

# Leading Efforts to Identify and Address Disparities: A Response to Disproportionality

**National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement and the National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology**

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# Overview

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- Leadership
  - How It All Began
  - Legislative Mandates
  - Disproportionality Manager and Specialists: Legislated Capacity to Lead the Work
  - Examining Enforcement Actions
- Using the Data
  - Showing that Disproportionality Exists
  - Choosing and Monitoring Sites
  - The Idea and Method of Evaluation
  - Three Levels of Evaluation Data

# Leadership: How it all began

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- ❑ Beaumont/Port Arthur area
- ❑ Pulling the data
- ❑ Recognizing problem on regional level
- ❑ Partnering with the community & Project HOPE was born
- ❑ Looking at the issue on state level

# Leadership: Legislative Mandates

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- ❑ Senate Bill 6, 79<sup>th</sup> Legislature, laid the foundation for comprehensive reform of Child Protective Services (CPS) in Texas including disproportionality and family focus
- ❑ Requirement to determine if the system was disproportionate
- ❑ Analysis of disproportionality was provided to the legislature on January 1, 2006
- ❑ A remediation plan was provided in July 2006
- ❑ Disproportionality Specialists were assigned to 5 sites

# Leadership: Legislative Mandates (continued)

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- ❑ Senate Bill 758, 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature, called for the expansion of efforts statewide
- ❑ Disproportionality sites are currently located in all 11 Texas Regions and 13 Disproportionality Specialists have been hired with a Disproportionality Manager at State Office reporting to the Assistant Commissioner.

# Leadership: What precipitated the legislation?

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Several factors:

- ❑ High profile cases
- ❑ Child deaths
- ❑ Community outcry
- ❑ State Comptroller's Report
- ❑ Governor's Executive Order
- ❑ The time was right!

# Leadership: Requirements and Results of Senate Bill 6

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- ❑ Examine and address racial disproportionality in CPS (accomplished and documented in three reports)
- ❑ Provide cultural competency training in the form of Knowing Who You Are and Undoing Racism training to all CPS staff (over 4000 staff trained)
- ❑ Offer culturally competent services to all CPS children and families (documented through a recent report on FGDM)
- ❑ Increase targeted recruitment for all foster care and adoptive parents (Texas was awarded a national 5 year grant to bolster these efforts)
- ❑ Target recruitment efforts to insure diversity among all staff (the diversity of staff have been increased)
- ❑ Engage in collaborative community partnerships (disproportionality sites are in all 11 regions and community partners as well as judges throughout Texas are beginning to be trained in disproportionality and cultural competency)

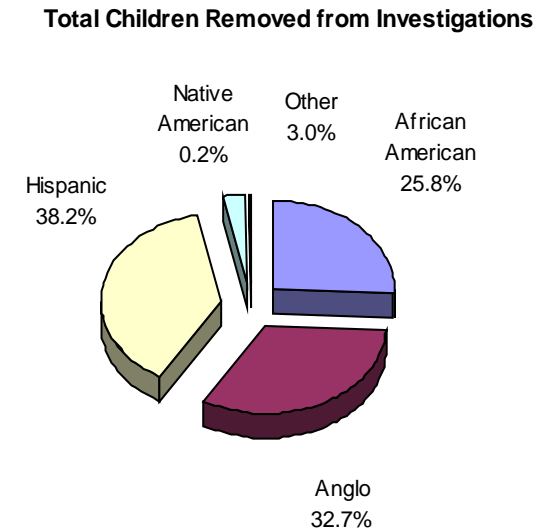
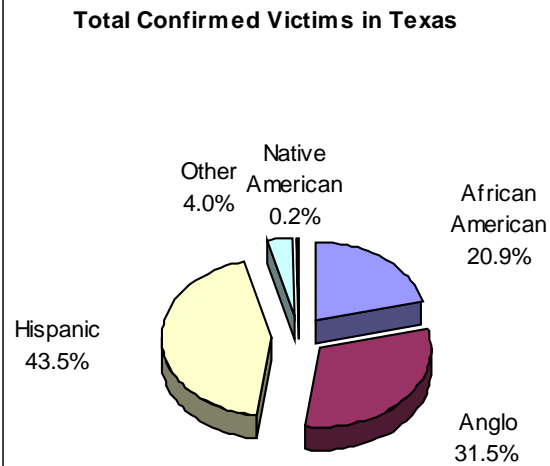
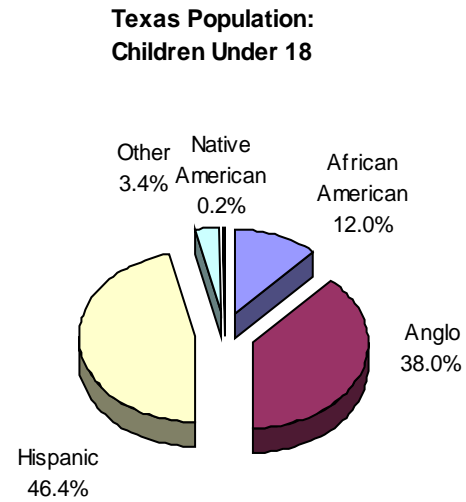
# Using the Data: Showing that Disproportionality Exists

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- ❑ Comparisons to the Child Population
- ❑ Comparisons to the CPS Population at Different Decision Points
- ❑ Ways of showing Disparities and Resulting Disproportionality



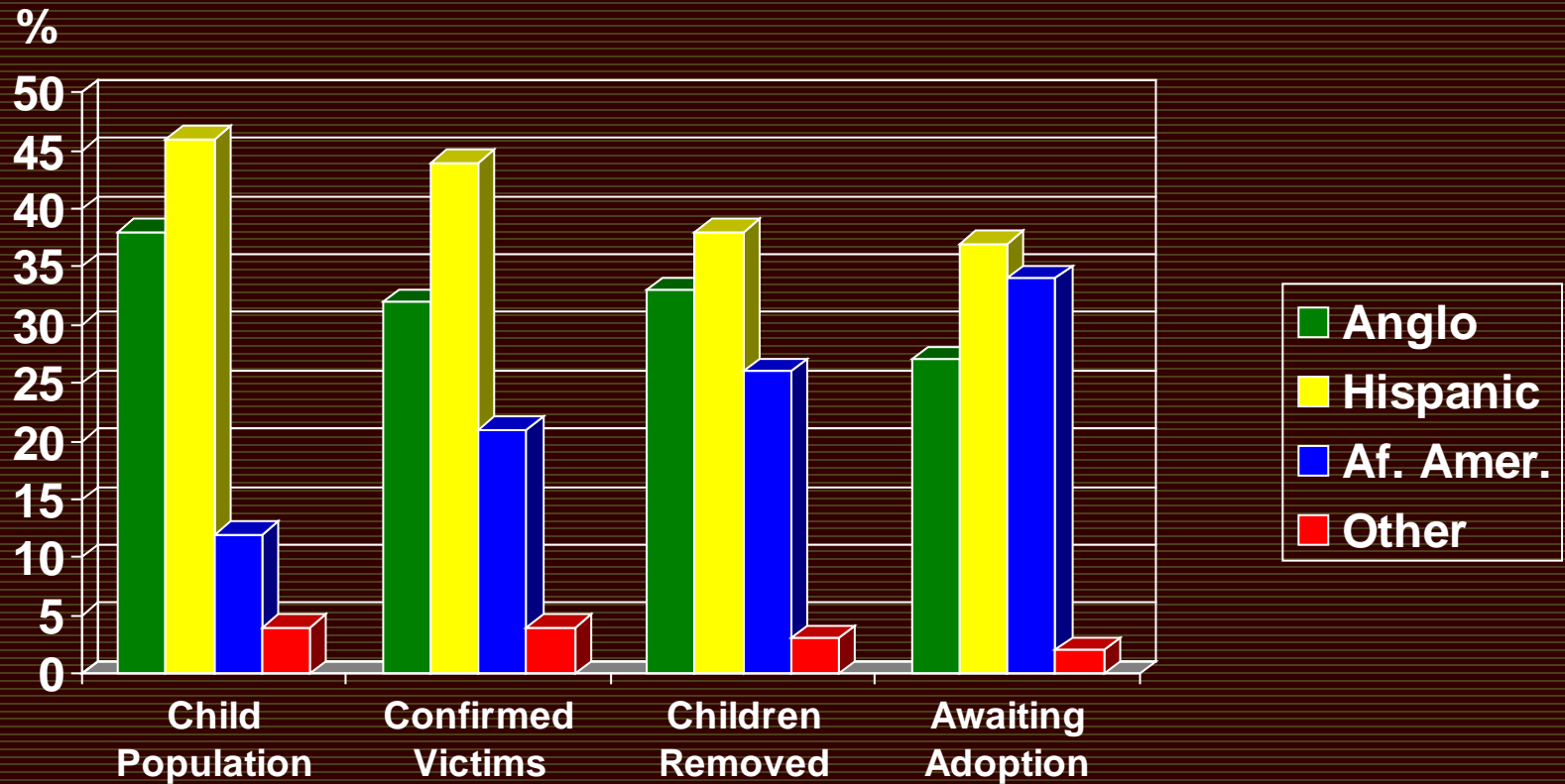
# Using Data: Comparisons to the Texas Child Population Data FY 2008



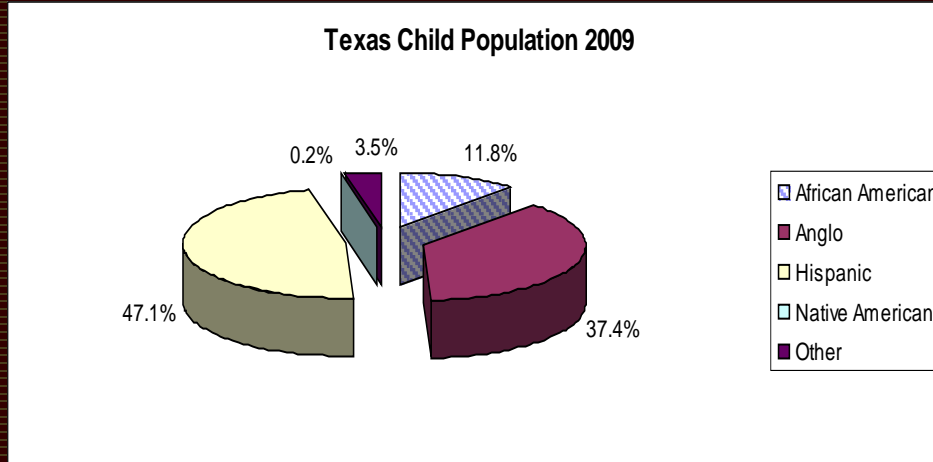
African American Children in Texas make up:

- 12% Texas Population
- 20.9% Confirmed Victims in CPS
- 25.8% Removals in CPS, and

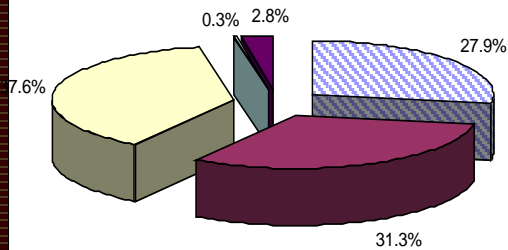
# Using Data: Comparison of Stages FY 08



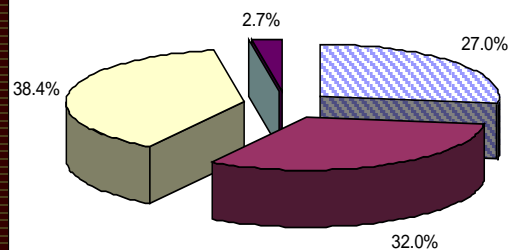
# Using Data: How removals and exits affect disproportionality



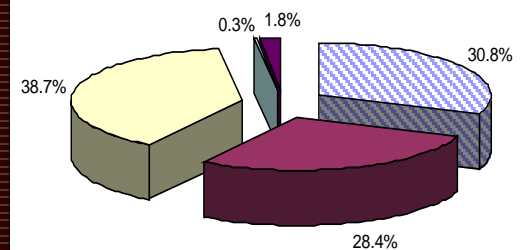
**Removals FY 2009**



**Exits from Care FY 2009\***



**Children in Substitutue Care as of the End of FY 2009**



# Using Data: Targeting and Monitoring Disproportionality Sites

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- ❑ Three sets of data are created and displayed by zip code, that can be rolled up to county and to regional levels: (1) A risk index for African American, Hispanic and Anglo families, (2) a rate of child removals for African American and Hispanic families, relative to Anglos Families and (3) The number of investigations for each.
- ❑ Zip codes areas are chosen by community board members and CPS staff that reflect lower risk, high relative removals rates and sufficient magnitude of investigations. They are displayed electronically on Google Maps so that they can be examined more closely.
- ❑ Once chosen, the Community Engagement Model is intensified and the sites are monitored for progress.

# Using Data: The Idea and the Method

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- The Decision-Making Ecology
- Integrated Administrative and Externally Gathered Data
- Single and Multi-Level Analyses

# The Idea

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- Decision-Making Ecology (Developed in 1997 as part of a large decision-making project)
  - Case factors
  - Individual decision maker factors
  - Organizational factors
  - Outcomes
- Advantages to the Framework
  - Effectiveness of organizational changes can be tested (e.g., did the changes make a difference and can other organizational factors be identified?)
  - Individual decision-making processes can be tested (e.g., what are the strategies that are both reduce and increase disproportionality?)

# Data Collection and Analyses

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## □ Data collection

- Focus groups in the two large regions (n=19)
- Investigation caseworker surveys (n=1,125)
- Administrative data (investigation n's =197,000 to 600,000; foster care n's = 31,750 to 72,400)
- Combined surveys and investigations (n = 700)

## □ Data analyses

- Qualitative
- Population description
- Logistic regression
- Survival analyses
- Multi-level structural equation modeling

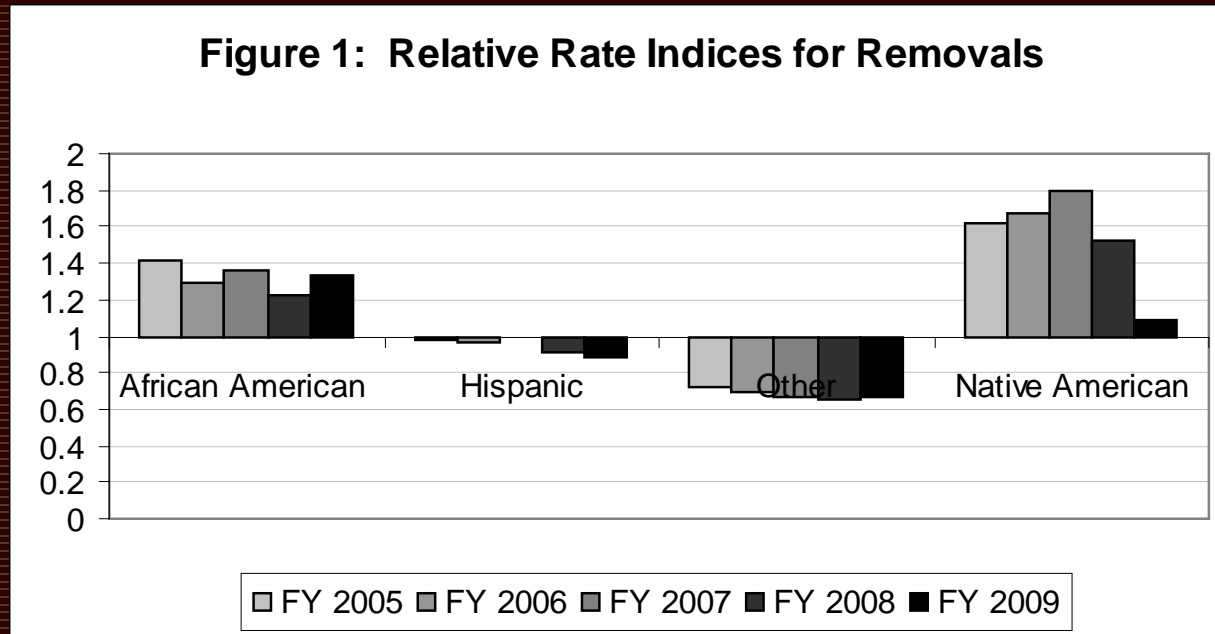
# Using Data: Three Levels of Analyses

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- Population data
- Data that take other factors into account
- Data that explain why

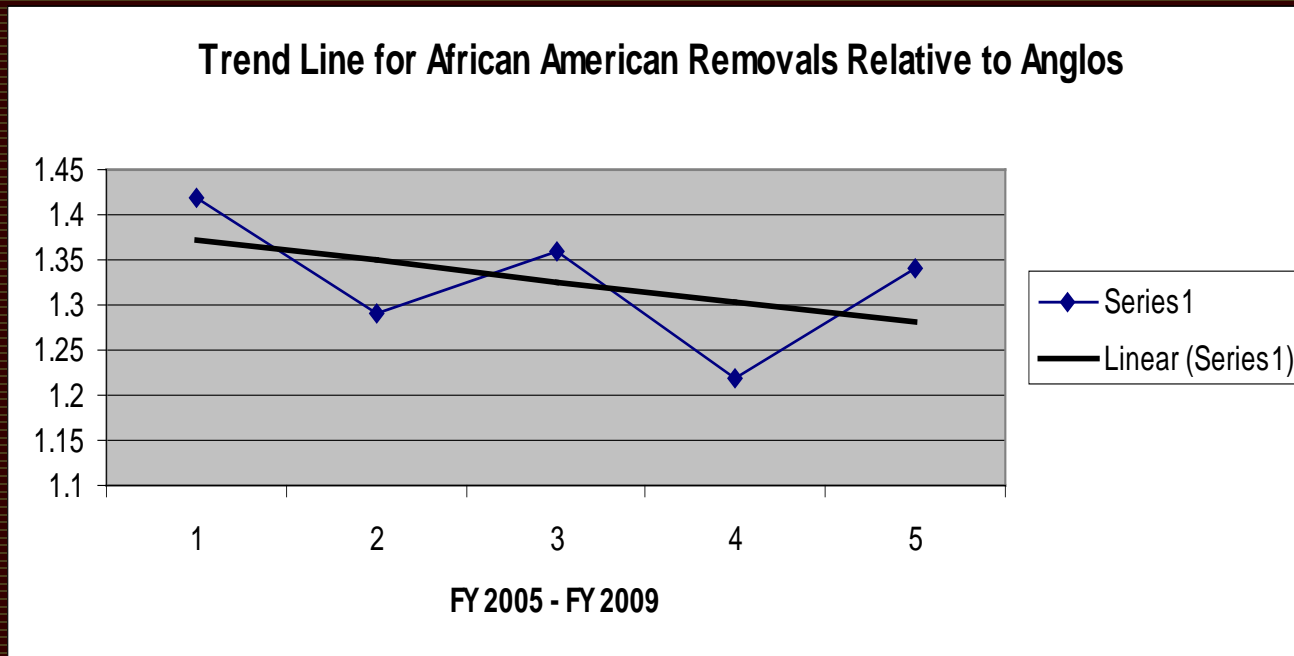


# Using Data: Does the population data show that the removal process changed over time?



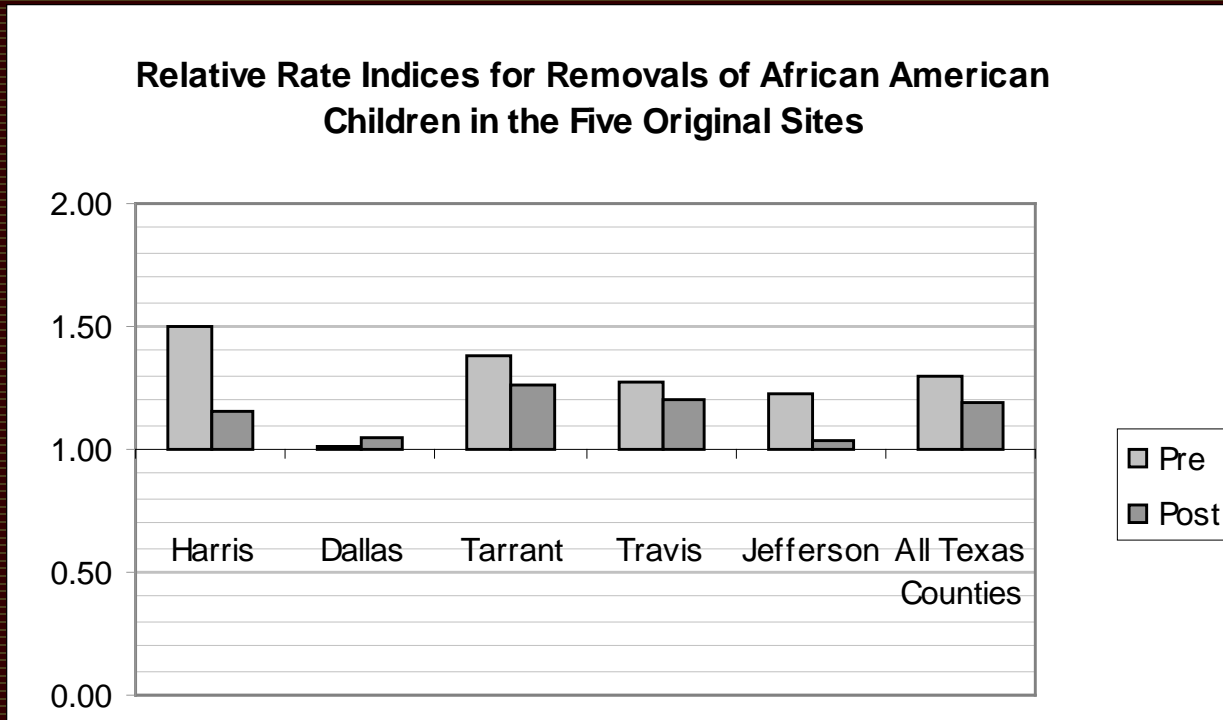
- Relative to children in investigations, the removal rates of African American and Native American children are higher than that of Anglo children
- The rate of removals for African American and Native American children has been lowered since 2005
- Children are removed in place of FBSS (thus, the odds of receiving services, relative to a removal, are lower for African American children)

# Using Data: Does the population data show that the removal process changed over time?



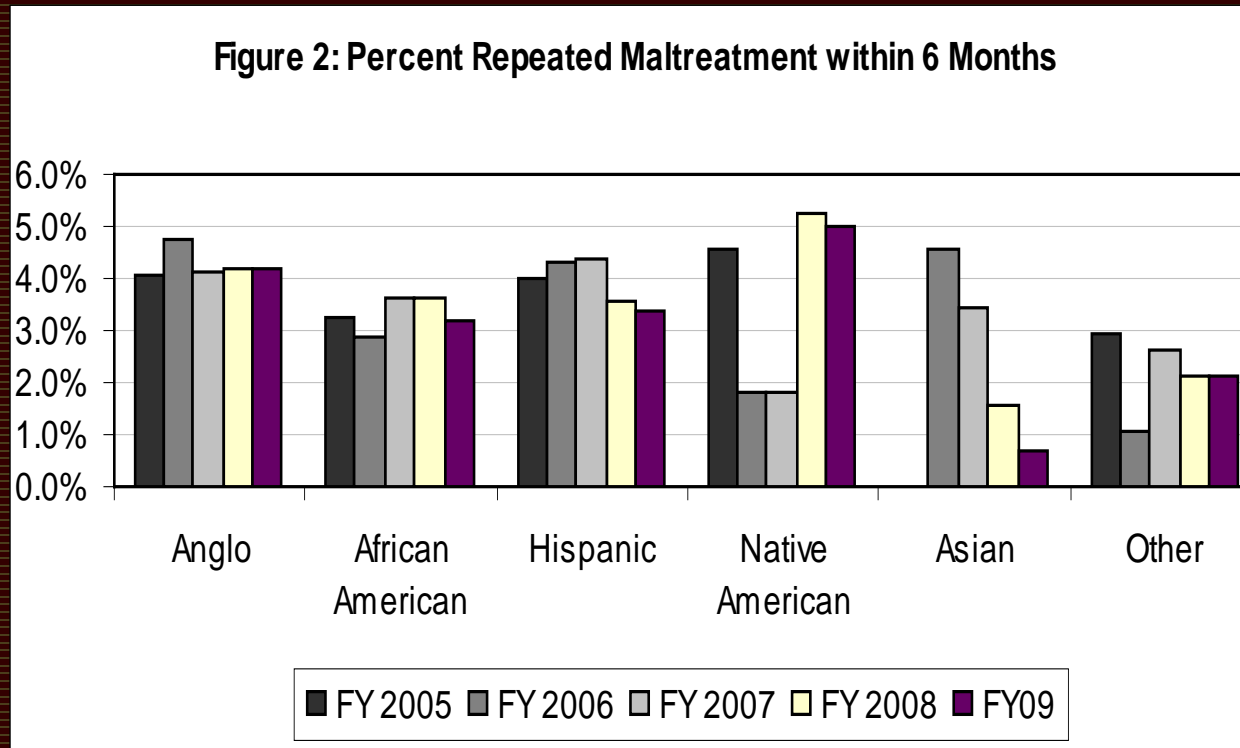
- There has been some variation in the removal rates of African American children relative to Anglo children over the last 5 years
- The trend, however, is linear and downward

# Using Data: Where does the population data show the change has taken place?



- In four of the five counties where the effort has been most intense, African American removal rates have lowered

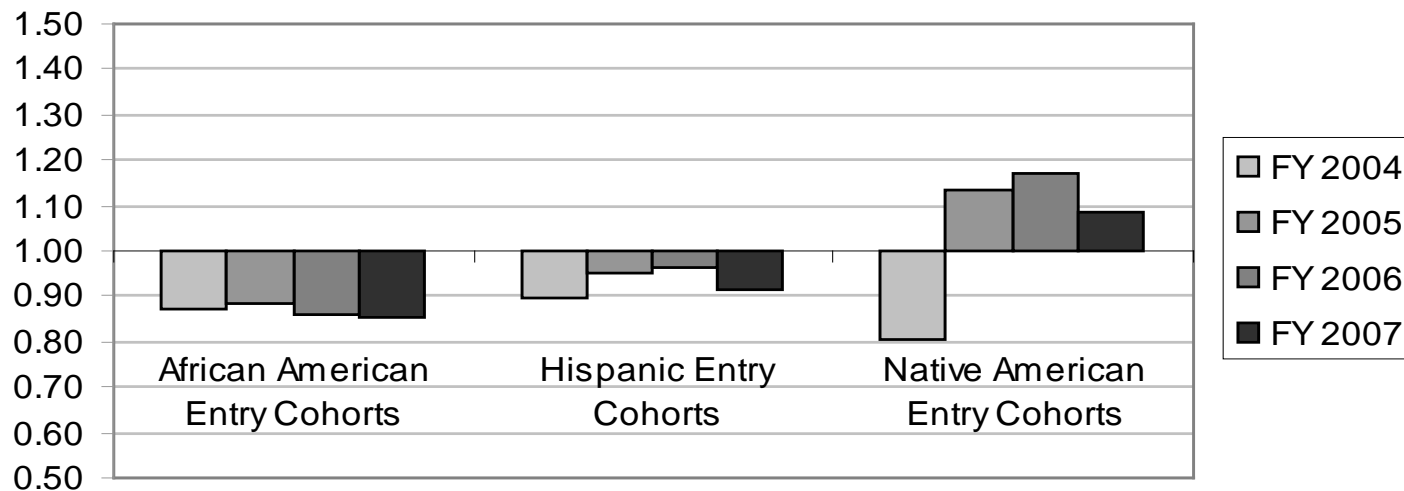
# Using Data: Do the population data show that children are safe?



- Rates of Maltreatment for African American Families Remain Lower than Anglo Families
- Rates of Maltreatment for Hispanic Families are now Lower than Anglo Families

# Using Data: What do the population data show about exits from care?

**Figure 2: Relative Rate Indices for Entry Cohorts Exiting Care Within 17 Months**



- Overall Rates have not changed for African American and Hispanic children without taking other factors into account. They have changed for reunification and kinship care when other factors are taken into account (see subsequent slides).

# Using Data: Taking other factors into account

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- African American families were reported more often, but not confirmed more often, for maltreatment than Anglo families.
- African American and Hispanic families were less likely to receive Family Based Safety Services to prevent a removal than Anglos.
- African American and Native American children were more likely to be removed based on race than Anglo children.
- African American children spent longer in foster care than Anglo children and were less likely to reunify and, similar to Hispanic children, were less likely to be adopted than Anglo children. Both were less likely to be placed with relatives.

Factors taken into account other than race were income, risk level, age of child, number of children, gender, single parenthood, teen parent, source of report, type maltreatment, removal reason and area of the state

# Using Data: Can we Explain the Removal Process?

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- The relationship between the case factors risk, race, and poverty may be difficult for caseworkers to understand because they are intertwined (the fundamental attribution error).
- The perception of lower interpersonal skills, an individual factor, is related to greater disparities in the removal of African American children.

# Using Data: Can we Explain the Removal Process?

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- Having more African American or Hispanic families on one's caseload, an organizational factor, is associated with fewer disparities in the removal of African American or Hispanic children (a contrast effect or mere exposure).
- Removals themselves are increased when the caseworker believes the services in the areas in which they work to be inadequate (organizational).



# Using Data: Can we Explain the Exit Process?

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- ❑ The primary case and organizational factors that slow exits to reunification for all ethnicities and races are age of the child, family income, single parenthood, parental drug use, incarceration and inadequate housing (the latter two are especially problematic for African American and Hispanic families).
- ❑ For exits to a kinship placement, however, these factors did not slow the exits, and in some cases actually worked to speed up an exit to a kinship placement overall and for African American and Hispanic children.
- ❑ Family Group Conferences, an Organizational Factor, has improved the overall rates for reunification and exits to kinship placements, respectively, and decreased the disproportionate rates for both types of exits.

# Need More Information?

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Analysis of disproportionality provided to the legislature on January 1, 2006

[Disproportionality in CPS: Statewide Reform Effort Begins With Examination of the Problem](#)

Development and implementation of remediation plan reported to the legislature on July 1, 2006

[Disproportionality in Child Protective Services - Policy Evaluation and Remediation Plan](#)

Disproportionality evaluation available at:

[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/about/pdf/2010-03-25\\_Disproportionality.doc](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/about/pdf/2010-03-25_Disproportionality.doc)

Casey development of the Texas Summary and Chronicle

[www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org)

**Senate Bill 6- Relating to Child Protective Services  
Signed by Governor Perry on June 6, 2005**