Child Welfare Monthly Report

Report Date: December 2018

The first table in this report is a monthly picture of the status of our Child Welfare SSS1 workforce. This section of the report shows a rolling 12-month trend in the current SSS1 Caseworker staffing.

SSS1 Caseworker Recruitment and Retention Efforts

MEASURES	2017		2018										12-MO AVG
	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	
Total # of New SSS1 Caseworkers[1]	20	20	30	23	38	36	35	44	45	47	30	37	33.8
Total # of SSS1 Caseworker Separations	20	25	18	18	18	18	18	20	25	21	29	16	20.5
Impact on Total Caseworkers	**0**	**(5)**	**12**	**5**	**20**	**18**	**17**	**24**	**20**	**26**	**1**	**21**	**13.3**
Total # of SSS1 Caseworker Promotions[2]	2	3	21	20	8	9	9	2	4	7	3	11	8.3

[1] *New SSS1 Caseworkers: Hired or promoted into SSS1 position from inside or outside of DHS*

[2] *Total # of SSS1 Caseworker Promotions: Promoted into a higher position within Child Welfare, a subset of Caseworker Separations.*

October data is more aligned with the past six months, and helpful to see that September was more of anomaly. Staff are still carrying heavy workloads and feeling burdened. Recent highlights include offering the abbreviated assessment tool, adding the 186 new positions and the closure tool, as well as almost completing the listening tours with just two districts left to go. These are all points of light for our staff, yet it is not enough. We need to continue to resource them and/or safely reduce their workload in order to help retention. We recently did a workload study that showed our staff are, on average, only able to spend one hour and twenty minutes a month with a family. This is missing the mark, not only do we have 2.5 times the case load, our focus has been on compliance, not on the families. This focus does not allow them to really dig in and get to know a family, their culture or the root cause of their issues. We continue to think creatively in hopes of reducing their stress. When we work in stress and fear we are not making our best decisions, and when a child is not safe we need our best and brightest to be on their “A” game. We’ve asked to use the 2.5-million-dollar Special Purpose Appropriation to create a “Relief Pool” of trained retirees, they would be able to step in and carry a workload for 6 weeks while we hire a new employee, someone is out on medical, or on vacation. They would be like a substitute teacher, they would have total access to our programs, they would be CJIS cleared, and they are able to hit the ground running for a duration of six weeks or less.

Position Authority, Workload Levels and the Caseworker Gap

	2017		2018									
MEASURES	**NOV**	**DEC**	**JAN**	**FEB**	**MAR**	**APR**	**MAY**	**JUNE**	**JULY**	**AUG**	**SEPT**	**OCT**
100% Caseworker need (WKLD MDL)	1,825.66						1,859.01					
Current Position Authority (funded Level)	1,434.62				1,509.62							

The Legislature approved 186 positions for Child Welfare which have been allocated to the Districts with an equity versus equality lens. The positions are being rolled out in waves. Twenty-five (25) Case Aide positions were released April 2018, all of whom have been hired. Twenty-five additional case aides were released and hired on or before July 2018. Seventy-five (75) Social Service Specialist 1(SSS1) positions were released in waves of Twenty-five (25) on July 1, 2018, October 1, 2018 and the last 25 will be released in January 1, 2019. Four Supervisor positions will be released in July 2018, 3 in October 2018 and 3 in January 2019. Twenty-three (23) Social Service Specialists (SSAs) who provide visitation supervision and twenty-five (25) Administrative Staff (OSII's) were all released in July 2018.

The Governor's Budget included additional staff, which is less than our Policy Option Package to be fully staffed. Any additional staff we receive will help and we will continue to think creatively to to create the space to offer better services to the children and the families we serve, while creating excellent partnerships within each community. We can be out-stationed in the schools, with law enforcement, and our non-profits like the YMCA, we can work different shifts and share cubicles, one running into the evening to offer after hour visitation, which will allow parents who work to visit with their children over dinner or help them with their homework, and we could work weekends. This will allow us also save money on mandatory over-time and regular overtime. This will increase the ability to have more family visits. It would be a win, win for the families we serve, for our staff, and for the CW budget.

The Child Welfare Director is working with the Human Resource office to clear up our vacancy data, that shows we have 300 vacancies, and does not match our CW data. We've found once a position is hired we are not getting it cleared off the vacancy list. HR has been excellent partners and we should see a marked difference by the end of January 2019.

Foster System Capacity

Having more foster homes available will help assure a proper first-time placement for each child.

MEASURES	DESIRED DIRECTION OF CHANGE	8/2018	9/2018	10/2018	CHANGE FROM PRIOR MONTH	10/2017	CHANGE FROM PRIOR YEAR	12-MONTH TREND
# OF OPEN DHS-CERTIFIED FOSTER HOMES, BY TYPE:								
CHILD-SPECIFIC FOSTER CARE	▲	2,669	2,631	2,632	IMPROVED	2,672	NOT IMPROVED	
GENERAL FOSTER CARE	▲	1,527	1,517	1,504	NOT IMPROVED	1,495	IMPROVED	
TOTAL FOSTER CARE	▲	**4,196**	**4,148**	**4,136**	NOT IMPROVED	**4,167**	NOT IMPROVED	

The community is coming along side us! We can see a marked difference in the morale of our staff in the communities that are rolling out Every Child. Staff are slowly changing their narrative to being proud that they are a state employee and even prouder of their work in child welfare. We have recruited 808 people, both foster parents and community volunteers who want to help in some way.

As we collect data we are learning the best method to recruit our community members. Below is a graph that shows what media source is the strongest avenue to pursue. This will help us focus how we recruit and maximize our resources.

Learn About	Show Up	Jan-Aug 2018 Mo Avg
Billboard	4	0
Church	40	3
DHS	39	14
Embrace Oregon	40	14
Embrace Oregon foster family	8	2
Every Child foster family	8	1
Friend or colleague	67	26
Informational event	14	10
News story	6	7
Online Ad	16	0
Other	53	23
Radio	18	2
Social media	121	15
Web search engine	41	31
Total	472	148

Foster care area of concern:

Our numbers of foster parents leaving us is still too high. Teachers, nurses, anyone who has licensing as part of their credentials will no long come forward. If we do an investigation on a foster family, they must let people know when applying for a position that they have been investigated. If they receive a determination from us, such as an unable to determine or a founded, both findings will cause them to lose their license and likely their employment.

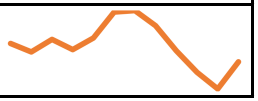
- The impacts of SB 243 on all foster parents, both general and relative, are significant. Being investigated for abusing a child is an overwhelming experience. It can impact the employment of some: medical fields, teaching, law enforcement to name a few. This has a chilling effect on recruitment and retention of foster parents. As part of the GRACE grant staff interviews were conducted. The evaluator noted: "The increase in assessments of foster homes was of major concern to the interviewees, who believe that they have lost good foster homes, placements within ongoing foster homes, as well as prospective foster parents who have pulled their applications or who have decided against engaging with foster care entirely."

How we addressed these concerns before:

- <u>Certification/Licensing Violation vs. Child Abuse Allegation</u>
  - It is possible to address all the expanded definitions of abuse under SB 243 as certification violations—with consequences around placement and revocation of the certificate/license, rather than with a comprehensive CPS assessment. This allows the department to look holistically at the situation and do what is in the best interest of the child.

We are looking at our data to assess if we are seeing increased safety while losing the professional foster parents we truly want onboard.

Child Abuse and Neglect

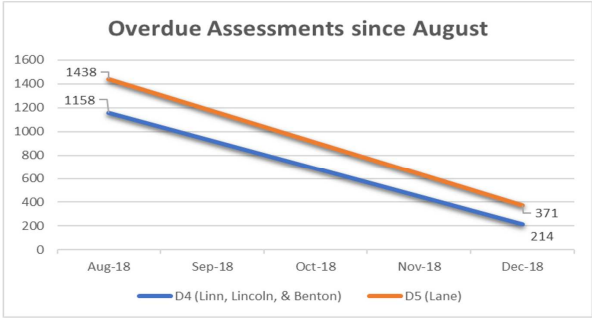
MEASURE	DESIRED DIRECTION OF CHANGE	Average of 5/18 to 8/18	Average of 6/18 to 9/18	Average of 7/18 to 10/18	CHANGE FROM PRIOR MONTH	Average of 7/17 to 10/17	CHANGE FROM PRIOR YEAR	4 MONTH ROLLING AVERAGE FOR LAST 12 MONTHS
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTS:								
# OF REPORTS REFERRED FOR ASSESSMENT	▼	2,963	2,836	3,044	NOT IMPROVED	3,062	IMPROVED	

Each month's data point is a moving average of four months of data.

STATEWIDE OVERDUE ASSESSMENT**:**

Statewide Overdue Assessments

August 2018	December 13, 2018
Totals Per District	Totals Per District
Central Office: 42	**Central Office:** 2
D1- 517	D1- 420
D2- 949	D2- 1162
D3- 1,237	D3- 889
D4- 1,158	D4- 212
D5- 1,438	D5- 367
D6- 568	D6- 281
D7- 91	D7- 206
D8- 906	D8- 847
D9- 115	D9- 155
D10- 54	D10- 137
D11- 136	D11- 179
D12- 112	D12- 135
D13- 28	D13- 46
D14- 323	D14- 80
D15- 1,032	D15- 744
D16- 664	D16- 502
Total Outstanding- 9,370	**Total Outstanding-** 6,364



In March of 2018 we created the Oregon Executive Leadership team, it is comprised of the 16 district managers across the state and the 14 senior program managers in central office. This team was created to bridge the gap between policy and practice.

The overdue assessment project is one of the first projects this team agreed to tackle. In 2016 our overdues were extremely high, but we were working in a culture of fear, our staff worked tirelessly and in isolation to get their individual overdues cleared. The overdues were cleared and within the month started elevating once again. What happened? We didn't look at the root cause and find the issues that were causing our overdues assessments. We were losing our staff in droves, we knew this time we had to do it differently. We researched other states that have been successful, and we are currently working with Arizona to help us find the root causes and the best was to work with our staff to not only clear up the backlog but to support, educate and train our staff at the same time. This process has helped us continue to build safety, trust and hope.

A team of 10-12 child safety experts travel to one district at a time to engage in blitzes across the state. They are not only clearing these overdues, but they are modeling excellent practice, giving our staff tools by teaching successful techniques, and modeling leadership.

Overdue Assessment Project

"Thanks for leading the charge!"

"This feels amazing; folks at West are feeling like a weight has been lifted."

"We are very appreciative of the help we are receiving, and I know all of us have felt supported in this process."

DHS | Oregon Department of Human Services

MEASURE	TARGET GOAL	DESIRED DIRECTION OF CHANGE	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018
RE-ABUSE: OF ALL CHILDREN WHO WERE VICTIMS OF A SUBSTANTIATED OR INDICATED REPORT OF MALTREATMENT DURING A 12-MONTH TARGET PERIOD, WHAT PERCENT WERE THE VICTIMS OF ANOTHER SUBSTANTIATED OR INDICATED MALTREATMENT ALLEGATION WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF THEIR INITIAL REPORT?	≤9.1%	▼	11.7%	11.7%	11.5%

The Office of Reporting, Research, Analytics and Implementation (ORRAI) has begun the phased in implementation of their first project, at both the Oregon Child Abuse Hotline (ORCAH) and at the Marion County screening unit. The Screeners received training and support for the last few weeks as they learn to work with the tool. Child Welfare screeners will be provided two estimates of safety for every child identified in a report. The first estimate will indicate the probability a child will be placed in substitute care within two years. The second estimate will estimate if a child will receive a subsequent screened in report within the next two years. Both estimates will be displayed as a score between one and four, with one being the lowest probability of the outcome and four indicating the highest probability. Decision-makers will use this score to provide data-informed decision-making along with their professional discretion on whether to assign the case or close at screening. This tool will improve accuracy while reducing bias in decision-making at screening. Improved accuracy resulting in a focused use of resources on the most vulnerable children with lower probabilities of safety, reducing the amount of time CPS workers spend on assessing children with higher probabilities of safety.

Foster Care

MEASURES	DESIRED DIRECTION OF CHANGE	Average of 5/18 to 8/18	Average of 6/18 to 9/18	Average of 7/18 to 10/18	CHANGE FROM PRIOR MONTH	Average of 7/17 to 10/17	CHANGE FROM PRIOR YEAR	4 MONTH ROLLING AVERAGE FOR LAST 12 MONTHS
# OF FOSTER CARE ENTRANTS:	▼	275	271	262	IMPROVED	347	IMPROVED	
# OF FOSTER CARE EXITS:	▲	344	341	352	IMPROVED	323	IMPROVED	
INCREASE EXITS TO ENTRIES RATIO[1]:	▲	1.25	1.26	1.34	IMPROVED	0.93	IMPROVED	

[1] *EXIT TO ENTRY RATIO : A ratio of 1 indicates the number of children entering care and the number of children exiting care matches. A ratio above 1 indicates exits exceed entries and is the desired outcome. A ratio below 1 indicates entries exceed exits and is not desired.*

Each month's data point is a moving average of four months of data.

Child Welfare has the right professionals on their team and all we need to do is take away the barriers, give them the tools they need and allow them the grace and space to do excellent work. The LIFE program is a good example of what really works, this is a program we hope to take statewide and was included in a Policy Option Package but was not part of the GRB.

Leveraging Intensive Family Engagement (LIFE)

- Enhanced Family Find for the life of the case
- Monthly Case Planning Meetings with the family's team
- Peer Parent Mentors available for every parent on the case

4 Values: Strengths-based, Trauma-informed, Culturally Responsive, Parent and Youth Voice

Between July 2015 and June 2018 LIFE has served 468 families (682 eligible children and their siblings).

Almost half of those children (48%) have achieved some form of permanency in less time than the predicted 3 plus years. Even more important is the fact that LIFE cases support families and workers to do their best work, stay engaged, and work together.

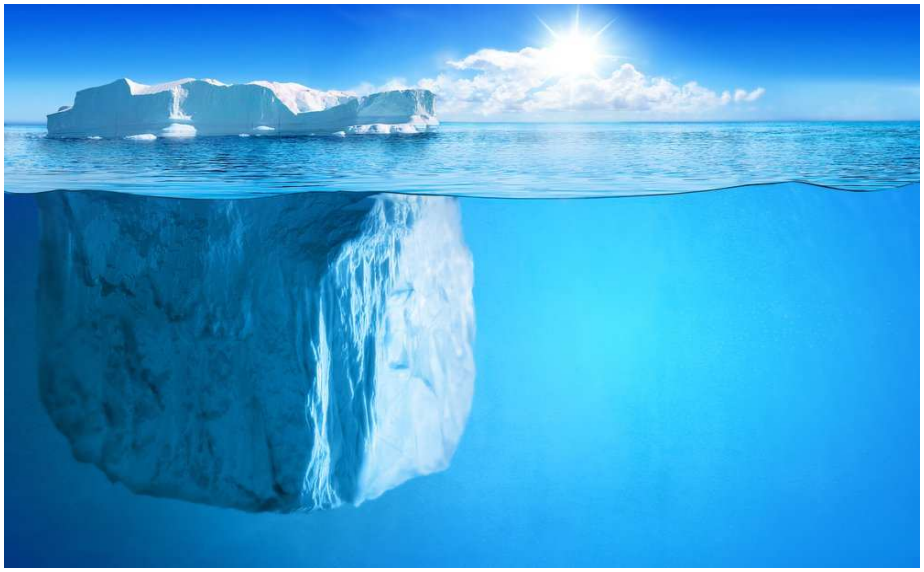
- ✓ Parents feel respected, supported and heard and are more engaged and motivated to make lasting change.
- ✓ Caseworkers and staff feel supported, valued, and engaged with their families and the case. This supports accountability and increases retention.

- ✓ Outcomes are more sustainable. The family is an active participant in their plan and there is a whole team calling on all their resources and creative thinking to support the children and the parents. Supportive relationships, community connections and self-advocacy last long after the DHS case has closed.
- ✓ Parents, staff, and community partners say the LIFE program holds everyone accountable, sets up a safe place to work together, and humanizes people.

No other policy, law, or workload change has ever raised up practice and built effective partnerships with families and the community like LIFE.

Other News:

Critical Incident Response Reviews Changing the way we do our work:



The iceberg represents the work we do in child welfare and it is a good symbolization of how in a Critical Incident Response Review when our staff are working in fear, we are only getting to the surface level information by reviewing the case file. As we continue to create an environment of safety for our staff, they will be able to share with us the human story without fear of retaliation. Then and only then, will we be able to get to the entire story.

Child Welfare staff choose their difficult work because they are passionate and committed to serving children and families. But years of instability presented seemingly impossible challenges with unmanageable workloads and limited tools or support for success.

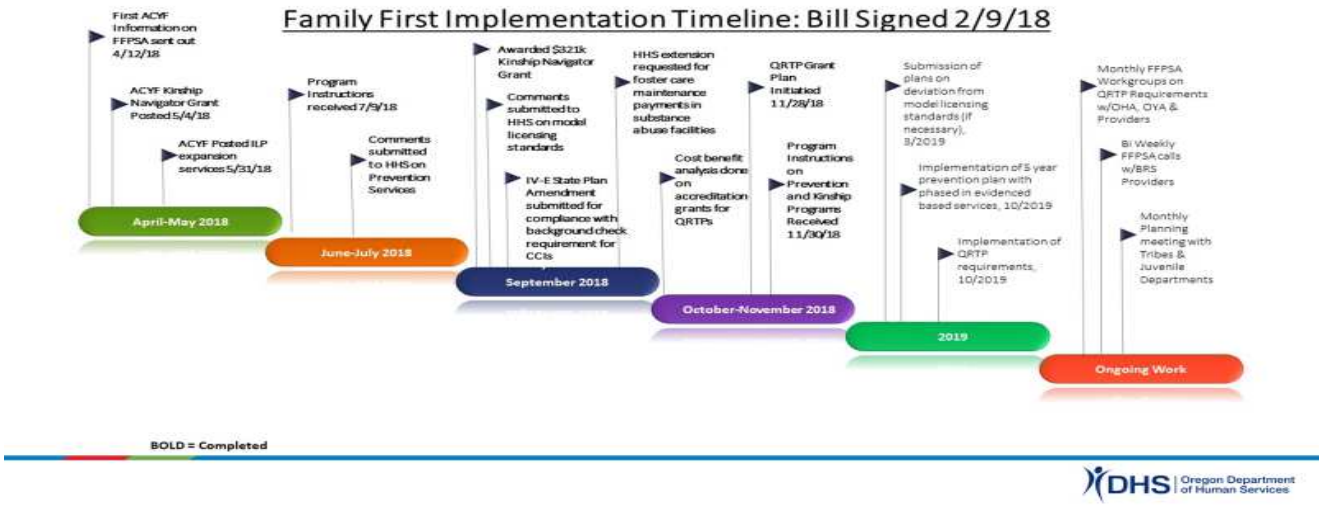
The loss of a child is a heartbreaking tragedy for every member of the family and for that child's community.

Though not all fatalities can be prevented, in Oregon's Child Welfare -- a program charged with keeping children safe -- we have a responsibility to review every child fatality and learn from what happened. We study what could have been done differently and apply the lessons learned to strengthen child safety. This process is referred to as the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT).

When our staff are working in fear, they are in fight and flight, this cannot result in our best work for children and families. We are making the turn to a safe culture where staff are open and transparent with what's working and what's not. We need to understand and hear the voices of staff. They need to feel safe to talk about their experience during their work with a family. That is when we will have a true understanding about how we can serve these families from a community perspective, long before they ever become involved with child welfare.

This is what they consider gathering the Second Story!

Family First



Limitations on FCMP's for congregate care placements and QRTPS

DHS plans to accomplish the goal of meeting these requirements by maintaining rather than limiting the continuum of care and placement options for children and youth in crisis, while also increasing our placement capacity within state in to prevent temporary lodging and reduce the number of children placed out of state.

We envision the Family First Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) standards as being an important part of this continuum of care but not as a replacement for every level of care beyond a family foster home. Every placement does not need to be accredited, but the state of Oregon expects the same high level of care in all facilities.

Where's Oregon with Accreditation

Child Welfare is expecting BRS Basic, Intensive and Short-Term Stabilization residential treatment programs to become accredited as QRTPs. Of these BRS programs in Oregon 10 out of 12 are not currently accredited. The Department has initiated a grant plan for accreditation to assist these programs.

Family First gives us a wonderful opportunity to create better outcomes for children and their families by providing front end services and prevent children from coming into foster care.

Oregon Child Abuse Hotline Transition:

As we are transitioning from fifteen hotlines to one we are having growing pains which are not unexpected, but we take them very seriously. Experienced staff across the state are staying in their communities, although we are hiring a new pool of candidates and training them we are losing our experienced screeners. We have seen an increase in wait times and dropped calls, frustration from some of our community members and our local offices are having to pick up the calls without the bandwidth to do so.

We recognize that many callers are experiencing a wait time that is directly impacting their ability to make a timely report. Most who are affected by this are mandatory reporters. The Oregon Child Abuse Hotline (ORCAH) is committed to decreasing wait times and attending to the reporters and community as quickly as we can. The ORCAH leadership team has been working diligently to improve our systems, both the phone technology and operationally.

We are sending this out to some of our Educators who have been frustrated with the call wait times.

We have been in the process of enhancing our phone system and have made some quick adjustments so that callers receive a new experience. These changes are:

- The phone greeting was updated to add an option for Mandatory Reporters to move into their own queue. This prioritizes their calls just behind law enforcement but ahead of the general public/non-mandated reporters;

- We added an automated message that reports the estimated wait time for callers. This change depending on the queue they select (LEA, Mandatory Reporter or All Other Calls);

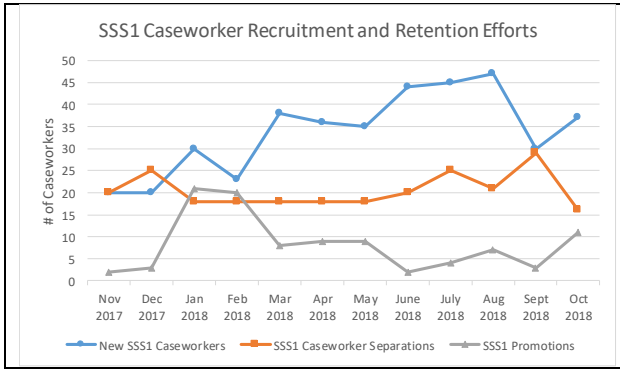
- And lastly, starting early next week, we will add a feature to allow the caller the opportunity to select a call back rather than waiting on the line while remaining their place in the queue.

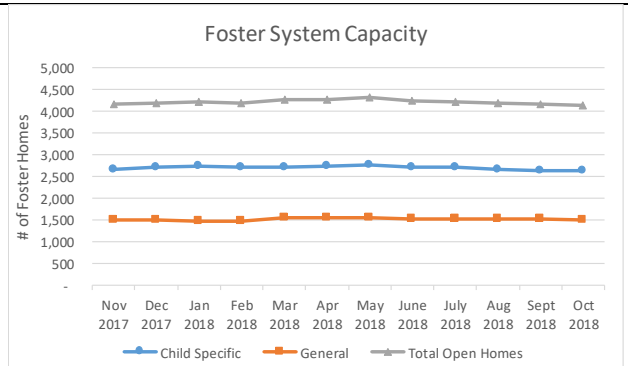
When you or your staff are required to make a mandatory report, please consider the following:

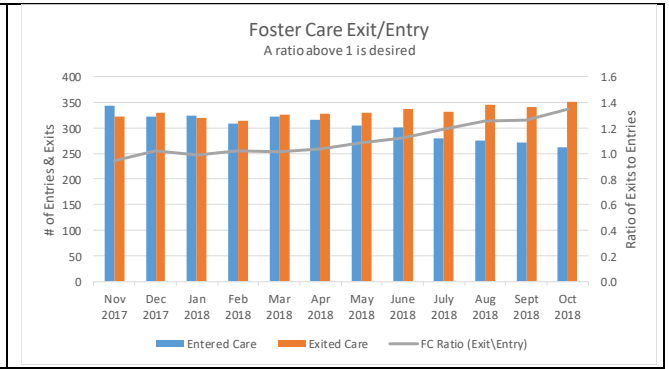
- Data reflects that our higher call volumes are during the afternoon hours, rather than the morning;

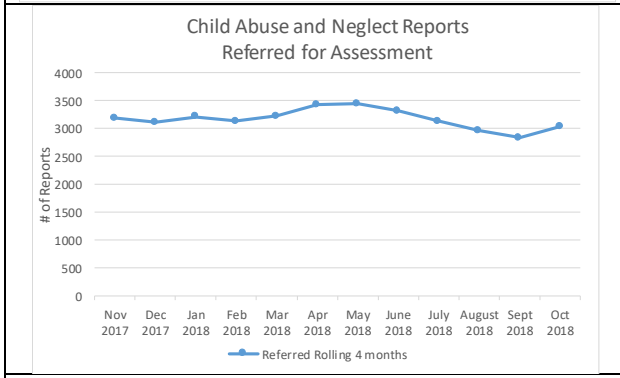
- If there is a critical report that needs to be made and the wait time is high, one option would be to contact your local law enforcement agency. They partner with us very closely and they cross report information to us whenever their reports involve children. Although this is one option, we want to ensure that you and your staff are continuing to call us to make their mandatory report;

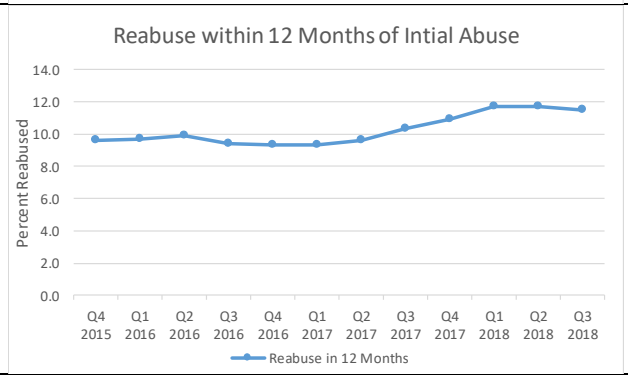
- If you need immediate assistance, you can email your feedback or concerns to: Feedback.OregonChildAbuseHotline@dhsoha.state.or.us as we are monitoring this closely as we want to utilize this venue to be responsive and ensure the customer service that our communities deserve;

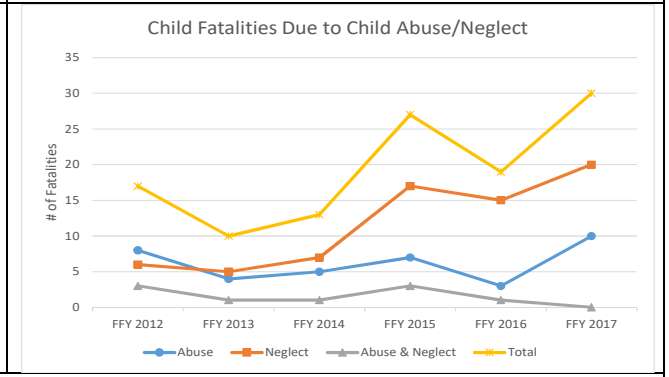


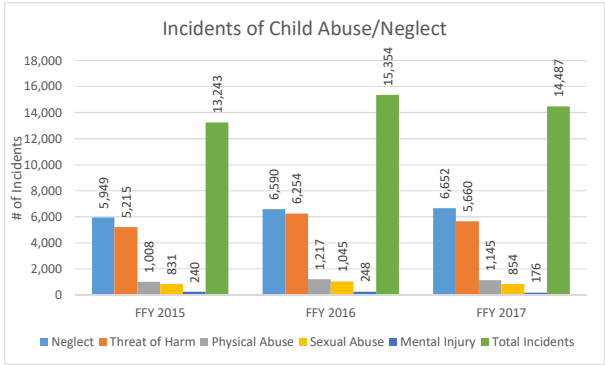












Reasons Children Enter Foster Care FFY 2015 to FFY 2017

(includes all types of foster care)

	FFY 2016		FFY 2017		
Removal Reason	**Number**	**% of Entrants**	**Number**	**% of Entrants**	**Change from Prior Year**
Neglect Abuse	2,708	71.1%	2,856	70.3%	-
Parent Drug Abuse	1,880	49.4%	2,113	52.0%	+
Inadequate Housing	578	15.2%	698	17.2%	+
Domestic Violence	463	12.2%	622	15.3%	+
Inability To Cope	653	17.1%	566	13.9%	-
Physical Abuse	502	13.2%	557	13.7%	+
Parent Alcohol Abuse	359	9.4%	535	13.2%	+
Incarceration Of Parent	420	11.0%	413	10.2%	-
Child Behavior	286	7.5%	282	6.9%	-
Sex Abuse	166	4.4%	210	5.2%	+
Abandonment	138	3.6%	125	3.1%	-
Child Drug Abuse	38	1.0%	62	1.5%	+
Death Of Parent	27	0.7%	42	1.0%	+
Child Alcohol Abuse	22	0.6%	23	0.6%	=
Relinquishment	8	0.2%	13	0.3%	+
Child Disability	52	1.4%	-	0.0%	n/a
Total Foster Care Entrants	**3,808**		**4,065**		