

Children in Substitute Care

Nevada

The Division of Child & Family Services (DCFS) coordinated substitute care for 4,642 children during the state fiscal year. The majority of the children were in DCFS custody (see table footnotes on page 68 for definition).

During calendar year 2002, children ages 3 and under were placed in substitute care for various reasons. The table on page 68 shows that they were most likely placed due to lack of supervision, minor physical injury, and physical neglect.

Two hundred thirty-nine children were adopted in 2002.

Significant Factors

Children are most likely placed in foster care because they have been physically or sexually abused by household members, or they have been severely neglected by their caretakers.¹

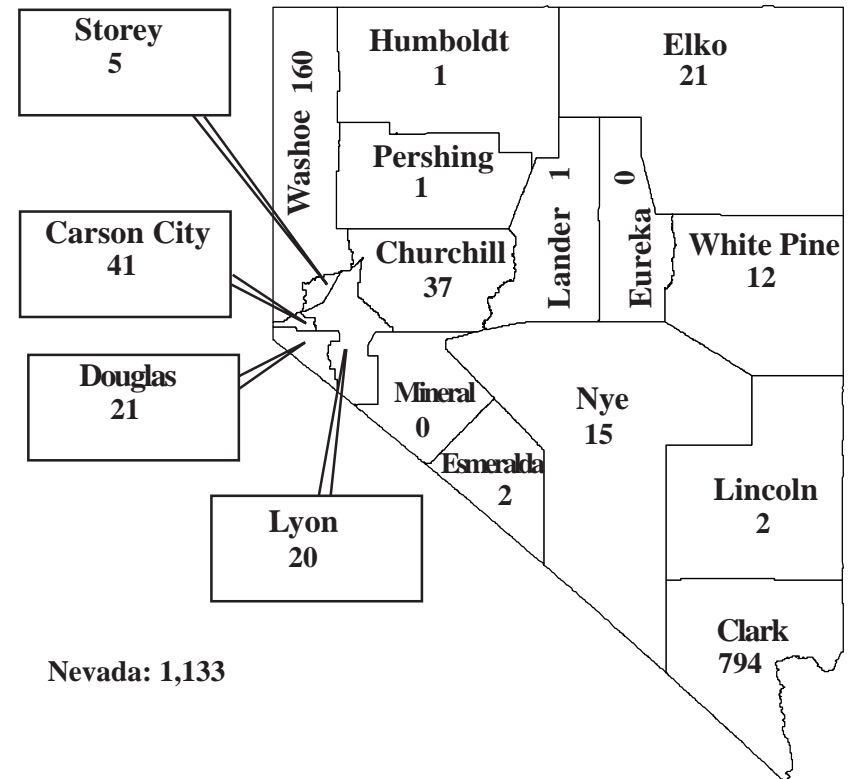
Children not only bring “heavy baggage” resulting from their neglect when they enter foster care, but they take it with them when they leave.² Helping children unload their baggage is a social concern.³

In 2000, 588,000 children in the U.S. were placed in foster care at a rate of 7.5 (number of children per 1,000 children under age 18). A historical view of the number of children in foster care reveals that the rate of children living in foster care in 1990 was 6.2.⁴

Definition

Substitute care involves temporary out-of-home placement for children found by a court to be in need of protection. Substitute care includes emergency shelter, foster family care (including placement with relatives), group-home care, therapeutic foster care, respite care, residential treatment care (both in-home and out-of-state), and independent living services (transitional services for youth who are age 18 at the time they leave foster care). These services may be provided through contract or community placement.⁵

Number of Children in DCFS Care Ages 5-17 by County: for October 2002



Source: Nevada Department of Human Resources, Division of Child and Family Services Program Evaluation & Data Unit, 2002.

Children in Substitute Care Continued

Types and Number of DCFS Substitute-Care Case Placements in Nevada: Calendar Year 2002 (Annual month-end average)

Type of Placement	Number
Total DCFS child-welfare caseload	4,642
DCFS child-welfare caseload in custody*	2,404
DCFS child welfare in custody by type	
Lower levels of care**	1,221
Higher levels of case***	745
DCFS child-welfare caseload noncustody****	2,238

*Custody = those children for which DCFS has legal custody and responsibility for child's well-being.

**Lower levels = family foster care.

***Higher levels = therapeutic foster care (medical institutions, etc).

****Noncustody = those children who either another agency or individual has legal custody of child (eg., juvenile probation, relative, parents, etc.), but DCFS is providing services.

Source: Nevada Department of Human Resources, Division of Child and Family Services Program Evaluation & Data Unit, 2002.

Adoption in Nevada: Calendar Year 2002

Adoptions	Number
Eligible for subsidy	1,505
Receiving subsidy	1,228
Finalized adoptions	239

Sources: Nevada Department of Human Resources, Division of Child and Family Services Program Evaluation & Data Unit, 2002.



Reasons Children Ages Three and under Are Placed in Substitute Care by Region: Calendar Year 2002

Substantiated 2002	Clark	Washoe	Rest of State	Total
Lack of supervision	409	51	29	489
Minor physical injury	380	0	0	380
Physical neglect	215	42	10	267
Threat of harm	0	81	17	98
Parent substance abuse	0	53	19	72
Sexual exploitation	62	4	0	66
Parent in jail	0	36	16	52
Emotional neglect	50	0	0	50
Educational neglect	46	0	1	47
Medical neglect	32	4	1	37
Abandoned	22	10	3	35
Filthy home	0	17	13	30
Lack necessity	0	18	7	25
Environment neglect	0	2	14	16
Parent alcohol abuse	0	5	5	10
Bruised	0	6	2	8
Beaten	0	4	1	5
Drug infant	0	2	2	4
Fail to thrive	0	2	1	3
Child's need not met	0	1	1	2
No access to medical	0	2	0	2
Parent in hospital	0	0	2	2
Parent mentally incompetent	0	2	0	2
Legal protection	0	1	0	1
Other	1,809	22	5	1,836

Source: Nevada Department of Human Resources, Division of Child and Family Services Program Evaluation & Data Unit, 2002.