



state fact sheet

# NEW JERSEY

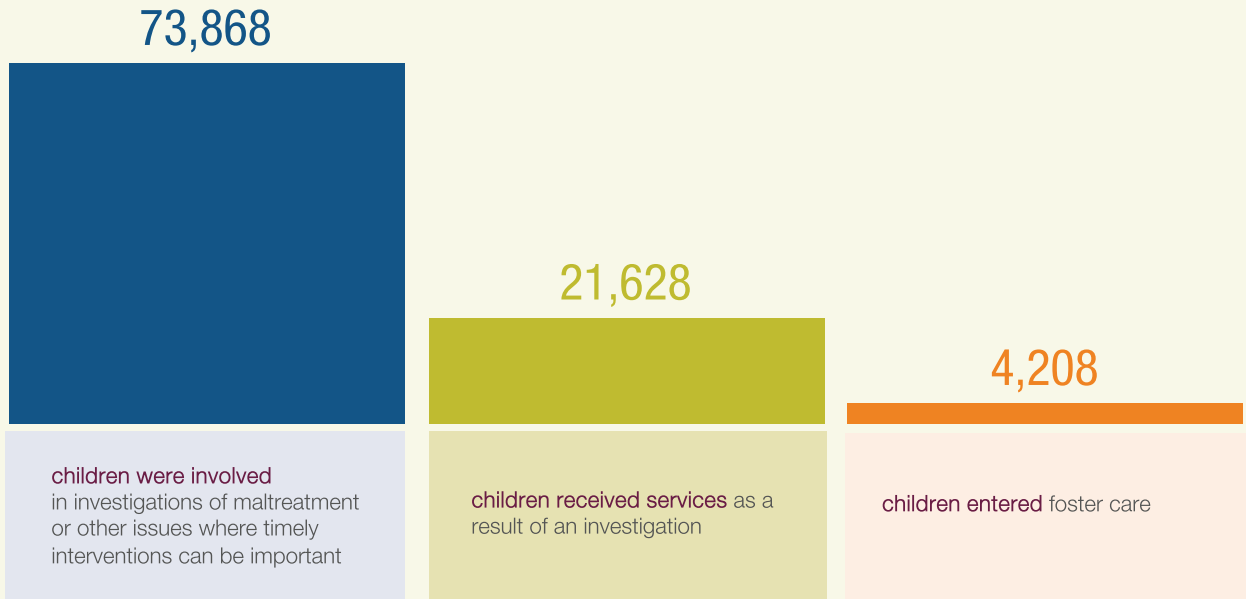
Casey Family Programs works in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and two territories and with more than a dozen tribal nations to safely reduce the need for foster care and build Communities of Hope for children and families. From 2008 through 2018, Casey Family Programs will have invested **\$4.1 million** in New Jersey 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.



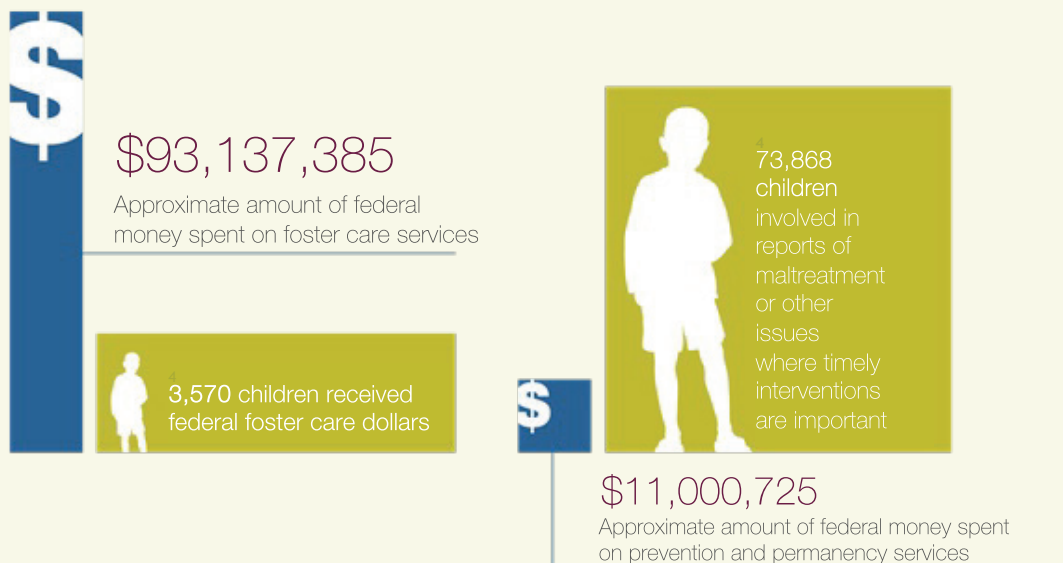
We talk about a “foster care system,” but the goal is to prevent abuse and neglect and help every child grow up safely in his or her own family whenever possible. Rather than waiting for maltreatment to occur, we can improve the safety of children who have come to the attention of child protective services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

Across **New Jersey** in 2016, approximately:



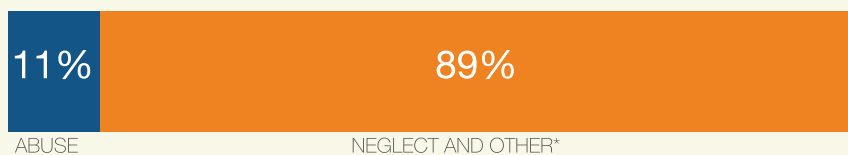
Most states currently use the bulk of the \$7.3 billion in dedicated federal child welfare funding only for services related to foster care. The Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 provides states with the historic opportunity to invest federal funding to support up-front services including 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 **New Jersey**:

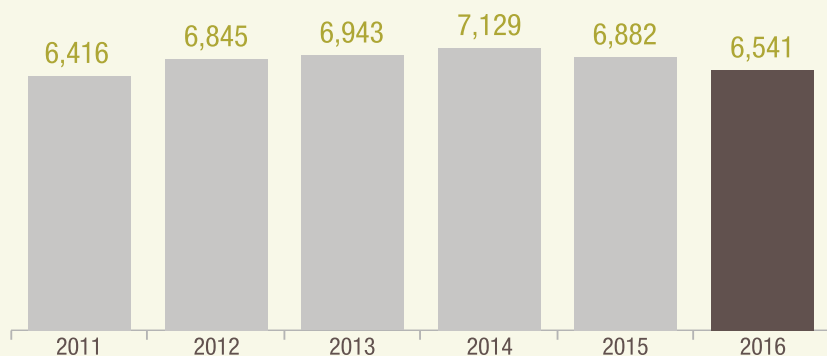


Safety and effective response go hand in hand. Most children enter foster care due to neglect and other reasons — not because of physical or sexual abuse. In New Jersey, providing targeted and effective interventions as soon as possible can safely prevent the need for foster care and better ensure that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

Reasons children in New Jersey enter foster care:



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



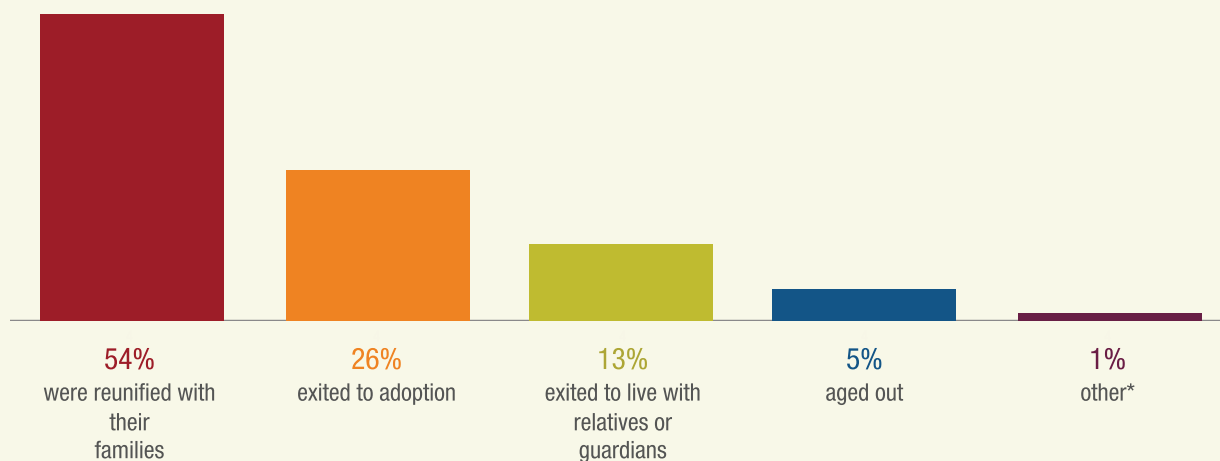
\* "Other" includes parental substance abuse, child substance abuse, child disability, child behavior problems, parent death, parent incarceration, caretaker inability to cope, relinquishment or inadequate housing.

96% of children in New Jersey 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 New Jersey 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 New Jersey and new opportunity

Since our founding in 1966, Casey Family Programs has invested more than \$2.7 billion to help communities across America keep children safe, make families strong and build Communities of Hope.

We partner with public child welfare systems, courts, policymakers, families, businesses, faith-based organizations, tribes and others to help better prevent abuse and neglect and support stable, lifelong families for all children.

Casey Family Programs operates 16 offices across the United States to provide and improve — and ultimately prevent the need for — foster care.

We believe this work is making a meaningful improvement to the lives of children and families in New Jersey. It is critical that Congress and the federal government continue to enable states like New Jersey to make smart investments that effectively address the needs of communities' vulnerable children and their families.

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.

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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