



Colorado Interim Child Welfare Study Committee

Sept 12, 2023

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Advocacy

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SAFE STRONG SUPPORTIVE

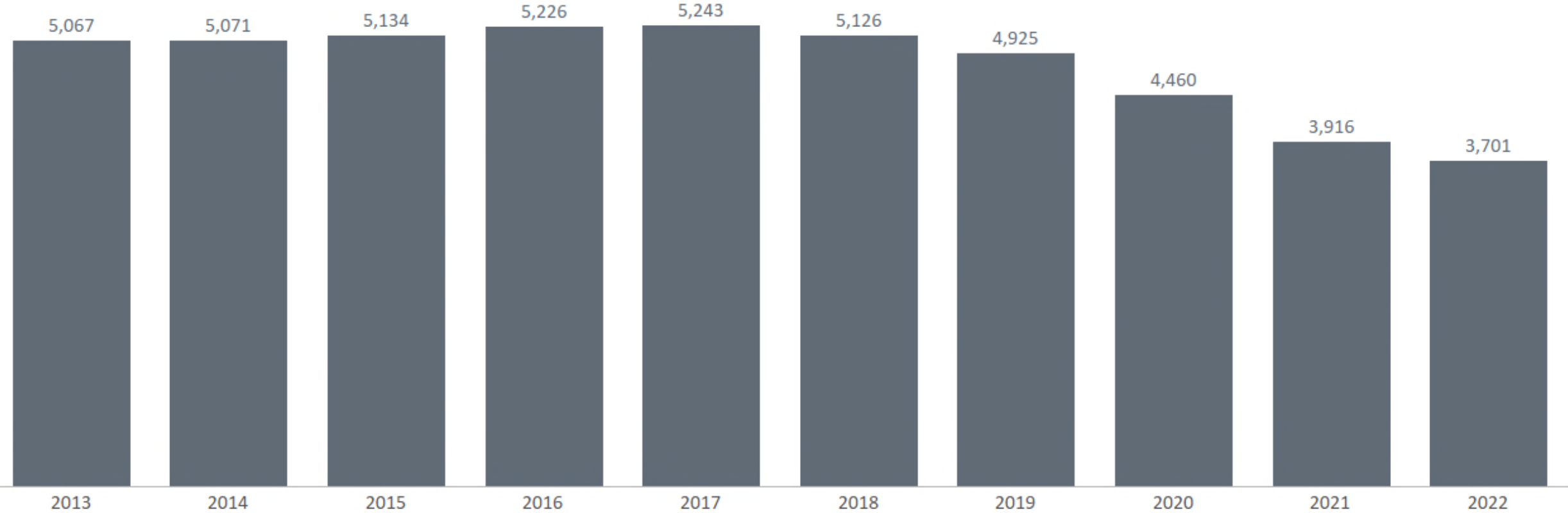
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safe children | strong families | supportive communities



In Care | Colorado

Number of children in foster care.

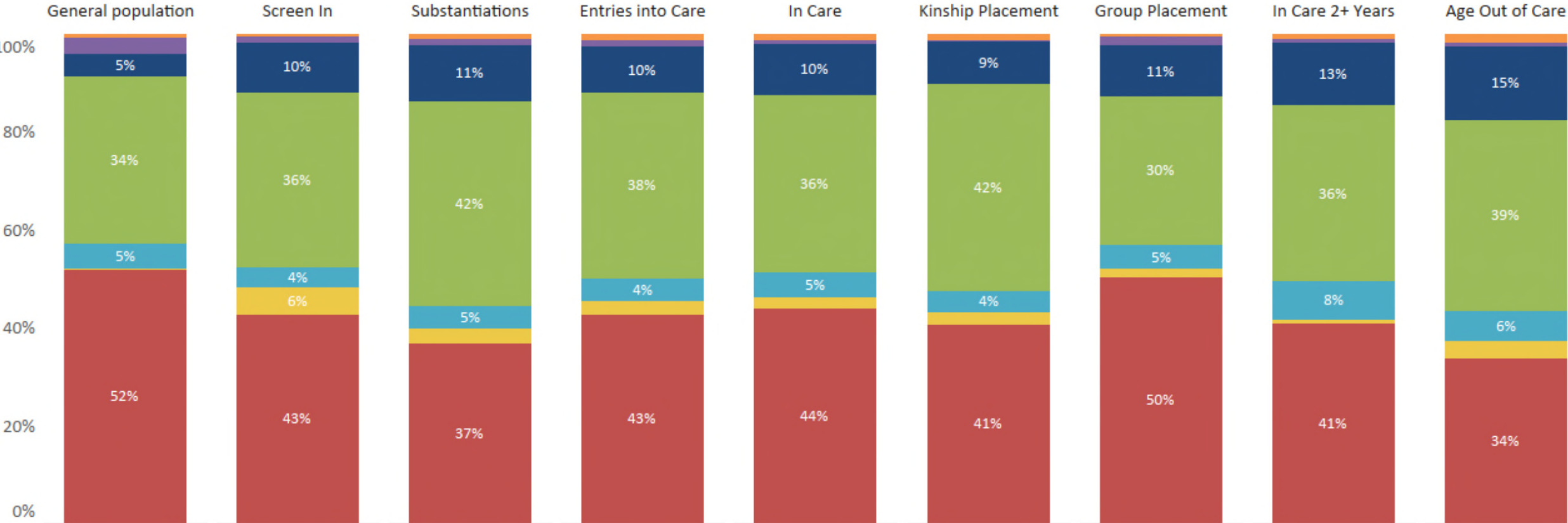


Source: state submitted AFCARS & NCANDS data (children/youth < age 18)

Key Decision Points | Colorado

- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Latinx
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Multi-Racial
- Black/African American
- White

A decision point analysis can provide a helpful picture for understanding disparity by visually tuning-in to over- and under-represented groups relative to their proportion in the base population. (Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022)

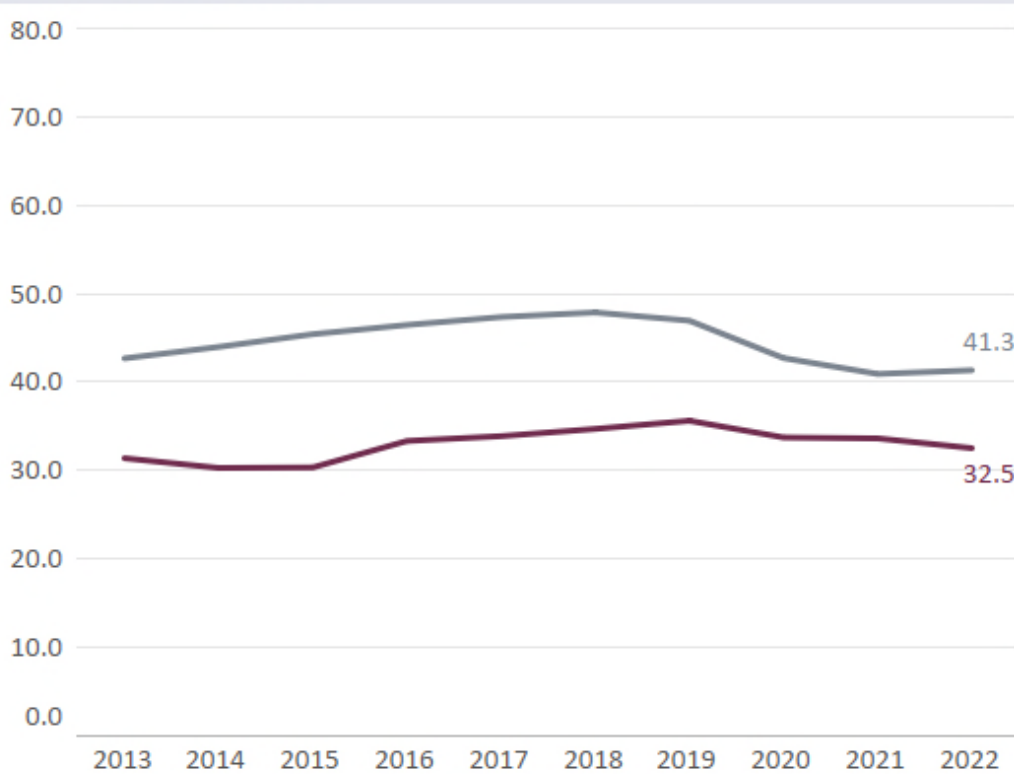


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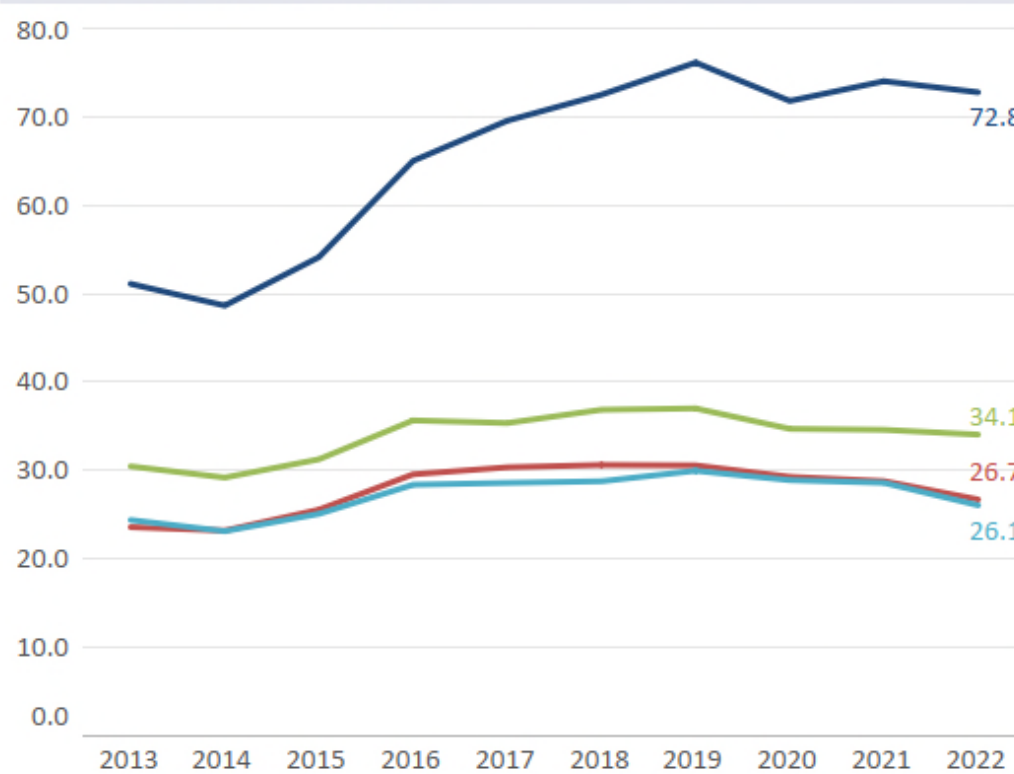
Screened In Rate | Colorado

Screen in rate is measured by the unique count of children involved in a report of maltreatment that is screened in by the child welfare agency for an investigation or assessment, per 1,000 children in the general population.

Colorado and National



Colorado by race/ethnic group



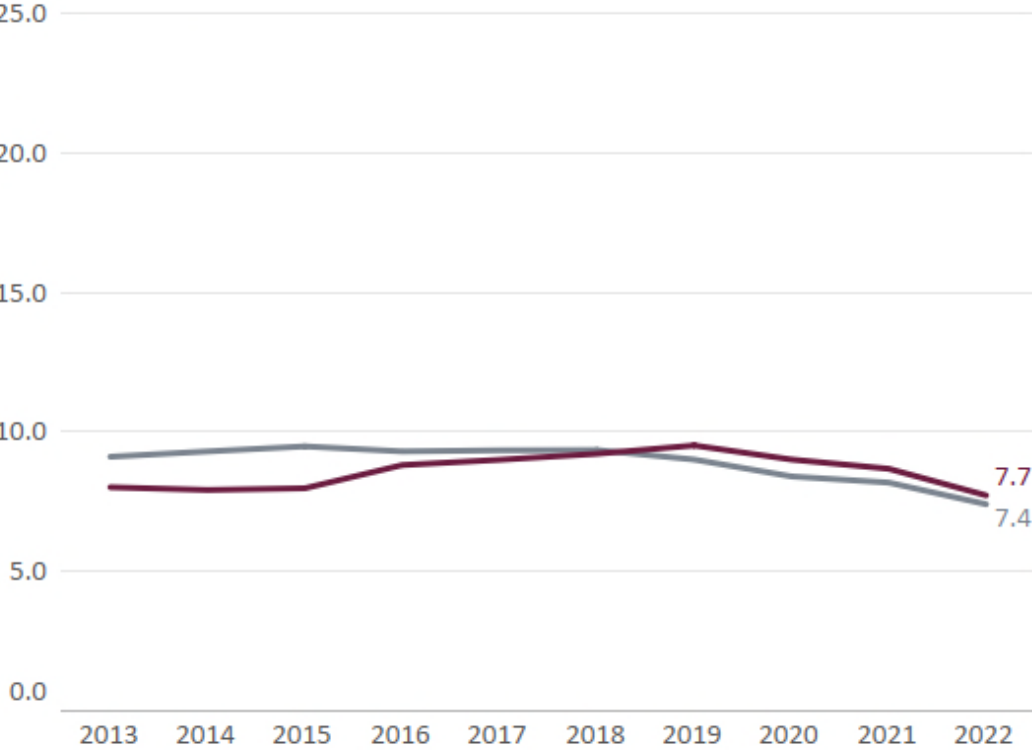
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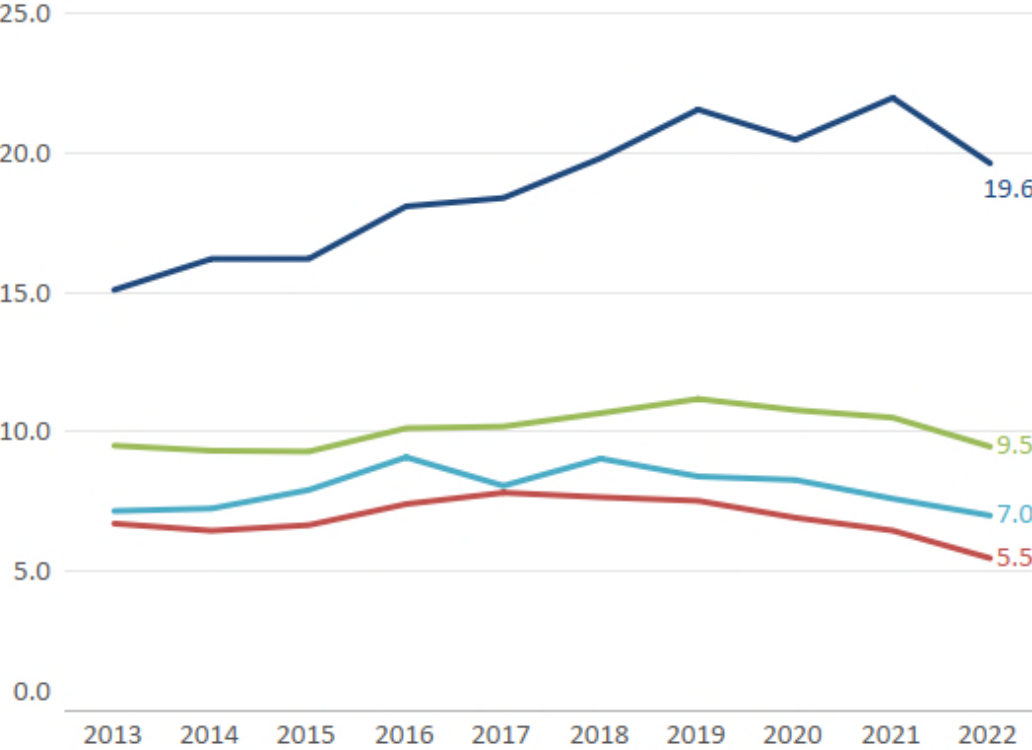
Substantiated Rate | Colorado

Substantiation rate is measured by the unique number of children who have a substantiated allegation of child maltreatment during the reporting period per 1,000 children in the general population.

Colorado and National



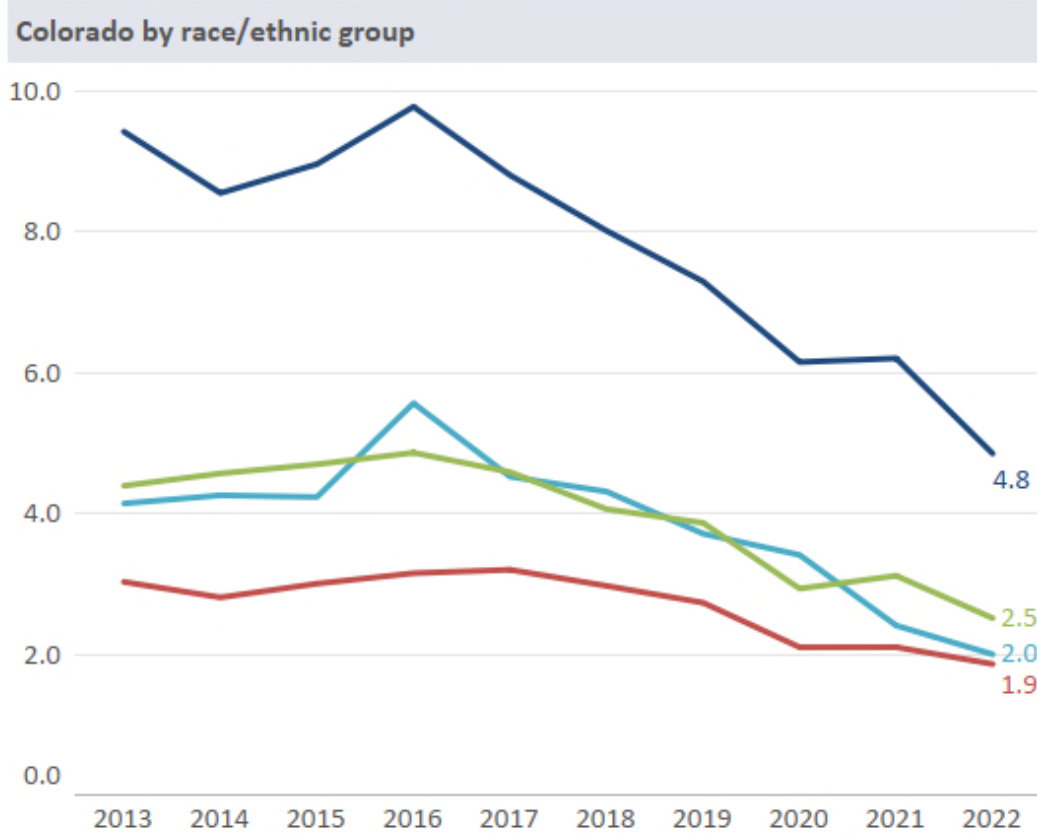
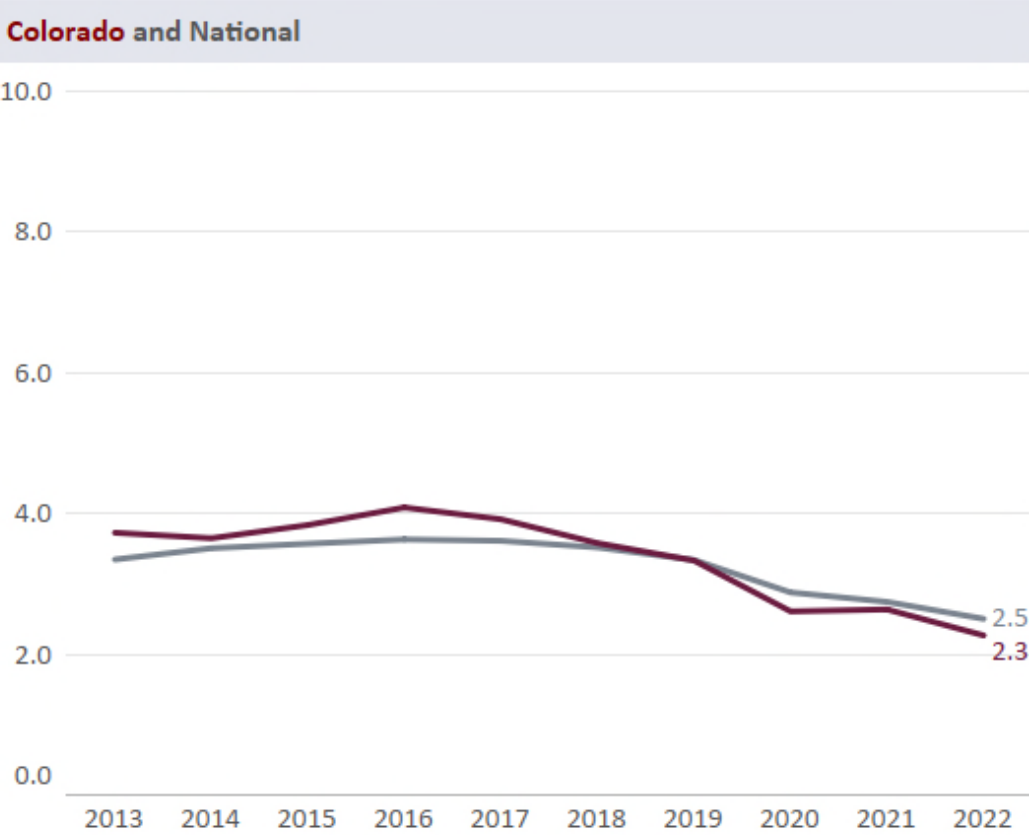
Colorado by race/ethnic group



Source: state submitted NCANDS data (children/youth < age 18)

Entry Rate | Colorado

Entry rate is measured by the unique number of children and youth who enter care during the 12-month reporting period per 1,000 children and youth in the general population.



Source: state submitted AFCARS data (children/youth < age 18)

Casey Family Programs

- Operating Foundation – working in all 50 States, territories, and with tribal nations.
- Mission – to improve, and ultimately prevent the need for foster care.
- Values –
 - Diversity, Equity, Anti-Racism, Anti-Discrimination
 - Innovation
 - Relationship
 - Stewardship

Overall CO Trends from data

- Big disparity at front door – referrals, screened in reports, but incrementally grows thru child welfare system
- Many positive trends – # kids in care, use of congregate care, # of kids aging out are all declining
- Downward trends for most all populations, but continued disparities, especially for families and their children, of color

National Approaches to Advance Race Equity

- Thriving Families, Safer Children - Focus on community prevention strategies – CO Partnership for Thriving Families
- Rethinking Child Welfare Front Door Strategies – Mandated Reporting Task Force, Re-Imagining Child Welfare Steering Committee
- Maximizing concrete & financial supports
- Kin First Culture - community, agencies and courts
- Co-Design with Lived Experience - Families and Youth
- Intentional tracking / evaluation - disaggregated data for all families and their children - awareness


Building on CO Resources & Opportunities

- CO Partnership for Thriving Families – prevention
- Mandated Reporting Task Force – front door
- Differential / Alternative Response – front door
- Steering Committee for Re-Imagining Child Welfare and Family Voice Council – Lived Experience
- Best Practices - CO Kinconnected, Kin First Culture, Family First & Prevention Services
- Evaluation focus

CO Partnership for Thriving Families

- **FOCUS** - community-based prevention strategies for families with newborns and young children. Family & Caregiver Space for Co-Design
- **Illuminate CO** is “backbone agency” with cross system statewide participation. Goals:
 - Reduced maltreatment
 - Reduced child fatality rate
- **Family Connects** – Evidence Based Practice to connect with families at birthing hospital and link them to ongoing home visiting program. In other jurisdictions especially improved outcomes for families of color

...CO Partnership continued

- **Family Resource Centers** – pilots in Adams and Prowers - no wrong door for families - 33 FRCs that serve families in 57 of Colorado's 64 counties with strengths-based, culturally-relevant services and referrals
-  - coconnected.org - Community Norms Campaign – informal connections, community based, govt assistance
- **Family Financial Wellbeing** – exploring policies and access to various concrete & financial supports. Much research indicated access to financial & concrete supports reduces child welfare involvement.
- **Equity Council** – working on language translations

Mandatory Reporting Task Force - Child Protect

Ombudsman of CO leading)

- Legislatively created, broad membership, recommendations end of 2024
- Insights from all, data, review of best practice approaches nationally, to build on CO context
- Insights so far:
 - Racial disparities in who is reported, screened in
 - CO has lower screen in rates than other states – RED teams?
 - White population over-represented in use of Alternative Response (as all urbans implement, may change)

Early National Efforts re Transforming Mandated Reporting

- Messaging, Training of MRs, Critical Thinking Tools, Screening Dialogue, access to “Prevention Hubs”, narrowing of Neglect
- Insights from surveys, etc. – MRs understand how to report; little awareness of disproportionality re reporting, or of trauma impact and loss of trust for engagement; conflagration re neglect and poverty; concern re liability
- Texas – narrowly re-defined Neglect re Imminent Safety Risk
- NY State – “Families shouldn’t have to be reported to be supported”. Enriched mandated 2 hr. on-line MR training

...more early efforts re transforming MR

- New Hampshire, Ohio, Los Angeles – working toward a Community Response Guide critical thinking tool for MRs
- New Hampshire - AG opinion indicating good faith use of the Community Response Guide alleviates liability concerns of MRs when deciding to report
- Community Prevention Hubs – “no wrong door” - San Diego 211 with Community Info Exchange, Family Resource Centers, community Kinship Navigator programs, Family Connects for new families, Community Pathways as part of Family First & Prevention Plans, New Hampshire Peer Navigation warm line, New Jersey continuum of care and OhioRISE Medicaid Managed Care for High Acuity children & youth...

Re-Imagining Child Welfare & CO Child Welfare Advisory Council

- Innovative Co-Design with impacted families & youth
- Evolving pilots for community co-design change – DHSs and community
- Advisory Council for input / co-design on policy and practice
- CHSDA also encouraging community efforts re advancing race equity – partnership with DCW for joint efforts

Best Practices for Child Welfare

- **Differential / Alternative Response** – for screened in reports of child maltreatment; community services instead of family separation
- **Community Pathways** – for families with children at risk of placement, seamless connection to prevention services without CPS investigation (integrated as part of Family First Plan - CT, IN, Washington DC)
- **Kin First Culture** -
 - Informal and child welfare involved families
 - CO Kinnected – federally recognized Evidence Based Best Practice for child welfare involved families
 - Full array of permanency options for kin families – DCW leading a Kin Support Workgroup as a result of legislative language last spring

Data and Evaluation

- Track best practices at various points – engagement, completion, outcomes – disaggregate data for ALL families and children
- Develop strategies for advancing race equity at all points
- Track LGBTQ+ identification
- Great CO partners
 - CO Implementation Science Unit, Dept of Child Welfare, result of investment by Morgridge Family Foundation
 - ARCH (Applied Research for Child Welfare) led by CO State U
 - CO Evaluation & Action Lab at DU

Questions?

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Pronouns: she / her / hers

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Resources

Analysis of state definitions of child neglect

<https://www.casey.org/state-definitions-child-neglect-casey-family-programs/>

What is a well-functioning child protection agency?

<https://www.casey.org/what-is-well-functioning-child-protection-agency/>

Can reductions in child poverty impact involvement with child protective services?

<https://www.casey.org/poverty-reduction-study/>