

Wake County Human Services

# Division of Child Welfare

## Annual Report



Wake County Human Services: (919) 212 7000  
Child Welfare Reception Line: (919) 212 9529  
Child Protection Report Line  
English: (919) 212 7990  
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[wakegov.com/humanservices](http://wakegov.com/humanservices)

# FY 2020

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# LETTER FROM THE CHILD WELFARE DIVISION DIRECTOR



## "A Culture of Change"

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

| Barack Obama

The Division of Child Welfare is charged with ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of Wake County's children and families. The weight of this responsibility was felt even more this year as we all confronted unforeseen and historical challenges brought about by a global pandemic and social injustices. The COVID-19 crisis and mass protests seeking change have reshaped our lives and shifted our perspectives on safety, community, health, work, and education. Child Welfare, accustomed to change and responding to crisis, thrived in this environment.

I am humbled by how our Child Welfare team embraced these challenges, adapted practices, and demonstrated resilience. With haste, our team converted to a mobile workforce, institutionalized the use of personal protective equipment, and modified interactions with families to ensure consistent engagement.

In addition to focusing on preventing and responding to child maltreatment, Child Welfare remained committed to making systemic changes to improve the experiences of families and staff alike. Through VISION 2020, we increased staff retention, expanded access to services, and improved consistent practice. We also received a 2020 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties for our Community Outreach Sponsorship Team efforts to track and distribute donations to children and families involved with Child Welfare. This report will elaborate on how these strides were accomplished, and how we hope to replicate this approach to change in 2021.

As I look forward to the future of this Division, I am confident that we will continue to promote positive change in our team, the families we serve, and our community. I am honored to serve as the Division Director of this team during such critically important times. I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to the entire Child Welfare team for their hard work and commitment to protecting our county's most vulnerable. We, as a Division, would like to also thank our Department and County leadership, and community partners for their support during these challenging times.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paige Rosemond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paige" being more prominent than the last name "Rosemond".

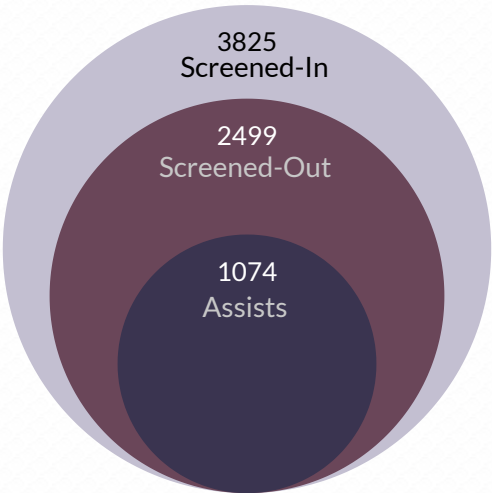
Paige Rosemond, Division Director  
Wake County Child Welfare

OVERVIEW OF CHILD WELFARE

# Outcome Measures

In FY 20, Wake County Child Welfare took 13,161 calls and 7,398 reports of suspected child abuse and neglect, including requests for assistance from other counties.

**60** % of CPS reports received were accepted and referred to an in-person assessment.



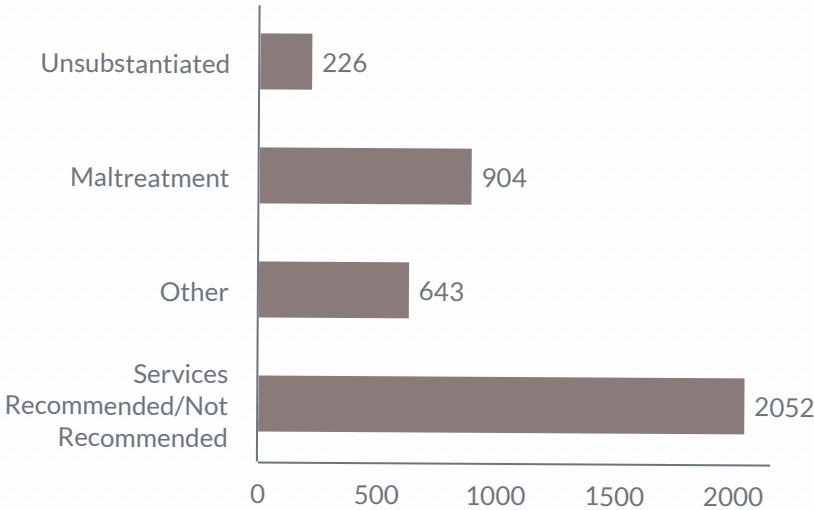
**54** % of completed assessments identified well-being concerns, some of which resulted in a recommendation for community-based services.

After assessments have been completed, most cases (51%) with a finding of maltreatment were closed because they were provided immediate assistance and did not need ongoing support. Another 39% were recommended for services within the home. Services may include parent education, one-on-one coaching, case management, and referrals to health care and basic needs support (housing, food, utility assistance, cash assistance, job placement).

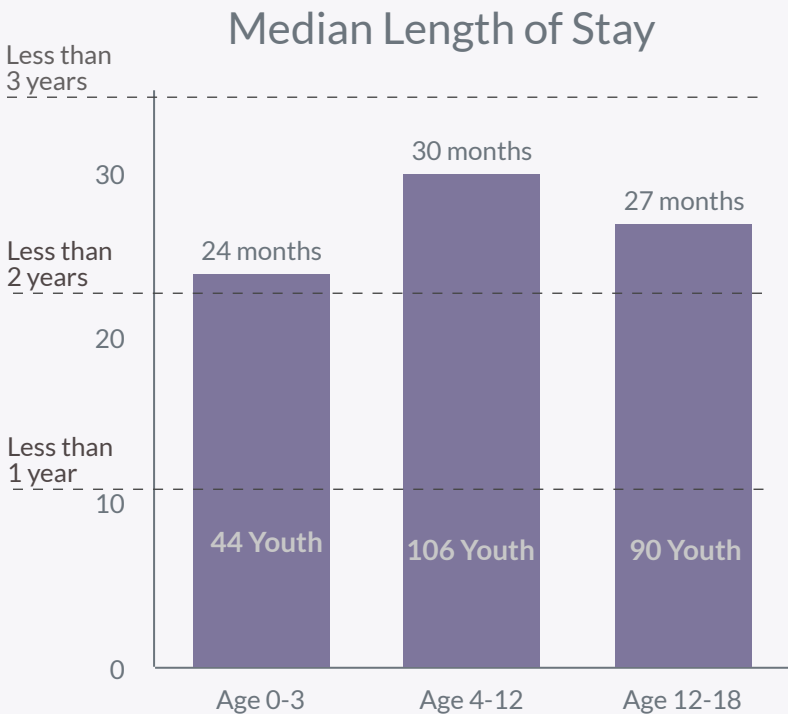
In addition to serving the children and families that are referred to Wake County, 2020 presented a number of challenges prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Child Welfare workers, around the nation, typically have higher burnout rates compared to other fields. In 2018, Wake County Child Welfare realized its highest rate of staff turnover.

Furthuremore, the Division received a corrective action plan issued by the state for inconsistent practices.

**24** % of completed assessments found evidence of abuse and neglect.



**2** % of completed assessments resulted in children being placed in out-of-home care.



\* Older children in foster care typically have a greater length of stay than younger children.

# Performance Measures



The Child Accountability and Protection Act/Rylan’s Law (Session Law 2017-41) was passed by the North Carolina General Assembly in 2017, requiring all County Child Welfare Agencies to work in partnership with NCDHHS to support the safety and well-being of children and families served throughout the state of North Carolina. The requirements include six Child Welfare program performance goals, detailed below, which “address the immediate safety, ongoing protection from abuse and neglect, and long-term security and well-being for children entering the state’s child welfare system.” (2018-19 NCDHHS/County Memorandum of Agreement, Child Welfare Performance Measures Fact Sheet, 2018).

Measure	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
<b>CWS 1</b> Initiate 95% of all screened-in reports within required time frames.	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>CWS 2</b> For all children who were victims of maltreatment during a twelve-month period, no more than 9.1% received a subsequent finding of maltreatment.	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>CWS 3</b> Ensure that 95% of all foster youth have face-to-face visits by the social worker each month.	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
<b>CWS 4</b> Ensure that 40.5% of children who enter foster care in a 12-month period are discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering foster care.	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
<b>CWS 5</b> Ensure that of children who enter foster care in a 12-month period who were discharged within 12 months to reunification, kinship care, or guardianship, no more than 8.3% re-enter foster care within 12 months of their discharge.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>CWS 6</b> Ensure that of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, the rate of placement moves per 1000 days of foster care will not exceed 4.1	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗

*\* WAKE COUNTY  
CHILD WELFARE EXCEEDED  
STATE STANDARDS IN  
4 OF 6  
PERFORMANCE MEASURES  
DURING THE LAST MONTH  
OF THE  
FISCAL YEAR \**



# VISION 2020

# GOALS

Wake County Child Welfare developed goals for FY 20 after reviewing data and conducting a leadership retreat, road tour, and 5 Town Hall meetings. All feedback was recorded and compiled under the themes that emerged.

Each Unit was required to select at least one strategy for each goal and report on how they planned to measure progress. In addition, they were encouraged to have ongoing conversations about the goals, strategies, and performance at their monthly unit meetings. Likewise, VISION 2020 was a standing agenda item for leadership team meetings. Throughout this year, leadership shared how they, as a Division, progressed with the strategies. While this report focuses on high-level strategies, all unit achievements can be found on the [Child Welfare SharePoint site](#).



## INCREASE STAFF RETENTION

Increase the number of staff who maintain employment at Wake County CW. This includes impacting factors, such as a satisfaction with position, connectedness to coworkers, and morale.



## EXPAND ACCESS TO SERVICES

Expand access to critical health, mental health, and substance use treatment, along with connection to services that meet basic needs for food, shelter, education, and transportation.

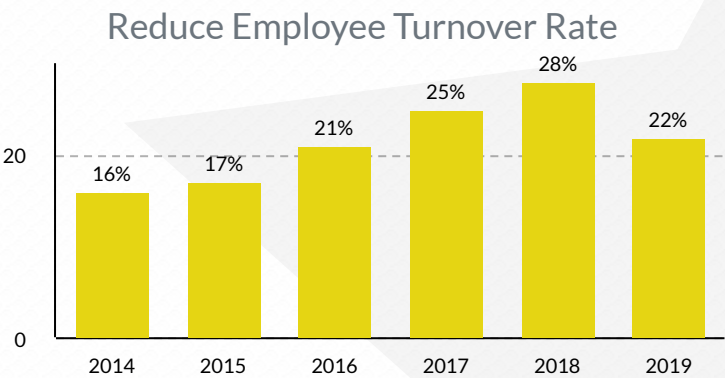


## IMPROVE CONSISTENT PRACTICE

Ensure consistency of practices and adherence to policy across the division, regardless of functional area, location, and supervisor structure.

## — Increase Staff Retention —

### Key Performance Indicators



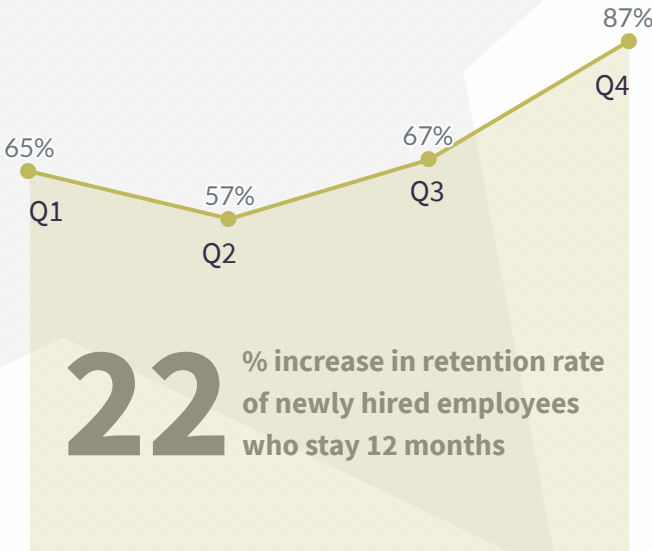
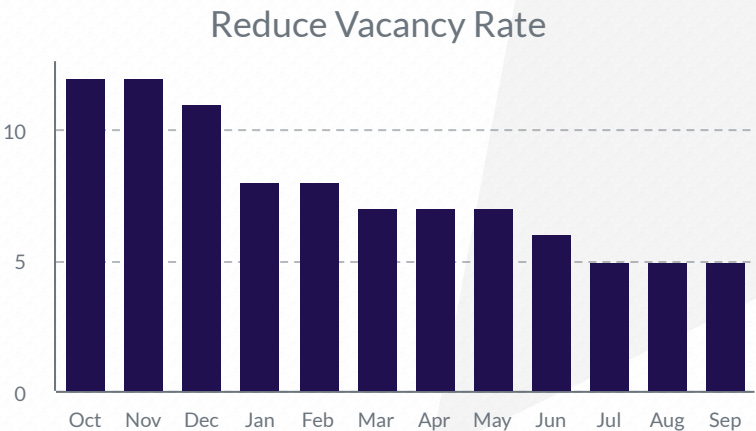
Turnover Rate is the number of employees who leave divided by the total staff employed (SAMHSA, Recruitment & Retention Toolkit).

**21** % decrease in turnover rate during FY 20

*\*A healthy/optimal turnover rate is 10-12%*

*\*2016 North Carolina average turnover rate was 28%*

### Increase Retention of New Hires



**22** % increase in retention rate of newly hired employees who stay 12 months

# Key Performance Indicators

## Wake Network of Care



### Increase Staff Access to Network of Care

At the beginning of FY 20, Wake County Child Welfare partnered with Alliance Healthcare to expand the use of Network of Care. This is an online application to query comprehensive and up-to-date directory of needed services, organizations, and supports in Wake County. The application was added to all staff cell phones. Additionally, all new hires (51) starting between July 2019 and February 2020 received training on the application during new hire orientation. Finally, virtual training was provided to all staff in the summer of 2020. Eighty-four (84) staff participated in the training.

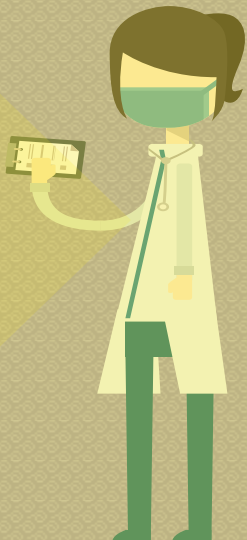
### Enhance Connections to Healthcare Services

Wake County Child Welfare received a 3-year grant from The Duke Endowment to expand the Child Health Development Program (CHDP). This allowed Child Welfare to bring on nurses to provide medical and behavioral health care coordination, and conduct visits to the homes of families involved with In-Home Services. These services also extend to children currently in foster care.

Three nurses were hired as part of the expansion, and these enhanced services are scheduled to begin in FY 21.

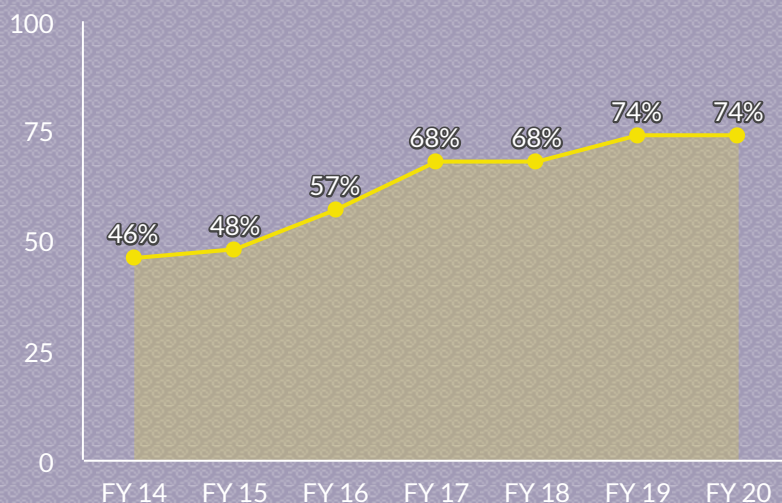
90

Children were served by CHDP in FY 20



## Other Activities

### Improved In-Home Services Case Closure Rate



The percent of In-Home Services cases that are closed timely (within 6 months of opening) continues the 6-year trend of higher rates.



A Pre-LINKS program for youth ages 9-19 was started in December 2019 to help youth develop a sense of community with other youth involved in foster care.



LINKS Academy went virtual and continues as "LINKS LIVE" weekly on Tuesdays. Adolescents in foster care receive group support, tutoring and mentoring resources, health and wellness education, and independent living activities.



LabCorp Paternity Testing received a contract to identify and engage fathers and their family members in services.



Triangle Family Services received a contract to connect parents with resources including housing, mental health services, and employment services.

# Improve Consistent Practice

## Key Performance Indicators

### Development & Implementation of Training and On-Site Support

In FY 20, Wake County Child Welfare made a commitment to expand internal training and to create an On-Site Support (OSS) unit to support effective and consistent practices. These two units consist of six OSS Consultants and four Trainers, in addition to one Supervisor per unit.

#### Participants in OSS Events:

25  
Coaching

291 Team Support  
Circles

8 Team  
Support

#### Participants in Training:

848



#### Increase Understanding & Knowledge Due to Training or Support:

- The Training Team offers an array of trainings to help equip Child Welfare staff with the knowledge and information needed to be successful in their roles. 97% had positive feedback about New Hire Orientation.
- The OSS Team builds Skills in social worker practices.

#### Understanding of the Subject Matter:

*Topic Increased My Understanding*  
**4.47 (of 5) Avg Rating**

*"The consultant was Awesome. She introduced new ways of obtaining information from parents that were very creative ways of thinking. She provided positive dialogue that was focused driven. I believe OSS is a great asset to Wake County Child Welfare..."*

*-Testimony from OSS participant*

#### Percent of Staff who Completed Coaching Plans:



A collaborative OSS plan is developed that includes desired practice behaviors and action steps. Progress is reviewed every 30 days. Support may last for 30, 60, or 90 days, determined and agreed upon by the worker, as supervisor, and OSS.

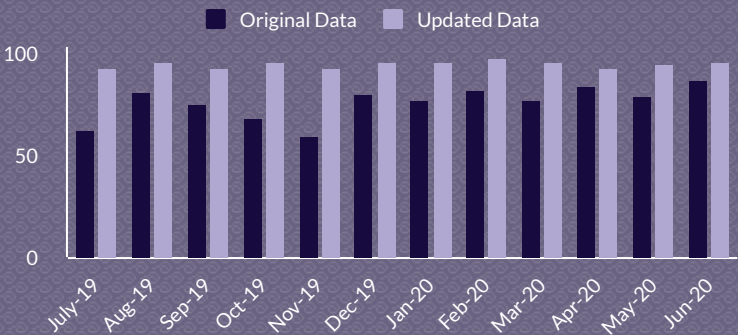




# CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM'S Highlights and Achievements

Wake County Child Welfare initiated a quality improvement project focused on assuring that face to face visits with youth in foster care are properly reported to the state. During the project, team members discovered that the visits were taking place, but had not been entered correctly into the data system. Through team work, reviewing data, creating a map of the process, and thinking creatively the project team developed a new process for entering data, resulting in substantial improvement—from 10% to 34% in a given month.

Face-to-Face for Youth in Foster Care



93.8%

Annual Average of Assessments initiated timely

97.5%

Assessments initiated timely during 4th Quarter of FY 20, exceeding State goal of 95%

72%

Annual Average of Assessments completed within 45 days

1,677

Visits facilitated at the Wake House Visitation Center



89%

Assessments completed within 45 days during 4th Quarter of FY 20, exceeding State goal of 75%

97

Children and youth adopted

Foster Parent Retention

Peer-to-Peer Parent Resources; Parent Education; Onboarding; New Newsletter & Facebook Page

31

Families Reunfied

14

Youth achieved Permanency with other parent

\*Permanency Round Tables, a multidisciplinary effort, was implemented to establish **permanent connections** for children, and to re-engage family members in permanency planning.

## Supporting Youth in Foster Care

199 book bags	817 youth sponsored for Christmas	Food Lion gift card to Extended Foster Care recipient in crisis
100 Thanksgiving dinners		
104 comfort bags	Groceries to 14 kinship families	Restaurant take out orders to 13 Kinship families
190 Easter bags	2 bicycles to Siblings	Basket of baby supplies to mother in crisis
14 pieces of luggage	22 high school graduates received gift baskets & cards	20 care packages

Total Estimated Value of Gifts: \$147,247

# COVID-19 Response

To say it has been a rough year is an understatement. The quote below summarizes the efforts of all child welfare professionals persevering through the pandemic, racial unrest, and loss to continue with their goals of safety, well-being, and permanence for vulnerable families:

*"If you want to be a true professional, you will do something outside of yourself. Something to repair tears in your community. Something to make life a little better for people less fortunate than you. That's what I think a meaningful life is - living not for oneself, but for one's community"*

- Justice Ruth Badar Ginsburg

Almost all Child Welfare staff worked, and continue to work, remotely. The staff needing to work directly with families received PPE to promote safety, health, and well-being.

In response to this incredible display of flexibility and collaboration, the Child Welfare team was successful with maintaining "Business as Usual", and ensuring continuity of services provided to the youth and families served by Wake County.

- These services include:
- Family Visitation Services
  - Parent Education & Parent Coaching
  - Foster Parent Recruitment, Licensing, and Retention Services
  - Foster Parent Education and Support
  - On-Call & Crisis Intervention Services
  - Court Services
  - Donations to youth and families

Additionally, there has been an increase in the **average monthly attendance** for select support services, for both families served and Child Welfare staff.

**Before COVID-19**  
**In-Person Support Services**

\*Father Support Groups: 6

\*Kinship Care Groups: 24

\*Staff Training: 84

\*OSS Support: 18



**After COVID-19**  
**Primarily Virtual (in-person when safe)**  
**Support Services**

\*Father Support Groups: 6.3

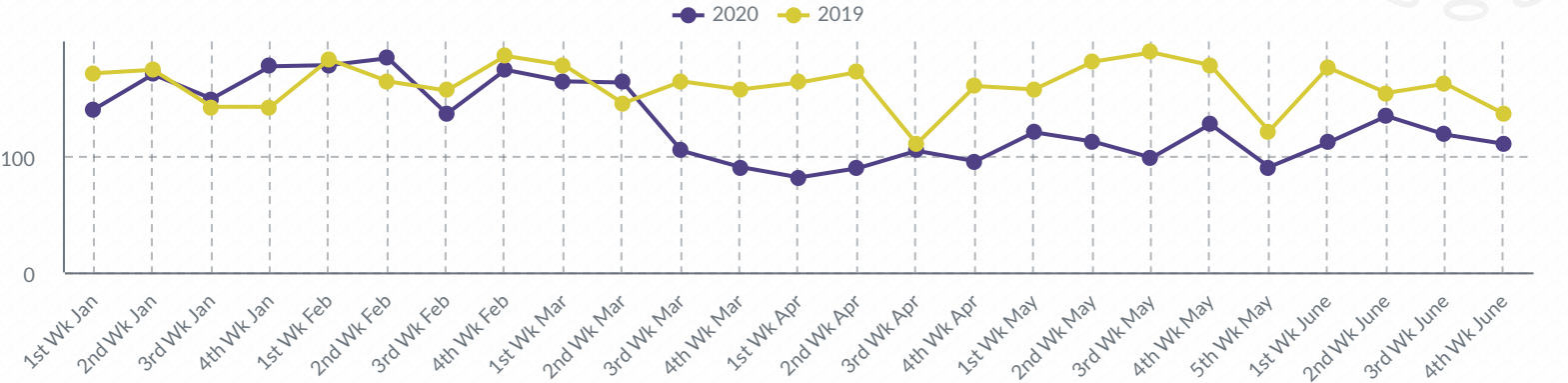
\*Kinship Care Groups: 32

\*Staff Training: 90

\*OSS Support: 72

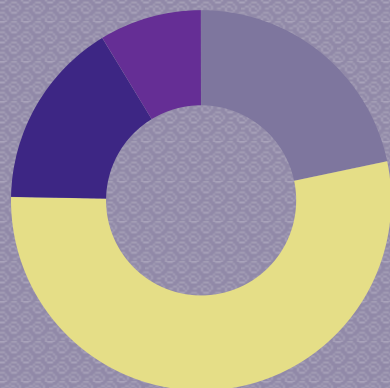
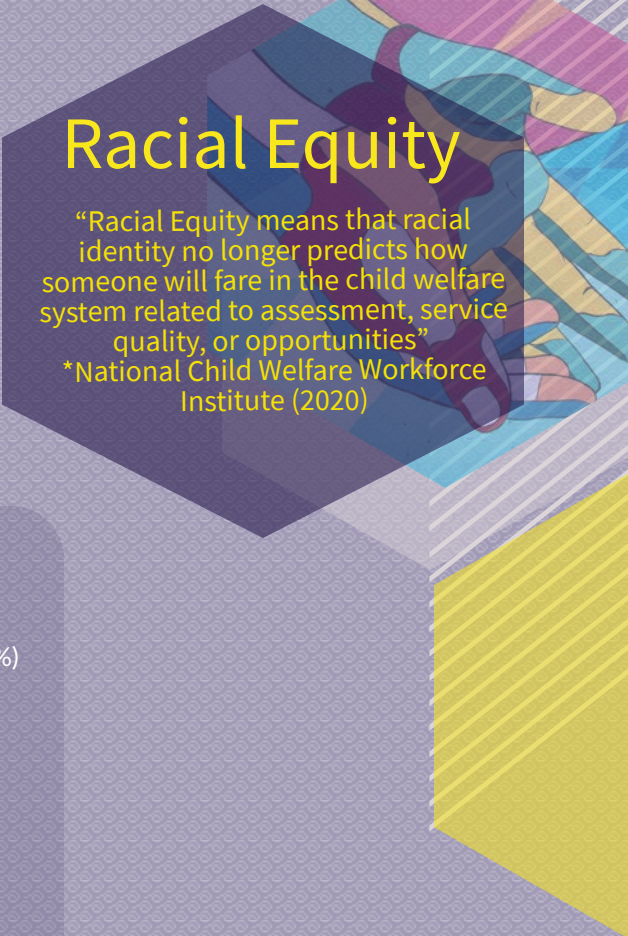
## CPS Reports Received Weekly

The number of child abuse and neglect reports received decreased by as much as 50% during the weeks following the issuing of the Governor's Stay At Home Orders.



# FY 2021 Goals

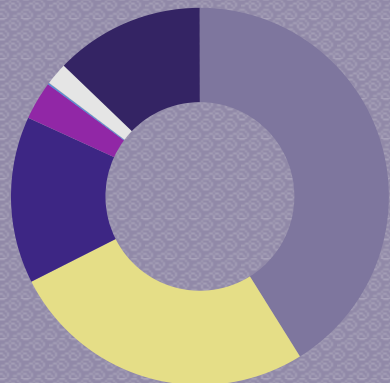
Wake County Child Welfare began pulling and analyzing racial and ethnic data to determine if racial inequity exists within decision points in the child welfare system. As the graphs below illustrate, reports received are disproportionate to the racial and ethnic makeup of the community. While African-Americans consist of 22% of Wake county, they make up 41% of all reports received. \*Data will continue to be analyzed throughout Child Welfare in FY 21.



Wake County Census  
Child Population CY 2019

- African American; Non-Hispanic (21.7%)
- White; Non-Hispanic (53.6%)
- Hispanic (16%)
- Other Race; Non-Hispanic (8.7%)

2020 The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Center



Wake County CPS Reports Received FY 2020

- African-American; Non-Hispanic or Latino (41.12%)
- White; Non-Hispanic or Latino (26.42%)
- Hispanic or Latino (14.31%)
- Multiple Race Groups; Non-Hispanic or Latino (3.3%)
- American Indian or Alaskan; Non-Hispanic or Latino (0.1%)
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; Non-Hispanic or Latino (0.04%)
- Asian; Non-Hispanic or Latino (1.9%)
- Race Unknown (12.81%)

## Building a Trauma Informed Agency

Those impacted by child abuse and neglect are at risk of experiencing trauma. Improving outcomes for children and families is a primary goal for the Child Welfare system. Children served by agencies that incorporate trauma-informed practices have more stability in foster care placements and control over their behavior (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2017).

The US Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2014) argues that addressing trauma requires a public health approach "...provided in an organizational or community context that is trauma-informed, that is, based on the knowledge and understanding of trauma and its far-reaching implications."

Wake County Child Welfare will be partnering with UNC-Family & Children's Resource Program to develop a plan for incorporating trauma-informed approaches throughout its direct practice, training, and protocols.





FY 2020

## Division of Child Welfare

Wake County Human Services 919 212 7000

Child Welfare Reception Line 919 212 9529

Child Protection Report Line

English 919 212 7990

Español 919 212 7963



**IN-HOME SERVICES**  
577 Families  
1,295 Children Served

**INTAKE**  
13,161 Calls Taken  
7,398 Reports & Assists Received

**ASSESSMENTS**  
3,825 Families  
86% Neglect  
3% Abuse and Neglect  
9% Abuse  
1% Dependency  
1% Other

**18-21 EXTENDED FOSTER CARE**  
109 Young Adults Served

**REUNIFICATION SERVICES**  
31 Children Reunified

**FOSTER CARE**  
611 Children Served In Out-of-Home Care  
110 entered Care  
240 Exited Care

**ADOLESCENT SERVICES**  
211 Youth Served  
Ages 14-17

**FOSTER PARENT LICENSING & RECRUITMENT**  
164 Homes  
71 In Process

**PLACEMENT**  
380 New/Change Requests

**WAKE HOUSE FAMILY VISITATION CENTER**  
1,677 Family Visits

**ONSITE SUPPORT**  
25 1:1 Coaching  
291 Group Participants  
8 Teams Participated in Team Support Services

**FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES**  
393 Families Served  
\*54 Families Received Respite  
\*45 Youth Participated in Super Saturday Events

**CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**  
\*493 Quality Assurance Reviews  
\*1,894 CFT Meetings facilitated by CQI, CPS, Permanency Planning, And Extended Foster Care 18-21  
\*848 Staff Trainings

**POST PERMANENCY SERVICES**  
97 Finalized Adoptions  
44 Discharges to Guardianship  
20 Discharges to Legal Custody

**PARENT EDUCATION**  
285 Parents

**GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE**  
26 Youth  
**ADOPTION ASSISTANCE**  
1,112 Youth

**CHILD HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**  
90 Youth

**INTERSTATE COMPACT ON THE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN**  
21 Outgoing  
41 Incoming

### Locations:

Swinburne  
Sunnybrook  
Crosby-Garfield Center  
Millbrook Human Services Center  
Western Human Services Center  
Northern Regional Center  
Eastern Regional Center  
Southern Regional Center  
Wake House Visitation Center

**TRANSPORTATION**  
5,851 Trips  
145 Youth Transported

**322 Staff**



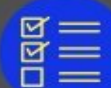


## Identifying & Responding to **Children's Needs & Wishes**

**Wake County's Child Welfare Division, in collaboration with Community Partners, is tracking and distributing donations to children and families involved with Child Welfare**

### **Established in 2018, COST coordinates donations through:**

- Developing and retaining relationships with community partners;
- Identifying children and families' needs and wishes;
- Creating a data system to match and track current and projected needs and wishes, donations, and distribution; and
- Celebrating staff and community partners' commitment.



### **RESULTS**

In its first two years, COST distributed:

- 200 Easter Baskets
- 280 Book Bags
- Thanksgiving Meals for 100 Families
- Christmas Sponsorship for more than 1,400 children and over 7,000 Gifts

Valued  
@  
\$235,000+



### **THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!**

Friends of the Guardian Litem, Knights of Columbus, Wake County Public School System, Bovenizer & Baker Orthodontics, an Eagle Scout, a youth with her own non-profit organization, and multiple Faith Partners



# References

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- SAMHSA. [Recruitment and Retention Toolkit Building a Recruitment and Retention Plan Step 1: Gather Organizational Baseline Information \[2.1.0.e\]](#). [Gather Organizational Baseline Information Quick Tool \[2.1.1\]](#) How to Determine Your Retention, Turnover, and Vacancy Rates [2.1.1.a.2]. Online: <http://toolkit.ahpnet.com/Building-a-Recruitment-and-Retention-Plan/Step-1-Gather-Organizational-Baseline-Information/Gather-Organizational-Baseline-Info-Quick-Tool/How-to-Determine-Retention-Turnover-Vacancy-Rates.aspx>, Accessed 6/30/20.
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- NC Department of Health and Human Services, 2018-19 NCDHHS/County Memorandum of Agreement, *Child Welfare Performance Measures Fact Sheet* (August 2018, unpublished).