

Ontario Child Welfare Service Performance Indicators – Halton Children’s Aid Society

Permanency Outcome – The Time to Permanency

Definition:

For all children admitted to the care of a Children’s Aid Society during the fiscal year, the cumulative percentage discharged within a specific time-period (i.e., 12 months, 24 months and 36 months since admission).

Why is this Measure Important?

Providing children with permanency in their care promotes healthy development, encourages continuity in relationships, a sense of community and identity. However, for some children reunification with their family of origin is not possible and stable alternatives must be pursued. The child welfare system in Ontario has multiple options through which permanency can be achieved (e.g., reunification with parents, legal custody, and adoption). Permanency planning is a significant focus for children in care, whose permanency status, both legally and psychologically, is uncertain.

Limitations of the Data:

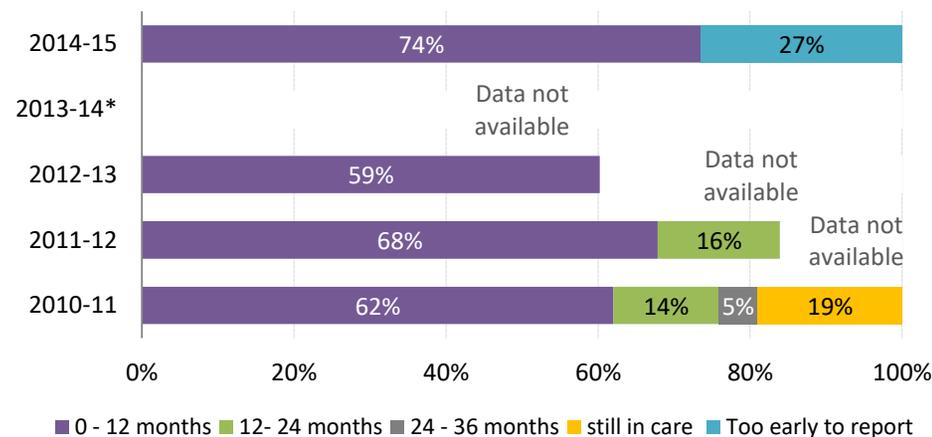
Not all discharges represent permanency achieved; however, this measure is considered a good proxy for permanency. To understand permanent versus non-permanent exits from care, data by discharge type are required. Customary care (culturally appropriate care arrangements for Aboriginal children) is not included in these data at this time.

Key Considerations:

The timing and nature of permanency may look different for every child depending on the child's needs, family circumstances, court processes, and availability of community service providers. A key factor that influences time to permanency is the child’s age at admission. Children who enter care at a young age are more likely to be discharged to certain types of permanency (e.g., adoption) compared to older children. Young children often achieve permanency within shorter timeframes, supported by legislation that limits the allowable cumulative time in short-term care for children under 6 years of age compared to older children. An additional factor that impacts time to permanency is the needs of the child, with more complex needs associated with longer timeframes to achieving permanency.

These data have been compiled and analyzed by the University of Toronto, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work through the Ontario Child Abuse & Neglect Database System.

The Time to Permanency



Results:

Data shown illustrate that of all children admitted in any given fiscal year, over half (59-74%) exit care within 12 months post-admission (as shown by the purple bars). By 24 months post-admission, 76-84% of children that came into care have been discharged from care (as shown by the purple and green bars).

*Some data is not available due to technical limitations of the Child Protection Information Network (CPIN).