

# Reentry to Foster Care



Capacity Building  
CENTER FOR STATES

## CFSR Round 4 Statewide Data Indicator Series

The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) are a partnership between federal and state staff. The CFSR process enables the Children's Bureau to ensure conformity with federal child welfare requirements, determine what is happening to children and families receiving child welfare services, and assist states in enhancing their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes related to safety, permanency, and well-being.

Statewide data indicators are used in the CFSR Round 4 process to evaluate state performance on safety and permanency outcomes. Performance on the indicators helps identify strengths and improvement needs. The Statewide Data Indicator Series presents detailed information on each statewide data indicator, including measure definitions, calculation specifications, data requirements, and national performance values for CFSR Round 4.



### CFSR Permanency Outcome 1

Performance on this indicator is used to evaluate CFSR Permanency Outcome 1—children have permanency and stability in their living situations. This indicator measures whether children reenter foster care within 12 months of their discharge to permanency (excluding adoptions).

#### Definition

Of all children who exit foster care in a 12-month period to reunification, living with a relative, or guardianship, what percentage reentered foster care within 12 months of their discharge?

#### Risk Adjustment

Performance is risk adjusted by age of child at exit and by state. Adjusting by age at exit controls for the fact that children of different ages have different likelihoods of experiencing the outcome, regardless of the quality of care a state provides. Adjusting by state accounts for the underlying risk of experiencing the outcome in that particular state.

### National Performance



**5.6 PERCENT**

(A lower value is desirable)

#### Numerator

Number of children in the denominator who reentered foster care within 12 months of their discharge

#### Denominator

Number of children in a 12-month period who discharged to reunification, living with a relative, or guardianship

#### Examining Equity

The Children's Bureau provides observed performance data disaggregated by age, race/ethnicity, and locality to states in the supplemental context data sent with the CFSR State Data Profile. State teams can use these data to help identify variations in the experiences and outcomes of different populations, including potential evidence of disproportionality and disparity.



## Data Quality Checks Performed

- ✓ Dropped records (greater than 10%)
- ✓ AFCARS IDs do not match from one period to the next (greater than 40%)
- ✓ Missing date of birth (greater than 5%)
- ✓ Missing date of latest removal (greater than 5%)
- ✓ Date of birth after date of entry (greater than 5%)
- ✓ Date of birth after date of exit (greater than 5%)
- ✓ Enters and exits care the same day (greater than 5%)
- ✓ Exit date is prior to the removal date (greater than 5%)
- ✓ Missing discharge reason (exit date exists) (greater than 10%)
- ✓ Percentage of children on first removal (greater than 95%)

### Data Periods Used to Calculate the National Performance

AFCARS 20A, 20B, 21A, 21B

### Primary Data Elements Required for Calculation

AFCARS Foster Care Element #1:	Title IV-E agency
AFCARS Foster Care Element #4:	Record number
AFCARS Foster Care Element #6:	Child's date of birth
AFCARS Foster Care Element #21:	Date of latest removal
AFCARS Foster Care Element #56:	Date of discharge from foster care
AFCARS Foster Care Element #58:	Reason for discharge

For more information: [CFSR Statewide Data Indicators webpage \(Center for States\)](#)

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## Notes

Reentry is based on children who discharge from foster care to reunification with the child's parents or primary caregivers, living with a relative, or guardianship. Discharges to adoption are not included because they cannot be tracked reliably since some states issue new child identifiers if a child who was previously adopted enters foster care.

## Inclusions

If a child has multiple reentries within 12 months of discharge, only the first reentry is selected.

## Exclusions

The following are excluded:

- Youth who enter or exit care at age 18 or older
- Children whose discharge from their first foster care episode did not have a discharge reason
- Children whose date of latest removal for the reentry episode is reported as being before the date of discharge for the prior episode
- Children who reenter foster care within the same reporting period due to AFCARS reporting structure not including discharge reason for first episode

