



Child Welfare Services Program Overview Trends in Foster Care

February 2015

Overview of Foster Care

- Review of Child Welfare Services Program
- Children in Foster Care
- Placement Home Types
- Resource Family Approval

24 Hour Child Abuse Hotline

Screeners Assess Risk to Child

Using a Structured Decision Making assessment tool to evaluate risk and determine response priority



Determines the Appropriate Response

Evaluate Out

Immediate

10 -day

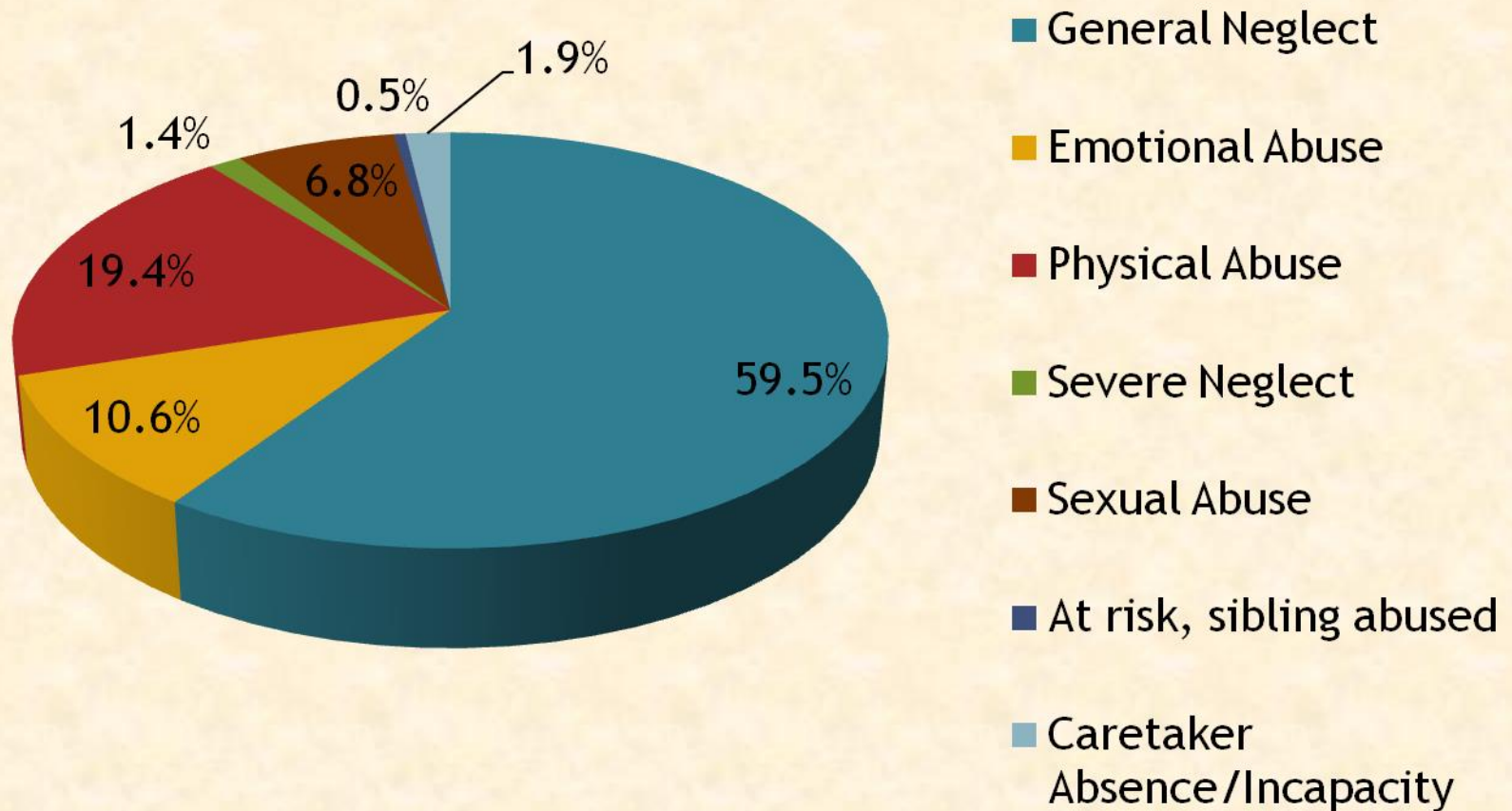
In 2013, the Child Abuse Hotline received
7,654 calls.

Assessment and Investigation

- 24 Hour In-person response
- Individual social worker, or multi-disciplinary response
- Assess for safety, risk, protective capacity, and family strengths, including the following factors:
 - prior child welfare involvement,
 - domestic violence,
 - substance abuse,
 - medical and mental health care needs

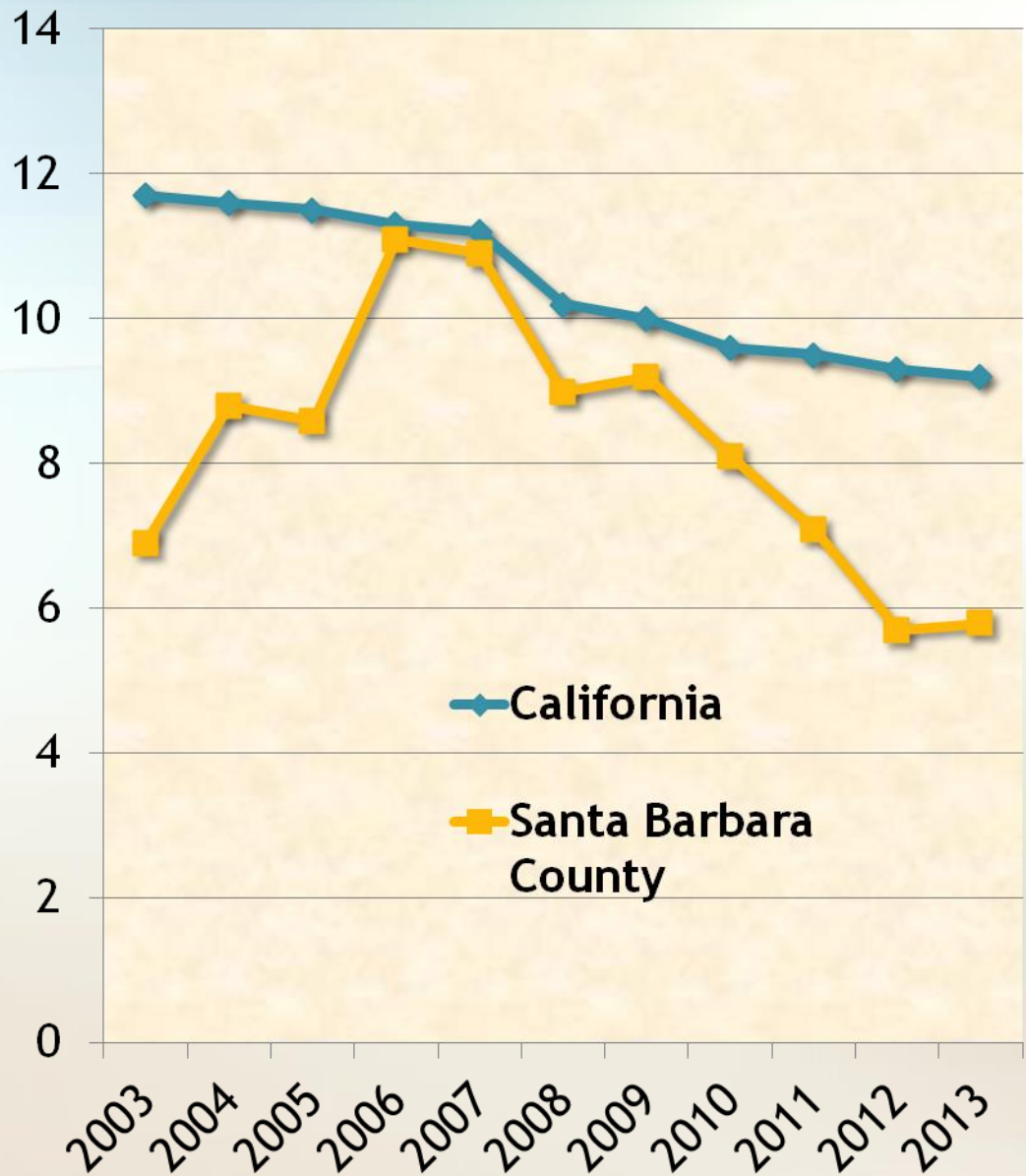
In 2013, Santa Barbara County social workers conducted 3,309 in-person investigations.

Abuse and Neglect by Type 2013



Substantiations of abuse and neglect per 1,000 children

Although the rate of allegations is increasing, the rate of substantiations is decreasing both Statewide and in Santa Barbara County.



Investigations Outcomes



Close Referral

- May refer to community resources

Short-Term Child Welfare Services

- 30 days
- Referrals to community resources

Voluntary Family Maintenance Case

- Up to 12 months
- Services to maintain child safety in the home

Refer to Juvenile Court

- Child remains in the home
- Child is removed from the home

Foster Care

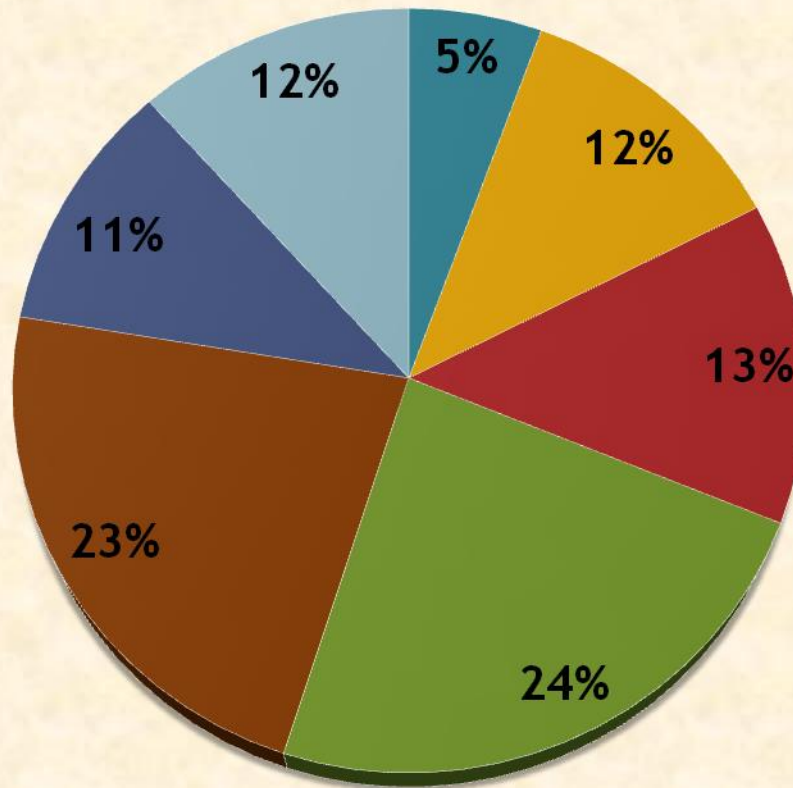
- Children enter foster care when they cannot safely remain in the family home due to abuse or neglect. Resource Families open their homes, providing a safe haven for these children.



Children in Foster Care By Age

On 7/1/14

■ Under 1 ■ '1-2 ■ '3-5 ■ '6-10 ■ '11-15 ■ 16-17 ■ 18-20



School-aged children (6-17) represent 57% of the children in foster care

Family Reunification

- Provides intervention and support services for a limited time period to parents and their children who have been removed from the home.
- The goal is a safe home environment so that the child may return home.

Family Reunification Services

- A case plan is developed by the social worker in collaboration with the family and may include services for:
 - counseling
 - mental health treatment
 - substance abuse treatment
 - domestic violence
 - parent education

The Role of the Foster Parent in Family Reunification

- Foster parents play a critical role in family reunification by:
 - providing for the needs of the child
 - helping the child to be successful in school
 - support visitation between the child and their parents
 - being a role model to the child and parents
 - providing a safe environment for the child

Permanent Placement

- To ensure that children have safe, stable, and permanent homes to grow up in
- To create lifelong connections with a caring adult



Permanent Placement

Adoption

- Federal policy prefers adoption as first permanency option
- Requires termination of parental rights

Legal Guardianship

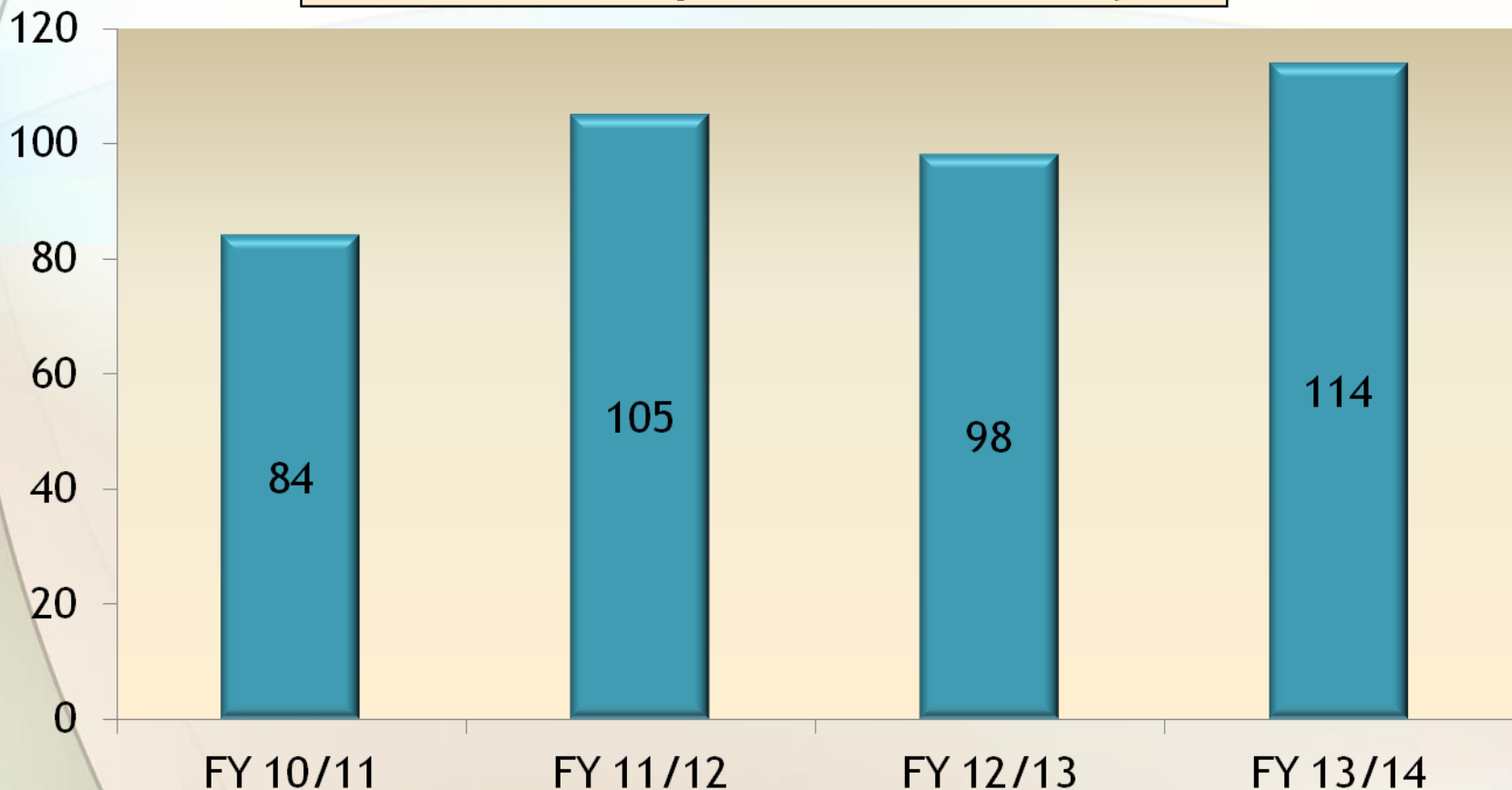
- Relative or non-relative who has legal authority and responsibility
- A relative may receive financial assistance through Kin-Gap

Alternative Forms of Permanency

- Long-term foster care with relatives, non-relatives, or group homes
- Continued efforts are made to obtain legal permanency

Santa Barbara County continues to finalize a high number of adoptions

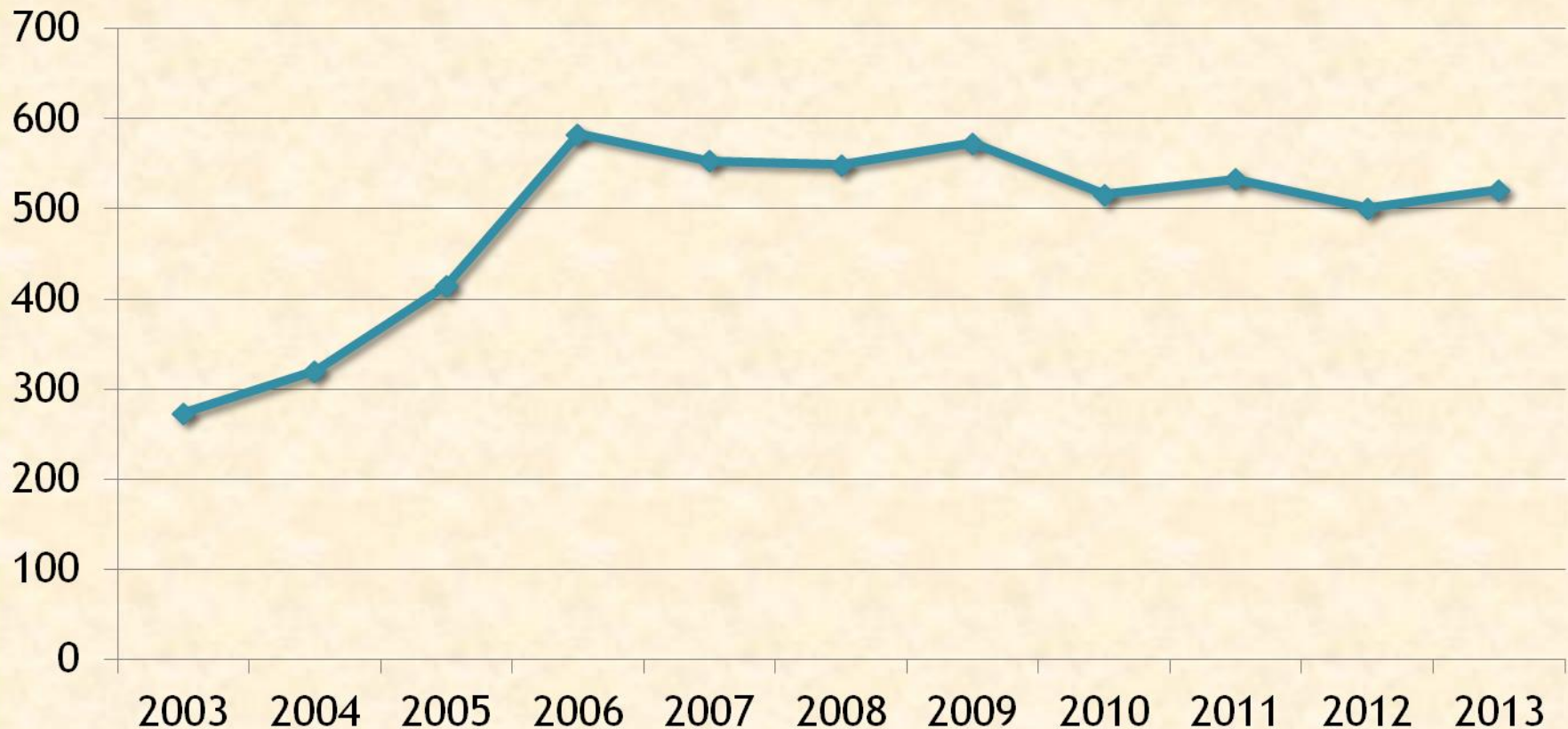
Number of Adoptions Finalized by FY



Source: CWS Adoption Database

Santa Barbara County Total Number of Children in Foster Care 2003-2013(Children 0-20)

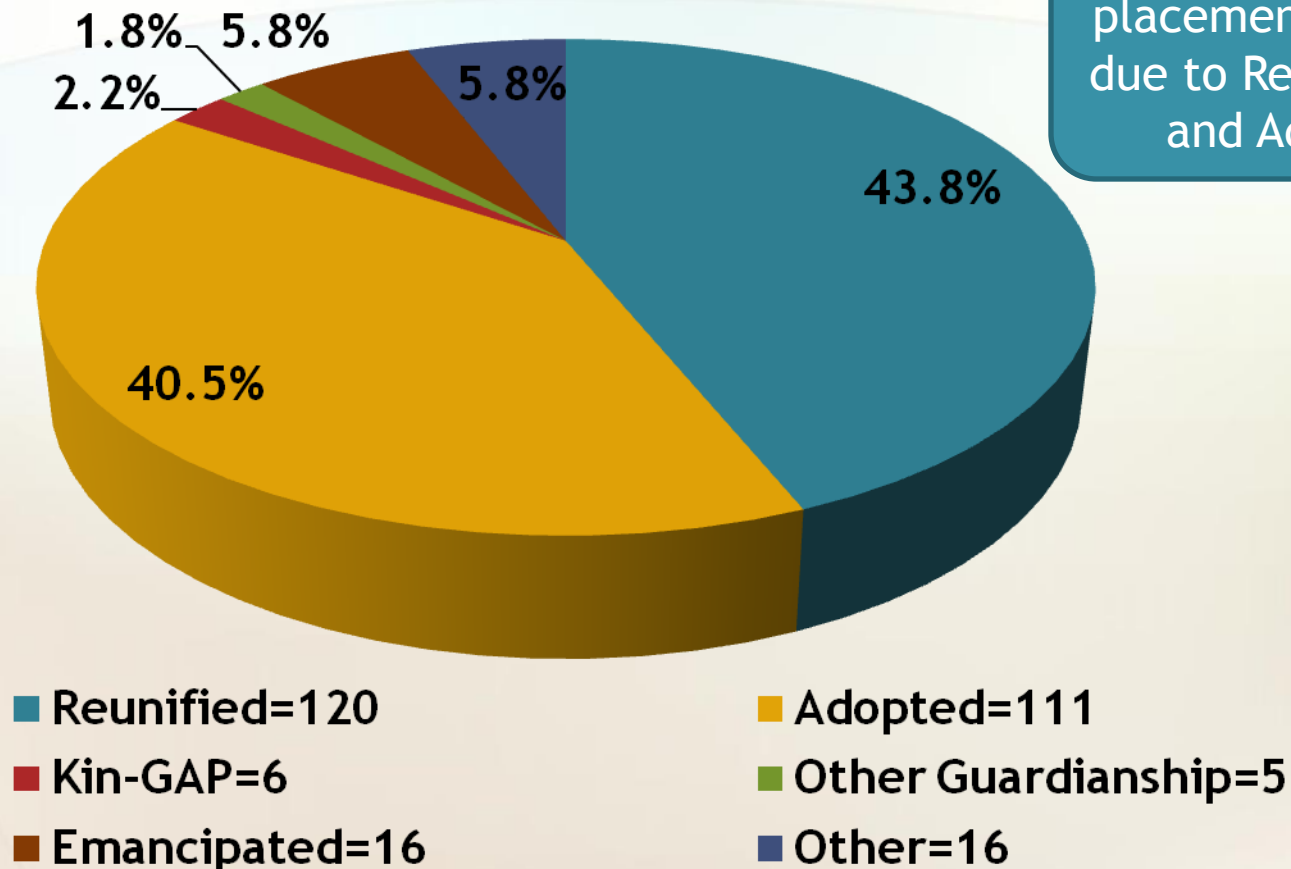
Total Point in Time on July 1st



Source: https://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/Entries.aspx
http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/Exits.aspx 2014 Q2 Extract

Exits from Foster Care FY 13/14

The majority of placement exits are due to Reunification and Adoption



Placement Home Types

Approved Relatives/Non-Related Extended Family Members

- Approved to care for identified children who are related or who have a pre-existing familial/mentoring relationship (coach, teacher)

County Licensed Foster Family Home

- Licensed to provide out of home care for up to 6 unrelated children.

Foster Family Agency Home

- Certified by Foster Family Agency to provide treatment foster care for up to 6 unrelated children.

Small Family and Group Homes

- Licensed by Community Care Licensing to provide specialized care for children with specialized medical, behavioral, or mental health needs.

Trends in Placement Homes:

Monthly average percentage of children

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014, Q1 and Q2
Relative Home	39%	38%	38%	38%	36%
County-licensed Home	9%	12%	11%	9%	6%
Foster Family Agency Homes	42%	39%	37%	38%	40%
Group Home	10%	11%	12%	9%	9%
Supervised Independent Living	n/a	n/a	1%	4%	7%

Note: Data excludes small family homes, approx. 1% of total homes

Source: CWS Report Card; Safe Measures Extract Date 9/30/14

Resource Family Approval

Santa Barbara 1 of 5 Counties selected to Pilot Implementation

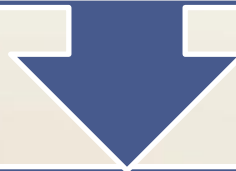
Began Implementation March 2014

Implement for 3 FYs



CDSS will review implementation of Resource Family Approval

Resource Family Approval program modification will occur as necessary



July 2017 Statewide Implementation

Goals of RFA Process

Streamlined
processes

Fewer
placement
changes

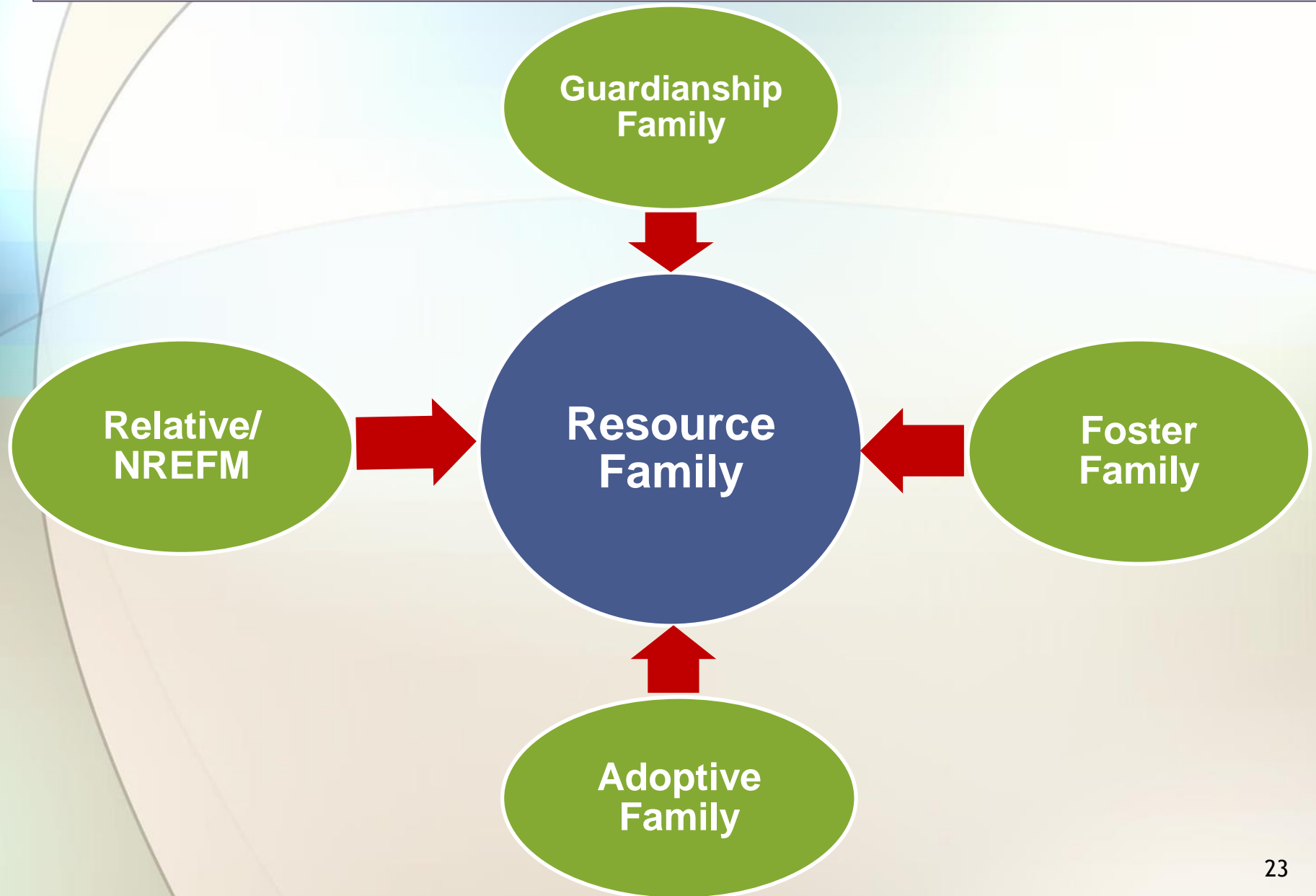
Greater
stability and
safety for the
child

Greater support
for Relative and
Non-relative
homes

Resource Family Approval

- **Legislative Intent:** To develop a unified, family friendly, and child centered resource family approval process that:
 - Eliminates duplication
 - Increases approval standards
 - Incorporates a comprehensive psychosocial assessment of all families
 - Includes approval for: foster care, adoption, guardianship

RESOURCE FAMILY



Approval Standards	Adoption (Existing)	Relative/NE RFM (Existing)	Foster Home (Existing)	RFA
Criminal Records/Child Abuse Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
Standardized Criteria for Criminal Record Exemptions		✓	✓	✓
Home and Ground Safety Check	✓	✓	✓	✓
Training Required			✓	✓
Psychosocial Assessment	✓			✓
Screen for Risk Factors (DM, S, MH, PH)			MH and PH Only	✓
Applicant References	✓			✓
Annual Review of all families		✓		✓