

Presentation to the 2021 Joint Ways and  
Means Subcommittee on Human Services

# CHILD WELFARE DIVISION

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Director, Child Welfare Division

March 23, 2021

# Presentation Outline

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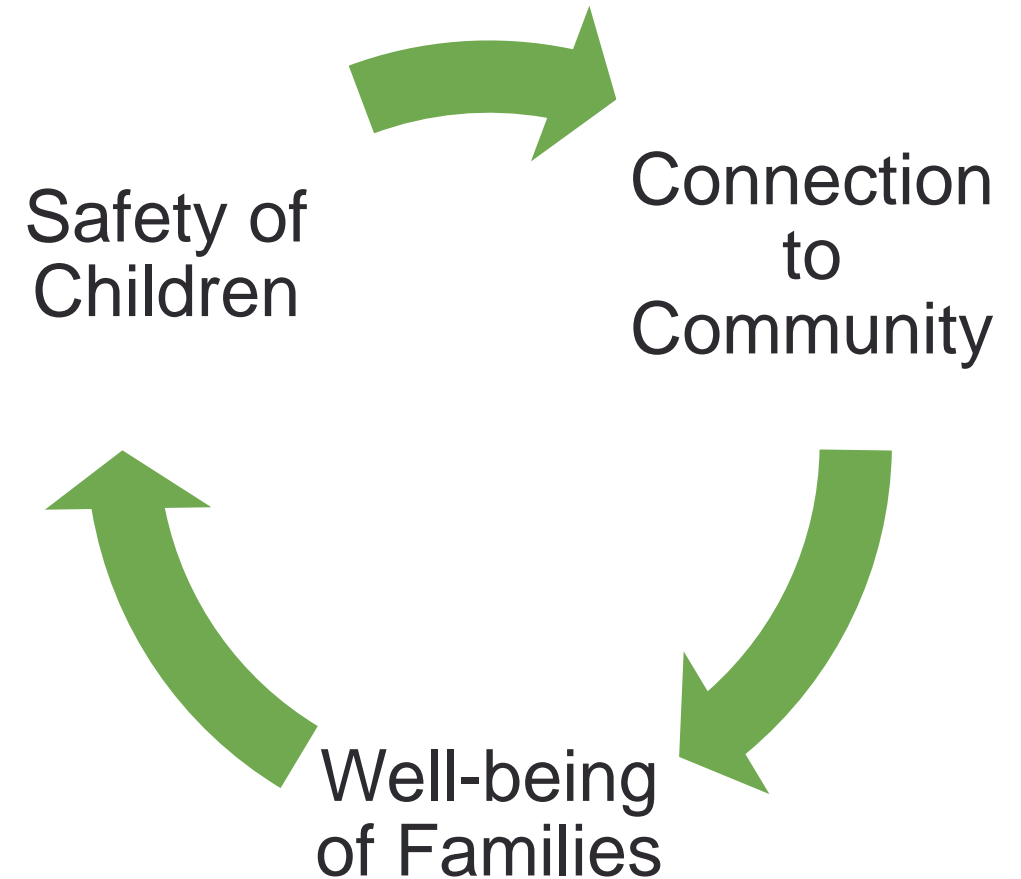
## TODAY

- Building child, family and community well-being
- Building the structure for the Child Welfare Division Vision for Transformation
- Integrating the Child Welfare Division Vision for Transformation
- Supporting families and promoting prevention
- Enhancing our staff and infrastructure
- Enhancing the structure of our system by using data with continuous quality improvement

# We are Child Welfare

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- Mission: to ensure every child and family is empowered to live a safe, stable and healthy life
- Part of a larger statewide social system that works to support children and families and communities



## Vision for Transformation

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Our Vision for Transformation is based on a belief that children do best growing up in a family and on values related to honoring and supporting cultural wisdom, building community resilience and voice, and ensuring the self-determination of our communities of color. The goal is an absolute transformation.

## We Believe, We Value

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- All children deserve to experience safe, stable, healthy lives and grow up in the care of a loving family and community
- Value the voices, experiences, cultures, intellect and uniqueness of the children and families we serve

**WE VALUE**  
**Believe**



# Building the foundation for the Vision for Transformation

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1. Laying avenues for fairness, equity, inclusion, accessibility, diversity and transparency in our work
2. Partner, listen and lift community voices and their decision-making powers

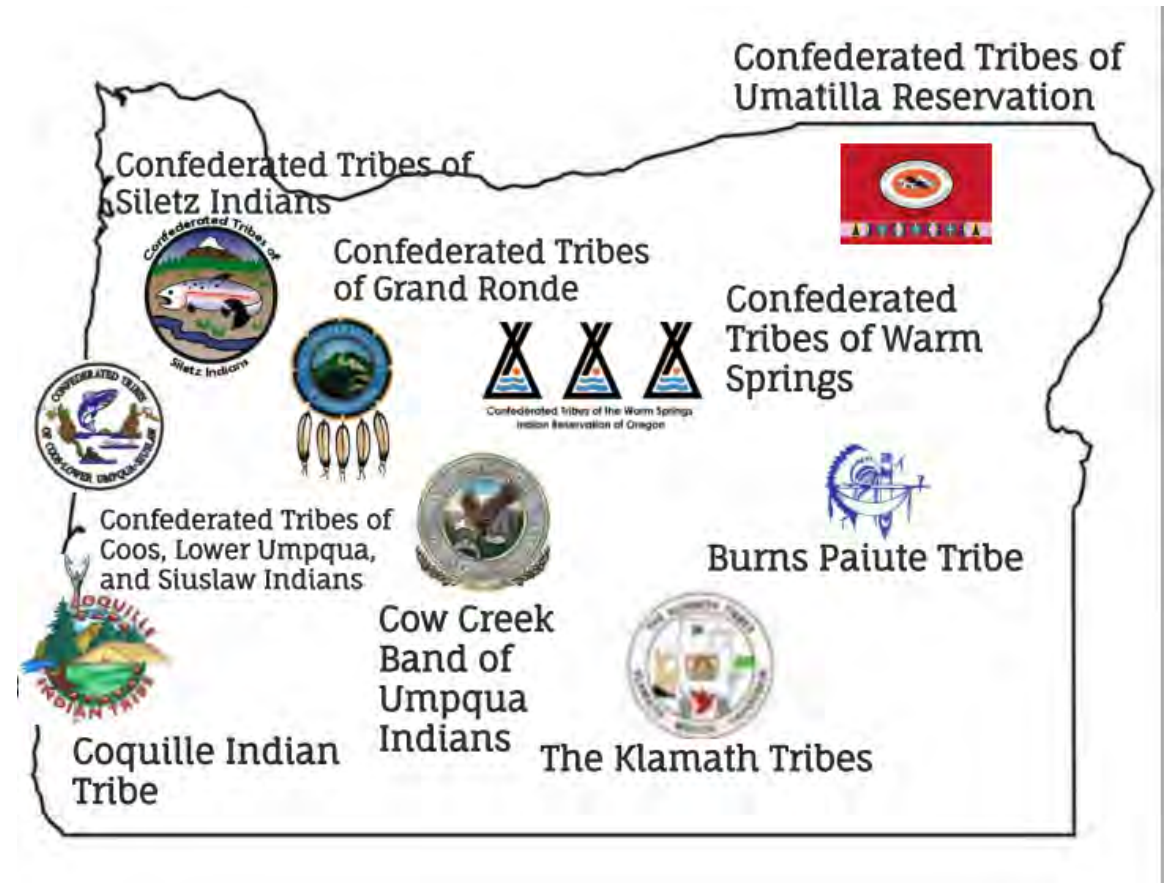
# Racial Equity and Anti-Racist Framework

- In our work
  - Keeping families together whenever possible with safety at the core
  - Improving procedures for reunification and coordinating partners to improve time to permanency – addressing racial disproportionality
  - Providing inclusive, equitable and culturally appropriate services to children, young adults and families
- Among staff
  - Retention and recruitment of diverse staff
  - Strong leadership support and prioritization of equity efforts



# Partnering with Tribal Nations

- Honor and support our Government-to-Government relationship
- Tribal Affairs Baskets of Work
  - Tribal Consultations and Partnership
  - Program, Practice and Policy Development
  - Training and Capacity Building
  - Resource Management
  - Research and Data
- Quarterly meetings with Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council
- 2021 Oregon Indian Child Welfare Act (ORICWA) Implementation





# Part of building resilient communities

## Prevention Focused

- Family well-being focus
- Family First Prevention Services Act is a tool to shift how we support families
- Multi-generational approach
- Engage with community
- Trauma-informed
- Strength-based
- Honor and support self-determination of communities of color



# Three Guiding Principles of the Vision for Transformation

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**1. Supporting families and promoting prevention**

**2. Enhancing our staff and infrastructure**

**3. Enhancing the structure of our system by using data with continuous quality improvement**





# Integrating the Vision for Transformation in Child Welfare

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1. Who we serve
2. How we serve



# Who We Serve

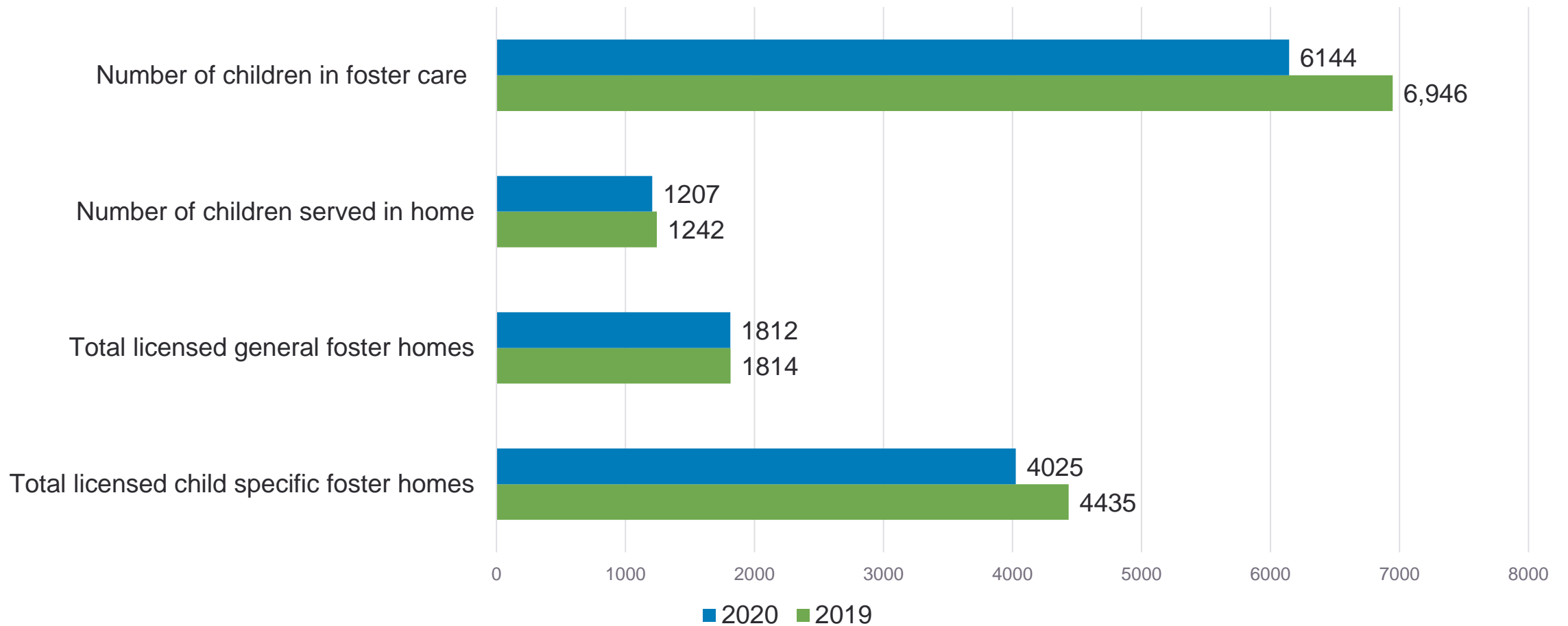
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- All 36 counties in Oregon
- Tribal Nations
- Children and Young Adults
- Families of Origin
- Foster Parents and Caregivers
- Community Partners
- Providers



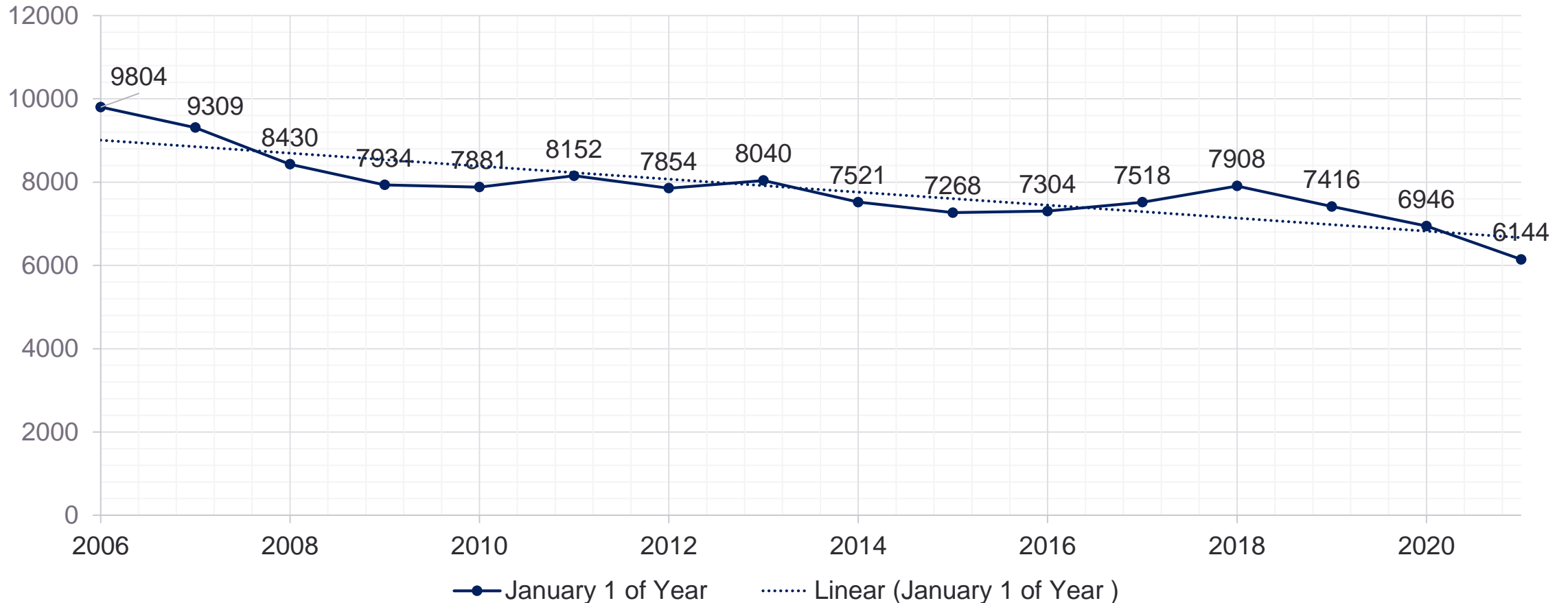


# Who We Serve and Services Provided



# Lowest Number of Children Entering Care in 15 years

Count of Children in Foster Care January 1 by Year



# Child Welfare Division Core Areas of Work

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Oregon Child Abuse Hotline

Child Safety

Permanency:  
Reunification,  
Adoption,  
Guardianship

Foster Care Program  
Youth Transitions Program

Fatality Prevention and Review

Health and Wellness

Foster Parent Retention & Recruitment

Treatment Services

ICPC  
Interstate Compact for Placement of Children

Policy  
State and Federal

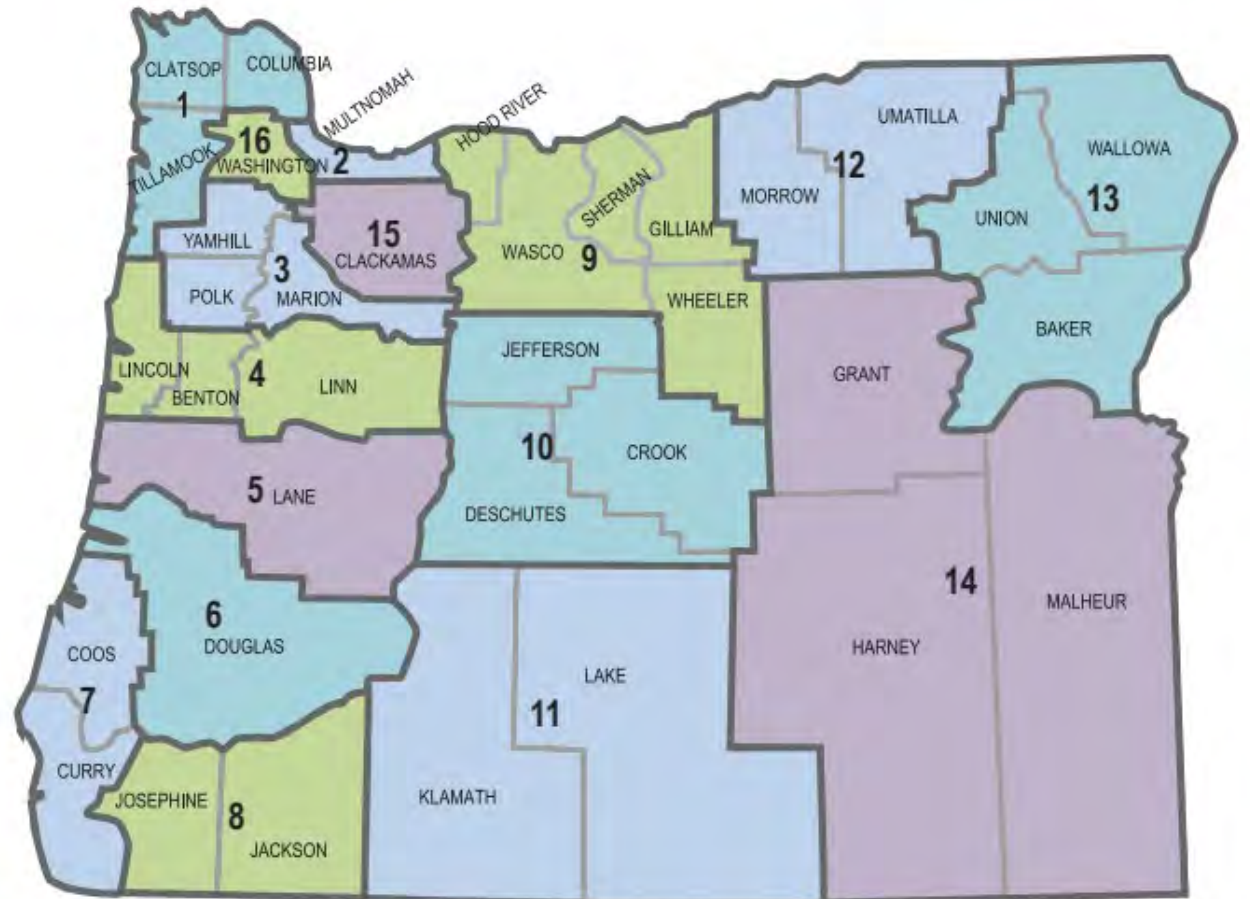
Equity, Training, & Workforce Development

Business & Operations  
Contracts, ORKIDS

# Local Staff Structure

Services provided by ODHS Child Welfare staff in partnership with Tribal Nations, community partners and organizations

- 3,398 positions from the Governor's Recommended Budget 21-23
- 74 offices including central, district, branch, satellite, and visitation locations







# Supporting families and promoting prevention

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1. Oregon Child Abuse Hotline
2. Safety Program
3. Permanency Program
4. Resource Family Supports
5. Respite Care for Resource Parents
6. Youth Transitions

# Oregon Child Abuse Hotline (ORCAH)

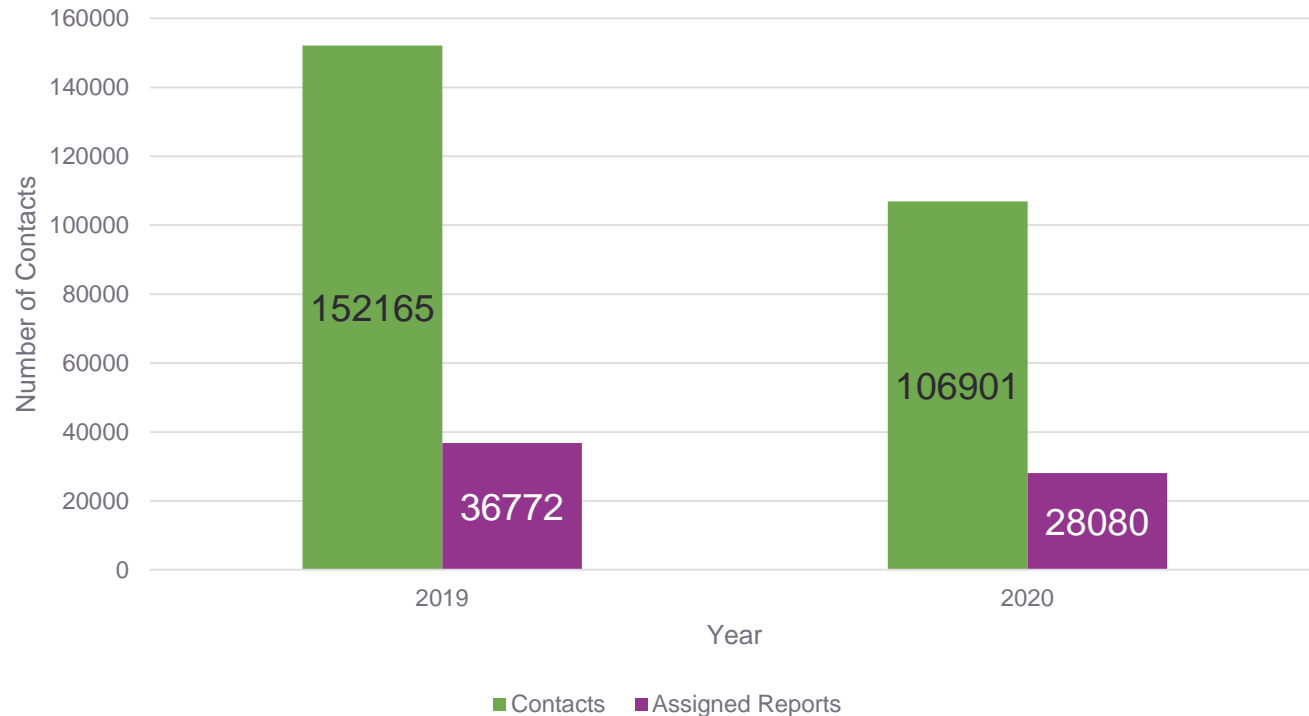
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- Being the first point of contact for community or people concerned about children's safety
- Educating mandatory reporters that poverty does not equal neglect
- Providing 24-hour call center at **1-855-502-SAFE (7233)**



# ORCAH Data

ORCAH Volume April-Dec 2019 and 2020  
 Contacts=calls and cross reported law enforcement reports



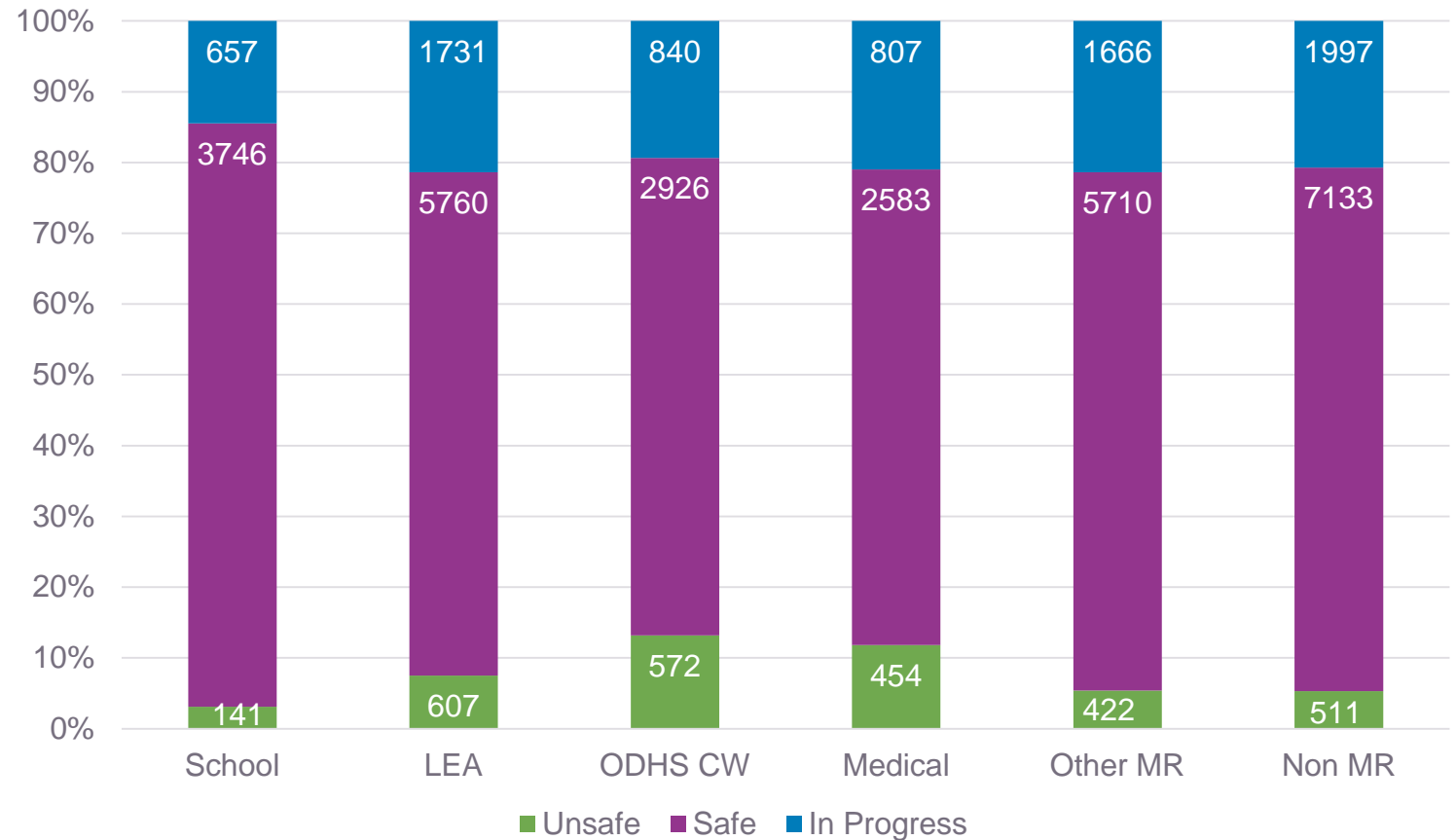
- Implemented new business processes within ORCAH focusing on Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) to reduce wait times

Aggregate	2019 (April-Dec.)	2020
Average Wait Time	8.07 minutes	4.33 minutes (1.82 minutes April-Dec.)

# Safety Program

- Provide comprehensive child safety assessments
- Keep child in a home safely and provide supports to families
- Utilize foster care as the last option for intervention

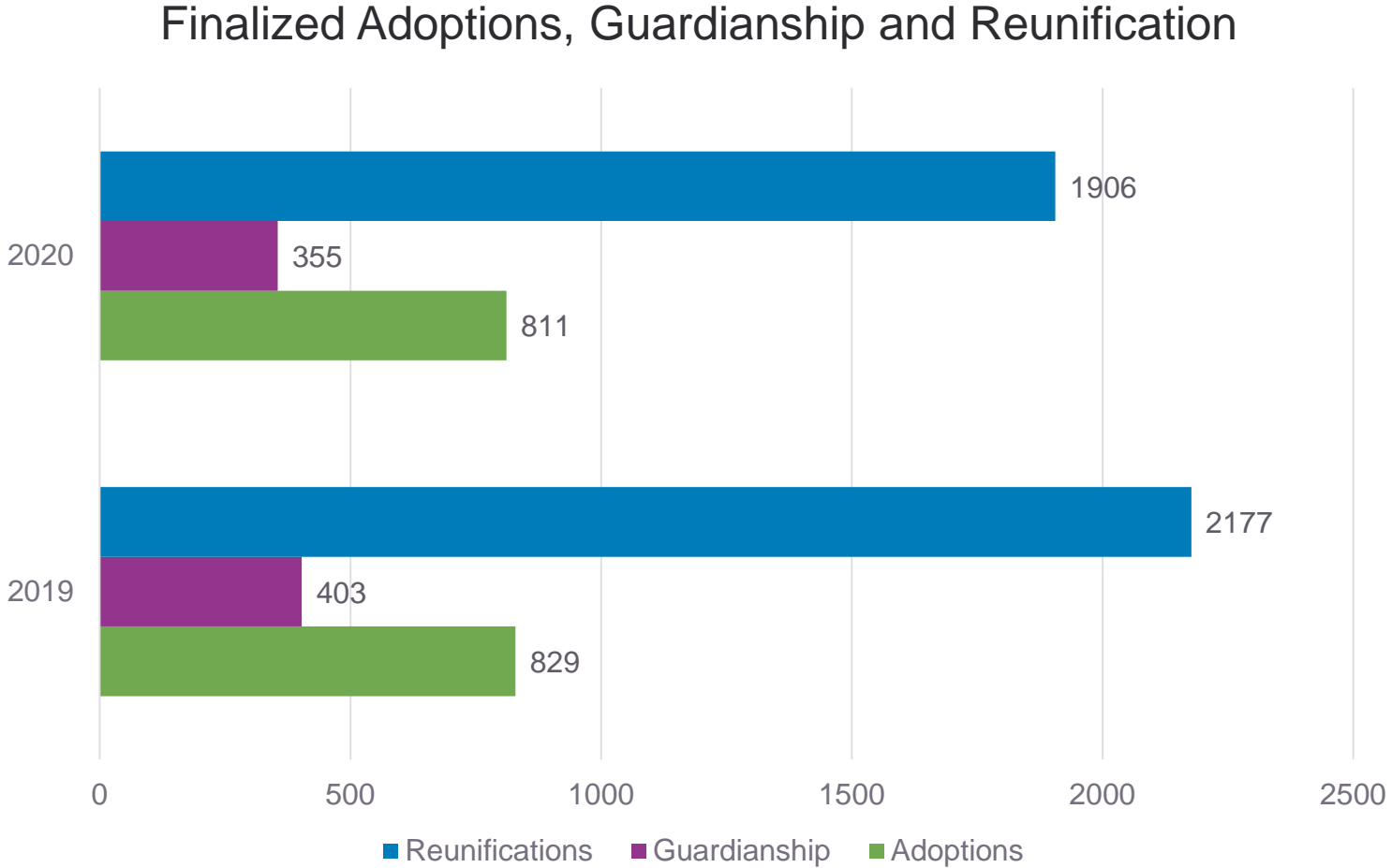
2020 Safety Decision by Reporter Type





# Permanency Program

- Supporting families in reaching permanency as quickly as possible
- Permanency looks like:
  - A child reuniting with their parent
  - A child being adopted out of foster care
  - A child being placed in guardianship
- Post-Adoption Services



# \$19.4 million GRB Requested Investment in Respite Care for Foster Parents

- No current formalized respite care program that would certify pay and monitor respite providers
- Respite care:
  - provides resources for caregivers to care for themselves and their families better
  - leads to greater retention and less burnout of foster families
- Program to be built in collaboration with community partners to deliver these services

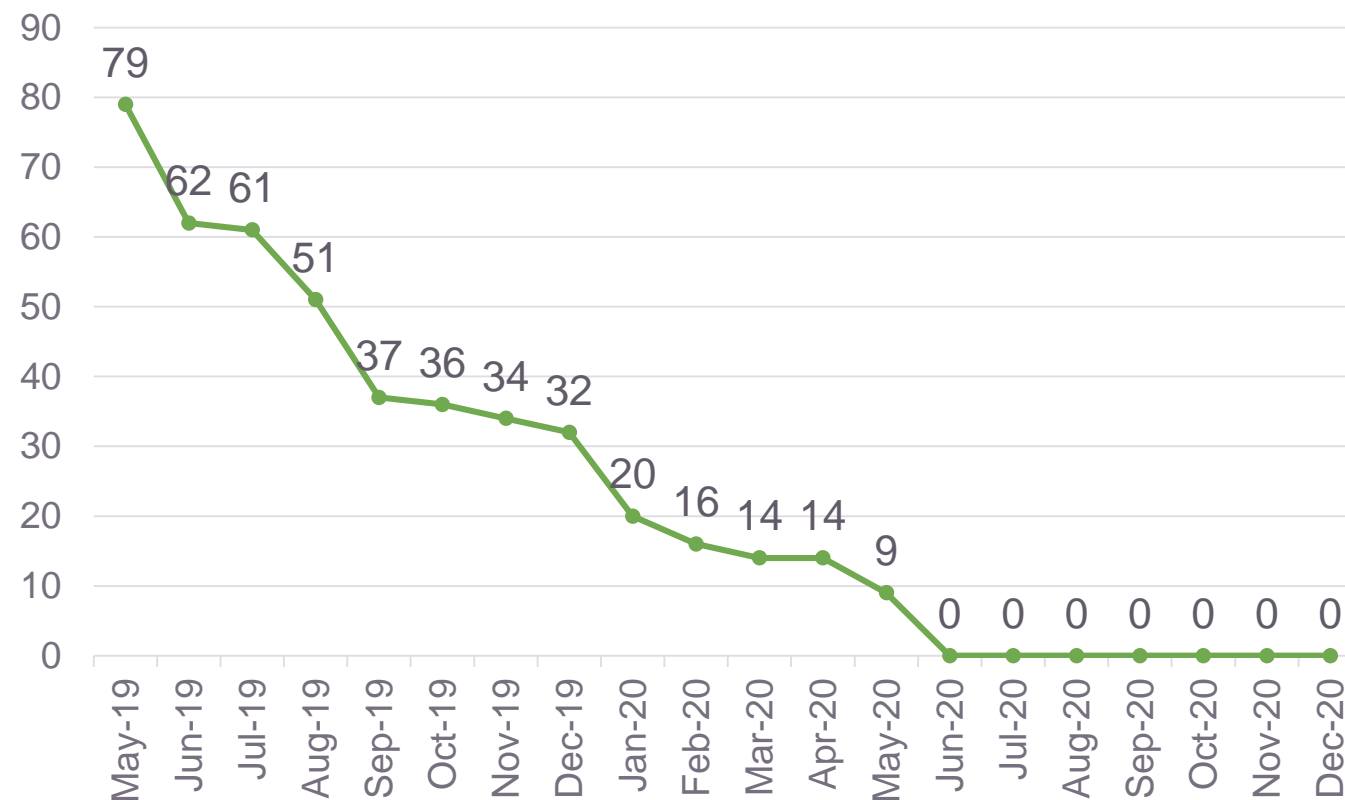


Source: [My Oregon News](#)

# Treatment Services

- All children are now served in Oregon and there are no approved out of state providers
  - Contract with Sequel Youth Services was canceled July 2020
- Worked to maintain bed capacity throughout 2020
- Tailor expansions based on individual needs
- Incredible effort to reduce use of temporary lodging
- Plans in 2021 to expand pilot crisis response

Total Children Out of State



# Family First Prevention Services Act (Family First)

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- Federal legislation passed in 2018
- Expanded the use of Federal Title IV-E funding to include services to prevent the need for foster care
- Created specific requirements for congregate care placements
- Submitted Oregon Family First Prevention Plan for federal review in November 2020
  - Resubmitted in February 2021



# Where Family First Fits

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- A tool to support Oregon in achieving the Vision for Transformation to build a system that is:
  - Trauma-informed
  - Family and community centered
  - Culturally responsive services
- Services will be part of the state's broader, cross-agency prevention system





# Child Fatality Prevention and Review Program

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- Child Fatality Prevention and Review Program
- Participated in the National Transformational Collaborative Outcomes Management Conference
- Three large prevention efforts
  - Safe Sleep for infants
  - Suicide Prevention
  - Responding to Chronic Neglect



# Oregon Indian Child Welfare Act (ORICWA)



# Enhancing our staff and infrastructure

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1. Equity, Workforce Development and Training
2. Social Service Specialist Retention and Engagement
3. Oregon Indian Child Welfare Act



# Equity, Training and Workforce Development

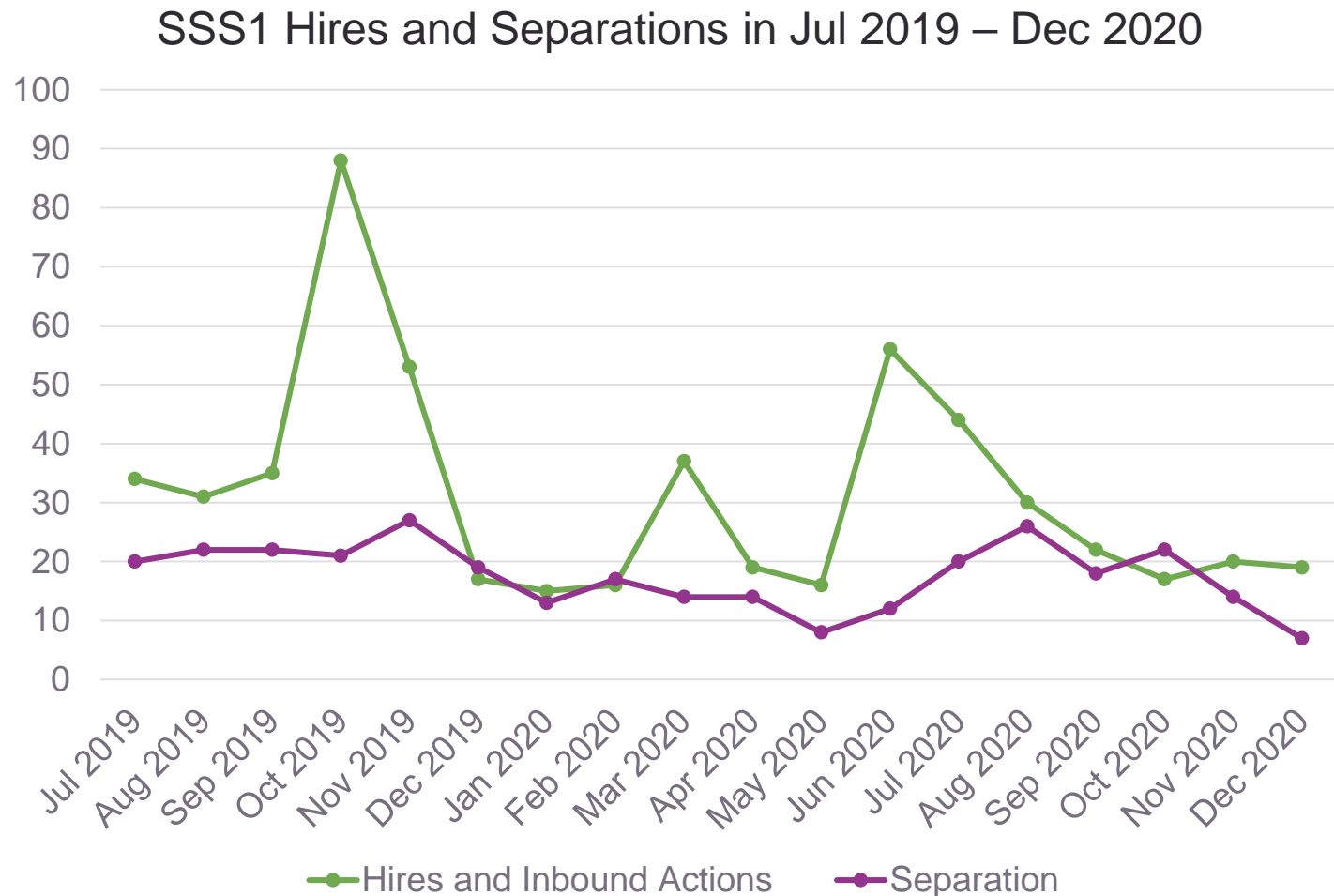
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- Workforce development efforts to support quality supervision, transfer of learning and coaching
- Hiring and support of Child Welfare caseworkers.
  - Current caseworker staffing is around 92% of position authority
- Building internal workforce development capacity
- Realignment with training partners
- 19 FTE focused on equity, training, workforce development and well-being, for staff and foster parents



# Casework Workforce Movement

- A total of 433 Social Service Specialists (SSS1) were hired
  - 124 SSS1's were promoted within the organization
- The number of separations continue to decrease over time
- The reasons for separations were collected since September





# Enhancing the structure of our system by using data with continuous quality improvement

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1. Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System Implementation
2. The Child Welfare Research Agenda

# Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) Implementation

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- OR-Kids, the state's information system is being updated to meet the new federal CCWIS regulations
- Goal to improve processes to enhance and support the work
- Monolithic Model → Module Model
- Complete transfer scheduled for second quarter of 2024
- Partially funded by federal government, Administration of Children and Families (ACF)

## CCWIS Modernization Program

CCWIS  
certification  
by ACF for  
OR-Kids

Data quality  
program to  
improve  
accuracy

Easy to  
use/  
training  
program for  
end users

# The Child Welfare Research Agenda

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- Research agenda uses data and research to inform decisions
- Research activities include:
  - ORCAH Screening Tool
  - Safety at Reunification
  - Achieving Permanency
  - Staff Engagement Survey
  - Temporary Lodging Tool
  - Tribal Nation specific projects



# COVID-19 Response

- Updated guidance on quality parenting time visitation guidance → virtual
- Adapted work process to include remote and virtual work
- Monitoring COVID-19 to continually assess resource needs
- Consulting with Senior Health Advisor between Child Welfare leadership weekly
- Providing greater childcare and respite care fund access
- Partnering with EveryChild (My NeighbOR) and KEEP
- Outreach and additional supports to young adults that were nearing or recently transitioned out of foster care
- Accessing quarantine locations with children in care when necessary
- Increasing virtual engagement with partners





# Wildfire Response

- Supported families and children connected to Child Welfare who lost homes
- Quickly relocated children displaced by wildfires to other foster homes
- Local offices took the lead with foster homes and families affected by wildfires to get resources out
  - Increased EveryChild My NeighbOR outreach to prevent families from being overloaded with stress
- Contacted Child Welfare in California to ensure any children placed in California were safe from wildfires there
- Assured any children in programs were safe and facilitated their return to primary locations if they had been evacuated





# Accomplishments of 19-21 Biennium

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- Eliminated use of out-of-state placement resources
- Continued reduction of children in foster care
- Reduced use of temporary lodging
  - Cross system collaboration with Oregon Health Authority
  - Launch efforts to reduce need for temporary lodging
- Incorporated recommendations from the Child Welfare Oversight Board and Alvarez & Marsal that were directed by the Executive Order
- Comprehensive Training System Assessment
- Created the Vision for Transformation
- Created a Deputy Director role and a team for equity
- Diversified membership of advisory groups





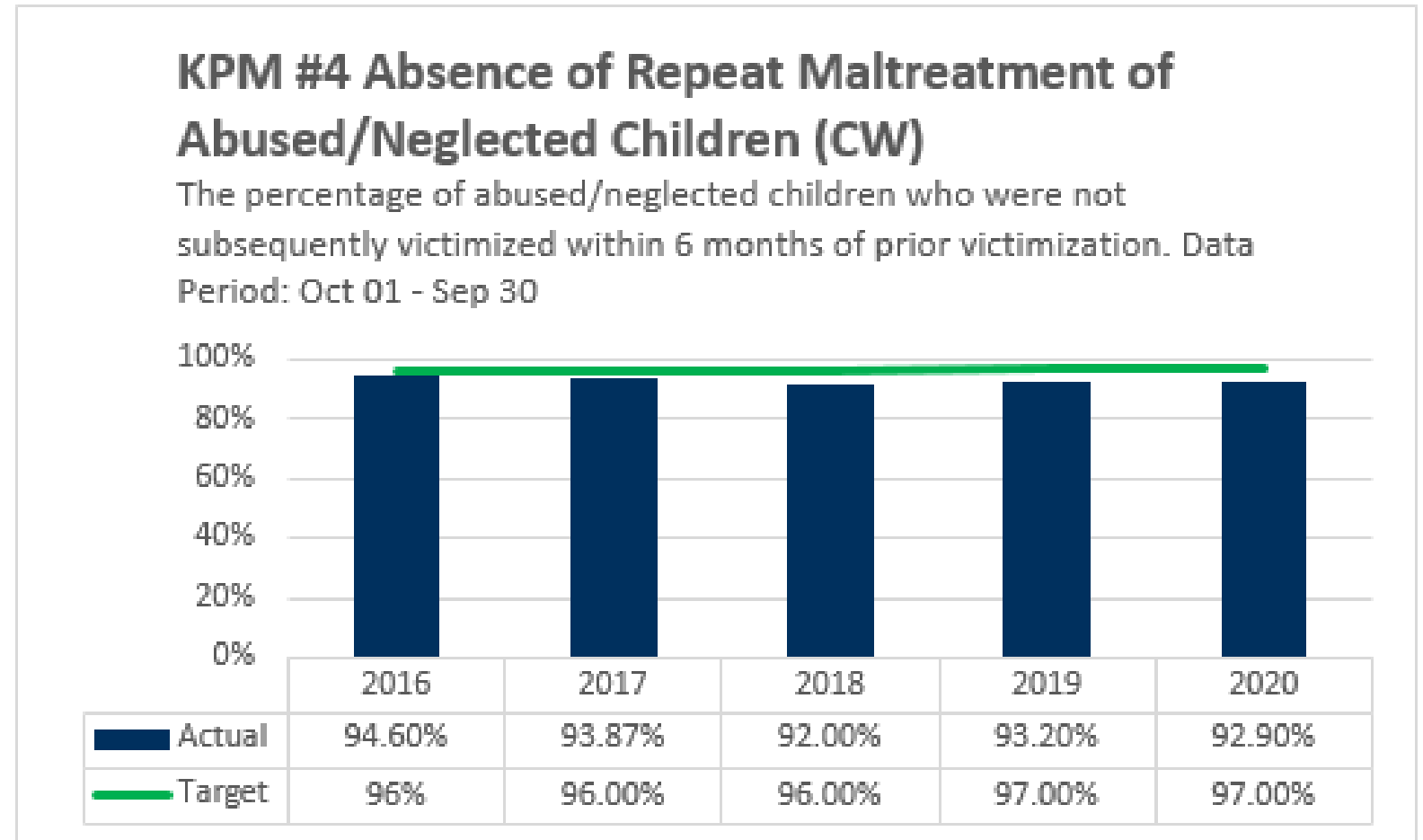
# 21-23 Biennium Budget

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1. Key Performance Metrics
2. 21-23 Biennium Budget numbers
3. 21-23 Strategic Goals

# Key Performance Metric (KPM): Absence of Repeat Maltreatment of Abused/Neglected Children

- Conducted root cause analysis to better understand why children may experience repeat maltreatment
- Built resources around domestic violence for staff
- Increased staff training around substance abuse
- Worked with districts on a local level to see how to improve safety planning, management and decision making

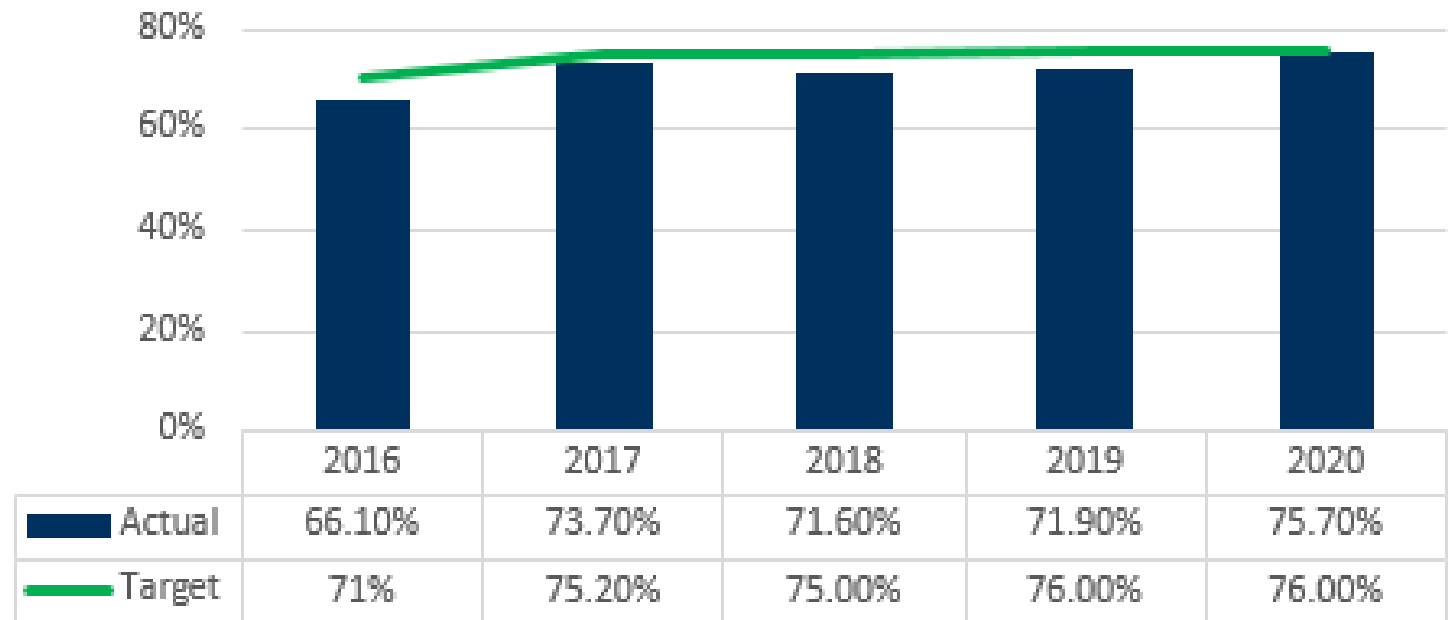


# KPM: Timely Reunification of Foster Children

- Intentional focus on engaging parents with case planning
- Developed Family Engagement Plan
- Implemented Early Case Transfer Process
- Training Permanency Consultants

## KPM #5 Timely Reunification of Foster Children (CW)

The percentage of foster children exiting to reunification within 12 months of foster care entry. Data Period: Oct 01 - Sep 30

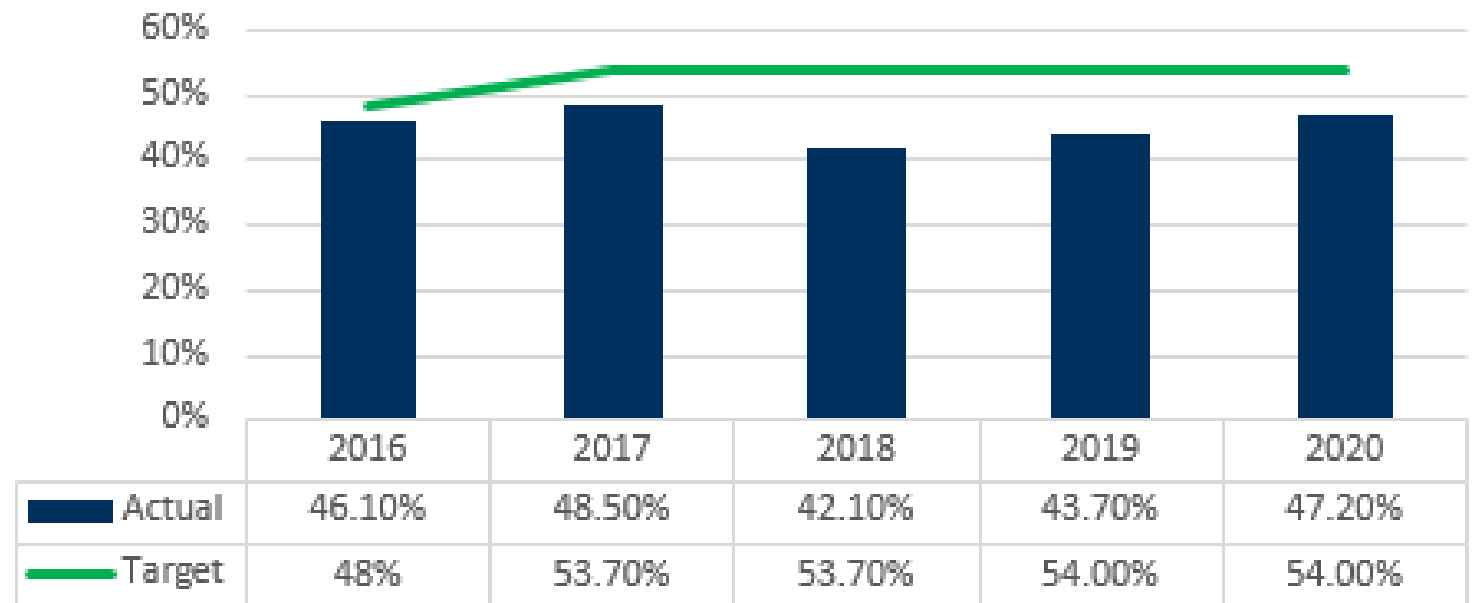


# KPM: Timely Adoption Once Children are Legally Free

- Hired paralegals for each district to aid timeliness to permanency
- Family Report
- Developed and use of Adoption Tracking Report
- Partnered with Juvenile Court Improvement Program, courts and other partners create strategies for more timely adoption
- Transitioned to using electronic records and case processing during pandemic

## KPM #6 Timely Adoption Once Children are Legally Free (CW)

The percentage of legally free children adopted in less than 12 months. Data Period: Oct 01 - Sep 30



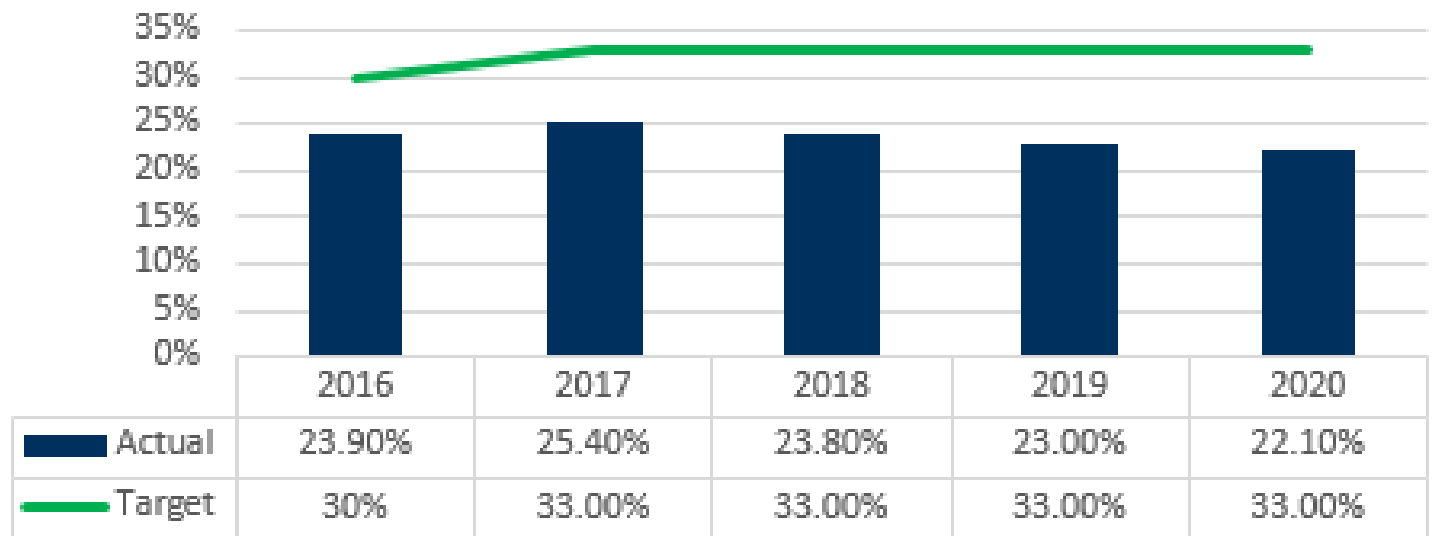


# KPM: Children Served by Child Welfare Residing in Parental Home

- Providing in-home supports
- Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families (SPRF) Federal Funding
- Family First
- Provided tools to court and Citizen Review Board partners to assist in oversight of steps to finalization

## KPM #8 Children Served by Child Welfare Residing in Parental Home

The percentage of children served in Child Welfare on an average daily basis (in home and foster care) who were served while residing in their parent's home. Data Period: Oct 01 - Sep 30



# KPMs on Disproportionality, Disparity and Equity

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Historically, data shows:

- Native children are more likely to be removed
- African American children are more likely to have longer stays in care

Created two KPMs:

- Disproportionality at entry into care
- Disparity in length of stay for children in care

## ODHS Disproportionality Project

Initial Data Analysis

In Depth Exploration

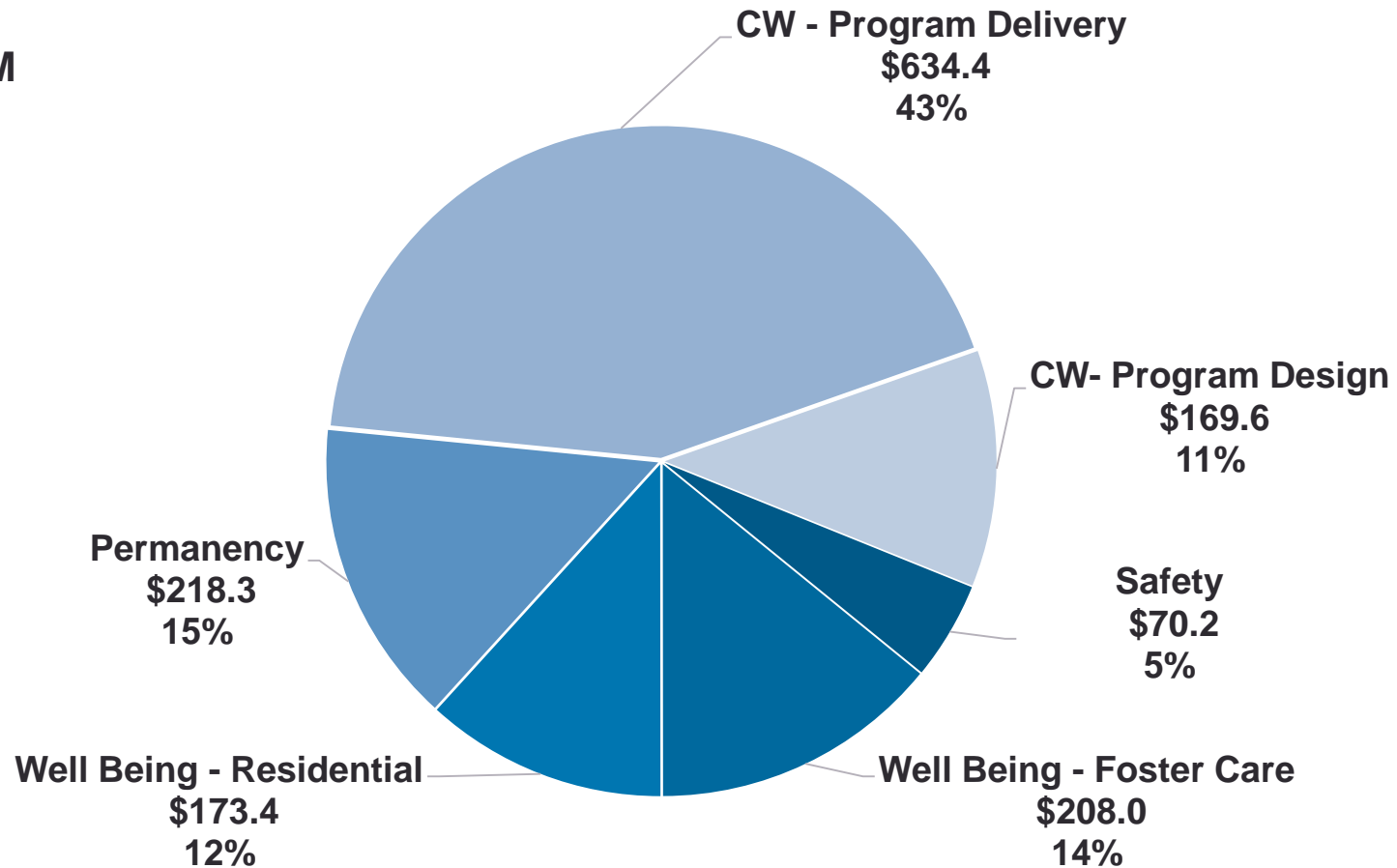
Deep Dive Research

Nuanced Data Leads to Data Informed Solutions

# '21-'23 Governor's Budget: Total by Program

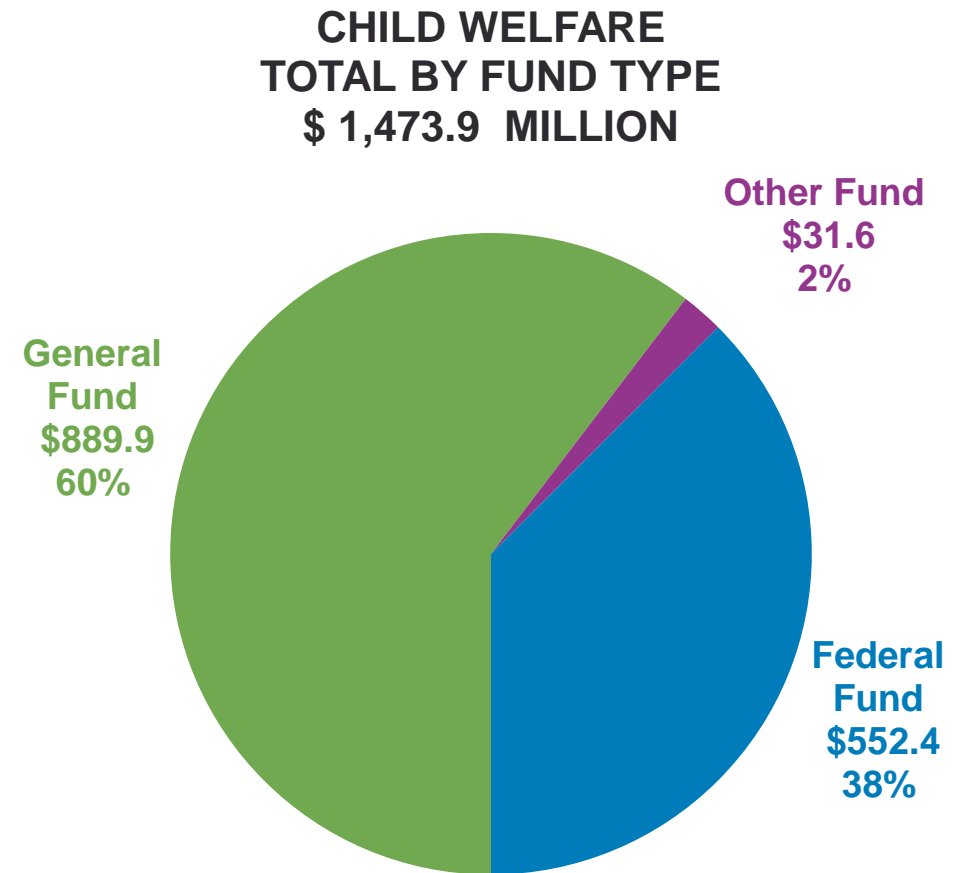
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**CHILD WELFARE  
TOTAL BY PROGRAM  
\$1,473.9 MILLION**



# '21-'23 Governor's Budget: Budget By Fund Type

- Federal Funding underwent a major shift in 2018
- Federal incentives to provide prevention services
- Child Welfare's Vision aligns with federal policy changes
- States must:
  - Shift to prevention-based services
  - Identify alternate funding streams



# '21-'23 Biennium: Priorities and Barriers

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## Key Priorities

- Developing and maintaining resources to serve children and families
- Supporting staff and foster parents with retention, recruitment strategies
- Case planning to ensure timely permanency for children and young adults
- Engaging with leadership and partners
- Using data to inform decisions and performance

## Key Barriers addressed by the budget

- Focuses on prevention services
- Maintains workforce sustainability
- Addresses lack of capacity among staff
- Continues to build engagement with partners
- Commitment to maintaining and developing resources
- **Supports equity on all levels**



# Stabilizing support systems and working upstream

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**Investments from the Governor's Budget help focus on fewer children entering care and more children served at home**

- \$1 million to expand training capacity
- \$15.9 million to increase staffing levels and provide core program infrastructure
- \$4.6 million to create infrastructure for the Family Preservation and Prevention Program
- \$19.4 million to establish an effective respite care program
- Staff support for the Governor's Child Foster Care Advocacy Commission

## **10% Reductions**

50% reduction of Child Welfare Division office expenses: (\$2.7 million)

- Contract capacity of alignment
- 50% reduction of Child Welfare Division travel expenses: (\$2.1 million)

# Overview of 21-23 Biennium Goals and Solutions

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## Implement the Child Welfare Vision for Transformation moving into this next biennium

- Create an equitable system
- Build framework for workforce development and training
- Increase data and continuous quality improvement capacity
- Create Family Preservation infrastructure and diversify prevention services for families
- Implement ORICWA
- Partner with community and agencies to strengthen well-being network for families and children
- Lift voices of those with lived experience



# Thank you, Questions?



# Thank you

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## Upcoming ODHS Presentations to the Committee

- Self-Sufficiency Program  
March 25
- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities  
April 1



**Public Comment for Child Welfare is March 30**