

2023 FOSTER CARER SNAPSHOT REPORT

Foster Care Association of Victoria

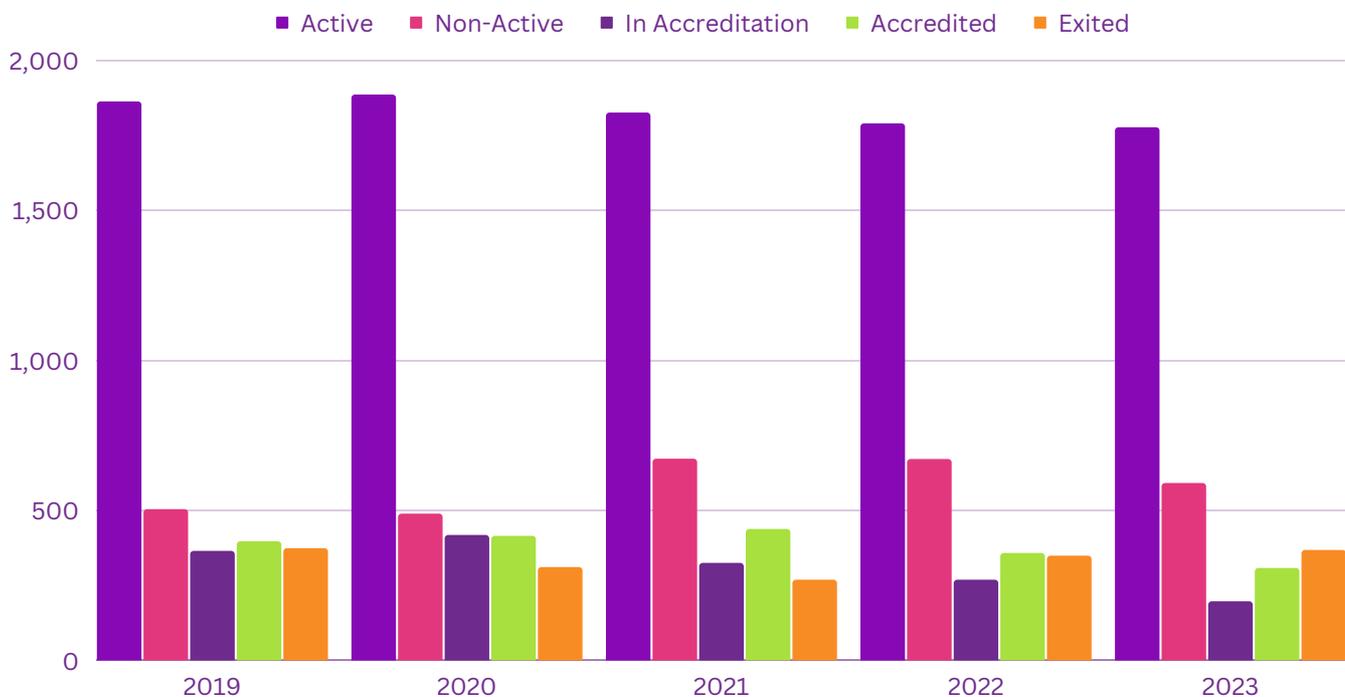


Introduction

The Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) conducts an annual review of foster carer households in Victoria to keep track on trends of foster carers entering, remaining, and exiting the system. The FCAV gathers this data from Community Service Organisations (CSOs) and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) who provide us with foster carer information based on the households affiliated with each of its offices.

The 2023 Snapshot highlights the data collection of the last 5 years and the impact that the COVID pandemic has had on recruiting and retaining foster carers.

Data 1 - Yearly trends of foster carer households from 2019 to 2023.



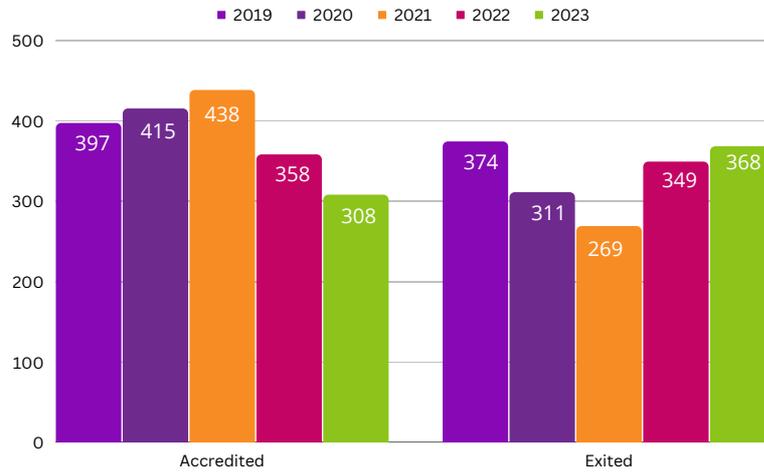
Carer Snapshot Definitions:

- Active carer households - has a current placement or is available for a placement referral.
- Non-Active carer households - on "hold" or on a break and not taking placements.
- In Accreditation - has started the accreditation training.
- Accredited - has completed the accreditation training.
- Exited - no longer in the system.

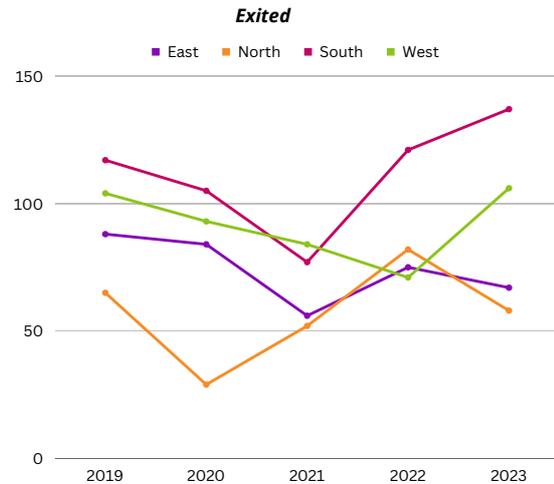
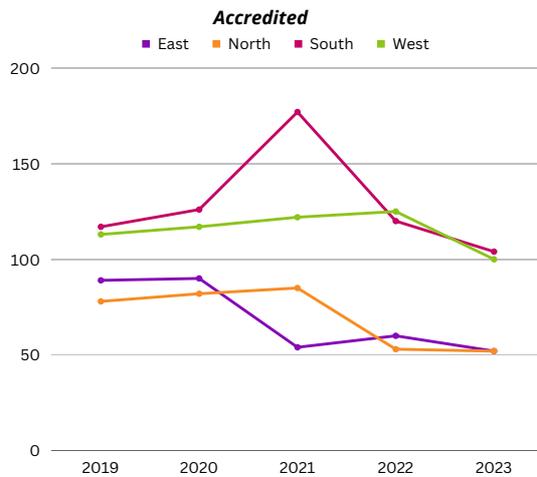
The data collected for March of 2023 reflects a 26% drop in interested carers going through the accreditation process, which led to 50 fewer new carers entering the sector this year compared to last. Compounded by the record number of exiting carer households, has resulted in almost 100 fewer households available for a placement referral.

Prior to COVID, the number of active carers and those in accreditation had been trending upwards year on year. For the past 3 years, the state of Victoria has seen a steady decline in individuals interested in becoming accredited foster carers and more households exiting the system.

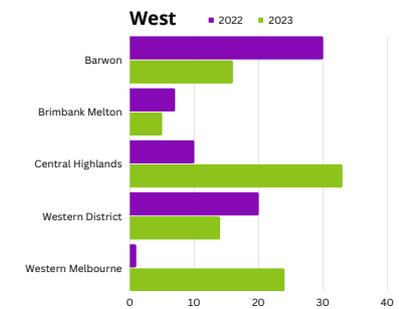
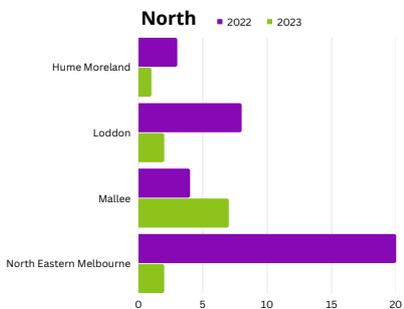
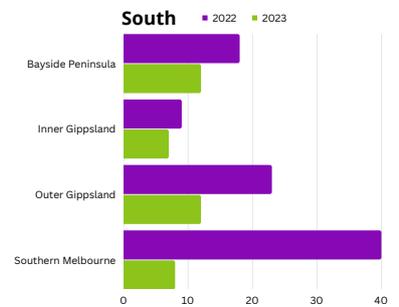
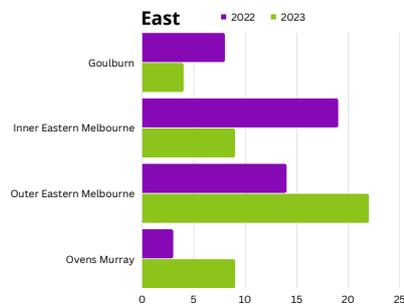
Data 2 - Highlighting Accredited vs Exited households from 2019 to 2023.



Data 3 - Highlighting Accredited vs Exited households by DFFH Regions from 2019 to 2023.



Data 4 - Carers in the Accreditation process by DFFH Region and Area in 2022 vs 2023.



The decrease in accreditations, combined with the increase in exiting carers, shows a concerning trend in foster carer households available to provide care of children and youth where reunification with family or kinship care options are not possible.

