



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

Children and Family Services

Children with Disabilities Involved in the Child Welfare Continuum



Summary Report

August 2009

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Introduction

This report provides an overview of children with disabilities and special health care needs within the Minnesota child welfare system. Children with disabilities and special health care needs are represented in multiple assessment and service delivery systems across the state. This population of children receives services from various professionals and entities, some of which are involved in collaborative efforts, while many are not. This report delineates demographics and related factors of this child population and the services which they receive. The report specifically looks at data in reference to age, disability type, county, gender, race/ethnicity, child protection response path, child maltreatment determinations, and the number of disabilities a child has. By focusing on this population and related service delivery challenges and successes, further improvements to the overall experience for children with disabilities and special health care needs will be accomplished.

Disability definition

While there is no one agreed upon definition of “disability” among child welfare professionals across service delivery systems, a literature and research review, and communication with several state government entities, including the Minnesota Departments of Human Services, Education, Health, and several national government entities, have led to the following description in attempting to define child disabilities: Disability and special health care needs can generally be defined as behavioral, developmental, emotional, physical, and sensory-related impairments; or conditions that can affect a child’s ability to walk, talk, see, hear, breathe, or their overall daily functioning. A child can have multiple disabilities.

It is important to note the term “identified” disability which is used throughout this report. This signifies that a child has been professionally diagnosed and documentation has occurred within the Social Service Information System (SSIS). SSIS is the information system used by case managers to follow children in the child welfare/protection system in Minnesota. Many children, both in and out of the child welfare system, are undiagnosed, making attending to those needs very challenging. The data from SSIS is preliminary information about children who have been identified as having a disability.

State overview

The following table and figure illustrates the number of children with disabilities and all children across Minnesota. It is noteworthy that 39 percent of children in out-of-home care have an identified disability, whereas only 13 percent have an identified disability when first coming into contact with child protection regarding a child maltreatment concern. It is important to note that children who were maltreated may or may not have entered out-of-home care or have been adopted. Children who were in out-of-home care may have been in care for reasons other than maltreatment. See Table 1.

Table 1: State overview

| | Total number of children | % of total MN child population | Total number of children with identified disability | Total % of children with disabilities in child protection system | Children with disability % of total MN child population |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Total MN children (Census 2000) | 1,286,894 | | | | |
| Total MN children of accepted child maltreatment reports (2007) | 24,139 | 1.88% | 3,234 | 13.40% | 0.25% |
| Total MN children in out-of-home care (2007) | 14,800 | 1.15% | 5,710 | 38.58% | 0.44% |

The percent of children with an identified disability is higher in counties outside of the metro area. Tables 2 and 3 identify the five counties with the highest and lowest percentage of children with identified disabilities in 2007. Table 4 represents the larger counties in the state, based on the number of children involved with child protection, and their percent of children with disabilities.

Table 2: Alleged maltreatment – top five counties with highest percent of children with identified disability – 2007

| | County | Total children with alleged maltreatment | Total children with disability of those with alleged maltreatment | % Children with disability |
|---|---------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Cook | 16 | 7 | 43.80% |
| 2 | Le Sueur | 137 | 41 | 29.90% |
| 3 | Goodhue | 129 | 38 | 29.50% |
| 4 | Itasca | 187 | 55 | 29.40% |
| 5 | Chisago | 206 | 57 | 27.70% |

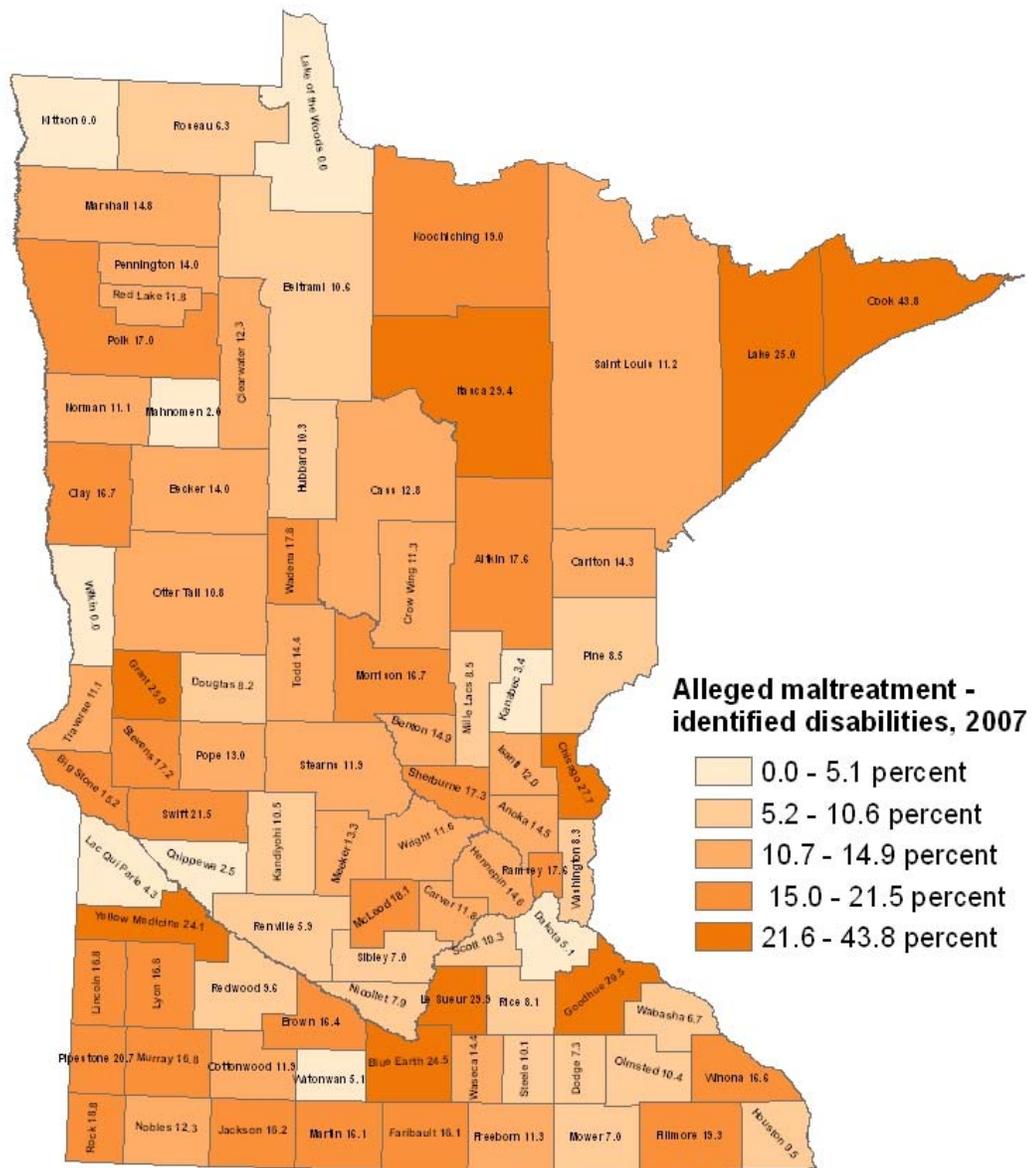
Table 3: Alleged maltreatment – top five counties with lowest percent of children with identified disability – 2007

| | County | Total children with alleged maltreatment | Total children with disability of those with alleged maltreatment | % Children with disability |
|---|---------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Mahnomen | 49 | 1 | 2.00% |
| 2 | Chippewa | 40 | 1 | 2.50% |
| 3 | Kanabec | 89 | 3 | 3.40% |
| 4 | Lac qui Parle | 23 | 1 | 4.30% |
| 5 | Dakota | 1,615 | 82 | 5.10% |

Table 4: Alleged maltreatment – total percent of children with disabilities in larger counties – 2007

| County | Total children with alleged maltreatment | Total children with disability of those with alleged maltreatment | % Children with disability |
|---------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Washington | 731 | 61 | 8.34% |
| Scott | 455 | 47 | 10.33% |
| St. Louis | 1,201 | 134 | 11.16% |
| Wright | 422 | 49 | 11.61% |
| Carver | 304 | 36 | 11.84% |
| Anoka | 1,129 | 164 | 14.53% |
| Hennepin | 6,750 | 984 | 14.58% |
| Ramsey | 1,736 | 306 | 17.63% |

Figure 1: Alleged Maltreatment of children who have an identified disability - 2007



2007 Alleged Maltreatment Identified Disabilities by County

Identification and data tracking varies from county to county. The data may over- or under-represent the actual number of children in the child welfare system with disabilities (diagnosed or not). It is possible that counties with the higher rates of disabilities have an enhanced identification process for child disabilities. Further exploration of local level procedures for identifying child disabilities may provide further details on best practices that can enhance identification of disabilities.

Data analysis along the child welfare continuum

The Department of Human Services and county partners are implementing early intervention strategies within the Parent Support Outreach Program ([PSOP](#)) and the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)/Family Connections Project ([MFIP](#)). These projects are being evaluated to examine the kinds of support that are more effective in averting child abuse and neglect situations where county intervention becomes necessary, and to examine the impact of early intervention services on low-income families at risk of child maltreatment or other poor outcomes for children.

Child disabilities have been noted in the evaluation findings of the Institute of Applied Research (IAR) for the child population being served by the above programs in 38 participating counties. According to the report from IAR, PSOP family respondents to surveys (n=608) often report the presence of child-related problems. For example, 23.0 percent of families had one or more children with severe or chronic problems. Approximately 28 percent of families reported behavior problems in their children and 12 percent report a child with a developmental disability. From this same IAR report, workers involved in the study indicated the following information related to issues addressed with families:

- Approximately 26 percent of families had the emotional health of their children addressed
- Approximately 23 percent of families had the developmental levels of their children addressed
- Approximately 19 percent of families had assistance addressing control of their children
- Approximately 18 percent of families had the physical health of their children addressed
- Approximately 23 percent had the progress of their children in school addressed.

Maltreatment Data Analysis

Alleged maltreatment by gender

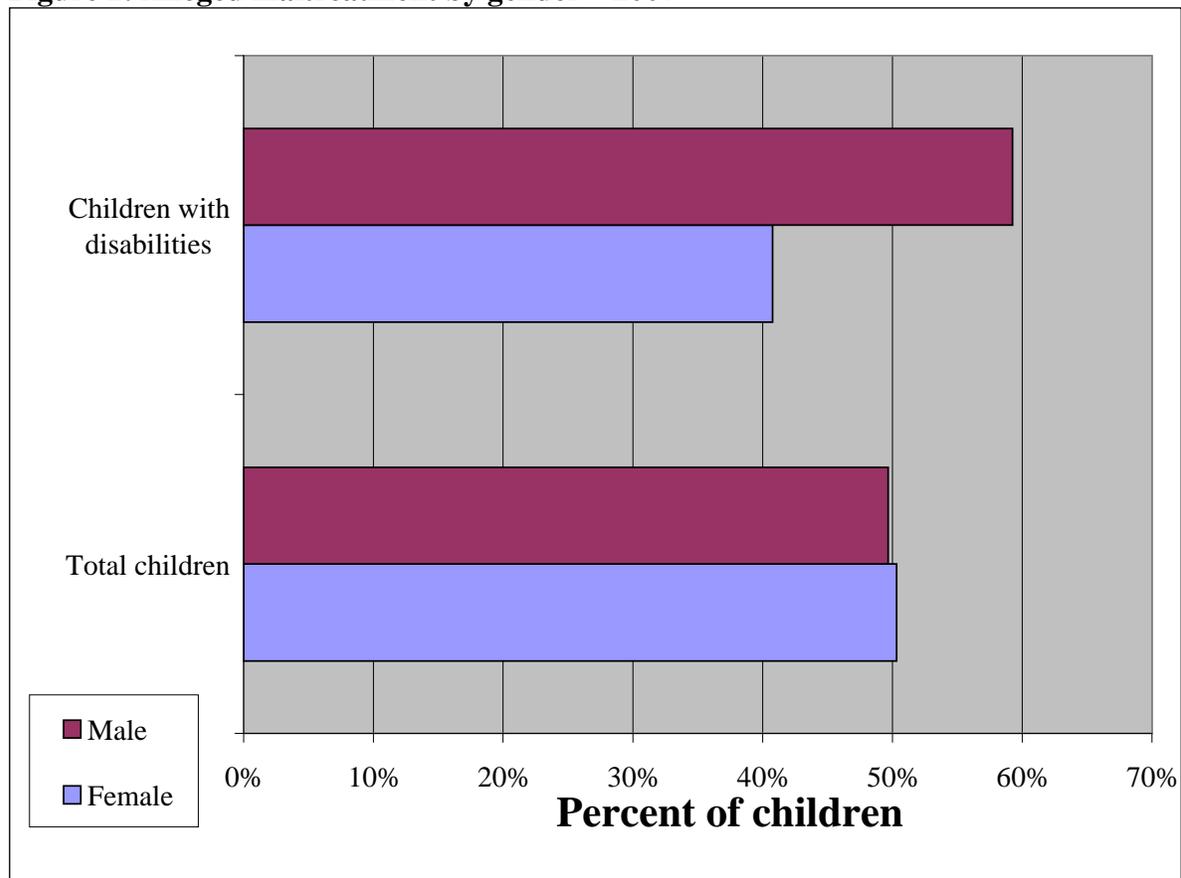
Data shows that there is a significant difference between genders when disabilities are identified. In 2007, males comprised 49 percent of the total child welfare population and 59 percent of the children with identified disabilities. See Table 5 and Figure 2.

Table 5: Alleged maltreatment by gender – 2007

| Gender | Total children | Total percent children | One or more disabilities | One or more disabilities – percent of all disabilities |
|--------|----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Female | 12,144 | 50.31% | 1,318 | 40.75% |
| Male | 11,991 | 49.67% | 1,916 | 59.25% |
| Total | 24,139 | 100.00% | 3,234 | 100.00% |

**Unduplicated count of subjects of child protection assessments and investigations with one or more recorded disabilities and total children who had an accepted maltreatment report within 2007.*

Figure 2: Alleged maltreatment by gender – 2007



Alleged maltreatment by age

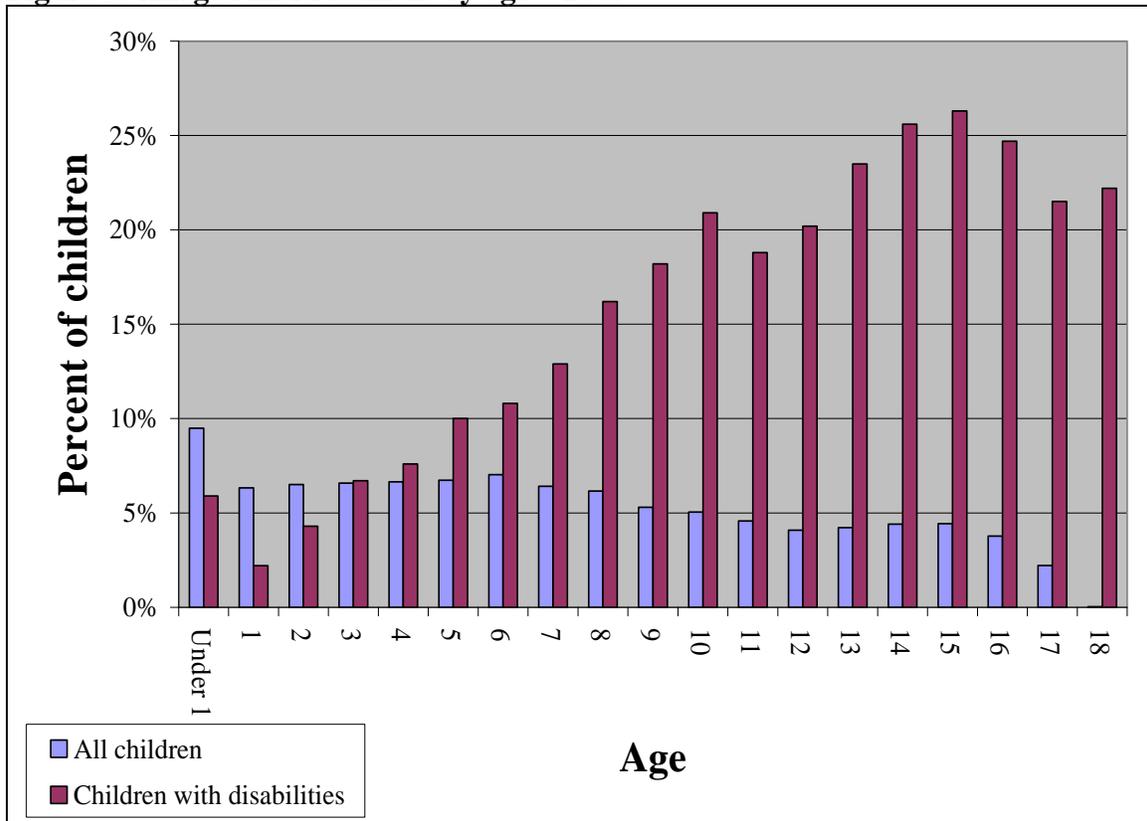
In addition to gender differences, variations between age groups were noted for children with and without identified disabilities in 2007. Of 24,139 children, 4,607 were 13 to 18 years old. Of the 4,607, 1,134 had one or more disabilities noted. Thirteen - 18-year-olds were 19 percent of the alleged child maltreatment population, yet were 35 percent of all children with disabilities. From this data it can be assumed that as children get older, the percentage of children with an identified disability in that age group increases. See Table 6 and Figure 3.

Table 6: Alleged maltreatment by age – 2007

| Age in years at CP intake | Total children | Total children % | One or more disabilities | One or more disabilities – percent of age group |
|---------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------------|---|
| -1 | 57 | 0.24% | 1 | 1.80% |
| 0 | 2,233 | 9.25% | 91 | 4.10% |
| 1 | 1,527 | 6.33% | 33 | 2.20% |
| 2 | 1,570 | 6.50% | 67 | 4.30% |
| 3 | 1,589 | 6.58% | 107 | 6.70% |
| 4 | 1,604 | 6.64% | 122 | 7.60% |
| 5 | 1,626 | 6.74% | 162 | 10.00% |
| 6 | 1,697 | 7.03% | 183 | 10.80% |
| 7 | 1,547 | 6.41% | 199 | 12.90% |
| 8 | 1,486 | 6.16% | 240 | 16.20% |
| 9 | 1,279 | 5.30% | 233 | 18.20% |
| 10 | 1,218 | 5.05% | 255 | 20.90% |
| 11 | 1,105 | 4.58% | 208 | 18.80% |
| 12 | 986 | 4.08% | 199 | 20.20% |
| 13 | 1,018 | 4.22% | 239 | 23.50% |
| 14 | 1,064 | 4.41% | 272 | 25.60% |
| 15 | 1,069 | 4.43% | 281 | 26.30% |
| 16 | 912 | 3.78% | 225 | 24.70% |
| 17 | 535 | 2.22% | 115 | 21.50% |
| 18 | 9 | 0.04% | 2 | 22.20% |
| Error/missing data | 8 | 0.03% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Total | 24,139 | 100.00% | 3,234 | 13.40% |

*Unduplicated count of child subjects of CP assessments and investigations with one or more recorded disabilities within CY 2007. A child is counted only once per calendar year, even if they appear in multiple assessments/investigations. The youngest age of the child for the year is used.

Figure 3: Alleged maltreatment by age – 2007



Alleged maltreatment by disability

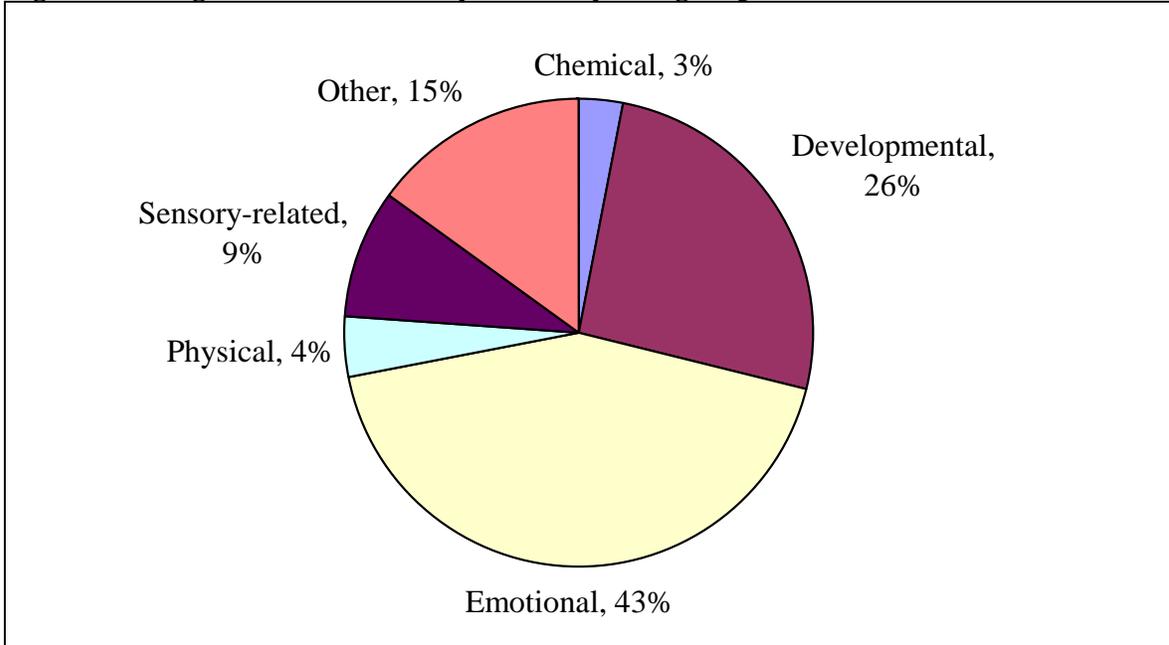
As previously indicated, the definition of disability in children varies from profession to profession. In an attempt to create similar parallels between categories, the 20 SSIS codes for disability were sorted into six sub-groups: chemical, developmental, emotional, physical, sensory-related and other.

In 2007, of all children in the child protection system, those with an emotional disturbance comprised 7.13 percent of all children (43 percent of all children with a disability). Emotional disturbance comprised the highest sub-group of children with a disability. See Table 7 and Figure 4.

Table 7: Alleged maltreatment by disability sub-grouping – 2007

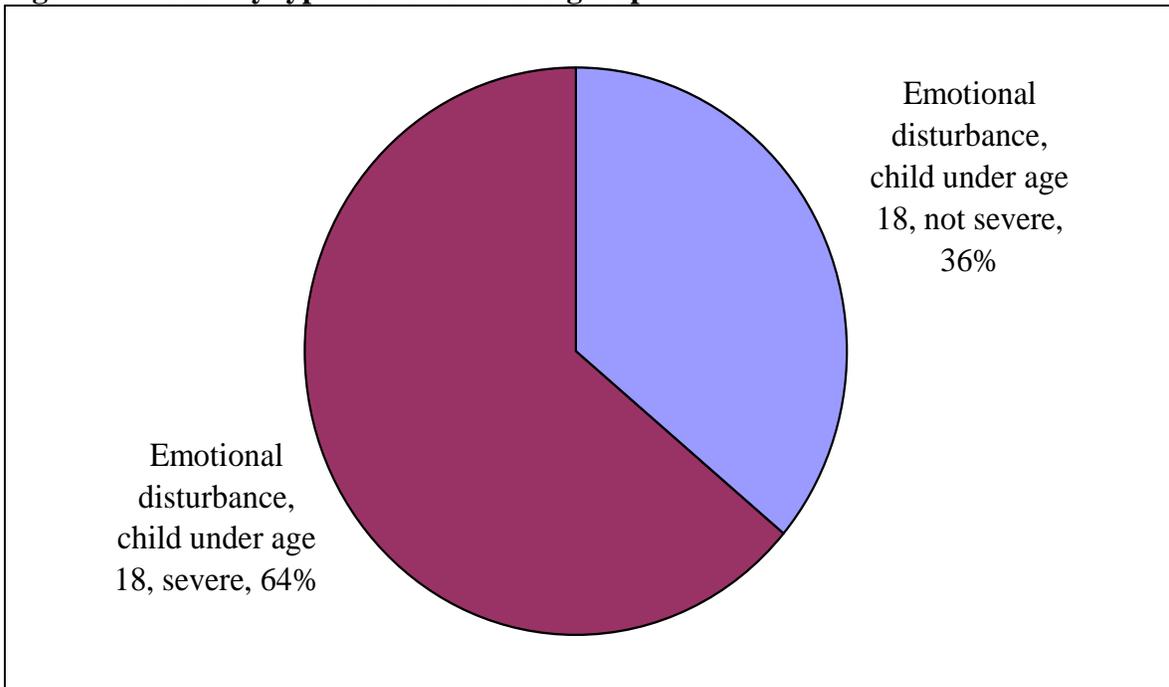
| Disability | Number of children | Percent of total disabilities | Disability grouping |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| No known disability | 20,336 | | |
| Chemical dependency (substance abuse) – alcohol | 64 | 1.6% | Chemical |
| Chemical dependency (substance abuse) – drugs | 75 | 1.8% | Chemical |
| Developmentally disabled, mental retardation only | 139 | 3.4% | Developmental |
| Developmentally disabled, mental retardation with other developmental disabilities | 237 | 5.8% | Developmental |
| Developmentally disabled, without mental retardation | 289 | 7.1% | Developmental |
| Emotional disturbance, child under age 18, not severe | 639 | 15.6% | Emotional |
| Emotional disturbance, child under age 18, severe | 1,144 | 27.9% | Emotional |
| Hearing impairment | 52 | 1.3% | Sensory |
| Speech impairment | 251 | 6.1% | Sensory |
| Visual impairment | 49 | 1.2% | Sensory |
| Specific learning disability | 304 | 7.4% | Developmental |
| Physical disability – ambulation limited | 71 | 1.7% | Physical |
| Physical disability – ambulation not limited | 93 | 2.3% | Physical |
| HIV/AIDS | 2 | 0.0% | Other |
| Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) | 22 | 0.5% | Developmental |
| Other clinically diagnosed condition | 609 | 14.9% | Other |

Figure 4: Alleged maltreatment by disability sub-group – 2007



Within the emotional sub-group, 64 percent of children identified with an emotional disability were severe emotional disturbance, while 36 percent were not severe. The selection code of Other Clinically Diagnosed Condition comprises 14 percent of all disabilities identified. See Figure 5.

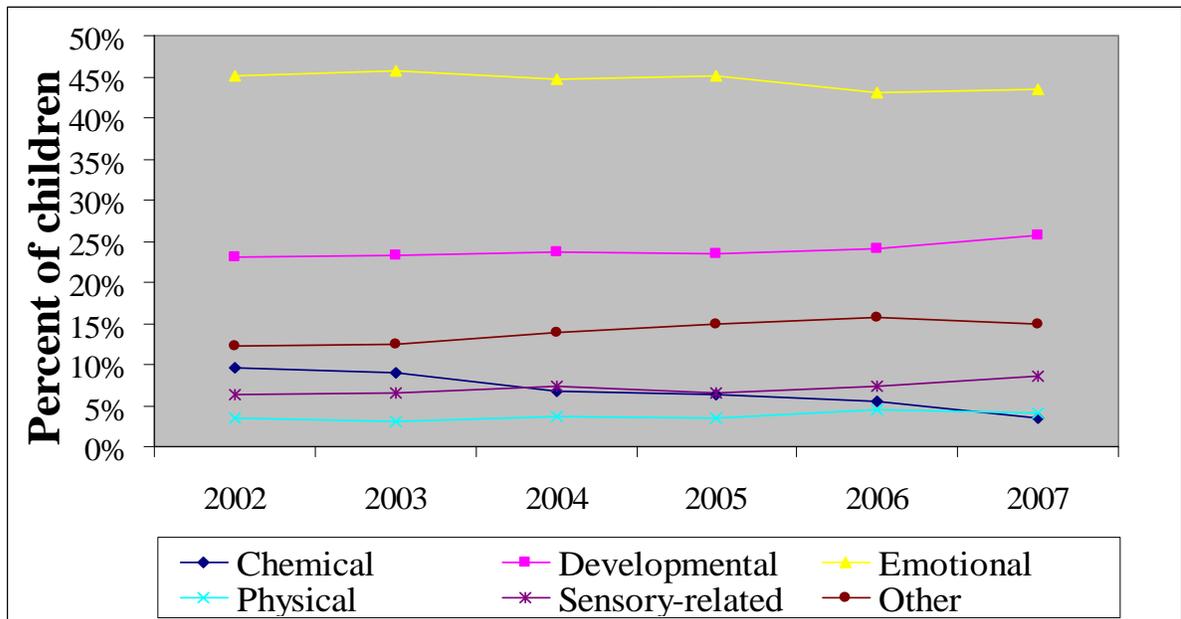
Figure 5: Disability type – emotional sub-group – 2007



Further exploration is recommended to better identify the diagnosis children are receiving. Improved disability identification and diagnosing can lead to improved service provision.

From 2002-2007 children identified with chemical dependency (substance abuse) disabilities decreased: alcohol use decreased steadily from 4.9 percent in 2002 to 1.6 percent in 2007. The reported use of non-prescribed drugs also decreased steadily, from 4.8 percent to 1.8 percent. Children identified as developmentally disabled, without mental retardation, increased from 4.8 percent to 7.1 percent. Children under age 18 with an emotional disturbance (not severe) slightly decreased from 17 percent to 15.5 percent. This data reflects that children with substantiated cases of abuse or neglect suffer emotional consequences, which is consistent over time. See Table 8 in the following section and Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Percent of children by disability sub-type and year



Alleged maltreatment by race and ethnicity

Major differences between race/ethnicity and identified disability were not observed in the 2007 data. Table 8 shows the percent of children within each race and percent of children with disabilities. The following section provides a breakdown by race in calendar year 2007 and a multi-year analysis from 2002-2007. In 2007, children with an undetermined race comprised 7 percent of all children, and were 2 percent of children with disabilities. Further evaluation into whether these children are being diagnosed to the same extent as other children is suggested. Caucasian children were 60 percent of all children with disabilities, yet only 14.5 percent of them had an identified disability in 2007. Children with two or more races make up only 9 percent of all children with disabilities, yet 16 percent of their total race have a disability.

Over the five-year period (2002-2007), African Americans comprised between 19.63-21.12 percent of total children in child protection services. The numbers of African American children identified with a disability increased each year from 16.72 percent-21.63 percent. Children identified as having two or more races increased from approximately 6.26 percent of the total population to 7.3 percent. This population saw an increased number of children identified as having a disability, from 7.41 percent in 2002 to 9.12 percent in 2007. The population of children identified as Hispanic with a disability increased from 8.23 percent of the total population to 10.87 percent from 2002-2007. From 2002-2006, this population was approximately 6 percent of the one or more disabilities population compared to non-Hispanics. In 2007 there was an increase to 8.69 percent of Hispanics identified as having one or more disabilities. See Table 8, Figures 7 and 8.

Table 8: Alleged maltreatment by race – 2007

| Race | All Children | % of all children | Identified disability | % of all disabilities | Identified disability % of total race |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| African American/Black | 4,929 | 20.42% | 680 | 21.03% | 13.80% |
| American Indian | 1,677 | 6.95% | 182 | 5.63% | 10.85% |
| Asian | 566 | 2.34% | 55 | 1.70% | 9.72% |
| Pacific Islander | 24 | 0.10% | 4 | 0.12% | 16.67% |
| White | 13,470 | 55.80% | 1,954 | 60.42% | 14.51% |
| Two or more races | 1,769 | 7.33% | 295 | 9.12% | 16.68% |
| Unable to determine | 1,701 | 7.05% | 64 | 1.98% | 3.76% |
| Missing data | 3 | 0.01% | | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Total | 24,139 | 100.00% | 3,234 | 100.00% | |

*Unduplicated count of subjects of child protection assessments and investigations with one or more recorded disabilities AND total children within CY 2007.

Figure 7: Percentage of all children by race that experienced alleged maltreatment – 2007

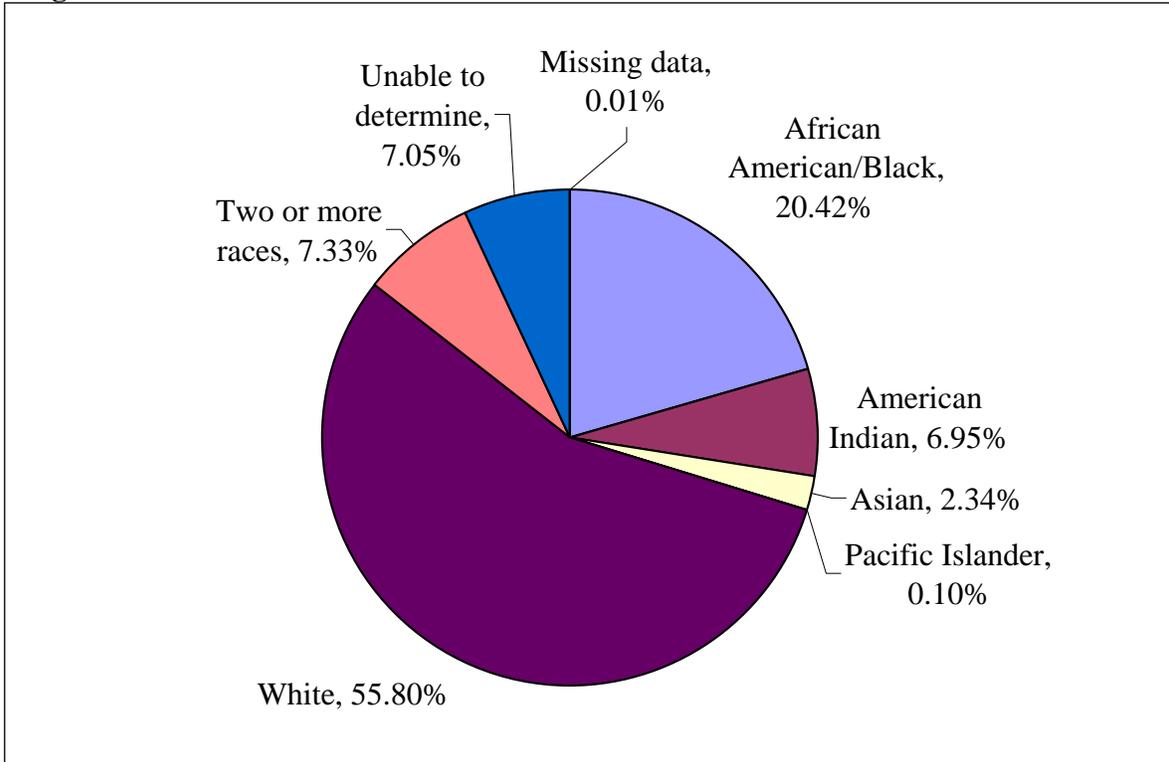
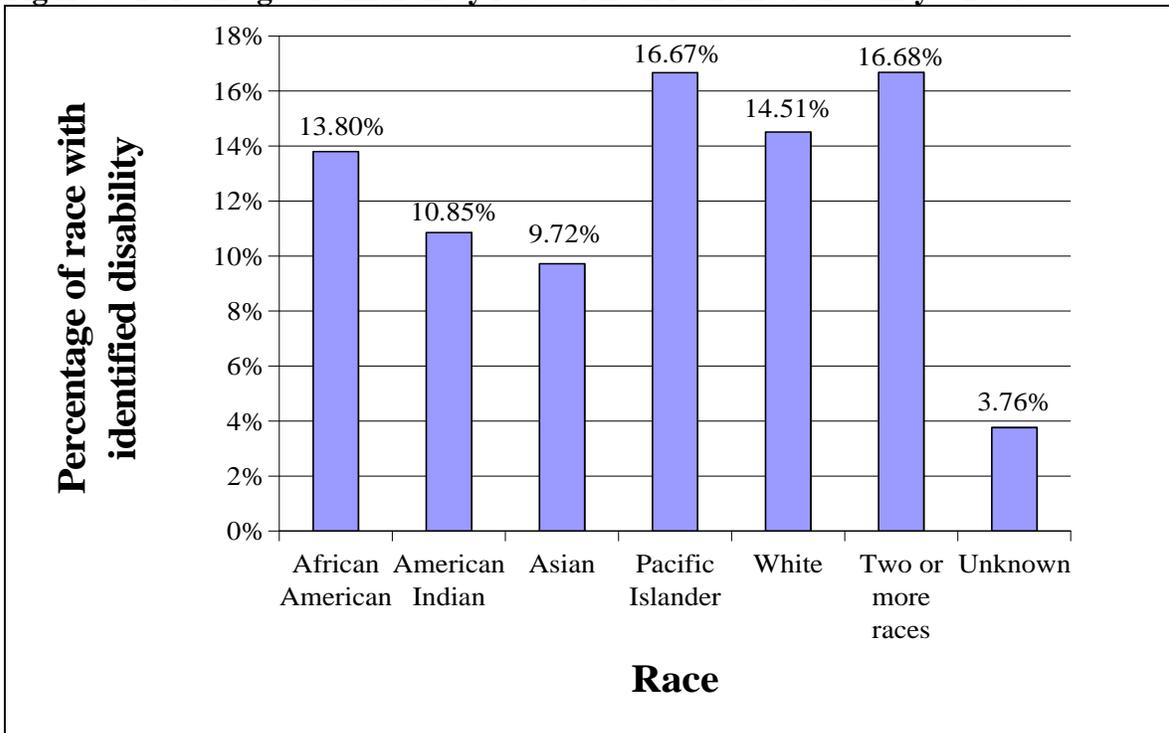


Figure 8: Percentage of children by race with an identified disability – 2007



Alleged maltreatment by child protection response path

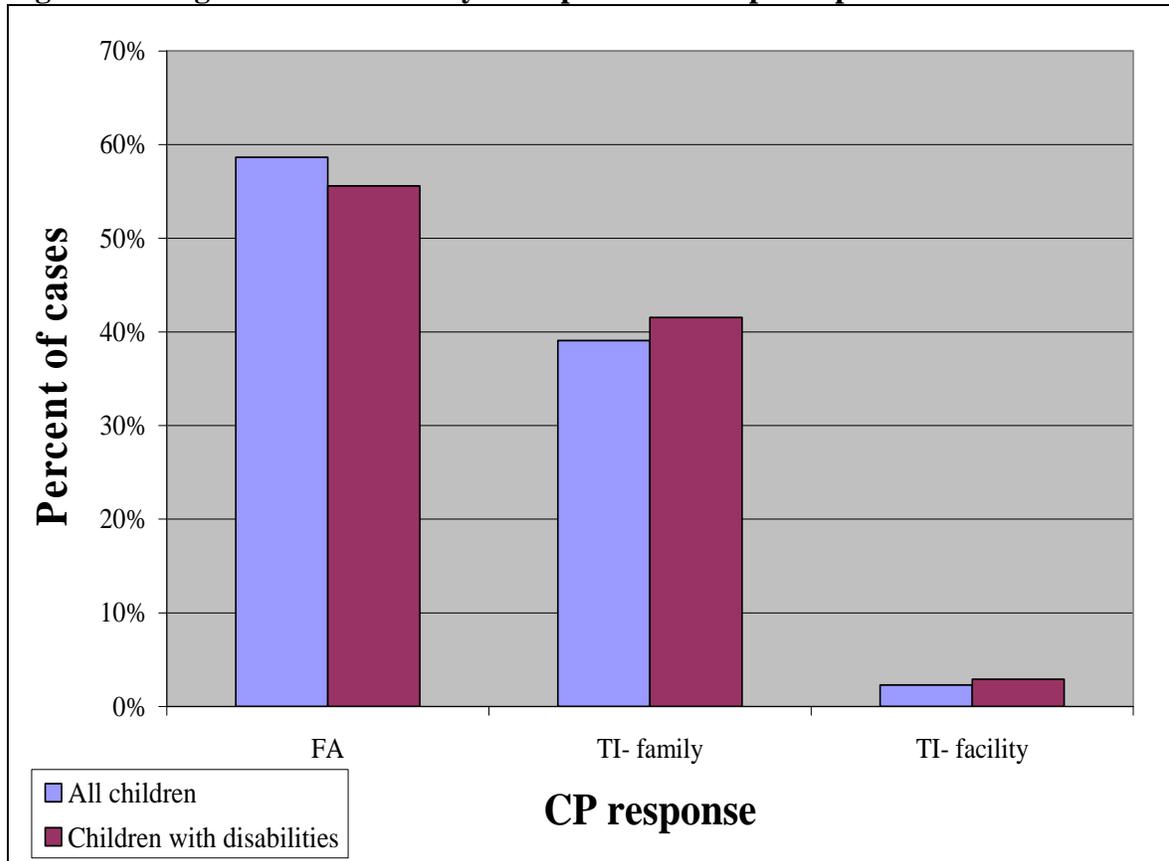
A fairly even distribution of child protection responses for children with disabilities compared to all children was observed. Figure 9 shows that of children with disabilities, 55.58 percent received a Family Assessment Response (58.64 percent of all children), 41.52 percent received a traditional investigation (TI) (39.08 percent of all children), and 2.90 percent received a facility investigation (FI) (2.28 percent of all children). Children with identified disabilities comprised 12.82 percent of all completed Family Assessments, 14.37 percent of all traditional investigation (family) cases, and 17.16 percent of all facility investigations. See Table 9 and Figure 9.

Table 9: Alleged maltreatment–child protection response path – 2007

| CP response | Total children | Children with disabilities | Total children % | Children with disabilities % of total CP response | Children with disabilities % of total disabilities |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|------------------|---|--|
| FA | 14,685 | 1,882 | 58.64% | 12.82% | 55.58% |
| TI – family (alleged) | 9,786 | 1,406 | 39.08% | 14.37% | 41.52% |
| TI – facility (alleged) | 571 | 98 | 2.28% | 17.16% | 2.90% |
| Total | 25,042 | 3,386 | 100% | | |

* Unique children by assessment/investigation type (child may be counted twice if in an FA as well as TI during the year).

Figure 9: Alleged maltreatment by child protection response path – 2007



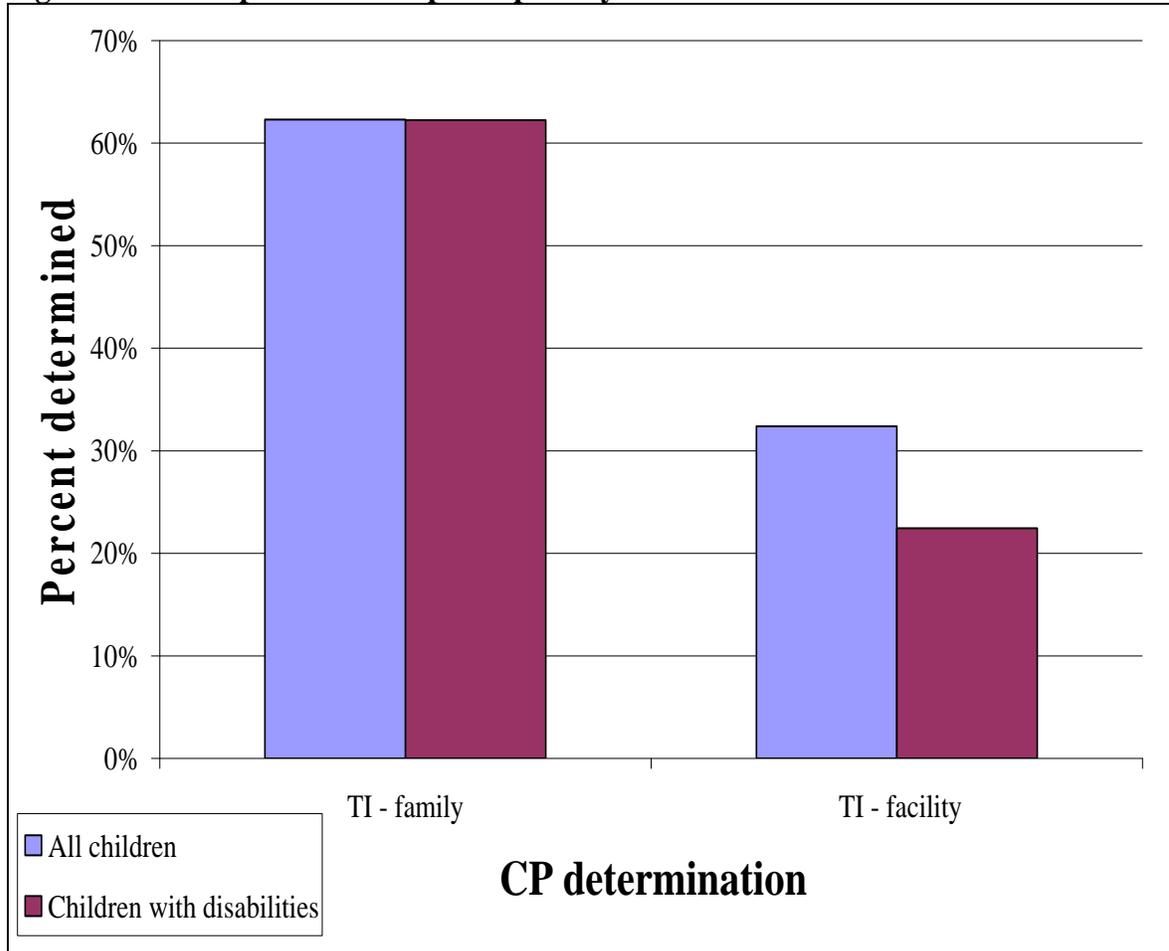
Alleged maltreatment by child maltreatment determinations

In addition to a similar response rate for child protection paths, children with disabilities, and all children, received similar levels of child maltreatment determinations stemming from an investigation response. As revealed in Figure 10, 62.23 percent of children with identified disabilities had determinations in traditional investigation situations (62.32 percent for all children), and 22.45 percent of children with identified disabilities had determinations in facility investigations (32.40 percent for all children). See Table 10 and Figure 10.

Table 10: Alleged maltreatment by child protection response path – determination – 2007

| | All children | Children with disability | % all children – determined | Determined % children with disabilities |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| TI – family (alleged) | 9,786 | 1,406 | | |
| TI – family (determined) | 6,099 | 875 | 62.32% | 62.23% |
| TI – facility (alleged) | 571 | 98 | | |
| TI – facility (determined) | 185 | 22 | 32.40% | 22.45% |

Figure 10: Child protection response path by determination – 2007



Out-of-home Care Data Analysis

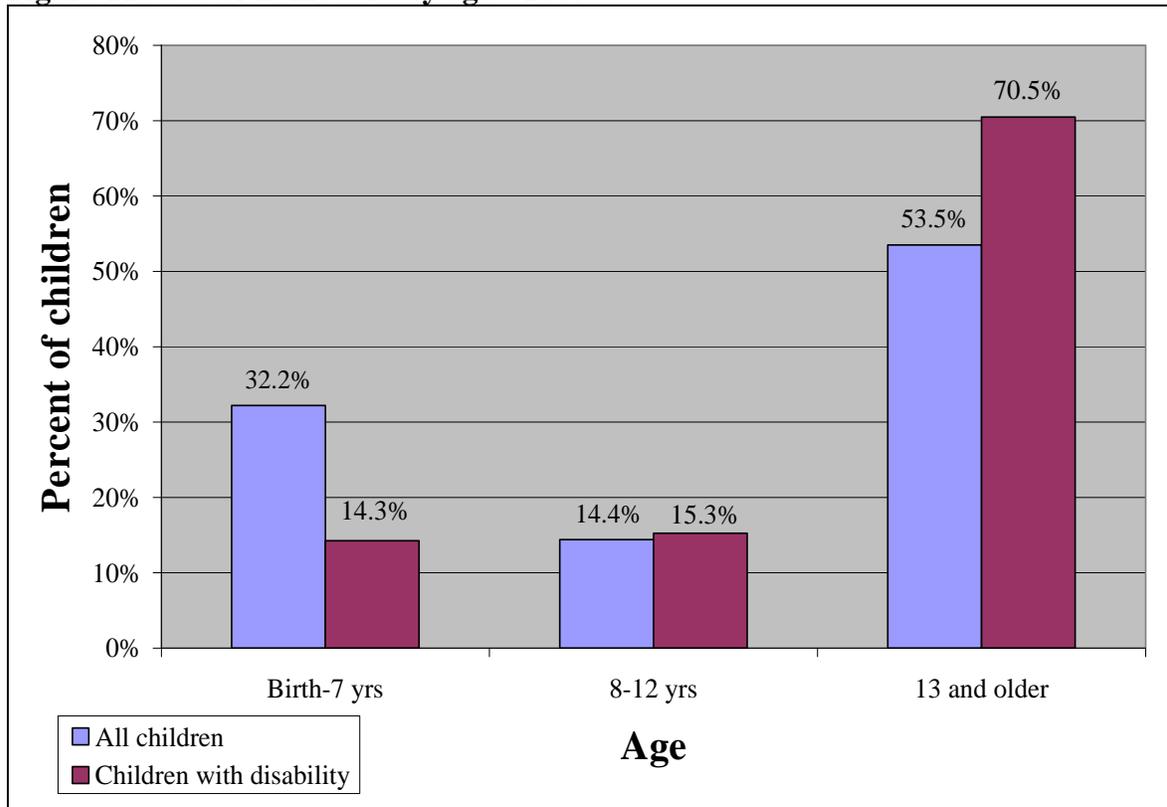
Out-of-home care data by age

Data shows that as children get older, beyond age 6, the chance of maltreatment decreases. If a child has suffered maltreatment, the chance of them having a disability increases as they get older. Similar to the alleged maltreatment data presented earlier in this document, children with disabilities are over represented in out-of-home care. In 2007, 53 percent of all children were age 13 and older, yet 70 percent of this age group was identified as having a disability. Children ages birth-7 comprised 32 percent of the out-of-home care population, while a little under 50 percent were identified as having a disability (14 percent). See Table 11 and Figure 11.

Table 11: Out-of-home care by age – 2007

| Age | All children | Children with a disability |
|-----------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Birth – 7 | 4,760 | 815 |
| 8 – 12 | 2,127 | 871 |
| 13+ | 7,913 | 4,024 |
| Total | 14,800 | 5,710 |

Figure 11: Out-of-home care by age – 2007



Out-of-home care data by disability – 2007

As mentioned previously, the definition of disability varies from profession to profession. The same six categories were used for grouping children in out-of-home care who had disabilities, including chemical, developmental, emotional, physical, sensory-related and other. Similar to the alleged maltreatment data, more than 50 percent of children (52 percent) in out-of-home care in 2007 were identified as having an emotional disability. See Figure 12 and Table 12.

Figure 12: Out-of-home care by disability type – 2007

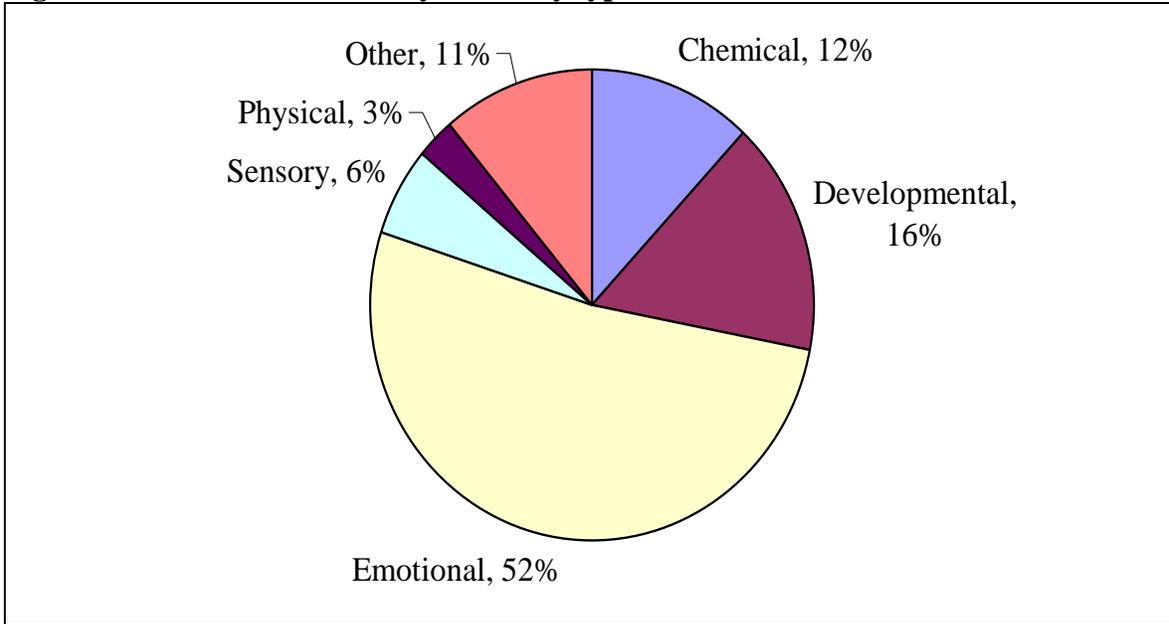


Table 12: Out-of-home care by disability type – 2007

| Disability type | Child can have more than one reason, but unique children within each reason | 2007 Percent based on 14,800 unique children | Disability as percent of disability only (7,832) | Disability grouping |
|--|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| Chemical dependency (substance abuse) – alcohol | 352 | 2.4% | 4.5% | Chemical |
| Chemical dependency (substance abuse) – drugs | 433 | 2.9% | 5.5% | Chemical |
| Developmentally disabled, mental retardation only | 158 | 1.1% | 2.0% | Developmental |
| Developmentally disabled, mental retardation with other developmental disabilities | 393 | 2.7% | 5.0% | Developmental |
| Developmentally disabled, without mental retardation | 317 | 2.1% | 4.0% | Developmental |
| Emotional disturbance, child under age 18, not severe | 1,261 | 8.5% | 16.1% | Emotional |
| Emotional disturbance, child under age 18, severe | 2,705 | 18.3% | 34.5% | Emotional |
| Hearing impairment | 76 | 0.5% | 1.0% | Sensory |
| Speech impairment | 265 | 1.8% | 3.4% | Sensory |
| Visual impairment | 97 | 0.7% | 1.2% | Sensory |
| Specific learning disability | 436 | 3.0% | 5.6% | Developmental |
| Physical disability ambulation – limited | 137 | 0.9% | 1.7% | Physical |
| Physical disability – ambulation not limited | 102 | 0.7% | 1.3% | Physical |
| HIV/AIDS | 3 | 0.0% | 0.0% | Other |
| Other clinically diagnosed condition | 780 | 5.3% | 10% | Other |
| Fetal Alcohol Syndrome | 223 | 1.5% | 2.8% | Developmental |
| Other | 1 | 0.0% | 0.0% | Other |
| Unknown | 0 | 0.0% | 0.0% | Other |
| Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) | 45 | 0.3% | 0.6% | Developmental |

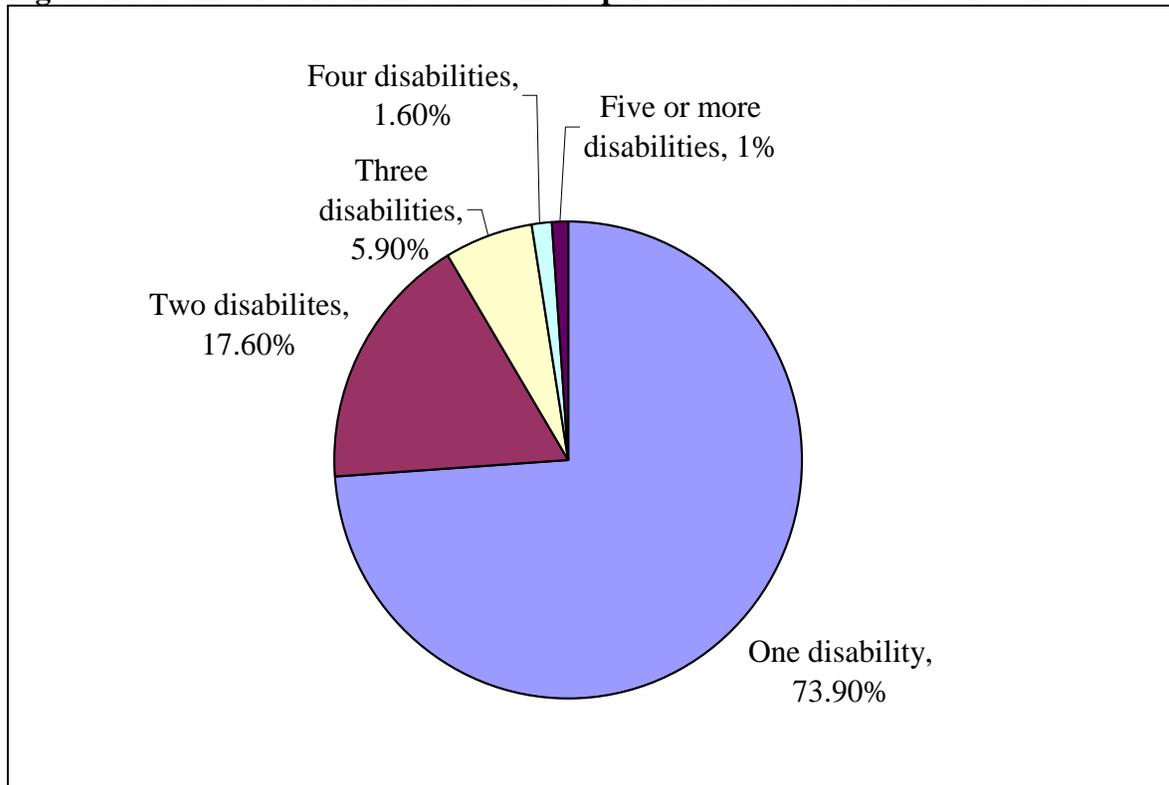
Out-of-home care data by number of disabilities

Although children with identified disabilities in out-of-home care in 2007 made up 38 percent of all children in out-of-home care, 74 percent of those children had only one identified disability. Nine percent of children had three or more identified disabilities. See Table 13 and Figure 13.

Table 13: Number of disabilities per child in out-of-home care – 2007

| Number of identified disabilities | Total number of children with count of disabilities | |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------|
| 1 | 4,225 | 73.90% |
| 2 | 1,004 | 17.60% |
| 3 | 334 | 5.90% |
| 4 | 90 | 1.60% |
| 5+ | 57 | 1.00% |
| Total | 5,710 | 100.00% |

Figure 13: Number of identified disabilities per child in out-of-home care – 2007



Out-of-home care data and reason for leaving current placement within an episode of care

Children with disabilities fared, for the most part, as one may expect regarding reason for leaving current placement within an episode of care. An episode is equal to the time of one removal to their return home (within an episode a child may have multiple placements). For purposes and simplicity of data reporting, a child is equated to a “reason,” when in actuality, a child may have more than one reason. The total numbers of

reasons for all children in 2007 equals 11,038; 4767 of the reasons were for children with disabilities.

In 2007, children with disabilities (reasons) made up 43.19 percent of the total reasons for leaving current placement within an episode of care. Children with disabilities (reasons) made up 77.46 percent of the reasons for needing medical treatment; 71.04 percent needing specialized treatment; 67.39 percent pre-adoptive placement disruption; 66.81 percent needing more structure; 61.11 percent unauthorized removal; 55.28 percent needs less restrictive; and 55.09 percent for pre-adoptive placement reasons.

Children with disabilities made up a smaller percent of reasons for leaving current placements, within an episode of care for the following categories: 13.40 percent live with non-custodial parent (agency retains custody); 18.58 percent begin trial home visit; 21.74 percent Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) placement preference; and 23.01 percent relative placement. See Table 14.

Table 14: Out-of-home care – reason for leaving current placement within episode of care – 2007

| Reason for leaving current placement within an episode of care | Number of reasons | Children with disability (reasons) | % children with disability (reasons) out of total reasons |
|---|--------------------------|---|--|
| Child's safety | 405 | 178 | 43.95% |
| Closer proximity | 152 | 65 | 42.76% |
| Education | 20 | 7 | 35.00% |
| Emergency to non-emergency | 1,117 | 300 | 26.86% |
| ICWA placement preference | 184 | 40 | 21.74% |
| Needs less restrictive | 1,613 | 940 | 58.28% |
| Needs more structure | 1,166 | 779 | 66.81% |
| Pre-adoptive placement | 452 | 249 | 55.09% |
| Pre-adoptive placement disruption | 46 | 31 | 67.39% |
| Provider household changes | 182 | 54 | 29.67% |
| Provider request | 1,584 | 620 | 39.14% |
| Relative placement | 1,108 | 255 | 23.01% |
| Runaway | 882 | 441 | 50.00% |
| Sibling reunification | 151 | 41 | 27.15% |
| Needs specialized treatment | 663 | 471 | 71.04% |
| Needs medical treatment | 71 | 55 | 77.46% |
| Begin trial home visit | 1,109 | 206 | 18.58% |
| Live w/non-custodial parent (agency retains custody/responsibility) | 97 | 13 | 13.40% |
| Unauthorized removal | 36 | 22 | 61.11% |
| Total | 11,038 | 4,767 | 43.19% |

*Note: One child may have more than one reason.

Out-of-home care data and counts of episode discharges by reason

Children with identified disabilities comprised a smaller percentage (33.40 percent) of reasons for episode discharges in foster care in 2007. The number of episodes for children with disabilities comprised more than 50 percent of the reasons for discharge in the following categories: 66.67 percent death of a child (note: n=four of the total of six); 62.26 percent reached age of majority or emancipated; and 53.70 percent, adoption finalized. Within all children with disabilities (number of episodes =2829), 61.15 percent were reunified with parents/primary caregivers; 12.83 percent adoption finalized; and 12.48 percent reached age of majority or emancipated. See Table 15.

Table 15: Out-of-home care – count of episode discharges by reason – 2007

| Reason discharged episode | Total episodes | Total children (episodes) % | Children with disability (episodes) | Children with disability (episodes) % of all disabilities | Children with disability (episodes) % out of reason discharged |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Reunification with parents/primary caretakers | 5,819 | 68.71% | 1,730 | 61.15% | 29.73% |
| Living with other relatives | 280 | 3.31% | 82 | 2.90% | 29.29% |
| Adoption finalized | 676 | 7.98% | 363 | 12.83% | 53.70% |
| Reached age of majority or emancipated | 567 | 6.70% | 353 | 12.48% | 62.26% |
| Guardianship | 31 | 0.37% | 13 | 0.46% | 41.94% |
| Transfer to another agency | 208 | 2.46% | 88 | 3.11% | 42.31% |
| Runaway from placement (placement no longer planned) | 237 | 2.80% | 95 | 3.36% | 40.08% |
| Death of child | 6 | 0.07% | 4 | 0.14% | 66.67% |
| Permanent transfer of legal and physical custody to a relative | 620 | 7.32% | 97 | 3.43% | 15.65% |
| Tribal customary adoption | 11 | 0.13% | 2 | 0.07% | 18.18% |
| Transfer to tribal agency | 14 | 0.17% | 2 | 0.07% | 14.29% |
| Total | 8,469 | 100.00% | 2,829 | 100.00% | 33.40% |

Out-of-home care data by count of placement settings

Overall, in 2007 children with disabilities comprised 41.65 percent of total placement settings (episodes) and they comprised more than 50 percent of all episodes for several of the placement settings. Children with disabilities comprised the following percent of episodes: 89.47 percent intermediate care facility – mentally retarded; 81.29 percent foster home (corporate – shift staff); 63.64 percent supervised independent living; 59.41 percent juvenile correctional facility (non-secure, 12 or fewer children); 56.77 percent group home; 54.78 percent pre-adoptive home (non-relative); and 51.08 percent juvenile correctional facility (locked). Within the 10,360 placement settings (episodes) for children with disabilities, 34.44 percent were placed in a foster family home (non-relative); 20.69 percent were placed in residential treatment centers; and 15.46 percent were placed in a group home. See Table 16.

Table 16: Out-of-home care – count of placement settings – 2007

| Placement setting | Total children (episodes) | Total children (episodes) % | Children with disability (episodes) | Children with disability (episodes) % of all disabilities | Children with disability (episodes) % of placement setting |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Pre-adoptive home – relative | 459 | 1.85% | 215 | 2.08% | 46.84% |
| Pre-adoptive home – non-relative | 869 | 3.49% | 476 | 4.59% | 54.78% |
| Foster family home – relative | 3,602 | 14.48% | 737 | 7.11% | 20.46% |
| Foster family home – non-relative | 9,513 | 38.25% | 3,568 | 34.44% | 37.51% |
| Group home | 2,822 | 11.35% | 1,602 | 15.46% | 56.77% |
| Residential treatment center | 4,659 | 18.73% | 2,143 | 20.69% | 46.00% |
| Supervised independent living | 44 | 0.18% | 28 | 0.27% | 63.64% |
| Foster home – corporate/shift staff | 278 | 1.12% | 226 | 2.18% | 81.29% |
| Juvenile correctional facility (non-secure, 12 or fewer children) | 239 | 0.96% | 142 | 1.37% | 59.41% |
| Juvenile correctional facility (non-secure, 13 or more children) | 1,300 | 5.23% | 660 | 6.37% | 50.77% |
| Juvenile correctional facility (locked) | 1,069 | 4.30% | 546 | 5.27% | 51.08% |
| Intermediate care facility – mentally retarded (ICF-MR) | 19 | 0.08% | 17 | 0.16% | 89.47% |
| Total PI settings | 24,873 | 100.00% | 10,360 | 100.00% | 41.65% |

Out-of-home care data by days in episodes of care

For children who were placed in out-of-home care:

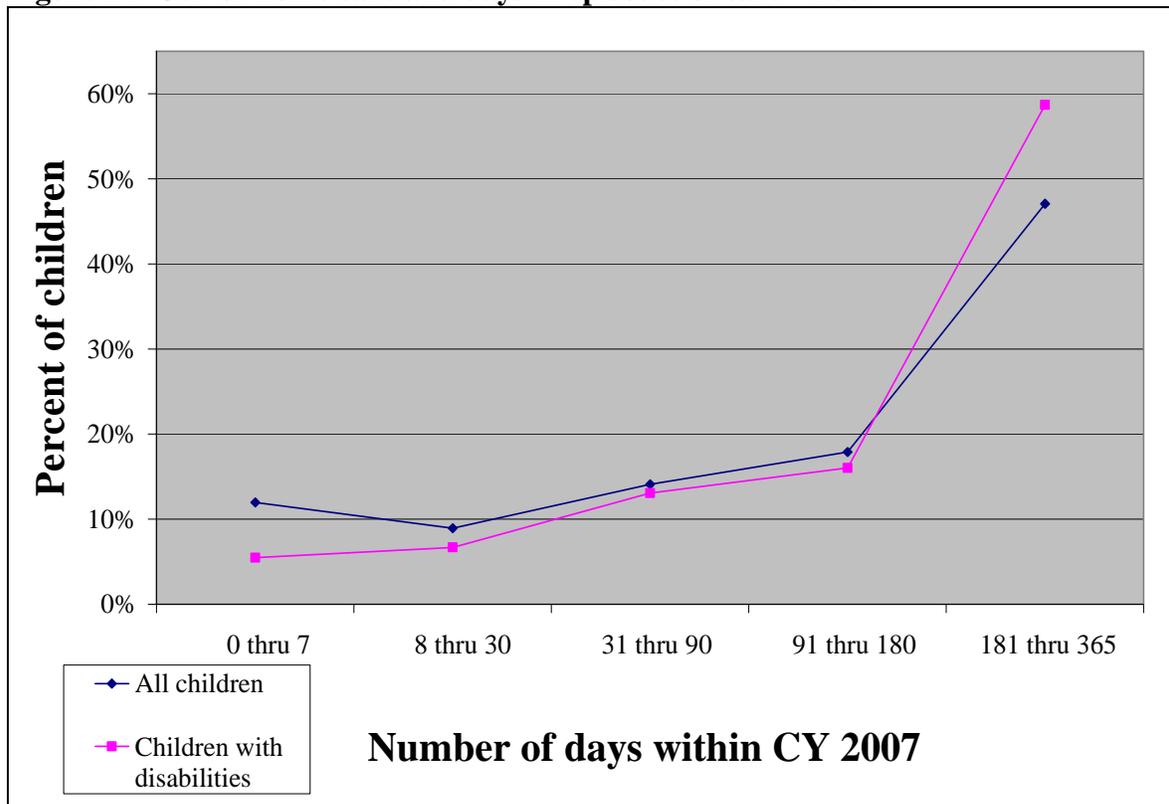
- Of all episodes, 38.58 percent were children who had one or more identified disabilities
- Of the children with disabilities, 58.70 percent averaged 181 – 365 days in episodes of care, while 47.08 percent of all children averaged 181 – 365 days in episodes of care.

See Table 17 and Figure 14.

Table 17: Out-of-home care – days in episodes of care – calendar year (CY) 2007

| CY time range max in days | All children | % all children | Children with disability | Children with disability % of all disabilities | Children with disability % of placement setting |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|--|---|
| 0 thru 7 | 1,772 | 11.97% | 312 | 5.46% | 17.61% |
| 8 thru 30 | 1,323 | 8.94% | 382 | 6.69% | 28.87% |
| 31 thru 90 | 2,086 | 14.09% | 747 | 13.08% | 35.81% |
| 91 thru 180 | 2,648 | 17.89% | 916 | 16.04% | 34.59% |
| 181 thru 365 | 6,968 | 47.08% | 3,352 | 58.70% | 48.11% |
| Greater than 365 | 3 | 0.02% | 1 | 0.02% | 33.33% |
| Total | 14,800 | 100.00% | 5,710 | 100.00% | 38.58% |

Figure 14: Out-of-home care and days in episodes of care – 2007



Out-of-home care data by average days per placement setting for calendar year 2007, and beyond calendar year

Significant differences in the average days per placement setting were noted in the data for placements in both calendar year 2007, and beyond the calendar year. Figure 15 illustrates the differences. During calendar year 2007:

- Children with identified disabilities stayed an average of 10 days *fewer* in pre-adoptive home – relative than all children
- Children with disabilities stayed on average 15 days longer in a single placement setting, or 42 days longer in their combined placements, compared to all children.

During the same time frame, children with identified disabilities stayed on average *more* days in the following placement types than all children:

- Foster family home – non-relative, 33
- Foster home – corporate/shift staff, 23
- Residential treatment centers, 20.

Beyond calendar year 2007, children with identified disabilities:

- Stayed on average 63 days longer in a single placement setting, or 143 days longer in their combined placement settings, than the average of all children.

During the same time frame, children with disabilities stayed on average significantly longer in the following placement settings:

- Foster family home – relative, 150 days
- Foster family home – non-relative, 128 days
- Supervised independent living, 116 days
- Foster home corporate/shift staff, 75 days
- Group homes, 43 days
- Residential treatment centers, 39 days.

Children with identified disabilities stayed on average 34 days fewer in placement settings labeled unidentified. See Tables 18 and 19 and Figure 15.

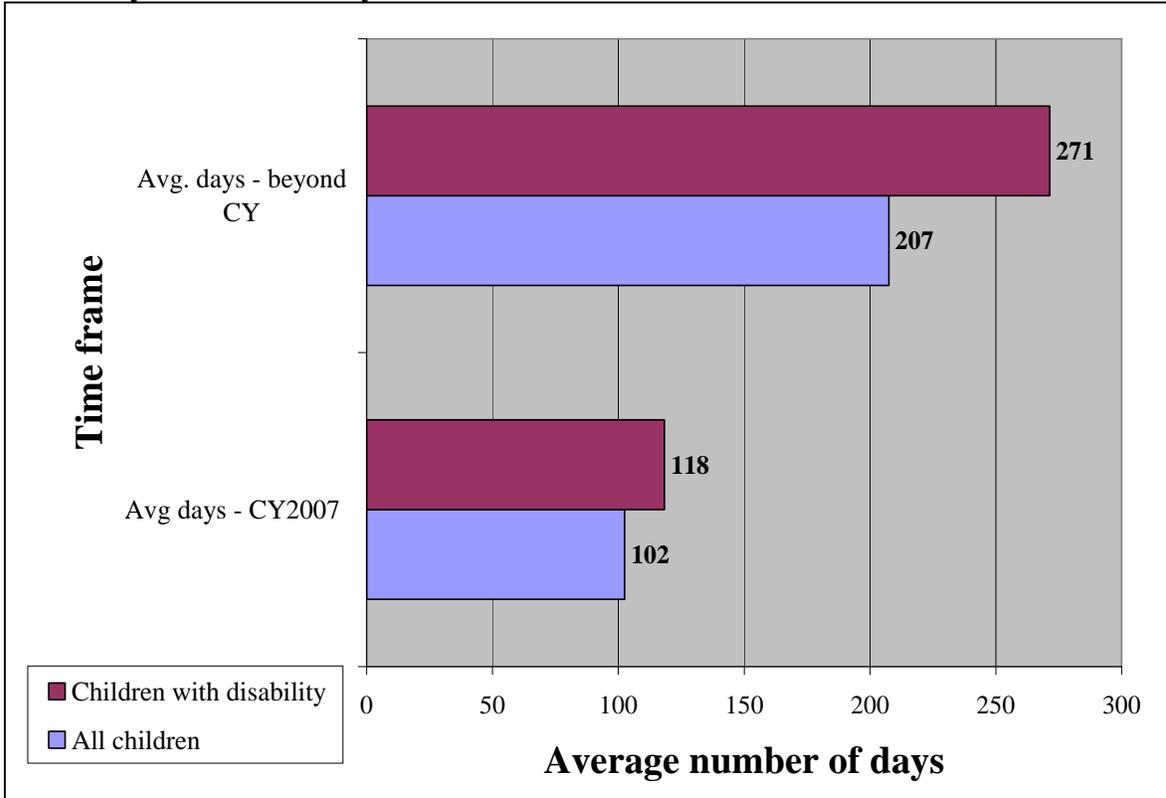
Table 18: Out-of-home care – average days per placement setting – calendar year 2007

| Placement setting | All children – sum of days per placement | Children with disability – sum of days per placement | All children— avg. days per placement | Children with disability avg. days per placement | Number of days diff. between avg. all children and children with disability |
|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| No placement setting code | 840 | 241 | 84 | 60.2 | -23.7 |
| Pre-adoptive home – relative | 92,627 | 40,939 | 201.8 | 191.3 | -10.4 |
| Pre-adoptive home – non-relative | 178,684 | 97,632 | 205.6 | 204.2 | -1.3 |
| Foster family home – relative | 492,020 | 115,049 | 136.5 | 156.1 | 19.5 |
| Foster family home – non-relative | 1,083,909 | 523,865 | 113.9 | 146.9 | 33.0 |
| Group home | 194,457 | 129,515 | 68.9 | 80.8 | 11.9 |
| Residential treatment center | 313,323 | 187,959 | 67.2 | 87.7 | 20.4 |
| Supervised independent living | 5,456 | 3,575 | 124 | 127.6 | 3.6 |
| Foster home – corporate/shift staff | 50,880 | 46,779 | 183.0 | 206.9 | 23.9 |
| Juvenile correctional facility (non-secure, 12 or fewer children) | 12,833 | 8,345 | 53.6 | 58.7 | 5.0 |
| Juvenile correctional facility (non-secure, 13 or more children) | 75,440 | 43,760 | 58.0 | 66.2 | 8.1 |
| Juvenile correctional facility (locked) | 45,624 | 25,472 | 42.6 | 46.7 | 4.0 |
| ICF-MR | 2,871 | 2,745 | 151.1 | 161.4 | 10.3 |
| Totals | 2,548,964 | 1,225,876 | | | |
| Avg. days per setting | | | 102.4 | 118.3 | 15.8 |
| Avg. days per child | 172.2 | 214.6 | | | 42.4 |

Table 19: Out-of-home care – average days per placement setting – beyond CY

| Placement setting | All children – sum of days per placement | Children with disability – sum of days per placement | All children – avg. days per placement | Children with disability avg. days per placement | Number of days diff. between avg. all children and children with disability |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| No placement setting code | 951 | 241 | 95.1 | 60.2 | -34.8 |
| Pre-adoptive home – relative | 186,046 | 88,265 | 405.3 | 412.4 | 7.1 |
| Pre-adoptive home – non-relative | 339,036 | 192,856 | 390.1 | 403.4 | 13.3 |
| Foster family home – relative | 992,036 | 314,234 | 275.4 | 426.3 | 150.9 |
| Foster family home – non-relative | 2,456,917 | 1,377,397 | 258.2 | 386.3 | 128.0 |
| Group home | 380,421 | 285,448 | 134.8 | 178.2 | 43.4 |
| Residential treatment center | 468,277 | 299,610 | 100.5 | 139.8 | 39.3 |
| Supervised independent living | 15,337 | 13,031 | 348.5 | 465.3 | 116.8 |
| Foster home – corporate/shift staff | 131,616 | 124,117 | 473.4 | 549.1 | 75.7 |
| Juvenile correctional facility (non-secure, 12 or fewer children) | 18,293 | 12,047 | 76.5 | 84.8 | 8.2 |
| Juvenile correctional facility (non-secure, 13 or more children) | 101,368 | 60,350 | 77.9 | 91.3 | 13.3 |
| Juvenile correctional facility (locked) | 63,520 | 36,945 | 59.4 | 67.7 | 8.3 |
| ICF-MR | 7,195 | 6,554 | 378.6 | 385.5 | 6.8 |
| Totals | 5,161,013 | 2,811,095 | | | |
| Avg. days per setting | | | 207.4 | 271.3 | 63.8 |
| Avg. days per child | 348.7 | 492.3 | | | 143.5 |

Figure 15: Out-of-home care and average days in placement by calendar year 2007 and beyond



Adoption Data

Adoption report

The data available on adoption has historically come from a different database than SSIS. The adoption database documents the number and percentage of children who had special needs and disabilities who entered guardianship, were adopted, and those who remained in guardianship at year-end. See Tables 20, 21 and 22.

Table 20: Children with special needs and disabilities – entering guardianship

| Year | Total wards entering | Percent with special needs* | | Percent with disabilities*** |
|------|----------------------|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| | | Any special needs | Victims of chronic neglect and abuse** | |
| 1998 | 563 | 95.6 | 69.1 | 69.8 |
| 1999 | 567 | 94.9 | 73.5 | 70.5 |
| 2000 | 634 | 93.9 | 72.6 | 67.2 |
| 2001 | 633 | 91.9 | 70.9 | 67.8 |
| 2002 | 593 | 91.2 | 67.2 | 64.8 |
| 2003 | 730 | 90.5 | 67.3 | 60.4 |
| 2004 | 726 | 85.7 | 60.3 | 59.4 |
| 2005 | 705 | 80.7 | | 52.9 |
| 2006 | 780 | 84.1 | | 53.2 |
| 2007 | 812 | 76.9 | | 44.6 |

*Special needs includes physical, mental, emotional or behavioral disability, member of a sibling group to be placed together, religious or cultural needs, older child, behavioral problems, family genetic/health background makes child high risk, history of abuse, neglect or multiple placements, adolescent parent with child(ren) and high risk of developing physical, mental, emotional or behavioral disability.

**Children who were victims of chronic abuse and neglect are reported since they were the greatest representation of children with special needs. SSIS code changes in 2005 prevent appropriate data for 2005 – 2007 under the column entitled “Victims of chronic neglect and abuse.”

***Disabilities include chemical dependency/substance abuse, emotional disturbance for child under 18 – severe or not severe, hearing, visual or speech impairment, developmentally disabled – mental retardation or mental retardation with other developmental disabilities, physical disabilities – ambulation limited or ambulation not limited, specific learning disability, other clinically diagnosed condition, HIV and/or AIDS, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or Spectrum and Traumatic Brain Injury.

Table 21: Children with special needs and disabilities – adopted

| Year | Total wards adopted | Percent with special needs* | | Percent with disabilities *** |
|------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | | Any special needs | Victims of chronic neglect and abuse** | |
| 1998 | 520 | 96.1 | 69.2 | 70.6 |
| 1999 | 620 | 97.6 | 63.1 | 73.1 |
| 2000 | 630 | 97.8 | 70.0 | 68.4 |
| 2001 | 540 | 92.8 | 69.6 | 66.1 |
| 2002 | 616 | 92.4 | 71.9 | 65.4 |
| 2003 | 708 | 92.4 | 68.0 | 65.7 |
| 2004 | 573 | 90.9 | 71.9 | 64.2 |
| 2005 | 731 | 87.3 | | 59.0 |
| 2006 | 603 | 84.6 | | 53.7 |
| 2007 | 672 | 86.3 | | 53.4 |

*Special needs includes physical, mental, emotional or behavioral disability, member of a sibling group to be placed together, religious or cultural needs, older child, behavioral problems, family genetic/health background makes child high risk, history of abuse, neglect or multiple placements, adolescent parent with child(ren) and high risk of developing physical, mental, emotional or behavioral disability.

**Children who were victims of chronic abuse and neglect are reported since they were the greatest representation of children with special needs. SSIS code changes in 2005 prevent appropriate data for 2005 – 2007 under the column entitled “Victims of chronic neglect and abuse.”

***Disabilities include chemical dependency/substance abuse, emotional disturbance for child under 18 – severe or not severe, hearing, visual or speech impairment, developmentally disabled – mental retardation or mental retardation with other developmental disabilities, physical disabilities – ambulation limited or ambulation not limited, specific learning disability, other clinically diagnosed condition, HIV and/or AIDS, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or Spectrum and Traumatic Brain Injury.

Table 22: Children with special needs and disabilities – at year-end in guardianship

| Year | Total wards at year-end | Special needs* | | Percent with disabilities*** |
|------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| | | Percent with any special needs | Percent victims of chronic neglect and abuse** | |
| 1998 | 1,815 | 95.8 | 70.7 | 74.5 |
| 1999 | 1,708 | 95.7 | 74.1 | 74.6 |
| 2000 | 1,641 | 94.3 | 74.6 | 74.7 |
| 2001 | 1,649 | 94.1 | 75.1 | 75.5 |
| 2002 | 1,545 | 94.0 | 73.4 | 76.3 |
| 2003 | 1,466 | 93.2 | 72.4 | 74.7 |
| 2004 | 1,516 | 90.6 | 66.9 | 71.1 |
| 2005 | 1,373 | 87.6 | | 67.7 |
| 2006 | 1,437 | 87.0 | | 65.2 |
| 2007 | 1,429 | 82.2 | | 58.6 |

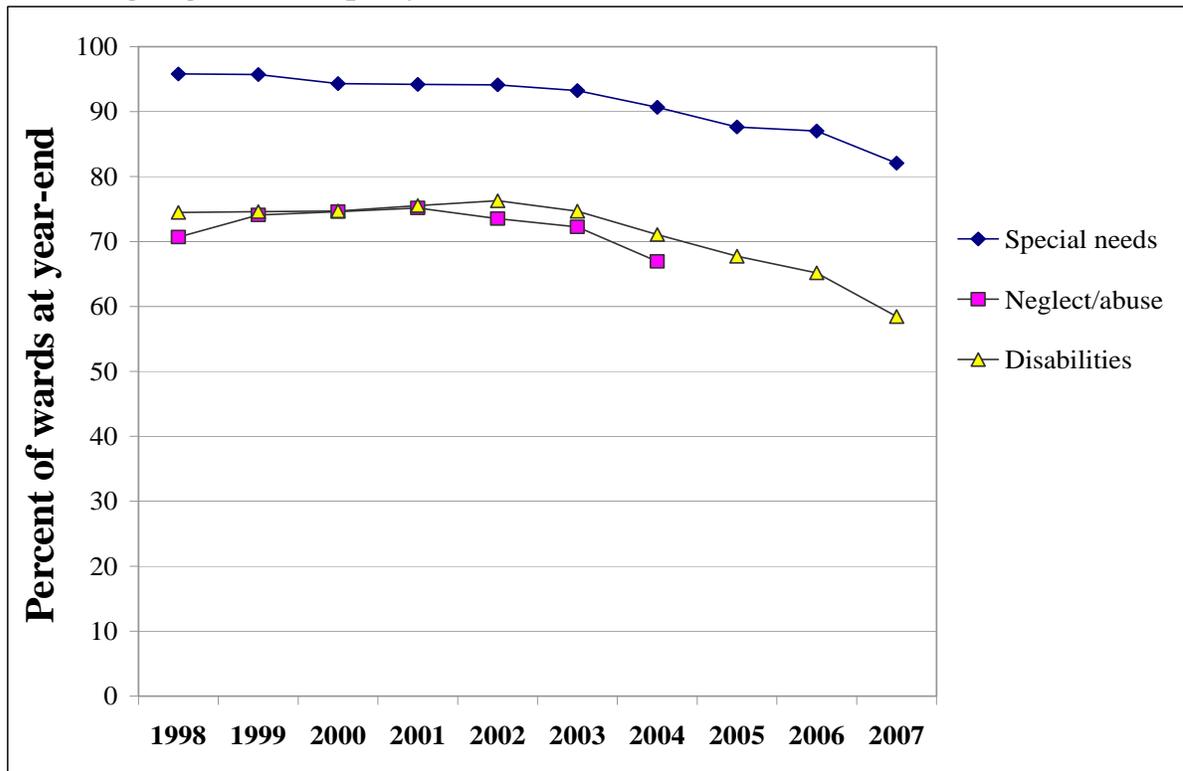
*Special needs includes physical, mental, emotional or behavioral disability, member of a sibling group to be placed together, religious or cultural needs, older child, behavioral problems, family genetic/health background makes child high risk, history of abuse, neglect or multiple placements, adolescent parent with child(ren) and high risk of developing physical, mental, emotional or behavioral disability.

**Children who were victims of chronic abuse and neglect are reported since they were the greatest representation of children with special needs. SSIS code changes in 2005 prevent appropriate data for 2005 – 2007 under the column entitled “Victims of chronic neglect and abuse.”

***Disabilities include chemical dependency/substance abuse, emotional disturbance for child under 18 – severe or not severe, hearing, visual or speech impairment, developmentally disabled – mental retardation or mental retardation with other developmental disabilities, physical disabilities – ambulation limited or ambulation not limited, specific learning disability, other clinically diagnosed condition, HIV and/or AIDS, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or Spectrum and Traumatic Brain Injury.

Of those children who entered guardianship in 2007, 44.6 percent had one or more disabilities. Children with disabilities were 53.4 percent of all children adopted in 2007. The largest proportion of children with disabilities, 58.6 percent, remained under guardianship at year-end. The majority of those with special needs were victims of chronic abuse and neglect. From 1998 – 2007, the number of children who had special needs and/or disabilities declined over the decade. See Figure 16.

Figure 16: Children with special needs, chronic neglect and abuse, and disabilities remaining in guardianship at year-end

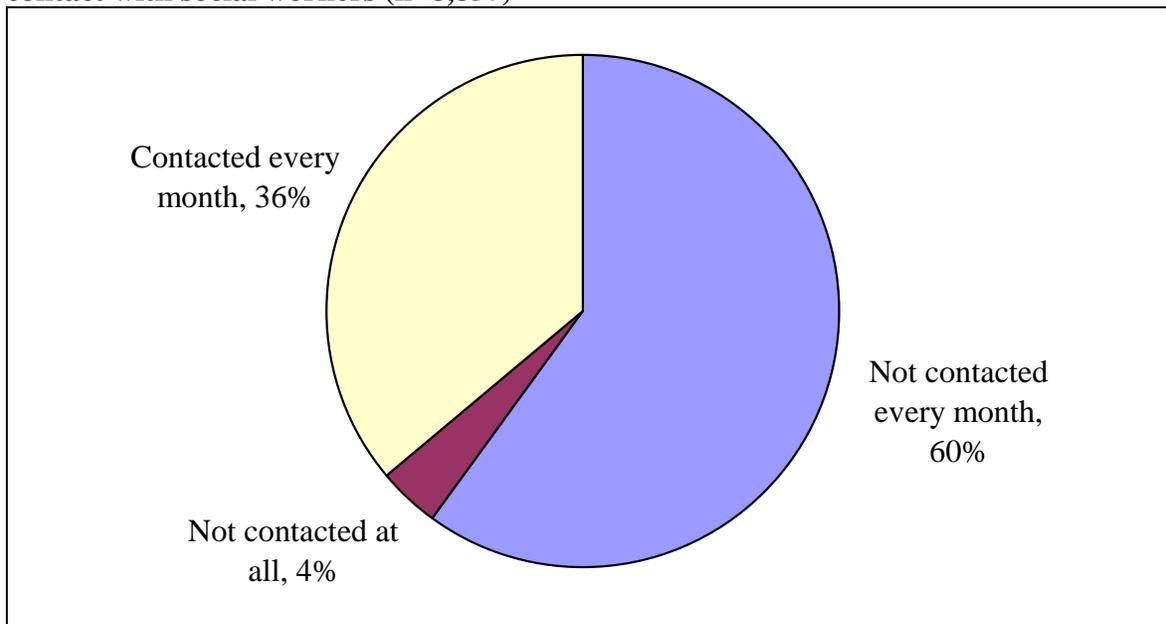


SSIS Child Welfare Data by Caseworker Visits

Caseworker visits with children

Frequent, quality caseworker visits are important to the safety and well-being of children. In-person visits are how social workers ensure children are safe, and that their evolving needs are being met. Visits allow caseworkers to continually assess children's emotional, physical and social well-being. The Child and Family Services Improvement Act (PL109-288), passed by Congress in 2006, includes a mandate that children in foster care shall receive monthly face-to-face visits with their caseworker. In October 2007, a study was conducted related to response of the frequency of monthly home visits by caseworkers, based on 2006 data. This study, completed by the department, concluded that 36.1 percent of children in foster care were visited each month, given that they were in foster care from Sept. 1, 2006, through Aug. 31, 2007. The report further identified 367 children in foster care during this time that did not have any caseworker visits. See Figure 17.

Figure 17: Children in out-of-home care during 2006 and their contact with social workers (n=8,857)



A survey of counties was conducted to determine why a visit was not completed. Enhanced practice guidance is under development to improve the frequency and quality of caseworker visits with children.

The following is an overview of logistic regression analyses of the baseline data, and which child characteristics are most likely to influence the occurrence of caseworker visits. The next three figures include data regarding the likelihood of caseworker contact occurrence. The data is demonstrated using a research term called odds ratios. Odds ratios are the likelihood of a particular event occurring or not occurring. Odds ratios are equal to the chance of occurrence divided by chance of non-occurrence. An odds ratio of 1.00 means there is a 50 – 50 chance of an event occurring (i.e., child contacted by case-

worker). Odds ratios greater than 1.00 are more likely to occur. Odds ratios less than 1.00 (such as 0.3 or 0.7) are less likely to occur.

Figures 18, 19 and 20 demonstrate the disparities among children with identified disabilities regarding caseworker visits. Children with identified disabilities were more likely to not be contacted at all by caseworkers, and more likely to be without contact every month by caseworkers. See Figures 18, 19 and 20.

Figure 18: During 2006, children in out-of-home care who were not contacted at all were more likely to be:

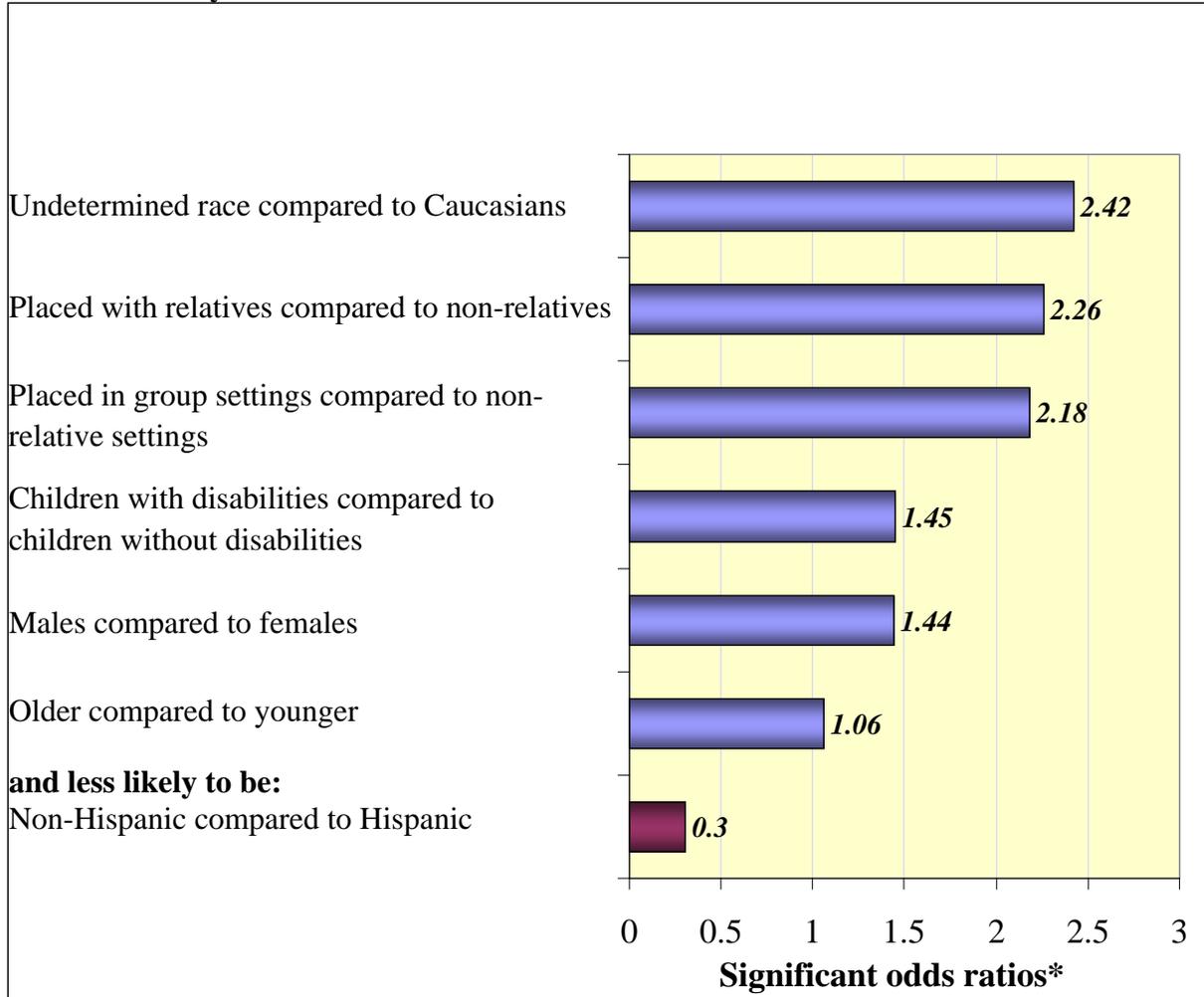


Figure 19: During 2006, children in out-of-home care that were contacted every month by social workers:

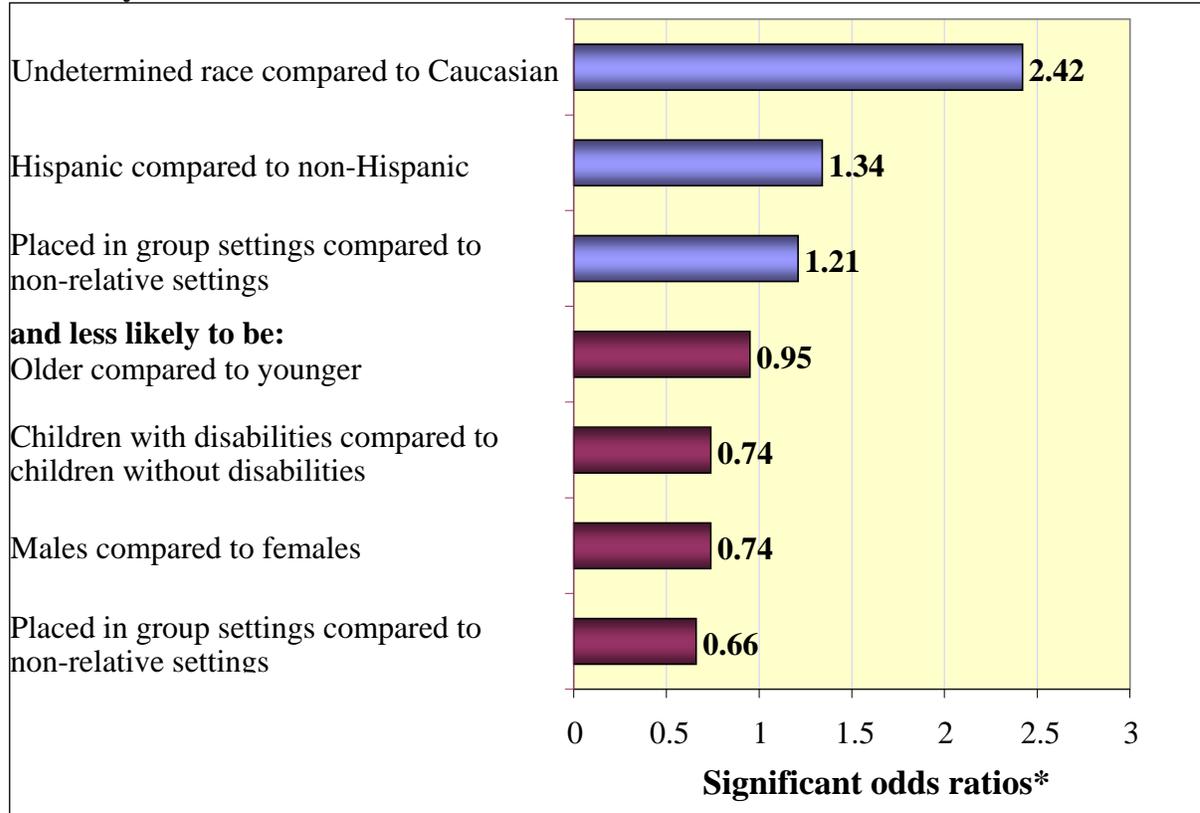
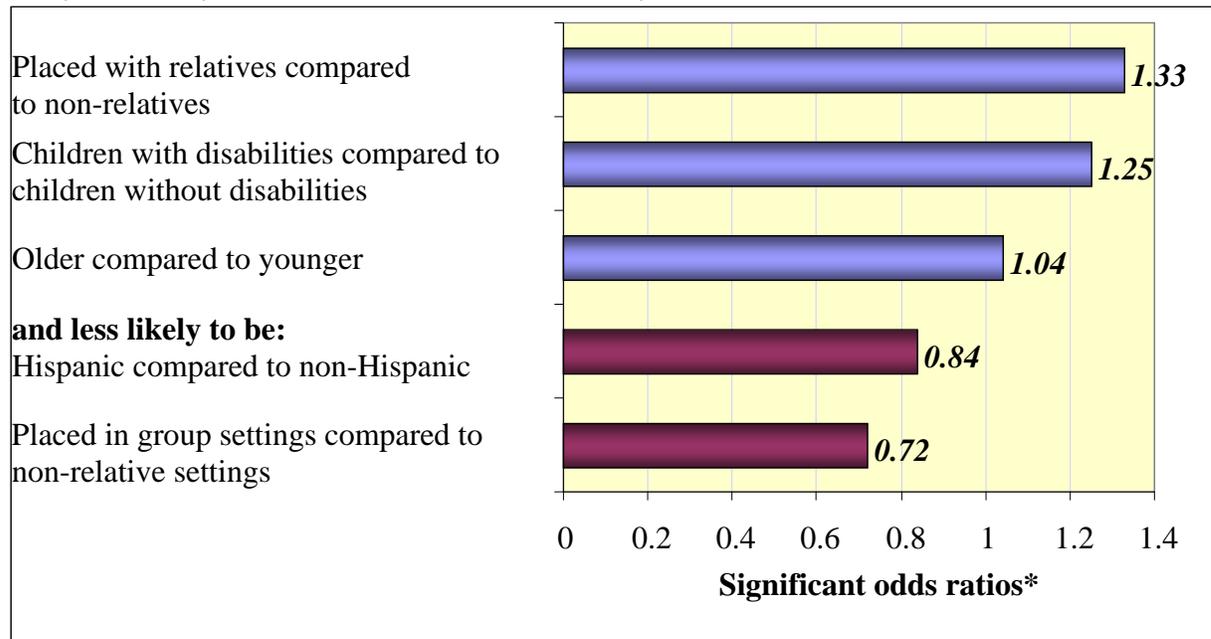


Figure 20: In 2006, children in out-of-home care who were WITHOUT contact every month by social workers were more likely to be...



*This logistic regression analysis controlled for race, permanency plan, placement types, ethnicity, sex, disability and age N=8857, where 5,295 (59.8 percent) were without contact every month by social workers.

Next Steps and Considerations

This report provides a preliminary overview of children with disabilities and special health care needs across the child welfare continuum. The following are suggested next steps for professionals in the on-going process of assessing and improving the experience of children with disabilities across all systems:

- Improve data entry and documentation
- Continue annual analysis, review, and reporting of disability data
- Expand awareness of early identification and referral benefits
- Identify key access points for screening, assessment, and diagnostic resources in communities across Minnesota
- Enhance skills for providing age-appropriate and culturally sensitive disability and special health care assessments and services
- Highlight online access to resources for professionals
- Enhance collaboration and partnership between social service systems that hold children in common.

Conclusion

A clear need remains for further exploration, research, assessment and practice enhancement for this vulnerable population. Continued and renewed partnerships and collaborative efforts are necessary for improved identification, diagnosis, and service provision for children with disabilities. The overall experience of children with disabilities and their families can greatly improve by professionals and stakeholders working in their best interest across all systems.

This information is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling (651) 431-4671. TTY users can call through Minnesota Relay at (800) 627-3529. For Speech-to-Speech, call (877) 627-3848. For additional assistance with legal rights and protections for equal access to human services programs, contact your agency's ADA coordinator.



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**