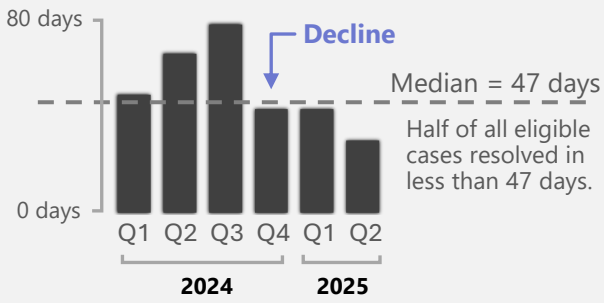
# Children and Youth in Crisis

Data from January 2024 through June 2025

The **Rapid Care Team (RCT),** led by the Governor's Office, brings together state agencies and communities to help children in crisis and their families receive timely support.

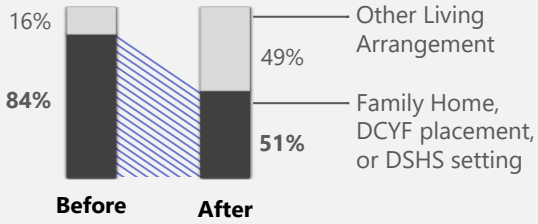
These multidisciplinary partners and experts help families **get their children in crisis out of hospitals and quickly access the services they need**. The team centers lived expertise, applies flexible funding and develops creative solutions that remove barriers and move children in crisis toward safety and stability.

## Median Case Duration by Quarter of Referral




**Case Duration** is the number of days from RCT referral to discharge or placement stabilization. The median declined when flexible funding and parent peer support began in October 2024.

## Living Arrangement Before Crisis Compared to After RCT Intervention




**After RCT intervention, 48% of children and youth were living in a family home, DCYF placement, or DSHS setting**. The most common types of other living arrangements were residential treatment facilities (19% in-state; 16% out-of-state).

**18% of referrals were ineligible*** (n = 24 of 131)

**82% of referrals were eligible** (n =107 of 131)

A referral is **eligible if** the child meets the RCW definition for a child in crisis (see page 2).

# 131 Total Referrals

**received Jan 2024 to June 2025.**

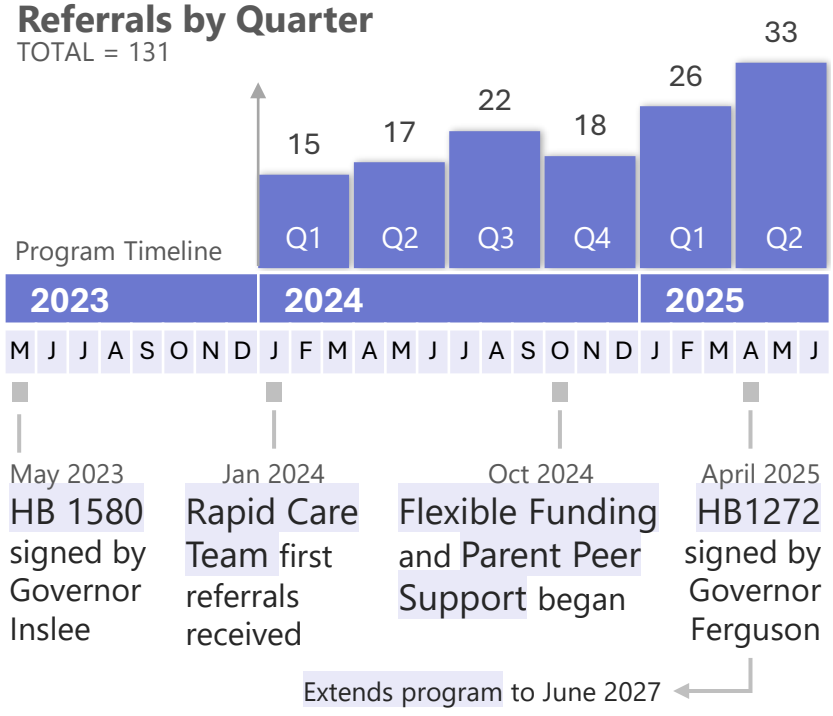
Most (61%) came from hospitals. Sources also included DCYF (12%), DDCS (10%), and other sources (17%), such as parents or community providers.

Among eligible children and youth…

- **28%** had a race/ethnicity other than White, non-Hispanic
- **62%** were age 13 to 16 years old (min. 7, max. 17 years)
- **70%** had a male gender identity
- **100%** had an indicated mental health condition or intellectual or developmental disability

## Referrals by Quarter

TOTAL = 131





**HB1580/1272 Rapid Care Team**
Prepared December 2025 by DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division

OFFICE OF GOVERNOR BOB FERGUSON
DSHS Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
Washington State Department of CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES
Washington State Health Care Authority

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## Child in Crisis

A "child in crisis" is defined by RCW 43.06.535 as person under age 18 who is staying in, or at risk of remaining in, a hospital without medical necessity and unable to return to the care of a parent; or who is dependent under chapter 13.34 RCW, experiencing placement instability, and referred to the RCT by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

## RCT CONTACTS

Referrals and general questions should be sent to HCA1580ChildreninCrisis@hca.wa.gov


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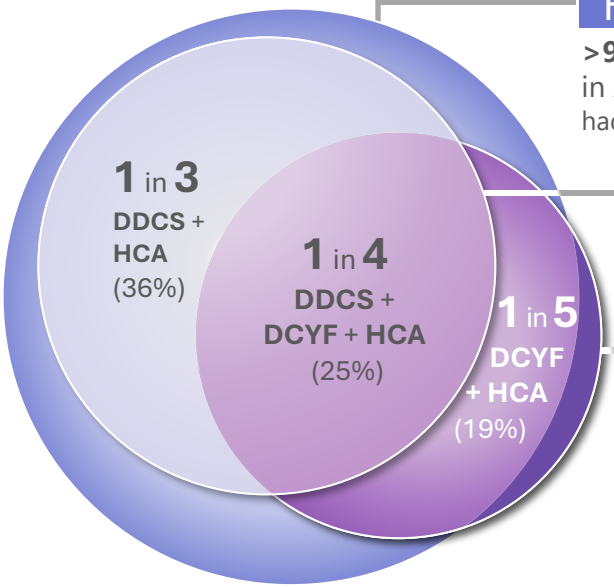
## RELATED REPORTS

2025 Report to the Legislature "Transforming Washington's Children and Youth System of Care: Report on System Changes and Innovations"; 2024 Report

## Multiagency Engagement

**Nearly 80%** of eligible referrals were engaged with two or more state agencies (Health Care Authority (HCA), Developmental Disabilities Community Services (DDCS), and/or Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF).




**HCA**

**>90%*** were enrolled in Apple Health (18% had Apple Health only)

**DDCS**

**61%** were eligible for DDCS services

**DCYF**

**>44%*** had an open child welfare case (<10%* had DCYF engagement only)

* Fewer than 11 children/youth did not have current or prior Apple Health coverage but did have an open DCYF Child Welfare case.

"We tried everything, but **the system wasn't built for him. It needs to be**."

- Parent of youth served by the Rapid Care Team

"The first discharge lacked a bridge plan, safety supports and coordinated services. Within ten days, [our son] was back in the ER. The second discharge, driven by the **Rapid Care Team,** was built around **collaboration, continuity, and family-defined safety."**

- Parent of child served by the Rapid Care Team

"Having **a parent peer with lived experience is like having a backbone to hold you up**. It gives you courage, support, and having someone walk along with you to navigate the systems from someone who understands your story."

- Parent of youth served by the Rapid Care Team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