

2005

# African American Comparative Case Review Study Report



## **I. Introduction**

The research that provided the content of this study was conducted and implemented under the direction of the African American Disparities Advisory Committee of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (the department). The committee was convened in 2001, following a charge to the department from the Minnesota Legislature. The committee composition included membership from the African American community, state and county child welfare professionals, educators and child advocacy groups. The committee conducted an initial study to review the decision making points and subsequent outcomes for African American and Caucasian children in Minnesota's child protection system. That study and report yielded five recommendations with corresponding action steps.<sup>1</sup>

One of the recommendations and action steps was to “focus on improving county practices: conduct a case review in Anoka, Hennepin, Olmsted and Ramsey Counties to assess the appropriateness of decision making, including level, type and delivery of services.” These four counties have the highest population of African American children in Minnesota's child protection system and agreed to partner with the state in this process.

This report describes the process and findings of the case reviews. The goal and purpose of the case reviews was to take a closer look at case practice and service delivery for African American families in comparison to Caucasian American families by examining the level, type and delivery of services. In addition, the committee wanted to explore the similarities and differences in services as experienced by African American and Caucasian American families. The hope was that the findings of the study would help to better understand the needs of African American families and that the results of the study would help inform case practice when working with African American children and families.

The research team for this study consisted of volunteers from the committee, staff from the four counties studied, staff from several divisions of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and researchers from the University of Minnesota School of Social Work.

## **II. Description of Case Review Methodology Research Questions**

### **A. Research Questions**

Following a preliminary review of the literature (see report bibliography for a partial list), the research team worked with the African American Disparity Committee to develop several questions that would help identify the similarities and differences in case practice for African American and Caucasian American families.

The committee's research questions addressed in this report included:

- What (case, child and family) factors are associated with the selection and delivery of child welfare services to families?

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<sup>1</sup> Minnesota Department of Human Services (2002), <http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Legacy/MS-1943-ENG>

- Do services differ by race (Caucasian American versus African American) when controlling for other factors that impact service and placement decisions?
- What factors, including race, are most influential in determining the placement of a child in out-of-home care?

## B. Cases Reviewed

Neglect referrals were chosen for this case review because they are the most common child protection referrals for African American children. Cases with multiple allegations in a single report (for example, abuse and neglect) were eliminated to limit the number of possible confounding factors in the study. From a universe of 1,095 cases of neglect in the four counties studied, 103 pairs of children identified as African American or Caucasian in the state’s social service information system (SSIS) were selected. These cases were substantiated for neglect in 2001. For the study, these cases were followed from the time of case determination (after investigation/assessment) through case closure or until the time of the case reading in summer 2003. These pairs were matched for age group (0-5 and 6-11), gender, reason for referral and county. The matching of cases based on age, gender, reason for referral, county and age group enabled the Committee to control for major factors that affect case outcome. It also increased the likelihood of identifying any variations in decision making that might be associated with race if such differences did exist. The sample included only one child from a family and an attempt was made to exclude children of African immigrants. While the immigrant population is important, the reasons for referral and case decisions may vary systematically from those concerning children whose parents were raised in the United States. Children who did not have a prior placement history in SSIS were selected to limit the number of confounding variables. During the case reading, whenever a case clearly did not fit the selected criteria, it was replaced. A final sample of 103 pairs (103 children identified as African American and 103 children identified as Caucasian in the SSIS system) was selected in proportion to the number of cases in the counties studied. After an intensive review of the data collected, the researchers assisting the Committee in data analysis are confident that less than seven percent of the 206 cases were cases that might have been excluded due to other case characteristics such as a later finding of immigration status that was not immediately apparent in the first case reading.

	Anoka	Hennepin	Olmsted	Ramsey
Total pairs - 322	16	224	12	70
Sample size - 100 - pairs	10	50	10	30
Actual final Sample	10	49	12	32

Refer to Appendices 1 and 2 for details of sampling frame and sample.

Characteristics of the case study sample drawn from SSIS are described in Table 1.

**Table 1 SSIS Characteristics of the Case Study Sample**

	<b>African American</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>Total Children</b>
<b>Age Group</b>			
0-5	52	52	104
6-11	51*	51	102
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	57	57	114
Female	46	46	92
<b>County</b>			
Anoka	10	10	20
Hennepin	49	49	98
Olmsted	12	12	24
Ramsey	32	32	64
<b>Type of Neglect</b>			
Abandonment	2	2	4
Educational neglect	14	14	28
Endangerment	30	30	60
Inadequate supervision	12	12	24
Neglect (food, clothing, shelter)	41	41	82
Prenatal drug exposure	4	4	8
<b>Total Children</b>			<b>206</b>

\* Due to an error in age or date recording in the system data or records, one pair straddles the age groups with one child age 6 and the other age 5. Because both reports concerned educational neglect, the pair was assigned to the 6-11 category with the assumption that the age at report of the “younger” was incorrect by a few months. The final pairing assignment is reflected in this table. The reading of the records did not contradict this case assignment.

### **C. Development of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was first drafted by the University of Minnesota School of Social Work and pre-tested in Anoka County. Extensive changes were made in the instrument based on feedback from the reviewers and the logistics of the case review process. The questionnaire was then thoroughly reviewed and finalized by experienced staff members so it would be understandable to all readers and sufficiently reflective of current terms and case practices used in the field.<sup>2</sup>

### **D. Selection and Preparation of the Case Review Team**

The case review team was composed of seven representatives of the counties (two workers from Ramsey, Hennepin and Anoka Counties and one worker from Olmsted); five program staff from the department; and two staff with supervisory and quality assurance experience from the department who would provide leadership to the teams and on-site quality control.

<sup>2</sup>Please refer to Appendix 4 for a copy of the questionnaire.

The department's staff and county staff were paired in teams of two. It was felt that the knowledge and skills of each group would complement each other. The county staff generally had more familiarity and recent experience using the Social Services Information System. All members had extensive child welfare experience, and the team composition was racially diverse with both African American and Caucasian members.

Training was provided to the case reviewers by the department's staff and the University of Minnesota School of Social Work.

### **E. Conducting the Review**

The questionnaire focused on the phases of service delivery, from assessment through case management and reunification services (when the child was in placement). Information was collected about the types of problems described, the services recommended and delivered, and the case decisions with respect to placement and case closure.

The selected cases were read by the diverse group of staff from the department and the counties. County case readers did not review cases in their own counties. Two types of information were collected. The first included responses that could be easily coded as present or absent and the second focused on more qualitative information such as reasons for decisions made. The qualitative questions were coded by department staff after the case record reading and in consultation with the University of Minnesota School of Social Work. The case reading instrument completion was verified at on-site reviews by the study managers. The coding was verified through random review and re-coding by a second reader.

## **III. Study Findings**

### **A. Study Advantages and Limitations**

A remarkable aspect of this study is that it is possibly the first matched pairs study completed to examine the problem of racial disparities. The cases were followed from the time of substantiation through a minimum of 18 months following substantiation. The amount of detail available through the case records allowed the researchers to control for many major issues associated with case outcomes. This allowed the examination of race separately from, and in combination with, other known factors that influence case decision making. The time and care taken by the committee members, the counties, the department and the University of Minnesota School of Social Work to develop and carry out the study were notable.

It must be noted that there were some limitations to the study, particularly the small sample size. While the larger counties of Hennepin and Ramsey each provided a large cohort of matched pairs to choose from, it was more difficult for the smaller counties of Anoka and Olmsted to provide large cohorts. Another limiting factor was that a very specific case type was selected for study – neglect cases without multiple types of maltreatment reported.

Because collected information was based on the worker's observations and case recording, several possible sources of imprecision in the data were possible such as whether the observations were complete and accurate or whether they might have differed to some extent by race. In addition, the nature of recording is that it captures the major case issues, but

some of the detail important to decision making may be lost. Finally, due to the nature of collecting data retrospectively, a few of the cases (less than seven percent) did not fit the original selection characteristics. An example of this might be an African American child with a father from Africa or a child with a parent from Mexico.

The major solutions to the study limitations were: to interpret findings with caution; to compare findings with other studies that, together, help form a broader knowledge base; and to be very clear and specific in describing the findings and their possible meaning. It is accurate to report that the findings represent the experience of these cases of neglect substantiated in 2001 in the four counties studied. It should be noted that the four counties studied have the largest concentrations of African American children in the state. This is helpful in one way because it focuses on the larger populations. However, if *differentness* (that is, the subject of the decision is perceived as different from or not belonging to the dominant group or culture) is a risk factor for disparity, it may be that the greater sources of disparity for outstate counties were not included in the study.

## B. Interpreting Study Findings

As a study of matched pairs, the analysis of this data was somewhat different than that usually conducted in racial disparities studies. An example is provided here in order to clarify how the data are reported. The example in Table 2 concerns whether there was a biological father in the household.

**Table 2 Percentage of Pairs for which the Children were Alike or Different: Biological Father in the Household\***

		Caucasian Child of Pair		Total
		No	Yes	
African American Child of Pair	No	48.5%	28.2%	76.7%
	Yes	11.7%	11.7%	23.3%
Total		60.2%	39.8%	100% N=103

\*McNemar level of significance:  $p=.012$

The table indicates that for 28.2 percent of the 103 pairs examined, the Caucasian child had a biological father in the household and the African American child did not. It also shows that for 11.7 percent of the pairs the African American child had a biological father in the household and the Caucasian child did not. For 48.5 percent of the pairs, neither child had a biological father in the home. For 11.7 percent of the pairs, both children had a biological father at home. The difference between the African American “yes” and Caucasian child “no” combination and the Caucasian child “yes” and the African American child “no” combination form the basis for the statistical test of difference (McNemar test). In this case, there is a difference by race with the Caucasian child being more likely to have a biological father in the home.

One important issue affecting analysis was the attrition of cases over time. Cases may be closed at any time during the case process. Therefore, there were fewer case management cases than assessment cases and even fewer (placement) reunification cases. Later analyses of reunification services relied on more standard comparisons of African American versus Caucasian experiences because there were not enough original pairs remaining to conduct the McNemar test of significance comparing outcomes by pair.

The remainder of the findings will be presented in text and summary tables. Tables supporting the significant findings are provided in Appendix 3. All of the findings of difference reported regarding the case and family characteristics are statistically significant unless noted otherwise. Refer to the supporting tables for the exact level of significance.

### **C. Case Review Findings**

The case reviews followed the same steps as case processing. After a report is made to the county, an investigation is conducted. This investigation is called an assessment and is completed within 90 days. At the end of the assessment, a determination is made regarding whether the child or children were determined to have experienced abuse or neglect. This determination is also accompanied by a decision regarding whether to refer the case on to involuntary case management services.

A child may be placed away from home at any point in the case process. The child may be placed at the time of the report. For example, the child may have been placed by the police during an arrest or may have been kept in the hospital on physician's orders pending a report and investigation. The county child protection worker may return the child during the assessment, may file a petition to recommend that the child remain in placement, or may place a child who has not been placed if the child is in imminent danger of harm.

#### **This section is divided into four parts:**

- 1: Differences in case and family characteristics
- 2: Case decisions following assessment
- 3: Case management data and decisions
- 4: Reunification decisions.

#### **1. Differences in Case and Family Characteristics**

As in other studies, this study found differences in some of the types of issues experienced by families of the African American children compared to those of the Caucasian children.

Table 3 outlines the comparison in case descriptors. The text following describes the major differences.

**Table 3 Percentage of Pairs for which Cases are Alike or Different:  
Family Characteristics Noted in the Record**

	Percent Pairs	Percent Pairs	Total Pairs
	AA Yes/C No	C Yes/AA No	
<b>Biological Father in the Household</b>	11.7	28.2	103
<b>Child Lives with both Biol. Parents</b>	9.7	21.4	103
<b>Mother on Public Assistance</b>	24.3	7.8	103
<b>Mother Had Cognitive, Physical or Mental Health Problems</b>	7.8	31.1	103
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	26.2	12.6	103
<b>Parenting Issues for Father in HH</b>	1.9	10.7	103

**a. Family Financial Situation**

The record indicated that the mother in the family was on public assistance for 43 cases. The African American child of the pair had a mother on public assistance while the Caucasian child did not in 24 percent of the pairs, while the opposite was true in about 8 percent of the pairs. For the 43 cases on public assistance, significantly more mothers of Caucasian children were described as having financial problems than mothers of African American children (76.9 percent of 13 cases compared to 33 percent of 30 cases, respectively). That is, if the family was on public assistance, the Caucasian parent was more likely to be noted as having financial problems.

**b. Parental Difficulties**

Mothers of Caucasian children were more likely to have been identified as having physical, cognitive or mental health concerns. Mothers of African American children were more likely to have problems with domestic violence in the child’s household. For fathers living in the household, fathers of the Caucasian children were more likely to be reported as having parenting issues than fathers of the African American children.

There were no significant differences in family problems of the pairs of children for parental drug abuse, alcohol abuse, inadequate housing, felony history, contact with the law, father’s disabilities, or death of one or both of the parents.

**2. Case Decisions Following Assessment**

For cases determined to have involved maltreatment, a child protection worker may decide to discontinue the case after assessment, determine that in-home child protection services are needed or place the child in out-of-home care. (The following information is taken from the flow chart in Figure 1.) Of the 206 cases in the study, 104 children received case management services in their own homes or were placed in out-of-home care. The remaining cases (n=102) were closed after assessment. A total of 75 children were referred for case management services in their own homes and 29 children were placed or continued in placement in out-of-home care. During case management, 18 children (of the 75 referred for case management) also went into out-of-home care after receiving in-home services. At



every step, there was a balance between African American and Caucasian children referred for placement or case management services in the child's own home.

For decisions made at assessment, there were no statistically significant differences between the African American and Caucasian children in whether they were placed at the time of the assessment or whether they were opened for case management services during assessment. Of the pairs where there were differences, about 15.5 percent of the pairs had the African American child placed and 13.6 percent of the pairs had the Caucasian child placed. These placements may have happened prior to the agency becoming involved in the case. For example, the child was kept in the hospital after birth or the police placed the child during an encounter with, or arrest of, the parents.

### **3. Case Management Data and Decisions**

The study question addressed at this level (case management services in the home) was whether there were differences by race in service delivery decisions after the children were referred for case management services. Due to the complexity of the families' lives, the case does not necessarily progress neatly from assessment to case management and then to reunification. As noted in the illustrations detailing case activity (Figures 1 and 4), the children may never be placed or may experience placement at any time. The same is true of case management services. The information is organized here by each phase of the process in order to best detail the findings.

#### **a. Case Management Descriptive Data**

In the 75 cases that went to case management, there were 18 of the original full pairs remaining. For these pairs there were no significant differences in what happened to one child versus what happened to the other of the pair. For example, of the African American children, 76 percent were closed at case management; of the Caucasian children, 76 percent were closed at case management.

At the beginning of the assessment, half the cases studied were Caucasian and half were African American. At the end of the assessment, of the cases open for services (n=104), 53 percent were Caucasian and 47 percent were African American.

There was a slight difference in the distribution of children by county at assessment and case management levels. Ramsey County had 31 percent of the total cases at assessment, but they had 49 percent of the total cases at case management, while the converse holds true for Hennepin County, which had 48 percent of the total cases at assessment, but had 28 percent of the total cases at case management. The respective figures for Anoka are 10 percent and 7 percent and for Olmsted, 12 percent and 16 percent. This indicates a difference in case processing decisions by county. The share of cases continuing in case management services increased for Ramsey and Olmsted Counties and decreased for Hennepin and Anoka Counties.

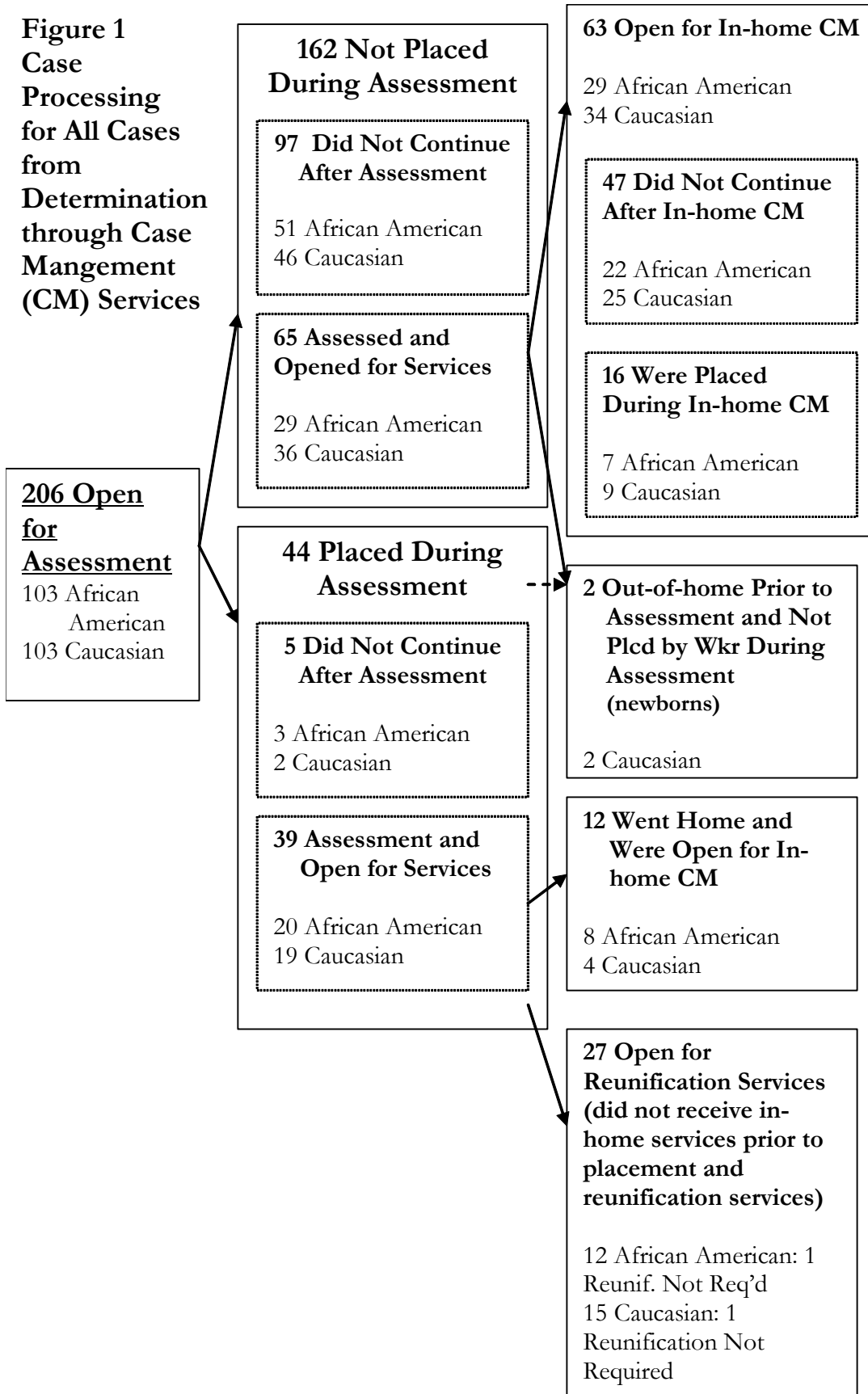
#### **b. Case Management Decisions**

The child protection worker can make four types of decisions at the case management level – provide services in the home only, place the child in foster care, discharge the child from placement, or close the case. These actions may occur in virtually any combination or time order. This part of the study attempted to determine if there were

differences by race in the decisions made by the child protection worker during case management services provided in the home.

There was statistically no difference in the placement of the child in foster care by race at case management. There was also no difference in the number of children discharged from placement during case management services by race. There was no difference in the number of matched pair cases that were closed by the child protection worker during case management by race. There was also no difference in the total number of cases closed during case management by race. Figure 1 illustrates the case pathways from determination through case management of services to families in their own homes.

**Figure 1**  
**Case**  
**Processing**  
**for All Cases**  
**from**  
**Determination**  
**through Case**  
**Mangement**  
**(CM) Services**



**c. Worker Identification of Family or Community Strengths**

Family and community strengths were identified in about half of the cases at the time of assessment. Of the cases remaining at the time of case management (N=75), a much greater proportion had strengths identified. When the cases for which strengths were identified are examined by race, there is not statistically significant difference. (Table 4).

**Table 4 Percent Cases in Which Family or Community Strengths Noted by Race**

	Family Strengths Noted		Community Resources Noted	
	Assessment	Case Management	Assessment	Case Management
African American	55 % (n=101)	83% (n=36)	50.5% (n=101)	89% (n=37)
Caucasian	61% (n=103)	92% (n=38)	47.6% (n=103)	84% (n=37)
Total	58% (n=204)	88% (n=74*)	49% (n=204)	87% (N=74*)

\*Although 75 cases had case management plans, some cases had insufficient information for analysis of certain variables.

**d. Services Recommended and Received**

Table 5 describes the services recommended and received for the 18 pairs remaining in case management. It also details the degree to which services were completed. It is interesting to note that while the families of African American children completed somewhat fewer services (not significant), when the reasons for non-completion were examined, any observed differences virtually disappeared.

**Table 5 Percent of Total Pairs Discordant on Case Management Services Recommended and Received**

Type of Service	AA yes/ Caucasian no	Caucasian yes/ AA no	McNemar Chi Square
<b>Case Management Services Recommended (18 pairs)</b>			
Chemical Dependency Services	17%	11%	1.00
Parent Education and Training	28	17	.727
Health and Home Health Services	22	28	1.00
Family Received Housing Services	22	22	1.00
Mental Health Services	22	11	.687
<b>Case Management Services Received (18 pairs)</b>			
Chemical Dependency Services	22	11	.687
Parent Education and Training	28	11	.453
Health and Home Health Services	17	28	.727
Family Received Housing Services	17	11	1.00
Mental Health Services	28	11	.453
<b>Summary of Services Delivered (18 pairs)</b>			
Child Received at Least One Service	28	17	.727
Child or Family Received at Least One Service	0	6	-
All Services Completed	12	24	.687
No Services Completed	29	12	.453
At Least One Service Not Completed Due to Client Reason	18	15	1.00

Table 6 shows service delivery for *all* cases in case management, regardless of pairing. In this table, there were more differences observed between services received by race, but only one was statistically significant: Families of African American children received more family counseling than their Caucasian counterparts. Other non-significant differences are also shown in the table. Families of African American children received somewhat more chemical dependency, parent education and employment services. Families of Caucasian children received more mental health services. Most of these differences fit with the observed differences in family problems noted above, for example, presence of mental health problems. Virtually the same percentage had at least one service. More Caucasian families completed the services delivered although the percentages of service completion were low for both groups. Conversely, families of African American children were somewhat more likely to have not completed any of the services received.

**Table 6 Percentage of Cases for Which the Services Were Received by Race (N=75\*)**

	<b>African American</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>Pearson's Chi Sq.</b>
<b>Case Management Services</b>			
Family Counseling	27	8	.029**
Chemical Dependency	57	47	.280
Parent Education	60	50	.278
Employment Services	8	0	.115
Health and Home Health	16	26	.217
Mental Health	35	47	.200
Child or Family received at least one service	95	100	.240
Completed all case management services delivered	23	40	.101
No services completed (N=73)	26	16	.224

\*Although 75 cases had case management plans, some cases had insufficient information for analysis of certain variables.

\*\*Fisher's exact significant at  $p \leq .05$

#### **e. Racial Differences in Case Management Decision Making**

The findings to this point were somewhat puzzling in that it is clear there is disproportionality in out-of-home care. In addition, research conducted by Dr. Samuel Myers has suggested there may be a small increase in disproportionality at each step of the process.<sup>3</sup> To better understand the possibilities for interaction of race with other case variables, the recent racial disparities analysis of the Third National Incidence Study on Abuse and Neglect (NIS-3) was reviewed. Although the analysis of the NIS-3 data focused on whether investigations were conducted (combining the decision to report and the decision to investigate), the analysis was instructive for all points in decision making.

The decisions of particular interest to the committee were the one to place a child after child protective services became involved in a case and the one to maintain a child in placement after child protective services involvement. Very short term placements, such as 72 hour holds, were of less interest for this study because those placements may not

<sup>3</sup> Myers, S. L., Jr., (2003), *Update to Professional Staff*, Minnesota Department of Human Services, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota.

have been a direct result of worker decision making. For example, a child may have been placed by the police due to reported abandonment or during an arrest. The outcome of interest with respect to case processing was child placement of sufficient length to be referred for reunification services.

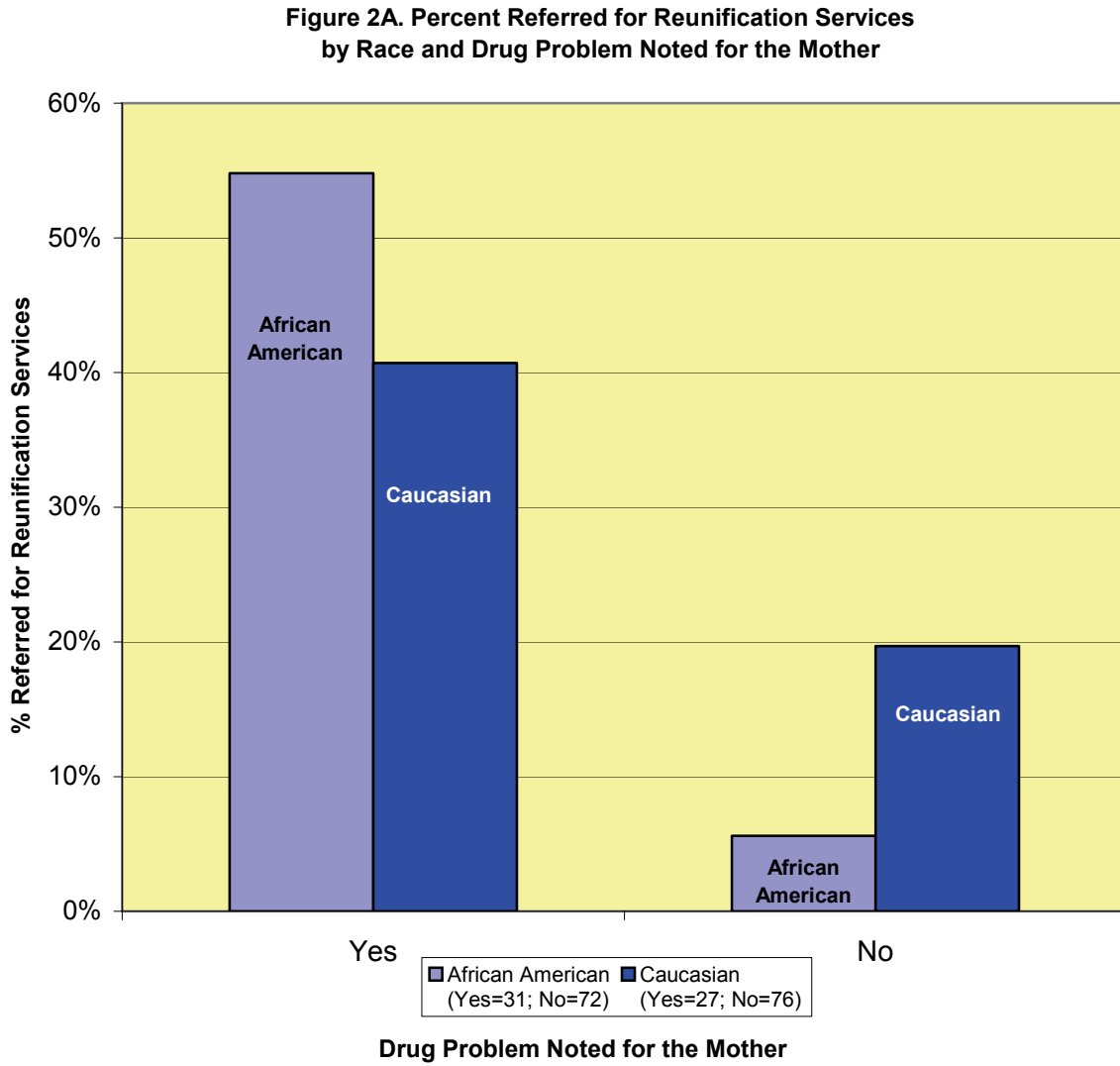
The findings of this analysis were not dissimilar from those of the NIS-3. The NIS-3 researchers found that although there was no difference in occurrence of child maltreatment, there was significant disproportionality at the time of determining which cases were investigated. Upon further review, the investigators found different case characteristics were associated with case investigation (reporting and screening combined). For example, if drug abuse was involved, the African American child was more likely to receive an investigation. On the other hand, if the child's parents were unemployed (looking for work but currently without a job), the Caucasian family was somewhat more likely to be investigated (not statistically significant). If the parents were not in the labor force (for example, not looking for work, disabled, on leave), the Caucasian family was much more likely to be investigated (significant at  $p < .001$ ).<sup>4</sup> The findings suggest that the occurrence of various characteristics in the families seen by referral sources may well lead to disproportionate reporting and/or disproportionate screening at the time of the report.

In order to investigate the possibility that individual case characteristics might interact with race and be associated with differential case response, analyses similar to those in the NIS-3 were conducted. Of the pairs examined in the case review study, mothers with drug abuse problems were more likely to have more intensive intervention if their children were African American, while families of Caucasian children in which all adults were unemployed were more likely to have more intensive intervention. This is illustrated in Figure 2 below. As noted above, for this study, more intensive intervention refers to a child being placed in out-of-home care long enough to begin to receive reunification services.

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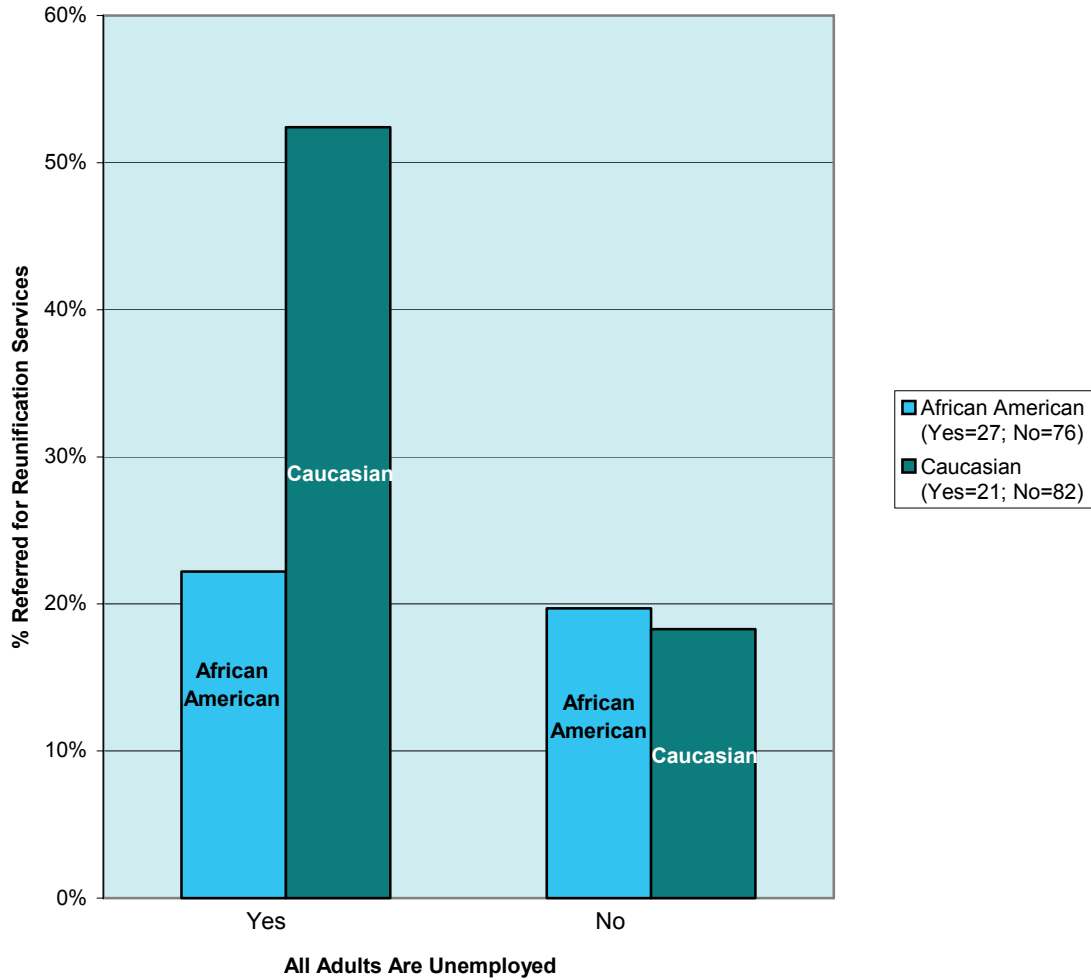
<sup>4</sup> Administration for Children and Families. Third National Incidence Study on Child Abuse and Neglect. Washington, DC: Author, 1996.

Figure 2. Percent of Cases Referred for Reunification Services by Race and Case Characteristics





**Figure 2B. Percent Referred for Reunification Services  
By Race and All Adults in Household are Unemployed**

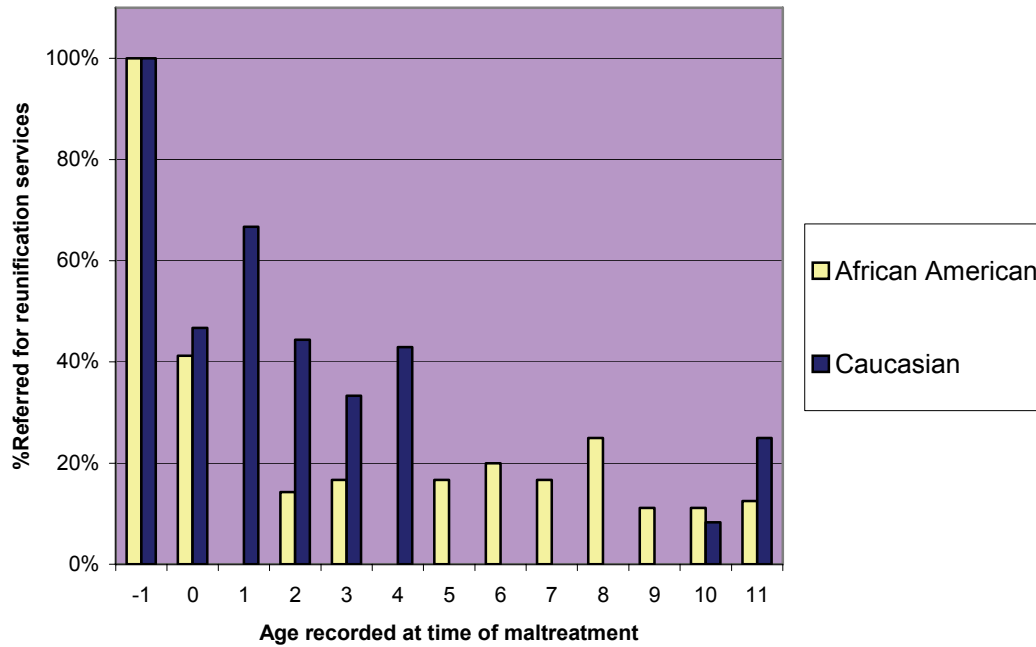


Another variable that interacted with race was age. As Figure 3 illustrates, at ages five through nine, African American children are much more likely to have more intensive intervention than Caucasian children. For ages one through four, Caucasian children are more likely to have more intensive intervention. This is notable because both African Americans and Caucasians are represented in the sample in every age category (Table 7).

**Table 7 Number of Cases by Age and Race**

	Pre-natal through infancy under 1 year of age	Ages 1 through 4	Ages 5 through 9	Ages 10 and 11	Total
African American	19	22	45	17	103
Caucasian	18	28	37	20	103
Total	37	50	82	37	206

**Figure 3. Percent Referred for Reunification Services by Age**



#### 4. Reunification Decisions

The study question addressed at reunification was whether there is a difference by race in providing reunification services to the child and/or family by the child protection worker and whether the child was reunified during the study period.

##### a. Reunification Descriptive Data

A total of 47 cases were open for reunification services. Reunification is the last of three levels of intervention reviewed in this study. Ramsey County had a higher percentage of the total study cases in case management and reunification services than they had at the time of the assessment. Hennepin County had a lower percentage of cases in case management and reunification services than they had at assessment. Anoka and Olmsted Counties had a similar percentage of cases at reunification compared to assessment.

The distribution of cases by race at all three levels shows that percentages of Caucasian children and African American children were about equal at assessment and case management, but there was a slightly higher percentage of Caucasian children at reunification (55 percent versus 45 percent). There was little change in case distribution at the three levels of the child protection system when viewed by the four types of maltreatment: basic neglect (food, shelter and clothing), educational neglect, inadequate supervision, and endangerment. There were more male than female children at all three levels, but their proportions changed slightly at the case management and reunification levels (45:55, 44:56 and 47:53). The proportion of cases by age group was almost similar at the assessment and case management levels for both age groups. Zero to five year olds represented 51% of the cases and 6 to 11 year olds represented 49% of the cases.

However, this proportion changes drastically at reunification to 77 percent of 0-5 year olds versus 23 percent of 6-11 year olds.

#### **b. Reunification Decisions**

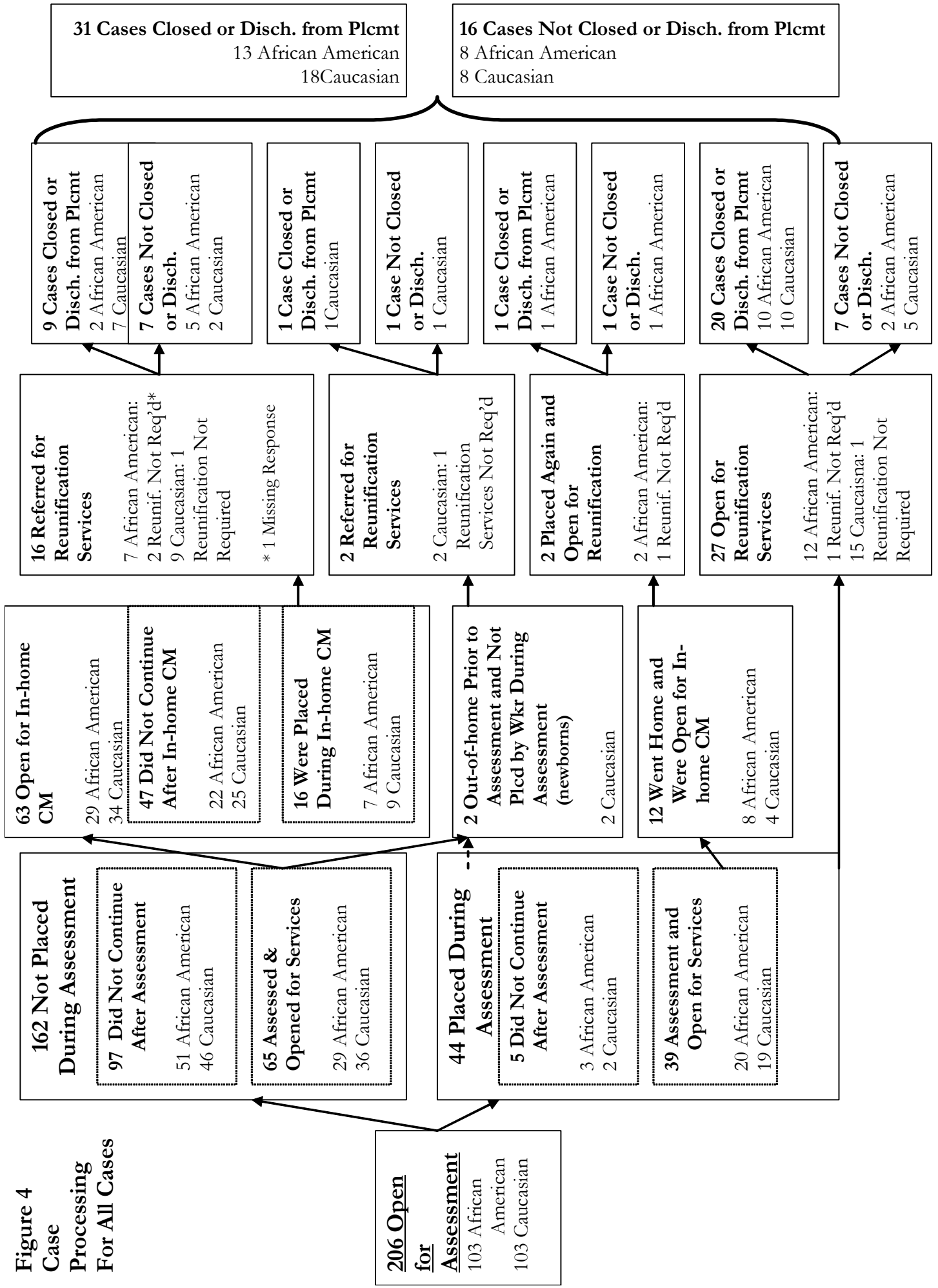
At this stage, the child protection worker can either continue reunification services or discharge the child from placement. Also at this point, a judge may determine that the situation is so egregious, for example, prior death of another child in the home, that reunification services are not warranted.

Due to the drop-off in cases by this point, the analyses examined all of the remaining cases together instead of looking at differences between the children in each set of pairs. Four (19 percent) of the African American children had a court order saying reunification services were not needed due to prior egregious harm to a child compared to three (11.5 percent) of the Caucasian children. Sixty-two percent of the 21 African American children placed long enough for reunification services were discharged from placement during the study period compared to 69 percent of the Caucasian children.

For the four pairs that continued to this stage and for which there were data, only one pair was discordant for this decision. That is, in one pair, the African American child was discharged and the Caucasian child was not. The other three pairs still intact at this point had concordant, or the same, outcomes.

Figure 4 illustrates the case process from determination through reunification.

**Figure 4**  
**Case**  
**Processing**  
**For All Cases**



**c. Services Delivered during Reunification**

During reunification, there were few notable differences in services received by the children and families. Most notably (but not statistically significant), families of African American children were more likely to receive family support services. There were no differences of note in whether a family received any services or whether all the services delivered were completed. Table 8 shows these differences.

**Table 8 Percentage of Cases for Which Reunification Services Were Received by Race (N=74\*)**

	<b>African American</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>Fisher's Exact Test.</b>
<b>Reunification Services</b>			
Family support	14	0	.082
Child or family received at least one service	81	89	.377
Completed all reunification services delivered	12	13	-

\* Although 75 cases had case management plans, one of these cases did not have sufficient information for analysis.

\*\*Fisher's exact significant at  $p \leq .05$

**d. Worker Identification of Family or Community Strengths**

When the worker identified family or community strengths for children at assessment or during case management, the number of African American and Caucasian children was fairly evenly divided. However, at reunification, when the worker identified community strengths, the percentage of Caucasian children outweighed the African American children (but not significantly). (Table 9).

**Table 9 Percent Cases in Which Family or Community Strengths Noted by Race**

	<b>Family Strengths Noted</b>			<b>Community Resources Noted</b>		
	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Case Management</b>	<b>Reunification</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Case Management</b>	<b>Reunification</b>
African American	55 % (n=101)	83% (n=36)	88% (n=16)	50.5% (n=101)	89% (n=37)	77% (n=17)
Caucasian	61% (n=103)	92% (n=38)	91% (n=22)	47.6% (n=103)	84% (n=37)	96% (n=23)
Total	58% (n=204)	88% (n=74*)	89% (n=38)	49% (n=204)	87% (N=74*)	88% (n=40)

**IV. Multivariate Analyses**

A series of analyses were conducted that examined the ability to predict the intensiveness of intervention (in placement long enough to require reunification services) when all the important variables were taken into account. These analyses better model the caseworker's decisions by considering, as much as possible, the combination of factors known to the worker.

Some of the limitations of this analysis are the same as for the study generally. While this is quite a large study for a paired prospective case review, it is a relatively small study with respect to the ability to analyze a large number of variables at one time. Accordingly, theoretically meaningful sets of variables were analyzed in a step-wise fashion, introducing one set and then the next. Prior to introduction of the next set, the strongest variables were selected for retention in the model.

In addition to considerations due to sample size, the complexity of the paired data called for the review of a number of different statistical approaches. The different approaches yielded similar but not exactly the same results.

The analysis that was most fully developed for this report used an approach that controlled for the influence of race on each of the variables in the model. The selected model focused on county of report, history of placement and reported maltreatment, characteristics of the child and family such as household composition and problems experienced by the parents such as unemployment, alcohol or drug abuse and mental health problems. After preliminary analyses, the mother's difficulties appeared to be most influential in determining outcome. The county in which the case was served was also important but was not included in the final model. For example, in the model presented, Olmsted County was less likely to have the most intensive intervention when controlling for other factors but the finding was not consistently significant statistically.

Case and mother's characteristics that were often important, but not always statistically significant, in the models reviewed included:

- Mother's
  - Drug problem
  - Financial problems
  - Public assistance
  - Contact with law enforcement
  - Mental health problems
- Child's age
- History of maltreatment assessments for people in the household
- Sibling already in placement
- County.

As noted above, the analysis presented in this report was selected because it allows for the evaluation of the effects of race in interaction with each individual variable considered. This was particularly important given the findings of no difference in the initial exploratory analysis reported in the case management analysis. Table 10 shows that race, age of the child, history of maltreatment, the combination of race and child's age, the combination of race and Mother's drug problem and the combination of race and Mother's financial problems were the statistically significant predictors of intensiveness of intervention (placement long enough to require reunification services). The odds in the table indicate the added odds that a case with this characteristic will be referred for more intensive intervention when all the other variables in the table are taken into consideration.

**Table 10 Example of Combined Model Predicting Intensiveness of Intervention<sup>†</sup>**

	Beta	Std. Error	Statistical Significance	Odds for More Intensive Intervention
Caucasian	1.9	.88	.03	7:1
Age of the Child	-.39	.10	.00	1.5:1 for every year younger a child is
History of Maltreatment	1.6	.51	.00	5:1
Mother Drug Problem	.03	.67	n.s.	-
Mother Financial Problem	-1.06	.77	n.s.	-
African American * Age	.30	.13	.02	1.3:1 for every year older up to 11 years of age
African American * Mother Drug Problem	2.9	.96	.00	18:1
Caucasian * Mother Financial Problem	3.63	1.05	.00	38:1
Constant	-3.25	.76	.00	-

<sup>†</sup>Intensiveness of intervention is placement out of home long enough to require reunification services.

To summarize these findings, one would say that the intensiveness of child protective intervention in the four counties studied was predicted by whether the case involved:

- A Caucasian child
- A younger child
- A case with a history of prior maltreatment assessments
- An African American older child – for every year older for an African American child, the chance for more intensive intervention is greater
- The mother of an African American child when the mother has drug abuse problems
- The mother of a Caucasian child when the mother has financial problems.

This model correctly predicted the intensiveness of intervention for 85 percent of the cases in the sample.

The findings may appear to be counter-intuitive in that they identify Caucasian children as more likely to have more intensive intervention. They also show, however, that in selected circumstances African American children are more likely to have more intensive intervention.

### **A. Other Potential Sources of Disproportionality**

In addition to case management in child protection, there are at least three other possible sources of disproportionality in the foster care system. The first is the cases that are not neglect. Neglect was selected for this study due to its prevalence in the child protection system and the fact that it is the major maltreatment determination for African American families. There are many cases that come into foster care for other child welfare reasons. Other reasons,

for example, may include child behavior problems that do not come to child protection or child mental health problems. At this point, these cases have not been studied to the same degree as neglect cases.

More importantly, there are points in the case process that were not studied. For example, an examination of reporting trends suggests that a disproportionate number of reports come from neighborhoods with high African American populations. In addition, the time from the report to the time of case determination was not included in this study. Dr. Sheila Ards and colleagues found a small but significant disparity in the substantiation decision.<sup>5</sup>

Within the 18 month window studied, children of both races appeared to leave placement at about the same rate. For those who stayed longer than the study period, however, it is unclear whether that parity in rates of leaving care continues. The adoption data, for example, suggests that African American children wait longer for adoption and, therefore, may accumulate in the system. For example, of the children waiting for adoption, the incidence per 1,000 children in the population is .25 for Caucasian children and 3.3 for African American children. When pre-adoptive homes are reviewed, the proportion of Caucasian children per 1,000 children in the population is .29; for African American children, it is 1.48.

While the success story is the number of children in pre-adoptive homes, the other side of the coin suggests that fewer African American children get into pre-adoptive homes. That is, the proportion of Caucasian children waiting for adoption and the proportion in pre-adoptive homes is similar. For African American children, the proportion waiting for adoption is much greater than the proportion in a pre-adoptive home. Similarly, the absolute numbers are quite different. For children waiting, the numbers are about the same for African American children and Caucasian children, 210 and 270 respectively. For those in pre-adoptive homes, there are 95 African American children and 315 Caucasian children.

These data suggest that some significant sources of disproportionality and disparities are found in reporting and possibly screening and in the wait for adoption. There is much more to be done with these analyses, but some conclusions can be made at this point.

## **V. Conclusions: Policy and Case Practice Implications**

For the cases studied, there was no statistical difference in the major case decisions and there were very few differences in the services delivered. This does not mean that all families were treated equally, only that, generally speaking, the outcomes were similar. It also does not belie the experience of any individual family who may face bias or difficulties during the intervention process. In order to better understand some of these possibilities, further analyses will be conducted with this data to examine the service process and any possibility that families may have different experiences based on race, and the differences may cancel one another out resulting in similar numbers at each case decision point.

Potential major sources of disproportionality remain the disparity of reporting to the agency prior to investigation or case finding and once the parental rights have been terminated. African

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<sup>5</sup> Ards, S. D., Myers, S. L., Jr., Malkis, A., Sugrue, E., & Zhou, L. (2003), *Racial disproportionality in reported and substantiated child abuse and neglect: an examination of systematic bias*. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 25(5/6), 521-538.



American children tend to stay longer. In addition, there may be small disparities along the way, as was suggested by Ards, Myers and colleagues, that result in more significant imbalances as time goes on.

For assessment, case management and reunification services, it appears that the most fruitful course may be to continue to improve competencies in working across race and culture. Meanwhile, more attention should be paid both to the front and back ends of the system.

## VI. Recommendations

The African American Disparity Advisory committee and others have suggested possible practice changes. Efforts should be focused on the front end, providing key services or referral to family condition-focused and culturally appropriate community-based services. Once a specific problem or family condition has been identified (educational neglect, substance abuse, or domestic violence), the family is referred to an agency that can provide customized services to address that need. New child welfare reform initiatives such as Alternative Response may help at this earlier point in the system.

On the back end of the spectrum there is a need to continue efforts to help African American children under state guardianship find permanency and adoptive homes. Counties need to find creative ways to recruit adoptive homes for African American children. They should also support foster care placement with relatives who should be concurrently encouraged to adopt.

The major implications of these findings are threefold and complementary:

**1. While bias may affect everyone at different points in time, it is critically important in child protective services and, therefore, requires targeted and ongoing attention.**

- This attention should be planful and systematic
- It should be continuous throughout professional staff development and activities casework

**2. Activities specific to case processing require special attention.**

a. In reporting and substantiation, it is necessary to:

- Educate the community and mandated reporters about what child protection is and the alternative services (community) for child protection available to African American families.
- Examine, improve and implement practice changes on the front end to prevent African American families from entering the system.
- Review internal case assessment decisions to ensure equity among different racial and ethnic populations.
- Address mandated reporting issues for school age African American children and support access to community services that support family functioning and meets their needs.

b. Through family support and reunification, workers should

- Utilize in-home case management services as a priority and preferred intervention for African American families.
- Build, support and document family and community strengths of African American families.

- Encourage the use and inclusion of positive family connections to improve the safety of the child and the cohesiveness of the family. Utilize family centered practice and culturally supportive methods such as Family Group Decision Making to enhance this effort.
  - Improve, enhance and support timely reunification efforts for African American children who have been removed from the home.
- c. In planning and implementing permanency for children, it is important to:
- Continue improving adoption and permanency efforts for African American children.
  - Focus on relatives; on early identification and the search for relatives, including paternal and maternal; and providing appropriate post permanency services to support adoption and transfer of legal custody.
- 3. These recommendations can be implemented in four steps: dissemination, planning for change, implementing change strategies and evaluating changes in practice.**
- a. The Committee members, research team and all interested parties should use multiple dissemination activities to inform the field of the case study findings and heighten awareness of the effects of potential biases in case practice.
- b. County and supervisory units should devise a plan for working with African American families in their caseloads and determine the most effective ways to help workers identify potential issues and deal with them constructively.
- c. Implementation at the local and state levels includes:
- Implementing new and existing activities.
  - Training Workers; providing customized training for workers which focuses on improving case practice with African American families and reducing biases.
- d. Ongoing evaluation, to include:
- Review progress and outcomes periodically at state and county levels.

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**Appendix 1: Final Sample  
Number of Children by Age, Gender, County and Presenting Problems**

<b>Sampling Frame</b>											
		<b>Anoka</b>		<b>Hennepin</b>		<b>Olmsted</b>		<b>Ramsey</b>			
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Total Original Pairs in Sampling Frame - 322		11	5	121	103	7	5	35	35		
Number Children in Sampling Frame		32		448		24		140			
<b>Sample</b>											
		<b>Age</b>		<b>Anoka</b>		<b>Hennepin</b>		<b>Olmsted</b>		<b>Ramsey</b>	
<b>Maltreatment</b>		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Abandonment	0 - 5 years			2	2						
	6 - 11 years										
Educational Neglect	0 - 5 years				2						
	6 - 11 years	6		6	6	2		2	4		
Endangerment	0 - 5 years	2		12	8	2	6		2		
	6 - 11 years	2		8	8	6		2	2		
Inadequate Supervision	0 - 5 years			6	2	2	2	2			
	6 - 11 years	2	2	2	4						
Neglect	0 - 5 years	2	2	10	4			14	12		
	6 - 11 years	2		4	6	2	2	12	10		
Prenatal Exposure	0 - 5 years			4	2				2		
	6 - 11 years										
Medical Neglect	0 - 5 years										
	6 - 11 years										
Total Children	0 - 5 years	6	2	34	20	4	8	16	16		
	6 - 11 years	10	2	20	24	10	2	16	16		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>		

## Appendix 2

### Presenting Problems for Neglected Children and Families

	Sampling Frame	Sampling Frame Percent	Sample	Sample Percent
Abandonment	29	2.6	4	1.9
Chronic and severe use of alcohol or controlled substance	4	0.4	0	
Educational neglect	286	26.1	28	13.6
Emotional neglect	2	0.2	0	
Endangerment	282	25.8	60	29.1
Inadequate supervision	116	10.6	24	11.7
Infant medical neglect	2	0.2	0	
Medical neglect (not "Baby Doe")	11	1.0	0	
Neglect (food, shelter, clothing)	297	27.1	82	39.8
Prenatal exposure	66	6.0	8	3.9
Total	1,095	100.0	206	100.0

### Race of Neglected Children and Families

Race	Sampling Frame	Sampling Frame Percent	Sample	Sample Percent
African American	632	57.7	103	50.0
Caucasian	463	42.3	103	50.0
Total	1,095	100.0	206	100.0

### Gender of Neglected Children and Families

Gender	Sampling Frame	Sampling Frame Percent	Sample	Sample Percent
Female	536	48.9	92	44.7
Male	559	51.1	114	55.3
Total	1,095	100.0	206	100.0

### Age Group of Neglected Children and Families

Age Group	Sampling Frame	Sampling Frame Percent	Sample	Sample Percent
0-5	521	47.6	104	51.5
6-11	568	51.9	102	48.5
12-18	6	0.5		
Total	1,095	100.0	206	100.0

## Appendix 3: Significant Findings

### A. Biological Dad in Household with Child

		Cauc. Child Biol. Dad in Household			
			No	Yes	Total
AA Child Biol. Dad in Household	No	Count	50	29	79
		% of Total	48.5%	28.2%	76.7%
	Yes	Count	12	12	24
		% of Total	11.7%	11.7%	23.3%
Total		Count	62	41	103
		% of Total	60.2%	39.8%	100.0%

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
McNemar Test		.012 <sup>a</sup>
N of Valid Cases	103	

a. Binomial distribution used.

### B. Child Lives with Both Biological Parents

		Caucasian Child lives with both biological parents			
			No	Yes	Total
AA Child lives with both biological parents	No	Count	60	24	84
		% of Total	58.3%	23.3%	81.6%
	Yes	Count	10	9	19
		% of Total	9.7%	8.7%	18.4%
Total		Count	70	33	103
		% of Total	68.0%	32.0%	100.0%

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
McNemar Test		.024 <sup>a</sup>
N of Valid Cases	103	

a. Binomial distribution used.

### C. Did Either the Worker or the Collateral Note Public Assistance for the Mother?

		Did either the worker or the collateral note Public Assistance for the Mother of the Caucasian Child?			
			No	Yes	Total
Did either the worker or the collateral note Public Assistance for the Mother of the AA Child?	No	Count	65	8	73
		% of Total	63.1%	7.8%	70.9%
Total	Yes	Count	25	5	30
		% of Total	24.3%	4.9%	29.1%
		Count	90	13	103
		% of Total	87.4%	12.6%	100.0%

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
McNemar Test		.005 <sup>a</sup>
N of Valid Cases	103	

a. Binomial distribution used.

### D. Worker or Collateral Noted a Physical, Mental or Cognitive Disability

		Worker or collateral noted a physical, mental or cognitive disability for White child			
			No	Yes	Total
Worker or collateral noted a physical, mental or cognitive disability for AA child	No	Count	55	32	87
		% of Total	53.4%	31.1%	84.5%
Total	Yes	Count	8	8	16
		% of Total	7.8%	7.8%	15.5%
		Count	63	40	103
		% of Total	61.2%	38.8%	100.0%

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
McNemar Test		.000 <sup>a</sup>
N of Valid Cases	103	

a. Binomial distribution used.

### E. Did either the Worker or the Collateral Note Domestic Violence for the Mother?

		Did either the worker or the collateral note Domestic Violence for the Mother of the Caucasian child?			
		No	Yes	Total	
Did either the worker or the collateral note Domestic Violence for the Mother of the AA child?	No	Count	43	13	56
		% of Total	41.7%	12.6%	54.4%
Total	Yes	Count	27	20	47
		% of Total	26.2%	19.4%	45.6%
		Count	70	33	103
		% of Total	68.0%	32.0%	100.0%

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
McNemar Test		.038 <sup>a</sup>
N of Valid Cases	103	

a. Binomial distribution used.

### F. For Dads Living in the Household, Were there Parenting Issues Noted?

		Parenting Issues: Adopt or biological Dad living in HH with the Caucasian child			
		No	Yes	Total	
Parenting Issues: Adopt or biological Dad living in the Household with the AA child	No	Count	87	11	98
		% of Total	84.5%	10.7%	95.1%
Total	Yes	Count	2	3	5
		% of Total	1.9%	2.9%	4.9%
		Count	89	14	103
		% of Total	86.4%	13.6%	100.0%

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
McNemar Test		.022 <sup>a</sup>
N of Valid Cases	103	

a. Binomial distribution used.



### Appendix 4

#### CHILD AND FAMILY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the review: \_\_\_\_\_

Case reviewer's number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Subject child's assessment workgroup name and ID: \_\_\_\_\_

*If copying any information from the case record write on each copy:*

- The subject child's SSIS Person ID number
- **Bracket the information and identify the question the information is referencing**

#### SECTION 1: CHILD PROTECTION ASSESSMENT

1. Number of children, including the subject child, (individuals under 18 years of age, but not including parents of subject child if they are minors) in the household at the time of the assessment: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Number of adults (individuals over 18 years of age, or parents of subject child, even if they are minors) in the household at the time of the assessment: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Relationship of adults (individuals over 18 years of age or minor parents of the subject child) in the household to the subject child (circle **all** the numbers that apply):
  - (1) Biological father
  - (2) Biological mother
  - (3) Adoptive father
  - (4) Adoptive mother
  - (5) Stepfather
  - (6) Stepmother
  - (7) Parent's partner
  - (8) Adult sibling
  - (9) Other relative
  - (10) Other unrelated adult
4. Circle the item that most closely describes the employment of the adults (individuals over 18 years of age or the minor parents of the subject child) living in the household at the time of the workgroup opening (circle only **one** number that applies):
  - (1) At least one adult employed full time
  - (2) No adult employed full time, but at least one adult employed part time
  - (3) No adult employed, either part or full time (child's siblings who are under 18 years of age may be employed full or part time)

- (4) Employment status of adults in household is unknown
- (5) No adult (parent of child or person over 18 years of age) found living in the household
- (6) Others (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Did the family have any of the following housing difficulties at the time of the subject child’s assessment? (circle **all** the numbers that apply)

- (1) No place to live and no temporary residence (homeless)
- (2) No place to live – staying with friends or relatives temporarily
- (3) Temporary transitional housing
- (4) Substandard housing (dangerous to children) as noted by the worker, e.g., frayed wiring, holes in floors or walls, plumbing not working, overcrowding
- (5) Family worried about being evicted
- (6) No known housing problems
- (7) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Was the subject child placed during the assessment? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes (go to question #6a)
- (2) No (go to question #13)

6a. What was the initial legal authority for the subject child’s out-of-home placement? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) 72-hour police hold
- (2) Voluntary placement Agreement
- (3) Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Describe why the subject child was placed? (photocopy or write verbatim from the case record)

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8. Were efforts made to locate a relative **prior** to the subject child being placed? (Use relative as defined in Minnesota Statute 260C.007, subd.27) (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) No information was found in the case record

Describe the efforts to locate relatives: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Were efforts made to locate a relative **after** the subject child was placed? (Use relative as defined in Minnesota Statute 260C.007, subd.27) (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) No information was found in the record

Describe the efforts to locate relatives: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Describe the county's efforts to prevent the subject child's placement? Include the efforts made by any after hours emergency social services. (photocopy or write verbatim from the court order or case record)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Check if no information was found in the case record

11. Was the subject child's placement followed by a court hearing? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes (Go to question #12)
- (2) No (Go to question #13)

12. Was the court opposed to the worker's recommendations regarding the subject child's placement? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

If yes, photocopy or write verbatim from the court order or case record: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. Was the SDM risk assessment tool used at the closing of the assessment? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes (Attach a copy of SDM risk assessment)
- (2) No

**14. Do not answer question 14 - Information will be provided by SSIS staff**

What were the total number of face-to-face contacts with the subject child or family during the child protection assessment?

How many months or how long was the child protection assessment case open?

15. What is the relationship of the alleged offender(s) to the subject child? (refer to the relationship codes in question # 3)

- (1) Offender 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Offender 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) Offender 3 \_\_\_\_\_

16. Is there a history of prior child maltreatment assessments on the subject child or other family members in the subject child's home? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

17. What was the status of the subject child's siblings at the time workgroup was opened for an assessment? (circle **all** the numbers that apply)

- (1) One or more siblings already in a placement
- (2) No siblings in placement at the time the assessment is opened
- (3) Whereabouts of siblings unknown
- (4) One or more siblings entered placement at the same time as the subject child
- (5) No known siblings

18. What were the living arrangements of the subject child's biological (or adoptive, if child is adopted) parents at the time of the assessment? (circle the number of your answer)

**Mother:**

- (1) Deceased
- (2) Incarcerated
- (3) In-home with child
- (4) Elsewhere (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) Unknown/not specified in record

**Father:**

- (1) Deceased
- (2) Incarcerated
- (3) In-home with child
- (4) Elsewhere (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) Unknown/not specified in record

19. Family’s Condition: Circle **all** of the following difficulties that were **noted by the worker** during the assessment regarding the subject child’s primary caretaker:

**Mother/Substitute:**

- 1. Alcohol use
- 2. Other drug use
- 3. Physical disability
- 4. Cognitive status
- 5. Mental health status
- 6. Past felony convictions
- 7. Other contact with law enforcement (excluding item #6)
- 8. Mother/substitute unknown
- 9. Domestic violence
- 10. Inadequate housing
- 11. Financial problems
- 12. Public assistance
- 13. Parenting issues
- 14. None
- 15. N/A (Deceased or TPR)
- 16. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Father/Substitute:**

- 1. Alcohol use
- 2. Other drug use
- 3. Physical disability
- 4. Cognitive status
- 5. Mental health status
- 6. Past felony convictions
- 7. Other contact with law enforcement (excluding item #6)
- 8. Father/substitute unknown
- 9. Domestic violence
- 10. Inadequate housing
- 11. Financial problems
- 12. Public assistance
- 13. Parenting issues
- 14. None
- 15. N/A (Deceased or TPR)
- 16. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

20. Collateral Contact Information: Circle **all** of the following difficulties that were **noted by the collateral contacts** during the assessment regarding the subject child’s primary caretaker:

**Mother/Substitute:**

- 1. Alcohol use
- 2. Other drug use
- 3. Physical disability
- 4. Cognitive status
- 5. Mental health status
- 6. Past felony convictions
- 7. Other contact with law enforcement (excluding item #6)
- 8. Mother/substitute unknown
- 9. Domestic violence
- 10. Inadequate housing
- 11. Financial problems

**Father/Substitute:**

- 1. Alcohol use
- 2. Other drug use
- 3. Physical disability
- 4. Cognitive status
- 5. Mental health status
- 6. Past felony convictions
- 7. Other contact with law enforcement (excluding item #6)
- 8. Father/substitute unknown
- 9. Domestic violence
- 10. Inadequate housing
- 11. Financial problems

- |                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 12. Public assistance     | 12. Public assistance     |
| 13. Parenting issues      | 13. Parenting issues      |
| 14. None                  | 14. None                  |
| 15. N/A (Deceased or TPR) | 15. N/A (Deceased or TPR) |
| 16. Other (specify) _____ | 16. Other (specify) _____ |
| _____                     | _____                     |
| _____                     | _____                     |

21. Does the assessment have a closing summary? (circle the number of your answer)

(1) Yes. If yes, photocopy or write verbatim from the case record: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(2) No.

22. Did the worker document in the case record an assessment of family strengths and identify community resources **available** to help the family? (circle the number of your answer for **both** family and community)

**Family:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

*Print or photocopy the text of the assessment of family strengths*

**Community:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

*Print or photocopy the text of the available community resources*

23. Photocopy or write verbatim any text that describes the status of the subject child and the family when the assessment was concluded (e.g., offender went to jail; child stayed with other parent; mother said she would get counseling and child remains at home; child went to live with an aunt in another state).

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

24. At the conclusion of the assessment, was there a determination of a need for ongoing Child Protective Case Management services? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

25. Based on your professional experience and judgment, do the facts in the case support the worker's conclusions about any of the following? (Circle the number of your answer). Give your reasons.

**Maltreatment determination:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Services:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Placement:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) N/A – Unable to determine

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

***Stop!***

**Section 1 is now complete.**

**The tool is completed** if ongoing case management services were **not** provided to the subject child. Put the tool and attachments into the file folder and give to the site leader.

Subject Child SSIS Person ID \_\_\_\_\_

07/02/03

**Go directly to Section 2** if the case was opened for ongoing case management services **and** the subject child was **not** in placement.

**Go directly to Section 3** if the case was open for ongoing case management services and the subject child was **in placement**.



**SECTION 2:  
PREVENTIVE SERVICES DURING ONGOING CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

26. Was the subject child in placement at the time the case was assigned to ongoing case management services? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes (Go to Section 3)
- (2) No (Go to question # 26a)

26a. Was there a child protection service plan in the case record? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

27. Circle the code numbers for all services that were **recommended by the worker** in the child protection service case plan or in the case records for the family. For this question it **does not matter** whether or not the services were provided/completed. Use the following codes: (circle **all** the numbers that apply)

**SSIS Service Codes**

00 None	15 Family planning services
01 Family counseling	16 Health related and home health
02 Individual counseling	17 Housing services
03 Family-based services -- counseling	18 Independent and transitional living services
04 Family-based services -- life management skills	29
05 Family-based services - crisis	19 Information and referral services
06 Respite care	20 Legal services
07 Day care (child)	21 Mental health services
08 Chemical dependency services	22 Pregnancy and parenting services for young parents
09 Parenting education	23 Special services -- disabled
10 Child protection services case management	24 Special services – juvenile delinquent
11 Family support services	25 Transportation
12 Family preservation services	26 Other Services
13 Education and training services	27 Out-of-home placement
14 Employment services	

28. Did the worker document in the case record an assessment of family strengths and identify community resources **available** to help the family? (circle the number of your answer for **both** family and community)

**Family:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

If yes, what were they?

**Family strengths:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Community:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

If yes, what were they?

**Community resources:** \_\_\_\_\_

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29. Describe what the worker did to connect the family with services and resources (e.g. provided transportation, accompanied parent(s) to appointments).

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30. What child protection case management services did the family receive? (Refer to the service codes in question # 27)

SSIS Code for services provided:	Target of Services	Did client complete course of service?	If client did not complete course of service, please explain
(1) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(1) Yes, all (2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown	_____ _____ _____
(2) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(1) Yes, all (2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown	_____ _____ _____
(3) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(1) Yes, all (2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown	_____ _____ _____
(4) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(1) Yes, all (2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown	_____ _____ _____
(5) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(1) Yes, all (2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown	_____ _____ _____

31. **Question omitted**

32. Describe the results of the family’s involvement with child protection case management services (e.g., family completed the services – chemical dependency counseling, parenting education, mental health, family received respite care, family moved out of the county, family refused services, family did not complete recommended services)? **(If the workgroup is still open, use the case notes at six (6) months after opening for case management)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

33. **Do not answer question 33 - Information will be provided by SSIS staff** What were the total number of **face-to-face** contacts with the subject child or family in the first six months of child protection case management services?

How many months was the child protection case management case open?

33a. During the time that child protection case management services were open, was the subject child placed in out-of-home care? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes (go to question #33b)
- (2) No (go to question #40)

33b. Describe why the subject child was placed? (photocopy or write verbatim from the case record)

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34. Were efforts made to locate a relative **prior** to the subject child being placed? (Use relative as defined in Minnesota Statute 260C.007, subd.27) (circle the number of your answer and comment)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) No information was found in the case record

Describe the efforts to locate relatives: \_\_\_\_\_

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35. Were efforts made to locate a relative **after** the subject child was placed? (Use relative as defined in Minnesota Statute 260C.007, subd.27) (circle the number of your answer and comment)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) No information was found in the case record
- (4) N/A

Describe the efforts to locate relatives: \_\_\_\_\_

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35a. Describe the efforts to prevent the subject child's placement? (photocopy or write verbatim from the court order or case record)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

35b. Was the subject child’s placement followed by a court hearing? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes (Go to question #36)
- (2) No (Go to question #37)

36. Was the court opposed to the worker’s recommendations regarding the subject child’s placement? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

If yes, photocopy or write verbatim from the court order or case record:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

37. Was the subject child ever determined to be Title IV-E eligible during this placement? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

38. Was the subject child discharged from this placement? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

If yes, reason for discharge? (circle the number of your answer)

- |   |
|---|
| 01 Reunification with parents/primary caretakers                  |
| 02 Living with other relatives                                    |
| 03 Adoption finalized   |
| 04 Reached age of majority or emancipated                         |
| 05 Guardianship   |
| 06 Transfer to another agency                                     |
| 07 Runaway from placement/placement no longer planned             |
| 08 Death of client  |
| 09 Permanent transfer of legal and physical custody to a relative |

39. Was the court opposed to the worker’s recommendation regarding the subject child’s discharge from placement? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

If yes, photocopy or write verbatim from the court order or case record:

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40. Was the child protection case management workgroup closed for services at the time of this case reading? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) If yes, date closed \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the reason for closure:

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40a. Based on your professional experience and judgment, do the facts in the case support the worker's conclusions about the following? (circle the number of your answer). Give your reasons.

**Services:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Placement:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) N/A – Unable to determine

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Stop!*

**Section 2 is complete** if the subject child **did not** enter placement during case management services. Put the tool and attachments into the file folder and give to the site leader.

**Go to Section 3** if the subject child **did** enter placement during case management services.

**SECTION 3:  
REUNIFICATION SERVICES DURING ONGOING CASE MANAGEMENT**

41. Has the court ordered that reunification services are not necessary for the subject child and parents? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes (reunification services are not necessary)
- (2) No (reunification services must be provided)

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Stop!**

**If you answered yes, Sections 1 and 3 are now complete.** Put the tool and attachments in the file folder and give to the site leader.

**If you answered no, go on to question 42.**

42. Was there a child protection service plan in the case record? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

42a. Circle the code numbers for all services that were recommended by the worker in the child protection service case plan or in the case records for the family. For this question it **does not matter** whether or not the services were provided/completed. Use the following codes: (circle **all** the numbers that apply)

**SSIS Service Codes**

00 None	15 Family planning services
01 Family counseling	16 Health related and home health
02 Individual counseling	17 Housing services
03 Family-based services -- counseling	18 Independent and transitional living services
04 Family-based services -- life management skills	29
	19 Information and referral services



05 Family-based services - crisis	20 Legal services
06 Respite care	21 Mental health services
07 Day care (child)	22 Pregnancy and parenting services for young parents
08 Chemical dependency services	23 Special services -- disabled
09 Parenting education	24 Special services – juvenile delinquent
10 Child protection services case management	25 Transportation
11 Family support services	26 Other Services
12 Family preservation services	27 Out-of-home placement
13 Education and training services	
14 Employment services	

43. Did the worker document in the case record an assessment of family strengths and identify community resources **available** to help the family? (circle the number of your answer for **both** family and community)

**Family:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

If yes, what were they?

**Family strengths:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Community:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

If yes, what were they?

**Community resources:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

44. Describe what the social worker did to connect the family with services and resources (e.g. provided transportation, accompanied parent(s) to appointments, etc.). \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

45. What child protection case management services did the family receive (Refer to the codes in question number 42a)?

SSIS Code for services provided	Target of Service	Did client complete course of service?	If client did not complete course of service, please explain
(1) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(1) Yes, all (2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown (1) Yes, all	_____ _____ _____ _____
(2) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown	_____ _____ _____
(3) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(1) Yes, all (2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown	_____ _____ _____
(4) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(1) Yes, all (2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown	_____ _____ _____
(5) _____	_____ <i>(Child or family)</i>	(1) Yes, all (2) Some  (3) No, none (4) Unknown	_____ _____ _____

46. Question omitted

47. What were the results of the family’s involvement with child protection case management services (e.g., family completed the services – chemical dependency counseling, parenting education, mental health, family received respite care, family moved out of the county, family refused services, family did not complete recommended services)? **(If the workgroup is still open, use the case notes at six (6) months after opening for case management).**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**48. Do not answer this question as information will be provided by SSIS staff**

What were the total number of **face-to-face** contacts with the subject child or family in the first six months of child protection case management services?

How many months or how long was the child protection case management case open?

48a. Was the subject child determined to be Title IV-E eligible during this placement?  
(circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Was the subject child discharged from this placement? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

If yes, reason for discharge: (circle the number of your answer)

- 01 Reunification with parents/primary caretakers
- 02 Living with other relatives
- 03 Adoption finalized
- 04 Reached age of majority or emancipated
- 05 Guardianship
- 06 Transfer to another agency
- 07 Runaway from placement/placement no longer planned
- 08 Death of client
- 09 Permanent transfer of legal and physical custody to a relative

Was the court opposed to the worker’s recommendation regarding the subject child’s discharge from placement? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Unable to determine

If yes, photocopy or write verbatim from the court order or case record:

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Was the child protection case management workgroup closed for services at the time of this case reading? (circle the number of your answer)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

If yes, date closed: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe reason for closure: \_\_\_\_\_

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52. Based on your professional experience and judgment, do the facts in the case support the worker's conclusions about the following? (circle the number of your answer). Give your reasons.

**Services:**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

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---

**Placement:**

(1) Yes

(2) No

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Stop!**

**The tool is now complete.** Put the tool and attachments in the file folder and give to the site leader.

This information is available in other forms to people with disabilities by contacting us at (651) 282-5329 (voice). TTY/TDD users can call the Minnesota Relay at 711 or (800) 627-3529. For the Speec-to-Speech Relay, call (877) 627-3848.

For more information contact [maxie.rockymore@state.mn.us](mailto:maxie.rockymore@state.mn.us)  
[www.dhs.state.mn.us](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us)



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