



Legislative Research Commission Committee

April, 5 2016

Matt Anderson, MSW



Children's Home Society
OF NORTH CAROLINA

Agenda

Children's Home Society Overview

Challenges facing Youth in Foster Care

Opportunities to Improve Permanency

Questions



Children's Home Society
OF NORTH CAROLINA

CHS Overview

CHS Mission

To promote the right of every child to a permanent, safe, and loving family

We Believe

- In the inherent value and potential of every child
- A child's potential is best nurtured in a family
- Investing in children and families is the greatest opportunity to improve our communities

Accomplishments

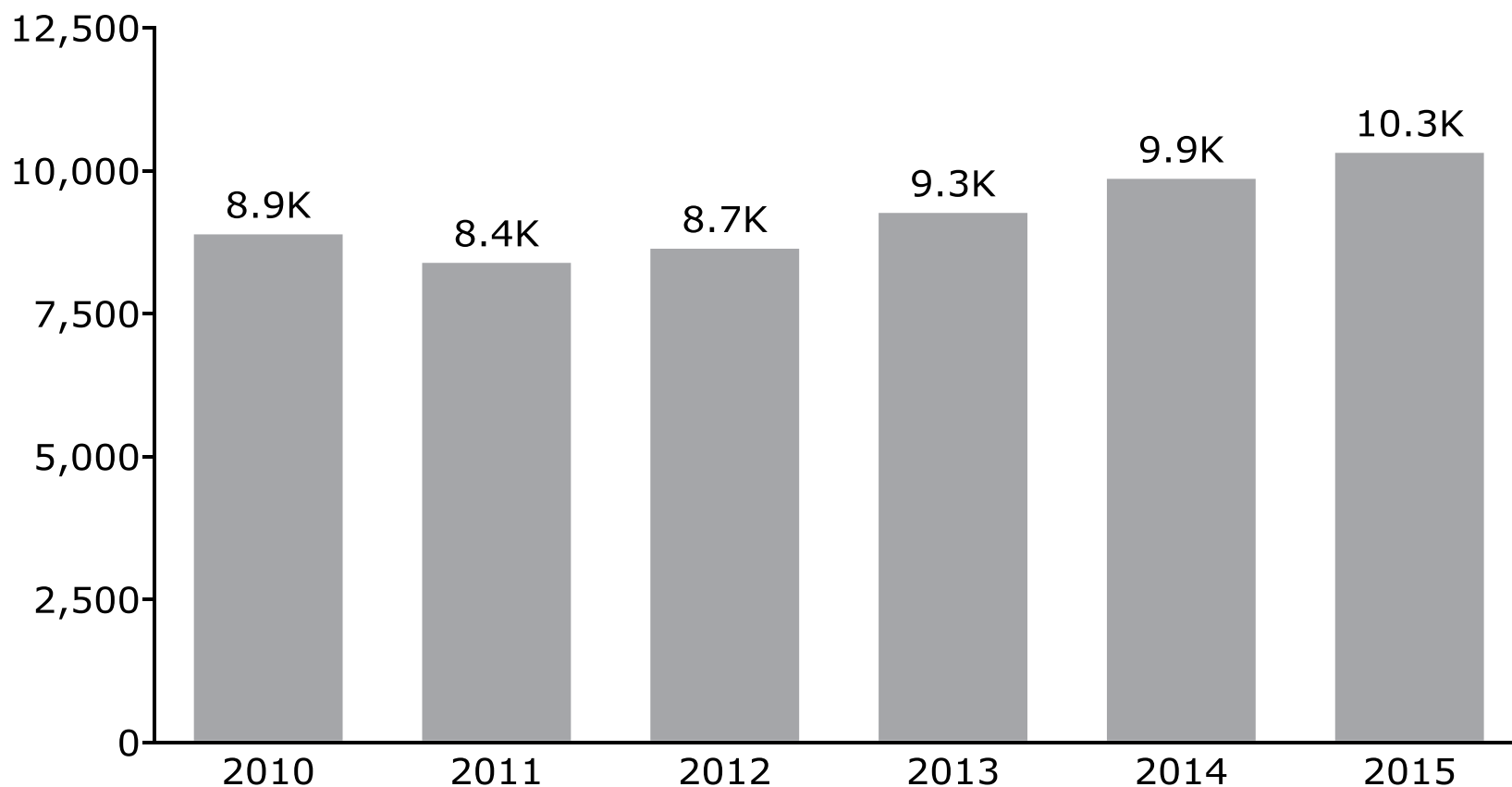
- 114-year history of serving children and families in North Carolina
- 15,000+ children have been adopted through CHS
- Largest private provider of foster care to permanency services in North Carolina



Children's Home Society
OF NORTH CAROLINA

More Children are in Foster Care

Total number of North Carolina youth in custody



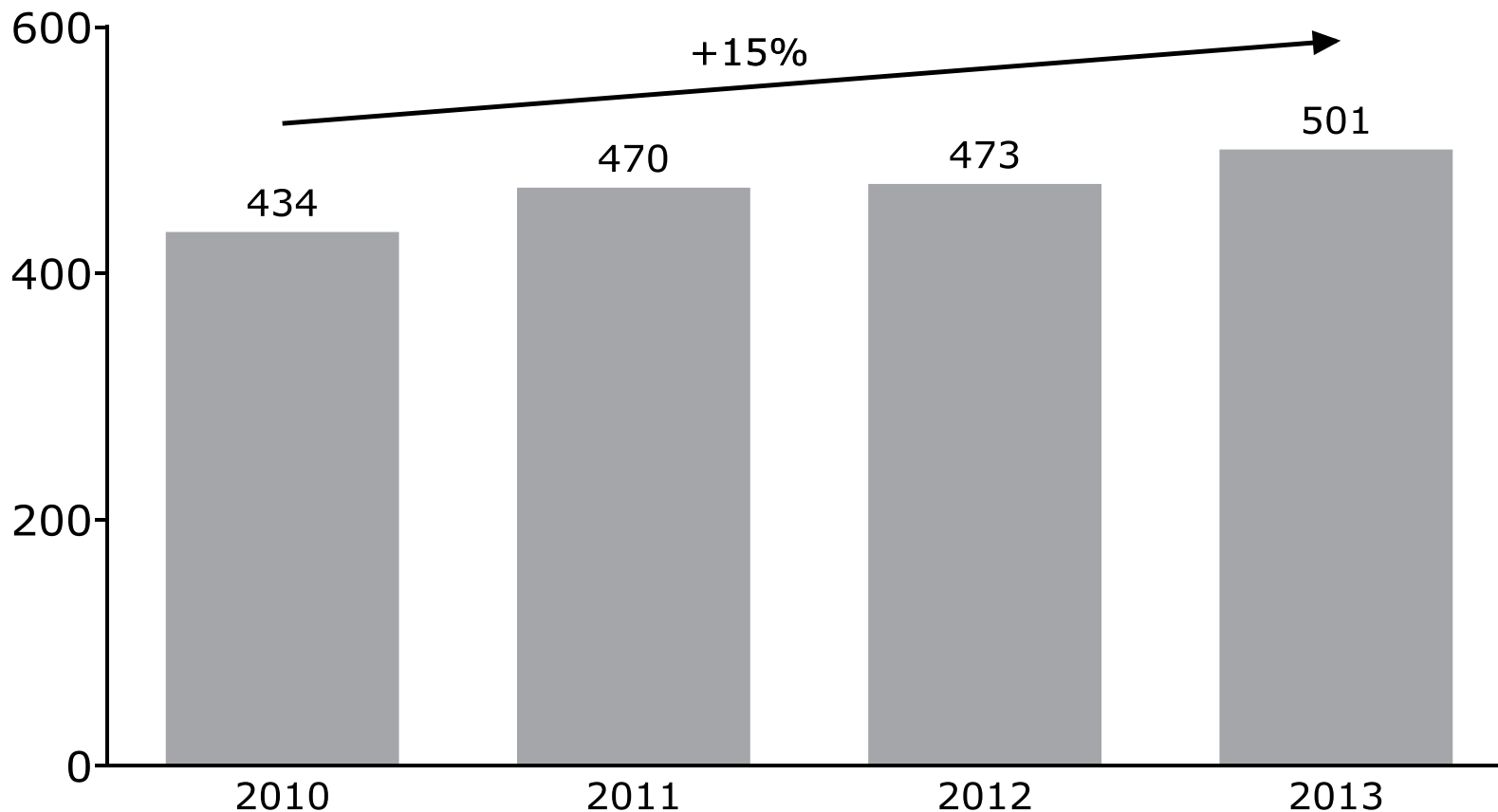
Duncan, D.F., Kum, H.C., Flair, K.A., Stewart, C.J., Vaughn, J.S., Guest, S., Rose, R.A., Gwaltney, A.Y., and Gogan, H.C. (2015). Management Assistance for Child Welfare, Work First, and Food & Nutrition Services in North Carolina (v3.2). Retrieved [Feb 3, 2016], from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Jordan Institute for Families website.



Children's Home Society
OF NORTH CAROLINA

Youth in Care are Staying Longer

Median time in custody in North Carolina (days)

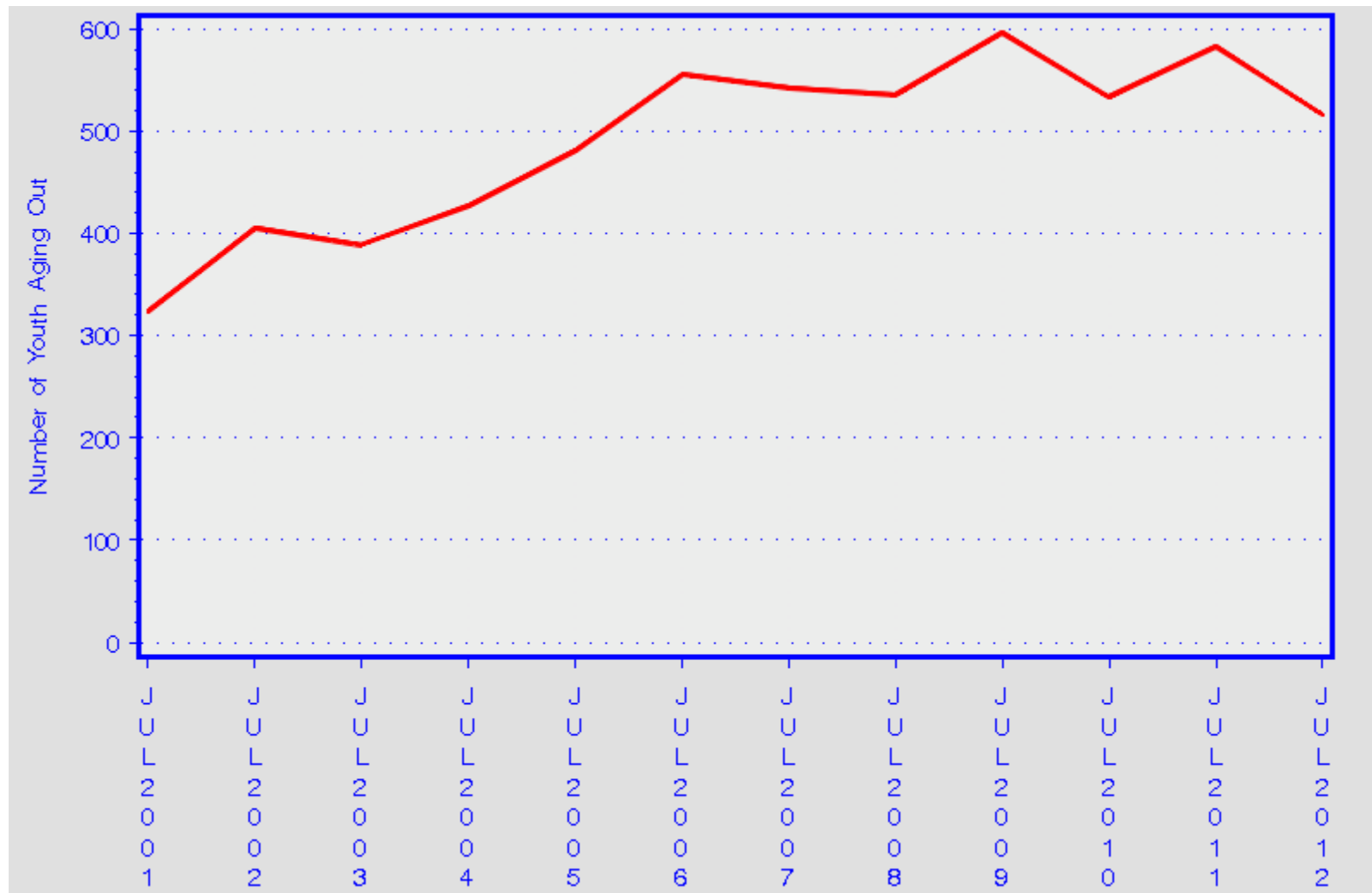


Duncan, D.F., Kum, H.C., Flair, K.A., Stewart, C.J., Vaughn, J.S., Guest, S., Rose, R.A., Gwaltney, A.Y., and Gogan, H.C. (2015). Management Assistance for Child Welfare, Work First, and Food & Nutrition Services in North Carolina (v3.2). Retrieved [Feb 3, 2016], from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Jordan Institute for Families website.



Children's Home Society
OF NORTH CAROLINA

More Youth are Aging Out



Duncan, D.F., Kum, H.C., Flair, K.A., Stewart, C.J., Vaughn, J.S., Guest, S., Rose, R.A., Gwaltney, A.Y., and Gogan, H.C. (2015). Management Assistance for Child Welfare, Work First, and Food & Nutrition Services in North Carolina (v3.2). Retrieved [Feb 3, 2016], from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Jordan Institute for Families website.

The Impact of Aging Out

732 youth from Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin

- At age 18; 75% of youth felt unprepared for independence
- By age 19; 57% had received a HS Diploma
- By age 23;

Outcome	Midwest	Peers
Employed at time of interview	48.0%	75.5%
Received government benefits	22.0%	6.0%
Experienced homelessness	36.5%	-
Women who have been pregnant	77.0%	40.0%
Men who have been arrested	81.0%	17.0%
Completed a 4 year degree	2.5%	19.5%

Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth, Chapin Hall at The University of Chicago (Courtney, 2010)

The Cost of Aging Out

SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED COSTS

One cohort year graduating at the rate of the general population would increase earnings over a working life	\$1,867,000,000
and increase taxes paid by	\$430,000,000
One cohort year unplanned, too early childbearing	\$250,000,000
One cohort year criminal justice costs for a criminal career.	\$5,236,000,000

Total for academic failure, unplanned pregnancy and criminal involvement for each cohort year:	\$7, 783,000,000
---	-------------------------

Recommendations

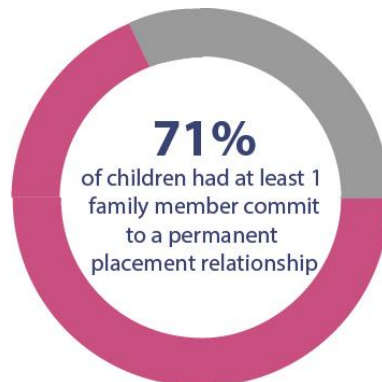
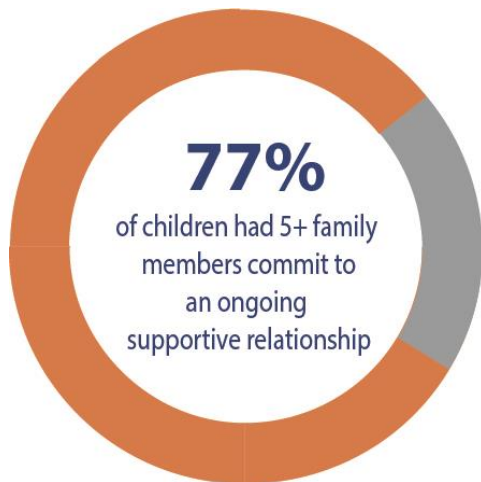
- **Prevention: Permanency is Possible**
 - Children receive an intensive permanency service and leave foster care to guardianship or adoption
 - Children have a network of unconditional supportive relationships
- **Transition: Quality vs Quantity**
 - Effectively implement the extension of foster care to 21
 - Access to effective transitional living services

Permanency Innovation Initiative

- The Permanency Innovation Initiative (PII) was established in 2014 in partnership with the General Assembly, State and local Division of Social Services, Children's Home Society, and other stakeholders
- PII services include Family Finding, Child Specific Adoption Recruitment, and Permanency Focused Training
- PII leveraged an even greater public/private partnership, building upon more than \$15 million in investment from the private sector over the past 10 years
- Goal is to improve permanency outcomes and reduce the number of children aging out
 - 60 DSS agencies have utilized services
 - 289 children are being served
 - 43 children have achieved permanency
 - 69 children are on track to achieve permanency



Family Finding



“I thought I would never have a family again, but Ms. Rochelle helped me find my family. I’m so excited, I can’t wait to see them.”

- **Program:** Family Finding is a six step program model that utilizes technology and specialized techniques to discover and engage the biological family members of children in foster care
- **Population:** Children who are in foster care, particularly older youth who have been in foster care multiple years and are at risk aging out of foster care
- **Outcome:** Relational and legal permanency; Family Finding is successful when a child has an unconditional network of support and/or has left foster care to a permanent family

Source: CHS Internal Data



Children's Home Society
OF NORTH CAROLINA

Family Finding

- Sean entered foster care at 4 years old and was referred to Family Finding at 12 years old
- Family Finder discovered 39 new family members who were not connected to Sean
- 9 family members committed to a supportive relationship and 6 committed to legal permanency
- Sean's step-grandparents were the primary option and the plan was adoption
- Multiple family members completed MAPP training, became licensed, and began visiting with Sean
- Sean's step-grandparents adopted Sean in September of 2015, just in time to have a big celebration over Thanksgiving



Child Specific Adoption Recruitment

“Child Specific Adoption Recruitment substantially and significantly increases adoptions from foster care.” – Child Trends

- A child served by a Child Specific Recruiter is **1.7 times more likely** to be adopted than a child not served by a recruiter
- Older children or children with mental health disorders are **more than 3 times more likely** to be adopted when served by a recruiter than those not served by a recruiter

The Impact of Child-Focused Recruitment on Foster Care Adoption: A Five-Year Evaluation of Wendy's Wonderful Kids. (Malm, 2011)

Child Specific Adoption Recruitment

North Carolina children served: 2005 – 2014

- Average age is 12.5 years old
- Averaged 7 placements prior to referral
- Averaged 5.5 years in care prior to referral
- 43% were in group care, hospitals or institutions at referral
- 317 children served
- 223 children matched with a family
- **148 children adopted (188 as of Jan 2016)**

Source: Dave Thomas Foundation database managed by Child Trends

Conclusion: Investing in Permanency Pays Off

The stakes are high



The costs of aging out are significant



North Carolina is making progress



More children could benefit from permanency services



Thank you for your
leadership and commitment
to children and families!