



Foster Care Program Outcome Report

July 2000 – June 2001

Follow-up Data for Children in Foster Care Program

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Revised July 2002

FOSTER CARE OUTCOMES

JULY 2000 TO JULY 2001

Family Services of Western Pennsylvania serves a number of children and adolescents in foster care that reside primarily in Allegheny County. There are approximately 80 foster homes that provide foster care for children who are newborns up to the age of 20. The following information provides outcomes for the services that were provided during the above-mentioned fiscal year.

Children Referred to Foster Care. Children come into Foster Care for various reasons. Figure 1 shows the seven most frequent reasons why children were referred to our Foster Care program over the past three Fiscal Years. Of the children served last year (FY00/01), 24% were referred for foster care service due to physical or sexual abuse while 27% were due to caregiver's drug and alcohol or mental health issues. Other referral reasons accounted for smaller but significant percentages.

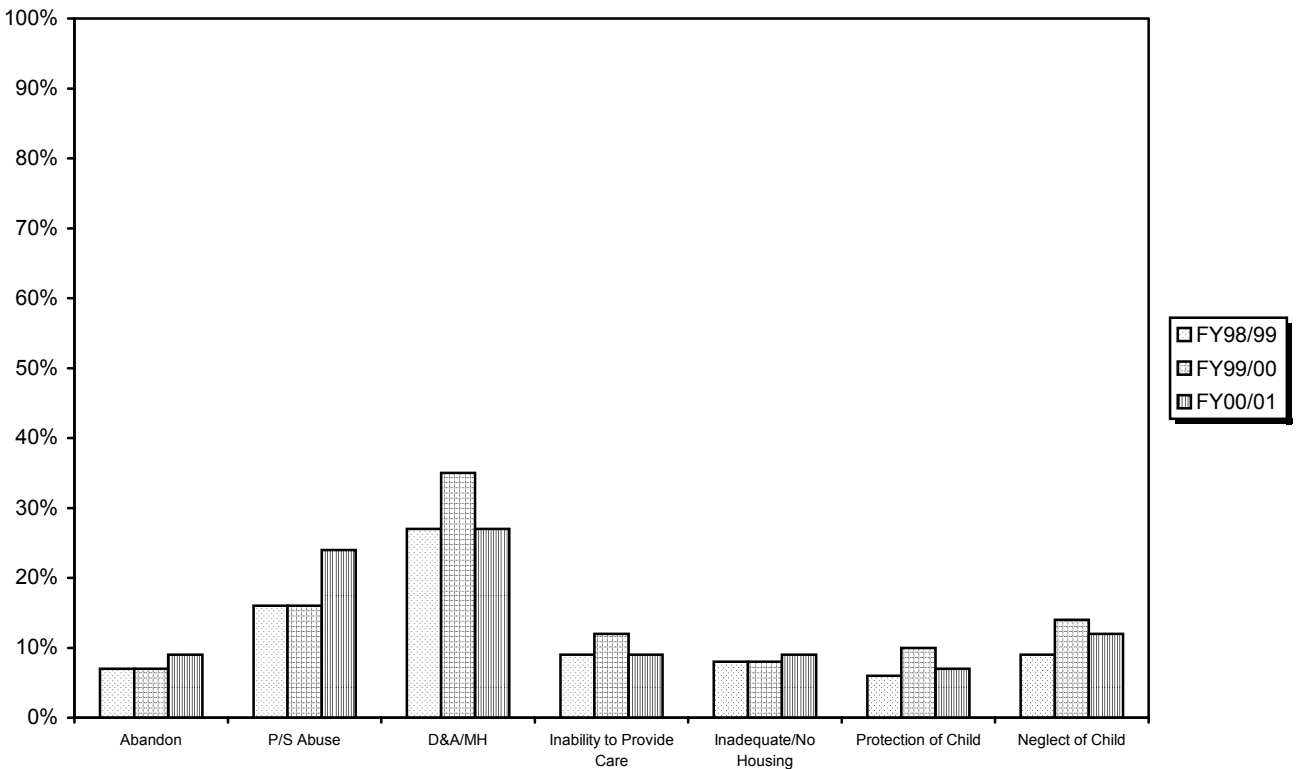


Figure 1 - Comparison of seven most frequent reasons for referrals to Foster Care for fiscal year 98/99, 99/00, and fiscal year 00/01.

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Children Served. Table 1 shows the children served in FY 00/01. During the Fiscal Year 00/01, the Foster Care Program served 307 children with an average daily census of 112 children. During this same time period, there were 134 children discharged from care. About half (46%) were girls and half (54%) were boys. The children ranged in age from birth through eighteen years old, with sixty four (48%) of the children under the age of five, and another 34% between the ages of 6 and 10.

Age	Male	Female	Total for Age range
0-5	56%	44%	48%
6-10	56%	44%	34%
11-15	47%	53%	14%
16-20	38%	62%	4%
Totals	54%	46%	100%

Table 1--Total children served demographic.

Of the 134 children who were discharged during the year, there was an average length of stay of 316 days, and a total of 42,397 days of care for these children. Several children served were discharged, came back into care and were discharged again. Each "episode of care" was counted separately. 35% were in care less than one month, and 65% were in care for more than one month. 26% of the children were in care for more than one year.

Fiscal Year	Discharges	Avg. LOS	% < 30 day	Discharged	Discharged
			Avg LOS	< 1 year	> 1 year
99/00	169	337 days	40% - 5.5	21%	39%
00/01	134	316 days	34% - 6.5	40%	26%

Table 2--Comparison table of FY 99/00; 00/01, average length of stay, % discharges.

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For children who were in care for at least three months Table 3 breaks down the age and gender of the discharged children from FY 99/00 as compared to FY 00/01. Overall 73 children who had been in care at least three months were discharged in 00/01. Of that group, 49% were male and 51% were female. Ages of the children ranged from less than one year old, to nineteen years old. The children in the 0-5 age range comprised 42% of the children, 39% fell into the 6-10 age range, 15% fell into the 11-15 age range, and 4% fell into the 16-20 age range.

COMPARISON OF FY 00/01 TO FY 99/00

AGE RANGE FY 00/01	MALE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
0 – 5	42%	43%	42%
6 – 10	50%	27%	39%
11 – 15	8%	22%	15%
16 – 20	0	8%	4%
Totals	49%	51%	

AGE RANGE FY 99/00	MALE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
0 – 5	60%	40%	64%
6 – 10	47%	53%	21%
11 – 15	38%	62%	9%
16 – 20	20%	80%	6%
Totals	53%	47%	

Table 3 – Comparison of Age & Gender of Children Studied FY99/00 – 00/01

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Children Discharged. The status of the children at the time of discharge fell into two categories: 1) Children who were placed in settings less restrictive than our foster care program and 2) Children who were placed in settings equal to, or more, restrictive than our foster care program.

The following ***restrictiveness of living situation scale*** was used to classify the children's living situation at the time of the follow-up contact. The scale uses a range from the least restrictive living situation (living independently by self) to the most restrictive situation (jail). We identified one additional situation – Preadoptive Foster Care – which we added to the scale.

<i>Restrictiveness of Living Situation Scale</i>	
LESS RESTRICTIVE	Independent - Living By Self
	Independent - Living With Friend
	Home of Natural Parents
	School Dormitory
	Adoptive Home
	Home of A Relative
	Home of A Friend
	Armed Services
	Supervised Independent Living
	Preadoptive Foster Care
EQUAL	Regular Foster Care
MORE RESTRICTIVE	Specialized Foster Care
	Individual Home-Based Emergency Shelter
	Foster Family-Based Treatment Home
	Group Home
	Residential Job Corp Center
	Group Emergency Shelter
	Residential Treatment Center
	Wilderness Camp
	In-Patient Medical Hospital
	Drug & Alcohol In-Patient Rehabilitation Center
	Intensive Treatment Unit
	County Detention Center
	State Mental Hospital
State Youth Detention Center	
Jail	

Figure 2 - Restrictiveness of Living Situation

Hawkins, R. P., Almeida, C., Fabry, B., & Reitz, A. L. (1992). *A scale to measure restrictiveness of living environments for troubled children and youths. Hospital and Community Psychiatry, 43*, 54-58.

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Immediate Outcomes. In FY 00/01, a total of 73 children who were in care for more than three months were discharged during the report period. As shown in Figure 3, 50% were placed with their natural parents or family members, 29% were placed in a pre-adoptive foster home, and 4% left care as an adult to an independent living situation. These are the children we count as successful outcomes because they continued to live in settings less restrictive than our foster care program after being discharged. The total percent of successful discharges is **83%**.

The remaining **17%** are considered as unsuccessful outcomes because they went to equally restrictive or more restrictive living situations after discharge. Specifically, 3% were placed in another foster care home setting through CYF and 14% were placed in a group or residential treatment setting.

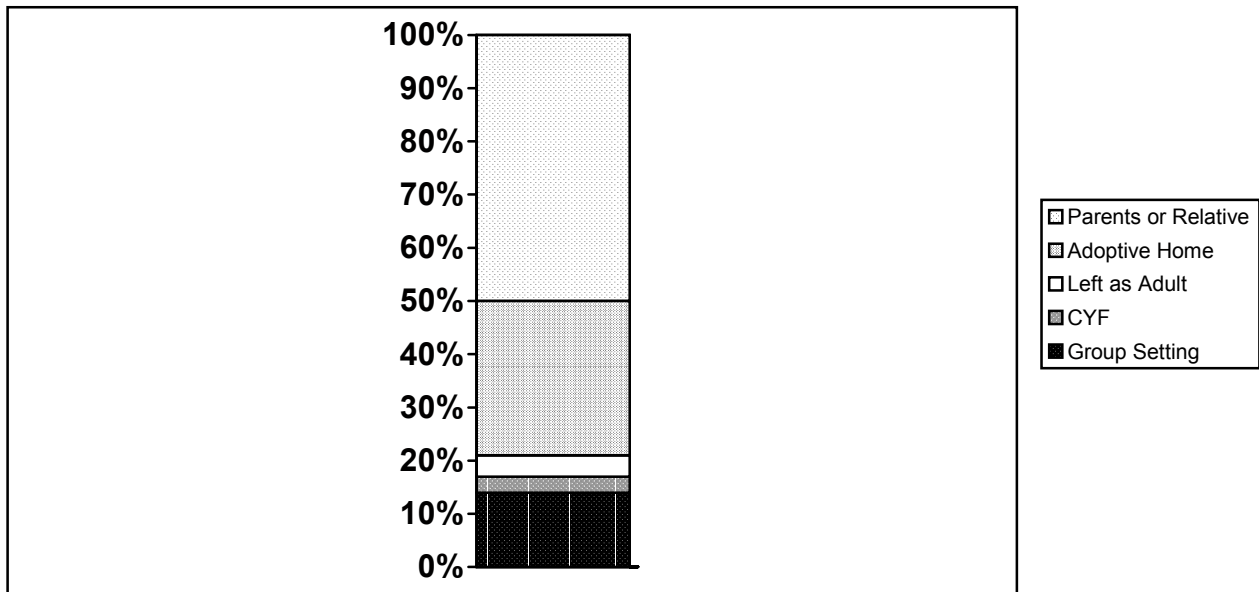


Figure 3 - Living Situation at Discharge

Enduring Outcomes. The Foster Care Program has been making follow-up contacts 30 days after a child has been discharged from Foster Care and then again at six months post discharge. At the time of the 6-month follow up call, all of the children who left care and were placed in a less restrictive setting continued to reside in less restrictive settings. In other words, **83% of children discharged continued to live with parents, relatives, adoptive parents, or independently up to 6 months after discharge.**

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Analysis of Unsuccessful Discharges. Figure 4 shows a breakdown of the children placed in more restrictive settings by age and gender. In the 0 to 5 age range 8% of the children placed in more restrictive settings were male and 0% were female. In the 6 to 10 age range 53% of the children placed in more restrictive settings were male and 8% were female. In the 11 to 15-age range, 8% of the children placed in more restrictive settings were male and 23% of those placed were female. There were no children in the 16 to 20-age range. The data from last year revealed a significant number of females discharged to a more restrictive setting. The results of this year did not show the same results. In fact, more males were discharged to a more restrictive setting than females. An additional year of data will be necessary to understand trends or issues if one exists.

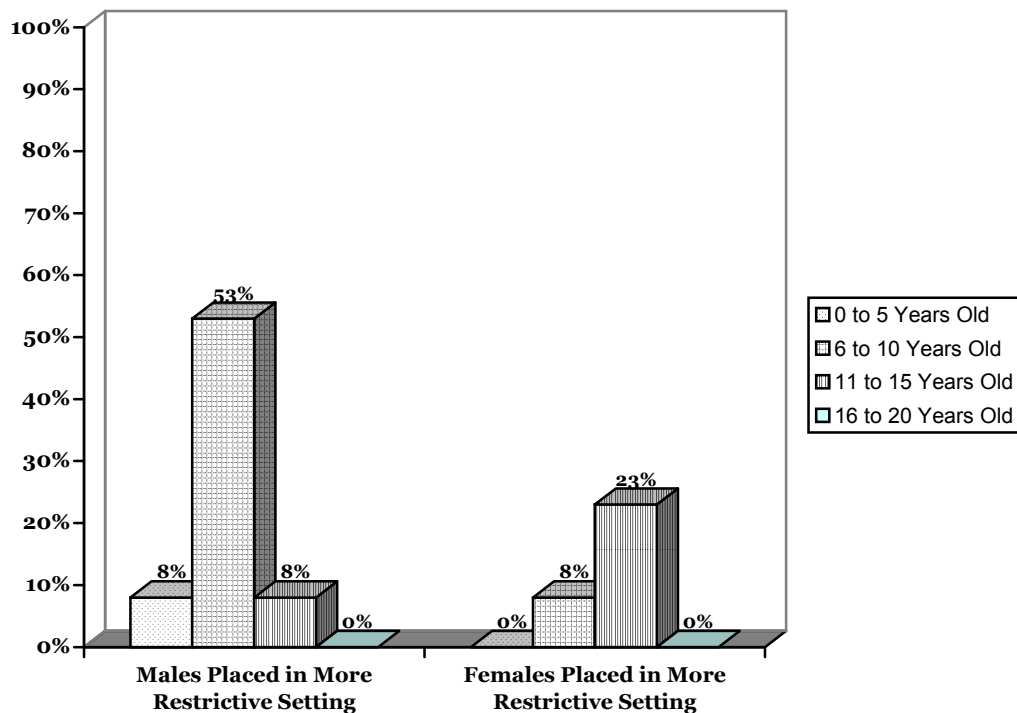


Figure 4 – Comparison by age and gender of children who were placed in settings of equal, or greater, restrictiveness after being in care for at least three months.

It is our intent to refine and improve upon our system of follow-up and to continue to generate a yearly report. Continue refinement of the outcomes data report will occur during the next fiscal year and further analysis of the data as well as comparison of possible trends will be discussed.