

Permanency Data - Overview:

The source of the permanency data is Child Care Review Service (CCRS). CCRS is the system of record for foster care placement, legal events, and adoption activity. This data packet includes data that was input into CCRS by January 31, 2013. The CCRS data in this packet was accessed primarily through the Multi-State Foster Care Data Archive (State Data Center).

For the purpose of this data packet, CCRS data is processed to create child spells. A child spell is a continuous period of time in an out-of-home placement that is not interrupted by an absence or trial discharge of more than thirty days. A child's spell(s) is associated with the county that most recently had jurisdiction over the child's care. Only spells that are at least five days long are included.

At the request of local districts, the permanency data includes only children who have been in the custody of the LDSS for all or part of their foster care spell. The data contained in this report does not include in care youth who have been under the custody of OCFS during their entire foster care spell.

Frequently Asked Questions about the OCFS Permanency Data:

Q: What is the State Data Center?

A: Chapin Hall and the American Public Human Services Association established the Center for State Foster Care and Adoption Data in 2004 to support child welfare agencies using longitudinal data. The State Data Center is supported through fees paid by member states and the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Casey Family Programs.

Q: Our district maintains our own records and some of those counts are different than the data in this data packet. The data warehouse also reports different counts. Why?

A: There are three primary reasons that numbers in this packet differ from those that appear on other routine reports that are distributed by OCFS.

- 1) Data are taken from a database on different dates: CCRS data in this packet includes data input through January 31, 2013. Timely data entry at the local level creates more complete and accurate data.
- 2) The data definitions differ: For the purpose of this data packet, CCRS data is processed to create child spells. A child spell is a continuous period of time in an out-of-home placement that is not interrupted by an absence or trial discharge of more than thirty days. A child's spell is associated with the county that most recently had jurisdiction over the child's care. Only spells that are at least five days long are included. Children are counted as exiting foster care if they have been absent (for example on runaway status or in a hospital absence) or on trial discharge for more than thirty days. If a child returns to foster care after thirty days, this is counted as a new admission. A child's spell in foster care continues if the time out of care is thirty days or less.
- 3) The universe of children is different: All CCRS placement data is analyzed. However, only the records for children who were recorded to be in LDSS custody for their entire foster care stay or a portion of their foster care stay are included in this data packet. Children who were exclusively in OCFS custody for their entire foster care stay are excluded.

Q: Are all exit types included in the data or just the permanent (reunification, relatives, KinGAP, adoption) exits?

A: Types of exits from foster care are summarized in eight groups: reunification, relatives, KinGAP, adoption, reach majority, APPLA, runaway, and other exit. Children released to a primary resource person are included in the counts of relative exits. "Other" exits include any other exit code recorded in CCRS associated with an M950 or an M990 code. The most common types of "other" exits were SB (Hospital), SD (Sent to detention), 582 – To Enter OCFS Facility, 585 – Administrative Action.

Q: Has this data packet refreshed all the data since the previous data packet?

A: Yes. The numbers and percentages presented in this packet may differ from the data presented in the previous CFSR data packets. The data in previous data packets was pulled from CCRS or CONNECTIONS on different dates, and the data included in this packet has been refreshed and reflects additional data entry since the last data packet release.

Q: Our County's estimate of the number of children who reside in our county differs from the estimate contained in the data packet.

A: Age, race and ethnicity population estimates were obtained from Woods and Poole Economics Inc. The safety and permanency charts (including DMR data) base the youth population count on the Woods and Poole population estimates that were calculated in 2012 and the 2010 actual census data.

According to the Woods and Poole population estimates calculated in 2012 and the US 2010 Census, NYS' 2010 youth population is 4,328,403. This represents a decrease of approximately 6.7% between 2004 (estimate) and 2010. The counties outside of NYC (Rest of State – ROS) have an estimated 5.4% fewer children in 2010 than in 2004.

Q: We're a small county and some of our data have changed dramatically from one reporting period/year to the next. Why?

A: Sharp changes in performance should be treated with caution. A small base population or small child count in a particular measure may significantly change the rate or percentage.

Q: Why isn't there any data related to disproportionate minority representation in our county's data?

A: Small counties in particular should note that disparity ratios were not calculated in counties with less than 50 minority children under 18 years; and (2) counties with less than 6 minority children with SCR reports.

Questions regarding the content of this data overview guide may be directed to:

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