

# KANSAS DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM OVERSIGHT  
SECRETARY LAURA HOWARD | 6.26.2024

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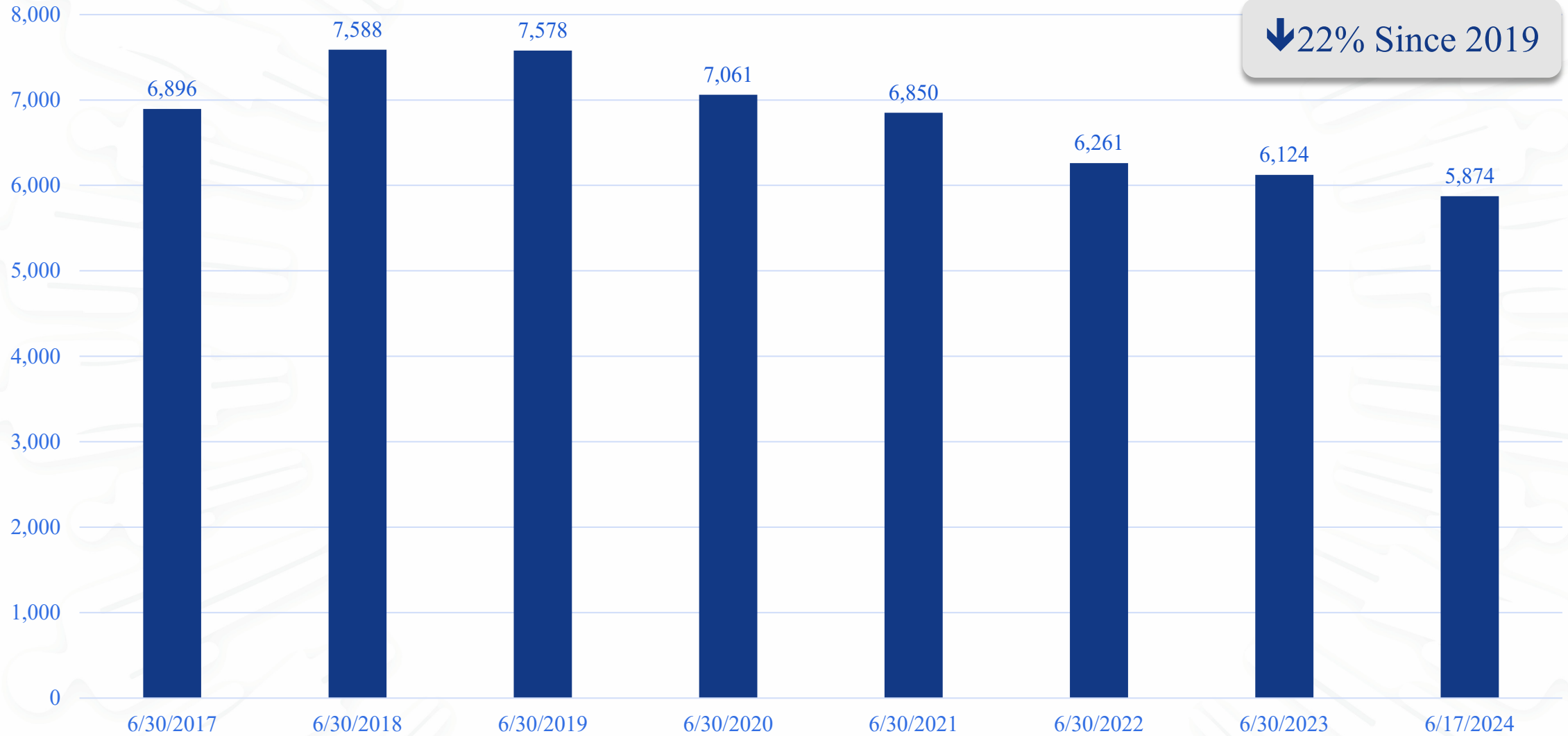
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# BY THE NUMBERS

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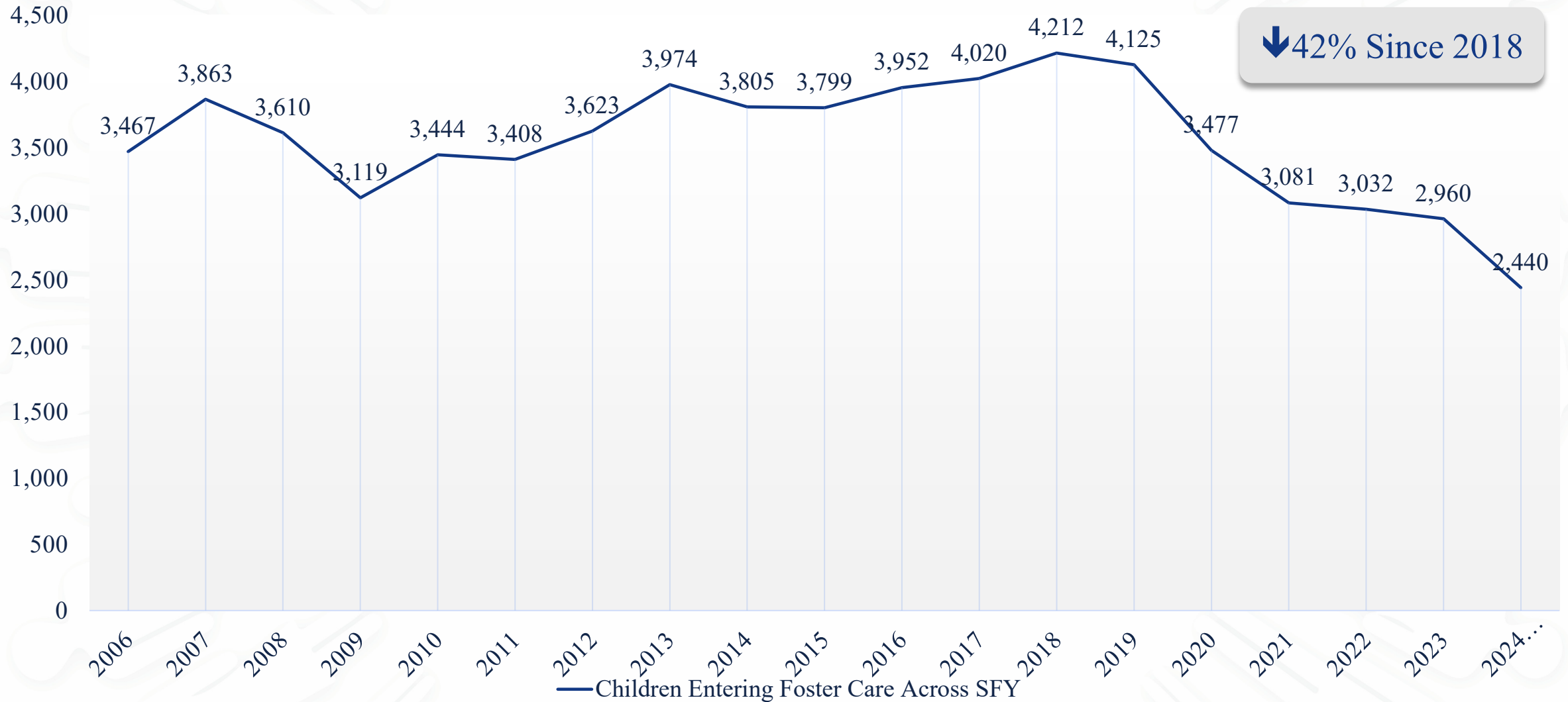
## NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE



↓22% Since 2019

■ Number of Children In Foster Care

## CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE ACROSS STATE FISCAL YEARS



— Children Entering Foster Care Across SFY

# DECREASED RATE OF ENTRY INTO FOSTER CARE MARCH 2024 FEDERAL DATA PROFILE



Across years:  
Rate of Removal of Children into Foster Care  
per 1,000 Child Population

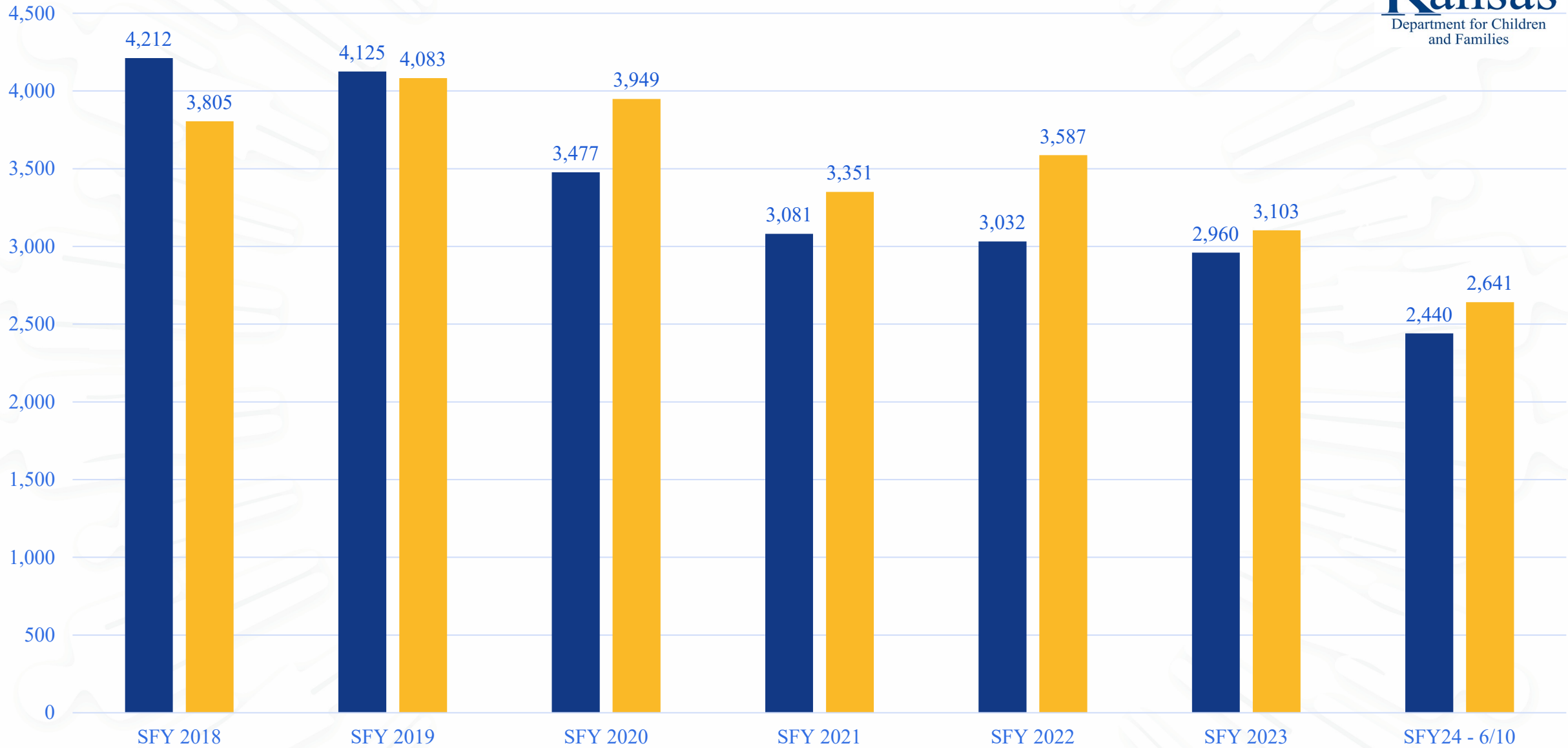
	FFY19	FFY20	FFY21	FFY22	FFY23
National	3.14	2.69	2.56	2.34	2.22
Kansas	5.70	4.19	4.42	4.40	3.84

# DECREASED RATE OF ENTRY INTO FOSTER CARE MARCH 2024 FEDERAL DATA PROFILE

- For FFY 23 that ended September 2023, Kansas ranks 42 of 52 jurisdiction for the rate of entry into care, improved from the prior fiscal year.

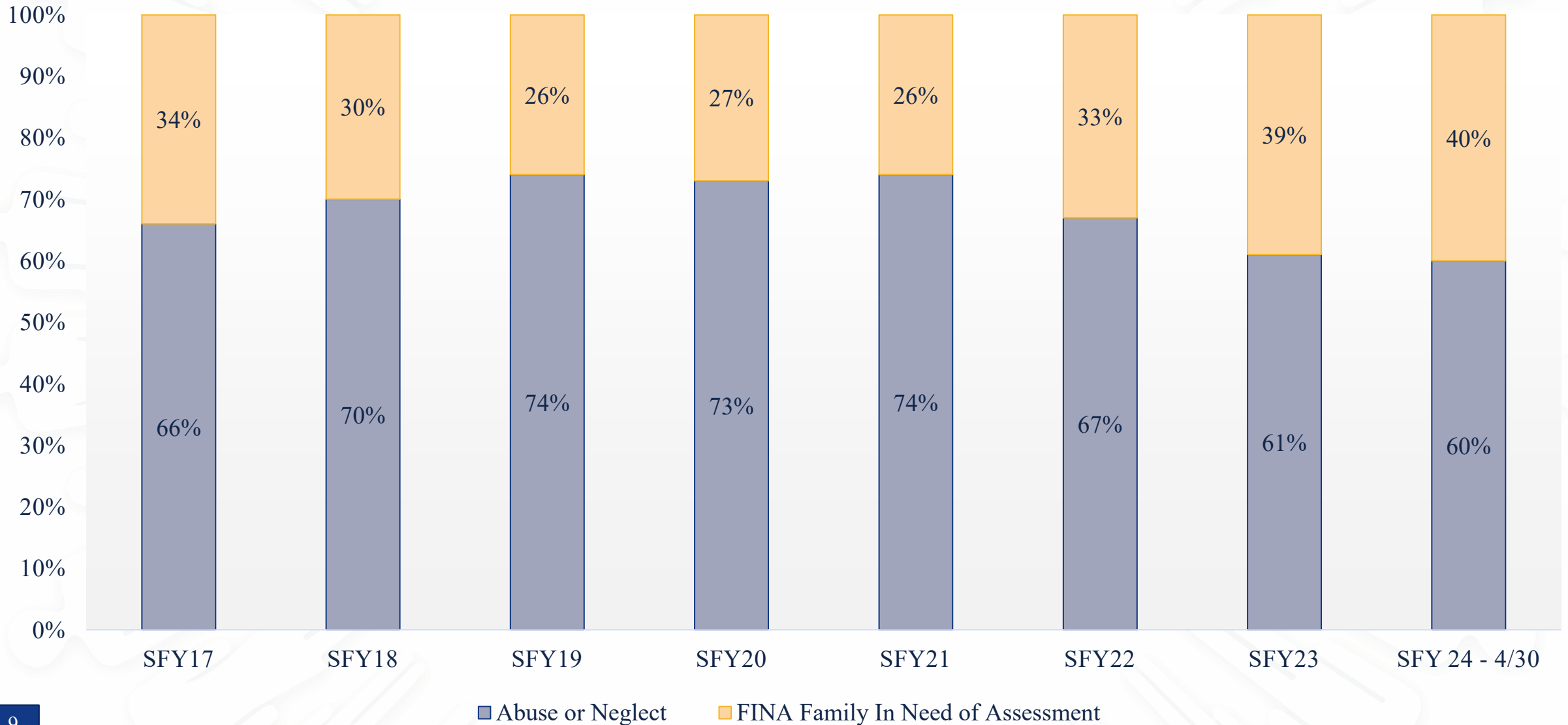
Highest Rank of Removal Rate per 1,000 child population				
	FFY22	entry rate	FFY23	entry rate
1	West Virginia	8.88	West Virginia	11.26
2	Alaska	6.28	Alaska	5.62
3	Montana	5.65	Montana	5.25
4	Vermont	5.01	Wyoming	5.18
5	Wyoming	4.84	Kentucky	4.52
6	Kentucky	4.55	Maine	4.21
7	Kansas	4.40	South Dakota	4.08
8	Missouri	4.23	Missouri	4.01
9	Maine	4.22	Iowa	3.90
10	Rhode Island	4.01	Kansas	3.84

# Children Entering & Exiting Foster Care Across Years

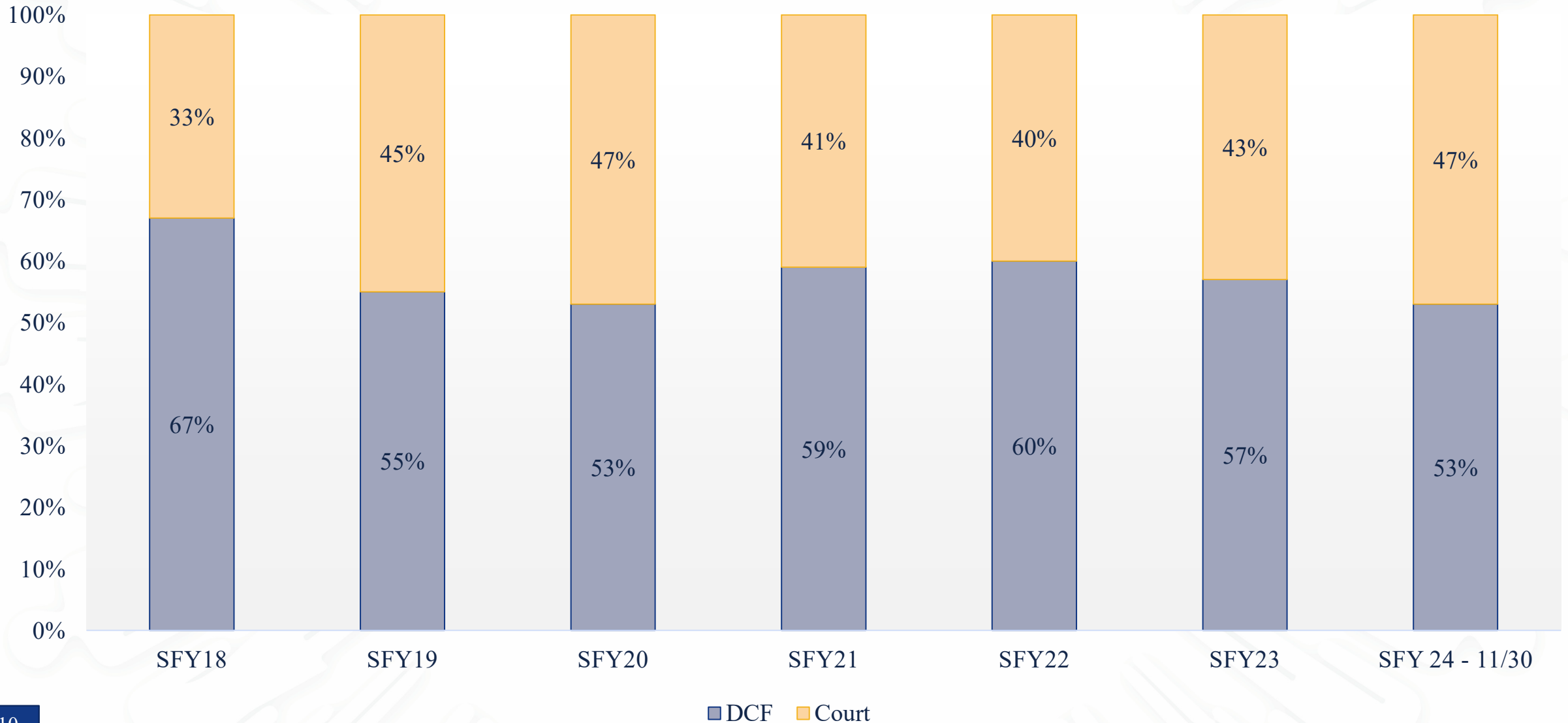




## STATEWIDE CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE PRIMARY REMOVAL REASON



## STATEWIDE CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE REQUESTOR SOURCE



# PREVENTION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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# PROMISING IMPACTS: COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING

- Increasing capacity of services on a mental health continuum such as crisis intervention (KDADS), mobile response or treatment services in schools for students (KSDE/KDADS)
- That increased capacity prevents unnecessary reports to DCF when there is no abuse or neglect.
- Reports involving a presenting situation of a family in need of behavior health support for their child.
  - There was an **18% decrease** in overall reports received about child behavior problems (compare month March 2023, 775 with and March 2024, 637).
  - Overall, there is a **15% decrease** in the monthly average number of child behavior problem reports assigned from SFY 2023 (average of 347) to SFY 2024 (average of 296).
- Influencing prevention factors
  - statewide expansion of Multisystemic Treatment in family first grants
  - Established Children’s Behavior Interventionist as a Medicaid billable in-home service increasing access to resources to prevent the need to enter foster care for a behavior health need.
  - Further implementation of Four Questions with local law enforcement agencies

# CHILD WELFARE SUMMIT



WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE LASTING IMPROVEMENT IN CHILD WELFARE

The Child Welfare Summit April 15 – 16, 2024  
DCF staff joined Judicial Teams creating action plans for lasting improvement in child welfare.

## In person teams include:

- CINC Judge, CINC Prosecutor, Guardian ad Litem, Parent Attorney, DCF Staff, Case Management Provider Staff, CASA, Citizen Review Board members and Law Enforcement

## Presentations and discussion included:

- Perspectives from lived experts
- Safety and Risk in prevention & permanency
- Four Questions
- Collaboration between Child Welfare Partners
- Timely Permanency
- Disproportionality
- Child Welfare Partner Well-Being
- Kansas Mental Health Resources

# CHILD WELFARE SUMMIT



WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE LASTING IMPROVEMENT IN CHILD WELFARE

## Takeaways

- Four questions implementation has had positive impact on prevention outcomes
  - Continue collaboration in jurisdictions can have similar impact asking four questions to achieve timely permanency
  - Community conversations including law enforcement are focused and encouraging
- Introduction of four possible questions to ask related to timely permanency
    1. What is the current safety concern that prevents us from sending child home?
    2. If there is a current safety concern, are there after-care services that can address that concern?
    3. If not, what needs to happen by next (week) to satisfy that safety concern?
    4. “If a safe return is not possible, is the current permanency plan appropriate?”

# 4 QUESTIONS PROGRAM APPROACH

*Update: The 4 questions continue to be shared with courts as part of the Child Welfare Summit action plans and recently shared with local law enforcement in developing plans for safety and prevention.*



**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?

# 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.

- The project includes 3 RFPs, internal staff costs, hardware and licenses. RFPs are:
  - Design, Development and Implementation (DDI),
  - Quality Assurance Contractor (QI), and
  - Independent Verification and Validation Contractor (IVV).
  
- The Design Development, and Implementation RFP is the largest, providing most of the work.
- Bidders have been narrowed with reviews and documents being completed with Department of Administration and the federal agency toward a contract award in 2024.
- Because the project is currently under a competitive bid process, we are unable to give additional details.

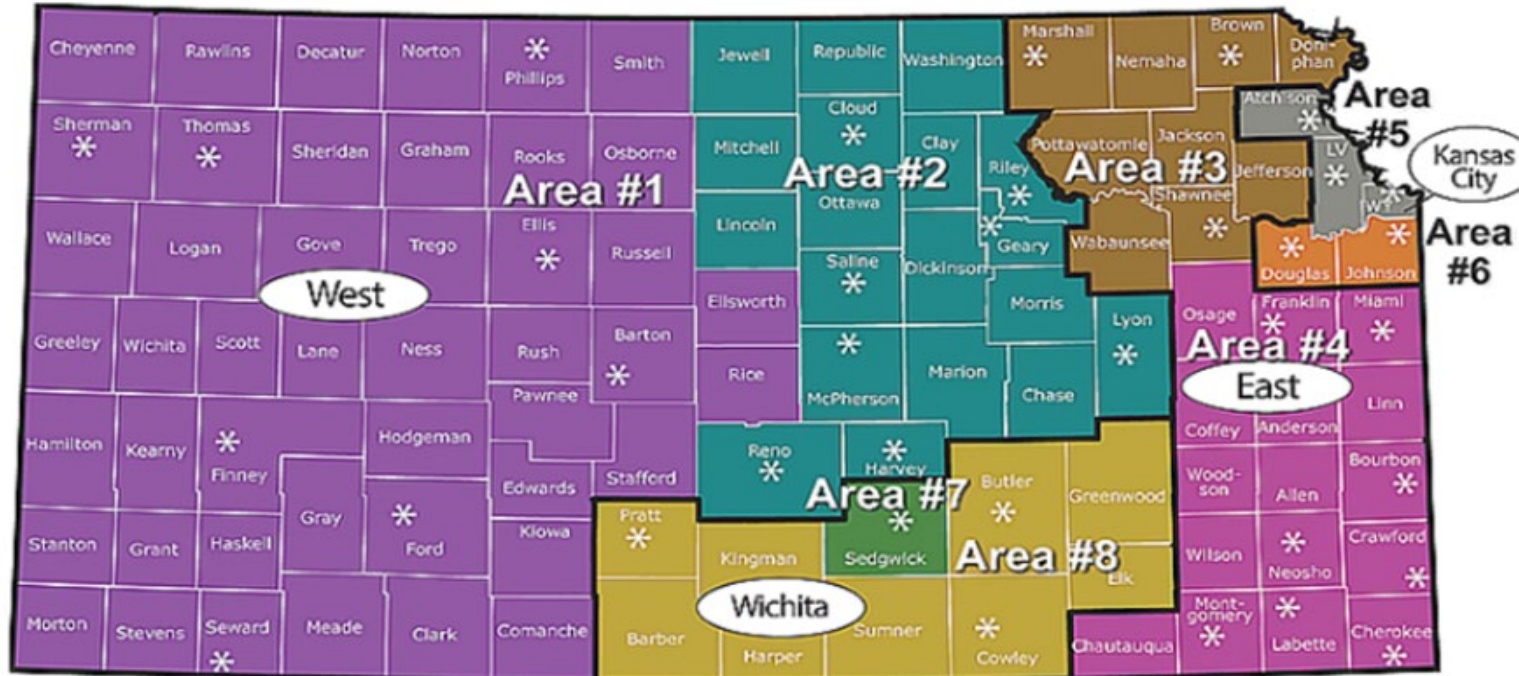


# FOSTER CARE UPDATES

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# FOSTER CARE CASE MANAGEMENT 7/1/24

FOSTER CARE CONTRACT EFFECTIVE 7/1/24



✱ DCF Service Center		DCF Regions	
1	St. Francis Ministries	3	KVC
2	St. Francis Ministries	4	TFI
5	Cornerstones of Care	7	EmberHope
6	KVC	8	TFI

# EMBERHOPE TRANSITION

## WORKFORCE UPDATE

- 87% staffed for 7/1 as of 6/19/24.
- Has offered multiple incentives to staff transferring from Saint Francis Ministries including:
  - \$2,000 sign on bonuses and transferring up to 80 hours of paid leave time from SFM.
  - Insurance coverage starting on July 1 rather than having a waiting period.
  - Incentivizing staff to remain at Saint Francis until 7/1. To do this, Saint Francis staff who are transferring to EHC may not begin full time work at Emberhope until 7/1.

# EMBERHOPE TRANSITION

## CASE MANAGEMENT ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

- 50% of children will experience new case manager related to positive practice change, due to in part:
  - Complying with case load sizes included in the new contracts (1:15) necessitates a change in case manager for many youth.
  - 90 of the youth in Area 7 will have case managers who specialize in working with crossover youth who will have a projected case load of 1:8.
  - A team of case managers specializing in working with you who have independent living case plan goals.
- Their data system (Evolve) being filled with youth information and includes task list and flags for case managers including upcoming visits and case plan due dates.
- Case Transfer Summaries are being prepared for all youth who will transfer . The Saint Francis Ministries staff person preparing the files for transfer is the staff person who receives the files for Emberhope.

# Timely Legal Permanency

UPDATE: FEDERAL PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

- Kansas does not meet national data measures for timely permanency
- Kansas Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) approved 4/30/24
- Regarding Timely Permanency for Children Ending Foster Care
  - Kansas was found to be performing statistically worse than national performance in achieving permanency within 12 months for children entering care,
  - in care 12-23 months, and
  - in care 24 or more month

# Timely Legal Permanency

UPDATE: FEDERAL PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

- Data for the federal April 3023 CFSR on site review:
  - **30.2%** exited foster care to reunification, adoption, guardianship or living with a relative within 12 months of their entry. *The national performance for this data indicator is 35.2%.*
  - Of the children who had been in care between 12 and 23 months, **40.1%** exited to permanency in the subsequent 12 months. *The national performance for this data indicator is 43.8%.*
  - Of the children and youth who had been in care 24-months or more, **32.8%** exited to permanency in the subsequent 12 months. *The national performance for this data indicator is 37.3%.*

# Timely Legal Permanency

UPDATE: FEDERAL PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

## Key strategies to reach closer to national performance

- Improve communication of risk and safety concerns related to the four questions so information can be provided to the court and parties to allow for more timely reintegration.
- Increase timely filing of Termination of Parental Rights and subsequent adoptions.

# EMBERHOPE TRANSITION

## WORKFORCE UPDATE

- 83% staffed for 7/1 as of 6/12/24 and that will increase.
- Has offered multiple incentives to staff transferring from Saint Francis Ministries including
  - \$2,000 sign on bonuses and transferring up to 80 hours of paid leave time from SFM.
  - Insurance coverage starting on July 1 rather than having a waiting period.
  - Incentivizing staff to remain at Saint Francis until 7/1. To do this, Saint Francis staff who are transferring to EHC may not begin full time work at Emberhope until 7/1.



# EMBERHOPE TRANSITION

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# RELATIVE / KIN ABRIDGED LICENSING

## FOSTER CARE UPDATES

Related to new federal guidance, Relatives/ Kin who wish to be licensed will receive the same daily rate of reimbursement as licensed family foster homes 7/1/24.

- Kansas was 3rd state in country to receive an approved plan for separate licensing standards for relatives and kin related to Title IV-E federal financial participation (administrative costs.)
- Relatives and Kin will need to meet abridged or adjusted licensing standards
  - Required to take first aid and medication management training
  - In first year of being a caregiver for their related or kin connection child, they will take licensing course and have access online at no cost to Kinship Origins and Path [Kinship Care Training & Resources — Children's Alliance \(childally.org\)](#)
  - Non safety standards are waived for relatives/ kin creating the abridged standard.

# RELATIVE / KIN ABRIDGED LICENSING



## RATE REFRESHER

Licensed Foster Home Level of Care Daily Rate	Maint. paid to home/caregiver	Admin. paid to CPA	Daily total
Basic 1	\$25.20	\$13.11	\$38.31
Basic 2	\$42.00	\$22.52	\$64.52
Basic 3	\$63.00	\$32.08	\$95.08
Intensive 1	\$78.75	\$40.86	\$119.61
Intensive 2	\$94.50	\$48.09	\$142.59
Treatment Transition	\$113.40	\$56.73	\$170.13
Therapeutic	\$159.60	\$54.60	\$214.20
IDD – Tier 1	(FFH payee 163.24*) \$187.24	\$59.67	\$246.91
IDD – Tier 2	(FFH payee 133.71*) \$157.71	\$54.95	\$212.66
IDD – Tier 3	(FFH payee 96.66*) \$120.66	\$38.62	\$159.28
IDD – Tier 4	(FFH payee 62.42*) \$86.42	\$25.90	\$112.32
IDD – Tier 5	(FFH payee 45.11*) \$69.11	\$20.47	\$89.58

# FAMILY TREATMENT COURTS



## FOSTER CARE UPDATES

Three jurisdictions – Cowley, Lyon, and Miami Counties - launch September 2024.

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.

The Chief Justice of the Kansas Supreme Court has convened implementation teams 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.

Program interventions are assessed by 5 outcomes:

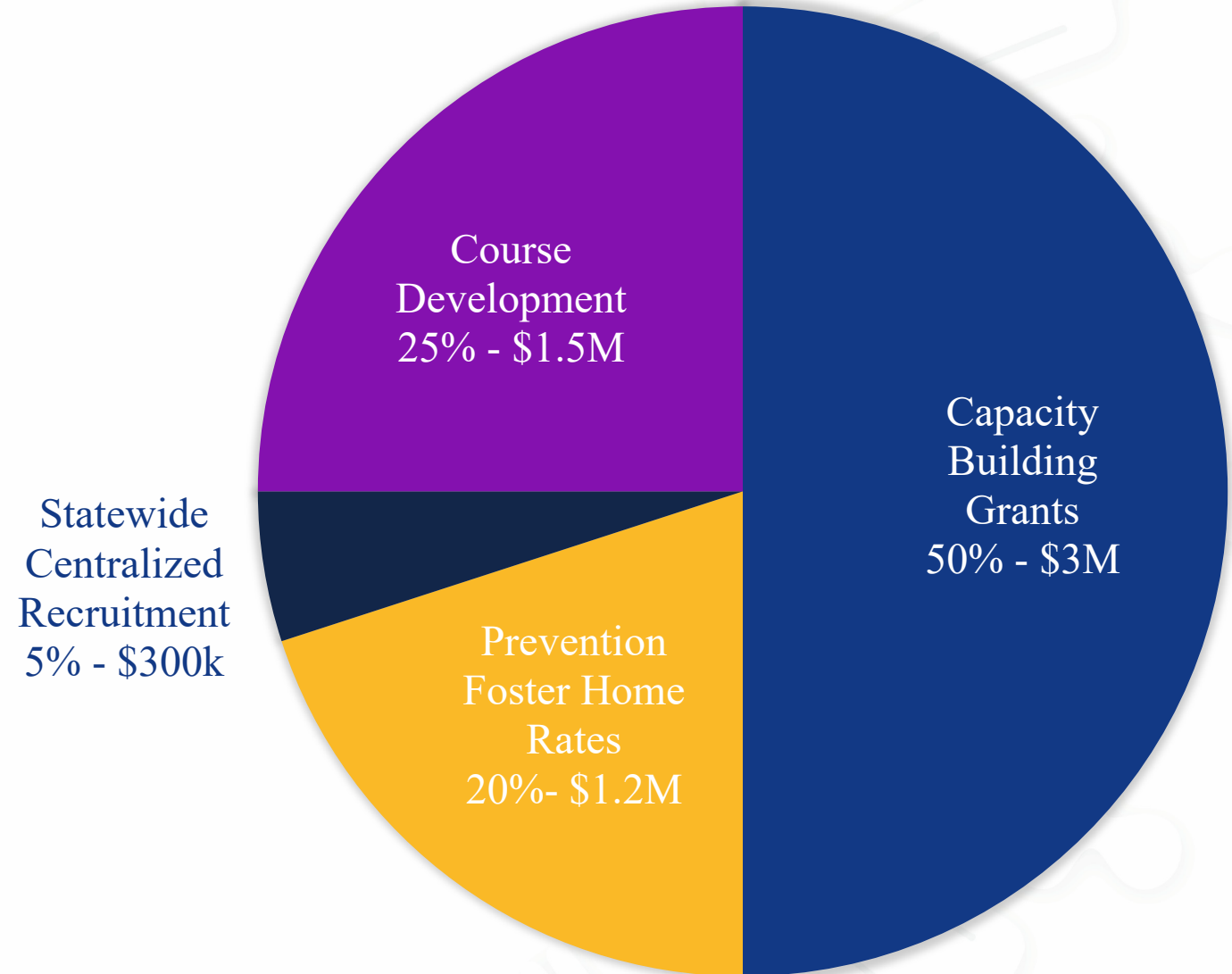
Recovery, Reunification, Repeat Maltreatment or Re-Entry, Remain at Home.

# THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE

## UPDATE

In SFY23 the Governor signed into law \$6 million for DCF to expand the Therapeutic Foster Care program as an integral piece in achieving stability and timely permanency.

The funds are invested on a nationally recognized training curriculum and capacity building grant awards announced Spring 2024.



# THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE GRANTS



## GRANT AWARD UPDATE

Seven (7) agencies received a total \$4,765,355 in grants to build capacity providing needed training and supportive services.

- Cornerstones of Care, \$512,766
- DCCCA, \$1,017,306
- Eckerd, \$332,014
- Emberhope, \$1,221,644
- FosterAdopt Connect, \$189,507
- KVC, \$532,255
- Pressley Ridge, \$959,863

Read more: [DCF announces Innovative Capacity Building Grants for Therapeutic Family Foster Homes - Newsroom \(ks.gov\)](#)

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

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# HB 2381 DCF Follow up

Died in Judiciary Committee 4/30/24



- Short Title: Requiring the court to appoint an attorney to represent a child who is the subject of child in need of care proceedings and allowing for the optional appointment of a guardian ad litem.
- Related to the bill, there was renewed interest in the DCF ( as the state's Title IV-E agency) pursuing federal financial participation (FFP) of 50% in administrative costs for legal representation set forth in 2017 and 2020 federal guidance.
- DCF will submit a cost allocation plan for federal approval and collaborate with Office of Judicial Administration on would become operational instructions for counties to bill DCF to receive reimbursement payment for eligible legal representation services.
- With approved plan, Kansas can receive FFP for administrative costs of preparation for and participation in judicial determinations in all stages of foster care legal proceedings, by:
  - A title IV-E agency attorney,
  - An attorney providing independent representation to a child who is a candidate for title IV-E foster care or is in title IV-E foster care, and
  - An attorney providing independent representation to such a child's parent



# HB 2381 DCF Follow up

## Title IV-E Legal Representation Reimbursement Illustration

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.

# REGULATION UPDATES



- **Implemented June 7, 2024:**
  - Foster Care Licensing
  - Child Placing Agency
  - Juvenile Crisis Intervention Centers
- **Regulations will be formatted into booklets and will be sent for printing.**
  - Family Foster Home Regulation Book
  - Non-related Kinship and Relative Abridged Family Foster Home Book
  - Child Placing Agency Regulation Book
  - Juvenile Crisis Intervention Center Book

Available here: [Issue 21 - 05-23-2024 | Kansas Department for Children and Families | Permanent Administrative Regulations - 52158 \(ks.gov\)](#)

# S.O.U.L. INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION



SUPPORT – OPPORTUNITY – UNITY – LEGAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Effective 7/1/24
- 5 training sessions:
  - June 25 to July 16, 2024
  - Foundational curriculum webinars for front line case managers and their supervisors.
- Booster sessions and advanced topic workshops planned for Fall 2024

# S.O.U.L. INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

SUPPORT – OPPORTUNITY – UNITY – LEGAL RELATIONSHIPS



In April 2024, there were **381 16 and 17-year-olds with a current goal in FACTS of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)**

- Over two-thirds are living with a relative or licensed family foster home (68%)
- One-third are from Johnson, Reno and Sedgwick County (n=129/381)
- One-third have been in foster care for less than 2 years.
- Eight (8) counties with more than 10 youth who are age 16 or 17 with goal of APPLA

County	Youth
Sedgwick	73
Johnson	29
Reno	27
Lyon	16
Wyandotte	13
Riley	12
Leavenworth	12
Finney	11

# QUESTIONS?

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