

The Race + Child Welfare Project

Fact Sheet 2 – State-by-State Statistical Profile of Racial Over-Representation in Foster Care

Currently, there is no widely used method for calculating racial over-representation or racial disparity in the foster care system. This fact sheet offers one approach to quantifying the extent of this problem.

We calculated a “racial disproportionality ratio” by dividing the proportion of Black (or non-Hispanic White) children in foster care by the proportion of Black (or non-Hispanic White) children in the state population under the age of 18. We then classified the 50 states into the following four groups based on their racial disproportionality rates for African Americans: Comparable Representation (states with rates under 1.50); Moderate Disproportion (states with rates between 1.50-2.49); High Disproportion (states with rates between 2.50-3.49); and Extreme Disproportion (states with rates of 3.50 and over). “Racial disparity” occurs when the rate of disproportionality of one racial group (e.g., African Americans) exceeds that of a comparison group (e.g., White Americans).

Table 1.

Statistical Overrepresentation of African-American Children and Black-White Disparity among Children in Foster Care in the 50 States, 2000¹

	(A) % in <u>Population</u>	(B) % in <u>Foster Care</u>	(B)/(A) Over- <u>Representation</u>
Comparable Representation (4 states)			
Massachusetts			
Black	7.2	8.4	1.16
Non-Hispanic White	75.2	71.6	.95
B/W Disparity			1.22
Washington, DC			
Black	75.0	94.6	1.26
Non-Hispanic White	11.9	4.2	.35
B/W Disparity			3.60
Mississippi			
Black	45.0	57.5	1.28
Non-Hispanic White	51.6	41.9	.81
B/W Disparity			1.58
Hawaii			
Black	2.0	2.8	1.40
Non-Hispanic White	15.0	2.0	.13
B/W Disparity			10.77
Moderate Disproportion (15 states)			
Louisiana			
Black	39.9	62.1	1.56
Non-Hispanic White	54.6	36.5	.67
B/W Disparity			2.33

South Carolina				
Black	36.6	58.7	1.60	
Non-Hispanic White	58.0	39.2	.67	
B/W Disparity			2.39	
Alabama				
Black	32.0	52.9	1.65	
Non-Hispanic White	63.3	45.9	.73	
B/W Disparity			2.26	
Georgia				
Black	34.4	59.1	1.72	
Non-Hispanic White	55.5	37.3	.67	
B/W Disparity			2.57	
Arkansas				
Black	20.7	36.0	1.74	
Non-Hispanic White	71.3	61.1	.86	
B/W Disparity			2.02	
Tennessee				
Black	21.2	37.5	1.77	
Non-Hispanic White	73.0	60.0	.82	
B/W Disparity			2.16	
North Carolina				
Black	26.4	48.7	1.84	
Non-Hispanic White	62.5	42.6	.68	
B/W Disparity			2.71	
Washington				
Black	7.1	15.1	2.12	
Non-Hispanic White	71.5	61.4	.86	
B/W Disparity			2.47	
Florida				
Black	21.2	47.1	2.22	
Non-Hispanic White	55.4	44.1	.80	
B/W Disparity			2.78	
Virginia				
Black	23.4	51.9	2.22	
Non-Hispanic White	64.0	44.0	.69	
B/W Disparity			3.22	
Maine				
Black	0.9	2.0	2.22	
Non-Hispanic White	94.6	93.7	.99	
B/W Disparity			2.24	
New York				
Black	19.3	43.5	2.26	
Non-Hispanic White	54.6	40.6	.74	
B/W Disparity			3.05	
Oklahoma				
Black	9.5	22.1	2.32	
Non-Hispanic White	64.6	51.0	.79	
B/W Disparity			2.94	
Maryland				
Black	32.2	76.8	2.39	
Non-Hispanic White	55.9	21.3	.38	
B/W Disparity			6.29	
Alaska				
Black	3.8	9.3	2.46	
Non-Hispanic White	58.8	32.1	.55	
B/W Disparity			4.47	

High Disproportion (15 states)

Kentucky				
Black	9.0	22.5	2.50	
Non-Hispanic White	86.3	76.4	.88	
B/W Disparity			2.84	
Texas				
Black	12.8	32.6	2.55	
Non-Hispanic White	42.6	34.1	.80	
B/W Disparity			3.19	
Delaware				
Black	24.2	61.8	2.56	
Non-Hispanic White	64.2	31.6	.49	
B/W Disparity			5.22	
Nevada				
Black	8.3	21.2	2.56	
Non-Hispanic White	54.0	64.5	1.19	
B/W Disparity			2.15	
Missouri				
Black	14.4	39.1	2.71	
Non-Hispanic White	78.9	59.1	.75	
B/W Disparity			3.61	
Utah				
Black	0.9	2.6	2.84	
Non-Hispanic White	82.4	76.4	.93	
B/W Disparity			3.05	
Vermont				
Black	0.7	2.0	2.92	
Non-Hispanic White	94.7	96.7	1.02	
B/W Disparity			2.86	
Nebraska				
Black	5.4	15.8	2.92	
Non-Hispanic White	81.8	68.2	.83	
B/W Disparity			3.52	
West Virginia				
Black	3.7	11.0	2.98	
Non-Hispanic White	93.0	87.6	.94	
B/W Disparity			3.17	
Kansas				
Black	7.1	21.3	3.01	
Non-Hispanic White	77.0	71.6	.93	
B/W Disparity			3.24	
Colorado				
Black	4.6	14.2	3.08	
Non-Hispanic White	66.2	56.1	.85	
B/W Disparity			3.62	
North Dakota				
Black	0.8	2.5	3.09	
Non-Hispanic White	86.6	61.3	.71	
B/W Disparity			4.35	
South Dakota				
Black	0.8	2.6	3.27	
Non-Hispanic White	80.6	31.0	.38	
B/W Disparity			8.61	

Ohio				
Black	14.4	48.8	3.39	
Non-Hispanic White	79.2	48.2	.61	
B/W Disparity			5.56	
Connecticut				
Black	11.8	40.4	3.42	
Non-Hispanic White	69.6	34.8	.50	
B/W Disparity			6.84	
Extreme Disproportion (16 states)				
Rhode Island				
Black	6.3	22.5	3.57	
Non-Hispanic White	72.7	60.4	.75	
B/W Disparity			4.76	
New Jersey				
Black	16.4	61.3	3.74	
Non-Hispanic White	59.4	30.2	.51	
B/W Disparity			7.33	
New Mexico				
Black	2.1	7.9	3.74	
Non-Hispanic White	32.5	32.0	.98	
B/W Disparity			3.82	
Iowa				
Black	3.0	11.3	3.76	
Non-Hispanic White	88.8	81.9	.92	
B/W Disparity			4.09	
Indiana				
Black	10.4	39.5	3.79	
Non-Hispanic White	81.6	56.2	.69	
B/W Disparity			5.49	
Pennsylvania				
Black	13.0	49.4	3.80	
Non-Hispanic White	78.2	42.1	.54	
B/W Disparity			7.04	
Arizona				
Black	3.7	14.5	3.91	
Non-Hispanic White	49.6	49.6	1.00	
B/W Disparity			3.91	
Montana				
Black	0.4	1.6	3.92	
Non-Hispanic White	83.9	63.6	.76	
B/W Disparity			5.16	
Illinois				
Black	18.7	73.5	3.93	
Non-Hispanic White	59.2	21.0	.36	
B/W Disparity			10.92	
California				
Black	7.5	31.0	4.14	
Non-Hispanic White	34.8	31.3	.90	
B/W Disparity			4.60	
Oregon				
Black	2.1	9.2	4.38	
Non-Hispanic White	76.3	76.7	1.00	
B/W Disparity			4.38	

Wyoming			
Black	.90	4.1	4.53
Non-Hispanic White	55.4	44.1	.80
B/W Disparity			6.91
Minnesota			
Black	5.0	23.8	4.77
Non-Hispanic White	82.0	56.3	.69
B/W Disparity			6.91
Idaho			
Black	0.5	2.4	4.84
Non-Hispanic White	83.4	78.1	.94
B/W Disparity			5.15
New Hampshire			
Black	0.9	4.4	4.93
Non-Hispanic White	93.4	88.6	.95
B/W Disparity			5.19
Wisconsin			
Black	8.4	46.1	5.48
Non-Hispanic White	80.4	44.6	.55
B/W Disparity			9.96
Total U. S.			
Black	15.1	36.6	2.43
Non-Hispanic White	60.9	46.0	.76
B/W Disparity			3.20

ⁱ Population figures are based on the proportion of children under 18 in the state in the 2000 Census, while the foster care figures are based on 2000 AFCARS data. The two omitted jurisdictions (Michigan and Puerto Rico) had no race data in the 2000 AFCARS.