NATIONAL DATA ARCHIVE ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT
NDACAN

THE NDACAN UPDATA
Summer 2025 (Vol. 70)
The NDACAN Updata is your source for important Archive announcements.

INFORMATION ABOUT FORTHCOMING AFCARS DATASETS

AFCARS Under the 2020 Rule
In 2016, the Children's Bureau (CB) proposed updates to AFCARS 1993, which were authorized in 2020 as "AFCARS 2020." These new regulations required states to collect more detailed child welfare data starting in FY 2023, offering greater detail on demographics, placements, and removals. Under AFCARS 2020, "out-of-home care" measures replaced the previous "foster care" and adoption file elements. States had to update their database systems at different rates, often maintaining old and new systems simultaneously, which led to some data quality issues during the transition.

Below is a summary of the major changes to the information that title IV-E agencies must report under AFCARS 2020:
- The reporting population for the out-of-home care data file was expanded to include those in out-of-home care who are over age seventeen, regardless of the funding source.
- Reporting requirements changed from only reporting the information about a child's most recent removals, permanency plans, and placements to reporting all the child's removals, permanency plans, and living arrangements.
- The file also allows for multiple dates and information on specific elements, instead of just the most recent, such as caseworker visit dates and locations.
- The adoption data file was removed. Many of the data elements that were previously reported as part of the adoption data file are now part of the out-of-home care data file.
- The Adoption and Guardianship Assistance Data File is new. Title IV-E agencies report on children who were in a finalized adoption or legal guardianship under a title IV-E adoption or guardianship assistance agreement.

In Technical Bulletin #20, the Children's Bureau provides additional explanatory text and examples to demonstrate the differences between AFCARS 1993 and AFCARS 2020: https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/afcars-tb-20.pdf

Translating AFCARS 2020 to AFCARS 1993
Since the transition from AFCARS 1993 to AFCARS 2020 was not immediate (and since states have different transition timelines as they align their data collection and reporting with AFCARS 2020 requirements), the current release of FY 2023 AFCARS datasets are still formatted in accordance with AFCARS 1993. This is necessary in order to provide consistent data to policy-makers and the public, and also to give CB the opportunity to assess AFCARS 2020 data collection and reporting processes prior to releasing new data files.

However, this approach requires that data which are already being collected by some states in compliance with AFCARS 2020 are translated back to match AFCARS 1993 variables and definitions. If possible, all variables in currently released AFCARS files are therefore formatted to match AFCARS 1993. In some instances, new variables may not be mappable to old ones; new categories may not be mappable to old ones; or old data elements may no longer be available.

See AFCARS Technical Bulletin #20, Appendix A, for a side-by-side comparison of how each data element from the new data relates to a data element of the old data: https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/afcars-tb-20.pdf.
See also: https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/afcars_data_elements_comparison.pdf

The AFCARS AB File Format
The new AFCARS data are released by the Children's Bureau as "AB" files, rather than Annual files. The Annual File was constructed by utilizing the "A" and "B" period of the respective FY, plus the "A" period of the following FY. Including this subsequent "A" period allowed the capture of reports that may have happened, or had not been resolved, by the end of the FY and may not have captured or transmitted at the time the state submitted data to the Children's Bureau. The annual file was constructed with these three periods and then cleaned and processed before submission to NDACAN.

The AB file, however, is constructed with only the "A" and "B" period of the nominal FY. In all other ways it is identical and undergoes the same cleaning and processing steps that the annual file underwent. This means, however, that aggregate counts derived from an AB file may yield artificially lower counts compared to aggregate counts derived from an annual file of the same year (if one exists) or compared to analogous counts from a previous years' annual files. It's possible to attempt to replicate the Annual file format by combining fiscal year datasets and anchoring the analysis by removal date rather than fiscal year, however this method is not exact and is only possible when a more recent FY dataset exists (e.g., it is not possible for FY23 prior to the release of FY24).

2025 SUMMER TRAINING SERIES

Join us for the 2025 Summer Training Series (STS) on-line! The theme of the 2025 series is "Life Cycle of an NDACAN Research Project". Presentations will take place on Wednesdays from 12PM - 1PM (Eastern Time) and will guide participants through a research project using NDACAN administrative data (NYTD and AFCARS datasets), from idea generation and basic data cleaning through the presentation of results. The STS helps participants advance research projects using our data and increases the impact of such work. The presentations are free but advanced registration is required through the link provided below.

<div align="center">

2025 Summer Training Series Schedule:
Wednesdays from 12PM - 1PM (Eastern Time)

</div>

- July 2 — Developing a Research Question and Exploring the Data
    - Presenter: Alexander F. Roehrkasse, Ph.D., Butler University
- July 9 — Data Management
    - Presenter: Alexander F. Roehrkasse, Ph.D., Butler University
- July 16 — Linking Data
    - Presenter: Alexander F. Roehrkasse, Ph.D., Butler University

- July 23 — Exploratory Analysis
  - Presenter: Alexander F. Roehrkasse, Ph.D., Butler University
- July 30 — Visualization and Finalizing the Analysis
  - Presenter: Noah Won, M.S., NDACAN Data Analyst

2025 Summer Training Series Registration Link:
https://cornell.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ShrEdYDEQq-5u6XVocrPaQ

OFFICE HOURS

LeaRn With NDACAN
Special Office Hours Series 2024-2025

NDACAN concluded its 2024-2025 Office Hours series in May. Each session included a live "LeaRn With NDACAN" 30-minute course on the R programming software, followed by 30-minutes of open support time and breakout groups. We thank all of our participants and presenters for a successful series! Those who were unable to join us can now access the LeaRn course slides, R code, sample dataset, homework exercises, and videos on the NDACAN website at the following link: https://www.ndacan.acf.hhs.gov/events/events.cfm#ndacan-office-hours.

CALL FOR DATA USERS TO SEND CITATIONS

NDACAN maintains a reference list of scholarly work produced from datasets in its holdings. You can access the Child Abuse and Neglect Digital Library (canDL) directly or from our canDL Bibliography information page. Please visit the canDL to check if your publications that used NDACAN datasets are listed, and contact us if you have references to add (NDACANsupport@cornell.edu). When submitting citations, please be sure to include the DOI link. Please tag us on 'X' (Twitter) with @NDACAN_CU and include a clickable DOI link to the article with the hashtag of the dataset abbreviation and/or number which was used for the study (e.g. #NCANDS, #NYTD, #DS223, etc.).

Featured Publications:

- **National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) Child File, Adoption and Foster Care Reporting System (AFCARS)**
  Eiermann, M., & Sernaker, S. (2025). The impact of data suppression on re-identification risk and data access in the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System. *Child Maltreatment*, *0*(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/10775595251337073
- **Adoption and Foster Care Reporting System (AFCARS)**
  Adams, G. B., Turpin, R., Tiller, L., Gibbs, D., & Meyers, D. (2025). Longitudinal analysis of education training vouchers utilization and post-secondary education enrollment among youth experiencing foster care, 2019–2023. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2025.2487472
- **Longitudinal Studies on Child Abuse and Neglect (LONGSCAN) ages 0-18**
  Morelli N, Hong K, Nguyen T, et al. (2025). The effects of maternal childhood victimization on depression, harsh parenting, and child externalizing problems over 10 years. *Development and Psychopathology*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579425000392

FORTHCOMING DATASETS

- Dataset #305 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), Foster Care 6-month Combined 2020-2023
- Dataset #304 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), Foster Care AB File 2024
- Dataset #303 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), Foster Care AB File 2023
- Dataset #302 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), Foster Care AB File 2022
- Dataset #301 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), Foster Care AB File 2021
- Dataset #300 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), Foster Care AB File 2020
- Dataset #299 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), Foster Care AB File 2019
- Dataset #298 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), Foster Care AB File 2018AFCARS
- Dataset #291 National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being III (NSCAW III) Restricted Release - Waves 1 & 2
- Dataset #219 LONGSCAN Young Adult/NIDA Data Welfare Workforce Study
- Dataset #TBD Integrated Foster Care Time Series
- Dataset #TBD Children's Bureau Statistical Series (CBSS)
- Dataset #TBD National Center for Social Statistics (NCSS)

STAY CONNECTED TO #NDACAN

For the latest updates on NDACAN activities, make sure to follow us on X (Twitter) @NDACAN_CU. NDACAN curates its X (Twitter) content to highlight the availability and research potential of NDACAN data holdings, trainings, and user support services for child welfare researchers. You are encouraged to follow our feed and tweet your publications or presentations at @NDACAN_CU to share the various ways that NDACAN is advancing the field of child welfare research.

CALL FOR DATASETS

Research has demonstrated an increased citation rate for publications whose investigators share data. Depositing your data with NDACAN can facilitate long-term preservation and provide researchers access to your data for secondary analysis. The Archive is seeking quantitative datasets to add to our collection. Please contact us (NDACANsupport@cornell.edu) if you have data or know of data that would benefit researchers, or check out the Contribute Data page of our website.

Are you a member of our Child Maltreatment Research List Serve (CMRL)?

The Archive moderates an e-mail list for discussions of research issues relevant to child abuse and neglect. To subscribe or to alter your subscription, visit our CMRL page.

NDACAN Updata **Newsletter Subscription Preferences**

NDACAN sends *The NDACAN Updata* e-newsletter to the CMRL membership, to our general mailings list, and to all active users of Archive datasets. If you would like to stop receiving general mailings, but still want updates about datasets that you're using, please email us using this link. If you would like to stop receiving general mailings and no longer use any datasets, please email us using this link.

NDACAN is a joint project of Duke University, Cornell University, University of California, San Francisco. and Mathematica.

The National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect is a service of the Children's Bureau | Administration for Children and Families | U.S. Department of Health and Human Services