



Foster Care Review Office

June 2021



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Quarterly Report



The Nebraska Foster Care Review Office (FCRO) independently tracks children and youth in out-of-home care, reviews their cases, collects and analyzes data related to the children and youth, and reports on these findings.

We value opportunities to share this data with communities and system partners across Nebraska.



The FCRO is an independent state agency responsible for the oversight of the permanency, safety and well-being of all children in out-of-home care in Nebraska.

Topics for Today's Discussion:

- Overview of Children and Youth in Out-of-home Care
- Review of Related Demographics
- Placements and Removals
- Number of Caseworkers
- Educational Outcomes
- June 2021 Recommendations



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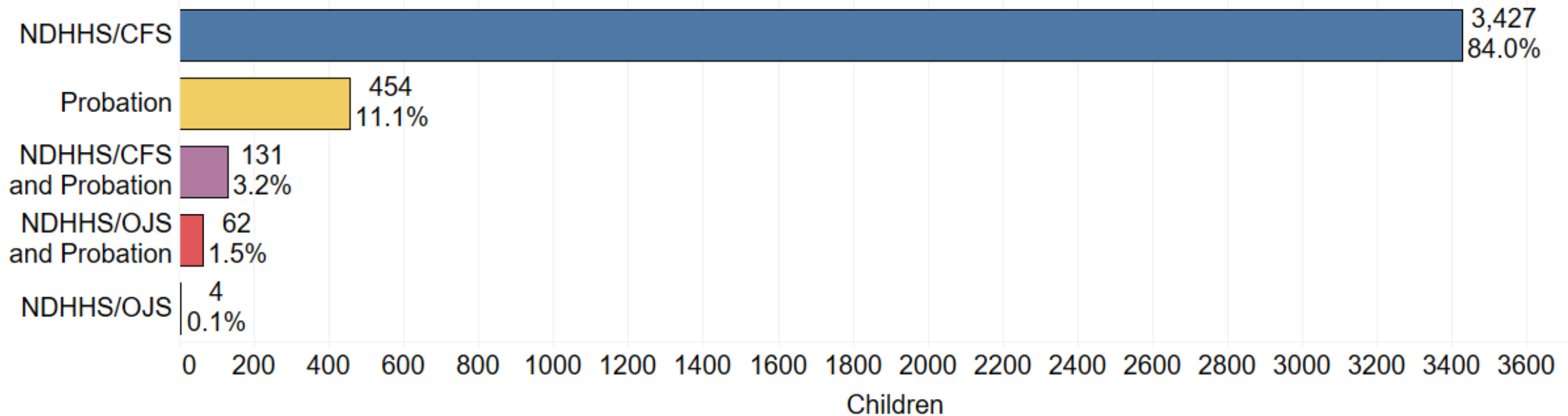
Nebraska children in out-of-home or trial home visit placements under DHHS/CFS, DHHS/OJS, and/or the Office of Juvenile Probation – Point-in-time (Single Day) View



Agencies need to work together to monitor the impact Covid-19 has had and may continue to have on service delivery and supports, placement constraints, workforce capacity, and on individual well-being.

4,078

Number of Nebraska children in out-of-home or trial home visit placements under DHHS/CFS, DHHS/OJS, and/or the Office of Juvenile Probation on 3/31/21





Children Solely Involved with DHHS/CFS – Point-in-time (Single Day) View

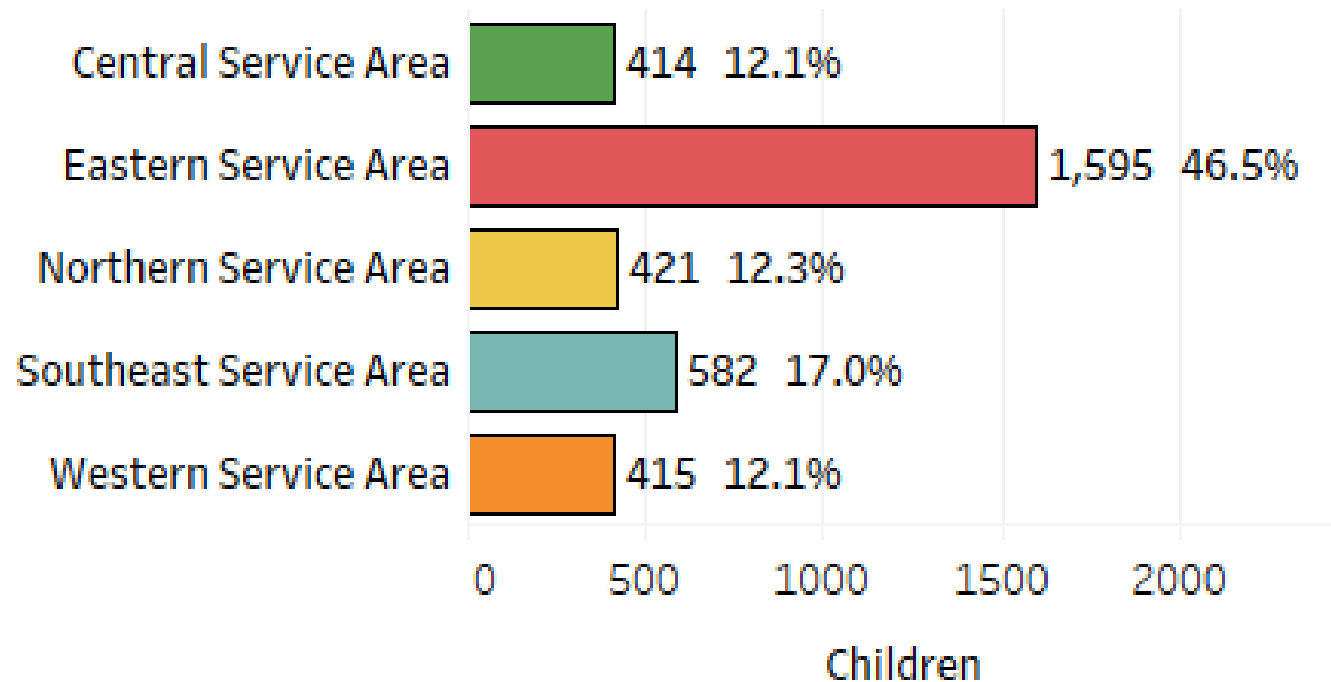


Most of the children solely involved with DHHS/CFS are from the larger urban areas located in the Eastern and Southeast service areas. Counties with the most children in care included Douglas (1,414), Lancaster (410), and Sarpy (181).

When comparing the number of children in out-of-home care and trial home visit to the number of children in the population for the county, the counties with the highest rates of children in out-of-home or trial home visit placement are Garden, Lincoln, Thomas, Greeley, Pawnee, Morrill, Boyd, Cheyenne, Scotts Bluff, and Phelps.

3,427

DHHS/CFS Wards in Out-of-Home or Trial Home Visit Placement on 3/31/21

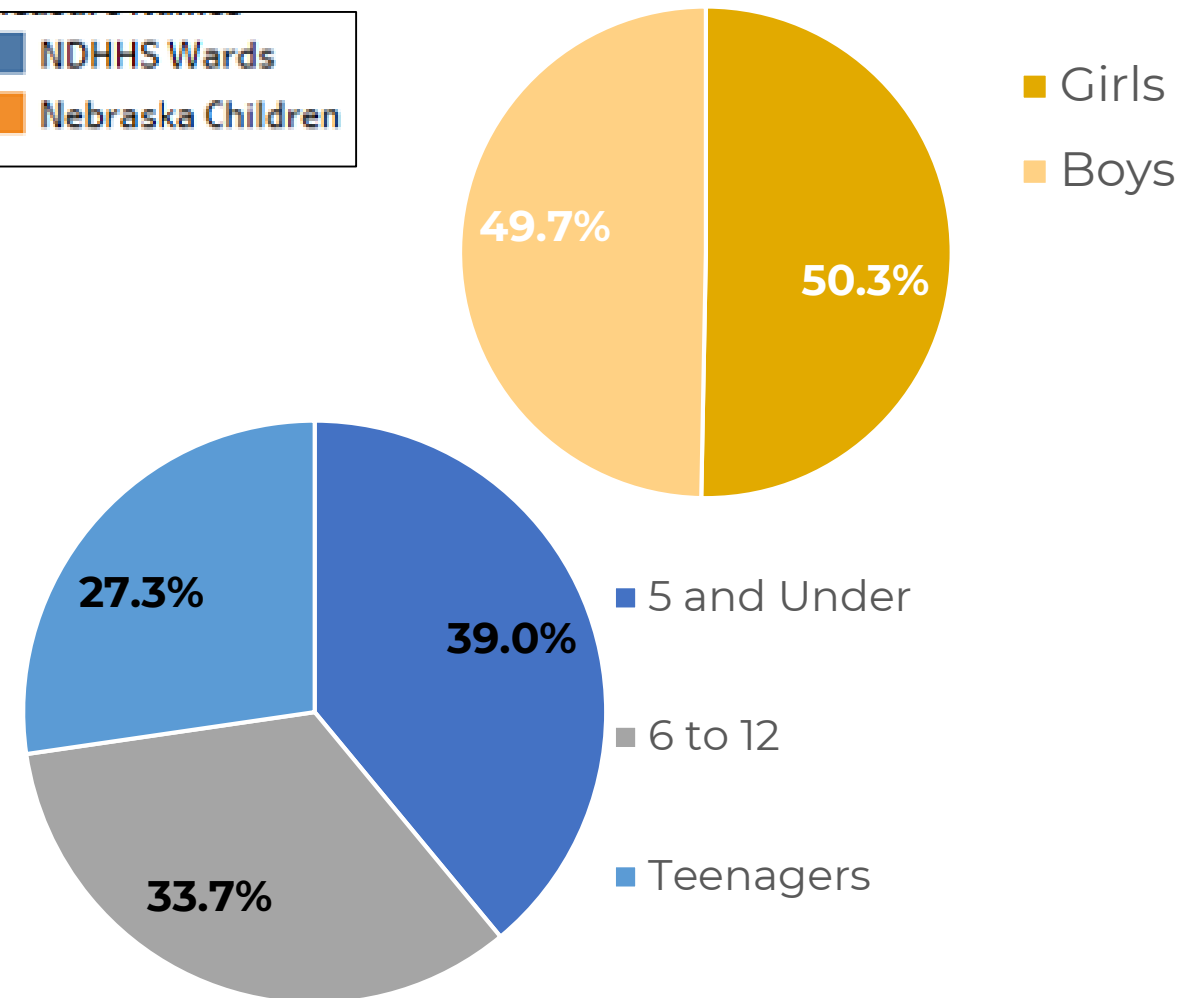
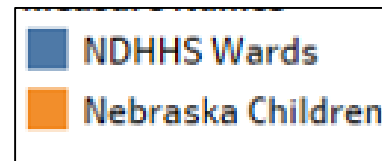
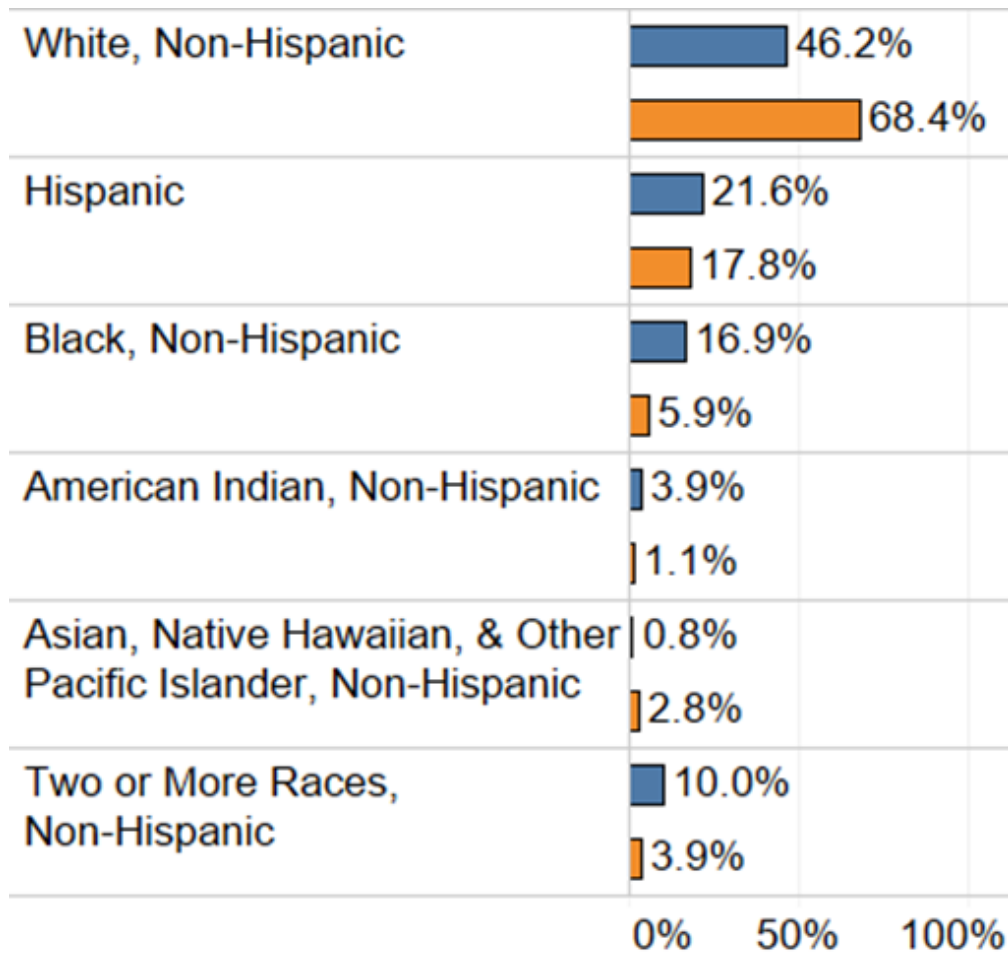




A disproportionate number of minority youth are DHHS/CFS wards in out-of-home or trial home visit placements.

3,427

DHHS/CFS Wards in Out-of-Home or Trial Home Visit Placement on 3/31/21

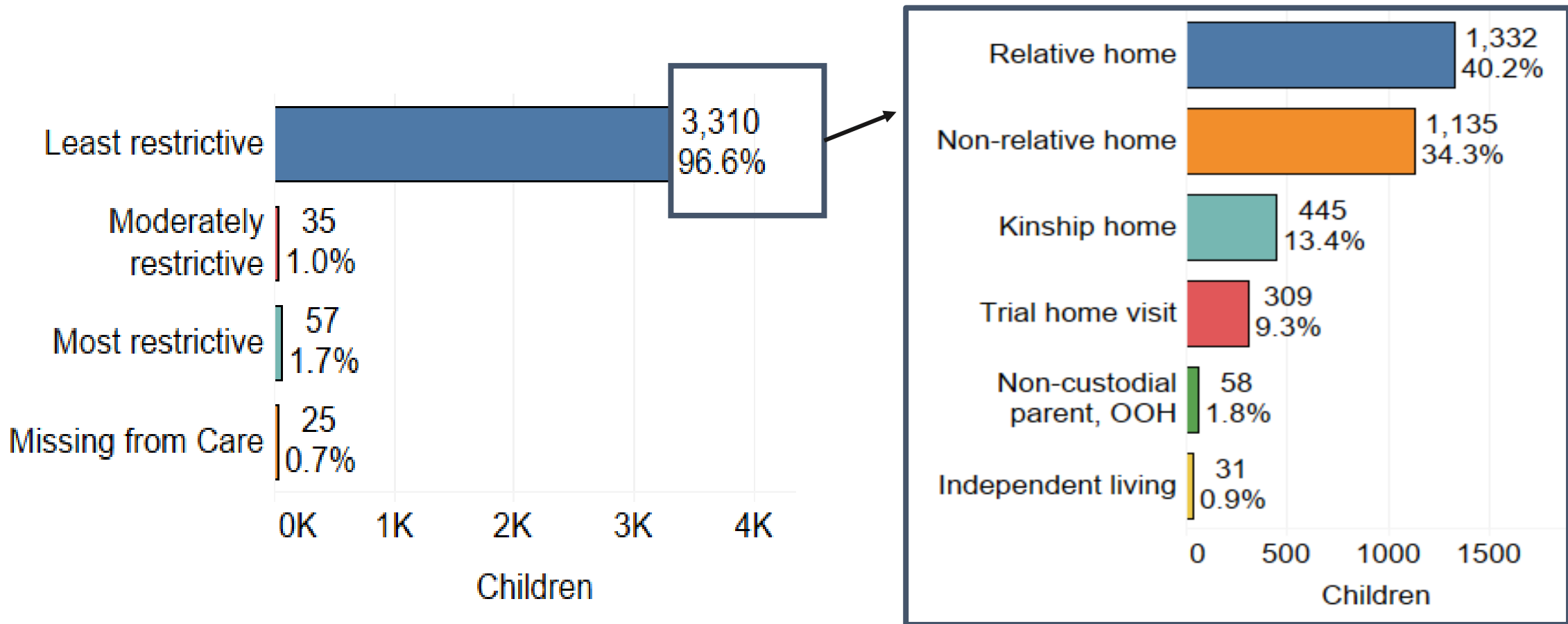




Most (3,310 or 96.6%) DHHS/CFS wards were placed in a family-like, least restrictive setting. The majority (1,777 or 59.2%) of children in a least restrictive foster home, excluding trial home visits, are placed with relatives or kin.

3,427

DHHS/CFS Wards in Out-of-Home or Trial Home Visit Placement on 3/31/21

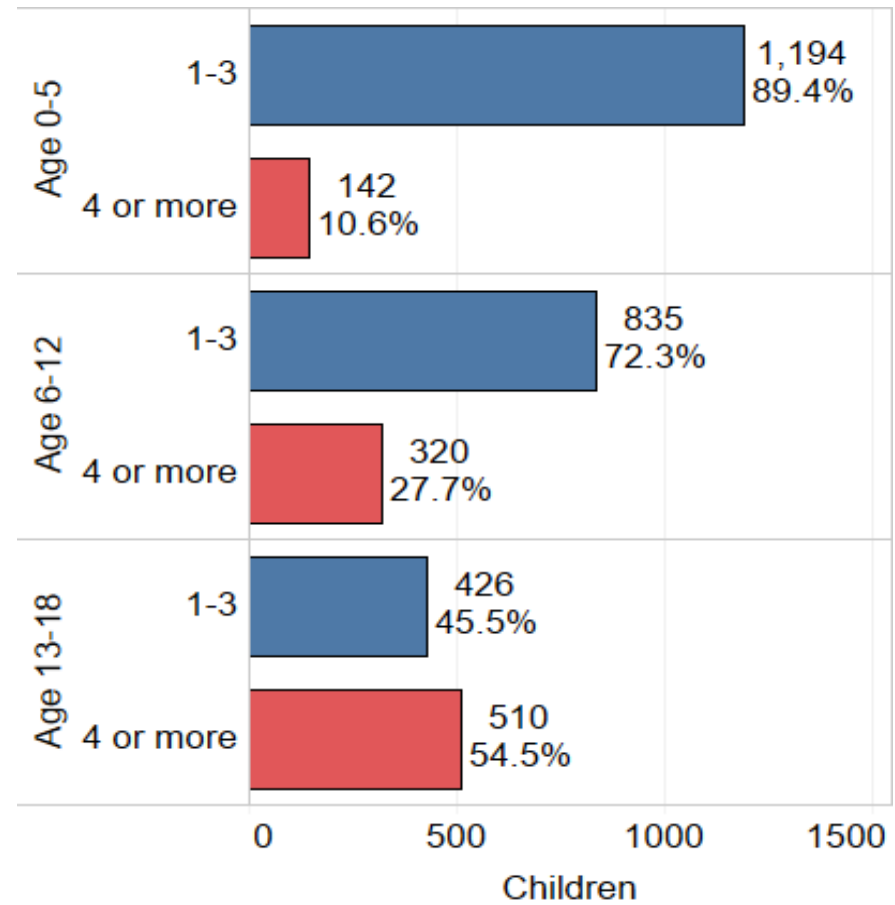
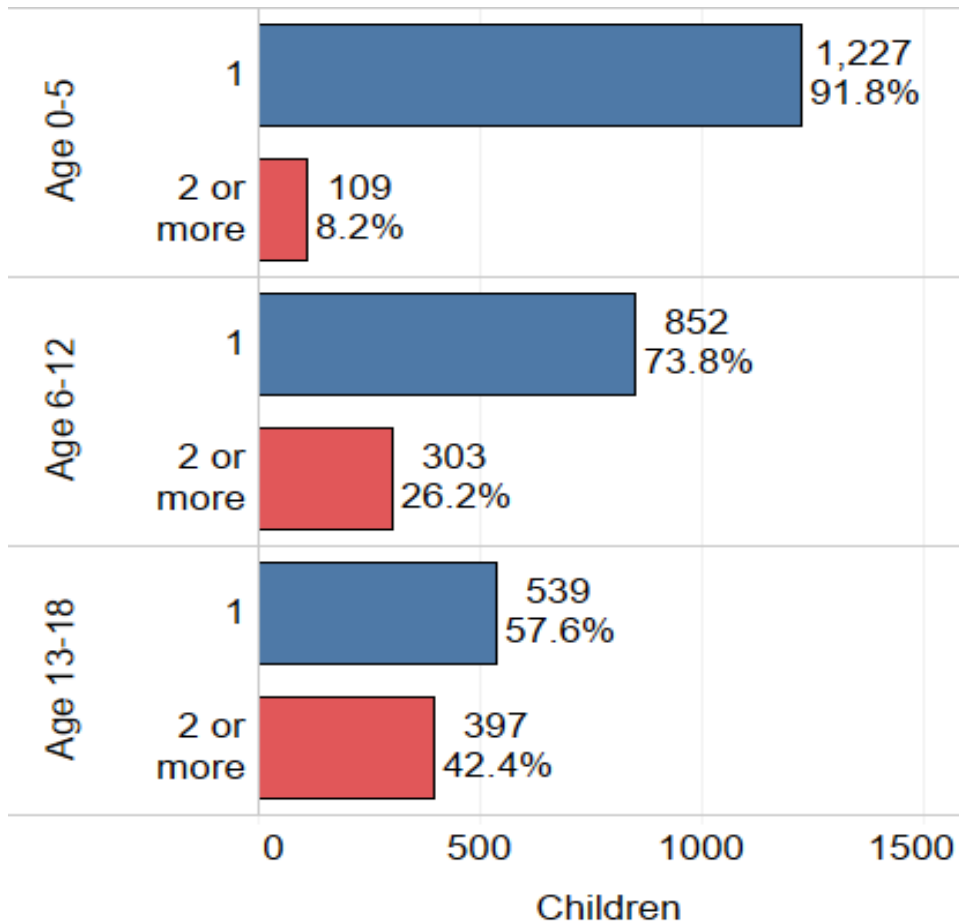




Of the DHHS/CFS wards in care on 3/31/21, 809 (23.6%) had experienced more than one court-involved removal from the parental home and 972 children (28.4%) had experienced four or more placements over their lifetime.

3,427

DHHS/CFS Wards in Out-of-Home or Trial Home Visit Placement on 3/31/21

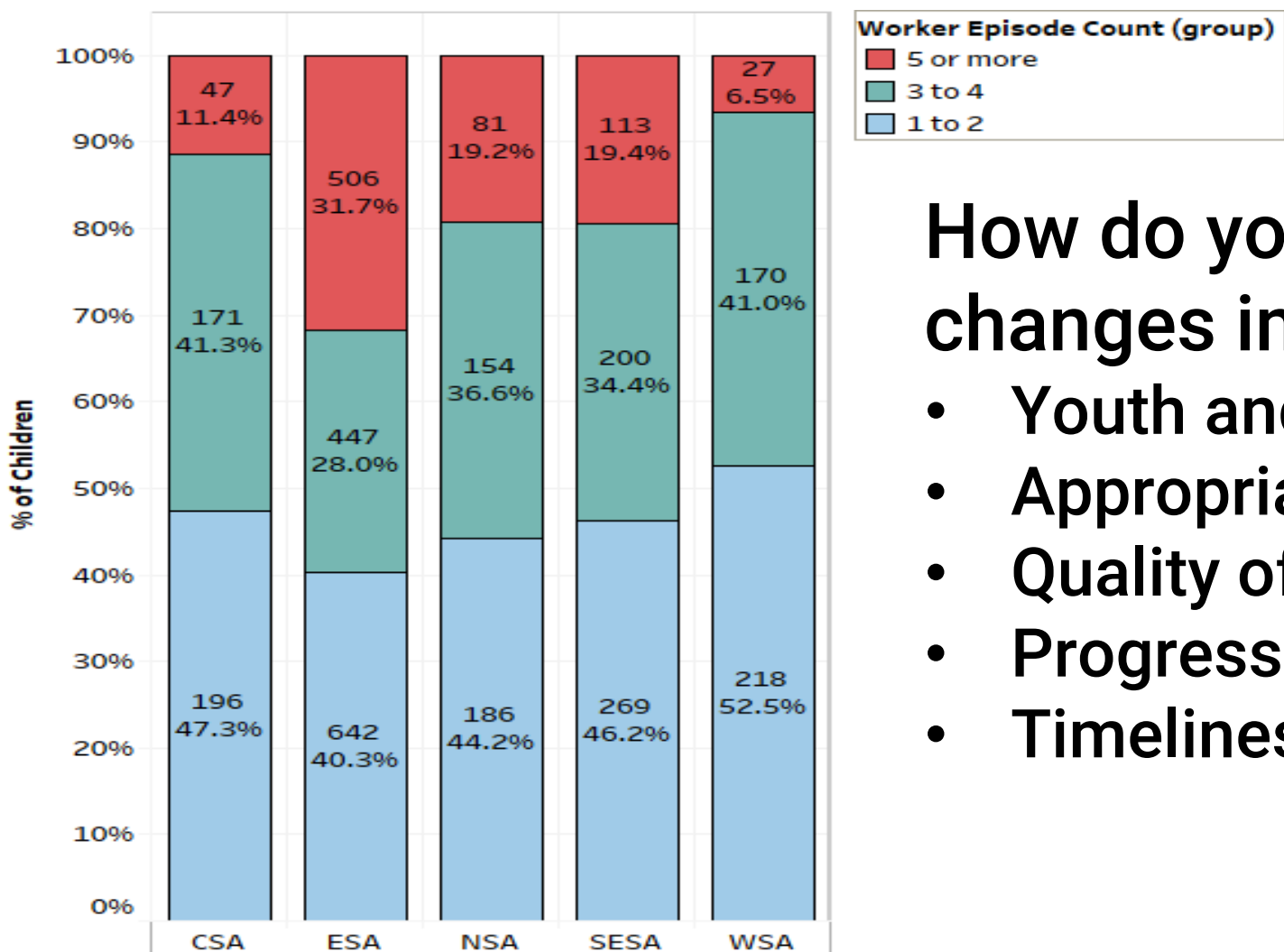




Between 6.5% to 31.7% of DHHS/CFS wards have had five or more workers since most recently entering the child welfare system. More than four workers is considered an unacceptable number of worker transfers, as it is likely to delay permanency.

3,427

DHHS/CFS Wards in Out-of-Home or Trial Home Visit Placement on 3/31/21



How do you see caseworker changes impacting...

- Youth and family engagement
- Appropriateness of placement(s)
- Quality of foster care
- Progress on permanency goals
- Timeliness of permanency

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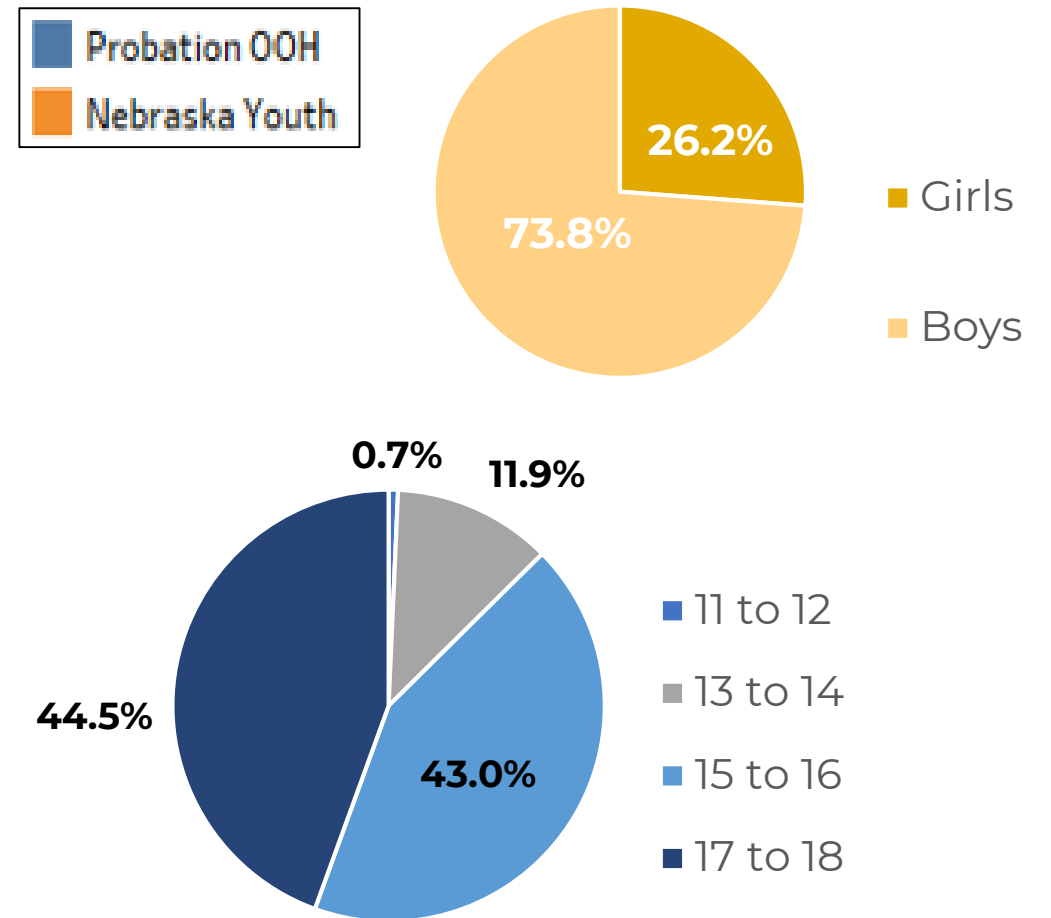
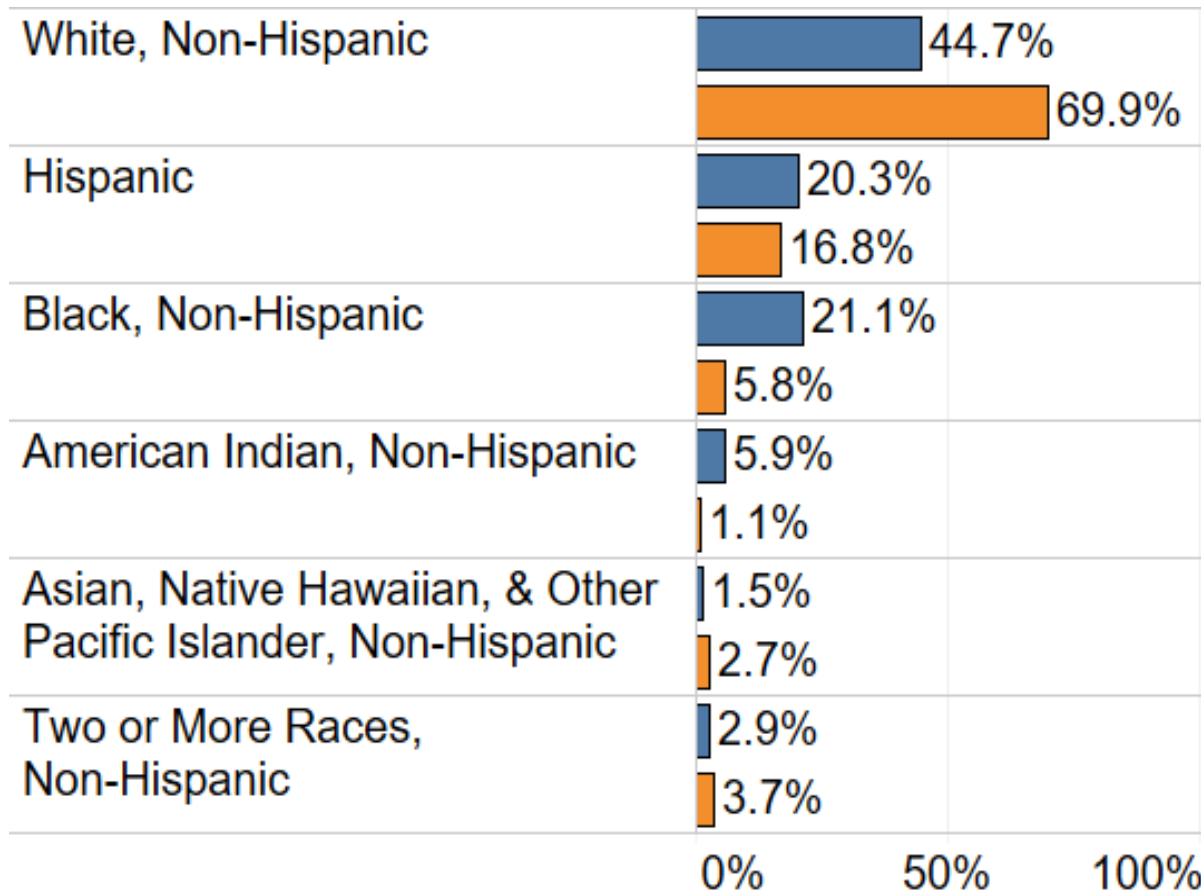
Youth in Out-of-Home Care Supervised by the Office of Juvenile Probation - Point-in-time (Single Day) View



A disproportionate number of minority youth supervised by Probation are in out-of-home care.

454

Probation Supervised Youth in Out-of-Home Care on 3/31/21





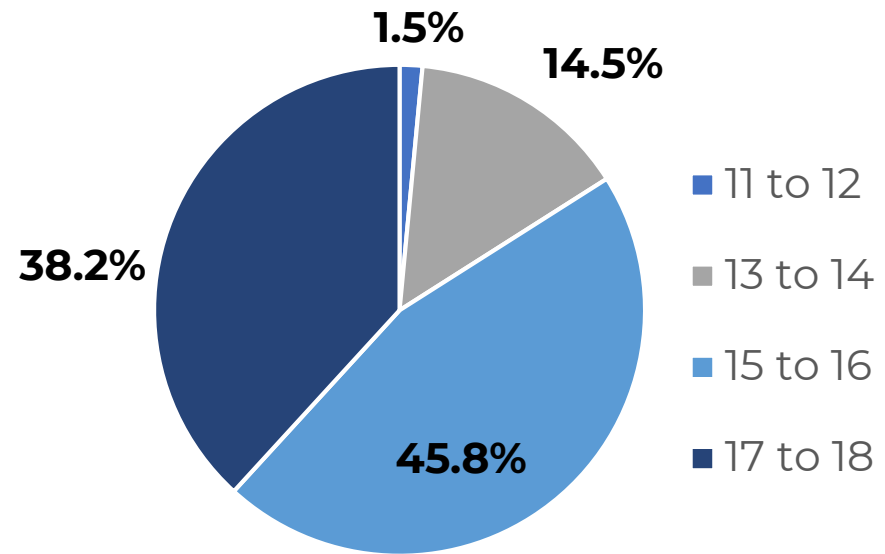
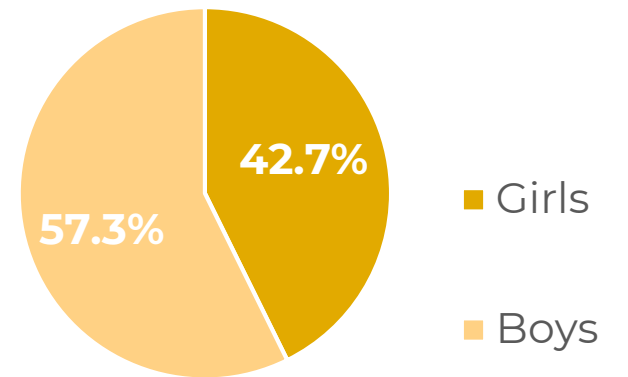
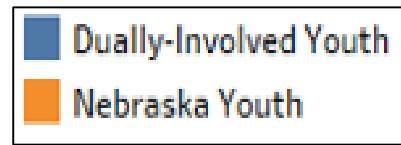
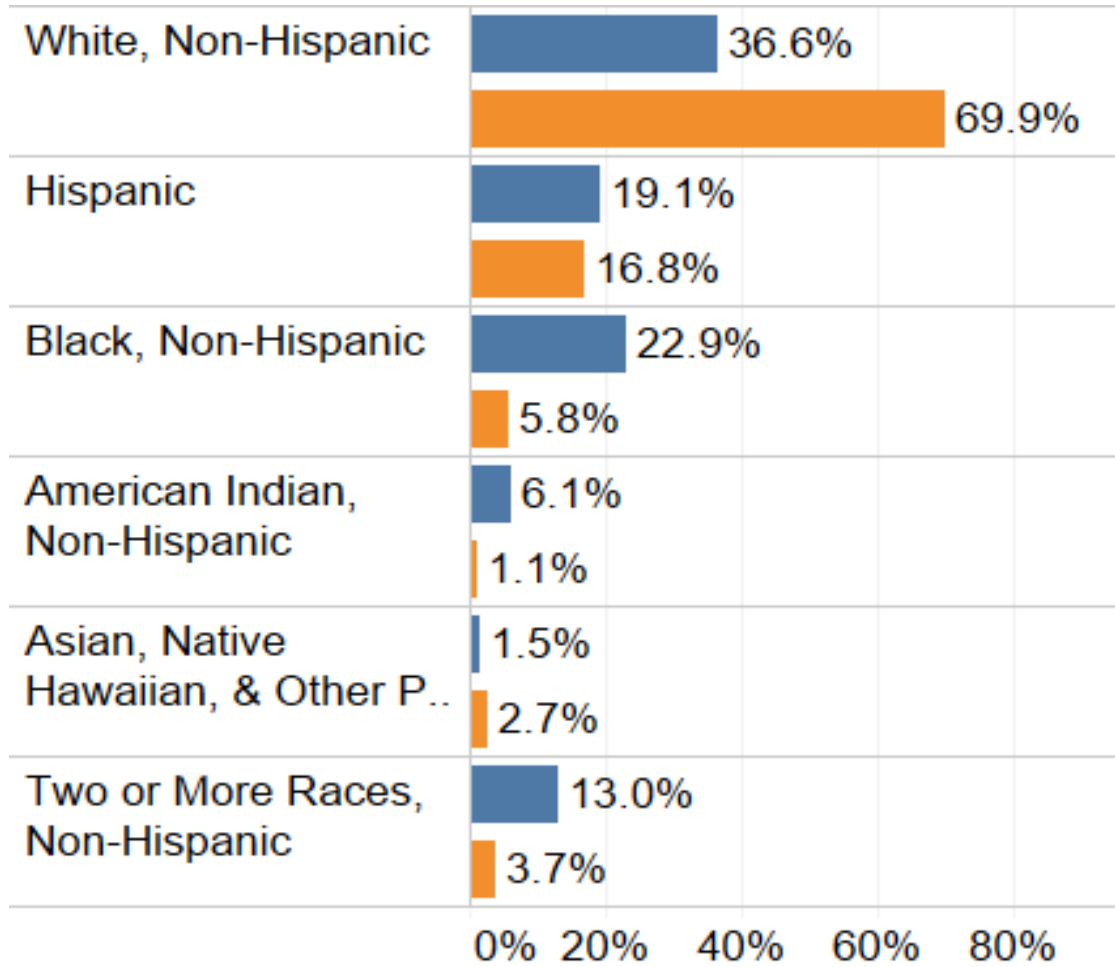
Youth in Out-of-Home Care with Simultaneous DHHS/CFS and Probation Involvement – Point-in-time (Single Day) View



Black, American Indian, and multi-racial youth continue to be overrepresented in the dually-involved population.

131

DHHS/CFS Wards and Probation Supervised (Dual) Youth in Out-of-Home Care on 3/31/21





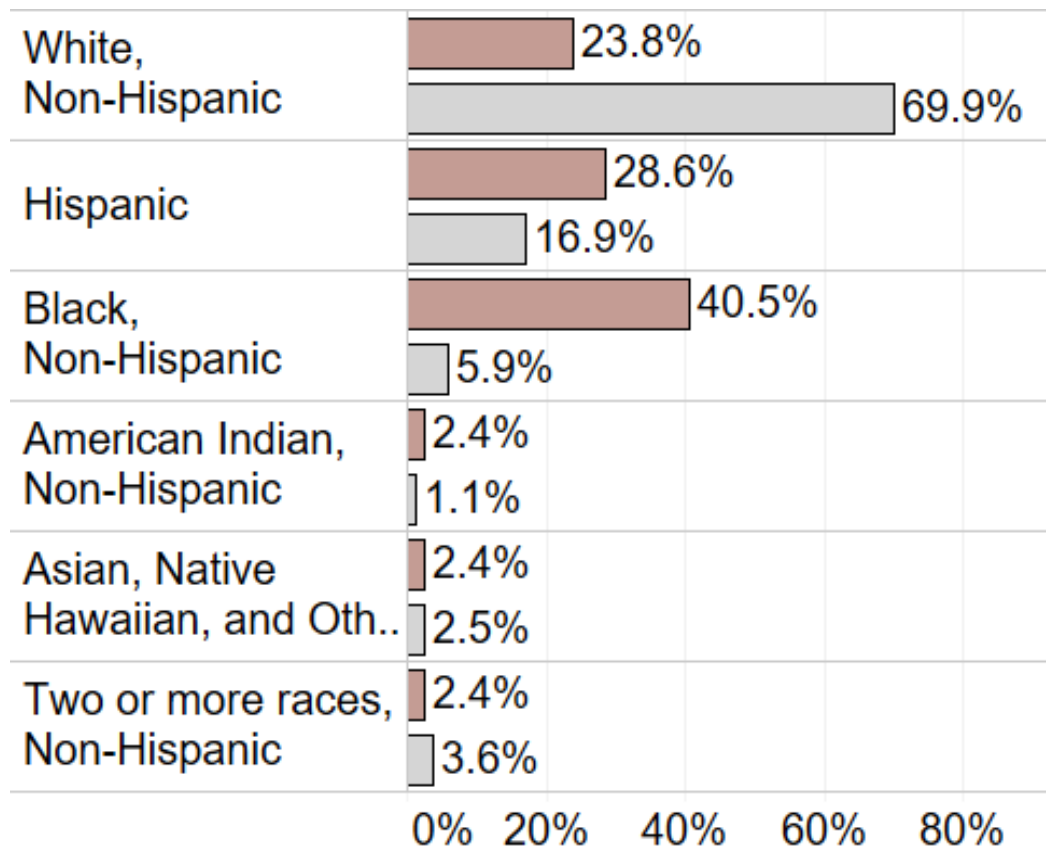
DHHS/OJS Youth Placed at a YRTC – Point-in-time (Single Day) View



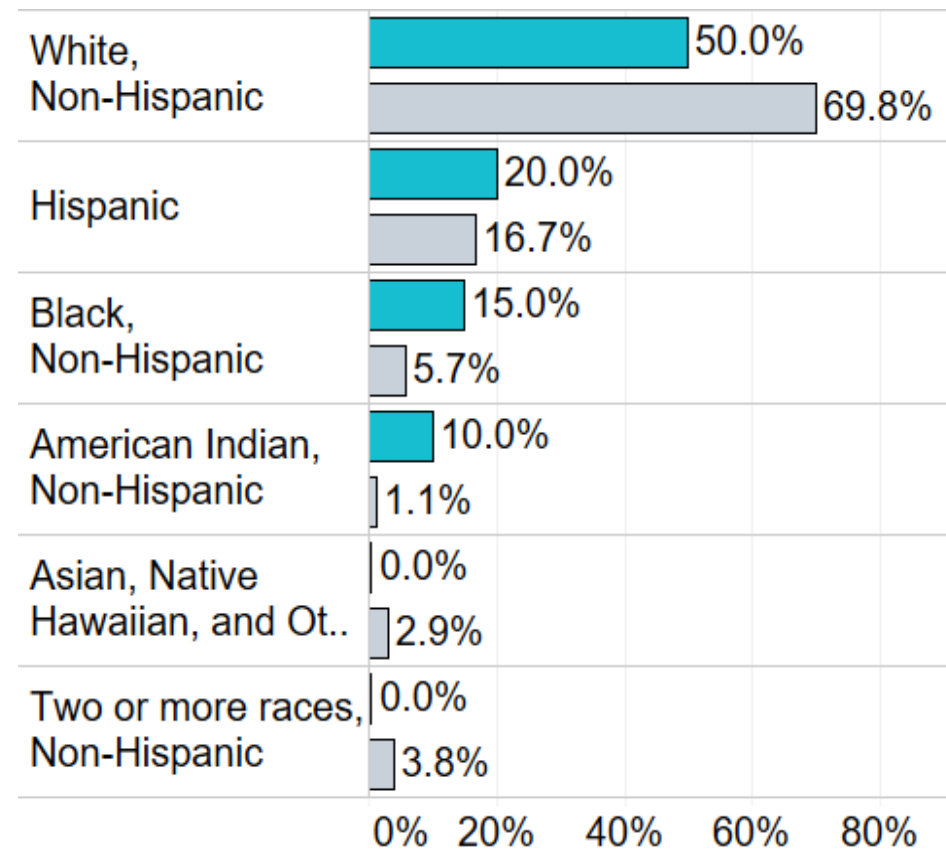
Youth at the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers (YRTC) come from every region of the state. There were 62 youth (42 boys and 20 girls) at a YRTC on 3/31/21 compared to 108 on 3/31/20, a 42.6% decrease.

62

Boys and Girls Placed by a Juvenile Court at a Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center (YRTC) on 3/31/21



■ YRTC Boys
■ Nebraska Boys



■ YRTC Girls
■ Nebraska Girls

Special Report on Educational Outcomes



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Overview of Study:

- 4,254 review records in the FCRO's Foster Care Tracking System (FCTS) data base; 2,622 were for children and youth known to be enrolled in school and an additional 10 were homeschooled. (N=2,632)
- Of the 2,632 records, a substantial number (583 or 22.2%) did not contain sufficient information on children's school progress.
- Of the 2,049 children enrolled in school or homeschooled where academic performance was known, 1,008 were boys and 1,041 were girls.
 - Both boys and girls appear to have had greater challenges staying on target over time; though, boys have higher overall rates of not being on target with their core classes.



Additional Key Findings :

- There were 1,526 from the group of 2,049 who, similar to those included in other quarterly report sections, were described as out-of-home on 3/31/21.
 - Children with a higher number of placements (4 or more) had lower rates of being on target academically.
 - Academic performance recorded as “unable to be determined” rises with the number of placements.
- Information on behavioral issues was available for 1,855 children.
 - Consistent behavioral issues were found more frequently for both boys and girls with 4 or more placements.
- Information on whether special education services were received was available for 2,004 children.
 - Throughout the year, those children receiving special education services were far more likely to NOT be on target with their academic performance.

A Few of the Suggested Areas for Further Research :

- How do the findings compare to children not in out-of-home care?
- Are there differences for children and youth in out-of-home care depending on which agency is responsible for their case?
- Are there differences in outcomes between the different types of placements?
- Why were there such high percentages of missing educational information in the agency case files? Does this affect the agency's ability to ensure that the child's caregivers are given accurate educational information?
- Are there issues with prompt enrollment for children placed out-of-home or moved between foster homes/facilities?
- What is the relationship between children's mental health conditions and academic performance?
- Is there a relationship between positive parental visitation and children's ability to learn and retain information?
- **Others?**



June 2021 Recommendations



Recommendations from the June 2021 Report:

- All the major agencies/stakeholders involved in the lives of children in out-of-home care and their families collaborate on means to improve overall and specific educational outcomes.
- DHHS and the Eastern Service Area Child Welfare Contract Special Investigative and Oversight Committee of the Legislature should monitor for fiscal responsibility, while the FCRO continues to monitor outcomes for children.
- Saint Francis case manager turnover data needs to be reported publicly in a manner similar to DHHS/CFS.



Recommendations from the June 2021 Report Continued:

- The unique needs of dually-involved youth must be identified so that DHHS/CFS and Probation can ensure each youth's circumstances are understood and needs are met.
- Agencies need to work together to monitor the impact Covid-19 has had and may continue to have on service delivery and supports, placement constraints, workforce capacity, and on individual well-being.
- FCRO continues to work with DHHS/CFS, the Courts, Probation, and all other stakeholders to pursue the recommendations brought forth in the 2020 Annual Report (September 2020).



Recommendations for Future Review

Questions

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