Keeping Families Together Act

Effective July 1, 2023

Quarterly Data Update

January 2026

www.dcyf.wa.gov

Washington State Department of CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

After two years of updates, this is the final-stand alone data deck focused on the impact of KFTA. The July 2026 update, and subsequent data updates, will be included in the ‘Out-of-home’ tab of the OIAA Child Welfare Agency Performance Dashboard.

What we're seeing:

- The law is meeting the intended impact of reducing removals
- We are not removing as many children at high risk of future encounters with child welfare, and those children are more likely to remain with their families and communities.
- Internal reviews of Safe Child Consultations indicate that we are taking additional steps to prevent removal of a child and to support a safety plan for the family
- The overlap between 1227 and Plan of Safe Care is reducing screened in intakes involving substance-exposed newborns
- Fentanyl crisis leaves many children at risk
- A lack of SUD treatment services and other community-based supports for families places children at further risk

Long-term trends:

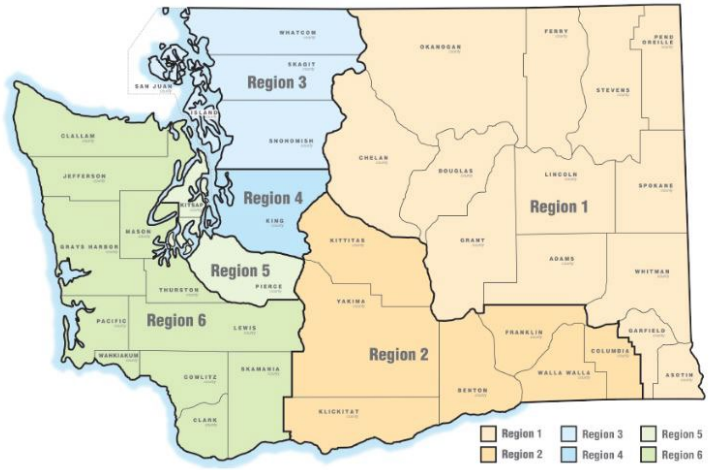
- Between state fiscal year (SFY) 2018 and the implementation of HB1227 at the end of SFY2023, Washington saw a 35.6% decrease in the number of children in out of home care (point in time). This trend is largely consistent with the national trends on children in out of home care.
- Since 2020, DCYF has seen an increasing percentage of moderately high to high-risk cases being re-referred to CPS intake and screening-in (within 90 days of the completion of the risk assessment.)
- Since 2019, opioid-related emergencies have dramatically increased for the entire population (both adults and children) in Washington.

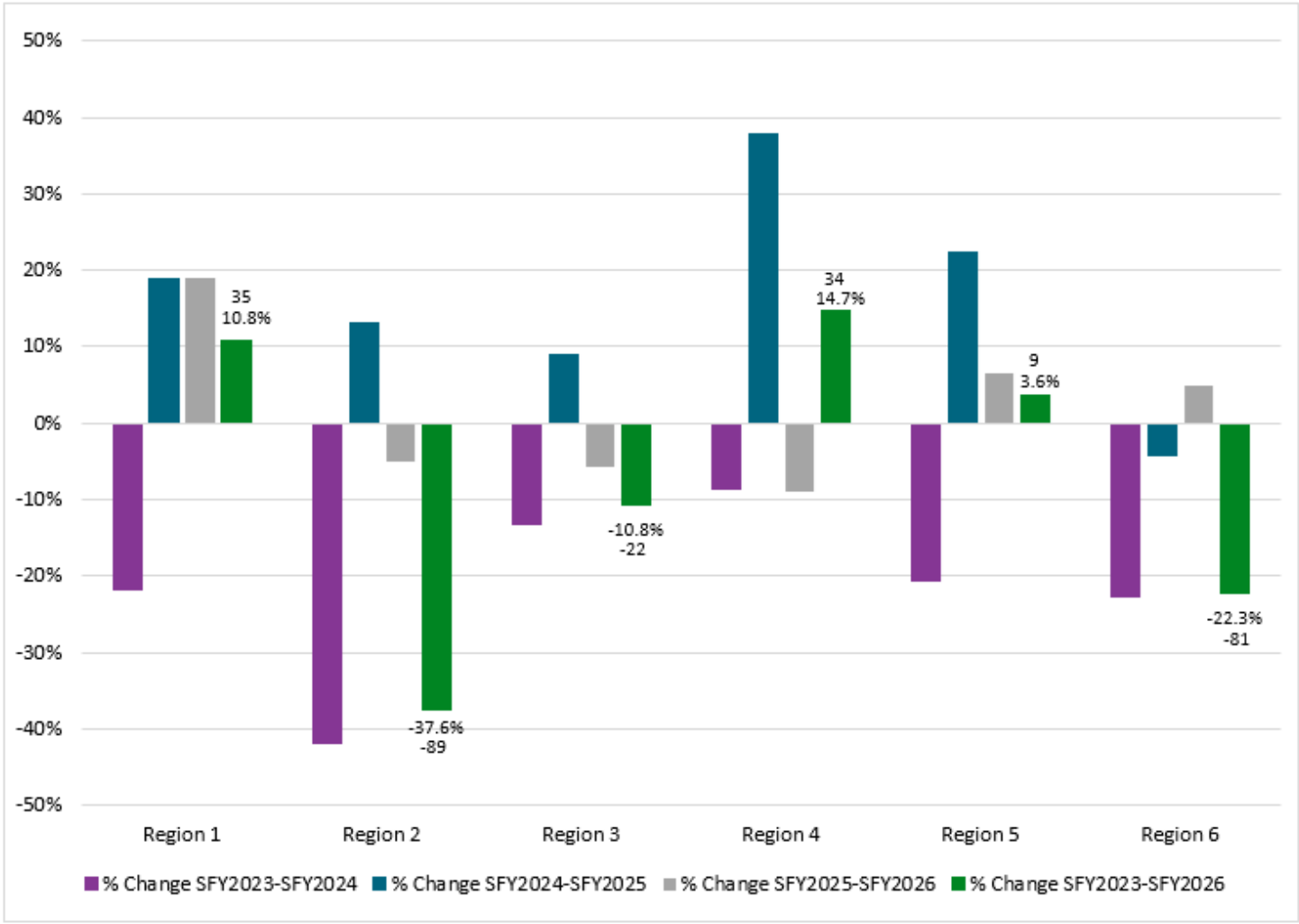
Entries into care have decreased by 7.8% since the new law went into effect

SFY2023-2026 Percent Change in Children Entering Care by Region, First Half of Years (July 1-December 31)

Statewide:

- Whatcom has shown almost 40% reduction in removals since 7/1/23
- King County is removing a higher percentage of children showing an 18.3% increase since the same time period in SFY 2023.





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[1]2026 estimate adjusted for known data lag, observed 2026 count=1,492
DCYF OIAA (January 2026). CW Reporting Portal, Out of Home Exits and Entries [July 2022-December 2025].

While entries into care have increased since last year, they continue to be lower than before the Keeping Families Together Act was implemented. Families served through FVS continue to increase.

All Entries Into Care

	July 1 - Dec 31, 2022	July 1 - Dec 31, 2023	July 1 - Dec 31, 2024	July 1 - Dec 31, 2025
Voluntary Placements	272	259	214	260
Protective Custodies	789	679	776	787
Court Approved Placements	560	328	476	449
TOTAL REMOVALS	**1,621**	**1,266**	**1,466**	**1,496**

Cases Receiving Services

Family Voluntary Services	**1,047**	**1,174**	**1,257**	**1,662**

* Family Voluntary Services identifies the distinct count of families served by FVS during the time frame identified

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DCYF OIAA (January 2026). CW Reporting Portal,
Out of Home Exits and Entries and CW Assignment Report
[July 2022-Dec 2025]

The largest number of reductions in out of home placement entries are among infants

Total Fewer Children Entering Care by Age Group

July 1 – Dec 31, 2022, compared to July 1 – Dec 31, 2025

	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
Age 0-1	-143	-24.4%
Age 2-3	3	1.7%
Age 4-11	42	8.2%
Age 12-17	-29	-8.5%

Number identifies the change in children entering care for this period, since SFY 2023
Percentage identifies the reduction seen in this age group for this period, since SFY 2023

Observed, *not* adjusted for data lag
DCYF OIAA (January 2026), CW Reporting Portal,
Out of Home Exits and Entries
[July 2022-December 2025]

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