



Foster Care Forum

Pittsburg

April 19, 2018

Coalition:

- Independent advocacy organizations
- Youth leaders and families with direct experience
- Came together over concerns about the record number of children in foster care
 - How did we get here?
 - What can we do about it?

Goals for this presentation:

- Share information
- Provide a common foundation for discussion

Goals for the child welfare system:

Federal: safety, permanency, well-being

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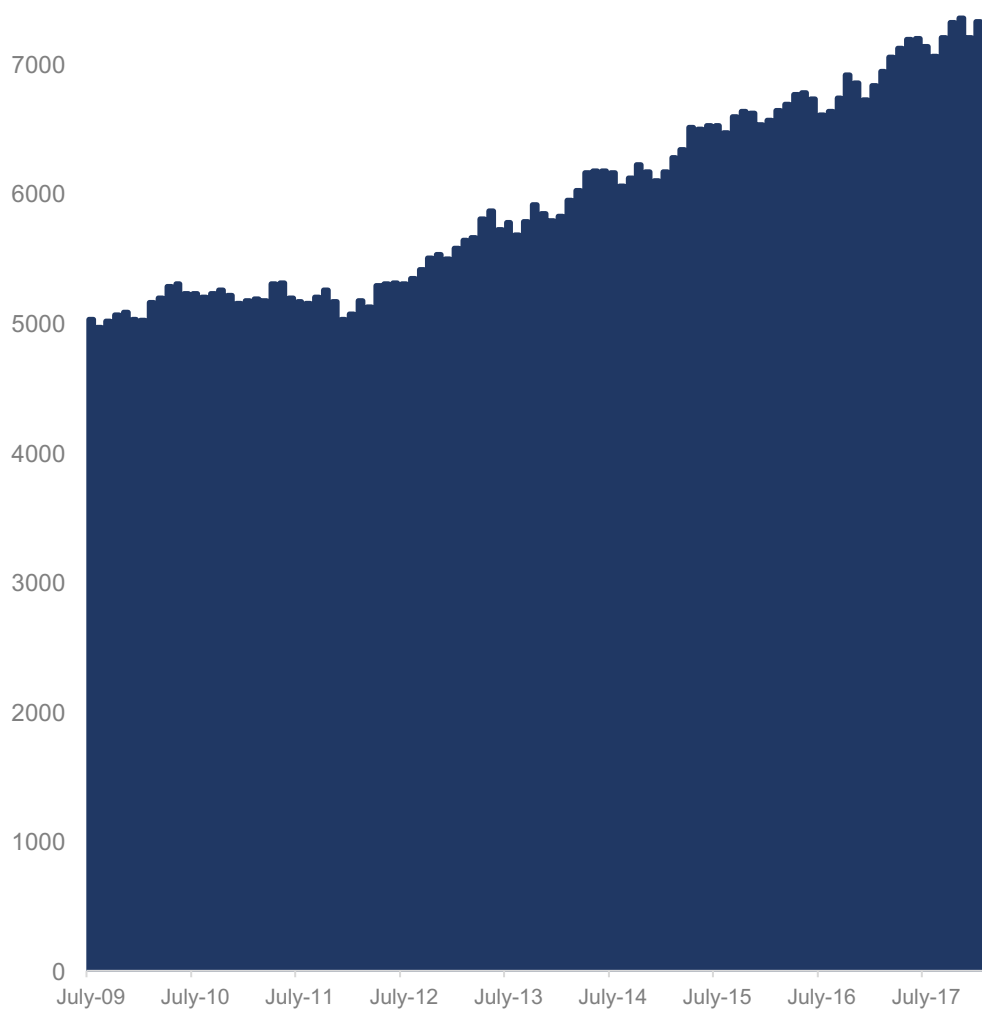
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Number of kids in foster care:



- 7,394 children in foster care at the end of February 2018
- About 2,000 more children in foster care compared to 2012

Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.



Number of kids in foster care:

- Entries
- Exits
- Length of stay

Number of kids in foster care:

- Kansas is outpacing the national increase in foster care.
 - US: +9%
 - Kansas: +22%

Sources: National increase of number of children in care as of September 30th, 2012, compared to September 30th, 2016:
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Trends in Foster Care and Adoption.



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Number of kids in foster care:

- Kansas is outpacing the national increase in foster care.
 - US: +9%
 - Kansas: +22%
- More kids in foster care per 1,000 kids than in 42 other states.

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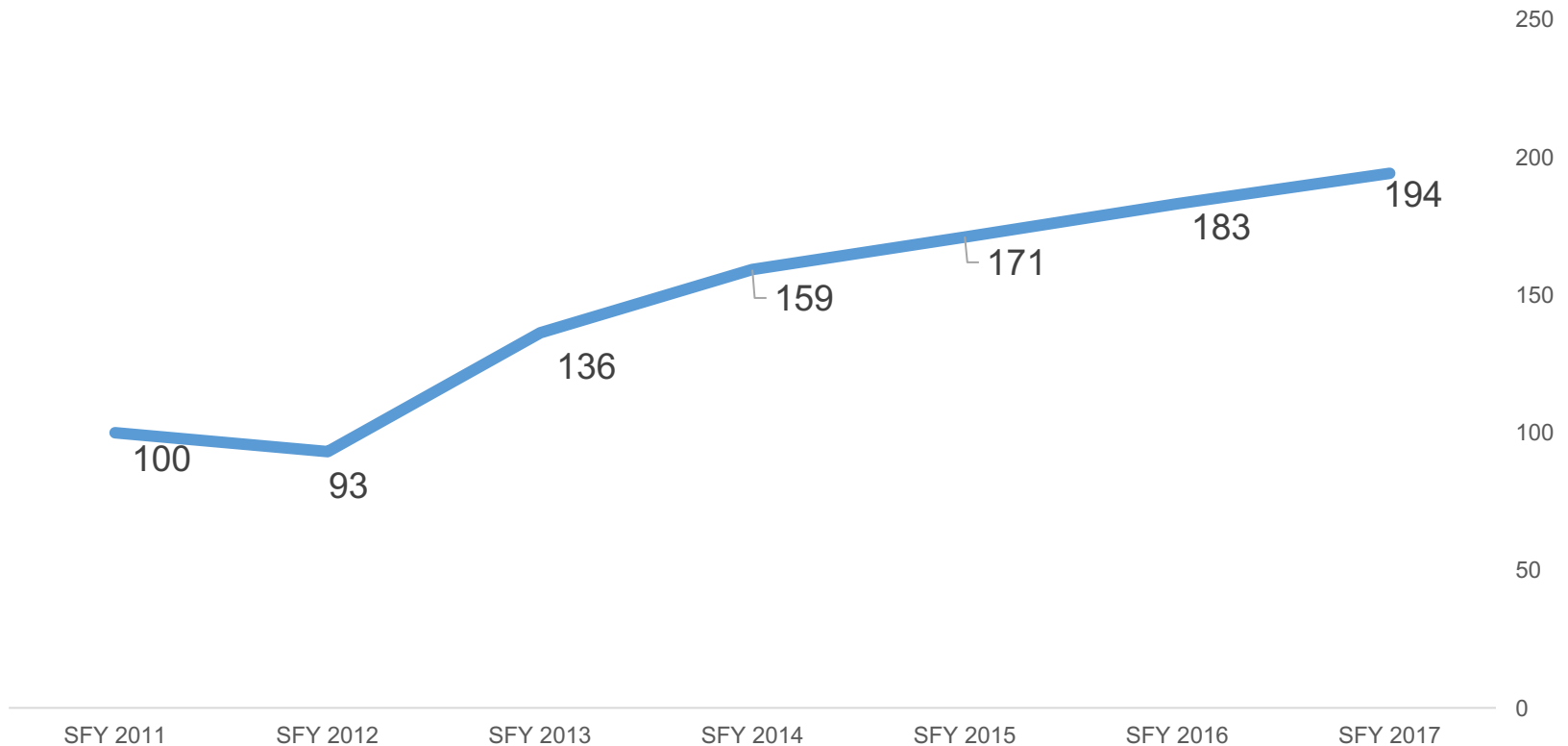
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Number of kids in foster care:

Crawford County
Monthly Average Number of Children in Foster Care



Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.



Number of kids in foster care:

Monthly Average Number of Children in Foster Care								
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	% change
Allen	63	48	45	58	77	75	75	+19%
Bourbon	55	51	66	89	102	93	89	+62%
Cherokee	45	47	45	76	74	69	64	+42%
Crawford	100	93	136	159	171	183	194	+94%
Labette	76	72	63	58	56	60	61	-20%
Montgomery	77	71	77	120	154	185	149	+94%
Neosho	34	43	44	48	71	80	72	+112%
Wilson	5	5	14	22	21	30	30	+500%

Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.



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Removals (entry into foster care)	3,408	4,020	+18%

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Referrals to Family Preservation Services	2,687	2,630	-2%

Potential contributing factor:

- Family preservation services have not kept pace with increased reports of potential abuse and neglect

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Family preservation referrals statewide	2687	2613	2476	2576	2621	2610	2630

Potential contributing factor:

Crawford County	SFY 2011	SFY 2017	Percent change
Intake reports	1,037	1,069	+3%
Reports assigned for investigation	616	673	+9%
Removals (entry into foster care)	75	123	+64%
Referrals to Family Preservation Services	42	56	+35%

Potential solution:

Goal: Help struggling families at the first sign of trouble, while children can safely be kept in the home, in an effort to reduce the number of children placed in out-of-home care

Potential solution: Allow more families to benefit from family preservation services

Reasons for entering care:

- Primary removal reason cited by DCF

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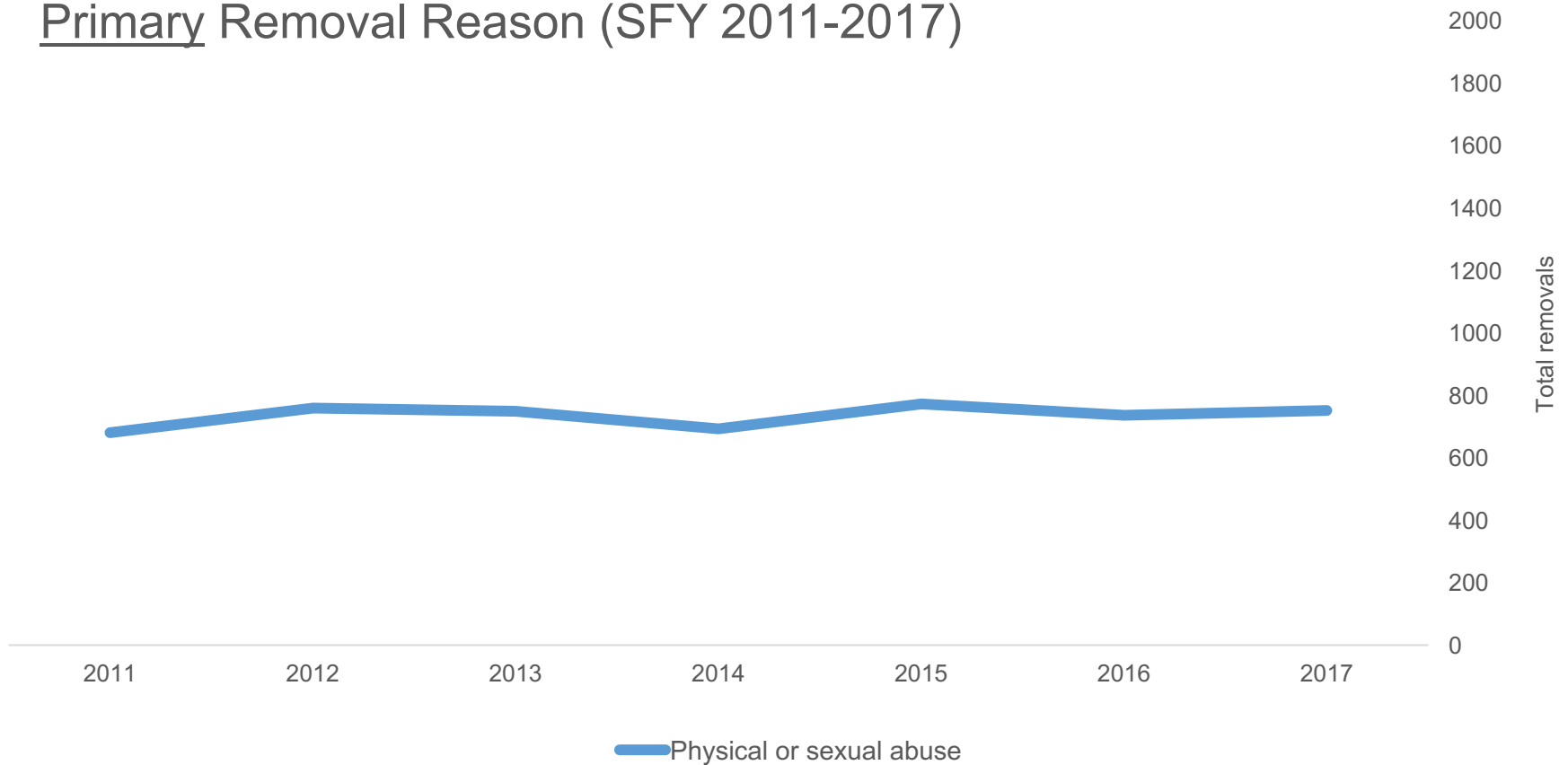
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- As in other states, more removals for neglect than abuse or other reasons
- The recent growth in children entering foster care has been almost entirely related to neglect

Reasons for entering care:

Primary Removal Reason (SFY 2011-2017)

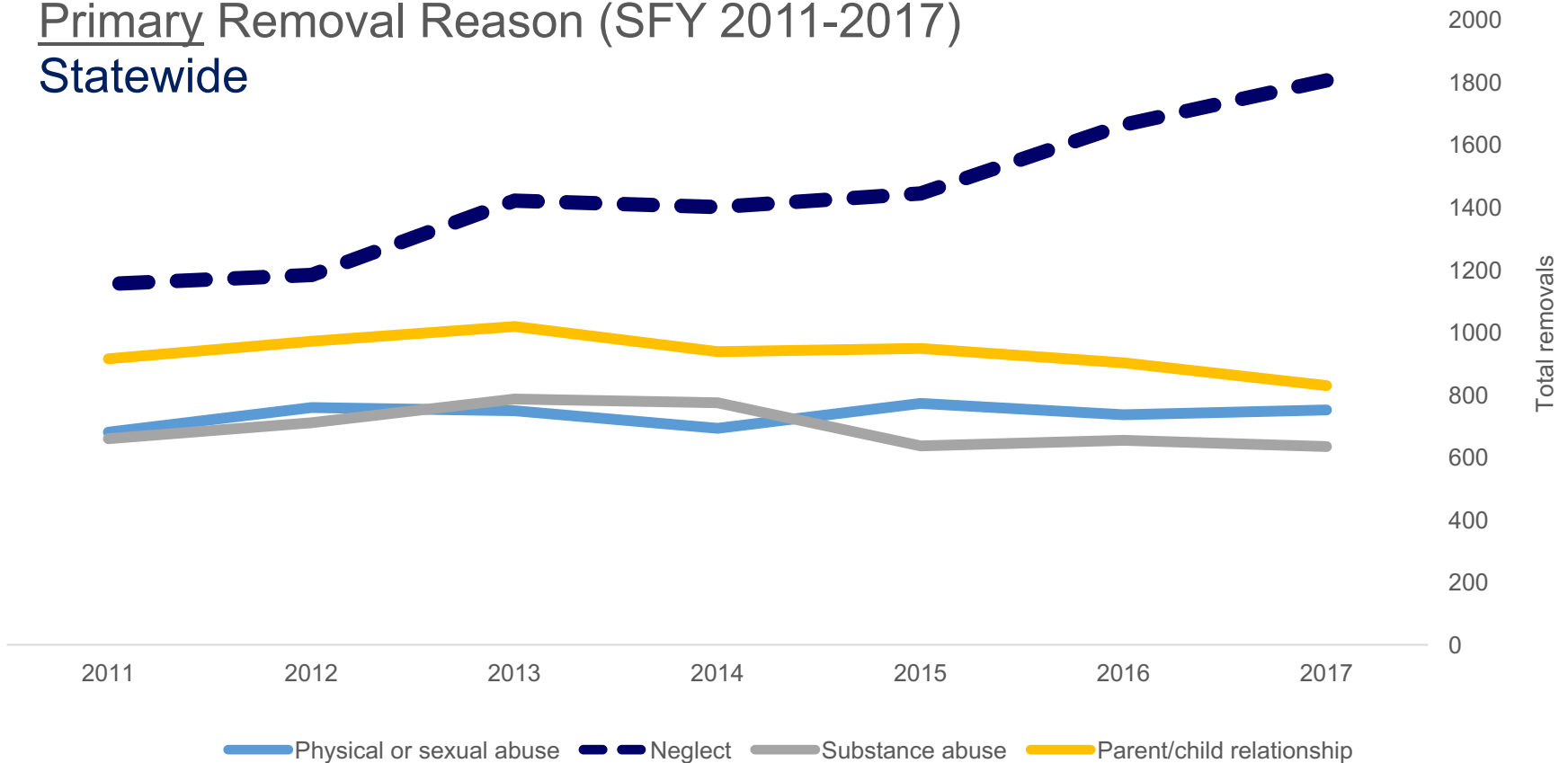


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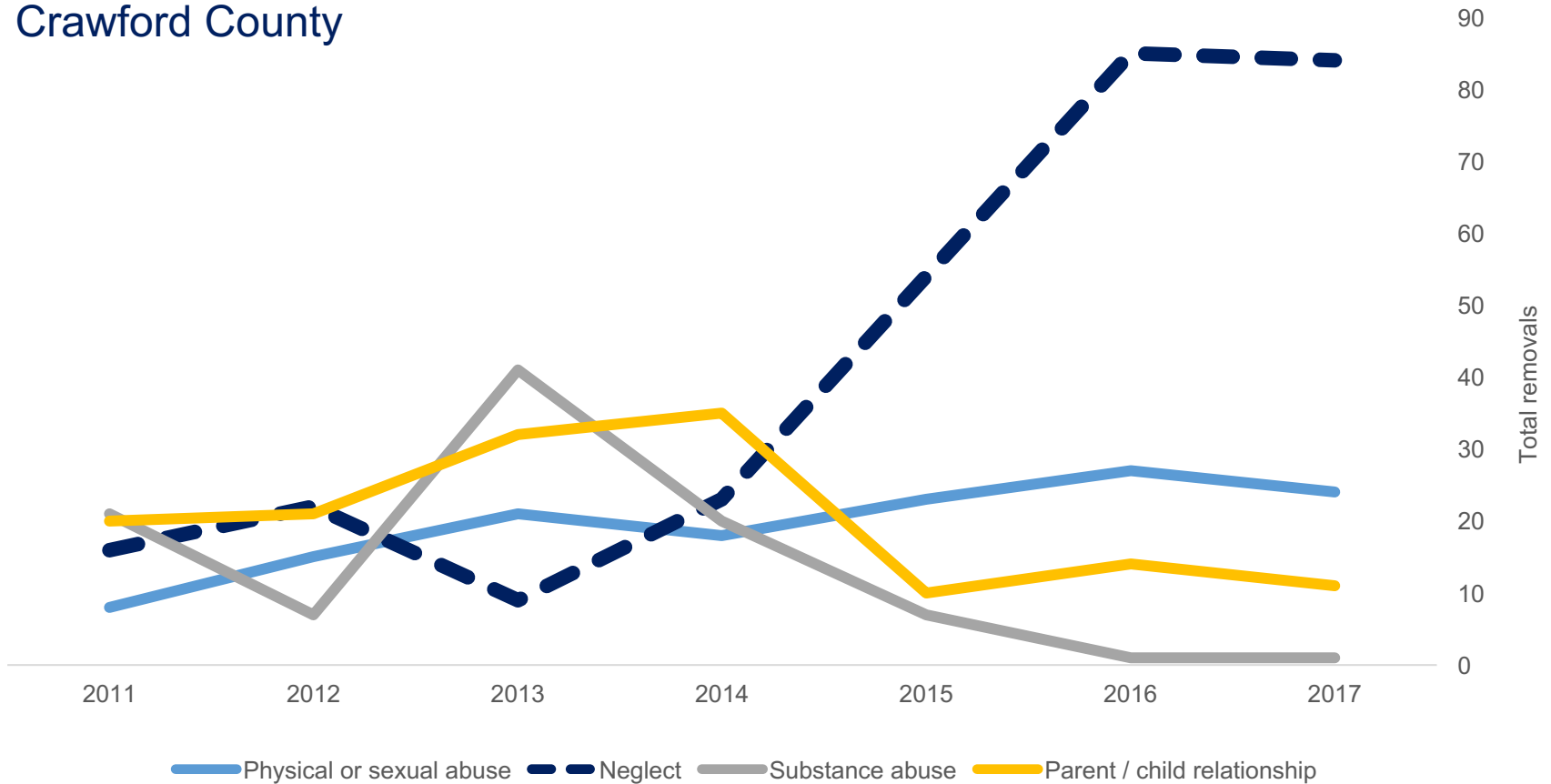
Primary Removal Reason (SFY 2011-2017)
Statewide



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Primary Removal Reason (SFY 2011-2017)
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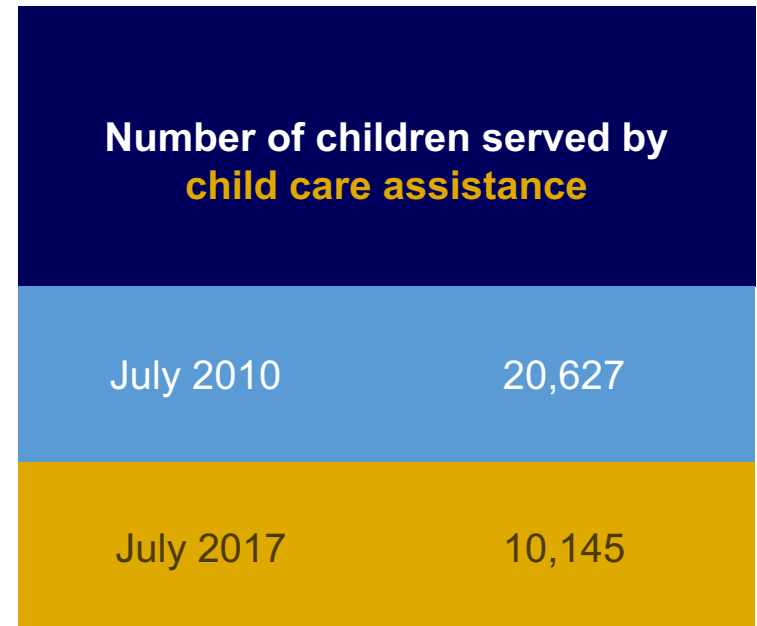
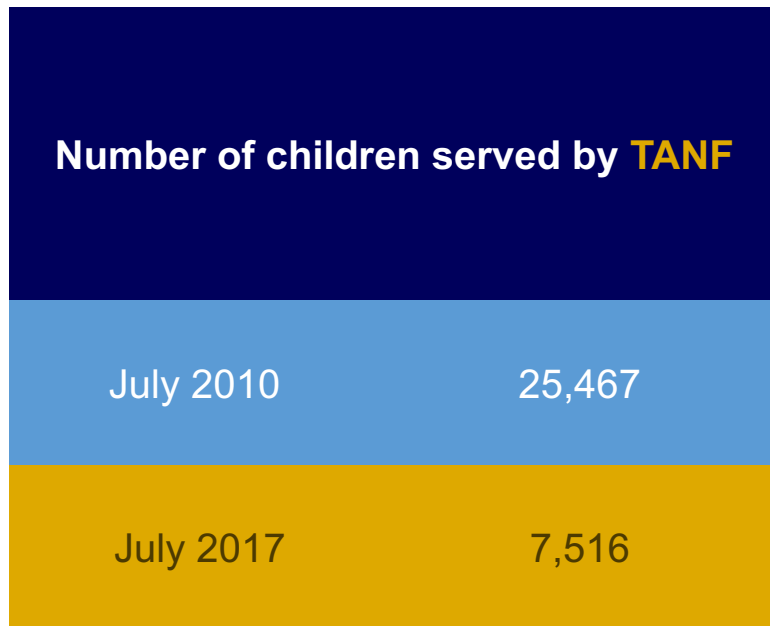


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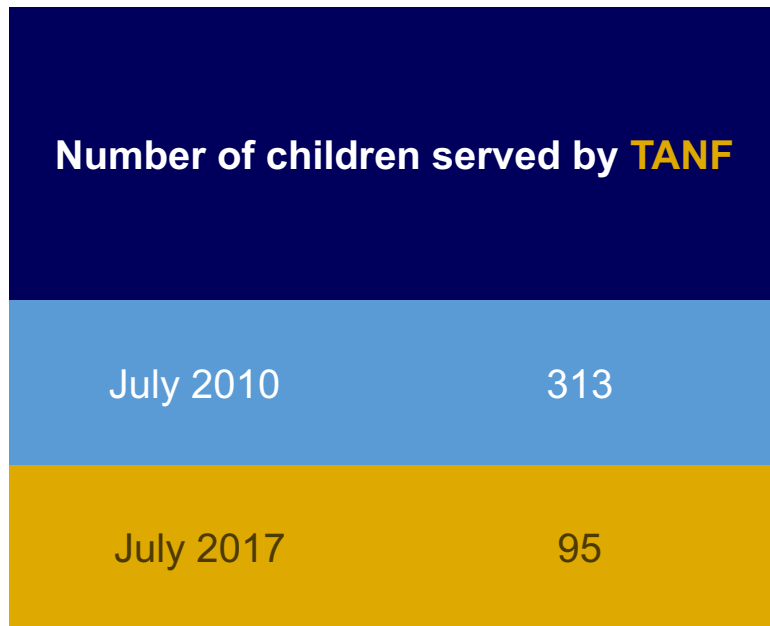
- Social safety net programs in Kansas have assisted many fewer children and families in recent years.



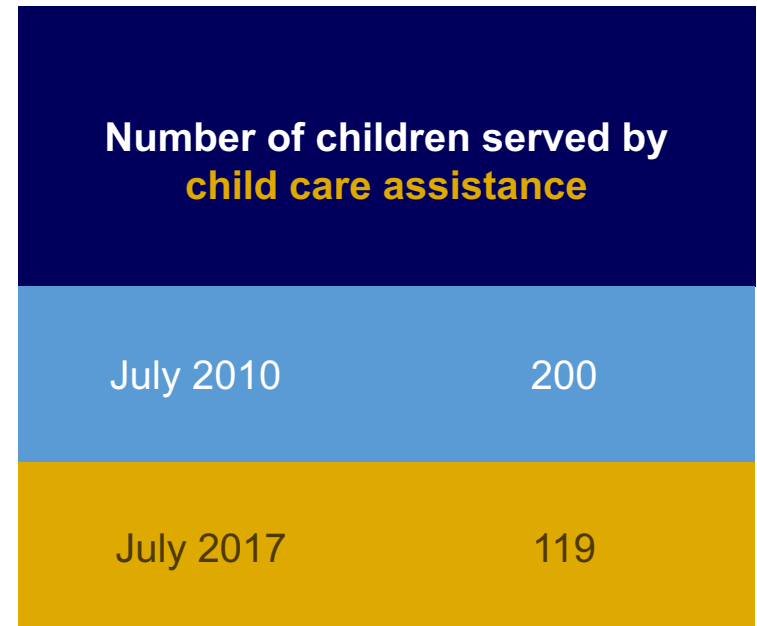
- KU research demonstrates a causal connection

Potential contributing factor:

- Crawford County:



-229%



-41%

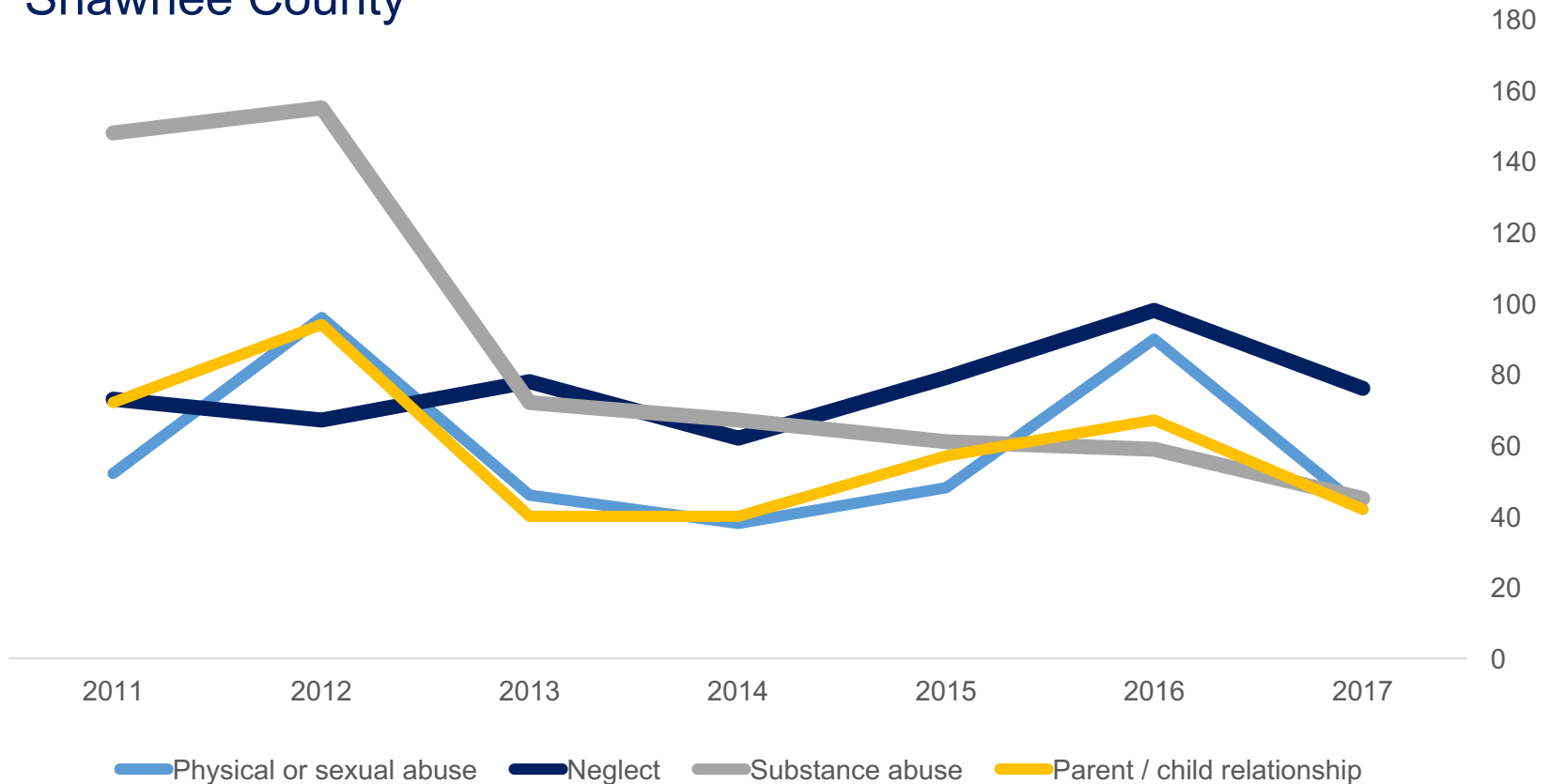
Potential solutions:

Goal: Help struggling families at the first sign of trouble, while children can safely be kept in the home, in an effort to reduce the number of children placed in out-of-home care

Potential solution: Strengthen safety net supports.

Reasons for entering care:

Primary Removal Reason (SFY 2011-2017) Shawnee County



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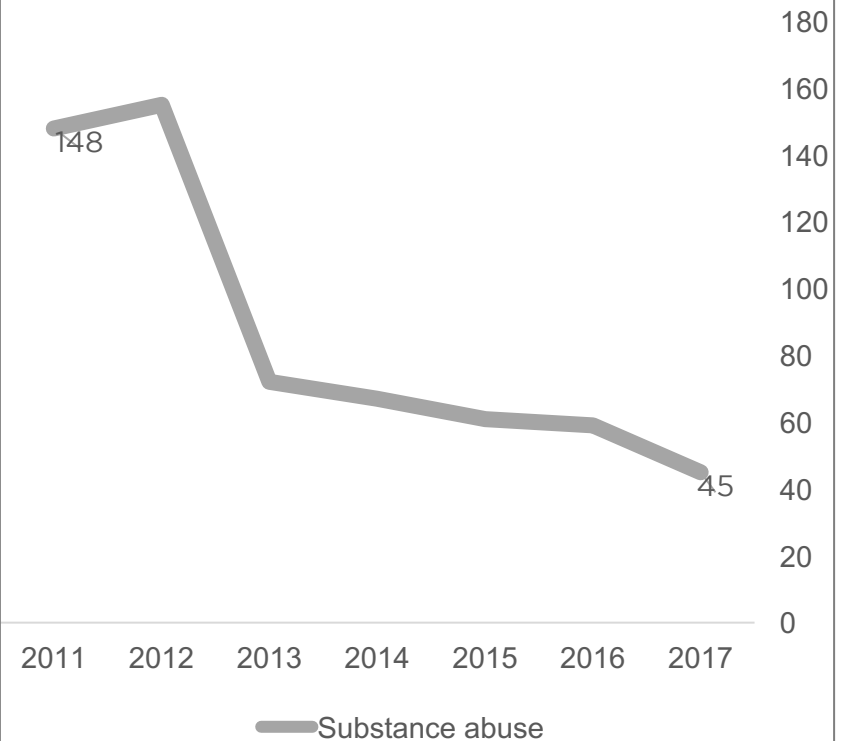
Potential contributing factor:

- Resources to address substance abuse issues.

Drug Endangered Child program:

- Comprehensive support for mothers struggling with substance abuse in Shawnee County
- Served 57 families with 108 children in 2016
- Primarily funded through the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention grant

Shawnee County removals



Potential solutions:

Goal: Help struggling families at the first sign of trouble, while children can safely be kept in the home, in an effort to reduce the number of children placed in out-of-home care

Potential solution: Expand resources to address family substance abuse issues.

Goals for the child welfare system:

2. Provide a more stable environment for children in out-of-home care by avoiding multiple transfers of custody and school placements

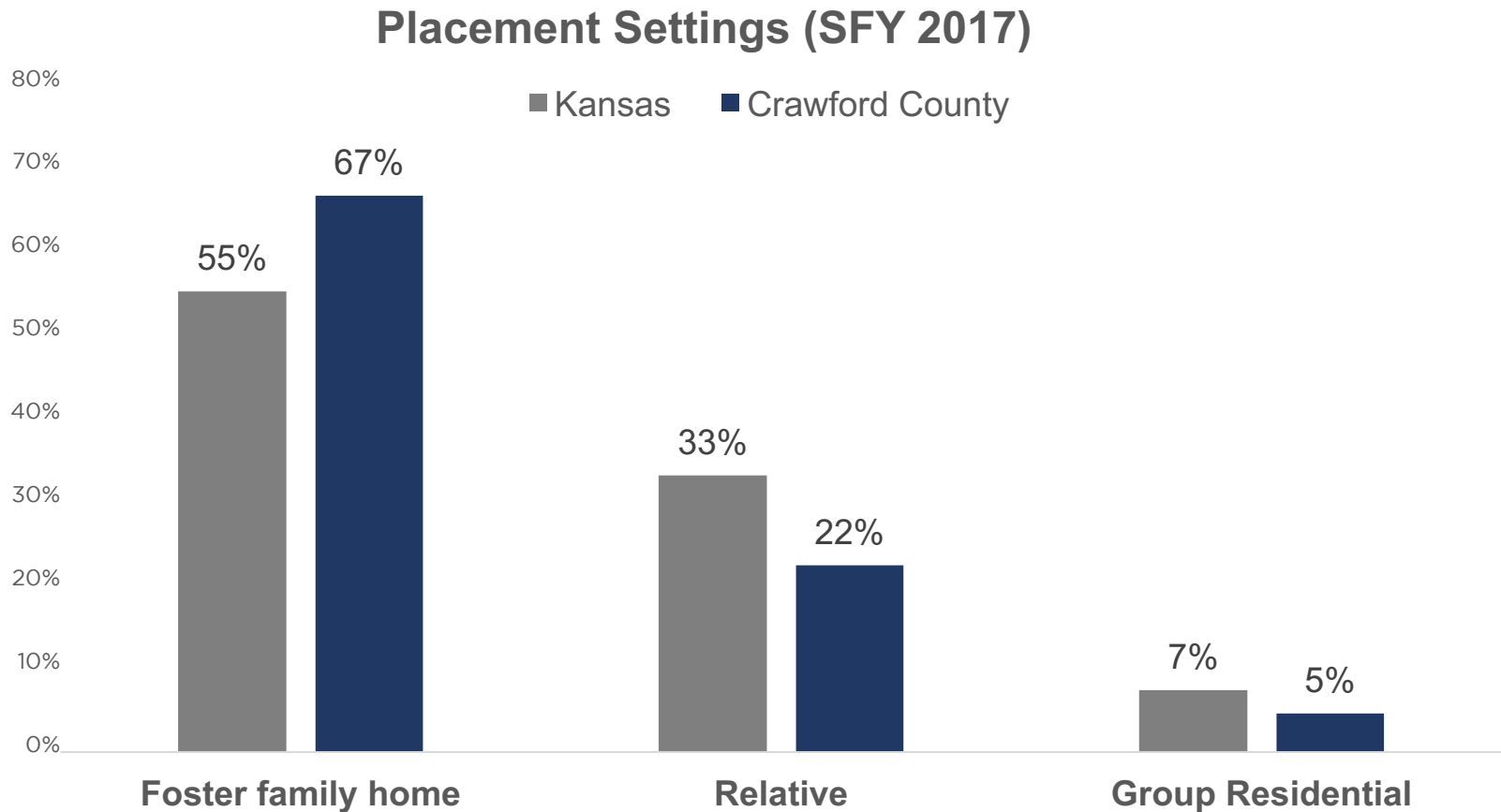
Placement stability:

- Number of placement moves increasing statewide in recent years
- Compliance concerns in recent federal review

Placement stability:

- Nationally, placements with relatives are generally more stable
- About a third of foster care placements are with relatives statewide, but that number is lower in Crawford County

Placement stability:



Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.



Potential contributing factor:

- Many relative homes are not licensed and receive a lower rate of payment

Statewide, SFY 2017	Average # of kids per month
Non-relative licensed foster home (standard)	2,152
Relative, non-licensed	2,182

Potential contributing factor:

- Many relative homes are not licensed and receive a lower rate of payment

Statewide, SFY 2017	Average # of kids per month	Average daily rate paid
Non-relative licensed foster home (standard)	2,152	\$21
Relative, non-licensed	2,182	\$3

Potential solution:

Goal: Provide a more stable environment for children in out-of-home care by avoiding multiple transfers of custody and school placements

Potential solution: Provide relative placements more financial support and address potential licensing barriers

Goals for the child welfare system:

3. Provide permanency for children in a shorter period, whether through reintegration back into their home, or, if needed, adoption

Permanency:

- Average months spent in foster care for children exiting in SFY 2017 to:
 - Reunification: 10 months
 - Adoption: 36 months

Potential contributing factors:

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 - High caseloads can make it difficult for social workers to work with families intensively, and contribute to turnover
 - Additional services may be needed for higher-acuity youth

Potential solution:

Goal: Provide permanency for children in a shorter period, whether through reintegration back into their home, or, if needed, adoption

Potential solution: Create conditions for successful reunification or adoption: sufficient services, caseworker attention

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Potential solutions:

- Allow more families to benefit from family preservation services
- Strengthen safety net supports
- Expand resources to address family substance abuse issues
- Provide relative placements more financial support and address potential licensing barriers
- Create conditions for successful reunification or adoption: sufficient services, caseworker attention

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