

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

Adoption From Foster Care

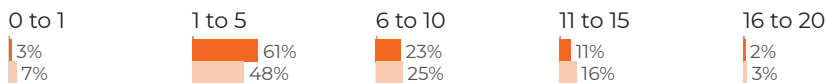
Federal Fiscal Year 2019

Adoption creates a permanent legal relationship between a child and their adoptive family. Children adopted from foster care were originally removed from their birth families because child protective services and a court determined it was not safe for them to return home and that adoption would be in their best interest. Not every child in foster care has a goal of adoption; most will reunify with their birth families or live with relatives as their guardians. However, for children for whom reunification is not possible, adoption is a critically important path to a safe, permanent family.

Age distribution of children adopted and waiting to be adopted from foster care ⁵

Adopted Waiting to be adopted

California



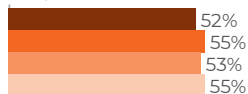
United States



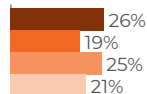
Race and ethnicity of children in California adopted and waiting to be adopted from foster care ⁶

General child population Foster care population Adopted Waiting to be adopted

Hispanic or Latino



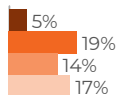
White



Asian



African American



Multiple races



American Indian/Alaska Native



Pacific Islander



California

Number of children adopted from foster care

6,981

United States: 66,111

Average length of stay in care before adoption finalized¹

32.3 months

United States: 31.8 months

Average age of adopted children²

5.0 years

United States: 5.9 years

Percent of adopted children who did not receive Title IV-E federal adoption assistance

9%

United States: 20%

Number of children waiting to be adopted from foster care³

14,436

United States: 122,637

Average length of stay - children waiting to be adopted

29.4 months

United States: 31.3 months

Average age of children waiting to be adopted⁴

5.9 years

United States: 7.4 years

Percent of children waiting to be adopted who have spent 5 or more years in foster care

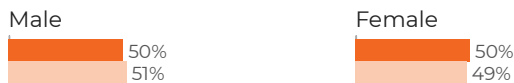
8%

United States: 10%

Gender

California

- Children adopted from foster care
- Children waiting to be adopted from foster care



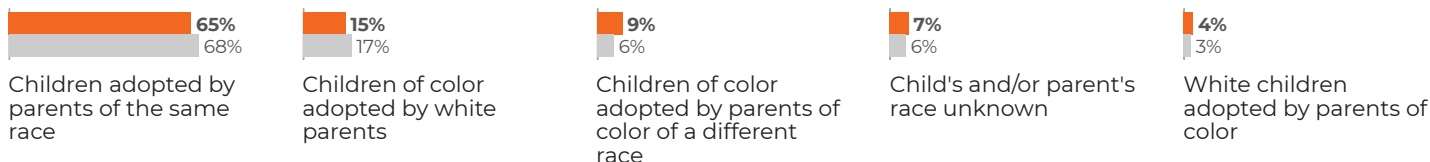
United States

- Children adopted from foster care
- Children waiting to be adopted from foster care



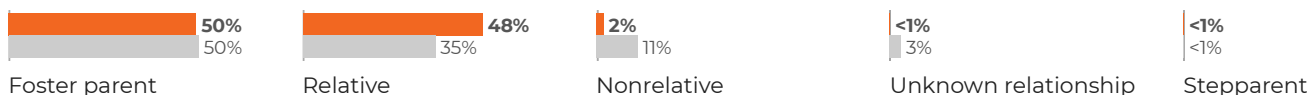
Transracial adoptions ⁷

- California
- United States



Relationship of adoptive parent to child ⁸

- California
- United States



Source, unless noted otherwise: The data used in this publication, [Dataset #24], AFCARS Adoption FY2019], were obtained from the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect and have been used in accordance with its Terms of Use Agreement license. The data represent the federal fiscal year 2019 reporting period (October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019). Unless otherwise noted, for each calculation, children who were missing data on the relevant indicator were excluded from analyses. The Administration on Children, Youth and Families, the Children's Bureau, the original dataset collection personnel or funding source, NDACAN, Cornell University and their agents or employees bear no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

Notes:

¹ Length of stay in care is calculated based on the current removal episode.

² Based on child's age on date of adoption.

³ Children are included in this count if they are in foster care at the end of the fiscal year, under age 18, and their parents have either lost parental rights or their case goal is adoption. Children ages 16 and 17 with the case goal of emancipation are not included.

⁴ Based on child's age at end of fiscal year.

⁵ Does not include children over age 20 or children missing birthdate data; children waiting to be adopted from foster care are age 17 or younger.

⁶ If a child is determined to be of Hispanic origin, they are only counted as Hispanic and are not included in any other racial/ethnic categories. Data for the general child population under age 18 in 2019 are from the U. S. Census Bureau.

⁷ An adoption is considered transracial if the child has two adoptive parents and is not the same race as either parent, or if the child has one adoptive parent and is not the same race as that parent.

⁸ In cases where more than one type of adoptive family was selected, stepparent receives priority followed by relative, foster parent, and nonrelative.