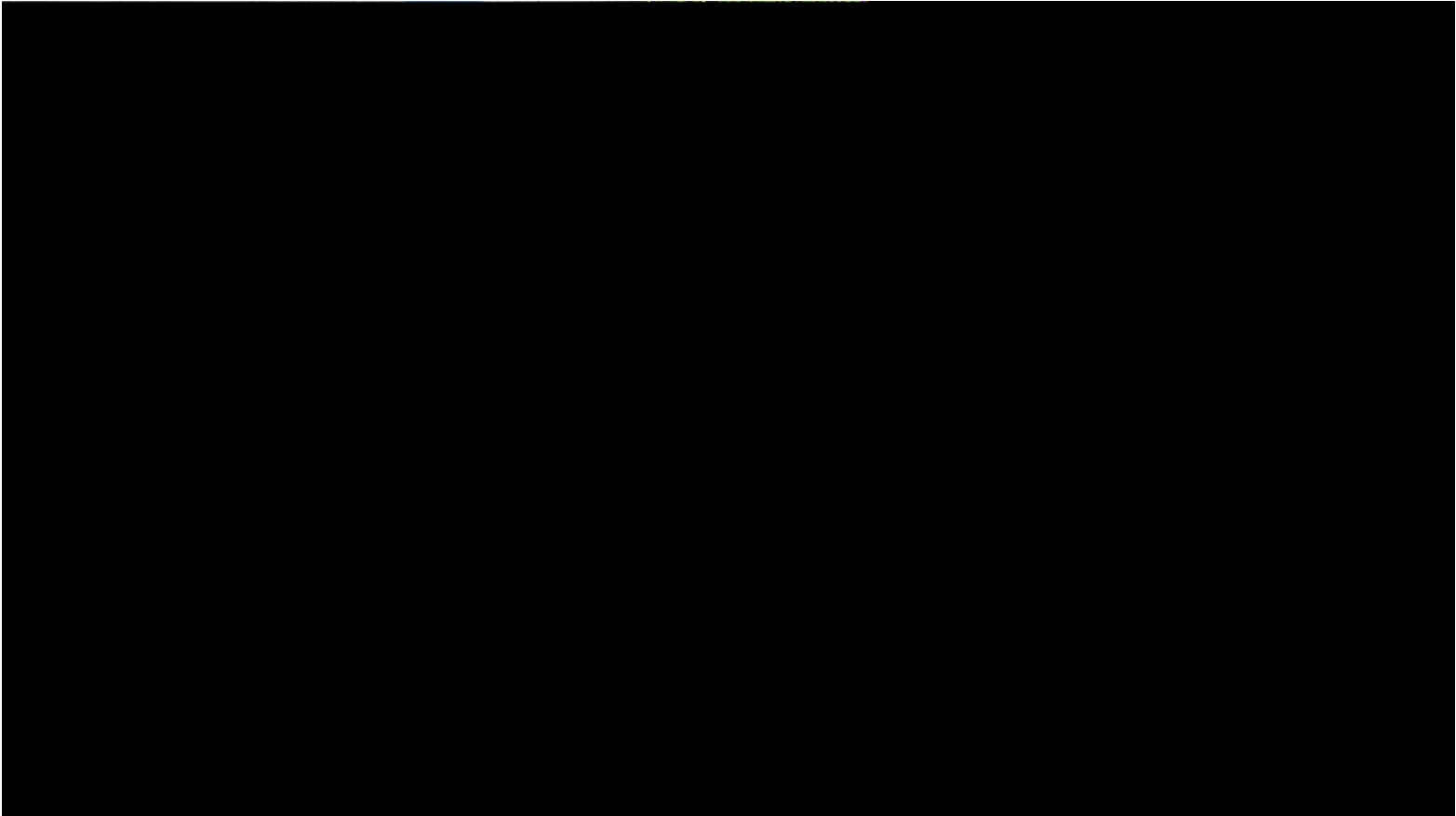


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Opinion

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Julio Mendez, a retired Superior Court assignment judge and an analyst for the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University, says the state's Division of Child Protection and Permanency has improved significantly. He adds that additional oversight can only ensure the safety of an at-risk child

By [Star-Ledger Guest Columnist](#)

By Julio Mendez

New Jersey child protection's focus has shifted away from the removal of children toward family preservation. Over the last decade, the state Department of Children and Families (DCF) has made impressive progress in improving the child welfare system.

With a new name — Division of Child Protection and Permanency — came a new approach. The improvements have been acknowledged by the federal government, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and many child protection advocates.

As a result, 20-year [_____](#)

