

Child Welfare Outcomes 2020: Report to Congress

Executive Summary

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The Child Welfare Outcomes Report is created by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to meet requirements of section 203(a) of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA).¹ ASFA created section 479A of the Social Security Act (the Act), which requires HHS to issue an annual report that assesses state performance in operating child protection and child welfare programs under Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Act.² *Child Welfare Outcomes 1998 was the first Report created in the Child Welfare Outcomes series of Reports. The present Report, Child Welfare Outcomes 2020, is the 21st Report since the series' inception.*

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Child Welfare Outcomes 2020 includes:

- Performance on the seven national outcome categories:
 - National performance in 2020
 - National and state performance over time Outcome-based data visualizations
 - State comments (if provided)
 - A discussion of data issues and key findings of the data analyses across states

The Child Welfare Outcomes Reports provide information on national performance as well as the performance of individual states in seven outcome categories.³ Prior to the first Report, the Children's Bureau (CB) within HHS's Administration for Children and Families (ACF) identified these outcomes in close consultation with state and local child welfare agency administrators, child advocacy organizations, child welfare researchers, state legislators, and other experts in the child welfare field. Beginning with this Report, Outcome 1 (reduce recurrence of child abuse and/or neglect) was modified to report recurrence of maltreatment within 12 months of a prior incident. The original outcome measure reported recurrence of maltreatment within a 6-month period. This adjustment was made to align with the current measure used in the Child and Family Services Reviews. The following are the national outcomes established by HHS through the consultation process mentioned above:

- Outcome 1:** Reduce recurrence of child abuse and/or neglect
- Outcome 2:** Reduce the incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care
- Outcome 3:** Increase permanency for children in foster care
- Outcome 4:** Reduce time in foster care to reunification without increasing reentry
- Outcome 5:** Reduce time in foster care to adoption
- Outcome 6:** Increase placement stability
- Outcome 7:** Reduce placements of young children in group homes or institutions



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau



These outcomes reflect the importance of performance objectives in child welfare practice in and around the time of ASFA's passage. In recent years, CB, Congress, and the child welfare field have begun to recognize and emphasize the critical importance of a full continuum of prevention services and approaches as essential to child welfare practice. This may lead to HHS considering the creation and addition of prevention-oriented performance objectives in the future.

In addition to detailing state performance in the current outcome categories, this Report also includes findings of analyses conducted across states and over time. Data for most of the measures in this Report come from two national child welfare reporting systems—the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS).

Contextual Factors

The Child Welfare Outcomes Report presents data on child welfare-related contextual factors relevant to understanding and interpreting state performance on the measures. The following is a summary of the 2020 data for these contextual factors.⁴

Foster care information overview

- Nationally, there were approximately 407,000 children in foster care on the last day of 2020. During that year, an estimated 217,000 children entered foster care, and approximately 224,000 children exited foster care.⁵ Among the states, the foster care entry rate ranged from 0.9 children per 1,000 in a state's child population to 13.2 children per 1,000 in a state's population.⁶
- Each year since 2018, the number of children in foster care on the last day of the year decreased from the prior year. From 2018 to 2019, there was an approximately 1.8-percent decrease, and from 2019 to 2020, there was a 4.7-percent decrease.⁷
- Of the children who entered foster care in 2020, the majority had a reason for removal that included neglect (either alone—25.6 percent— or in combination with another reason other than physical or sexual abuse—30.3 percent). Physical or sexual abuse (alone) accounted for 16.0 percent of the removals, and drug abuse (alone) accounted for 8.5 percent. Removal reasons involving child behavior problems and caretaker's inability to cope accounted for 4.0 percent and 3.6 percent, respectively.

- The majority of children entering care in 2020 were identified as White (about 46 percent). The entry population identified as Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino represented 20 and 21 percent, respectively. Children identified with multiple races was 8 percent—approximately. American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander represented less than one percent each, of the foster care entry population.

AFCARS data show that the number of children in care on the last day of the FY has decreased for the last 3 years (2018, 2019, and 2020). The decrease from 2019 to 2020 was 4.7 percent.

Child victims' information overview

- During 2020, approximately 618,000 children were confirmed to be victims of maltreatment.^{8,9} The overall national child victim rate was 8.4 child victims per 1,000 children in the population.¹⁰ State child victim rates varied dramatically, ranging from 1.7 child victims per 1,000 children to 19.0 child victims per 1,000 children.¹¹

State Performance on Outcome Measures

This Report includes a synopsis of key findings on the 12 measures established to assess performance on the seven national outcomes previously identified. These measures are described in detail in appendix B. For all measures, national performance was determined by the medians across states that meet data-quality thresholds. Table 1, at the end of the Executive Summary, displays these measures and their medians for 2016–2020.¹² Change in state performance over time was assessed by calculating a percentage change in performance on the measures.¹³ Consistent with HHS's historical approach to the analyses in these Reports, a percentage change of 5.0 or greater in either direction (i.e., positive or negative) was used as a general indicator that meaningful change in performance on the measures occurred. Therefore, for the purposes of the analyses presented in this Report, if the percentage change in performance from 2016 to 2020 was less than 5.0 in either

direction, the determination was that there was no change in performance. Additionally, please note that lower values in this Report indicate better performance for the following measures: 1.1 (recurrence of maltreatment), 2.1 (maltreatment in foster care), 3.4 (exits to emancipation for children who entered care before age 12), 4.2 (reentry into foster care), and 7.1 (placement of young children in group homes and institutions). Consequently, when referring to changes in performance in these measures over time, negative values indicate a measurement decrease but an improvement in performance; conversely, positive values indicate a measurement increase but a decline in performance. For all remaining measures, positive values indicate improvements in performance, and negative values indicate declines in performance. Table 2, at the end of the Executive Summary, is a summary snapshot to assist the reader in easily and quickly identifying where changes in performance for each state improved (darker cell shade), declined (lighter cell shade), or experienced no change (no cell shading) for each measure.

Outcome 1: Reduce recurrence of child abuse and/or neglect

- In 2019, state performance with regard to the percentage of child victims experiencing a recurrence of child maltreatment within a 12-month period (measure 1.1) was 7.5 percent.
- States with higher child victim rates tended to have higher maltreatment recurrence rates within a 12-month period (Pearson's $r=0.77$).¹⁴ Similarly, the percentage of children who were victims of neglect was moderately correlated with the percentage of maltreatment recurrence within a 12-month period (Pearson's $r=0.49$).
- National performance over time on the recurrence of child maltreatment improved between 2016 (median=8.5 percent) and 2019 (median=7.8 percent), with about as many states reporting an improvement in performance (19) as a decline in performance (18).

Outcome 2: Reduce the incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care

- In 2020, the national median with regard to the maltreatment of children in foster care (measure 2.1) was 0.28 percent, and state medians ranged from 0.00 percent to 2.23 percent of children in care¹⁵

- The national median regarding the percentage of children who experienced maltreatment while in foster care increased from 0.20 percent in 2016 to 0.28 percent in 2020, with 63 percent of states reporting a decline in performance.

The percentage of all children in foster care who experienced maltreatment while in care increased between 2016 and 2020.

Outcome 3: Increase permanency for children in foster care

- In 2020, states were mostly successful in achieving permanency (i.e., discharge to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship) for all children exiting foster care (measure 3.1), with a national median of 90.3 percent.
- States were less successful in achieving permanent homes for children exiting foster care who had a diagnosed disability (measure 3.2, median=82.1 percent) and for children who had entered care when they were older than age 12 (measure 3.3, median=62.9 percent).¹⁶
- The median percentage of children who emancipated from foster care and who also were age 12 or younger when they entered care (measure 3.4) declined 12.6 percent since 2016, with 56 percent of states demonstrating improved performance on this measure.
- From 2016 to 2020, state performance declined for placing American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino, and children of two or more races into permanent homes (measure 3.5). There was an increase in the median percentage of Asian children (from 87.5 percent to 89.3 percent), Black or African American children (from 85.7 percent to 86.3 percent), and White children (from 90.7 percent to 91.4 percent) exiting care to permanent placements.

In 2020, 89.0 percent of all children who exited foster care during the year were discharged to a permanent home.

Outcome 4: Reduce time in foster care to reunification without increasing reentry

- In 38 states (75 percent), at least half of reunifications occurred within 12 months from the time of entry into foster care (measure 4.1). The national median in 2020 for this outcome was 60.9 percent. The national median over time has declined consistently over the past 5 years, with a 7.9-percent decrease since 2016.
- Of all children who entered foster care during 2020, a median of 7.2 percent had reentered foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode (measure 4.2). This was a 1.4-percent increase from the 7.1 percent median in 2016, with 21 states showing increases during this period.

Outcome 5: Reduce time in foster care to adoption

- In 2020, states continued to struggle with achieving timely adoptions. Nationally, the median for children discharged to a finalized adoption within 12 months of the latest removal (measure 5.1a) was 2.5 percent, and more than half of states (70 percent) saw a decline in performance between 2016 and 2020.
- For adoptions occurring at least 12 months but less than 24 months from entry into foster care (measure 5.1b), national performance declined 11.3 percent between 2016 and 2020, with more than half (65 percent) of states demonstrating a decline.

The 2020 data indicate that achieving timely adoptions within 24 months of entering foster care remained a challenge for all but a few states, with 65 percent of states demonstrating a decline in performance.

Outcome 6: Increase placement stability

- In 2020, the majority of children in foster care for less than 12 months remained in a stable placement (i.e., having two or fewer placement settings in a single foster care episode) (measure 6.1a), with a national median of 84.5 percent.

- States were less successful in achieving placement stability the longer a child spent in foster care. The median across states for children who were in care between 12 and 24 months (measure 6.1b) was 65.4 percent, and for children in care at least 24 months (measure 6.1c), it was 40.0 percent.
- Between 2016 and 2020, states showed little change in placement stability for children in care under 24 months. However, for children in care at least 24 months, the national median increased by 2.6 percent—from 39.0

The national median for achieving placement stability for children who have been in care for 24 months or longer improved by 2.6 percent between 2016 and 2020.

to 40.0 percent—with nearly three-fifths (59 percent) of states demonstrating an improvement in performance.

Outcome 7: Reduce placements of young children in group homes or institutions

- For half of states (50 percent), 2.6 percent or less of children entering foster care under the age of 12 were placed in group homes or institutions in 2020 (measure 7.1).
- Overall, states continued to demonstrate improvement on this measure. The median decreased from 3.2 percent in 2016 to 2.6 percent in 2020 (an 18.8-percent decline), and 35 states (69 percent) demonstrated an improvement in performance.

Between 2016 and 2020, the national median percentage of children who were age 12 or younger when they entered care and were placed in group homes or institutions declined by 18.8 percent—69 percent of the states demonstrated an improvement in performance.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Further Investigation

In reviewing the key findings in all seven outcome areas, it is clear there are both areas of strength and areas in need of improvement with regard to achieving positive outcomes for children who come into contact with state child welfare systems. While AFCARS and NCANDS data provide some limited initial insight into many of these issues, all of these areas deserve additional investigation in order for the child welfare field to gain further understanding and move forward. The following are examples of specific areas that may benefit from additional research attention:

- The number of children in foster care on the last day of the year decreased during the last 3 years (2018, 2019, and 2020). It will be important to monitor these numbers in future reports to see if this will become a sustained decrease, which could partially be due to the availability of optional prevention funding¹⁷ and implementation efforts.
- From 2016 to 2020, there was a decline in the national performance regarding maltreatment in foster care, with 63 percent of states showing decreased performance during that time. Although the maltreatment in foster care measure is very sensitive to slight changes because of the small number of children who are maltreated in care, it is important to monitor if this finding becomes a continuing trend. To address this, agencies should continue to monitor their practices and periodically review and update current trainings, enhance screening for foster parents, and ensure staff have the resources and capabilities needed to adequately care for children in their caseloads who are in out-of-home care.
- While the national median in achieving permanency for children with a diagnosed disability remained high, state performance on finding permanent homes for older children continues to be a challenge. Agencies should review their data to consider what additional barriers may prevent older youth from achieving permanency.
- Despite reunifications constituting more than half of all exits from foster care, the national performance on the percentage of children exiting to reunification who reunified within 12 months of entry into foster care has declined over the last 5 years, with over five times as many states demonstrating a decline in performance

than showing an improvement. When reunification is not in the best interest of the child, adoption should be pursued. However, data indicate that finalizing adoption in less than 2 years from entry is unlikely in most states. Agencies should continue to monitor these outcomes and to identify and review specific barriers to achieving timely reunifications and adoptions.

- In 2020, states showed improvement in achieving stable placement settings for children in foster care less than 12 months and those in care between 12 and 24 months. States may want to examine the population of children in care at least 24 months to identify possible barriers to improved performance specific to this population.
- Although the national median of young children placed in group homes or institutions has declined since 2016, it is important to note that 11 states declined in performance (i.e., more children were placed in congregate care). Therefore, it would be useful to determine what strategies may assist states that continue to struggle in this area.
- Table 2 displays the changes in performance for each state between 2016 and 2020 across the measures and select subcategories of measures. Seven states showed improvement in at least half (seven or more) of the measures, with states ranging from improving on one to nine measures. While many states are making progress on these permanency and safety outcomes, it is important for states to continue to monitor ongoing practice efforts and identify which strategies may be associated with improved outcomes. They then may be able to determine whether they—or other states—can replicate those strategies to stem or reverse declining performance in any remaining outcomes.

Data and analyses presented throughout this Report offer additional details regarding the foster care population and overall national performance on the seven primary outcomes. Outcomes-based visuals in the Report display both single-year performance and state performance over time from 2016 to 2020.

Although the COVID-19 health crisis began in early 2020, this Report does not evaluate the specific circumstances that could account for changes in performance at the state level, including any potential impact the COVID-19 pandemic may have had on child welfare operating systems. However, some states did provide comments that cited the COVID-19 pandemic as a contributing factor in performance (see chapter

VI). Of the 11 states that opted to submit data commentaries, only 3 states mentioned the pandemic as a limiting factor on their performance in certain areas. One state reported that it continued to see improvements in some areas despite the challenges. The following are highlights from the states' comments:

- Connecticut reported that the 2020 data for in-placement caseworker visits seemed low because, although the state was able to document virtual contact, the SACWIS system did not have the capability at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic to capture if the child was in their placement setting at the time of the visit. The state reported that this has been corrected and will be reflected in future submissions.
- The District of Columbia continued to report a decrease in the number of children in care but experienced an increase in the median lengths of stay during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Rhode Island reported that the closure of the courts during the pandemic impacted both the terminations of parental rights that were granted and the number of

adoptions completed during 2020. In addition, the state reported a significant decrease in the percentage of children exiting to reunification from 2019 to 2020.

- Washington State reported that the state continued to observe a reduction in the number of children in out-of-home care despite the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although only a few states mentioned challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, *Child Maltreatment 2020* includes a more robust commentary section in which states report challenges they faced pertaining to the NCANDS data collection.¹⁸ This Report only uses NCANDS data for safety measures 1 and 2; therefore, NCANDS data commentaries in *Child Maltreatment 2020* regarding COVID-19 and other issues should not be generalized to the collection of AFCARS data if they are not mentioned specifically by the state providing the comment.

¹ See appendix A for the current specifications of section 479A of the Social Security Act, as created by ASFA and amended by Pub. L. 109–288, Pub. L. 112–34, Pub. L. 113–183, and Pub. L. 115–123.

² Title IV-E has been amended on several occasions. Its funds support foster care; adoption assistance; kinship guardianship assistance; and, at the option of a state, kinship navigator programs and/or time-limited prevention services for candidates of foster care, pregnant or parenting foster youth, and the parents or kin caregivers of those children and youth. Title IV-B funds support preventative and protective services for children. For more information on policies and guidance provided to states, see the [Policy/Program Issuances page](#) on the CB website.

³ For the purposes of this Report, the designation of “state” includes the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Therefore, the Report provides information on a total of 52 states, depending on the number of states that submitted adequate data for a particular measure. Tribal Title IV-E agencies are not included in this Report. It is important to note, however, that states report information on all children for whom the state has responsibility for placement, care, and supervision, and in some cases these children may be tribal children. Currently, the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System does not have an indicator to distinguish which states are reporting tribal information or an identifier for tribal children.

⁴ Unless otherwise specified, the data used in this Report are for federal fiscal years (October 1–September 30). Additionally, unless otherwise specified, the data used in this Report are for federal fiscal year 2020.

⁵ The foster care data for children in care on the last day of the year, entries, and exits were obtained from [Trends in Foster Care and Adoption: FY 2011–2020](#). These data may differ from data presented in later sections of this Report because of differences in data-quality thresholds.

⁶ The foster care entry rate was calculated by dividing the total number of children entering foster care in a state by the total child population in that state and multiplying the resulting number by 1,000.

⁷ For more information, see [Trends in Foster Care and Adoption: FY 2011–2020](#). The data used in that report were current as of October 04, 2021.

⁸ This Report uses a unique count for child victims, which tallies a child only once regardless of the number of times the child was found to be a victim during the reporting year.

⁹ For the purposes of this Report, a “victim of child maltreatment” is defined as a child for whom an incident of abuse or neglect has been substantiated or indicated by an investigation or assessment. This includes a child who died as a result of child abuse or neglect. Prior to 2015, children with dispositions of “alternative response victim” were also included as victims. It is important to note that the Child Welfare Outcomes Reports use the total reported number of child victims as opposed to a national estimate of child victims, which often is reported in the Child Maltreatment reports. The total number of child victims in this Report were rounded to the nearest 1,000.

¹⁰ The national child victim rate was calculated by dividing the total number of child victims (618,399) by the child population for all states that submitted NCANDS data (73,368,194) and multiplying the resulting number by 1,000. This calculation includes children under the age of 18.

¹¹ A state’s rate of child victims is defined as the number of child victims reported to NCANDS per 1,000 children in the state’s population.

¹² In this Report, two separate national medians were computed for each measure. In the 2020 Range of State Performance tables, national medians were calculated using data from all states that met the relevant data-quality thresholds in 2020 only. However, in the Median State Performance and Change in Performance Over Time tables, national medians were calculated using only data from the states that met the relevant data-quality thresholds for all the relevant fiscal years (2016–2020). This was done to provide a more accurate calculation of change over time. Unless stated otherwise, comparisons of medians between years used the latter calculation. Therefore, the number of states (N) included in each of these calculations may vary, and these two medians may vary slightly.

¹³ Percentage change was calculated by subtracting the “old” data from the “new” data, dividing that result by the old data, and multiplying it by 100. For example, the national median on measure 3.1 was 89.3 percent in 2016 and 90.3 percent in 2020, and so the resulting increase is 1.1 percent $\left(\frac{90.3-89.3}{89.3} \times 100 = 1.1\right)$.

¹⁴ The strength of relationships in the Child Welfare Outcomes Reports is assessed using correlation coefficients, specifically Pearson’s *r*, which can range in value from –1 to +1.

¹⁵ Due to the relatively few cases of child maltreatment in foster care, performance on this measure is presented using two decimal places to improve comparability.

¹⁶ For the purpose of AFCARS, a diagnosed disability includes mental retardation, visual or hearing impairment, physical disability, emotional disturbance, or other medically diagnosed conditions requiring special care. For more information on the definitions and requirements for a disability, see [AFCARS Technical Bulletin #2: Disability Information](#), which was last revised February 2012.

¹⁷ The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) (Pub. L. 115–123), which was enacted in 2018 and amended Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Act, provides optional Title IV-E prevention funding for states. For more information on FFPSA, see the [What’s New in Laws & Policies page](#) on the CB website. See the [Title IV-E Prevention Program page](#) on the CB website for more information about that program.

¹⁸ For more information, see Appendix D: State Commentary of [Child Maltreatment 2020](#).

Table 1. State Medians on Outcome Measures, 2016–2020

Outcome measures	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Change in median, 2016-2020
Measure 1.1: Of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect during a 12-month period, what percentage had another substantiated or indicated report within a 12-month of the initial victimization? (N=48) ^c	8.5%	8.2%	7.7%	7.8%	-- ^a	-8.2% ^b
Measure 2.1: Of all children who were in foster care during the year, what percentage were the subject of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff? (N=48) ^c	0.20%	0.27%	0.24%	0.26%	0.28%	40.00%
Measure 3.1: Of all children who exited foster care during the year, what percentage left to either reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship (i.e., were discharged to a permanent home)? (N=50)	89.3%	90.3%	90.5%	90.5%	90.3%	1.1%
Measure 3.2: Of all children who exited foster care during the year and were identified as having a diagnosed disability, what percentage left to either reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship (i.e., were discharged to a permanent home)? (N=44)	82.1%	81.5%	82.6%	83.2%	82.9%	1.0%
Measure 3.3: Of all children who exited foster care during the year and were older than age 12 at the time of their most recent entry into care, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship (i.e., were discharged to a permanent home)? (N=50)	65.3%	64.5%	62.9%	64.3%	62.7%	-4.0%
Measure 3.4: Of all children exiting foster care during the year to emancipation, what percentage were age 12 or younger at the time of entry into care? (N=50) ^c	16.7%	16.6%	15.5%	15.0%	14.6%	-12.6%
Measure 4.1: Of all children reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care during the year, what percentage were reunified in less than 12 months from the time of entry into foster care? (N=50)	66.1%	64.6%	63.8%	62.7%	60.9%	-7.9%
Measure 4.2: Of all children who entered foster care during the year, what percentage reentered care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode? (N=50) ^c	7.1%	7.4%	6.9%	7.3%	7.2%	1.4%
Measure 5.1a: Of all children discharged from foster care during the year to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from home? (N=50)	3.7%	3.4%	2.7%	3.1%	2.5%	-32.4%
Measure 5.1b: Of all children discharged from care during the year to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care at least 12 months but less than 24 months from the date of the latest removal from home? (N=50)	29.1%	29.4%	28.7%	26.8%	25.8%	-11.3%
Measure 6.1a: Of all children served in foster care during the year who were in care for less than 12 months, what percentage had no more than two placement settings? (N=50)	84.0%	84.4%	83.5%	83.0%	84.5%	0.6%
Measure 6.1b: Of all children served in foster care during the year who were in care for at least 12 months but less than 24 months, what percentage had no more than two placement settings? (N=50)	65.2%	65.6%	65.8%	64.9%	65.4%	0.3%
Measure 6.1c: Of all children served in foster care during the year who were in care for at least 24 months, what percentage had no more than two placement settings? (N=50)	39.0%	41.1%	41.1%	41.0%	40.0%	2.6%
Measure 7.1: Of all children who entered foster care during the year and were age 12 or younger at the time of their most recent placement, what percentage were placed in a group home or an institution? (N=50) ^c	3.2%	3.0%	3.1%	2.9%	2.6%	-18.8%

^a At the time of this analysis, data were not available to calculate the recurrence of maltreatment for children who were victims of maltreatment in 2020.

^b For measure 1.1, the percentage change is 2016–2019 rather than 2016–2020.

^c For these measures, a lower number indicates better performance.

Notes.

—Lower values in this Report indicate better performance for the following measures: 1.1, 2.1, 3.4, 4.2, and 7.1. Consequently, when referring to changes in performance in these measures over time, negative values greater than 5-percent indicate a measurement decrease but an improvement in performance (dark gray); conversely, positive values greater than 5-percent indicate a measurement increase but a decline in performance (light gray). For all remaining measures (measures 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 5.1a, 5.1b, 6.1a, 6.1b, 6.1c), positive values indicate improvements in performance (dark gray), and negative values indicate declines in performance (light gray). For all measures, values less than 5-percent in either direction indicate no change in performance (no shading).

—Data for this table include all states that met the relevant data-quality criteria for all years. Data for measure 3.5 is presented separately in table III-5 in this Report.

Table 2. State Percentage Change in Performance by Outcome Measure, 2016–2020

State	1.1a	2.1	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	4.1	4.2	5.1a	5.1b	6.1a	6.1b	6.1c	7.1
Alabama	21.3%	190.9%	1.6%	-7.1%	-3.9%	-61.5%	-8.9%	3.0%	0.3%	8.0%	-0.9%	8.6%	17.8%	-46.8%
Alaska	-6.4%	53.8%	-5.1%	-10.6%	-8.8%	-10.7%	16.6%	2.8%	251.0%	-52.6%	0.9%	-3.8%	7.2%	48.3%
Arizona	11.2%	16.7%	2.8%	-2.5%	11.0%	51.6%	-1.0%	-14.2%	46.1%	3.1%	2.2%	-0.3%	-14.9%	-20.4%
Arkansas	2.2%	16.7%	-1.8%	-2.5%	-14.2%	11.4%	-8.7%	-5.6%	-30.4%	-6.0%	4.9%	11.4%	-15.4%	-76.0%
California	-2.0%	31.6%	1.8%	2.4%	-4.6%	-4.6%	-2.1%	-12.8%	-27.9%	-6.6%	5.1%	10.8%	12.3%	-35.3%
Colorado	-4.5%	-48.3%	-0.8%	DQ	-13.9%	-53.8%	-8.3%	-12.5%	-8.1%	-29.0%	-1.9%	12.5%	23.9%	-57.8%
Connecticut	-19.1%	-77.9%	5.3%	3.6%	11.6%	18.4%	-21.8%	37.1%	-76.3%	-17.8%	-2.8%	-2.3%	11.7%	-59.5%
Delaware	-24.1%	NA	-10.3%	-8.7%	-24.4%	24.3%	24.9%	-1.3%	-2.9%	-7.9%	3.7%	-9.0%	-22.2%	-31.0%
District of Columbia	10.7%	-42.5%	1.4%	71.4%	-0.5%	-34.8%	-15.7%	37.7%	-27.2%	40.4%	-6.9%	-21.7%	24.3%	113.8%
Florida	-14.3%	-80.0%	0.7%	-2.2%	-2.2%	-34.9%	-14.2%	3.5%	-40.0%	-14.4%	1.5%	-3.3%	3.8%	-46.7%
Georgia	-35.1%	DQ	-1.5%	0.5%	-14.6%	39.6%	-26.7%	-4.5%	-34.3%	-25.5%	4.5%	15.6%	15.4%	-39.2%
Hawaii	DQ	-63.9%	-0.8%	-0.5%	-11.3%	-59.1%	-11.5%	1.5%	-45.5%	-0.9%	-2.3%	11.0%	7.3%	-37.6%
Idaho	-26.5%	0.0%	-4.8%	3.7%	-12.8%	-56.4%	-4.3%	-34.7%	18.3%	-12.6%	-3.3%	-6.8%	6.2%	-6.3%
Illinois	15.4%	52.7%	-7.8%	-28.7%	-15.1%	15.8%	88.1%	-19.6%	-19.1%	16.7%	8.3%	9.5%	22.2%	-29.3%
Indiana	-6.4%	20.0%	0.2%	3.3%	-2.7%	-20.6%	-11.6%	37.5%	-1.8%	-36.9%	-0.5%	0.6%	1.3%	-47.7%
Iowa	19.9%	183.3%	3.0%	10.3%	-0.3%	-29.8%	-19.1%	-0.3%	-7.1%	-7.3%	1.4%	5.9%	27.4%	-0.2%
Kansas	-10.9%	-21.1%	-0.6%	-2.8%	-7.7%	5.3%	-16.8%	15.1%	-45.4%	-18.3%	3.7%	-3.6%	-8.0%	42.8%
Kentucky	-6.7%	-32.5%	0.6%	0.1%	1.9%	13.4%	-8.0%	-13.2%	13.7%	58.4%	-2.2%	1.5%	9.0%	-37.6%
Louisiana	-28.2%	DQ	-4.1%	-0.7%	-24.1%	-37.3%	-9.1%	-8.8%	-63.7%	-15.9%	-2.0%	-4.8%	-9.4%	-27.8%
Maine	27.3%	23.2%	3.0%	15.0%	44.9%	15.0%	33.4%	120.6%	-18.7%	51.4%	-2.4%	-5.4%	1.9%	-25.5%
Maryland	-4.2%	123.3%	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ
Massachusetts	-1.2%	-16.1%	0.1%	DQ	-3.1%	12.8%	-8.2%	-6.1%	-56.4%	-18.4%	11.8%	1.4%	-17.4%	0.0%
Michigan	2.9%	-23.2%	2.2%	-2.3%	-4.9%	-34.1%	-19.9%	40.6%	-47.7%	-6.6%	1.7%	2.9%	12.0%	-59.6%
Minnesota	-34.8%	-22.1%	0.5%	-0.4%	-5.8%	9.8%	-13.7%	-2.3%	-10.4%	-23.5%	0.7%	7.6%	8.2%	14.5%
Mississippi	5.3%	89.0%	2.9%	4.0%	5.3%	128.0%	-12.5%	-11.1%	-78.1%	9.0%	-1.7%	4.6%	18.4%	-59.8%
Missouri	-30.7%	12.0%	-1.0%	-2.8%	-3.3%	15.2%	-13.2%	-30.1%	26.6%	-14.6%	2.3%	2.6%	4.2%	-14.7%
Montana	9.2%	94.4%	2.8%	DQ	3.4%	-3.2%	-7.2%	60.6%	201.8%	4.0%	2.1%	1.3%	12.7%	-26.2%
Nebraska	-4.3%	23.1%	-0.7%	0.6%	-3.5%	-64.3%	-3.0%	25.1%	51.5%	-30.7%	0.7%	-3.3%	-3.8%	-41.1%
Nevada	-16.0%	65.0%	-1.8%	12.7%	-7.9%	-13.3%	-5.0%	-33.0%	-51.4%	-14.9%	2.7%	7.6%	10.4%	-57.5%

Table 2. State Percentage Change in Performance by Outcome Measure, 2016–2020

State	1.1a	2.1	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	4.1	4.2	5.1a	5.1b	6.1a	6.1b	6.1c	7.1
New Hampshire	6.2%	NA	8.6%	-1.6%	2.3%	-62.0%	16.5%	75.9%	-69.5%	82.8%	-4.3%	1.8%	4.9%	49.9%
New Jersey	-18.8%	85.7%	-2.0%	-1.0%	-9.7%	13.6%	-18.0%	-12.5%	-44.7%	7.9%	2.7%	2.8%	-0.7%	15.1%
New Mexico	-8.7%	188.9%	-3.3%	-8.1%	-9.6%	67.4%	-12.3%	-4.9%	-100.0%	-18.3%	2.3%	3.8%	14.1%	-17.7%
New York	-6.0%	-44.4%	-9.1%	-21.2%	-27.5%	-15.8%	-7.9%	-7.7%	6.7%	8.3%	0.0%	-1.1%	0.6%	5.6%
North Carolina	DQ	DQ	6.1%	9.0%	24.9%	84.0%	-10.6%	123.3%	-6.6%	-5.6%	-4.1%	-5.0%	-13.2%	3.2%
North Dakota	-43.2%	NA	13.6%	19.0%	24.6%	129.2%	-4.8%	-16.1%	-68.7%	-48.9%	-7.0%	8.3%	21.0%	-44.8%
Ohio	5.6%	-28.8%	-1.7%	-5.6%	-14.5%	-51.8%	-10.2%	39.8%	-21.8%	-14.8%	0.0%	2.5%	10.7%	9.3%
Oklahoma	-3.7%	-31.3%	1.1%	1.3%	-3.3%	-4.0%	8.3%	-6.0%	2.4%	26.9%	5.1%	18.8%	16.0%	1.8%
Oregon	5.1%	-75.9%	2.9%	-3.5%	-2.9%	-40.9%	-7.4%	-25.0%	114.0%	-18.1%	-0.4%	2.2%	6.3%	34.1%
Pennsylvania	DQ	28.6%	3.6%	DQ	-9.2%	-36.5%	-9.0%	2.6%	0.3%	-15.5%	2.6%	6.2%	15.9%	-31.8%
Rhode Island	8.1%	36.9%	-4.6%	-12.0%	-30.9%	-39.0%	-45.5%	-56.7%	-37.8%	-31.5%	1.6%	3.4%	13.7%	-31.8%
South Carolina	6.5%	56.4%	-1.1%	DQ	-3.7%	-41.7%	-7.4%	12.3%	-22.3%	-27.5%	-9.7%	-9.7%	-11.7%	-66.5%
South Dakota	19.6%	261.5%	3.1%	DQ	-12.3%	-70.2%	-8.8%	7.5%	-47.8%	79.6%	-2.2%	-10.8%	26.0%	-30.2%
Tennessee	9.1%	123.1%	-0.2%	12.9%	-2.2%	-5.5%	-10.0%	-4.2%	-30.7%	-2.0%	-1.5%	-5.5%	-8.8%	-10.9%
Texas	3.1%	41.9%	-0.5%	-1.4%	-7.6%	-35.7%	-13.7%	34.4%	-27.6%	0.7%	0.3%	-2.3%	-4.3%	-6.7%
Utah	-8.1%	200.0%	4.0%	25.0%	3.6%	-18.0%	-9.9%	-2.3%	-18.1%	-10.3%	1.8%	10.4%	44.7%	13.8%
Vermont	-33.9%	NA	-1.7%	13.1%	-9.0%	166.7%	-10.0%	-14.7%	-69.1%	-51.5%	-5.7%	-0.2%	14.9%	-33.2%
Virginia	34.6%	-26.9%	11.3%	13.4%	13.1%	-7.8%	2.8%	50.1%	-26.3%	10.7%	2.0%	0.4%	-6.7%	-32.2%
Washington	-2.5%	-18.2%	0.6%	1.5%	-2.6%	-36.8%	-8.8%	42.7%	-56.0%	-37.9%	4.8%	3.9%	-1.1%	93.7%
West Virginia	55.1%	154.5%	0.8%	1.5%	-0.5%	-49.0%	-7.4%	-29.0%	0.2%	-7.7%	-0.1%	3.8%	20.6%	-35.5%
Wisconsin	-4.2%	42.9%	-0.6%	6.5%	-6.1%	-25.2%	-7.8%	8.0%	-38.1%	-37.7%	1.4%	2.4%	12.4%	-12.2%
Wyoming	27.7%	67.5%	3.5%	0.7%	5.3%	NA	7.0%	-14.9%	-77.3%	-5.6%	-1.7%	-4.4%	10.1%	-46.3%
Puerto Rico	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ	DQ

^a For measure 1.1, the percentage change is 2016–2019 rather than 2016–2020.

Notes.

—This table excludes measure 3.5. State-level information on this measure can be found on the [Child Welfare Outcomes data site](#), and national performance is included in chapter III of this Report.

—A change of +/-5.0 percent is considered a change in performance. Values shaded in dark gray indicate an improvement in performance, values shaded in light gray indicate a decline in performance, and values with no shading indicate no change in performance.

—Lower values in this Report indicate better performance for the following measures: 1.1, 2.1, 3.4, 4.2, and 7.1. Consequently, when referring to changes in performance in these measures over time, negative values greater than 5-percent indicate a measurement decrease but an improvement in performance (dark gray); conversely, positive values greater than 5-percent indicate a measurement increase but a decline in performance (light gray). For all remaining measures (measures 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 5.1a, 5.1b, 6.1a, 6.1b, 6.1c), positive values indicate improvements in performance (dark gray), and negative values indicate declines in performance (light gray). For all measures, values less than 5-percent in either direction indicate no change in performance (no shading).

—Percentage-change calculations were done without rounding.

—Cells marked with “DQ” were excluded from analyses due to incomplete data or data-quality issues.

—Cells marked with “NA” indicate a percentage change could not be calculated because the percentage for the first year (2016) was 0.00 percent.

Child Welfare Outcomes Data Site

Additional child welfare-related context data and state data regarding the seven national measures are available on the [Child Welfare Outcomes data site](#). The Child Welfare Outcomes data site allows for significantly faster release of these data than is possible via the publication of the full Report. The data site features AFCARS and NCANDS data that have been reviewed and approved by the states for inclusion in the Report and that are updated annually. With the data site, users have the ability to conduct the following activities:

- View one state's data or simultaneously compare data for multiple states, including by ACF region
- Compare data for a single state across multiple years
- View state context, demographic, and outcome data in tables grouped by type of data
- View additional context and demographic data for states not included in the Report, including two distinct breakdowns of race and ethnicity data
- Choose to view data in a table or graph
- Export the data into a variety of formats, including copying or printing customized data directly from the site, exporting data into Excel, and saving data as a PDF or CSV file
- Search for data by topic of interest
- View static state data pages previously included in the full Reports

For questions or more information about the Child Welfare Outcomes data site, please contact CB at CBDataTeam@acf.hhs.gov.

VISIT THE CHILD WELFARE OUTCOMES DATA SITE!

The data site features the latest AFCARS and NCANDS data that have been reviewed and approved by the states for inclusion in the Report. In addition, the data site provides additional child welfare-related context data regarding the seven national outcome measures.

With the data site, users have the ability to conduct the following activities:

- The latest AFCARS and NCANDS data
- A custom report builder
- *Quick Links* to important indicators
- Flexible data outputs formats

Visit the [Child Welfare Outcomes data site](#).

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