

# Washington State Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds

2025 OFCO Report-  
Child Fatalities and Near Fatalities in Washington State

Presentation to the DCYF Oversight Board  
Thursday, July 17, 2025

Patrick Dowd, OFCO Director

# OFCO's Duties

Oversight of child welfare system.

- ▶ Respond to inquiries
- ▶ Investigate complaints
- ▶ Child Fatality & Near Fatality Reviews
- ▶ Identify systemic issues and make recommendations

*(RCW 43.06A)*

# AIRS Reporting (AIRS) of Critical Incidents

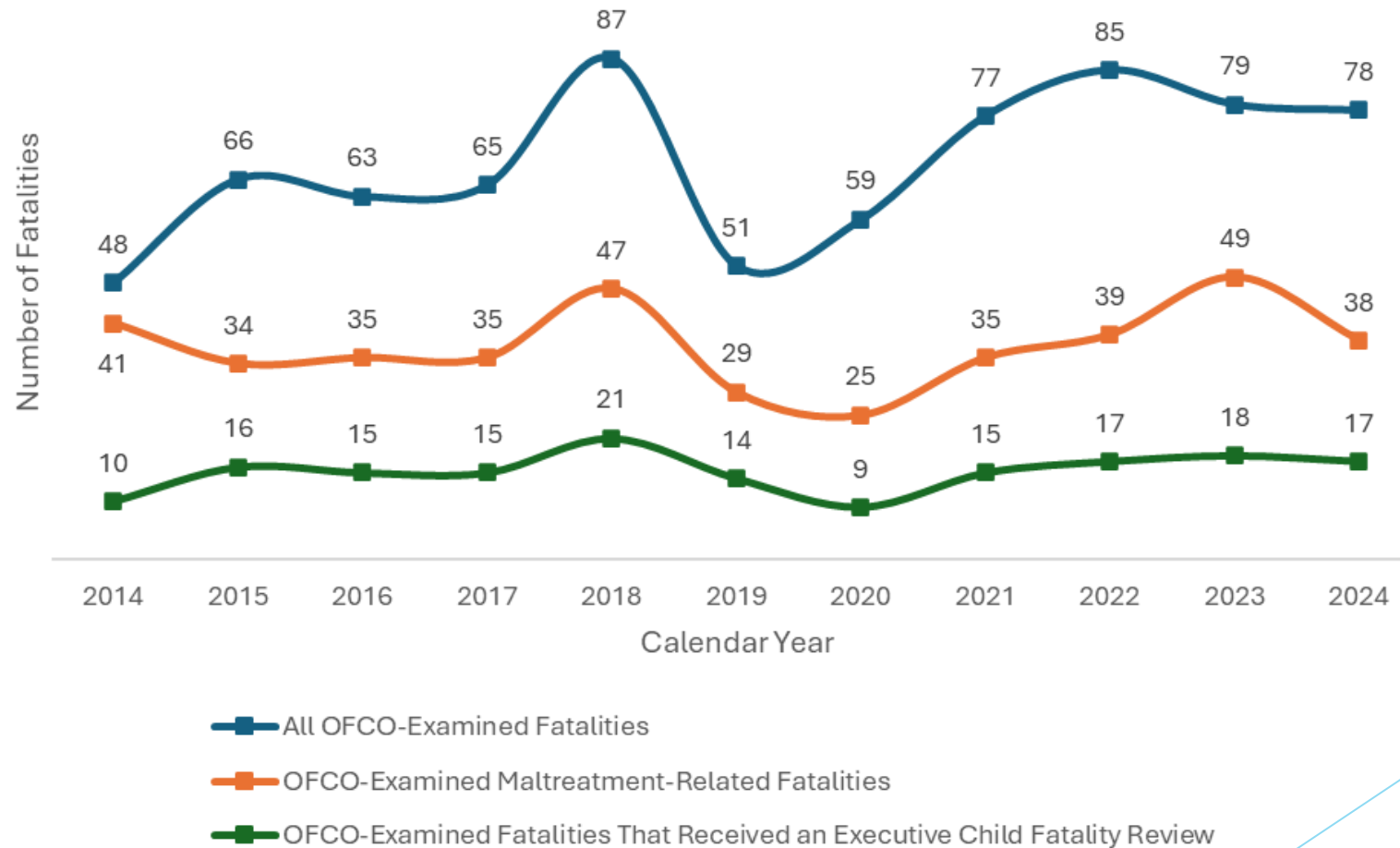
OFCO receives AIRS notifications from DCYF of child fatalities and near fatalities.

Examine these critical incidents to:

- ▶ Identify current safety issues for children in the home
- ▶ Determine if the critical incident qualifies for an ECFR or CNFR
- ▶ Determine if any DCYF action or conduct warrants OFCO initiated investigation
- ▶ Identify systemic child welfare issues.

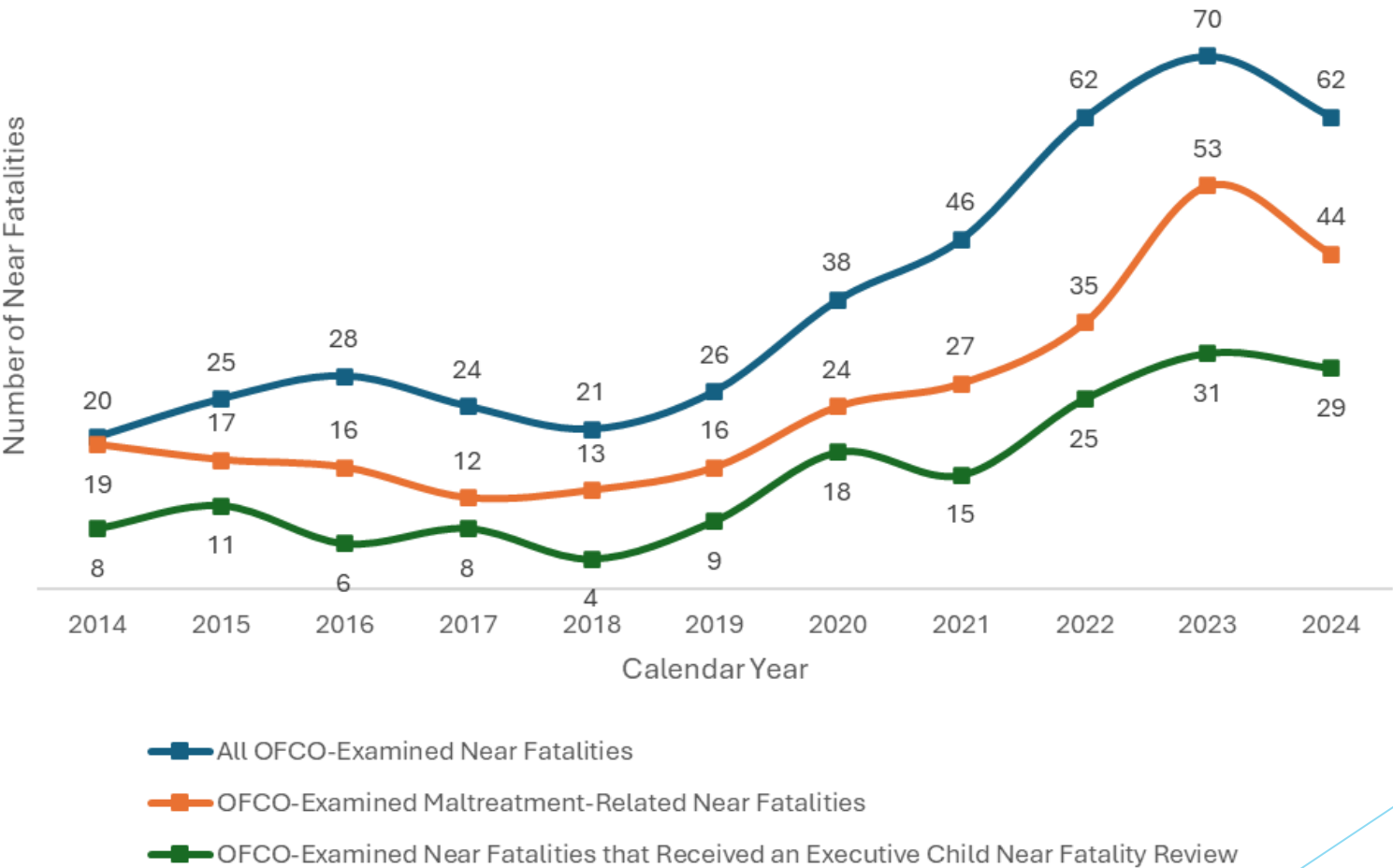
# Child Fatalities

Figure 3: OFCO-Examined Child Fatalities by Year



# Child Near Fatalities

Figure 10: OFCO-Examined Child Near Fatalities by Year



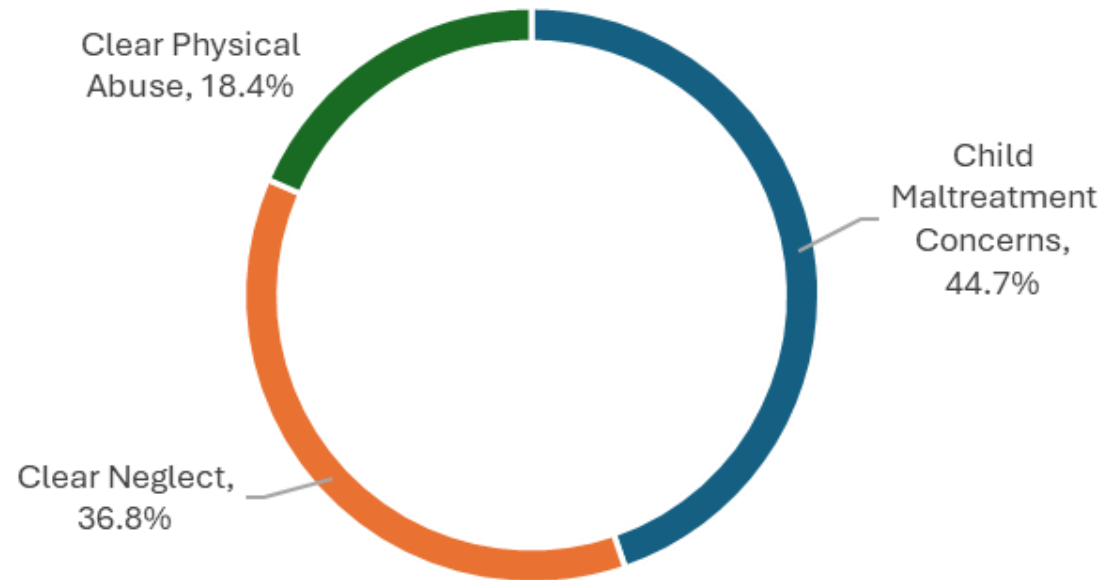
# Child Fatalities and Near Fatalities Examined by OFCO -2025 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter

Table 3: **Child Fatalities and Near Fatalities Examined By OFCO,  
Quarterly 2024-2025**

	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1
OFCO-Examined Critical Incidents	36	42	34	28	47
Critical Incidents Involving Accidental Ingestions and Overdoses	17	25	12	7	20
Critical Incidents Involving Fentanyl/Opioid	13	22	11	6	18
Critical Incidents Involving Accidental Ingestion by Children Ages 0-3	7	18	8	5	14
Critical Incidents Involving Accidental Ingestion of Fentanyl/Opioid by Children Ages 0-3	5	17	7	4	14
Critical Incidents that Received an Executive Review	9	16	13	8	19

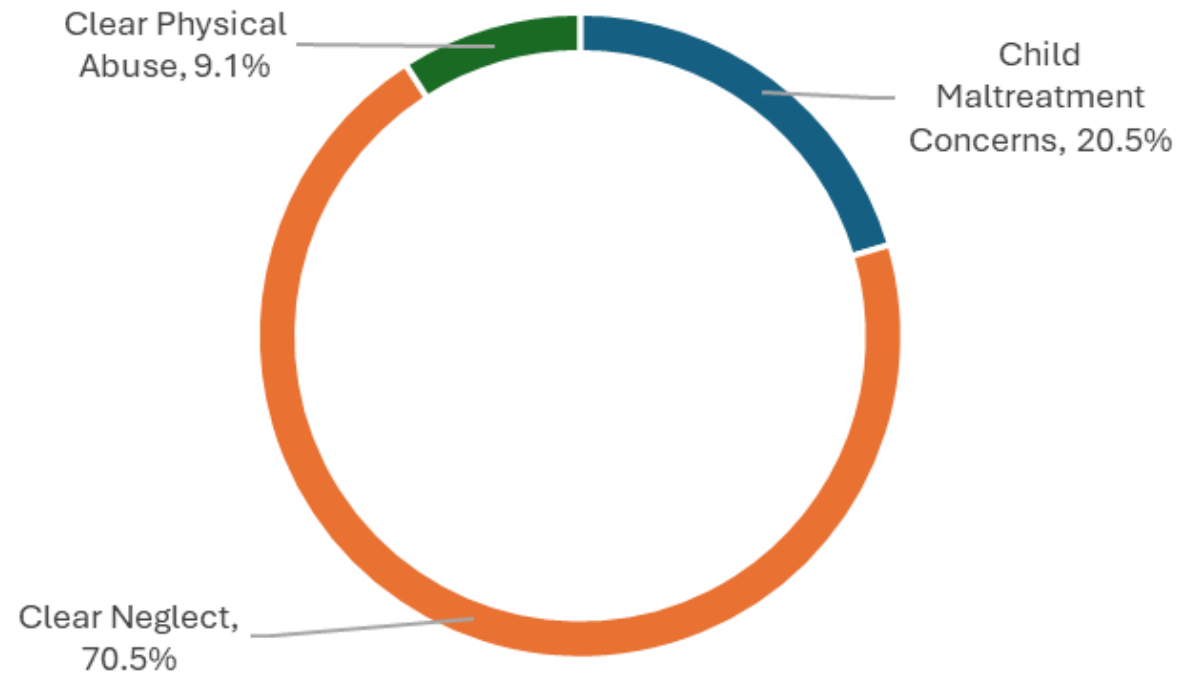
# Fatalities Related to CA/N

Figure 4: Type of Maltreatment in Child Fatalities, 2024



# Near Fatalities Related to CA/N

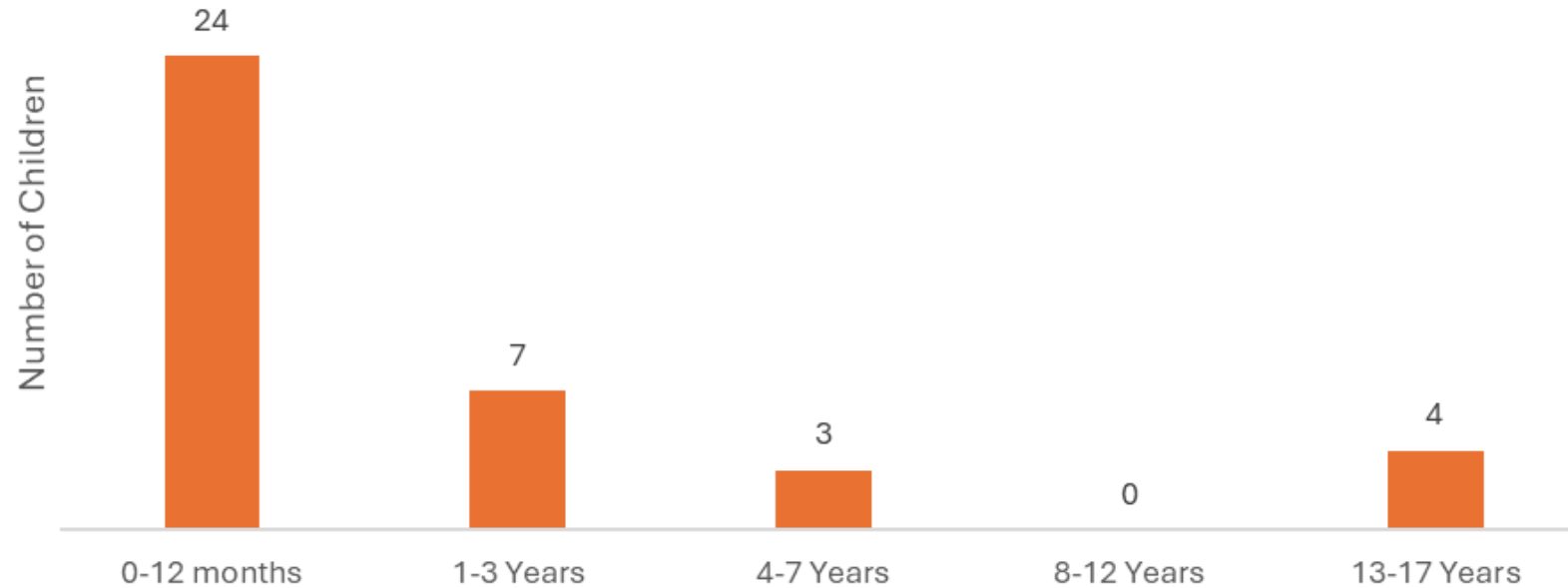
Figure 11: Type of Maltreatment in Near Fatalities, 2024





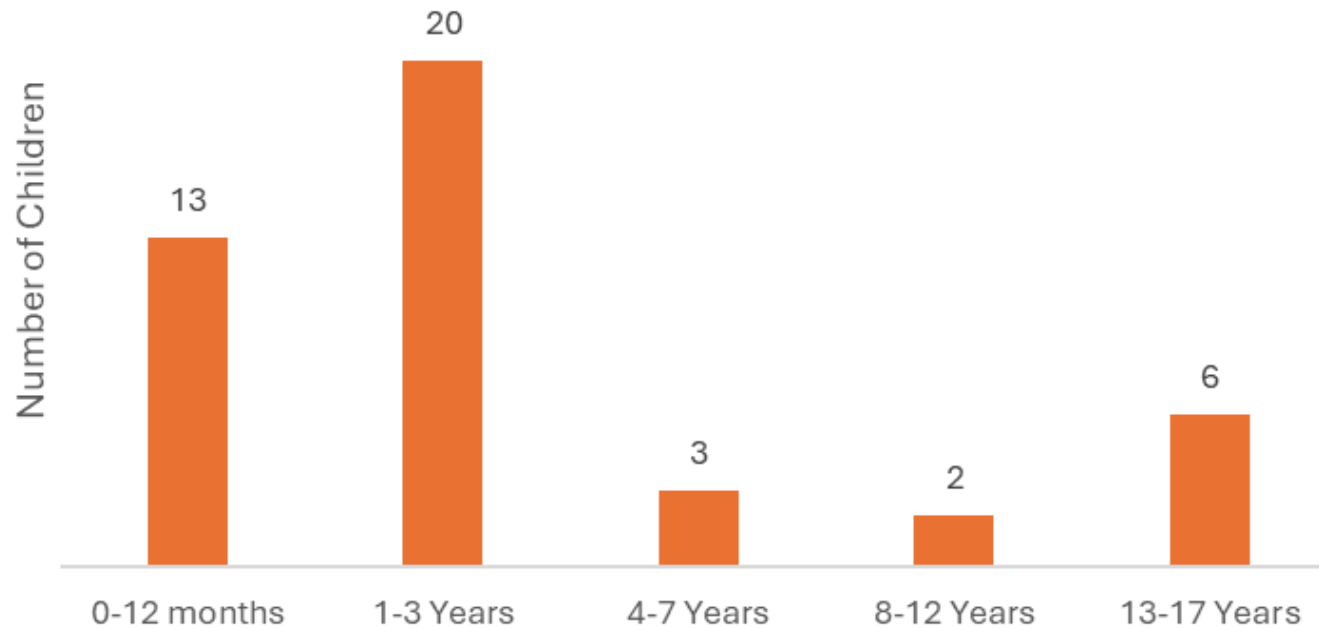
# Child's Age at Time of Death

Figure 7: Child Age at Time of Death, 2024



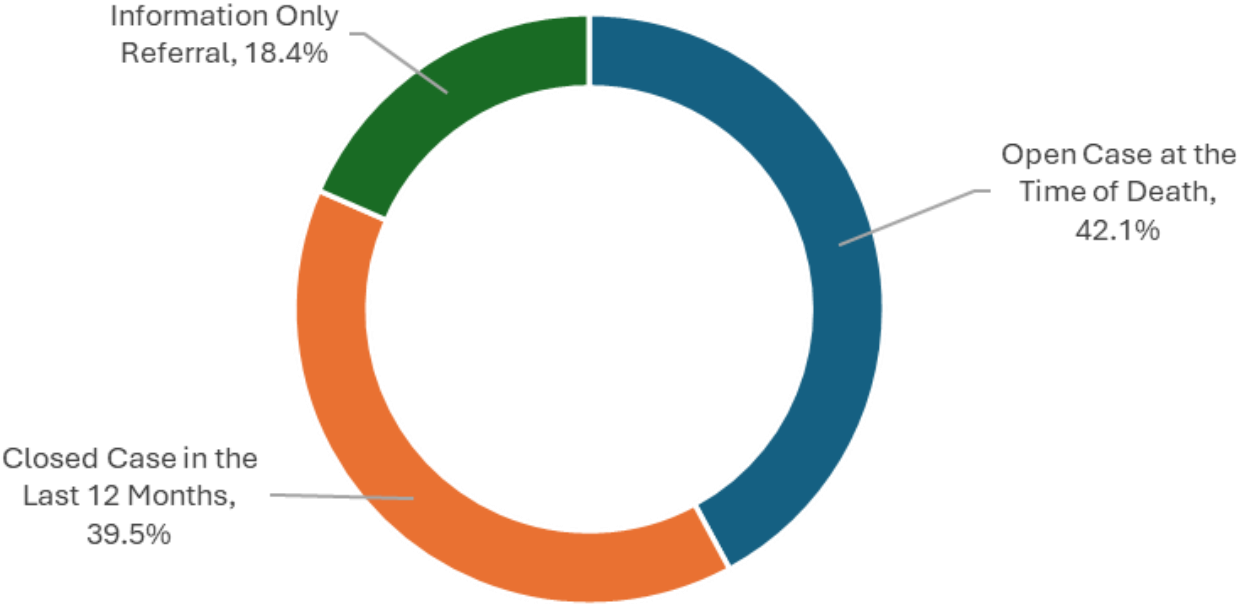
# Child's Age at Time of Near Fatality

Figure 12: Child Age at Time of Near Fatality, 2024



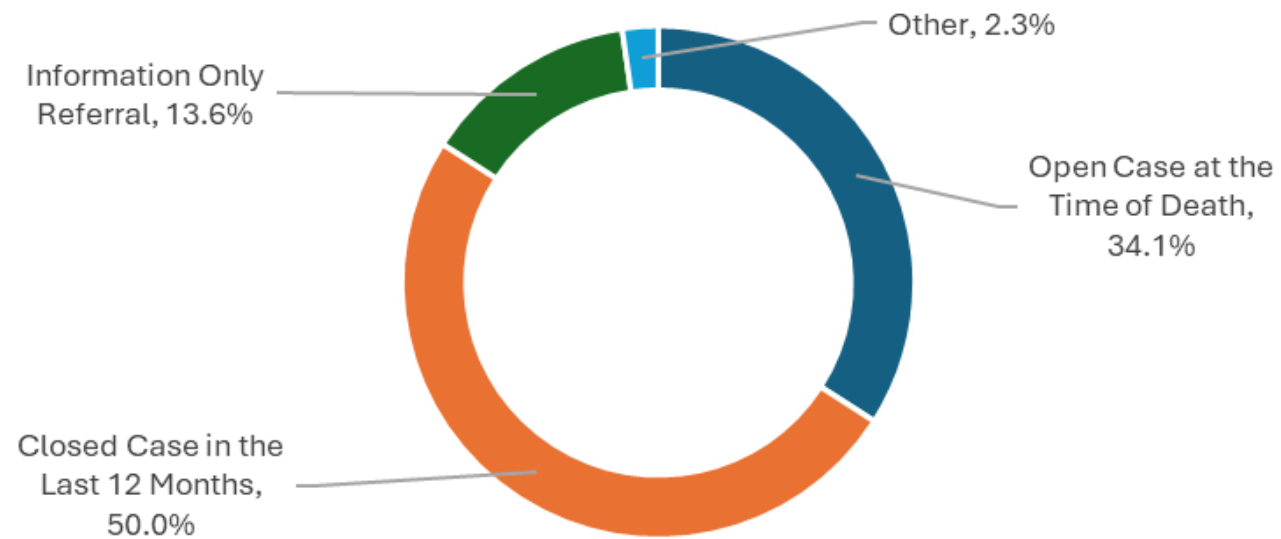
# DCYF Case Status Within 12 Months of Fatality

Figure 8: **DCYF Case Status Within 12 Months, 2024**



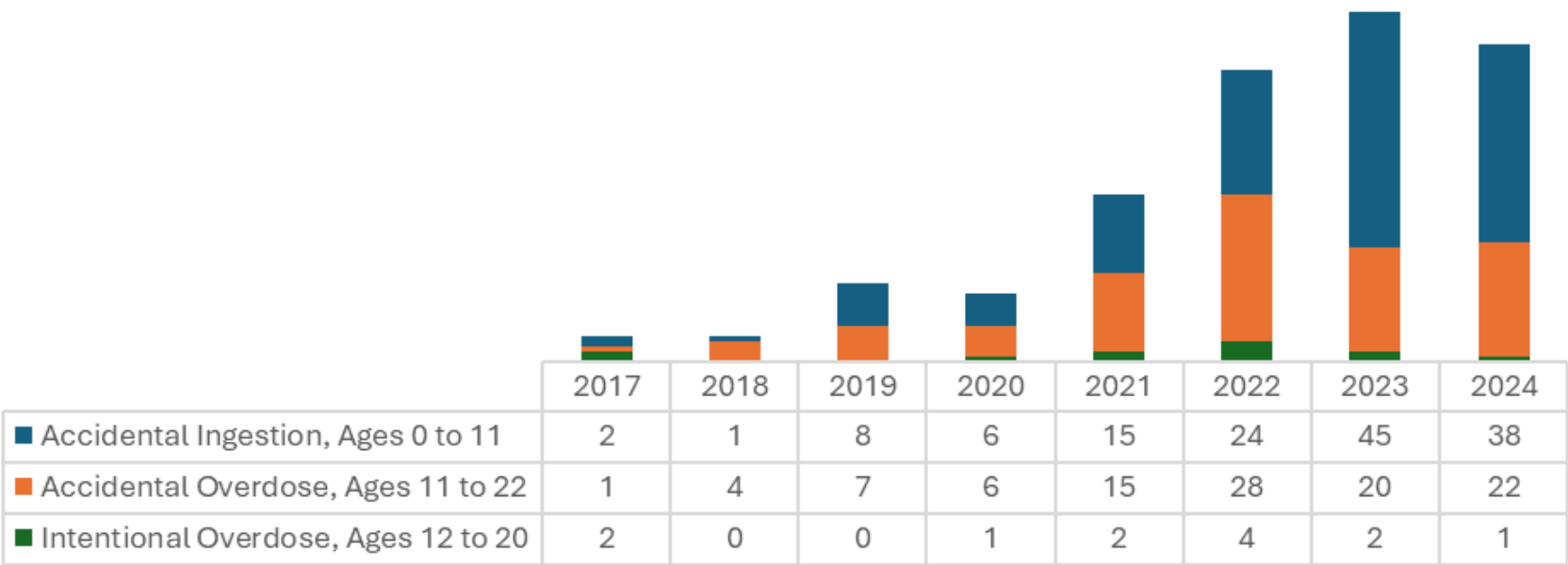
# DCYF Case Status Within 12 Months of Near Fatality

Figure 13: **DCYF Case Status Within 12 Months of Near Fatality, 2024**



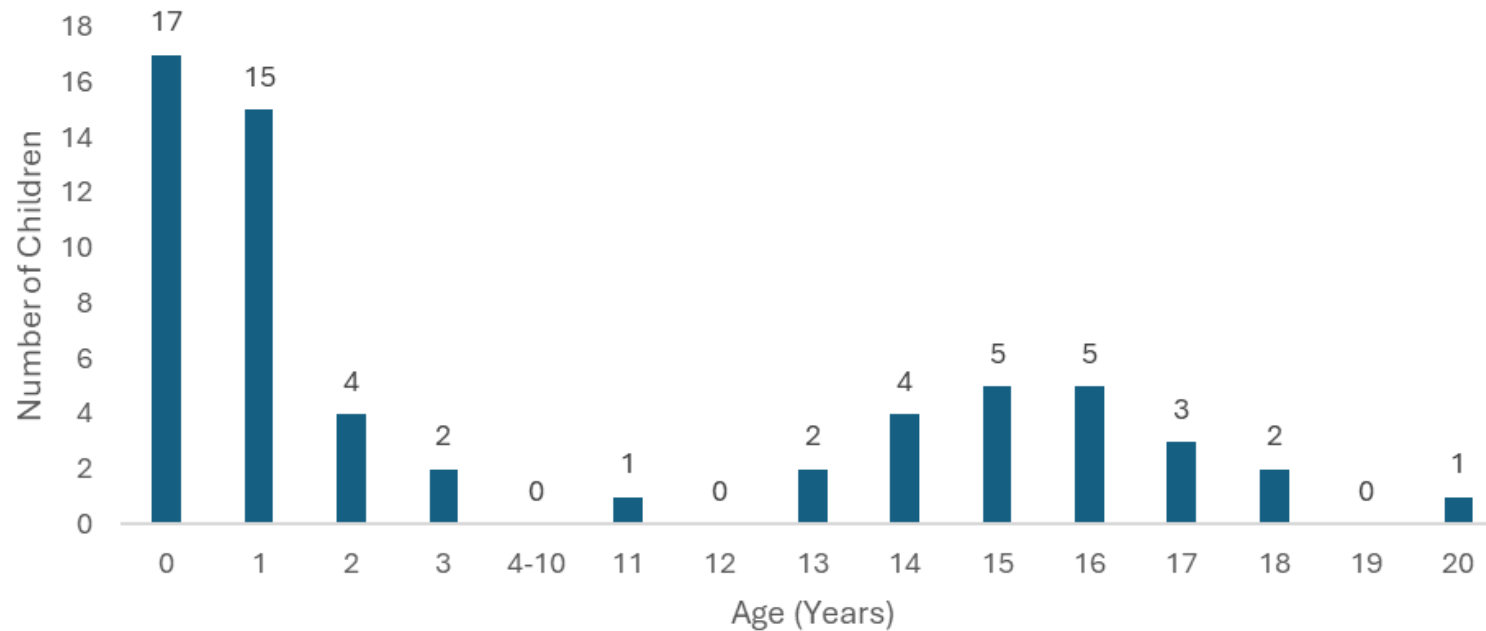
# Accidental Ingestions and Overdoses

Figure 15: Accidental Ingestion and Overdoses, 2017-2024



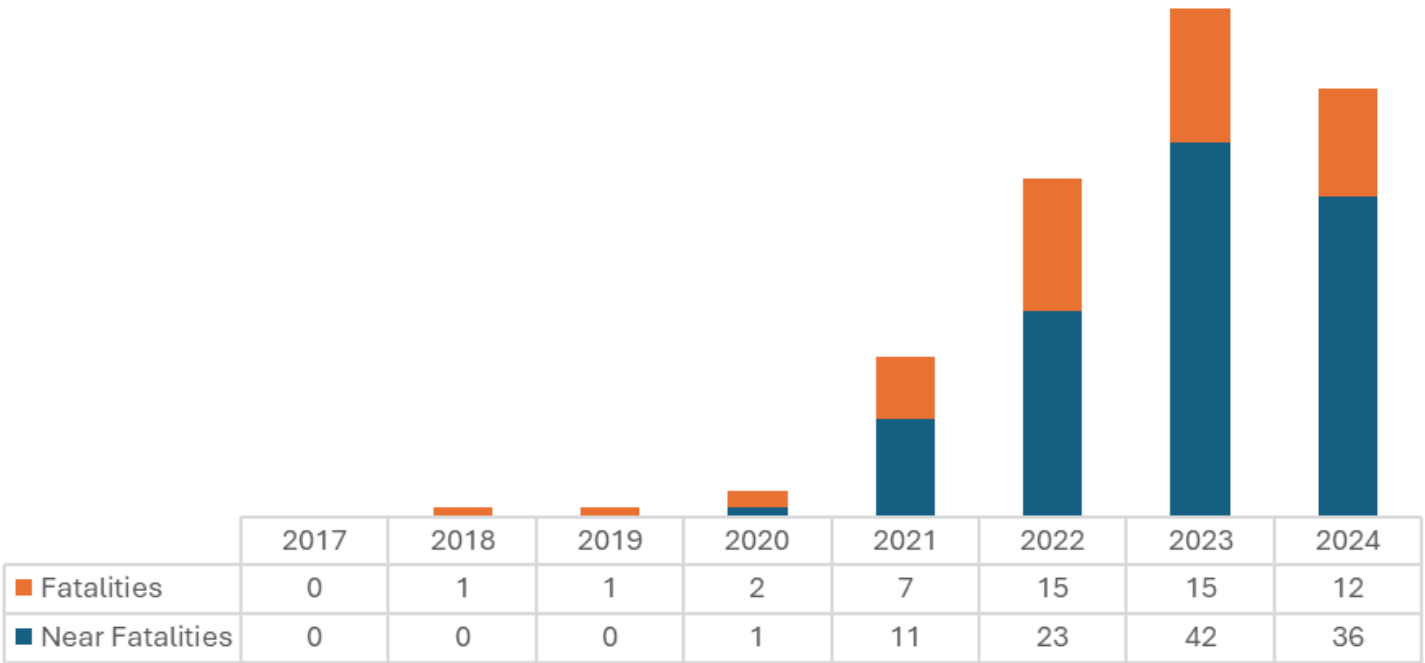
# Accidental Ingestions and Overdoses - Age of Children

Figure 16: Age of Children Involved in Accidental Ingestions and Overdoses, 2024



# Critical Incidents Involving Fentanyl

Figure 18: Critical Incidents Involving Fentanyl, All Children and Youth, 2017-2024



# Recommendations

- ▶ Expand Treatment Resources for Pregnant and Parenting Women
- ▶ Increase Efforts to Engage Fathers
- ▶ Explore the Use of In-Home Dependencies



# Questions and Answers

Patrick Dowd, Director  
[patrick.dowd@ofco.wa.gov](mailto:patrick.dowd@ofco.wa.gov)

OFCO  
6840 Fort Dent Way, Suite 125  
Tukwila, WA 98188  
206-439-3870

website: [ofco.wa.gov](http://ofco.wa.gov)