




*Emergency High  
Acuity Youth Initiative*

BRINGING BACK COMMON SENSE TO THE  
CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

DOUG RIGGS, OREGON ALLIANCE FOR  
SAFE KIDS & HEALTHY FAMILIES

*Crisis:*

**OPB** contribute 

In The News Kotek's first year in office Winter

Oregon is placing foster children in unlicensed short-term rental homes and paying millions to do so



By **Lauren Dake** (OPB)  
Nov. 20, 2023 6 a.m.

**State child welfare officials signed a contract with a religious nonprofit, paying it more than 100 times the amount they pay**

**OPB** contribute 

News

Local | Nation | News

## Settlement To Stop Foster Kids Sleeping In Hotels And Offices Breaks Down

by **Kristian Foden-Vencil**  OPB June 15,

2017 midnight | Updated: May 31, 2018 11:52 a.m. | Portland



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 **SUBSCRIBE** 

MENU  Mental Health > News

## Shortage of Mental Health Beds Keeps Kids Trapped Inside ERs

FROM THE WEBMD ARCHIVES 

By Martha Bebinger, WBUR  
Friday, June 25, 2021 (Kaiser News) -- One evening in late March, a mom called 911. Her daughter, she said, was threatening to kill herself. EMTs arrived at the home north of Boston, helped calm the 13-year-

## *The Problem*

Decade of rate cuts = depleted workforce

Complex regulatory framework

Needless duplicative systems / silos .... too many agencies with too many duplicative contract requirements, audits, reviews, reports

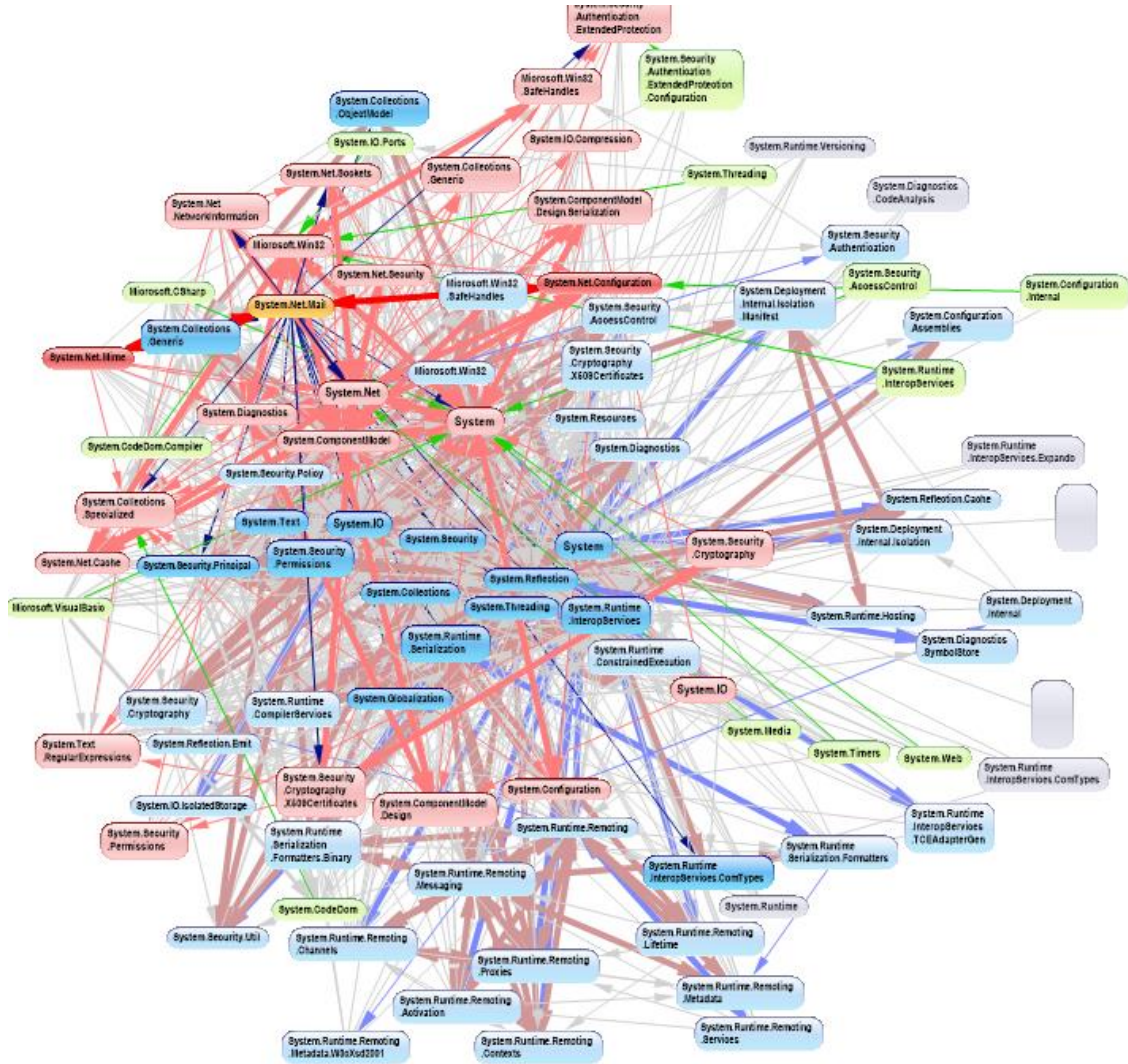
Episodic system creates **gaps** in service (i.e. added trauma) for youth and families.

Gaps (and what come after) are: bad, re-traumatize the youth, start from scratch, lose progress, generate mistrust and fear.

*Gaps in service = increased trauma & loss of progress*



# Impossible to Navigate





*Impact on  
Staff/  
Providers/  
Capacity*

45-65% annual workforce turnover



2/3 reduction in residential beds



Closure of major programs:

The "I Am" program for  
black teen boys (OYA)

The "White Shield"  
program for  
pregnant/parenting girls

The Bob Belloni Ranch  
Girls program

Boys & Girls Aid "Nest" for  
girls 10-under

## *As a result....*

Families with no support feel abandoned when youth come home

Children see dozens of different adults, over and over

Youth move into higher and higher levels of care

Staff become frustrated by dysfunctional system

State pays higher and higher costs as youth age

Opportunity for true progress is lost

# ***Alliance Has Repeatedly Suggested Changes***

- 2017 **HB2903** Adjustments to Regulatory System, Use of "Deemed Status," Etc.
- 2019 **HB3208** (Nathanson/Prozanski), "*Just Culture*" Bill
- 2020 (Walkout) "*Just Culture 2.0*"
- 2021 **HB2424** Revised "*Just Culture 2.1*" Concepts
- 2022 **HB4011** "*Workforce and Training Act of 2022*"
- 2023 **HB3009** "*Innovation and Youth Centered Act of 2023*"
- 2024 HB\_\_\_\_ "*Emergency High Acuity Youth Initiative*"



# *Let's Finally Make a Change?*

Continuity

Youth/Family Works With One Wrap-Around Team

**One** Provider / **One** Contract / **One** Regulator

System Pays Enough to Retain Staff - -  
**Continuity**

