

OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ADMINISTERING THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT



TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES UNDER THE CSA

Annual Report to the General Assembly, December 2020

In accordance with the Appropriation Act, Chapter 1289, Item 292 (K)(1)

The Children's Services Act (CSA, §2.2-2648 et seq) was enacted in 1993 to create a collaborative system of services and funding for at-risk youth and families.

The CSA establishes local multidisciplinary teams responsible to work with families to plan services according to each child's unique strengths and needs and to administer the community's CSA activities.

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) is the administrative entity responsible for ensuring effective and efficient implementation of the CSA across the Commonwealth.

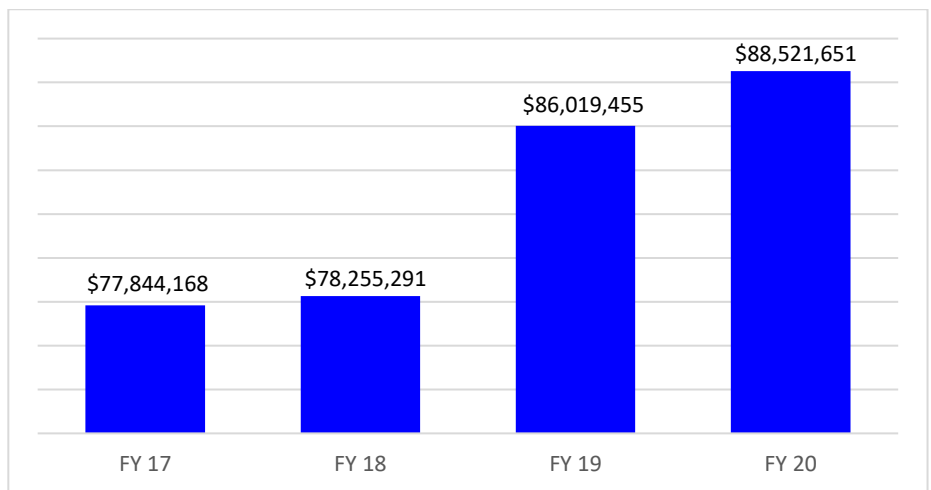
Guiding principles for OCS include:

- Child and family directed care,
- Equitable access to quality services,
- Responsible and effective use of public funds,
- Support for effective, evidence-based practices, and
- Collaborative partnerships across state, local, public, and private stakeholders.

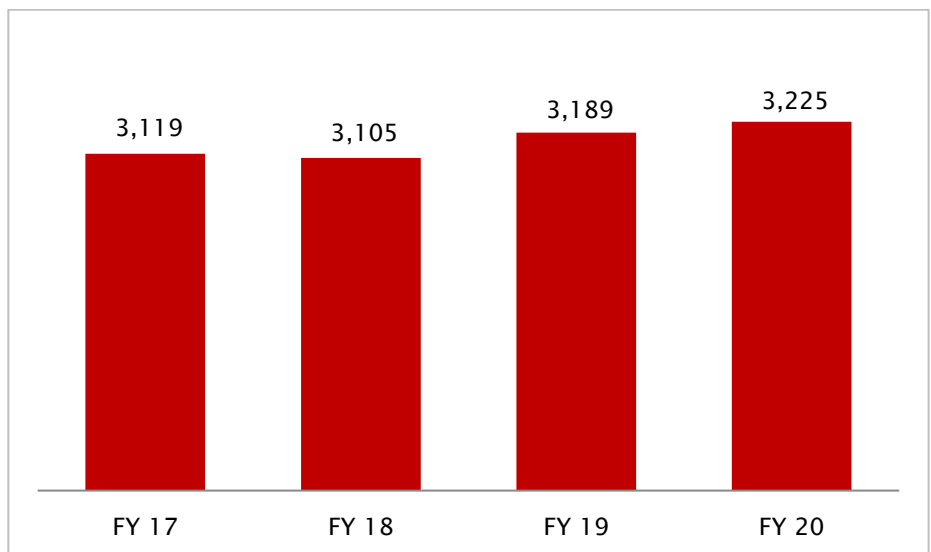


Treatment foster care (TFC) is a community-based program where services are designed to address children's special needs while in the custody of a local department of social services. TFC is provided by foster parents trained, supervised, and supported by a private agency (licensed child-placing agency or LCPA). TFC is family-based, goal-directed, results-oriented, and emphasizes permanency planning for the child in care. Total TFC costs may be partially offset by federal/state title IV-E revenues for eligible foster children. Title IV-E revenues and payments are handled through the Department of Social Services.

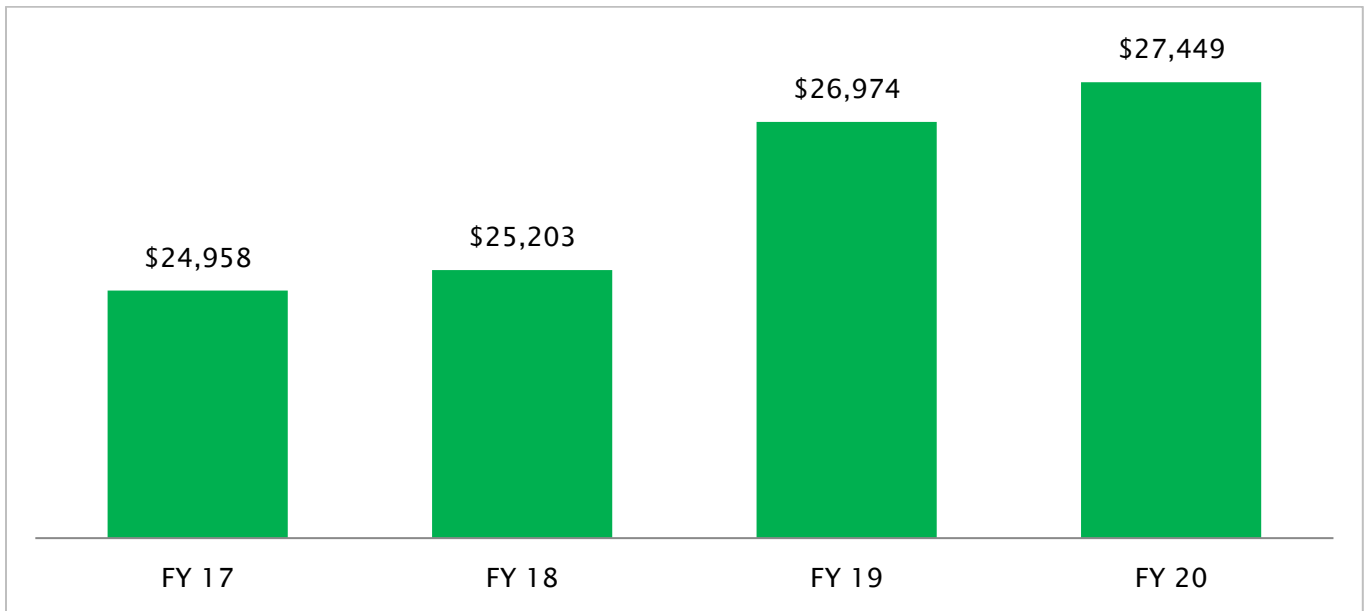
Total CSA Expenditures - Treatment Foster Care (FY2017 - FY2020)



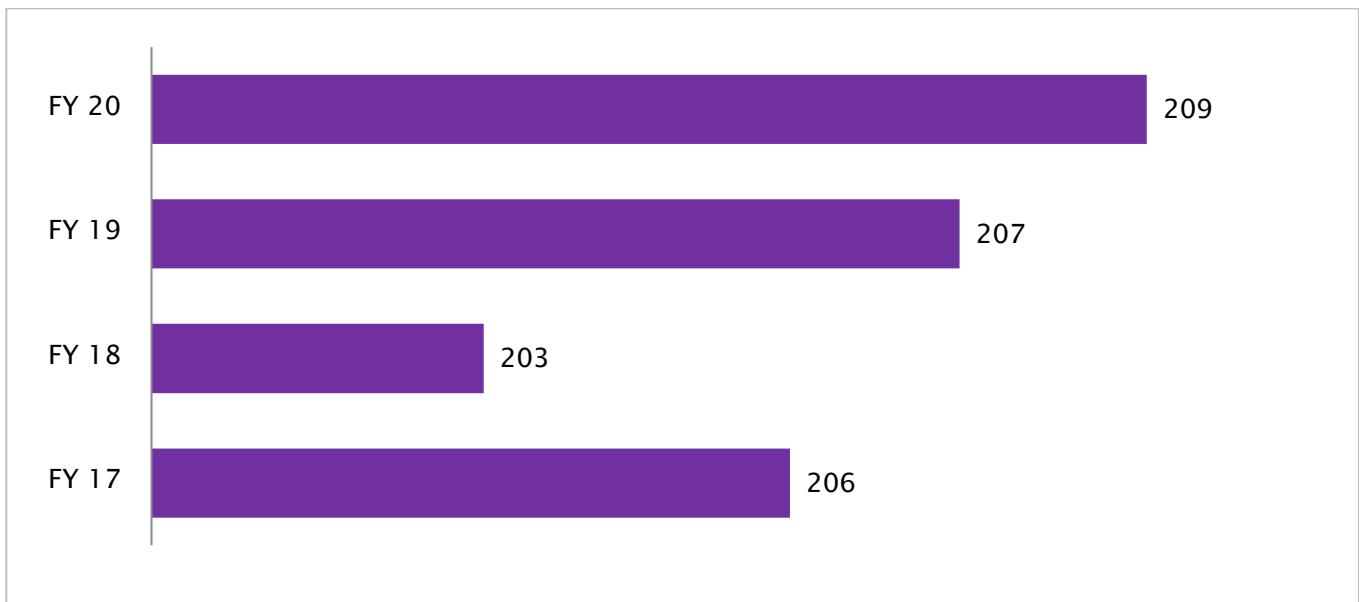
Number of Youth Served - Treatment Foster Care (FY2017 - FY2020)



Average Annual CSA Expenditure per Child – Treatment Foster Care (FY2017 – FY2020)
(Includes Foster Care Maintenance costs)



Average Length of Stay (Number of Days/Year) – Treatment Foster Care (FY2017 – FY2020)



Discussion

In FY2020, utilization of treatment (also known as therapeutic) foster care (TFC) increased slightly, but was mostly stabilized after a noticeable increase in FY2019. TFC remains a primary source of foster care placements in Virginia, reflecting ongoing challenges in local DSS agencies' ability to establish "agency foster homes" (foster families recruited and supported by the local department). Approximately 60% of children in foster care are placed in a TFC arrangement through a licensed child-placing agency (LCPA). LCPAs are private agencies that, among other services, provide for foster home placements through referrals from the local DSS. In FY2020, a TFC placement (exclusive of monthly maintenance and enhanced maintenance payments) averages \$104 per day or approximately \$21,000 per year. While foster care maintenance costs may be supported by CSA pool funds or the federal title IV-E program, TFC-specific costs (CSA Service Name = "Private Foster Care, Support, Supervision, and Administration") are paid exclusively from CSA state pool and local matching funds.