

Children in Substitute Care

Nevada

The Division of Child & Family Services (DCFS) coordinated substitute care for 4,729 children during state fiscal year 2003. The majority of the children were in DCFS custody (see table footnotes in adjacent column for definition).

Significant Factors

Placement instability is a concern of children in long-term out-of-home care. One study showed that children who were moved more than once were more likely to have placement instability than those who moved once or who did not move during their first year in care.¹ Age, gender, and reasons for removal were related to the likelihood of placement instability in long-term care. For example, males were more likely to have experienced placement instability than girls.²

Nevada, which is undergoing federal review of its child foster-care system, plans to streamline its operations, that is, integrate its child-protection services with its state child-welfare system to reduce the number of times a child is moved from one foster home to another.³ Theresa Anderson, deputy administrator for Nevada’s Division of Child & Family Services, stated in an interview on the federal-review process that “stability of placement is one area needing improvement.”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

Types and Number of DCFS Substitute-Care Case Placements in Nevada: State Fiscal Year 2003 (Annual month-end average)

Type of Placement	Number
Total DCFS child-welfare caseload	4,729
DCFS child-welfare caseload in custody*	2,413
DCFS child welfare in custody by type	
Lower levels of care**	1,225
Higher levels of care***	725
DCFS child-welfare caseload noncustody****	2,316

*Custody = those children for whom DCFS has legal custody and responsibility for their well-being.

**Lower levels = family foster care.

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

****Noncustody = those children in the legal custody of another agency or individual (e.g., juvenile probation, relative, parents, etc.) while DCFS is providing services.

Source: Nevada Department of Human Resources, Division of Child & Family Services information Management Services, 2003.

Children in Substitute Care Continued

Number of Children in the U.S. in Foster Care: September 30, 2001*

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent**</i>
Under 1 year	22,957	4.0
1-5 years	130,857	24.0
6-10 years	127,711	24.0
11-15 years	160,419	30.0
16-18 years	89,632	17.0
19 or more years	10,424	2.0
TOTAL	542,000	99.0

*Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data submitted for the fiscal year 2001, 10/1/00 through 9/30/01.

**Total may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, "The AFCARS Report: Preliminary FY Estimates as of March 2003," available online at <www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cbpublications/afcars/report8.pdf> as of 4/1/04.

Placement Settings of U.S. Children in Foster Care: September 30, 2001*

<i>Placement Settings</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Preadoptive home	20,289	4.0
Foster-family home (relative)	130,869	24.0
Foster-family home (nonrelative)	260,384	48.0
Group home	43,084	8.0
Institution	56,509	10.0
Supervised independent living	5,068	1.0
Runaway	9,112	2.0
Trial home visit	16,685	3.0
TOTAL	542,000	100.0

*Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data submitted for the fiscal year 2001, 10/1/00 through 9/30/01.

Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, "The AFCARS Report: Preliminary FY Estimates as of March 2003," available online at <www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cbpublications/afcars/report8.pdf> as of 4/1/04.