

# Children, Youth, and Families Access to Housing

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



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

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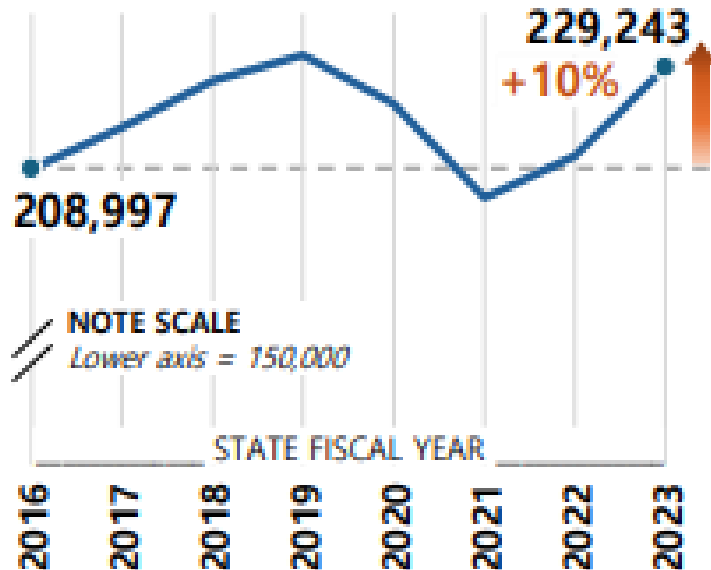


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# Why Focus on Access to Housing?

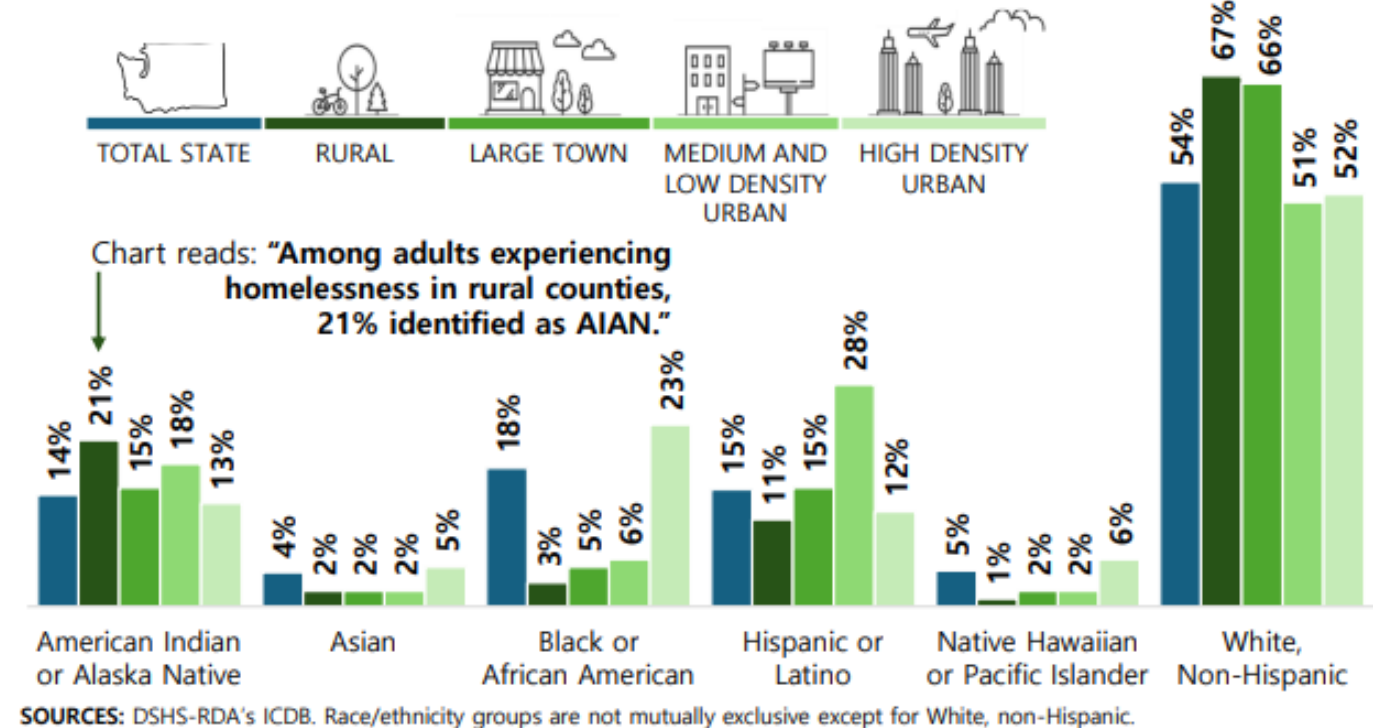
## Increases in adult homelessness in Washington

### Number of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness SFY 2016-2023



## Racial disparity in adult homelessness in Washington

### Race/Ethnicity of Adults Experiencing Homelessness by County Urbanicity SFY 2023



# Homelessness Among All School-Age Youth

School Year	Number of Students Experiencing Homelessness
2014–15	33,642
2015–16	37,661
2016–17	39,189
2017–18	40,085
2018–19	39,888
2019–20	36,996
2020–21	32,335
2021–22	37,337
2022–23	42,375
2023–24	48,504

“During the 2023–24 school year, the number of students statewide that experienced homelessness rose by 14% from the previous year to the highest level seen in the past decade.” (p. 6)

Student Group	Number of Students Experiencing Homelessness*	Total Student Population	Percent of State Population that is Experiencing Homelessness
Statewide (All Students)	48,504	1,149,142	4.2%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1,012	13,788	7.3%
Asian	1,158	101,917	1.1%
Black/African American	4,721	56,573	8.3%
Hispanic/ Latino of any race(s)	18,953	302,567	6.3%
Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	2,256	17,252	13.1%
Two or More Races	5,095	106,158	4.8%
White	15,299	550,712	2.8%



# Definitions of Homelessness for Federal Programs Serving Children, Youth, and Families

## **McKinney-Vento Act**

- Children and youth sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- Children and youth living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations
- Children and youth living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Children and youth abandoned in hospitals
- Children and youth whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc.)
- Children and youth living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations
- Migratory children and youth living in any of the above situations

## **Housing and Urban Development (HUD): 4 Categories of the Homeless**

- Homeless
- Imminent Risk of Homelessness
- Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes
- Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence





# DCYF Strategic and Racial Equity Plan: Addressing Youth Homelessness

	Agency Priority	Outcome Indicators	Balancing Indicators	Driver Indicators (Potential)
INTENTION	Create successful transitions into adulthood for youth and young adults in our care	High school graduation rates Workforce participation following exit Disaggregated for child welfare, JR, and crossover youth	Five-year graduation rates Rates of homelessness following exit	Improvements in behavioral health Consistent high-quality transition planning

## Create Successful Transitions Into Adulthood for Youth and Young Adults in Our Care

### Enhance Availability of Services and Supports

- Ensure youth exiting foster care and JR have safe, affordable, supportive housing plans.



# Washington State: Youth Homelessness Prevention Continuum



**Universal Prevention:** Education for larger population of the state, youth, and families.

**Primary Prevention:** Supporting youth and families prior to system involvement to reduce risk of housing instability for youth.

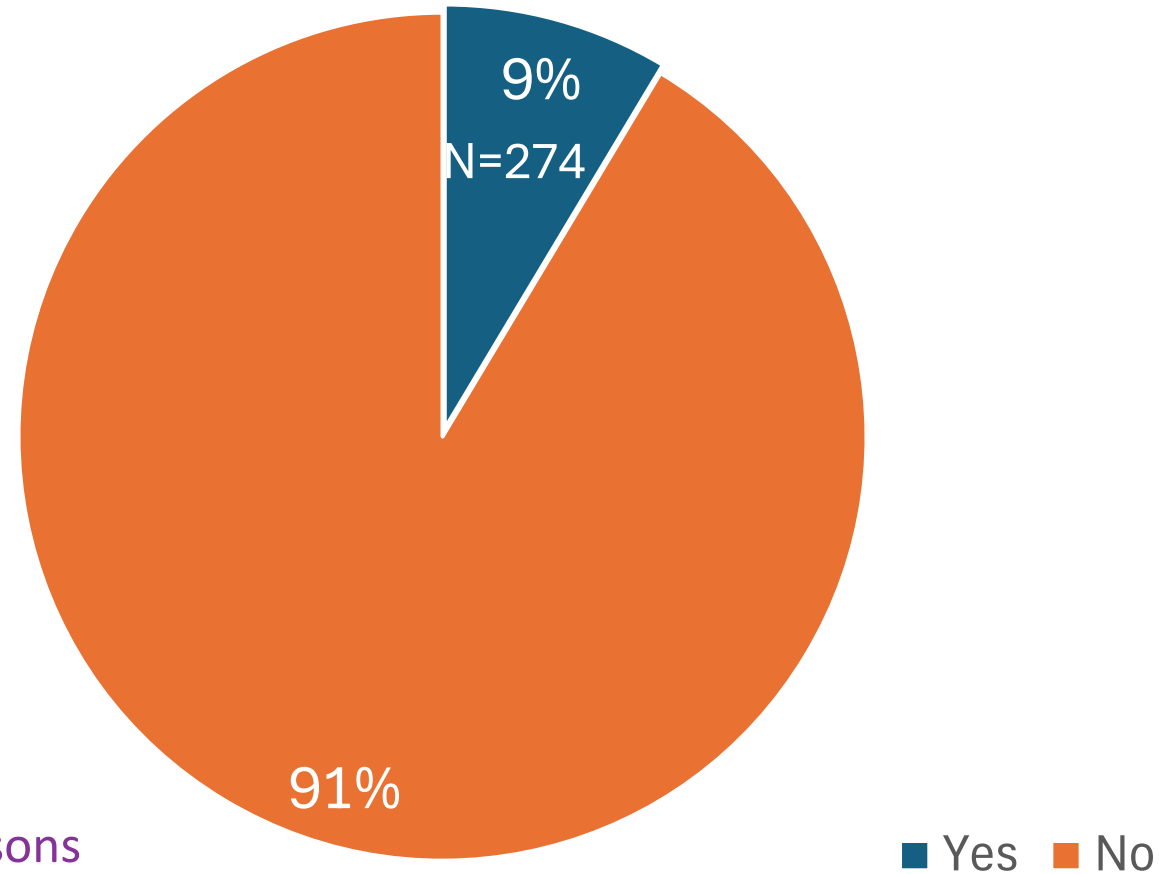
**Early Secondary Prevention:** Early system (CPS or Juvenile or Criminal Justice) interaction that does not lead to out-of-home placement or incarceration

**Later Secondary Prevention:** Preventing deeper system involvement and housing instability.

**Tertiary Prevention:** Preventing housing instability for those exiting the system. Ensuring those who are experiencing homelessness move quickly into safe and stable housing and receive appropriate support.



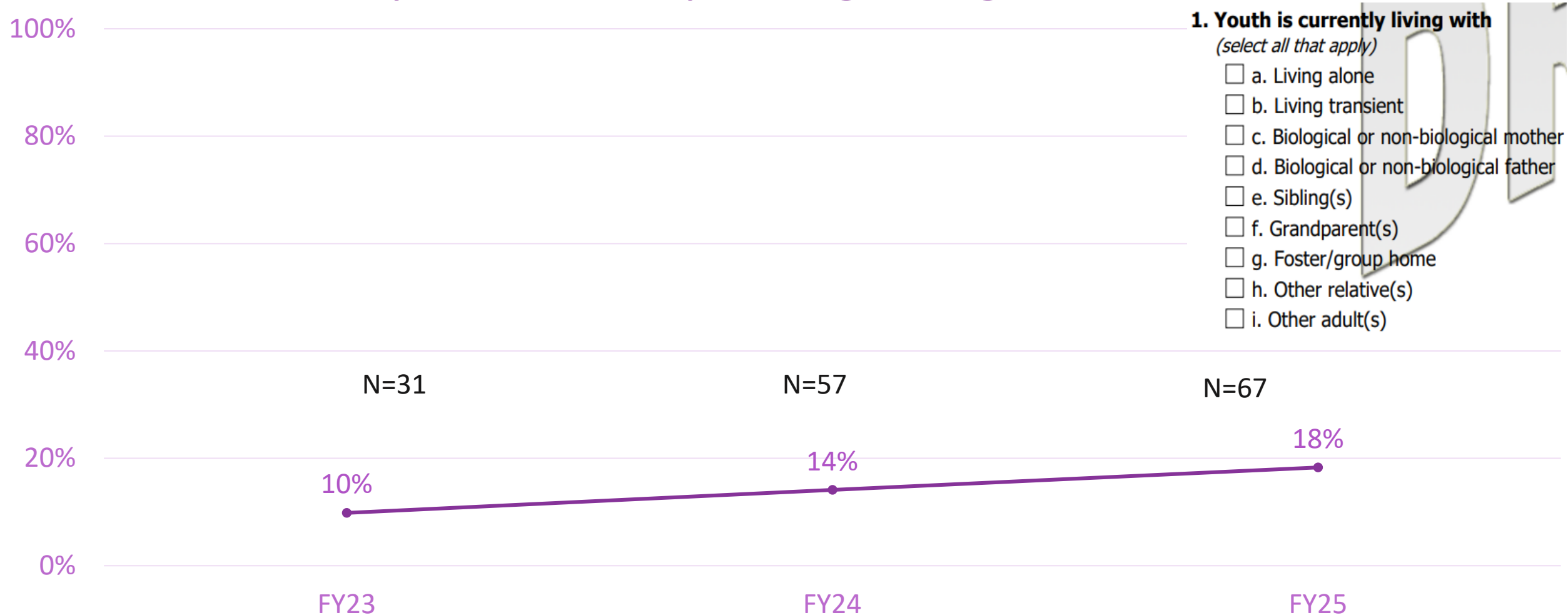
# Child Welfare: Inadequate Housing Noted as a Contributing Factor in Safety Assessment



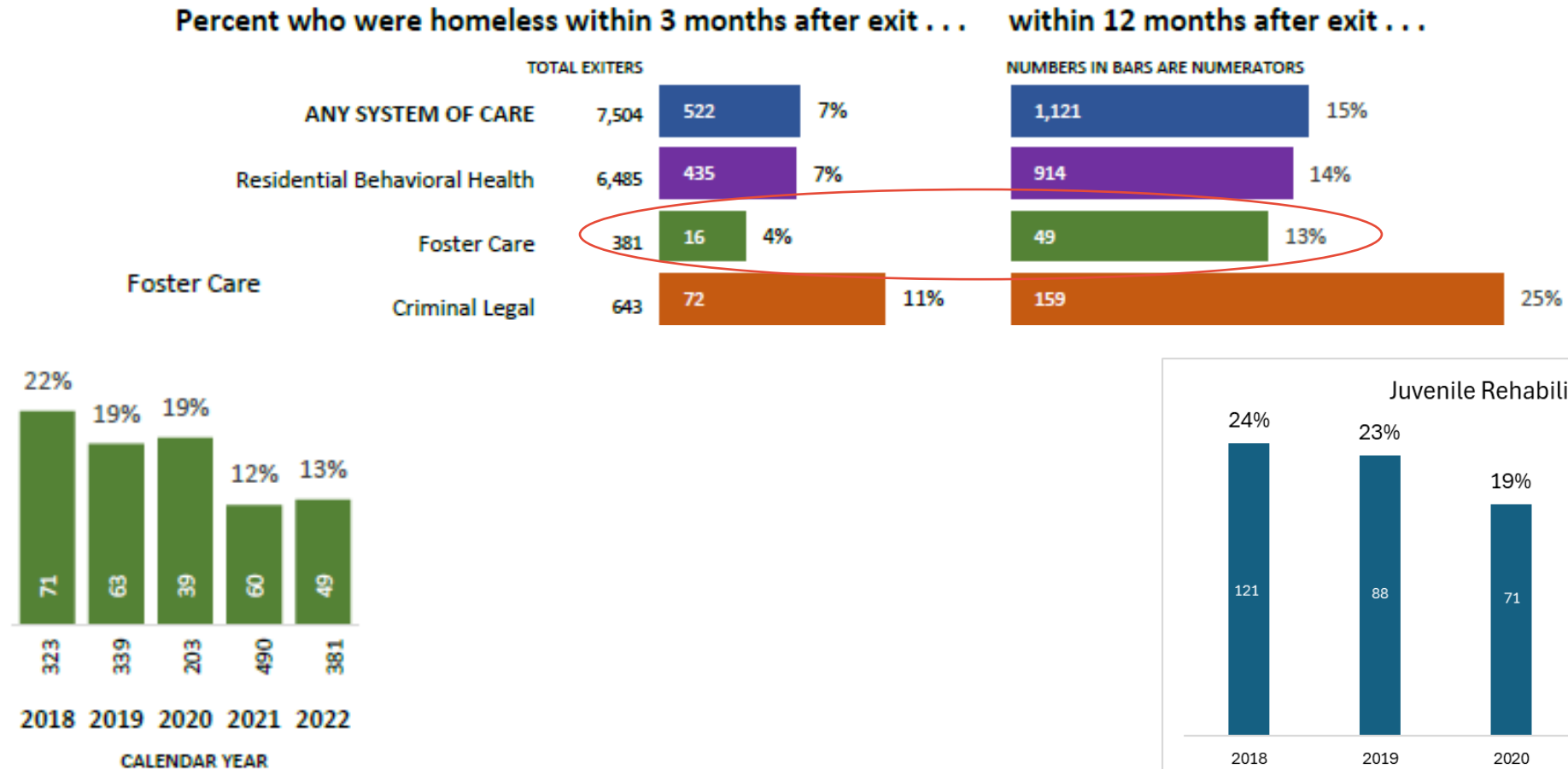
- Removals often have multiple reasons
- Inadequate housing  $\neq$  housing instability



# Juvenile Rehabilitation: A growing percent and number of youth are reporting living transient



# Youth and Young Adults 12 months after Exiting DCYF Systems



# Youth and Family Housing

Jess Mayrer - Program Manager



# CWHP: How it Works

*Connecting families and youth to stable housing*

**Partnerships** enable DCYF to collaborate with public housing authorities (PHAs) and service providers to provide rental assistance and housing supportive services to families and young adults.

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## **Family Unification Program (FUP)**

PHAs provide housing vouchers to families where lack of housing is a primary barrier to reunification.

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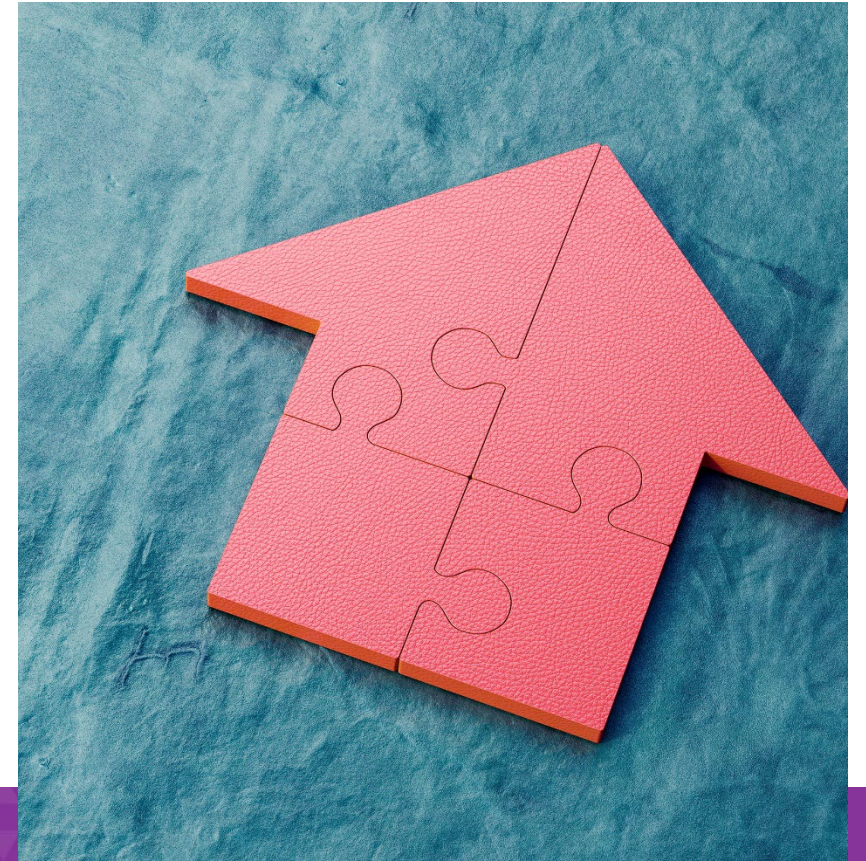
## **Foster Youth to Independence (FYI)**

PHAs provide housing vouchers to young adults (18-24) who are leaving foster care, homeless, or at-risk of homelessness.

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## **Child Welfare Housing Program (CWHP)**

Regional service providers deliver housing navigation, financial assistance, case management, and logistical support.





# Supportive housing services

Cash assistance for:

- Application fees
- First and last month's rent
- Security and utility deposits
- Utility connection fees
- Rent and utility arrears
- Moving expenses
- Other housing-related costs



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# Rulemaking

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) will, in the coming months, be making rules for its Child Welfare Housing Program (CWHP)

The rules will be created in consultation with community partners (including you!) and sovereign tribal nations and will be placed in Washington Administrative code.

This work comes in response to The Washington State Legislature's 2025 passage of House Bill 1177





# Waitlist Funds

\$500,000 for the  
biennium to  
eliminate waitlists

Regional workgroups  
convened to identify  
waitlist spending  
targets





# Challenges

- Geographic justice
- Waitlists
- Process

# Next Steps: Full implementation

- Unify statewide processes
- Desk manual
- Formalized and statewide referral forms and referral process
- Continued internal training and work on external partnerships with housing authorities and contracted agencies
- Continued expansion of vouchers using MOU's and Housing Supportive Services through contracts to underserved and unserved areas.





# Thank you!

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# Youth and Young Adult Housing Response Team (YYAHRT)

Shannon M. Quinn, MSW – YYAHRT Manager

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# SB 6560

In 2018, SB 6560 passed directing OHY and DCYF to develop a plan for ensuring no young person would be discharged into homelessness from a system of care.

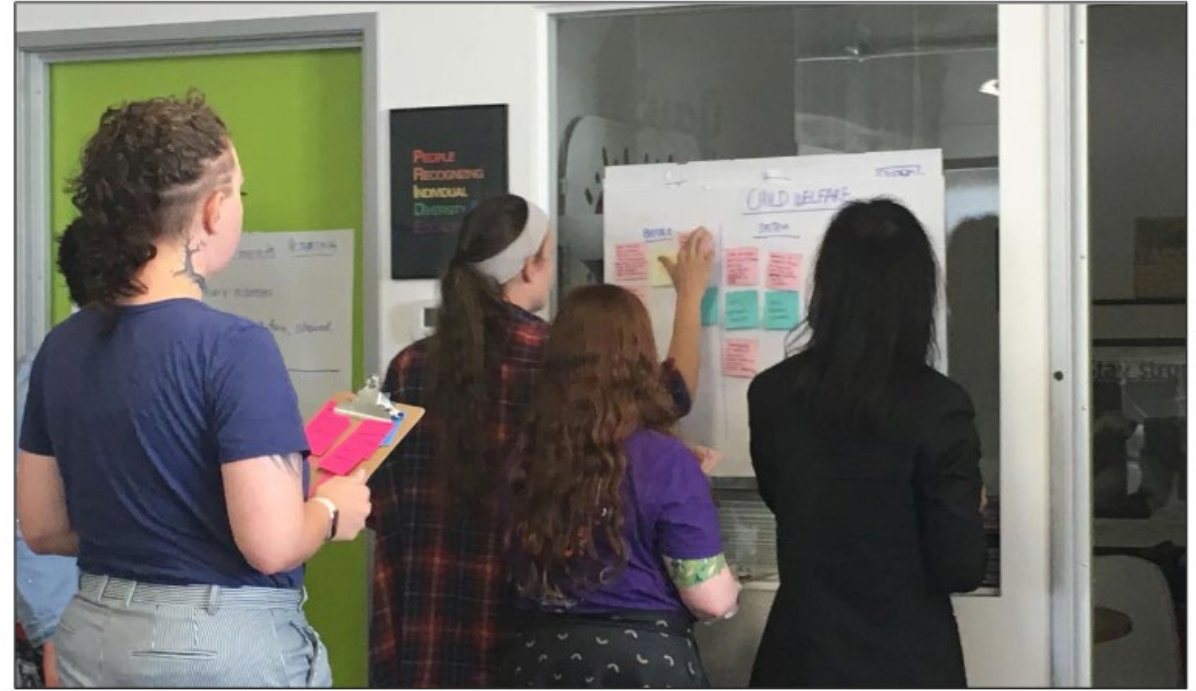


Image 1: Young adults identifying issues in the child welfare system at the Pierce County child welfare session.

Source: Department of Commerce. *Improving Stability for Youth Exiting Systems of Care*. (2020)



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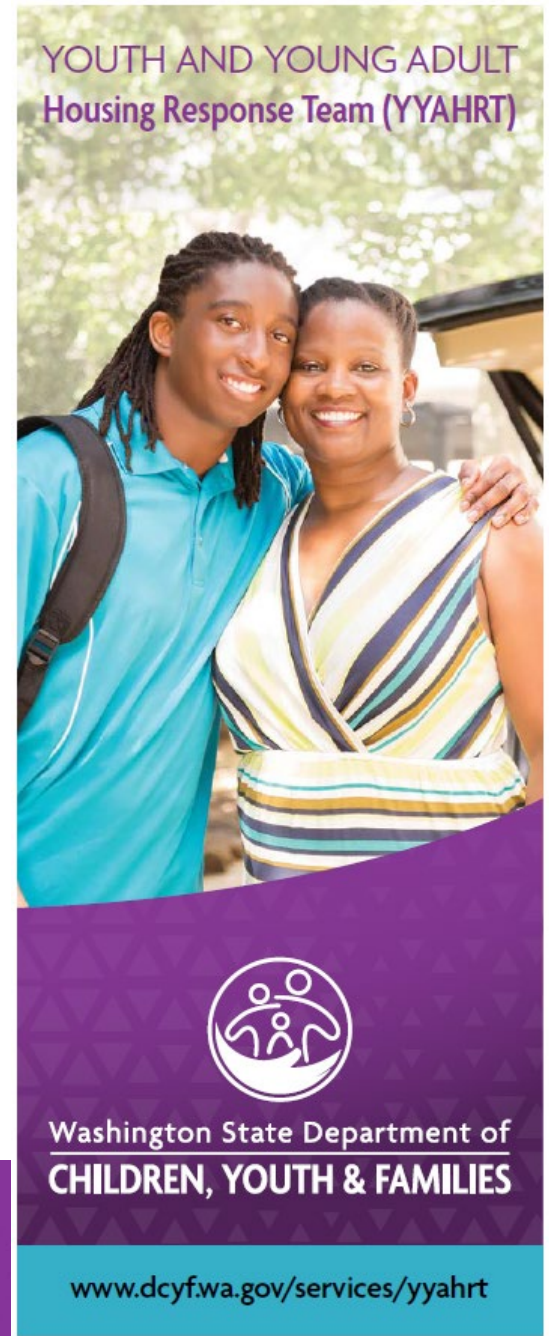


## HB 1905, Sec. 2

In 2022, HB 1905 passed creating what is now known as the Youth and Young Adult Housing Response Team (YYA-HRT), an interagency team that regularly meets to triage complex cases involving young people exiting system of care experiencing or at risk for homelessness.

<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/yyahrt>

DCYF Publication # **PPS 0002**



# Multi-Agency Partnership



# WHO DO WE SERVE?

The YYAHRT accepts referrals for young people who are:

- Ages 12 through 24, and
- **Exiting** a system of care (RCW 43.330.720) and
- Experiencing or at risk for homelessness



# WHAT DO WE PROVIDE?

- Multisystem Coordination with Subject Matter Experts
- Diversion and Referral
- Resource Navigation
- Youth Centered Meetings
- System Level Advocacy
- Recommendations for System Changes



# WHAT DO WE NOT PROVIDE?

- Housing
- Financial Assistance
- Placement Coordination
- Emergency Services



# Gaps in the Housing Array for Minors

- Long-term housing options for homeless youth under age 16
- Housing options for small population of youth with a history of problematic sexual behavior
- Housing for pregnant and parenting teens and teen families
  - Alexandria House Spokane WA is the only available option





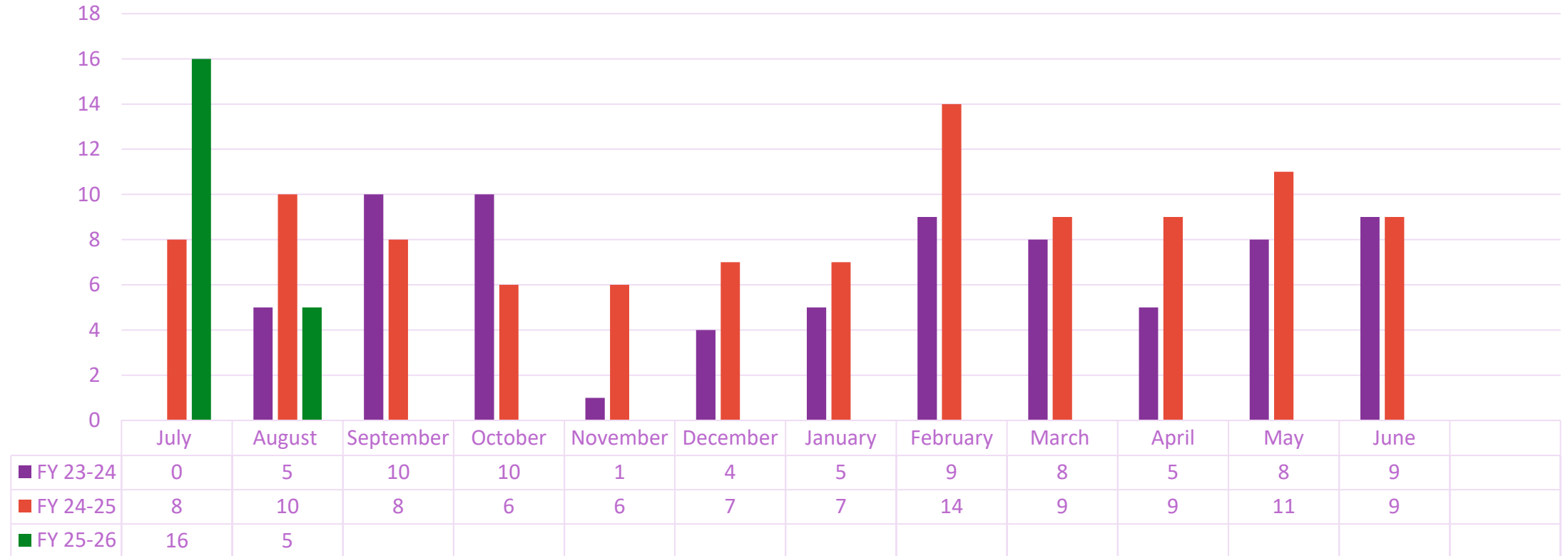
# OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Supporting youth with problematic sexualized behavior
- Clarify legal status of unaccompanied homeless youth
  - Empower homeless youth ages 16-17
- Improve Washington's post-adoption support infrastructure

**YYAHRT Annual Reports:** [www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/housing-homelessness-prevention/yyahrt/reports](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/housing-homelessness-prevention/yyahrt/reports)



# REFERRAL VOLUME



## OFFICE HOURS

## Youth and Young Adult Housing Response Team Office Hours

**EVERY  
WEDNESDAY**  
1 to 2 PM  
(PACIFIC TIME)

The Youth and Young Adult Housing Response Team was created by HB 1905 (<https://app.leg.wa.gov/billssummary?BillNumber=1905&Year=2021&Initiative=false>) in 2022 to respond to youth and young adults (ages 12 through 24) exiting publicly funded systems of care who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

**WHAT:** Two Core Members of the Youth and Young Adult Housing Response Team will be available to meet with youth, young adults, public employees, service providers, families, community members and others who are seeking more information about:

- The Response Team
- Systems of care
- Consultation and resources available to youth and young adults in Washington state.

**WHY:** The Youth and Young Adult Housing Response Team recognizes that there are approximately 1,000 young people per year exiting systems of care who will experience homelessness. The Response Team seeks to be available to provide consultation and support as broadly as possible.

**WHERE:** Microsoft Teams

**Meeting Link:** [https://teams.microsoft.com/dl/launcher/launcher.html?url=%2F%2321P2F2mmeetup-j0n79%3Ameeting\\_OGEIM2YIOEDZK3C002WILH3IMH0GUM2B0U0MAM7A%3A40thread%3A232203f3ontent%3A2025%2F05%2F25%2F25%3A25221D0277-2646-400A-8D5-7dec7d727252%3A252201D%3A25225253%3A252206c8dbd-8950-491a-8987-5d616afab20%3A2522%3A2527%3A26anon%3Dtrue&type=meetup-link&deplinkid=44518823-4688-4244-9a67-8096af581898&directDl=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&supores=Prompt=true](https://teams.microsoft.com/dl/launcher/launcher.html?url=%2F%2321P2F2mmeetup-j0n79%3Ameeting_OGEIM2YIOEDZK3C002WILH3IMH0GUM2B0U0MAM7A%3A40thread%3A232203f3ontent%3A2025%2F05%2F25%2F25%3A25221D0277-2646-400A-8D5-7dec7d727252%3A252201D%3A25225253%3A252206c8dbd-8950-491a-8987-5d616afab20%3A2522%3A2527%3A26anon%3Dtrue&type=meetup-link&deplinkid=44518823-4688-4244-9a67-8096af581898&directDl=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&supores=Prompt=true)

Meeting ID: 222 569 737 139

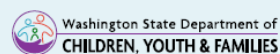
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**Need help?** <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/join-a-meeting-in-microsoft-teams-1613bb53-f3fa-431e-85a9-d6a91e3468c9?omkt=en-US>

### For More Information

Please join us for Office Hours or visit us at [www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/yyahrt](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/yyahrt)

[Click here](#)



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# Thank you!

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