

Data Quality Criteria for Child Welfare Outcomes 2016-2020

AFCARS Data Quality Checks

Title	Description	Denominator	Numerator	Limits	Notes	States Removed from Analysis by Year
AFCARS IDs don't match from one period to next	Percent of records that do not match for a given record number in the next 6-month period.	Number of children reported in first 6-month file for the fiscal year	Number of children with AFCARS IDs that do not match in the next 6-month file for the fiscal year	> 50%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measures 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1, and entry rate calculations. Additionally, States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from the numbers of children in care, entries, and exits as well as numbers of children waiting for adoption and adopted	2016: None 2017: None 2018: None 2019: None 2020: None
Dropped records	Record is missing a date of discharge, suggesting the child is still in care, but a record for this same child in the next 6-month period does not exist	Number of children reported in first 6-month file for the fiscal year	Number of children reported without discharge dates in first 6-month file for the fiscal year that do not appear in the subsequent 6-month file for the fiscal year	> 10%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measures 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1, and entry rate calculations. Additionally, States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from the numbers of children in care, entries, and exits as well as numbers of children waiting for adoption and adopted	2016: None 2017: None 2018: None 2019: None 2020: MD

Missing child disability status	Percent of records missing data for child disability status	Number of children reported in a fiscal year file	Number of children missing data for their disability status	>15%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measure 3.2	2016: MA, SC 2017: CO*, MT, SC 2018: CO*, MT, PA, SC 2019: CO*, MT, SD 2020: CO*, SD
Missing date of birth	Percent of records with a missing date of birth	Number of children reported in a fiscal year file	Number of children missing date of birth	>15%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measures 3.3 and 7.1	2016: None 2017: None 2018: None 2019: None 2020: None
Missing date of latest removal	Percent of records with a missing date of latest removal	Number of children reported in a fiscal year file	Number of children missing date of latest removal	>15%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measures 4.1, 5.1, and 6.1	2016: None 2017: None 2018: None 2019: None 2020: None
Missing discharge reason	Percent of records where date of discharge from most recent foster care episode exists but the reason for discharge is missing	Number of children reported in a fiscal year file	Number of records where data of discharge exists but discharge reason is missing	>15%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measures 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, and 5.1	2016: None 2017: None 2018: None 2019: None 2020: None
Missing number of placement settings	Percent of records with a missing number of placement settings	Number of children reported in a fiscal year file	Number of children missing number of placement settings	>15%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measure 6.1	2016: None 2017: None 2018: None 2019: None 2020: None
Missing current placement setting	Percent of records missing the current placement setting	Number of children reported in a fiscal year file	Number of children missing data for their current placement setting	>15%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measure 7.1	2016: None 2017: None 2018: None 2019: None 2020: None
Missing current placement setting date	Percent of records missing the date for the current placement setting	Number of children reported in a fiscal year file	Number of children missing data for the date of their current placement setting	>15%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measures 6.1 and 7.1	2016: None 2017: None 2018: None 2019: None 2020: None

NCANDS Data Quality Checks

Title	Description	Denominator	Numerator	Limits	Notes	States Removed from Analysis by Year
Child IDs for victims match across years	Percent of records with IDs that do not match across years	Number of children with at least one substantiated or indicated	Number of children who had another substantiated or indicated	<1%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measure 1.1	15-16: PA, PR 16-17: HI, PA 17-18: PA 18-19: PA, PR 19-20: NC, PA, PR
Child IDs match across years, but dates of birth/age and sex do not	Percent of records that have matching IDs across years but dates of birth/age and sex do not	maltreatment report in a 12-month period	maltreatment report within 12 months of their initial report	>5%		
Missing age for victims	Percent of records with missing age for victims			>5%		
Missing data on perpetrator relationship if 95% of perpetrators have a known relationship	Percent of records that do not have perpetrator relationship data and at least 95% of perpetrators have a known relationship to the child	Number of children reported in a fiscal year file	Number of cases that are missing perpetrator relationship data if at least 95% of perpetrators have a known relationship to the child	> 25%	States that do not meet this threshold are excluded from measure 2.1	2016: GA*, LA, PR* 2017: LA 2018: LA 2019: LA 2020: LA, NC

Note1.—States marked with an asterisk are excluded from analyses due to incomplete data and not due to issues of data quality.

Note2.—Due to data quality concerns, many of which are associated with the lingering effects of Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico's data are only included for the years 2019 and 2020 (foster care), and 2018 through 2020 (adoption). PR is in the process of addressing the quality of their excluded data.

States Excluded from 2020 Analyses

Measure	N	States Excluded
Measure 1.1: Of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect during a 12-months period, what percentage had another substantiated or indicated report within a 12-month period?	49	NC, PA, PR
Measure 2.1: Of all children who were in foster care during the year, what percentage were the subject of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff?	50	LA, NC
Measure 3.1: Of all children who exited foster care during the year, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?	51	MD
Measure 3.2: Of all children who exited foster care during the year and were identified as having a diagnosed disability, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?	49	CO*, MD, SD
Measure 3.3: Of all children who exited foster care during the year and were older than age 12 at the time of their most recent entry into care, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?	51	MD
Measure 3.4: Of all children exiting foster care during the year to emancipation, what percentage were age 12 or younger at the time of entry into care?	51	MD
Measure 3.5: Of all children who exited foster care during the year, what percentage by racial/ethnic category left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?	51	MD
Measure 4.1: Of all children reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care during the year, what percentage were reunified in the following time periods? (a) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from home; (b) At least 12 months but less than 24 months; (c) At least 24 months but less than 36 months; (d) At least 36 months but less than 48 months; (e) 48 or more months	51	MD
Measure 4.2: Of all children who entered foster care during the year, what percentage reentered care: (a) Within 12 months of a prior foster care episode? (b) More than 12 months after a prior foster care episode?	51	MD
Measure 5.1: Of all children discharged from foster care during the year to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care in the following time periods? (a) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from home; (b) At least 12 months but less than 24 months; (c) At least 24 months but less than 36 months; (d) At least 36 months but less than 48 months; (e) 48 or more months	51	MD
Measure 6.1: Of all children served in foster care during the year who had been in care for the time periods listed below, what percentage had no more than two placement settings during that time period? (a) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from home; (b) At least 12 months but less than 24 months; (c) 24 or more months	51	MD
Measure 7.1: Of all children who entered foster care during the year and were age 12 or younger at the time of their most recent placement, what percentage were placed in a group home or an institution?	51	MD
Entry Rate: Rate of children entering care per 1,000 in a State's child population	51	MD

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Note2.—Due to data quality concerns, many of which are associated with the lingering effects of Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico's data are only included for the years 2019 and 2020 (foster care), and 2018 through 2020 (adoption). PR is in the process of addressing the quality of their excluded data.

States Excluded from Cross-Year Analyses

Measure	N	States Excluded
Measure 1.1: Of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect during a 12 months period, what percentage had another substantiated or indicated report within a 12-month period?	48	HI, NC, PA, PR
Measure 2.1: Of all children who were in foster care during the year, what percentage were the subject of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff?	48	GA*, LA, NC, PR*
Measure 3.1: Of all children who exited foster care during the year, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?	50	MD, PR ^a
Measure 3.2: Of all children who exited foster care during the year and were identified as having a diagnosed disability, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?	44	CO, MA, MD, MT, PA, PR ^a , SC, SD
Measure 3.3: Of all children who exited foster care during the year and were older than age 12 at the time of their most recent entry into care, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?	50	MD, PR ^a
Measure 3.4: Of all children exiting foster care during the year to emancipation, what percentage were age 12 or younger at the time of entry into care?	50	MD, PR ^a
Measure 3.5: Of all children who exited foster care during the year, what percentage by racial/ethnic category left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?	50	MD, PR ^a
Measure 4.1: Of all children reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care during the year, what percentage were reunified in the following time periods? (a) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from home; (b) At least 12 months but less than 24 months; (c) At least 24 months but less than 36 months; (d) At least 36 months but less than 48 months; (e) 48 or more months	50	MD, PR ^a
Measure 4.2: Of all children who entered foster care during the year, what percentage reentered care: (a) Within 12 months of a prior foster care episode? (b) More than 12 months after a prior foster care episode?	50	MD, PR ^a
Measure 5.1: Of all children discharged from foster care during the year to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care in the following time periods? (a) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from home; (b) At least 12 months but less than 24 months; (c) At least 24 months but less than 36 months; (d) At least 36 months but less than 48 months; (e) 48 or more months	50	MD, PR ^a
Measure 6.1: Of all children served in foster care during the year who had been in care for the time periods listed below, what percentage had no more than two placement settings during that time period? (a) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from home; (b) At least 12 months but less than 24 months; (c) 24 or more months	50	MD, PR ^a
Measure 7.1: Of all children who entered foster care during the year and were age 12 or younger at the time of their most recent placement, what percentage were placed in a group home or an institution?	50	MD, PR ^a
Entry Rate: Rate of children entering care per 1,000 in a State's child population	50	MD, PR ^a

Note1.—States marked with an asterisk are excluded from analyses due to incomplete data and not due to issues of data quality.

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