

California F2F Outcomes¹ **Quarter 4, 2004 Update**

1. Reducing the number and rate of children placed away from their birth families

The number of children referred for maltreatment increased sharply from 436,061 in 1998 to 470,033 in 2000, then increased steadily thereafter to 493,304 in 2004. (Q2 & Q4 data)

Of the 493,304 children who were referred for child maltreatment between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004, 110,414 or 22 percent were substantiated. (Q4 data)

Approximately 51 children per 1,000 had referrals for child maltreatment in 2004. Of these, 12 children per 1,000 had their referrals substantiated (approximately 22 percent of referrals). Substantiation rates have remained stable at approximately 12 per 1,000 since 1998. (Q4 data)

First entries to foster care decreased sharply from 30,988 in 1998 to 27,822 in 2000 and then rose slightly in 2001 to 28,347. In subsequent years however, first entries have declined. (Q4 data)

Between January 1, 2004 and December 30, 2004, 27,167 children entered foster care. (Q4 data)

First Entries rates remained relatively stable at approximately 3 per 1,000 between 1998 and 2004. (Q4 data)

There were large ethnic group differences in first entry rates in 2004--African Americans entered at a rate of about 7 per 1,000, and Native Americans at a rate of about 5 per 1,000 compared with a rate of approximately 3 per 1,000 for White and Hispanic children. Asian children entered at the lowest rate--one per 1,000. (Q4 data)

There were large age group differences in first entry rates in 2003 -- infants (< 1 year old) entered at a rate of about 11 per 1,000, and toddlers (1-3 year olds) at a rate of about 4 per 1,000. Three to 5 year olds entered at a rate of about 3 per 1,000, and 6-10 year olds entered at a rate of about 2 per 1,000. Eleven to 15 year olds entered at a rate of approximately 2 per 1,000 and 16-17 year olds at a rate of about one per 1,000. (Q4 data)

Between January 1, 1998 and December 31, 2004, the proportion of infants entering care for the first time increased only slightly from 20 to 23 percent. (Q4 data)

Between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004, approximately half (55 percent) of children entering care for the first time were age 5 or younger, 22 percent were 6-10 years old, 19 percent were 11-15 years old, and 5 percent were 16-17 years old. (Q4 data)

The proportion of children entering care for the first time between January 1, 1998 and December 31, 2004 who were Black declined slightly from 22 to 18 percent, while the proportion of Hispanic children increased from 40 to 47 percent. (Q4 data)

¹ Data for the 9th outcome of "reducing any disparities associated with race/ethnicity, gender, or age" are provided within the information given for each of the other eight outcome measures.

Hispanic children accounted for 47 percent of all children entering care for the first time between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004, while White children accounted for 31 percent, Black children accounted for 18 percent, Asian children comprised 3 percent, and Native American children accounted for 1 percent of all entries. (Q4 data)

Between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004, neglect accounted for 78 percent of all first entries to foster care, physical abuse accounted for 12 percent, sexual abuse for 5 percent, and other types of abuse accounted for an additional 5 percent of all first entries. (Q4 data)

Between January 1, 1998 and December 31, 2004, the percentage of children entering care for the first time who were first placed in FFA homes increased from 16 to 35 percent while the proportion of first placements in kinship care declined from 28 to 17 percent. During this same time, the percentage of children entering care for the first time who were placed in group homes or shelters decreased from 23 to 17 percent. (Q4 data)

Between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004, 29 percent of all children entering care for the first time were first placed in foster homes, and 35 percent were placed in FFA homes. Kinship care accounted for 17 percent of first placements and group homes for 9 percent. Eight percent of children entering care for the first time during this period were first placed in shelters. (Q4 data)

2. Increasing the number and rate of children coming into foster care who are placed in their own neighborhoods or communities

Between January 1, 1998 and December 31, 2003 children in kinship care were more likely to be placed closer to home than were children placed in non-kin care. During this period, the proportion of children in care one year after entry who were with kin and placed within one mile of home remained stable at about 28 percent, while the corresponding proportion of children in non-kin care placed at this distance decreased from 7 to 4 percent. (Q4 data)

Additionally, between January 1, 1998 and December 31, 2003, approximately 28 to 31 percent of children in care one year after entry who were with kin were placed 11 or more miles from home compared to 42-47 percent of children placed in non-kin care. (Q4 data)

3. Reducing the number of children served in institutional and group care

Between July 1, 1998 and January 1, 2005 overall child welfare supervised foster care caseloads declined from 108,585 to 82,368. (Q2 & Q4 data)

Over this period, the distribution of placement types shifted toward an increase in children placed in FFA homes and a decrease in children placed with kin. Specifically, the proportion of children in care in FFA homes increased from 16 percent in 1998 to 23 percent by January 1, 2005, and the proportion of children in care in kinship homes decreased from 45 percent to 35 percent over this same period. (Q2 & Q4 data)

As of January 1, 2005, 35 percent of children in care were placed with kin, 23 percent were in FFA homes, and another 12 percent were in traditional county foster homes. Group homes accounted for 9 percent of placements and guardian homes for 10 percent. (Q4 data)

As of January 1, 2005, kinship care placements were the most common among all age groups. This is a change from July 1, 2003, where traditional foster home placements were more common among infants while kinship care was more common among children 1 year of age and older. (Q2 & Q4 data)

Children of all ethnic groups (except for "missing" ethnicity) were more likely to be placed in kinship care homes than in any other child welfare supervised placement. However, Black children were more likely to be placed with kin than were children of other ethnic groups. (Q4 data)

4. Decreasing lengths of stay of children in placement

The median length of stay for children who entered care for the first time between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2002 was 496 days (over 16 months). (Q2 data)

Children placed with kin or in FFA homes experienced longer lengths of stay than those placed in traditional foster homes. Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2002, the median length of stay for children in kinship care, in FFA homes, or in traditional foster homes was 575 days (18 months), 549 days (18 months), and 318 days (10 months), respectively. (Q2 data)

Between January 1, 2000 to December 31, 2002, Black children experienced longer lengths of stay in care than did their counterparts in other racial groups. The median length of stay for Black children in kinship care was 687 days (approximately 22 months), while the median length of stay for White and Hispanic children placed in kinship care was 524 (17 months) and 588 days (19 months), respectively. In non-kin care, the median length of stay was 505 days (17 months) for Black children, 383 days (12 months) for White children and 440 days (14 months) for Hispanic children. (Q2 data)

For *all* racial groups, children in kin care experienced longer median lengths of stay than those in non-kin care. (Q2 data)

5. Increasing the number and rate of children reunified with their birth families

The number of children reunified within 12 months increased consistently from 28 percent for children entering care in 1998 to 35 percent for children entering care in 2001. Since that time, reunifications within 12 month have remained relatively stable reaching 37 percent in 2003. (Q4 data)

Children in non-kin care were reunified more quickly than were children in kinship care. Among children who entered their first spell in care in 2002 (who were in care for at least 5 days), after 24 months 47 percent of children placed with kin had been reunified compared to 58 percent of children placed with non-kin. (Q4 data)

Among children in both kin and non-kin care, the proportion of children reunified increased over time and the kin/non-kin disparity decreased. Specifically, among children who entered their first spell in care in 1998 (who were in care for at least 5 days), after 36 months, 52 percent of children in kinship care and 56 percent of children in non-kin care had been reunified. After 72 months 55 percent of children in kinship care and 59 percent of children in non-kin care had been reunified. (Q4 data)

Among children in both kin and non-kin care who entered their first spell in care in 2002 (who were in care for at least 5 days), the proportion reunified at 24 months tended to be lower for infants than for children ages 1 to 15. Overall, the disparity between reunification rates for infants and older children increased over time for both kin and non-kin placements. For children between the ages of 16 and 17 entering kin and non-kin care for the first time, however, this disparity lessened. (Q4 data)

Among children in kinship care who entered their first spell in care in 2002 (who were in care for at least 5 days), the proportion reunified at 24 months was lower for Black children than for children of any other ethnic group. Among children in non-kin care, reunification rates were similarly lower for Black children than for other ethnic groups, though this racial disparity was less pronounced. (Q4 data)

6. Decreasing the number and proportion of children reentering care

For all entry cohorts between 1998 and 2002, of the total number of children reunified within 12 months, the proportion of children reentering care within 12 months remained relatively stable ranging from 12 to 14 percent. (Q2, Q3, & Q4 data)

For all entry cohorts between 1998 and 2001, of the total number of children reunified within 24 months, the proportion of children reentering care within 12 months remained relatively stable at 11 to 12 percent. (Q2, Q3, & Q4 data)

Among children entering care for the first time in 2001 who were reunified within one year, 11 percent of children placed with kin² and 14 percent of those placed with non-kin had reentered care after 12 months. By 24 months, 14 percent of children placed with kin and 19 percent of those placed with non-kin had reentered care. (Q4 data)

Among children entering care for the first time in 2002 who were reunified within one year, 11 percent of children placed with kin and 14 percent of those placed with non-kin had reentered care after 12 months. (Q4 data)

Among those children placed in kin and non-kin care in 2001 and reunified within 12 months, a greater proportion of infant children reentered care than did children of other age groups. Within 24 months, 19 percent of those infants formerly placed in kin care and 26 percent of those placed in non-kin care had reentered care. (Q4 data)

Among those children placed in kin and non-kin care in 2002 and reunified within 12 months, a greater proportion of infant children reentered care than did children of other age groups. (Q4 data)

Of the Black children placed in kin and non-kin care in 2001 and reunified within 12 months, 13 percent of those placed with kin, and 20 percent of those placed with non-kin had reentered care within 12 months. Within 24 months, 17 percent of Black children formerly placed in kin care and 25 percent of Black children formerly placed in non-kin care reentered care. (Q4 data)

² Placement type for this analysis is stratified by predominant (i.e., setting where child spent at least half the number of care days) placement for the episode from which the child reunified.

Among those children placed in kin care in 2001 and reunified within 12 months, Black children had the highest proportion of reentry among all racial groups after 12 months, among non-kin care providers, however, Native American children had the highest proportion of reentry . After 24 months, Native American children placed in kin and non-kin care had the greatest proportion of reentries at 21 and 26 percent respectively, while Black children had the second highest proportion of reentry at 17 and 25 percent respectively. (Q4 data)

7. Reducing the number of placement moves children in care experience

The number of children who experienced three or more placement moves after 12 months increased for children entering their first spell in care (who were in care for at least 5 days) from 32 percent of those children who entered in 1998 to 37 percent of those children who entered in 2002. After 2002, the proportion of children who experienced three or more placement moves after twelve months decreased slightly to 36 percent in 2003. (Q4 data)

Among children who entered their first spell in care in 1998 (who were in care for at least 5 days), after 3 months, 10 percent of children placed with kin, and 16 percent of children with non-kin had experienced three or more placement moves. After 3 years, these figures rose to 41 percent among those placed within kin and 69 percent among those placed with non-kin. After 6 years, 56 percent of children placed with kin and 82 percent of children with non-kin had experienced three or more placement moves. (Q4 data)

Among children who entered their first spell in care in 2003 (who were in care for at least 5 days), after 3 months, 15 percent of children placed with kin and 17 percent of children placed with non-kin had experienced three or more placement moves. After 12 months, these figures rose to 28 percent for children placed with kin and 42 percent for those placed with non-kin. (Q4 data)

Among children entering care in 1998 (who were in care for at least 5 days), children in non-kin care were more likely to experience three or more placement moves at an earlier age than were children in kinship care. Specifically, 63 percent of children between ages 1 to 5 in non-kin care had experienced three or more placement moves by 24 months compared to approximately 31 percent of those children ages 1 to 5 in kinship care. (Q4 data)

8. Increasing the number and rate of brothers and sisters placed together

As of January 1, 2005, 67 percent of all children in care also had one or more siblings in care. (Q4 data)

As of January 1, 2005, 43 percent of all children with one or more siblings in care were placed with all of their siblings while 66 percent were placed with at least one sibling. (Q4 data)

Placements with relatives were better for keeping entire siblings groups together than where other placement types. As of January 1, 2005, 56 percent of children in sibling groups of two or more were placed together while in kin care, compared to 36 percent of children placed in traditional family foster homes and FFAs, 35 percent of children placed in court specified homes, 9 percent of those placed in shelters, and 50 percent of those placed in guardianship placements. (Q4 data)

Black children in siblings groups were least likely to be placed together in care compared to other ethnicities. As of January 1, 2005, 38 percent of Black children in sibling groups of two or more were placed together while in care, compared to 46 percent of White and Hispanic children, 50 percent of Asian children, and 43 percent of Native American children. (Q4 data)