

Protecting Opioids' Youngest Victims in Jackson County

Jackson County Department of
Social Services

Opioid Awareness Forum
April 23, 2018



Is it a...



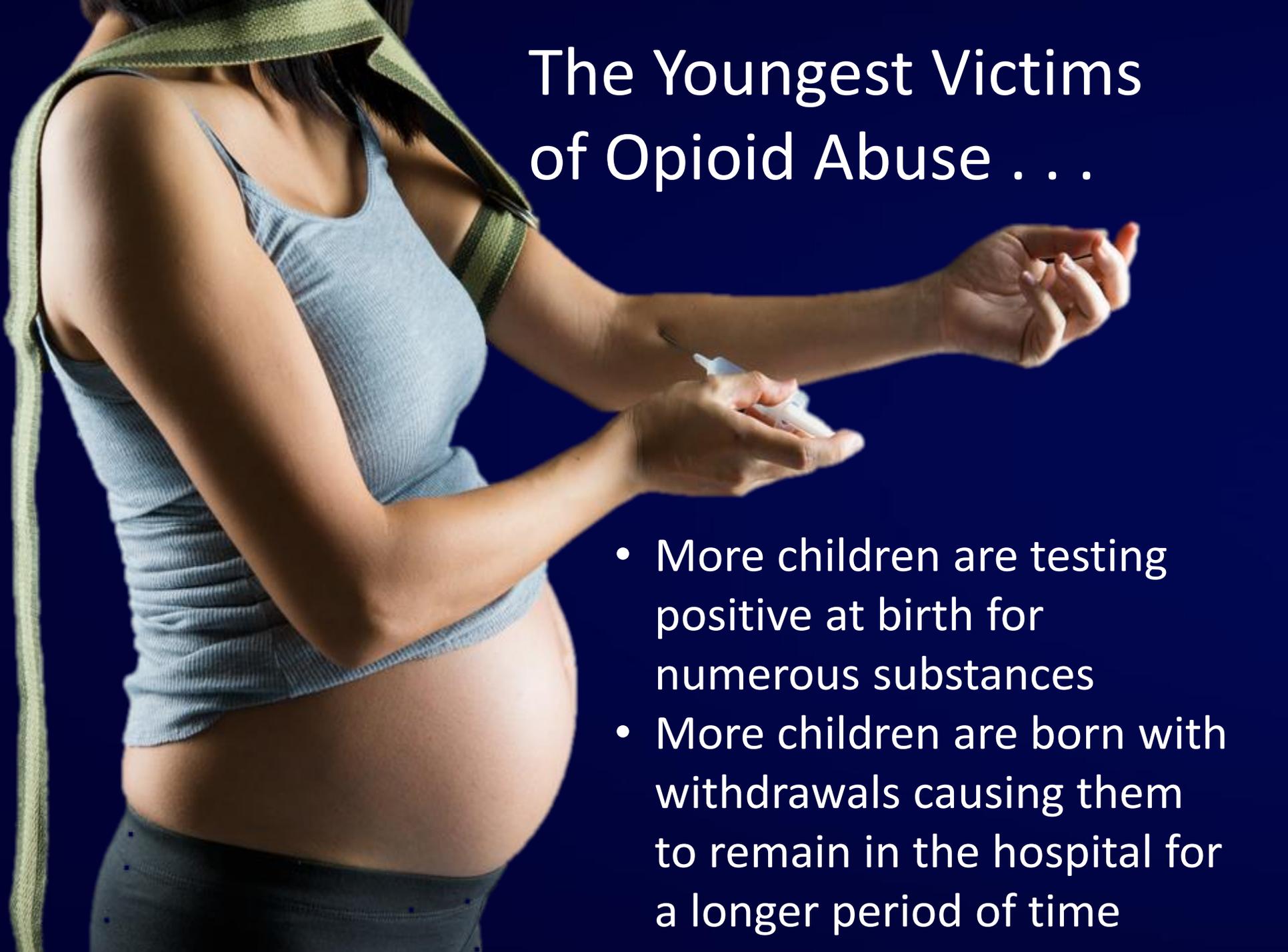
Girl OR **BOY?**

Sadly, there is now another question our community must answer when a child is born in Jackson County ...



“Is the child drug dependent?”





The Youngest Victims of Opioid Abuse . . .

- More children are testing positive at birth for numerous substances
- More children are born with withdrawals causing them to remain in the hospital for a longer period of time

The Youngest Victims of Opioid Abuse . . .



- Substance abuse infants are being born prematurely
- Mothers are using substances during pregnancy and up to delivery
- Many are delivering without prenatal care

The Youngest Victims of Opioid Abuse . . .



- Children are remaining in Foster Care longer
- Fewer children in Foster Care are being reunited with their parents

Substance Affected Infants In Jackson County

September 2017 - NC began requiring all county Social Service agencies to track the number of Substance Affected Infants (at birth).

- **September - December 2017**
13 reports received
- **January - March 2018**
10 reports received
- **23 total reports received in seven months**



Children in Foster Care

In the past five years our agency has not seen a significant increase in children coming into Foster Care. The numbers have remained steady.

- Jackson County currently has **57** children in Foster Care.
- Of these **57** children, **38** came into care due to substance abuse issues.



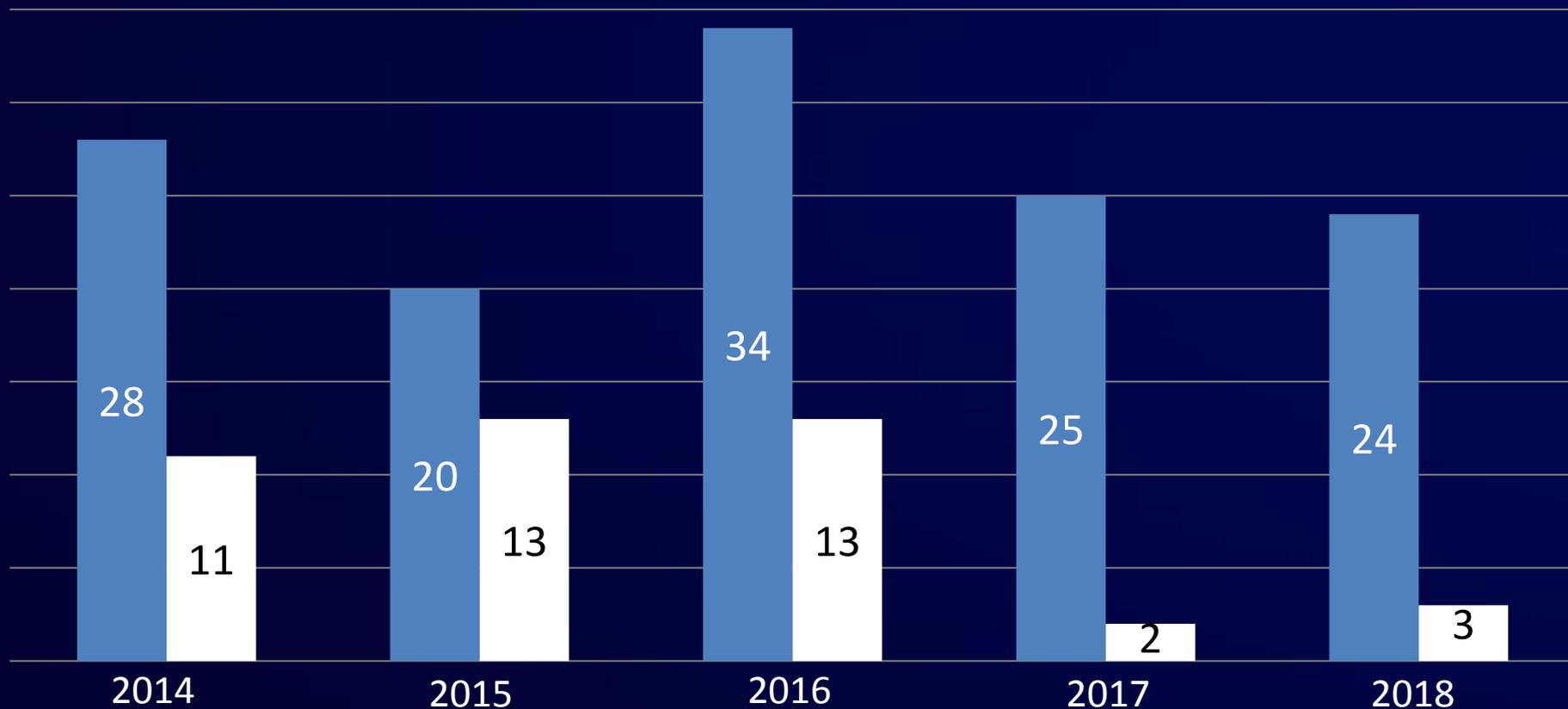
The Youngest Victims of Opioid Abuse . . .

“The most significant change we are seeing is the reduction in the number of children in Foster Care being reunited with their parents. This is due mainly to the complexity of substance use.”



The Youngest Victims of Opioid Abuse . . .

Foster Care vs Reunification



In-Home Services Cases

(Cases involving substantiated “Abuse” or “Neglect” or the family found In Need of Services)

- 14 open cases
- 12 of the 14 cases are due to substance use
- 6 of the 12 cases have required court action due to the placement of children in kinship or relative care



Substance abuse
and addiction is a
community issue
that we all need to
be aware of and
collectively address

