

# DCYF Oversight Board Juvenile Rehabilitation Update

Original Date: August 28, 2024

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



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

# Agenda

- **Background**

- Juvenile Justice Continuum Overview
- Pathways In and Out of JR
- Population Trends

- **Recent Realities**

- Timeline and Decisions
- Young People
- Staff (Safety and Security)
- Legal

- **Future**

- Next Steps and Upcoming Proposals

**Joined by:**

Ross Hunter, *Secretary*

Felice Upton, *Assistant Secretary Juvenile Rehabilitation*

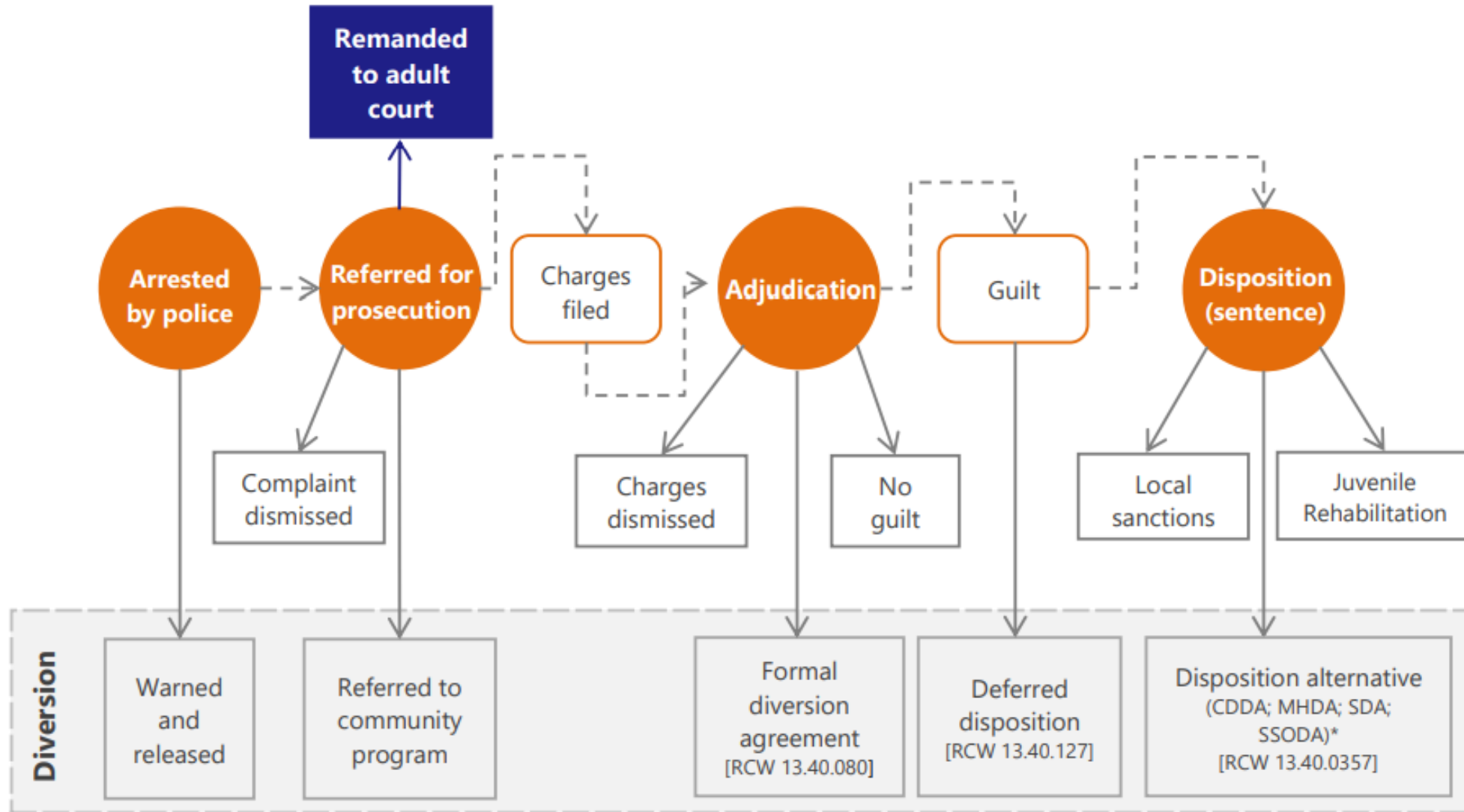
Jenny Heddin, *Deputy Secretary Chief of Staff*

Robert Long, *DOC Director of Security & Emergency Management*

Allison Krutsinger, *Director of Public Affairs*



# Pathways to JR and Diversion Opportunities



## Notes:

**Orange** indicates the major processing points in the juvenile justice system.

**Blue** indicates youth who are not processed in the juvenile justice system and are remanded to adult court.

**Solid** lines represent a potential final stage in case processing.

# Recent Legislative Changes & Investments

## JR to 25 (2018 and 2019)

- Moved young people from DOC to JR who qualified, expanded age to 25
- Investments in post-secondary and vocational programs

## Less restrictive care (HB1186, 2021)

- Community Transition Services – serving part of sentence on EM in home/community
- Community facility investments
- Expand reentry aftercare support for all young people
- Revamp risk/needs and actuarial assessments

## MH and SUD interventions

- Increased investment

## Institutional Education (HB1295, 2021)

- Dropout reengagement examination
- Professional development for IE staff
- OSPI to modify or establish IE requirements
- Develop recommendations of a reformed & funded IE program

## Solitary confinement (2020)

- Increased focus and requirements
- Limited Room Confinement and Isolation only

### Challenging Staffing Realities Throughout:

- ~60% JR Staff Turnover during COVID Pandemic
- New staff coincided with unprecedented population increase + shift in population



# JR Service Delivery System

**325** young people released in FY2024  
Residential care: **785** youth served (FY2024)  
Average length of stay: **415** days (FY2024)



## Institutions

**Echo Glen Children's Center (Snoqualmie)**

Serves women (aged 12-25) men (aged 11-17)

**Safe, Operational Capacity of 112**

**Green Hill School (Chehalis)**

Serves men (aged 17-25)

**Safe, Operational Capacity of 180**

## Community facilities

Located in Kirkland, Lakewood, Olympia, E. Wenatchee, Ephrata, Kittitas, Yakima, Richland

Serves qualifying young people who achieve a Minimum-Security classification. Locations vary by age, gender and programming.

**Launched May 2024:**

## Community Transition Services

Young person serves final portion of sentence in home community

Currently operational in Pierce and Spokane Counties



## Reentry Programming for all

Both mandatory and voluntary programs



# When a Young Person Comes to DCYF JR...

## Youth are adjudicated into the JRA system if their term of confinement exceeds 30 days.

- Initially all young people are placed at either EGCC or GHS
- When a young person is admitted to JR, they will receive several screenings that include medical and mental health needs, as well as risks for harming themselves, others, or engaging in harmful behaviors.
- Risk screening will determine a young person's security classification.
- They will be assigned to a living unit.
- DCYF's new Family Handbook explains what young people can expect from DCYF's JR Continuum

<b>First Week</b>	Assigned staff will contact the parent/guardian for introductions and invite them to the initial Future Planning Meeting.
<b>First Two Weeks</b>	A qualified assessor interviews young people to assess their risks and needs. Assessors also contact the legal guardian to get additional information.
<b>Within 30 Days</b>	Initial Future Planning Meeting is completed.
<b>Every 120 Days</b>	Young people receive risk and need reassessment throughout their residential sentence and while on parole aftercare if they are released with a parole obligation.



# Three Pathways out of JR Institutional Setting

- Release with mandatory parole or voluntary wrap around case management (Community Assisted Reentry)
- Transfer to Less Restrictive Settings
  - Community Facilities
    - Minimum-security, small facilities are located throughout the state and provide educational, vocational, employment and reentry opportunities in a supported community setting.
  - Community Transition Services
    - CTS allows JR to transfer young people into the community to an approved address to finish their residential sentence on electronic monitoring. E2HB 1186 (2021) established the program.
- Transfer to Department of Corrections
  - Those with post 25-sentence will transfer to DOC at age 25



# Most Young People at Green Hill are not Eligible for an Alternate Placement

## Classification of Young People at Green Hill School (as of 8/26):

- Minimum Security: **5** young people
  - *(only residents with a minimum-security classification are eligible for Community Facility consideration)*
- Medium Security: **85** young people
- Maximum Security: **138** young people

- Each week, all individuals who are eligible or soon-to-be eligible for a Community Facility or for Community Transition Services are reviewed for placement
- **Most young men over 17 are not eligible for either CFs or CTS** and their only option is to serve their sentence at GHS.

### Community Facility reviews held to date: **110**

- Recommended for placement: **91**
- NOT recommended for placement at that time: **19**

### Community Transition Services reviews held to date: **10**

- Recommended for placement: **10**
- NOT recommended for placement: **0**

As of 8/26/2024





# Community Facilities are Near Capacity

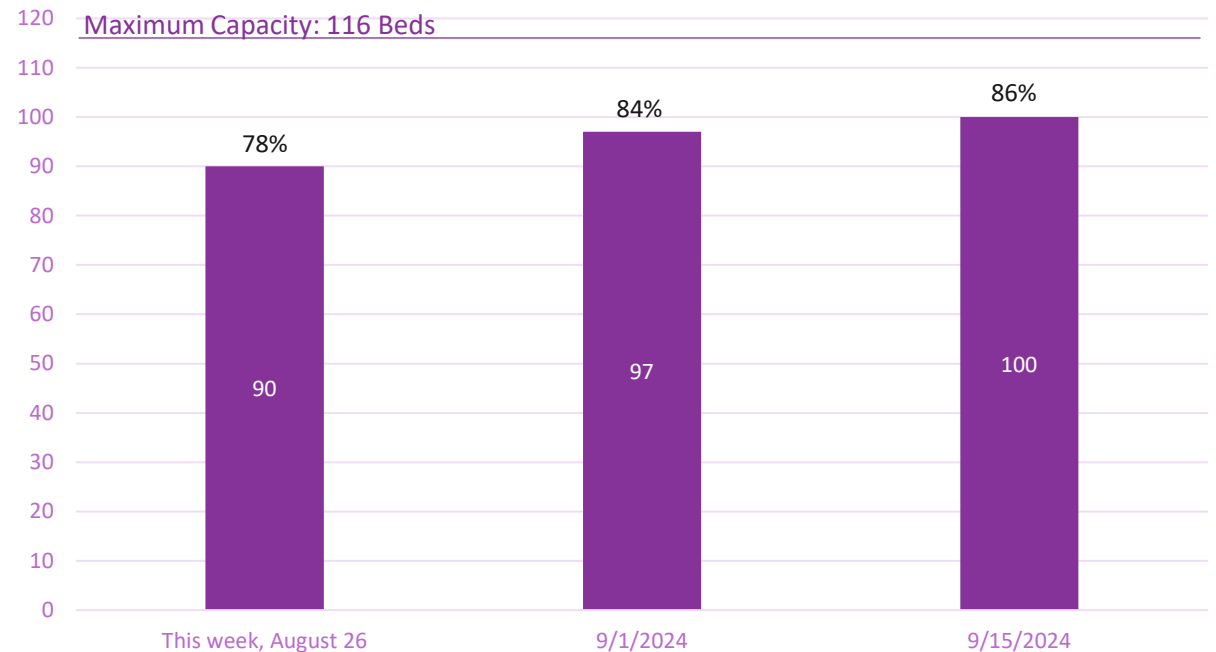
**CFs will likely never be at 100% capacity as beds must be held for young people....**

- Transferring between CFs as they cycle through programming
- During necessary 30-day notification periods once approved for transfer from institutions.
- Some facility beds are reserved only for women or for younger individuals.

## **CF Review Process**

- When an individual achieves Institution Minimum Security Classification and has no other rule out criteria, they are considered for placement
- Weekly reviews by a Risk Review Committee look back at the last 90 days of behaviors to evaluate risk and readiness and recommend/deny placement
- If placement is denied, a plan is developed to address barriers and a timeframe for reconsideration is provided.

**Projected Community Facility Occupancy, through 9/15/2024**



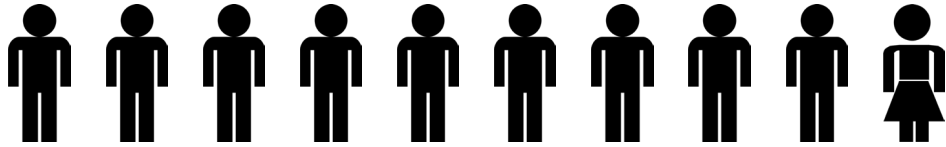
Facility Fill Rate Data: Community facility / CTS report out – JULY 29, 2024 (Approved for distribution by Rebecca Kelly)

# Current External Realities

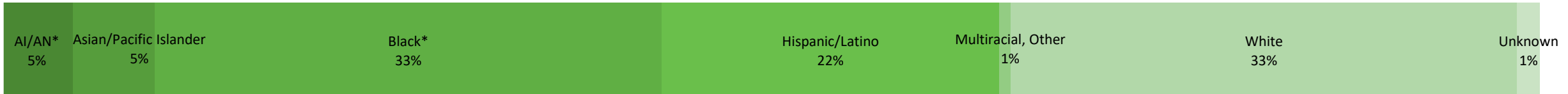
- Despite years of declining juvenile crime and incarceration, the most recent year has seen a 60% increase in intakes to JR of young men 17-25.
- Recent data from the Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs indicates a 24% increase in juveniles arrested for crimes.
- At the same time, courts are sentencing more youth and issuing longer sentences.
- An increase of intakes has led to population growth at all DCYF JR facilities, and at Green Hill School in particular.

# Who are we serving in JR?

Nine of ten JR young people identify as male (93%)



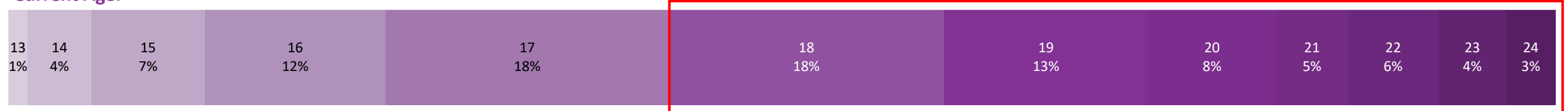
Young people of color are the majority in JR (66%)



\*American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) – Multiracial and Black – Multiracial categories have been combined with AI/AN and Black respectively, according to the [WSRDAC M standard](#).

57% of young people in JR are age 18 or older, 18% are age 21 and over

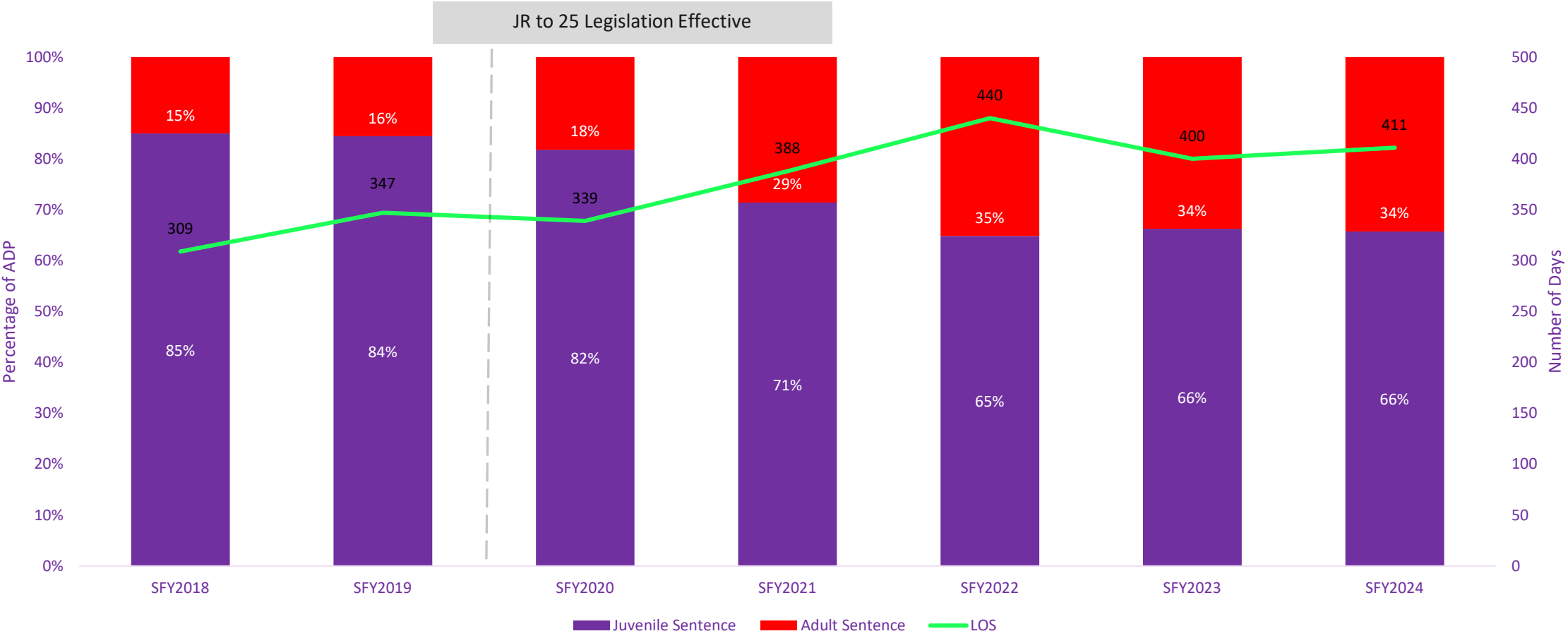
Current Age:



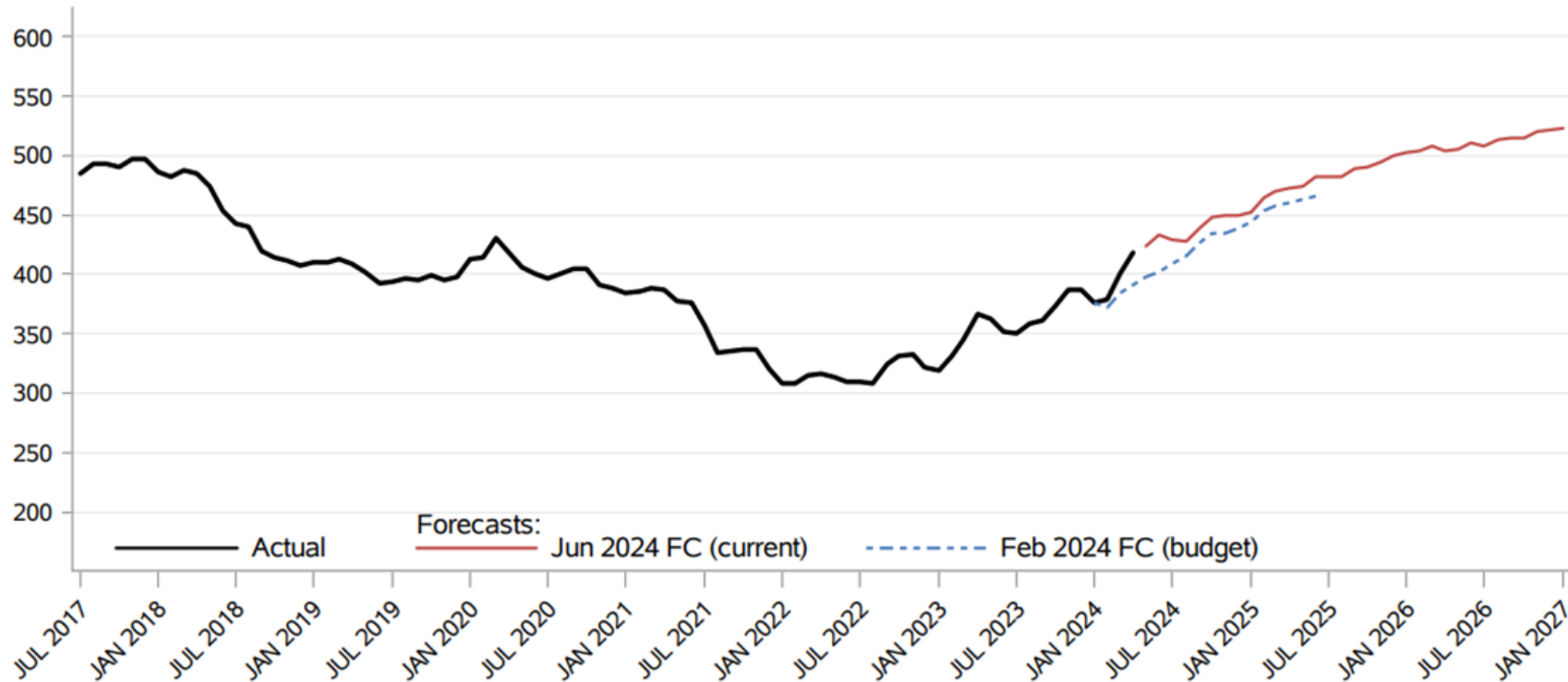
Due to rounding, age categories do not sum to 100%.

# The Length of Stay and Proportion of Young People with Adult Sentences is Rising

## Average Daily Population by Sentence Type with Average Length of Stay SFY18-24

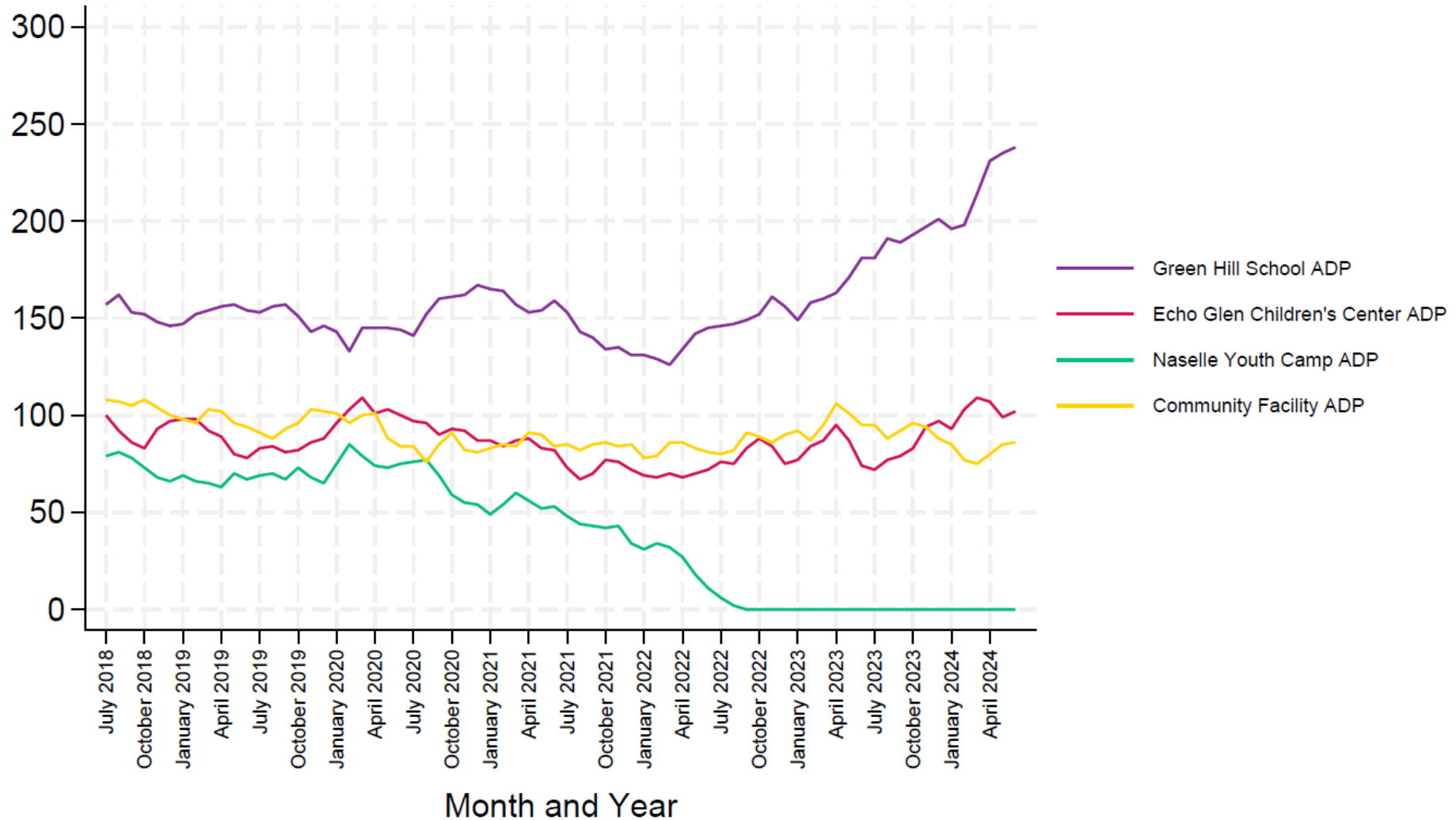


# Current forecast shows continued growth across JR for the foreseeable future



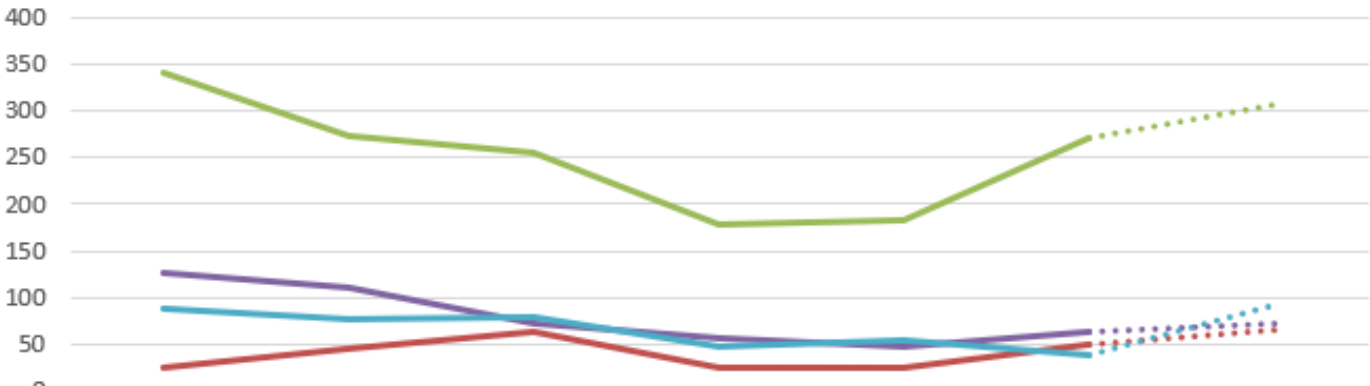
# The JR Population is Increasing

## Juvenile Rehabilitation Population Growth



# Intakes are projected to continue to rise, including for DOC admits who largely go to Green Hill

Admissions by Type CY2018-2024



	CY2018	CY2019	CY2020	CY2021	CY2022	CY2023	CY2024 (Projected*)
DOC Admits	26	46	63	26	25	51	66
First Admits	340	273	255	178	184	270	306
Parole Revokes	127	112	73	57	47	64	72
ReAdmits	88	78	79	48	55	39	92

\*1/1/24-6/30/24 admissions were doubled to project CY2024 total admissions

DOC Admits    First Admits    Parole Revokes    ReAdmits

**DOC Admit** – An individual with an adult sentence is admitted to a JR institution.

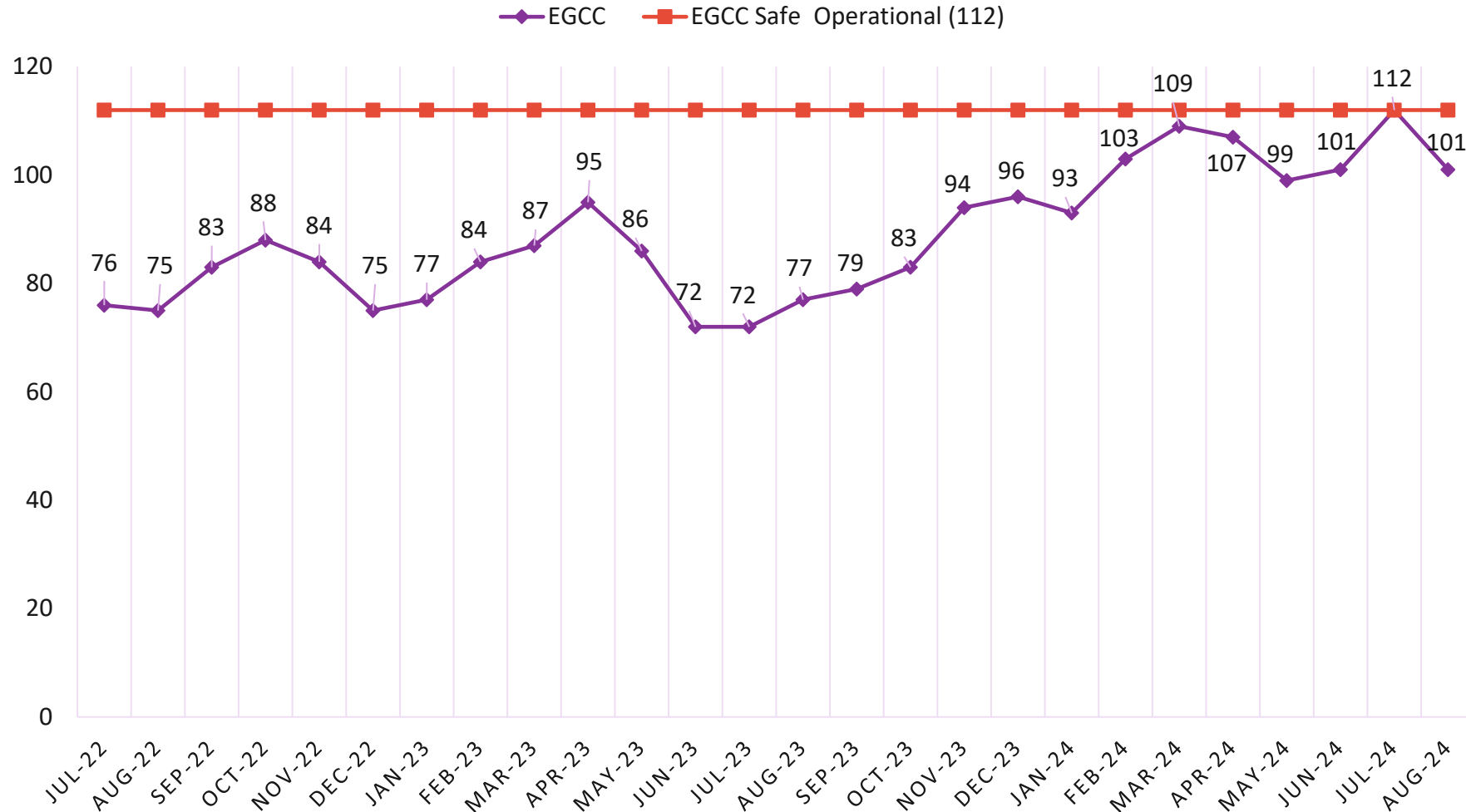
**First Admit** – An individual with a juvenile sentence is admitted to a JR institution for the first time.

**Parole Revoke** – An individual who violated the terms of their parole returns to a JR institution.

**Re-Admits** – An individual who has previously been in the JR system returns to an institution to serve a new juvenile sentence. (Clients who are recommitted with an adult sentence are counted as a “DOC Admit” rather than a “ReAdmit”.)

# Echo Glen is Hovering around Safe Operational Capacity

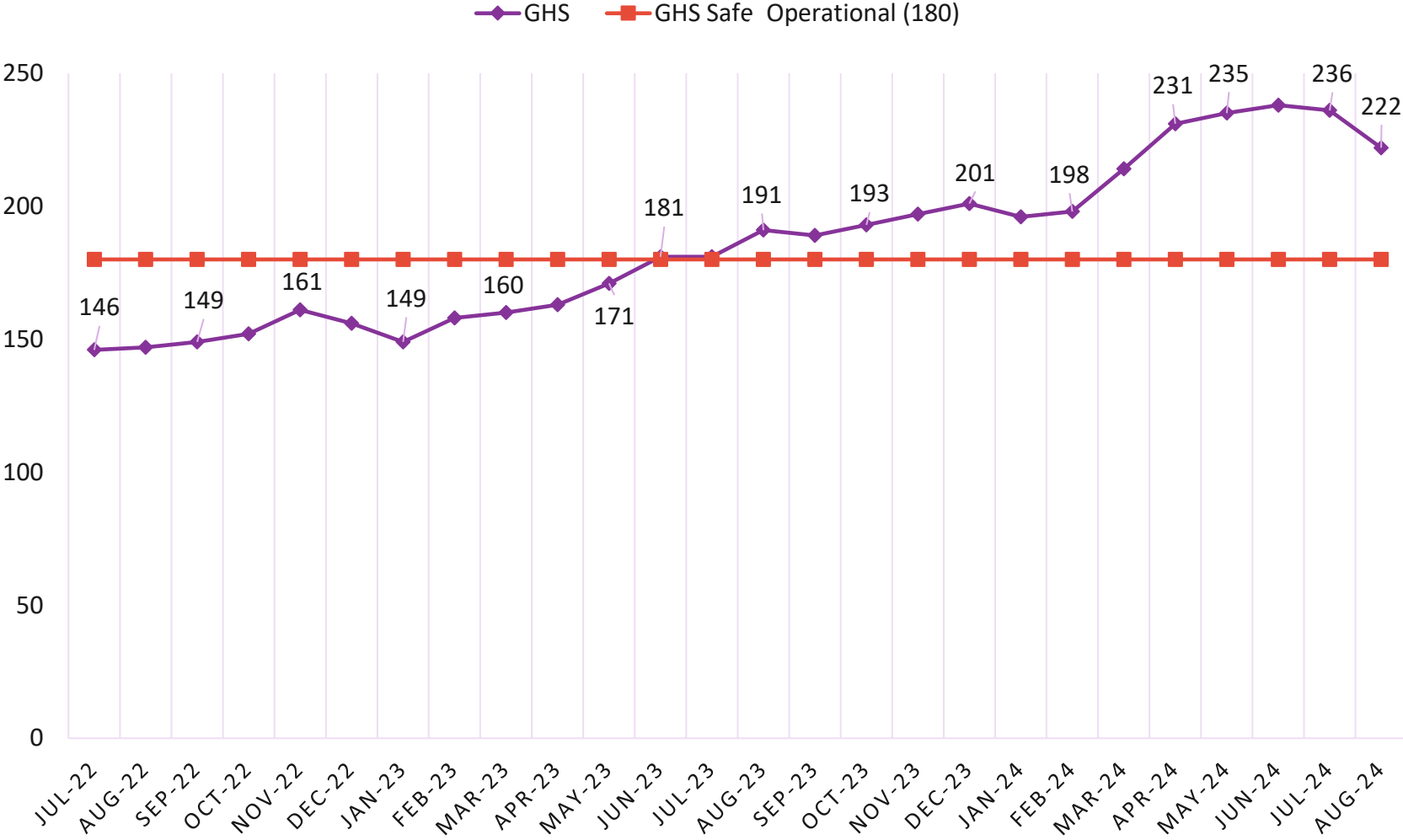
## ECHO GLEN AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION AND SAFE OPERATIONAL CAPACITY





# Green Hill School has been above Safe Operational Capacity since July 2023

## GREEN HILL SCHOOL AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION AND SAFE OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

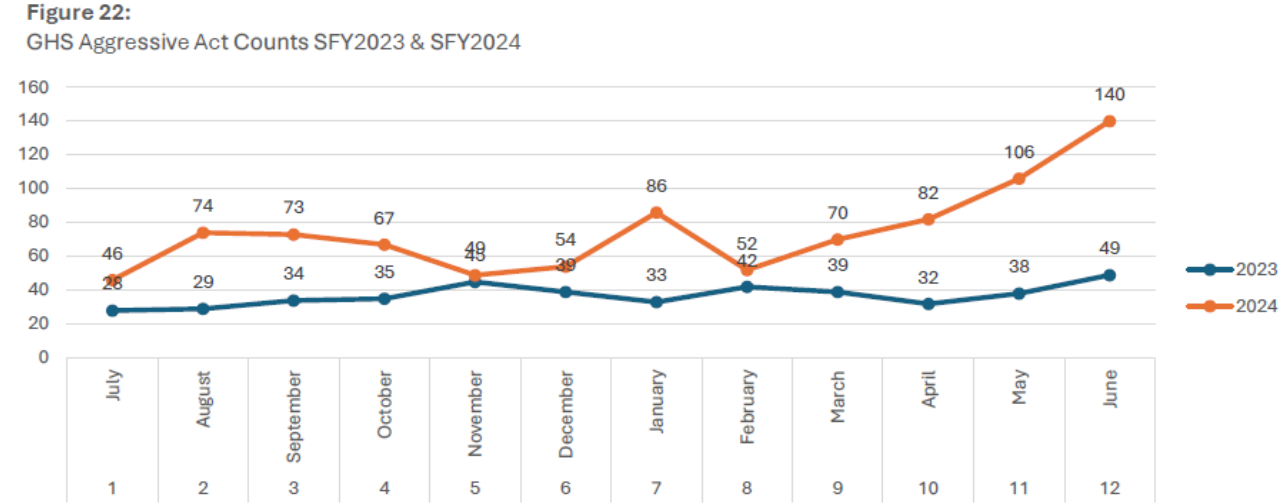


# Risks of Overcrowding

- Research indicates overcrowding and extended room confinement...
  - increases incidents (fights, assaults),
  - impacts youth and staff’s perception of safety (higher rates of reporting safety concerns and fear for safety),
  - contributes to the overall facility culture and environment (deplorable living conditions, decreased programming, negatively impacting staff wellness)
- Rapid population growth affects staffing ratios
- Limited space at Green Hill means young people must double-bunk
- Young people cannot be successful in conditions of overcrowding, we see this playing out at GHS daily

Green Hill School Aggressive Act Counts

Figure 22: GHS Aggressive Act Counts SFY2023 & SFY2024  
The total number of aggressive acts that occurred at GHS for each month of SFY2023 and SFY2024.



373 distinct youth were involved in the aggressive acts that occurred at GHS during SFY2023 and SFY2024.

# Current Green Hill Realities

- **Joint Incident Command Post with DOC – supporting safety, foundational environmental needs, and practice**
  - An Incident Command System is a system of managing and organizing correctional operations when normal operations are not possible or efficient.
  - Provides increased staffing boost, infrastructure resources, and technical assistance support, staff report feeling empowered
- **Highlights to Date -**
  - Meals have resumed in the dining hall
  - High School classes started for Fall quarter
  - Environmental focus to increase cleanliness and facilitate quality property management
  - Increased attention to strategies addressing contraband and security
  - Increased community with residents and staff
  - Increased communication with residents and families
  - Post-secondary classes start in alignment with Centralia Collège Fall quarter

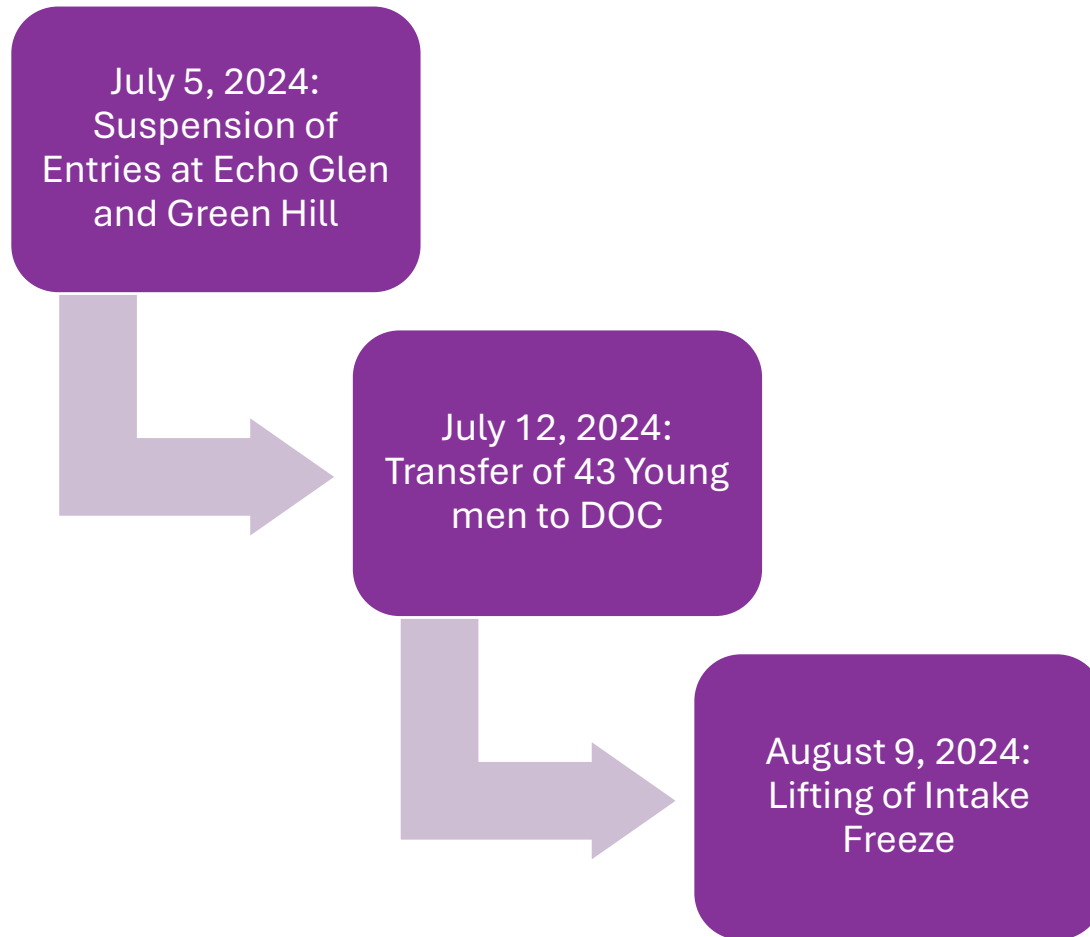


# Staffing Impact

- Efforts to protect the safety of our staff have been central throughout this process
- Incident Command Post
  - Established May 25 following Memorial Day Weekend incidents
- Staffing Partnership with DOC
  - Unified Command Structure Established
    - DOC brings nationally recognized certifications and experience in managing large scale incidents.
    - Already seeing some increased programming (i.e. cafeteria and yard use)
- Staffing remains a challenge
  - ~60-80 FTE short at GHS throughout the year
  - Frequent Callouts/No-shows



# Timeline of Recent Events



- Precipitating Factors
- Facts of the Events
- Alternatives Considered
- Communication & Transparency



# Next Steps for a Future JR System

- Capacity footprint must match population realities in an appropriate way
  - Ability to respond to population variance and realities
  - Smaller facilities based in community, those with mental health focus and medium security ability
- Programming-related Changes
  - Mental Health and Wellbeing
  - Employment and Education
  - Therapeutic Staffing and Processes
- Staffing-related Changes
  - Forecast ARL
  - Wage Increases



# DP: Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing

- **Medicaid Transformation Discharge Planning Resources (1115 Waiver Implementation)**
  - Aftercare Liaisons serving 8 community facilities and 6 regions.
  - These contracts align with aims of Medicaid Transformation.
  - State funds cover consultation, training, and coordination with JR staff, as well as participation in quality assurance processes
  - Contractors bill Medicaid for direct services.
- **Positive Outcomes through Successful Transition (POST) program continuation**
  - OUD intervention delivered in collaboration with Seattle Children's Hospital
- **Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP)**
  - Expanding quality assurance



# DP: Employment Expansion and Education Support

- **Green Hill School Transition and Reentry Support**
  - Postsecondary/Vocational Experience Manager
  - Transition and Future Planning Specialist
- **Vocational Programming**
  - Landscaping
  - Automotive
  - HVAC Certification
- **Professional Consultancy and Workforce Development**
- **Paying Residents to Work**





# DP: Safe and Therapeutic Staffing and Environments

- **Transparent, Safe Processes**

- Internal Infractions Unit
- Hearings Unit Capacity
- Grievance Process
- Classifications Process
- Internal Records Unit
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework, incorporating Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

- **Safety Infrastructure**

- Contraband Investigation Capacity
- Surveillance and Video Records System
- EGCC Handheld Radios and Duress System
- Secure System for Resident Calls

