

# CHILD WELFARE DIVISION

## PROGRESS REPORT

December 2023

(November 2023 data)



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# Executive Summary

This report provides data through November 2023.

Some highlights from November include:

## Guiding Principle One

- In November, the average wait time for all ORCAH caller types was under 1 minute.
- The percentage of statewide timeliness of completed case plans dipped slightly to 68.50 percent.
- Certified Resource Families continued to access respite care services. Since January 2023, 44 individuals have obtained a certificate of approval as a certified respite provider.
- The Family Preservation team will be completed with the addition of six policy analyst positions; they are currently in the hiring process. These analysts will focus on fidelity to the Family Preservation practice model at the local office level.

## Guiding Principle Two

- An Advisory Committee was created to provide input and lead the implementation of Senate Bill 209, relating to the confidentiality of Sexual

Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) information for youth

- The number of new SSS1s continues to outpace separations.
- Caseworker caseload averages continue to meet Oregon's caseload ratio standards for all three categories of caseworkers.

## Guiding Principle Three

- District 3 (Yamhill) continues to work on the lead measure of Frequency and Quality of Family Time with Parents and Siblings.

Thank you for reading the December Progress Report.

# Guiding Principle 1:

Supporting Families and  
Promoting Prevention



Continued efforts to ensure that the Child Welfare Division is trauma-responsive, family and community-centered, and focused on safety and prevention

# Average wait times for all caller types was 1 minute

## What the measure is

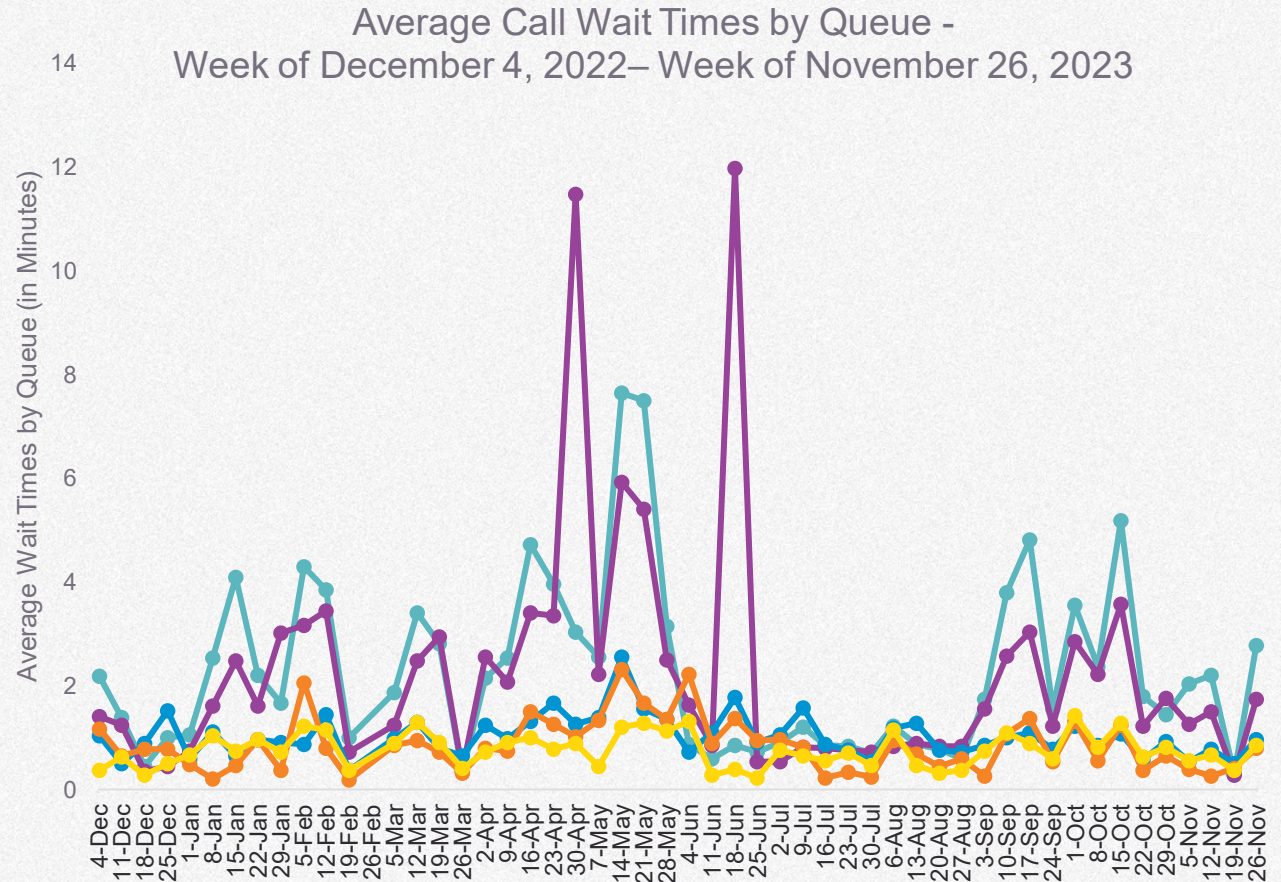
The chart reflects the average length of time calls wait in an Oregon Child Abuse Hotline (ORCAH) queue, presented by week and queue type.

## Why it is important

Timely answering of calls facilitates effective triage and rapid identification of contacts that require a Child Protective Services (CPS) response to ensure child safety.

## What we are doing\*

ORCAH continues to leverage current operational strategies to maintain low wait times with a target of answering 95% of calls within 5 minutes.

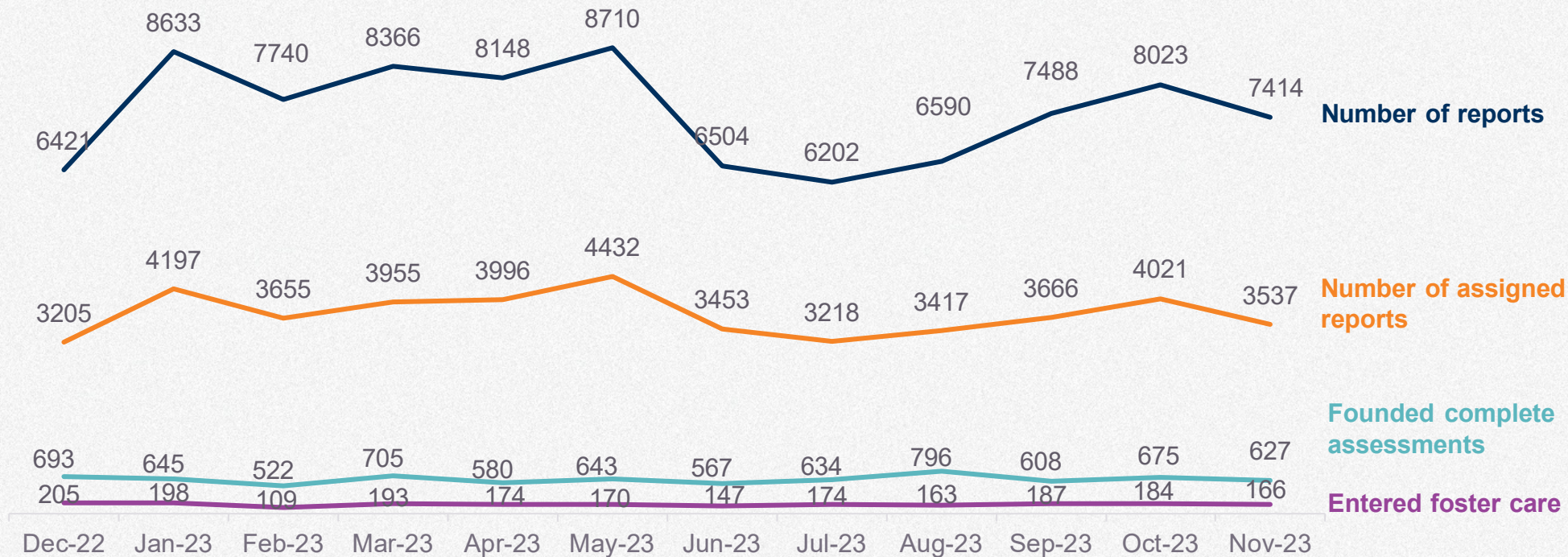


- LEA** – calls from a law enforcement official
- MP** – calls from a medical provider
- MR** – calls from a mandatory reporter
- GP** – calls from the general public
- SP** – calls from Spanish-speaking community members

\*The information in this section will only be updated if the data shows significant changes that require an adjustment in strategies.

# Founded assessments and number of children entering care

Reports of Abuse, Founded Assessments, Children Entering Foster Care



## What is the measure

While thousands of contacts are received at ORCAH, a smaller “Number of reports” are documented as a report of abuse or a report describing conditions that pose a risk to a child, but do not constitute a report of abuse as defined by rule. The “Number of assigned reports” are reports of abuse assigned for CPS assessment. A small percentage of those assessments result in “Founded complete assessments,” and an even smaller percentage lead to children who “Entered foster care.”

## Why it is important

Many times, concerns can be managed with resources and support provided by family, community and ODHS to allow children to remain in their homes and avoid removal.

# 27 percent of contacts result in CPS assignment

## What is the measure

Total contacts received at ORCAH and the number of those contacts that are assigned for Child Protective Services (CPS) assessment.

“Contacts” are all calls and law enforcement cross-reports received, including those that do not constitute a report of abuse.

## Why it is important

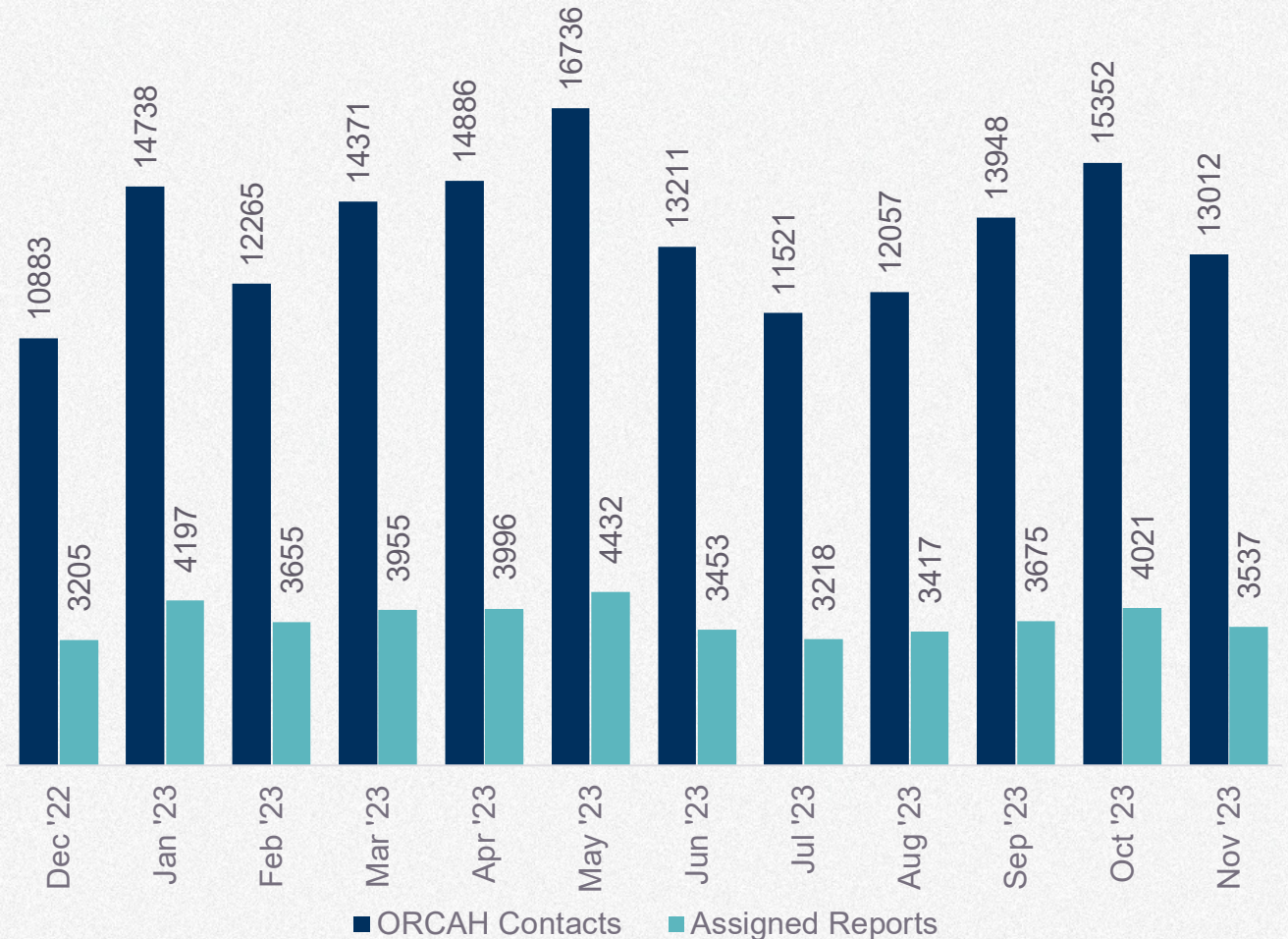
ORCAH receives a high number of contacts that are neither reports of child abuse nor require Child Welfare intervention. In November 27 percent of contacts resulted in CPS assignment.

## What we are doing\*

ORCAH continues to monitor data related to the number of contacts that are assigned for CPS assessment.

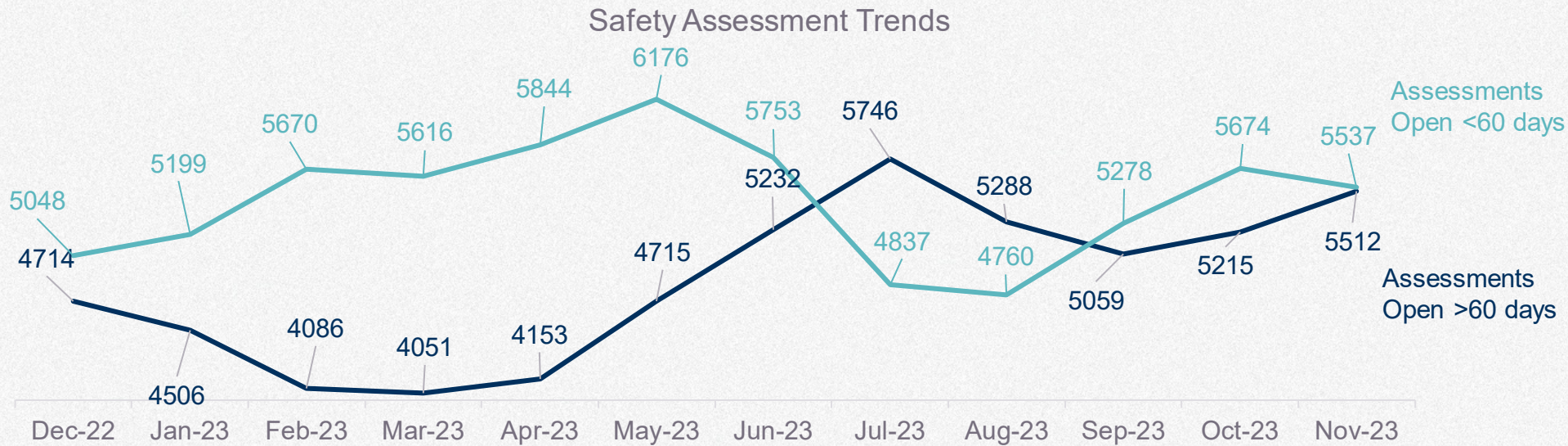
\*The information in this section will only be updated if the data shows significant changes that require an adjustment in strategies.

### ORCAH Contacts\* vs Assigned Reports



\* September 2022-January 2023 data from prior reports has been updated to correct a data transcription error.

# Consultation regarding complex cases supports timely and accurate safety assessments



## What is the measure

In many cases after initial screening, Child Protective Services (CPS) determines that a formal child safety assessment is necessary. The graphic above shows the number of assessments open less than 60 days (teal) and the number of assessments open greater than 60 days (dark blue).

## Why it is important

Timely assessments are critical in ensuring children's safety, minimizing stress on families, and making the best use of Child Welfare workers' time.

## What we are doing

In November, the Safety Program continued to participate in case-specific discussions and structured meetings at critical junctures in complex cases. These efforts support case decisions that comply with CPS rules, procedures, and best practices. Consultation regarding complex cases supports timely and accurate decision-making and the timely completion of assessments.

Safety Program continues to analyze data with local office leadership and develop strategies to help reduce barriers for workers in the completion of assessments.



# 75 percent of children and young adults at risk of Temporary Lodging are diverted to other services

## What is the measure

The graphic displays the number of individual children and young adults who spent at least one night in Temporary Lodging (TL) last month. TL becomes necessary when an appropriate placement cannot be found. It typically refers to a child or young adult's overnight stay in a hotel with Child Welfare workers, while the team works to develop a solution for the placement need.

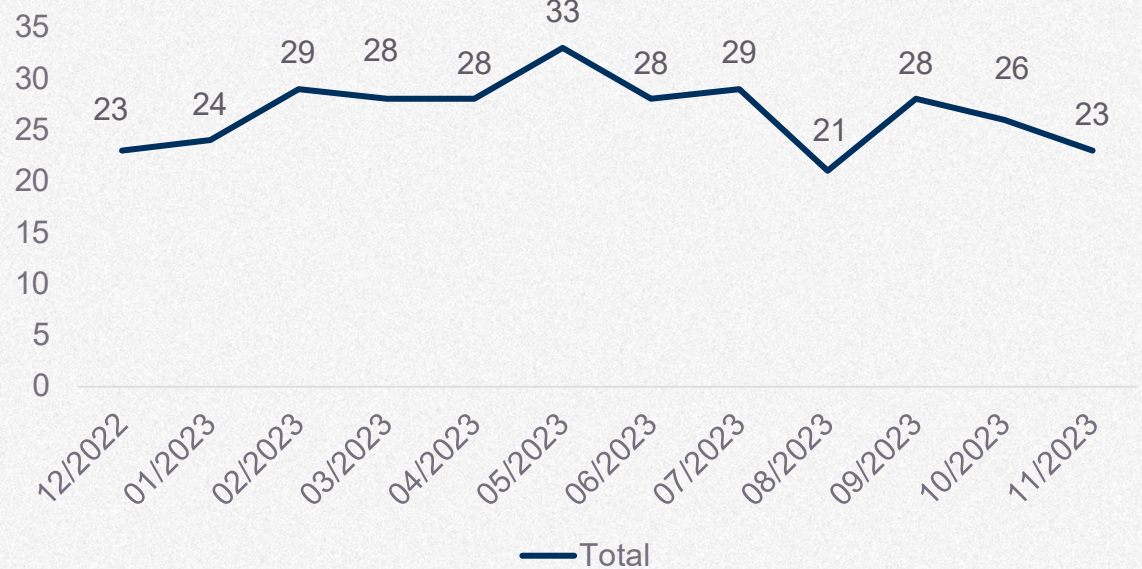
## Why it is important

Child Welfare tracks the number of children in TL to track ongoing efforts to ensure it is only used as a last resort, as we are identifying appropriate placement options and supports.

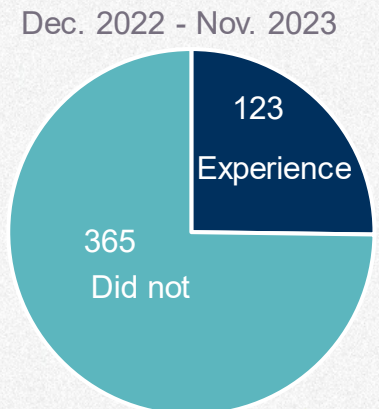
## What we are doing

Response and Support Network (RSN) services through the Oregon Post Adoption continues to support families. RSN began supporting relatives in Washington County at the time of placement in September, by October nearly all relatives in Washington County had accepted the voluntary service. Clackamas and Multnomah Counties are working on processes to implement the service. RSN has supported 226 children between March 2021 and October 2023 and continues to support the highest acuity children.

Unique child or young adult with at least one night of Temp Lodging in the Month



All children and young adults identified as being at risk of TL are staffed by a team of design and delivery staff who work to develop child-specific plans to prevent TL. Between July and November 2023, 77 percent of the 287 children and young adults who were at risk of TL did not experience an episode of TL. This is part of a longer-term trend over the last 12 months, in which 75 percent of children and young adults staffed do not experience TL.



# Number of children in foster care remains low

## What is the measure

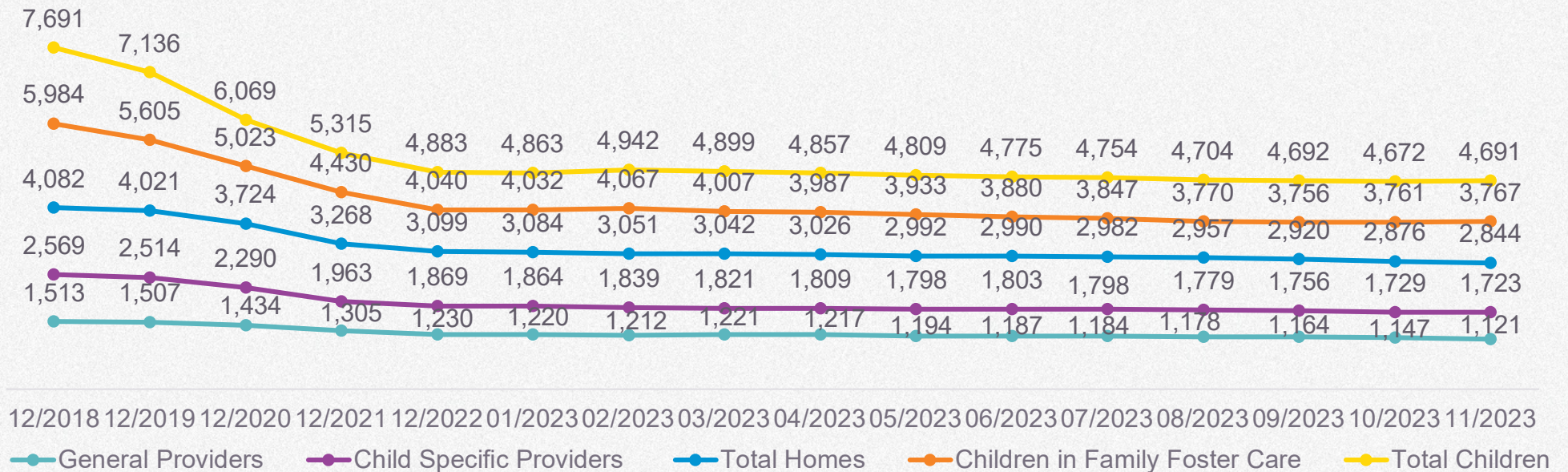
This graph shows the number and type of resource families in relation to the number of children in care.

The Total Children (yellow line) count does not match the Children in Family Foster Care (orange line) because some children are placed in other settings, such as those supporting individuals with developmental disabilities and those providing higher levels of care.

Total Homes (blue line) = Child Specific Providers (purple line) + General Providers (teal line)

## Why it is important

These numbers help inform efforts to increase recruitment and retention of available resource families. The next section of this report describes the consistent, local and statewide, recruitment and retention efforts. These efforts strive to develop a qualified pool of resource families who reflect and affirm the diversity of children and young adults in foster care.



Child Welfare Data Book, 2018-2022. ROM.CM01 Foster Care Counts, 1/2023-5/2023. Child Welfare Retention and Recruitment Dashboard, 6/2023– current.

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# Efforts to recruit and retain resource (foster) families continue

## Certified Respite Program

In November, 32 individuals completed the required training to become a certified respite provider, for a total of 251 individuals who have completed the training since January 2023. As of November, 44 individuals hold a certificate of approval as a certified respite provider.

## Champion statewide team activities in November

In **District 5 (Lane)**, retention efforts included a Dinner and Discuss event to review the rules and procedures related to the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) screening. The District 5 Champion partnered with a local organization to provide Thanksgiving food boxes to 45 local resource families. Also, coordination efforts began with six community groups that were recruited to provide holiday gifts to resource parents and children in care.

## District 6 (Douglas) and District 11 (Klamath/Lake),

Champions are in the early stages of writing grants to the Ford Family Foundation to support local needs. Champions are meeting with resource families and looking at innovative ways to improve their experience and ensure they feel supported and heard.

Grief and loss can be challenging for resource families as they support the transitions of children and young adults out of their home. Survey data shows **District 7 (Coos/Curry) resource families** feel they need more support. District 7 responded to this need by securing a grant to launch a monthly grief and loss support group that will be facilitated by a local therapy clinic beginning in 2024.

Early in November, **District 12 (Morrow/Umatilla)** applied focus effort on the retention goal of ensuring 100% of cases are assessed for appropriateness of birth parent and resource parent icebreakers, with 50% of cases appropriate cases having icebreakers scheduled within 7 days of placement. Local management and the Champion reviewed current protocols and provided staff with updated training regarding the protocols and benefits of ice breakers.

**District 13 (Baker/LaGrande/Wallowa)** and **District 14 (Malheur/Grant/Harney)** are in the second year of the Allied Family Partnership project which adds extra layers of financial and community support to families caring for children with mental health and trauma-based behaviors. This work is being supported through an Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care grant.

# Permanency consultants use data to identify local offices in need of supports

## What is the measure

The percentage of total case plans completed within the federally required timeframe.

## Why it is important

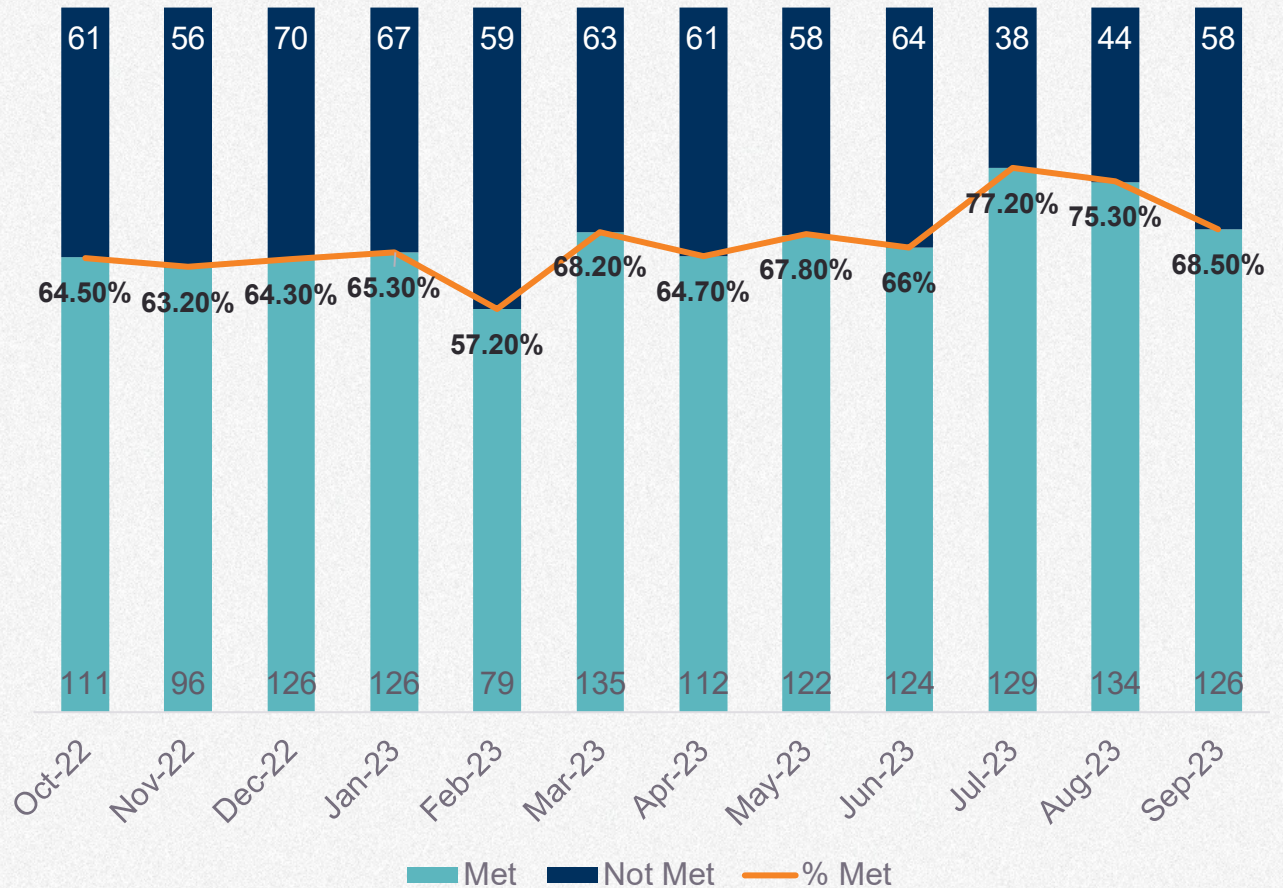
It is a federal requirement that initial case plans should be completed within 60 days of a child's placement in foster care. Each case plan is the "road map" for families and Child Welfare, identifying the necessary steps toward family reunification and case closure.

## What we are doing

Permanency Consultants are reviewing data and discussing outcomes with local leadership and staff.

Through use of the Foster Care Initial Family Report dashboard, permanency consultants are analyzing data at the local office level to identify teams in need of additional supports. They are having conversations with local leadership to identify workforce and systemic barriers to sustaining timeliness of case plans from month to month.

Percent of Timely Case Plans Met or Not Met



Note: Timeliness of case plans is measured in accordance with policy allowing up to 60 days to complete a family's case plan. Data for children coming into care during October will be reflected in the January report. Data for children coming into care during November will be reflected in the February report.

# Recurrence of maltreatment continues a downward trend

## What is the measure

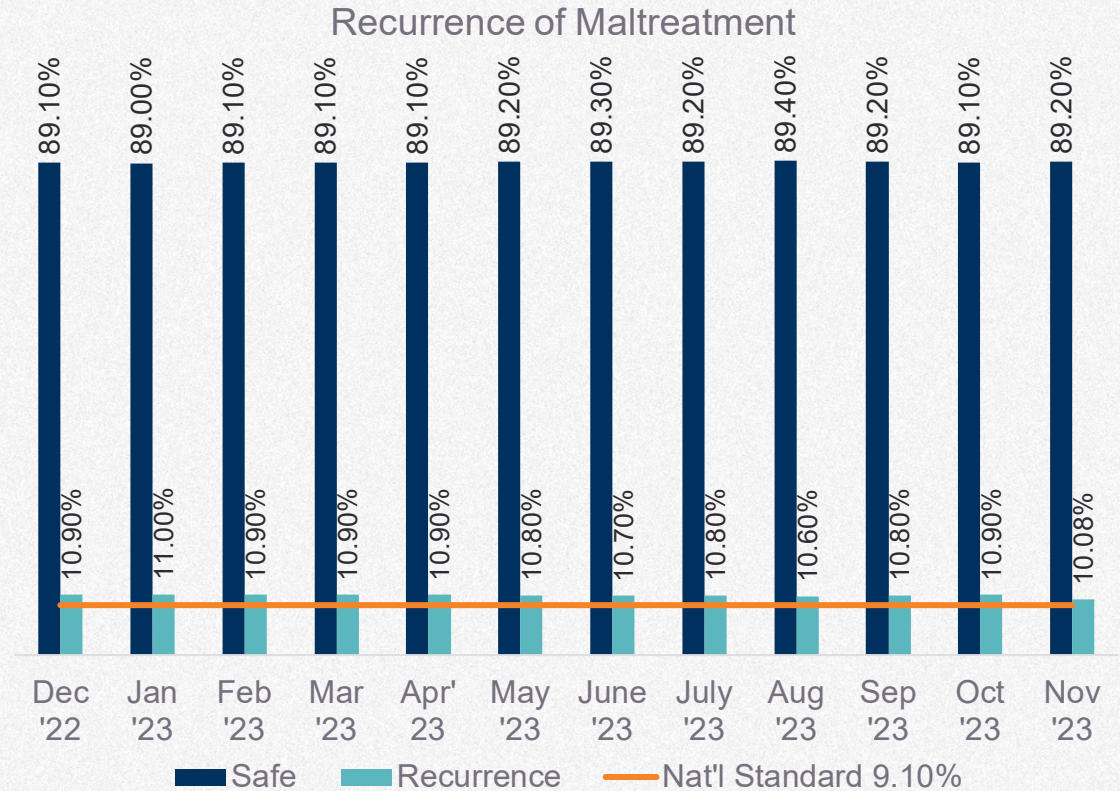
Recurrence of Maltreatment is defined as children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated report of maltreatment during a 12-month target period. The date the report was received determines if a child is counted in the 12-month target period and is used to determine whether maltreatment recurrence occurred within 12 months. This metric also includes reports of maltreatment occurring outside of their time in CW custody.

## Why it is important

One of the primary purposes of Child Protective Services (CPS) interventions is to prevent future harm to children who have already experienced abuse or neglect.

## What we are doing

Child Welfare is in phase 2 of rolling out Oregon Assessing Patterns and Behaviors of Neglect Training, a 2-day training for Child Welfare caseworkers. This training aims to build knowledge around the societal and systemic factors influencing families, as well as the child welfare response to neglect. The training builds enhanced knowledge of the indicators and impacts of neglect and promotes quality practice rooted in the protective factors and impacts of neglect.



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# Family Preservation Approach

## Building a Team

The Federal government enacted the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 to move Child Welfare systems toward becoming family preservation systems and away from separating families through foster care placements. As a first step toward the goal of family preservation, Oregon developed a Title IV-E Prevention Plan that guides the design of an enhanced service array, case management practices that enhance family engagement, and CQI systems that support sustainability. This plan, in alignment with ODHS' Well-being Together Initiative, the Equity North Star and both the Child Welfare *Vision for Transformation* and Self Sufficiency *Vision in Action*, necessitated the development of infrastructure to support the transformation of both the Child Welfare (CW) and Self Sufficiency (SSP) programs through integrated policy and practice and collaboration with communities and other family serving systems.

The Family Preservation Unit is currently being built to support the transformation of CW and SSP. We know a strong, structured, and collaborative relationship across the two programs and the community is essential to providing complete and seamless supports to families in their homes. The needs of the whole family must be centered in this work. The Family Preservation unit consists of positions that sit across both Self Sufficiency and Child Welfare programs.

### Family Preservation team structure:

**Family Preservation Manager:** Manages the Family Preservation Unit across SSP and CW, as well as the Reunification Program in Child Welfare.

**Family Preservation Lead Program Analyst (PA4):** This analyst leads the community engagement work, supports strategic planning, designs data collection strategies, analysis and planning and reports to leadership.

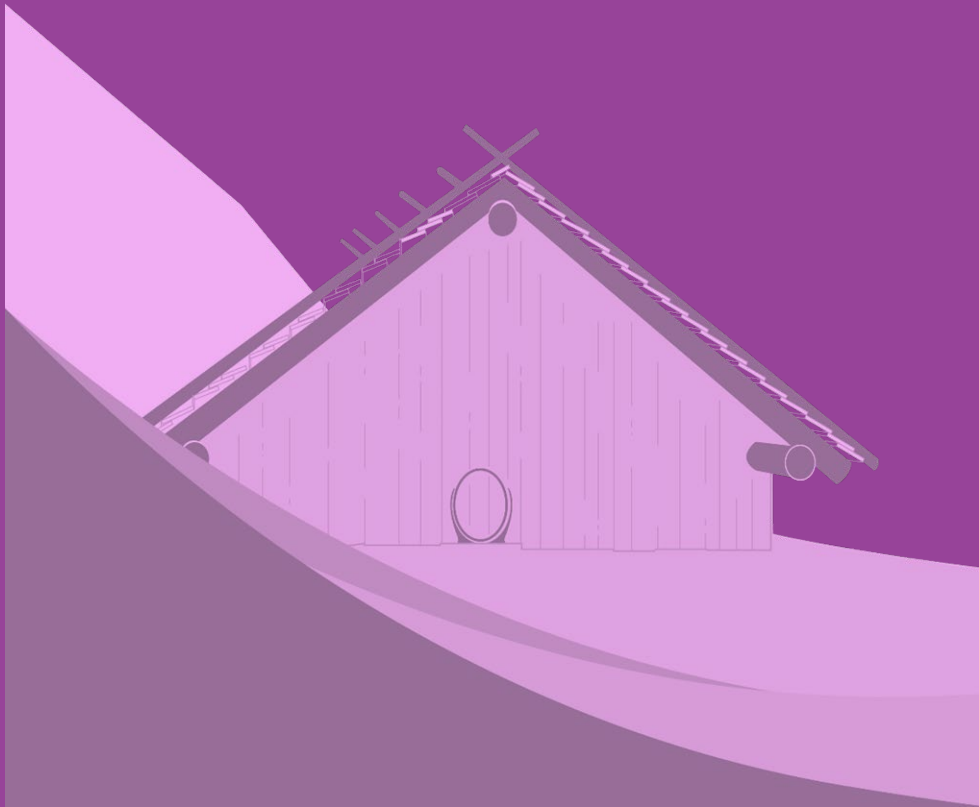
**Family Preservation Operations and Policy Analysts (OPA3):** There are two OPAs in the unit who work in partnership to support policy and practice changes across Child Welfare and Self Sufficiency. They provide consultation, support and training to local offices and community and other agency partners across the state.

**Family Preservation Lead Policy Analysts (Lead PA3):** There are two Lead-PAs whose primary duties include gap analysis, reporting and support in designing and implementing the Family Preservation practice model.

**Family Preservation Policy Analysts (PA2):** Six PA positions are currently in the hiring process. These positions will focus on model development and fidelity to the Family Preservation practice model at the local office level. These positions will also support research, analysis and design of new and enhanced Family Preservation policy and procedure across CW and SSP.

# Guiding Principle 2:

Enhancing Our Staff and  
Infrastructure



Significant metrics for a supported, skilled, and engaged workforce that reflects the communities we serve

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# Child Welfare Equity Initiatives

## **SB209 – SOGIE Confidentiality**

A Core Team and Advisory was created to provide input and lead the implementation of Senate Bill 209, relating to the confidentiality of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) information for youth.

## **Child Welfare Race & Equity Leadership Team (CWRELT)**

The Child Welfare Race & Equity Leadership Team has been redesigned and is anticipated to begin meeting again in early 2024. Participation has been enhanced through the development of a Core Team that includes participants from the ODHS Office of Tribal Affairs, the Nine Tribes in Oregon, the Office of Equity and Multicultural Services, the Service Equity Council, the Child Fatality Prevention and Review Program, Equity, Training, and Workforce Development and several Employee Resource Groups.

## **Racial Equity Social Justice Tool (RESJ)**

An update to the RESJ Tool (2.0) was initiated in collaboration with the CWRELT Core Team and Child Welfare Program Managers. This tool seeks to ensure that all Child Welfare policy, procedure, and forms are designed in collaboration with community and individuals with lived experience with the goal of moving our agency toward equity in practice.

## **ADA Guide for Resource Parents**

A guide for Resource Parents was created by the Equity Coordinator in partnership with others from the Equity, Training and Workforce Development program. This guide seeks to support Resource Parents in identifying and requesting supports for children in their care that have disabilities.

## **Service Equity Council**

The Office of Equity and Multicultural services (OEMS) and Child Welfare Service Equity Manager are supporting the implementation of the Child Welfare Service Equity Council. This council is part of the ODHS Strategic Equity Plan, known as the Unified Equity Framework. In its current phase of implementation, there is a Steering Group that is completing the council's charter. This group is comprised of representatives from the Nine Tribes of Oregon, people with lived experience, subject matter experts, and community partners.



# New hires and promotions continue to outpace separations

## What the measure is

Child Welfare caseworkers hired or promoted into SSS1 classification compared to caseworker separations.

## Why it is important

Child Welfare jurisdictions across the nation have historically faced staffing shortages. Like many industries, since COVID-19, Child Welfare is contending with workforce challenges across the board.

## What we are doing

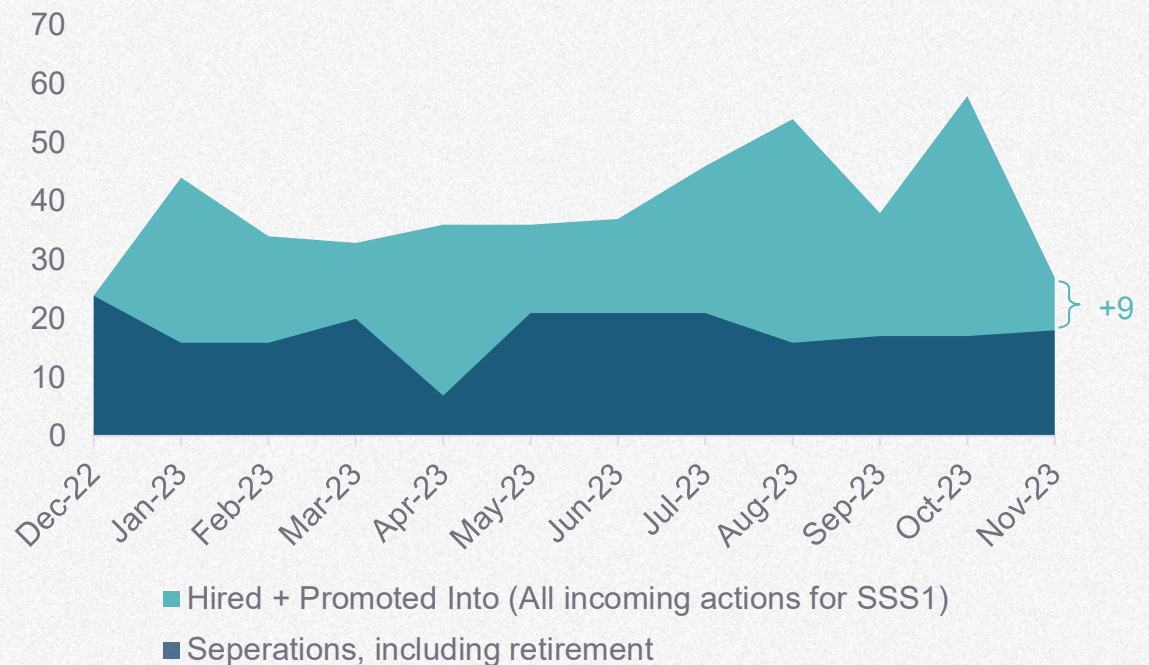
For all recruitments during the last 180 days, the average recruitment length from job posting to conditional offer was 69 days. ODHS continues to focus efforts on achieving the goal of an average of 45 days or less to fill.

The Human Resources team has transitioned to providing the ODHS Hiring Manager Recruitment Trainings virtually. To date, 280 managers have completed this training.

Human Resources has also provided Interview Panelist Training for 369 ODHS staff.

In October, Human Resources launched the new Position Description Writing Training. To date, 49 ODHS staff have completed this training.

Hires & Promotions Into SSS1 Caseworker Classification vs Separations



Note: Data may change as the result of processes that have “completed” in Workday since the last data run.

# Caseworker Caseload Averages continue to meet Oregon's established ratios

## What the measure is

Child Welfare caseworkers (SSS1 classification) are assigned cases (e.g., CPS: number of new assessments in the last 30 days, Permanency: number of children and young adults, and Certification: number of homes) as part of their caseload. This data will capture the monthly averages for each of the three casework roles.

## Why it is important

Ensuring manageable caseloads is one way to develop and support the workforce. This will result in a decrease in vacancies, an increase in retention rates, an increase in longer tenures, increased promotions, and higher workforce morale, which all positively impact the children and youth we serve.

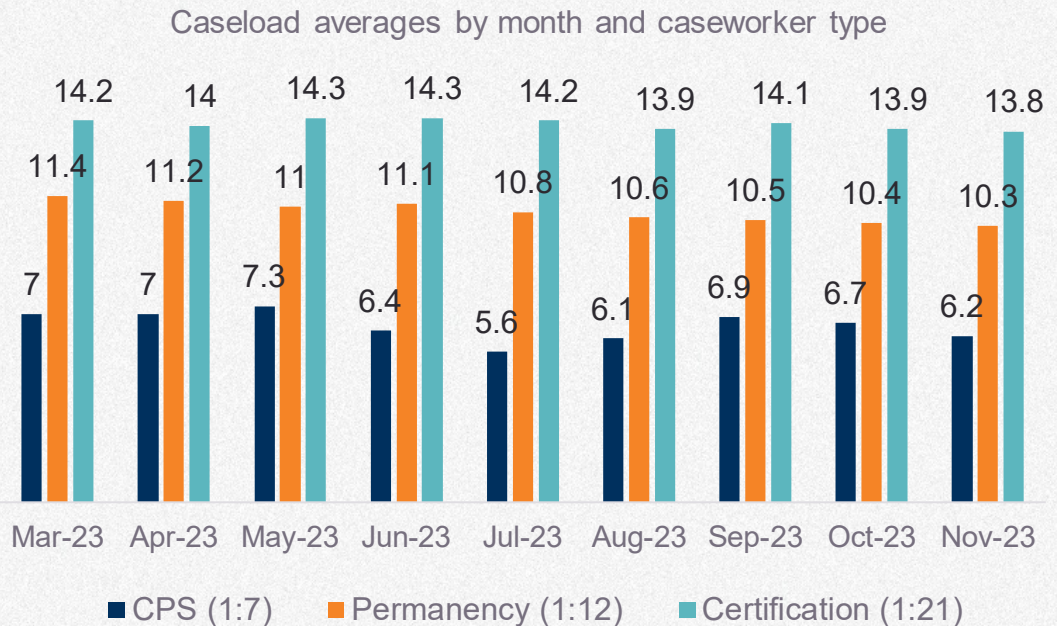
## What we are doing

Each level of management is regularly using the dashboard. Frequent data validation checks are happening within Safety, Permanency, and Certification program staff.

## Background

Caseloads play an important role in the legislative process and are used to inform legislatively granted position authority and budget. In implementing the Vision for Transformation, in 2022 Child Welfare established the state's goal for caseload ratio standards. To establish them, Child Welfare incorporated the CWLA Standards of Excellence, Council on Accreditation, timing studies done in Oregon in 2008 and 2017, and literature and research reviews. The average monthly caseloads for the specific caseworker roles are outlined below:

- CPS: 1 caseworker per 7 new assignments assigned in the last 30 days
- Permanency: 1 caseworker per 12 children and young adults served
- Certification: 1 caseworker per 21 certified resource homes



# Guiding Principle 3:

Utilizing Data with  
Continuous Quality  
Improvement Systems (CQI)



Enhancing the Structure of our  
System by using Data with Continuous  
Quality Improvement (CQI)

# CQI Implementation Continues

## What is the measure

Yamhill County chose the lead measure of Frequency and Quality of Family Time with Parents and Siblings in July 2023. Yamhill had its 2<sup>nd</sup> quarterly check-in on December 5, 2023. An outcome of that meeting was the addition of a new action step to talk about supervision level of family time earlier in the case and discuss this during the preparation meeting which occurs 5-7 days after the child is placed in substitute care.

Yamhill County typically sees only a few children come into care each month. For this reason, timeliness of initial family time data may change dramatically from month to month. For example, data for September and August 2023 is based on one case each month.

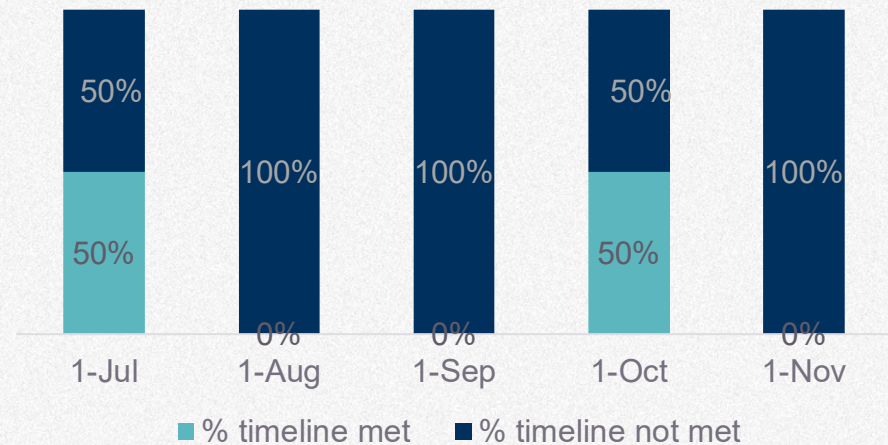
## Why it is important

Family Time with Parents and Siblings measures whether concerted efforts were made by Child Welfare to ensure that family time between a child in substitute care and his or her mother, father, and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationships. The frequency of family time is considered based on the needs of the child and circumstances of the case. The measure also considers if decisions about supervision during visits, location, length, etc., are made in such a way that supports a positive family time experience for the child and ensures quality interactions with parents/siblings.

## What we are doing

The measure is being tracked through a monthly review of the Timeliness of Initial Family Time After FC Entry report. This report measures how soon children had family time with parents and siblings after they entered substitute care. The expectation is for children to have family time with their parents within two days or less. Yamhill initially was meeting this measure 14% of the time for the period under review April 1, 2022-April 1, 2023. The site implemented an action plan to improve this measure in July, with updates will be made during the December 5, 2023 check-in meeting.

Timeliness of Initial Family Time After FC Entry



# System transformation through community partnerships

## Why it is important

ODHS is transforming the child welfare system in collaboration with Tribes, community members, families and children with prior system experience, resource and birth parents, service providers, and policy makers. This values-based approach holds equity and a belief that children do best growing up in a family at the center of helping families achieve well-being and independence through opportunities that protect, empower, respect choice and preserve dignity.

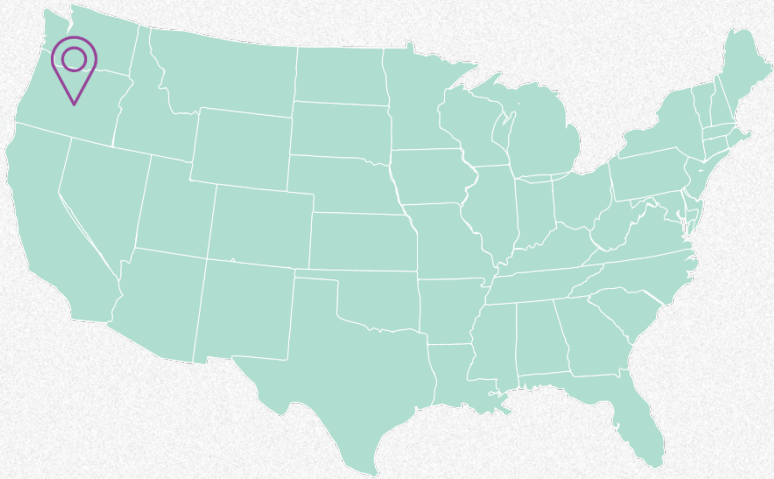
## What we are doing

- The **District 1 (Clatsop/Tillamook/Columbia)**, District Manager participates as a voting member on the Columbia County Trauma Informed Network (CTIN). The primary focus of CTIN is the reduction of ACES scores for children throughout the tri-county area. They have had great success in supporting smaller more agile non-profit social services in the area that are able to move more quickly to connect individuals with resources and long-term planning through larger agencies.
- In **District 9 (Hood River/Wasco/Sherman/Gilliam/Wheeler)** the ODHS team came together and passed out holiday meals to local Tribal families. In total, approximately 150 households received food, which included 450 precooked meals and 133 food boxes. These efforts were done in partnership with the Gorge Native American Collaboration, Oregon Food Bank, The Next Door Inc, and N' Chi' Wana Housing. District 9 has been intentional in showing up for their Tribal community and supporting them in the ways they express their need.



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# Federal Performance Measure Dashboard



The [Oregon Department of Human Services \(ODHS\) Child Welfare Federal Performance Measures Dashboard](#) provides quarterly updates on an array of trends across the state for these Federal Performance measures:

- Maltreatment in foster care
- Recurrence of maltreatment
- Re-entry to foster care
- Permanency in 12 months
- Permanency in 12 to 23 months
- Permanency in 24+ months
- Placement stability

Definitions for the Federal measures are posted in the link above.

This dashboard, launched in December 2021, is designed from files produced by the University of Kansas Center for Research Results Oriented Management Application (ROM) using Oregon Child Welfare data.

The Federal Standards for each measure are updated every few years. These standards are updated on our Federal Performance Measures dashboard to reflect the changes in 2023. For more information, please refer to the [Children and Family Services Review Technical Bulletin 13A](#).

The [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services prepares an annual report](#) of state performance in the seven categories listed above. The report includes findings of analysis conducted on performance across states over time.

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# About

The [Child Welfare Division Vision for Transformation](#) is the spirit of what we believe the child welfare system should be in Oregon.

Centered on three guiding principles, the [Vision for Transformation](#) is the roadmap and compass for the Oregon Child Welfare Division to transform itself and the greater child welfare system into one that supports and preserves families. These guiding principles are:

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

You can also read more in the most recent edition of the [CW Staff Connect](#).

**For questions or feedback about this report, please contact:**  
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