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
Goals for the child welfare system:

**Federal**: safety, permanency, well-being

**Kansas Department for Children & Families**:  
1. 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
Goals for the child welfare system:

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**Kansas Department for Children & Families**:

1. 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

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1. 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
Number of kids in foster care:

- 7,588 children in foster care at the end of June 2018
- 2,361 more children in foster care than June 2010
- 396 more children in just last year
- 45% increase in 8 years; 6% increase in 1 year

Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.
Number of kids in foster care:

- **Entries**
  - SFY 2010: 3,444
  - SFY 2018: 4,212 (+22%)

- **Exits**
  - SFY 2010: 3,347
  - SFY 2018: 3,805 (+14%)
  - Not Keeping Pace

- **Average Length of Stay**
  - SFY 2014: 16.7 months
  - SFY 2015: 18.2 months
  - SFY 2016: 18.2 months
  - SFY 2017: 18.9 months
  - SFY 2018: 19.1 months
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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- More kids in foster care per 1,000 kids than in 42 other states.

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The growth in Out of Home Care in Saline County has been even greater than it has statewide.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Statewide #</th>
<th>% Increase</th>
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<tr>
<td>June 2010</td>
<td>5,227</td>
<td>+45%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>+338%</td>
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<td>June 2018</td>
<td>7,588</td>
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Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.
Potential contributing factor:

• Statewide: Family preservation services have not kept pace with increased reports of potential abuse and neglect
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<td>Referrals to FPS</td>
<td>2,870</td>
<td>2,705</td>
<td>-6%</td>
<td>Referrals to FPS</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
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Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.
Potential improvement:

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 improvement: Allow more families to benefit from family preservation services.
Reasons for entering care:

• **Primary** removal reason cited by DCF
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• As in other states, more removals for neglect than abuse or other reasons
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- **Primary** removal reason cited by DCF
- As in other states, more removals for neglect than abuse or other reasons
- The recent **growth** in children entering foster care statewide has largely been related to neglect
Reasons for entering care:

Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.
Reasons for entering care:

DCF Tracked Categories

Neglect: physical neglect, lack of supervision, abandonment, incarceration of parents, medical neglect, inadequate housing, death of parents, failure to thrive

Physical or sexual abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse


Parent / child relationship: emotional abuse, child behavior problem, caretaker inability to cope, runaway, not attending school, relinquishment, child disability

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*Note: County level data is only estimated because it is tracked differently than statewide data. Some categories are omitted or combined.

Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.
Potential contributing factor:

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

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<tr>
<th>Number of children served by TANF</th>
<th>Number of children served by Child Care Assistance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Saline</td>
<td>Statewide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2011</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2018</td>
<td>325</td>
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• Research demonstrates a causal connection statewide between these decreases, and increases in kids in care

Source: DCF data summarized by SFRH Coalition.
Potential improvement:

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 improvement: Strengthen safety net supports.
Potential improvement:

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 improvement: Think about what might be unique to Saline County.
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:

- Standard: 4 or fewer placements per 1,000 days in FC
- Kansas in FY2018: 9 placements per 1,000 days
- Ed continuity standard: 25% attend same school
- Kansas in FY2018: 16% attend same school
Placement stability:

- Nationally, placements with relatives are generally more stable.
- Saline County has a much smaller percentage of kinship placements than Kansas statewide.
- Saline County also has a larger percentage of Non-Relative Foster placements and Group Residential placements than Kansas statewide.
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

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<th>Statewide, SFY 2017</th>
<th>Average # of kids per month</th>
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<td>2,152</td>
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Source: Data presented to the Kansas Child Welfare Task Force summarized by SFRH Coalition.
Potential contributing factor:

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

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Source: Data presented to the Kansas Child Welfare Task Force summarized by SFRH Coalition.
Potential improvement:

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

Potential improvement: 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 2018 to:
  - Reunification: 10 months
  - Adoption: 38 months
Potential contributing factors:

• Anecdotally:

  • Services parents need as part of their reunification plans may not be available or may have waiting lists
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• Anecdotally:
  
  • Services parents need as part of their reunification plans may not be available or may have waiting lists
  
  • High caseloads can make it difficult for social workers to work with families intensively, and contribute to turnover
Potential contributing factors:

- Anecdotally:
  - Services parents need as part of their reunification plans may not be available or may have waiting lists
  - 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 improvement:

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

Potential improvement: Create conditions through policy for successful reunification or adoption: sufficient services, caseworker attention.
Goals for the child welfare system:

**Federal**: safety, permanency, well-being

**Kansas Department for Children & Families:**

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Potential improvements:

• Allow more families to benefit from family preservation services

• Strengthen safety net supports

• Provide relative placements more financial support and address potential licensing barriers

• Create conditions through policy for successful reunification or adoption: sufficient services, caseworker attention
What does this community need?

1. What does this community need to better support families and keep kids safe and out of foster care?
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3. How can kids in foster care from this community spend less time in foster care and achieve permanency (reunification, adoption) more quickly?
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