

A Home for Every Child: Refocusing the Nation’s Child Welfare System

Alex J. Adams

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is now centering its collective urgency on increasing the ratio of foster homes to foster children.

Most important, the ACF is giving states a historic opportunity to pivot their required Program Improvement Plans to incorporate the foster-home-to-foster-kid ratio.

The ACF’s goal is to refocus states on actions that improve both sides of this equation: decreasing the number of kids in foster care and increasing foster homes.

One number cannot fix the child welfare system—but it can help to refocus the system’s goals. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is centering its collective urgency on the ratio of foster homes to foster children to improve child welfare outcomes and shift away from compliance-driven activity.¹ When I was Assistant Secretary for Family Support at the ACF, the department launched A Home for Every Child, an initiative which, at its core, aims to ask a straightforward but essential question: Are foster homes waiting for children, or are foster children waiting for homes? It also gives states an opportunity to improve both sides of the ratio by:

1. Responsibly increasing the number of foster homes through recruitment and retention to boost the numerator; and

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at <https://report.heritage.org/bg3959>

The Heritage Foundation | 214 Massachusetts Avenue, NE | Washington, DC 20002 | (202) 546-4400 | heritage.org

Nothing written here is to be construed as necessarily reflecting the views of The Heritage Foundation or as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any bill before Congress.

2. Responsibly reducing entries into foster care and reducing the length of stay for those already in care to reduce the denominator.

As one observer noted about this initiative: “This is capacity planning in its most practical form: define the supply you need, understand the demand you face, and manage both deliberately rather than through crisis response.”²

A Home for Every Child builds on my experience managing Idaho’s child welfare system during one of the most challenging eras in the program’s history. I saw firsthand how a single, unifying measure re-channeled the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare’s (DHW) energy into productive, measurable, child-centered work and, in so doing, expanded the ratio of foster homes from 74 to 104 homes per 100 kids in less than 15 months.³ It allowed the DHW to better manage capacity needs rather than reacting through emergency placements.

In this *Backgrounder*, I explain why Idaho selected this ratio as its compass, how early improvements were achieved, and why the ACF is now elevating the measure nationally to help participating states to strengthen families and to improve child welfare outcomes.

The Problem States Are Facing

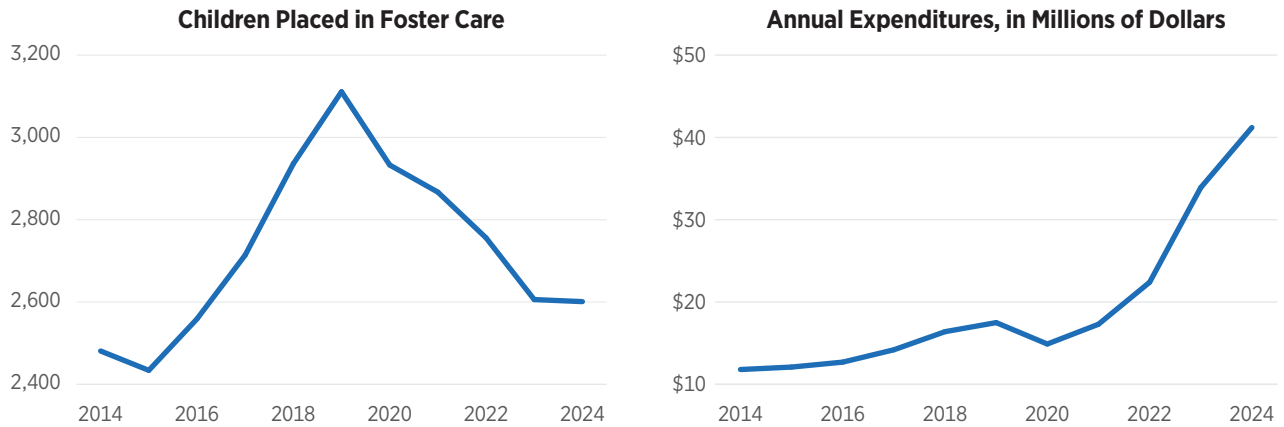
When I became Idaho’s child welfare leader, the landscape looked similar to what many state administrators face today. Idaho’s legislative oversight body had recently issued three detailed and often critical reports.⁴ These reports identified inconsistent practices and growing frustration among families and other child-welfare stakeholders. In response, the legislature convened an oversight committee and held hours of emotional public testimony—stories from biological parents, foster parents, relatives, and former foster youth.⁵ The state established an ombudsman’s office, and the media spotlight intensified.⁶

Before I stepped into the role, I had sat with dozens of people who had experienced the system in different ways—biological parents who felt unheard, foster parents exhausted from burnout, former foster youth carrying memories that should have been prevented, advocates from child-serving nonprofits, legislators who had championed reforms, specialized attorneys, and representatives from Citizen Review Panels and the Children At-Risk Task Force. Everyone saw pieces of the problem. Everyone cared deeply. But when I asked this question—“If you could fix one or two things first, what would they be?”—I got as many answers as people I asked.

All their concerns could fit into a Venn diagram. At the center sat the best interest of the child. But the outer rings were overwhelming: workforce

CHART 1

Idaho Children Served and Child Welfare Expenditures



SOURCE: Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, “Facts, Figures, and Trends,” <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/about-dhw/facts-figures-and-trends> (accessed April 15, 2026).

BG3959 heritage.org

issues, inconsistent court practices, training gaps, prevention needs, foster home shortages, budget pressures, unsustainable caseloads, congregate care challenges, and concerns about transparency and communication. Every thread mattered, and every thread felt urgent. But knowing where to start was a challenge.

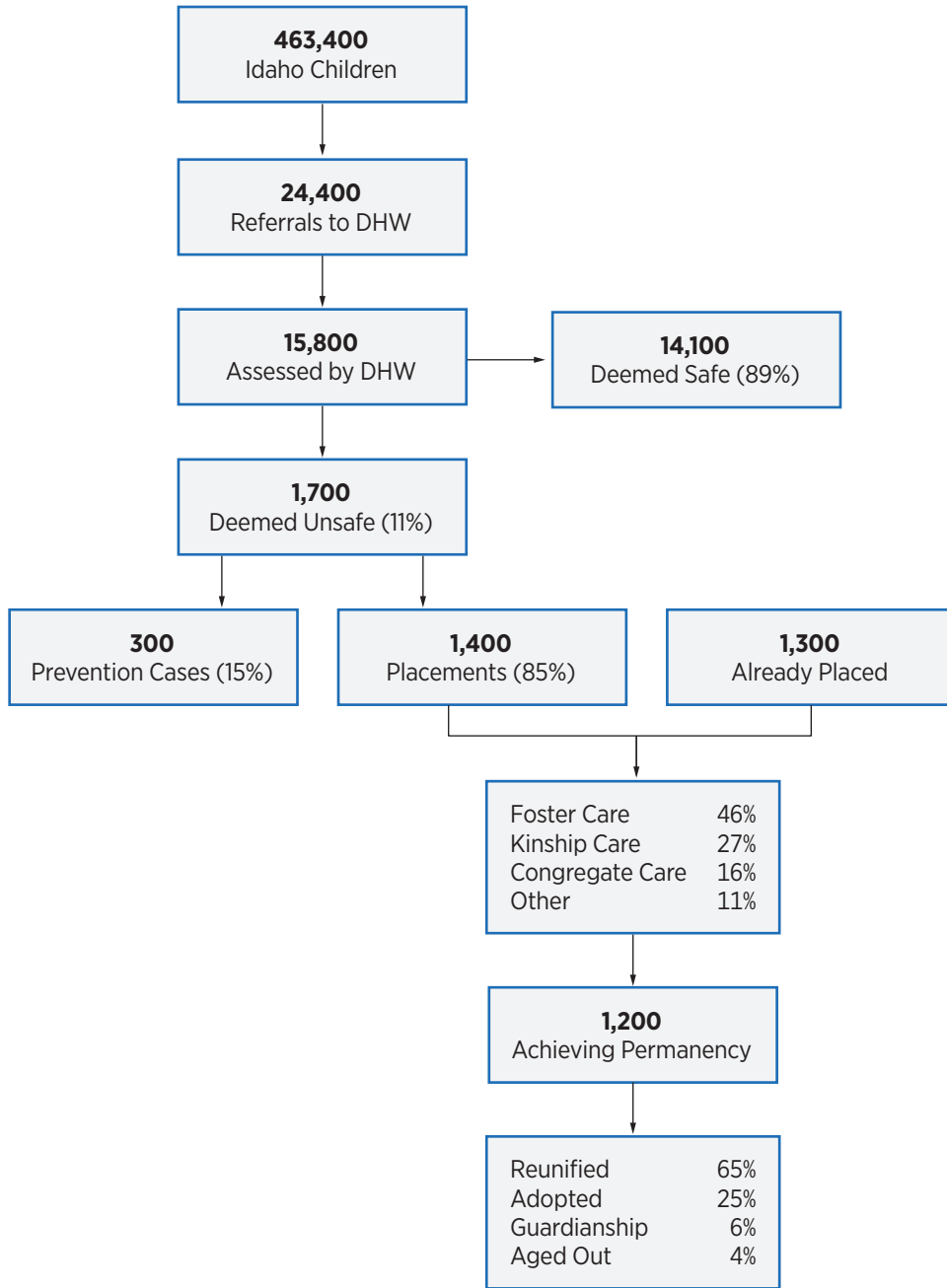
Meanwhile, the system was buckling under pressure. Like many states, Idaho experienced a steep decline in both foster homes and in-state congregate care capacity post-COVID-19 and following the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act. With fewer placement options, children were sleeping in offices and short-term rentals—situations that are expensive, unsustainable, and harmful to children.⁷

Costs soared. Child welfare spending correlated closely with caseload through 2020, but then per-child costs escalated dramatically, driven by out-of-state congregate care placements and reliance on costly emergency placements, such as short-term rentals. (See Chart 1.) DHW leadership stood before the legislature each year requesting supplemental appropriations to keep the system afloat, with costs increasing annually from \$1.5 million in 2022 to \$14.1 million in 2025.⁸

These were not abstract policy problems. They were daily realities—constant triage, a sense of firefighting rather than forward motion, and a workforce stretched beyond its limits.

FIGURE 1

The Child Welfare Journey in Idaho



SOURCE: Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, “Child Welfare Overview,” https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/sessioninfo/2025/standingcommittees/250129_sh&w_0300PM-Minutes_Attachment_1.pdf (accessed April 15, 2026).

A Framework for Focus

To cut through the noise, Idaho DHW embraced the Four Disciplines of Execution (4DX) framework, a strategic model used across sectors to identify and execute on a “Wildly Important Goal.” The principle is simple: If you prioritize everything, you prioritize nothing. Focus creates traction. Traction builds progress. Progress builds trust.

The DHW leadership team went back to basics and began mapping the entire child welfare journey, from hotline call, to assessment, to the decision between prevention services or placement, through to permanency. (See Figure 1.)

This mapping surfaced three primary levers that drive both cost and outcomes:

1. The Front Door. The DHW does not directly control who enters foster care—courts ultimately make that determination—but agencies influence it through thorough safety assessments, clear communication with the courts, and robust prevention capacity. Provision of strong prevention services can shift children from placement to in-home support when safety allows.

2. Length of Stay. How long children remain in foster care has profound implications. Shorter stays, when safely achieved through timely reunification or adoption or guardianship, can reduce trauma and reduce cost. Long stays often indicate system strain or ineffective court practices, where appropriate services are either inaccessible or take too long to access and fail to meet safety needs.

3. Placement Decision. In child welfare, better outcomes and better budgets are aligned. (See Table 1.) When a child can remain *safely* at home, the impact is positive across every dimension. When remaining home is not safe, kinship care generally produces better stability, continuity, and outcomes than does non-relative care. Congregate care must remain an exception, used only when clinically necessary and for the shortest duration necessary.

Stabilization Through Optimization

While long-term benefits, such as reduced risks of incarceration and homelessness, are substantial, it is not necessary to factor these in to demonstrate cost stabilization. Preventive services alone yield significant savings: For every 100 children kept out of Idaho foster care, the state saves approximately \$518,300 per year, based solely on the difference in average annual costs between prevention and foster care placements, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Idaho Costs per Setting for Foster Children in 2024

Placement Type	Average Daily Rate	Average Annual Cost
Prevention (in-home)	\$1.80	\$657
Foster/Kinship Care	\$16	\$5,840
Congregate Care	\$385	\$140,525

SOURCE: Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, "Child Welfare Overview," https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/sessioninfo/2025/standingcommittees/250129_sh&w_0300PM-Minutes_Attachment_1.pdf (accessed April 15, 2026).

BG3959  heritage.org

Prevention also frees up existing foster home capacity. If this newly available capacity enables even a portion of children in congregate care to move safely into appropriate foster homes, the financial impact is even greater: Every 10 children in Idaho who make this transition generate \$1.3 million in annual savings. (See Table 1.)

These insights helped the DHW to articulate three mantras that guided Idaho's reform:

1. "Flip the script." In recent years, roughly 85 percent of children in the child welfare system were removed from their homes and placed with kin or non-relatives, in congregate care, or other settings, and only 15 percent were in prevention cases in which they remained in their homes. DHW leadership believed that this ratio could be reversed and more children could be kept safely in their own homes with appropriate support.
2. "Right kid, right place, right time." No child should be placed in a setting simply because it is the only available option.
3. "Create a flywheel effect." Effective prevention frees foster homes; freed foster homes reduce reliance on congregate care; reduced congregate care frees dollars for more re-investment in front-end prevention.

But the child welfare department still needed a single, unifying benchmark that every staff member could understand and influence.

The department chose the ratio of foster homes to foster children.

TABLE 2

Strategies Idaho Adopted to Bolster Foster Home Capacity (Page 1 of 2)

Strategy	Tactic	Description
Recruitment	Updated foster care licensure standards for non-relatives to national model ^a	Aligned state licensing rules with national model standards to improve clarity and consistency. Removed subjective or outdated criteria, such as assessing “harmonious home life” or requiring unnecessary physical features like 4-foot fencing, that added barriers without improving safety.
	Fast-tracked re-licensure of prior foster families	Enabled previously licensed foster families in good standing to reinstate their license through an expedited process rather than restarting the full application.
	Fast-tracked out-of-state licensees	Recognized prior licensure from other states, which was important for Idaho’s rapidly growing population, and allowed experienced foster parents to become licensed in Idaho without repeating full onboarding steps.
	“Speed kills” approach to licensure applications	Shifted agency expectations from responding to new applications within 30 days to responding within 1 day. Increased licensing unit staffing levels to sustain rapid turnaround times.
	Created kin-specific licensure ^b	Implemented a streamlined licensing track for kinship caregivers that mirrors national kin-specific standards and removes requirements irrelevant to kin placements.
	Improved software to identify kin	Invested in multiple technology tools to more quickly and accurately identify relatives and fictive kin for children entering care, improving placement options and reducing reliance on non-relative homes.
	PR Campaign	Launched a statewide, multi-platform recruitment campaign (billboards, yard signs, social media) to increase public awareness and attract new foster families.
	Paid Family Leave ^c	Updated state paid family leave policies so fostering receives the same benefits as birth or adoption. Encouraged private employers to adopt similar inclusive leave policies.
	Conversation starters	Expanded public-private partnerships to create “earned media” moments that spark community conversation about fostering. These included free state park passes or fishing licenses for foster families, free career technical education courses, or free sporting events. ^{d-h} This effort has positive benefits on retention as well.
	Faith-based outreach	Established a dedicated office for faith-based initiatives to build partnerships with houses of worship and support their engagement in foster parent recruitment.
Retention	Better engaged foster parents in case planning	Adopted a Foster Parent Bill of Rights to clarify expectations for communication, involvement in case planning, transparency, and processes for raising concerns or appealing decisions. ⁱ
	Improved foster care maintenance payments	Increased monthly reimbursement rates by an average of 5% to better align with the actual costs of caring for children (e.g., food, clothing, transportation). ^j Increases were stratified with higher percentages going to foster parents welcoming older youth.
	Provided more supports to foster families	Implemented a 24/7 clinical support line to ensure foster families can access help during crises or when navigating challenging placements.
	Increased staff to lower caseloads	Hired additional caseworkers to move toward a 15:1 caseload ratio, enabling staff to spend more time supporting each family and improving placement stability.
	Enhanced communication to foster families	Launched a new monthly foster family newsletter and foster family community forum to ensure foster families have the resources and support they need to succeed. ^k Created a resource binder for foster families.

TABLE 2

Strategies Idaho Adopted to Bolster Foster Home Capacity (Page 2 of 2)

- a Alex J. Adams, "DHW Is Renewing Its Commitment to Strengthen Child Welfare," DHW Voice, June 7, 2024, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/dhw-director-alex-j-adams-dhw-renewing-its-commitment-strengthen-child-welfare> (accessed April 22, 2026).
- b Monty Prow, "Why Faster Kinship Placements Matter – and How Idaho Just Took a Step Forward," DHW Voice, July 11, 2025, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/why-faster-kinship-placements-matter-and-how-idaho-just-took-step-forward> (accessed April 22, 2026).
- c Taylor Ansure, "Idaho Governor Brad Little Expands Paid Parental Leave to Include Foster Families," KXLY, August 4, 2024, https://www.kxly.com/news/idaho-governor-brad-little-expands-paid-parental-leave-to-include-foster-families/article_c8b417de-5429-11ef-aca7-bb7c440f9444.html (accessed April 22, 2026).
- d Kyle Pfannenstiel, "Idaho Foster Families to Get State Parks Passes, Outdoor Trainings in Public-Private Program," Idaho Capital Sun, August 7, 2024, <https://idahocapitalsun.com/2024/08/07/idaho-foster-families-to-get-state-parks-passes-outdoor-trainings-in-public-private-program/> (accessed April 22, 2026).
- e Mia Maldonado, "Idaho Fish and Game to Give Free Fishing Licenses to Foster Care Youth," Idaho Capital Sun, November 15, 2024, <https://idahocapitalsun.com/briefs/idaho-fish-and-game-to-give-free-fishing-licenses-to-foster-care-youth/> (accessed April 22, 2026).
- f DHW Communications, "Foster Care Festival Brings Community Together to Support Youth Aging Out of the System," DHW Voice, March 7, 2025, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/foster-care-festival-brings-community-together-support-youth-aging-out-system> (accessed April 22, 2026).
- g DHW Communications, "Boise State University Student-Athletes Inspire Foster Kids at Albertsons Stadium," DHW Voice, October 18, 2024, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/boise-state-university-student-athletes-inspire-foster-kids-albertsons-stadium> (accessed April 22, 2026).
- h Monty Prow, "Foster Family Night at Boise Hawks Game Showcases the Power of Partnership," DHW Voice, June 12, 2025, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/foster-family-night-boise-hawks-game-showcases-power-partnership> (accessed April 22, 2026).
- i Monty Prow, "Idaho's Foster Parent Bill of Rights Enhances Support and Respect," DHW Voice, July 12, 2024, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/idahos-foster-parent-bill-rights-enhances-support-and-respect> (accessed April 22, 2026).
- j Alex J. Adams, "Gov. Little and DHW Celebrate Major Step Forward for Vulnerable Children," DHW Voice, April 9, 2025, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/gov-little-and-dhw-celebrate-major-step-forward-vulnerable-children> (accessed April 22, 2026).
- k Monty Prow, "New Newsletter and Forum Provide Direct Support for Foster Families," DHW Voice, October 22, 2024, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/new-newsletter-and-forum-provide-direct-support-foster-families> (accessed April 22, 2026).

BG3959 📄 heritage.org

Why This Ratio Worked

The foster-homes-to-foster-kids ratio became the department's Wildly Important Goal because it focused on the best interest of the child and gave staffers a chance to measure progress weekly. When the ratio is low, everything becomes reactive. Staff scramble. Costs surge. Stability evaporates. Children pay the price.

But when the ratio improves, even modestly, the system can breathe. Staff at all levels generated ideas to move the numerator or denominator. And the urgency accelerated innovation.

Strengthening the Numerator: Bolstering Foster Home Capacity. Idaho undertook many strategies to boost the numerator through recruitment and retention of foster homes. (See Table 2.)

Reducing the Denominator: Prevention and Permanency. Idaho also undertook strategies to reduce the denominator of foster kids through effective prevention and efforts to improve permanency. (See Table 3.)

TABLE 3

Strategies Idaho Adopted to Reduce the Denominator of Foster Kids

Strategy	Tactic	Description
Prevention	Boosted prevention specialist team from 14 to 50 full-time equivalents	Expanded the prevention workforce to provide intensive in-home oversight, coordinate needed services, and demonstrate to courts that children can safely remain at home when supported. ^a
	Fast-tracked access to substance use disorder services	Created expedited referral pathways so parents of at-risk children can rapidly enter substance use treatment, reducing delays that often lead to removal.
	Deployed predictive analytics	Integrated cross-system data into intake processes to help identify families who are strong candidates for prevention services versus those needing immediate placement.
Permanency	Waived adoption fees	Eliminated application and home study fees to reduce financial barriers for families pursuing adoption from foster care.
	Speed permanency	Revised statutes to require more frequent case reviews and enhance judicial discretion, enabling courts and caseworkers to resolve cases more efficiently and move children to permanency sooner. ^{b-c}
	Legal advocacy	Updated the Title IV-E plan to include legal representation, acknowledging research showing that legal advocacy improves decision-making and accelerates permanency outcomes.
Improved Placement	Improve the continuum of care	Established a dedicated unit to oversee the placement process for youth requiring residential care. Key responsibilities include reviewing assessments to ensure youth are matched to the most appropriate settings and prioritizing in-state options before considering out-of-state placements, collaborating to determine medical necessity for Medicaid-funded services, monitoring active placements to ensure treatment plans align with a youth's needs and readiness for discharge, and supporting discharge planning to facilitate smooth transitions to the next placement or community setting.

a Jean Fisher, "Prevention Workers Bring Hope and Stability to Idaho Communities," DHW Voice, July 9, 2025, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/prevention-workers-bring-hope-and-stability-idaho-communities> (accessed April 22, 2026).

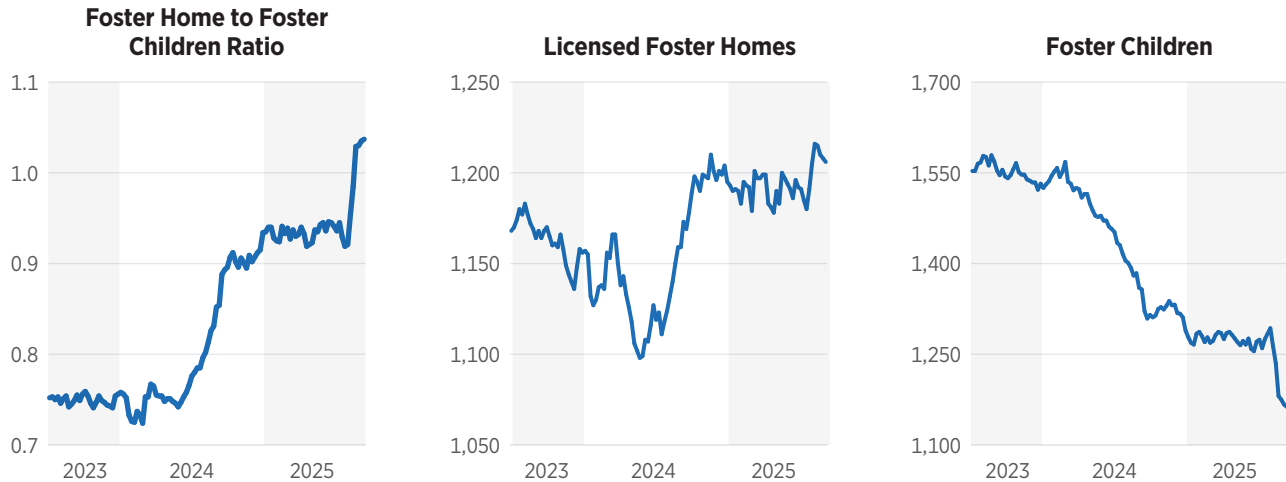
b Idaho Senate Bill 1021, <https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2025/legislation/S1021/> (accessed April 22, 2026).

c Idaho Senate Bill 1090, <https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2025/legislation/S1090/> (accessed April 22, 2026).

Collectively, these efforts delivered measurable results. Idaho increased its ratio of foster homes to children from 74 per 100 to 104 per 100 in just over one year, eliminated emergency placements in short-term rentals,¹⁰ reduced reliance on congregate care by 30 percent, expanded the use of relative and kinship care,¹¹ and strengthened its prevention infrastructure.¹² As capacity grew, system costs began to stabilize and legislative confidence improved.¹³ Remarkably, only a year after highly charged oversight hearings,

CHART 2

CYFS Foster Homes and Foster Children



SOURCE: Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, data provided via personal communication April 14, 2026.

BG3959 heritage.org

the Idaho legislature approved the largest child-welfare funding increase in state history to help further create the flywheel effect.¹⁴

These changes were not without critics. Some argued that the ratio itself was too simplistic, pointing out that it does not account for bed availability or distinguish whether the system is recruiting the right mix of homes rather than disproportionately attracting families seeking infant placements. Others objected to specific tactics, such as aligning Idaho’s standards with national model licensure guidelines, expressing concern that streamlined requirements might weaken foster-home quality.

There are, of course, both good and bad ways to improve this ratio. Simply boosting the numerator with homes that will only take infants does little to help a system whose biggest issue is placing older youth and sibling groups. But the DHW trusted its social workers and team to make the right decisions to safely improve both sides of the equation, because the status quo was failing. If it had been working, system costs would not have been escalating and children would not have been spending nights in short-term rentals.

Idaho succeeded by keeping the department in a posture of rapid-cycle innovation and decisive action—resisting calls for slow-moving adjustments in the face of mounting urgency.

Bringing This Focus to the National Stage

National data on foster-home capacity remains surprisingly limited. Despite ACF collecting more than 200 federally required state data elements, the number of licensed foster homes is not currently among them. Using the best available information from 2023—the most recent year with comparable but self-reported data—the ACF estimates a national ratio of roughly 57 foster homes for every 100 children in care.¹⁵ The country can, and must, do better.

At the ACF, leadership is elevating this measure to national visibility. A Home for Every Child is not a federal mandate. It is a federal–state partnership. States differ in size, geography, workforce constraints, court cultures, and provider networks. Yet every state can improve one or both sides of this ratio: increasing the number of available homes or reducing the number of children who need them.

The ACF’s national work focuses on:

- Partnering with states to build foster home capacity, particularly kinship care and homes that meet the individual needs of foster kids;
- Strengthening prevention pathways to safely reduce entries into care;
- Promoting agencies’ practices and procedures that emphasize safe and timely permanency; and
- Providing policy, technical assistance, and data tools that help states to monitor and improve their ratio over time.

Most important, the ACF is giving states a historic opportunity to pivot their required Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) to incorporate the foster-home-to-foster-kid ratio.¹⁶ For decades, every state has labored under PIPs driven by the Child and Family Services Reviews, which, as research shows, no state has ever fully passed in the 25 years since they began.¹⁷

This reform represents a meaningful shift: It offers states the possibility of real relief from the cycle of penalties, often imposed by wide-ranging or fruitless PIP requirements, and allows them to focus on locally driven solutions that increase their numerator or reduce their denominator—or both. In short, it replaces compliance-oriented busywork with a practical, outcomes-focused strategy that truly supports children and families.

States opting in to the new PIP will focus their energy on initiating a small number of initiatives to improve their ratio and report progress to the ACF monthly. Such enhanced near-real-time reporting will lead to more actionable insights about what is working and what is not, leveraging the experience of participating states. The ACF will publish a scoreboard showing each participating state's ratio and trendline. To date, the response from states has been illuminating: In just months since the new PIP requirements were released, 15 bipartisan jurisdictions and counting have already joined A Home for Every Child.¹⁸

Through these actions, the ACF's goal is simple but profound: homes waiting for children, not children waiting for homes. This measure does not solve everything. It does not replace the need for workforce stabilization, court collaboration, engaging youth who have experienced foster care, or practice reforms. But it creates momentum. And momentum creates possibility.

The ACF stands ready to partner with every state, every tribe, and every community that shares the same vision: a safe, loving home for every child who needs one.

Alex J. Adams is Assistant Secretary for Family Support at the Administration for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Endnotes

1. Administration for Children and Families, “ACF Unveils New Initiative to Strengthen American Families—A Home for Every Child,” November 24, 2025, <https://acf.gov/media/press/2025/acf-unveils-new-initiative-strengthen-american-families-home-every-child> (accessed April 8, 2026).
2. Fred Wulczyn, “Capacity Planning as Market Stewardship,” Substack, January 26, 2026, https://fhwulczyn.substack.com/p/capacity-planning-as-market-stewardship?utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web&triedRedirect=true (accessed April 18, 2026).
3. Alex J. Adams, “Delivering on President Trump’s Call to Strengthen Foster Care: A Home for Every Child,” The Daily Signal, November 21, 2025, <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/11/21/delivering-on-president-trumps-call-to-strengthen-foster-care-a-home-for-every-child/> (accessed April 29, 2026).
4. Idaho Legislature Office of Performance Evaluations, “Child Welfare System: Reducing Risk of Adverse Outcomes,” March 2018, <https://legislature.idaho.gov/ope/reports/r1803/> (accessed April 8, 2026); Idaho Legislature Office of Performance Evaluations, “Child Welfare System,” February 2017, <https://legislature.idaho.gov/ope/reports/r1701/> (accessed April 8, 2026); and Idaho Legislature Office of Performance Evaluations, “Best Interest of the Child,” July 2017 Supplemental, <https://legislature.idaho.gov/ope/reports/r1701/> (accessed April 8, 2026).
5. Ruth Brown, “Oversight Committee Raises Child Welfare Concerns,” *Idaho Reports*, February 23, 2024, <https://blog.idahoreports.idahoptv.org/2024/02/23/oversight-committee-raises-child-welfare-concerns/> (accessed April 8, 2026).
6. Ruth Brown, “House Passes Bill to Establish Child Protection Ombudsman,” *Idaho Reports*, March 18, 2024, <https://blog.idahoreports.idahoptv.org/2024/03/18/house-passes-bill-to-establish-child-protection-ombudsman/> (accessed April 8, 2026).
7. Kelcie Moseley-Morris, “‘I Have Not Seen it Like This’: Idaho’s Child Welfare Safety Net Is Wearing Thin,” *Idaho Capital Sun*, November 29, 2021, <https://idahocapitalsun.com/2021/11/29/i-have-not-seen-it-like-this-idahos-child-welfare-safety-net-is-wearing-thin/> (accessed April 18, 2026).
8. Idaho Legislature, “Idaho 2025 Legislative Budget Book, Fiscal Year 2026,” <https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/budget/publications/Legislative-Budget-Book/2025/Legislative%20Budget%20Book.pdf?ts=1776532435> (accessed April 18, 2026).
9. Franklin Covey, “Courses: The 4 Disciplines of Execution,” <https://www.franklincovey.com/courses/the-4-disciplines/> (accessed April 8, 2026).
10. Ryan Hill, “DHW Ends Short-Term Rental Policy,” KMVT, November 14, 2024, <https://www.kmvt.com/2024/11/14/dhw-ends-short-term-rental-policy/> (accessed April 8, 2026).
11. Monty Prow, “Why Faster Kinship Placements Matter—and How Idaho Just Took a Step Forward,” *DHW Voice*, July 11, 2025, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/why-faster-kinship-placements-matter-and-how-idaho-just-took-step-forward> (accessed April 8, 2026).
12. Alex J. Adams, “Delivering on President Trump’s Call to Strengthen Foster Care: A Home for Every Child,” The Daily Signal, November 21, 2025, <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/11/21/delivering-on-president-trumps-call-to-strengthen-foster-care-a-home-for-every-child/amp/> (accessed April 29, 2026).
13. Alex J. Adams, “DHW Is Renewing Its Commitment to Strengthen Child Welfare,” *DHW Voice*, June 7, 2024, <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/dhw-voice/dhw-director-alex-j-adams-dhw-renewing-its-commitment-strengthen-child-welfare> (accessed April 8, 2026).
14. News release, “Idaho Makes Largest Investment Ever to Support Foster Children and Families,” Office of the Governor, April 9, 2025, <https://gov.idaho.gov/pressrelease/idaho-makes-largest-investment-ever-to-support-foster-children-and-families/> (accessed April 18, 2026).
15. Alex Adams, “Why We Are Putting the PIP on a PIP,” *The Imprint*, December 19, 2025, <https://imprintnews.org/opinion/why-we-are-putting-the-pip-on-a-pip/269784> (accessed April 18, 2026).
16. Administration for Children and Families, Child and Family Services Reviews *Technical Bulletin* No. 14, December 19, 2025, <https://acf.gov/cb/training-technical-assistance/cfsr-technical-bulletin-14> (accessed April 8, 2026).
17. Marissa Abbott, Jessica Rendon, and Jennifer Burnszynski, “No States Have Ever Passed the Child and Family Services Reviews: Findings from an Analysis Over the Last 25 Years,” Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, November 18, 2025, <https://aspe.hhs.gov/reports/no-state-has-ever-passed-cfsr-findings-analysis-over-last-25-years> (accessed April 8, 2026).
18. News release, “15 Jurisdictions Commit to ACF Effort to Close Foster Home Gap—A Home for Every Child,” Administration for Children and Families, April 13, 2026, <https://acf.gov/media/press/2026/15-jurisdictions-commit-acf-effort-close-foster-home-gap-home-every-child> (accessed April 18, 2026).