

Kansas Foster Care at a Glance

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2026 | JULY 1, 2025 - JUNE 30, 2026

Understanding the bigger picture helps us talk about foster care accurately. These statistics provide a snapshot of children and youth in Kansas foster care - their ages, where they are living, and the permanency goals their teams are working toward.

5,321

Children & Youth in Out-of-Home Placement

Kansas statewide snapshot - June 30, 2026

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN & YOUTH?

10.1

Average age

11

Median age

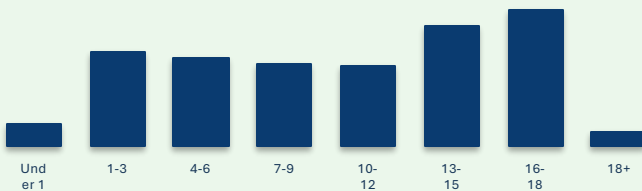
55.1%

Age 10 or older

42.4%

Age 13 or older

Ages 16-18 are the largest age group - 21.4%



WHAT ARE THEIR PERMANENCY GOALS?

58.2%

Reintegration

29.1%

Adoption

10.3%

APPLA*

1.7%

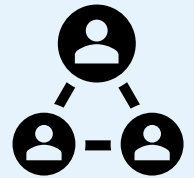
Maintain in Family

0.6%

Permanent Custodianship/Guardianship

0.2%

SOUL Family



Foster care's purpose is to support the whole family and reunify when safe to do so.

WHERE ARE THEY LIVING?

49.1%

Family Foster Homes

36.4%

Relative Placements

9.6%

Group/Residential Care

4.1%

Other settings



Greatest Need:

10+ | Sibling Groups | Higher Needs

There is an ongoing need for families able to care for older youth, sibling groups, and children with higher support needs. These children and youth need caregivers who can meet them where they are, support important relationships, and provide stability and connection.

WHAT THESE NUMBERS TELL US

There is no single foster care experience.

Children in care range from infants to young adults. They live with relatives, foster families, in residential settings, and in other placements. Their permanency paths are also different. Understanding the bigger picture helps us share our own experiences without assuming they represent every child or family.

Source: Kansas Department for Children and Families, SFY 2026 Foster Care/Adoption Summary Reports.



Pathways for Prospective Families

Use this quick reference when individuals or families ask about foster care, adoption, kinship care, or where to find support. You do not need to know every answer - help people identify a good place to start and connect them with the right resource.



Adopt Kansas Kids

How to Get Started.

A statewide resource for individuals and families learning about foster care and adoption from foster care in Kansas. AKK can explain the process, help families understand next steps, and connect them with appropriate agencies. AKK also serves as Kansas' adoption exchange.

adoptkaskids.org



K-PARC

Kansas Post Adoption Resource Center

Support for the Adoption Journey.

Kansas Post Adoption Resource Center provides education, resources, connection, individualized support, and advocacy to families after adoption. Adoption does not end at finalization - families may need different support at different stages of the journey.

adoptkaskids.org/families/k-parc/



Kansas Caregivers Support Network

Support. Resources. Advocacy.

Kansas Caregivers Support Network supports foster, adoptive, and kinship families across Kansas. KCSN helps caregivers navigate challenges, understand systems and processes, identify resources and services, and advocate for family needs.

kansascaregiverssupportnetwork.com/



Children's Alliance of KANSAS

Training. Advocacy. Resources.

A statewide resource offering education, training, caregiver resources, advocacy, and information for families and child welfare professionals. Children's Alliance is the platform for trainings including MAPP Foundations.

childdaily.org

How Do Families Get Involved?

These are general pathways. Individual circumstances and requirements may vary.

Become a Licensed Foster Parent

- 1 Learn more about foster care (Connect with a CPA or Adopt Kansas Kids)
- 2 Complete pre-service training-MAPP Foundations- 30 hours and obtain agency sponsorship
- 3 Application and background checks
- 4 Home assessment and licensing requirements
- 5 DCF foster home license
- 6 Ready to accept placements

Where to start: Adopt Kansas Kids or any Child Placing Agency can help you learn more and connect with next steps.

Adopt from Foster Care

- 1 Learn more about adoption (Connect with Adopt Kansas Kids)
- 2 Complete training-MAPP Foundations-30 hours and obtain agency sponsorship
- 3 Complete an adoptive family assessment/home study
- 4 Approved to adopt
- 5 Explore potential matches with Adopt Kansas Kids
- 6 Best Interest Staffing
- 7 Transition and placement
- 8 Finalization

Where to start: Adopt Kansas Kids can help you understand the process and connect with the right agency.

Take a Kinship or Relative Placement

- 1 Identified as a relative or kin
- 2 Talk with the child's case team/CMP
- 3 Background and safety checks & Walk-through
- 4 Home/kinship assessment
- 5 Placement decision
- 6 Ongoing support and permanency planning

Where to start: Contact the child's case team/CMP. KCSN can also provide support and advocacy.

Kansas Speaker's Bureau

SHARING YOUR STORY

OUR PURPOSE

The Kansas Speaker's Bureau represents foster care and adoption across Kansas, not a specific organization.

Your lived experience is one of our best resources for recruiting and retaining foster and adoptive parents. Your story helps others understand what it means to support Kansas children and families.

SHAPE YOUR STORY

- 1 What do I hope others will take away from my story?
- 2 Where was I before this experience?
- 3 What challenge, change, or realization occurred?
- 4 What did I learn, and how did it change me?
- 5 How can I connect the ending back to my key message?

THINK BEFORE YOU SHARE



STOP: Keep it private

Private or confidential details that belong to someone else.

PAUSE: Consider the audience

Some details may be appropriate with close friends or family, but not in public.

GO: Share your experience

Your own thoughts and experiences that you are comfortable sharing publicly.

Ask yourself: "Is this my story to tell?"

WORDS MATTER

Consider using	Rather than
Child in care	Foster child
Adoptee / Person who was adopted	Orphan
Birth / First / Biological parent	Real parent / Natural parent
Parent* / My child*	Adoptive parent* / My adopted child*
Child placed for adoption	Given up / Taken away
Parental rights legally terminated	Abandoned / Unwanted
Waiting child	Adoptable / Available child
Biological child / Child by birth	Own child

*Use adoption terms when relevant. Otherwise, "parent" and "child" are enough. Respect each person's preferred language.

You are the expert on your experience. Leave room for others to have a different story.