



# Who are Foster Youth Students in California Schools?



A "child in foster care" is typically known to mean a child who has been ordered by a dependency court to be removed from their home and placed in the care of a foster parent. Still, the child welfare system includes many more children than those placed by the court "in foster care,", as seen below. For the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), the California Education Code defines a broader, but not comprehensive, set of child welfare involved youth as "foster youth," for the purposes of funding and identification through CALPADS.

## **Referral Evaluated Out**

The hotline social worker assesses the evidence and decides it is not sufficient to open a case.

#### Referral Closed

Investigation determines suspected abuse or neglect is unfounded or evidence is inconclusive and child is safe.

# **Referral to Differential Response**

If child is at low/no risk and family could benefit from services, family is referred to voluntary services in community under Differential Response program, if available in the county.

#### **Child Removed from Home**

Child is taken into custody and placed in safe environment(e.g., approved relative or nonrelated extended family member, temporary shelter, or emergency foster care).

## **Case Dismissed or Settled**

Court finds insufficient grounds for petition or that there are no longer safety concerns for the child. The child is safe and the family is able to provide for their needs.

#### Family Maintenance

Court leaves child at home and orders child welfare agency to develop a case plan with the family and provide services to the family.

## **Case Dismissed or Settled**

Court finds problems that brought family into court are no longer safety concerns. In cases of neglect, children are found to be safe and family is able to provide for their needs.

## **Report Called into Hotline**

Report of suspected child abuse or neglect is called into the county Child Abuse Hotline by a mandated reporter or concerned individual.

## Call Screened

Hotline social worker screens call using a Standardized Safety Assessment tool to determine if an investigation is warranted.

## **In-Person Investigation**

An ER social worker, individually or as part of a multidisciplinary team, conducts an in-person investigation to assess evidence of child abuse or neglect.

## **Referral Substantiated**

Investigation confirms evidence of child abuse or neglect.

## Voluntary Services Provided

Child remains at home while referral is investigated. Family may receive ER services for 30 days or voluntary Family Maintenance in 6-month increments.

#### **Voluntary Services Fail**

The abuse or neglect continues, a new report is confirmed, or voluntary services fail for other reasons.

#### **Dependency Petition Filed**

A petition is filed in juvenile dependency court by the child welfare agency, beginning a series of judicial hearings (detention, jurisdiction, disposition).

## Child Becomes a Dependent of the Court

Court places child under its jurisdiction.

## **Family Maintenance Fails**

A petition for the removal of the child from its family is filed with dependency court.

## LEGEND

LCFF- Children who fit the description in this box are considered "foster youth" for LCFF - typically after a petition in dependency court is filed Non-LCFF - Children who fit the description in this box are NOT considered "foster youth" for LCFF

#### **LCFF**

SOME Probation Youth Also Qualify as LCFF Foster Youth - If a court has taken jurisdiction over a child and declared the child to be a ward of the court due to the child's violation of certain criminal laws AND has been ordered by a court to be removed from the home and placed in foster care - i.e. "suitable placement" order.

## **Cross-Report Filed**

A cross-report is sent to law enforcement for further action.

## **Referral Closed**

ER services or Family Maintenance succeeds in providing a safe and secure environment for the child.

#### Family Reunification

Court orders the child placed in the least restrictive, most family-like out-of-home setting to keep child safe. Orders child welfare agency to develop reunification plan with the parents and provide services. Concurrent planning is required to prepare for an alternative permanent placement should reunification fail.

## **Permanency Planning**

Court decides child cannot safely be returned home and/or efforts to reunify with birth family should end; orders another permanent placement plan to be selected.

## **Family Reunified**

Family successfully completes service plan and child is returned home. Court can order Family Maintenance services to keep family successfully reunified.

Child Removed from Home if Not Previously