



Family and Children's Services

Annual report 2024-2025



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Message from the Director

To: Brad Cathers
Minister of Health and Social Services
Government of Yukon

Dear Minister Cathers,

Please accept the 2024–25 Family and Children’s Services’ annual report which details the work undertaken by the Family and Children’s Services (FCS) branch to deliver services under the *Child and Family Services Act* (CFSA) and the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA).

As the Director of FCS, it is my pleasure to present to you quantitative analyses of the continuum of services we deliver, including preventative programming, programming for families involved in the child protection system, programming for children in out-of-home care and their caregivers, and young adults who have transitioned out of the child protection system.

The CFSA requires me to perform the functions of the provincial director under the YCJA, so this report also details our work in Youth Probation, the Young Offenders Facility and the Youth Achievement Centre.

In March 2025, I stepped into the role of Director of FCS and shepherded the branch through the final month of the reporting period. I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to all FCS staff, and I want to thank Yukon First Nation governments, the Council of Yukon First Nations’ Family Preservation Services and other service providers for their work.

Thank you,

Tanya MacKenzie,
Director, Family and Children’s Services



Executive summary

This report provides an overview of the services and supports provided to children, youth and families by the Family and Children's Services (FCS) branch of Health and Social Services (HSS) from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025. The primary focus of this report is the *Child and Family Services Act* (CFSA), but it also provides information on the work done by FCS under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and the services delivered to all Yukoners through FCS's Family Resource Program.

The figures included in this report detail the service use trends of the various supports and services offered by FCS. Some of these noteworthy trends include:

- An overall decrease in the number of children in care or custody by 34 per cent from 2017 to 2024. However, from April 2024 to March 2025 the number of children in care increased by 14.1 per cent.
- Over half of all children in out-of-home care (51%) were in the care of extended family during the 2024–25 fiscal year.
- Over the reporting period, the number of children placed with extended family members and community members continued to decrease, resulting in more children being placed in group care.
- When comparing 2023 to 2024 point-in-time counts, the number of children in group care increased by 76.2 per cent. Monthly changes over the reporting period reflected this upward trend, increasing by 51.9 per cent from April 2024 to March 2025.
- The number of young adults supported through agreements continues to increase. From April 2024 to March 2025, the number of young adults supported with Agreements for Transitional Support Services increased by 12.5 per cent.



Caseload overview

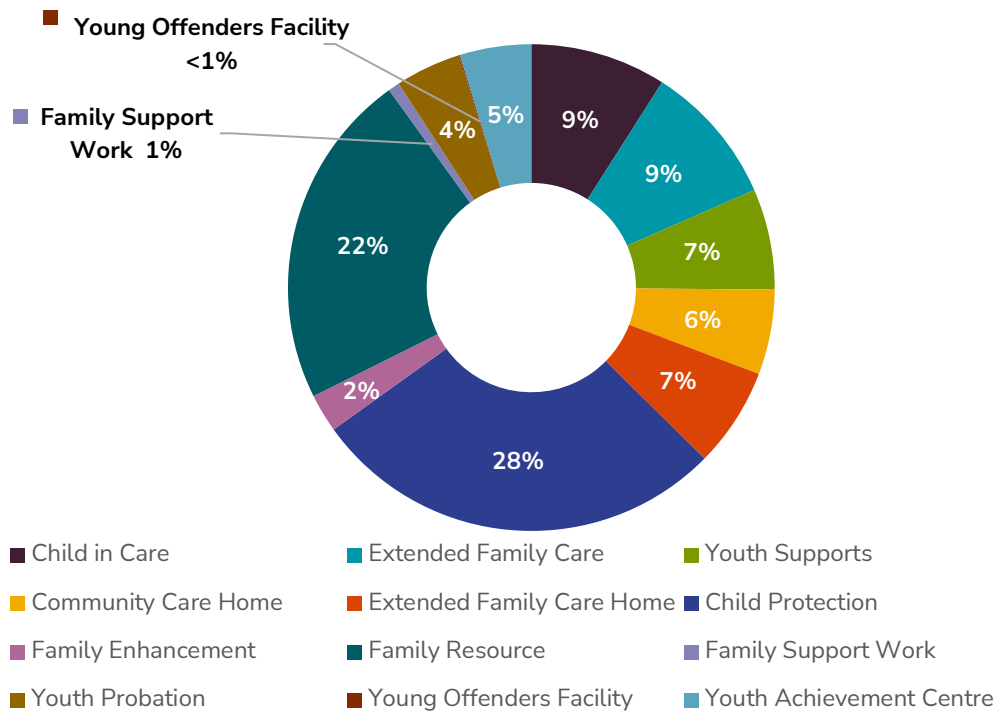


Figure 1 – Percentage breakdown of total unique FCS cases over the reporting period by file type.
 Note: This data speaks to the number of unique cases, not unique individuals served. Due to the nature of the data and services provided, some individuals may be double counted if they have accessed services or supports under more than one file type over the reporting period.

In addition to data on programs and services, this report briefly highlights FCS’s response to the 2023 Yukon Coroner’s Inquest related to the death of a child, as well as milestones in FCS’s relationships with Yukon First Nations.

Purpose of the report

According to s. 187 of the CFSA, the Director of FCS must submit to the Minister of HSS an annual report on the provision of services under the CFSA. The two previous reports to the Minister summarized service delivery from 2020 to 2022 and January 2023 to March 2024, respectively. Beginning with the current report, subsequent annual reports will follow the fiscal year.



Continuum of programs and services

FCS provides a continuum of programs and services to support Yukoners. It starts with preventative programming designed to support all families in the Yukon. When child protection concerns regarding the safety of children arise, FCS delivers Family Support Services under the CFSA to keep children with their families. If the child protection concerns cannot be mitigated to create safety for children, then children are placed in out-of-home care temporarily until they can be reunified with their parents. FCS also delivers specialized programming for youth from 16 to 19 years of age who cannot live with their parents and for those from 19 to 26 years of age who were previously in out-of-home care.

Preventative programming for all families

FCS prioritizes keeping families together and in their communities by building on their strengths. FCS's Family Resource Unit (FRU) provides resources for families outside of the confines of the legislated mandate of the CFSA. These programs are voluntary and are available to all families who have children aged 0 to 19. Programming offered through FRU ranges from one-on-one supports to group events and structured parenting programs. Examples of events include crafting groups, lessons on self-care, and many more.

The number of families working with FRU has continued to increase since 2017, except for 2022 and 2023 (Figure 2). The noticeable drop in the number of families in 2022 and 2023 is largely due to changes in how this data is captured and reported. This is supported by the number of families reported in 2024 to be working with FRU reflecting the upward trend observed across previous years. Ten of these families also accessed FRU's Family Support Work program.



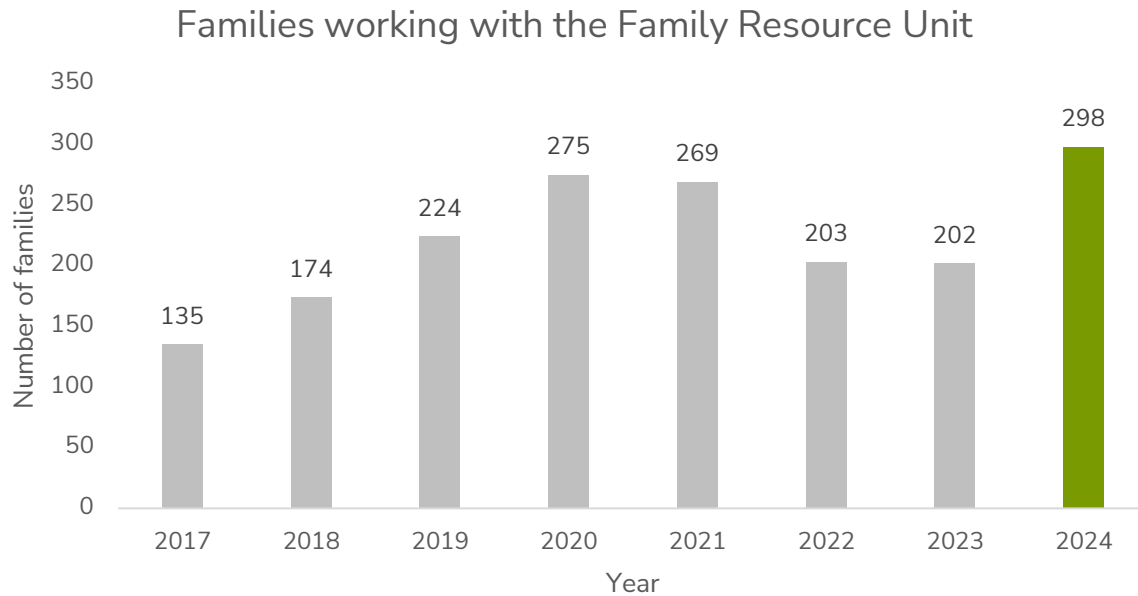


Figure 2 – Number of families working with the Family Resource Unit from 2017 to 2024. The data for the reporting period is highlighted in green. Note: From 2017 to 2023, FRU service use data was reported by calendar year. For the current and subsequent annual reports, FRU service use data is cumulative for each fiscal year.

Over the 2024–25 fiscal year, FRU hosted 192 events. This represents a decrease of 29.9 per cent in the number of events held when compared to the 2023 calendar year.

Family Support Services

When child protection concerns are identified, FCS works with the families to address the underlying issues. A range of services and supports, listed in the CFSA, can be provided to families based on their individual needs. These include services for children, counselling, in-home support, out-of-home care, homemaker services, respite care, parenting programs and supports for children who witness family violence. FCS also provides financial supports and connects families with the necessary community resources to create safety for the child(ren) in the family home.

Over the reporting period, FCS worked with 402 families to address child protection concerns.



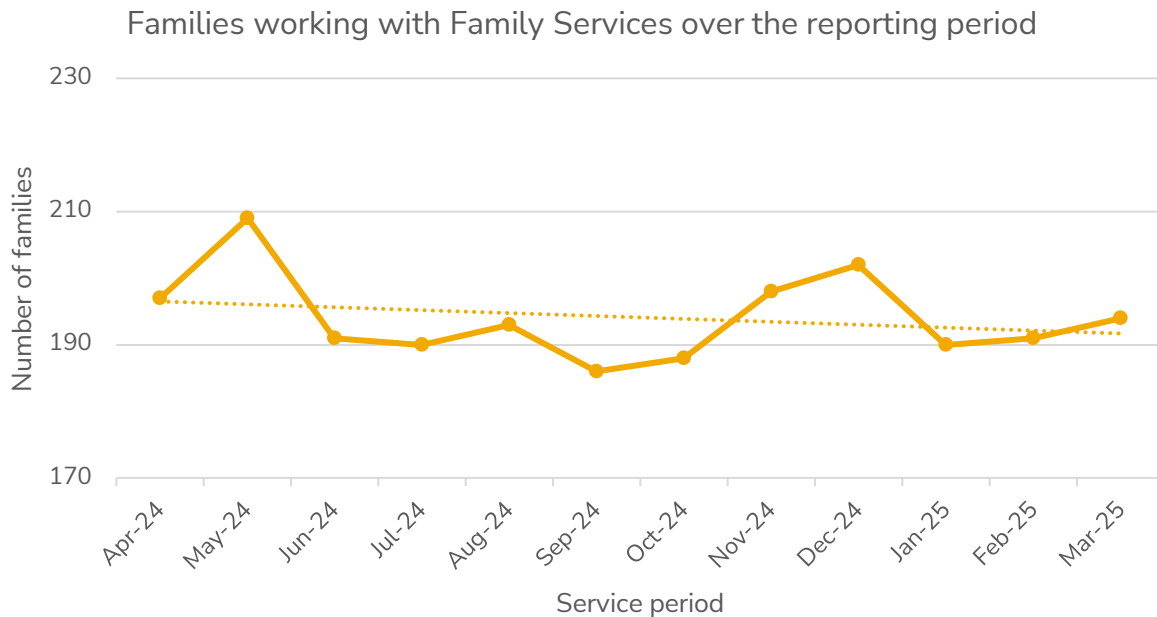


Figure 3 – Number of families with an open Family Services case during each month of the reporting period. The dotted line showcases the overall trend over the reporting period. Note: Open cases include both those receiving ongoing services and cases in the Investigation/Assessment stage.

Out-of-home care programs

When Family Support Services cannot mitigate the child protection concerns for the child in the family home, then the child requires out-of-home care. In such cases, placing the child with an extended family member is prioritized. If no extended family members are available, then the child may be brought into care and placed with a community caregiver or in group care.

Although there is variation over the years, the following overall trends in out-of-home care are evident:

- Total number of children in out-of-home care decreased from 195 in 2017 to 181 in 2024, which is a 7.2 per cent decrease.
- With the introduction of extended family care, the number of children in the Director’s care or custody has decreased from 141 in 2017 to 93 in 2024, which is a 34 per cent decrease.



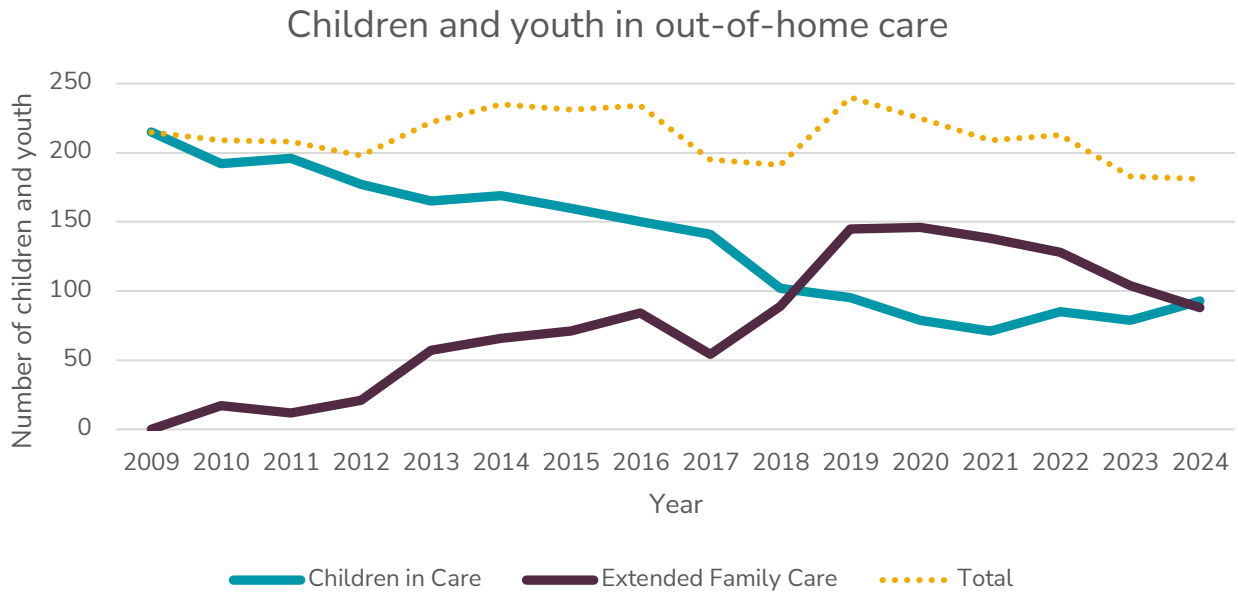


Figure 4 – Number of children and youth in both types of out-of-home care from 2009 to 2024. September caseloads were used due to the reporting structure of the previous case management system and to remain consistent with previous annual reports.

- Percentages of children in out-of-home care based on placement type (that is, with extended family members, community caregivers and group care) have remained relatively stable since 2019.
- One noteworthy exception is the percentage of children placed in group care. On average, group care comprised approximately 10 per cent of out-of-home care placements from 2017 to 2023. However, this percentage doubled in 2024.



Children and youth in out-of-home care by placement type

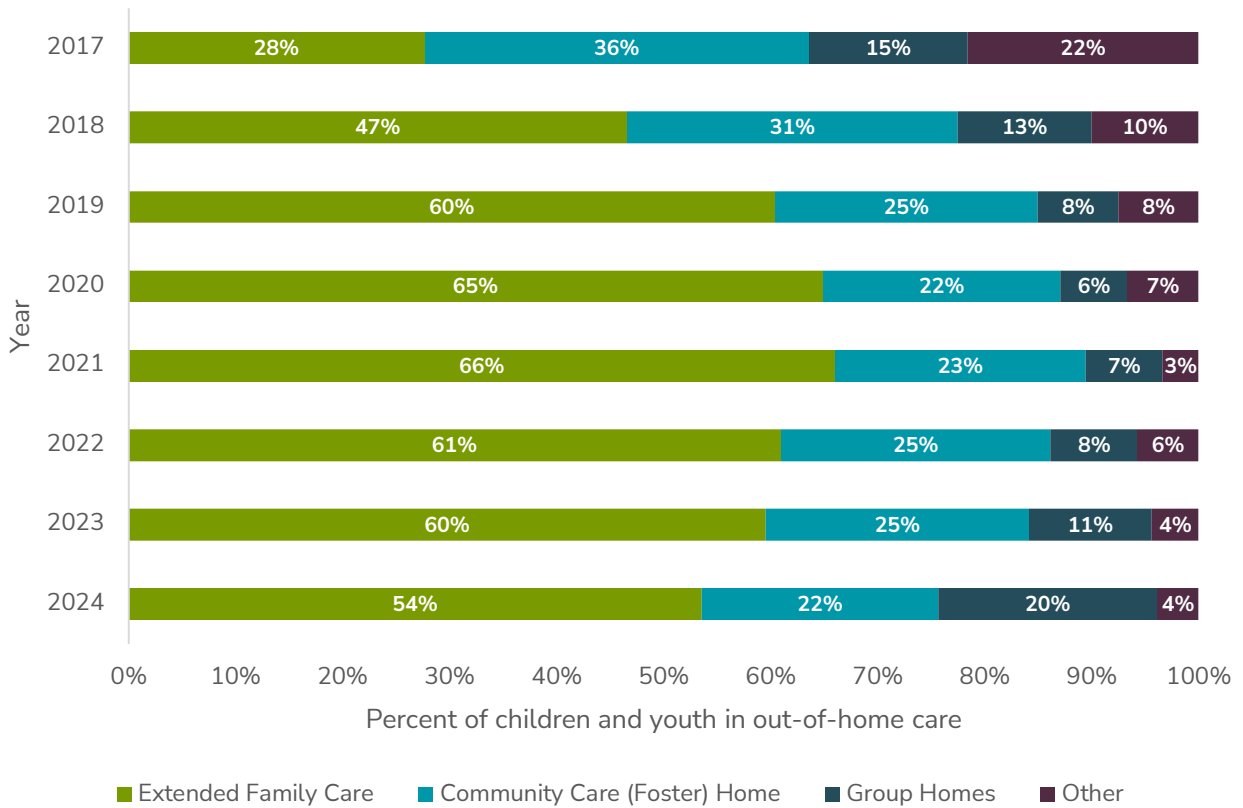


Figure 5 – Percent of children and youth in out-of-home care placement types from 2017 to 2024. Other placement types could include many placement types, such as extended visits with family, out of territory placements or medical placements. Note: September caseloads were used due to the reporting structure of the previous case management system and to remain consistent with previous annual reports.

For the current reporting period, there were a total of 245 unique out-of-home care cases, with extended family care cases representing just over half (51%) of all out-of-home care cases. Age composition of children and youth in out-of-home care remained consistent, as approximately 28 per cent of children in out-of-home care were between 12 to 15 years of age. The average age of children in out-of-home care was just over 10 years old.



Children and youth in out-of-home care by age group

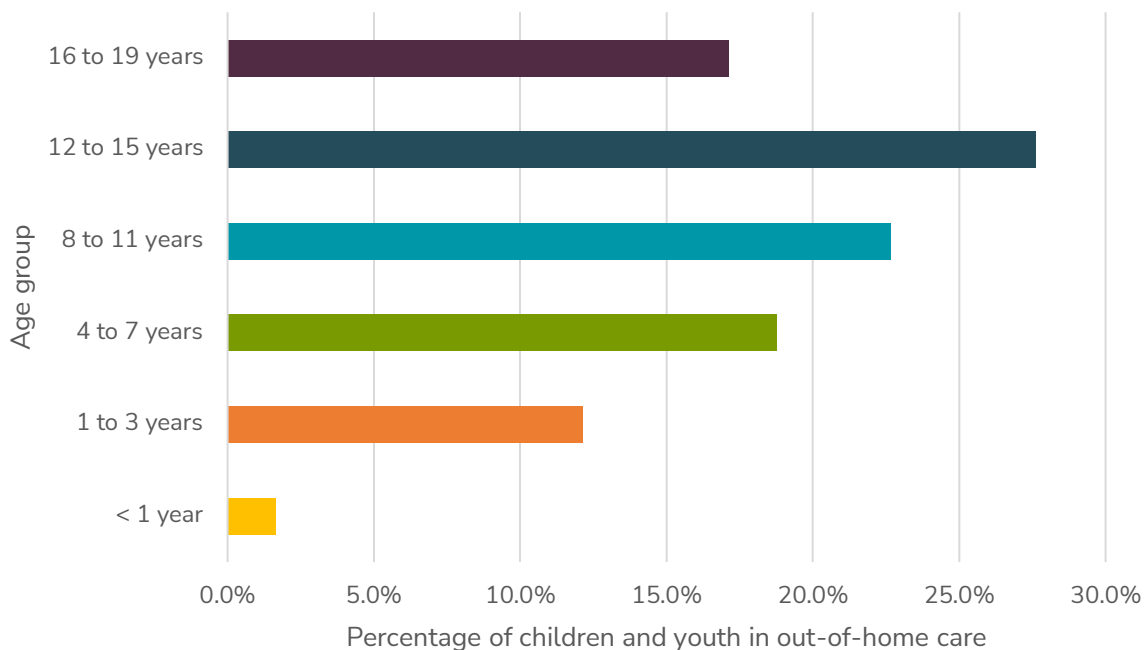


Figure 6 – Percentages of children and youth in out-of-home care by age group. September caseloads were used due to the nature of this data and to remain consistent with the other point-in-time statistics included in this report.

Extended family care

The first choice for out-of-home care is placement with an extended family member. This allows parents to retain custody while enabling the child to maintain their connections to family, community and culture.

Most children and youth in extended family care identified as Indigenous (95%), with the majority identifying as Yukon First Nation (80%).



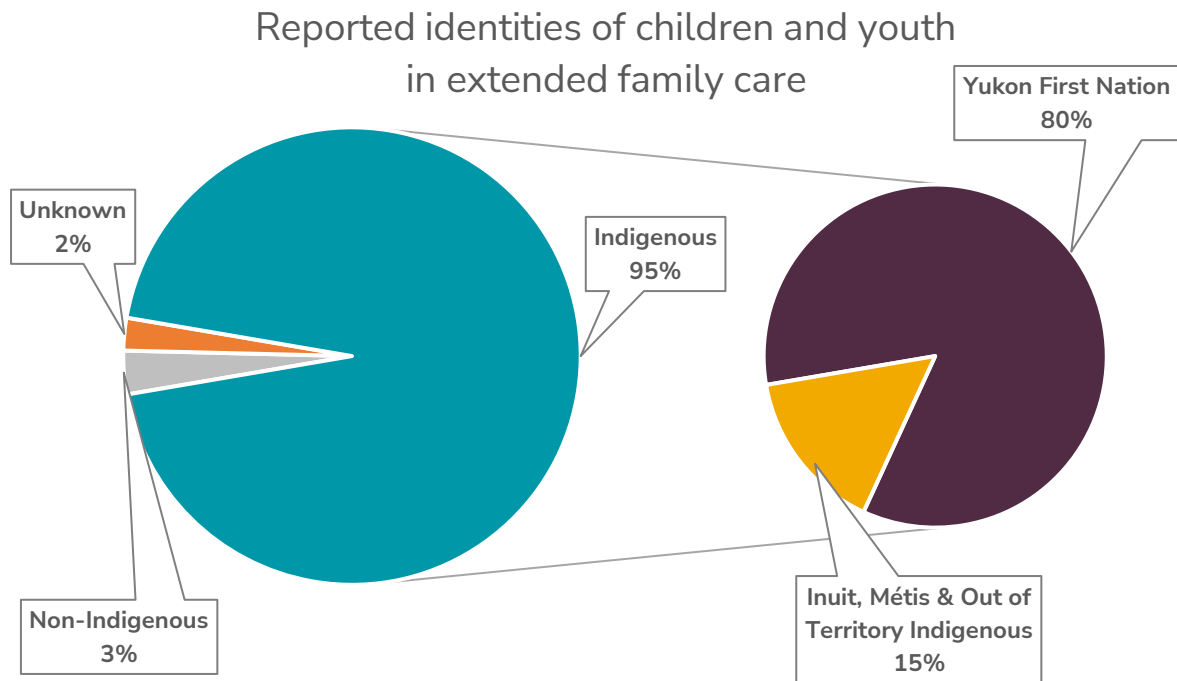


Figure 7 – Self-reported identities of children and youth in extended family care during the reporting period. The chart on the left speaks to the general demographic identity of those in extended family care, including overall Indigenous representation. The chart on the right provides a breakdown of Indigenous representation, including those who identified as Yukon First Nation.

As demonstrated in Figures 8 and 9, the number of children in extended family care continues to trend downward, with a decrease of 15.4 per cent in the number of children in extended family care from September 2023 to September 2024.

However, a decrease of only 4.1 per cent was observed when comparing numbers of children in extended family care at the beginning of the reporting period (April 2024) to numbers at the end (March 2025).



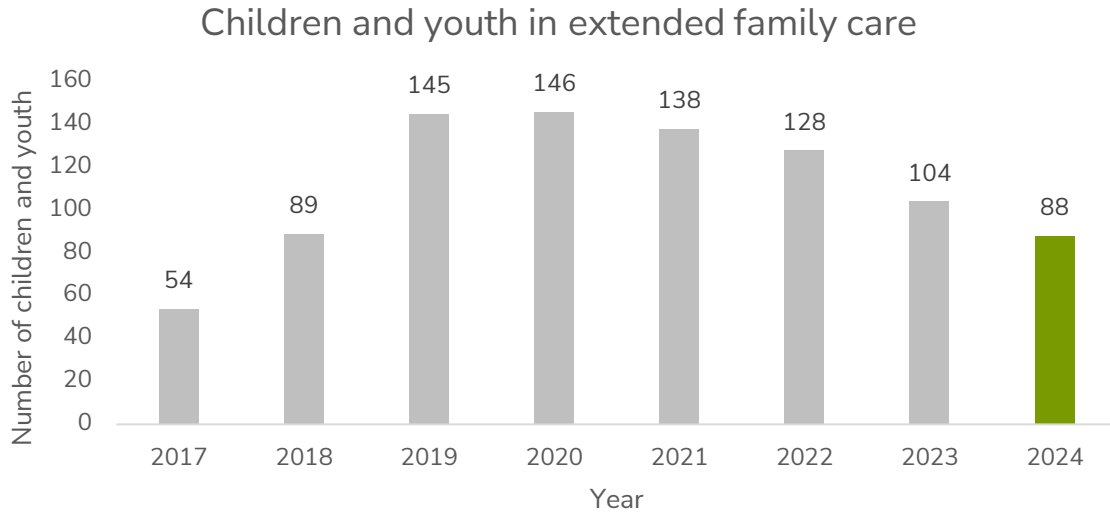


Figure 8 – Number of children and youth in extended family care from 2017 to 2024. September caseloads were used due to the reporting structure of the previous case management system and to remain consistent with previous annual reports. The data for the reporting period is highlighted in green.

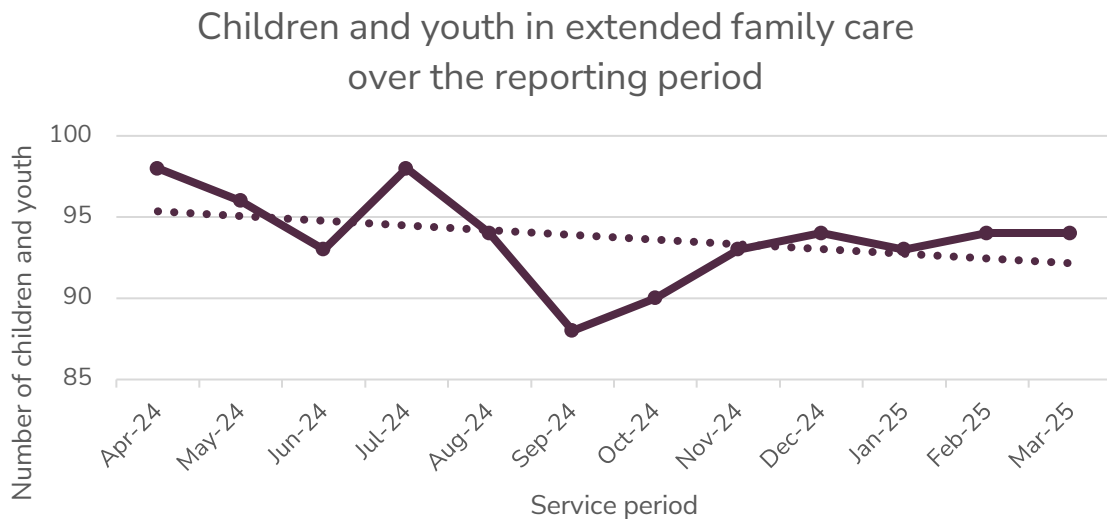


Figure 9 – Number of children and youth in extended family care during each month of the reporting period. The dotted line showcases the overall trend over the reporting period.



Children in care

When extended family care is not possible, children come into the care or custody of the Director and are placed with community caregivers or in group care. The Director may also place children in care with extended family members, but unlike extended family care discussed above, the parents will not retain custody of the children.

Like extended family care, most children in care identified as Indigenous (95%), with the majority identifying as Yukon First Nation (68%).

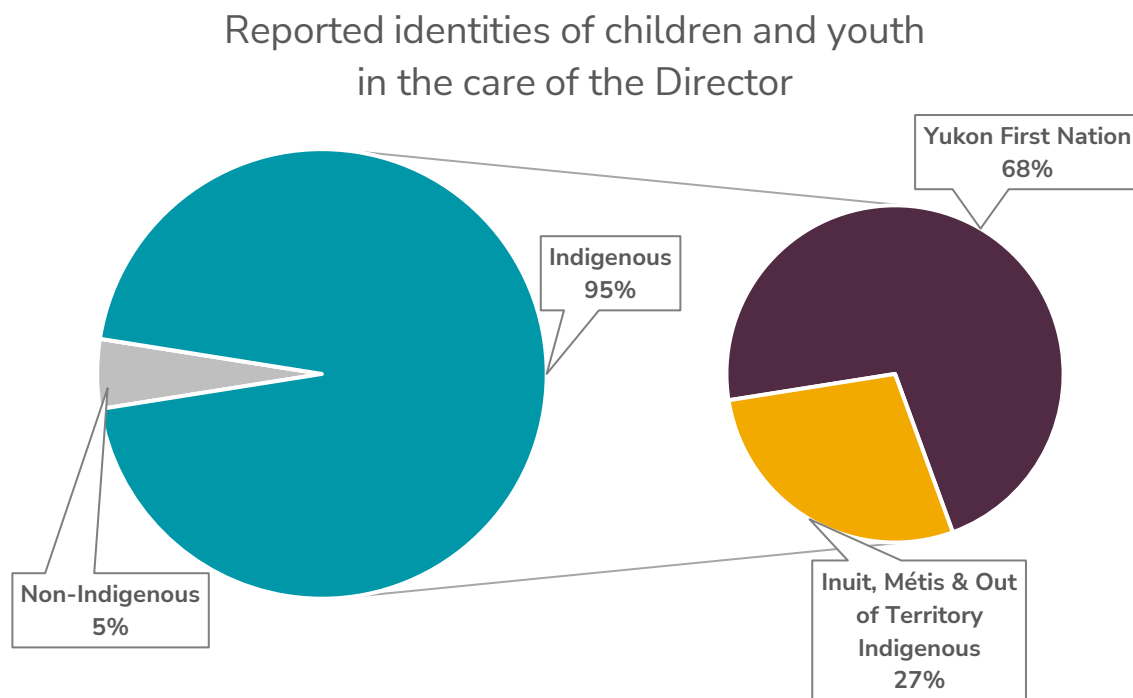


Figure 10 – Self-reported identities of children and youth in the care of the Director during the reporting period. The chart on the left speaks to the general demographic identity of those in the care of the Director, including overall Indigenous representation. The chart on the right provides a breakdown of Indigenous representation, including those who identified as Yukon First Nation.



The number of children in care has shown continued annual and monthly increases over the reporting period. Figure 11 demonstrates that the annual counts of children in care, as point-in-time counts from September of each year, increased by 17.7 per cent. Figure 12 shows that the monthly counts of children in care during the reporting period increased by 14.1 per cent from April 2024 to March 2025.

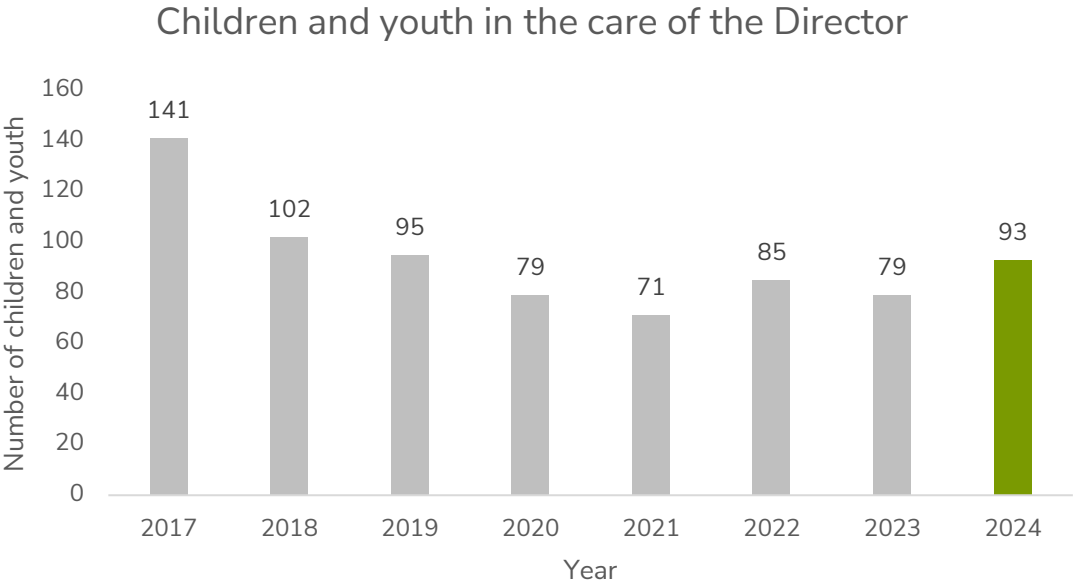


Figure 11 – Number of children and youth in the care of the Director in all placement types from 2017 to 2024. September caseloads were used due to the reporting structure of the previous case management system and to remain consistent with previous annual reports. The data for the reporting period is highlighted in green.



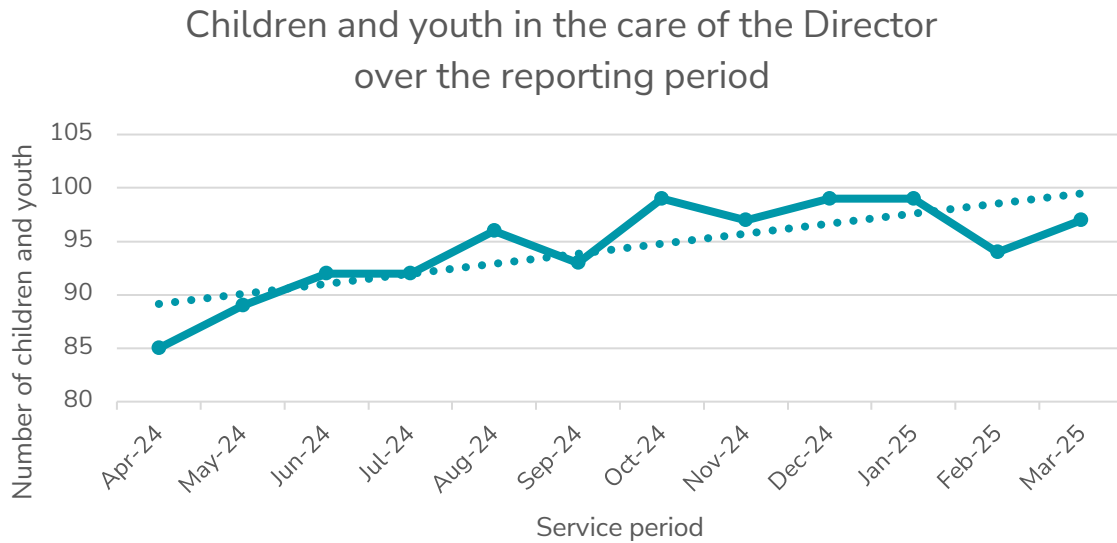


Figure 12 – Number of children and youth in the care of the Director during each month of the reporting period. The dotted line showcases the overall trend over the reporting period.

Community caregiver program

Community caregivers, formerly called foster parents, provide a home environment for children in the care or custody of the Director. Under the guidance of the Director, they are responsible for the day-to-day care of the children placed with them. These caregivers can provide emergency, short- or longer-term care, depending on their caregiving capacity.

When comparing point-in-time counts from September of each year (Figure 13) and comparing the monthly numbers over the reporting period (Figure 14), the number of children placed with community caregivers has decreased. There was an 11.9 per cent decrease from 2023 to 2024 and a 7.1 per cent decrease from April 2024 to March 2025.



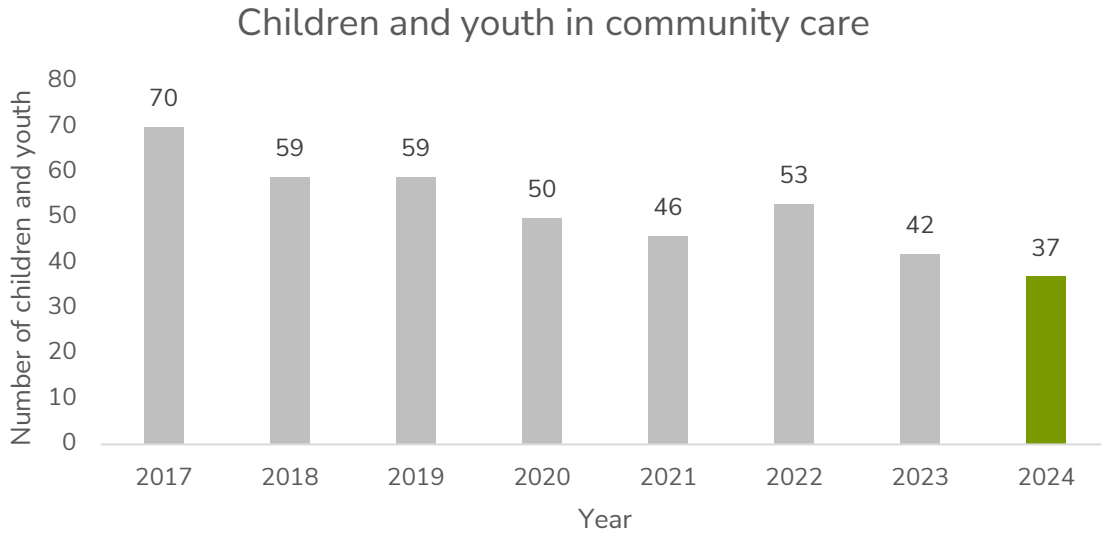


Figure 13 – Number of children and youth in the care of the Director who were in community care from 2017 to 2024. September caseloads were used due to the reporting structure of the previous case management system and to remain consistent with previous annual reports. The data for the reporting period is highlighted in green.

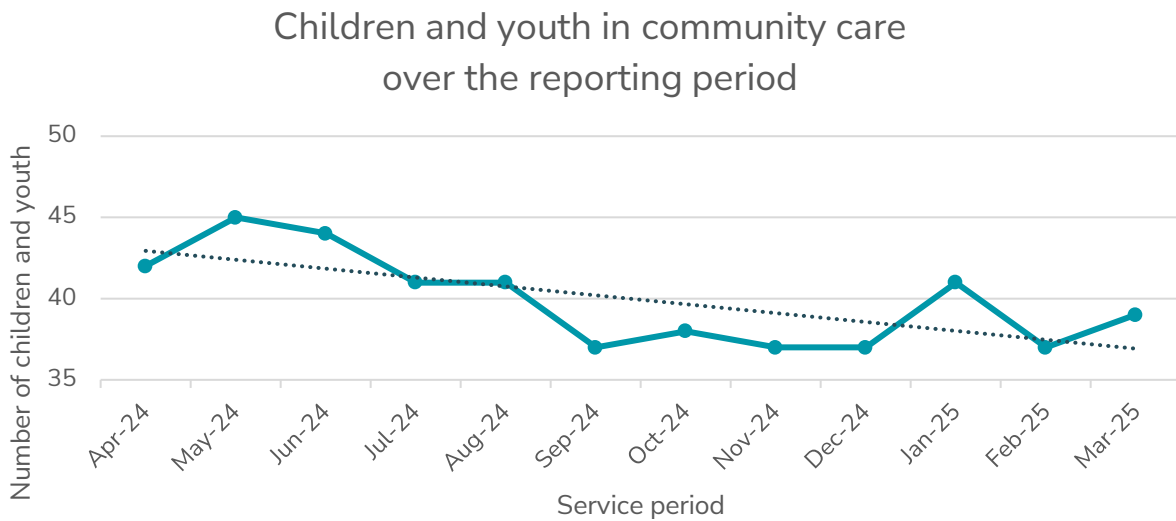


Figure 14 – Number of children and youth in the care of the Director residing in community care homes during each month of the reporting period. The dotted line showcases the overall trend over the reporting period.



Decrease in extended family and community caregiver placements

The decrease in the number of children placed with extended family caregivers and community caregivers is likely due to two reasons: an overall decrease in the number of children in out-of-home care and a caregiver shortage.

As shown in Figure 4, the number of children in out-of-home care has slowly decreased for the last 14 years. This is likely due to the increased focus on prevention services by FCS, Yukon First Nations, the Council of Yukon First Nations and other community resources to prevent children from encountering the Yukon's child protection system, as well as the increased focus by FCS to keep children with their families, and reunify children in out-of-home care with their families.

We have also seen a steady decline in the number of both community and extended family caregivers. The retirement of some longer-term community caregivers and lower interest seen during caregiver recruitment initiatives has contributed to the current caregiver shortage.

Individuals are finding it increasingly difficult to serve as caregivers due to rising living costs, the complex needs of children in out-of-home care, and other daily challenges that make caregiving more difficult. To address this, FCS launched a Caregiver Strategy Action Plan in 2023. Over the reporting period, FCS visited communities to recruit caregivers and ran a radio and social media ad campaign. To increase caregiver retention, FCS is delivering additional training to caregivers, including Cultural Connections for Caregivers facilitated by the Council of Yukon First Nations in February 2025.

Transitional Support Services

In the absence of extended family caregivers and community caregivers, children in need of out-of-home care are placed in group care, managed by FCS's Transitional Support Services (TSS) program. Group care is a 24/7 staffed living environment where qualified workers are available to meet the day-to-day caregiving needs of children.

The number of children and youth in TSS group care declined between 2017 and 2020 but has increased in subsequent years. As seen in Figures 15 and 16, group care



placements increased substantially both annually and monthly over the 2024–25 fiscal year. A 76.2 per cent increase in the number of children in group care was observed when comparing 2023 to 2024 point-in-time counts.

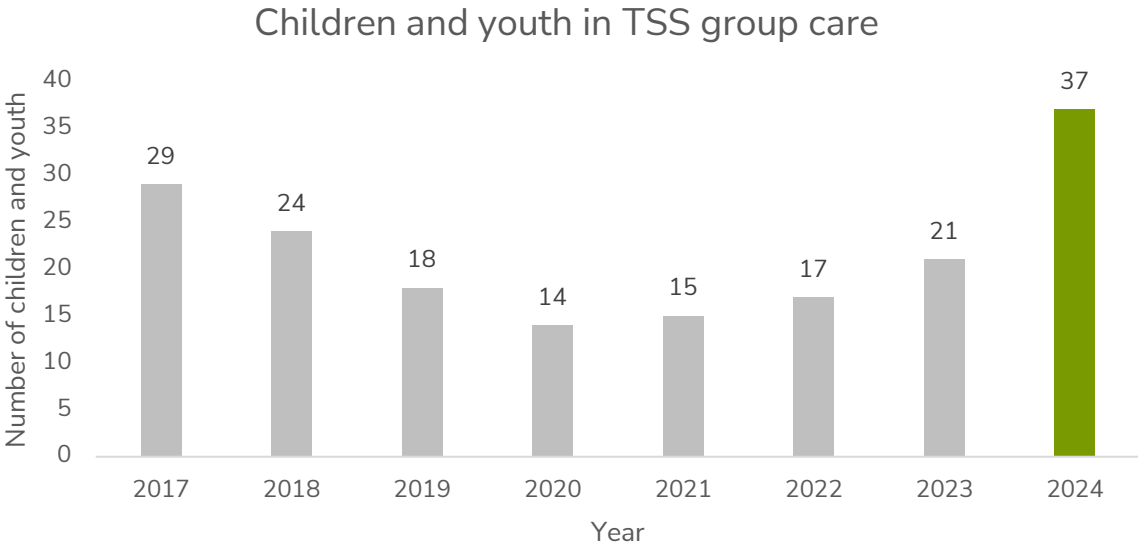


Figure 15 – Number of children and youth in care living in group homes from 2017 to 2024. September caseloads were used due to the reporting structure of the previous case management system and to remain consistent with previous annual reports. The data for the reporting period is highlighted in green.

When reviewing the monthly data over the reporting period, the number of children in group care increased by 51.9 per cent from April 2024 to March 2025.



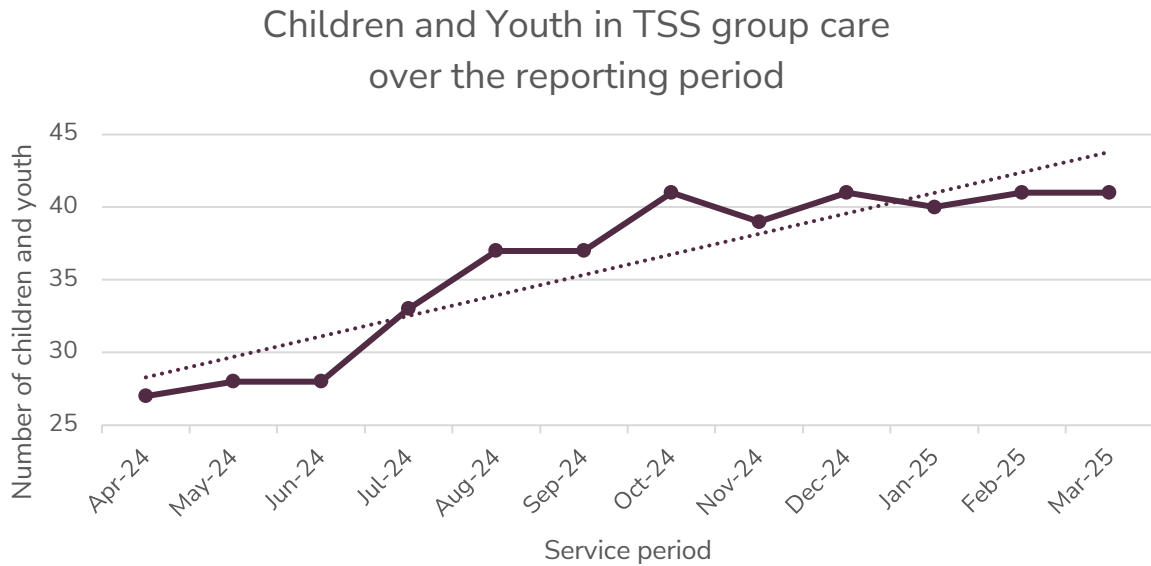


Figure 16 – Number of children and youth in the care of the Director residing in TSS group homes during each month of the reporting period. The dotted line showcases the overall trend over the reporting period.

As the number of extended family caregivers and community caregivers decrease, more children requiring out-of-home care are placed in group care.

Programs and services for youth and young adults

When youth and young adults have access to programs and supports that help build necessary life skills and connection to natural support networks, they are more likely to succeed after leaving care. To facilitate the successful transition to independence and lasting connections, FCS provides two programs for those from 16 to 26 years of age: Agreements for Support Services for Youth and Agreements for Transitional Support Services.

Through Agreements for Support Services for Youth, FCS provides supports to youth aged 16 to 19 who cannot live with their parents. These supports include financial assistance for necessities such as housing, food and clothing, alongside social supports aimed at developing life skills and addressing concerns such as mental health, substance use or returning to school.



Young adults aged 19 to 26 who were previously in out-of-home care but have transitioned to independent living are able to receive similar supports through Agreements for Transitional Support Services.

Most youth and young adults supported through these two types of agreements identified as Indigenous (87%), with over half identifying as Yukon First Nation (60%).

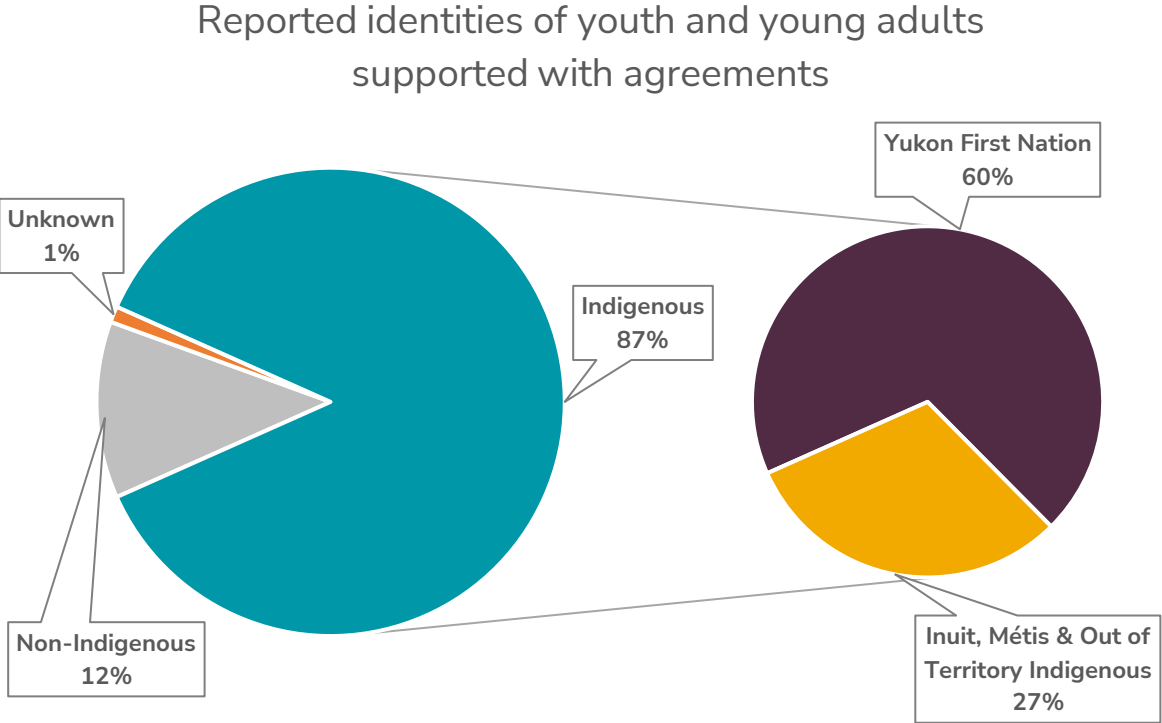


Figure 17 – Self-reported identities of youth and young adults supported with agreements during the reporting period. The chart on the left speaks to the general demographic identity of those supported with agreements, including overall Indigenous representation. The chart on the right provides a breakdown of Indigenous representation, including those who identified as Yukon First Nation.

The number of youth and young people supported with agreements has continued to increase from 2019 onwards, except for 2023. However, an increase of 11.9 per cent in the number of youth and young people supported with agreements was observed in 2024, reflecting the trend seen in previous years (see Figure 18).



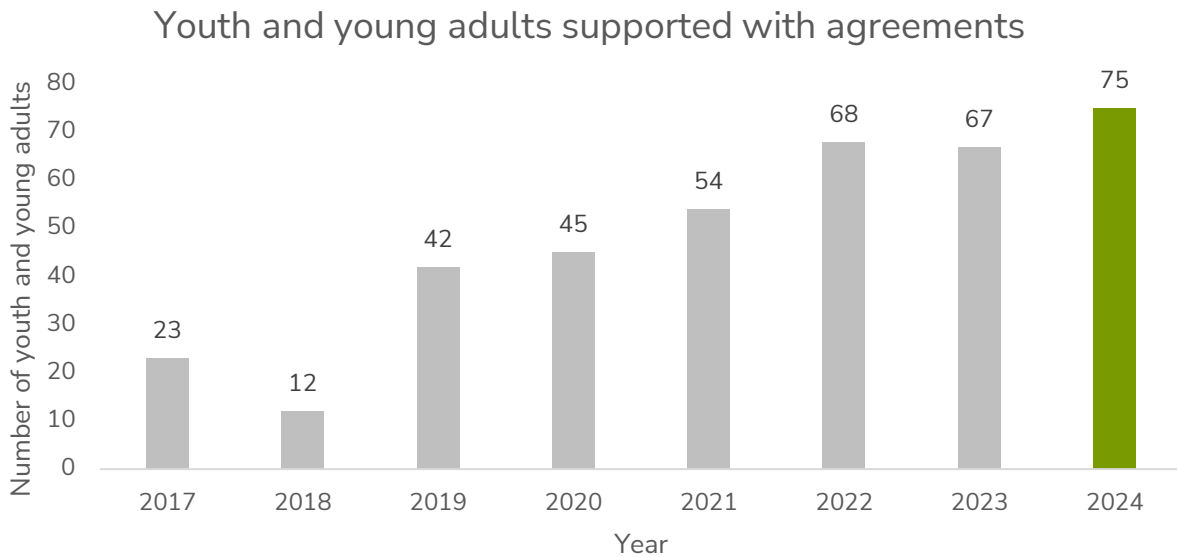


Figure 18 – Number of youth and young adults supported through agreements from 2017 to 2024. September caseloads were used due to the reporting structure of the previous case management system and to remain consistent with previous annual reports. The data for the reporting period is highlighted in green.

When comparing monthly data over the reporting period, there is a slight upward trend in the total number of youth and young adults supported with agreements (see Figure 19). However, this was primarily driven by increases in the number of young adults supported through Agreements for Transitional Support Services over the reporting period; from April 2024 to March 2025, the number of young adults supported with Agreements for Transitional Support Services increased by 12.5 per cent. In contrast, the number of youth supported with Agreements for Support Services for Youth decreased by 28.6 per cent from April 2024 to March 2025.



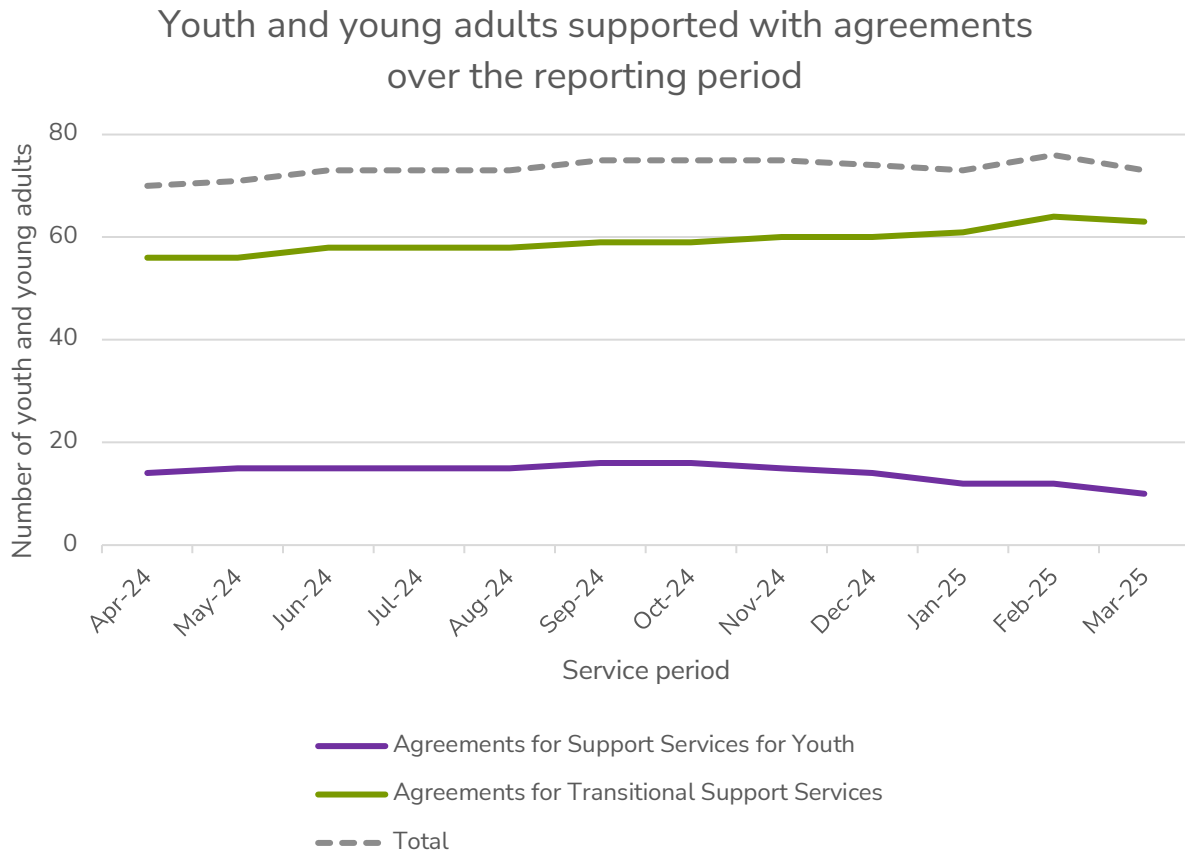


Figure 19 – Number of youth and young adults supported through both agreement types during each month of the reporting period. The dashed line represents the total number of youth and young adults supported with agreements.

Youth Justice

The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) and s. 174(3) of the CFSA establish the Director of FCS as the provincial Director of Youth Justice within the Yukon. Youth Justice is responsible for delivering three programs under the YCJA to serve youth who are, or are likely to be, in conflict with the law, all under the guidance of the Director of FCS. The three programs are Youth Probation, Young Offenders Facility and Youth Achievement Centre.

Youth Probation

Youth involved with the criminal justice system in the Yukon continue to work with either Whitehorse-based probation staff or mobile probation officers, in partnership



with Yukon First Nations. In line with general trends observed in previous years, the number of youth connected to the Youth Probation office has declined over the last year.

During the reporting period, the Youth Probation office supervised 58 court orders, including extrajudicial sanctions (both pre-and post-charge), bail orders (undertakings and release orders), and sentenced orders (probation, conditional discharge, intensive support and supervision, deferred custody and supervision orders, and the community portion of custody and supervision orders)¹. However, this does not mean 58 unique individuals were served, as some youth were subject to multiple orders during the reporting period.

Court orders supervised by Youth Probation office

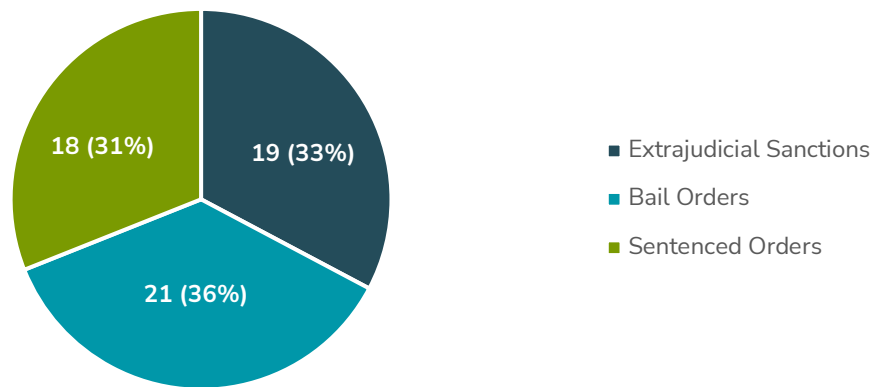


Figure 20 – Number of orders supervised by the Youth Probation office during the reporting period, by order type.

¹ See Appendix 1 for descriptions of the order types supervised by the Youth Probation office.



Young Offenders Facility

The Young Offenders Facility (YOF) provides custodial supervision of youth aged 12 to 17 at the time of offence under the YCJA, ensuring the safety and security of youth and the community. During the reporting period, the YOF had a total of 368 bed days².

Youth Achievement Centre

The Youth Achievement Centre (YAC) provides programs for youth aged 12 to 17 who are involved in the youth justice system, at risk of becoming involved in the youth justice system or require support that cannot be provided through Yukon's education system.

Over the reporting period, 63 unique youth attended a total of 4,325.5 hours of programming provided by the YAC. Approximately 87 per cent of these youth attended programming because they were at risk of becoming involved in the youth justice system or required additional educational support. Only 12.7 per cent of youth attending YAC programming were involved with the youth justice system.

² A 'bed day' is defined as one occupied bed for one night. For example, if three (3) youths occupied beds on a single night, that would count as three (3) bed days and if one youth occupied a bed for two weeks it would be counted as 14 bed days.



YAC programming attendance overview

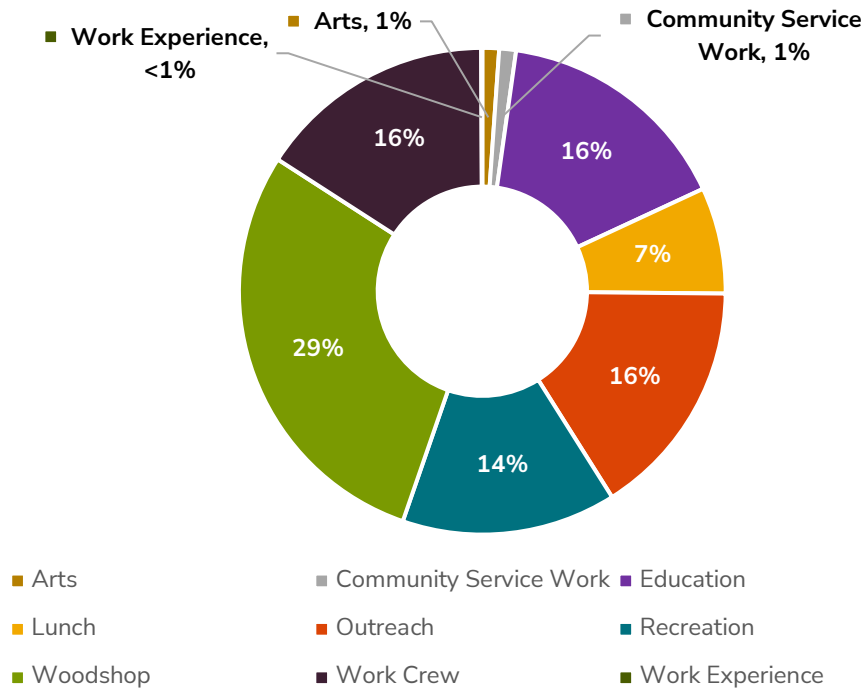


Figure 21 – Percentage breakdown of total hours of YAC programming youth attended over the reporting period by program type.

Coroner's inquest

On June 17, 2023, the jury from the Yukon Coroner's Services inquest into the accidental death of an infant in extended family care under the CFSA made eight recommendations to FCS (recommendations 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13). To date, five of these recommendations have been implemented (recommendations 5, 6, 7, 9 and 13). Work on recommendation 8, which calls for updating Extended Family Care Agreement policies, is part of a comprehensive FCS policy project which is expected to start soon. There are no set deadlines for completing recommendations 10 and 11, as they require collaboration with community and Yukon First Nations. FCS will continue to recruit respite caregivers (recommendation 10) and remains available to support Yukon First Nations in developing resources for their communities (recommendation 11).



Relationships with Yukon First Nations

FCS continues to work together with Yukon First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations to deliver services under the CFSA to Indigenous children and families in the Yukon. Over the reporting period, FCS met with Yukon First Nations bilaterally numerous times to discuss issues specific to their communities.

FCS also regularly provided updates on child protection service delivery at the Yukon First Nation Health and Social Development Commission meetings.

At the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of Yukon First Nations Children and Families, FCS worked side-by-side with the Government of Canada, Yukon First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations to share information and make decisions related to service delivery under the CFSA and Canada's First Nation Child and Family Services Program.

Looking forward

Child protection systems across Canada are evolving rapidly as First Nations and Indigenous governing bodies exercise authority over child and family services. The Yukon is no exception and Yukon First Nations have also expressed their interest in exercising similar authority.

As Yukon First Nations occupy jurisdiction in the area of child and family services, FCS is committed to continuing a collaborative approach and offering any support possible to help Yukon First Nations build capacity and work together to ensure that children, youth, young adults formerly in out-of-home care, and families all experience the best possible outcomes.

In December 2024, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG) informed FCS that they would be conducting a comprehensive audit of the branch's child welfare-related work (that is, all matters governed by the CFSA, excluding the work done under the Youth Justice areas of FCS). Substantial branch and departmental resources were dedicated to supporting the OAG in the planning, preparation and execution of their audit of FCS from January 2025 onwards. Following the completion of the OAG audit and the release of the final results and recommendations, FCS looks forward to



exploring innovative solutions to providing services that better support the children, youth, young adults and families they serve.



Appendix 1

This appendix details the various order types commonly supervised by the Youth Probation office.

Order Name & Type	Description
Undertaking (Bail)	When a youth is charged with a criminal offence, they can be released on an Undertaking to an Officer in Charge (RCMP). The undertaking will identify a court date and may include conditions such as reporting to a bail supervisor, curfew, no contact with person(s) or address etc.
Release Order (Bail)	When a youth is charged with a criminal offence, they can be released from court on a Release Order issued by a Judge under the YCJA. The Release Order will identify the next court date and any conditions the Judge deems appropriate. These conditions may include: reporting to a Bail Supervisor, residency conditions, programming expectations, curfew and no contact orders. A Release Order may include a surety or cash deposit if deemed necessary by the court.
Extrajudicial Sanction (Diversion)	Referrals for Extrajudicial Sanctions are received from Crown Prosecutors or the RCMP and, after completing assessments, are referred to the Youth Justice Panel to craft an Extrajudicial Sanction (diversion) suitable for the young person's circumstances. For this form of diversion, the following must occur: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The young person accepts responsibility for the alleged offence and there is sufficient evidence to proceed with the prosecution of the offence. 2. The young person consents to participate. 3. The young person is advised of their right to be represented by counsel and has a reasonable opportunity to so. 4. The sanctions are deemed to be appropriate to meet the needs of the young person and the interests of society.
Probation Order (Sentence)	A Probation Order is a court-ordered sentence for a young person who has pled or been found guilty of a criminal offence. Youth Probation Orders cannot run longer than two years and typically contain



	conditions to guide the youth’s rehabilitation and reintegration while addressing public safety.
Conditional Discharge (Sentence)	Conditional Discharge is a court ordered sentence for a young person who has pled or been found guilty of a criminal offence. With this sentence the young person is not given a criminal conviction if they meet certain conditions set out by the court, such as counseling or community service hours, and comply with all conditions set out.
Deferred Custody and Supervision Order (Sentence)	Deferred Custody and Supervision Order is a court-ordered sentence for a young person who has pled or been found guilty of a serious criminal offence. Instead of serving time in a youth facility, the youth is placed under strict supervision in the community with conditions such as regular reporting to their probation officer and attending programming and counseling for a time not exceeding six (6) months. In the event of a breach of conditions the young person may be subjected to a period of detention in a youth facility for up to 48 hours, at the discretion of the Provincial Director.
Custody and Supervision Order (Sentence)	Custody and Supervision Order is a court-ordered custody sentence for a youth who has pled or been found guilty of a criminal offence. The youth serves the first two-thirds of their sentence in a youth custody centre, either in an open or secure setting, and is then supervised in the community for the remaining third of their sentence. The Provincial Director is responsible for determining which conditions the youth will be subject to while supervised in the community.
Intensive Supervision and Support Order (Sentence)	A court can order an Intensive Supervision and Support Order as an alternative to custody. This type of sentence provides more intensive support and supervision of the youth when compared to a Probation Order.
Intensive Rehabilitative	A court can order an Intensive Rehabilitative Custody and Supervision Order for serious charges such as murder and aggravated sexual



Custody and Supervision Order (Sentence)	assault for a youth who suffers from a mental, psychological or emotional disorder. This type of sentence is meant to have a treatment component and requires willingness from the youth to engage in a treatment plan.
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