



**SCHOLARS**  
STRATEGY NETWORK

## How California reduced foster care without risking kids

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Today, approximately 18,000 fewer California children are in foster care than five years ago — an astonishing 32% drop. In some places, the declines are even steeper: Los Angeles County, for example, has halved its foster care population.

A common trope in child welfare is that foster care reductions come at the expense of child safety. But this is a false choice, not borne out by the evidence.

California has made important progress toward correcting its over-reliance on foster care and can continue doing so without endangering children.