

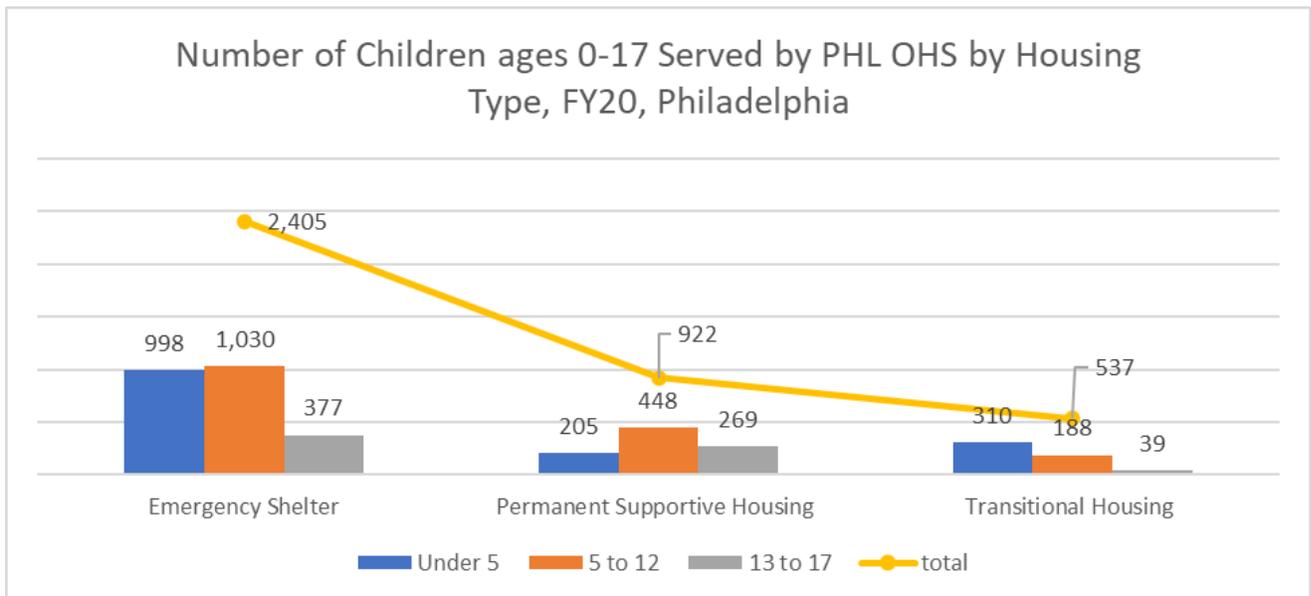
Brought to you by the PEC Policy Department with help from Marybeth Taylor.
For more information, email Policy Department.

BrainGain@PEC provides brief summaries of research or publications on family homelessness and related issues. Previous issues of BrainGain@PEC can be found at <http://bit.ly/2iaczvQ>.

October 2020

Philadelphia Homeless Services: a Significant Service Delivery System for Children and Youth in Temporary Housing

This report shows the total number of children and youth served in emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing programs sponsored by the Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services (OHS), during Fiscal Year 2020. This report **does not represent all children and youth served by OHS or all homeless children in Philadelphia**. PEC created this report for planning by early education and other agencies serving at-risk children and youth. Data sources: Philadelphia OHS



Highlights

OHS served **3,775 children and youth** in FY 2020 in 3 types of housing programs.

- This number includes homeless children, i.e., in emergency or transitional housing, and in PSH programs where the children are not homeless.
- This total does not include children and youth in other OSH-supported programs such as Rapid Rehousing, and Prevention and Diversion programs.
- *Note 1: PEC requested the data of children BY AGE; as a result, 41 children changed age during the reporting period so they are being reported once in each age group and once in the total. The totals are accurate counts of the number of unique individuals served.*
- *Note 2: The School District of Philadelphia can be expected to have a different number of children and youth due to their use of different definitions of “homelessness.”*

The FY 2020 numbers include:

- **1,698 children from birth to five years old**, including
 - **1,191** infants and toddlers ages younger than three years
 - **507** children in the Pre-Kindergarten **ages of four or five** years old
- **1,401 children from six to 12 years old**
- **676 youth from 13 to 17 years old.**



For FY20, OHS served significantly more children and youth in emergency shelter, than in transitional housing and permanent supportive housing.

- **64% of children** from birth to age 17 who were served by OHS were in **emergency shelter**, while **24% and 14% were served respectively in transitional housing and in permanent supportive housing.**
- **Comparing data from FY17 to FY20:**
 - The number of **children ages 0-12** who were served by OHS in **emergency shelter** have **increased** each year since FY18.
 - The number of children ages 0-12 who were served by OHS in transitional housing programs have **decreased** each year since FY18
 - In FY20, OHS **served more** youth ages 13-17 in emergency shelter and transitional housing than in any of the previous 3 years.

Background

This summary is intended to inform various initiatives and the general Philadelphia community who work with children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Initiatives addressing child and youth development are critical. Families who use shelter are more likely to have extremely low income (less than half the federal poverty level), to have experienced domestic violence, to be headed by a younger, single mother, and, by definition, to have moved one or more times in the past year.

Efforts focusing on specific age populations, i.e., infants and toddlers, preschool, etc., can benefit by these data. Specifically, some of these efforts include:

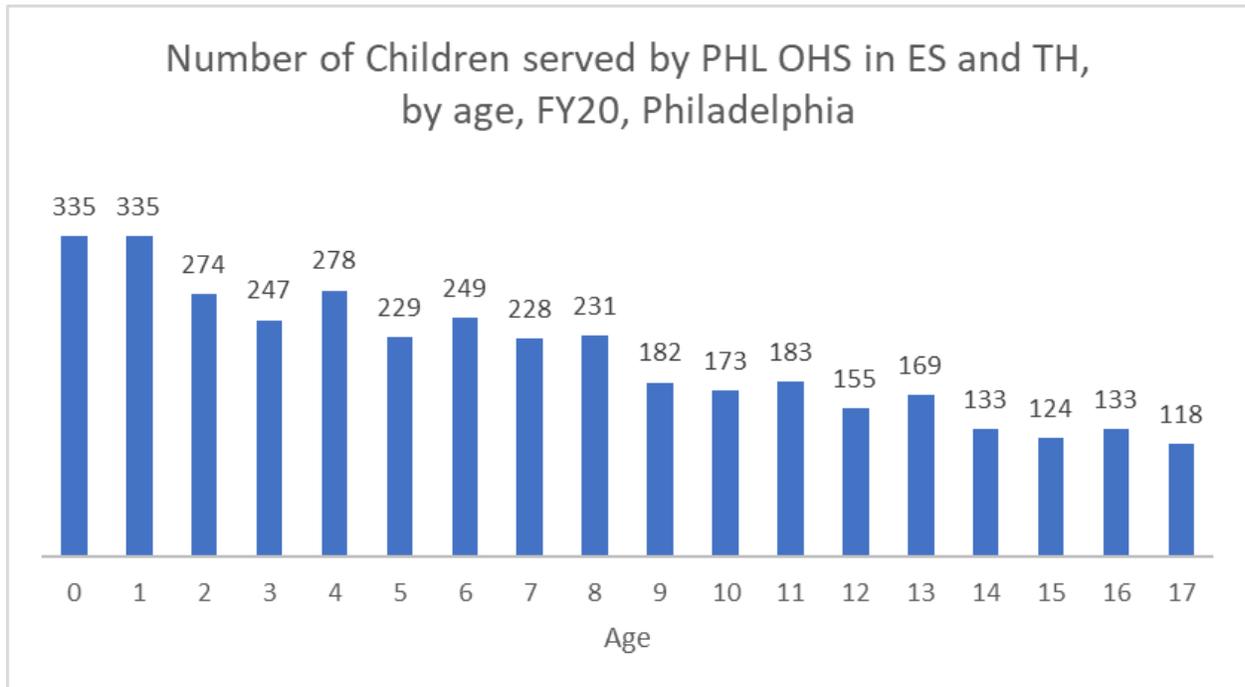
- PEC's **Building Early Links for Learning** and its expansion into serving children in **PSH** works to increase access to high quality early learning programs.
- **Most** emergency housing programs recruit services addressing parenting, mental and physical health, afterschool and tutoring services, arts programs, and other needed services that support child development.
- **Home visiting** programs that are expanding, particularly for **Early Head Start**.
- **Childcare** and **Head Start** programs who recruit homeless young children.
- The collaboration between the City of Philadelphia's **early intervention system** with KenCrest aims to **reduce developmental delays** in young school and prepare them for school readiness.
- **PHMC's Healthy Babies** program supports sheltered newborns ages from birth to four months.
- The **School District of Philadelphia's** and **charter schools'** support for students who experience homelessness.



This report is just one of several reports on the scale of child/youth homelessness. When available to the public, PEC summarizes a variety of reports by other entities, including reports from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the School District of Philadelphia, and OHS' annual 'Data Snapshot' and PIT data releases. Read past summaries by PEC at <https://www.pec-cares.org/policy-publications.html>. (Charts begin next page)

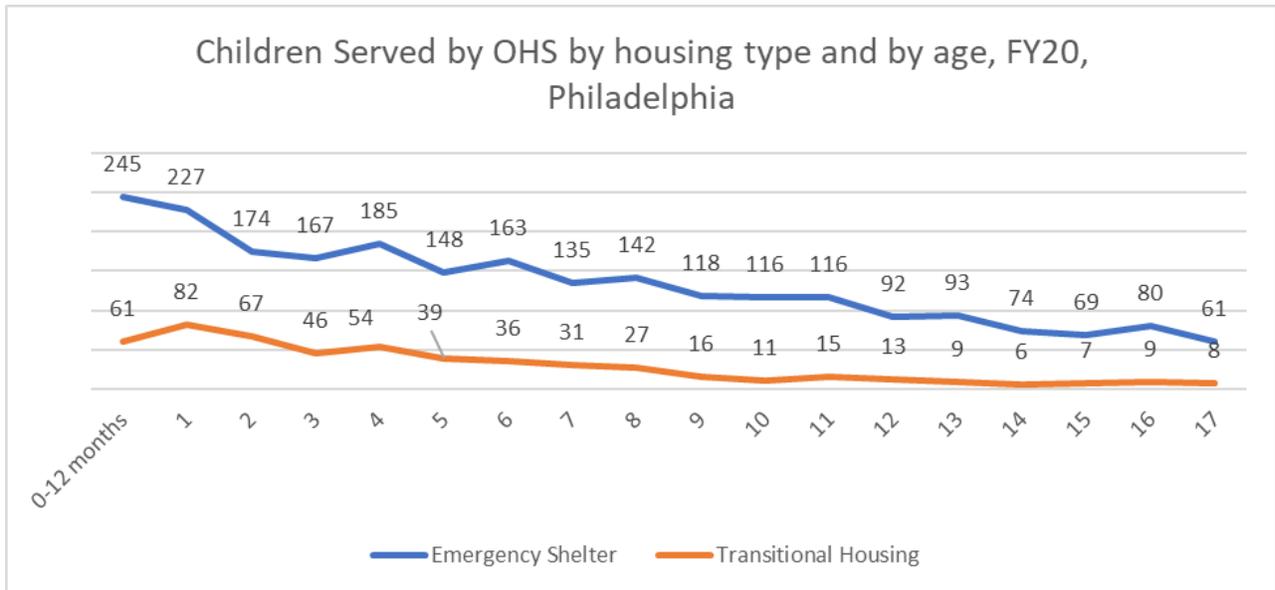
Charts

Children and Youth in Emergency (EH) and Transitional Housing (TH)

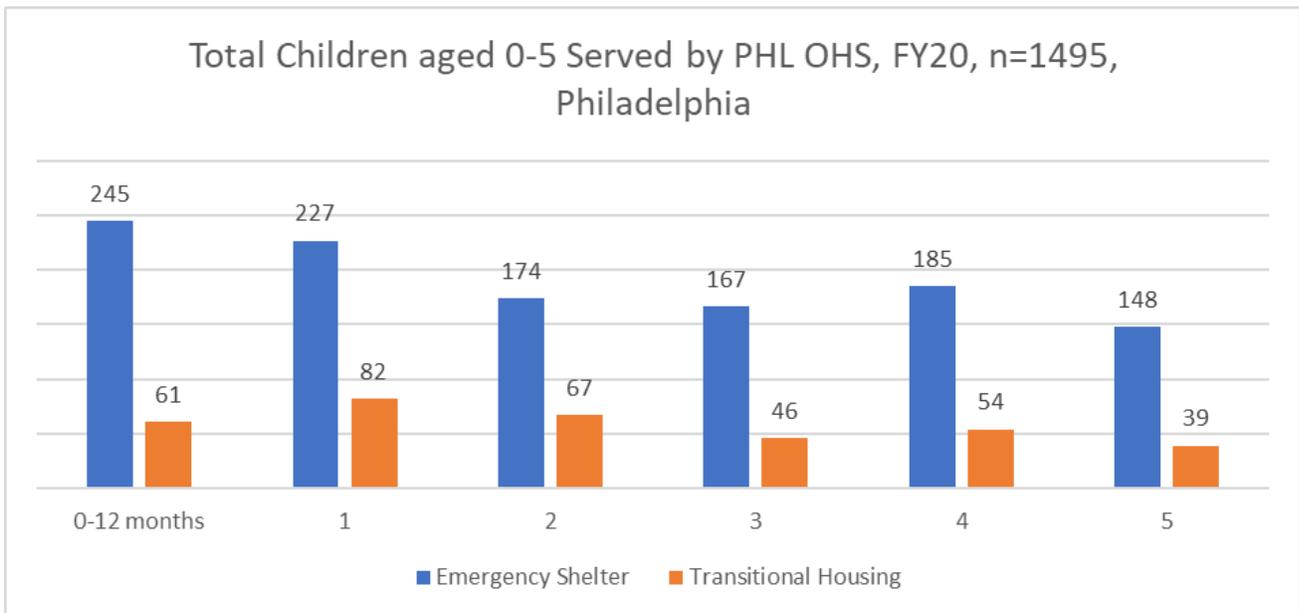


- Children residing in EH or TH housing are legally defined as homeless.
- OHS served **2,749 children and youth in EH or TH housing** programs.
- Children from birth to five years old constitute the **largest group** of homeless children under age 18.
- Alternatively, there are relatively few youth ages 13-17 identified as homeless.

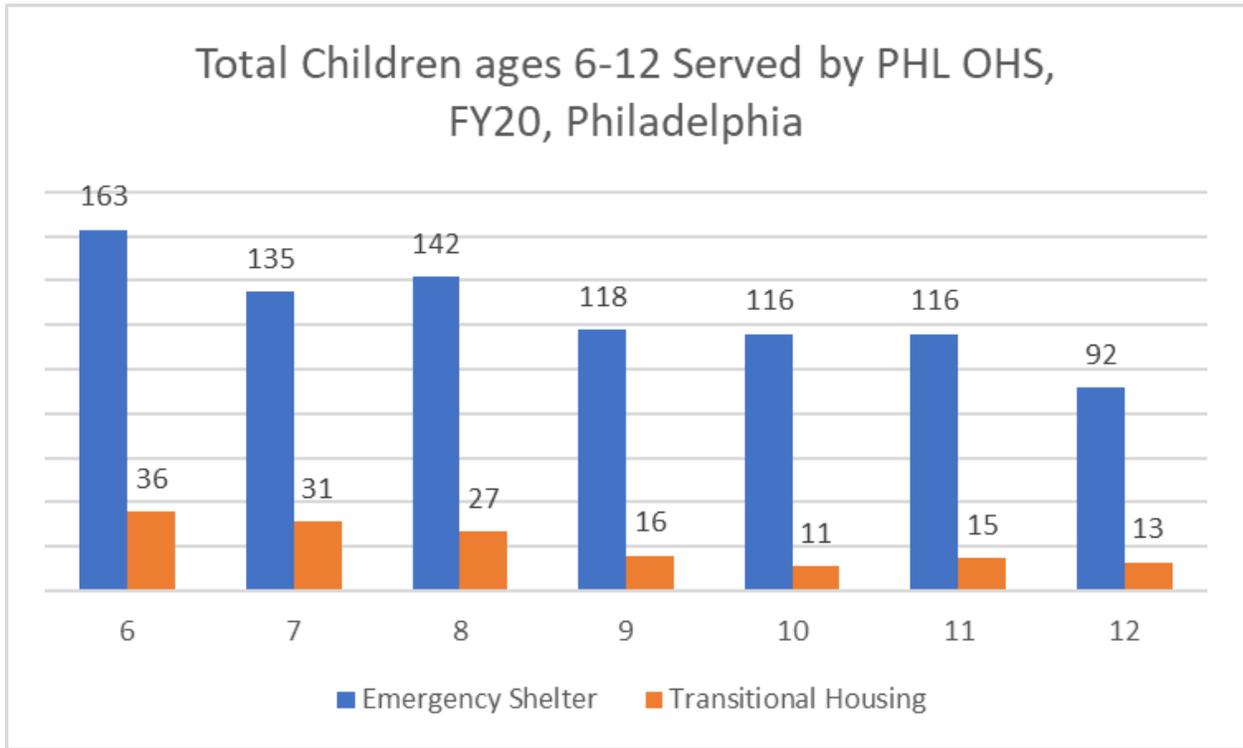
By Specific Age in EH or TH:



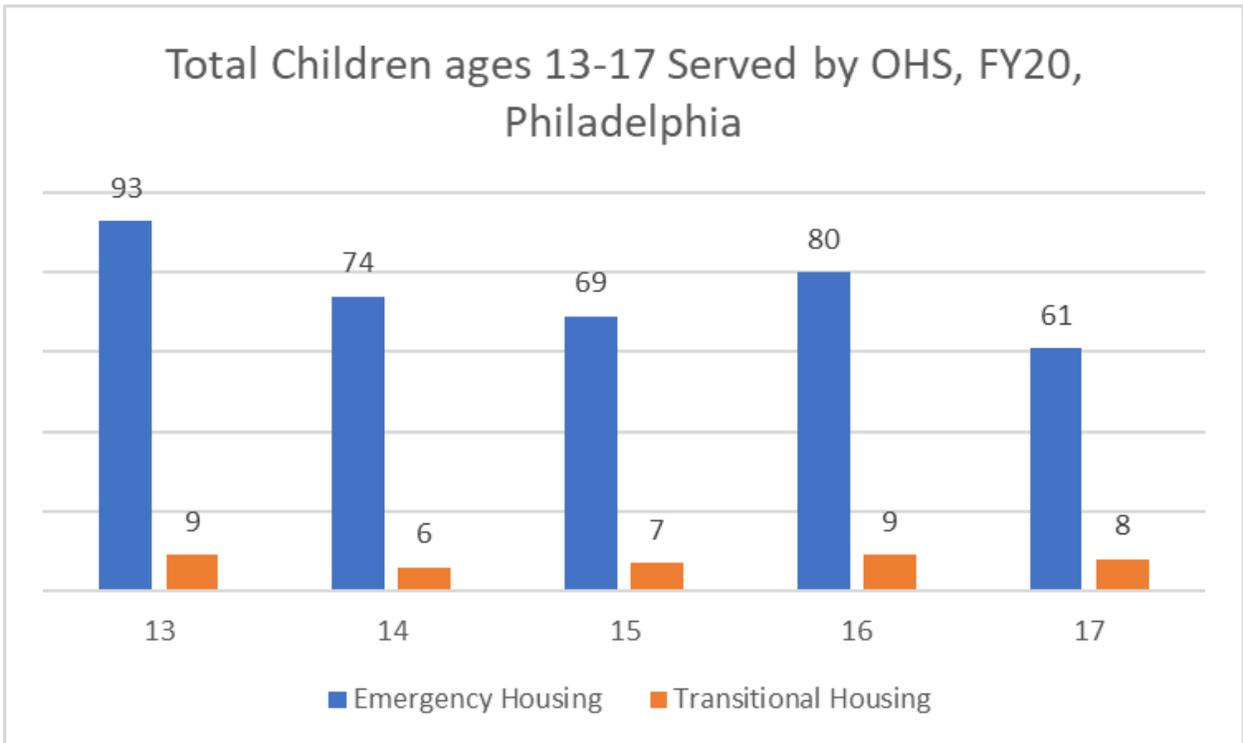
1,495 children from birth to five years of age served in EH/TH, FY20



1,031 children ages six to 12 years served in EH or TH in FY20

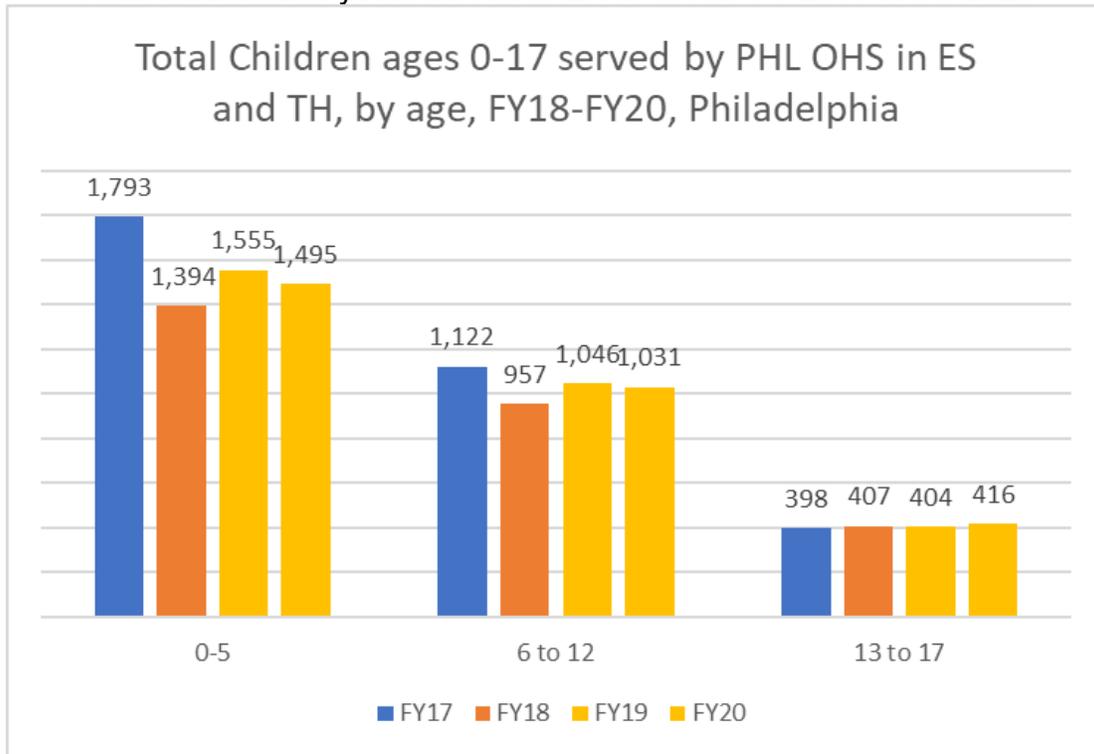


416 youth 13-17 years of age were served in EH or TH in FY20.
(They are not 'unaccompanied' youth).

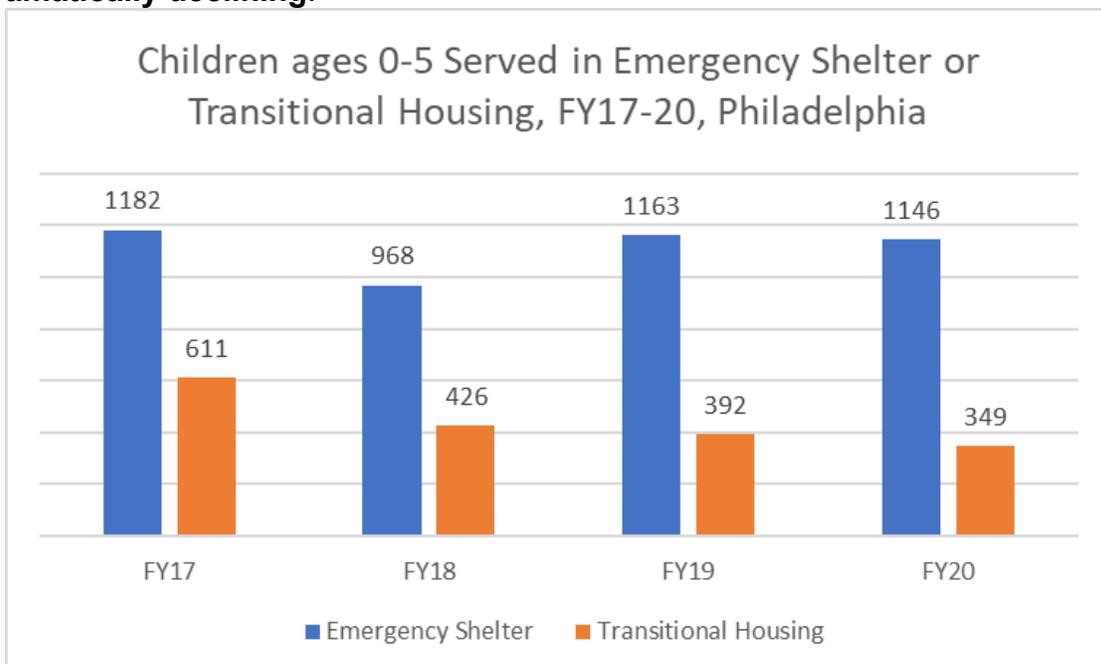


Four-year Trends¹

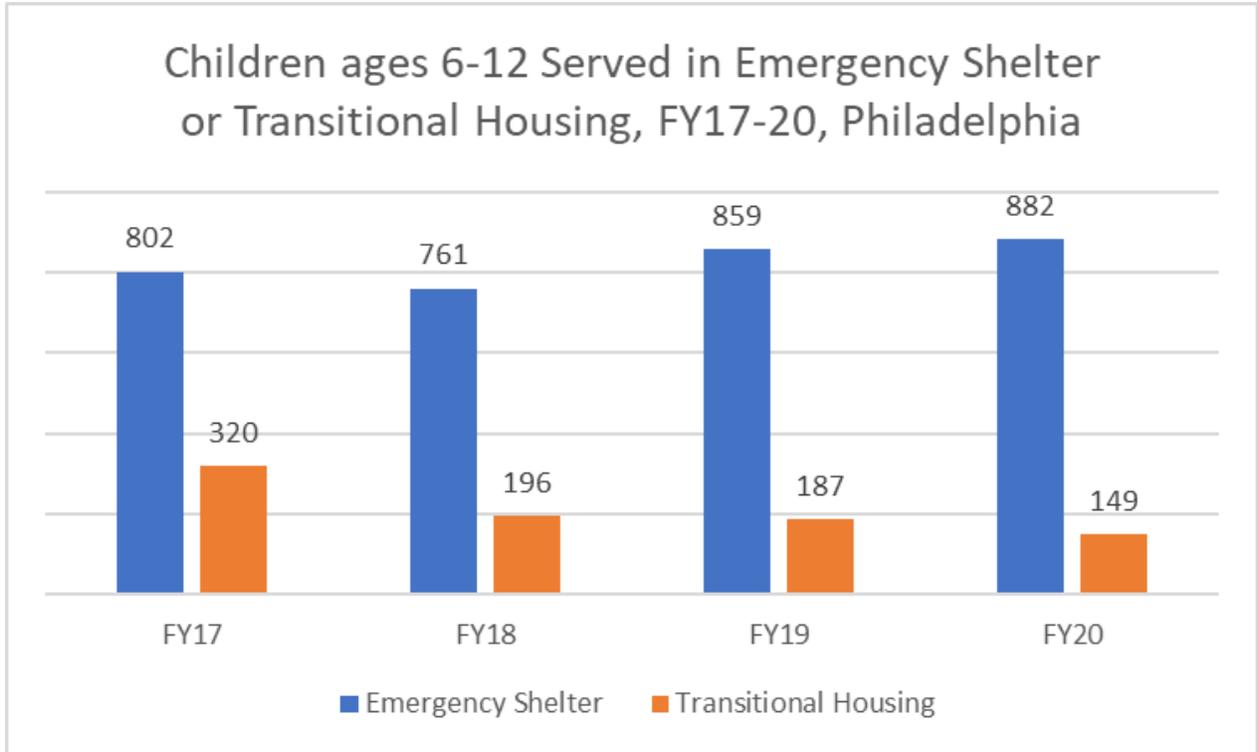
Total children and youth served in EH or TH for FY 2017 to FY 2020



Number of children ages birth to five years served in **emergency shelter or transitional housing** for FY17-FY20. Here we see that the number of children ages birth to five years in EH is **slightly declining**, while the number in TH is **dramatically declining**.



Number of children and youth ages six to 12 **served in emergency shelter or transitional housing** for FY17-FY20. Note, the trend is **increasing** for the number of children ages six to 12 in EH, while it is dramatically **declining** in TH.



Number of children and youth ages 13-17 served in EH or TH for FY17-FY20.

- The trend is increasing for teens in EH.
- The number of teenagers in TH is fairly constant.

