

Statewide

There are approximately 11,000 children in out of home placement on any given day. As of January 2003, 8600 children had been in care longer than sixty days.

Permanency Outcomes

Adoptions, Guardianships and Reunifications Achieved Statewide, 1995-2002

	Adoptions	Legally Free	Guardianships	Reunifications	Entry to Care
1995	637	1416	479	8495	-
1996	521	1605	503	8082	-
1997	826	1773	531	7667	9000
1998	935	1922	610	6922	8200
1999	1016	2076	631	6154	8150
2000	1170	1921	656	5969	8100
2001	1189	1881	579	5438	8400
2002	861	2077	594	5312	8000
FY 2003	1204	1771	-	-	8280

Note: The number of legally free children represents the number free on January 1, of the following year. (For some of these children, adoption is no longer the plan). Other outcomes are for calendar year. The figures from FY 2003 are reported to reflect a more accurate number of adoptions and legally free children due to federal tax incentives for adoption in 2003.

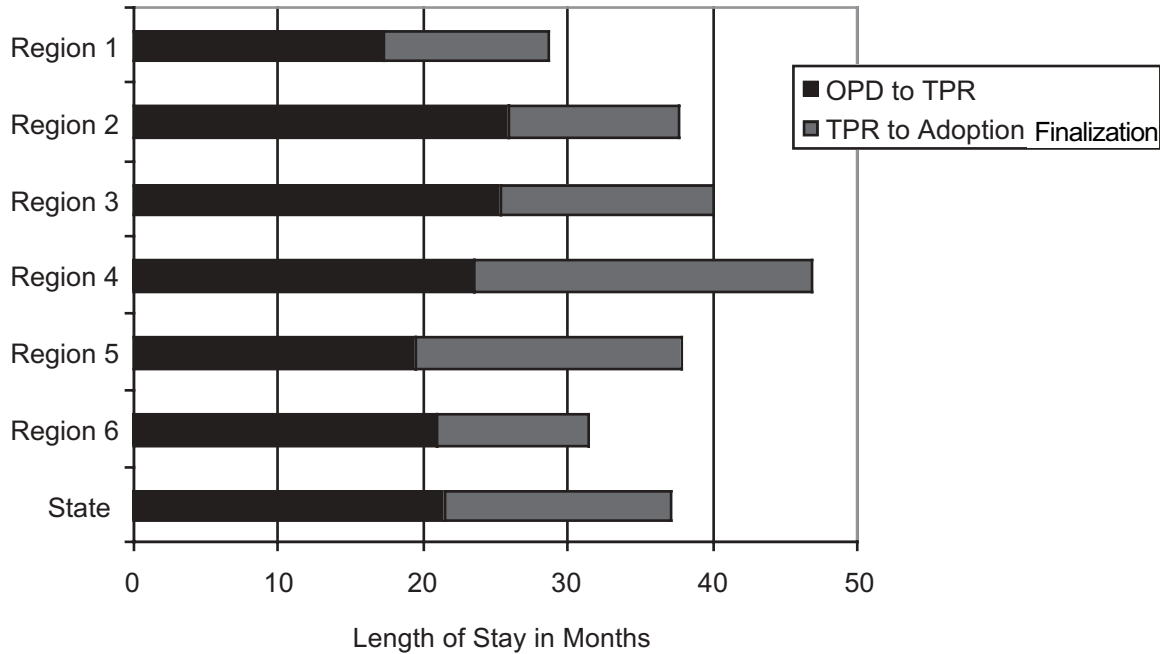
Source: Children's Administration, August 2003

- The number of adoptions is higher in FY 2003 than any previous year, indicating steady growth since 1995.
- The number of legally free children awaiting permanence has decreased to below 1,800, the lowest since 1997.
- The number of guardianships has remained fairly constant (average of 600 versus average of 500 prior to 1998).
- The number of reunifications continues to decrease: reunifications have dropped 31% since 1997. However, a complementary decrease in the number of children entering care (11%) suggests that one third of this decrease is accounted for by a decrease in entries to care.



Length of Time in Care

Length of Stay from Original Placement Date (OPD) to Termination of Parent Rights (TPR) and TPR to Adoption Finalization by Region, 2002



Average Lengths of Time from OPD to TPR and TPR to Adoption Finalization, 2002

Region	OPD to TPR	TPR to Adoption	Total Months in Care	Number of Adoptions
1	17.3	11.4	28.7	156
2	25.9	11.7	37.7	53
3	25.4	14.6	40.0	136
4	23.5	23.4	46.9	180
5	19.6	18.2	37.8	169
6	21.1	10.4	31.5	167
State	21.6	15.6	37.2	861

Source: Children's Administration, August 2003

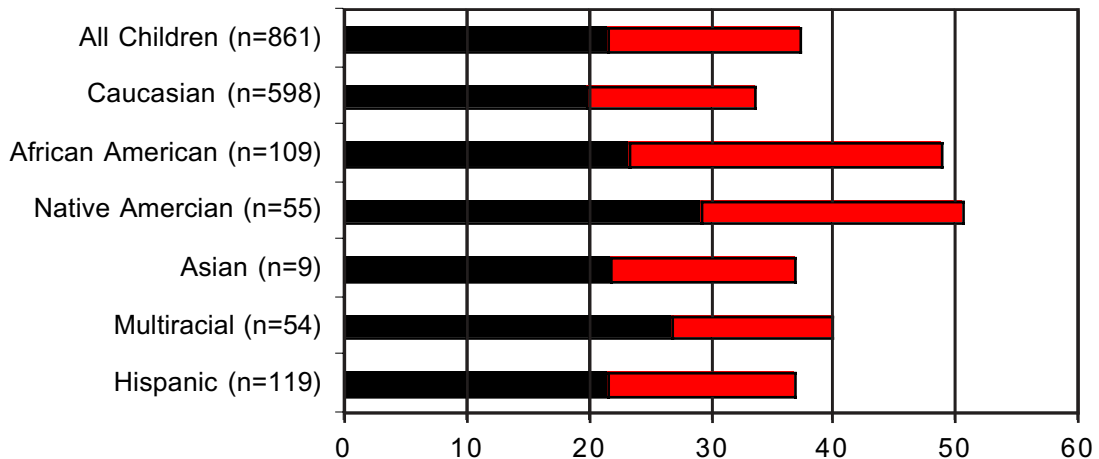
- From 1998 to 2002, the average length of stay from OPD to TPR for all children has decreased from 24.2 to 21.6 months.
- From 1998 to 2002, the average length of stay for all children from TPR to adoption finalization has decreased from 18.3 months to 15.6 months. However there is wide variation among regions. Half of all adoptions statewide were completed within 11.5 months of their TPR date.





Length of Time to Adoption by Race

Length of Stay from OPD to TPR and TPR to Adoption Finalization by Race
Statewide 2002



	Hispanic (n=119)	Multiracial (n=54)	Asian (n=9)	Native American (n=55)	African American (n=109)	Caucasian (n=598)	All Children (n=861)
■ TPR to Adoption Finalization	15.2	13.1	15.1	21.2	25.5	13.8	15.6
■ Placement to TPR	21.59	26.8	21.8	29.3	23.4	19.9	21.6

Length of Stay in Months

Note: Hispanic children are also included in the other race categories. The Multiracial category was added in 2001 to reflect changes in the national Census Bureau data collection.

Source: Children's Administration, August 200

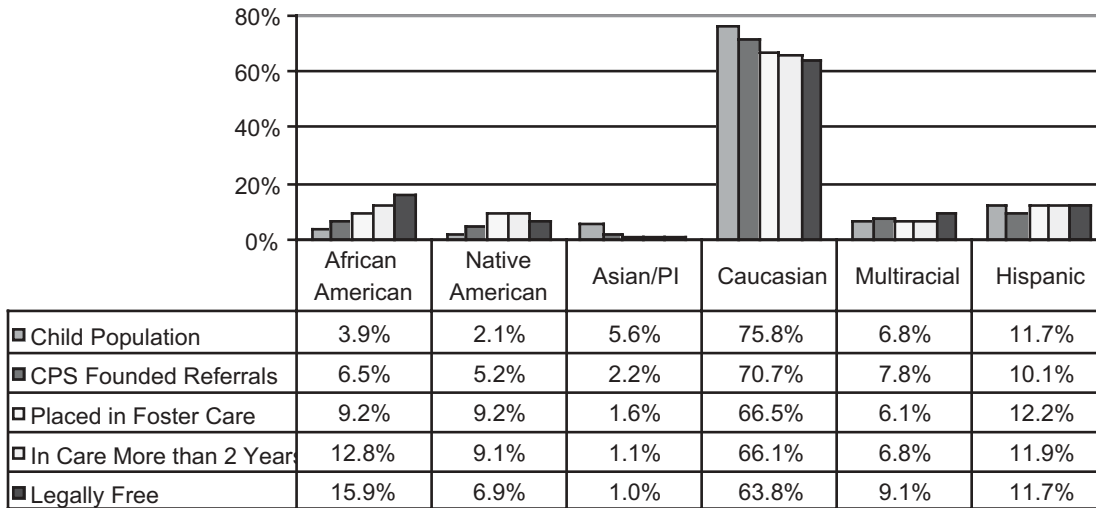
- Since 1998, African American children have experienced a decrease in length of time from placement to TPR (25.7 to 23.4 months). African American children continue to remain in care 15 months longer than Caucasian children from placement to adoption.
- The total months in care for Caucasian children has decreased from 40.1 in 1998 to 34.7 in 2002.
- Multiracial, Native American and Hispanic children have long stays in care from placement to TPR. Native American children also have long lengths of stay after parental rights have been terminated, an average of 21 months.





Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality

Statewide Percentages of CPS Founded Referrals, Placed in Care, in Care More than Two Years, and Legally Free by Race/Ethnic Group, 2002



Note: The total across any category will not equal 100%; Hispanic children are also included in the other race categories; children of "Other" or "Unknown" race are not included in this chart. The Multiracial category was added in 2001 to reflect changes in the national Census Bureau data collection.

Source: Children's Administration, August 2003

- African American children are:
 - Three times more likely than Caucasian children to be placed in foster care.
 - Four times more likely to be in care longer than two years.
 - Five times more likely to be legally free.
 - Two times more likely to reenter care.

Despite these indicators of disproportionality, the total number of African American children in care more than two years continues to decline (from 713 in 1999 to 580 in June, 2003).

- Native American children are:
 - Five times more likely than Caucasian children to be placed in foster care.
 - Five times more likely to be in care longer than two years.
 - Four times more likely to be legally free.
 - Three times more likely to reenter care.

Although represented disproportionately in the foster care system, Native American children are more likely to be in relative care (39%) than other children (33%).

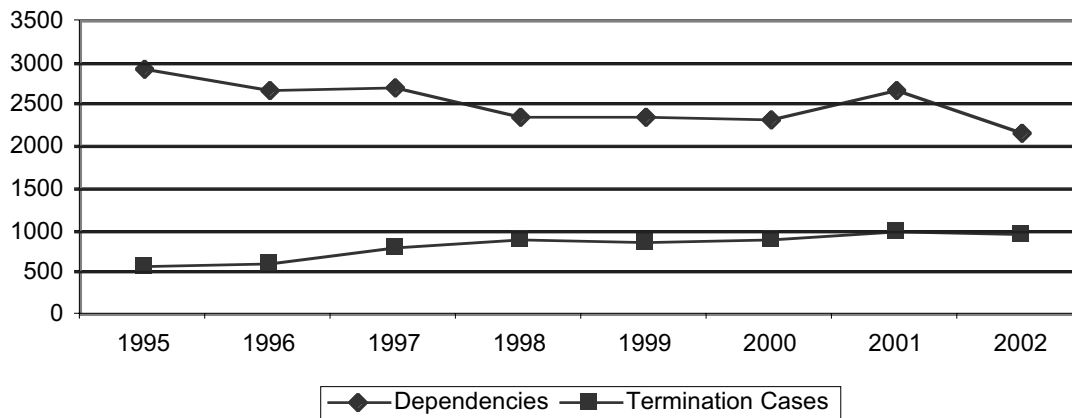
- Hispanic children are:
 - Slightly more likely than Caucasian children to be placed in foster care.
 - Slightly more likely to be legally free.
 - Slightly more likely to be in care longer than two years.





Legal Actions

Dependencies and Terminations Opened, 1995-2002, Statewide

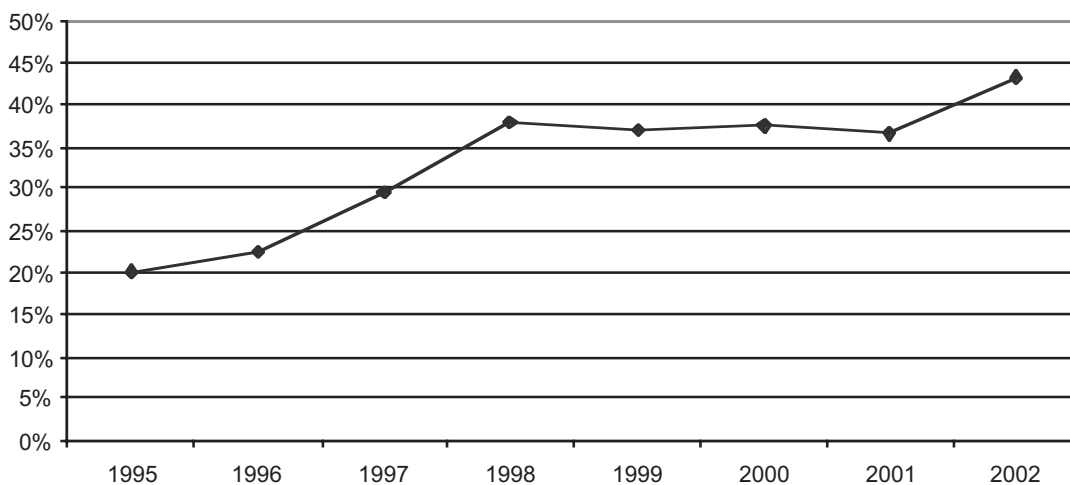


Note: Each case represents approximately 1.5 children.

Source: Washington State Office of the Attorney General, August 2003. Dependencies and Terminations opened in 2002 are the total cases opened in all counties in Washington State.

- In 2002, the number of dependencies opened was 2,173, compared to 2,920 in 1995 (a 26% decrease).
- In 2002, the number of termination cases opened was 941, compared to 586 in 1995 (a 61% increase).

Termination Cases Opened as a Percentage of Dependency Cases, 1995-2002



- The proportion of terminations to dependencies is influenced by changes in the number of terminations and/or dependencies in a given year. Terminations, as a percentage of dependencies opened, have more than doubled since 1995 and have reached an all-time high of 43%, indicating that a growing proportion of children in care have become legally free throughout Washington State. The proportion of open terminations to dependencies varies across the regions from 1:5 to as high as 1:2.