



Bringing Families Home San Francisco

A promising model for helping child welfare
system-involved families experiencing homelessness



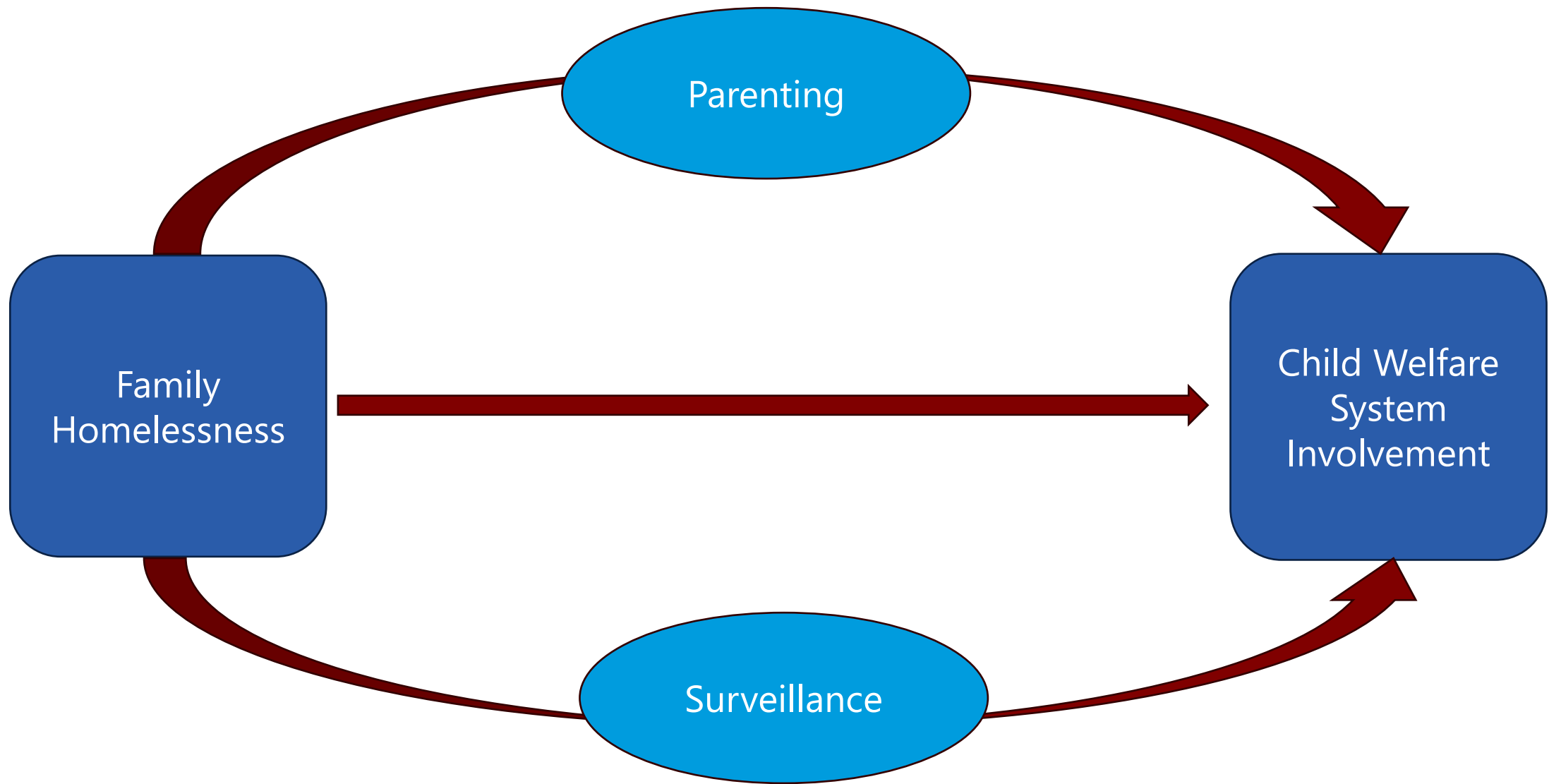
AGENDA

- Introduction
- What is Bringing Families Home (BFH)?
- What did we learn from the BFH evaluation?
- Conclusion



INTRODUCTION

- Family homelessness is a significant but often hidden problem, particularly among families involved with the child welfare system
- Risk for child welfare system involvement is higher among families experiencing homelessness than among similar low-income but stably housed families
- Lack of adequate housing can delay reunification among families with children in out-of-home care



HOMELESSNESS CONTRIBUTES TO CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT



HOUSING AS A CHILD WELFARE INTERVENTION

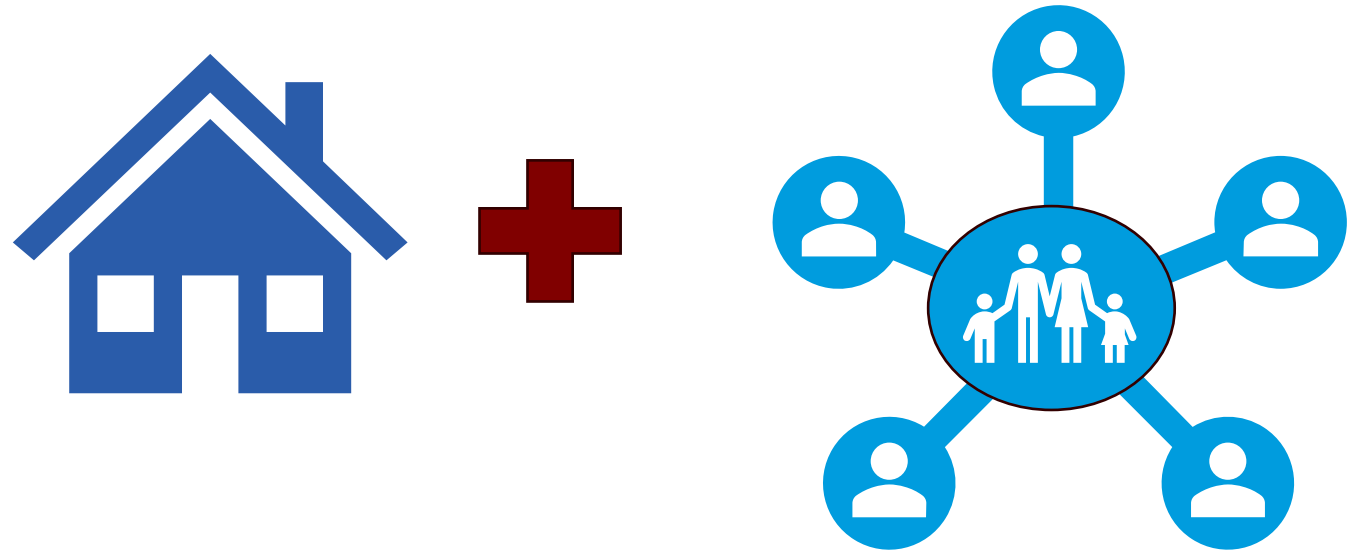
- Addressing the housing needs of child welfare system involved families experiencing homelessness can improve child welfare outcomes
- Families with co-occurring problems require more than housing alone.





SUPPORTIVE HOUSING AS A CHILD WELFARE INTERVENTION

- Housing-first approach that pairs subsidized housing with case management and other supportive services



- Focusing first on housing will help families stabilize so that they can then address the problems that led to their child welfare system involvement.

Bringing Families Home Program Model

Vladlena Gulchin, San Francisco Human Services Agency

Randell Jackson, Homeless Prenatal Program



PROGRAM HISTORY

Original model: Families Moving Forward

- Began in 2014
- Funded through a federal demonstration grant

Current model: Bringing Families Home

- Launched in 2017
- State-funded



Local Sponsor



Service Provider



Local Evaluator

PARTNERSHIP



TARGET POPULATION

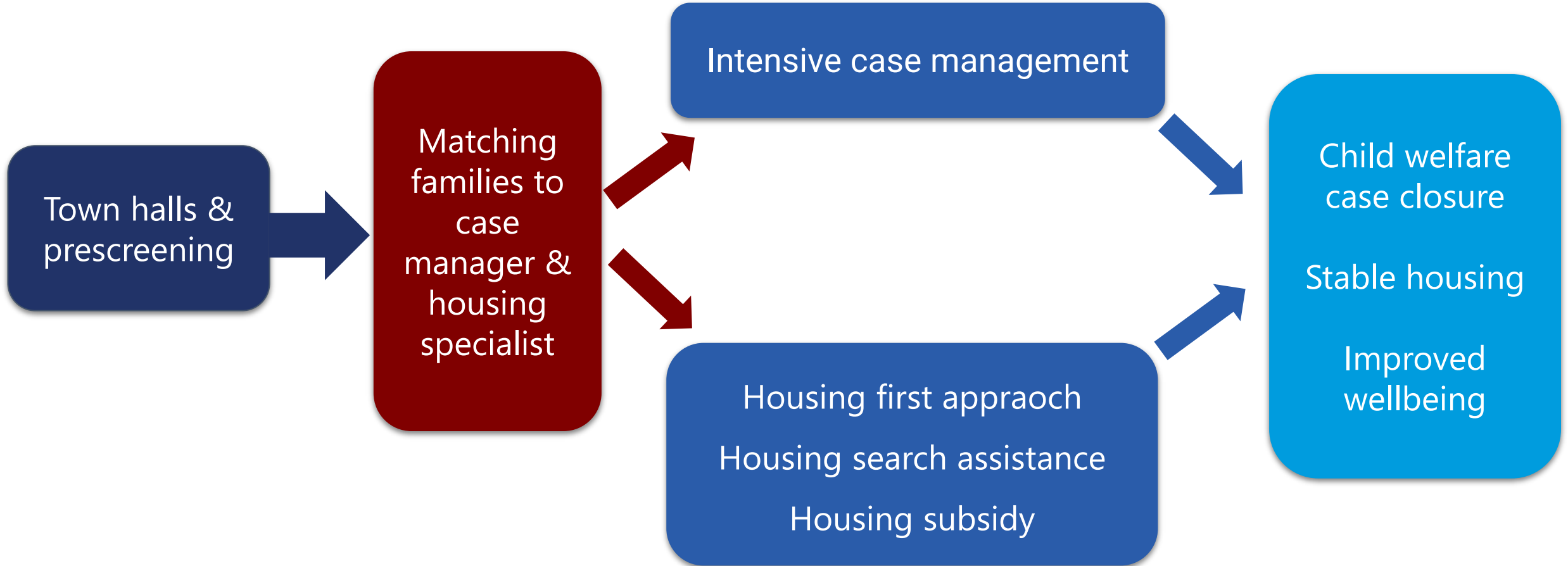
- Families experiencing homelessness for whom lack of adequate housing is an underlying reason for their child welfare system involvement
- Families with family maintenance or family reunification cases referred by the child welfare system

Screening criteria embedded in the CPS investigative narrative and **Structured Decision Making (SDM)** risk assessment

QUALIFYING REFERRAL REASONS

- Child physical or developmental disability
- Medically fragile child
- Caregiver or child mental health problem
- Caregiver criminal arrest history
- Caregiver substance use problem
- Domestic violence

PROGRAM COMPONENTS



Case Managers

Assessments
Housing stability plan
Home visits
Employment
Family treatment court
Internal & external referrals

Housing Specialists

Budgeting
Housing search
Housing applications
Utilities
Unit maintenance

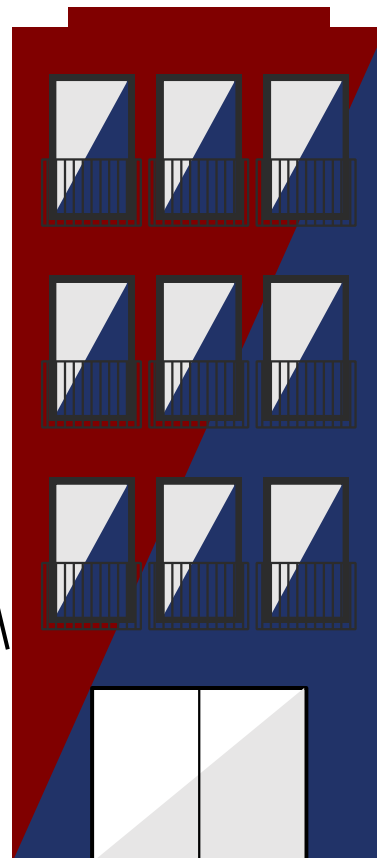
Security deposits
Move-in assistance
Landlord partnerships
Housing subsidies
Unit viewings
Lease signings
Move-out process

Shift due to the lack of additional FUP vouchers

BFH-PSH

Permanent Supportive
Housing

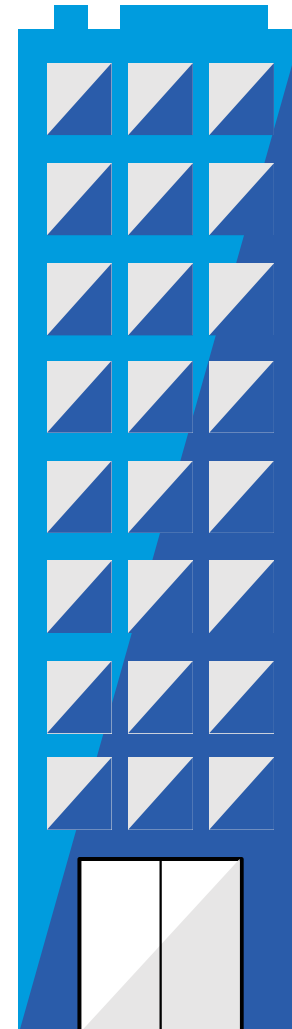
Began in July 2017



BFH-RRH

Rapid Re-Housing

Began in July 2022



Original Model (BFH-PSH)
Referral wait list
50 - 70 families enroll per year
Permanent Housing Choice Voucher from San Francisco Housing Authority
Focus on family preservation/reunification and successful child welfare case closure

Current Model (BFH-RRH)
Lottery
15 - 25 families enroll per year
Temporary rental subsidy for market rate rent administered by HPP
Focus on family preservation/reunification and successful child welfare case closure + increasing income to sustain stable housing when subsidy ends

PROGRAM MODEL COMPARISONS

Months	BFH-PSH	BFH-RRH
1 – 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve family functioning • Focus on recovery & wellness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect family to income • Financial coaching
7 -12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolution of child welfare case • Increase income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase income • Resolution of child welfare case
13 - 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain stable housing • No active child welfare case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to low-income housing • Exit plan



RAPID REHOUSING PROGRAM CHALLENGES

- Lack of affordable housing in Bay Area
- Families lack sufficient income to sustain their housing once subsidy ends
- Families need to stay in compliance with program rules for 2 years
- Relocating large families to low income or affordable housing

Housing Options for RRH Families



Unit Size	Maximum Monthly Payment Standard
1 Bedroom	\$3,200- \$3,600
2 Bedrooms	\$3,800- \$4,200
3 Bedrooms	\$4,700- \$5,100
4 Bedrooms	\$5,200- \$5600
5 bedrooms	\$5,900- \$6,400

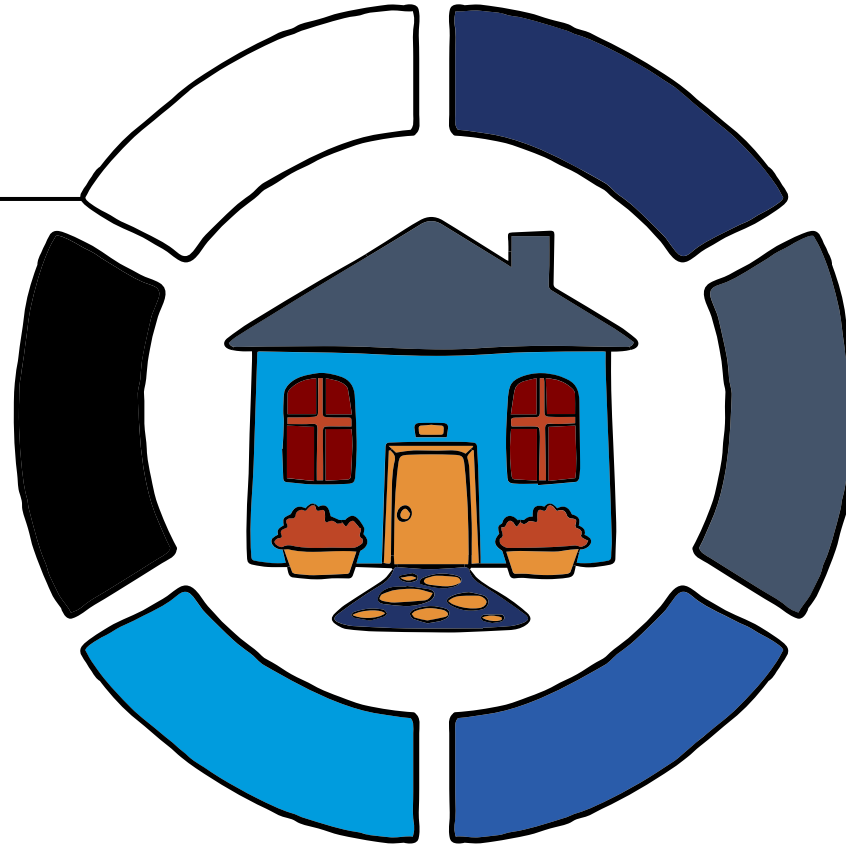
Child Welfare Worker Quotes

The majority, if not all, of my families who have been selected to participate in BFH have successfully reunified with their children. The housing crisis is a major issue impacting so many families so I am grateful for all the work that BFH does to ensure that our families receive the support needed to address this basic need.

BFH has helped several of my families find secure, safe, and stable housing that has allowed them to not only have successful reunification, but also the opportunity to create a new beginning for themselves and their children. The housing support from BFH allowed the family to focus on their services without obstacles of having worry about housing.

Lived Experience

[Video](#)





EVALUATION FINDINGS

Emily Rhodes



RESEARCH APPROACH

Administrative data

Parent surveys

Parent interviews

Implementation

- Characteristics of families served
- Types of services received
- Experiences of families

Outcomes

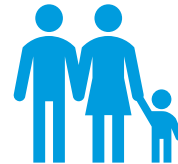
- Housing stability
- Child welfare case
- Caregiver and family wellbeing



FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

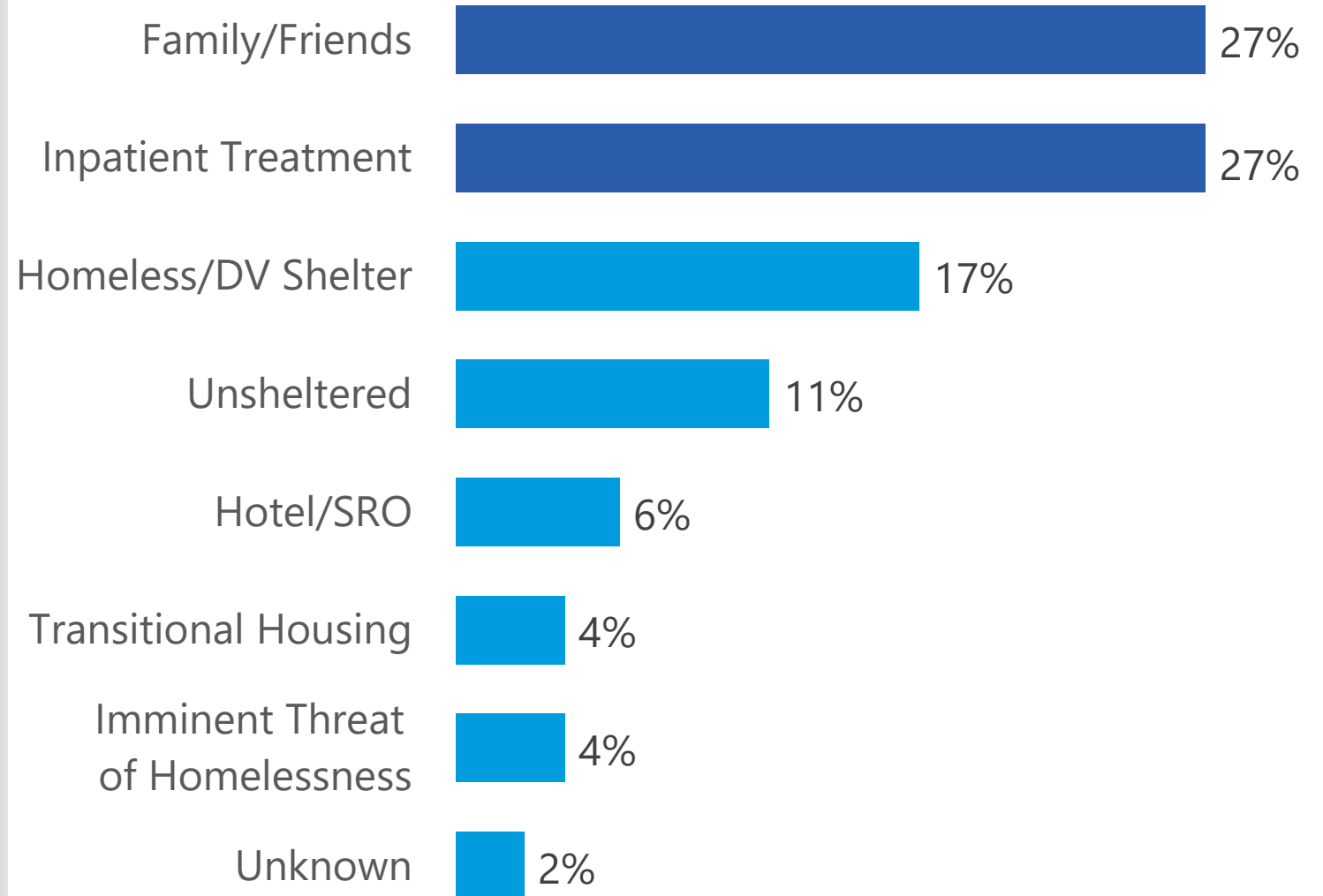


195 families enrolled in Bringing Families Home between July 2017 and June 2023





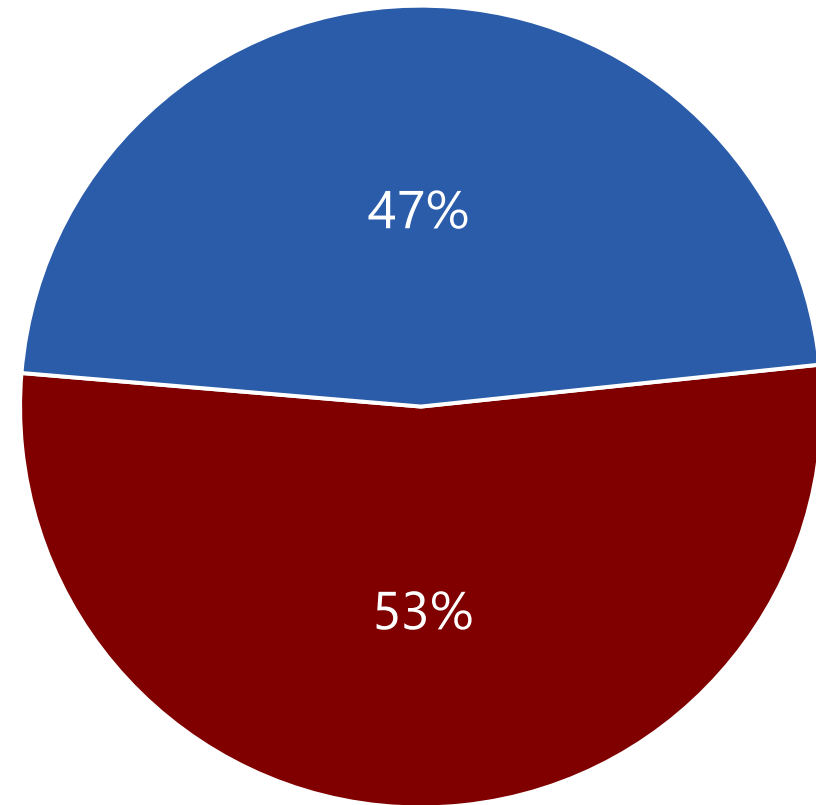
WHERE FAMILIES WERE LIVING AT ENROLLMENT





CHILD WELFARE CASE TYPE AT ENROLLMENT

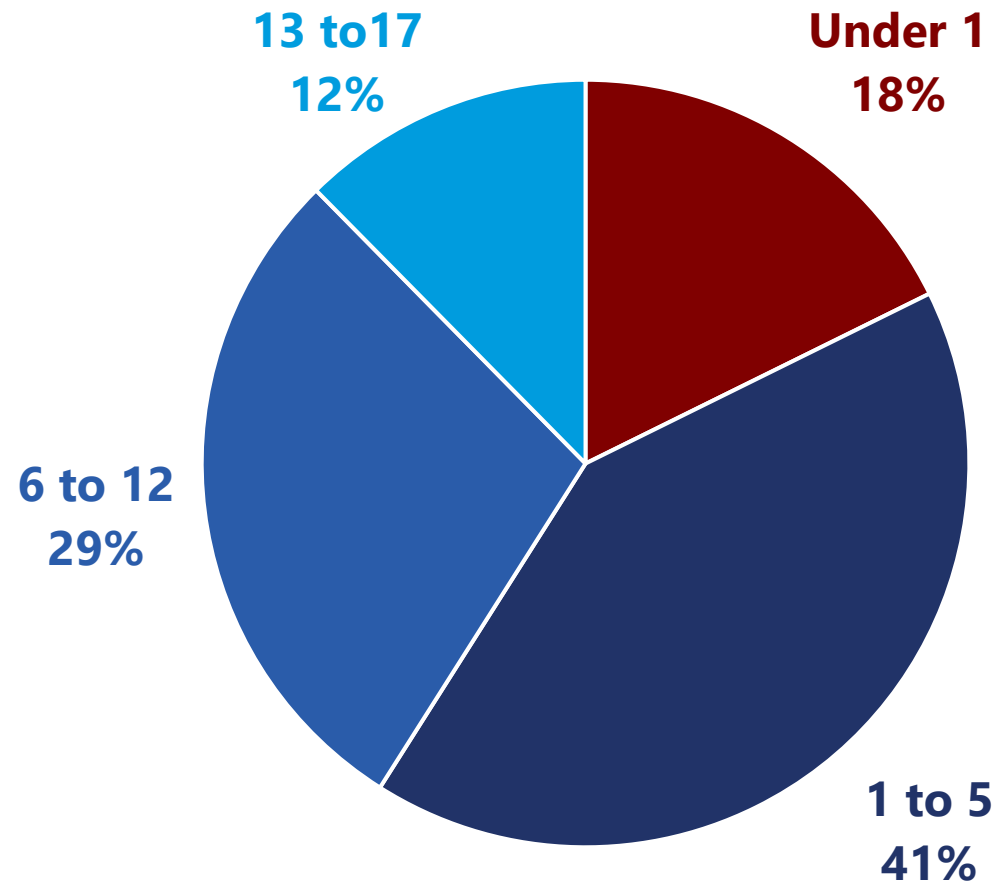
Family Reunification Cases



Family Maintenance Cases

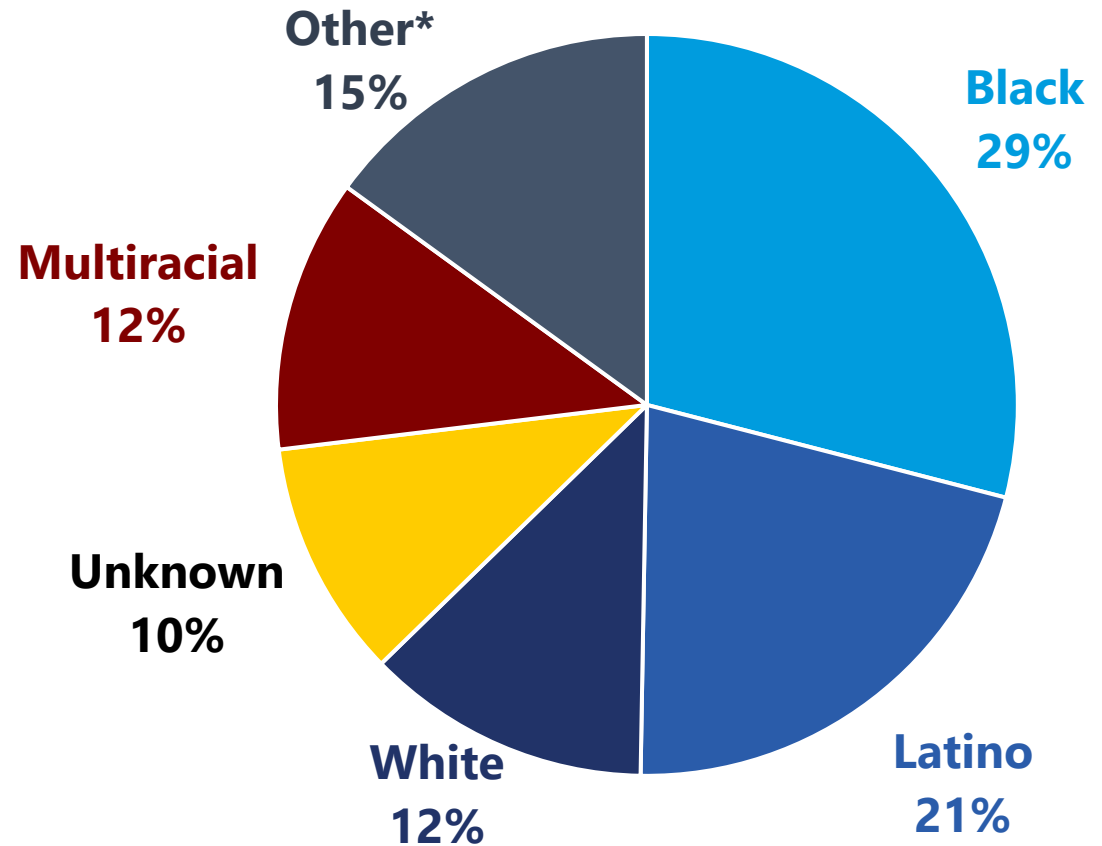


CHILDREN'S AGES (N=339)





**CAREGIVER
RACE OR
ETHNICITY
(N=248)**

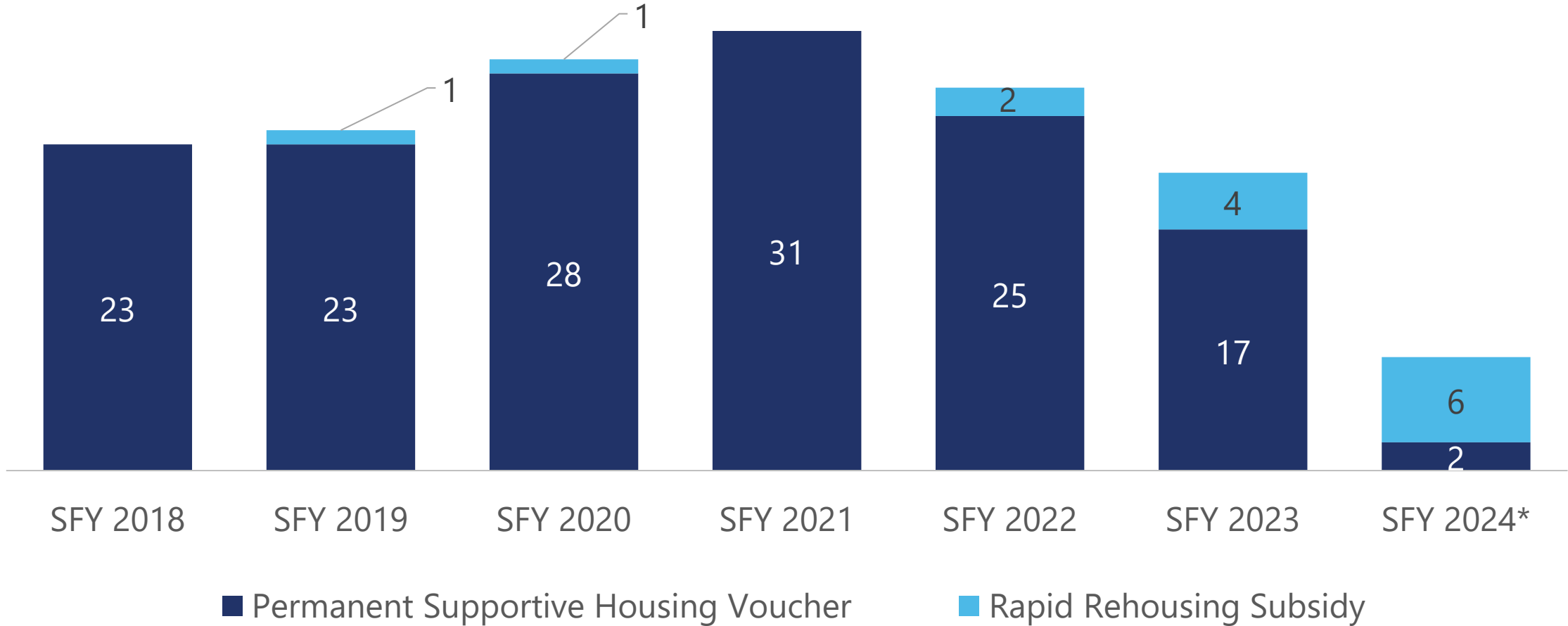


* Other includes Asian and Native American



HOUSING OUTCOMES

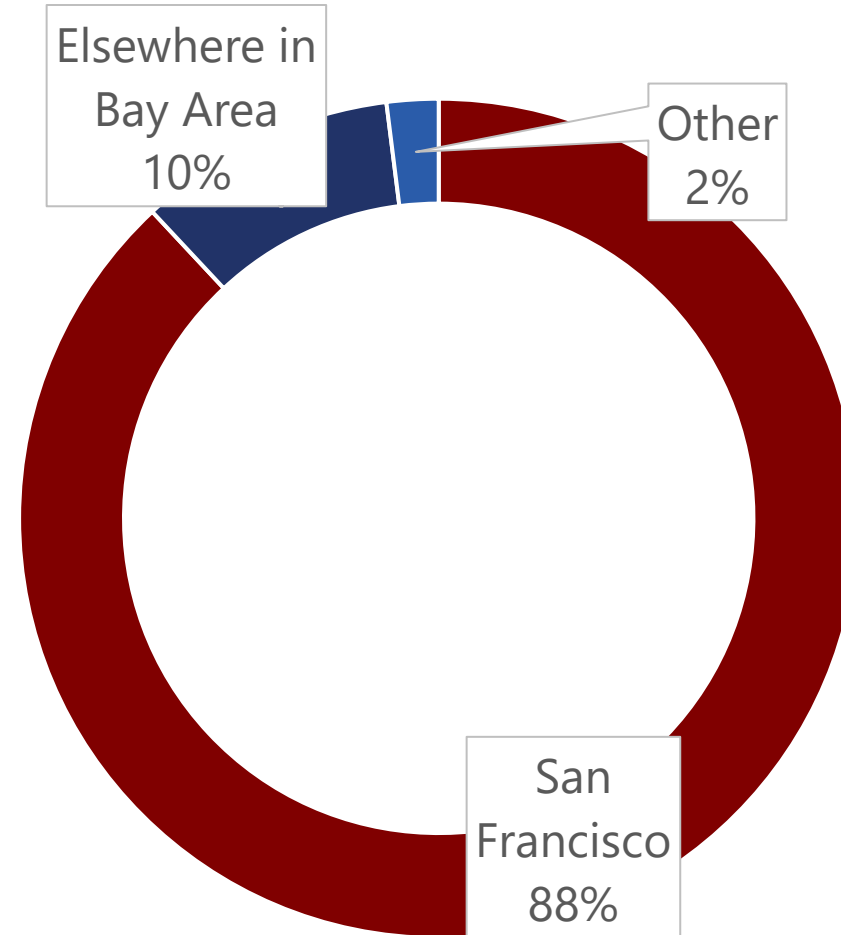
163 families were housed between July 2017 and September 2023, usually with permanent vouchers



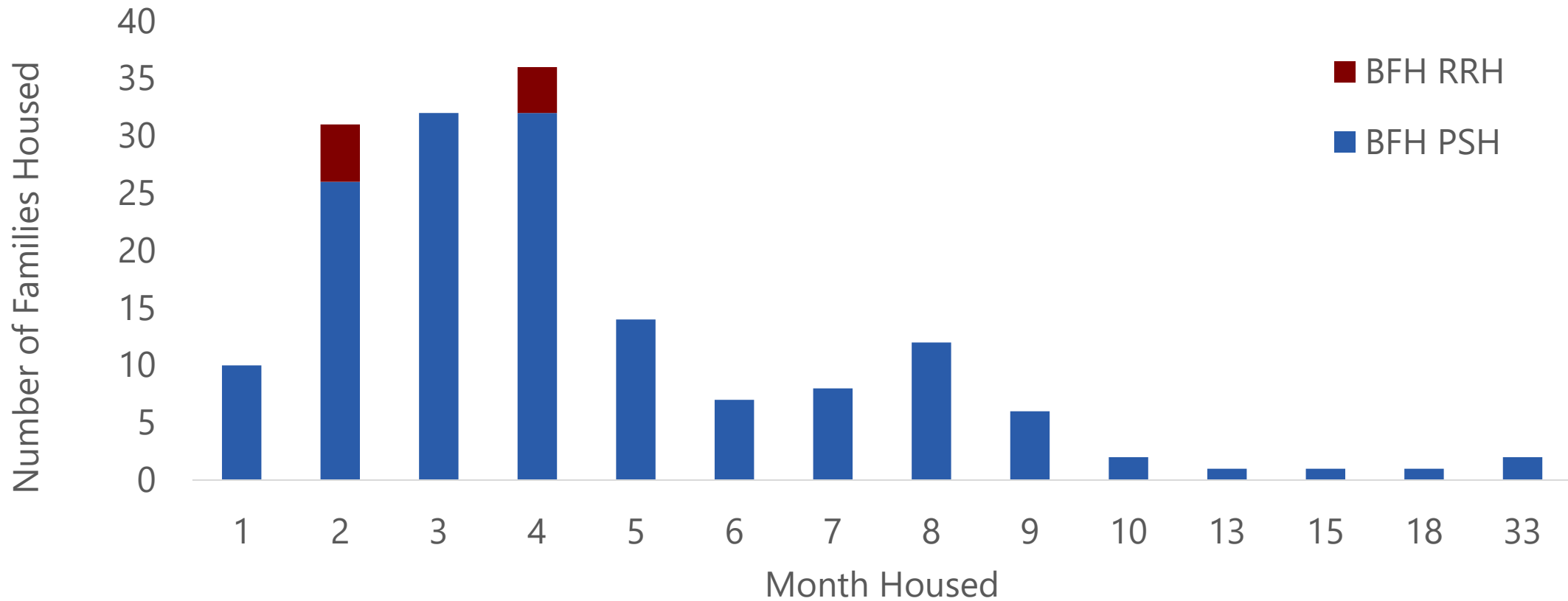
* SFY 2024 is based on a partial year of data



Most families were
housed in San
Francisco



Families were typically housed within 4 months of joining BFH

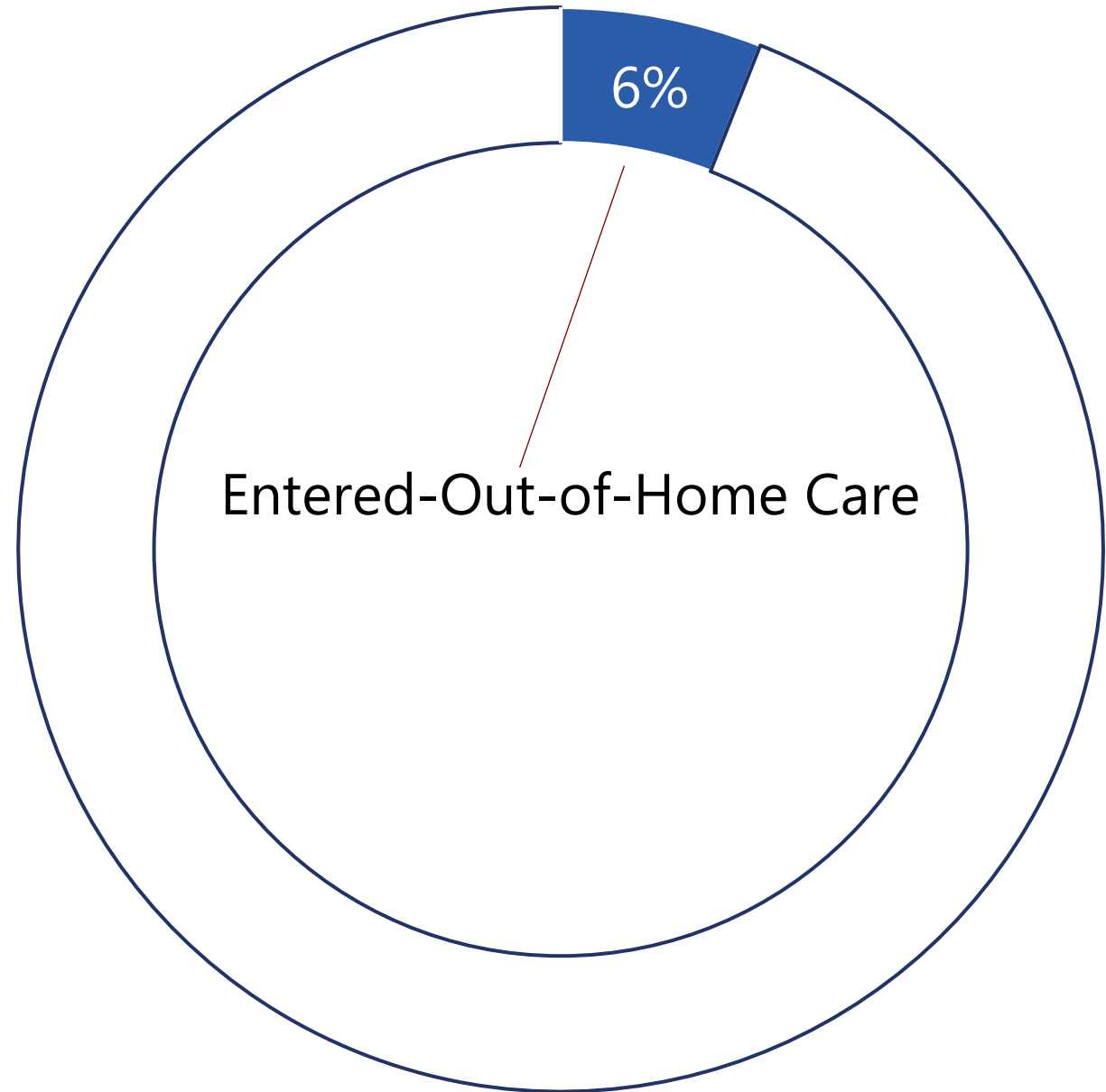




CHILD WELFARE OUTCOMES



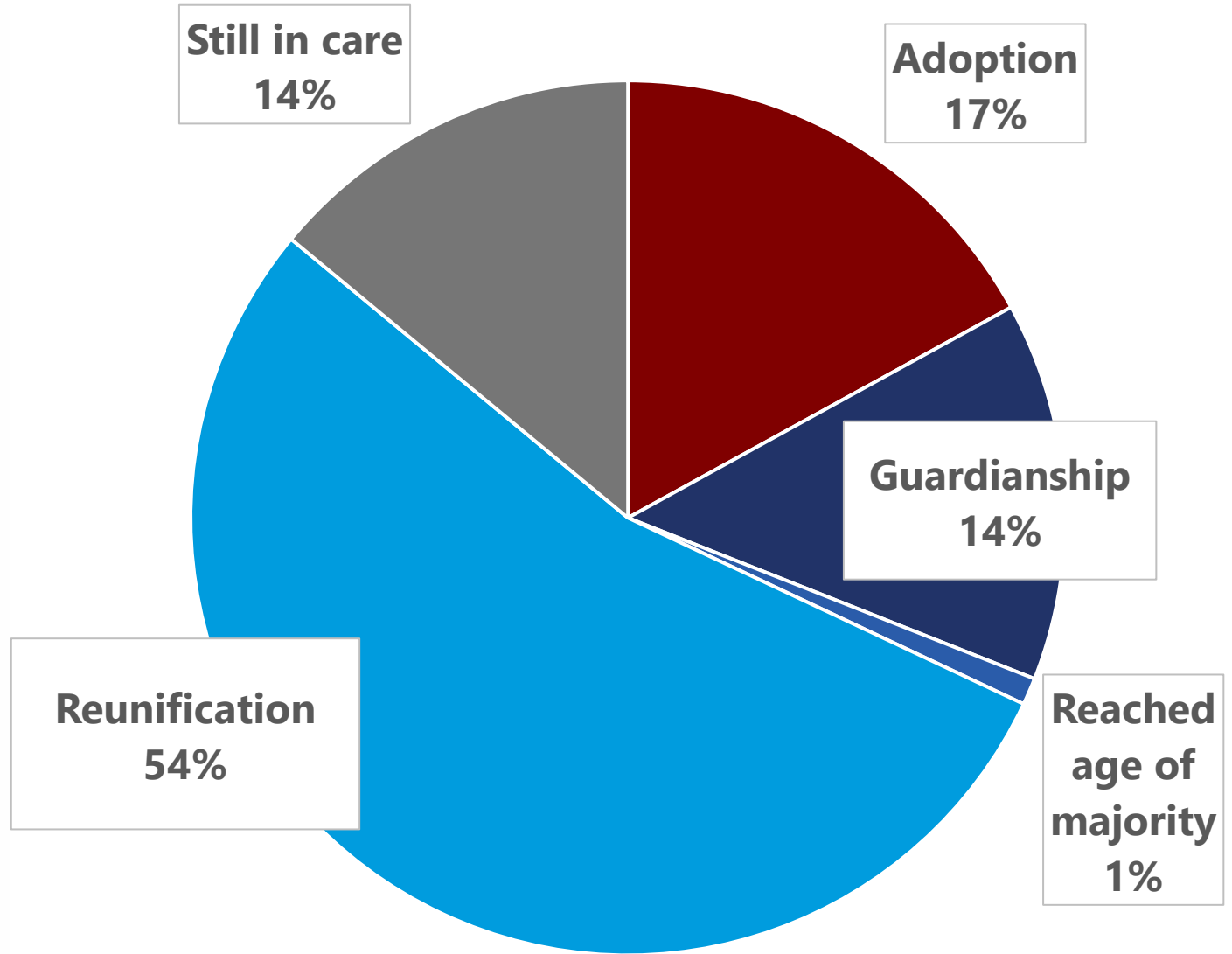
**OUTCOMES OF
CHILDREN LIVING AT
HOME AT
ENROLLMENT
(N = 149)**



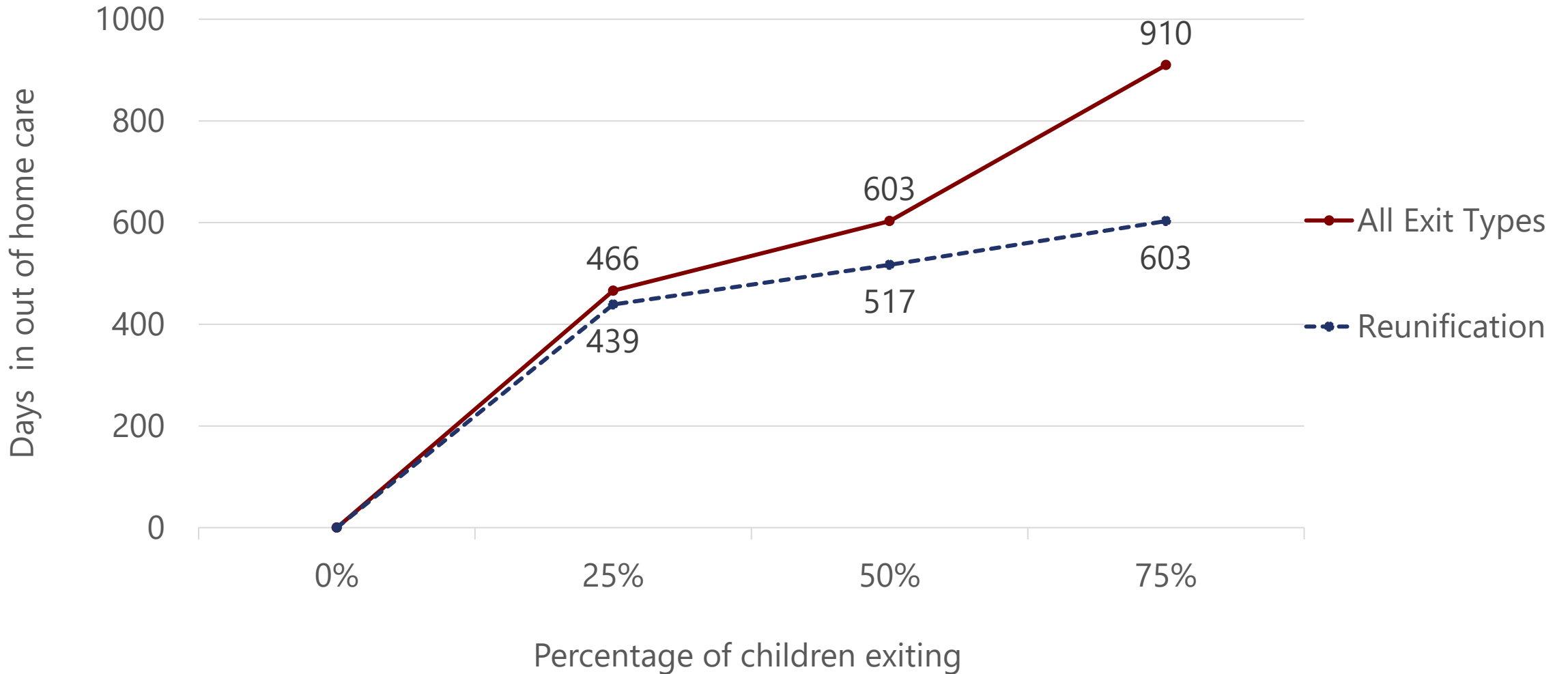


OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE AT ENROLLMENT

(N = 145)



The first half of children reunify within 517 days of placement

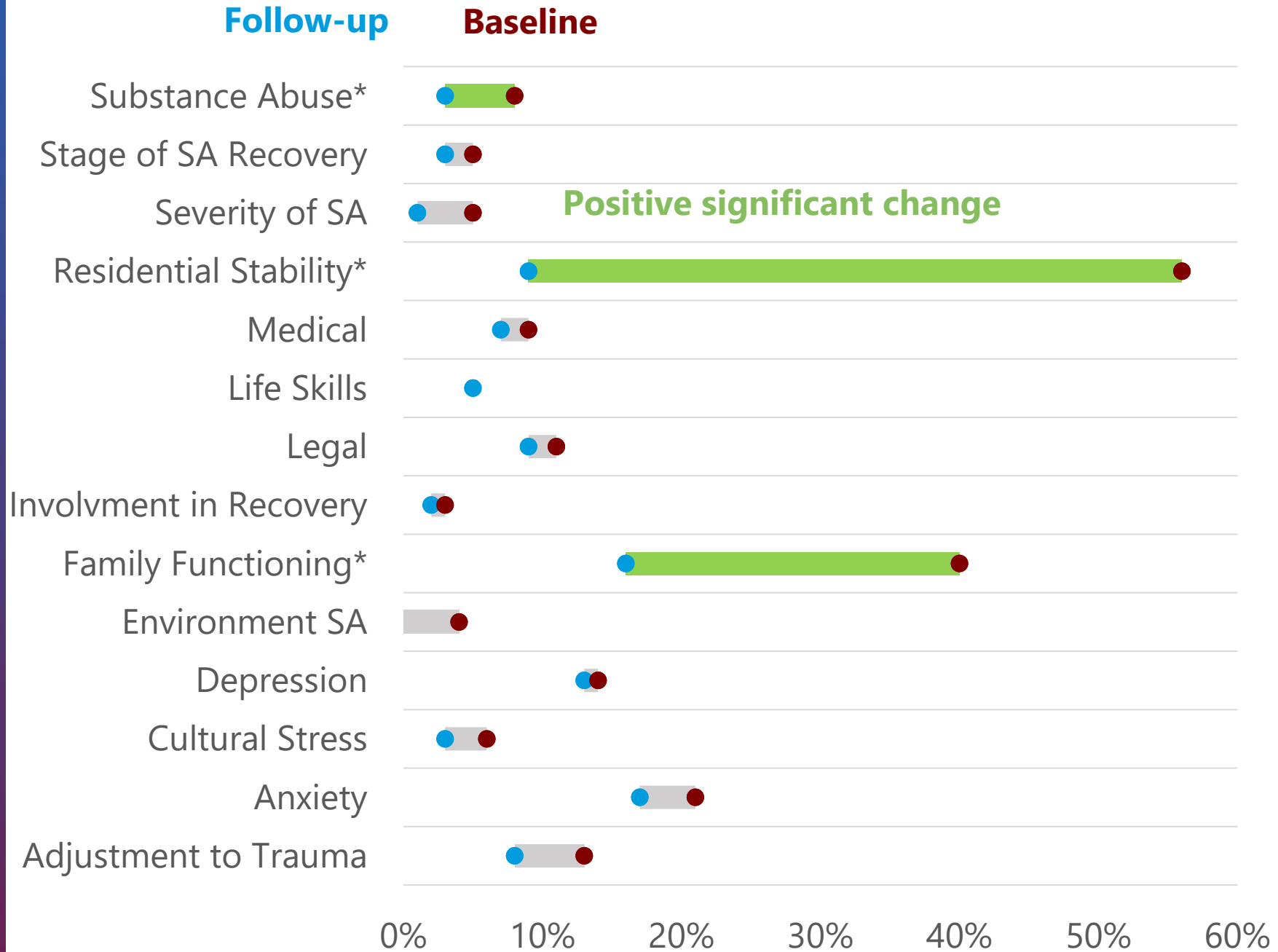




WELLBEING OUTCOMES



IMPROVEMENTS IN CAREGIVER AND FAMILY WELLBEING





EXIT OUTCOMES

- 170 of the 195 families enrolled in BFH had exited the program as of 9/30/2023
- Families typically stayed in the program for a year and half
- 2/3 were stably housed at exit

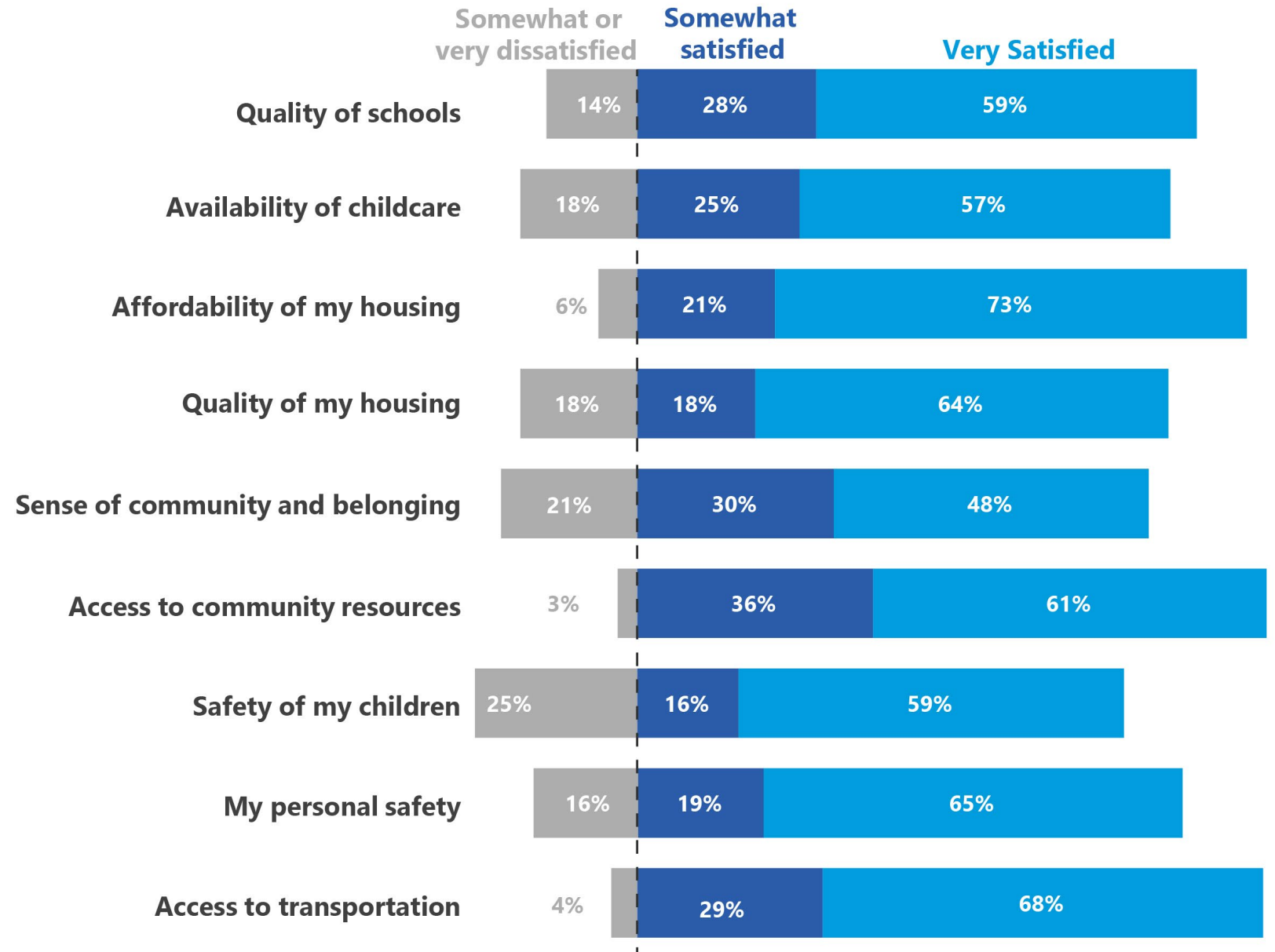


FOLLOW UP SURVEY

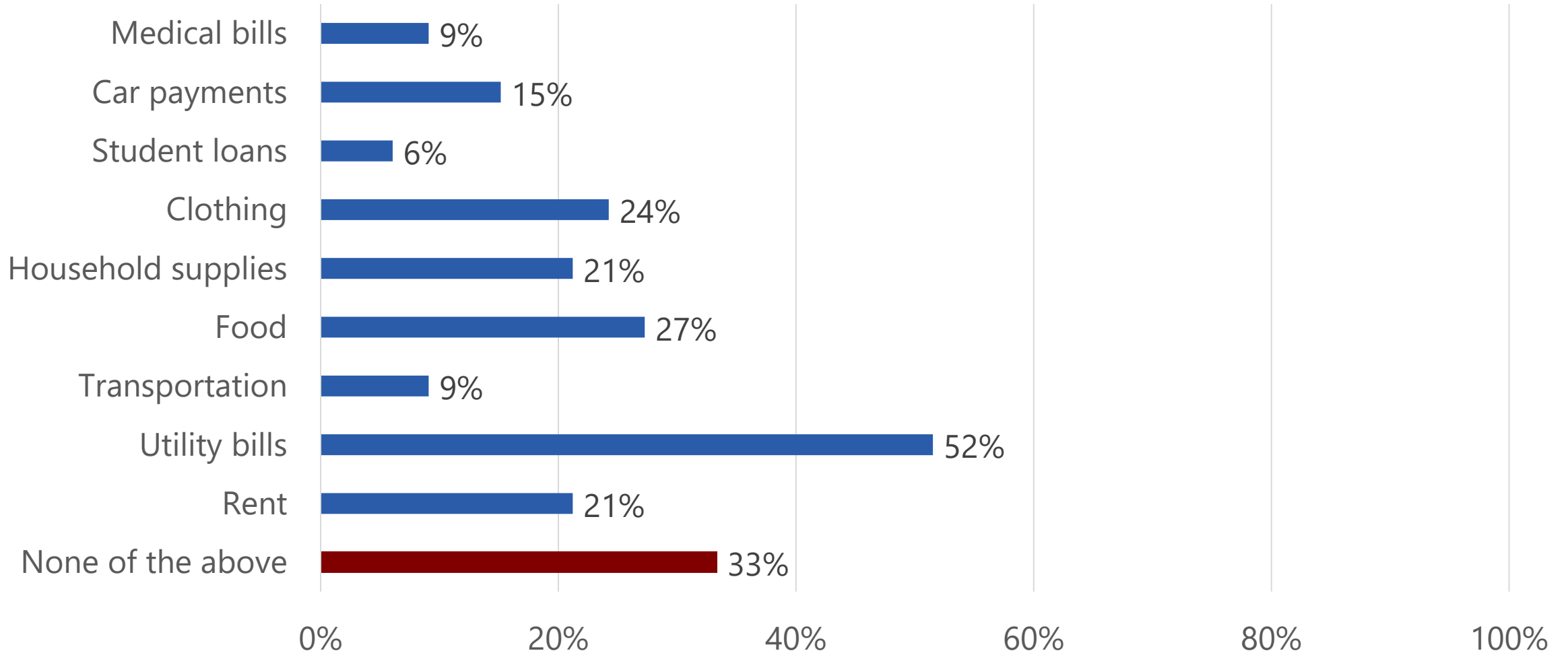
(N = 33)



MOST CAREGIVERS WERE SATISFIED WITH THEIR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY



2/3 reported difficulty paying bills 6 months after successfully completing the program





Parent Quotes

Parent Quotes from Follow-up Survey

BFH has truly help[ed] our family find and keep stable housing. Creating this safe and stable home has helped us focus on other aspects of our lives that need support such as our recovery services, mental health, and creating a positive, loving, and enriching environment for our daughter.

BFH has been a true gift to our family, I just wish there was in-person or over the phone follow up after our case was closed.

Parent Quotes from Interviews

I was losing hope in getting my baby back. I thought it was over. And when I saw everybody sitting there. It was over Zoom, but when I looked at everybody's face on the screen, I was like, I have a chance. I can do it. . . . I felt like I had some sort of power again. It felt nice.

[Case manager] helped me with more than just housing. Daycare, child care, looking into some training for work, anything. She tells me anything I need, *I could ask her for, really.*



CONCLUSION

- Supportive housing may help stabilize families experiencing homelessness and lead to successful child welfare case closure.
- Fewer children in foster care—due to placement prevention or reunification—translates into cost savings for child welfare systems.
- Preventing placement and facilitating reunification through supportive housing are also good for children and their families



For full report visit:

www.chapinhall.org/research/bringing-families-home-san-francisco/

Evaluation Report

BRINGING FAMILIES HOME SAN FRANCISCO

Emily Rhodes | Amy Dworsky | LaShaun Brooks



Questions?