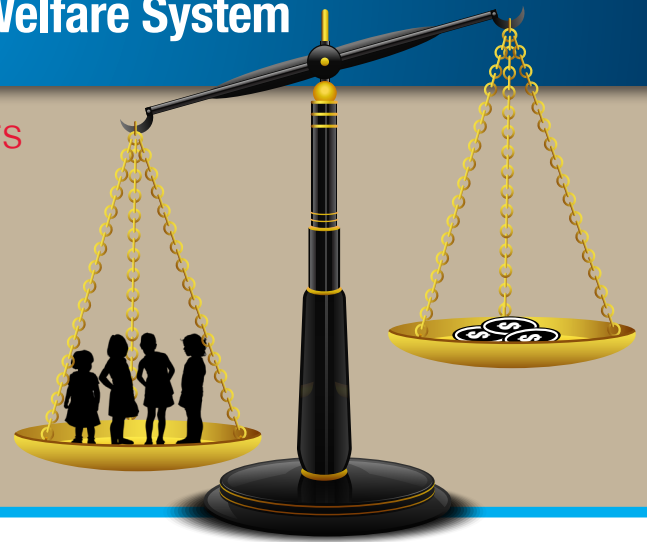


# Structural Deficiencies in Florida's Child Welfare System

Funding for community-based care providers has decreased 13 percent since 2008, accounting for inflation, while children in out-of-home care increased by 10 percent. During FY 2014 we saw the highest levels of children being removed from homes since 2008.

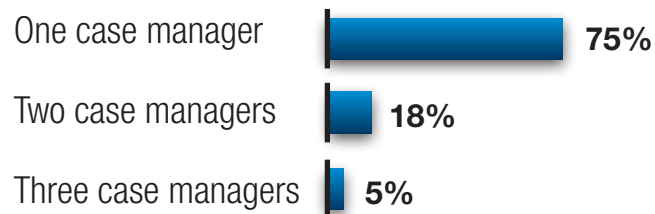


**22:1** Florida's current caseload ratios are as high as 22 cases per case manager. According to the Department of Children and Families, Florida's standard is 14 to 1.

This lack of adequate financial resources drives up caseloads and leads to case manager workforce instability. These service and workforce issues contribute to increased demand for child welfare and result in longer stays in the system and negative child permanency outcomes, at great taxpayer expense.

Florida averages 37 percent turnover statewide, but can run as high as 80 percent in certain communities. Workforce instability takes a toll on children in the system. Factors affecting turnover include low pay, workloads and environment.

## Chance of permanency within 21 months.



Florida's caseworker salaries are among some of the lowest in the country, while being asked to manage some of the highest number of cases.

“Like most problems, the issues facing Florida's community-based child welfare system will only grow worse with time if not addressed. Without adequate investments to improve service and workforce issues now, demand on the child welfare system will continue to climb, and children in the system will pay the price for years to come.”