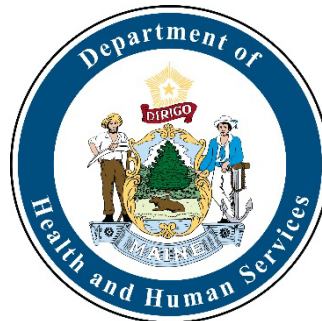


Office of Child and Family Services Quarterly Child Welfare Update

Director Bobbi L. Johnson, LMSW

Health and Human Services Committee

June 23, 2026





OCFS Approach:

What would it take?

OCFS Priorities



Family Support and Prevention

Child Safety

Permanency

Child and Family Well-Being

Maine's Child Welfare System

Primary Prevention

Providing statewide access to a variety of prevention resources with the goal of supporting families to be strong and stable, thereby decreasing the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. Addressing parental stressors and ensuring access to early intervention. Strengthen Mandated Reporters in their role as family supporters.

Secondary Prevention

For families that do become involved with child welfare, ensure an array of evidence-based services to address and resolve concerns related to child abuse and neglect before they escalate.

Tertiary Prevention

Engage in efforts to prevent removal (FTMs, safety planning, etc.).
When removal does occur, prioritize kinship placements and permanency



All Maine Children & Families

**SAFE, STABLE,
HAPPY, HEALTHY**

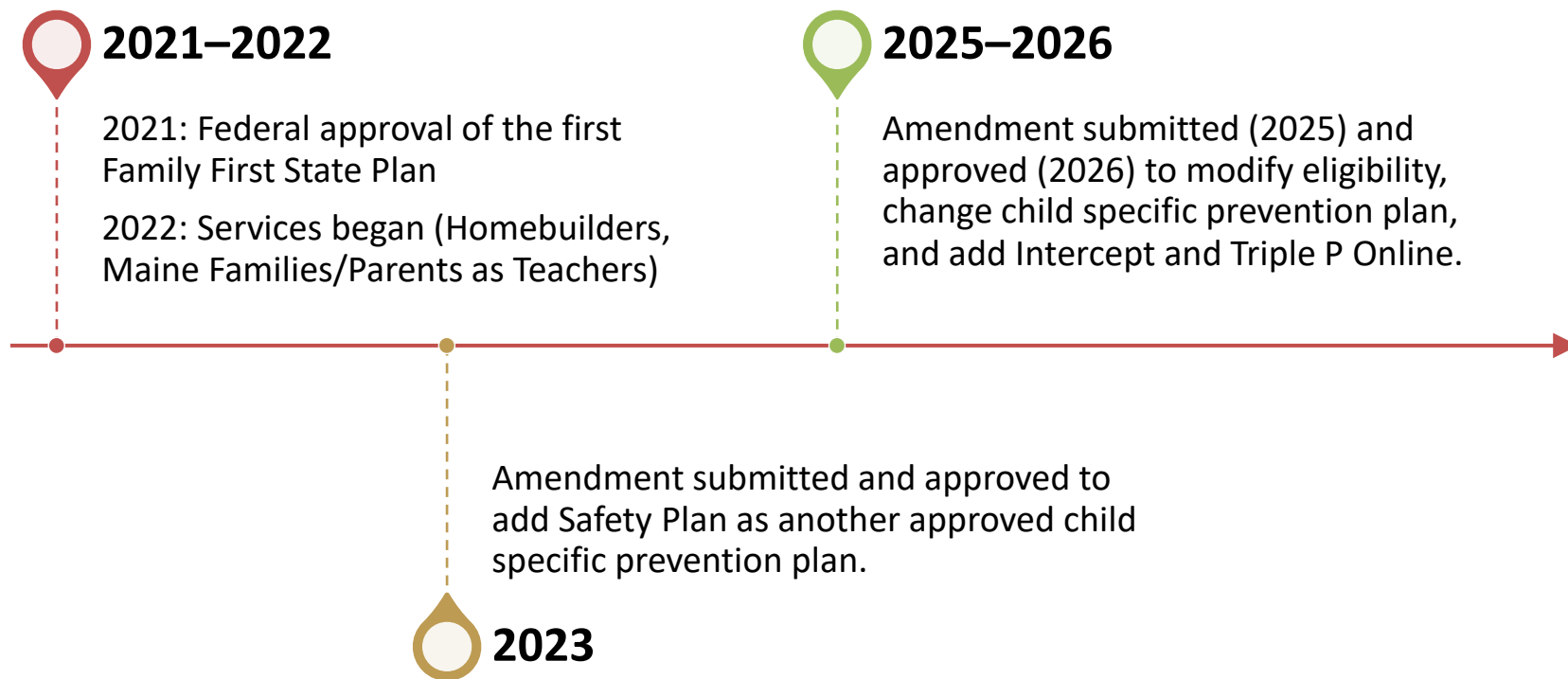
Office of Child and Family Services

Early Care and Education Programs



- Child Care Affordability Program (CCAP)
- Head Start and Early Head Start Programs
- ECE Workforce Salary Supplement System
- Maine Roads to Quality - early childhood education courses, health and safety training, technical assistance, peer to peer networks, child care program and workforce navigators, credentials, apprenticeships, and associate and bachelor degree scholarships
- Child Care Infrastructure Grants
- ECE Consultation for ME
- Help Me Grow Maine - early childhood resources, developmental screening, referrals to services for families
- Maine Parent Ambassadors Program - parent leadership
- Baxter Child Welfare Information System

Family First Prevention Services Act Update



Mandated Reporting

The Mandated Reporting/Community Support Initiative:

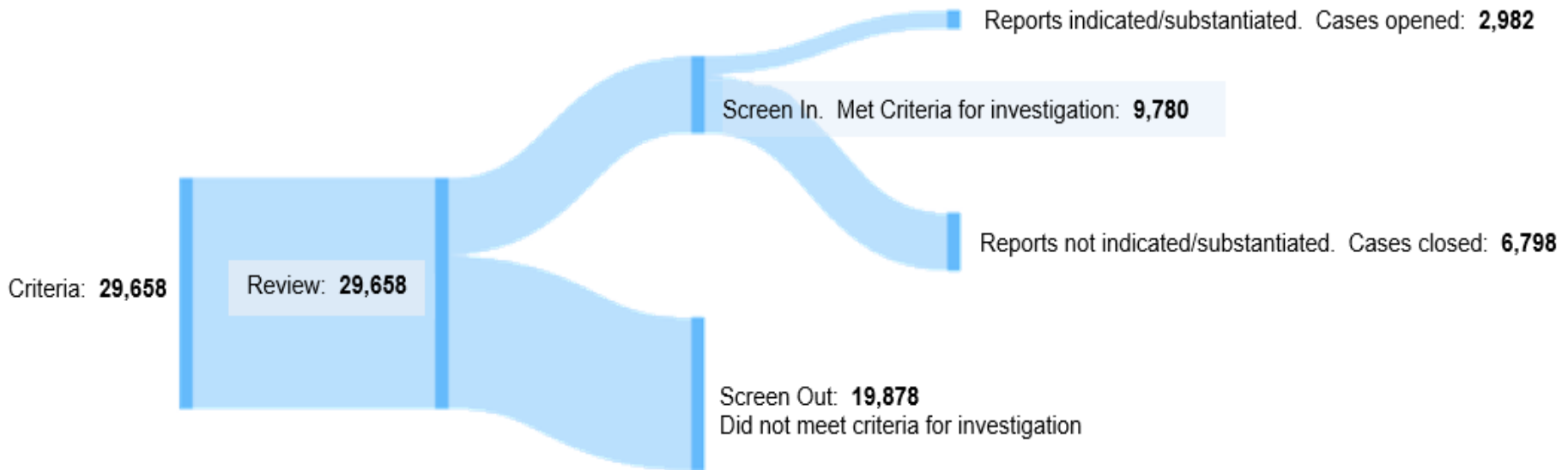
- Developed in response to feedback received during the development and implementation of CSFWB Plan.
- Collaboration between OCFS/MCWAN.
- Three areas were identified for the scope of work to improve mandated reporting and community support for families in Maine:
 - Defining Child Abuse and Neglect
 - Mandated Reporting Training
 - Community Support for Families



Maine Child Welfare
Action Network

Mandated Reporting

Reports of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect: Process and Outcomes (2024)

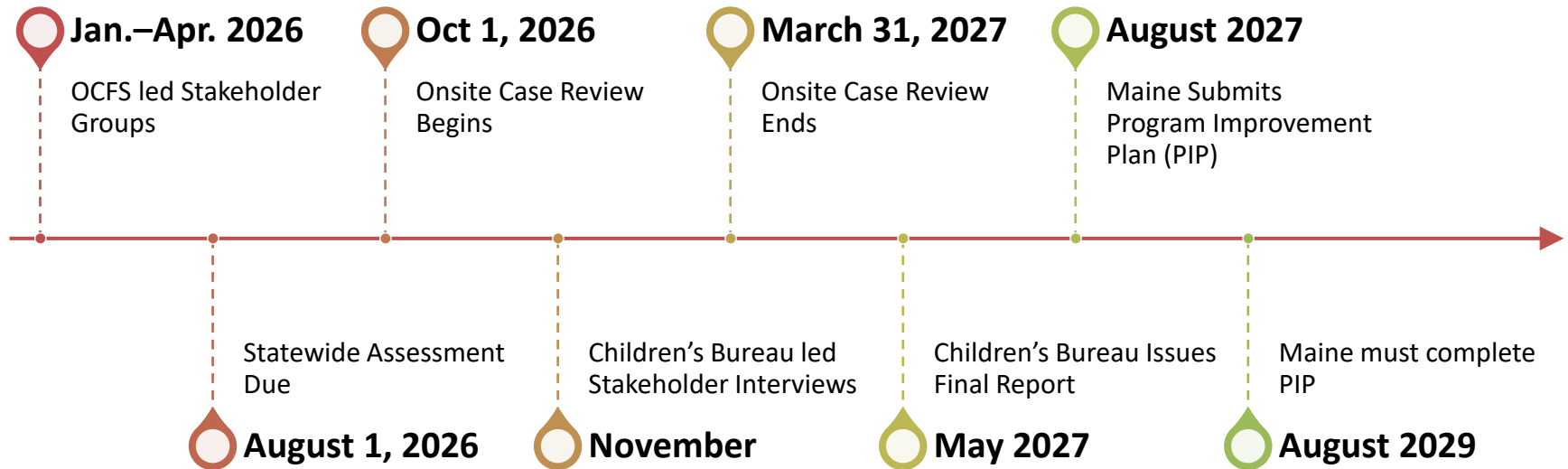


90% of reports of suspected child abuse and neglect did not result in findings.

These families may be experiencing challenges to well-being and are being reported to the child welfare agency when community-based services, supports, services, or resources might be more appropriate to meet a family's needs.

Maine CFSR Timeline

Maine CFSR Timeline



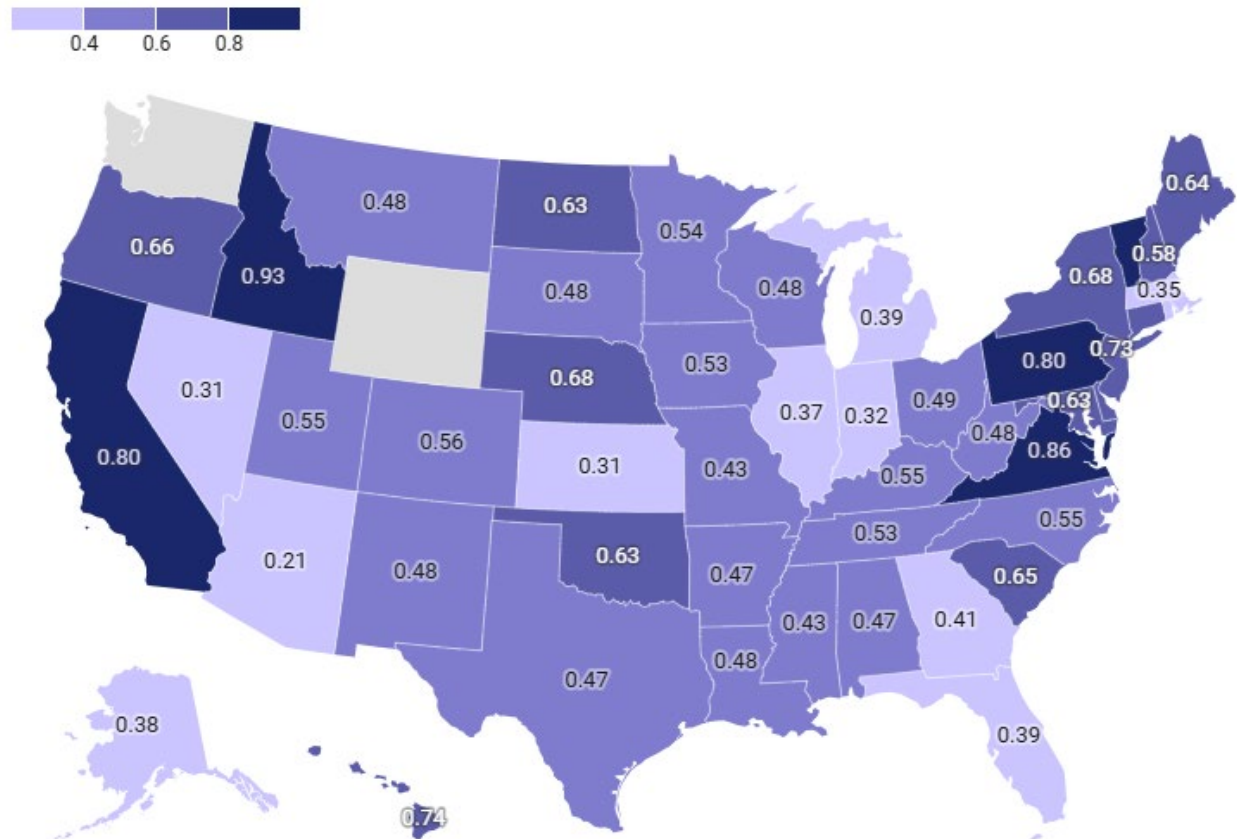
CFSR Process As Defined By Regulation (45 CFR 1355 31-37)

Maine Department of Health and
Human Services

A Home for Every Child

- Initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF).
- ***“Homes waiting for children, not children waiting for homes”.***
- Goal of achieving at least a 1:1 ratio of licensed foster homes to children entering care in every state.
- Nationally there are approximately 57 licensed foster homes for every 100 children entering care.

Ratio of Foster Homes in 2025 to Children in Care on 9/30/2024



Source: Visualization by the Child Welfare Work based on the AFCARS dashboard 2024 for children in care at the end of FY 2024 and the Imprint's Who Cares data for foster homes in 2025. Washington and Wyoming are omitted because 2024 AFCARS data is not available for those states. The District of Columbia is omitted because it did not participate in the Who Cares data collection.

A Home for Every Child

Levers of Impact

Ratio of Licensed Resource Homes to Children in Care

Prevention

- Develop and utilize a robust system of evidence-based primary and secondary prevention resource
- s to keep children safe without the need for state custody whenever possible.

Available Resource Homes

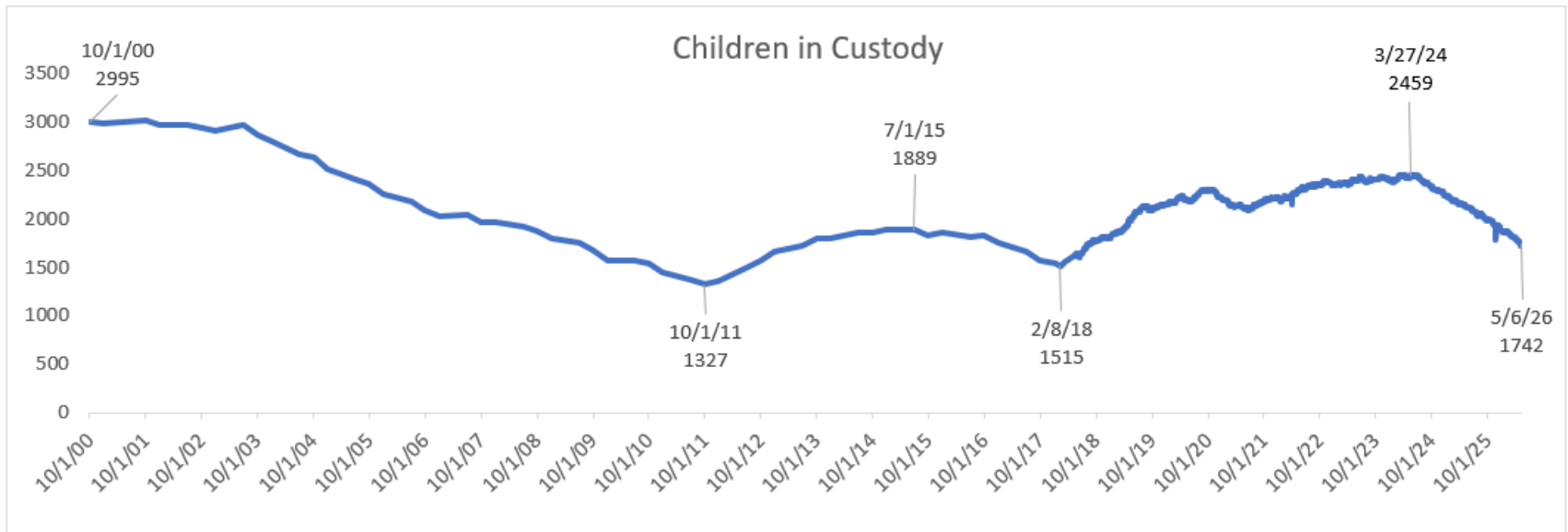
- Reduce barriers to resource home licensing, strengthen resource home retention and support services, and prioritize relatives for placement .

Timely Permanency

- Engage in efforts to improve the timeliness of safe and appropriate permanency for children in state care.



Efforts to Prevent Removal Children in Custody

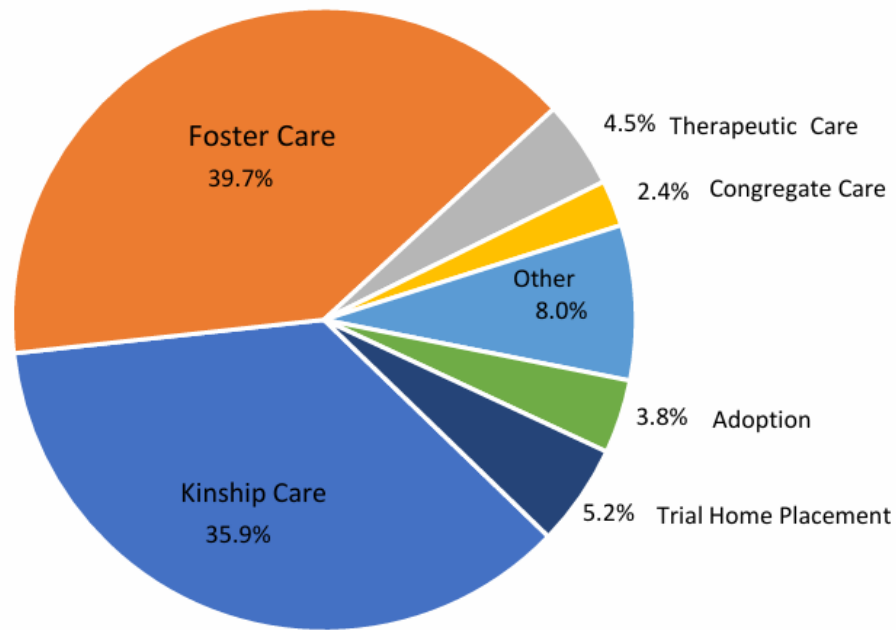


Maine Department of Health and
Human Services

Snapshot of Placements

Monthly Snapshot of Children in DHHS Custody by Placement

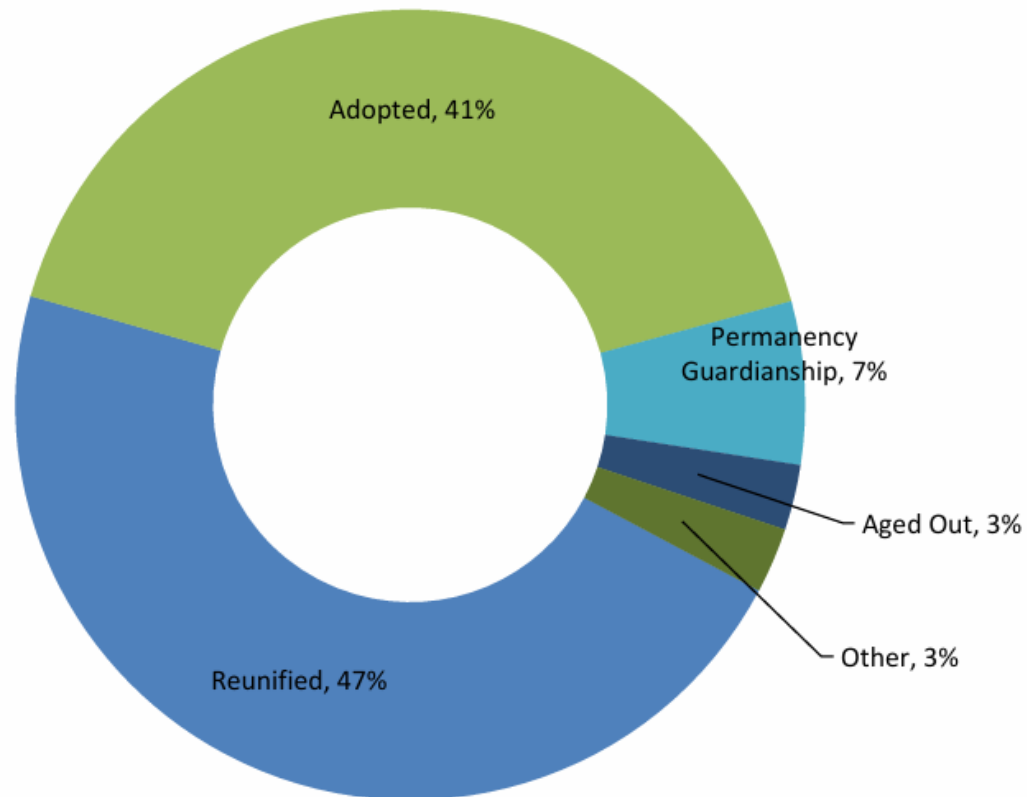
Data as of May 1, 2026



Snapshot of Permanency Outcomes

Outcomes for Children Exiting Custody

State



Data as of May 2026

Other Updates

Social Security

Governor included funding in the budget to set aside and establish accounts for Social Security death and disability benefits for youth in DHHS custody

LD 1544 Implementation

Reinforcing expectations for petitions to demonstrate reasonable efforts to prevent removal and articulate why removal is a necessary step

Conducting QA/QI reviews to monitor child safety

Collecting feedback through District visits and partnership with the Office of the Attorney General

Staff Support

Caseworker Vacancies at 9%

Supervisor Trainer positions

Field Instruction Unit Class of 2026-2027: 13 confirmed interns of 15 slots (6 interns in 2025-2026, 4 hired)

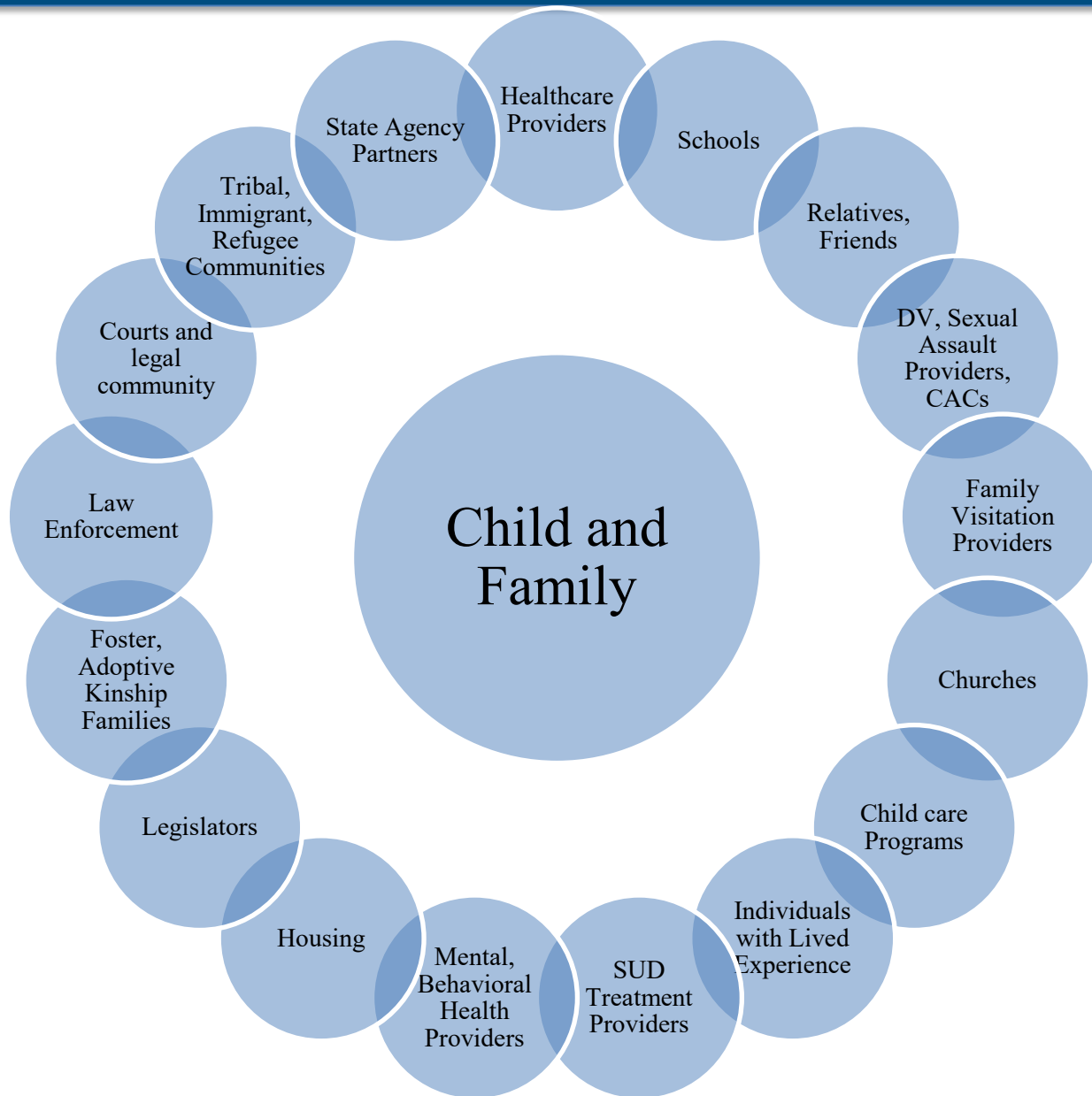
Partnership with Individuals with Lived Expertise

Youth Leadership Advisory Team / Ambassadors

Family Engagement Advisory Team (FEAT)

Resource Parent Advisory Team

Maine's Child Welfare System



Questions/Closing Remarks



Maine Department of Health and Human Services