



CCAO Human Services Series, Part 1: Children Services

August 20, 2026



PCSAO Overview

What We Do

PCSAO is a membership-driven association of Ohio's county Public Children Services Agencies that advocates for sound **public policy**, promotes **program excellence**, and builds **public value** for safe children, stable families, and supportive communities.

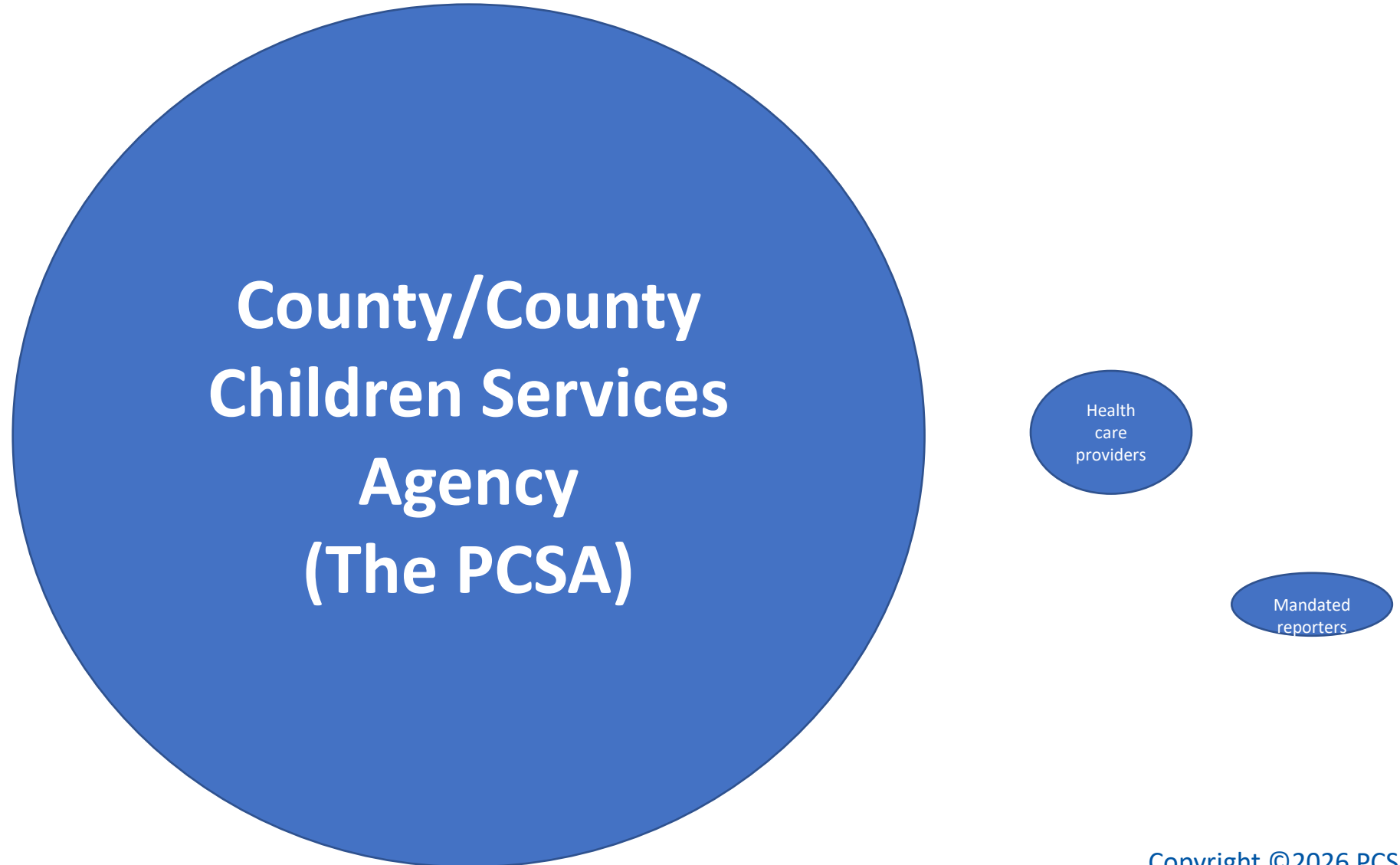
Who We Represent

66 county JFS agencies that have
children services,
17 stand-alone Children Services
Boards, and
2 Hybrid – Children Services
reports to County Administrator

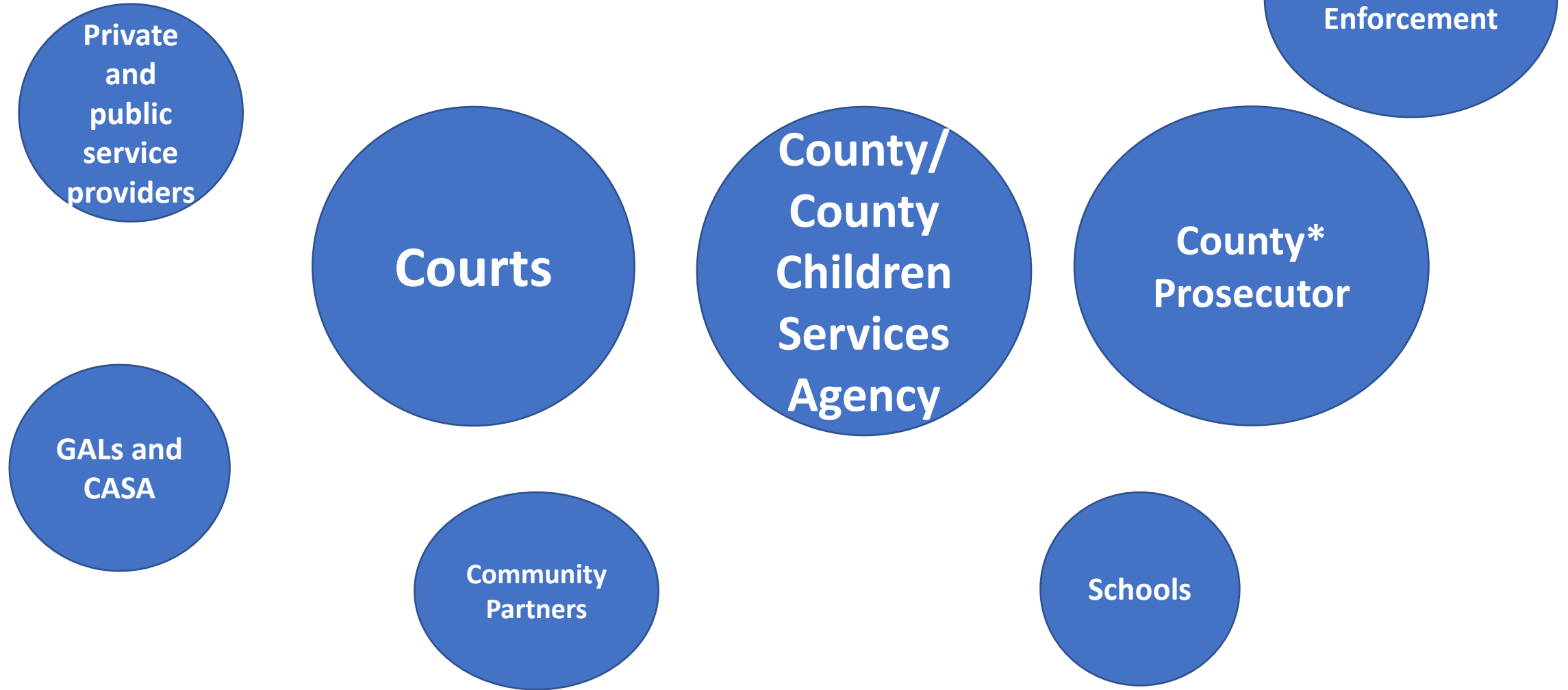


Children Services 101

The Children Services System



The Children Services System



An iceberg floating in blue water under a blue sky with clouds. The tip of the iceberg is above the water line and contains a white oval with the text 'PCSA Decisions'. The much larger part of the iceberg is submerged below the water line and contains several orange ovals with white text. On the left side of the submerged part, there is a white text block. On the right side, there is a large white title. The background is a gradient of blue from the sky to the water.

**PCSA
Decisions**

**Federal/
state law**

OAC

Courts

**Best
Practice**

Research

**Best
Interest
of Child**

**Community
Expectations**

Prosecutor

Guidance

HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

Agency decisions
are grounded in
a regulatory
framework and
informed by
research and best
practice

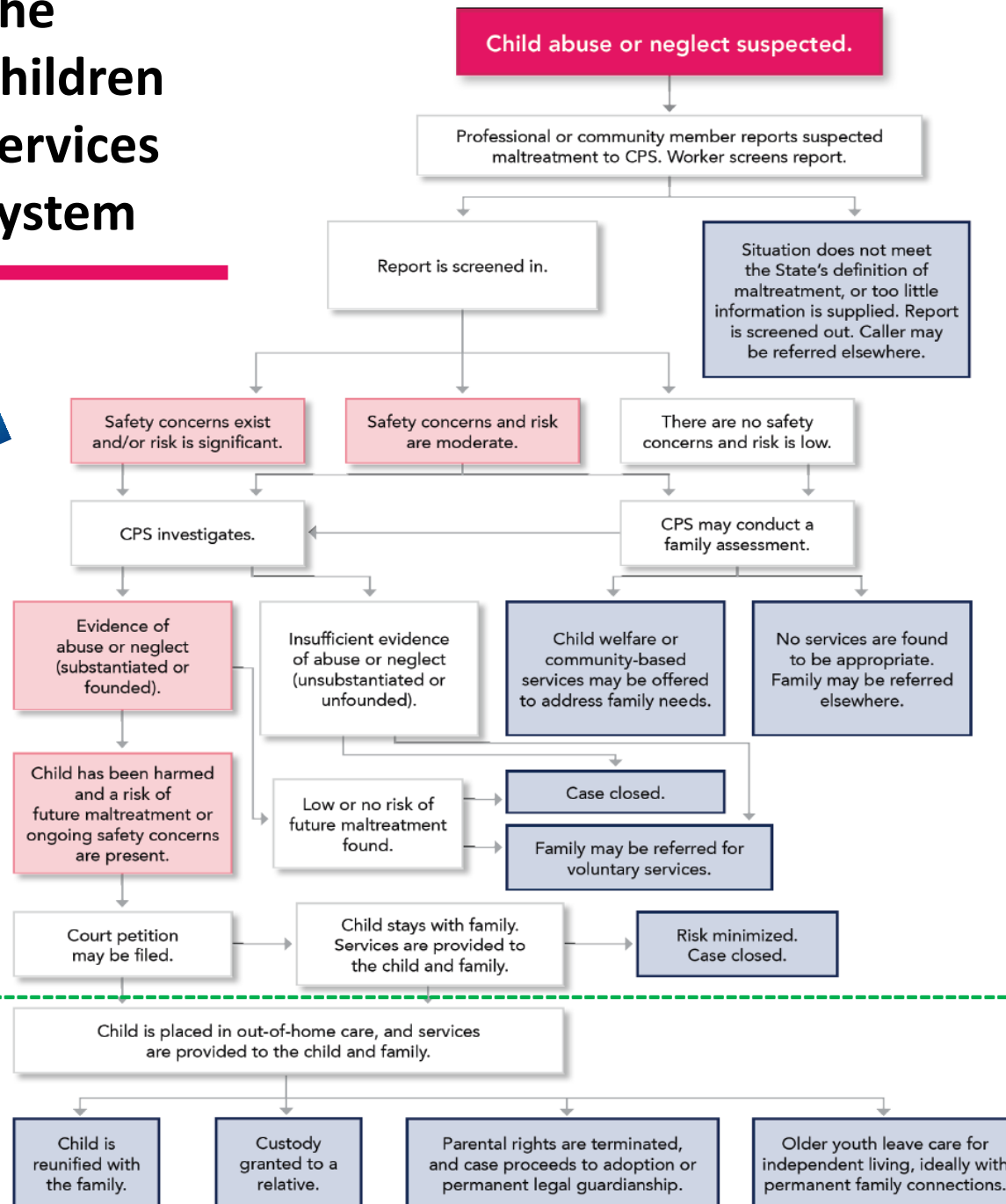
You did too much

You didn't do enough



What We Do: By the Numbers

The Children Services System



**Receive
allegations
24/7 (200,000)**



**Screen
allegations
(200,000)**

**ORC, OAC,
DCY Guidance**

**Screen
out; refer**

OR

**Screen in and
investigate**



Investigate Screened-In Reports (78,000)



ORC, OAC,
(Prosecutor,
Courts)

Ohio Children & Families Served



14,260 children in
foster care on any given
day (agency custody)
(SFY25)



13,570 children served
in their own home
(SFY25)

Legal representation
Kinship
Documentation, documentation, documentation
Meet court deadlines
Foster caregiver recruitment and support
IV-E Audits, CPOE, CFSR

Fiscal and contract management
Family Finding
Community outreach
Independent living services
Staff recruitment and retention
Training mandates
Supervised Visitation
Assessments

Public records requests
Adoption

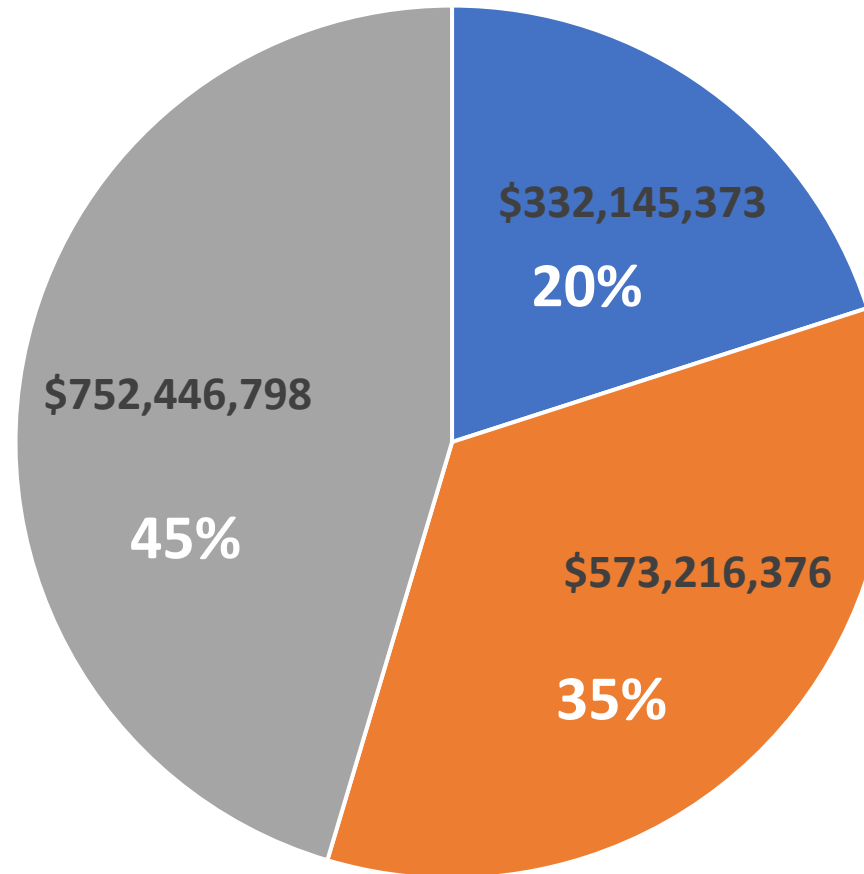
QUESTIONS?

Children Services 201

HOW WE ARE FUNDED

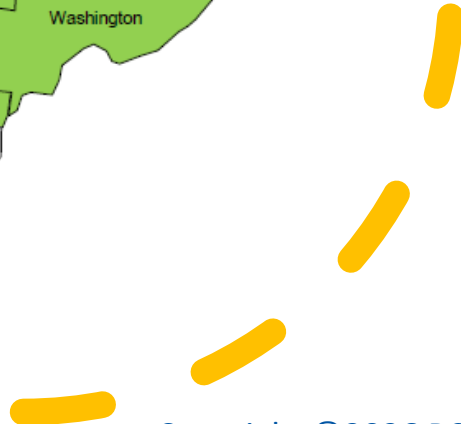
STATEWIDE SPEND SFY 2025

SFY2025
Total Spend = \$1,657,808,546



■ STATE ■ FEDERAL ■ LOCAL

- 52 counties
- 80% child population



PLACEMENT COSTS & HOW DID WE GET HERE?

What Are Placement Costs?

Placement costs ARE
(per diems, foster care
maintenance (FCM), boarding
costs, etc.)

- Expenses associated with the 'care and maintenance' of a child in foster care (room and board)
- Other items such as clothing, special diets, personal incidentals
- A portion of the placement setting's administrative costs

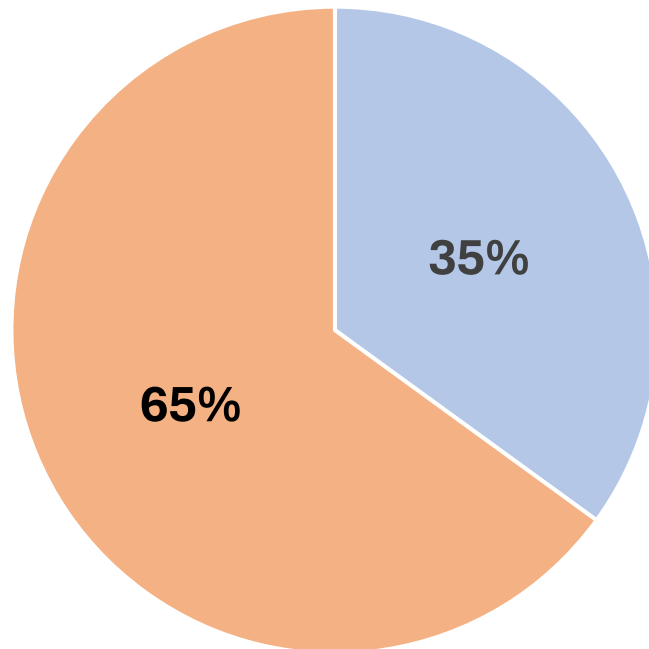
Placement costs are NOT

- Treatment

Placement Costs/Context

Placement costs accounted for 35% of Ohio's total Children Services overall spending

SFY2025 Overall Spending
\$1.7B



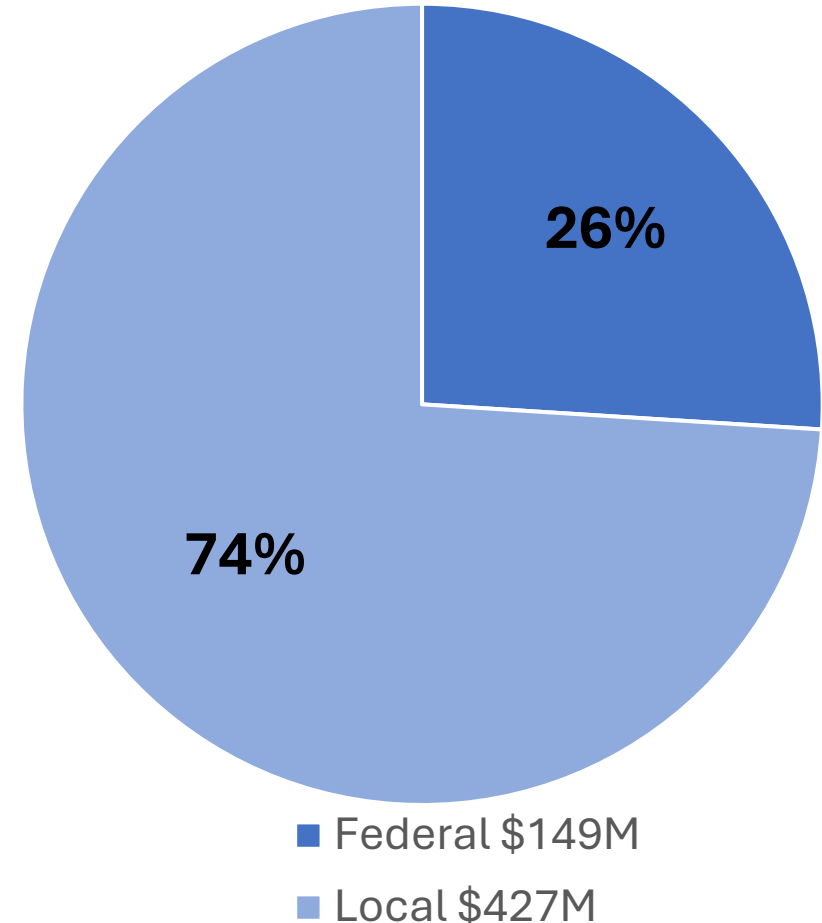
■ Placement Costs \$576M ■ All other spending \$1.12B



Who pays placement costs?

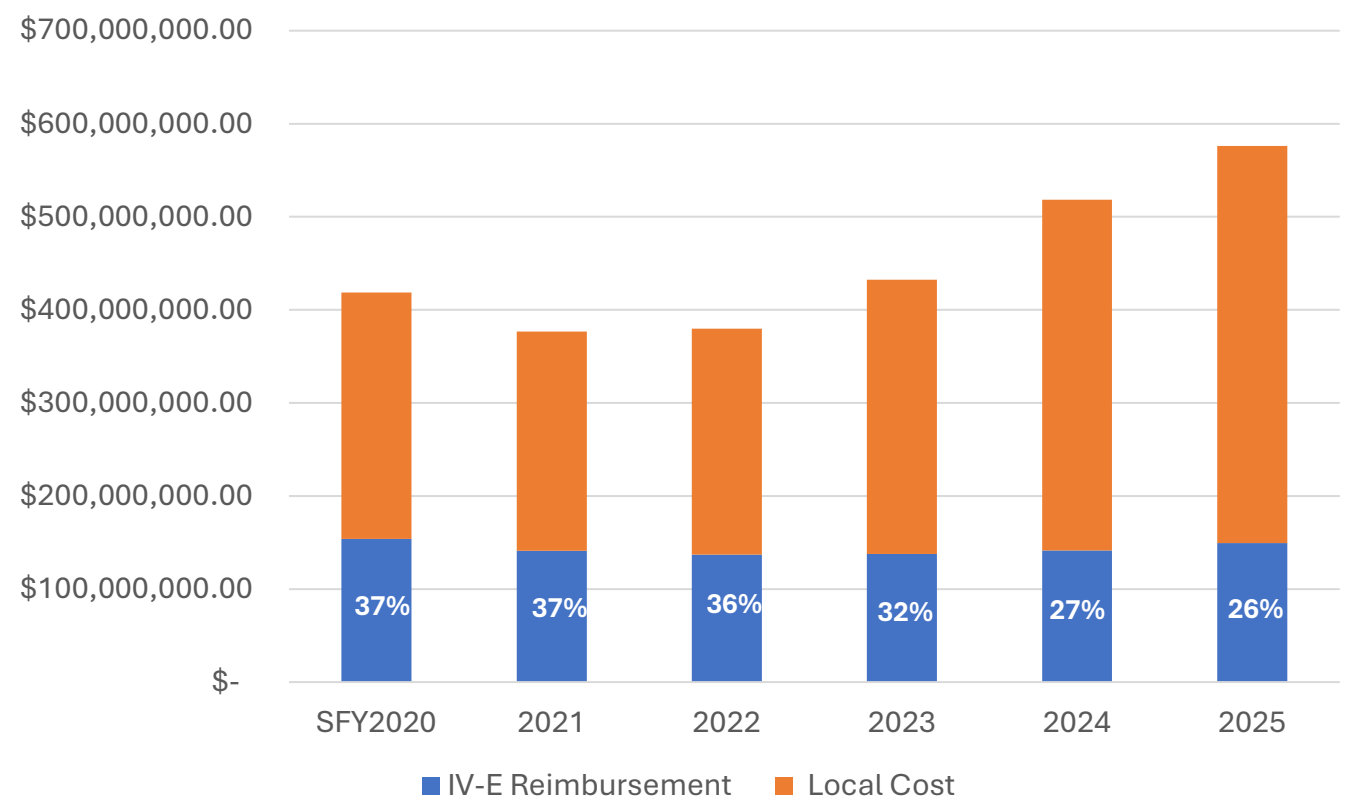
- In Ohio, placement costs are shared by feds and locals
- Federal Title IV-E funds are available on a reimbursable basis for eligible youth
 - IV- E eligibility is based on outdated income level **AND** on a set of requirements regarding circumstances and process of removal (less than ½ eligible)
 - Reimbursement rate = FMAP (64.6%)
- Placement provider agencies must meet certain requirements for PCSAs to claim IVE reimbursements (i.e., licensed & file an annual cost report)
- Courts must file timely and with correct documentation for PCSAs to claim IVE reimbursements

Total Placement Spending By
Source SFY2025
\$576M

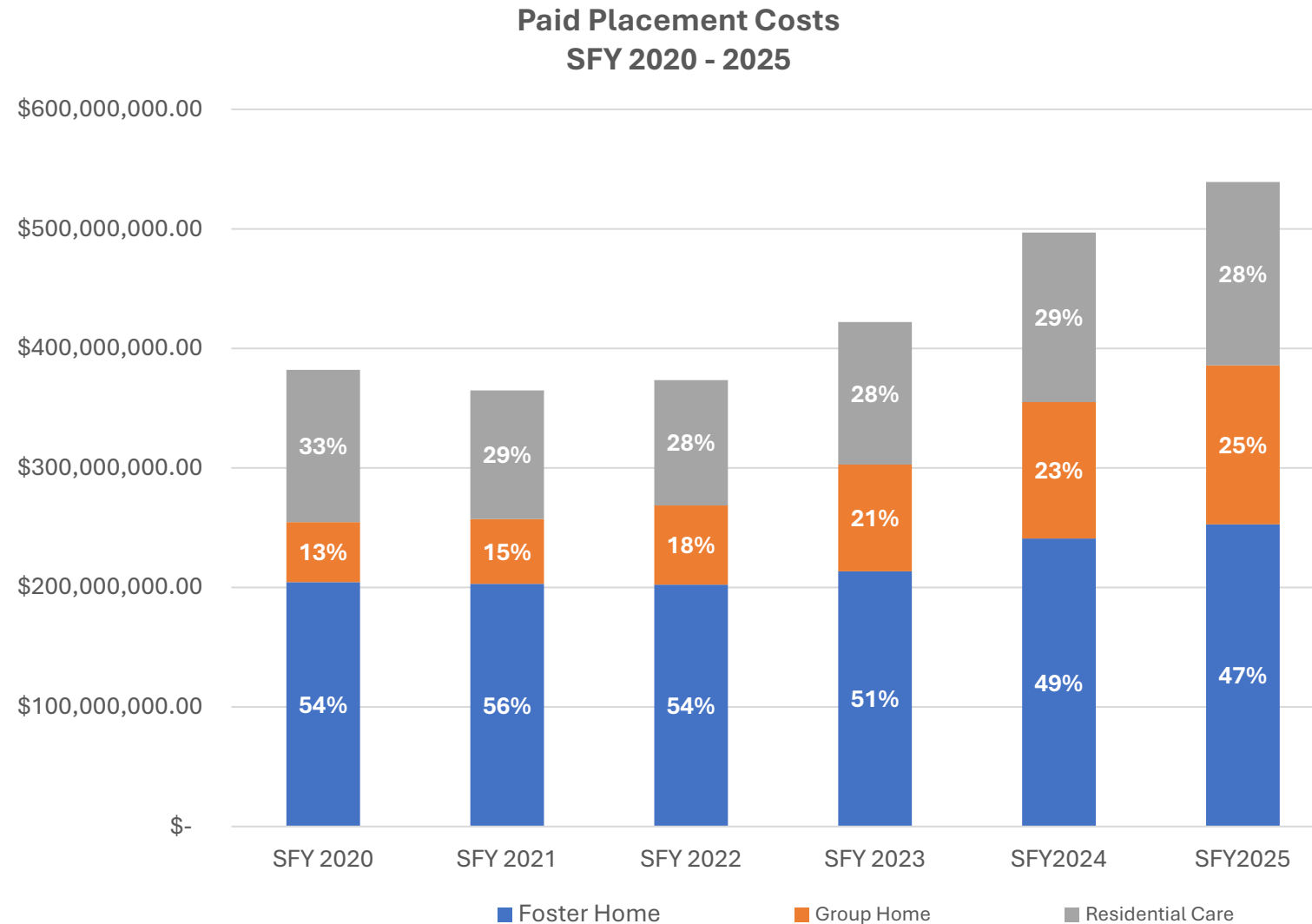


Title IV-E Reimbursement Loss

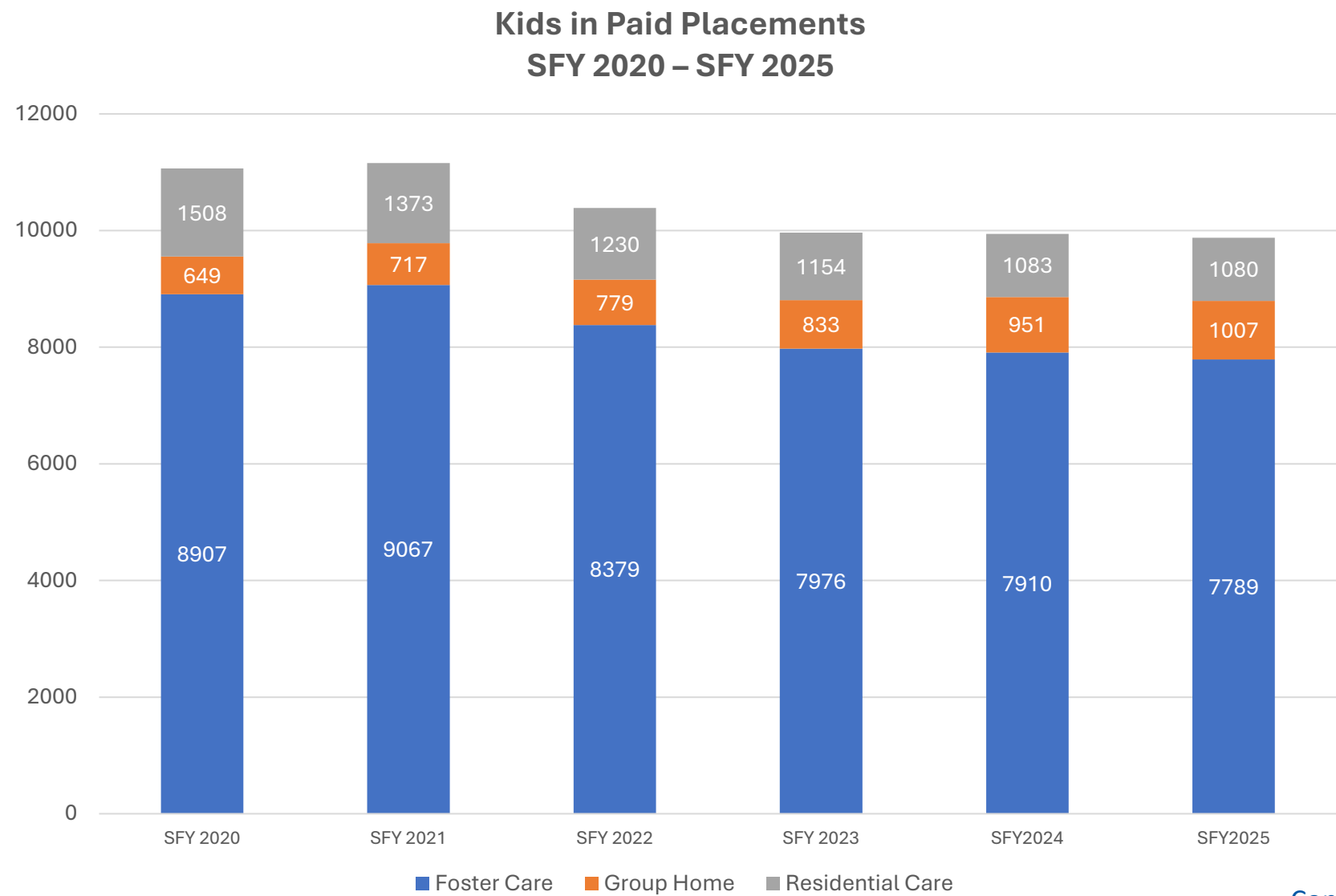
IV-E Reimbursement of Placement Costs
SFY 2020 – SFY 2025



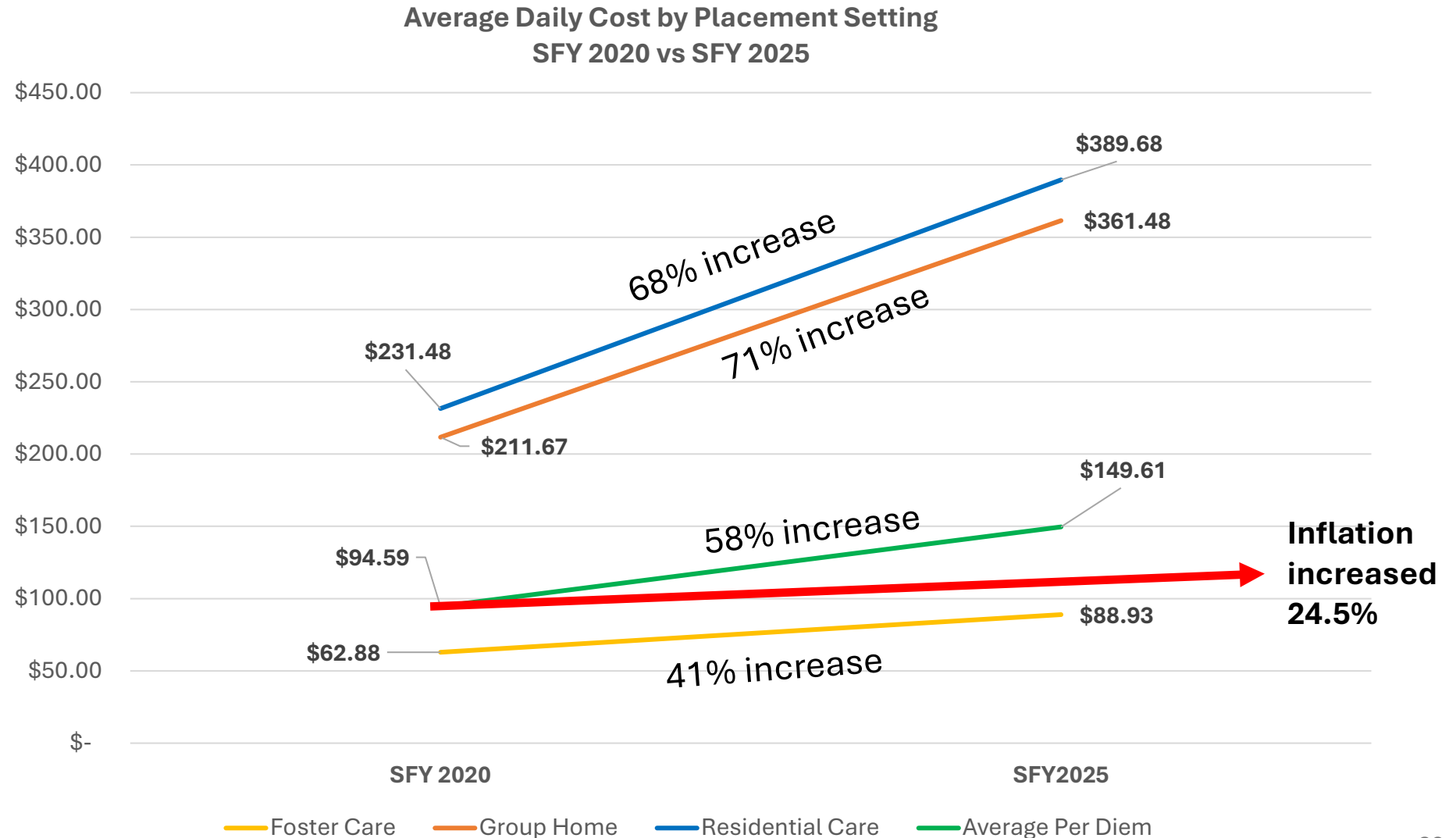
Paid placement costs have increased by 41%



Placement costs have **increased** even though there are **11% less kids** in paid placements

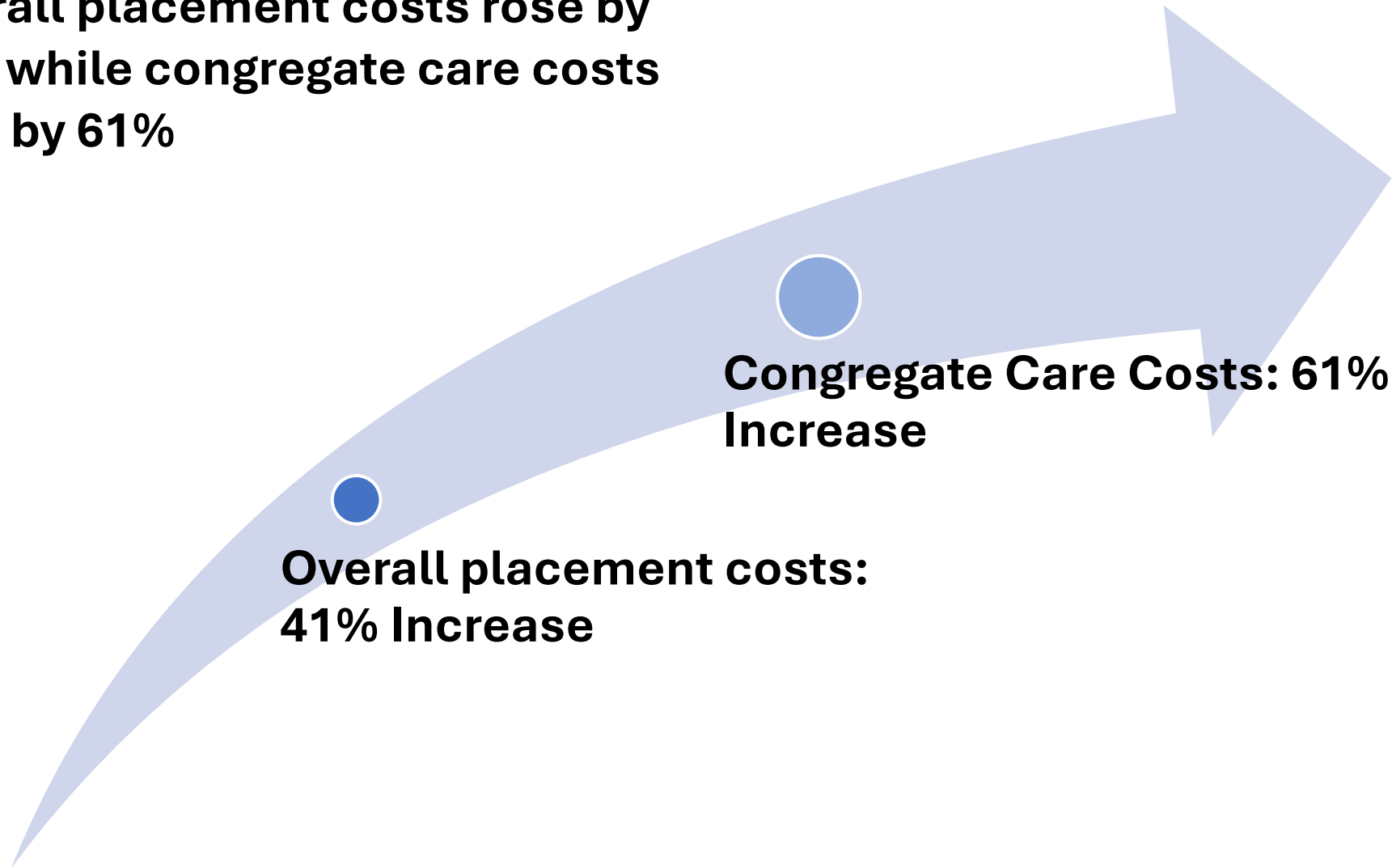


Placement costs have increased across all settings & outpaced inflation

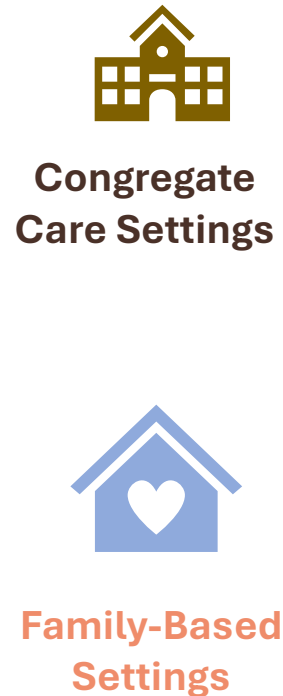


2020 – 2025

Overall placement costs rose by 41% while congregate care costs rose by 61%

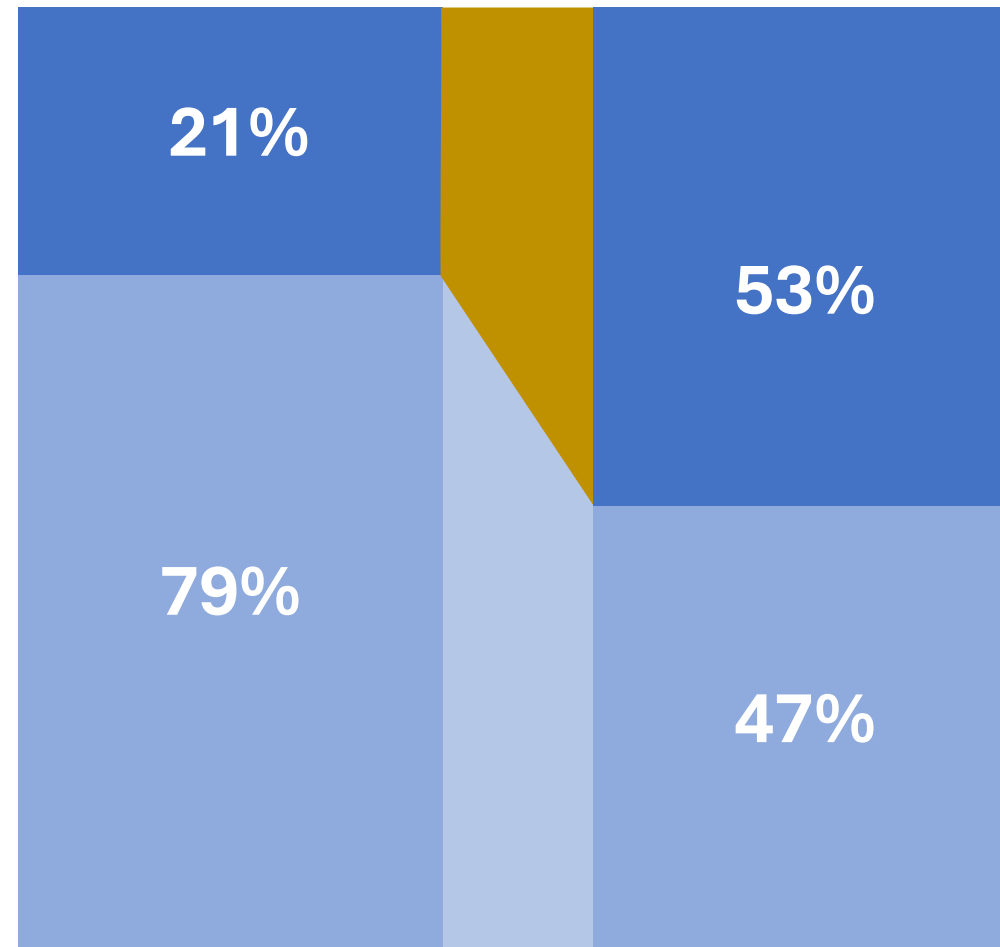


Congregate care settings consume more than 50% of placement costs even though 1 in 5 children are placed there

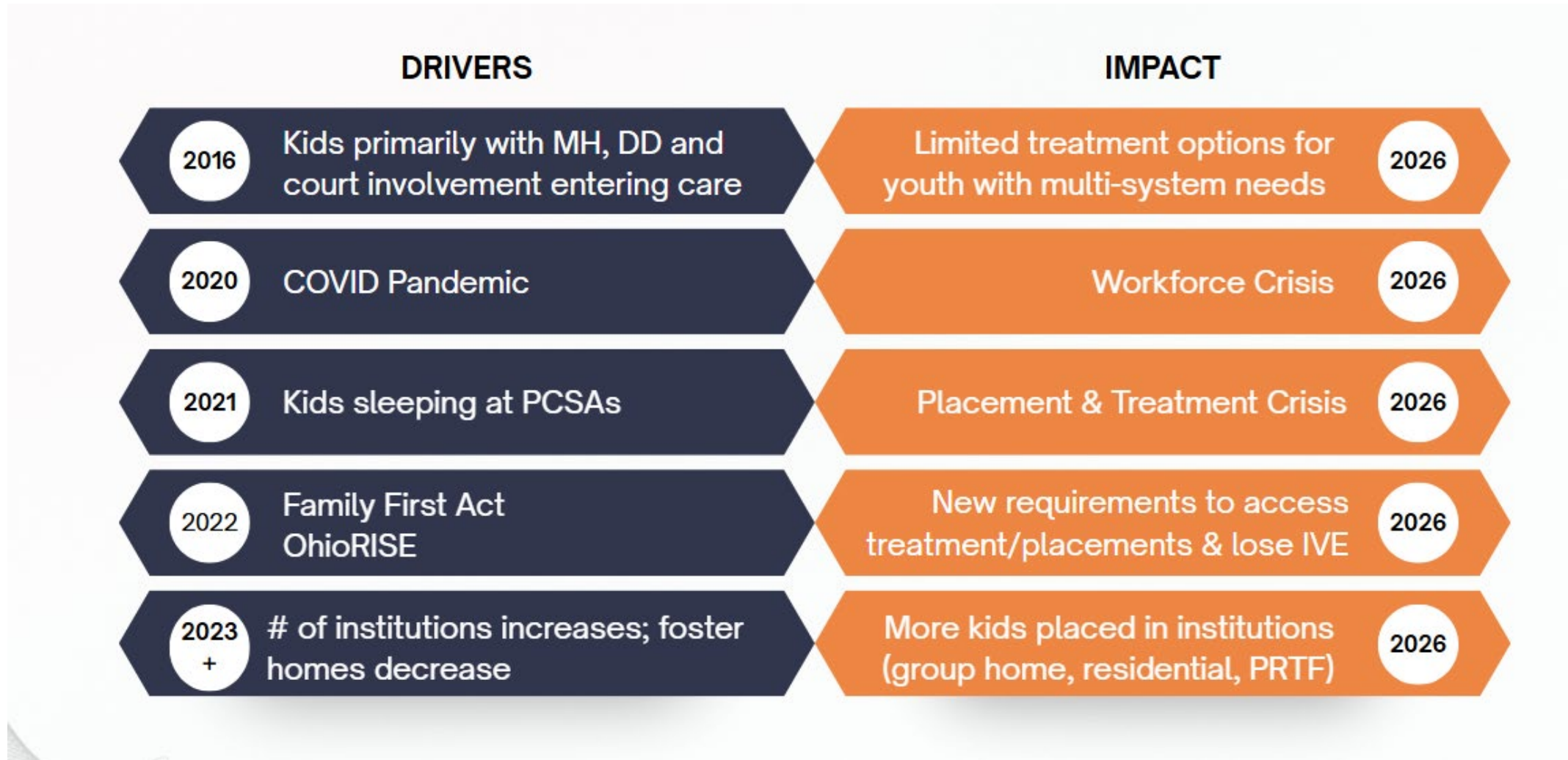


Children in Paid Placements

Portion of Overall Costs



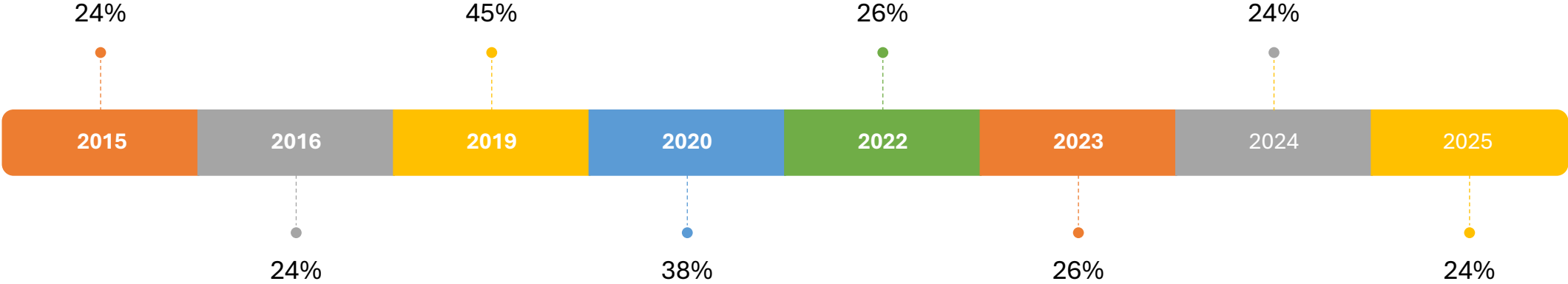
What happened over the last 6 years to drive up costs?



QUICK OVERVIEW OF THE DRIVERS OF COST

Children Services Workforce Crisis

Statewide Children Services Turnover 2015 - 2025



Increased Costs

Studies suggest that, at minimum, the agency cost to replace a worker is **\$54,000**. That equates to **\$18 million** in 2025 alone (negative turnover only, not adjusted for inflation).

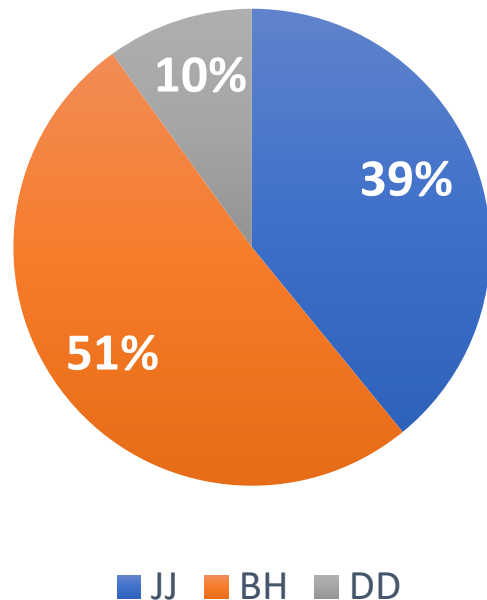
Reduced Permanency

In a study, children entering care who had only 1 worker achieved permanency in **74.5%** of cases, while children with two caseworkers achieved permanency in only **17.5%** of cases.

Placement / Treatment Crisis for Kids

2021 - ongoing

**24% of youth entered PCSA custody
primarily due to mental health,
developmental disabilities, or juvenile
justice needs in 2021**



**6% of youth that came into
custody in 2021 had to spend
at least 1 night in a PCSA
(government agency)**

Family First Act's IMPACT

Effective Oct. 2021

- Created “Qualified Residential Treatment Programs” with specific requirements for licensing group homes & residential facilities
- PCSAs can only place in “QRTP” licensed placements in order to claim IV-E reimbursement (if child is eligible)
 - Ohio opted to use the “CANS” tool to determine if child is eligible for a “QRTP” placement & court must agree to QRTP placement with submitted CANS results for IV-E reimbursement (if child is eligible)

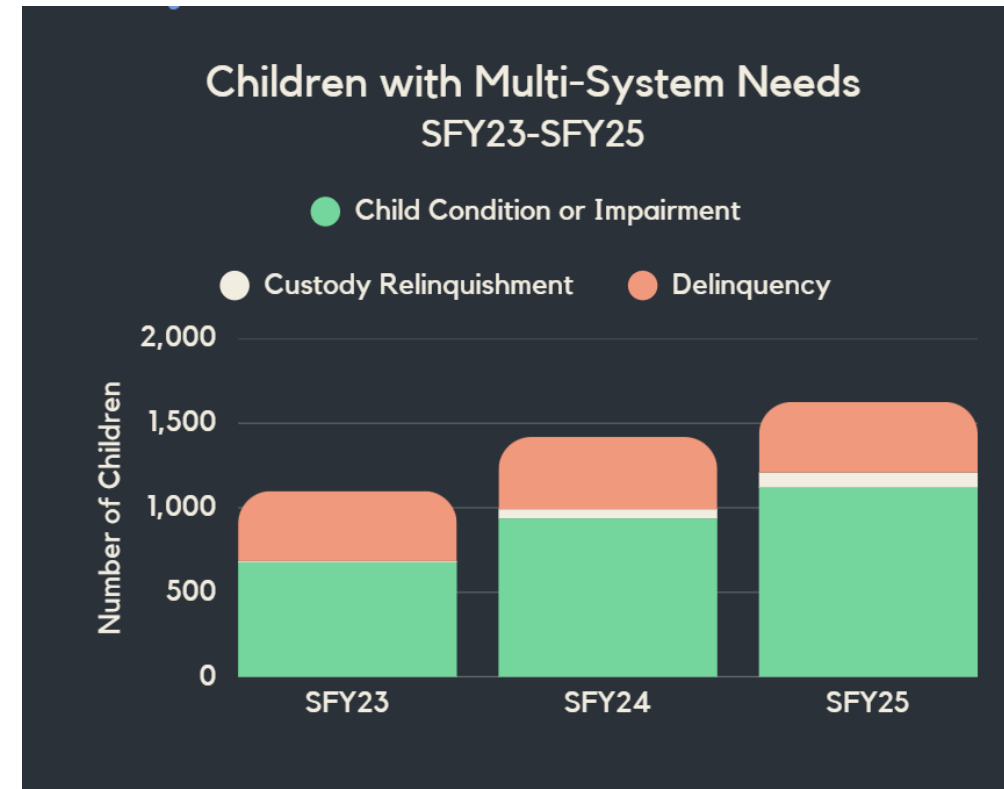
Federal Revenue Loss Since Inception of Family First Act/QRTP by Reason

Row Labels	# Exceptions	Admin not reimbursed	Maintenance not reimbursed	Total
NON-COMPLIANT	319	\$448,503.51	\$4,552,469.01	\$5,000,972.15
LATE MISSING ASSESSMENT	193	\$306,241.80	\$4,388,413.75	\$4,694,655.35
NOT RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT	214	\$185,122.04	\$3,456,081.79	\$3,641,203.72
LATE MISSING RULING	46	\$71,710.42	\$1,485,779.62	\$1,557,489.98
NON-COMPLIANT BECAME COMPLIANT	46	\$15,514.25	\$212,672.64	\$228,186.89
NOT RECOMMENDED RULING	13	\$10,430.35	\$150,770.19	\$161,200.54
Grand Total	790	\$1,037,522.37	\$14,246,187.00	\$15,283,708.63

OhioRISE Impact

2022 - ongoing

- Goal - to prevent custody relinquishment
 - **90 children entered care due to custody relinquishment in SFY25**
- Goal – to bring Ohio kids back instate from out-of-state placements
 - **130+ children are placed out-of-state for placement/treatment today**
- Goal – strengthen Ohio’s system of care with new and expanded treatment services to keep kids with their families
 - **1,119 children entered PCSA custody due to unmet conditions of mental health or developmental disabilities**
 - **417 youth entered PCSA custody for delinquency**



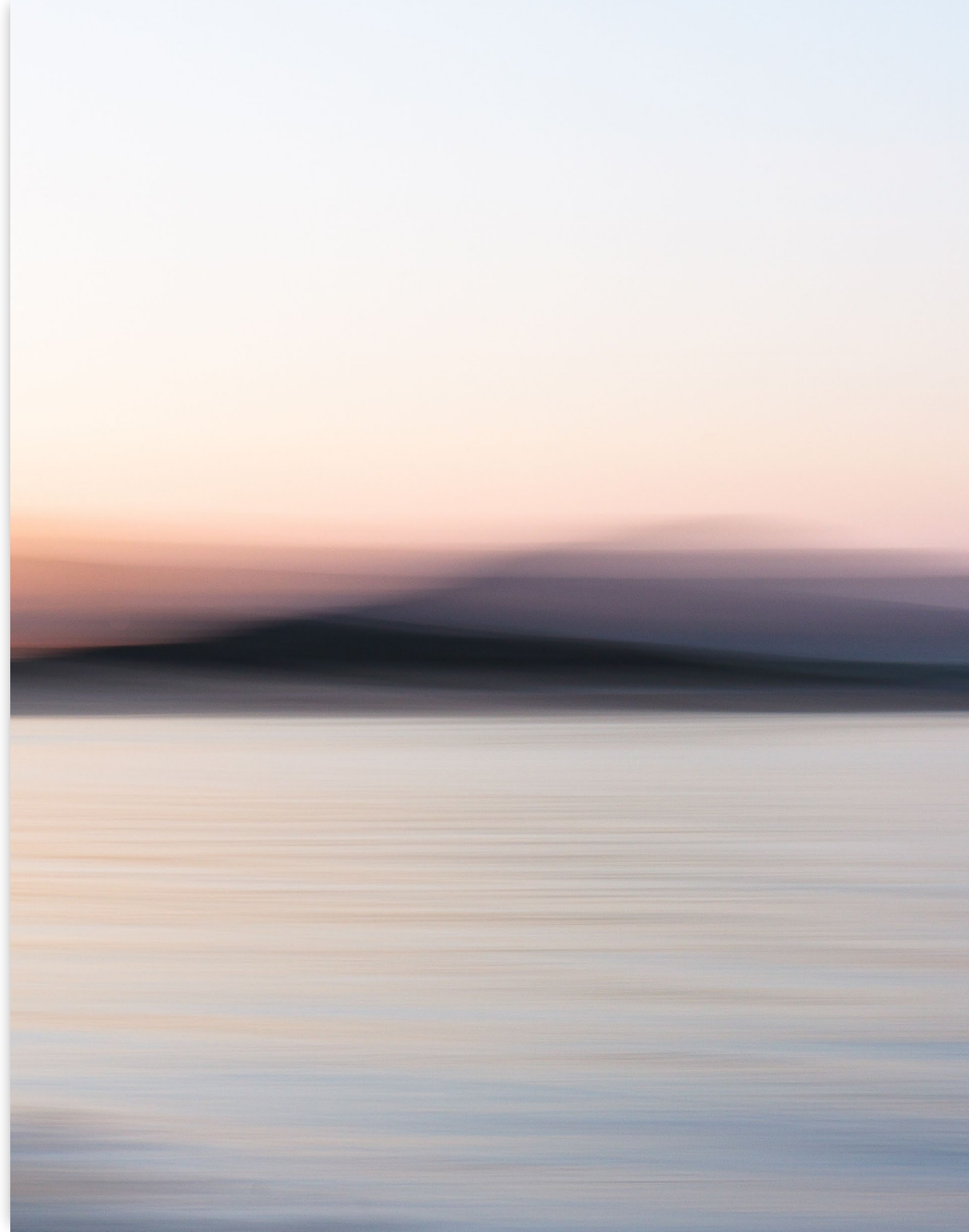
Explosion of Congregate Care Options vs. Foster Homes

2023 - 2026

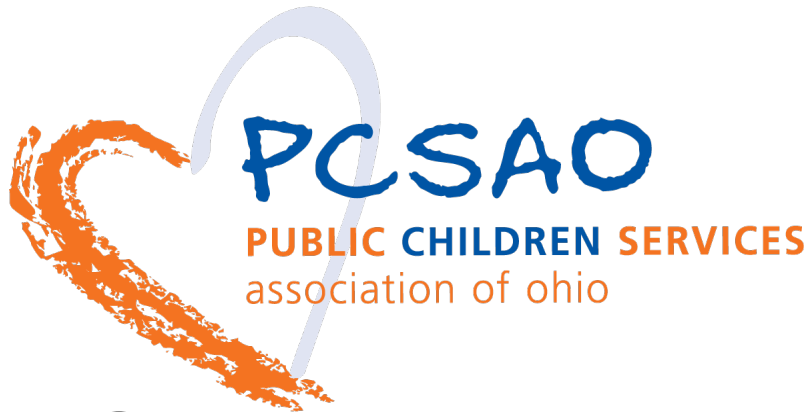
	Foster Homes	Group Homes	Residential Facilities
SFY2020	7,781	171	85
SFY2025	6,917	253	103
SFY2026	6,927	306	106
% change from 2020	-11%	48%	21%
% change from 2025	0%	21%	3%

Hope on the Horizon

- **Rate Cards:**
 - Effective January 1, 2027
 - Applies to all congregate care settings (group homes & residential); foster care is optional (for now)
 - Rate established using filed cost reports --- audited/actual costs + controlled inflation factor
 - No negotiations
 - Median rate established for those without cost reports
 - **Seeking 2-year retroactive lookback
 - IV-E Reimbursement allowable on all established rates



QUESTIONS?



Contact Us

Angela@pcsao.org

Scott@pcsao.org

Mary@pcsao.org

www.pcsao.org

(614) 224-5802