

STATE OF THE CHILD IN TENNESSEE 2025

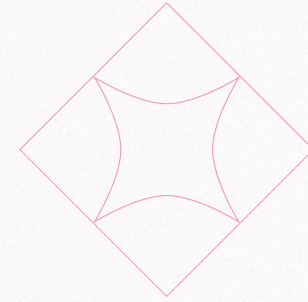


About the Report

TCA 37 -3-103(a)(1)(E) Publish annually, on or before December 31, a comprehensive report on the status of children and youth in Tennessee; and distribute the report to the governor, to each member of the general assembly and to each of the state's depository libraries;

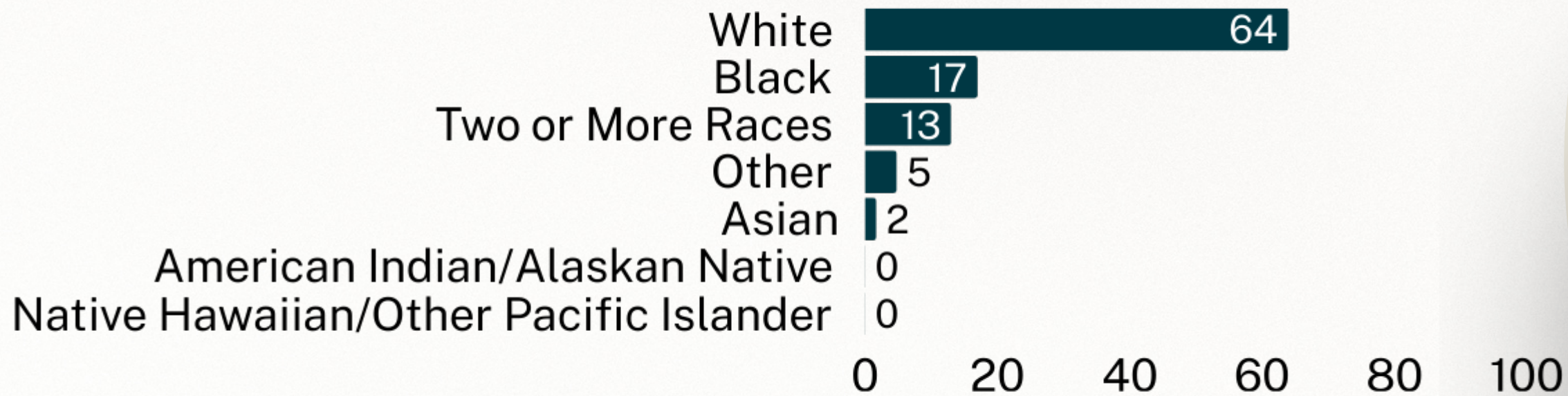


Demographics



More than one in five Tennesseans were under 18

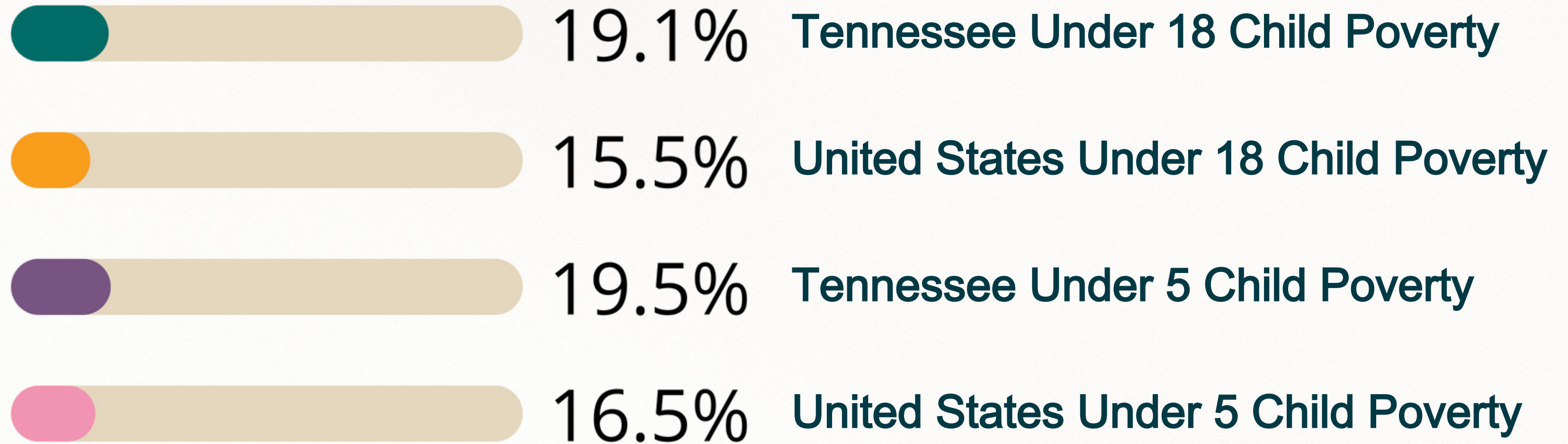
Percent of Tennessee under 18 population by Race



1 in 8 Tennessee children spoke a language other than English at home. Of those, more nearly two-thirds spoke Spanish.



Economics



Early Education

2025 Tennessee Market Rate Child Care Costs

Infant Center -Based
\$13,926

Infant Group -Homes
\$9,697

Toddler Center -Based
\$12,800

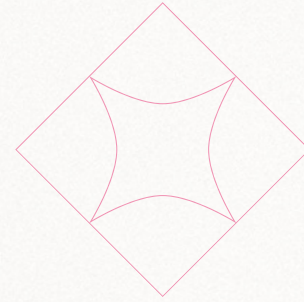
Toddler Home -Based
\$9,179

65 percent of
Tennessee children
under 6 had all
available parents in
the workforce in
2024

Infant center -
based care was
more than 2025
in-state tuition
at all of
Tennessee's
four-year public
universities.



Health



In 2024, 6.5 percent of Tennessee children were uninsured.

In 2023, two-thirds of children who were uninsured in Tennessee were financially eligible for coverage through TennCare or CoverKids.



Health

Data from Tennessee Food Banks Regarding Temporary Suspension of SNAP Benefits

Second Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Tennessee – Kingsport
October 2025 compared to October 2024
29 % increase in meals distributed .

Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee – Maryville
Purchased **175,000 + lbs** of food earlier than normal due to need, equivalent to **\$160,000 in additional cost .**



Health

Data from Tennessee Food Banks Regarding Temporary Suspension of SNAP Benefits

Chattanooga Area Food Bank Chattanooga
60% increase in households served in the first week of November 2025 compared to the first week of November 2024

70% increase in Tennessee children served during the same period.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee – Nashville

October 2025 compared to October 2024

46% increase in individuals served

November 2025 compared to November 2024





60% increase in individuals served



Health

In 2023, **Tennessee had a child and teen death rate of 32.2 per 100,000**, the state's highest since 2000.

In 2023, among deaths of Tennesseans ages 1 to 17:

- 1 in 5 deaths were due to a firearm 
- 1 in 8 were due to motor vehicle traffic 
- 1 in 15 were due to cancer 
- 1 in 16 were due to poisoning 

In 2023, Tennessee had the 7th highest rates of homicides and homicides by firearm for those age 1 to 17.

In Tennessee, the rate of infant deaths due to accidental suffocation/strangulation in bed was nearly 2.5 times higher than the national rate and the third highest in the nation.



Mental Health

Among those ages 12 to 17 in Tennessee in 2022 -23, within the last year:

- One in seven had serious thoughts of suicide
- One in 15 made a suicide plan
- One in 24 made a suicide attempt
- 5.6 percent received substance use treatment in the last year.
- 31 percent received mental health treatment in the last year.

In 2022 -23, 63.7 percent of Tennessee youth ages 12 to 17 with a past year Major Depressive Episode did not receive treatment.

Tennessee had the lowest percentage in the country of teens perceiving there to be great risk associated with smoking a pack or more of cigarettes a day.



Education

Tennessee has seen strong post-pandemic recovery on TCAP ELA scores. In 2025, 40% of students scored “Approaching” in ELA and **39% Met or Exceeded Expectations**, compared to 50% and 29% respectively in 2021.

During the 2024-25 school year, Tennessee school districts employed:

- 2,726 School Counselors
- 586 School Social Workers and
- 655.5 School Psychologists
- and 1,106 schools had a partnership with a community-based mental health provider.

One in 10 Tennessee schools had infrastructure rated in fair or poor condition.

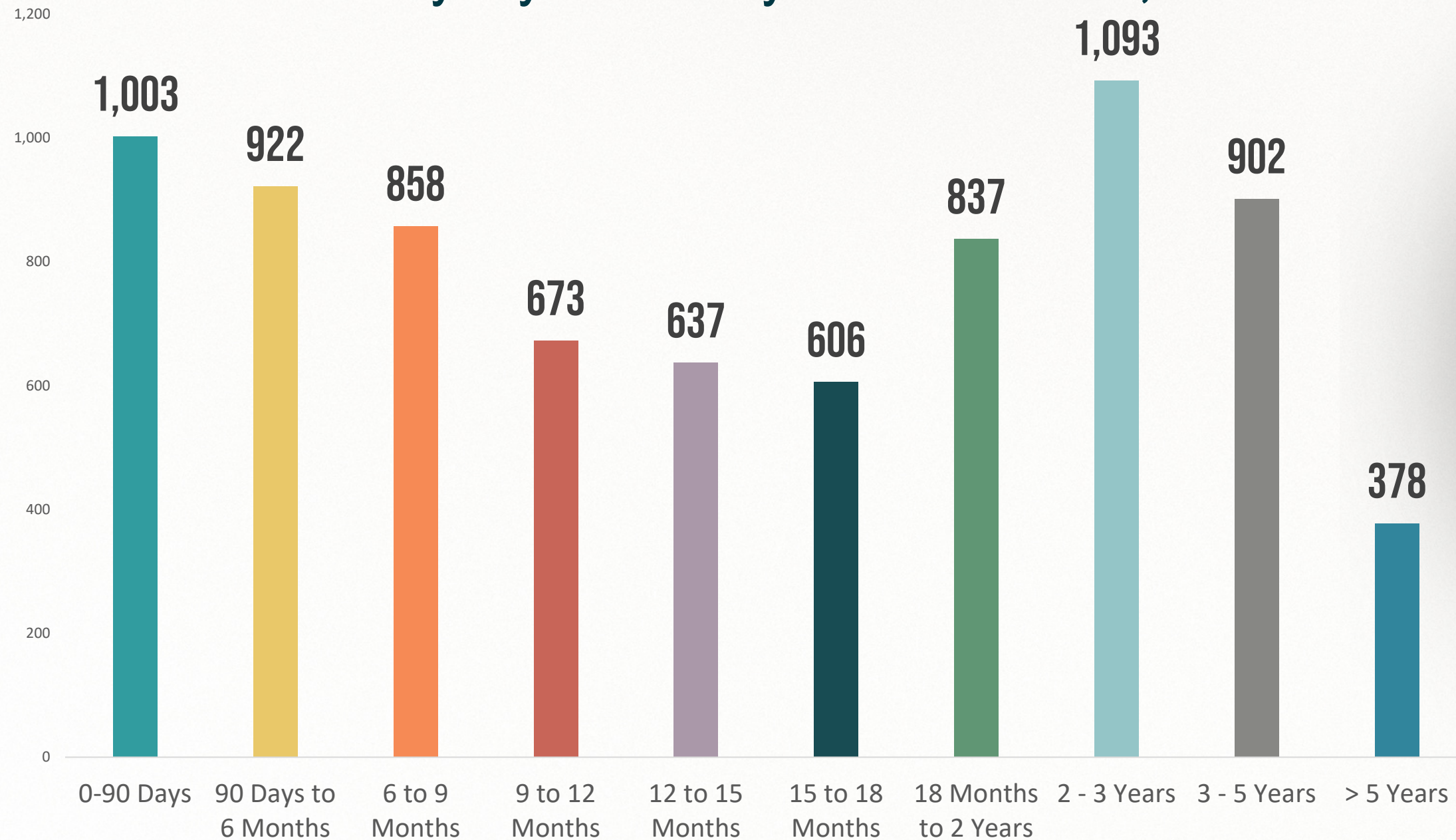
Tennessee’s public schools needed **\$79.6 million** in infrastructure improvements to be in compliance with state and federal laws.



Child Welfare

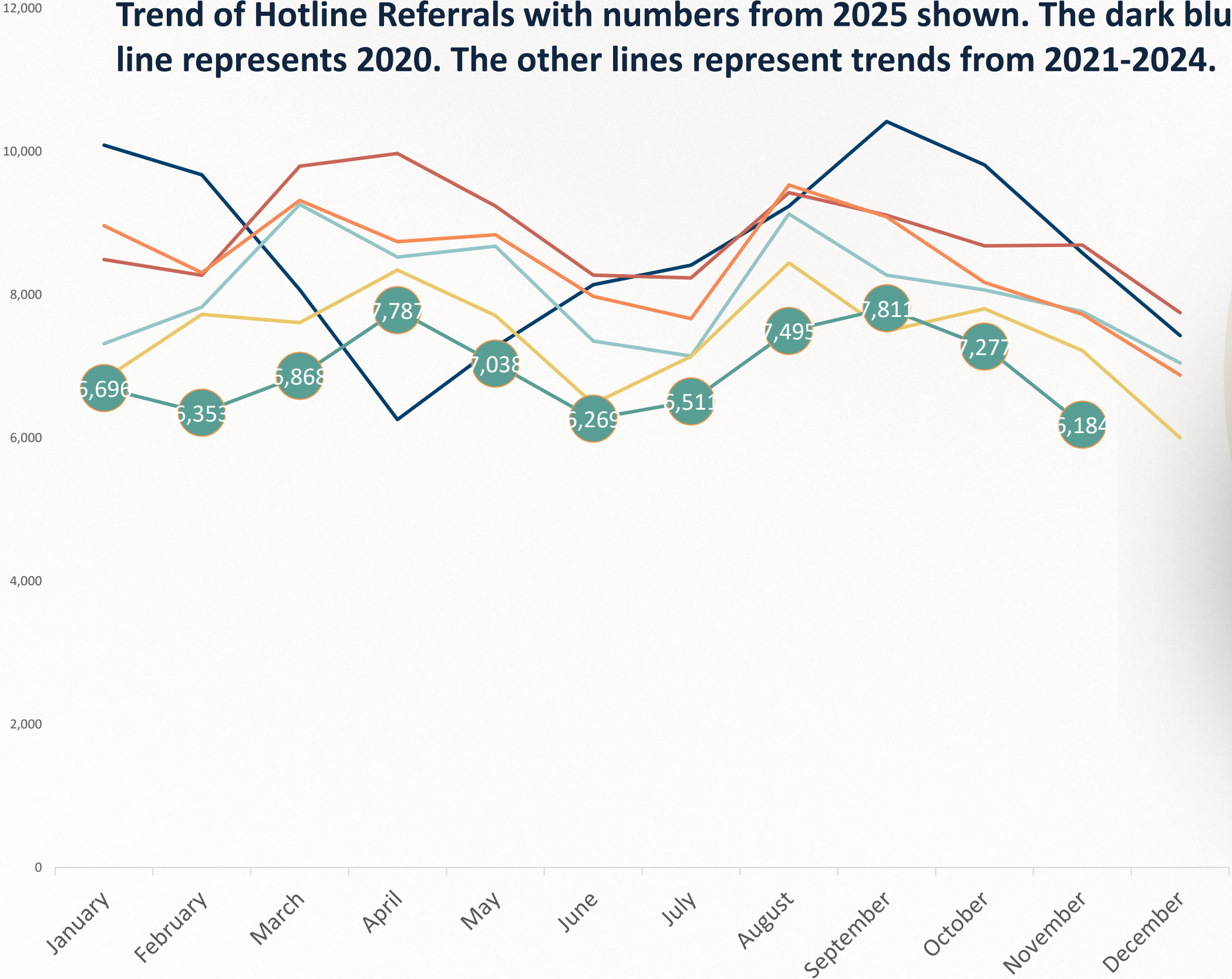
In FY2025, there were 15,901 victims of abuse or neglect in Tennessee with either a substantiation or a case disposition of services needed/services court ordered.

Number of children by days in custody on December 15, 2025



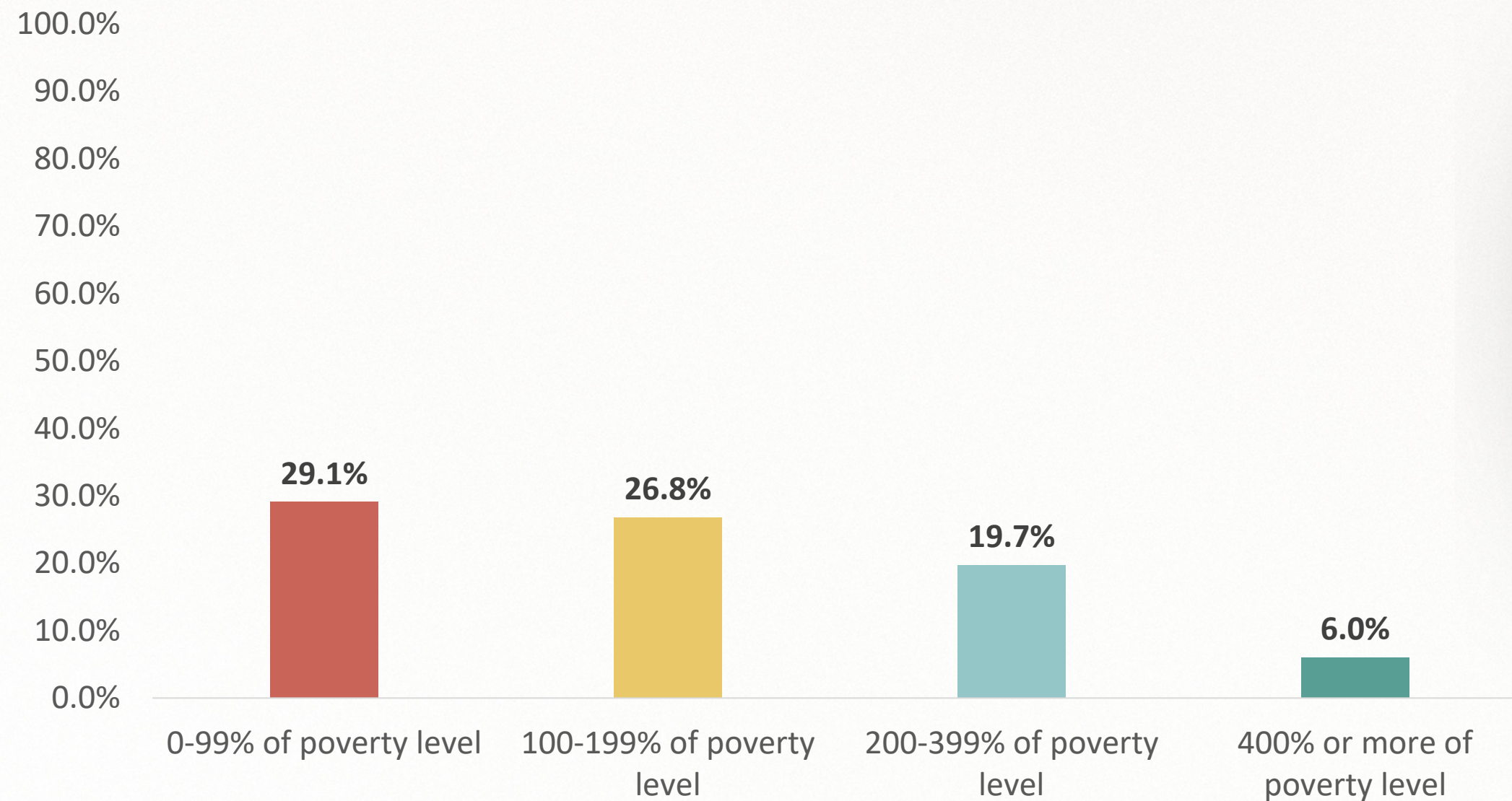
Child Welfare

Trend of Hotline Referrals with numbers from 2025 shown. The dark blue line represents 2020. The other lines represent trends from 2021-2024.



Adversity & Resilience

Nearly one in five Tennessee children were reported to have experienced two or more adverse childhood experiences. This was more common among those living below the federal poverty level at 29 percent.



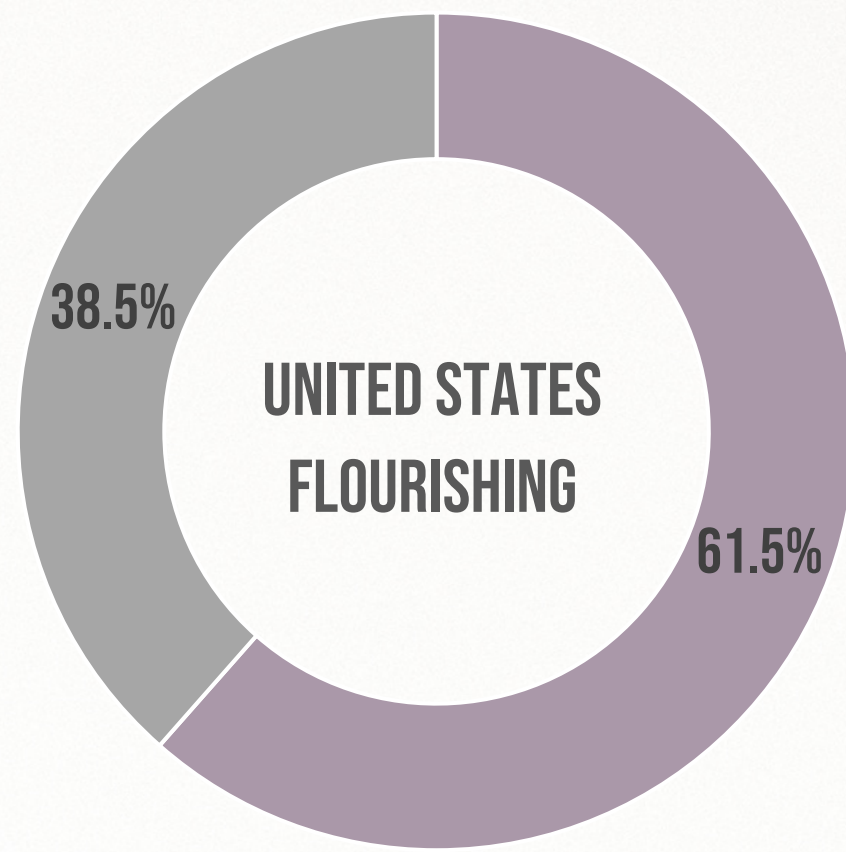
Adversity & Resilience

Children who are flourishing:

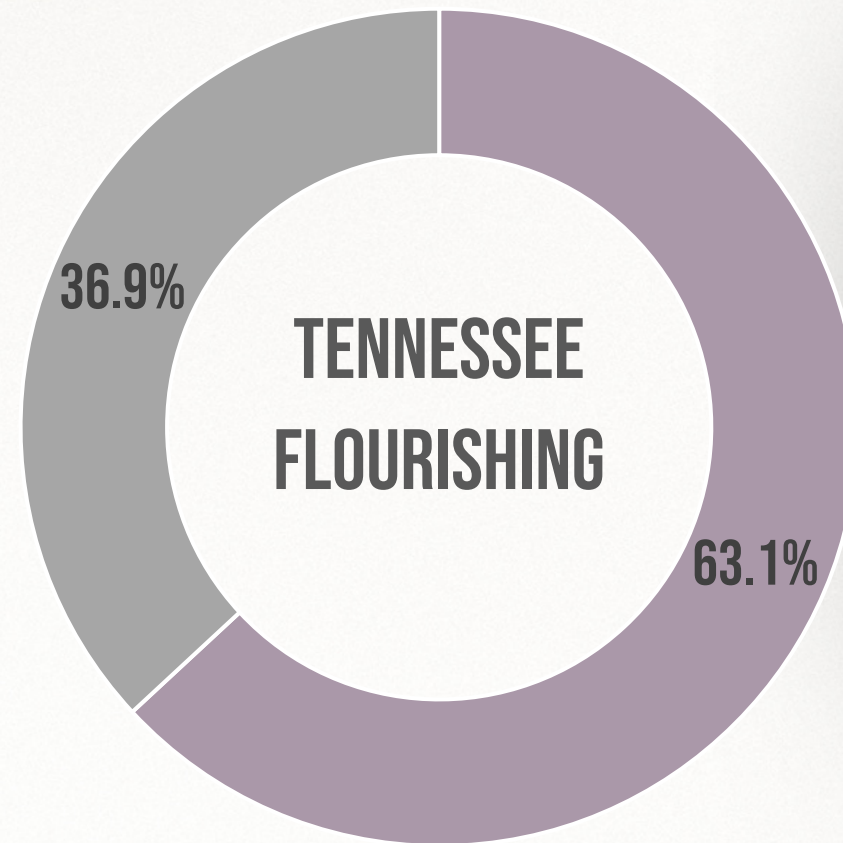
6 to 17 years

How often does this child:

- 1) Show interest and curiosity in learning new things?
- 2) Work to finish tasks they start?
- 3) Stay calm and in control when faced with a challenge?



■ Met flourishing criteria ■ Did not meet flourishing criteria

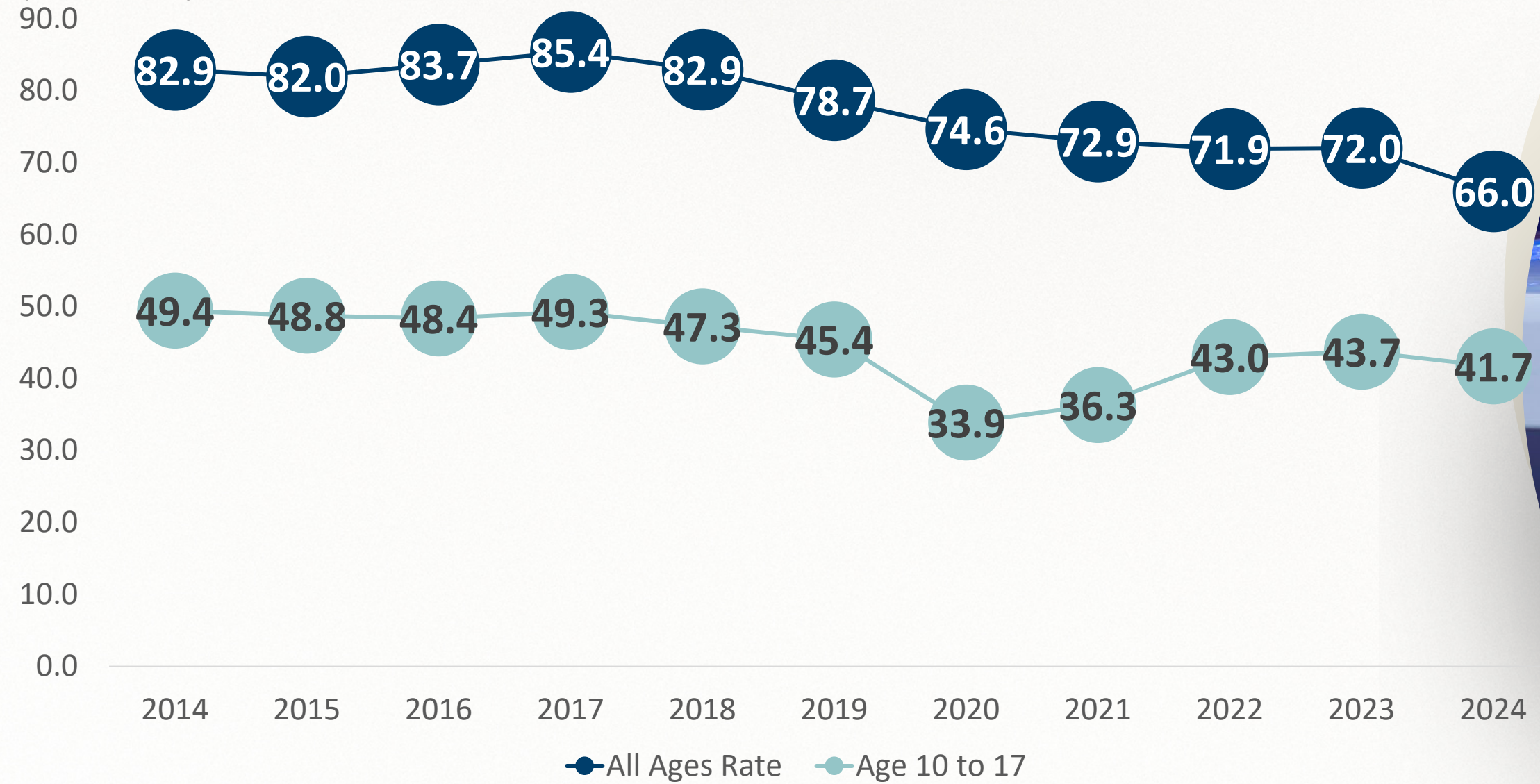


■ Met flourishing criteria ■ Did not meet flourishing criteria



Youth Crime

Overall Crime Rate
(Per 1,000)



Thank you!

**Contact:
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