

University of Houston
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Annotated Bibliography
Disproportionality of Minorities in the Child Welfare System

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Ashton, V. (2004). The effect of personal characteristics on reporting child maltreatment. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 28(9), 985-997.

This study examined the relationship between personal characteristics of 276 potential entry-level social service workers and their decision to report child maltreatment to Child Protective Services (CPS). The personal characteristics of interest were: age, gender, parenthood, mother's education, father's education, college major, ethnicity and immigrant status. The study hypotheses were that personal characteristics would have: (1) an individual effect on reporting, (2) a combined effect on reporting, and (3) an effect on reporting beyond any effect mediated by approval of corporal punishment and perceptions of maltreatment. Method: Data were collected by a self-report survey employing vignettes in multi-item scales. Respondents rated (1) their approval of corporal punishment, (2) the seriousness of incidents of probable maltreatment, and (3) their likelihood of reporting incidents of probable maltreatment to CPS. Results: Of the eight personal characteristics, **only ethnicity and immigrant status had significant effects on reporting.** Together with approval of corporal punishment and perception of maltreatment, ethnicity and immigrant status accounted for 32% of the variance in reporting ($p < .001$). Conclusion: Independently and combined, **ethnicity and immigrant status have considerable effect on reporting behavior, Findings suggest that human service agencies should address issues of diversity and establish clear criteria for responding to child maltreatment.**

Ayon, C., & Lee, C. D. (2005). A comparative analysis of child welfare services through the eyes of African American, Caucasian & Latino parents. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 15(4), 257-266.

The purpose of this study was to find if differences exist among 88 African American, Caucasian, and Latino families who received child welfare services. Method: A secondary data analysis of cross-sectional survey data employing standardized measures was used for this study. Family preservation (FP) services were received by 49 participants, and 39 participants were provided Family maintenance (FM) services. Results: Minority clients were likely to have more children, lower incomes, and receive public assistance, and 30% were monolingual Spanish speakers. African American and Latino parents reported more positive outcomes on children's academic adjustment and symptomatic behavior than Caucasian parents when receiving FP services. Conclusion: **When recommending child welfare services, workers need to take ethnicity into account as culturally sensitive and community-based programs, such as FP may be more effective when serving ethnic or racial minority groups.**

Becerra, R. M., Thomas, W., & Ong, P. M. (2001). Latino and African American non-custodial fathers: Perceptions of fatherhood and child support. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 10*(3), 3-30.

This study examines the perspectives of 30 Latino (n = 17) and African American (n = 13) low-income non-custodial fathers regarding their role as fathers and the child support system. Using an ethnographic approach, these non-custodial fathers (NCFs) were asked about their own childhood and background, their relationship with their own fathers, their relationship with their non-custodial child(ren), and their views of the child support system. The cultural portrait that emerges is a group of fathers who express a strong desire to be positive role models to their children and to play a significant role in their lives. Notwithstanding their negative feelings toward the child support enforcement system, they need to increase their knowledge regarding the process in order to clarify both their responsibilities and their rights. Implications for social work policy and research are included.

Bell, J. (2005). A solvable problem: Reducing the disproportionality of youths of color in juvenile detention facilities. *Corrections Today, 67*(5), 80-83.

Focuses on the reduction of the disproportionate number of youth of several races who are in juvenile detention in the U.S. Introduction of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act in 1988; Establishment of the Juvenile Detentions Alternative Initiative by the Annie E. Casey Foundation; Procedural steps in implementing the efforts of W. Haywood Burns Institute to reduce the overrepresentation of youths of colors in the juvenile justice system, including the community profile.

Bitoni, C., Albers, E., & Reilly T. (1996). Multicultural competence in Nevada human Services: A statewide survival. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 4*(4), 67-83.

A survey of 300 Nevada mental health, child welfare, early childhood, and parole workers provided baseline information concerning multicultural competence for use in planning diversity programs. A modified version of the Multicultural Counseling Inventory yielded data on awareness, knowledge, skills, and relationship. Significant findings emerged for gender, educational level, practice field, and minority status. Women scored higher than men on the total and three subscales. Workers with graduate degrees scored higher than BA level workers on the total and two subscales. Early childhood workers scored highest on the total; youth parole scored lowest. Minority workers scored higher than non-minority workers in awareness.

Briggs, H. E., Briggs, A. C., & Leary, J. D. (2005). Promotion culturally competent systems of care through statewide family advocacy networks. *Best Practice in Mental Health: An International Journal, 1*(2), 77-99.

This article examines the extent to which statewide family organizations are committed to cultural competence through the involvement of culturally diverse families at all levels: as clients, volunteers, staff and board members. The data show that families who participate in and govern statewide family organizations

seek to enhance participation of culturally diverse families in all aspects of operational and governance activities. Implications for future studies, which would measure the extent to which these organizations are achieving a balance between culturally diverse and white families, are highlighted.

Brown, Y. A. (2002). On the rights side. *Community Care*, 1451.

Examines the effect of immigration on the values and behavior of immigrants in Great Britain. Problems caused by cultural differences in dealing with children; Concerns over the use of physical punishment to discipline children; Provisions of the Children Act of 1989.

Brownell, P., Berman, J., Nelson, A., & Fofana, R. C. (2003). Grandparents raising grandchildren: The risk of care giving. *Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect*, 15(3/4), 5-31.

Findings from a study utilizing grandparent and child welfare worker locus groups demonstrate that professionals can learn about elder abuse from older people who may be experiencing abuse. This challenges the assumption that elder abuse is a social problem that must be defined by professionals because abuse victims are unable to speak for themselves. Differences in perceptions between African American and Latina grandparents underscore the importance of incorporating of diversity into elder abuse research. Examining elder abuse from the perspective of clients and professionals in service systems not traditionally associated with this social problem can promote case finding and prevention.

Chibnall, S., Dutch, N. M., Jones-Harden, B., Brown, A., Gourdine, R., Smith, J., Boone, A., & Shelita, S. (2003). Children of color in the child welfare system: Perspectives from the child welfare community. *Department of Health and Human Services Children's Bureau & Administration for Children and Families*.

Responding to concerns about the overrepresentation of minority children in the child welfare system, particularly African-American children, the Children's Bureau sponsored an exploratory qualitative study of the child welfare system's response to children of color. The project was intended to meet the following goals: 1) To gain insight into the issue of overrepresentation (or racial disproportionality) from the perspective of the child welfare community, including agency administrators, supervisors, and direct service workers. 2) To describe the strategies child welfare and child-welfare serving agencies use to meet the needs of children and families of color in the child welfare system. The findings from the study are important for several reasons. First, very few studies have considered the child welfare community's perception on overrepresentation. Second, few studies have looked at the manner in which agencies are responding to over-representation. As such, this study provides a unique perspective on the issue and potential solutions to it. Third, the information presented here can be used to inform policy makers about over-representation and potentially promising practices, strategies, and programs that are being implemented to reduce it. Finally, the information can educate and inform the child welfare community, by increasing awareness of overrepresentation, and

providing examples of programs, practices, and strategies that they can implement in their own agencies to better serve children and families of color.

<http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/otherpubs/children/children.pdf>

Child Welfare League of America. (2005). Children of color in the child welfare system. Overview of racial disproportionality in the child welfare system, including relevant research, statistics, and initiatives to address this issue.

<http://ndas.cwla.org/Include/text/Children%20of%20Color05.pdf>

Chipungu, S. S., & Bent-Goodley, T. B. (2004). Meeting the challenges of contemporary foster care. *The Future of Children*, 14(1), 74-93.

Over the past two decades, the foster care system experienced an unprecedented rise in the number of children in out-of-home care, significant changes in the policy framework guiding foster care practice, and ongoing organizational impediments that complicate efforts to serve the children in foster care. This article discusses the current status of the foster care system and finds: Agencies often have difficulty providing adequate, accessible, and appropriate services for the families in their care. **Children of color, particularly African-American children, are disproportionately represented** in foster care, a situation which raises questions about the equity of the foster care system and threatens the developmental progress of children of color. Foster families can find the experience overwhelming and frustrating, causing many to leave foster parenting **within their first year**. Organizational problems such as large caseloads, high staff turnover, and data limitations compromise efforts to adequately serve and monitor families. The challenges before the foster care system are numerous; however, the authors believe promising policies and practices aimed at **strengthening families, supporting case workers, providing timely and adequate data, and infusing cultural competency throughout the system**, can move the foster care system forward in the coming years.

Church, W. T., Gross, E., & Baldwin, J. (2005). Maybe ignorance is not always bliss: The disparate treatment of Hispanics within the child welfare system. *Children & Youth Services Review*, 27(12), 1279-1292.

Previous studies indicate that the proportion of culturally diverse children to White children is increasing in public social service agencies. In addition, culturally diverse children are more likely to receive more intensive and punitive services, are more likely to stay within the system for longer periods of time and are reported more often to Child Protective Services. The purpose of the study was to explore how child welfare practices with Hispanic children are different from those applied with White non-Hispanic children. This study was a retrospective, two year, longitudinal, survival analysis of differential child welfare placement outcomes of White non-Hispanic and Hispanic children/families which had substantiated cases of abuse/neglect (n=1001). Findings demonstrate that although cases reported for abuse/neglect are relatively proportionate between Hispanic and White non-Hispanic children, **substantiated cases are more likely to occur with Hispanic children**. These children are **more likely to be placed out of**

the home more quickly and for longer periods of time than their White non-Hispanic counterparts. The current study demonstrates the need for increased cultural awareness among Child Welfare professionals, especially in terms of assessment and case decision making, and the need for the development of culturally sensitive training modules for CPS and case management personnel.

Coakley, T. M. (2008). Examining African American fathers' involvement in permanency planning: An effort to reduce racial disproportionality in the child welfare system. *Children & Youth Services Review, 30*(4), 407-417.

Abstract: Children of color are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system. In 2005 they comprised **53% of the 513,000 children in out-of-home placements** in the United States [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau (2006). Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). Retrieved on June 12, 2007 from [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/tar/report 13.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/tar/report%2013.htm)]. On average, they stay in foster care longer than Caucasian children [Hill, R.B. (2006). Synthesis of research on disproportionality in child welfare: An update. Washington, D.C.: Casey—CSSP Alliance for Racial Equity in the Child Welfare System. Retrieved April 11, 2007, from http://www.caseyfamilyservices.org/pdfs/0226_CC_BobHillPaper_FINAL.pdf]. There is virtually no empirical research on African American fathers' involvement in permanency planning, which makes it difficult either to understand the relationships among fathers' involvement, agency practices, and children's permanency outcomes or to identify which types of efforts are most effective to involve African American fathers. This study examines the extent to which African American fathers' involvement in permanency planning influences children's placement outcomes using a secondary data analysis of 88 children's child welfare case records. Findings show that children were reunited with birth families more often and had shorter stays in foster care when their fathers were involved. This study contributes to the emerging research on fathers' involvement and explores agency practices that account for extended lengths of stay in foster care for children of color. Recommendations are provided for child welfare policy, practice, and research.

Coleman, H., Unrau, Y. A., & Manyfingers, B. (2001). Revamping family preservation for native families. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 10*(1), 49-68.

Family Preservation Services (FPS) have become widespread among child protection agencies to prevent the unnecessary removal of children from their families and family homes. **Native children, who are over-represented in public care systems, are largely absent from reports evaluating the effectiveness of FPS.** This paper examines the FPS philosophy and program structures in the context of Native culture. The authors provide practical suggestions for changing FPS in hopes that such programs will improve success in serving and preserving Native families with child protection concerns.

Crampton, D., & Jackson, W. L. (2007). Family group decision making and disproportionality in foster care: A case study. *Child Welfare*, 86(3), 51-69.

Research on the disproportionate number of children of color in the child welfare system suggests that we should focus on key decision points such as investigations, substantiations, and placements to understand how experiences of children vary by race and ethnicity. This article describes one community's efforts to use Family Group Decision Making in placement decisions to reduce disproportionality in foster care by diverting children from regular foster care services and keeping them within their extended families.

Denby, R. W., Curtis, C. M., Alford, K. A., & Nielsen, K. (1998). Family preservation services and special populations: The invisible target. *Families in Society*, 79(1), 3-14.

Children of color are especially vulnerable for a devastating outcome as a result of their living environment and are disproportionately represented within the child welfare system. Social workers, who are trained to mitigate the effects of social injustice and societal inconsistencies, particularly among minorities and oppressed populations, perpetuate the injustices associated with the child welfare system by ignoring the special needs of children of color when administering family preservation services. The authors present results from a national study that examined the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of family preservation workers regarding the service criterion based on whether a family is part of a special population. Results indicate a **significant bias** against targeting family preservation services to children of color.

Derezotes, D. (2006). Race matters in child welfare. *Permanency Planning Today*.

Throughout the country today black children are overrepresented in the child welfare system in every state. Native American children – Indians, Hawaiians and Alaskans – are all overrepresented in the jurisdictions in which they reside. Latino children are overrepresented in over 10 states. But this information does not fully describe the disproportionality of minority children in the child welfare system. Asians and Pacific Islanders tend to be underrepresented in the child welfare system. And, if we look more closely at Latino representation throughout the country we see that Latinos are overrepresented in some jurisdictions and underrepresented in others.

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/newsletter/ppt-summer-2006.pdf>

Derezotes, D., & Hartnett, M. A. (2005). Child welfare system involvement of African Americans: Jones County, Illinois. *Race Matter Consortium*.

The following report was developed by the Race Matters Consortium as an example of the first step administrators should take when considering alternatives to address racial disproportionality in the child welfare system. Once this type of analysis is complete, further examination of the points within the system where disproportionality occurs is necessary. Depending on the point of focus, various approaches can be undertaken including, but not limited to: case file reviews,

child welfare professional interviews (i.e. workers, supervisors, therapists, administrators), client focus groups, and examination of court procedures.
<http://www.racemattersconsortium.org/docs/whopaper6.pdf>

Disproportionality in Child Protective Services: Statewide reform effort begins with examination of the problem. (2006). *Texas Health and Human Services Commission/Texas Department of Family and Protective Services*.

Senate Bill 6 (SB 6), passed by the 79th Texas Legislature and signed by Governor Rick Perry, requires comprehensive reform of the Child Protective Services (CPS) system in Texas. One aspect of that reform is to address issues of disproportionality or overrepresentation of a particular race or ethnic group in a program or system. This report is prepared in response to Section 1.54 of SB 6, which requires the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to “analyze data regarding child removals and other enforcement actions taken by the department [DFPS] during state fiscal years 2004 and 2005” and “determine whether enforcement actions were disproportionately initiated against any racial or ethnic group, in any area of the state, taking into account other relevant factors, including poverty, single parent families, young parent families and any additional factor determined by other research to be statistically correlated with child abuse or child neglect.”

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Documents/about/pdf/2006-01-02_Disproportionality.pdf

Disproportionality in the child welfare system: The disproportionate representation of children of color in foster care. Casey Family Programs. Retrieved on March 26, 2008 at <http://www.ncsl.org/print/cyf/fostercarecolor.pdf>.

On September 30, 2003 over fifty percent (59% or 304,910) of the 523,085 children living in foster care placements were children of color, although they represented only 41% of the child population in the United States. It reported statistics on groups who are overrepresented and underrepresented in foster care, maltreatment rates, etc.

Dougherty, S. (2003). Practices that mitigate the effects of racial/ethnic disproportionality in the child welfare system. Casey Family Programs.

This paper will focus on practices that might mitigate the effects of disproportionality on the children and families who are already involved with the out-of-home care system by leading to improved outcomes in permanency and well-being. It will not look at practices that might reduce the disproportionate number of children of color who are the subjects of child abuse/neglect reports or who then enter the system.² It will also look at ways other systems – education, health care and juvenile justice – are seeking to mitigate disproportionate representation of children of color. We can not only take lessons for our own practice from related systems, but can examine the work of those systems as it impacts the children in out-of-home care who attend school, are served by the

health care system, and who unfortunately often have interaction with the juvenile justice system.

http://www.casey.org/NR/rdonlyres/F2CF350A-1A46-4E02-80EA-3746F2A70F20/132/casey_mitigating_disproportionality.pdf

Equity: Moving toward better outcomes for all of Michigan's children. (2006). *Michigan Department of Human Services*.

This report discusses the overrepresentation of children of color in the child welfare system in Michigan and presents recommendations for addressing this issue.

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DHS-Child-Equity-Report_153952_7.pdf

Freudenburg, W. R. (2005). Privileged access, privileged accounts: Toward a socially structured theory of resources and discourses. *Social Forces*, 84(1), 89-114.

Environmental harms involve a "double diversion" - two forms of privilege that deserve greater attention. The first involves disproportionality, or the privileged diversion of rights/resources: Contrary to common assumptions, much environmental damage is not economically "necessary" - instead, it represents privileged access to the environment. It is made possible in part by the second diversion - the diversion of attention, or distraction - largely through taken-for-granted or privileged accounts, which are rarely questioned, even in leftist critiques. Data show that, rather than producing advanced materials, major polluters tend to be inefficient producers of low-value commodities, and rather than being major employers, they can have emissions-to-jobs ratios a thousand times worse than the economy as a whole. Instead of simply focusing on overall/average levels of environmental problems, sociologists also need to examine disproportionalities, analyzing the socially structured nature of environmental and discursive privileges. Doing so can offer important opportunities for insights, not just about nature, but also about the nature of power, and about the power of the naturalized.

Fulcher, L. C. (2002). Cultural safety and the duty of care. *Child Welfare*, 81(5), 689-708.

Examines the notion of **cultural safety** in relation to the duty of care mandate assigned to child welfare workers when the state intervenes in family life, focusing on the vulnerabilities of rural and indigenous youth in New Zealand to cultural racism. Asserts that child welfare professionals have a professional obligation to enhance their cultural competencies, including those related to effective work with rural families and children.

Green, M. Y. (2002). Minorities as majority: Disproportionality in child welfare and juvenile justice. *Children's Voice Article*. Retrieved on March 26, 2008 at

<http://www.cwla.org/articles/cv0211minorities.htm>.

In 1992, Congress amended the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act to make it a "core requirement" for states to demonstrate efforts they're taking to reduce disproportionate minority confinement. A decade of data gathering, many

lament, has produced considerable head scratching, shoulder shrugging, and finger-pointing, but little in the way of reversing this phenomenon. Statistics confirmed what child welfare professionals suspected all along: Far too many children of color pass from protection to punishment. With no such mandate to collect data in child welfare, disproportionality - its causes and cures - is just now coming to light. In this two-part series, Children's Voice examines this seemingly intractable problem. The first article tries to define the scope and nature of the problem, looks at emerging research, and explores a variety of perspectives from all sides of the table. The second article, which will appear in the next issue, will focus on several local jurisdictions that are meeting these challenges head-on with promising programs and practices.

Green, M. Y. (2002). Balancing the scales: Targeting disproportionality in child welfare & juvenile justice. *Children's Voice Article*. Retrieved on March 26, 2008 at <http://www.cwla.org/articles/cv0301balancing.htm>.

Juvenile crime is decreasing significantly, but the number of juveniles in confinement continues to climb. The juvenile justice system confines far more minority youth than can be justified by their offense rates. And African American children show up more often and languish far longer in child welfare systems than do white children, despite lower incidences of abuse and neglect by race. Communities nationwide are grappling with these stark facts, but several are addressing the problems of disproportionality with promising results. Three different communities show what is possible using a mix of strategies that includes interagency collaboration, systems rethinking, accurate data collection and analysis, cultural competency, and community involvement.

Hancock, T. U. (2005). Cultural competence in the assessment of poor Mexican families in the rural southeastern United States. *Child Welfare*, 84(5), 689-711.

Increasing numbers of poor Mexican immigrant families are settling in the rural southeastern United States. Most of these families are from isolated agrarian communities in Mexico and are headed by unskilled laborers or displaced farm workers with little education. Child welfare workers and other service providers in rural communities may be **poorly prepared** to address the needs of this population. This article provides an overview of the cultural, social, and family dynamics of first generation, working class Mexicans to promote cultural competency among helping professionals. An ecological perspective is used to examine the strengths that poor Mexicans bring from their culture of origin, stresses of the migratory experience and ongoing adaptation, shifts that may occur in family structure and functioning, disruptions in the family life cycle, the role of social supports in family adaptation, and effect of institutional discrimination on family well-being. Suggestions also are made for essential components of adequate in-service education.

Harris, M. S., & Hackett, W. (2008). Decision points in child welfare: An action research model to address disproportionality. *Children & Youth Services Review*, 30(2), 199-215.

Researchers conduct secondary analysis of data collected in community-based focus groups convened to analyze key decision points where racial disproportionality grew wider in child welfare. Analysis confirms findings of other research pointing to referral bias, unclear or problematic policies related to engaging kin, the confounding role of poverty, and racial disparities in the availability of services to ameliorate family problems. A new finding suggested by this work was that lack of professional awareness of the influence of bias is in and of itself a barrier. Authors assert that professionals who believe the court system is fair and rational will not be vigilant in seeking out checks and balances to racial bias and may also be less likely to seek training or consciousness-raising experiences to address their own bias. The research methodology used serves as an example of ways university-based researchers can team with community-based action planning coalitions to stimulate systems change.

Hill, R. B. (2006). Synthesis of research on disproportionality in child welfare: An update. *Casey Family Programs*.

This research paper focuses on information about black children and families because most of the research that has been done so far on this topic has been done on those children and families and because there are more black children in the child welfare system than any other racial group. This paper looks at the following questions: 1) Does a child's or family's race influence the decisions that child welfare professionals make about that child or family? If so, how? 2) Are white and black children in the child welfare system treated differently? If so, how and how often? 3) What other research is needed to help us understand why there is disproportionality and disparity in the child welfare system, how it happens, and what happens as a result?

[http://www.casey.org/NR/rdonlyres/053CD4C6-300D-402A-8C18-7E476C929D2A/990/0226 CC BobHillPaper FINAL.pdf](http://www.casey.org/NR/rdonlyres/053CD4C6-300D-402A-8C18-7E476C929D2A/990/0226_CC_BobHillPaper_FINAL.pdf)

Hogan, P. T., & Siu, S. (1988). Minority children and the child welfare system: An historical perspective. *Social Work*, 33(6), 493-498.

This article presents information about the historical and current situation of minority children in the child welfare system in the U.S. The important issues that relate to the treatment of minority children in the U.S. child welfare system continue to be countering prevention of entry into the system; ensuring equal access, appropriateness of services, and equal treatment; and protecting civil rights. Based on the historical and current data, the authors project an increased emphasis on civil rights issues, further controversy over the issue of trans-racial adoptions, and a need to develop delivery systems to address the needs of new minority populations. To address the numerous issues, a concentrated focus on the needs of minority children is necessary, and the social work profession has a responsibility to sponsor such an effort. Improvement in the treatment of minority children in the child welfare system could result from the support of certain actions by the social work profession: **the training of culturally sensitive workers, the inclusion of child welfare knowledge into social work education along with a**

renewed emphasis on practice in the public sector, centralized data collection to document access and service appropriateness, advocacy to halt declassification of child welfare workers in the public sector, and advocacy for private and public service initiatives.

Irfan, S., & Cowburn, M. (2004). Disciplining, chastisement and physical and physical child abuse: Perceptions and attitudes of the British Pakistani community. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 24(1), 89-98.

There are cross-cultural differences in people's perspectives of what constitutes physical abuse of children. The focus of the present study was to explore the British Pakistani community's perception about physical child abuse and to understand more about the values held by them in relation to child protection. The study aimed to discover issues that are important to protect the children from harm, and to describe the possibilities these issues present. The study used a questionnaire survey that focused on 16-25-year-old British Pakistani's, exploring their experiences of childhood, of physical punishment and physical child abuse. The findings indicated that although serious child abuse was not experienced by most of the respondents, 75% of respondents experienced some kind of physical punishment as part of their childhood experience. However, **72% of respondents who received such punishment in childhood accepted it as an appropriate disciplining method.** The future research and policy implications with prevention in mind are discussed.

Jenkins, S., & Morrison, B. (1979). Ethnicity and service delivery. *Psychiatry & Child Development*, 63(12742).

Five minority groups were included in this study of the ethnic commitment of workers. The study tested the hypothesis that there would be significant differences between attitudes on ethnic issues in service delivery between workers in traditional and innovative agencies. An ethnic commitment continuum study instrument was developed to assess cultural content in programs; mixing vs. matching along ethnic lines; and issues on decision making or power in formulating policies. The research sought the responses of workers from two distinct populations; trained social workers from traditional child welfare settings and minority workers in innovative settings. The results of the study indicated that the two groups of child care workers differed in their attitudes on service delivery issues. In addition, results were found for other items on the Jenkins scale. The entire **Jenkins Ethnic Commitment scale** is included in the report along with a discussion of its development and a description of the statistical analysis for the study.

Klingner, J. K., Harry, B., & Felton, R. K. (2003). Understanding factors that contribute to disproportionality: Administrative hiring decisions. *Journal of Special Education Leadership*, 16(1), 23-33.

A study involving 12 elementary schools investigated hiring and placement decisions of school district-level personnel and principals. Findings indicate inequities in the quality of leadership and instruction in the inner-city schools

exacerbate efforts to reduce disproportionate placements of culturally and linguistically diverse children into special education.

Lemon, K., D'Andrade, A., & Austin, M. J. (2005). Understanding and addressing disproportionality in the front end of the child welfare system. *Bay Area Social Services Consortium*.

Racial/ethnic disproportionality in the child welfare system is a complicated social problem that is receiving increasing amounts of attention from researchers and practitioners. This structured review of the literature, commissioned by the Bay Area Social Services Consortium, examines the nature of disproportionality in the front-end of the child welfare system. The first section outlines the problem, and describes several theories about its cause. The second section describes interventions that have been developed based upon those theories, and assesses the effectiveness of the interventions. The report concludes with a section on the implications of the study's findings for research and practice.

http://cssr.berkeley.edu/bassc/public/DISPRO_PDF.pdf.

Leung, P., & Cheung, K. M. (1994). A strengths approach to ethnically sensitive practice for child protective service workers. *Child Welfare*, 73(6), 707-721.

The article suggests that a strengths approach, with guiding principles of family preservation, be used to empower child protective service (CPS) caseworkers and to enhance their cultural competence. A three-dimensional training model for planning and evaluating CPS cases has been developed to encourage workers to examine their attitudes, knowledge, and skills in working with ethnically different clients through various phases of intervention. Questions related to case planning, intervention, evaluation, and termination are presented for self-monitoring and training purposes, and practice implications are discussed. The **cultural and ethnic diversity inherent in child protection casework necessitates a framework for practice that incorporates many variables**. For intervention to be effective, cultural competence must be demonstrated not only in the attitudes of caseworkers toward cultural and ethnic diversity, but also in their knowledge about a family's cultural and ethnic context, and in their skills in communicating respect and empowerment to people of varying backgrounds and experiences.

Murphy, S. M., & Bryant, D. (2002). The effect of cross-cultural dialogue as child welfare parenting classes: Anecdotal evidence in Black and White. *Child Welfare*, 81(2), 385.

The child welfare system indicates that evidence of successful completion of parenting classes is instrumental in determining whether parents are actively engaged in the process of permanency planning. Such classes vary in length and intensity with topics ranging from "How to Raise Healthy Families" to "How to Discipline Your Child." Two social workers (one white and one black), who initially disagreed about the format of a parenting class, chronicle their efforts to collaborate and create a class format that recognizes the psychosocial and, more specifically, the cultural influences inherent in facilitating these classes. The juxtaposition of the clinical concepts of projection and projective identification

are evaluated against the backdrop of the **social concepts of empowerment and diversity**.

Ondersma, S. J., Malcoe, L. H., & Simpson, S. M. (2001). Child Protective Services' response to prenatal drug exposure: Results from a nationwide survey. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 25*(5), 657-668.

This survey was conducted to: (1) document child protective services (CPS) agencies' actual practices regarding prenatal drug exposure; (2) examine urban and rural differences in CPS responses; (3) explore whether CPS practices varied as a function of county median income, birth rate, population size, or percent minority births; and (4) assess respondent satisfaction with their county's current responses. Method: Data were collected via a nationwide telephone survey of child welfare supervisors from two urban and two rural counties in every state (N = 200). Results: Ninety percent of counties (100% of urban and 80% of rural) reported receiving referrals of infants with prenatal drug exposure. Among those receiving referrals, extreme variations in practice were found; all possible response options (from very inactive to very aggressive) were equally represented on key questions (e.g., filing court petitions, taking custody). Rural counties tended to have stronger responses than urban counties ($t[175] = -2.26, p = .024$). County response did not vary with county-level median family income, percent minority births, or birth rate. Despite wide variations in practice, the majority of respondents (69%) felt their county's response was appropriate. Of respondents who did indicate that their county's response was inappropriate, most (85%) felt that the county needed to do more to protect children. Conclusions: There is currently tremendous variation across US counties in CPS responses to, and beliefs regarding, the issue of prenatal drug exposure. Some of this variation is due to differences between urban and rural counties, **with little variation explained by differences in median income or percent minority births** at the county level. There is a need for research-based guidance and consensus building in CPS practice in this area.

Park, M. S. (2001). The factors of child physical abuse in Korean immigrant families. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 25*(7), 945-958.

This study explores Korean immigrant mothers' attitudes toward child physical abuse based on an ecological perspective. Method: One hundred and forty-four Korean immigrant mothers who came to the US after age 16 and have at least one child under 18 years old participated in this study. Data were collected using instruments translated in Korean that measure mothers' attitudes toward child physical abuse in four areas: degree of agreement with physical abuse, conflict tactics, belief in the use of physical punishment, and perceptions regarding physical abuse. Results: This study found that the following variables affect Korean immigrant mothers' attitudes toward child physical abuse at ecological levels of the environment: amount of time spent with children, experience of corporal punishment as a child, children's gender and age, family acculturation conflicts, mothers' age, and length of time in US at the micro level; involvement in their children's school and involvement in social organizations at the meso

level; level of education and reported stress of immigrant life at the exo level; value of children in Korean culture, **familiarity with Child Protective Services (CPS)**, perceived discrimination, and value of corporal punishment at the macro level. Conclusions: This study suggests the importance of cultural sensitivity in social work practice when working with Korean immigrants. It also implies that intervention and prevention efforts of child abuse should be targeted at more than one level of the environment.

Park, R. P. (2003). Child abuse report decision-making: The role of ethnicity and other factors in a psychologist's decision to report physical abuse. *Dissertation abstracts International: Section B: The sciences and Engineering*, 64(5-B), 2397.

Although previous studies have addressed factors involved in the decision-making process to report child abuse, there is a noticeable lack of data regarding the role that a psychologist's own personal and professional characteristics play in this decision. The goal of this study was to explore the relationship such characteristics, in particular psychologists' ethnicity, have with their decisions to report physical child abuse. Surveys containing a short questionnaire and a hypothetical vignette were mailed to 800 psychologists, 200 in each of four ethnic groups: African American, Asian American, Latino, and Caucasian. A total of 376 respondents completed the study, for a 47.5% response rate. After the surveys were returned, a fifth "Multiracial" ethnic group was created to include psychologists who identified themselves as biracial or multiracial. Respondents were asked to decide whether they would make a report to Children's Protective Services (CPS), and what their level of certainty was that abuse was occurring. In addition, respondents were asked to rate their attitudes toward corporal punishment, as well as their attitude towards CPS. Results indicated that there were **no significant mean differences in psychologists' decisions to report based on the five ethnic group categories**. However, when comparing Caucasian psychologists and all other ethnic minority group psychologists combined, Caucasian psychologists were slightly but significantly more likely to report. There were no significant differences in reporting rates based on attitudes toward corporal punishment, attitudes toward CPS, amount of professional experience, amount of child abuse training, or whether the psychologist was male or female. A factor that was significantly related to the decision to report was the level of certainty that abuse was occurring. Further analyses comparing ethnic groups and attitudes towards corporal punishment and towards CPS revealed no significant mean differences in attitudes toward CPS, but there were significant mean differences in attitudes towards corporal punishment. Results indicated that African American respondents had significantly more favorable beliefs about corporal punishment than did the Caucasian and "Multiracial" respondents. Results of the study and the implications to child abuse reporting and to the CPS system are discussed.

Pittman, B. L. (2005). Offender and community reintegration: An exploratory and descriptive study of cultural competency within treatment and correctional reentry

programs. *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences*, 66(3-A), 1177.

Using qualitative and quantitative measures, this study examines the value of infusing the concept of cultural competency within community treatment and correctional reentry programs that serve African-American ex-offenders residing in Portland, Oregon, and then identifies indicators and measures of cultural competency within those programs. This researcher purports that if demographic, environmental, and cultural information about ex-offenders is taken into account by community treatment and correctional reentry programs, ex-offenders would experience more success in their reintegration. A literature review reveals that declining resources devoted to post-prison release supervision leave ex-offenders with little to aid their reentry process. **No group is more associated with America's criminal justice system than the African-American male.** It is estimated that one in three African-American males between the ages of 20 and 29 is in prison or jail or on probation or parole. Many return to high-crime neighborhoods often in concentrated areas of poverty. For the reentry transition of these ex-offenders to be successful, their ongoing influx into the neighborhoods must be met by a collaborative array of services from a variety of correctional and social service organizations. Researchers have examined the role of cultural competency within other disciplines (e.g., juvenile justice, health services, mental health, child welfare, education), but this researcher was unable to locate any studies that examined the concept of cultural competency within correctional or community treatment re-entry programs specifically related to African-American ex-offenders. This document includes an overview of the U.S. incarceration and recidivism rate data, and reviews the literature on culture, cultural competency and theories addressing the causation of crime. Quantitatively, cultural competency levels are examined by mean scores on the following subscales in the Cultural Competency Self-Assessment Questionnaire: knowledge of communities; personal involvement; resources and linkages; staffing; service delivery and practices; organizational policies and procedures; and reaching out to communities. Using chi-square, cross-tabulations, and cluster analysis statistical measures, characteristics associated with identifying cultural competency levels are also analyzed. This study will contribute to correctional administrative practices by emphasizing the need to develop and increase cultural competency strategic plans and policies within correctional organizations and community treatment agencies.

Racial disproportionality in child welfare system in King County, Washington. (2004). Clegg & Associates, Inc.

Discusses factors that contribute to disproportionality at different points in the child protective services process and proposes action steps to address them.

<http://www.chs-wa.org/KingCountyReportonRacialDisproportionality.pdf>

Report to the legislature on the study of outcomes for African American children in Minnesota's child protection system. (2002). *Minnesota Department of Human Services*.

This report complies with the legislative mandate in the 2001 Minnesota Session Laws, which instructed the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services in consultation with local social services agencies, councils of color, representatives of communities of color and others to study why African American children in Minnesota are disproportionately represented in out-of-home placements. In addition the mandate instructed the commissioner to study the decision-making points in the child welfare system that lead to different outcomes for children. The Legislature also requested that the department produce a report on its findings along with corresponding recommendations. In response to this mandate, the department invited and then convened a committee that consisted of African American community members, leaders, representatives of Anoka, Hennepin, Olmsted and Ramsey counties, and others. The committee used the experience of child welfare experts and academicians, along with the department's child welfare data system, and national research literature to gather child welfare and child demographical information to develop an understanding of the over representation of African American children in Minnesota's child welfare system. While there was concurrence about the definition and existence of disproportionality of African American children in Minnesota's out-of-home placement system, there were multiple and varying opinions about the causes of the racial disproportionality. Research and anecdotal experiences point to several causes which include racism; practices of child welfare professionals; reporting patterns of mandated reporters and others; and socio-economic factors of the African American families in the system. This report provides a review of the data, an abbreviated look at child welfare decision points, local and national research about racial disparities of African American children and their families in the out-of-home placement system and finally the full recommendations of the committee.

Roberts, D. E. (2003). Child welfare and civil rights. *University of Illinois Law Review*. While child welfare receives considerable media and scholarly attention, it is seldom treated as a civil rights issue. The child welfare system, however, is plagued by an alarming racial disparity, with black children especially representing a disproportionate share of the foster care population. In her lecture, Dorothy Roberts ties the child welfare system's racial disparity to broader economic and racial inequities and argues that disparate state supervision and dissolution of black families inflict a racial harm. She concludes that viewing the disparity as a group-based civil rights violation calls for transforming the State's focus from punishing impoverished parents to providing increased, noncoercive support for vulnerable families.
http://home.law.uiuc.edu/lrev/publications/2000s/2003/2003_1/Roberts.pdf

Salend, S. J., & Garrick, D.L. (2002). A comprehensive approach to identity and Addressing issues of disproportionate representation. *Remedial & Special Education*, 23(5), 289.

Reasons for the disproportionate representation of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in special education are multifaceted and

shaped by the cultural experiences of students and professionals. With this perspective in mind, this article presents a comprehensive approach to identifying and addressing issues of disproportionate representation. Specifically, a list of questions that can be used to examine the extent to which issues and factors of disproportionality exist in schools is presented as well as strategies to address the needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Siegel, L. (1994). Cultural differences and their impact on practice in child welfare. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 3*(3), 87-96.

This article examines selected aspects of family structure, child-rearing practices and help-seeking behavior in the black culture. The popular view of black family life as disorganized by slavery overlooks the historical facts. While the black community may suffer from many environmental problems, two inherent areas of health which are often misinterpreted by the white community emerge. They are the tendency to adopt children informally and the ability to incorporate non-kin into the family household. Black families participate in extended family networks which pool resources and provide economic and emotional security. These interdependent relationships form a system of mutual aid in such areas as finances, housing and child reading. In disciplining children, black parents may use physical measures but this is done with love and care. While a black father's involvement with his children generally is hindered by economic restrictions, a black mother is generally recognized for her love and devotion. Sibling relationships within the black family are very important. Patterns of help-seeking within the black culture are generally focused on utilizing the extended family network and church organizations. The underutilization of psychological help and family therapy in the black community is also related to their general mistrust of the therapist, especially the white therapist.

Texas Migrant Council (1979). A manual for understanding child abuse and neglect among Mexican migrants, *Becker and Associates*, San Antonio, TX.

Prepared as a tool for those who work with Mexican American migrants, this manual is based upon documents and verbal narrations provided by persons involved in the Texas Migrant Council's Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Project (caseworkers and employers of migrants in Texas and in northern "user" states, Mexican American migrants, child neglectors, and child abusers). Included are an index, 12 figures, 7 sections, a summary by professional consultants, reference material, recommended readings, and 4 detailed appendices. The first section briefly describes the project and the changes in its emphasis over the three-year period. The second section deals with demographic and cultural characteristics of Mexican Americans in the project (10 counties in south Texas). Following a description of Maslow's need hierarchy as a framework, each remaining section gives information about child abuse-neglect among the migrants in relation to five categories of need: (1) physiological; (2) safety; (3) social; (4) personal esteem; and (5) self-actualization. Major components in each category address situational and cultural aspects, the relevance of these aspects among the migrants, and some implications for assessment and assistance.

The race + child welfare project. Fact sheet 1 – Basic facts on disproportionate representation of African Americans in the foster care system. (2004). *Center for the Study of Social Policy*.

The United States child welfare system is embroiled in an epidemic involving race and bad child and family outcomes. African-American children and families are significantly more likely to be torn apart by the local child welfare agency than any other racial group in the country – despite the fact that multiple national research studies prove that African-American families are *not* more likely to abuse or neglect their children. This situation has resulted in severe levels of overrepresentation of African-American children in the country's child welfare system.

The race + child welfare project. Fact sheet 2, state-by-state statistical profile of racial overrepresentation in foster care. (2004). *Center for the Study of Social Policy*.

Currently, there is no widely used method for calculating racial overrepresentation or racial disparity in the foster care system. This fact sheet offers one approach to quantifying the extent of this problem. The project calculated a "racial disproportionality ratio" by dividing the proportion of Black (or non-Hispanic White) children in foster care by the proportion of Black (or non-Hispanic White) children in the state population under the age of 18. They then classified the 50 states into the following four groups based on their racial disproportionality rates for African Americans: Comparable Representation (states with rates under 1.50); Moderate Disproportion (states with rates between 1.50-2.49); High Disproportion (states with rates between 2.50-3.49); and Extreme Disproportion (states with rates of 3.50 and over). "Racial disparity" occurs when the rate of disproportionality of one racial group (e.g., African Americans) exceeds that of a comparison group (e.g., White Americans). A table indicates the statistical overrepresentation of African-American children and black-white disparity among children in foster care in the 50 States for the year 2000.

<http://www.cssp.org/uploadFiles/statORFactSheet2.pdf>

The role of the caseworker in identifying, developing and supporting strengths in African American families involved in Child Protective Services: A practice guide. *Minnesota Department of Human Services*. Retrieved on March 26, 2008 at <http://www.friendsnrc.org/download/06confpres/disorportionality.pdf>.

This practice guide was developed as a tool for social workers to help them address the systemic issue of the overrepresentation and racial disparity of African American children and their families involved in child protective services. It is anticipated that this guide will serve as a resource and reference manual for caseworkers (the person working in the practice of social work) as they engage African American families in effective service delivery.

Too many children of color in foster care? (2004). *Policy & Practice of Public Human Services*, 62(1), 7.

There have been countless debates surrounding the overrepresentation of children of color in the foster care system. In response to the widespread concern to the problem, "Mitigating the Effects of Racial Disproportionality," a paper published by Casey Family Programs, looks at practices that may alleviate this Disproportionality. The practices in the paper include, family group conferencing, placement with relatives, diligent recruitment and maintaining family connections. Strategies for recruiting foster and adoptive families include identifying the right communities to target, using child-specific recruitment efforts and team decision-making.

Undercounted, underserved, immigrant refugee families in the child welfare system. *The Annie E. Casey Foundation*. Retrieved on March 26, 2008 at <http://www.aecf.org/upload/PublicationFiles/IR3622.pdf>.

This report focuses on the needs of immigrant and refugee children in the child welfare system. It is a result of extensive research, including a literature review; interviews with child welfare workers, immigration attorneys, adoptive parents, foster youth, advocates, staff of community-based agencies, researchers, and policymakers; and the recommendations from a consultative session with national experts and child welfare practitioners.

United States Children's Bureau, Chibnall, Dutch, Jones-Harden, Brown, Gourdine (2-3). Children of color in the child welfare system. *Perspectives from the Child Welfare Community*, Retrieved on 3/10/06 at <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/pub/otherpubs/children/litreview.cfm>.

One of the most challenging and controversial issues facing the child welfare system is the **disproportionate representation of ethnic minority children and families, particularly African-American children**. Specifically, the percentage of African-American children who enter the system and remain in out-of-home care is greater than their proportion of the country's population (Anderson, 1997). Although African-Americans account for 15% percent of all children in the United States, they account for 25% of substantiated maltreatment victims. Conversely, Caucasian children (79% of the child population versus 51% of all substantiated victims) and Asian and Pacific Islander children (4% of the population versus 1% of substantiated victims) are underrepresented among victims of child maltreatment. Hispanic children account for an equal share of the population and substantiated victims (NCANDS, 2002). Racial disparities are even more pronounced in out-of-home care. African-American children comprise 45% of the total number of children in foster care (U.S. DHHS, 1999).

Walker, S. (2002). Culturally competent protection of children's mental health. *Child Abuse Review*, 11(6), 380-393.

The protection of the mental health of black and other ethnic minority children and young people has not received adequate attention in the literature. This paper considers, describes and discusses the **concept of culturally competent practice**. Ways in which practitioners can better understand the needs of children in a multicultural, diverse society and intervene in more effective ways are assessed.

Finally, the components of a culturally competent practice to support families in the protection of children's mental health are summarized, together with the implications for practice.