



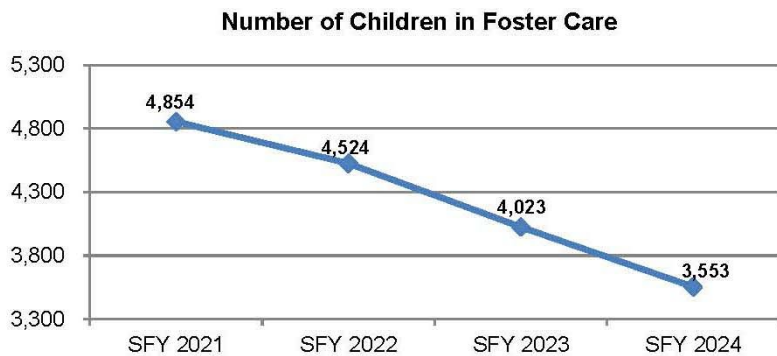
Arkansas House Newsletter

December 6, 2024

Report Shows Decrease in Foster Care Cases

Number of Children in Foster Care

There were 3,553 children in foster care at the end of SFY 2024. This signified a decrease of 12 percent from SFY 2023 (4,023).



The Arkansas House Committee for Aging, Children and Youth, and Legislative and Military Affairs met this week and reviewed the annual report from the Department of Human Services' Division of Children and Family Services. The report provided significant insights into the state's foster care system during State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024.

At the conclusion of SFY 2024, Arkansas had 3,553 children in foster care, representing a notable decrease of 12 percent from the previous fiscal year's count of 4,023. This decline indicates progress in addressing the needs of children in the state's care.

One key highlight from the report was the observation that more children exited foster care during SFY 2024 than entered the system, demonstrating positive strides in achieving permanency for these vulnerable children. Neglect and substance abuse emerged as the predominant reasons for children entering foster care throughout the year.

Of the children who left foster care in SFY 2024, 42 percent were reunified with their families, 30 percent were adopted, and 9 percent were discharged to relative custody. Notably, a significant 92 percent of children exiting care in Arkansas achieved permanency through avenues such as returning home, placement with relatives, adoption, or other permanent arrangements.

The division's goal is to have at least one foster home bed available for each child in foster care. The ratio of licensed foster home beds to children in foster care was 0.75 at the end of the year, identical to the previous year.

Foster parents help support families during a difficult time. They work as a team with the child's case worker to ensure the well-being of the child in their care. A foster parent's impact reaches far as they provide a positive influence across the community. [Learn more about becoming a foster parent.](#)