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Outcome 3: Low Replacements

This outcome report provides an overview of the magnitude of foster care movements. The best measure to present this magnitude is the percent of children in care at least one day who had at least one transfer from one facility to another during a given month or year.

Key Notes on Source Data

The sources for the data are the Child Care Review Service (CCRS)/Welfare Management System (WMS) and Connections, both of which are New York City's data systems of record. CCRS/WMS captures data on foster care and preventive services. Connections captures data about all investigations of abuse and neglect and on foster care facilities and foster parents.

- For this analysis, movements from one facility to another are indicated by activity codes in CCRS. Facility location and types associated with these movements are reported in Connections.
- For the transfers and neighborhood-based placements analysis, Community District (CD) is used to represent neighborhood. The child's home CD is defined by his/her case address at the time of placement as recorded in the Welfare Management System (WMS). The facility CD is defined by the facility's address as recorded in Connections.
- For the transfers involving siblings analysis, children with the same case numbers, as reported in WMS, are identified as siblings. Children with the same biological/adopted mother are assigned the same case numbers. There are two main limitations to our ability to accurately identify sibling groups. The first is that when a child is freed for adoption, his/her case number can be changed, severing any association to other siblings in care. Thus, for children who are freed for adoption, we are unable to determine whether or not they are part of a sibling group. The second limitation derives from the way we assign case numbers through the biological mother. By associating siblings through the biological mother, half-siblings with the same father but different mothers cannot be identified and properly counted.

Total Number and Types of Reports:

Two levels of reporting have been devised for presenting the data: summary reports and comparative reports. There is a citywide, or systemwide, summary report and three similar reports, i.e. Borough, CD, and Agency, which consider only smaller sub-populations of the citywide. In addition, two comparative reports have been developed, using the basic format of the summary reports, allowing the user to compare cross-sections of the data. Both levels of reporting present the data, using the same measures, in a similar format.

Summary Reports

1. Citywide – This is the overall systemwide report for the city.
2. Borough – This report mimics the citywide report, but focuses only on transfers of children from a particular borough.
3. Community District (CD) Summary – This report mimics the citywide report, but focuses on transfers of children from a particular community district (CD).
4. Agency Summary – This report mimics the citywide report, but provides information for children who experienced movements while in facilities managed by a particular agency. When a child is transferred between two agencies, that movement is associated with the initiating agency.

Comparative Reports

5. CD Comparative with City and Borough – This report compares the transfer experiences of children from a particular CD in a particular borough to the transfer experiences of children from the same borough and the city as a whole.

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6. Agency Comparative with City – This report compares the transfer experiences of children who were placed in a facility managed by a particular agency to the experiences of children placed with all contract agencies/ACS direct foster care services and all NYC placements.

Report Layout

Reports 1, 2, 3, and 4 are *summary reports* for the City, Borough, CD, and Agency, respectively. The layout for each of these reports shows:

- 1) the three most recent months of data for the current calendar year; and
- 2) calendar year-to-date (CYTD) cumulative totals for the current year and the three years prior.

For example, for the June 2001 report, the three most recent months of data shown are for April 2001, May 2001 and June 2001. The CYTD 2001 data reflects the cumulative total from January 2001 to June 2001. The period covered in the cumulative total for the current year is the same period covered in the cumulative totals for the other years listed – CYTD 2000 would represent the same January to June period.

Reports 5 and 6 are *comparative reports* for CD and Agency.

The CD comparative report allows you to compare a particular CD's performance with that of the Borough's and the City's performances. The Agency comparative report provides a comparison of a particular agency's performance with the City's performance. The layout for each of these reports shows:

- 1) the most recent month of data for the current calendar year;
- 2) CYTD cumulative total for the current year; and
- 3) the percentage change from the previous CYTD cumulative total.

For example, for the June 2001 report, the most recent month of data that is shown is June 2001. The CYTD 2001 data reflects the cumulative total from January 2001 to June 2001. The percentage change from the previous CYTD (CY 2000) data reflects the comparative change from the CYTD 2001 cumulative total and the cumulative total from CYTD 2000. The comparative number for CYTD 2000, which is not shown, spans the same January to June period.

Details on Performance Report

This outcome provides a measure of the foster care system's success at providing stable placements for children while they are in foster care. In this measurement, the analysis of the data assesses the impact transfers have on five critical foster care factors. These critical factors consider:

1. movements from one agency to another;
2. the transfer number (1st, 2nd, or 3^d+ movement) in a given child's foster care spell;
3. movements to and from kinship placements;
4. movements to and from a child's neighborhood or CD; and
5. the impact on intactness of sibling groups in foster care.

Number of children in care at least one day

This first section of the table provides an overview of a point-in-time snapshot of children in care at least one day during the time period evaluated.

- A unique count of children who experienced at least one transfer during a given time period is provided.
- Of the total in-care population, the percent that experienced a transfer is shown.

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Number of transfers

This section considers movements within an agency or movement from one agency to another and whether that movement is the child's first, second, third or more transfer. The starting point is to first identify the total number of transfer activities in the given time period.

The first portion of this section distinguishes between intra-agency transfers and inter-agency transfers. An intra-agency transfer is a transfer in which a child is moved from a facility managed by a given agency to another facility managed by that same agency. An inter-agency is a transfer in which a child is moved from one agency's facility to a different agency's facility.

- Of the total number of transfers, percentages are given for both intra-agency transfers and inter-agency transfers.

The second portion of this section looks at a child's transfer history during his/her current foster care spell. A spell is the time between foster care entry and discharge.

- Of the total number of transfers, the percent of transfers that are 1st transfers in a child's foster care spell is shown.
- Of the total number of transfers, the percent of transfers that are 2nd transfers in a child's foster care spell is shown.
- Of the total number of transfers, the percent of transfers that are the 3rd or more transfer in a child's foster care spell is shown.

Transfer to and from kinship placements

This section examines the movements while in care from one type of facility to a kinship home and from kinship homes to other types of facilities. Kinship care is foster care provided by a relative up to the third degree (grandparents, great-grandparents, great-great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, great-aunts, great uncles, siblings and first cousins). Other facility types include foster boarding homes and congregate care facilities (institutional setting, agency-operated boarding homes, group homes & group residences).

- The percent of transfers that went from a facility type that is not kinship to a kinship home is provided.
- The percent of transfers that went from a kinship home to another facility type is provided.

Transfers and neighborhood –based placements

This section considers transfers in foster care where the movement places or removes the child from his/her neighborhood/CD. Again, CD is used to represent the child's neighborhood. Case address, the address of the biological mother, determines the child's home CD.

- The percent of transfers that returned the child to his/her home CD is shown.
- The percent of transfers that removed a child from his/her home CD is shown.

Transfers Involving Siblings

This last section of transfers assesses whether the transfers affected the intactness of sibling groups in foster care. A group of two or more full- or half-siblings constitutes a sibling group. Children with the same case number are identified as siblings.

ACS emphasizes the importance of placing children with their siblings to maintain family ties. If a child's needs suggest that he/she should be separated from his/her sibling(s), effort is made to place

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the children close together to help ensure the legally required visitation and communication between them.

Sibling groups are identified as either being separated, partially intact, or fully intact.

- Siblings that are **separated** refer to sibling groups in which none of the children are placed together in the same home or facility.
- Siblings that are **partially intact** refers to sibling groups of three or more children in which some of the siblings are placed in the same home or facility and some are not.
- Siblings that are **fully intact** refers to sibling groups in which all siblings are placed together in the same home or facility.

Number of transfers of siblings that were initially separated

For separated siblings, it is the hope that transfers of siblings place them together.

- Of the transfers of sibling groups initially separated, the percent of transfers that resulted in bringing the entire group together is provided.
- Of the transfers of sibling groups initially separated, the percent of transfers that resulted in bringing the group partially together, where at least two siblings are placed in the same facility, is provided.

Number of transfers of siblings that were initially partially intact

For partially intact sibling groups, it is the hope that any transfer will elevate their intactness level to fully intact.

- Of the transfers of sibling groups initially partially intact, the percent of transfers that resulted in bringing the entire group together is provided.
- Of the transfers of sibling groups initially partially intact, the percent of transfers that resulted in completely separating the group is provided.

Number of transfers of siblings that are initially intact

For fully intact sibling groups, it is the hope that transfers do not affect the group's fully intact status.

- Of the transfers of sibling groups fully intact, the percent of transfers that resulted in partially separating the group is provided.
- Of the transfers of sibling groups fully intact, the percent of transfers that resulted in separating the group is provided.