



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

Children and Youth Missing from
DFPS Conservatorship
&
Human Trafficking Data
Fiscal Year 2018 Report

May 2019

Pursuant to Texas Family Code § 264.017(b)(12) and (13) and Texas Family Code § 264.123, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is required to report:

- The number of children and youth who are missing from their substitute care provider while in the managing conservatorship of DFPS;
- The number of children and youth who were victims of trafficking under Penal Code Chapter 20A, while in the managing conservatorship of DFPS;
- For each child and youth who is missing and for each child and youth who is a victim of trafficking:
 - Whether the managing conservatorship of DFPS is temporary or permanent;
 - The type of substitute care in which the child is placed; and
 - The child or youth's county of residence, sex, age, race and ethnicity; and
- Whether a child or youth who went missing from their substitute care provider was a victim of trafficking during the time the child or youth was missing.

In Fiscal Year 2016, DFPS began investigating allegations of sex and labor trafficking committed by a person traditionally responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare. Prior to Fiscal Year 2016, these allegations were categorized as another form of abuse and neglect (e.g. sexual abuse or neglectful supervision).

Children and Youth Missing while in DFPS Conservatorship

In Fiscal Year 2018, a total of 52,397 children and youth were in DFPS conservatorship with 1,843 children and youth reported as missing. Of those youth who were reported as missing during Fiscal Year 2018:

- 1,582 (85.8%) had been located as of August 31, 2018.
- 197 (10.7%) were still missing on August 31, 2018. The children and youth who had still not been recovered by August 31st had been missing an average of 11 weeks and two days.
- 64 (3.5%) children and youth missing from DFPS conservatorship exited conservatorship while missing. Of these:
 - 40 turned age 18 while missing.
 - 24 had DFPS legal responsibility terminated by the court of jurisdiction over the child or youth's case while missing and before they had turned 18. Note: DFPS continues to search for any child or youth missing from conservatorship until the department no longer has legal authority over the child or youth.

During the last three fiscal years, there has been a slight increase in the total number of children and youth in DFPS conservatorship as well as an increase in the number of missing children and youth while in substitute care. The percentage of children and youth with one or more missing episodes during the fiscal year has remained stable at 3.5% of the population of children and youth who are in DFPS conservatorship at some point during the year (see **Table 1**).

Table 1
Total Number of Missing Children and Youth in DFPS Conservatorship

Data Collection	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Number of children and youth in conservatorship at some point during fiscal year.	48,795	50,293	52,397
Number of missing children and youth in conservatorship	1,695	1,707	1,843

Reasons Given For Missing Children and Youth

Of the 1,730 found surveys completed for recovered children and youth, 1,410 children and youth reported why they were missing from care in Fiscal Year 2018. The top seven reasons provided by the recovered children and youth are listed below, and are similar to those collected from previous years:

- Anger at CPS or the system (24%)
- Dislike of rules of placement (23%)
- Desire to be on one's own (17%)
- Desire to see family/relatives (16%)
- Frustration / anger with caregivers (13%)
- Desire new placement (12%)
- Desire to be with boyfriend or girlfriend (10%)

Demographics of Children and Youth Missing from DFPS Conservatorship

Of the children and youth who were missing in Fiscal Year 2018, 68% were age 15-17 (see **Table 2**).

Table 2
Ages of Children and Youth when First Missing

Age	FY 2016 Number of Children	%	FY 2017 Number of Children	%	FY 2018 Number of Children	%
17	443	26%	472	28%	481	26%
16	459	27%	437	26%	433	23%
15	323	19%	316	19%	354	19%
14	234	14%	198	12%	244	13%
13	127	7%	141	8%	145	8%
12	34	2%	55	3%	54	3%
Less than 12	75	4%	88	5%	132	7%
Total	1,695	100%	1,707	100%	1,843	100%

The gender breakdown of those children and youth missing from care has remained relatively consistent over the last three fiscal years (see **Table 3**).

Table 3
Fiscal Year 2018: Gender of Missing Children and Youth

Gender	Number of Children	%
Female	1015	55%
Male	827	45%
Unknown	1	< 1%
Total	1,843	100%

Race/Ethnicity for children and youth missing from care has remained consistent across fiscal years (see **Table 4**). In Fiscal Year 2018, the percentages of children and youth who were missing from DFPS conservatorship by race/ethnicity is similar to the percentages for all children and youth in DFPS Conservatorship by race/ethnicity.

Table 4
Race/Ethnicity of Missing Children and Youth

Race/ Ethnicity	FY 2016 Children and Youth Missing	(%)	FY 2017 Children and Youth Missing	(%)	FY 2018 Children and Youth Missing	(%)
African American	390	23%	393	23%	465	25%
Anglo	465	27%	476	28%	524	28%
Hispanic	752	44%	746	44%	767	42%
Native American	< 5	<1%	< 5	<1%	<5	<1%
Other	70	4%	77	5%	64	3%
Unknown	15-20	1%	15-20	1%	20-25	1%
Total	1,695	100%	1,707	100%	1,843	100%

As with Fiscal Year 2017, the substitute care living arrangements from which children and youth were missing most frequently in Fiscal Year 2018 include Residential Treatment Centers and Emergency Shelters (see **Table 5**).

Table 5
Living Arrangements for Children and Youth at the Time of the Missing Event

Substitute Care Type	FY 2016 Youth	%	FY 2017 Youth	%	FY 2018 Youth	%
Residential Treatment	369	22%	325	19%	433	23%
Emergency Shelter	313	18%	331	19%	342	19%
Therapeutic Foster Care	370	22%	315	18%	285	15%
Kinship Home	181	11%	201	12%	211	11%
GRO	119	7%	131	8%	145	8%
Unauthorized Placement	54	3%	71	4%	90	5%
Own Home	79	5%	66	4%	78	4%
Foster Care: Child Care Services	55	3%	35	2%	61	3%
Other Foster Care	45	3%	82	5%	60	3%
DFPS Supervision	15	1%	36	2%	21	1%
Other	16	1%	18	1%	11	1%
Unknown	79	5%	96	6%	106	6%
Total	1,695	100%	1,707	100%	1,843	100%

Most children and youth who went missing from care continue to be under the Temporary Managing Conservatorship (TMC) of DFPS, followed by Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) with termination of parental rights, and then PMC without termination of parental rights (see **Table 6**). Note: The majority of children and youth in DFPS conservatorship are under TMC.

Table 6
Legal Status of Missing Children and Youth

Legal Status	FY 2016	%	FY 2017	%	FY 2018	%
Temporary Managing Conservatorship	750	44%	822	48%	903	49%
Permanent Managing Conservatorship With Termination	525	31%	515	30%	561	30%
Permanent Managing Conservatorship Without Termination	391	23%	335	20%	352	19%
Other Legal Basis	<5	<1%	5	<1%	7	<1%
Care, Custody, and Control	<5	<1%	<5	<1%	<5	<1%
Not Recorded	20	1%	28	2%	16	1%
Total	1,695	100%	1,707	100%	1,843	100%

Children and Youth Trafficked while in Conservatorship

Of the 1,582 missing children and youth recovered in Fiscal Year 2018, 105 (6.6%) reported being victimized while missing; 52 (3.3 %) reported being a victim of sex trafficking (see **Table 7**).

Table 7
Overview of Texas Children and Youth in DFPS Conservatorship FY 2018

Total number in DPFS Conservatorship at some point in FY 2018	52,397
Total number missing from DPFS Conservatorship recovered	1,582
Number reported being victimized while missing	105
Number confirmed victims of sex trafficking while missing	52
Number confirmed victims of labor trafficking while missing	<5

In Fiscal Year 2018 some children and youth experienced multiple types of victimization while they were missing from DFPS conservatorship (see **Table 8**).

Table 8
Children and Youth Victimized While Missing

Reports	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Reported Sex Trafficked	31	35	52
Reported Labor Trafficked	< 5	< 5	<5
Reported Being Sexually Abused	20	34	68
Reported Being Physically Abused	8	< 5	23
Youth who Reported being Victimized	53	62	105

Table 9 highlights data findings regarding reports of sex or labor trafficking received by DFPS for Fiscal Year 2018.

Table 9
Human Trafficking Reports

Reports	FY 2018 Sex Trafficking	FY 2018 Labor Trafficking
Reports Received	494	43
Reports Investigated	333	17
Reports sent to Alternative Response	0	2
Investigations resulting in a disposition of "Reason to Believe"	53	0

Online Sources for more Information

- [DFPS Investigations: What DFPS Is Doing in the Fight Against Human Trafficking](#)
- [DFPS Investigations: Human Trafficking](#)
- [DFPS Investigations: Human Trafficking Resources](#)
- [4290 Determining Human Trafficking in CPS Reports](#)
- [DFPS Handbooks: Locating Missing Children Resource Guide](#)
- [Child Protective Services Handbook: 6300 Services to Families](#) (specifically 6314)
- [Texas Youth Connection Physical Safety: Human Trafficking](#)
- [Texas Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing: Minimum Standards](#)
- [Childcare Licensing Handbook: 3321.3 Public Notice Requirements for General Residential Operation Providing Human Trafficking Services](#)
- [Human Resource Code 42.041 \(b\) \(23\)\(b\)](#)