



Senate Judiciary Committee

February 4, 2020

SB 332

Written by:

Tanya Keys

Deputy Secretary

Kansas Department for Children and Families

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Testimony of:

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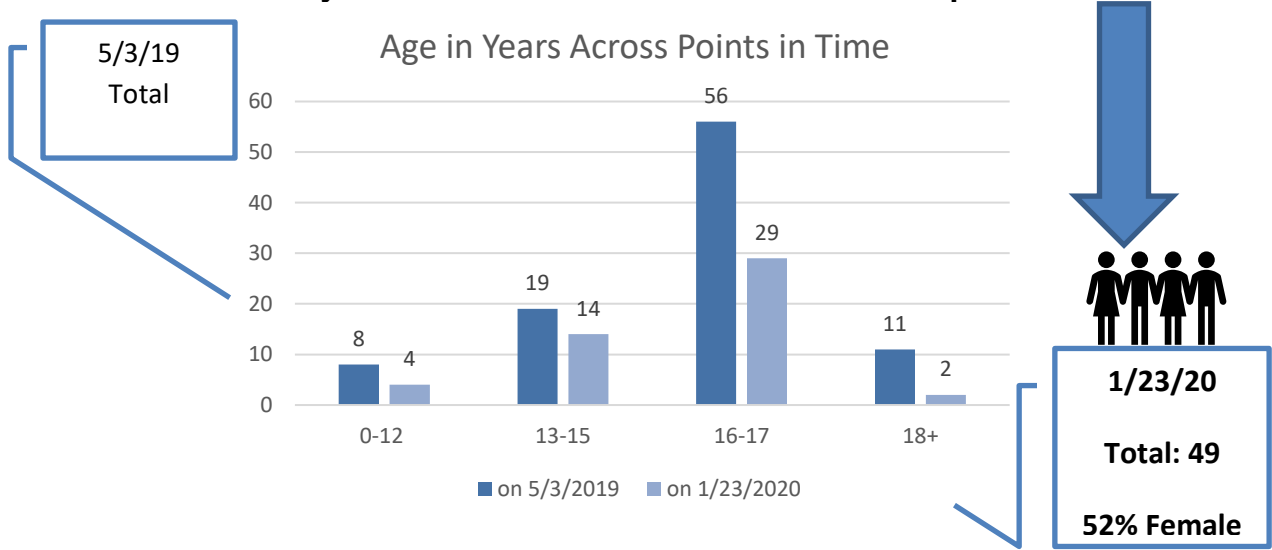
Chair Wilborn, Vice-Chair Rucker, and Ranking Member Miller, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to the committee regarding SB 332. DCF is in opposition to this bill.

As the Committee reviews this proposal, please remember the ability of the court to exercise discretion and thoughtfully determine the best interest of each child is a critical consideration in any Child In Need of Care matter. The court, case management team and networks supporting the child consider the child's age, developmental and educational needs, meaningful connections in that's child's life and important community resources to help that child achieve positive outcomes.

To assure greatest positive impact to a child, the court must have ability to use discretion in entering an order directing a child to remain in a present or future placement. Removing the court's ability to apply discretion in the serious matter of placement stability may have detrimental impact to a youth resulting in increased toxic or traumatic levels of stress, isolation and loneliness, setback in academic progress and loss of connection to family and community resulting in delays to legal permanency.

In June of 2019, we partnered with our foster care grantees to create a statewide special response team of ten (10) trained front line practitioners dedicated to reducing young persons who run from their placements through prevention, location recovery and systems improvement. Results are promising - the daily pace of youth experiencing a run episode has decreased from 94 in May of 2019 to about 50 in January of 2020. Further, we are learning that for youth whose location is recovered, just over one-half (57%) have experienced at least one prior run episode and we aspire to reduce or prevent run recurrence.

CINC youth whose location in on run: Data Snapshot



On 1/23/20 there were 28 youth in a court ordered secure care placement across three (3) secure care facilities: Emberhope in Newton with capacity for 12 females; Geary County Secure Care in Junction City with capacity for 15 males; and, St. Francis in Wichita with a capacity for 16 children who is serving only 3 youth because their last day of service is 3/23/2020. Most of the 28 young people in secure care are males age 17 years (n= 9, 32%.)

Youth in Secure Care Placement 1/23/20									
	Female				Male				Table 1 Blank = 0
CINC County of Jurisdiction	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17	Total
Allen		1		1					2
Butler				1					1
Crawford								1	1
Douglas				1			1		2
Dickinson								1	1
Ellis							1		1
Finney			1						1
Franklin				1					1
Geary								1	1
Jackson					1			1	2
Jefferson		1							1
Montgomery				1					1
McPherson								1	1
Marshall								1	1
Riley								1	1
Reno								1	1
Saline			1					1	2
Stafford							1		1
Sedgwick	2	1				1			4
Shawnee	1								1
Sumner			1						1
Total Secure Care #, %	3 / 11%	3 / 11%	3 / 11%	5 / 18%	1 / 3%	1 / 3%	3 / 11%	9 / 32%	28 / 100%

DCF continues to pursue resources and innovations in practice for youth absent from placement that are in the best interest of Kansas children. Again, I thank you for the opportunity to provide input on our opposition to SB 332 and am happy to answer questions or provide additional information if needed.