

Wisconsin Children in Out-of-Home Care

Annual Report for Calendar Year 2008

June 16, 2010

Bureau of Program Integrity
Division of Safety and Permanence
Department of Children and Families

This report is available on the Internet at
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwreview/reports/OOHC/2008-OOHC.pdf>

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CY 2008 Out-of-Home Care Report: Executive Summary

Statewide Summary

This report includes information on children in an out-of-home care (OHC) placement during Calendar Year (CY) 2008. Data from this report was taken from the eWiSACWIS Out-of-Home Caseload Summary Report (r254 Caseload Counts) for CY 2008. Monthly and year-end counts have been produced at different times, for different purposes and/or by different means and may provide slightly different results. Thus, counts presented in this report may vary and differ from other published information.

Demographics of Children in OHC

- As of December 31, 2008, a total of 7,324 children were in an OHC placement in Wisconsin. This represents a decrease of 72 children from December 31, 2007. A total of 602 fewer children were in an OHC placement at the end of CY 2008 than CY 2003.
- Children under the custody of the BMCW represented 37% of the total OHC population.
- The age of children statewide in OHC on December 31, 2008 was as follows:
 - 4 and under: 30%
 - 5-11: 27%
 - 12-15: 22%
 - 16-18: 21%
- Children 12-15 years old experienced the greatest decline of children in an OHC placement, compared to December 31, 2007 (135 fewer children).
- More males are in OHC (54%) than females (46%). Caucasian children represented 53% of all children in OHC care. African American children represented 39%.
- Statewide, 31% of children are placed with relatives. In Milwaukee County, 39% of children in OHC are placed with relatives.

Entry into OHC CY 2008

- 5,229 children entered OHC statewide during CY 2008, a decrease of 547 children from CY 2007.
- 485 more males than females entered OHC.
- 59% were Caucasian children, 30% were African American children.

Discharge from OHC in CY 2008

- 5,456 children and youth were discharged from OHC during CY 2008. This represents 320 fewer children discharged from OHC compared to CY 2007.
- Adoptions were finalized for 699 children. Due to data limitations, information below does not include these adoptions.
- Reunification was the most frequent discharge reason (64%).
- Males accounted for 55% of discharges from OHC.
- Children ages 16-18 accounted for the largest share of children discharged from OHC (30%).
- Caucasian children accounted for 59% of total discharges from OHC
- African American children accounted for 30% of total discharges from OHC.
- The Median Time to Discharge for children discharged in CY 2008 was 210 days.

Introduction

Purpose of the Report

The *Wisconsin Children in Out-of-Home Care Report* is a broad overview of the children placed in out-of-home care (OHC) and provides demographic information for children in OHC during Calendar Year (CY) 2008. By supplying this information, it is hoped readers will have a better understanding of the children in OHC and the trends associated with the OHC population.

Data included in this report is presented at a statewide level, with information obtained from 71 counties, the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) and the State-operated Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP). The appendices to this report provide specific OHC data for individual counties, the BMCW and the SNAP.

Overview of Child Welfare Service System in Wisconsin

Wisconsin's child welfare system is state-supervised and county-administered in 71 counties and state administered in Milwaukee County and the SNAP. The role of the Division of Safety and Permanence within the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is to supervise the county programs and assure the development and implementation of statewide policies and procedures that support child safety, permanence and well-being. In addition, the DSP administers child welfare services in Milwaukee and the SNAP. For children with tribal affiliation, placements into OHC can be made under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) through tribal courts. Under state statute, counties remain financially responsible for tribal placements under Chapter 161 agreements. DSP does not have data available on tribal placements paid with tribal funds.

A child can enter OHC in the following distinct ways:

Kinship Care

Many children reside with relatives where the parent and the relative have made the living arrangement voluntarily and the relative caregiver is eligible for and receives a Kinship Care (KC) payment to support their care of the relative child. These voluntary arrangements do not constitute an OHC placement. There are three basic eligibility requirements for Kinship Care:

- the basic needs of the child can be better met living with the relative than with the parent(s);
- the placement is in the best interests of the child; and
- the child currently or would potentially meet the requirements for court jurisdiction as being in need of protection or services if the child were to remain with the parent(s).

A child's voluntary living arrangement with a relative may become court-ordered or a child may be placed with a relative under a court-order. Children placed in Court-Ordered Kinship Care (COKC) are considered to be in OHC and are subject to all permanency planning requirements. Data included in this report includes information only from COKC cases.

Child in Need of Protective Services (CHIPS)

A child may be removed from his or her family home and placed into OHC due to safety concerns that cannot be controlled in the family home. If the Child Protective Services (CPS) worker determines that a child needs to be placed in OHC in order to ensure his or her safety, the child is placed into OHC via a court order or through a voluntary placement agreement. Children placed

placed into OHC via a court order or through a voluntary placement agreement. Children placed in OHC through a court order are required to meet all permanency planning standards set forth by Wisconsin statute. Voluntary placement agreements can be for up to 180 days and placements must be court ordered to continue beyond 180 days.

Juvenile in Need of Protective Services (JIPS) and Delinquency

Children under a JIPS or Delinquency order may be placed in OHC. In order for the state to have jurisdiction under a JIPS petition, a child must meet one of the following as specified in s. 938.13, Stats.:

- be considered uncontrollable and the parent signs a petition;
- be habitually truant from school; be considered a school dropout;
- be habitually truant from home; committed a delinquent act before the age of 10;
- or be deemed not responsible or not competent.

For the state to have jurisdiction under a Delinquency petition, a child (ages 10-17) must be alleged to have committed a delinquent act. A referral is received by the county agency, the agency under the direction of local court system determines the types of services and interventions that will best address the needs of the child, family, and community.

This report includes data on children placed in non-secure OHC settings. Unless otherwise noted, the report does not include children in secure detention, juvenile corrections or adult corrections (children age 17). The data does include situations where secure detention is part of the overall OHC placement episode.

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)

The ICPC ensures that children in need of out-of-home placement in Wisconsin, from other states, receive the same protections guaranteed to the children placed in care within Wisconsin. Children under the custody of county child welfare agencies, the BMCW and the SNAP placed outside Wisconsin are included in this report. However, children placed from another state into OHC in Wisconsin are not included in this report.

Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP)

When rights of both birth parents are terminated for a child in OHC by a death, voluntary or involuntary court action, guardianship of the child in OHC is transferred to the SNAP. The State assumes foster care placement and payment responsibility for the child until the adoption is finalized. A child may be eligible for an Adoption Assistance subsidy if she/he meets the SNAP eligibility criteria. Pre-adoptive children, in OHC pending an adoption finalization served by the SNAP are included in this OHC report.

Report Interpretation and Data Limitations

The focus of this report is on the total population served under the child welfare program, i.e. those children and youth in an OHC placement who are placed under a court order or a formal voluntary placement agreement. Children can receive other types of child welfare services, such as in-home services. Information on other services is not included in this report. This report generally does not include counts of children in hospitals or mental health facilities unless the use of these facilities is part of an OHC placement episode.

The report is produced using data obtained from the electronic Wisconsin Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (eWiSACWIS). eWiSACWIS is an automated case management system designed for child welfare workers to support practice and documentation

regarding children and families they serve. eWiSACWIS was initially implemented in 2001 by BMCW and SNAP and statewide implementation of the automated system was completed by July 2004. Data is entered into eWiSACWIS by county, BMCW and SNAP caseworkers in the course of day-to-day case management responsibilities. Information documented by the caseworker and their supervisors are used to generate numerous management and statistical reports, including federal outcome measurement reports. The use of eWiSACWIS allows for improved timeliness and accuracy of child welfare placement data in Wisconsin. The quality of the data in this report is dependant upon the accuracy and timeliness of data submitted by the local agencies.

The data presented in this report is generally consistent with data reported to the federal government for the Title IV-E purposed to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). There are some differences with AFCARS data, particularly for juvenile justice cases, so the data and performance measures presented in this report may differ from AFCARS caseload and performance data for Wisconsin.

Historical data presented in this report includes data from eWiSACWIS, the Human Service Reporting System (HSRS) and the Kinship Care Tracking System (KCTS). The transition from HSRS and KCTS data to eWiSACWIS affected the quality of data prior to 2004, as previous systems were limited in capturing the full range of data currently available in eWiSACWIS.

The primary data source for this report is the DSP Out-of-Home Caseload Summary Report (r254 Caseload Counts). This report includes placement of children in licensed family foster care, treatment foster care, pre-adoptive foster homes, group homes and residential care centers, unlicensed relatives or non-relatives, and court-ordered placements with relatives under the Kinship Care program (COKC). The OHC caseload counts include children placed for both child protective service and juvenile justice purposes. Statewide counts include children under placement and care of a county child welfare agency, the BMCW or the SNAP. Data for this report was produced on August 18, 2008. Any data corrections or updates made by agencies after the time the data was produced is not reflected in this report.

Totals cited in graphs, tables and text throughout this report might not always be consistent. While a single data set is used for the report, there may be discrepancies in certain detailed information. Data inconsistencies may also be due to issues regarding conversion of data from HSRS to eWiSACWIS or inconsistencies in how data is recorded at the local agency level. DSP continues to work with agencies to improve data quality. Totals for the graphs and tables may vary as data elements in eWiSACWIS may be missing for some cases. Additional considerations regarding report interpretation and data limitations are outlined in **Appendix A**.

Key Definitions:

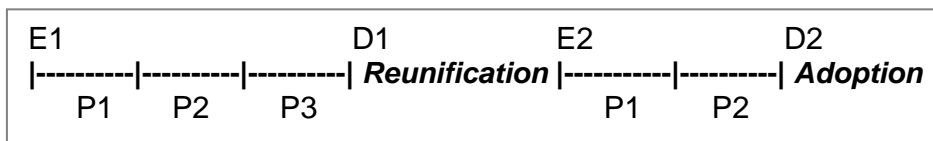
Child: Term used to address both children and juveniles served by county child welfare agencies, county juvenile justice agencies, the BMCW and the state SNAP.

Discharge: A child's placement episode ends with the date a child is discharged from OHC. The discharge date represents the date the child achieves a permanent outcome, such as reunification, permanent placement with a relative or adoption.

Placement: The use of a facility or home provider for the physical placement of the child who has been removed from his or her family home.

Placement Episode: A placement episode starts with a child’s removal from home and ends with a discharge from OHC to a permanent home or to independent living. A child may be placed in multiple placement settings within a placement episode.

Placement Episode Activity - Removal, Placement Changes & Discharge: In summary, a combination of these placement transactions, i.e. child removal, movement from one placement setting to another, discharge and subsequent placement episode can be depicted as follows:



Explanation of Codes

E1 = Date of first removal /initial entry to care; beginning of first Placement Episode

D1 = Date of discharge from care; ending of first Placement Episode

E2 = Date of second removal /second entry; beginning of second Placement Episode

D2 = Date of second discharge; ending of second Placement Episode

P1-P3 = Change in Placement Settings with different placement providers, or in different placement settings within the placement episode.

Placement Settings: A child may be placed with multiple providers or in different placement facilities during a single placement episode. These changes may be due to actions initiated by the agency, the provider, the child, the parent or the court. Standard placement settings include:

- Foster homes, including receiving homes, family foster homes, treatment foster home and pre-adoptive foster homes.
- Unlicensed relative and non-relative homes.
- Group homes.
- Residential care centers (RCCs).
- Shelter care.
- Detention.
- Trial reunification.
- Missing from out-of-home care.
- Supervised independent living.
- Respite.

Removal: A child’s placement episode begins with the date of the child’s removal from his or her home. The child is taken into physical custody and is placed into OHC under a court order or via a formal voluntary placement agreement between the agency, the parents and the placement provider.

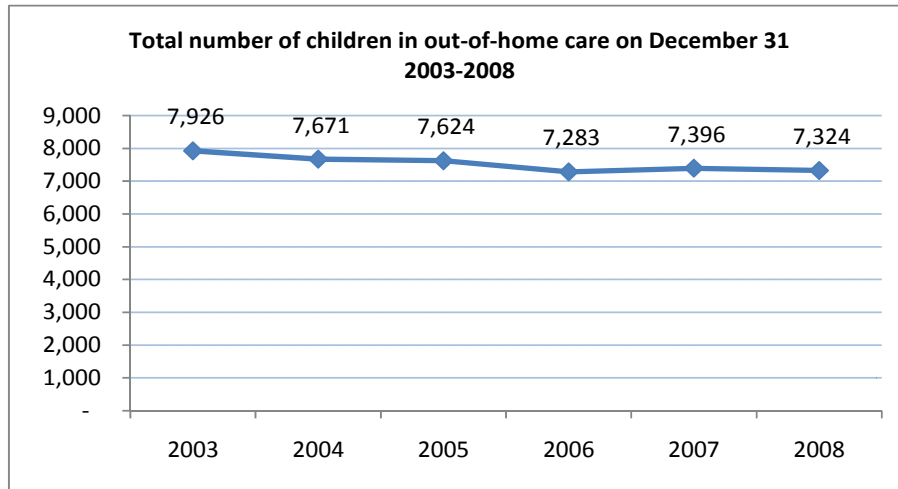
Information regarding the types of out-of-home care providers used can be found in **Appendix B.**

Children in Out-of-Home Care on December 31, 2008

Trends of Children in Out-of-Home Care

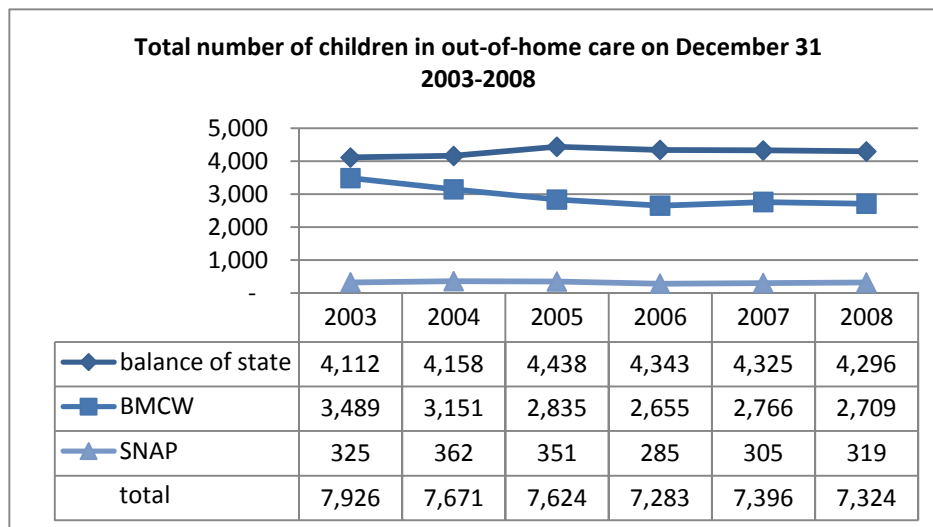
The number of children placed in OHC statewide has decreased somewhat over the past five years. Figure 1 shows the decline of children in OHC since December 31, 2003. Over the five-year period, a total of 602 fewer children were in an OHC placement at the end of the calendar year (CY) in 2008. While 2008 numbers are lower than 2007, they are still slightly higher than 2006.

Figure 1: Statewide, the number of children in OHC appears to be declining.



The decrease in overall children in OHC statewide can be attributed to BMCW, which saw a decrease of 780 children, or 22 percent, in this time period. **Figure 2** separates children in OHC by children placed in BMCW, in other counties (or balance of state), or in the SNAP.

Figure 2: The statewide decrease in children in OHC appears to be driven by a decrease in children in OHC in BMCW.



Case Types of Children in Out-of Home Care

Case types are the most readily available data element to distinguish what issues the family may be facing that contributed to the OHC placement of the child. This information is used to analyze performance and service trends across counties and accurately measure state performance on federal outcome measures and to target performance improvement areas. On December 31, 2008, there were 13 unique case types that can be used for cases in eWiSACWIS. The following is a description of the most frequent case types that could be identified or documented for a child:

CPS Family Ongoing: Used to denote a case where abuse and or neglect has been alleged. This case type is very broad and is used to document cases involving primary caregiver as well as secondary caregiver maltreatment.

Juvenile Justice (JJ): This case type is used for both Delinquency Cases and JIPS Cases. This case type is used for cases where children are involved in JJ services, but there are no maltreatment or child welfare issues.

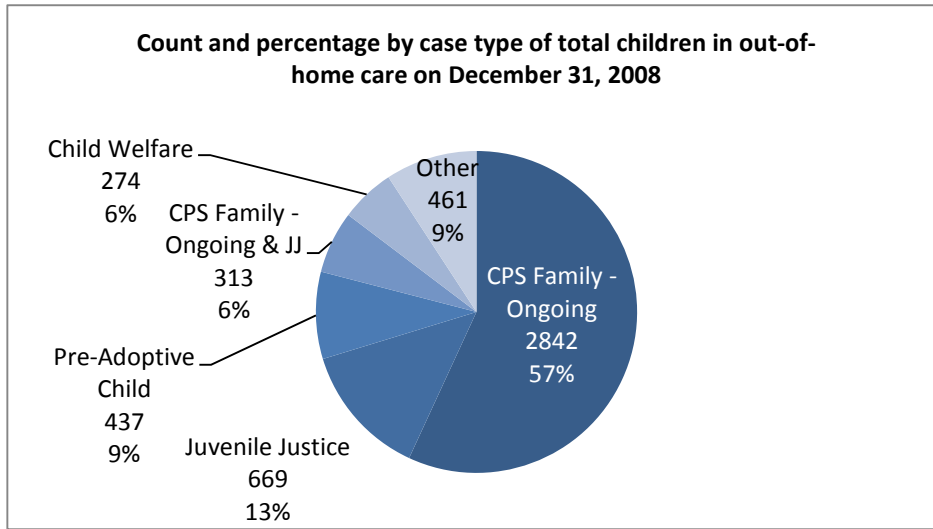
CPS Ongoing and JJ: This case type is used when a child or when multiple children within a single family case are being served due to CPS and/or JJ related concerns. For example: an older youth within the family may be an adjudicated delinquent while the family is also being served due to CPS concerns related to a younger sibling.

Pre-adoptive: This case type applies to those children for whom a termination of parental rights (TPR) has been completed. This case is created when a child is deactivated from their CPS Family case for reasons of TPR. The SNAP uses this case type to document their case management work between the TPR and finalization of the adoption.

Child Welfare: This case type is used to document those cases in which there are no specific allegations of abuse or neglect, but there is some service being provided to the child or family. This case type can include voluntary placements.

Figure 3 outlines the most common case types noted for the children and their families. **Appendix C** contains additional information on the “other” case types used statewide. **Appendix D** contains detailed case type information by count and percentage by county.

Figure 3: CPS-Family Ongoing cases account for over half the children in OHC



Relative Placements

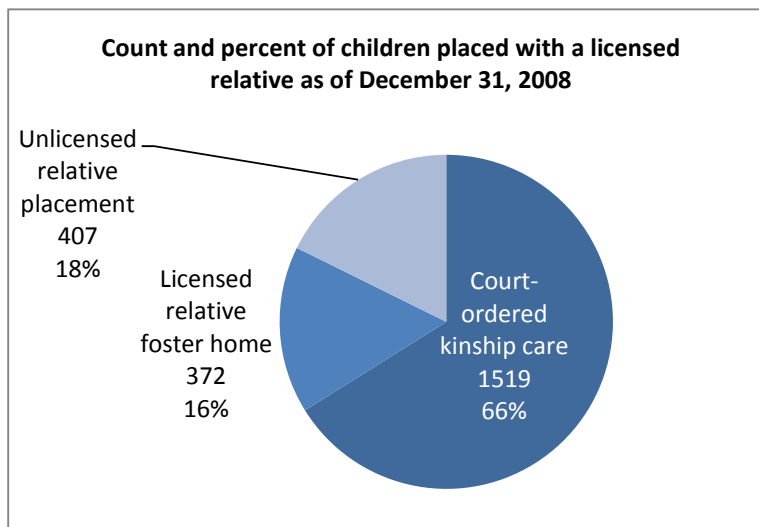
Children in OHC may be placed with a relative via a Court-Ordered Kinship Care, Licensed Relative Foster Homes, and Unlicensed Relative Placement. Unlicensed relative placements are unpaid and are typically used on a temporary basis. Overall, there were 2,298 children in a relative placement on December 31, 2008. **Figure 4** shows the statewide percentage of children in a relative vs. non-relative placements.

Figure 4: Roughly one-third of children in OHC are in a relative placement



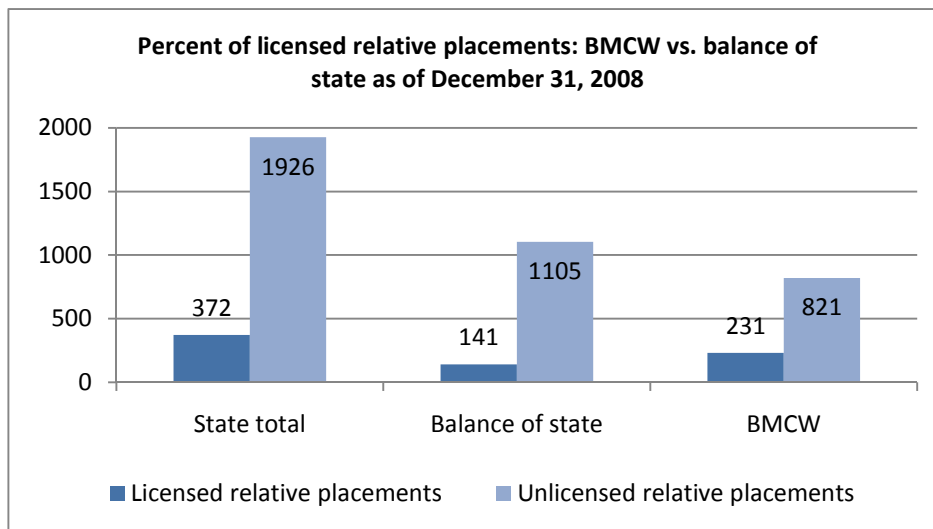
Figure 5 shows a breakdown of children placed with a licensed relative vs. unlicensed relative placements.

Figure 5: Over two-thirds of children in a relative placement are in court-ordered kinship care



Children in BMCW account for 43 percent of the state's total relative placements and 62 percent of the state's total licensed relative placements (**Figure 6**). The percent of relative placements is significantly higher in BMCW (39%) than in the balance of the state (27%). The percentage of relatives *licensed* as foster parents is significantly higher in BMCW (22%) than in the balance of the state (11%).

Figure 6: BMCW accounts for more than two-fifths of statewide children in relative placement



Note: Unlicensed placements includes both paid (such as COKC) and unpaid placements.

Demographics of Children in Out-of-Home Care

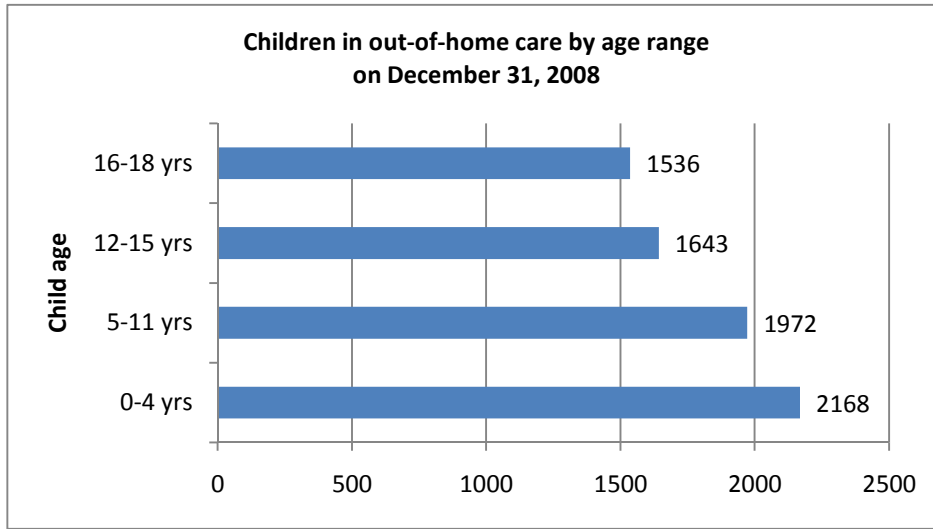
Age

Children may be in an OHC placement until they turn 18, or are age 18 and attending high school. **Table 1** displays a count of children in OHC by age on December 31, 2008.

Age in years	Total	% of total
Under 1	392	5%
1	458	6%
2	486	7%
3	453	6%
4	379	5%
5	343	5%
6	290	4%
7	308	4%
8	261	4%
9	270	4%
10	259	4%
11	241	3%
12	255	3%
13	328	4%
14	461	6%
15	599	8%
16	763	10%
17	618	8%
18+	159	2%
incomplete data	1	0%
State total	7324	100%

Figure 7 displays the breakdown of ages of children.

Figure 7: Children ages 0-4 years accounted for 30% of children in out-of-home care as of December 31, 2008.



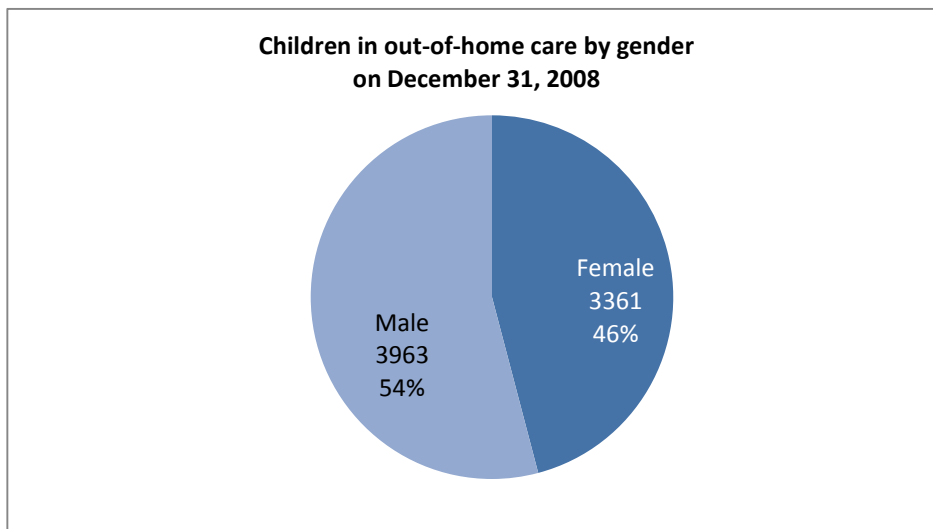
Note: Figure does not include four 19-20 year olds or one child of unknown age.

Appendix E includes information on individual county OHC child count, by age range and gender. **Appendix F** includes data on the percentage of children in specified age ranges by county. Additional county specific detail on caseload statistics can be found at the end of the report.

Gender

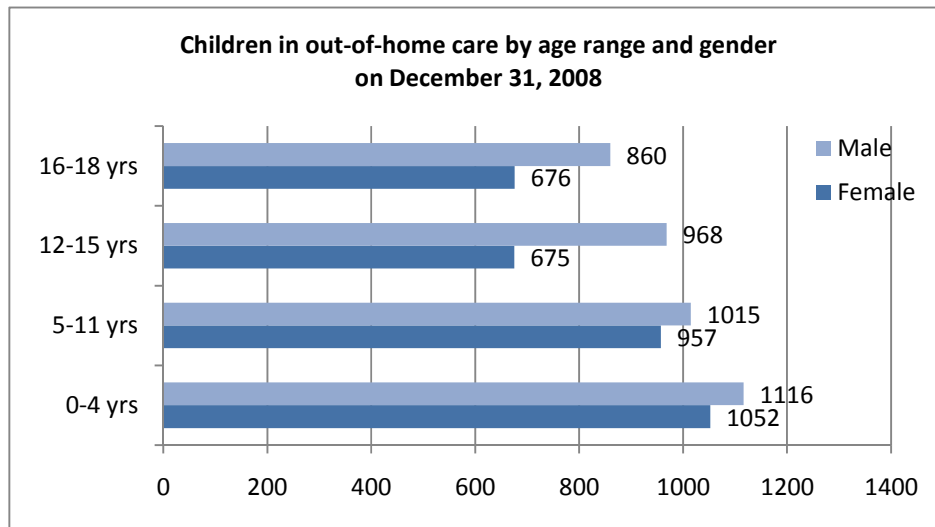
Figure 8 displays December 31, 2008 counts of children in OHC by frequency and proportion according to their gender. On December 31, 2008, there were 602 more males than females in an OHC placement. **Figure 9** displays the count of children by age range and gender.

Figure 8: Males accounted for just over half of the OHC population On December 31, 2008.



The predominance of males in OHC is particularly pronounced at older ages. This pattern is due primarily to juvenile justice placements.

Figure 9: The predominance of males in OHC grows as children reach adolescence.

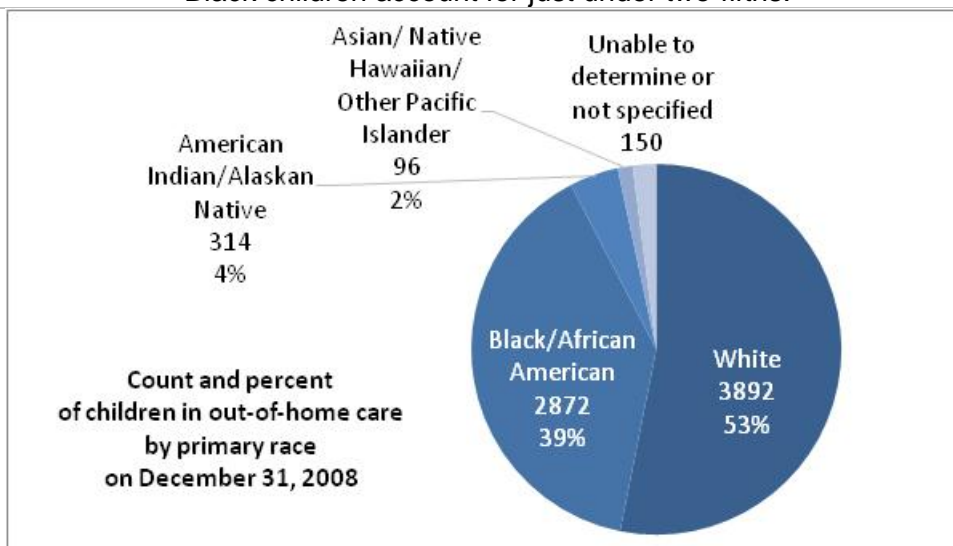


Note: Figure does not include four 19-20 year olds or one child of unknown age.

Race

In general, a person's race is determined by how they self identify. In the case of young children, parents specify the race of the child. A worker can select "unable to determine" if no person is available to identify the child's race, or if the parent, relative or guardian is unwilling to identify the child's race. **Figure 10** shows the count and percentage of children in OHC by race on December 31, 2008. **Appendix G** contains information on individual primary race counts and percentage by county.

Figure 10: Caucasian children account for just over half the children in OHC. Black children account for just under two-fifths.

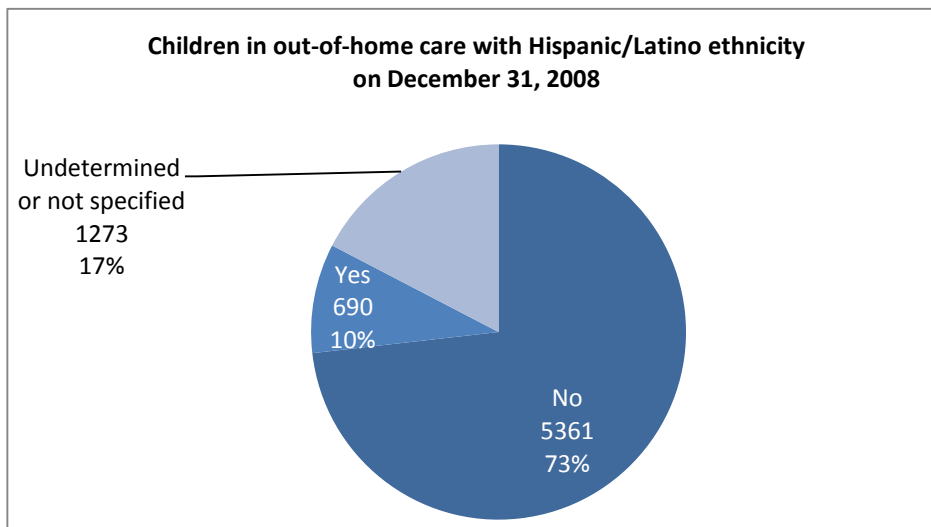


Note: The primary race of 54 children was not specified; of 96 children was unable to determine.

Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity

People of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity may be of any race. A total of 690 children on December 31, 2008 were identified with a Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity, accounting for 10% of the OHC population. **Figure 11** demonstrates the number of children with a designation of Yes, No or Undetermined regarding their Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. **Appendix H** contains information on Hispanic or Latino ethnicity counts and percentage by county.

Figure 11: One in ten children in OHC on December 31, 2008 was identified with a Hispanic/Latino ethnicity



Note: 1170 were undetermined; 103 were not specified.

Disability

Figure 12 presents summary data regarding whether a child in OHC has been clinically diagnosed by a qualified professional as having at least one of the following disabilities:

- Mentally retarded
- Visually or hearing impaired
- Physically disabled
- Emotionally disturbed
- Learning disabled
- Other medically diagnosed condition(s) requiring special care.

The reporting of a child's disability is frequently under-reported in eWiSACWIS, primarily because demographic information may not be updated to reflect new information regarding diagnosis of children.

Figure 12: Some one in five children in OHC on December 31, 2008 had a diagnosed disability.

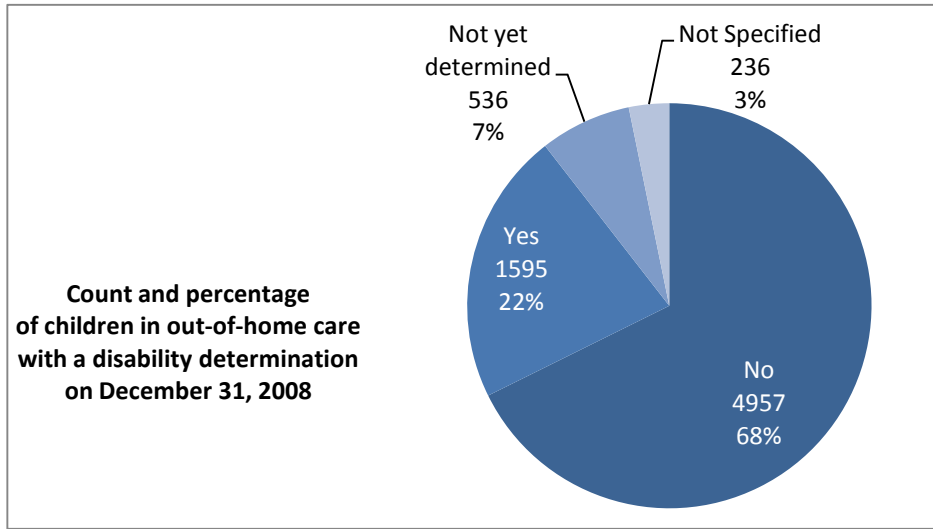
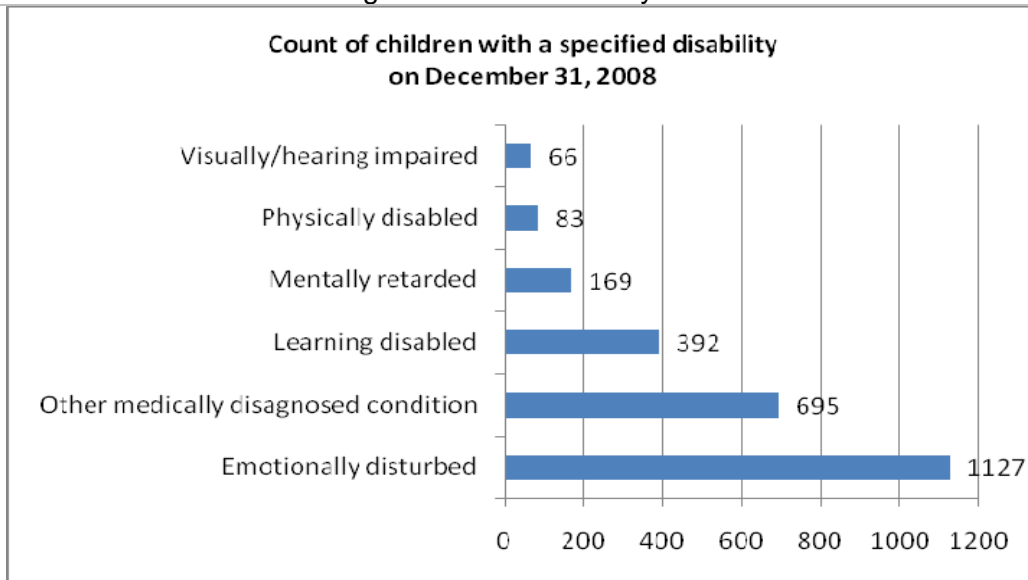


Figure 13 shows the types of disability selected for the 1,595 children in OHC with a documented disability determination. More than one disability may be documented for a specific child.

Figure 13: Just over 70% of the 1,595 children in OHC as of December 31, 2008 were diagnosed as emotionally disturbed.



Note: Since children can have more than one diagnosis, numbers will sum to greater than the number of children.

Child Demographics by Out-of Home Care Placement Settings

This section outlines the number of children in OHC by their placement setting on December 31, 2008. Placement setting is defined as the type of setting in which the child resided at the end of the calendar year. **Appendix I** outlines the placement setting breakdown for all children, with percentages by placement settings.

The most frequently used placement settings are family foster homes (33%), court-ordered kinship care (21%), treatment foster homes (15%), residential care centers (7%) and unlicensed relatives (6%).

Gender

Figure 14a and **Figure 14b** show the most frequent placement settings for male and female children in OHC. The top five placement settings account for 80% of the total placement settings for male children and 83% of the total settings for female children. Female children are more likely to be placed in a non-relative family foster home (36%) than male children (30%). Male children are more likely to be placed in a higher level of care placement (treatment foster home, group home or RCC) than female children. **Appendix J** includes the complete count of children by gender, age range, and placement setting.

Figure 14a: Foster family homes (non-relative) and court-ordered kinship accounted for almost 50% of OHC placement settings for male children.

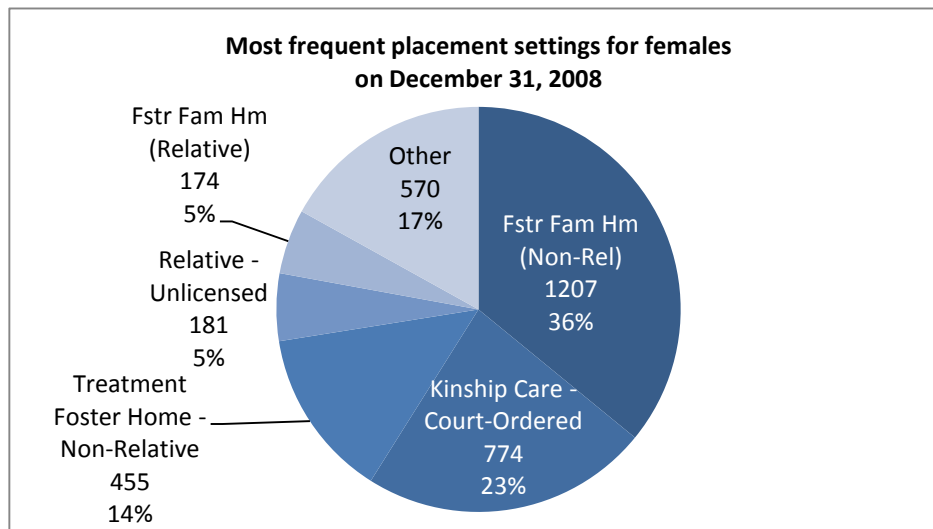
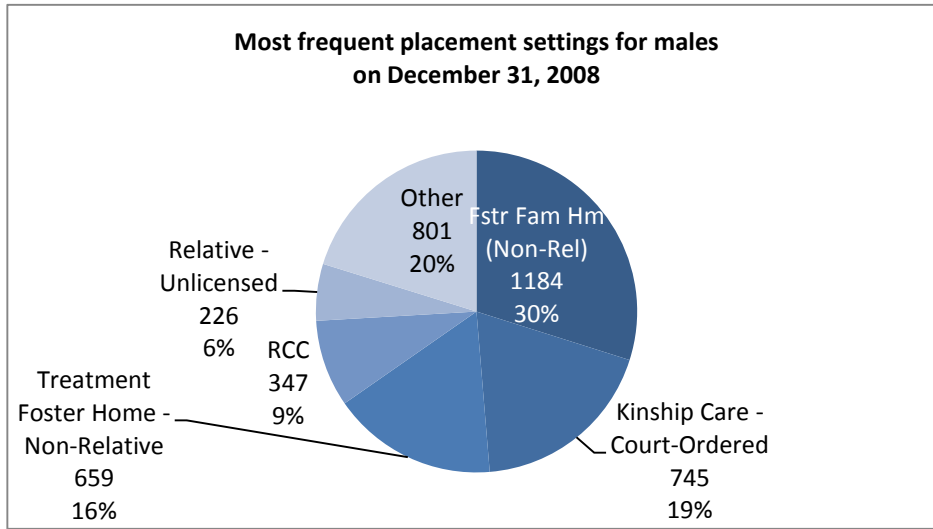


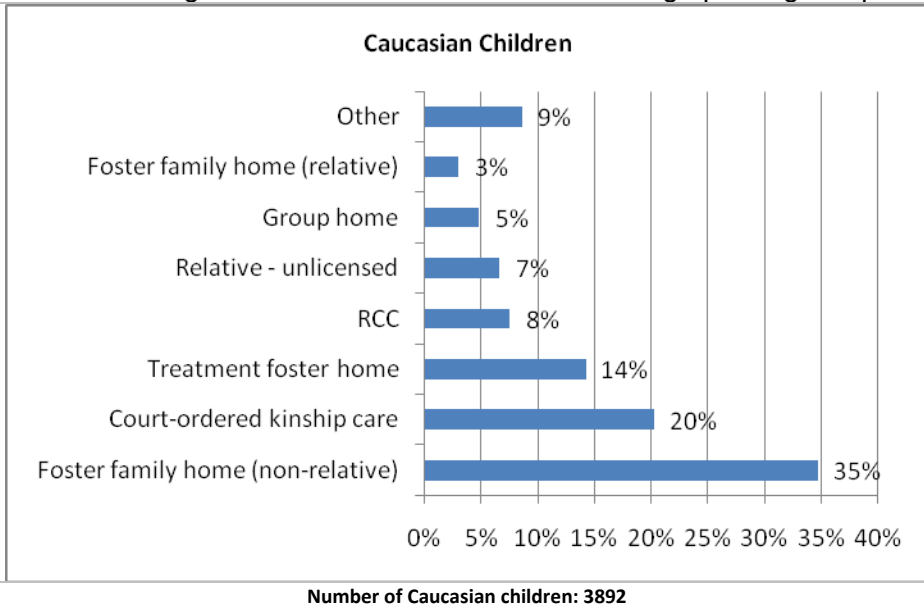
Figure 14b: Foster family homes (non-relative) and court-ordered kinship accounted for almost 60% of OHC placement settings for female children.



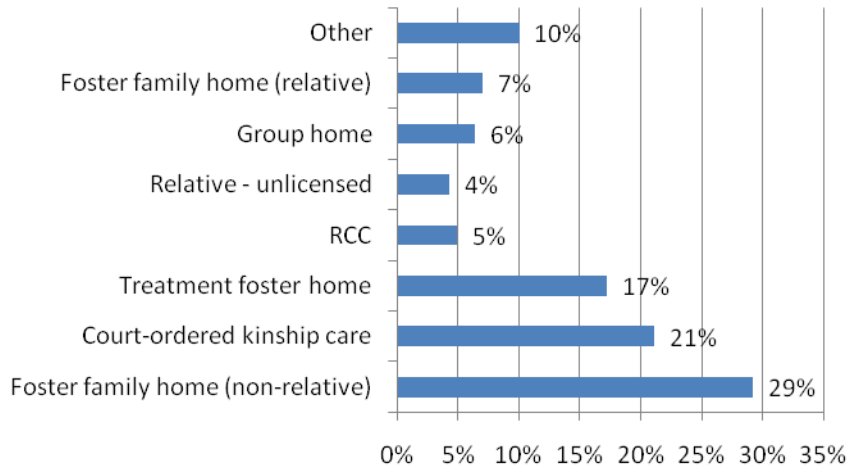
Race

Figure 15 displays the seven most frequent placement settings by the child's primary race as indicated in eWiSACWIS. The percentages are based upon the total number of children within each primary race group. **Appendix K** contains the complete count of children by race and Hispanic/Latino ethnicity by placement setting on December 31, 2008.

Figure 15: Generally, Caucasian and Black / African American children have similar – though not identical – likelihoods of ending up in a given placement

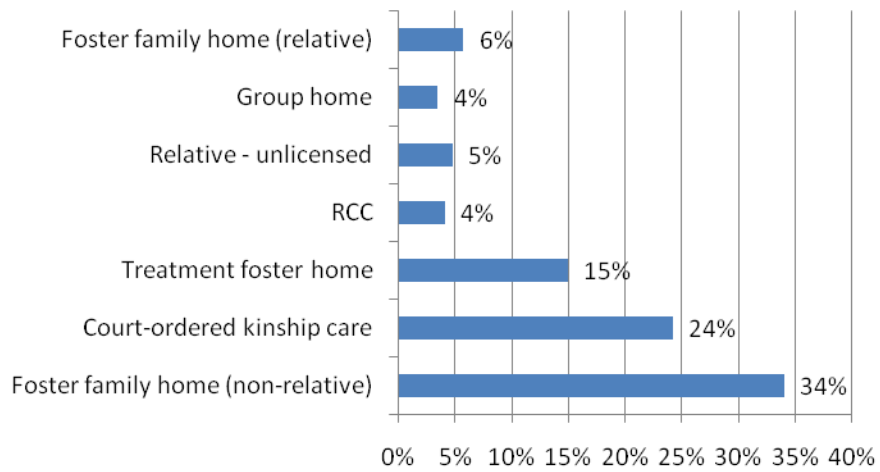


Black/ African American Children

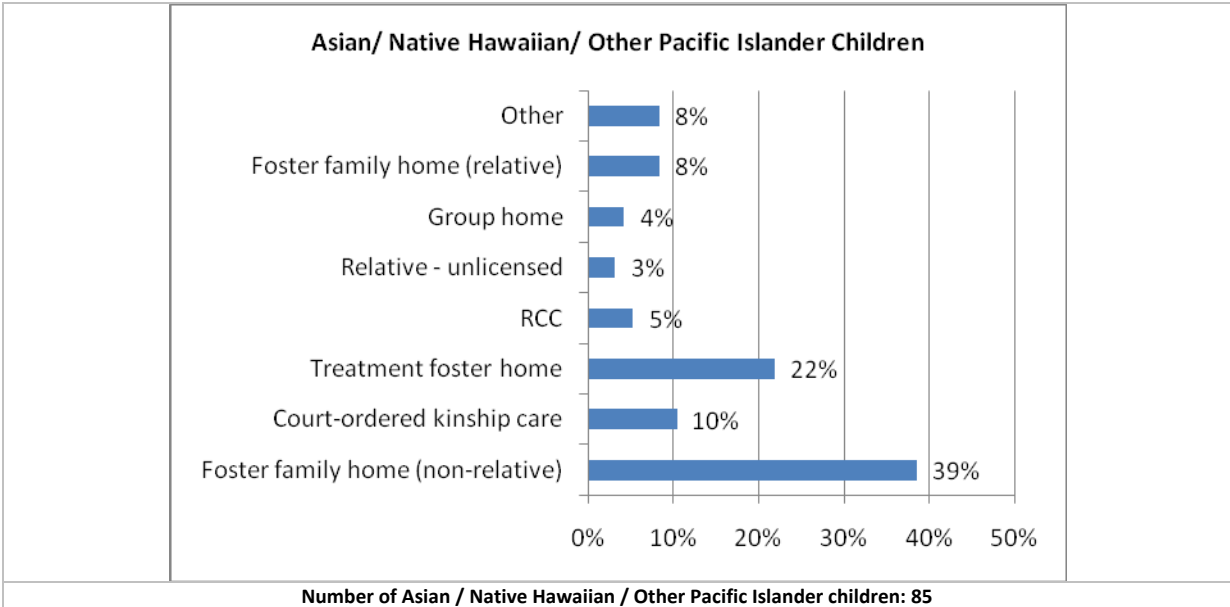


Number of Black / African American children: 2,872

American Indian/ Alaskan Native Children

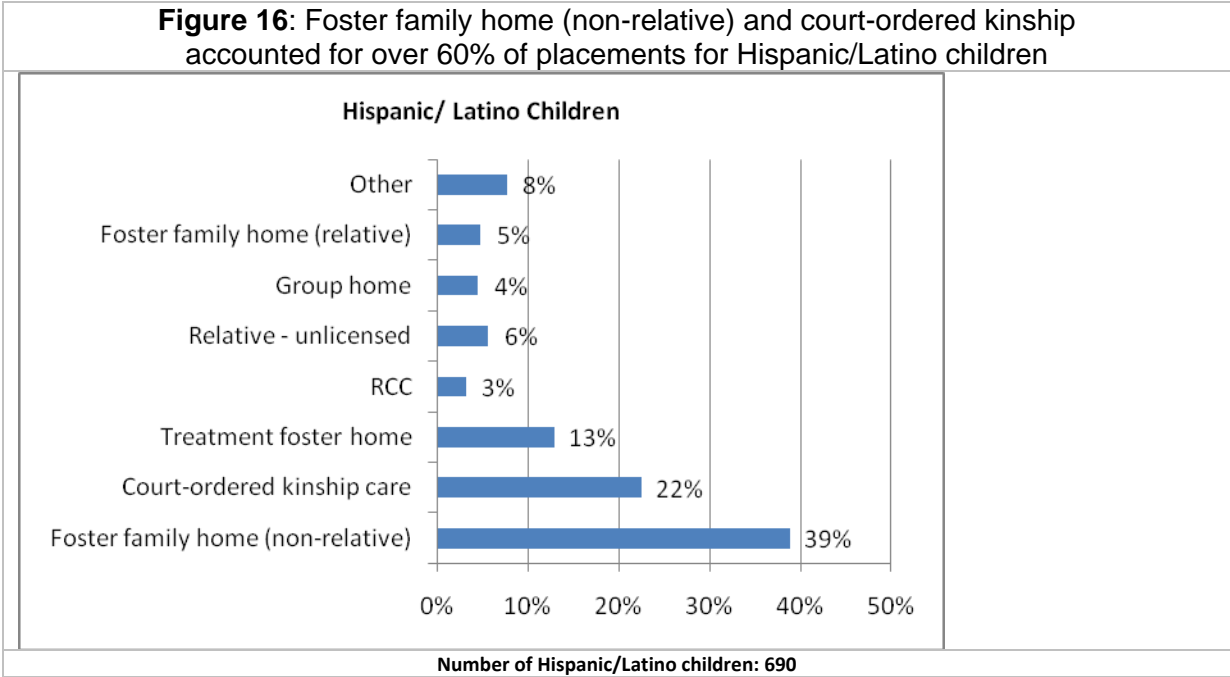


Number of American Indian / Alaskan Native children: 314



Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity

Figure 16 displays the most frequent placement settings on December 31, 2008 for children identified as Hispanic/Latino.



Child Entry into Out-of-Home Care in CY 2008

A child's entry into OHC is defined in this report as when a child was removed from home and placed in OHC during CY 2008. Most counts included in this report contain information related only to a child's most recent removal from his or her family home and corresponding placement into OHC. However, some counts include all removals (so if a child was removed multiple times, each removal is included) and this is noted in the text, table, or figure.

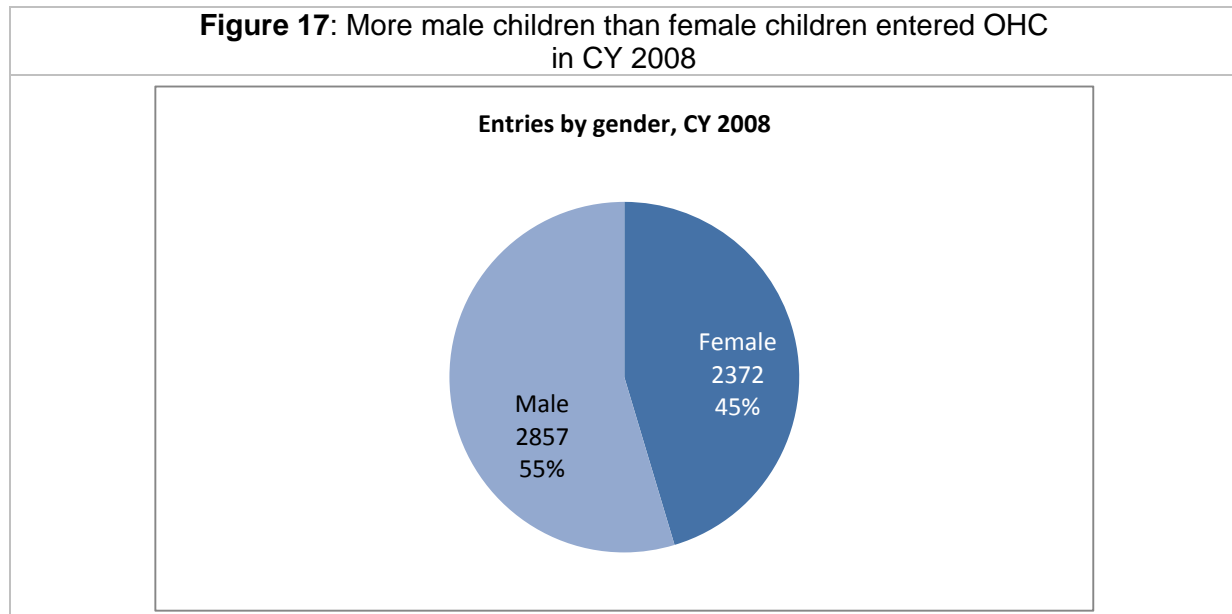
A total of 5,229 children entered OHC statewide during CY 2008; this represents a decrease from the total of 5,710 children entering OHC in CY 2007. As noted above, this number includes only the child's most recent entry into OHC within a given county or the BMCW. If a child had multiple entries in more than one county, the statewide count only includes the child's most recent entry into OHC. **Appendix L** shows CY 2008 entries by county. If a child entered care more than one time or in more than one county, this appendix shows the most recent entry in each county.

Child Demographics of Entries

Entries by Child Gender

Figure 17 displays the 2008 calendar year counts of children who entered OHC by frequency and proportion according to their gender. During CY 2008, 485 more males than females entered OHC.

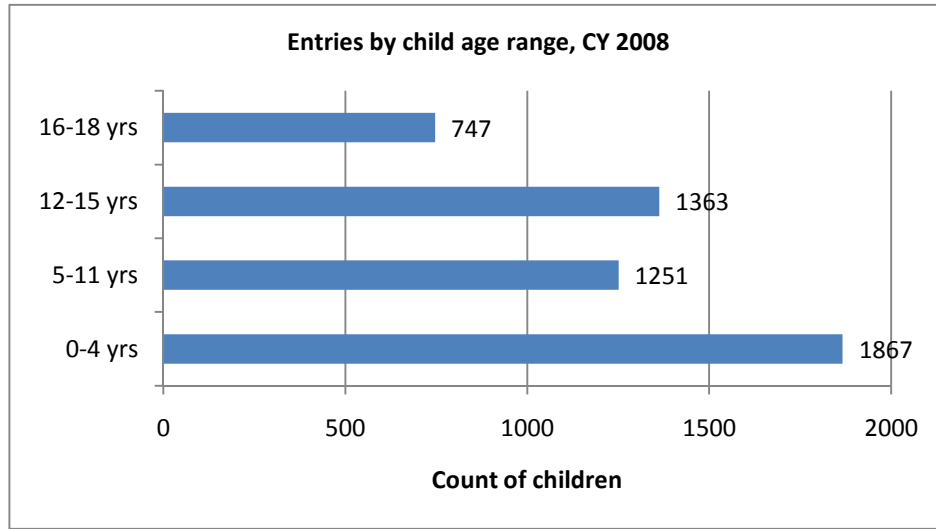
Figure 17: More male children than female children entered OHC in CY 2008



Entries by Child Age Range

Children may enter into an OHC placement until they turn 18. **Figure 18** displays the breakdown of ages of children that entered OHC in CY 2008. In 2007, the under 4 years age group accounted for the largest number entries into OHC (36%), followed by children in the 12-15 age bracket (26%). Children in the 16-18 age bracket account for the fewest entries into OHC (14%).

Figure 18: Children 0-4 yrs old account for more than one-third of CY 2008 entries into OHC

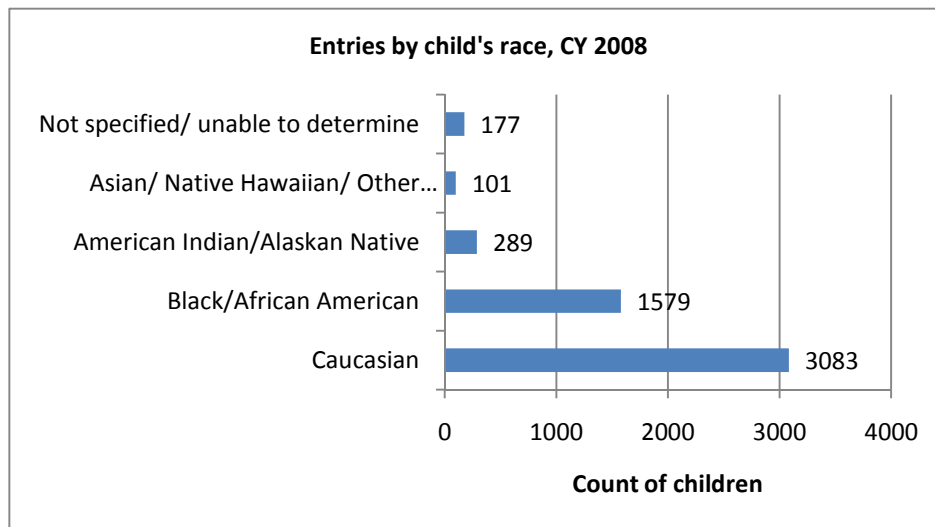


Note: Does not include one child whose age was not documented.

Entries by Child Race

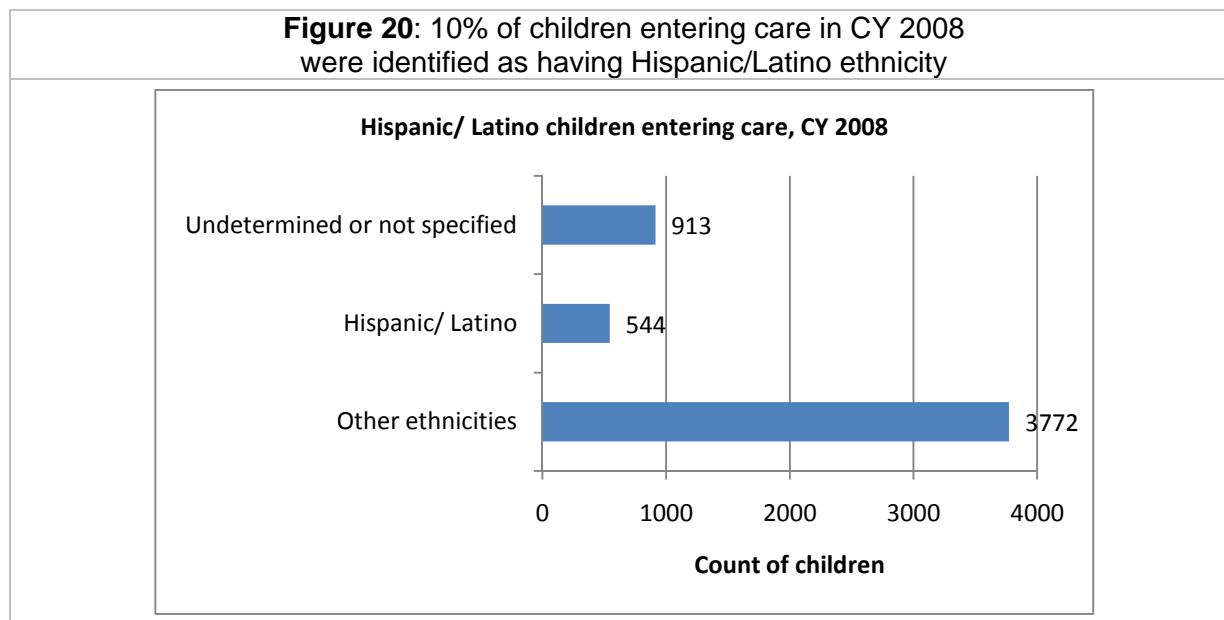
Figure 19 shows the count of children who entered OHC by race during CY 2008. Caucasian children account for 59% of the entries in CY 2008, followed by African American children, who account for 30% of the entries.

Figure 19: Caucasian children accounted for close to 60% of children entering OHC in CY 2008.



Entries of Hispanic/Latino Children

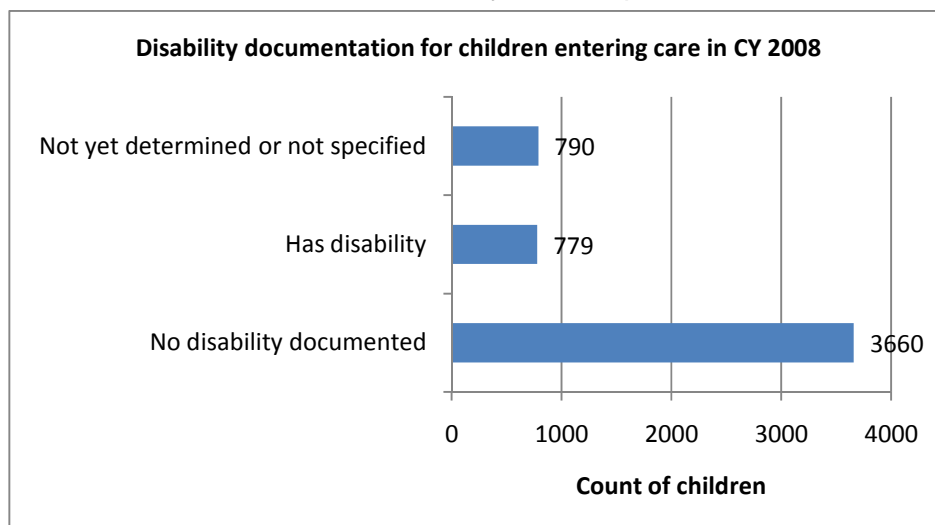
As presented in **Figure 20**, a total of 544 Hispanic/Latino children entered OHC during CY 2008.



Entries for Children with Diagnosed Disabilities

Close to 800 children who entered OHC during CY 2008 were identified as having at least one clinically diagnosed disability. This accounts for 15% of the total population that entered OHC in CY 2008. However, this disability may not be the reason the child entered OHC. Moreover, subsequent additional information about a child's disability obtained later in the life of the case may not be reflected in the child's demographic information. Thus, the number of children with disabilities is likely under-reported in the OHC population. **Figure 21** shows a breakdown of children by disability status for the CY 2008 entries.

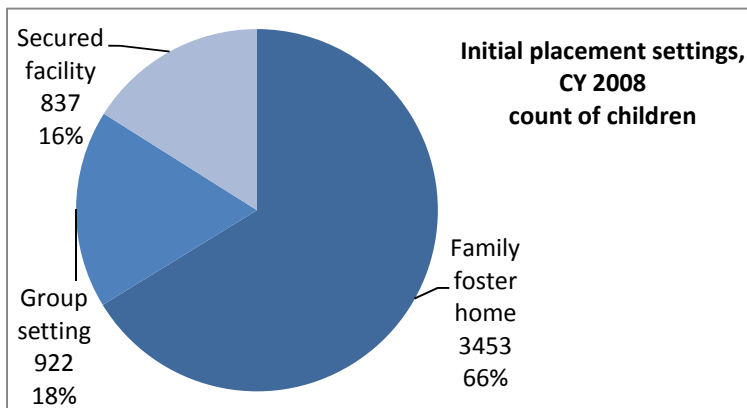
Figure 21: Some 15% of children entering OHC in CY 2008 had a documented disability. This amount is likely under-reported.



Initial Placement Settings

When a child enters OHC, an agency has numerous choices as to where to place the child. A child may be placed in a family foster home setting, a group setting or a secured facility setting. Initial placements may be a receiving home or a shelter facility, which are used to assess the child's needs and identify an appropriate placement. Child welfare program goals are to place the child in the least restrictive setting and allow the child to remain in the community to the extent possible. **Figure 22** details a breakdown of the three possible placement groupings. **Appendix M** lists counts of all initial placement settings for CY 2008.

Figure 22: Two-thirds of children coming into OHC in CY 2008 had an initial placement in a family foster home setting.



Note: Six children had initial placements of "missing from OHC." Five had "supervised independent living." One had "respite." Five had "trial reunification."

Child Removal Reasons

A child welfare worker is required to document one of the following removal reasons when a child enters OHC. Workers are encouraged to select as many removal reasons that apply to the specific case. **Appendix N** lists all removal reasons and their corresponding definitions. **Table 2** shows the number and percentage of children for each removal. Note that a clarification of when to use each definition was provided to child welfare employees in 2008 and appears to have impacted the frequency of use of certain reasons. Because a child may have more than one removal reason, the count of reasons is higher than the count of children and the percent of children impacted by all reasons will sum to higher than 100%.

Table 2: Removal reason: count of use and percent of children to whom reason was applied for CY2008.

Removal Reason	Count of use	Percent of children
Caretaker's inability to cope	2871	55%
Neglect	1335	26%
Child behavior problem	537	10%
Physical abuse	487	9%
Parent alcohol/drug abuse	449	9%
Parent incarcerated	219	4%
Inadequate housing	165	3%
Child clinically diagnosed	88	2%

Table 2: Removal reason: count of use and percent of children to whom reason was applied for CY2008.

Removal Reason	Count of use	Percent of children
Sexual abuse	74	1%
Child alcohol/drug abuse	74	1%
Abandonment	68	1%
Relinquishment	34	1%
Parent death	17	0.3%
Children removed	5229	

Note: Child behavior problem removal reason includes juvenile justice placements.

Removal Reasons by Child Age Range and Gender

Figures 23-26 show the five most frequent removal reasons for each age group broken out by gender. Caretaker’s inability to cope is now the most common reason for all age groups. This is new in CY 2008 and most likely caused by the clarification of when to use each definition provided to child welfare workers in 2008. After that, neglect is the most common reason for younger children and child behavior problems (including delinquency and status offenses) is the most common reason for older children. Males are significantly more likely to be removed for behavior reasons than females. A child may have multiple removals in the below graphs, and may have multiple reasons associated with each removal.

Figure 23: For children 0-4 yrs old, neglect and caretaker alcohol/drug abuse were the most common removal reasons after caretaker’s inability to cope.

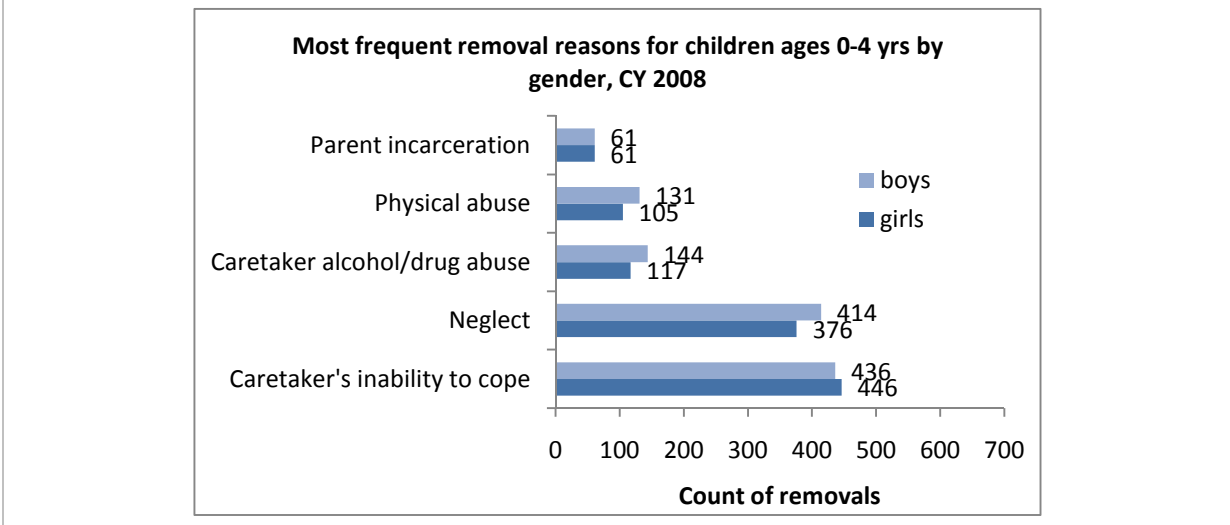


Figure 24: For children 5-11 yrs old, neglect and physical abuse were the most common removal reasons after caretaker's inability to cope.

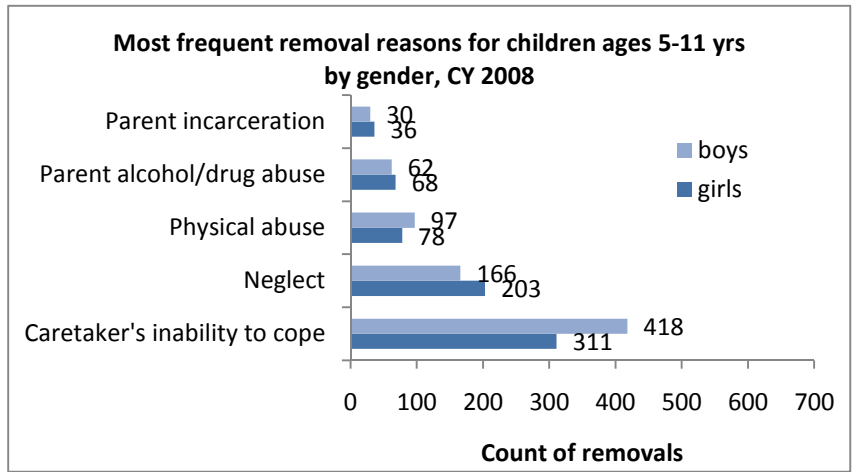


Figure 25: For children 12-15 yrs old, child behavior problem and neglect were the most common removal reasons after caretaker's inability to cope.

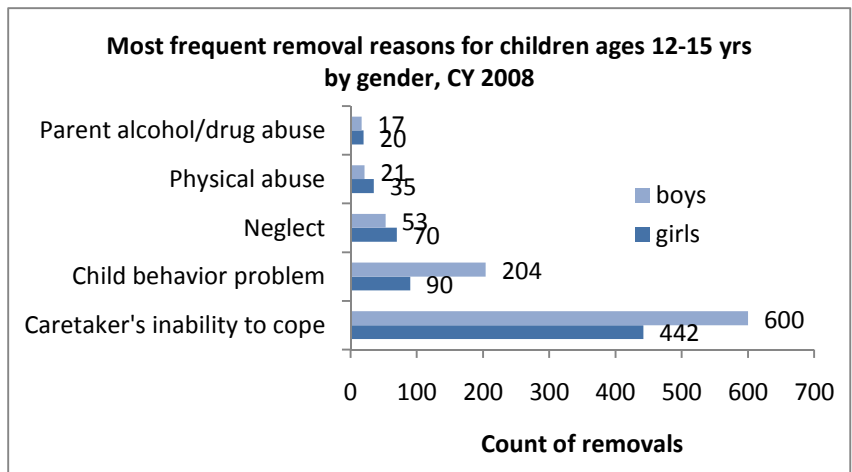
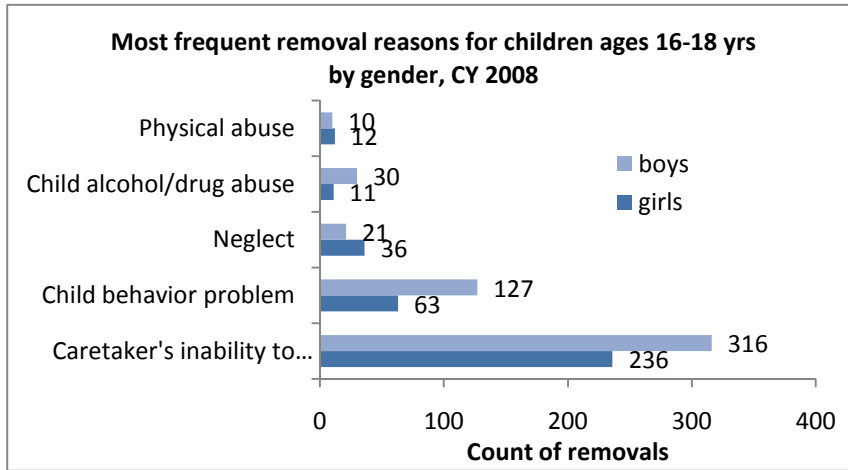


Figure 26: For children 16-18 yrs old, child behavior problem and neglect were the most common removal reasons after caretaker's inability to cope



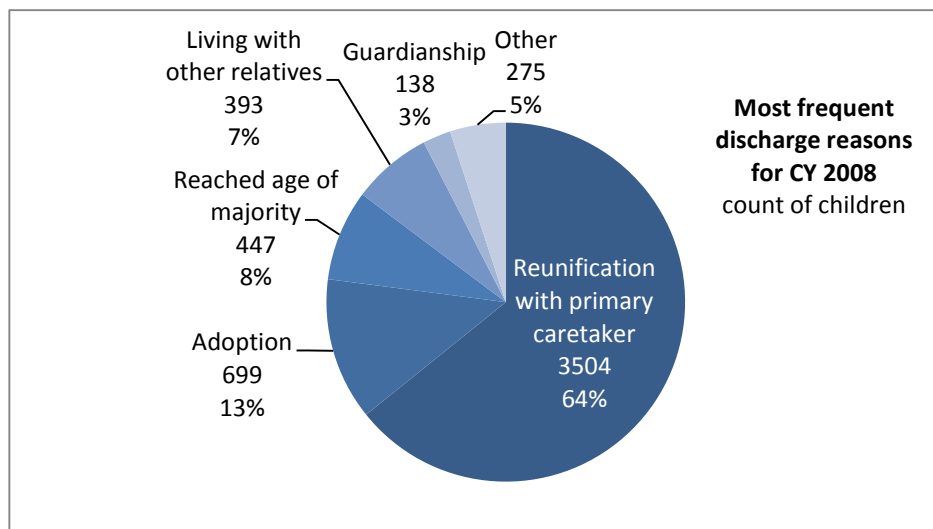
Child Discharge from Out-of-Home Care in CY 2008

Discharge Reasons

A child's discharge from OHC is defined as the end of a placement with no subsequent placements by an agency or the court. In these instances, a child is exiting a placement to a permanency outcome and the child welfare agency is no longer responsible for the child's physical custody. The child and his or her family may continue to receive services after the discharge from placement. Counts included in this report contain information related to a child's most recent discharge from OHC. If a child has multiple discharges, he/she may appear in the counts for more than one county, but he/she will appear only once under the most recent discharge within a county and only the most recent discharge will be counted in the state total.

A total of 5,456 children were discharged from OHC statewide in CY 2008, a decrease of 320 children as compared to CY 2007. This includes 699 children who were adopted through the SNAP program during this period. **Appendix O** includes Entries and Exit counts by county for CY 2008. A child welfare worker is permitted to select one of several discharge reasons when a permanency outcome has been met. **Figure 27** shows the most frequent reasons a child was discharged from OHC during CY 2008.

Figure 27: Reunification accounted for almost two-thirds of discharges in CY 2008.

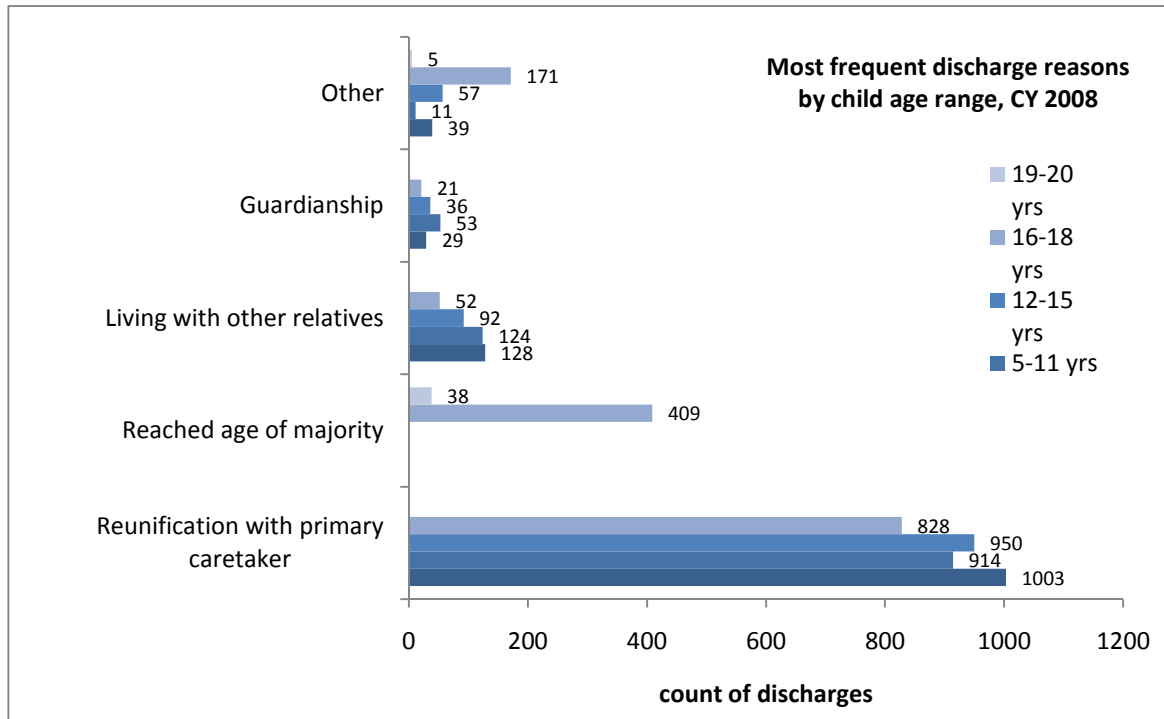


Excluding those who exited to adoption, a total of 4,757 children were discharged from OHC in CY 2008. Some of these children were discharged from more than one county during the specified time period; however, they are counted only one time.

Due to report constraints, the remainder of the data in this section does not include children adopted in CY 2008. Adoption discharges are attributed to the SNAP rather than the county of origin for the child. For additional information about 2008 Adoptions, please refer to the Special Needs Adoption and Permanency Consultation Program 2008 Annual Report.

Figure 28 compares discharge reasons by age.

Figure 28: Reunification is the most common discharge reason, regardless of age.



Data excludes one child of unknown age.

Child Discharge Demographics

Demographic counts are based on a child's most recent discharge from OHC. If a child discharged multiple times during the year in more than one county, only the most recent discharge is counted.

Gender

Figure 29 displays CY 2008 counts of children discharged from OHC by frequency and proportion according to their gender. During CY 2008, 493 more males were discharged from OHC than females in OHC. The discharge pattern is consistent with males having a larger percentage of entries. **Figure 30** compares entries to discharges by gender in CY 2008.

Figure 29: Slightly more males than females discharged from OHC in CY 2008.

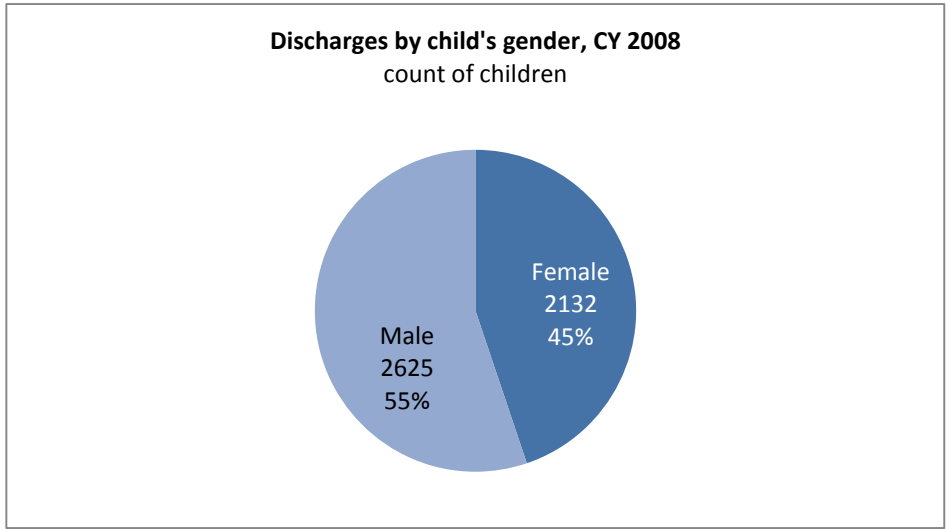
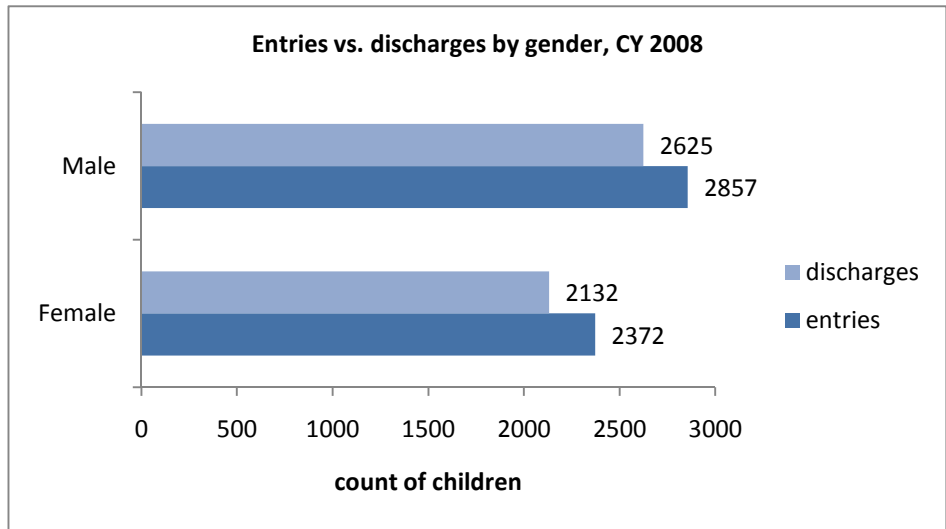


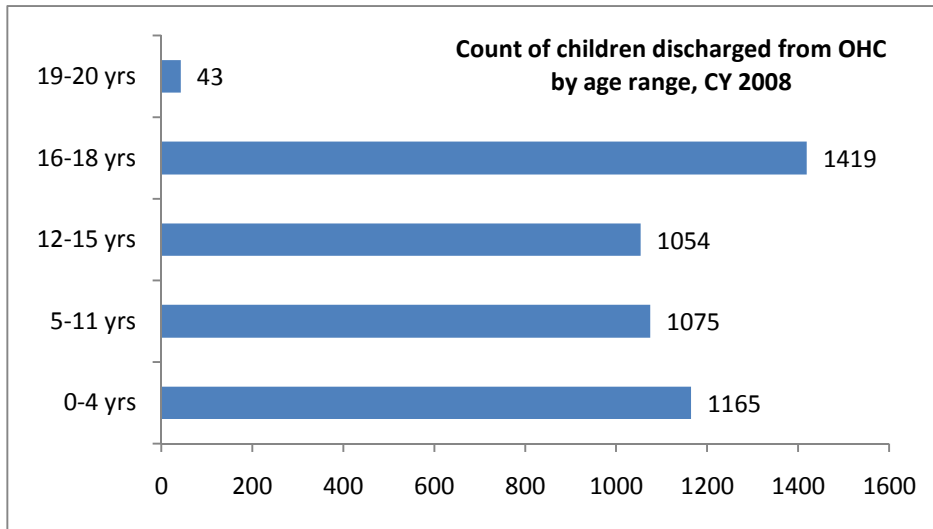
Figure 30: Male children have more entries and more discharges from OHC than female children.



Age

Children may be in an OHC placement until they turn 18, or may continue in placement at age 18 if they are attending high school. **Figure 31** displays the breakdown of ages of children discharged from OHC during CY 2008.

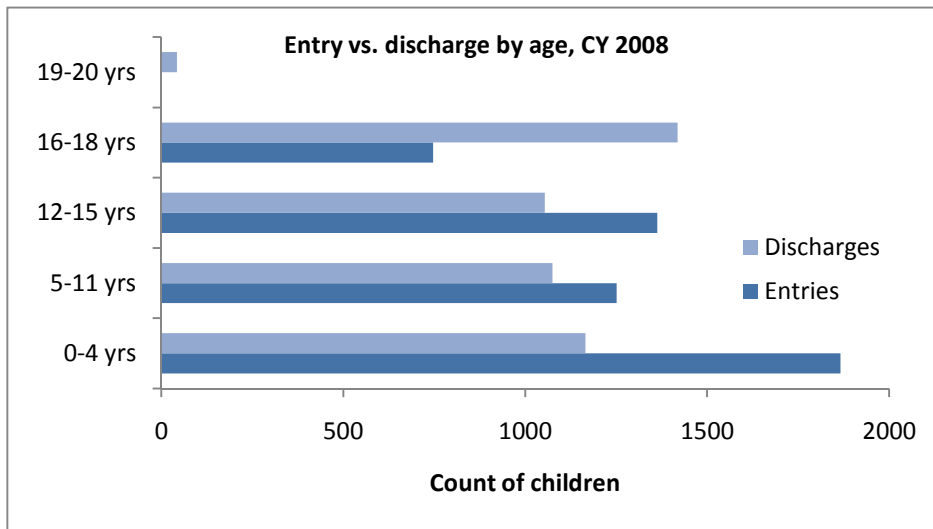
Figure 31: Children 16-18 years old accounted for 30% of discharges in CY 2008.



Does not include one child of unknown age.

Figure 32 compares entries to discharges by age in CY 2008.

Figure 32: Because children age while they are in care, there are more entries for younger age groups and more discharges for the 16-18 year age group.



Does not include one child of unknown age.

Race

Figure 33 shows the count of children discharged from OHC by race during CY 2008.

Figure 34 compares entries in CY 2008 to discharges in CY 2008 by race.

Figure 33: Caucasian children accounted for 59% of discharges in CY 2008. Black/African American children accounted for 30%.

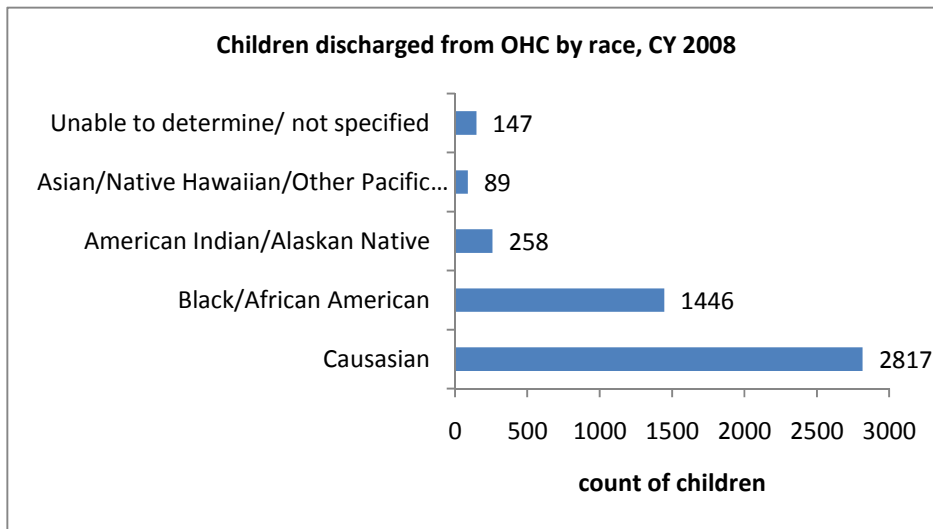
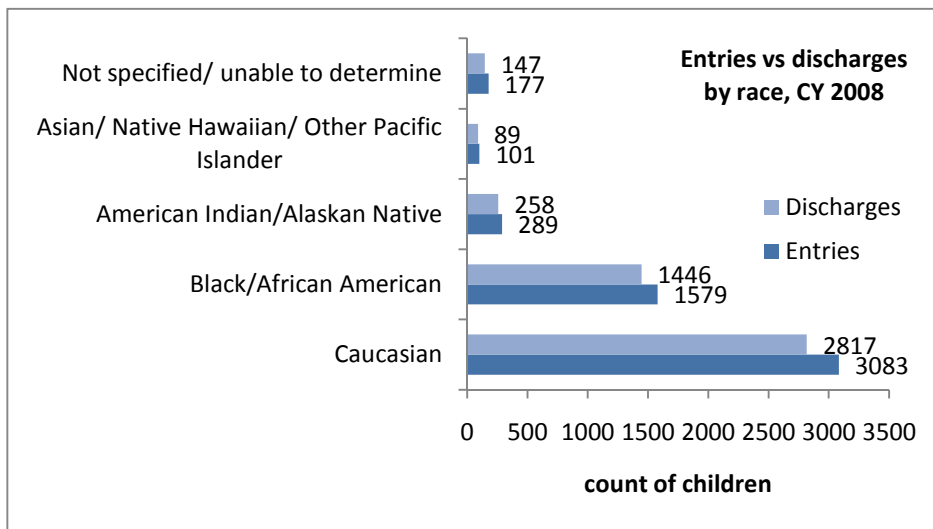


Figure 34: Children appear to discharge in rough proportion to their entry by race.



Hispanic/Latino

Figure 35 provides the number of children who were discharged with a Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. **Figure 36** compares the number of Hispanic/Latino children who entered OHC to the number of children discharged from out-of home care.

Figure 35: There were 434 children of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity discharged in CY 2008

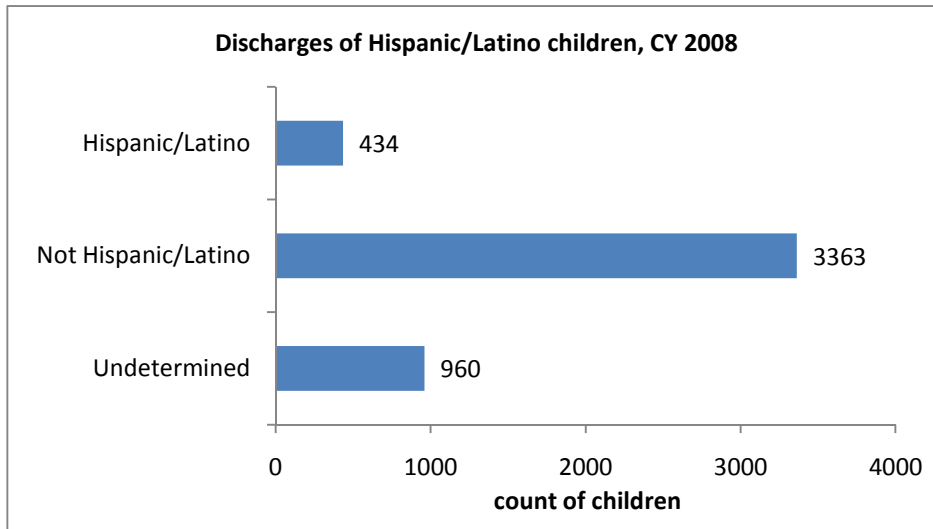
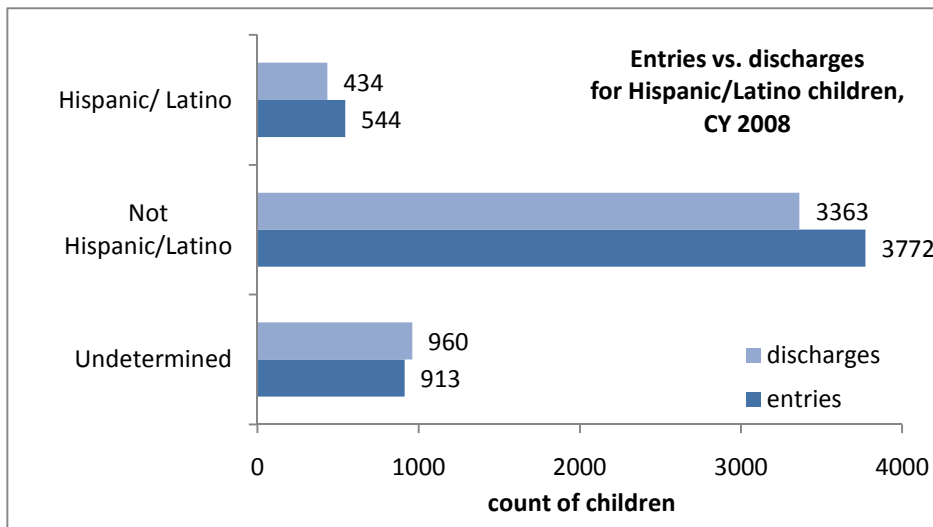


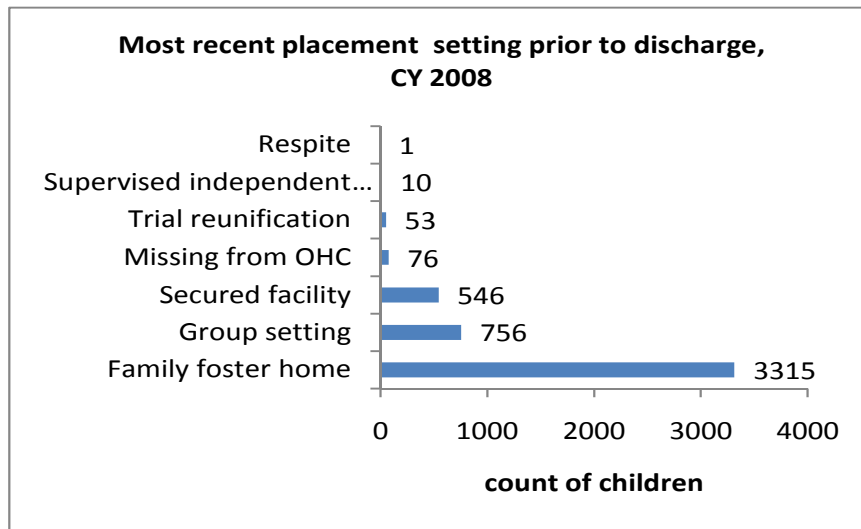
Figure 36: Children of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity appear to discharge in rough proportion to their entry.



Most Recent Placement Setting Prior to Discharge

When a child is in an OHC placement, a child welfare agency has numerous choices as to where the child may be placed. For example, a child may be placed in either a family type setting, a group setting or a secured facility setting. **Figure 37** details a breakdown of the child's most recent placement setting prior to discharge.

Figure 37: 70% of children discharged in CY 2008 were in a family foster home setting immediately prior to discharge.

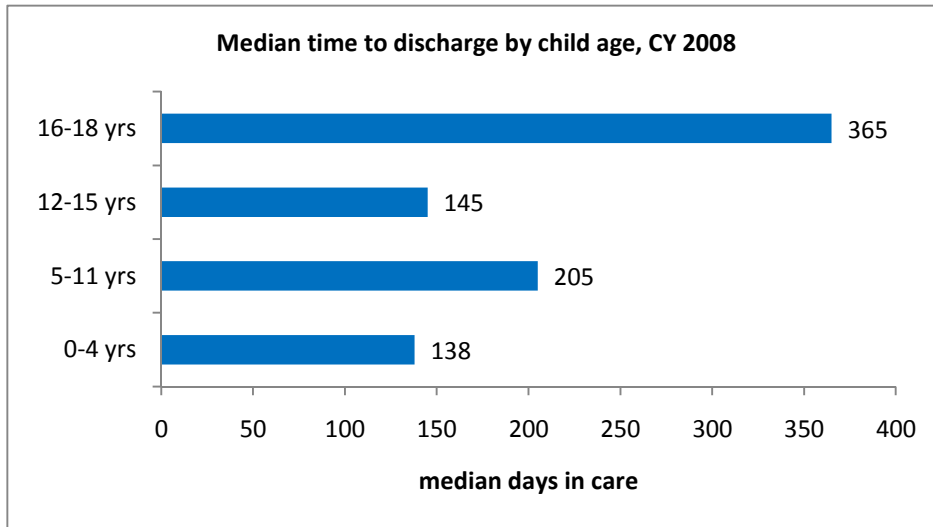


Family foster home includes foster care, kinship care, and treatment foster care.
 Group setting includes shelters, group homes, and RCCs.
 Secured facility includes hospitals, detention, and corrections.

Median Time to Discharge

Median Time to Discharge presents summary data on the median length of the OHC placement episode prior to discharge. The length of time is based on the time from the child's removal from home until the time of discharge. Statewide, children spent a median of 210 days in care before discharge. **Figure 38** displays the total Median Time to Discharge for children in OHC during CY 2008 by age. **Figure 39** displays the Median Time to Discharge for children in OHC by age and gender. **Figure 40** displays the same information by Race and **Figure 41** by Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. In the below graphs, each child's most recent CY 2008 discharge in each county is counted one time, so a child with discharges in multiple counties may appear multiple times.

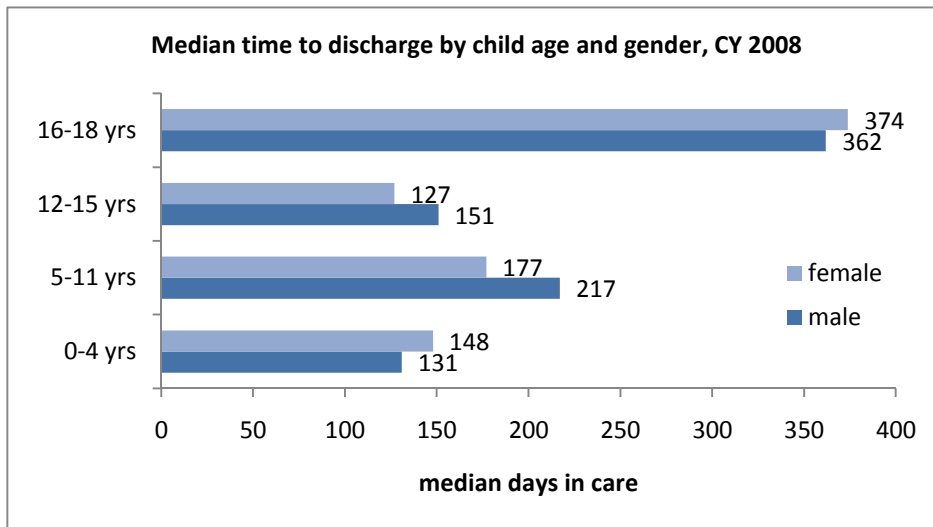
Figure 38: Children 16-18 years have spent a full year in care, on average, when they discharge.



Does not include 1 discharge without age information.
 Does not include 43 discharges for children 19-20 yrs.
 For children 19-20 yrs, median time to discharge was 3127 days.

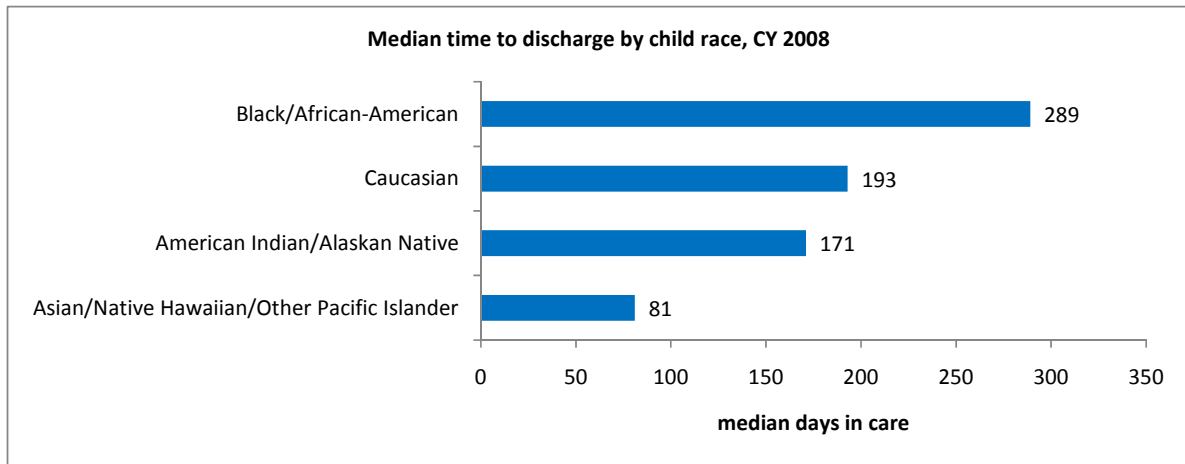
Male children spent a median time of 213 days in care before discharging. Female children spent 205 days.

Figure 39: For the most part, girls and boys appear to have similar lengths of stay in care.



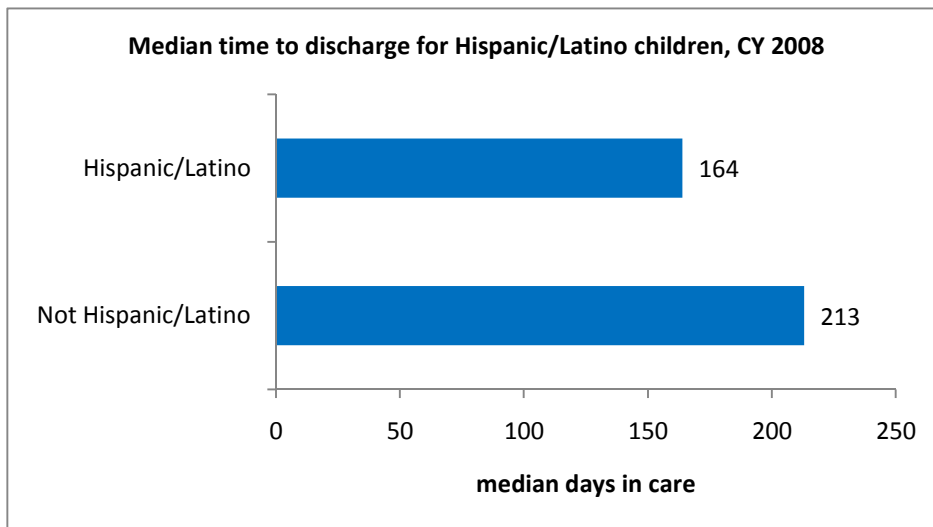
Does not include one discharge for a child of unknown age.
 Does not include 43 discharges for children ages 19-20 years.

Figure 40: African American children appear to have significantly longer stays in care than Caucasian children.



Does not include 152 discharges where data on primary race was missing.

Figure 41: Children of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity appear to have shorter stays in care than children not of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.



Does not include 999 discharges where data on Hispanic/Latino ethnicity was missing.