



# Region 7 Profile December 2022



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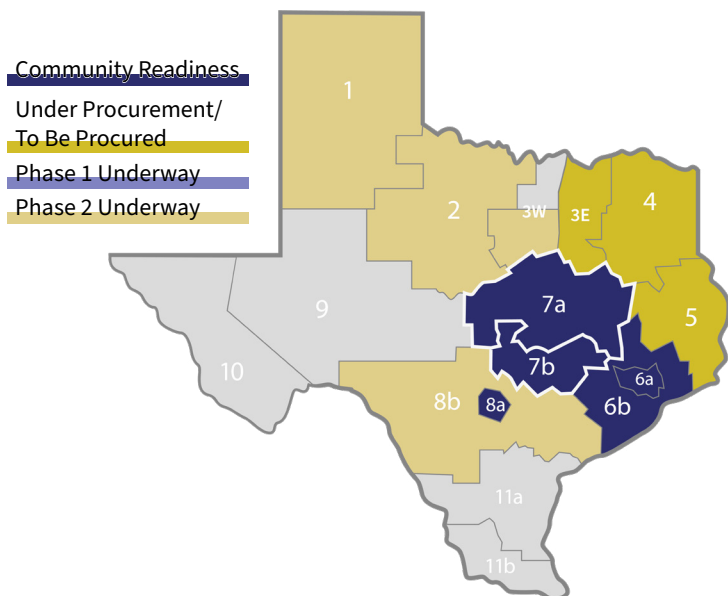
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The child welfare system in Texas is undergoing a fundamental shift in its service delivery model for children in foster care. In this new model, Community Based Care (CBC), responsibility lies with a local nonprofit or local governmental entity (known as a Single Source Continuum Contractor or SSCC) for developing foster care capacity, building a network of service providers, engaging the community, foster care placement services, and coordinating and delivering services to children in foster care and their families.

Four regions of Texas are currently implementing Community Based Care (CBC), with three more anticipated to be under contract soon. Region 7, located in Central Texas, is comprised of 30 counties, both urban and rural communities, surrounding the Austin-Waco area. The region is currently operating under the Department of Family and Protective Services legacy system and is in the planning phases for Community-Based Care (CBC). Although there is not a specific time frame for when a contract for Community Based Care will be established for Region 7, the State Implementation Plan calls for full roll-out by Fiscal Year 2029. The Office of Community Based Care Transitions recently posted guidelines for organizations to submit unsolicited proposals for Single Source Continuum Contracts in regions that do not have active contracts.



For planning and implementation, Region 7 is divided into two catchment areas:

**Catchment 7a:** Central Texas/Waco, includes the following 20 counties: Bell, Bosque, Brazos, Coryell, Falls, Freestone, Grimes, Hamilton, Hill, Lampasas, Leon, Limestone, Llano, Madison, McLennan, Milam, Mills, Robertson, San Saba, Williamson.

**Catchment 7b:** Capital Area, includes the following 10 counties: Bastrop, Blanco, Burleson, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Travis, Washington.

In 2021, Region 7 had a total population of 3,662,025, divided almost equally between 7a and 7b. Over 35% of the region's residents live in Travis County, the 5th largest county in the state. The population growth in Central Texas has been steady, with a 20% increase since 2012.

Using data made available by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), this community profile provides insights about children and families who are involved with the child welfare system. This profile reflects data available at the time of publication<sup>1</sup> and is intended to inform a region-wide conversation about how to address the needs of children and families involved or at risk of being involved in the child welfare system while concurrently preparing to implement Community Based Care in Region 7.

<sup>1</sup> Data in this report reflects the most recent publicly available information as of August 2022. The most recent data available varies by source.

## REGION 7 HIGHLIGHTS

### Region 7 has some of the highest maltreatment risks in the state

Although, there are substantial risk disparities within counties that are largely driven by income, poverty, education, and access, among other factors, over half of the counties in the region have high maltreatment risk for at least one age group compared to the rest of the state. Whether it be regional, county level, or by neighborhood, understanding the children and families we serve in our communities is essential for improving child outcomes and preparing for Community-Based Care. Preventing the underlying risks for child maltreatment will take coordinated efforts between community and state-level partners.

### Substantiated cases of abuse are declining

In Region 7 and across the state, the percentage of completed investigations closed with a substantiated reason to believe (RTB) disposition has been decreasing over the past couple of years. In fiscal year 2022, Region 7 had 19 percent fewer investigations with an RTB than in 2020. This is potentially driven by the legislative changes in the definition of neglect, requiring an increased threshold of evidence that actions or omissions involved “blatant disregard” and resulted in harm or immediate danger to a child.

FY 2022

24%, Region 7

22%, Rest of State

Although there has been a decline in the total number of substantiated cases, Region 7 has had a higher proportion of investigations that are found to have a reason to believe (RTB) abuse or neglect than the average of the rest of the state since at least 2018. In fiscal year 2022, 24 percent of investigations had an RTB disposition in Region 7, compared to 22 percent in the rest of the state. This could reflect higher incidence of maltreatment due to regional and community level risk factors, or it could reflect differences in policies and practices of Child Protective Investigations in Region 7.

### Among substantiated cases, the proportion opened for services has decreased considerably

When investigations are completed, there are three possible results, even for those where a substantiated case of abuse or neglect has been found: the case can be closed with no services, the case can be referred to in-home Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS), or the child(ren) can be removed. Over the past several years, the percentage of substantiated cases being closed with no services has been rising, with a sharp increase since fiscal year 2020.

In fiscal year 2022, nearly half of the counties in the region had higher proportions of substantiated cases closed without services than the rest of the state. The two largest counties in the region closed 78 percent (Travis) and 86 percent (Williamson) of substantiated investigations without any services, compared to 70 percent in the rest of the state.



## Fewer families are being referred to Family Based Safety Services...

In Region 7, as well as statewide, the number of investigations opened to FBSS services has sharply declined over the last couple of years. Region 7 has opened fewer proportions of investigations to FBSS than the rest of the state since at least 2018 and in fiscal year 2022, the region opened a significantly smaller proportion of cases to FBSS compared to the rest of the state.

Of all investigations in fiscal year 2022, three percent of cases in the region were opened to FBSS, nearly a  
**68% decline from 2020**

Of the 4,656 investigations in Region 7 that were substantiated with a RTB, nine percent were opened to FBSS  
**a 66% decline from fiscal year 2020**

The reductions in the cases opened to FBSS may leave families who are at significant risk for abuse/neglect without the oversight and access to services that are necessary to keep children safe. Families may receive referrals for services before an investigation is closed, but there is currently not a way to track these referrals and determine whether families are receiving the supports they need. Substance abuse, mental healthcare needs, family counseling, and financial or housing support services are some of the common

services families need. The need to provide these supports outside of the FBSS program for families who are not opened for services, increases the importance and demand of active networks and services within our communities to support our children and families, whether it be through a referral or not.

To measure the health of the system going forward, there is importance in surveillance of rates of maltreatment, tracking child fatalities both with and without previous involvement with Child Protective Services, and monitoring outcomes for families, including those being re-reported or resulting in a future removal, after either receiving FBSS or having an investigation closed without further services.

## ...And fewer children are being removed

Less children have been entering care over the last couple of years. The proportion of older youth removed has slightly decreased over the last two years, while the proportion of children ages zero to two and six to nine increased.

In fiscal year 2022, 44 percent of removals were children ages zero to two, compared to 38 percent in 2020. During this same time, all other ages, most notably youth ages 14 to 17, which dropped to 8 percent from 10 percent in 2020.

## For those children who are removed, the majority are placed in family-like settings, and many are with kin.

At the end of fiscal year 2022, most children in substitute care in Region 7 were placed with relatives or in non-relative foster homes. Throughout fiscal year 2022, the region placed nearly 57 percent of children with relatives, including both unverified and verified foster home placements, compared to the 44 percent average statewide. The percentage of kinship placements that are verified has been increasing in Region 7, and in the state, since at least fiscal year 2018.

These trends indicate that although Region 7 has higher rates of kinship placements than the rest of the state, there is continued need to strengthen relative placements and support services to provide more opportunity for children to stay connected with their family and community.

# The region, like the rest of the state, struggles to have the capacity and supports necessary to have older children stay close to home.

Teenagers in foster care with **higher service levels** are being **placed outside** of the region.

At the end of fiscal year 2022, 32 percent of children in foster care in Region 7 were placed outside of the region. Older children in foster care are more likely to be placed out of region. Of all children placed outside of the region, **54% are ages 10 or older, and an additional 19% are ages six to nine.**

Of children ages 10 or older placed outside of the region, **nearly half are in emergency shelters or residential treatment facilities.**

Older children are more likely to be in higher levels of care. **Over 40% youth ages 14 to 17 are in specialized care, or above.**

## Children of color are disproportionately represented in the region’s foster care system

African American children are radically overrepresented in substitute care across the state. The proportion of African American children in substitute care in Region 7 is more than double their proportion in the child population. According to DFPS’s Fiscal Year 2022 Disproportionality and Disparity Analysis, Travis County has the largest disparities of the seven largest counties in the state with African American children 4.6 times more likely to be reported, 5.4 times more likely to be investigated, and 7.2 times more likely to be removed than White children.

## Children are spending longer time in care and the proportion of children exiting care to family with continued care assistance is low

The catchment areas have seen different trends over the last few years. The proportion of children reunified with their families has increased in the 7a catchment over the last few years, while at the same time, the proportion of children exiting to the care of relatives has decreased. These exit types combined have made up 84 percent of exits from care in 7a since 2019.

In 7b, there have been swapping trends in family reunification and other exits to relatives, most recently with the proportion of children reunified with their families decreasing. In fiscal year 2022, 82 percent of children who exited care in this catchment were reunified with family or exited to the care of a relative.



Throughout the region, many families who accept permanent custody of a relative child or youth are doing so without continued support.

Though exits with PCA supports are low throughout the region, there are wide variations by county, which might suggest the potential impact of the court's role in exiting children from care. Chapter 5 of the Rider 15 Report **“recognizes the critical role of the courts in CBC readiness efforts and presents opportunities for involving judicial and legal stakeholders not only in early planning but every step of CBC implementation.”**

Successful relationships between caseworkers and Child Placing Agencies (CPA's), as well as informed, strong voices from local advocates can positively impact the supports children and families working towards permanency receive. Preparing families for long term stability includes **persistent advocacy, ample CPA kinship support programs, and timely planning that is equally weighted to time in care considerations.**

The data in this analysis demonstrates the need to further efforts to keep children close to home and connected to family whenever safely possible. With the significant number of children in kinship homes, there is considerable need for communities to ensure the appropriate supports are in place to create long term stability and success of these families. When it is in a child's best interest, family reunification is the intended outcome for children. Providing families with support to safely maintain children in their homes begins with prevention and continues through reunification efforts. The needs of, and access to, programs and services for children and families need to be identified, and as often as possible, offered at the local level the local level.

*“By helping to understand local capacities and strengths in family preservation, a strong and sustainable asset mapping will serve as the foundation to growing a community-based preventive model of caring for youth and families in Texas.”*

*“there is a difference between whether the resource exists and whether the resource is accessible...in some of, for some of our more rural areas, especially in our less populated areas, that becomes a question of whether it exists, and then in our more populated areas that may exist, but whether it's actually accessible, either because of funding, transportation, all kinds of things for the family, I think, is part of the challenge we find when we do the community asset mapping.”*

**- DFPS, Study of Options for Implementing Family Preservation, published October 1st, 2022.**

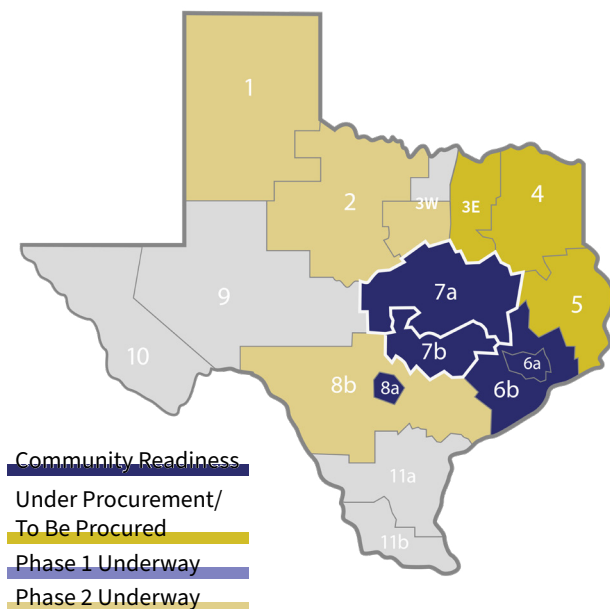
# REGION 7 COMMUNITY PROFILE

In 2019-2021, Mission Capital published a Region 7 Landscape Analysis and held community conversations to discuss how the region wanted to prepare for Community Based Care. Priority focus areas that stakeholders indicated should be pursued from that work included:

**1** Continue to consider whether there was a better way to divide the Region into catchment areas, or perhaps develop a full-region approach to implementing Community Based Care.

**2** Develop a collaborative, coordinated, and impact-focused effort designed to increase services across the region, with particular focus on supporting rural communities and expanding services and capacity for teenagers and youth with complex needs.

**3** Bring information and expertise from areas already implementing Community Based Care, both in Texas and across the country, to inform Region 7 moving forward.



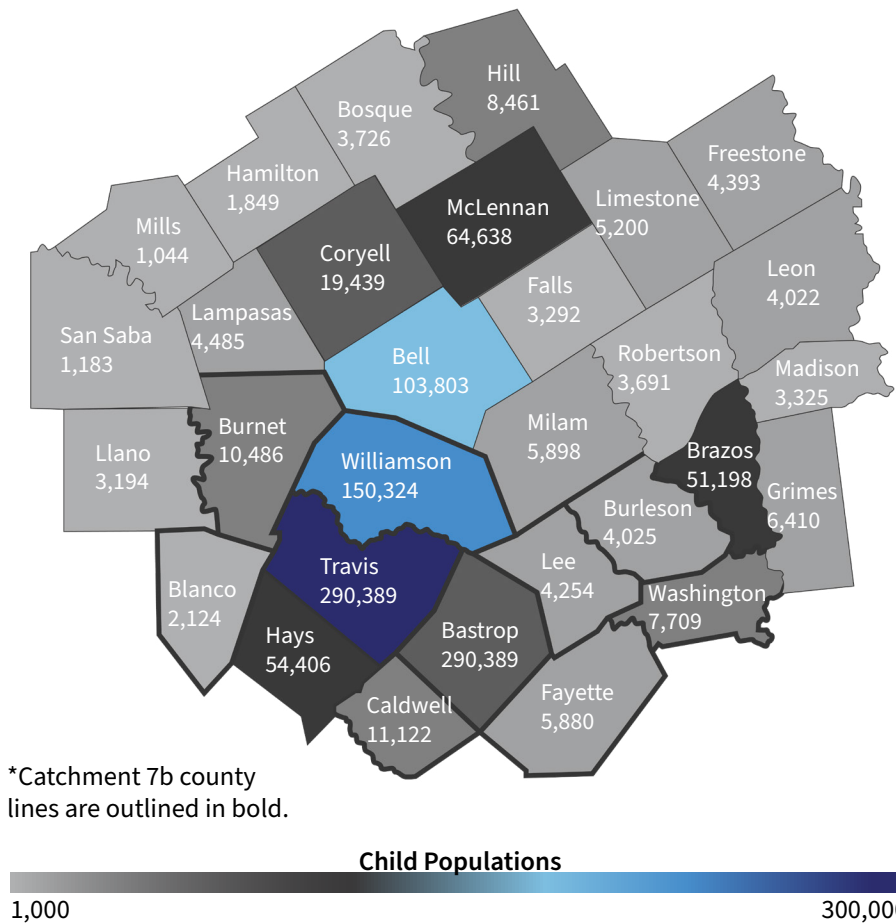
Since that time, the child welfare ecosystem has shifted dramatically, and Community Based Care has rolled out in more regions of the state. There are now four regions of Texas fully implementing Community Based Care (CBC), with three more anticipated to be under contract soon. In addition to the Region 7 work, readiness efforts have been ongoing in Regions 6, 3 and 8 – each focused on building their community’s capacity to meet the unique needs of the children and families in their area.

Although there is not a specific time frame for when a contract for Community Based Care will be established for Region 7, the State Implementation Plan calls for full roll-out by Fiscal Year 2029.

The implementation of Community Based Care is not the only significant shift in the child welfare landscape. There have been dramatic changes in the numbers of children coming into the child welfare system as well as the families that are referred to family preservation services. None of these negate the focus areas recommended by community stakeholders during the process thus far, but they do suggest it is time to take another look at the data and allow it to inform the path forward. The following sections explore trends across the continuum of child welfare involvement, from risks to exits from conservatorship, that have been occurring in the region. The information can be used to inform the ongoing community conversation on how Region 7 can best support its families and keep children safe while preparing for Community Based Care.



## REGION 7 CHILD POPULATIONS



**Over 11% of children** in the state of Texas live in Region 7<sup>2</sup>.

In 2021, the total child population of Region 7 was **860,962<sup>3</sup>**.

**Over half, 51%,** of these children reside in Travis and Williamson Counties, and an additional 34% are in Bastrop, Bell, Brazos, Hays, and McLennan counties.

The remaining 23 counties have child populations of less than 20,000.

2021 Child Population of Region 7		
African American	84,720	10%
Hispanic	346,771	40%
White	352,764	41%
Other	76,707	9%
Total	860,962	100%

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix for county level populations and child populations.

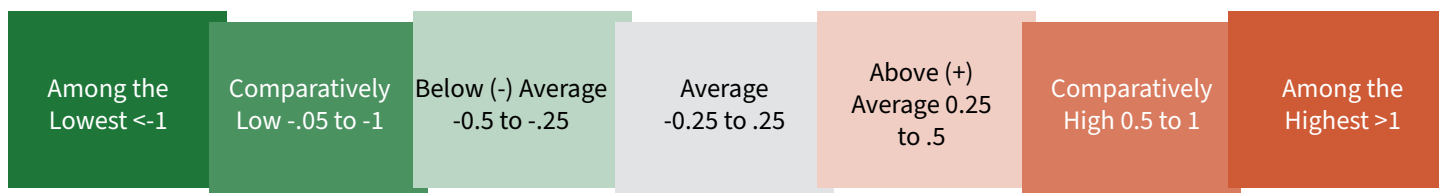
<sup>3</sup> Estimates for fiscal year 2021, last updated March 21, 2022. Includes ages 0 to 17.

[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About\\_DFPS/Data\\_Book/Child\\_Protective\\_Investigations/Populations\\_at\\_Risk.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Data_Book/Child_Protective_Investigations/Populations_at_Risk.asp)

# COMMUNITY-LEVEL MALTREATMENT RISK

The DFPS Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) division has collaborated with the University of Texas at Tyler Health Science Center to create an interactive community maltreatment risk map tool that was published in 2019. This tool provides the estimated risk of maltreatment that can be used to better understand our communities, and children at risk, across the state.

[This tool was developed](#) using statistical modeling of comprehensive community-level risk indicators to quantify maltreatment risk at the zip code and county levels throughout the state. Risk scores are broken out by age group, as risk factors for maltreatment vary by age. Some of the metrics used to calculate risk scores include, among others, health and disability indicators, low income, family poverty, community safety, employment rate, percent of children enrolled in childcare/school, and hospital visits for substance abuse and assaults. For each zip code and county in the state, a risk score is assigned in each age group. Negative risk scores indicate maltreatment risk is lower than the state average; positive risk scores indicate maltreatment risk higher than the state average. The scores are grouped into descriptive risk levels as follows<sup>4</sup>.



Region 7 has some of the highest maltreatment risk in the state. Over half of the counties in the region have comparatively high maltreatment risk for *at least* one age group. It is important to note that communities with average risk are not communities with no risk and there is no one single factor that indicates that a community has a high risk for children.

Freestone, Lampasas, Llano, and Robertson are among the highest risk for infants. Lampasas is also among the highest for ages 5-9 and Llano is among the highest for all age groups.

Within counties with the lowest maltreatment risk in the region, there are zip codes with some of the highest risk in the state. Most notably in Travis County, where the I-35 corridor divides a stark difference in children at much higher risk for maltreatment east of the interstate (78617, 78724, 78702, 78723, 78753, 78758, 78728, 78654). Additionally, zip codes within Bastrop, Hays, and Williamson counties have substantially higher risk compared to the county average (78616, 78617, 78612, 78621, 78957, 78666, 78644, 76574, 78626).

<sup>4</sup> Data are not presented for communities with small child populations as these estimates are not reliable, populated as n/a.



Region 7 Maltreatment Risk by County							
	County	Child Populations	Infants	Ages 1-4	Ages 5-9	Ages 10-14	Ages 15-17
7a	Bell	103,803	High	+Average	+Average	Average	+Average
	Bpsque	3,726	Low	-Average	-Average	Average	-Average
	Brazos	51,198	Low	-Average	Low	-Average	-Average
	Coryell	19,439	High	+Average	High	Average	High
	Falls	3,292	High	High	High	Hgh	High
	Freestone	4,393	Highest	+Average	+Average	Average	Average
	Grimes	6,410	Average	Average	Average	Average	Low
	Hamilton	1,849	n/a	High	n/a	n/a	Average
	Hill	8,461	Average	Average	Average	High	High
	Lampasas	4,485	Highest	High	Highest	Average	+Average
	Leon	4,022	+Average	Average	Average	+Average	Lowest
	Limestone	5,200	+Average	+Average	+Average	High	Average
	Llano	3,194	Highest	Highest	Highest	Highest	Highest
	Madison	3,325	High	Average	Average	Average	Low
	McLennan	64,638	High	+Average	+Average	Average	+Average
	Milam	5,898	+Average	+Average	High	+Average	+Average
	Mills	1,044	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Robertson	3,691	Highest	Average	+Average	Average	+Average
	San Saba	1,183	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Williamson	150,324	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
7b	Bastrop	20,992	Low	-Average	Average	Average	+Average
	Blanco	2,124	n/a	n/a	Low	Average	Average
	Burleson	4,052	+Average	Average	+Average	Average	Average
	Burnet	10,486	Average	Average	High	Average	+Average
	Caldwell	11,122	-Average	+Average	+Average	+Average	High
	Fayette	5,880	-Average	-Average	-Average	Low	Lowest
	Hays	54,406	Low	-Average	Low	Low	Average
	Lee	4,254	Low	Low	Low	-Average	Low
	Travis	290,389	Low	Low	Low	Low	Average
	Washington	7,709	+Average	Average	Average	Low	Low

# INTAKE AND INVESTIGATIONS

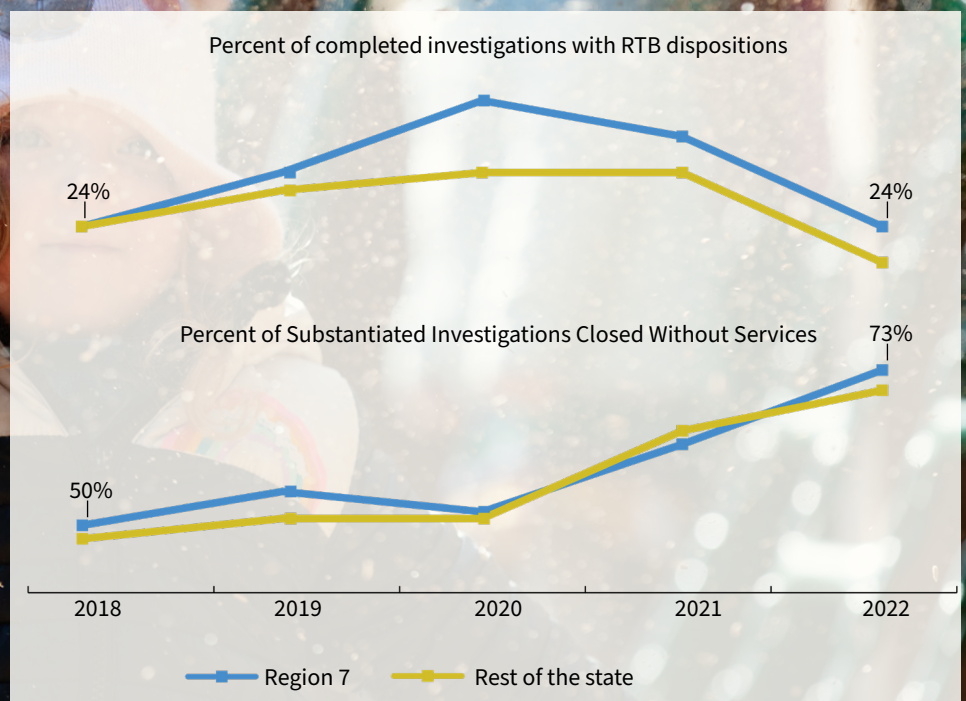
Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Years 2018- 2022

In fiscal year 2022, there were 39,450 reports of abuse and/or neglect in Region 7, 87% of which were assigned for investigation or alternative response. Among cases that were assigned, 15% were assigned as a Priority 1.

The percentage of completed investigations that were substantiated with a reason to believe (RTB) disposition has been slightly higher in Region 7 than in the rest of the state since at least 2018. This could reflect higher incidence of maltreatment due to regional and community level risk factors, or it could reflect differences in policies and practices of Child Protective Investigations in Region 7. The percentage of completed investigations with RTB dispositions has been declining in Region 7, and in the rest of the state, over the last couple of years. In fiscal year 2022, substantiation rates ranged from 14% in Bosque County to 41% in Mills County<sup>5</sup>.

When investigations are completed, cases can be closed with no services, or cases can be opened to either in-home Family Based Safety Services (FBSS) or conservatorship (CVS). Over the past several years, the percentage of substantiated cases being closed with no services has been rising, with a sharp increase since fiscal year 2020. In fiscal year 2022, the largest counties in the region, Travis and Williamson counties, had higher proportions of substantiated cases closed without services than the average in the rest of the state<sup>6</sup>.

Over the past several years, the percentage of substantiated cases being closed with no services has been rising, with a sharp increase since fiscal year 2020.



<sup>5</sup> See Appendix for completed investigations with RTB dispositions for fiscal year 2022 by county.

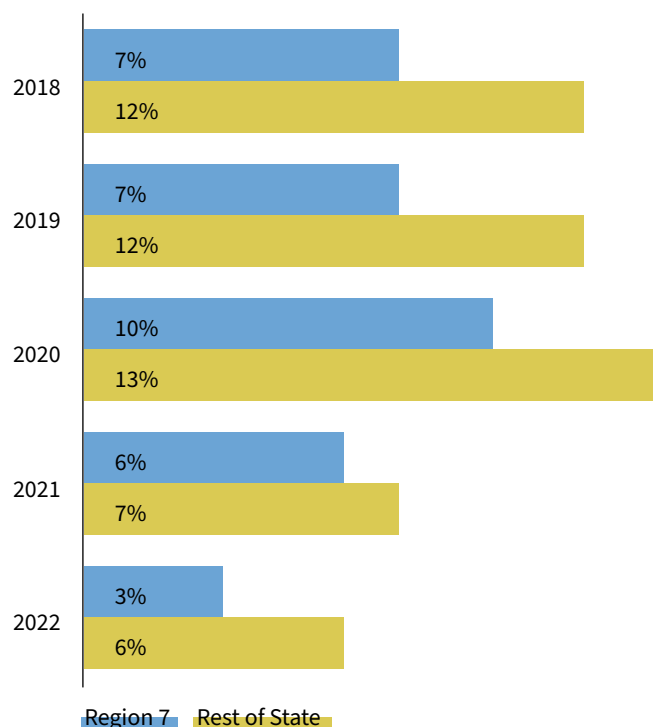
<sup>6</sup> See Appendix for substantiated cases closed without services in fiscal year 2022 by county.



# CPS SERVICES: FAMILY BASED SAFETY SERVICES AND CONSERVATORSHIP

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Years 2018- 2022 unless otherwise noted.

## Percent of all completed investigations opened to FBSS

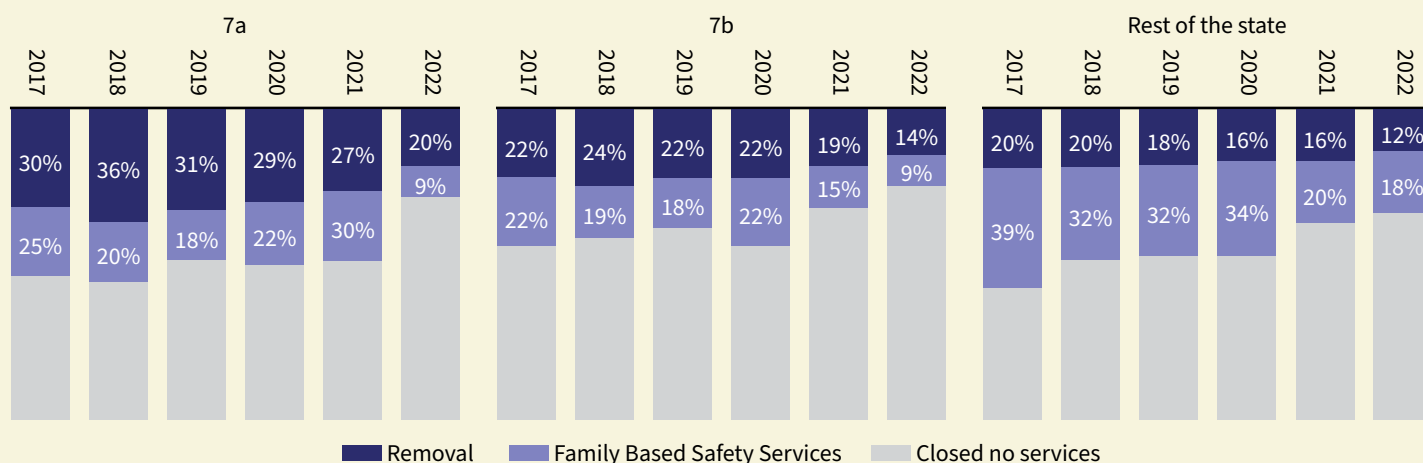


Families may be referred to Family Based Safety Services (FBSS) after a completed investigation when there are ongoing risk factors that need services but do not rise to the level of removal. FBSS provides family preservation services that focus on keeping children with their families by increasing safety and reducing risk factors for future maltreatment. Compared to the rest of the state, Region 7 has opened a lower proportion of completed investigations to FBSS since at least 2018. In both the region and the state, there has been a substantial drop in the percentage of completed investigations referred to FBSS over the last two years.

Among substantiated cases in Region 7, the proportion opened to either FBSS or conservatorship has substantially decreased in recent years. Both catchments opened similar proportions of completed investigations to FBSS in 2022, although 7a saw the most dramatic decrease from the previous fiscal year.

Within the region, there is variance seen at the county level in case actions after investigations<sup>7</sup>. In fiscal year 2022, Williamson County closed the largest proportion of cases without further support in the region.

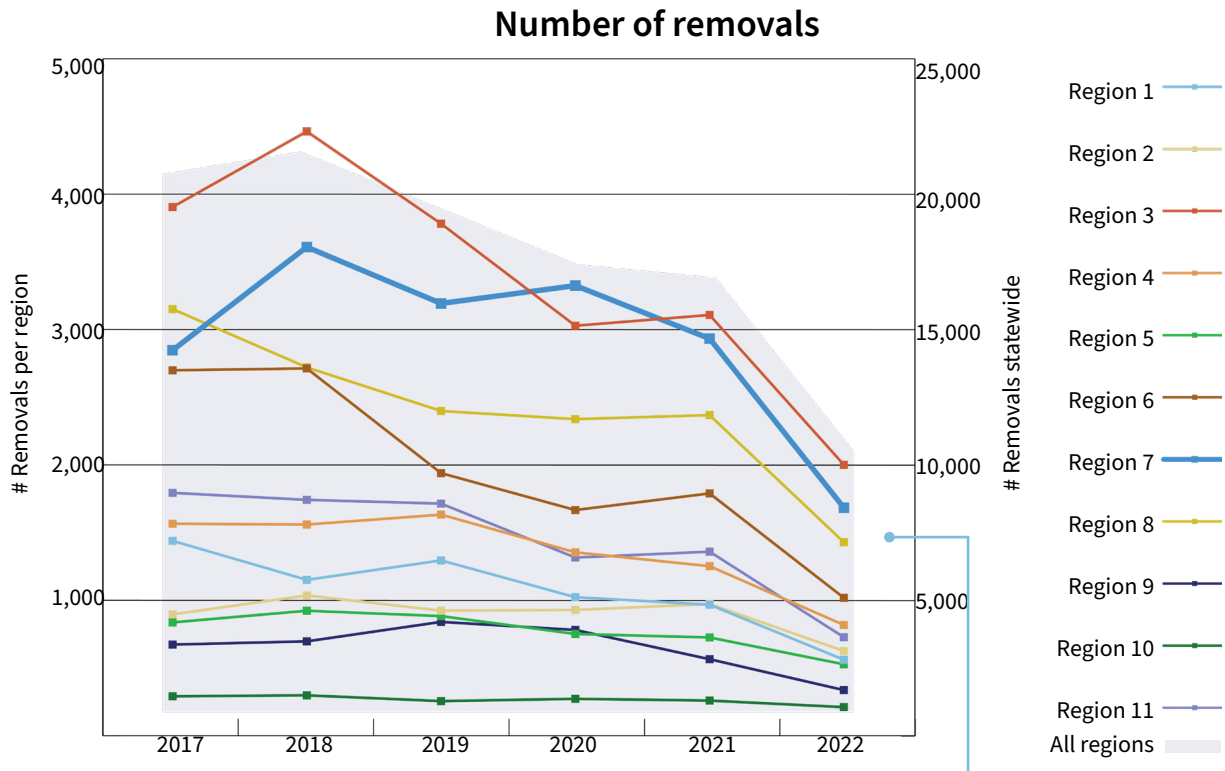
## Substantiated case actions



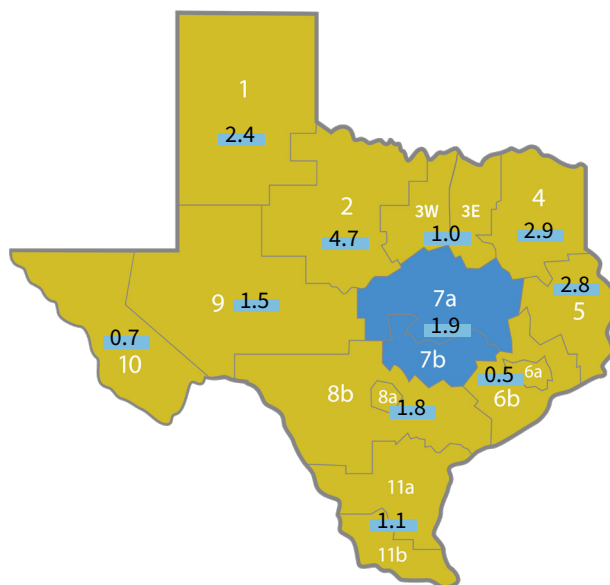
<sup>7</sup> See Appendix for substantiated case actions by county for fiscal year 2022.

# Removals

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Years 2017- 2022 unless otherwise noted.



## Rate of removal (per 1,000 children), FY 2022

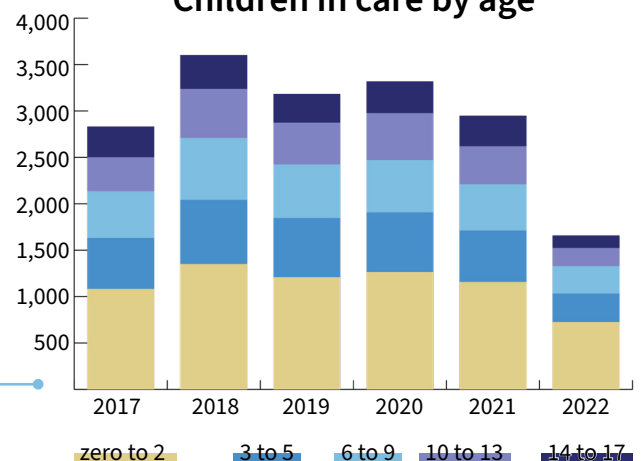


Consistent with statewide trends, removals in Region 7 have been *trending down* for several years, with a 43% decrease from last year.

In fiscal year 2022, Region 7 had the second highest number of removals and the fourth highest rate at which children are removed (number of removals per 1,000 children in the population) in the state. However, the *largest counties have the lowest rates of removals* in the region<sup>8</sup>.

The total number of children being removed from their home has been decreasing over the last few years, but the proportion of these removals that are ages zero to 2 and 6 to 9 have been slightly increasing.

## Children in care by age



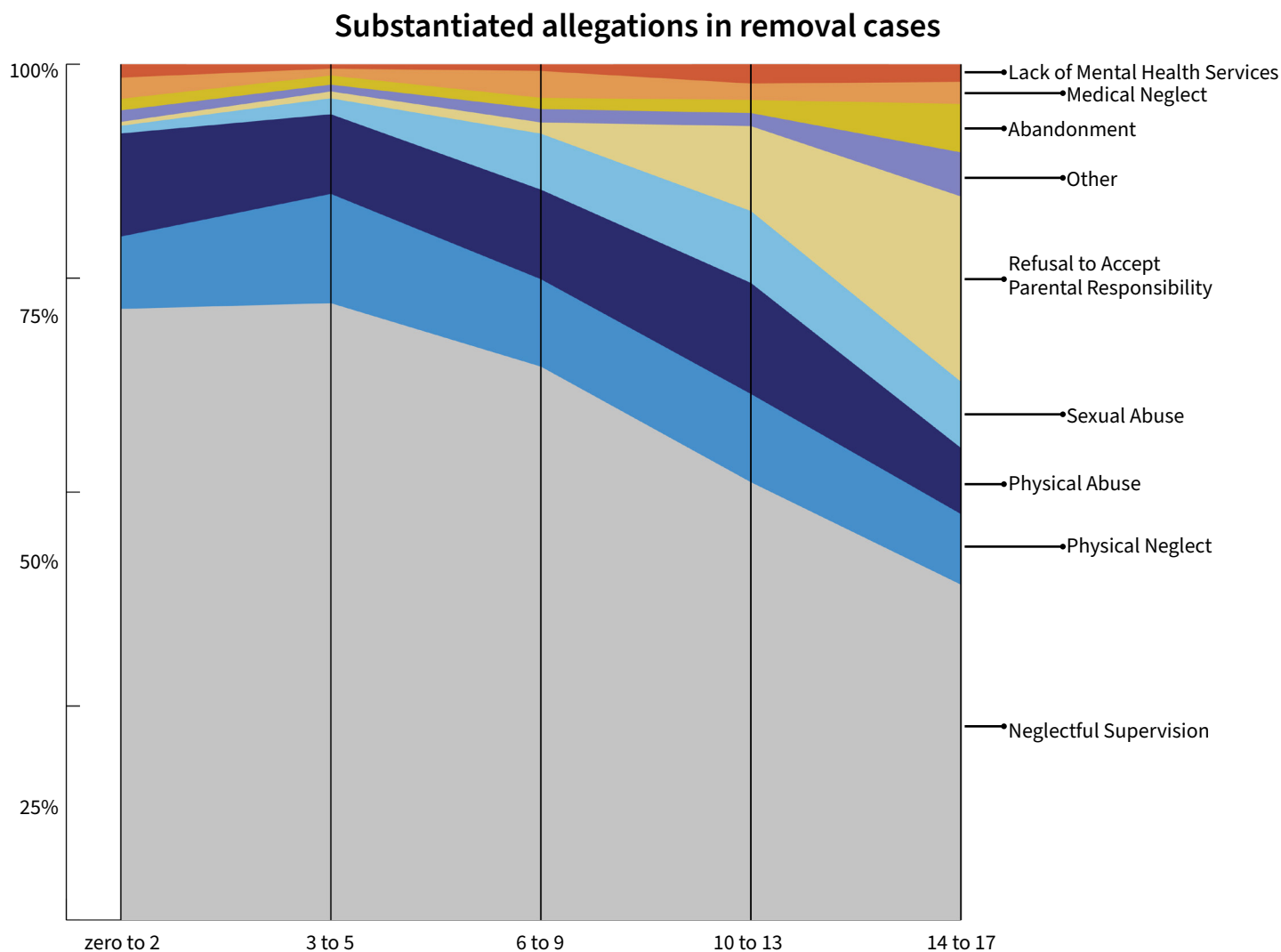
<sup>8</sup> See Appendix for fiscal year 2022 rate of removal by county.

# Reasons for Removal

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Year 2022.

For all age groups, Neglectful Supervision (NSUP) is the most common reason for removal<sup>9</sup>. In fiscal year 2022, NSUP represented 65% of substantiated allegations in Region 7 removals. The most common substantiated allegations in removal cases vary by age group.

In addition to NSUP, **physical abuse and physical neglect** are the most common allegations in younger age groups, while refusal to accept parental responsibility becomes more frequent, and physical abuse and physical neglect less frequent, in removals of older children.

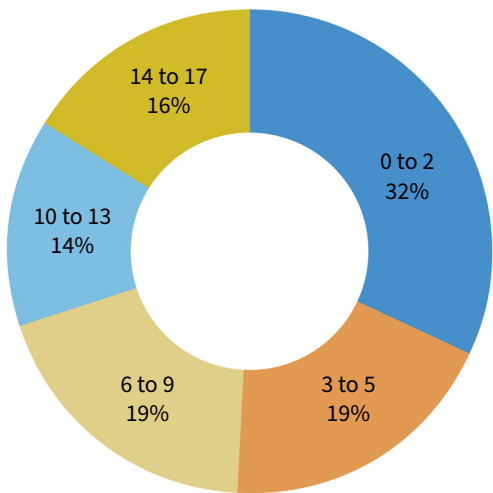


<sup>9</sup> Children can have more than one allegation, or reason for removal.

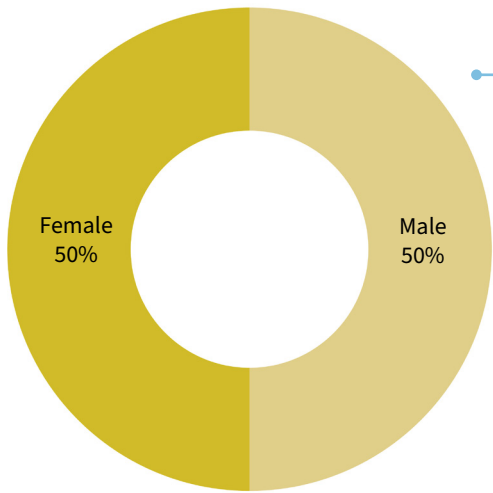


# Demographics of Children in Care

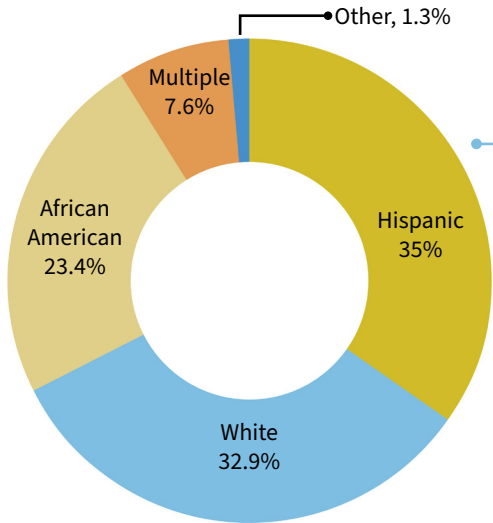
Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Year 2022 and DFPS data reports for 2021. Data is as of the last day of August 2022.



At the end August 2022, there were 3,050 children, ages 17 years or younger, in substitute care in Region 7. Just over half of the children in care are five years old or younger. This is slightly higher than the percent for this age group in the rest of the state<sup>10</sup>.

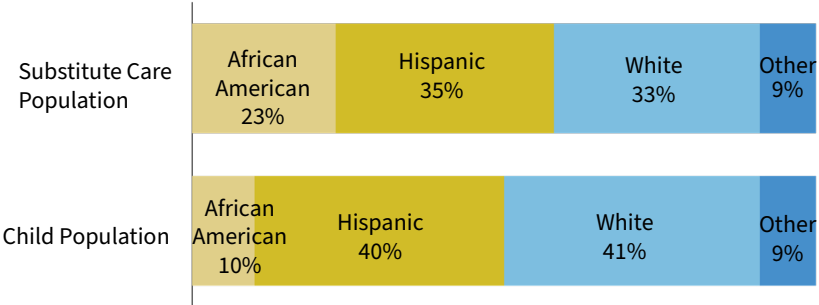


The number of males and females in substitute care is nearly equal.



The largest population of children/youth in substitute care are Hispanic.

Within the region, there are substantial differences in the racial demographics of children in care compared to the child population. African American children are radically overrepresented in substitute care. **The proportion of African American children in substitute care in Region 7 is more than double their proportion in the child population.** Latino/Hispanic children and White children are underrepresented in care compared to their respective child populations in the region.



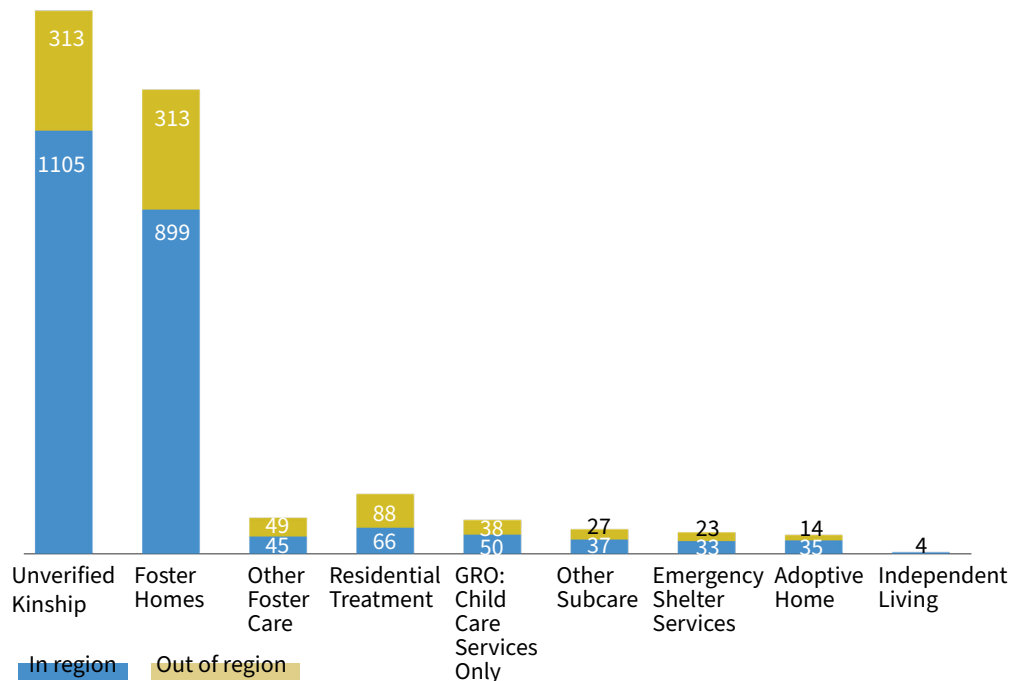
10 See Appendix for demographic data for children in substitute care in Region 7 and the rest of the state.

# Child Placements

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Year 2022. Data includes placements from the first day to the last day of August 2022.

**Over 68% of children in substitute care**  
including youths 18 years of age and older, whose legal residence at the time of removal was Region 7, were placed within the region.  
Most of these out of region placements were in kinship or foster homes.

Most children in substitute care are placed in a home-like setting. At the end of fiscal year 2022, most children were with relatives or in non-relative foster homes.



The proportion of children placed with relatives, including both unverified kinship and verified foster home placements, has been slightly declining in Region 7 since 2019, however, the proportion of these homes that are verified has been increasing<sup>11</sup>. County level data throughout the region shows considerable variance in the proportion of children placed with relatives<sup>12</sup>, as well as the percent of homes that are verified<sup>13</sup>. Region 7 places more children with relatives throughout the year on average than the state.

Children in Substitute Care Placed with Relatives					
	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Region 7	58.1%	59.5%	57.2%	57.5%	56.7%
State	45.9%	44.9%	44.1%	45.1%	44.2%

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix for verified kinship placements fiscal years 2018-2022.

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix for relative placements by county, fiscal year 2022.

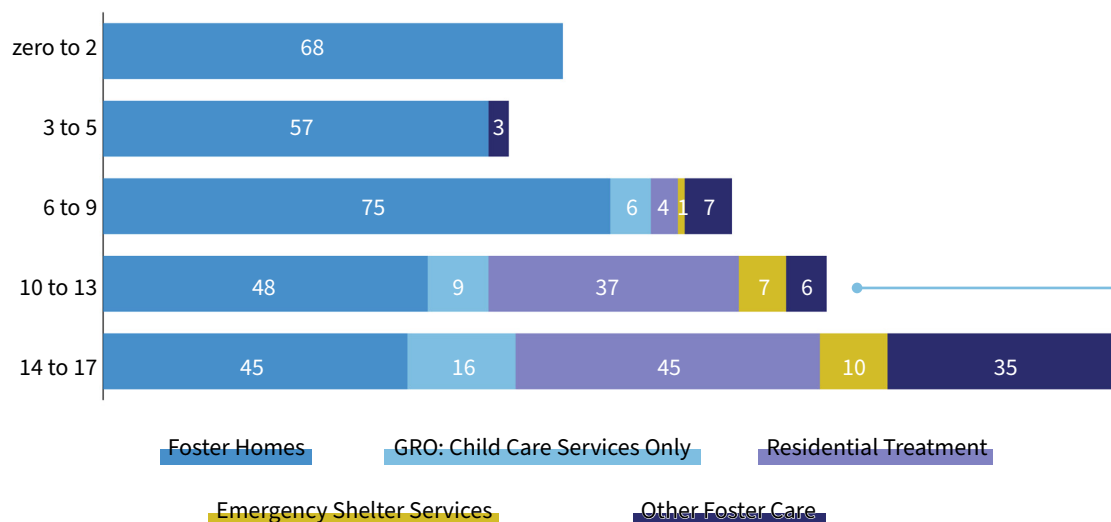
<sup>13</sup> See Appendix for percent of verified kinship placements by county, fiscal year 2022.

Capacity to place children close to home is related to the number of beds in the region, the match between available beds and the needs of children needing placement, and the “borrowing” of Region 7 beds by other regions. Data from August 2022 shows that Region 7 borrows more foster homes and general residential beds than it lends out and provides more residential treatment and emergency shelter beds to out of region children.

Type of Substitute Care Placement	Region 7 Children Placed out of Region	Out of Region Children Placed in Region 7
DFPs Foster Homes	36	4
Private CPA and Independent Homes	277	194
GRO: Child Care Services Only	38	35
Residential Treatment	88	214
Emergency Shelter Services	23	37
Other Foster Care	49	41
Unverified Kinship	313	118
Adoptive Home	14	7
Independent Living	0	1
Other Substitute Care	27	10

**75% of children and youth in foster care**  
in Region 7 are placed outside of their home county.  
**32% of these children**  
were placed outside of the region.

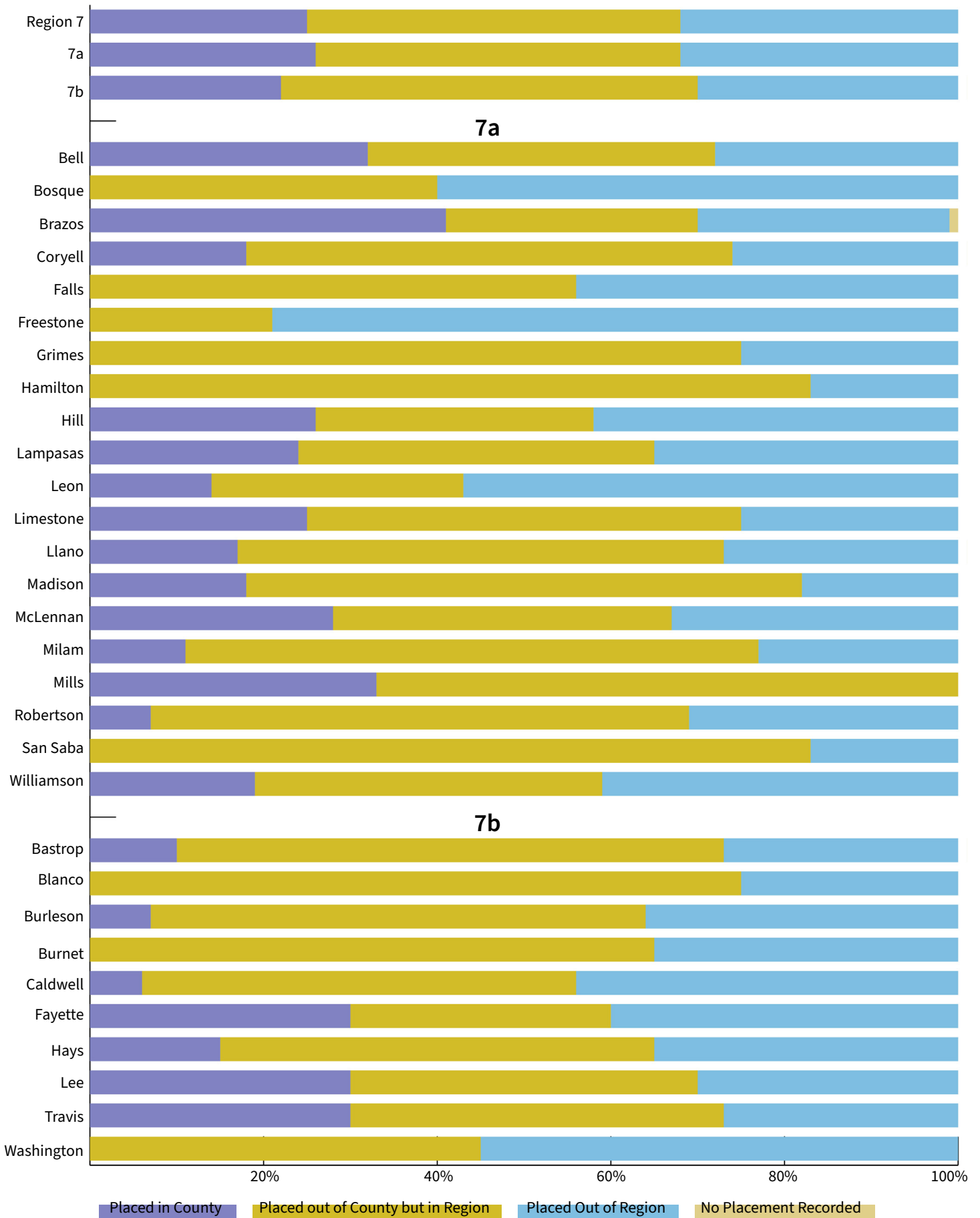
### Foster care children placed outside of the region



Older children in foster care are more likely to be placed out of region. Of children age 10 or older placed outside of the region, nearly half are in emergency shelters or residential treatment facilities.



## Placement proximity of children in foster care placements



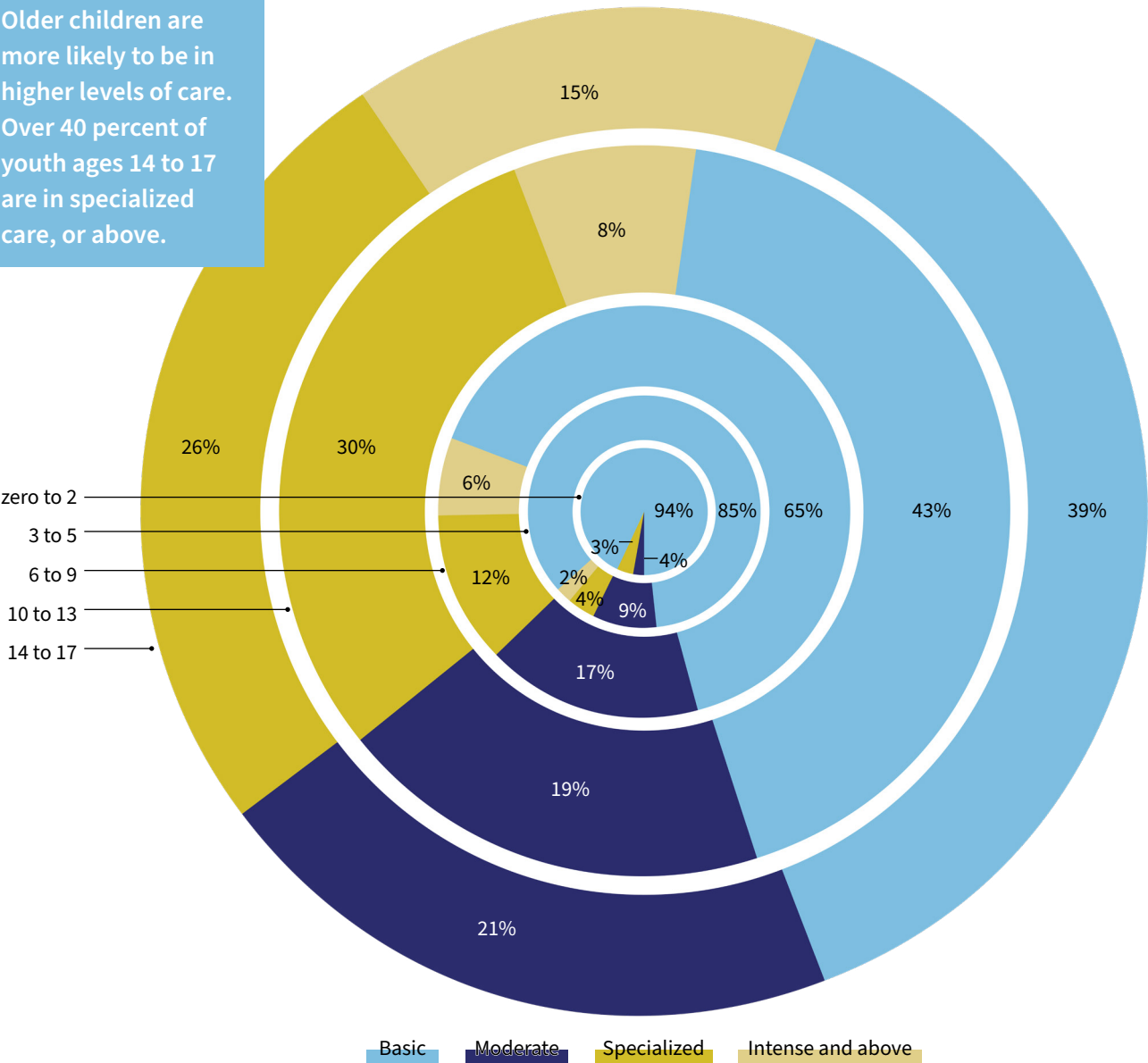
# Levels of Care

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Year 2022. Data includes placements from the first day to the last day of August 2022.



Authorized Service Levels by Age

Older children are more likely to be in higher levels of care. Over 40 percent of youth ages 14 to 17 are in specialized care, or above.

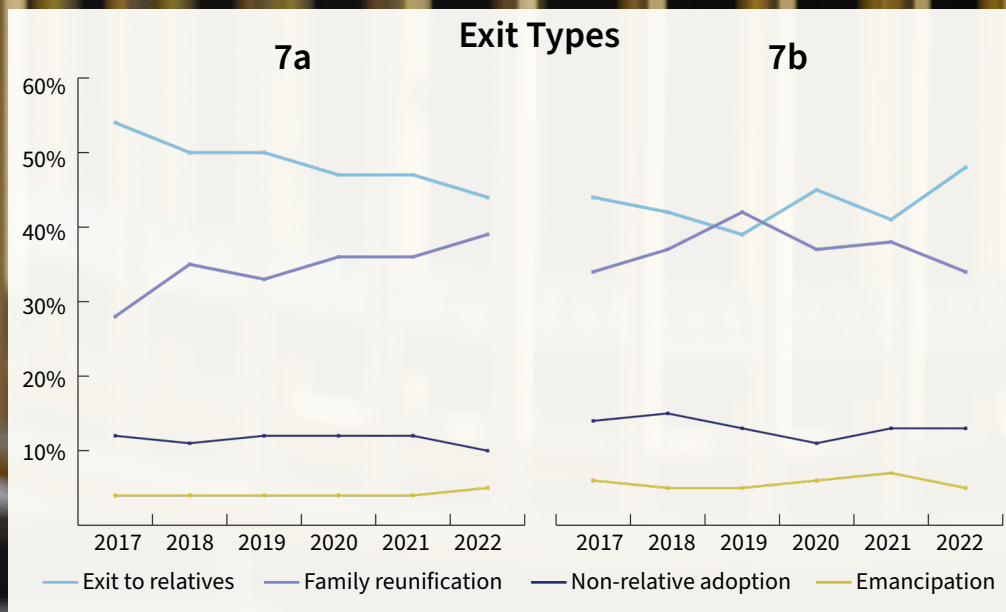


<sup>14</sup> Children and youth categorized as “other” are not shown.

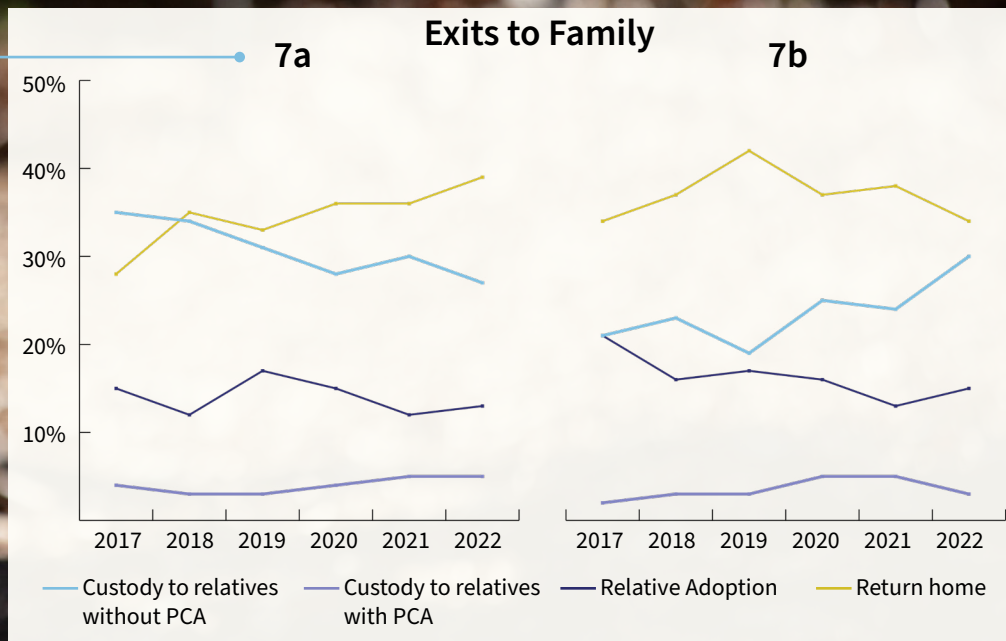
# Exits from Care

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Years 2017- 2022.

The proportion of children reunified with their families has increased since at least 2017, concurrent with decreasing trends in other types of exits to relatives<sup>15</sup> in the 7a catchment. In 7b, there have been swapping trends in family reunification and other exits to relatives, most recently with the proportion of children reunified with their families decreasing.



Among those children exiting to the care of relatives, custody to relatives with PCA has slightly increased in 7a over the last few years, but most exits to relatives except for reunification are to those without PCA supports.



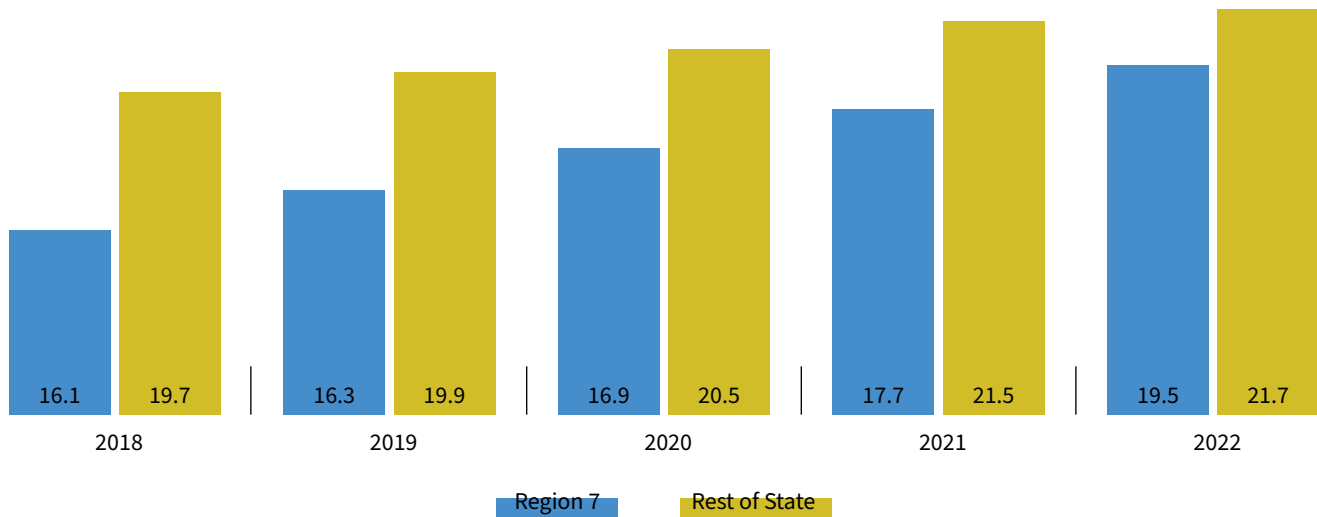
<sup>15</sup> Exits to relatives includes PMC to relatives with and without PCA, as well as relative adoptions



## Children are spending longer time in care.

Time in care has increased in Region 7, and statewide, over the last five years. During this time, children returning home, being adopted by relatives, or exiting to the care of a relative with PCA, have seen the most considerable increases in average time in care<sup>16</sup>. The average length of stay for all children who exited care from Region 7 in fiscal year 2022 was just under 20 months, though there is substantial variation by exit type and county. Children aging out of care, being adopted, and exiting to relatives with PCA spent the longest time in care, on average, in fiscal year 2022.

**Average time in care in months**

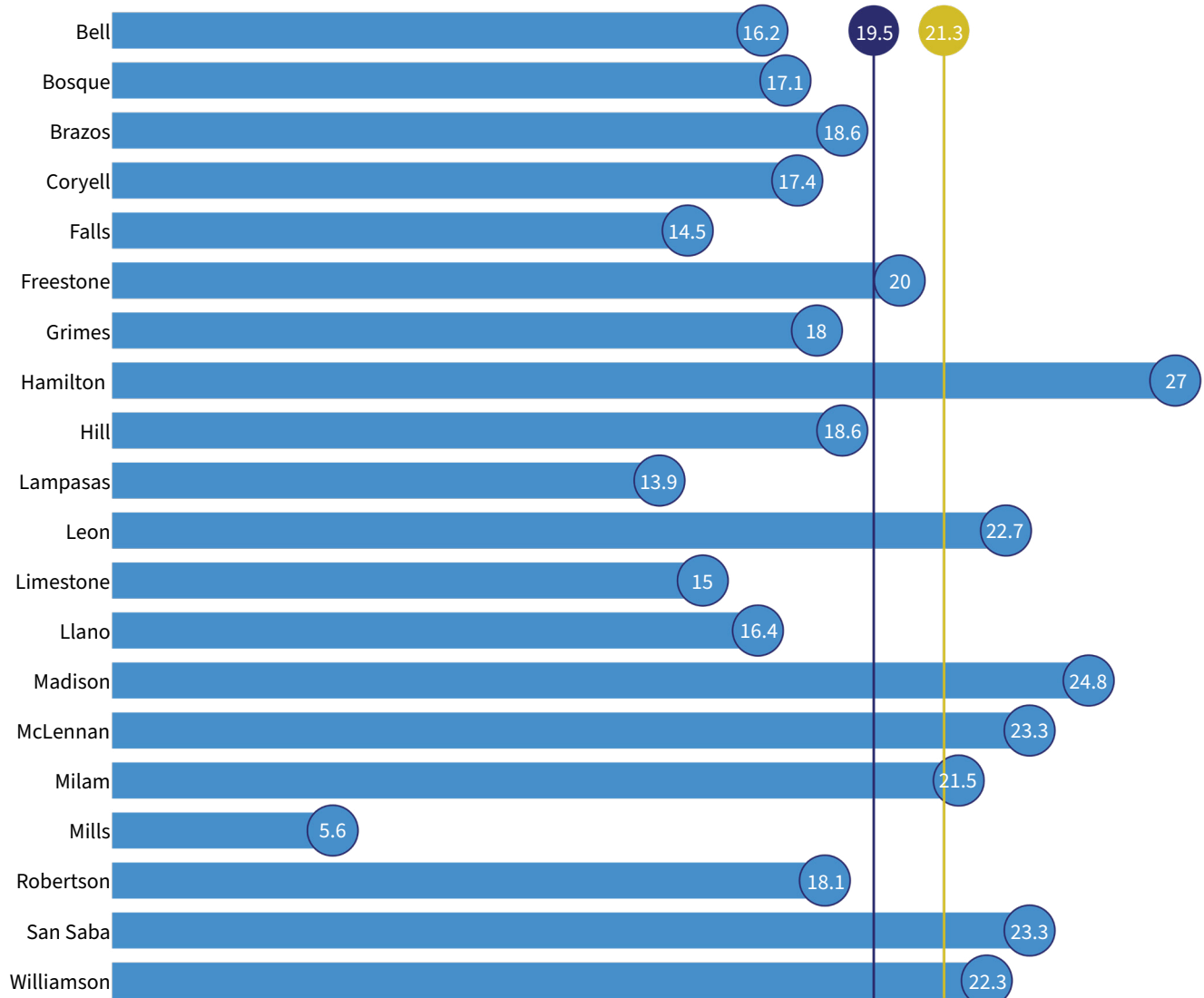


Average Months in Care (FY 2022)			
	Region 7	7a	7b
Returned home	14.8	13.7	16.8
PMC to relatives with PCA	25	26	21.9
PMC to relatives without PCA	15.6	14.8	16.8
Relative adoption	26.4	26	27
Non-relative adoption	27.4	27.2	27.6
Emancipated	36.7	40.5	30
Other	21	21.8	29.6

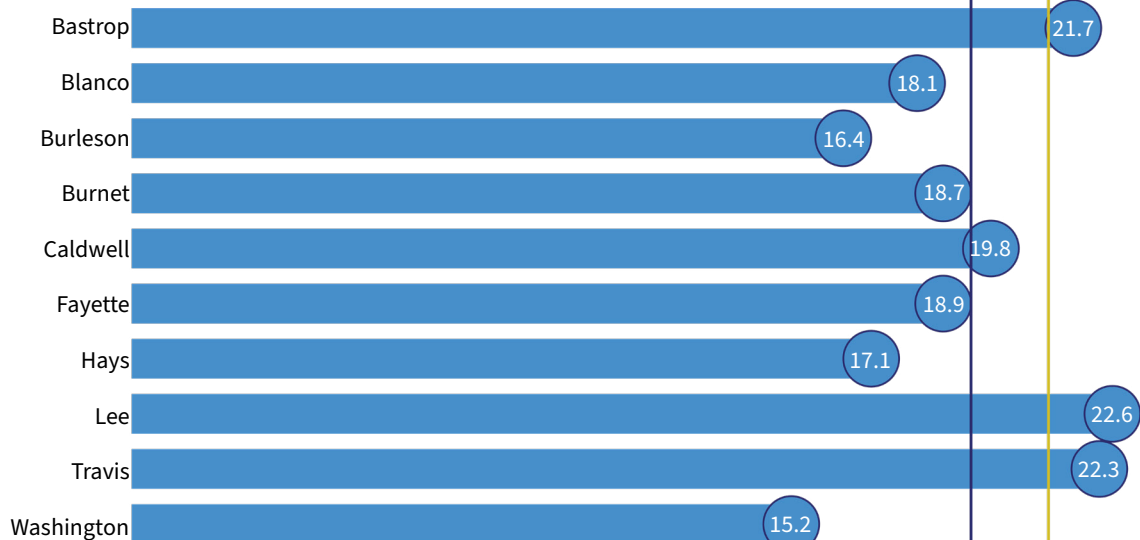
<sup>16</sup> See Appendix for time in care by exit type for fiscal years 2018 to 2022.

## Average time to exit, by county FY 2022

7a



7b



Region 7 counties

Rest of the State average

Region 7 average

# Outcomes

Source: DFPS Data Book Fiscal Years 2017- 2021

DFPS tracks outcomes for children who were either provided family preservation services or returned home from DFPS custody and were subsequently re-reported as alleged victims of maltreatment after their case is closed. Over the last few years, the region has seen lower rates of recidivism<sup>17</sup> at all measurement points followed FBSS case closure. During this same time, the recidivism rates following conservatorship decreased slightly for six-month and five-year measurement points, and rates at six-months have been increasing since at least 2017<sup>18</sup>.

Recidivism (Re-Reports) Following FBSS (FY 2021)			
	6-months	1-year	5-year
Region 7	11%	21%	47%
Rest of State	12%	18%	42%
7a	10%	20%	47%
7b	11%	22%	47%

At one-year and five-year measurement points, the Region 7 rate in which children were re-reported following a closed case that received FBSS is higher than the rest of the state rate. The recidivism rates for counties in 7a are among the lowest in Region<sup>19</sup>.

At all measurement points, the Region 7 recidivism rate following a closed conservatorship case is equal to or higher than the rest of the state rate. The rates for the 7a catchment are slightly lower than 7b at all measurement points; however, the catchment had more victims alleged in a new report than 7b<sup>20</sup>.

Recidivism (Re-Reports) Following Conservatorship Case Closure (FY 2021)			
	6-months	1-year	5-year
Region 7	13%	24%	47%
Rest of State	12%	22%	45%
7a	13%	23%	44%
7b	14%	25%	51%

Although the region has seen lower rates in alleged victims being reported after case closure at most measurement points over the last few years, rates are mostly higher than the averages in the rest of the state and there is still significant variance in rates at the county level. This indicates the need to ensure children and families are receiving the services and support they need to maintain stability immediately, and long, after case closure.

17 In this context “recidivism” refers to being alleged as a victim in a new report, regardless of the disposition of that report.

18 See Appendix for outcomes in Region 7 for fiscal years 2017-2021.

19 See Appendix for county level outcomes at all measurement points for fiscal year 2021.

20 See Appendix for county level outcomes at all measurement points for fiscal year 2021.



# CONCLUSION

This community profile is intended to inform the ongoing community conversation of how Region 7 can best support its families and keep children safe while preparing for Community Based Care. Based on the data available at the time of this publication, Region 7 has some of the highest maltreatment risk areas in the state. Additionally, the child welfare landscape has dramatically shifted over the last few years. Substantial reductions in removals and families being referred to Family Based Safety Services, in addition to the substantial number of children exiting to family without ongoing support, indicate the importance of special focus on ensuring families receive the services and supports they need. To gauge the true impact of this shift in the system, future monitoring of child maltreatment, child fatalities, and recidivism will be important. As the region prepares for community-based care, this is an opportune time to learn from areas that have already implemented community-based care and develop a collaborative approach to support children and families.



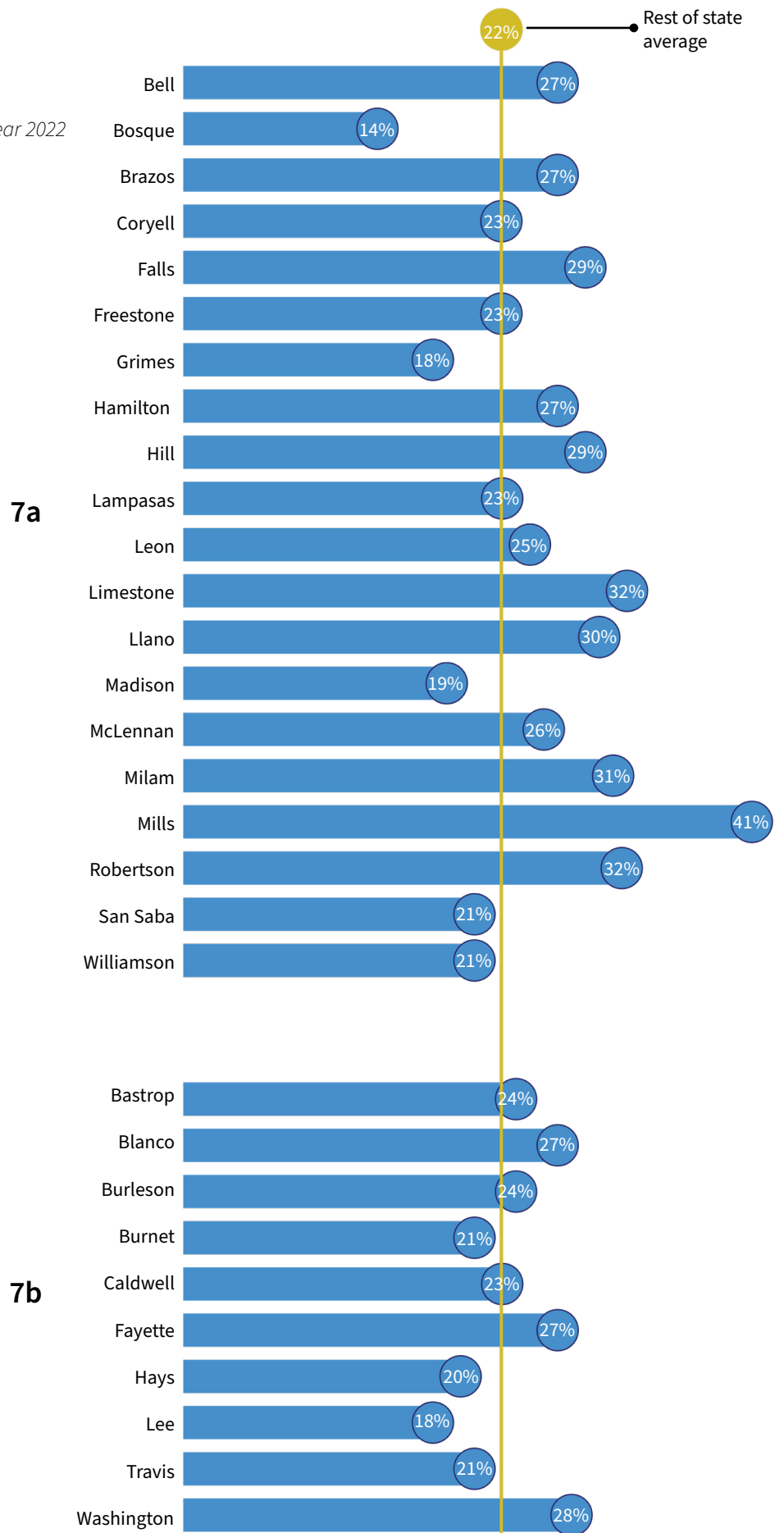
# APPENDIX

County Level Populations			
Catchment	County	Child Population	Total Population
7a	Bell	103803	357856
	Bosque	3726	17729
	Brazos	51198	233503
	Coryell	19439	78703
	Falls	19439	78703
	Freestone	4393	19865
	Grimes	6410	29128
	Hamilton	1849	8210
	Hill	8461	35678
	Lampasas	4485	21193
	Leon	4022	17805
	Limestone	5200	23559
	Llano	3194	19481
	Madison	3325	14636
	McLennan	64638	254824
	Milam	5898	24634
	Mills	1044	4863
	Robertson	3691	16924
	San Saba	1183	5856
	Williamson	150324	609818
7b	Bastrop	20992	87351
	Blanco	2124	11609
	Burleson	4025	17782
	Burnet	10486	48769
	Caldwell	11122	44960
	Fayette	5880	26272
	Hays	54406	244221
	Lee	4254	17691
	Travis	290389	1317306
	Washington	7709	35306

Source: DFPS Data Book Fiscal Year 2021

## Percent of completed investigations with RTB dispositions by county

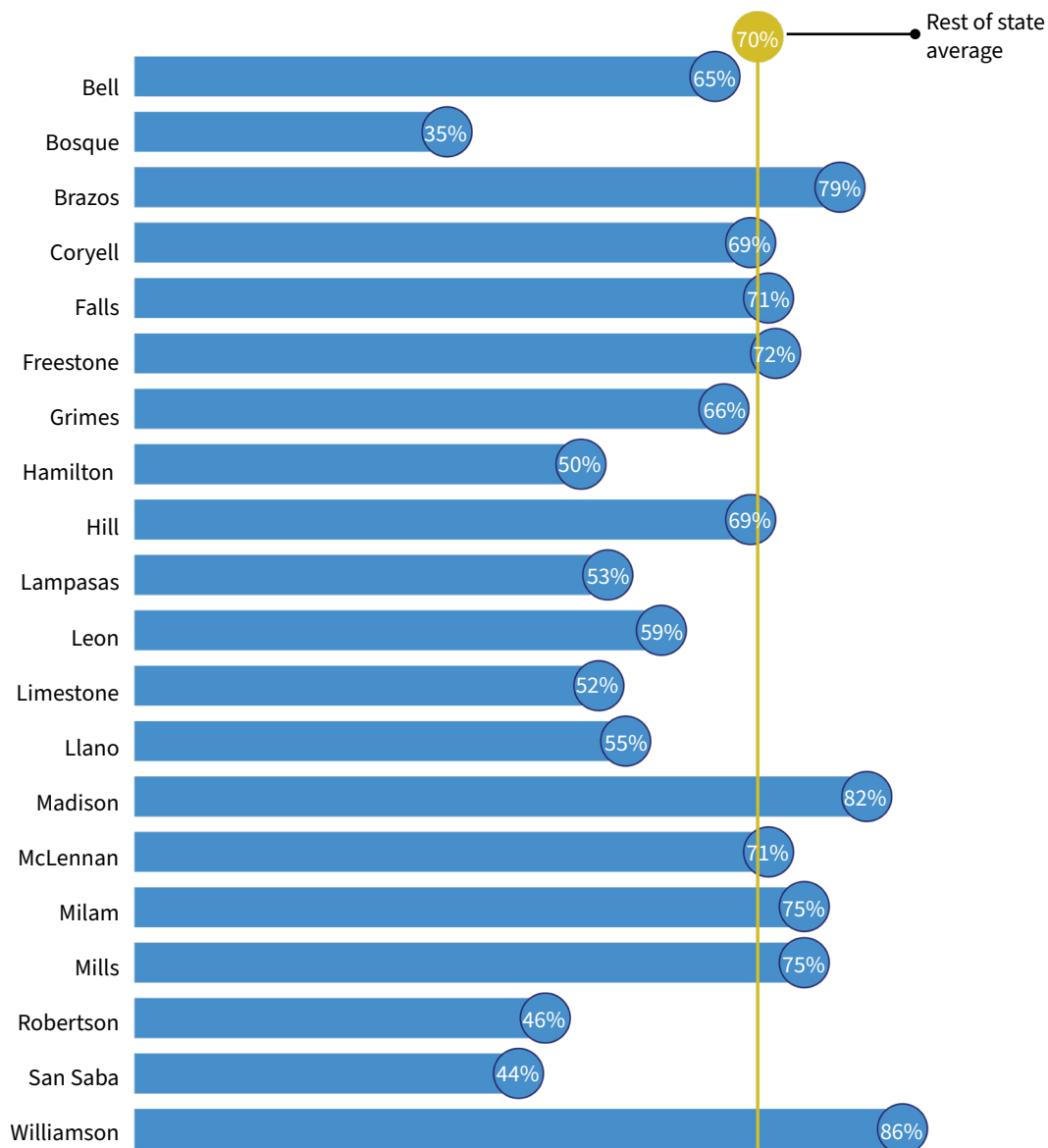
Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Year 2022



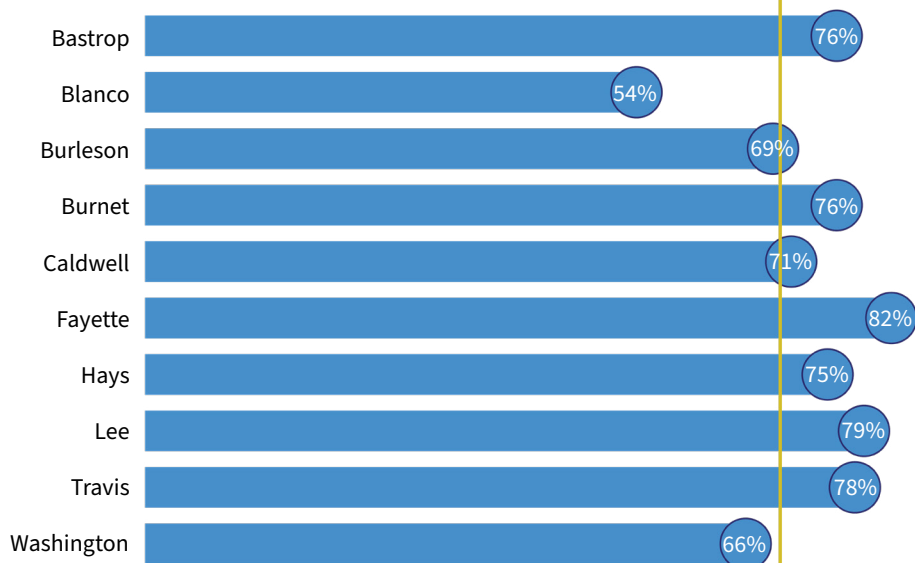
## Percent of substantiated investigations closed without services, by county

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Year 2022

7a



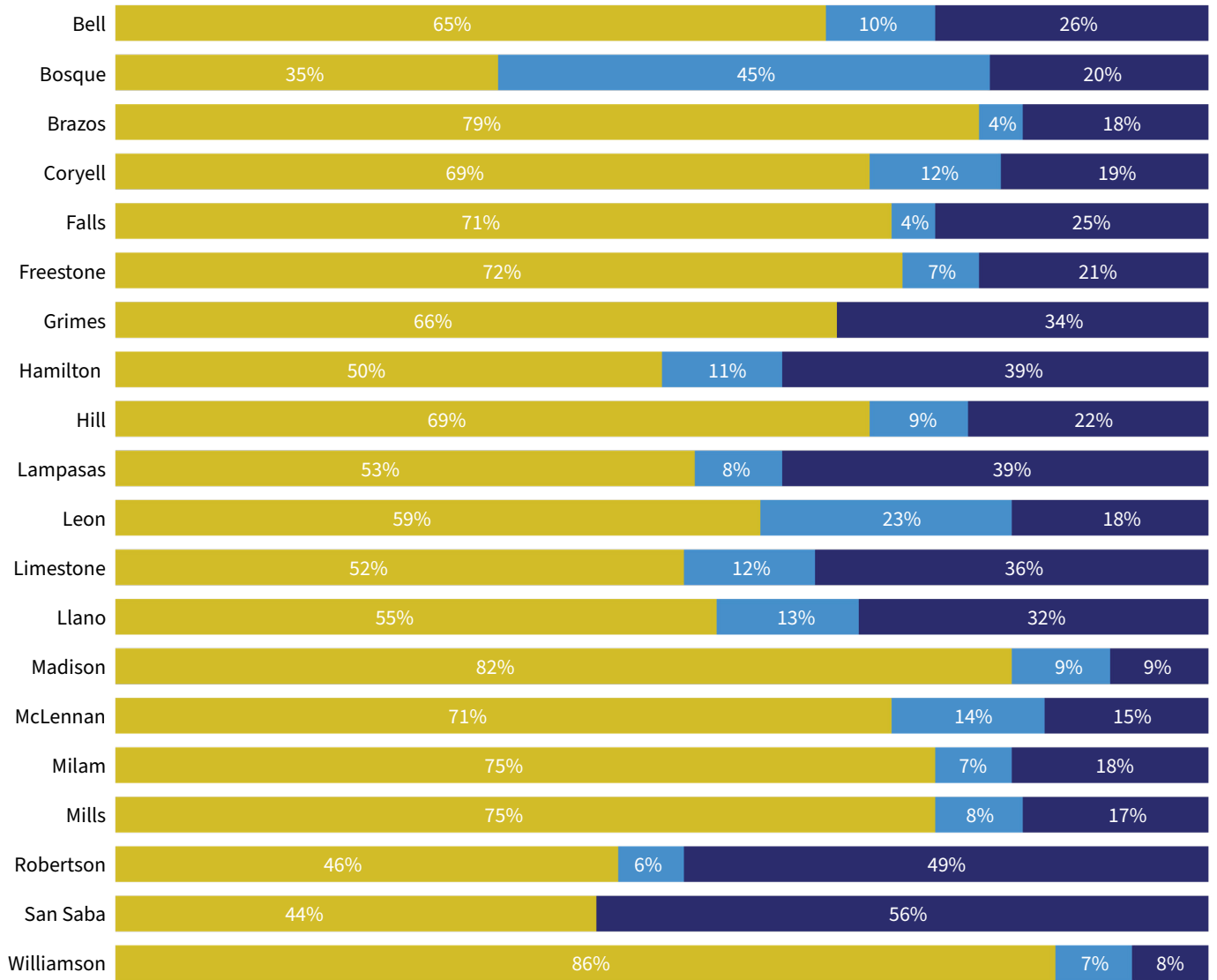
7b



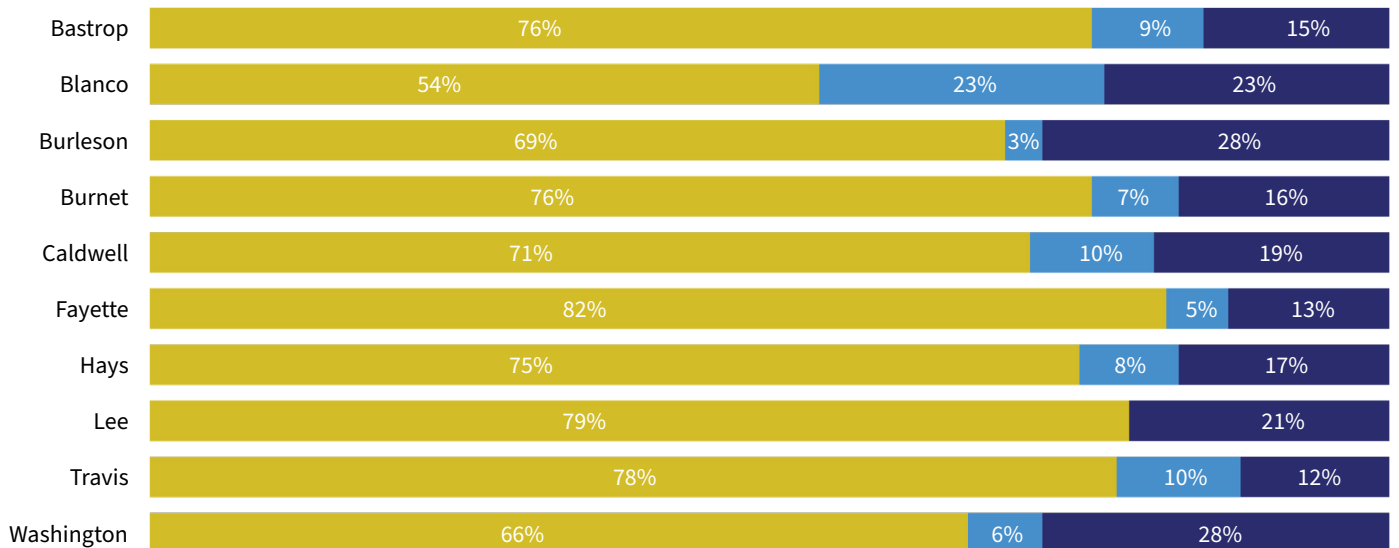


## Substantiated case actions by county

7a



7b



Fiscal Year 2022 Removals		
County	Removal rate per 1,000 children	Number of removals
Bastrop	2	41
Bell	4.5	469
Blanco	0.9	2
Bosque	3.5	13
Brazos	2	100
Burleson	4.5	18
Burnet	3.6	38
Caldwell	2.6	29
Coryell	2.4	47
Falls	3.6	12
Fayette	1.5	9
Freestone	2.3	10
Grimes	1.7	11
Hamilton	7	13
Hays	1.4	75
Hill	4.5	38
Lampasas	6	27
Lee	2.4	10
Leon	1.7	7
Limestone	4	21
Llano	8.1	26
Madison	1.8	6
McLennan	2.7	177
Milam	13.2	78
Mills	1.9	2
Robertson	10.6	39
San Saba	5.1	6
Travis	0.9	270
Washington	3.6	28
Williamson	0.5	82

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Year 2022

Region 7 Percent Demographics of Children in Substitute Care at the end of August 2022		
	Region 7	Rest of state
Female	50	48
Male	50	52
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Age: 0-2	32	29
Age: 3-5	19	18
Age: 6-9	19	18
Age: 10-13	14	16
Age: 14-17	16	19
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>
African American	23	22
Hispanic/Latino	35	45
White	33	28
Native American	0	<1
Asian	<1	<1
Multi-racial/ethnic	8	4
Undetermined	<1	1
Not recorded	<1	<1
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Year 2022

Of Children in Kinship Placements, % in Verified Placement					
	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Region 7	7.6%	9.9%	12.4%	13.1%	15.5%
State	12.4%	13.0%	14.2%	14.9%	14.8%

Data Source: DFPS Data Warehouse Children in Kinship Placements sa\_09

Region 7 - FY22 Children in Substitute Care Placed with Relatives	
Bastrop	55.2%
Bell	54.5%
Blanco	22.3%
Bosque	32.7%
Brazos	62.9%
Burleson	61.8%
Burnet	73.4%
Caldwell	74.2%
Coryell	55.7%
Falls	35.1%
Fayette	64.4%
Freestone	50.2%
Grimes	65.4%
Hamilton	57.1%
Hays	53.0%
Hill	45.5%
Lampasas	61.0%
Lee	70.1%
Leon	62.0%
Limestone	68.8%
Llano	59.8%
Madison	87.1%
McLennan	59.2%
Milam	47.5%
Mills	53.7%
Robertson	67.1%
San Saba	37.1%
Travis	54.4%
Washington	63.3%
Williamson	53.9%

Region 7 - FY22 Of Children in Kinship Placements, % in Verified Placement	
Bastrop	7.9%
Bell	18.5%
Blanco	0.0%
Bosque	7.9%
Brazos	7.2%
Burleson	18.8%
Burnet	14.5%
Caldwell	12.8%
Coryell	18.6%
Falls	7.9%
Fayette	12.6%
Freestone	11.3%
Grimes	16.8%
Hamilton	5.4%
Hays	22.1%
Hill	8.4%
Lampasas	25.5%
Lee	26.9%
Leon	9.5%
Limestone	0.6%
Llano	14.9%
Madison	41.1%
McLennan	18.9%
Milam	5.9%
Mills	9.7%
Robertson	13.3%
San Saba	27.9%
Travis	12.8%
Washington	10.6%
Williamson	17.1%

Data Sources: DFPS Data Warehouse reports sa\_09 and sa\_05

Data Source: DFPS Data Warehouse

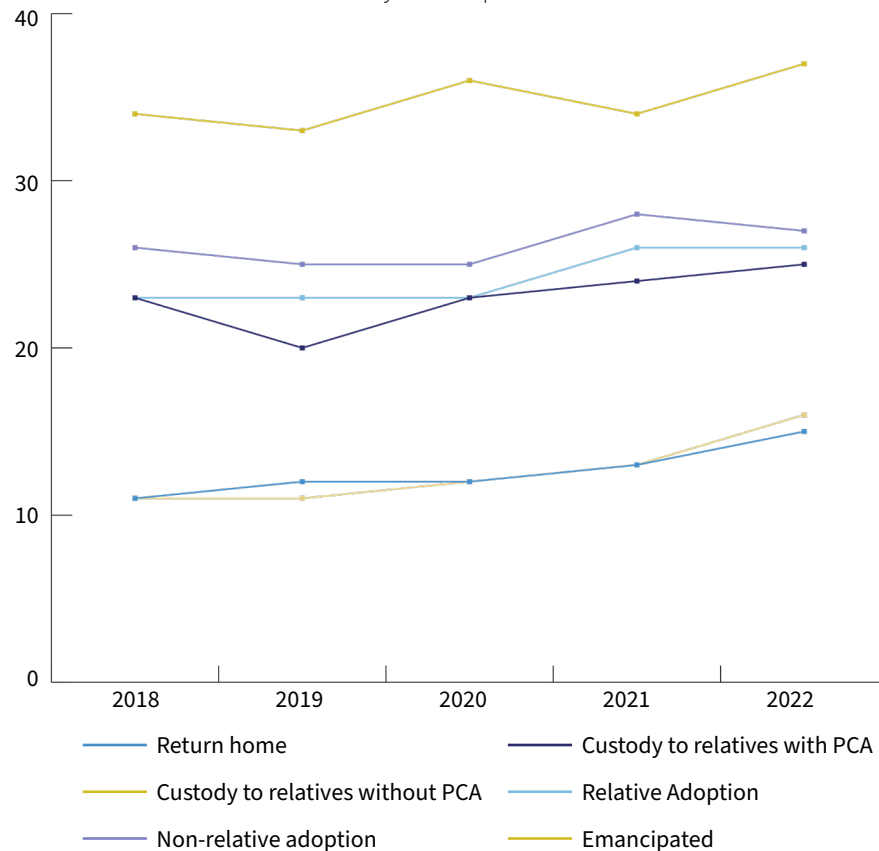
Methodology: The total number of children in Kinship placements (sa\_09) divided by the total number of children in substitute care (sa\_05)

Children in Kinship Placements sa\_09



## Time in care by exit type

Source: DFPS Monthly Data Reports Fiscal Years 2018-2022



Recidivism following FBSS case closure			
Region 7	6-month	1-year	5-year
2017	15%	21%	46%
2018	15%	23%	49%
2019	12%	22%	50%
2020	10%	21%	47%
2021	11%	21%	47%

Source: DFPS Data Book Fiscal Years 2017-2021

Recidivism following Conservatorship case closure			
Region 7	6-month	1-year	5-year
2017	12%	21%	51%
2018	14%	22%	48%
2019	14%	23%	46%
2020	14%	22%	47%
2021	13%	24%	47%

Source: DFPS Data Book Fiscal Years 2017-2021

Outcomes Following FBSS Case Closure by County (FY 2021)							
Catchment	County	Children Served	6-month recidivism	Children Served	1-year recidivism	Children Served	5-year recidivism
7a	Bell	468	8	635	16	675	47
	Bosque	12	0	23	30	11	73
	Brazos	53	11	42	12	192	48
	Coryell	71	7	154	21	172	49
	Falls	17	6	21	33	44	71
	Freestone	8	0	7	43	25	68
	Grimes	10	30	1	0	42	45
	Hamilton	5	40	26	27	3	0
	Hill	27	33	71	21	25	52
	Lampasas	14	0	55	44	24	58
	Leon	4	0	3	0	6	50
	Limestone	19	0	9	0	43	49
	Llano	41	22	62	24	24	54
	Madison	7	14	1	0	5	60
	McLennan	306	10	415	19	690	50
	Milam	9	22	19	5	47	34
	Mills	0	-	6	17	3	33
	Robertson	5	0	13	0	23	65
	San Saba	0	-	6	50	9	44
	Williamson	149	11	285	23	472	36
7b	Bastrop	75	17	158	16	74	47
	Blanco	4	0	2	50	6	67
	Burleson	1	0	2	50	11	46
	Burnet	26	8	86	24	45	71
	Caldwell	74	15	98	18	63	40
	Fayette	12	0	9	56	7	0
	Hays	122	12	261	17	139	53
	Lee	7	0	6	0	20	50
	Travis	636	10	1023	24	891	46
	Washington	8	50	10	0	18	28
	Grand Total	2190	11	3509	21	3809	47

Source: DFPS Data Book Fiscal Year 2021

Outcomes Following Conservatorship Case Closure by County (FY 2021)							
Catchment	County	Children Served	6-month recidivism	Children Served	1-year recidivism	Children Served	5-year recidivism
7a	Bell	302	18	511	21	400	43
	Bosque	11	0	13	15	14	21
	Brazos	24	8	28	21	17	47
	Coryell	58	12	116	22	84	29
	Falls	11	9	35	14	2	0
	Freestone	2	0	21	57	1	0
	Grimes	2	0	17	18	13	62
	Hamilton	0	-	8	0	8	50
	Hill	17	0	25	8	21	33
	Lampasas	31	16	32	22	11	73
	Leon	1	0	4	75	11	18
	Limestone	4	0	14	7	11	73
	Llano	26	15	15	7	28	61
	Madison	0	-	0	-	2	50
	McLennan	116	6	211	28	170	53
	Milam	5	20	14	43	36	44
	Mills	0	-	12	500	6	17
	Robertson	15	0	14	29	4	0
	San Saba	6	0	4	25	12	50
	Williamson	30	10	73	16	137	44
7b	Bastrop	37	16	53	45	84	57
	Blanco	4	0	5	20	4	100
	Burleson	15	0	31	29	19	58
	Burnet	21	0	77	20	11	73
	Caldwell	21	10	33	18	39	41
	Fayette	3	67	8	13	23	57
	Hays	48	13	153	21	90	37
	Lee	8	0	21	14	21	86
	Travis	221	17	453	25	416	50
	Washington	7	29	26	31	21	48
	Grand Total	1046	13	2027	24	1719	47

Source: DFPS Data Book Fiscal Year 2021