



Joint Committee on Child Welfare System Oversight **November 16, 2022**

Rep. Susan Concannon, Chair
Sen. Richard Hilderbrand, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to share updates about DCCCA child welfare services.

My name is Jeanette Owens, and I am the Chief Child Welfare Officer at DCCCA. We provide child welfare programs including family preservation, child placing agency services, and We Kan Drive, a new program that supports youth in foster care in obtaining a driver's license. Additionally, we provide mental health and substance use disorder treatment, traffic safety, prevention, and research services. DCCCA has served Kansas communities, families, and children for the past 48 years.

Family Preservation Services

DCCCA is serving 232 families currently with more than 562 children in those homes. We are working alongside these families to address mental health needs, housing availability, food insecurities, utility payment issues, safe childcare options as well as additional areas of need. Resources continue to fluctuate in availability and homelessness remains a huge barrier for many families.

Our current caseloads for Tier 1 average 3.2 families. Our current caseloads for Tier 2 average 11.7 families. It is important to note that caseloads sizes vary based on referrals received as well as open staff positions.

Child Placing Agency (CPA) Services

DCCCA provides child placing agency services statewide which includes recruitment, training, licensing, and support services for foster families. We currently serve 354 foster families and 501 foster children placed in those homes. Kansas has 2,399 foster families statewide. Since May of 2020, the number of foster families statewide has had a net decrease of 536 foster homes.

New DCCCA Foster Homes FY23

MONTH	HOMES LICENSED	TAKE SIBLINGS, TEENS, HIGH NEEDS, MINORITY
July	10	5
August	8	8
September	7	9*
October	5	3
Current Total for FY23	30	25

*3 Homes that licensed in July had children placed that qualified in September

Workforce Updates

The Recruitment and Retention funds have continued to make an impact on our child placing agency staffing as well as the enhanced rates that started in October. We were able to post 6 new positions for our CPA services. We believe these new positions will not only enhance our support services, but will also assist with staff retention.

Our family preservation workforce continues to be an area of concern. We currently have 17 open positions. We continue to work diligently on our recruitment and retention plan to determine the best ways to make an impact. One specific area of focus this past month was the amount of time staff spend driving. In our Kansas City region, staff traveled over 50,700 miles this past quarter and Wichita region was over 34,590 miles. We have enhanced and increased our company fleet over the past several years as well as increased our mileage reimbursement for those staff that drive their own vehicles. We work with supervisors and staff to assign cases in local areas, scheduling tips to enhance travel efficiencies, have a teamwork approach when a client needs transportation and assist in finding other resources when possible. We will continue to support staff and assist them as they seek to balance job responsibilities, client needs and their own personal obligations.

Thank you for your time today. We appreciate the invitation to join the conversation and we appreciate the commitment to improving the lives of Kansas children.

Respectfully submitted,

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Questions may also be directed to: Stuart Little, Little Relations, stuartjlittle@mac.com