STATE OF NEVADA

CHILD WELFARE PRESENTATION

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February 15, 2015

STATE OF NEVADA DEMOGRAPHICS

- **Nevada's Total Population**
  2,791,494
  - 2,027,868- Clark County
  - 433,731- Washoe County
  - 329,895- Rural Nevada
- **Total Number of Children Statewide**
  723,498 Children (ages 0-18)
- **Land**
  109,781 square miles
  (making it the 7th largest of the states)
- **People Per Square Mile**
  24.8 persons per sqare mile
- **Median Age**
  36
- **Median income**
  $52,800
- **% Child poverty rate**
  21.6%
- **% Living in poverty**
  15%

MISSION

Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invite participation in decision-making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family.

CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES

NEVADA'S CHILD WELFARE STRUCTURE

- Child welfare in Nevada up until 2001 was bifurcated. The two urban counties (Las Vegas and Reno) were responsible for the FRONT END type services: Intake, investigations, removal and the State was responsible for the BACK END type services such as Foster Care and/or Adoption.

- In 2001, the Legislature changed this design of child welfare to a system where those counties that had populations of 100,000 or more were responsible for child welfare services and the State was responsible for the counties who had populations of less than 100,000.

- DCFS supervises and administers child welfare services in the 15 rural counties.

- Nevada uses a state-supervised, county-administered structure for the management of child welfare services.

- Further, DCFS has state oversight for county-administered child protective and child welfare services delivery providing technical assistance, fiscal oversight for federal monies, and quality improvement activities.

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE IN THE URBAN COUNTIES

- The organizational structure of Nevada's child welfare services is influenced by the size of the state and the concentration of county populations. In counties in which the population is 100,000 or more, the county shall provide protective services for children in that county and pay the cost of those services in accordance with standards adopted by the state.

  In the 2011 Legislative session the funding for the two urban counties, Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) and the Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS) by the Division changed. Today, CCDFS and WCDSS receive an annual capped block grant each year to support child welfare services. The block grant is divided into two allocations:
  - A base allocation for each biennium which is based on the total State General Fund appropriated for the previous biennium. The base allocation may be used for the delivery of child welfare and child protective services without category restriction. Any unspent State General Funds remaining in the base allocation at the end of the fiscal year *may be retained and reinvested* for the delivery of child welfare and child protective services.
    - *This requires the urban counties to meet a minimum maintenance of effort requirement. Specifically, the counties must maintain the amount of local funds spent for child welfare and child protective services at a level equal to or greater than the amount appropriated for fiscal year 2011.*
  - A second allocation which would include the estimated cost attributable to projected caseload growth for the adoption assistance program. This was separated out of the block grant to avoid de-incentivizing this permanency option for children. In addition to the block grant, the two urban counties are eligible to receive incentive funds to stimulate and support improvement in key areas identified in the agency improvement plan.

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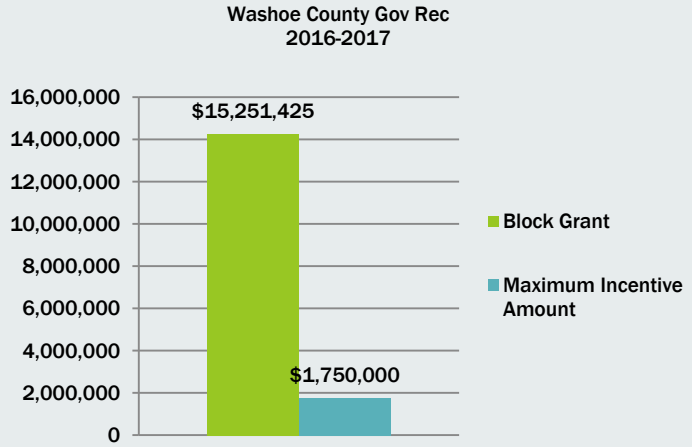
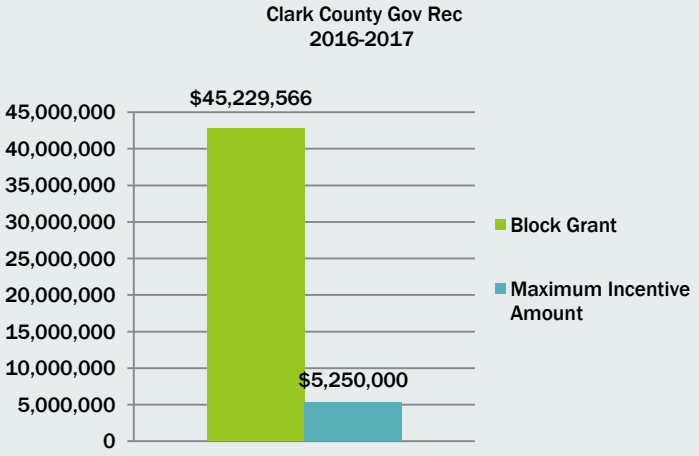




COUNTY ASSESSMENTS

- In the 2011 Legislative Session, SB 480 was enacted.
- SB 480 requires an assessment of the rural counties for the cost of child protective services.
- The assessment is determined based upon the percentage of the population for persons under 18 years old within each county. This assessment and percentage of the population is recalculated each year and notifications are sent out to each county prior to the upcoming fiscal year indicating the most recent amount due to the state.
- A report on or before December 1 of each year is submitted to the Governor and to each county whose population is less than100,000 that contains a statement of:
  - (a) The total number of children who received child protective services in each county in the immediately preceding fiscal year; and
  - (b) The amount and categories of the expenditures made by DCFS on child protective services in each county in the immediately preceding fiscal year;
- DCFS provides each county whose population is less than 100,000, on or before May 1 of each year, with an estimate of the amount of the assessment. The estimate becomes the amount of the assessment unless the county is notified of a change. The county is required to pay the assessment:
  - (a) In full within 30 days after the amount of the assessment becomes final; or
  - (b) In equal quarterly installments on or before the first day of July, October, January and April, respectively.

STRATEGIES

- Strengthen and reinforce safety practices by:
  - Continuing the development of Nevada's safety assessment model, which is now expanded to all three child welfare agencies.
  - Reinforcing assessing safety through the life of a case through implementation of the family assessment in concert with the safety model.

- Implementation of the Quality Parenting Initiative
  - Encourage and support recruitment and retention of great foster parents by:
  - Enhances training and development of high quality foster parents.
  - Creates systemic changes the value the participation and membership of foster parents as full members of a child's team.

- Redesign the specialized foster care system through a combination of implementing evidence based practices in foster care settings and fiscal reform.

- Improve the timeliness and appropriateness of permanency planning by:
  - Continuing a collaboration with the Court Improvement Project to bring court and child welfare agency practices in line with one another.
  - Reducing the number of children in out of home care for 18 months or longer.

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

A CHILD'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

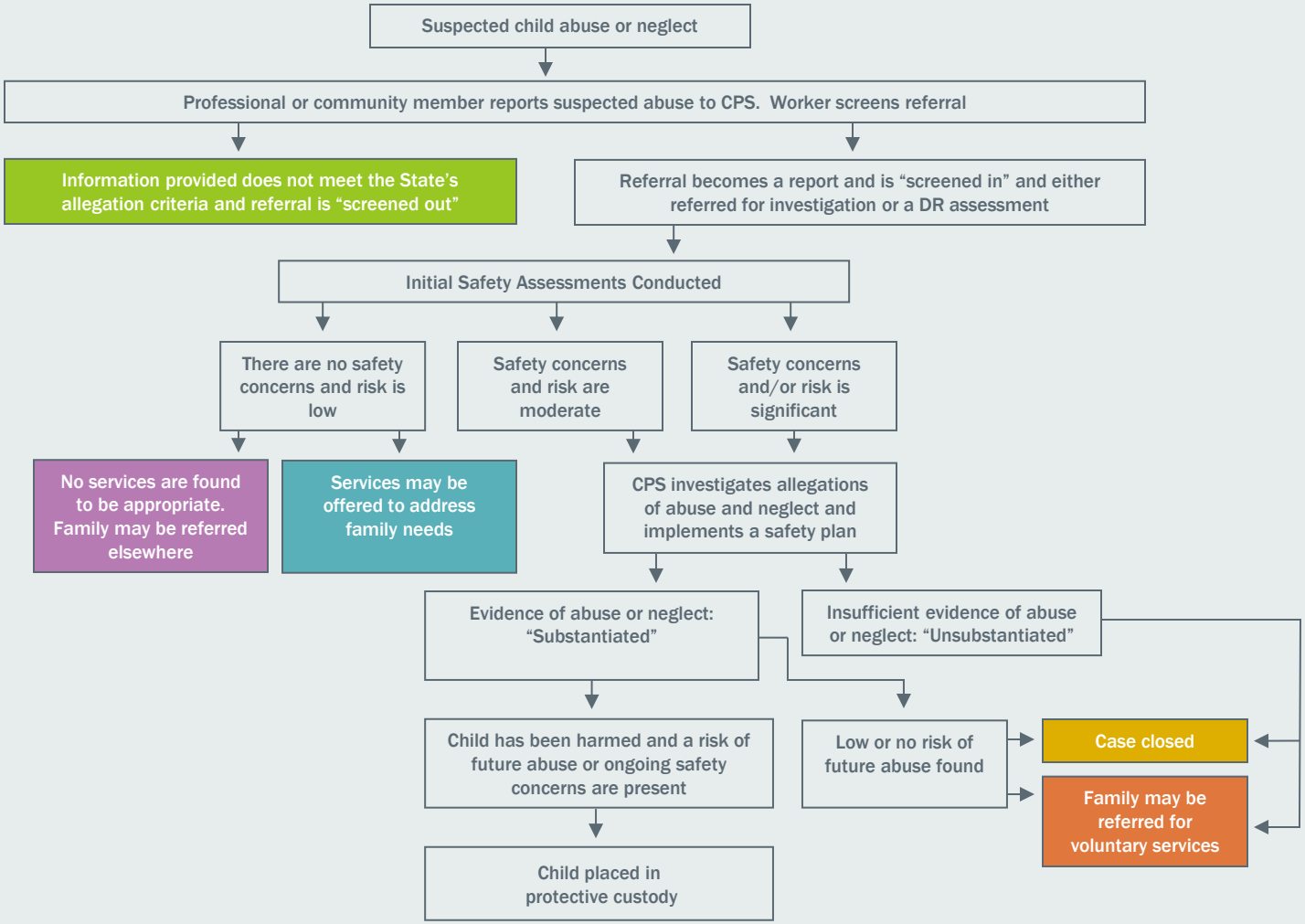
- Children and families come to the attention of the child welfare agency due to reports of abuse or neglect.
  - Often these families face issues such as illness, alcohol or drug addition, and/or homelessness, domestic violence, or other issues
- Based on the information in the report, a child protective services investigation may be initiated. The outcome is either a substantiated report, or an unsubstantiated report.
- If the report is substantiated, the child welfare agency opens the case for services, which can be in home or out of home
- In home cases involve the child welfare agency working with the family to put a safety plan in place so that children can safely remain in the home while the parents work on the issues that brought them to the attention of the child welfare agency
- Out of home services involve children being placed in foster care, while the parents work on case plan to address the issues that make it unsafe for the child to remain at home.
- Foster care placements may be relatives, or they may be people unrelated to the child or family

A CHILD'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

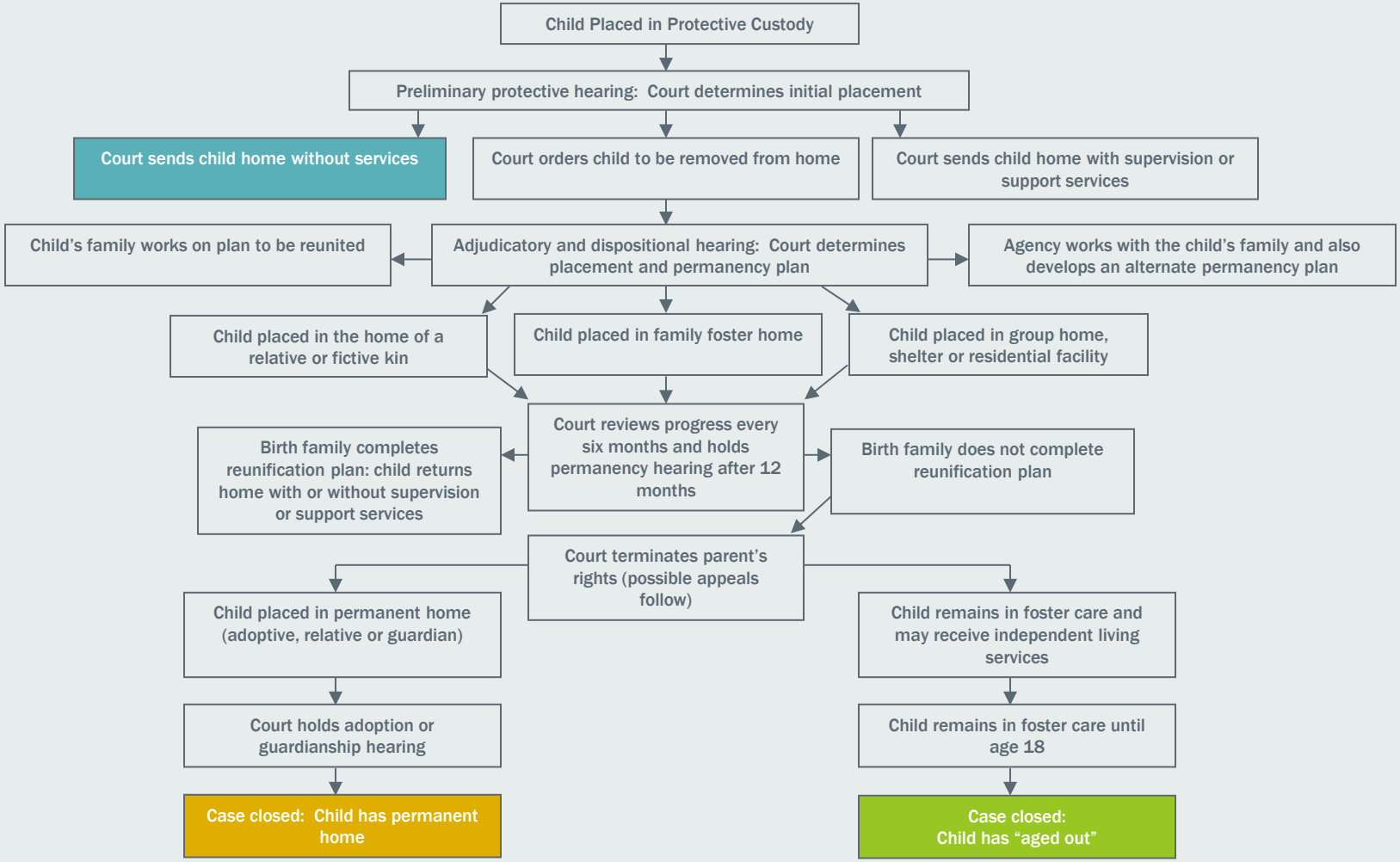
- Foster families are recruited, trained, and licensed to care for the children temporarily, while their parents work with the child welfare agency to resolve their family issues. Relatives may also be licensed as foster parents.

- Foster care is intended to be a short term temporary situation until a permanent placement can be made:
  - Reunification with biological parent(s).
    - When it is deemed in the child's best interest, and the family can safely maintain their children in their home. This is generally the first choice.
  - Adoption
    - Preferably by a biological family member such as an aunt or grandparent.
    - If no biological family member is willing or able to adopt, the next preference is for the child to be adopted by the foster parents or by someone else involved in the child's life (such as a teacher or a coach). This is to maintain continuity in the child's life.
    - If neither above options are available, the child may be adopted by someone who is a stranger to the child.
  - Permanent transfer of guardianship.
  - If none of these options are viable the plan for the minor may enter OPPLA (Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement). This option allows the child to stay in custody of the public agency and in foster care until age 18 and may receive independent living services.

A CHILD'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM



A CHILD'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM (CONTINUED)



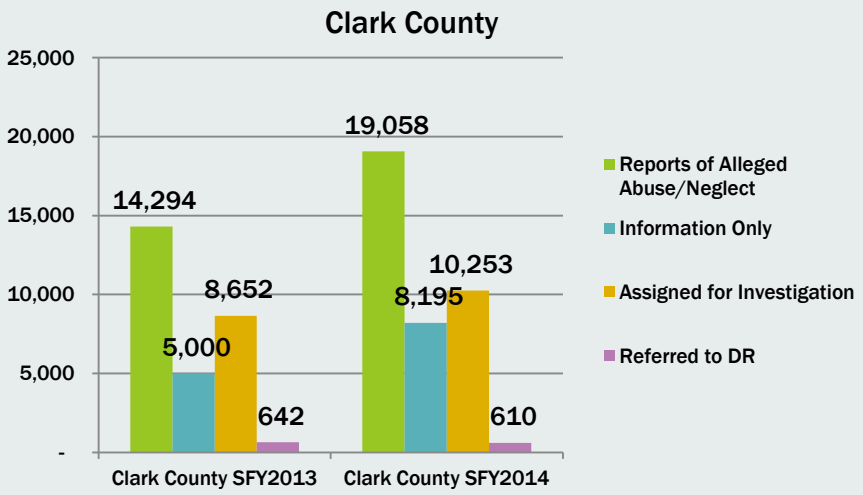
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING

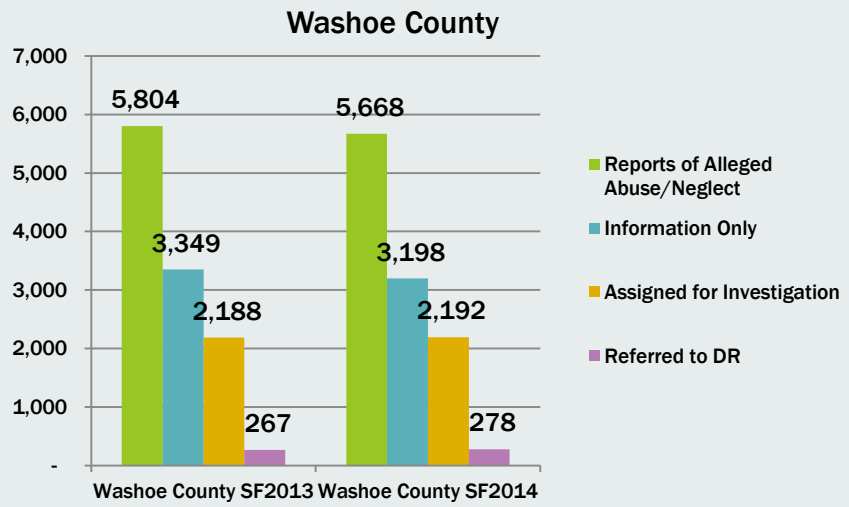
- NAC 432B.090 requires the state to provide a full staff development and training program related to the principles and practices of child welfare services, including specific training related to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).
- Beginning in January, 2014 the Nevada Partnership for Training (NPT) began a vast revision to the Nevada New Worker Academy training to include current best practices in child welfare, The Nevada child welfare training academy operates in two locations: One in Las Vegas which partners with and trains Clark County Department of Family Services and one in Reno which partners with and trains Division of Child and Family Services and Washoe County Department of Social Services. State Tribal child welfare workers are also eligible to attend either of these Academies.
- The Academy is required for all new child welfare workers and is an intensive training consisting of in-class and on-the-job training. There are also specialty CORE modules available as well as certain online courses.
- Also provided is a mandatory 6 week, 66 total classroom hours, Best Practice Supervisor Training Program for all supervisors in child welfare agencies which is based on "Mastering the Art of Child Welfare Supervision" by Marsha Salus.
- Nevada's child welfare training program is funded through State General Funds and Title IV-E funds.
- Training is provided through contracts with UNR and UNLV schools of social work.
- To support a skilled child welfare workforce, a stipend program is offered in conjunction with the University of Nevada, Reno School of Social Work.

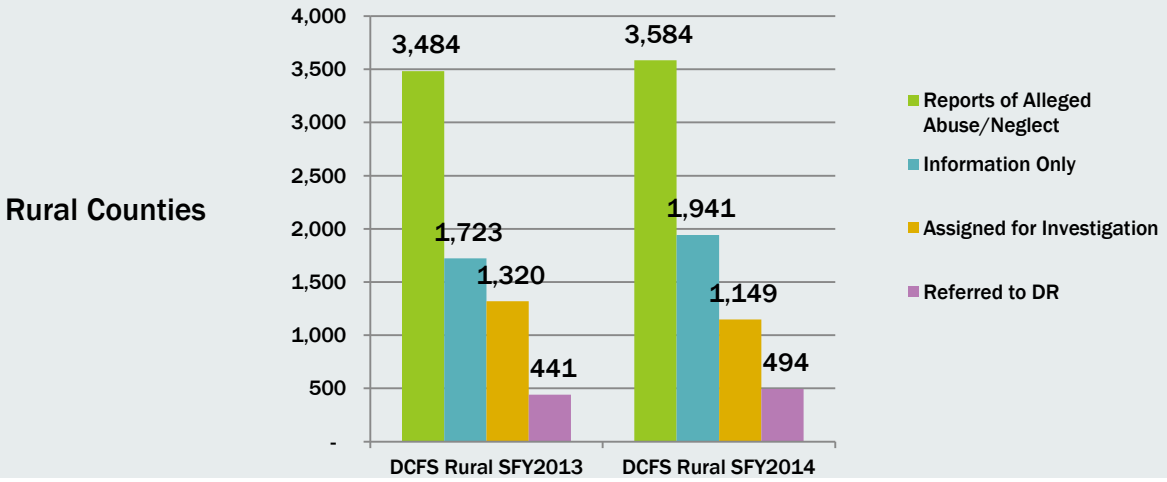
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS)

- Child Protective Services (CPS) is the first step to ensure the safety and permanency of children who are reported as being abused or neglected.
- The primary focus of CPS is to ensure that children are protected from harm or risk of harm and to make it safe for the child to live with the parent or caretaker.
- Nevada child protective service agencies conduct activities in preventing, investigating, and treating child abuse and neglect in accordance with Chapters 432 and 432B of the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), and Nevada's Regulations for the Protection of Children From Abuse and Neglect (NAC 432B).
- Abuse or neglect complaints include mental injury, physical abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, negligent treatment or maltreatment, and excessive corporal punishment.

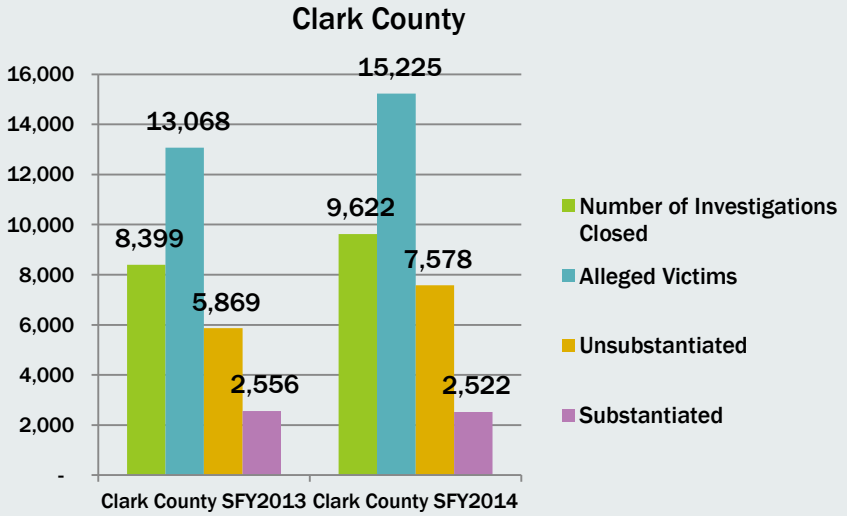
NUMBER OF REFERRALS AND DISPOSITIONS OF ALLEGED ABUSE/NEGLECT

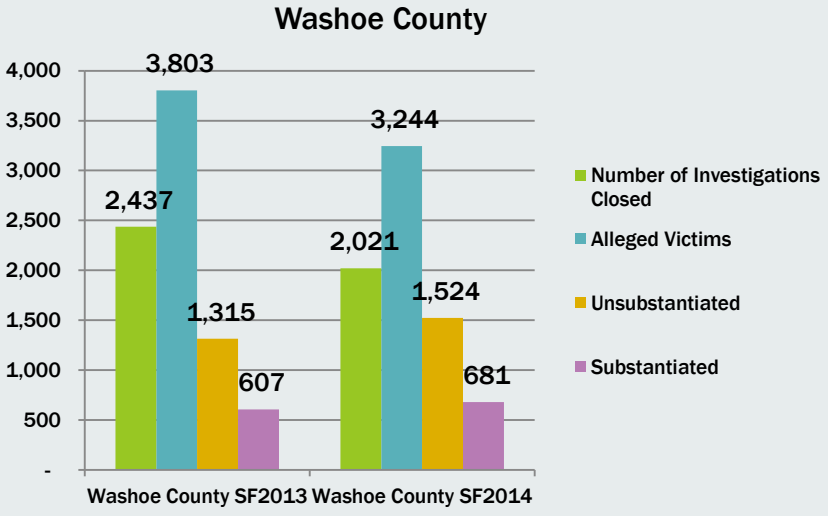




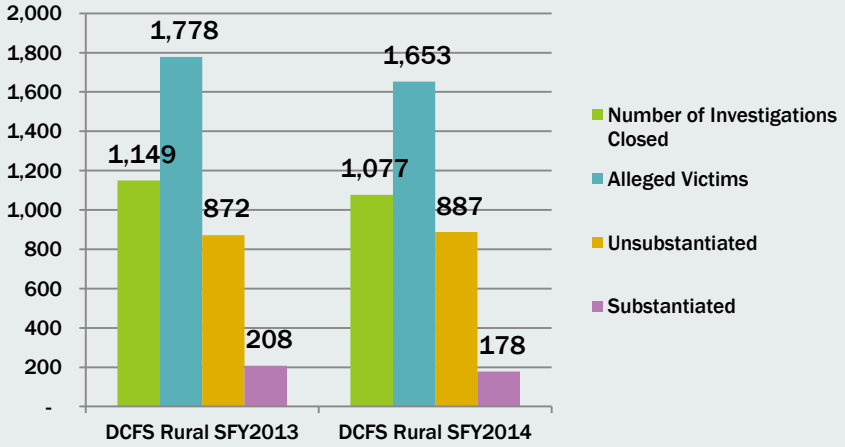


SUBSTANTIATIONS

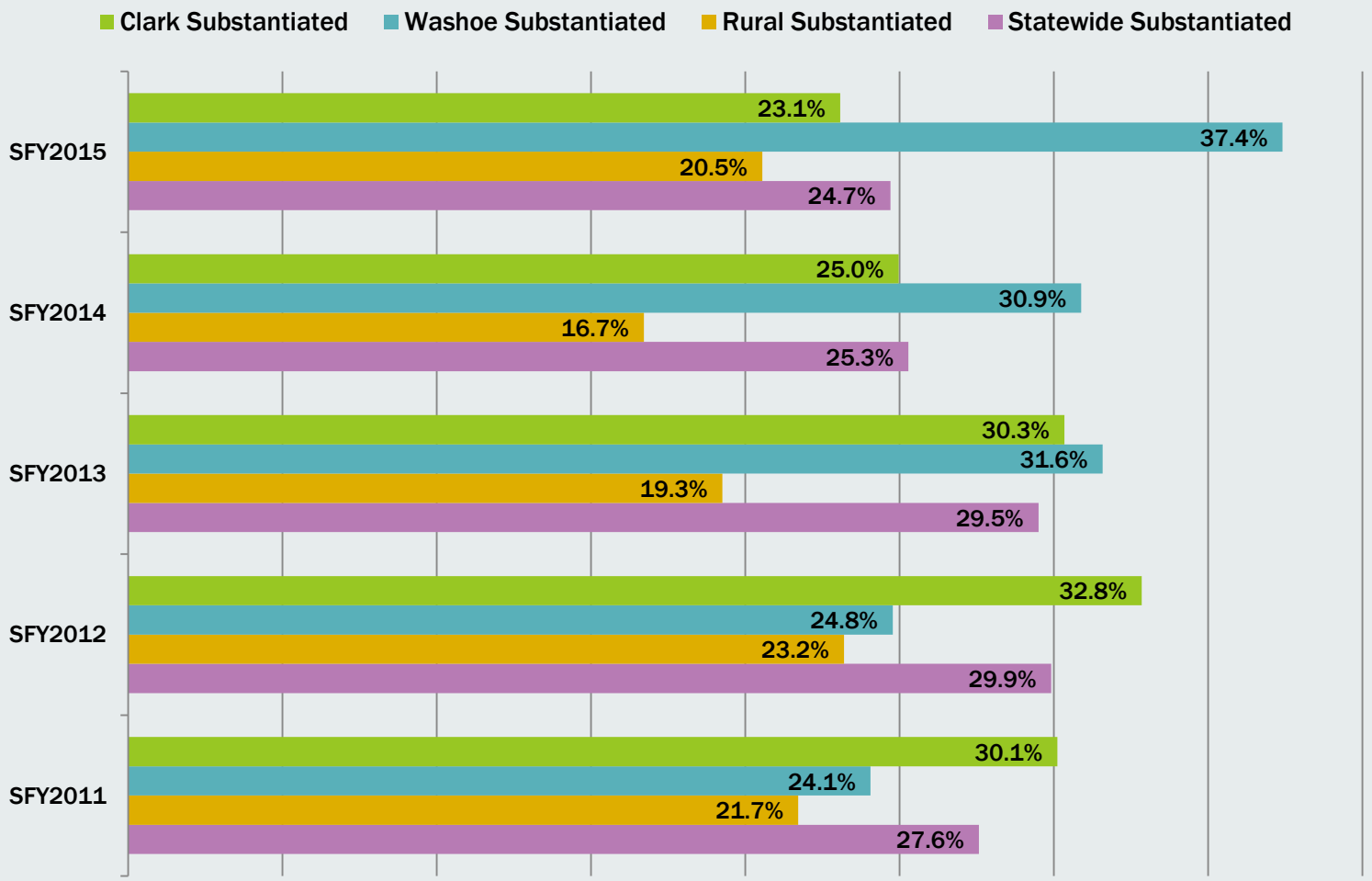




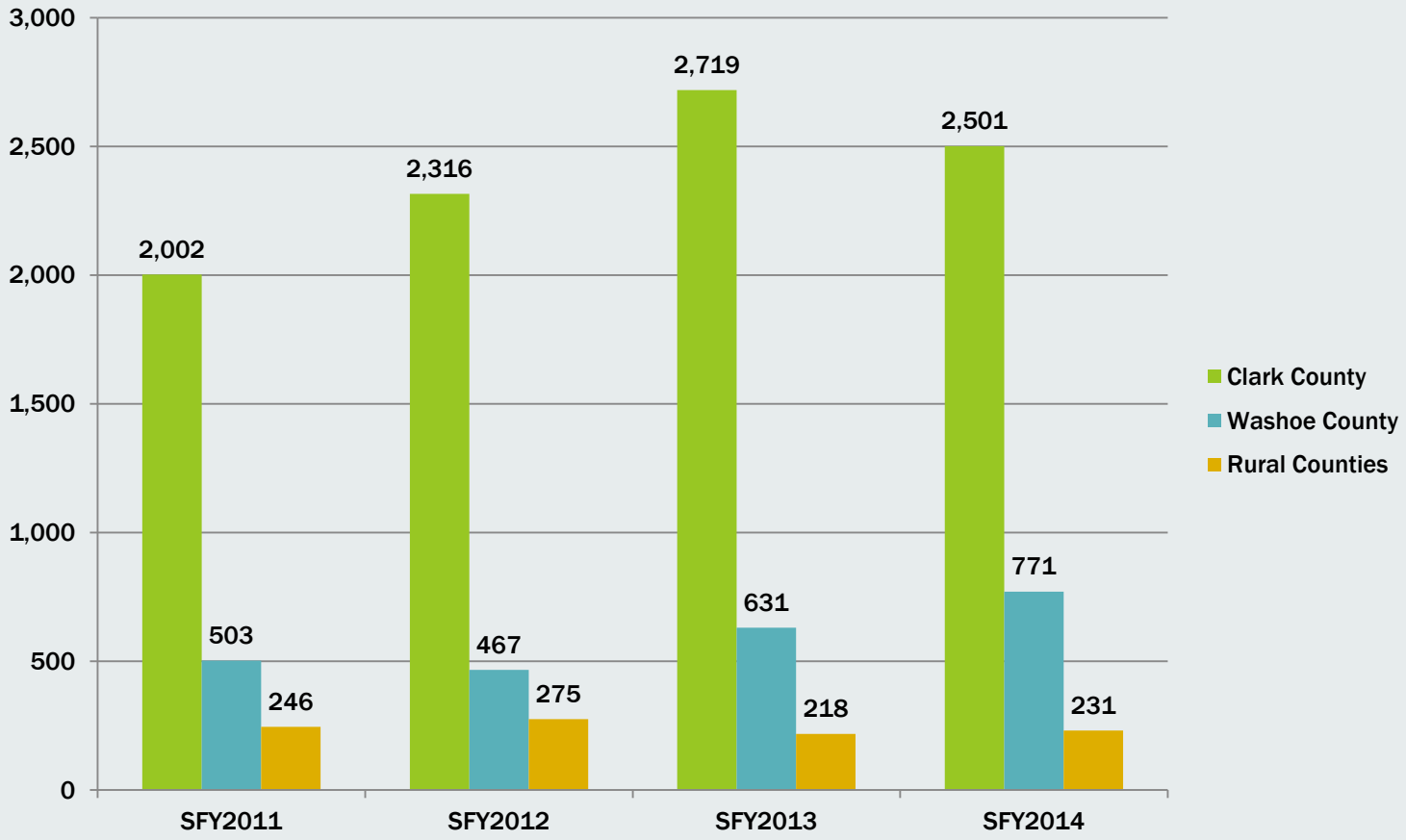
Rural Counties



STATEWIDE CPS INVESTIGATIONS



STATEWIDE REMOVALS



FOSTER CARE

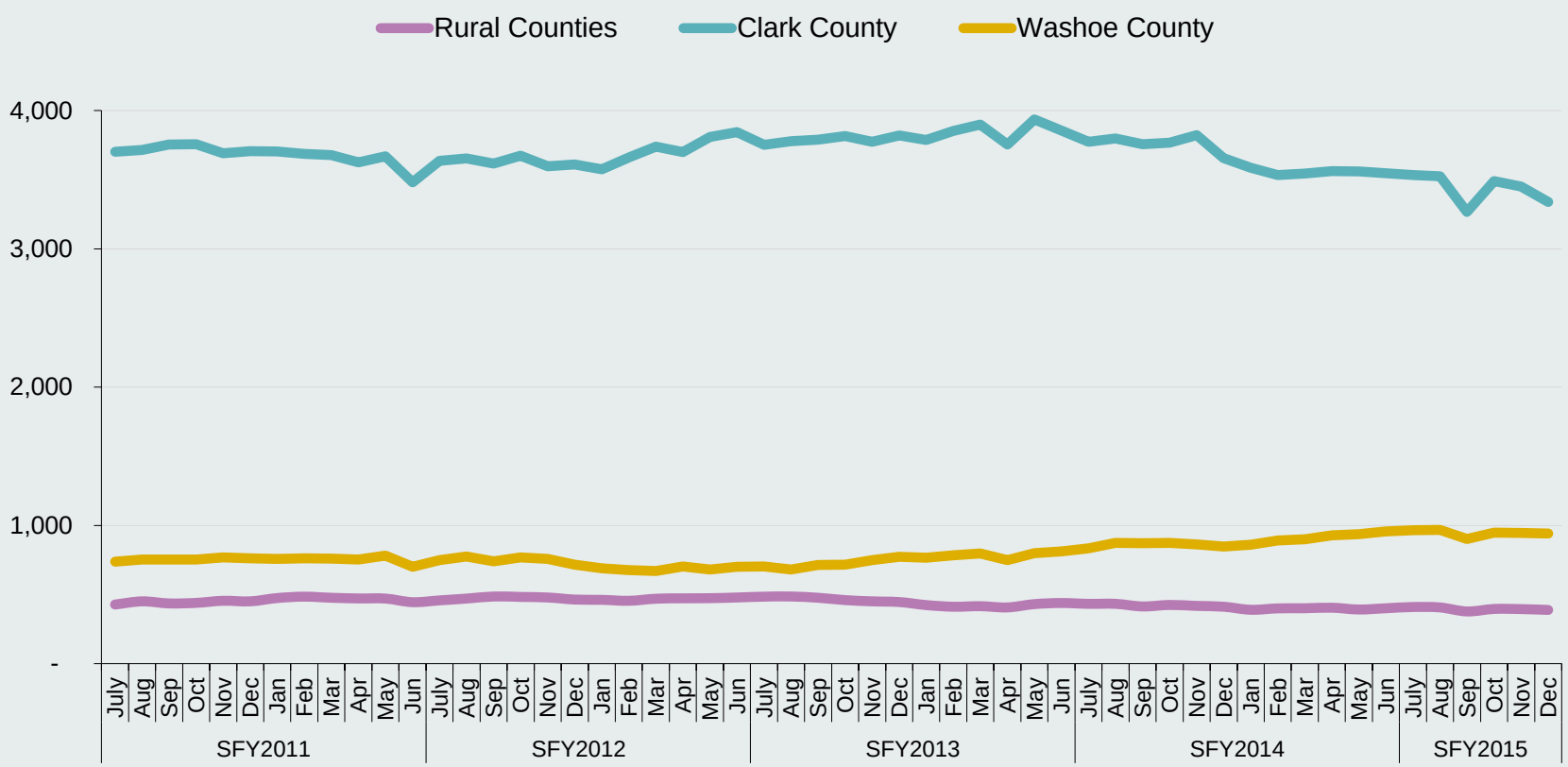
- The goal of the foster care system is to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of children who either temporarily or permanently cannot be safely maintained in their own homes.

- Foster care is intended to be a short term situation until a permanent placement can be made.
  - Placement with relatives/fictive kin is first choice
  - Regular family foster care or specialized level care if needed
  - Shelter care
  - Adoption
  - Reunification

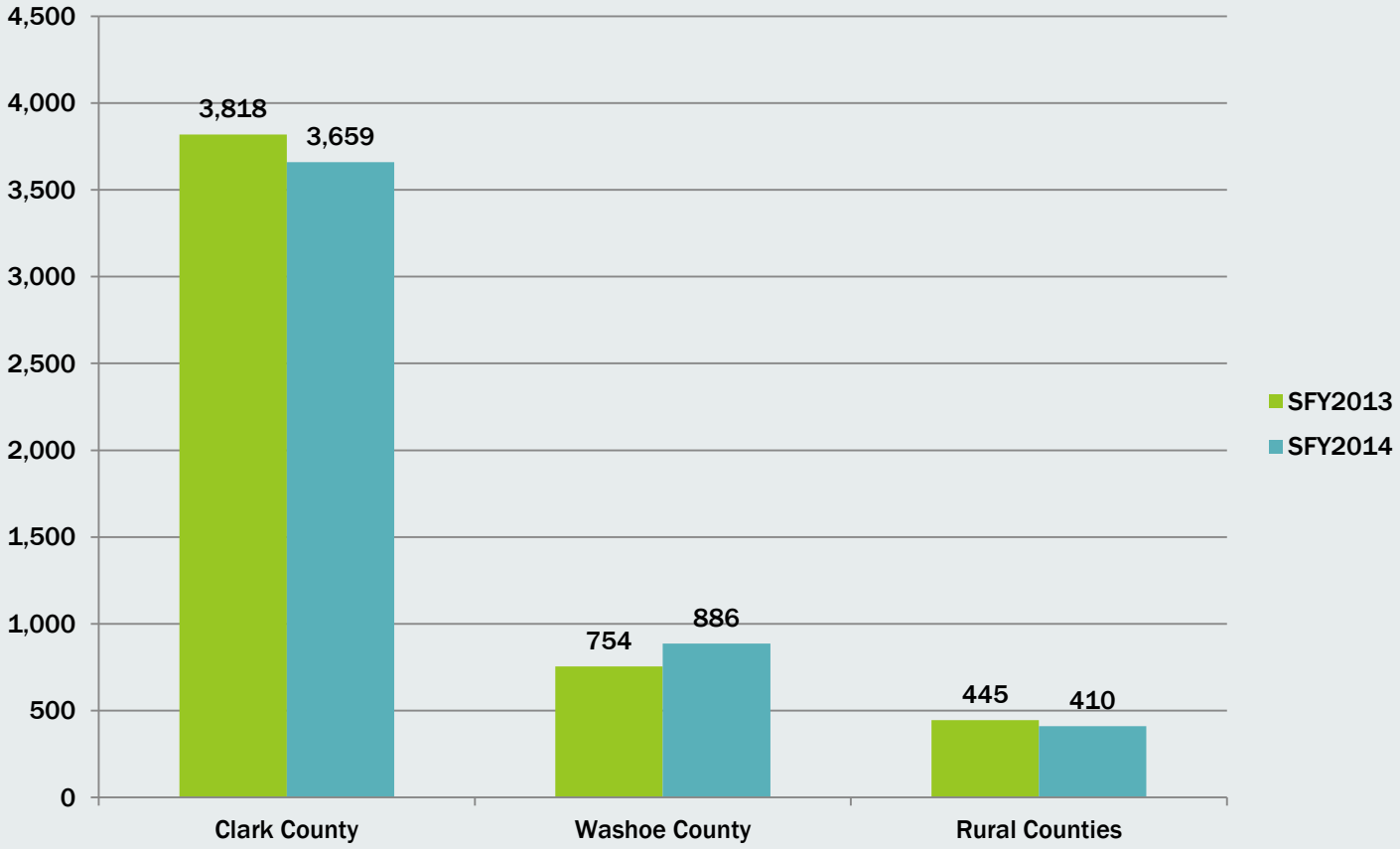
- While in foster care a case manager is assigned to the child and his/her family to assist with case plan development and to work on minimizing the safety threats in the family so the child can be safely returned home.

- If reunification is not an option, other permanent living situations are explored such as adoption, guardianship and OPPLA (Other planned living arrangement).

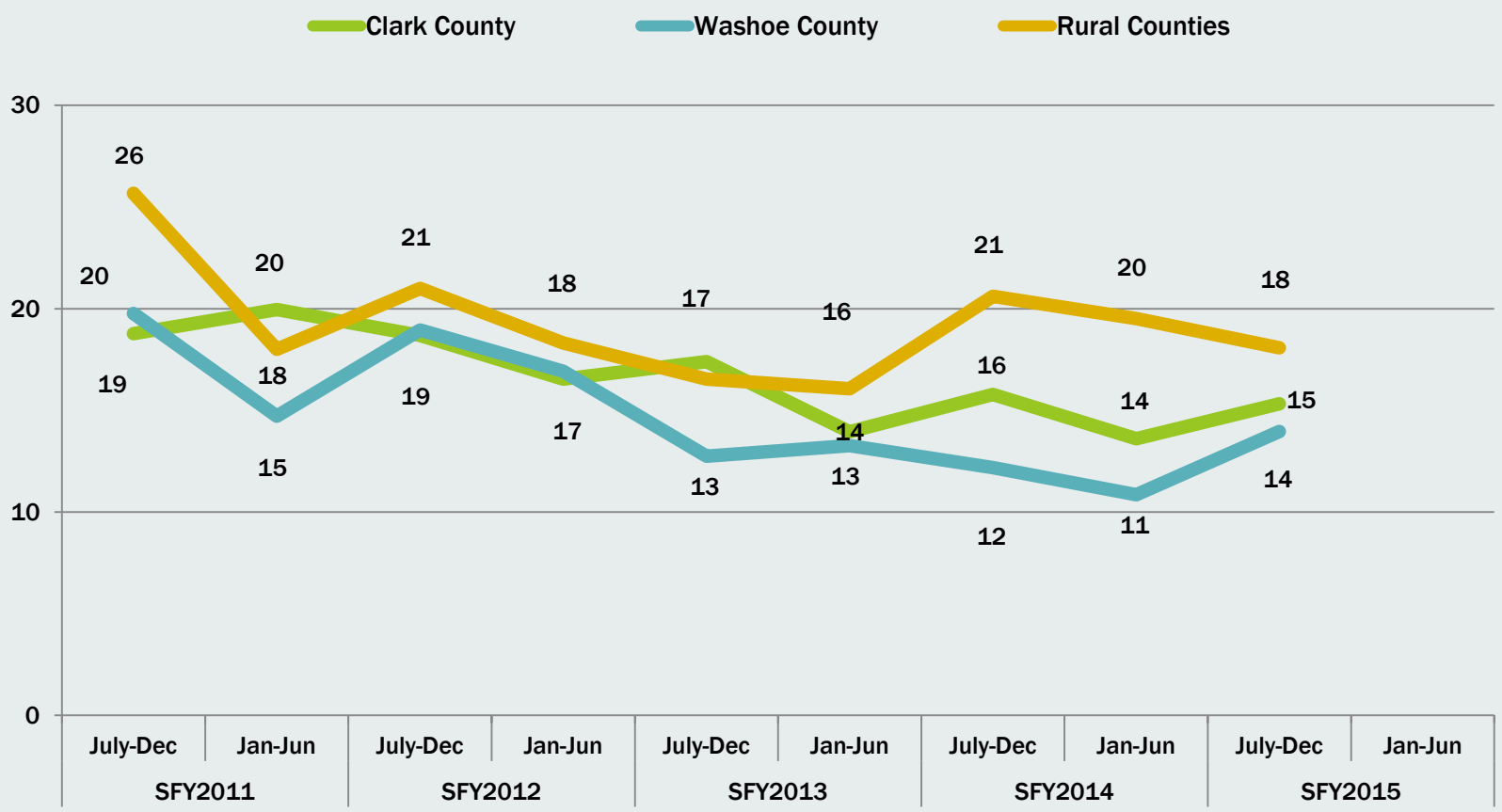
TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS



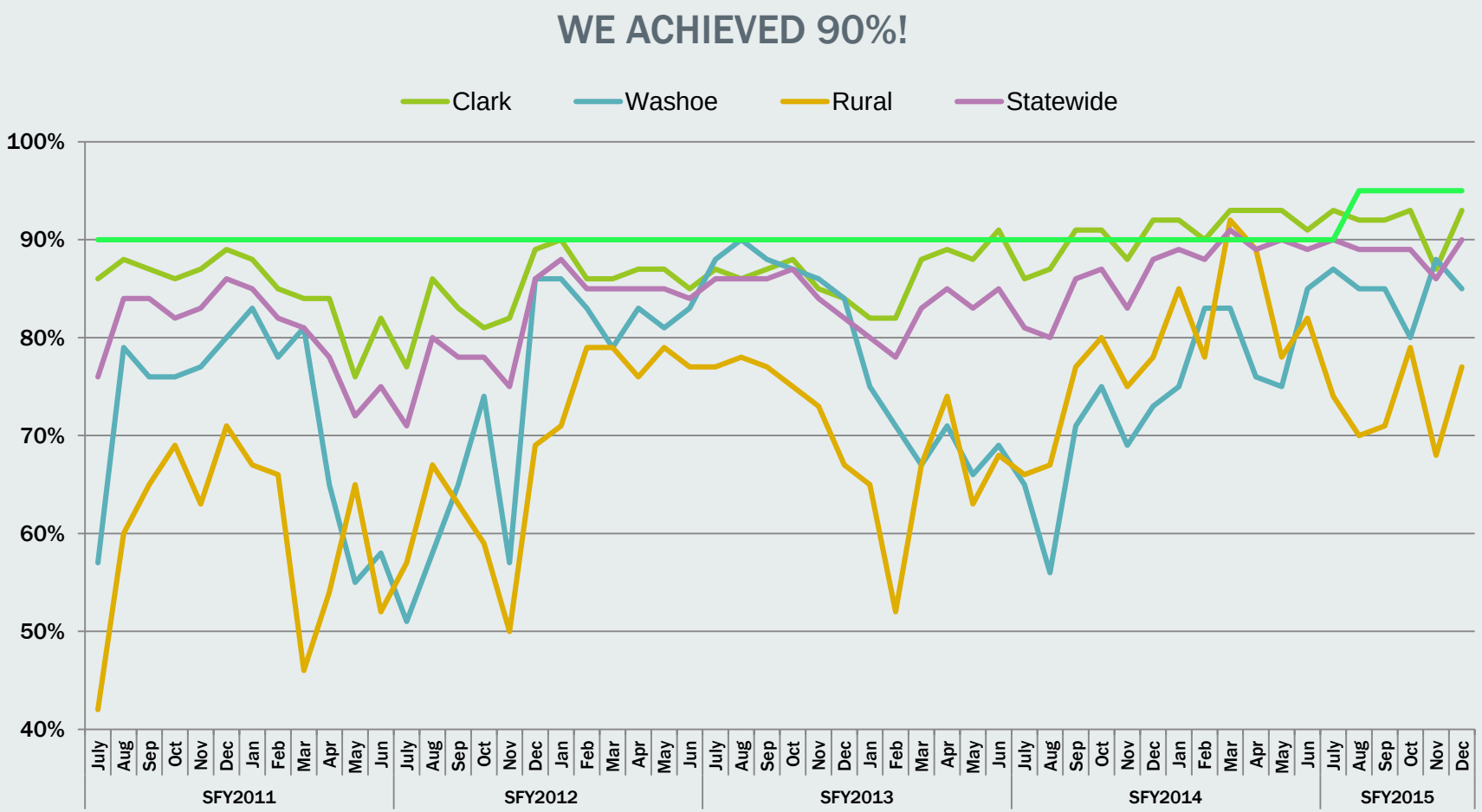
FOSTER CARE MONTHLY AVERAGE



AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY IN MONTHS FOR CHILDREN EXITING FOSTER CARE



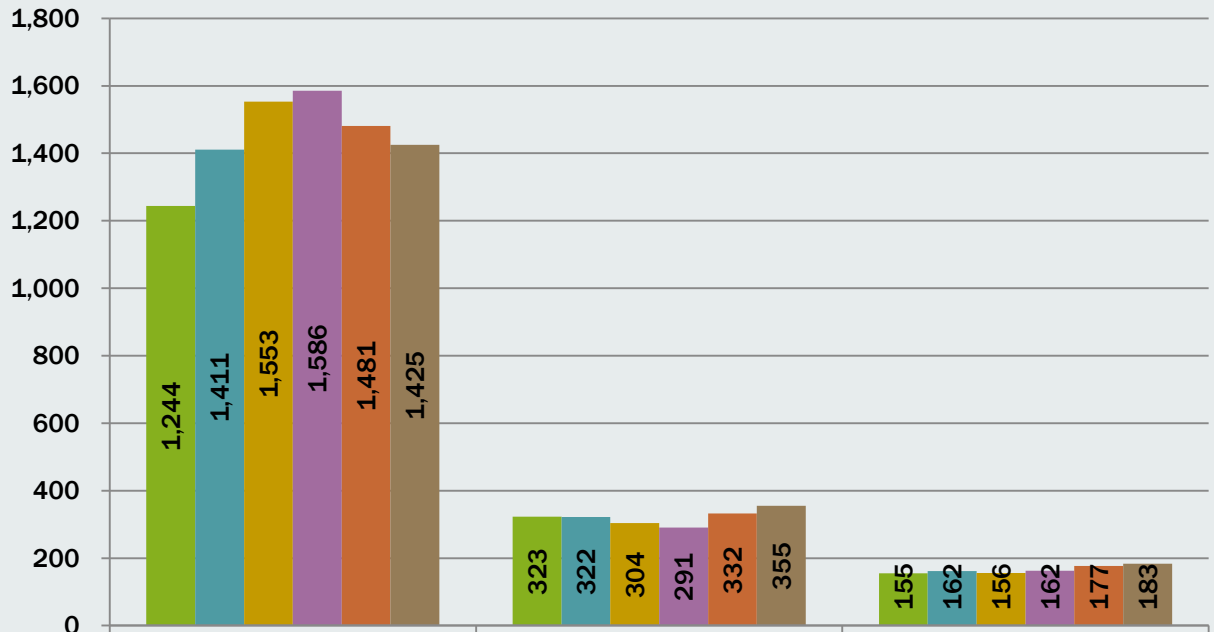
CASEWORKER CONTRACT COMPLIANCE



FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT, LICENSING AND TRAINING

- New children come in to the foster care system daily resulting in a continuous for new, qualified foster parents.
- The licensing process is required by NRS 424 to determine if the placement is suitable.
- All applicants and residents 18 years of age or older living in the home must complete and pass a FBI background check, and state and local background checks.
- Each Child Welfare agency has a training program that all foster families must complete.
- All training curricula covers:
  - How to interact with foster children;
  - What behaviors to expect;
  - Appropriate discipline techniques;
  - Grief, loss and attachment issues; and,
  - Information on the child welfare agency

FAMILY FOSTER HOMES



	Clark County Family Foster Home Licenses	Washoe County Family Foster Home Licenses	DCFS Rural Family Foster Home Licenses
SFY 2010	1,244	323	155
SFY 2011	1,411	322	162
SFY 2012	1,553	304	156
SFY 2013	1,586	291	162
SFY 2014	1,481	332	177
SFY 2015 through 12/31/2014	1,425	355	183

SPECIALIZED FOSTER CARE INITIATIVE

- In 2012 IFC approved a transfer of Basic Skills Training funding from the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy to DCFS, so that DCFS could implement a Specialized Foster Care pilot program in both the rural region, and the urban counties. The pilot program was implemented in an effort to provide the most effective and appropriate services for children in foster care with severe behavioral and emotional problems, and to provide these services within their own communities. This pilot was driven by a recognition that children in specialized foster care:
  - Had treatment plans that often did not clinically match the needs noted by providers or indicated by the diagnosis ,
  - Stayed in foster care longer than their counterparts in traditional family foster care,
  - High rate of Basic Skills Training (BST) that did not correlate with positive outcomes,
  - Lacked placement stability, and;
  - Despite being placed in specialized foster care, children's behaviors and emotional well-being did not improve even as services and costs increased substantially.

- All three child welfare agencies have implemented the pilot a bit differently, but all have some common elements: a high degree of agency oversight, implementation of evidence based practices, and an evaluation component.

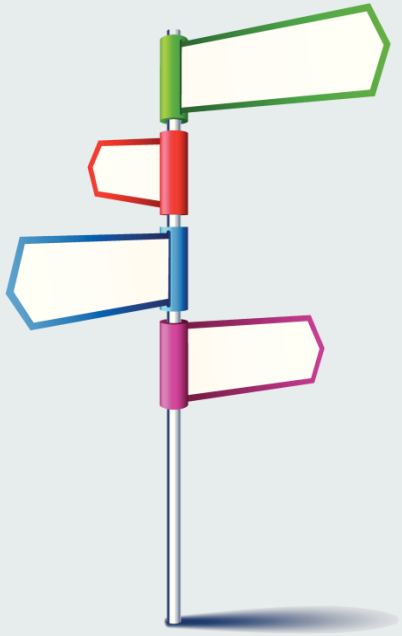
	North (Washoe and Rural Region)	South (Clark County)
Start date	February 2013	October 2012
# of slots	30 (Washoe) 10 (Rural)	30 (initial) 220 (Current)
# of children who have received services	72	228
Evaluation procedure	DCFS Program Evaluation Unit gathers and analyzes data	Healthy Minds gathers data, UNLV statistician analyzes data
Population Served	Foster children with Severe Emotional Disturbance, and elevated clinical scores	Children with an open DFS case and Severe Emotional Disturbance
Summary of Services Provided	Implementing Together Facing the Challenge (TFC) with Foster parents who have been trained in TFC and Trauma Informed Care and Clinical Case management.	Contracted behavioral and mental health services through Healthy Minds. Services include: Individual and Family Counseling and Clinical Case management.

- The pilot evaluation was divided north (Washoe and all Rural counties) and south (Clark County). The three areas which both evaluations track are hospitalizations, psychotropic medication usage, and placement stability:

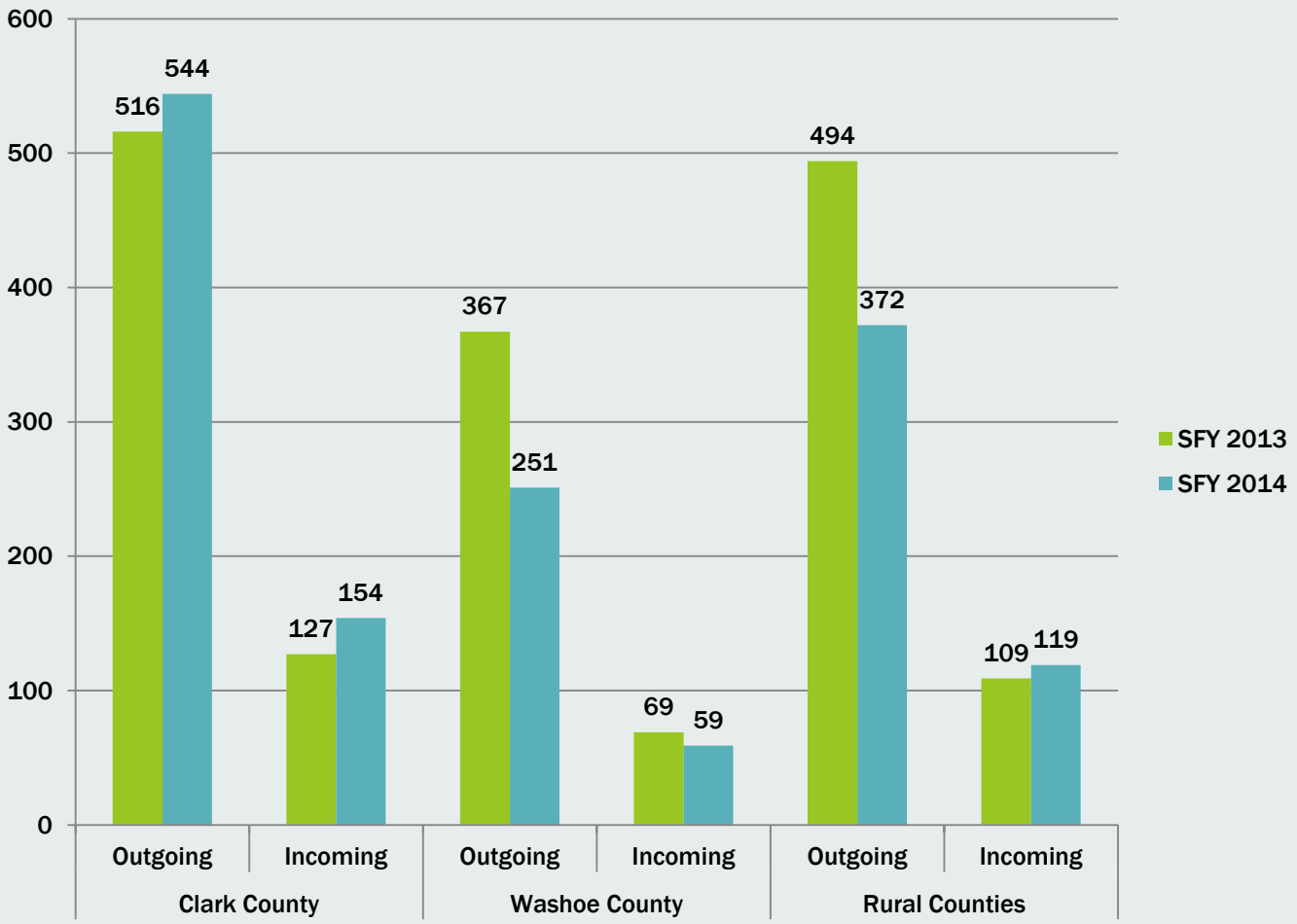
	NORTH	SOUTH
Hospitalizations	100% ↓	31%↓
Psychotropic Medications	37.5%↓	29%↓
Placement Disruptions	93%↓	53%↓

INTERSTATE COMPACT ON THE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN (ICPC)

- There are times when the best placement resource for a child is located out of state.
- The primary purpose of ICPC is to ensure that children placed out-of-state are placed with care-givers who are safe, suitable and able to meet the child's needs.
- ICPC requires an assessment of these factors before a child is placed out-of-state.
- As a legally binding agreement between all states, ICPC ensures a uniform set of protections and benefits regardless of which state a child is moving to or from.
- ICPC ensures that the person or entity that places a child out-of-state retains legal and financial responsibility for the child after the placement occurs.



INCOMING AND OUTGOING REFERRALS



ADOPTION

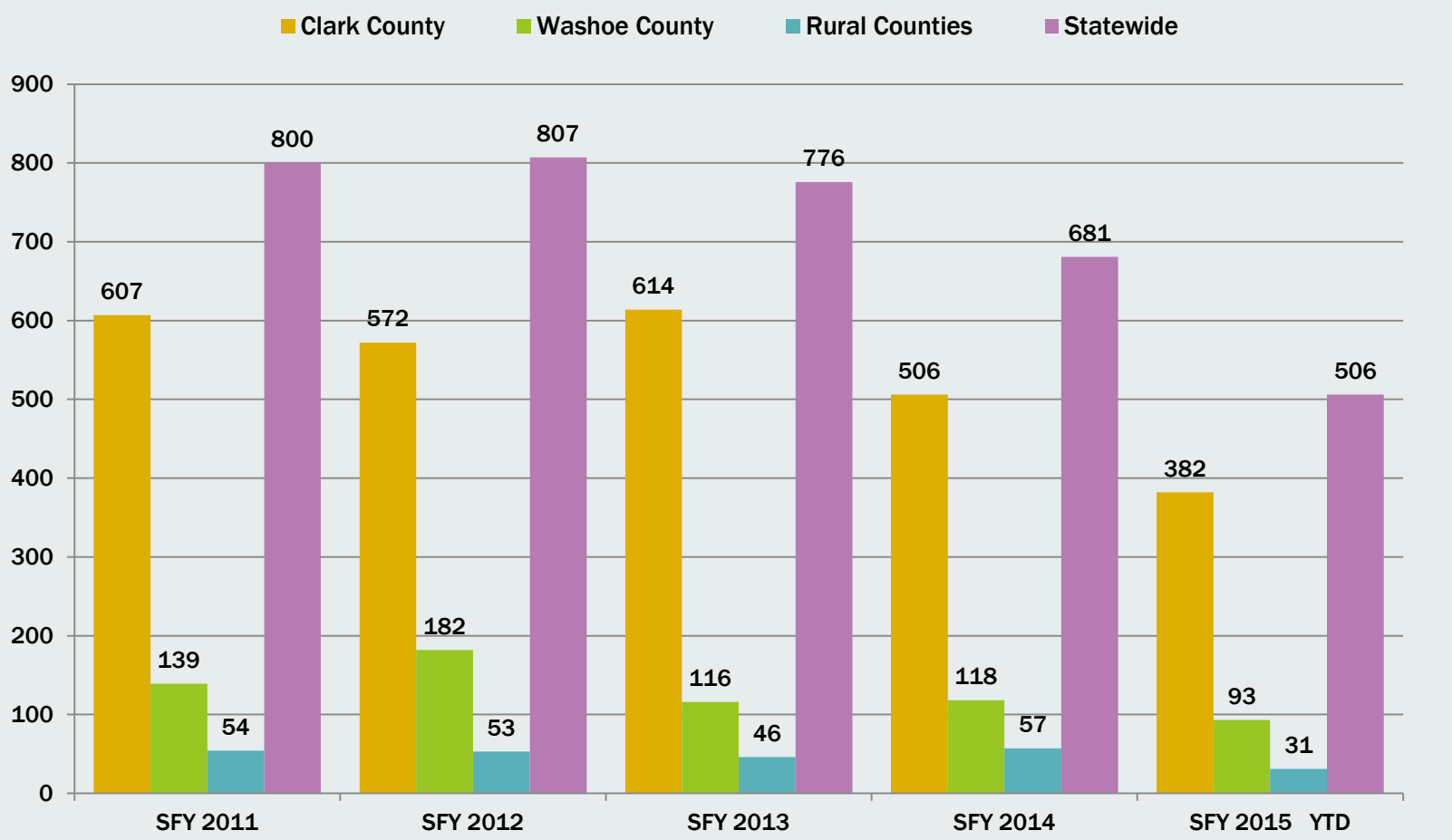
- The goal of Nevada's adoption program is to provide safe and permanent homes for children whose birth parents cannot care for them.
- The programs are child-focused, and designed to recruit and secure the best families available to meet children's needs.
- State and county child welfare agencies responsible for the child's care must ensure that permanent adoptive homes are identified in a timely manner.
- Most foster children are adopted by relatives and foster parents, while others require additional local and national recruitment efforts to locate appropriate adoptive families.
- Adoption Assistance, which may be a monthly reimbursement or medical insurance, is available to families to encourage and support the adoption of special needs children.

ADOPTION INCENTIVE GRANTS

- In recognition of the State's efforts to finalize the adoptions of children in Foster Care, Nevada received a Federal Adoption Incentive Grant award in the amount of 2.5 million dollars - was an increase from the baseline year.

- The funds are used by DCFS, CCDFS and WCDSS to support special-needs adoption, recruitment, home study, and post placement services, and for post adoption services required to stabilize and maintain the placement.

STATEWIDE FINALIZED ADOPTIONS



SFY 2015 is through December 31, 2014

INDEPENDENT LIVING

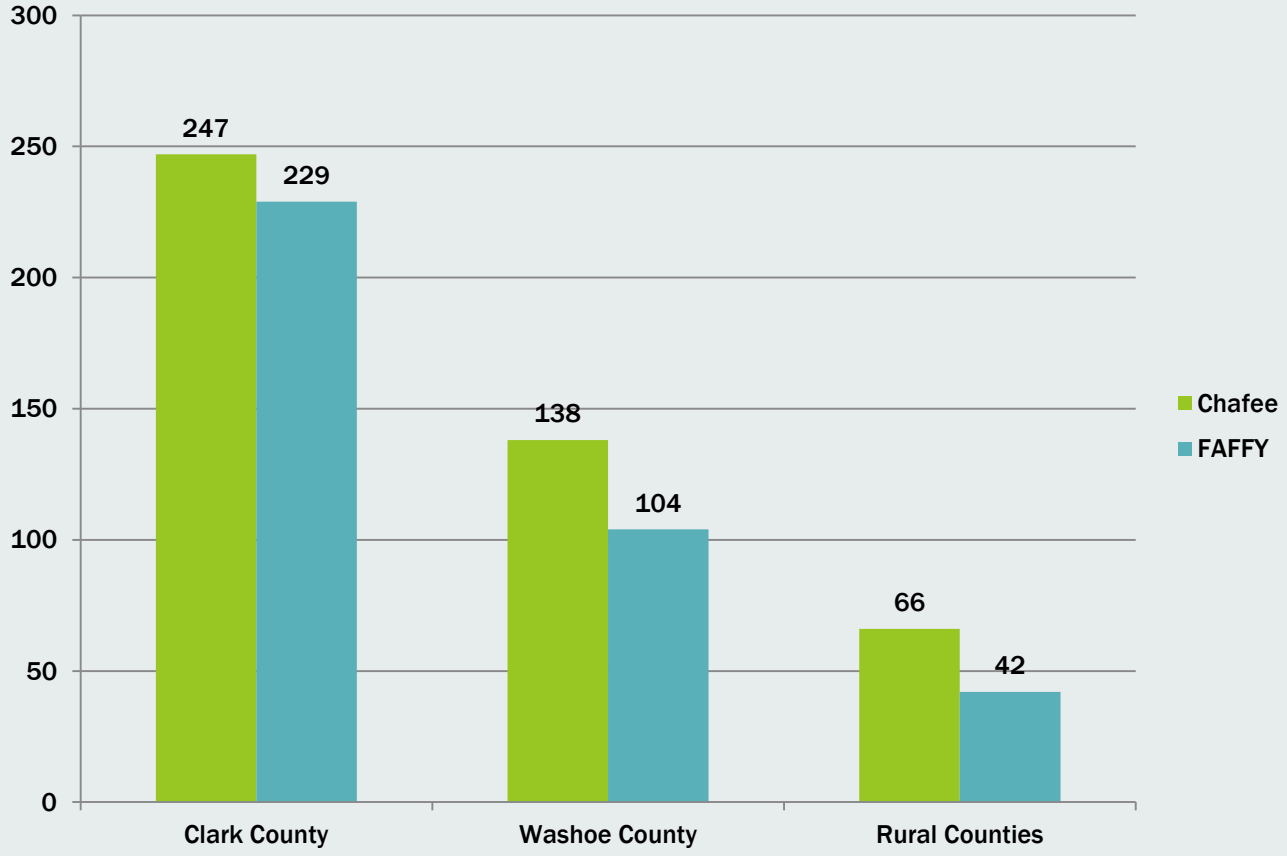
- The goal of Nevada's Independent Living Program (IL) is to prepare young adults for the transition to adulthood and to provide opportunities to obtain the skills necessary for self sufficiency.

- Independent Living, is not only a placement option, but also a set of services specifically designed around the needs of each youth in the program.

- Services provided are funded through two federal grants (the Chafee Independent Living (P.L. 106-169) and the Educational and Training Voucher Grants) and revenue generated from fees collected on the recording of documents.

- Additional funds for this population are made available through the fee based account, Funds to Assist Former Foster Youth (FAFFY), which is based on fees collected from an additional fee added to recorded documents in Nevada.

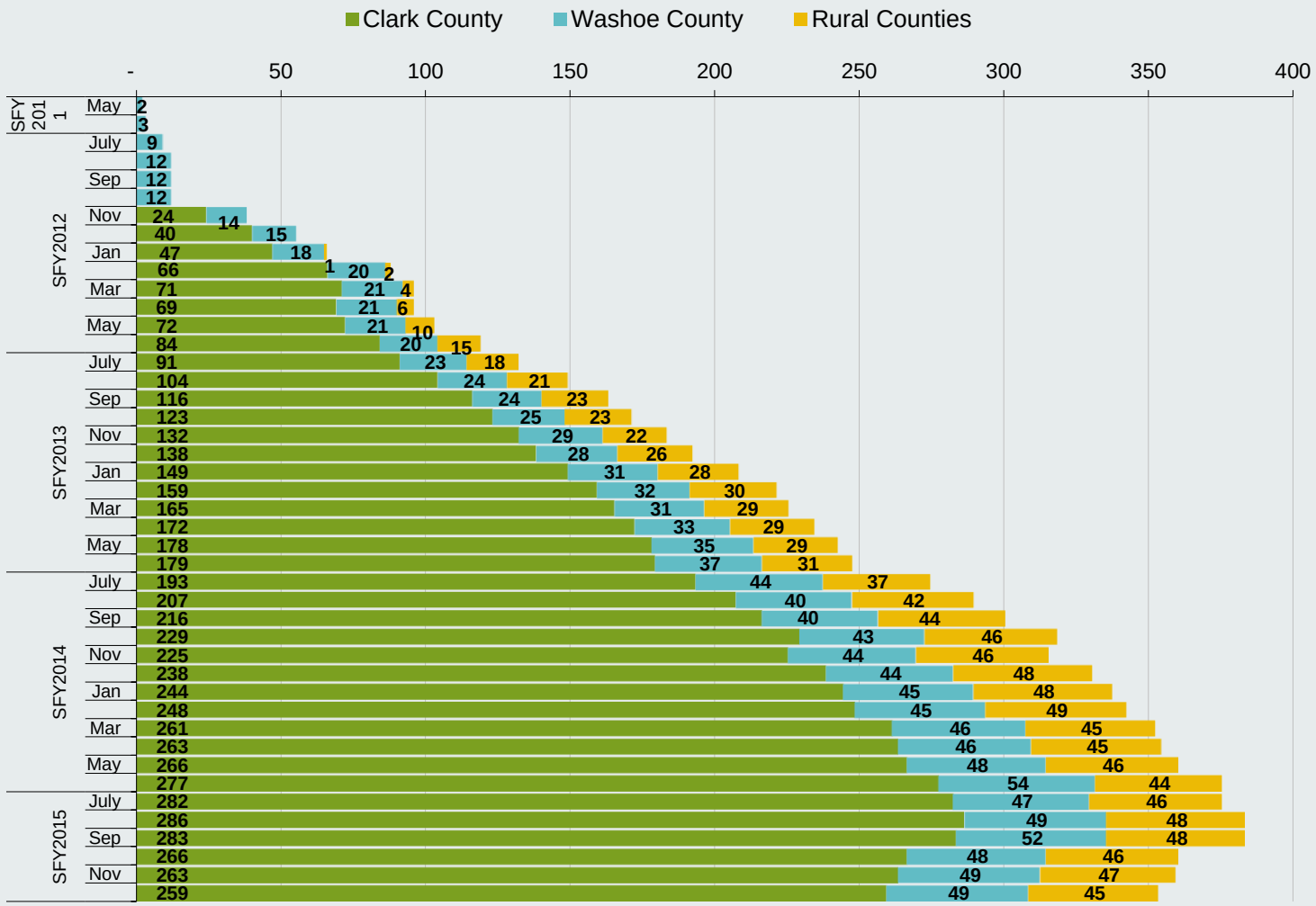
YOUTH SERVED WITH CHAFEE AND FAFFY



COURT JURISDICTION

- During the 2011 legislative session Assembly Bill 350 was passed.
- Created an opportunity for youth aging out of foster care to have additional supports to support successful transition to adulthood.
- Financial Assistance
- Case Management Support
- Youth may opt-in to this program, and have access to funds equal to the state foster care rate until age 21.
- Youth are required to comply with a transition plan and make positive steps towards self sufficiency to remain in the program.

NUMBER OF FOSTER YOUTH REMAINING UNDER COURT JURISDICTION AFTER AGE 18



CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (CFSR)

- Provides an opportunity to review, analyze and improve internal child welfare policies and practices.
- Ensures compliance and conformity with the requirements of Title IV-B and Title IV-E of the Social Security Act and regulations identified by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.
- CFSR is provides a review of data that shows a states performance on achieving outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being of children in care
- Conducted every five years, review teams assesses:
  - Child Protective Services
  - Foster Care
  - Adoption
  - Family Preservation and Family Support
  - Independent Living
- Due to national concerns about the reliability and validity of the data gleaned from the CFSR process, changes to the CFSR process were made for round three of the CFSR.

CFSR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- 36 items related to Safety, Permanency and Well Being

  18 Outcome performance indicators which include, but are not limited to:
  - Whether children under the care of the State are protected from abuse and neglect
  - Whether children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate
  - Whether children have permanency and stability in their living conditions
  - Whether the continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children
  - Whether families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs
  - Whether children receive appropriate and adequate services to meet their educational, physical, and mental health needs

- 18 Systemic factors measured by the CFSR include, but are not limited to:
  - The effectiveness of the State's systems for child welfare information, case review, and quality assurance
  - Training of child welfare staff, parents, and other stakeholders
  - The array of services that support children and families
  - The agency's responsiveness to the community
  - Foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention

NEVADA CFSR UPDATE

- The second Child and Family Services Review was conducted in 2009, the first was in 2004. As all states, each time Nevada was placed on a two year Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address the areas needing improvement that were found in the CFSR.

- The PIP was implemented on December 1, 2010 with a focus on 5 primary strategies to enhance child welfare practices:
  - Assessment of safety practices throughout the life of a case
  - Preserving connections and strengthening relationships
  - Improve timeliness and appropriateness of permanency planning
  - Strengthen child welfare supervision and middle management skills
  - Expand service options and create flexibility for services to meet the needs of children and families

- The Program Improvement Plan (PIP) from the 2009 CFSR was approved by the Administrator for Children and Families (ACF) in February 2013 for all case related data indicators.

- Nevada remained on a PIP for one of the National Data Standards "Abuse in Care", until 2014. Nevada achieved the negotiated target for this National Standard in 2014 during a non-overlapping PIP performance.

- Round 3 for all states begins in 2015 and Nevada's CFSR is scheduled to be conducted in 2018.

- Nevada's CFSR, PIP performance and other Annual Reports can be located on the DCFS website: http://www.dcfs.nv.gov/Tips/Reports/Annual/

CFSR RESULTS AND DATA INDICATORS

Outcomes	Items	2010 Baseline	Target	Status Quarter
Safety 1	1. Timelines of investigations	76.19	80.4	81.0(8)
Safety 2	3. Services to protected children in home	70.45	74.9	76.1(4)
	4. Risk of harm	48.39	52.5	54.8(4)
Permanency 1	7. Permanency goal for child	57.14	62	61.9(8)
	10. Other planned living arrangement	50	61.3	62.5(4)
Well-Being 1	17. Needs/services of child, parent and foster parents	41.94	46	46.8(4)
	18. Child/family involvement in case planning	44.07	48.2	54.2(4)
	19. Caseworker visits with child	56.45	60.5	71.0(7)
	20. Caseworker visits with parents	45.28	49.7	50.9(7)

National Standard Indicators	Standard	NSI at 2009 CFSR	Initial AAI	FFY Met
S1-Absence of maltreatment	94.6	93.6	94.2	95.1/2008
S2- Absence of child abuse and neglect in foster care	99.68	99.61	99.64	99.66% 2014
P1- Timeliness and permanency of reunification	122.6	153	N/A	153/2009
P2- Timeliness of Adoptions	106.4	82.8	83.1	84.7/2009
P3- Timeliness for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time	121.7	120.3	123.7	132.3/2008
P4- Placement stability	101.5	83.1	85.6	86.6/2009

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Program Improvement Plan (PIP) was approved by the Administration for Children and Families, in January 2013. In March 2014 Nevada submitted its final data report on the national standards and passed the final data indicator!
- Nevada developed and submitted our 5 year strategic plan for 2015-2019, the Child and Family Services Plan
- Nevada Administrative Code 424 was finalized and enrolled
- Nevada submitted a Title IV-E waiver project on behalf of Clark County and it was approved by the Administration for Children and Families.
- Successfully passed the Federal IV-E compliance review.
- SAFE model is now statewide.
- QPI is now statewide.

QUESTIONS?

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