

Strategies That Address Critical Practice Areas: Successes and Challenges in Implementation

Children's Bureau

Administration for Children and Families

Department of Health and Human Services

Areas of Analysis

Practice Areas:

- Comprehensive and ongoing assessment
- Engagement of children and parents
- Caseworker visits with children and parents
- Supervision

Systemic Factors:

- Case Review System
- Service Array

Methodology

- Includes 33 States that have completed their PIPs as of April 2006
- Conducted content analysis of the 33 States PIPs
- Identified measures used by States to gauge progress
- Scheduled interviews with State administrators, QA directors and other staff

Comprehensive and Ongoing Assessment of Children and Families

Most frequently implemented strategies

- Develop or implement new assessment tools or models (12 States)
- Train line workers and/or supervisors in assessment (11 States)

Most effective strategies identified by States

- Monitor practice (QA, supervisory reviews, local improvement plans)
- Develop new assessment tools or models
- Incorporate family-centered principles into casework practice

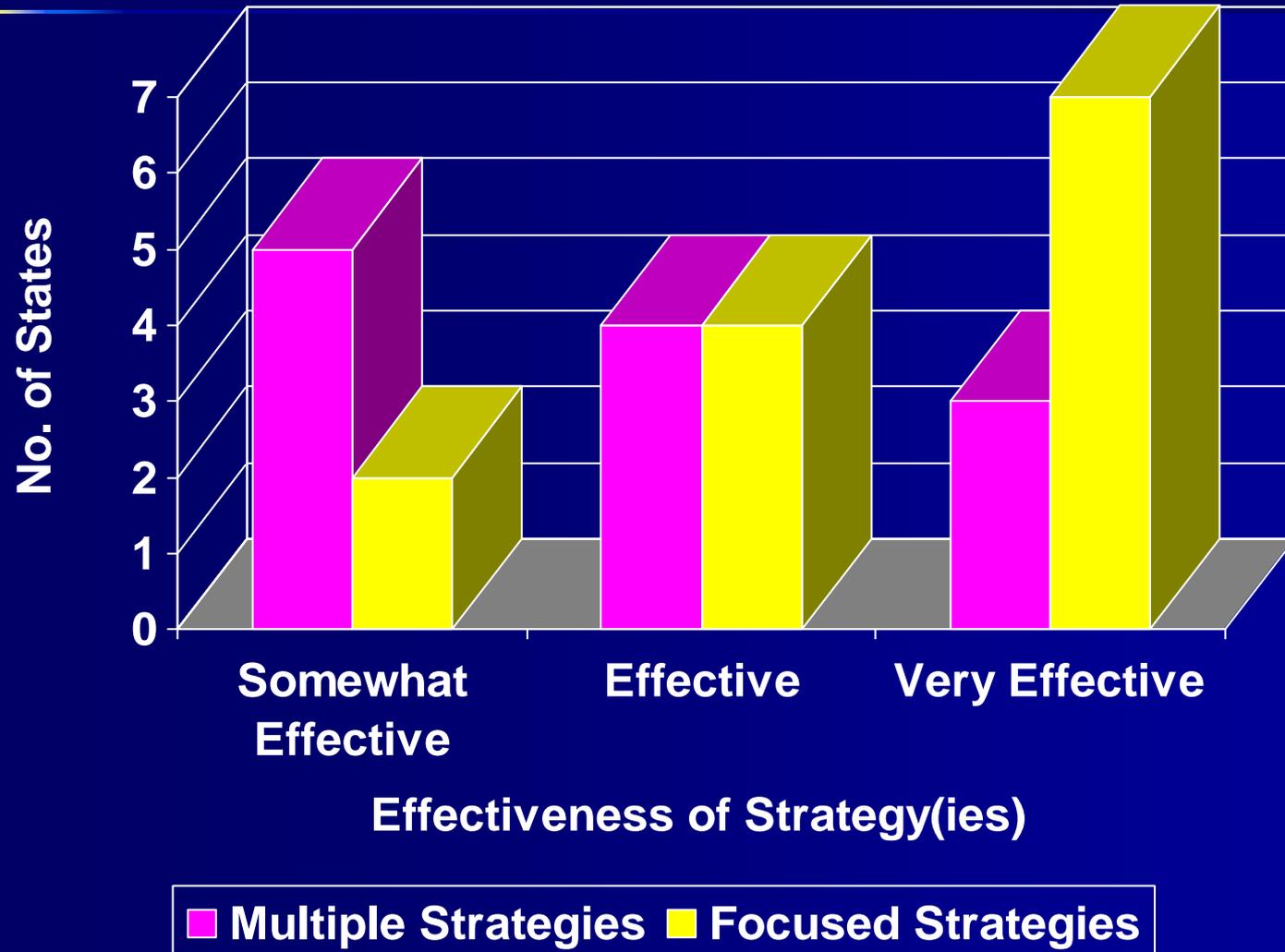
Comprehensive and Ongoing Assessment

(25 States were applicable)

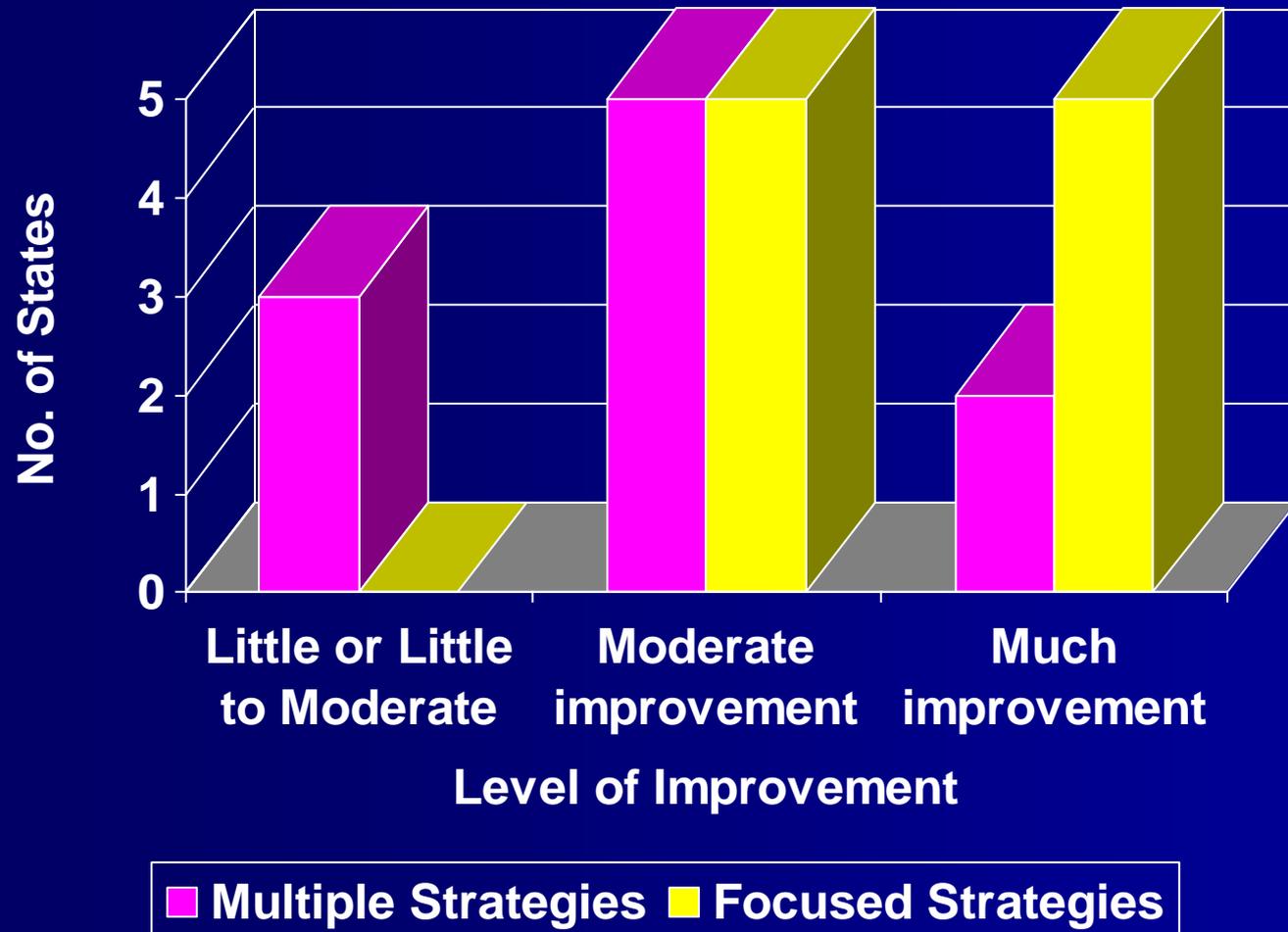
Two groups of States regarding general approach to assessment:

- 1. Multiple strategies approach:** Range of strategies that were not explicitly coordinated with one another. (12 States)
- 2. Focused strategies approach:** One or more strategies coordinated to achieve a single goal or different strategies focused on the same process. (13 States)

Effectiveness Ratings for Assessment Strategies



Improvement Ratings for Assessment Strategies



Comprehensive and Ongoing Assessment - **Lessons Learned**

- Engage counties, supervisors and line workers
 - Train staff on policy changes, rather than just changing policy
 - Listen to staff at the local levels
- Evaluate efforts to determine success of strategies
- **Don't be too ambitious** – start small

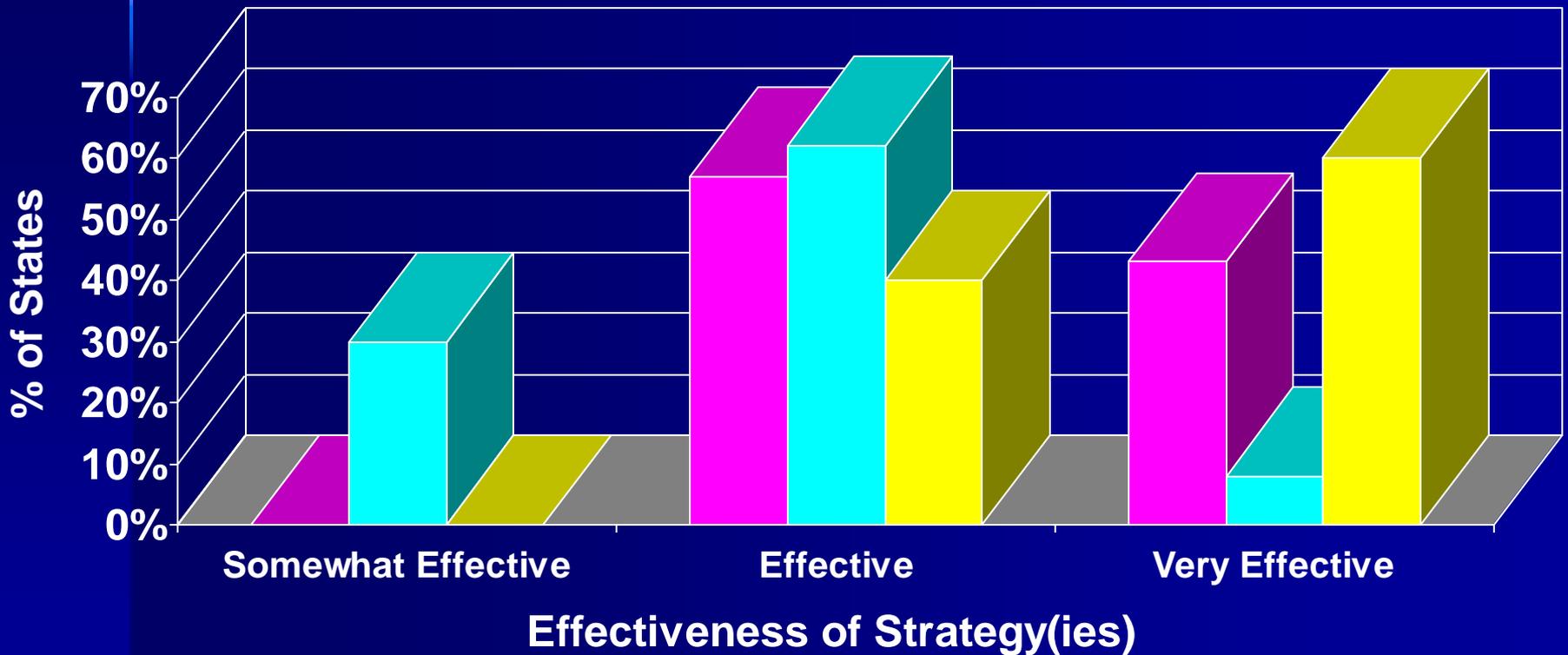
Engagement of Children and Families

(27 States were applicable)

Most frequently implemented strategies:

- Change/develop policy and train staff
- Family meetings, i.e., Family Conferencing, Family Group Decision Making, Family Team Meetings, etc.
- Monitoring through supervisory reviews, Quality Assurance/CQI

Effectiveness Ratings for Engagement Strategies

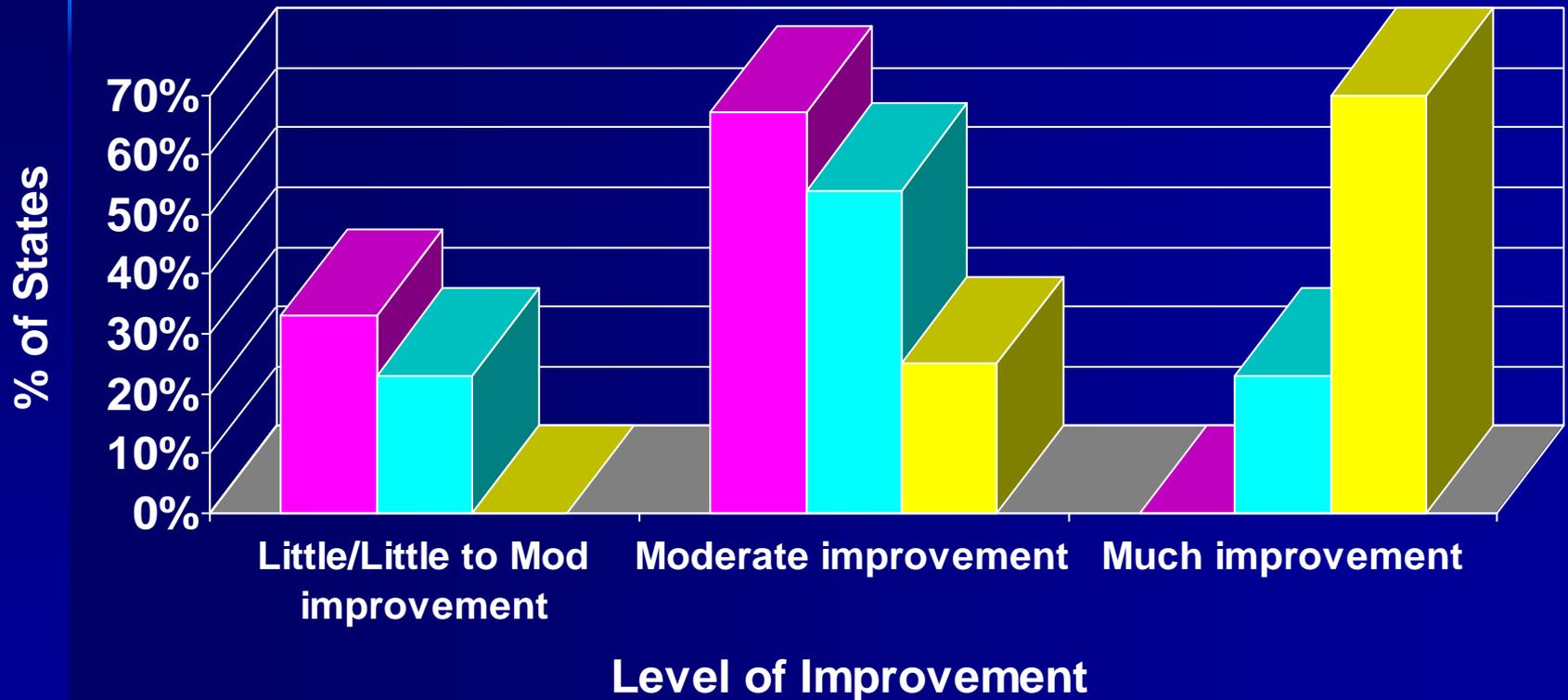


■ Policy, Train, Family Mtgs

■ Policy, Train, QA

■ Policy, Train, QA, Fam Mtgs

Improvement Ratings for Engagement Strategies



■ Policy, Train, Family Mtgs

■ Policy, Train, QA

■ Policy, Train, QA, Fam Mtgs

Engagement – Lessons Learned

- Critical role of supervisors
- Cultural change needed at all levels
- Parents should drive assessment and planning process
- Be less prescriptive in policy development, more training and education
- More is needed than just training
- Focus on infrastructure first, then practice
- Start small

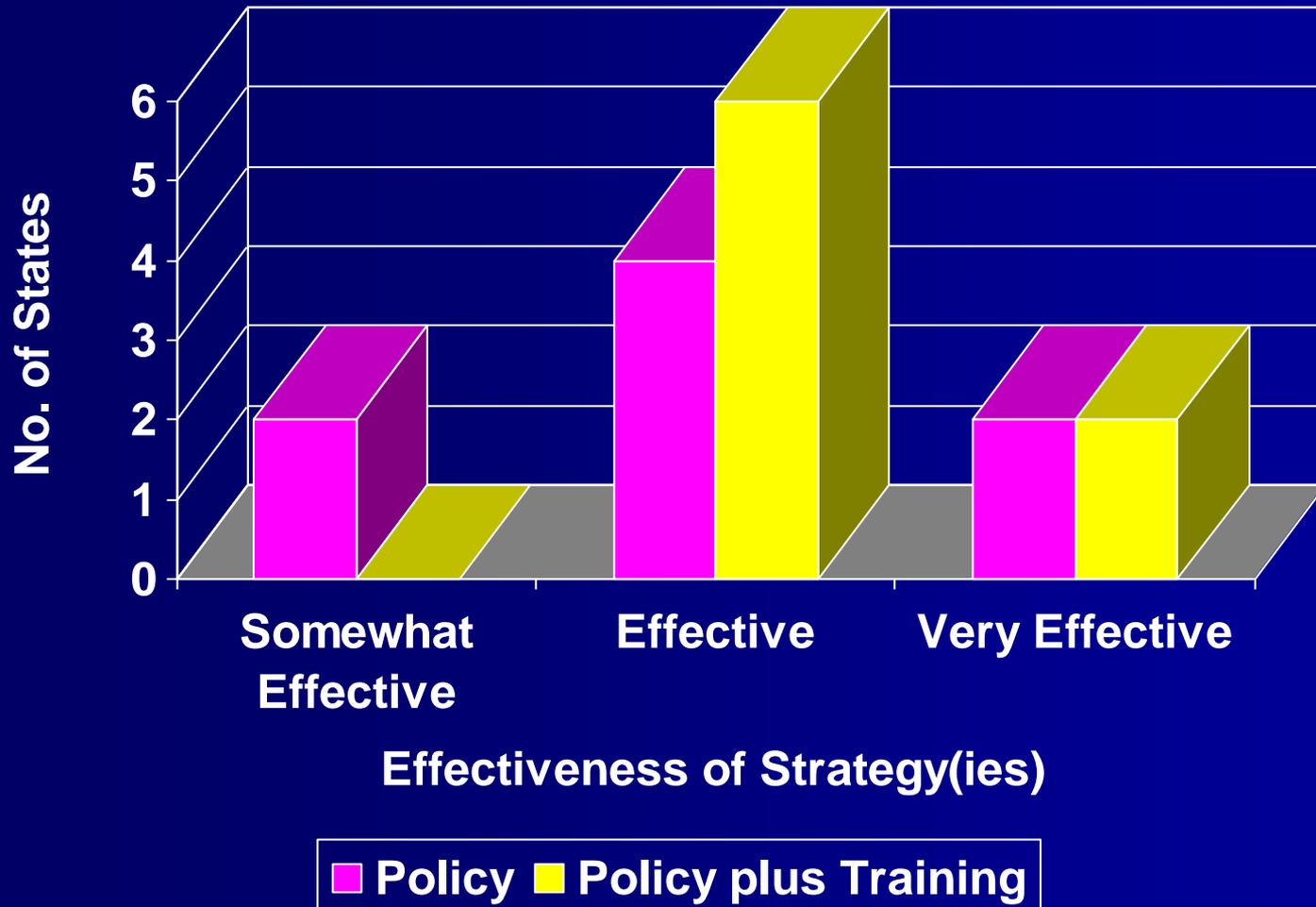
Caseworker Visits

(25 States were applicable)

Two groups of States regarding general approach to caseworker visits:

1. Change policy regarding visits but no training provided (9 States).
2. Change policy and provide training, focusing on rationale behind the policy and importance of visits (9 States).

Effectiveness Ratings of Most Frequently Used Strategies for Caseworker Visits



Caseworker Visits – Lessons Learned

- Emphasize reasons behind policy and why caseworker visits are important in order to bring about change.
- Cannot resolve caseworker visit problems without attention to caseloads.

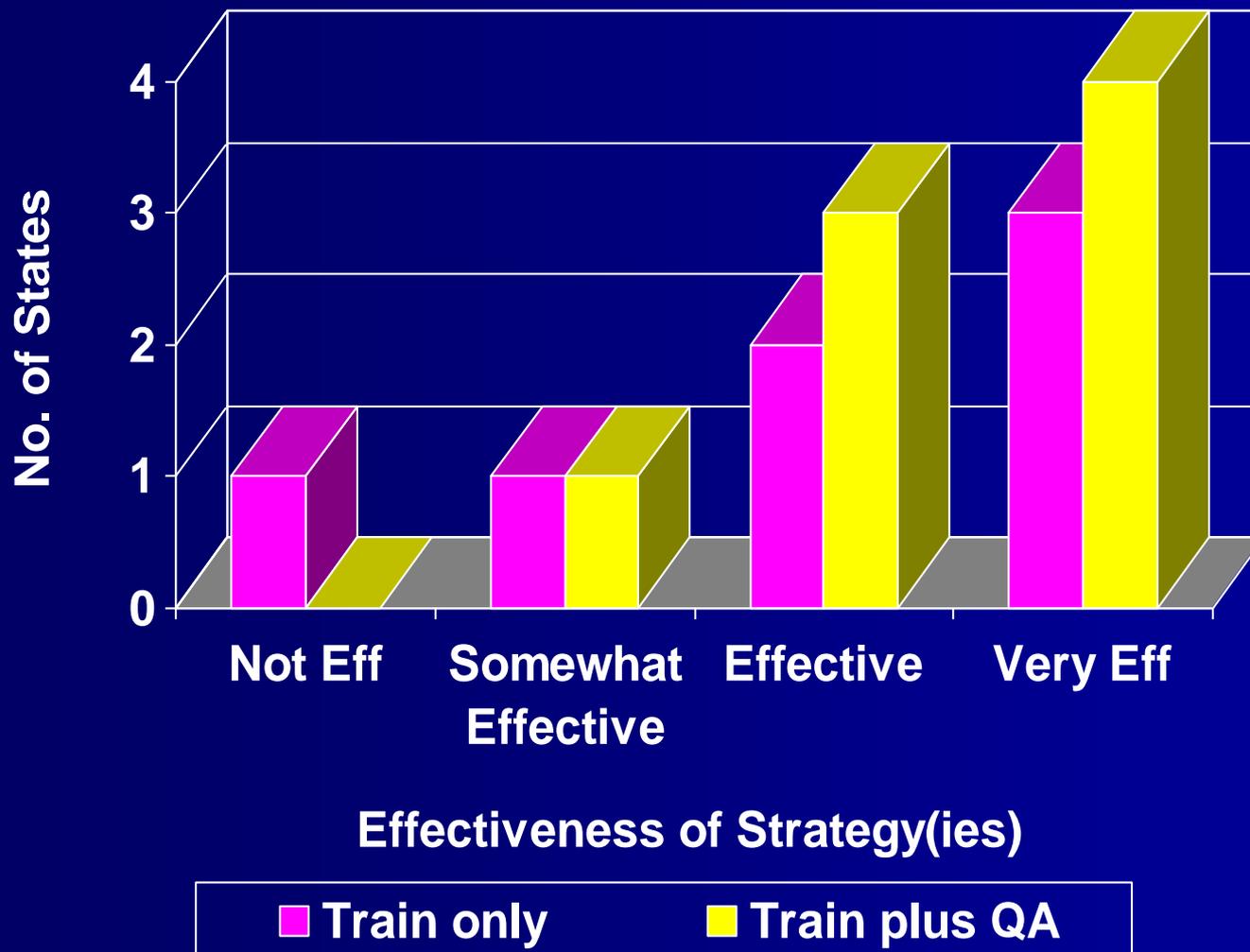
Supervision

(22 States were applicable)

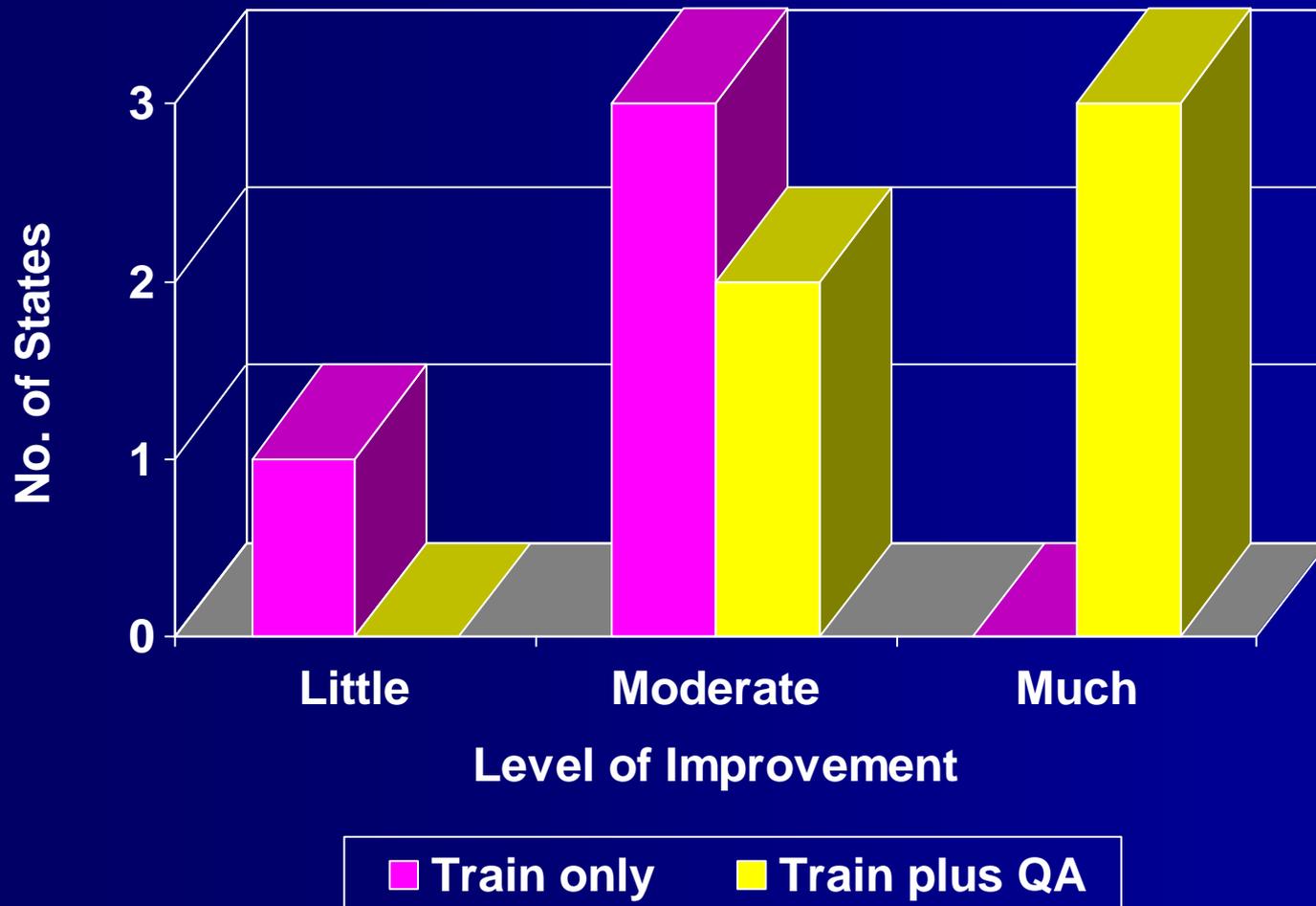
Two groups of States regarding general approach to improving supervision:

1. Training (7 States)
2. Training plus engage supervisors in monitoring process (8 States)

Effectiveness Ratings for Supervision Strategies



Improvement Ratings for Supervision Strategies



Supervision – **Lessons Learned**

- Critical role of supervisors in enhancing and monitoring practice
- Hire more, train and support them well
- Provide 2nd tier of supervision for front line supervisors
- Increase opportunity for networking
- Develop clinical skills of supervisors
- Engage supervisors in change process

Case Review System

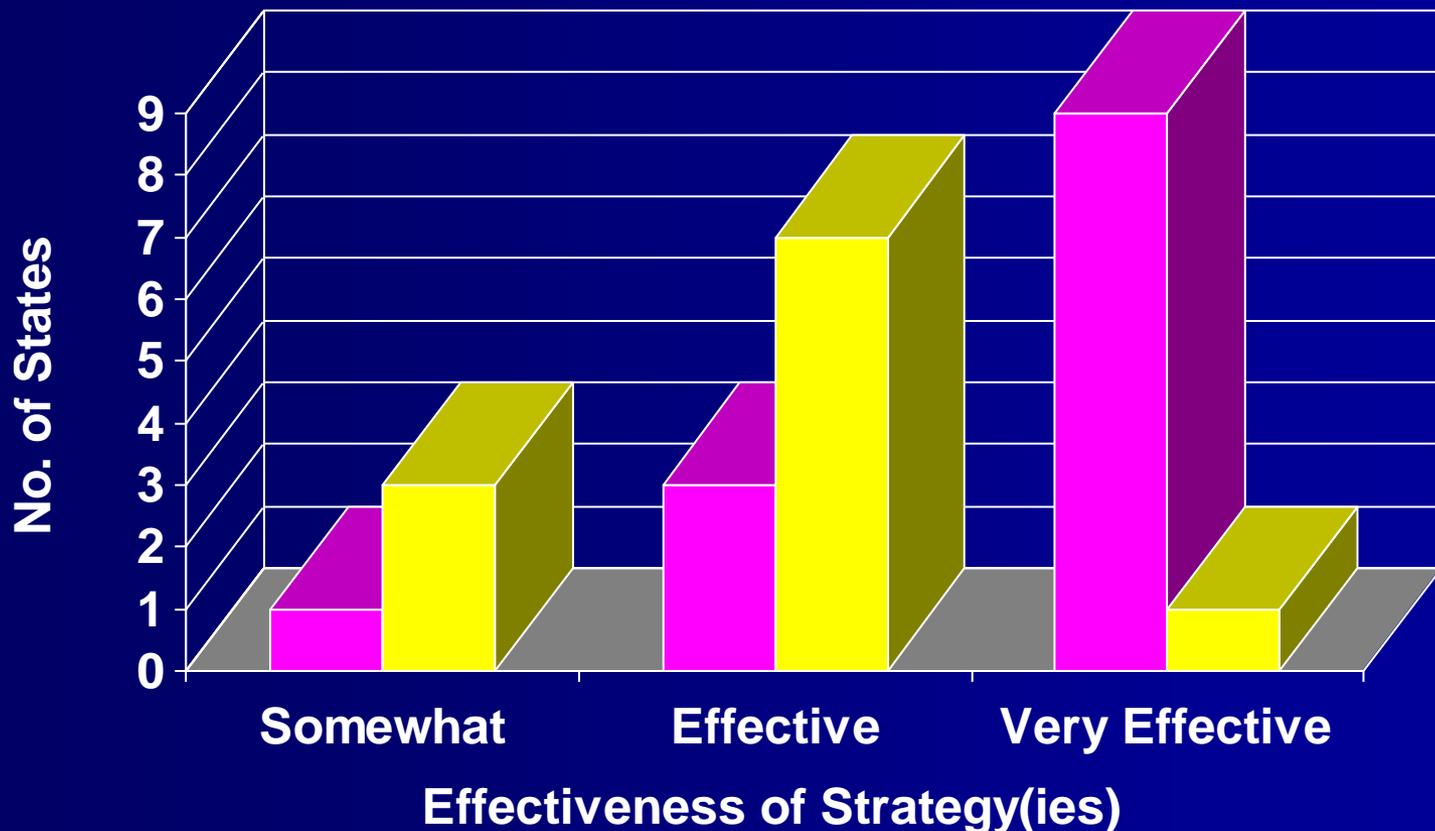
(26 States were applicable)

Most frequently implemented strategies:

- Train agency staff, court and/or legal personnel (6 States)
- Establish formal and regular meetings between court and agency personnel (9 States)

Case Review System

Is the type of collaboration strategy related to agency's perception of agency-court collaboration?



■ Training and/or meetings

■ No trainings nor mtgs

Case Review System – Lessons Learned

- Set up formal mechanisms to ensure input and participation in PIP process
- Continue collaborative effort with courts – always make it a priority
- Make more effort in giving courts input into how agency works

Service Array

(19 States were applicable)

Most frequently implemented strategies:

- **Collaboration with other State agencies to meet well-being needs of families**
- **County/community self-assessments**
- **Regional recruitment plans for foster homes**
- **Establish flex funds**
- **Local improvement plans**
- **Collaboration with tribes to enhance services for youth**

Service Array

Barriers

- Funding issues
- Time and leadership at local level

Lessons Learned

- Need to engage stakeholders frequently, on a routine basis
- Shift in philosophy needed for inter-dept collaboration
- Need to implement a strategic plan, not use a piece-meal approach
- Leadership is important

Summary of Findings

Assessment – Focused strategies approach

Engagement – Provide a process to engage families in case planning and monitor practice

Caseworker Visits – Set a standard but also train on importance of visits

Supervision – Train and engage supervisors in monitoring/QA

Case Revise System – Cross-train and maintain regular meetings

Service Array – Need to effectively address service array to sustain practices and strong outcomes

Permanency Data Indicators Update

- Review of State Performance and relationship to PIP completion
- Review of trends in Placement Stability
- Review of data trends among completed States with high American Indian/Alaskan Native populations

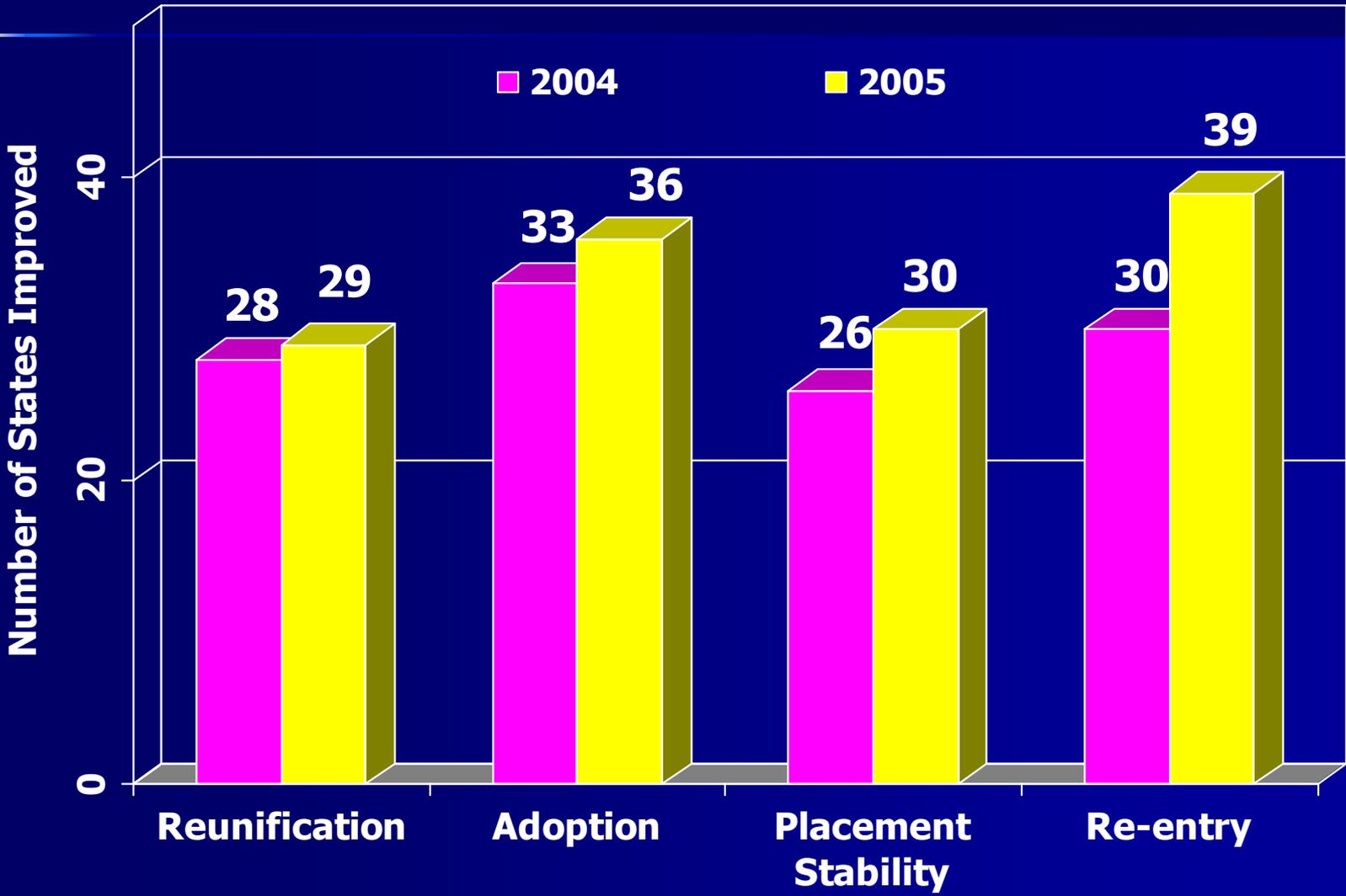
Limitations of This Data Indicator Analysis

- 2005 data is preliminary and has not been verified by states
- NCANDS FFY05 is not yet available for analysis
- The AFCARS C File is not included in the 2005 data. No States were excluded from the preliminary 2005 data. In general the medians included in the Report To Congress may be slightly different from those reported here because more state exclusions have been applied based on known data quality issues.

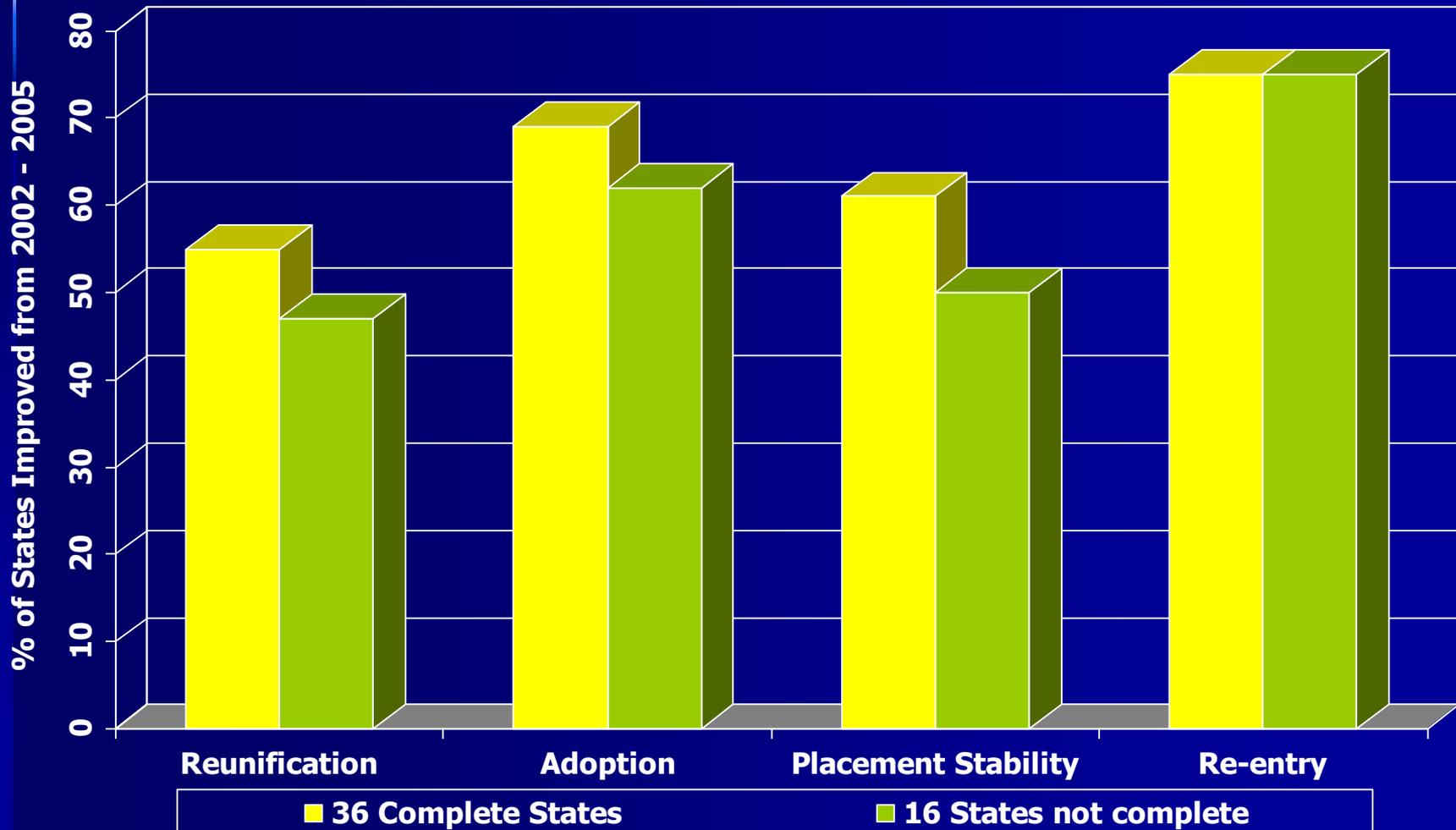
Limitations of This Data Indicator Analysis (cont.)

- Improvement identified in this presentation does not necessarily reflect improvement for determinations of substantial conformity
- The trends and contextual information is preliminary and requires further analysis.

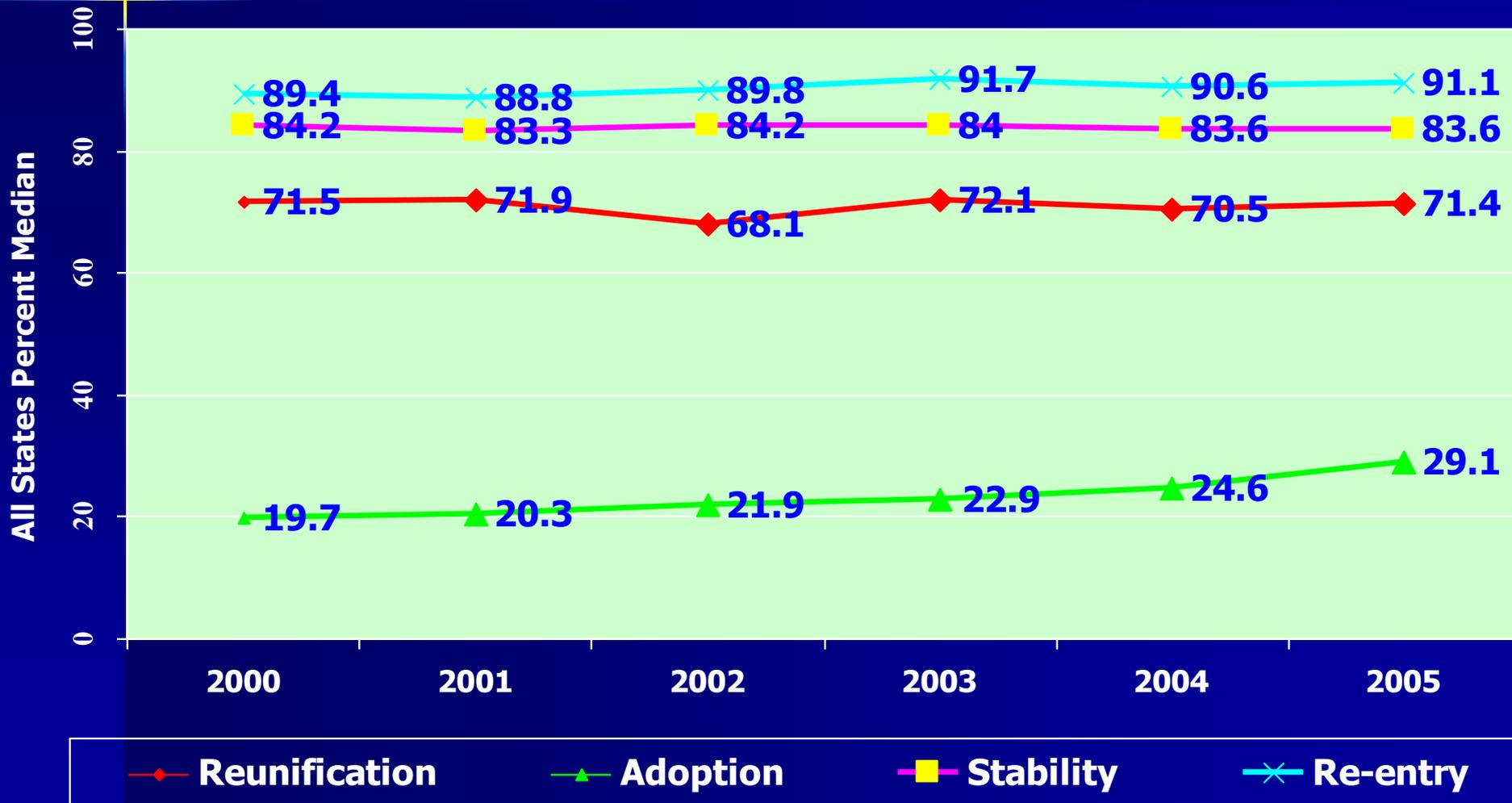
Number of States Improved on Permanency Indicators from 2002 through 2004 and 2005



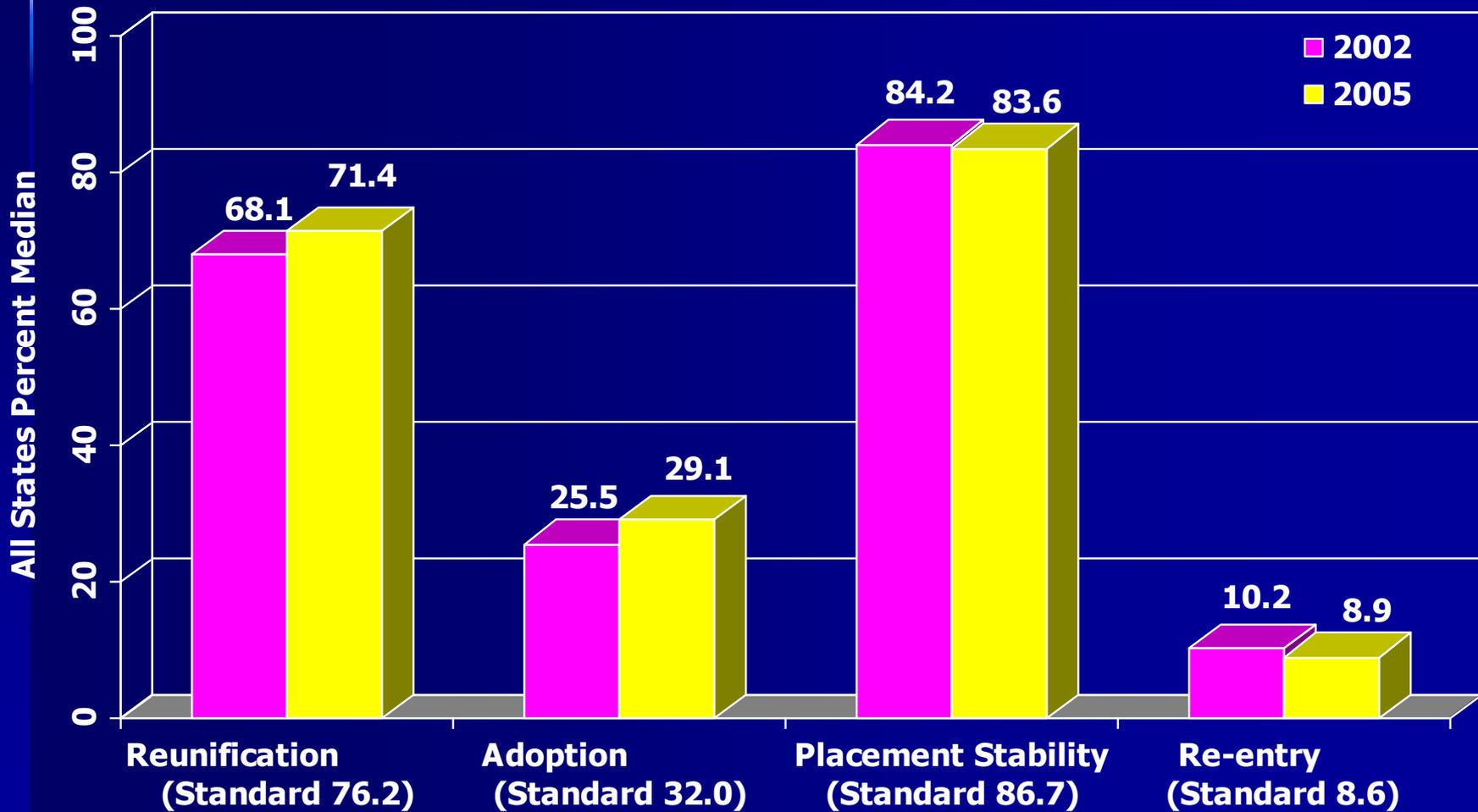
State Improvement from FFY2002 to FFY2005 on Permanency Indicators and PIP Completion Status



State Performance on Permanency Indicators - Median National Performance by Year 2000-2005

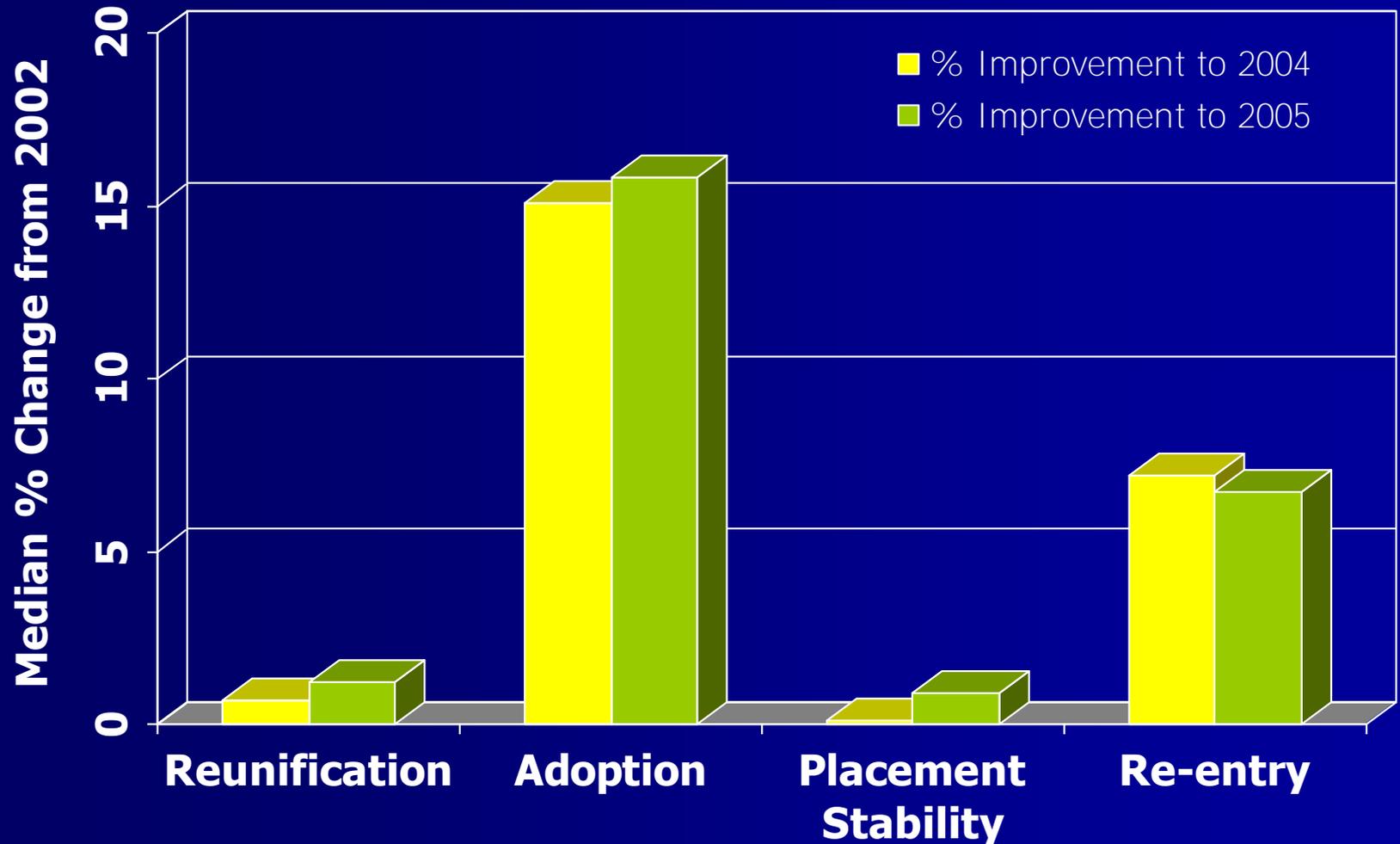


FFY2002 Compared to FFY2005 Median State Performance on Permanency Indicators

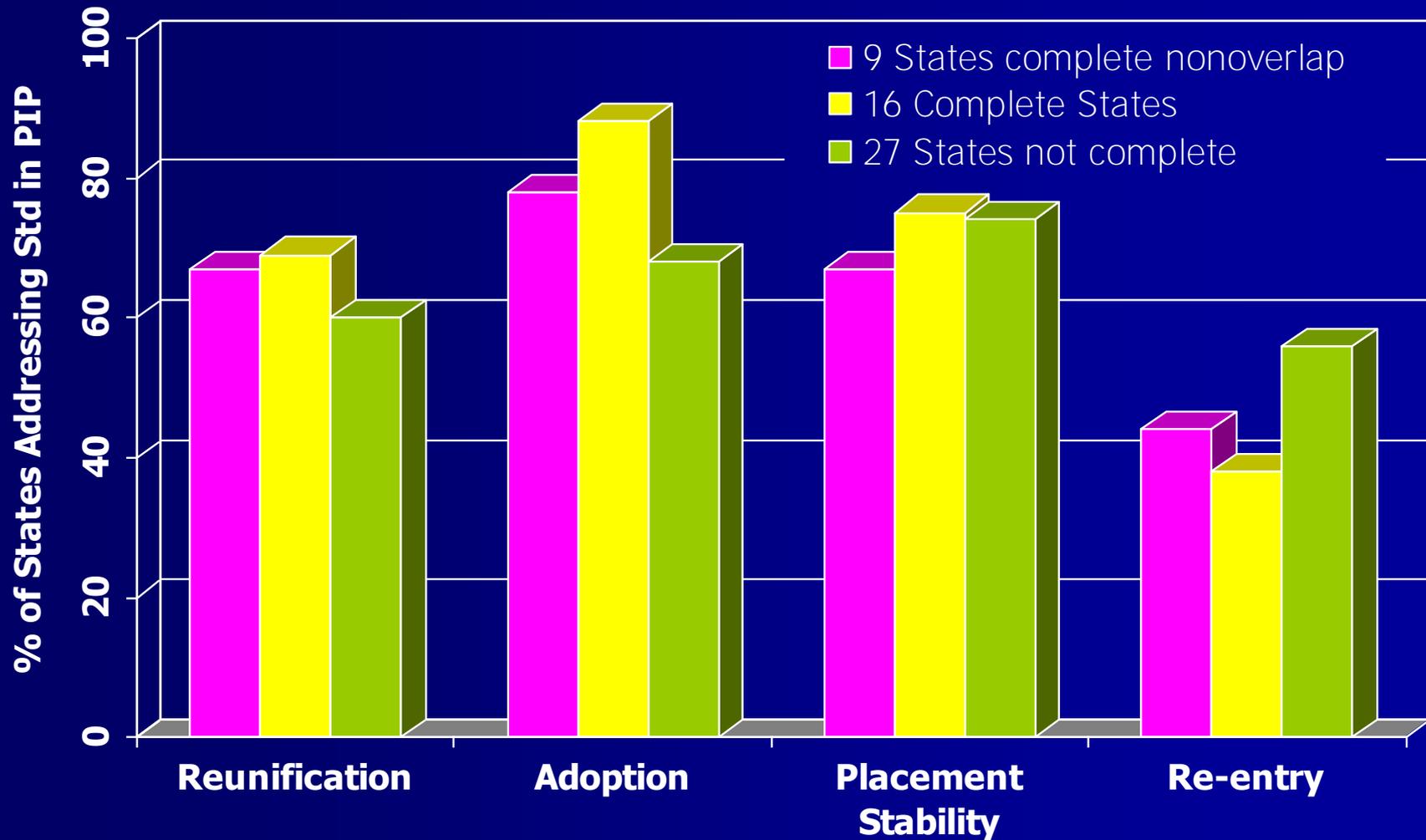


Permanency Indicators

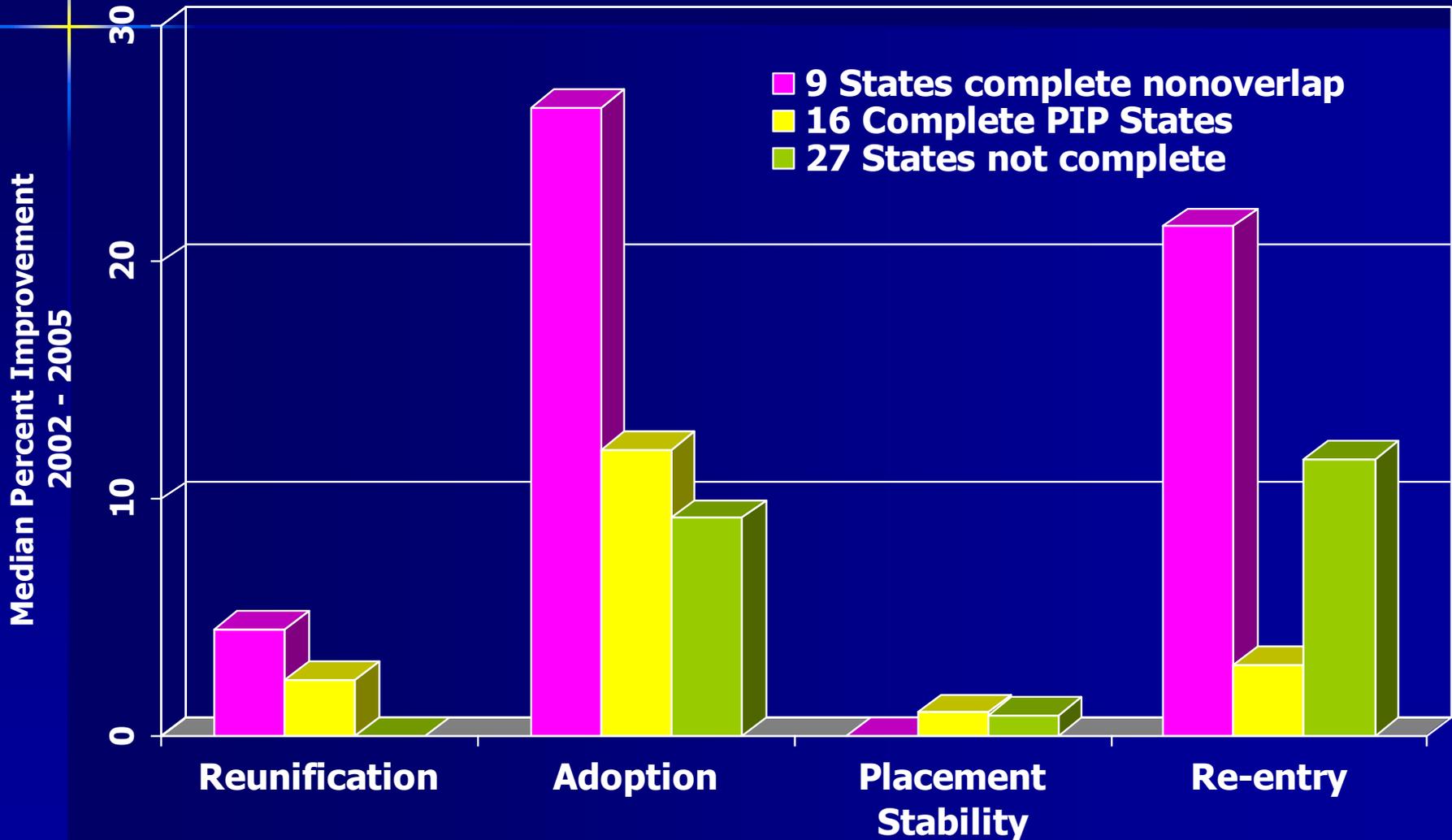
Median Percent Change from FFY 2002 to FFY 2004 and FFY 2005



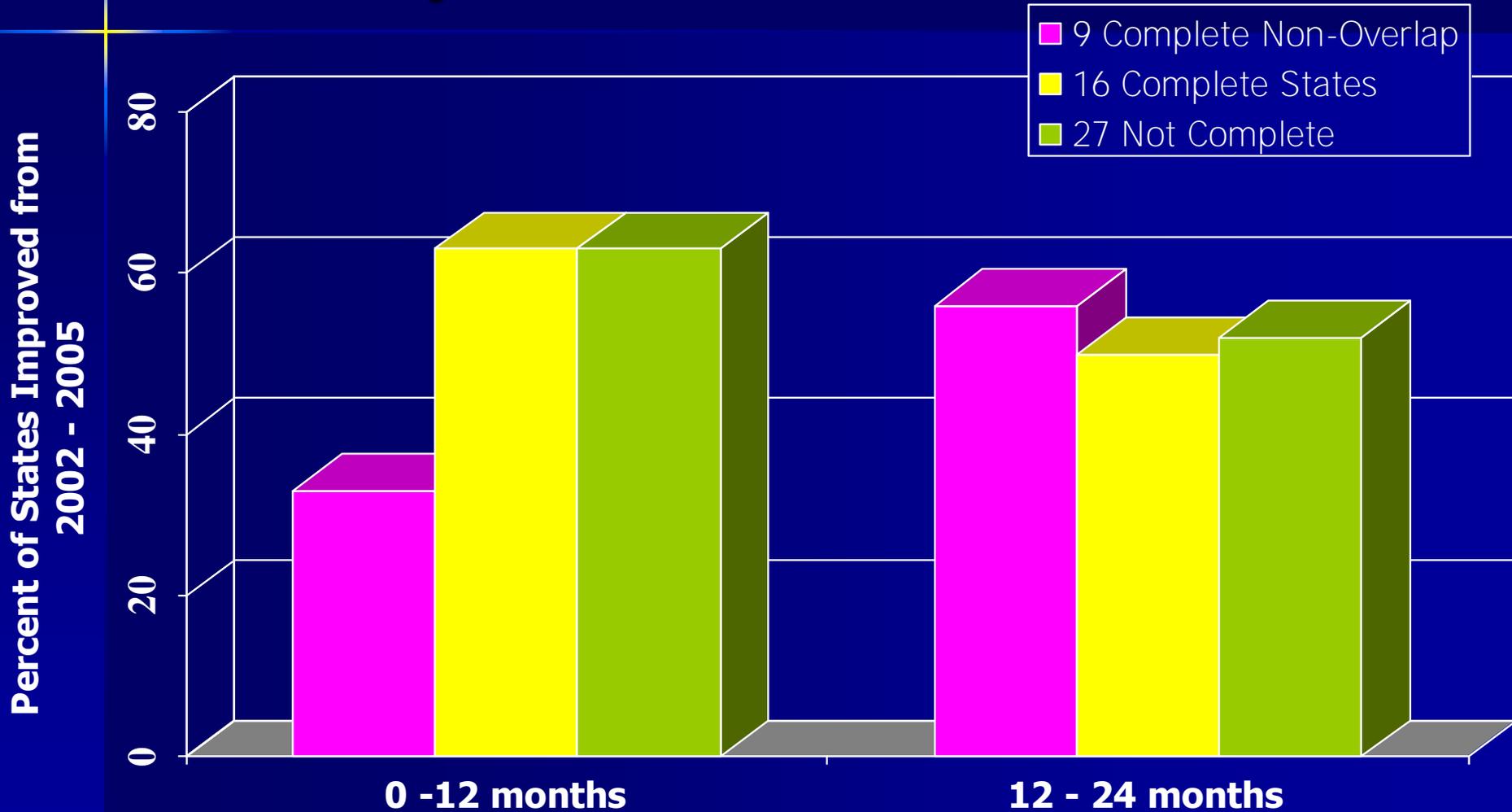
States Addressing Permanency Indicators and Relationship to PIP Completion Status



Median Percent Improvement from FFY2002 to FFY2005 on Permanency Indicators Based on PIP Completion Status



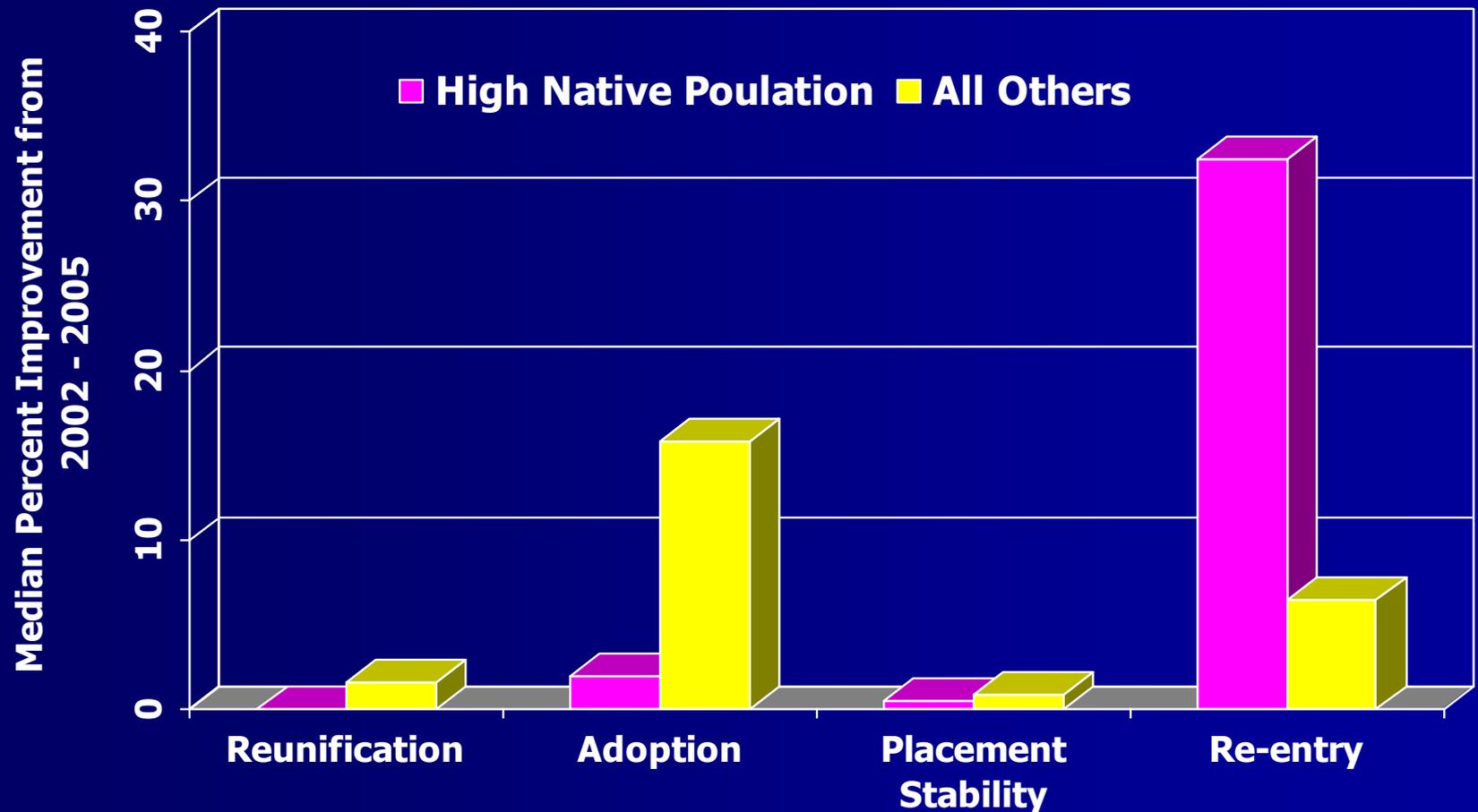
Percent of States Improved from FFY2002 to FFY2005 on Placement Stability



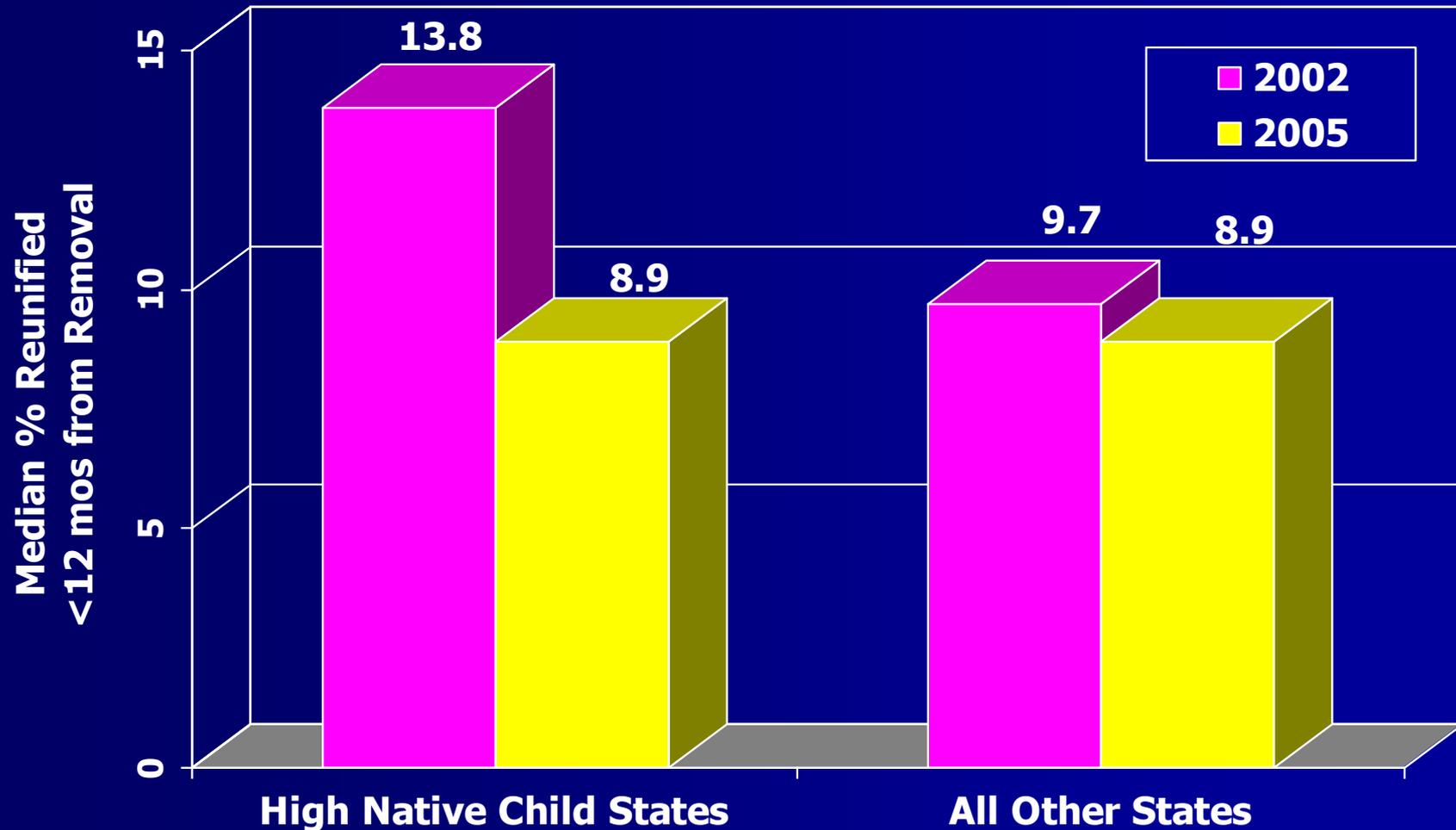
Highest American Indian/ Alaskan Native States by Child Population

State	% Child Population	% Children in Care
Alaska	20	64
Arizona	6	3
Montana	9	33
New Mexico	12	8
Oklahoma	10	13
North Dakota	8	28
South Dakota	13	56

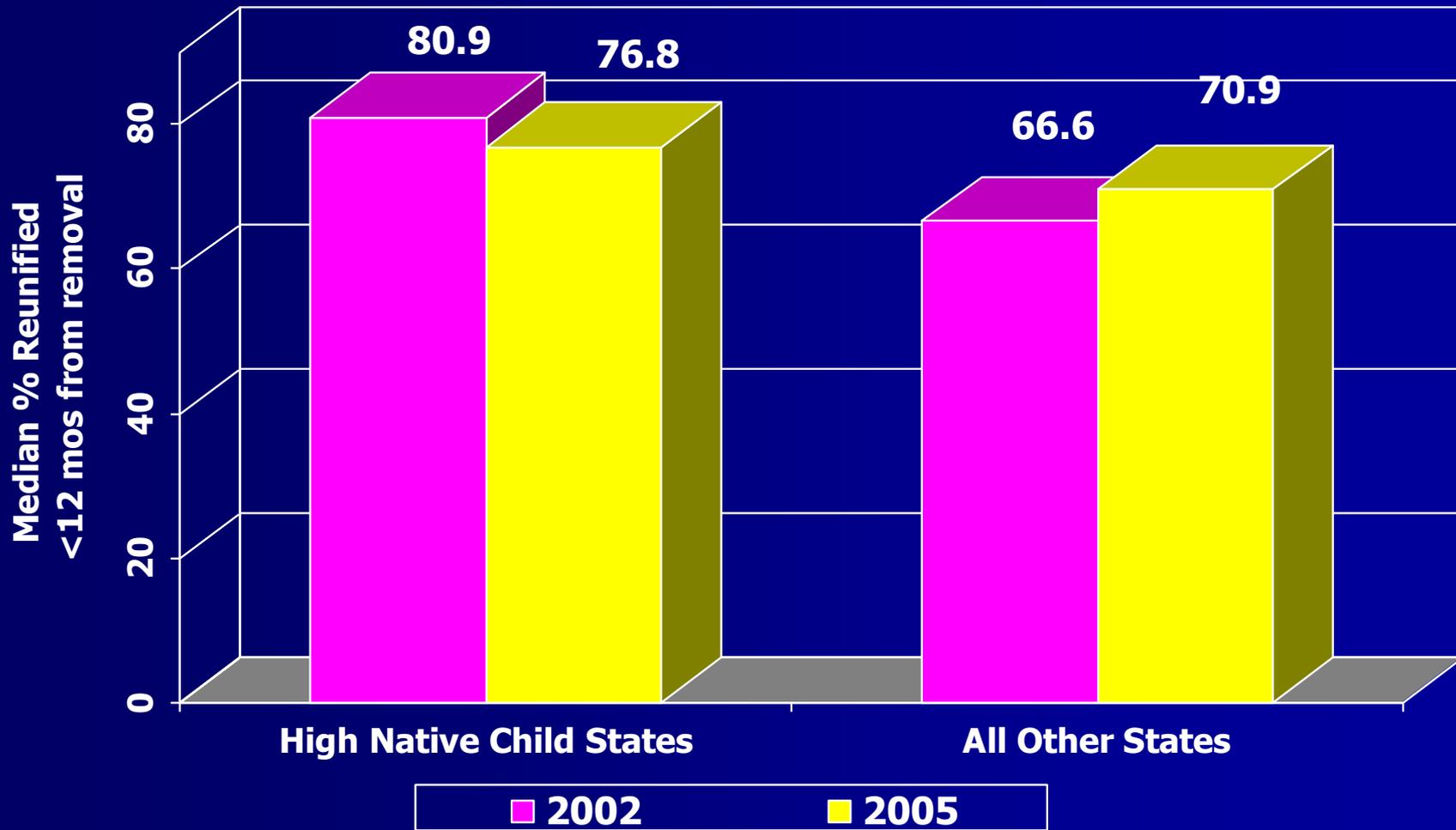
Percent Change from FY 2002 to FY2005 Highest Alaskan Native/American Indian States Compared to All Others



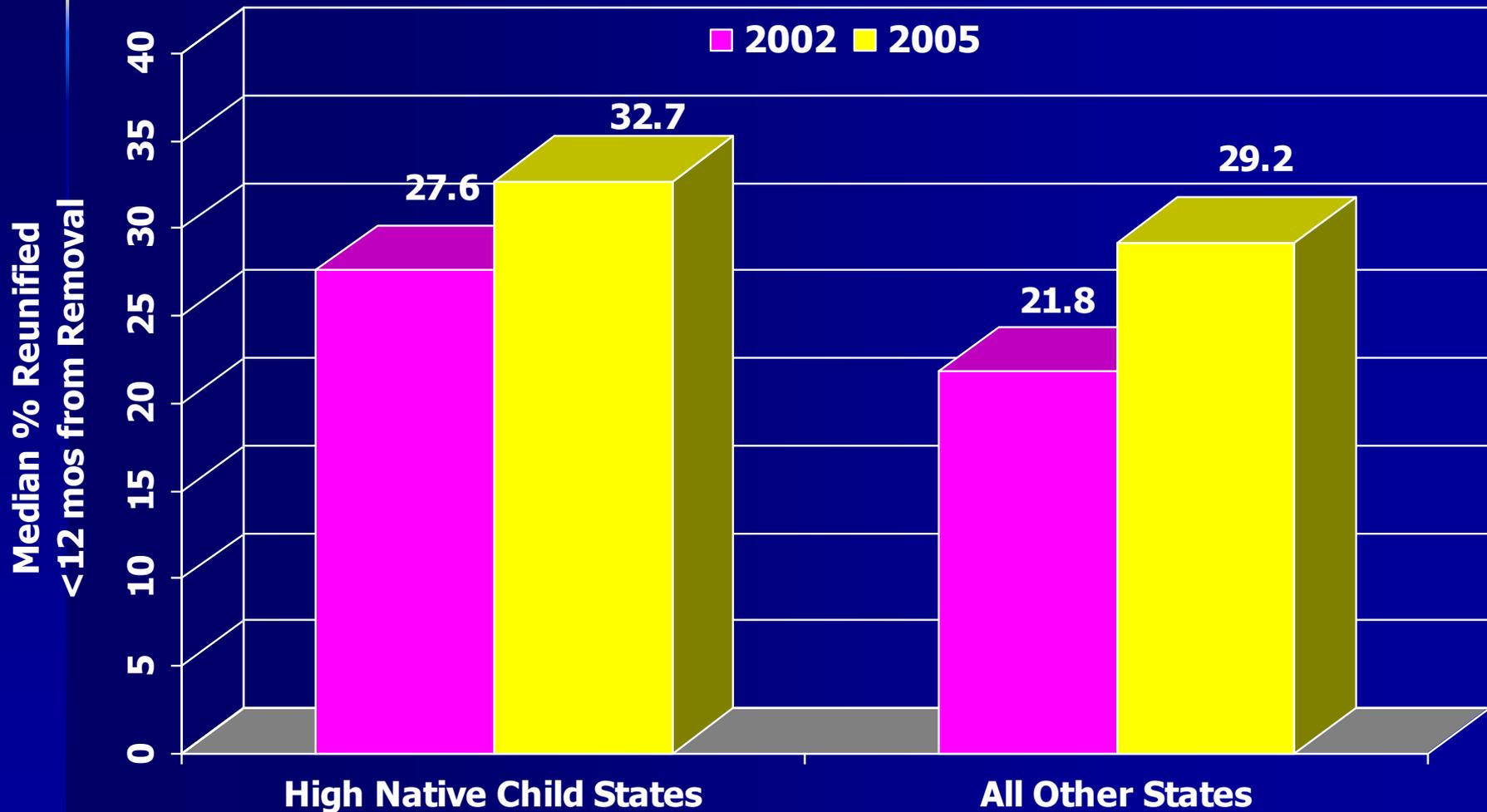
Median on Re-entry Indicators for High Alaskan Native/American Indian States vs. All Others



Median on Reunification Indicators for High Alaskan Native/American Indian States vs. All Others



Median on Adoption Indicator for High Alaskan Native/American Indian vs. All Others



Summary of Findings Based on Permanency Standard Progress

- Majority of states continue to show progress across permanency indicators during the period of peak PIP implementation from 2002 -2005
- States with more time from PIP implementation show slightly more improvement in reunification and adoption timeliness

Summary of Findings Based on Permanency Standard Progress (continued)

- The number of moves children experience in foster care during their first year of placement has not shown any significant progress, although more states have improved than not
- Analysis of placement stability rates utilizing a broader picture of placement episodes may provide more information for targeting practice

Summary of Findings Based on Permanency Standard Progress (continued)

- Differences noted in highest child population Alaskan Native/American Indian States
 - Re-entry rate has improved significantly
 - Reunification time has not shown improvement
 - Time to adoption < 24 months better than national rate