

Hennepin County

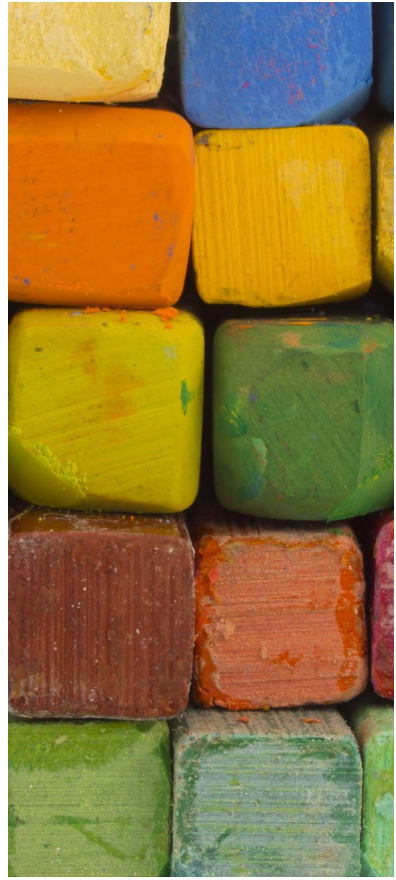
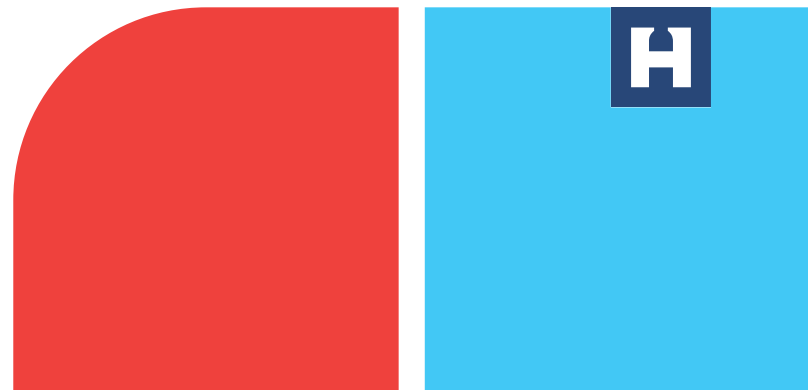
Child Well-Being

Annual report to the board

December 4, 2025



Child well-being transformation



2016 recommendations

1

Establish a new focus on child well-being in partnership with the community

2

Stabilize the workforce

3

Improve professional support for staff

4

Offering early and practical help to families

5

Continue study and maintain system accountability

6

Establish Child Well-being Advisory Committee

Countywide, we're listening to residents.

Since 2017, our work to build a system centered on child well-being has taken shape around supporting whole families and reducing trauma.

This vision has guided us to invest in upstream support and trauma-informed services that eliminate disparities in areas across the county.

Child
well-being
looks very
different
today.

Trauma-informed throughout the case continuum



Child well-being

Above all, we want to see children safe at home, in healthy, stable families.



Eliminating disparities for Native American children in out-of-home placement

We make seven recommendations to guide our work into the future.



Integrating work to eliminate disparities in multiple domains

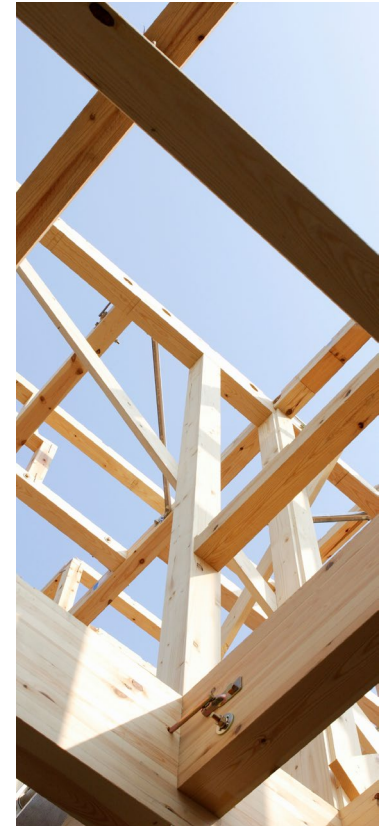
Strategic work underway across Human Services and countywide.

Caseloads and workforce development

Measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*
Ongoing child protection case management	10	10	11	11	7
Target: 8-10					
ICWA* ongoing child protection case management	8	10	9	10	7
Target: 6-8					
Child protection assessment/ investigations	7	7	7	7	6
Target: 8					

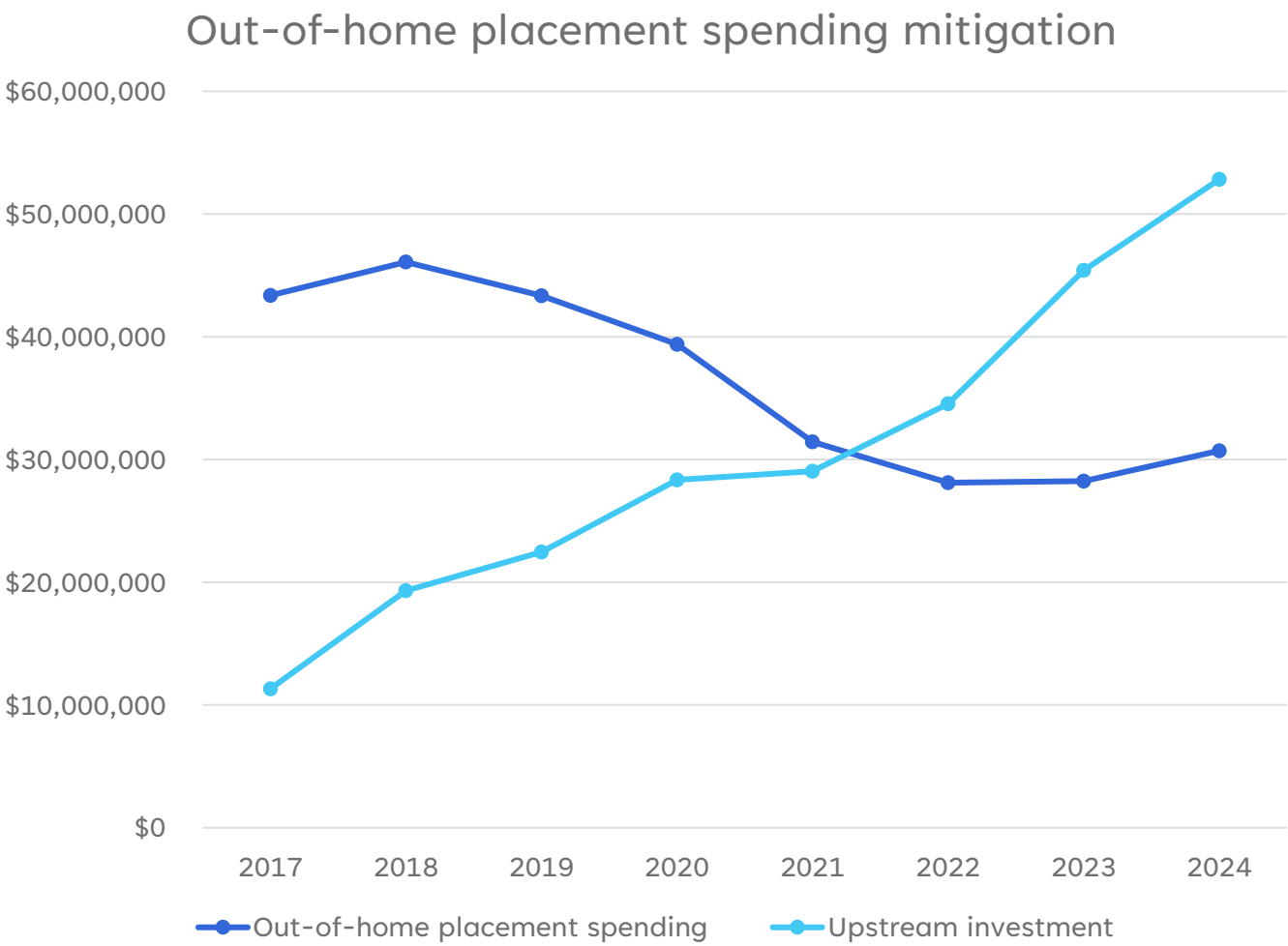
Note: Caseloads in December of each year.

5.5% turnover rate
97% of new hires retained



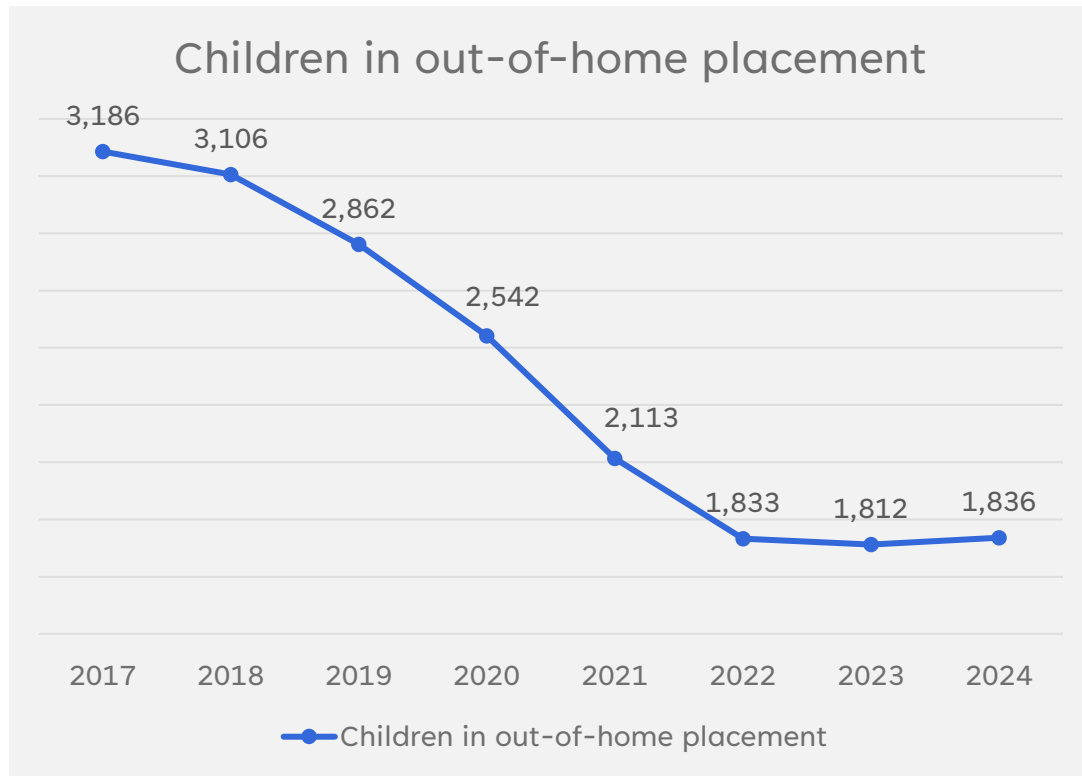
Out-of-home placement

Thanks to sustained investment from the Hennepin County Board, we're seeing a clear trend: as prevention funding increases, out-of-home placement costs decrease.

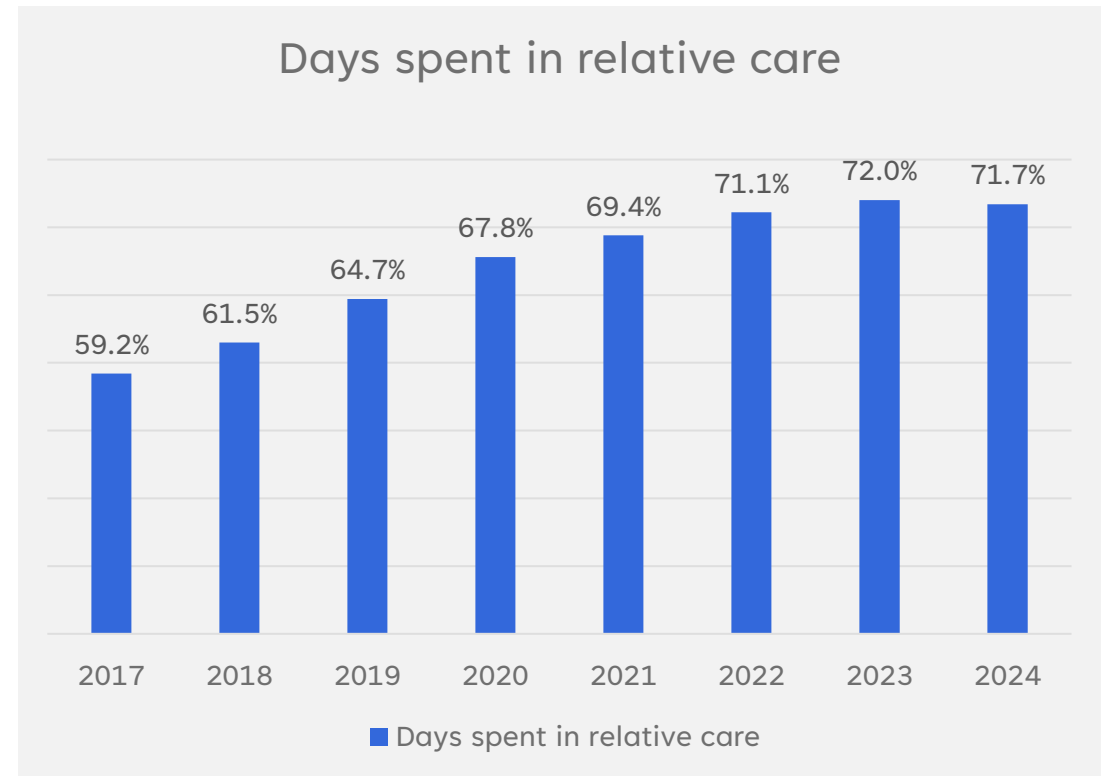


Out-of-home placement and relative care

Children in placement, 2017-2024



Relative care, 2017-2024



Permanency

Across all outcomes last year, 86.6% of children achieved permanency with family or kin.

*2025 data through September 30, 2025

	2021		2022		2023		2024		2025*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Reunification	412	43.8%	318	42.2%	252	36.9%	294	39.9%	210	44.7%
TPLPC	149	15.9%	117	15.5%	187	24.7%	194	26.3%	106	22.6%
Adoption with relative	139	14.8%	128	17.0%	86	12.6%	78	10.6%	47	10.0%
Living with other relatives	48	5.1%	29	3.9%	20	2.9%	10	1.4%	14	3.0%
Residing with non-removal guardian	--	--	--	--	28	4.1%	58	7.9%	30	6.4%
Non-relative permanency	191	20.3%	161	21.4%	110	16.1%	103	14.0%	63	13.4%
Total discharges	939	100%	753	100%	683	100%	737	100%	470	100%

A successful end to the post-settlement period

91.3% of children reunified after a trial home visit, up from 82.5% in 2021

83.9% of case plans completed monthly, up from 63.6% in 2021

93.2% of children have completed child information forms, up from 57.9% in 2022

93% of potential adoptive parents received full disclosure, up from 86.5% in 2022

We've demonstrated consistency across outcomes and are performing better than before in key areas.



I truly believe that the work of Children and Family Services following the settlement has been transformative.

James L. Volling

Faegre, Drinker, Biddle, and Reath, representative for the plaintiffs

It's a testament to government and community working together to improve the system and outcomes for families and children.

Judge John Stanoch

Chair and Independent Neutral for the Settlement Subcommittee

The next phase of child well-being

Eliminating disparities for
Native American children in
out-of-home placement



Systems-level recommendations to eliminate disparities

Prevention

Providing culturally responsive prevention resources.

Cultural responsiveness

Using proven programs to promote healing and repair.

Mental and chemical health

Increasing access to mental and chemical health services that keep families together.

One-on-one relationships

Supporting parents with one-on-one relationships.

System language

Using supportive and compassionate language throughout the child protection system.

Releases of information

Ensuring the minimum necessary information is collected by releases of information.



Centering lived experience

The seventh recommendation entrusts the Child Well-Being Advisory Committee to continue embedding lived experience as a priority during implementation.

Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act

- Collaborating with families, communities and systems
- Applying active efforts to prevent out-of-home placement and reunify families
- Prevention services that support families before they enter the system are more vital than ever



**Two-year
phase-in
period began
January 1,
2025**

1,307 cases have been assigned to the phase-in program

7.2%

CHILD PROTECTION CASE MANAGEMENT

94 cases have opened to ongoing child protection case management.

3.9%

OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT

80 children involved in 51 cases have experienced out-of-home placement.

16

CHILDREN REUNIFIED

Of these, 16 children involved in 6 cases have been reunified under protective supervision.

Data as of December 1, 2025

Prevention

All families face challenges — and all have strengths that can be uplifted. Prevention services meet families there, with support and resources to find health, stability, and well-being, **before** the need for system involvement.



2,516 residents served by PSOP in 2024

Launched in 2021, the Parent Support Outreach Program is a voluntary service driven by parents' goals for family well-being.



99% had no future maltreatment findings

Of those who completed services, 87.6% did not experience a future screened-in child protection report.



\$8.9 million in prevention grants since 2023

To support continued innovation in how we serve families before their needs escalate.



Family Resource Centers opening in 2026

Welcoming, community-led spaces that help parents strengthen protective factors.

Supporting mandated reporters

Specialized, in-person training to deepen understanding of the system and answer questions in real time.

Technical assistance to examine reporting disparities and build an inventory of local resources to support families.

Intake “warmline” offering anonymous consultations to assess safety and make connections to services.



2,789 consultations provided since launch of consultation line in April 2024.

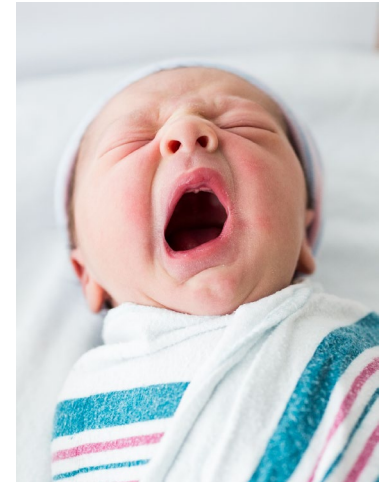
**Child
protection
reports have
dropped
36.06% since
2017.**

Promoting healthy pregnancies and whole families

For 35 years, Project CHILD has supported safe pregnancies for parents working on recovery, keeping families together.

Going Home Together creates safety and hope for parents who've previously lost custody of a child due.

So far this year, every participating family has gone home together.



Preparing youth in foster care for successful futures

We're redesigning our services for youth in foster care ages 14 to 21 to better prepare them for adulthood.

While we have a strong foundation, the world is changing — and so are the needs of young people.

The redesign will launch in 2026, with expanded services, staff training, and stronger partnerships.



Flexible, individualized support

A menu of personalized services — including education, job training, housing, health and life skills — that meets youth where they are, when they need it.



Trusted relationships and belonging

Youth are part of the process and have lasting relationships with trusted adults who walk alongside them.

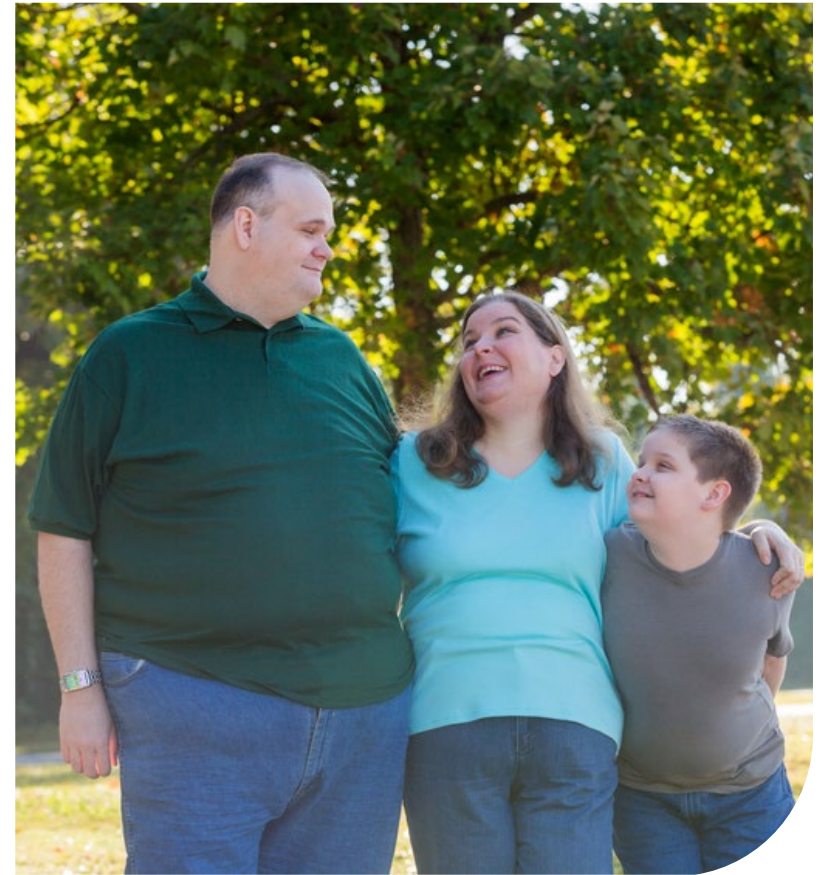
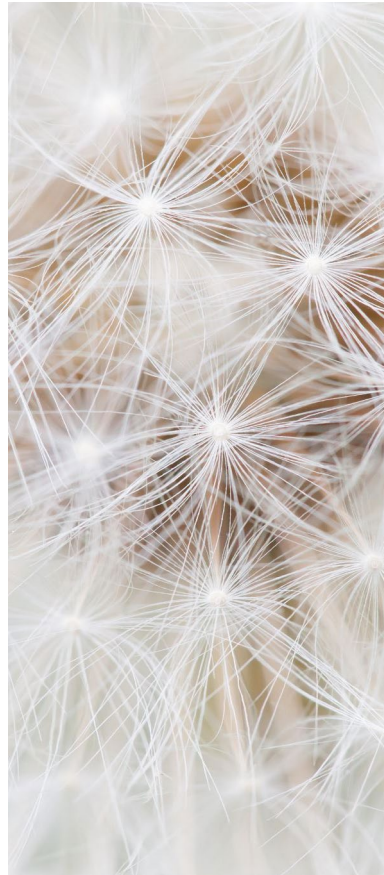


Authentic, community-based partnerships

Specially trained staff will lead this work, in authentic partnerships with community-based organizations who know our youth well.

Focusing on disparity elimination

Our work has evolved into a network of integrated, family-centered solutions that work to eliminate disparities in multiple domains.



Supporting family health in children's earliest moments



1

Family home visiting

- 1,825 clients served in 2024
- 87.83% from racially and ethnically diverse communities

2

Maternal Health Initiative and Birth Justice

- 5,800+ residents received perinatal health care services and education, 2021-2024
- 42 African American and Native American families served by post-partum home visiting pilot

Filling a critical gap in our continuum of care

To address one of the most acute gaps in services, Hennepin County has developed a Youth Stabilization Center in Minneapolis.

- 13 beds
- 24/7 program staffing
- Welcoming, non-institutional environment
- Short-term stays, 30-45 days
- Opening in mid-December



**With this
bold action,
we're
leading the
state.**

Removing barriers to mental health care



Children under age 6

Assessments and trauma services to connect young children to support sooner.

- Programming wrapped around the whole family
- Parenting support groups
- Assessments for caregivers

Youth in juvenile court

Youth involved with juvenile court have access to more timely assessments.

- A collaboration between the courts, Children and Family Services and the Mental Health Center
- Court orders connect youth with mental health assessments from their first appearance

24/7 Family Response

When a family calls, a provider meets them within the hour.

- Youth are maintaining their living arrangements
- Families are avoiding emergency room visits
- Youth and families are avoiding involvement with law enforcement

Safeguarding well-being with stable, supportive housing



Preventing homelessness

Support in 180 schools across nine districts.

School staff bridge families to support.

Focus on families with precarious housing, often invisible in traditional systems.

Supporting family stability

Two communities prioritize units for families involved with child welfare.

Services available on or near the site.

74% of families had no future maltreatment.

These efforts are part of a broad system to ensure all families in Hennepin County have stable homes, and our data shows it's working.

In the last year, the number of families in shelter dropped by nearly 30%.

Reducing barriers to student engagement

Young people navigating foster care, parenthood and justice involvement deserve the chance to thrive.

- Connect for School Success: 477 students served since 2022 — 93% have achieved their self-identified goals.
- TeenHOPE and Pathways work directly with young parents and youth on probation.
- Youth Advisory Board launched this year.
- Since 2014, the Recognition of Success ceremony has honored these graduates.



Thank you

