



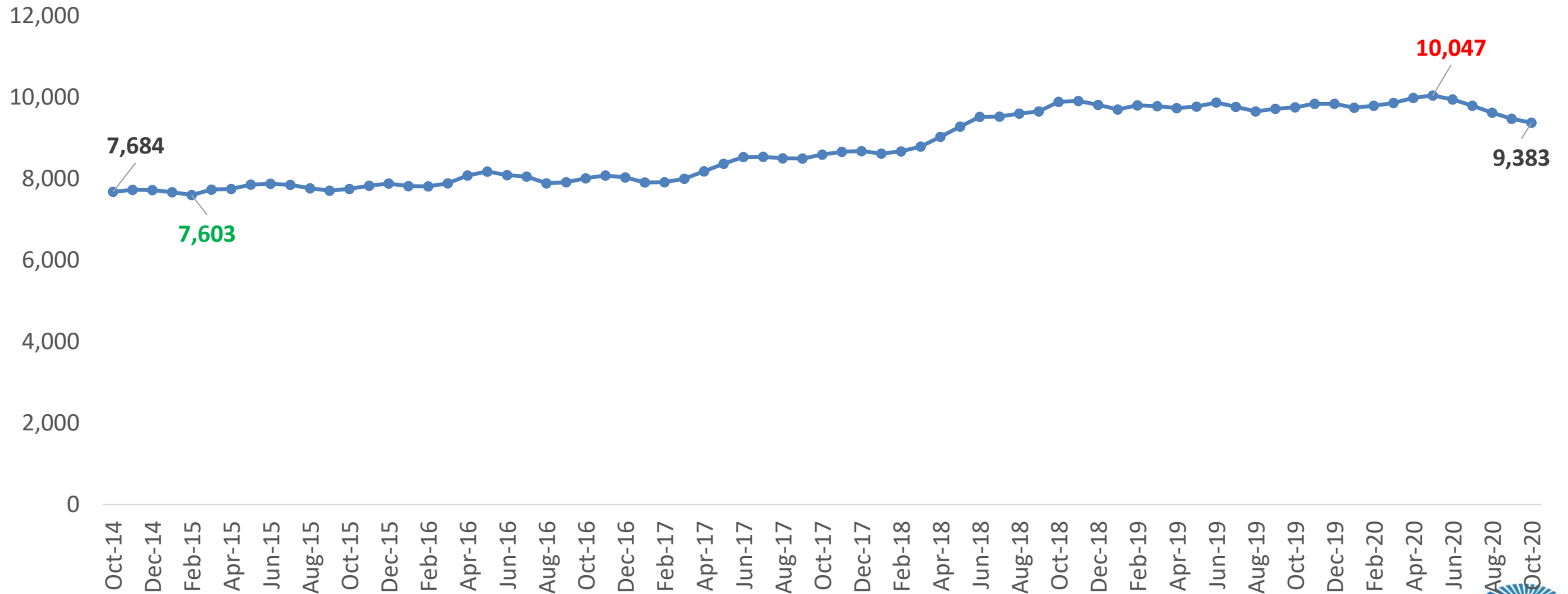
# Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century DCBS

**Interim Joint Committee on Health, Welfare, and Family Services  
Department for Community Based Services (DCBS)  
Commissioner Marta Miranda-Straub**

**December 15, 2020**

# Children in the Custody of or Committed to the Cabinet

October 2014 – October 2020



# DCBS Priorities for Youth in Out of Home Care

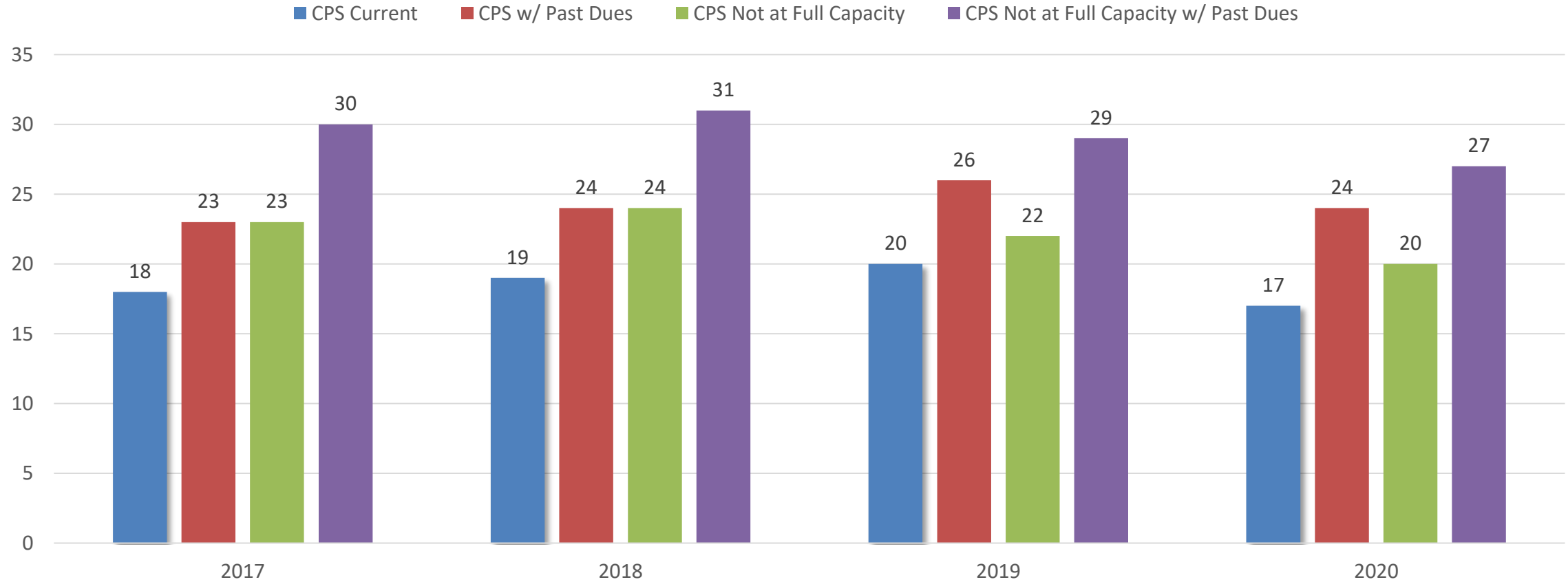
- Ensure that children are maintained safely in the least restrictive setting whenever possible.
- Children in out of home care receive quality services and achieve permanency timely.
- Improve services and outcomes for youth who transition from out of home care upon turning 18 (or 21 for youth who choose to extend commitment).

# Quality Services in Care

- Focus on placement stability.
- Ensuring children in care achieve permanency timely.
- DCBS continues to focus on recruitment and retention of qualified staff to maintain manageable caseloads.
- Quality service to children and families is dependent on valued, experienced staff.

# Average Child Protective Services Caseloads

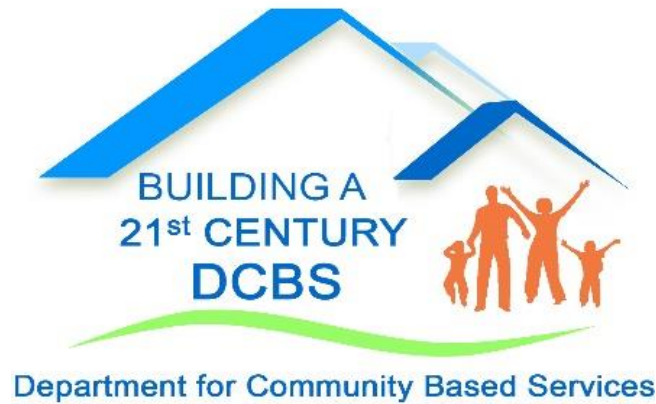
CY2017 – \*CY2020



\*CY2020 year to date Jan-Jul

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- Surveys were conducted of both staff and stakeholders:
  - 3,085 staff respondents
  - 820 stakeholder respondents
- Overwhelmingly positive response by both staff and stakeholders regarding use of virtual platforms and electronic means for all types of needs.
- Reduced time spent on travel and inclusion of those who otherwise might not be able to participate.
- Increased efficiency reported among staff working remotely.
- Increased work/life balance.
- Opportunities to decrease our brick and mortar footprint and improve efficiency.



**Designed within a culture of safety through the infusion of primary and secondary prevention initiatives**

- Phase I: Stabilization (6 months)**
- Phase II: Innovation (18 months)**
- Phase III: Thriving (3 year plan)**

The triple pandemics (COVID-19, racial inequity, and the opioid crisis) have created opportunity for meaningful, systemic, and structural agency change

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## The Five Pillars

- Equity: Social and Economic: Racial Disparities & Poverty: Economic Support
- **Trauma/Resilience and Engaged Healing: Clients and Staff**
- Families/Children/Youth
- Health and Wellness: Behavioral Health, Mental Health, and the Opioid Crisis
- Operations/Implementation and Evaluation: Systemic and Structural Changes



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## The Challenge

- Exposure to multiple traumatic events
- High risk positions
- Burn out, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue
- Secondary Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Quality of services is diminished
- Work capacity/retention/turnover
- Trauma triggers the desire to leave the work

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## Symptoms and Solutions

- Symptoms: depression, anxiety and panic, lack of sleep, hyper vigilance, mistrust, existential crisis, substance misuse, unhealthy coping skills
- Solution: immediate debriefing; time to recalibrate, decompress, and process; and ongoing support
- Solution: comprehensive self-care, individual and organizational policy process, and strong resilience building

# Current Staff Training

- Structured as a credit for learning approach which is based in academia
- Does not allow for full competency development and assessment before staff are assigned a caseload
- There is not an opportunity for staff to practice skills

# The Academy Courses and Key Topics

Child Sexual Abuse

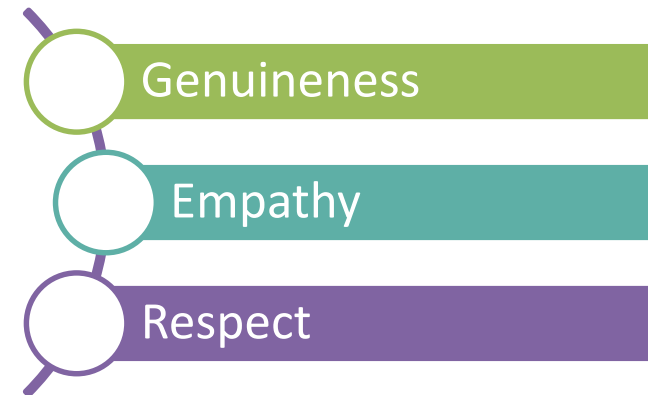
Child Protective Services

Introduction to Child Welfare, Parts 1-3

- Learn and practice engaging skills
- Self-care
- Cultural competence in context of child welfare case work
- Motivational interviewing
- Substance use
- Behavioral health screeners
- Medical indicators
- Intimate partner violence
- Trauma and mental health
- Assessment and Documentation Tool (ADT)
- Judicial proceedings
- Ethics

# Curriculum Design

- Designed to provide child welfare regional leadership with strategies and tools that support casework in the field
- Incorporation of online training
- Curriculum is:
  - Evidence-informed
  - Trauma-focused
  - Case-based



# DCBS Training Moving Forward

## DCBS Certification

- Competency-based training focusing on skill development
- Supports for new workers ensuring they know how to apply policy
- Certification program for supervisors/leadership

# The Child Welfare Trauma Training Toolkit

- Partnering with the University of Kentucky Center on Trauma and Children to offer new staff trainings in 2021
  - Supports caseworkers, supervisors, and all levels of child welfare workforce
  - Provides trauma-informed knowledge and skills
  - Will be offered for all regions
  - To be conducted virtually

# New Field Training Specialists Program

- Launching new program in 2021 to provide additional support to new employees through their Academy training
- Pairs new workers with Field Training Specialists to evaluate and coach the new worker on a daily basis
- Field Training Specialists are role models in the workplace – respected by management and peers, knowledgeable in best practices



# What is a Safety Model?

A safety model is a practice used in child welfare that assists workers and supervisors with making decisions regarding safety and risk throughout multiple points in the case.

## Safety model tools are a prompt for practice

 Tools do not make decisions

 People make decisions

 +  Tools help people make better decisions

# Questions?



For questions or information related to this presentation,  
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