

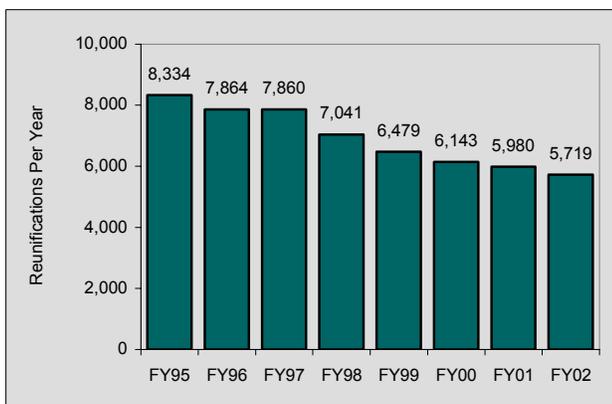
DECLINE IN WASHINGTON'S FAMILY REUNIFICATIONS: WHAT INFLUENCED THIS TREND?

BACKGROUND

When families are in crisis due to child abuse or neglect, or because of a child's behavior, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Children's Administration may be called upon to protect children and provide services to families. The state's involvement may result in the removal of children from the home. Where it is possible to do so safely, the goal of the Children's Administration is to help families resolve their problems and return the children to their parents.¹

In recent years, the Children's Administration has observed annual decreases in the number of family reunifications. Between 1995 and 2002, the annual number of reunifications fell by 2,615 or 31 percent.

Exhibit 1
Reunifications* Per Year²



*Children in out-of-home care who were reunified with their parents during the fiscal year.

¹ Children's Administration Performance Report 2003, Dept. of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration, <<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/general/2003perfrm.asp>>.

² These numbers were provided by the Children's Administration and represent updated information available on March 8, 2004. Numbers are slightly larger than reported in the Children's Administration 2002 Performance Report because they include reunifications that occurred in the past but were recorded recently.

SUMMARY

When children are removed from home due to child abuse or neglect or because of the child's behavior, DSHS may file a dependency case in the court. Or, in cases where parents agree to the placement, services may be provided to the family to help resolve their problems without going to court. In both instances, when it is possible to do so safely, the goal of DSHS is to reunify the family.

Between 1995 and 2002, the annual number of reunifications dropped by 31 percent. The Washington State Legislature directed the Institute to identify factors that reduce family reunifications in Washington. To do this, we merged administrative records from DSHS with court records of dependencies for the same children.

Findings:

While the total number of reunifications declined, we found that most of the reduction has occurred because the number of out-of-home placements has dropped, not because of any significant change in rate of reunification.

- Between 1995 and 2002, the annual count of family reunifications declined by 2,615. During that same period, the number of children removed from home decreased by 2,236. Thus, the drop in out-of-home placements accounts for 86 percent of the decline in reunifications: 2,236 placements ÷ 2,615 reunifications.
 - ✓ The decline in placements was primarily among a lower-risk population for whom no dependency case was filed. Nearly all children in such placements reunify with families.
 - ✓ No change occurred in the number of placements with an associated dependency case. Slightly over half of children in dependencies reunify with their parents.
- The remaining 14 percent of the decline is explained by changes in the caseload mix, in favor of cases less likely to reunify (e.g., more infants in care, more children placed for neglect or parental substance abuse, more children placed with relatives). However, controlling for case characteristics, the likelihood of reunification did not change over time.

The reduction in reunifications has received attention from the Families for Kids Partnership. The Partnership stated:

*The seven year trend of decrease in family reunifications and the relatively high reentry rate into care (15% within 12 months of reunification) is of great concern and not well understood. While we must promote early decision-making, it is equally important to strengthen the legal and social services that give birth parents the opportunity to resolve their challenges quickly.*³

The possibility that the decline in reunifications may reflect more disrupted families is a concern of the Washington State Legislature. In the budget adopted by the 2001 Legislature, the Office of Public Defense was directed to undertake several activities, including a study by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) to...

*...identify factors that are reducing the number of family reunifications that occur in dependency and termination cases.*⁴

In 2003, the Children's Administration reported several additional changes that might have affected the number reunifications.⁵

- An increase in the percentage of children placed with relatives.
- A decrease in the number of out-of-home placements.

Between 1995 and 2002, two further changes were noted by others that might suggest the reduction in reunifications was due, in part, to an increase in the number of permanently disrupted families.

- The number of termination cases (court cases opened to decide whether to terminate the parent-child relationship) filed per year increased by almost 250 percent, from 589 to 1,434.⁶

- The annual number of adoptions increased between fiscal year 1996 (the first year available in the Performance Report⁷) and fiscal year 2002 by 80 percent, from 584 to 1,053.

The purpose of this report is to clarify the factors that have contributed to declining reunifications by answering the following three questions:

- How does the decrease in out-of-home placements relate to declines in numbers of reunifications?
- What factors influence family reunification?
- Controlling for caseload characteristics, has the likelihood that children will reunify with their families changed substantially over the period of decreasing reunifications?

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In our analysis, we distinguish between "placements" and "dependencies." A **placement** episode occurs when children are removed from home. A placement may consist of more than one placement event, for example, within a single placement episode, a child may be placed in foster care and later placed with a relative. Placements may occur because of child abuse or neglect or because of a child's disability or child's behavior.

When the Children's Administration removes a child from home, unless the parents agree to a voluntary placement, a **dependency** case is opened in the court. If the court finds the child to be dependent, case will remain open until the child is in a permanent legal situation (such as reunification or adoption), is emancipated, or turns 18. Here, we refer to dependency placements if a case is filed, without regard to whether the court issues a finding of dependency. Between 1995 and 2002, 48 percent of 63,053 placements were associated with a dependency case.

Our analysis used the Children's Administration's definition of **reunification**: *placement of the child with either parent or return to the original caretaker.* This definition is considered the "traditional" child

³ *Washington Permanency Report 2002* (Seattle: Families for Kids Partnership, 2002), <<http://www.chs-wa.org/PermReport10.2002.pdf>>.

⁴ ESSB 6153, Section 114(4)(d); Chapter 7, Laws of 2001.

⁵ *Children's Administration Performance Report 2003*.

⁶ From trend tables published in *Superior Court 1999 Annual Caseload Report*, <<http://www.courts.wa.gov/caseload/superior/ann/atbl99.pdf>>, and *Superior Court 2002 Annual Caseload Report*, <<http://www.courts.wa.gov/caseload/superior/ann/atbl02.pdf>>.

⁷ *Children's Administration Performance Report 2003*.

welfare definition of reunification.⁸ This definition is broader than the one sometimes used by court representatives, where the term reunification is limited to cases where the child is returned to the person who was the caretaker at the time of placement. Under this use of the term, return of the child to the other parent would not be called a reunification.

RESEARCH DESIGN⁹

To study the questions of interest, the Institute merged administrative records for children in out-of-home placements between July 1993 and December 2002¹⁰ with court records of dependency cases for the same children. For fiscal years 1995 through 2002, 48 percent of the 63,053 placements were associated with a dependency case.

With these merged data sets, we evaluated factors that influence reunification by examining how various case characteristics affect the chances of family reunification within two years. The factors included characteristics of children in the placement: age at placement, race and ethnicity, child gender; reason for placement; whether the child was placed with relatives; geography; and whether the placement had a corresponding court case.

FINDINGS

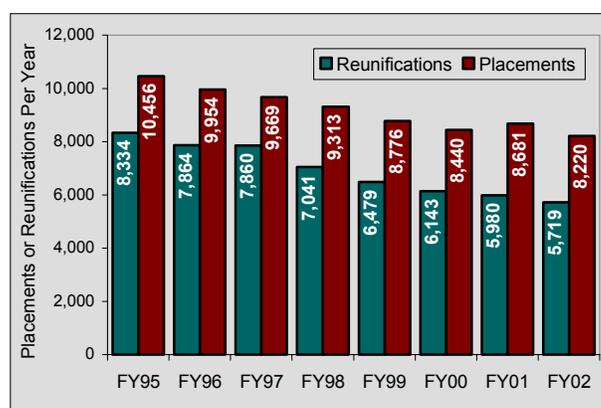
The decline in out-of-home placements accounts for much of the decline in reunifications.

Because reunification only applies to children removed from their homes, we first determined how the number of out-of-home placements has changed over time. The vast majority of

reunifications occur within a year of placement,¹¹ so that the number of reunifications within a year is closely related to the number of placements in the same year. Between FY95 and FY02, the number of out-of-home placements decreased by 2,236, from 10,456 to 8,220 (see Exhibit 2).

The reduction in placements occurred among families who, as we will show, nearly always reunify. Thus, the reduction in placements explains roughly 86 percent (2,236 placements ÷ 2,615 reunifications) of the decline in reunifications over this eight-year period.

Exhibit 2
Total Reunifications and Placements¹²
FY95–FY02



Since 1995, about 4,000 dependency cases have been filed each year. Likewise, the number of placements per year associated with a court case has remained fairly constant from FY95 to FY02. The decline in out-of-home placements was almost exclusively among children for whom no court case was filed (see Exhibit 3). In this span of time, the distribution of placements has changed from FY95, when the majority of placements had no court case, to FY02, when the majority of placements were associated with a court case.

⁸ Westat and Chapin Hall Center for Children, *Assessing the Context of Permanency and Reunification in the Foster Care System* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Health and Human Services, 2001).

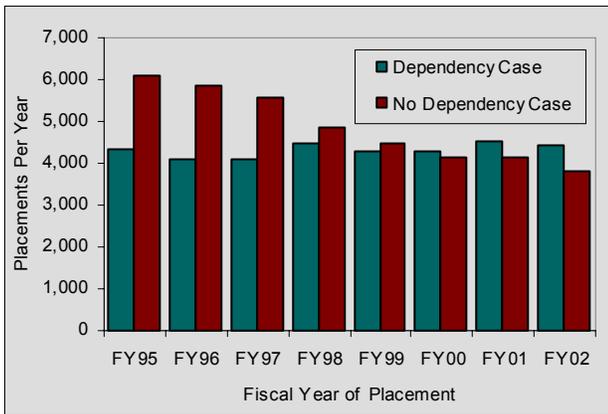
⁹ For a more complete description of data and the analytical approach, see Appendix A.

¹⁰ This time period includes the earliest CAMIS records of new child placements. Although the analysis is limited to later years, these early data allowed for nearly complete matching across the CAMIS and SCOMIS data for the period of interest.

¹¹ *Children's Administration Performance Report 2002*.

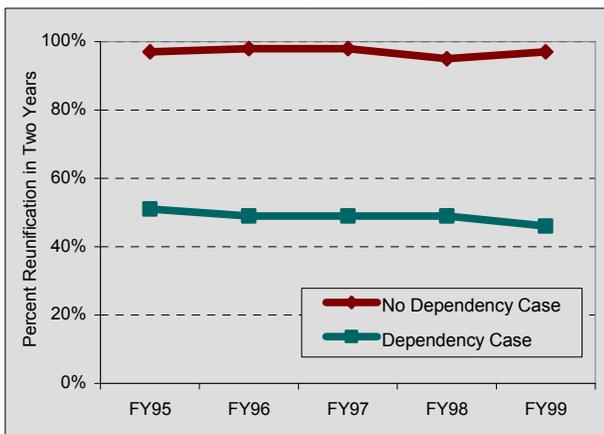
¹² Institute analysis of out-of-home placements. The decline in placements occurred in all DSHS administrative regions, except for Region 2 (Southeastern Washington). See Appendix B for placements by region.

Exhibit 3
Placements With and Without an Associated Dependency Case



If the numbers of placements and reunifications have both declined, what has happened to the **rate** of reunification? To answer this question, we examined the percentage of placements with a reunification within two years. As can be seen in Exhibit 4, between 1995 and 1999, unadjusted reunification rates did not change for placements with no dependency case. Among dependency placements, the unadjusted declined from 51 percent in 1995 to 46 percent in 2002.

Exhibit 4
Percent Reunifying Within Two Years: Placements With and Without an Associated Dependency Case



Factors Affecting Reunification

While the reduction in out-of-home placements explains 86 percent of the drop in reunification, what accounts for the remaining 14 percent of the decrease?

To answer this question, we first identified factors associated with placements that make reunification less likely. We then examined the caseload to determine if the decline in reunification coincides with an increase in these factors.

Exhibit 5 displays the results of this analysis,¹³ showing how various factors affect the likelihood of reunification within two years of placement.

- Open dependency cases had the largest overall effect on the likelihood of reunification. Controlling for all other factors in the model, placements associated with a dependency case were 40 times less likely to reunify in two years compared with children without a court case.
- Placement with relatives decreases the likelihood of reunification.
- Children placed as infants or teens over 15 years old are less likely to reunify than children of other ages.
- Black children are less likely to be reunified.

Compared with placements because of abuse, the following placements were less likely to result in reunification:

- Neglect or parental substance abuse
- Parental disability
- Orphaned or abandoned
- Inadequate housing (not homelessness)

¹³ This analysis, using logistic regression, provides the relative likelihood of reunification within two years for each child and placement characteristic compared with other characteristics in the model.

Exhibit 5
Factors Affecting the Likelihood of Reunification^a Within Two Years:
All Placements

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Likelihood^b of Reunification</u>
Geography (compared to King County [Seattle])	
Eastern Washington	Not Significant
Western Washington (not King County)	Not Significant
Dependency Case Filed (compared to cases with no court case)	
Case Filed	Very Much Less
Placement Type (compared to all other placements)	
Placed With Relatives	Less
Reason for Placement (compared to neglect or parents' drug or alcohol problems)	
Parent Disability	Less
Neglect or Substance Abuse	Less
Parent in Jail	Not Significant
Inadequate Housing	Slightly Less
Orphaned/Abandoned	Less
Child Reasons for Placement	Less
Child Age at Placement (compared to children ages 1 and 2)	
Infants	Less
3 through 5 years	Not Significant
6 through 9 years	Not Significant
10 through 14 years	Not Significant
15 years and older	Less
Child Race/Ethnicity	
American Indian	Not Significant
Asian/Pacific Islander	Not Significant
Hispanic	Not Significant
Black	Slightly Less
Child Gender	
Male	Not Significant
Other Factors	
Non-English	Slightly More

^a The analysis excluded placements with no out-of-home placement events, respite care, and cases that were transferred to another jurisdiction (usually Indian tribes). Because placement reasons were not recorded prior to July 1, 1995, only placements after that date are included.

^b To read the relative likelihoods:

Very Much Less	Odds of reunification under 10% of comparison
Much Less	Odds of reunification 10 to 49% of comparison
Less	Odds of reunification 50 to 79% of comparison
Slightly Less	Odds of reunification 80 to 99% of comparison
Not Significant	Not significantly different from comparison
Slightly More	Odds of reunification 101 to 149% of comparison
More	Odds of reunification 150 to 200% of comparison
Much More	Odds of reunification over 2 times that of comparison

What factors distinguish placements with and without a dependency case?

As we have shown, dependency is the most influential factor in predicting reunification. From the placement data, we are able to see some striking differences between placements with a dependency case and placements where no dependency case was filed.¹⁴

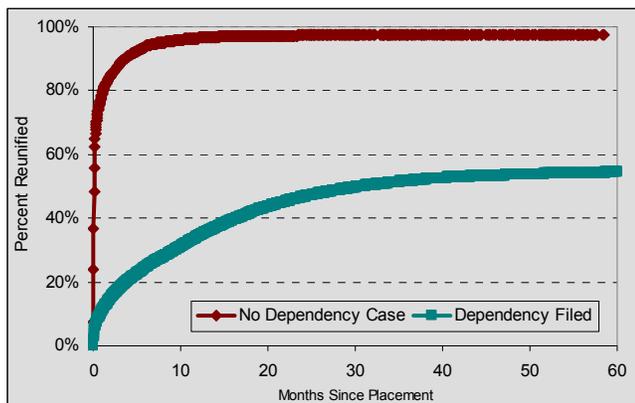
Children in dependency cases are far more likely to be placed with relatives, to be placed for reasons of neglect or parental substance abuse, and to be an infant at placement. Children for whom no dependency case was opened are far more likely to be placed for child-related reasons (most commonly child behavior) and to be teenagers.

How does reunification differ in cases with and without a dependency case?

Exhibit 6 illustrates graphically the reunification differences between placements with and without an associated dependency case. Children are less likely to reunify, and reunify more slowly, from placements during a dependency case than children for whom no dependency case is filed. When no dependency case is filed, 98 percent of children are ultimately reunified with their families; half of such children are reunified within four days of placement. By contrast, when a dependency case has been filed, 56 percent of children are ultimately reunified; the time required to reach 50 percent is 30 months.

It is not clear if the filing of a dependency case *per se* lengthens time to reunification or whether dependency cases are filed for those families with the most difficult problems. Both factors may be operative.

Exhibit 6
Time to Reunification



¹⁴ Comparison of characteristics of cases with and without a dependency is provided in Appendix C.

Placements without dependencies probably represent families with less severe problems or where parents work quickly to correct the issues that originally put children at risk.

What are the outcomes for children in dependency cases, other than reunification?

Slightly more than half of all children in dependency placements reunify with their families. Other outcomes include adoption (20 percent), guardianships (12 percent), children who remain in the system until they turn 18 (6 percent). Of placements begun between FY95 and FY99, 5 percent were ongoing in December 2002.¹⁵

Did the likelihood of reunification change over time for children removed from home?

We have seen that the number of children removed from home each year has declined. And recently, a larger percentage of the caseload is associated with dependency cases in the courts, a group with lower likelihood of reunification. Controlling for known placement characteristics, we evaluated the likelihood of reunification for placements each year between FY96 and FY99, the period of greatest decline in reunification.

Due to the very large difference in likelihood of reunification between placements with and without a dependency case, we analyzed the two populations separately.

Controlling for child and placement characteristics, regardless of dependency status, the likelihood of reunification did not decrease over time in either population.¹⁶ That is, similar children removed from home in 1996 and 1999 were equally likely to reunify.

¹⁵ A chart showing the recorded placement results is provided in Appendix D.

¹⁶ See Appendix E for detailed results of analyses.

Have additional changes occurred in factors known to affect reunification?

Between 1996 and 2002, we observed large changes in factors that negatively affect reunification.¹⁷

- In placements with a dependency, the changes include the following:
 - ✓ Increase in the proportion of placements for neglect or substance abuse (from 47 percent to 60 percent).
 - ✓ Increase in the proportion of children placed with relatives (from 27 percent to 35 percent).
 - ✓ Increase in the proportion of children placed as infants (from 18 percent to 23 percent).
 - ✓ Decrease in the proportion of children placed because of sexual abuse (from 10 percent to 4 percent of placements).
- In placements with no dependency case, changes include the following:
 - ✓ Increase in the proportion of cases for neglect or parental substance abuse (from 16 percent to 24 percent).
 - ✓ Decrease in the proportion of children placed for child reasons, primarily child behavior (from 53 to 47 percent). In this lower-risk population, such children are more likely to reunify.

Although the annual counts of termination cases and adoptions increased between 1995 and 2002, those changes appear to be unrelated to the declines in reunification.

In recent years, the Children's Administration has removed fewer children from their homes. The avoidance of lower-risk placements in recent years has altered the mix of the now-smaller placement caseload, toward a predominance of placements associated with dependency cases, and hence a lower overall likelihood of reunification.

SUMMARY

Fewer reunifications have occurred each year since 1995. At the same time, the Children's Administration has removed fewer children from their homes. **About 86 percent of the overall decline in reunifications can be explained by decreases in the number of children removed from home.**

What explains the other 14 percent? The decline in out-of-home placements was entirely among lower-risk families, where the state did not file a dependency petition. Compared with FY95, the caseload in FY02 is dominated by higher-risk cases, as exhibited by a majority of placements with a corresponding dependency case. Thus, in the more recent placement caseloads, one would expect reunification, as a percentage of all placements, to be lower.

Other changes in the caseload that might predict a lower rate of reunification include the following:

- Increased placement for reasons of neglect. Children placed for reasons of neglect or parental substance abuse are less likely to be reunified.
- Increased use of family placements. Children placed with relatives are less likely to be reunified with parents.
- More infants in care, both as a percentage of placement caseload and in absolute number. Children placed as infants are less likely to be reunified.

¹⁷ Appendix F shows year-by-year characteristics in placements with a dependency case. Appendix G shows similar statistics for placements with no dependency.

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYTICAL APPROACH

To investigate possible changes in the caseload that could account for the reductions in reunifications, we obtained placement data from the Case Management and Information System (CAMIS) on all placements begun between July 1, 1993, and December 31, 2002. These data provide information on each child's birth date and race, reason for the placement (beginning in FY96), type of placement, dates for beginning and end of the placement episode, specifics of placement events within an episode, type of placement (i.e., foster home, relative placement), and placement outcome, such as adoption or reunification. Because placements can last several years, we were unable to count all reunifications occurring in any one year because some reunifications were from placements prior to July 1993. However, it was possible to determine, by analysis, which case characteristics (available in CAMIS) affect the likelihood of reunification. It was also possible to observe changes in the makeup of Children's Administration caseloads that would predict lower numbers of reunifications in recent years.

CAMIS also records placements where the child is in the family home. Such in-home placements were omitted from all analyses. With some exceptions, such placements reflect a period of supervision following family reunification.

To evaluate reunification in placements associated with dependency cases, we also obtained court records. The Administrative Office of the Courts supplied computerized records from the Superior Court Management Information System (SCOMIS) on all dependency cases filed between July 1, 1993, and December 31, 2002.

We then matched children in CAMIS against children for whom a dependency case was documented in SCOMIS and where dates in both records indicated the court case overlapped in time with the placement. For placements with no match to SCOMIS, we were able to identify additional dependency cases in the CAMIS legal actions table. The match of SCOMIS and CAMIS required dates for placement and court case to overlap. Court cases begun before July 1, 1993, would not match to placements occurring later. To avoid such match difficulties, we limited the analysis to placements after July 1, 1994. For fiscal years 1995 through 2002, 48 percent of 63,053 placements were associated with a dependency case.

To evaluate factors that influence reunification, we examined the likelihood of reunification within two years for placements in each fiscal year using logistic regression. Factors included in the analysis were child age at placement, race and ethnicity, child gender, reason for placement, placement with relatives, geography, and whether the placement had a corresponding court case. To allow for a full two years and a lag between placement end and the recording of outcomes, and to include reasons for placement, we evaluated placements begun between July 1, 1995, and January 1, 1999.¹⁸

To determine if reunification has become less likely over time, a second set of logistic regressions included the year of placement in the analysis, controlling for all other factors. It was determined that the presence of a dependency had the greatest effect on reunification. Therefore, to pick up more subtle effects, two similar models were run, one each for placements with and without a dependency.

As with most administrative data sets, CAMIS and SCOMIS contain occasional errors. However, it is our belief, borne out by record reviews of sample cases provided by court and DSHS personnel, that most of the data are accurate, and that errors are random.

¹⁸ Prior to FY96, reasons for placement were not consistently recorded in CAMIS. For that reason, this analysis is limited to placements after July 1, 1995, the first day of the fiscal year.

APPENDIX B: DECLINE IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS BY DSHS REGION

Across the state, fewer children were removed from home each year between 1995 and 2002. Exhibit B-1 indicates that the drop in out-of-home placements occurred in five of the six DSHS administrative regions. Region 2 (Southeastern Washington) stands out because, over this time, the number of children removed from home increased. Region 2 also did not experience the declines in reunification noted in other regions and statewide.¹⁹

Exhibit B-1
Out-of-Home Placements by DSHS Region

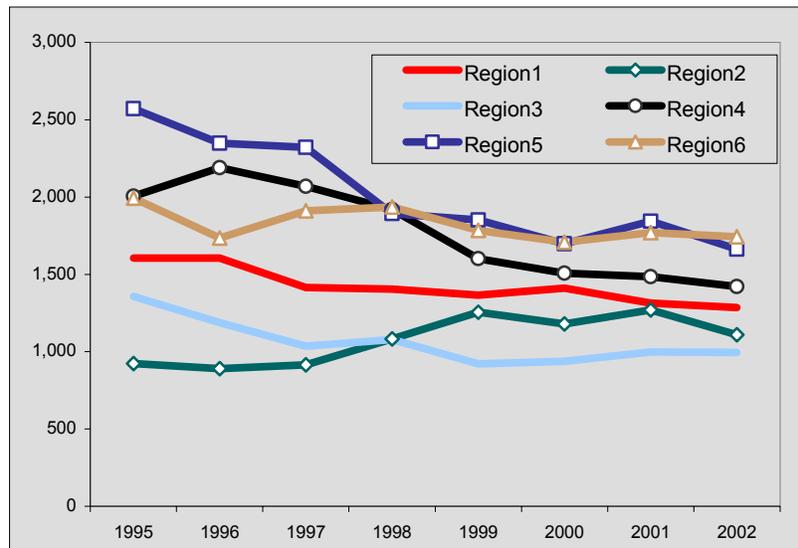
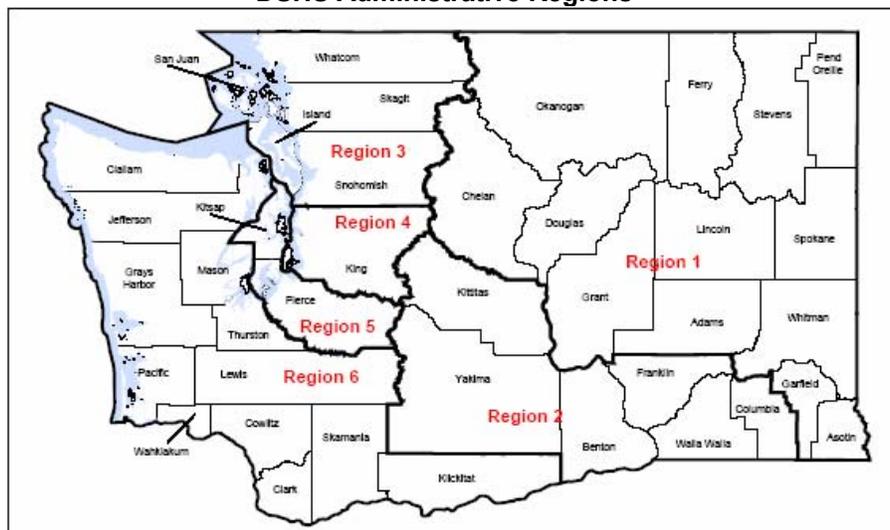


Exhibit B-2
DSHS Administrative Regions²⁰



¹⁹ Washington Permanency Report 2002.

²⁰ M.G. Miller and L. Schragar, *Licensed Child Care in Washington State: 1998*, Report 7.100 (Olympia: Research and Data Analysis, Department of Social and Health Services, 1990).
<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/rda/research/7/100.pdf>

APPENDIX C

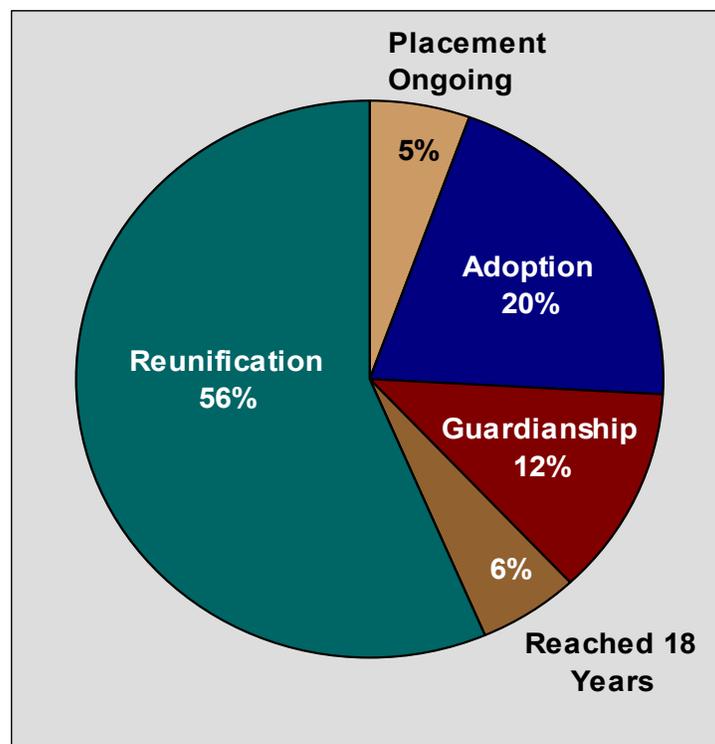
Characteristics of the Placement Caseload With and Without a Dependency Case Placements Between July 1, 1995, and June 30, 2002

	<u>Dependency</u>	<u>No Dependency</u>
Number of Placements	30,207	32,846
Number of Individual Children	25,705	24,896
	<u>Percent of Placements</u>	
<u>Factors</u>	<u>Dependency</u>	<u>No Dependency</u>
Placement Characteristics		
Placement With Relative	30.4%	5.1%
Reasons for Placement FY95–FY02		
Placement for Child Reasons	8.8%	48.9%
Physical Abuse	15.7%	10.5%
Sexual Abuse	6.6%	3.3%
Parent in Jail	3.0%	4.1%
Neglect/Substance Abuse	54.2%	21.3%
Orphaned/Abandoned	2.9%	1.8%
Inadequate Housing	0.8%	0.9%
Parent Disability	7.2%	8.9%
Child Age		
Infants (Under 12 Months)	19.8%	6.0%
1 to 2 Years	14.3%	6.6%
3 to 5 Years	17.2%	9.3%
6 to 9 Years	19.3%	11.6%
10 to 14 Years	21.5%	35.0%
15 Years and Over	7.9%	31.5%
Child Race/Ethnicity/Gender		
American Indian	11.7%	8.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.8%	2.7%
Black	13.1%	11.3%
White	68.4%	69.7%
Race Undetermined	4.9%	7.4%
Hispanic	12.0%	10.7%
Male	50.3%	45.5%
Location		
Eastern Washington	27.2%	27.2%
King County	21.0%	16.8%
Western Washington, not King County	51.7%	56.0%

APPENDIX D

The Case Management and Information System (CAMIS) records placement information when children are under the care and supervision of the Children's Administration. The chart below illustrates the outcomes recorded, as of December 2002, for out-of-home placements between FY95 and FY99 associated with dependency cases. Of the 20,571 placements occurring in this time period, 56 percent resulted in reunification, 20 percent in adoption and 12 percent in guardianship. In 6 percent of placements, the placement ended when the child turned 18. Five percent of placements have no result recorded and appear to be ongoing. Children with more than one placement were counted more than once. This chart does not include the 0.2 percent of children who died or the 0.2 percent of children who were emancipated before turning 18.

Exhibit D-1
**Outcomes of Dependency Placements
FY95 to FY99**



APPENDIX E

Likelihood of Reunification From Placements With and Without an Associated Dependency Case Factors Affecting Likelihood of Reunification Within Two Years: Fiscal Years 1996 to 1999

Factors	Effects on Likelihood^a of Reunification	
	Dependency Case	No Dependency Case
Geography (compared to King County [Seattle])		
Eastern Washington	Not Significant	More
Western Washington (not King County)	Not Significant	Slightly More
Placement Type (compared to all other placements)		
Placed With Relatives	Less	Much Less
Reason for Placement (compared to abuse)		
Parent Disability	Less	Much Less
Neglect or Substance Abuse	Less	Less
Parent in Jail	Not Significant	Not Significant
Inadequate Housing	Not Significant	Not Significant
Orphaned/Abandoned	Much Less	Less
Child Reasons for Placement	Less	More
Child Age at Placement (compared to children ages 1 and 2)		
Infants	Less	Much Less
3 through 5 years	Not Significant	Not Significant
6 through 9 years	Not Significant	Not Significant
10 through 14 years	Not Significant	Not Significant
15 years and older	Not Significant	Much Less
Child Race/Ethnicity (compared to White)		
American Indian	Slightly More	Much Less
Asian/Pacific Islander	Not Significant	Not Significant
Hispanic	Not Significant	Not Significant
Black	Less	Less
Child Gender (compared to females)		
Male	Not Significant	Less
Other Factors		
Non-English	More	Less
Fiscal Year of Placement (compared to FY 1996)		
1997	Not Significant	Not Significant
1998	Not Significant	Not Significant
1999	Not Significant	Not Significant

^a To read the relative likelihoods:

Very much less	Odds of reunification under 10% of comparison
Much less	Odds of reunification 10 to 49% of comparison
Less	Odds of reunification 50 to 79% of comparison
Slightly less	Odds of reunification 80 to 99% of comparison
Not significant	Not significantly different from comparison
Slightly more	Odds of reunification 101 to 149% of comparison
More	Odds of reunification 150 to 200% of comparison
Much more	Odds of reunification over 2 times that of comparison

APPENDIX F

Changes in the Placement Caseload With an Associated Dependency Case

Out-of-Home Placements Only With a Corresponding Court Case

	<u>Year of Placement (Fiscal Year)</u>							
	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Number of Placements With Court Case Match	4,341	4,096	4,092	4,472	4,309	4,276	4,538	4,424
Number of Individual Children	4,083	3,899	3,903	4,214	4,122	4,105	4,319	4,261
Placements Per Child Per Year	1.06	1.05	1.05	1.06	1.05	1.04	1.05	1.04
Dependency Cases Filed (calendar year) ^a	4,100	3,882	4,117	3,952	4,010	3,988	4,018	3,924

Factors

Percent of Placements in a Year

Placement Characteristics

Placement With Relative	25.3%	27.2%	25.8%	29.8%	31.5%	30.3%	32.6%	35.0%
Placement for Child Reasons	N/A	11.6%	9.9%	10.3%	9.0%	8.3%	7.0%	6.1%
Physical Abuse	N/A	16.6%	16.5%	14.2%	14.9%	15.6%	16.6%	15.8%
Sexual Abuse	N/A	10.2%	8.2%	7.5%	6.8%	4.9%	4.9%	4.1%
Parent in Jail	N/A	3.1%	2.6%	3.4%	3.4%	2.8%	2.5%	3.3%
Neglect/Substance Abuse	N/A	47.4%	50.1%	51.7%	54.9%	57.1%	58.4%	60.2%
Orphaned/Abandoned	N/A	3.3%	3.2%	3.5%	2.9%	2.3%	2.9%	2.4%
Inadequate Housing	N/A	1.2%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%	0.6%	0.9%	0.9%
Parent Disability	N/A	6.5%	8.6%	8.3%	7.0%	7.7%	6.1%	6.6%

Child Age

Infants (Under 12 Months)	15.4%	17.9%	20.1%	17.0%	19.4%	21.4%	19.6%	23.1%
1 to 2 Years	16.6%	14.4%	14.1%	14.1%	14.3%	13.6%	14.7%	14.7%
3 to 5 Years	20.3%	19.2%	16.7%	17.7%	16.4%	16.6%	16.1%	17.7%
6 to 9 Years	20.0%	19.2%	19.1%	21.1%	19.8%	18.8%	19.1%	17.9%
10 to 14 Years	20.2%	20.8%	21.5%	22.4%	22.2%	21.5%	22.8%	19.6%
15 Years and Older	7.3%	8.4%	8.5%	7.7%	7.8%	8.1%	7.8%	6.9%

Child Race/Ethnicity/Gender

American Indian	12.1%	10.3%	11.3%	12.9%	12.6%	12.1%	11.5%	11.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.1%	2.4%	1.8%	1.7%	1.5%	1.9%	2.0%	1.3%
Black	13.2%	15.6%	14.8%	14.1%	13.8%	12.4%	10.3%	11.3%
White	67.5%	66.7%	67.6%	67.2%	67.6%	69.4%	70.4%	70.0%
Race Undetermined	5.0%	5.1%	4.6%	4.2%	4.5%	4.2%	5.7%	6.1%
Hispanic	10.2%	10.7%	12.1%	11.4%	12.9%	12.1%	12.8%	12.1%
Male	49.6%	49.6%	49.1%	50.2%	50.8%	50.4%	50.9%	51.2%

Location

Eastern Washington	26.4%	24.7%	24.6%	25.6%	28.4%	29.0%	27.9%	30.3%
King County	22.7%	24.7%	23.4%	22.9%	20.0%	20.8%	18.4%	17.4%
Western Washington, not King County	50.8%	50.6%	52.0%	51.5%	51.6%	50.3%	53.7%	52.2%

^a Superior Court 2002 and 1998 Annual Caseload Reports, Washington Administrative Office of the Courts, accessed at:
 for 1994-1998: <http://www.courts.wa.gov/caseload/superior/ann/atbl98.pdf>
 for 1998-2002: <http://www.courts.wa.gov/caseload/superior/ann/atbl02.pdf>

APPENDIX G

Changes in the Placement Caseload With No Dependency Case Filed

Out-of-Home Placements Only With NO Corresponding Court Case

	<u>Year of Placement (Fiscal Year)</u>							
	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Number of Placements With No Court Case	6,115	5,858	5,577	4,841	4,467	4,164	4,143	3,796
Number of Individual Children	5,117	4,876	4,650	4,068	3,877	3,638	3,538	3,274
Placements Per Child Per Year	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.19	1.15	1.14	1.17	1.16

Factors

Percent of Placements in a Year

Placement Characteristics

Placement With Relative	1.8%	2.7%	3.1%	4.6%	4.6%	7.1%	7.5%	9.7%
Placements for Child Reasons	N/A	52.9%	52.9%	47.4%	45.7%	45.2%	48.3%	47.1%
Physical Abuse	N/A	9.6%	9.4%	9.1%	10.7%	11.8%	12.4%	11.4%
Sexual Abuse	N/A	3.9%	3.3%	3.2%	3.0%	3.4%	2.7%	3.6%
Parent in Jail	N/A	4.0%	4.3%	4.2%	4.9%	4.3%	3.3%	3.8%
Neglect/Substance Abuse	N/A	16.4%	17.8%	22.4%	23.3%	24.0%	23.8%	24.3%
Orphaned/Abandoned	N/A	2.1%	2.0%	2.4%	1.6%	1.8%	1.1%	1.3%
Inadequate Housing	N/A	0.9%	0.8%	1.3%	1.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
Parent Disability	N/A	8.8%	9.5%	10.0%	9.9%	8.7%	7.7%	7.6%

Child Age

Infants (Under 12 Months)	5.1%	5.0%	5.0%	6.0%	7.2%	6.5%	6.5%	6.6%
1 to 2 Years	6.8%	5.5%	5.7%	7.2%	7.7%	6.6%	6.8%	7.1%
3 to 5 Years	8.9%	8.5%	9.4%	9.5%	9.9%	9.1%	9.1%	9.7%
6 to 9 Years	9.8%	10.4%	10.8%	13.5%	11.8%	11.2%	11.2%	11.0%
10 to 14 Years	38.3%	38.6%	38.0%	34.8%	32.5%	33.1%	33.1%	32.4%
15 Years and Older	30.5%	31.8%	31.1%	29.0%	30.9%	33.3%	33.3%	33.1%

Child Race/Ethnicity/Gender

American Indian	7.5%	8.7%	8.1%	9.7%	10.1%	9.2%	8.3%	8.4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.8%	3.1%	2.8%	2.3%	2.3%	2.6%	2.9%	2.8%
Black	12.0%	11.8%	11.1%	12.7%	11.5%	11.2%	10.1%	10.0%
White	72.5%	71.0%	72.4%	68.4%	68.3%	69.2%	68.7%	68.6%
Race Undetermined	5.1%	5.4%	5.7%	6.9%	7.8%	7.8%	9.9%	10.2%
Hispanic	7.7%	7.7%	8.2%	11.6%	12.0%	11.8%	13.8%	11.9%
Male	46.0%	44.0%	46.4%	45.1%	47.0%	45.1%	46.0%	45.3%

Location

Eastern Washington	21.3%	24.8%	23.6%	25.7%	29.3%	30.9%	31.1%	27.4%
King County	16.7%	18.6%	17.9%	17.3%	15.3%	15.1%	15.2%	17.0%
Western Washington, not King County	62.0%	56.6%	58.5%	57.0%	55.3%	54.1%	53.6%	55.5%

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