

United States

- On any given day, there are approximately 397,000 children in out-of-home care in the United States.
- During the last year (2012), about 640,000 children spent some time in out-of-home care in the United States.
- Children entering foster care remain there on average for nearly two years.
- Despite the common perception that most children in foster care are young children, the average age of the children in foster care is over nine years old.
- The median amount of time children spent in foster care increased between 2000 (12 months) and 2012 (13.1 months). On average, children in the American child welfare systems spend about two years — 22.7 months — in foster care. Nine percent of children in foster care have languished there for five or more years.
- While most children in foster care live in family settings, 15 percent live in institutions and group homes.
- Nearly half of all children in foster care have chronic medical problems.
- About half of children under five years old in foster care have developmental delays.
- Up to 80 percent of all children in foster care have serious emotional problems.
- More than 58,000 children living in foster care have had their biological parental rights permanently terminated. The assumption is that once parental rights have been terminated, the State should work as rapidly as possible to ensure that the child is safely in a new adoptive home and that the adoption is finalized. Yet, of these children, the average time they've been waiting to be adopted is nearly two years (22.2 months).
- In 2012, 10 percent of the children (over 23,000) exiting foster care aged out of the system. Research has shown that teens aging out of the system are highly likely as adults to experience homelessness, poor health, unemployment, incarceration, and other poor outcomes.
- Fifteen percent of children in foster care in 2012 were in foster care for three or more years before they were emancipated.

NC KIDS STATISTICS, JANUARY 2014

Families with a completed pre-placement assessment registered with NC Kids	477
NC children legally free for adoption	576
NC children for whom NC Kids is actively recruiting adoptive families	212
NC children registered with NC Kids but on hold (awaiting approval of the selected prospective adoptive family)	131
NC children classified as legal risk (do not have TPR on all parents, or TPR has been appealed)	46
Children exempt from listing by NC Kids (most are in an approved adoptive placement and are awaiting final adoption decree)	438