

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

Adoption From Foster Care

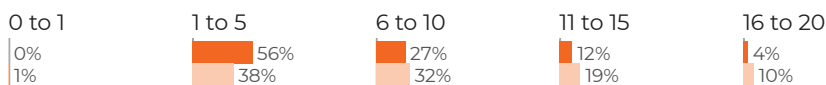
Federal Fiscal Year 2017

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.

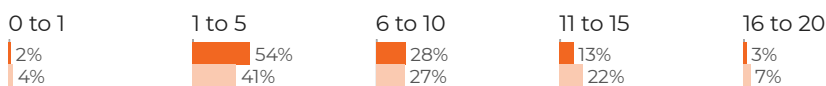
Age distribution of children adopted and waiting to be adopted from foster care ⁵

Adopted Waiting to be adopted

District of Columbia

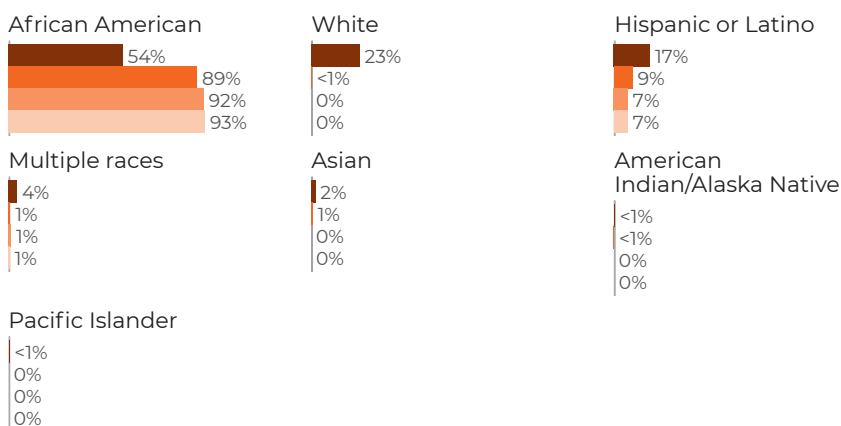


United States



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

General child population Foster care population Adopted Waiting to be adopted



District of Columbia

Number of children adopted from foster care

91

United States: 59,430

Average length of stay in care before adoption finalized¹

39.7 months

United States: 31.3 months

Average age of adopted children²

6.2 years

United States: 5.8 years

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

85%

United States: 18%

Number of children waiting to be adopted from foster care³

190

United States: 123,437

Average length of stay - children waiting to be adopted

37.5 months

United States: 30.9 months

Average age of children waiting to be adopted⁴

7.7 years

United States: 7.2 years

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

13%

United States: 9%

Gender

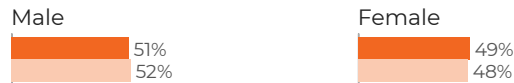
District of Columbia

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



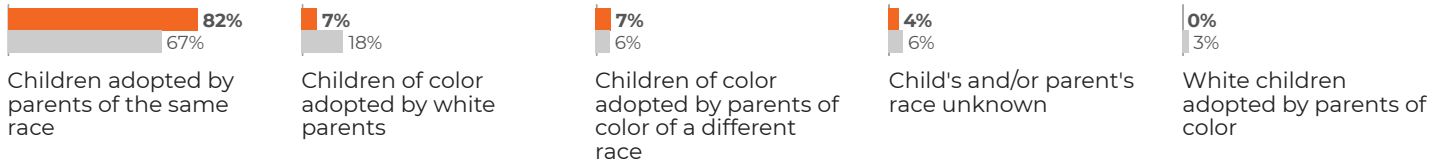
United States

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



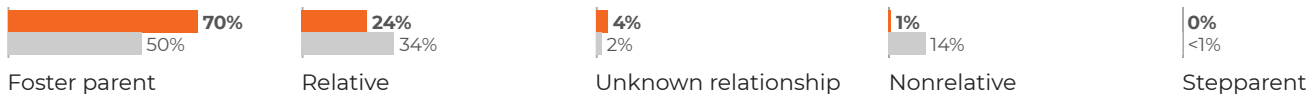
Transracial adoptions ⁷

- District of Columbia
- United States



Relationship of adoptive parent to child ⁸

- District of Columbia
- United States



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

Notes:

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 2017 is from the U. S. Census Bureau and is publicly available from the Kids Count Data Center.

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.