

MINNESOTA ADOPTION DISRUPTIONS & DISSOLUTIONS: AN EXAMINATION OF CHILDREN IN PRIVATE OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS

This survey is a partnership between the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASW) at the School of Social Work at the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Council of Child Caring Agencies (MCCCA). It seeks to help us better understand the experiences of children in private out-of-home placements in Minnesota. What is contained in this report is a side-by-side comparison of data from all residential facilities, group homes, and foster homes.

*Comparison of
Preliminary Data by
Agency Type*

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In February 2012, the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW) in collaboration with the Minnesota Council of Child Caring Agencies conducted a study to examine adoption disruptions and dissolutions among children in Minnesota's private-agency out-of-home placements.

To conduct this study, the research team identified and contacted the executive director or program manager of fifty-four state-licensed private residential treatment centers, group homes, and treatment foster home placement agencies in Minnesota. A total of thirty-eight agencies (70%) agreed to participate in the study. The study consisted of a closed-answer survey which was to be completed by agency case managers. Agencies were asked to have each of their case managers complete one survey per child or youth on their case load who was physically housed in the facility or home on February 29, 2012. Each survey consisted of 18 to 25 questions depending on responses; no identifying information about the youths was collected. Group homes reported the most difficulty participating (52% participation) due to high caseloads and lack of staff time, while residential treatment centers had the highest participation (80%). Private treatment foster care providers participated at a rate of 71%. Four of the committed agencies did not follow through for a total participation number of 34 agencies (63%). A total sample of 938 youth was obtained after the data had been cleaned for duplications and incomplete submissions.

CASCW evaluators have completed a preliminary analysis and synthesized the data into a comprehensive report presented in the following pages. Tables in this report are divided into five columns. The first column contains the survey questions and potential responses. Columns two through four list results from each placement sub-type (group homes, residential treatment facilities, and private treatment foster homes). Finally, the last column contains the results of all 938 youth in the sample. The data in the columns simply report numbers and basic percentages. Each section ends with a summary of the data; several sections also include charts/graphs. All summaries and graphs take into account data from each agency sub-type and from the total sample.

As we reviewed survey responses, it was clear that there was confusion among respondents/case managers about how to answer questions regarding adoption and pre-adoptive placements. Because people answered these questions in a varied manner, data could not be interpreted as it was reported. Therefore, we conducted a follow-up survey with participating agencies to request additional clarification on approximately 20% of cases - namely those cases in which the case manager indicated that the child/youth may have experienced either an adoption or pre-adoptive placement. Requests for clarified data were made in November 2012. An addendum to this report, inclusive of the (new) clarified data, will be released in Summer 2013.

Again, the data findings in this report represent a preliminary analysis of the data. In-depth analysis of data is ongoing with an anticipated completed report by early to mid-2013. Questions about the study or data contained within this report can be directed to the Principal Investigator for this study, Dr. Traci LaLiberte, lali0017@umn.edu or 612-624-2279.

Minnesota Adoption Disruptions & Dissolutions

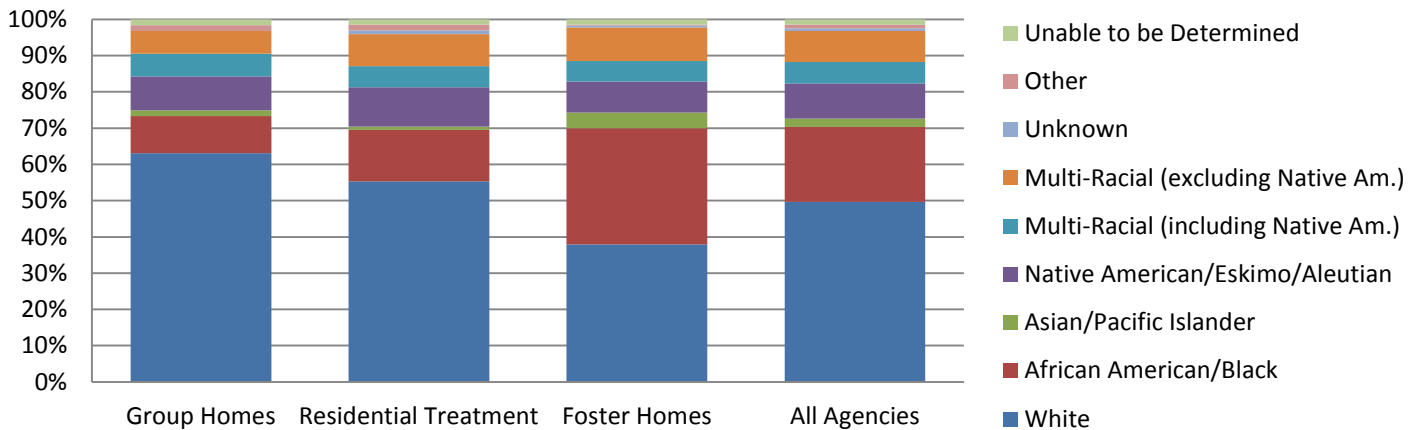


	Group Homes	Residential Treatment	Foster Homes	All Agencies
DEMOGRAPHICS	N=128	N=444	N=366	N=938
Gender				
Male	87 (68.0%)	306 (68.9%)	207 (56.5%)	600 (64.0%)
Female	41 (32.0%)	138 (31.1%)	158 (43.2%)	337 (35.9%)
Intersex	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.1%)
Age				
0-3 Years	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.2%)	31 (8.5%)	32 (3.4%)
4-6 Years	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.2%)	28 (7.7%)	29 (3.1%)
7-9 Years	0 (0.0%)	12 (2.7%)	35 (9.6%)	47 (5.0%)
10-12 Years	6 (4.7%)	46 (10.7%)	43 (11.7%)	95 (10.1%)
13-15 Years	49 (38.3%)	184 (41.4%)	72 (19.7%)	305 (32.5%)
16-18 Years	62 (48.4%)	196 (44.1%)	121 (33.1%)	379 (40.4%)
19+ Years	11 (8.6%)	4 (0.9%)	36 (9.8%)	51 (5.4%)
Child Identifies as Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual				
Yes	15 (11.7%)	43 (9.7%)	12 (3.3%)	70 (7.5%)
No	113 (88.3%)	401 (90.3%)	354 (96.7%)	686 (92.5%)
Child Identifies as Transgendered				
Female to Male	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.7%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.3%)
Male to Female	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
N/A	128 (100.0%)	441 (99.3%)	366(100.0%)	935 (99.7%)
Race				
White	81 (63.3%)	246 (55.4%)	139 (38.0%)	466 (49.7%)
African American/Black	13 (10.2%)	63 (14.2%)	117 (32.0%)	193 (20.6%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	2 (1.6%)	4 (0.9%)	16 (4.4%)	22 (2.3%)
Native American/Eskimo/Aleutian	12 (9.4%)	48 (10.8%)	31 (8.5%)	91 (9.7%)
Multi-Racial (including Native American/Eskimo/Aleutian)	8 (6.3%)	26 (5.9%)	21 (5.7%)	55 (5.9%)
Multi-Racial (excluding Native American/Eskimo/Aleutian)	8 (6.3%)	39 (8.8%)	34 (9.3%)	81 (8.6%)
Unknown	0 (0.0%)	5 (1.1%)	2 (0.5%)	7 (0.7%)
Other	2 (1.6%)	7 (1.6%)	1 (0.3%)	10 (1.1%)
Unable to be determined	2 (1.6%)	6 (1.4%)	5 (1.4%)	13 (1.4%)
Ethnicity				
Hispanic, White	10 (7.8%)	23 (5.2%)	29 (7.9%)	62 (6.6%)
Hispanic, Non-White	4 (3.1%)	18 (4.1%)	3 (0.8%)	25 (2.7%)
Hispanic, Non-Specified	2 (1.6%)	6 (1.4%)	5 (1.4%)	13 (1.4%)
Hmong	1 (0.8%)	2 (0.5%)	5 (1.4%)	8 (0.9%)
Unknown	0 (0.0%)	28 (6.3%)	27 (7.4%)	55 (5.9%)
N/A	111 (86.7%)	366 (82.4%)	297 (81.1%)	774 (82.5%)
Other	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.1%)

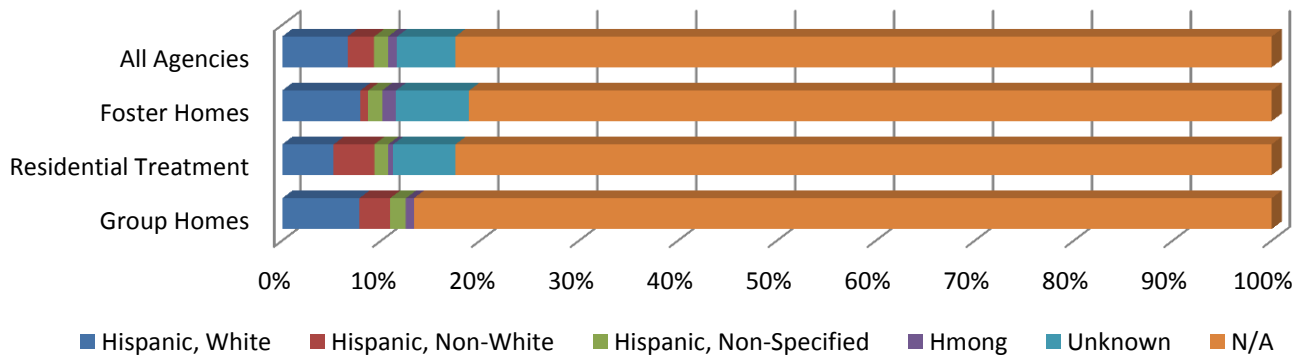
DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Overall, the sample had more males than females, with males making up 64% of the total population. This was true across all agency types, though group homes and residential treatment facilities had slightly higher percentages (68% and 68.9%, respectively) and foster homes had a slightly lower percentage of males (56.5%). Of all the youths, 7.5% identified as GLB, and this was also higher in group homes (11.7%) and residential facilities (9.7%) and lower in foster homes (3.3%). Racially, just under half the sample was noted as being White while 20.6% identified as African American/Black. There was more variation in these percentages throughout the placement types. Foster homes saw less margin between these two racial groups with 38% of children identified as White and 32% identified as Black. Both group homes and residential treatment facilities saw larger margins – 63.3% White youth versus 10.2% Black youth in group homes and 55.4% White youth compared to 14.2% Black youth in residential treatment. Finally, across the whole sample and within each placement type the majority of case managers noted ethnicity as being not applicable. This means that relatively few youths were identified as Hispanic, Hmong, Somali, or another ethnic identity.

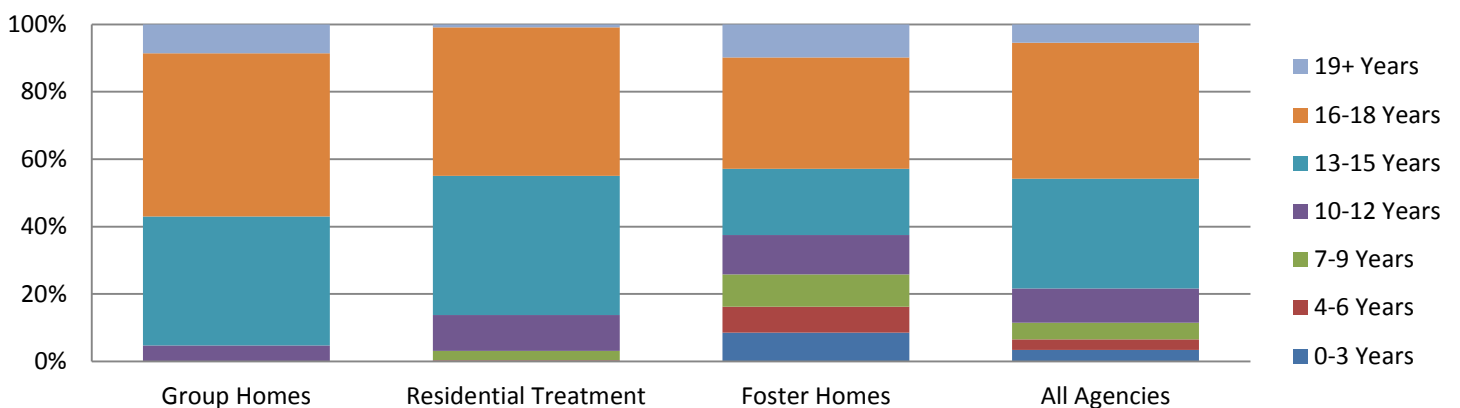
Race



Ethnicity



Age

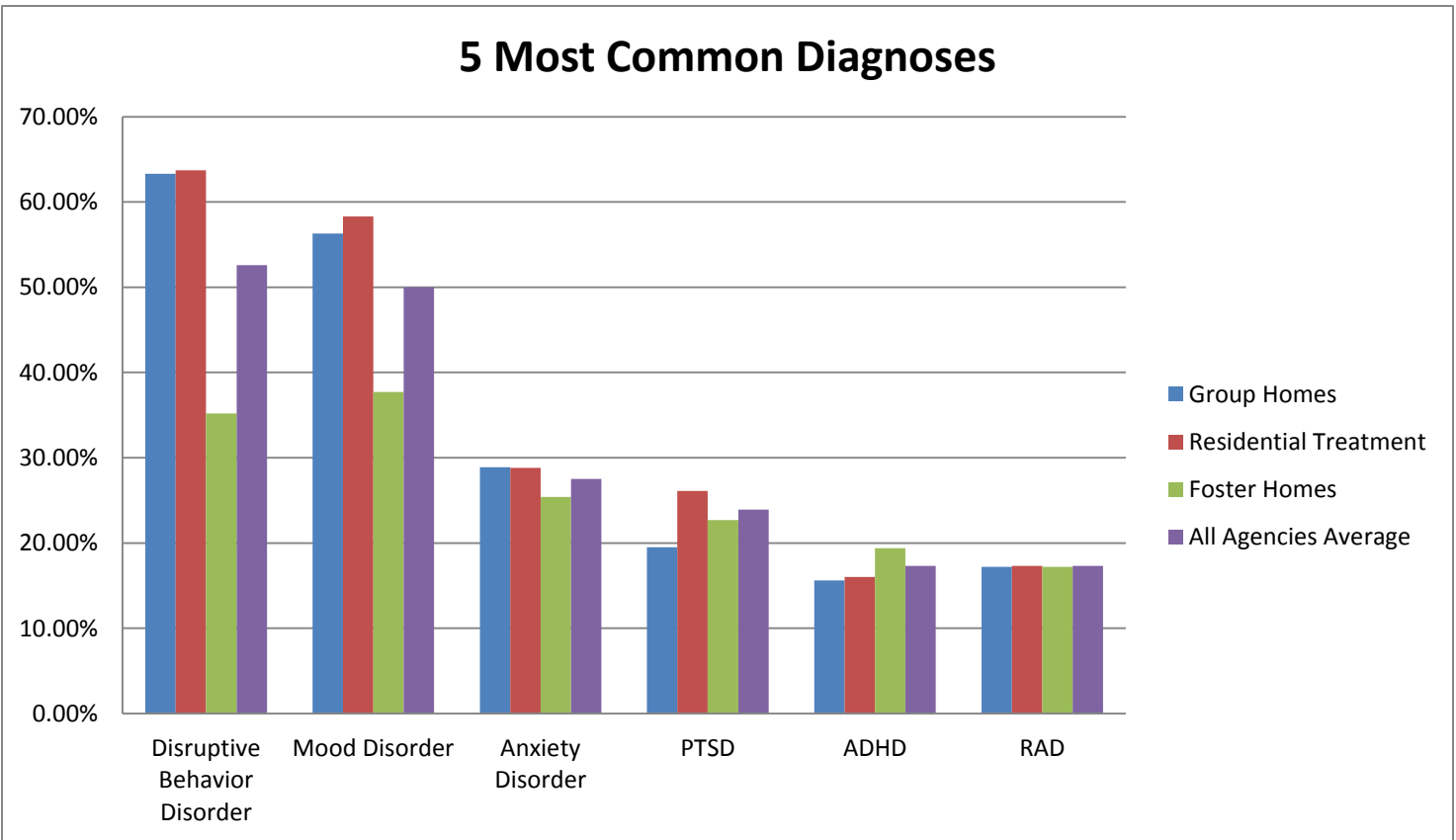
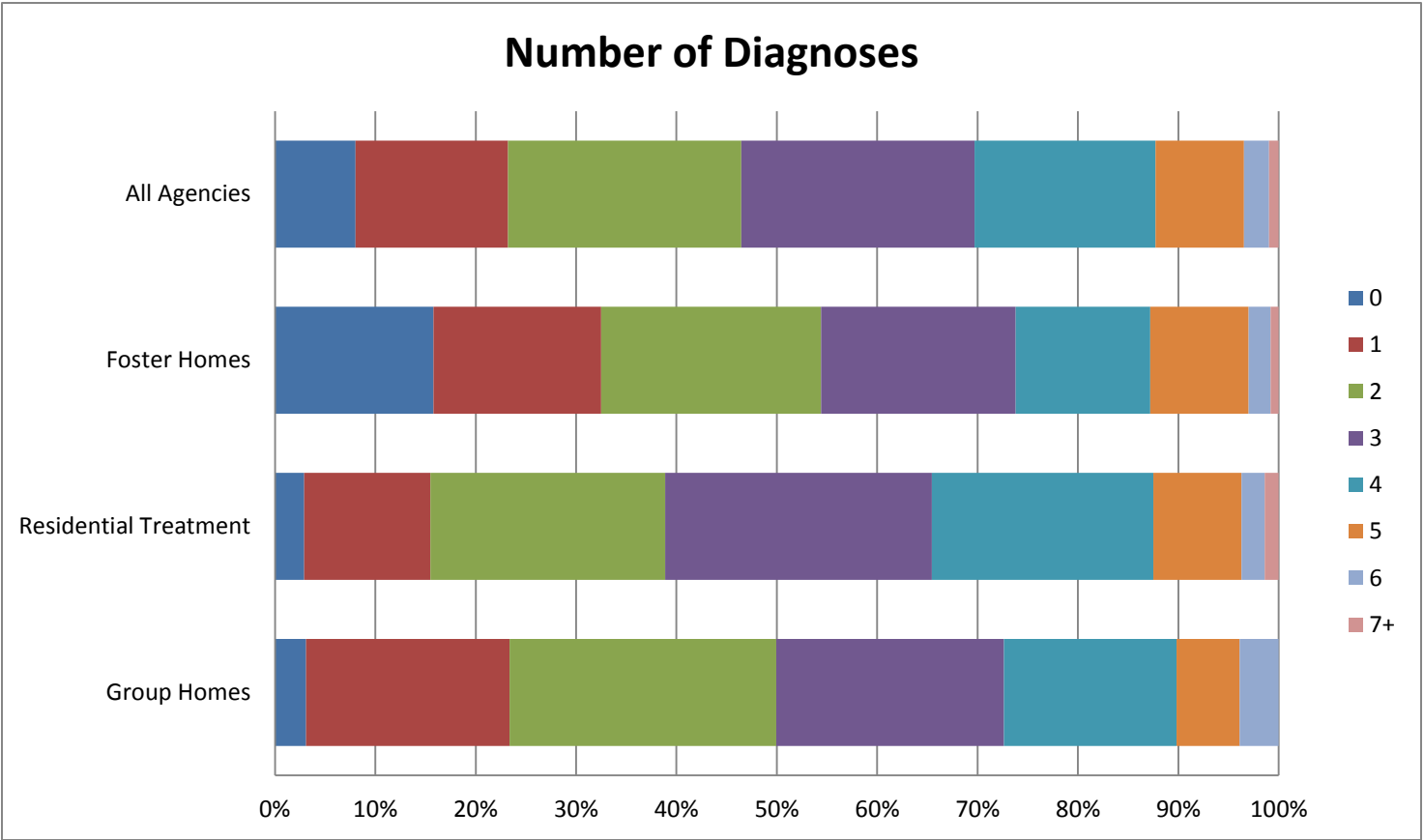


	Group Homes	Residential Treatment	Foster Homes	All Agencies
DISABILITY/DIAGNOSES	N=128	N=444	N=366	N=938
Current Disability/Diagnoses				
Physical Disability	1 (0.8%)	12 (2.7%)	15 (4.1%)	28 (3.0%)
Sensory Disability	3 (2.3%)	10 (2.3%)	16 (4.4%)	29 (3.1%)
Sensory Processing Disability	1 (0.8%)	8 (1.8%)	5 (1.4%)	14 (1.5%)
Intellectual/Developmental Disability	2 (1.6%)	37 (8.3%)	41 (11.2%)	80 (8.5%)
Autism Spectrum Disability	7 (5.5%)	38 (8.6%)	31 (8.5%)	76 (8.1%)
Learning Disability	12 (9.4%)	51 (11.5%)	72 (19.7%)	135 (14.4%)
Disruptive Behavior Disorder	81 (63.3%)	283 (63.7%)	129 (35.2%)	493 (52.6%)
Mood Disorder	72 (56.3%)	259 (58.3%)	138 (37.7%)	469 (50.0%)
Anxiety Disorder	37 (28.9%)	128 (28.8%)	93 (25.4%)	258 (27.5%)
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	25 (19.5%)	116 (26.1%)	83 (22.7%)	224 (23.9%)
Psychotic Disorder	0 (0.0%)	8 (1.8%)	3 (0.8%)	11 (1.2%)
Personality Disorder	10 (7.8%)	41 (9.2%)	16 (4.4%)	67 (7.1%)
Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD)	22 (17.2%)	77 (17.3%)	63 (17.2%)	162 (17.3%)
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Disorder (FASD)	9 (7.0%)	21 (4.7%)	29 (7.9%)	59 (6.3%)
Eating Disorder	2 (1.6%)	18 (4.1%)	5 (1.4%)	25 (2.7%)
Substance Abuse Disorder	25 (19.5%)	102 (23.0%)	20 (5.5%)	147 (15.7%)
LISTED UNDER "OTHER"				
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	20 (15.6%)	71 (16.0%)	71 (19.4%)	162 (17.3%)
Prenatal Exposure (No FASD Diagnosis)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.2%)	4 (1.1%)	5 (0.5%)
Tourette's Syndrome	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.5%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.2%)
Adjustment Disorder	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.2%)	21 (5.7%)	23 (2.5%)
Identity Disorder	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.1%)
Impulse Control Disorder	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.2%)
Cognitive Disorder	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.5%)	1 (0.3%)	3 (0.3%)
Sexual Disorder	5 (3.9%)	19 (4.3%)	10 (2.7%)	34 (3.6%)
Other Medical Diagnoses	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	10 (2.7%)	10 (1.1%)
Rule Out Diagnoses	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.3%)	3 (0.3%)
Other (Not mentioned above)	2 (1.6%)	1 (0.2%)	5 (1.4%)	8 (0.9%)
Number of Diagnoses				
No Diagnoses	4 (3.1%)	13 (2.9%)	58 (15.8%)	75 (8.0%)
1 Diagnosis	26 (20.3%)	56 (12.6%)	61 (16.7%)	143 (15.2%)
2 Diagnoses	34 (26.6%)	104 (23.4%)	80 (21.9%)	218 (23.2%)
3 Diagnoses	29 (22.7%)	118 (26.6%)	71 (19.4%)	218 (23.2%)
4 Diagnoses	22 (17.2%)	98 (22.1%)	49 (13.4%)	169 (18.0%)
5 Diagnoses	8 (6.3%)	39 (8.8%)	36 (9.8%)	83 (8.8%)
6 Diagnoses	5 (3.9%)	10 (2.3%)	8 (2.2%)	23 (2.5%)
7+ Diagnoses	0 (0.0%)	6 (1.4%)	3 (0.8%)	9 (0.96%)

DISABILITY/DIAGNOSES SUMMARY

Case managers could identify more than one diagnosis when appropriate. This means that percentages will not add up to 100%. The most frequently diagnosed disorders held across all placements types. These were diagnoses of Disruptive Behavior Disorder, Mood Disorder, Anxiety Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Reactive Attachment Disorder. While Disruptive Behavior Disorder and Mood Disorder were still among the most frequent diagnoses for youths in foster care (occurring in 35.2% and 37.7% of youths, respectively), the rates were less than those in the average sample (occurring in 52.6% and 50% of youths, respectively). It should be noted that all those diagnoses that are under the heading "listed under 'other'" were written in by individual case managers. Those diagnoses occurring in more than a single youth were included here. Finally, ADHD was inadvertently left off the list of choices in the original survey. While several case managers wrote in an ADHD diagnosis, there is likely underreporting in this category.



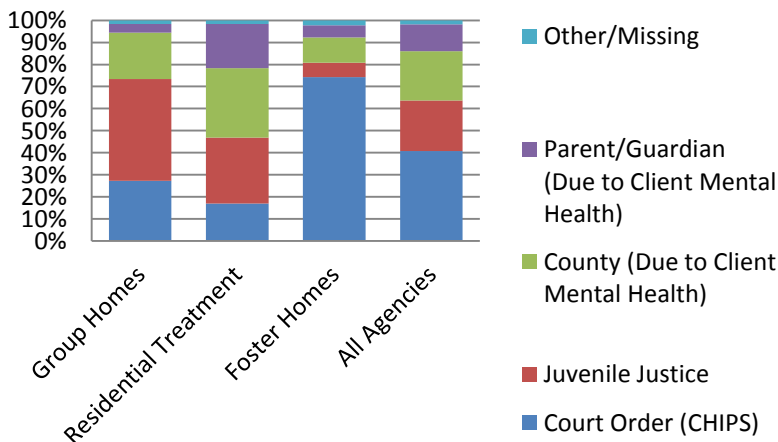


	Group Homes	Residential Treatment	Foster Homes	All Agencies
CURRENT PLACEMENT	N=128	N=444	N=366	N=938
Current Placement is ICWA?				
Yes	5 (3.9%)	11 (2.5%)	24 (6.6%)	40 (4.3%)
No	12 (9.4%)	54 (12.2%)	28 (7.7%)	94 (10.0%)
Missing	18 (85.7%)	108 (84.4%)	370 (83.3%)	314 (85.8%)
Unsure	3 (2.3%)	9 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (1.3%)
Legal Authority for Placement?				
Court Order (CHIPS)	35 (27.3%)	75 (16.9%)	272 (74.3%)	382 (40.7%)
Juvenile Justice	59 (46.1%)	133 (30.0%)	24 (6.6%)	216 (23.0%)
Voluntary by County Due to Client's Mental Health (CMH)	27 (21.1%)	140 (31.5%)	42 (11.5%)	209 (22.3%)
Voluntary by Parent Due to CMH	5 (3.9%)	89 (20.0%)	20 (5.5%)	114 (12.2%)
Other	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.5%)	4 (1.1%)	6 (0.6%)
Missing	2 (1.6%)	5 (1.1%)	4 (1.1%)	11 (1.2%)
Placing Entity?				
County Agency (7-County Metro)	39 (30.5%)	88 (19.8%)	247 (67.5%)	374 (39.9%)
County Agency (Out-State)	34 (26.6%)	105 (23.6%)	85 (23.2%)	224 (23.9)
Tribal Agency	3 (2.3%)	15 (3.4%)	12 (3.3%)	30 (3.2%)
Other State Agency	48 (37.5%)	164 (36.9%)	20 (5.5%)	232 (24.7%)
Parent/Private Placement	4 (3.1%)	72 (16.2%)	1 (0.3%)	77 (8.2%)
Missing	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.1%)
Child's Parent(s) Incarcerated?				
Yes, one parent incarcerated	17 (13.3%)	25 (5.6%)	46 (12.6%)	88 (9.4%)
Yes, both parents incarcerated	2 (1.6%)	3 (0.7%)	4 (1.1%)	9 (1.0%)
No	87 (68.0%)	342 (77.0%)	238 (65.0%)	667 (71.1%)
Unsure	22 (17.2%)	74 (16.7%)	77 (21.0%)	173 (18.4%)
Missing	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.1%)

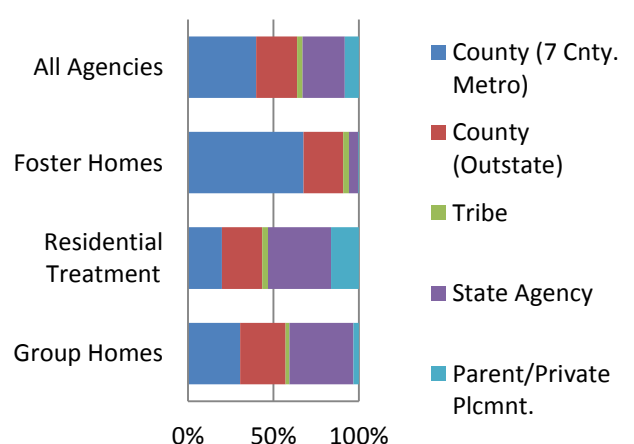
CURRENT PLACEMENT SUMMARY

An important point to consider in the 'Placement' data is that a large percentage of case managers did not answer the questions concerning ICWA placement. These answers were counted as Missing but it may suggest that case managers do not know what constitutes an ICWA placement. In the overall sample, the largest percentages of children were placed by a court order. This was higher in treatment foster homes (74.3% of youths) and lower in residential treatment (16.9%) and group homes (27.3%). Juvenile Justice held the authority for placing 23% of youths overall, though this was lower in foster homes (6.6%) and higher in residential treatment (30%) and group homes (46.1%). The 7-County Metro counties placed youths primarily into foster care while an "Other State Agency" placed the highest percentage of youths in both residential treatment and group homes. Finally, 10.4% of all children had at least one parent currently incarcerated. There is a higher rate of children with incarcerated parents in both foster homes (13.7%) and group homes (14.9%) and a lower rate in residential treatment facilities (6.3%).

Authority for Placement



Placing Entity



	Group Homes	Residential Treatment	Foster Homes	All Agencies
PERMANENCY	N=128	N=444	N=366	N=938
Identified Permanency Plan?				
Reunification	69 (53.9%)	289 (65.1%)	125 (34.2%)	483 (51.5%)
Adoption	4 (3.1%)	9 (2.0%)	74 (20.2%)	87 (9.3%)
Transfer of Permanent Legal and Physical Custody	4 (3.1%)	15 (3.4%)	21 (5.7%)	40 (4.3%)
Independent Living/Emancipation	31 (24.2%)	55 (12.4%)	80 (21.9%)	166 (17.7%)
Long Term Foster Care -Court Order	20 (15.6%)	74 (16.7%)	65 (17.8%)	159 (17.0%)
Missing	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.5%)	1 (0.3%)	3 (0.3%)
Expected Permanency Plan?				
Remain in Current Placement	4 (3.1%)	18 (4.1%)	72 (19.7%)	94 (10.0%)
Return to Parent/Guardian	50 (39.1%)	158 (35.6%)	61 (16.7%)	269 (28.7%)
Transfer to Relative Foster Home	5 (3.9%)	6 (1.4%)	21 (5.7%)	32 (3.4%)
Transfer to Non-Rel. Foster Home	23 (18.0%)	50 (11.3%)	5 (1.4%)	78 (8.3%)
Transfer to Pre-Adoptive Placement	1 (0.8%)	5 (1.1%)	20 (5.5%)	26 (2.8%)
Independent Living/Emancipation	28 (21.9%)	47 (10.6%)	57 (15.6%)	132 (14.1%)
Adult Foster Care	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.2%)	2 (0.5%)	4 (0.4%)
Juvenile Detention	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.2%)
Homelessness	2 (1.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.2%)
Other	0 (0.0%)	13 (2.9%)	3 (0.8%)	16 (1.7%)
Missing	13 (10.2%)	145 (32.7%)	125 (34.2%)	283 (30.2%)

PERMANENCY SUMMARY

Once again, it should be noted that many workers skipped the question regarding expected permanency plan. Despite training on how to complete each question in the survey, it is unclear if individuals left this blank because they were unsure what the permanency plan would be, believed the identified plan would occur, or did not understand the question. Notable in these results are the much lower percentage of foster youth with reunification as either their identified (34.2%) or expected (16.7%) permanency plan when compared to the average rates for all children (51.5% and 28.7%, respectively). Overall, there is a sizeable discrepancy between reunification being the identified permanency plan and the expected permanency plan. This is consistent over all three placement types indicating most placements have a significantly lower number of children expected to reunify though the case plan would identify reunification as the goal.

	Group Homes	Residential Treatment	Foster Homes	All Agencies
PREVIOUS PLACEMENT(S)	N=128	N=444	N=366	N=938
Child Experienced At Least 1 Placement in the Following:				
Public/Tribal Relative Foster Home	13 (10.2%)	40 (9.0%)	56 (15.3%)	109 (11.6%)
Public/Tribal Non-Relative Foster Home	25 (19.5%)	65 (14.6%)	140 (38.3%)	230 (24.5%)
Private Relative Foster Home	10 (7.8%)	14 (3.2%)	14 (3.8%)	38 (4.1%)
Private Non-Relative Foster Home	18 (14.1%)	71 (16.0%)	150 (41.0%)	239 (25.5%)
Group Home	34 (26.6%)	69 (15.5%)	32 (8.7%)	135 (14.4%)
Residential Treatment Facility	82 (64.1%)	232 (52.3%)	104 (28.4%)	418 (44.6%)
Shelter	28 (21.9%)	103 (23.2%)	152 (41.5%)	283 (30.2%)
Juvenile Detention	62 (48.4%)	141 (31.8%)	49 (13.4%)	252 (26.9%)
# of Total Previous Placements**				
None	12 (9.4%)	79 (17.8%)	46 (12.6%)	137 (14.6%)
1-2 Placements	45 (35.2%)	174 (39.2%)	134 (36.6%)	353 (37.6%)
3-4 Placements	31 (24.2%)	77 (17.3%)	85 (23.2%)	193 (20.6%)
5-7 Placements	21 (16.4%)	42 (9.5%)	43 (11.7%)	106 (11.3%)
8-10 Placements	3 (2.3%)	20 (4.5%)	10 (2.7%)	33 (3.5%)
11+ Placements	9 (7.0%)	15 (3.4%)	17 (4.6%)	41 (4.4%)
Unsure	6 (4.7%)	34 (7.7%)	29 (7.9%)	69 (7.4%)
Missing	1 (0.8%)	3 (0.7%)	2 (0.5%)	6 (0.6%)

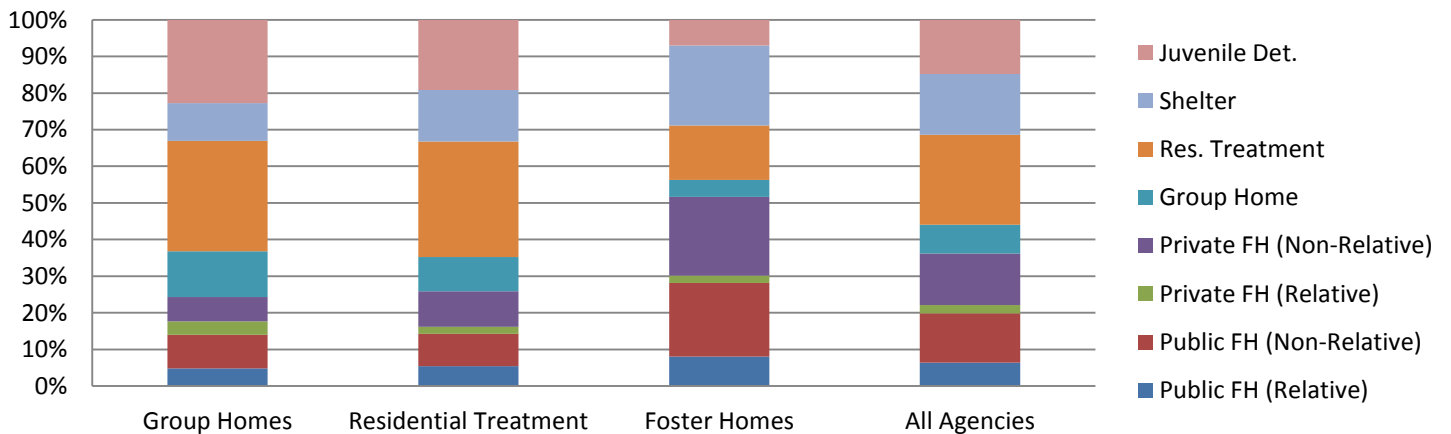
**Total number of placements reflects only non-permanent placements and does not reflect pre-adoptive or adoptive placements.

	Group Homes	Residential Treatment	Foster Homes	All Agencies
PREVIOUS PLACEMENT(S) (cont.)	N=128	N=444	N=366	N=938
Child Previously Adopted or in Pre-Adoptive Placement?				
No	99 (77.3%)	364 (82.0%)	265 (72.4%)	728 (77.6%)
Yes, Finalized Adoption	21 (16.4%)	66 (14.9%)	35 (9.6%)	122 (13.0%)
Yes, Pre-Adoptive Home (w/APA)	1 (0.8%)	4 (0.9%)	35 (9.6%)	40 (4.3%)
Yes, Pre-Adoptive Home (No APA)	3 (2.3%)	4 (0.9%)	15 (4.1%)	22 (2.3%)
Unsure	3 (2.3%)	3 (0.7%)	11 (3.0%)	17 (1.8%)
Missing	1 (0.8%)	3 (0.7%)	5 (1.4%)	9 (1.0%)
Child Adopted from Another Country (International Adoption)				
Yes	5 (3.9%)	6 (1.4%)	7 (1.9%)	18 (1.9%)
No	23 (18.0%)	70 (15.8%)	93 (25.4%)	186 (19.8%)
N/A or Missing	100 (78.1%)	368 (82.9%)	266 (72.7%)	734 (78.3%)

PREVIOUS PLACEMENT SUMMARY

Overall, the greatest percentage of youths (44.6%) had experienced a previous placement in residential treatment facilities while only 4.1% had experienced a placement in a private foster home with a relative. However, there was variability within each agency type with respect to identified previous placements. The average youth from within this study experienced 1-2 previous placements. This held true across all three agency types. The majority of youths (77.6%) had never experienced a finalized adoption or pre-adoptive placement, which was also consistent over the three agency types.

% of Children Having Been in the Following Placements



Number of Previous Placements

