

Appendix D

Understanding State Data Profiles

The Children's Bureau data team prepares data profiles for each State for use in analyzing child outcomes and child welfare practice during the Child and Family Services Reviews. A State's data profiles provide information that the State previously may not have had access to; the profiles can be used:

- To improve the State data system
- To improve programs
- To show to State officials as evidence that more resources are needed

Data Profiles at a Glance

The Children's Bureau provides the following data profiles for States:

- Child Safety Profile
- Permanency Profile, including (1) demographic and other context data; (2) the composite permanency measures to be used in round two of the Child and Family Services Reviews, some of which are longitudinal while others are measured at a particular point in time; and (3) a special section showing information on a first-time-entry cohort of children as they enter foster care for the first time.
- First-Time Entry Cohort Permanency Profile

Child Safety Profile

- This profile is based on the Federal fiscal year. Before fiscal year (FY) 2003, the profiles were based on the calendar year.
- The data come from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS).
- This profile contains two types of data:
 - Summary Data (referred to as “duplicate children” in this profile because children may be counted as many times as they were maltreated).
 - Child File Data (called “unique children” in this profile because children are counted only once, regardless of the number of times they were maltreated).

Only the Child File can track individual children over time to determine whether maltreatment has recurred, or to determine whether a particular child was maltreated in foster care. It is very important for States to have the ability to submit Child Files because the Summary Data do not allow States to determine outcomes for particular children. Most States do submit Child Files now, but States that do not should seek free technical assistance from the Children’s Bureau to develop this capacity.

- The safety profile contains the following two individual measures related to the national standards:
 - Absence of maltreatment recurrence (within 183 days)
 - Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (12 months)
- If a State does not submit Child File Data to NCANDS, the State needs approval to use an alternate data source for the two above-mentioned indicators, because, as discussed above, these indicators cannot be calculated using the Summary Data (“duplicate children”).

Permanency Profile

- This profile is based on the foster care data in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) files.
- This profile is based on the Federal fiscal year, which is October 1–September 30.
- The Permanency Profile tables provide the following context data for this population: number of placements, case goals, placement settings, total removals, and median stay in care.
- This profile contains four data composites related to the national standards:
 - Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (includes an individual measure that evaluates the degree to which children tend to re-enter foster care)
 - Timeliness of adoptions
 - Achieving permanency for children in foster care
 - Placement stability

First-Time Entry Cohort Permanency Profile

- This profile is based on the foster care data in the AFCARS files.
- This profile is based on the Federal fiscal year.
- This profile is based on the cohort of children entering care for the first time during the first 6 months of the Federal fiscal year.
- No national standards are associated with the First-Time Entry Cohort Profile, but the data may be interesting to the State for other reasons.
- The Length of Time to Achieve Permanency Goal section is very important; it shows the discharge reasons and associated length of stay. The data for the reunification and adoption outcome indicators come from the same source as these data.