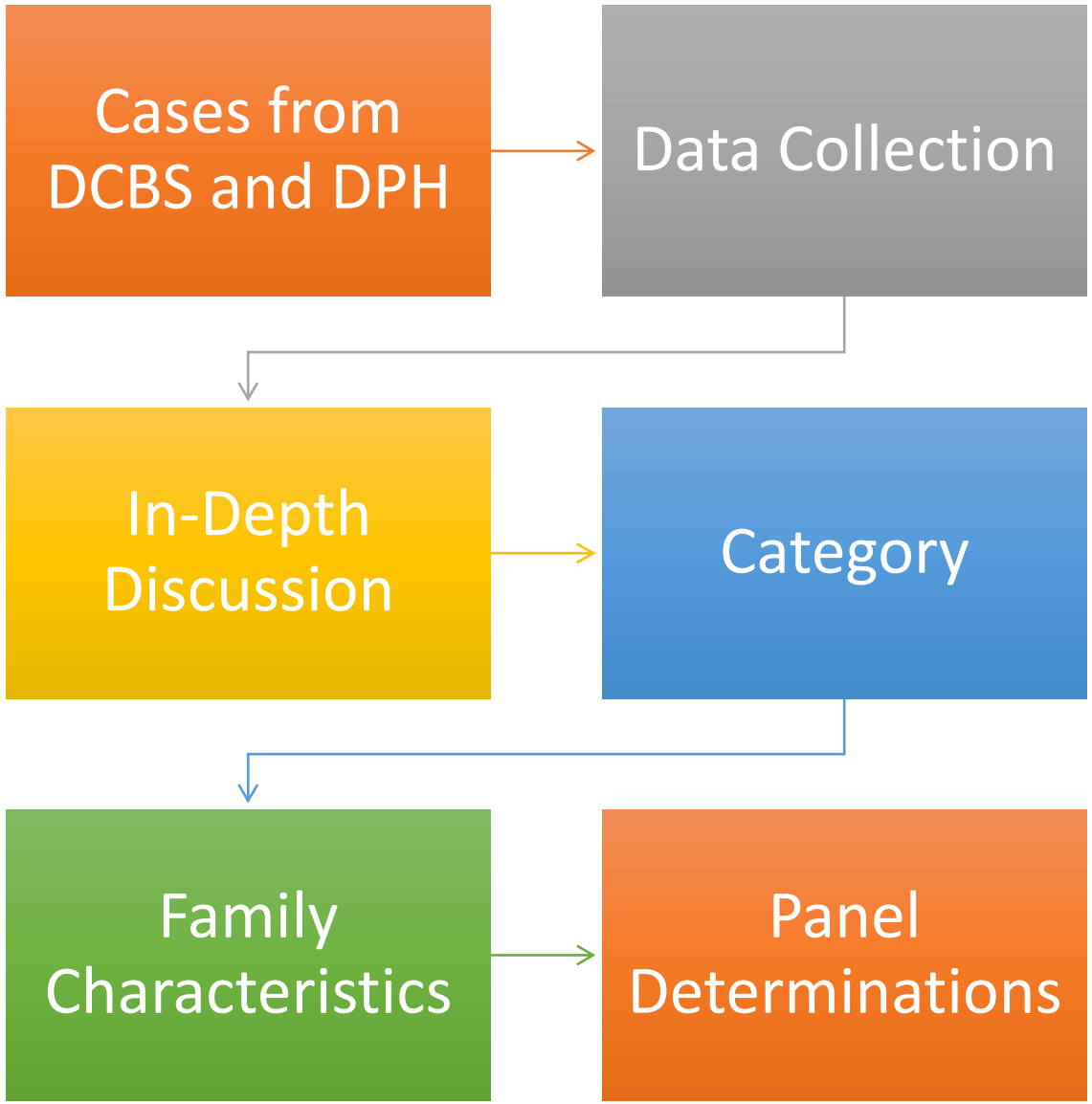
Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel

2024 Annual Report

Panel Members

- Chair - Hon. Benjamin Harrison, Lewis County Attorney
- Commissioner, DCBS – Lesa Dennis
- Commissioner, DPH - Dr. Henrietta Bada, proxy
- Family Court Judge - Hon. Libby Messer
- UK School of Medicine - Dr. Christina Howard
- UofL School of Medicine - Dr. Melissa Currie
- State Medical Examiner - Dr. William Ralston
- Court Appointed Special Advocate – Victoria Benge
- Kentucky State Police - Det. Jason Merlo
- Prevent Child Abuse Ky – Dr. Jaime Pittenger Kirtley
- Ky Coalition Against Domestic Violence – Olivia Spradlin
- Community Mental Health Centers- Steve Shannon
- Citizen Foster Care Review Board - Dr. Elizabeth Salt
- State Child Fatality Review Team - Janice Bright, RN
- President KY Coroner's Association - Mark Hammond, Boyd Co.
- Practicing Addiction Counselor – Geoff Wilson
- Kentucky House of Representatives – Samara Heavrin
- Kentucky Senate – Danny Carroll
- Practicing Prosecutor – Hon. Olivia McCollum
- Practicing Social Work Clinician – Nicole Smith Abbott
- Family Resource and Youth Service Center – Heather McCarty
- Practicing Medication-Assisted Treatment – Dr. Danielle Anderson

Panel Process

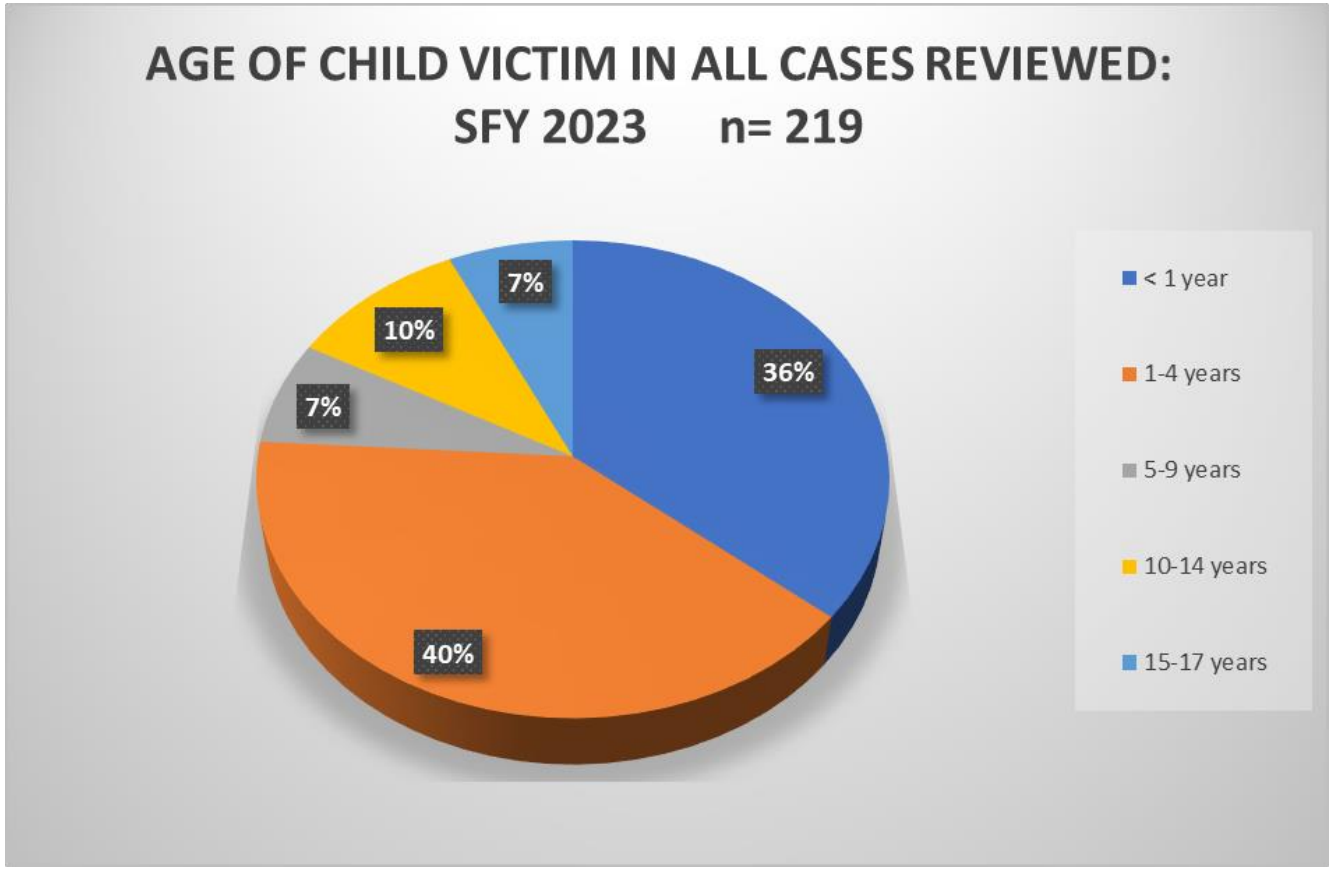


Annual Report

- Case Reviews
- Findings
- Recommendations

Findings

Children four years or younger are at the highest risk for maltreatment.

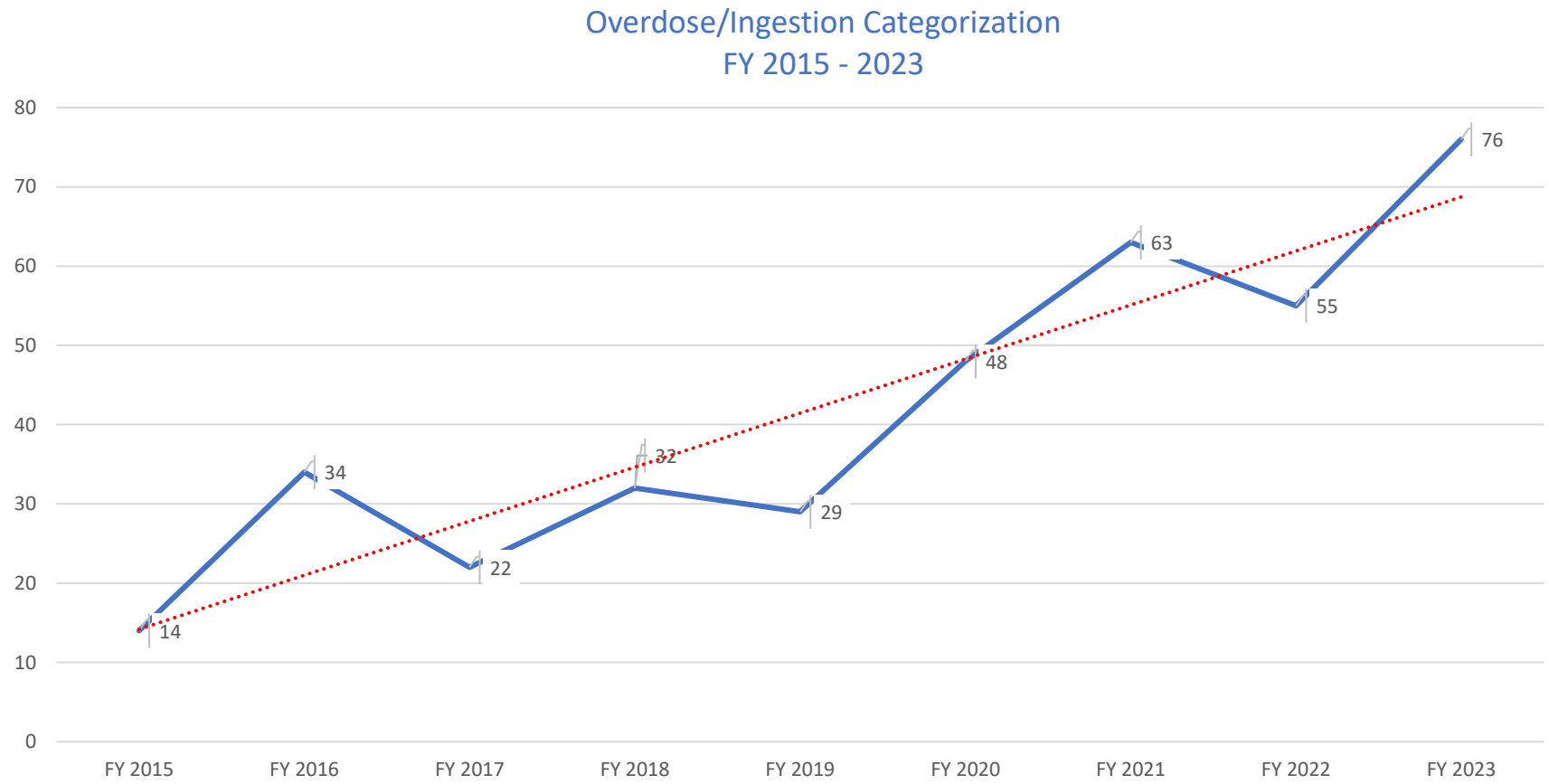


Data Source: Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel Data

Key Findings

- The most commonly found family characteristics in SFY23 included:
    1. Financial Issues (73%)
    2. DCBS Issues (68%)
    3. DCBS History (67%)
    4. Substance Abuse (in home) (54%)
    5. Substance Abuse (caregiver) (52%)
    6. Environmental neglect (51%)
- 95% of all Overdose/ingestion cases involved environmental neglect (unsafe access).
- 80% of all Suicide cases involved an educational issue.
- 50% of all cases with a Panel Determination of Neglect (medical) involved a medically fragile child.
- 56% of Abuse Head Trauma cases involved a caregiver with a mental health issue.
- 50% of all Physical abuse cases involved a caregiver with a history of domestic violence.

Trends


Overdose/Ingestion Categorization
FY 2015 - 2023
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
14
34
22
32
29
48
63
55
76
FY 2015
FY 2016
FY 2017
FY 2018
FY 2019
FY 2020
FY 2021
FY 2022
FY 2023

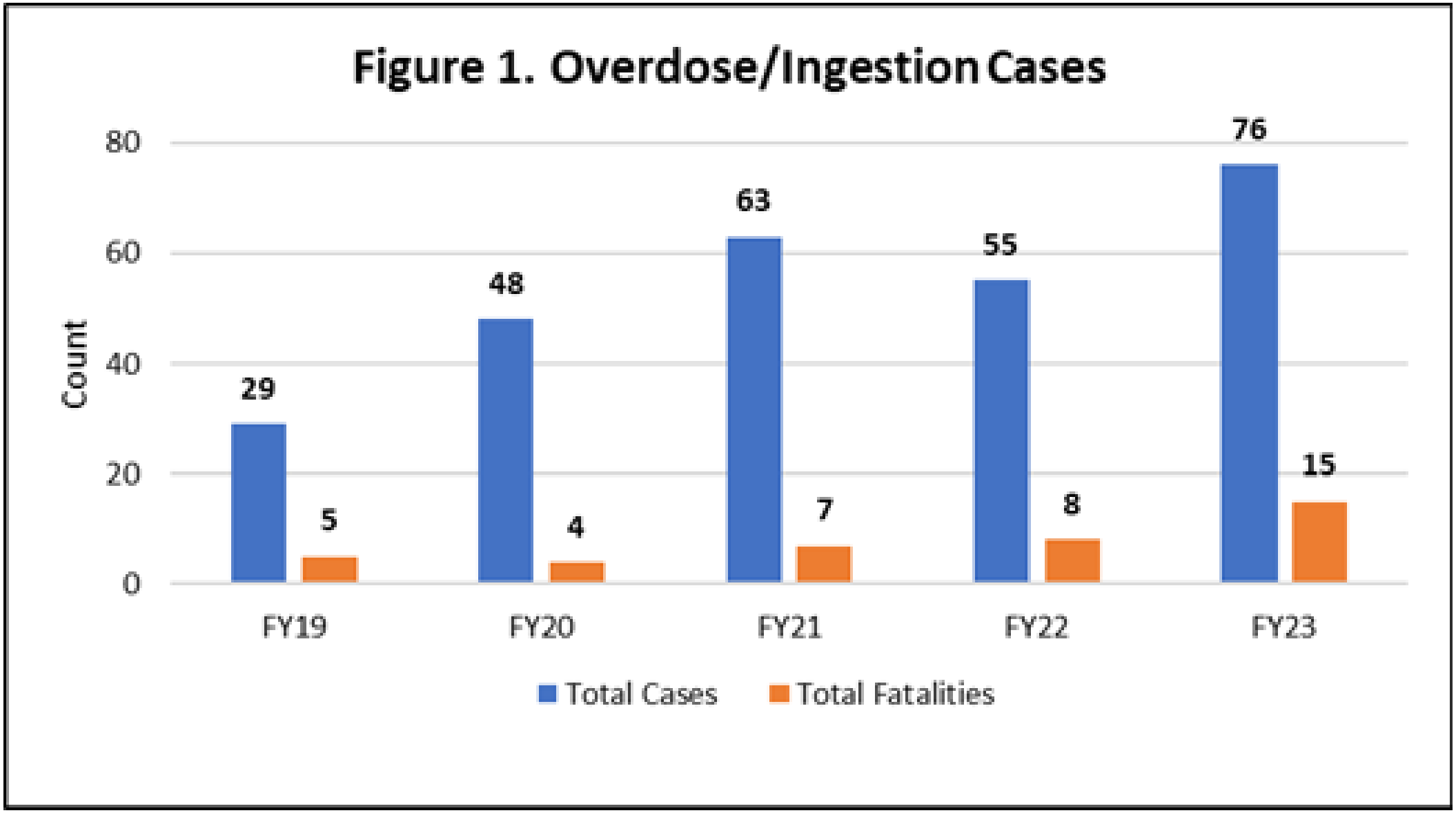
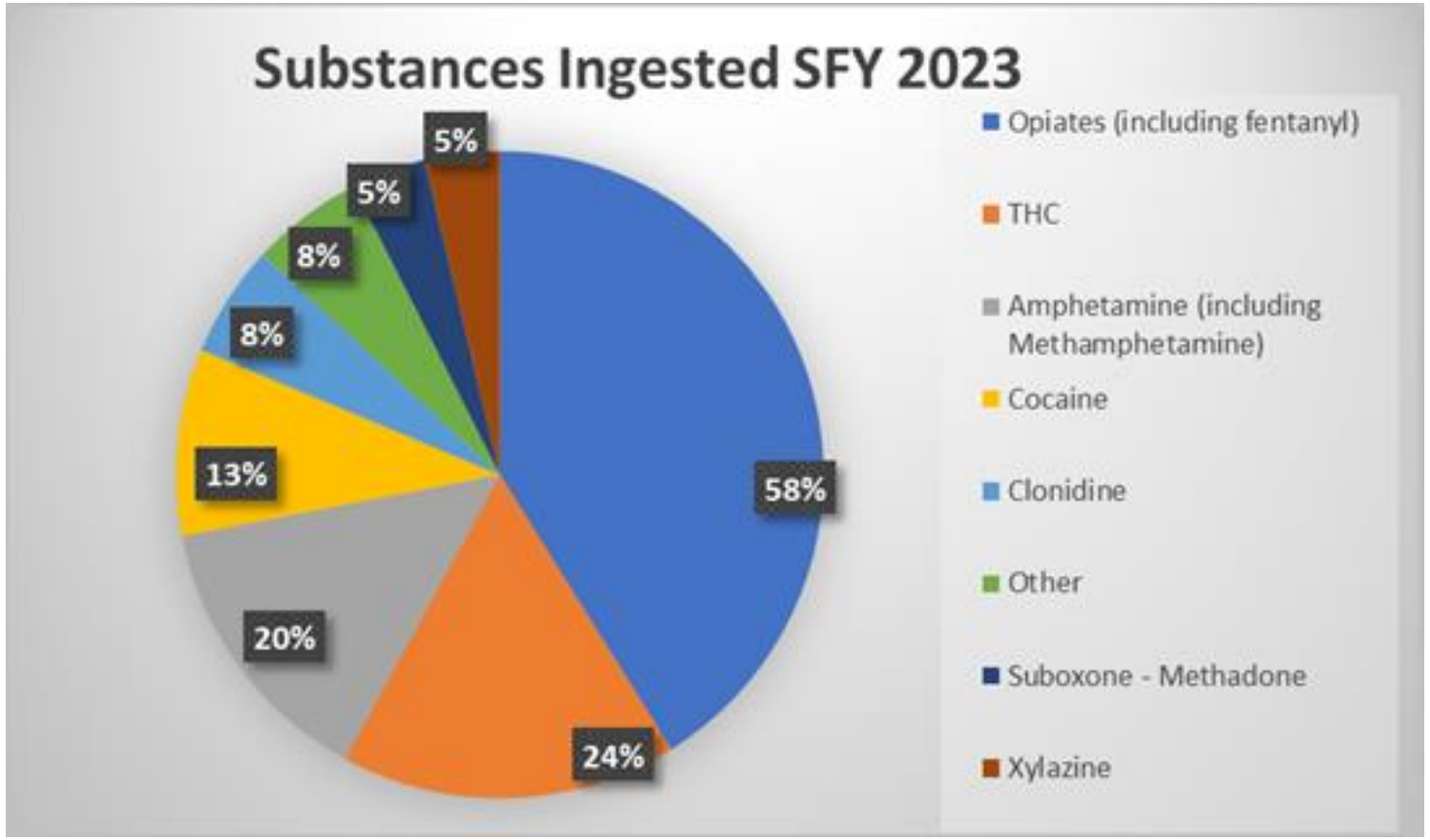
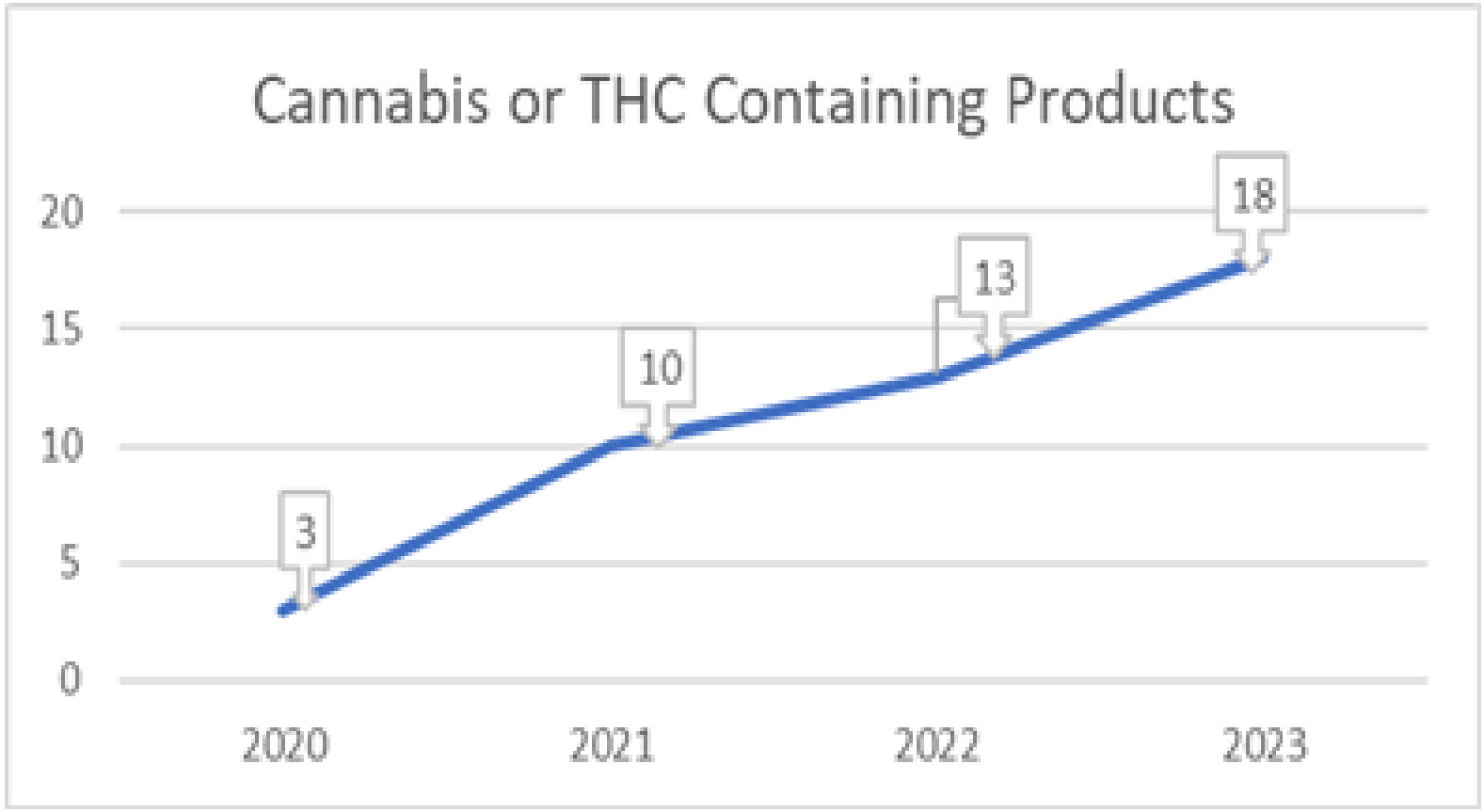


Figure 1. Overdose/Ingestion Cases
Count
80
60
40
20
0
29
5
48
4
63
7
55
8
76
15
FY19
FY20
FY21
FY22
FY23
Total Cases
Total Fatalities

Types of Substances Ingested



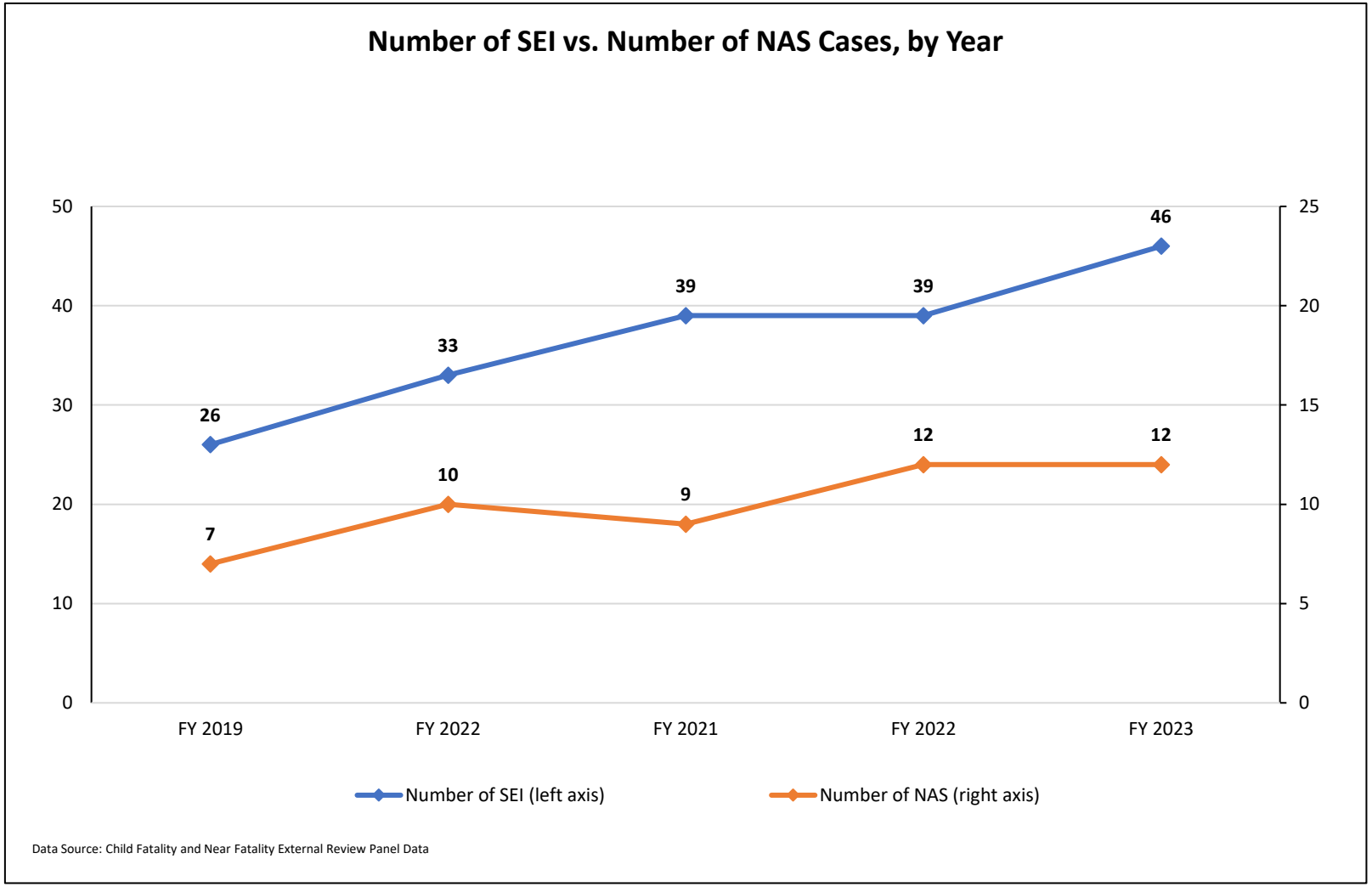
Trends


Cannabis or THC Containing Products
20
15
10
5
0
3
10
13
18
2020
2021
2022
2023

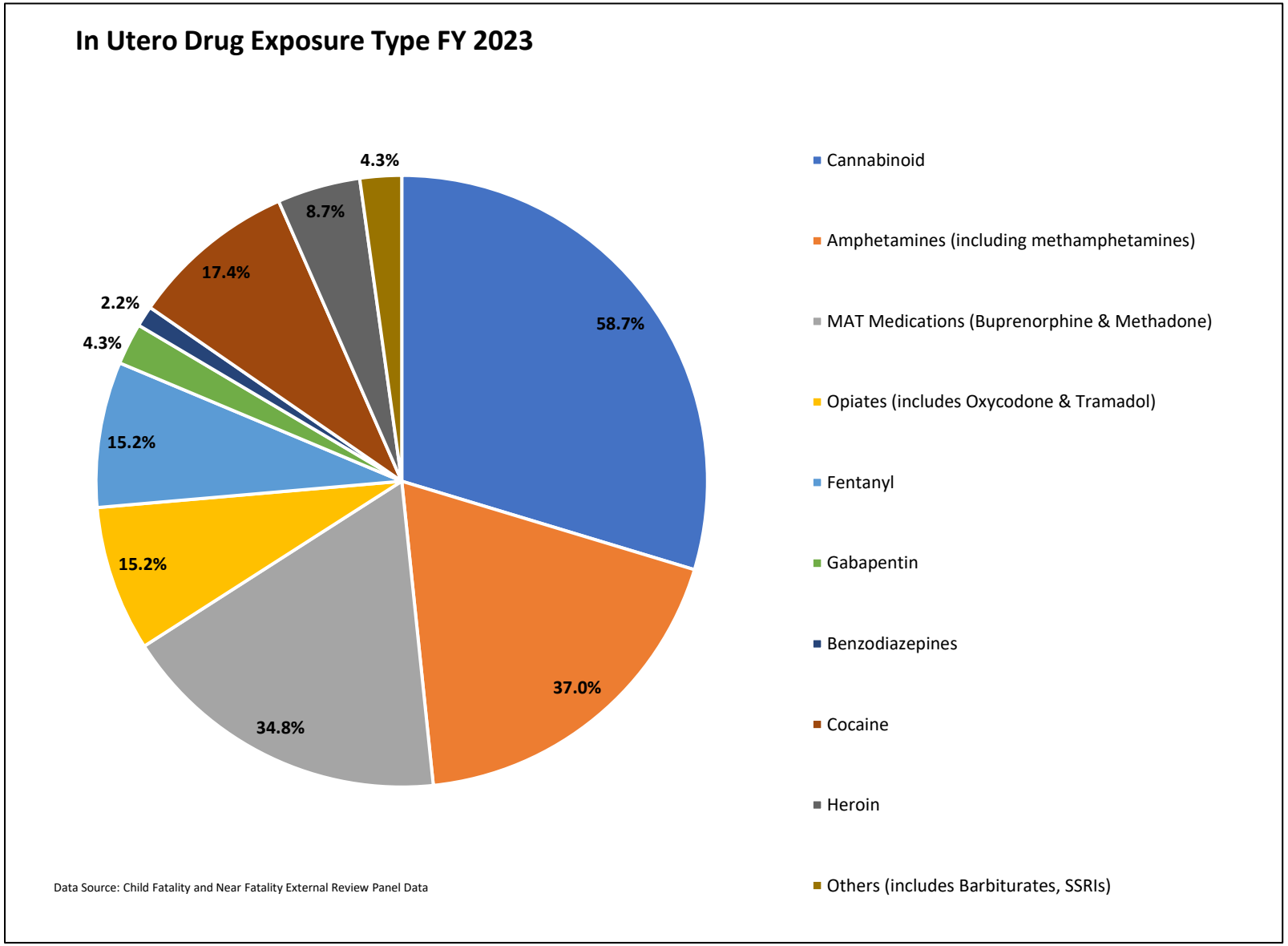
Overdose/Ingestion Recommendations

- CHFS, including representative from DBHDID, DPH, and the Kentucky Office of Medical Cannabis should convene a workgroup to create standardized safe storage guidelines for all prescribers and the public.
- DPH should conduct an aggressive public safety campaign targeting proper medication safe storage.
- DCBS should educate staff on the need to request comprehensive drug screen for caregivers, especially if the child had a positive response to Naloxone.
- The Kentucky Hospital Association should encourage all hospitals to conduct comprehensive UDS, inclusive of synthetic opioids, when a child has a positive response to Naloxone.
- DCBS should create Practice Guidelines Specific to Safe Storage of Medication available within SOP 2.11.

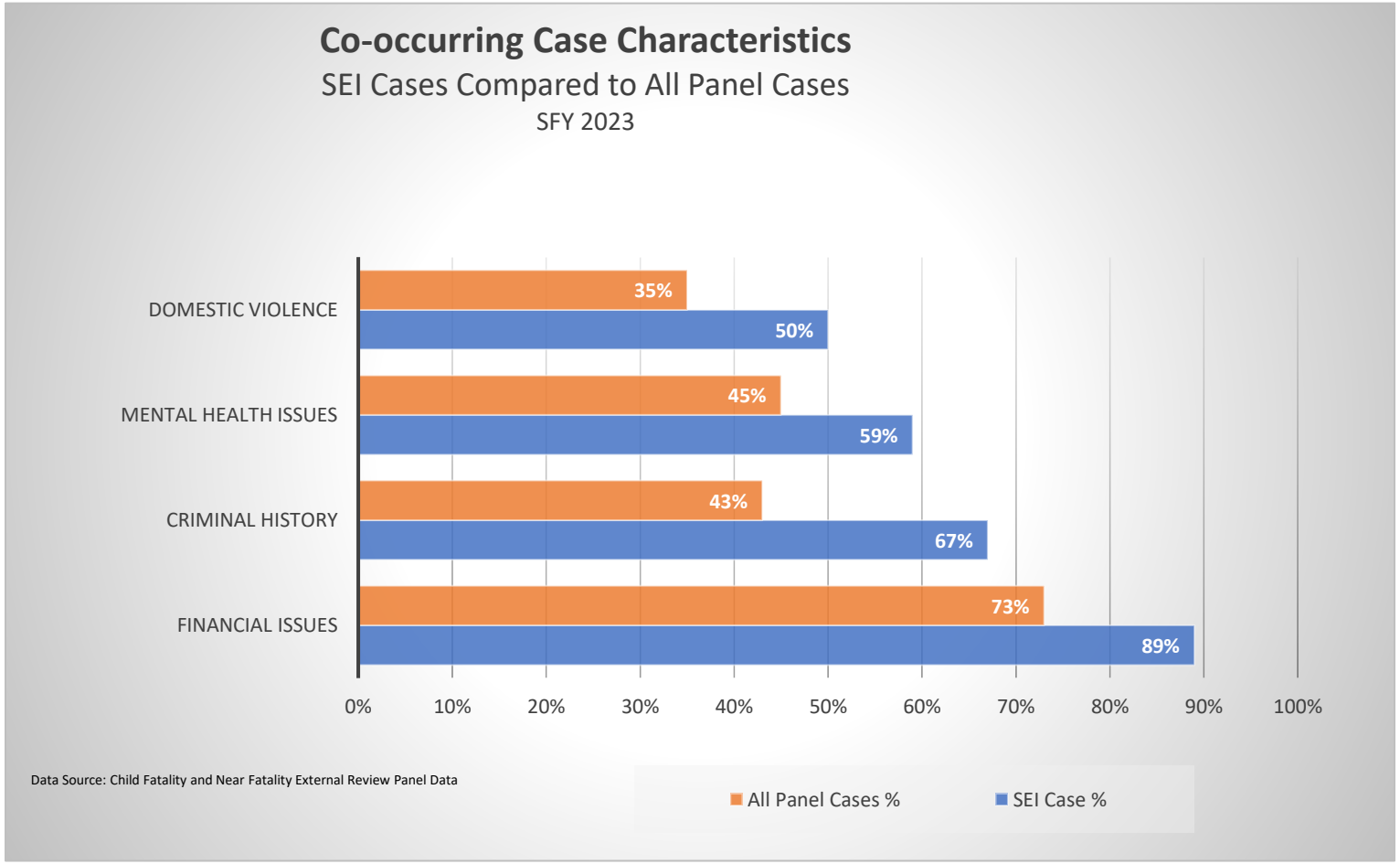
Plan of Safe Care



Plan of Safe Care



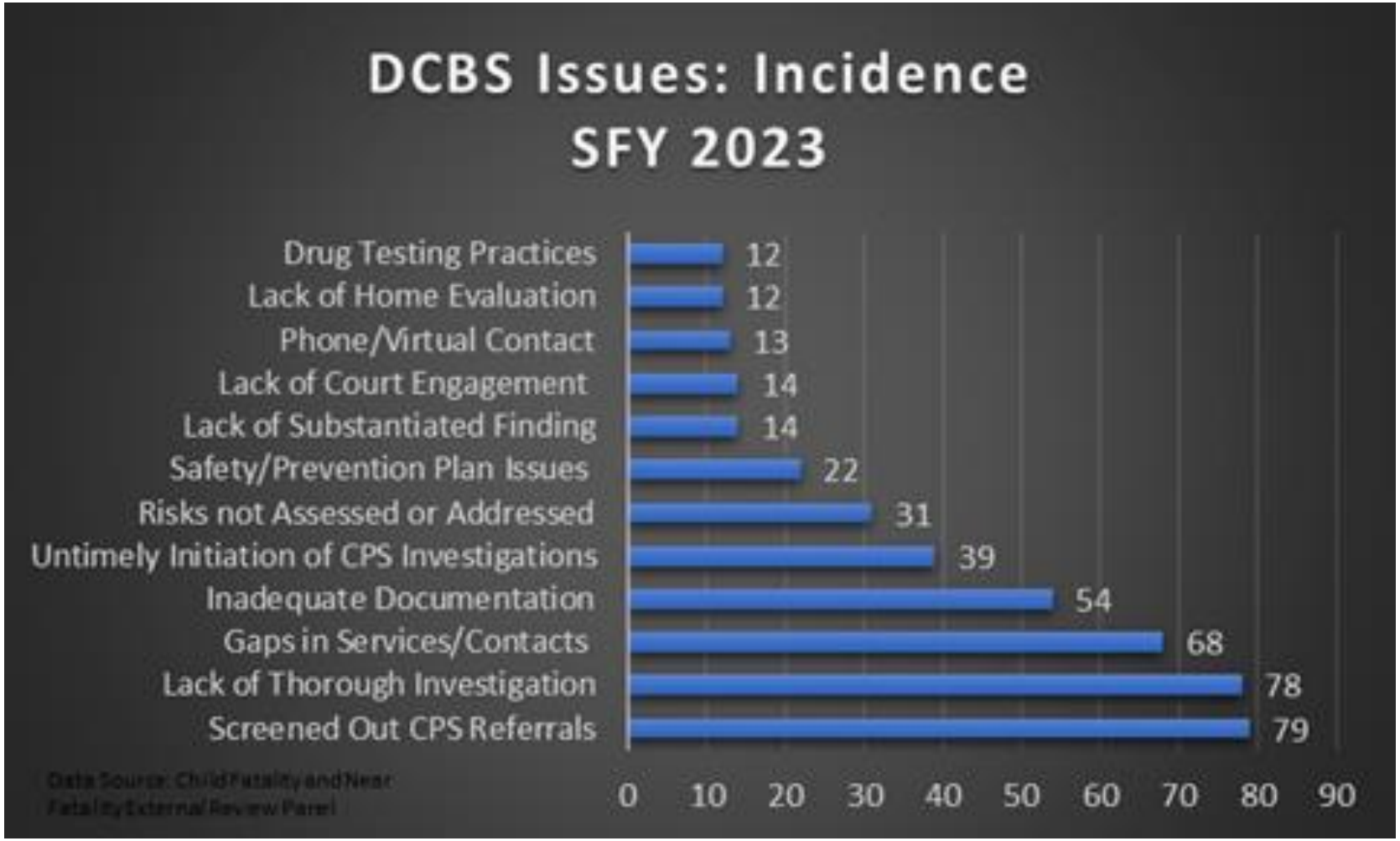
Plan of Safe Care



Plan of Safe Care Recommendation

The Governor's Office should convene a task force with the goal of developing and implementing a robust Plan of Safe Care to address the needs of substance exposed infants and their caregivers across the Commonwealth. The task force should consist of House and Senate members, Executive Branch personnel, Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel members, and community stakeholders.

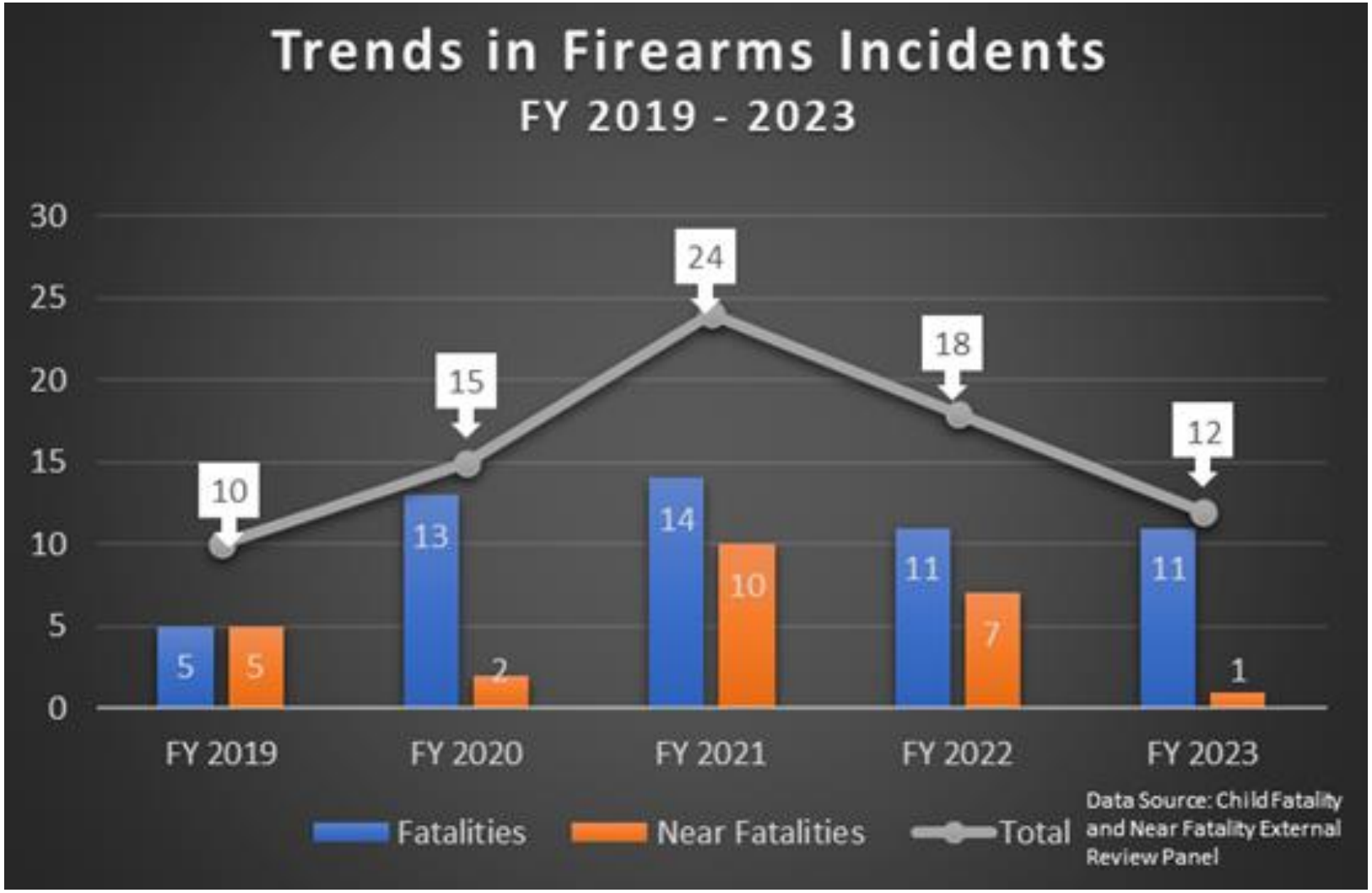
Department for Community Based Services



DCBS Recommendation

The Department for Community Based Services should examine and document existing practice involving the use of virtual contacts by CPS staff (investigative, ongoing, foster care, etc.), to include use of phone, Zoom, or virtual formats. This examination should be included in all levels of the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and the Case Review Process. Based on findings from the CQI reviews, amended SOP and/or practice guidelines should be issues to the field by January 2026.

Trends

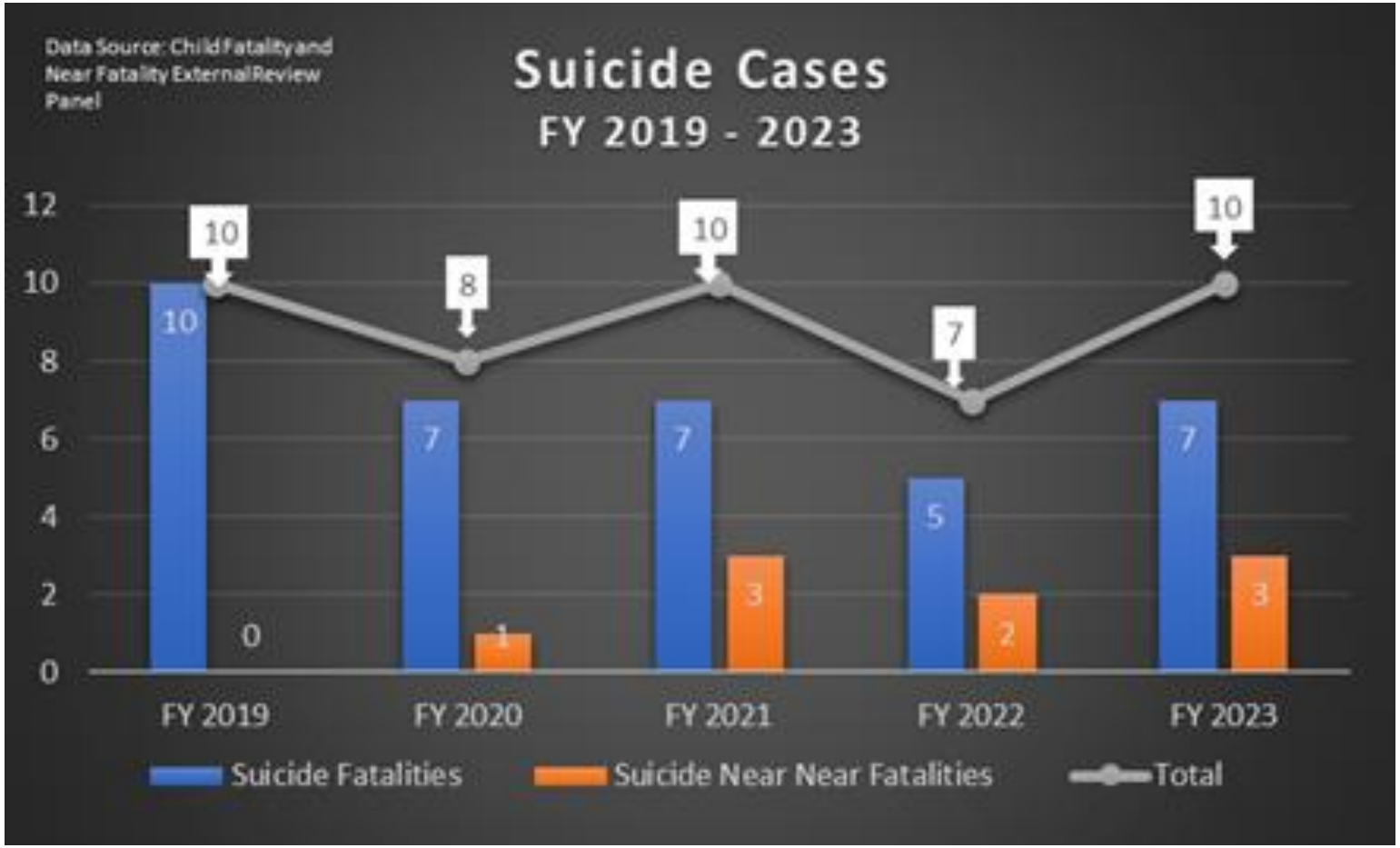

Trends in Firearms Incidents
FY 2019 - 2023
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
10
15
24
18
12
5
5
13
2
14
10
11
7
11
1
FY 2019
FY 2020
FY 2021
FY 2022
FY 2023
Fatalities
Near Fatalities
Total
Data Source: Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel

Child-Access Prevention Laws

The Kentucky General Assembly, through the Judiciary Committee, should explore model legislative strategies to encourage and support safe storage of firearms. Recommended options for exploration include: 1) Child-Access Prevention and Safe-Storage Laws, 2) funding for evidence-based prevention education, and 3) provision of gun locks with every firearm sold to give responsible gunowners the tools to securely store firearms.

The Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board should work collaboratively with community partners to fund and raise awareness regarding safe storage practices of firearms.

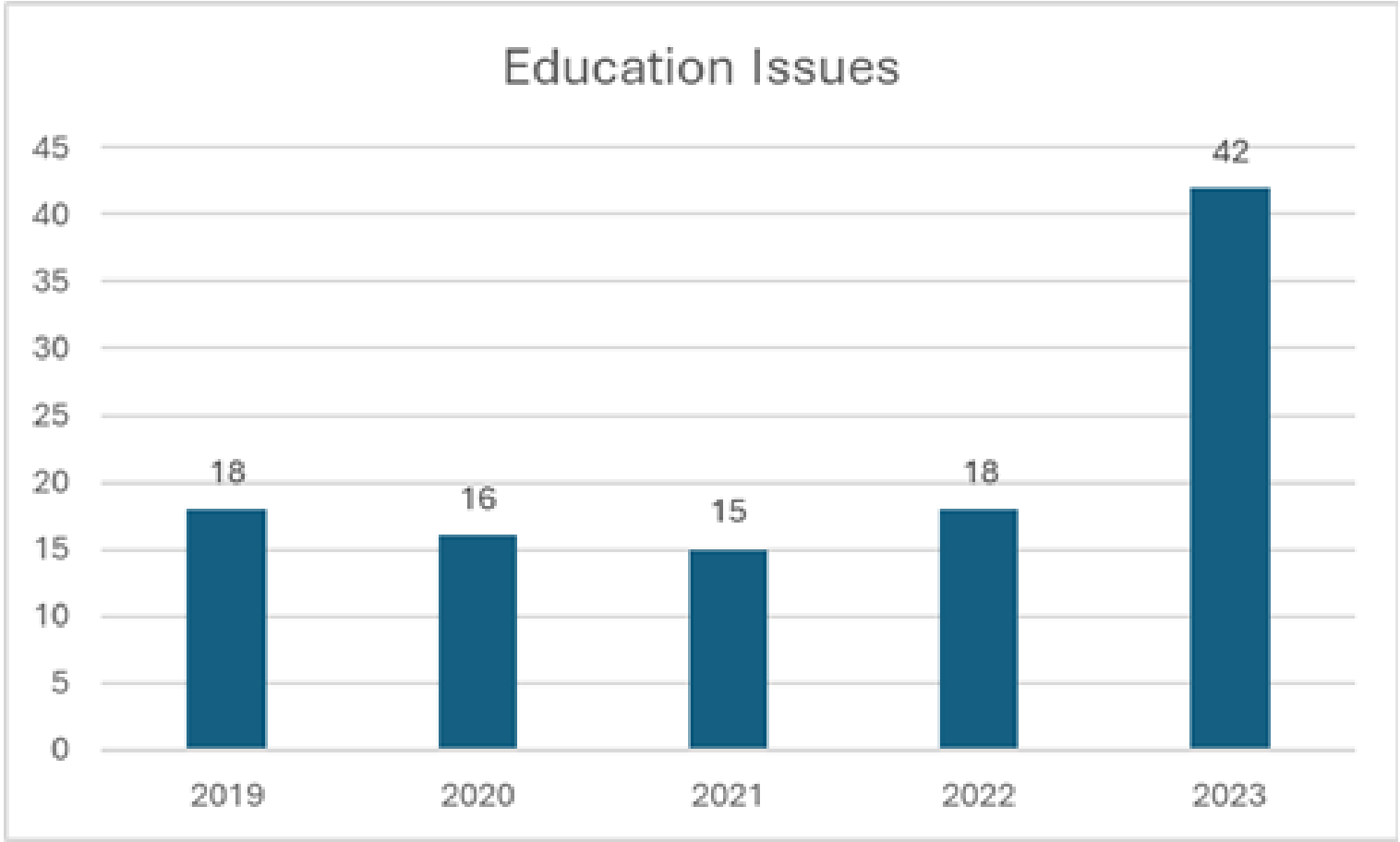
Youth Suicides

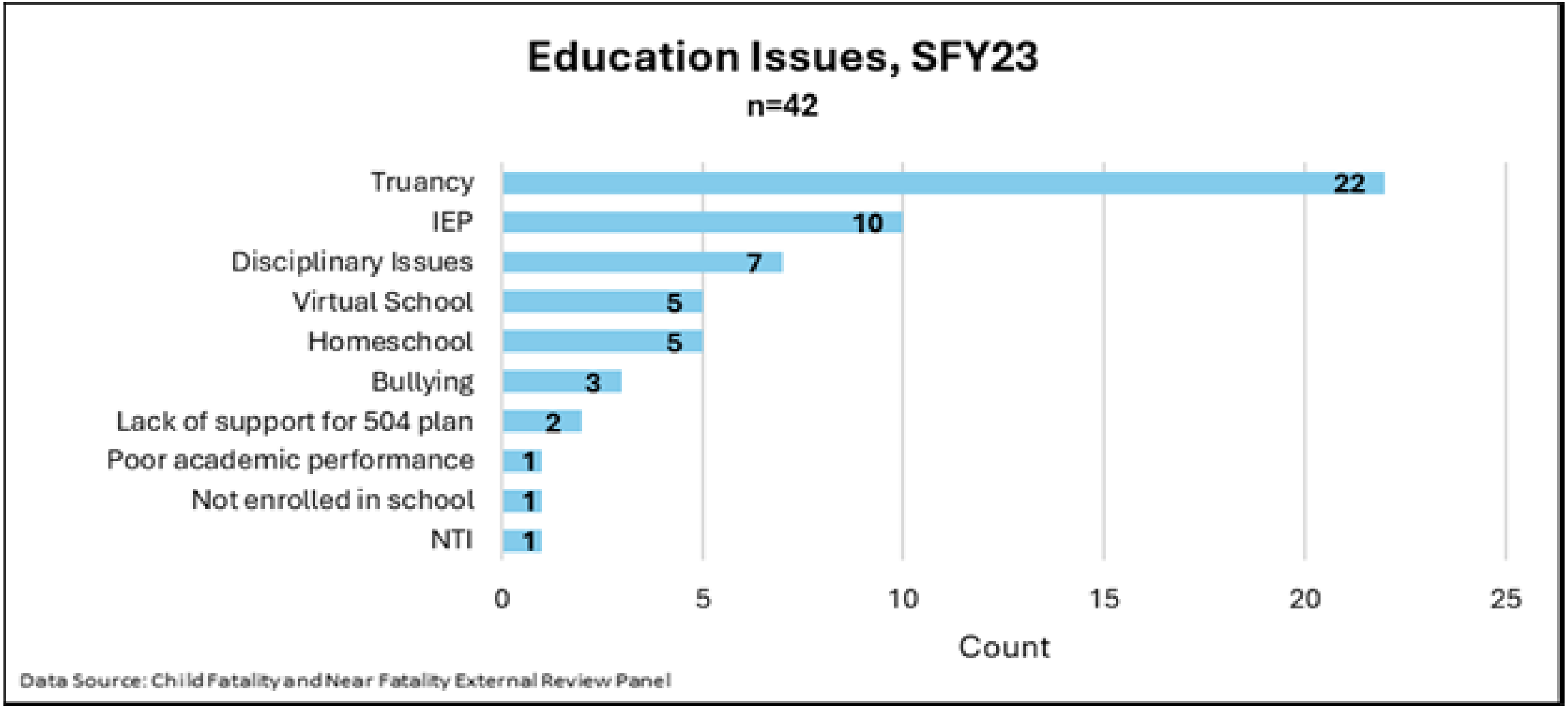


Youth Suicide Recommendation

The Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (DBHDID) and the Kentucky Department for Public Health should convene a workgroup to identify the resources required to fully implement the Psychological Autopsy throughout the state.

Educational Issues




Education Issues, SFY23
n=42
Truancy
IEP
Disciplinary Issues
Virtual School
Homeschool
Bullying
Lack of support for 504 plan
Poor academic performance
Not enrolled in school
NTI
22
10
7
5
5
3
2
1
1
1
0
5
10
15
20
25
Count
Data Source: Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel

Education Recommendation

- The Kentucky Department of Education should coordinate a presentation with the Panel regarding best practice standards for addressing truancy issues, and the use of virtual school or other non-traditional instructional formats, especially regarding high-risk children.

Questions

Thank you!