
The Foster Care Housing Crisis

As the number of foster youth continues to rise in America, many state child welfare systems struggle to recruit and keep enough foster homes

In the first-ever report of its kind, *The Chronicle of Social Change* projects a continued increase in the number of children in foster care, as well as a concurrent shortfall in the number of foster homes to accommodate them.

While the federal government tracks the overall number of youth in foster care, the latest count of 427,910 was for federal fiscal year 2015.¹ The next count of children in foster care will be released later this year and will encompass fiscal year 2016.

Based on 2017 figures provided to *The Chronicle* by state agencies, we project² the number has risen to about 443,000, a 3 percent increase from 2015 and an 11 percent increase from 2012.

The Chronicle staff endeavored to determine whether this increase in foster care numbers has been met with a proportional increase in foster homes.

The simple answer, for at least half of the states in this country, is no. In others, increases in foster home capacity mask gaps on the local level and among certain demographic groups.

While the national capacity crisis is real, a handful of states have been able to increase the number of foster care beds faster than the rise in overall foster care numbers.

President Trump's proposed 2018 budget anticipates \$700 million more in Title IV-E foster care spending in the upcoming fiscal year, a signal that the Department of Health and Human Services also predicts continued increases.³

Key Findings

1. At least half of the states in the U.S. have seen their foster care capacity decrease between 2012 and 2017. Either these states have fewer beds and more foster youth, or any increase in beds has been dwarfed by an even greater increase in foster children and youth.
2. Our numbers suggesting downward trends in capacity are supported by documentation in the Child and Family Services Reviews, a periodic federal assessment of state child welfare systems.
3. In some states, a growing reliance on kinship care has offset the demand for non-relative homes. But an overall increase in the reliance on relatives is smaller than one might think.
4. Overall increase in some states has masked localized or demographic shortfalls, meaning that some children may have to be placed far from home.
5. Capacity challenges are not necessarily a byproduct of complacency; a number of states experienced declines in capacity despite dedicated efforts to increase it.
6. Some states have succeeded in intentionally growing the number of beds available for foster children.

Methods

For this project, we set out to identify recent trends in foster home capacity for each state and Washington, D.C. The two most critical elements in this realm are the number of available beds in non-relative foster homes, and the number of children and youth placed in foster care.

We attempted to assess capacity by contacting every state child welfare administration, as well as the federal Administration for Children Youth and Families, while also reviewing official reports from state and federal agencies to gather the following data points:

1. The number of beds available in licensed, non-relative foster homes for the years 2012 and 2017. When individual bed counts were not available, we attempted to collect the number of licensed, non-relative homes.

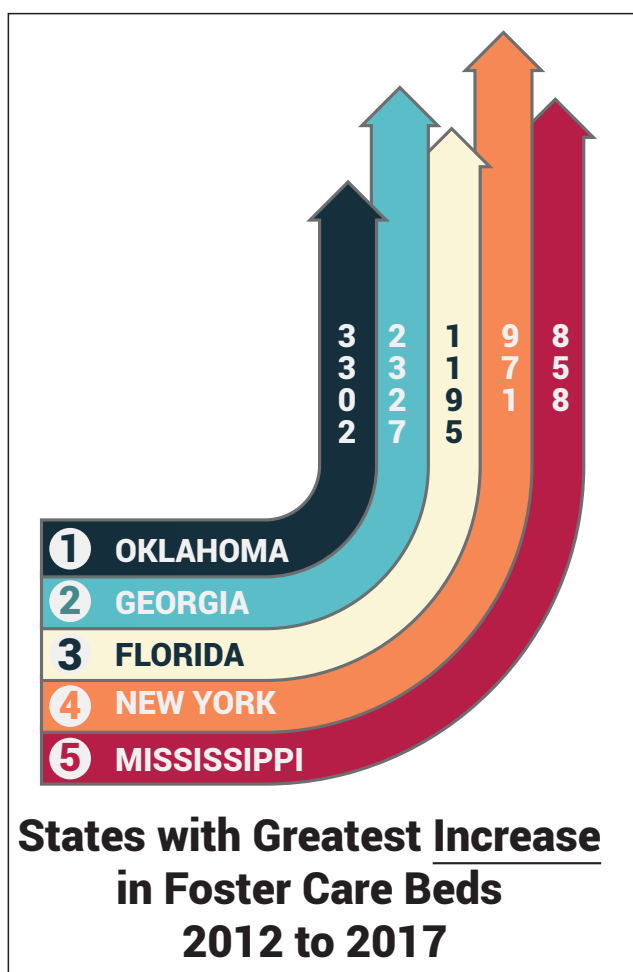
We used 2012 as a baseline because it is the first year in nearly a decade during which federal data indicated a rise in the number of youth in foster care.

We followed up our own data collection with analysis of the federal Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR), a periodic assessment of child welfare performance by state agencies. We also reviewed progress reports, and foster home recruitment and retention plans, filed by each state in accordance with the CFSR process.

2. The number of children in foster care. We used the federal data in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) for fiscal years 2012 and 2015, and we have also collected a recent 2017 state figure in all states that were able or willing to provide that information.

States with the Greatest Increase in Foster Youth 2012 to 2017

Arkansas	+9,820
California	+6,213
Georgia	+5,860
Florida	+4,523
Missouri	+3,563



We focus in this report on non-relative homes, excluding the beds currently used in relatives' homes and in group care settings. *The Chronicle* determined this to be the best measurement of a state's ability to respond to a potential increase in its foster care population.

Involving kin in removals has become a priority for many states. But in a pure projection of a state's ability to respond to an upward trend, it is not possible to predict the extent to which a state can rely on relatives for children it has not yet removed. It is logical to conclude, though, that states that are already involving kin at a high rate in foster care placements would be equipped to continue involving relatives.

On the other end of the spectrum, there is growing consensus in the child welfare field that congregate care is a suboptimal placement option for the vast majority of youth who are removed from their families.

Limitations

Some states said they could not differentiate their bed capacity data by relative and non-relative care. We did not include data from these states. Other states were not able to provide comparable data for 2012, and a handful of states did not respond at all to our requests for information for this project.

In total, there were 15 states where we were unable to make a basic determination of capacity as defined in the section above.

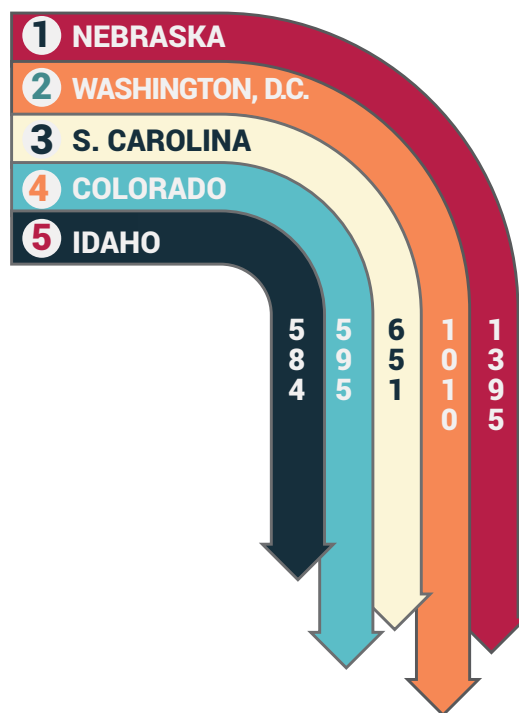
Other states said that the vast majority of their relative caregivers were unlicensed, though a small number of them would likely be included in the data on licensed bed space. We did include data from these states.

It is also important to note that our research for this project focuses entirely on quantity. Of greater importance to the field is the quality and preparedness of foster parents.

The need for stronger quality control in foster care was laid plain this fall in the report released by the Senate Finance Committee. While the report was nominally about the privatization of foster care, the committee mainly expressed concern at the passive approach some states took to monitoring and regulating private providers that manage foster families.⁴

Along the same lines, we also do not address in this research the drivers or rationale behind the increasing number of children entering foster care in various states. Our objective here was to learn about the foster home capacity of states, not what drove entrances into foster care.

States with Greatest Decrease in Foster Care Beds 2012 to 2017



States with the Greatest Decrease in Foster Youth 2012 to 2017

Nebraska	-1,658
Michigan	-1,480
S. Dakota	-1,399
N. Dakota	-1,109
Oregon	-1,086

Breakdown of Findings

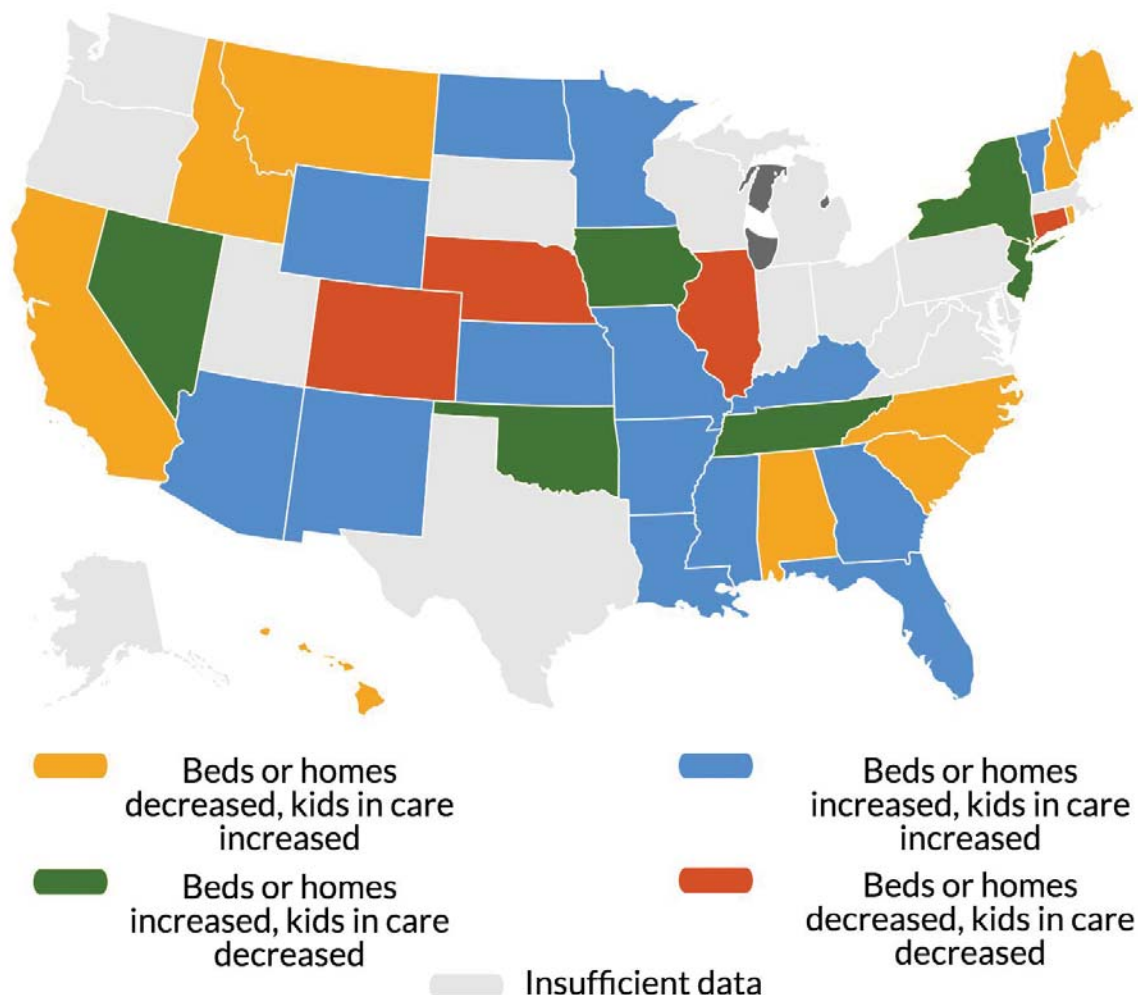
Finding One

We identified 25 states in the U.S. that saw their non-relative foster care capacity decrease from 2012 through 2017.

We were able to collect enough information to make a comparison in 34 states and Washington, D.C. Of those, 14 states and D.C. saw a decline in the number of licensed non-relative beds or homes. Ten of those states saw an increase in the foster care population during this same time frame.

There were 20 states that saw a numerical increase in non-relative beds or homes available. However, 11 of those also saw an increase in foster youth far greater than the increase in beds and homes. For example, Kentucky increased the number of foster homes by 1,459, but its foster youth population rose from 6,979 in 2012 to 8,508 in 2017.

See Appendix A for a state-by-state breakdown of data collected from each state. See Appendix C for individual state profiles.



Finding Two

The downward trend in foster care capacity suggested by these numbers is reflected in the federal reviews of state systems.

The federal government does not require states to report on the supply or capacity of available foster homes. But an assessment of each state's "Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes" is included in the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), a periodic Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) review of state child welfare systems.

The CFSR process rates a state's performance on several systemic factors, including the recruitment of foster families, using a combination of state-wide assessment and "onsite" reviews and interviews with child welfare stakeholders.

HHS is in the process of completing its third round of CFSR with each state, which will be completed in 2018. The first round was conducted between 2001 and 2004, the second round between 2007 and 2010.

Only 18 states received a "Strength" rating on recruitment in their most recent CFSR. The other 32 states were rated "Needs Improvement."

The CFSR assessment focuses on the state's efforts to recruit foster homes to serve older youth, minority youth and youth with special needs. But often, HHS notes overall trends in foster homes. Following are several examples, with excerpts from the reviews.⁵

Minnesota: "Minnesota has a severe shortage of foster homes for all children, especially for African American and Native American children. Areas of the state have shown an increasingly diverse population, but Minnesota has not adequately assessed the need."

Connecticut: Connecticut's second CFSR, conducted in 2008, noted a "severe shortage" of homes. Since then, the state has seen a further decline in homes from 2,377 to 1,921. In the third round, completed last year, the CFSR noted an alarming claim made by some of the stakeholders interviewed: that "it is difficult to close foster homes, even when an abuse or neglect investigation is substantiated, due to the shortage of foster home placement stability and to achieve adoptions in a timely manner."

Oregon: There is a "decreasing number of non-relative foster care resources. The shrinking pool of foster homes

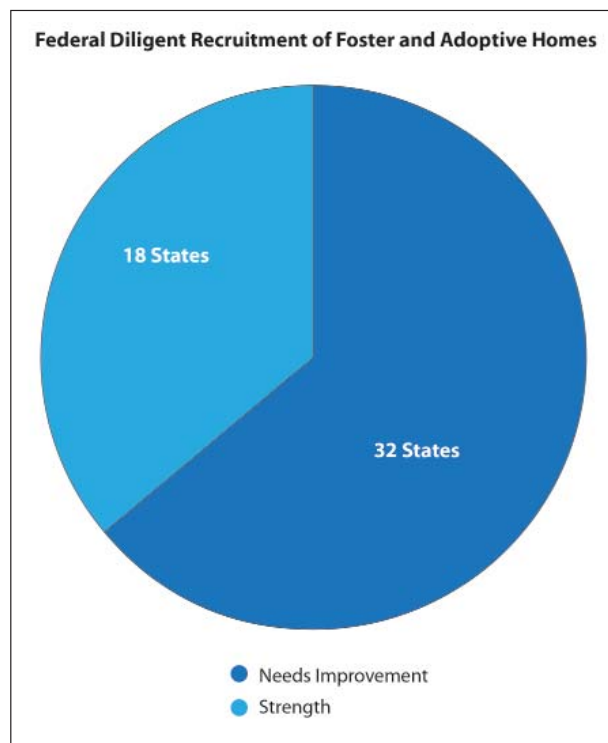
has led to the inability to consistently match placement options with the needs of children entering foster care. Evidence of this significant shortage was seen in the number of times children stayed with caseworkers in their offices or at a hotel over the past year ... In the last three years, the number of regularly certified foster homes has declined significantly."

Alaska: The state "does not have a statewide process in place to recruit foster homes despite significant shortages of all types of foster homes."

Colorado: "There is a shortage of foster parents in the

state that creates challenges in placing children in out-of-home care placements that are carefully matched to their needs. This lack of adequate matching may contribute to placement instability and to delays in permanency."

Texas: "Stakeholders said that the state does not have an adequate pool of homes to meet placement needs in specific regions or counties and cannot ensure that all children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed have sufficient homes available statewide."



Finding Three

In some states, growing reliance on kinship care has been a counterbalance on declining non-relative home options. But overall growth in the reliance on relatives is smaller than one might think.

In some of the states facing significant declines in the number of non-relative beds or homes, there was a growing reliance on relatives to care for children removed from their homes. This is based on trends in federal data between 2012 and 2015, the most recent year available.

See Appendix B of this report for a state-by-state breakdown of kinship foster care placements.

Some examples:

Connecticut: The state's stable of foster homes declined 20 percent between 2012 and 2017. But the percentage of foster youth in kinship placements was 22 percent in 2012, and had reached 36 percent by 2015.

Nebraska: The foster bed count dropped by 32 percent between 2012 and 2017. The percentage of its foster youth placed with kin went from 20 percent to 31 percent between 2012 and 2015.

The state's 2015-2019 Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment Retention Plan specifically identifies the following as one of its goals: "Relatives and kinship homes will have adequate specialized support to ensure placement stability as evidenced by survey results."⁶

As early as 2014, according to the plan, kinship families were to have access to training on trauma-informed care

and links to community resources to help meet the needs of the children in their care.

Arkansas: This state has also increased its reliance on relatives in the past two years. The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) made relative placements a pri-

ority after a report from veteran child welfare consultant Paul Vincent reviewed procedures for kinship care.

DCFS moved to ease barriers for relatives to become caregivers. Last year was the first year Arkansas did same-day placements of children in provisional foster homes with relatives. It completed 383 of these placements in 2016.

The percentage of removed children living with relatives has gone

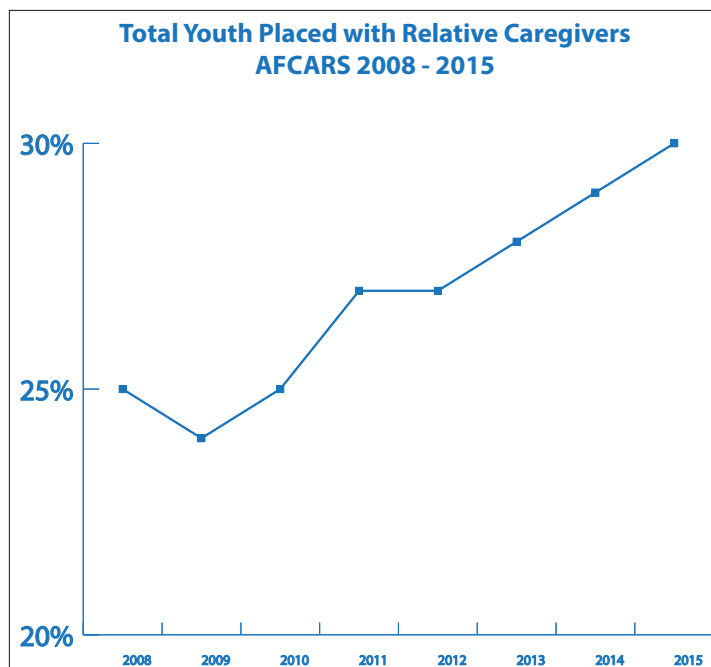
from 14.7 percent in 2015 to 28 percent today, according to *The Chronicle's* interview with DCFS Director Mischa Martin.

Minnesota: The foster bed total stayed flat between 2012 and 2017, while the number of foster youth rose by a staggering 60 percent. The state nearly doubled its reliance on kin between 2012 and 2015, from 17 percent of kids to 31 percent.

In its 2015-2019 Child and Family Services Plan,⁷ Minnesota also identifies improving kinship/relative engagement and placement among its priority areas.

Upon including that objective, the report states:

"Children in relative placements experience fewer moves while in care and have stronger attachment to temporary



caregivers with whom they may already have a significant relationship, and may continue to have a significant relationship post-reunification. Placement with relatives is helpful for maintaining a more culturally familiar environment for children and a faster timeline to permanency if reunification is not possible.”

That objective sets a goal that 45 percent of foster youth are placed with relatives by 2019.

There is growing recognition of the importance of involving relatives whenever possible in foster care placements. And between 2008 and 2015, 42 states saw an increase in the percentage of foster youth who were placed with relatives, according to federal AFCARS data provided to *The Chronicle of Social Change*.

But in that period, the overall national percentage of foster youth placed with kin only rose by fewer than six percentage points, from 24.5 percent to 30.2 percent. Of those 42 states that saw an increased reliance on kinship, only 15 had an increase of 10 percentage points or more.

Some states have failed to include more relatives, even as their non-relative supply decreased. In South Carolina, the state lost 16 percent of its non-relative beds while gaining more than 1,000 foster youth in the past five years. Only 7 percent of South Carolina foster youth lived with relatives in 2008, and that number dropped to 6 percent in 2015.

Finding Four

In some states, an overall increase in non-relative homes or beds has masked localized or demographic gaps.

We found that in several child welfare systems an overall increase in beds at the state level masked some challenges at the local level, or with youth of certain ages or races.

Georgia: The state increased its number of non-relative foster beds by 2,327 between 2012 and 2017. But Georgia has identified significant shortages in several of the regional divisions of its child welfare system.

Susan Boatwright, communications director for the Divi-

sion of Family and Children Services (DFCS), noted in her response to *The Chronicle of Social Change's* request that this figure did not tell the whole story. Said Boatwright: “When talking about this issue we often get a response saying we appear to have enough placements available (if you just look at the open beds), when we are really in desperate need of more foster homes in order to keep children in their local communities.”

Boatwright cautioned that overall bed totals do not factor in that any foster home can limit its availability in different ways.

“Providers have restrictions on the types of children they will accept based on age, gender, sibling group size, and level of care,” Boatwright said. “Which translates to: Just because there’s an open bed does not mean the foster home or the provider has the capacity to take another child.”

It is also not surprising that Georgia’s uptick in beds has failed to address DFCS’ capacity issues. Georgia’s foster care population has nearly doubled, up 76 percent from 7,671 to 13,531 in the past five years.

One of the demographic shortages experienced by many states is in the area of Latino children. This challenge was noted in the CFSR reports of states including Connecticut, Illinois, Mississippi, Utah and Virginia.

The CFSR for several northern states — including Minnesota, Montana, North and South Dakota, and Wyoming — noted a lack of beds available in Native American households.

Finding Five

Capacity challenges are not necessarily a byproduct of complacency.

Florida, which has a privatized system dominated by several regional lead agencies, recently instituted recruitment as part of its regional and statewide plans. These are intended to fulfill specific foster and adoptive home recruitment goals using prior year data.

The state did see an overall increase of 1,195 beds in the past five years, but the foster care population rose from 19,536 in 2012 to 24,059 in 2017. The 13 percent increase in beds was dwarfed by a 23 percent increase in foster children and youth.

Florida's most recent CFSR found that the effectiveness of recruitment "could not be demonstrated. Despite these efforts, stakeholders noted significant home shortages and retention challenges."

In South Carolina, the state embarked on a venture similar to Florida's. In its 2015-2019 plan, the state Department of Social Services announced it would pilot a "regional licensing structure" to raise the number of available foster homes in the system.⁸

"In recent years, the number of quality resource families statewide has declined, while the number of children coming into care has held steady," the plan states. "Many of these children were members of large sibling groups and often over the age of 10. In order to accommodate the increased number of siblings and older children entering care, more resource families are needed."

But the number of beds in South Carolina has declined by 651 since 2012. Meanwhile, the number of foster youth is up from 3,113 in 2012 to 4,232 this year.

Finding Six

Some states have intentionally grown the number of beds available within their foster care systems.

New Jersey is one of only a few states where the state's fos-

ter home capacity exceeds the number of children placed in out-of-home care.

Bed capacity in foster homes has increased from 6,349 in 2012 to 6,844 in 2017, even as the overall number of children placed in out-of-home care has dropped by 9 percent during that time. That number is now 6,232, according to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF).

DCF staff attributed the increase to better data from county-level assessments that have helped individual recruiters better identify specific needs in the different parts of the state, such as families able to take in sibling groups.

DCF contracts with a nonprofit called Foster and Adoptive Family Services to provide support services and on-going training to foster and relative caregivers in the state.

Lloyd Nelson, communications staffer for Foster and

Adoptive Family Services, said increased supports were part of the response to the 2003 death of Faheem Williams, a 7-year-old who was found dead near the home of a relative caring for him and his brothers.

DCF now provides dedicated social workers just for resource families, in addition to other support services, Nelson said.

"The reason I think New Jersey is successful is that it provides ample resources," Nelson said. "We have board rates, we have workers, we have agencies like Foster and Adoptive Family Services that make it easier for you to be a foster parent."



Arkansas saw its foster youth population jump by 38 percent between 2012 and 2017. During this time, the state boosted the number of licensed foster homes in the state to 1,458 in 2017, an increase of 388 over 2012.

Arkansas' top child welfare official, Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Director Mischa Martin, attributed the gains to a federal grant and the faith-based community.

A 2013 Diligent Recruitment Grant, made by the Children's Bureau for \$400,000 over five years, has helped the state use a data-driven approach to hone in on specific areas of need and counties with a disproportionate number of children entering the system.

Until recently, Arkansas drew most of its foster parents from the state-run foster care system. The CALL, a non-profit organization supported by Christian congregations across Arkansas, helps DCFS recruit foster homes through the faith-based community and also helps provide training and background checks.

The organization started with one county in 2007, and has since emerged as a statewide provider.

"Almost 50 percent of our foster homes in Arkansas were recruited by The CALL," Martin said.

Kentucky also increased the number of licensed foster homes by nearly 50 percent, from 3,157 in 2012 to 4,616 in 2017. That has not been anywhere near enough to meet the demand for out-of-home placements caused by the opioid epidemic. In that time, the number of children in care has increased by about 23 percent, to 8,598.

"Seventy-one percent of children are coming into care as a result of substance abuse, contributing either directly or indirectly," said Adria Johnson, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services (DCBS).

In the past few years, Kentucky has come to rely more

on its privatized network of foster care providers to fill a growing demand. "Private child-caring" homes now account for 41.3 percent of all placements for Kentucky children in out-of-home care, as compared with 33.4 percent placed in DCBS foster homes.

That is a notable change from 2012, when private foster homes accounted for 35.4 percent of all placements, compared with 42 percent for DCBS homes. During those five years, the number of children placed in private child-caring homes increased by 999. Meanwhile, DCBS foster home placements decreased by 162.

"We've seen much more of an increase in their [private foster family agencies'] ability to bring on homes than we have," Johnson said.

Johnson said Kentucky has also attempted to hasten the licensing process for potential foster homes. The state is exploring how to streamline the application and training process for foster parents, she said, and it cut the number of initial training hours required for foster parents in Kentucky from 32 to 15.

"We wanted to make [the process] less cumbersome, more achievable and sensitive to work schedules and home schedules," said Johnson. "We look for ways to create efficiencies in that space."

Like Arkansas, Kentucky is relying on more help from the faith community. Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin launched the "Open Hearts/Open Homes" initiative to build greater capacity within the faith-based community. In addition to more homes, the state is hoping that faith-based communities can provide more respite care and mentoring to children.

The state has partnered with Harvest of Hope Family Services, an organization that trains churches and communities on how to provide successful foster parent homes. Founded in New Jersey in 1996 by Rev. Dr. DeForest B. Soaries Jr., Harvest of Hope Family Services is now in Kentucky and Arizona.

Discussion

The number of foster youth in America appears likely to continue its upward trend. As mentioned in the introduction of this report, *The Chronicle of Social Change* projects that the number of youth in foster care will be approximately 443,000, or 3 percent higher than the federal AFCARS data reported for fiscal 2015.

President Trump's proposed 2018 budget anticipates \$700 million more in Title IV-E foster care spending in the upcoming fiscal year, a signal that the Department of Health and Human Services predicts continued increases.

This increase will further challenge states to find stable homes for kids, especially those states that have not grown the role of kinship care.

States experiencing drastic surges in their foster care population should assess the reasons why, especially at a time with foster home capacity is decreasing in many states.

Federal and state officials have attributed the increasing foster care totals to removals related to substance abuse, particularly opioid abuse. But states should also be mindful of the potential for high-profile deaths or quickly developing trends such as the rise in opioid abuse to prompt unnecessary removals of children from their families.

As mentioned, Arkansas has seen a 38 percent increase in its foster care population since 2012. While it has been more successful than most states in raising placement capacity, it also appears to be unnecessarily removing children.

This was the finding of Hornby Zeller Associates, a consulting group hired by the state to assess the surging foster care numbers.⁹

"The increase in foster care is due largely to two factors: DCFS removing more children [from their homes] immediately upon investigation and the courts ordering removals against the recommendations of the agency," the firm stated in its report issued in 2016.

The federal government has no existing mandate to track

and/or monitor the foster care capacity of states. What it knows is largely the product of information shared through the CFSR process.

The central transmission of child welfare information is through the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), which includes data to be reported in compliance with the requirements of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS).

The annual AFCARS report notes the percentage of foster youth living in different types of placements: foster homes, with kin, in group settings or in independent living arrangements. But the actual number of each placement option is not collected.

A state's non-relative foster home capacity is influenced by the addition of new families and by its ability to retain the homes it already has.

This report did not take on those two factors as independent variables. We looked at the aggregate trends, so the changes from 2012 to 2017 do not account for how many families were added or how many stopped fostering.

Future research that tracks the exit of foster families, and the reasons why, could help inform the discussion on retaining foster families.

The capacity of states to place youth in foster homes should be of great importance to those seeking to reform federal child welfare financing.

A recent attempt at this, the Family First Prevention Services Act, would allow states to spend more federal dollars on strategies to prevent the need for foster care in more cases that involved substance abuse, mental health or parenting challenges.¹⁰

Were such a gambit successful, it could drive down the demand for foster care placements, which would stabilize the existing capacity of states.

The bill would also have placed restrictions on federal fund-

ing for congregate care placements. In the long term, the hope is that the other part of this legislation would decrease the need for such placements and for all other forms of foster care.

But in the short term, limitations on congregate care placements might require some states to rely more heavily on their available foster homes. And as this research shows, many states are challenged as it is when it comes to foster home capacity.

Conclusion

The notion of a national child welfare system, with coherent trends and corresponding lessons, is somewhat illusory. While the federal government contributes billions to states for child welfare purposes, the work of maltreatment prevention, child protection and family services are planned and carried out at the state and county level.

Our research on the recent, state-by-state changes suggests there is a national foster care housing crisis in America. At least half of the states in the country have lost foster care capacity in the past five years. Another 15 were not able to provide enough information for us to even make a determination of their capacity.

Meanwhile, only three states demonstrated that they had gained more foster homes against the backdrop of a lower,

or even constant, number of youth in foster care. And several states that saw overall capacity rise have noted serious regional challenges in placing children in foster homes.

The federal government currently has little to do with recruitment and retention of foster homes, but it can play a bigger role on this issue.

States regularly share information about foster home recruitment with HHS through the Child and Family Services Review process. In several instances that we noted in our report, a state's failure to recruit enough foster homes contributed to failure on the CFSR assessment. Yet there is no current effort to collect state-by-state data on foster care capacity.

The federal government, along with the philanthropic world, can also play a role in helping to disseminate best practices in this arena. While our report displays the high number of states that have struggled with capacity, it also notes several states that have intentionally grown their stable of foster homes.

But ultimately, the hard work of recruiting and then training foster parents will continue to fall to state and county child welfare agencies. The findings of this report suggest that many (if not most) of these systems are already struggling to keep up.

Sources

State Research Requests

Between June and August of 2017, *The Chronicle of Social Change* contacted child welfare agencies in each state and Washington, D.C. We asked them to provide the following information:

1. The number of beds in non-relative foster homes for the years 2012 and 2017. We used 2012 as a baseline year for comparison because fiscal 2012 is the year when the national foster care population began its recent rise. When specific bed figures were not available, we sought the number of licensed non-relative homes.
2. The most recent count of youth in foster care.

Federal Data

The Chronicle used data available from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) for the following:

1. The state-by-state number of youth in foster in each state in 2012 and 2015.
2. The state-by-state number and percentage of foster youth who were placed with relatives in 2012 and 2015.
3. The number of youth in foster care reported by states for 2017 may not be calculated in the same way as federal AFCARS figures

State-Federal Documents

The Chronicle analyzed the most recent Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) reports for each state. Each CFSR includes an assessment of each state's "Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes."

Many states have already completed the round three CFSR evaluation, which will conclude in 2018. For states that have not been reviewed in round three, *The Chronicle* used its round two evaluation, conducted between 2007 and 2010.

Interviews

The Chronicle interviewed child welfare officials in several states for this report. We have included feedback from several researchers and advocates on the findings in the report.

Authors of the report: John Kelly, Daniel Heimpel, Jeremy Loudanback, Christie Renick, Kim Phagan-Hansel, Elizabeth Green, Stephanie Pham and Marisol Zarate

Endnotes

1. The AFCARS Report, No. 23 (June, 2016), The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau.
2. To project this, we include 2017 figures provided to us by state agencies, and then add federal 2015 data for states that did not provide current totals. This assumes a constant number for the states we do not have 2017 numbers for; in fact, most of those states have seen their foster care totals increase in recent years. Inasmuch, our projections are conservative.
3. Kelly, John. "Amid Cuts to Youth Services, Trump Includes Big Increase to Child Welfare Entitlement." *The Chronicle of Social Change*. May, 2017.
4. Kelly, John. "Senate Report Slams Public Management of Private Foster Care Industry." *The Chronicle of Social Change*. October, 2017.
5. Unless otherwise indicated, these comments are taken from the Round Three CFSR for each state. Round Three is scheduled to conclude in 2018; www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/monitoring/child-family-services-reviews/round3
6. Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment Retention Plan CFSP. 2014. <http://dhhs.ne.gov>.
7. Minnesota Department of Human Services. Minnesota Child and Family Services Plan. 2014. <http://mn.gov/dhs>.
8. South Carolina Department of Social Services. Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan 2015-2019. 2014. <https://dss.sc.gov>.
9. Joyce, Kathryn. "Arkansas's foster care surge due to 'questionable removals' of kids, DHS consultant finds." *Arkansas Times*. October, 2016.
10. Kelly, John. "Family First Bill: CBO Projects Long-Term Savings, Does Not Expect Big Drop in Congregate Care." *The Chronicle of Social Change*. June, 2016.

Appendix A: Overview of State Capacity Data

Bed Capacity in Non-Relative Foster Homes

State	Bed Capacity, 2012	Bed Capacity, 2017	Change	2012 Foster Care Estimate (AFCARS)	2015 Foster Care Estimate (AFCARS)	2017 State's Count of All Children in Foster Care
Arizona	8,572	8,914	342	13,461	17,738	16,751
Colorado	6,231	5,636	-595	6,003	5,644	4,968
D.C.	2,000	990	-1,010	1,551	947	926
Florida	9,167	10,362	1,195	19,536	22,364	24,059
Georgia	9,263	11,590	2,327	7,671	10,935	13,531
Idaho	1,854	1,270	-584	1,234	1,351	1,649
Iowa	3,730	4,300	570	6,262	5,918	5,269
Kansas	6,533	7,367	834	6,002	7,223	7,192
Louisiana	3,155	3,409	254	4,044	4,545	4,364
Maine	2,581	2,453	-128	1,512	1,873	1,749
Minnesota	8,154	8,167	13	5,330	7,610	8,875
Mississippi	5,307	6,165	858	3,699	4,773	5,115
Nebraska	4,350	2,955	-1,395	5,116	3,887	3,458
Nevada	2,515	2,990	465	4,745	4,485	4,319
New Hampshire	1,695	1,666	-29	768	1,004	N/A
New Jersey	6,349	6,844	495	6,848	6,874	6,232
New York	20,016	20,987	971	23,924	20,921	N/A
North Carolina	14,945	14,731	-214	8,461	10,324	11,122
North Dakota	949	1,029	80	1,109	1,359	N/A
Oklahoma	2,310	5,612	3,302	9,134	11,173	9,020
Rhode Island	1,024	899	-125	1,707	1,826	1,829
South Carolina	3,872	3,221	-651	3,113	3,726	4,232
Tennessee	4,827	5,129	302	7,978	7,780	N/A
Vermont	922	1,128	206	975	1,332	1,247
Wyoming	426	440	14	949	1,082	N/A

Licensed, Non-Relative Foster Homes

State	2012 Licensed, Non-Relative Foster Homes	2017 Licensed, Non-Relative Foster Homes	Change	2012 Foster Care Estimate (AFCARS)	2015 Foster Care Estimate (AFCARS)	2017 State's Count of All Children in Foster Care
Alabama	1,823	1,716	-107	4,561	4,745	6,050
Arkansas	1,070	1,458	388	3,711	4,548	5,135
California	14,496	13,744	-752	54,553	55,983	60,766
Connecticut	2,377	1,921	-456	4,563	3,908	4,402
Hawaii	1,089	577	-512	1,079	1,360	1,533
Illinois	11,386	9,839	-1,547	16,772	16,654	16,160
Kentucky	3,157	4,616	1,459	6,979	7,538	8,508
Missouri	1,971	2,781	810	9,985	12,160	13,548
Montana	884	695	-189	1,937	2,807	3,701
New Mexico	685	804	119	1,914	2,471	2,419

All data was collected in correspondence with state officials and reviews of official state reports and publications. We have listed states by bed capacity wherever available, and licensed homes where bed data was not available. States that did not respond: Virginia, Utah, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Maryland. Insufficient data provided from states: Alaska, Delaware, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin. The number of youth in foster care reported by states for 2017 may not be calculated in the same way as federal AFCARS figures

Appendix B: Reliance on Relatives

Relative Family Foster Homes

Number and percentage of foster youth placed with relatives

STATE	FY 2008 Count	Percent	FY 2012 Count	Percent	FY 2015 Count	Percent	Change from 2008 to 2015
Alabama	808	12%	576	13%	532	11%	-1%
Alaska	512	26%	359	19%	634	24%	-2%
Arizona	3,345	35%	5,307	40%	8,222	47%	12%
Arkansas	313	9%	613	17%	724	16%	7%
California	19,051	28%	16,959	31%	18,319	33%	5%
Colorado	1,084	14%	922	16%	1,338	24%	10%
Connecticut	822	16%	984	22%	1,412	36%	20%
Delaware	111	12%	71	9%	76	11%	-1%
DC	358	17%	239	16%	164	17%	1%
Florida	9,256	42%	8,977	46%	9,997	45%	3%
Georgia	1,716	17%	1,347	18%	2,609	24%	7%
Hawaii	661	41%	515	48%	608	45%	4%
Idaho	332	19%	344	28%	408	30%	11%
Illinois	6,252	35%	5,788	35%	6,136	37%	2%
Indiana	2,350	20%	3,014	27%	6,210	36%	17%
Iowa	1,241	18%	1,605	26%	1,727	29%	11%
Kansas	1,351	21%	1,656	28%	2,154	30%	8%
Kentucky	766	11%	329	5%	258	3%	-7%
Louisiana	1,083	21%	935	23%	1,712	38%	16%
Maine	414	24%	470	31%	533	29%	5%
Maryland	2,363	32%	1,951	40%	1,446	37%	5%
Massachusetts	1,891	18%	1,851	22%	2,649	26%	8%
Michigan	7,429	37%	4,612	32%	4,221	35%	-2%
Minnesota	961	16%	889	17%	2,371	31%	15%
Mississippi	635	19%	1,086	29%	1,705	37%	18%
Missouri	1,438	19%	2,552	26%	3,310	27%	8%
Montana	450	28%	782	40%	1,321	47%	19%
Nebraska	1,039	19%	1,037	20%	1,199	31%	12%
Nevada	1,462	29%	1,638	35%	1,524	34%	5%
New Hampshire	159	15%	149	21%	163	17%	1%
New Jersey	3,229	38%	2,322	34%	2,509	36%	-1%
New Mexico	458	21%	365	19%	464	19%	-2%
New York	5,825	20%	4,785	20%	3,679	21%	2%
North Carolina	2,214	23%	2,016	24%	2,720	27%	4%
North Dakota	172	14%	138	12%	231	17%	3%
Ohio	1,970	14%	1,757	15%	2,178	16%	2%
Oklahoma	2,995	28%	2,750	31%	3,745	34%	5%
Oregon	1,720	19%	2,644	30%	2,038	28%	9%
Pennsylvania	5,944	22%	3,566	25%	5,156	32%	10%
Rhode Island	539	22%	494	29%	701	38%	16%
South Carolina	351	7%	208	7%	232	6%	-1%
South Dakota	266	18%	242	17%	286	22%	4%
Tennessee	554	8%	1,066	13%	801	10%	3%
Texas	7,433	27%	9,644	33%	9,898	33%	6%
Utah	390	14%	576	20%	624	23%	9%
Vermont	134	11%	193	20%	458	34%	23%
Virginia	468	7%	293	6%	275	6%	-1%
Washington	3,986	36%	3,206	33%	3,687	35%	-1%
West Virginia	671	15%	809	18%	984	20%	5%
Wisconsin	2,290	31%	2,005	31%	2,571	36%	5%
Wyoming	176	16%	220	23%	339	31%	15%
Puerto Rico	1,837	30%	1,295	30%	563	13%	-16%
Total	113,275	25%	108,151	27%	127,821	30%	6%

Source: Federal AFCARS reports.

Appendix C: Foster Care Capacity State Profiles

**This section includes profiles for all states that provided
2012 and 2017 data on non-relative beds or homes**

Foster Care Capacity: **Alabama**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 4,561

2015: 4,745

2017: 6,050

Non-Relative Foster Homes

2012: 1,823

2015: N/A

2017: 1,716

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 576 (13%)

2015: 532 (11%)

2017: N/A

*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Arizona**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 13,461

2015: 17,738

2017: 16,751

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 8,572

2015: N/A

2017: 8,914

Youth Placed with Kin

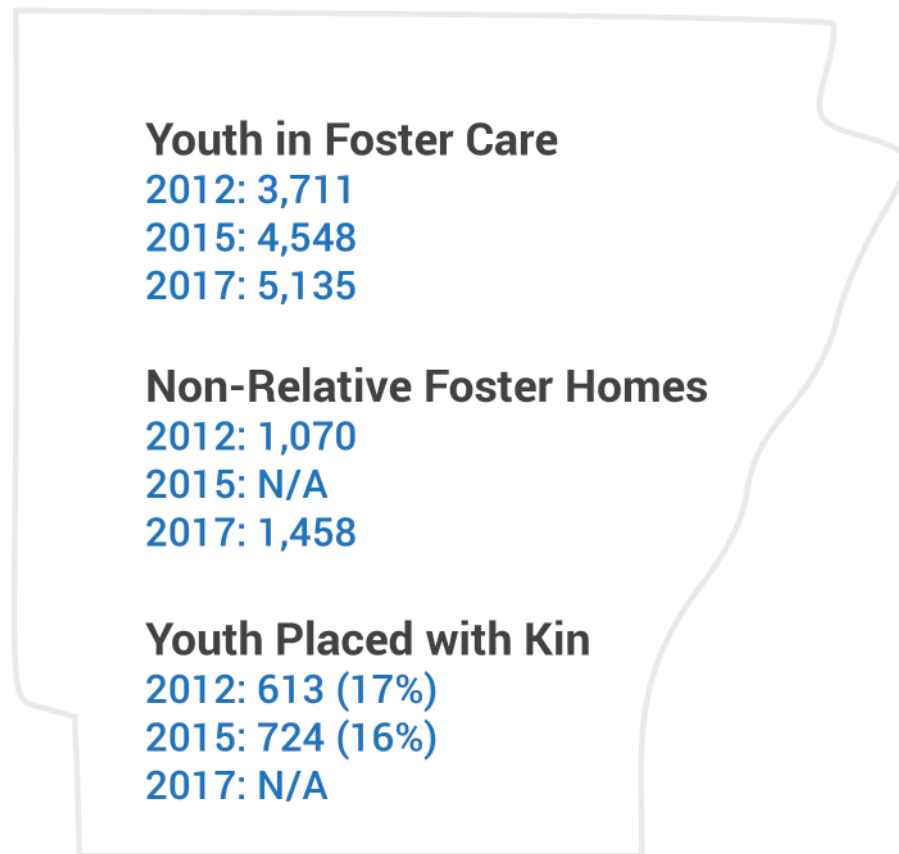
2012: 5,307 (40%)

2015: 8,222 (47%)

2017: N/A

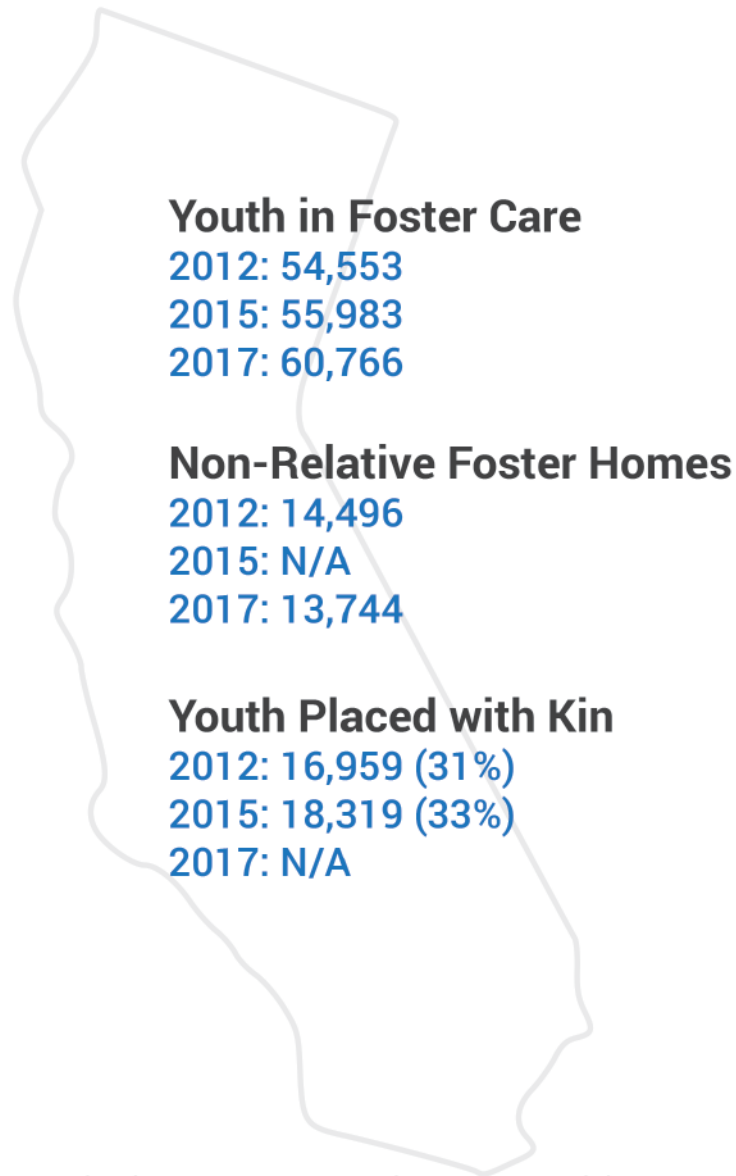
*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Arkansas**



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: California



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Colorado**

Youth in Foster Care

2012: 6,003

2015: 5,644

2017: 4,968

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 6,231

2015: N/A

2017: 5,636

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 922 (16%)

2015: 1,338 (24%)

2017: N/A

Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.

2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.

Foster Care Capacity: **Connecticut**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 4,563

2015: 3,908

2017: 4,402

Non-Relative Foster Homes

2012: 2,377

2015: N/A

2017: 1,921

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 984 (22%)

2015: 1,412 (36%)

2017: N/A

*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Washington, D.C.

Youth in Foster Care

2012: 1,551

2015: 947

2017: 926

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 2,000

2015: N/A

2017: 990

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 239 (16%)

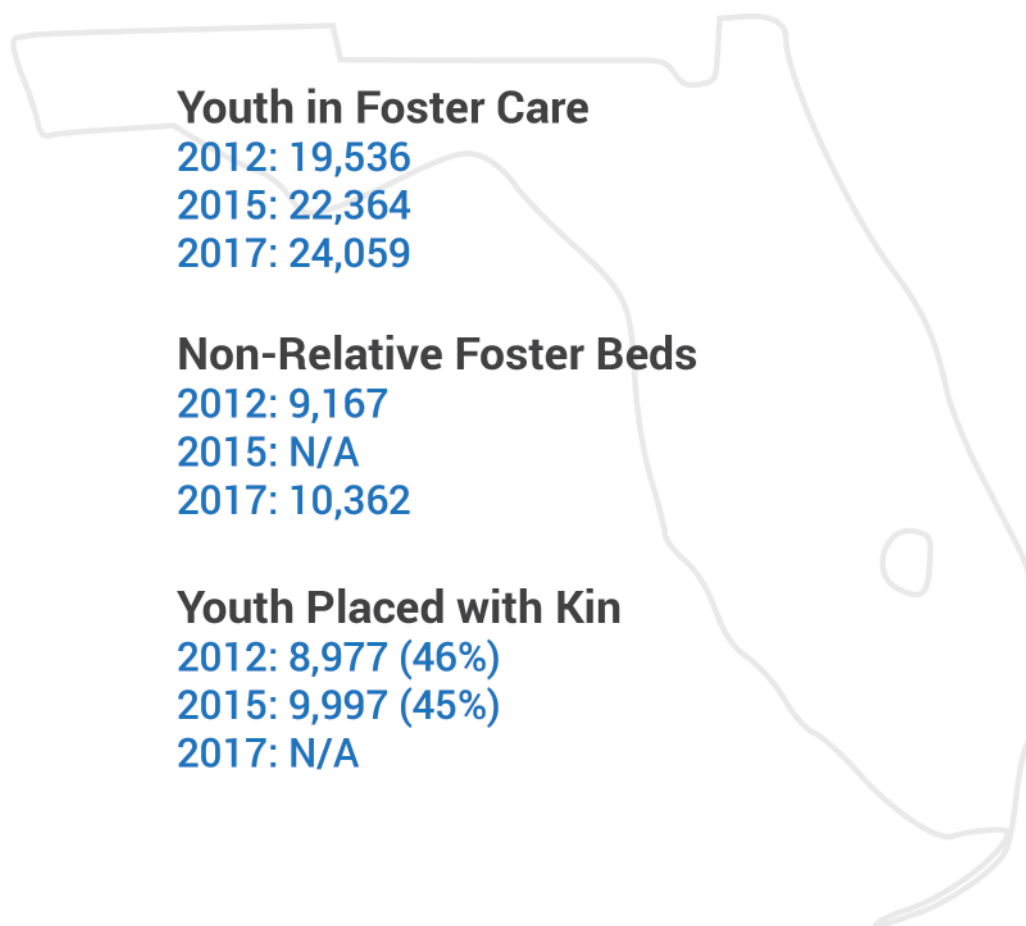
2015: 164 (17%)

2017: N/A

Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.

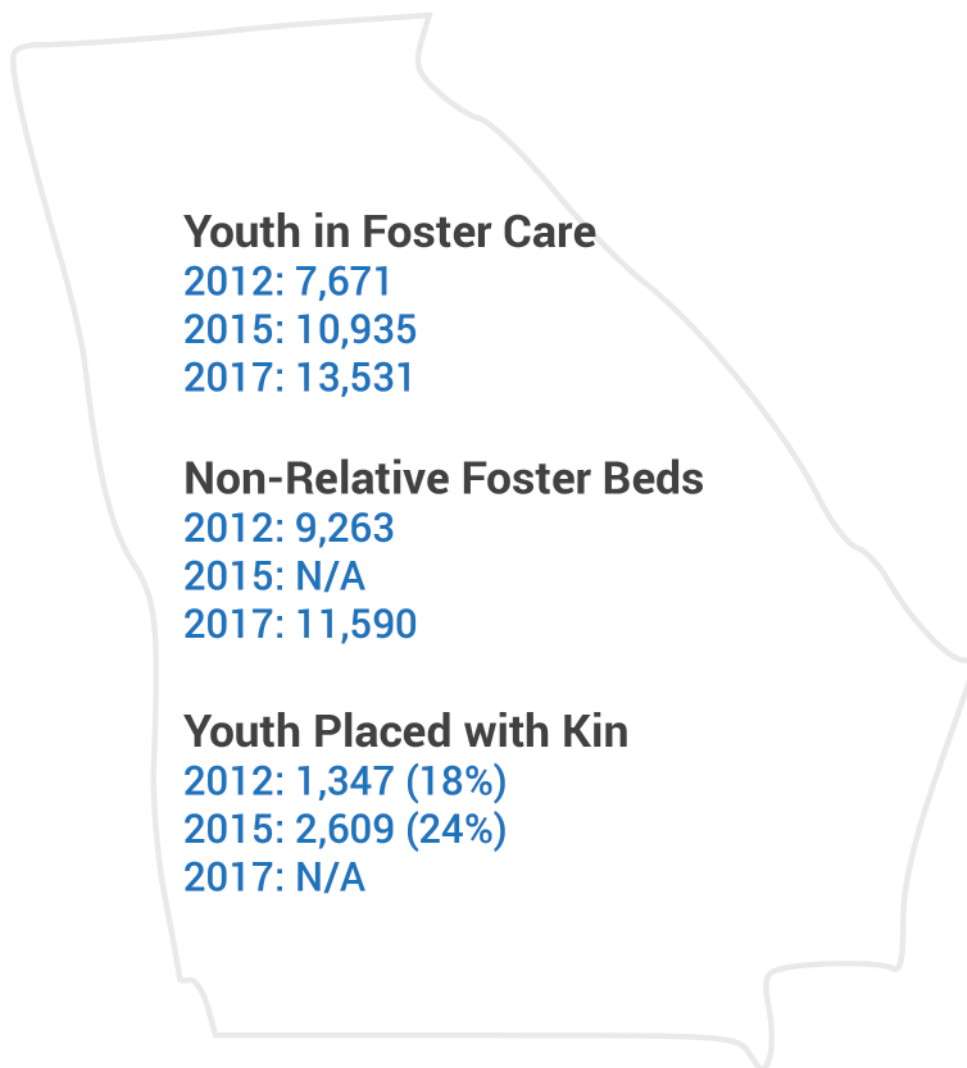
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.

Foster Care Capacity: **Florida**



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Georgia



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Hawaii**

Youth in Foster Care

2012: 1,079

2015: 1,360

2017: 1,533

Non-Relative Foster Homes

2012: 1,089

2015: N/A

2017: 577

Youth Placed with Kin

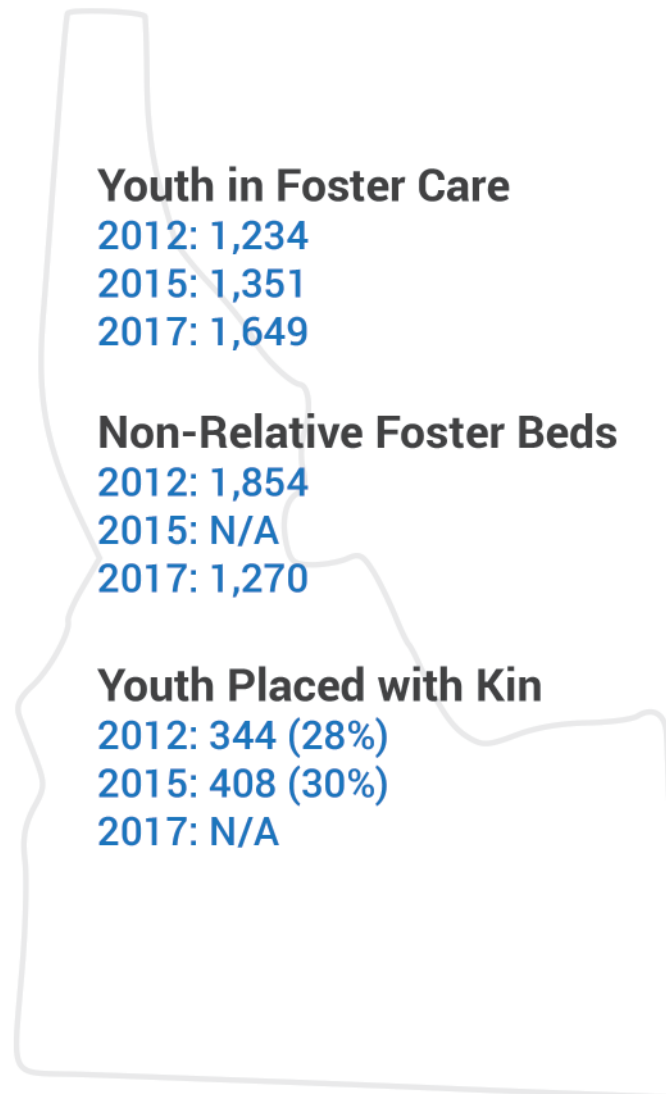
2012: 515 (48%)

2015: 608 (45%)

2017: N/A

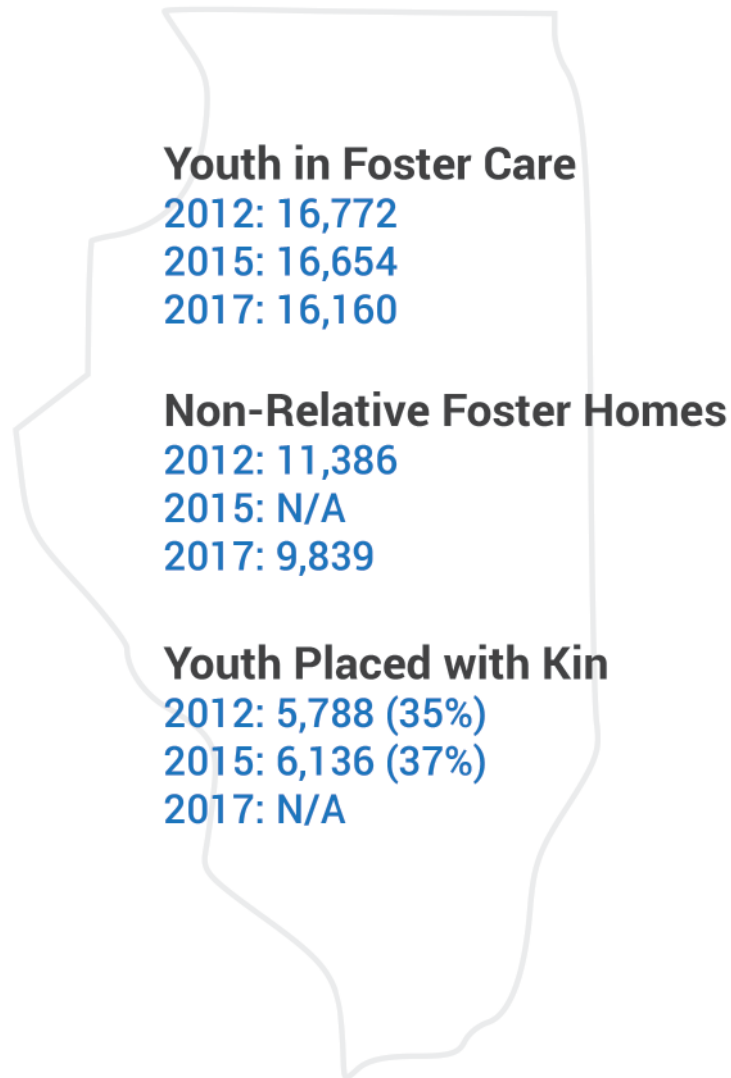
*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Idaho



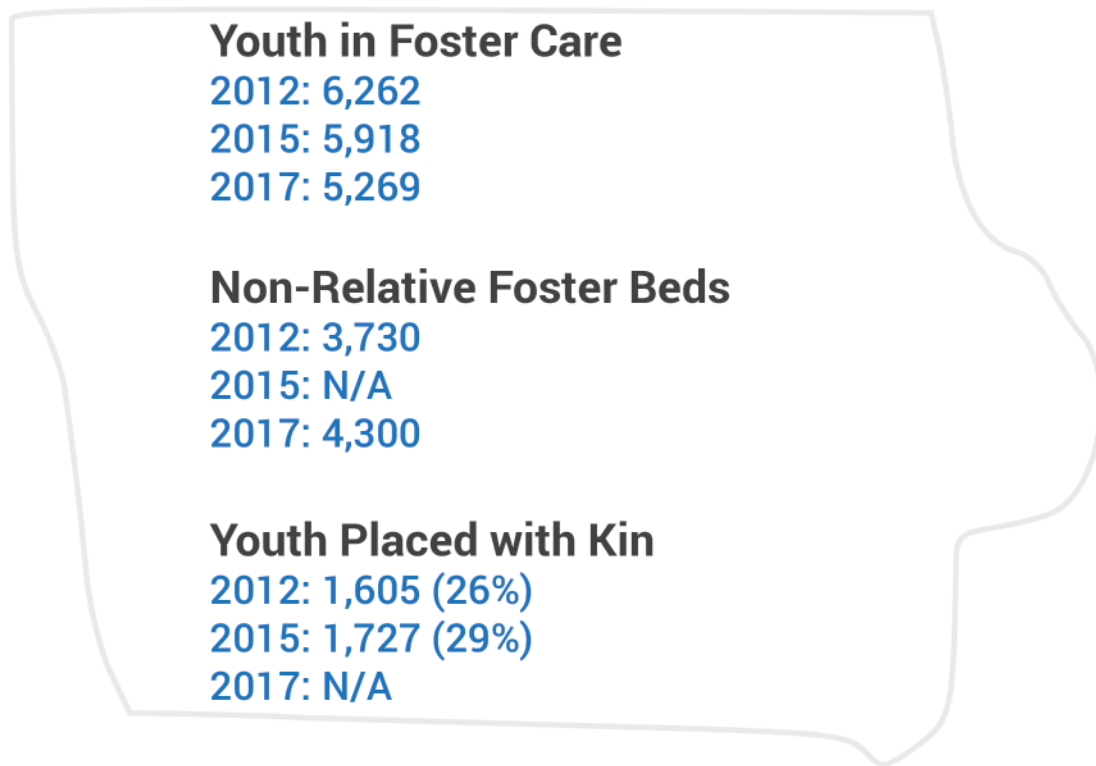
*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Illinois



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Iowa



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Kansas**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 6,002

2015: 7,223

2017: 7,192

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 6,533

2015: N/A

2017: 7,367

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 1,656 (28%)

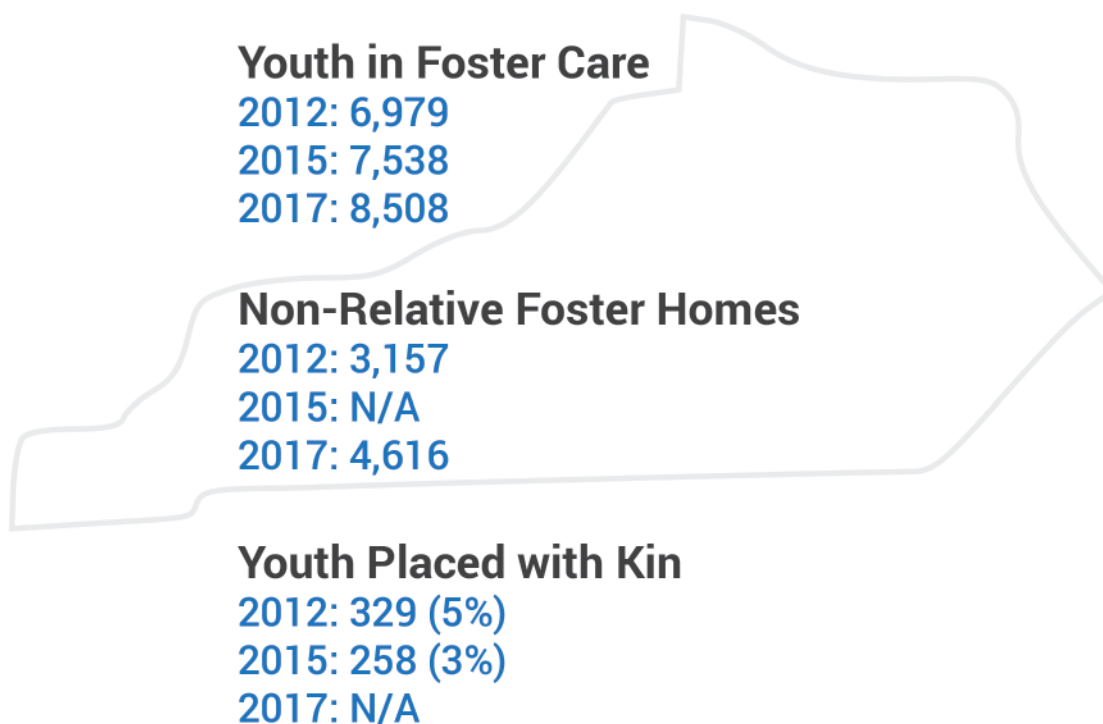
2015: 2,154 (30%)

2017: N/A

Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.

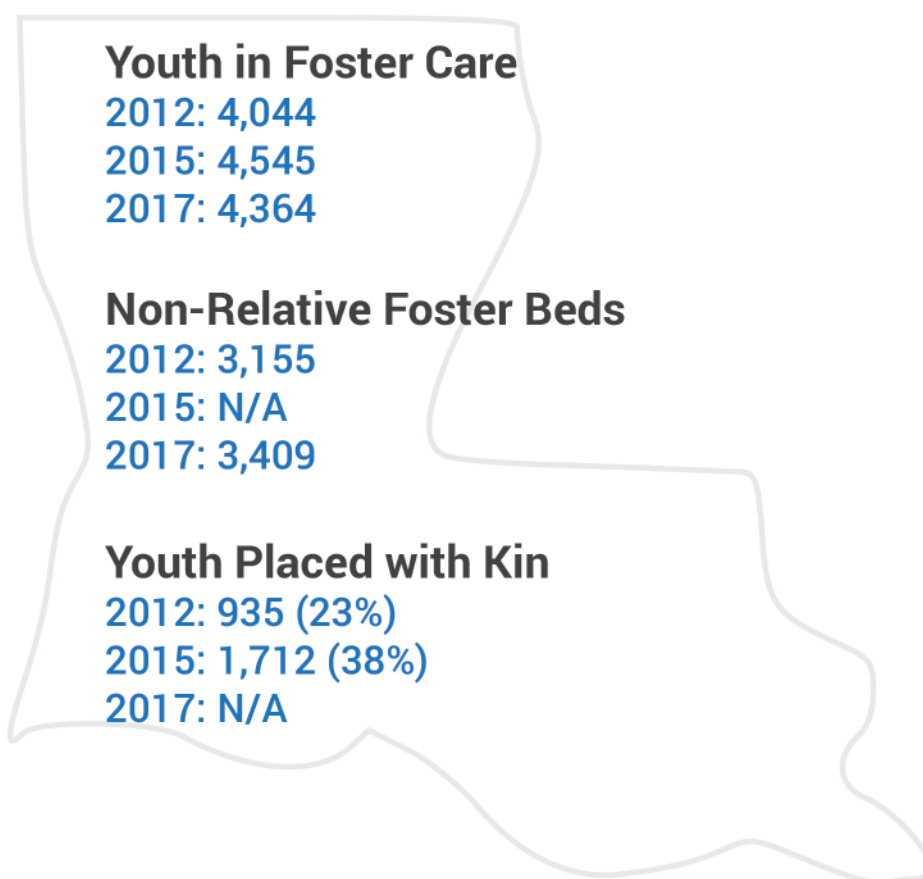
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.

Foster Care Capacity: **Kentucky**



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Louisiana



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Maine**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 1,512

2015: 1,873

2017: 1,749

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 2,581

2015: N/A

2017: 2,453

Youth Placed with Kin

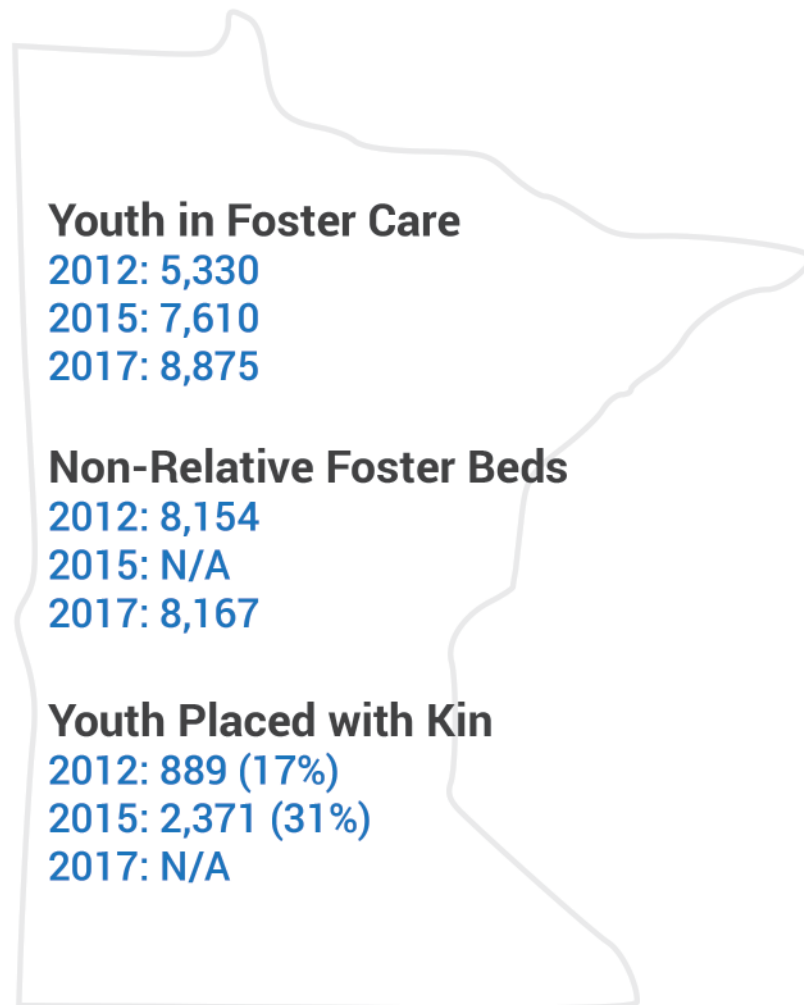
2012: 470 (31%)

2015: 533 (29%)

2017: N/A

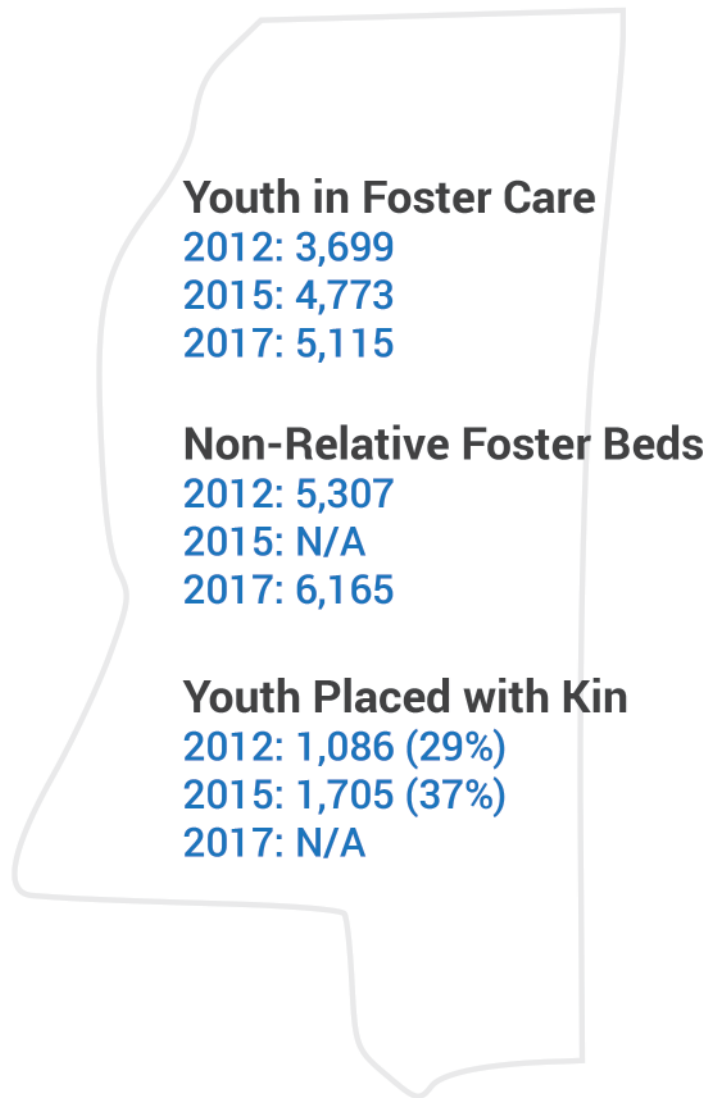
*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Minnesota



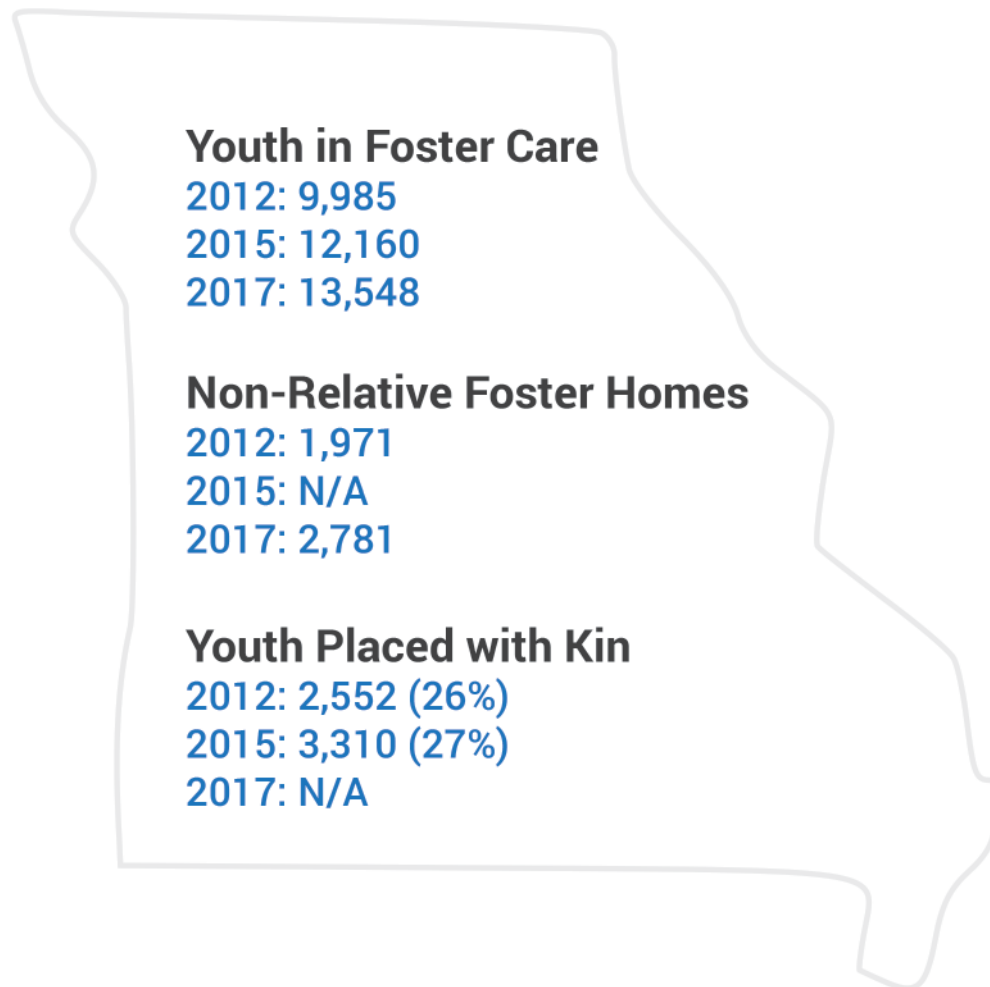
*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Mississippi



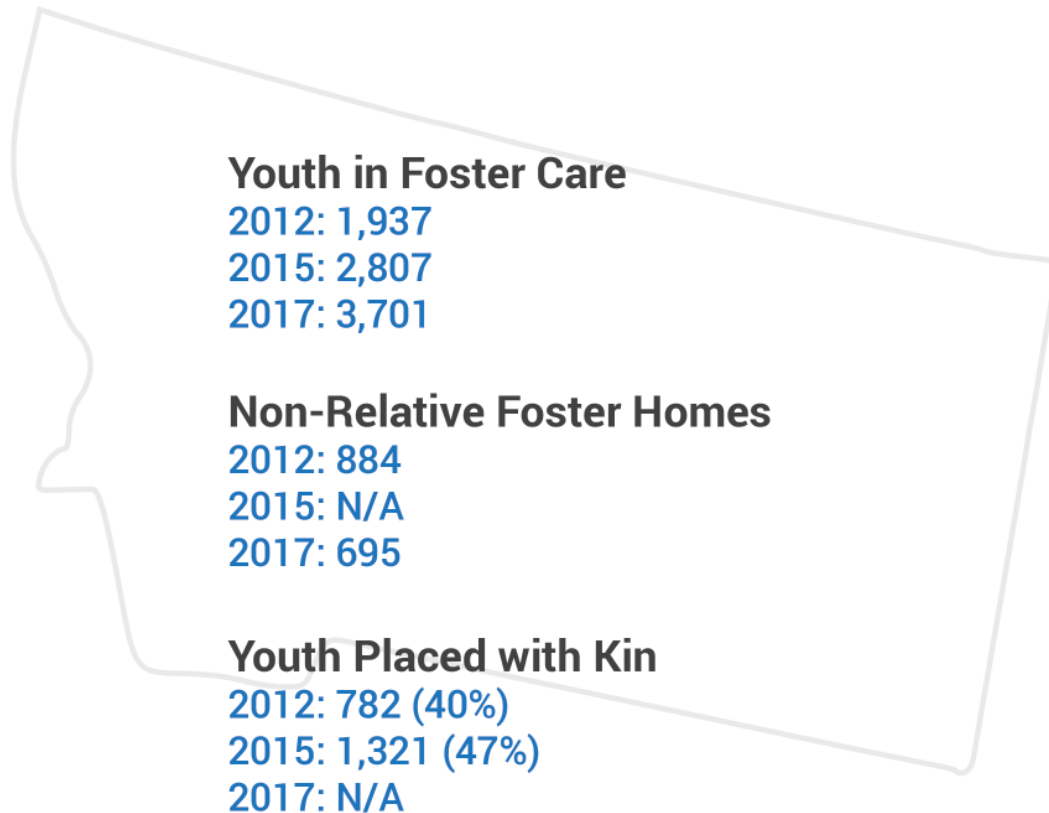
*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Missouri**



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Montana**



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Nebraska**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 5,116

2015: 3,887

2017: 3,458

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 4,350

2015: N/A

2017: 2,955

Youth Placed with Kin

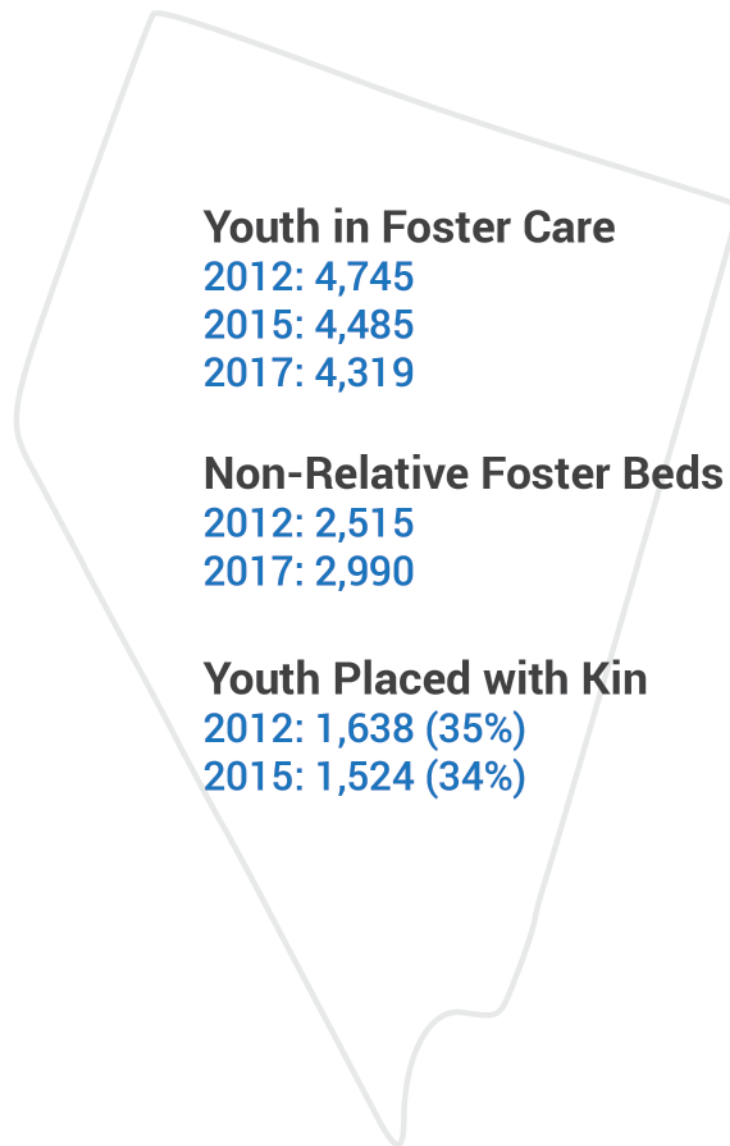
2012: 1,037 (20%)

2015: 1,199 (31%)

2017: N/A

*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Nevada



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **New Hampshire**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 768

2015: 1,004

2017: N/A

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 1,695

2015: N/A

2017: 1,666

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 149 (21%)

2015: 163 (17%)

2017: N/A

*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **New Jersey**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 6,848

2015: 6,874

2017: 6,232

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 6,349

2015: N/A

2017: 6,844

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 2,322 (34%)

2015: 2,509 (36%)

2017: N/A

*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **New Mexico**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 1,914

2015: 2,471

2017: 2,419

Non-Relative Foster Homes

2012: 685

2015: N/A

2017: 804

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 365 (19%)

2015: 464 (19%)

2017: N/A

Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.

2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.

Foster Care Capacity: **New York**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 23,924

2015: 20,921

2017: N/A

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 20,016

2015: N/A

2017: 20,987

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 4,785 (20%)

2015: 3,679 (21%)

2017: N/A

Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.

2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.

Foster Care Capacity: North Carolina

Youth in Foster Care

2012: 8,461

2015: 10,324

2017: 11,122

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 14,945

2015: N/A

2017: 14,731

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 2,016 (24%)

2015: 2,720 (27%)

2017: N/A

*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: North Dakota



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 1,109

2015: 1,359

2017: N/A

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 949

2015: N/A

2017: 1,029

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 138 (12%)

2015: 231 (17%)

2017: N/A

*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Oklahoma**



Youth in Foster Care

2012: 9,134

2015: 11,173

2017: 9,020

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 2,310

2015: N/A

2017: 5,612

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 2,750 (31%)

2015: 3,745 (34%)

2017: N/A

Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.

2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.

Foster Care Capacity: Rhode Island

Youth in Foster Care

2012: 1,707

2015: 1,826

2017: 1,829

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 1,024

2015: N/A

2017: 899

Youth Placed with Kin

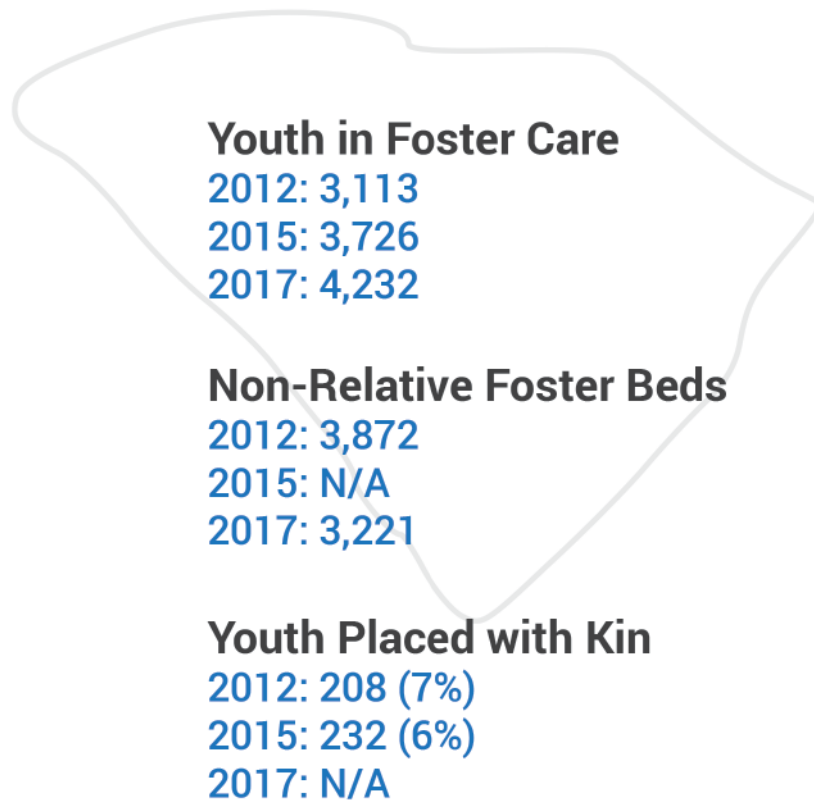
2012: 494 (29%)

2015: 701 (38%)

2017: N/A

*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **South Carolina**



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: Tennessee

Youth in Foster Care

2012: 7,978

2015: 7,780

2017: N/A



Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 4,827

2015: N/A

2017: 5,129

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 1,066 (13%)

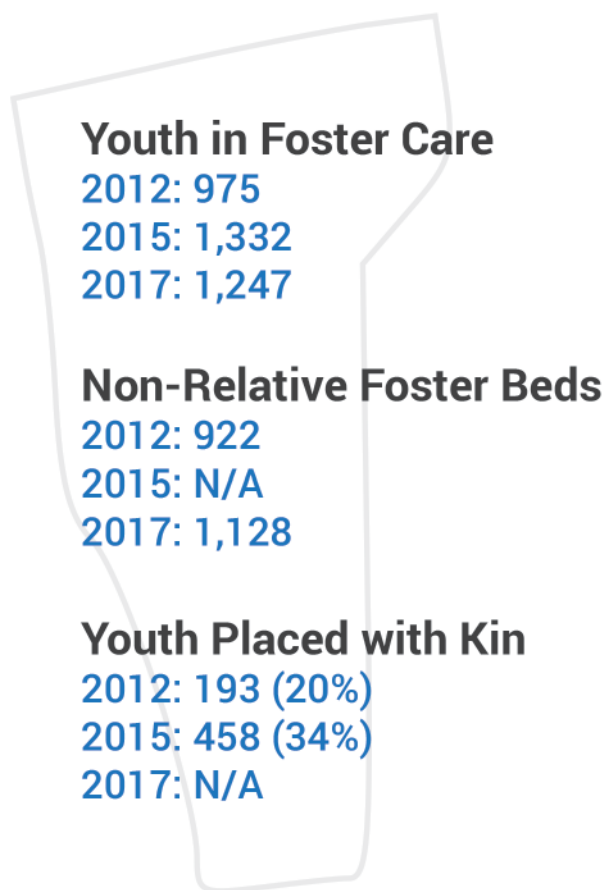
2015: 801 (10%)

2017: N/A

Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.

2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.

Foster Care Capacity: **Vermont**



*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*

Foster Care Capacity: **Wyoming**

Youth in Foster Care

2012: 949

2015: 1,082

2017: N/A

Non-Relative Foster Beds

2012: 426

2015: N/A

2017: 440

Youth Placed with Kin

2012: 220 (23%)

2015: 339 (31%)

2017: N/A

*Source: Federal AFCARS reports and state-reported data.
2015 Non-Relative Foster Homes data was not requested for
this project. 2017 Youth Placed with Kin data not yet available.*