

## **Child Safety Data Overview:**

The child safety data originates in the CONNECTIONS system. CONNECTIONS is the system of record for child protective, preventive, adoption and foster care case initiation. Detailed data descriptions are found throughout the Safety Data Guide.

The safety data guide provides charts and tables for users to compare county performance over time as well as to other counties.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the Safety Data:**

**Q:** Does Family Assessment Response (FAR) impact this data?

**A:** FAR is an alternative process for addressing certain allegations of child maltreatment. In selected CPS maltreatment reports, FAR is a non-adversarial approach to the traditional investigative response and has resulted in improved outcomes in other states. (For more information related to FAR, refer to the OCFS Informational Letter: 08-OCFS-INF-13.)

By design, the CPS intake process at the SCR and the transmission of reports to a LDSS, is not impacted by FAR. Therefore, those measures in this data packet that relate to a SCR report (prior to an assignment to FAR or the traditional Investigative Track), have not changed.

Because a FAR case does not result in a determination of the allegations, data users should be aware of resulting implications that FAR has on data that uses “determined” or “indicated” reports. The “Rate of Recurrence of Maltreatment”, for example, may be impacted by FAR because the Recurrence Rate measures “...all of the children who were involved in an *indicated* report, percent who were involved in another *indicated* report within six months”. If a district assigns cases to FAR, that report is not determined. Therefore, the universe of children that are included in the Recurrence Rate measure does not include any child involved in reports assigned to the FAR track.

For clarity, charts that are labeled “investigative track” include only reports assigned to the traditional investigative track (FAR cases are not included).

**Q:** The safety comparison charts provide data for “ROS LDSS” and “Statewide LDSS”, why specify “LDSS”?

**A:** Throughout this packet, ROS means every entity outside of NYC. However, in reference to abuse/maltreatment, reports may be assigned to a LDSS or “other agencies” (including the Office of Children and Family Services Regional Offices, and other State agencies, such as Office of Mental Health, Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Commission for Quality Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, and State Education).

Because the “other agencies”:

- serve different populations (IAB, for example), and
- often adhere to different regulations (example: IAB reports may not be consolidated), the data from “other agencies” potentially skew the LDSS safety data.

Therefore when “ROS-LDSS” or “Statewide LDSS” is referenced, the data reflects aggregate counts of only investigations or assessments by LDSS.

**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:** 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 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:** Our County's record of the number of SCR reports differs from the OCFS number of SCR reports. Why?

**A:** The "Total Reports of Abuse/Maltreatment" registered to a LDSS count is generated from a Data Warehouse Report. This Data Warehouse report counts the number of CPS reports assigned to the LDSS *with primary investigative responsibility* that become an investigation or assessment.

Counts exclude those SCR reports which were:

- Assigned to the LDSS with a secondary investigative role. A Data Warehouse report titled, Secondary Assignments Received will provide a report of all secondary assignments.
- Consolidated into another on-going investigation. The Data Warehouse report titled, Consolidated Investigations Summary Report will provide a count of consolidated reports.
- Transferred by the LDSS before investigation conclusion.
- Duplicates intakes. The number of duplicate intakes is captured in the CONNECTIONS Call Log Report.
- Add Information: The number of "add infos" is captured in the CONNECTIONS "Call Log Report".

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

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