



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# Partners for Children & Families Committee

---

**May 31, 2024**



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# I. Call to Order

---

**Commissioner Stephanie Muth**

## II. Introduction of Members

---

- **Jamie Bernstein**, Texas Supreme Court Children's Commission
- **Denise Blakney**, Building Future Families
- **Robbie Callis**, Casey Family Programs
- **Tabitha Charlton**, Kidsave, Inc.
- **Chelsea Churchill**, Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas
- **Fedora Galasso**, Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS)
- **Jenifer Jarriel**, Depelchin Children's Center
- **Brandon Logan**, One Accord for Kids
- **Michael Loo**, Upbring
- **Mike Maples**, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- **Katie Olse**, Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services
- **Michael Redden**, New Horizons Ranch & Center, Inc.
- **Tara Roussett**, SJRC Texas
- **Vicki Spriggs**, Texas CASA
- **Ashleigh Wilkes**, A World for Children



# III. Committee Member Term Limits

---

## Selecting Member Terms

- All members pulled tickets as they checked in to determine if they will have a 2-year or 4-year terms.
- Terms are staggered.
- Members may be reappointed once.
- DFPS will begin its search for new members in early 2026.



# IV. Election of the Chair

---

## Duties of the Chair

- a. Preside over the PCFC Meetings.
- b. Select subcommittee chairs in consultation with Department staff.
- c. Set meeting agendas in consultation with DFPS staff and PCFC members.
- d. Carry out other duties and activities necessary to fulfill PCFC's purpose .





# IV. Election of the Chair

---

## Candidates

- Denise Blakney
- Tabitha Charlton
- Brandon Logan
- Michael Redden





**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# 10 Minute Break

---

# V. Review and Adoption of Bylaws

---







**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# VI. PCFC Subcommittees

---

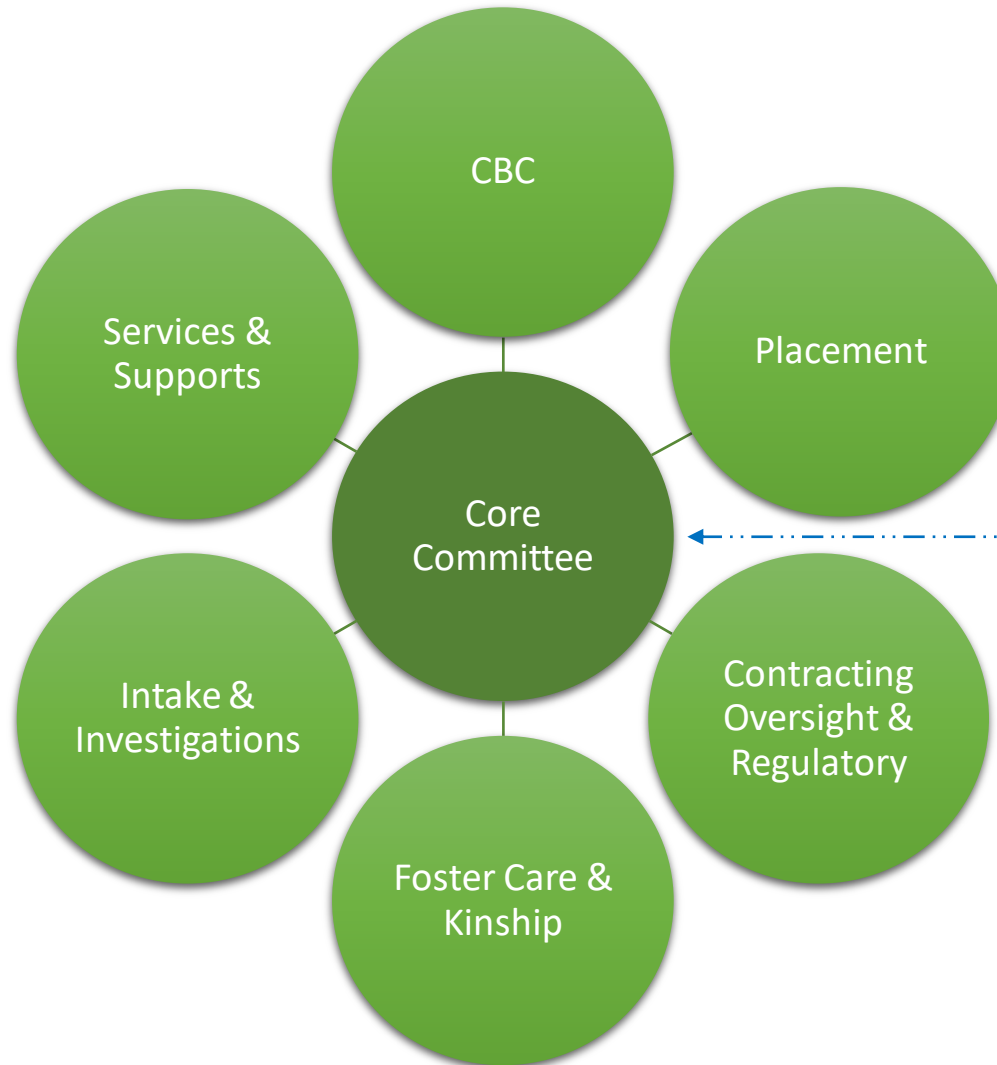
**Jason Steele**

**Director, Stakeholder and Government Relations**

**May 31, 2024**

# Subcommittees

- Standing subcommittees will discuss and make recommendations back to the core committee on issues deemed appropriate to the charge of the core committee.
- Additional subcommittees may be added as needed by vote of the core committee.



## Other Advisory Bodies:

- DFPS Council
- T3C Steering Committee
- Data Access and Governance Council

# Subcommittee Focuses

---

Subcommittee	Topics
<b>Community Based Care</b>	The focus is to discuss SSCC Operations, such as CBC implementation execution, expansion, and common operations issues.
<b>Placement</b>	The focus is on capacity (both for SSCC and Legacy areas) and shared capacity. Opportunity to discuss capacity need data to see where gaps exist and seek collaborative solutions to meet the needs of children.
<b>Contracting and Oversight</b>	The focus is on system wide contract requirements, heightened monitoring, facility-based investigations, and HHS Regulatory.

# Subcommittee Focuses

---

Subcommittee	Topics
<b>Foster Care/Kinship Policy</b>	The focus is on policies and practices related to children in foster care and discuss supports and needs of children and caregivers.
<b>Intake and Investigations</b>	The focus is on Intake, Family Based investigations and Alternative Response, and issues related to procedures and intermediate supports to prevent removals.
<b>Services and Support</b>	<p>The focus is on the continuum of care for children and families, such as, behavioral health, family support services, aging/older youth services.</p> <p>This committee will stay engaged with HHS Behavioral Health and Family Support Services for continued cross-agency collaboration.</p>



# Subcommittee Meetings

---

- Subcommittee must meet at least once a year.
- There is more flexibility to meet at the call of the subcommittee chair multiple times a year as needed based on discussions at the core committee, in consultation with DFPS staff, or needs of the subcommittee membership.
- All subcommittee meetings can be held virtually.
- Subcommittee meeting are not subject Texas Open Meetings Act.

# Subcommittee Chairs

---

- Each subcommittee will have a subcommittee chair who must be a Core Committee member. Subcommittee chairs are selected by the Presiding Chair, in consultation with Department staff.
  - If the subcommittee determines a need for a co-chair, that position can be filled by a subcommittee member.
- Subcommittee chairs oversee subcommittee meetings, set agendas for subcommittee meetings in consultation with DFPS staff, and report subcommittee activities to the Core committee.

# Subcommittee Members

---

- Subcommittee members will be selected from the applications received and based on applicant preference rankings and needs of the subcommittee by the subcommittee chair and DFPS.
- Other than the chair position, subcommittee members are not members of the core committee. Subcommittees will have no less than 3 members, with a maximum of 12 members.
- In addition, if a subcommittee is dissolved or ceases to exist, a subcommittee member remains eligible to be assigned to a new subcommittee for the duration of their term.

# Subcommittee Membership

---

- The Department will be accepting applications to serve on subcommittees until June 14<sup>th</sup>.
- The applications will be posted on the website and should be returned to [DFPScouncil@dfps.texas.gov](mailto:DFPScouncil@dfps.texas.gov)



# Subcommittee Support

PCFC Subcommittees	DFPS Program Area Lead (Executive Sponsor)	Subject Matter Expert Support
Community Based Care (CBC)	CBC Operations (Grace Windbigler)	Hollie Mims (SME)
Placement	CPS (Erica Banuelos)	Hector Ortiz (SME)
Contract Oversight and Regulatory	COO (Lisa Kanne)	Kason Vercher (SME)
Foster Care and Kinship Policy	CPS (Erica Banuelos)	Natalie Taylor (SME)
Intake and Investigations	CPI (Marta Talbert/Stephen Black)	Natalie Reeves (SME)
Services and Support	Behavioral Health	Sherry Rumsey (SME)



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# Thank you

---

**Contact:**

**Cheryl Gomez**  
**Council and Advisory Committee Liaison**

**[dfpscouncil@dfps.Texas.gov](mailto:dfpscouncil@dfps.Texas.gov)**



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# VII. Streamlining Contract Oversight

---

**Brian Hoover**

# Streamlining Contract Oversight

---

- **Monitoring Tools:** Review current contract monitoring tools to explore opportunities to reduce duplication and provide recommendations for DFPS leadership for changes.
- **Monitoring Process:** Review the contract monitoring process and explore recommend options that could be implemented by DFPS and SSCC's to eliminate or reduce the duplication of both SSCC and DFPS conducting contract monitoring of residential childcare providers.





# Workgroup Composition and Assignment

Involved program areas: Office of Community Based Care Transition, Contract Oversight and Support, Residential Childcare Contracts

## Workgroup A

### Completed work:

- Review of DFPS contract monitoring tools.

### Current work:

- Facilitate recommendations to DFPS leadership.

### Future work:

- Update monitoring tools based on leadership decisions and provide the tool to workgroup B.

## Workgroup B

### Completed work:

- Review and recommend options that could eliminate duplication of contract monitoring.

### Current work:

- Facilitate recommendations to DFPS leadership.

### Future work:

- Review and recommend any needed changes to the SSCC Universal Monitoring Tool for acceptance by DFPS as substitution of DFPS monitoring tools.



# Implementation Timeline

---

## Summer 2024

- Input from stakeholders
  - Coordinate with Alliance for structure of feedback
- Analysis of Senate Bill 593 consultation to identify overlaps and opportunities

## Fall 2024

- Implementation of new processes to eliminate duplication within FY 25





**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# VII. Community-Based Care Update

---



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

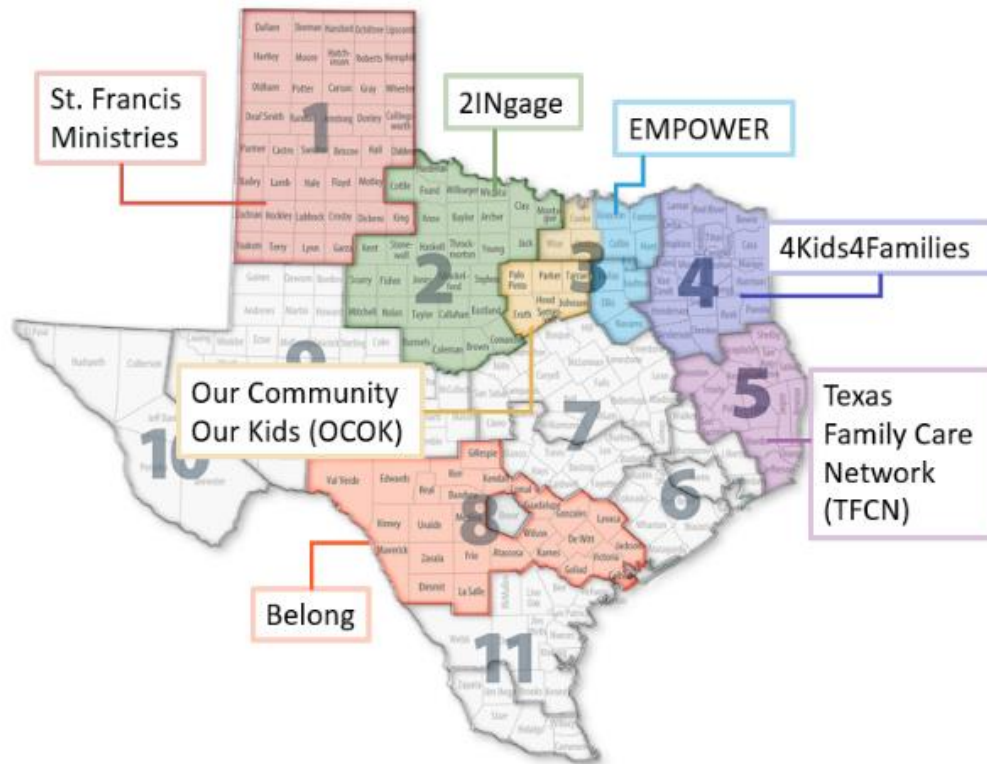
# Agenda

---

- Implementation Updates
- Lessons Learned and Process Improvements
- Stage III Information



# Current CBC Implementation



- March 2024:
  - EMPOWER moved to Stage II
  - Saint Francis, 2INgage, and OCOK moved to Stage III
- April 2024:
  - TFCN moved to Stage II
- May 2024:
  - 4Kids4Families moved to Stage II
- June 2024:
  - Belong will move into Stage III

# Community-Based Care Implementation

---

## Lessons Learned and Process Improvements

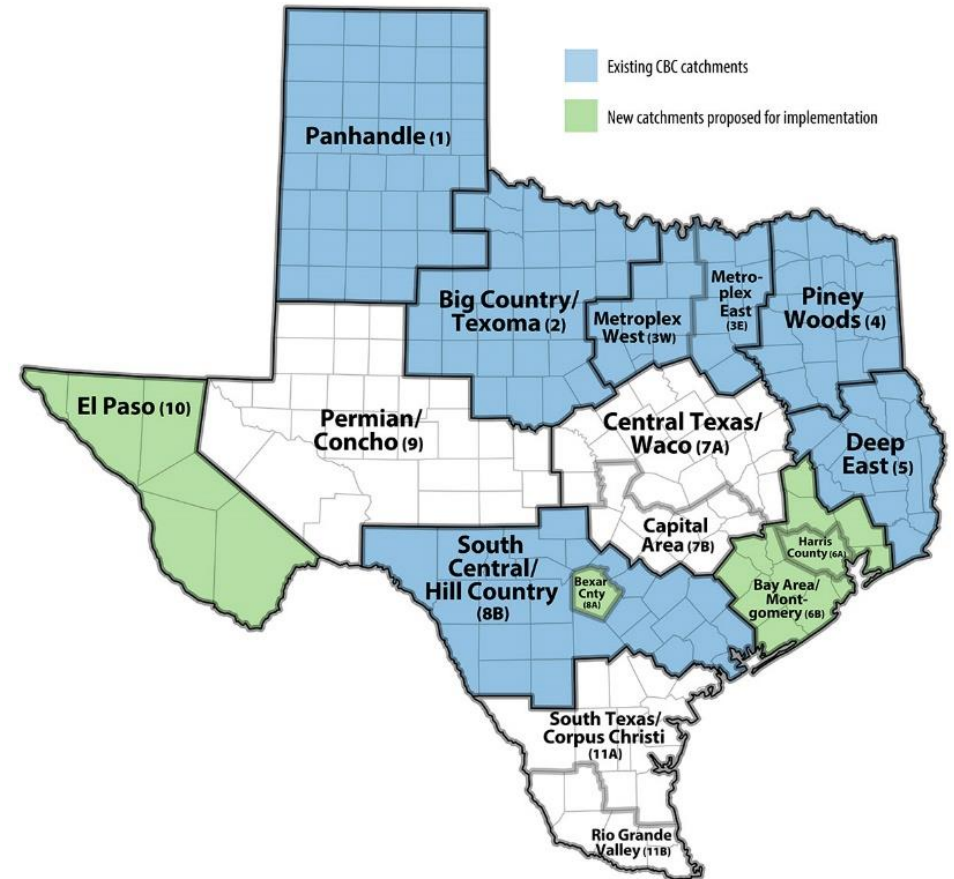
- Challenges:
  - Staffing levels
  - Case loads
  - Implementation timeline (length between Stage I and II; implementations close together)
- Process Improvements:
  - Extend readiness timeframes
  - Stagger implementations further apart
  - Increase SSCC hiring percentage requirements prior to go-live approval
  - Improvements to case transition process



# Where is CBC Moving Next?

The 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature funded the expansion of CBC in the following regions:

- Regions 6A, 6B, 8A, and 10 Request for Applications (RFA) was advertised in February and responses were received in May
- RFA Responses are being evaluated



# Community-Based Care

## Stage III Implementation

Stage III uses child-level data to establish a baseline for positive foster care exits and paid foster care days, their length of stay, and compares the baseline to actual performance.

The following measures are reported for children in SSCC-eligible paid placement:

- Positive exits from paid placement
  - Monitored Return Home/Reunification
  - Kinship Placement
  - Adoptive Placement
- Other exits from paid placement
  - Nonpermanent Exits from Paid Care
  - Transfers
  - “Other” Exits
- Children who return to paid Conservatorship (re-entry)
  - Re-entry
  - Re-entry Rate
- Other Outcomes
  - Proximity of Paid Placement Relative to Removal

If an SSCC uses fewer foster care days, thus decreasing time to one of the three types of non-paid settings, an incentive is earned. The general revenue portion of the foster care reimbursement that would have been paid based on baseline projections continues to be paid to be reinvested to improve the quality of care.







**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# Thank you!

---

**CBC Operations Division**





**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

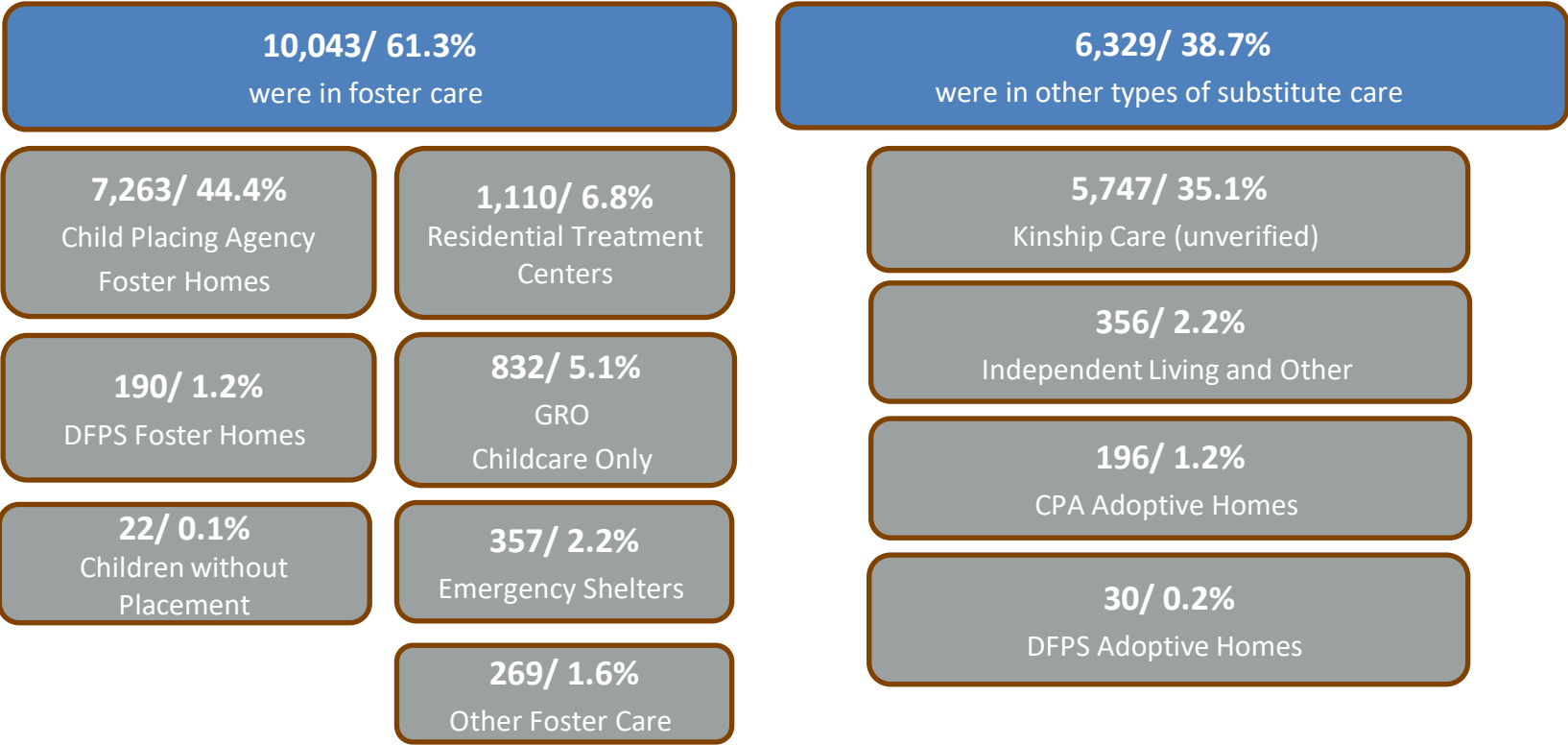
## **IX. Children Without Placement efforts**

---

**Audrey O'Neill**  
**Deputy Commissioner of Programs**

# DFPS Census of Children in Care

Of the 16,372 children in care (ages 0-17) at the end of April 2024 Statewide:

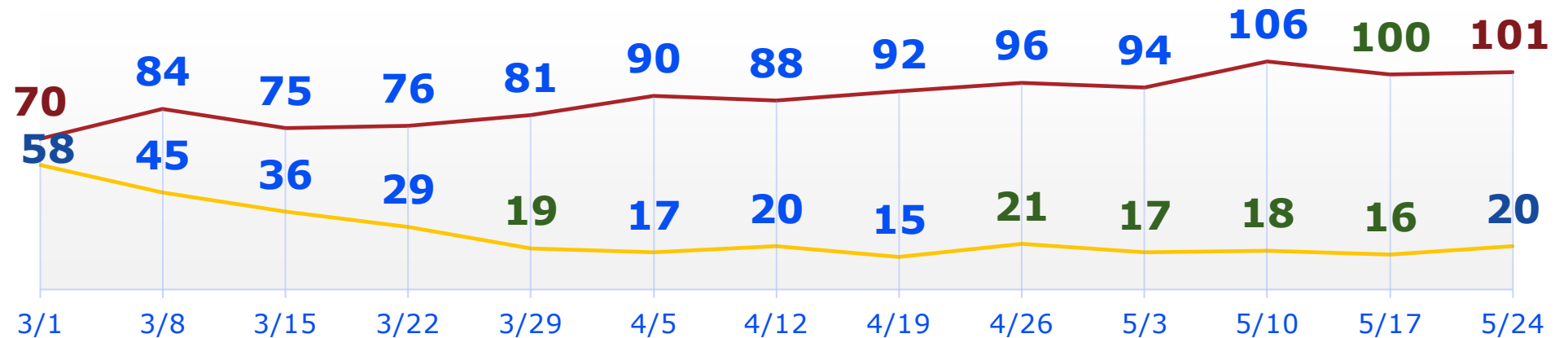


Data Source: CAPS Sub/Adopt Data Warehouse SA\_05s,  
 Warehouse Data As of: 05/07/24  
 Report Run Date: 05/13/2024



# Children Without Placement – Progress Data

Number of CWOP Per Day – (March to May – **2023 v. 2024**)



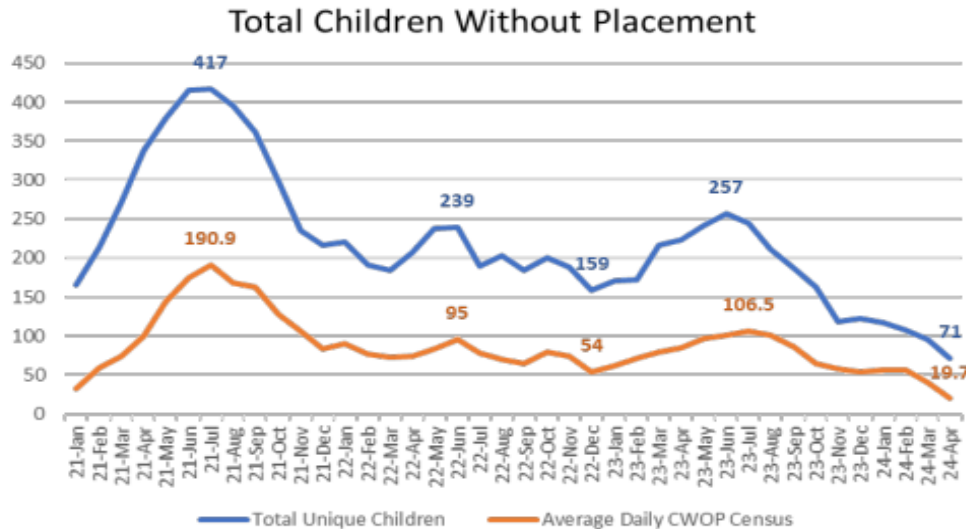
Source: CWOP Tracker, Data as of 5/30/2024

## Drivers of success:

- Strategic system wide efforts
- Individual child intensive focus
- Interagency collaboration

Children and youth in conservatorship continue to have very high needs that remain even after placement, and create risk for placement disruption.

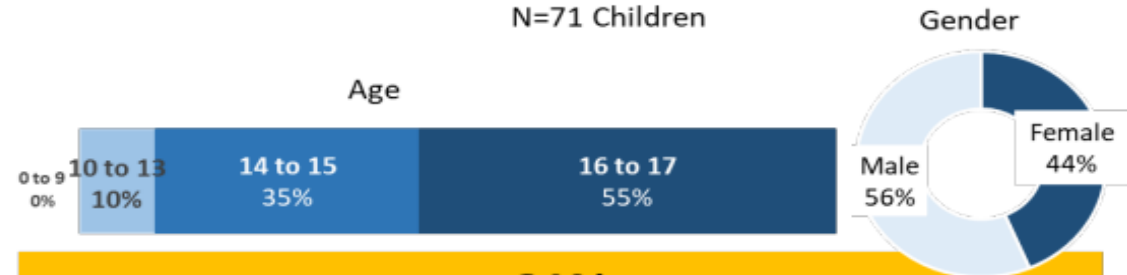
# Children Without Placement - Data



Definition: A child without placement event refers to when a child or youth was without placement for at least two consecutive, uninterrupted nights. If a youth goes missing during a child without placement event, the youth will be in a missing status rather than a child without placement event to ensure protocols are followed for safe return of the youth. If the youth returns from the missing event, a new event starts after at least two consecutive, uninterrupted nights.

### Children Without Placement

April 2024  
N=71 Children



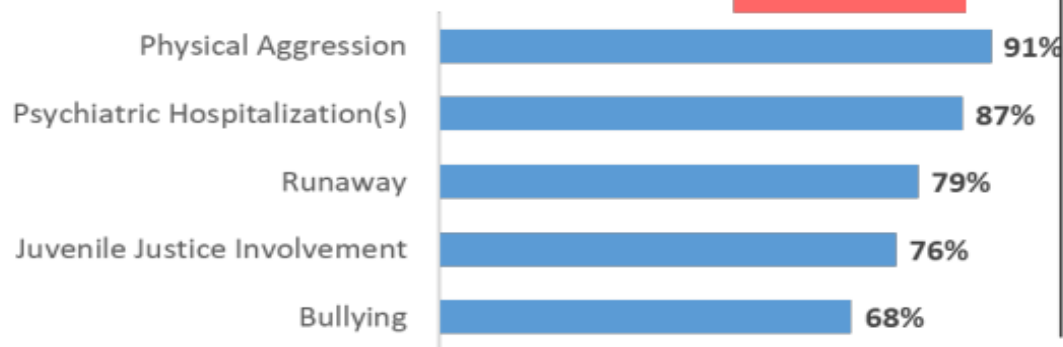
**31%**  
Of all children who had a CWOP event in March (71 children) had been in conservatorship for less than one year

**48%**  
Of all children who had a CWOP event in March (71 children) were removed due to Refusal to Accept Parental Responsibility

### Top 5 Child Characteristics/Needs

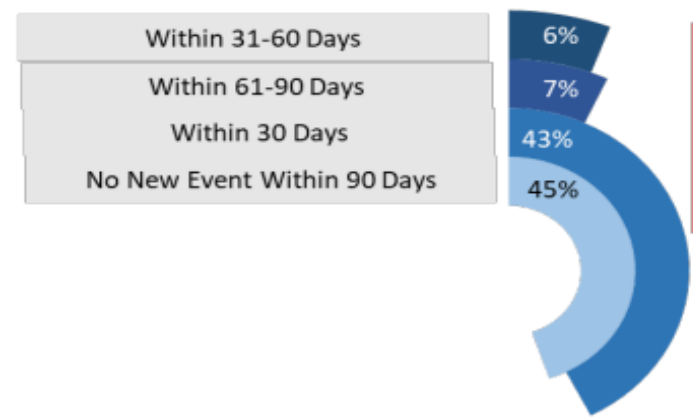
April 2024  
N=82 Events

Children without placement have complex needs



### Subsequent CWOP Event for CWOP Events





Ending in January 2024  
N= 87 events



Many of the children and youth who left CWOP in January did not go again without placement within 90 days – for those that did, it was most often within the following 30 days



# Children Without Placement Agency Efforts

PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTIONS	ACTIONS
	<p><b>CARE</b></p> <p>Augment the structure and staffing of DFPS Supervision sites, providing an environment that incentivizes positive youth behaviors while prioritizing the safety of both youth and caseworkers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pilot in Regions 6 &amp; 7</b> targeted at behavior modification for youth to establish added structure, youth incentives, and staff responsibilities</li> <li>• Additional staff training for pilot participants, including de-escalation techniques</li> <li>• Hiring dedicated positions</li> <li>• Increased <b>temporary staffing</b></li> <li>• Placement staffings</li> <li>• <b>Expediting placement referrals</b> to Residential Treatment Placement Coordinators and for Child Specific Contract searches</li> <li>• Law enforcement engagement</li> <li>• <b>Clinical coordinators</b> to support with caseworker tasks when a child/youth is in DFPS Supervision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy updates to support staff wellbeing by <b>limiting the number of DFPS Supervision shifts</b> allowable</li> <li>• <b>Trafficking assessment</b></li> <li>• Missing youth searches</li> <li>• <b>DFPS Temporary Housing Implementation Plan</b></li> <li>• <b>Convening of State Agencies</b> and Stakeholders</li> <li>• <b>Pathways to Placement</b></li> <li>• <b>Interagency Critical Case Meetings</b></li> <li>• <b>Children’s Mental Health Strategic Plan</b> Subcommittee</li> </ul>
	<p><b>CAPACITY</b></p> <p>Enhance the capacity and stability of kinship and licensed placements while streamlining DFPS placement processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualified Residential Treatment Program (<b>QRTP</b>), Intensive Psychiatric Stabilization Program (<b>IPSP</b>), and Treatment Family Foster Care (<b>TFFC</b>) expansion</li> <li>• Temporary Emergency Placement (<b>TEP</b>) expansion</li> <li>• Placement process improvement and <b>additional staffing</b></li> <li>• <b>Emergency Shelter Partnership</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for staff regarding engaging kin and placement with kinship.</li> <li>• Developing strategies to increase 1st placements with kinship</li> <li>• <b>Updating kinship policies</b> to strengthen kinship practices</li> <li>• Expanded and flexible Kinship spending</li> <li>• <b>Provider Clinical and Programmatic Support</b></li> </ul>
	<p><b>SERVICES</b></p> <p>Support programs and services to meet the specific needs of youth in DFPS Supervision, with a focus on preparing older youth for successful transitions to independence and self-sufficiency within appropriate placements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on services and support, such as preparation for adult living, housing, job opportunities, and other <b>basic life skills</b></li> <li>• <b>Utilize behavioral health funding for youth crisis outreach</b> and extended inpatient hospital support</li> <li>• <b>Partnering youth with mentor support</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure every youth is referred for a <b>Circle of Support</b></li> <li>• <b>Providing up to date mental health resources</b> to staff through broadcasts and Job Aids</li> <li>• Ensure therapeutic supports are scheduled for youth regardless of participation</li> </ul>
	<p><b>DIVERSION</b></p> <p>Implement actions to divert children and youth from entering state custody as appropriate through effective intervention strategies and alternative support systems, promoting family preservation and community-based solutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with HHSC to support access to behavioral health resources and additional funding to prevent removals as a result of refusal to accept parental responsibility</li> <li>• Increased use of <b>Alternative Response</b></li> <li>• Increased use of Behavioral Health Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on <b>least restrictive environment</b></li> <li>• <b>Partnership with Juvenile Justice</b></li> <li>• Increased communication with psychiatric hospitals</li> <li>• Emphasis on first placement with kinship</li> </ul>



# Children Without Placement

---

## Drivers of Success

### Strategic System Wide Efforts

- By collaborating with internal subject matter experts to understand barriers and limitations, DFPS has improved system concerns by centralizing functions essential to finding placement solutions, surveying providers to understand limits to capacity expansion, developed a community resource guide to help families in need of behavioral health support, and received funding to expand monitoring to more youth in Texas.

### Individual Child Intensive Focus

- This initiative involves an intensive daily meeting process that fosters accountability and commitment among all participants to ensure the safety and well-being of youth.

### Interagency Collaboration

- Convening representatives from relevant state agencies and partners use collective resources, knowledge, and expertise to understand state gaps. The anticipated outcomes are a reduced number of children and youth in unlicensed placements; enhanced safety, stability, and well-being of affected children; and improved collaboration and communication among state and partnering agencies.



# Children Without Placement

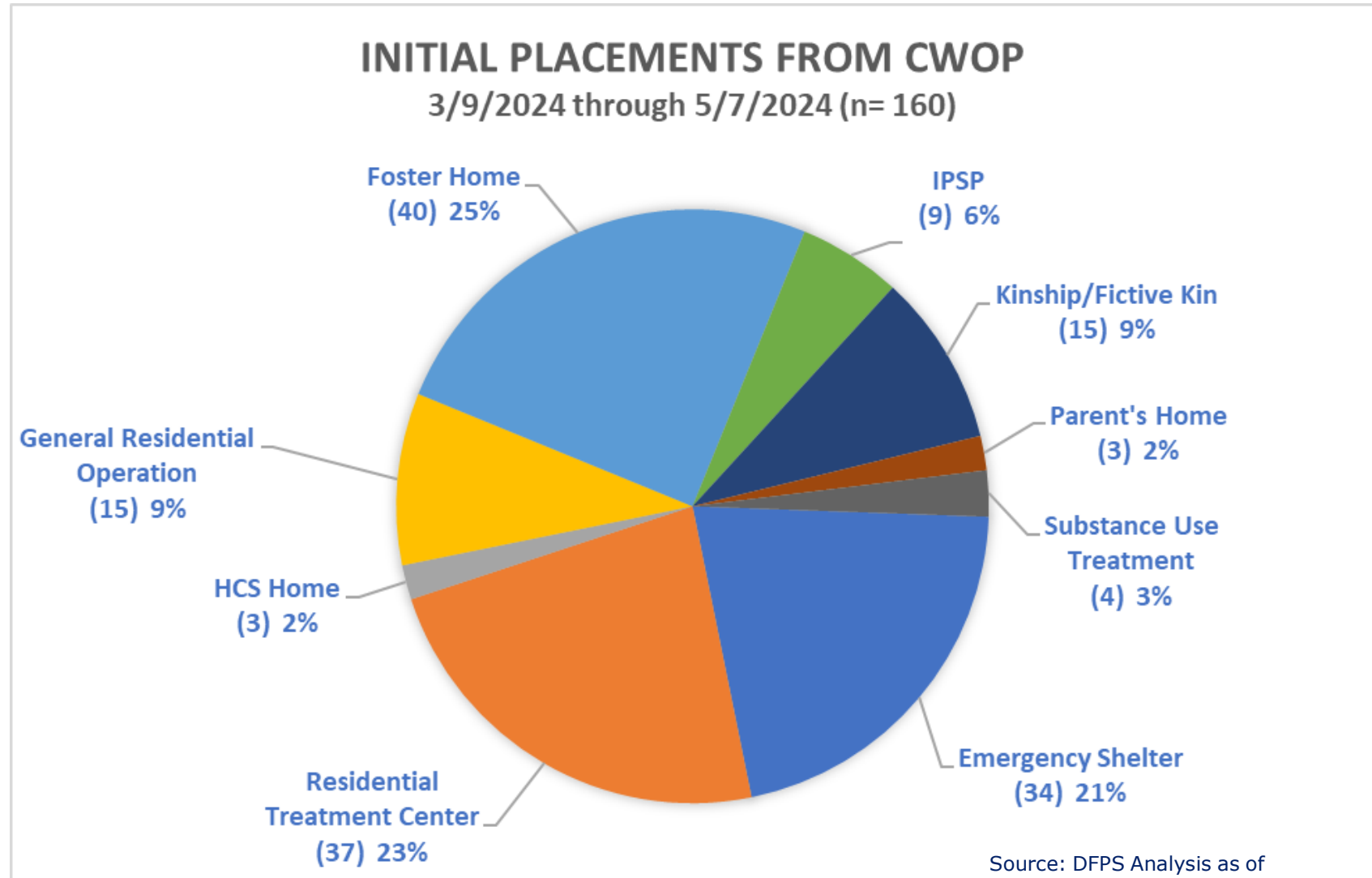
---

## Barriers

- Changing landscape of behavioral and mental health needs of youth
- Limitations on availability of certain types of placements for youth with high needs

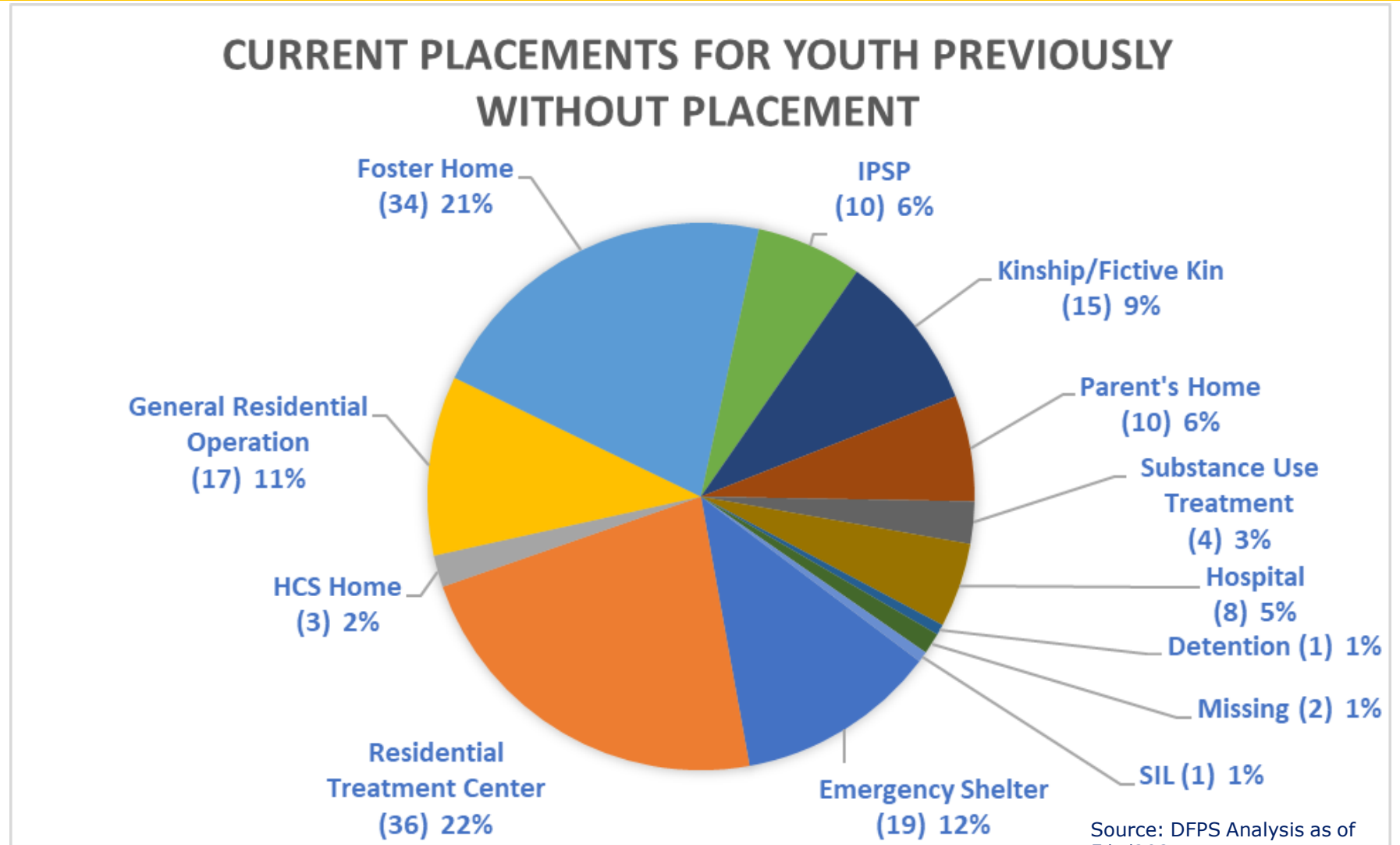


# Children Without Placement – Initial Placement Data



Source: DFPS Analysis as of 5/7/2024

# Children Without Placement – Current Placement Data



Source: DFPS Analysis as of 5/7/2024



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# Thank You

---

**Audrey O'Neill**  
**Deputy Commissioner of Programs**  
**[audrey.oneill2@dfps.texas.gov](mailto:audrey.oneill2@dfps.texas.gov)**





**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# X. Adjourn

---

**Cheryl Gomez**

**[dfpscouncil@dfps.Texas.gov](mailto:dfpscouncil@dfps.Texas.gov)**