

**DISPROPORTIONATE MINORITY REPRESENTATION (DMR) IN CHILD WELFARE
SERVICES:
2023 DATA PACKET**

Prepared by:
Office of Children and Family Services
Office of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics
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**Office of Children
and Family Services**

Understanding how different racial/ethnic groups experience child welfare services is an important step toward building a more equitable and just service system. Disproportionate minority representation (DMR) occurs when a particular racial/ethnic group's involvement with a system differs substantially from that group's representation in the general population, or from that of their Non-Hispanic White peers. This report examines DMR at various contact points across New York State's child welfare system using multiple measures.

Contact points examined include:

- Authorization of preventive services,
- Being named as an alleged victim in a child protective services report called into the Statewide Central Register for Child Abuse and Maltreatment (CPS/SCR),
- Being named as a confirmed victim in an *indicated* CPS/SCR report,
- Foster care admission, and
- Active foster care placement.

Data for all contact points is limited to children under age 18 to provide a standard comparison group. Young adults can remain in foster care up to age 21 but must consent to the continued placement. These youth are not included in the admission or in care numbers provided.

Commonly used indicators of racial/ethnic disparity include:

- **Disproportionality.** This metric examines the difference observed between a given racial/ethnic group's presence in the overall population and the same group's presence at a specified contact point. A group that makes up 10% of the overall population and 30% of those served, is *over-represented* within the system. Conversely, a group that makes up 50% of the general population but only 15% of those served, is *under-represented* within the system.
- **Rate per thousand** captures the number of children within a specified racial/ethnic group experiencing system contact for every 1,000 children within that racial/ethnic group in the overall population. Rates per 1,000 are useful for comparing the likelihood of system contact when population groups differ in size. For example, suppose a county provides services to 200 children, 100 of whom are Black and 100 of whom are White. If only served numbers are considered, one might conclude that both groups are equally likely to receive services. However, let us further assume that the county has a total child population of 4,000 children, 1,000 of whom are Black and 3,000 of whom are White. The rate of service for Black children would be 100 per 1,000 children, while the rate for White children would be approximately 33 per 1,000.
- **Disparity Rates.** This metric compares the rates per 1,000 for two distinct groups and is typically used to show the extent to which a given minority group is more or less likely than Non-Hispanic Whites to experience system contact. To calculate a disparity rate, you divide the rate per 1,000 of the minority of group by the comparison group of interest, typically Non-Hispanic Whites. Continuing with the example from above, if we divide the rate per 1,000 Black children above by the rate per 1,000 for White children (100/33), we see that Black children are approximately three times more likely than White children to receive services. Disparity rates are divided into four categories for the purposes of this report:
 - No to Little Disparity: 0 – 1.5
 - Moderate Disparity: 1.6-2.5
 - High Disparity: 2.6-3.5
 - Extreme Disparity: >3.5

Race/Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity are combined into a single metric, with priority given to ethnicity over race. All children identified as Hispanic, or Latino appear in the Hispanic category. Non-Hispanic/Latino children are classified based on race, using the following hierarchy: Black, Asian, American Indian, White, Other. Other includes children with unknown racial backgrounds (e.g., missing, declined, or “multiple”). Rate per thousand and disparity rate calculations cannot be calculated for children classified as “Other” as no comparable population/census data exists.

County Size

DMR County Comparison figures include break-outs by county size to enable readers to quickly compare counties that have similar child welfare populations. County sizes are based on the county classifications determined by 2016-2018 child welfare data, as reported by the Monitoring and Analysis Profiles (MAPS) package.

Data Sources

- Records related to system contact (e.g., service authorization, CPS report, foster care, etc.) are pulled from CONNECTIONS, the state’s child welfare case management system.
- Population data is taken from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program Populations (1969-2022) (www.seer.cancer.gov/popdata), National Cancer Institute, DCCPS, Surveillance Research Program, released March 2024. Due to census data being available on a one-year lag, the 2022 population estimates were used to calculate 2023 rate per thousand and disparity rate values.

Packet Contents:

1. DMR County Comparison figures: This file includes a series of charts displaying the racial disparity rates for Hispanic, Black, Native American, and Asian children relative to White children for all NYS counties at five key system points:
 - Authorized to receive preventive services
 - Being named as an alleged victim in a child protective services report (CPS),
 - Being named as a confirmed victim in an **indicated** child protective services report,
 - Foster care admission, and
 - Active foster care placement.
2. DMR Data file: This file includes tables, separated by county and race/ethnicity, for child population, children with preventive services authorizations, the number of children named in a CPS/SCR report, the number of children named as a confirmed victim in a CPS/SCR indicated report, the number of children admitted to foster care during the calendar year, and the number of children in foster care on 12/31. The file includes an interactive 5-year trend summary sheet, as well as detailed counts for each contact point. This file also includes data on rates per thousand for each county, which was used to calculate the disparity index in the DMR County Comparison file.