



Presentation to the 2025 Legislative Audit Committee

Child Welfare Secretary of State Audit

Oregon Can More Effectively Use Family Services to Limit Foster Care and Keep Children Safely at Home

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Agenda

- I. Mission
- II. Vision
- III. Background
- IV. Audit review and implementation

Our mission



- Serving children, young adults and families facing challenges that can affect child safety.
- Responding to reports of child abuse and neglect.
- Assessing whether supports or services can support remaining together and coordinating foster care placement when a child cannot remain at home safely.

Evolving our safety mission

Moving from

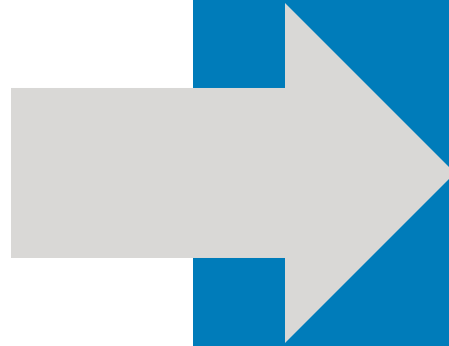
To



Family
separation



Punishing
parents



Community
builds safety



Investing in
families

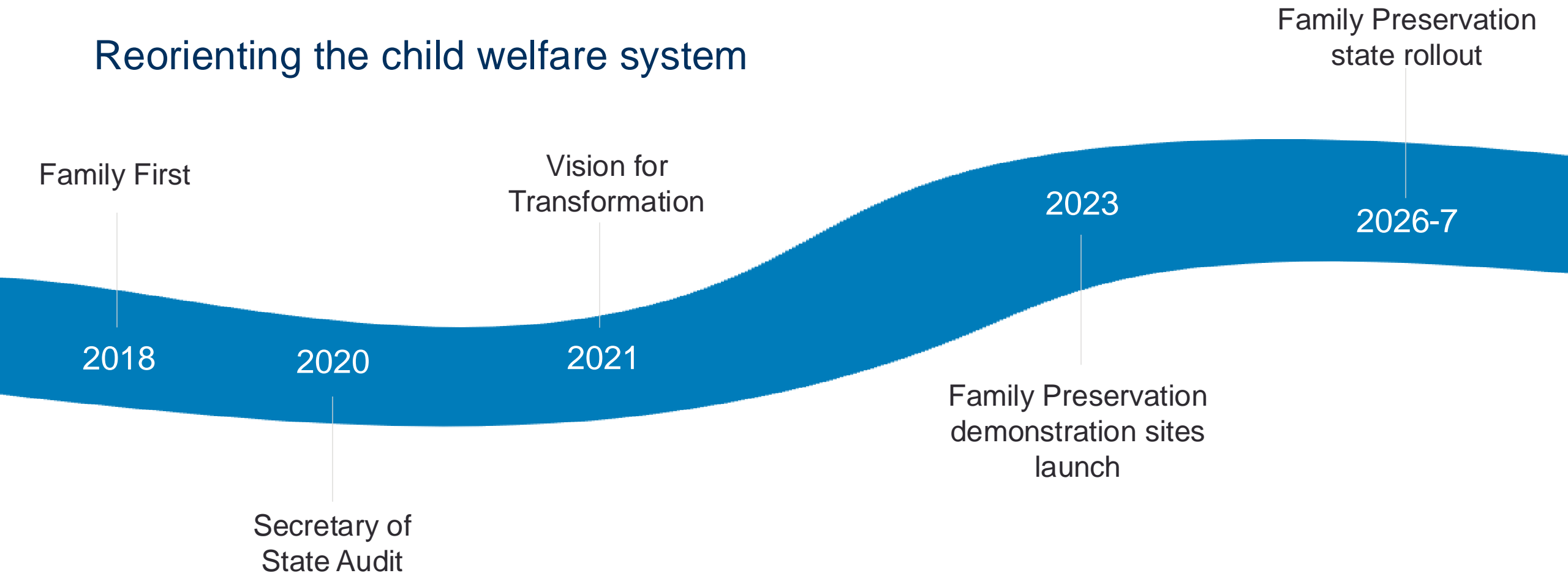
More effectively leveraging family services



Ensuring more families can safely stay together

A continuum of change and reform

Reorienting the child welfare system



Recommendations: Core themes



Recommendation 1

Establish **collaboration protocols** with partner divisions and agencies that set common goals, procedures, and timelines for action on Child Welfare referrals and at the front end of open cases.



Recommendation 1: Implementation

Office of Developmental Disabilities Services	OHA Child and Family Behavioral Health Unit	OHA and DELC	Juvenile Justice Policy Commission
Timeline: Ongoing since January 2025 Monthly CQI workgroups covering youth with open cases, with intellectual or developmental disabilities, not DD eligible.	Timeline: July 2025 Inter-agency agreement with OHA to provide/share behavior health services.* Uses Title IV-E Prevention Plan to access funds.	Timeline: Ongoing Coordination of early childhood home visiting programs.	Timeline: Ongoing ODHS promotes family preservation, rehabilitation and policies to keep children in their homes.

* Submitted for audit.

Recommendation 2

- Use **data analysis and input** from staff, parents, and other stakeholders to identify the types of services and providers that are most successful and cost-efficient, including alternatives for improving front-end family engagement, service coordination, and safety services.
- **Provide ORRAI*** with enough capacity to credibly evaluate service outcomes and staffing needs, identify the most effective services, and conduct outreach to help districts improve performance management.

*Office of Research Reporting Analytics and Implementation



Recommendation 2: Implementation

Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) | Title IV-E Prevention Funds and Data Accessibility

Timeline: 2021 - Ongoing

- 2021: CW developed program wide CQI recommendations based on gap analysis, staff surveys, peer to peer learnings, and feedback circles.*
- ORRAI developed a public-facing Child Welfare dashboard. This data is used for continuous quality improvement across the state. *
- FFPSA reimburses for evidence-based prevention services vetted through randomized control trials.
- Oregon is currently drafting the next five-year Title IV-E Prevention Plan to implement these services.

* Submitted for audit.

Recommendation 3

Identify and implement alternatives to **reduce caseworker workload**. Potential alternatives include reducing time spent on data entry and other administrative activities and making case procedures more accessible and user friendly.



Recommendation 3: Implementation

Reducing caseworker administrative burden

Timeline: Ongoing

New Family Report created with partners, youth and parent mentors to improve efficiency and reduce administrative case work. *

OR-Kids business team and Child Welfare have updated OR-Kids process to streamline the system via modules. Modules implemented to date: *

- ORCAH Documentation Guide
- Family Report
- Home Inquiry
- Person Data Structure

Legislature invested in additional safety positions in 2023-25 to help maintain caseload standards.

* Submitted for audit.

Recommendation 4

- Develop **contract measures** at the district and central office level that set goals for provider timeliness, access, quality, and reporting of overall performance.
- Set clear performance management guidelines for contract administrators.



Recommendation 4: Implementation

Provider contract performance measurement

Timeline: 2020-2021

2020: Child Welfare Contracts Unit and project management office standardized central and local office contracts, focusing on:

- Budget management
- Quality assurance (Service Array workgroup)
- Value-based payments
- Uniform outcomes across districts
- Outcome-based provider selection
- Ensuring implementation of culturally appropriate services

2021: Child Welfare Executive Leadership organized contracts to explore non-traditional contractors in local communities and develop FFPSA services. *

* Submitted for audit.

Recommendation 5

Work with contracted providers to develop diverse delivery options that address service gaps in rural areas and other underserved areas, such as delivering services online or virtually when appropriate.



Recommendation 5: Implementation

Address service gaps in underserved areas

Timeline: 2021-2022

- Child Welfare Contract Administrators and leaders worked with providers to adapt services for online formats such as videoconferencing. *
- Family First Prevention Services are designed to be accessible in underserved areas. ODHS is working with rural provider networks to share implementation strategies.
- Child Welfare collaborated with OHA, providers, the Department of Early Learning's Employment Related Day Care and Coordinated Care Organizations to implement respite for resource families and reunified families.
- The Response Support Network (RSN) program provides 24/7 support in underserved and rural areas for caregivers of children with special needs. *

* Submitted for audit.

Recommendation 6

Work with OHA, CCOs and other stakeholders to quantify needs for **mental health and addiction treatment services in underserved areas**, ensure adequate coverage and establish data sharing for CCO-provided services in Child Welfare cases.

Work with OHA to develop publicly reported CCO performance metrics that tie to Family First goals.



Recommendation 6 Implementation

Collaborate to quantify need for addiction and mental health underserved areas

Timeline: Ongoing

- **Monthly meetings**
 - Child Welfare and Medicaid Directors focus on collaborative problem solving.*
 - Child Welfare/Behavioral Health Workstream meeting with Child Welfare Director, OHA Behavioral Health Director and Child and Family Behavioral Health Director to discuss barriers to access. *
- **Other OHA collaborative projects:**
 - Work with OHA Behavior Health Director on System of Care development and implementation. *
 - Child Welfare and Medicaid work on 1115 Demonstration Waiver and Family Preservation workgroups. *

* Submitted for audit.

Recommendation 7

Ensure that ORRAI's efforts to account for racial bias receive an independent review, either through peer-reviewed studies or commissioned experts.



Recommendation 7: Implementation

Independent ORRAI review

Timeline: February 2023

- Peer review of the Child Welfare reunification algorithm and fairness procedure was published in Children and Youth Services Review. *

* Submitted for audit.

Recommendation 8

Incorporate detailed information on services for CIRT team evaluation of CIRT cases, including whether key services within or outside Child Welfare were effective or available.



Recommendation 8: Implementation

Evaluation of CIRT cases, effectiveness and availability of Child Welfare and other services

Timeline: Ongoing

- Child Fatality Prevention and Review Program (CFPRP) updated CIRT process to evaluate ODHS and community services.*
- In 2022, 30 child fatalities met statutory requirements for a Critical Incident Review resulting in over 30 system improvements underway.
- Efforts are underway to update substance use disorder education for caseworkers to prevent child fatalities, often related to substance use.

* Submitted for audit.

Recommendation 9

Provide **biennial reports** to state leadership and policymakers on service access, availability, and effectiveness throughout the state, drawing on improved performance information.



Recommendation 9 Implementation

Biennial reports to policy makers on service access, availability, effectiveness

Timeline: 2020-current

- System of Care Advisory Council monthly reports for system of care implementation and a coordinated response to identified barriers.
- Monthly Child Welfare Progress Reports submitted to the Governor's Office and posted online for partners and policymakers.*

* Submitted for audit.

Recommendation 10

Incorporate the previous recommendations into development of the new five-year **Family First prevention plan** for ongoing inclusion in periodic Child and Family Services plans.



Recommendation 10: Implementation

Implement recommendations into new Family First prevention plans

Timeline: 2020-2022

Implementation of FFPSA and amended five-year plan* including:

- Interagency collaboration between OHA, DELC, OYA, CCOs
- Partnership with ICF evaluation team on service effectiveness through data
- Reduction in administrative burden to staff with streamlined Family Report
- Design considerations led by community, focused on underserved and rural populations

* Submitted for audit.



Questions?

Thank you.

