

State of Child Welfare 2013

Mercer (Rural-Mix)

SIGNIFICANCE	INDICATOR	County		Rural-Mix		State	
		2012 Report	Current Report	2012 Report	Current Report	2012 Report	Current Report
<p>Child maltreatment is a serious problem that has grave and costly consequences for the child, his or her family and the community at-large.</p> <p>A child who has experienced abuse and neglect is more likely to have social, emotional and physical health problems and perform poorly in school.</p>	<p>Child Abuse Reports Reported incidents of suspected child abuse through the ChildLine and Abuse Registry. Does not include General Protective Services reports, which include less severe general neglect reports. (Number and rate per 1,000 children age 0-17)</p>	238	235	3,700	4,170	24,378	26,664
		9.4	9.3	9.1	10.2	8.7	9.5
	<p>Child Abuse Substantiations Founded or indicated reports of child abuse. Does not include the number of children determined to need General Protective Services.</p>	21.4%	17.4%	16.6%	14.6%	14.0%	13.4%
	<p>Repeated Child Abuse Children with another substantiated incident of abuse following the first reported incident. (Data may be overstated.)</p>	9.8%	9.8%	6.8%	8.7%	7.9%	7.9%
		1 in 10	1 in 10	1 in 15	1 in 11	1 in 13	1 in 13
<p>In-home services are designed to strengthen families by addressing the root causes of abuse and neglect. The provision of in-home services helps a child to remain safely in his or her home.</p>	<p>In-Home Services Children whose families received services in their homes to address concerns related to child safety and well-being during the year.* Counties that did not report in-home services are excluded from total.</p>	2,128	1,952	30,712	31,808*	164,842	171,416*
<p>Foster care is meant to be a temporary intervention to assure the safety and well-being of a child. A child who spends long periods of time in foster care is more likely than other children to drop out of school, have mental health challenges, experience unemployment and be homeless as an adult.</p>	<p>Children Entering Foster Care All Entries into Foster Care During the Year First Time Entries During the Year</p>	88	88	1,538	1,238	10,038	9,205
		63.6%	52.3%	73.1%	72.6%	71.5%	71.7%
	<p>Children in Foster Care All Children in Foster Care (Rate per 1,000 children age 0-20)</p>	191	178	2,958	2,727	22,443	21,545
		6.2	5.8	6.1	5.6	6.7	6.4
	Age						
	0-1	8.4%	9.6%	12.7%	12.4%	12.0%	11.9%
	2-5	22.5%	21.9%	21.3%	22.7%	21.9%	22.6%
	6-12	15.7%	15.7%	21.7%	22.2%	22.5%	22.8%
	13-17	45.0%	42.1%	37.1%	34.3%	33.2%	31.7%
	18-20	8.4%	10.7%	7.3%	8.4%	10.5%	11.0%
	Race and Ethnicity						
	White	59.7%	70.8%	82.2%	83.5%	54.6%	55.9%
	Black or African American	39.8%	37.1%	18.6%	18.9%	44.8%	44.4%
	Other	0.5%	0.6%	0.9%	0.8%	3.2%	2.8%
	Hispanic or Latino	2.6%	1.1%	5.8%	6.0%	11.7%	12.0%
	Placement Setting						
	Family Setting	66.5%	61.2%	69.6%	70.2%	72.5%	72.7%
	Pre-adoptive Home	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	3.0%	3.1%	3.2%
	Foster Family Home – Relative	21.5%	18.0%	15.4%	16.9%	24.2%	24.5%
	Foster Family Home – Non-Relative	45.0%	43.3%	51.6%	50.3%	45.2%	45.0%
	Congregate Care	32.5%	34.8%	22.0%	21.1%	21.0%	20.2%
	Group Home	30.9%	33.1%	15.8%	14.5%	12.7%	12.5%
	Institution	1.6%	1.7%	6.2%	6.6%	8.4%	7.7%
	Supervised Independent Living	1.0%	3.9%	0.5%	0.6%	2.0%	2.0%
	Runaway	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.7%	1.2%	2.0%
	Trial Home Visit	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	7.5%	3.3%	3.1%
<p>A child's separation from his or her parents or relatives is traumatic for all involved. Minimizing the time a child spends in foster care without compromising safety is key to healthy child development.</p>	<p>Timely Reunification with Parents or Relatives Children who entered foster care for the first time who were reunified with their parents or discharged to relatives within the next 12 months.</p>	48.0%	62.0%	55.3%	51.3%	46.9%	42.7%
<p>A child re-entering foster care following a return to his or her family signals a breakdown in the family and a potential failure on the part of the child welfare system to appropriately address family needs.</p>	<p>Re-entry into Foster Care Children who re-entered foster care in fewer than 12 months following reunification with parents or relatives. (Data may be overstated.)</p>	24.6%	30.9%	21.4%	21.7%	27.5%	26.0%

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<p>A child relies on his or her family for an array of supports from early childhood through adulthood. Without a permanent family, a child fails to have a sense of security and suffers from a lack of belonging.</p>	<p>Children Leaving Foster Care Children who exited foster care by discharge reason and how long they were in foster care. Also includes the median length of stay for children remaining in foster care.</p>						
	Total Children Leaving Foster Care	95	119	1,502	1,442	10,578	9,490
	Percent of Children Leaving Foster Care	49.7%	66.9%	50.8%	52.9%	47.1%	44.0%
	(number of months until leaving)	7.9	11.3	7.0	8.6	11.3	11.6
	Exit to Permanent Arrangements	90.5%	87.4%	90.9%	91.0%	87.4%	88.3%
	Reunification	76.8%	65.5%	63.1%	60.0%	59.3%	58.3%
	(number of months until reunification)	5.1	1.1	3.3	5.8	5.8	5.9
	Adoption	4.2%	5.0%	14.2%	16.1%	17.9%	19.3%
	(number of months until adoption)	37.0	48.7	33.7	27.2	28.6	27.1
	Guardianship	8.4%	15.1%	5.5%	7.0%	5.6%	5.8%
	(number of month until guardianship)	20.3	21.8	20.8	24.1	21.4	22.2
	Live with Other Relatives	1.1%	1.7%	8.2%	7.9%	4.6%	4.9%
	(number of months until living with relatives)	10.8	9.6	4.9	5.7	3.1	2.3
	Exit to Non-Permanent Arrangements	9.5%	12.6%	8.7%	9.0%	12.5%	11.5%
	Emancipation	7.4%	10.1%	7.1%	7.6%	7.8%	8.3%
(number of months until emancipation)	25.8	27.4	42.5	27.5	38.5	34.7	
Transfer to Another Agency	2.1%	2.5%	1.2%	1.0%	1.9%	2.6%	
(number of months until transfer)	0.6	2.3	6.3	11.3	7.1	6.4	
Runaway	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.3%	2.7%	0.6%	
(number of months until running away)	0.0	0.0	28.6	7.5	5.0	12.4	
Death of Child	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	
(number of months until death of a child)	0.0	0.0	7.0	0.0	4.7	19.4	
Total Children Remaining in Foster Care	114	83	1,650	1,447	13,611	13,381	
(number of months children have been in care)	15.3	9.2	11.8	13.0	12.8	13.2	
<p>Every time a child moves, the trauma caused by separation and lack of continuity grows. A child who faces multiple placements struggles to build and maintain healthy relationships and faces academic challenges due to school changes.</p>	<p>Foster Care Placement Stability Children who were in foster care for 12 to 23 months and had three or more placement settings.</p>	38.0%	50.0%	38.8%	36.0%	37.7%	34.3%
	<p>Caseworker Visits Children who were in foster care and visited on a monthly basis by a county or private agency child welfare worker.</p>	—	—	—	—	96%	98%



This report was made possible in collaboration with Casey Family Programs, whose mission is to provide and improve - and ultimately prevent the need for - foster care. To learn more, visit casey.org. The findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and do not necessarily reflect the views of Casey Family Programs.

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