



National Survey of Child
and Adolescent Well-Being

NSCAW II WAVE 2 REPORT

Child Permanency

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NSCAW II WAVE 2 REPORT: CHILD PERMANENCY

FINAL REPORT

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Introduction to NSCAW II

The second National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW II) is a longitudinal study intended to answer a range of fundamental questions about the functioning, service needs, and service use of children who come in contact with the child welfare system. The study is sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). It examines the well-being of children involved with child welfare agencies; captures information about the investigation of abuse or neglect that brought the child into the study; collects information about the child's family; provides information about child welfare interventions and other services; and describes key characteristics of child development. Of particular interest to the study are children's health, mental health, and developmental risks, especially for those children who experienced the most severe abuse and exposure to violence.

The study includes 5,872¹ children ranging in age from birth to 17.5 years old at the time of sampling. Children were sampled from child welfare investigations closed between February 2008 and April 2009 in 83 counties nationwide. The cohort includes substantiated and unsubstantiated investigations of abuse or neglect, as well as children and families who were and were not receiving services. Infants and children in out-of-home placement were oversampled to ensure adequate representation of high-risk groups. Face-to-face interviews or assessments were conducted with children, parents and nonparent adult caregivers (e.g., foster parents, kin caregivers, group home caregivers), and investigative caseworkers. Baseline data collection began in March 2008 and was completed in September 2009. Additional information about the NSCAW II history, sample design and methods, instrumentation, as well as a summary of differences between the NSCAW I and NSCAW II cohorts can be found in the first report of this NSCAW II Baseline series.² A series of baseline reports on these data have been published (OPRE Reports 2011-27a-g) and are publicly available at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/abuse_neglect/nscaw/index.html.

Wave 2 is a follow-up of children and families approximately 18 months after the close of the NSCAW II index investigation. The NSCAW II cohort of children who were approximately 2 months to 17.5 years old at baseline ranged in age from 16 months to 19 years old at Wave 2. Data collection for the second wave of the study began in October 2009 and was completed in January 2011.

Wave 2 data collection procedures mirrored the baseline data collection effort with a few notable exceptions. At baseline, an *investigative* caseworker interview was pursued for every child in the cohort. At Wave 2, a *services* caseworker interview was pursued only if the child was living out of home at Wave 2 or if the child or family had received services paid for or

¹ At the time the baseline analyses and reports were prepared, the size of the cohort was 5,873. One child case was identified as ineligible during Wave 2, resulting in a revised NSCAW II cohort size of 5,872.

² Comparisons between NSCAW I and NSCAW II estimates require statistical testing. Analysis for comparison purposes requires a different set of weights; these are available through the National Data Archive for Child Abuse and Neglect at Cornell University.

provided by child welfare agencies since the baseline interview date. In cases where the caregiver reported no services or was uncertain if services had been received, service use was verified with the participating county child welfare agency. If needed, a services caseworker interview was pursued even in situations where the child and/or caregiver were not interviewed for Wave 2.

Wave 2 interviews were completed with 4,750 children and 4,958 caregivers. On average, interviews with children and caregivers were conducted 18.7 months (range 14.9 to 24.7 months) and 18.6 months (range 14.9 to 24.1 months) after the investigation end date, respectively. Approximately 51% of children and families had received services since the baseline interview and, thus, required a services caseworker interview. Wave 2 interviews were completed with 2,843 caseworkers. On average, services caseworker interviews were conducted 19.0 months after the investigation end date (range 15.4 to 23.3 months). Wave 2 weighted response rates were 82.8% for children, 86.3% for caregivers, and 93.9% for caseworkers.

Summary of Report Findings

This report summarizes the permanency of children at NSCAW II Wave 2. Permanency was defined following the *Child Welfare Outcomes Reports* and the *Child and Family Services Reviews* (CFSRs). Per these sources, a child achieves permanency when he or she is reported as discharged from foster care to one of the following arrangements: reunified with parents or primary caretakers; living with other relatives; living with a legal guardian; and legally adopted (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). As this report is based on information collected up to 18 months after the index report, it still may be too soon to determine if these permanency arrangements are stable.

Eighteen months after the close of investigation, fewer than one in 10 (7.1%) of parents of children reported for maltreatment in 2008 had their parental rights terminated, and 2.2% of all children were adopted. Although fewer than 3% of parents of children who were in-home at baseline had their parental rights terminated, more than half of parents whose child was living in formal kin care, foster care, or a group home or residential treatment program at baseline experienced termination of parental rights.

Between the close of the investigation and the 18-month follow-up (Wave 2), more than three quarters of the sample (77.7%) were never placed out of home. Among the 22.3% placed out of home, 72.6% had one placement, 18.9% had two placements, and 8.5% had three or more placements. The mean number of placements was 1.4. The oldest children (13 to 17 years old), and children living in foster care or a group home or residential treatment program at baseline had a higher number of mean placements than younger children and children living in other settings. The number of mean placements among subsequently adopted children was lower than among children not adopted. The mean number of days out of home was 249. Children 13 to 17 years old, and children living in formal kin care, foster care, or a group home or residential treatment program at baseline had a higher number of mean days out of home than other children.

Among children placed out of home after the index report, more than a third (36.5%) had at least one attempt of reunification with parents. Young children (birth to 2 years old at

baseline) and those who were in-home at baseline were more likely to have a reunification attempt when compared with other children.

Of children placed out of home, almost half (47.7%) reached permanency. Of those who reached permanency, 73.2% were reunified with parents, 20.8% were adopted, 4.0% had a legal guardian, and 2.1% were discharged to relatives. Young children and those who were in-home at baseline or in informal kin care were more likely to be reunified than to be adopted when compared with other children. Children with families under high stress (e.g., unemployment, poverty) and those whose main caregiver had a history of domestic violence victimization were more likely to be reunified with their original caregiver than to be adopted when compared with children whose families did not have those problems.

Guide to the NSCAW II Wave 2 Report Series

This report is the sixth in a series of reports describing findings from the NSCAW II 18-month follow-up (Wave 2) data. Included are descriptions of children's adoption, reunification of children placed in out-of-home care, and placement changes.

The topics covered in other NSCAW II Wave 2 reports in this series include:

- Child Well-Being (descriptions of children's physical and mental health, substance use, sexual behavior, illegal activity, cognitive development, academic achievement, and social competence)
- Children's Services (insurance status, health and mental health services, and special education)
- Children and Families Receiving Child Welfare Services Post-Baseline (caseworker characteristics, child and family service needs, services received)
- Caregiver Health and Services (caregiver physical and mental health, substance use, intimate partner violence, involvement with the law, and services received by in-home parents)
- Child Safety (re-reports of abuse or neglect following the baseline index investigation, exposure to violence, aggression, and conflict)

The data analyzed in this report have been released through the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN) in NSCAW II data version 2-1. Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN) in NSCAW II data version 2-1.

Child Characteristics at NSCAW II Baseline and Wave 2

At baseline, one half of the sample was male (50.8%). One fifth (20.6%) of the children were 0 to 2 years old, 22.6% were 3 to 5 years old, 27.4% were 6 to 10 years old, and 29.5% were 11 to 17 years old (Exhibit 1). Four out of 10 children (41.5%) were White (41.5%), 28.3% were Hispanic, 22.4% were Black, and 7.7% described their race/ethnicity as "Other." At the time of the baseline interview, the majority of children were living at home with parents (87.3%),

while 8.5% were living with a kin primary caregiver. A kin caregiver may be a grandparent, aunt or uncle, sibling, or other relative; 6.1% were in an informal kin care arrangement and 2.4% were in formal kin care. In formal kin care living arrangements, the caregiver receives some financial support. A smaller proportion of children were living in foster care (3.4%) and in group homes (0.5%).

Exhibit 2 gives an overview of the key characteristics of children at Wave 2. Approximately one half of the sample was male (50.9%). One ninth (12.8%) of the children were 16 months to 2 years old, 23.1% were 3 to 5 years old, 30.0% were 6 to 10 years old, and 34.2% were 11 to 17 years old. Four out of 10 children (41.2%) were White, 29.0% were Hispanic, 22.5% were Black, and 7.3% described their race/ethnicity as “Other.”

At the time of the Wave 2 interview, the majority of children were living at home with parents (85.5%), while 10.7% were living with a kin primary caregiver. Less than one in 10 (8.3%) lived in an informal kin care arrangement and 2.4% were in formal kin care. A smaller proportion of children were living in foster care (2.9%) and in group homes (0.5%).

Out-of-Home Permanency Data Sources

This report adopted the out-of-home placement definition used by the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR): “24-hour substitute care for children outside their own homes. Foster care settings include, but are not limited to, nonrelative foster family homes, relative foster homes (whether payments are being made or not), group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, and preadoptive homes (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012).”

In this report, permanency was defined following the *Child Welfare Outcomes Reports* and the *Child and Family Services Reviews* (CFSRs). Per these sources, a child achieves permanency when he or she is reported as discharged from foster care to one of the following arrangements: reunified with parents or primary caretakers; living with other relatives; living with a legal guardian; and legally adopted (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).

Two data sources were used to analyze placement and permanency of children placed out of home. The first source was caseworker interviews at baseline and Wave 2. At baseline, caseworkers were asked to describe every change in living arrangement since the index report; (this information was also asked at Wave 2 if the case was missing a baseline interview). At Wave 2, caseworkers were asked to describe every change in living arrangement since the baseline interview. For each change in living arrangement, caseworkers reported on the type of living arrangement,³ child welfare custody, dates of beginning and end of each placement, if the child’s parents were living with the child, and supervised visits with parents. At Wave 2, a

³ Living arrangements categories were: birth parent’s home, adoptive parent’s home, kin/relative’s home, home of a family friend, preadoptive home, unrelated foster parent, specialized or therapeutic foster care, group home, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, institutional/residential treatment facility, place of detention, transitional independent living, other public agency (corrections, mental health), whereabouts unknown/runaway, child lives on own (school, college, military, etc.).

caseworker interview was pursued only if the child was in out-of-home care and/or the child or family had received services since the baseline interview. Wave 2 caseworker data were available for 2,843 of the 5,872 Wave 1 respondents, and covered the entire period between the index report and Wave 2.

The second data source was AFCARS, which collects case-level data from states on all children who received a child protective services (CPS) agency response and are placed out of home. The AFCARS data set includes cumulative data on each child's removal and placement history, as well as detailed information on the child's current placement. AFCARS data are not created in a way that allows for the combination of data across multiple submissions. If several files are combined, a cumulative summary data on the child's history can be created, but it is not possible to construct a continuous longitudinal record including details of each placement. Details are available only for the child's current or most recent placement at the time of file submission. The maximum number of AFCARS submissions for which data could be merged was five (May 2008, November 2008, May 2009, November 2009, and May 2010). The AFCARS placement data were available for 1,698 of baseline respondents.

Two AFCARS variables were used for this report: the AFCARS adoption variable (Yes/No), and AFCARS discharge variable (reunified with parent; living with other relatives; adoption; emancipation; guardianship; transfer to another agency). If information from AFCARS was outdated or not available, information provided by caseworkers on history of placements at baseline and Wave 2 was used. If the caseworker's history of placement information was outdated or not available, a derived variable that relies on first caregiver interview data and, if missing, child interview data to identify setting at Wave 2 was used. If the case had neither Wave 2 interview data nor AFCARS data, the Wave 1 setting variable was used.

These data sources were used to create several placement variables. Using both sources, some information about whether a reunification occurred was available for 5,460 of the 5,872 baseline respondents (92%). Still, 339 children had neither caseworker nor AFCARS data, so information the caregiver provided was used to identify their final living arrangement.

The derived variables and exhibits presented in this report are intended to be consistent with the CFSR framework. Information about reunification and permanency is part of the data collected from states for the CFSRs. The 1994 Amendments to the Social Security Act (SSA) authorized the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to review state child and family service programs to ensure conformity with the requirements in titles IV-B and IV-E of the SSA. The Children's Bureau within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) administers the review system (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).

For the CFSR, two groups of children are reported separately: children older than 12 years old, and children with disabilities. In this report, results presented by child age have a category to identify children who were 13 years old and older at baseline. In addition, two NSCAW II variables are included to represent children with disabilities. One variable identifies developmental problems among children birth to 5 years old at baseline, the second variable identifies behavioral and cognitive problems among children 6 to 17 years old at baseline.

Placement Changes

Out-of-home placements. The majority of children (77.7%) did not experience any out-of-home placement in the 18 months between the close of investigation and Wave 2 (Exhibit 3). Approximately 16% (16.2%) of children experienced one placement, 4.2% experienced two placements, and 1.9% experienced three or more placements. The number of placement changes differed by child age, baseline setting, and adoption status. Children 6 to 10 years old at baseline were significantly more likely have no out-of-home placements (81.4%) than to have one placement (14.3%) when compared with children 0 to 2 years old at baseline (72.6% and 18.4%, respectively). The youngest children (0 to years old at baseline) were significantly more likely to have two placements (7.2%) than to have one placement (18.4%) when compared with children 6 to 10 years old at baseline (2.6% and 14.3%, respectively) and children 13 to 17 at baseline (4.0% and 18.5%, respectively). The oldest children (13 to 17 years old at baseline) were also significantly more likely to have three or more placements (4.0%) than to have one placement (18.5%) when compared with children 3 to 5 years old at baseline (0.8% and 15.2%) and children 6 to 10 years old at baseline (1.6% and 14.3%, respectively).

Children in foster care at baseline were significantly less likely to have one placement than to have two or three placements when compared with children living in-home at baseline, in formal kin care at baseline, and in informal kin care at baseline (see Exhibit 3 for more detail). Children residing in group homes or residential care settings at baseline were significantly less likely to have one placement than to have two or three placements when compared with children living in all other settings at baseline (see Exhibit 3). Not surprisingly, children who were adopted by Wave 2 were more likely to have one placement (78.2%) than to have no out-of-home placements (3.5%) when compared with children who were not adopted (14.8% and 79.4% respectively).

Number of out-of-home placements. Exhibit 4 provides information on the subset of children who had at least one out-of-home placement. As shown in Exhibit 4, the majority (72.6%) had one placement, 18.9% had two placements, 5.3% had three placements, and 3.2% had four or more placements. The youngest children (0 to 2 years old at baseline) were significantly less likely to have one placement (67.2%) than to have two placements (26.4%) when compared with children 6 to 10 years old at baseline (77.0% and 14.2% respectively) and children 13 to 17 years old at baseline (69.7% and 15.3%, respectively). Children 0 to 2 years old at baseline were also less likely to have one placement (67.2%) than to have three placements (5.0%) when compared with children 3 to 5 years old at baseline (75.8% and 2.3%, respectively) and children 11 to 12 years old at baseline (77.1% and 2.1%, respectively). Children 13 to 17 years old at baseline were significantly less likely to have one placement (69.7%) than to have three or more placements (7.8%) when compared with children 11 to 12 years old at baseline (77.1% and 2.1%, respectively). The oldest children (13 to 17 years old at baseline) were also significantly less likely to have one placement (69.7%) than to have four or more placements (7.2%) when compared with children 0 to 2 years old at baseline (67.2% and 1.5%, respectively), children 3 to 5 years old at baseline (75.8% and 1.8%, respectively), and children 6 to 10 years old at baseline (77.0% and 1.9%, respectively).

Within this subset, children in foster care at baseline were significantly less likely to have one placement than to have two, three, or four placements when compared with children living

in-home at baseline, in formal kin care at baseline, and in informal kin care at baseline (see Exhibit 4 for more detail). Children residing in group homes or residential care settings at baseline were significantly less likely to have one placement than to have two, three, or four placements when compared with children living in all other settings at baseline (see Exhibit 4). Children who were adopted by Wave 2 were significantly more likely to have one out-of-home placement (81.1%) than to have three (1.7%) or four (0.6%) placements when compared with children who were not adopted (71.7%, 5.7%, and 3.6%, respectively).

Mean number of out-of-home placements. As shown in Exhibit 5, the mean number of out-of-home placements between close of investigation and Wave 2 was 1.4. The average number of placements differed by child age, baseline setting, and adoption status. The oldest children (13 to 17 years old at baseline) were significantly more likely to have a higher average number of out-of-home placements (1.7 placements) than children 3 to 5 years old at baseline, 6 to 10 years old at baseline, and 11 to 12 years old at baseline (1.3 placements, respectively). Children in foster care at baseline had a significantly higher average number of out-of-home placements (1.9 placements) than children living in-home at baseline (1.3 placements), in formal kin care at baseline (1.3 placements), and in informal kin care at baseline (1.2 placements). Children living in group homes or residential care settings at baseline had a significantly higher average number of out-of-home placements (4.3 placements) than children living in all other settings at baseline (see Exhibit 5 for more detail). Children who were adopted by Wave 2 had a significantly lower average number of out-of-home placements (1.2 placements) than children who were not adopted (1.5 placements).

Cumulative days out of home. The average number of cumulative days spent out of home was 249 days (Exhibit 6) or approximately 8.3 months. Cumulative days out of home differed by age and baseline setting. Children 13 to 17 years old at baseline spent significantly more days out of home on average (287.3 days) than children 6 to 10 years old at baseline (224.9 days), and 11 to 12 years old at baseline (202.7 days). Children living in-home at baseline spent significantly fewer days out of home on average (150.8 days) than children living in formal kin care at baseline (391.7 days), in informal kin care at baseline (208.0 days), in foster care at baseline (442.1 days), and in group homes or residential care settings at baseline (524.5 days). Children living in informal kin care at baseline spent significantly fewer days out of home on average (208.0 days) than children living in formal kin care at baseline (391.7 days) and children living in foster care at baseline (442.1 days). Children living in group homes or residential care settings at baseline spent significantly more days out of home on average (524.5 days) than children living in formal kin care at baseline (391.7 days), in informal kin care at baseline (208.0 days), and in foster care at baseline (442.1 days).

CFSR Permanency Outcome 6 (*achieving stable and appropriate placement settings*) relates to success in having as few changes in placement as possible. CFSR data from the 2007–2009 period show that for measure 6.1a (*Of all children served in foster care during the year who were in care less than 12 months, what percentage had no more than two placement settings?*) in 2009, the median was 84.9% (range across states was 69.8% to 92.8%; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). Given that the mean time spent in out-of-home placement for children in NSCAW II was 8.3 months (see Exhibit 6), the time period reported for measure 6.1a can be considered equivalent for comparison. The CFSR estimate that 84.9% of children in care for less than 12 months had no more than two placements is slightly

lower than the NSCAW II estimate; 91.5% of children placed out of home had no more than two placements.

NSCAW II findings on placement changes parallel findings from the 2000–2005 report of the Multistate Foster Care Data Archive (Wulczyn, Chen, & Hislop, 2007). While direct comparisons about numbers of placement changes are not comparable between NSCAW II and the Archive report,⁴ patterns of placement changes are similar. For instance, both NSCAW II and the Archive found that older children are more likely to move than younger children. And, similar to NSCAW II, Wulczyn et al. (2007) found that children initially placed with relatives are the least likely to experience placement changes. Furthermore, children first placed in group home or “congregate” care experienced a higher average number of placement changes than children in either kinship care or conventional foster homes (Wulczyn et al., 2007).

Permanency

In passing the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA), Congress recognized all children’s need for a stable home. This law includes guidelines and incentives for states to enhance the safety, well-being, and placement permanency of children in foster care by promoting adoption when reunification cannot be accomplished safely and expeditiously (Child Welfare League of America, 2005; Welte, 1997). Among other provisions ASFA decreased from 18 to 12 months the time in foster care for making permanency decisions, and required termination of parental rights when children are in foster care 15 of the previous 22 months. ASFA also made it easier for states to pursue concurrent planning, which involves working toward reunification but also planning for an alternative permanent setting at the same time (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2005). Establishing permanent homes for children expeditiously is an important goal of child welfare services. Reunification is preferred but when that goal becomes impossible, the aim is for timely adoption. Historically, adoption rates for very young children are higher than for older children (Wulczyn, Hislop, & Jones Harden, 2002), largely because their age makes them more desirable for many prospective adoptive parents. The next sections present permanency outcomes for children in the NSCAW II cohort.

Termination of Parental Rights and Adoption Among All Children. When parents severely abuse or neglect a child, abandon the child, or put the safety and well-being of the child at risk because of criminal behavior, substance abuse or dependence, mental illness or other

⁴ We have deliberately limited comparisons from the NSCAW II Wave 2 report and the *Foster Care Dynamics* report from 2000–2005 (Wulczyn et al., 2007). The two sources define placement changes differently. The Wulczyn et al. (2007) report from the Multistate Foster Care Data Archive offers descriptive statistics about a “spell” in out-of-home placement. A “spell” is defined as a continuous episode spent in out-of-home child welfare arrangements. A spell begins with a new foster care placement (i.e., an event) and continues until reunification, adoption, or some other discharge from the child welfare system occurs. Placement changes are described within one spell. Placement changes that might have occurred during a subsequent spell are not included in the Wulczyn et al. (2007) estimates. NSCAW data were collected so as to count numbers of out-of-home placements across the child’s participation in the study. Therefore, NSCAW estimates of placement changes may and likely do span across more than one spell as defined by Wulczyn et al. (2007). Direct comparisons related to placement duration and numbers of placement changes are not possible; NSCAW estimates are consistently higher since they account for placement changes across multiple spells in out-of-home placement.

problems, CWS can petition courts for termination of parental rights. Termination is generally a necessary step to free children for adoption. ASFA explicitly states that a child who has been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months should have a petition filed on his or her behalf to terminate parental rights (Child Welfare League of America, 2005). Given that Wave 2 is the 18-month follow-up, few children would have had the chance to meet the ASFA criteria, unless termination of parental right was decided for other reasons related to abandonment and severity of maltreatment that allow the court to dictate such termination.

Among all parents of children reported for child maltreatment at baseline, 7.1% had termination of parental rights by Wave 2 (Exhibit 7). Parents of children 0 to 2 years old at baseline (10.9%) were more likely to have their parental rights terminated than children 6 years old or older (5.2%). Among parents of adolescents, those with children 13 to 17 years old at baseline (6.7%) were more likely to have their parental rights terminated than parents of children 11 to 12 years old at baseline (3.9%). Termination of parental rights occurred among fewer than 3% of parents of children living in-home at baseline (2.6%), but more than half of parents of children placed in formal out-of-home care (formal kin care: 54.5%, foster care: 63.4%, and group/home residential: 68.9%) had their parental rights terminated. Thus, parents of children living in-home at baseline were significantly less likely to have termination of parental rights than parents of all other children. Similarly, parents of children living in informal kin care at baseline (12.7%) were significantly less likely to have termination of parental rights than parents of children placed in all other types of out-of-home placements.

Among all children at baseline, 2.2% were adopted (Exhibit 7). Although children living in formal kin care at baseline were more likely to be adopted by Wave 2 than children living in-home and in informal kin care at baseline, 4.5% of those in formal kin care were adopted by Wave 2, even when more than half had parents whose parental rights were terminated. Children living in foster care at baseline were more likely to be adopted by Wave 2 than all other children. However, even though more than two thirds of children in foster care at baseline had parents whose rights were terminated, only about one in 10 were adopted (12.1%). Compared with all other children, the children least likely to be adopted lived in a group home or residential treatment program at baseline (less than 1% adopted: 0.4%). Children birth to 5 years old at baseline who had developmental needs (2.3%) were more likely to be adopted than children without developmental needs (1.1%).⁵

According to the National Survey of Adoptive Parents (NSAP), approximately 2% of all U.S. children are adopted (Vandivere, Malm, & Radel, 2009). Children adopted from foster care represent about 37% of these adoptions; and 23% of adoptive parents who adopted their child from foster care were relatives. These estimates provide a general context about adoption in the United States, but are not directly comparable with estimates provided in this report. The NSAP includes private domestic, foster care and international adoptees. The survey does not report the

⁵ Developmental need was defined based on young children having a diagnosed mental or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay (e.g., Down syndrome) and/or being 2 standard deviations below the mean in at least one developmental area or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two areas. Areas included cognitive development based on the Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI) or Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (K-BIT), communication development based on the Preschool Language Scale-3 (PLS-3), and adaptive development based on the Vineland Daily Living Skills.

percentage of all U.S. children who are adopted from foster care exclusively or adopted as a result of maltreatment.

Reunification Attempts Among Children Placed in Out-of-Home Care. Of all children in the NSCAW II cohort, more than a fifth (22.3%) were placed out of home at some point between the index report and Wave 2. Among children placed out of home after the index report, more than a third (36.5%) had at least one reunification attempt with parents (Exhibit 8). For most children (93.0%) the first reunification attempt was successful and they did not have additional placements out of home. Young children (birth to 2 years old at baseline) were more likely to have a reunification attempt (48.3%) when compared with children who were 6 to 10 years old (29.6%) and 13 to 17 years old at baseline (26.7%). Black children (27.1%) were less likely to have a reunification attempt when compared with White children (40.4%) and children of other races (52.5%). Children living in-home with parents at baseline (61.5%), who were subsequently placed out of home, were significantly more likely to have a reunification attempt when compared with all other children care (formal kin care: 19.2%, informal kin care: 14.2%, foster care: 23.6%, and group/home residential: 31.2%). Children living in foster care at baseline were also more likely to have a reunification attempt, when compared with children living at baseline in informal kin care. Children birth to 5 years old at baseline who had developmental needs (33.4%) were less likely to have a reunification attempt than children without developmental needs (48.5%).

Permanency Among Children Placed in Out-of-Home Care. Among children placed in out-of-home care, almost half (47.7%) reached permanency by Wave 2 (Exhibit 9). Children living in-home with parents at baseline, who were subsequently placed out of home (73.5%), were more likely to reached permanency when compared with all other children (formal kin care: 29.0%, informal kin care: 19.5%, foster care: 40.0%, and group/home residential: 32.0%). Additionally, children living in foster care at baseline were more likely to reach permanency, when compared with children living at baseline in formal and informal kin care.

CFSR Permanency Outcome 3 (*increase permanency for children in foster care*) relates to success in achieving a permanent home for all children exiting foster care during the year to either reunification, adoption, discharge to relatives, or legal guardianship (i.e., were discharged to a permanent home). The most recent CFSR data are from the 2007–2009 period, showing that for measure 3.1 (*Of all children who exited foster care during the year, what percentage left to either reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?*) in 2009 the median discharge to a permanent home among all children who exited foster care during the year was 86.1% (range across states was 64.9% to 94.7%). Among children with a disability, the median discharge to a permanent home was 76.5%, while among children 12 years old and older it was 66.6% (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).⁶

⁶ Although CFSR estimates provide contextual information about annual discharges to a permanent home, they do not report how much time children were in out-of-home placements, making difficult a direct comparison with the 18-month period covered in this report. The closest comparable CFSR estimate of permanency is Measure C3.1 (*Of all children in foster care for 24 months or longer on the first day of the year, what percentage were discharged to a permanent home prior to their 18th birthday and by the end of the year?*). In 2009 the median discharge to a permanent home among children who had been in foster care 24 months or longer was 28.4% (range across states was 13.7% to 49.7%). Nevertheless, these estimates are also not directly comparable with

Among children who achieved permanency by Wave 2, almost three quarters were reunified with parents (73.2%), 20.8% of those achieving permanency were adopted, 4.0% had a legal guardian, and 2.1% were discharged to a relative (Exhibit 9). Based on CFSR data from 2009, of all children who exited foster care to permanency, 68% were discharged to reunification, 23% were discharged to adoption, and 8% were discharged to legal guardianship. These estimates are comparable with the permanency estimates provided in this report, although the CFSR estimates are slightly higher for reaching permanency through adoption and legal guardianship, and slightly lower for permanency through reunification.

This report's finding that reunification was the most likely permanency outcome is consistent with previous findings suggesting that most children leave the foster care system by reunification with a birth parent (Wulczyn, 2004). Using 1990 cohort data from the Multistate Foster Care Data Archive, Wulczyn (2004) also found that age and race were associated with the likelihood of reunification. Adolescents were less likely to be reunified than children in other age groups. And, consistent with findings in Exhibit 8, Wulczyn (2004) found that Black children were less likely to be reunified than children of other racial/ethnic backgrounds.

The type of permanency achieved varied by child age, baseline setting, developmental needs among children birth to 5 years old, and two risk factors associated with the family of origin from the baseline caseworker interview: a history of domestic violence against the caregiver, and high stress in the family (e.g., unemployment, drug use, poverty, or neighborhood violence) (Exhibit 9). Children birth to 2 years old (81.3%) and those 3 to 5 years old (80.9%) at baseline were more likely to be reunified than to be adopted when compared with children who were 6 to 10 years old at baseline (63.0%). Children living in-home with parents at baseline who were subsequently placed out of home were significantly less likely to have a legal guardian (0%) than to be reunified (76.2%) adopted (22.1%), or discharged to relatives (1.7%) when compared to children living at baseline in informal kin care (guardianship: 10.3%, reunification: 77.8%, adoption: 8.2%, discharged to relatives: 3.7%) and foster care (guardianship: 9.3%, reunification: 56.4%, adoption: 31.6%, discharged to relatives: 2.8%). Children living with informal kin at baseline were also more likely to be reunified (77.8%) than to be adopted (8.2%), when compared to children living at baseline in home and in foster care. Children birth to 5 years old without developmental needs at baseline were significantly more likely to be reunified (85.5%) than to be adopted (8.6%), when compared with children with developmental needs (reunification: 69.7%, adoption: 23.1%).

At baseline, caseworkers were asked to report on several risk factors related to the child, his or her main and secondary caregiver, and the family of origin. Children whose main caregiver had a history of domestic violence victimization (identified by the caseworker at baseline) were more likely to be reunified (85.5%) than to be adopted (9.8%), when compared with children whose main caregiver did not have such history (reunification: 69.3%, adoption: 25.2%). Similarly, children whose families had high stress (identified by the caseworker at baseline) (e.g., unemployment, drug use, poverty, or neighborhood violence) were significantly

NSCAW II, as this report provides estimates for all children placed out of home between the index report and Wave 2. Thus, for many children the placement was less than 18 months (as reported in Exhibit 6, the mean number of days out of home was 249, approximately 8 months).

more likely to be reunified (82.5%) than to be adopted (13.2%), when compared with children whose families did not have high stress (according to the caseworker at baseline) (reunification: 62.0%, adoption: 31.3%).

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1. Child Characteristics at Baseline

	<i>N</i>	Total <i>N</i> = 5,873	
		%	<i>SE</i>
Total	5,873	100.0	0.0
Gender			
Male	3,017	50.8	1.4
Female	2,856	49.2	1.4
Age (years)			
0–2	2,937	20.6	1.0
3–5	829	22.6	1.2
6–10	1,053	27.4	0.9
11–17	1,054	29.5	1.3
Race/ethnicity			
Black	1,827	22.4	2.6
White	2,004	41.5	3.9
Hispanic	1,614	28.3	3.5
Other	407	7.7	1.0
Setting			
In-home	3,636	87.3	1.1
Formal kin care	495	2.4	0.4
Informal kin care	540	6.1	0.7
Foster care	1,105	3.4	0.3
Group home or residential program	68	0.5	0.1
Other out of home ^a	29	0.3	0.1
Insurance status^b			
Private	549	15.3	1.5
Public	4,834	72.0	1.8
Other	130	3.1	0.7
Uninsured	324	9.6	0.9

Note: All analyses were on weighted NSCAW II baseline data; *Ns* are unweighted and, therefore, direct percentages cannot be calculated from the *Ns*. Reported *Ns* vary slightly across analyses because of missing data in some variable categories.

^a “Other out of home” includes situations where the primary caregiver was identified as “other nonrelative” and where the primary caregiver was not receiving foster parent payments.

^b “Private” includes children who had any private insurance plan at the time of interview either obtained through an employer or purchased directly. “Public” includes children who did not have private coverage at the time of interview, but who had Medicaid and/or a State Children’s Health Insurance Plan (SCHIP). “Other” includes children who did not have private insurance or Medicaid (or other public coverage) at the time of interview, but who have any other type of insurance, including coverage through a military health plan. “Uninsured” includes children not covered at the time of interview under private, public, or other insurance. “Uninsured” also includes children only covered through the Indian Health Service.

Exhibit 2. Child Characteristics at Wave 2

	<i>N</i>	Total	
		%	<i>SE</i>
Total	5,261	100	0.0
Gender			
Male	2,703	50.9	1.5
Female	2,558	49.1	1.5
Age (years)			
1–2	2,385	12.8	0.8
3–5	816	23.1	1.3
6–10	1,001	30.0	1.0
11–17	1,058	34.2	1.2
Race/ethnicity			
Black	1,657	22.5	2.7
White	1,767	41.2	4.1
Hispanic	1,460	29.0	3.8
Other	356	7.3	1.1
Setting			
In-home	3,592	85.5	1.1
Formal kin care	414	2.4	0.4
Informal kin care	486	8.3	0.9
Foster care	690	2.9	0.3
Group home or residential program	50	0.5	0.1
Other out of home	24	0.4	0.2
Insurance status ^a			
Private	505	15.0	1.1
Public	4,141	75.0	1.5
Other	73	2.3	0.5
Uninsured	233	7.7	0.8

Note: All analyses were on weighted NSCAW II Wave 2 data; *Ns* are unweighted and, therefore, direct percentages cannot be calculated by hand. Reported *Ns* vary slightly across analyses because of missing data in some variable categories. Pearson χ^2 tests for cluster samples were used for significance tests.

^a“Private” includes children who had any private insurance plan at the time of interview either obtained through an employer or purchased directly. “Public” includes children who did not have private coverage at the time of interview, but who had Medicaid and/or a SCHIP. “Other” includes children who did not have private insurance or Medicaid (or other public coverage) at the time of interview, but who have any other type of insurance, including coverage through a military health plan. “Uninsured” includes children not covered at the time of interview under private, public, or other insurance. “Uninsured” also includes children only covered through the Indian Health Service.

Exhibit 3. Number of Placements for All Children by Caseworker Report

	<i>N</i>	Percentage (SE)			
		0 Placement	1 Placement	2 Placements	3 or More Placements
Total	5,872	77.7 (1.2)	16.2 (0.9)	4.2 (0.5)	1.9 (0.2)
Gender					
Male	3,017	77.7 (1.4)	15.9 (1.1)	4.7 (0.7)	1.8 (0.3)
Female	2,855	77.8 (1.7)	16.5 (1.5)	3.7 (0.5)	2.0 (0.4)
Age (years) at baseline***					
0–2	2,937	72.6 (2.0)	18.4 (1.9)	7.2 (0.8) ^a	1.8 (0.3)
3–5	828	79.9 (2.2)	15.2 (1.8)	4.0 (1.5)	0.8 (0.3)
6–10	1,053	81.4 (1.8) ^b	14.3 (1.6)	2.6 (0.5)	1.6 (0.4)
11–12	326	81.5 (3.0)	14.2 (2.9)	3.1 (1.0)	1.1 (0.5)
13–17	728	73.6 (2.5)	18.5 (2.4)	4.0 (0.6)	4.0 (0.8) ^c
Race/ethnicity					
Black	1,827	74.3 (2.4)	18.2 (1.9)	4.9 (0.9)	2.7 (0.6)
White	2,003	78.7 (1.6)	15.9 (1.3)	3.9 (0.6)	1.6 (0.3)
Hispanic	1,614	78.7 (2.2)	15.3 (1.7)	4.8 (1.1)	1.3 (0.3)
Other	407	79.5 (3.4)	14.8 (3.1)	2.3 (0.7)	3.5 (1.5)
Setting at baseline^{d***}					
In-home	3,635	89.2 (0.9)	8.5 (0.8)	1.9 (0.4)	0.5 (0.1)
Formal kin care	495	n/a	74.3 (8.5)	21.1 (8.5)	4.6 (1.1)
Informal kin care	540	n/a	83.1 (3.0)	11.6 (2.3)	5.3 (2.1)
Foster care	1,105	n/a	46.9 (3.9)	32.6 (3.8) ^e	20.5 (2.7) ^f
Group home or residential program	68	n/a	9.2 (3.0)	24.9 (8.0) ^g	65.9 (8.8) ^h
Developmental need at baseline (birth to 5 years old)ⁱ					
Yes	928	78.8 (2.5)	13.9 (2.0)	6.1 (2.0)	1.3 (0.3)
No	2,836	75.3 (1.9)	18.2 (1.7)	5.3 (0.9)	1.3 (0.3)
Risk of any behavioral/emotional or cognitive problems at baseline (children 6 to 17 years old)^j					
Yes	1,242	77.1 (1.5)	16.8 (1.4)	3.7 (0.5)	2.4 (0.5)
No	739	79.7 (2.8)	15.1 (2.7)	2.8 (0.6)	2.5 (0.7)
Child adopted***					
Yes	332	3.5 (3.1)	78.2 (5.2) ^k	16.1 (4.6)	2.2 (0.7)
No	5,540	79.4 (1.2)	14.8 (0.9) ^l	4.0 (0.5)	1.9 (0.2)

Note: All analyses were on weighted NSCAW II baseline and Wave 2 data; *N*s are unweighted and, therefore, direct percentages cannot be calculated by hand. Reported *N*s vary slightly across analyses because of missing data in some variable categories. Pearson χ^2 tests for cluster samples were used for significance tests. Asterisks indicate statistical significance (***) $p < .001$ for the covariate. Children with one placement served as the reference group in this analysis.

^a Children 0 to 2 years old at baseline were significantly more likely to have two placements than to have one placement when compared with children 6 to 10 years old at baseline ($p < .05$) and children 13 to 17 years old at baseline ($p < .05$).

- ^b Children 6 to 10 years old at baseline were significantly more likely to have no (0) placement than to have one placement when compared with children 0 to 2 years old ($p < .05$).
- ^c Children 13 to 17 years old as baseline were significantly more likely to have three or more placements than to have one placement when compared with children 3 to 5 years old at baseline ($p < .01$) and children 11 to 12 years old at baseline ($p < .05$).
- ^d By definition, all children in out-of-home settings have at least one placement. The percentage of children with zero placements is only applicable to children who were living in-home at baseline.
- ^e Children in foster care at baseline were significantly less likely to have one placement than to have two placements when compared with children in-home at baseline ($p < .001$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .05$), and in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$).
- ^f Children in foster care at baseline were significantly less likely to have one placement than to have three or more placements when compared with children in-home at baseline ($p < .001$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), and in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$).
- ^g Children in group homes or residential treatment centers at baseline were significantly more likely to have two placements than to have one placement when compared with children in-home at baseline ($p < .01$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$), in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$), and in foster care at baseline ($p < .05$).
- ^h Children in group homes or residential treatment settings at baseline were significantly more likely to have three or more placements than to have one placement when compared with children in-home at baseline ($p < .01$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$), in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$), and in foster care at baseline ($p < .01$).
- ⁱ Developmental need was defined based on young children having a diagnosed mental or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay (e.g., Down syndrome) and/or being 2 standard deviations below the mean in at least one developmental area or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two areas. Areas included cognitive development based on the Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI) or Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (K-BIT), communication development based on the Preschool Language Scale-3 (PLS-3), and adaptive development based on the Vineland Daily Living Skills.
- ^j Children 6 to 17 years old were considered to be at risk for a cognitive problem or low academic achievement and in need of a referral for special education services if they had a score 2 standard deviations or more below the mean for the K-BIT or Woodcock-Johnson III (considered a cognitive need) (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004; Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001). Children were considered to be at risk for a behavioral/emotional problems if either (1) a caregiver reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL;(Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (2) an adolescent reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the Youth Self Report (YSR;(Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (3) a teacher reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the Teacher Report Form (TRF;(Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (4) a clinically significant score was obtained on the Child Depression Inventory (CDI);(Kovacs, 1992), or (5) a clinically significant score was obtained on the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) scale of the Trauma Symptoms Checklist (Briere, 1996).
- ^k Children who were adopted by Wave 2 were significantly more likely to have one placement than zero placements when compared with children who were not adopted ($p < .001$).
- ^l Children who were adopted were significantly more likely to have one placement than to have three or more placements when compared with children who were not adopted by Wave 2 ($p < .001$).

Exhibit 4. Number of Placements for Children Placed Out of Home by Caseworker Report

	N	Percentage (SE)			
		1 Placement	2 Placement	3 Placements	4 or More Placements
Total	3,006	72.6 (2.1)	18.9 (1.7)	5.3 (0.8)	3.2 (0.5)
Gender					
Male	1,550	71.0 (2.8)	21.0 (2.7)	4.6 (0.9)	3.4 (0.9)
Female	1,456	74.2 (2.7)	16.8 (2.0)	6.0 (1.4)	2.9 (0.7)
Age (years) at baseline***					
0–2	1,783	67.2 (3.6)	26.4 (2.8) ^a	5.0 (0.9) ^b	1.5 (0.4)
3–5	331	75.8 (6.4)	20.1 (6.2)	2.3 (0.7)	1.8 (1.0)
6–10	428	77.0 (3.2)	14.2 (2.6)	6.9 (2.0)	1.9 (0.7)
11–12	120	77.1 (6.4)	16.7 (5.8)	2.1 (0.9)	4.1 (2.1)
13–17	344	69.7 (3.4)	15.3 (2.2)	7.8 (2.6) ^c	7.2 (2.0) ^d
Race/ethnicity					
Black	1,051	70.7 (3.9)	18.9 (3.0)	6.7 (1.9)	3.7 (1.0)
White	915	74.6 (2.3)	18.0 (2.1)	4.6 (1.0)	2.8 (1.0)
Hispanic	823	71.5 (4.5)	22.4 (4.3)	3.3 (0.6)	2.8 (0.7)
Other	203	72.1 (7.4)	11.0 (3.2)	11.9 (6.3)	5.0 (3.4)
Setting at baseline***					
In-home	769	78.6 (3.3)	17.3 (3.0)	2.5 (1.1)	1.6 (0.8)
Formal kin care	495	74.3 (8.5)	21.1 (8.5)	2.9 (0.9)	1.6 (0.5)
Informal kin care	540	83.1 (3.0)	11.6 (2.3)	4.3 (1.9)	1.0 (0.7)
Foster care	1,105	46.9 (3.9)	32.6 (3.8) ^e	13.4 (2.0) ^f	7.1 (1.8) ^g
Group home or residential program	68	9.2 (3.0)	24.9 (8.0) ^h	26.1 (10.5)	39.8 (9.0) ⁱ
Developmental need at baseline (birth to 5 years old)^j					
Yes	513	65.4 (7.7)	28.5 (7.8)	4.6 (1.1)	1.6 (0.8)
No	1,601	73.4 (3.6)	21.5 (3.3)	3.5 (0.7)	1.6 (0.7)
Risk of any behavioral/emotional or cognitive problems at baseline (children 6 to 17 years old)^k					
Yes	559	73.4 (2.9)	16.1 (2.4)	6.3 (1.5)	4.3 (1.2)
No	278	74.4 (5.0)	13.5 (3.1)	6.9 (3.1)	5.2 (1.6)
Child adopted**					
Yes	328	81.0 (4.8) ^l	16.7 (4.7)	1.7 (0.6)	0.6 (0.4)
No	2,678	71.7 (2.1)	19.2 (1.8)	5.7 (0.9)	3.5 (0.6)

Note: All analyses were on weighted NSCAW II baseline and Wave 2 data; *N*s are unweighted and, therefore, direct percentages cannot be calculated by hand. Reported *N*s vary slightly across analyses because of missing data in some variable categories. Pearson χ^2 tests for cluster samples were used for significance tests. Asterisks indicate statistical significance (** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$) for the covariate. Children with one out-of-home placement served as the reference group in this analysis.

^a Children who were 0 to 2 years old at baseline were significantly less likely to have one out-of-home placement than to have two placements when compared with children 6 to 10 years old at baseline ($p < .01$) and children 13 to 17 years old at baseline ($p < .05$).

- ^b Children who were 0 to 2 years old at baseline were significantly less likely to have one out-of-home placement than to have three placements when compared with children 3 to 5 years old at baseline ($p < .05$), and children 11 to 12 years old at baseline ($p < .05$).
- ^c Children who were 13 to 17 years old at baseline were significantly less likely to have one out-of-home placement than to have three placements when compared with children 11 to 12 years old at baseline ($p < .05$).
- ^d Children who were 13 to 17 years old at baseline were significantly less likely to have one out-of-home placement than to have four or more out-of-home placements when compared with children 0 to 2 years old ($p < .01$), children 3 to 5 years old ($p < .05$), and children 6 to 10 years old ($p < .01$).
- ^e Children in foster care at baseline were significantly less likely to have one out-of-home placement than to have two placements when compared with children living in-home at baseline ($p < .001$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .05$), and in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$).
- ^f Children in foster care at baseline were significantly less likely to have one out-of-home placement than to have three placements when compared with children living in-home at baseline ($p < .001$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), and in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$).
- ^g Children in foster care at baseline were significantly less likely to have one placement than to have four or more out-of-home placements when compared with children living in-home at baseline ($p < .01$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$), and in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$).
- ^h Children in group homes or residential care settings at baseline were significantly more likely to have two out-of-home placements than to have one placement when compared with children living in-home at baseline ($p < .01$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$), in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$), and in foster care at baseline ($p < .05$).
- ⁱ Children in group homes or residential care settings at baseline were significantly more likely to have four or more out-of-home placements than to have one placement when compared with children living in-home at baseline ($p < .01$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$), in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .01$), and in foster care at baseline ($p < .01$).
- ^j Developmental need was defined based on young children having a diagnosed mental or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay (e.g., Down syndrome) and/or being 2 standard deviations below the mean in at least one developmental area or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two areas. Areas included cognitive development based on the BDI or K-BIT, communication development based on the PLS-3, and adaptive development based on the Vineland Daily Living Skills.
- ^k Children 6 to 17 years old were considered to be at risk for a cognitive problem or low academic achievement and in need of a referral for special education services if they had a score 2 standard deviations or more below the mean for the K-BIT or Woodcock-Johnson III (considered a cognitive need) (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004; Woodcock et al., 2001). Children were considered to be at risk for a behavioral/emotional problems if either (1) a caregiver reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the CBCL (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (2) an adolescent reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the YSR (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (3) a teacher reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the TRF (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (4) a clinically significant score was obtained on the CDI (Kovacs, 1992), or (5) a clinically significant score was obtained on the PTSD scale of the Trauma Symptoms Checklist (Briere, 1996).
- ^l Children who were adopted were significantly more likely to have one out-of-home placement than to have three placements when compared with children who were not adopted by Wave 2 ($p < .01$). Children who were adopted were also significantly more likely to have one out-of-home placement than to have four or more out-of-home placements when compared with children who were not adopted by Wave 2 ($p < .001$).

Exhibit 5. Mean Number of Placements from Close of Investigation to Wave 2 for Children Placed Out of Home by Caseworker Report

	N	Mean # of Placements	SE
Total	3,006	1.4	0.0
Gender			
Male	1,550	1.4	0.0
Female	1,456	1.5	0.1
Age (years) at baseline		**	
0–2	1,783	1.4	0.0
3–5	331	1.3	0.1
6–10	428	1.3	0.1
11–12	120	1.3	0.1
13–17	344	1.7 ^a	0.1
Race/ethnicity			
Black	1,051	1.5	0.1
White	915	1.4	0.0
Hispanic	823	1.4	0.1
Other	203	1.8	0.4
Setting at baseline		***	
In-home	769	1.3	0.0
Formal kin care	495	1.3	0.1
Informal kin care	540	1.2	0.1
Foster care	1,105	1.9 ^b	0.1
Group home or residential program	68	4.3 ^c	0.8
Developmental need at baseline (birth to 5 years old)^a			
Yes	513	1.4	0.1
No	1,601	1.3	0.1
Risk of any behavioral/emotional or cognitive problems at baseline (children 6 to 17 years old)^b			
Yes	559	1.5	0.1
No	278	1.5	0.1
Child adopted		***	
Yes	328	1.2 ^f	0.1
No	2,678	1.5	0.0

Note: All analyses were on weighted NSCAW II Wave 2 data; *Ns* are unweighted and, therefore, direct percentages cannot be calculated by hand. Reported *Ns* vary slightly across analyses because of missing data in some variable categories. Pearson χ^2 tests for cluster samples were used for significance tests.

^a Children 13 to 17 years old at baseline were significantly more likely to have a higher number of out-of-home placements than children 3 to 5 years old at baseline ($p < .05$), 6 to 10 years old at baseline ($p < .01$), and 11 to 12 years old at baseline ($p < .05$).

^b Children in foster care at baseline were significantly more likely to have a higher number of out-of-home placements than children living in-home at baseline ($p < .001$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), and in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$).

^c Children living in group homes or residential care settings at baseline were significantly more likely to have a higher number of out-of-home placements than those living in-home at baseline ($p < .001$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), and in foster care at baseline ($p < .01$).

^d Developmental need was defined based on young children having a diagnosed mental or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay (e.g., Down syndrome) and/or being 2 standard deviations below the mean in at least one developmental area or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two areas. Areas included cognitive development based on the BDI or K-BIT, communication development based on the PLS-3, and adaptive development based on the Vineland Daily Living Skills.

^e Children 6 to 17 years old were considered to be at risk for a cognitive problem or low academic achievement and in need of a referral for special education services if they had a score 2 standard deviations or more below the mean for the K-BIT or Woodcock-Johnson III (considered a cognitive need) (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004; Woodcock et al., 2001). Children were considered to be at risk for a behavioral/emotional problems if either (1) a caregiver reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the CBCL (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (2) an adolescent reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the YSR (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (3) a teacher reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the TRF (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (4) a clinically significant score was obtained on the CDI (Kovacs, 1992), or (5) a clinically significant score was obtained on the PTSD scale of the Trauma Symptoms Checklist (Briere, 1996).

Exhibit 6. Mean Cumulative Number of Days Out of Home from Baseline to Wave 2 for Children Placed Out of Home by Caseworker Report

	N	Mean # of days out of home	SE
Total	2,916	249.0	14.4
Gender			
Male	1,507	252.1	16.9
Female	1,409	245.9	18.4
Age (years) at baseline		*	
0–2	1,742	255.8	21.4
3–5	317	240.9	40.3
6–10	409	224.9	26.9
11–12	117	202.7	28.8
13–17	331	287.3 ^a	22.0
Race/ethnicity			
Black	1,011	252.4	20.0
White	897	235.7	14.7
Hispanic	795	252.4	33.4
Other	199	293.8	33.1
Setting at baseline		***	
In-home	759	150.8 ^b	14.2
Formal kin care	465	391.7 ^c	35.9
Informal kin care	513	208.0	20.3
Foster care	1,083	442.1 ^d	17.7
Group home or residential program	68	524.5 ^e	25.0
Developmental need at baseline (birth to 5 years old) ^a			
Yes	501	284.4	37.4
No	1,558	234.9	22.4
Risk of any behavioral/emotional or cognitive problems at baseline (children 6 to 17 years old) ^b			
Yes	536	266.2	16.3
No	269	217.4	29.3
Child adopted			
Yes	307	183.7	36.2
No	2,609	255.3	14.8

Note: All analyses were on weighted NSCAW II Wave 2 data; *N*s are unweighted and, therefore, direct percentages cannot be calculated by hand. Reported *N*s vary slightly across analyses because of missing data in some variable categories. Pearson χ^2 tests for cluster samples were used for significance tests.

^a Children 13 to 17 years old at baseline were significantly more likely to have a higher number of days out of home than children 6 to 10 years old at baseline ($p < .05$) and 11 to 12 years old at baseline ($p < .05$).

^b Children living in-home at baseline were significantly more likely to have a lower number of days out of home than children living in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .05$), in foster care at baseline ($p < .001$), and in in group homes or residential care settings at baseline ($p < .001$),

^c Children living in formal kin care at baseline were significantly more likely to have a higher number of days out of home than children living in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$).

- ^d Children living in foster care at baseline were significantly more likely to have a higher number of days out of home than children living in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$).
- ^e Children living in group homes or residential care settings at baseline were significantly more likely to have a higher number of days out of home than children living in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), and in foster care at baseline ($p < .01$).
- ^e Developmental need was defined based on young children having a diagnosed mental or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay (e.g., Down syndrome) and/or being 2 standard deviations below the mean in at least one developmental area or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two areas. Areas included cognitive development based on the BDI or K-BIT, communication development based on the PLS-3, and adaptive development based on the Vineland Daily Living Skills.
- ^f Children 6 to 17 years old were considered to be at risk for a cognitive problem or low academic achievement and in need of a referral for special education services if they had a score 2 standard deviations or more below the mean for the K-BIT or Woodcock-Johnson III (considered a cognitive need) (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004; Woodcock et al., 2001). Children were considered to be at risk for a behavioral/emotional problems if either (1) a caregiver reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the CBCL (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (2) an adolescent reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the YSR (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (3) a teacher reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the TRF (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (4) a clinically significant score was obtained on the CDI (Kovacs, 1992), or (5) a clinically significant score was obtained on the PTSD scale of the Trauma Symptoms Checklist (Briere, 1996).

Exhibit 7. Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) and Adoption by Caseworker Report and Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) Data

	N	TPR		Adopted Children	
		%	SE	%	SE
Total	5,872	7.1	0.7	2.2	0.3
Gender					
Male	3,017	7.5	0.9	2.0	0.4
Female	2,855	6.6	0.8	2.5	0.5
Age (years) at baseline		**			
0–2	2,937	10.9 ^a	1.5	1.9	0.3
3–5	828	7.4	1.5	1.1	0.4
6–10	1,053	5.2	0.7	3.0	0.8
11–12	326	3.9	1.1	1.6	1.0
13–17	728	6.7 ^b	1.0	3.0	1.0
Race/ethnicity					
Black	1,827	5.9	1.0	2.3	0.7
White	2,003	7.8	1.1	2.1	0.4
Hispanic	1,614	6.8	1.1	2.5	0.5
Other	407	6.3	1.5	1.2	0.6
Setting at baseline		***		***	
In-home	3,635	2.6 ^c	0.5	1.8	0.3
Formal kin care	495	54.5	7.2	4.5 ^d	1.1
Informal kin care	540	12.7 ^e	2.3	1.5	0.6
Foster care	1,105	63.4	3.7	12.1 ^f	2.3
Group home or residential program	68	68.9	6.7	0.4 ^g	0.4
Developmental need at baseline (birth to 5 years old)^a				*	
Yes	928	10.3	2.1	2.3	0.6
No	2,836	8.5	1.3	1.1	0.2
Risk of any behavioral/emotional or cognitive problems at baseline (children 6 to 17 years old)^b					
Yes	1,242	6.0	0.9	2.9	0.6
No	739	4.8	0.7	2.9	1.1

Note: All analyses were on weighted NSCAW II baseline, AFCARS, and Wave 2 data; *N*s are unweighted and, therefore, direct percentages cannot be calculated by hand. Reported *N*s vary slightly across analyses because of missing data in some variable categories. Pearson χ^2 tests for cluster samples were used for significance tests. Asterisks indicate statistical significance (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$) for the covariate.

^a Children 0 to 2 years old at baseline were significantly more likely to have termination of parental rights than children 6 to 10 years old at baseline ($p < .01$), children 11 to 12 years old at baseline ($p < .001$), and children 13 to 17 years old at baseline ($p < .05$).

^b Children 13 to 17 years old at baseline were significantly more likely to have termination of parental rights than children 11 to 12 years old at baseline ($p < .05$).

^c Children living in-home at baseline were significantly less likely to have termination of parental rights than children living in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), in foster care at baseline ($p < .001$), and in a group home or residential treatment program at baseline ($p < .01$).

- ^d By Wave 2 children living in formal kin care at baseline were significantly more likely to be adopted than children living in-home at baseline ($p < .05$) and children living in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .05$).
- ^e Children living in informal kin care at baseline were significantly less likely to have termination of parental rights than children living in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), in foster care at baseline ($p < .001$), and in a group home or residential treatment program at baseline ($p < .01$).
- ^f By Wave 2 children living in foster care at baseline were significantly more likely to be adopted than children living in-home at baseline ($p < .001$), in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .05$), in informal kin care at baseline ($p < .001$), and in a group home or residential treatment program at baseline ($p < .01$).
- ^g By Wave 2 children living in a group home or residential treatment program at baseline were significantly less likely to be adopted than children living in-home at baseline ($p < .05$), children living in formal kin care at baseline ($p < .05$), and children living in foster care at baseline ($p < .01$).
- ^h Developmental need was defined based on young children having a diagnosed mental or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay (e.g., Down syndrome) and/or being 2 standard deviations below the mean in at least one developmental area or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two areas. Areas included cognitive development based on the BDI or K-BIT, communication development based on the PLS-3, and adaptive development based on the Vineland Daily Living Skills.
- ⁱ Children 6 to 17 years old were considered to be at risk for a cognitive problem or low academic achievement and in need of a referral for special education services if they had a score 2 standard deviations or more below the mean for the K-BIT or Woodcock-Johnson III (considered a cognitive need) (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004; Woodcock et al., 2001). Children were considered to be at risk for a behavioral/emotional problems if either (1) a caregiver reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the CBCL (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (2) an adolescent reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the YSR (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (3) a teacher reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the TRF (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (4) a clinically significant score was obtained on the CDI (Kovacs, 1992), or (5) a clinically significant score was obtained on the PTSD scale of the Trauma Symptoms Checklist (Briere, 1996).

Exhibit 8. Reunification of Children Placed in Out-of-Home Care

	N	Any Reunification		Successful first reunification		
		%	SE	N	%	SE
Total	2,989	36.5	2.5	991	93.0	1.5
Gender						
Male	1,543	34.9	3.7	507	93.0	2.4
Female	1,446	38.1	3.5	484	93.0	1.9
Age (years) at baseline		*				
0–2	1,780	48.3 ^a	4.0	582	88.7	4.2
3–5	327	38.8	6.8	122	96.4	1.4
6–10	422	29.6	3.7	149	95.3	1.9
11–12	120	39.6	6.9	43	97.4	1.7
13–17	340	26.7	5.4	95	92.7	4.0
Race/ethnicity		*				
Black	1,048	27.1 ^b	4.4	293	96.0	1.3
White	907	40.4	3.6	306	90.0	2.9
Hispanic	817	34.9	5.4	303	94.5	1.7
Other	203	52.5	7.3	83	96.5	1.7
Setting at baseline		***				
In-home	752	61.5 ^c	3.5	478	93.2	2.1
Formal kin care	495	19.2	3.5	115	91.0	3.2
Informal kin care	540	14.2	2.8	123	95.7	1.7
Foster care	1,105	23.6 ^d	3.3	251	90.3	2.5
Group home or residential program	68	31.2	13.7	17	89.9	3.2
Developmental need at baseline (birth to 5 years old)^e		*				
Yes	510	33.4	4.5	165	93.4	2.5
No	1,597	48.5	4.9	539	91.2	3.5
Risk of any behavioral/emotional or cognitive problems at baseline (children 6 to 17 years old)^f						
Yes	550	32.3	3.6	177	95.7	1.4
No	277	26.0	4.0	91	92.0	4.8

Note: All analyses were on weighted NSCAW II baseline, AFCARS, and Wave 2 data; *N*s are unweighted and, therefore, direct percentages cannot be calculated by hand. Reported *N*s vary slightly across analyses because of missing data in some variable categories. Pearson χ^2 tests for cluster samples were used for significance tests. Asterisks indicate statistical significance (** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$) for the covariate.

^a Children birth to 2 years old at baseline were significantly more likely to be reunified when compared with children who were 6 to 10 years old at baseline ($p < .01$), and children 13 to 17 years old at baseline ($p < .01$).

^b Black children were significantly less likely to be reunified when compared with White children ($p < .05$) and children of other races ($p < .05$).

^c Children living in-home with parents at baseline who were subsequently placed out of home, were significantly more likely to be reunified when compared with children living at baseline in formal kin care ($p < .001$), informal kin care ($p < .001$), foster care ($p < .001$), and group home or residential treatment center ($p < .01$).

^d Children living in foster care at baseline were significantly more likely to be reunified when compared with children living at baseline in informal kin care ($p < .05$).

^e Developmental need was defined based on young children having a diagnosed mental or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay (e.g., Down syndrome) and/or being 2 standard deviations below the mean in at least one developmental area or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two areas. Areas included cognitive development based on the BDI or K-BIT, communication development based on the PLS-3, and adaptive development based on the Vineland Daily Living Skills.

^f Children 6 to 17 years old were considered to be at risk for a cognitive problem or low academic achievement and in need of a referral for special education services if they had a score 2 standard deviations or more below the mean for the K-BIT or Woodcock-Johnson III (considered a cognitive need) (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004; Woodcock et al., 2001). Children were considered to be at risk for a behavioral/emotional problems if either (1) a caregiver reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the CBCL (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (2) an adolescent reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the YSR (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (3) a teacher reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the TRF (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (4) a clinically significant score was obtained on the CDI (Kovacs, 1992), or (5) a clinically significant score was obtained on the PTSD scale of the Trauma Symptoms Checklist (Briere, 1996).

Exhibit 9. Permanency of Children Placed in Out-of-Home Care

	Total Achieving Permanency			Type of Permanency								
				Adoption			Reunification		Guardianship		Discharged to Relatives	
	N	%	SE	N	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE
Total	2,963	47.7	2.4	1316	20.8	2.8	73.2	3.1	4.0	1.4	2.1	1.0
Gender												
Male	1,527	46.0	3.5	683	19.8	4.2	72.1	4.8	5.4	2.3	2.6	1.6
Female	1,436	49.5	3.8	633	21.7	3.9	74.1	4.1	2.5	1.1	1.6	0.9
Age (years) at baseline				*								
0–2	1,782	53.4	3.8	800	13.0	2.7	81.3 ^a	3.9	1.2	0.4	4.6	3.2
3–5	331	46.9	6.5	152	12.0	4.1	80.9 ^a	6.1	6.2	4.1	0.9	0.5
6–10	428	44.6	4.3	189	32.6	6.7	63.0	6.8	2.3	0.8	2.0	1.5
11–12	120	48.3	8.5	57	17.6	7.7	81.0	7.6	1.3	1.0	0.2	0.2
13–17	302	44.8	6.3	118	29.9	8.4	60.8	9.5	8.9	4.8	0.4	0.4
Race/ethnicity												
Black	1,035	41.2	4.0	387	23.6	7.2	68.1	7.8	6.7	3.7	1.6	1.1
White	899	50.0	3.5	424	18.9	3.4	74.1	3.9	3.2	2.1	3.8	2.1
Hispanic	816	47.1	6.9	398	25.1	4.9	70.3	5.2	4.1	2.8	0.5	0.3
Other	199	58.4	7.6	99	9.9	4.8	89.2	4.8	0.9	0.7	0.1	0.1
Setting at baseline		***		***								
In-home	763	73.5 ^b	3.0	515	22.1	3.7	76.2	3.9	0.0 ^c	0.0	1.7	1.2
Formal kin care	487	29.0	4.4	160	16.4	4.4	63.3	9.1	17.8	10.1	2.6	1.7
Informal kin care	536	19.5	2.8	191	8.2	3.3	77.8 ^d	5.9	10.3	4.2	3.7	1.7
Foster care	1,090	40.0 ^e	3.4	423	31.6	6.1	56.4	6.9	9.3	5.9	2.8	1.6
Group home or residential program	59	32.0	14.4	15	1.6	1.8	98.4	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Developmental need at baseline (birth to 5 years old) ^f				*								
Yes	513	46.9	4.6	237	23.1	5.9	69.7	7.4	6.1	5.1	1.1	0.7
No	1,600	52.0	4.8	715	8.6	2.0	85.5 ^g	3.4	2.1	1.1	3.8	2.6
Risk of any behavioral/emotional or cognitive problems at baseline (children 6 to 17 years old) ^h												
Yes	538	47.2	3.9	236	29.0	5.3	67.4	5.4	3.0	1.5	0.7	0.4
No	257	42.6	5.3	107	30.9	9.3	59.8	9.2	7.3	5.0	2.1	2.1

(continued)

Exhibit 9. Permanency of Children Placed in Out-of-Home Care (continued)

	Total Achieving Permanency			Type of Permanency								
				Adoption			Reunification		Guardianship		Discharged to Relatives	
	N	%	SE	N	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE
Caseworker risk assessment at baseline												
Active drug abuse by primary caregiver												
Yes	1,029	45.6	4.4	470	14.9	3.3	70.8	4.6	8.0	4.2	6.3	4.1
No	1,363	51.0	2.8	633	21.1	3.5	76.6	3.7	1.7	0.8	0.6	0.3
Primary caregiver had serious mental health problem												
Yes	944	46.9	3.5	394	9.7	2.2	85.8	3.1	2.6	1.6	1.8	0.7
No	1,358	49.1	3.0	663	22.6	4.1	73.2	4.3	2.1	0.9	2.1	1.5
Primary caregiver had poor parenting skills												
Yes	1,355	47.8	3.7	584	13.3	2.4	79.2	3.7	5.7	2.9	1.8	1.0
No	1,047	48.7	3.2	518	23.5	4.3	72.8	4.5	1.6	0.8	2.0	1.3
History of domestic violence against caregiver				*								
Yes	934	53.2	3.6	432	9.8	3.1	85.5 ⁱ	3.6	2.9	1.6	1.8	0.9
No	1,356	48.1	3.4	629	25.2	4.1	69.3	4.5	3.4	1.7	2.2	1.3
History of abuse or neglect of primary caregiver												
Yes	895	52.6	3.7	408	14.3	3.9	80.3	4.0	1.4	0.7	4.0	2.8
No	1,217	48.8	3.5	589	23.3	4.2	72.4	4.5	3.0	1.4	1.2	0.6
High stress on the family (e.g., unemployment, drug use, poverty, or neighborhood violence)				*								
Yes	1,784	49.2	3.0	802	13.2	2.6	82.5 ^j	2.9	3.1	1.6	1.2	0.5
No	676	45.7	3.9	318	31.3	6.1	62.0	6.5	3.5	2.5	3.2	2.1
Low social support												
Yes	1,098	43.8	4.6	488	13.7	2.9	80.3	3.7	4.4	2.8	1.5	0.9
No	1,339	49.5	3.3	630	23.0	3.9	72.2	4.2	2.6	1.4	2.1	1.5

(continued)

Exhibit 9. Permanency of Children Placed in Out-of-Home Care (continued)

	Total Achieving Permanency			Type of Permanency								
				Adoption			Reunification		Guardianship		Discharged to Relatives	
	N	%	SE	N	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE
Family had trouble paying for basic necessities (food, shelter, clothing, electricity, or heat)												
Yes	1,005	42.8	5.2	451	13.8	2.9	81.9	3.2	3.0	1.6	1.4	0.7
No	1,364	51.7	3.3	644	21.6	3.5	73.1	3.8	3.2	1.5	2.1	1.4

Note: All analyses were on weighted NSCAW II baseline, AFCARS, and Wave 2 data; *N*s are unweighted and, therefore, direct percentages cannot be calculated by hand. Reported *N*s vary slightly across analyses because of missing data in some variable categories. Pearson χ^2 tests for cluster samples were used for significance tests. Asterisks indicate statistical significance (** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$) for the covariate.

- ^a Children birth to 2 years old and 3 to 5 years old at baseline were significantly more likely to be reunified than to be adopted when compared with children who were 6 to 10 years old at baseline (for both comparisons, $p < .05$).
- ^b Children living in-home with parents at baseline who were subsequently placed out of home were significantly more likely to reached permanency when compared with children living at baseline in formal kin care ($p < .001$), informal kin care ($p < .001$), foster care ($p < .001$), and group home or residential treatment center ($p < .01$).
- ^c Children living in-home with parents at baseline who were subsequently placed out of home were significantly less likely to have a legal guardian than to be reunified ($p < .05$), adopted ($p < .05$), or discharged to relatives ($p < .05$) when compared to children living at baseline in informal kin care; and less likely to have a legal guardian than to be discharged to relatives ($p < .05$) when compared to children living at baseline in foster care.
- ^d Children living with informal kin at baseline were significantly more likely to be reunified than to be adopted when compared with children living at baseline in home ($p < .05$), and in foster care ($p < .01$).
- ^e Children living in foster care at baseline were significantly more likely to reach permanency when compared with children living at baseline in formal kin care ($p < .05$) and informal kin care ($p < .001$).
- ^f Developmental need was defined based on young children having a diagnosed mental or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay (e.g., Down syndrome) and/or being 2 standard deviations below the mean in at least one developmental area or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two areas. Areas included cognitive development based on the BDI or K-BIT, communication development based on the PLS-3, and adaptive development based on the Vineland Daily Living Skills.
- ^g Children without developmental needs at baseline were significantly more likely to be reunified than to be adopted when compared with children with developmental needs ($p < .01$).
- ^h Children 6 to 17 years old were considered to be at risk for a cognitive problem or low academic achievement and in need of a referral for special education services if they had a score 2 standard deviations or more below the mean for the K-BIT or Woodcock-Johnson III (considered a cognitive need) (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004; Woodcock et al., 2001). Children were considered to be at risk for a behavioral/emotional problems if either (1) a caregiver reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the CBCL (Achenbach & Rescorla,

2001); (2) an adolescent reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the YSR (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (3) a teacher reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the TRF (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (4) a clinically significant score was obtained on the CDI (Kovacs, 1992), or (5) a clinically significant score was obtained on the PTSD scale of the Trauma Symptoms Checklist (Briere, 1996).

ⁱ Children whose main caregiver had a history of domestic violence victimization (identified by the caseworker at baseline) were significantly more likely to be reunified than to be adopted when compared with children whose main caregiver did not have a history of domestic violence victimization (identified by the caseworker at baseline) ($p < .01$).

^j Children whose families had high stress (identified by the caseworker at baseline) (e.g., unemployment, drug use, poverty, or neighborhood violence) were significantly more likely to be reunified than to be adopted when compared with children whose families did not have high stress (as identified by the caseworker at baseline) ($p < .01$).

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APPENDIX

Derived Variables. Following is a descriptive list of the variables derived for the NSCAW II Wave 2 Report: Permanency.

- *Setting.* The setting variable includes six levels: in-home, formal kin care, informal kin care, foster care, group home/residential program, or other out of home. *In-home* caregivers include living situations where the primary caregiver is either a biological, adoptive, or stepmother/father. *Formal kin care* includes situations where the primary caregiver has a kin relationship to the child and where the caregiver is receiving payments from the child welfare system. Informal kin care is where the primary caregiver has a kin relationship to the child, but is not receiving payments from the child welfare system. Foster care indicates that the child primary caregiver was identified as a foster parent. Group home/residential program indicates that a child was currently living in a group home or residential facility. *Other out of home* includes situations where the primary caregiver was identified as “other nonrelative” and where the primary caregiver was not receiving foster parent payments.
- *Any Reunification:* This variable contains data on all children who were in out-of-home care post-investigation, even if for a brief time. Children were classified as having been reunified if there was at least one attempt of reunification with the biological parents for any amount of time, even if they had a subsequent placement in out-home-care.
- *Successful first reunification:* This variable identifies the children who were in out-of-home care post-investigation, even if for a brief time, who were reunified with the biological parents and did not had a subsequent placement in out-home-care.
- *Final Placement:* To determine final placement, the most current information from several sources was used to identify the last placement in which the child was reported. Information was based on AFCARS adoption variable (Yes/No), and AFCARS discharge variable (reunified with parent; living with other relatives; adoption; emancipation; guardianship; transfer to another agency). If information from AFCARS was outdated or not available, information provided by caseworkers on history of placements was used (adoption and setting: in-home with biological parent; in-home adoptive parent; kin; home of a family friend; preadoptive home; unrelated foster care; therapeutic foster care, group home, emergency shelter; psychiatric hospital, residential treatment facility; place of detention; transitional independent living; other public agency; runaway; child lives on own; other). If the caseworker’s history of placement information was outdated or not available, a derived variable to identify setting at Wave 2 was used. This variable uses the following hierarchy of information: caregiver Wave 2 interview variables (adoption, guardianship, type of blood and functional relationship with caregiver, support received from CWS), caseworker Wave 2 interview variables, child Wave 2 interview variables (child report of relationship with caregiver: in-home with biological parent; in-home adoptive parent; kin; foster care; group home/residential. If not available, field interviewer coding of child’s setting). If no interviews were completed for a case

at Wave 2, neither AFCARS data nor the Wave 1 setting variable was used. This derived variable followed the same logic as the Wave 2 setting variable. The following placements and coding logic was used to identify final placement categories:

- Adoption: use most recent among
 - AFCARS adoption flag
 - AFCARS discharge codes
 - Wave 2 setting variable

NOTE: if no dates were available, use Wave 2 setting variable. If Wave 2 setting variable not available, use Wave 1 setting variable.
- Reunified with parents: use most recent among
 - AFCARS discharge codes
 - Caseworker placement history codes
 - Wave 2 setting variable

NOTE: if no dates were available, use Wave 2 setting variable. If Wave 2 setting variable not available, use Wave 1 setting variable.
- Guardianship: use most recent among
 - AFCAR discharge codes
 - Wave 1 or 2 caregiver guardianship flag
- Age out: if age \geq 18 at or before Wave 2; or
 - If AFCARS discharge code indicate emancipation
 - If the placement history indicated the child was living on their own
- Living with other relatives: use most recent among
 - AFCARS discharge codes
 - Caseworker Placement history
- Other placement: use most recent among
 - AFCARS discharge codes
 - Caseworker Placement history codes
 - Wave 2 setting variable

NOTE: if no dates were available, use Wave 2 setting variable. If Wave 2 setting variable not available, use Wave 1 setting variable.
- *Permanency*: To determine permanency, information was based on the *Final Placement* derived variable and AFCARS. If the Final Placement variable indicated adoption, reunified with parents, or guardianship, the child was classified as “Yes” for Permanency. Additionally, if the AFCARS discharge variable indicated “living with other relatives,” even if the child was living with relatives that did not report guardianship, the child was classified as having been in a permanent placement given that the AFCARS file had discharge information and was closed. Children living in

all other arrangements, or with relatives, but without a discharge code from AFCARS, were classified as not having reached permanency.

- *Number of placements:* This variable uses information provided by caseworkers on the history of out-of-home placements (placement with adoptive or preadoptive parents, kin, foster parents, or in group/home residential treatment) for every child in the sample. A placement value of “0” indicates that the child was never removed and placed out of his or her original home (the residence the child had at the time of the index report).
- *Number of out-of-home placements:* This variable uses information provided by caseworkers on the history of out-of-home placements for each child placed out of home at any time between the index maltreatment and Wave 2. A placement value of 1 indicates that the child was removed from the original home, and placed with adoptive or preadoptive parents, kin, foster parents, or in group/home residential treatment, but there were no further placements of the child after that. In contrast, two or more placements indicate that the child moved to additional out-of-home placements.
- *Number of days out of home:* This variable uses information provided by caseworkers on the history and dates of out-of-home placements for each child placed out of home at any time between the index maltreatment and Wave 2. The number of days out of home was counted when children were placed with kin, foster parents, or in group/home residential treatment. Once a child was reunified or if the child was placed in a preadoptive or adoptive home, that time was not counted as days out of home.
- *Adoption:* A child was identified as adopted if the AFCARS foster care summary data file was “Yes” for a variable indicated that the child was “ever adopted,” or if the AFCARS discharge reason variable’s category was “adopted;” or if the caregiver interview was completed and the caregiver reported relationship to child is adopted mother or father, or if the child interview was complete and the caregiver reported relationship to child is adopted mother or father, or if the Child ID with the study indicates that child was adopted.
- *Termination of Parental Rights (TPR):* A child was identified as having parents whose parental rights were terminated (freeing the child for adoption) if the AFCARS foster care summary data file was “Yes” for variables that indicated that the mother and/or father had a TPR date, or if the caseworker reported that the mother and/or father had a TPR date.

Developmental need at baseline (children birth to 5 years old) † Developmental need was defined based on young children having a diagnosed mental or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay (e.g., Down syndrome) and/or being 2 standard deviations below the mean in at least one developmental area or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two areas. Areas included cognitive development based on the Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI) or Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test

(K-BIT), communication development based on the Preschool Language Scale-3 (PLS-3), and adaptive development based on the Vineland Daily Living Skills.

- *Risk of any behavioral/emotional or cognitive problems at baseline:* Children 6 to 17 years old were considered to be at risk for a cognitive problem or low academic achievement and in need of a referral for special education services if they had a score 2 standard deviations or more below the mean for the K-BIT or Woodcock-Johnson III (considered a cognitive need) (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004; Woodcock et al., 2001). Children were considered to be at risk for a behavioral/emotional problems if either (1) a caregiver reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the CBCL (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (2) an adolescent reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the YSR (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (3) a teacher reported an elevated score (>1.5 standard deviations above the mean) on the Total Problems, Internalizing, or Externalizing scales of the TRF (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (4) a clinically significant score was obtained on the CDI (Kovacs, 1992), or (5) a clinically significant score was obtained on the PTSD scale of the Trauma Symptoms Checklist (Briere, 1996).
- *Use of weights for Permanency Report:* Outcome variables were derived using data from wave II, wave I, across wave, and administration data files. If data were missing from the wave II file, then the most recent data from the other sources was used. Hence, missingness on the outcomes (which was rare) was not due to missingness at wave II. Therefore, the wave I sampling weights were the most appropriate for the analyses of these outcomes.