



The AFCARS Report:

North Carolina

Preliminary FY¹ 2021 Estimates as of June 28, 2022 - No. 29

SOURCE: Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) FY 2021 data²

Numbers at a Glance: North Carolina

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number in foster care on September 30 of the FY	10,756	10,543	11,223	10,630	10,710
Number entered foster care during the FY	5,830	5,531	5,564	5,119	5,431
Number exited foster care during the FY	4,745	4,698	4,454	4,535	4,537
Number served by the foster care system during the FY	15,501	15,241	15,676	15,164	15,247
Number waiting to be adopted on September 30 of the FY	2,929	2,819	2,861	2,835	2,786
Number waiting to be adopted for whom parental rights (for all living parents) were terminated as of the last day of the FY	1,434	1,255	1,211	1,139	1,168
Number adopted with public child welfare agency involvement during the FY	1,528	1,522	1,546	1,521	1,317

Children in Foster Care on September 30, 2021 - N=10,710

Age as of September 30th	Years	Sex	Percent	Number
Mean	8.1	Male	51%	5,418
Median	8.0	Female	49%	5,292

Age as of September 30th	Percent	Number	Most Recent Placement Setting	Percent	Number
Less than 1 Year	7%	704	Pre-Adoptive Home	2%	217
1 Year	8%	842	Foster Family Home (Relative)	24%	2,527
2 Years	8%	827	Foster Family Home (Non-Relative)	57%	5,936
3 Years	6%	689	Group Home	6%	629
4 Years	6%	630	Institution	6%	633
5 Years	5%	553	Supervised Independent Living	0%	24
6 Years	5%	521	Runaway	1%	82
7 Years	5%	497	Trial Home Visit	3%	335
8 Years	5%	495			
9 Years	4%	472			
10 Years	5%	493			
11 Years	4%	450			
12 Years	5%	508			
13 Years	5%	524			
14 Years	5%	517			
15 Years	5%	560			
16 Years	5%	577			
17 Years	5%	543			
18 Years	3%	308			
19 Years	0%	0			
20 Years	0%	0			

Case Plan Goal	Percent	Number
Reunify with Parent(s) or Primary Caretaker(s)	51%	5,339
Live with Other Relative(s)	6%	582
Adoption	25%	2,658
Long Term Foster Care	0%	1
Emancipation	0%	5
Guardianship	7%	773
Case Plan Goal Not Yet Established	11%	1,189

¹ 'FY' refers to the Federal Fiscal Year, October 1st through September 30th.

² Data from both the regular and revised AFCARS file submissions received by June 28, 2022 are included in this report. Missing data are excluded from each table. Therefore, the totals within each distribution may not equal the total provided for that subpopulation (e.g. number in care on September 30th may not match the sum across ages for that group)

Race/Ethnicity	Percent	Number	Time in Care	Months
American Indian/Alaska Native	2%	257	Mean	20.9
Asian	0%	25	Median	14.2
Black or African American	29%	3,072		
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0%	12		
Hispanic (of any race)	9%	939		
White	51%	5,429		
Unknown/Unable to Determine	2%	216		
Two or More Races	7%	759		

NOTE: All races exclude children of Hispanic origin. Children of Hispanic ethnicity may be any race.

Time in Care	Percent	Number
Less than 1 Month	5%	520
1 - 5 Months	20%	2,168
6 - 11 Months	20%	2,124
12 - 17 Months	12%	1,307
18 - 23 Months	11%	1,157
24 - 29 Months	9%	957
30 - 35 Months	6%	598
3 - 4 Years	12%	1,263
5 Years or More	6%	616

Children Entering Foster Care during FY 2021 - N=5,431

Age at Entry	Years	Race/Ethnicity	Percent	Number
Mean	7.1	American Indian/Alaska Native	2%	129
Median	6.0	Asian	0%	23
		Black or African American	26%	1,411
		Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0%	5
		Hispanic (of any race)	9%	509
		White	53%	2,868
		Unknown/Unable to Determine	2%	121
		Two or More Races	7%	365

NOTE: All races exclude children of Hispanic origin. Children of Hispanic ethnicity may be any race.

Age at Entry	Percent	Number	Circumstances Associated with Child's Removal	Percent	Number
Less than 1 Year	19%	1,052	Neglect	83%	4,529
1 Year	7%	388	Drug Abuse (Parent)	39%	2,142
2 Years	6%	301	Caretaker Inability To Cope	19%	1,031
3 Years	5%	295	Housing	15%	791
4 Years	5%	266	Physical Abuse	8%	458
5 Years	4%	226	Child Behavior Problem	7%	359
6 Years	5%	274	Alcohol Abuse (Parent)	5%	275
7 Years	4%	204	Abandonment	5%	259
8 Years	4%	209	Parent Incarceration	4%	205
9 Years	4%	207	Sexual Abuse	3%	156
10 Years	4%	221	Parent Death	3%	153
11 Years	4%	227	Drug Abuse (Child)	3%	146
12 Years	4%	218	Child Disability	1%	52
13 Years	4%	233	Relinquishment	1%	30
14 Years	5%	251	Alcohol Abuse (Child)	0%	14
15 Years	4%	233			
16 Years	4%	210			
17 Years	2%	102			
18 Years	6%	313			
19 Years	0%	0			
20 Years	0%	0			

NOTE: These categories are not mutually exclusive, so percentages will total more than 100% and counts will be more than the total number of entries.

Children Exiting Foster Care during FY 2021 - N=4,537

Age at Exit		Years	Race/Ethnicity		Percent	Number	
Mean		7.8	American Indian/Alaska Native		3%	125	
Median		7.0	Asian		0%	10	
			Black or African American		26%	1,192	
			Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander		0%	7	
			Hispanic (of any race)		9%	413	
			White		53%	2,425	
			Unknown/Unable to Determine		2%	77	
			Two or More Races		6%	287	
NOTE: All races exclude children of Hispanic origin. Children of Hispanic ethnicity may be any race.							
Age at Exit		Percent	Number	Reason for Discharge		Percent	Number
Less than 1 Year		3%	143	Reunification with Parent(s) or Primary Caretaker(s)		43%	1,920
1 Year		9%	413	Living with Other Relative(s)		3%	150
2 Years		9%	425	Adoption		27%	1,209
3 Years		8%	346	Emancipation		3%	151
4 Years		7%	318	Guardianship		23%	1,016
5 Years		6%	257	Transfer to Another Agency		0%	22
6 Years		6%	258	Runaway		0%	6
7 Years		5%	237	Death of Child		0%	8
8 Years		5%	231				
9 Years		4%	200				
10 Years		4%	200				
11 Years		4%	202				
12 Years		5%	207				
13 Years		4%	190				
14 Years		4%	192				
15 Years		4%	165				
16 Years		4%	190				
17 Years		5%	225				
18 Years		3%	138				
19 Years		0%	0				
20 Years		0%	0				
Time in Care		Months					
Mean		22.2					
Median		18.7					
Time in Care		Percent	Number				
Less than 1 Month		3%	134				
1 - 5 Months		11%	510				
6 - 11 Months		16%	741				
12 - 17 Months		17%	782				
18 - 23 Months		16%	710				
24 - 29 Months		12%	523				
30 - 35 Months		9%	394				
3 - 4 Years		13%	596				
5 Years or More		3%	144				

Children Waiting to be Adopted³ on September 30, 2021 - N=2,786

Age as of September 30th			Years	Age at Entry into Foster Care			Years
Mean			7.8	Mean			4.7
Median			7.0	Median			4.0

Age as of September 30th	Percent	Number	Age at Entry into Foster Care	Percent	Number
Less than 1 Year	2%	55	Less than 1 Year	24%	655
1 Year	7%	190	1 Year	8%	235
2 Years	10%	272	2 Years	8%	213
3 Years	8%	224	3 Years	7%	183
4 Years	7%	193	4 Years	6%	172
5 Years	6%	169	5 Years	7%	208
6 Years	6%	165	6 Years	7%	188
7 Years	5%	150	7 Years	6%	177
8 Years	5%	152	8 Years	6%	169
9 Years	5%	151	9 Years	5%	150
10 Years	5%	143	10 Years	5%	138
11 Years	5%	142	11 Years	4%	106
12 Years	6%	161	12 Years	3%	70
13 Years	5%	137	13 Years	2%	52
14 Years	5%	134	14 Years	1%	41
15 Years	5%	128	15 Years	1%	20
16 Years	5%	126	16 Years	0%	9
17 Years	3%	94	17 Years	0%	0

Placement Type	Percent	Number	Race/Ethnicity	Percent	Number
Pre-Adoptive Home	7%	197	American Indian/Alaska Native	2%	59
Foster Family Home (Relative)	14%	399	Asian	0%	6
Foster Family Home (Non-Relative)	68%	1,872	Black or African American	28%	786
Group Home	6%	156	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0%	4
Institution	4%	121	Hispanic (of any race)	8%	212
Supervised Independent Living	0%	1	White	52%	1,448
Runaway	0%	13	Unknown/Unable to Determine	1%	41
Trial Home Visit	0%	9	Two or More Races	8%	230

Sex	Percent	Number
Male	52%	1,453
Female	48%	1,333

NOTE: All races exclude children of Hispanic origin. Children of Hispanic ethnicity may be any race.

³ Waiting children are identified as children who have a goal of adoption and/or whose parents' parental rights have been terminated. Children 16 years old and older whose parents' parental rights have been terminated and who have a goal of emancipation have been excluded from the estimate.

Time in Care	Months	Of Children Waiting for Adoption whose Parents' Parental Rights have been Terminated (N=1,168), Time Elapsed since Termination of Parental Rights as of September 30, 2021
Mean	37.8	
Median	31.3	

Time in Care	Percent	Number	Time Since TPR	Months
Less than 1 Month	0%	7	Mean	24.5
1 - 5 Months	1%	30	Median	13.0

6 - 11 Months	7%	198
12 - 17 Months	10%	278
18 - 23 Months	13%	374
24 - 29 Months	16%	439
30 - 35 Months	10%	283
3 - 4 Years	27%	753
5 Years or More	15%	424

Children Adopted with Public Agency Involvement in FY 2021⁴ - N=1,317

Age at Adoption	Years	Time Elapsed from Termination of Parental Rights to Adoption	Months
Mean	6.2	Mean	10.8
Median	5.0	Median	7.5

Age at Adoption	Percent	Number	Time Elapsed from Termination of Parental Rights to Adoption	Percent	Number
Less than 1 Year	2%	25	Less than 1 Month	2%	24
1 Year	10%	138	1 - 5 Months	39%	513
2 Years	13%	173	6 - 11 Months	26%	347
3 Years	11%	144	12 - 17 Months	14%	185
4 Years	9%	115	18 - 23 Months	9%	122
5 Years	7%	97	24 - 29 Months	5%	65
6 Years	7%	88	30 - 35 Months	2%	25
7 Years	5%	71	3 - 4 Years	2%	27
8 Years	6%	76	5 Years or More	0%	4
9 Years	5%	72			

Race/Ethnicity	Percent	Number
American Indian/Alaska Native	1%	17
Asian	0%	2
Black or African American	20%	259
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0%	3
Hispanic (of any race)	10%	129
White	55%	718
Unknown/Unable to Determine	0%	0
Two or More Races	14%	188

NOTE: All races exclude children of Hispanic origin. Children of Hispanic ethnicity may be any race.

⁴ Note that the adoption data reported in this section are from the AFCARS Adoption file. Therefore, the number of adoptions reported here may not equal the number reported as discharges to adoption from foster care.

Adoptive Family Structure	Percent	Number	Sex	Percent	Number
Married Couple	76%	994	Male	52%	681
Unmarried Couple	0%	0	Female	48%	635
Single Female	0%	1			
Single Male	24%	321			
Relationship of Adoptive Parents to Child Prior to Adoption	Percent	Number	Receive Adoption Subsidy	Percent	Number
Non-Relative	4%	53	Yes	98%	1,288
Foster Parent	73%	958	No	2%	29
Stepparent	0%	1			
Other Relative	23%	297			

FY 2021 AFCARS Foster Care Data Release

Definitions and additional supporting information relevant to the populations presented in this report can be found by clicking on the tabs above the area chart displayed when using this link:

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/trends-in-foster-care-and-adoption>