



state fact sheet

ARKANSAS

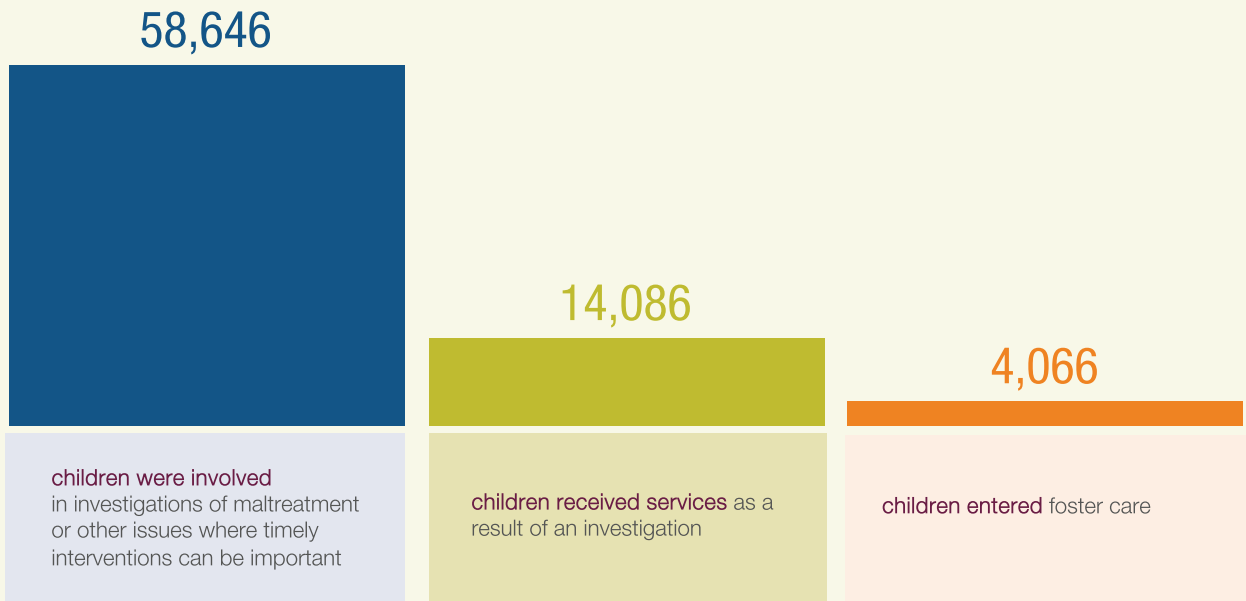
Casey Family Programs works in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and two territories and with more than a dozen tribal nations to safely reduce the need for foster care and build Communities of Hope for children and families. From 2008 through 2018, Casey Family Programs will have invested **\$1.1 million** in Arkansas to support the work of the child welfare system, courts, policymakers and organizations that support children and families.

Approximately 3.5 million children across the country were involved in an investigation or alternative response for maltreatment in 2016. About 422,000 children under the age of 18 currently live in foster care. To truly transform the child welfare system in America, we should make more effective investments at the federal, state and local level to support programs that keep children safe from harm, safely reduce the need for foster care and produce better outcomes for children and their families.



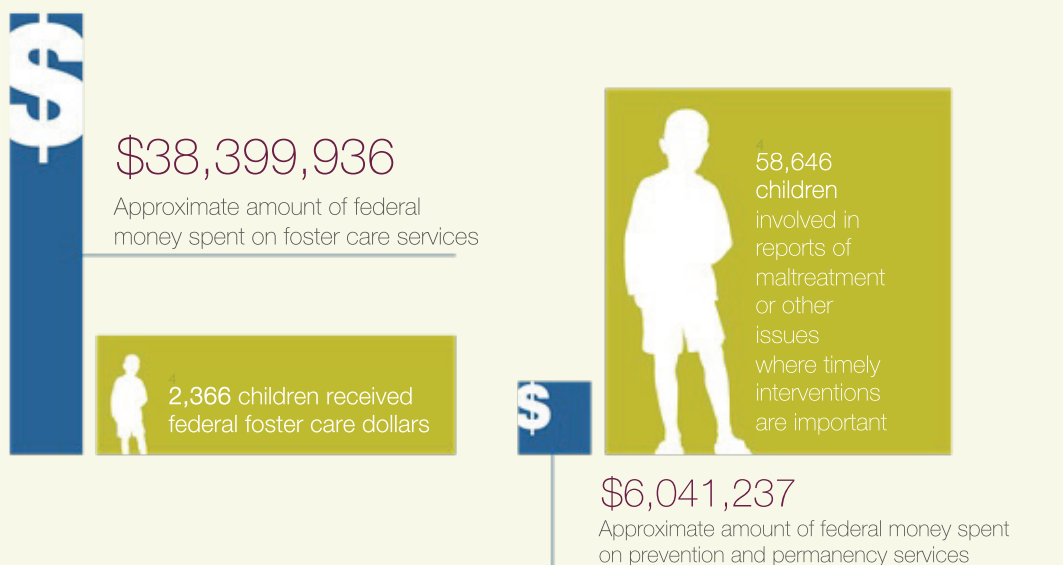
We talk about a “foster care system,” but the goal is to prevent abuse and neglect and help every child grow up safely in his or her own family whenever possible. Rather than waiting for maltreatment to occur, we can improve the safety of children who have come to the attention of child protective services by helping their families with evidence-based and promising practices.

Across **Arkansas** in 2016, approximately:



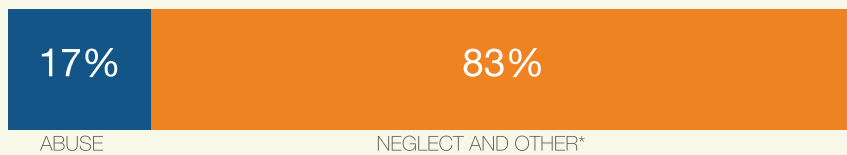
Most states currently use the bulk of the \$7.3 billion in dedicated federal child welfare funding only for services related to foster care. The Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 provides states with the historic opportunity to invest federal funding to support up-front services including substance abuse, mental health and parental skills training. States can now begin to rebalance their investments and shift their focus from foster care services for some children to prevention and permanency services for all children.

How federal child welfare funding is currently aligned in **Arkansas**:

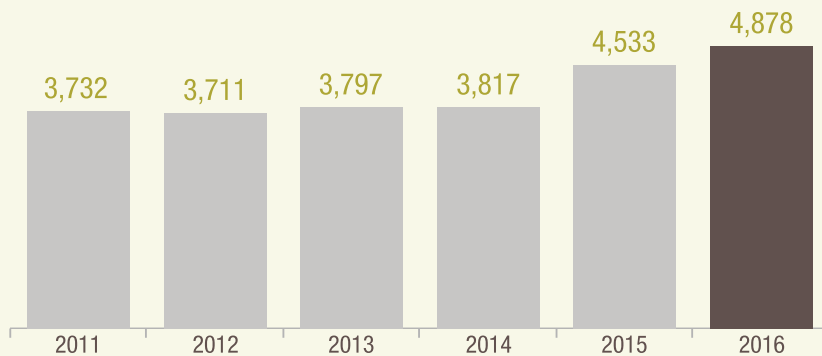


Safety and effective response go hand in hand. Most children enter foster care due to neglect and other reasons — not because of physical or sexual abuse. In Arkansas, providing targeted and effective interventions as soon as possible can safely prevent the need for foster care and better ensure that children who suffer any kind of maltreatment are not harmed again.

Reasons children in Arkansas enter foster care:



Children under age 18 living in foster care in Arkansas:
(as of September 30 of each year)



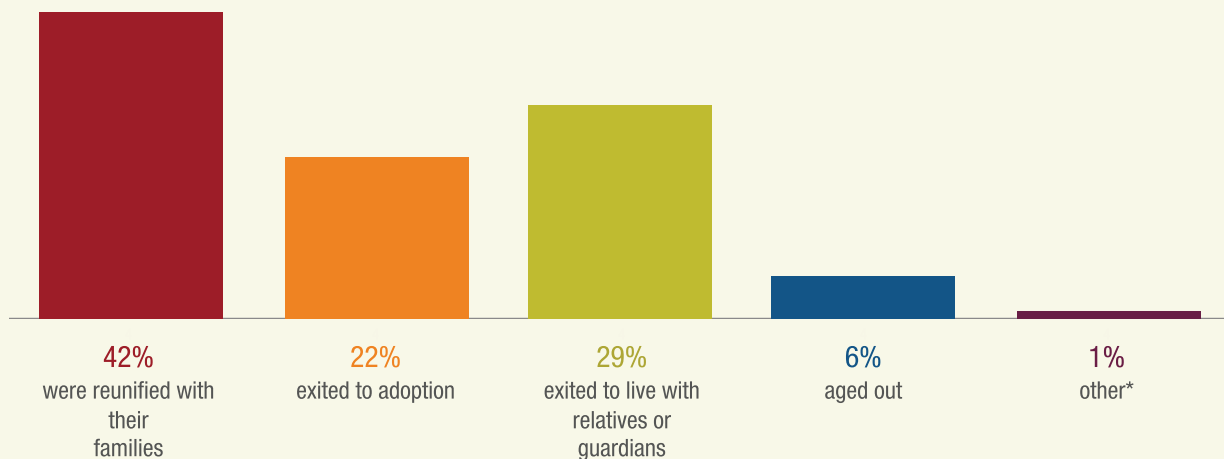
* "Other" includes parental substance abuse, child substance abuse, child disability, child behavior problems, parent death, parent incarceration, caretaker inability to cope, relinquishment or inadequate housing.

95% of children in Arkansas do not experience a repeat occurrence of maltreatment within six months

keeping children safe

What happens to children who end up in foster care? Most are safely reunited with their own parent or extended family. A significant number are adopted. Communities across America have shown that they can help more children to grow up in safe, stable families by providing appropriate and timely services prior to the need for removal, or after they return home or have been adopted.

Among children in Arkansas who exited foster care in 2016:



* "Other" includes transferred to another agency, ran away or died. Numbers may not equal 100% due to rounding.

everyone deserves a lifelong family

Progress in Arkansas and new opportunity

Arkansas has received a waiver to invest federal dollars in innovative ways to reduce child abuse and neglect. These federal demonstration projects, which are scheduled to expire in 2019, have allowed states to use funds previously allocated to foster care to implement innovative and evidence-based strategies so children can grow up happy, healthy and strong.

The specific challenges facing children and families differ from state to state. In Arkansas, the waiver program is designed to:

- Prevent foster care entry
- Increase permanency
- Prevent short stays in placement ("short stayers")
- Improve placement stability

To achieve these goals, Arkansas is implementing the following types of interventions:

- Clinical/functional assessments
- Family-centered case-management models
- Permanency roundtables
- Resource/kinship family recruitment and support
- Parent education and mentoring
- Alternative/differential response

The Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 reforms how federal child welfare is financed to enable states and tribes to target services to families who are at risk of entering the child welfare system. By allowing federal reimbursement for evidence-based mental health services, substance addiction treatment, and in-home parenting skills training for birth parents, kinship providers and adoptive parents of children at risk of being placed in foster care, states have the opportunity to help vulnerable families heal, improve safety and become strong.

Source: Children's Bureau; Administration on Children, Youth and Families; Administration for Children and Families; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Summary of the Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstrations. Arlington, VA: James Bell Associates; 2016.
Available online at: www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cw_waiver_summary2016.pdf.

Updated April 2018

This report is based on *Child Maltreatment 2016* and 2016 data made available by the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN), including the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS).

Check with state officials for the most up-to-date data.



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