

## SIGNIFICANCE

## INDICATOR

Child maltreatment is a serious problem that has grave and costly consequences for the child, his or her family and the community at-large.

A child who has experienced abuse and neglect is more likely to have social, emotional and physical health problems and perform poorly in school.

### Child Abuse Reports

Reported incidents of suspected child abuse through the ChildLine and Abuse Registry. Does not include General Protective Service reports which include less severe general neglect reports.  
(Number and rate per 1,000 children)

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
288	2,915	25,655
9.6/1,000	8.2/1,000	8.3/1,000

### Child Abuse Substantiations

Founded or indicated reports of child abuse. Does not include the number of children determined to need General Protective Services.

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
17.0%	17.4%	16.4%

### Repeated Child Abuse

Children with another substantiated incident of abuse following the first reported incident.  
(data may be overstated)

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
1 in 25	1 in 11	1 in 11

In-home services are designed to strengthen families by addressing the root causes of abuse and neglect. The provision of in-home services helps a child to remain safely in his or her home.

### In-home Services

Children whose families received services in their homes to address concerns related to child safety and well-being on any given day.  
(data may be understated)

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
370	3,946	31,517

Foster care is meant to be a temporary intervention to assure the safety and well-being of a child. A child who spends long periods of time in foster care is more likely than other children to drop out of school, have mental health challenges, experience unemployment and be homeless as an adult.

### Children Entering Foster Care

**All entries** into foster care during the year  
**First time** entries during the year

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
128	1,515	12,307
64.8%	72.7%	67.4%

### Children in Foster Care

#### All Children in Foster Care

Age	0-1	2-5	6-12	13+
<b>Race and ethnicity</b>	White	African American	Other	Latino
<b>Placement setting</b>	Pre-Adoptive Home	Foster Family Home - Relative	Foster Family Home - Non-Relative	Group Home
	Institution	Supervised Independent Living	Runaway	Trial Home Visit

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
219	3,024	31,537
7.8%	14.8%	14.5%
8.2%	16.2%	17.6%
18.3%	21.4%	22.5%
65.8%	47.6%	45.4%
58.9%	81.6%	48.6%
37.4%	18.2%	45.8%
3.7%	1.4%	6.3%
1.4%	3.8%	9.7%
0.0%	2.6%	4.0%
15.5%	10.0%	20.9%
35.6%	47.7%	42.8%
46.1%	23.7%	13.3%
1.8%	7.4%	14.0%
0.9%	1.1%	1.8%
0.0%	0.5%	0.6%
0.0%	7.0%	2.6%

For more information on data reporting periods, citations and sources, please [CLICK HERE](#).

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A child's separation from his or her parents or relatives is traumatic for all involved. Minimizing the time a child spends in foster care without compromising safety is key to healthy child development.

### Timely Reunification with Parents or Relatives

Children who entered foster care for the first time who were reunified with their parents or discharged to relatives within the next 12 months.

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
70.5%	62.0%	48.2%

A child re-entering foster care following a return to his or her family signals a breakdown in the family and a potential failure on the part of the child welfare system to appropriately address family needs.

### Re-entry into Foster Care

Children who re-entered foster care in fewer than 12 months following reunification with parents or relatives. (data may be overstated)

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
36.1%	22.8%	27.8%

A child relies on his or her family for an array of supports from early childhood through adulthood. Without a permanent family, a child fails to have a sense of security and suffers from a lack of belonging.

### Children Leaving Foster Care

Children who exited foster care by discharge reason and how long they were in foster care. Also includes the median length of stay for children remaining in foster care.

	MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
<b>Total Leaving Foster Care</b>	149	1,570	14,027
[number of months until leaving]	3.9	5.6	10.7
<b>Reunification</b>	87.2%	70.5%	57.8%
[number of months until reunification]	3.2	3.0	5.9
<b>Adoption</b>	1.3%	10.0%	15.7%
[number of months until adoption]	20.2	26.9	31.7
<b>Guardianship</b>	0.7%	4.7%	5.9%
[number of months until guardianship]	11.2	18.6	24.1
<b>Live with Other Relatives</b>	3.4%	5.9%	6.1%
[number of months until living with relatives]	9.8	1.9	2.8
<b>Emancipation</b>	4.7%	6.2%	6.6%
[number of months until emancipation]	26.0	32.4	37.7
<b>Transfer to Another Agency</b>	2.7%	2.4%	4.0%
[number of months until transfer]	0.9	3.9	4.9
<b>Runaway</b>	0.0%	0.3%	3.8%
[number of months until running away]	—	14.7	7.5
<b>Death of Child</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
[number of months until death of a child]	—	—	9.6
<b>Total Children Remaining In Foster Care</b>	98	1,577	18,380
[number of months children have been in care]	9.8	13.3	15.7

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
149	1,570	14,027
3.9	5.6	10.7
87.2%	70.5%	57.8%
3.2	3.0	5.9
1.3%	10.0%	15.7%
20.2	26.9	31.7
0.7%	4.7%	5.9%
11.2	18.6	24.1
3.4%	5.9%	6.1%
9.8	1.9	2.8
4.7%	6.2%	6.6%
26.0	32.4	37.7
2.7%	2.4%	4.0%
0.9	3.9	4.9
0.0%	0.3%	3.8%
—	14.7	7.5
0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
—	—	9.6
98	1,577	18,380
9.8	13.3	15.7

Every time a child moves the traumatic experience of separation and lack of continuity in his/her life grows. A child who experiences multiple placements while in foster care struggles to build and maintain healthy relationships and is disadvantaged academically due to repeated school changes.

### Foster Care Placement Stability

Children who were in foster care for 12 to 23 months and had three or more placement settings.

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
56.4%	33.0%	33.3%

The frequency and quality of visitation between the caseworker and a child is a key component to assuring safety, permanency planning and related service delivery.

### Caseworker Visits

Children who were in foster care and visited on a monthly basis by a county or private agency child welfare worker.

MERCER COUNTY	RURAL MIX	STATE
NOT AVAILABLE		81%