

**Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Child
Welfare System:
New York City Compared to Rest of State (Outside of
NYC), 2009 Compared to 2010 and Comparison of
Selected Counties**

**Vajeera Dorabawila, Ph.D.
Bureau of Evaluation and Research
July 13, 2011**



Introduction

- **DMR Indicators with**
 - 2010 data.
 - Comparing changes from 2009 to 2010.
 - Including of changes for Native American children.
 - Comparison of changes for selected counties, particularly in foster care admissions and in foster care.



Measures

- **Disproportionality**
- **Rate per 1,000 in population**
- **Disparity Rate**



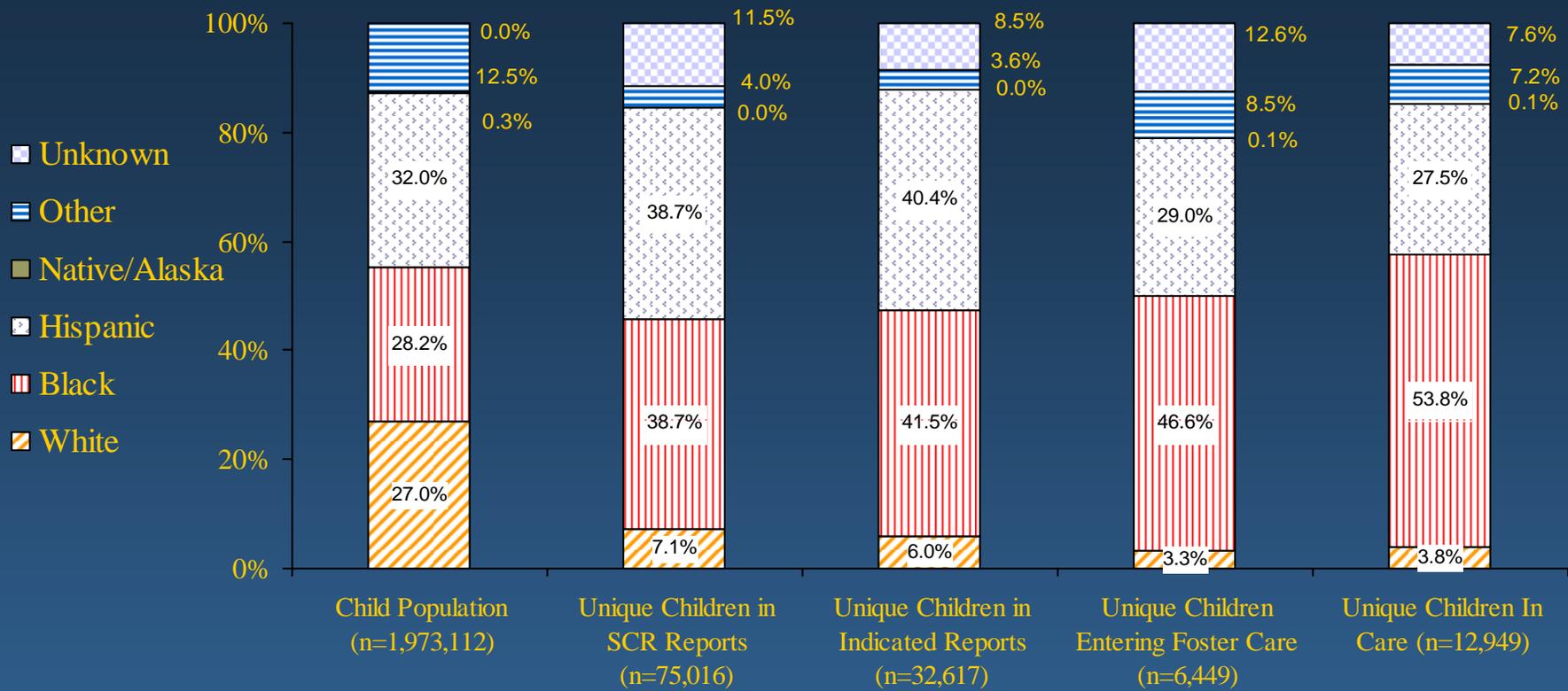
Disproportionality

- **Disproportionality exists when a group makes up a proportion of those experiencing some event (SCR report or foster care placement) that is higher or lower than that group's proportion in the population**
- **For example: Is the proportion of black children placed in foster care greater than expected given black children's presence in the overall population?**



New York City: Children <18 Years

Race/Ethnic Distribution of Children in Child Welfare System, 2010

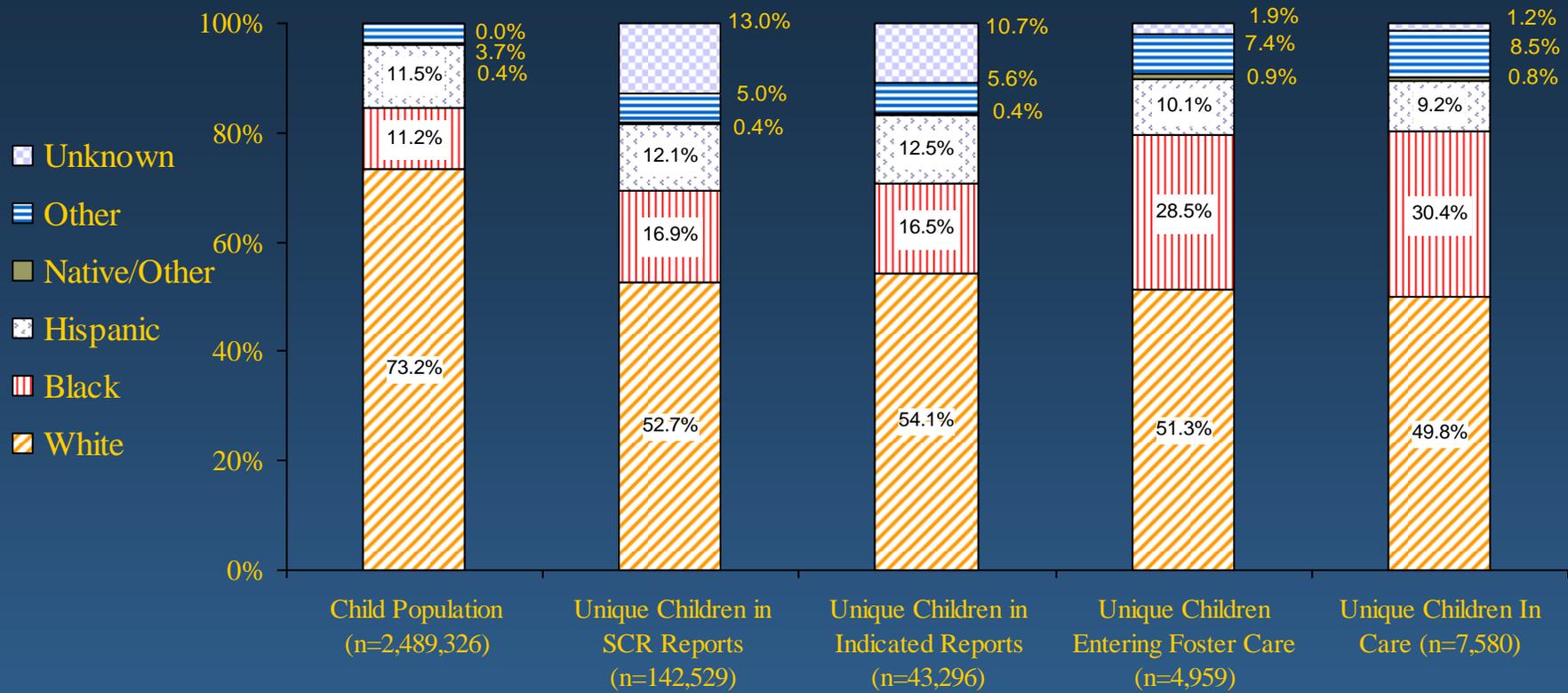


Unknown	0	8,594	2,779	813	980
Other	246,148	3,026	1,162	547	930
Native/Alaska	6,823	18	7	7	16
Hispanic	631,524	29,022	13,163	1,867	3,565
Black	556,605	29,041	13,546	3,004	6,963
White	532,012	5,315	1,960	211	495



Rest of State: Children <18 Years

Race/Ethnic Distribution of Children in Child Welfare System, 2010



Unknown	0	18,469	4,653	95	93
Other	92,637	7,062	2,426	365	644
Native/Alaska	10,156	560	187	44	62
Hispanic	285,705	17,181	5,421	500	696
Black	279,068	24,149	7,165	1,411	2,307
White	1,821,760	75,108	23,434	2,544	3,778



Black Children are Overrepresented at All Stages of the Child Welfare System

- In both NYC and rest of state, black children make up a substantially higher percentage of the child welfare population at each stage in the process than their share of the general population of children under 18.
- The overrepresentation of black children increases steadily with progression through the child welfare system, from SCR report to foster care placement.



Use of Percentage Distribution Only Can be Misleading

- **For example for ROS 2010: The percent of black children increased from 11.2% in the child population to 30.4% for children in care. As a result, share of the “pie” for those other than black is smaller at the in care stage.**
- **Proportion Hispanic children is an example of a category impact.**
- **Creates the need to use several different indicators as is in this presentation.**



“Unknown” Race/Ethnicity

- **For both NYC and ROS proportion of SCR reports and indicated reports with “unknown” race/ethnicity remains high in both years.**
- **In rest of state the proportion with “unknown” race/ethnicity for admissions and in care continues to decrease.**
 - Important in comparing changes, particularly in examining changes for Native American children.
- **In NYC, “unknown” proportion for admissions and in care has increased.**



Rate per 1,000 in Population

- The rate per 1,000 is an indicator of how many children from each specific racial/ethnic group have contact with the child welfare system (at various decision points) compared to their representation in the general population.

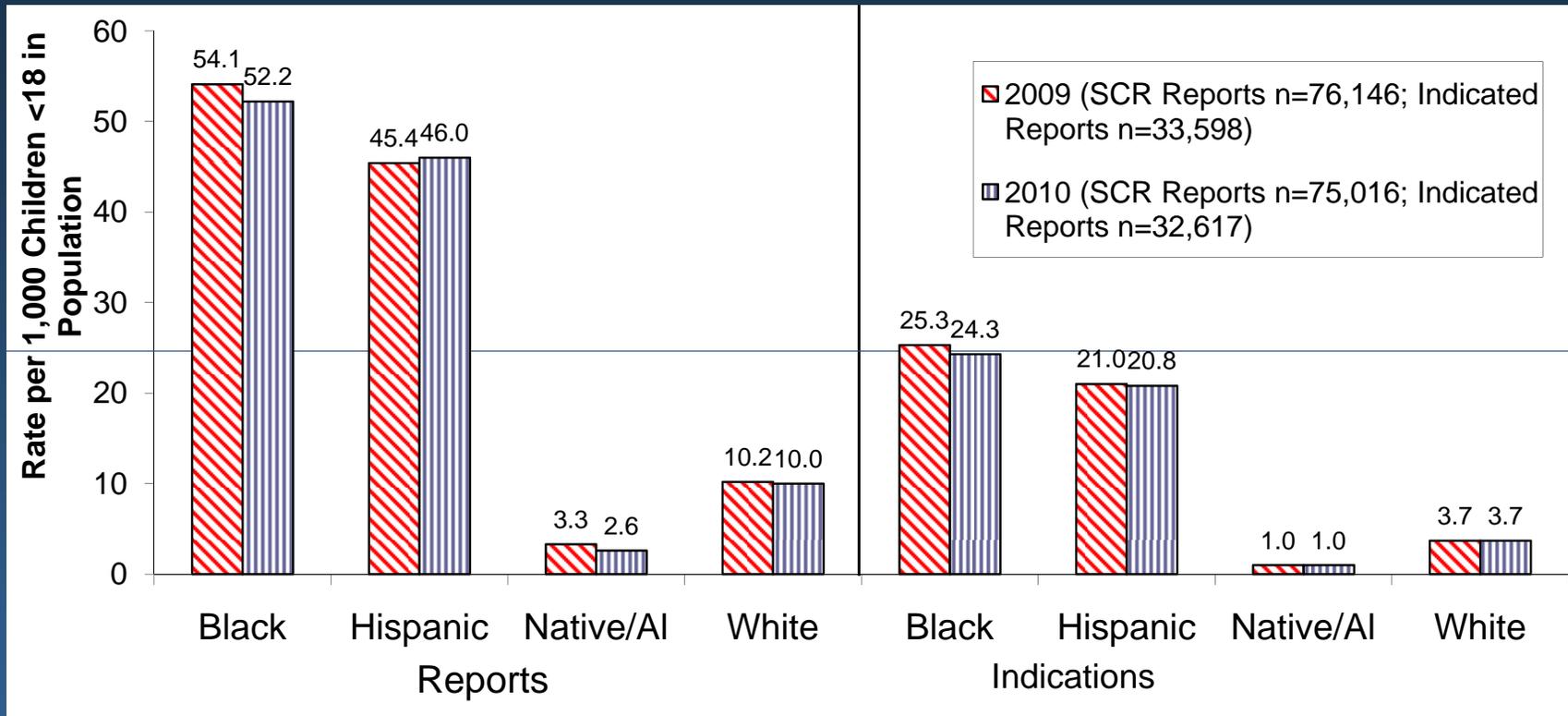
	Black Children ROS
Population<18	279,068
Admissions<18	1,411

Black Admission Rate per,
1,000 in ROS 2010

$$\frac{1,411}{279,068} \times 1000 = 5.056$$



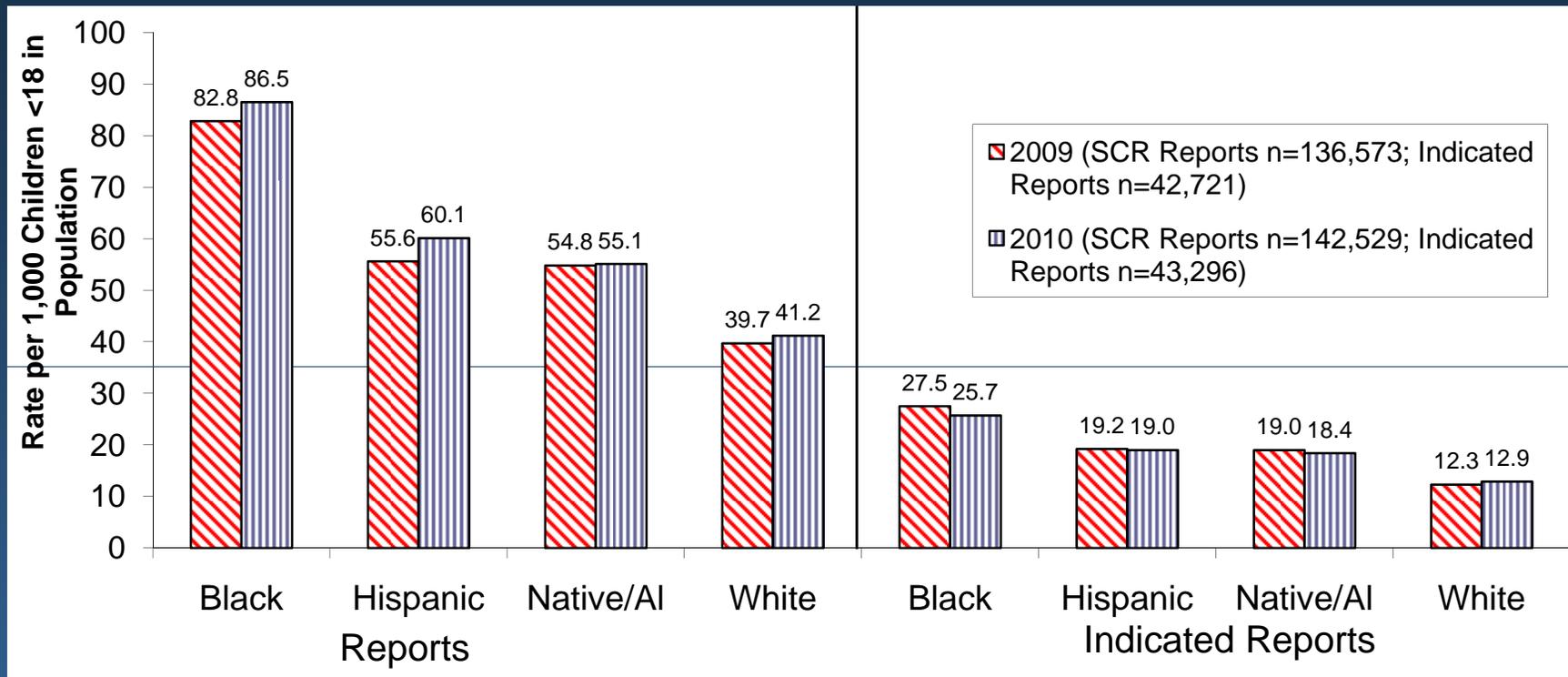
New York City: Changes from 2009 to 2010 in Rate of Children Reported to SCR, and Indicated for Abuse/Neglect Per 1,000 Children < 18 in Population



- The change in rate of children (per 1,000 children) reported and indicated from 2009 to 2010, if any, has been a decrease. The only exception, if any, is Hispanic children with a nominal increase in rate per 1,000 for reports.



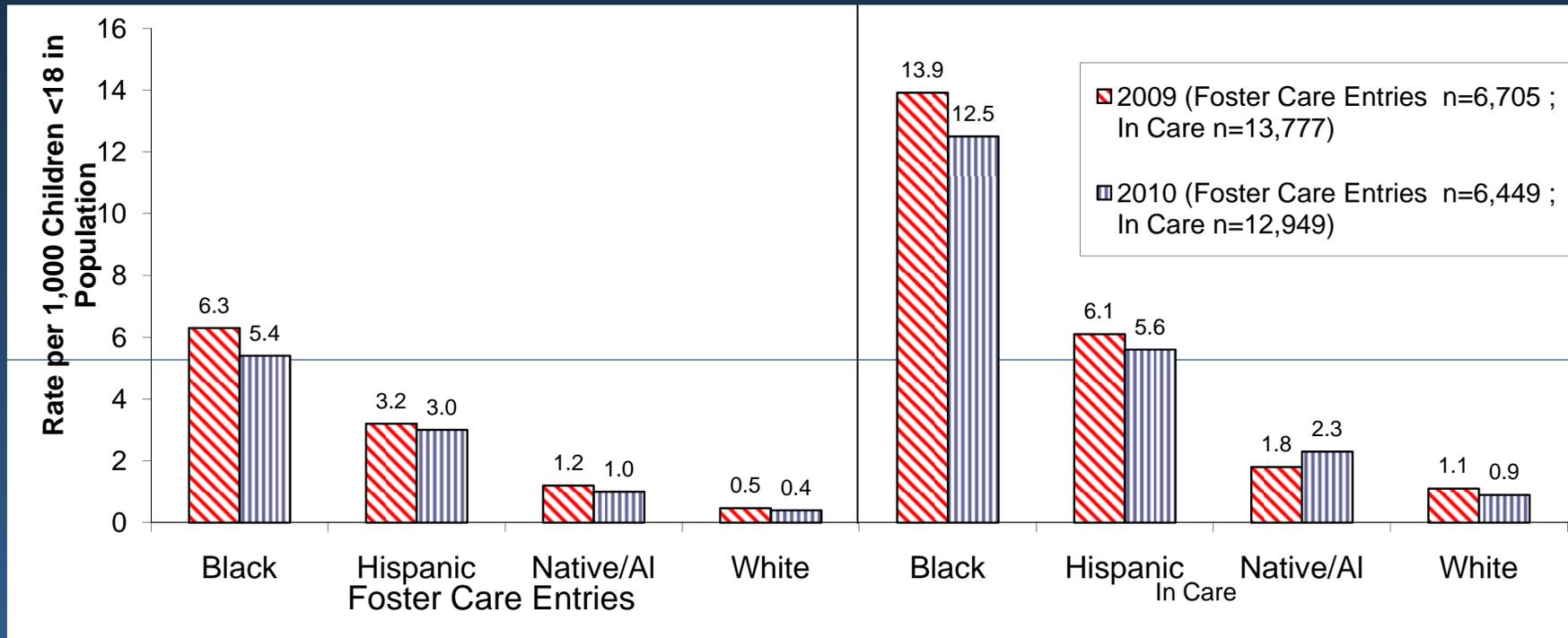
Rest of State: Changes from 2009 to 2010 in Rate of Children Reported to SCR, and Indicated for Abuse/Neglect Per 1,000 Children < 18 in Population



- In this period, rate of children (per 1,000 children) reported increased slightly for all four groups.
- There was a slight decrease for black, Hispanic and Native American children and a slight increase for white children (per 1,000) indicated during this period.
- Overall trends is that of no change.



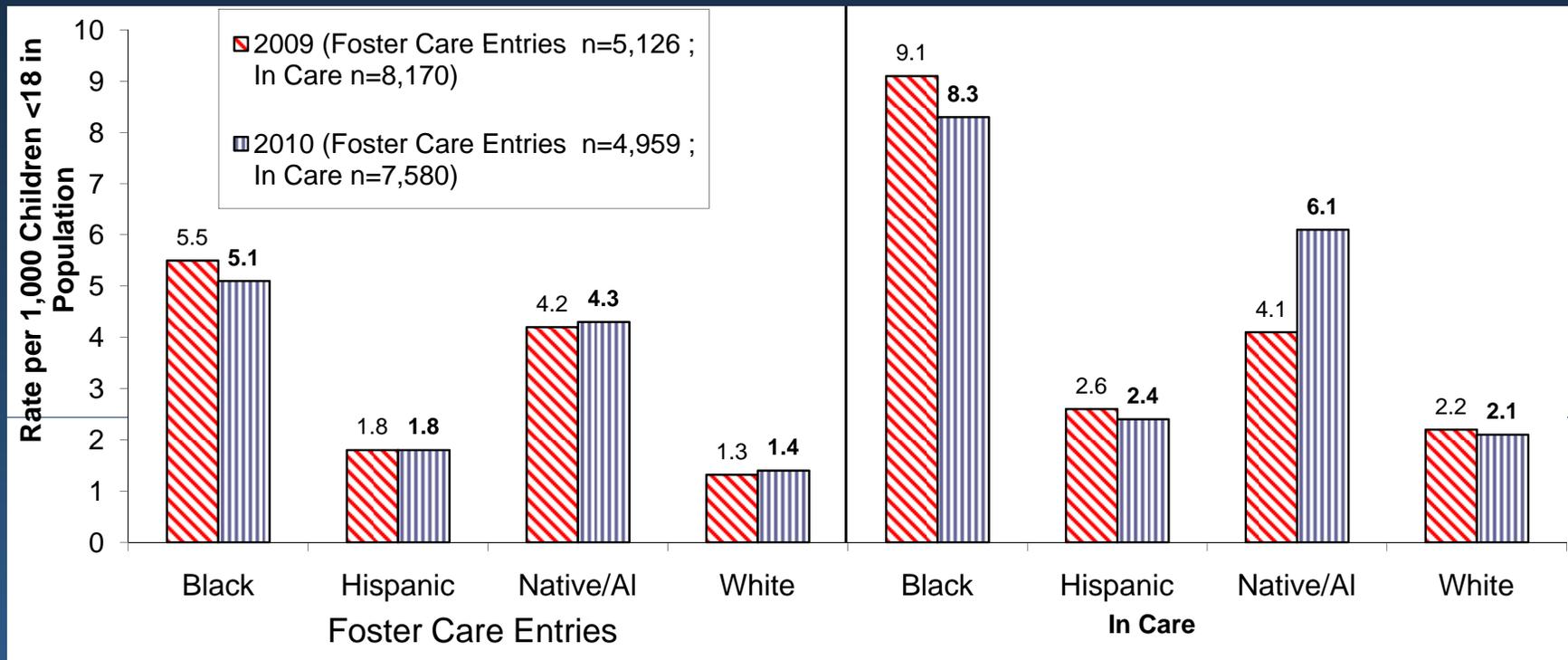
New York City: Changes from 2009 to 2010 in Rate of Children Entering Foster Care, and In Care Per 1,000 Children < 18 in Population



- In this period, rate of children (per 1,000 children) entering foster care and in care decreased slightly for all four groups of children. The decrease (in % terms) was higher for black, Native American and white children.
- There was an increase for in care rate per 1,000 for Native American children (number of Native American children in NYC is very small). It was a decrease for the other three groups.



Rest of State: Changes from 2009 to 2010 in Rate of Children Entering Foster Care, and In Care Per 1,000 Children < 18 in Population



- Foster care entry rates did not change during this period, if anything there was a slight decrease for black children and a slight increase for Native and white children.
- Rate of children in care decreased for three groups, white it increased for Native American children. The decrease was higher (in % terms comparing 2009 to 2010) for black children. The increase for Native American children was about 50%, however, maybe due to decrease in “unknown” race/ethnicity than a real increase.



Rate of Children Reported to SCR, Indicated for Abuse/Neglect, Entering Foster Care, and In Care Per 1,000 Children < 18 in Population

- In both NYC and rest of state, as measured by rate per 1,000 children in population, black children are more likely than Hispanic children, and Hispanic children are more likely than white children, to be reported to SCR, indicated for abuse/neglect, enter foster care, and in care.
- Native American rate per 1,000 is lower than that for black children.
- Differences between Native American, Hispanic and white children varies by location and indicator.



Disparity Rate

- **Compares a minority group to the majority group**
- **For example: How much more likely are black children to enter to foster care relative to white children?**



Disparity Rate

Disparity rate is the ratio of rate per 1000, at each stage of the child welfare system, for black children (or Hispanic children) relative to the rate for white children.

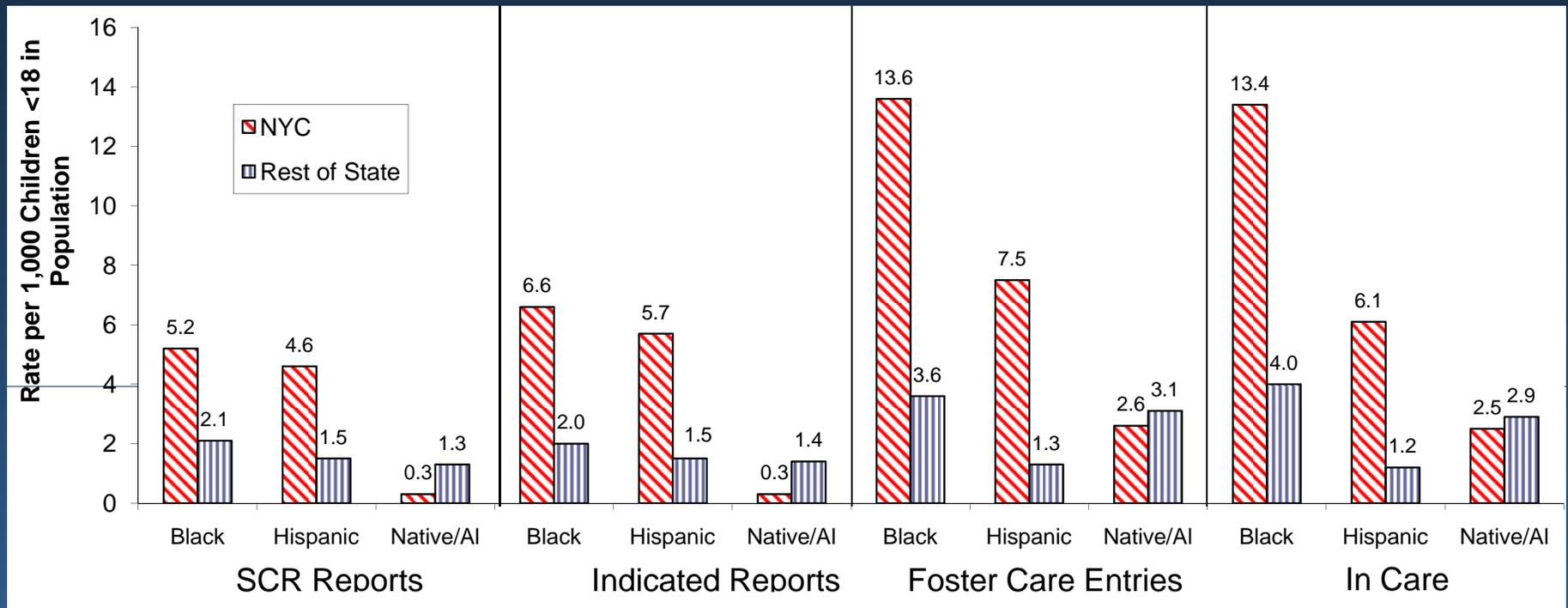
Race/ Ethnicity	Foster Care Entry Rate per 1,000 Children in ROS 2010
Black	5.0561
White	1.3965

Black Disparity Rate in ROS 2010

$$\frac{5.0561}{1.3965} = 3.62$$



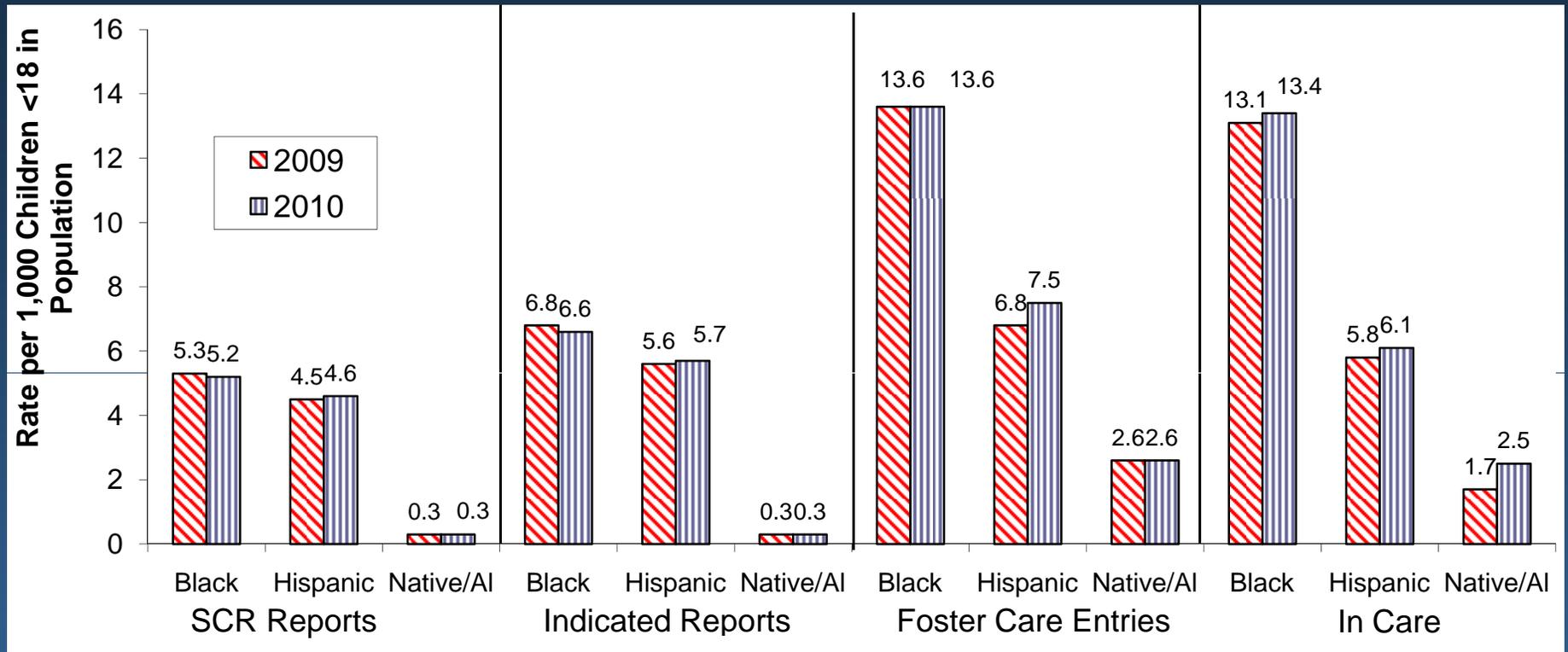
New York City vs. Rest of State 2010: Disparity Rates for Black, Hispanic and Native American Children (vs Whites)



- At each of the decision points, disparity rates for NYC are substantially higher than that for ROS.
- The difference between NYC and ROS is higher deeper in the child welfare system.
- For both NYC and ROS, disparity rates at the foster care stage is substantially higher than at the indication stage for black children.



New York City: Changes in Disparity Rates for Black, Hispanic and Native American Children (vs Whites)



• There has been no change (or very little) in disparity rates during this period. The only exceptions are Hispanic and Native American.

- Slight increase for Hispanic children.
- Increase for Native American children for in care.

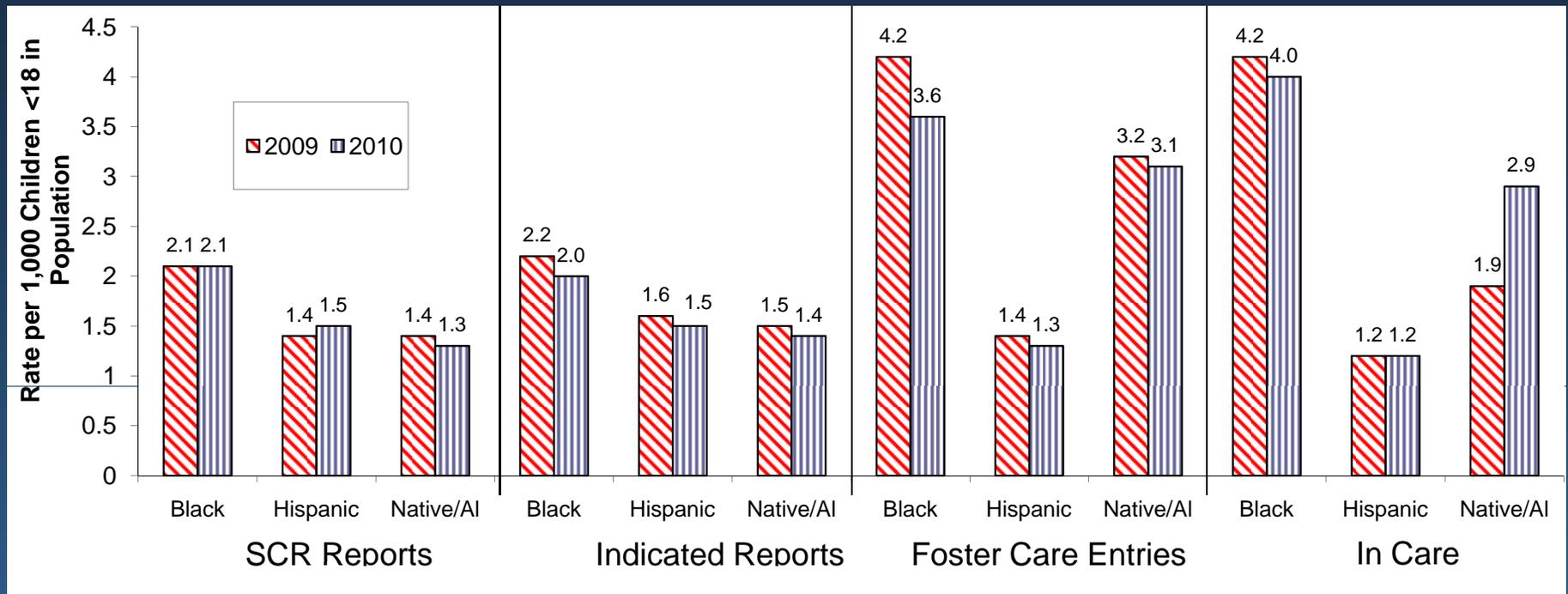


New York City: Disparity Rates for Black, Hispanic & Native American Children (vs Whites)

- In NYC, in 2010, relative to white children, black children are 5.2 times as likely to be reported to SCR, 6.6 times as likely to be indicated, 13.6 times likely to be admitted to foster care and 13.4 times as likely to be in care.
- At each of the decision points, disparity rates for black children are higher than that for Hispanic children, that for Hispanic children are higher than that for Native American children. This is true for both years.
- Native American disparity rates at the report stage is less than 1 indicating higher rates for white children.



Rest of State: Changes in Disparity Rates for Black, Hispanic and Native American Children (vs Whites)



- Report disparity remained the same for black children, and increased slightly for Hispanic children and decreased for Native American children.
- For all three groups, there is a slight decrease in indication and admission disparity rates. The exception of that for black children, who experienced a large decrease.
- In care disparity decreased slightly for black children, remained the same for Hispanic children and increased substantially for Native American children (due to reduction in “unknown”).



Rest of State: Disparity Rates for Black, Hispanic & Native American Children (vs Whites)

- 2010: In ROS, relative to white children, black children are 2.1 times as likely to be reported to SCR, 2.0 times as likely to be indicated, 3.6 times likely to be admitted to foster care and 4.0 times as likely to be in care.
- Disparity rates for black children are higher than that for Hispanic and Native American children at each of the decision points.
- Native American disparity rates are lower than that for Hispanic children for reports and indications and higher for foster care entries and in care.



Conclusion: Changes from 2009 to 2010

- In NYC, generally there has been no change in disparity rates.
- In ROS, if anything there has been a slight decrease in disparity, rates, particularly for black foster care entries. Only exception is an increase in in-care disparity rates for Native American children.



Conclusion: Both Years, NYC and Rest of State

- **Black, Hispanic and Native American children have higher rates of involvement in each stage of the child welfare system than white children. The only exception is disparity rates for Native American children at the report and indication stages for NYC.**
- **Disparity rates are more pronounced for black children than for Hispanic children.**
- **For black children, disparity rates at the foster care stage are substantially higher than at the investigation stage of the system.**

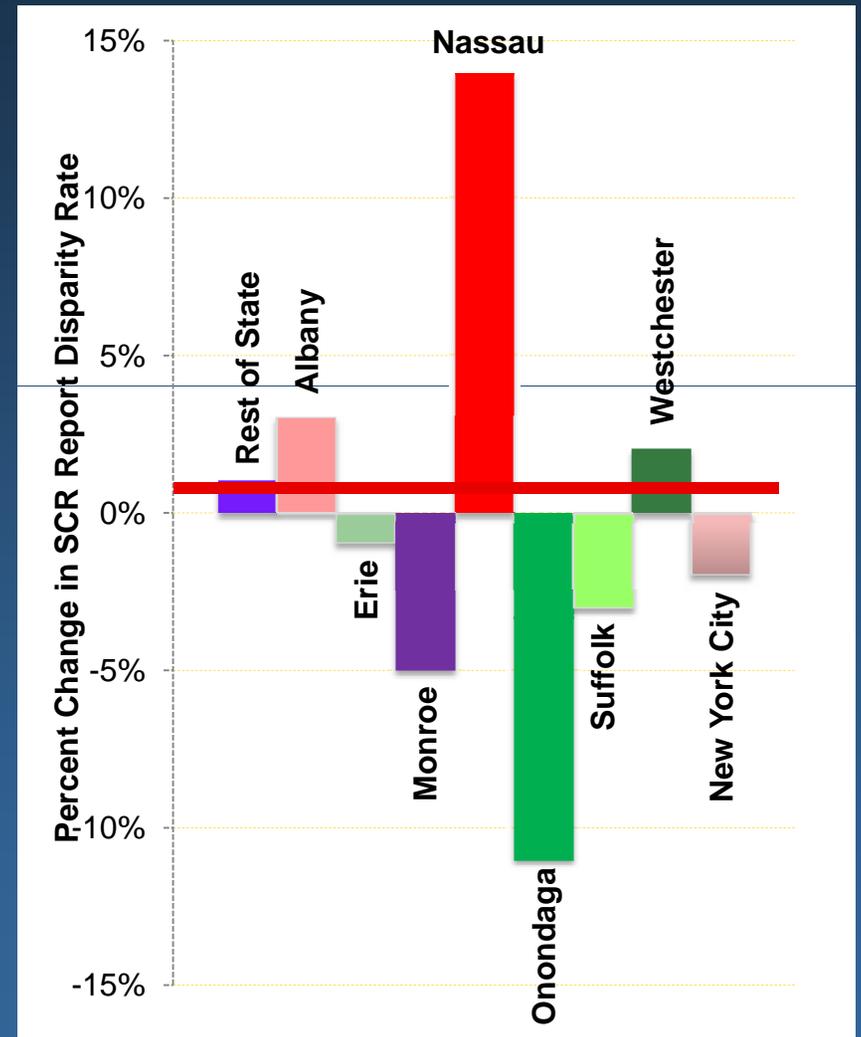


Comparison of Selected Counties



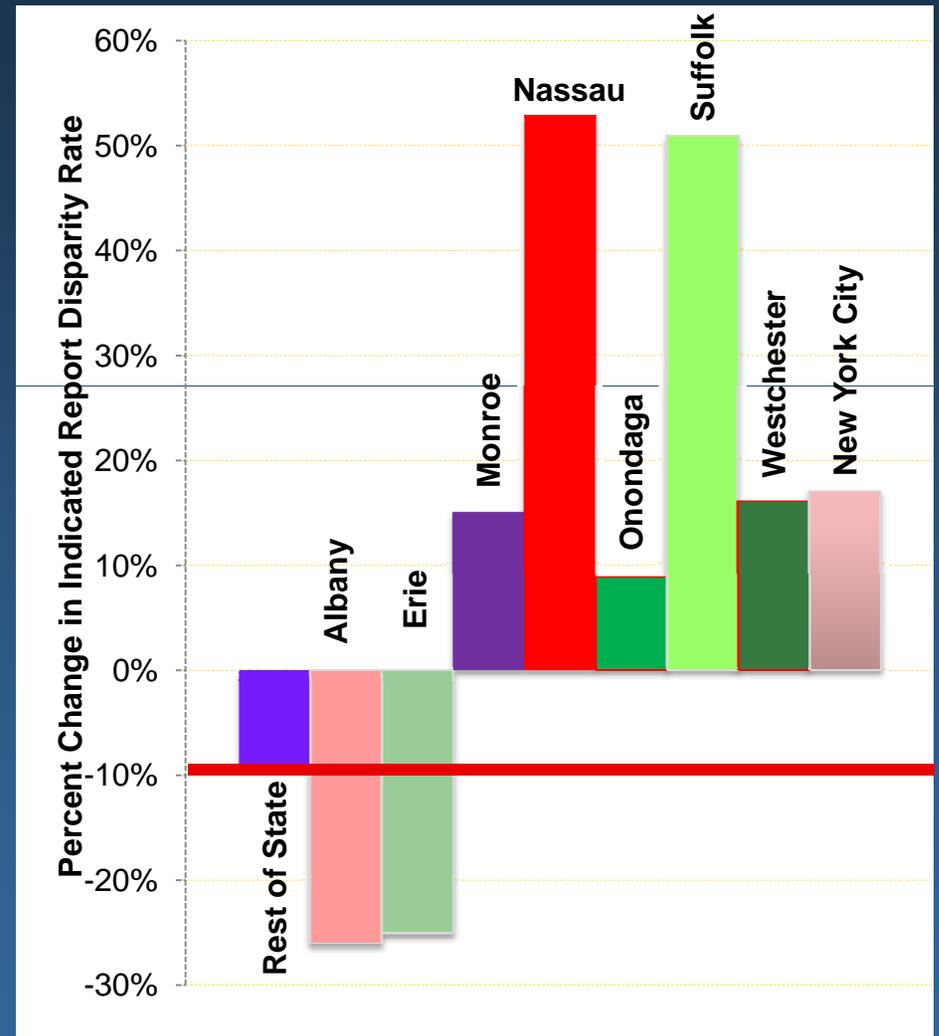
SCR Report Disparity Rates for Black Children: Changes for Selected Counties from 2009 to 2010

- **Counties above the solid horizontal line indicate counties where the decline was less than that for rest of state.**
 - Rest of state disparity rates increased by close to 1% (almost no change)
 - Albany, Nassau and Westchester experienced increases in disparity rates higher than rest of state.
- **Counties below the solid line are those with changes that were positive (increases < 1% or decreases) compared to rest of state**
 - Erie, Monroe, Onondaga, Suffolk and NYC experienced decreases in SCR report disparity rates.
 - These counties experienced decreases in comparison with almost no change for rest of state.
- **However, there were 16 other counties that experienced a decrease.**



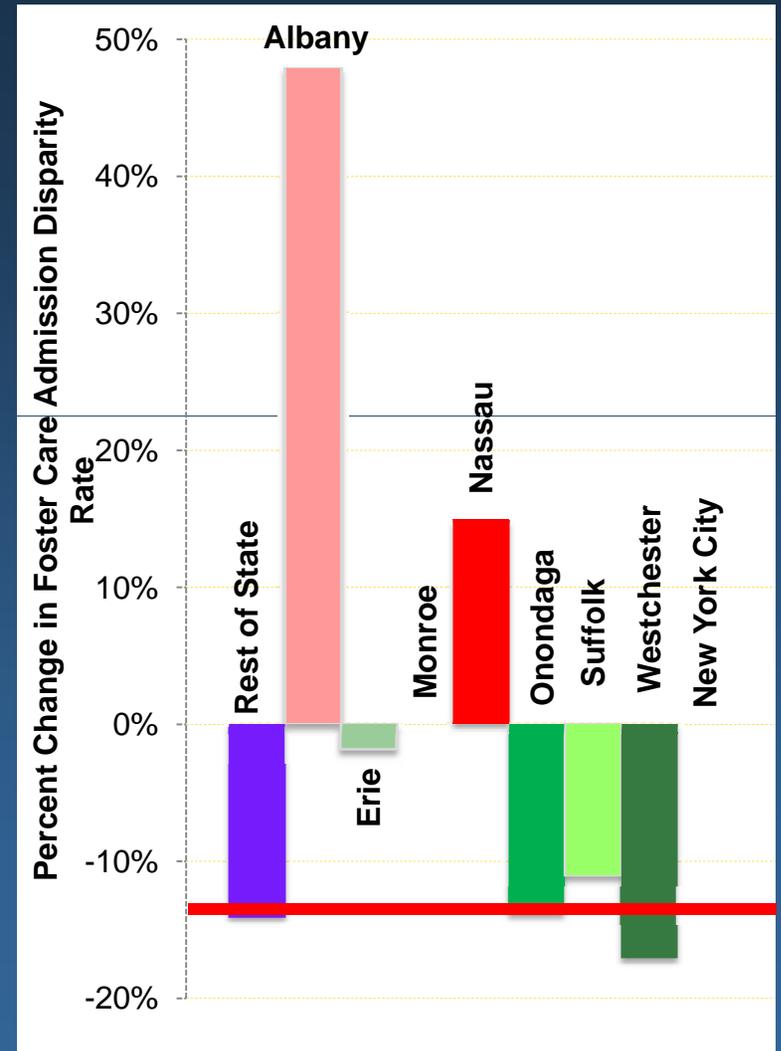
Indicated SCR Report Disparity Rates for Black Children: Changes for Selected Counties from 2009 to 2010

- **Counties above the solid horizontal line indicate counties where the decline was less than that for rest of state or had an increase.**
 - Monroe, Nassau, Onondaga, Suffolk, Westchester and New York City had increases in disparity rates.
- **Counties below the solid line are those with declines that were higher than that for rest of state**
 - There was a 9% decrease (2.2 to 2.0) in disparity rates for rest of state.
 - Albany and Erie had decreases that were higher than that for rest of state.
- **While these counties contributed to the decrease, they were not the only source**
 - Only 2 of these counties experienced decreases higher than rest of state. Others experienced increases.
 - There were 14 other counties with decreases



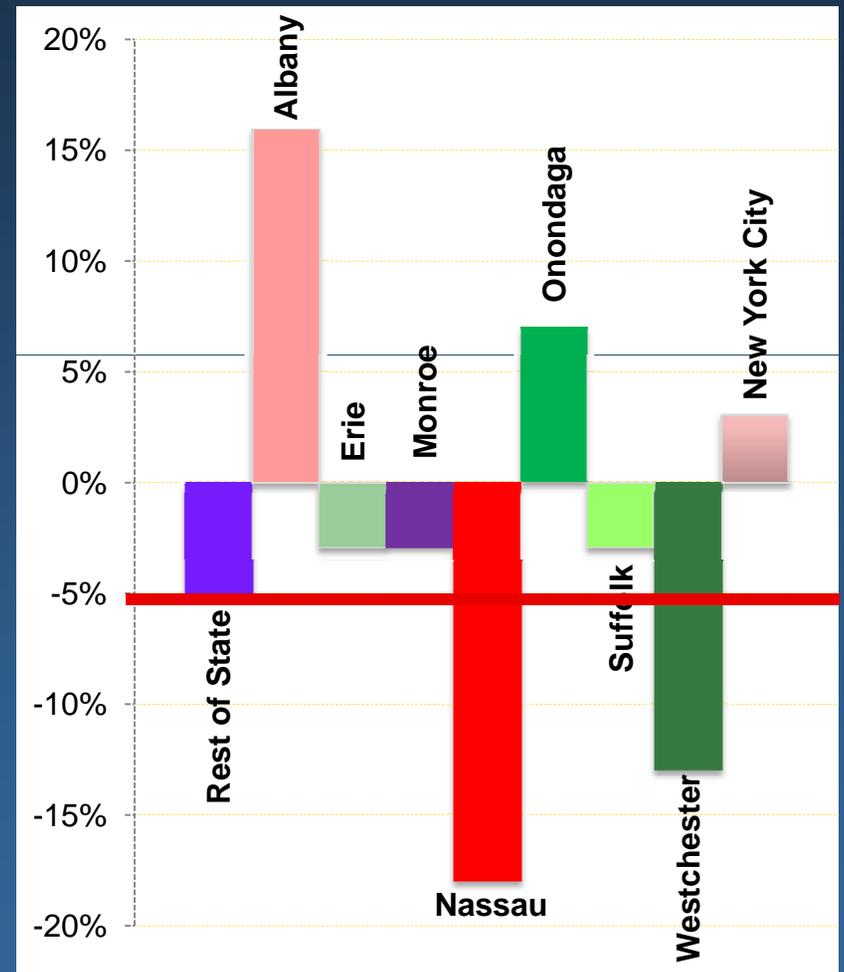
Foster Care Admission Disparity Rates for Black Children: Changes for Selected Counties from 2009 to 2010

- **Counties above the solid horizontal line indicate counties where the decline was less than that for rest of state.**
 - Erie, and Suffolk experienced declines, but were less than that for rest of state.
 - Monroe and NYC disparity rates remained the same.
 - Albany and Nassau experienced increases in disparity rates.
- **Counties below the solid line are those with declines that were higher than that for rest of state**
 - Westchester was the only county in this sample with a decline in disparity rate, that was higher than that for rest of state. Disparity rate for rest of state decreased by 14% (4.2 to 3.6) while that for Westchester decreased by 17%, although rate itself remains high.
 - Onondaga decline was about the same and Suffolk experienced a decline close to rest of state.
- **These counties have contributed to the decrease, but was not the only source. i.e. there were 5 other counties that experienced decreases higher than 14%.**



In Foster Care Disparity Rates for Black Children: Changes for Selected Counties from 2009 to 2010

- **Counties above the horizontal line indicate counties where the decline was less than that for rest of state or had an increase.**
 - Erie, Monroe, Onondaga, and Suffolk experienced declines, but were less than that for rest of state.
 - Albany, Onondaga and New York City experienced increases in disparity rates.
- **Counties below the solid line are those with declines that were higher than that for rest of state**
 - Nassau and Westchester experienced declines higher than that for rest of state. Disparity rate for rest of state decreased by 5% (4.2 to 4) while that for Nassau and Westchester decreased by 18% and 13% respectively. Erie, Monroe and Suffolk experienced decreases close to rest of state.
- **It is most likely these counties contributed to the decrease in rest of state. Additionally, there were 3 other counties that experienced decreases higher than rest of state.**



Comparison of Disparity Rate Changes for Black Children from 2009 to 2010: Selected Counties vs. Rest of State

- **In SCR report disparity rate changes, selected counties examined (Erie, Monroe, Onondaga, Suffolk and New York City) experienced decreases while that for rest of state was no change. However, there were many other counties that had declines.**
- **In indication disparity rate changes, counties examined were not contributing to positive change in general.**
 - Only 2 of the counties examined had decreases, while 14 other counties not examined had decreases.
- **In foster care admissions and in care, the counties examined may have contributed to a decrease in overall rates. However, they were not the only source of decline.**
- **In all 4 decision points there were counties that had increases in disparity rates.**

