

Racial Disparity Indices Report – Part 1 (Statewide) For Cohorts from CY 2010 through CY 2015

September 2016

DSHS Children's Administration Data Management and Reporting Section

Introduction

This report briefly summarizes trends in racial disparities for children referred to Children's Administration (CA) and children placed in foster care by CA. The indicators reported here reflect an ongoing evolution in our approach to understanding and tracking racial differences in the handling of child welfare cases in our Administration. Guided by the *CA Racial Disparity Working Group*, Dr. David Marshall (2011) re-defined race categories, abandoned some old indicators, and developed a series of new indicators, which required a recalculation of all indicators for past years. Therefore, the trends reported from that point on, while similar in their overarching message of racial disparities in the system, are not exactly comparable to the indicators and trends of reports prior to 2011.

Again in 2015, prior years were recalculated (from 2006 on) to account for changes in Office of Financial Management (OFM) population estimation methodology, improvements in the way CA classified intakes and placements into region, and CA data cleaning with regard to race that had occurred since 2011.

And modifications continue to be made. As of the current report (2016), the metric *Children Reunified within 12 Months of Placement* (reversed for the sake of comparison in the previous report) was replaced with the metric *Children NOT Reunified within 12 Months of Placement*. As with the previous version, the direction of this new measure continues to be consistent with the other measures of the report, in that index values above one indicate disparity (but it is *opposite* to the corresponding measure in reports prior to 2015; this should be kept in mind while comparing the graph of this measure to those of earlier years). Also as of the current report (2016), the *Disparity Index After Intake* (DAI) has been replaced with the *Disparity Index after Placement* (DIAP) for all decision points following placement, in order to better identify the actual stage-specific disparity.

Thus *Section 1* of this report makes comparisons of rates and describes racial disproportionality relative to the general population of Washington State, while *Section 2* concerns indicators of racial disparity and corresponding indices relative to the CA population at intake or placement (the DIAI and DIAP metrics, respectively). The general advantage of using the more refined disparity Indices, i.e. having *intake* numbers (DIAI) or *placement* numbers (DIAP) in the denominators of the relative rates, is that it is a way to control for whatever disproportionality may be present as a legacy of earlier stages in the process by which children/youth enter and move through the system. In contrast, if the rates being compared are based only upon the numbers of White and minority children/youth in *the general population* (as with the DI of *Section 1*), disproportionality occurring at the stages of intake and placement are reflected in the Indices that purport to represent disparity at the later stages (for example *being in care for more than two years*), which gives a misleading impression. By using intake or placement numbers in the denominators of the rates, whichever is most appropriate, whatever disproportionality there may have been at earlier stages is removed from the calculation, yielding more accurate representations of the actual disparity at each successive point of decision making. This matter is elaborated in *Section 2*.

Furthermore, the disparity indices in *Section 2* are computed with reference to the expanded racial categories listed described therein (within which the “multiracial” category is further detailed). We cannot report *population-based* rates of occurrence or disparity indices at this finer level of race detail because general population figures from OFM are not classified in a way that allows these racial categories to be distinguished as such. For this reason, in *Section 1* we report the rates of occurrence and disparity indices (“DI”) for all intakes, screened-in intakes, and placements within one year of intake with reference to the more basic racial distinctions (i.e. having just one “multiracial” category).

Please note that in 2015 OFM concluded a multi-year process of revising their methodology for estimating racial composition of the state, and the office now releases these estimates annually. As of the previous report (2015), the rate calculations presented herein all have been updated with estimates generated by the new methodology.

Readers referencing reports prior to September 2011 will be helped by knowing that the rate of “screened in” referrals herein can be roughly compared to rates of “accepted referrals” in reports prior to September 2011. In contrast, the definition of placement within 12 months of intake was modified more extensively based on Dr. Marshall’s further analysis of data patterns (see below), and so the rates cannot be directly compared to those presented in earlier reports.

Also please note that as of the 2014 report our definition of region at intake was refined to resolve issues related to use of Statewide Intake – region at intake now is categorized based upon the location of the worker initially assigned to the case. This is most relevant to Part 2 (Regional) of the report, but does slightly affect the statewide numbers also (because in the statistical program that generates these results the regions are “rolled up” to generate the statewide numbers). Further changes and corrections made in the current report are detailed in *Appendix I*.

Definition of Indicators and Analysis Groups

Indicators – racial composition compared to composition at intake (all intakes) or placement (placements lasting more than a week)

Group 1¹ – Entry cohort of victims identified at intake, follow-up period of 12 months, annual reporting periods:

- Victims identified at Screened-In CPS Intakes (DLR excluded)
- Victims in cohort Placed within 12 months of Intake (3 days before to 365 after)

Group 2 – Entry cohort of children entering placement, follow-up period 12 months, annual reporting periods:

- Children **not** initially placed with relatives/kin
- Children moved twice or more in their first 12 months in care (initial stability)
- Children reunified within 12 months of placement entry

Group 3 – Children in care during cohort period (exiting or remaining in care), no follow-up period (point in time), 12 month cohort periods:

- Children in care for more than 2 years
- Children moved in their previous 12 months in care (ongoing stability)

Metric Definitions:

➤ Rate of Occurrence (**Rate per Thousand**):

$N \text{ children/youth at a decision point} \div N \text{ in the general population} \times 1000$

➤ Disproportionality Index (**DI**):

$\text{Minority Rate of Occurrence} \div \text{White Rate of Occurrence}$

➤ Disproportionality Index after Intake (**DI AI**):

$\text{Minority Rate of Occurrence (relative to Intake)} \div \text{White Rate of Occurrence (relative to Intake)}$

➤ Disproportionality Index after Placement (**DI AP**):

$\text{Minority Rate of Occurrence (relative to Placement)} \div \text{White Rate of Occurrence (relative to Placement)}$
(Placement in the denominator used for the DIAP rates is of placements *lasting 8 or more days*.)

¹ See *Section 1 Indicators* subsection on rates of occurrence for details of Group 1 indicator definitions.

Past Reports.

Readers are referred to the following reports for a comprehensive history and explanation of earlier methodologies and results:

DSHS Children's Administration Technology Services (2015, September). *Racial Disparity Indices Report – Part 1 (Statewide), For Cohorts from CY 2006 through CY 2014*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

DSHS Children's Administration Technology Services (2014, September). *Racial Disparity Indices Report – Part 1 (Statewide), For Cohorts from CY 2006 through CY 2013*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

DSHS Children's Administration Technology Services (2013, October). *Racial Disparity Indices Report For Cohorts from CY 2006 through CY 2012*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

DSHS Children's Administration Technology Services (2012, September). *Racial Disparity Indices Report For Cohorts from CY 2006 through CY 2011*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Marshall, D. B. (2011, September). *Racial Disparity Indices Report For Cohorts from CY 2006 through SFY 2010 or SFY 2011*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Graham, J. C. (2011, January). *Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration Racial Disproportionality Tracking Report: 2004-2009 (Statewide FamLink Baseline), TECHNICAL REPORT*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee and the Department of Social and Health Services (2010). *Racial Disproportionality in Washington State: Report to the Legislature*. Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee and the Department of Social and Health Services.

Marshall, D. B. (2009). *Racial Disproportionality Tracking Report*. In Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee and the Department of Social and Health Services (2010), Appendix A. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee and the Department of Social and Health Services (2008). *Racial Disproportionality in Washington State Child Welfare – Remediation Plan (Committee Report to DSHS Secretary Robin Arnold-Williams)*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee and the Department of Social and Health Services.

Miller, M. (2008). *Racial Disproportionality in Washington State's Child Welfare System*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Document No. 08-06-3901.

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Section 1: Rates and Disproportionality relative to the General Population.

Rates of Occurrence and Section 1 Disparity Indices' Definitions:

All Intakes: These are unduplicated counts of children identified as potential victims in CPS intakes received during the cohort period, whether screened out or screened in, excluding intakes from and investigations of licensed facilities (DLR cases). A small proportion (< 0.5%) of cases identified as DLR at intake are later changed to a CPS case upon investigation; children in these intakes are included in the counts. If children are identified in multiple intakes during the cohort period, the first *founded* intake is selected²; if there are only unfounded intakes, the *earliest* unfounded intake in the cohort period is selected; if there are only screened-out intakes³, the earliest one of those is selected. The intention is to select the *most serious* of multiple intakes occurring during the cohort period.

Screened-In CPS Intake: These are unduplicated counts of children identified as potential victims in CPS intakes received during the cohort period and accepted for investigation (whether actually investigated or not), excluding intakes from and investigations of licensed facilities (DLR cases). As of September 2011 this label is applied to referrals that are both screened in at intake and accepted for investigation. A small proportion (< 0.5%) of cases identified as DLR at intake are later changed to a CPS case upon investigation; children in these intakes are included in the counts. If children are identified in multiple intakes during the cohort period, the *first founded* intake is selected⁴; if there are only unfounded intakes, the *earliest* unfounded intake in the cohort period is selected.

Placement within 12 Months of Intake: These are unduplicated counts of children placed from three days *before* intake⁵, unless the placement episode closes before intake, to 12 months after intake. First, children in intakes are unduplicated as described above; then, the placement episode occurring closest to the date of intake is selected. Placement episodes of any length of stay are counted (unless they end before the intake date). Only screened-in/accepted intakes are included when checking for

² We use founded here as our best proxy of the most serious intake occurring during the cohort period.

³ There has been a substantial increase in the number of screened-out intakes that have been recorded and child information collected on since converting the data system from CAMIS to FAMILINK.

⁴ Again, we use founded here as our best proxy of the most serious intake occurring during the cohort period.

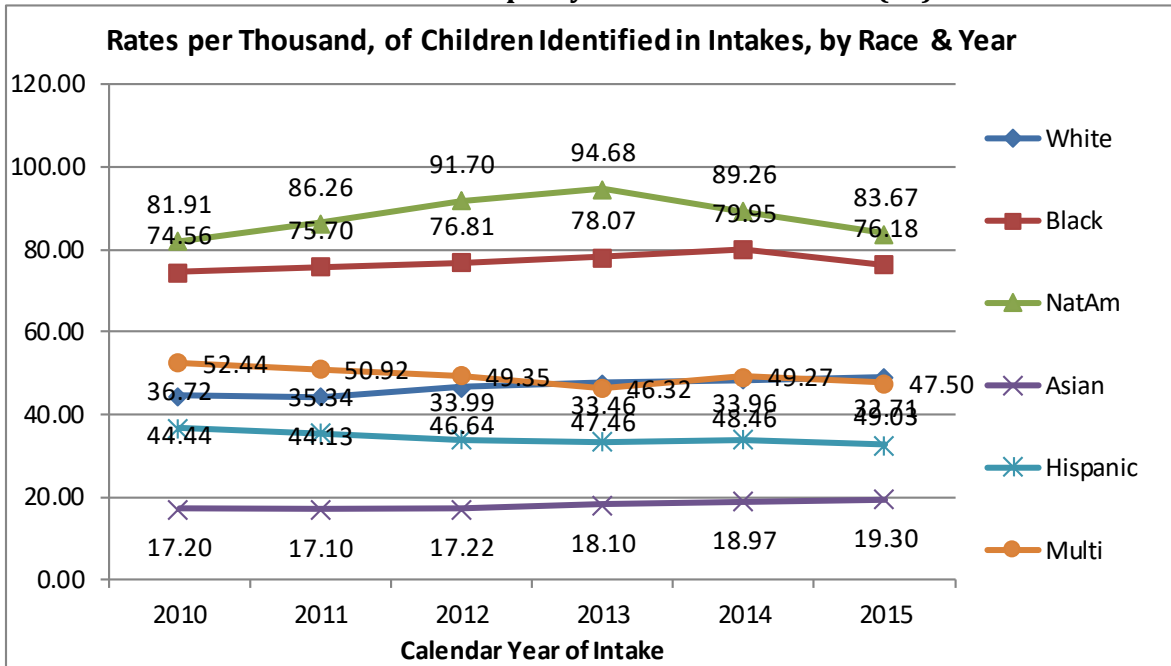
⁵ We have found that in practice there are a cluster of cases where there has been an emergency placement, followed by entry of intake information into the system up to a few days later. This is reasonable from the point of view of practice, since the actual incidence date is sometimes difficult to determine, especially for neglect cases. Intake workers are then either not entering an incident date, or simply using the date of intake processing as the 'start' date. In these situations, it would be inappropriate to not count such cases as 'resulting' in placement.

subsequent placements. These changes plus the change in the unduplication procedure for multiple intakes results in a larger number of children identified as entering placement following an intake, and thus a higher rate of occurrence within 2012 reports and later compared to the placement-after-intake indicator used in our January 2011 report. Rates of occurrence under this new definition are roughly 10%-20% higher than under the old definition. Because the increase was largest for White children, the DI values for minorities have actually declined slightly since the 2011 report for most reporting periods.⁶

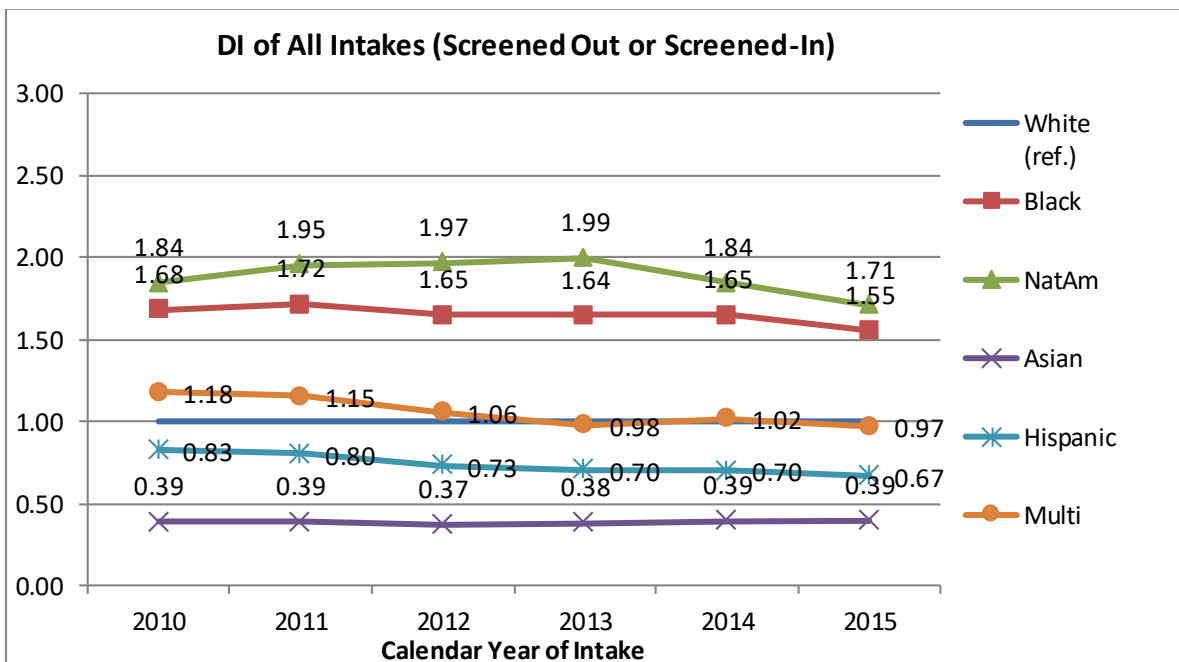
⁶ We are continuing to refine our definitions of indicators as we learn and take fuller advantage of the more accurate and detailed information available to us in FAMILINK *versus* our earlier CAMIS data system. This may lead to further changes in our racial disparity indicators in future years.

Section 1 Indicators.

Trends in Rate of Occurrence and Disparity Index for All Intakes (DI)

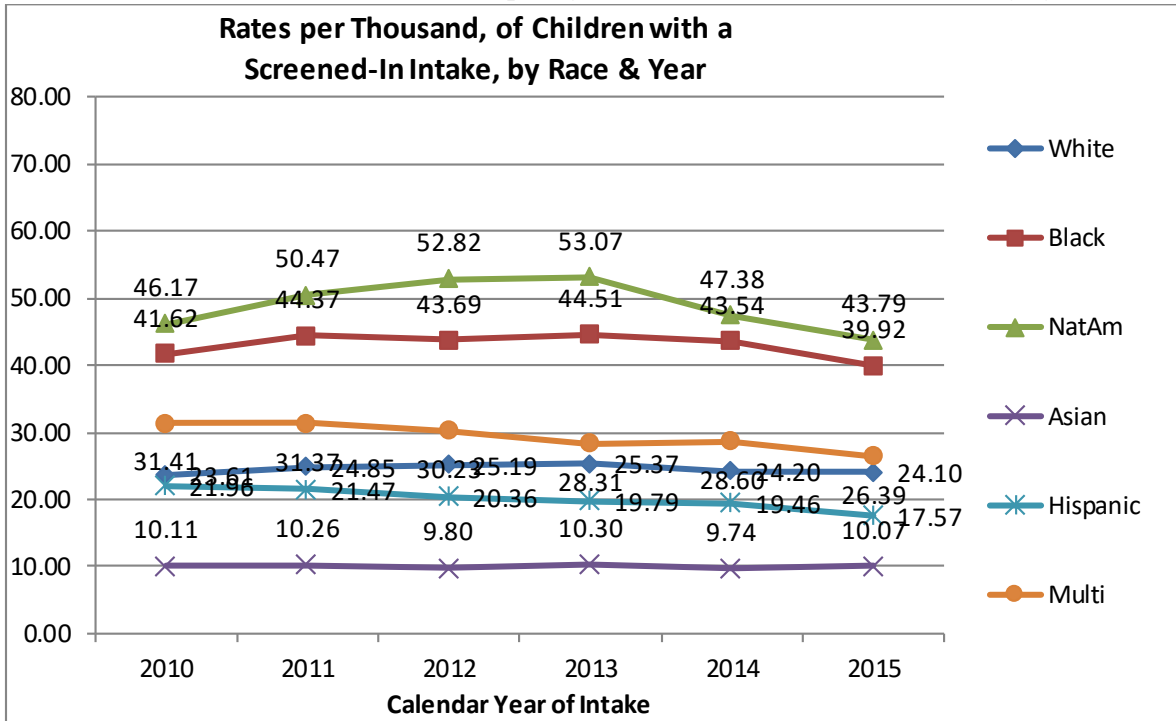


Note: Maximum of vertical axis is set to allow a level comparison with the corresponding table in earlier reports.

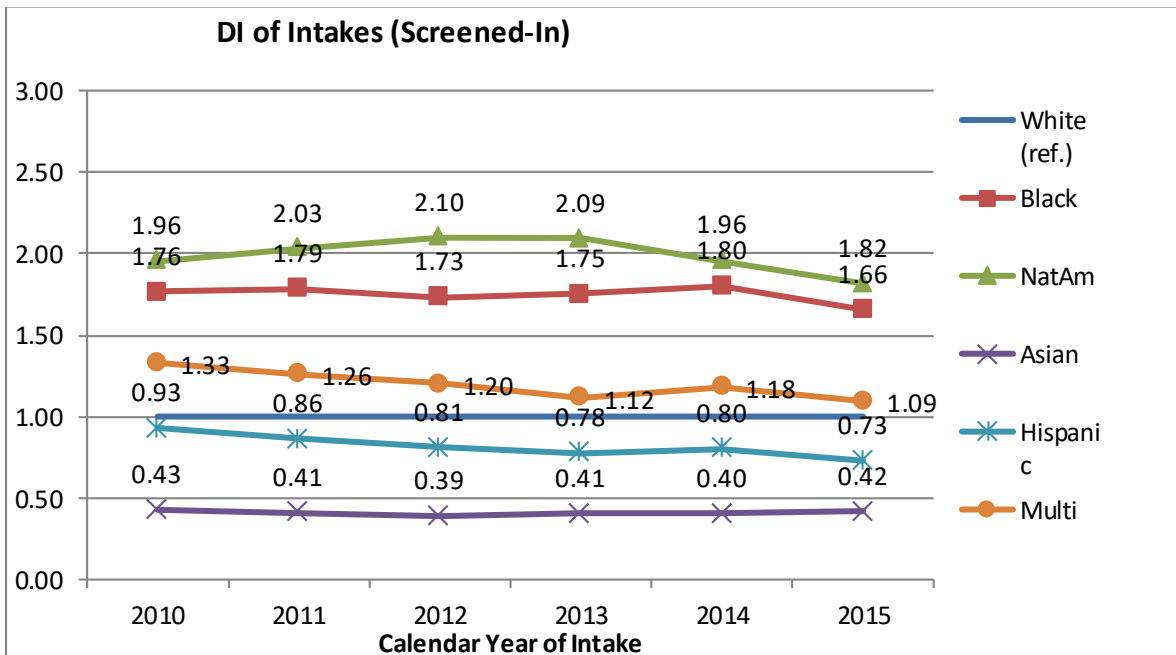


Note: Maximum of vertical axis is set to allow a level comparison with the corresponding table in earlier reports.

Trends in Rate of Occurrence and Disparity Index for Screened-in Intakes (DI)

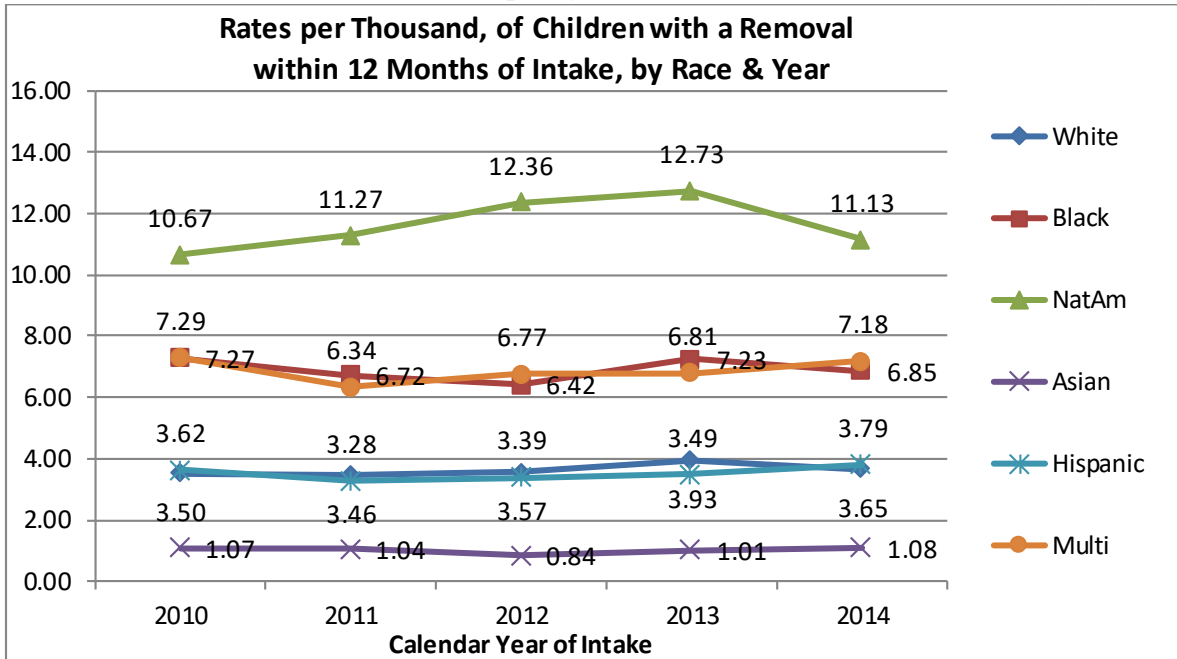


Note: Maximum of vertical axis is set to allow a level comparison with the corresponding table in earlier reports.

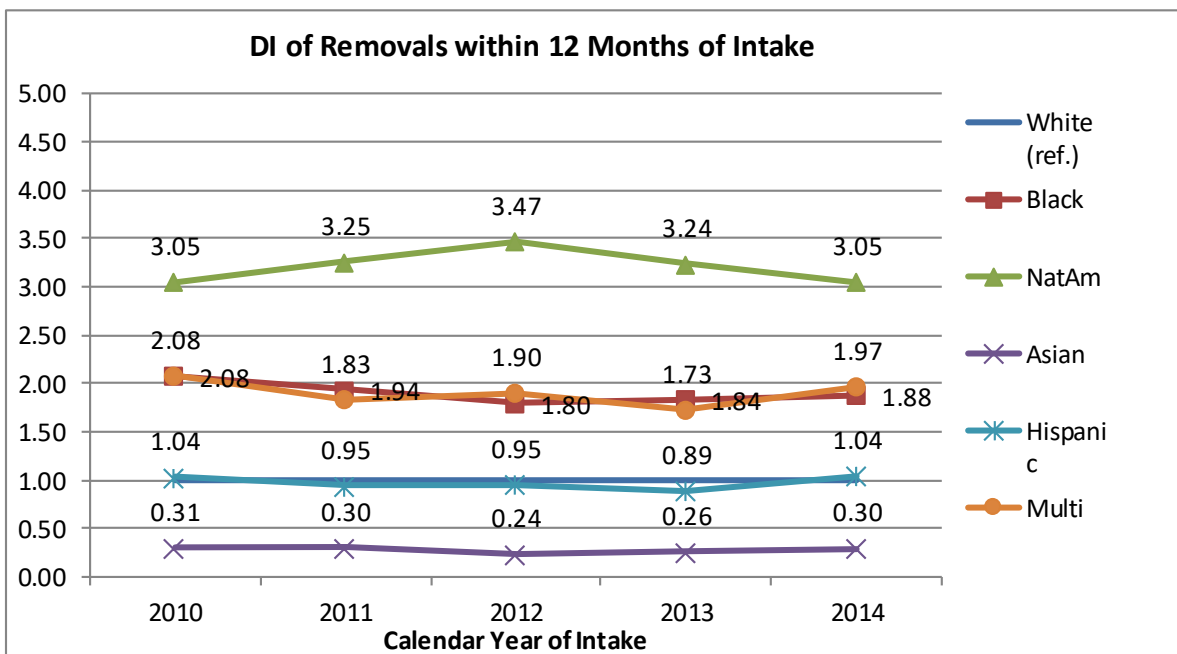


Note: Maximum of vertical axis is set to allow a level comparison with the corresponding table in earlier reports.

Trends in Rate of Occurrence and Disparity Index for Placement after Intake (DI)



Notes: Maximum of vertical axis is set to allow a level comparison with the corresponding table in earlier reports. The data are updated one year less than most current year, due to a minimum 12 month follow-up window being needed.



Notes: Maximum of vertical axis is set to allow for values above 3.0 and an even comparison with the corresponding table in earlier reports. The data are updated one year less than most current year, due to a minimum 12 month follow-up window being needed.

Section 2: Disparity relative to Intake and Placement Populations.

Meaning of DIAI and DIAP and Rationales for Their Use

The (racial) Disparity Index After Intake (DIAI) is a measure of racial disparity relative to the racial composition of children identified as potential victims in all CPS intakes where child race information was recorded, regardless of whether the intake was screened in (accepted for investigation) or not. This provides a reference point that is closest to the racial composition of the general population without being restricted to census data. Thus, using DIAIs (or DIAPs) gives us the ability to measure performance at *any* frequency, since they are independent of the racial composition of the general population (their reference point is, as stated above, the racial composition at intake or placement, not in the general population).

Using DIAIs to monitor changes in racial disparity also provides the advantage of factoring out racial disparity in general social conditions and the sources of referrals (such as possible demographic differences in maltreatment risk factors, differences in visibility to mandated reporters, and the potential racial bias of *reporters* of child abuse and neglect). While these all are important factors to consider, they are ones over which the agency has little control. Similarly, using a Disparity Index After Placement (DIAP) factors out whatever racial disparity there may be at placement itself (as well as at earlier stages). This enables the “zooming in” on whatever disparity is specific to post-placement stages of care in order that agency efforts to decrease disparity can be most effectively directed.

DIAIs generally measure any *increase* in disparity after children are identified in CPS intakes as potential victims, as they move through the intake-screening process and possibly on to stays in foster care (after which the DIAPs are more appropriate). The Disparity Index After Intake (DIAI) is so named in this report to distinguish it from the DIAR of the WSIPP and CA reports previous to September 2011, because we have changed the reference population of these indices from accepted CPS referral to all CPS intakes. The data system conversion from CAMIS to FAMLINK and its related policy and practice changes have resulted in a substantial increase in the demographic and other information collected on all intakes, whether accepted for investigation (“screened in”) or not. This change in reference population from accepted referral to all intakes (the denominator of the DIAIs) of course changes the values of the indices. Also, we have changed how we sort children into racial categories, in order to better reflect the actual differences in disparate treatment and outcomes experienced by various types of multiracial children (see below). Finally, we have changed the definition of some of the previously

reported decision points, and added new indicators of disparity, most recently (as of the 2016 report) the DIAP of *Children Not Reunified within 12 Months of Placement* (and the DIAPs generally). Note that for all measurement points, a DIAI or a DIAP value above 1 indicates disparity compared to Whites.

Race Categories

The following race categories reflect our intention to distinguish single-race children from multi-racial children in our client population without either lumping all multi-racial children together (as in the DI estimates that are based on OFM-based population estimates) or ignoring possible differences between the experience and treatment of multiracial *versus* single-race children (as in the 2008 WSIPP report). At the same time, we cannot (for practical reasons) track very small groups of children. The categories that follow represent those distinctions that the *CA Racial Disparity Working Group* felt are most important to monitor (though, even with these, the numbers of children included for some categories are small, especially for regional data, which results in the corresponding indices being relatively volatile from year to year).

- Native American (just one race indicated)
- Asian/Pacific Islander (just one race indicated)
- Black (just one race indicated)
- White (just one race indicated)
- Hispanic (Hispanics of other than White race only, or Unknown only, are included in the appropriate other categories)
- Multiracial Native American (**any** Native American indicated)
- Multiracial Black (**any** Black indicated, **except** Native American)
- Multiracial other (all other combinations, with no indication of Native American or Black)
- Unknown (no races indicated) - Not included in the race-based figures below.

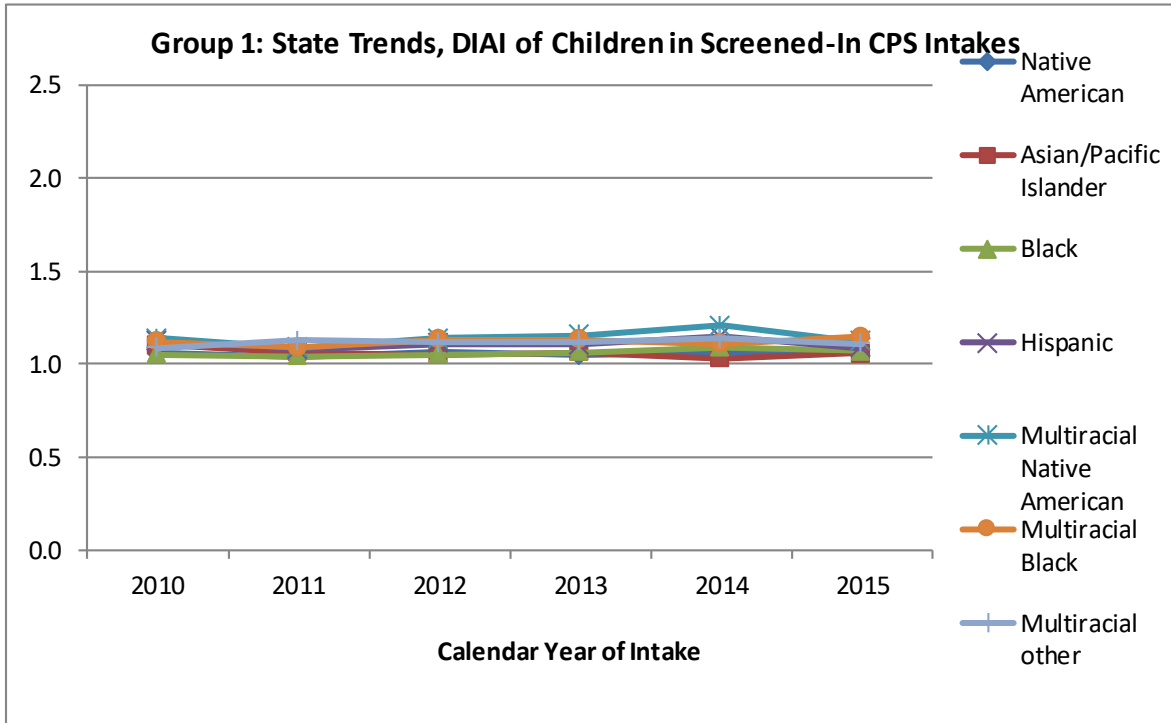
Example Numbers of Children (CY 2014 cohort), computed for 2016 report

Race Category	Group 1 Indicators			Group 2 Indicators			Group 3 Indicators	
	All Intakes ⁷ (including screened out)	Screened In CPS Intake	Placed w/n 12 months of Intake	NOT initially placed w/ith relatives	> 1 move in first 12 months	NOT Reunified w/n 12 months	In Care > 2 years	Ongoing (in)stability (moved w/n last 12 months)
Native American Only	3,393	1,798	278	202	59	182	206	227
Asian/Pacific Islander Only	2,434	1,251	115	88	43	56	50	60
Black Only	5,874	3,200	393	366	156	255	380	380
Hispanic (White or Unknown Race)	9,274	5,314	816	620	217	530	612	657
Multiracial Native American	3,450	2,090	400	278	101	238	364	416
Multiracial Black except Native American	3,107	1,728	334	281	94	242	292	317
Multiracial Asian/Hispanic/White	1,126	643	120	100	30	73	62	74
Unknown	10,078	3,514	22	28	0	6	5	4
White Only	44,508	22,231	2,551	1,980	690	1689	2,014	2,343
Total	83,244	41,769	5,029	3,943	1,390	3,271	3,985	4,478

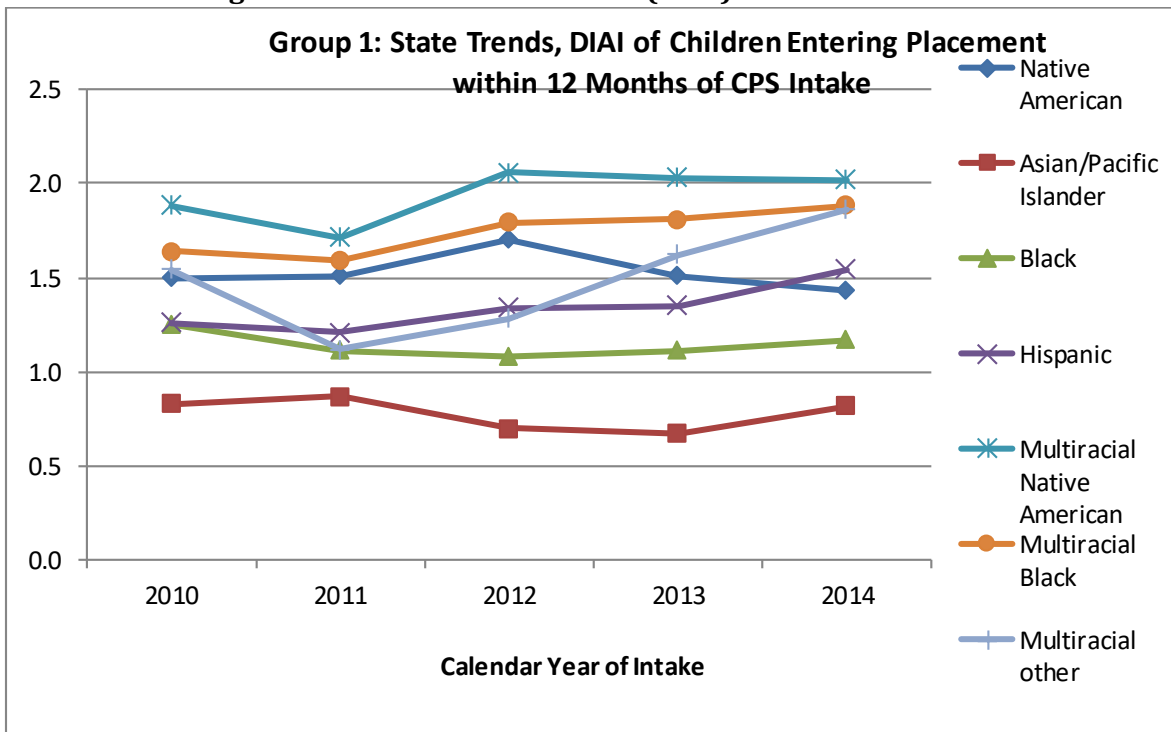
⁷ All intakes which contained information on one or more potential child victims.

Section 2 Indicators.

Children in Screened-In CPS Intakes (DIAI)

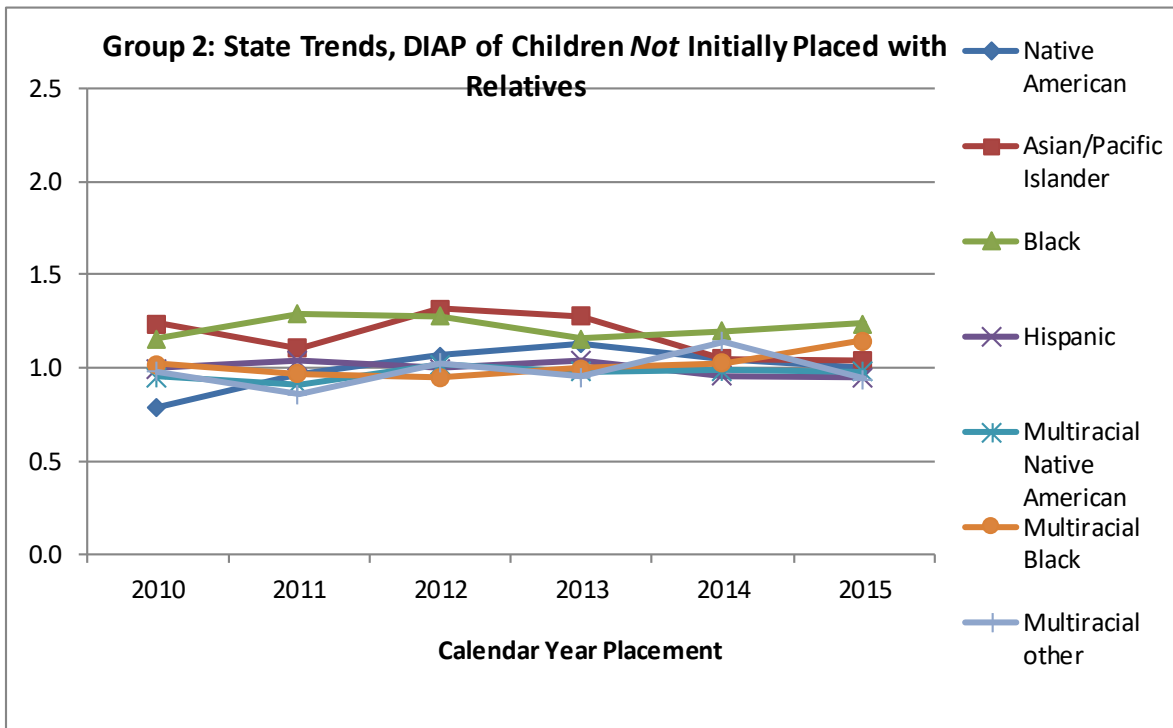


Children Entering Placement within 12 Months (DIAI)

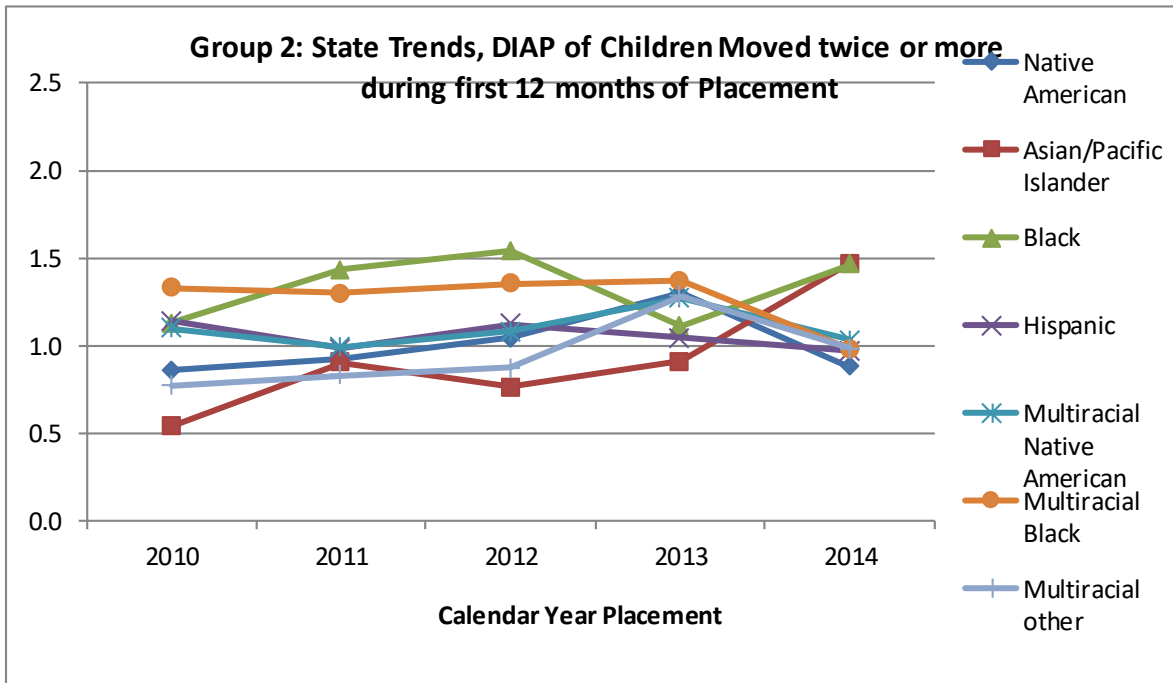


The data are updated one year less than most current year, due to a minimum 12 month follow-up window being needed.

Children NOT Initially Placed with Relatives (DIAP)



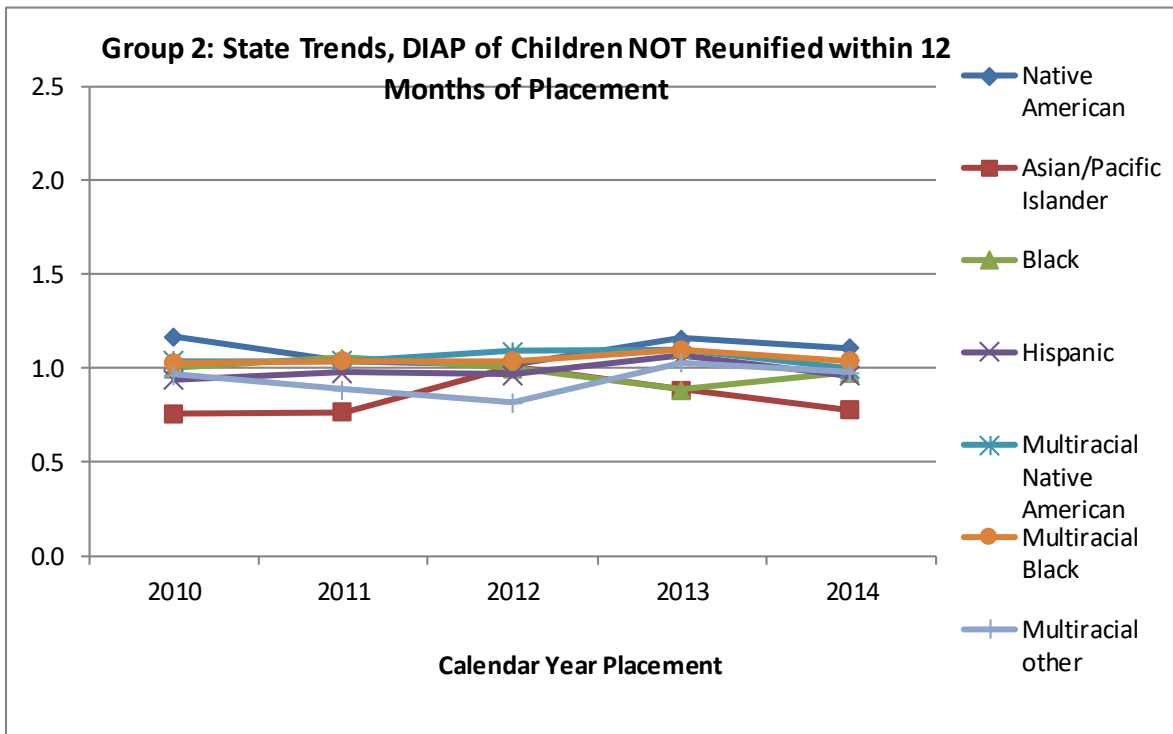
Children Moved twice or more during first 12 months of Placement (DIAP)



Note: The y-axis is reduced from that of the corresponding graph in the 2015 report so as to be consistent with the other DIAP graphs in the current report.

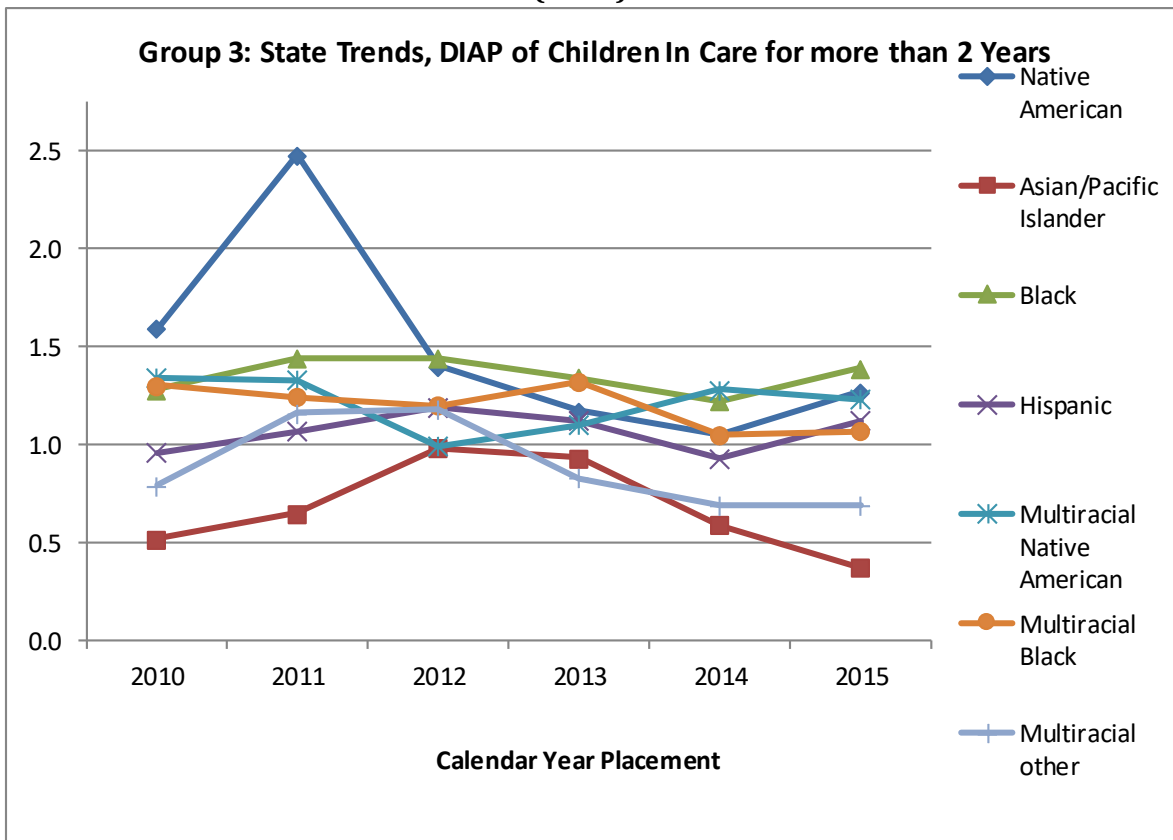
The data are updated one year less than most current year, due to a minimum 12 month follow-up window being needed.

Children Not Reunified within 12 Months of Placement (DIAP)

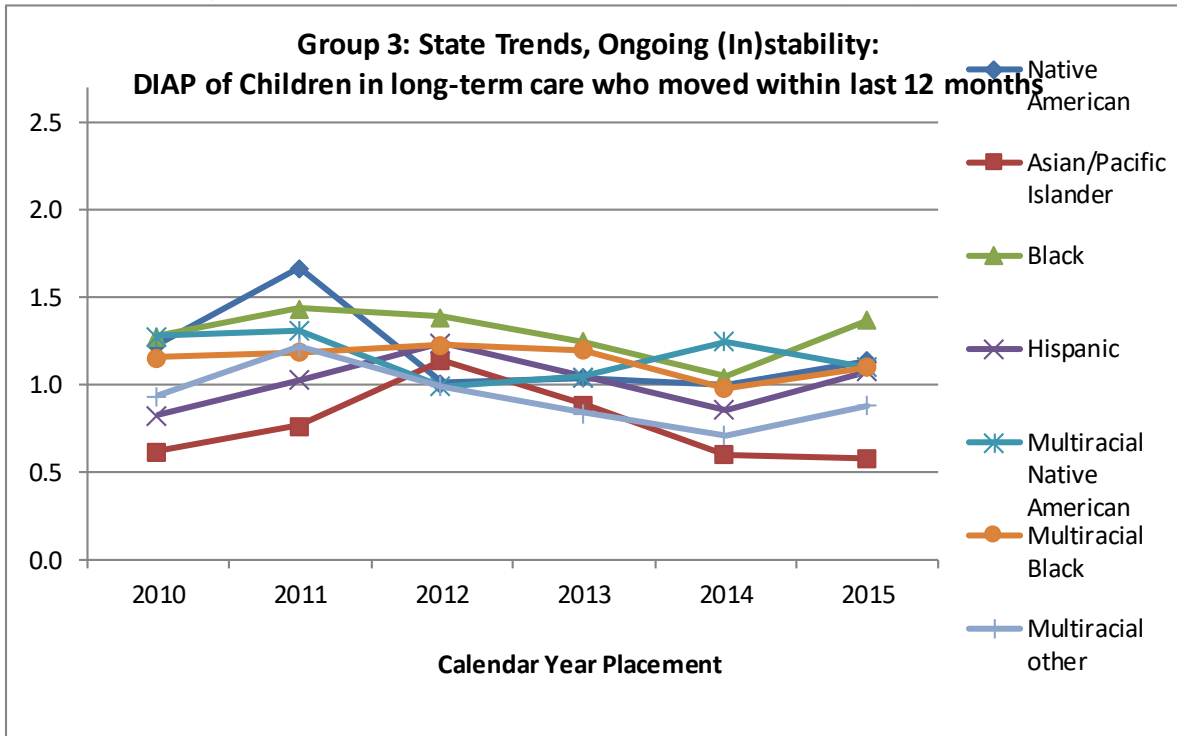


The data are updated one year less than most current year, due to a minimum 12 month follow-up window being needed.

Children In Care for more than 2 Years (DIAP)



Children in long-term care who moved within last 12 months (DIAP)



Appendix I: Changes and Corrections in the 2016 Racial Disparity Report

As with versions of this report since September 2011, the current report reflects revisions made to the race categories and earlier draft disparity measures *per* decisions made by the *CA Racial Disparity Working Group* chaired by Judy Hall at the meeting of August 17th, 2011 and in subsequent communications.

Additional revisions made to the September 2016 report are as follows:

- Rates, DIs, and DIAIs were updated for 2014 and added (for some metrics) for 2015.
- The general population numbers (2010 – 2014) for Asian/PI were corrected by additionally including the *Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander* category from OFM. (This affects both the *rates* and the *DI* metrics for the Asian/PI category.)
- Computations of DIAIs were corrected by removing a restriction that the AFCARS episode end date had to be less than or equal to the cohort end date, that was unnecessarily excluding some placements from the cohort (it selected only placements that had closed within the cohort year). For this reason, DIAIs of *Children Entering Placement within 12 Months of CPS Intake* were re-computed from 2010 forward. However, the correction made only slight differences in the metric.
- The earliest annual data point was advanced from 2006 to 2010 (so that the graphed series now correspond to the *FamLink* Era).
- The metric (*Reversed*) *Children Reunified within 12 Months of Placement* was replaced with the new metric *Children NOT Reunified within 12 Months of Placement*. (The direction of the index remains the same from the 2015 to the 2016 report, higher numbers representing greater disproportionality relative to White).
- DIAI metrics were replaced with DIAP metrics for the five decision points following placement (*Children Not Initially Placed with Relatives*, *Children Moved twice or more during first 12 months of Placement*, *Children NOT Reunified within 12 Months of Placement*, *Children In Care for more than 2 Years*, and *Ongoing (In)stability: DIAP of Children in long-term care who moved within last 12 months*).
- The scale of the y-axis of *Children Moved twice or more during first 12 months of Placement* was reduced from that of the previous report, so as to correspond with the other DIAP graphs of the current report (the extended scale no longer being necessary, given the change from DIAI to DIAP).