

# Keeping Families Together Act

Quarterly Data Update

January 2024

[www.dcyf.wa.gov](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov)



Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

# What we're seeing:

- The law is meeting the intended impact of reducing removals
- We are not removing many children at high risk, and those children are 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:

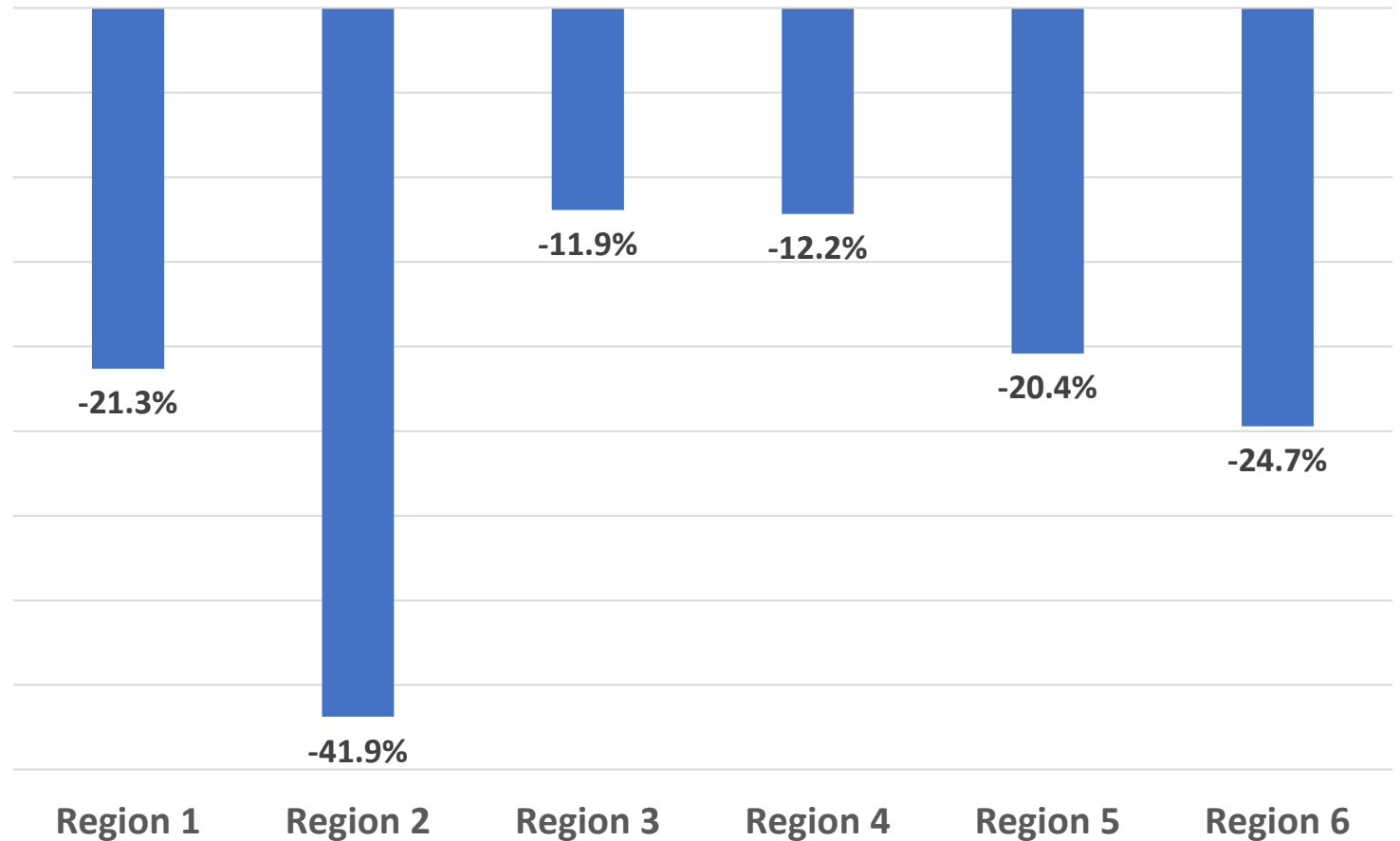
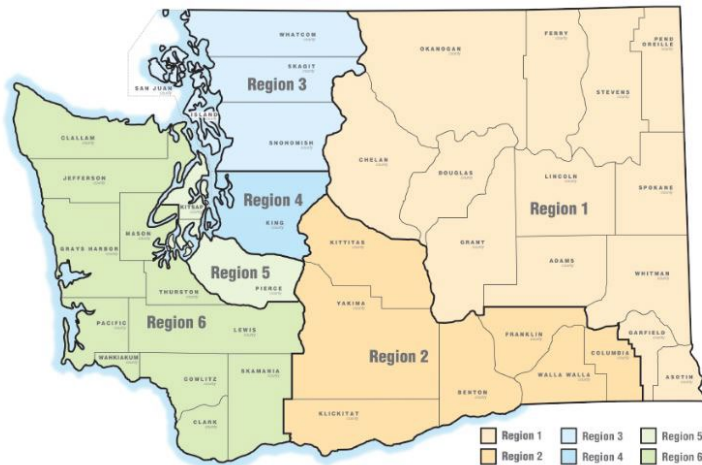
- Since state fiscal year 2018, Washington has seen a 35.6% decrease in the number of children in out of home care (point in time.) This trend is largely consistent with the national trends on children in out of home care.
- Since 2020, DCYF has seen an increasing percentage of moderately high to high-risk 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 22.8% since the new law went into effect

Total Fewer Children Entering Care by Removal County  
 July 1 – December 31, 2023, compared to July 1 – December 31, 2022

## Statewide:

- 22.8% reduction in children entering care
- Largest reductions in Pierce and Yakima Counties



# Entries into care are down across all categories, while participation in voluntary services is increasing

All entries into care		
	July 1-Dec 31, 2022	July 1-Dec 31, 2023*
Voluntary Placements	272	256
Protective Custodies	789	676
Court Approved Placements	560	320
Cases Receiving Services		
Family Voluntary Services**	1,047	1,174
<small>*2023 data are observed, not adjusted for known data lag, so may increase somewhat as more case data are entered into FamLink  ** Family Voluntary Services identifies the distinct count of families served by FVS during the time frame identified</small>		

# The largest reductions in out of home placements are among infants

<b>Total Fewer Children Entering Care by Age Group</b> July 1 – Dec 31, 2023, compared to July 1 – Dec 31, 2022		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age 0-1</b>	-190	-32.4%
<b>Age 2-3</b>	-19	-10.7%
<b>Age 4-11</b>	-77	-15.1%
<b>Age 12-17</b>	-83	-24.3%

# Fentanyl-related critical incidents are increasing among children in Washington State

88% - (29 of the 33) fentanyl related critical incidents in 2023 involved children age 2 and under

