

Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board

Community Based Interventions
Subcommittee Meeting

July 28, 2025

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Approval of June Meeting Minutes
3. OCA Announcements
4. Dually Involved Youth Project: National Literature Review
5. Discussion & Next Steps

OCA Announcements

In early July, the OCA released [Improving Massachusetts' Child Require Assistance System: A 2025 Update and Path Forward for Change.](#)

Key Findings:

- Total CRA petitions continue to rise since 2022 (FY23 and FY24), and this increase is driven by school-based filings
- Overall racial and ethnic disparities in filings have worsened
- There has been an increase in the number of filings for children under the age of 12
- Geographic differences in filings remain

The OCA's report also offers bright spots in state agencies' work since 2022, and recommends the Legislature pass [An Act regarding families and children in need of assistance](#) which implements many of the Board's recommendations to address structural issues with the CRA petition process.

Bill [factsheet](#)

Dually Involved Youth Project: National Literature Review

Research & Presentation Notes

Prior to this meeting, members received a comprehensive slide deck on national research along with a few key sources that informed the OCA's literature review.

This presentation provides a brief overview of the detailed literature review, which will be posted with the meeting materials.



The research presented *may not* fully reflect the specific policies, practices, or conditions within the Commonwealth.

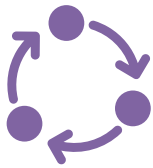


This presentation highlights *general* themes and may not capture the specific outcomes or nuances of individual cohorts, jurisdictions, or programs.



Specific statistics or references are hyperlinked in the text or denoted by a citation directly following the finding. Citations for broader themes can be found in the “Citations” section of this slide deck.

Complexities in Researching Dual System Youth



Intersectionality: Dual system youth are impacted by intersecting identities (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) and co-occurring challenges (e.g., trauma, placement instability, behavioral health needs, etc.) that often compound the risk of system involvement.



Dual-System Challenges: Child welfare and juvenile justice systems have different philosophies, mission statements, and resources – creating challenges when coordinating services for dual system populations.



Data Inconsistencies: Data points are shaped by the structure (e.g., child welfare and juvenile justice under the same agency) and operations (e.g., county-based, etc.) of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, as well as local policies and practices (e.g., diversion, etc.).

Guiding Questions

1

What is the definition of crossover youth, and what is the prevalence of dual system involvement, nationally?

2

What are the common risk factors and life experiences that contribute to dual system involvement? Who is dually involved?

3

What systemic factors contribute to dual system involvement?

4

What are the outcomes related to dual system youth?



1. What is the definition of crossover youth, and what is the prevalence of dual system involvement nationally?

There are multiple ways to define and measure crossover, depending on the level of system involvement and timing of the contact.

Research suggests that more than half of the juvenile justice population has or will have child welfare involvement. Most crossover youth do not have concurrent system involvement.

There are multiple ways to define and measure crossover, depending on the level of system involvement and timing of the contact.

Cohort	Definition	Examples/Additional Details
Crossover youth	Youth who experience maltreatment and engage in delinquent acts	Umbrella term, youth may or may not have an investigation and/or involvement in one or both systems
Dual system/ Dual contact	Crossover youth who have <u>contact</u> in both the child welfare (CW) and juvenile justice (JJ) systems, regardless of timing or extent of involvement	e.g., youth is referred for a CW investigation (51A) and is later charged with vandalism
Dually involved	A subset of dual system youth with concurrent involvement in both systems	e.g., youth has an open CW case and is detained for theft while the CW case remains open
Dually adjudicated	Youth who have been found by a court to be in need of care and protection by the CW system and delinquent by the JJ system, concurrently	e.g., a youth that has been committed to a JJ placement from a CW group home

✓ JJPAD Working Definition: A youth who enters DYS care/custody and is either in the care/custody of DCF or has an open case with DCF.*

* Further data analysis will determine the degree to which MA dual system youth for the JJPAD DIY project are dual contact, dually involved, or dually adjudicated.

Research suggests that more than half of the juvenile justice population has or will have child welfare involvement. Most crossover youth do not have concurrent system involvement.

Since studies identify different process points to denote CW and JJ involvement, each study identifies a unique cohort of dual system youth.

**According to
the literature
OCA reviewed:**

5 - 73% of youth had involvement in both the CW and JJ systems

e.g., 5% of youth completing a JJ residential programming in Florida had an open child welfare case

e.g., 73% of youth ages 14-17 with an open care and protection case had been referred to the court on at least one delinquency referral

In jurisdictions and studies that define dual system youth similarly to the JJPAD's working definition, prevalence rates are comparable at ~50%.

Source: June CBI Meeting, For more on national prevalence rates, see Appendices A & B.

2. What are the common risk factors and life experiences that contribute to dual involvement? Who is dually involved?

Trauma and low rates
of protective factors

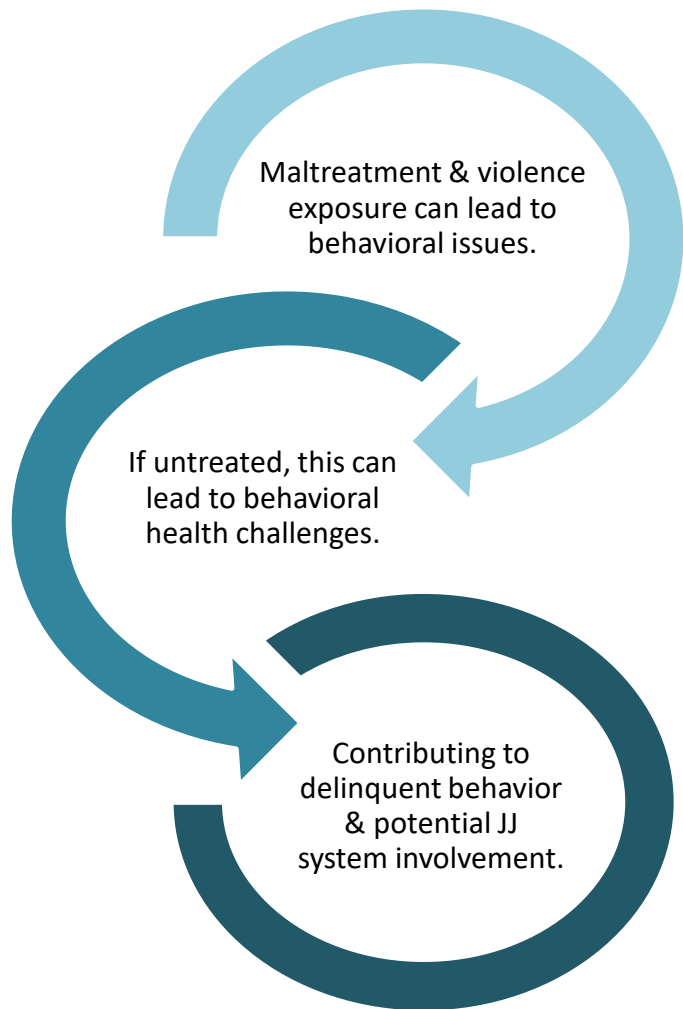
High acuity needs and
behavioral health
challenges

Crossover youth are
younger and
disproportionately youth of
color, girls, and LGBTQ+ or
gender nonconforming
(GNC)*

*compared to youth involved in one system

Dual system youth report high rates of trauma and low rates of protective factors, which can lead to serious unmet needs that may contribute to delinquent behavior.

Maltreatment to Delinquency



More exposure to more types of trauma and adverse experiences compared to single system youth:

- In [one study](#), a larger proportion of crossover youth were exposed to domestic violence, neglect, and multiple types of maltreatment compared to their CW-only counterparts

Low rates of protective factors compared to single system youth:

- According to [one study](#), dually involved youth report lower levels of family support, close relationships with parents, and prosocial friends compared to JJ-only youth.

Crossover youth's serious unmet needs may contribute to challenging and/or delinquent behavior.

Leading to...

Educational Challenges

ex) [one study](#) showed that, compared to JJ-only youth, dually involved youth are:

- more likely to have behavioral health problems in school
- less likely to report good performance
- less likely to graduate

Delinquent Behavior

- **Type & Location:** According to [one study](#), 33 – 50% of crossover youth were charged with assault occurring at home, in a group home, or at school
- **History & Status Offenses:** [Another study](#) found that one-third of youth had prior arrests with an average of 1.7 prior criminal charges and 3 status offenses.
- **Survival Crimes & Behaviors:** [A third study](#) found that 25% of crossover youth were gang-involved, which may contribute to delinquent behavior.

Crossover youth have distinct characteristics and identities, with girls, youth of color, and LGBTQ+ and GNC youth disproportionately represented.

Common Characteristics



Age: Crossover youth are typically older at their first CW investigation (compared to CW-only youth) and younger at their first entry into the JJ system (compared to JJ-only youth).

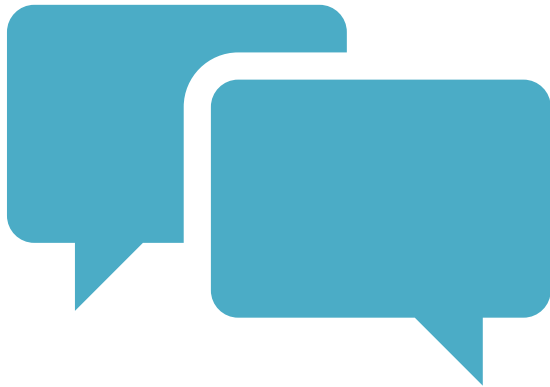
Gender: Girls with a CW history are *overrepresented* in the JJ system compared to girls from the general population.

Race: Youth of color are *overrepresented* within crossover populations and experience deeper system involvement than their white peers.

Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity: LGBTQ+ and GNC may be* *overrepresented* in crossover populations due to their overrepresentation within each individual system.

*While research suggests this population is *likely* overrepresented in the dual status population, there is currently a lack of research on dual status rates for LGBTQ+/GNC youth compared to youth involved in single systems.

Discussion Questions



- Any questions on the research presented so far?
- Are there other identities we should be considering?
- What ways should we cut the data (when possible) to understand cohorts of dual status youth in MA?

3. What systemic factors contribute to dual involvement?

Placement practices

Practitioner decision making

Placement instability can increase the likelihood of delinquency.

Frequent causes of placement changes for dual system youth include:

Significant behavioral health needs *e.g.*, substance use, frequent missing from care episodes, CSEC concerns, etc.

Availability, quality, and fit of placement options *e.g.*, behavioral health needs that require specialized expertise, policies that require staff to report behavior that kin may tolerate, visitation policies, etc.

According to [one study](#), 76% of placement disruptions were due to a foster parents' inability or unwillingness to continue fostering, in part (28%) due to an inability to tolerate a youth's behavioral or emotional challenges.

There are disparities in decision making for youth crossing over from the child welfare system into the juvenile justice system.

This observed “child welfare bias” is likely due to the perception/reality of a lack of protective factors and “release resources” and may contribute to:

Placement decisions Restrictive settings (e.g., pretrial detention) are used as placement more frequently for CW youth than JJ-only youth

Viable sanction options Dual status youth are **less likely to receive probation** than JJ-only youth

4. What are the outcomes related to dual system youth?

**Individual impacts:
instability, worse
permanency outcomes,
and recidivism**

**Systemic impacts: long-
term reliance on public
assistance**

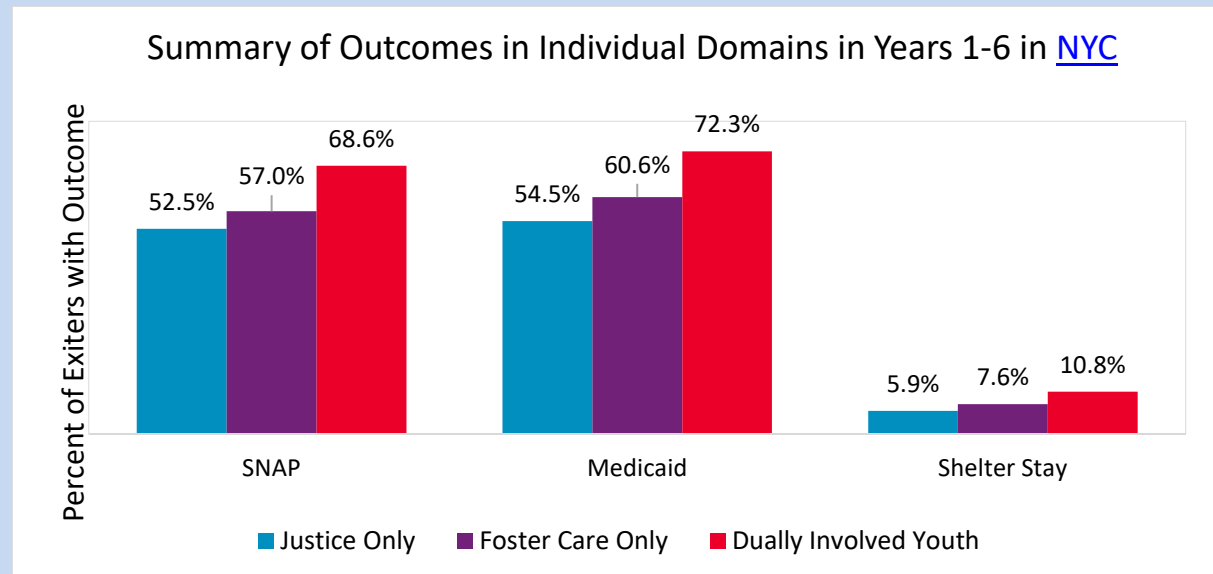
Having two systems involved in a youth's life can lead to negative short- and long-term impacts on a youth.

In the short-term... involvement in two systems often **disrupts stability and relationships**

In the long-term... dual system youth have **worse permanency and recidivism** outcomes

Dual system youth typically **earn less, report higher levels of unemployment** than single system youth, and are **heavy users of public systems**.

Sources: (Center for Innovation through Data Intelligence, 2015)

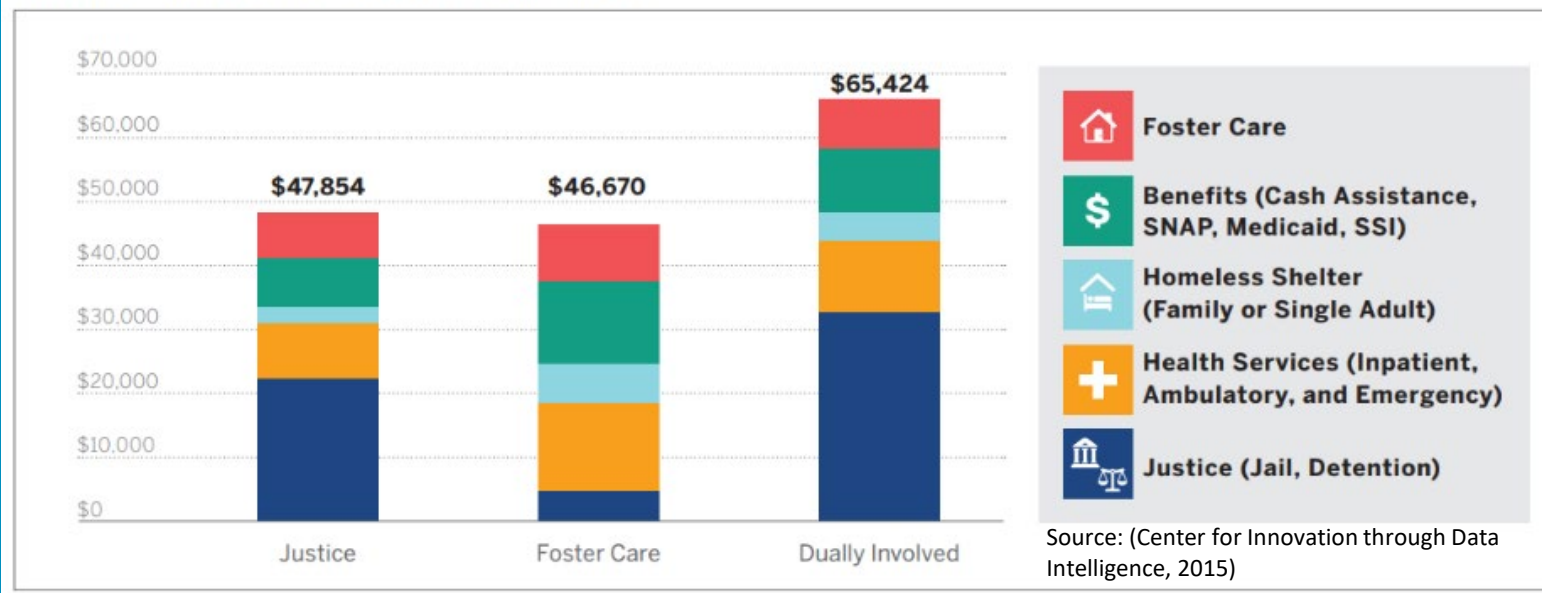


Having two systems involved in a youth's life can lead to negative short- and long-term impacts on public systems.

In the short-term... Processing a dual system youth's case is resource intensive on both the JJ and CW systems.

In the long-term... The cost burden on public systems extends into adulthood.

Average Cumulative Cost of Services Used in Years 1-6



Key Takeaways



1

Over half of the juvenile justice population has or will have child welfare involvement. Most youth are not involved in both systems, simultaneously.

2

Dual system youth are typically older at their first CW investigation and younger at their first entry into the JJ system and have unique needs/experiences compared to their single-system peers.

3

Dual system youth are likely to have high acuity needs that, if unaddressed, can result in behavioral challenges and a variety of delinquency-related behaviors.

4

Certain identity groups have disproportionate dual system rates, including girls, youth of color, and, likely, LGBTQ+/GNC youth.

5

There are CW and JJ system practices that contribute to dual system involvement.

6

Having two systems involved in a youth's life can lead to negative short- and long-term impacts on a youth and public systems.

Questions & Discussion



Status Update

Where we've been...



Interviews with stakeholders



**Presentation on
DYS/DCF/Provider practices**



National literature review

Where we're going...



Data analysis



Case file review



**Review of best practices from
other jurisdictions**



**Continued review of state
policies**



**Discuss draft findings and
brainstorm potential
recommendations**

Next Meeting:

September 22nd

11am-12:30pm

(All meetings are virtual; Zoom information is in each calendar invitation)



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Appendix A: National Prevalence Rates for Dual System Youth

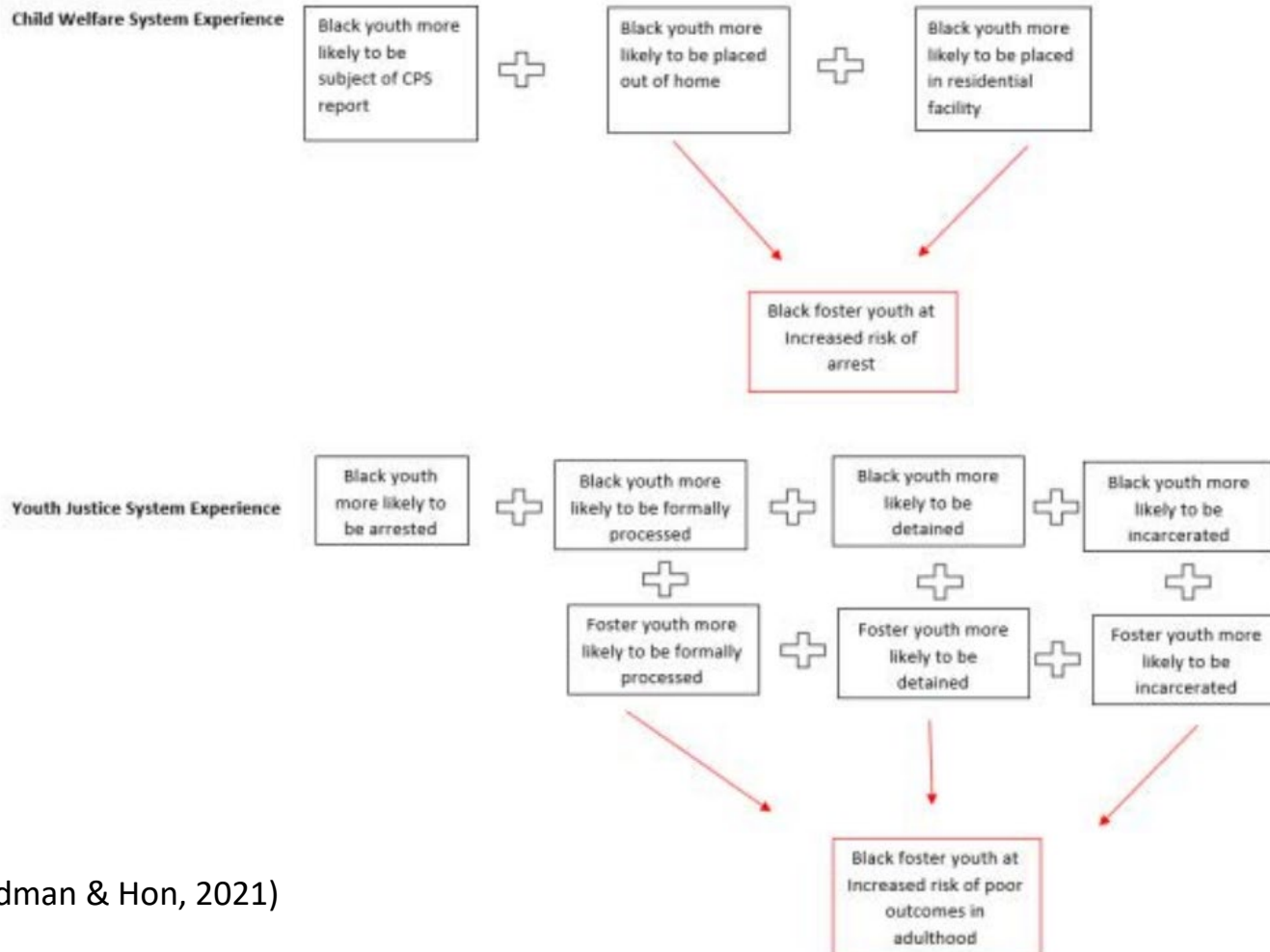
Rate	Definition	Citation	Link
73%	Youth ages 14-17 with an open care and protection case in Cochise, Coconino, Maricopa and Pima counties that had been referred to the court on at least one delinquency referral	(G. J. Halemba et al., 2004)	Arizona Dual Jurisdiction Study Final Report
70%	Youth with a first juvenile justice petition and child welfare involvement of any type in New York City	(D. C. Herz & Dierkhising, 2018)	OJJDP Dual System Youth Design Study
69%	Youth with a first juvenile justice petition and child welfare involvement of any type in Cuyahoga County	(D. C. Herz & Dierkhising, 2018)	OJJDP Dual System Youth Design Study
67%	Youth referred to the King County Juvenile Court on one or more offender matters and have had some form of Children’s Administration (CW) involvement	(G. Halemba & Siegel, 2011)	Doorways to Delinquency
64%	Youth with a first juvenile justice petition and one child welfare investigation since birth	(D. C. Herz et al., 2021)	Dual system youth and their pathways in Los Angeles County
50%	Youth in a secure detention facility in the Mountain West with history of a substantiated child welfare maltreatment petition prior to their involvement in the current study	(Modrowski et al., 2023)	Youth Dually-Involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems
45%	Youth with a first juvenile justice petition and child welfare involvement of any type in Cook County	(D. C. Herz & Dierkhising, 2018)	OJJDP Dual System Youth Design Study
29%	Youth who had spent at least one year in out-of-home placement and had ever been in juvenile detention/placement in Allegheny County	(Kolivoski et al., 2014)	Developmental Trajectories and Predictors of Juvenile Detention, Placement, and Jail
19%	Youth who received an investigation following a maltreatment report and had later record of commitment to the California Youth Authority (JJ facility)	(Jonson-Reid & Barth, 2000)	From maltreatment report to juvenile incarceration: the role of child welfare services
17%	Youth with an open dock in juvenile court at least six months after a substantiated allegation of mistreatment in Connecticut	(Randall et al., 2015)	Crossover-Youth-Technical-Report.pdf
9%	Youth who experienced out-of-home care in LA County foster care at any point between birth and age 18 and experienced a juvenile court petition by their 18 th birthday	(Eastman et al., 2025)	Contact with Foster Care and the Juvenile Delinquency Court

Appendix B: National Prevalence Rates for Dually Involved Youth

Rate	Definition	Citation	Link
59%	Youth ages 14-17 in Cochise, Coconino, Maricopa and Pima counties who had one or more delinquency petitions and an open care and protection case	(G. J. Halembe et al., 2004)	Arizona Dual Jurisdiction Study Final Report
35%	Youth leaving Probation supervision who had open child welfare cases in Los Angeles county	(McCroskey et al., 2017)	Crossover Youth: Los Angeles County Probation Youth with Previous Referrals to Child Protective Services
33%	Youth with a first juvenile justice petition and concurrent child welfare involvement of any type in NYC	(D. C. Herz & Dierkhising, 2018)	OJJDP Dual System Youth Design Study
25%	Youth in a secure detention facility in the Mountain West who were under the care and custody of the state at the time of study participation	(Modrowski et al., 2023)	Youth Dually-Involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems
25%	Youth with a first juvenile justice petition and concurrent child welfare involvement of any type in Cuyahoga County	(D. C. Herz & Dierkhising, 2018)	OJJDP Dual System Youth Design Study
12%	Youth with a first juvenile justice petition and concurrent child welfare involvement of any type in Cook County	(D. C. Herz & Dierkhising, 2018)	OJJDP Dual System Youth Design Study
10%	Youth in Washington State who had an open child welfare case at the time of arrest	(Ryan et al., 2013)	Adolescent Neglect, Juvenile Delinquency and the Risk of Recidivism
7%	Youth who have an open child welfare case and are simultaneously involved with probation following their first arrest in Los Angeles County	(Ryan et al., 2007)	Maltreatment and delinquency: Investigating child welfare bias in juvenile justice processing
5%	Youth completing juvenile justice residential programming in Florida with an open child welfare case	(Baglivio et al., 2016)	Maltreatment, Child Welfare, and Recidivism

Appendix C: Compounding Risk Factors of Dual System Involvement for Youth of Color

Youth of color experience disproportionate contact and disparate outcomes within both systems, increasing their risk of dual system involvement.



Source: (Heldman & Hon, 2021)

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