

How does Utah achieve permanency?

Kevin Jackson, assistant director

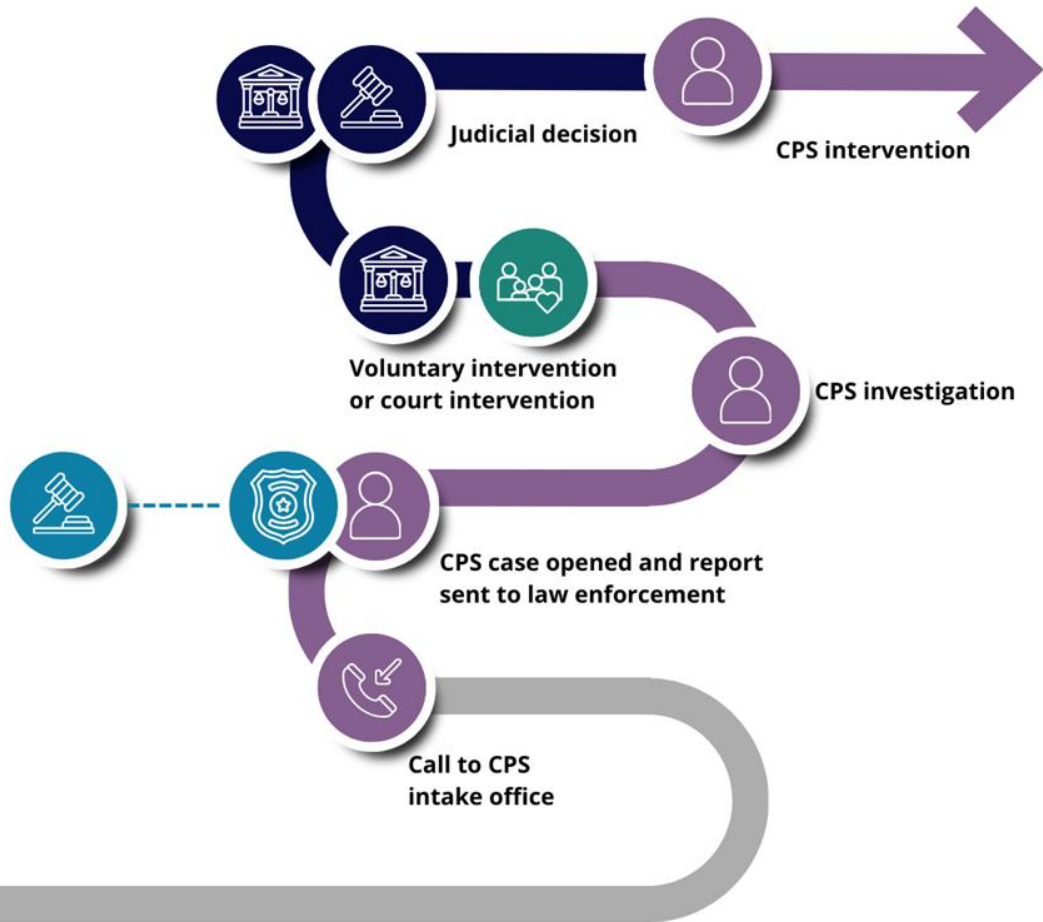
Utah Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS)

Our goal is to prevent abuse
and help families stay together
when it's safe to do so.



Child Protective Services process overview

-  Family
-  DCFS
-  Law enforcement
-  Criminal justice system
-  Office of attorney general
-  Juvenile court judge



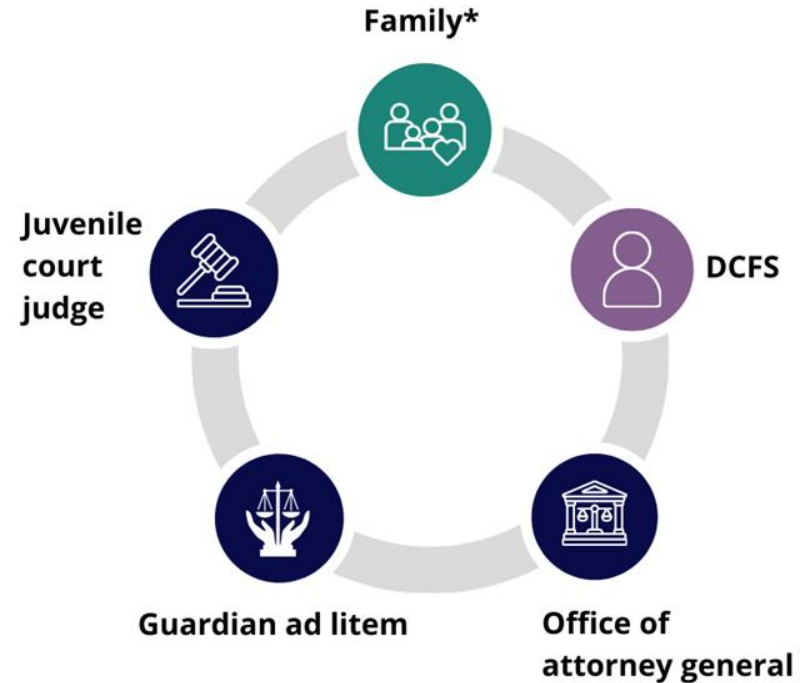
It is our responsibility to work together and design a system that serves and strengthens all children and families.



Achieving permanency

judicial process overview

Once a child has been placed in DCFS care all 5 parties work together to achieve a permanent home. However, the ultimate decision lies with the judge.



*Parents are entitled to parental defense.

Moving to permanency

Utah Legislation understands the importance of children moving to permanency and supports our practice through statute.

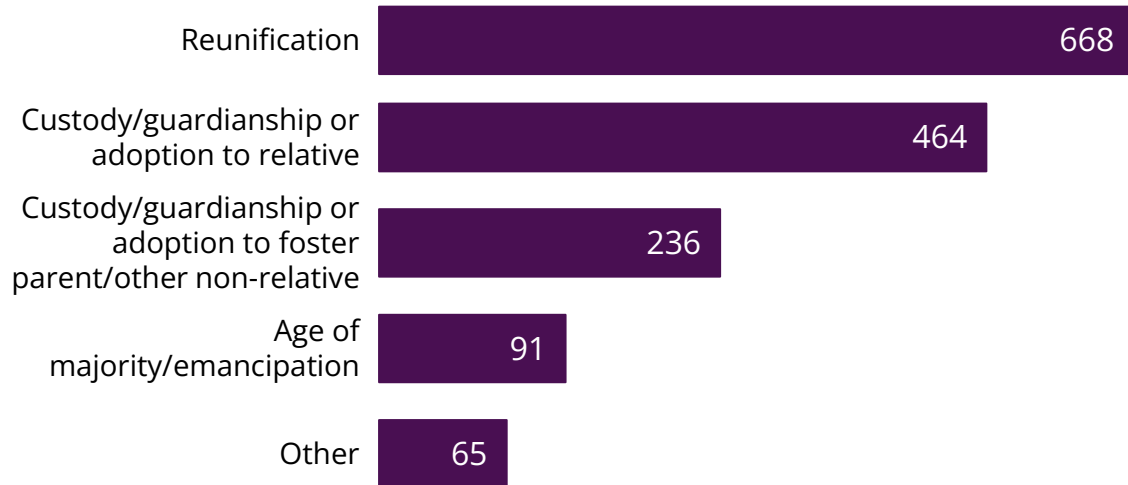
The language in Utah State Code 80-2a-201 promotes:

- Reunification
- Concurrent permanency planning
- Prioritizing kin



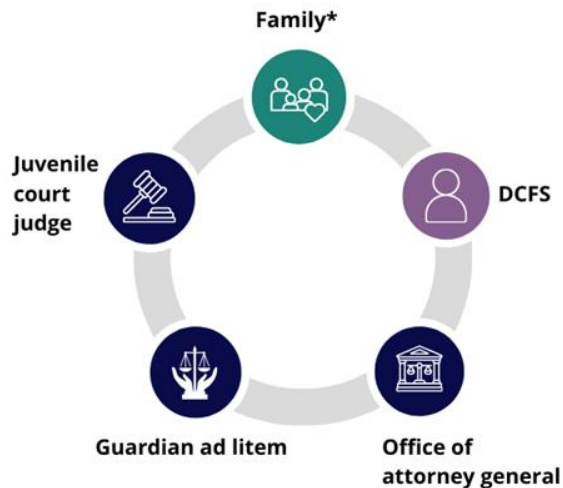
Reasons children left foster care during FY 2023

74.2% of children were reunited with their family or adopted through kinship

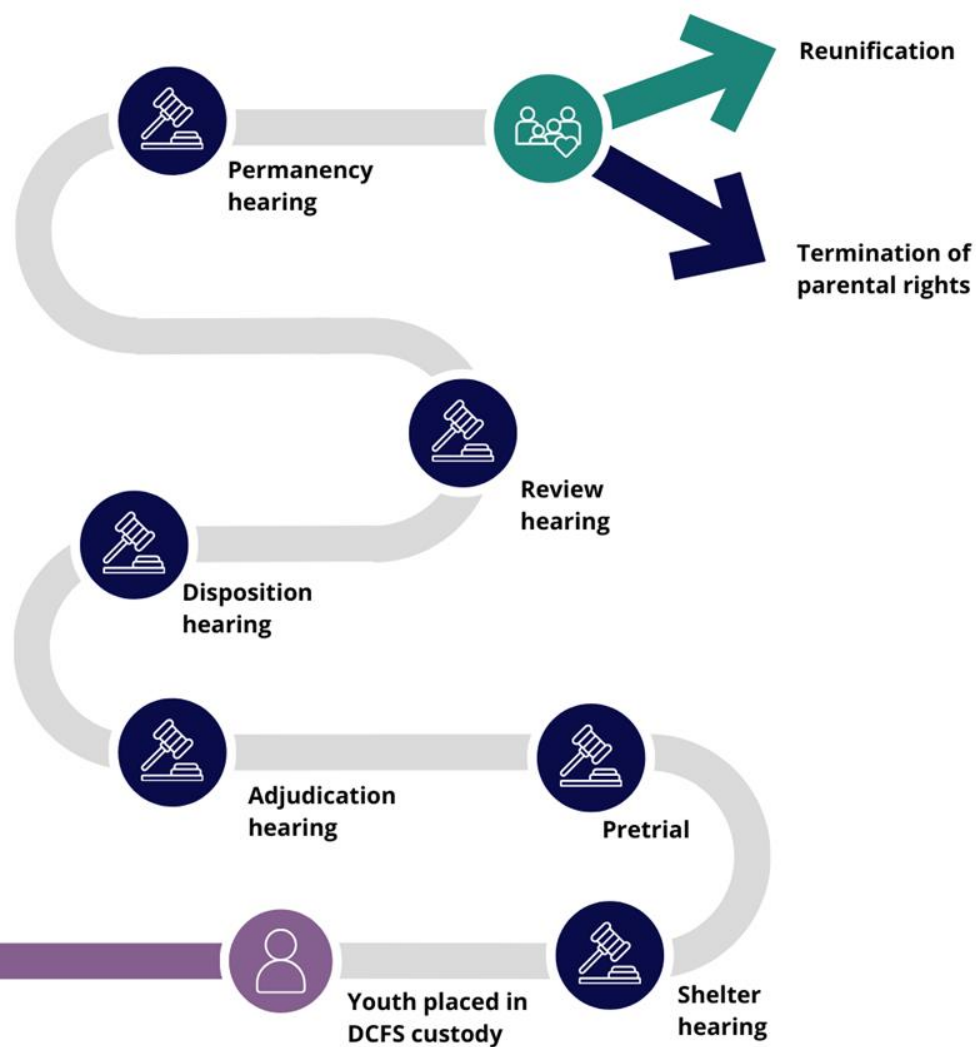


Achieving permanency

judicial process overview



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SFYs 2020, 2021, and 2022 timeliness of hearing completion

Hearing type	Statutory deadline	Percent compliant			Percent compliant within 15 days after benchmark			Percent compliant within 30 days after benchmark		
		2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
Shelter	3 days	99.8	98	99	99.8	98	100	100	100	100
Child welfare proceeding pretrial	15 days	97	96	96	97	96	100	100	100	100
Child welfare proceeding adjudication	60 days	96	89	90	96	89	93	99	96	95
Child welfare proceeding adjudication	30 days	96	93	95	96	93	98	99	100	99
No reunification to permanency hearing	30 days	98	94	97	98	94	98	98	97	98
Permanency hearing	12 mos.	90	88	96	90	88	98	96	93	99
Termination pretrial	45 days	78	64	74	78	64	83	88	83	88
Removal to decision on petition to terminate	18 mos.	85	71	70	85	71	75	89	75	77
PSS pretrial	15 days	98	98	98	98	98	100	100	100	100
PSS adjudication	60 days	90	89	83	95	95	90	98	96	93

Concurrent planning

Concurrent planning is held to high expectations in statute and practice.

Permanency goals and concurrent planning include:

- Reunification
- Adoption
- Guardianship (relative)
- Guardianship (non-relative)
- Individualized permanency



Partnership with the courts

DCFS has a close partnership with the juvenile courts and participates in collaborative efforts to make sure missions align and great work continues.

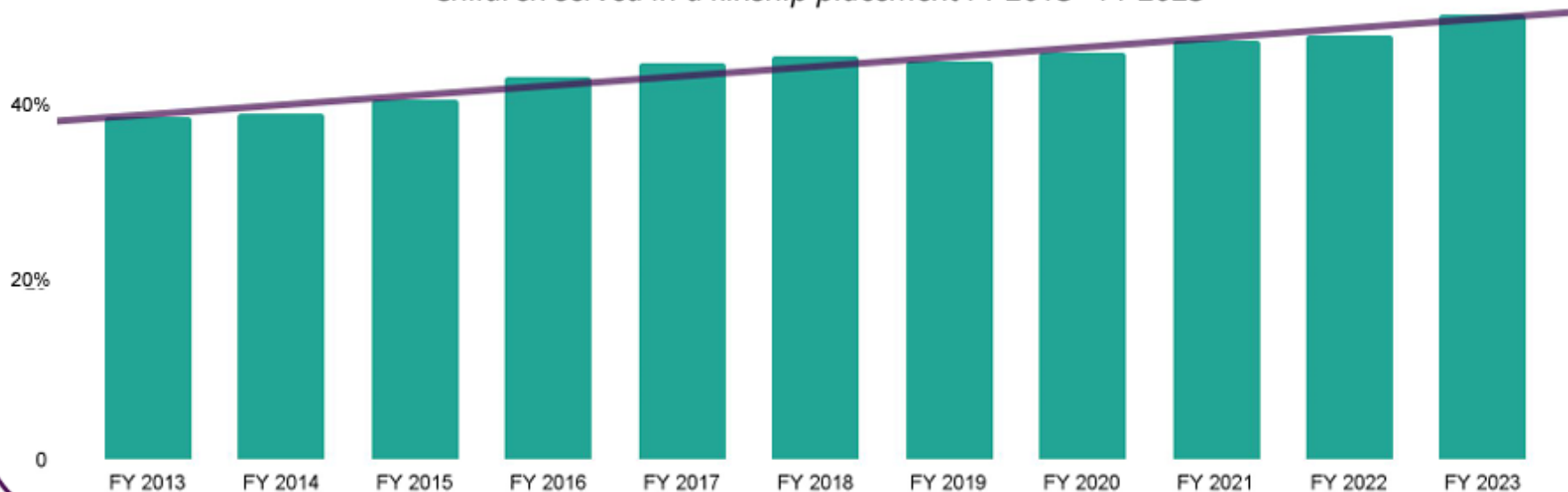
- Court improvement program (CIP)
- Quality hearing bench card



Emphasis on kinship

Kinship placements continue to increase

Children served in a kinship placement FY 2013 - FY 2023



Emphasis on kinship

Research shows that placing an emphasis on kin from the start leads to improved outcomes once a family is involved with the child welfare system.

- Family action meetings (FAM)
- Parent-child substance use treatment programs



Ongoing efforts for complex youth

Despite current efforts to move youth out of the foster care system by 12 months, DCFS does experience trouble at times with finding permanency for youth with complex needs.

- Child in care 24+
- Wendy's Wonderful Kids
- Raise the Future



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