



A Profile of Young Children in Westchester County Foster Care

Kim Brennan, Lauren Frank BS, Lauren Kennish, Lara Perkins, Jacklyn Rukaj MA, Ed.S, Vini Zaninovic BA, LEND Trainees

Trupti Rao, Psy.D., Beth Reiman, Ph.D., LCSW, LEND Faculty

Janet Stockheim, M.D., Medical Director, Dept. of Social Services-Pediatric Unit, Community Partner

Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (LEND) Program

Westchester Institute for Human Development, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities and New York Medical College



Background

68%

of substantiated maltreatment cases involved children under the age of 5

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Witnessed family violence
- Parental substance abuse

70-80%

of children in foster care have some documented trauma

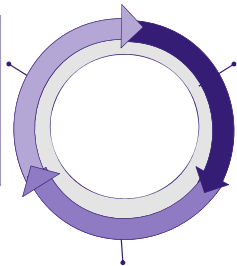
- Does not include trauma from being placed in foster care
- More infants with a sibling in care are also being placed

60%

of young children in foster care have developmental delays

- Compared to 4-10% in the general population
- Higher instances of behavioral and emotional problems

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
Potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood, such as experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect



Trauma
Deeply distressing or disturbing experience that lingers long after the event

Health Impacts

Include developmental delays, mental health concerns, or attachment problems

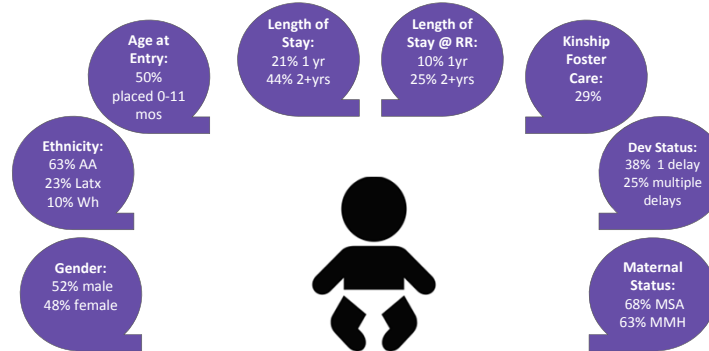
Objective

- Create descriptive profile of young children in foster care in Westchester.

Methods

- Retrospective records review of children under 5 placed in Westchester County family foster care from 2017-2018.
- Compiled descriptive data.
- Conducted Chi-Square and McNemar's analyses.

Descriptive Profile (N=124)



Over 50% of children entering Westchester County foster care from 2015-2018 were under the age of 5.

Results

African American vs. Latinx $\chi^2 (1, N=124) = 61.33, p=0.00$	Maternal substance use and child weight (underweight) $\chi^2 (1, N=93) = 5.54, p=0.01$	EI/CPSE eval pre vs. post placement $\chi^2 (1, N=57) = 13.78, p=0.00$
African American vs. Caucasian $\chi^2 (1, N=124) = 24.63, p=0.00$		

Discussion & Next Steps

- **Profile suggested:** Infants make up at least 1/2 of the sample, LOS is higher than the national average, and developmental needs are prevalent in young children in foster care.
- **Notable findings:** African American children were disproportionately represented, Maternal Substance Abuse related to children's weight when placed, and differences between EI/CPSE services pre and post placement.
- **Study limitations:** Limited health and psychosocial information.
- **Next Steps:** Continue data collection (2015-2016) and disseminate findings to DSS and family court judges.