



2019 WASHINGTON STATE CHILD WELFARE RACIAL DISPARITY INDICES REPORT



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/reports/CWRacialDisparityIndices2019.pdf>

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Introduction

This report summarizes trends in racial and ethnic disparities for children reported to or placed in out-of-home care by **Washington State Children’s Administration (CA)** or **Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)**. Though CA was incorporated into DCYF (a newly formed state agency) in 2018, during most of the period reported herein CA was still a part of the **Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)**. This is the first of this series of reports that includes data from the DCYF era (specifically data from July 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018).

Section 1 of this report compares racial/ethnic rates of intakes and placements and describes racial disproportionality relative to the general population of Washington State, while **Section 2** presents indicators of racial disparity relative to the CA/DCYF population at intake or placement (using the Disparity Index After Intake [DIAI] and the Disparity Index After Placement [DIAP] metrics, respectively). The purpose of the DIAI and DIAP is to control for whatever disproportionality (of reports) or disparity (within the system) may be present as a legacy of the earlier stages of the process by which children and youth come to the attention of, and may become involved with, Child Protective Services (CPS) and move through the system.

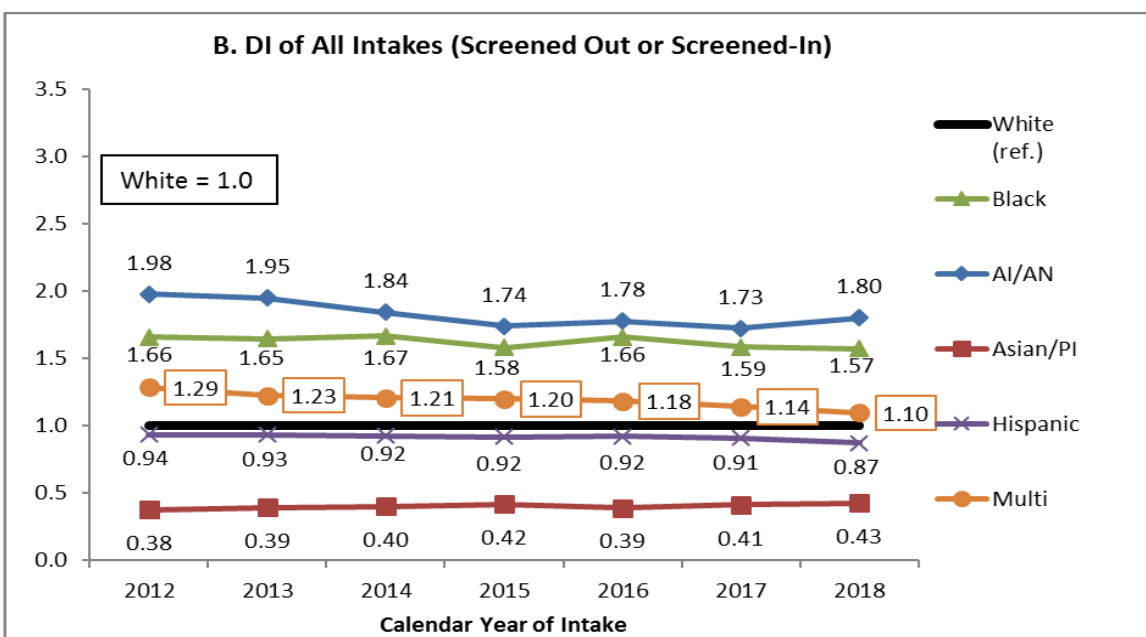
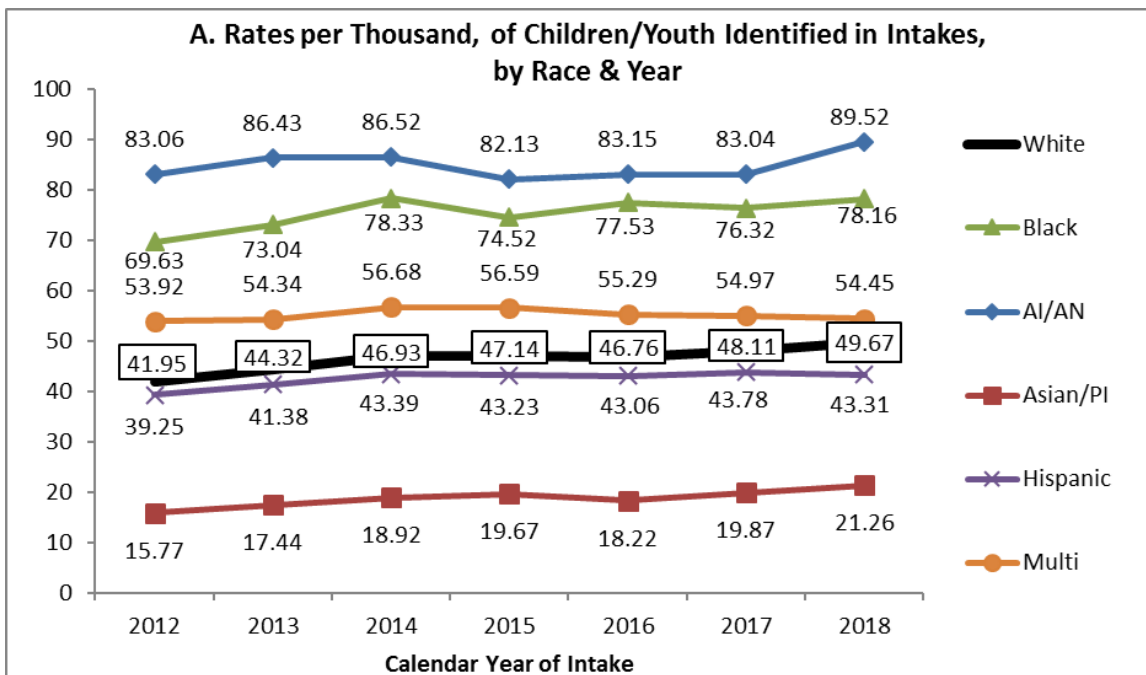
Another difference between the two sections is that the disparity indices in **Section 2** are computed with reference to expanded racial categories (within which the “multiracial” category is further detailed). We cannot report population-based rates of occurrence (or disproportionality indices) at this finer level of race detail because census-based population estimates from the **Office of Financial Management (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 rates of occurrence and disproportionality indices with reference to just one “multiracial” category.

Beyond **Section 1** and **Section 2**, **Appendix 1** includes a methodological summary of the metrics, analysis groups, definitions of the rates of occurrence and the disproportionality indices used in **Section 1**, the race/ethnicity classification method used in **Section 2**, an explanation of the rationale for use of the DIAI and DIAP metrics and a guide to interpreting the figures that form the main body of the report. **Appendix 2** lists changes and corrections made in this report. **Appendix 3** comprises tables having the numbers of children and youth underlying the results presented herein and **Appendix 4** presents a full list of prior reports of the series. We refer readers who are interested in the evolution of the disproportionality/disparity metrics used by CA and/or in other methodological changes to those prior reports, which, if not available on **the DCYF website**, are available upon request.

Section 1: Rates and Disproportionality Relative to the General Population

The reader is referred to Appendix 1 for definitional details of the metrics and analysis groups, rates of occurrence and disproportionality indices used in Section 1. A guide to interpreting the graphs of disproportionality/disparity indices also is provided in Appendix 1.

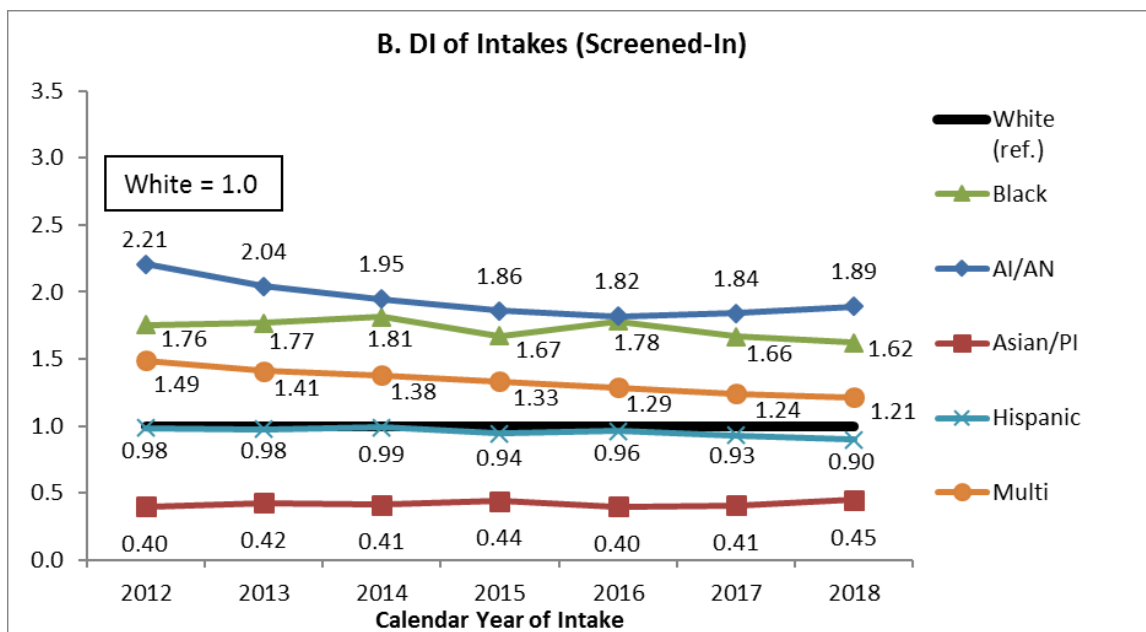
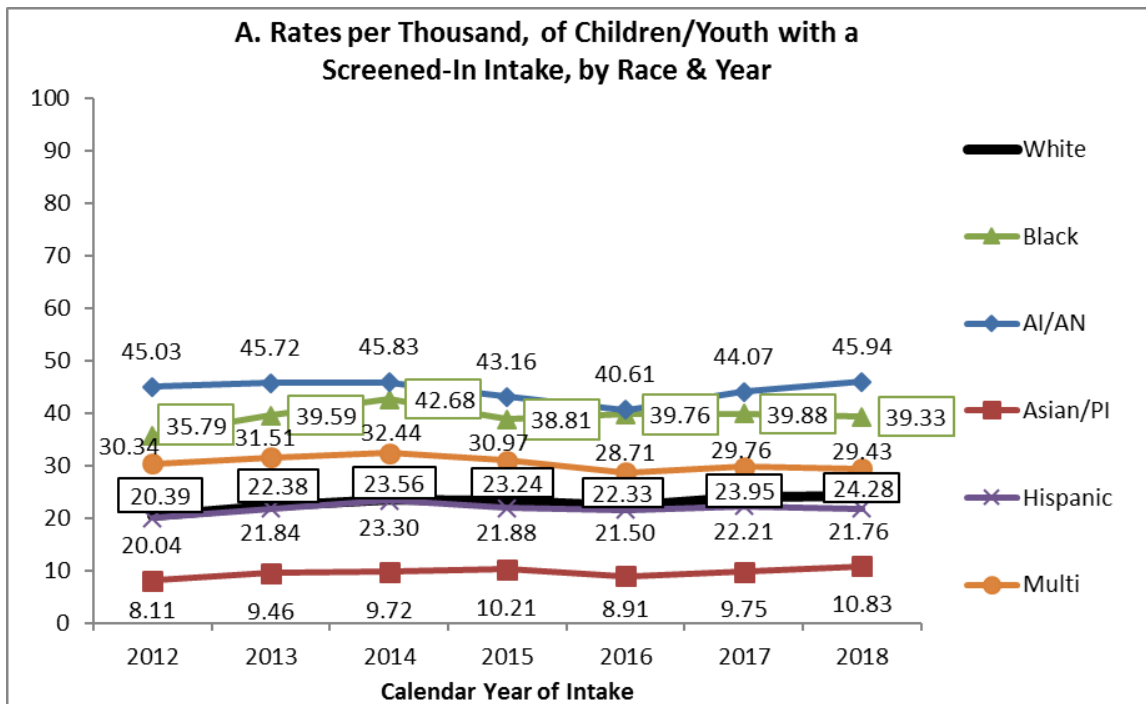
1. Trends in Rate of Occurrence and Disproportionality Index (DI) for All Intakes



The rates of intakes for Black and American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children/youth have been distinctly elevated relative to Whites across the reporting period (for Blacks on the order of more than half-again as much to two-thirds-again as much; for AI/AN to as high as almost double). For AI/AN there was a modest decrease in the relative rates from 2012 to 2015 but an increase in 2018. In contrast, the relative rate of intakes for Multiracial children/youth has decreased throughout the reporting period (continuing a trend that started in 2007). Rates of intake for Asian/Pacific Islanders (PI) and (to a lesser extent) Hispanics have remained lower than that of Whites throughout the

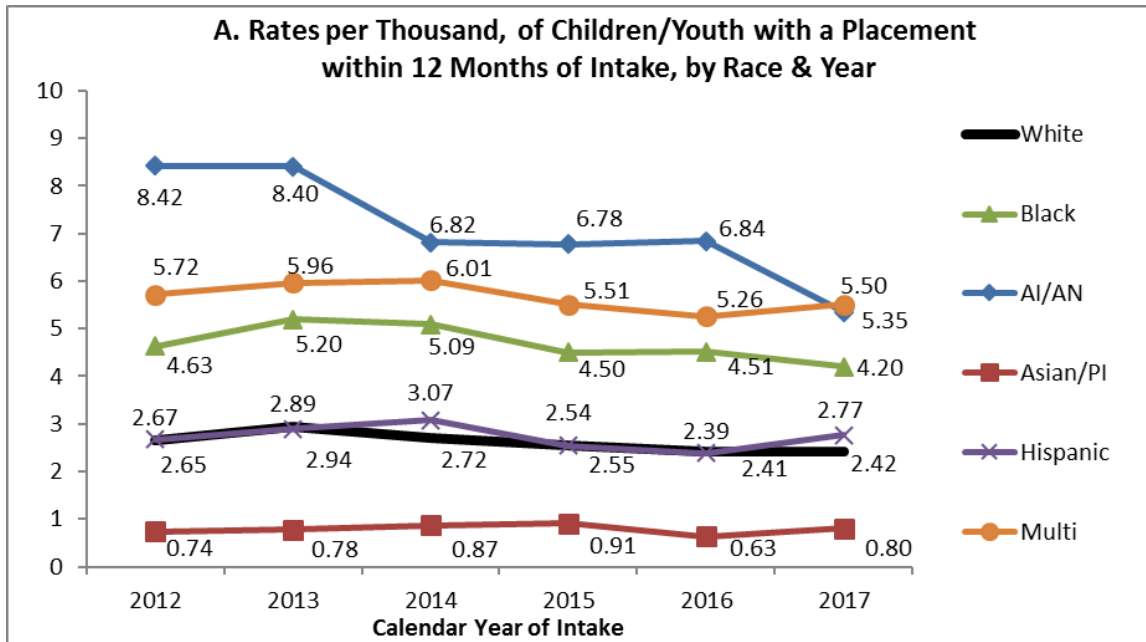
reporting period. That the rate of referral for Asian/PI has been consistently low compared to the other groups (less than half) raises the possibility that maltreatment of Asian/PI children/youth is underreported (or alternatively, the lower intake rates may reflect less maltreatment occurring).

2. Trends in Rate of Occurrence & Disproportionality Index (DI) for Screened-In Intakes

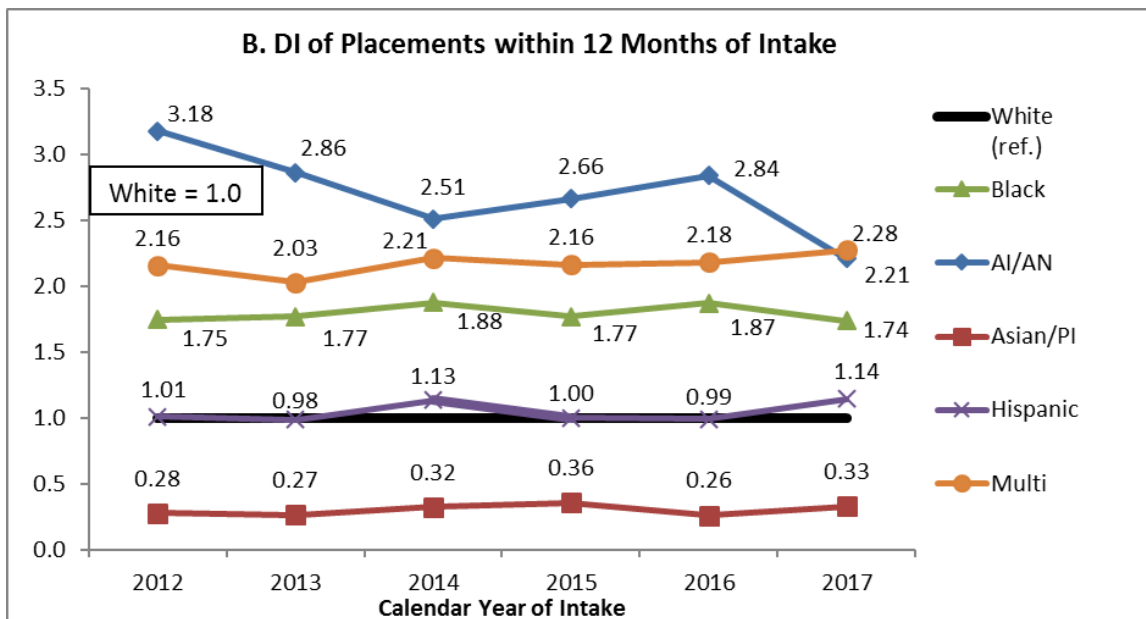


The patterns of rates and DIs of screened-in intakes generally reflect the rates of all intakes, though the absolute level of the rates of screened-in intakes is of course lower (roughly half as much as that of all intakes). The trend lines of the rates and DIs of screened-in intakes for children and youth of color are slightly above the corresponding trend lines in the previous set of graphs (of all intakes) and the DIAI metric is employed in Section 2 in order to provide a clearer view of the possibility of disparity having been contributed by the screening decision (see p. 5). The effect of the DIAI metric is to adjust for the general rates of intakes.

3. Trends in Rate of Occurrence & Disproportionality Index (DI) for Placement after Intake



*Due to a necessary 12-month follow-up window, the figure is updated with a one-year lag.



*Due to a necessary 12-month follow-up window, the figure is updated with a one-year lag.

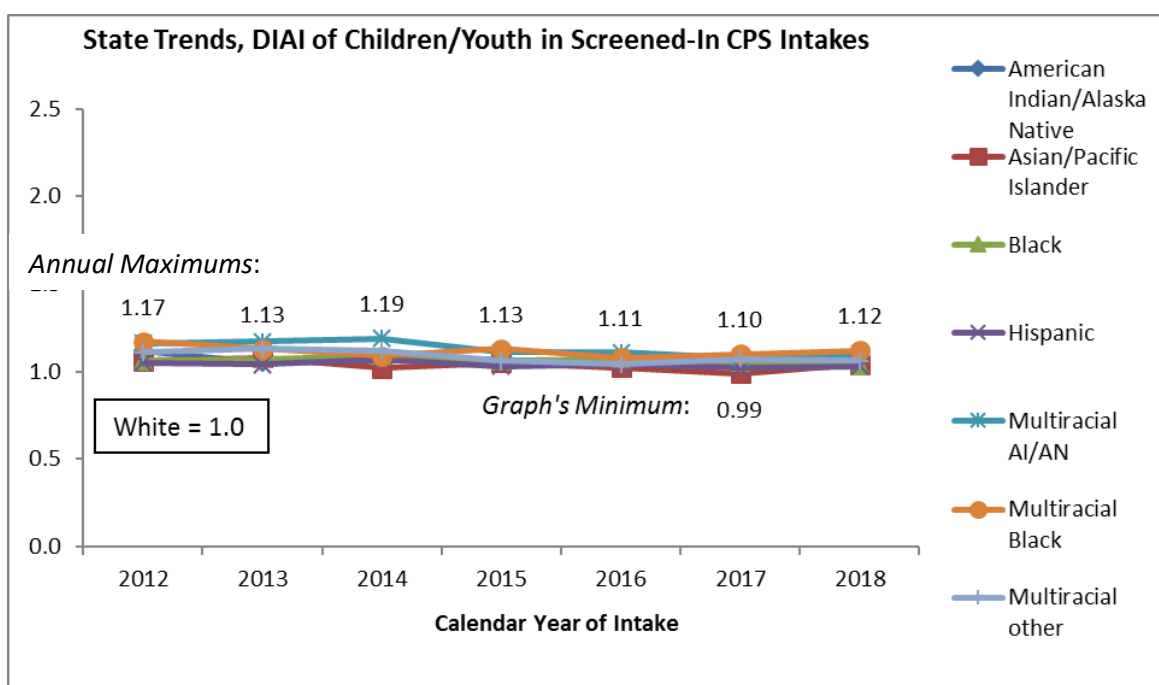
The patterns of rates and DIs of placement within 12 months also in part reflect the rates of all intakes, though the absolute level of these rates understandably are even less than those of screened-in intakes. However, it is evident from a comparison of the DIs in the graph 3B (DI of Placements within 12 Months of Intake) to the graphs for DIs of all intakes and screened-in intakes that the disproportionality for AI/AN, Multiracial and Black children/youth is even more elevated for placements within a year of intake. It can be seen that the trend lines for Hispanics and Whites are indistinguishable (except for the 2014 and 2017 cohorts, for which the Hispanic rates are slightly elevated), whereas the placement rates for AI/AN children/youth are highly elevated, and for Multiracial and Black children/youth also quite elevated. In contrast, the rates for Asian/PI are much lower than those of White and Hispanic children/youth. A positive sign regarding the AI/AN group, however, is that their placement rates sharply decreased from 2016 to 2017, to slightly below

that of the Multiracial group for the first time. Again, to get a view of the *disparity* of the placement decision, in contrast to the *disproportionality* presented in the graph immediately above, the DIAI is employed in Section 2 in order to adjust for the general rates of intakes (see p. 6).

Section 2: Disparity Relative to Intake and Placement Populations

The reader is referred to Appendix 1 for definitional details of the expanded race categories used in Section 2, as well as a general explanation of the meanings of the Section 2 metrics (the DIAI and DIAP) and the rationales for their use. A guide to interpreting the graphs of disproportionality/disparity indices also is given in Appendix 1.

4. Children/Youth in Screened-In CPS Intakes (DIAI)



The graph above, which presents the DIAI for screened-in intakes, evidences only slight disparity. The DI of 1.19 for Multiracial AI/AN children in 2014 was the maximum; other than that all of the DIs were 1.17 or less. The average is only 1.08, representing an 8% elevation of the average rate of screened-in intakes over that of Whites, controlling for the rates of all intakes.

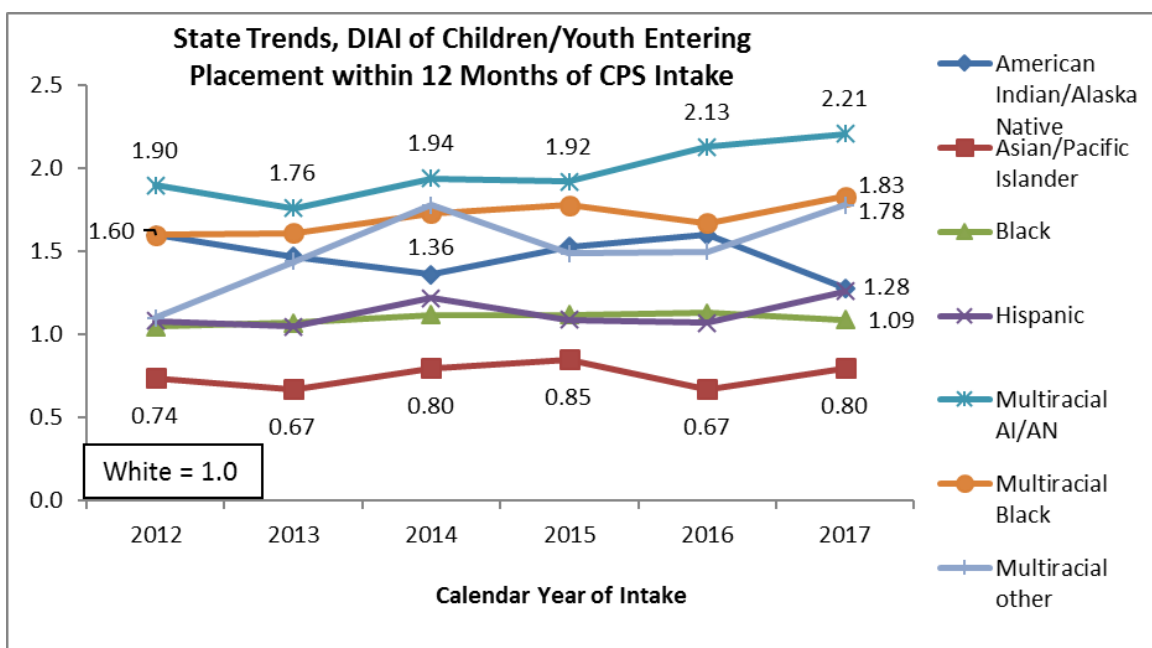
It's interesting to observe that, in terms of the DIAIs, the rates of screened-in intakes of Asian/Pacific Islanders, in contrast to the Section 1 graphs of disproportionality (which showed inverse disproportionality, i.e. DIs < 1.0) are comparable to those of the other groups (i.e. slightly elevated compared to that of Whites for most years). The minor exception, which also is the graph's minimum, is noted within the graph.

While recent disparity elevated even by 12% may be concerning, as for Multiracial Black children/youth in 2018, relative to the disparity evident at some later decision-making stages (e.g. placement, mobility), the degree of disparity at screening evidently is slight, especially when viewed as a whole. This chart can even be used as a kind of baseline for comparison for the later graphs, because the

disparity seen in it is so little. Nevertheless, it's notable that, with one the exception noted in the graph, all of the Dis are > 1.0 (i.e. consistently disparate in the direction of there having been higher rates of screened in intakes of children/youth of color).

However, it should be borne in mind that just because disparity is present to some degree does not necessarily imply that the decision-making of a given stage is biased or otherwise unfair, primarily because there may be differences in risk factors and consequently events, that legitimately warrant decisions ("screened-in" decisions in this instance) to be made at different rates. To the extent that there is disparity evident, however, the data raise the question of to what extent this is appropriate given the circumstances or, conversely, to what extent racial or other bias may be playing a part in the decision making. That said, as remarked above, we're seeing only a slight degree of any such disparity at the stage of screening of intakes.

5. Children/Youth Entering Placement within 12 Months (DIAI)



*Due to a necessary 12-month follow-up window, the figure is updated with a one-year lag.

In contrast to the graph of DIAIs for screening, the DIAI chart for children/youth entering placement within 12 months evidences obvious disparity, most so for the three Multiracial groups (all of which were maximally disparate in the most recent cohort) and for AI/AN (for which disparity decreased in the most recent cohort). In contrast, the DIAIs for the placement decision were only slightly elevated for Black children/youth (ranging from 1.05 [2012 cohort] to 1.13 [2016 cohort]). For the whole period displayed, Asian/PI children/youth were less likely compared to Whites to be placed within a year, with a range (controlling for the different rates of intake), from 18% less (corresponding to a DIAI of .85 of the 2015 Asian/PI cohort) to 49% less (corresponding to DIAI of 0.67, of the 2013 and 2016 Asian/PI cohorts).¹

¹ These percentages are based upon the reciprocals of the DIAI.

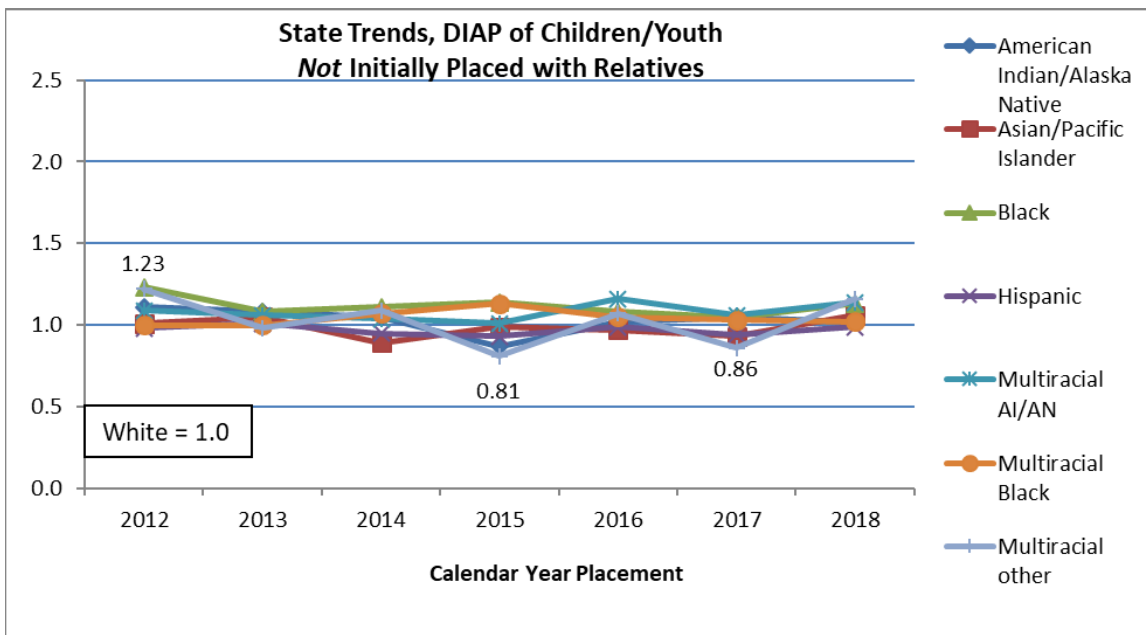
The Placement DIAIs are highest across the years for Multiracial AI/AN (with a maximum DIAI of 2.21 observed for the 2017 cohort), followed by Multiracial Black (maximum DIAI = 1.83 [2017 cohort]), Multiracial Other (maximum DIAI = 1.78 [2014 and 2017 cohorts]), and AI/AN (maximum DIAI = 1.60 [2012 and 2016 cohorts]). Reflecting the sharp decrease in recent placement rates for AI/AN initially seen in Figure 3A, however, the AI/AN DI of placement was lower for the 2017 cohort, dropping to nearly the same as that of Hispanics (1.28 and 1.26, respectively).

In last year's report, we remarked that the Placement DIAIs for both AI/AN and Multiracial AI/AN having increased from the 2015 cohort to the 2016 cohort was concerning and should be a matter of ongoing attention. In light of that, it is interesting that the two 2017 cohorts diverged to such a degree, with the DIAI for Multiracial AI/AN setting a new historical **maximum** (starting with the 2006 cohort) while the DIAI for AI/AN reached its historical **minimum**. As of the most recent cohort (2017), the adjusted rate of Multiracial AI/AN children/youth entering placement within 12 months relative to that of AI/AN children/youth is far more disparate than is the rate of AI/AN children/youth compared to that of Whites. The reason(s) for the divergence in disparity of placement for the AI/AN and Multiracial AI/AN groups (which has been evident to some degree since 2009, but which has gotten even more accentuated since then) should be a subject of urgent investigation.

Data corrections having to do with classification of Hispanic children/youth as such resulted in a distinct lowering of their trend line compared to that presented in the 2018 report. In that year we reported that the statewide Hispanic DIAI trend for placement (in terms of cohort years) went from 1.54 [2014], to 1.36 [2015] and then to 1.45 [2016], but in this 2019 report the corresponding trend is 1.22 [2014], 1.09 [2015], and 1.07 [2016] (and then up to 1.26 for the 2017 cohort).

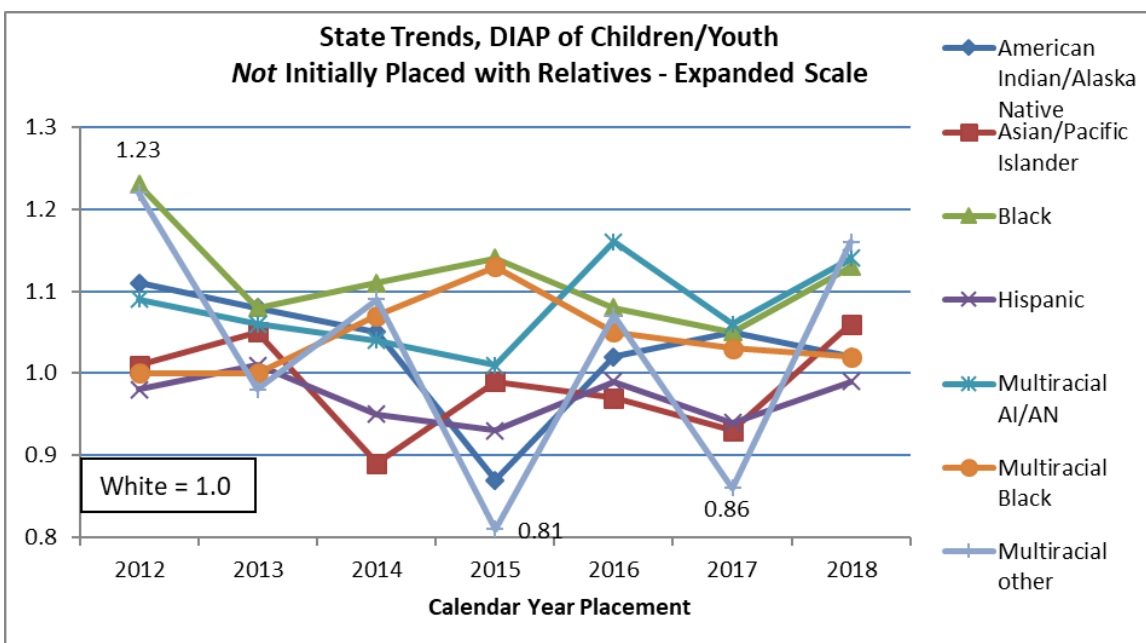
As emphasized last year, disparity of placement is relatively clear compared to the disparity we observe at other stages of CPS decision making and, in addition, initial placement into foster care is the key early stage of child or youth's involvements in the CPS system. As such, agency efforts to understand the reasons for the disparity of placements and to appropriately address them will serve to reduce disparity in the system overall.

6a. Children/Youth NOT Initially Placed with Relatives (DIAP)



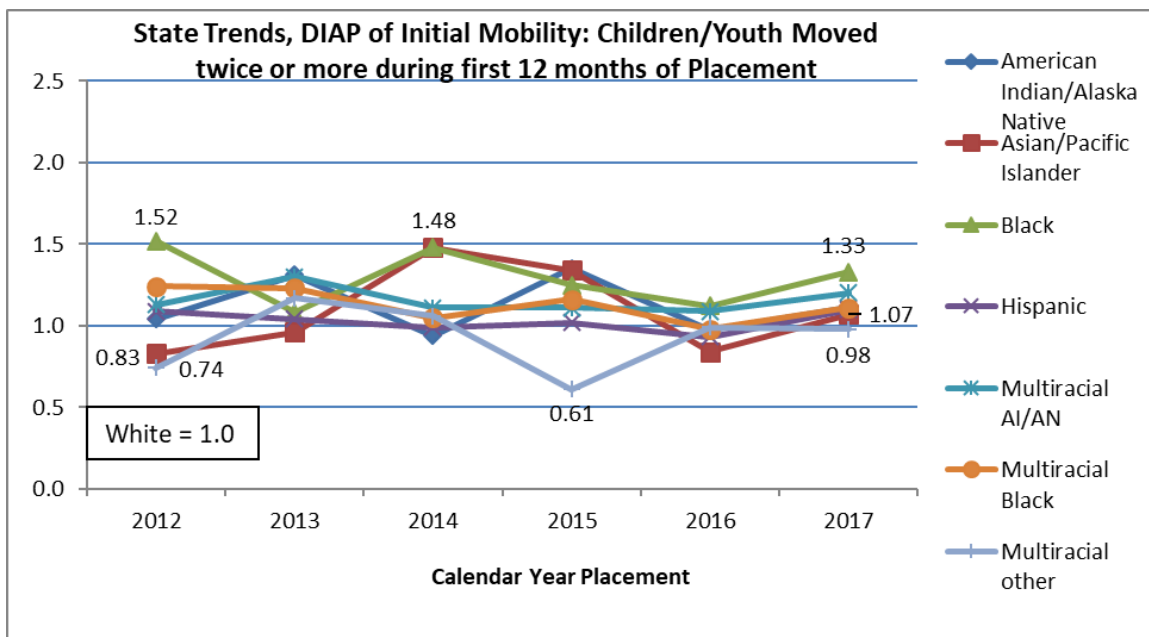
Compared to the DIAs of placement, there is only slight racial/ethnic disparity evident in the DIAP trends of children not initially placed with relatives. For the sake of discussion, a version of this graph with an expanded vertical axis is presented below.

6b. Children/Youth NOT Initially Placed with Relatives (DIAP) – Expanded Scale



Beyond the compression of the trend lines seen in Figure 6a, another indication of a lack of systematic disparity of this metric is that the DIAP values in the graphs of **children/youth not initially placed with relatives** are distributed both above and below the reference line of 1.0 (see Figure 6b). The maximum greater-than-one disparity for this metric is the DIAP of 1.23 for Black children/youth of the 2012 cohort.

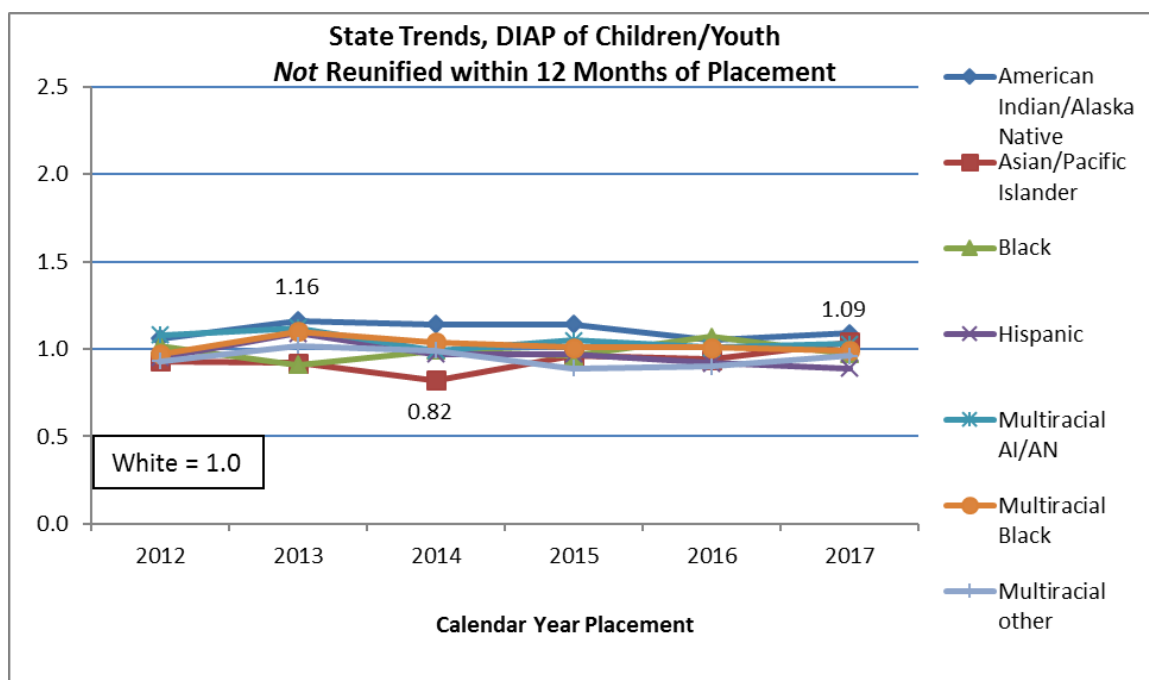
7. Initial Mobility: Children/Youth Moved twice or more during first 12 months of Placement (DIAP)



*Due to a necessary 12-month follow-up window, the figure is updated with a one-year lag.

There is some disparity evident in the DIAP values within the graph of children moved twice or more during first 12 months of placement but it is inconsistent across the years. The DIAP values for Black children/youth were relatively high (approximately 1.5) for the 2012 and 2014 cohorts and also again elevated (1.33) for the 2017 cohort. And though the trend for Asian/PI reached the same peak as Blacks (DIAP = 1.48) for the 2014 cohort, it has decreased for subsequent cohorts; as of the 2017 cohort the Asian/PI DIAP was only 1.07. Overall, however, there was an increase in disparity from the 2016 cohort to the 2017 cohort. Whereas for the 2016 cohort all of the DIAP values were within the range .85 (Asian/PI) to 1.17 (Black), the values for the 2017 cohort ranged from .98 (Multiracial Other) to 1.33 (Black). DIAPs of all of the groups except Multiracial Other increased from 2016 to 2017.

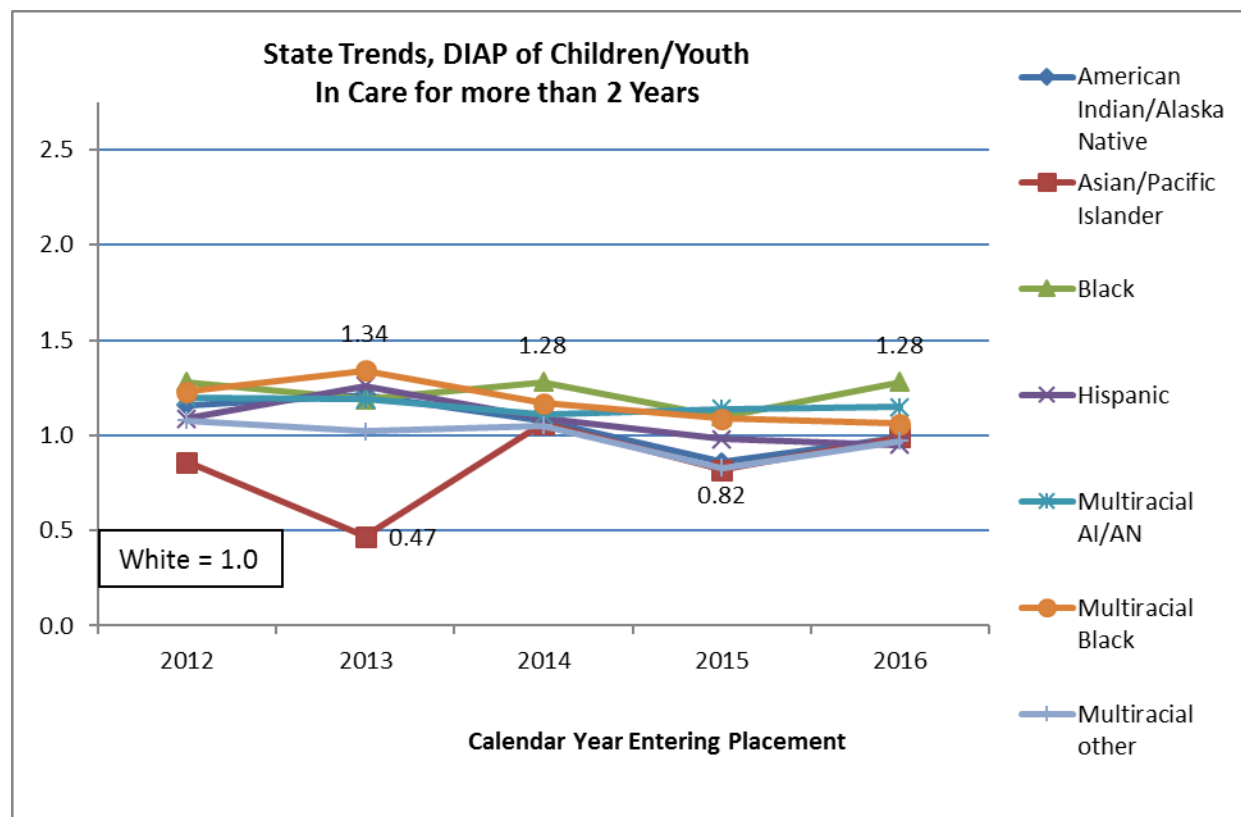
8. Children/Youth NOT Reunified within 12 Months of Placement (DIAP)



*Due to a necessary 12-month follow-up window, the figure is updated with a one-year lag.

The graph of DIAP values for children/youth not reunified with 12 months of placement also shows only slight disparity (and it also is distributed both above and below the reference line of 1.0) and across the 2016 and 2017 cohorts the overall disparity of this metric is small; for the 2017 cohort DIAPs range from 0.89 (Hispanic) to 1.09 (AI/AN). Over the entire span of cohorts presented in this graph, the maximum above-one DIAP value for this metric is only 1.16 (for the AI/AN 2013 cohort).

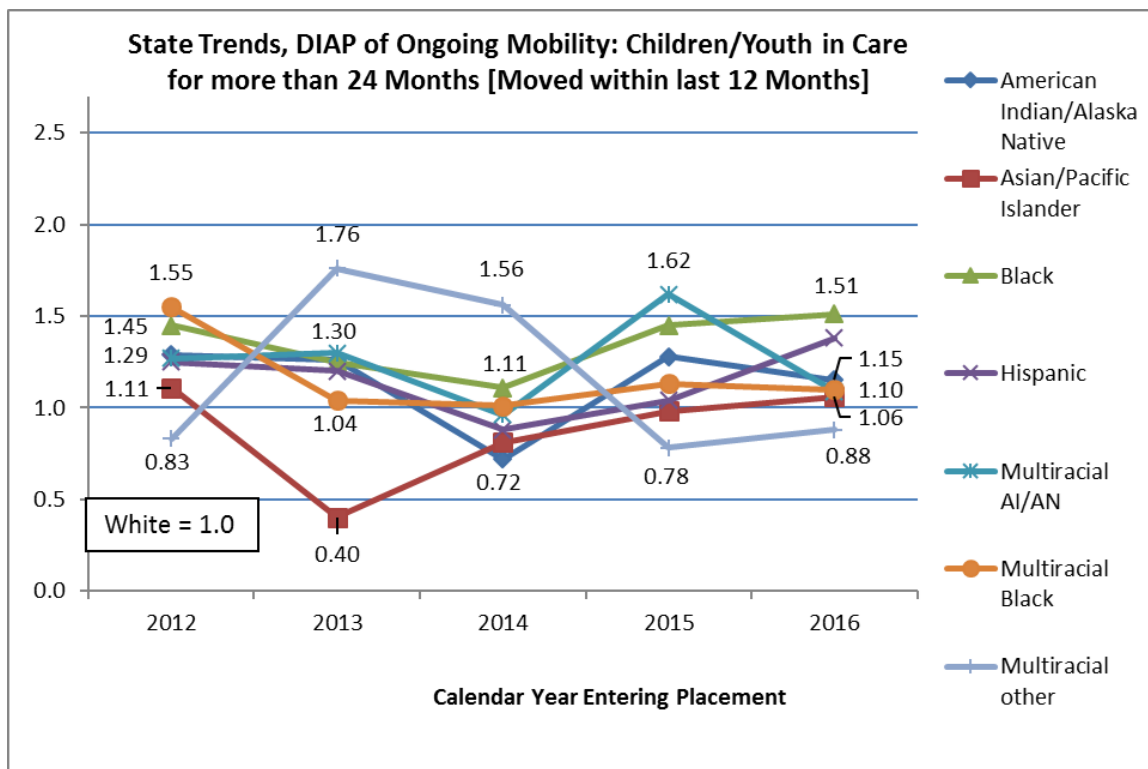
9. Children/Youth In Care for more than 2 Years (DIAP)



*Due to a necessary 24-month follow-up window, the figure is updated with a two-year lag.

The DIAP metric **children/youth in care for more than 2 years** reveals some disparity, though at a modest level (compared to that of children/youth entering placement within 12 months, for instance). The maximum greater-than-one DIAP value is 1.34 for the Multiracial Black children/youth 2013 cohort. Though the trend for Asian/PI children was below 1.0 for most cohorts, especially for the 2013 cohort (DIAP = 0.47), for the 2014 cohort it was 1.06. The maximum and minimum DIAP values both being of 2013 cohorts may give a visual impression that the DIAP trend lines for this metric are more dispersed than they actually are; in fact 83% of the DIAP values are within the range +/- 23% (i.e. having DIAPs between .81 and 1.23).

10. Ongoing Mobility of Children/Youth in Care > 24 Months [Moved within last 12 Months] (DIAP)



*Due to a necessary 24-month follow-up window, the figure is updated with a two-year lag.

The graph of the DIAP values of the metric **mobility of children/youth in care for more than 24 months** includes some elevated greater-than-one values. Though, as with the earlier **metric children moved twice or more during first 12 months of placement**, the trend lines bounce around somewhat (because this metric is based upon the smallest Ns of all the metrics included; see Appendix 3), for the 2016 cohort the DIAP values are less extreme (the maximum, for Black 2016 cohort, is 1.51).

The trend lines for AI/AN and Hispanic are similar, decreasing from 1.25 or 1.29 (2012 cohort Hispanic and AI/AN groups, respectively) to 0.72 or 0.88 (AI/AN and Hispanic groups, respectively, for the 2014 cohort), and then rising for the 2015 and 2016 cohorts back over 1.0 (high DIAPs = 1.28 [AI/AN 2015], 1.38 [Hispanic 2016]). The DIAP trend for Black children/youth decreased from the 2012 cohort through the 2014 cohort (from 1.45 to 1.11) but then increased again for the 2015 (1.45) and 2016 (1.51) cohorts. The trend line for Multiracial Other, as another relatively small group, would also be expected to be volatile and it is; the maximum DIAP is 1.76 (2013 cohort) and the minimum is 0.78 (2015 cohort). The trend line for Multiracial Black children/youth was more stable. It decreased from a maximum DIAP of 1.55 for the 2012 cohort to near parity with Whites (1.04) for the 2013 cohort and has remained relatively stable since then (the 2016 Multiracial Black DIAP is 1.10). The Asian/PI trend line for this metric went from 1.11 for the 2012 cohort, dipped far below 1.0 (DIAP = 0.40) for the 2013 cohort, then rose toward 1.0 for the 2014 (0.81) and 2015 (0.98) cohorts and then most recently rose just above parity for the 2016 cohort (1.06).

Of concern in last year's report was the question of why the DIAP value for AI/AN children/youth went from under 1.0 for the 2014 cohort to nearly double the rate of Whites for the 2015 cohort.

Two considerations have tempered this concern as of the current report. Firstly, data corrections have had the effect of lowering this metric's DIAP value for the AI/AN 2015 cohort (from 1.82 to 1.28).

Secondly, the DIAP for AI/ANs has decreased from the 2015 cohort to the 2016 cohort (to DIAP = 1.15), which is a level of disparity less concerning.

Appendix 1: Methodology

Metrics and Analysis Groups

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**):

$\text{Children and youth of color group Rate of Occurrence} \div \text{White Rate of Occurrence}$

- Disproportionality Index after Intake (**DIAl**):

$\text{Children and youth of color group Rate of Occurrence (relative to Intake)} \div \text{White Rate of Occurrence (relative to Intake)}$

- Disproportionality Index after Placement (**DIAP**):

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

Analysis Groups and Associated Metrics

Group 1 – Entry cohort of victims identified at intake, follow-up period of 12 months, annual reporting periods:

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

Group 2² – 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 mobility)
- Children reunified within 12 months of placement entry
- Children in care for more than 2 years
- Children in care for more than 2 years, moved during their previous 12 months in the current (or final) placement setting (ongoing mobility)

(Note that changes in placement setting with a length of stay < 31 days that occur as an intermediate setting between two settings with the same business ID are not counted as “moves” for the purposes of this metric.)

² Prior to the 2017 report, there was an Analysis Group 3, but as of that report Groups 2 and 3 became identical as a placement entry cohort was used for all of the DIAP metrics (rather than Open/Exit cohorts, as were used for Group 3 in previous reports).

Definitions of Section 1 Rates of Occurrence and Disproportionality Indices

All Intakes: These are unduplicated counts of children who were 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; these children are included in the intake counts. If children are identified in multiple intakes during the cohort period, the first founded intake is selected³; if there are only unfounded intakes, the earliest unfounded intake in the cohort period is selected; if there are only screened-out intakes, the earliest one of those is selected. The intent is to select the most serious of multiple intakes occurring during the cohort period.⁴

Screened-In CPS Intake: These are unduplicated counts of children identified as at risk or potential victims in CPS intakes received during the cohort period and accepted for Family Assessment Response (FAR) or CPS investigation (whether actually investigated or not), excluding intakes from and investigations of licensed facilities (DLR cases). As noted above, 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 selected⁵; 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 into foster care up to three days before intake⁶ (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). All qualifying intakes (i.e. Department of Child and Family Services [DCFS] intakes associated with one or more victims) are included when identifying placements for the purposes of rate calculation (not just screened-in/accepted intakes) because some legitimate index placements otherwise would be excluded. (This refers to the set of intakes that are entered into the deduplication procedure.) Non-Department of Child and Family Services [Non-DCFS] placements⁷ are not included and children/youth under the jurisdiction of Tribal Courts have a Placement Care and Authority [PCA] of Non-DCFS, so tribal payments only placements are excluded (unless, that is, the child returned to the care of DCFS).

³ We use founded here as our best proxy of the most serious intake occurring during the cohort period.

⁴ It is necessary to select a particular intake for reference by later metrics (such as *Placement within 12 Months of Intake*).

⁵ Again, we use founded here as our best proxy of the most serious intake occurring during the cohort period.

⁶ 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. In these situations, it would be inappropriate to not count such cases as 'resulting' in placement.

⁷ These are those with the most recent PCA of Non-DCFS (either the current PCA, if an open placement, or last PCA prior to discharge, if closed).

Expanded Race Categories (used in Section 2)

The following race categories reflect the intent to distinguish single-race children from multi-racial children in the client population in a reasonably detailed way, neither ignoring possible differences between the experience and treatment of multiracial versus single-race children nor lumping all multi-racial children together. At the same time, we cannot (for practical reasons) track very small groups of children (as would result from even more refined multiracial categories). The categories that follow represent those distinctions that the CA Racial Disparity Working Group identified as most important to monitor⁸.

- American Indian/Alaska Native (just one race/ethnicity indicated).
- Asian/Pacific Islander (just one race/ethnicity indicated).
- Black (just one race/ethnicity indicated).
- White (just one race, Hispanic not indicated).
- Hispanic (White race only or Unknown race only). Multiracial Hispanics are included in the appropriate other multiracial categories.
- Multiracial American Indian/Alaska Native (**any** American Indian/Alaska Native indicated as well as another race/ethnicity).
- Multiracial Black (**any** Black indicated as well as another race/ethnicity **except** American Indian/Alaska Native).
- Multiracial other (all other combinations, with no indication of American Indian/Alaska Native or Black). This category includes Asian/Pacific Islander/White and Asian/Pacific Islander/Hispanic.
- Unknown (no race/ethnicity indicated) - Not included in the figures below (but included in the Appendix 2 tables of base data).

DIAI and DIAP and the Rationales for their use in Section 2

Whereas in Section 1 disproportionality indices are used, Section 2 relies upon two more refined metrics, disparity indices.

The Disparity Index After Intake (DIAI) is a measure of disparity relative to the racial/ethnic composition of (unduplicated) children reported to the agency as being at risk or possibly victims in CPS intakes (specifically, those for whom child race information was recorded), regardless of whether or not the intake was screened in (accepted for services or investigation) or not. This is the group of children who enter the system to any extent (even if only to be screened out).

Using DIAIs to monitor changes in racial⁹ disparity has the important advantage of factoring out racial disparity in general social conditions and the sources of referrals (such as possible demographic

⁸ As reflected in decisions made by the *CA Racial Disparity Working Group* chaired by Judy Hall at the meeting of August 17th, 2011 and in subsequent communications. These are the categories used since the 2011 report.

⁹ In using “racial” in this discussion we mean it in the broad sense of racial/ethnic, given that Hispanic is one of the categories used in the “race” classification detailed below.

differences in maltreatment risk factors, differences in visibility of families 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. The use of DIAIs allows for the tracking of changes in disparity after children are identified in CPS intakes, as they move through the intake-screening process, possibly are investigated, and for some children/youth after they are removed from their homes and have stays in foster care (after which the DIAPs are more appropriate, because they use the group of children put in placement as the comparison group).

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 focusing on whatever disparity is specific to post-placement stages of care, in order that agency efforts to decrease disparity during foster care can be most effectively directed. For purposes of the DIAIs and DIAPs, all intakes, screened-in intakes, and placements within 12 months are defined as described above (in Section 1). Note that for all measurement points, a DIAI or a DIAP value above 1 indicates greater problematic disparity compared to Whites, whereas a DIAI or a DIAP value less than 1 (inverse disparity) indicates that a given group generally is doing better than Whites in terms of that metric (because all of the indices are scaled in the direction that generally is not preferable).

A Guide to Interpreting the Figures presenting Disproportionality/Disparity Indices

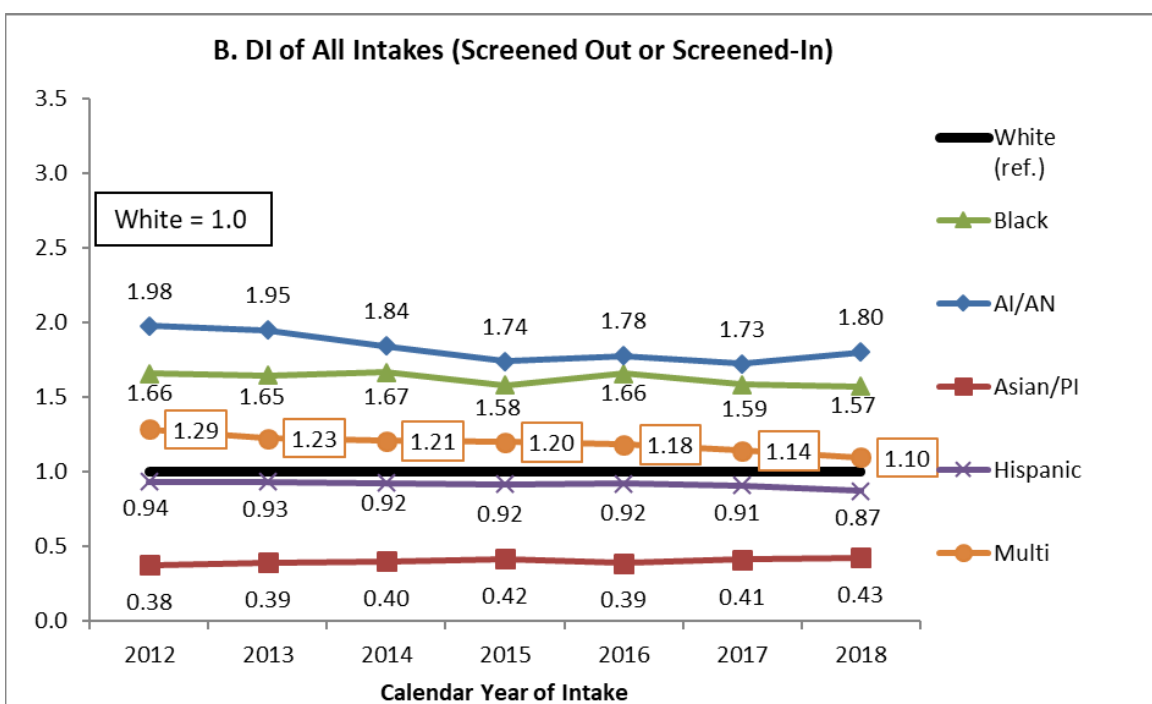
Readers may appreciate an introduction to interpretation of the main kind of graphs that are presented in this report. The graphs of rates per thousand that are included in Section 1 are not uncommon but there is less general familiarity with graphs of the disproportionality and disparity indices that represent the report's main results.

The disproportionality and disparity indices presented in this report are one form of what is generally known as relative rates. The indices differ somewhat across the decision points, specifically in the comparison groups that are used in the denominators to compute the rates, but the general form of the indices is simply the Rate of Children and Youth of Color Group divided by the Rate of White Group. The result, or index, represents the degree of difference in the rate of a children and youth of color group compared to the rate of Whites. Because the metrics in this report are scaled in the direction that generally is problematic, a higher rate of a children and youth of color group (indicated by an index value *greater* than one) indicates some problematic disproportionality or disparity for that group, whereas a lower rate of a children and youth of color group (indicated by a positive index value *less* than one) indicates that the children and youth of color group generally is faring better than Whites in that regard. The size of the disproportionality or disparity index (to the extent that it diverges from the reference value of 1.0) represents the degree to which the children and youth of color are faring worse or better, i.e. the extent to which the decision making at that stage is disproportional or disparate.

For example, a disparity index of 2.0 would show that the rate of a children and youth of color group is twice as great as that of Whites; in other words, the event under consideration would be twice as likely to happen for the children/youth of color of the group under consideration compared to their White counterparts. Indices between zero and one are a bit trickier to interpret, because the degree of difference in rates is found by computing the reciprocal of the index, i.e. one divided by the index value. For instance, an index of 0.4 means that children/youth of the children and youth of color group have a rate 2.5 times less ($1.0/0.4$) than the rate for White children/youth. The reference trend in all such graphs is the cross-year trend line for Whites, which is always exactly 1.0 (i.e. the rate of Whites compared to itself, $1.0/1.0$).

The figure below is an example of the kind of graphs under consideration. It is the disproportionality index (DI) for All Intakes (these are intakes associated with victims, and are unduplicated by victim).

Example Figure: Trends in Rate of Occurrence & Disproportionality Index for All Intakes (DI)



In this graph the reference trend is the (horizontal) line for Whites, which is 1.0 for all years. The rates that are compared are based upon the number of intakes for each racial group over the (estimated) number of children/youth of that race in the general population of Washington State. So, for example, in 2012 American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children/youth were about twice as likely (DI = 1.98, i.e. 98% more likely) to be reported to CPS as were White children/youth, and in 2018 they were 80% more likely (DI = 1.80), which is a reduction but still disproportionate. In contrast, Multiracial children/youth in 2012 were 29% more likely (DI = 1.29) to have a CPS intake, but by 2018 Multiracial children/youth were only slightly more likely to have an intake than were White children/youth (DI = 1.10). Incidentally, this is a continuation of a decreasing multi-year trend in disproportionality regarding Multiracial children/youth, going back to 2007 (a cohort for which a DI of 1.68 for was most recently calculated [in 2015]).

On the other hand, Asian/Pacific Islander (Asian/PI) children/youth throughout the period 2012-2017 had DIs that were less than one, indicating that the rates of intakes for Whites were higher than for Asian/PI children/youth. These ranged from a DI of 0.38 [2.6 times less] (in 2012) to a DI of .43 [2.3 times less] (in 2018). The DIs for Hispanic children youth also were consistently less than 1.0 during this period, indicating that Hispanic children/youth had fewer intakes than Whites (both groups having been adjusted for their representation in the Washington population) and that disproportionality (in the direction of Whites being overrepresented in intakes compared to Hispanics), which we refer to as inverse disproportionality, slightly increased during the period (from 0.94 [6% less] in 2012 to 0.87 [15% less] in 2018). (As described above, these percentages are based upon the reciprocals of the Dis.) Note that the results for Hispanic children/youth have changed considerably from last year's report (they now are closer to 1.0) as a result of a correction to the Hispanic indicator variable made in FamLink during 2019 (see Appendix 2).

Appendix 2: Changes and Corrections in the 2019 Report

As of the 2016 Report, revisions to each year's report are detailed in an Appendix. Additional revisions made to this 2019 report are as follows:

- *Child Welfare* was inserted in the name of the report, to make clear to what part of DCYF the report pertains.
- The *Methodological Introduction* has been renamed *Methodology* and moved to Appendix 1, and now includes all of the methodological sections of the report.
- The OFM Statewide Race/Ethnicity Population Estimates were updated (for years 2012 to 2018).
- All possible disproportionality and disparity metrics were updated for CY2012 through CY2018, as were the corresponding base data in Appendix 3.
- Data from CY2011 were dropped from the graphs and the table of base data for C2011 were not included in the current year's report. (Our practice is for each subsequent report to have a minimum 5-year reporting window, each year dropping the oldest year and adding a new one.)
- In Appendix 1 and in the tables of Appendix 3, what were previously referred to as Group 2 and Group 3 were collapsed (into Group 2). This reflects a change made in the 2017 report, the first in which entry placement cohorts were used for the final two metrics (rather than Open/Exit cohorts, as were used for Group 3 in previous reports).
- The tables of Appendix 3 were corrected to exclude All Intakes from the category of Group 1.
- As in the past year's report, base data table cells with $N > 0$ and $N < 10$ were redacted (so as to minimize possible identifiability), as indicated by an 'X'. However this year this was not done for the *unknown* row. And, in addition, for columns that did have a redaction, the final digit of the column's *total* also was redacted in the same way (to avoid the possibility of the redacted data being derived *via* subtraction).
- Two longstanding errors were discovered in the classification algorithm for Race/Ethnicity and were corrected. This only affected the classifications of '*Asian/PI*' (the correction *increases* them) and *Multiracial Other* (the correction *decreases* them), but the difference is slight, on the order of 0.1% in terms of the cohort populations, and about 1.5% to 3.0% in terms of the groups (*Asian/PI* and *Multiracial Other*, respectively).
- A correction in *FamLink (Epic Story 4942 Change Request)* resulted in additional children/youth being classified as *Hispanic* and in the multiracial categories, and fewer in the single-race categories and many fewer as *unknown*. For instance, for CY2012, the number of intakes identified as Hispanic increased 29% and of *Hispanic* screened-in intakes by 22%. Sizes of all of the other race/ethnicity categories also changed, to a lesser extent; the three multiracial categories all increased (+5-8%). The N with race/ethnicity *unknown* decreased substantially (-15% intakes, -8% screened-in) and *unknowns* also decreased with the other metrics.
- The text has been revised to reflect changes in the data and the new data.
- Grid lines have been removed from all of the graphs.

- Data labels in the graphs have been improved for clarity and selected ones have been added as benchmarks in Section 2.
- In the tables of Appendix 3, *Initial Mobility* has been added to the column headings of the fifth metric, and *Ongoing (In)stability* in the column headings of the eighth metric has been replaced with *Ongoing Mobility*. Headings in the corresponding graphs also have been made consistent in this regard.

Appendix 3: Base Data for the 2019 report (2012-2018)

CY2012 Cohort¹⁰

Updated 11/25/19

| Race Category | Group 1 Denominator | Group 1 Indicators | | Group 2 Indicators | | | | | Group 2 Denominator |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | All Intakes (Including Screened Out) | Screened In CPS Intake | Placed w/in 12 months of Intake | NOT initially placed w/ relatives | Initial Mobility (> 1 move in first 12 months) | NOT Reunified w/in 12 months | In Care > 2 years | Ongoing Mobility (moved w/in last 12 months) | Children/Youth in Placement > 7 days |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native only | 3,097 | 1,679 | 314 | 156 | 52 | 153 | 86 | 26 | 218 |
| Asian/PI only | 1,928 | 991 | 90 | 44 | 13 | 42 | 20 | X | 68 |
| Black only | 4,946 | 2,542 | 329 | 258 | 114 | 220 | 143 | 44 | 327 |
| Hispanic (White or unknown race) | 10,223 | 5,219 | 696 | 389 | 153 | 386 | 227 | 71 | 614 |
| Multiracial AI/AN | 3,722 | 2,092 | 446 | 286 | 105 | 290 | 166 | 48 | 407 |
| Multiracial Black except American Indian/Alaska Native | 3,156 | 1,799 | 320 | 201 | 89 | 201 | 131 | 45 | 313 |
| Multiracial Other | 993 | 537 | 69 | 51 | 11 | 40 | 24 | X | 65 |
| Unknown | 5,741 | 1,655 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| White only | 39,250 | 19,078 | 2,481 | 1,605 | 571 | 1,649 | 849 | 231 | 2,493 |
| Total | 73,056 | 35,592 | 4,752 | 2,992 | 1,108 | 2,982 | 1,646 | 47X | 4,507 |

¹⁰ The columns of this table are not mutually exclusive.

CY2013 Cohort¹¹

Updated 11/25/19

| Race Category | Group 1 Denominator | Group 1 Indicators | | Group 2 Indicators | | | | | Group 2 Denominator |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | All Intakes (Including Screened Out) | Screened In CPS Intake | Placed w/in 12 months of Intake | NOT initially placed w/ relatives | Initial Mobility (> 1 move in first 12 months) | NOT Reunified w/in 12 months | In Care > 2 years | Ongoing Mobility (moved w/in last 12 months) | Children/Youth in Placement > 7 days |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native only | 3,240 | 1,714 | 315 | 157 | 76 | 168 | 89 | 25 | 233 |
| Asian/PI only | 2,170 | 1,178 | 97 | 58 | 21 | 50 | 13 | X | 88 |
| Black only | 5,254 | 2,848 | 374 | 245 | 98 | 206 | 137 | 39 | 364 |
| Hispanic (White or unknown race) | 11,037 | 5,824 | 771 | 460 | 190 | 494 | 291 | 75 | 730 |
| Multiracial AI/AN | 3,822 | 2,259 | 445 | 303 | 148 | 319 | 172 | 51 | 458 |
| Multiracial Black except American Indian/Alaska Native | 3,322 | 1,893 | 354 | 211 | 104 | 231 | 144 | 30 | 339 |
| Multiracial Other | 1,068 | 610 | 102 | 57 | 27 | 59 | 30 | 14 | 93 |
| Unknown | 7,068 | 2,319 | 12 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| White only | 41,016 | 20,712 | 2,719 | 1,719 | 685 | 1,707 | 870 | 235 | 2,749 |
| Total | 77,997 | 39,357 | 5,189 | 3,216 | 1,349 | 3,235 | 1,747 | 47X | 5,061 |

¹¹ The columns of this table are not mutually exclusive.

CY2014 Cohort¹²

Updated 11/25/19

| Race Category | Group 1 Denominator | Group 1 Indicators | | Group 2 Indicators | | | | | Group 2 Denominator |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | All Intakes (Including Screened Out) | Screened In CPS Intake | Placed w/in 12 months of Intake | NOT initially placed w/ relatives | Initial Mobility (> 1 move in first 12 months) | NOT Reunified w/in 12 months | In Care > 2 years | Ongoing Mobility (moved w/in last 12 months) | Children/Youth in Placement > 7 days |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native only | 3,287 | 1,741 | 259 | 150 | 57 | 166 | 83 | 15 | 230 |
| Asian/PI only | 2,429 | 1,248 | 112 | 61 | 43 | 57 | 39 | X | 110 |
| Black only | 5,751 | 3,134 | 374 | 262 | 148 | 238 | 162 | 38 | 378 |
| Hispanic (White or unknown race) | 11,868 | 6,373 | 841 | 513 | 228 | 535 | 317 | 69 | 868 |
| Multiracial AI/AN | 3,993 | 2,383 | 449 | 262 | 119 | 255 | 150 | 35 | 406 |
| Multiracial Black except American Indian/Alaska Native | 3,628 | 1,989 | 364 | 269 | 112 | 266 | 158 | 37 | 404 |
| Multiracial Other | 1,246 | 703 | 128 | 87 | 36 | 80 | 45 | 18 | 128 |
| Unknown | 8,081 | 2,650 | 15 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| White only | 43,115 | 21,642 | 2,495 | 1,585 | 675 | 1,614 | 851 | 230 | 2,548 |
| Total | 83,398 | 41,863 | 5,037 | 3,192 | 1,418 | 3,214 | 1,805 | 45X | 5,079 |

¹² The columns of this table are not mutually exclusive.

CY2015 Cohort¹³

Updated 11/25/19

| Race Category | Group 1 Denominator | Group 1 Indicators | | Group 2 Indicators | | | | | Group 2 Denominator |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | All Intakes (Including Screened Out) | Screened In CPS Intake | Placed w/in 12 months of Intake | NOT initially placed w/ relatives | Initial Mobility (> 1 move in first 12 months) | NOT Reunified w/in 12 months | In Care > 2 years | Ongoing Mobility (moved w/in last 12 months) | Children/Youth in Placement > 7 days |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native only | 3,151 | 1,656 | 260 | 115 | 82 | 157 | 72 | 25 | 200 |
| Asian/PI only | 2,604 | 1,352 | 120 | 82 | 51 | 83 | 43 | 12 | 125 |
| Black only | 5,577 | 2,905 | 337 | 240 | 121 | 209 | 146 | 45 | 318 |
| Hispanic (White or unknown race) | 12,181 | 6,164 | 717 | 479 | 242 | 519 | 317 | 79 | 779 |
| Multiracial AI/AN | 4,039 | 2,204 | 418 | 290 | 147 | 314 | 208 | 69 | 436 |
| Multiracial Black except American Indian/Alaska Native | 3,867 | 2,156 | 372 | 311 | 146 | 288 | 189 | 46 | 416 |
| Multiracial Other | 1,241 | 646 | 100 | 63 | 22 | 72 | 41 | X | 118 |
| Unknown | 7,847 | 2,599 | 26 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| White only | 43,071 | 21,239 | 2326 | 1,647 | 758 | 1,719 | 1,042 | 244 | 2,498 |
| Total | 83,578 | 40,921 | 4,676 | 3,233 | 1,570 | 3,366 | 2,059 | 52X | 4,898 |

¹³ The columns of this table are not mutually exclusive.

2019 Washington State Child Welfare Racial Disparity Indices Report

* Due to a necessary 24 month follow-up window, the greyed-out data are not yet available.

CY2016 Cohort¹⁴

Updated 11/25/19

| Race Category | Group 1 Denominator | Group 1 Indicators | | Group 2 Indicators | | | | | Group 2 Denominator |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | All Intakes (Including Screened Out) | Screened In CPS Intake | Placed w/in 12 months of Intake | NOT initially placed w/ relatives | Initial Mobility (> 1 move in first 12 months) | NOT Reunified w/in 12 months | In Care > 2 years | Ongoing Mobility (moved w/in last 12 months) | Children/Youth in Placement > 7 days |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native only | 3,245 | 1,585 | 267 | 134 | 54 | 135 | 77 | 22 | 201 |
| Asian/PI only | 2,521 | 1,232 | 87 | 63 | 23 | 60 | 38 | 10 | 99 |
| Black only | 5,949 | 3,051 | 346 | 244 | 108 | 237 | 171 | 50 | 346 |
| Hispanic (White or unknown race) | 12,517 | 6,248 | 694 | 475 | 189 | 432 | 269 | 96 | 731 |
| Multiracial AI/AN | 4,014 | 2,124 | 440 | 358 | 143 | 308 | 210 | 49 | 473 |
| Multiracial Black except American Indian/Alaska Native | 3,867 | 2,001 | 334 | 268 | 107 | 254 | 160 | 41 | 391 |
| Multiracial Other | 1333 | 660 | 103 | 92 | 36 | 76 | 49 | 11 | 131 |
| Unknown | 8,399 | 2,669 | 20 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| White only | 42,751 | 20,422 | 2,205 | 1,645 | 699 | 1615 | 973 | 240 | 2,514 |
| Total | 84,596 | 39,992 | 4,496 | 3,285 | 1,365 | 3,117 | 1,947 | 519 | 4,895 |

¹⁴ The columns of this table are not mutually exclusive.

CY2017 Cohort¹⁵

Updated 11/25/19

| Race Category | Group 1 Denominator | Group 1 Indicators | | Group 2 Indicators | | | | | Group 2 Denominator |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| | All Intakes (Including Screened Out) | Screened In CPS Intake | Placed w/in 12 months of Intake | NOT initially placed w/ relatives | Initial Mobility (> 1 move in first 12 months) | NOT Reunified w/in 12 months | In Care > 2 years* | Ongoing Mobility (moved w/in last 12 months)* | Children/Youth in Placement > 7 days |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native only | 3,262 | 1,731 | 210 | 107 | 48 | 105 | | | 150 |
| Asian/PI only | 2,835 | 1,392 | 114 | 84 | 41 | 89 | | | 133 |
| Black only | 6,050 | 3,161 | 333 | 244 | 131 | 213 | | | 342 |
| Hispanic (White or unknown race) | 13,057 | 6,623 | 825 | 531 | 263 | 475 | | | 833 |
| Multiracial AI/AN | 4,166 | 2,245 | 463 | 349 | 168 | 320 | | | 485 |
| Multiracial Black except American Indian/Alaska Native | 4,011 | 2,193 | 370 | 290 | 133 | 263 | | | 415 |
| Multiracial Other | 1,342 | 716 | 120 | 87 | 42 | 92 | | | 149 |
| Unknown | 9,788 | 3,205 | 19 | 10 | 3 | 5 | | | 13 |
| White only | 44,110 | 21,962 | 2,218 | 1,703 | 722 | 1,610 | | | 2,507 |
| Total | 88,621 | 43,228 | 4,672 | 3,405 | 1,551 | 3,172 | 0 | 0 | 5,027 |

* Due to minimum 12 month or 24 month follow-up windows, the greyed-out data are not yet available.

¹⁵ The columns of this table are not mutually exclusive.

2019 Washington State Child Welfare Racial Disparity Indices Report

CY2018 Cohort¹⁶

Updated 11/25/19

| Race Category | Group 1 Denominator | Group 1 Indicators | | Group 2 Indicators | | | | | Group 2 Denominator |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|--------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| | All Intakes (Including Screened Out) | Screened In CPS Intake | Placed w/in 12 months of Intake* | NOT initially placed w/ relatives | Initial Mobility (> 1 move in first 12 months)* | NOT Reunified w/in 12 months* | In Care > 2 years* | Ongoing Mobility (moved w/in last 12 months)* | Children/Youth in Placement > 7 days |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native only | 3,558 | 1,826 | | 117 | | | | | 178 |
| Asian/PI only | 3,166 | 1,613 | | 66 | | | | | 97 |
| Black only | 6,325 | 3,183 | | 251 | | | | | 345 |
| Hispanic (White or unknown race) | 13,257 | 6,660 | | 478 | | | | | 750 |
| Multiracial AI/AN | 4,253 | 2,295 | | 330 | | | | | 451 |
| Multiracial Black except American Indian/Alaska Native | 4,094 | 2,246 | | 262 | | | | | 399 |
| Multiracial Other | 1,383 | 717 | | 89 | | | | | 120 |
| Unknown | 11,017 | 3,650 | | 3 | | | | | 6 |
| White only | 45,323 | 22,154 | | 1,534 | | | | | 2,391 |
| Total | 92,376 | 44,344 | 0 | 3,130 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,737 |

* Due to minimum 12 month or 24 month follow-up windows, the greyed-out data are not yet available.

¹⁶ The columns of this table are not mutually exclusive.

Appendix 4: Past Reports of the Series

Graham, J. Christopher (2019). *Washington State DCYF Racial Disparity Indices Report (2018)*. Olympia, WA: Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

DSHS Children's Administration Technology Services. *Racial Disparity Indices Report – Part 1 (Statewide, September 2017) and Part 2 (Regional, November 2017), for Cohorts from CY 2010 through CY 2016*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

DSHS Children's Administration Technology Services (2016, September). *Racial Disparity Indices Report – Part 1 (Statewide), and Part 2 (Regional), for Cohorts from CY 2010 through CY 2015*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

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.