

Adoption Surveillance Report

Data and Evaluation

December 2019

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Acknowledgement

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Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families Efforts

In 2013, The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families (RI DCYF) was one of six child welfare systems awarded a grant to fund the Adopt Well-Being Rhode Island Initiative, a partnership among RI DCYF, Family Service of Rhode Island, and Adoption Rhode Island that seeks to improve the overall standard of care in the child welfare and mental health systems in Rhode Island.

The Initiative built a collaborative process to integrate multiple system reforms in an effort to achieve the main goals of the project. These goals focused on improving the overall well-being of children and families through the implementation of trauma-informed, adoption-competent approaches to well-being and permanency outcomes. The system transformation included:

- implementation of trauma assessment
- implementation of an on-going functional assessment of child well-being
- a shift to data-driven case planning that was trauma-informed and adoption competent
- with a focus on aligning the service array to meet the needs of children waiting to be adopted and at post-adoption to ensure that safety, permanency, and well-being are achieved

The RI DCYF Adoption Surveillance Report provides information on children and youth involved with RI DCYF waiting for their forever family and who have found their forever family.

**If you are interested in being a foster parent or adopting a child, please contact Robin Perez, DCYF Foster Parent Recruiter: 401-528-3700
Adoption Rhode Island: 401-865-6000**

Highlights and Key Findings

- Two thousand three hundred and four (2,447) children were adopted from the Rhode Island Child Welfare System between federal fiscal years 2008 and 2018.
- Of children whose parent's parental rights were terminated (TPR) in FY2008-16, 93.8% were adopted within two years of TPR*.
- The largest proportion, 48.7%, of youth who had been waiting for adoption* for two years or longer on 3/19/2018 was between the ages of 11 and 15.
- Compared to youth ages 10 or younger, youth ages 11 or older at the time of TPR (in FY2008-16) had 7 times the odds of staying in placement for two years versus being adopted within two years (not including direct consent adoptions).
- The two largest racial and ethnic groups who had been waiting for adoption for two years or longer on 3/19/2018 were Hispanics and Whites: 33.3% and 41.0%, respectively.
- Of youth removed from an adopted home in FY2008-18, the median length of time between adoption and first removal from home post-adoption was 7.3 years. The median age at first removal post-adoption* was 14 years old.
- Of youth whose adoption was dissolved in FY2008-18, the median length of time between adoption and dissolution was 7.3 years. The median age at dissolution* was 13 years old.
- The data on children removed post adoption and adoption dissolutions suggest children who are adopted between the ages of 5 and 6 years *may* have an elevated risk of experiencing a removal or dissolution between the years of 13 and 14 years old. This suggests perhaps providing additional supports at the time of adoption and active outreach and supports to those youth and their families at the time the youth is entering adolescence, approximately 10 or 11 years old.
- Fifty-eight percent (58%) of children who experienced an adoption dissolution in FY2008-18 were subsequently adopted.**

* See definitions page

** Data reflect dissolutions that occurred between FY2008-18 and subsequent adoption that occurred before 6/30/2018.

Terms and Definitions

- Termination of parental rights (TPR)

Termination of Parental Rights is the severing of the parent-child relationship by the state. If two parents have their parental rights terminated on different dates, the latter of the two dates is considered the TPR date.

- Waiting for adoption

A child is considered to be waiting for adoption if a child is 17 years old or younger and has a permanency goal of adoption and/or has parents' parental rights terminated.

If a child is waiting with TPR and a goal of adoption, length of time waiting for adoption is calculated from the date of TPR. If a child is waiting without TPR and with a goal of adoption, length of time waiting for adoption is calculated from the date at which permanency goal becomes adoption.

- Direct consent adoption

A child is adopted via direct consent when a birth parent gives direct consent for the adoption of his/her child to a specific family currently providing care to the child, instead of relinquishing his/her parental rights to a designated agency.

- Adoption disruption

Adoption disruption is an adoption process that ends after a child is placed in an adoptive home and before the adoption is legally finalized.

- Removal post-adoption

A removal post-adoption is when a child is removed from adoptive home after the adoption is legally finalized.

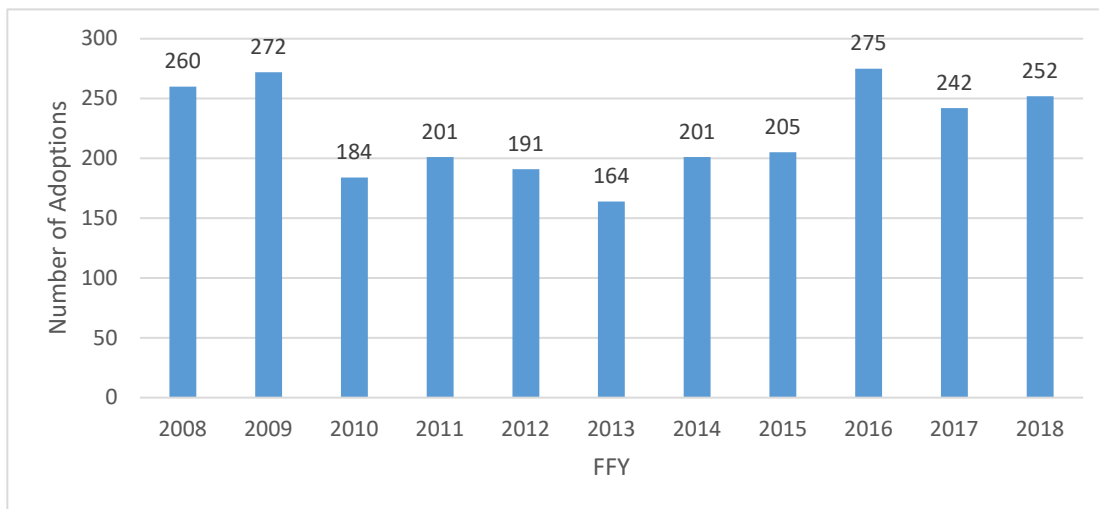
- Dissolution

Dissolution is a termination of parental right of adoptive parents after the adoption is legally finalized.

Adoptions

Consistent with Child Welfare best practice, RI DCYF aims to promote safety, permanency and well-being among all children, youth and their families. RI DCYF makes concerted efforts to preserve families and support children in their families. When efforts to maintain children in their homes can no longer ensure child safety, for the safety of the child, the child is placed in foster care. When a child is removed from their home, the primary goal for permanency is reunification with their family. If permanency cannot be achieved by reunification with their family, the child can achieve permanency with a forever family through adoption.

Number of adoptions over time, FFY* 2008-2018



Percent of adoptions over time, FFY* 2010-2018

Regardless of whether the number of adoptions increased or decreased over time (figure above), the percentage of adoptions among children exiting care has increased over time

(Percent exiting with reunification generally decreased and percent of children exiting with guardianship generally increased over the same time)

FFY	# exited care	% reunification	% guardianship	% adoption
2010	1,254	63.2%	7.6%	14.6%
2011	1,311	59.6%	9.6%	15.3%
2012	1,175	57.0%	11.5%	15.7%
2013	1,069	62.2%	9.9%	15.1%
2014	1,091	55.3%	8.1%	18.4%
2015	1,059	51.9%	11.5%	19.4%
2016	1,220	48.4%	11.3%	22.5%
2017	989	49.4%	10.8%	24.5%
2018	1,083	50.3%	11.7%	23.3%

Source: Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS).

*FFY: Federal Fiscal Year

Adoptions, continued

Indicators, FFY* 2018

Of all children discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption, percent discharged less than 24 months from date of latest removal from home:

38.5%

Compared to FFY2013, percent adopted less than 24 months from latest removal from home increased by 12.6% (from 34.2% to 38.5%).

Median time between child entering care and adoption, for children who have been adopted:

26.5 months

Compared to FFY2013, median time between child entering care and adoption decreased by 0.5 month.

Placement adopted from, FFY* 2018

Compared to FFY2013, percent adopted from non-relative foster family home decreased by 34.4% (from 78.7% to 51.6%)

Foster Family Home (Non-Relative):

N

%

130

51.6%

Foster Family Home (Relative):

118

46.8%

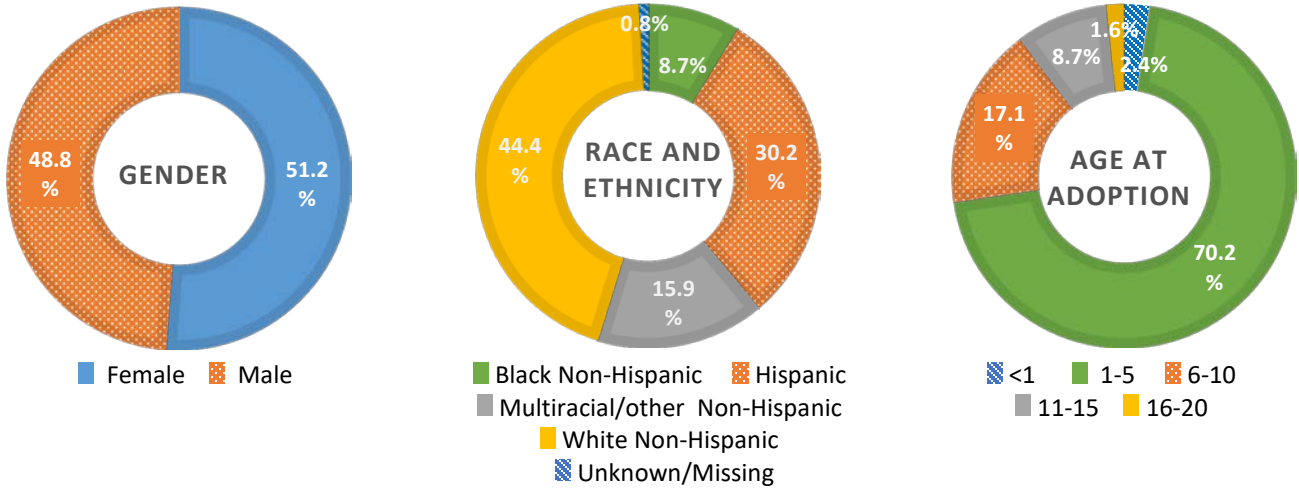
Compared to FFY2013, percent adopted from relative foster family home increased by 118.3% (from 21.3% to 46.8%)

Source: Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS).

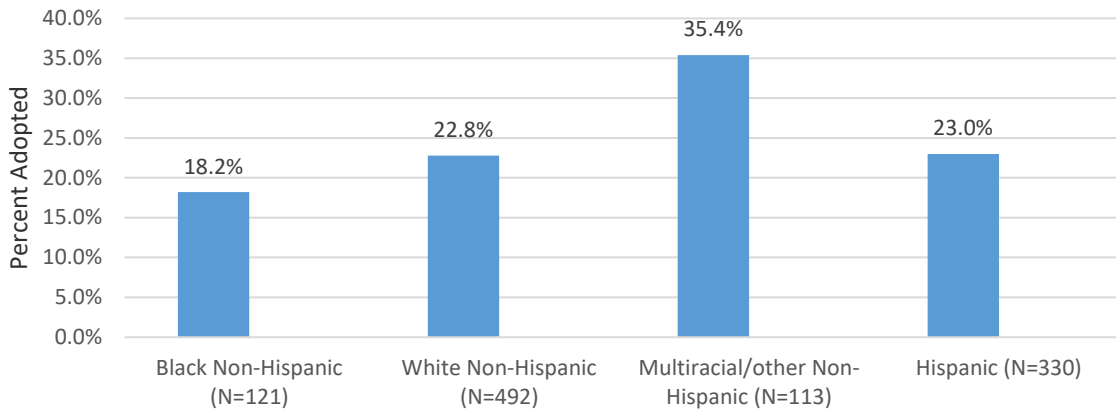
*FFY: Federal Fiscal Year

Adoptions, continued

Characteristics of children adopted, FFY* 2018 (N=252)



Disproportionality in percent adopted among exit cohort, by race and ethnicity, FFY* 2018 (N=1,083)

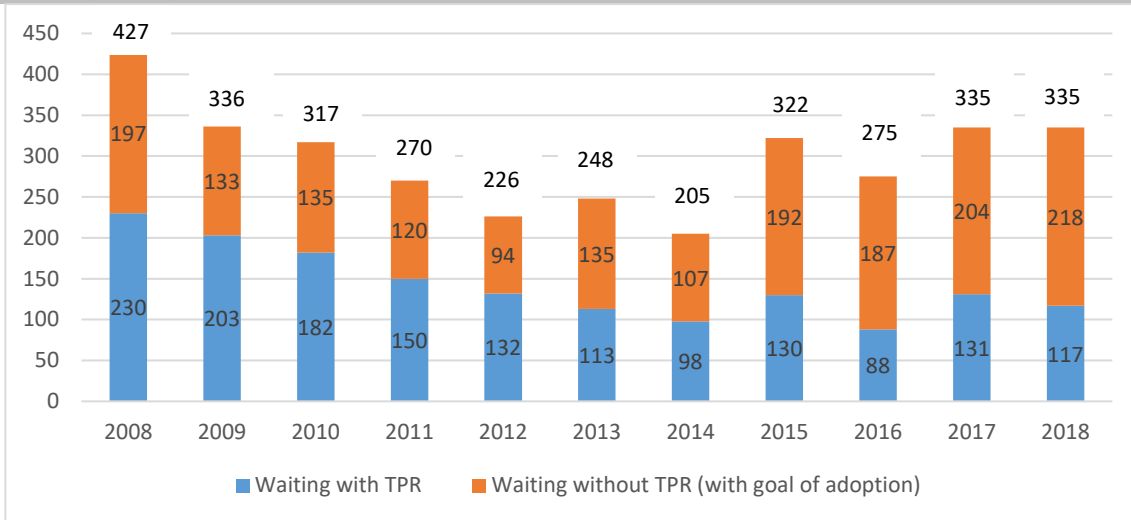


Source: Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS).
*FFY: Federal Fiscal Year

Children Waiting for Adoption

A child is considered to be waiting for adoption if a child is 17 years old or younger and has a permanency goal of adoption and/or has parents' parental rights terminated for both parents. It excludes children 16 years old and older whose parents' parental rights have been terminated and have a permanency goal of emancipation. There is no federal definition for a child waiting to be adopted. The definition used in this report is consistent with AFCARS.

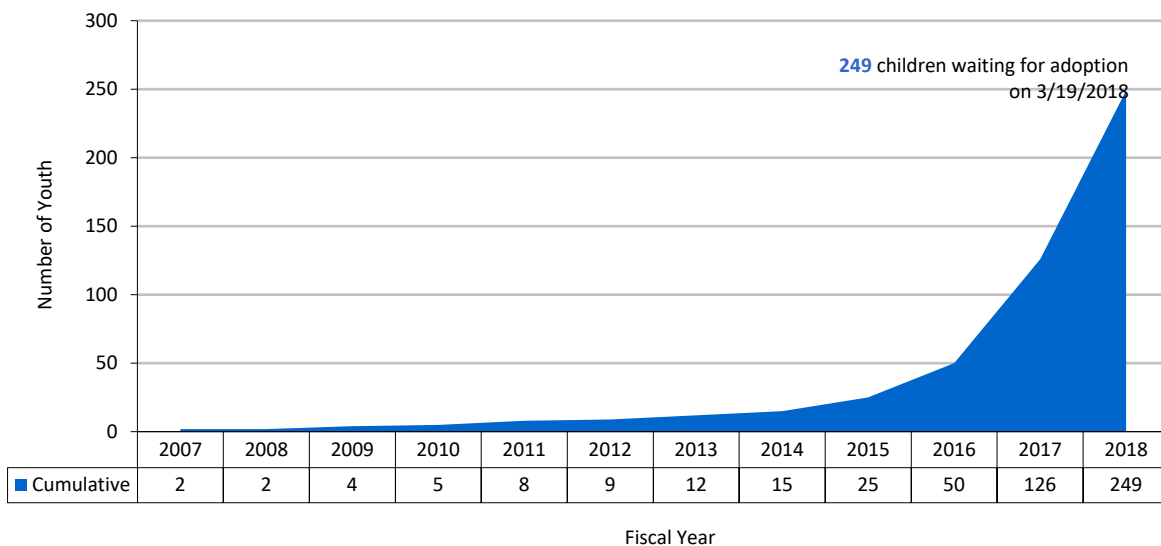
Number of children waiting for adoption by year, FFY 2008-2018



Source: Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS)

Children waiting for adoption on 3/19/2018: **249**
52 children with TPR and **197** without TPR (with goal of adoption)

Cumulative count of youth waiting for adoption, by year of TPR or goal of adoption



Source: Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST).

Children Waiting for Adoption, continued

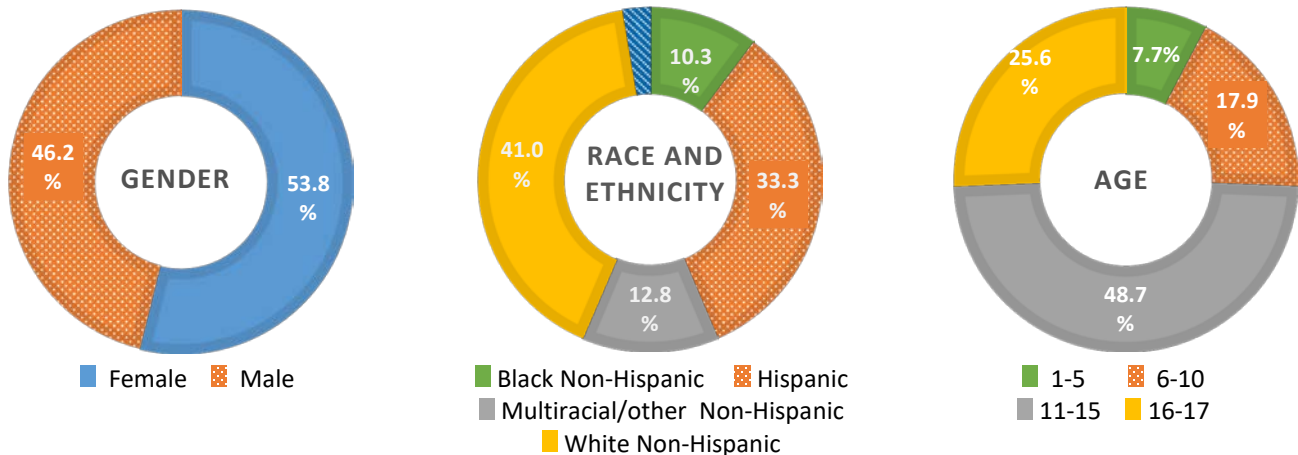
Current placement of children waiting for adoption on 3/19/2018

Placement Type	# children	%
Relative Kinship	106	42.6%
Non-relative Kinship	26	10.4%
Non-kinship	85	34.1%
Congregate Care	29	11.7%
Hospital	3	1.2%
Semi- / Independent Living	0	0%
TOTAL	249	100.0%

Median length of time waiting for adoption
for children waiting for adoption on 3/19/2018

with TPR: **1.68 years**
without TPR (with goal of adoption): **0.59 years**

Characteristics of children who have been waiting for adoption
for 2 years or longer on 3/19/2018, (N=39)
For characteristics of all children waiting for adoption, see Appendix Table1



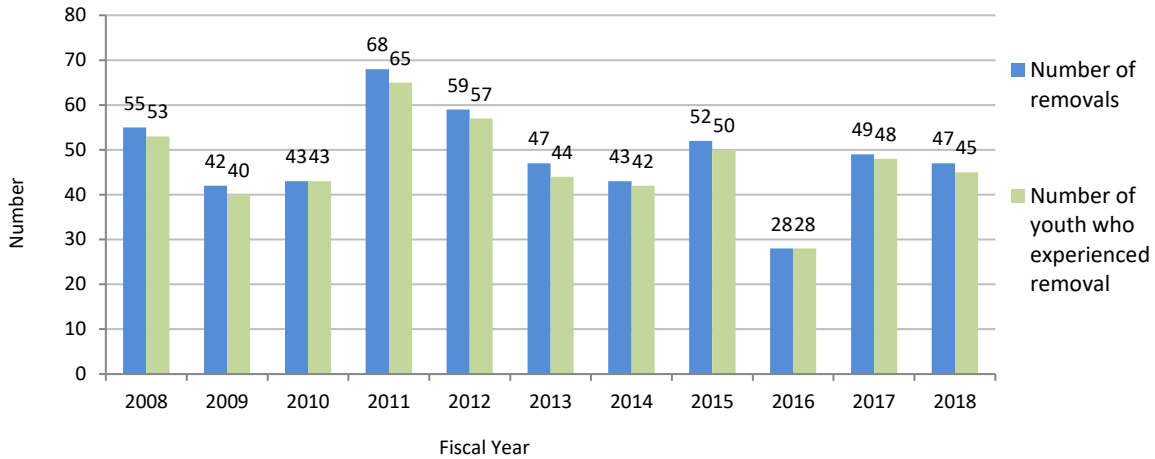
Source: RICHIST

Data Notes:

- Children waiting without TPR have a primary permanency goal of adoption.
- If kinship is missing among children in non-relative foster care and private foster care, it is assigned proportionally based on existing data.
- Length of time waiting for adoption begins from the date at which both parents' parental rights become terminated. If a child is waiting for adoption without TPR, length of time waiting for adoption begins from the date at which the child's permanency goal becomes adoption.

Removals Post-Adoption, FY 2008-2018

Number of removals and youth who experienced removals from adoptive home, by year of removal



First placement type after removal from adoptive home

Placement Type	# removals	%
Relative Kinship	49	9.2%
Non-relative Kinship	22	4.1%
Non-kinship	59	11.1%
Congregate Care	395	74.1%
Semi-/ Independent Living	2	0.9%
Other	3	0.6%
TOTAL	533	100.0%

Source: RICHIST

Data Notes:

- If kinship is missing among children in non-relative foster care and private foster care, it is assigned proportionally based on existing data.
- Number of youth who experienced removals from adopted home is unduplicated within a fiscal year. However, a youth may have experienced removal in more than one year.
- Congregate Care includes acute residential treatment, emergency shelter, assessment and stabilization center, group homes, high end residential treatment, purchase of service emergency shelter, purchase of service group homes, residential counseling center, residential treatment center, and residential treatment center- substance abuse. Other includes DAS inpatient and psychiatric hospital.

Removals Post-Adoption, FY 2008-2018, continued

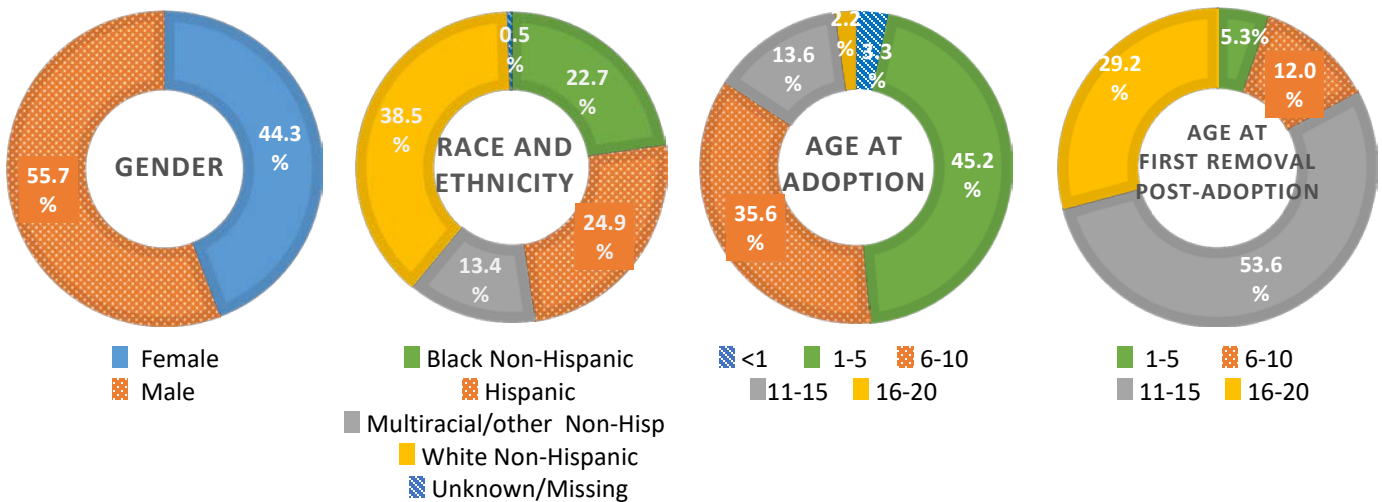
Characteristics of children who experienced a removal post-adoption (N=418)

Median age at adoption: **6 years**

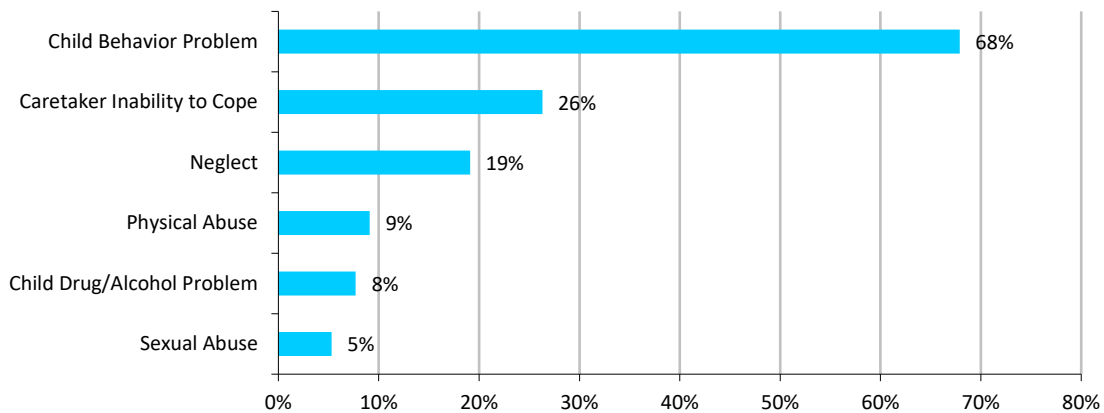
Median age at first removal post-adoption: **14 years**

Median length of time between adoption and first removal: **7.3 years**

Percent reunified with parents within 6 months of removal: **22.0%**



Removal reasons associated with first removal post-adoption (Percent of children removed by removal reason, RI DYCF)



Source: RICHIST

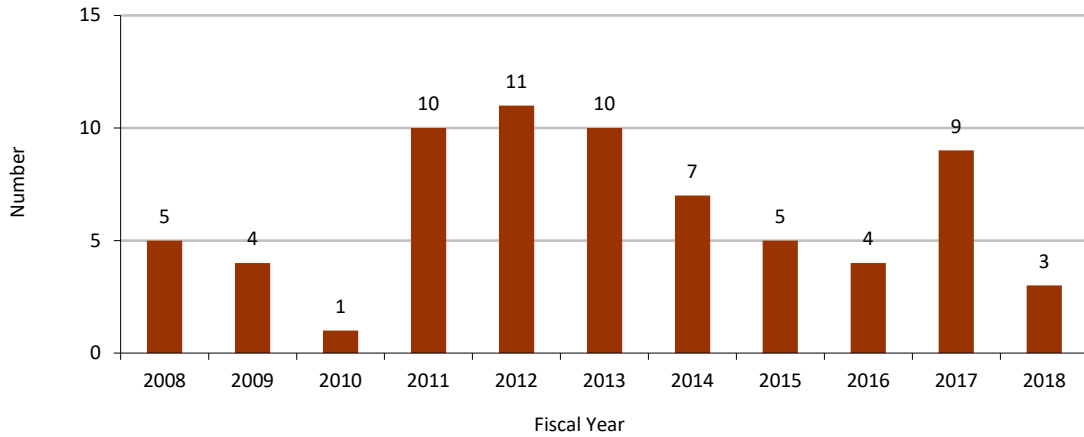
Data Notes:

- Adoption age of children who experienced a removal from adopted home follows similar distribution as adoption age of all children adopted during same time period.
- Percentages do not add up to 100 as there can be more than one removal reason associated with removal. Less than 5 percent of children who experienced removal after adoption had the following removal reasons associated with the removal: relinquishment, inadequate housing, parent death, parent incarceration, parent drug/alcohol problem, or abandonment.

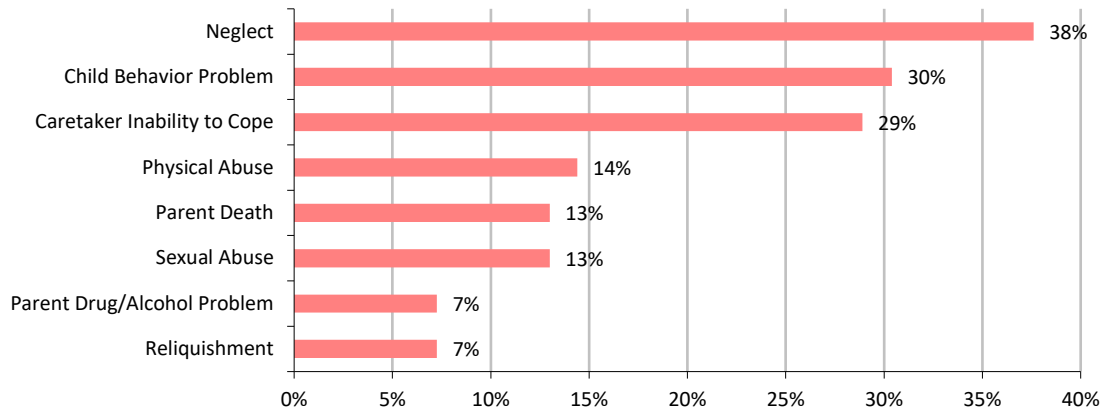
Dissolutions (TPR After Adoption), FY 2008-2018

Adoption dissolution is defined as a termination of parental rights for youth who have been adopted.

Number of dissolutions, by year (N = 69)



Removal reasons associated with dissolution
(Percent of children removed by removal reason, RI DYCF)



Source: RICHIST.

Data Note:

- Percentages do not add up to 100 as there can be more than one removal reason associated with removal. Less than 5 percent of children who experienced dissolution had the following removal reasons associated with dissolution: inadequate housing, parent incarceration, child drug/alcohol problem, or abandonment.

Dissolutions (TPR After Adoption), FY 2008-2018, continued

Characteristics of children who experienced a dissolution
For characteristics of children by their adoption status post dissolution, see Appendix Table 2

Median age at adoption: **5 years**

Percent adopted by direct consent: **37.7%**

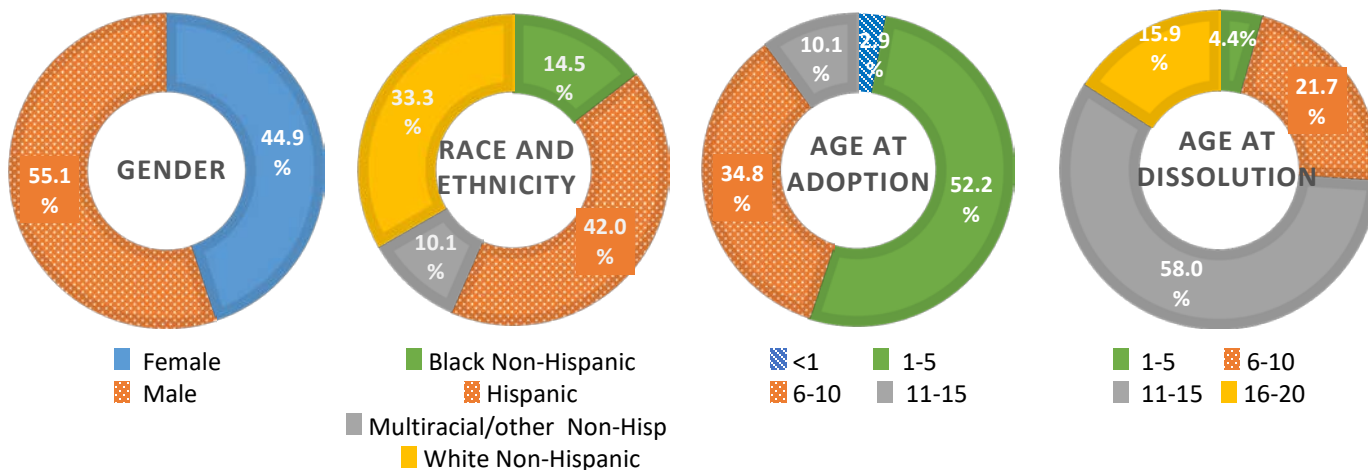
Median age at dissolution: **13 years**

Median length of time between adoption and dissolution: **7.3 years**

Percent adopted after dissolution: **58.0%**

(Only reflect subsequent adoptions that occurred before 6/30/2018)

Median age at adoption after dissolution (N=40): **13 years**



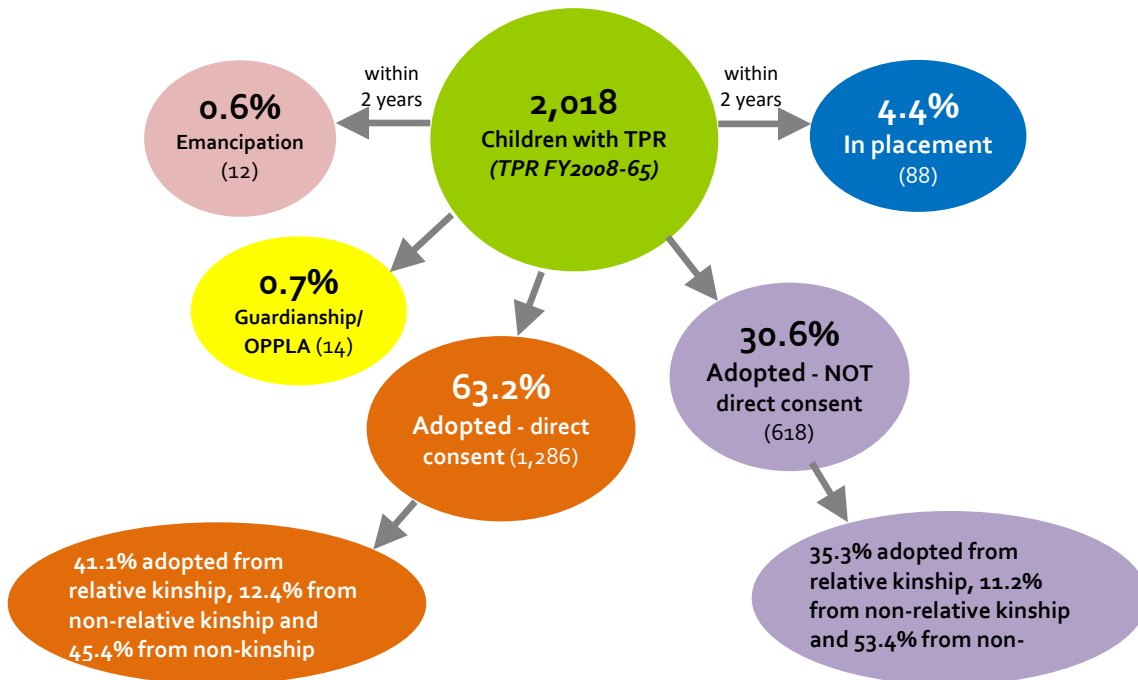
Source: RICHIST.

Data Notes:

- Adoption age of children who experienced a dissolution follows similar distribution as adoption age of all children adopted during same time period.

Outcomes for Youth whose Parents' Parental Rights were Terminated in FY 2008-2016

For characteristics of youth whose parents' parental rights were terminated, see Appendix Table3



Factors significantly associated with remaining in care 2 years post-TPR Odds ratio (OR) of staying in placement 2 years post-TPR compared to being adopted - NOT direct consent

❖ Age at TPR

Youth ages 11 or older at the time of TPR have 7 times the odds of staying in placement compared to youth ages 10 or younger

❖ Disability

Youth with disability have 3 times the odds of staying in placement compared to those without

❖ Sibling group

Youth in part of sibling group have 2 times the odds of staying in placement compared to those not in sibling group

❖ Age at first removal

Youth ages 11 or older at the time of first removal have 4 times the odds of staying in placement compared to those 10 or younger

❖ Age at most recent removal

Youth ages 11 or older at the time of most recent removal have 4 times the odds of staying in placement compared to those 10 or younger

Characteristics of youth	Unadjusted OR* (C.I.)
Age at TPR (years)	
11 or older <i>compared to</i> 10 or younger	6.98 (4.35 – 11.20)
Disability*	
Yes <i>compared to</i> No	3.12 (1.97 – 4.93)
Part of sibling group	
Yes <i>compared to</i> No	1.90 (1.20– 3.01)
Age at first removal (years)	
11 or older <i>compared to</i> 10 or younger	4.25 (2.35 – 7.69)
Age at most recent removal (years)	
11 or older <i>compared to</i> 10 or younger	4.02 (2.31 – 7.01)

Odds ratio on this table are unadjusted and does not control for other factors that may contribute to the outcome. Table includes only the factors significantly associated with odds of staying in placement 2 years post-TPR (p<0.01). Placement at the time of TPR, experience of disruptions (by proxy definition), number of placements post-TPR are significantly associated with odds of staying in placement 2 years post-TPR, but are not included because of large confidence interval. Gender and number of removals between first removal and TPR were not significantly associated.

Source: RICHIST

Data Note: If kinship is missing among children in non-relative foster care or private foster care, it is assigned proportionally based on existing data.

Appendix

Table 1: Children in RI DCYF foster care waiting for adoption for 2 years or longer compared to less than 2 years, by demographic characteristics (on 3/15/2016)

	Total	Children waiting for 2 years or longer		Children waiting for less than 2 years	
Number and percent of children waiting for adoption	249	39	15.7%	210	84.3%
Gender					
Female	119	21	17.7%	98	82.3%
Male	130	18	13.8%	112	86.2%
Race and ethnicity					
Black Non-Hispanic	19	4	21.1%	15	78.9%
Hispanic (any race)	80	13	16.2%	67	83.8%
White Non-Hispanic	124	16	12.9%	108	87.1%
Multiracial/Other Non-Hispanic	24	5	20.8%	19	79.2%
Unknown	2	1	50.0%	1	50.0%
Median age (years)	6	14		5	
Age (years)					
<1	3	0	0.0%	3	100.0%
1-5	107	3	2.8%	104	97.2%
6-10	63	7	11.1%	66	88.9%
11-15	56	19	33.9%	37	66.1%
16-17	20	10	50.0%	10	50.0%
Median age at TPR or goal of adoption (years)	6	9		5	
Median length of time waiting (years)	0.8	2.9		0.6	
Removal reasons					
Neglect	150	21	14.0%	129	86.0%
Caretaker Inability to Cope	49	11	22.5%	38	77.5%
Parent Death	6	0	0.0%	6	100.0%
Parent Incarceration	17	4	23.5%	13	76.5%
Inadequate Housing	24	5	20.8%	19	79.2%
Child Behavior Problem	14	7	50.0%	7	50.0%
Child Drug/Alcohol Problem	3	0	0.0%	3	100.0%
Parent Drug/Alcohol Problem	109	9	8.3%	100	91.7%
Relinquishment	4	3	75.0%		25.0%
Sexual Abuse	5	1	20.0%	4	80.0%
Physical Abuse	29	4	13.8%	25	86.2%

Source: RICHIST.

Data Notes:

- Percentages are calculated across rows.
- Foster care: Federal definition, including all children in out-of-home placement.
- Waiting for adoption: A child is considered to be waiting for adoption if a child is 17 years old or younger and has a permanency goal of adoption and/or has parents' parental rights terminated.
- Length of time waiting: If a child is waiting with TPR and a goal of adoption, length of time waiting for adoption is calculated from the date of TPR. If a child is waiting without TPR and with a goal of adoption, length of time waiting for adoption is calculated from the date at which permanency goal becomes adoption.

Appendix

Table 2: Children adopted after dissolution compared to those NOT adopted, by demographic characteristics

	Total	Children adopted after dissolution		Children NOT adopted after dissolution	
Number and percent of children who experienced dissolution	69	40	58.0%	29	42.0%
Gender					
Female	31	19	61.3%	12	38.7%
Male	38	21	55.3%	17	44.7%
Race and ethnicity					
Black Non-Hispanic	10	9	90.0%	1	10.0%
Hispanic (any race)	29	16	55.2%	13	44.8%
White Non-Hispanic	23	10	43.5%	13	56.5%
Multiracial/Other Non-Hispanic	7	5	71.4%	2	28.6%
Unknown	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Median age at initial adoption (years)	5	4		7	
Age at initial adoption (years)					
<1	2	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
1-5	36	25	69.4%	11	30.6%
6-10	24	11	45.8%	13	54.2%
11-15	7	2	28.6%	5	71.4%
16-20	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Median age at dissolution (years)	13	12		14	
Age at dissolution (years)					
<1	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
1-5	3	3	100.0%	0	0.0%
6-10	15	13	86.7%	2	13.3%
11-15	40	18	45.0%	22	55.0%
16-20	11	6	54.6%	5	45.4%
Median length of time between initial adoption and dissolution (years)	7.3	7.2		7.5	
Removal Reasons for Dissolution					
Neglect	26	16	61.5%	10	38.5%
Caretaker Inability to Cope	20	7	35.0%	13	65.0%
Parent Death	9	9	100.0%	0	0.0%
Parent Incarceration	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Inadequate Housing	1	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Child Behavior Problem	21	7	33.3%	14	66.7%
Child Drug/Alcohol Problem	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Parent Drug/Alcohol Problem	5	5	100.0%	0	0.0%
Relinquishment	5	2	40.0%	3	60.0%
Sexual Abuse	9	3	33.3%	6	66.7%
Physical Abuse	10	8	80.0%	2	20.0%

Source: RICLIST.

Data Notes:

- Percentages are calculated across rows.
- Dissolution: Dissolution is a termination of parental right of adoptive parents after the adoption is legally finalized.

Appendix

Table 3: Outcomes two years post-TPR

Characteristics of Youth	Overall (N=2,018)	Adopted - NOT Direct Consent (n=618)		In Placement (n=88)		Emancipation (n=12)		Guardianship/ OPPLA (n=14)		Adopted - Direct Consent (n=1,286)	
Median age at TPR (years)		4		12		17		10		3	
Age at TPR (years)											
10 or younger	1,721	512	29.8%	36	2.1%	0	0.0%	7	0.4%	1,166	67.8%
11 or older	297	106	35.17%	52	17.5%	12	4.0%	7	2.4%	120	40.4%
Gender											
Female	970	283	29.2%	43	4.4%	3	0.3%	7	0.7%	634	5.4%
Male	1,048	335	32.0%	45	4.3%	9	0.9%	7	0.7%	652	62.2%
Race/ethnicity											
Black Non-Hispanic	267	88	33.0%	11	4.1%	1	0.4%	4	1.5%	163	61.1%
Hispanic (any race)	553	167	30.2%	27	4.9%	1	0.2%	2	0.4%	356	64.4%
Multiracial/other Non-Hispanic	318	77	24.2%	11	3.5%	3	0.9%	2	0.6%	225	70.8%
White Non-Hispanic	863	279	32.3%	39	4.5%	7	0.8%	6	0.7%	532	61.7%
Unknown	17	7	--	0	--	0	--	0	--	10	--
Disability											
Yes	642	202	31.5%	53	8.3%	3	0.5%	6	0.9%	378	58.9%
No	1,370	416	30.4%	35	2.6%	9	0.7%	8	0.6%	902	65.8%
Part of sibling group											
Yes	807	247	30.6%	50	6.2%	7	0.9%	6	0.7%	497	61.6%
No	1,075	338	31.4%	36	3.4%	5	0.5%	8	0.7%	688	64.0%
Unknown	136	33	--	2	--	0	--	0	--	101	--
Placement at time of TPR											
Congregate Care	46	9	19.6%	29	63.0%	3	6.5%	4	8.7%	1	2.2%
Non-Congregate Care	1,939	593	30.6%	55	2.8%	8	0.4%	10	0.5%	1,273	65.7%
Unknown	33	16	--	4	--	1	--	0	--	12	--
Experienced any disruptions within 2 years after TPR (by proxy definition) TPR											
Yes	100	39	39.0%	56	56.0%	2	2.0%	3	3.0%	0	0.0%
No	1,918	579	30.2%	32	1.7%	10	0.5%	11	0.6%	1,286	67.1%
Median age at first removal (years)		1		6		11		6		0	
Age at first removal (years)											
10 or younger	1,920	578	30.1%	68	3.5%	4	0.2%	8	0.4%	1,262	65.7%
11 or older	98	40	40.1%	20	20.4%	8	8.2%	6	6.1%	24	24.5%

Characteristics of Youth	Overall (N=2,018)	Adopted - NOT Direct Consent (n=618)		In Placement (n=88)		Emancipation (n=12)		Guardianship/ OPPLA (n=14)		Adopted - Direct Consent (n=1286)	
Number of placements within 2 years post-TPR											
3 or less	1,970	612	31.1%	51	2.6%	10	0.5%	11	0.6%	1,286	65.3%
4 or more	48	6	12.1%	37	77.1%	2	4.2%	3	6.3%	0	0.0%
Number of removals between first removal and TPR											
1 or less	1,584	488	30.8%	59	3.7%	7	0.4%	9	0.6%	1,021	64.5%
2 or more	434	130	30.0%	29	6.7%	5	1.2%	5	1.2%	265	61.1%
Median age at most recent removal (years)		2		9		12		8		1	
Age at most recent removal (years)											
10 or younger	1,884	568	30.2%	65	3.5%	1	0.1%	8	0.4%	1,242	65.9%
11 or older	134	20	37.3%	23	17.2%	11	8.2%	6	4.5%	44	32.8%
Removal reasons for most recent removal											
Physical Abuse	154	37	24.0%	7	4.6%	0	0.0%	1	0.7%	109	70.1%
Sex Abuse	46	10	21.7%	7	15.2%	1	2.2%	0	0.0%	28	60.7%
Neglect	1,210	350	28.9%	49	4.1%	6	0.5%	6	0.5%	799	66.0%
Inadequate Housing	304	100	32.9%	10	3.3%	4	1.3%	0	0.0%	190	72.5%
Parent Alcohol/Drug Problem	869	299	34.4%	21	2.4%	6	0.7%	2	0.2%	541	62.3%
Child Alcohol/Drug Problem	19	7	36.8%	1	5.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	11	57.9%
Child Behavior Problem	57	8	14.0%	18	31.6%	3	5.3%	4	7.0%	24	42.1%
Caretaker Inability to Cope	509	117	23.0%	28	5.5%	4	0.8%	3	0.6%	357	70.1%
Other	327	156	47.7%	13	4.0%	0	0.0%	4	1.2%	154	47.1%
Median length of time between (years)											
Removal and TPR		1.8		2.4		3.0		2.5		2.1	
TPR and Adoption (if adopted)		0.4		--		--		--		--	

Source: RICLIST.

Data Notes:

- Percentages are calculated across rows.
- Disruption is determined using proxy definition: a child is placed with a foster family or a pre-adoptive family after TPR and the placement ended due to child needing higher level of care, child's behavior problem, placement in longer term foster care setting or placement match problem. RI DCYF is implementing more systematic way to accurately monitor disruption.
- Disability: Includes mental retardation, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, speech impairment, visual impairment, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and other diagnosed conditions or disabilities.
- Placement at time of TPR: Congregate Care includes acute residential treatment, emergency shelter, group homes, high end residential treatment and residential treatment center.
- Removal reasons: Other includes parent incarceration, parent death, abandonment and relinquishment.