

OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ADMINISTERING THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT



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.

IMPACT OF TIERED MATCH RATES FOR CSA

*Annual Report to the Governor and General Assembly, December 1, 2025
In accordance with the Appropriation Act, Chapter 725, Item 268 (C)(3)(c)*

Item 268.C. 3.a. Notwithstanding the provisions of C.2. of this Item, beginning July 1, 2008, the local match rate for community-based services for each locality shall be reduced by 50%.

b. Localities shall review their caseloads for those individuals who can be served appropriately by community-based services and transition those cases to the community for services. Beginning July 1, 2009, the local match rate for non-Medicaid residential services for each locality shall be 25% above the fiscal year 2007 base. Beginning July 1, 2011, the local match rate for Medicaid residential services for each locality shall be 25% above the fiscal year 2007 base.

c. By December 1 of each year, the State Executive Council (SEC) shall provide an update to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees on the outcomes of this initiative.

As established in Section 2.2-5211.C. of the *Code of Virginia* and the Appropriation Act, funding services to children and families through the Children's Services Act (CSA) is a shared responsibility of state and local government. Effective July 1, 2008, the Appropriation Act implemented a three-tiered, "incentive-based" local match rate model to encourage reduced residential care utilization, increase the proportion of children served in their homes and communities, and support investments in community-based services. This policy-driven match rate model promotes the delivery of services consistent with the statutory purposes of the CSA (see § 2.2-5200.A., *Code of Virginia*) to:

- preserve families;
- design and provide services that are responsive to the unique and diverse strengths and needs of troubled youth and families; and
- provide appropriate services in the least restrictive environment while protecting children's welfare and maintaining the public's safety.

Before 2008, CSA utilized a single "base" match rate unique to each locality. These local base match rates were established in the early years of the CSA (1993-1998), using a formula that reflected the amount contributed by the locality in previous years and the locality's "ability to pay." Under the three-tiered (incentive) model, the local match rate for residential services is 25% above its base match rate, and community-based services are 50% below their base match rate. Designated services (foster care and special education) remain at the base match rate. Local base match rates range from 16.98% to 53.09%, with 32.99% as the average local base match rate.



Office of Children's Services
Empowering communities to serve youth

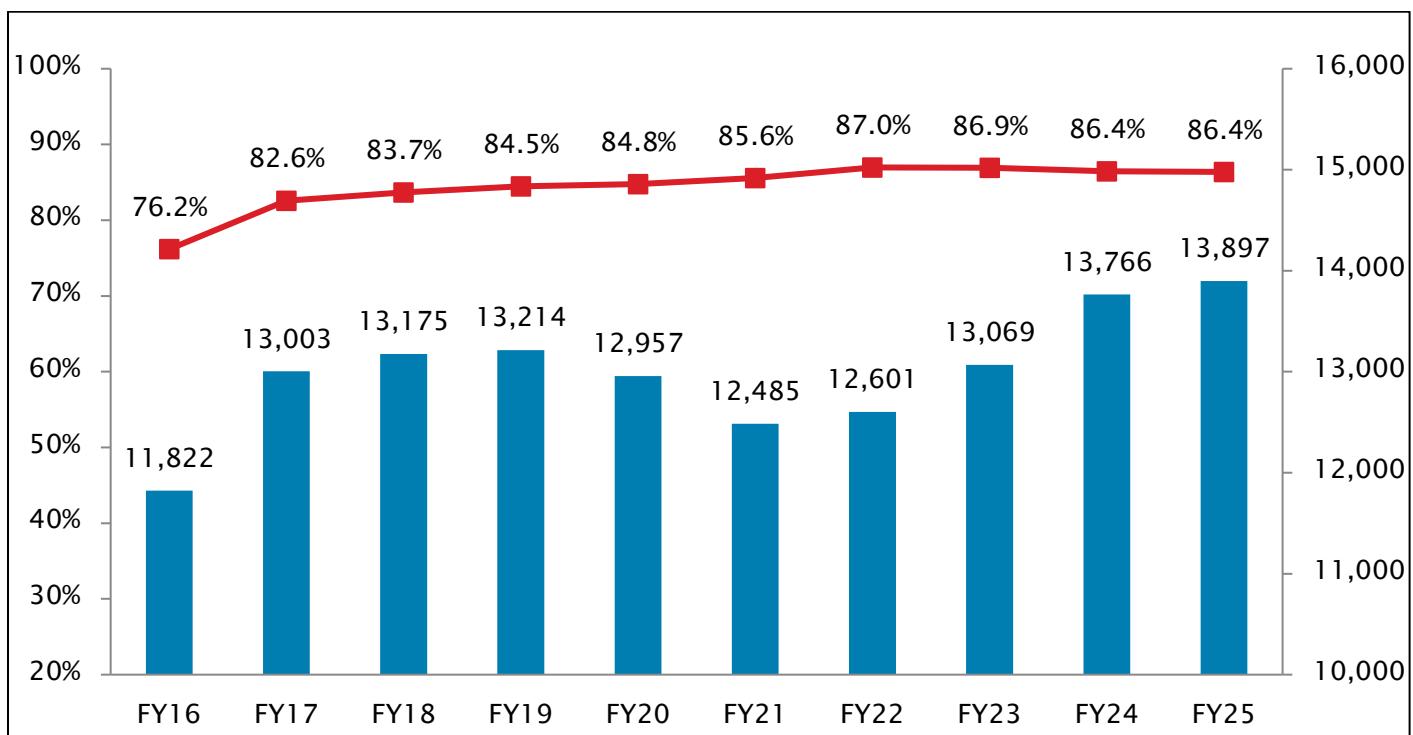
Effective (Actual) Match Rates (Statewide Average)

	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
Effective Local Match Rate	34.8%	34.4%	34.3%	34.0%	34.0%	33.7%	33.5%	33.3%	33.6%	33.4%
Effective State Match Rate	65.2%	65.6%	65.7%	66.0%	66.0%	66.3%	66.5%	66.7%	66.4%	66.6%

The effective match rate reflects the impact of the mix of services at the various tiered match rates on the overall match rate for all funded services.

The table above indicates that the three-tiered match rate model, compared to the single-tiered (base) rate model, results in a slightly higher state share of the overall CSA expenditures. Depending on the overall level and "mix" of services, the impact on the general fund state pool may vary.

Number and Percent of Youth Served Only in Community-Based Settings Impact of the Three-Tiered (Incentive) Match Rate Model (FY2016 – FY2025)



Discussion

The intent of the three-tiered match rate model was two-fold. The first was to employ fiscal incentives to discourage the placement of children into restrictive, residential (congregate care) treatment settings when it was possible to safely utilize alternative, non-residential services that would adequately address the needs of the child, family, and community. The chart, *"Number and Percent of Youth Served Only in Community-Based Settings,"* illustrates that this goal has been increasingly achieved and has remained stable over the past five years. Over the ten years shown, there has been a significant increase in the children served through the Children's Services Act who did not experience any congregate care placements during the reporting year (from 76.2% to 86.4%). Residential placements are typically among the more costly services funded through the CSA (second to private day special education placements). The associated goal of the three-tiered match rate system was to control CSA expenditures, which, at the time (FY2008), had reached their highest historical point. In the years following the implementation of the tiered match rate model, overall CSA expenditures fell significantly. Attributing this decrease solely to the match rate model is not definitive, as it coincided with a significant economic recession. In FY2015, this trend reversed, with overall CSA annual expenditures rising.

While the effective (actual) state (vs. local) match rate is higher than the base rate, the state-to-local match rate ratio (the effective match rate) has been virtually unchanged for several years. The effective local match has not declined further due to the significant rise in costs (and overall share of total CSA expenditures) associated with private special education day and therapeutic foster care placements. Such placements are not subject to incentives or disincentives through the three-tiered match rate model, resulting in less "variability" in the state versus local match rates. Using fiscal incentives to impact special education placements is not permissible under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Within its limits, the three-tiered match rate model has achieved its goal of increasing the utilization of community-based versus congregate care services. Over the ten years of data covered in this report, the increase in expenditures, applied through the three-tiered match rate model, resulted in an increase in the state share from an additional \$4.8 million in FY2016 to an additional \$10.9 million in FY2025, compared to if the single base match rate were used for all services. This is due to the significantly reduced (50 percent below the base match rate) local match for community-based services, which have been increasing in cost over the past several years.

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UTILIZATION OF RESIDENTIAL CARE UNDER THE CSA

Annual Report to the Governor and General Assembly, December 15, 2025

In accordance with the Appropriation Act, Chapter 725, Item 268 (B)(2)(d)

Item 268.B.2.d. Each locality shall submit to the Office of Children's Services information on utilization of residential facilities for treatment of children and length of stay in such facilities. By December 15 of each year, the Office of Children's Services shall report to the Governor and Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees on utilization rates and average lengths of stays statewide and for each locality.

Aside from acute psychiatric hospitalization, residential (or congregate) care is typically the most intensive setting utilized to meet the treatment needs of children and youth with highly challenging clinical presentations due to psychiatric, emotional, and behavioral problems. The major categories of residential placement are psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs), group homes (therapeutic group homes (TGH) licensed by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services), children's residential facilities (CRF) licensed by the Department of Social Services, and temporary care facilities, such as emergency shelters. Historically, there has been concern about the high utilization of such settings. Models such as the System of Care, the foundation of the Children's Services Act (CSA), establish a preference for treating youth within the context of their families and communities, rather than in congregate care.

In FY2025, the unduplicated number of children served in residential care increased for the fourth consecutive year (+1.4% from FY2024 and a cumulative 15.9% from FY2022), following a relatively long period of decline (an overall decrease of 34.8% from FY2015 to FY2022). In FY2025, the CSA-funded cost of these services increased by 9.5% (compared to FY2024) after several years of steady decline, which ended in FY2023. FY2025 data indicate that the number of youth in psychiatric residential treatment placements (PRTF) increased by 4.0% while group home (TGH and CRF) placements decreased by 2.5%. Placements for the most challenging youth continue to be a concern for CSA and its partner agencies (Virginia Departments of Social Services, Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and Medical Assistance Services). The need for costly out-of-state placements and sponsored residential placements (often not eligible for Medicaid reimbursement) has been an issue of considerable attention.

Medicaid and CSA are the primary funding sources for PRTF and group home placements. The data in this report reflects only CSA expenditures.

Total CSA Expenditures for Residential Placements (FY2022 – FY2025)

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Temporary Care Facility	162,389	534,853	861,877	781,280
Group Home	16,830,272	19,276,939	25,832,824	29,042,395
Residential Treatment Facility	51,854,325	58,109,360	70,312,324	76,369,049
TOTALS	\$ 68,846,986	\$ 77,921,152	\$ 97,007,025	\$ 106,192,724

Note: Amounts do not include Title IV-E and Medicaid expenditures.

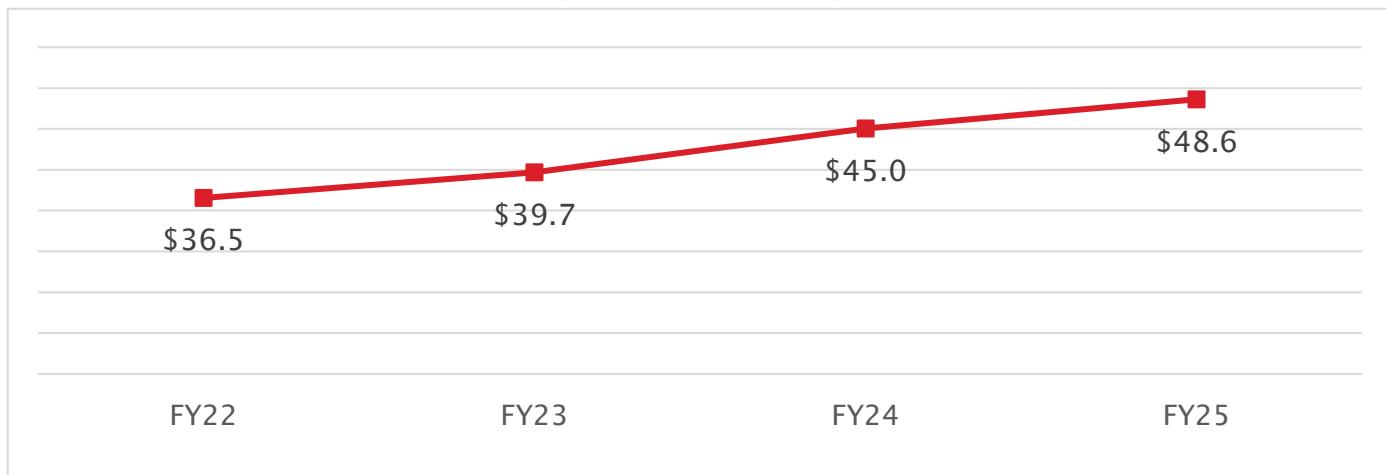
Number of Youth Served through CSA in Residential Placements (FY2022 – FY2025)

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Temporary Care Facility	19	21	25	37
Group Home	642	678	750	732
Residential Treatment Facility	1,523	1,548	1,695	1,763
Unduplicated Total	1,884	1,963	2,154	2,184

The total reflects the number of unduplicated youth across all residential settings.

Youth served in congregate care placements increased from 2,154 to 2,184 (+1.4%). This represents a slow reversal of a years-long downward trend (through FY2022), but the total number is lower than that found before the COVID-19 pandemic (2,323 youth in FY2020).

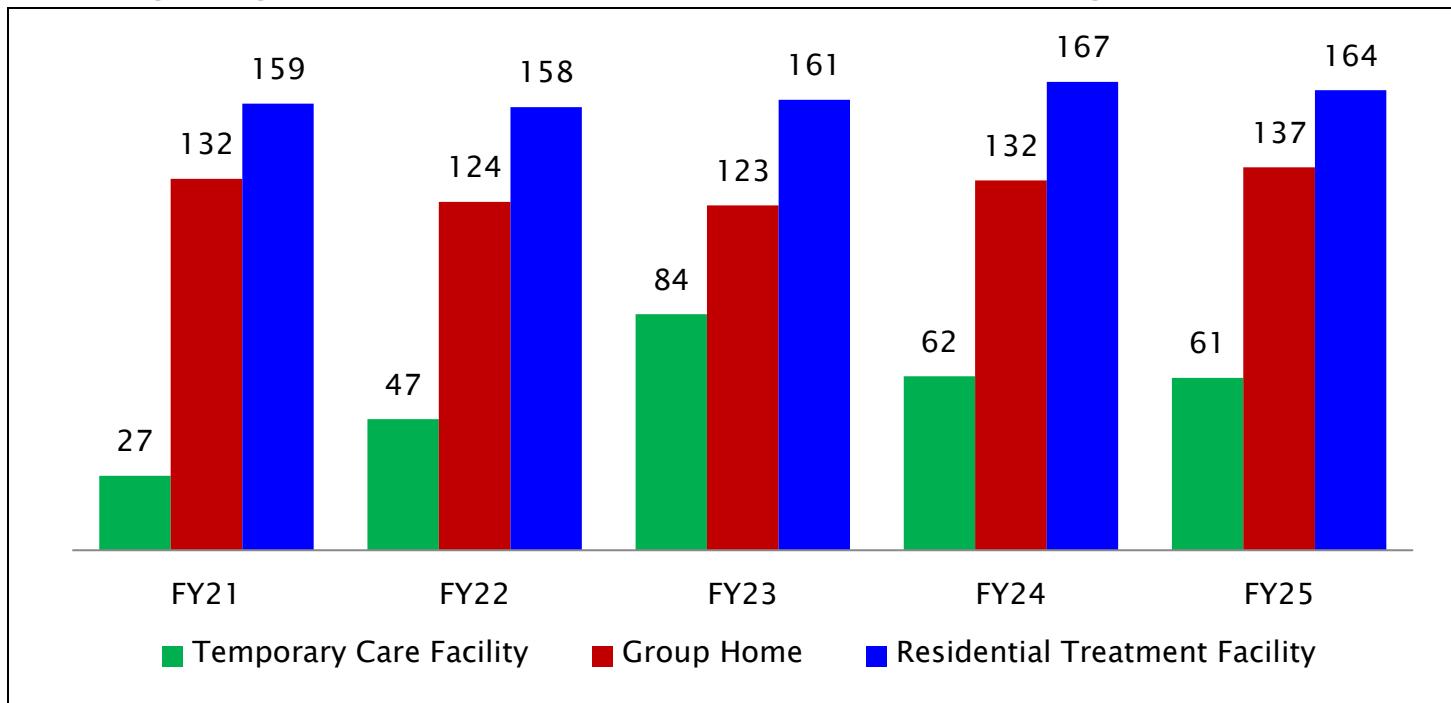
**Figure 1: Average Residential Expenditures Per Child (\$ thousands)
(FY2022 – FY2025)**



The average per-child increase in residential expenditures rose significantly from \$45,036 to \$48,623 (+8.0%), likely due to several factors. These include per diem rate increases charged by providers and a major “shift” in average annual cost (from \$35,974 in FY2024 to \$41,189 in FY2025, or +14.5%) for children in

foster care placed in group homes. In April 2023, the Virginia Department of Social Services suspended the Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) under the federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). As a result, federal Title IV-E funds were no longer available to support these placements (impacting 626 youth in FY2025 and accounting for \$3.7 million in increased costs between FY2024 and FY2025).

Average Length of Stay (Days) per Youth in Residential Care Settings (FY2021 – FY2025)



Note: Reflects the average number of days per youth within the fiscal year.

Utilization of Residential Care through the CSA by Locality, FY2023- FY2025

FIPS	Locality	UNDUPLICATED YOUTH COUNT/LOS/EXPENDITURES ACROSS ALL RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT TYPES								
		FY2023			FY2024			FY2025		
		Youth	Avg LOS	Expenditures (\$)	Youth	Avg LOS	Expenditures (\$)	Youth	Avg LOS	Expenditures (\$)
001	Accomack	8	177	\$359,308	10	246	\$519,091	4	320	\$329,881
003	Albemarle	28	211	\$2,146,447	25	199	\$2,681,113	29	204	\$2,353,761
005	Alleghany	4	172	\$69,982	3	155	\$100,876	8	89	\$286,050
007	Amelia	6	127	\$205,397	5	246	\$273,726	4	172	\$138,676
009	Amherst	11	96	\$144,067	8	118	\$127,073	13	111	\$176,067
011	Appomattox	11	144	\$231,850	11	131	\$329,257	10	173	\$402,093
013	Arlington	38	127	\$1,813,646	56	118	\$2,616,192	54	142	\$2,652,389
015	Augusta	29	209	\$1,028,944	32	214	\$1,252,175	31	189	\$1,217,420
017	Bath	3	26	\$36,947	4	157	\$250,692	2	19	\$28,388
019	Bedford County	34	183	\$1,328,899	42	207	\$1,595,627	48	206	\$2,022,163
021	Bland	4	254	\$172,661	5	149	\$225,661	2	170	\$101,119
023	Botetourt	4	214	\$157,725	6	125	\$107,622	7	184	\$352,581
025	Brunswick	5	194	\$217,371	5	209	\$209,005	5	207	\$158,057
027	Buchanan	6	163	\$169,252	17	150	\$471,823	20	141	\$703,160
029	Buckingham	8	197	\$419,730	10	253	\$647,685	7	225	\$564,640
031	Campbell	16	204	\$615,890	23	193	\$904,345	26	164	\$1,050,451
033	Caroline	7	192	\$229,512	6	172	\$216,691	9	192	\$402,535
035	Carroll	31	209	\$1,259,097	28	169	\$1,046,266	20	218	\$922,122
036	Charles City	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
037	Charlotte	4	175	\$130,698	2	280	\$84,976	3	190	\$97,934
041	Chesterfield	66	160	\$2,175,519	58	195	\$2,561,630	47	185	\$1,761,341
043	Clarke	2	343	\$88,317	3	163	\$72,329	4	251	\$242,524
045	Craig	1	181	\$23,247	3	162	\$77,073	3	253	\$153,845
047	Culpeper	11	150	\$482,366	11	159	\$525,805	16	194	\$981,432
049	Cumberland	4	204	\$83,142	2	148	\$25,646	1	31	\$2,640
051	Dickenson	13	181	\$629,825	12	98	\$466,473	11	171	\$857,881
053	Dinwiddie	11	155	\$400,056	10	81	\$199,980	7	133	\$140,696
057	Essex	7	126	\$151,548	6	204	\$392,219	2	274	\$118,347
061	Fauquier	18	210	\$750,110	21	185	\$890,551	18	205	\$1,026,833
063	Floyd	9	228	\$559,394	7	224	\$335,009	5	205	\$303,057
065	Fluvanna	3	67	\$49,216	5	106	\$126,193	13	163	\$547,468
067	Franklin County	39	181	\$1,284,726	43	203	\$1,701,380	52	213	\$2,154,845
069	Frederick	21	162	\$823,448	16	173	\$737,355	27	153	\$950,609
071	Giles	7	203	\$291,900	8	238	\$554,825	12	153	\$627,434
073	Gloucester	4	177	\$150,016	5	192	\$246,972	6	193	\$185,789
075	Goochland	8	188	\$220,021	8	146	\$411,301	7	226	\$492,866
077	Grayson	6	161	\$161,049	8	141	\$222,577	9	209	\$511,887
079	Greene	12	157	\$347,327	16	160	\$300,293	15	117	\$379,969
083	Halifax	14	145	\$510,396	9	251	\$570,213	9	213	\$647,043
085	Hanover	34	217	\$1,341,453	36	156	\$1,041,707	30	202	\$1,307,399

Utilization of Residential Care through the CSA by Locality, FY2023- FY2025

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		FY2023			FY2024			FY2025		
		Youth	Avg LOS	Expenditures (\$)	Youth	Avg LOS	Expenditures (\$)	Youth	Avg LOS	Expenditures (\$)
087	Henrico	49	176	\$1,602,872	63	173	\$2,152,772	59	172	\$2,652,709
089	Henry	28	189	\$1,196,485	35	220	\$1,674,077	29	174	\$1,352,675
091	Highland	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
093	Isle of Wight	4	165	\$106,582	3	29	\$15,580	4	134	\$176,349
095	James City	11	162	\$358,213	5	48	\$97,010	2	163	\$124,954
097	King & Queen	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0	1	264	\$111,936
099	King George	11	111	\$231,362	14	192	\$503,240	12	178	\$563,459
101	King William	2	95	\$38,410	3	192	\$182,114	2	70	\$23,094
103	Lancaster	2	157	\$35,882	2	61	\$51,508	6	158	\$172,865
105	Lee	14	165	\$839,127	14	202	\$1,163,410	14	199	\$1,220,144
107	Loudoun	32	206	\$2,023,336	36	183	\$2,103,544	33	211	\$3,131,080
109	Louisa	22	213	\$1,128,832	25	186	\$1,026,788	24	203	\$1,054,021
111	Lunenburg	10	217	\$401,020	10	194	\$434,472	6	271	\$373,801
113	Madison	2	154	\$33,281	5	143	\$170,052	9	192	\$788,576
115	Mathews	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0	1	259	\$30,144
117	Mecklenburg	10	148	\$268,071	15	153	\$442,566	17	203	\$813,019
119	Middlesex	1	148	\$13,094	1	41	\$3,680	1	164	\$15,540
121	Montgomery	11	121	\$214,684	13	173	\$309,989	18	133	\$544,503
125	Nelson	7	162	\$248,210	7	162	\$293,041	16	125	\$552,529
127	New Kent	6	174	\$157,011	3	92	\$81,802	2	259	\$151,004
131	Northampton	1	341	\$68,605	1	157	\$27,548	2	176	\$69,812
133	Northumberland	3	68	\$52,471	4	182	\$148,296	6	167	\$130,149
135	Nottoway	3	142	\$70,314	2	196	\$61,395	3	148	\$28,064
137	Orange	23	211	\$707,718	24	194	\$839,819	18	232	\$1,181,592
139	Page	17	188	\$1,059,441	17	166	\$659,783	12	207	\$699,691
141	Patrick	12	169	\$639,407	15	274	\$1,241,551	12	227	\$548,610
143	Pittsylvania	25	166	\$895,965	27	190	\$1,496,207	29	221	\$1,771,041
145	Powhatan	5	72	\$38,206	6	187	\$139,808	4	335	\$199,525
147	Prince Edward	3	235	\$141,181	2	231	\$197,987	8	144	\$197,384
149	Prince George	3	127	\$88,815	5	172	\$182,491	3	132	\$85,473
153	Prince William	59	170	\$2,473,910	71	179	\$3,101,926	84	172	\$3,962,017
155	Pulaski	15	147	\$444,014	19	173	\$791,801	13	88	\$298,031
157	Rappahannock	5	241	\$744,728	3	289	\$253,019	3	239	\$339,301
159	Richmond County	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0	1	359	\$351,533
161	Roanoke County	33	145	\$944,929	37	200	\$1,998,369	35	190	\$1,719,191
163	Rockbridge	15	162	\$461,925	18	240	\$1,231,279	22	193	\$1,123,248
165	Rockingham	49	170	\$1,895,017	62	178	\$2,676,672	61	225	\$3,693,069
167	Russell	10	166	\$501,679	15	149	\$684,533	18	150	\$695,429
169	Scott	5	109	\$89,123	6	174	\$144,602	7	120	\$151,745
171	Shenandoah	24	155	\$991,222	19	210	\$1,045,370	30	191	\$1,502,750

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173	Smyth	21	226	\$958,986	25	208	\$920,323	25	199	\$1,171,897
175	Southampton	1	53	\$4,055	1	305	\$60,391	5	98	\$123,780
177	Spotsylvania	34	143	\$876,599	33	180	\$1,369,087	35	208	\$2,345,117
179	Stafford	16	157	\$434,920	15	196	\$704,666	13	121	\$407,488
181	Surry	1	334	\$47,958	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
183	Sussex	4	150	\$78,970	3	259	\$129,448	4	186	\$175,460
185	Tazewell	25	193	\$1,000,826	17	202	\$936,663	18	160	\$896,021
187	Warren	9	202	\$397,236	13	158	\$552,844	17	161	\$877,366
191	Washington	26	153	\$878,123	34	205	\$1,350,509	29	201	\$1,383,809
193	Westmoreland	6	123	\$250,782	5	121	\$211,592	5	271	\$321,613
195	Wise	4	89	\$41,321	10	87	\$158,646	13	193	\$576,084
197	Wythe	14	187	\$432,948	11	183	\$454,206	15	139	\$668,167
199	York	14	214	\$831,853	15	260	\$952,200	14	162	\$513,414
510	Alexandria	18	153	\$498,896	29	142	\$1,442,712	16	122	\$691,430
520	Bristol	12	214	\$624,010	12	201	\$654,437	13	148	\$658,379
530	Buena Vista	9	267	\$418,481	6	212	\$400,874	4	122	\$127,443
540	Charlottesville	8	152	\$205,547	10	169	\$384,218	16	217	\$1,366,881
550	Chesapeake	13	153	\$420,739	21	184	\$818,273	33	108	\$871,722
570	Colonial Heights	5	148	\$141,458	2	277	\$58,024	7	194	\$333,425
580	Covington	4	155	\$82,609	4	107	\$81,515	6	163	\$372,981
590	Danville	27	201	\$2,395,766	25	190	\$2,317,356	29	146	\$1,667,510
620	Franklin City	7	155	\$208,716	6	148	\$125,732	8	195	\$336,728
630	Fredericksburg	14	122	\$365,467	17	213	\$1,296,823	22	197	\$939,040
640	Galax	12	155	\$426,319	11	202	\$437,754	6	204	\$348,451
650	Hampton	1	320	\$234,095	2	33	\$34,245	0	0	\$0
660	Harrisonburg	26	157	\$1,039,683	30	161	\$1,281,478	31	142	\$1,242,518
670	Hopewell	8	199	\$271,701	14	210	\$551,958	18	206	\$999,942
678	Lexington	0	0	\$0	2	226	\$59,515	3	151	\$62,196
680	Lynchburg	52	162	\$1,335,803	51	163	\$1,436,512	52	159	\$1,741,280
683	Manassas City	7	237	\$292,353	4	190	\$181,089	5	145	\$157,773
685	Manassas Park	5	131	\$122,928	3	140	\$151,096	1	256	\$220,890
690	Martinsville	10	167	\$362,333	8	201	\$335,128	6	122	\$254,510
700	Newport News	15	180	\$422,368	27	154	\$760,962	27	211	\$1,049,640
710	Norfolk	65	121	\$1,391,108	68	125	\$1,563,872	60	142	\$1,936,051
720	Norton	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0	2	86	\$111,473
730	Petersburg	12	146	\$527,031	6	245	\$568,033	11	152	\$610,609
735	Poquoson	2	215	\$104,052	2	97	\$47,125	0	0	\$0
740	Portsmouth	13	171	\$469,752	17	185	\$572,359	15	156	\$527,113
750	Radford	9	97	\$231,649	12	104	\$460,147	9	203	\$463,362
760	Richmond City	64	169	\$2,863,355	78	180	\$3,947,007	66	201	\$3,056,733
770	Roanoke City	39	181	\$1,527,983	48	185	\$2,020,520	51	229	\$3,279,358

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		Youth	Avg LOS	Expenditures (\$)	Youth	Avg LOS	Expenditures (\$)	Youth	Avg LOS	Expenditures (\$)
775	Salem	15	168	\$409,060	16	215	\$679,617	16	187	\$653,690
790	Staunton	8	195	\$237,716	10	222	\$592,003	8	130	\$193,096
800	Suffolk	12	159	\$448,555	15	148	\$555,402	25	156	\$898,420
810	Virginia Beach	67	188	\$3,626,612	69	183	\$3,172,852	67	193	\$3,271,915
820	Waynesboro	12	179	\$424,537	16	146	\$421,631	12	208	\$498,536
830	Williamsburg	4	224	\$178,416	1	31	\$773	2	227	\$127,419
840	Winchester	15	153	\$551,413	8	176	\$350,098	13	167	\$545,979
1200	Greensville/Emporia	4	180	\$127,342	3	157	\$57,450	3	191	\$73,139
1300	Fairfax/Falls Church	115	128	\$6,530,656	127	154	\$8,640,333	105	176	\$7,089,424
	Totals	1,963	169	\$77,921,152	2,154	177	\$97,007,025	2,184	181	\$106,192,723

OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ADMINISTERING THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT



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PRIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES UNDER THE CSA

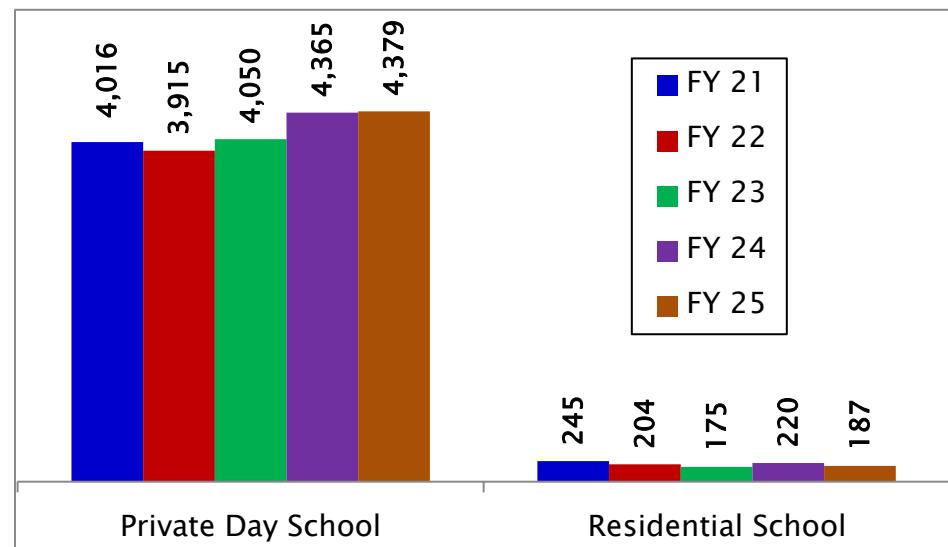
Annual Report to the General Assembly, December 1, 2025

In accordance with the Appropriation Act, Chapter 725, Item 268 (K)(2)

Item 268K.2. The Office of Children's Services shall report on funding for special education day treatment and residential services, including but not limited to the number of children served annually, average cost of care, type of service provided, length of stay, referral source, and ultimate disposition.

Children and youth with educational disabilities enrolled in approved private school special education programs based on their Individualized Education Program (IEP) are a significant component of the Children's Services Act (CSA) population. These children are eligible for CSA-funded services as specified in the *Code of Virginia*, §§ 2.2-5211 and 2.2-5212. Services are provided in a private day school or private residential school, per the student's IEP.

**Figure 1: Number of Youth Served
Private Special Education Services (FY2021 – 2025)**

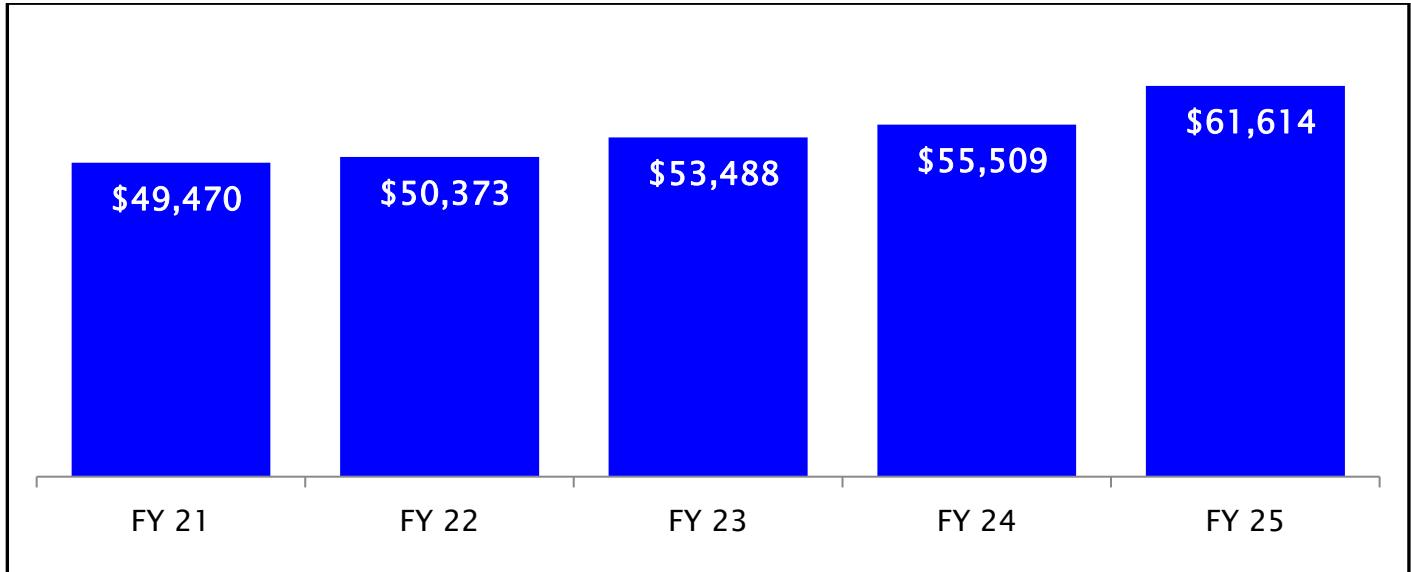


FY2025 unduplicated count of youth who received services resulting from an Individualized Education Program (IEP) requiring a private school placement = 4,502

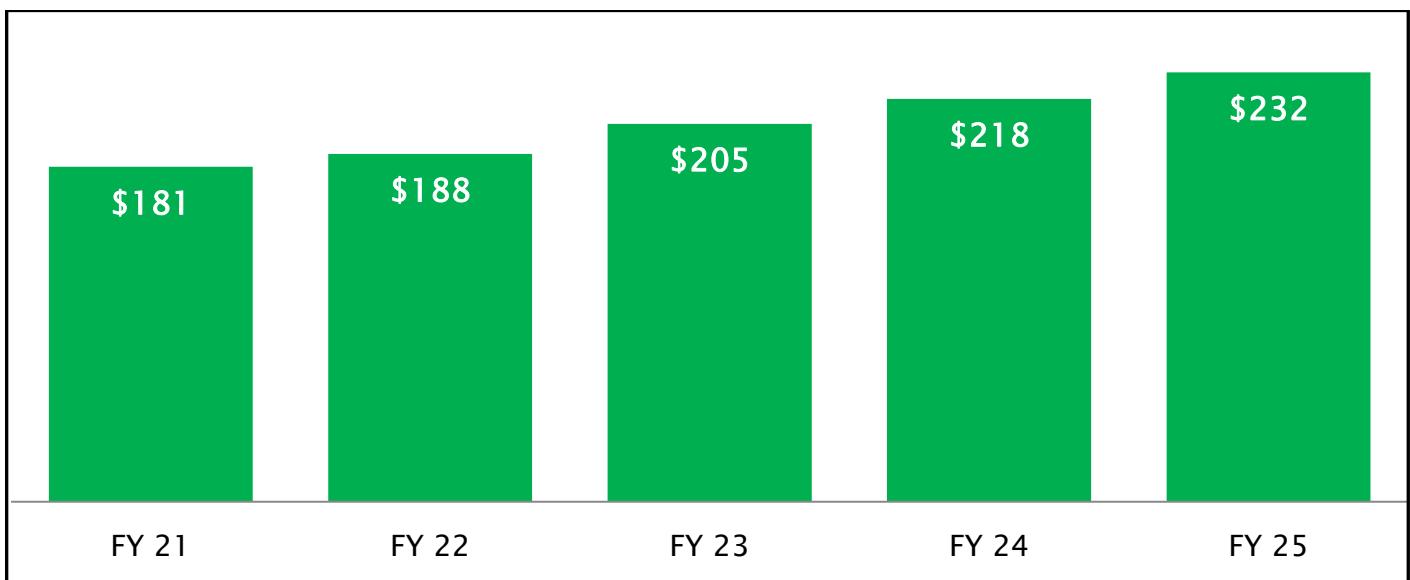
**Figure 2: Net CSA Expenditures by Placement Type
Special Education Services**

	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Private Day School	\$214,034,041	\$240,291,578	\$268,592,858
Private Residential School	\$8,744,410	\$9,777,794	\$8,794,111
Total	\$222,778,451	\$250,069,372	\$277,386,969

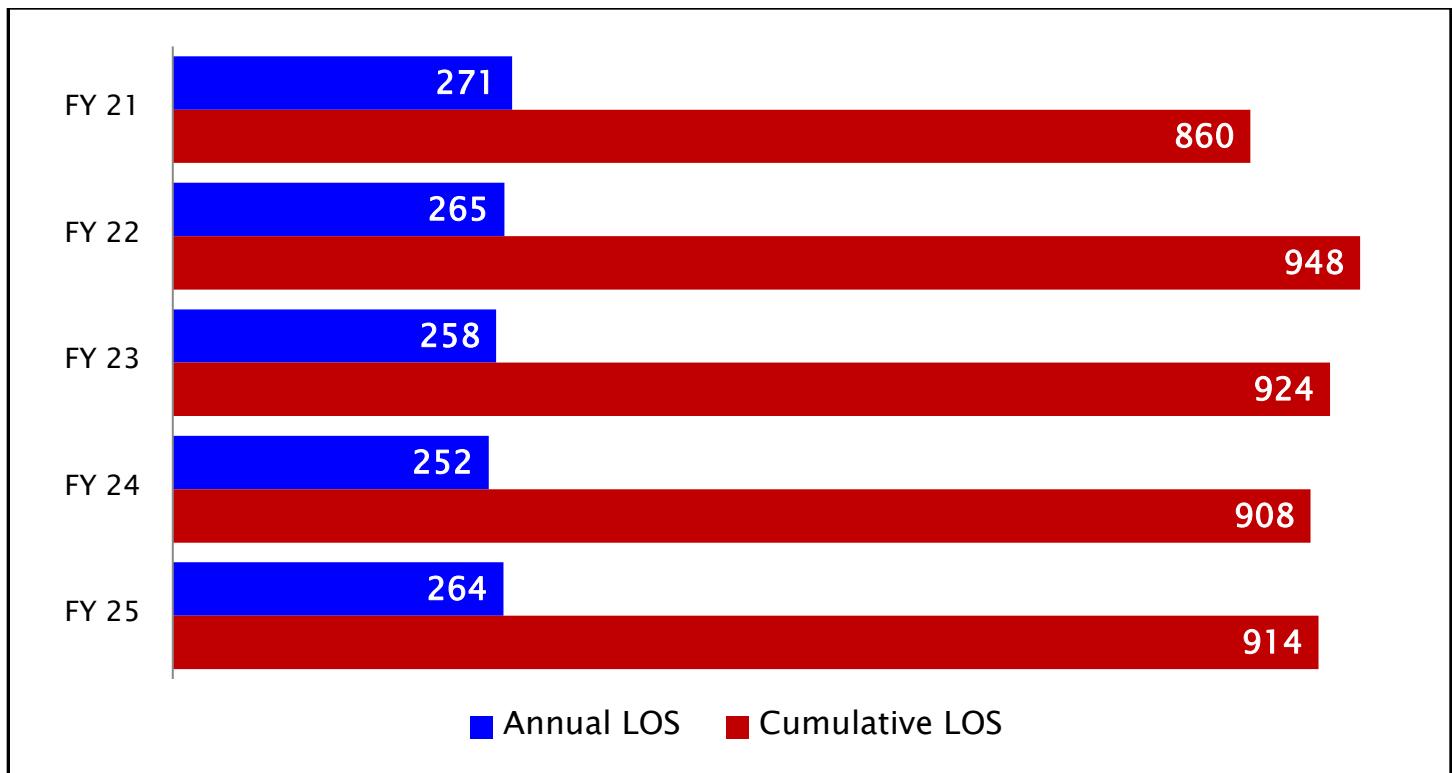
**Figure 3: Average Annual CSA Expenditure per Child
All Private Special Education Placements (FY2021 – 2025)**



**Figure 4: Average Daily Cost per Child
Private Day Special Education Placements (FY2021 – 2025)**



**Figure 5: Average Annual and Cumulative Length of Stay (Number of Days per Year)
Private Day Placements (FY2021 – 2025)**



Discussion

The growth in private special education placements, especially private day schools, has received extensive attention in recent years. CSA expenditures for private day special education placements account for the largest share of overall CSA growth since 2015. In FY2025, private day special education placements accounted for 45% of net CSA expenditures, including state general and local matching funds. The number of students served in such placements as required by their IEP rose 24% (3,416 to 4,251 between FY2015 and FY2020) and, after a temporary decline over the years of the COVID-19 pandemic, has in FY2025, risen to its highest level ever (4,379 students), albeit an essentially unchanged number from FY2024 (<1% increase, see Figure 1). This accounted for 27% of the children served through the CSA. As the number of students served has increased, per-student daily tuition expenditures also evidence significant growth (6% from FY2024 to FY2025) (see Figure 4). The length of stay (number of days served in the current fiscal year) has remained generally stable, averaging 262 days across the last five years. The cumulative length of stay across multiple years has also remained stable (see Figure 5), averaging around 2.5 years per student.

The 2021 Session of the General Assembly added specific CSA eligibility for students with disabilities to receive up to 12 months of transitional services to assist with their successful return from private day to public school settings. Funding for these services was made available to localities on July 1, 2021. In FY2025, 21 localities (vs. 24 in FY2024) accessed this transitional funding, supporting 64 students (vs. 57 students in FY2024) with net expenditures of \$1.4 million (a slight increase from FY2024). To determine the outcomes of

these transitional services, specifically how many students remained in public school and did not return to the private day setting, OCS determined that of the 102 unique students who completed transitional services in FY2024 or FY2025, 26 remained in or returned to a private day setting after the conclusion of the transitional services. This represents a 75.5% “success” rate. It should be noted that some of these students completed their transitional services at the “tail-end” of FY2025, and their “final “outcomes may not be known until some time after the beginning of FY2026 (2025 – 2026 school year).

The 2025 session of the General Assembly directed that the Office of Children's Services (OCS) limit the rate at which the state reimburses localities for private day special education programs to no more than 5 percent over the rates provided the previous year (Chapter 725, Item 268.L.). This directive will take effect on July 1, 2025, for the 2025 – 2026 school year and was linked to a \$5 million reduction in the state allocation to support CSA reimbursement to localities.

The Virginia Department of Education submits to the General Assembly an “Annual Report on the Outcome Data Measuring Student Progress for Students with Disabilities Enrolled in Special Education Private Day Schools.” The most recent iteration of that report is RD209 (2025) and can be found at:

<https://rga.lis.virginia.gov/Published/2025/RD209>. The next report is due in January 2026.

Additionally, the Appropriation Act (Chapter 725, Items 269.B.1. and B.2.) states:

B.1. Out of this appropriation, \$100,000 the first year and \$100,000 the second year from the general fund shall be provided to the Office of Children's Services (OCS) to contract with the Virginia Department of Education's Office of Special Education to conduct a review of private day placement decisions in those localities with a higher than average number of placements and make recommendations to the local education agency. OCS shall, on its website by October 1 of each year, (i) show the number of students in private day placements by locality; (ii) calculate the ratio of children in private day placements to the number of students in the local education agency (LEA); and (iii) identify the LEAs that exceed the statewide average of private day placements compared to the LEA's enrollment.

2. The Office of Comprehensive Services, in coordination with the Virginia Department of Education's Office of Special Education, shall report to the General Assembly by October 1 of each year: (i) recommendations made to each LEA and progress made in improving the LEA's ability to serve students; (ii) an assessment of barriers to students returning to a LEA from a private day placement including instances when the LEA refuses or is unable to provide a less restrictive environment due to a lack of available transition services and recommendations for returning students to public school who are deemed eligible; and (iii) trends in behavioral and emotional diagnoses including students on home-based instruction that may require private day placements.

The data required by this Item can be found on the Office of Children's Services website as follows:
The 2024–2025 school year data on utilization of private day placements by school division can be found at:
https://www.csa.virginia.gov/content/doc/Utilization_of_Private_Day_Special_Education_Placements_2024-2025_School_Year.pdf

The report on the DOE analysis of barriers to youth returning to public schools and recommendations can be found at: https://www.csa.virginia.gov/content/doc/Private_Day_Placements_VDOE_Review_2024-2025.pdf

OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ADMINISTERING THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT



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Regional and Statewide Training Regarding the Children's Services Act (CSA)

Annual Report to the General Assembly, December 1, 2025

In accordance with the Appropriation Act Chapter 725 Item 268 (B)(6)

Item 268.B.6. A report on all regional and statewide training sessions conducted during the fiscal year, including (i) a description of each program and trainers, (ii) the dates of the training and the number of attendees for each program, (iii) a summary of evaluations of these programs by attendees, and (iv) the funds expended, shall be made to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees and to the members of the State Executive Council by December 1 of each year.

The mission of the Office of Children's Services (OCS) is to facilitate a collaborative system of services and funding that is child-centered, family-focused, and community-based when addressing the strengths and needs of youth and their families in the Commonwealth of Virginia. OCS annually develops and implements a robust training plan to support this mission, including proposed training topics, audiences, venues, and formats. The FY2024 training plan saw a continued return to higher numbers of in-person training events and the continued use of virtual delivery platforms and asynchronous e-learning offerings. Virtual training approaches have proven effective in OCS's ability to reach larger numbers of participants across geographic regions. The most recent CSA conference was held in October 2024 in Roanoke.

In accordance with the FY2025 training plan, approved by the State Executive Council for Children's Services, the following activities were implemented:

- Fifty-three (53) local, regional, or statewide training sessions were provided to 2,658 (non-unique) participants. This report summarizes training topics, dates, and participant attendance numbers on pages 2 through 5.
- Twenty-one (21) online training courses were offered through the Virginia Learning Center and the Praed Foundation CANS (Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths) training site, with a total enrollment of 6,395 (non-unique) participants.
- Over 600 individuals attended the 13th annual CSA Conference. A combined pre-conference session was held for local CSA Coordinators, Community Policy and Management Team (CPMT) Chairs/members, and Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT) members. The keynote speaker, Dr. Sobia Kahn, from the Center for Implementation, worked with participants on "Fostering Change through Trust and Power."
- The online "OCS Help Desk" was maintained, and approximately 775 individual requests were answered.

Funds Expended for Regional and Statewide Training

Annual CSA Conference and Pre-Conference Sessions	\$ 74,624
New CSA Coordinator Academy	\$ 11,047
Online CANS Training/Certification	\$ 27,000
Go-to-Meeting/Go-To-Webinar Subscription/Zoom Government	\$ 2,000
TOTAL	\$ 114,671

Training for CSA Local, Regional, and Stakeholder Constituent Groups
Fiscal Year 2025

In-person and "Live" Virtual Events			
TOPIC (Trainer)	PARTICIPANT GROUP	DATE(S)	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
HFW Refresher Training – Rocky Mount (Anna Antell)	Experienced HFW Facilitators	7/23/2024	14
HFW Refresher Training – Roanoke/Salem (Anna Antell)	Experienced HFW Facilitators	7/24/2024	22
HFW Overview (Anna Antell)	Roanoke Area CSA Stakeholders	7/24/2024	17
Using CSA Data for Continuous Quality Improvement (Carrie Thompson)	Alexandria CSA Teams	7/24/2024	11
Education Stability for Children and Youth in Foster Care (Kristi Schabo)	DSS and DOE School Liaisons	7/30/2024	47
CANS and Service Planning (Anna Antell and Carol Wilson)	Culpeper County CSA Teams	8/1/2024	44
Overview of the CSA Website (Kristi Schabo)	Virginia Parent Leader Network	8/12/2024	9
HFW Refresher Training – Richmond (Anna Antell)	Experienced HFW Facilitators	8/13/2024	14
HFW Refresher Training – Charlottesville (Anna Antell)	Experienced HFW Facilitators	8/14/2024	39
HFW Overview (Anna Antell)	Charlottesville Area CSA Stakeholders	8/14/2024	3
FAPT and CMPT Roles and Responsibilities (Mary Bell and Courtney Sexton)	Bristol/Washington/Smyth County Area CSA Stakeholders	8/15/2024	36
CANS and Service Planning (Anna Antell and Carol Wilson)	Bristol/Washington/Smyth County Area CSA Stakeholders	8/15/2024	73
HFW Refresher Training – Fairfax (Anna Antell)	Experienced HFW Facilitators	8/21/2024	34
HFW Overview (Anna Antell)	Patrick County CSA Stakeholders	9/3/2024	15
HFW Overview (Anna Antell)	Statewide (Virtual)	9/25/2024	51
FAPT and CMPT Roles and Responsibilities (Mary Bell and Courtney Sexton)	Newport News CSA Stakeholders	9/27/2024	16
CSA Preconference: Fostering Change Through Trust and Power	CSA Coordinators, FAPT and CPMT Members	10/15/2024	165
13th Annual CSA Conference	All CSA Stakeholders	10/16 – 10/17/2024	583
High Fidelity Wraparound: Introduction (Anna Antell)	New ICC Providers	10/21 – 10/24/24	36
CSA Overview (Mary Bell)	Partnership of Office Services Support Employees (LDSS)	10/23/2024	50
HFW Overview (Anna Antell)	Prince George County CSA Teams	11/6/2024	16
CANS and Service Planning (Anna Antell and Carol Wilson)	Wise/Lee County CSA Stakeholders	11/8/2024	54

In-person and "Live" Virtual Events

TOPIC (Trainer)	PARTICIPANT GROUP	DATE(S)	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
CSA Update (Scott Reiner)	VCOPPA Annual Critical Issues Symposium	11/13/2024	60
FAPT and CMPT Roles and Responsibilities (Mary Bell and Courtney Sexton)	Tazewell CSA Stakeholders	11/14/2024	14
Using CSA Data for Continuous Quality Improvement (Carrie Thompson)	James City County, York, Poquoson CSA Stakeholders	11/19/2024	14
CANS and Service Planning (Anna Antell and Carol Wilson)	Piedmont Area CSA Stakeholders	11/19/2024	42
FAPT and CMPT Roles and Responsibilities (Mary Bell and Courtney Sexton)	Portsmouth CSA Stakeholders	11/20/2024	21
Family Engagement (Mary Bell and Anna Antell)	Franklin County CSA Teams	12/6/2024	21
Family Engagement (Mary Bell and Anna Antell)	Washington/Smyth/Bristol CSA Teams	1/24/2025	49
Using CSA Data for Continuous Quality Improvement (Carrie Thompson)	Alleghany, Covington, Bath County CSA Stakeholders	1/28/2025	15
CANS and Service Planning (Anna Antell and Carol Wilson)	Shenandoah County CSA Stakeholders	1/29/2025	16
Using CSA Data for Continuous Quality Improvement (Carrie Thompson)	Frederick County CPMT	2/24/2025	9
CQI and Strategic Planning (Anna Antell and Carrie Thompson)	Wise/Lee County CSA Stakeholders	3/14/2025	14
Best Interest Determinations for Youth in Foster Care (Kristi Schabo)	School division foster care, LDSS educational liaisons	3/19/2025	91
CANS and Service Planning (Anna Antell and Carol Wilson)	Prince William County CSA Stakeholders	3/24/2025	44
Family Engagement (Mary Bell and Anna Antell)	Wise/Lee/Scott County CSA Stakeholders	4/11/2025	46
CSA Team Parent Representative Training (Anna Antell)	CPMT and FAPT Parent Representatives	4/23/2025	33
FAPT and CMPT Roles and Responsibilities (Mary Bell and Courtney Sexton)	Harrisonburg/Rockingham CSA Teams	4/24/2025	29
CSA Parental Agreements (Carol Wilson)	Wise County CSA Teams	4/25/2025	30
High Fidelity Wraparound Overview (Anna Antell)	Manassas Park CPMT	4/28/2025	14
Family Engagement (Mary Bell and Anna Antell)	Lunenburg County CSA Stakeholders	4/29/2025	12
New CSA Coordinator Academy	New CSA Coordinators (past 12 months)	5/6 – 5/8/2025	29
CSA Basic for Military Family Liaisons (Mary Bell and Kristi Schabo)	Exceptional Military Family Member Case Liaisons	5/15/2025	50
CANS and Service Planning (Anna Antell and Carol Wilson)	Tazewell County CSA Stakeholders	5/20/2025	18
FAPT and CMPT Roles and Responsibilities (Mary Bell and Courtney Sexton)	Pittsylvania County CSA Stakeholders	5/20/2025	29

CQI and Strategic Planning (Anna Antell and Carrie Thompson)	Surry County CSA Stakeholders	5/21/2025	10
High Fidelity Wraparound Overview (Anna Antell)	Franklin County CSA Stakeholders	5/30/2024	23
FAPT and CMPT Roles and Responsibilities (Mary Bell and Courtney Sexton)	New River Valley CSA Stakeholders	6/6/2025	22
Family Engagement (Mary Bell and Anna Antell)	Shenandoah County CSA Stakeholders	6/10/2025	25
Using CSA Data for Continuous Quality Improvement (Carrie Thompson)	Warren County CSA Stakeholders	6/10/2025	4
CHINS: Changes to Law and Policy (Webinar)	All CSA Stakeholders	6/18/2025	237
New J & DR Judge Pre-Bench (Scott Reiner)	Newly Elected J & DR Judges	6/25/2025	12
CHINS: Changes to Law and Policy (Webinar)	All CSA Stakeholders	6/26/2025	276
Total			2,658

Online (Asynchronous) Courses

TOPIC	PARTICIPANT GROUP	DATE(S)	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
CSA for New LDSS Staff – Module 1	New LDSS Staff and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	276
CSA for New LDSS Staff – Module 2	New LDSS Staff and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	256
CSA for New LDSS Staff – Module 3	New LDSS Staff and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	253
CSA for New LDSS Staff – Module 4	New LDSS Staff and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	246
CSA for New LDSS Staff – Module 5	New LDSS Staff and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	250
CSA for Non-DSS Case Managers	New Case Managers from non-DSS Agencies	ongoing	39
CSA for FAPT Members	Local FAPT Members	ongoing	78
Special Education Wraparound Funding Under the CSA	All CSA Stakeholders	ongoing	54
CSA Continuous Quality Improvement	All CSA Stakeholders	ongoing	50
Can CSA Pay? (Standalone Course)	All CSA Stakeholders	ongoing	61
CPMT Training – Module 1 (The Big Picture)	CPMT Members and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	80
CPMT Training – Module 2 (CPMT/FAPT Roles and Responsibilities)	CPMT Members and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	107
CPMT Training – Module 3 (Funding and Eligibility)	CPMT Members and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	61
CPMT Training – Module 4 (Can CSA Pay?)	CPMT Members and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	64
CPMT Training – Module 5 (Utilization Review)	CPMT Members and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	64

Online (Asynchronous) Courses			
TOPIC	PARTICIPANT GROUP	DATE(S)	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
CPMT Training – Module 6 (Audit)	CPMT Members and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	48
CSA Fiscal Overview	CSA Finance Staff and Other Interested Parties	ongoing	76
CSA for FAPT/CPMT Parental Representatives	All CSA Stakeholders	ongoing	69
CSA IT Security Training	All CSA Stakeholders	ongoing	170
CSA Parental Agreements	All CSA Stakeholders	ongoing	56
CANS Certification/Recertification Training	All Local CSA Case Managers	ongoing	4,037
Total			6.395

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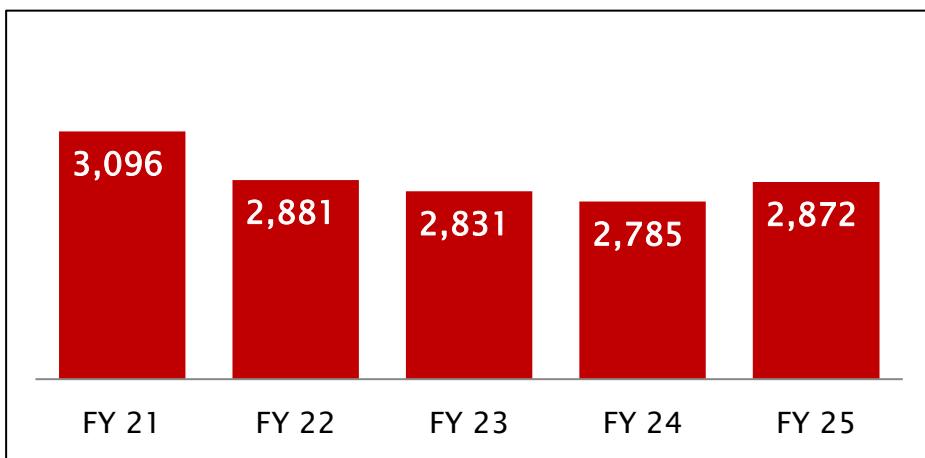
THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE SERVICES UNDER THE CSA

*Annual Report to the General Assembly, December 1, 2025
In accordance with the Appropriation Act, Chapter 725, Item 268 (K)(1)*

Item 268. K.1. The Office of Children's Services (OCS) shall report on funding for therapeutic foster care services including but not limited to the number of children served annually, average cost of care, type of service provided, length of stay, referral source, and ultimate disposition.

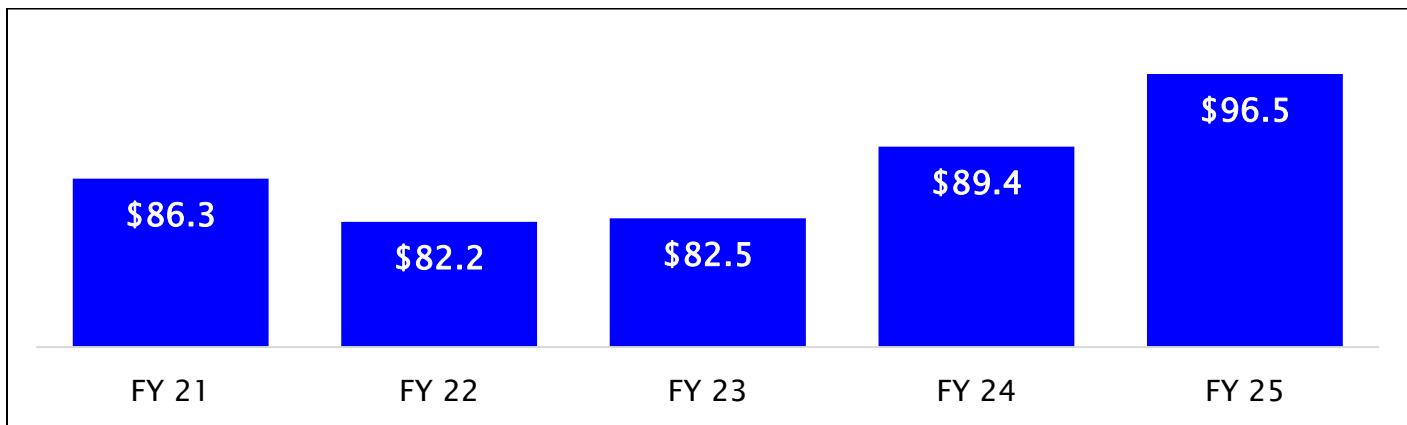
Therapeutic foster care (TFC)¹ is an intervention that addresses the placement and service needs of children in the custody of a local department of social services (LDSS). Foster parents trained, supervised, and supported by a private agency (licensed child-placing agency, or LCPA) provide TFC. TFC is family-based, goal-directed, and results-oriented, emphasizing permanency planning for children in care. An LDSS makes all referrals for TFC. The CSA reimburses localities for the (daily) cost of "support, supervision, and administration" of the TFC placement by the LCPA and for maintenance payments to the foster family. Maintenance, which the Virginia Department of Social Services defines as: "payments made on behalf of a child in foster care to cover the cost of (and the cost of providing) food, clothing, shelter, daily supervision, school supplies, a child's personal incidentals, liability insurance with respect to a child, and reasonable travel for the child to visit with family or other caretakers and to remain in his or her previous school placement," may be partially offset by federal/state Title IV-E reimbursements for eligible children. Title IV-E funds are handled through the LDSS and the state Department of Social Services.

Therapeutic Foster Care Number of Youth Served

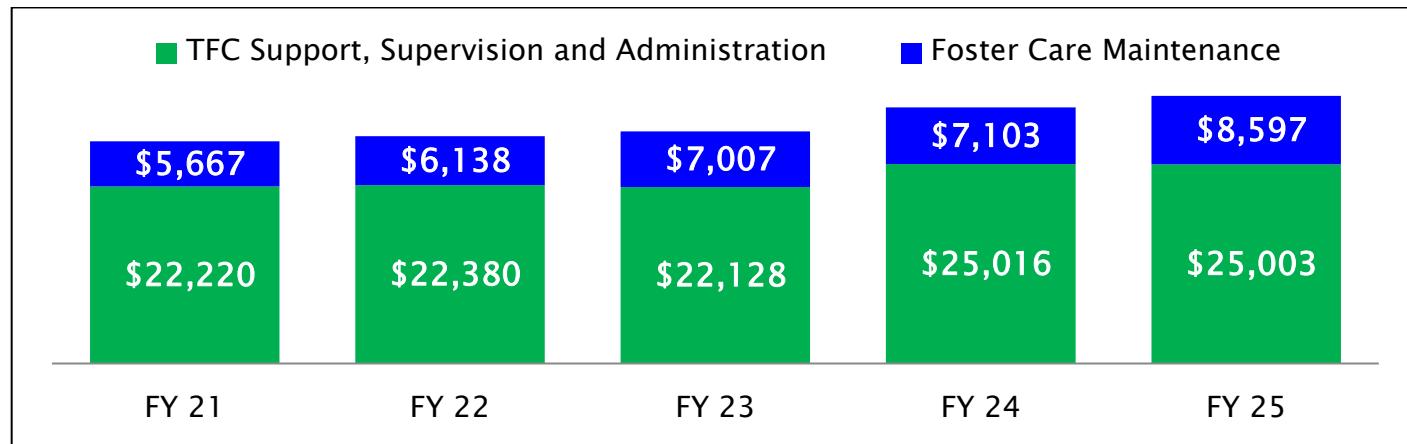


¹ The term "therapeutic" foster care is often used interchangeably with "treatment" foster care.

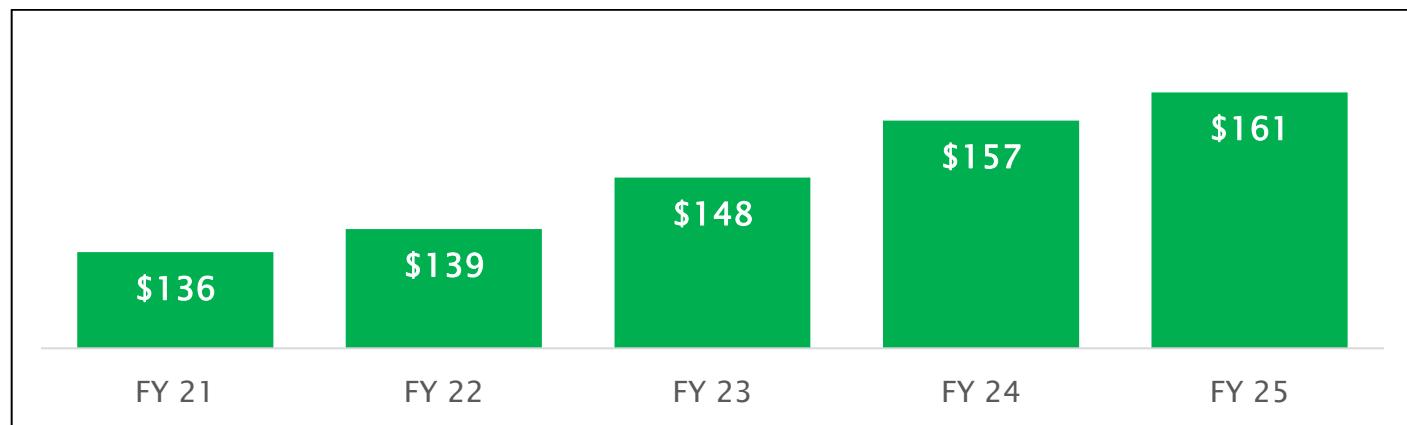
Therapeutic Foster Care
Total CSA Expenditures (Millions)



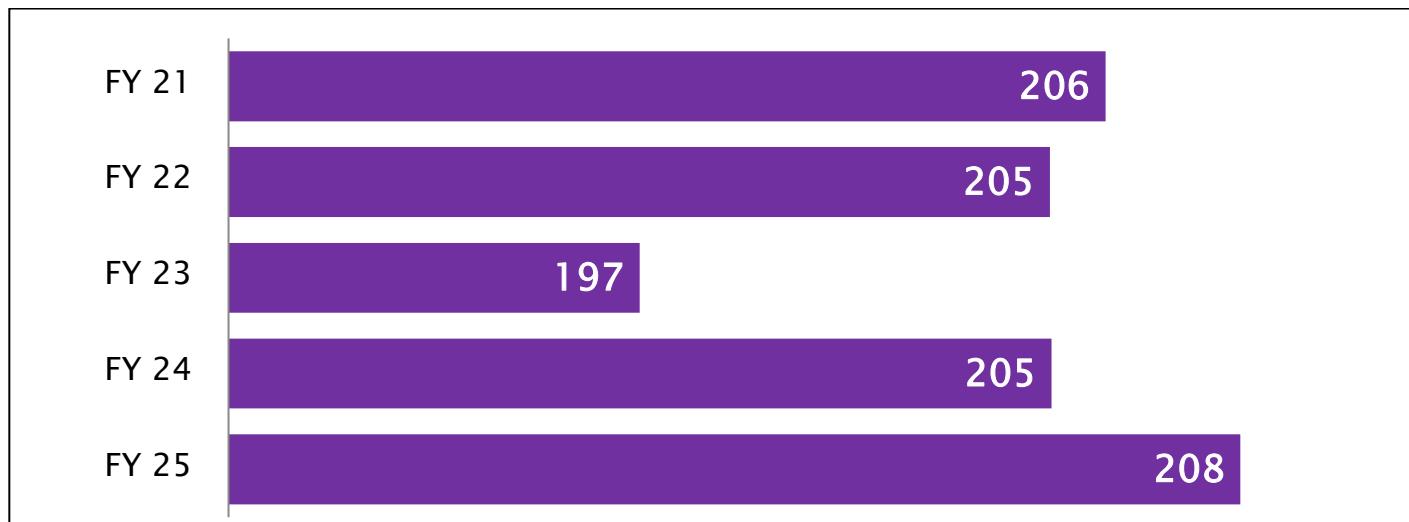
Therapeutic Foster Care
Average Annual CSA Expenditure per Child



Therapeutic Foster Care
Average Per Diem Expenditure per Child (Including Maintenance)



Therapeutic Foster Care
Average Length of Stay (Number of Days/Year)



Discussion

TFC, provided through Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPA), is a primary resource to local departments of social services (LDSS) for foster care placements in Virginia. LCPAs are private agencies that, among other services, provide foster home placements. Approximately 29% of the children in foster care on June 30, 2025 (5,695, 8% higher than in FY2024) were in a TFC program. The number of children in a TFC placement increased by 3.1% from the previous year. This utilization rate reflects ongoing challenges in LDSS's ability to establish "agency foster homes" (foster families recruited and supported by the local department) and the needs of children in foster care and their foster families for higher support than typically provided in agency foster homes. In the long term, the number of youth placed in TFC has decreased over the past five years (-7.2% since 2021). In FY2025, a TFC placement (excluding monthly maintenance and enhanced maintenance payments) averaged \$125 per day or approximately \$25,000 per child over the year. Children remained in a TFC setting for an average of 200 days during FY2025, with an overall length of stay crossing multiple fiscal years (from entry to discharge) of 455 days. The increasing overall cost for TFC placements is due to two main factors: increased maintenance costs (tied to statutorily required maintenance rate increases) and the increased number of children placed.

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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT

Biennial Report to the General Assembly, December 2025

In accordance with §2.2-2648.21, COV and Chapter 1, Item 268 (H)

Code of Virginia, §2.2-2648.

The State Executive Council for Children's Services shall:

21. Biennially publish and disseminate to members of the General Assembly and community policy and management teams a state progress report on comprehensive services to children, youth and families and a plan for such services for the next succeeding biennium. The state plan shall:

- a. Provide a fiscal profile of current and previous years' federal and state expenditures for a comprehensive service system for children, youth and families;*
- b. Incorporate information and recommendations from local comprehensive service systems with responsibility for planning and delivering services to children, youth and families;*
- c. Identify and establish goals for comprehensive services and the estimated costs of implementing these goals, report progress toward previously identified goals and establish priorities for the coming biennium;*
- d. Report and analyze expenditures associated with children who do not receive pool funding and have emotional and behavioral problems;*
- e. Identify funding streams used to purchase services in addition to pooled, Medicaid, and Title IV-E funding; and*
- f. Include such other information or recommendations as may be necessary and appropriate for the improvement and coordinated development of the state's comprehensive services system.*

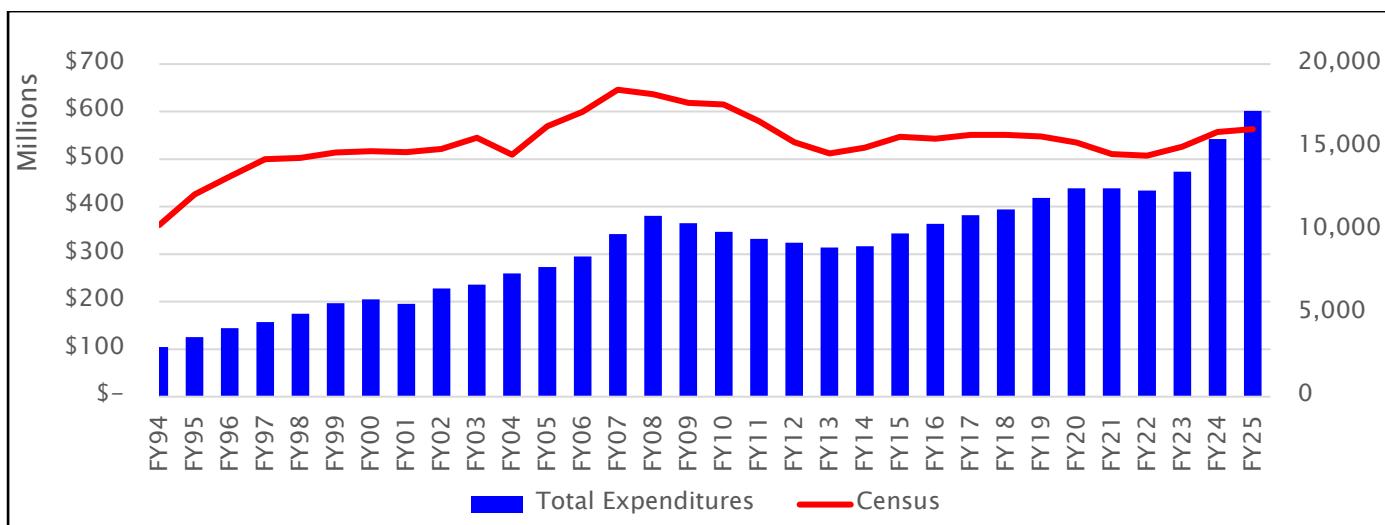
Appropriation Act, Chapter 725, Item 268. H.

Pursuant to subdivision 21 of § 2.2-2648, Code of Virginia, no later than December 20 in the odd-numbered years, the State Executive Council shall biennially publish and disseminate to members of the General Assembly and Community Policy and Management Teams a progress report on services for children, youth, and families and a plan for such services for the succeeding biennium.

The Code of Virginia and the Appropriation Act require that the State Executive Council for Children's Services (SEC) biennially publish and disseminate a progress report on services for children, youth, and families and a plan for such services for the ensuing biennium. As the administrative entity of the Council, the Office of Children's Services (OCS) is pleased to submit the following report, approved by the SEC. A report on progress meeting the goals and objectives of the 2024 - 2025 biennial Strategic Plan can be found in this report.

CSA Expenditures and Utilization

Total Expenditures / Children Served through the CSA, FY1994 – FY2025



Annual CSA expenditures (both state and local) and the number of children served rose consistently from the Act's inception in FY1994 through FY2008. Following a decline in spending and the number of children receiving services over five years (FY2009–2013), except during the COVID-19 pandemic (FY2021–2022), expenditures have increased significantly. In contrast, the CSA census (number of children served) has risen slightly and has been generally stable since FY2015. In FY2025, expenditures increased by 27.1% from the prior report issued in 2023, and the census increased by 7.0%. Overall, increased expenditures are due to higher service costs across almost all CSA-funded services, notably the rise in the number (and associated costs) of children receiving private day special education placements.

State and Federal Funding Not Included in the CSA State Pool

	<u>FY2024</u>	<u>FY2025</u>
Children's Mental Health Initiative (DBHDS)	\$ 5,648,128	\$ 5,648,128
Promoting Safe & Stable Families ¹ (DSS)	\$ 11,292,933	\$ 19,271,934
Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (DJJ)	\$ 10,379,921	\$ 10,379,921
Title IV-E (Foster Care Maintenance) ² (DSS)	\$ 35,114,222	\$ 35,371,465
Social Services Block Grant ² (DSS)	\$ 9,419,998	\$ 9,419,998
Medicaid (Treatment Foster Care, Residential Care) ³	\$ 80,025,076	\$113,570,115
TOTAL	\$151,880,278	\$193,661,561

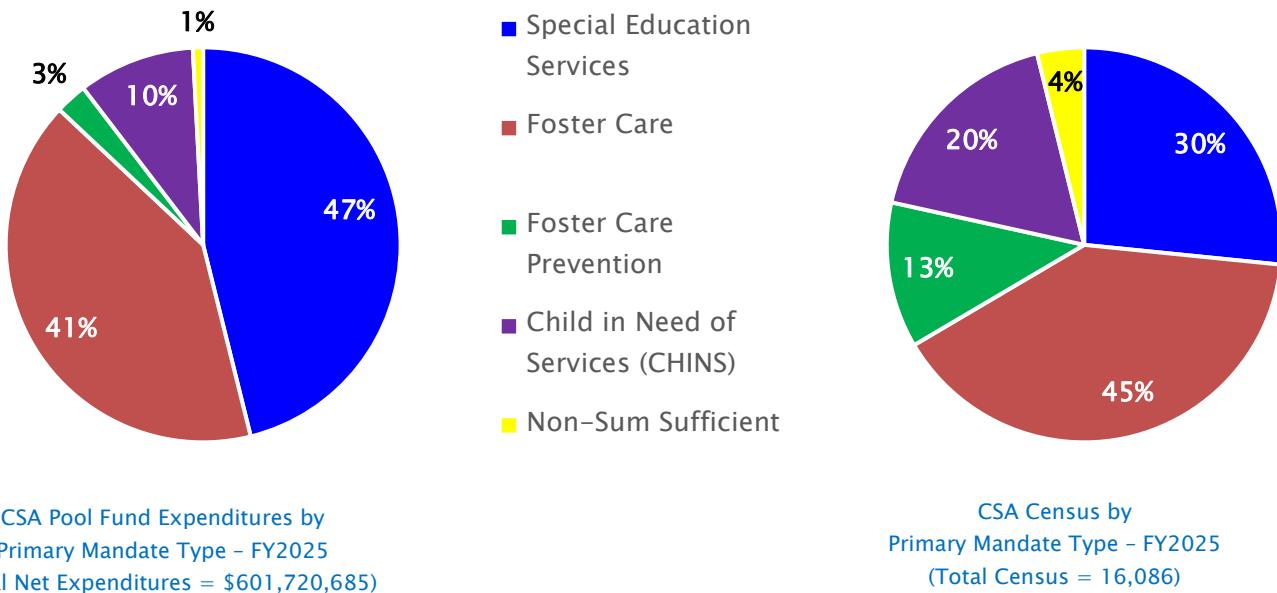
¹Federal FMAP rate was 74% (FY2024) and 85% (FY2025).

²Federal FMAP rate was approximately 51% throughout the period.

³Federal FMAP rate for Medicaid is typically 50%. Adjustments during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in higher FMAP rates.

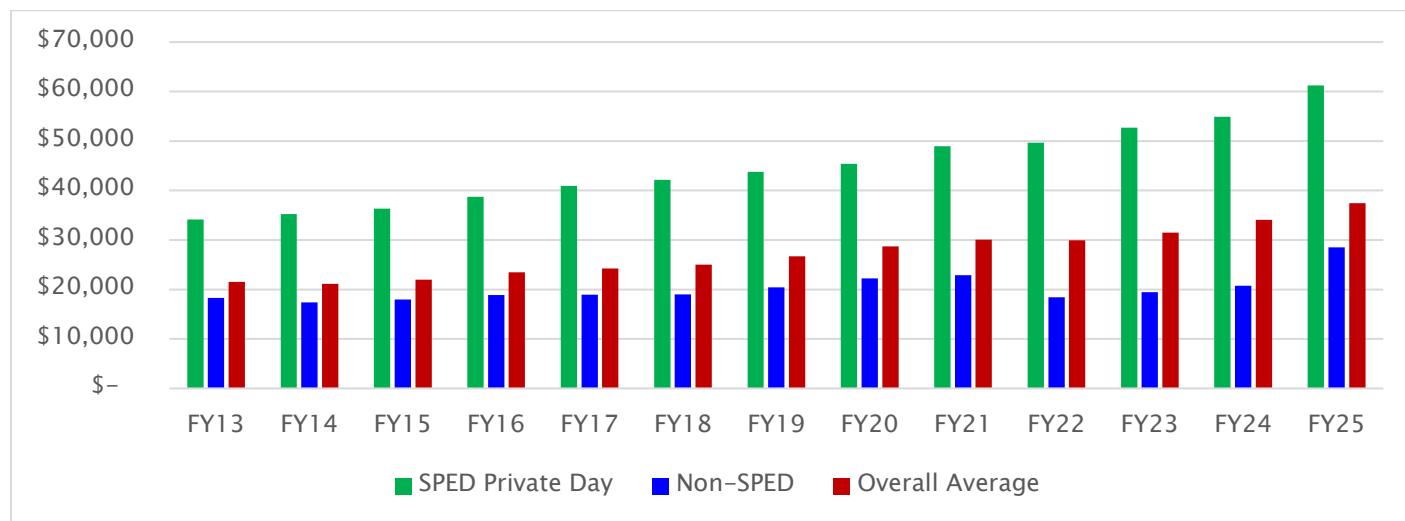
The table above reflects the contributions of funding sources other than the CSA pool funds to addressing the needs of children and families.¹ These funds are “braided” with the “blended” CSA pool funds and are utilized for CSA and non-CSA-eligible youth and services, in whole or in part, when available to support needed services. Medicaid funds for behavioral health services for children, other than residential and treatment foster care, are not reported here and are available from the Department of Medical Assistance Services.

FY2025 CSA Expenditures and Mandate Types



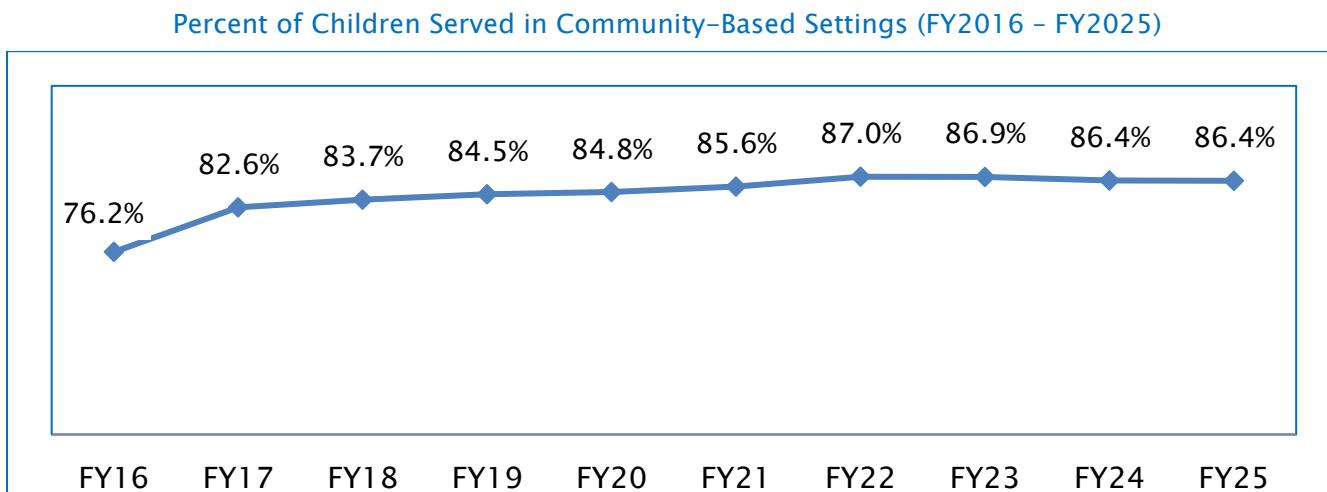
The two graphs above show that special education services accounted for 47% of the total CSA expenditures in FY2025. However, children in this category accounted for only 30% of the total CSA primary mandates. (Note: Children may have more than one Primary Mandate Type.) This disparity is because private day special education placements have an annual per-child cost of \$53,488 compared to an average of \$18,707 for all other categories of children (see graph below). Children eligible for CSA due to receiving foster care or foster care prevention services accounted for 64% of those eligible for CSA, but only 46% of expenditures.

Average Annual per Child CSA Pool Fund Expenditures (FY2013 – FY2025)



¹ Appendix A provides a description of these various funding sources.

Serving children in community-based (as opposed to residential or congregate care) settings is at the core of the CSA system of care philosophy. An extensive body of evidence indicates that long-term outcomes are improved when children are safely maintained in their families, schools, and communities. The avoidance, where possible, given clinical needs and other concerns, of placements in restrictive, congregate residential settings has long been a goal of the CSA. As shown in the chart below, performance on this indicator has continued to improve over time, though it has remained essentially flat from FY2022 to FY2025.



Significant Accomplishments 2024 – 2025

The following is a summary of significant accomplishments related to the Goals and Objectives for the 2024 – 2025 Strategic Plan approved by the State Executive Council for Children’s Services in December 2023.

Policy and Oversight

- 1.1 With input from the State and Local Advisory Team (SLAT) and other stakeholders, the State Executive Council for Children’s Services (SEC) will complete a comprehensive review of the current CSA Policy Manual to allow for improved uniformity, flexibility, and alignment (internally and across partners).**
 - 1.1.1 The SEC will systematically review the existing policy manual to ensure policies are uniform in format and aligned internally and with the policies and practices of CSA agency partners. (Policy Review/Update)**
 - Ongoing
 - 1.1.2 The SEC will review current practices to ensure alignment with relevant policies. (Review Practice for Alignment)**
 - Ongoing
- 1.2 The SEC will establish a process for soliciting/generating ideas for new/ revised CSA policies and practices to enhance program effectiveness and efficiency.**
 - 1.2.1 The SEC will work with stakeholders, including the SLAT, CSA Coordinator Network–Policy Committee, Virginia Association of Counties (VACO), and Virginia Municipal League (VML), to develop a process for promoting policy revisions to enhance local CSA programs. (Policy Revision Process)**
 - Ongoing
 - 1.3. The SEC will provide oversight of local CSA programs through the receipt of regular reports on local CSA program audits and technical assistance activities, highlighting both problematic (specific localities and activities) and positive aspects (areas of excellence and innovation).**
 - 1.3.1 The SEC will receive electronic notification of the publication of audits, review quarterly and annual audit summary reports prepared by the Office of Children’s Services and recommend actions as appropriate. (Audit Reporting)**
 - Ongoing – 2nd Written Report – March 2025
 - 1.3.2. The SEC will receive quarterly updates on technical assistance activities. (ETA Reporting)**
 - Ongoing – 2nd Written Report – March 2025
 - 1.3.3. The SEC will develop a process to acknowledge areas of local excellence and best practices. (Acknowledge Local Excellence)**
 - Implemented March 2025

Leadership and Collective Action

2.1 The SEC, SLAT, and member entities will enhance the availability of and access to services for youth and families by supporting and championing statewide, cross-agency initiatives.

- 2.1.1. The SEC and SLAT will support enhanced community capacity by supporting outcome-driven practices in localities. (Support outcome-driven practice through OCS / SLAT)
 - Evidence-Based Program Bench Card – Completed
 - OCS is participating in the DMAS-led behavioral health redesign process to replace legacy services
- 2.1.2. With the SLAT and OCS, the SEC will develop resources/tools to assist localities in implementing outcome-driven practices and decision-making. (Resources to assist localities through OCS / SLAT)
 - Model Strategic Plan Template – Completed and Distributed – June 2025
- 2.1.3. The SEC will receive updates from lead agencies to determine the most appropriate supportive actions from the SEC, the SLAT, and OCS. (Agency updates)
 - Right Help, Right Now and Safe and Sound – June 2024
 - Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) Youth Substance Use Strategic Planning – March 2025
 - Special Education Process (VDOE) – September 2025
 - Regular agency updates at SEC meetings – Ongoing
- 2.1.4. The SEC will receive annual updates on service needs assessments completed by participating agencies.
(Service Needs updates)
 - DBHDS Substance Use Disorder Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan – March 2025
 - 2025 CSA Service Gap Survey – December 2025
- 2.1.5. The SEC and SLAT members should educate their respective agencies, highlighting policy issues and best practices. (Members educate their agencies/constituents)
 - Ongoing

Empowering Families and Communities

3.1 The SEC will support family engagement and a child-centered, family-focused, trauma-informed, and community-based system of care through:

- Training and coaching by OCS and SEC member agencies on youth and family engagement for local CSA teams and other system partners.
- Continuing OCS's role as a key training partner for evidence-based and outcomes-driven practices.

- 3.1.1. The SEC, in collaboration with the SLAT, OCS, and other stakeholders, will develop tools for youth and families, such as a family guide brochure, model intake form, and family experience video, to build understanding about access to needed services.
 - Family Video – Completed and distributed, Spring 2024
 - Family Guide Brochure – Completed and distributed, June 2024
 - Model Intake Form – Completed and distributed to local CSA programs, November 2024

3.2 In collaboration with the SLAT and other partners, the SEC will work to increase parent participation at the state and local levels.

- 3.2.1. The SEC and SLAT will explore the barriers and challenges to elicit parent representation at the state and local levels and brainstorm ways to overcome these barriers. (Explore barriers)
 - TBD
- 3.2.2. In collaboration with the SLAT and OCS, the SEC will support parent representative empowerment by developing focused training opportunities for parent representatives on the Community Policy and Management Team (CPMT) and Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT).
 - Complementary registrations provided for the 2024 and 2025 Annual CSA Conference.
 - Four CSA Parent Representatives were invited to and completed Advanced Parent Leadership Training offered by the Virginia Family Network (VFN).
 - OCS is working with VFN to deliver virtual training for CSA Parent Representatives focusing on leadership, “sharing your story,” and advocacy – First delivery, April 2025
- 3.2.3. The SEC, in collaboration with the SLAT, OCS, and other stakeholders, will survey local CSA programs to determine how they evaluate family perceptions of and satisfaction with the CSA process.
 - Local survey complete and findings presented to the SLAT and SEC – December 2024
- 3.2.4. The SEC, in collaboration with the SLAT, OCS, and other stakeholders, will develop and disseminate a model “Youth and Family Engagement Survey” and recommend practices for gathering youth and family input from local CSA programs.
 - Develop a model survey to include a version for youth input – Completed and distributed, June 2025
 - Recommend best practices for gathering input – TBD

The 2026 – 2027 CSA Strategic Plan

In December 2023, the State Executive Council adopted a Strategic Plan for 2024 – 2025. The progress in meeting the goals and objectives of that plan is described earlier in this report. With the impending changes in the Executive branch following the election, the development of the plan for 2026 – 2027 will be taken up following the designation of a new State Executive Council Chair (Secretary of Health and Human Resources or their designee) and executive branch agency leadership. The plan will be published on the OCS website upon completion.

Appendix A

Children's Mental Health Initiative

The General Assembly established the Children's Mental Health Initiative (MHI) Fund in FY 2000 to create a dedicated source of funding for mental health and substance abuse services for children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances (SED) who are not mandated for the Children's Services Act (CSA). Funds are provided to the Community Services Boards based on a funding methodology.

Promoting Safe & Stable Families

The Virginia Department of Social Services administers the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program (PSSF), which is designed to assist children and families in resolving crises, connecting with necessary and appropriate services, and remaining safely together in their own homes whenever possible. This program helps more than 15,000 children and families each year. Services are provided to meet the following objectives:

- Prevent or eliminate the need for out-of-home placements of children
- Promote family strength and stability
- Enhance parental functioning
- Protect children
- Assess and make changes in state and local service delivery systems

The federal government provides PSSF funding with a required state match. The VDSS allocates funds to individual localities upon submission of an approved plan. Additional information on the PSSF program can be found at:

<https://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/pssf.cgi>.

Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act

In 1995, the Virginia General Assembly passed the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCA) "to establish a community-based system of progressive intensive sanctions and services that correspond to the severity of offense and treatment needs." Administered by the Department of Juvenile Justice, all localities have access to a funding allocation to provide services to eligible youth involved in the juvenile court system. Services generally fall into the categories of public safety, post-dispositional/graduated sanctions, accountability, and competency development. Additional information on the VJCCA program can be found at: <https://www.djj.virginia.gov/pages/ppi/vjcca.htm>.

Title IV-E

Title IV-E is a federal program designed to provide funding to states to ensure proper care for eligible children in foster care and to provide ongoing assistance to eligible children with special needs receiving adoption subsidies. The program is administered under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act and is funded by federal and state/local matching funds. Title IV-E funds are administered by the Virginia Department of Social Services and the local departments of social services.

Additional information on Title IV-E can be found at: <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/iv-e.cgi>.

Social Services Block Grant

The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) is a federal funding source that partially supports various services delivered through local departments of social services. The Virginia Department of Social Services administers the SSBG. Additional information on the SSBG can be found at: https://www.dss.virginia.gov/geninfo/reports/agency_wide/block_grants.cgi.

Medicaid

Medicaid is the federal program that assists states in providing health care (including behavioral health) to eligible children and adults. Medicaid funding is a shared federal and state responsibility. Medicaid funds support CSA for residential care (therapeutic group homes and psychiatric residential treatment facilities), treatment foster care case management, and various outpatient behavioral health services.