



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services

House Committee on County Affairs

Charge 5: Effects of Substance Abuse on DFPS Populations

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Associate Commissioner, Child Protective Services

Department of Family and Protective Services

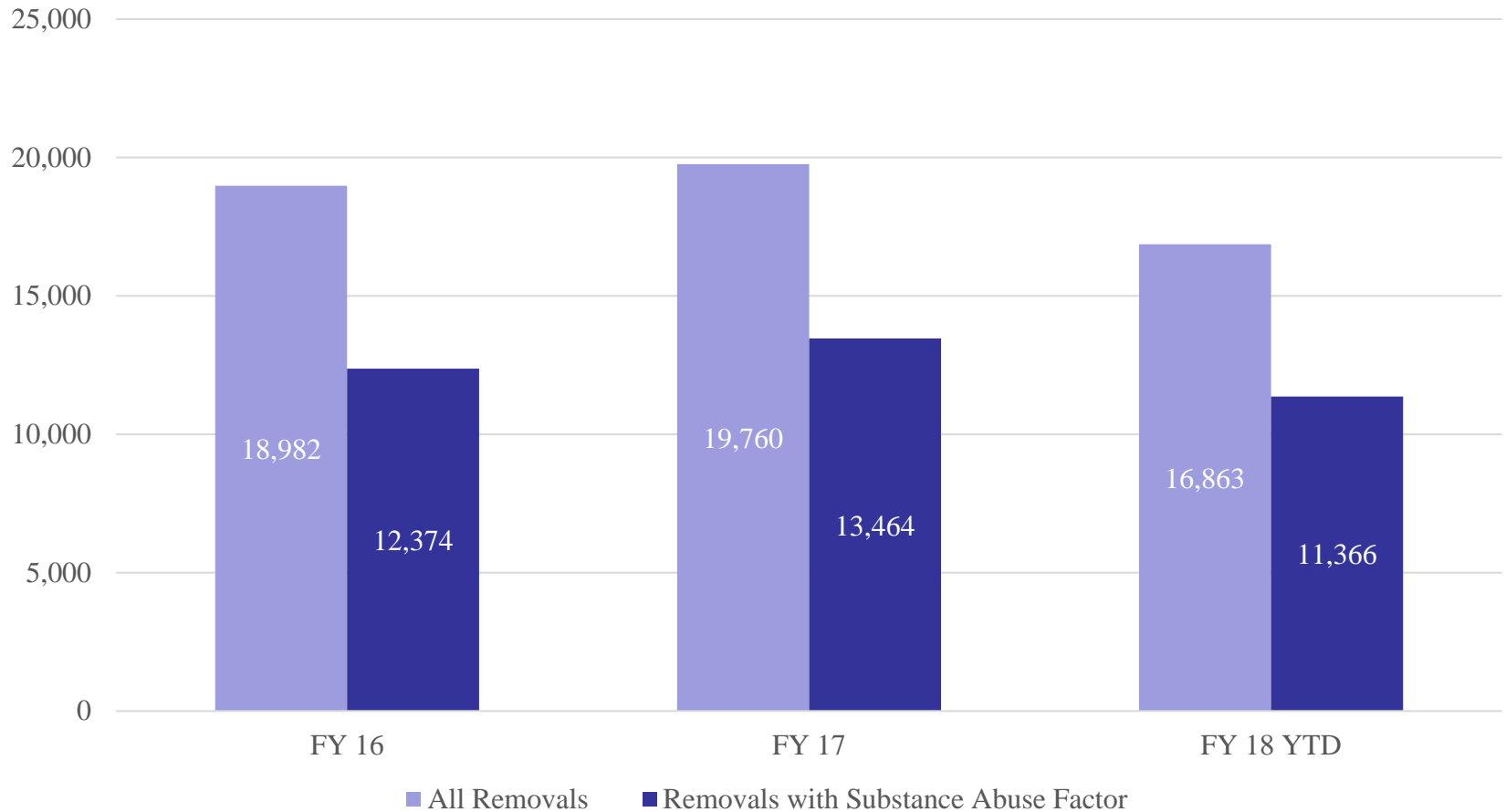
September 25, 2018

Response to Substance Abuse

- When DFPS receives an intake of abuse or neglect in a home, our greatest concerns are for immediate child safety. Investigators often find that abuse has occurred to the child due to exposure to substances or neglectful supervision of the child by an impaired caregiver.
- In many cases, the child may be removed from the home because they are considered to be at immediate risk of harm through drug exposure, lack of parenting, and a combination of environmental, mental, and physical conditions that lead to an unstable home environment.
- Exposing or providing a child with illegal substances is a criminal offense under the Texas Penal Code. While there is no law prohibiting a parent from exposing a child in utero to illegal substances, this may still lead to an investigation once a child is born.
- A joint investigation with law enforcement and DFPS is required by law on drug exposed children. Traditionally, law enforcement arrests parents and caregivers who have manufactured drugs in a home, especially where children are present.

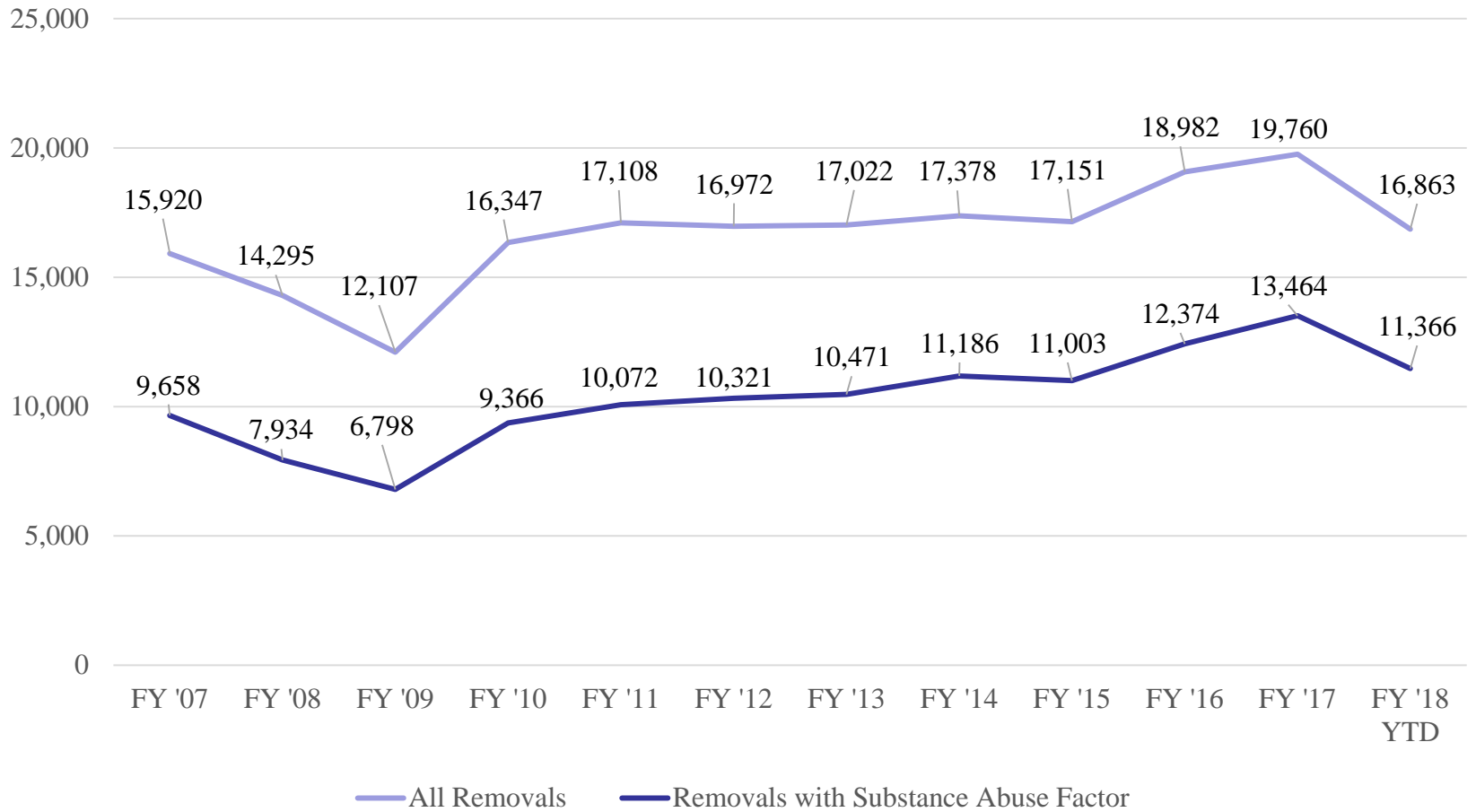


Substance Abuse as a Factor in Removals





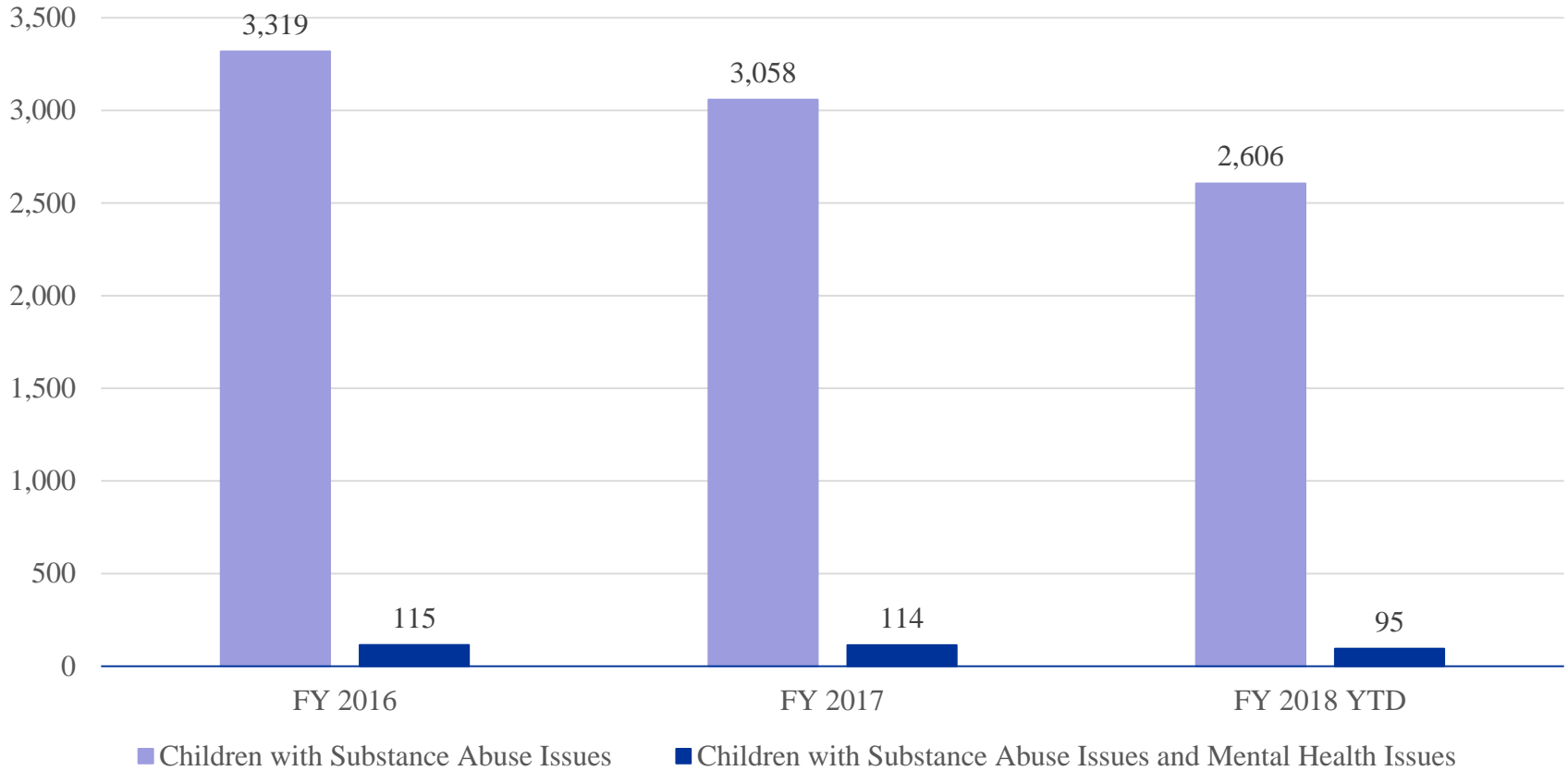
Substance Abuse as a Factor in Removals





Substance Abuse in Children

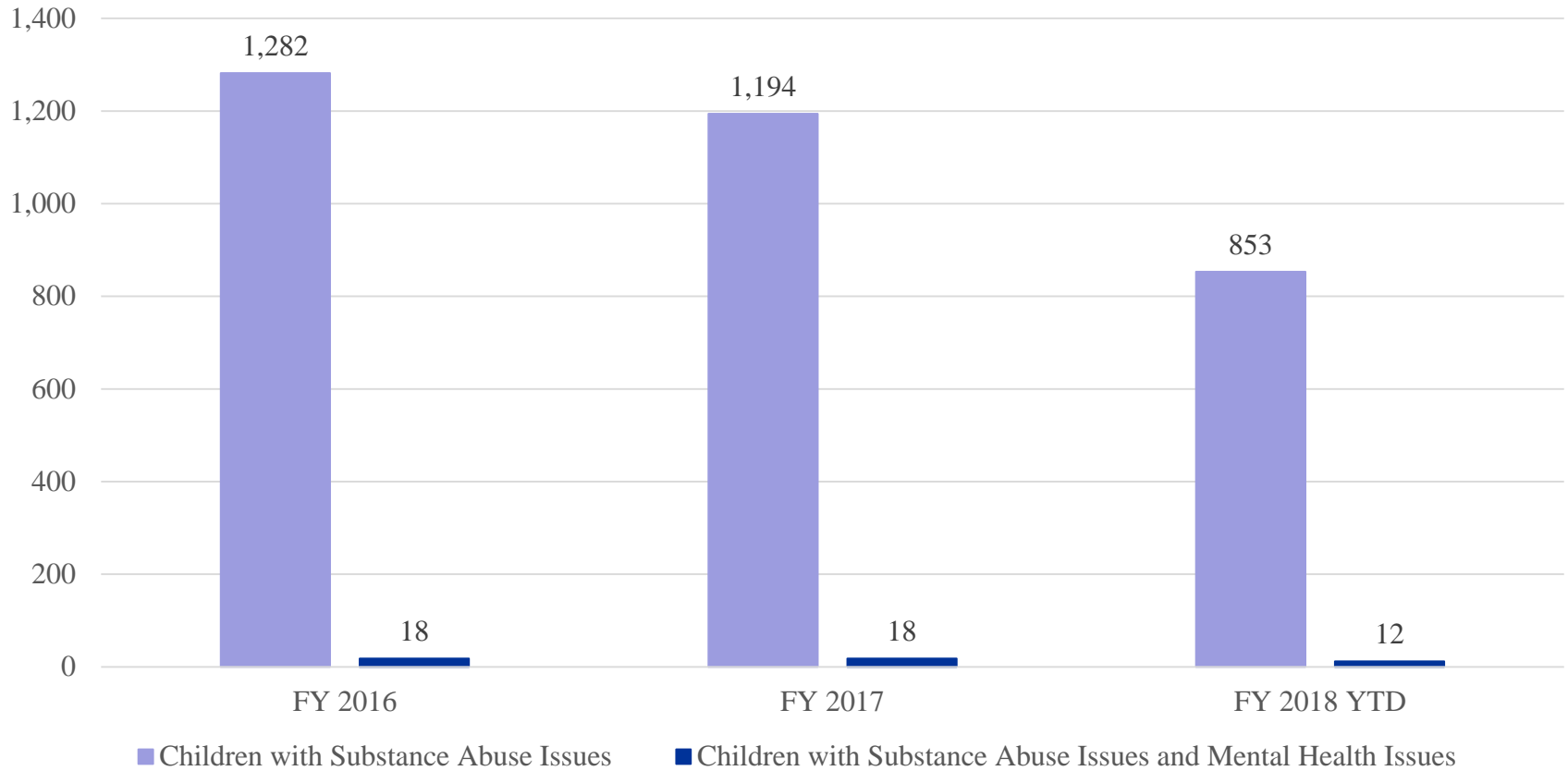
Substance Abuse in Children in Investigations or Alternative Response





Substance Abuse in Children

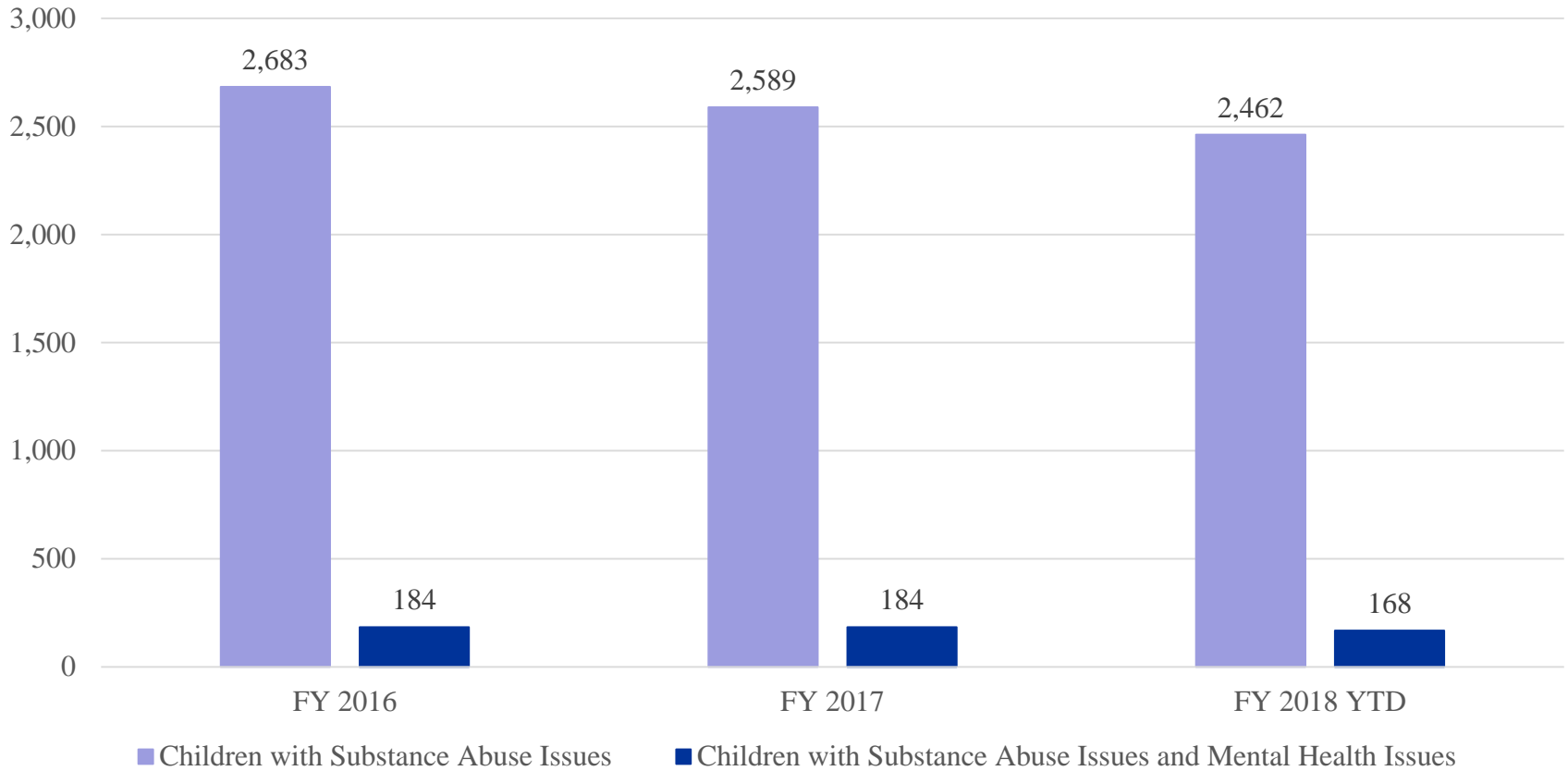
Substance Abuse in Children in Family-Based Safety Services





Substance Abuse in Children

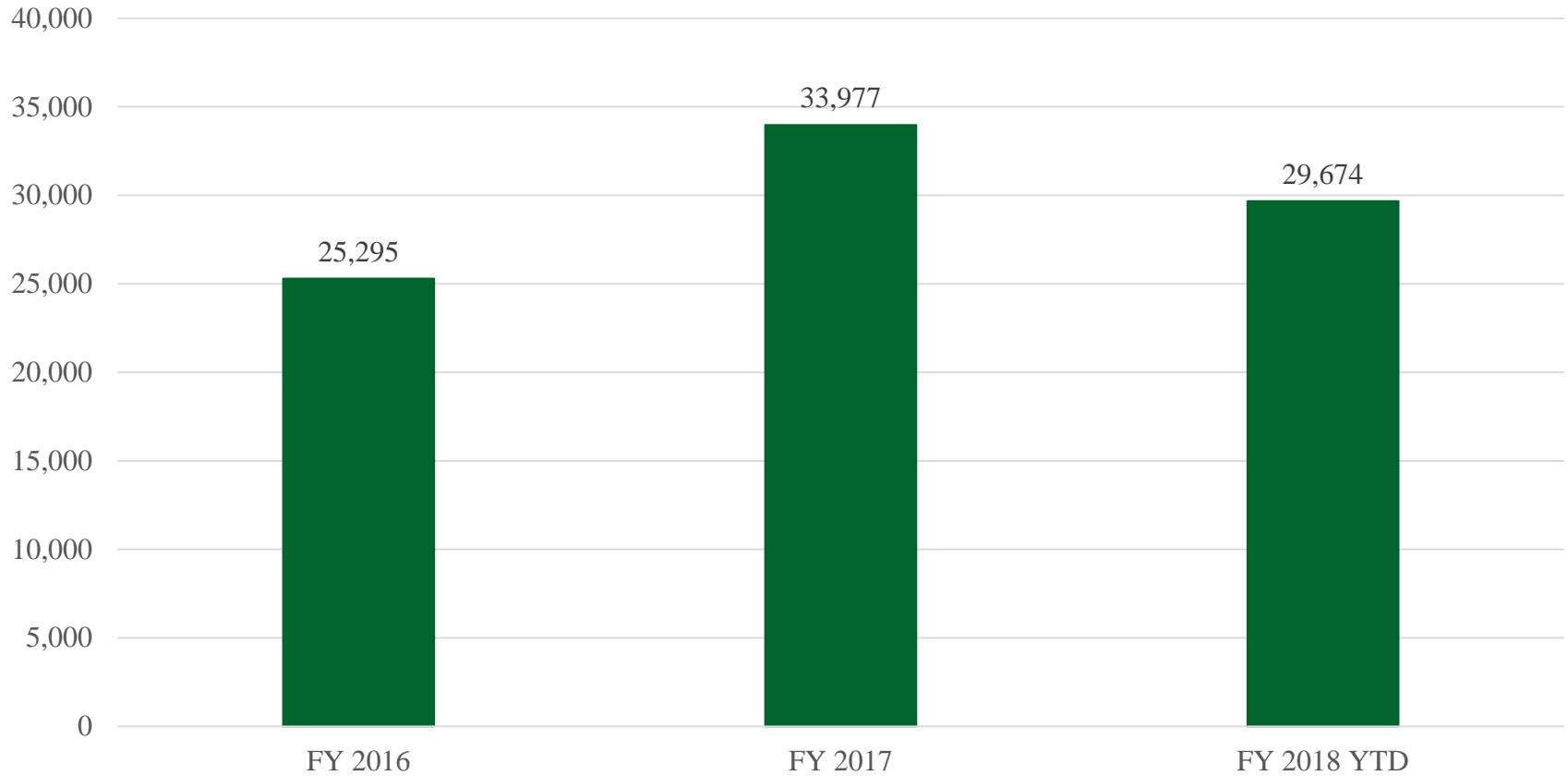
Substance Abuse by Children in Conservatorship





Substance Abuse in Caregivers

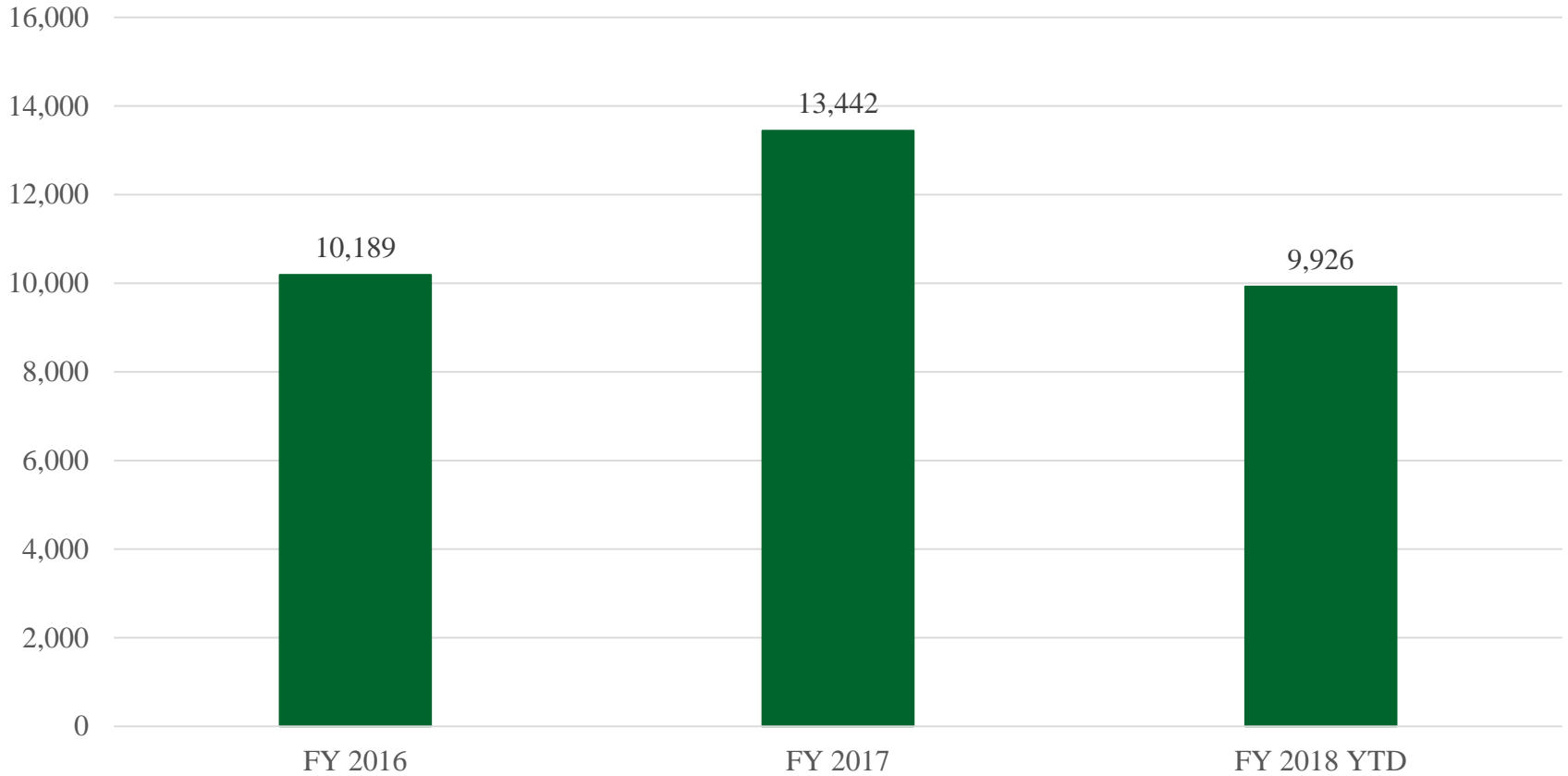
Caregiver Substance Abuse in Investigations or Alternative Response





Substance Abuse in Caregivers

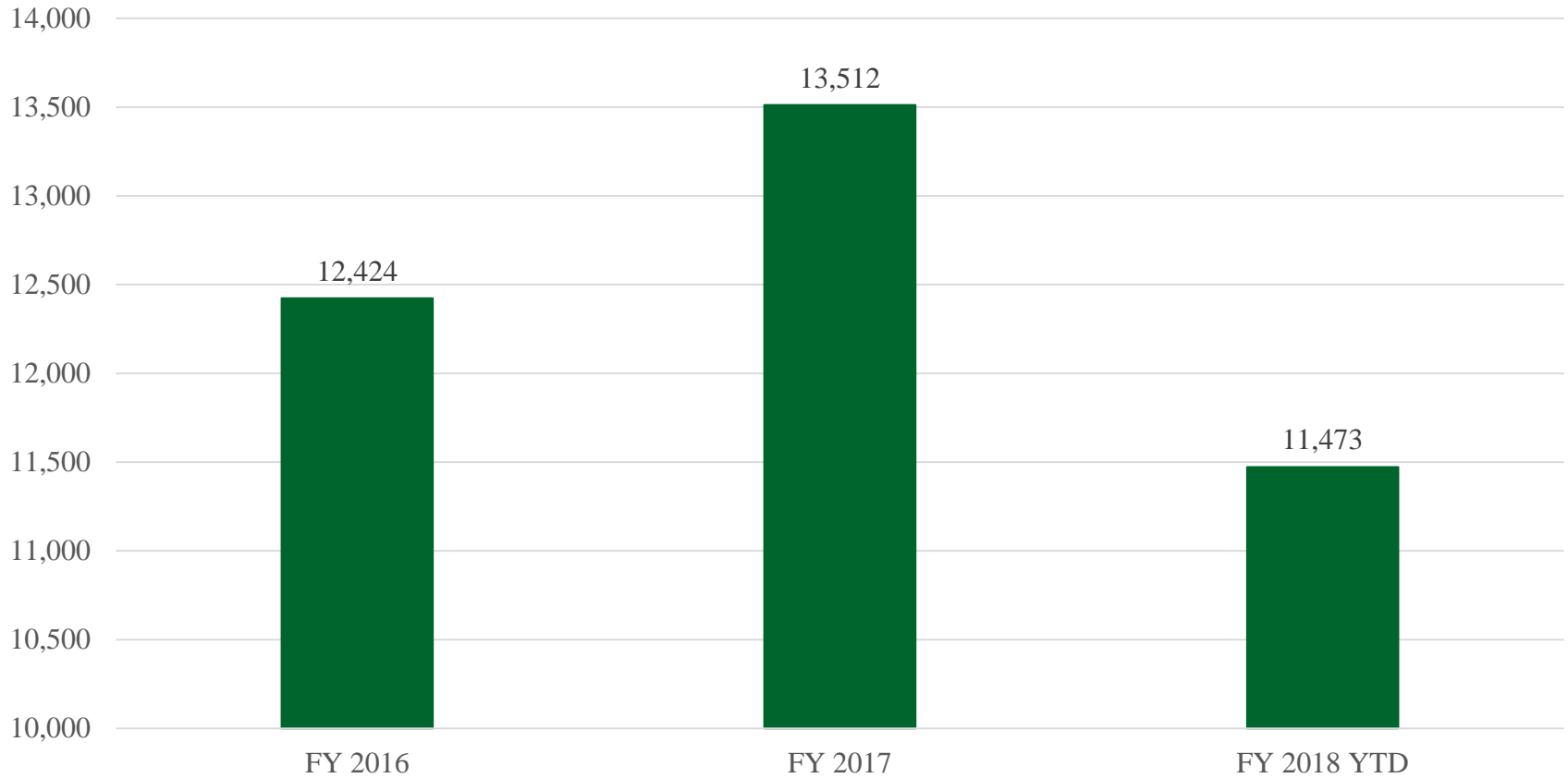
Caregiver Substance Abuse in Family-Based Safety Services





Substance Abuse in Caregivers

Caregiver Substance Abuse in Conservatorship (Removals)



Substance Abuse as a Factor in Fatalities

Substance abuse, mental health concerns, and domestic violence were common factors in confirmed child abuse and neglect fatalities:

- In FY 17, 52% of fatalities caused by abuse or neglect involved a parent or caregiver actively using a substance and/or under the influence of one or more substances that affected their ability to care for the child.
- Almost 23% of fatalities caused by abuse or neglect involved a parent or caregiver with reported or confirmed mental health concerns.
- A history of domestic violence was identified in 40% of abuse/neglect fatalities, with 17% of fatalities having active domestic violence.



Child Abuse/Neglect Fatalities

	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Child Population of Texas	6,865,824	6,952,177	6,996,352	7,121,499	7,266,760	7,311,923	7,407,636	7,500,272
Number of Intakes Assigned for Investigation or Alternative Response by CPS	231,532	222,541	206,200	194,803	215,512	232,159	238,591	238,600
Number of Investigated Child Fatalities	1,024	973	882	804	797	739	796	807
Number of Fatalities where Abuse/Neglect was Confirmed	227	231	212	156	151	171	222	172



FY 2017 Child Abuse/Neglect Fatalities

Substance Abuse Concern	Active*	Past History	Substance Abuse Concern	Active*	Past History
Alcohol	23	20	Methadone	1	0
Marijuana	56	78	Opiates	2	4
Cocaine	16	19	Synthetic Marijuana	2	6
Methamphetamines	14	13	Other	16	3
Phencyclidine (PCP)	1	1	Unknown	26	31
Heroin	1	2	No Known Use	56	50

*Active substance abuse concerns are indicated in cases where a parent has either tested positive for substances or self-reported abuse at the time of death of a child. **13**



Family Treatment Drug Courts



Family Treatment Drug Courts

- Family Drug Courts provide a continuum of services for parents, children and families.
 - These courts bring together a civil court to monitor compliance, service array for parents and children, and collaboration with county personnel, community providers and CPS.
 - Eligible participants include parents who have been identified by CPS as exhibiting symptoms of substance use disorders that may impact child safety and wellbeing.
 - Programs strive to help parents graduate so they can care for their children without further state intervention.
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Travis County Family Drug Court



Travis County Family Drug Court Participant Demographics

- 54% of participants have a High School Diploma/GED
- 70% of participants report a history of homelessness
- 84% of participants report a history of trauma
- 84% of participants have a mental health diagnosis in addition to Substance Use Disorder
- 86% of participants have a criminal history
- 70% of participants have prior CPS Involvement as adults
- 30% of participants report CPS Involvement as a child
- 22% of participants have had parental rights terminated to child(ren) not part of the current lawsuit

Long-term Outcomes for Participants

- 89% of participants exhibited *no* reoccurrence of child maltreatment within the following fiscal year
 - 92% of participants had *no* new CPS lawsuit within 12 months
 - 65% of program graduates report that they continue to work an active recovery program within 6-12 months of graduation
 - 71% of program graduates report stable employment within 6-12 months of graduation
 - 71% of program graduates report permanent housing within 6-12 months of graduation
 - 82% of program graduates report that they are the primary caregiver of their child(ren) within 6-12 months of graduation
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Bexar County Family Drug Court

- The Bexar County Program consists of five phases of treatment, with clearly defined goals, incentives for progress and sanctions (when necessary).
 - During its 15 years of operation, Bexar County Family Drug Court has seen that most participants are underemployed and undereducated individuals, who have also likely experienced domestic violence, housing instability, trauma, and/or mental health issues.
 - Bexar County has been able to prioritize this program for pregnant mothers, to reduce the number of babies born addicted to substances.
 - Bexar County's program also has a rapid reunification rate of six months.
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- County-led initiatives like Bexar and Travis Counties and other specialty courts to sustain families through innovative treatment and judicial solutions
 - Improved collaboration between agencies that serve similar populations
 - Education of Judiciary and stakeholders on the challenges of substance abuse and use
 - Enhanced services and after-care to support parent's sobriety when children are returned home
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