

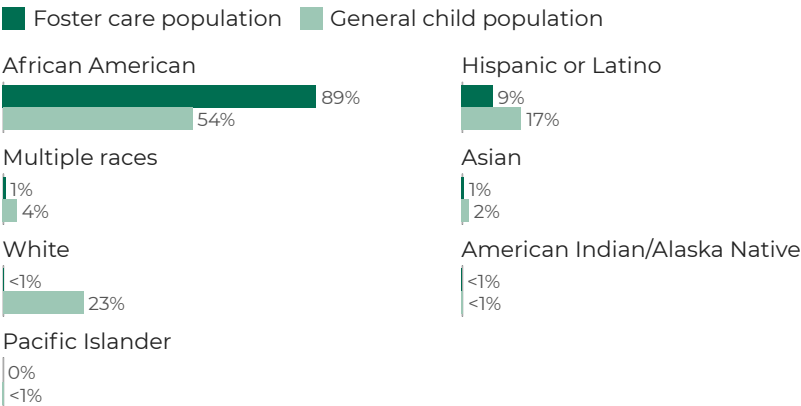
State-level data for understanding  
child welfare in the United States

Foster Care

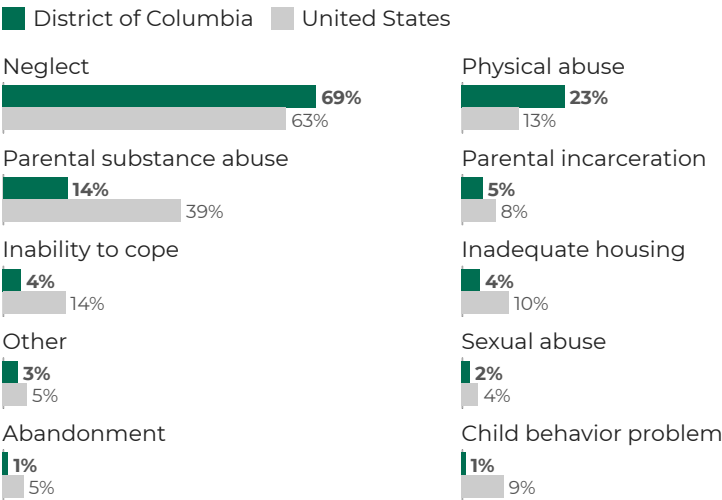
Federal Fiscal Year 2017

Children are placed in foster care when a child protective services worker and court have determined it is not safe for them to remain home. Many children are traumatized by displacement from their family and disruption of their usual routine and familiar surroundings. Children in foster care need strong relationships with caring adults, a network of social support, and services to cope with the challenging circumstances of home removal.

Foster care caseload in District of Columbia by race/ethnicity<sup>6</sup>



Foster care entry reasons<sup>7</sup>



District of  
Columbia

Number children in foster care<sup>1</sup>

751

United States: 442,995

Foster care rate per 1,000<sup>2</sup>

5.8

United States: 5.8

Number of children who entered foster care<sup>3</sup>

321

United States: 269,690

Average length of time in foster care<sup>4</sup>

24.9 months

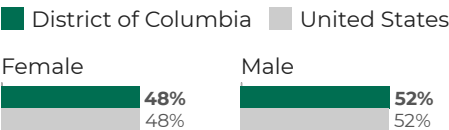
United States: 20.1 months

Percent of children in foster care 5 plus years

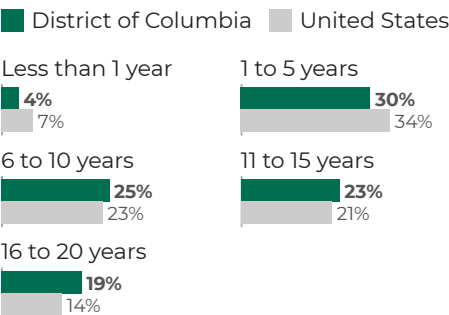
7%

United States: 6%

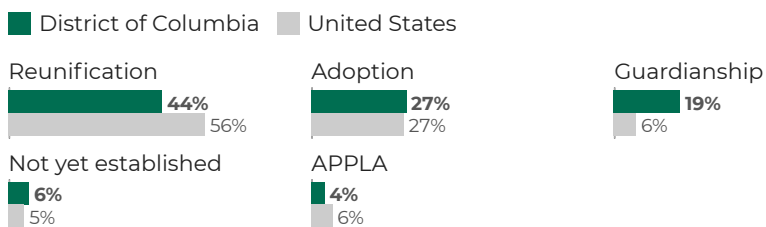
Gender of children in foster care



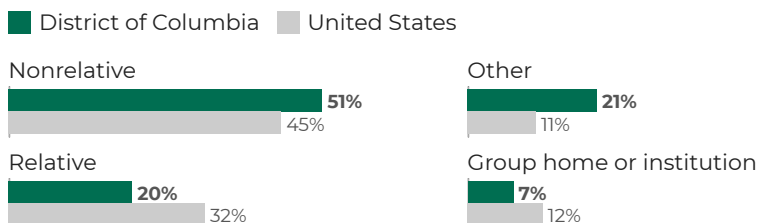
Age distribution of children in foster care<sup>5</sup>



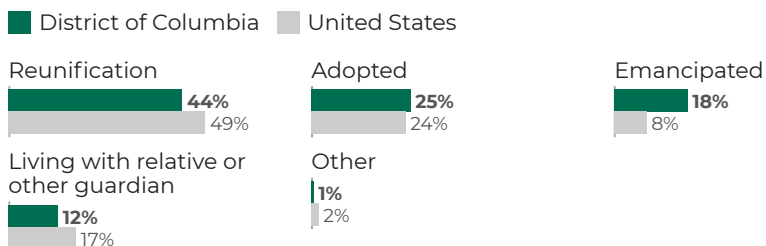
## Case plan goal for children in foster care<sup>8</sup>



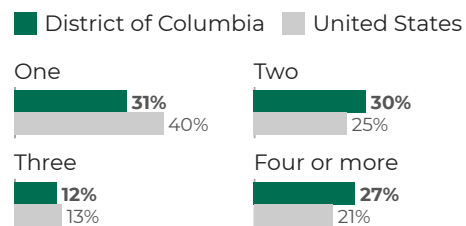
## Foster care by placement type<sup>10</sup>



## Outcomes of children exiting foster care<sup>11</sup>



## Number of different foster care placements<sup>9</sup>



Number of children who were at risk of aging out of foster care<sup>12</sup>

**51**

United States: 39,538

Number of youth who aged out of care

**70**

United States: 19,945

Of children who aged out of foster care, percent who had been in care since before age 13

**20%**

United States: 17%

**Source, unless specified otherwise:** This information is from the federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and represents the federal fiscal year 2017 reporting period (October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017). Unless otherwise noted, for each calculation, children who were missing data on the relevant indicator were excluded from analyses.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Number of children of all ages currently in foster care on September 30, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Foster care rate is based on data from the U. S. Census Bureau from 2017 and is publicly available at the Kids Count Data Center.

<sup>3</sup> Number of children whose date of most recent removal was during the 2017 federal fiscal year.

<sup>4</sup> Length of stay in care is calculated based on the current removal episode.

<sup>5</sup> Does not include children over age 20.

<sup>6</sup> If a child is determined to be of Hispanic origin, they are only counted as Hispanic and are not included in any other racial/ethnic categories. Data for the general child population under age 18 in 2017 is from the U. S. Census Bureau and is publicly available from the Kids Count Data Center.

<sup>7</sup> For children entering care in FY 2017. "Other" includes drug or alcohol abuse by the child, child's disability, relinquishment, and parental death.

<sup>8</sup> APPLA stands for Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement.

<sup>9</sup> The number of places the child has lived, including the current setting (except for trial home visits), during the current removal episode.

<sup>10</sup> Other placement types include pre-adoptive home, runaway, supervised independent living, and trial home visit.

<sup>11</sup> Emancipation means the child/youth legally reached majority (i.e., is considered an adult) due to age, marriage, etc.

<sup>12</sup> Includes children ages 9 and older with a case goal of long-term foster care or emancipation.