

# Adoptions in Colorado

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**COLORADO**  
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# Adoptions in Colorado

- This presentation will provide an broad overview of the adoption process in Colorado
- Brief overview of the what the data says about adoptions in Colorado
- Highlight the changes made to get towards consistency state-wide and to improve the adoption assistance process, experience and support for each family



## Adoption Data on Adoption Success



Fiscal Year	# Children in finalized adoptions	# Children entering removal after adoption	% of Total adoptions
SFY 2019	921	7	0.76%
SFY 2020	914	16	1.75%
SFY 2021	832	8	0.96%
SFY 2022	803	5	0.62%
SFY 2023	697	1	0.14%
Grand Total	4167	37	0.89%

## Adoption Data with Kin



Fiscal Year	Foster Parent Adoptions	%	Relative w/ custody	%	Relative certified	%	Unknown	Grand Total
SFY 2019	472	51.2%	309	33.6%	109	11.8%	31	921
SFY 2020	462	50.5%	269	29.4%	138	15.1%	45	914
SFY 2021	408	49.0%	235	28.2%	127	15.3%	62	832
SFY 2022	383	47.7%	229	28.5%	127	15.8%	64	803
SFY 2023	334	47.9%	167	24.0%	134	19.2%	62	697
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>51.2%</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>33.6%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>921</b>

# Adoption Data on Assistance Provided



## State Assistance Totals

- \$3,834,630 monthly
- \$46,015,554 annually



## Additional Case Services

- Daycare
- Tutoring
- Respite

# Adoption Data on Assistance Provided

## Rule and Statute Revamp

- 2018-2022 Volume VII rewrite to be in line with federal rule
- 2019 SB19-178 changes Children's Code on adoption assistance

## Adoption Assistance Worksheet

- 2021-2022 One consistent worksheet created for all counties to appropriately match families with the assistance they need

## State Policy

- 2023 One policy created for all counties statewide
- Creates common language, definitions and process
- Additional forms also centralized



# Adoption Process

## Pre-Adoption Work

### Concurrent Planning

- Return Home/APR efforts
- Case Consults, Family meetings, staffings
- Adoption goal best interest of child

### Family Finding Efforts

- Active efforts throughout life of case
- Family given preference on placement
- Out of state efforts
- All options considered

### Foster Adopt Family Recruitment

- Overall shortage
- Fewer adoption specific
- Most foster parents are placement, become connected to child

### Child's History Gathered

- Child's story preserved (Child Study)
- Records gathered and retained
- Needs identified

# Adoption Process



## Child in Need of Forever Home

- Child is legally free to be adopted
- Adoption goal full efforts

## Adoptive Family Identified

- Prioritize Kin
- Maintain current relationships
- Identify new options
- Continue Family Finding
- Specialized recruitment
- Discussion of needs continued or started

## Caseworker Starts Adoption Work

- Adoption readiness discussions with adoptive parents
- Adoption readiness discussions with child (age appropriate)
  - GAL/CFY
- Lots of paperwork initiated

## Adoption Coordinator Starts Work

- Introduction, Information, Education and rights in the process
- Provided documents
  - State policy, Assistance worksheet, Process



# Adoption Process Continued



## Adoption Assistance Worksheet

- New Worksheet
- Child's unique needs
- Family's circumstances
- Amplifies
  - Living in poverty
  - Kinship adoptions
  - Sibling group adoptions

## Adoption Assistance Agreement

- Medicaid
- 2,000 for related expenses
- Monthly subsidy
- One time assistance
- Case services
  - Daycare
- Community resources
- Ability to renegotiate

## Caseworker Adoption Work Cont.

- Any pending paperwork completed
- Subsidy agreement is signed
- Adoption is filed with the court
- Court Date is set

## Court Approves Adoption

- Court addresses family, asks any additional questions
- Court makes final decision
- Child finds their forever family

# Consistent Process Statewide: Benefit to Families



## Updated Rules and Policies

- In line with federal rule
- Clear expectations for counties
- Met all of the recommendations of the Child Protection Ombudsman's Report
- Unified state policy to create consistency
  - Ensures same experience across counties



## Updated Processes and Forms

- Adoption Assistance Worksheet creates consistent statewide process
- Provides balanced, equitable approach to adoption assistance
  - Goal to appropriately match with the the help the family needs
  - Address barriers to adoption
- Increased transparency
  - Tool completed together
  - Creates partnership
- Family voice is amplified
  - Family identifies needs



## State, County and Stakeholder Collaboration

- Helped build relationships through the process
- Cross county, state and key stakeholder collaboration
- Created common language, definitions and process
- Agreements made for follow up and continued improvement

## Beyond the Process:

### What Adoption Looks Like in Colorado

The family came to the department after adopting a sibling group of three from the county they lived in. Unfortunately the father of the family had a medical emergency and passed from the complications. The adoptive mother of the children had been a stay at home caretaker for the children while the father was the main income provider. The mother came to the department after the father's death and asked for assistance to be renegotiated. The county was able to renegotiated the subsidy for the mother and they were able to also support the family with case services for all three children to stay in pro-social activities.



**Jones Family**

## Beyond the Process:

### What Adoption Looks Like in Colorado

“Recently I had a family request a review of their assistance agreement. The child was adopted at age 2 in 2013 by a single mom. Assistance given at that time was Medicaid and reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses related to the adoption. At the time of the adoption, adoptive mom prided herself on doing the best she could to provide for her son and his needs on the limited income she had, as well as finding community resources that could help. Recently, she has been struggling with health issues of her own and has not had the steady income she once had. She reached out to see if there was any assistance the Department could provide. I informed her about the new worksheet we are now using. The assistance that was derived from the new worksheet left her speechless and in tears. She was overwhelmed. She could not stop asking if I was serious and if was I sure about the assistance that was being offered. This was completely life-changing for this family. Mom could not previously afford respite care for her child, so her elderly mother was providing it, which as the years went by was getting harder and harder for her due to her age and own health issues. This assistance has ended up having a tremendous impact on 3 lives.”



**Smith Family-Story** from their Adoption  
Assistance Coordinator

# THANK YOU

Please feel free to ask any questions.



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