

# Health Concerns Among Children in Foster Care

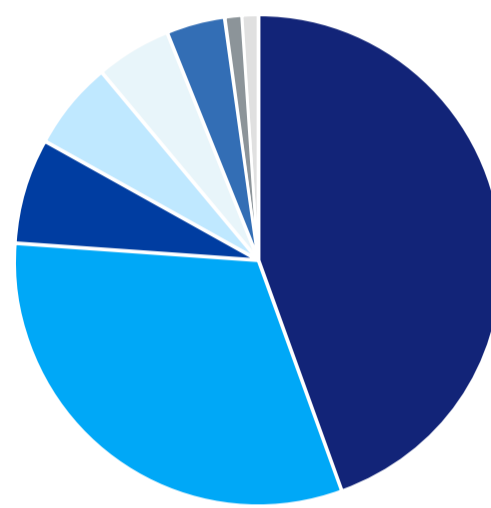
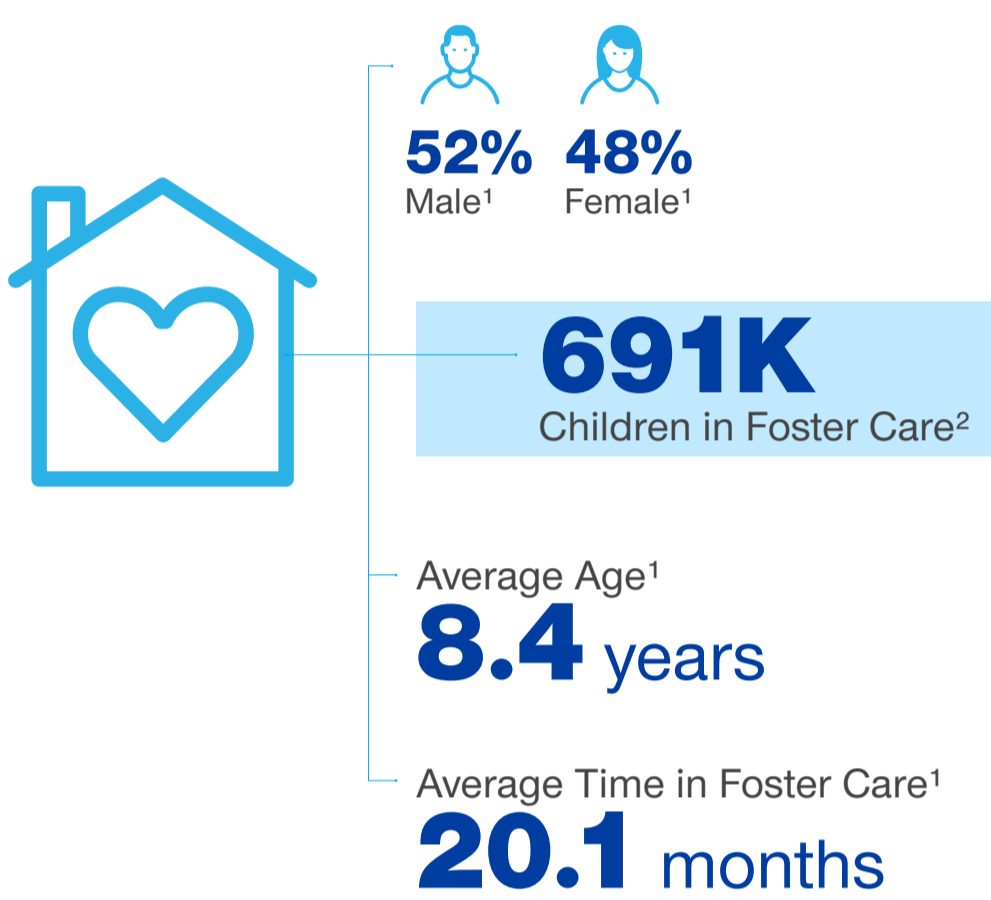
Children in foster care tend to have greater physical and behavioral health needs than other American children. It is important that Medicaid programs that serve these children have systems and services in place to address these needs. This can help improve these children's overall health and well-being, as well as increase the chances of stable placement in a loving and supportive family.



## UnitedHealthcare and the Foster Care Population

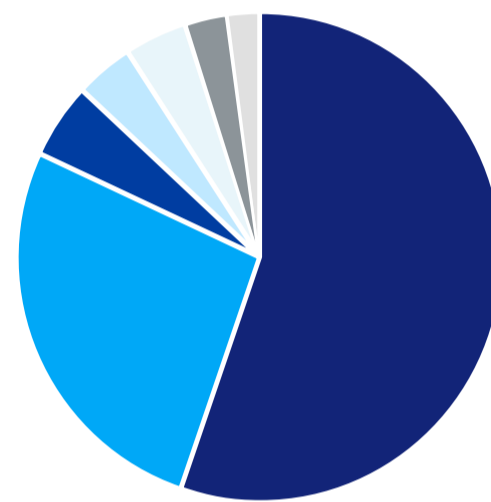
- In 2019, **UnitedHealthcare Community & State** served **55,000 foster children across 12 markets**, all part of integrated plans.
- Partnership with the **National Foster Parent Association** provides training about the foster care system and how to best assist foster parents.
- UnitedHealthcare has a **dedicated clinical model for children in foster care** anchored in the principles of trauma-informed care and coordination.
- Online **continuing education (CEU's)** specific to children in foster care is available.
- UnitedHealthcare offers **unique products to serve children in foster care**, including an app for transition aged youth to plan for adulthood and store confidential documents they will need as adults to access services.

## The Foster Care Population



### Most Recent Placement Settings<sup>1</sup>:

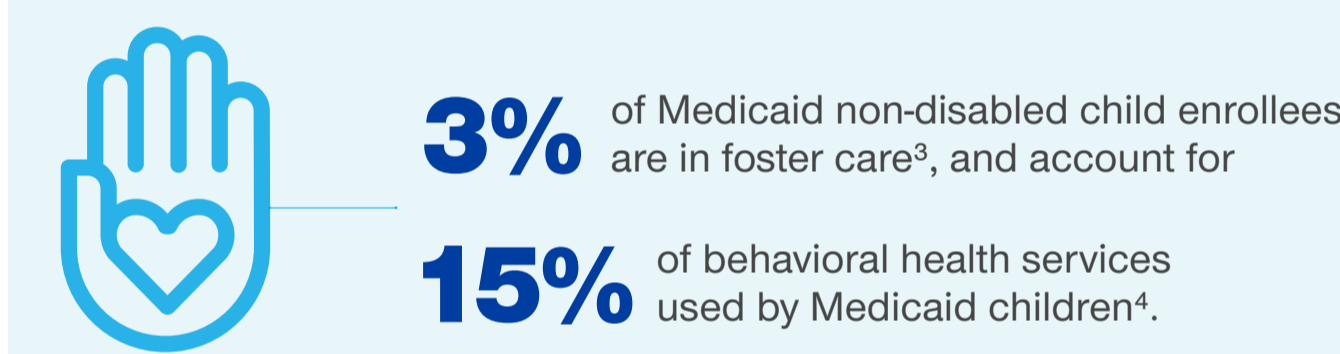
- 44%** Foster family home (non-relative)
- 32%** Foster family home (relative)
- 7%** Institution
- 6%** Group home
- 5%** Trial home
- 4%** Pre-adoptive home
- 1%** Supervised independent living
- 1%** Runaway



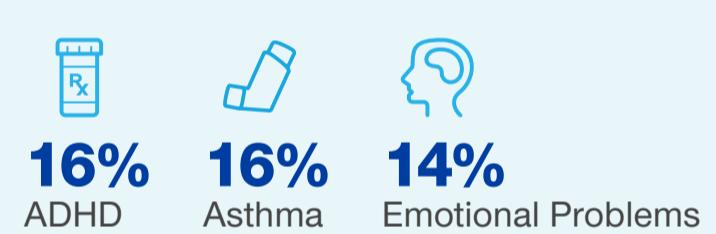
### Case Plan Goals<sup>1</sup>:

- 55%** Reunify with parents
- 27%** Adoption
- 5%** Goal not yet identified
- 4%** Emancipation
- 4%** Guardianship
- 3%** Live with other relatives
- 2%** Long-term foster care

Children in foster care have significantly greater behavioral health care needs, and a higher spend, compared to physical health care spending.



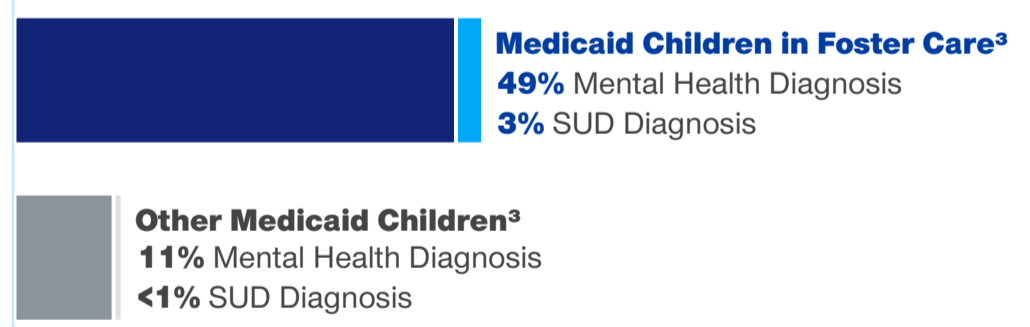
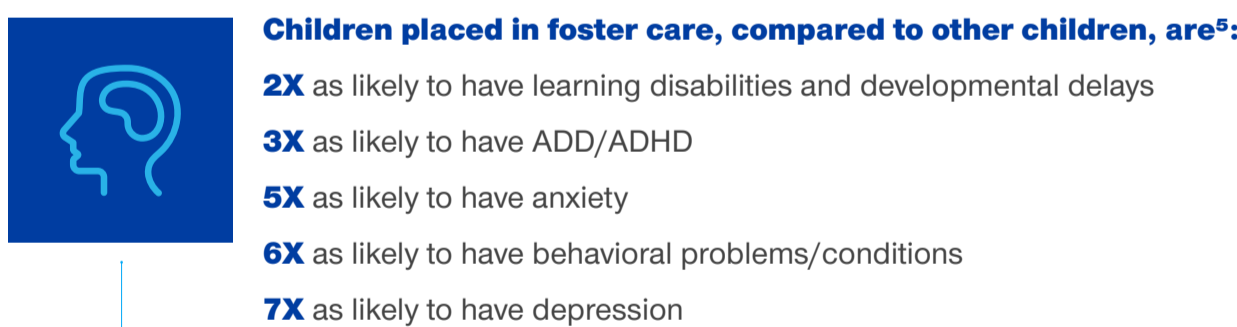
### Most Common Health Conditions among Children in Foster Care<sup>3</sup>:



## Physical Health



## Behavioral Health



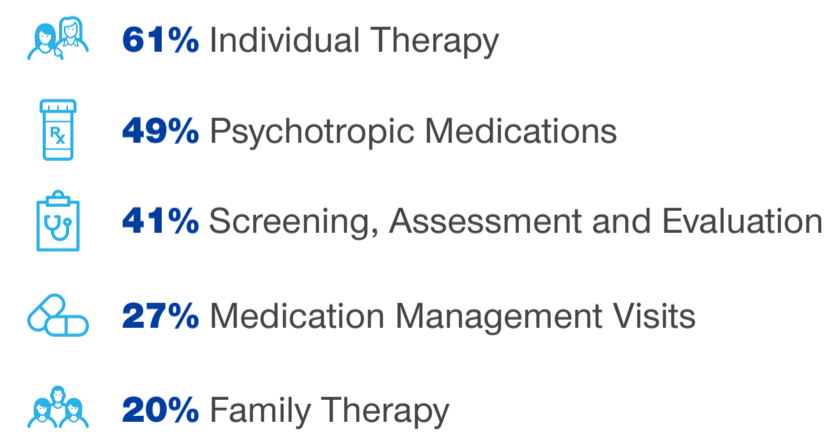
Medicaid children in foster care are **4x** more likely to use psychotropic medications than other Medicaid children.<sup>4</sup>

In fact, these children represent **13%** of ALL Medicaid enrollees receiving psychotropic medications.<sup>4</sup>

**2.6x** higher behavioral health costs for foster care population compared to TANF.<sup>6</sup>

**1.9x** higher physical health costs for foster care population compared to TANF.<sup>6</sup>

### Most common behavioral health services used by Medicaid children in foster care (2005)<sup>7</sup>:



### Common issues later in life:

- Former foster children, compared to the general population, are<sup>7</sup>:**
  - 5X** as likely to develop PTSD
  - 2X** as likely to have alcohol use disorder
  - 7X** as likely to have a substance use disorder
- 11% to 36%** of the youths who age out of foster care become homeless during the transition to adulthood.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Based on a snapshot of the 443K individuals reported in foster care on September 30, 2017. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. (2018). The AFCARS report: Preliminary FY 2017 estimates as of August 10, 2018 (25). <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport25.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Based on number of individuals served by the foster care system in FY 2017. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. (2018). The AFCARS report: Preliminary FY 2017 estimates as of August 10, 2018 (25). <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport25.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> MACPAC Report to Congress on Medicaid and CHIP, June 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Allen KD, Hendricks T. Medicaid and Children in Foster Care: State Policy Advocacy and Reform Center. Hamilton, NJ: Center for Health Care Strategies, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Turney K, Wildeman, C. Mental and Physical Health of Children in Foster Care. Pediatrics 138 (5), November 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Center for Health Care Strategies. 2014. Medicaid behavioral health care use among children in foster care. Accessed April 15, 2019 at [http://www.chcs.org/media/Medicaid-BH-Care-Use-for-Children-in-Foster-Care\\_Fact-Sheet.pdf](http://www.chcs.org/media/Medicaid-BH-Care-Use-for-Children-in-Foster-Care_Fact-Sheet.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Assessing the Effects of Foster Care: Mental Health Outcomes from the Casey National Alumni Study. The Foster Care Alumni Studies, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Dworsky A, Napolitano L, Courtney M. Homelessness during the transition from foster care to adulthood. Am J Public Health. 2013;103(suppl 2):S318-S323.

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