

Giving Context for Equity in the Courts:

Where Lived Expertise, Trauma-Informed Care, and Belonging Intersect

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Date: May 23, 2023

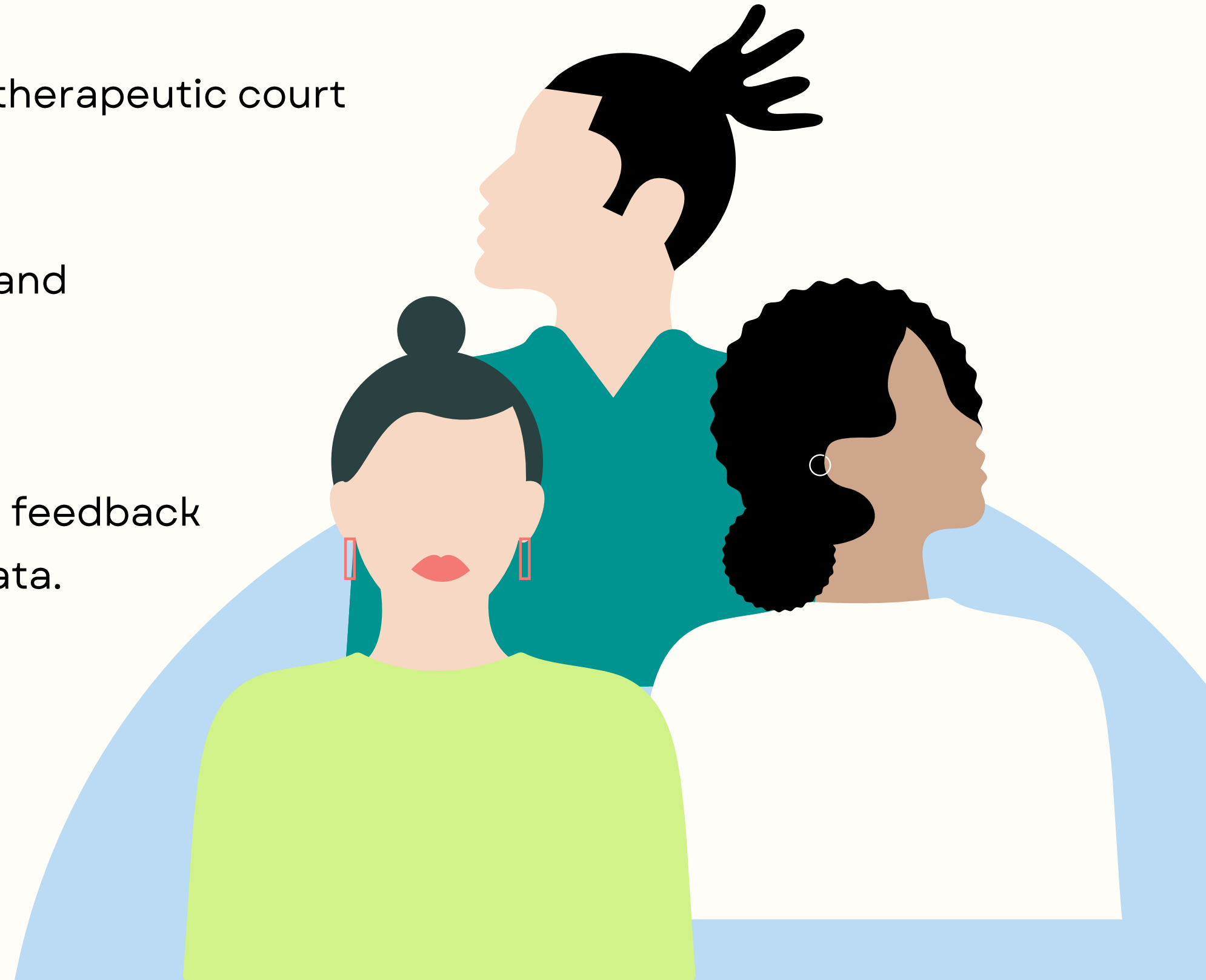
Time: 1:30 pm

slides and resources available on
www.wacita.org

Objectives

What do we hope to share today?

- 1 Understand the value of lived expertise in a therapeutic court
- 2 Insight on how to make changes using data and expertise
- 3 Examples of changes made because of peer feedback and consistent reflection on the outcome data.
- 4 Discussion about opportunities for change

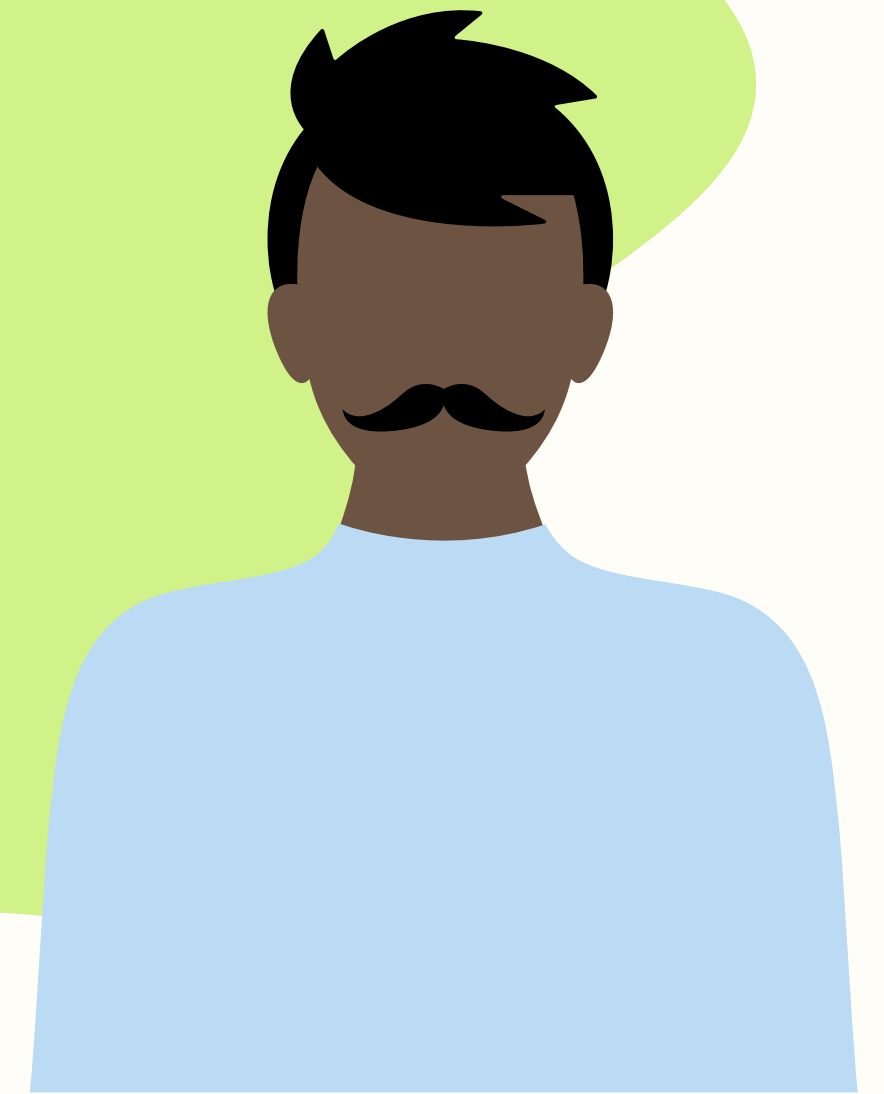
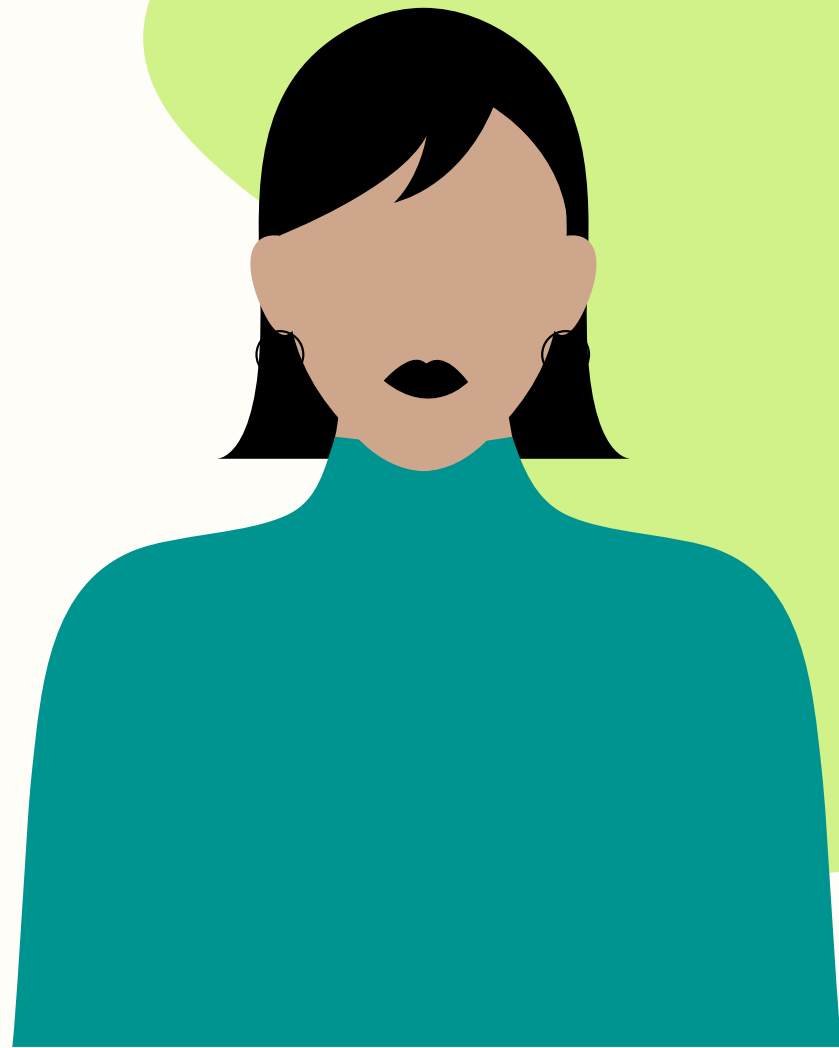


Context defined

“the action of weaving, connection, coherence,

ordered scheme, structure”

As we introduce ourselves, we
bring our history and our
present selves.



Introduce Yourself

What is the context that brings you here today?

What is your lived expertise?

What in your life brought you to this room, this conference, this work?

The Family Therapeutic Courts (FTCs)

- Family is struggling due to a Substance Use Disorder
- This SUD has led to a safety risk for child(ren) in the home
- Dependency has been established*
- Voluntary Admission to FTC Program
- Higher risk/higher needs cases





The Family Therapeutic Court Goals

Reduce Substance Use in
Participants – Recovery
from SUD

Reduce Number of
Removals/Dependencies
for children

Provide a high-
accountability, non-
adversarial, collaborative
team to work with
complex family needs

Best Practices in FTCs

Team is diverse in expertise* and can address families' needs* to have a successful case outcome

- Consistent training and cross-training
- Consideration of unique family and population needs

Participants' treatment services are integrated with case processing

- Early Identification
- Quick entry into SUD Treatment
- Integrated case planning

High accountability

- Frequent (2Xweekly) drug screening
- Frequent hearings and communication

Evidence Based Practices

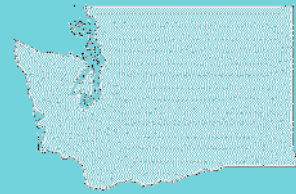
- Consideration of Practice-Based Evidence Needs



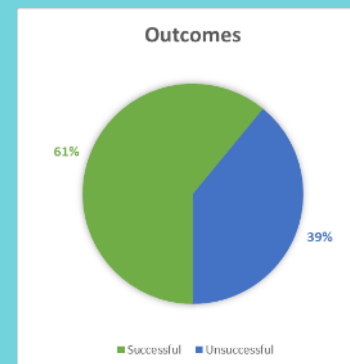
Family Therapeutic Courts Facts



317 FTCs
Nationally in
2020



20 FTCs in
Washington
State & 2 Tribes
with Family
H2W Courts



Outcomes
and Data
Measures in
WA FTCs



Early
Childhood
and ICWA
courts



Problems
with disparity

Some Unique Challenges of Entering High Contact Courts for Historically Marginalized Groups

- Historic Trauma
- Systemic injustice
- Systemic racism
- Generational or direct justice system involvement

Need for:

Trauma informed practices with a lens of equity

Belonging & Hope

Careful monitoring of referrals, decision points, outcomes



The Family Therapeutic Courts (FTCs)

Unique case needs require more careful monitoring of potential for bias

More integration of qualitative data input (participant feedback)

May be overwhelming to under-resourced courts

Suggestions of Change

- Specific
- Listening and Learning Focused



Ensuring Racial and Ethnic Proportionality in Family Drug Treatment Courts

Spotlight on Efforts in King County, Washington

Jill Murphy, LICSW
Family Treatment Court
Program Manager





King County FTC Primary Goals

- Children have safe and permanent homes within permanency planning guidelines;
- Families of color have outcomes from dependency cases similar to families not of color;
- Parents are better able to care for themselves and their children and seek resources to do so; and
- The cost to society of dependency cases involving substances is reduced.

Eligibility Criteria for KCFTC

KCFTC is a voluntary program for parent(s) who, with attorney permission:

- Admit to the court that his/her child is dependent or have an existing dependency finding
- Have a moderate or severe SUD and willing to go to treatment;
- Are at least 18 years of age;
- Sign a Consent to Release Confidential Information Form to share tx information w/team;
- Have no felony child abuse or sexual abuse guilty findings;

KCFTC Entry Process

Prior to Court:

- Referral Received
- Attorney Permission
- Screening Appt Scheduled
- Records Request
- Collateral Contacts
- Summary of screening information sent out to the team prior to Acceptance Staffing

In Court:

- **Acceptance Staffing:**
 - Team reviews eligibility criteria in policy
 - Team reviews areas of concern such as extensive felony history, developmental delays, psychosis, etc...that might impact the parent's ability to participate in the program.
 - Judge decides if case is appropriate for KCFTC and sets an Acceptance Hearing date.
- **Acceptance Hearing:**
 - Parent signs KCFTC Acceptance Order listing conditions of participation.
 - First official KCFTC hearing.

KCFTC Program Model



- KCFTC uses an integrated model of Family Treatment Drug Court.
- Case Social Workers dedicated to the FTC with reduced caseloads (13:1) and a Court-Appointed Special Advocate is dedicated to each KCFTC family.
- Formal Wraparound Process for approx 1/3 of families (15 at a time)
- Treatment Specialist who recruits and screens parents for entry in FTC as well as assists and monitors parent's entry and progress in SUD and MH treatment upon program acceptance.
- Case review hearings every week until frequency can be stepped down.
- Cross-disciplinary pre-hearing staffings to present a unified approach at hearings.

Working on Proportionality - 2013

What's been done?

- Quarterly review of statistics
- Advertising of job postings to recruit a more diverse staff
- Hiring of a Treatment Specialist Teaming with Parent Allies
- Cultural Competence Team Training
- KCFTC Policy Manual Changes
- Community Engagement (culturally specific referrals, tribal involvement, feedback)

What are the challenges?

- Reliance on stakeholders for referral information and timing
- Funding for another Treatment Specialist or Peer Specialist to help with engagement prior to entry
- No control over KCFTC partners' hiring practices
- Accurate and consistent data from DCYF
- Tracking race/ethnicity on each referral and reasons for not entering KCFTC

Working on Proportionality - 2023

2013 challenges?

- Reliance on stakeholders for referral information and timing and one treatment specialist position
- Funding for another Treatment Specialist or Peer Specialist to help with engagement prior to entry
- No control over KCFTC partners' hiring practices
- Accurate and consistent data from DCYF
- Tracking race/ethnicity on each referral and reasons for not entering KCFTC

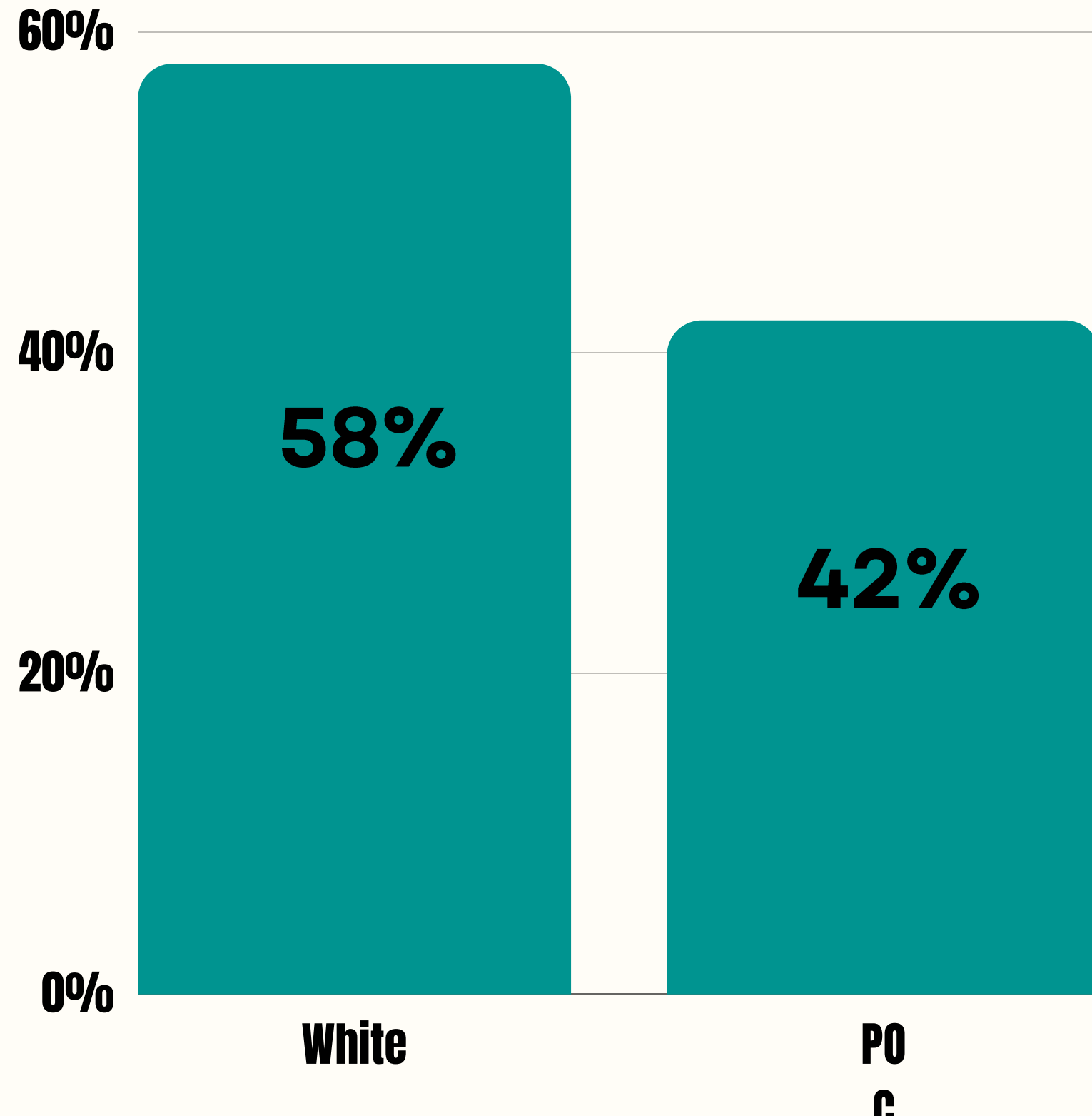
What's been done since?

- Applied for SAMSHA grant, obtained local funding for two FRSS positions
- Data Dashboard created at State Level
- Partnered on each other's interview panels
- New database and updated forms to capture more nuanced information on referrals
- Annual Drop Off Analysis with Steering Committee Review

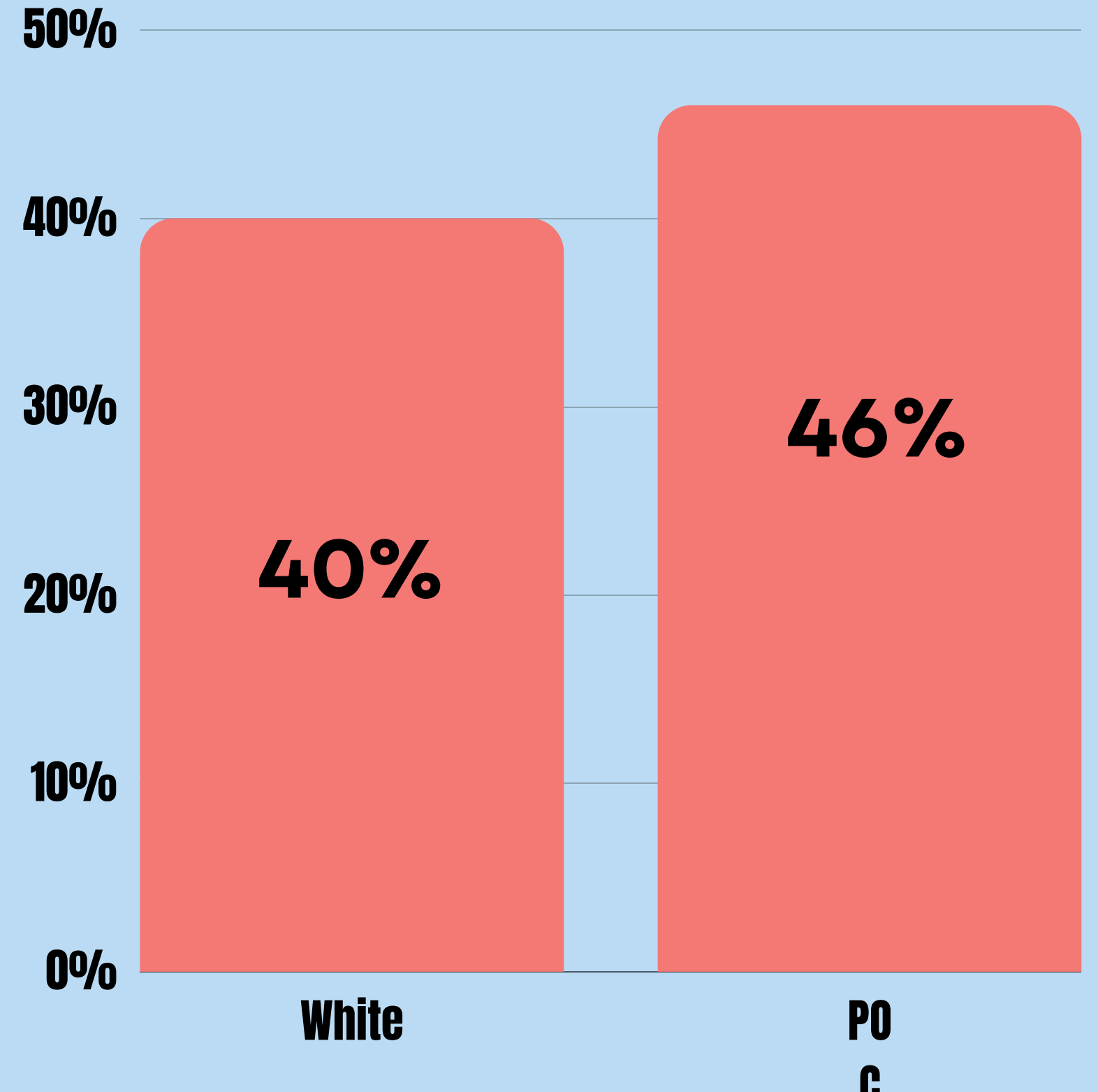
Drop Off Analysis

2013 - 2022

Referral Percent

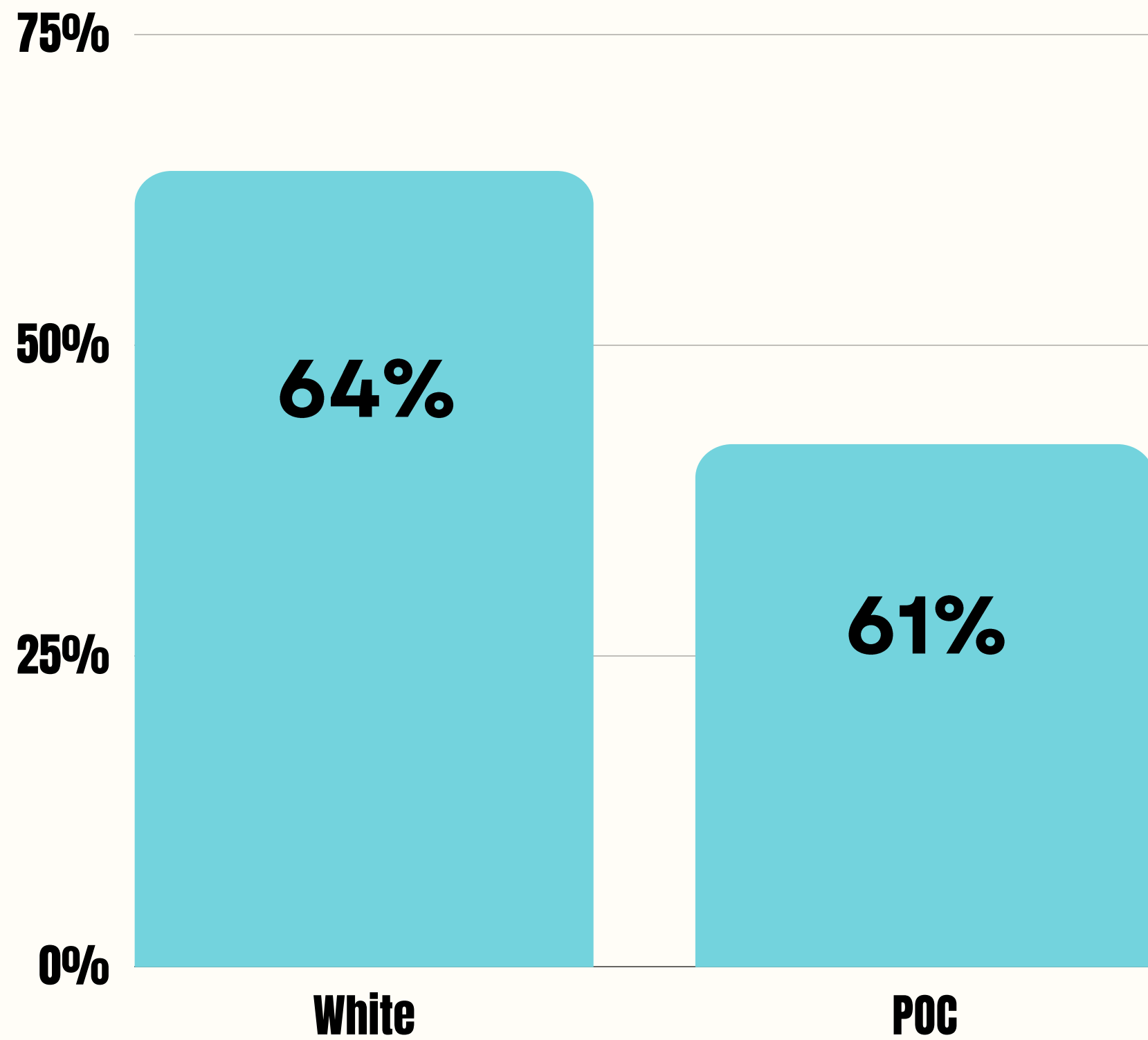


Intake Percent

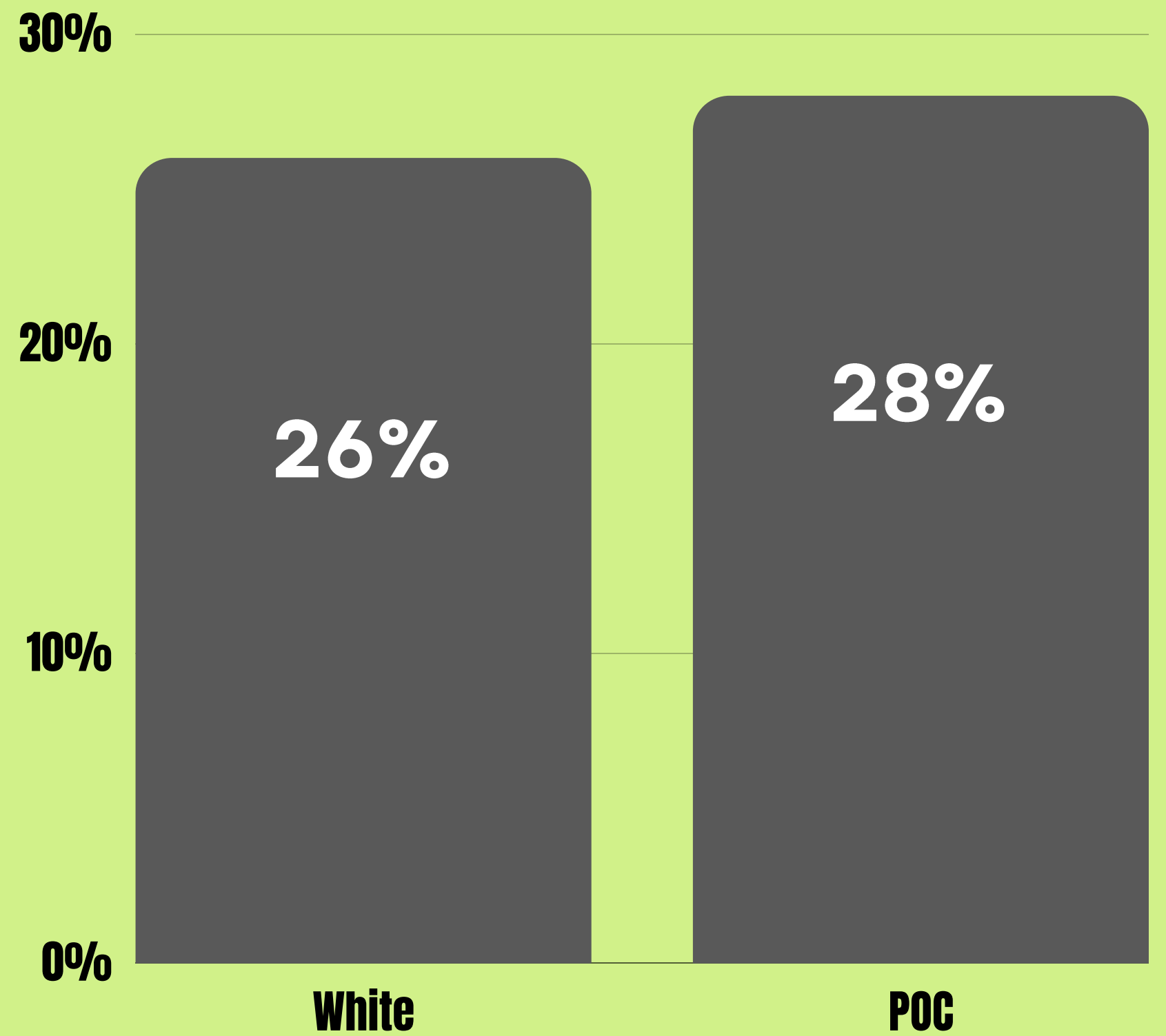


Staffing Rates

Staffing Percent Incremental

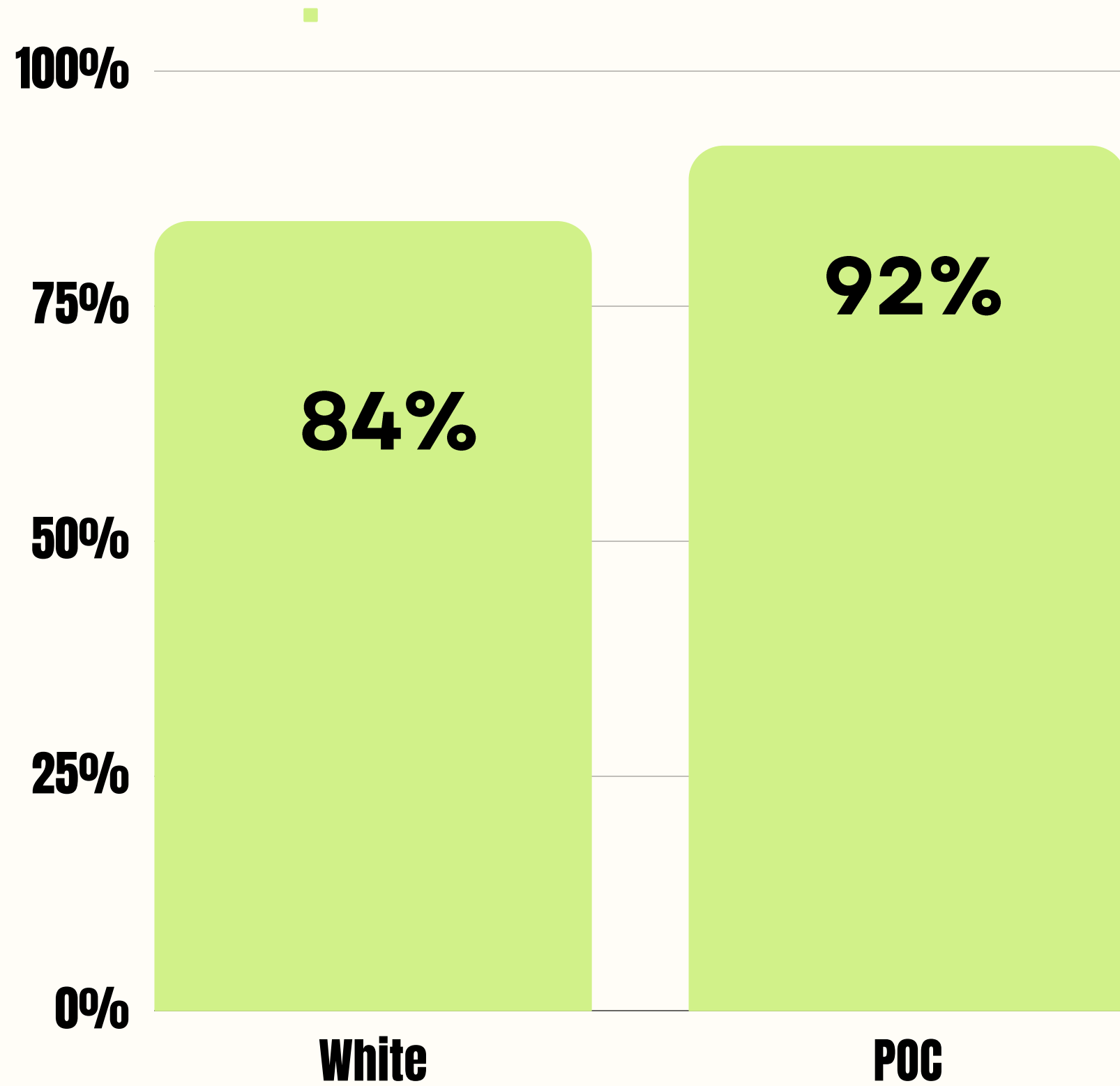


Staffing Percent Cumulative

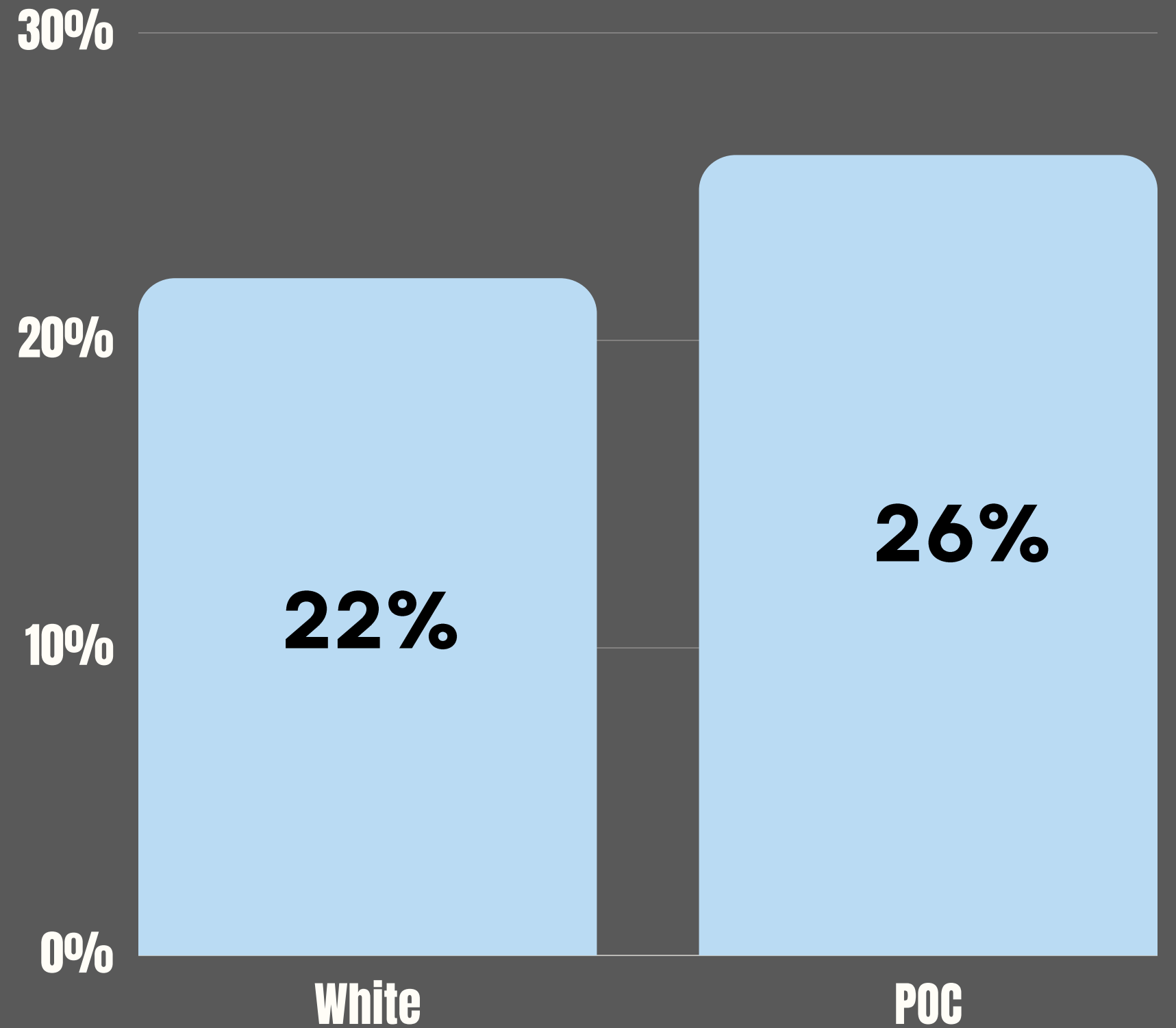


Acceptance Rates

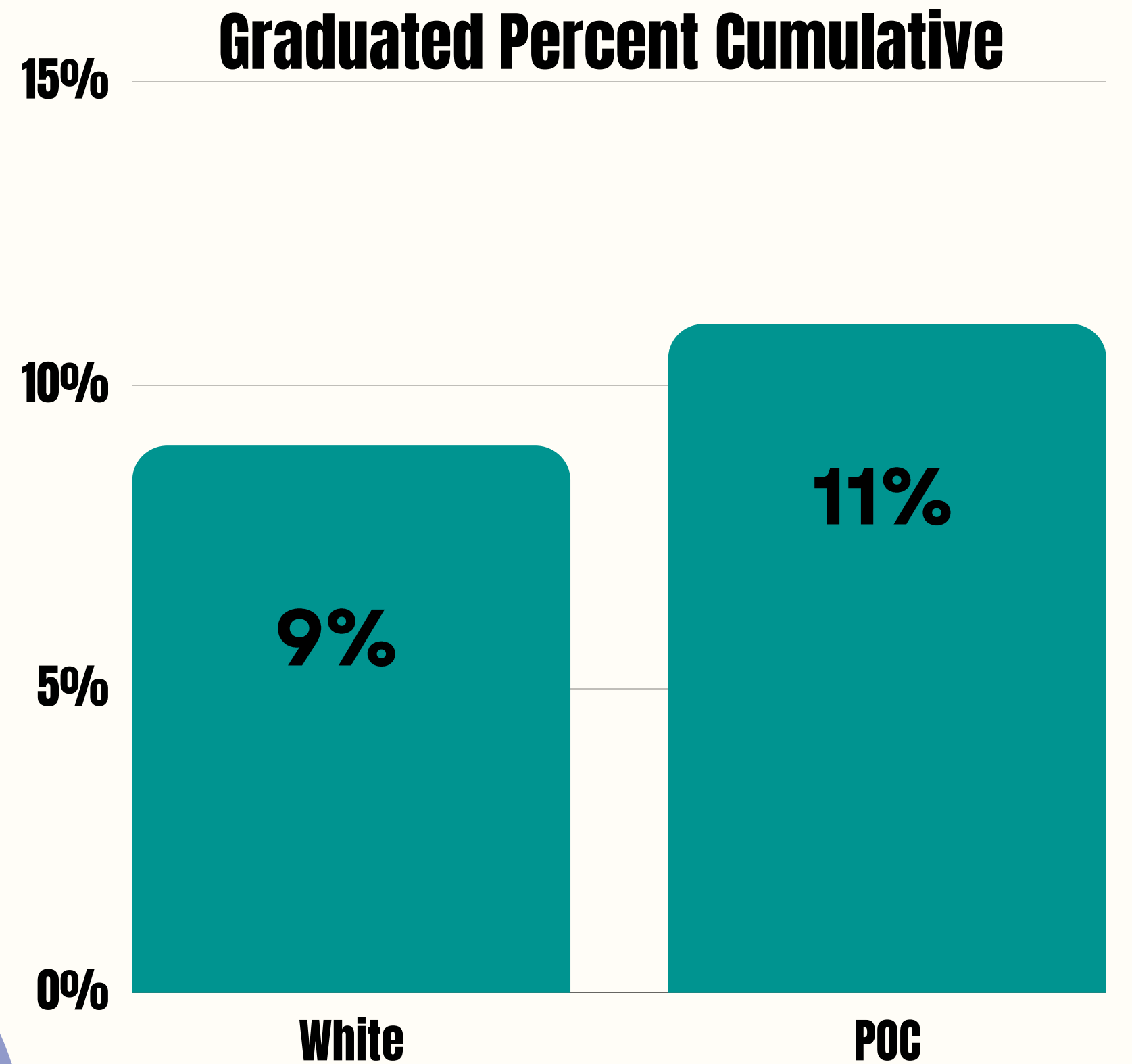
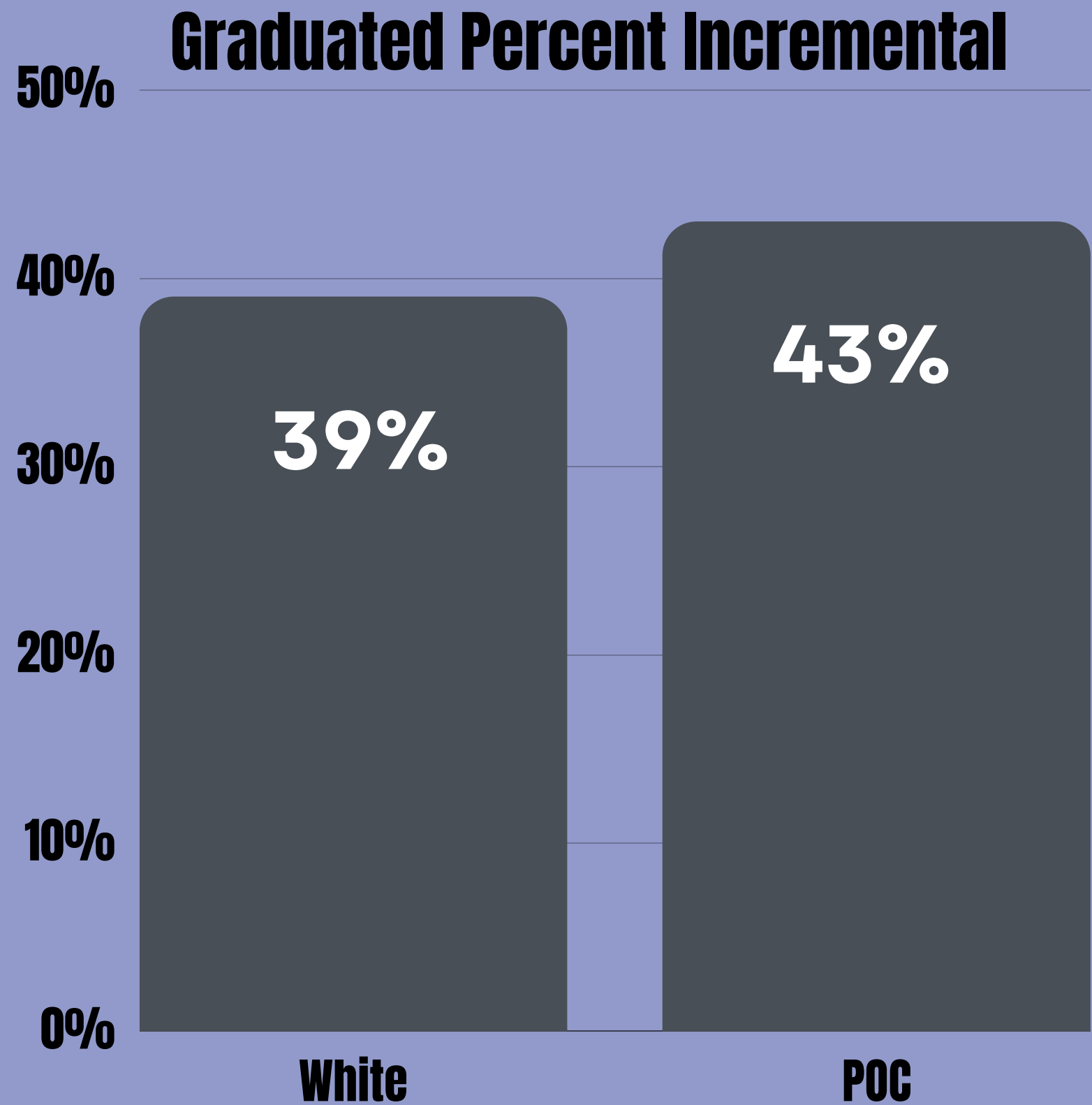
Accepted Percent Incremental



Accepted Percent Cumulative



Graduation Rates



Reasons for Not Entering FTC

2013-2022

Reason Given	n (%)	
	POC	White
Not interested	81 (17.3)	158 (24.6)
Could not locate/Didn't Show for Intake	155 (33.8)	158 (24.6)
Referral more than 6 months after petition	37 (8.0)	32 (5.0)
Attorney	41 (8.9)	54 (8.4)
Serious mental health issues	25 (5.4)	46 (7.2)
Criminal History	24 (5.2)	21 (3.3)
Pending	28 (6.1)	69 (11.0)
Other ¹	41 (8.9)	57 (8.9)

What's Next

- * Did the intervention have the desired effect? What else might be needed?
- * What were the outliers in the cohort experience? Drilling down deeper...
- * Continual review of policies at all levels of decision making are necessary to root out any institutionally racism practices.
- * Clear process for policy change that includes all levels within the program
- * Formal evaluation to assess success with program goals.

Program Goal Comparison

2011 Evaluation

- Parents entered treatment faster, stayed in treatment longer and were more successful in treatment
- Children were 70% more likely to be returned home to their parents
- Families exited the child welfare system sooner
- Results roughly equivalent across for families of color and white families in FTC

2019 Evaluation

- There were fewer days between intake assessments and enrollment
- More parents enrolled in SUD treatment
- Children achieved permanency faster
- More participants graduated or had their dependency dismissed
- No differences in program outcomes for white families and families of color, but white families did reunify earlier.



**You're only as good
as your data!**

- Decide what to track
- Review for accuracy of entry
- Mark points in time for system changes
- Use internal and external reviews

Manisha Jackson

King County Family
Treatment Court
Graduate

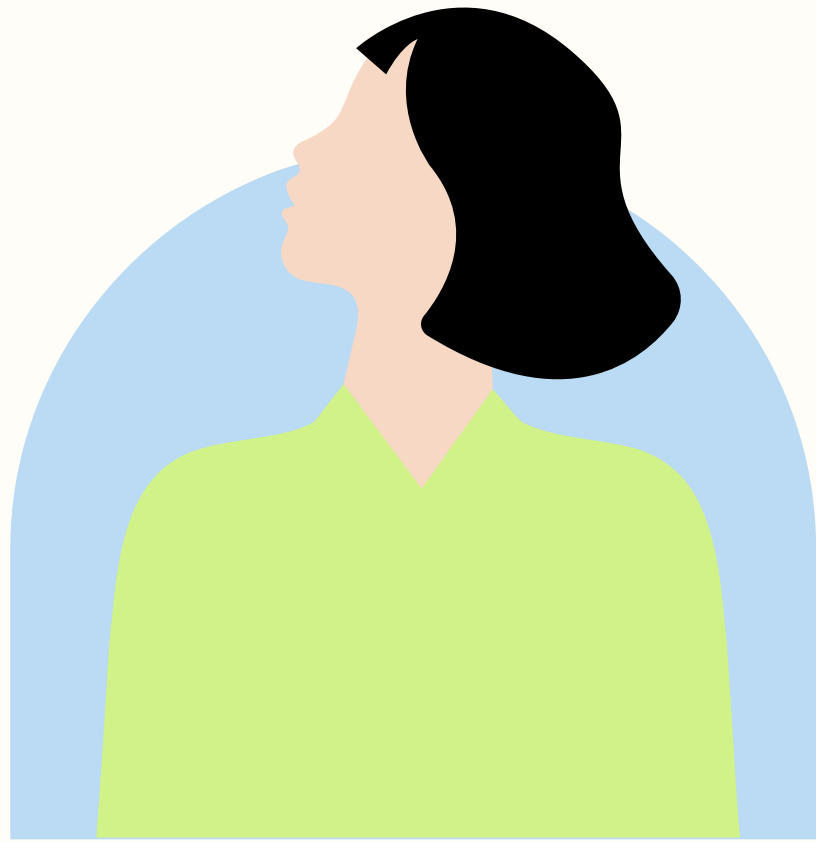
&

Family Recovery
Support Specialist



KCFTC: Entry to Exit Perspectives

- How I heard about FTC and how I was referred to the program
- How I experienced the Screening process
- How it felt on my Acceptance Hearing court day (ie first day in family treatment court)
- My experience in FTC court program



Belonging & the Family Recovery Support Specialist Role

Mirroring the Language of the Team and the Participants

Race & Equity

Safety, Hope, and Experiences of Success





From Large to Small Communities



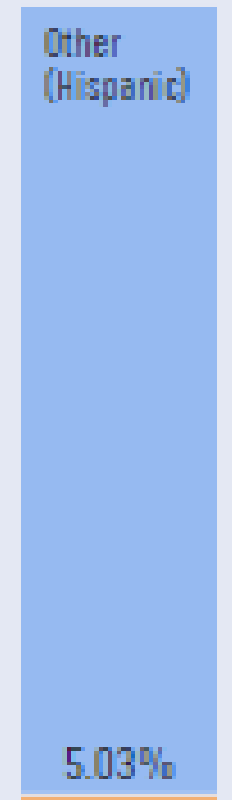
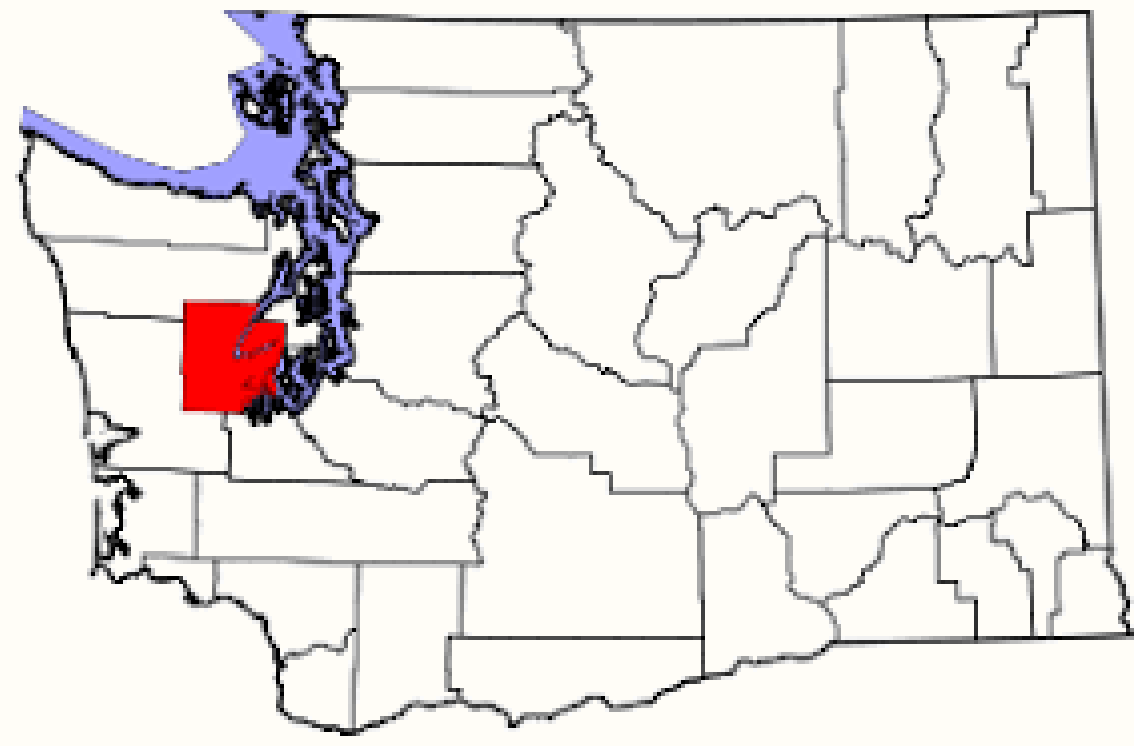
Gabbi: Family Recovery Court Caseworker

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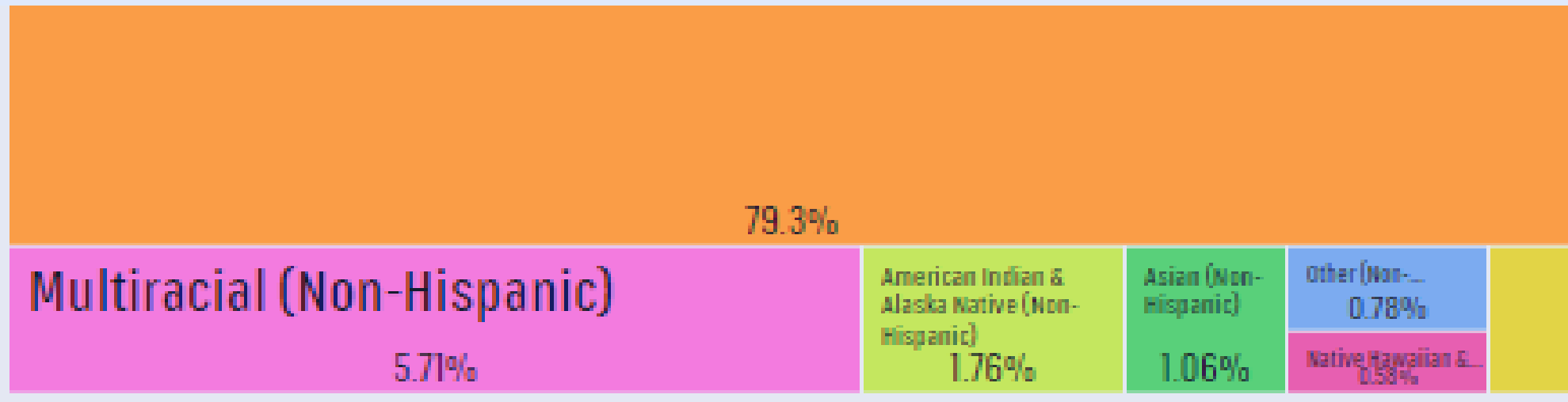


Mason County

Population estimate (2020) 68,000 people



- White
- Multiracial
- Other
- American Indian & Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander



[US Census Bureau](#)
[Data USA](#)

Mason County Families & Children in 2022

12,500

Children in Mason County

48

Total Dependency Filings

*WA Total 2,589

22

Total Termination Filings

*WA Total 955

74

Cases Dismissed

257

Total Active Cases

47%

Removals are related to
Substance Abuse

13%

Removals are related to
Inadequate Housing

Mason County Family Recovery Court (FRC)



- Total families & kids
- First meet & engage with parent(s) during shelter care
- Parents do an intake interview to assess needs and history
- Court hearings:
 - Early on: every week
 - As they progress: every other week and alternate with life skills classes
- Meet with a peer once a week (during week of court), decreases with progress in program
 - Other communication depends on needs at least couple of times a week

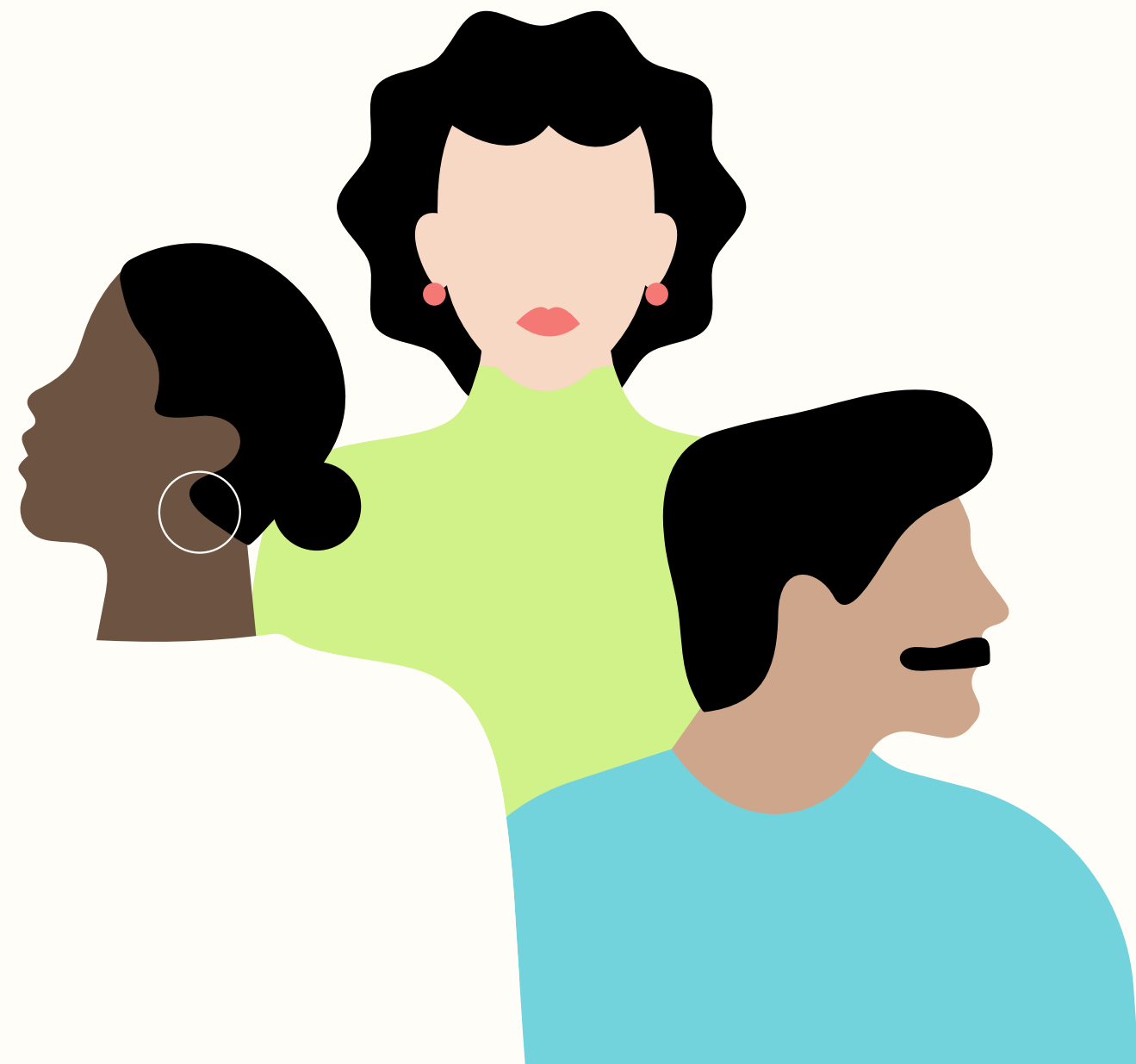
Rural Community Challenges



- Services & Transportation
- Personal Connection to other community members
- Harder to feel belonging in a less diverse community

Every day community interactions set an example of successful recovery

Peer Connection and Advocacy



- Hope for families & for FRC professionals
- Sharing ideas, concerns & advocating for families
- Developing a place where families belong

Audience Question

Do you use Feedback from Participants, Graduates, and other Lived Experts in Court and SUD?

How is it organized?

Are you using Peer Support?

How are you funding this?



Small Changes with big impacts

Share with a partner a change that
could help your court be more
welcoming to a diverse group of
participants





Thank you!

We appreciate you joining us &
learning more together about how
to bring equity to the courts

What questions can we answer?



Center for Children and Family Futures
Strengthening Partnerships, Improving Family Outcomes



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