



**National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information  
National Adoption Information Clearinghouse**



***Gateways to Information: Protecting Children and Strengthening Families***

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<http://basis1.calib.com/BASIS/chdocs/docs/canweb/SF>

## **Assessing Disproportionality in Child Welfare**

**The Race + Child Welfare Project. Fact sheet 2, State-by-state statistical profile of racial over-representation in foster care / Center for the Study of Social Policy.**

Center for the Study of Social Policy (Washington, D.C.)

2004

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Currently, there is no widely used method for calculating racial over-representation or racial disparity in the foster care system. This fact sheet offers one approach to quantifying the extent of this problem. The project calculated a "racial disproportionality ratio" by dividing the proportion of Black (or non-Hispanic White) children in foster care by the proportion of Black (or non-Hispanic White) children in the state population under the age of 18. They then classified the 50 states into the following four groups based on their racial disproportionality rates for African Americans: Comparable Representation (states with rates under 1.50); Moderate Disproportion (states with rates between 1.50-2.49); High Disproportion (states with rates between 2.50-3.49); and Extreme Disproportion (states with rates of 3.50 and over). "Racial disparity" occurs when the rate of disproportionality of one racial group (e.g., African Americans) exceeds that of a comparison group (e.g., White Americans). A table indicates the statistical overrepresentation of African-American children and black-white disparity among children in foster care in the 50 States for the year 2000. (Author abstract modified)

<http://www.cssp.org/uploadFiles/statORFactSheet2.pdf>

**Measuring racial discrimination / Panel on Methods for Assessing Discrimination, Committee on National Statistics, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council of the National Academies ; Rebecca M. Blank, Marilyn Dabady, and Constance F. Citro, editors.**

2004

Publication Information: Washington, DC: National Academies Press

<http://www.nap.edu/books/0309091268/html/>

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**Racial Disproportionality in Reported and Substantiated Child Abuse and Neglect: An Examination of Systematic Bias.**

Ards, S. D.  
Myers, S. L.  
Malkis, A.  
Sugrue, E.  
Zhou, L.  
Benedict College, Columbia, SC.  
2003

*Children and Youth Services Review*  
25(5/6)375-392

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Using data from Minnesota for 2000, this study shows that measures of discrimination in maltreatment substantiation are inflated by a failure to disaggregate counties with large minority populations from those with small minority populations. Racial disparities in substantiation rates, conditional upon reports to child protective service workers, are not huge. Nonetheless, measures of discrimination- once one accounts for characteristics of victims, offenders, reporters, counties, and types of maltreatment- are non-trivial. For African Americans, discrimination rates are higher in the state as a whole than in the counties that have the largest share of minority children. Although the discrimination measures do not vanish when disaggregated analysis is performed, the findings suggest that caution should be displayed when reporting disproportionality statistics that include data from widely dispersed geographical areas. (Author abstract) 13 references, 5 tables.

**Report to the Legislature on the study of outcomes for African American children in Minnesota's child protection system.**

Minnesota Department of Human Services, Children's Services Administration.  
2002  
Distributed by: Minnesota Dept. of Human Services  
444 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
Tel: (651) 297-3933  
TDD/TTY: (800) 627-3529  
[Commissioner.DHS@state.mn.us](mailto:Commissioner.DHS@state.mn.us)  
Distributor's Website: <http://edocs2.dhs.state.mn.us>

This report complies with the legislative mandate in the 2001 Minnesota Session Laws, which instructed the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services in consultation with local social services agencies, councils of color, representatives of communities of color and others to study why African American children in Minnesota are disproportionately represented in out-of-home placements. In addition the mandate instructed the commissioner to study the decision-making points in the child welfare system that lead to different outcomes for children. The Legislature also requested that the department produce a report on its findings along with corresponding recommendations. In response to this mandate, the department invited and then convened a committee that consisted of African American community members, leaders, representatives of Anoka, Hennepin, Olmsted and Ramsey counties, and others. The committee used the experience of child welfare experts and academicians, along with the department's child welfare data system, and national research literature to gather child welfare and child

demographical information to develop an understanding of the over representation of African American children in Minnesota's child welfare system. While there was concurrence about the definition and existence of disproportionality of African American children in Minnesota's out-of-home placement system, there were multiple and varying opinions about the causes of the racial disproportionality. Research and anecdotal experiences point to several causes which include racism; practices of child welfare professionals; reporting patterns of mandated reporters and others; and socio-economic factors of the African American families in the system. This report provides a review of the data, an abbreviated look at child welfare decision points, local and national research about racial disparities of African American children and their families in the out-of-home placement system and finally the full recommendations of the committee. (Author abstract modified)  
<http://edocs2.dhs.state.mn.us/lfservlet/Legacy/MS-1943-ENG>

**Child Abuse and Neglect: An Examination of American Indian Data**

Earle, K. A.

University of Southern Maine, Portland  
2000

Publication Information: Casey Family Programs, Seattle, WA.

Distributed by: Casey Family Programs

1300 Dexter Ave. N., Suite 400

Seattle, WA 98109

Tel: 206-282-7300

Distributor's Website: <http://www.casey.org>

This study examined the methods used by states to collect data about child abuse and neglect within the Native American population to determine the accuracy of national statistics. Interviews were conducted with representatives from 57 tribes and officials from 21 states about investigation procedures and the maintenance of statistics at the tribal and state level. An analysis of the interviews revealed that only a portion of child abuse and neglect cases in the American Indian community are recorded by the state. About one-fourth of Indian child abuse and neglect cases are investigated by the tribe only. Other cases are investigated by a combination of agencies including the tribe (65 percent); states (42 percent); counties (19 percent); Bureau of Indian Affairs (19 percent); and a consortium (9 percent). States and counties only report the cases in which they have been involved, which suggests that a maximum of 61 percent of all cases are tracked in the data collection system. Fewer than 20 percent of tribes have an automated record keeping system and only 3.5 percent forward reports to a national database, such as the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System. The tribes lack the technical and financial resources to develop a database of child abuse statistics and so must rely on the states and counties to report their information. The author recommends greater coordination in the collection of data and more support for tribes to establish their own recordkeeping systems. 43 references, 4 figures, 3 tables.  
[http://www.nicwa.org/policy/research/2000/CAN\\_2000.pdf](http://www.nicwa.org/policy/research/2000/CAN_2000.pdf)

**Research-based risk assessment: adding equity to CPS decision making.**

Children's Research Center

1999

Over the last two decades, America's Child Protective Service (CPS) systems have seen the number of African American families on caseloads increase. In most jurisdictions, African Americans are more likely than Whites, Hispanics, or Asians to have allegations of maltreatment substantiated and to have children placed in out-of-home care. This trend is particularly disturbing when viewed in the context of the National Incidence Studies (NIS) which conclude that there are no differences in maltreatment rates for African Americans and Whites. If these studies are accurate, they raise serious questions about the disproportionate number of African American families in America's child protection system. Some have worried (or even concluded) that as more and more CPS agencies implement actuarial risk assessment systems, racial bias will be exacerbated. Rather than speculate about the potential impact of research-

based systems on the over representation of African Americans, the Children's Research Center (CRC) has reviewed data from agencies using actuarial risk assessments to determine if these systems have resulted in a greater level of disparity between African Americans and Whites. This paper answers questions about the relationships between risk, race, and recurrence of abuse and neglect. It presents the actual experiences of states using actuarial risk assessment and clarifies precisely how equity issues should be evaluated. (Author abstract)

<http://www.nccd-crc.org/crc/pubs/racerisk.pdf>

**Race, Ethnicity, and Child Maltreatment: An Empirical Analysis.**

Lauderdale, M.

Valiunas, A.

Anderson, R.

Texas Univ., Austin. School of Social Work.

1980

*Child Abuse and Neglect*

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New York, NY 10010

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An analysis of data from all validated cases of child abuse or neglect recorded in the central registry of the Texas Department of Human Resources for 1975, 1976, and 1977 was undertaken to assess the rates of abuse and neglect for each of the major ethnic groups represented in the state's population. The ethnic composition of the population identified as at risk for abuse or neglect was 61 percent Anglo, 15 percent Black, and 24 percent Mexican-American. The annual rates for all abuse and neglect per 1,000 people under 18 years of age were 2.87, 3.17, and 3.94 for Anglos, Mexican-Americans, and Blacks, respectively. Abuse among Anglos accounted for 33.5 percent of the validated cases of maltreatment. Mexican-Americans and Blacks accounted for 25.3 percent and 29.4 percent of the maltreatment cases, respectively. Neglect was the major form of maltreatment for Mexican-Americans and Blacks, accounting for 65.6 percent and 61.2 percent of the maltreatment cases, respectively. Approximately 55 percent of the maltreatment cases involving Anglo families involved neglect. These relationships were not altered when rural-urban differences were taken into account. In addition to providing information on the relation between ethnicity and incidence of various forms of abuse, the study underscores the methodological value of the use of rates to enable accurate comparative inferences and the aggregation of data by demographic characteristics to reduce potentially confounding effects. 22 references.