



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor



**Oregon Department of Human Services**

*Office of the Director*

500 Summer St. NE, E-15

Salem, OR 97301

Voice: 503-945-5600

Fax: 503-581-6198

**Oregon Department of Human Services**  
**Report to Legislative Assembly on ORS 418.485 and 418.580**  
**Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families Programs**  
**December 31, 2020**

The Department of Human Services is submitting this report to the Oregon Legislature as required by Senate Bill 964 enacted in the 2011 Regular Legislative Session and now part of Chapter 418 of the Oregon Revised Statute. This report relates to the Strengthening, Preserving, and Reunifying Families (SPRF) programs throughout Oregon. The specific requirements of the report are as follows: The Department, in consultation with programs, shall report annually to the Governor and the appropriate interim committees of the Legislative Assembly that address child welfare issues on the progress toward and projected costs of full implementation of ORS 418.575 to 418.598. This report consists of updated information regarding SPRF contracts and service array; program funds and allocation; and program outcomes and evaluation.

**History of SPRF:**

**2011** – SB964 Legislation passed.

**2012** – Three counties chosen to pilot SPRF.

**2013** – SPRF expanded into four more counties.

**2014** – All 36 counties have SPRF contracts in place.

**2015** – SPRF contracts have outcome-based language added, baseline data collection begins.

**2016-2019** – Service gaps reassessed, continued contract administration improvements, continued evaluation of providers regarding outcomes for the reason of renewal.

**2019-2020** – Services were scaled back due to the Federal IV-E Waiver ending and the passage of the Family First Prevention Services Act. There was a misconception by community providers that this new legislation would not only replace SPRF funds but would allow prevention programming to grow tremendously. The FFPSA creates a path to use Title IV-E dollars for eligible services before children enter care. Currently services can only be selected off the federal clearinghouse. Families typically need more than one service to support them in moving away from the Child Welfare System, and some of these services may never be rated, such as culturally appropriate services or anti-poverty supports.

“Assisting People to Become Independent, Healthy and Safe”

Strengthening Preserving and Reunifying Families program was not fully funded in the 19-20 legislative session, which created further instability within the provider community. In addition to the funding reduction there is a world-wide pandemic impacting communities and the families that live within them. This will make the task of shifting the system into a prevention system with a focus on child well-being an even more difficult task. There is a need to increase and stabilize services, which will only happen with further investment into the system.

### **SPRF Contracts and Service Array:**

The Department has had SPRF contracts executed for services in all 36 counties statewide since December 2014, and those services are consistent with those outlined in ORS 418.580.

SPRF objectives:

- Reduce trauma by maintaining children safely in their home whenever possible
- Reduce length of stay in foster care
- Reduce the re-abuse rate, and improve permanency outcomes

The following list provides categories in the contracted service array across the state as well as family success stories (names have been changed for confidentiality) of how the goals have been achieved:

**Relief Nursery:** Relief Nurseries offer an array of case management services to families, which includes childcare, parenting and support services.

Available in the following areas: Lane, Linn, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson and Umatilla

*JH entered SPRF services upon the birth of his son. When he first began receiving services, he described himself as having no idea about how to care for a newborn baby. He was initially scared of handling the baby and struggled with maintaining the feeding schedule. JH became the child's primary caregiver at age two months. Soon after entering services, the COVID-19 crisis developed, and JH lost his job.*

*SPRF services were crucial to helping him navigate this challenging time. JH actively engaged in twice weekly in-person parent coaching sessions with a Pearl Buck Parent Navigator. In addition to providing education on home safety and child development, the Parent Navigator also assisted him with filing for unemployment benefits and following job search requirements. JH was able to find a new job within three months.*

*JH received additional services from the Relief Nursery and attended a weekly online parenting classes offered by Parenting Now! By the time his case was closed, he was able to manage a daily care routine including feedings, baths and age appropriate interactions. He could juggle simultaneously changing a diaper AND folding the laundry AND talking on the phone. Most importantly, he had formed a close, loving bond with his son, who was thriving under his care and meeting or exceeding developmental milestones.*

**Navigators:** Specialists to help navigate social service agencies. The navigator takes the Child Welfare goals from the case worker and helps the family achieve the goals. Often this involves helping families access resources and work through challenges with completing goals.

Available in the following counties: Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, Multnomah, Marion, Polk, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, Lane, Jackson, Josephine, Hood River, Wasco, Sherman Gilliam, Wheeler, Lake, Malheur, Grant and Harney

### ***Success Story 1***

*Travis and his recently reunited daughter were living in a very small cottage about 35 miles from town and were struggling to get to all their appointments and trust the system. The navigator program received a referral for this family and went straight to work getting this family in town and able to complete the multiple services his daughter needed.*

*Travis was able to be housed in a beautiful two-bedroom townhouse in Medford and his daughter was able to not only attend, but graduate all her services through mental health, she was in such desperate need of. Travis has been able to graduate from the budgeting class through this program and now understands credit, has a saving account. Travis also states he has a clear understanding of the importance of scheduling and chores and most importantly learning to understand his child's needs and the need for structure.*

*Travis has built a great relationship with his property manager and is sustaining his housing. Travis was able to get his child welfare case closed and gain full custody of his daughter and gain skills and trust for the system. Travis and this navigator were also able to work through some of his anger issues around the system, and now Travis is grateful for all the support and trust he has been able to gain.*

### ***Success Story 2***

*GM entered SPRF services after his child had been removed from the home. GM suffers from a traumatic brain injury that presents as memory challenges and behavioral outbursts. He also was in recovery from drug use. The mother was not part of the service due to having been removed from the home for continued drug use.*

*Pearl Buck received the referral to work with GM with the goal of reunification. The Parent Navigator assisted with developing a system to remember daily routines and medications for himself and his child. The Parent Navigator also assisted with developing time management tools. As a safety provider, the Parent Navigator provided supervision of visits and ongoing feedback that allowed GM to grow his skills as a parent.*

*GM completed two courses of Parenting Skills Group. In one-on-one sessions, the Parent Navigator assisted GM with reinforcing and remembering the concepts and techniques that were learned during the PSG sessions. GM was able to demonstrate his increased awareness of maintaining a safe home, child development, positive discipline techniques, and planning age-appropriate activities for the child.*

*During the holidays GM unfortunately suffered a relapse. His Parent Navigator provided support as he went to his DHS hearing. During the hearing, GM was able to articulate to the*

*judge that his child was more important than the drugs. The Parent Navigator assisted him with entering the FAIR program and provided ongoing accountability. GM was able to successfully complete the FAIR program and proved through his actions the truth of what he said during the hearing.*

*Reunification plans moved forward. First, visits time gradually increased. Then overnight visits were allowed. Finally, the day arrived when the child returned home. During this process, the Parent Navigator facilitated interactions with the foster family, provided support with meal planning and other routines, assisted with applications for programs such as WIC and Head Start, and documented the growth in GM's parenting skills.*

*GM receives continued Parent Navigator support through Pearl Buck's Outreach Program. Once his child was returned, GM turned his sights to attaining his driver's license. The Parent Navigator assisted with prepping for the test and he passed with flying colors!*

**Parent Educate and Coach/Mentoring:** Specialist to teaching and reinforcing parenting behaviors, supportive services when needed to help stabilize families.

Available in the following counties: Multnomah, Marion, Polk, Benton, Linn, Lincoln, Lane, Douglas, Coos, Curry, Josephine, Jackson, Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson Klamath, Lake, Umatilla, Clackamas and Washington.

### ***Success Story 1***

*I worked for most of a year under SPRF funding with a twenty-two-year-old mother in recovery from meth addiction, together with her girls, ages one and three. During services, the mother experienced a violent breakup and relapsed, and I supported her recovery through the remainder of services. At first, she was intimidated by her one-year-old's independence, interpreting it as rejection, and she was tentative in engaging with her daughters and managing their behavior. But she demonstrated commitment to improving her parenting skills, and she picked up training quickly, implementing a principle consistently once she understood it. With modeling and guided practice, the mother became confident and skilled in her parenting, and the girls' security and trust in their mother grew visibly. The girls were returned home and Family SkillBuilders' services switched to in-home ISRS for a period before they were no longer needed.*

*Family SkillBuilders worked for a year separately with the mother and father of a seven-year-old boy. The parents had a no-contact order between them because of domestic violence, and each parent relapsed with alcohol once during services. Early on the father demonstrated emotional stability but admitted he did not have necessary skills to parent his son and expressed doubt that he could. The mother was more volatile and had trouble respecting her son's cues and limits, but she demonstrated strong parenting skills in several areas. The father worked hard at learning to manage his son's explosive emotions and behavior and became confident over time. With support, the mother gradually began to report a healthier self-image and to regulate her emotions. As his parents became healthier, the son showed signs of growing security, and his extreme emotions and behaviors became less frequent and more quickly managed. Both parents struggled with employment, but eventually became stably employed as their recovery and confidence continued. Eventually their no-contact order was lifted, and though neither planned to resume their relationship, the provider helped them develop a coparenting plan. Their son was*

*returned to the father's home, and they began enjoyable joint visits with plans for shared custody.*

*We received the referral of MR from her DHS Child Welfare Caseworker for a duration of five months. As a Tu Familia Specialist, my primary service is to create a supportive family-related environment focused on reducing or eliminating sources of stress like discrimination, health issues, lack of resources, or immigration misinformation while supporting MR's safety plan. At the initial time and according to the initial Hispanic Stress Inventory assessment, MR's stressors were family-related, parenting, unemployment, and economic stress. In the course of MR's participation in Tu Familia Program, MR was able to moderate her stressors by graduating from parenting classes, participating in Trauma Healing and Recovery classes, being approved for the SNAP/TANF program, and receiving six months of rent paid from a community program.*

### **Success Story 2**

*When Tu Familia Specialist closed MR's case, MR had succeeded in most of the safety plan she was asked to accomplish. MR family started the reunification process with one of the children and continued progressing with the other two kids. MR continued with Tu Familia Specialist's recommendations; following a daily schedule/routine with her children to provide the children with continuity and clear expectations. continue with counseling to learn how to reach out for help when she feels overwhelmed or anxious and working on essential basic needs in her life.*

*At the end of the Tu Familia Specialist participation, MR stated she felt the services she received from Tu Familia Specialist were culturally competent. Additionally, MR said that when she can get access to staff who speak her language (Spanish), her cultural tension is notably reduced. As Tu Familia Specialists, we are from the communities we serve and have a strong understanding of our MR's cultural needs. In this respect, we are responsive to the ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity represented in Marion County, Oregon.*

**Alcohol and Drug Treatment:** Inpatient/Outpatient alcohol and drug treatment or recover focused services that focus on multi-dimensional issues such as parenting, domestic violence, and childcare.

Available in the following counties: Marion, Yamhill, Benton, Lincoln, Linn, Deschutes and Washington

**Housing:** Short-term, Long-term, Emergency, Treatment Based and Transitional Housing services.

Available in the following areas: Columbia, Clatsop, Multnomah, Yamhill, Marion, Benton, Lincoln, Lane, Douglas, Coos, Jackson, Josephine, Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson, Umatilla, Malheur, Clackamas and Washington

### **Success Story 1**

*When the program received this referral, Joshua was living in an oxford house that was not conducive to his son's special needs. Joshua has a lengthy criminal history (27 felonies) and had no experience being a father. Joshua had been told before entering the navigator program he would never be able to live outside of and Oxford house due to his criminal record. Joshua was*

*released from prison in 2019 and was told his son had been removed from his mother and Joshua went straight to work on becoming a father and getting engaged with the navigator program.*

*Joshua is now in a committed healthy relationship and has been able to be housed in a two-bedroom apartment, allowing his son to have his own space. Joshua is sustaining his housing while working full time. Joshua was able to attend the budgeting class through this program and now understands credit, budgeting, and more importantly how to be an adult. Joshua has been able to have his child welfare case closed and has full custody of his son Ethan.*

*Joshua has completed TX and is still very engaged in the NA community and has learned to trust enough through this program to build a large natural support system, which is crucial to our families. Joshua has a great relationship with his property manager as well.*

### **Success Story 2**

*This is a success story about a truly inspirational client I had, who is the father of three young daughters. He became involved with the Child Welfare Program due to his substance abuse issues that resulted in safety threats to his children. He completed substance abuse treatment, worked very hard at his recovery, and dedicated himself to developing a healthy lifestyle for himself and his children. He was eventually able to have his daughters returned to his care while living in clean and sober housing at Mariposa Village under a SPRF contract. This father has been clean and sober for over two years, continues to do well safely parenting his daughters, and his case has been dismissed. He feels he benefitted from the SPRF housing program because it helped bring structure, light, and accountability into his life. In this safe and stable environment, he was able to learn how to live again and accept his responsibility to utilize the information provided in the program. He received a lot of support and appreciated having to be regularly accountable. This program, along with other services provided, refreshed his memory of the parenting skills he had before he became involved with alcohol and drugs. This father and his daughters established a healthy routine while living at Mariposa Village that he continues to maintain after moving on to different housing.*

### **Success Story 3**

*Mother (age: 35 years old) and father (age: 35 years old) interviewed at Iron Tribe Network at the beginning of February and moved in together on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Prior to being interviewed, the couple reached out to ITN staff asking for an opportunity to reside at ITN and have their family reunited. Mother was residing in an inpatient treatment center and father was homeless, sleeping in his vehicle. Both parents were unemployed at the time.*

*Mother and father were able to have their first in home, overnight visit with their three-year-old son within a week of being at ITN and regained physical custody of their son in less than 2 weeks of being in the program. Mother and father are both participants in the Fostering Attachment Treatment Court.*

*Mother started work at Amazon as a temporary employee. After about two months she was hired on as a permanent employee and received a pay raise. Father worked for a temp agency for a few months, before obtaining full time employment at Northwest Distribution. Father also received a pay raise there.*

*In their time at ITN, mother and father both completed multiple parenting classes, celebrated their first year of sobriety, were respectful and courteous to all staff and other residents, and excelled in all ITN expectations including multiple clean UA's.*

*Mother and Father successfully completed ITN in October 2020. Upon completion, Mother and father moved into a two-bedroom apartment with minimal financial assistance and are expected to pay their full amount of rent on their own. During her exit interview, mother stated "I would just like to say thank you for everything you guys have done for my family. You really are amazing. You've taught me the skills to be a strong person and for that I will always remember this place. Thank you for giving me another shot at life." During his exit interview, father stated "Thank you so much for all the love and support you guys have given us. We could not have made it this far without you guys!"*

*Mother and father are doing well and are expected to continue and complete their FATC program prior to their case closing. Their son is thriving and doing well in their home environment.*

**Front End Intervention:** Specialists assigned to families during the assessment period with the goal of diverting child removal (Alcohol and Drug, Mental Health, Domestic Violence, and Human Service Generalists).

Available in the following areas: Multnomah, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, Lane, Umatilla, Baker, Union, Wallowa and Clackamas

### ***Success Story 1***

*Larry overcame many obstacles while in our program. Larry came to us homeless and just beginning treatment for a meth addiction. Larry's son Koda, who was just 6 months old, was in family foster care. Larry was able to obtain a studio apartment through OnTrack housing and then get Koda back in his care shortly after that. Larry finished treatment and obtained full-time employment through Brother's construction as a welder. He set up a payment plan with the courts and has since been working towards getting fines paid down so he could obtain his driver's license. Larry has since been able to get into a 1-bedroom apartment and maintain his rent and has proven to be self-sufficient.*

### ***Success Story 2***

*Nicole came to Family Nurturing Center in early March. Nicole and her 14-year-old son had been living in a 1-bedroom motel room for the last couple of years unable to get out because they were paying a significant amount weekly just to keep a roof over their heads. Nicole was active in treatment as meth was her drug of choice. Nicole was having her father help with rent payments as she was only working part-time at Pilot. Nicole was able to obtain a 2-bedroom apartment for her and her son. Shortly thereafter, Nicole completed treatment and started searching for a job with more hours and better pay. Nicole was able to obtain a full-time position with benefits at CARS, a non-profit here in Medford. Nicole has been able to maintain her home and maintain her sobriety.*

**Reconnecting Families:** Specialists used to engage families and conduct relative searchers for additional familial resources/placements.

**Available in the following areas:** Marion, Polk, Lincoln, Crook, Jefferson and Deschutes

**Trauma Services and therapeutic services:** Mental Health services and Intensive services to trauma affected families and children.

Available in the following areas: Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler and Clackamas

**Family Visitation Support and Coaching:**

Available in the following areas: Columbia Clatsop, Benton, Lincoln, Linn, Lane, Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler, Deschutes, Jefferson, Crook, Klamath and Lake

**Enhanced Meeting Facilitation:** Professional facilitator who is a neutral party to facilitate family meetings, this includes bringing in broad supports to work with the family, including other family members where appropriate.

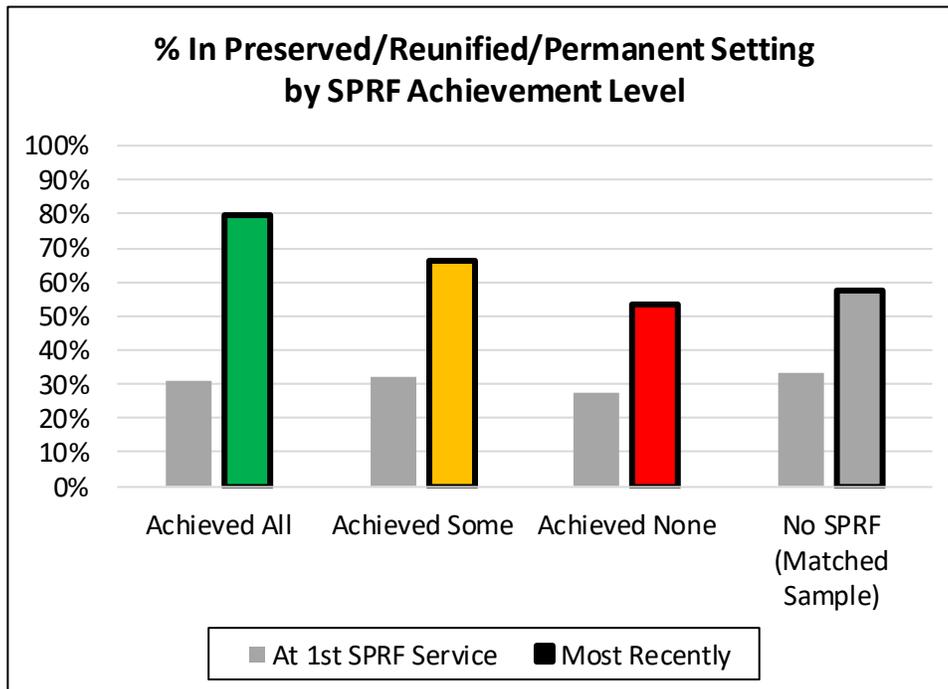
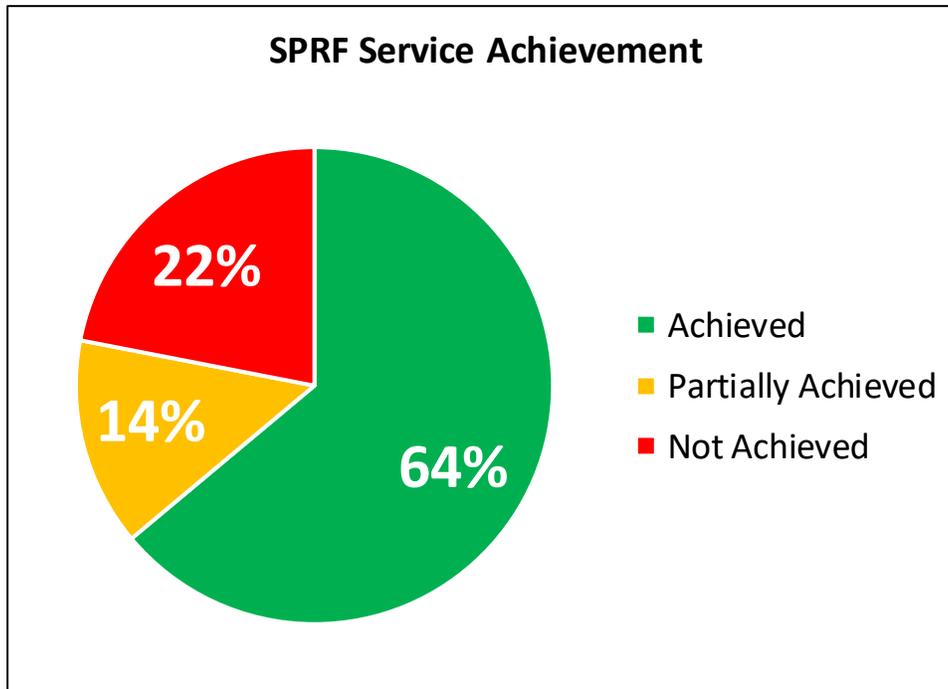
Available in Multnomah and Curry

**Program Outcomes and Evaluation:**

We have defined outcomes measurements and have worked collaboratively on continuous improvement with our contracted providers. The emphasis has been on outcome-based contracting versus financial incentives or penalties. This work is foundational for our overall ability to report on outcomes associated with the SPRF Program.

**The following are examples of outcomes:**

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Period Under Review                               | February 2019 - February 2020 |
| Children Impacted (Total)                         | 10028                         |
| Children Impacted (With CW Placement Involvement) | 5064                          |



| SPRF Service Rollup           | Children Impacted |                           | Closed Services | Of Those Closed and Given Achievement Rating |                    |              |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------|--------------|
|                               | Total             | With CW Placement History |                 | Achieved                                     | Partially Achieved | Not Achieved |
| Enhanced Meeting Facilitation | 2364              | 1516                      | 81%             | 96%  | 1%                 | 4%           |
| Front End Intervention        | 4264              | 1884                      | 90%             | 50%  | 25%                | 24%          |
| Housing                       | 2406              | 1314                      | 86%             | 66%  | 7%                 | 27%          |
| Mental Health Therapy         | 643               | 192                       | 86%             | 55%  | 19%                | 26%          |
| Other                         | 57                | 41                        | 93%             | 86%  | 0%                 | 14%          |
| Parent Training               | 4484              | 2542                      | 86%             | 60%  | 14%                | 26%          |
| Visitation Support            | 924               | 635                       | 50%             | 63%  | 10%                | 27%          |

| SPRF Service                             | SPRF Service Rollup           | Children Impacted |                           | Closed Services | Of Those Closed and Given Achievement Rating |                    |              |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------|--------------|
|  |                               | Total             | With CW Placement History |                 | Achieved                                     | Partially Achieved | Not Achieved |
| Enhanced Meeting Facilitation            | Enhanced Meeting Facilitation | 2364              | 1516                      | 81%             | 96%  | 1%                 | 4%           |
| Front End Intervention                   | Front End Intervention        | 2156              | 770                       | 91%             | 56%  | 24%                | 19%          |
| Navigators                               | Front End Intervention        | 2346              | 1232                      | 89%             | 45%  | 26%                | 29%          |
| Long-Term Housing                        | Housing                       | 1517              | 806                       | 88%             | 67%  | 6%                 | 28%          |
| Short-Term Supportive Housing            | Housing                       | 612               | 362                       | 84%             | 71%  | 9%                 | 20%          |
| Short Term Emergency Housing             | Housing                       | 42                | 33                        | 82%             | 100%   | 0%                 | 0%           |
| Short Term Housing Assistance            | Housing                       | 58                | 41                        | 88%             | 75%  | 0%                 | 25%          |
| Transitional Housing                     | Housing                       | 348               | 136                       | 85%             | 67%  | 5%                 | 28%          |
| Treatment Based Housing                  | Housing                       | 131               | 76                        | 79%             | 34%  | 16%                | 50%          |
| Mental Health Therapy                    | Mental Health Therapy         | 643               | 192                       | 86%             | 55%  | 19%                | 26%          |
| Child Care                               | Other                         | 31                | 26                        | 100%            | 100%   | 0%                 | 0%           |
| Reconnecting Families                    | Other                         | 26                | 15                        | 82%             | 63%  | 0%                 | 38%          |
| Family Strengths and Needs Asmt (Unpaid) | Parent Training               | 517               | 101                       | 100%            | 73%  | 6%                 | 21%          |

|  |                    |      |      |      |     |     |     |
|--|--------------------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Family Strengths/Needs Assessment (Paid) | Parent Training    | 69   | 12   | 100% | 57% | 0%  | 43% |
| Mentoring Services                       | Parent Training    | 2683 | 1660 | 90%  | 59% | 15% | 26% |
| Parent Educate and Coach, Paid           | Parent Training    | 1181 | 741  | 81%  | 55% | 20% | 25% |
| Parent Education (Classroom)             | Parent Training    | 282  | 186  | 95%  | 58% | 8%  | 34% |
| Pos. Support Group & Coach/Skill builder | Parent Training    | 618  | 427  | 61%  | 65% | 14% | 22% |
| Visitation Support & Coaching            | Visitation Support | 924  | 635  | 50%  | 63% | 10% | 27% |

**For more information, please contact:**

**Tristan Fernandez**

Senior Legislative Policy Analyst

ODHS Child Welfare and Vocational Rehabilitation

**Work:** 503-302-1479

**Email:** [tristan.fernandez@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:tristan.fernandez@dhsosha.state.or.us)