

# Washington State's Foster Placement Continuum: successes, challenges, & proposed solutions

Ross Hunter, Secretary

House Appropriations Committee  
Original Date: September 12, 2019

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



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

# Agenda



- Overview of steps to date to address placement crises
- Review of placement data
- Initial thoughts on next steps and our plans for the coming year



# DCYF Year One Placement Update:



- Executive cabinet members visited every child in out-of-state placement in 2018
- Assessing continuum of current options and identifying gaps in our service array
- Working in partnership with Youth, Child Placing Agencies, staff and advocates to develop comprehensive placement system



# Out-of-State Placements

July 1, 2018: 83 children

- Avg. length of stay: 8.8 months
- Avg. cost per month: \$11,429.67

August 20, 2019: 33 children

- Avg. length of stay: 11.2 months
- Avg. cost per month: \$11,911.16



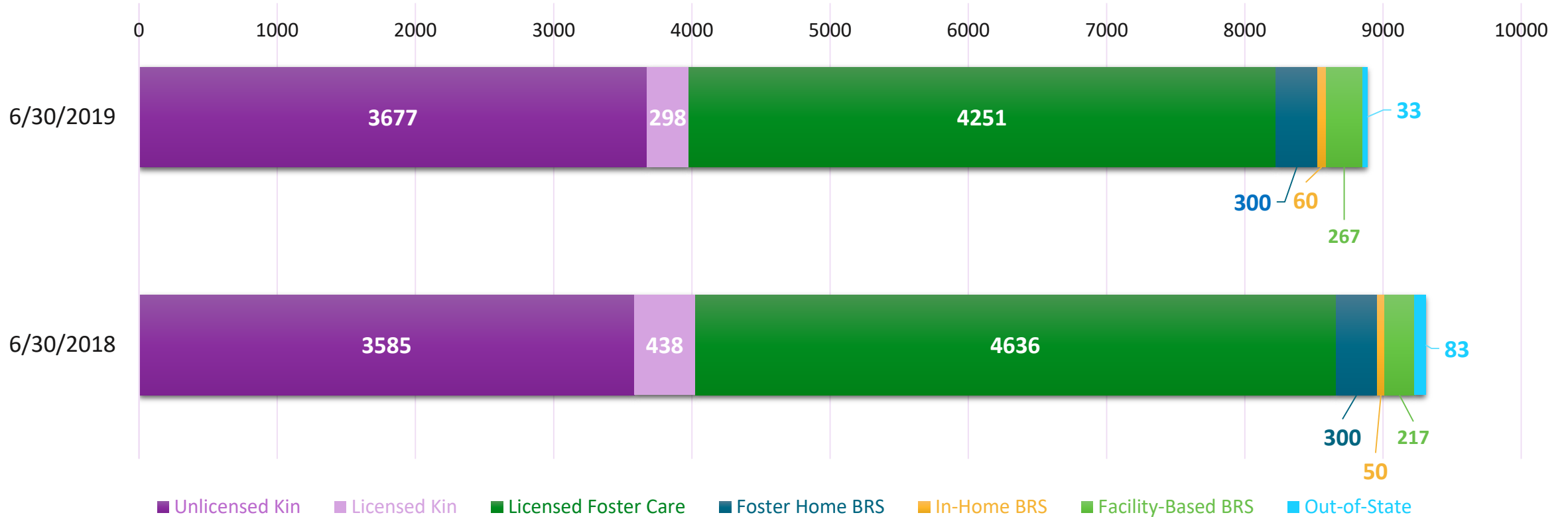
# DCYF One Year Placement Update:



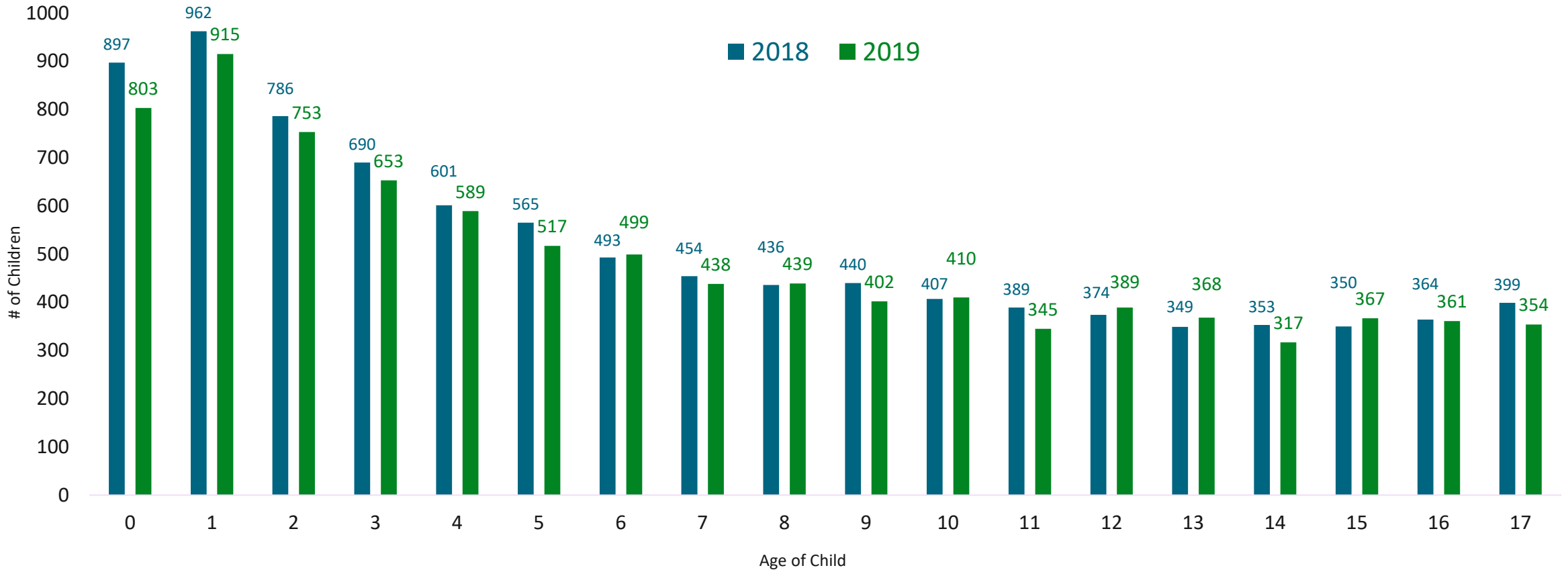
- Out-of-state placements decreased by over 50%
- Legislature invested in BRS rate stabilization
- Foster parent licensing has stabilized
- Identified key weaknesses in current system
  - Lack of therapeutically appropriate options, especially for adolescents
  - Challenge of multi-systemic kids
  - In most cases, need to keep kids closer to community of origin not to disrupt educational and medical services, reduce transitions and maintain critical connections to family



# Out-of-Home Placement Snapshot



# Children in Out-of-Home Care Snapshot, by Age

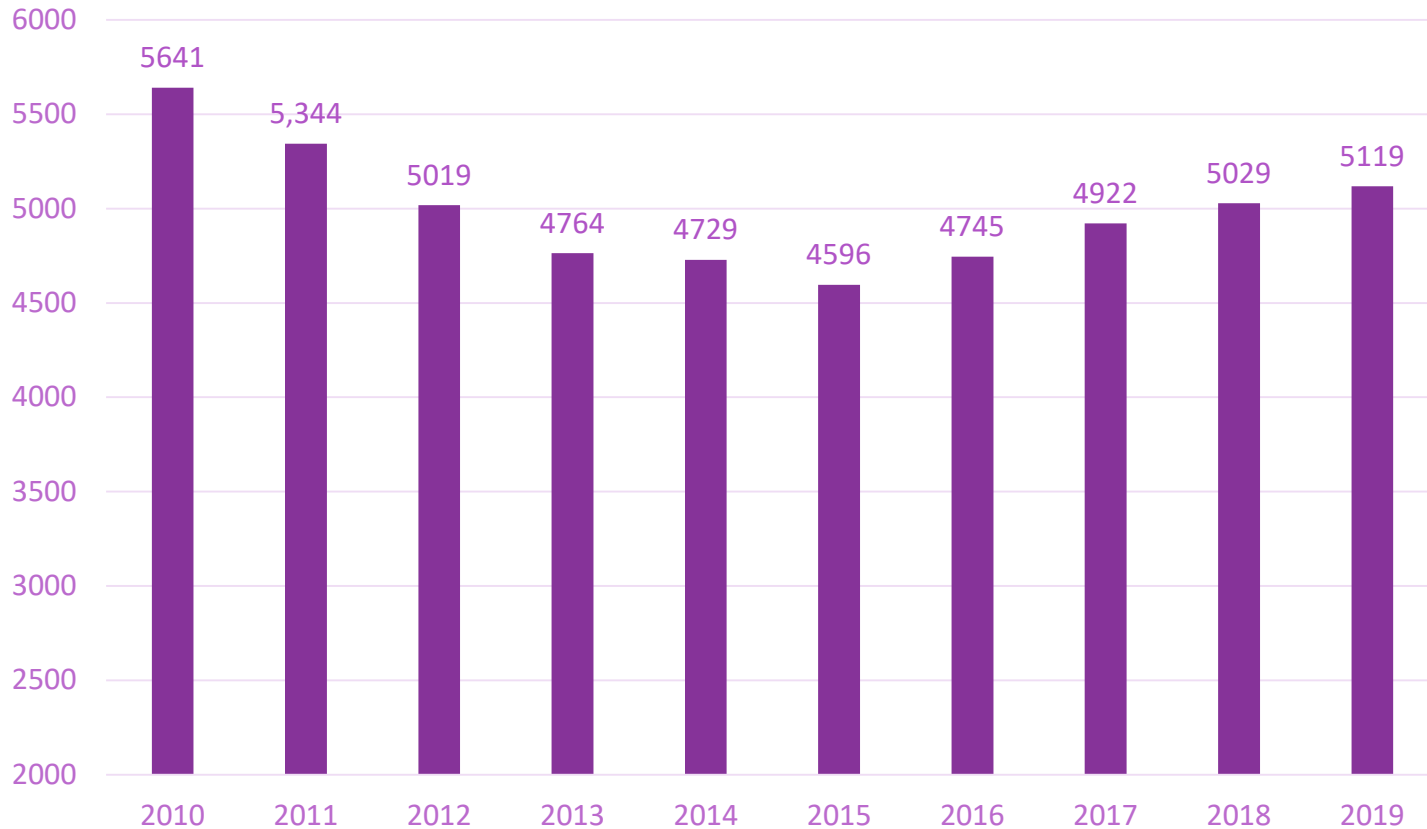


# Children in Out-of-Home Care Snapshot, by Race

Race	Children in Care 0-17		Washington 0-19	
	# 2019	% 2019	# 2018	% 2018
American Indian/Alaska Native	321	3.6%	26,620	1.4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	226	2.5%	160,716	8.7%
Black	788	8.8%	78,253	4.2%
Hispanic	1,371	15.4%	333,480	18.0%
White	4,284	48.0%	1,024,869	55.3%
American Indian/Alaska Native/Multiracial	905	10.1%		
Black/Multiracial	767	8.6%	230,328	12.4%
Other/Multiracial	212	2.4%		
Unknown	45	0.5%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,919</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,854,267</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



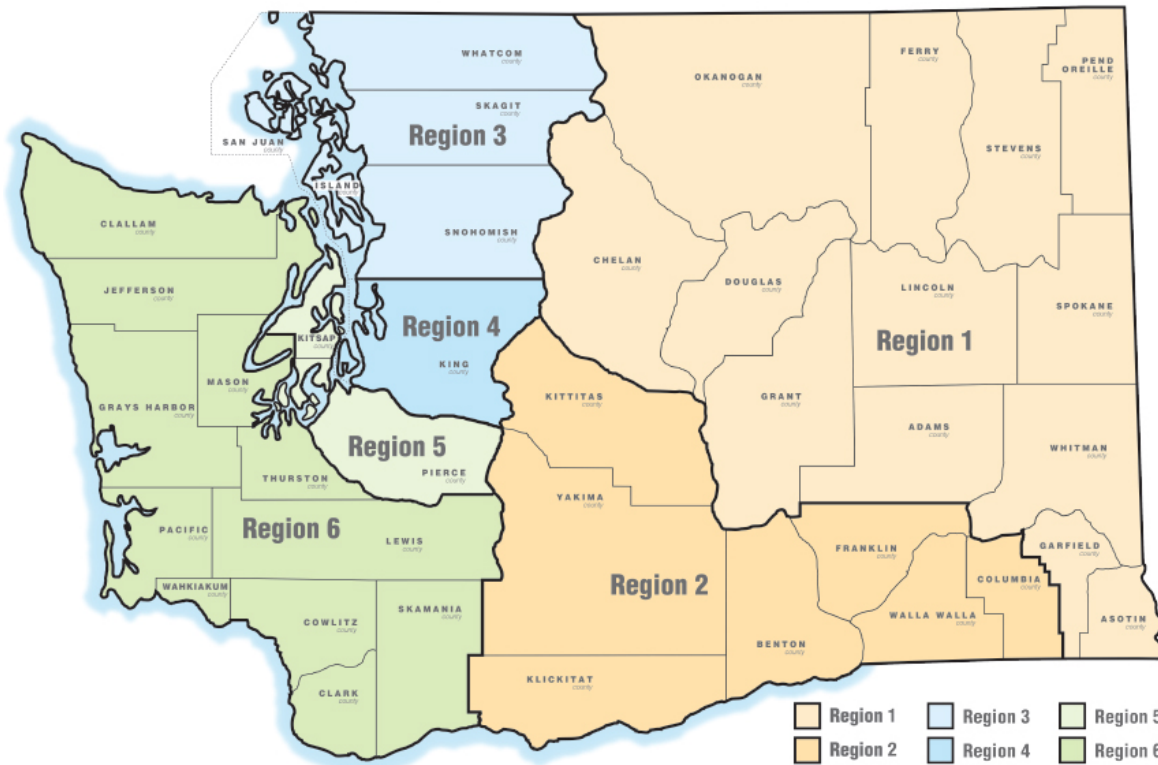
# Licensed Foster Homes, by Type



Licensure Type	FY 2018	FY 2019
Foster Home	3231	3249
Private Agency Foster Home	1788	1856
Tribal Licensed Foster Home	10	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>5029</b>	<b>5119</b>

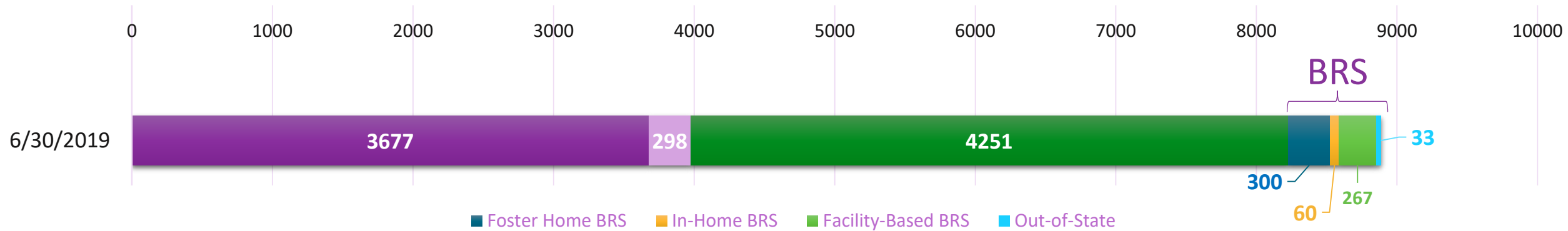


# Licensed Foster Homes, by Region



Location	# LFH FY2018	# Kids FY2018	# LFH FY2019	# Kids FY2019
Region 1	905	1697	923	1655
Region 2	506	796	498	716
Region 3	795	1364	792	1236
Region 4	810	1764	835	1869
Region 5	958	1725	991	1556
Region 6	1055	1955	1079	1883
<b>Total</b>	<b>5029</b>		<b>5119</b>	

# Behavior Rehabilitation Services



Type	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
Avg. # of Youth	688/month	665/month	660/month
Avg. Length of Stay	15.2 months	14 months	11.5 months

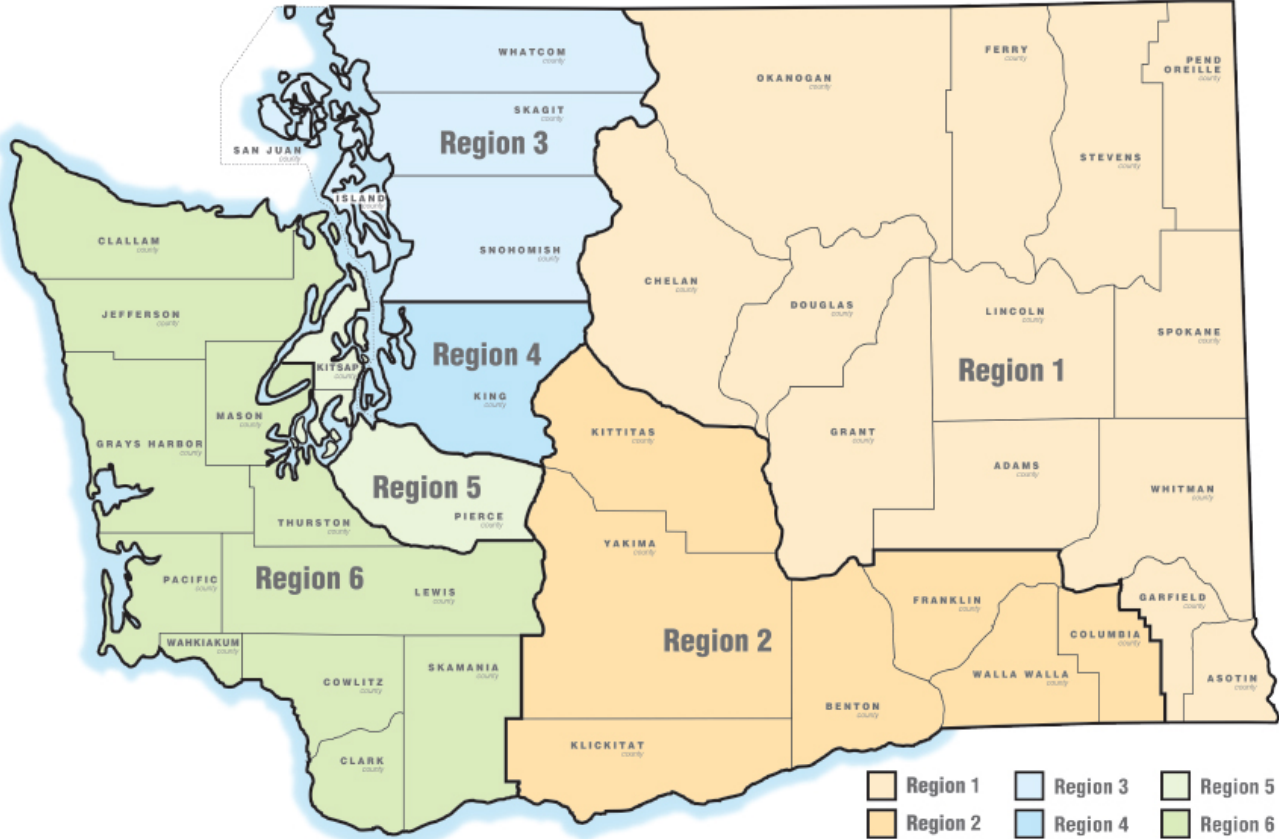


# Placement Exceptions

Type	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
Office Stays	?	?	?
Number of Hotel Stays	561	1448	1381
Avg. length of hotel stay	8.1 days	5.8 days	6.5 days

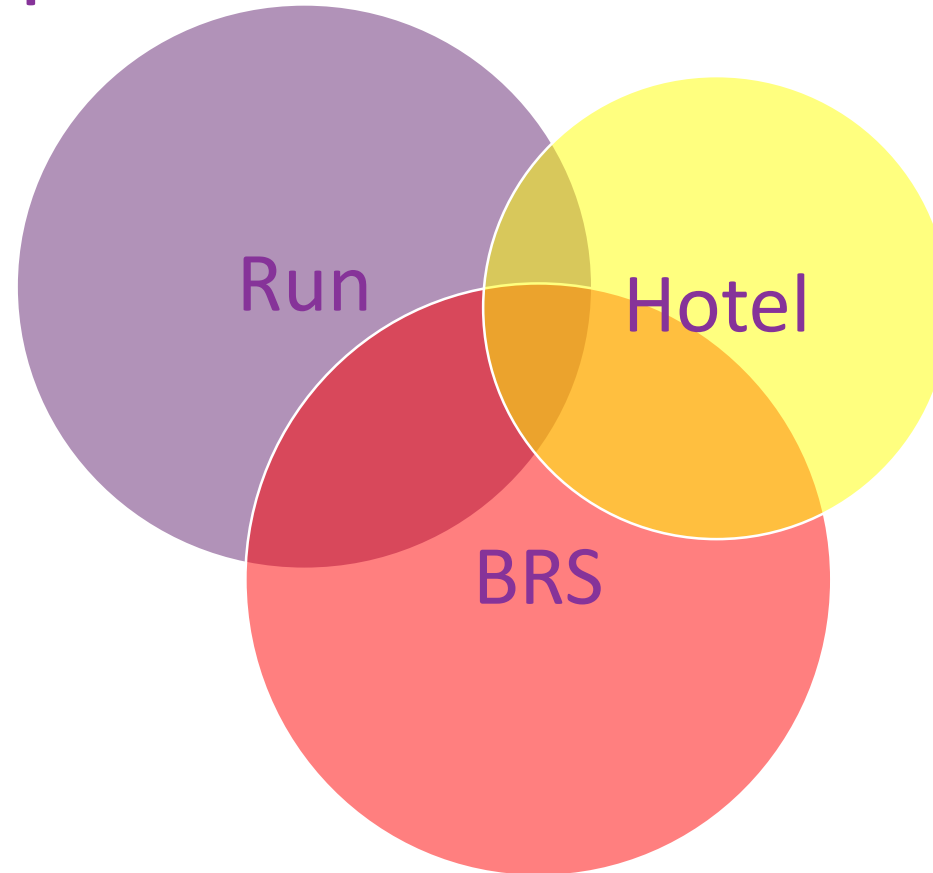


# Hotel Stays, by Region



Location	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
Region 1	0	6	41
Region 2	0	3	1
Region 3	88	373	274
Region 4	457	979	1001
Region 5	12	55	8
Region 6	4	32	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>1448</b>	<b>1381</b>

# Overlap Between Events of Concern



# Foster Placement Solutions

- Safely decrease number of children in dependency
- Create seamless continuum of placement options based on the child's need
- License more kin
- Improve bio-parent & foster-parent interactions
- Recruit foster parents that are prepared and able to support the diversity of our adolescents LGBTQ+
- Maximize current DCYF staff capacity for supporting families
  - Practice model
  - IT systems improvement
  - Policy reduction



# Thank you!

**Contact:**

[Ross.Hunter@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:Ross.Hunter@dcyf.wa.gov)

Office: 360-407-7909

