



AVERT A CRISIS for our most vulnerable youth in DHS/OYA/OHA programs, children who are disproportionately being impacted by COVID and the economic situation today.

94% in poverty

48% children of color

We urge the Joint Committee on the First Special Session to act to prevent further reductions of services and closures of children's programs caused by this crisis and prioritize these youth.

Past data shows that capacity reductions/budget cuts in 2002 and 2008 caused catastrophic consequences and **higher costs**

Closures of dozens of Oregon programs for our most vulnerable youth

Hundreds of children placed in hotels or sent out of state & placed in unsafe conditions

Higher costs of almost \$1 million a month

Numerous lawsuits in our foster care system, adding up to tens of millions of dollars

Skyrocketing homeless counts, as unserved homeless youth became permanently homeless adults

The evidence proves that cuts this year will lead to **higher** costs. Youth don't disappear when state budgets are cut. Their challenges don't disappear. Their needs aren't magically eliminated. Instead, they will go to places with higher mandatory costs for the state, health system, and our communities:

Emergency rooms

Homelessness and substance abuse

Suicide, depression, mental/behavioral crises

Oregon youth are already more vulnerable and further trauma is occurring during this crisis.

At this critical time, we should invest in our youth, who are facing higher trauma and higher acuity. This will lead to better outcomes, preserve jobs/employment in communities, tax revenues for state and local governments, and create safe and positive pathways for success for all of our youth.

Invest in our youth to save our money in future budgets.

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