



SUTTER COUNTY CHILDREN'S SERVICES ARCHIVE

FOSTER CARE LENGTH OF STAY FROM CWS/CMS

Median length of stay in foster care can be estimated even though not all children who enter foster care have exited the system. The Kaplan-Meier method for computing median, first quartile, and third quartile duration was used in this section. This method avoids the problems in interpretation that result from using closed cases and/or using point-in-time caseloads to measure duration.

Length of stay is presented in integer days. The median is the estimated time for half (50%) of the children who enter out-of-home care to leave a first spell in care. First and third quartiles have also been provided. These are estimates of the time in months for one-fourth (25%) and three-fourths (75%) of the children entering a first spell to leave care, respectively. Children who have had spells of 4 days or less are not included in these analyses.

2001 Length of Stay by Kin/Non-kin Placements

- **The median length of stay for children who entered care in 2001 was forty-nine percent longer for children in kinship care than for children in non-kinship care.**
- **Among children who entered care in 2001, children in kinship care had first quartile length of stays a little over 2 times longer than children in non-kinship care.**

Median length of stay, by kin/non-kin, were:

Median Length of Stay

* Kinship:	699 days (23.3 months)
* Non-kin:	344 days (11.5 months)
* Total:	413 days (13.8 months)

First and Third Quartile lengths of stay, by kin/non-kin, were:

25% Length of Stay 75% Length of Stay

* Kinship:	384 days (12.8 mos.)	829 days (27.7 mos.)
* Non-kin:	205 days (6.8 mos.)	512 days (17 mos.)
* Total:	245 days (8.2 mos.)	724 days (24 mos.)

1999-2001 Length of Stay by Major Placement Type

- **Children in Group homes and Mixed care had greater median and first quartile lengths of stay than all other types combined, among those who entered child welfare supervised foster care between 1999 and 2001. Children in Group homes and Mixed home care, also had greater third quartile lengths of stay among those who entered child welfare supervised foster care between 1999 and 2001.**

Median length of stay, by placement type, were:

Median Length of Stay

* Kinship:	436 days (14.5 months)
* Foster Care:	259 days (8.6 months)
* FFA:	404 days (13.5 months)
* Group:	850 days (28.3 months)
* Shelter:	(No Data)
* Other:	173 days (5.8 months)
* Mixed:	857 days (28.5 months)
* Total:	392 days (13 months)

First and Third Quartile lengths of stay, by placement type, were:

25% Length of Stay 75% Length of Stay

* Kinship:	230 days (7.7 mos.)	720 days (24 mos.)
* FC:	63 days (2.1 mos.)	414 days (13.8 mos.)
* FFA:	271 days (9 mos.)	712 days (23.7 mos.)
* Group:	393 days (13.1 mos.)	1,181 days (39.4 mos.)
* Shelter:	(No Data)	(No Data)
* Other:	173 days (5.8 mos.)	173 days (5.8 mos.)
* Mixed:	393 days (13.1 mos.)	1,355 days (45.2 mos.)
* Total:	209 days (7 mos.)	623 days (20.8 mos.)

1999-2001 Length of Stay by Ethnicity

- **For kinship care, Native American children had the greatest median, and for Non Kinship Black children had the greatest median lengths of stay among children entering child welfare supervised foster care between 1999 and 2001. For kinship care, White children had the greatest length of stay the third quartile; while in non-kinship care, Blacks had the greatest length of stay among children entering child welfare supervised foster care between 1999 and 2001.**

NOTES: ** Estimates which could not be calculated since the corresponding proportion of entries had not yet exited care are represented by a "**".
1) Major placement type (e.g., Kin, Foster, FFA) is the type of placement where a child spent at least half of their time in care.

Median length of stay among *kinship* placements, by ethnicity, were:

Median Length of Stay

* Black:	397 days (13.2 months)
* White:	441 days (14.7 months)
* Hispanic:	230 days (7.7 months)
* Asian/Other:	** days (months)
* Nat Amer.:	629 days (30 months)
* Total:	436 days (14.5 months)

First and Third Quartile lengths of stay among *kinship* placements, by ethnicity, were:

	<i>25% Length of Stay</i>	<i>75% Length of Stay</i>
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* Black:	138 days (14.6 mos.)	598 days (19.9 mos.)
* White:	245 days (8.20 mos.)	720 days (24 mos.)
* Hispanic:	48 days (1.6 mos.)	428 days (14.3 mos.)
* Asian/Other:	599 days (20 mos.)	** days (mos.)
* Nat Amer.:	215 days (7.2 mos.)	734 days (24.5 mos.)
* Total:	230 days (7.7 mos.)	720 days (24 mos.)

Median length of stay among *non-kinship* placements, by ethnicity, were:

Median Length of Stay

* Black:	496 days (16.5 months)
* White:	393 days (13.1 months)
* Hispanic:	271 days (9 months)
* Asian/Other:	428 days (14.3 months)
* Nat Amer.:	384 days (12.8 months)
* Total:	380 days (12.7 months)

First and Third Quartile lengths of stay among *non-kinship* placements, by ethnicity, were:

	<i>25% Length of Stay</i>	<i>75% Length of Stay</i>
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* Black:	33 days (1.1 mos.)	918 days (3.3 mos.)
* White:	214 days (7.1 mos.)	712 days (23.7 mos.)
* Hispanic:	90 days (3 mos.)	373 days (12.4 mos.)
* Asian/Other:	392 days (13 mos.)	445 days (14.8 mos.)
* Nat Amer.:	253 days (8.4 mos.)	549 days (18.3 mos.)
* Total:	171 days (5.7 mos.)	597 days (19.9 mos.)

For further information please visit our website:
<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/cwscmsreports/cohorts/stay/>

METHODOLOGY for Length of Stay Reports

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Length of stay is presented in days. The median is the estimated time for half (50%) of the children who enter out-of-home care to leave a first spell in care. First and third quartiles (Q1, Q3) have also been provided—these are estimates of the time in days for one-fourth (25%) and three-fourths (75%) of the children entering a first spell to leave care, respectively. Children who have had spells of 4 days or less are not included in these analyses. Estimates which could not be calculated since the corresponding proportion of entries had not yet exited care are represented by a "**".

Major placement type (e.g., Kin, Foster, FFA) is the type of placement where a child spent at least half of their time in care. If no particular placement type accounted for at least half of a child's time in care, they are represented in these tables with a placement type of "Mixed." Children with a predominant facility type of Guardian or Missing were excluded from these analyses. Blank cells in a given table indicate that there were no children in that particular category.

For each length of stay estimates table, an accompanying table of the sample sizes for each group is provided (frequencies less than 5 in this table have been masked with a triple asterisk to protect confidentiality). If the sample size for a particular group is very small (as may be the case in counties with few children entering care), results must be interpreted with caution. Unlike the point-in-time analyses, this report does not adjust for children in an open episode but not an open placement for more than 6 months; all children are counted as being in care until the episode is closed in CWS/CMS. Therefore, the length of stay may be exaggerated, depending on the quality of county data.

The length of stay for children in Los Angeles County with a major facility type of "Shelter" appears to be extremely inflated due to a large number of children incorrectly coded with this facility type. We have informed LA staff of this issue.