

**CHILD SAFETY, PERMANENCY, AND
WELL-BEING OUTCOMES:
An Update of Categories, Measures, and Indicators**

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INTRODUCTION

Indicators for Child Safety, Permanency of Family Relations, and Well-Being

One of the responsibilities of the Children and Family Research Center is to produce periodic reports on outcomes for children and families who are involved with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The public child welfare outcome literature identifies the general areas of child safety, permanency of family relations, and child well-being (Poertner, McDonald, & Murray, 1996). Also, the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USHHS) is developing a strategy for reviewing federally assisted child and family services from an outcome perspective. A draft memorandum of July 1996 expressed an interest in developing partnerships with states in identifying and working toward improved outcomes for children and families. The outcome categories identified by ACYF are those broadly agreed upon by experts in public child welfare: safety, permanency of family relationships, child and family well-being. ACYF further defines these outcomes as:

Safety

Children are protected from abuse and neglect in their own homes whenever possible.

The risk of harm to children is minimized.

Permanency

Children will have permanency and stability in their living situations

The continuity of family relationships, culture and connections will be preserved for children.

Child and family well-being

Families will have enhanced capacity to provide for their children.

School-age children will have educational achievements appropriate to their abilities.

Children will receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

Staff of the Children and Family Research Center have also met with a variety of groups in Illinois to discuss public child welfare outcomes. From these discussions it appears that there is general agreement about child safety and permanence of family relations. Opinions about child and family well-being are much more diverse. There is little agreement about the meaning of child and family well-being. Some people think that well-being includes all aspects of the lives of children and families. Others think that well-being should be thought of much more narrowly. Many feel that child and family well-being is even more important than safety and permanency and that this should be the central focus of the public child welfare system. The groups met with prior to this report include:

- ?? The Department's Child Welfare Advisory Committee
- ?? Department Quality Assurance Staff
- ?? Department Clinical Staff
- ?? Department Administrative Staff
- ?? Department Administrative Case Review Staff
- ?? Child Care Association of Illinois Members and Staff
- ?? Child Care Association of Illinois Outcome Committee
- ?? American Civil Liberties Union

A review of the public child welfare literature was also conducted to guide the selection of outcome categories and indicators. This review is entitled *Child Welfare Outcomes Revisited* by Poertner, McDonald, and Murray. A copy of this review is available upon request.

Safety

Safety in the public child welfare context is commonly measured through the child abuse and neglect reporting system where an "indicated report" is accepted as a judgment that abuse or neglect is present (Poertner, McDonald, & Murray, 1996). While this is widely accepted, this definition is not without difficulties. One difficulty is that such a definition applies only to children who are reported as abused or neglected, while it is widely agreed that many instances of abuse and neglect are unreported (National Research Council, 1993).

A second difficulty is the definition of abuse or neglect that is used to make a judgment about a report. Susan Wells (1995) has demonstrated that the cases that are investigated and

judged as “indicated” vary widely between communities and offices. The same situation that might be judged as abuse or neglect in one community may not be abuse or neglect in another. This suggests that the definition of an indicated report is not uniform. The state of Illinois has worked to standardize these definitions and there may be less variation across this state than others.

Another difficulty with “indicated reports” as a definition of safety is that it is narrow (National Research Council, 1993). While abuse or neglect is somewhat broadly defined in the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, it places an emphasis on the more extreme aspects of abuse and neglect. Abuse in this definition is essentially intentional acts of people who are responsible for the child or live in the same household. Some people advocate for inclusion of less serious aspects of abuse and neglect while others argue for a broader definition that encompasses other domains, such as neighborhoods or the larger community.

Regardless of the difficulties with current approaches to measuring child safety the Center will begin with the following safety indicators:

- ?? Abuse or neglect subsequent to Department involvement and before the case is closed.
- ?? Abuse or neglect after case is closed within a specified period of time such as 6 months.

One of the major issues in interpreting these indicators is responsibility for subsequent abuse or neglect. Just as society does not hold a parent responsible for acts of abuse that are out of their control such as an event that occurs at school or in the neighborhood, the agency is not necessarily responsible for all acts of abuse or neglect. Stating that there was a subsequent indicated report of abuse or neglect does not identify important circumstances of the abuse or neglect, such as where the incident took place or who was identified as being responsible. Ultimately, it is necessary to examine the circumstances surrounding an event to determine if a particular event is the responsibility of the public agency.

Outcome results always need to be interpreted in light of a variety of variables including process variables and input variables. Input variables are all of those characteristics of children and families that workers encounter while working with the family that may have a significant impact on the results of the case (e.g. age of the child, resources of the family caregiver, type of abuse, etc). Process variables are related to the intervention (e.g. Department policies, worker

behaviors, services provided, etc.). As outcome results are produced, key input and process variables will be used to place the results in context.

Child Safety Categories, Indicators and Measures. Child safety is assessed through indications of abuse or neglect. Specifically, this is abuse or neglect of a child subsequent to involvement with the Department of Children and Family Services. In spite of the difficulties with this measure, it remains a useful indicator for managing or assessing large public child welfare systems. The Center does not yet have indicators for abuse or neglect after the case is closed.

Category: Abuse or neglect after Department involvement and before case is closed.

Most children come to the attention of the Department through reports of abuse or neglect. When a worker finds reason to believe that a caretaker has abused or neglected a child, a report is indicated. Some reports are indicated and no case is opened because the child is judged to be safe. In these situations the family is frequently referred to local service providers for assistance. Some reports are indicated by workers, the child is judged to be safe, and the worker opens a family case to provide services to the family as a whole. These are called “intact” family cases. In still other cases, abuse or neglect is indicated and concerns for the child’s safety result in opening a child case and, frequently, out-of-home placement.

A complete set of safety indicators includes all situations where the Department became involved with a child because of an abuse or neglect report. For a variety of reasons it is not yet possible to report a complete set of safety results. Center staff continue to expand child safety reporting indicators and over time expect to produce safety results for all children subsequent to Department involvement.

Sub-category: Abuse or neglect of children in “intact” families. The Department uses the term “intact family” to describe those situations where a family case is open and none of the children associated with the family are placed outside of the home. Since the Department does not have a indicator for intact families in the information system, it is difficult to compute safety results for this group of children. Analysis requires identifying intact families in the database through a process of elimination. This process starts by first eliminating families with a child(ren) in placement upon family case opening. Then to find the number of children in

these intact families, adults over the age of 18, and married teens over the age of 16 who did not have an open child case are eliminated.

Indicator: The percent of children with an indicated report during an open intact family case adjusted for time in care.

Sub-category: Abuse or neglect for children subsequent to the Department opening a child case.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) with an indicated report subsequent to the Department opening a child case.

Three decision rules were implemented in the construction of rates for this indicator. The first rule establishes that the Department is responsible for a case if that case is open seven days or longer. In some situations, a worker believes that a child is in danger, opens a case, and may take protective custody of the child. However, subsequent examination of the situation reverses this decision. These situations are referred to as lapsed protective custody cases which are eliminated by this rule. The rule may also eliminate some cases that should be counted, but the number of these cases is thought to be very small.

The second decision rule counts an indicated report for a child placement when it occurs seven or more days after the start of a placement. The Department's child abuse and neglect information system does not record the date of the abuse or neglect incident but only the date of the report. This limits the ability to link an indicated report of abuse or neglect to other dates such as the date of case opening or the date a child placement starts. This rule is therefore necessary so that the indicator is more likely to include those incidents that occur after a placement begins.

The third rule only counts a child placement if it lasts at least 7 days. There are a variety of reasons for short-term placements including normal hospital procedures. This rule does not count these short-term placements.

The indicators identified here are both percentages and rates per 100 child years. The literature identifies safety indicators as percentages of children. For example, the percent of children in state custody who are subsequently abused or neglected. However, Simpson, Imry, Geling, and Butkus (1998) demonstrated that simple percentages underrepresent the true rate of

abuse and neglect. The simple percentages count an abuse incident for a child in the care of the state for one month the same as an incident of a child in care for ten months. The second child can actually be considered to be safer, since there was no abuse for nine months. This concept of adjusting for time of exposure comes from public health. The idea is that the longer a person is exposed to something, such as a cold virus, the more chance they have of catching the cold.

Simpson et al. (1998) developed a method for adjusting the percentages to account for time in care. This method converts the percentages to rates per 100 child years. In other words, in addition to reporting the percent of children in care who have a subsequent indicated report of abuse or neglect, we report the number of incidents of abuse or neglect per 100 children in care for an entire year.

Sub-category: Abuse or neglect after Department involvement and before the case is closed by types of placement. There is a general concern about the safety of children in different out-of-home placements. Therefore, the safety indicators are also reported for the major types of out-of-home placements.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) living in the home of parent in which there is an indicated report of abuse or neglect.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) placed in home of relative who have an indicated report during the fiscal year.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) living in adoptive homes who have an indicated report during the fiscal year.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) living in family foster care who have an indicated report during the fiscal year.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) of children living in specialized foster care who have an indicated report during the fiscal year.

Indicator: Percent and rate (per 100 child years) living in group homes who have an indicated report during the fiscal year.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) living in institutions who have an indicated report during the fiscal year.

Permanency Categories, Indicators and Measures

There are four desirable outcomes in permanency of family relations: 1) A child may be maintained at home, 2) A child may be returned home from substitute care, 3) A child may be adopted, or 4) A child may be placed with someone who subsequently becomes the legal guardian for that child. The failure of these outcomes is an additional set of permanency indicators.

Category: Children maintained at home

Children maintained at home includes two situations. In one situation a family case is opened without opening cases on each of the children. These are termed “intact” families. These cases are usually opened as a result of an abuse or neglect investigation for which the worker judged the risk to the children to be low and believes that they can be maintained safely at home if the family receives services. In these cases the worker deems that the child can be maintained safely at home while their needs are being addressed. If and when this fails, the child may be placed into substitute care.

In the second situation, the worker has specific concerns about one or more of the children in a family and opens a case for a child. A child case is not opened unless a court makes DCFS responsible for the child. The rate at which children move from home to substitute care is one indication of the success or failure of efforts to maintain a child safely at home

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) who are placed from family cases.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) in Department custody, initially living at home, who are later placed in substitute care.

Category: Children returned to home of origin

When the safety of children requires that they be placed out of the home, one of the permanency goals is to return the child to his/her home of origin as soon as possible. The time element is important for several reasons. Research in child development indicates that the

longer the child is away from his/her parents, the more likely that the bond between the child and the parents will be undermined (Bowlby, 1969). Family systems theory indicates that the longer the child is away from the family, the more the family will adjust to the child being gone, and the more difficult it will be for the child to regain his/her place in the family (Bermann, 1973; Minuchin, 1974). The child's sense of time is another consideration. One year for a three year old child is one-third of his/her life while one year for a person aged 20 is only 5%. Further, the permanency literature has consistently demonstrated that the longer a child stays in substitute care the lower the probability of return home.

Indicator: Percent of children returned home from substitute care within 6,12, 18, and 24 months.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) living at home who were previously in substitute care and then re-enter substitute care.

Category: Adoption

Some children cannot return home. For these children a permanent family is a new or adoptive family.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) in substitute care who are adopted.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) whose adoption disrupts prior to consummation.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) whose adoptions are legally consummated, where the adoption is dissolved.

The Children and Family Research Center does not have data for this indicator at this time.

Category: Transfer of Guardianship

In some cases neither return to the child's original parents nor adoption is a viable option. However, many times there is someone who is willing to become the guardian of a child and guide him/her to adulthood. Frequently the guardian is an extended family member

for whom adoption would not be a comfortable option but who is willing to be the decision maker for the child.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) in substitute care where guardianship has been transferred to a private person.

Indicator: Percent of children and rate (per 100 child years) whose guardianship was transferred from DCFS to a private person and subsequently became Department wards.

Child Well-Being Categories, Indicators and Measures

Review of the literature and discussions with various interest and advocacy groups suggests that child well-being includes the categories of education, physical health, and mental health. There is a general feeling that these categories are not sufficient but there is little consensus regarding additional categories.

To date the Center has not been successful in developing a system to report on these outcomes. There are several reasons for this. First, the administrative database does not include information in these categories. Second, direct data collection from the children is expensive and is complicated by Department procedures. Third, to be meaningful there needs to be a system of data collection in these categories that begins with case opening and takes periodic readings on the progress of children who are the responsibility of the Department.

Category: Education

Discussions about indicators for educational outcomes have identified the following potential indicators:

- ?? Children entering school ready to learn. This is a difficult indicator to operationalize. Participation of wards in early childhood education programs may be a proxy.
- ?? School attendance.
- ?? School discipline events including suspensions and expulsions.
- ?? Academic performance as measured by grades or grade level.
- ?? High school drop-out rates or graduation (including GED) rates.

Category: Physical and Mental Health

The HealthWorks program was initiated to assure that wards received necessary health services. Consistent with other studies of the health status of children under the care of public child welfare agencies, an initial study of the health status of wards using HealthWorks data indicated that:

- ?? Wards that are newborns were more likely to have retarded growth, respiratory distress syndrome, and congenital anomalies.
- ?? Children who entered foster care were more likely to have a primary diagnosis of a psychiatric condition and be developmentally delayed.

These findings underscore the importance of developing a health outcome tracking system that collects physical and mental health indicators periodically from time of the child's involvement with DCFS. A review of health outcome indicators resulted in identification of the following categories of health outcomes across three major age groups. It is suggested that health outcomes data collection begin with information relevant to these categories.

	Age 0–5	Age 6–11	Age 12–18
Physical Health			
Caretaker evaluation	X	X	X
Restrictions on normal physical activities	X	X	X
Vaccinations/immunizations	X	X	X
Hospitalizations, accidents	X	X	X
Indicator and chronic conditions	X	X	X
Mental/Behavioral Health			
Caretaker evaluation of index behaviors.	X	X	X

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS FOR USE WITH THE IDCFS INTEGRATED DATABASE

Most of the safety and permanency outcomes indicators are constructed, directly or indirectly*, from fields contained in the IDCFS Integrated Database. As a joint project between the Department of Children and Family Services and Chapin Hall Center for Children, the

* In conducting analyses on child safety and permanency, the Children and Family Research Center made use of two datafiles derived from the IDCFS Integrated Database. These two files, the "HMR Monitoring File" and the "Master Events File," were created by Lucy Mackey-Bilaver of Chapin Hall who has provided much-welcomed support regarding their construction and use.

database permits tracking of indicators over a period of several years as well as provides a rich database for research purposes. To better assure consistent analysis across research projects, representatives from the Department, the Children and Family Research Center, and Chapin Hall Center for Children meet regularly to determine how best to define the important indicators and other variables used in the analyses presented in their reports. We have agreed upon the following operational definitions.†

ADOPTED

A child was defined as adopted if

(1) he or she had a case closing reason (closrsn) that was coded as 'CA' or 'RA' (“Completed Adoption” or “Relative Adoption,” respectively) **AND** a next living arrangement type (endevent) not coded as 'ZZZ' or 'ZZA'‡ (signaling case closed) **AND**

if case opening reason (opencode) was not coded as 'AA' (“Adoption Assistance”)

OR

(2) he or she had a case closing reason was coded as 'SC' (“Services Completed”) and current living arrangement (event) was coded as 'HAP' (“Home of Adoptive Parent”) **AND**

if case opening reason (opencode) was not coded as 'AA' (“Adoption Assistance”)

ADOPTION DISRUPTED

A child was designated as part of a disrupted adoption if his or her placement type was defined, as described herein, as “Home of Adoptive Parent” **AND**

† The CFRC would like to acknowledge and thank Jim Gregory, Patty Sommer, Lucy Mackey-Bilaver, and Mark Testa for their work in constructing these definitions.

‡ These are codes in the “HMR Monitoring” and “Master Events” files only.

if his or her next living arrangement (endevent) was not coded as 'HAP', 'HMA', 'FHA', or 'CEN'[§] **AND**

if the case closing date was missing (i.e., case is open).

AGE

While the calculation of a child's age at any point in time is a straightforward and trivial matter, determining a child's age over a period of time required adopting the following decision rules:

Age in a Placement Spell in a Fiscal Year. A child's age (in years) in a placement spell was defined as the difference between the last day of the placement of interest or, if the placement continued beyond the fiscal year in question, the last day of that fiscal year, and the child's birthdate, divided by 365.25.

Age for a Placement Type in a Fiscal Year. The age of a child in a given type of placement in a given fiscal year was defined as the mean of a child's age in all placement types in that fiscal year.

Age for a Child in a Fiscal Year. The age of a child in a given fiscal year was defined as the mean age of the child across all placement spells in the fiscal year of interest.

Age Groupings. For presentation purposes, mean age was broken down into seven categories based upon increment of 3 years:

- (1) Greater than 0 years and less than 3 years;
- (2) Greater than or equal to 3 years and less than 6 years;
- (3) Greater than or equal to 6 years and less than 9 years;
- (4) Greater than or equal to 9 years and less than 12 years;
- (5) Greater than or equal to 12 years and less than 15 years;
- (6) Greater than or equal to 15 years and less than 18 years;
- (7) Greater than or equal to 18 years.

Allegation of Abuse/Neglect, Severity of

The 85 allegation codes from the Department's Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTS) were grouped into 8 categories and ranked in terms of severity. The 8

[§] "CEN" is a code used in the "HMR Monitoring" and "Master Events" files only to designate a continuing

categories, in order of severity, from most severe to least severe are: Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, Substance Exposed Infant, Emotional Abuse, Lack of Supervision, Environmental Neglect, Other Neglect, and Substantial Risk of Harm.

Allegation Type Linked to a Placement

For purposes of unduplicated tabulation, the type of abuse or neglect linked to a placement is that which occurred most recently during the placement (the “latest”) and the one that is the most severe (the “greatest.”)

Duration in Care

Duration in care is defined as the number of days in a given fiscal year a child is in a particular type of care until the status of care under consideration changes. A change in care status may be precipitated by a change in placement (e.g., from Home of Parent to Substitute Care placement), or by a change in case type (e.g., from Intact Family Care to Substitute Care).

Exposure Adjusted Percentage

Exposure adjusted percentages are calculated as the number of children (who moved home, were placed in substitute care, were adopted, etc.) per 100 child years (in a particular placement type, in a given fiscal year, etc.). Alternatively, it is the number of children (who moved, etc.) per 100 children in placement for 365.25 days (in a given fiscal year, placement type, etc.).

Guardianship

Delegated Relative Authority. If a placement has a type of service code among the following: ‘0136’, ‘3136’, ‘4136’, ‘6136’, ‘8136’, ‘9136’, ‘0137’, ‘6137’, ‘8137’, or ‘9137’ **OR** the living arrangement is coded as ‘DRA’, then the guardianship arrangement was defined as “Delegated Relative Authority.”

placement at the time the data were extracted or “pulled” from the administrative systems files.

Subsidized Guardianship. If the type of service arrangement was coded among the following: '0188', '0189', '0194', '0150', '0186', '0193' **OR** the type of living arrangement was coded as 'SGH,' then the guardianship arrangement was defined as "Subsidized Guardianship."

Successor Guardian. If a placement had a type of service code among the following: '0126', '5126', '6126', '8126', '9126', '0176', '3176', '4176', '5176', '6176', '8176', or '9176' **OR** the type of living arrangement was coded as 'GDN,' then the guardianship arrangement was defined as "Successor Guardian."

Indicated Report During A Placement

Only those indicated reports that were dated 7 or more days after the start of a placement and on or before the end of a placement were considered to have been indicated reports during the placement in question.

Intact Family Care (at Family Case Opening)

A child was defined as being in intact family care if, at the time his/her family case opened, neither the child, nor any other children who were members of that family case, also had a concurrent open child case. (A child case concurrent with a family case opening was (1) a child case that lasted at least 7 days, and (2) a child case that opened within 7 days before or within 7 days after the opening of the family case and closed more than 7 days after the opening of the family case, or a child case that opened any time before the family case opened and closed more than 7 days after the family case opened.)

Intact Family Case

An intact family case was defined as an open family case in which no children who were members of that family case also had a concurrent open child case.

Living Arrangement (see Placement)

(Child) Moved from Home to Substitute Care

Children in Child Cases. A child was defined as moving from home to substitute care if he or she had a placement type of 'HMP' followed by a next living arrangement type (event) of among the following:

'DRA', 'HMR', 'HRA', 'HRL',
 'FHB', 'FHI', 'FHP', 'FOS',
 'FHS',
 'DET', 'HHF', 'ICF', 'IDC', 'IMH', 'INS', 'IOP', 'IPA',
 'IRS', 'NCF', 'YES', or
 'GRH' **AND**

not having a case opening reason (opencode) of 'AA' or 'RA.'

Children in Family Cases. A child was defined as moving from home to substitute care if he or she was part of a family case and did not have a child case opening within seven days before or after the opening of the family case **AND** after seven days of the opening of the family case, had a child case placement type of one of the following:

'DRA', 'HMR', 'HRA', 'HRL',
 'FHB', 'FHI', 'FHP', 'FOS',
 'FHS',
 'DET', 'HHF', 'ICF', 'IDC', 'IMH', 'INS', 'IOP', 'IPA',
 'IRS', 'NCF', 'YES', or
 'GRH' **AND**

the child case opening did not have an opening reason (opencode) of 'AA' or 'RA.'

Nonintact Family Care (at Family Case Opening)

A child was defined as being in nonintact family care if, at the time his/her family case opened, at least one other child member of the family case other than him/herself, also had a concurrent open child case at the time the family case was opened. (A child case concurrent with a family case opening was (1) a child case that lasted at least 7 days, and (2) a child case that opened within 7 days before or within 7 days after the opening of the family case and closed more than 7 days after the opening of the family case, or a child case that opened any time before the family case opened and closed more than 7 days after the family case opened.)

Nonintact Family Case

An intact family case was defined as an open family case in which at least one child, but not all children, who were members of that family case also had a concurrent open child case.

Open Case

An open case was defined as a case for which there is a missing case closing date (“closdate”) at the time the data are extracted from the system. Applies to both child and family cases.

Out-of-Home Spell

If a spell in care began in any living arrangement type other than the following:

‘HAP’, ‘HMP’, ‘SGH’, ‘RNY’, or ‘HHF’, and ended in a living arrangement of among ‘HAP’, ‘HMP’, ‘SGH’, ‘RNY’, or ‘HHF’,

the spell was defined as an out-of-home spell.

Perpetrator Linked to an Indicated Report During a Placement

For purposes of unduplicated tabulation, the perpetrator linked to indicated report of abuse or neglect is the first listed involved caretaker who is associated with the most recent and the most severe allegation reported during a given placement.

Placement (Living Arrangement)

The variable “Placement” was defined on the basis of two fields from the Department’s CYCIS database: type of service categorization (“typeserv”) and child living arrangement type (“event”**). In constructing each placement type, type of service categorization was given priority over child living arrangement type. Thus, placements were first defined on the basis of typeserv, and where type of service codes were not available for a given living arrangement,

** A variable from the “HMR Monitoring” and the “Master Events” files, somewhat equivalent to the “typecode” field in the main IDCFS Integrated Database.

living arrangement type was used to define the placement. A set of 12 mutually-exclusive and exhaustive placement types was created:

Relative Care. If the type of service arrangement was coded among the following:

'5106', '5115', '5136', '5153', '5154', '5191', '5192', '5193',
 '5195', '5196', '9104', '9105', '9106', '9115',
 '9136', '9153', '9154', '9161', '9176',
 '0179', '5194',
 '9903', '9904', '9905', '9914', '9944', '9959', '9103',
 '9114', '9144', '9159',
 '3179', '4179', '6179',
 '8179', '8903', '8914', '8959',
 '6903', '6904', '6905', '6914', '6944', '6959',
 '0106', '0115', '0136', '0153', '0154', '0161',
 '0176', '0179', '3106', '3136', '3153', '3154', '3161', '3176',
 '4106', '4136', '4153', '4154', '4161', '4176', '5176', '6106',
 '6115', '6136', '6153', '6154', '6161', '6176',
 '8106', '8115', '8136', '8153', '8154', '8161', '8176', '8904', '8905',
 '9137', '9140', '9160', '2940', '2960',
 '9909', '9943', '9958', '7909', '7943', '9143', '9158',
 '0169', '5179', '9179',
 '7809', '7609', '7643',
 '6169', '6909', '6943', '6958', '7609', '7643',
 '7843', '8909', '8943', '8958',
 '0137', '0140', '0141', '0160', '2140', '2160', '2640', '2669', '2840', '2860',
 '6137', '6140', '6160', '8137',
 '8140', '8160', '8169' **OR**

there was no type of service code **AND**

the type of living arrangement was coded as 'DRA', 'HMR', 'HRA', or 'HRL',
 then placement was define as "Relative Care" or "Home of Relative."

Family Foster Care. If the type of service arrangement was coded among the following:

'0101', '0104', '0107', '0146', '0151', '0152', '0156', '0162',
 '0211', '4026', '5101', '5104', '5107', '5126', '5151', '5152',
 '5161', '9101', '9107', '9151', '9152', '9156',
 '6101', '6104', '6107', '6126', '6151', '6152', '6156', '8101',
 '8104', '8107', '8126', '8151', '8152', '8156',
 '0102', '0155', '8102', '9102', '9155', '2902', '2102',
 '6102', '6155', '2602', '9104' **OR**

there was no type of service code **AND**

the type of living arrangement was coded as 'FHB', 'FHI', 'FHP', or 'FOS',
 then placement was defined as "Family Foster Care."

Specialized Foster Care. If the type of service arrangement was coded among the following:

'0103', '0105', '0114', '0144', '0159', '5103', '5105', '5114',
 '5159', '5144',

'6103', '6105', '6114', '6144', '6159', '8103', '8105', '8114',
 '8144', '8159',
 '0109', '0143', '0158', '7109', '7143', '7543', '9109',
 '9169', '9103', '9105', '9114', '9143', '9144', '9158', '9159',
 '6109', '6143', '6158', '7309', '7343', '7409', '7443',
 '8109', '8143', '8158',
 '7110', '7709', '7710', '7743' **OR**
 there was no type of service code **AND**
 the type of living arrangement was coded as 'FHS,'
 then placement was defined as "Specialized Foster Care."

Group Home. If the type of service arrangement was coded among the following:
 '0203', '0222', '7202', '7203' **OR**
 there was no type of service code **AND**
 the type of living arrangement was coded as 'GRH,'
 then placement was defined as "Group Home."

Institutional Care. If the type of service arrangement was coded among the following:
 '0201', '0202', '0221', '0223', '0901', '7201', '0210', '0213', '0251', '7251',
 '0206', '0207', '0216', '0217', '0218') **OR**
 there was no type of service code **AND**
 the type of living arrangement was coded as 'DET', 'HHF', 'ICF', 'IDC', 'IMH', 'INS', 'TOP',
 'IPA', 'IRS', 'NCF', or 'YES,'
 then placement was defined as "Institution" or "Institutional Care."

Independent Living. If the type of service arrangement was coded among the following:
 '0163', '0167', '7267', '0267', '7167',
 '0208', '0701', '0704', '0705', '0706', '0708', '0720',
 '0723', '0724', '0725', '0801', '0804', '0805', '0806',
 '0204', '7204', '7205', '9167' **OR**
 there was no type of service code **AND**
 the type of living arrangement was coded as 'ILO', 'ASD', or 'CUS,'
 then placement was defined as "Independent Living."

Subsidized Guardianship. If the type of service arrangement was coded among the following:
 '0188', '0189', '0194', '0150', '0186', '0193' **OR**
 there was no type of service code **AND**
 the type of living arrangement was coded as 'SGH,'
 then placement was defined as "Subsidized Guardianship."

Adoption Subsidy (or Adoption Assistance). If the type of service arrangement was coded
 among the following – '0126', '0301', '0313', '0314', '0315', '0316', '0300', '0324', '0326', '0323',
 '0331', '0333', '0332', '0334',
 '0335', '0304', '0337', '0302', '0303', '0338', '0336', '0327' **AND**
 the **case opening reason** (opcode) was coded as either 'AA' or 'RA',
 then placement was defined as "Adoption Subsidy" or "Adoption Assistance."

Home of Parent. If there was no type of service code **AND** the type of living arrangement was coded as 'HMP,' then placement was defined as "Home of Parent."

Successor Guardian. If there was no type of service code **AND** the type of living arrangement was coded as 'GDN,' then placement was defined as "Successor Guardian."

Adoptive Placement. If there was no type of service code **AND** the type of living arrangement was coded as 'FHA', 'HAP', or 'HMA,' then placement was defined as "Adoptive Placement."

Runaway/Missing/Unknown/Other. If there was no type of service code **AND** the type of living arrangement was coded as 'RNY', 'MIS', 'UNK', or 'OTH,' then "placement" was defined as "Runaway/Missing/Unknown/Other."

Private (Payment of Services) VS Department Placement

If type of service arrangement was coded as one of the following: '9137', '9140', '9160', '2940', '2960', '9909', '9943', '9958', '7909', '7943', '9143', '9158', '0169', '5179', '9179', '7809', '7609', '7643', '6169', '6909', '6943', '6958', '7609', '7643', '7843', '8909', '8943', '8958', '0137', '0140', '0141', '0160', '2140', '2160', '2640', '2669', '2840', '2860', '6137', '6140', '6160', '8137', '8140', '8160', '8169', '0102', '0155', '9102', '9155', '8102', '2902', '2102', '6102', '6155', '2602', '0109', '0143', '0158', '9109', '7543', '0243', '7109', '7143', '9169', '8109', '8143', '8158', '7409', '7443', '6109', '6143', '6158', '7309', '7343', '0163', '0167', '0208', '0720', '0704', '0705', '0706', '7204', '0204', '7205', **OR**

if living arrangement type was coded as 'FHP' **AND** there was **no** type of service code, then the placement was defined as under the auspices of a private agency.

'5106', '5115', '5136', '5153', '5154', '5191', '5192', '5193', '5195', '5196', '9104', '9105', '9106', '9115', '9136', '9153', '9154', '9161', '9176', '0179', '5194', '9903', '9904', '9905', '9914', '9944', '9959', '9103', '9114', '9144', '9159',

'3179','4179','6179',
 '8179','8903','8914','8959',
 '6903','6904','6905','6914','6944','6959'
 '0106','0115','0136','0153','0154','0161',
 '0176','0179','3106','3136','3153','3154','3161','3176',
 '4106','4136','4153','4154','4161','4176','5176','6106',
 '6115','6136','6153','6154','6161','6176',
 '8106','8115','8136','8153','8154','8161','8176','8904','8905',
 '0101','0104','0107','0146','0151','0152','0156','0162','0211','4026',
 '5101','5104','5107','5126','5151','5152','5161','9101',
 '9107','9151','9152','9156',
 '8101','8104','8107','8126','8151','8152','8156',
 '6101','6104','6107','6126','6151','6152','6156',
 '0103','0105','0114','0144','0159','5103','5105','5114', '5144','5159',
 '8103','8105','8114','8144','8159',
 '6103','6105','6114','6144','6159',
 '0163','0167','7267','0267','7167','0208','0701','0704','0705',
 '0706','0708','0720','0723','0724','0725','0801','0804',
 '0805','0806', '0203','0222','7202','7203','0201','0213','0221','0223',
 '0901','7201','0251','0202',
 '0186','0193','0188','0189','0194','0150', **OR**

if type of living arrangement was coded among one of the following:

'HMR','DRA','ASD','CUS','ILO', 'FHA','FHB','FHI','HAP','FHS', 'HMP',
 'DET','HHF','IMH','IDC','GRH','OTH','RNY','IPA','NCF',
 'TRS','ICF','YES','MIS','PND','UNK','SGH','FOS','HRA',
 'HRL','INS','IOP','GDN','IND' **AND** there was **no** type of service code,

then the placement was defined as under the auspices of the Department of Children and Family Services,.

Race

Seven codes defined ethnicity: 'AO' for Asian; 'BL' for African-American; 'HI' for Hispanic; 'NA' for Native American; 'OT' for Other; 'UK' for Unknown; and 'WH' for White.:

Region

In analyses by region, a new six-category variable was derived by collapsing some and eliminating some of the 50 codes DCFS assigns to their "Assigned Region" ("region") field. Region is defined in this report as:

The Northern Region, created from the Rockford region ('1A') and the Aurora region ('2A');

The Central Region, created from the Peoria region ('1B'), the Springfield Region ('3A'), and the Champaign Region ('3B');

The Southern Region, created from the East St. Louis region ('4A') and the Marion region ('5A');

The Cook County North Region, created from Cook County North region ('6B'), and of the following Chicago region/site/field combinations:

'2B0113'-'2B0158','2B0204','2B0207'-'2B0209','2B0212','2B0216',
'2B0231'-'2B0232','2B0236','2B0238','2B0264','2B0267',
'2B0270','2B0274','2B0515','2B0540'-'2B0541','2B0549',
'2B0552','2B0554'-'2B0555',
'2B0560'-'2B0561','2B0564','2B0568','2B0570','2B0598','2B0731','2B0766',
'2B0767'

The Cook County Central Region, created from Cook County Central region ('6C'), and of the following Chicago region/site/field combinations:

'2B0403'-'2B0490','2B0502','2B0518','2B0544','2B0548','2B0553','2B0551',
'2B0557'-'2B0559','2B0565'-'2B0566','2B0569','2B0573','2B05-',
'2B0756','2B0757'

The Cook County South Region, created from Cook County South region ('6D'), and of the following Chicago region/site/field combinations:

'2B0201'-'2B0203','2B0206','2B0210','2B0211','2B0213'-'2B0215',
'2B0217'-'2B0219','2B0221'-'2B0230','2B0234'-'2B0235','2B0237',
'2B0261'-'2B0263','2B0265',
'2B0268'-'2B0269','2B0271'-'2B0272','2B0273','2B0275'-'2B0399',
'2B0516','2B0542'-'2B0543','2B0545'-'2B0547','2B0550','2B0556',
'2B0562'-'2B0563','2B0567','2B0572','2B0574','2B05--',
'2B0768','2B0787'

(Child) Returned Home from Substitute Care

A child was defined as returning home from substitute care if his or her next living arrangement type (event^{††}) was coded as 'HMP' and his or her current placement type ("event") was defined, according to the above definition, as "Substitute Care" **AND** the corresponding case opening reason (opcode) was not coded as 'AA' or 'RA' (adoption or refugee assistance).

^{††} A variable from the "HMR Monitoring" and "Master Events" files indicating the next living arrangement for a child.

Substitute Care

Substitute Care was defined as encompassing the following Placement types:

“Relative Care,” “Family Foster Care,” “Specialized Foster Care,” “Group Home,” “Institutional Care,” **OR** having a type of living arrangement (“event”) of ‘FHA.’ (Foster Home Adoption)

A Note About Units Of Analysis And Unduplication Of Records.

The basic unit of analysis represented in both data sets used for analyses in this report is the “placement spell.” A placement spell is the period of time beginning with the child’s placement in one particular living arrangement until the time he or she is placed in a different living arrangement. Although the definition of “different living arrangement” itself differs somewhat from the HMR Monitoring Data Set and the Master Events Data Set and some other derivative data sets we used, the placement spell remains the basic unit.

Placement spells can be grouped in a number of ways. First, and corresponding to the operation of the Department, placement spells can be grouped under the case to which they correspond. One or more placement spells constitutes a case. The beginning of the first placement spell and the end of the last placement spell in a case correspond to the opening and closing, respectively, of a case. Furthermore, because a given child may have one or more cases opened and/or closed during his or her history with the Department the term “case” and child are not equivalent units of analysis. Thus, in terms of the structure of the data, placement spells are “nested” within cases, and child cases are nested within children.

Second, placement spells may be grouped under the rubric of “placement type.” Each spell may be characterized on the basis of type of service (payment) code and/or type of living arrangement code into a smaller organizational category representing the type of placement or living arrangement of a child in Department care. Herein we describe one 12-category breakdown. We have also conducted analyses in which we collapse the placement categories to define “Substitute Care.” Again, in “nesting” terms, placement spells are nested within placement types, and placement types are nested within the Substitute Care/Not Substitute Care distinction.

Third, placement spells and/or placement types may be collapsed into other categories. Although not presented in this report, using type of service codes and type of living arrangement codes, analyses can be conducted comparing outcomes across placements under the responsibility Department versus those for which private agencies bear responsibility.

Fourth, placement spells may be “summed up” to form larger categories of spells in care. For instance, out-of-home spells are defined as beginning when a child enters an out-of-home placement, moves or does not move to one or more different out-of-home placements, and ends when the child is placed in an in-home living arrangement or the case is closed.

This explanation of units of analysis is provided by way of alerting the reader to considering what tabulated figures may represent in any table presented in this report. For example, where a table presents the total number of children in a given placement type in a given fiscal year, it is important to be aware that this number is the total number of children who had a least one placement spell of the type listed that lasted at least one day during the fiscal year in question. Calculations of this type represent aggregation over all placement spells over all cases for that child in a given fiscal year. Similarly, a table presenting the total number of children served by the Department in a given fiscal year represents aggregation over all placement spells and cases for a particular child in that fiscal year. It is the number of children who had at least one placement spell of any type that lasted at least one day during that fiscal year.