



Children's Services

Study of Outcomes
for African American
Children in
Minnesota's
Child Protection System

Report
to the 2002
Minnesota
Legislature

April 2002

**For the Study of Outcomes for African American Children
in Minnesota's Child Protection System Report**

This report was prepared by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Children's Services Administration, and produced for the Legislature in compliance with the 2001 Minnesota Session Laws, First Special Session, Chapter 9, Article 11, Section 15. Copies of this report are available from Children's Services at 651-296-3800.

Total estimate cost: \$3,600

Cost of preparation: 120 hours x \$25 = \$3,000

Cost of printing: 200 x \$3 = \$600

This information is available in other forms to people with disabilities by calling 651-282-5329, or contact us through the Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529 (TTY) or 877-627-3848 (speech to speech).

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
ON THE
STUDY OF OUTCOMES FOR
AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN IN
MINNESOTA'S CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

APRIL 2002

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Children's Services Administration
444 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155

Table of Contents

Executive summary.....	4
Introduction	6
Assumptions and values.....	7
Analysis of data	8
Factors affecting racial disparities	13
Minnesota data on risk factors and disparities.....	15
The impact of racial bias.....	16
Conclusion and recommendations	19
Appendices	
I Bibliography on Disparities.....	21
II Literature Review on Racial Disparities in Child Welfare	25
III African American Disparities Committee Members	33
IV Current Activities and Strategies to Address Disparities by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Children’s Services Administration.....	34
V History of Efforts in Minnesota to Address Racial Disparity.....	35
VI Racial Disparities Facts, Minnesota Trends	38
VII Study of Outcomes for African American Children in the Child Protection System	43
VIII African American Disparities Committee’s Activities	44
IX County Profiles	45

Executive summary

Racial disparities exist in Minnesota. Racial disparities in the child welfare system are a call to all of us, regardless of race, to gather together, to understand the cause of the disparities, and to craft action plans that will genuinely improve the lives of African American children and their families. Racial disparities in Minnesota's child welfare system are found in the entire process, from initial reporting to acceptance of cases to discharge of children from the system. This is an urgent crisis in Minnesota's child welfare system.

Until we do that, we will continue to face disparities that have existed for years:

- As a percentage of the general population, African American children are five times more likely to be in out-of-home care.
- African American families are more likely to be reported for neglect (80 percent for African Americans versus 64 percent for Caucasians).
- African American children are nearly twice as likely to enter care for "parent reasons" (e.g., abuse, abandonment) than Caucasian children.

(DHS Data 2000)

The Minnesota Department of Human Services convened the African American Disparities Committee in 2001 to:

- study why African American children in Minnesota are disproportionately represented in child welfare out-of-home placements
- study how each stage of the child protection system affects children and determine why outcomes differ by race
- use child welfare performance indicators and data to understand disparities and why they lead to different outcomes for African American children
- study and determine if there are decision-making points in the child protection system that lead to different outcomes for children and how those decision-making points affect outcomes for children.

State legislators, state and county social services administrators, community members and others have a responsibility to eradicate the over representation of African American children in out-of-home placement in Minnesota.

The committee recommends:

- monitoring and evaluating county practices to eliminate disparities
- emphasizing culturally competent training and innovative service strategies
- working on partnerships with the African American community and
- advocating for supports needed by African American families to ensure children are growing up in safe and nurturing homes, and families are thriving.

Analysis must take place at the family and community level. Data systems are poorly equipped to capture human possibilities because numbers do not reflect the strengths that exist in African American families and in their community. This report is a beginning in what will surely be a prolonged effort to study and take the necessary steps to improve the child welfare system, especially for African American children.

Introduction

This report complies with the legislative mandate in the 2001 Minnesota Session Laws, First Special Session, Chapter 9, Article 11, Section 15 (see Appendix VII for the full mandate). The mandate instructed the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services in consultation with local social services agencies, councils of color, representatives of communities of color and others to study why African American children in Minnesota are disproportionately represented in out-of-home placements. In addition the mandate instructed the commissioner to study the decision-making points in the child welfare system that lead to different outcomes for children. The Legislature also requested that the department produce a report on its findings along with corresponding recommendations.

In response to this mandate, the department invited and then convened a committee (See African American Disparities Committee member list in Appendix III) that consisted of African American community members, leaders, representatives of Anoka, Hennepin, Olmsted and Ramsey counties, and others. The committee met five times, led by co-chairs Dr. William Allen, family therapist and mental health consultant, and Erin Sullivan Sutton, assistant commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Children's Services Administration.

The committee took the mandate very seriously and used the experience of child welfare experts and academicians, along with the department's child welfare data system (Social Service Information System), and national research literature (See Appendix II for literature resources) to gather child welfare and child demographical information (U.S. Census, 2000) to develop an understanding of the over representation of African American children in Minnesota's child welfare system.

The information was reviewed, discussed and consolidated in this report. The committee members, in working together, came to agreement about shared values and assumptions. They felt that this was necessary in order to go forward with the commissioner's charge and to develop a framework of understanding for the critical issue of disproportionality of African American children in out-of-home placement.

The committee also felt that it was necessary to develop a definition of disproportionate representation (otherwise known as disproportionality or racial disparity). "Disproportionate representation occurs when a given race or ethnic group is over represented in specific systems (such as the child welfare out-of-home placement system) relative to levels that would be expected given their proportional representation in the general population."

While there was concurrence about the definition and existence of disproportionality of African American children in Minnesota's out-of-home placement system, there were multiple and varying opinions about the causes of the racial disproportionality. Research and anecdotal experiences point to several causes which include racism; practices of child welfare professionals; reporting patterns of mandated reporters and others; and socio-economic factors of the African American families in the system.

This report will guide readers through a review of the data, an abbreviated look at child welfare decision points, local and national research about racial disparities of African American children

and their families in the out-of-home placement system and finally the full recommendations of the committee.

Assumptions and values

Moving forward to address racial disparities

Culture and socio-politics

Racism, cultural bias and deficient cross-cultural expertise are realities in U.S. society and thus also present in the child welfare system. It follows that these problems are also contributing factors in the disproportionate out-of-home placement of African American children.

African American families and communities have many underappreciated and underutilized strengths, assets and capacities that need to be mobilized on behalf of African American children who need protection, services or homes. As with all families, some African American families need additional support and occasionally special social, therapeutic or rehabilitative services. Those services should optimally support and preserve children safely in their own homes. Removing children from their homes must always be a last resort. This may require reassessing current levels of support for parents and children, and comprehensive family care. The destructive myth that African American families are not capable of properly rearing their own children needs to be confronted and addressed. One way to counter this stereotype is to embrace the value that African American children belong with their families and in their communities.

Racial disparity

The existence of a statistical disparity is a call for better understanding, attention and action, although the existence of the disparity does not, by itself, explain *why* the disparity exists nor point to any particular solution or strategy. Disproportionate out-of-home placement and its antecedent, disproportional involvement in the child protection/child welfare system, are complex, multi-dimensional and systemic problems. To be successful, Minnesota needs multi-dimensional, systemic solutions. The disparity statistics for African American children in the child welfare system constitute an urgent crisis for African American children and families, the community and the entire state.

Next steps

- The time for action is now. Minnesota must begin taking proactive steps to address risk factors in the community, to support and preserve families and thus prevent out-of-home placement, as well as to train people in decision-making positions to work more effectively across cultures.
- Further study and analysis will identify the attitudes, risk factors, practices and decision points that lead to racial disparity. This analysis needs to go beyond the numbers and get to the human level if we are to understand the “lived” experience of families in the child welfare system.
- The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and the counties have a leadership role in organizing a response to address disparities in child welfare.
- There needs to be leadership from every sector that influences the problem—the judiciary, the Legislature, law enforcement, the non-profit sector, the faith community, the broader community.

Analysis of data

Examining the charge of racial disparity

The current child protection system

The paramount concern of the child protection system is the safety of all children, regardless of race. Congress and the Minnesota Legislature are unequivocal about this. Once involvement with the child welfare system has occurred, there are two mandates:

- rehabilitate and reunify the family if possible, and
- assure a safe, permanent home for the child as quickly as possible.

Child protection professionals assess the risk to children, the capacity of the family to care for children, and the services necessary to ameliorate the presenting problem and return children home. The balancing act of preserving the family and protecting children is the perennial one for social work, the courts and child welfare professionals. Intervention is the key. A lack of appropriate intervention and assessment are the determining factors that may result in children being placed outside their homes unnecessarily or children being hurt or killed.

A significant consensus among the committee members indicated the need to balance the traditional, child-focused mandate of child protection policy with the larger, societal need for healthy family functioning and support. The needs of children (even children at risk of maltreatment) should never be placed in opposition to the needs of the parents and communities in which the children live. Both are legitimate concerns in an enlightened and progressive society interested in promoting family well-being.

The ultimate test of effective child welfare policy and procedures is how many families are restored to health.

Minnesota's numbers on child welfare disparities

African American children in Minnesota are several times more likely to be reported as maltreated than their Caucasian counterparts in the general child population and the reports are slightly more likely to be substantiated. If a determination of maltreatment is made, African American children are more than twice as likely than maltreated Caucasian children to experience an out-of-home placement. (Chart #1)

The four counties identified in the chart are not the only counties with African American children in out-of-home placement, but 89 percent of the African American children reported and accepted for assessment in 2000 were from these four counties. These counties agreed to participate on the committee and they are committed to working on this issue after this initial study is completed.

Reading this chart

In the bottom rows for the state, the numbers show that African American children are assessed for all maltreatment reasons (neglect, physical, sexual abuse and mental injury) at a rate of 83.3 per 1,000 African American children in the Minnesota population. It shows that Caucasian children are assessed at a rate of 13 per 1,000 Caucasian children in the Minnesota population.

If the numbers are accurate, African American children are more than six times more likely to be assessed by the social services child protection system for maltreatment than Caucasian children.

The column “Alleged Victims Placed Out-of-Home During Assessment” shows that, in the statewide African American child population, six children per 1,000 were placed out of their home during a child protection assessment. This is a rate of more than sixteen times that for Caucasian child (.4 per 1,000).

Chart #1

Children per thousand in the population and the ratio of African American to Caucasian children at child protection assessment decision points*					
	Race (total population)	Alleged Victims/ Assessed	Determined Victims	Determined Victims Referred to CPS	Alleged Victims Placed Out-of-Home During Assessment
Anoka	African American (1,916)	53.8	33.9	8.4	3.1
	White (78,318)	11.5	6.3	2.6	0.5
	Ratio #AA:1W	4.7	5.4	3.3	6.3
Hennepin	African American (37,374)	95.3	50.4	20.5	5.8 (4.6)*
	White (185,458)	13.0	5.8	1.9	0.3
	Ratio #AA:1W	7.3	8.7	10.9	17.5 (15.3)*
Olmsted	African American (1,273)	44.0	27.5	11.0	3.1
	White (28,887)	10.8	4.5	2.8	0.5
	Ratio #AA:1W	4.1	6.1	3.9	7.0
Ramsey	African American (15,128)	68.4	47.7	26.1	8.3
	White (80,650)	12.0	7.8	3.0	0.8
	Ratio #AA:1W	5.7	6.1	8.7	10.5
State	African American (64,308)	83.3	47.3	21.2	6.0
	White (1,079,278)	13.0	6.0	2.9	0.4
	Ratio #AA:1W	6.4	7.8	7.4	16.3

Social Service Information System Data, 2000

The numbers of victims per thousand are rounded to the nearest tenth. The ratios in the chart are based on the unrounded numbers per thousand, therefore may not appear to calculate.

*If placements of less than 24 hours are excluded, the rate per 1,000 African American children is reduced to 4.6 and the ratio is reduced to 15.3.

Disparities by Decision Points in Child Protection

There are six major decision points in the child protection system:

Report to Child Protection

Accepted for Assessment or Not

Maltreatment Determination

Referred to Child Protective Services

Out-of-Home Placement

Permanency

Report to Child Protection

This decision point occurs when a person in the community believes that a child is being maltreated and contacts the child protection agency. Hennepin County reports that 48 percent of their reports involve African American children. DHS does not have data on all reports that are made, only on those that are screened in for assessment.

Accepted for Assessment or Not

This decision point occurs when a county child protection screener takes the report from a community member and decides that it fits the statutory criteria for assessment by child protection, or that it does not. DHS data suggest this rate is 6.4 times greater for African American children.

Maltreatment Determination

This decision point occurs after an assessment has been completed and the worker decides that based on the information collected, maltreatment did or did not occur. The standard for this determination is the preponderance of the evidence.

DHS data shows that statewide, African American children are 7.8 times as likely to be determined victims of maltreatment than Caucasian children (47.3 and 6.0 per 1,000, respectively). Of the children assessed for maltreatment, 57 percent of African American and 46 percent of Caucasian children received maltreatment determinations. African American children had slightly higher rates of recurrence of maltreatment than Caucasian children (10 percent versus 7 percent).

Referred to Child Protective Services

This decision point occurs when the child protection agency decides to open a case for ongoing child protection services or not. Statewide, DHS data shows that African American children are 7.4 times as likely as Caucasian children to be referred to ongoing child protective services (21.2 and 2.9 per 1,000, respectively). Of the children assessed for maltreatment, 26 percent of African American and 22 percent of Caucasian children were referred for ongoing child protective services.

Out-of-Home Placement*

This decision point occurs when a court or law enforcement agency determines that the children's health or welfare would be immediately endangered if they remained with the parents and directs a placement to occur. Parents may choose to place their children voluntarily as well.

Statewide, African American children are 16.3 times as likely as Caucasian children to be placed out of home during a child protection assessment (6.0 and .4 per 1,000, respectively). Of the children assessed for maltreatment, 7.2 percent of African American and 2.8 percent of Caucasian children were placed out of home. African American children were less likely than Caucasian children to re-enter care within 12 months (23 percent versus 32 percent). African American children are more likely to be placed with relatives than are Caucasian children (14 percent versus 7 percent) according to DHS data.

*Not including juvenile corrections, severely emotionally disturbed, developmentally delayed, chemically dependent.

Permanency

Within 12 months of the child's placement in care, the court must determine a permanent placement for the child. Options include returning to the home of the parents, transferring permanent legal and physical custody to a relative, terminating parental rights followed by adoption, or under certain circumstances, long-term foster care or foster care for a specific period. The 12 month permanency hearing is required by federal law. For children under eight years of age, Minnesota law requires that there be a permanency review within six months of the child's placement to review the progress of the case, the parent's progress on the case plan and the provision of services by the agency. During the course of committee discussion there was concern that the six month time frame does not maximize opportunities for parents to correct the conditions that lead to placement. There is a need to use the federal standard for permanency decisions and to monitor the impact of this timeline on different populations.

In 2000, 140 African American children were made available for adoption and placed under the guardianship of the Commissioner of the Department of Human Services, in contrast to 311 Caucasian children. African American children were made available for adoption at a rate of 2.2 per 1,000, and Caucasian children at a rate of 0.3 per 1,000. The rate for African American children is 7.5 times greater than the rate for Caucasian children. DHS data shows that 68 percent of the African American children who left care in 2000 were reunited with their parents or primary caretaker, in contrast to 78 percent of Caucasian children who left care. Twelve percent of African American children were discharged to live with other relatives, in contrast to 5 percent of Caucasian children. Each racial group had one percent leave for guardianship.

Other findings

Other findings from Minnesota child welfare data for 2000 reveal:

- As a percentage of the general child population, African American children are five times more likely to be in out-of-home care.*
- African American families are more likely to be reported for neglect (80 percent for African Americans versus 64 percent for Caucasians). Caucasian families are more likely to be reported for physical and sexual abuse.
- Neglecting families were assessed to have the highest overall risk for maltreatment due to multiple family problems including substance abuse, domestic abuse and poverty. For example, drug abuse was identified in neglecting families at a three times greater rate than other maltreating families.
- African American families were less likely to receive counseling services than Caucasian families (19 to 29 percent), and slightly more likely to receive child protection services than Caucasian families (49 percent to 47 percent).

- African American children are nearly twice as likely to enter care for “parent reasons” (e.g., abuse, abandonment) than Caucasian children. Caucasian children are more likely to enter care for “child reasons” such as behavior or disability.
- African American children under state guardianship stay in care much longer from the time of termination of parental rights to a finalized adoption (826 days) compared to Caucasian children (628 days).
- Eighty-six percent of children under state guardianship are adopted by parents of the same race.
- Eighty-five percent of siblings are adopted with one or more siblings.

*This calculation includes children placed for any reason and is in comparison to children of all races.

Factors affecting racial disparities

The National Incidence Study (NIS), conducted periodically by the federal Health and Human Services Department (HHS), reports there are no racial differences in maltreatment incidence. Yet the NIS-3 survey, conducted in 1993, found that “poor, single-parent homes” were 22 times more likely to maltreat their children.

These two findings seem contradictory because for a variety of historical and socio-demographic reasons, African American families are more likely to be poor and headed by single parents. The Children’s Bureau at HHS has convened a task force to examine and reconcile these contradictory findings and to correct the methodology that may be generating them.

The National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences (1993) describes an ecology of interlocking and compounding risks in the home, environment and society as being the strongest correlates of maltreatment. Poverty, single-parenthood, teen-parenthood, substance abuse and domestic abuse are associated with adverse outcomes for children, including involvement with the child protection system

Mark Courtney and Dick Barth (1996), two leading child welfare researchers, argue that researchers, policymakers and practitioners should give more attention to the nexus of race, gender and social class as factors in child welfare services. “Race and child welfare cannot be separated from the relationship between economic deprivation, single-parenthood and child welfare.”

They go on to comment that: “It is one thing to say that collectively our social institutions have failed children of color and their families, and that one result is an inequitable representation of children of color in the child welfare services system. It is quite another to state that any inequity of outcomes within the system is prima facie evidence of a failure of the system itself. In fact, in the absence of efforts to improve the lot of impoverished families of color, it might be justifiable cause for concern if the children of such families were not over represented in child welfare services caseloads.”

Douglas Nelson, executive director of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, with a long history of involvement in child welfare service and work with minority communities, has focused his foundation’s efforts on solving problems at the local community level. “The neighborhood and community are the critical contexts for intelligent policymaking and investment on behalf of America’s most disadvantaged children and families.”

In a policy brief, Nelson noted: “We are discovering in America just how determinant place is in the lives of American children. The truth is, few things more strongly predict how an American child is going to grow up than where he or she grows up. Race, class and ethnicity are critical—but these factors are compounded, made concrete, by place.”

An American child growing up in a high-poverty neighborhood is:

- 18 times more likely to be killed by gunfire
- 26 times more likely to drop out of school
- 46 times more likely to be placed in foster care

- 60 times more likely to suffer reportable abuse or neglect and
- 160 times more likely to give birth as a teenager.

These realities have led the Annie E. Casey Foundation to the conclusion that the way to arrest the decline and renew troubled communities is by finding ways to strengthen and reinforce the families that live there. Building community, revitalizing community, to the Casey Foundation, means strengthening families. It means increasing the ability of parents to raise their children successfully. Nelson notes that: “Increasing family functioning, capacity and success has to be the central theme, the key benchmark, the primary outcome we seek.”

Nelson concludes: “To accomplish this task we have to do the most important thing...public and private systems need to ask community residents and leaders how to do any and all of this work. In other words, this engagement, this investment in strengthening families in tough places will succeed only if it is a partnership, a shared responsibility between the holders of external resources and authority and the leaders and representatives of residents in tough communities.”

Minnesota data on risk factors and disparities

It seems reasonable that given the disproportionate numbers of African American children in Minnesota's child welfare system, there would be a disparate number of African Americans in other statistics that represent contributing factors to maltreatment.

Minnesota has historically been considered one of the most socially progressive states in the country. But it currently has some of the worst racial disparities across the board, involving nearly every known risk factor. Some of the disparities in health and social welfare are striking:

- In Minnesota in 1999, African American teens aged 15-19 had a birth rate 5.2 times that of Caucasian, non-Hispanic teens (109.9 and 21.0 per 1,000 respectively). This is the second largest disparity in the 50 states second only to New Jersey (5.3 times greater birth rate for African American teens). (National Vital Statistics Reports, Center for Disease Control, 2000)
- Fully half of African American children live under the federal poverty guideline, compared to 12 percent of all children in Minnesota, an over representation of ten fold. (KIDS Count, 2001)
- One-third of all minority residents in the Twin Cities metro area lives in concentrated poverty. Minnesota has the highest concentration of inner-city African American poverty in the United States. Concentrated poverty is defined as a census tract with 40 percent or more of its residents having incomes below the federal poverty line. (Jon Powell, Institute on Race and Poverty, 2000)
- People of color represent over 60 percent of single-parent Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) recipients in the Twin Cities metro region and are leaving welfare much more slowly than Caucasians. (MFIP Ethnic Reports, 2001)
- Minnesota's African American population has more than tripled from 50,000 in 1980 to about 171,000 in 2000. More than half of the African Americans moving to Minnesota in recent years have been poor. (U.S. Census, 2000).
- The 2001 Wilder Homelessness Survey finds that 60 percent of the shelter population in the Twin Cities metro area is African American. This is an over representation of more than ten fold.
- The Hunger Solutions survey of food shelf use in Minnesota (July 2001) found that African Americans are five times more likely than their Caucasian counterparts to experience an episode of hunger as indicated by food shelf visits.
- The Minnesota Urban Coalition Report, "Warning: Disparities Begin Here," (2001), found that young people of color report being both physically and sexually abused at a rate two to three times more than their Caucasian counterparts. (Racial Disparities Facts, Minnesota Trends, Appendix VI, includes additional enumeration of racial and demographic disparities).

The litany of racial disparities can go on to include infant mortality rates, prenatal care access, child fatality rates and more. Irrespective of the source, a gap between the health and welfare of Caucasians and African Americans in Minnesota is in evidence.

The impact of racial bias

For African American families, leaders and academicians, the concern about racial bias in the child welfare system cannot be ignored. Dr. Priscilla Gibson, who is on the faculty of the School of Social Work at the University of Minnesota and participated on the committee, stated: “ For African American families, there is an inherent socio-political context that pervades society and the child welfare system nationwide. It is essential that there is an understanding of the influence of this context to raise awareness of the realities of the lived experience for African American families. While this reality is diverse, it includes the notion that discrimination and racial oppression, which can be seen in three forms: institutional, social and personal, might be experienced daily. In addition, African American families encounter a power differential when interacting in the dominant society that interferes with attaining equitable supports and services.”

Concerns must be viewed and analyzed in a historical context. History may have a lingering impact on the unwritten practices and policies of today’s child welfare practitioners and agencies. The conspicuous break up of African American families under slavery is just one example of how history intrudes on the present. Public policy efforts, such as the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program and welfare reform, have arguably had a differential effect on African American families.

Policies governing AFDC eligibility, up until 1961, often included “home suitability clauses,” “man in the house rules” and “illegitimate child clauses.” African American families bore a disproportionate share of the arbitrary enforcement of these welfare policies by public officials. For example, between 1927 and 1939, the number of Caucasian children brought before the court for child protection issues in New York City declined by more than 31 percent, while the number of African American children rose by 147 percent. (Piven and Cloward, 1971).

In her recent book, “The Lost Children of Wilder,” a chronicle of the failures of the public child welfare system in New York City, Nina Bernstein notes that the existing child-serving charities did not know how to respond to the needs of African American families. “Established charities, organized around Caucasian ethnic poverty for more than a century, added few if any services for African American children.” As late as 1939, 23 of 27 Protestant custodial care agencies took only Caucasian children. Bernstein notes that this meant “needy African American children often had to be labeled juvenile criminals to qualify for any out-of-home placement services.”

The passage of the Flemming Rule in 1961, was designed to counteract the home suitability requirements of the AFDC program. The Flemming rule required workers to make some efforts at preserving all types of families and providing some basic services, rather than just declaring them unsuitable according to AFDC guidelines. However, nationwide, AFDC workers (who were almost exclusively Caucasian) began to emphasize removal of African American children from homes instead of working with families to correct “neglectful” conditions, because the workers did not have the cross-cultural skills to provide effective clinical services or what the family needed. (Billingsley & Giovannoni, 1972). The numbers of African American families involved with the child protection system skyrocketed. Today African American children continue to make up around half of the children in out-of-home placement nationwide, despite being only a fraction of the child population.

Child welfare researcher Richard Barth noted that, “Race is perhaps the most powerful background factor in all our child welfare services research. Although it is always challenging to explain why the performance dynamics are so different for African American, Caucasian and Latino children, it is indisputable that the likelihood for African American children to achieve the highest permanency goals of reunification or adoption is significantly less than it is for Caucasian or Latino children. Race is one of the strongest predictors of outcome models, yet we have been struck by the awkwardness of not having a ready explanation for the major differences in service patterns and outcomes by race. We have no solutions except to continue to discuss the issue.” (Joint Center for Poverty Research Conference, 1997)

Thomas Morton, director of Atlanta’s Center for Child Welfare Studies, has challenged some theoreticians’ reliance on poverty and family structure to explain pervasive racial disparities in child welfare. In his article, “The Increasing Colorization of America’s Child Welfare System: The Overrepresentation of African American Children” (2000), Morton pointed out that “African American children and families are disproportionately more likely to receive an involuntary government intervention when child maltreatment arises. The nature of this intervention is more likely to last longer, involve separation of family members, and mean that children and parents will never be reunited.”

Morton went on to observe: “Conventional wisdom has historically pointed to the relationship between poverty and child maltreatment. Since African American households have disproportionately lower incomes than Caucasian households do, the effects of poverty would arguably drive incidence rates higher in the African American community. The child welfare system has been content to rest on this assumption.”

Yet, Morton noted, the HHS’ National Incidence Studies on Abuse and Neglect have found: “no significant or marginal racial differences in the incidence of maltreatment... this was true for both the Harm Standard and the Endangerment Standard findings.”

If no difference in incidence was found by race, one could argue that there should be proportional racial representation throughout the system. If proportional representation does not exist, a strong argument is created for the existence of differential treatment by race. It is plausible that this bias effect precedes children’s entry into the child protection system, either at reporting or decision-to-investigate stages. The disparity in Minnesota is over six times greater at the assessment stage for African American children than it is for Caucasians. Given that disproportionate representation increases as children move further into the system, either some direct system bias or a higher rate of failure of interventions with African Americans appears possible.

Morton noted the complicating fact that: “Cultural incompetence could be a potential explanation for treatment failure, or even what gets defined as child maltreatment. If cultural incompetence were the primary factor, however, one could expect that all minority populations would be over represented in the child welfare system. In fact, Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Island peoples are underrepresented as a percentage of the population.”

A Minnesota researcher, Nancy Rodenberg, a former child protection worker and a professor at Augsburg College, has analyzed the national data and reported her findings at the December 4,

2001 Legislative Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on this topic. She conducted a secondary data analysis using national case file data over an 18-month period. She compared the rates of exit from child protection of Caucasian and African American children. She found that, even while controlling for the effect of poverty, being African American led to a lower rate of exit from child protection. She also considered a number of variables thought to make a difference in child welfare outcomes, such as single motherhood status and substance abuse by a parent or guardian, and found that even when considering these variables, being African American led to longer duration in out-of-home placement.

Rodenborg concluded that this suggested the possibility of: “widespread indirect institutional discrimination.” She further suggested since the two racial groups had about the same potential for exit during the first 30 days, providing poverty-related services during the first month of contact might prevent such a disparity from developing. She emphasized that concrete services such as housing, employment and supports were needed to meet the basic needs of families. She also encouraged greater emphasis on training child welfare staff and improving substance abuse services to families.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The committee unequivocally confirmed that there are numerous racial disparities in the representation of African American children in Minnesota's child welfare out-of-home placement system. The committee found that Minnesota's African American children are 16.3 times more likely to be placed in out-of-home care during a child protection investigation than Minnesota's Caucasian children. Racial disparities in Minnesota's child welfare system are found in the entire process, from initial reporting to acceptance of cases to discharge of children from the system.

These gross racial disparities are systemic and layered; they are unacceptable in a state that boasts of many positive and progressive well-being indicators and outcomes for the rest of its child population. The cause of these disparities is hard to pinpoint. It is difficult to attribute them to one factor or episode. Factors such as racial bias, the socio-economic status of the African American children in out-of-home placement, case practices of county child welfare professionals, and reporting patterns and practices of mandated reporters all play a role. This is an urgent crisis in Minnesota's child welfare system.

Recommendations

The committee discussed the responsibility of the Minnesota Legislature to ensure equity for all Minnesota citizens by leading Minnesota citizens to adopt a statewide vision, commitment and action plan to eradicate the disproportionality and over representation of African American children in the child protection system in the state of Minnesota.

State legislators, state and county social services administrators, community members and others have a responsibility to gather their resources to address racial disparities of African American children in the child protection system immediately. While the problem is great, it is not insurmountable. Minnesota has the capacity and resources to address this problem.

A multi-dimensional strategy must be implemented. The committee members strongly recommend focusing on prevention and use of alternative community-based and culturally centered services. And for African American children and families who are placed in the out-of-home placement system, the committee recommends high quality, culturally appropriate, family-centered services. These recommendations include the following actions:

- **Focus on improving county practices:**
 - Conduct a case review in Anoka, Hennepin, Olmsted and Ramsey counties to assess the appropriateness of decision making, including level, type and delivery of services.
 - Form a partnership among the four counties (Olmsted, Hennepin, Ramsey and Anoka) to facilitate local plans to eradicate disparities. Include community members faith-based institutions, providers, clients, parent-teacher organizations and other local groups in the plans.
 - Encourage local county social service agencies to develop a self-assessment process. This will review decision-making points along the child welfare services continuum to ascertain the outcomes for African American children and families. Start with the four county partners as a model and then implement this assessment tool statewide. Ensure that county accountability measures and evaluation are a part of the process.

- **Increase monitoring and evaluation:**
 - Monitor disparities, as well as outcomes for African American children and families, using the Social Services Information System and review indicators.
 - Review, monitor and evaluate the impact of new child welfare initiatives (Alternative Response, Family Group Conferencing, Structured Decision Making and Concurrent Permanency Planning) on African American children and families.
 - Develop new data reporting, gathering and analysis methods, instruments and procedures that track county performance measures and accountability as it relates to demographic indicators for children and particularly African American children in the child welfare system. This data analysis should span the child welfare continuum from intake/acceptance to permanency/discharge.
 - The impact of permanency time frames and decisions on different populations should be monitored and evaluated.
- **Develop service and training strategies:**
 - Research, identify and communicate new approaches to working with African American families. This should include prevention efforts and successful intervention strategies so families do not have to become child protection clients to access services.
 - Improve the effectiveness of cultural competence training. Training needs to include professional ethics, equal access and equitable service delivery and family support. Training should be provided to child welfare professionals and their supervisors as well as other parties in the system (e.g., judiciary, law enforcement).
 - Explore alternative funding options (e.g., Title IV-E of the Social Security Act waivers) to restructure service delivery to families.
- **Partner with the African American community** (e.g., advisory committee, families, and leaders) to integrate a community-based approach to respond to disparities.
- **Continue advocating for development of the supports needed by African American families**, such as affordable housing, reliable transportation, adequate incomes and employment opportunities, health care and assistance with childcare.

With implementation of these recommendations, the committee believes Minnesota will achieve these desired outcomes for African American families and children:

- The eradication of disparity by race in the child protection system in Minnesota
- Timely, equitable and culturally competent services that are individually tailored to meet the needs of African American families
- Safety, permanency and well-being for African American children with careful attention to the needs of their families and a focus on reducing the disparities at each decision point in Minnesota's child protection system.

Appendix I

Bibliography on Disparities

- Aronson Fontes, L. (2001). *Those Who Do Not Look Ahead, Stay Behind*. *Child Maltreatment*, 6 (2), 83.
- Brown, A. W. & Bailey-Etta, B. (1997). *An Out-of-Home Care System in Crisis: Implications for African American Children in the Child Welfare System*. *Child Welfare*, 76 (1), 65-83.
- Child Welfare League of America, April 24, 2000. *New Report, "And Justice for Some" Reveals Sharp Racial Disparities in Nation's Juvenile Justice System*.
- Cohen, J. A., Deblinger, E., Mannarino, A. P., & A de Arellano, M. (2001). *The Importance of Culture in Treating Abused and Neglected Children: An Empirical Review*. *Child Maltreatment*, 6 (2), 148-57.
- Council on Crime and Justice Newsletter, November 2001. www.crimeandjustice.org.
- Courtney, Mark E., Barth, Richard P., Duerr Berrick, Jill, Brooks, Devon, Needell, Barbara, & Park, Linda. (1996). *Race and Child Welfare Services: Past Research and Future Directions*. *Child Welfare*, LXXV (2), 99-135.
- Crampton, D. & Jackson, W. L. (1999). *Beyond Justice: Using Family Group Decision Making to Address the Overrepresentation of Children of Color in the Child Welfare System*. In 1999 Family Group Decision Making National Roundtable and International Conference: Summary of Proceedings, Seattle, WA, May 12-14, pp.93-98. American Humane Association, Englewood, CO.
- DeBruyn, L., Chino, M., Serna, P., & Fullerton-Gleason, L. (2001). *Child Maltreatment in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities: Integrating Culture, History, and Public Health for Intervention and Prevention*. *Child Maltreatment*, 6, (2), 89-102.
- Doty Hollingsworth, Leslie. (1998). *Promoting Same-Race Adoption for Children of Color*. *Social Work*, 43 (2), 104-116.
- Garland, A. F., Ellis-MacLeod, E., Landsverk, J. A., Ganger, W., Johnson, I. (1998). *Minority Populations in the Child Welfare System: The Visibility Hypothesis Reexamined*. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 68 (1), 142-46.
- Hamm, Wilfred. (1997). *Guide for effectively recruiting African American adoptive families*. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 5 (3/4), 139-149.
- Hampton, R. L. & Newberger, E. H. (1985). *Child Abuse Incidence and Reporting by Hospitals: Significance of Severity, Class, and Race*. *American Journal of Public Health*, 75 (1), 56-60.

Haveman, Robert H., et al. (1988). *Disparities in Well-being Among U.S. Children Over Two Decades: 1962-1983*. University Press of America: Lanham, MD.

Hunger Solutions Minnesota. July 2001. *Working but Still Hungry: A Survey of Food Shelves and On-Site Meals Programs in Minnesota. July 2001*.

Jones, Loring P. (1997). *Social Class, Ethnicity, and Child Welfare*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 6 (3/4), 123-138.

Keller, JoDee, and McDade, Katherine. (1997). *Cultural Diversity and Help-Seeking Behavior: Sources of Help and Obstacles to Support for Parents*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 5 (1/2), 63-78.

KIDS Count, Children's Defense Fund, 2001 Report.

Lawrence-Webb, C. (1997). *African American Children in the Modern Child Welfare System: A Legacy of the Flemming Rule*. Child Welfare, 76 (1), 9-30.

Leashore, Bogart R. (1997). *African American Men, Child Welfare, and Permanency Planning*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 5 (1/2), 39-48.

Lynch, E. W., & Hanson, M. J. (Eds.). (1998). *Developing Cross-Cultural Competence: A Guide for Working with Children and Their Families*. Paul Brookes Publishing: Baltimore, MA.

McPhatter, A. R. (1997). *Cultural Competence in Child Welfare: What is it? How Do We Achieve It? What Happens Without It?* Child Welfare, 76 (1), 255-78.

McRoy, Ruth G. (1994). *Attachment and Racial Identity Issues: Implications for Child Placement Decision-Making*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 3 (3), 59-74.

Minneapolis Public Schools. *What Our Schools Look Like*, September 19, 2000.
Minnesota Department of Health, *Eliminating Health Disparities in Minnesota*, 2001 Report.

Minnesota Department of Human Services. *Report on Out-of-Home Care in 1997 and 1998 by Race and Heritage* (Bulletin #01-68-01). March 1, 2001.

Morton, Thomas D. (1999). *The Increasing Colorization of America's Child Welfare System: The Overrepresentation of African-American Children*. Policy & Practice, 23-30.

National Study of Protective, Preventative and Reunification Services Delivered to Children and Their Families: Final Report. (1997). Administration on Children, Youth and Families (DHHS), Washington, DC. Rockville, MD: Westat, Inc.

Pinderhughes, Elaine. (1997). *Developing Diversity Competence in Child Welfare and Permanency Planning*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 5 (1/2), 19-38.

Pioneer Press. *Blacks in America Doing Better But Still Lagging, Study Finds: Employment, Pay at Record Levels, but Disparities Still Exist*, November 14, 1999.

Pioneer Press. *Minnesota's Schools are Among Most Segregated, Study Indicates*, July 19, 2001.

Piven, Frances F., & Cloward, R. A. (1971). *Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare*. Vintage Books: New York.

Rycus, J. S., & Hughes, R. C. (1998). *Family-Centered Child Protection: An Integrated Model of Child Welfare Practice Stressing Protection and Permanence*. Institute for Human Services: Columbus, OH.

Scannapieco, M. (1999). *Kinship Care in the Public Child Welfare System: A Systematic Review of the Research*. In Hegar, R. L. & Scannapieco, M. (Eds.). *Kinship Foster Care: Policy, Practice, and Research*, pp. 141-54. Oxford Press: New York.

Sedlak, Andrea J., & Broadhurst, Diane D. (1996). *Executive Summary of the Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect*. National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse & Neglect Information. (<http://www.calif.com/nccah/pubs/statinfo/nis3.cfm#implications>).

Siegel, Lorraine. (1994). *Cultural Differences and Their Impact on Practice in Child Welfare*. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 3 (3), 87-96.

Star Tribune. *A Tale of Two Minnesotas*, August 22, 2001.

Star Tribune. *Glaring Gap in Proportion of Minnesota Blacks, Whites Sent to Prison*, June 8, 2000.

Star Tribune. *Justice Study Finds Wide Disparity in Federal Death Penalty System*, September 13, 2000.

Star Tribune. *Minorities Contribute Bulk of State's Population Gains*, March 29, 2001.

Star Tribune. *Report Assails Health Care for Poor, Minorities*, May 31, 2001.

Star Tribune. *State's Rise in Black Population Among Nation's Fastest*, August 2000.

Sullivan, M., Kone, A., Senturia, K. D., & Noel, J. (2001). *Researcher and Researched-Community Perspectives: Toward Bridging the Gap*. *Health Education and Behavior*, 28 (2), 130-49.

Terao, S. Y., Borrego Jr., J., & Urquiza, J. (2001). *A Reporting and Response Model for Culture and Child Maltreatment*. *Child Maltreatment*, 6 (2), 158-68.

The Urban Coalition. *Warning: Disparities Begin Here. The Health and Well-Being of Youth in Minnesota*, June 2001.

U. S. Census Bureau. www.census.gov

Weaver, H. N. (1999). *Indigenous People and the Social Work Profession: Defining Culturally Competent Services*. *Social Work*, 44, (3), 217-25.

Wilhelmus, Maria. (1998). *Mediation in Kinship Care: Another Step in the Provision of Culturally Relevant Child Welfare Services*. *Social Work*, 43 (2), 117-126.

Williams, Carol W. (1997). *Personal Reflections on Permanency Planning and Cultural Competency*. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 5 (1/2), 9-18.

Yancey, A. K. (1998). *Building Positive Self-Image in Adolescents in Foster Care: The Use of Role*. *Adolescence*, 33 (130), 253-67.

Appendix II

Literature Review on Racial Disparities in Child Welfare

Theories:

Brown, A. W. & Bailey-ETTA, B. (1997). *An Out-of-Home Care System in Crisis: Implications for African American Children in the Child Welfare System*. *Child Welfare*, 76 (1), 65-83.

An out-of-home care system that is itself in crisis lacks adequate resources to provide the services needed by families and children in distress. Increasingly, these families are composed of people of color, particularly African Americans. Using current child welfare statistics and a review of the literature, this article examines the nature of the crisis in child welfare, and how poverty and an array of social problems, as well as problems specific to the child welfare system, increase the over representation of African American children and families in the out-of-home care system. Implications for child welfare practice and advocacy are also discussed.

Cohen, J. A., Deblinger, E., Mannarino, A. P., & A de Arellano, M. (2001). *The Importance of Culture in Treating Abused and Neglected Children: An Empirical Review*. *Child Maltreatment*, 6 (2), 148-57.

A review of the available empirical evidence that addresses the influence of culture on symptom formation, treatment-seeking behaviors, treatment preference and response following child maltreatment. Cultural factors may play an important role in providing efficacious treatment to maltreated children. There are some data that indicate that maltreated minority children develop more severe and enduring psychiatric symptoms than maltreated Caucasian children, although other studies have failed to replicate these results. There is growing evidence that minority children in general, and those placed in foster care in particular, are less likely to be referred to and to receive mental health interventions than Caucasian children. No empirical studies have addressed whether culture influences the type of treatment preferred by families of maltreated children. Based on the available evidence, it appears that race is not an important predictor of treatment response for these children.

Courtney, Mark E., Barth, Richard P., Duerr Berrick, Jill, Brooks, Devon, Needell, Barbara, & Park, Linda. (1996). *Race and Child Welfare Services: Past Research and Future Directions*. *Child Welfare*, LXXV (2), 99-135.

A review of the literature shows that children of color and their families experience poorer outcomes and fewer services than Caucasian children. Overall there is an observed difference in child welfare outcomes by race or ethnicity reflecting differences in the economic and social well-being of children and families. The relationship between race, ethnicity and child welfare services and outcomes is complex. Because of this, researchers, policymakers and practitioners should give more attention to the nexus of race, gender and social class as a factor in the functioning of child welfare services.

Relationships between race and single motherhood and single motherhood and poverty for example, confound attempts to understand the role of race in child welfare services and outcomes. To improve child welfare outcomes, service models that claim greater efficacy with persons of color should be implemented and evaluated. The conclusion is: it is everyone involved in child welfare's responsibility to draw attention to larger social forces that contribute to pushing children out of their homes, but at the same time people working in the child welfare

system must seek to improve the utility of the services they provide to families and children of color.

Garland, A. F., Ellis-MacLeod, E., Landsverk, J. A., Ganger, W., Johnson, I. (1998). *Minority Populations in the Child Welfare System: The Visibility Hypothesis Reexamined*. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 68 (1), 142-46.

This study tests the “visibility hypothesis”, which suggests that there is a higher probability for minority children to be placed in foster care when living in geographic locations where their proportions in the population are relatively low, compared to areas where their proportions are high. The data for this study derive from a longitudinal study of children placed in out-of-home care. A cohort of 1,332 subjects was compiled between May 1990 and October 1991 from a population of minors referred to the primary child protection receiving facility in California. Results support the hypothesis that African American children are over represented in foster care. Explanations of the findings, and their implications for research and practice, are also discussed.

Hampton, R. L. & Newberger, E. H. (1985). *Child Abuse Incidence and Reporting by Hospitals: Significance of Severity, Class, and Race*. *American Journal of Public Health*, 75 (1), 56-60.

A study was conducted on child abuse reporting in hospitals and its relationship to severity, class and race. Compared with other agencies in the sample, hospitals identified children who were younger, African American, lived in urban areas, and had more serious injuries. Some relevant factors that influence whether a report is made include income, mother’s role in abuse, emotional abuse, race, maternal employment, and sexual abuse. Cases tended to go underreported for victims of emotional abuse who came from families of higher income. Findings suggest that in hospitals, social class and race are the most important perpetrator characteristics that distinguish reported from unreported cases of abuse.

The authors state that although professional practice claims to be value-free, personal prejudices and judgments may affect the typing of individuals who are defined as deviant. Their data suggests that biases at the point of recognition and reporting are important in determining which cases are channeled into the protective services system for investigation. Finally it is stated that if the reporting of child abuse is as biased by class and race as the data suggest, there is a clear need for a critical review of the system as well as the process of reporting.

Lawrence-Webb, C. (1997). *African American Children in the Modern Child Welfare System: A Legacy of the Flemming Rule*. *Child Welfare*, 76 (1), 9-30.

Children of color throughout America, and especially those who are African American, are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system. This article links this current child welfare condition to the most significant but little known ruling in the historical development of the modern child welfare system – the Flemming Rule. The 1960 administrative decision by Dr. Arthur Flemming, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, was designed to counteract the home suitability requirements of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program. State policies that prohibited AFDC benefits for homes that were considered immoral, or had illegitimate children or substitute fathers, resulted in the denial of assistance to many African American families. The Flemming rule required states to provide due process protections and support for families who were determined to be unsuitable. Although intended to be constructive, the rule was implemented in a negative way that has had long-term

serious consequences for African American children and their families. Implications for future policies are discussed.

Morton, Thomas D. (1999). *The Increasing Colorization of America's Child Welfare System: The Overrepresentation of African-American Children*. *Policy & Practice*, 23-30.

The author poses the questions: Do the differences in incidence of child maltreatment, placement in foster care and child fatality which reflect socio-cultural differences predispose African-American families to maltreat their children more frequently? Or does it reflect differential treatment of African Americans in the U.S. child welfare system? The child welfare system has a more extensive and invasive impact on African-American families than any other ethnic group. A powerful argument is presented for the impact of poverty and other demographic factors as an explanation for the over representation of African American children in the child welfare system. Family structure was also identified as a relevant variable because a higher incidence of child maltreatment has been noted in single-parent households. The author emphasizes that correlation does not equal causation.

National Study of Protective, Preventative and Reunification Services Delivered to Children and Their Families: Final Report. (1997). Administration on Children, Youth and Families (DHHS), Washington, DC. Rockville, MD: Westat, Inc.

Data on children and families served by the child welfare system from March 1, 1993 to March 1, 1994 were compared with data collected in 1977 to identify changes in the characteristics of children and families and differences in case duration, receipt of in-home services, race/ethnicity and kinship foster care. Telephone interviews conducted with caseworkers in a sample of 50 counties and regions in the United States revealed a decrease in the number of children served by child welfare agencies from 1977 to 1994. The number of children receiving in-home services decreased during the period, while the foster care population remained about the same. This indicates that federal policies designed to promote in-home services rather than foster care have not had the expected impact. In addition, the placement of African American and Hispanic children is disproportionately higher than for Caucasian children with comparable problems.

Sullivan, M., Kone, A., Senturia, K. D., & Noel, J. (2001). *Researcher and Researched-Community Perspectives: Toward Bridging the Gap*. *Health Education and Behavior*, 28 (2), 130-49.

The authors wanted to understand the experiences of community members and researchers in community-based research projects and to develop guidelines to improve future projects. They conducted qualitative, key informant interviews with 41 people involved at all levels of community-based research projects in Seattle. Respondents were identified using a snowball sampling technique. Some concluding implications for practitioners include the need to spend more time prior to beginning the project addressing community mistrust issues and the need for open and honest communication that addresses race, class, gender and power.

Weaver, H. N. (1999). *Indigenous People and the Social Work Profession: Defining Culturally Competent Services*. *Social Work*, 44, (3), 217-25.

During the past decade much has been said about the need to include cultural issues as a factor in the helping process. The discussion in social work literature has moved from cultural sensitivity

to cultural competence, the ability to integrate cultural knowledge and sensitivity with skills for a more effective and culturally appropriate helping process. This article reports the results of a study of culturally competent helping practices with Native Americans. Sixty-two Native American social workers and social work students completed a survey on knowledge, skills and values necessary for culturally competent service provision to Native American clients. As both Native Americans and helping professionals, the survey respondents are in an ideal position to articulate how best to serve the Native American population. This article fills a gap in the literature by providing empirical information on culturally competent social work with Native Americans.

Strategies:

Aronson Fontes, L. (2001). *Those Who Do Not Look Ahead, Stay Behind*. *Child Maltreatment*, 6 2, 83.

Child maltreatment professionals need to understand cultural issues yet must avoid harmful stereotypes that obscure their clients' individuality. The author gives four needs for professionals to improve the field in addressing cultural issues:

- greater agreement about how to discuss and examine cultural issues (starting with the most basic issue of sample definitions).
- greater commitment on the part of the leaders of the field to address issues of culture and oppression.
- greater representation of people from diverse groups in leadership positions in the child maltreatment field.
- greater political will to command the funding and training necessary to serve people from cultural minority groups impacted by child maltreatment.

DeBruyn, L., Chino, M., Serna, P., & Fullerton-Gleason, L. (2001). *Child Maltreatment in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities: Integrating Culture, History, and Public Health for Intervention and Prevention*. *Child Maltreatment*, 6, (2), 89-102.

The authors argue for the conscientious integration of culture and history into the public health framework when developing, implementing and evaluating child maltreatment intervention and prevention programs in American Indian/Alaska Native communities. They suggest that a concerted effort be made to include components of culture and history not only as context but also as operational and measurable variables. They are hopeful that such an approach may help determine which combinations of risk and protective factors prove most useful for the prevention of child maltreatment in this community. The public health model can be enhanced to fit cultural frameworks and belief systems to help communities prevent violence. Finally the authors acknowledge that although their focus was American Indian communities, these concepts may be helpful when developing research and prevention programs for populations other than Native Americans.

Doty Hollingsworth, Leslie. (1998). *Promoting Same-Race Adoption for Children of Color*. *Social Work*, 43 (2), 104-116.

The author gives background into transracial adoption history in the United States, starting from the 1940s. Alternative considerations are given for handling these cases.

- Policies that increase the number of foster care families who adopt have increased the number of transracial adoptions because of the lack of proportions of foster families of color to children of color in the system.

- There are indications that there are sufficient numbers of families of color to adopt children if some of the traditional barriers to these families would be dropped.
- Many children of color in the child welfare system are not available for adoption or have special needs.
- An over representation of children of color in the child welfare system has been linked to disparities in services related to ethnic groups.
- Children of color may be counted as being in foster placements when they are actually in permanent kinship care.
- Poverty, which disproportionately affects families of color, has been associated with the abuse and neglect that often result in the out-of-home placement of children.

Jones, Loring P. (1997). *Social Class, Ethnicity, and Child Welfare*. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 6 (3/4), 123-138.

This article focuses on how racial/ethnic and economic factors enter decision-making in child protective services. Institutional and individual biases can lead to children being removed inappropriately and children remaining in the system longer than necessary. The description of the majority of families served by child protection is given as low socioeconomic status and a disproportionate representation of ethnic minorities. Jones states that if poverty is a major factor in placement and entry then employment and training programs would be more appropriate than parenting classes. The difference in proportions of children based on ethnicity could be reflective of the disproportions of ethnic minorities in poverty since neglect's association with poverty has been well documented. Biases in professional decision making are also emphasized. A decision-making team is suggested as a way to keep biases by individual workers in check along with an aggressive recruitment of minority personnel.

Lynch, E. W., & Hanson, M. J. (Eds.). (1998). *Developing Cross-Cultural Competence: A Guide for Working with Children and Their Families*. Paul Brookes Publishing: Baltimore, MA.

This book examines issues that surround working with families from diverse cultural, ethnic and language groups. Recommended practices in early intervention and intercultural training are discussed. Examples and instructions are provided to help providers work more effectively with families whose cultural, ethnic, racial, or language background differs from their own. The book also introduces culture-specific information about a number of groups that make up the population of the United States. Each group is described in terms of its history, values and beliefs, with particular emphasis placed on issues related to family, child rearing, health and healing and disability.

McPhatter, A. R. (1997). *Cultural Competence in Child Welfare: What is it? How Do We Achieve It? What Happens Without It?* *Child Welfare*, 76 (1), 255-78.

The over representation of minority children in the child welfare system is well documented. This article asserts that before significant progress is made toward culturally relevant and effective medical and psychosocial services, cultural competence must be elucidated. A Cultural Competence Attainment Model, comprising a grounded knowledge base, affective dimensions and cumulative skill proficiency, is described for use by child welfare practitioners. The model suggests that professionals adapt their worldview to become more accepting of other cultures, learn about the history and traditions of clients, understand social problems faced by minority populations, be open to culturally relevant alternative intervention strategies, build on

cultural strengths and family structures and improve their ability to engage culturally different clients. The effects of cultural incompetence are also addressed.

McRoy, Ruth G. (1994). *Attachment and Racial Identity Issues: Implications for Child Placement Decision-Making*. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 3 (3), 59-74.

This article looks at issues related to transracial adoption decision-making and gives some recommendations for agency practice and policy. A summary of attachment theory related to foster care and adoption states that the main focus for children in foster care is helping them develop healthy attachments and helping them to transfer those attachments to a permanent adoptive family or to the birthparents (if appropriate). It is suggested that anxiety about rearing a child of a different race might undermine foster parents' self-confidence and their abilities to handle the problems of interracial families. Techniques for placing children are given including placing the child with another family member.

Agencies should conduct ongoing deliberations on such questions as: What is being done to reduce the number of children (both minority and non-minority) from entering the child welfare system? Are Caucasian families seeking healthy infants and toddlers or the many older special-needs children? How successful are recruitment strategies for African American families? Is racial matching considered an acceptable criterion for Caucasian children and families but not for minority children and families? What special efforts can be made to secure a pool of minority waiting families just as agencies have of Caucasian waiting families? Answering these questions may help agencies assess their current policies and procedures and help to direct services for children in a more comprehensive way.

Rycus, J. S., & Hughes, R. C. (1998). *Family-Centered Child Protection: An Integrated Model of Child Welfare Practice Stressing Protection and Permanence*. Institute for Human Services: Columbus, OH.

This document outlines the guiding principles and foundations of the Protection and Permanence model of child welfare practice. The model emphasizes the importance of a safe, permanent family for children at risk of abuse. Included in the definition of "family" are biological parents or relatives, a foster family, or an adoptive family. Children's and parents' rights are given priority; while at the same time the state has a responsibility to intervene when necessary to protect a child from abuse or neglect. The model expresses a preference for family preservation and the role of the caseworker as a facilitator rather than an intruder. Out-of-home placements are to be used only when less intrusive interventions are likely to fail and only for the time required to develop a permanent plan. Support should be provided to all families, without regard to structure (biological, foster, adoptive). Cultural competency and integration collaboration are also vital to the effectiveness of services. The implications of the model for case planning, cultural competency, child development assessments and placement decisions are discussed.

Siegel, Lorraine. (1994). *Cultural Differences and Their Impact on Practice in Child Welfare*. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 3 (3), 87-96.

One problem in service delivery is related to the worker's inability to provide culturally responsive forms of treatment. Characteristics of African American families and culture are compared to an Anglo-based system. Trends of African American families looking for help are discussed, such as looking to the church and extended family members, and using outside sources only as a last resort. Siegel mentions that the experiences of history for the African

American community have been replicated in the child welfare system. She sums up the article by saying that a need for a change in attitude and practice is needed to work competently with cultures that are different from the mainstream.

Terao, S. Y., Borrego Jr., J., & Urquiza, J. (2001). *A Reporting and Response Model for Culture and Child Maltreatment*. *Child Maltreatment*, 6 (2), 158-68.

As our society becomes increasingly culturally diverse, there is a growing concern in the mental health field as to whether clinicians are able to accurately distinguish different cultural parenting discipline practices from child maltreatment. Clinicians in various fields continue to differ on what is reportable. Although there is literature describing characteristics of various ethnic minority groups, there are limited data to support why clinicians do what they do and no decision-making model to guide a clinician's reporting behavior when working with clients from different cultures. The authors propose a model to guide clinicians through the decision-making process and discuss interventions and clinical responses that may be most appropriate when presented with different scenarios involving cultural parenting discipline practices and child maltreatment. Finally, limitations of the presented model along with future clinical and research directions are discussed.

Wilhelmus, Maria. (1998). *Mediation in Kinship Care: Another Step in the Provision of Culturally Relevant Child Welfare Services*. *Social Work*, 43 (2), 117-126.

This article discusses the difficulties in providing culturally appropriate services to African American families. It refers to the concept of kinship care as a step towards providing culturally relevant child welfare services. It discusses the growing need for culturally responsive child welfare services and the lack of child welfare policy and practice to create a standard for their kinship care policies and practice. Conflicts and obstacles to kinship care are discussed; from misunderstandings of roles between the child welfare worker and the family to feelings of neglect and being forgotten by the agency.

Yancey, A. K. (1998). *Building Positive Self-Image in Adolescents in Foster Care: The Use of Role*. *Adolescence*, 33 (130), 253-67.

The article describes the development of a pilot preventive mental health intervention, the PRIDE (Personal and Racial-Ethnic Identity Development and Enhancement) program, designed to provide components of parenting that are necessary for promoting positive self-image in ethnically marginalized adolescents and that are typically lacking in the foster care milieu. PRIDE utilizes successful, ethnically relevant role models in interactive group sessions to create a significant cognitive and emotional experience for teens. While the utility of role modeling for at-risk youth is widely accepted, there is little research on the packaging, delivery and influence of this intervention modality. This study demonstrates the feasibility of a "hybrid" role-modeling approach (intermediate in intensity of exposure and cost between one-to-one mentoring and career-day programs). Implications for further research on this type of intervention are discussed.

Other Articles of Interest:

Crampton, D. & Jackson, W. L. (1999). *Beyond Justice: Using Family Group Decision Making to Address the Overrepresentation of Children of Color in the Child Welfare System*. In 1999 Family Group Decision Making National Roundtable and International Conference: Summary of Proceedings, Seattle, WA, May 12-14, pp.93-98. American Humane Association, Englewood, CO.

Hamm, Wilfred. (1997). *Guide for effectively recruiting African American adoptive families*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 5 (3/4), 139-149.

Haveman, Robert H., et al. (1988). *Disparities in Well-being Among U.S. Children Over Two Decades: 1962-1983*. University Press of America: Lanham, MD.

Keller, JoDee, and McDade, Katherine. (1997). *Cultural Diversity and Help-Seeking Behavior: Sources of Help and Obstacles to Support for Parents*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 5 (1/2), 63-78.

Leashore, Bogart R. (1997). *African American Men, Child Welfare, and Permanency Planning*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 5 (1/2), 39-48.

Pinderhughes, Elaine. (1997). *Developing Diversity Competence in Child Welfare and Permanency Planning*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 5 (1/2), 19-38.

Scannapieco, M. (1999). *Kinship Care in the Public Child Welfare System: A Systematic Review of the Research*. In Hegar, R. L. & Scannapieco, M. (Eds.). *Kinship Foster Care: Policy, Practice, and Research*, pp. 141-54. Oxford Press: New York.

Williams, Carol W. (1997). *Personal Reflections on Permanency Planning and Cultural Competency*. Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 5 (1/2), 9-18.

Appendix III

African American Disparities Committee Members

Co-Chair Dr. William Allen
Mental Health Consultant

Co-Chair Erin Sullivan Sutton
Assistant Commissioner
Children's Services Administration
Minnesota Department of Human Services

Honorable Pamela Alexander
Hennepin County District Court

Linda Benson
Ramsey County Human Services

Irving Boone
African American Family Services

Lester Collins
Council on Black Minnesotans

John Edmonds
Olmsted County Community Services

Claudia Fercello
Children's Research, Planning and
Evaluation Division
Minnesota Department of Human Services

Dr. Priscilla Gibson
School of Social Work
University of Minnesota

Ella Gross
Institute for Minority Development

Ann Hill
Office of the Ombudsperson for Families

Don Johnson, J.D.
Hennepin County Attorney's Office

Beth Haney
Children's Defense Fund

Amy Perkins
Ramsey County Guardian Ad
Litem Program

Sarah Maxwell
Hennepin County
Adult, Children and Family Services

Rob Sawyer
Olmsted County Community Services

Cindy Cesare
Anoka County
Children's and Family Services Department

Dr. Halisi Edwards-Staton
Mental Health Consultant

Mark Toogood
Children's Services Administration
Minnesota Department of Human Services

Honorable Neva Walker
Minnesota House of Representatives

Patricia Torres Ray
Children's Services Administration
Minnesota Department of Human Services

Jacqui Smith
Retired from The City, Inc.

Marcie Jefferys
School of Social Work
University of Minnesota

Misty Heggeness
Humphrey Institute/School of Social Work
University of Minnesota

Appendix IV

Current Activities and Strategies to Address Disparities by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Children's Services Administration

- The most significant reform that will benefit African American families, DHS believes, is the move toward an Alternative Response to child maltreatment. This family-strength model is ideally suited for African American families who we know are dealing with stressful life circumstances that often manifests as a neglect report. Alternative response is a much less invasive, non-law enforcement approach to meeting the families' needs.
- Children's Services has developed guidelines for cultural competence on both an organizational and practice level. These guidelines will be available for implementation in 2002.
- Children's Mental Health Division developed and now supports the "Provider of Color Network" to increase the community's ability to provide culturally competent mental health services to children. The division provides training and mentoring on the grants process, quality improvements and other areas.
- Children's Services updated the *Directory of Organizations and Providers Serving Diverse Populations* in Fall 2001.
- The Children of Color Outreach Initiative was formed in 1996 to lead and to coordinate all Department of Human Services efforts to strengthen services for children of color and to implement recommendations of the Children of Color Advisory Committee.
- The coordinator of the Children of Color Outreach Initiative, has been active in identifying, sharing and promoting "best and promising practices" on culturally appropriate/culturally competent child welfare service delivery both within the Department of Human Services and with county and community partners.
- The department's Child Welfare Training system provides a three-part, graduated course on culture and diversity to county child welfare personnel.
- The External Review team is incorporating some standardized questions into their review format to inquire into agency practice regarding cultural competency, diverse populations and other related areas.
- Citizen Review tries to include diverse community representation on their panels so all voices and concerns are heard about children in the child protection system.
- Children's Services does extensive analysis of socio-demographic on grants and contracts to ensure vendors are responsive to the needs of diverse populations.
- The department actively recruits and supports racially diverse adoptive families for children in need of permanency through the Public/Private Adoption Initiative.
- Most recently, the department authorized and will employ a full-time cultural expert in the department's African-American disparities position. This person will actively work with an advisory committee, the agency and the community to identify family-level strategies to improve family functioning and prevent child placement.

Appendix V

History of Efforts in Minnesota to Address Racial Disparity

In 1990-91, the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners created a task force to address the concerns about African American children in out-of-home placement. This was in response to the request of the African American Children and Family Survival Committee of the Council on Black Minnesotans. The task force report, “African American Children in Out-of-Home Placement” was presented in August 1991.

The report noted that African American children constitute ten percent of the child population in Hennepin County, but sixty percent of the placement population. The committee made a number of demands that centered on the apparent inadequacy of the implementation of the Minority Heritage Act. Strategies put forth by the committee included:

- Counties must hire African American staff in proportion to the number of African American children served. Staff includes not only child protection workers, but also supervisors, program managers and division managers. Further, the counties must hire African American advocates.
- Child protection workers must be screened as closely as potential foster care parents are *before* being placed on their jobs.
- Counties must provide training immediately to judges and social workers in the entire system that work with communities of color. Those training programs should be developed with communities of color.
- Arrangements for therapy will be made with African American professionals.
- Caucasian foster parents will receive therapy to facilitate the move to African American families.
- African American children who are being reunited with their siblings must receive therapy around reunification and grief, and how to function again as a family with African American therapists.
- All residential treatment centers will be reviewed by this committee to determine which are inappropriate resources. Those that are inappropriate will no longer be used for African American children from Hennepin County.
- A kinship unit must be created for relative searches.
- Promote the One Church, One Child Program to encourage at least one African American family in every church to foster or adopt an African American child.
- Create and support an independent African American Adoption Project.

The Department of Human Services conducted a review of Hennepin County policies and practices in 1991 regarding the placement of children of color in foster care. A summary of the findings and recommendations included:

- County manuals do include appropriate references to laws respecting cultural heritage. But procedures for putting the policy into operation, including quality control points, need to be developed.
- Attention must be focused on the point of entry into care.
- State and county should develop procedures, including checklists and case plans, to ensure compliance.

- Increased efforts should be placed on relative searches when children must be removed from their parents.
- Training efforts need to be focused on the importance of ethnic or cultural heritage for children.
- “Best interests” of children should be implemented in terms of the importance of community or ethnic identity.

A follow-up task force was created by Hennepin County in 1992 to review the findings of the Placement Task Force and to examine adoption and foster care policies for all children. Some of their recommendations included:

- All employees must attend ongoing cultural sensitivity training.
- Reunification practices and procedures must be restructured.
- Managers of color must be hired.
- Culturally specific services must be utilized within communities.
- Guardian ad litem (GALs) of the same race should be appointed.
- GALs should be recruited and trained from the community.
- Families from communities of color for children with special needs should be recruited and trained.
- A diverse external citizens review process should be developed.
- Ongoing cultural issues training should be provided to judges, referees and attorneys.

The Department of Human Services convened a symposium in 1995, “Redefining Service Delivery to Communities of Color.” The Children of Color Outreach Initiative was then launched in response to statewide data that showed a disparity between the need for various services and the low percentage of families of color actually utilizing available services. The African American committee of the Initiative developed the following recommendations to guide the department’s work with the African American community.

- All professionals in the child welfare system should receive training on separation, placement and reunification. That training should cover African American culture and values.
- Culturally appropriate in-home supports should be offered instead of out-of-home placement. Supports should include: homemaker services, parent aides, protective day care, public health services, parenting classes, respite care, in-home education and counseling.
- Drug abuse must be addressed before it gets to the courts. Launch a media campaign that doing drugs is suicidal and doing drugs while pregnant amounts to child abuse.
- Mothers and children at risk must be identified. Support prenatal care and treatment of addiction.
- Family-oriented drug treatment programs must be developed.
- Extended care for continued follow-up of infants discharged as cocaine exposed must be provided.
- The foster care and adoption system must be revamped so the children can be removed from the custody of drug-using parents.
- The “whole family foster care” concept must be developed and implemented.

The Children of Color Outreach Initiative became a structural feature of the Children's Services (then the Children's Initiative) administration in 1996. The five-year strategic plan for the Children's Initiative that developed in 1997-98 included "Culturally Competent Delivery of Services" as one of four overarching goals and initiatives. The Children of Color Outreach Initiative has achieved worthwhile goals in the last five years.

Appendix VI

Racial Disparities Facts¹ Minnesota Trends

Socio-economic trends

- Minnesota's African American population has more than tripled from 50,000 in 1980 to about 171,000 in 2000. More than half of the African Americans moving to Minnesota in recent years have been poor. (U.S. Census, 2000).²
- The explosion in minority population contributed 57 percent of the state's gain in residents in the 1990s. Minnesota's African American growth rate is at the top among 47 states.³
- In Minnesota in 2000, people identifying their race as African American alone made up 3.49 percent of the population, Caucasian alone made up 89.45 percent, and two or more races made up 1.68 percent of the population.⁴
- Nine out of 10 Minnesotans are Caucasian.⁵
- Minnesota and Illinois have the nation's largest average African American family size, with 3.5 people.⁶
- Over 30 percent of all minority metro residents live in "concentrated poverty"⁷,⁸
- Fully half of African American and American Indian children live under the federal poverty guideline, compared to 12 percent of all children in Minnesota.⁹
- People of color represent the largest portion of the welfare population and are leaving welfare much more slowly than Caucasians.¹⁰
- People of color represent over 60 percent of single-parent Minnesota Family Investment Plan (MFIP) participants in the metro region. American Indians represent 30 percent of single-parent MFIP participants in northwest Minnesota. Hispanics represent the largest minority group of MFIP participants in both central and southwestern Minnesota.
- African American households are over represented (16 percent) in food shelf and on-site meal programs compared to the total state population of African American households (three percent). Caucasian households were under represented (62.9 percent) in comparison to the total state population of Caucasian households (93.2 percent).¹¹

¹ Author's note: "Facts" on disparity by race need to be interpreted carefully and contextually. No social problem is singly determined. Rather, all social phenomena are multivariate and multidimensional. In that sense then, the broader ecology in which people of color live their lives needs to be taken into account when looking at these numbers. Racism, discrimination and economic marginalization and segregation are salient and implicit variables when discussing disparities by racial group.

² U. S. Census Bureau www.census.gov

³ Star Tribune. *Minorities Contribute Bulk of State's Population Gains*, March 29, 2001. www.startribune.com

⁴ U. S. Census Bureau. www.census.gov.

⁵ Pioneer Press. *Minnesota's Schools are Among Most Segregated, Study Indicates*, July 19, 2001.

⁶ Star Tribune. *A Tale of Two Minnesotas*, August 22, 2001. www.startribune.com

⁷ Concentrated poverty is defined as a census tract with 40 percent or more of its residents having incomes below federal poverty line.

⁸ Institute on Race and Poverty

⁹ KIDS Count

¹⁰ MFIP Ethnic Reports

¹¹ Hunger Solutions Minnesota. July 2001. *Working but Still Hungry: A Survey of Food Shelves and On-Site Meals Programs in Minnesota*. July 2001.

Health Trends

- Infant mortality rates for African American and American Indian babies are more than twice as high (16.5 deaths and 16.2 deaths, respectively, per 1,000 live births) as those for any other racial or ethnic group in the state.¹²
- Families of color receive insufficient prenatal care. In a recent study by the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support, about 43 percent of African Americans received inadequate prenatal care compared to Caucasians (17 percent).¹³
- American Indian women are eight times more likely to receive inadequate prenatal care or no care at all than their Caucasian counterparts. Asian and African American women are six times more likely to receive inadequate care or no care at all. The rate of early prenatal care among populations of color is among the worst in the nation.¹⁴
- Among 15-17 year olds, pregnancy rates among populations of color are approximately three to seven times higher than the comparable rate for Caucasians. Minnesota has the highest rate of African American teen pregnancy in the nation.¹⁵
- The suicide rate is substantially higher among American Indians than any other racial/ethnic group. Students of color in Minnesota are more likely to have attempted suicide.¹⁶
- Populations of color comprise approximately eight percent of Minnesota's population, but approximately 17 percent of Minnesota's uninsured population. The rate of uninsurance for all populations of color is approximately 10 percent, compared to 5 percent for Caucasians.¹⁷
- African American admissions to chemical dependency treatment grew from 10 percent in 1989 to 24 percent in 1997.
- Fifty-one percent of African American admissions involve cocaine as the primary substance of abuse. Alcohol is the primary substance for all other racial groups.
- There were 64 cocaine-related deaths in Hennepin County in 1996 (up from 46 in 1995). Half of those who died were African American and seven of the deaths were infants. (DAANES, the Drug Alcohol Normative Evaluation System data from 1997)

School Trends

- During the 1990s, the percentage of students of color in Minnesota climbed from 10 to 17 percent. Minnesota was singled out for having the most segregated schools. More than 60 percent of the state's African American students are enrolled in schools where minorities make up most of the students. For 12.5 percent of the state's African American students, their schools are made up of more than 90 percent minorities.¹⁸
- African American students in grades 7-12 are almost four times as likely to drop out of school as their Caucasian counterparts.¹⁹

¹² Minnesota Department of Health

¹³ Star Tribune. *Report Assails Health Care for Poor, Minorities*, May 31, 2001. www.startribune.com.

¹⁴ Minnesota Department of Health

¹⁵ Center for Disease Control

¹⁶ Minnesota Department of Health

¹⁷ Minnesota Department of Health

¹⁸ Pioneer Press. *Minnesota's Schools are Among Most Segregated, Study Indicates*, July 19, 2001.

¹⁹ Minneapolis School District

- In Minneapolis, the number of students whose home language is not English has grown from 8 percent in 1988 to 19 percent in 1999. English language learners (ELL) come from more than 80 countries.²⁰
- Over 90 percent of ELL students receive free or reduced lunch.²¹

Correctional/Justice System Trends

- As in previous years, in 1999 Minnesota had an exceptionally low imprisonment rate for Caucasians (68 per 100,000) and about an average imprisonment rate for African Americans (1,417 per 100,000), resulting in the worst racial disparity in the country (21 to 1).²²
- Minnesota has the worst record of 49 states studied when comparing the rate at which African Americans and Caucasians go to prison. African American men in Minnesota are 27 times more likely to be jailed than Caucasian men.²³
- In Minnesota, African American men are nearly 40 times more likely to go to prison for a drug offense than Caucasians, yet five times as many Caucasians in the United States use drugs as African Americans.²⁴
- One out of every 24 African American men in Minnesota is in prison, compared with one in 642 for Caucasian men.²⁵

Child Abuse and Neglect Trends

- According to a study conducted in 1997, more than 8 percent of all African American children in Minnesota were in some sort of out-of-home placement during the year, compared with 1 percent of the state's Caucasian children.²⁶
- African American children were 12 times more likely than Caucasian children to be in out-of-home placement because of parent-related issues, compared with about six times more likely than Caucasian children to be in out-of-home placement for correctional issues.²⁷
- African American children in Minnesota in 1997 made up approximately four percent of the population under age 18, but had a rate of 22.3 percent of being in juvenile out-of-home care.²⁸

Chemical Dependency Trends

- Recent data suggests that American Indians receive chemical dependency services at a rate 70 times greater than the general population.²⁹

²⁰ Minneapolis School District

²¹ Minneapolis School District

²² Council on Crime and Justice Newsletter, November 2001. www.crimeandjustice.org.

²³ Star Tribune. *Glaring Gap in Proportion of Minnesota Blacks, Whites Sent to Prison*, June 8, 2000. www.startribune.com.

²⁴ Star Tribune. *Glaring Gap in Proportion of Minnesota Blacks, Whites Sent to Prison*, June 8, 2000. www.startribune.com.

²⁵ Star Tribune. *Glaring Gap in Proportion of Minnesota Blacks, Whites Sent to Prison*, June 8, 2000. www.startribune.com.

²⁶ Minnesota Department of Human Services. *Report on Out-of-Home Care in 1997 and 1998 by Race and Heritage* (Bulletin #01-68-01). March 1, 2001.

²⁷ Minnesota Department of Human Services. *Report on Out-of-Home Care in 1997 and 1998 by Race and Heritage* (Bulletin #01-68-01). March 1, 2001.

²⁸ Minnesota Department of Human Services. *Report on Out-of-Home Care in 1997 and 1998 by Race and Heritage* (Bulletin #01-68-01). March 1, 2001.

²⁹ CCPD

Other Trends³⁰

- Minority youth in a recent study were more likely to experience violence, truancy, emotional distress, sexual activity and pregnancy than Caucasians.
- Racial minorities were two to three times more likely to be threatened or injured with a weapon than Caucasian students.
- Minority youth were two to three times more likely to experience both sexual and physical abuse than Caucasian students.
- Students who are racial minorities were two to three times more likely to have cut class than their Caucasian counterparts.
- African American youth are getting pregnant or impregnating others at two to three times the rate of Caucasian students.
- Minority youth were twice as likely to have attempted suicide in the previous year and twice as likely to feel discouraged, sad, hopeless, or stressed.

Minneapolis/St. Paul Trends³¹

- African American children made up 44 percent of the student population in the Minneapolis Public Schools whereas Caucasian children made up only 28.73 percent in 2000.
- In 1998-1999, African American children dropped out at a rate of 19.8 percent and Caucasian children dropped out at a rate of 5.8 percent, meaning African American children were four times as likely to drop out.
- African American youth had a 31 percent four-year graduation rate as compared to a 63 percent graduation rate for Caucasians. Meaning that African American youth are one-half as likely to graduate in four years than Caucasians.
- Seventy percent of the Minneapolis School District qualified for free or reduced-price lunch in comparison to 26 percent of students statewide.

National Trends

- In key sectors (nationally), including educational attainment and access to health care, African Americans continue to lag behind Caucasians. The major challenge to eliminating these obstacles is presented by the institutions in this country.³²
- In the United States in 2000, African Americans alone made up 12.32 percent of the population, Caucasians alone made up 75.14 percent, and two or more races made up 2.43 percent of the population.³³
- In 1997, African American families had a median income of \$28,602 while Caucasian family income was \$46,745 – a difference of \$18,143. Income for African American married couples was \$45,375 while Caucasian married couples' median income was \$52,098 – a difference of \$6,723.³⁴

³⁰ The Urban Coalition. *Warning: Disparities Begin Here. The Health and Well-Being of Youth in Minnesota*, June 2001.

³¹ Minneapolis Public Schools. *What Our Schools Look Like*, September 19, 2000.

http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/communications/report_2000/schools.html.

³² Pioneer Press. *Blacks in America Doing Better But Still Lagging, Study Finds: Employment, Pay at Record Levels, but Disparities Still Exist*, November 14, 1999. <http://www.pioneerplanet.com>.

³³ U. S. Census Bureau. www.census.gov.

³⁴ Pioneer Press. *Blacks in America Doing Better But Still Lagging, Study Finds: Employment, Pay at Record Levels, but Disparities Still Exist*, November 14, 1999. <http://www.pioneerplanet.com>.

- Nationally, more than 70 percent of the nation's African American students attend schools where the minority population is greater than 50 percent.³⁵
- Youth of color experience more severe treatment than their Caucasian peers at every stage of the juvenile justice process. Although minority youth are one-third of the adolescent population in the United States, three out of four youth admitted to state prisons in 1997 were minorities. Even when charged with the same offenses – minority youth were less likely to be placed on probation than Caucasian youth, were much more likely to be waived to criminal court, and African American youth with no prior admissions to locked facilities were six times more likely to be incarcerated than Caucasian youth with the same background.³⁶
- A Justice Department study found wide racial and geographic disparities in the federal death penalty system. Minorities are over represented in the federal death penalty system, as both victims and defendants, relative to the general population. Crime is often the product of social ills and harsh conditions...that disproportionately affect minorities.³⁷

³⁵ Pioneer Press. *Minnesota's Schools are Among Most Segregated, Study Indicates*, July 19, 2001.

³⁶ Child Welfare League of America, April 24, 2000. *New Report, "And Justice for Some" Reveals Sharp Racial Disparities in Nation's Juvenile Justice System*. <http://www.cwls.org/publicpolicy/jjupdate042400.html>.

³⁷ Star Tribune. *Justice Study Finds Wide Disparity in Federal Death Penalty System*, September 13, 2000. <http://www.startribune.com>.

Appendix VII

Study of Outcomes for African American Children in the Child Protection System

Legislative Mandate (2001 Minnesota Session Laws, First Special Session, Chapter 9, Article 11, Section 15)

The commissioner of human services, in consultation with local social services agencies, councils of color, representatives of communities of color, child advocates, representatives of courts, and other interested parties, shall:

- study why African American children in Minnesota are disproportionately represented in child welfare out-of-home placements.
- study each stage of the proceedings concerning children in need of protection or services, including the point at which children enter the child welfare system, and the outcomes for children in the child welfare system, to determine why outcomes differ by race.
- use child welfare performance and outcome indicators and data and other available data as part of this study.
- study and determine if there are decision-making points in the child protection system that lead to different outcomes for children and how those decision-making points affect outcomes for children.

The commissioner shall report and make legislative recommendations on the following:

- amend the child protection statutes to reduce any identified disparities in the child protection system relating to outcomes for children of color, as compared to Caucasian children;
- reduce any identified bias in the child protection system;
- reduce the number and duration of out-of-home placements for African American children; and
- improve the long-term outcomes for African American children in out-of-home placements.

The commissioner of human services shall submit the report and recommended legislation to the chairs and ranking minority members of the committees in the house of representatives and senate with jurisdiction over child protection and out-of-home placement issues.

Appendix VIII

African American Disparities Committee's Activities

Activities conducted:

- The African American Disparities Committee was formed consistent with the legislative charge. See Appendix III for a list of committee members.
- The first order of business was to explore each other's values and assumptions regarding racial disparities, which are on page 7. Five meetings were held with the committee. Community concerns were shared, expert opinions were presented, values and recommendations were discussed and developed.
- A national literature review was conducted and literature on racial disparities and promising strategies to address them was compiled.
- Consultation with national experts on disparities and child welfare was carried out with representatives from the Child Welfare League of America, the Children's Research Center at University of Wisconsin-Madison, the Humphrey Institute and the School of Social Work at the University of Minnesota.
- Social Services Information System (SSIS) administrative data on the ratio of racial disparities, at each decision point in the child protection system, were reviewed.
- County profiles of various socio-demographic and ethnic factors were developed using data from four counties: Anoka, Hennepin, Ramsey and Olmsted. (See Appendix IX) Representatives from these counties also participated on the Advisory Committee.
- A review of racial disparities in Minnesota was conducted across various domains and a "Racial Disparities Facts, Minnesota Trends Fact Sheet" developed. (See Appendix VI).
- The department and the committee participated in a legislative hearing on disparities sponsored by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Anoka County

Anoka County is part of the northern section of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Statistical Area, and is the fourth largest county in Minnesota. Anoka County had a 1998 per capita income of \$26,354, the eleventh highest in the state.¹

Demographics² (by race) in the year 2000

Estimated Population.....	298,084
Est. African American Population.....	4,756
Est. Caucasian Population.....	279,133
Est. Population Two or More Races.....	5,084
Estimated Population by Householders ³	107,449
Est. African American Householders.....	1,404
Est. Caucasian Householders.....	102,826
Estimated Persons under 17 years old.....	86,217
Est. African American Persons under 17 years old.....	1,916
Est. Caucasian Persons under 17 years old.....	78,218
Est. Two or More Race Persons under 17 years old.....	2,853
Average Family Size.....	3.49
Av. Family Size for African American Families.....	3.74
Av. Family Size for Caucasian Families.....	3.16
Av. Family Size for Two or More Race Families.....	3.57

¹ Minnesota Kids: A Closer Look 2001 Data Book. Children's Defense Fund, Minnesota.

² U. S. Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov/>

³ Black alone or in combination with one or more other races. White alone or in combination with one or more other races.

Appendix IX

Environmental Factors (by race)

Persons below poverty ⁴ in 2000.....	4.3%
Children below poverty ⁵ in 2000.....	1.7%
Children as a percentage of persons below poverty ⁶	3.9%
Births to unmarried mothers ⁷ in 1999.....	23.3%
Teen pregnancy rates ⁸ in 1997-1999	
15-17 yrs.....	21.9
18-19 yrs.....	71.9
15-19 yrs.....	39.5
Homelessness rates.....	not statistically significant ⁹
Juvenile Apprehensions: African American youth make up approximately 2 percent of youth ages 17 and under in 2000 yet accounted for 6.19 percent of Part I juvenile offenses ¹⁰ and 3.64 percent of Part II juvenile offenses ¹¹ in 1999.	

Child Welfare Statistics (by race)

Number of children in out-of-home placement¹²:
In 1998, Anoka County had 171 children of color¹³ in care and 1,021 Caucasian children. One hundred and seventy-one children of color is approximately 14 percent of the total children reported by the county as in care.

⁴ U. S. Census Bureau: Table – Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Sex and Age

⁵ U. S. Census Bureau: Table – Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Sex and Age. “Children” is defined as 0 to 17 years old.

⁶ U. S. Census Bureau: Table – Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Sex and Age

⁷ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics

⁸ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics, number of pregnancies per 1,000 population of specific age group

⁹ Numbers too small

¹⁰ Part I offenses include murder, negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

¹¹ Part II offenses include other assaults, forgery and counterfeiting, fraud, embezzlement, stolen property, vandalism, weapons offenses, prostitution, other sex offenses, narcotics offenses, gambling offenses, offenses against family or children, driving under the influence, liquor laws, disorderly conduct, vagrancy, and other offenses (except traffic).

¹² MN DHS Bulletin #01-68-01: Report on Out-of-Home Care in 1997 and 1998 by Race and Heritage, March 1, 2001.

¹³ African American, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic

Hennepin County

Hennepin County, part of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Statistical Area, is the largest county in the state. The county is ethnically and racially diverse. In 1998, it had a per capita personal income of \$40,126, the highest in the state. ¹ Hennepin County accounts for over one-third of all child protection cases in Minnesota.

Demographics² (by race) in the year 2000

Estimated Population.....	1,116,200
Est. African American Population.....	99,943
Est. Caucasian Population.....	898,921
Est. Population Two or More Races.....	29,041
Estimated Population by Householders ³	463,723
Est. African American Householders.....	37,017
Est. Caucasian Householders.....	395,954
Estimated Persons under 17 years old.....	267,502
Est. African American Persons under 17 years old.....	37,374
Est. Caucasian Persons under 17 years old.....	185,458
Est. Two or More Race Persons under 17 years old.....	14,732
Average Family Size.....	3.34
Av. Family Size for African American Families.....	3.52
Av. Family Size for Caucasian Families.....	2.94
Av. Family Size for two or more race Families.....	3.55

¹ Minnesota Kids: A Closer Look 2001 Data Book. Children's Defense Fund, Minnesota.

² U. S. Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov/>

³ African American alone or in combination with one or more other races. Caucasian alone or in combination with one or more other races.

Environmental Factors (by race)

Persons below poverty⁴, 1997 model-based estimate 9.4 percent
 Children below poverty⁵, 1997 model-based estimate 15.5 percent

Births to unmarried mothers⁶, 1999 27.5 percent

Teen pregnancy rates⁷, 1997-1999: The teen pregnancy rate among Minnesota African American teenagers is seven times greater than that of Caucasian teens (120 per 1000 African American teens compared to 18 per 1000 Caucasian teens).

Homelessness Rate: African American adults make up 60 percent of the Homeless population. Caucasians make up 20 percent. African American youth make up 41 percent of the homeless child population.

Domestic Violence: African Americans make up 53 percent of the battered women's shelter population. Caucasian women 16 percent.

Juvenile Apprehensions: African American youth make up approximately 14 percent of youth ages 17 and under in 2000 yet accounted for 42.74 percent of Part I juvenile offenses⁸ and 33.85 percent of Part II juvenile offenses⁹ in 1999.

⁴ U. S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts

⁵ U. S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts

⁶ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics

⁷ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics, number of pregnancies per 1,000 population of specific age group

⁸ Part I offenses include murder, negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft and arson.

⁹ Part II offenses include other assaults, forgery and counterfeiting, fraud, embezzlement, stolen property, vandalism, weapons offenses, prostitution, other sex offenses, narcotics offenses, gambling offenses, offenses against family or children, driving under the influence, liquor laws, disorderly conduct, vagrancy and other offenses (except traffic).

Hennepin County, *continued*

Child Welfare Statistics (by race)

Number of Children in Out of Home Placement¹⁰:

In 1998 in Hennepin County there were 3,681 children of color¹¹ in care and only 1,253 Caucasian children. Three thousand six hundred and eighty-one children of color is approximately 72 percent of the total children reported by the county as in care.

Other Facts on Disparity by Race in Hennepin County and Minneapolis

From: “An External Review of Child Protection Services in Hennepin County, DHS Report,” September 2000

- Hennepin County accounts for over one-third of all child protection cases in Minnesota.
- 72 percent of placements in Hennepin County in 1998 were children of color.
- Families of color were 64 percent of foster homes.
- Cocaine positive births are a significant problem in Hennepin County. There is a high incidence of these and other health problems in the four or five neighborhoods identified as the source of almost half of the maltreatment reports received by the county.
- African American Family Services (AAFS) staff who were interviewed expressed serious concerns about meeting the permanency time lines in cases involving chemical dependency.
- AAFS staff also shared that child protection and the court did not necessarily need to be involved with a lot of these families, especially around issues dealing with disciplining and corporal punishment. AAFS staff noted that African American families

relocating from Gary, Indiana or Detroit, often bring disciplining practices with them that differ from the community norm here. Parent education about our system and community standards may make a difference in whether or not families end up in child protection. (Note: The Alternative Response Program was designed precisely for this kind of reason).

- In 1999, 30 percent of children going into foster care were placed with relatives or kin.

From: “When Rescue is Urgent: Children in Shelter Placement for Seven Days or Less,” Esther Wattenberg, et.al (DRAFT) 2001

- African American children in every age group—very young, school age, older adolescents—are disproportionately represented in emergency shelter care.
- More than half (54 percent) of children admitted are African American.
- Another 17 percent of the children admitted are biracial or mixed.
- Almost 20 percent of all kids admitted were living in foster homes, juvenile centers, group homes or with kin. They arrived for placement because of “disruptive circumstances.”
- Prior to entering St. Joseph’s Home for Children, most children lived in single parent households. Less than 10 percent were children for whom both parents had legal custody.
- Though St. Joseph’s Home for Children serves all of Hennepin County, the vast majority of children at St. Joseph’s come from Minneapolis, and a majority of those children come from the north side of Minneapolis, covered by police Precinct Four.
- The Fourth Precinct has the highest proportion of African Americans and an extremely high concentration of children, perhaps as many as sixty children per square block.

¹⁰ MN DHS Bulletin #01-68-01:Report on Out-of-Home Care in 1997 and 1998 by Race and Heritage, March 1, 2001.

¹¹ African American, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic

Olmsted County

Olmsted County in southeastern Minnesota is the eighth largest county in the state. Olmsted County's 1998 per capita personal income of \$30,880 ranked fifth among Minnesota counties.¹

Demographics² in the year 2000

Estimated Population.....	124,277
Est. African American Population.....	3,330
Est. Caucasian Population.....	112,255
Est. Population Two or More Races.....	1,881
Estimated Population by Householders ³	48,253
Est. African American Householders.....	1,102
Est. Caucasian Householders.....	44,752
Estimated Persons under 17 years old.....	33,533
Est. African American Persons under 17 years old.....	1,273
Est. Caucasian Persons under 17 years old.....	28,897
Est. Two or More Race Persons under 17 years old.....	1,033
Average Family Size.....	3.41
Av. Family Size for African American Families.....	3.63
Av. Family Size for Caucasian Families.....	3.04
Av. Family Size for Two or More Race Families.....	3.57

¹ Minnesota Kids: A Closer Look 2001 Data Book. Children's Defense Fund, Minnesota.

² U. S. Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov/>

³ African American alone or in combination with one or more other races. Caucasian alone or in combination with one or more other races.

Characteristics

Persons below poverty⁴, 1997 model-based estimate 7.0 percent
 Children below poverty⁵, 1997 model-based estimate 10.1 percent

Births to unmarried mothers⁶, 1999 18.6 percent

Teen pregnancy rates⁷, 1997-1999
 15-17 yrs. 20.5
 18-19 yrs. 63.2
 15-19 yrs. 37.0

Infant Mortality⁸, 1995-1999 5

Child Care Subsidies.....

Maternal Education Status⁹, 1999
 low percentage 8.1
 medium percentage 19.0
 high percentage 73.0

Juvenile Criminal Apprehensions.....

Abuse and Neglect Rates.....

Number of Children in Foster Care.....

Homelessness Rates.....

Domestic Violence Statistics.....

Substance Abuse.....

⁴ U. S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts

⁵ U. S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts

⁶ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics

⁷ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics, number of pregnancies per 1,000 population of specific age group

⁸ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics, number of deaths per 1,000 population of specific age group

⁹ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics

Ramsey County

Ramsey County, the second largest county in Minnesota, is part of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Statistical Area. The county is ethnically and racially diverse. The 1998 per capita personal income of \$32,863 was the second highest in the state.¹

Demographics² (by race) in the year 2000

Estimated Population.....	551,035
Est. African American Population.....	38,900
Est. Caucasian Population.....	395,406
Est. Population Two or More Races.....	14,813
Estimated Population by Householders ³	204,695
Est. African American Householders.....	14,255
Est. Caucasian Householders.....	172,397
Estimated Persons under 17 years old.....	130,684
Est. African American Persons under 17 years old.....	15,128
Est. Caucasian Persons under 17 years old.....	80,650
Est. Two or More Race Persons under 17 years old.....	7,978
Average Family Size.....	3.35
Av. Family Size for African American Families.....	3.44
Av. Family Size for Caucasian Families.....	2.95
Av. Family Size for two or more race Families.....	3.67

¹ Minnesota Kids: A Closer Look 2001 Data Book. Children's Defense Fund, Minnesota.

² U. S. Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov/>

³ African American alone or in combination with one or more other races. Caucasian alone or in combination with one or more other races.

Environmental Factors (by race)

Persons below poverty ⁴ , 1997 model-based estimate.....	11.5percent
Children below poverty ⁵ , 1997 model-based estimate.....	19.2percent
Births to unmarried mothers ⁶ , 1999.....	33.5percent
Teen pregnancy rates ⁷ , 1997-1999	
15-17 yrs.	48.4
18-19 yrs.	102.2
15-19 yrs.	72.5

Homelessness Rates: African Americans make up 52 percent of homeless population. Caucasian 27 percent.

Domestic Violence Statistic: African American women make up 57 percent of the women's shelter population. Caucasian 20 percent.

Juvenile Apprehensions: African American youth make up approximately 12 percent of youth ages 17 and under in 2000 yet accounted for 36.03 percent of Part I juvenile offenses⁸ and 26.58 percent of Part II juvenile offenses⁹ in 1999.

Child Welfare Statistics (by race)

Number of Children in Out-of-Home Placement¹⁰:

In 1998, Ramsey County had 1,342 children of color¹¹ in care and only 887 Caucasian children. One thousand three hundred and forty-two children of color is approximately 60 percent of the total children reported by the county as in care.

⁴ U. S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts

⁵ U. S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts

⁶ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics

⁷ Minnesota Department of Health Statistics, number of pregnancies per 1,000 population of specific age group

⁸ Part I offenses include murder, negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft and arson.

⁹ Part II offenses include other assaults, forgery and counterfeiting, fraud, embezzlement, stolen property, vandalism, weapons offenses, prostitution, other sex offenses, narcotics offenses, gambling offenses, offenses against family or children, driving under the influence, liquor laws, disorderly conduct, vagrancy and other offenses (except traffic).

¹⁰ MN DHS Bulletin #01-68-01: Report on Out-of-Home Care in 1997 and 1998 by Race and Heritage, March 1, 2001.

¹¹ African American, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

444 Lafayette Road North

St. Paul, MN 55155-3839

www.dhs.state.mn.us

MS-1943/GF 03/02