

Department of Children, Youth, and Families

A General Overview of DCYF Child Welfare for Complex Behavior Echo

Virtual

Original Date: June 1, 2026

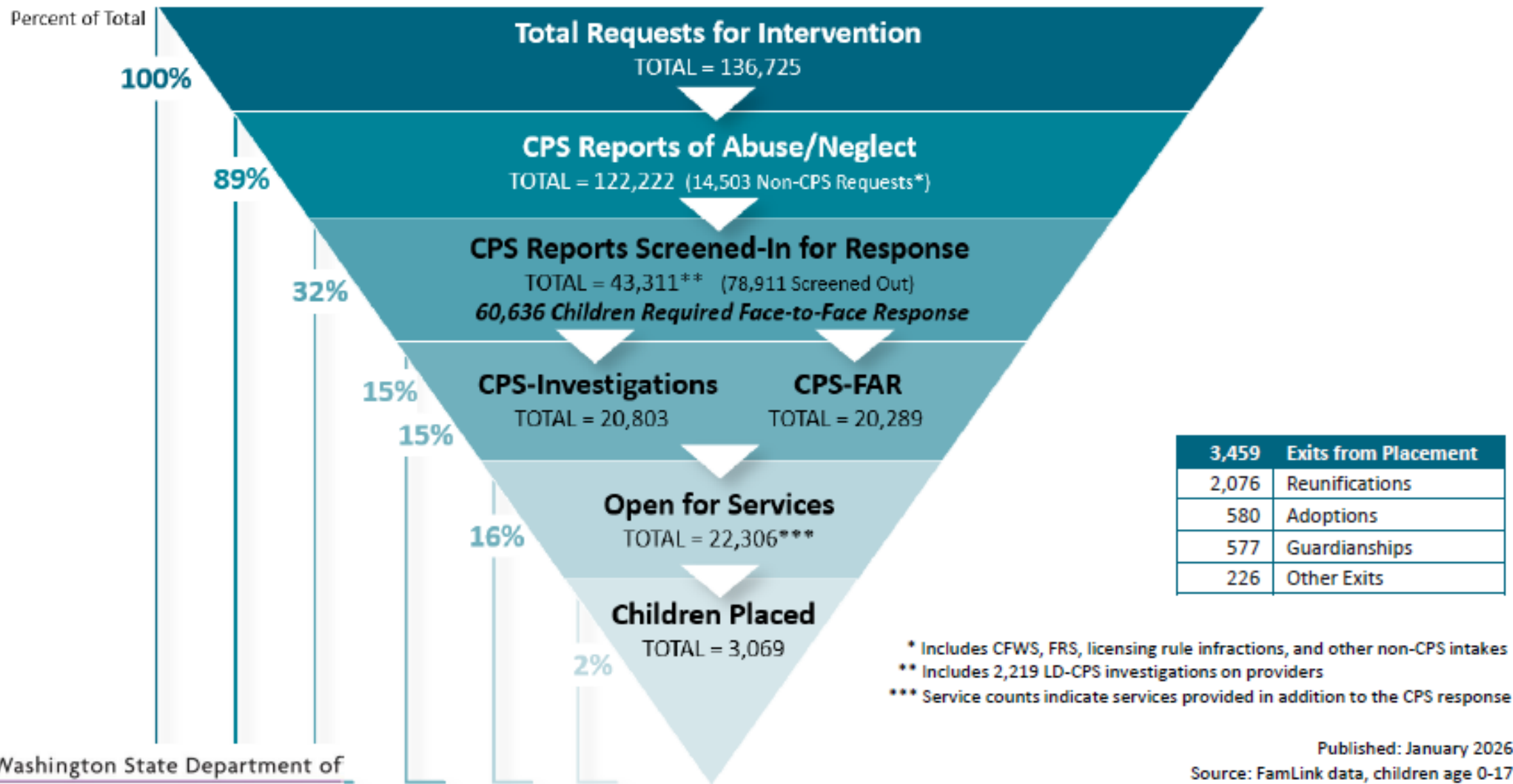
Child Welfare Division | Approved for distribution by Michelle Hetzel, DCYF Program Manager

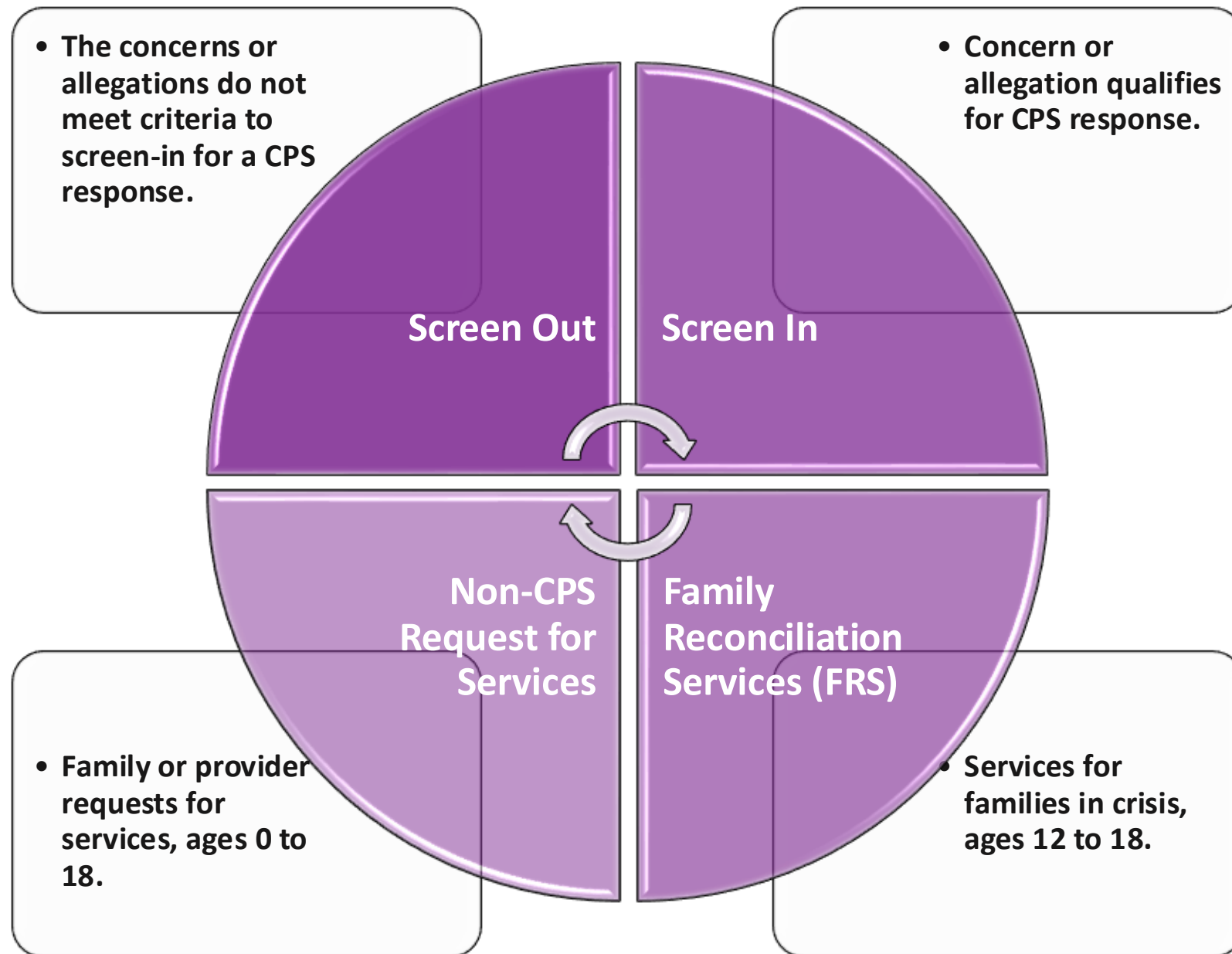
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Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

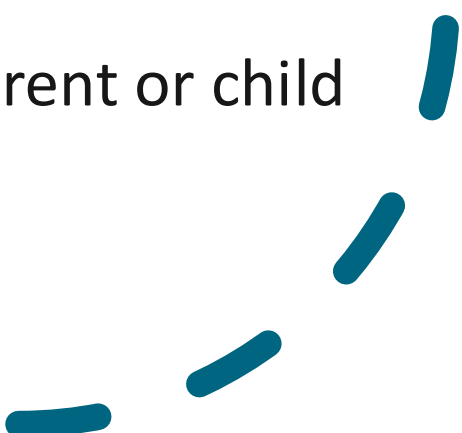
Child Welfare Overview SFY 2025







Risk factors
that by
themselves
are not abuse
or neglect

- Community or family poverty
 - Isolation
 - Single parenthood
 - Age of the parent
 - Crowded or inadequate housing
 - Substance use
 - Prenatal drug or alcohol exposure
 - Mental health problem
 - Domestic Violence
 - Disability or special needs of the parent or child
 - Truancy
 - Nonconforming social behavior
- 

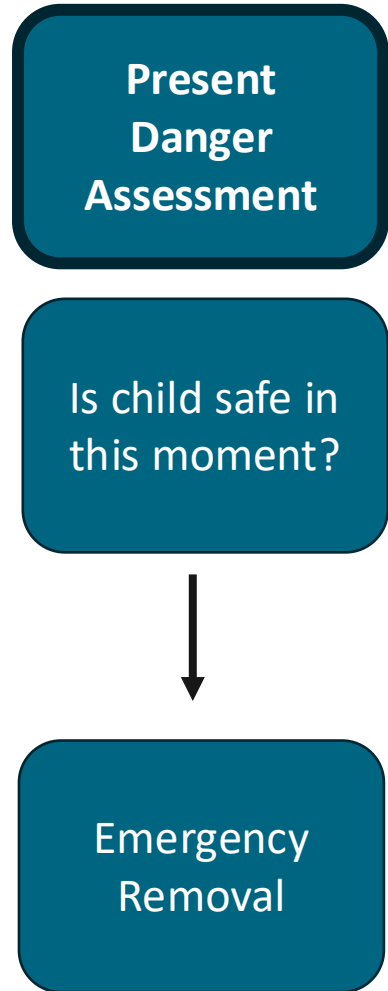
Child Protection Services

CPS caseworkers assess child safety after the agency receives an intake alleging concerns for child abuse or neglect.

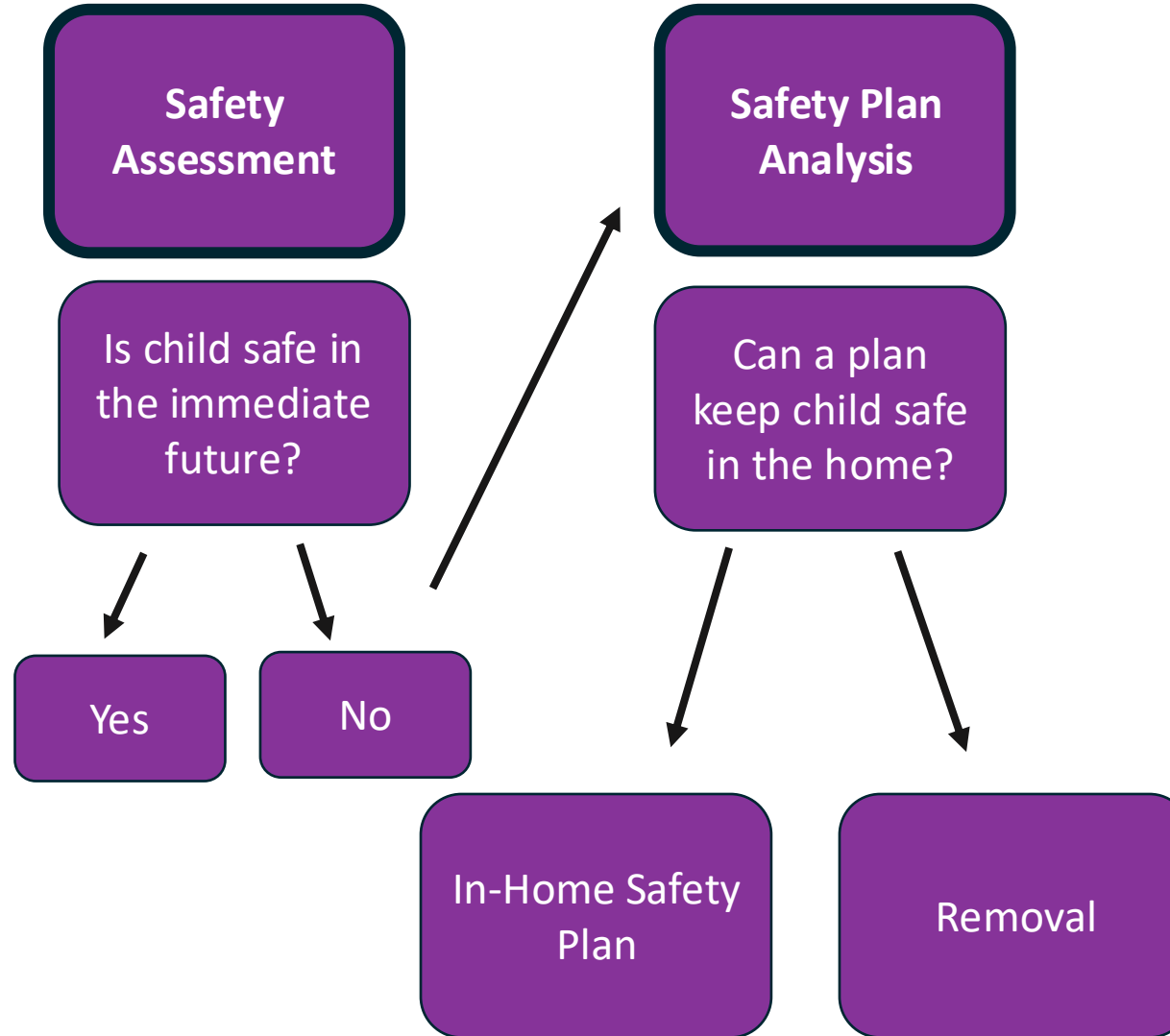
CPS caseworkers respond to allegations by completing an overall assessment of child safety, family functioning, and the risk of maltreatment.



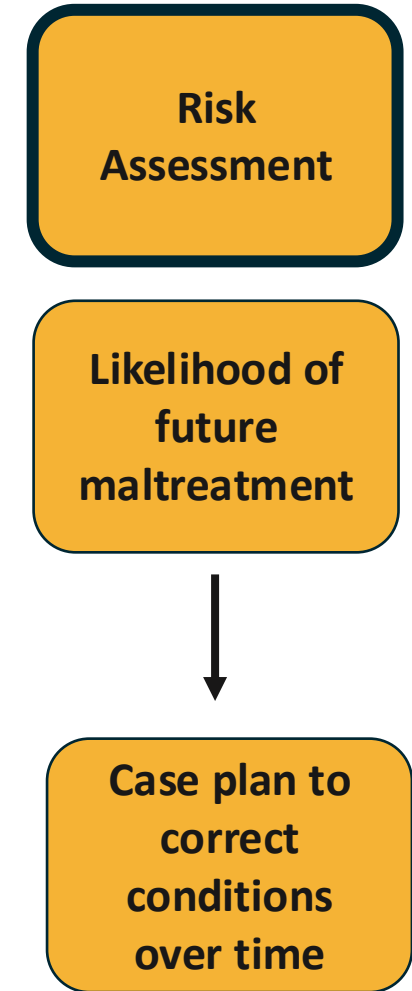
Assessed at
Every Interaction



Assessed at Key Points



Assessed at each intake



Family Voluntary Services



- Voluntary services can be requested anytime.
- They are offered when there is a safety threat or moderately-high or high risk of maltreatment.
- Case plans usually include in-home services.
- Voluntary placement of child or youth out-of-home



Family Reconciliation Services

Families, youth, or providers can request a family assessment and support for youth ages 12 to 17.

- Child in Need of Services (CHINS)
- At-Risk Youth (ARY)
- Youth with high-risk behaviors
- Homeless Youth



Child and Family Welfare Services

When child safety can't be managed in the home, a dependency petition may be filed to obtain court intervention.

- The child may be removed or may remain home with a parent under court supervision.
- The parents may be court ordered to participate in services.



Working With Children and Youth in Foster Care

- Most of the time, their parents still have parental rights to:
 - Attend appointments
 - Make medical decisions
 - Receive information
- Children and youth have health insurance, usually foster care Medicaid.
- They may be placed with a relative, friend, neighbor, or foster parent. Their placement can make routine medical decisions.
- Surgery, anesthesia, or medical procedures require parental consent or a court order.



Thank you!

Michelle Hetzel, MSW

Child and Family Welfare Services Program Manager



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