

# **CHILDREN AND FAMILY RESEARCH CENTER**

## **REPORT ON CHILD SAFETY AND PERMANENCY IN ILLINOIS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is the Children and Family Research Center's third report on child safety and permanency of family relations for children who are the responsibility of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. This report includes information on outcomes through FY 99.

The Department is the state agency that responds to reports of child abuse and neglect and assures that children who come to its attention are safe and have a permanent family. If we are to understand the Department's performance in these areas, we must be cognizant of its legal and social context.

In the 1990s, state and federal laws underwent substantial change, with a stronger emphasis on achieving permanent homes for vulnerable children while maintaining their safety. The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 together with new permanency legislation in Illinois is likely to have a dramatic impact on public child welfare. This act required the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to develop a set of outcome measures and a system for rating the performance of states. This system is now in place. Unfortunately DHHS made several data collection decisions in the past that have limited their ability to accurately report on child safety and permanency.

The 1990s were also a period of great change in Department policies, court decisions, and social conditions which have had a profound impact on the number of children and families for which the Department is responsible. Families and communities vary widely in the degree to which they are affected by such social problems as child abuse and neglect as well as the related problems of poverty and drug and alcohol abuse. Court decisions and Department policies regarding children placed with relatives (kinship care) have had an impact on Department responsibilities. The following data demonstrate a pattern of increasing Department responsibility through FY 95 with subsequent decreases in caseloads and demand for services.

- In FY 90 (July 1, 1989 through June 30, 1990), 103,421 children were reported as suspected victims of abuse and neglect. This number increased to an all-time high of 139,718 in FY 95. Between FY 95 and FY 99 these reports have decreased 23% to 106,891.
- In FY 90, investigations found 38,207 children to be victims of abuse or neglect. This number increased by 40% to 53,272 in FY 95 and has subsequently declined by 36% to 34,026 in FY 99.
- Between FY 90 and FY 95 the number of children in substitute care increased 130%. Between FY 95 and FY 99, the number of children in substitute care decreased by 18% to 39,064.
- Between FY 91 and FY 95 the number of children in kinship care increased 258%, from 10,477 to 27,071. Since FY 95, the number of children in kinship care has decreased 31% to 18,611.

The data for this report comes from the Integrated Administrative Database maintained by The Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, which is compiled from the Department's administrative information systems. Since the late 1980s, the Department has provided administrative data to Chapin Hall on a quarterly basis. Chapin Hall staff then constructs a relational database for children and families involved with the Department. This database contains information on reports of child abuse and neglect (with the exception of records deleted according to state law), all children placed out of the home, and all families for which a case was opened. Data on reports of abuse and neglect are available for the last 5 years. Data on children and families for which there was an open case are available for the fiscal years from FY 90 through 1999.

These databases were originally designed to assure a timely and consistent response to reports of abuse and neglect, keep track of children in care, assure timely and accurate payment for services, and comply with federal reporting requirements. While these databases include detailed data at the case level, they were not designed to report on child outcomes. As a result, safety indicators are restricted to findings of abuse and neglect subsequent to Department involvement. Other important dimensions of child safety cannot be determined from these data. Similarly, measures of permanence of family relations are restricted to case status indicators that rely on movement of children between placements. Child well-being indicators are virtually nonexistent in this database. In addition, information about children who are served by other systems such as education, mental health, or juvenile justice is not included.

From a management point of view, it is important to have standards for comparison of current outcome performance. These standards, or benchmarks, are normally derived from an organization's past performance or from the performance of comparable organizations. While the results included in this report are compared, where possible, with prior years and other systems, these are not intended as comparisons against standards for at least two reasons. First, comparisons between child welfare systems are difficult because of differences in state laws. Second, it is not the role of the Center to establish performance standards for the Department.

## **CHILD SAFETY**

Safety is measured by indicated reports of abuse or neglect for children who come to the attention of the Department.<sup>1</sup> While it is unacceptable to have

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<sup>1</sup> Much of the background material that supports the selection of outcome indicators provided in the first report is not included here. The outcome indicators were selected based upon the child welfare literature in collaboration with a wide range of constituent groups in Illinois. Readers are referred to the first report for this material.



any child who is the responsibility of the Department abused or neglected, a 100% standard of safety is difficult to guarantee. Community and family environments, natural or foster, are ever-changing and include unpredictable risks of physical and psychological harm.

For workers charged with the responsibility for making decisions about child safety, the placement decision is one of the most difficult. Workers know they are risking child safety when deciding whether to remove child from the home. Accurately predicting abuse events is nearly impossible given the changing composition of families and communities. The child who is left at home may be nurtured by familiar and important family members or may suffer unpredictable abuse or neglect. The child who is placed into substitute care may be freed from a dangerous and oppressive situation and learn and grow or be troubled by the loss of family and familiar surroundings and begin a cycle of disruptive behavior and failed placements.

Since FY 94 children who are involved with the Department are increasingly safe.

- Since FY 95 the rate of abuse and neglect of children served in family cases has declined. In FY 95, the abuse rate for children in family cases was 18.8 per 100 children in care for 1 year. This rate was 12.0 in FY 99.
- The category of children in family cases is made up of two subgroups: children in intact family cases where no children are placed out of the home and children in non-intact family cases where some children are placed and some remain in the home. Both of these groups had decreasing rates of abuse between FY 95 and FY 99, with children in intact family cases experiencing slightly higher rates of abuse. For FY 99, 12.2 children in intact family cases per 100 in care for 1 year experience an indicated report of abuse or neglect. This rate was 10.9 for children in non-intact family cases.
- Since FY 95 the rate of abuse and neglect of children in substitute care has declined. For every 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 95, 3.5 had an indicated report of abuse or neglect. This rate was 1.9 in FY 99.

Children in substitute care are placed in a variety of out-of-home placements. Currently, the most frequent such placements in Illinois are home-of-relative, family foster care, specialized foster care, and institutions.

- Since FY 95 the rate of abuse and neglect of children in child cases with the child living in the home of a relative has declined. For every 100 children in care and living in the home of a relative for 1 year in FY 95, 3.4 had an indicated report of abuse or neglect. In FY 99 this rate was 1.6.
- The rate of abuse and neglect of children in child cases with the child living in family foster care remained fairly stable from FY 94 through FY 97. This rate averaged 4.2 children for every 100 living in a family foster home for 1 year. In FY 98 and FY 99, this rate was 2.7.
- Since FY 94 the rate of abuse and neglect of children in specialized foster care has declined. For every 100 children living in specialized foster care for 1 year in FY 94, 3.3 had an indicated report of abuse or neglect. This rate for FY 99 was 1.8.
- Between FY 94 and FY 96 the rate of abuse and neglect of children in institutional placements was stable. For every 100 children living in institutional care for 1 year during this time period, the rate of indicated reports of abuse or neglect averaged 3.2 children. This rate spiked in FY 97 to 4.1 and has since decreased to 1.5 for FY 99.

#### **PERMANENCY OF FAMILY RELATIONS**

Permanency refers to maintaining children at home or assuring timely movement to a permanent family arrangement when a placement out of the home is necessary. Results in this area indicate substantial increases in the adoption of children and the transfer of guardianship to a private person. However, large numbers of children remain in substitute care for extended periods of time.

- From FY 91 through FY 95 the rate at which children were maintained at home in family cases declined from 89.7 children per 100 children in care for 1 year to 84 children. Since then this rate has increased to 88 children per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 97 and FY 99.
- Placement rates between intact and non-intact family cases differ. In FY 99, 90 children per 100 in care for 1 year were maintained in intact families and 77 per 100 were maintained in non-intact family cases.
- The percent of children returned home within 12 months of entering substitute care declined from 35% in FY 91 to 20% in FY 95. This rate increased to 23% in FY 97. It is too soon to tell if this is an upward trend.
- The percent of children who reenter substitute care within 12 months of family reunification decreased from 23% in FY 91 to 16% in FY 98.
- The rate at which children are adopted has increased dramatically. From FY 91 through FY 95, for every 100 children in substitute care for 1 year, 3.5 to 3.4 were adopted. In FY 99 this rate was more than 4 times greater at 16.7 per 100 children in care for 1 year.
- The rate at which children have their guardianship transferred to a private person has also increased dramatically. For every 100 children in substitute care for 1 year, the guardianship transfer rate for FY 91 was nearly zero. In FY 98 this rate was 2.62 and in FY 99 it was 4.8.

When the permanency outcomes are examined by age, race, and Department region responsible for the case, differences are found. For children served in family cases, those from Cook County regions, those who are African American and children under the age of 3 all experience higher placement rates.

- African American children were placed from family cases at the rate of 15 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 99. This compares to a rate of 8 for Hispanic children and 9 for White children.
- 14 children per 100 in family cases for 1 year in FY 99 from Cook County were placed into care compared to 10 for the rest of the state.

Examining differences between groups for other permanency outcomes is best done by examining exits from care for children who entered care in the same fiscal year.

- For children who entered kinship care in Cook County in FY 90, 27% of African American children were adopted, 20% returned home and 26% remain in care. A smaller percentage of White children in this cohort have been adopted (16%) but a larger percentage returned home (43%), with 11% still in care. Comparable figures for those children who entered care in FY 95 show that 20% of African American children were adopted, 18% returned home, and 42% remain in care. For White children, 23% were adopted, 29% returned home, and 33% are still in care.
- For children entering other types of substitute care in Cook County in FY 90, 30% of African American children were adopted, 25% returned home, and 23% remain in care. For White children in this cohort, 26% were adopted, 35% returned home, and 10% remain in care. Comparable figures for FY 95 show that 23% of African American children were adopted, 20% returned home, and 43% remain in care. For White children, 24% were adopted, 27% returned home, and 34% are still in care.
- For children entering non-kinship care placements from the rest of the state in FY 90, 15% of African American children were adopted, 28% returned home, and 43% remain in care. For White children in this cohort, 11% were adopted, 43% returned home, and 22% remain in care. Comparable figures for FY 95 show that

17% of African American children were adopted, 29% returned home, and 45% remain in care. For White children, 16% were adopted, 39% returned home, and 28% are still in care.

## Chapter 1

# **THE LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT: THE OUTCOME REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF THE ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT**

The results of the Department's efforts on behalf of vulnerable children are best understood in multiple contexts. These contexts include legislative mandates; court decisions; the ecology of child abuse and neglect, which includes the communities in which these children live; the difficulties that children and families bring to the Department; and the Department's interventions. The Center's first outcome report described the legislative and legal contexts in some detail, demonstrating how the state legislature and the federal congress have a major influence on the Department. In the second report, we briefly summarized two 1997 legislative actions that greatly influence the context for Department operations. In this report we focus on new federal outcome reporting requirements that were mandated by the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (PL 105-89) (ASFA).

Section 479A of PL 105-89 specifies that the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services shall work with state and local officials to

1. Develop a set of outcome measures.
2. Base these measures on data available from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS).
3. Develop a system for rating the performance of states.
4. Prescribe regulations that will assure that states will provide the needed data.
5. Report annually to the Congress beginning May 1, 1999.

6. Develop a performance-based incentive system.

This is an important change in the federal and state child welfare partnership. As with most major changes in public policy, this policy has positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, this provision recognizes that the purpose of public child welfare is to produce positive results for children and that managing the system from an outcome perspective is an important element of public policy. Previously, child welfare, like most social services, focused on key processes such as case plans, case review, and reasonable efforts to prevent child placement with little or no attention to results. The attention to outcomes now allows administrators to identify processes that will achieve results.

Further, the Administration for Children and Families in issuing both the preliminary list (Federal Register 2/2/99) and final list of child welfare outcomes and measures (Federal Register 8/20/99) has emphasized that the desired outcomes for children under that act are safety, permanency, and well-being. A clear consensus has developed that these are the primary categories of public child welfare outcomes.

On the other hand, the specific provisions of the Act and the final list of HHS child welfare outcomes have some problems. First, some of the three measures specified by the ASFA are performance measures rather than outcome measures. The Act directs the development of a set of outcome measures and specifies the inclusion of length of stay in foster care, number of foster care placements, and number of adoptions (42 USC 679b). While the number of adoptions is clearly an outcome, the number of foster care placements is not. The number of placements that a child experiences in foster care is very important to that child and is an important performance measure for a child welfare system. However, it is not an outcome. It is not unusual when developing a set of outcome measures to confuse some key performance indicators with outcomes; as the system is developed and refined, the indicators are then placed in their proper

categories. Since it is more difficult to change legislation than agency policy, the inclusion of key performance measures in the legislation codifies them in a manner that will be difficult to clarify as the field of child welfare outcome measurement develops.

A second difficulty with the reporting provision is the specification that the outcome measures be developed as much as possible from AFCARS. This system was established by Congress in 1986 and requires states to supply specific data on children in foster care and adopted children to HHS. The specific data elements were identified and published in the Federal Register in 1993. The ASFA includes the language “to the maximum extent possible” and the provision that HHS can prescribe regulations to ensure needed data from the states. However, the final list of outcome measures is limited to data elements currently available in AFCARS and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). This results in two types of problems. One, some measures are defined in a manner that does not produce an accurate picture of the performance of the system. Second, some key outcome measures cannot be included in the report. Both of these problems will be illustrated in the next section of this chapter.

Determining an effective set of outcome measures for any social service is a process that includes selecting measures that are thought to be useful, identifying data that can be collected efficiently to produce accurate reports, and refining the measures as the outcome system is used to manage the service delivery system. This is a dynamic process that requires continuous improvement. For example, as results of the outcome-focused information system are used to manage the system, unintended consequences may indicate the need to add measures that act as checks and balances. For example, one provision of the ASFA is a response to a perception that the previous law’s requirement for making reasonable efforts to prevent placement of children was resulting in keeping children in unsafe family settings. Consequently, current law clarified the need for assessment of the child’s health and safety as a balance to permanency.



Another example of the dynamic nature of outcome management information systems is the creation of new programs that create the need for new outcome measures. While placement of children with extended family is hardly new, the recognition of these arrangements in policy is recent. The ASFA exempts children being cared for by relatives from the 15 of 22 months in care time limit provision for the initiation of termination of parental rights. This generates a need for an additional set of outcome measures that distinguishes between outcomes from extended family placements and other placements.

Clearly Congress has an interest in certain child welfare outcomes and did not want to place a large reporting burden on the states. HHS has acted in a manner that was consistent with this intent. At the same time, it is in the states' interests to assist the development of the most accurate outcome measures.

#### **COMPARISON OF HHS AND ILLINOIS OUTCOMES MEASURES**

The Children and Family Research Center as well as the Department have been developing outcome measures for several years. A comparison of Center and Department measures with those of HHS will illustrate some of the difficulties outlined above (Table 1.1). Center staff have reviewed the literature on outcomes in public child welfare and met with many groups of constituents to develop the outcomes reported by the Center. The Department's Research Office has developed a set of indicators that are included on their Local Area Network (LAN) web site.

The developmental nature of an outcomes reporting system can be seen from the safety outcomes. None of the systems currently includes measures for all of the desired categories. Safety outcomes are not included in any of the three systems for children reported but not investigated, those reported and investigated

**Table 1.1 A Comparison of Outcomes Reported by USDHHS, the Center, and the Local Area Network (LAN) Website**

<b>Safety Outcomes</b>			
Outcome	HHS indicators	Center report indicators	LAN website indicators
Safety – Abuse or neglect for children reported but not investigated.			
Safety – Abuse or neglect for children reported, investigated, and not indicated.			
Safety – Abuse or neglect for children with an indicated report of abuse or neglect.	Of all children who were victims of child abuse and/or neglect during the reporting period, what percentage had another substantiated or indicated report within a 12-month period?		For children with a substantiated report of abuse and/or neglect, the percentage with another substantiated report within 12 months.
Safety – Abuse or neglect for children reported, investigated, and indicated with no case opening.			For children with substantiated reports of abuse and/or neglect who are not served in an open family or child case, the percent with another substantiated report within 3, 6, 12 months.

**Table 1.1 A Comparison of Outcomes Reported by USDHHS, the Center, and the Local Area Network (LAN) Website (continued)**

<b>Safety Outcomes (continued)</b>			
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>HHS indicators</b>	<b>Center report indicators</b>	<b>LAN website indicators</b>
Safety – Abuse or neglect for children reported, investigated, and indicated with a family case opened.		For children in family cases anytime during the year, the percent and rate per 100 child-years with a substantiated report of abuse or neglect during the year.  This is also reported for children in “intact,” “non-intact,” and home-of-parent placements.	For children living at home in a new family case, the percent with a substantiated report within 12 months.  For children living at home in a new family case with a substantiated report of abuse and/or neglect, the percent with another substantiated report within 12 months.  Both indicators are reported for intact and non-intact families.
Safety – Abuse or neglect for children reported, investigated, and indicated with child case opened.			
Safety – Child safety after case closure.			

**Table 1.1 A Comparison of Outcomes Reported by USDHHS, the Center, and the Local Area Network (LAN) Website (continued)**

<b>Safety Outcomes (continued)</b>			
Outcome	HHS indicators	Center report indicators	LAN website indicators
Safety – Abuse or neglect for children reported, investigated, and indicated who have a child case opened and are placed out-of-home.	Of all children who were in foster care during the reporting period, what percentage was the subject of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff?	For children in “substitute” care, the percent and rate per 100 child-years with a substantiated report of abuse or neglect during the year.  Also reported for children living in:  Relative care Adoptive placement Family foster care Specialized foster care Group homes Institutions	For children living in substitute care during the year, the percent and rate per 100 child-years with a substantiated report during placement.
<b>Permanency Outcomes</b>			
Permanency – Children maintained at home.		Percent of children and rate (per 100 child-years) who are placed from family cases.	Number of children in intact family cases who enter out-of-home placement within 6 months.

**Table 1.1 A Comparison of Outcomes Reported by USDHHS, the Center, and the Local Area Network (LAN) Website**  
*(continued)*

<b>Permanency Outcomes</b> <i>(continued)</i>			
Outcome	HHS indicators	Center report indicators	LAN website indicators
Reduced time in foster care to reunification without increasing reentry.	<p>Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, what percentage was reunified in less than 12 months, 12–24 month, 24–36 months, 36–48 months, and 48 or more months?</p> <p>Of all children who entered foster care during the reporting period, what percentage re-entered care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode?</p>	<p>Percent of children returned home from substitute care within 6, 12, 18, and 24 months.</p> <p>Percent of children living at home who were previously in substitute care and then re-enter substitute care within 6, 12, 18, and 24 months.</p>	Time to reunification, adoption, and other exists for children who first enter out-of-home care under the age of 10.
Reduced time in foster care to adoption.	<p>Of all children who exited care to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care in less than 12 months, 12–24 months, 24–36 months, 36–48 months, and 48 or more months.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>		

**Table 1.1 A Comparison of Outcomes Reported by USDHHS, the Center, and the Local Area Network (LAN) Website**  
*(continued)*

<b>Permanency Outcomes</b> <i>(continued)</i>			
Outcome	HHS indicators	Center report indicators	LAN website indicators
Reduced time in foster care to adoption. <i>(continued)</i>	Of all children who exited care to a finalized adoption who were age 3 or older at the time of entry into care, what percentage exited care in less than 12 months, 12–24 months, 24–36 months, 36–48 months, and 48 or more months?		
Increased permanency for children in foster care.	For all children who exited the child welfare system, what percentage left to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?  For all children who exited and were identified as having a diagnosed disability, what percentage left to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?  <i>(continued)</i>	Percent of children and rate (per 100 child-years) in substitute care who are adopted.  Percent of children and rate (per 100 child-years) whose adoption disrupts prior to consummation.  Percent of children and rate (per 100 child-years) in substitute care where guardianship has been transferred to a private person.	Percent of children reunified or adopted during a fiscal year that did not return to care within 6 and 12 months.

**Table 1.1 A Comparison of Outcomes Reported by USDHHS, the Center, and the Local Area Network (LAN) Website**  
*(continued)*

<b>Permanency Outcomes</b> <i>(continued)</i>			
Outcome	HHS indicators	Center report indicators	LAN website indicators
Increased permanency for children in foster care. <i>(continued)</i>	<p>For all children who exited the system and were age 12 or older at the time of their most recent entry into care, what percentage left to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?</p> <p>For all children who exited the system, what percentage by racial/ethnic category left to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?</p> <p>Of all children exiting the system to emancipation, what percentage was 12 or younger at the time of entry into care?</p>		

**Table 1.1 A Comparison of Outcomes Reported by USDHHS, the Center, and the Local Area Network (LAN) Website (continued)**

<b>Performance Measures</b>			
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>HHS indicators</b>	<b>Center report indicators</b>	<b>LAN website indicators</b>
Median length of stay in out-of-home care.	Median length of stay for children in care, those exiting care, and those in care.		Cohort table. Permanency breakdowns by race.
Reduced placements of young children in group homes or institutions.	For all children who entered care during the reporting period and were age 12 or younger at the time of their most recent placement, what percentage was placed in a group home or an institution?		
Increased placement stability.	Of all children served who had been in care for less than 12 months, 12–24 months, 24–36 months, 36–48 months, or 48 or more months, what percentage had no more than two placement settings during the time period?		Fact Book presents the percentage of children placed in out-of-home care during a fiscal year who experience more than three living arrangements during 6 and 12 months and the number of children to experience more than three placements within a fiscal year.



but not indicated and child safety after case closure. These are important safety indicators that require development. The Center is currently working on developing these indicators. Hopefully HHS will also continue to develop the measures they use to judge the states.

Another category that is not included in the HHS outcomes indicators is children living in family cases. While the primary interest of the ASFA is children in state custody, large numbers of children are served while living at home. In Illinois these are children living in “intact” and “non-intact” families. More than 28,000 children were living in family cases at some time during the year FY 99 (Chapter 3). The above examples are just two of several categories of outcomes that are important to develop so that the child welfare system is judged based upon a comprehensive set of outcomes.

An example of an indicator that is not an accurate reflection of the child welfare system’s performance is the HHS permanency measures, which are defined in terms of percentages of those exiting the system. One of these measures is defined as, for all of those children who exited the child welfare system, what percentage left to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship. The difficulty with this measure is that it is based on those children who exited the system; thus it simply gives a breakdown of the three major types of permanency exits from care and does not indicate if the system has performed well or not. For example, for FY 98, for 15,448 children exiting care in Illinois, were these percentages 37.6% were reunified, 32% were adopted, and 9.1% had guardianship transferred to a private person. For comparison purposes let’s say that another state had 5,000 children exiting care with 50% reunified, 20% adopted, and no children leaving through guardianship. Which state’s performance was better? It is not possible to answer this question with these data.

One alternative to the HHS measure is examining the experience of entry cohorts. For example, in Illinois 9,131 children entered substitute care in FY 97. By the end of FY 99, 24% were reunified, 8% were adopted, and 1% exited through

guardianship. Let's say another state had 3,000 children entering care during the same time with 35% reunified, 5% adopted, and no children exiting through guardianship. It is easy to make comparisons between these states based upon this information. The second state had a greater proportion of children who entered care in the same time period achieve permanency and this occurred through a higher rate of family reunification. However, Illinois demonstrated a higher rate of adoption.

These are just a few of the problems with the HHS indicators. It is not the intent of this discussion to critique the entire set of indicators or the need for comparisons across states. If management of child welfare systems through child outcomes is to become a useful reality, data that compares systems must be available. The outcome indicators determined by HHS are a good beginning. Efforts focused on continuous refinement of these indicators are needed.



## Chapter 2

### **ECOLOGY OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

The Department of Children and Family Services responds to child abuse and neglect within a complex context of children, families, communities, and the larger society in the economically and socially diverse state of Illinois. To understand safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children who are victims of child abuse or neglect, it is important to understand this context. This chapter draws upon available data to briefly describe this context.

Recent theories on the causes of child maltreatment recognize the role of ecological factors in the development of a social interaction model that recognizes multiple causes. This model emphasizes viewing child maltreatment within a context larger than the individual pathology of a parent. Rather, child maltreatment is viewed in the context of family, community, and society (Garbarino, 1977).

Research indicates that several factors occurring at the same time can result in the abuse or neglect of a child (Wells, 1995). Factors occurring in various combinations that place children at risk include poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, parental personality characteristics, intergenerational transmission of abusive parenting, child characteristics, unemployment, high-risk neighborhoods, inadequate parenting knowledge, marital status, and stressful life events (National Research Council, 1993).

Child abuse and neglect in Illinois are as diverse and complex as the multicausal social interaction model indicates. Some of the factors that have placed Illinois children at high risk can be attributed to social and economic conditions, including single-parent families, concentrated inner-city poverty, and chronic unemployment. The rampant spread of cocaine use was another important factor. The drug testing of infants at birth brought many substance-

exposed infants (SEIs) into the child welfare system. In FY 86, 297 infants tested positive for intrauterine substance exposure; this number rose to 3,346 infants in FY 95 (Testa, 1996). The current situation with low unemployment and decreased drug use affects these trends in a positive manner. For example, since FY 95 indicated reports of substance-exposed infants have dramatically (51%) decreased to only 1,645 cases in FY 99.

### **THE LOCAL CONTEXT**

Child abuse and neglect occur within a family and a community. The diversity of families and communities in Illinois is another factor that makes developing a state response that balances child safety with the permanency of family relations difficult. Geographic diversity in a state that ranges from Rockford to Cairo and Chicago to East St. Louis is one dimension. In addition, social circumstances such as poverty and female-headed households, which are frequently associated with higher levels of child abuse and neglect, are unequally distributed across communities. One way to understand this diversity is to examine data for Child and Adolescent Local Area Networks (LANs), which are organized to respond to the needs of children and their families by providing community-based services. Illinois has 62 Child and Adolescent LANs.

Research indicates that poverty is highly correlated with child abuse and neglect (National Research Council, 1993). This is likely to reflect a complex interaction of poverty with other situations such as female-headed households and problems such as mental illness and drug abuse. In Illinois, dramatic differences exist in the percentage of children living in poverty across communities:

- 17% of children in Illinois under the age of 18 live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level.
- 3% of children in LAN 39 (Dupage County) live in poor families.
- 29% of children in LAN 1 (the southernmost LAN) live in poor families.
- 51% of children in LAN 6 (East St. Louis) live in poor families.

Similar variations exist within Cook County:

- 2% of children in LAN 37A live in poor families.
- 73% of children LAN 76 live in poverty (LAN Website).

Numbers of female-headed households show similar differences.

- 17% of all households in Illinois are headed by females:
- 9% of households in LAN 39 are headed by females.
- 14% of households in LAN 1 are headed by females.
- 51% of households in LAN 6 are headed by females.

In Cook County:

- 8% of households in LAN 37A are headed by females.
- 60% of households in LAN 76 are headed by females.

Comparing the poverty indicators with the rates of child abuse and neglect demonstrates the correlation between poverty and child abuse and neglect. During FY 97;

- 13 children per 1,000 throughout Illinois were indicated victims of abuse or neglect.
- 4 children per 1,000 in LAN 39 were victims of abuse or neglect.
- 10 children per 1,000 in LAN 1 were indicated victims.
- 24 children per 1,000 in LAN 6 were victims of abuse or neglect.

In Cook County:

- 2 children per 1,000 in LAN 37A were indicated victims of child abuse or neglect.
- 23 children per 1,000 in LAN 76 were victims of abuse or neglect.<sup>1</sup>

The rate of child abuse and neglect of 13 children per 1,000 may not represent the true rate at which abuse and neglect occurs in Illinois. Many people believe that a large number of cases of child abuse and neglect do not come to the attention of child protective services. For example, the Child Welfare League of America reports rates ranging from 1.6 children per

1,000 to 53.6 children per 1,000. They report a median of 13.6 children per 1,000 for the states included in their study (CWLA, 1998–99). In comparison, a large national study reports incidence rates of 23 children per 1,000 when using a rather stringent harm standard and 42 children per 1,000 when using an endangerment standard (Sedlak & Broadhurst, 1996).

### **Abuse and Neglect Reports: Investigations and Results**

The Department seeks to fulfill its mandates of safety and permanency through the child protection and substitute care systems. The number of cases that a child welfare system works with impacts system design. For example, an administrator of an agency in a small community with 100 children may know the individual situations of these children and families, whereas an administrator of an agency that is responsible for 50,000 children must rely on resources other than personal knowledge to achieve safety and permanency. Changes in the volume of reports over time are also important in understanding agency responses.

For DCFS, the child protection function starts with calls to the State Central Register Hotline. The number of these calls increased each year between

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<sup>1</sup> LAN data comes from the LAN Factbook. <http://sophie.uchicago.edu/lan/illans>.

FY 90 and FY 95 (Table 2.1). In FY 90 there were 255,887 incoming calls (701 per day). The volume of calls reached an all-time high in FY 95 with 377,467 calls (1,034 per day). In FY 99, there were 304,945 incoming calls (835 per day).<sup>2</sup>

The number of calls is not the same as the number of children reported as abused or neglected. Some calls do not meet the criteria of a report. Even when a call does meet the criteria for a report there may be several reports for the same incident. For example, a particular child may be reported by a teacher and a doctor, or the report may simply identify a family. Between FY 90 and FY 95, the number of Illinois children reported as victims of child abuse and neglect increased 35% from 103,421 children to 139,720 (Table 2.1). Since FY 95 this number has decreased by nearly 24% to 106,891 in FY 99.

While it is difficult to make comparisons across states because of different reporting laws and systems, it is useful to place Illinois in a national perspective. The most recent statistics on the volume of abuse and neglect reports per 1,000 children in the population for several large states, including Illinois, were

California	52.1
Michigan	56.2
New York	52.0
Texas	27.6
Illinois	39.3
Pennsylvania	8.2 (CWLA, 1998–99).

In FY 98, investigations of the 113,892 child abuse and neglect allegations in Illinois resulted in 36,250 (31.8%) children being indicated as victims. That is, credible evidence was gathered that could cause a reasonable person to believe that a child had been abused or

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<sup>2</sup> The volume and trend information in this section is from the Office of Quality Assurance, Illinois DCFS Executive Statistical Summary, unless otherwise noted.



neglected. This compares to a total of 139,718 suspected child abuse and neglect reports with 53,272 (38%) indicated in FY 95.

**Table 2.1 Abuse and Neglect Reports: Investigations and Results**

	<b>FY 90</b>	<b>FY 95</b>	<b>FY 99</b>
Number of calls reporting child abuse and neglect	255,887	377,467	304,945
Number of children reported as suspected victims of abuse or neglect	103,421	139,720	106,891
Number of children found to be abused or neglected	38,207	53,272	34,026
Number of indicated family reports	21,890	28,709	19,246
Number of children taken into protective custody	6,148	9,037	6,375

In FY 90, 103,421 suspected child abuse and neglect reports resulted in 38,207 indicated cases (36.9%) (Table 2.1). In 1996, the percent of reports that were substantiated ranged from a low of 11% in Kansas to a high of 61% in Connecticut. Illinois was near the national average of 35%, with 31% of all reports identifying abuse or neglect (Wang & Daro, 1997).<sup>3</sup>

When a child is judged to be in imminent danger of abuse or neglect, the Department, a law enforcement officer, or a physician can take the child into protective custody. The number of children taken into protective custody can be viewed as an indicator of the seriousness of abuse and neglect confronting children in the state. In FY 90, 6,148 children in Illinois were taken into protective custody (5.9% of all child reports). The number of children taken into protective custody reached a high of 9,037 children in FY 95 (6.5% of all child reports). In FY 99, 6,375 children were taken into protective custody (6.0% of all child reports) (Table 2.1).

Child deaths due to child abuse or neglect are another indicator of the severity of the problem. The rate of child abuse fatalities has increased nationally by 20% since 1985. At least three children die each day as a result of child abuse or neglect (Wang & Daro, 1997). The Child Welfare League of America (1998–1999) reports that there were 2.4 maltreatment-related fatalities per 100,000 children in Illinois in 1990 and 1992, and 2.9 in 1994. The 1996 rates for states similar to Illinois were

Michigan	not available
Illinois	2.6
Texas	2.0
New York	1.8
Pennsylvania	1.1
California	0.6 (CWLA, 1998–99).

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<sup>3</sup> This is based on data from 37 states.

Clearly, the 1990s has been a decade of great change in abuse and neglect in Illinois and across the country. Illinois data on child abuse and neglect show that the percentage of indicated reports increases from 1990 to 1995 and subsequently decreased through 1999. Illinois is near the national average in the rate of reporting of child abuse and neglect and below the rates of other large states, except for the state of Texas. Illinois is about average in the percentage of reports that are determined to identify a child as a victim of abuse or neglect.

### **The DCFS Caseload**

The increases in child abuse and neglect reporting together with the Department's policies (e.g. kinship care) resulted in increases in the Department's caseload in the early to mid 1990s. The Department's caseload has substantially decreased since FY 95. The caseload consists of families with their children at home (intact) plus those with children in placement (non-intact). The total child and family caseload has decreased nearly 23% since FY 95 (Table 2.2). The number of intact family cases has decreased from 14,565 in FY 95 to 9,103 in FY 99, a 37.5% decline. The number of non-intact family cases has decreased by nearly 18%.

### **Children in Placement with the Department**

The decades of the 1980s and 1990s were times of nationwide growth in the number of children in substitute care. In Illinois, the period from 1985 to 1995 was a time of unprecedented growth. One key to understanding the current substitute care population in Illinois is the changes that have occurred in the Department's use of home-of-relative placements, which is the largest category of out-of-home placements for Illinois children.

**Table 2.2 Caseload Changes Since FY 95**

	<b>FY 95</b>	<b>FY 97</b>	<b>FY 99</b>	<b>% Change FY 95 to 99</b>
Total child and family caseload	66,438	67,926	51,068	-23.1%
Number of intact family cases	14,565	12,350	9,103	-37.5%
Number of non-intact family cases	18,171	18,563	14,911	-17.9%
Number of children in substitute care	47,862	51,331	39,064	-18.3%
Number of children in kinship care	27,071	29,124	18,611	-31.2%

**Home-of-relative care in Illinois.** Kinship care was a placement option long before the creation of the Department of Children and Family Services in 1964. The courts were always able to assign children to the custody and guardianship of their relatives. With the establishment of DCFS, the courts began to grant custody and guardianship to the Department, which would then determine whether the relative placement was in the child's best interest. Until 1977, the children placed in kinship care accounted for no more than 15% of all children in the Department's custody (Testa, 1997).

However, kinship care in Illinois began to change because of a State Supreme Court decision (*Youakim v. Miller*, 1974) and a United States Supreme Court decision (*Miller v. Youakim*, 1977). This ruling resulted in the Department extending full monthly boarding payments to all kinship caregivers regardless of whether they became licensed or not, the most generous relative care payment policy in the nation (Testa, 1996).

In the mid-1980s, the Department further established separate and less stringent approval standards for certifying kinship homes as foster family homes. Two other administrative changes helped to expand the home-of-relative program: (1) the Thorton decision, which required DCFS to take custody of children who had been left with relatives by absent parents; and (2) a ruling by the Cook County Juvenile Court that effectively stopped guardianship as one path out of care (Testa, Shook, Cohen, & Woods, 1996).

A dramatic increase in the number of children in kinship care followed these events. Between 1986 and 1991, the number of children in kinship care rose from 3,718 to 10,477, an annual rate increase of 23%. At the same time the number of children in non-relative care only increased 6% (Testa, 1996). In June of 1994, kinship care made up 55% of the placement of children in the custody of the Department (Testa, 1997). The number of children in kinship care reached 27,071 in FY 95 (Testa, 1996). According to the Child Welfare League of America, Illinois had the highest rate of kinship care in the country. Illinois had 8.8 children per 1,000 in kinship care whereas the median for the 39 states reporting was 1.1 child per 1,000 (Petit &

Curtis, 1997). The rates per 1,000 children in the population for states similar to Illinois in 1996 were

California	not available
Pennsylvania	not available
Illinois	9.0
New York	3.5
Michigan	1.7
Texas	0.4 (CWLA, 1998–99).

In July of 1995 the Department implemented reforms in the home-of-relative program. First, the Department stopped taking into custody those children in relative care arrangements with no protective need. It offered these families support services to address financial and legal problems that might threaten the living arrangement. Second, the Department implemented a single foster home licensing system that eliminated the separate approval process for relatives. The Department continues to place children in unlicensed kinship care if the home passes basic safety and criminal checks. Children in these placements are supported by a level of payment that the state says is needed to maintain “a livelihood compatible with health and well-being” (Testa, 1997). Since FY 95 the number of children in home-of-relative placement has decreased by 31% to 18,611 (Table 2.2).

### **THE NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

The Multistate Foster Care Data Archive is a project of The Chapin Hall Center for Children that provides a broader context in which to understand the growth in the substitute care population. This database was built from the computerized case records that state agencies use to track children living in child welfare placements. Twelve states now participate in this research: Alabama, Illinois, California, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New

Mexico, New York, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin. More than half of the United States foster care population resides in these states (Wulczyn, Goerge, & Brunner, 1999).

Some of the major changes in caseloads in these states include:

- California's caseload has grown steadily since 1983 with a pronounced period of growth from 1987 to 1989.
- In Illinois, caseload growth accelerated in 1988, leveled off in 1996, and has since started to decline.
- New York's foster care caseload grew rapidly from 1986 to 1991 and has been steadily declining since 1991.
- Between 1989 and 1995, Alabama's foster caseload declined slightly each year. After 1995, caseloads began to grow.
- Caseloads in Maryland, Missouri, and Wisconsin have grown steadily over time.
- Between 1983 and 1987, Michigan's foster care caseload increased by nearly two-thirds.

The substitute care placements in Illinois consist of children who are placed in foster care, relative care, institutional care, and group-home care. The total number of children in substitute care at the end of FY 99 was 39,064. From FY 95 through FY 97 the substitute care population decreased by 18% (Table 2.2).

The prevalence rates, which express how many children are in out-of-home care per 1,000 children in a state's overall population, have increased in the United States from 3.9 in 1962 to 6.6 in 1996.<sup>4</sup> The 1995 rate for Illinois of 17.1 was the highest in the country. In 1996 only the District of Columbia had a higher rate. For five large states the rates in 1996 were

Illinois	17.3
New York	11.7

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<sup>4</sup> This is the most recent year for which comparison data exists.



Michigan	6.2
California	4.1
Texas	2.8 (CWLA, 1998–1999).

## Chapter 3

### CHILD SAFETY OUTCOMES

Child safety is assessed through indicators of abuse or neglect 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. This chapter reports on child safety for children in “family” cases, children in substitute care, and by child living arrangements. For purposes of comparison, results are reported by fiscal year for the last 5 years. When possible, comparisons to other states are included. A complete set of safety indicators includes all situations where the Department becomes 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.

Outcome results need to be interpreted in light of other factors including characteristics of communities, families, and children. For example, children who come to the attention of the Department from poor neighborhoods for reasons of neglect present very different challenges compared to children who live in rural areas and are victims of some form of abuse. The community’s role in identifying potential victims, as well as the role of the local police and court system, is important in understanding which children come to the attention of the Department. In addition, understanding child safety outcomes requires linking these results to actions of the Department and others involved in child protection such as the court. This includes the ways in which workers implement state law and Department policy, the services that are available, and the reactions of the children to these services including placement out of the home.

Safety outcomes data come from the DCFS integrated database maintained by The Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. The database contains data from

the Department's administrative information systems and is updated quarterly. The child abuse and neglect information system known as CANTS is combined with the child placement information systems (MARS/CYCIS) to yield safety results. Operational definitions for the safety indicators were developed with the staff of the Department and The Chapin Hall Center for Children and are included in the appendix of this report.

### **SUMMARY OF SAFETY RESULTS**

This report begins by providing a summary of the safety results for children being served in family cases, substitute care, and the major types of substitute care placements for Department wards. More complete results for each of these safety measure follow the summary. Safety results for children served in FY 94 are taken from the last report because the database can only be used to produce safety results for the last 5 years due to state laws covering deletion of child protective services data. Safety results for children in family cases in FY 94 are not included because this is a new indicator in this report.

The rate of abuse or neglect for children being served in family cases demonstrates a decline from FY 95 (18.8 per 100 children in care for 1 year) through FY 99 (12.0 per 100 children in care for 1 year) (Table 3.1). Children in family cases include children in intact family as well as non-intact family cases. Rates of abuse or neglect in these two situations show the same decrease. Rates of abuse or neglect for children in non-intact family cases are somewhat lower than those for children in intact family cases. For non-intact family cases, 13.3 children per 100 in care for 1 year were abused or neglected in FY 95, declining to 10.9 for FY 99. This compares to an abuse or neglect rate of 19.7 per 100 children in intact family care for 1 year for FY 95, declining to 12.2 for FY 99.

**Table 3.1 Summary of Safety Results**

	<b>FY 94</b>	<b>FY 95</b>	<b>FY 96</b>	<b>FY 97</b>	<b>FY 98</b>	<b>FY 99</b>
Children in family cases		18.8	14.0	13.3	13.4	12.0
Children in intact family cases		19.7	14.3	13.6	13.8	12.2
Children in non-intact family cases		13.3	11.8	11.2	10.5	10.9
Children in substitute care	3.0	3.5	2.8	2.8	2.0	1.9
Children in relative care	2.6	3.4	2.3	2.2	1.7	1.6
Children in family foster care	3.8	4.3	4.2	4.4	2.7	2.7
Children in specialized foster care	3.3	3.2	2.8	2.4	2.1	1.7
Children in institutional placements	3.0	3.3	3.3	4.1	1.7	1.5
Children in group-home placements	2.6	3.0	3.1	3.5	1.1	1.9
Children in pre-adoptive placements	1.7	0.0	0.8	1.9	0.0	0.3

*Note.* The values represent number of children abused or neglected per 100 children in care for 1 year.

Abuse or neglect for children in substitute care shows a similar pattern of decrease since FY 95. The overall rate was 3.5 children per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 95 with a subsequent reduction to 1.9 for FY 99. This rate varied somewhat by type of substitute care. The majority of Department wards are placed with relatives and these placements had a recurrence rate of 3.4 per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 95, decreasing to 1.6 in FY 99. Children in family foster home placements have a higher rate of abuse or neglect with 4.3 per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 95, 4.2 per 100 for FY 96, and 4.4 per 100 for FY 97. This rate has decreased to 2.7 per 100 children in care for 1 year for the last 2 fiscal years.

**ABUSE OR NEGLECT SUBSEQUENT TO DEPARTMENT INVOLVEMENT: CHILDREN IN FAMILY CASES**

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 but no case is opened because the child is judged to be safe. Frequently in these situations the family is referred to local service providers for assistance. In some cases reports are indicated by workers, the child is judged to be safe, remains at home, 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 with the possibility of placing the child into substitute care. Sometimes when a child is placed into substitute care siblings remain in the home. The children remaining at home are counted as children in non-intact family cases. This rather complex set of decisions produces several categories of safety indicators.

### **Abuse or Neglect for Children in Family Cases**

This report defines children in family cases to include children in intact family cases as well as children in non-intact family cases. Since the Department does not have an indicator for intact or non-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. First families with children in placement at the time of family case opening are eliminated, then to find the children in these intact families, clients over the age of 18 and married teens over the age of 16 who did not have an open child case are eliminated. The remaining children are counted for this group.

The results reported here are somewhat different from the last report. While Center staff was developing the capacity to report on these safety indicators, the American Humane Association (AHA) was contracted to conduct a special study of safety in intact families and to assist in the development of relevant safety indicators. The American Humane Association was selected for this work because of its experience and expertise in working with large complex data systems and their previous experience conducting the safety analysis included in the Center's first outcomes report. In addition, the last report included results on children whose cases were opened in home-of-parent placements. This category is now included in family cases and not presented separately.

**Indicator:** Percent of children with an indicated report in a family case per fiscal year. Rate per 100 children in care for 1 year with an indicated report in a family case per fiscal year.

Table 3.2 includes the percent of children who were victims of subsequent abuse or neglect and the rate per 100 children living in family cases for 1 year. This table includes the number of children in family cases with an indicated report for each of the last 5 fiscal years, the total number of children living in a family

**Table 3.2 Number and Rate of Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children Living in Family Cases by Fiscal Year**

Case Type/Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Children Living With Family Case <sup>b</sup>	Indicated Reports <sup>c</sup>	Rate of Abuse or Neglect (%)	Mean Duration (days)	Rate per 100 Child-Years
Family cases					
1995	49,459	5,007	10.1	197	18.8
1996	51,984	4,078	7.8	204	14.0
1997	46,399	3,306	7.1	196	13.3
1998	36,508	2,610	7.1	195	13.4
1999	28,171	1,814	6.4	196	12.0
Intact family cases					
1995	43,763	4,493	10.3	190	19.7
1996	46,802	3,650	7.8	199	14.3
1997	41,954	2,957	7.0	189	13.6
1998	32,814	2,336	7.1	188	13.8
1999	25,203	1,595	6.3	190	12.2
Non-intact family cases					
1995	5,696	514	9.0	248	13.3
1996	5,182	428	8.3	255	11.8
1997	4,445	349	7.9	257	11.2
1998	3,694	274	7.4	257	10.5
1999	2,968	219	7.4	247	10.9

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal Year 1999 is through June 30, 1999.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with family cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>c</sup> Number of children with indicated reports of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the family case opened.

case sometime during the year, and the average number of days that children remained in these family cases for the two subcategories of family cases: intact and non-intact.

The rate per 100 children in care for 1 year is used because simple percentages do not reflect the length of time a child is in a particular family situation and thus underestimate the rate of abuse or neglect. A child with an indicated report who has been involved with the Department for only 1 month is counted equally as a child with an indicated report who has been in care for 11 months. As a result, attention to developing safety indicators that take time in care into consideration has been increasing (Lowman, Kotch, Jong, & Browne, 1998). Center staff consulted with the Illinois Statistics Office of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for assistance with refining the safety indicators to account for time in care. Doug Simpson, Peter Imrey, Olga Geling, and Susan Butkus (1998) demonstrated that the simple percentage typically used in reporting safety results underrepresented the true rate of abuse and neglect and suggested a rate that accounts for time in care. This rate involves taking into consideration the average number of days in care for all the children that have been in the care of the Department during a given time period. The result is an abuse and neglect rate per 100 child-years rather than per 100 children. The term 100 child-years may be a little confusing. An equivalent way of thinking about this is as a rate per 100 children living in a given arrangement for 1 full year.

The rate of abuse or neglect per 100 children in family care for 1 year has decreased from 18.8 children for FY 95 to 12.0 for FY 99. The rate of abuse or neglect for children in non-intact family cases is lower than that of children in intact family cases. For FY 95 13.3 children per 100 in non-intact family care for 1 year were victims of abuse or neglect while this rate was 19.7 for children living in intact family care. These rates have decreased to 10.9 per 100 children living in non-intact family care for 1 year in FY 99 and 12.2 for children in intact families.



**The national context.** Although the rate of indicated reports for children in intact families has decreased over the last 5 years, there may be reason to be concerned with the magnitude of the rate. The national data that is available to use as a basis of comparison is limited. In a national study of recurrence of maltreatment, Fluke, Yuan, and Edwards (1998) report recurrence rates for 10 states including Illinois. Using data for 1994 and 1995, they found a recurrence rate of 15% in 6 months and 20% for 12 months. The rate for Illinois was 16% for 6 months and 21% for a 12-month period. It is important to note that these rates are for substantiated (indicated) abuse or neglect reports subsequent to a prior substantiated abuse or neglect report. This includes all subsequent abuse or neglect regardless of whether a case was opened, whether services were provided to a child or family, or a child was placed out-of-home.

In addition, comparing this abuse rate to that of the general population would be helpful. The rate of indicated abuse or neglect for all children in Illinois is, however, not known. It is commonly thought that only a small percentage of children who are abused or neglected actually come to the attention of child protective systems. The Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN, 1996) reported that child protective service systems investigated less than one-half of the children recognized as abused or neglected by any source. This study reports incidence rates ranging from 2.3% to 4.2% of all children. Using state child protective services reporting systems, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA, 1997) reports abuse and neglect rates ranging from 2.3% (abuse only) to 3.8%, with a median across states of 2.3%. While these two sets of estimates are not strictly comparable, they provide a range of child abuse and neglect incidence rates.

Although the abuse and neglect rates reported for Illinois are within the American Humane Association's 1-year rate for the 10 states, the abuse rate for children in intact families and the AHA rate are both well above the national incidence rate reported by the CWLA. While it is not possible to reconcile these differences, it is

likely that children in family cases are a special population who are at more risk of abuse or neglect since most of these families were the subject of a previous indicated report of abuse or neglect. Also, since the Department is working closely with these families, they are under closer surveillance and subsequent abuse or neglect may be more likely to be identified.

### **Abuse or Neglect for Children Subsequent to the Department Opening a Child Case with Placement in Substitute Care**

When a worker judges that safety concerns require opening a child case and a judge concurs, the child is frequently placed outside of the home. The child may be placed with a relative, a foster family, or some special placement such as a group home. Safety results for children in substitute care and by type of substitute care placement are presented here.

**Indicator:** Percent with an indicated report subsequent to the Department opening a child case and placing the child in substitute care. Rate per 100 children in care for 1 year with an indicated report subsequent to the Department opening a child case and placing the child in substitute care.

Because of characteristics of the administrative data systems maintained by the Department it was necessary to construct three decision rules to produce rates for this indicator. The first rule establishes that the Department is responsible for a case if that case is open 7 days or longer; those cases open less than 7 days were dropped from this analysis. 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 may reverse this decision. This decision rule eliminates these situations. The rule may also eliminate some very short-term 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 only when it occurs 7 or more days after the start of a placement. The Department's child abuse and neglect information system does not record the date of an 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. The second decision rule makes it more likely that the indicator includes 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. Consequently this rule eliminates these short-term placements.

Results from this analysis must be interpreted carefully. This measure includes all indicated reports of abuse or neglect dated after Department involvement without regard to perpetrator and may not reflect actions of the Department. For example, in some cases, the perpetrator of the abuse may be someone other than the caretaker of the child who had access to the child in a normal community environment. In other cases, the perpetrator may be the caretaker with whom the Department placed the child. Whereas the latter situation is the responsibility of the Department, the former may not be. However, this indicator provides a base rate that can be used to compare results over time. Limited analysis by perpetrator of the abuse or neglect is presented in this report.

The rate of abuse for children in substitute care has decreased for the last 5 years (Table 3.3). Rates of abuse and neglect subsequent to Department involvement adjusted for time in care show a decline from 3.5 children per 100 children in care for 1 year abused or neglected in FY 95 to 1.9 in FY 99.

**Table 3.3 Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children in Substitute Care by Fiscal Year**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Total Children Served During FY<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Children With at Least One Report<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Percentage Kids With Indicated Reports</b>	<b>Mean Duration (days)</b>	<b>Reports per 100 Child-Years</b>
1995	56,175	1,563	2.8	292	3.5
1996	59,227	1,379	2.3	304	2.8
1997	60,273	1,435	2.4	309	2.8
1998	59,148	958	1.6	302	2.0
1999	53,585	818	1.5	292	1.9

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with child cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days. Some readers will note that some of these numbers are somewhat different than those in the last report. The numbers in the previous report were in error due to the accidental exclusion of several lines of computer code. This did not greatly affect the rates of abuse or neglect.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with indicated report of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the start of placement.

**The national context.** In addition to comparisons over time, comparisons of these safety results to other reports and to other states are desirable. However, little comparable data exists. One study conducted in Indiana reported on abuse and neglect for children in placement. Spencer and Knudsen (1992) used Indiana Department of Public Welfare data on substantiated/indicated reports of physical and sexual abuse and various forms of neglect for foster homes, residential homes, state institutions, and hospitals as well as schools, daycare homes, and centers. The authors combined these data for the 1984 through 1990 fiscal years to create weighted averages of the number of substantiated/indicated cases per year for physical and sexual abuse. A rate of maltreatment was also computed on the basis of the number of cases per 100 children at risk. This study reports a rate of abuse or neglect of 1.7 per 100 children in foster homes, 12.0 per 100 children in residential care, .9 per 100 children in state institutions, and 1.6 per 100 children in hospitals and other placements.

In Illinois, evaluation of the Child Endangerment Risk Assessment Protocol (CERAP) suggests that this effort may be linked to decreases in abuse rates. CERAP is a safety assessment system that Department workers use to identify a situation that would likely lead to immediate moderate or severe maltreatment of the child. In the event that the safety of a child is a concern, staff are to devise and implement a safety plan that will prevent further harm.

A records review of implementation of CERAP found that

- 93% of intact family cases with an alleged report of abuse or neglect had a CERAP completed during the investigation.
- 90% of substitute care cases and 81% of intact family cases had a CERAP completed when a child's safety appeared to be in jeopardy.
- 87% of substitute care cases had a CERAP completed prior to closing the case.

- Completion rates at other milestones were lower, usually between 50–60%.
- Recurrence of child abuse and neglect in the 60 days after a child's first report decreased by 28.6%.
- When taken together, the factors that were most predictive of a second indicated report of abuse or neglect within 60 days were no CERAP completed, prior indicated reports on perpetrators, more than four family problems, and no services provided during the first 60 days after case opening (Fuller & Wells, 1998).

**ABUSE OR NEGLECT AFTER DEPARTMENT INVOLVEMENT AND BEFORE THE CASE IS CLOSED: BY TYPE OF PLACEMENT**

The largest number of children in the care of the Department is placed in the home of a relative. The rate of abuse or neglect for children in home-of-relative placements has decreased from 3.4 per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 1.6 in FY 99 (Table 3.4).

The next largest number of children in substitute care is placed in family foster care. The abuse or neglect rate for children in family foster care was fairly stable from FY 95 (4.3 per 100 children in care for 1 year) through FY 97 (4.4 per 100 children in care for 1 year). Since then this rate has decreased to 2.7 per 100 children in care for 1 year for both FY 98 and FY 99. The rate for children placed in specialized foster care is lower than family foster care and has decreased over the last 5 years, from 3.2 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 1.8 for FY 99.

The rate of abuse or neglect for children in institutional placements was 3.3 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 95 and FY 96. This rate increased to 4.1 in FY 97 and subsequently decreased to 1.7 in FY 98 and 1.5 in FY 99.

**Table 3.4 Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children in Department Custody by Fiscal Year and Living Arrangement**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Living Arrangement</b>	<b>Total in Placement<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Indicated Reports<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Rate of Abuse or Neglect (%)</b>	<b>Mean Duration (days)</b>	<b>Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1995	Relative	33,846	876	2.6	277	3.4
	Adoptive placement	635	0	0.0	87	0.0
	Family foster	14,650	373	2.5	218	4.3
	Specialized foster	8,551	183	2.1	245	3.2
	Group home	1,689	20	1.2	145	3.0
	Institution	8,640	134	1.6	174	3.3
1996	Relative	35,585	636	1.8	289	2.3
	Adoptive placement	872	2	0.2	105	0.8
	Family foster	15,626	415	2.7	229	4.2
	Specialized foster	8,921	180	2.0	263	2.8
	Group home	1,675	24	1.4	166	3.1
	Institution	8,358	136	1.6	182	3.3
1997	Relative	35,706	622	1.7	295	2.2
	Adoptive placement	798	3	0.4	74	1.9
	Family foster	17,041	491	2.9	242	4.4
	Specialized foster	8,765	157	1.8	267	2.5
	Group home	1,719	27	1.6	164	3.5
	Institution	7,602	148	1.9	175	4.1

*Note.* Living arrangement is operationally defined in the appendix of this report.

<sup>a</sup> Number of children in Department custody ever living in a given placement type during the fiscal year.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children in Department custody ever living in a given placement type during the fiscal year with at least one indicated report.

**Table 3.4 Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children in Department Custody by Fiscal Year and Living Arrangement (continued)**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Living Arrangement</b>	<b>Total in Placement<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Indicated Reports<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Rate of Abuse or Neglect (%)</b>	<b>Mean Duration (days)</b>	<b>Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1998	Relative	35,299	470	1.3	286	1.7
	Adoptive placement	1,316	0	0.0	71	0.0
	Family foster	17,397	309	1.8	243	2.7
	Specialized foster	8,209	121	1.5	257	2.1
	Group home	1,590	8	0.5	171	1.1
	Institution	6,759	53	0.8	170	1.7
1999	Relative	31,419	375	1.2	271	1.6
	Adoptive placement	1,220	0	0.0	95	0.0
	Family foster	16,808	302	1.8	243	2.7
	Specialized foster	6,563	87	1.3	265	1.8
	Group home	1,369	14	1.0	185	2.0
	Institution	6,208	44	0.7	173	1.5

*Note.* Living arrangement is operationally defined in the appendix of this report.

<sup>a</sup> Number of children in Department custody ever living in a given placement type during the fiscal year.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children in Department custody ever living in a given placement type during the fiscal year with at least one indicated report.



Children placed in group homes experienced abuse or neglect at a rate of 3.0 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 95. This rate increased to 3.5 in FY 97 and then decreased to 1.1 in FY 98 and 2.0 in FY 99.

Finally, children in pre-adoptive homes experience the lowest rate of indicated abuse or neglect: For most of the 5 years there were no cases of abuse or neglect in these placements. It should be noted that a much smaller number of children is in these placements than the number of children adopted through the Department because many adoptions are from relative or foster family placements and are not identified as adoptive placements.

#### **ADDITIONAL SAFETY OUTCOMES ANALYSIS : GENDER, RACE, AGE, REGION, AND TYPE OF ALLEGATION**

This section of the report includes the safety results for children in family cases and substitute care categorized by age, race, gender and region. These categories were agreed upon with the Department when the outcome reporting system was being established. Previous safety reports have not included these results because the Center has only recently developed this capacity.

#### **Safety Outcome Analysis for Children in Family Cases: Gender, Race, Age, and Region**

There are no differences in abuse or neglect rates for males and females living in family (intact and non-intact) cases. Consequently, this data is not presented here. Table 3.5 shows the rates of abuse or neglect for children in family cases by race. Since very few of the children served by the Department in family cases are identified as a race other than African American, White, or Hispanic, these are the only categories presented. These results show that Hispanic children in family cases generally

experience the lowest rate of abuse or neglect ranging from 17.2 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 10.6 in

**Table 3.5 Exposure-Adjusted Rate of Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children Living in Family Cases by Fiscal Year and Ethnicity**

Fiscal Year	Ethnicity	Family Cases			
		Children living with family case <sup>a</sup>	Indicated reports <sup>b</sup>	Mean duration (days)	Rate per 100 child-years
1995	African American	26,380	2,817	201	19.4
	Hispanic	3,731	356	202	17.2
	White	18,329	1,745	188	18.5
1996	African American	27,908	2,206	214	13.5
	Hispanic	4,443	278	210	10.9
	White	18,500	1,527	189	15.9
1997	African American	23,732	1,648	201	12.6
	Hispanic	4,478	198	200	8.1
	White	17,082	1,362	189	15.4
1998	African American	17,556	1,197	205	12.2
	Hispanic	3,585	228	200	11.6
	White	14,452	1,119	184	15.4
1999	African American	12,892	743	208	10.1
	Hispanic	2,503	148	204	10.6
	White	12,045	853	183	14.2

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with family cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with indicated reports of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the family case opened.

FY 99. Except for FY 95 (where the rate for African American children was higher), White children experience the highest rate of abuse or neglect ranging from 18.5 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 14.2 in FY 99. The rate for African American children was 19.4 per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 95 and decreased to 10.1 in FY 99.

Large differences exist in abuse or neglect rates for children in family cases by age of the child (Table 3.6). Children under the age of 3 experience the highest rates of abuse or neglect, ranging from 29.3 per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 24.6 in FY 99. The reabuse rate steadily decreases as the age of the child increases, with children from 15 through 18 years of age experiencing the lowest rate of abuse or neglect. These rates range from 8.7 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 4.9 in FY 99.

Rates of abuse or neglect for children in family cases by region are presented by comparing the three Cook regions to the three non-Cook regions (Table 3.7). Except for FY 95, these rates are higher for the non-Cook regions, ranging from 18.5 children per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 14.1 in FY 99. For the Cook regions these rates are 19.1 in FY 95 and decrease to 9.6 in FY 99.

To gain insight into the types of abuse or neglect experienced by children in family cases, the allegation type for indicated reports was aggregated for the 5 years under study. Over one-third (36%) of the allegations for these indicated reports were lack of supervision, another third (34%) were substantial risk of harm, and 18% were environmental or other neglect. Only 14% of these reports were for some type of abuse.

**Table 3.6 Exposure-Adjusted Rate of Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children Living in Family Cases by Fiscal Year and Age in Fiscal Year**

Fiscal Year	Age in Fiscal Year	Family Cases			
		Children living with family case <sup>a</sup>	Indicated reports <sup>b</sup>	Mean duration (days)	Rate per 100 child-years
1995	Up to 3 years	12,986	1,757	169	29.3
	3 to 6 years	10,669	1,287	201	21.9
	6 to 9 years	8,390	848	205	18.0
	9 to 12 years	6,506	533	204	14.7
	12 to 15 years	5,456	398	204	13.1
	15 to 18 years	3,678	179	205	8.7
1996	Up to 3 years	12,694	1,378	173	22.9
	3 to 6 years	11,121	1,044	211	16.2
	6 to 9 years	9,201	709	211	13.3
	9 to 12 years	7,008	466	212	11.4
	12 to 15 years	5,773	331	210	9.9
	15 to 18 years	4,253	142	216	5.6
1997	Up to 3 years	10,490	1,072	162	23.0
	3 to 6 years	9,757	840	199	15.8
	6 to 9 years	8,469	631	202	13.5
	9 to 12 years	6,563	389	205	10.6
	12 to 15 years	5,375	245	202	8.2
	15 to 18 years	3,884	123	211	5.5

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with family cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with indicated reports of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the family case opened.

**Table 3.6 Exposure-Adjusted Rate of Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children Living in Family Cases by Fiscal Year and Age in Fiscal Year**  
(continued)

Fiscal Year	Age in Fiscal Year	Family Cases			
		Children living with family case <sup>a</sup>	Indicated reports <sup>b</sup>	Mean duration (days)	Rate per 100 child-years
1998	Up to 3 years	8,087	901	157	25.9
	3 to 6 years	7,312	558	196	14.2
	6 to 9 years	6,812	503	202	13.4
	9 to 12 years	5,235	344	205	11.7
	12 to 15 years	4,271	204	202	8.6
	15 to 18 years	3,150	95	215	5.1
1999	Up to 3 years	6,282	649	153	24.6
	3 to 6 years	5,360	410	194	14.4
	6 to 9 years	5,201	325	204	11.2
	9 to 12 years	4,221	219	204	9.3
	12 to 15 years	3,270	140	206	7.6
	15 to 18 years	2,397	69	215	4.9

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with family cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with indicated reports of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the family case opened.

**Table 3.7 Exposure-Adjusted Rate of Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children Living in Family Cases by Fiscal Year and Cook/Non-Cook Regions**

Fiscal Year	Cook/Non-Cook	Family Cases			
		Children living with family case <sup>a</sup>	Indicated reports <sup>b</sup>	Mean duration (days)	Rate per 100 child-years
1995	Cook regions	25,974	2,785	205	19.1
	Non-Cook regions	23,485	2,222	187	18.5
1996	Cook regions	29,177	2,114	219	12.1
	Non-Cook regions	22,807	1,964	186	16.9
1997	Cook regions	25,389	1,573	201	11.3
	Non-Cook regions	21,010	1,733	190	15.9
1998	Cook regions	17,873	1,130	205	11.3
	Non-Cook regions	18,635	1,480	185	15.6
1999	Cook regions	11,891	671	214	9.6
	Non-Cook regions	16,280	1,143	182	14.1

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with family cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with indicated reports of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the family case opened.

**Safety Outcome Analysis for Children in Substitute Care: Gender, Race, Age, and Region**

There are no appreciable differences in the reabuse or neglect rates between males and females in substitute care; consequently, these rates are not presented here. There are differences in the safety indicators by race (Table 3.8). For the 5 years of this analysis, White children experience the highest rates of abuse or neglect ranging from 5.1 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 3.0 in FY 99. These rates for African American children were 3.1 for FY 95 and 1.7 in FY 99. The rates for Hispanic children ranged from 4.1 in FY 95 to 1.5 in FY 99.

Rates of abuse or neglect for children in substitute care do not show the same kinds of differences by age that they do for children in family cases (Table 3.9). Children under the age of 3 in substitute care do not experience the same level of abuse or neglect as those in family cases. The rates for children under the age of 3 in substitute care range from 3.1 per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 1.5 in FY 99. In general children in substitute care in the 6 to 9 years-of-age category experience the highest rates of abuse or neglect, ranging from 4.5 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 95 to 2.6 in FY 99.

Rates of abuse or neglect for children in substitute care are higher for the non-Cook regions than for the Cook regions (Table 3.10). For the non-Cook regions these rates were 5.0 in FY 95 and 3.1 in FY 99. For the three Cook regions they ranged from 3.0 in FY 95 to 1.5 in FY 99.

**Table 3.8 Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children in Substitute Care by Fiscal Year and Ethnicity**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Total Children Served During Fiscal Year<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Children With at Least One Report<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration (days)</b>	<b>Reports per 100 Child-Years</b>
1995	African American	42,161	1,078	302	3.1
	Hispanic	2,403	73	269	4.1
	White	10,822	390	259	5.1
1996	African American	44,814	955	314	2.5
	Hispanic	2,706	40	284	1.9
	White	10,873	369	272	4.6
1997	African American	45,864	962	318	2.4
	Hispanic	2,801	64	295	2.8
	White	10,710	382	276	4.7
1998	African American	45,173	613	309	1.6
	Hispanic	2,862	55	287	2.4
	White	10,209	278	274	3.6
1999	African American	40,492	567	300	1.7
	Hispanic	2,622	31	287	1.5
	White	9,577	211	265	3.0

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with child cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with indicated report of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the start of placement.



**Table 3.9 Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children in Substitute Care by Fiscal Year and Age in Fiscal Year**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Age in Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Total Children Served During Fiscal Year<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Children With at least One Report<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration (days)</b>	<b>Reports per 100 Child-Years</b>
1995	Up to 3 years	9,435	199	251	3.1
	3 to 6 years	11,374	395	303	4.2
	6 to 9 years	9,787	372	310	4.5
	9 to 12 years	7,907	269	309	4.0
	12 to 15 years	7,535	210	304	3.3
	15 to 18 years	7,249	113	282	2.0
1996	Up to 3 years	9,076	174	266	2.6
	3 to 6 years	12,104	310	314	3.0
	6 to 9 years	10,811	311	321	3.3
	9 to 12 years	8,655	263	320	3.5
	12 to 15 years	7,808	196	315	2.9
	15 to 18 years	7,781	115	295	1.8
1997	Up to 3 years	8,332	163	272	2.6
	3 to 6 years	12,124	322	320	3.0
	6 to 9 years	11,391	330	324	3.3
	9 to 12 years	9,193	261	327	3.2
	12 to 15 years	8,137	234	319	3.3
	15 to 18 years	7,976	113	298	1.7

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with child cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with indicated report of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the start of placement.

**Table 3.9 Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children in Substitute Care by Fiscal Year and Age in Fiscal Year (continued)**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Age in Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Total Children Served During Fiscal Year<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Children With at least One Report<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration (days)</b>	<b>Reports per 100 Child-Years</b>
1998	Up to 3 years	7,473	77	262	1.4
	3 to 6 years	11,452	208	309	2.1
	6 to 9 years	11,349	241	313	2.5
	9 to 12 years	9,598	199	315	2.4
	12 to 15 years	8,172	136	314	1.9
	15 to 18 years	7,811	90	298	1.4
1999	Up to 3 years	6,661	70	263	1.5
	3 to 6 years	9,656	161	293	2.1
	6 to 9 years	9,962	213	297	2.6
	9 to 12 years	8,994	172	304	2.3
	12 to 15 years	7,544	131	305	2.1
	15 to 18 years	7,271	68	295	1.2

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with child cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with indicated report of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the start of placement.

**Table 3.10 Indicated Reports of Abuse or Neglect of Children in Substitute Care by Fiscal Year and Cook/Non-Cook Regions**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Cook/Non-Cook</b>	<b>Total Children Served During Fiscal Year<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Children With at Least One Report<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration (days)</b>	<b>Reports per 100 Child-Years</b>
1995	Cook regions	40,367	994	303	3.0
	Non-Cook regions	15,808	569	265	5.0
1996	Cook regions	43,333	799	315	2.1
	Non-Cook regions	15,894	580	275	4.9
1997	Cook regions	44,409	839	320	2.2
	Non-Cook regions	15,864	596	279	4.9
1998	Cook regions	43,789	587	311	1.6
	Non-Cook regions	15,359	371	275	3.2
1999	Cook regions	39,036	490	301	1.5
	Non-Cook regions	14,549	328	270	3.1

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with child cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children with indicated report of abuse or neglect occurring 7 or more days after the start of placement.

## Chapter 4

### **PERMANENCY OF FAMILY RELATIONS OUTCOMES**

Permanency of family relations has four positive outcomes: 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. The failure of these outcomes is an additional set of permanency indicators. Measurement of these outcomes provides a concise basis for a permanency performance report. This chapter also presents analyses of these outcomes by age, race, gender, and region.

Except where indicated, the following outcomes data were derived from the DCFS integrated database maintained by The Chapin Hall Center for Children, which contains data from the Department's administrative information systems. To show changes in permanency results over time, the data are presented by fiscal year from 1990 through 1999. The data used to produce the results reported here are from Department sources updated as of September 30, 1999.

It is important to understand that the Department databases used in this report were not created for reporting on outcomes, but to keep track of children in substitute care and to assure timely and accurate payment for services. Consequently, much work was required to construct operational definitions from the data rather than using the preferable process of defining the terms, selecting the measures, and then collecting data. Operational definitions for the permanency indicators are included in the Appendix of this report. These definitions were developed collaboratively with personnel from The Chapin Hall Center for Children and the Department of Children and Family Services.

One way to judge performance on outcomes indicators is to examine trends over time. When possible, outcomes data are reported for each fiscal year from FY 90 through FY 99. Another way to compare performance is by examining results from similar systems. Where available, data from other systems are used as a basis of comparison.

### **SUMMARY OF PERMANENCY RESULTS**

This report begins by providing a summary of overall permanency results. More complete results for children maintained at home, reunified with their family, adopted or with guardianship transferred to a private person follow the summary. Table 4.1 summarizes the permanency outcomes for selected years from 1991 through 1999. Two-year intervals are reported so that trends might be more easily identified. While the data must be interpreted carefully, they do provide an overview of the permanency performance of the Department.

Children remain in family cases at the rate of 84–90 per 100 children in care for 1 year. This rate decreased between FY 91 (89.7 per 100 children in care for 1 year) and FY 95 (84.0) and subsequently increased to 88 children per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 99. The rate at which children remain in family cases is different for those children in intact family cases than those in non-intact cases: Children remain in intact family cases at a slightly higher rate. This rate was 90 per 100 children in care in FY 91, 85 in FY 95, and 90 in FY 99. For children in non-intact family cases, these rates were 87 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 91, 79 in FY 95, and 77 in FY 99. These results must be examined in the context of the rate at which children in intact families are identified as having an indicated report of abuse or neglect (Chapter 3). A balance must be struck between keeping families together and maintaining child safety.

**Table 4.1 Permanency Outcome Rates for Illinois Children**

	<b>FY 91</b>	<b>FY 93</b>	<b>FY 95</b>	<b>FY 97</b>	<b>FY 99</b>
Rate at which children remain in family cases <sup>a</sup>	89.7	87.8	84.0	88.1	88.0
Rate at which children remain in intact family cases <sup>a</sup>	90.2	87.8	84.9	89.4	89.7
Rate at which children remain in non-intact cases <sup>a</sup>	86.8	83.6	79.1	80.1	77.0
Percent of children entering substitute care in the fiscal year who are returned home within 12 months	35.0	27.0	20.0	23.0	24.0 <sup>b</sup>
Percent of children who return to substitute care within 12 months	22.6	22.2	19.8	16.5	16.1 <sup>b</sup>
Rate at which children are adopted <sup>a</sup>	3.5	3.6	3.4	4.3	16.7
Rate at which adoptive placements disrupt prior to consummation <sup>a</sup>	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.7	5.6
Rate at which guardianship is transferred to a private person <sup>b</sup>	.08	.02	.02	.38	4.8

<sup>a</sup>This is the rate per 100 child-years.

<sup>b</sup>A full twelve months have not elapsed since June 30, 1999. Therefore this is the percentage for FY 98.

The decreasing trend in the percent of children returning home within 12 months that has been noted in previous reports may be beginning to change. From FY 91 to FY 95 this percentage decreased from 35% to 20%. However, in FY 97 it increased to 23%, with FY 98 showing a 24% rate. The current rate is likely to be higher in subsequent reports when full-year results for FY 99 are available. Those children placed into substitute care in May and June of 1999 will not have been observed for a full 12 months until May and June of 2000.

The percentage of children who reenter substitute care after being returned home has declined from a high of 22.6% in FY 91 to 16.1% in FY 98. There appears to be an additional decline in FY 99. However, since there has not been a full year to observe those children who returned home during the last few months of the fiscal year, the actual percentage for FY 99 is likely to be somewhat higher than that shown in Table 4.1.

Both the adoption rates, 16.7 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 99, and the guardianship transfer rates, 47.9 per 1000 children in care for 1 year in FY 99, are dramatic increases over past years. The rate of adoption disruption prior to consumation appears to have increased as well. However, this should be read cautiously since few children who are adopted are identified in adoptive placements. Many children who are adopted have placements with relatives or foster families prior to adoption. In addition, the apparent large increase in the rate is associated with a small number of children.

#### **CHILDREN MAINTAINED AT HOME**

Children are maintained at home in at least two situations. In the first situation, a family case is opened without concurrently opening cases for any of the children. Within the Department these are referred to as “intact” family cases. These cases are usually opened as a result of an abuse or neglect investigation during which the worker judges the risk to the children to be low and believes that the children can be maintained safely at home if the family receives services.

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.<sup>1</sup> 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. The rate at which children move from these family situations to substitute care is one indication of the success or failure of efforts to maintain a child safely at home.

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

### Family Cases

Table 4.2 gives the placement rate per 100 children living in family cases for 1 year. This rate increased from 9.4 in FY 90 to a high of 16.0 in FY 95, then declined to a fairly stable 12.0 per 100 children in care for 1 year for the years FY 96 through FY 99.

The category of family cases includes children in intact and non-intact family cases. Table 4.2 indicates that most children in family cases are in intact family situations; consequently, the placement rate for these children is similar to the overall rate. In FY 90, 8.5 children per 100 in care for 1 year were placed into substitute care. This rate increased to 15.1 for FY 95 and has leveled off to a little more than 10 for the years FY 96 through FY 99.

The movement of children from non-intact family cases is much higher than the rate for children in intact family cases. This rate was 13.9 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 90 and has increased to 23.0 in FY 99. This

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<sup>11</sup> A child case is not opened unless a court makes DCFS responsible for the child.



**Table 4.2 Substitute Care Placement From Family Cases: Intact and Non-intact**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Children Leaving Home to Substitute Care</b>	<b>Children at Home</b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Placement Rate (Percentage)</b>	<b>Placement Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1990					
Family <sup>a</sup>	2,581	46,766	215	5.5	9.4
Intact <sup>b</sup>	1,983	40,887	208	4.8	8.5
Non-intact <sup>c</sup>	598	5,879	266	10.2	13.9
1991					
Family	2,838	45,305	221	6.3	10.3
Intact	2,272	39,452	214	5.8	9.8
Non-intact	566	5,853	268	9.7	13.2
1992					
Family	3,532	44,814	219	7.9	13.1
Intact	2,822	38,339	212	7.4	12.7
Non-intact	710	6,475	261	11.0	15.4
1993					
Family	3,124	41,453	226	7.5	12.2
Intact	2,354	35,082	218	6.7	11.2
Non-intact	770	6,371	269	12.1	16.4
1994					
Family	3,868	43,115	215	9.0	15.3
Intact	2,926	36,476	207	8.0	14.2
Non-intact	942	6,639	260	14.2	19.9

<sup>a</sup> Family case includes the first family case on record for the child.

<sup>b</sup> Intact family case includes the first intact family case on record for the child.

<sup>c</sup> Non-intact family case includes the first non-intact family case on record for the child. Non-intact cases are those cases with at least one child in placement and at least one child living at home without a child case.

**Table 4.2 Substitute Care Placement From Family Cases: Intact and Nonintact (continued)**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Children Leaving Home to Substitute Care</b>	<b>Children at Home</b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Placement Rate (Percentage)</b>	<b>Placement Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1995					
Family <sup>a</sup>	4,801	52,644	208	9.1	16.0
Intact <sup>b</sup>	3,794	46,051	200	8.2	15.1
Non-intact <sup>c</sup>	1,007	6,593	267	15.3	20.9
1996					
Family	3,738	54,285	215	6.9	11.7
Intact	2,910	48,504	208	6.0	10.6
Non-intact	828	5,781	279	14.3	18.7
1997					
Family	3,194	47,831	205	6.7	11.9
Intact	2,463	43,028	197	5.7	10.6
Non-intact	731	4,803	280	15.2	19.9
1998					
Family	2,383	37,178	202	6.4	11.6
Intact	1,836	33,339	194	5.5	10.4
Non-intact	547	3,839	276	14.2	18.8
1999					
Family	1,859	28,189	201	6.6	12.0
Intact	1,373	25,303	193	5.4	10.3
Non-intact	486	2,886	267	16.8	23.0

<sup>a</sup> Family case includes the first family case on record for the child.

<sup>b</sup> Intact family case includes the first intact family case on record for the child.

<sup>c</sup> Non-intact family case includes the first non-intact family case on record for the child. Non-intact cases are those cases with at least one child in placement and at least one child living at home without a child case.

higher rate may reflect a higher risk for children in these cases. For example, these cases include situations where a child is born into a family with one or more siblings already in the custody of the Department. It is reasonable that some of these are high-risk situations that result in removal of the infant.

### **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 children are away from their parents, the more likely that the bond between the children and the parents will be undermined (Bowlby, 1969). Family systems theory suggests 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 3-year old child is one-third of his/her life while 1 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 in substitute care who are returned home from substitute care within 6, 12, 18, and 24 months.

Reunification is reported by examining the experience of children who entered their first substitute care placement in a given year. Table 4.3 presents the number of children who had their first substitute care placement during each fiscal year and the number and percent of these children who returned home during six different time periods. The first time period is 7 days or less and is selected because of the large number of children who return home in this time period. This

**Table 4.3 Children Returning Home From Substitute Care by Time and Fiscal Year**

Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>b</sup>	Children Returned From Substitute Care											
		7 Days or Less		7 Days–6 Months		6–12 Months		12–18 Months		18–24 Months		More Than 24 Months	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1990	8,483	1,546	18	1,317	16	539	6	375	4	226	3	587	7
1991	9,004	1,478	16	1,234	14	479	5	340	4	232	3	721	8
1992	11,205	1,322	12	1,184	11	640	6	359	3	235	2	945	8
1993	10,265	1,292	13	999	10	395	4	285	3	246	2	922	9
1994	12,714	1,195	9	991	8	530	4	405	3	301	2	1,227	10
1995	13,850	1,165	8	1,085	8	584	4	414	3	384	3	1,268	9
1996	10,047	825	8	872	9	433	4	328	3	309	3	693	7
1997	9,131	829	9	844	9	447	5	415	5	272	3	310	3
1998	7,612	782	10	718	9	405	5	246	3	79	1	0	0
1999	6,878	793	12	503	7	110	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Note:* A child may be returned home with his/her case closed or open.

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal year is the fiscal year the child first entered substitute care.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children entering their first substitute care placement during the given fiscal year.

situation occurs primarily because a child is taken into protective custody by a worker or police officer who thought the child was in imminent danger and returned when it was determined that the child was not in danger or the order of protective custody expired. The next time period begins at 7 days and continues through 6 months, followed by three 6-month time periods. The last time period is 24 months or longer. When examining this last time period it is important to note that it is not equal for all cohorts.

The permanency indicators defined by HHS include examining reunification in 12-month time periods. The percentage of children reunified within 12 months dropped from 36% in FY 90 to a low of 20% in FY 95. Since then it has increased to 25% in FY 98. The FY 99 rate of 21% understates the true rate since a full 12 months have not elapsed for all of the children placed into substitute care during the year. The percent of children reunified between 12 and 24 months has remained fairly stable at 5–7%. This rate was 8% in FY 97.

### **Reunification Comparison With Other States**

For comparison between states, reports from the Multistate Foster Care Data Archive are useful. The Chapin Hall Center for Children maintains this compilation of administrative data from 12 states (Alabama, California, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin). These states account for a large proportion of the foster care population in the country.

The most recent report includes data on exits from foster care spells for children who had their first entry into foster care from 1988–93. They report that almost 14% of these children were still in their first out-of-home spell at the end of 1997. Of the 86% who exited care, 56% were reunified and 14% were adopted (Wulczyn, Goerge, & Brunner, 1999).

The Chapin Hall report compares reunification rates between states and demonstrates that reunification varies significantly across states. For children who first entered care between 1988 and 1993, the Illinois reunification rate of 50.3% was similar to the five large states, except for California.

California	65.5%	
New York	51.4%	
Missouri	53.3%	
Illinois	50.3%	
Michigan	49.3%	(Wulczyn, Goerge, & Brunner, 1999).

**Indicator:** Percent of children living at home who were previously in substitute care and then reenter substitute care.

When a caseworker returns a child to his/her parents there is a risk of another abuse or neglect incident and/or another placement of the child into substitute care. The number of children at home who were previously in substitute care and the number and percent returned to substitute care are shown in Table 4.4.

Reentry within 12 months is often used as the time frame to judge the performance of a child welfare system. This is also the time frame used by the Department of Health and Human Services. The percent of children who reentered substitute care was highest in FY 91 (22.6%). Since then, this percentage has steadily declined to 16.1% in FY 98. The latest fiscal year also shows a further decline. However, this is incomplete information because 12 months have not elapsed for those children returned home in the last few months of the fiscal year. Table 4.4 also shows that children are most vulnerable to reentry in the first 6 months after being returned home: The highest reentry percentages occur during this time.

**Table 4.4 Reentry to Substitute Care by Time to Reentry and Fiscal Year**

Fiscal Year	Children Returned Home	Children Returned to Substitute Care											
		7 Days or Less		7 Days–6 Months		6-12 Months		12-18 Months		More Than 18 Months		Still at Home	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1990	2,807	29	1.0	364	13.0	167	5.9	104	3.7	357	12.7	1,786	63.6
1991	3,574	47	1.3	513	14.4	245	6.9	161	4.5	445	12.5	2,163	60.5
1992	3,679	39	1.1	464	12.6	251	6.8	144	3.9	404	11.0	2,377	64.6
1993	3,906	46	1.2	569	14.6	250	6.4	158	4.0	360	9.2	2,523	64.6
1994	3,416	54	1.6	451	13.2	201	5.9	133	3.9	216	6.3	2,361	69.1
1995	4,114	51	1.2	526	12.8	240	5.8	101	2.5	251	6.1	2,945	71.6
1996	3,803	36	0.9	434	11.4	223	5.9	128	3.4	187	4.9	2,795	73.5
1997	4,136	29	0.7	438	10.6	216	5.2	95	2.3	125	3.0	3,233	78.2
1998	4,133	29	0.7	435	10.5	203	4.9	68	1.6	28	0.7	3,370	81.5
1999	4,092	27	0.7	315	7.7	69	1.7	0	0	0	0	3,681	90.0

Readers of the previous outcome reports will note that the reentry percentages included in this report are much higher than those previously reported. The reentry tables in the previous reports were in error. Center staff continues to compare outcome results to information produced by others using the same database. Recently a disparity in reentry rates was noticed between Center results and those produced by Mark Testa for the LAN Factbook. Examination of the programming used to produce reentry rates uncovered errors that have been corrected. Reentry rates reported here and those produced for the LAN Factbook are now consistent.

The Multistate Foster Care Data Archives (MFCA) can be used as a rough basis of comparison. The time frames and cohorts of children differ between the MFCA study and this report. The MFCA data show reentry rates of 20% of children who exited care between 1988 and 1993 and were discharged before the end of 1997. The reentry rates for children entering care from 1988–93 and discharge for five states were

Missouri	24%
New York	22%
Michigan	20%
Illinois	19%
California	18% (Wulczyn, Goerge, & Brunner, 1999).

## **ADOPTION**

Another way for children to achieve a permanent family is through adoption. Two failure rates for the adoption outcome exist: the failure of an adoptive placement before it is legally consummated, and a disruption after the adoption has been legally consummated. The Center is not able to report this indicator.



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

Table 4.5 provides adoption rates by fiscal year. It is important to note that in this table an adoption is counted for a particular fiscal year based upon the date that the case is closed and an adoption assistance case may be opened. The database does not include the date that the adoption is legally consummated; in contrast, DCFS reports adoptions using the date the adoption is legally consummated. For a variety of reasons a delay can occur between the time the adoption is finalized and closing the case. Thus the number of adoptions reported here is different than DCFS figures for any particular fiscal year but tend to merge over a period of several years.

The number of adoptions steadily increased from 742 in FY 90 to 7,171 in FY 99. As a rate per 100 children in substitute care for 1 year, it shows dramatic increases. This rate increased from 3.0 per 100 child-years in FY 92 to 4.3 per 100 child-years (FY 96, FY 97) to 16.7 per 100 child-years in FY 99.

The Multistate Foster Care Data Archive report (Wulczyn, Goerge, Brunner, 1999) provides some comparative adoption data. For the those children who first entered care between 1988 and 1993, the percentage of children adopted through December 1997 was:

Michigan	19.9%
Illinois	17.7%
New York	15.9%
Missouri	13.8%
California	10.8% (Wulczyn, Goerge, & Brunner, 1999).

**Table 4.5 Adoption From Substitute Care**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Children Adopted</b>	<b>Children in Substitute Care<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Children Adopted (percentage)</b>	<b>Adoption Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1990	742	27,508	263	2.7	3.7
1991	777	30,417	267	2.6	3.5
1992	800	36,314	271	2.2	3.0
1993	1,124	41,021	282	2.7	3.6
1994	1,290	48,071	284	2.7	3.4
1995	1,538	56,658	290	2.7	3.4
1996	2,121	59,588	303	3.6	4.3
1997	2,200	60,615	308	3.6	4.3
1998	4,901	59,383	301	8.3	10.0
1999	7,170	53,834	291	13.3	16.7

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with child cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

### **Adoption Disruptions Prior to Consummation**

**Indicator:** Percent of children and rate (per 100 child-years) placed in adoptive homes whose adoption disrupts prior to consummation.

Table 4.6 shows the number of children in adoptive placements each fiscal year, the number of adoption disruptions prior to being legally consummated, the percent of disrupted adoptions, and the rate of disruptions per 100 child-years. The number of children in adoptive placements during the year is substantially smaller than the number of adoptions because many children who are adopted are never placed into an adoptive placement. They tend to be adopted directly from foster family care or a home-of-relative placement.

From FY 90 through FY 95 very few disruptions for children in adoptive placements occurred: no more than two in any of these years. In recent years these numbers are larger, with 18 adoption disruptions in FY 99. Adoption disruptions as a rate per 100 child-years went from 0 in the period FY 90 through FY 93 to 2.8 per 100 child-years in FY 96 and 3.1 per 100 child-years in FY 97. The rate for FY 99 was 5.6 per 100 children in care for 1 year.

### **TRANSFER OF GUARDIANSHIP**

Some of the children who do not return home achieve a permanent family by having someone other than the Department become their legal guardian. In some cases this is an extended family member; in other cases, it is an unrelated person who has a strong interest in the child.

**Indicator:** Percent of children and rate (per 100 child-years) in substitute care with guardianship transferred to a private person.

**Table 4.6 Adoption Disruption Prior to Consummation**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Children Moved from Adoptive Placement</b>	<b>Children in Adoptive Placement<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Adoption Placement Disruption<sup>b</sup> (percentage)</b>	<b>Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1990	0	450	93	0.0	0.0
1991	0	427	98	0.0	0.0
1992	0	443	95	0.0	0.0
1993	0	509	87	0.0	0.0
1994	2	544	120	0.4	1.1
1995	0	680	82	0.0	0.0
1996	7	928	100	0.8	2.8
1997	5	864	69	0.6	3.1
1998	3	1,484	64	0.2	1.1
1999	18	1,427	83	1.3	5.6

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with child cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

<sup>b</sup> Disruption is operationally defined as occurring when a child is in an adoptive placement, but his/her following placement is not adoptive home.

Table 4.7 presents the rate of transfer of guardianship. Children have been able to have guardianship transferred to a private person for many years. This is called successor guardianship; however, it has been a little-used option, as can be seen in the table. More recently the Department instituted the subsidized guardianship program, which maintains financial assistance to families who assume legal guardianship of a child. This has greatly increased the number of children achieving permanency.

From FY 90 through FY 96 less than 20 children per year achieved permanence through guardianship. In FY 97, 185 children achieved permanency through guardianship and this increased to 2,060 in FY 99. These increases can be seen even more dramatically through the rate (per 100 child-years) of children achieving permanency through the guardianship program. From FY 90 through FY 96 this rate ranged from .02 to .08 per 100 children in care for 1 year. In FY 97 this rate increased to .38 and in FY 99 it was 4.79.

#### **ADDITIONAL PERMANENCY OUTCOMES ANALYSIS: AGE, RACE, GENDER, AND REGION**

This section contains additional permanency outcomes analysis. Selected outcomes are analyzed by characteristics of children such as age, race, and gender. Results are also reported by Department region. The purpose of this analysis is to begin to identify differences between children and regions in achieving permanency outcomes. This type of analysis can also assist the Department in targeting its efforts to enhance performance. While data available in the administrative database allow identification of differences in outcomes, they do not provide data that explains these differences. Explanatory analysis is beyond the scope of this report.

**Table 4.7 Rate at Which Guardianship is Transferred to a Private Person**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Children in Subsidized Guardianship</b>	<b>Children in Successor Guardianship</b>	<b>Children in Substitute Care<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Transfer Rate Children per 100 in Care</b>	<b>Transfer Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1990	0	8	27,508	263	.03	.04
1991	0	18	30,417	267	.06	.08
1992	0	12	36,314	271	.03	.04
1993	0	5	41,021	282	.01	.02
1994	0	15	48,071	284	.03	.04
1995	0	9	56,658	290	.02	.02
1996	0	17	59,588	303	.03	.03
1997	185	11	60,615	308	.32	.38
1998	1,279	5	59,383	301	2.16	2.62
1999	2,060	0	53,834	291	3.83	4.80

*Note:* Operational definitions of subsidized guardianship, successor guardianship, and substitute care are included in the appendix.

<sup>a</sup> Number of children with child cases open during the fiscal year for 7 or more days.

### **Movement of Children From Family Cases: Gender, Race, Age, and Region**

No gender differences in children placed from family cases were found. Consequently this data is not reported here. There are differences between racial groups in children placed into substitute care from family cases (Table 4.8). African American children consistently have a higher placement rate than Hispanic or White children. In FY 90 11.1 African American children per 100 in family cases for 1 year were placed into substitute care. This rate increased to nearly 20 per 100 in care for 1 year in FY 94 and FY 95 and subsequently decreased to nearly 15 per 100 in care for 1 year in the FY 96 through FY 99. The rate at which White children were placed from family cases increased from 7.4 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 90 to 10.4 in FY 95. Since then the rate has decreased to between 8 and 9 per 100 children in care for 1 year in the last four fiscal years. The placement rate for Hispanic children generally increased between FY 90 and FY 95 from 5.9 per 100 to 12.3. Except for FY 97 when the rate was a low of 5.7 per 100 children in care for one year, the rate has been fairly stable at between 8 and 9 cases per 100.

Rates of placement for children in family cases by age are shown in Table 4.9. To make the table easier to read, only the even-numbered years are presented. Children under the age of 3 consistently have the highest placement rate. This rate increased from 11.9 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 90 to 18 per 100 in FY 94. Since then this placement rate has been fairly stable at about 13 per 100. Placement rates generally decrease as the age of the child increases except for those children between the ages of 12 and 15. In the years from FY 90 through FY 97 placement rates for children in this age group were higher than for children in adjacent age groups, ranging from 11.4 in FY 90 to 8.6 in FY 96. In the two most recent years the placement rate for these children has fallen in line with that of children in adjacent age groups.

**Table 4.8 Substitute Care Placement From Family Cases by Ethnicity**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Children Leaving Home to Substitute Care</b>	<b>Children at Home With Open Family Cases<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Placement Rate (percentage)</b>	<b>Placement Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1990	African American	1,675	25,232	218	6.6	11.1
	Hispanic	116	3,226	224	3.6	5.9
	White	738	17,479	210	4.2	7.4
1991	African American	1,936	24,166	230	8.0	12.7
	Hispanic	134	3,204	216	4.2	7.1
	White	732	17,141	209	4.3	7.4
1992	African American	2,551	23,811	231	10.7	16.9
	Hispanic	193	3,091	225	6.2	10.1
	White	744	17,115	202	4.3	7.9
1993	African American	2,220	21,681	243	10.2	15.4
	Hispanic	141	2,893	244	4.9	7.3
	White	725	16,114	200	4.5	8.2
1994	African American	2,739	22,636	225	12.1	19.6
	Hispanic	197	3,009	219	6.5	10.9
	White	849	16,625	199	5.1	9.4
1995	African American	3,438	28,963	218	11.9	19.9
	Hispanic	272	3,869	210	7.0	12.3
	White	1,025	18,738	193	5.5	10.4

<sup>a</sup> Family case includes the first family case on record for the child.



**Table 4.8 Substitute Care Placement From Family Cases by Ethnicity**  
(continued)

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Children Leaving Home to Substitute Care</b>	<b>Children at Home With Open Family Cases<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Placement Rate (percentage)</b>	<b>Placement Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1996	African American	2,635	29,732	229	8.9	14.2
	Hispanic	218	4,566	216	4.8	8.1
	White	819	18,807	194	4.4	8.2
1997	African American	2,142	24,830	214	8.6	14.7
	Hispanic	147	4,564	205	3.2	5.7
	White	835	17,290	194	4.8	9.1
1998	African American	1,546	18,064	215	8.6	14.5
	Hispanic	184	3,634	204	5.1	9.1
	White	602	14,550	187	4.1	8.1
1999	African American	1,140	12,933	216	8.8	14.9
	Hispanic	117	2,524	207	4.6	8.2
	White	550	12,012	185	4.6	9.0

<sup>a</sup> Family case includes the first family case on record for the child.

**Table 4.9 Substitute Care Placement From Family Cases by Age and Fiscal Year**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Age in Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Children Leaving Home to Substitute Care</b>	<b>Children at Home With Open Family Cases<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Placement Rate (percentage)</b>	<b>Placement Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1990	Up to 3 years	843	12,974	200	6.5	11.9
	3 to 6 years	392	8,354	208	4.7	8.3
	6 to 9 years	310	6,658	205	4.7	8.3
	9 to 12 years	243	5,242	205	4.6	8.2
	12 to 15 years	248	3,991	199	6.2	11.4
	15 to 18 years	100	2,514	205	4.0	7.1
1992	Up to 3 years	1,154	12,255	203	9.4	17.0
	3 to 6 years	568	7,712	203	7.4	13.2
	6 to 9 years	397	5,936	204	6.7	12.0
	9 to 12 years	302	4,895	207	6.2	10.9
	12 to 15 years	302	3,669	200	8.2	15.1
	15 to 18 years	117	2,233	201	5.2	9.5

<sup>a</sup> Family case includes the first family case on record for the child.

**Table 4.9 Substitute Care Placement From Family Cases by Age and Fiscal Year (continued)**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Age in Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Children Leaving Home to Substitute Care</b>	<b>Children at Home With Open Family Cases<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Placement Rate (percentage)</b>	<b>Placement Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1994	Up to 3 years	1,137	11,420	198	10.0	18.3
	3 to 6 years	531	7,516	200	7.1	12.9
	6 to 9 years	393	5,697	199	6.9	12.7
	9 to 12 years	297	4,588	198	6.5	11.9
	12 to 15 years	277	3,702	196	7.5	13.9
	15 to 18 years	97	2,167	204	4.5	8.0
1996	Up to 3 years	1,013	14,276	208	7.1	12.5
	3 to 6 years	587	10,253	205	5.7	10.2
	6 to 9 years	362	8,039	202	4.5	8.1
	9 to 12 years	268	6,284	204	4.3	7.6
	12 to 15 years	250	5,262	203	4.8	8.6
	15 to 18 years	74	3,203	205	2.3	4.1

<sup>a</sup> Family case includes the first family case on record for the child.

**Table 4.9 Substitute Care Placement From Family Cases by Age and Fiscal Year (continued)**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Age in Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Children Leaving Home to Substitute Care</b>	<b>Children at Home With Open Family Cases<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Placement Rate (percentage)</b>	<b>Placement Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1998	Up to 3 years	528	9,276	192	5.7	10.8
	3 to 6 years	316	7,135	197	4.4	8.2
	6 to 9 years	258	5,984	193	4.3	8.2
	9 to 12 years	180	4,611	195	3.9	7.3
	12 to 15 years	140	3,817	197	3.7	6.8
	15 to 18 years	43	2,350	204	1.8	3.3

<sup>a</sup> Family case includes the first family case on record for the child.

Placement rates for children in family cases are consistently higher for Cook County regions than for non-Cook regions (Table 4.10). For Cook County regions the placement rate went from 9.8 per 100 children in care for 1 year in FY 90 to 19.9 in FY 95. Since then it has decreased to a fairly stable 14 per 100 in the most recent fiscal years. For non-Cook regions this rate has been more stable, going from 8.8 in FY 90 to 10.8 in FY 95 and remaining at about 10 per 100 since then.

### **Children Exiting From Care: Gender, Race, Age, and Region**

Separately examining the permanency outcomes of return home, adoption, and guardianship by gender, race, age and region produces a large number of tables that are difficult to combine in an overall picture of Department performance. In an attempt to more accurately portray these findings, this report combines the permanency outcomes to show exits from the child welfare system for groups of children who entered Department care by fiscal year (entry cohorts). Table 4.11 provides the number of children who entered Department care for each fiscal year since FY 90 and shows the number who returned home, were adopted, and had guardianship transferred to a private person. In addition this table shows the number of children who achieved the age of majority while in Department care (aged out), ran away, died, and the number still in care. While this table provides a more complete picture of the ways that children leave the care of the Department, it is still not easy to interpret. Therefore Table 4.12 portrays the same information with percentages. These exit percentages show that while most children return home, the 30–32% of those entering care in FY 90 and FY 91 might be close to the upper limit of reunifications. The adoption initiative seems to be most beneficial to those entering care in the years from FY 92 and FY 93 with 23% of each of these cohorts being adopted. Similarly 5% of children entering care in FY 94 and FY 95 are benefiting from guardianship being

**Table 4.10 Substitute Care Placement From Family Cases by Cook/Non-Cook Regions**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Cook/Non-Cook</b>	<b>Children Leaving Home to Substitute Care</b>	<b>Children at Home With Open Family Cases<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Mean Duration in Care (days)</b>	<b>Placement Rate (percentage)</b>	<b>Placement Rate per 100 Child-Years</b>
1990	Cook regions	1,552	26,583	218	5.8	9.8
	Non-Cook regions	1,029	20,183	211	5.1	8.8
1991	Cook regions	1,871	24,440	229	7.7	12.2
	Non-Cook regions	967	20,865	212	4.6	8.0
1992	Cook regions	2,402	22,240	238	10.8	16.6
	Non-Cook regions	1,130	22,574	201	5.0	9.1
1993	Cook regions	1,979	19,677	256	10.1	14.3
	Non-Cook regions	1,145	21,776	199	5.3	9.7
1994	Cook regions	2,548	20,690	229	12.3	19.6
	Non-Cook regions	1,320	22,425	201	5.9	10.7
1995	Cook regions	3,433	28,524	221	12.0	19.9
	Non-Cook regions	1,368	24,120	192	5.7	10.8
1996	Cook regions	2,625	30,977	232	8.5	13.3
	Non-Cook regions	1,113	23,308	192	4.8	9.1
1997	Cook regions	2,081	26,486	213	7.9	13.5
	Non-Cook regions	1,113	21,345	195	5.2	9.8
1998	Cook regions	1,472	18,378	215	8.0	13.6
	Non-Cook regions	911	18,800	190	4.8	9.3
1999	Cook regions	1,036	11,958	222	8.7	14.2
	Non-Cook regions	823	16,231	185	5.1	10.0

<sup>a</sup> Family case includes the first family case on record for the child.

**Table 4.11 Number of Children Entering, Exiting, and Remaining in Substitute Care by Exit Type and Fiscal Year**

Fiscal Year	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>a</sup>	Exit Type								Sum Still in Care on June 30, 1999
		At home	Adopted	Guardianship	Aged out	Runaway, case closed	Deceased	Closed in substitute care	Still in care	
1990	8,483	2,686	1,620	162	1,100	18	33	572	2,292	2,292
1991	9,004	2,677	1,847	271	1,063	10	46	606	2,484	4,776
1992	11,205	2,996	2,605	436	1,170	18	41	841	3,098	7,874
1993	10,265	2,633	2,403	437	907	11	39	662	3,173	11,047
1994	12,714	3,187	2,759	624	778	7	46	874	4,439	15,486
1995	13,850	3,616	2,603	633	628	11	47	933	5,379	20,865
1996	10,047	2,525	1,571	353	268	10	43	603	4,674	25,539
1997	9,131	2,214	750	85	131	3	34	469	5,445	30,984
1998	7,612	1,432	264	3	37	4	18	282	5,572	36,556
1999	6,878	707	34	0	4	2	11	188	5,932	42,488

<sup>a</sup> Number of children whose first substitute care placement in his/her first case was active in the given fiscal year. Unduplicated across children.

**Table 4.12 Number of Children Entering and Percentage Exiting From Substitute Care by Exit Type**

Fiscal Year	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>a</sup>	Exit Type							
		At home	Adopted	Guardianship	Aged out	Runaway, case closed	Deceased	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1990	8,483	32%	19%	2%	13%	0%	0%	7%	27%
1991	9,004	30%	21%	3%	12%	0%	1%	7%	28%
1992	11,205	27%	23%	4%	10%	0%	0%	8%	28%
1993	10,265	26%	23%	4%	9%	0%	0%	6%	31%
1994	12,714	25%	22%	5%	6%	0%	0%	7%	35%
1995	13,850	26%	19%	5%	5%	0%	0%	7%	39%
1996	10,047	25%	16%	4%	3%	0%	0%	6%	47%
1997	9,131	24%	8%	1%	1%	0%	0%	5%	60%
1998	7,612	19%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	73%
1999	6,878	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	86%

<sup>a</sup> Number of children whose first substitute care placement in his/her first case was active in the given fiscal year. Unduplicated across children.



transferred to a private person. The percentages of children still in care seem high with 27% of those entering care in FY 90 still in care. The Multistate Foster Care Data Archive provides some comparison data. These data show that for those children who first entered care between 1988 and 1993, the comparisons of reunifications, adoption and children still in care through December 1997<sup>1</sup> are:

	<b>Reunification</b>	<b>Adoption</b>	<b>Still in Care</b>	
Michigan	48%	19%	3%	
Missouri	50%	13%	6%	
New York	46%	14%	11%	
California	54%	9%	17%	
Illinois	37%	13%	27%	(Wulczyn, Goerge, & Brunner, 1999).

Since it is easier to interpret changes between categories and across years with percentages, the tables that show exits by race, age and region will include only percentages. No tables are included for exits by gender since no appreciable gender differences were noted. Table 4.13 shows the percent of each entry cohort exiting care by race and demonstrates some of the complexity of the relationship between race and exiting Department care. For ease of presentation the percentages of children who ran away and had their case closed or died while in care are deleted from this table. These percentages tend to be negligible. African American children consistently demonstrate lower reunification rates. Of those African American children entering care in FY 90, 25% returned home. Over 40% of White children entering care in FY 90 returned home, with this percentage staying consistently higher than that of African American children throughout the years. Reunification rates for Hispanic children are between

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<sup>1</sup>Children also exited care by reaching the age of maturity (2-4%), running away (3-7%), and other (10-21%). The other category was not explained in the MFCA report.

those of the other groups with 32% of Hispanic children entering care in FY 90 returning home.

**Table 4.13 Number of Children Entering and Percentage Exiting From Substitute Care by Exit Type and Ethnicity**

Fiscal Year	Ethnicity	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>a</sup>	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1990	African American	4,952	25%	23%	3%	11%	6%	31%
	Hispanic	424	32%	14%	0%	13%	6%	33%
	White	2,891	44%	12%	0%	15%	8%	20%
1991	African American	5,714	22%	25%	5%	11%	6%	31%
	Hispanic	467	36%	11%	0%	9%	9%	34%
	White	2,672	45%	13%	0%	14%	7%	20%
1992	African American	7,678	21%	26%	5%	9%	7%	31%
	Hispanic	575	33%	19%	0%	9%	11%	26%
	White	2,786	41%	17%	1%	14%	8%	18%
1993	African American	6,968	19%	26%	6%	7%	7%	34%
	Hispanic	524	32%	17%	1%	7%	8%	35%
	White	2,629	41%	17%	2%	13%	5%	21%
1994	African American	8,833	20%	23%	6%	5%	7%	39%
	Hispanic	634	31%	21%	2%	7%	8%	31%
	White	3,014	39%	17%	2%	10%	7%	24%

<sup>a</sup> Number of children whose first substitute care placement in his/her first case was active in the given fiscal year. Unduplicated across children.

**Table 4.13** Number of Children Entering and Percentage Exiting From Substitute Care by Exit Type and Ethnicity  
(continued)

Fiscal Year	Ethnicity	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>a</sup>	Exit Type					Closed in substitute care	Still in care
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out			
1995	African American	9,575	21%	20%	6%	3%	7%	42%	
	Hispanic	757	32%	15%	1%	4%	9%	39%	
	White	3,274	39%	17%	2%	8%	6%	28%	
1996	African American	6,555	19%	17%	5%	2%	6%	51%	
	Hispanic	675	29%	13%	1%	3%	8%	45%	
	White	2,620	38%	13%	2%	4%	6%	37%	
1997	African American	5,903	18%	9%	1%	1%	5%	66%	
	Hispanic	612	31%	6%	0%	1%	6%	55%	
	White	2,378	37%	7%	1%	3%	6%	46%	
1998	African American	4,781	13%	4%	0%	0%	3%	80%	
	Hispanic	606	19%	4%	0%	0%	5%	72%	
	White	2,034	31%	3%	0%	1%	5%	59%	
1999	African American	4,143	6%	1%	0%	0%	3%	90%	
	Hispanic	446	13%	0%	0%	0%	3%	84%	
	White	2,095	18%	0%	0%	0%	3%	78%	

<sup>a</sup> Number of children whose first substitute care placement in his/her first case was active in the given fiscal year. Unduplicated across children.

The return-home percentages for FY 98 were 13% for African American children, 19% for Hispanic children, and 31% for White children.

However, exits through adoption favor African American children. For the FY 90 cohort, 23% of African American children exited through adoption, with the percentage being 14% for Hispanic children and 12% for White children. This difference is fairly consistent through FY 96. In recent years the percentages for these groups are similar. For FY 97 9% of African American children entering care in that year were adopted with 6% of Hispanic and 7% of White children being adopted.

Guardianship also favors African American children. Of the African American children who entered care in the fiscal years from 1991 through 1995, 5–6% had guardianship transferred to a private person. The percentages for Hispanic and White children were 1–2%.

Examination of the number of children still in care for each cohort shows that a higher proportion of African American and Hispanic children are still in care than White or Hispanic children. For those children who entered care in FY 90, 31% of the African American children are still in care, 33% of the Hispanic children are still in care, and 20% of the White children are still in care. These relative proportions are similar over time, with 42% of the African American and 39% of Hispanic children who entered care in FY 95 still in care. The percentage for White children is 28%. While more African American children exit care through adoption and guardianship, a larger number of children overall exit care through reunification than adoption or guardianship. Consequently, a disproportionate percentage of African American and Hispanic children remain in care.

Not surprisingly, there are differences in percent of children exiting care by age (Table 4.14). For each entry cohort, children who entered care under the age of 3 had high rates of exiting by adoption. For example, of children in this

**Table 4.14 Number of Children Entering and Percentage Exiting From Substitute Care by Exit Type and Age in Fiscal Year**

Fiscal Year	Age in Fiscal Year	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>a</sup>	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1990	Up to 3 years	3,241	30%	35%	2%	0%	7%	24%
	3 to 6 years	1,434	34%	20%	4%	0%	5%	36%
	6 to 9 years	1,060	35%	13%	2%	1%	7%	41%
	9 to 12 years	907	36%	4%	1%	23%	6%	31%
	12 to 15 years	944	33%	1%	0%	43%	8%	14%
	15 to 18 years	817	24%	0%	0%	54%	6%	14%
1992	Up to 3 years	4,271	24%	39%	4%	0%	7%	25%
	3 to 6 years	2,038	28%	26%	6%	0%	7%	32%
	6 to 9 years	1,472	32%	18%	7%	0%	7%	36%
	9 to 12 years	1,217	29%	8%	4%	8%	9%	42%
	12 to 15 years	1,278	29%	1%	0%	41%	9%	20%
	15 to 18 years	897	22%	0%	0%	61%	5%	11%

<sup>a</sup> Number of children whose first substitute care placement in his/her first case was active in the given fiscal year. Unduplicated across children.

**Table 4.14** Number of Children Entering and Percentage Exiting From Substitute Care by Exit Type and Age in Fiscal Year *(continued)*

Fiscal Year	Age in Fiscal Year	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>a</sup>	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1994	Up to 3 years	5,139	20%	36%	4%	0%	7%	31%
	3 to 6 years	2,407	29%	21%	7%	0%	6%	37%
	6 to 9 years	1,635	30%	16%	8%	0%	6%	40%
	9 to 12 years	1,244	30%	8%	8%	0%	6%	48%
	12 to 15 years	1,318	29%	2%	1%	21%	9%	38%
	15 to 18 years	933	21%	0%	0%	54%	8%	17%
1996	Up to 3 years	4,277	22%	25%	3%	0%	6%	43%
	3 to 6 years	1,809	27%	14%	4%	0%	6%	49%
	6 to 9 years	1,226	28%	10%	5%	0%	5%	51%
	9 to 12 years	999	28%	8%	5%	0%	5%	53%
	12 to 15 years	978	30%	2%	3%	3%	6%	55%
	15 to 18 years	693	26%	0%	0%	33%	8%	33%

<sup>a</sup> Number of children whose first substitute care placement in his/her first case was active in the given fiscal year. Unduplicated across children.

**Table 4.14** Number of Children Entering and Percentage Exiting From Substitute Care by Exit Type and Age in Fiscal Year *(continued)*

Fiscal Year	Age in Fiscal Year	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>a</sup>	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1998	Up to 3 years	3,282	14%	6%	0%	0%	3%	76%
	3 to 6 years	1,207	21%	2%	0%	0%	4%	74%
	6 to 9 years	1,034	21%	2%	0%	0%	3%	74%
	9 to 12 years	836	23%	2%	0%	0%	4%	70%
	12 to 15 years	731	25%	1%	0%	0%	4%	70%
	15 to 18 years	503	22%	1%	0%	7%	8%	61%

<sup>a</sup> Number of children whose first substitute care placement in his/her first case was active in the given fiscal year. Unduplicated across children.



age group who entered care in FY 90, 35% exited by adoption; this percentage was 25% in FY 96.

The youngest and the oldest children have relatively lower percentages returning home. For example, for those children entering care in FY 92 who were under the age of 3, 24% returned home. Twenty-two percent of children who entered at 15 to 18 years of age returned home. At the same time, 32% of those children who entered care at 6 to 9 years of age returned home.

Children who left care by aging out were older when they entered care. For those children who entered care at 15 to 18 years of age in FY 90, 54% exited by aging out. This increased to 61% for children in this age group entering care in FY 92.

The largest percentage of children still in care tends to be those who entered care from 3 to 12 years of age. For example, for those children who entered care in FY 92, 32% of those who entered at 3 to 6 years of age are still in care, 36% of those who entered at 6 to 9 remain in care, and 42% of those who entered at 9 to 12 are still in care.

The three non-Cook County Department regions consistently have higher percentages of children returning home (Table 4.15). For those children entering care from these regions in FY 90, 37% returned home. Cook County regions had a reunification rate of 25%. This difference is fairly consistent over time, with 27% of children entering care in non-Cook regions in FY 98 returning home; this percentage for Cook County regions was 12%.

The Cook County regions have a higher percentage of children exiting care through adoption and guardianship than the non-Cook regions. For those children entering care in Cook County in FY 91, 28% were adopted and 5% exited through guardianship. These percentages for the non-Cook regions were 13% and 1%.

**Table 4.15 Number of Children Entering and Percentage Exiting From Substitute Care by Exit Type and Region by Fiscal Year**

Fiscal Year	Cook/Non-Cook	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>a</sup>	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1990	Cook regions	3,782	25%	28%	3%	14%	7%	22%
	Non-Cook regions	4,701	37%	12%	1%	12%	7%	31%
1991	Cook regions	4,537	21%	28%	5%	13%	7%	25%
	Non-Cook regions	4,467	38%	13%	1%	10%	6%	30%
1992	Cook regions	6,546	20%	29%	5%	11%	8%	27%
	Non-Cook regions	4,659	37%	15%	2%	10%	7%	29%
1993	Cook regions	5,667	16%	29%	6%	8%	7%	32%
	Non-Cook regions	4,598	37%	17%	2%	9%	5%	30%
1994	Cook regions	7,610	17%	26%	7%	5%	8%	37%
	Non-Cook regions	5,104	36%	16%	2%	7%	6%	32%
1995	Cook regions	8,885	20%	21%	6%	4%	8%	41%
	Non-Cook regions	4,965	37%	15%	3%	6%	5%	34%

<sup>a</sup> Number of children whose first substitute care placement in his/her first case was active in the given fiscal year. Unduplicated across children.

**Table 4.15 Number of Children Entering and Percentage Exiting From Substitute Care by Exit Type and Region by Fiscal Year (continued)**

Fiscal Year	Cook/Non-Cook	Children Entering Substitute Care <sup>a</sup>	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1996	Cook regions	6,138	19%	18%	4%	2%	7%	49%
	Non-Cook regions	3,909	35%	11%	2%	4%	5%	42%
1997	Cook regions	5,353	18%	9%	1%	1%	5%	65%
	Non-Cook regions	3,778	33%	7%	1%	2%	5%	52%
1998	Cook regions	4,138	12%	4%	0%	0%	4%	80%
	Non-Cook regions	3,474	27%	3%	0%	1%	3%	65%
1999	Cook regions	3,257	5%	1%	0%	0%	3%	92%
	Non-Cook regions	3,621	15%	0%	0%	0%	3%	81%

<sup>a</sup> Number of children whose first substitute care placement in his/her first case was active in the given fiscal year. Unduplicated across children

**Racial differences in exits from care: Comparing kinship and non-kinship care, Cook and non-Cook regions.** The unique kinship care program in Illinois may partially explain the racial differences in exits from care. Therefore this section reports exits from care for those children who entered kinship care compared to those who entered all other types of substitute care by region and race.

Exits from care for children entering kinship care in Cook regions are shown in Table 4.16. This table shows that African American children are the largest group entering kinship care in each year. The fiscal year with the largest number of children entering kinship care was 1995. Of African American children entering care in this year, 18% returned home. This compares to 31% of Hispanic children and 29% of White children. For this same cohort, 20% of African American children, 19% of Hispanic children, and 23% of White children were adopted. Consequently, 42% of African American children in this cohort are still in care, compared to 35% of Hispanic and 33% of White children.

Table 4.17 shows the comparable data for children entering non-kinship care in Cook County. The cohort entering care in FY 95 was mainly African American. For these children 20% have returned home compared to 31% of Hispanic and 27% of White children. While a larger percent of African American children in this cohort exited through guardianship (3% of African American children compared to 1% for both Hispanic and White children), a nearly equal percentage of African American (23%) and White children were adopted (24%). Sixteen percent of Hispanic children in this cohort were adopted. These exits result in 43% of African-American children in this cohort still in care compared to 35% of Hispanic children and 34% of White children.

Tables 4.18 and 4.19 present exits from care for children who entered kinship and non-kinship care from the rest of the state by race. Examining the cohort of children who entered kinship care in FY 95 shows that 34% of African American children returned home, compared to 55% of Hispanic and 47% of

**Table 4.16 Children Entering, Percentage Exiting, and Percentage Remaining in Kinship Care by Fiscal Year, Race, and Exit Type – Cook County**

Fiscal Year	Race	Children Entering Care	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
		N	%	%	%	%	%	%
1990	African American	1,486	20	27	4	15	7	26
	Hispanic	77	44	21	0	13	5	17
	White	80	43	16	0	18	13	11
1991	African American	2,255	18	26	7	13	6	29
	Hispanic	94	41	16	0	15	17	10
	White	121	33	31	3	7	12	13
1992	African American	3,596	17	27	8	10	7	31
	Hispanic	180	25	29	0	9	19	16
	White	227	34	30	1	10	16	8
1993	African American	2,912	14	26	9	9	8	34
	Hispanic	119	34	23	2	5	9	28
	White	132	27	37	7	8	6	14

*Note:* Kinship care includes the following placement types: home-of-relative, delegated relative authority, home-of-relative adoption, and home-of-relative licensed.

**Table 4.16 Children Entering, Percentage Exiting, and Percentage Remaining in Kinship Care by Fiscal Year, Race, and Exit Type – Cook County (continued)**

Fiscal Year	Race	Children Entering Care	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardianship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
		N	%	%	%	%	%	%
1994	African American	3,878	18	23	10	4	7	38
	Hispanic	197	26	31	5	6	9	22
	White	194	26	30	4	3	10	26
1995	African American	4,373	18	20	9	3	8	42
	Hispanic	254	31	19	1	3	11	35
	White	270	29	23	4	4	8	33
1996	African American	2,621	17	17	7	2	6	51
	Hispanic	225	28	14	3	2	6	45
	White	211	34	23	3	2	9	29
1997	African American	2,047	17	8	1	1	5	68
	Hispanic	178	32	6	2	1	3	56
	White	179	40	4	1	3	6	45

*Note:* Kinship care includes the following placement types: home-of-relative, delegated relative authority, home-of-relative adoption, and home-of-relative licensed.

**Table 4.16 Children Entering, Percentage Exiting, and Percentage Remaining in Kinship Care by Fiscal Year, Race, and Exit Type – Cook County (continued)**

Fiscal Year	Race	Children Entering Care	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
		N	%	%	%	%	%	%
1998	African American	1,465	11	1	0	0	4	83
	Hispanic	145	21	2	0	1	6	71
	White	148	21	2	0	0	11	66
1999	African American	983	4	0	0	0	2	94
	Hispanic	107	2	0	0	0	1	97
	White	122	10	0	0	0	3	87

*Note:* Kinship care includes the following placement types: home-of-relative, delegated relative authority, home-of-relative adoption, and home-of-relative licensed.

**Table 4.17 Children Entering, Percentage Exiting, and Percentage Remaining in Non-kinship Care by Fiscal Year, Race, and Exit Type – Cook County**

Fiscal Year	Race	Children Entering Care	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1990	African American	1,594	25%	30%	3%	12%	6%	23%
	Hispanic	147	31%	21%	0%	22%	10%	15%
	White	323	35%	26%	1%	20%	9%	10%
1991	African American	1,600	21%	32%	4%	12%	7%	24%
	Hispanic	143	44%	15%	1%	9%	10%	18%
	White	274	30%	23%	0%	24%	9%	12%
1992	African American	1,990	19%	33%	4%	10%	8%	27%
	Hispanic	191	44%	20%	1%	10%	9%	15%
	White	285	26%	34%	0%	21%	6%	11%
1993	African American	1,981	16%	33%	4%	7%	6%	33%
	Hispanic	187	27%	18%	2%	8%	11%	33%
	White	281	19%	37%	2%	14%	9%	17%
1994	African American	2,665	15%	29%	3%	5%	7%	39%
	Hispanic	207	25%	25%	0%	8%	12%	29%
	White	372	16%	28%	3%	13%	9%	30%

*Note.* Non-kinship care includes the following placement types: foster care, group home, institution, and foster home adoption.



**Table 4.17 Children Entering, Percentage Exiting, and Percentage Remaining in Non-kinship Care by Fiscal Year, Race, and Exit Type – Cook County (continued)**

Fiscal Year	Race	Children Entering Care	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1995	African American	3,160	20%	23%	3%	4%	7%	43%
	Hispanic	288	31%	16%	1%	6%	11%	35%
	White	407	27%	24%	1%	7%	7%	34%
1996	African American	2,397	16%	20%	3%	2%	7%	52%
	Hispanic	281	30%	15%	0%	3%	11%	39%
	White	319	24%	23%	3%	7%	10%	34%
1997	African American	2,301	14%	11%	0%	1%	6%	68%
	Hispanic	233	32%	8%	0%	2%	10%	48%
	White	285	23%	12%	0%	2%	7%	55%
1998	African American	1,858	9%	5%	0%	0%	3%	81%
	Hispanic	220	14%	5%	0%	0%	4%	77%
	White	227	24%	5%	0%	0%	5%	66%
1999	African American	1,635	4%	1%	0%	0%	3%	92%
	Hispanic	147	11%	0%	0%	0%	6%	83%
	White	202	6%	0%	0%	0%	3%	90%

Note. Non-kinship care includes the following placement types: foster care, group home, institution, and foster home adoption.

**Table 4.18 Children Entering, Percentage Exiting, and Percentage Remaining in Kinship Care by Fiscal Year, Race, and Exit Type – Outside Cook County**

Fiscal Year	Race	Children Entering Care	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1990	African American	502	27%	15%	2%	10%	10%	35%
	Hispanic	44	25%	2%	0%	5%	2%	66%
	White	481	51%	7%	1%	9%	9%	23%
1991	African American	528	26%	19%	4%	9%	10%	32%
	Hispanic	34	35%	6%	0%	15%	3%	41%
	White	496	48%	12%	0%	9%	10%	20%
1992	African American	692	33%	15%	7%	7%	8%	28%
	Hispanic	35	46%	3%	0%	14%	14%	23%
	White	565	50%	12%	1%	8%	11%	18%
1993	African American	614	34%	21%	4%	6%	7%	29%
	Hispanic	45	42%	13%	0%	4%	2%	38%
	White	491	52%	10%	3%	7%	8%	20%
1994	African American	758	28%	17%	5%	4%	6%	39%
	Hispanic	53	47%	11%	0%	13%	4%	25%
	White	704	50%	12%	3%	7%	9%	20%

*Note.* Kinship care includes the following placement types: home-of-relative, delegated relative authority, home-of-relative adoption, and home-of-relative licensed.

**Table 4.18 Children Entering, Percentage Exiting, and Percentage Remaining in Kinship Care by Fiscal Year, Race, and Exit Type – Outside Cook County (continued)**

Fiscal Year	Race	Children Entering Care	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1995	African American	671	34%	13%	7%	2%	7%	36%
	Hispanic	38	55%	21%	0%	3%	3%	18%
	White	730	47%	11%	5%	5%	9%	24%
1996	African American	433	25%	11%	7%	3%	5%	49%
	Hispanic	42	36%	7%	2%	5%	5%	45%
	White	522	44%	9%	4%	2%	7%	32%
1997	African American	459	30%	4%	7%	1%	6%	53%
	Hispanic	31	32%	3%	0%	0%	13%	52%
	White	503	44%	7%	2%	2%	5%	40%
1998	African American	465	20%	2%	0%	0%	3%	75%
	Hispanic	56	21%	4%	0%	0%	7%	68%
	White	485	36%	2%	1%	1%	5%	56%
1999	African American	440	11%	0%	0%	0%	3%	85%
	Hispanic	55	22%	0%	0%	0%	0%	78%
	White	552	23%	0%	0%	0%	4%	73%

Note. Kinship care includes the following placement types: home-of-relative, delegated relative authority, home-of-relative adoption, and home-of-relative licensed.

**Table 4.19 Children Entering, Percentage Exiting, and Percentage Remaining in Non-kinship Care by Fiscal Year, Race, and Exit Type – Outside Cook County**

Fiscal Year	Race	Children Entering Care	Exit Type					Still in care
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	
1990	African American	1,370	28%	15%	2%	7%	4%	43%
	Hispanic	156	29%	8%	0%	8%	4%	50%
	White	2,007	43%	11%	0%	15%	7%	22%
1991	African American	1,331	30%	16%	2%	6%	6%	40%
	Hispanic	196	27%	6%	0%	6%	4%	57%
	White	1,781	47%	11%	0%	15%	5%	22%
1992	African American	1,400	28%	18%	1%	7%	6%	40%
	Hispanic	169	27%	11%	0%	8%	4%	51%
	White	1,709	42%	14%	1%	15%	6%	21%
1993	African American	1,461	28%	20%	1%	5%	6%	40%
	Hispanic	173	33%	12%	1%	7%	5%	42%
	White	1,725	42%	15%	1%	15%	4%	23%
1994	African American	1,532	29%	18%	3%	4%	4%	42%
	Hispanic	177	38%	7%	0%	5%	5%	44%
	White	1,744	41%	16%	1%	12%	6%	24%

*Note.* Non-kinship care includes the following placement types: foster care, group home, institution, and foster home adoption.

**Table 4.19 Children Entering, Percentage Exiting, and Percentage Remaining in Non-kinship Care by Fiscal Year, Race, and Exit Type – Outside Cook County (continued)**

Fiscal Year	Race	Children Entering Care	Exit Type					
			At home	Adopted	Guardian-ship	Aged out	Closed in substitute care	Still in care
1995	African American	1,371	29%	17%	2%	3%	3%	45%
	Hispanic	177	31%	5%	1%	3%	6%	54%
	White	1,867	39%	16%	1%	10%	5%	28%
1996	African American	1,104	30%	13%	2%	3%	4%	48%
	Hispanic	127	27%	8%	0%	2%	7%	55%
	White	1,568	39%	11%	1%	5%	4%	40%
1997	African American	1,096	26%	8%	0%	1%	2%	62%
	Hispanic	170	26%	5%	0%	1%	3%	65%
	White	1,411	36%	7%	0%	3%	6%	47%
1998	African American	993	20%	4%	0%	0%	2%	73%
	Hispanic	185	23%	4%	0%	1%	5%	68%
	White	1,174	32%	4%	0%	1%	4%	59%
1999	African American	1,085	9%	1%	0%	0%	3%	87%
	Hispanic	137	21%	0%	0%	0%	1%	77%
	White	1,219	19%	1%	0%	0%	2%	78%

*Note.* Non-kinship care includes the following placement types: foster care, group home, institution, and foster home adoption.

White children. Thirteen percent of African American children in this cohort were adopted, compared to 21% of Hispanic and 11% of White children. A higher percentage of African American children exited through guardianship (7%) compared to White children (5%). A larger percentage of African American children remain in care (36%) compared to Hispanic (18%) and White children (24%).

Of those children who entered other types of substitute care outside of Cook County (Table 4.19) in FY 95, 29% of African American children returned home compared to 31% of Hispanic and 39% of White children. A higher percentage of African American and White children (16%) exited care through adoption (17%) compared to Hispanic children (5%). Higher proportions of Hispanic and African American children remain in care for most of these cohorts. For the FY 95, cohort 54% of Hispanic and 45% of African American children remain in care compared to 28% of White children.

### **Children Returned to Substitute Care: Gender, Race, Age, and Region**

No gender differences in children reentering substitute care were found; therefore this data is not reported here. Some differences do exist between racial groups (Table 4.20), but no consistent pattern emerges over time. A smaller percentage of African American children remained at home in the early 1990s. For example, of those children returned home in FY 90, 59% of African American children remain at home compared to 64% of Hispanic and 69% of White children. These differences change over time. For example, 71% of African American children returned home in FY 95 are still at home compared to 71% of White children and 82% of Hispanic children.

Reentry into care differs by age (Table 4.21). For most years, the younger children were at time of return home, the more likely they were to reenter care. For example, for those children who returned home in FY 90, 59% of those up to

**Table 4.20 Reentry to Substitute Care by Time to Reentry, Fiscal Year, and Ethnicity**

Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Ethnicity	Children Returned Home <sup>b</sup>	Children Returned to Substitute Care <sup>c</sup>											
			7 Days or less		7 Days–6 months		6–12 months		12–18 months		More than 18 months		Still at home	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1990	African American	1,328	16	1.2	174	13.1	85	6.4	52	3.9	220	16.6	781	58.8
	Hispanic	188	2	1.1	24	12.8	16	8.5	4	2.1	21	11.2	121	64.4
	White	1,210	11	0.9	149	12.3	64	5.3	44	3.6	103	8.5	839	69.3
1991	African American	1,747	17	1.0	292	16.7	153	8.8	94	5.4	266	15.2	925	52.9
	Hispanic	243	1	0.4	23	9.5	6	2.5	8	3.3	32	13.2	173	71.2
	White	1,507	29	1.9	189	12.5	75	5.0	57	3.8	142	9.4	1,015	67.4
1992	African American	1,809	14	0.8	235	13.0	169	9.3	110	6.1	251	13.9	1,030	56.9
	Hispanic	218	2	0.9	23	10.6	17	7.8	6	2.8	12	5.5	158	72.5
	White	1,592	23	1.4	199	12.5	60	3.8	28	1.8	134	8.4	1,148	72.1
1993	African American	1,900	21	1.1	278	14.6	161	8.5	94	4.9	215	11.3	1,131	59.5
	Hispanic	246	0	0	29	11.8	14	5.7	4	1.6	18	7.3	181	73.6
	White	1,674	25	1.5	244	14.6	71	4.2	56	3.3	123	7.3	1,155	69.0

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal year is the fiscal year the child was returned home from substitute care.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children who were living at home during the fiscal year and had previously lived in substitute care.

<sup>c</sup> From the time returned home.

**Table 4.20 Reentry to Substitute Care by Time to Reentry, Fiscal Year, and Ethnicity (continued)**

Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Ethnicity	Children Returned Home <sup>b</sup>	Children Returned to Substitute Care <sup>c</sup>											
			7 Days or less		7 Days–6 months		6–12 months		12–18 months		More than 18 months		Still at home	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1994	African American	1,659	31	1.9	239	14.4	114	6.9	92	5.5	98	5.9	1,085	65.4
	Hispanic	218	5	2.3	12	5.5	7	3.2	3	1.4	22	10.1	169	77.5
	White	1,463	18	1.2	191	13.1	77	5.3	36	2.5	94	6.4	1,047	71.6
1995	African American	2,050	22	1.1	233	11.4	141	6.9	46	2.2	147	7.2	1,461	71.3
	Hispanic	251	0	0	15	6.0	10	4.0	8	3.2	11	4.4	207	82.5
	White	1,726	29	1.7	270	15.6	86	5.0	42	2.4	81	4.7	1,218	70.6
1996	African American	1,968	17	0.9	192	9.8	119	6.0	68	3.5	99	5.0	1,473	74.8
	Hispanic	245	0	0	30	12.2	7	2.9	1	0.4	11	4.5	196	80.0
	White	1,503	19	1.3	201	13.4	90	6.0	55	3.7	74	4.9	1,064	70.8
1997	African American	2,251	10	0.4	208	9.2	130	5.8	66	2.9	57	2.5	1,780	79.1
	Hispanic	299	0	0	13	4.3	4	1.3	1	0.3	11	3.7	270	90.3
	White	1,488	18	1.2	207	13.9	79	5.3	28	1.9	48	3.2	1,108	74.5

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal year is the fiscal year the child was returned home from substitute care.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children who were living at home during the fiscal year and had previously lived in substitute care.

<sup>c</sup> From the time returned home.



**Table 4.20 Reentry to Substitute Care by Time to Reentry, Fiscal Year, and Ethnicity (continued)**

Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Ethnicity	Children Returned Home <sup>b</sup>	Children Reentering Substitute Care <sup>c</sup>											
			7 Days or less		7 Days – 6 months		6–12 months		12–18 months		More than 18 months		Still at home	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1998	African American	2,418	17	0.7	244	10.1	112	4.6	48	2.0	22	0.9	1,975	81.7
	Hispanic	334	0	0	17	5.1	7	2.1	1	0.3	2	0.6	307	91.9
	White	1,269	9	0.7	160	12.6	75	5.9	17	1.3	4	0.3	1,004	79.1
1999	African American	2,322	15	0.6	143	6.2	37	1.6	0	0	0	0	2,127	91.6
	Hispanic	325	1	0.3	13	4.0	4	1.2	0	0	0	0	307	94.5
	White	1,330	11	0.8	152	11.4	24	1.8	0	0	0	0	1,143	85.9

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal year is the fiscal year the child was returned home from substitute care.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children who were living at home during the fiscal year and had previously lived in substitute care.

<sup>c</sup> From the time returned home.

**Table 4.21 Reentry to Substitute Care by Time to Reentry, Fiscal Year, and Age in Fiscal Year**

Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Age in Fiscal Year	Children Returned Home <sup>b</sup>	Children Reentering Substitute Care <sup>c</sup>											
			7 Days or less		7 Days–6 months		6–12 months		12–18 months		More than 18 months		Still at home	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1990	Up to 3 years	991	14	1.4	145	14.6	64	6.5	34	3.4	149	15.0	585	59.0
	3 to 6 years	551	6	1.1	57	10.3	34	6.2	28	5.1	83	15.1	343	62.3
	6 to 9 years	390	2	0.5	44	11.3	21	5.4	14	3.6	68	17.4	241	61.8
	9 to 12 years	284	2	0.7	39	13.7	14	4.9	13	4.6	33	11.6	183	64.4
	12 to 15 years	329	2	0.6	45	13.7	23	7.0	11	3.3	22	6.7	226	68.7
	15 to 18 years	256	3	1.2	34	13.3	11	4.3	3	1.2	0	0.0	205	80.1
1992	Up to 3 years	1,158	13	1.1	155	13.4	81	7.0	52	4.5	165	14.2	692	59.8
	3 to 6 years	704	2	0.3	82	11.6	51	7.2	28	4.0	89	12.6	452	64.2
	6 to 9 years	486	0	0	52	10.7	35	7.2	20	4.1	68	14.0	311	64.0
	9 to 12 years	449	3	0.7	40	8.9	37	8.2	22	4.9	56	12.5	291	64.8
	12 to 15 years	478	9	1.9	74	15.5	36	7.5	16	3.3	22	4.6	321	67.2
	15 to 18 years	390	12	3.1	60	15.4	11	2.8	6	1.5	4	1.0	297	76.2

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal year is the fiscal year the child was returned home from substitute care.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children who were living at home during the fiscal year and had previously lived in substitute care.

<sup>c</sup> From the time returned home.

**Table 4.21 Reentry to Substitute Care by Time to Reentry, Fiscal Year, and Age in Fiscal Year (continued)**

Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Age in Fiscal Year	Children Returned Home <sup>b</sup>	Children Returned to Substitute Care <sup>c</sup>											
			7 Days or less		7 Days - 6 months		6-12 months		12-18 months		More than 18 months		Still at home	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1994	Up to 3 years	934	17	1.8	135	14.5	65	7.0	37	4.0	83	8.9	597	63.9
	3 to 6 years	760	8	1.1	84	11.1	34	4.5	34	4.5	58	7.6	542	71.3
	6 to 9 years	490	10	2.0	59	12.0	24	4.9	20	4.1	34	6.9	343	70.0
	9 to 12 years	374	6	1.6	41	11.0	21	5.6	17	4.5	22	5.9	267	71.4
	12 to 15 years	444	6	1.4	70	15.8	36	8.1	18	4.1	17	3.8	297	66.9
	15 to 18 years	378	7	1.9	62	16.4	20	5.3	7	1.9	2	0.5	280	74.1
1996	Up to 3 years	849	8	0.9	120	14.1	50	5.9	28	3.3	38	4.5	605	71.3
	3 to 6 years	867	10	1.2	74	8.5	51	5.9	36	4.2	61	7.0	635	73.2
	6 to 9 years	628	4	0.6	65	10.4	40	6.4	19	3.0	33	5.3	467	74.4
	9 to 12 years	464	4	0.9	45	9.7	26	5.6	20	4.3	20	4.3	349	75.2
	12 to 15 years	488	3	0.6	71	14.5	33	6.8	18	3.7	30	6.1	333	68.2
	15 to 18 years	450	7	1.6	58	12.9	23	5.1	7	1.6	5	1.1	350	77.8

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal year is the fiscal year the child was returned home from substitute care.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children who were living at home during the fiscal year and had previously lived in substitute care.

<sup>c</sup> From the time returned home.

**Table 4.21 Reentry to Substitute Care by Time to Reentry, Fiscal Year, and Age in Fiscal Year (continued)**

Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Age in Fiscal Year	Children Returned Home <sup>b</sup>	Children Returned to Substitute Care <sup>c</sup>											
			7 Days or less		7 Days - 6 months		6-12 months		12-18 months		More than 18 months		Still at home	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1998	Up to 3 years	881	8	0.9	135	15.3	47	5.3	19	2.2	10	1.1	662	75.1
	3 to 6 years	904	4	0.4	93	10.3	42	4.6	12	1.3	5	0.6	748	82.7
	6 to 9 years	765	3	0.4	49	6.4	38	5.0	13	1.7	2	0.3	660	86.3
	9 to 12 years	644	4	0.6	49	7.6	33	5.1	7	1.1	6	0.9	545	84.6
	12 to 15 years	505	3	0.6	67	13.3	26	5.1	13	2.6	3	0.6	393	77.8
	15 to 18 years	388	7	1.8	42	10.8	17	4.4	4	1.0	2	0.5	316	81.4

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal year is the fiscal year the child was returned home from substitute care.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children who were living at home during the fiscal year and had previously lived in substitute care.

<sup>c</sup> From the time returned home.

age 3 remain at home compared to 62% of those 6 to 9 years of age and 68% of those 12 to 15 years of age. In more recent years, the youngest children and those between the ages of 12 and 15 have a higher rate of reentry into care. For example for the children ages 12 to 15 upon entering care in FY 98, 78% remain at home. For children under the age of 3, 75% remained at home.

Table 4.22 shows reentry rates by regions. Differences between Cook County regions and those in the rest of the state change over time. For those children returned home in FY 90, 56% from Cook County are still at home compared to 66% for the rest of the state. For children returned home in FY 95 these percentages are nearly equal at 74% for Cook County and 71% for the rest of the state. For FY 98 the percentages seem to favor children from Cook County with 90% still at home compared to 75% for the rest of the state.

**Table 4.22 Reentry to Substitute Care by Time to Reentry, Fiscal Year, and Cook/Non-Cook Regions**

Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Cook/Non-Cook	Children Returned Home <sup>b</sup>	Children Returned to Substitute Care <sup>c</sup>											
			7 Days or less		7 Days–6 months		6–12 months		12–18 months		More than 18 months		Still at home	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1990	Cook regions	582	6	1.0	63	10.8	49	8.4	23	4.0	115	19.8	326	56.0
	Non-Cook regions	2,225	23	1.0	301	13.5	118	5.3	81	3.6	242	10.9	1,460	65.6
1991	Cook regions	849	4	0.5	136	16.0	89	10.5	52	6.1	139	16.4	429	50.5
	Non-Cook regions	2,725	43	1.6	377	13.8	156	5.7	109	4.0	306	11.2	1,734	63.6
1992	Cook regions	856	4	0.5	85	9.9	76	8.9	53	6.2	130	15.2	508	59.3
	Non-Cook regions	2,823	35	1.2	379	13.4	175	6.2	91	3.2	274	9.7	1,869	66.2
1993	Cook regions	970	1	0.1	92	9.5	102	10.5	54	5.6	107	11.0	614	63.3
	Non-Cook regions	2,936	45	1.5	477	16.2	148	5.0	104	3.5	253	8.6	1,909	65.0
1994	Cook regions	719	20	2.8	79	11.0	65	9.0	29	4.0	45	6.3	481	66.9
	Non-Cook regions	2,697	34	1.3	372	13.8	136	5.0	104	3.9	171	6.3	1,880	69.7
1995	Cook regions	1,235	8	0.6	102	8.3	86	7.0	39	3.2	89	7.2	911	73.8
	Non-Cook regions	2,879	43	1.5	424	14.7	154	5.3	62	2.2	162	5.6	2,034	70.6

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal year is the fiscal year the child was returned home from substitute care.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children who were living at home during the fiscal year and had previously lived in substitute care.

<sup>c</sup> From the time returned home.

**Table 4.22 Reentry to Substitute Care by Time to Reentry, Fiscal Year, and Cook/Non-Cook Regions (continued)**

Fiscal Year <sup>a</sup>	Cook/Non-Cook	Children Returned Home <sup>b</sup>	Children Returned to Substitute Care <sup>c</sup>											
			7 Days or less		7 Days–6 months		6–12 months		12–18 months		More than 18 months		Still at home	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1996	Cook regions	1,335	3	0.2	81	6.1	75	5.6	47	3.5	73	5.5	1,056	79.1
	Non-Cook regions	2,468	33	1.3	353	14.3	148	6.0	81	3.3	114	4.6	1,739	70.5
1997	Cook regions	1,666	10	0.6	110	6.6	65	3.9	39	2.3	39	2.3	1,403	84.2
	Non-Cook regions	2,470	19	0.8	328	13.3	151	6.1	56	2.3	86	3.5	1,830	74.1
1998	Cook regions	1,868	5	0.3	91	4.9	69	3.7	19	1.0	10	0.5	1,674	89.6
	Non-Cook regions	2,265	24	1.1	344	15.2	134	5.9	49	2.2	18	0.8	1,696	74.9
1999	Cook regions	1,848	2	0.1	80	4.3	28	1.5	0	0	0	0	1,738	94.0
	Non-Cook regions	2,244	25	1.1	235	10.5	41	1.8	0	0	0	0	1,943	86.6

<sup>a</sup> Fiscal year is the fiscal year the child was returned home from substitute care.

<sup>b</sup> Number of children who were living at home during the fiscal year and had previously lived in substitute care.

<sup>c</sup> From the time returned home.

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## **Appendix A**

### **OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS**



## Operational Definitions for Use with the IDCFS Integrated Database

Most of the safety and permanency outcomes indicators are constructed, directly or indirectly<sup>1</sup>, from fields contained in the IDCFS Integrated Database. This joint project between the Department of Children and Family Services and Chapin Hall Center for Children permits tracking of indicators over a period of several years as well as providing 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 this report. We have agreed upon the following operational definitions.<sup>2</sup>

### 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) coded as 'ZZZ' or 'ZZA'<sup>3</sup> (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**

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> These are codes in the "HMR Monitoring" and "Master Events" files only.

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** if his or her next living arrangement (enevent) was not coded as ‘HAP’, ‘HMA’, ‘FHA’, or ‘CEN’<sup>4</sup> **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.

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<sup>4</sup> “CEN” is a code used in the “HMR Monitoring” and “Master Events” files only to designate a continuing placement at the time the data were extracted or “pulled” from the administrative systems files.

**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, SERVERITY 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 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.

#### **(MOST RECENT AND MOST SEVERE) 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"). Thus, among the allegations associated with the most recent report date, the most severe allegation was chosen based upon the severity ranking described above.



### **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.”

**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 (opcode) 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 (opcode) of 'AA' or 'RA'.

**NOINTACT FAMILY CARE (SEE SPLIT CUSTODY FAMILY CARE)**

**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”<sup>5</sup>). 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,

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<sup>5</sup> 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’, ‘IOP’, ‘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** (opencode) 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’,  
‘IRS’, ‘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 (endevent<sup>6</sup>) 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 (opencode) was not coded as ‘AA’ or ‘RA’ (adoption or refugee assistance).

#### **SPLIT CUSTODY (NONINTACT FAMILY CARE (AT FAMILY CASE OPENING))**

A child was defined as being in split custody 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.)

#### **SPLIT CUSTODY (NONINTACT) FAMILY CASE**

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

#### **SUBSTITUTE CARE**

Substitute Care was defined as encompassing the following Placement types: “Relative Care,” “Family Foster Care,” “Specialized Foster Care,” “Group Home,”

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<sup>6</sup> A variable from the “HMR Monitoring” and “Master Events” files indicating the next living arrangement for a child.

“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 the child 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 at 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

