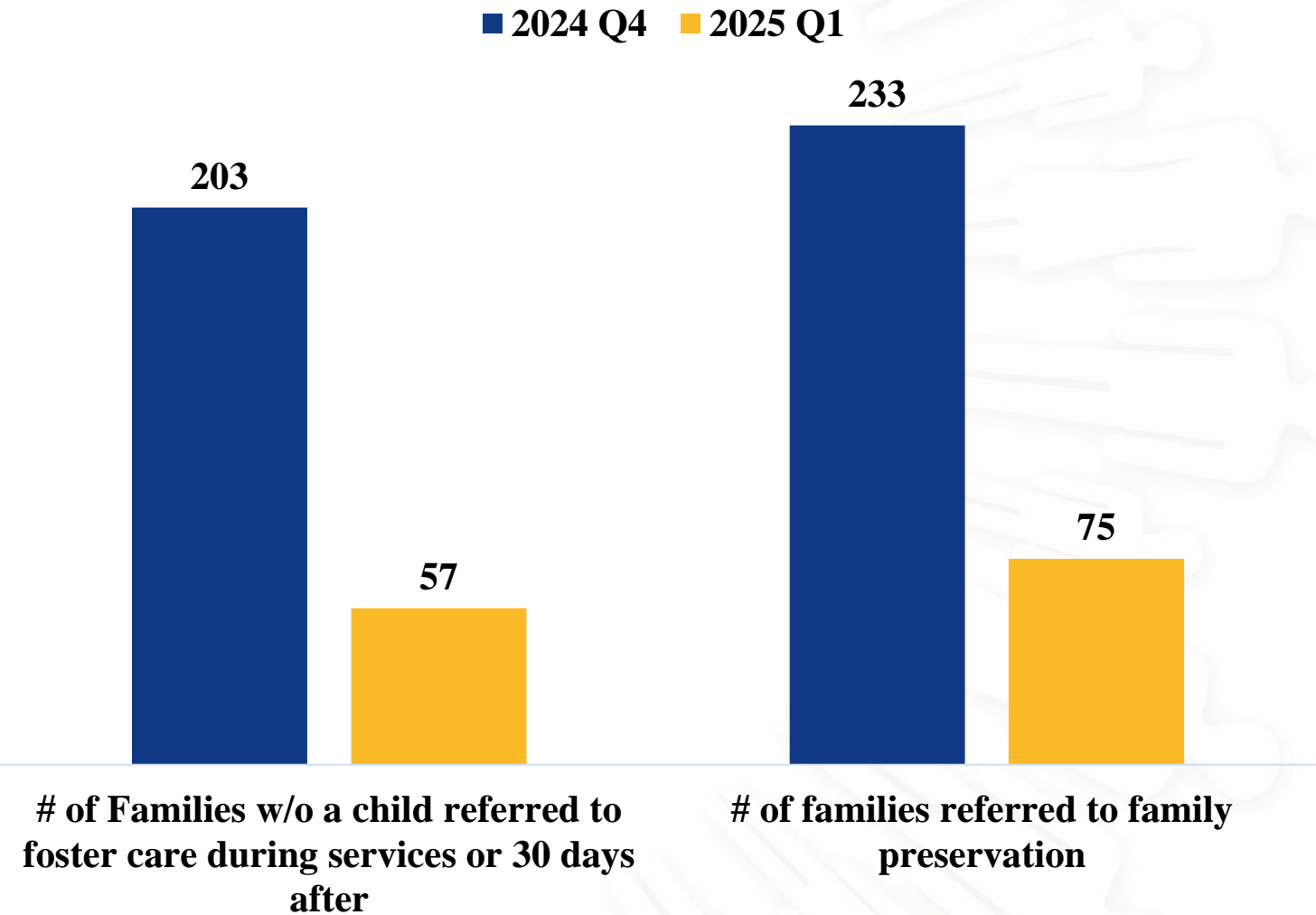
2024 Q4, 2025 Q1



Families referred for family preservation services will not have a child placed outside the home into the foster care program during the service period or within 30 days of case closure.

**Performance FY to date:  
88%**

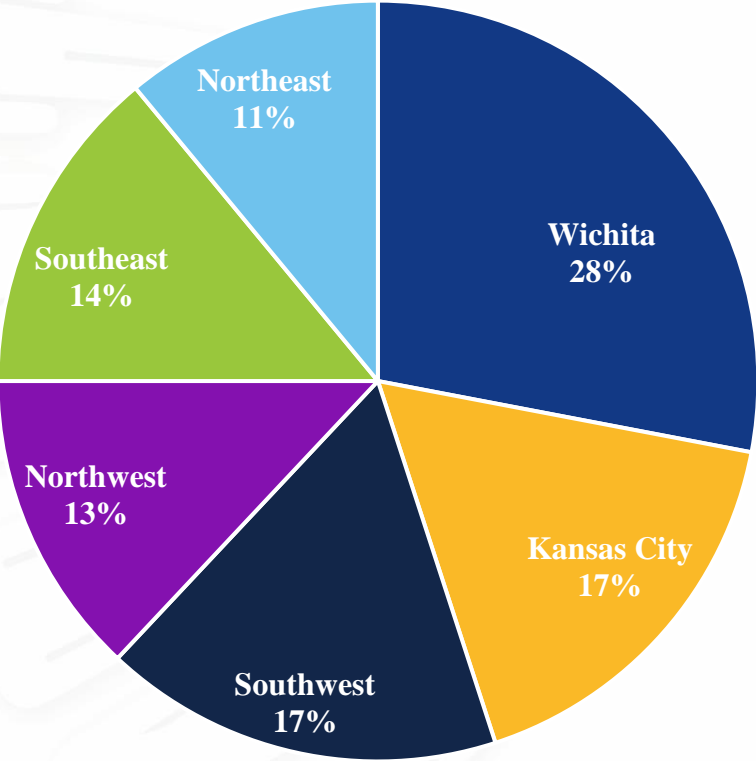
Children are Maintained Safely at Home



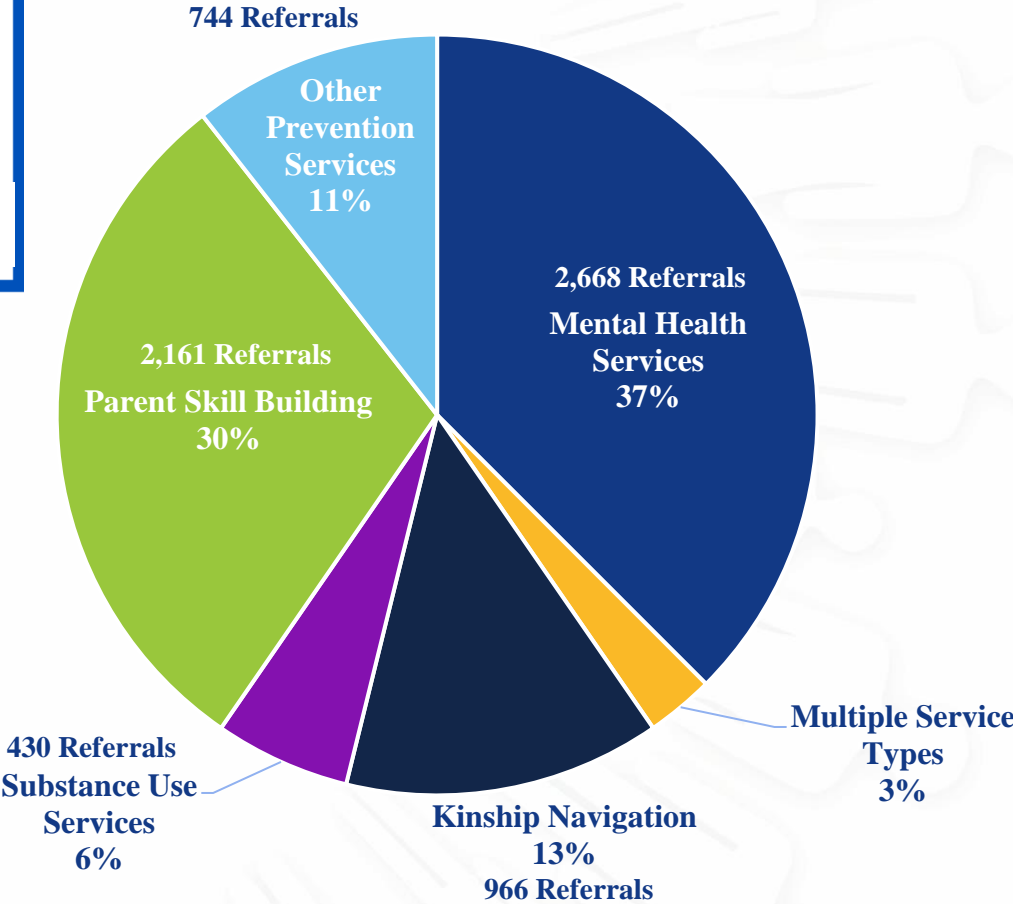
# “WHAT PREVENTATIVE SERVICES WERE PROVIDED”

Activity: October 2019 – March 2025

Referrals by Region

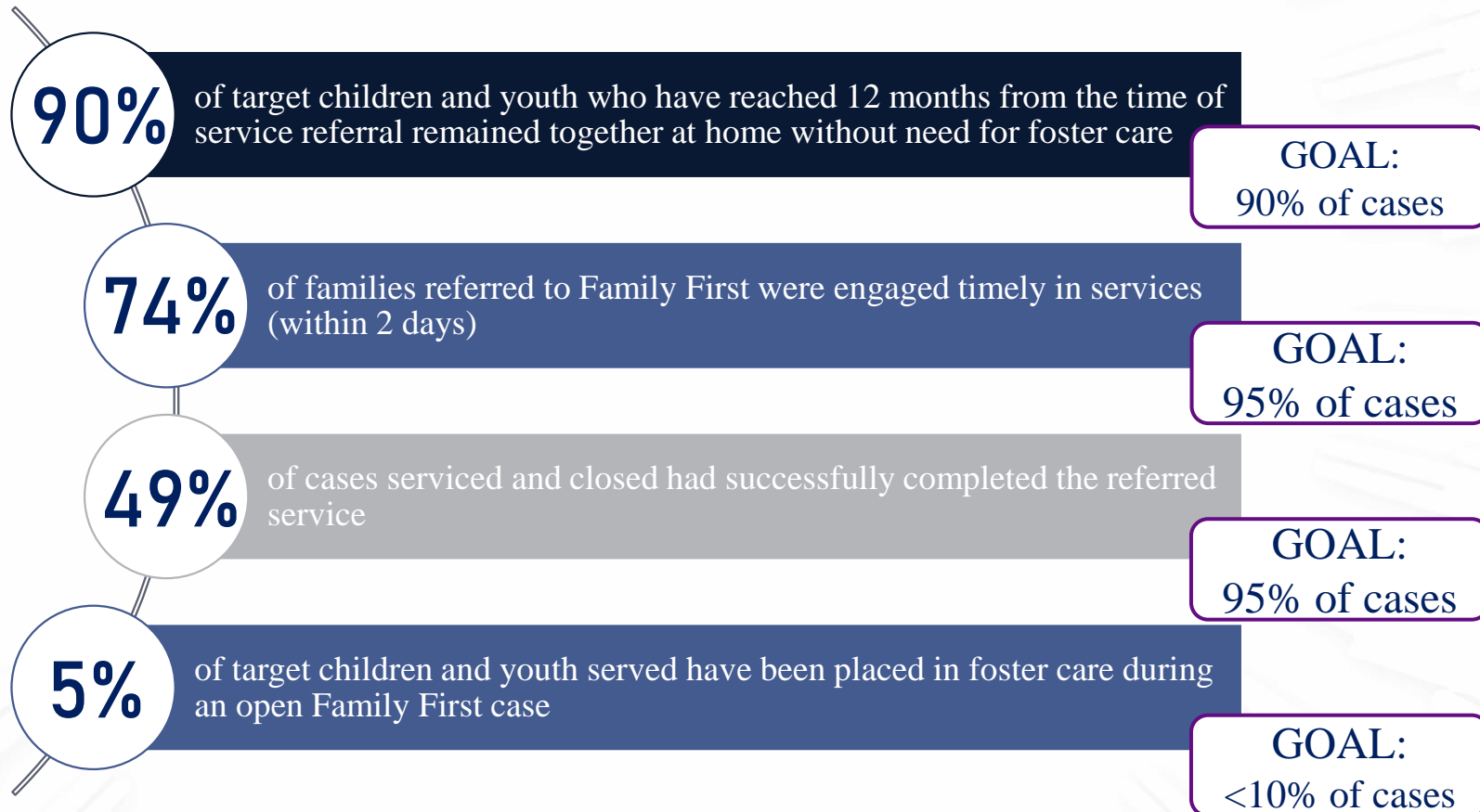


Referrals by Service Type



# FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES

Outcomes: October 2019 – March 2025



# "AVERAGE COST PER CHILD, PER MONTH"

FY 2024, FY 2025, FY 2026

## FY 2024 CONSENSUS CASE LOAD ACTUALS

\$13,996,424

- MONTHLY COST PER CHILD - \$4,190
- CASE MANAGEMENT COST PER MONTH - \$10,417,457
- PLACEMENT COSTS PER MONTH - \$13,897,114
- OTHER FOSTER CARE MONTHLY COSTS - \$612,645

- OTHER FOSTER CARE MONTHLY COSTS - \$787,227

## FY 2025 CONSENSUS CASE LOAD ESTIMATES

- MONTHLY COST PER CHILD - \$5,033
- CASE MANAGEMENT COST PER MONTH - \$13,549,683
- PLACEMENT COSTS PER MONTH -

## FY 2026 CONSENSUS CASE LOAD ESTIMATES

- MONTHLY COST PER CHILD - \$5,017
- CASE MANAGEMENT COST PER MONTH - \$12,351,435
- PLACEMENT COSTS PER MONTH - \$14,080,364
- OTHER FOSTER CARE MONTHLY COSTS - \$1,084,869

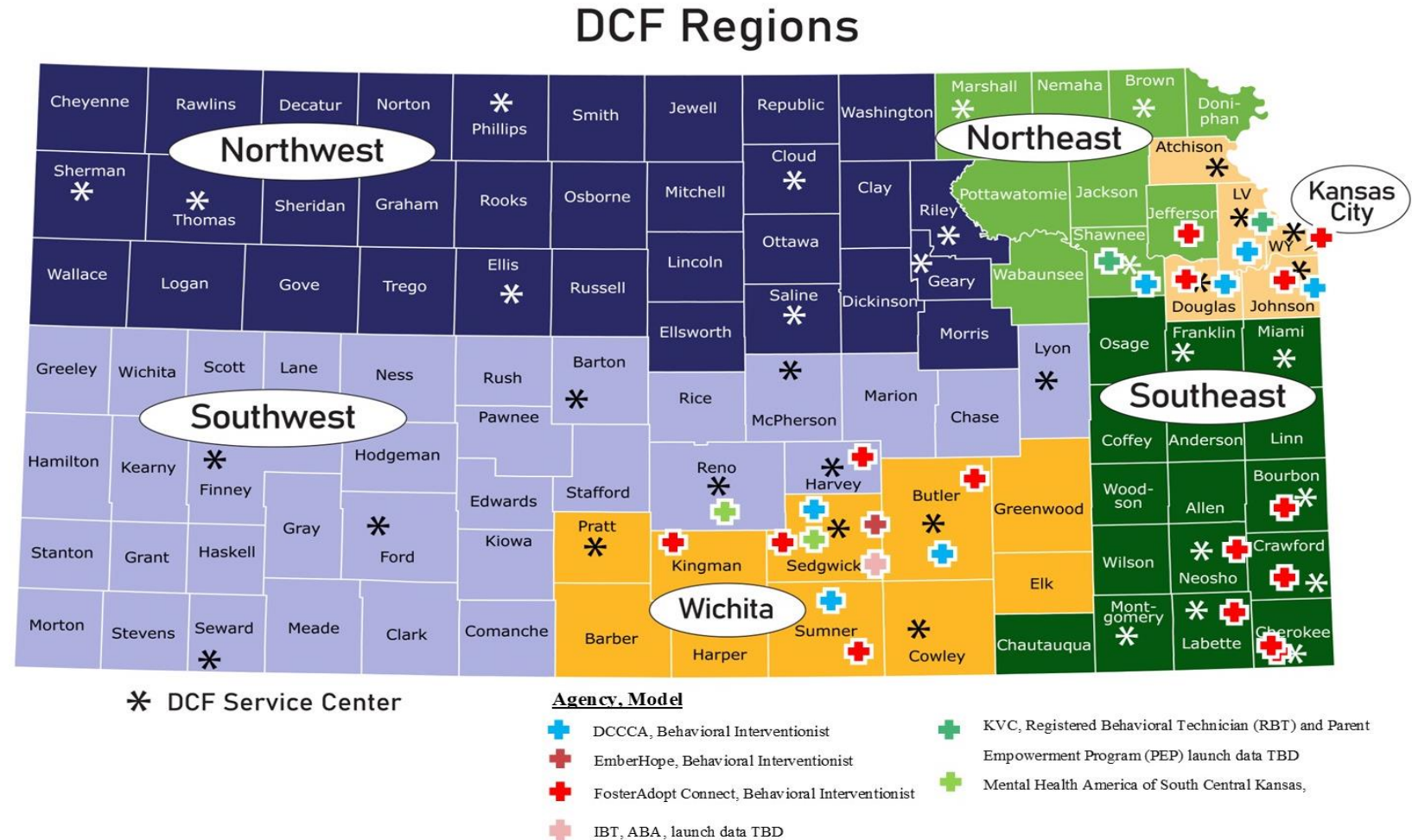


# “HOW MANY FAMILIES/YOUTH RECEIVED CBI BEHAVIORAL SPECIALIST SERVICES”

2024 Q4, 2025: Q1,

The goals of the intervention(s) will improve the family dynamic and the youth’s emotional or behavioral stability.

- 2024 Q4: 32
- 2025 Q1: 32
- We do not yet have data for 2025 Q2 which is still in progress.



# FOSTER HOME MAKEUP:

2024 Q4, 2025: Q1, Q2-TO DATE

“How many licensed foster homes will take kids up to age 18; how many homes can take kids with high medical/behavioral needs, what is overall capacity of licensed foster homes- how many beds do you have by age, by needs of child - high, moderate, mild?”

- On May 18<sup>th</sup>, there were 2,194 total licensed family foster homes with a capacity of 5,729 children. Average capacity is 2.57 children. 36% of homes have a capacity for 2 children, 29% have a capacity for 4 children, and 17% have capacity for either 1 or 3.
- 47% of homes serve children serve children infancy and older; 10% serve age 3 and older; 12% age 6 and older; 4% 10 and older; 3% age 13 and older ( percentages for relatives and NR Kin & military homes not included, thus does not sum to 100%)

FFH approved exception for dual license	4
Family Foster Home	1,944
Family Foster Home NRKIN	233
FFH Approval – Military Base	1
FFH Approval – Relative Care	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,238</b>

FFH approved exception for dual license	3
Family Foster Home	1,895
Family Foster Home NRKIN	227
FFH Approval – Military Base	1
FFH Approval – Relative Care	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,185</b>

FFH approved exception for dual license	2
Family Foster Home	1894
Family Foster Home NRKIN	234
FFH Approval – Military Base	1
FFH Approval – Relative Care	61
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,192</b>



# FOSTER HOME MAKEUP:

Information gathered regarding foster home preferences:

- Preferred capacity
- Age preferences (male and female)
- Level of Care
  - Standard
  - Therapeutic
- Pregnant or parenting youth
- Prior human trafficking or sexual exploitation or sexual abuse victimization
- Sexual activity or reactivity of the child or youth
- Behavioral concerns:
  - Cruelty to animals
  - Verbal or physical aggression
  - History of theft
  - Fire starting
  - Chronic Lying
  - Poor sibling or peer relationships
  - Property destruction
  - Homicidal threats
  - Running Behaviors
  - Gang involvement
  - Juvenile offenses
  - Sex offenses
- Mental Health
  - I/DD including Autism
  - Psychotropic medication
  - History of suicidal ideation, attempts, or self harm
  - Eating disorders
  - Substance Use Disorder
- Medical
  - Allergies
  - HIV Aids
  - Visual impairment
  - Deaf or Hard of Hearing
  - Special Medical Needs
  - Medically Fragile
  - Enuresis or Encopresis
  - Non-ambulatory
  - Service Animal
  - Special Dietary Needs
  - Epilepsy

# Family Based Placements: child's level of care need

SFY 25, last day of each quarter Level of Care is the closest data DCF has reflecting possible acuity needs.

Family Based Setting Levels of Care	9/30/24	12/31/24	3/31/25	March as a %
Family Foster Home (FFH) - Basic 1	626	564	576	13.2%
Family Foster Home - Basic 2	273	251	251	5.7%
Family Foster Home - Basic 3	264	293	284	6.5%
Family Foster Home - Intensive 2	440	434	422	9.6%
Family Foster Home -Intensive 1	281	276	269	6.1%
FFH-Non Related (NR)Kin-Basic 1	161	162	159	3.6%
FFH-NRKin-Basic 2	69	62	61	1.4%
FFH-NRKin-Basic 3	44	46	46	1.1%
FFH-NRKin-Intensive 1	24	24	26	0.6%
FFH-NRKin-Intensive 2	27	25	34	0.8%
FFH-Relative (REL) -Basic 1	1,277	1,299	1,298	29.7%
FFH-Relative-Basic 2	195	189	18	0.4%
FFH-Relative-Basic 3	177	172	169	3.9%
FFH-REL-Intensive 1	103	100	102	2.3%
FFH-REL-Intensive 2	164	157	152	3.5%
Treatment Transition for FFH, Rel, or Kin (combined)	164	183	182	4.2%
ICPC-Relative care by any relative	172	183	169	3.9%
IDD Waiver any (all) tier(s)	155	149	156	3.6%
Total Family Based Levels of Care	4,616	4,569	4,374	100%

## Saint Francis Ministries - 2

# HB 2075 UPDATE

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# HOUSE BILL 2075 IMPLEMENTATION

## RECEIVING AND RESPONDING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT



HB 2075 KSA 38-2231 (d):

*The secretary shall provide an electronic means of communication for a responding law enforcement officer to refer a child who may be a victim of abuse or neglect to the secretary. The secretary shall receive such referrals and, within 24 hours, initiate an investigation of abuse or neglect and contact the persons who are the subject of such investigation. Then, within 24 hours of such contact, the secretary shall respond to the referring law enforcement agency with the status of the investigation.*

Starting July 1, 2025, DCF will initiate contact with families every day of the week including Saturdays, Sundays and holidays when there is a report from a law enforcement officer about a child in a family who might be a victim of abuse or neglect.

- A DCF child protection specialist or investigator will initiate contact with the family within 24hrs.
- DCF will provide a response to the reporting law enforcement agency either through email or phone call within 24hrs of DCF's contact with the family.
- As in current practice:
  - If a law enforcement agency requests DCF hold off on contacting a family, DCF will not contact the family until law enforcement provides further guidance.
  - If the alleged circumstance requires a joint investigation by DCF and law enforcement, the child protection specialist or investigator will coordinate with the law enforcement agency on the best way to proceed with contacting the family.



# HOUSE BILL 2075 IMPLEMENTATION

Here for children  
and families, every  
day of every week.

HB 2075 presents  
opportunities for a  
positive impact on  
Kansas children and  
families.



Initiate child and family well-being assessment



Initial or immediate safety planning



Reinforce connection with the family's supports



Prevent the need for foster care



Initiate resource or service referrals

# FOSTER CARE UPDATES

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# EXECUTIVE ORDER 25-01 PRESERVATION OF FEDERAL BENEFITS

**Executive Order 25-01** requires DCF to **discontinue the prior practice** of reimbursing the state for the cost of foster care from benefits received by youth due to their own disability or the death, disability, or retirement of a parent.

- No funds reimbursed to DCF from benefit monies received after Jan. 1, 2025

**ABLE bank accounts** allow qualifying individuals with disabilities to save money without losing their federal benefits.

**As of May 1, 2025:**

- **520 ABLE accounts** have been opened for children and youth in custody
- **\$1,213,774.30** conserved for children and youth in custody



# EXECUTIVE ORDER 25-01 PRESERVATION OF FEDERAL BENEFITS

## CONTINUED



Notices will start going out by **July 1, 2025**. There will be **three types of notices** based on these events:

- DCF becomes Rep Payee of a child's benefit
- When an ABLE account has been established and needs transferred due to the permanency goal being achieved
- In January of each year, an accounting of benefits received and saved for the previous calendar year

Educational components are being designed in partnership between DCF, the State Treasurers Office (using their already existing ABLE Roadshow), the Kansas Council for Economic Education (KCEE) and Kansas Council for Developmental Disabilities (KCDD).

Thanks to KCDD's support KCEE will be able to engaged a retired educator to assist KCDD self advocates in creating vignettes explaining common scenarios that youth receiving ABLE accounts upon achieving permanency may encounter.

# COLLABORATIONS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

On April 14, Brenda Soto, Deputy Director of Medicaid and Children's Mental Health, attended the Chief of Police Conference in Mulvane, KS to represent the DCF booth.

During this event, FOUR Questions/Family Mobile Crisis Helpline/988 informational visor cards were provided by DCF representatives which aided in discussions surrounding prevention and access to needed mental health services and community-based interventions prior to family crises.

Attendance at this event included Chiefs of Police and juvenile intake specialists who were eager to receive the informational visor cards and showed immense interest to provide the cards to individual forces at a later date. The relational dialogue at the event provided an opportunity for DCF representatives to encourage attendees to connect with their regional DCF leadership in hopes that the visor cards and prevention discussions could continue the momentum forward with law enforcement partnerships in each region



# THERAPEUTIC FAMILY FOSTER HOMES

## FOSTER CARE UPDATES

**Therapeutic Family Foster Homes (TFFH)** capacity building contracts awarded and began March 1, 2024.

Innovative mix of service delivery options will include specific recruitment strategies and increased wraparound supports to resource families, biological families and youth.

- Some grants include collaboration with agencies who operate similar programs or support youth requiring a therapeutic level of care

**DCF has approved 90 Therapeutic Family Foster Homes (May 1, 2025))**

- At least one home available in each DCF Region
- **Mockingbird Model launch** of first two family constellations scheduled for May.
- Cornerstones of Care In-Home Specialists have worked with **24 family preservation families** assisting with issues such as school attendance, support for youth attending virtual school, hygiene practices, bullying concerns at school as well as creating and following routines. Respite has been utilized with 9 children for a total of 118 nights

# SOUL FAMILY LEGAL PERMANENCY

SUPPORT. OPPORTUNITY. UNITY. LEGAL RELATIONSHIPS

During the first year of SOUL Family Legal Permanency being an option for young people experiencing foster care in Kansas more than 10 young people have achieved permanency with a SOUL Family Legal Permanency (FLP) Custodian.

DCF Staff and lived expert consultants partnered to train more than 1,000 child welfare stakeholders regarding this new permanency option.

## A few highlights of the **first 10 young people** experiencing SOUL legal permanency

- Four DCF regions are represented
- Four occurred with the family who had been the young person's only placement
- 7 young people achieved permanency with a family located in their home county or an adjacent county
- 7 young people achieved permanency while placed with a relative



**SOUL Family**

SUPPORT • OPPORTUNITY • UNITY • LEGAL RELATIONSHIPS

# 2023-2024 Session HB 2381 DCF FOLLOW UP



## TITLE IV-E LEGAL REPRESENTATION COST CLAIMING

In August 2024, DCF notified OJA and Tribes of the intent to take advantage of the federal fund opportunity, facilitated an instructional call in the fall of 2024 and has been providing technical assistance to interested counties who wish to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with DCF to facilitate their claim (via cost allocation plan).

- 26 counties have responded in some way with interest.
- Douglas and Norton were approved to begin claiming through a memorandum of agreement effective 4/1/25
- 6 Other counties with approval in process to begin claiming 7/1/25 are:
  - Decatur
  - Graham
  - Johnson
  - Phillips
  - Osbourne
  - Smith
- Another 18 counties are in various stages of inquiry or considering if they wish to participate.



# 2023-2024 Session HB 2381 DCF FOLLOW UP



## TITLE IV-E LEGAL REPRESENTATION REIMBURSEMENT ILLUSTRATION

Fiscal Opportunity Scenario Reminder: Assume a county pays an appointed attorney \$1,000.

- The total allowable Title IV-E costs would be \$230 at the 23% (KS) eligibility rate, 50% of which (\$115) can be drawn from the IV-E foster care grant, with a state match requirement of the other 50%.
- Counties will provide the \$115 state match, and DCF will reimburse the county with \$115 federal funds.
- The county would then reimburse the attorney or use the funds otherwise for allowable foster care legal representation activities.
- With a total service cost of \$1,000, the county will cover \$885, or about 89% of the total \$1,000 cost.
- In other words, a county incurs the balance of cost not received through federal IV-E reimbursement.

# INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

## FOSTER CARE UPDATES



Kansas Practice Model implementation and work with Safe Generations to provide specific IL training centered on KPM

All Independent Living staff are taking “Questions that Make a Difference” training as part of the Kansas Practice Model which teaches staff how to lead conversations with curiosity and provides them with an increased clarity and understanding on how to ask more useful questions, including the use of scaling questions. This course also teaches staff skills to navigate denial and disputes.

FYI Section 8 Vouchers increase affordable housing options for young people who have experienced foster care

- FYI is available in: Sedgwick County, including Wichita; Harvey County, excluding Newton; Butler County; Crawford County, including Pittsburg; Allen, Bourbon, Cherokee, Labette, Linn, Montgomery, Neosho, Wilson, and Woodson and Johnson Counties.
- In Kansas City and Douglas County non-FYI housing vouchers are available.

# CROSSOVER YOUTH PRACTICE MODEL

## FOSTER CARE UPDATES



Shawnee, Montgomery and Sedgwick Counties have fully implemented the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) and are working toward their sustainability plans.

Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) created a Statewide CYPM Toolkit to assist other Kansas counties implement the CYPM.

In April, a webinar was held to discuss the toolkit. Afterwards, the toolkit and a readiness survey was sent to Case Management Providers, courts, judicial district directors, and other stakeholders.

The recipients of the toolkit and readiness survey have 6 weeks to complete the survey and notify the state coordinators of their interest in implementing CYPM in their community.

The coordinators will choose 2 to 4 counties to begin the implementation process.

Counties can also begin the work on their own, using the coordinators for technical assistance.



# WHOLE FAMILIES PILOT

## KANSAS CITY REGION UPDATE



The Kansas City Region also implemented a pilot project called Whole Families to ensure DCF benefits such as SNAP, TANF, and childcare are available to families who have their children reintegrating after Foster Care.

We have found for many families, there is a lapses in benefits for their children returning home which causes a hardship for those parents/caregivers.

In collaboration with the Urban Institute in Washington DC, the DCF regional and central administration, Cornerstones of Care, and KVC have developed a process to ensure everyone is aware of the timeline and expectations for children being reintegrated.

This is accomplished by all agencies having access to a shared e-mail box where they can submit pertinent information, documents, and applications.

These applications are then processed by DCF workers in a timely manner to ensure there is no lapses in benefits for families who qualify for EES programs.

# CONCENTRATED FOSTER CARE PREVENTION



## KANSAS CITY PILOT UPDATE

This pilot program was created to decrease the need for Foster Care for youth being released from PRTFs and Acute Facilities where caregivers/parents refuse to pick them up.

DCCCA, who provides Family Preservation Services for the Kansas City Region, has taken on the assignment to assist DCF Child Protection Specialists when they meet with parents/caregivers who are reluctant to take their children home after release from these facilities.

Since implementation, several youth have been reunified with their families without entering into the Foster Care System.

DCCCA provides resources and services to these families after reunification. We are now making plans to implement this process throughout the state in the other regions.

# CAPITALIZING ON COMMUNITY COLLABORATION



## WICHITA REGION UPDATE

Launched [www.careforeveryfamily.org](http://www.careforeveryfamily.org) in collaboration with community partners.

- Care for Every Family is a collaboration of more than a dozen local organizations committed to supporting families and reducing foster care.
- Care for Every Family, Wichita, KS named 2024 Network of the Year at CarePortal Annual Conference

Launched the Child and Family Well-being Continuum of Care [Gathered Strong Sedgwick County – Gathered](#)

- Gathered is transforming our community by training and supporting those who care for vulnerable children.

Lead Wichita has developed a State of our City Dashboard [Foster Care Wichita Data | State of our City: Wichita](#)

- State of Our City is a hyperlocal platform for Wichita that surfaces key realities through data and stories, to help equip, inspire, and connect leaders for greater community impact

# QUESTIONS?

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