

History of Substitute Care for Youth at the Texas Juvenile Justice Department

January 2024

As required by Section 243.008(e), Human Resources Code, this report presents certain information about youth who have been committed to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) and who have received substitute care services through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).

Youth Profile

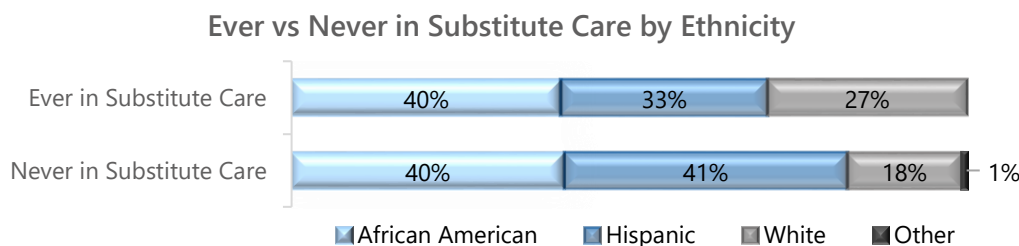
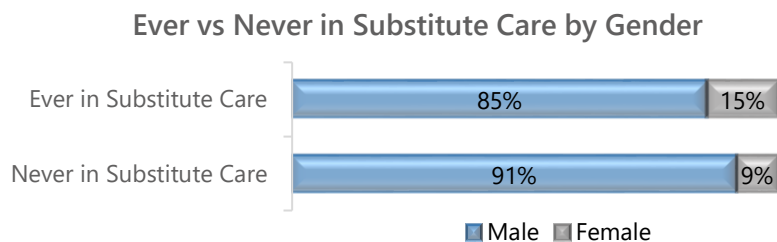
Of the 2,079 youth served by TJJD in fiscal years 2022-2023, 329 or 16% were in substitute care through DFPS at some point in their lives. Substitute care is defined as 24-hour care for children who have been placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom DFPS has placement and care responsibility. Substitute care includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes.

**Greater proportion of female youth and white youth have
been in substitute care.**

TJJD Youth Profile	TJJD Youth Served		Ever in Substitute Care	
	2,079		329	
Age at Admission (Years)	#	%	#	%
10 to 14	281	14%	62	19%
15	414	20%	76	23%
16	753	36%	110	33%
17 and older	631	30%	81	25%
Gender	#	%	#	%
Male	1,867	90%	280	85%
Female	212	10%	49	15%
Race / Ethnicity	#	%	#	%
African American	832	40%	132	40%
Hispanic	825	40%	108	33%
White	411	20%	89	27%
Other	11	<1%	0	0%

TJJD youth who had ever been in substitute care were similar to the total TJJD population in age breakdown. Sex and race/ethnicity showed noticeable differences. Compared to their percentage of the total TJJD population, females and white youth accounted for a greater proportion of TJJD youth ever in substitute care.

Separating youth ever in substitute care and those never in substitute care further highlights the differences among groups. Compared with TJJD youth never in substitute care, female youth and white youth comprised a greater proportion of TJJD youth ever in substitute care. The relationship between groups was statistically significant ($p < .01$).



Juvenile Justice System Involvement

The type of offense leading to TJJD commitment was similar for the total TJJD population and for TJJD youth who had ever been in substitute care; 74-80% in each category committed a violent offense against a person. Additionally, 92-93% of youth in each category had at least one prior referral to the juvenile justice system before commitment to TJJD.

Majority of youth committed a violent offense and had prior involvement with the juvenile justice system.

Offense Type	TJJD Youth Served	Ever in Substitute Care
Violent	1,554	263
Property	312	43
Drug	76	5
Other	137	18
Total	2,079	329

Entering the Juvenile Justice System for the First Time

TJJD Youth Served	Ever in Substitute Care
8%	7%

Methodology

The total TJJD population included all youth served during a two-year period from 9/1/2021 to 8/31/2023 in all location types (i.e., state-operated secure facilities, state-operated halfway houses, contract placements, and parole). DFPS matched TJJD youth with its records to identify youth who had ever been in substitute care and returned the matched data file to TJJD. Chi-square test was used to analyze independence.