



HB1490

Protect Foster Keiki Health

**In support of the establishment of
a universal, single payer health
care system in Hawai'i.**

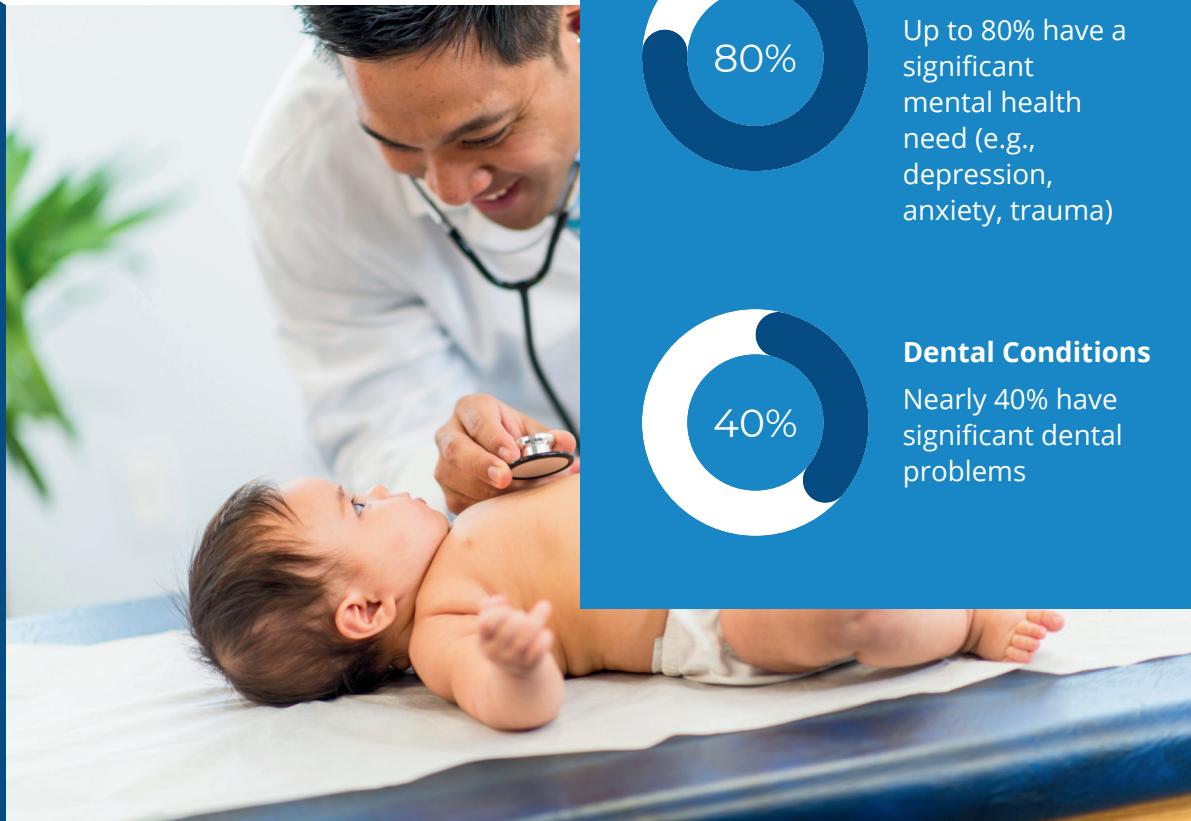
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Hawai'i Care
2026

The Challenge

Healthcare access is not equal, especially for vulnerable keiki

- Hawaii's healthcare delivery system faces rising costs and complexity.
- Many remain uninsured or underinsured, even with existing Medicaid expansions.
- Foster keiki often have high and unique healthcare needs requiring consistent, coordinated care.



Note : With over a thousand children in foster care statewide and many needing ongoing medical and developmental services, healthcare system stability is crucial.

Why Foster Keiki Are More Vulnerable

- ✓ Limited family advocacy means policy changes hit them first.
- ✓ Reliance on public insurance and systems with complex eligibility and reporting requirements.
- ✓ Higher rates of trauma, developmental, and behavioral health needs.
- ✓ Frequent placement changes that disrupt continuity of medical and behavioral care.
- ✓ Increased risk of losing healthcare when aging out due to instability in housing and financial security.



Mental Health Challenges :



Keiki in foster care are **3 to 10 times more likely** to receive a mental health diagnosis and have significantly higher mental health service use than similar peers. Foster youth have behavioral health conditions at **3x** the rate of non-foster peers.



Unmet Healthcare Needs Remain :

A federal review found that roughly 25% of children in foster care have unmet healthcare needs, even when covered by programs like Medicaid. About 20% become homeless soon after aging out.



The Need for HB1490

Healthcare Stability for Foster Keiki:

Federal legislation threatens foster keiki's access to consistent, coordinated care by reducing federal Medicaid funding, tightening eligibility rules, and adding administrative requirements.

- ✓ **Foster keiki face complex health and behavioral needs that require consistent care.**
- ✓ **Current systems are fragmented, with coverage gaps and administrative hurdles that disrupt care.**
- ✓ **HB1490 supports a system that can be more responsive to keiki with complex needs.**
- ✓ **HB1490 would ensure stable healthcare for foster keiki and all residents of Hawai‘i.**

As foster keiki age out, many lack family support, stable housing, or financial security. Federal rules often assume adult stability, putting youth at high risk of losing healthcare.

Support Foster Keiki by Advancing HB1490

A universal healthcare system can close coverage gaps, reduce barriers, and ensure consistent care. **Your support to hear HB1490 this session is crucial**—this bill will provide stability, security, and better health outcomes for Hawaii's most vulnerable keiki, helping prevent homelessness and giving them a stronger foundation.



Mahalo for your support of foster keiki

Sources

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