

## Calculating Disproportionality of Children in Out-of-Home Care

There may be more than one way to calculate disproportionality. Here is one that is used by the National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology, and CWLA's National Data Analysis System.

First, take the number of children in care by a specific race/ethnicity, divided by the total number of children of that race/ethnicity in the population, and multiply by 1000.

This will give you a rate.

For example:

- There are almost 19.68 black children in care per thousand black children in the population.
- There are 4.48 white children in care per thousand white children in the population.

You can then take two of those rates and calculate them against one another, and get a rate of disproportionality.

For example:

- Black children are 4.39 times more likely to be in out of home care than white children.
- Native American children are 3.38 times more likely to be in out of home care than white children.

This calculation can also be done on other child welfare data.

For example:

- Reports of child abuse/neglect
- Substantiated cases of child abuse/neglect
- Children removed from home

We can also analyze data on type of care and outcomes, such as:

- Type of placement setting (i.e. Kinship care, Group homes, etc) by race/ethnicity
- Length of stay in care by race/ethnicity

Things to consider:

- The possibility that Native American children are being under-reported.
- Race and Hispanic Origin are separate variables. In looking at disproportionality, we have separated them into mutually exclusive categories. For more information on race/ethnicity/Hispanic origin categories, click here: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/race/racefactcb.html>

*A data sheet has been provided with the state by state data on rates of children in out-of-home care and rates of over-representation. If you have any questions regarding this worksheet or the data sheet, please contact Julie Ohm at the National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology at [johm@cwla.org](mailto:johm@cwla.org)*