



VISION

ALASKA INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES ARE SAFE AND HEALTHY

MISSION

TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF ALASKANS

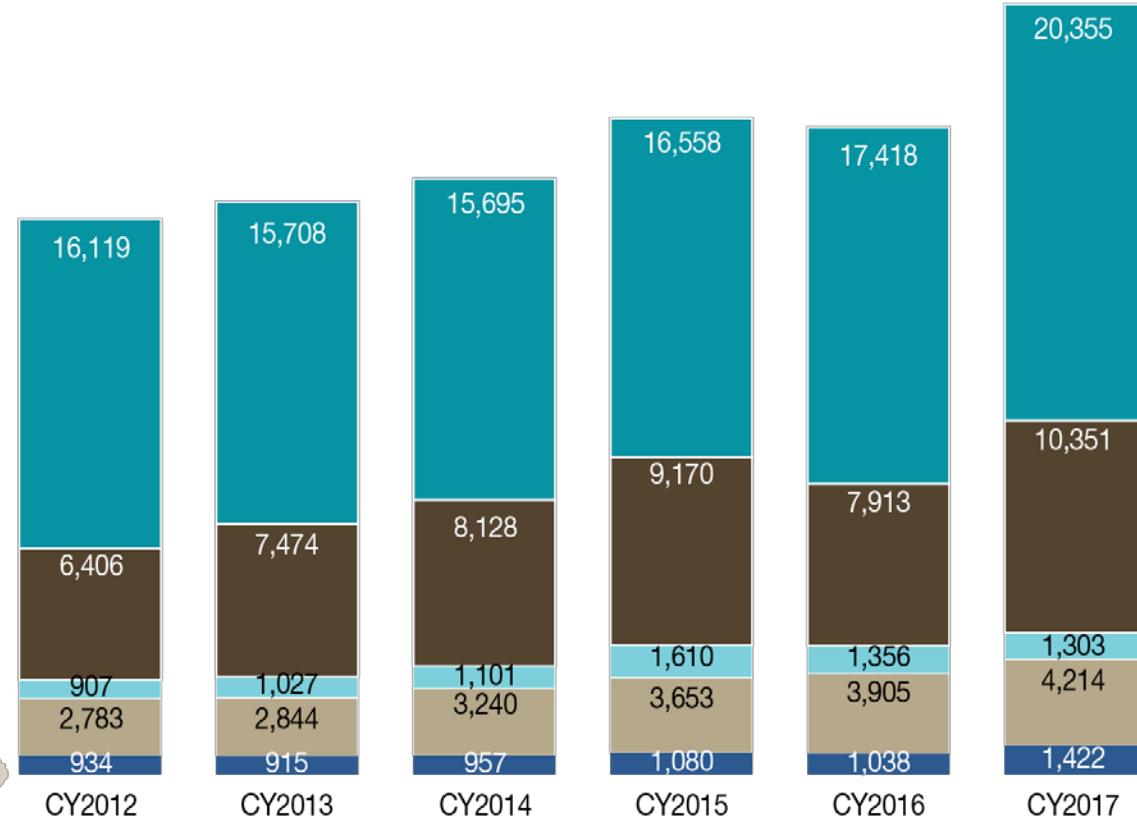
Senate Health & Social Services Committee Presentation

Christy Lawton | Director
Office of Children's Services

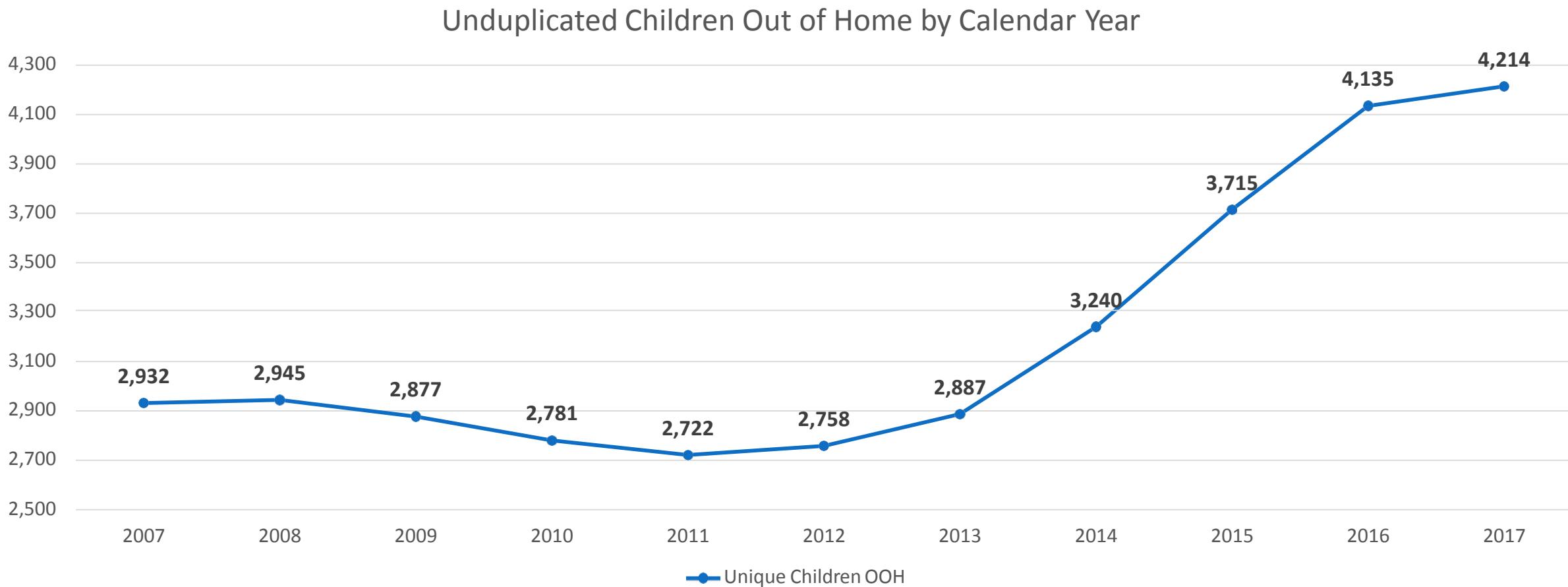
March 7, 2018

The last 6 years at a glance

- Protective Services Reports
- Screened In
- Removals
- Unduplicated Children in Out of Home Care
- Discharge
 - Parent
 - Adoption
 - Guardianship
 - Age out
 - Other



The last 10 years at a glance



Workforce Challenges

- High rate of case carrying worker turnover
- Staffing not representative of those served
- Impacts of secondary trauma
- Public perception
- Lack of Support and Resources
- Safety Concerns



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Workforce solutions

UAA/UAF Collaborative Goals~

- Interdisciplinary Child Welfare Certificate
- Stipend Program for existing staff to pursue their BSW or MSW degree
- Recruitment efforts on campus across disciplines

Leadership Academy for Middle Managers~

- Competency Based Evaluations
- Focus on improving office culture



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Child and Family Services Review

The Child and Family Services Review (completed in May 2017)

http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/Publications/pdf/2017_CFSR.pdf

Alaska did not achieve the national performance standard of 95% in Safety, Permanency, or Well-Being

Highest strengths were noted in the areas of:

- Stability of Foster Care Placement (80%)
- Placement with Siblings (89%)
- Children receive Appropriate Services to meet their Educational Needs (85%)

Lowest strengths were noted in the areas of:

- Children are Safely Maintained in Their Homes Whenever Possible and Appropriate (38%)
- Children have Permanency and Stability in Their Living Situations (15%)
- Families have Enhanced Capacity to Provide for Children's Needs (31%)
- Caseworker Visits with Parents (28%)



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Program Improvement Plan

Safety: Improve the overall safety of children at risk of maltreatment through:

- Improved timeliness of screening decisions and initial assessments
- Improved safety planning and monitoring
- Development of in-home services and protocols

Engagement: Use of strengths-based, evidence informed framework to:

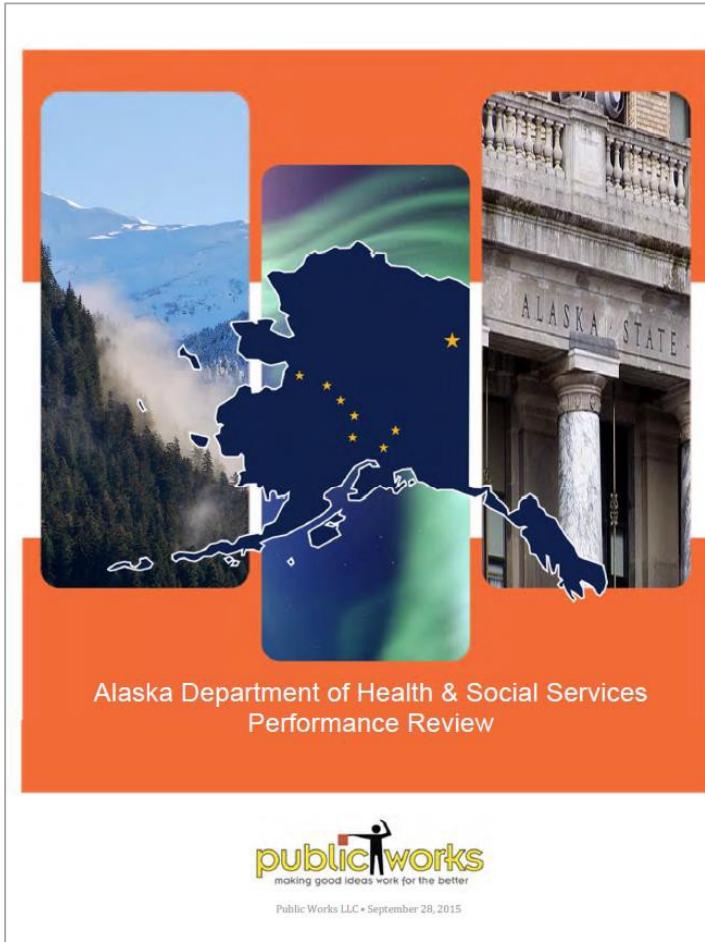
- Improve early identification of individual and family needs
- Establish appropriate goals with families in case planning
- Improve engagement of families to improve timely permanency for children.

Continuous Quality Improvement is enhanced to assess, evaluate and inform policy and practice improvement decisions



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HB 30 (SLA 2013) Performance Review



Link to Performance Review

<http://legaudit.akleg.gov/performance-review-of-the-department-of-health-and-social-services-2015/>



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HB 30 Recommendations

3.2.I.2 Separate foster care licensing and regulations from other residential care facilities

- Regulations have been drafted and are out for public review and comment at <https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/View.aspx?id=188790>

3.2.I.4 Develop a template or checklist for OCS workers and/or eligibility technicians to assist in correctly documenting the components of Title IV-E eligibility within appropriate timeframes

- A template exists in the OCS Online Resource for Children of Alaska (ORCA) and is used in all eligibility determinations.



2017 Success and 2018 Priorities

- Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact signed October 19th at AFN
- Continued to see efforts to safely discharge children and a slow down in new foster care entries
- Repeat maltreatment efforts worker and less children are experiencing a second episode of maltreatment than ever before
- Finalize and implement the PIP to improve in the areas found deficit by the federal review
- Continued efforts to become fully centralized in our intake practices
- Continued collaboration with Tribes/Tribal organizations to implement the compact
- Continued efforts to hire quality employees suited to the work of child welfare and work to retain them



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Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact

- Outcomes for all Alaska children will be improved; particularly those of Alaska Native children.
- Families will be served closest to home, in their own communities in a way reflective of their culture and traditions.
- Families will be able to be receptive and engaged in changing behavior which will mean over time that the number of Alaska Native children in foster care will decline as does the rate of maltreatment.
- More Tribes accessing Title IV-E Funding to operate programs autonomously with both the state and federal funding required to be successful.



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Quality Assurance and Oversight

Federal Administration for Children & Families

- Child & Family Services Review

- Title IV-E Audit

Legislative Audit

Alaska Court System

Facing Foster Care in Alaska

Alaska State Ombudsman

Children's Justice Act Taskforce

Citizen Review Panel

Resource Family Advisory Board



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CRP 2017 Recommendations for OCS

1. Assign CRP a significant role in implementation priority areas of the “Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: Strategic Plan 2016-2020.



CRP 2017 Recommendations for OCS

2. Speed up the process and implement the new tracking system of grievances by December 2017.



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CRP 2017 Recommendations for OCS

3. Establish adequate connection between a case file and any related grievances, with necessary protection for worker identity.



CRP 2017 Recommendations for OCS

4. Publish monthly aggregate data on number of grievances received, nature of those grievances, and time to resolution of those grievances online.



CRP 2017 Recommendations for OCS

5. OCS should work with the CRP to strengthen the CRP's ability as a robust mechanism for public participation, and relay on it to improve public awareness of the nature and content of OCS work.



CRP 2017 Recommendations for OCS

6. OCS should continue to work with the CRP to identify a clear working relationship under the participatory evaluation framework.



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Questions?

Thank You~

