



Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families

Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services Independent Monitoring Report

2023 Semi-Annual Report
January - June 2023

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Executive Summary and Highlights

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) and its Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) are focused on achieving long-lasting results that improve the safety, permanency and well-being of children and families in Milwaukee County. During the six-month period from January through June 2023, DMCPS performed the following:

Access and Initial Assessment / Independent Investigation

- A total of **7,807** Child Protective Service Reports were received, of which **3,359 (43.0%)** were screened-in for further initial assessment / independent investigation.
- A total of **3,087** initial assessments and **54** independent investigations were completed.
- At the start of 2023, there were **73** initial assessment specialists (IAS). From January through June 2023, **12** IAS were hired, and **14** IAS separated employment.

Safety

- The child welfare agencies made face-to-face contact on **9,319 (95.2%)** of the expected **9,789** monthly face-to-face contacts.
- A total of **33** children re-entered out-of-home care (OHC) within 12 months of their prior OHC episode.
- While in OHC, **five** children were substantiated for maltreatment by their provider.

Permanency

- On average per month, **57** children entered OHC, and **61** children exited OHC, during the first six months of 2023.
- On average per month, **1,506** of **1,771 (85.0%)** children in OHC were placed in a family like setting.
- On average per month, **634** of **1,771 (35.8%)** of children were in OHC for more than 24 months.
- In the first six months of 2023, **365** children exited an OHC episode.
- Of the **150** children who reunified during the first six months of 2023, **73 (48.7%)** reunified within 12 months of entering OHC.

Well-being

- On average per month, **1,509** of **1,776** children (**85.0%**) were current with their annual medical exams.
- On average per month, **959** of **1,435** children (**66.8%**) were current with their annual dental exams.

Child Welfare Case Manager Workforce

- At the start of 2023, there were **143** child welfare case managers (CWCMs). From January through June 2023, **54** CWCMs were hired, and **29** CWCMs separated employment which resulted **168** CWCMs at the end of this reporting period.
- On average per month, **70** of **149 (47.0%)** CWCMs had more than 15 children on their caseload.

This report is a cumulative performance summary for DMCPS. Changes in the data between this report and prior reports reflect updates due to validation procedures as well as changes in reporting structure.

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1. Introduction

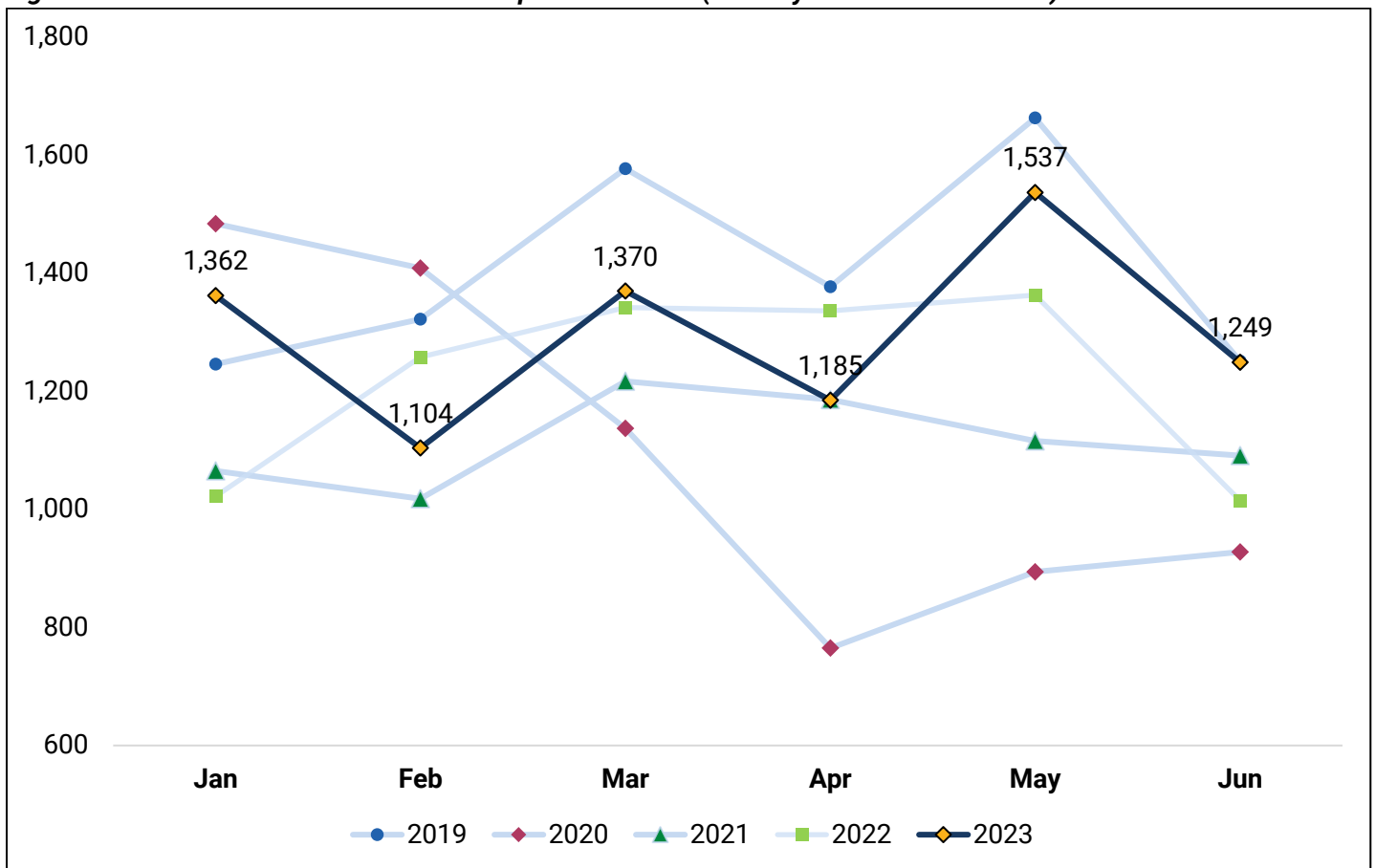
The DMCPs Independent Monitoring Report (IMR) provides pertinent information on key areas of the child welfare system in Milwaukee County. The report includes information about Access, Initial Assessments, Independent Investigations, outcomes related to Safety, Permanency, and Well-being, and the workforce. The IMR is intended to serve as a mechanism for maintaining transparency to both internal and external stakeholders while providing information about the overall functioning of Milwaukee County's child welfare system.

2. Access and Initial Assessment / Independent Investigations

2.1 Child Protective Service Reports - Volume and Response Time

From January through June 2023, DMCPs received a total of **7,807** unique CPS Reports. This is a **6.4%** increase in volume when compared to the 7,336 unique CPS Reports from the same period in 2022. Figure 1 shows the six-month total number of CPS Reports received between January and June over the last five years (2019 – 2023). Monthly volume appears to be returning to pre-pandemic levels. There were 116 (9.3%) more CPS Reports received in January 2023 than were received in January 2019. Furthermore, the volume of CPS reports in June 2023 is almost identical to that of June 2019 (and greater than the volume in June 2017 and June 2018¹).

Figure 1: Total Child Protective Services Reports Received (January – June 2019 – 2023)



On average per month, DMCPs received **1,301** Child Protective Services (CPS) Reports from January through June 2023. DMCPs screened-in an average of **560** CPS Reports for further assessment / independent

¹ There were 1,151 CPS Reports received in June 2017, there were 1,193 CPS Reports received in June 2018.

investigation per month, resulting in an average screen-in rate of **43.0%**. This represents a 4.7% decrease compared to January through June 2022.

Despite the increase in total CPS Reports received (compared to same period last year), the lower screen-in rate resulted in 138 fewer (3.9% decrease) CPS Reports screened-in compared to January through June 2022². Figure 2 shows the number of screened-in and screened-out CPS Reports by month during the first six months of 2023.

Figure 2: Child Protective Services Reports (Screened-in and Screened-out) Received by Month (January – June 2023)

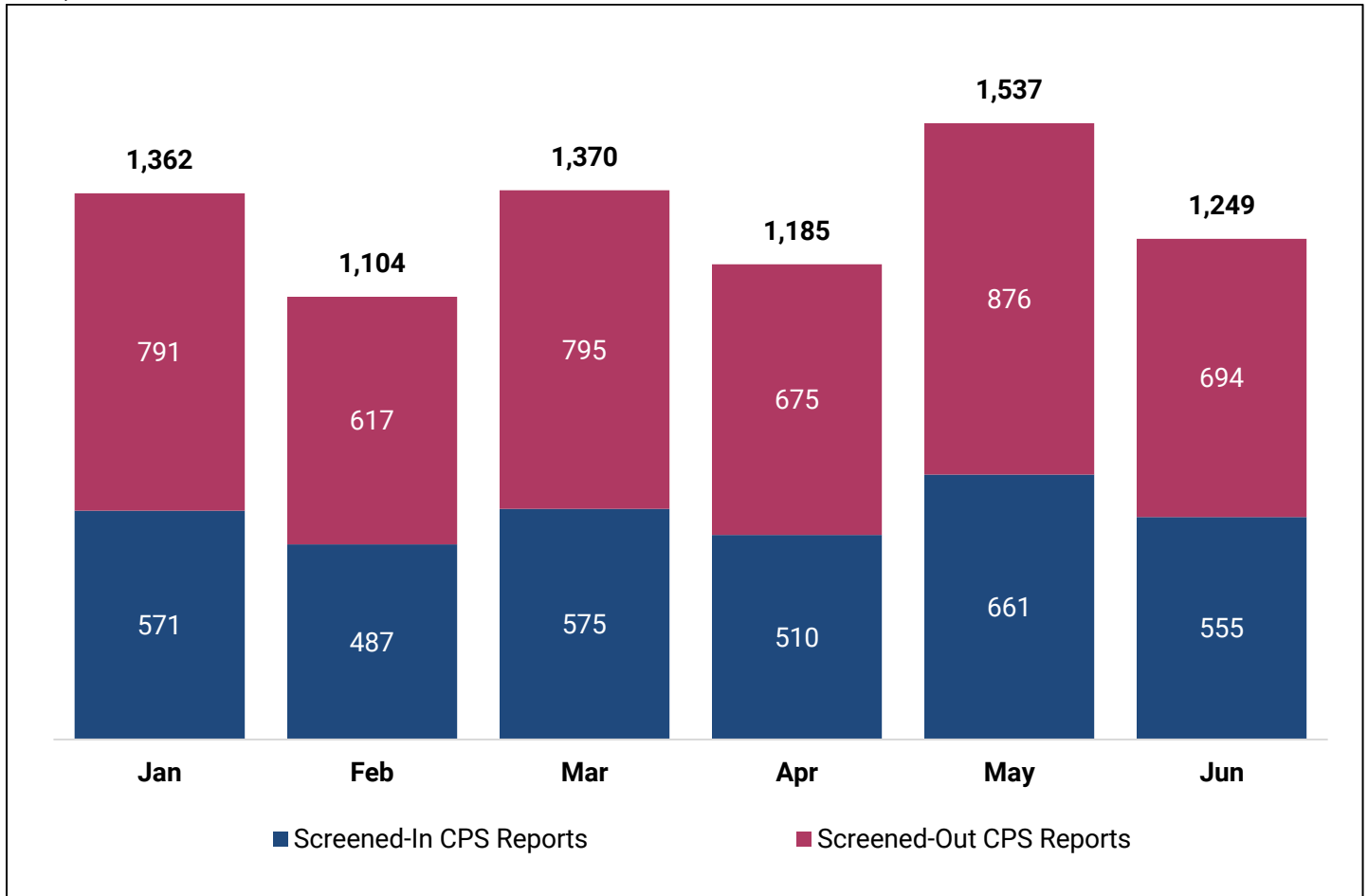


Table 1 shows the response time (by percentage) of CPS Reports that were screened-in by month during the first six months of 2023. On average per month, **22.6%** of CPS Reports were screened-in with a same day response time, and an average of **57.3%** were screened-in with a response time of within five business days.

Table 1: Percentage of Child Protective Services Reports by Response Time by Month (January – June 2023)

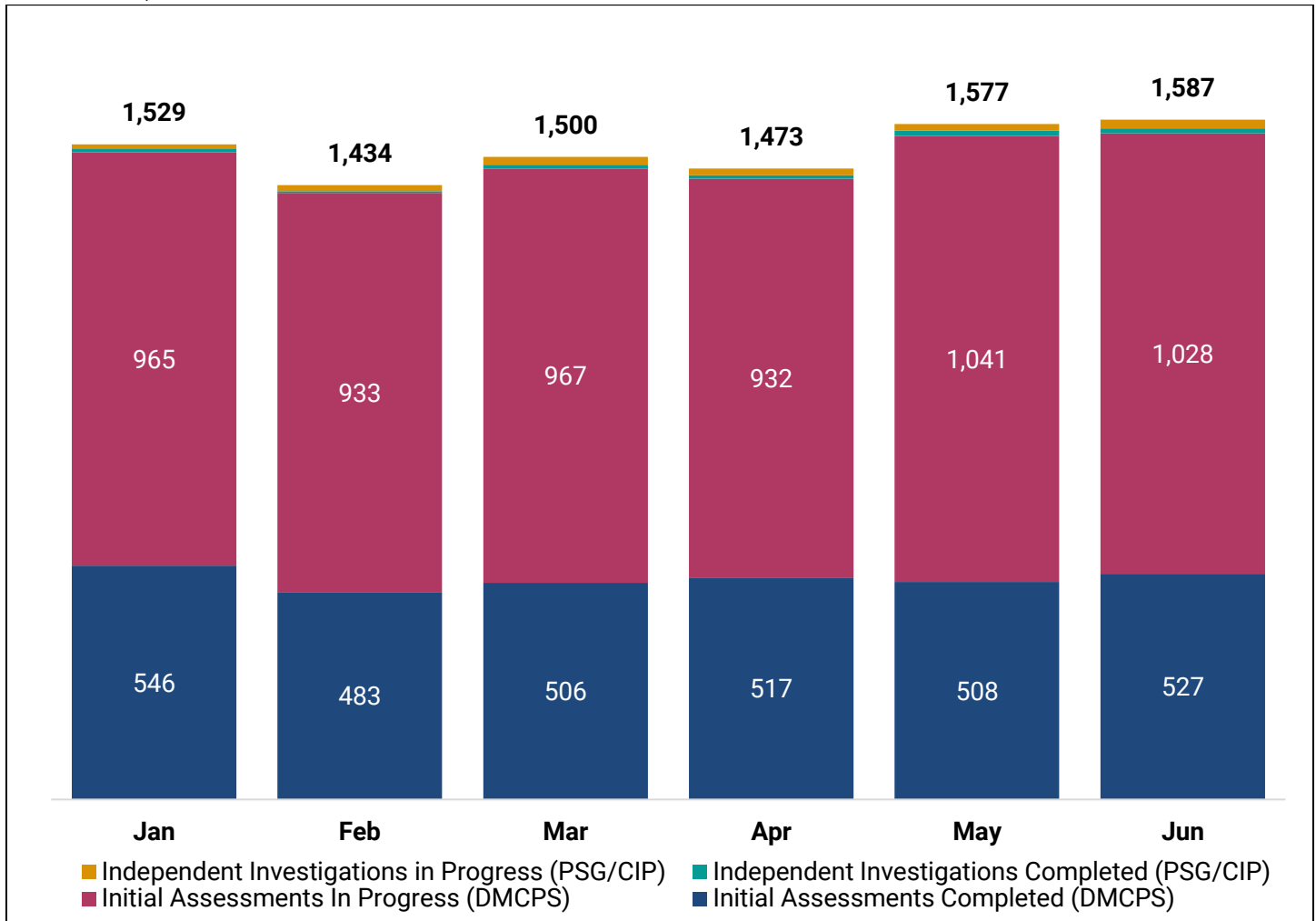
Response Time	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Same Day	22.9%	26.1%	23.0%	23.7%	19.2%	20.9%
Within 24-48 Hours	18.0%	16.8%	20.3%	21.8%	23.4%	20.0%
Within Five Business Days	59.0%	57.1%	56.7%	54.5%	57.3%	59.1%

² There were 3,497 CPS Reports screened in from January – June 2022. The screen-in rate was 47.8%.

2.2 Initial Assessments and Independent Investigations - Completed and Pending

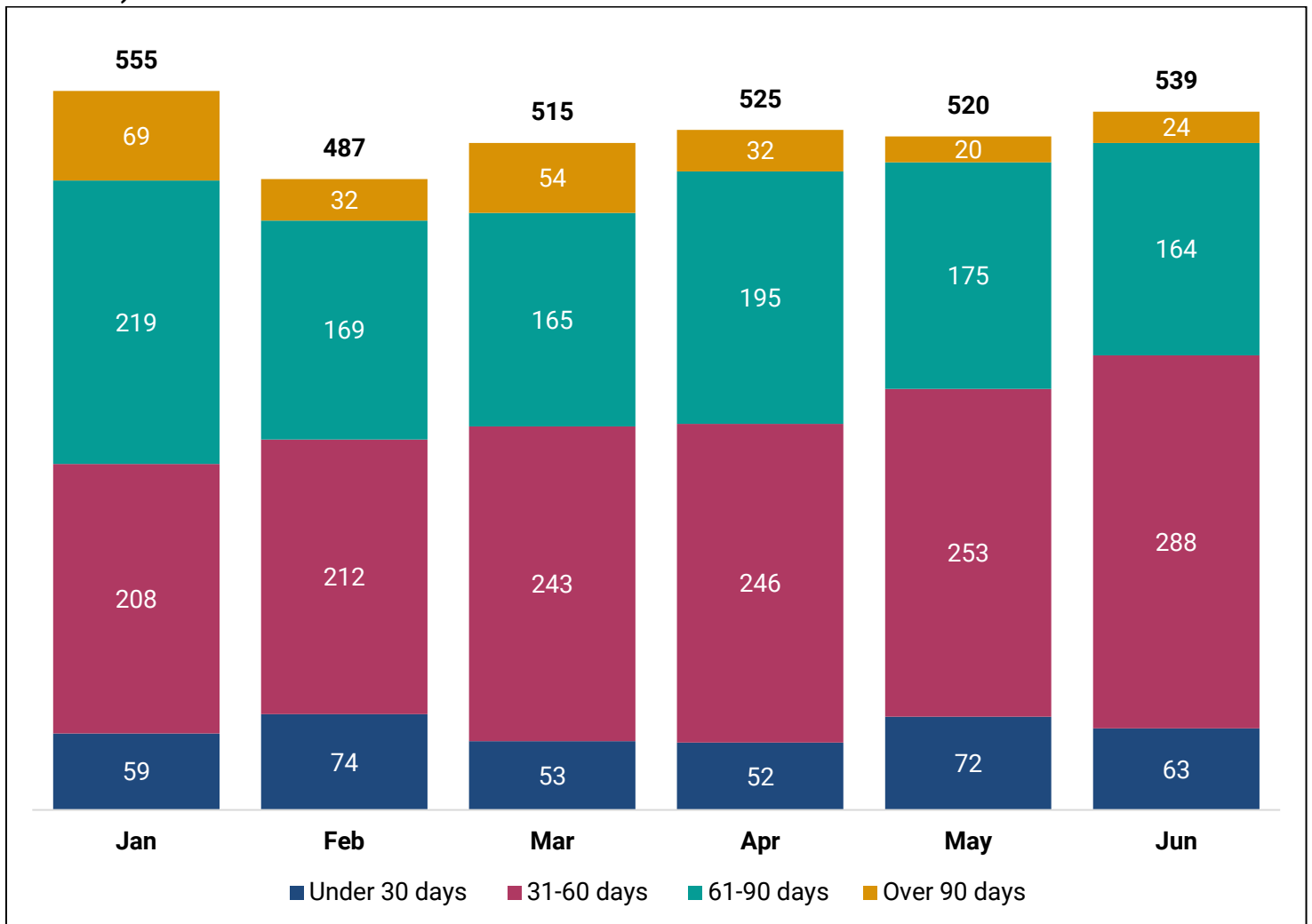
From January through June 2023, there were **3,087** Initial Assessments completed by initial assessment specialists (IAS) and **54** Independent Investigations completed by Professional Services Group/Community Impact Programs (PSG/CIP)³. On average, **515** Initial Assessments were completed by 62 IAS and **9** Independent Investigations were completed by **three** PSG/CIP staff per month. Figure 3 shows the number of completed and pending Initial Assessments and Independent Investigations by month during the first six months of 2023. The monthly volume is consistent with seasonal variations related to the end of the school year.

Figure 3: Number of Completed and Pending Initial Assessments and Independent Investigations by Month (January – June 2023)



Initial Assessments and Independent Investigations are required to be approved within 60 days of the referral. Figure 4 shows the number of days to complete Initial Assessments and Independent Investigations between January and June 2023. During the first six months of 2023, **1,823 (58.0%)** of the **3,141** Initial Assessments and Independent Investigations were completed in 60 days or less.

Figure 4: Number of Days to Complete Initial Assessments and Independent Investigations by Month (January – June 2023)



2.3 Initial Assessment Specialists Staffing

At the beginning of 2023, DMCPS employed **73** initial assessment specialists (IAS). During the first six months of 2023, **12** IAS were hired, and **14** IAS separated employment resulting in a **16.5%** semi-annual turnover rate⁴. Table 2 provides the monthly number of IAS at the beginning of the month, the number hired during the month, the number separating employment during the month, and the semi-annual turnover rate for the first six months of 2023.

Table 2: Number of IAS at the Start of the Month, the Hires and Separations by Month, and the Semi-Annual Turnover Rate (January – June 2023)

Turnover	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
IAS Start of Month	73	72	69	65	73	72
IAS Hires	3	0	0	9	0	0
IAS Separations ⁵	4	3	4	1	1	1
Semi-Annual Turnover %						16.5%

⁴ Turnover rate is the number of IAS who exited employment divided by the number of IAS at the beginning of the year plus the number of IAS hired during the reporting period.

⁵ Separations include Promotions, Resignations, Retirements, Terminations, and Transfers.

3. Safety

3.1 Face-to-Face Contact by the Child Welfare Agencies

During the first six months of 2023, **9,319 (95.2%)** of the expected **9,789** face-to-face contacts were completed by the child welfare agencies. Table 3 shows the number of expected and completed face-to-face contacts and the percent of completed face-to-face contact by month.

Table 3: Number of Expected and Completed Face-to-Face Contact by Month (January – June 2023)

Face-to-Face	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Children Receiving a Face-to-Face	1,568	1,509	1,565	1,566	1,558	1,553
Children Requiring a Face-to-Face	1,649	1,614	1,630	1,629	1,630	1,637
Percent of Children Receiving a Face-to-Face	95.1%	93.5%	96.0%	96.1%	95.6%	94.9%

3.2 Re-Entry

A total of **33** children re-entered OHC within 12 months of a prior episode in OHC from January through June 2023. This is an increase of **12 (57.1%)** children when compared to the first six months of 2022⁶. Table 4 shows the number of re-entries by a grouping of months between exiting and re-entry.

Table 4: Number and Percent of Re-Entries by Grouping of Time Before Re-Entry and Month (January – June 2023)

Time Before Re-Entry Group	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
0 - 2 Months	2	0	3	1	0	1	7
3 - 6 Months	0	2	3	1	2	2	10
7 - 9 Months	3	1	1	1	0	0	6
10 - 12 Months	1	0	3	2	3	1	10
Monthly Total	6	3	10	5	5	4	33

3.3. Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care

During the first six months of 2023, **five** children in OHC were substantiated for maltreatment by their provider. Table 5 shows the month of maltreatment, the child's age, the maltreatment type, and the maltreater's relationship to the victim.

Table 5: Number of Substantiated Maltreatment by Provider to Child(ren) in OHC by Month

Child Victim	Month	Child's Age at Time of Incident	Maltreatment Type	Maltreater Relationship to Victim
1	March	13	Physical Abuse	Treatment Foster Home (Non-Relative)
2	April	2	Physical Abuse	Court Ordered Kinship
3	May	11	Sexual Abuse	Treatment Foster Home (Non-Relative)
4	May	13	Sexual Abuse	Treatment Foster Home (Non-Relative)
5	May	13	Sexual Abuse	Treatment Foster Home (Non-Relative)

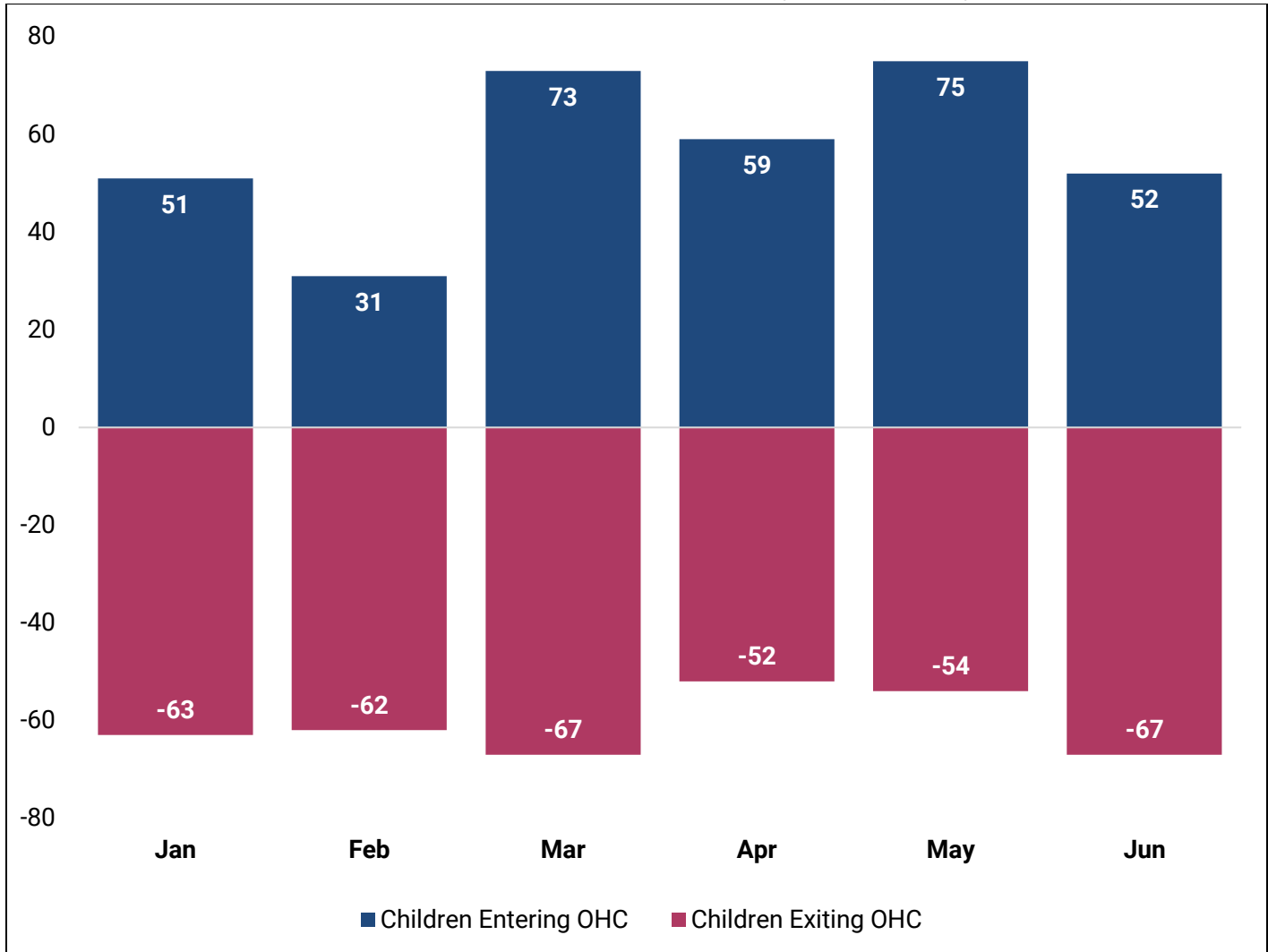
⁶ 21 children re-entered OHC within 12 months from January-June 2022.

4. Permanency

4.1 Entries into Out-of-Home Care

At the beginning of 2023, there were **1,802** children in OHC. On average per month, **57** children entered OHC, and **61** children exited OHC during the first six months of 2023. As a result, there were **1,772** children in OHC at the end of June 2023, a reduction of **30 (1.7%)** children during this period. Figure 5 shows the number of children entering and exiting OHC by month.

Figure 5: Number of Children Entering and Exiting Out-of-Home Care by Month (January – June 2023)



4.2 Placement Groups

On average per month, there were **1,771** children in OHC between January and June 2023. The placement types are divided into three groups: family like (foster home, kinship care, treatment foster home, trial reunification), congregate care (group home, residential care center, shelter), and other (detention, institutions, missing from OHC, supervised independent living). Figure 6 shows the number of children in OHC by placement group and month during the first six months of 2023. On average, **85.0%** of children in OHC were placed in a family like setting, **9.6%** were placed in a congregate care setting, and **5.4%** were placed in other settings.

Figure 6: Number of Children in OHC by Placement Grouping and Month (January – June 2023)

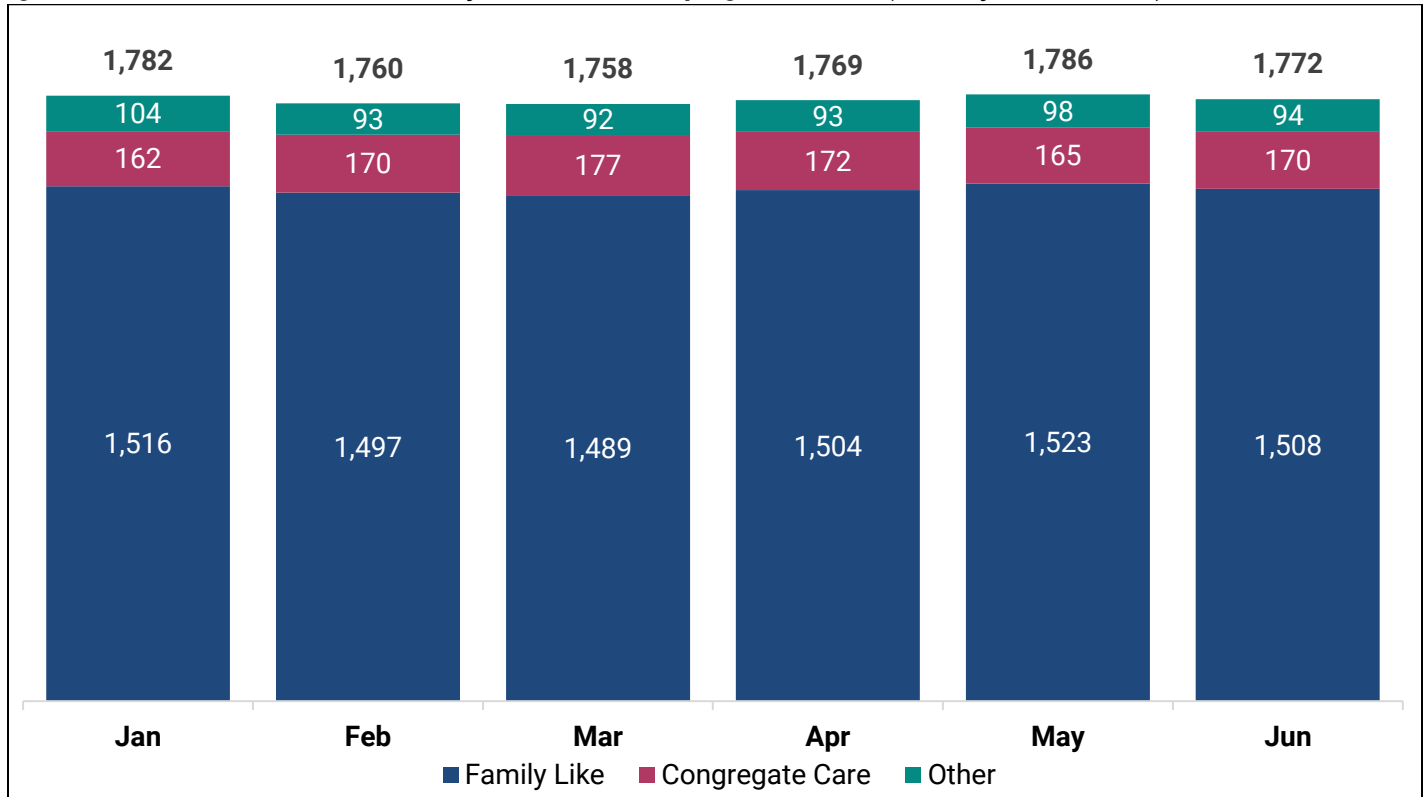


Table 6 shows the number of children in OHC by placement group, age group, and month during the first six months of 2023. On average per month, there were **541** children 12 years or older. Of these older children, **286 (52.9%)** were placed in a family like setting, **161 (29.8%)** were placed in congregate care, and **94 (17.4%)** were in other care.

Table 6: Number of Children in OHC by Placement Group, Age Group, and Month (January – June 2023)

Placement & Age Groupings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	AVG
Family Like	1,516	1,497	1,489	1,504	1,523	1,508	1,506
0 to 2	437	437	438	427	433	426	433
3 to 4	233	227	231	234	235	239	233
5 to 11	562	553	552	554	552	551	554
12 to 15	193	189	183	204	210	197	196
16+	91	91	85	85	93	95	90
Congregate Care	162	170	177	172	165	170	169
5 to 11	6	6	8	10	13	11	9
12 to 15	80	87	87	84	78	79	83
16+	76	77	82	78	74	80	78
Other	104	93	92	93	98	94	96
0 to 2	3	1	3	1	1	2	2
5 to 11	1	2	0	0	0	0	1
12 to 15	33	27	28	28	29	27	29
16+	67	63	61	64	68	65	65
Totals	1,782	1,760	1,758	1,769	1,786	1,772	1,771

4.3 Foster Homes

During the first six months of 2023, the average number of foster homes was **533**, a total of **93** providers were newly licensed, and **102** providers foster home licenses were closed. Table 7 shows the number of providers licensed as new foster homes, the number of providers closed, and the resulting monthly number of foster homes.

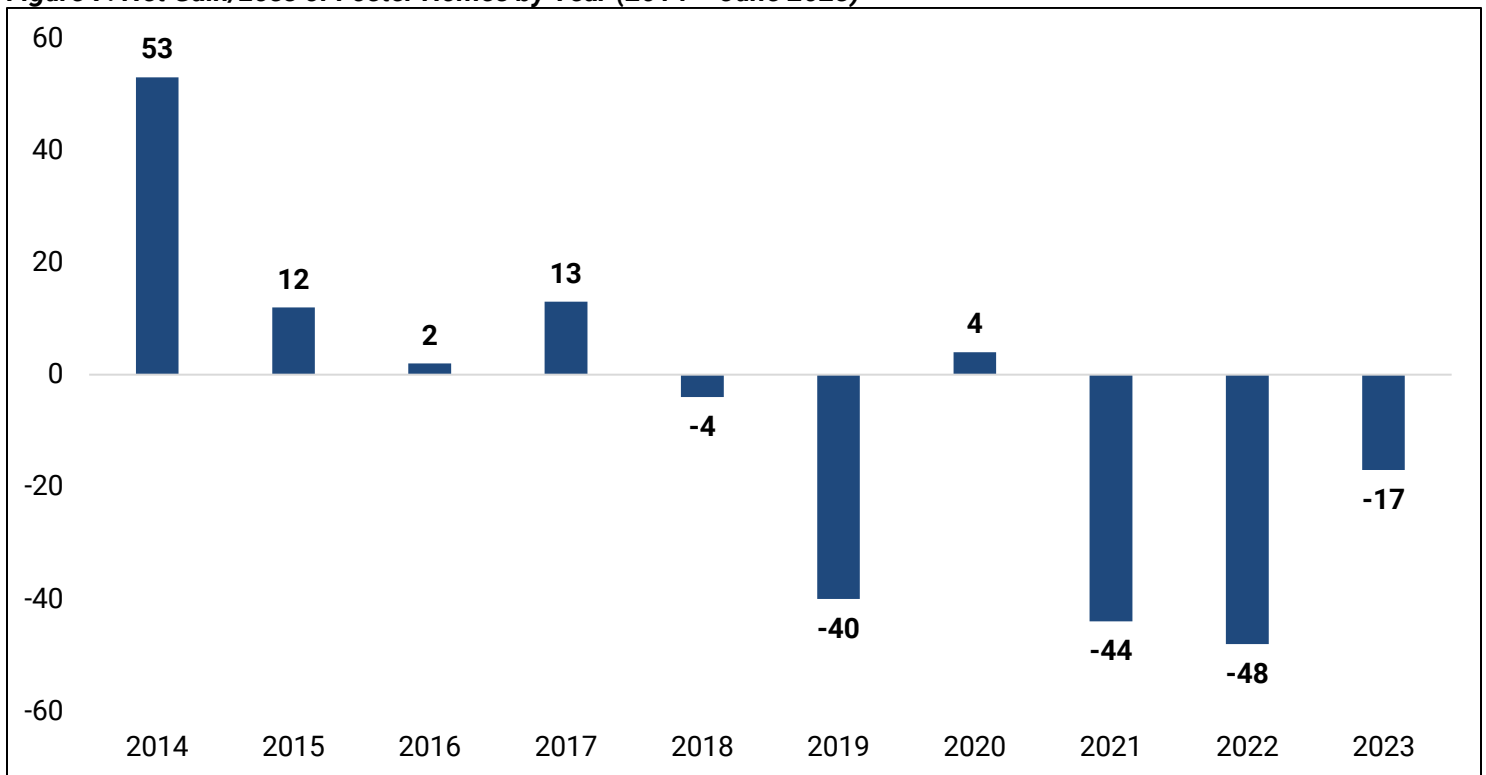
Table 7: Number of Foster Homes by Month (January – June 2023)

Foster Homes	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Foster Homes at the End of the Month	542	536	536	529	526	529
New Foster Homes	21	21	12	10	18	11
Closed Foster Homes	19	23	16	17	18	9

Note: Differences between the number of foster homes at the end of the month and the number of foster homes at the beginning of the following month could be the results of belated data entry and/or pending work.

The number of foster homes at the end of the year has decreased the last five years from **708** (2018) to **651** (2019) to **640** (2020) to **594** (2021) to **548** (2022). This reversed a trend from the prior three years (2014 through 2017) when the average number of new foster homes exceeded the number of closed foster homes. Figure 7 shows the net gain/loss of foster homes the last ten years – 2014 through June 2023⁷.

Figure 7: Net Gain/Loss of Foster Homes by Year (2014 – June 2023)

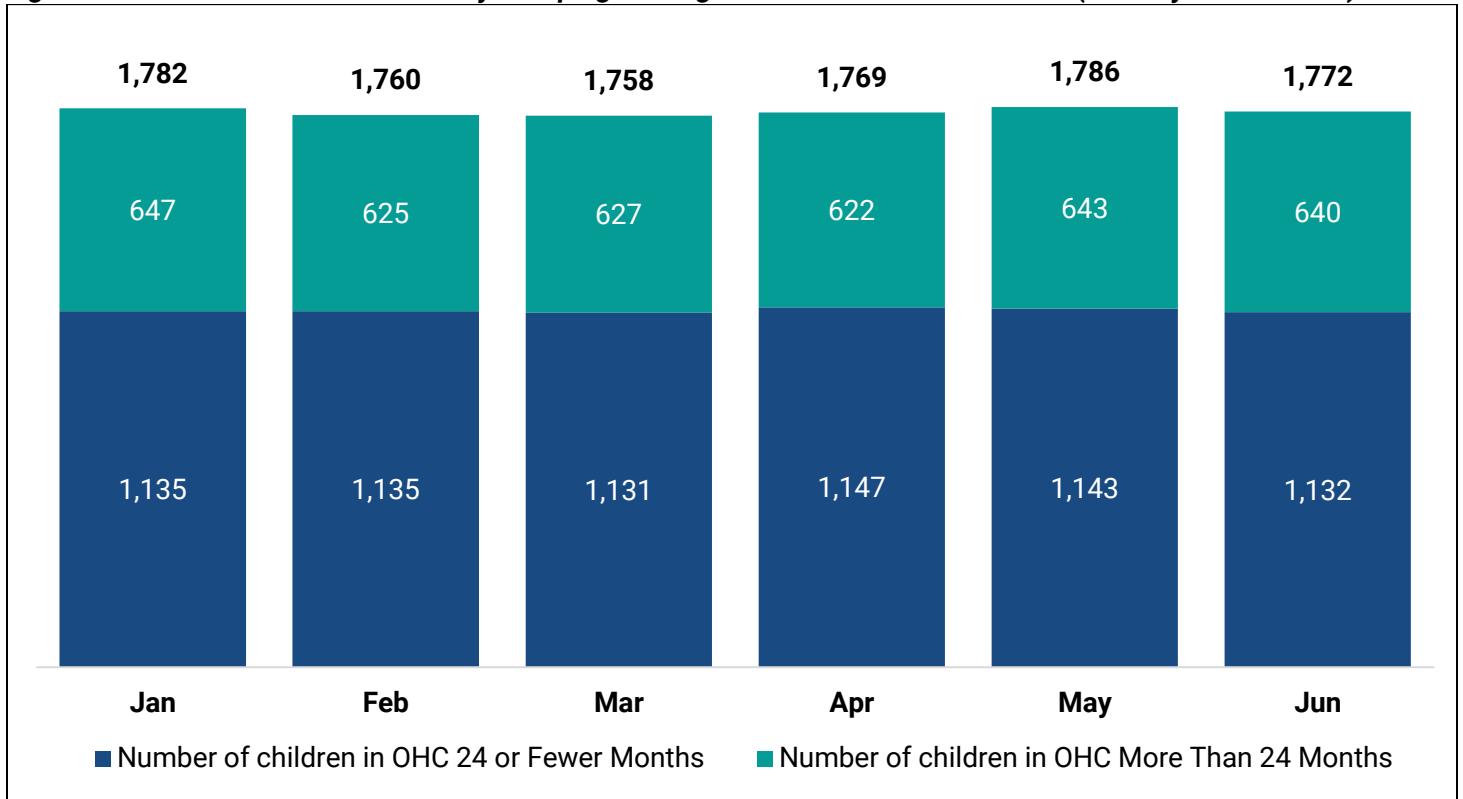


⁷ Net Gain/Loss was calculated by subtracting closed foster homes from open foster homes at the end of each month per year.

4.4 Length of Stay

On average per month, **634** of **1,771 (35.8%)** of children were in OHC for more than 24 months during the first six months of 2023. This is an improvement from the first six months of 2022⁸. Figure 8 shows the total number of children who were in OHC broken out by the number of children in OHC for 24 or fewer months and more than 24 months. The percent of children in OHC for more than 24 months remained consistent during the first six months of 2023.

Figure 8: Number of Children in OHC by Grouping of Length of Time in OHC and Month (January – June 2023)



⁸ From January through June 2022, an average of 772 of the 1,851 (41.7%) children were in OHC for more than 24 months.

4.5 Permanency Outcomes

A total of **365** children exited OHC during the first six months of 2023. Figure 9 shows that **150 (41.1%)** children were reunified, **83 (22.7%)** children had a transfer of guardianship (TOG), and **88 (24.1%)** children were adopted.

Figure 9: Number of Children Exiting OHC by Permanency Type and Month (January – June 2023)

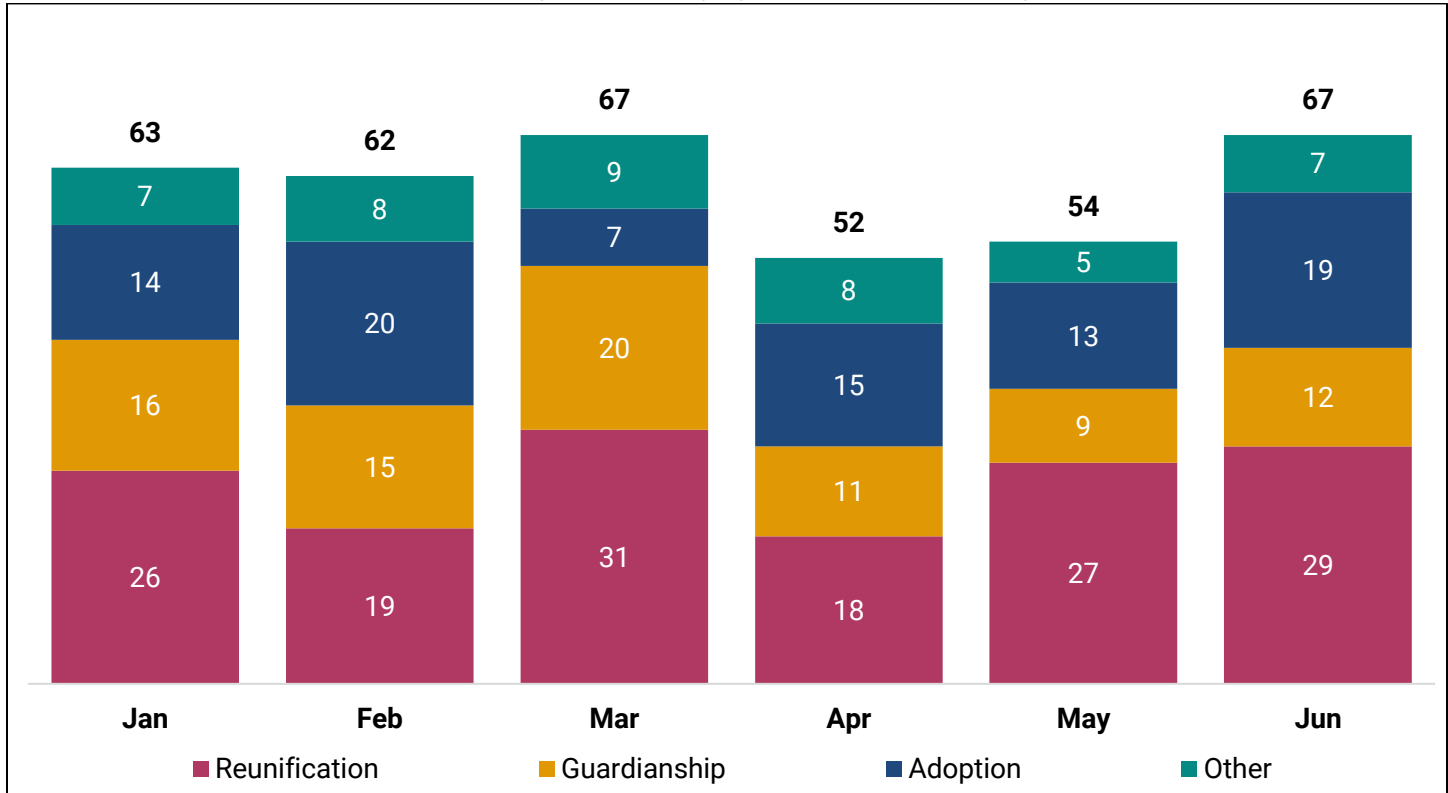


Table 8 shows the length of time that children were in OHC prior to exiting during the first six months of 2023, grouped by monthly intervals. Of the **150** children who reunified, **73 (48.7%)** reunified within 12 months of entering OHC. Of the **83** children who had a TOG, **38 (45.8%)** achieved permanency within 24 months or less. Of the **88** children who were adopted, **21 (23.9%)** were adopted within 24 months or less.

Table 8: Number of Children Exiting OHC during the first six months of 2023, by Exit Type and Length of Time in OHC

Exit Reason	<= 1 Month	2 - 3 Months	4 - 6 Months	7 - 9 Months	10 - 12 Months	13 - 24 Months	25 - 36 Months	37 - 48 Months	>= 49 Months
Reunification	12	5	15	20	21	48	10	13	6
Guardianship	0	0	0	1	4	33	21	17	7
Adoption	0	0	0	2	2	17	19	17	31
Other*	0	0	1	2	4	11	6	8	12
Total	12	5	16	25	31	109	56	55	56

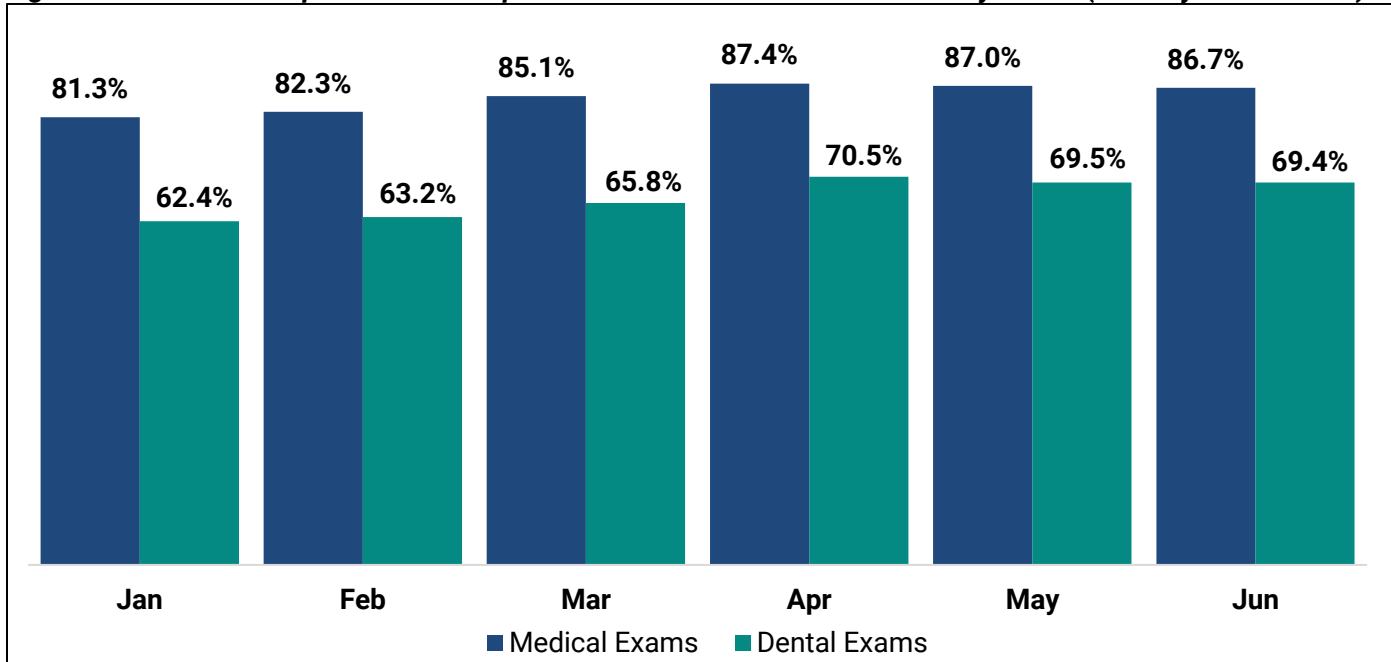
*Other includes age of majority, custody transfer, missing from OHC

5. Well-being

5.1 Annual Medical and Dental Exams

During the first six months of 2023, a monthly average of **1,776** children were expected to have an annual medical exam and **1,509 (85.0%)** were completed. **1,435** children were expected to have an annual dental exam and **959 (66.8%)** were completed. Figure 10 provides the percent of expected annual medical and dental exams that were completed during the first six months of 2023.

Figure 10: Percent of Expected and Completed Annual Medical/Dental Exams by Month (January – June 2023)



6. Child Welfare Case Manager Workforce

6.1 Child Welfare Case Manager Turnover

On January 1, 2023, there were **143** child welfare case managers (CWCMS). During the first six months of 2023, **54** CWCMS were hired and **29** CWCMS separated employment, resulting in a **14.7%** CWCMS turnover rate⁹. The turnover rate has showed improvement during the last two years and is the lowest semi-annual rate in the last five years. At the end of June 2023, there were **168** CWCMS, a net gain of 25 during this reporting period. Table 9 provides the monthly number of CWCMS at the beginning of the month, the number of CWCMS hired, the number of CWCMS separating employment, and the semi-annual CWCMS turnover rate for 2023.

Table 9: Number of Child Welfare Case Managers at the Start of the Month, the Hires and Separations by Month, and the Semi-Annual Turnover Rate (January – June 2023)

Turnover	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
CWCM Start of Month	143	159	163	159	161	163
CWCM Hires	21	9	5	7	3	9
CWCM Separations	5	5	9	5	1	4
Semi-Annual Turnover Rate						14.7%

6.2 Child Welfare Case Managers with a Caseload of More than 15 Children

⁹ Turnover rate is the number of CWCMS who exited employment divided by the number of CWCMS at the beginning of the year plus the number of CWCMS hired during the reporting period.

One measure of workload intensity is the proportion of CWCMs with more than 15 children on their caseload. For the six-month average from January through June 2023, **70 of 149 (47.0%)** CWCMs had more than 15 children on their caseload. This is more than a 25% improvement in performance when compared to the first six months of 2022¹⁰. Table 10 shows the number of CWCMs with cases, the number of CWCMs with more than 15 children on their caseload, and the percent of CWCMs with more than 15 children on their caseload.

Table 10: Number and Percent of CWCMs with a Caseload of More than 15 Children by Month (January – June 2023)

Caseloads with 16+ Children	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
CWCM with Caseload of 16+ Children	73	71	72	68	68	65
CWCM with Cases	135	142	149	159	156	153
% of CWCM with Caseload of 16 + Children	54.1%	50.0%	48.3%	42.8%	43.6%	42.5%

¹⁰ The six-month average from January-June 2022 was 81 of 129 (62.8%) of CWCMs had more than 15 children on their caseload.

For more information and links to historical reports, visit
[DMCPS Data | Wisconsin Department of Children and Families](https://dmcps.data.wisconsin.gov/mcps/data)
dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/data