



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# **Disproportionality Report**

**Fiscal Year 2017**

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# Introduction

African-American children continue to be overrepresented in the Child Protective Services (CPS) system both in Texas and nationwide, and, in Texas, Hispanic and Anglo children are underrepresented. The patterns and trends for Native Americans and Other<sup>1</sup> races and ethnicities in the CPS system are difficult to discern as their relatively low numbers can result in wide fluctuations in outcomes. This report and the DFPS Annual Legislative Report (Rider 15)<sup>2</sup> inform the Disproportionality Subject Matter Expert as we formulate strategies to address disproportionality through FY 2018<sup>3</sup>.

The starting point for disproportionality for African Americans occurs at the front door, as they are much more likely to be reported to CPS. Who gets reported for abuse and neglect is something that is outside of CPS control. Much of the disproportionality work CPS has done is connected to disparities within the CPS system, focusing on critical decision points that affect what happens to children and families after they are reported to CPS. CPS has worked to increase the cultural competence of staff through training to work effectively with diverse populations and people living in poverty. Other work has focused on increasing the use of relative caregivers for all races and ethnicities, and increasing adoptions for children of color who cannot safely return home.

The FY 2016 Disproportionality<sup>[i]</sup> Report found that African American children investigated for abuse or neglect were less likely to have an investigation referred to Family Based Safety Services (FBSS). As part of our disproportionality work in 2017, CPS further analyzed this issue. The concern was that African Americans were having their investigation closed without ongoing services when, perhaps, the family needed FBSS to ensure child safety. The drill-down analysis<sup>[ii]</sup> found, however, that the risk and safety level among African Americans was not significantly different from other races and ethnicities among those who had their investigations closed without ongoing services being provided. Moreover, African Americans with investigations closed without ongoing services were no more likely to have a new confirmed investigation or a case opened for services within 6 or 12 months of closing the investigation compared to other races and ethnicities. The disparity for African Americans on referrals from investigation to FBSS or removals from FBSS also did not continue into FY 2017. It does not currently appear that CPS is systematically denying African Americans FBSS when needed. The FY 2016 data also showed African Americans were more likely to be removed from FBSS than Anglos, though this trend also did not continue into FY 2017.

In FY 2017, however, there remained several other disparities at key decision points, primarily around outcomes after a child has been removed and placed in conservatorship. In 2017, African Americans had the lowest rate of reunification across all races and ethnicities, and remained about 11% less likely to reunify compared to Anglo and Hispanic children. A disparity also exists among the children not able to be reunified, with African American children 31% less likely to be adopted within 12 months than Anglo children after parental rights have been terminated in FY 2017.

This analysis has focused on state level patterns of disproportionality, and shows that the issue of disproportionality and disparities remains complex. In FY 2018, CPS continues to work to ensure quality and appropriate services for children and families of all races and ethnicities involved with CPS. The next step for CPS is a more in-depth analysis which utilizes focus groups in strategic regions to gain insight into disproportionate reunification outcomes for African Americans. Regional and county level analyses (such as outlined in Appendix B) will be used to guide these responses to ensure sensitivity to regional and county

variations in patterns of disproportionality. This analysis will build on previous work to try to further our understanding of the impact race and other factors have on reunification and other outcomes. At the same time, CPS continues its work to promote equity in services for all families served in the child welfare system.

## Disproportionality Analysis for FY 2017<sup>4</sup>

To better understand and track disproportionality, CPS maintains data at critical decision points in the CPS system by race and ethnicity. The decision points are:

- Percentage of investigations that are confirmed
- Percentage of confirmed victims that are removed
- Percentage of investigations opened to FBSS
- Percentage of FBSS cases in which there is at least one child removed
- Percentage of exits from DFPS custody that are to reunification
- For children who do not reunify, percentage of exits from DFPS custody to a relative
- Percentage of children who are adopted within 12 months of termination of parental rights (TPR)

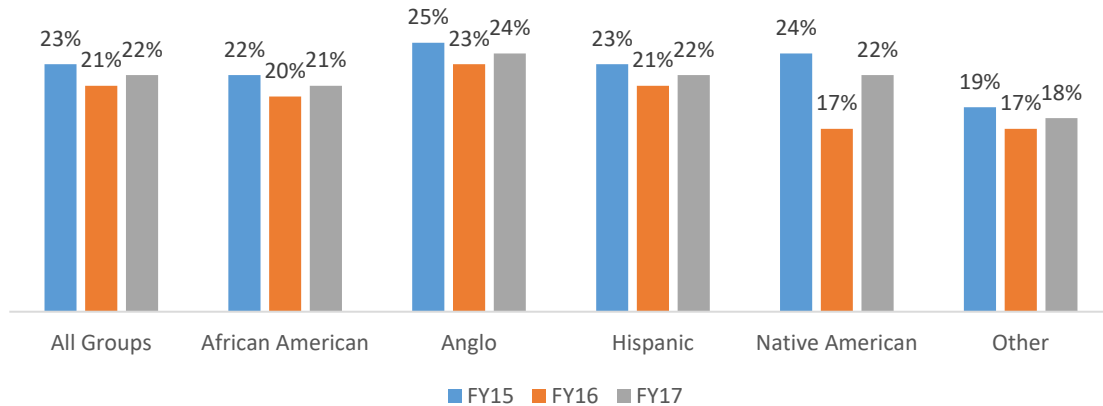
In 2017, African Americans, Anglos, Native Americans, and Others (not including Hispanics or other defined race and ethnicities) continued to experience some form of disparity in the system, but the magnitude and manner of these disparities was different.

- For African Americans, disparities emerged after removal. African American children who were removed were less likely to reunify and, when reunification was ruled out and they were freed for adoption, were less likely to be adopted within 12 months of termination of parental rights than those of other races or ethnicities (with the exception of Native Americans).
- For Anglos, disparities arose at different points in the system. They were more likely to be confirmed for abuse or neglect and more likely to be removed during an investigation. After removal when reunification was ruled out, they were less likely to exit to a relative.
- For Hispanics, there were no significant disparities. They were equal to or better than both Anglos and African Americans at all key decision points, except for adoption within 12 months of TPR, in which they had better outcomes than African Americans but not Anglos.
- For Native Americans and Others, trends continued to fluctuate due to the relatively small numbers. The biggest disparity in 2017 was that, when reunification was ruled out, they had the lowest rate of exit to a relative and adoption within 12 months of TPR.

In FY 2017, Anglos were more likely to be confirmed victims of abuse and neglect than any other race and ethnicity (Chart 1).

Besides Native Americans and Other, this trend has been stable over time (Chart 1). NOTE: A confirmed investigation means that there is a preponderance of evidence that the alleged abuse or neglect occurred.

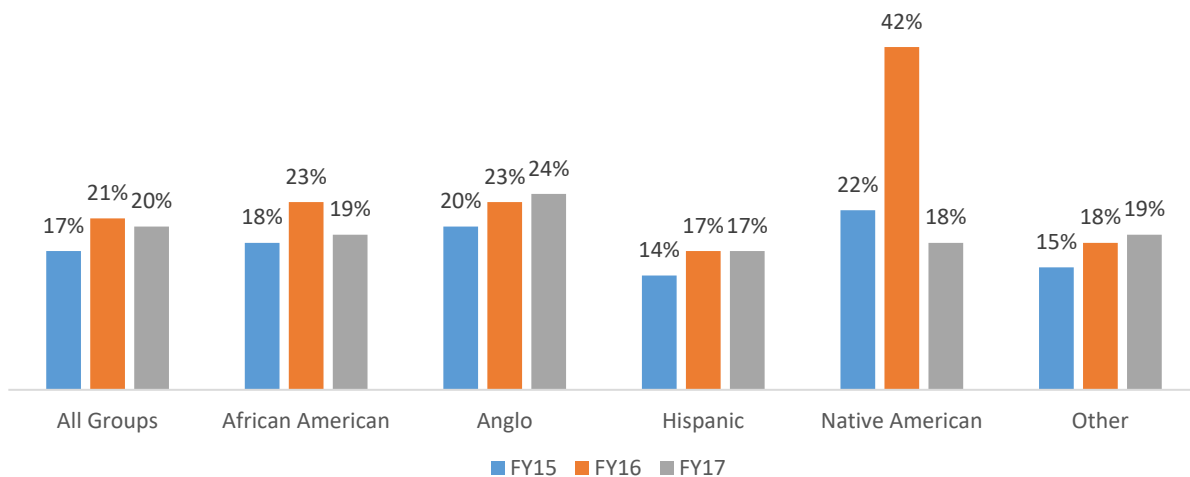
**Chart 1: Confirmation Rates among Investigations**



Anglo confirmed victims were removed more in FY 2017 compared to all other race and ethnicities (Chart 2).

Over the past three years, Native Americans were more likely to be removed into conservatorship. African Americans were removed at equal levels compared to Anglos in 2016, but had lower rates of removal than Anglos in 2015 and 2017. With the exception of Native Americans, trends remain stable. Hispanics were the least likely to be removed (Chart 2).

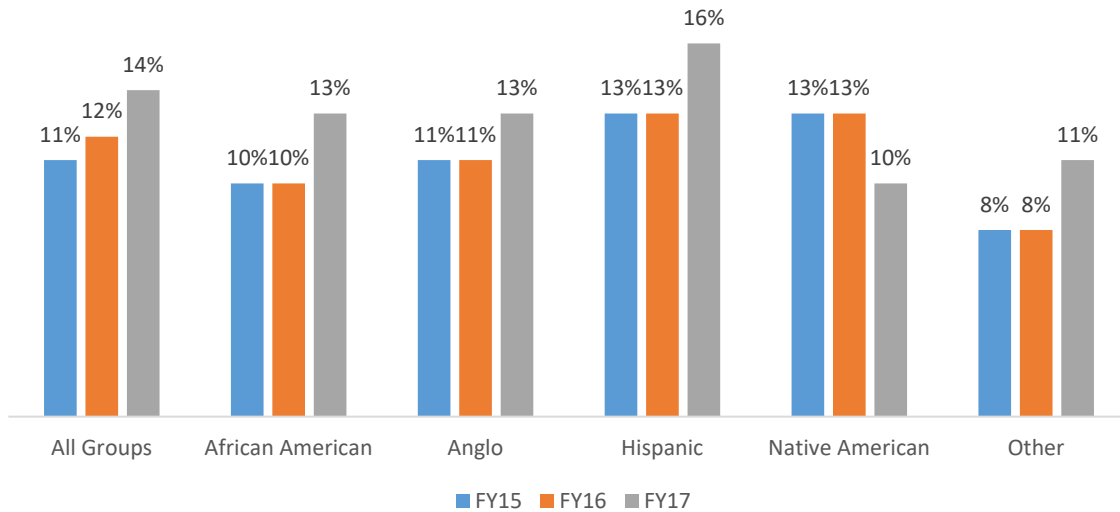
**Chart 2: Removals to Conservatorship among Confirmed Victims**



In FY 2017, African American referrals to FBSS increased markedly from FY 2016 and were equal to Anglos (Chart 3).

As an alternative to removal, CPS can provide FBSS services where the parent retains legal custody. Hispanics continue to have the highest rate of referrals to FBSS. (Chart 3). When combined with their lower removal rate from an investigation (Chart 2), it suggests that caseworkers are more likely to use FBSS in lieu of a removal for Hispanics. In 2017, Native Americans received the least referrals to FBSS (Chart 3).

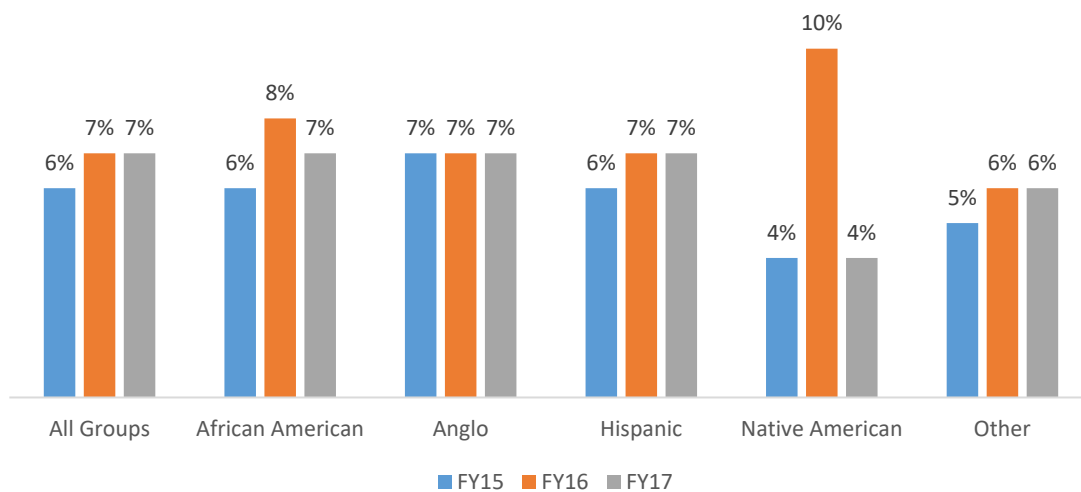
**Chart 3: Completed Investigations Referred to FBSS**



Removals from families receiving FBSS have stabilized across races and ethnicities (Chart 4).

From 2016 to 2017, removals from FBSS have been stable for most ethnicities and dropped for African Americans and Native Americans (Chart 4).

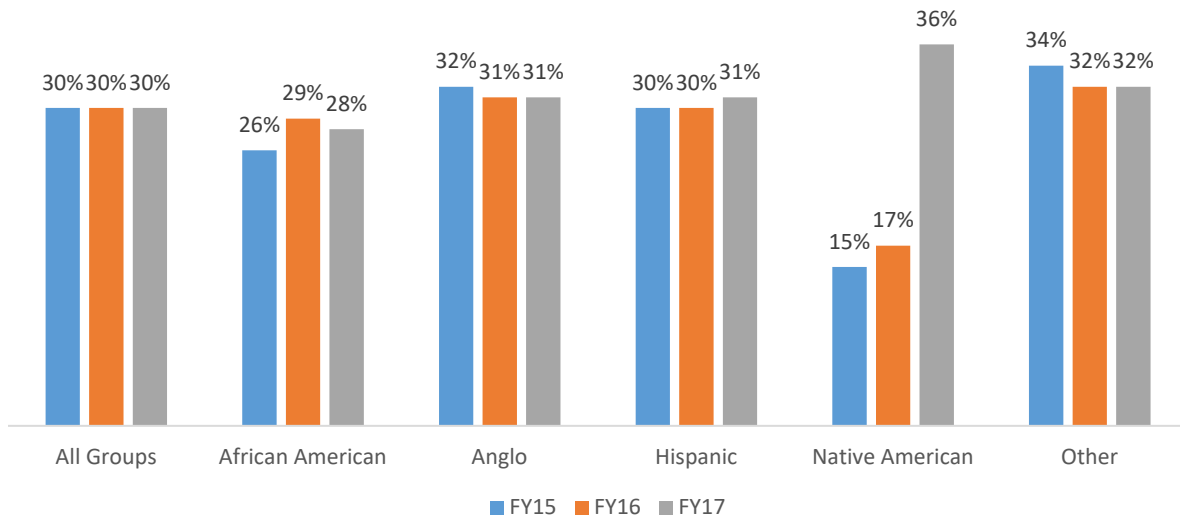
**Chart 4: Removals from FBSS**



African American children are less likely than all other races and ethnicities to reunify (Chart 5).

Over the past three years, African Americans were consistently less likely to reunify as compared to Anglos and Hispanics (Chart 5). Native Americans had the greatest increase in reunification from 2016 to 2017 (Chart 5).

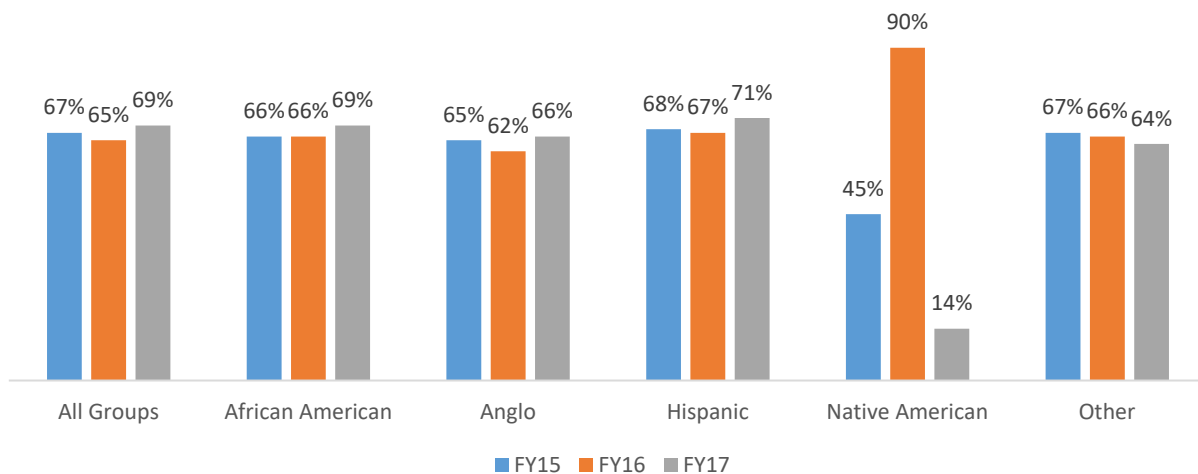
**Chart 5: Exits to Reunification**



**Anglos who did not reunify were consistently less likely to exit to a relative as compared to African Americans and Hispanics (Chart 6).**

Native Americans were consistently the least likely to exit to a relative when reunification was ruled out. (Chart 6).

**Chart 6: Exits to Relatives When Reunification Not Achieved**

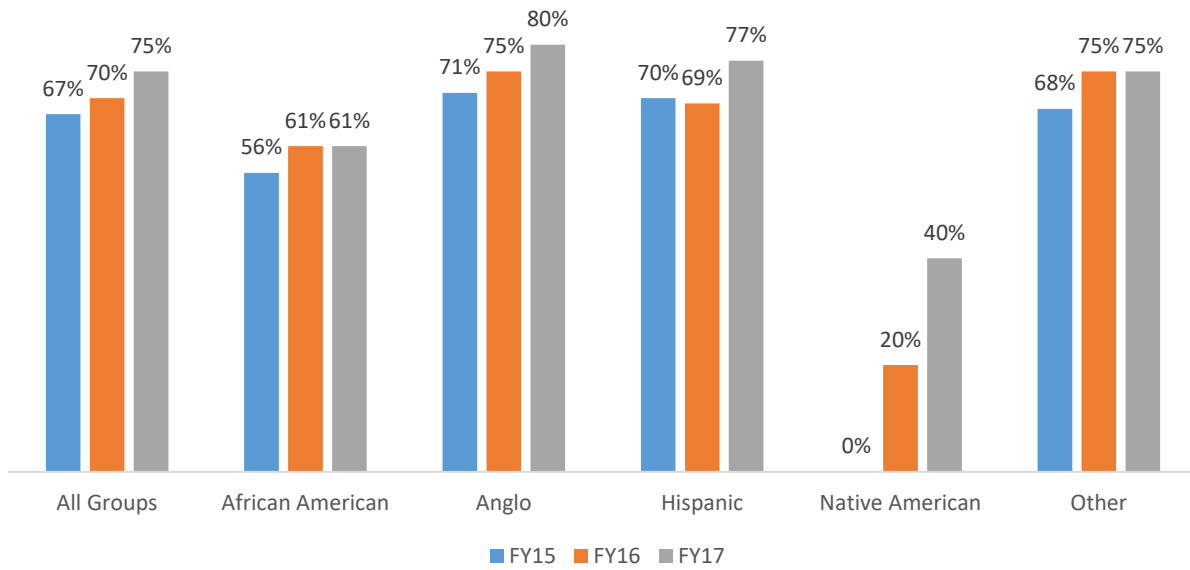


**Anglos are the most likely to be quickly adopted after parental rights are terminated (Chart 7).**



Although the rate of all ethnicities adopted within 12 months of termination of parental rights increased in 2017, African American, Hispanic and Native American children remain less likely than Anglos and Others to be adopted within 12 months of TPR.

**Chart 7: Children Adopted within 12 Months after Termination of Parental Rights**

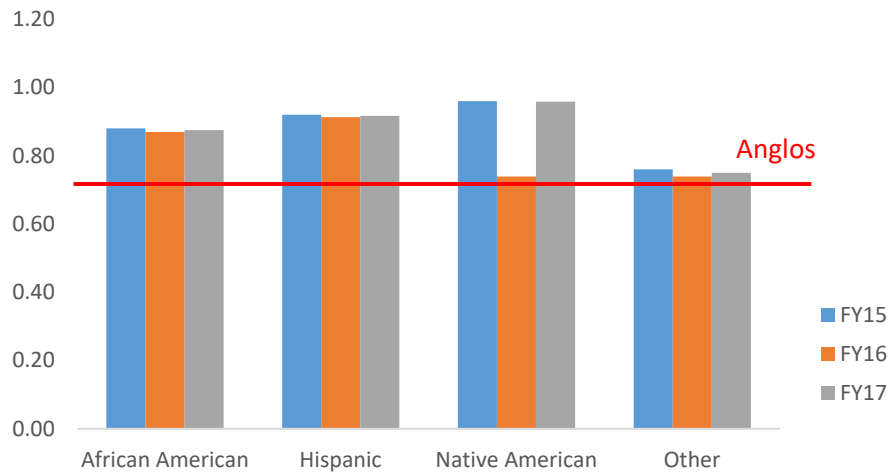


## Appendix A: ODI Charts for CPS System Outcomes

The ODI is a ratio of an ethnic group's origination rate divided by an Anglo origination rate. An ODI of 1.00 indicates parity with Anglos. An ODI less than 1.00 indicates (on its face) that an ethnic group fared better than the Anglo group. An ODI greater than 1.00 signals disparity, or that Anglos are faring better than the ethnic group. Graphs will be represented in this manner. The red line represents Anglo; anything above the red line for an outcome indicates that the race or ethnicity is more likely to experience the outcome as compared to Anglos. If the ethnic group is below the red line, this means they are less likely to experience the outcome as compared to Anglos. At or around the red line indicates ethnic parity.

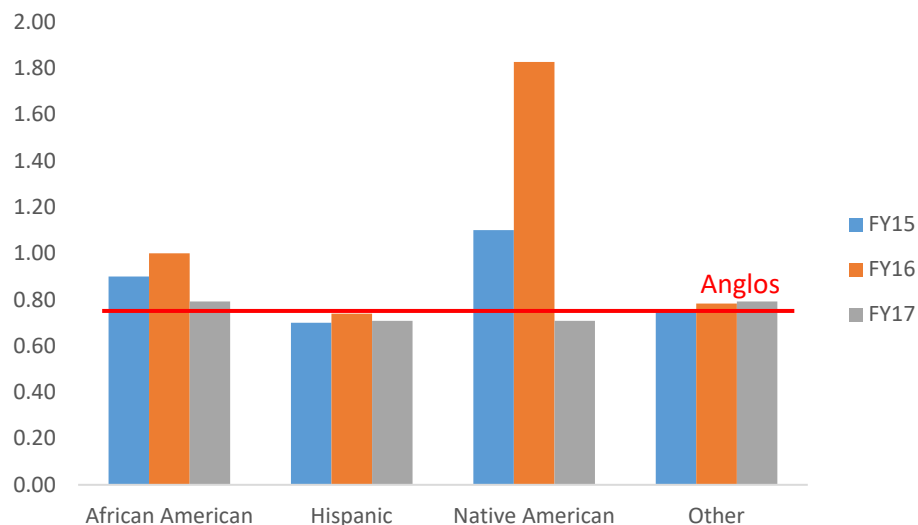
- Anglos are more likely to be confirmed victims of abuse and neglect than any other race and ethnicity.

**Chart A1: ODI Confirmation Rates among Investigations**



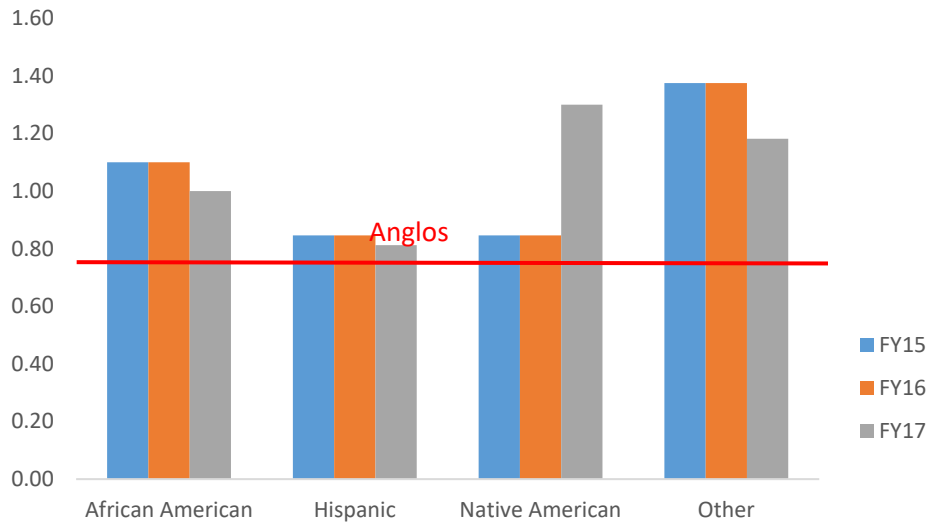
- Anglo confirmed victims were removed more in 2017 compared to all other races and ethnicities.

**Chart A2: ODI Removals to Conservatorship among Confirmed Victims**



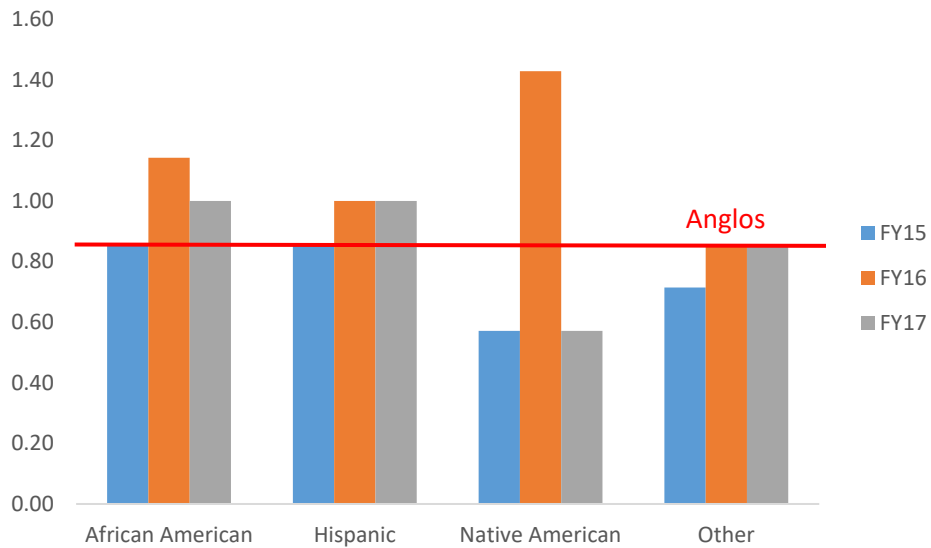
- In 2017, African American referrals to FBSS increased markedly from 2016 and were equal to Anglos.

**Chart A3: ODI Completed investigations Referred to FBSS**



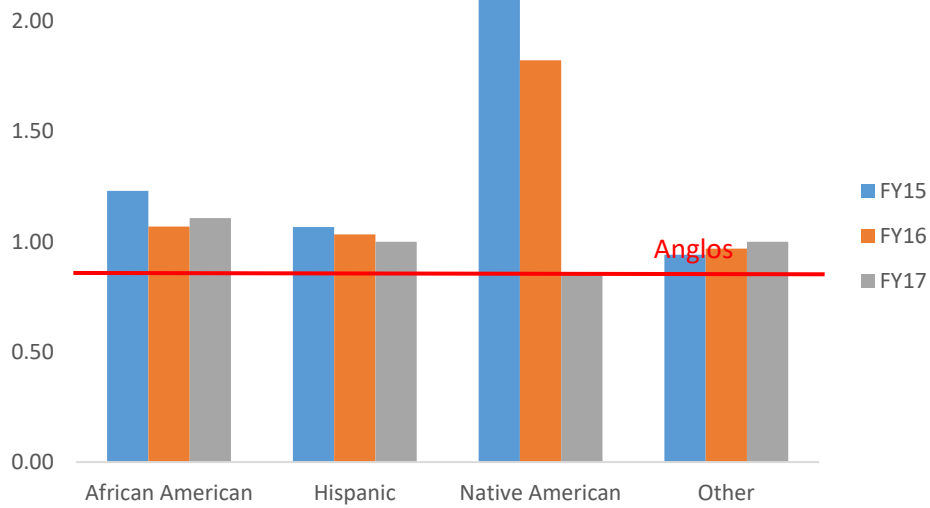
- In 2017, all races and ethnicities compared to Anglos are equal or less likely to be removed from FBSS.

**Chart A4: ODI Removals from FBSS**



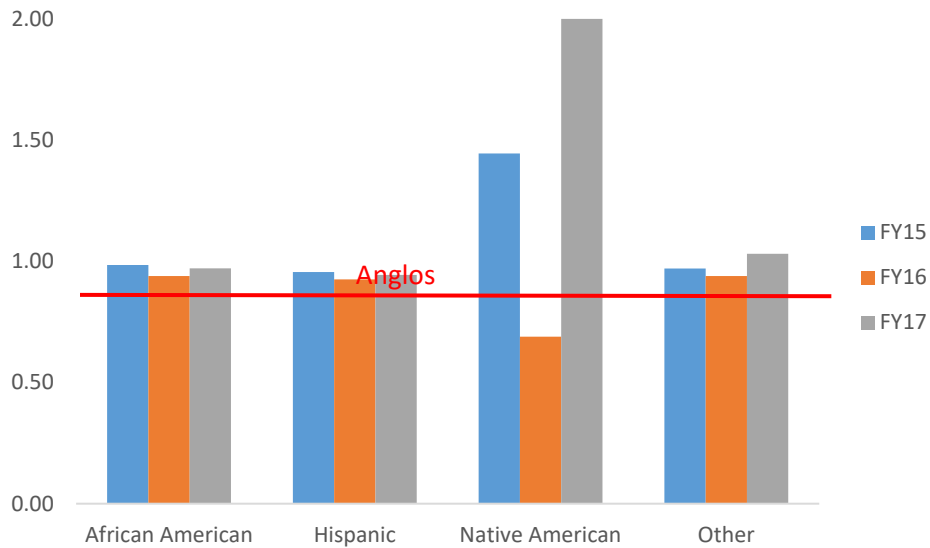
- In 2017, African American children are less likely than all other race and ethnicities to reunify.

**Chart A5: ODI Exits to Reunification**



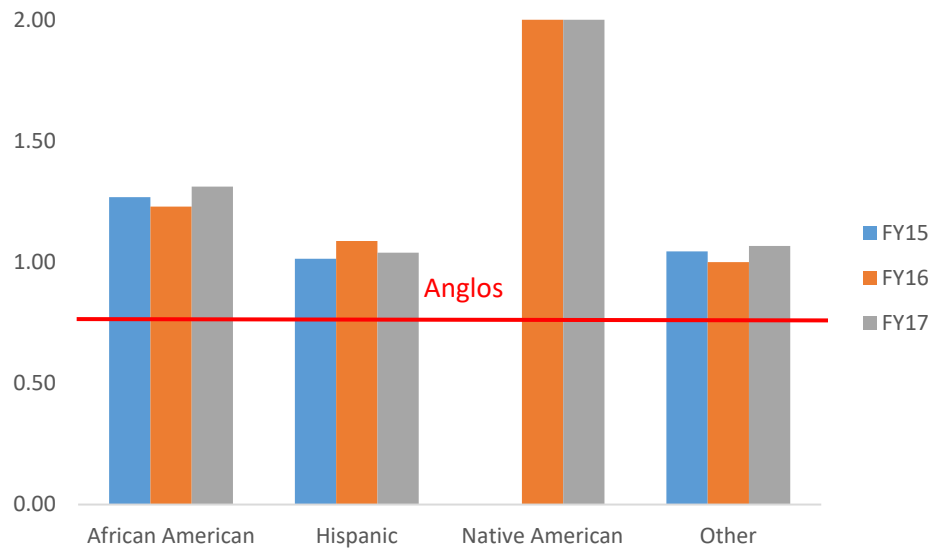
- Anglos who did not reunify were consistently less likely to exit to a relative as compared to African Americans and Hispanics.

**Chart A6: ODI Exits to Relatives**



- Anglos are the most likely to be quickly adopted after parental rights are terminated

**Chart A7: ODI Children Adopted within 12 Months after Termination of Parental Rights**



## Appendix B: ODI Hot Spot Table

The matrix below shows the races experiencing disproportionality compared to Anglos for each outcome within each Region over the three-year period (2015-17). The more races experiencing disproportionality in a Region for a measure, the darker the shade of red. The measure score (shown on the bottom row) shows the number of racial groups experiencing disparity compared to Anglos in that outcome across Regions. The Region Score (shown in the far right column) shows the number of races experiencing disparity compared to Anglos across all outcomes within the Region.

The matrix was created by using regional heat matrices (Appendix C) that calculate three-year ODI averages for each dashboard measurement, by race and ethnicity. The top three (when applicable) most disparate regions for each ethnicity, by each outcome, were tallied accordingly. The number of ethnic groups affected by the type of disproportionality is indicated for each region and outcome with a cumulative score; the greater the score, the more disparity. NOTE: Referrals to family preservation services were not included in the Table 1 scores because referrals to FBSS can be interpreted as positive or negative.

	Reports	Removals	FBSS*	FBSS Removals	Reunification	Exit to Relatives	Adoption	Region Score
Region 01	H			AA,H,O	N	H	AA,H,O	9
Region 02	AA,H			AA,H,O	O	O		7
Region 03		N	H			AA	AA,N	4
Region 04	N		AA,H	N	N			3
Region 05			AA,H,O		AA,H,O			3
Region 06		AA,N	AA				AA,H,N,O	6
Region 07	N			AA		O		3
Region 08	N	N	O		AA,H,N,O	O	N	8
Region 09						H	H	2
Region 10	AA			H,N	AA,H,	AA		6
Region 11			O	N	N	AA,H	O	5
Measure Score	7	4		11	13	9	12	

AA=African American H=Hispanic N=Native American O=Other

\* FBSS are not scored because FBSS referral can be categorized as positive or negative

## Appendix C: Regional Heat Matrices per Disproportionality Outcome

### Completed Investigations that are Confirmed

*African American		**Hispanic		***Native American		****Other	
*Region	*Avg ODI	**Region	**Avg ODI	***Region	***Avg ODI	****Region	****Avg ODI
10	0.84	2	0.94	9	0.00	2	1.08
2	0.98	1	0.98	4	0.73	1	1.13
9	1.00	7	1.01	7	0.80	5	1.13
7	1.05	8	1.02	8	0.86	7	1.19
5	1.06	9	1.05	5	0.87	10	1.21
3	1.09	3	1.05	1	0.90	11	1.21
11	1.12	10	1.09	10	0.93	9	1.23
6	1.14	11	1.09	11	0.93	4	1.28
4	1.15	4	1.11	2	1.17	3	1.32
8	1.16	6	1.14	6	1.21	8	1.46
1	1.23	5	1.15	3	1.41	6	1.50

### Completed Investigations with at Least One Removal

*African American		**Hispanic		***Native American		****Other	
*Region	*Avg ODI	**Region	**Avg ODI	***Region	***Avg ODI	****Region	****Avg ODI
6	0.89	5	1.01	2	0.00	4	1.00
3	1.06	8	1.03	9	0.00	5	1.10
4	1.08	2	1.14	10	0.00	3	1.24
8	1.09	1	1.18	8	0.44	7	1.25
11	1.09	3	1.27	6	0.45	6	1.32
10	1.12	4	1.30	3	0.58	8	1.34
1	1.16	7	1.44	11	0.58	11	1.35
5	1.18	11	1.45	5	0.79	9	1.43
2	1.18	6	1.53	7	0.97	2	1.48
9	1.19	10	1.53	1	2.08	1	1.52
7	1.20	9	1.54	4	3.28	10	1.71

### Completed Investigations Transferred to FPR

*African American		**Hispanic		*** Native American		****Other	
*Region	*Avg ODI	**Region	**Avg ODI	***Region	***Avg ODI	****Region	****Avg ODI
7	0.88	1	0.90	5	0.41	7	1.00
9	0.92	8	0.91	10	0.52	10	1.07
11	0.97	2	0.93	7	0.77	2	1.09
10	0.98	9	0.94	4	0.84	4	1.18
2	1.00	7	0.96	3	1.03	1	1.19
3	1.08	10	0.96	11	1.08	9	1.42
8	1.08	11	1.00	8	1.43	3	1.43
1	1.09	6	1.06	1	1.58	6	1.46
6	1.09	3	1.08	6	1.67	11	1.52
4	1.18	4	1.18	9	2.00	5	1.54
5	1.25	5	1.43	2	3.00	8	1.54

### FPR Stages with at Least One Removal

*African American		**Hispanic		*** Native American		****Other	
*Region	*Avg ODI	**Region	**Avg ODI	***Region	***Avg ODI	****Region	****Avg ODI
1	0.67	10	0.80	5	0.00	1	0.83
2	0.67	1	0.87	8	0.00	2	0.83
7	0.79	2	0.87	9	0.00	7	1.08
6	0.85	8	0.91	7	0.00	9	1.00
8	0.86	7	1.04	10	0.39	5	1.03
11	0.88	11	1.28	11	0.48	6	1.06
4	0.92	6	1.31	4	0.49	8	1.15
9	1.03	5	1.35	1	0.61	11	1.44
3	1.15	3	1.36	2	0.61	3	1.50
10	1.33	4	1.42	3	3.00	10	1.71
5	1.41	9	1.52	6	3.40	4	1.79



**Exits to Reunification**

*African American		**Hispanic		***Native American		****Other	
*Region	*Avg ODI	**Region	**Avg ODI	***Region	***Avg ODI	****Region	****Avg ODI
11	0.67	9	0.94	2	0.00	1	0.82
2	0.74	6	0.95	5	0.00	9	0.84
6	0.97	2	0.98	6	0.00	4	0.88
1	1.01	11	0.98	7	0.00	3	0.93
9	1.03	3	0.99	9	0.00	6	0.96
4	1.06	4	1.02	10	0.00	7	0.98
3	1.08	7	1.03	11	0.00	11	1.00
7	1.17	1	1.03	3	0.76	10	1.17
10	1.29	5	1.10	8	1.84	8	1.18
8	1.35	10	1.19	1	1.90	5	1.29
5	1.36	8	1.23	4	2.12	2	1.92

**Of exits that are not reunification, exit to relatives**

*African American		**Hispanic		***Native American		****Other	
*Region	*Avg ODI	**Region	**Avg ODI	***Region	***Avg ODI	****Region	****Avg ODI
11	0.75	11	0.85	5	0.00	2	0.87
10	0.85	1	0.86	7	0.00	7	0.94
3	0.90	9	0.88	9	0.00	8	0.95
1	0.91	2	0.89	11	0.00	1	0.96
5	0.93	3	0.90	1	1.54	9	0.96
7	0.97	8	0.95	10	1.65	3	0.98
4	0.99	5	0.96	2	1.85	4	1.00
6	0.99	10	1.01	3	1.88	5	1.02
9	1.10	7	1.02	8	1.90	10	1.08
8	1.10	6	1.06	4	3.22	6	1.12
2	1.16	4	1.08	6	4.73	11	1.21

**Children with TPR that are adopted within 12 months of termination (%)**

<b>*African American</b>		<b>**Hispanic</b>		<b>***Native American</b>		<b>****Other</b>	
<b>*Region</b>	<b>*Avg ODI</b>	<b>**Region</b>	<b>**Avg ODI</b>	<b>***Region</b>	<b>***Avg ODI</b>	<b>****Region</b>	<b>****Avg ODI</b>
11	0.69	8	0.84	1	0.00	9	0.62
8	0.88	5	0.89	2	0.00	10	0.86
4	0.95	7	0.90	4	0.00	4	0.93
7	1.01	9	1.08	5	0.00	8	0.95
10	1.06	10	1.18	7	0.00	7	0.99
2	1.35	4	1.20	9	0.00	2	1.02
5	1.39	3	1.20	10	0.00	5	1.06
9	1.41	2	1.22	11	0.00	3	1.07
6	1.51	1	1.24	3	1.42	6	1.10
3	1.56	6	1.30	6	1.60	1	1.11
1	1.62	11	1.33	8	1.60	11	1.94

<sup>1</sup> Other represents all other ethnicities identified besides Anglo, African American, Hispanic, and Native American, as well as biracial and multiracial children.

<sup>2</sup> The Annual Legislative Report (Rider 15) drills down disproportionality measures for the largest seven counties in the State. The report can be found here: *Available upon request*

<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all year references are to the Texas fiscal year which runs from September 1 to August 31.

<sup>(i)</sup> The 2016 Disproportionally Report summarizes the executive placement disproportionality findings for FY14-FY16. The report can be found here: *Available Upon Request*

<sup>(ii)</sup> A recidivism analysis was conducted to see if African American families reappear in the CPS system after case closure if not opened for FBSS services, at higher rates compared to their Anglo and Hispanic counterparts. To control for over-reporting, the study only examined families who were first reported to CPS for suspected abuse and neglect in FY16. When CPS examined cases that were reported for the first time in FY16 and were subsequently closed with no services, African Americans show no statistical difference ( $\alpha .05$ ) in recidivism compared to their Anglo and Hispanic counterparts at 6 and 12 months. Additionally, risk and safety assessments for African Americans were not statistically different for closed investigations compared to their Anglo and Hispanic counterparts, indicating that not referring African American families to FBSS who were reported for the first time was in fact appropriate per practice guidelines.

<sup>4</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all data in this section are from the CPS data placemat report and reflect the period of time from August to the following September in each fiscal year.