

Adverse Placement Score:

Using Better Metrics to Drive Practice in Child Welfare

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It takes all of us to drive positive outcomes for children and families

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Born at the University of Chicago

Our team started as generalists at the University's Center for RISC, an innovation lab for social good



Initially Focused on Data-Driven Recruitment

We came into child welfare with fresh eyes intent on using data to drive foster home recruitment



Realized Child Experience Was Missing

The data clearly showed that just having homes didn't always solve the "why" behind recruitment



Scaling Adoption of Adverse Placement Score

Oklahoma became the first state to write its new Performance Improvement Plan with APS in it



Our Path:

Foster Insights is a nonprofit dedicated to using data to improve child welfare



Traditional child welfare metrics aren't actionable or child-centered



Number of Homes

Having more homes only creates positive outcomes if we have the *right* homes

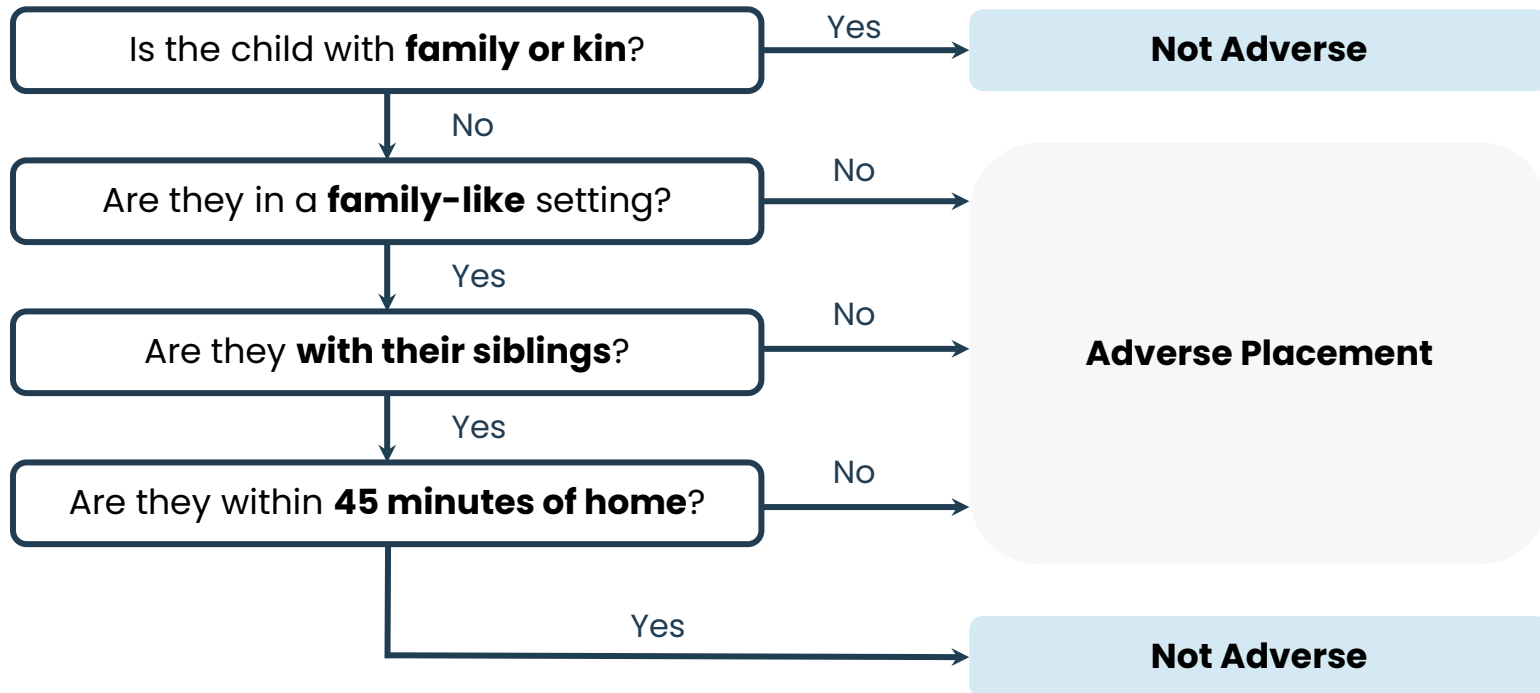


Placement Moves

Having fewer moves only creates positive outcomes if the first placement was best



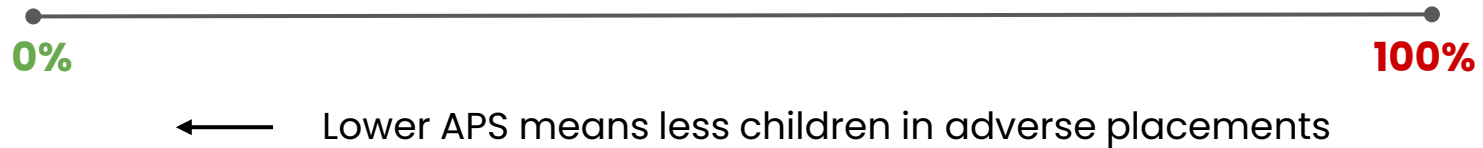
We developed a metric to reflect the child's experience in care





Lowering APS leads to increased connection and continuity

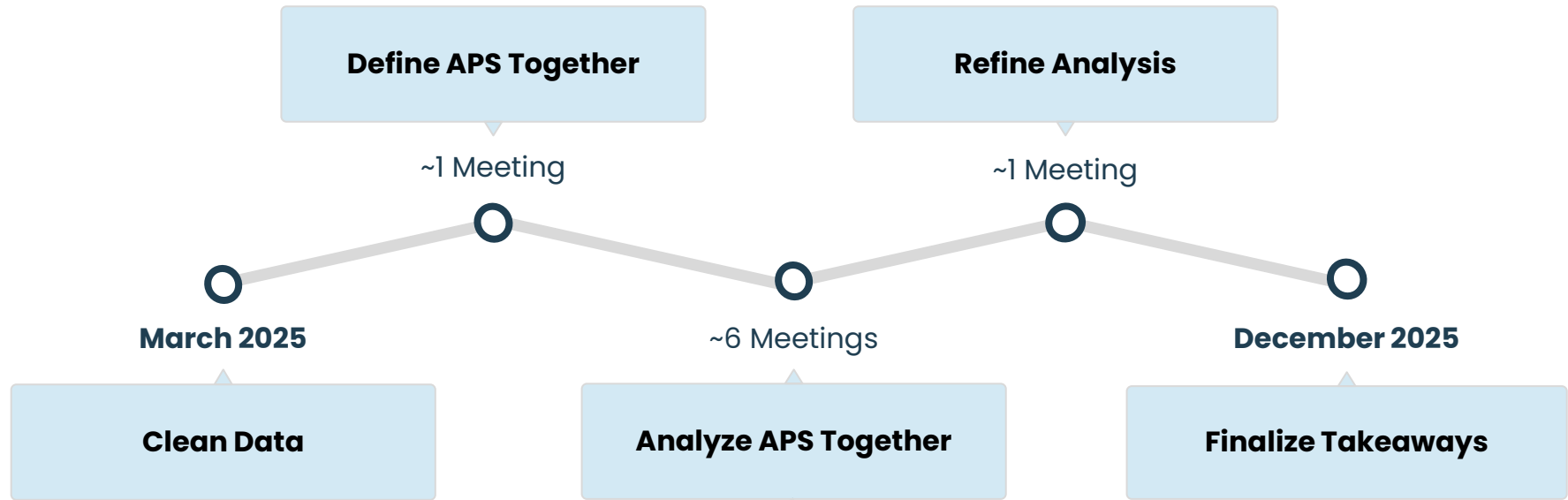
Adverse Placement Score = % of children in adverse placements



APS can be reduced by **increasing placement with kin or placement in non-kin homes with siblings, close to home**



Defining and diagnosing APS was a collaborative effort



Special thanks to OIAA; Partnership, Prevention, & Services; Licensing; Child Welfare; and Administrative services for your involvement and partnership!!!



APS Analysis: Executive Summary

Takeaways from APS Analysis

- WA has increased its kin placement significantly, which comes with a **host of benefits**
- Children have become more likely to be in an adverse placement **when not with kin**
- WA can reduce APS by **continuing to prioritize kin** while **improving non-kin outcomes**

Recommendations for Reducing APS

1. Increase **continuous kin-finding** to ensure children's next placement is also with kin
2. Assess barriers in the **non-kinship licensing process**, especially any added since 2022
3. **Engage non-kinship homes** at critical points so they continue to take placements
4. Design a **placement process** that prioritizes close-to-home placement, with siblings
5. Establish active monitoring and planning to **move children out of adverse placements**



Increasing kin placement has reduced APS in Washington since 2019

	<u>All Children</u>	
	Q Ending 09/30/25	+/- Since 06/30/19
% in Adverse Placements	29%	-5%
% in Non-Family-Like Setting	8%	-0%
% Separated from Siblings	13%	-6%
% Far from Home	21%	+1%

Because **kin are not adverse by definition**, WA's increased kin placements have reduced adverse placements, mostly due to **fewer sibling separations**.



When not with kin, over two-thirds (and rising) are in adverse placements

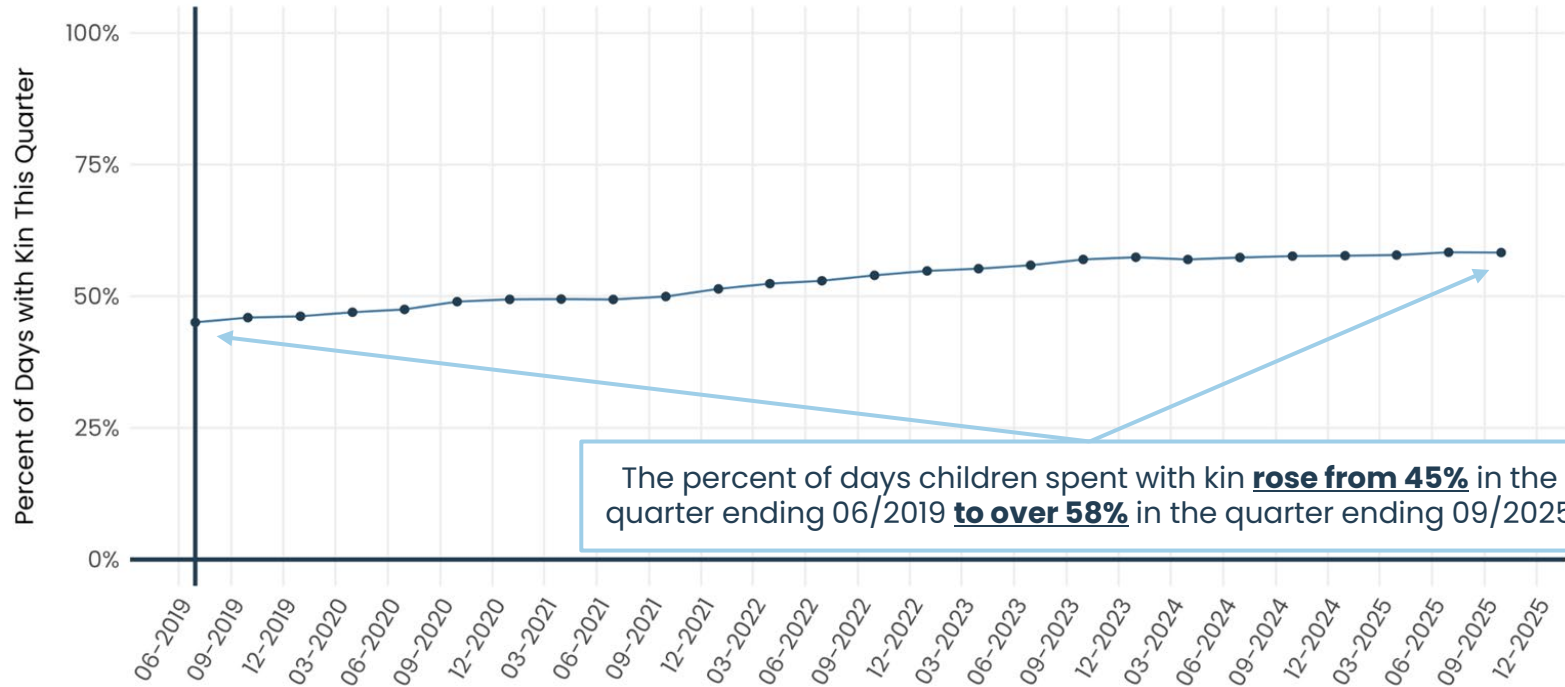
	<u>All Children</u>		<u>Children Not with Kin</u>	
	Q Ending 09/30/25	+/- Since 06/30/19	Q Ending 09/30/25	+/- Since 06/30/19
% in Adverse Placements	29%	-5%	68%	+6%
% in Non-Family-Like Setting	8%	-0%	18%	+3%
% Separated from Siblings	13%	-6%	31%	-5%
% Far from Home	21%	+1%	49%	+13%

While increasing kin rates have reduced APS overall, children are even more likely to be in an adverse placement **when not with kin**, due to an **increase in far from home**.



Children are now spending significantly more time with kin

Percent of Days with Kin By Quarter





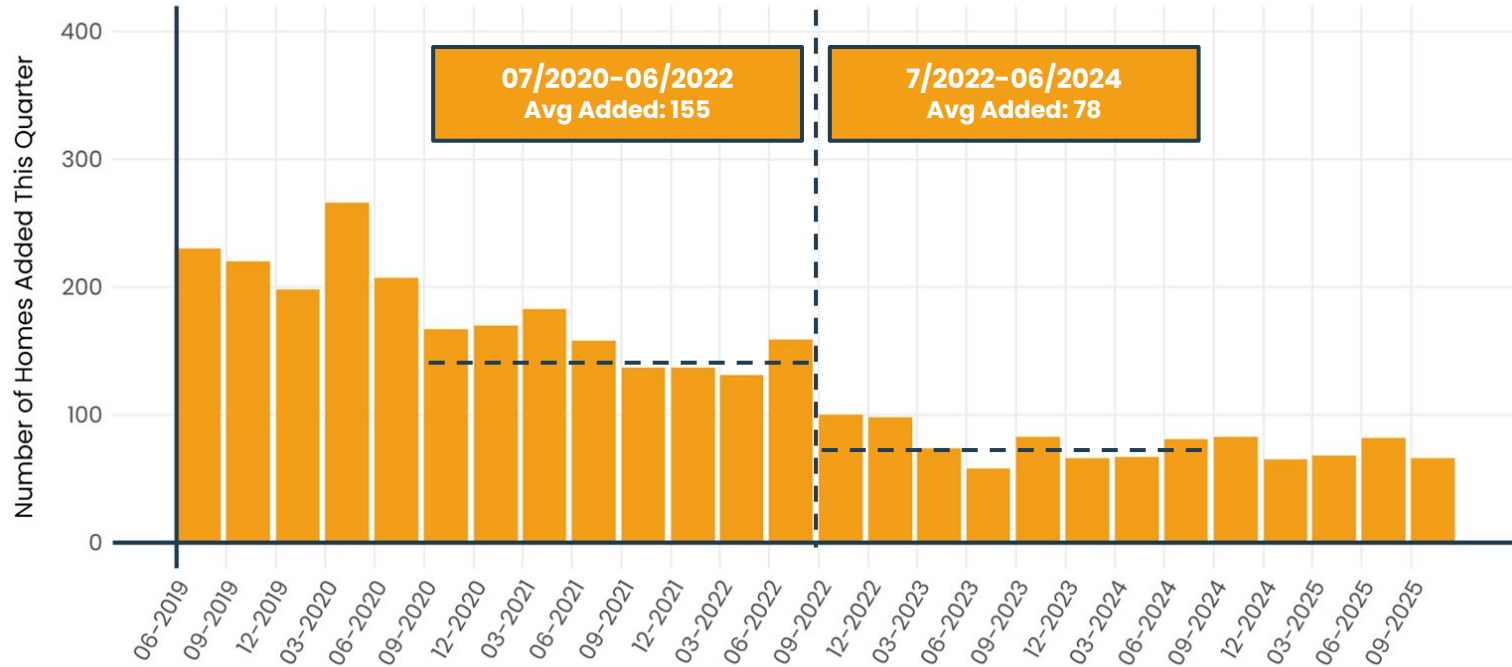
Kin placements support increased stability, connection, and permanency

Placement Type	<u>% Disrupted After 180 Days</u>	<u>Median Drive Time</u>	<u>% Days Placed with All Siblings</u>	<u>% Moves to Reunification</u>
Kin	31%	24 Min	63%	54%
Foster Home	66%	38 Min	42%	25%



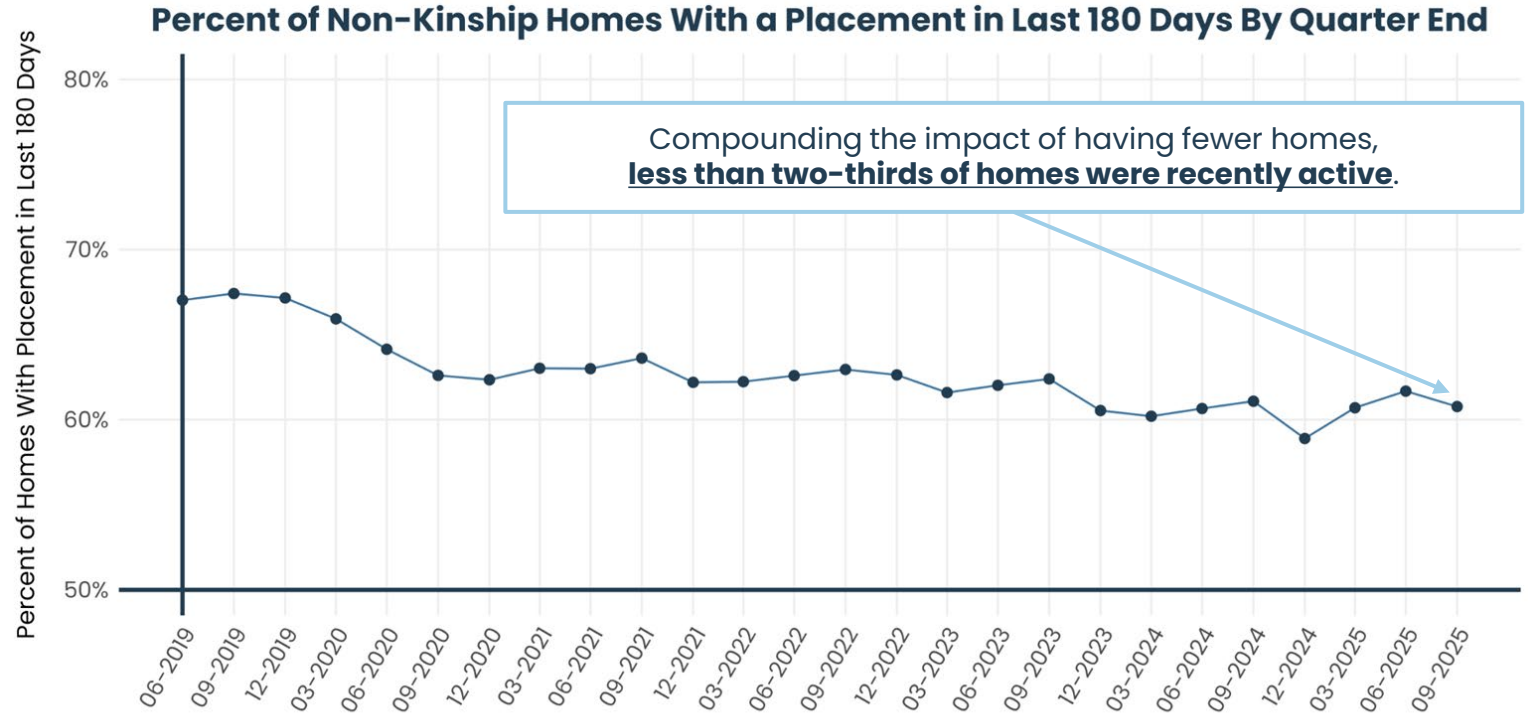
After 07/2022, WA halved the rate it added new non-kinship homes

Number of Non-Kinship Homes Added By Quarter



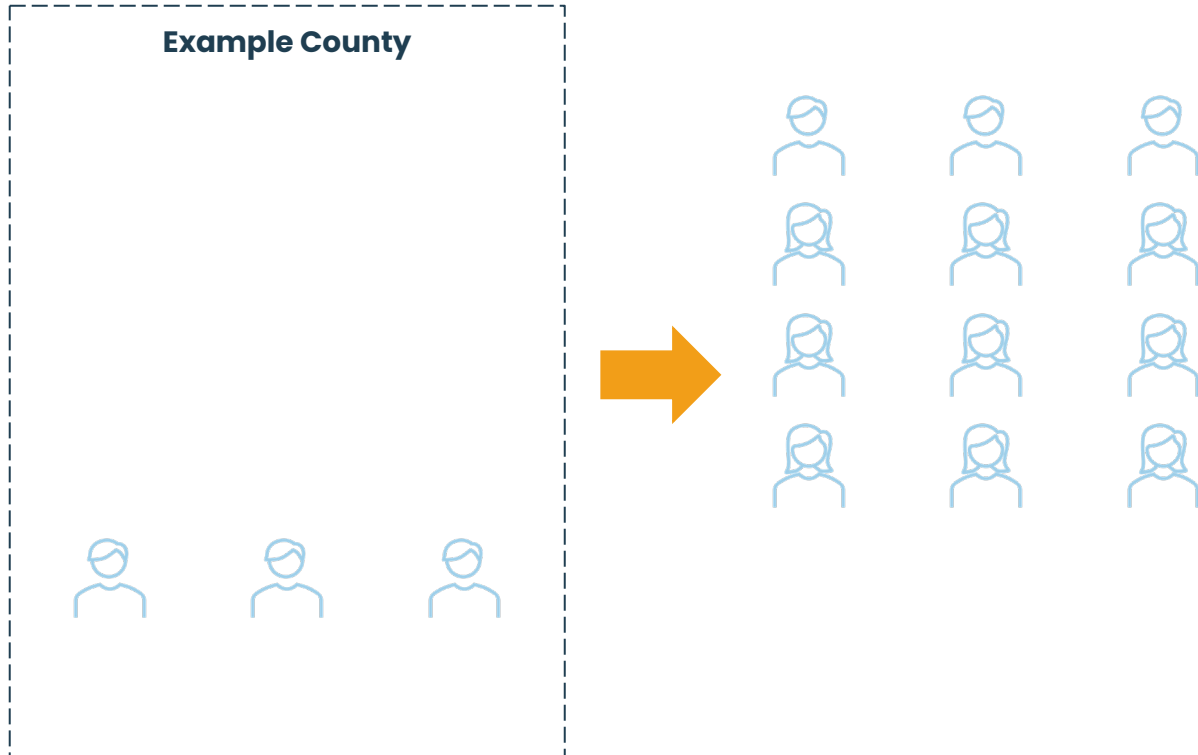


Many non-kinship homes are not actively taking placements



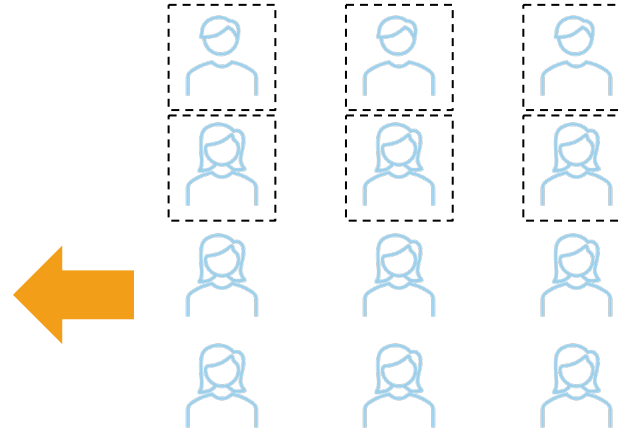
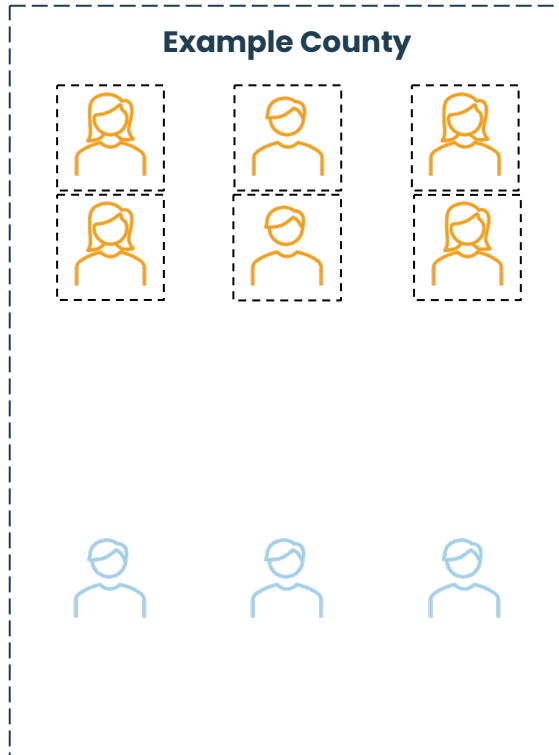


Counties across WA were placing most of **their children** out-of-county





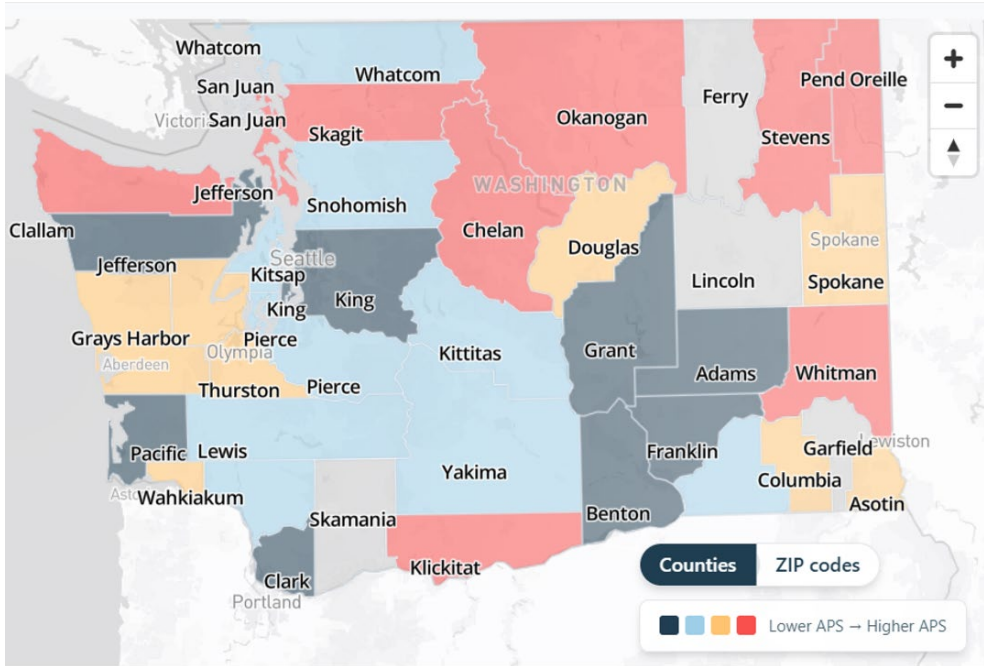
At the same time, they used their homes for children from **other counties**



Even just looking at placements made in the same quarter and for similar age groups, we found that **nearly half of all out-of-county placements had corresponding inflows during the same quarter.**



Next Steps: Integrating and Applying APS



Among initiatives underway to reduce APS is the **creation of a dashboard** that allows DCYF staff to see APS data by county, zip code, and child demographic to target efforts, such as non-kin recruitment



How could your role positively impact APS?



Feel free to reach out with any questions!

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