



Foster Parent Retention

For additional information please contact Jill Yordy, Senior Policy Specialist, Children and Families Program, jill.yordy@ncsl.org

Factors Associated with Retention

Foster parent turnover rates are high across the nation, frequently reaching turnover rates of [30 to 50% each year](#). With the number of children in state custody each year [remaining high](#), foster parent retention is an important element of a well-functioning child welfare program. Legislative scrutiny over chronic issues faced within child welfare agencies and departments, such as high foster parent turnover, is a national trend NCSL has been observing recently and is part of a broader conversation about oversight, accountability and reform in pursuit of better outcomes for children experiencing neglect and abuse. NCSL has conducted a search for state statutes related to foster parent turnover or retention. Additionally, NCSL has identified several studies that explore factors related to foster parent turnover and retention.¹ A 2018 study from the Chapin Hall Center for State Child Welfare Data found that most foster home closures are due to personal changes for the foster family or because a foster home providing kinship care has the kinship care arrangement end. It is important to note that many studies conducted on foster parent retention have relatively small sample sizes and often focus on a single state. This point is addressed through a note about state data collection below. Additionally, few studies address causality which means that although the factors listed below have been found to be associated with foster parent retention, they may or may not be causal factors. Further research would be necessary to establish causality.

Family Factors Associated with Retention

- **Personal attributes of foster parent** – This factor includes qualitative traits and characteristics of foster parents that multiple studies found to be associated with higher retention rates. For example, a foster parent’s resilience skills, flexibility, empathy, and comfort with calling caseworkers when needed were all identified as traits associated with longer duration of fostering.

¹ Ahn, Greeno, Bright, Hartzel and Reiman. 2017. [A Survival Analysis of the Length of Foster Parenting Duration and Implications for Recruitment and Retention of Foster Parents](#). Children and Youth Services Review. 79. Pp. 478-484.
Chamberlain, Moreland and Reid. 1992. [Enhanced Service and Stipends for Foster Parents: Effects on Retention Rates and Outcomes for Children](#). Child Welfare.
Hanlon, Simon, Day, Vanderwill, Kim and Dallimore. 2021. [Systematic Review of Factors Affecting Foster Parent Retention](#). Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services. 102(3). Pp. 285-299.
Johnco, Salloum, Olson and Edwards. 2014. [Child Welfare Workers’ Perspectives on Contributing Factors to Retention and Turnover: Recommendations for Improvement](#). Children and Youth Services Review. 47(3). Pp. 397-407.
Leffler and Ahn. 2022. [Foster Parent Perspectives and Experiences with Public Child Welfare](#). Journal of Public Child Welfare. 16(2). Pp 233-248.
Wulczyn, Orlebeke, Hislop, Schmits, McClanahan and Huang. 2018. [The Dynamics of Foster Home Recruitment and Retention](#). The Center for State Child Welfare Data.

Compiled by the National Conference of State Legislatures, April 2022

Please note: links to external websites and reports are for informational purposes only and do not indicate NCSL’s endorsement of the content on those sites.



Foster Parent Retention

- **Foster parent age** – Several studies highlight that younger foster parents tend to have lower retention rates than those who begin fostering after the age of 30.
- **Foster parent educational attainment** – Foster parents with college degrees tend to have lower retention rates than those with lower educational attainment. The literature has speculated this may be due to higher availability of other employment and income opportunities associated with higher educational attainment.
- **Number of foster children the foster family has had** – Some foster families have multiple children placed in their home during their tenure in fostering while others have long periods of time with no placements. Foster parents with more placements or more time with placements than without had longer retention rates than foster parents with fewer placements or more time with no children placed in the home.
- **Foster parent marital status** – While some studies show that married couples who serve as foster parents are among the longest serving foster parents, generally married couples have lower retention rates than single foster parents. A majority of single foster parents are women.

Agency Factors Associated with Retention

While family factors drive a majority of foster parent decisions to stop fostering, agency factors have also been identified as significant in some studies.

- **Agency Staffing** – when caseworkers have manageable caseloads, more work experience and appropriate training, they provide the support necessary to help ensure smooth transitions for children into and out of foster homes. This contributes to positive rapport with foster families, a better experience for children in state care and retention of foster parents.
- **Availability of supportive services and material support** – Providing additional services, supports and trainings to foster parents has been associated with better retention rates. This can include things like peer support, increased compensation, easy access to counseling for youth in foster care or skills trainings for the foster parent both before and during placements.
- **Data Collection** – States vary widely in their level of attention to why foster parents choose to discontinue fostering and some reasons may be related to specific state or local practices that go under-recognized if these data aren't collected and analyzed. States can develop better foster parent retention plans by improving data collection to understanding of why foster parents in their states choose to discontinue fostering. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been used in research on foster parent retention and states can leverage both types of data in improving their understanding of why foster parents choose to discontinue fostering.

State Legislative Actions to Retain Foster Parents

NCSL identified 10 states with statutes specifically aimed at improving foster parent retention, several of which address retention related factors identified in research. These statutes are included in the table below.

Compiled by the National Conference of State Legislatures, April 2022

Please note: links to external websites and reports are for informational purposes only and do not indicate NCSL's endorsement of the content on those sites.



Foster Parent Retention

Related Resources

NCSL Resources

- [Supporting Foster Parents](#)
- A summary of [2019 Legislation](#) aimed at supporting foster parents.
- [How to Support Foster Families: FAQs for State Legislators](#)

External Resources

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General [2002 Report on Retaining Foster Parents](#)
- [CHAMPS Guide on Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention](#)
- [CHAMPS Research Highlights](#) provides an overview of research findings related to foster parent recruitment and retention specifically related to child well-being.

Below is a chart of state laws regarding foster parent retention.

State	State Statutes
Arkansas	<p>A.C.A. § 9-28-903</p> <p>Foster parents should be supported in the following manner:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Treated by the Division of Children and Family Services and other partners in the care of abused and neglected children with consideration, dignity, respect, and trust as a primary caregiver for foster children, including respect for the family values and routines of the foster parent; (2) Considered to be an integral member of the professional team caring for children in foster care; (3) Confidentiality regarding personal issues as provided by law and to be free from discrimination based on religion, race, color, creed, national origin, age, marital status, or physical handicap in matters concerning licensing approval; (4)(A) Provided training that will enhance the skills and ability to cope as foster parents. (B) The training shall include both standardized pre-service training and continuing education at least annually and at appropriate intervals, including without limitation the following purposes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) To meet mutually assessed needs of the children in foster care; (ii) To inform foster parents of their responsibilities and opportunities as foster parents; (iii) To assist in the understanding of and dealing with family loss and separation when a child in foster care is placed, as well as when a foster child leaves the foster parent's home; (iv) To be informed of and have access to in a timely manner and at least annually any changes in applicable laws, guidelines, policies, and procedures that may impact the role of foster parents; (v) To receive specific training on investigations of alleged child abuse or neglect in a foster home. The training shall include the rights of a foster parent during an investigation; and (vi) To receive information about and have access to local and statewide support groups, including without limitation local and statewide foster parent associations; (5) Provided contact information for the appropriate staff of the child placement agency in order to receive information and assistance to access supportive services for children in the foster parent's care;

Compiled by the National Conference of State Legislatures, April 2022

Please note: links to external websites and reports are for informational purposes only and do not indicate NCSL's endorsement of the content on those sites.



Foster Parent Retention

- (6) Granted access to services from the Division of Children and Family Services/Child Placement Agency twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week for assistance;
- (7) Provided all information regarding the foster child that will impact the foster parent's home or family life in order to provide assurance of safety of the foster parent's family during the care of the child in foster care;
- (8) Provided full disclosure of all medical, psychological, and behavioral issues of children in the foster parent's care;
- (9)(A) Informed prior to placement of all information regarding the child's behavior, background, health history, or other issues relative to the child that may jeopardize the health and safety of the foster family or alter the manner in which foster care should be provided.
- (B) In an emergency situation, the child placement agency shall provide information as soon as it is available;
- (10) Prior to placement, enabled to review and discuss written information concerning the child and to assist in determining if the child is a proper placement for the foster family;
- (11) The ability to refuse placement of a child in the foster home or to request, upon reasonable notice, the removal of a child from the foster home without fear of reprisal or any adverse effect on being assigned any future foster child or adoptive placements;
- (12) Receipt of any information through the Division of Children and Family Services/Child Placement Agency regarding the number of times a child in foster care has been moved and the reasons for those moves and, upon request and within legal guidelines or as provided by statute, to receive the names and phone numbers of the previous foster parents if the previous foster parents authorize such release;
- (13) Provided a clear, written explanation of the placement agency's plan concerning the placement of a child in the foster parent's home and to receive at any time during the placement any additional or necessary information that is relevant to the case of the child, including any subsequent revisions to the case plan on a timely basis;
- (14)(A) Permitted meaningful participation in the development of the case plan for the child in foster care in his or her home.
- (B) To accomplish this goal, the foster parents shall have:
 - (i) The opportunity to discuss the plan of the child in foster care with the case manager and the child welfare team and be provided with a written copy of the individual service and treatment plan concerning the child in foster care in the foster parent's home, as well as a reasonable notification of any changes to that plan;
 - (ii) The opportunity to participate in the planning of visitation with the child in foster care and his or her birth family;
 - (iii) The opportunity to participate in the case planning and decision-making process with the Division of Children and Family Services/Child Placement Agency regarding the child in foster care;
 - (iv) The opportunity to provide input concerning the plan of care for the child and to have that input considered by the Division of Children and Family Services/Child Placement Agency;
 - (v) The opportunity to communicate for the purpose of participating in the case planning for the child in foster care with other professionals who work with the child in foster care within the context of the professional team, including without limitation therapists, physicians, and teachers;
 - (vi) The opportunity to be notified of all scheduled meetings and staffings concerning the child in foster care in order to actively participate in the case planning and decision-making process



Foster Parent Retention

regarding the child in foster care, including individual service planning meetings, administrative case reviews, multidisciplinary staffings, and individual educational planning meetings;

(vii) The opportunity to be given, in a timely and consistent manner, any information a caseworker has regarding the child in foster care and the family of the child in foster care that is pertinent to the care and needs of the child in foster care and to the making of a permanency plan for the child in foster care; and

(viii) The opportunity to be given reasonable explanatory written notice of any changes in a case plan for the child in foster care, plans to terminate the placement of the child with the foster parent within fourteen (14) days, and the reasons for the change or termination in placement except in an immediate response to a child maltreatment investigation involving the foster home. The notice shall be waived only as provided for by law;

(15) Afforded the opportunity to be notified in advance by the division or the court of any hearing or review in which the case plan or permanency of the child in foster care is an issue, including periodic reviews held by the court, permanency hearings, and motions to extend custody;

(16) Afforded the opportunity to be notified and to be heard during any court proceeding regarding the child in foster care in the foster parent's home and to be informed of decisions made by the courts or the child welfare agency concerning the child in foster care;

(17) Afforded the opportunity to be considered as a permanency option for a foster child in their home and if in the best interest of the foster child, and to receive assistance in dealing with family loss and separation when a child in foster care leaves the foster parent's home;

(18) Granted the following considerations:

(A) Consideration when appropriate, as a preferential placement option when a child in foster care who was formerly placed with the foster parents has reentered the foster care system;

(B) Consideration for adoption when a child in foster care who has been placed in the foster home for a period of at least twelve (12) months becomes eligible for adoption to the extent it is in the best interest of the child in foster care; and

(C) Allowed to maintain contact with the child in foster care after the child leaves the foster home, unless the child in foster care, a birth parent, the division who retains custody of the child in foster care, or other foster or adoptive parent refuses such contact;

(19) Provided with a reasonable plan for relief from the role of foster parenting through the use of respite care services;

(20) Provided timely and adequate financial reimbursement according to the agreement between the foster parents and the Division of Children and Family Services/Child Placement Agency;

(21) Provided evaluation and feedback on his or her role as a foster parent;

(22) In the event of an alleged violation of policies, given the opportunity:

(A) To request and receive a fair and impartial review regarding decisions that affect approval and retention or placement of a foster child in the foster parent's home;

(B) To be provided a fair, timely, and impartial investigation of complaints concerning the operation of the foster home;

(C) To be provided an explanation of a corrective action plan or policy violation relating to the foster parents;

(D) To have child maltreatment allegations investigated in accordance with the Child Maltreatment Act, § 12-18-101 et seq. and any removal of a child in foster care shall be pursuant division policies and procedures; and

(E) To request and receive a review of decisions that affect approval of the foster home; and



Foster Parent Retention

	<p>(23) Provided information on policies and procedures for reporting of misconduct by division employees, service providers, or contractors, confidential handling of the reports, and investigation of the reports.</p>
California	<p>West's Ann.Cal.Welf. & Inst.Code § 16003.5 (a) Any state funding allocated to counties for the purpose of recruiting, retaining, and supporting foster parents, relative caregivers, and resource families shall be used to increase the capacity and use of home-based family care and the provision of services and supports to such caregivers. Allowable expenditures of those funds shall include, but not be limited to, and shall be used to supplement and not supplant, resources used by a county for any of the following purposes: (1) Staffing to provide and improve direct services and supports to licensed foster family homes, approved resource families, and relative caregivers, and to remove any barriers in those areas defined as priorities in the county implementation plan and subsequent reports on outcomes. (2) Exceptional child needs not covered by the caregiver-specific rate that would normalize the child's experience, stabilize the placement, or enhance the child's well-being. (3) Child care for licensed foster parents, approved resource families, and relative caregivers. (4) Intensive relative finding, engagement, and navigation efforts. (5) Emerging technological, evidence-informed, or other nontraditional approaches to outreach to potential foster family homes, resource families, and relatives.</p> <p>West's Ann.Cal.Welf. & Inst.Code § 11465.6 (f) Each participating county shall report to the department on an annual basis. The information to be reported to the department shall be determined by the department in consultation with the County Welfare Director's Association. At a minimum, the annual report shall include the number of foster parents claiming a child care reimbursement, the number of children served under this section, and an analysis of the impact of the child care reimbursement on the recruitment and retention of licensed foster home providers. The department shall provide the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature with a report of the use of child care pursuant to this section on or before June 30, 2003.</p>
Louisiana	<p>LSA-R.S. 46:2433 A. The functions of the task force shall include all of the following: (3) Examination of means and best practices to encourage recruitment and retention of foster parents and relative caretakers.</p>
Michigan	<p>M.C.L.A. 722.958 (4) The department may establish as pilot projects foster parent resource centers. Each resource center shall provide at least support for and coordination of respite care and assistance to foster parents in obtaining child care. Resource center staff shall pursue other activities designed to promote permanency for children, particularly children with special needs, such as support aimed at retaining foster parents. The department may fund the pilot foster parent resource centers using money appropriated to the department for the current fiscal year. After the pilot project has been in operation for 2 years, the department shall evaluate the pilot project on its organization, effectiveness, and success.</p>
Missouri	<p>V.A.M.S. 453.600 1. There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Foster Care and Adoptive Parents Recruitment and Retention Fund" which shall consist of all gifts, donations, transfers, and moneys appropriated</p>

Compiled by the National Conference of State Legislatures, April 2022

Please note: links to external websites and reports are for informational purposes only and do not indicate NCSL's endorsement of the content on those sites.



Foster Parent Retention

	<p>by the general assembly, and bequests to the fund. The fund shall maintain no more than the total of the last two years of funding or a minimum of three hundred thousand dollars, whichever is greater. The fund shall be administered by the Missouri state foster care and adoption board created in section 210.617.</p> <p>3. Upon appropriation, moneys in the fund shall be used to grant awards to licensed community-based foster care and adoption recruitment programs. The board shall establish guidelines for disbursement of the fund to certain programs. Such programs shall include, but not be limited to, recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families for children who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Have been in out-of-home placement for fifteen months or more; (2) Are more than twelve years of age; or (3) Are in sibling groups. <p>Moneys in the fund shall not be subject to appropriation for purposes other than those of evidence-based foster care and adoption programs as designated by the board.</p>
Oregon	<p>O.R.S. § 418.044</p> <p>(1) The Governor's Child Foster Care Advisory Commission shall advise the Governor, the Director of Human Services, the Director of the Oregon Health Authority and the Director of the Oregon Youth Authority, and make recommendations for legislation, regarding the foster care system in this state. In addition, the commission shall study and report to the Governor and the directors with respect to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) Necessary and recommended improvements to the internal operations of the department, including but not limited to the following: (D) Recruitment, training and retention of foster parents;
Rhode Island	<p>Gen.Laws 1956, § 42-72.10-1</p> <p>(a) The Rhode Island general assembly recognizes the importance of foster parents in the care and nurturing of children who are in the care and custody of the department of children, youth and families hereinafter ("the department"). In an effort to ensure that foster parents are treated with dignity, respect, and trust in their work for the department, a statement of foster parents' rights shall be given to every foster parent at each licensing interval and shall include the following rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The right to be treated with dignity, respect, and consideration as a member of the child-welfare-treatment team; (2) The right to be notified of and be given appropriate education and continuing education and training to develop and enhance foster-parenting skills; (3) The right to be informed about ways to contact the department to receive information and assistance to access supportive services for any child in the foster parent's care; (4) The right to receive timely financial reimbursement for providing foster-care services; (5) The right to be notified of any costs or expenses that may be eligible for reimbursement by the department; (6) The right to be provided a clear, written explanation of the individual treatment and service plan concerning the child in the foster parent's home; (7) The right to receive, at any time during which a child is placed with the foster parent, additional or necessary information that the department has that may be relevant to the care of the child; (8) The right to be notified of scheduled review meetings, permanency-planning meetings, and special staffing concerning the foster child in order to actively participate in the case planning and decision-making process regarding the child;



Foster Parent Retention

	<p>(9) The right to provide input concerning individual treatment and the services plan for the child and to have that input be given respect and consideration in the same manner as information presented by any other member of the treatment team;</p> <p>(10) The right to communicate with other professionals who work with the foster child within the context of the treatment team, including, but not limited to, therapists, physicians, and teachers;</p> <p>(11) The right to be given, in a timely and consistent manner, information, as allowed by law, regarding the child and the child's family that is pertinent to the care and needs of the child and to the development of a permanency plan for the child;</p> <p>(12) The right to be given reasonable notice of any change in, or addition to, the services provided to the child pursuant to the child's individual treatment and service plan;</p> <p>(13) The right to be given written notice, except in emergency circumstances, of the following:</p> <p>(i) Plans to terminate the placement of the child with the foster parent; and</p> <p>(ii) The reasons for the changes or termination of the placement;</p> <p>(14) The right to be notified by the department of court proceedings, to attend hearings and reviews, and to present oral or written reports to the court pursuant to § 14-1-30.2;</p> <p>(15) The right to be considered as a preferred-placement option if a foster child who was formerly placed with the foster parent is to reenter foster care at the same level and type of care; provided that placement is consistent with the best interest of the child and other children in the home of the foster parent and, in the case of a child age twelve (12) or older, that child wants to return to the foster parent;</p> <p>(16) The right to be provided a fair, timely, and impartial investigation of complaints concerning the licensing of the foster parent;</p> <p>(17) The right to be provided the opportunity to request and receive a fair and impartial hearing regarding decisions that affect licensing retention;</p> <p>(18) The right to provide or withhold permission, without prior approval of the caseworker, department, educational advocate, or court, to allow a child in his or her care to participate in normal childhood activities based on a reasonable and prudent parent standard in accordance with the provisions of Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. The reasonable and prudent parent standard means the standard of care used in determining whether a foster parent(s) can allow a child in his or her care to participate in educational field trips, extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities. This standard is characterized by careful and thoughtful parental decision-making that is intended to maintain a child's health, safety, and best interest while encouraging the child's social, emotional, and developmental growth;</p> <p>(19) The right to have timely access to the appeals process of the department and the right to be free from acts of harassment and retaliation by any other party when exercising the right to appeal; and</p> <p>(20) The right to file a grievance and be informed of the process for filing a grievance.</p> <p>(b) The department shall be responsible for implementing the provisions of this section.</p>
Texas	<p>V.T.C.A., Family Code § 264.113</p> <p>(b) The department shall develop a program to recruit and retain foster parents from faith-based organizations. As part of the program, the department shall:</p> <p>(1) collaborate with faith-based organizations to inform prospective foster parents about the department's need for foster parents, the requirements for becoming a foster parent, and any other aspect of the foster care program that is necessary to recruit foster parents;</p> <p>(2) provide training for prospective foster parents recruited under this section; and</p>



Foster Parent Retention

	<p>(3) identify and recommend ways in which faith-based organizations may support persons as they are recruited, are trained, and serve as foster parents.</p> <p>(c) The department shall work with OneStar Foundation to expand the program described by Subsection (b) to increase the number of foster families available for the department and its private providers. In cooperation with the department, OneStar Foundation may provide training and technical assistance to establish networks and services in faith-based organizations based on best practices for supporting prospective and current foster families.</p> <p>(d) The department shall work with the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services to recruit foster parents and adoptive parents who have skills, training, or experience suitable to care for children with hearing impairments.</p>
Virginia	<p>VA Code Ann. § 63.2-913.1</p> <p>The Department shall, pursuant to Board regulations, establish a caseload standard that limits the amount of foster care cases that may be assigned to each foster care caseworker. Such caseload standard shall be reviewed and updated, as appropriate, annually on the basis of the time and work necessary to effectively manage each foster care case.</p> <p>VA Code Ann. § 63.2-904.2</p> <p>The Commissioner shall establish and maintain mechanisms to receive reports and complaints from foster parents, interested stakeholders, and other citizens of the Commonwealth regarding violations of laws or regulations applicable to foster care and any other matters affecting the health, safety, or well-being of children in foster care. Such mechanisms shall include establishing a statewide, toll-free hotline to be administered by the Department; publicizing the existence of such hotline; and enhancing electronic communication with the Department for the receipt of reports or complaints. Reports and complaints received through the foster care hotline or other mechanisms established pursuant to this section shall be investigated pursuant to Board regulations. All information received or maintained by the Department in connection with such reports, complaints, or investigations shall be confidential and not subject to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.), except that such information may be relayed and used on a confidential basis pursuant to Board regulations for the purposes of investigation and to protect the health, safety, and well-being of children in foster care.</p>
Washington	<p>RCWA 74.13.650</p> <p>A foster parent critical support and retention program is established to retain foster parents who care for sexually reactive children, physically assaultive children, or children with other high-risk behaviors, as defined in RCW 74.13.280. Services shall consist of short-term therapeutic and educational interventions to support the stability of the placement. The department shall enter into performance-based contracts with agencies to provide this program.</p> <p>RCWA 74.13.660</p> <p>Under the foster parent critical support and retention program, foster parents who care for sexually reactive children, physically assaultive children, or children with other high-risk behaviors, as defined in RCW 74.13.280, shall receive:</p> <p>(1) Availability at any time of the day or night to address specific concerns related to the identified child;</p>



Foster Parent Retention

- (2) Assessment of risk and development of a safety and supervision plan;
- (3) Home-based foster parent training utilizing evidence-based models; and
- (4) Referral to relevant community services and training provided by the local department office or community agencies.

RCWA 74.13.270

(1) The legislature recognizes the need for temporary short-term relief for foster parents who care for children with emotional, mental, or physical disabilities. For purposes of this section, respite care means appropriate, temporary, short-term care for these foster children placed with licensed foster parents. The purpose of this care is to give the foster parents temporary relief from the stresses associated with the care of these foster children. The department shall design a program of respite care that will minimize disruptions to the child and will serve foster parents within these priorities, based on input from foster parents, foster parent associations, and reliable research if available.

(2)(b) (b) Subject to funding appropriated specifically for this purpose, the Washington state institute for public policy shall prepare an outcome evaluation of the short-term support described in this subsection. The evaluation will, to the maximum extent possible, assess the impact of the short-term support services described in this subsection on the retention of foster homes and the number of placements a foster child receives while in out-of-home care as well as the return on investment to the state. The institute shall submit a preliminary report to the appropriate committees of the legislature and the governor by December 1, 2018, that describes the initial implementation of these services and descriptive statistics of the families utilizing these services. A final report shall be submitted to the appropriate committees of the legislature by June 30, 2021. At no cost to the institute, the department shall provide all data necessary to discharge this duty.

RWCA 74.13.110

(1) The department of children, youth, and families contracted services performance improvement account is created in the state treasury. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Moneys in the account may be expended solely to improve contracted services provided to clients under the agency's program areas, including child welfare, early learning, family support, and adolescents, to support (a) achieving permanency for children; (b) improving foster home retention and stability of placements; (c) improving and increasing placement options for youth in out-of-home care; (d) preventing out-of-home placement; and (e) achieving additional, measurable department of children, youth, and families outcome goals adopted by the department.