

## **Child welfare problems are difficult to manage.**

**Explained multiple ways**

**Widely differing views**

**Significant consequences for failure**

**Constraints of the problem and resources change over time**



## **Child welfare problems are difficult to manage.**

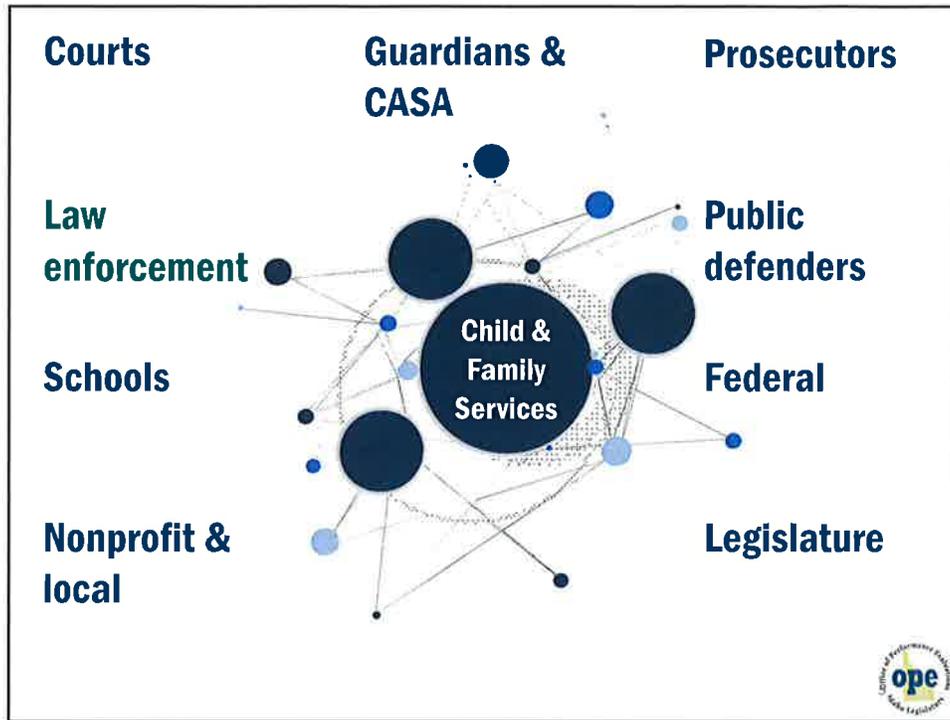
**Understanding comes after formulating a solution**

**Unique with no definite set of solutions**

**One problem symptom of another problem**

**Never definitively solved**





## **Collaborative working groups**

**Workforce recruitment and retention panel**

**Stakeholder meetings**

**Idaho Supreme Court Child Protection Committee**

**Idaho Foster Youth Advisory Board**

**Governor's Children At Risk Task Force**

**Child Welfare Executive Steering Committee**



## **Levels of accountability**

**Federal**

**Judicial**

**Guardians ad litem**

**Citizen review panel**



## **Recommendation**

**Form a formal, system-wide oversight entity to ensure accountability, visibility, and accessibility.**





## Areas for additional attention

**Community services**

**CASA program**

**Preventive measures**



## Child welfare gaps

**Placement services**

**Program capacity**

**Program culture**



## Child welfare gaps

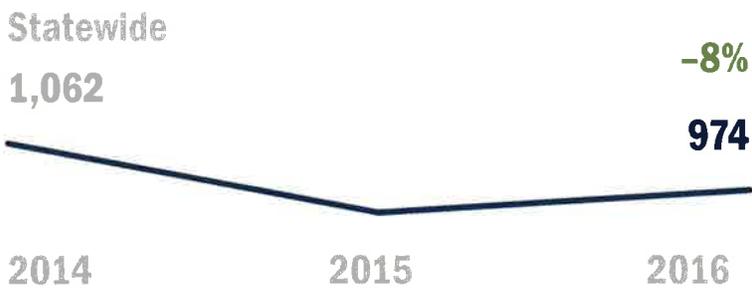
### Placement services

Program capacity

Program culture



## The number of licensed foster parents is decreasing.



Source: Child and Family Services, Foster Care Report, July 2017.  
Point-in-time comparisons taken from March of each year.



**“There is a sense of anxiety that comes over you because you have to find someone to take [the children].”**

**Child and Family Services  
Social worker**



**Retention is recruitment.**





## Recommendations

- Continue recruitment efforts**
- Set a goal and specify needed resources**
- Develop a robust retention plan**



## Child welfare gaps

- Placement services
- Program capacity**
- Program culture



**88%**

**Agreed that problems often arise because of insufficient time**



**Social workers estimate they are carrying**

**38%**

**more cases than they can effectively serve.**



**13.5** average  
monthly cases per  
month per worker



**Inability to meet  
practice requirements**

**Difficulty engaging  
families**

**Decreased quality in  
services provided**



**“Because of resource constraints, social workers have to settle for C-grade work. The problem is that there is an expectation for A-grade results.”**

Child and Family Services  
Chief of Social Work



**“I believe that most health and welfare workers want to do a good job and are good people. I also believe that their case loads are too big and their resources are too small. . . I'd give them a grade of 'C' if I were a teacher.”**

Magistrate Judge





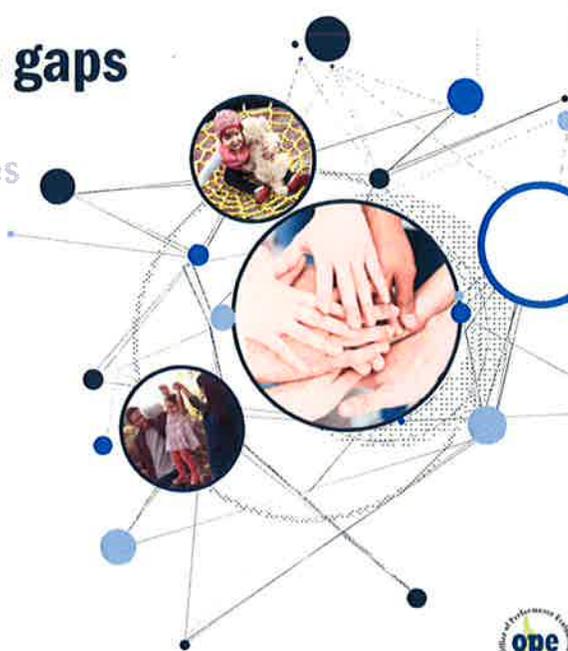
## Recommendations

- Continue staff retention efforts**
- Identify staffing shortages and create a plan**
- Work with partners to enhance external processes**



## Child welfare gaps

- Placement services
- Program capacity
- Program culture**



## **Commitment to children and families**



## **Strained relationships stem from a culture of defensiveness.**



## **Detrimental cycle of priority and compromise**



**“[My] confidence is improved by proactive efforts to enhance best practice in Idaho; [but] tempered by a lack of realistic expectations for workers in the field. All the best practices won’t matter if the workforce can’t implement them due to workload issues.”**

**Child and Family Services  
Social worker**



 **Recommendations**

**Ongoing assessment of the culture**

**Address the gap between expectations and practice**







**“There must be an integrated and cross-program monitoring and evaluation approach . . .”**





Within Our Reach  
A National Strategy to Eliminate  
Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities

“Such an approach would recognize that outcomes for children and families are the product of multiple programs, supports and community circumstances . . .”



Source: Movieclips.com



