

Children at High Risk for Sex Trafficking: A Cross-Agency Longitudinal Data Analysis



Children's Law Center
School of Law

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Project Introduction

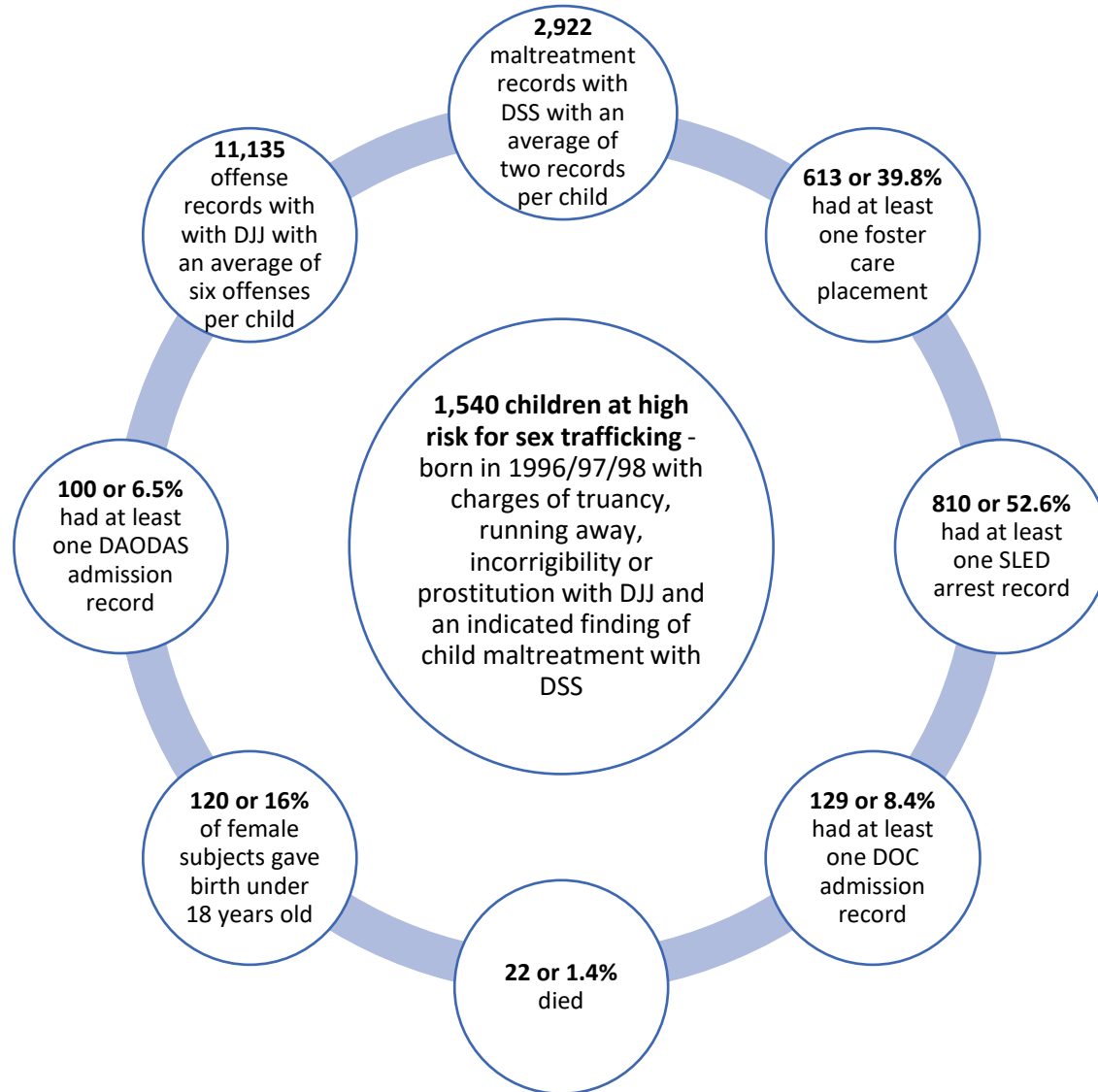
To help reduce racial and ethnic disparities of child victims and children at high risk for sex trafficking in the South Carolina juvenile justice system, the Children's Law Center at the University of South Carolina School of Law is leading a project to provide law enforcement officers with knowledge and tools in identifying and responding to child victims and children at high risk for sex trafficking. This project is funded by the Federal Formula Grant awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice through the South Carolina Department of Public Safety, Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs. Project activities include collecting and analyzing local data, developing screening tools, convening a law enforcement advisory workgroup to recommend practices, developing a training curriculum, and conducting training for law enforcement officers to better identify and respond to child victims and children at high risk for sex trafficking.

As a part of the project, the Children's Law Center submitted data applications to the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (RFA) to create a cross-agency longitudinal cohort on children at high risk for sex trafficking. RFA is a neutral service entity in South Carolina state government that houses data that links persons across multiple service providers. The children at high risk for sex trafficking were defined in data applications as children who were born in the years of 1996, 1997, and 1998 with any charge of truancy, running away, incorrigibility, or prostitution with the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and an indicated finding of abuse or neglect with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS). RFA then linked the data from DJJ and DSS to records from the South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS), State Law Enforcement Division (SLED), Department of Corrections (DOC), and Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).

With approvals from all the agencies requested in the data applications, RFA delivered the approved linked de-identified data to the Children's Law Center in October 2019 and provided updates on available data in July 2020. This data report presents results of a descriptive analysis of the linked data ranging from 1996 through 2019. **It should be noted that findings of the report are based on the records of RFA. Each agency's authorization to release their data does not imply their endorsement of this study or its findings by either RFA or the data owners.**

Overview of Findings

(Available Data from 1996 through 2019)

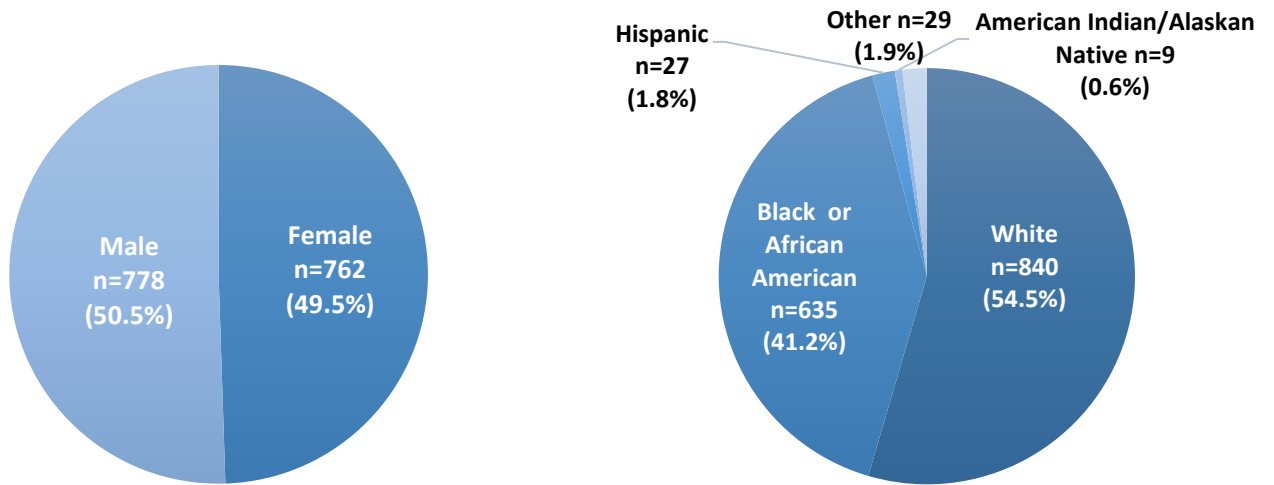


Children at High Risk for Sex Trafficking Cohort

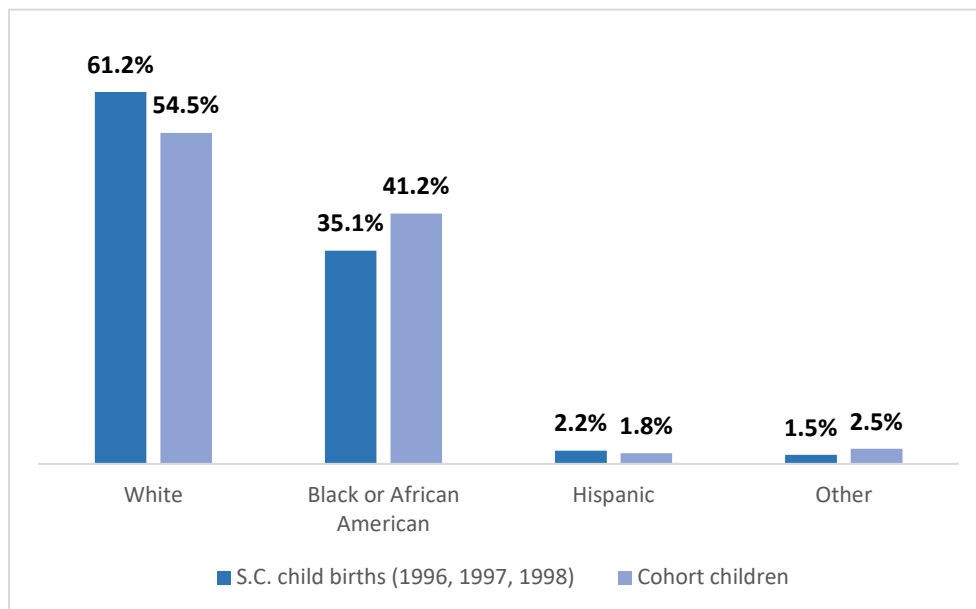
(Available Data from 1996 through 2019)

1,540 children were identified as children at high risk for sex trafficking who were born in the years of 1996, 1997 and 1998 with any charge of truancy, running away, incorrigibility, or prostitution with the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and an indicated finding of abuse or neglect with the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

COHORT CHILDREN BY GENDER AND RACE (N=1,540)



COHORT CHILDREN BY RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES (N=1,540)



Note. S.C. total child births (1996, 1997, 1998) = 157,208

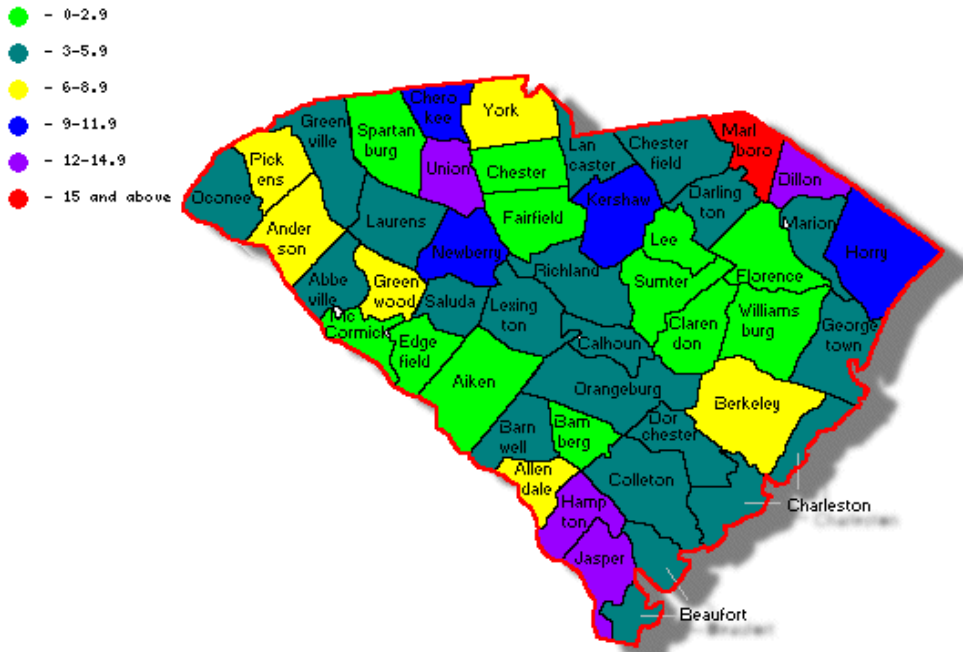
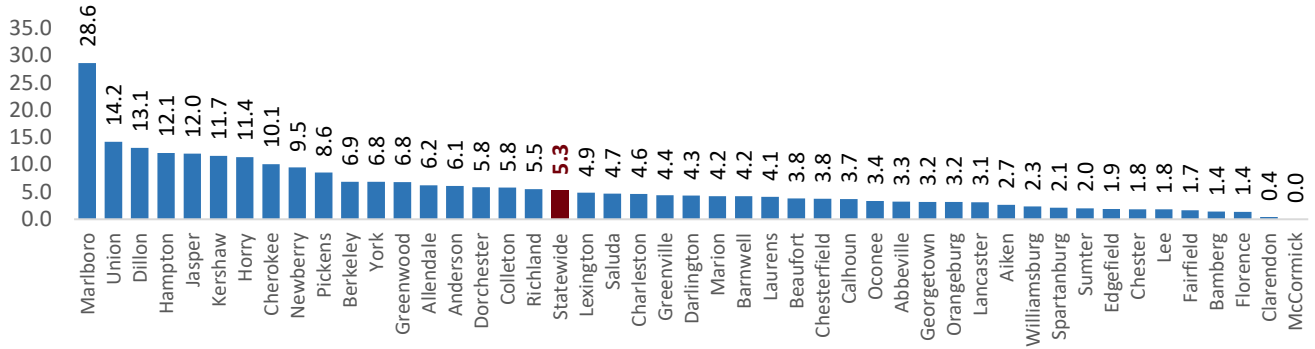
COHORT CHILDREN BY COUNTY (N=1,531)¹

	Number of High-Risk Children 1996-1998	Child Population 1996-1998	Rate Per 10,000 Children 1996-1998		Number of High-Risk Children 1996-1998	Child Population 1996-1998	Rate Per 10,000 Children 1996-1998
Abbeville	6	18,452	3.3	Greenwood	32	46,802	6.8
Aiken	28	105,355	2.7	Hampton	21	17,315	12.1
Allendale	6	9,629	6.2	Horry	133	116,962	11.4
Anderson	70	114,096	6.1	Jasper	18	14,971	12.0
Bamberg	*	14,144	1.4	Kershaw	43	36,895	11.7
Barnwell	8	18,942	4.2	Lancaster	14	44,817	3.1
Beaufort	31	81,257	3.8	Laurens	19	46,212	4.1
Berkeley	87	126,537	6.9	Lee	*	16,460	1.8
Calhoun	*	10,787	3.7	Lexington	75	153,332	4.9
Charleston	102	220,912	4.6	McCormick	0	6,441	0.0
Cherokee	37	36,715	10.1	Marion	13	30,685	4.2
Chester	5	27,116	1.8	Marlboro	69	24,100	28.6
Chesterfield	12	31,856	3.8	Newberry	24	25,272	9.5
Clarendon	*	24,901	0.4	Oconee	15	44,426	3.4
Colleton	18	30,953	5.8	Orangeburg	23	72,528	3.2
Darlington	23	52,971	4.3	Pickens	65	75,545	8.6
Dillon	35	26,693	13.1	Richland	121	218,584	5.5
Dorchester	44	75,227	5.8	Saluda	6	12,733	4.7
Edgefield	*	15,818	1.9	Spartanburg	37	176,066	2.1
Fairfield	*	18,147	1.7	Sumter	18	88,836	2.0
Florence	14	101,727	1.4	Union	31	21,830	14.2
Georgetown	14	44,044	3.2	Williamsburg	8	34,221	2.3
Greenville	111	252,603	4.4	York	79	115,389	6.8
				State Total	1,531	2,899,304	5.3

* < 5

¹ Cohort children with more than one county listed in the dataset were not included in the table (n=9).

Cohort Children by County Rate Per 10,000 Children



Source: diymaps.net (c)

DATA SOURCES

1. Cohort data requested from the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office with data request applications approved by the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) and the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).
2. The use of DSS records in the preparation of this material is acknowledged, but it is not to be construed as implying official approval by DSS of the conclusions presented.
3. The use of DJJ records in the preparation of this material is acknowledged, but it is not to be construed as implying official approval by DJJ of the conclusions presented.
4. S.C. child births data: KIDS COUNT Data Center, <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/6038-total-births-by-race#detailed/2/42/false/9,8,7/3,2,1,4,13/12703,12704> (last visited, June 30, 2021).

Cohort Records with the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice

(Available Data from 1996 through 2019)

OFFENSE RECORDS

11,135 offense records² were identified relating to the 1,540 cohort children, with an average of **six offenses per child**, ranging from one to 39 offenses per child. The average age at offense was **14 years old**.

REFERRAL SOURCES³

	Number	Percent
Law Enforcement Agency	4,061	56.0
School	1,365	18.8
Department of Juvenile Justice	882	12.2
Court Office	498	6.9
Guardian	383	5.3
Department of Social Services	27	0.4
Other Private Citizen	21	0.3
Other	16	0.2
Total Available Records	7,253	100

LIVING ARRANGEMENT AT OFFENSE⁴

- **493** or **44.8%** cohort children lived with their natural mother.
- **178** or **16.2%** cohort children lived with their relatives.
- **82** or **7.4%** cohort children lived with their natural mother/stepfather.
- **78** or **7.1%** cohort children lived with their natural parents.
- **71** or **6.4%** cohort children lived with their natural father.
- **64** or **5.8%** cohort children lived in foster homes.
- **40** or **3.6%** cohort children lived with their adoptive parents.
- **38** or **3.5%** cohort children lived with their natural father/stepmother.
- **10** or **0.9%** cohort children lived in institutions.
- **47** or **4.3%** cohort children had other living arrangements.

² Records with unique combinations of offense date and charge code for each child. Each child could have more than one offense date and more than one charge on the same offense date.

³ Based on available records: n=7,253 out of 11,135 records.

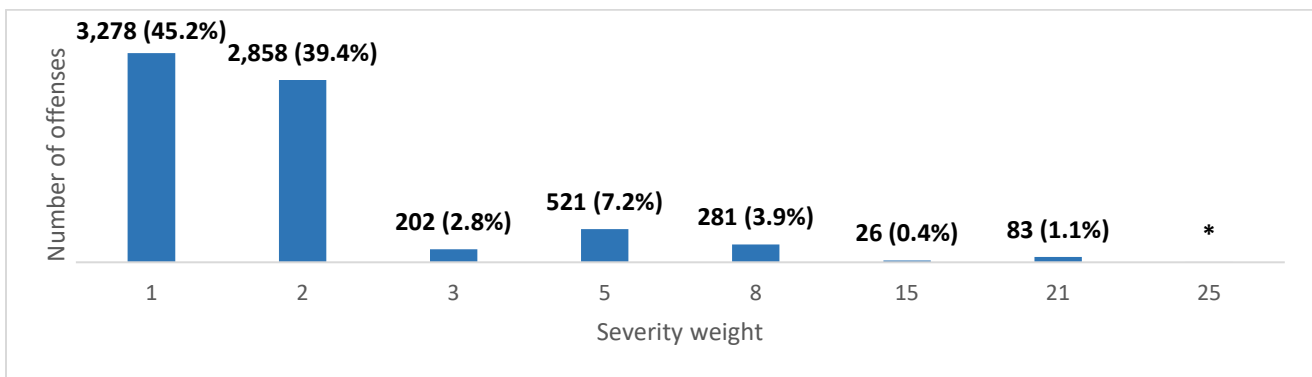
⁴ Based on available unique counts: n=1,101.

PARENTS STATUS AT OFFENSE⁵

- 492 or 45.9% cohort children had parents who lived apart (never married).
- 296 or 27.6% cohort children had parents who were divorced/separated.
- 107 or 10.0% cohort children had parents who lived together (married).
- 49 or 4.6% cohort children had fathers who were deceased.
- 27 or 2.5% cohort children had mothers who were deceased.
- 25 or 2.3% cohort children had parents who lived together (unmarried).
- * cohort children had parents who were both deceased.
- 74 or 6.9% children had parents with other statuses.

* < 5

SEVERITY WEIGHT⁶



* < 5

TOP TEN OFFENSES AND SEVERITY WEIGHT⁷

Rank	Offense Description	Severity Weight	Number of Offenses	Percent
1	Truancy	1	920	12.7
2	Contempt of Court by Child (Status)	1	702	9.7
3	Incorrigibility, Ungovernable, Beyond the Control of Parents	1	626	8.6
4	Running Away	1	607	8.4
5	Assault & Battery 3 rd degree	2	492	6.8
6	Violation of Probation for Cat. VI - Status Offense	1	394	5.4
7	Violation of Probation for Cat. V - Misdemeanor	2	313	4.3
8	Disturbing Schools	2	309	4.3
9	Petit or Simple Larceny - \$2,000 or less	2	239	3.3
10	Public Disorderly Conduct	2	234	3.2

⁵ Based on available unique counts: n=1,072. Data includes children who have records of more than one parent status (e.g., divorced/separated & father deceased).

⁶ Based on available records: n=7,250 out of 11,135 records.

⁷ Based on available records: n=7,253 out of 11,135 records.

DATA SOURCES

1. Cohort data requested from the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office with data request application approved by the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).
2. The use of DJJ records in the preparation of this material is acknowledged, but it is not to be construed as implying official approval by DJJ of the conclusions presented.

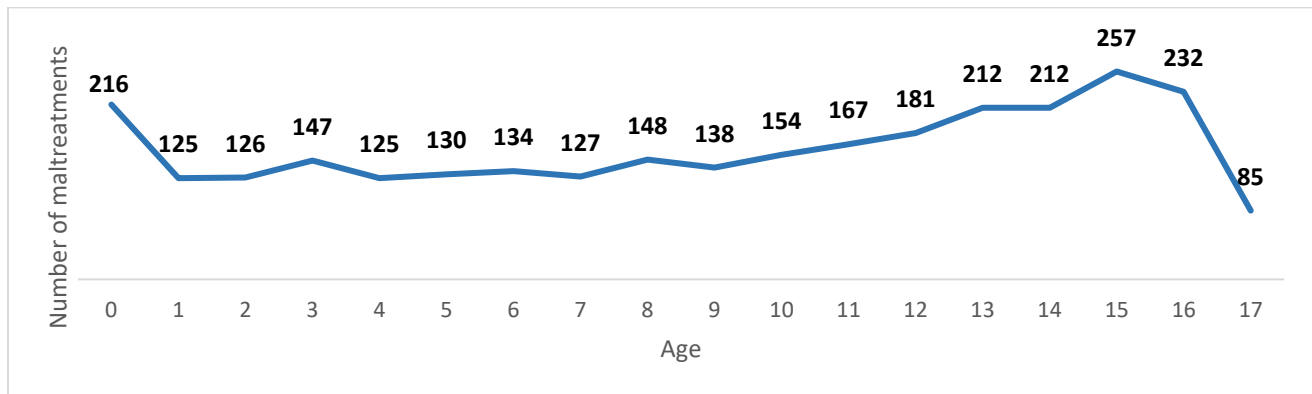
Cohort Records with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS)

(Available Data from 1996 through 2019)

MALTREATMENT RECORDS

2,922 maltreatment records⁸ were identified relating to the 1,540 cohort children, with an average of **two records per child**, ranging from one to 12 records per child. The average age at intake was **nine years old**.

AGE AT INTAKE⁹



MALTREATMENT CATEGORY

	Number of Maltreatments	Percent
Neglect (Formerly Physical Neglect)	1,124	41.5
Threat of Harm, Physical Abuse	436	16.1
Threat of Harm, Neglect	414	15.3
Education Neglect	276	10.2
Physical Abuse	225	8.3
Medical Neglect	84	3.1
Sexual Abuse	71	2.6
Abandonment	22	0.8
Threat of Harm, Medical Neglect	19	0.7
Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor	15	0.6
Threat of Harm, Mental Injury	10	0.4
Threat of Harm, Other	7	0.3
Mental Injury	6	0.2
Threat of Harm, Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor	*	0.1
Total Available Records	2,711	100

* < 5

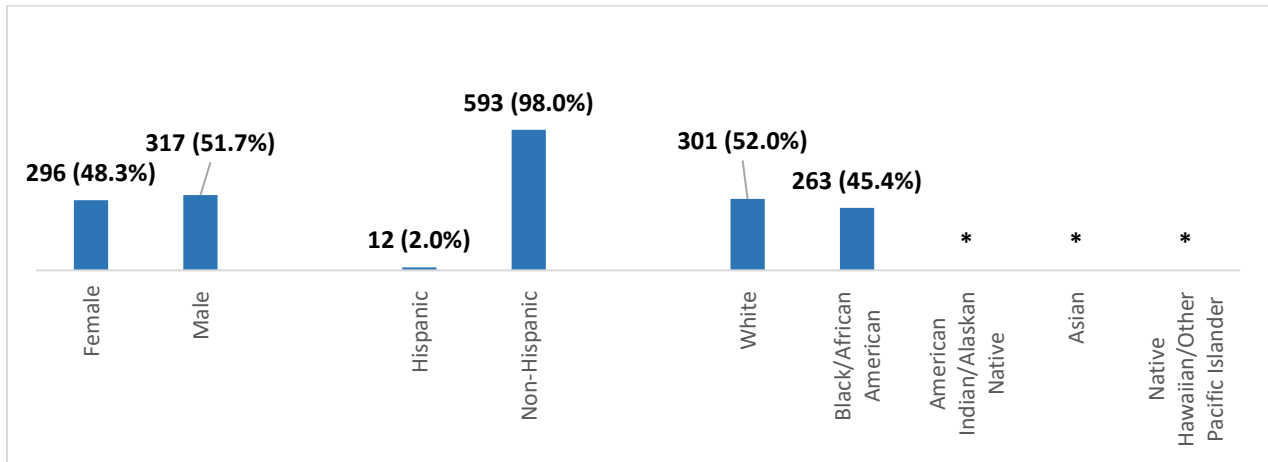
⁸ Based on records with unique combinations of maltreatment determination dates and maltreatment categories. Each child could have more than one maltreatment determination date and more than one maltreatment category on the same determination date.

⁹ Based on available records: n=2,916 out of 2,922 records.

FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT RECORDS

- **613** or **39.8%** of the 1,540 cohort children had at least one foster care placement.
- **2,145** foster care placements¹⁰ were identified relating to the 613 cohort children, with an average of **five placements per child**, ranging from one to 35 placements per child.

COHORT CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE BY GENDER, ETHNICITY AND RACE¹¹



* < 5

FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT TYPES

	Number of Placements	Percent
Therapeutic Foster Home	552	25.7
Foster Home	525	24.5
Group Home (Includes DJJ Homes)	489	22.8
Emergency Shelter	202	9.4
Court Ordered, Unlicensed (Relative)	131	6.1
Residential Treatment Facility	49	2.3
DJJ Facility	49	2.3
Correctional Facility (Non-DJJ)	30	1.4
Adoptive Home	27	1.3
Court Ordered, Parent	18	0.8
Hospital (Long-term)	15	0.7
Pre-Adoptive Home	14	0.7
Court Ordered, Unlicensed (Other)	10	0.5

¹⁰ Based on cases with unique starting dates in foster care for each child. Each child could have more than one record of involvement in foster care.

¹¹ Based on available data for 613 cohort children who had at least one foster care placement. The characteristics contained missing data. Calculation of percentage based on valid total numbers for each characteristic.

	Number of Placements	Percent
Foster Home (Relative)	9	0.4
Adoptive Home (Foster Parent)	7	0.3
School/College (No Board Payments)	6	0.3
Department of Mental Health Psychiatric Hospital	*	0.1
Alcohol/Drug Treatment Facility	*	0.1
Adoptive Home (Relative)	*	0.1
Department of Disabilities and Special Needs	*	0.1
Community Training Home		
Maternity Home	*	0
Temporary Event	*	0
Total Available Records	2,145	100

* < 5

DATA SOURCES

1. Cohort data requested from the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office with data request application approved by the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS).
2. The use of DSS records in the preparation of this material is acknowledged, but it is not to be construed as implying official approval by DSS of the conclusions presented.

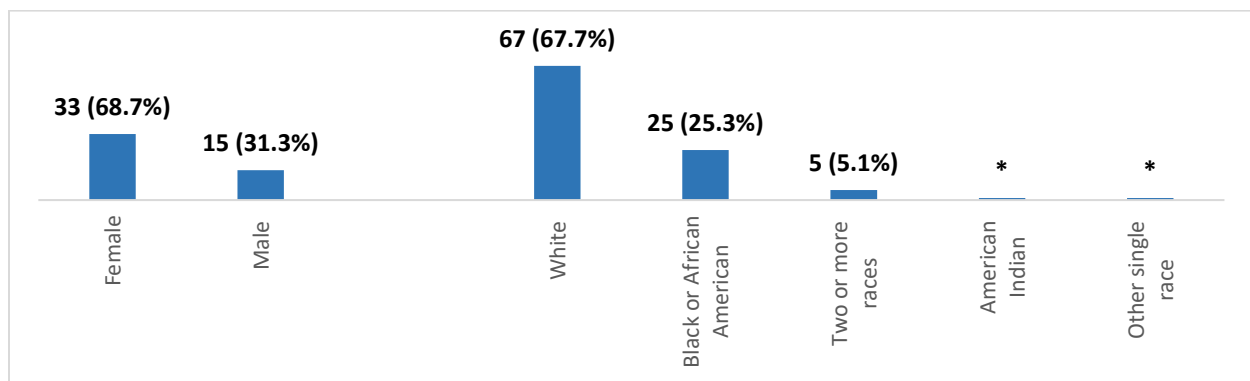
Cohort Records with the South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS)

(Available Data from 1996 through 2019)

DAODAS ADMISSION RECORDS

- **100** or **6.5%** of the 1,540 cohort subjects¹² had at least one DAODAS admission record.
- **137** admission records¹³ were identified relating to the 100 cohort subjects. The average age at admission was 19 years old, ranging from 16 to 22 years old.
- **45** or **32.9%** of the 137 admissions occurred when the cohort subjects were under 18 years old.

COHORT SUBJECTS WITH DAODAS ADMISSION RECORDS BY GENDER AND RACE¹⁴



* < 5

REFERRAL SOURCES

	Number of Admissions	Percent
Other Community Referral	58	42.3
Court/Criminal Justice Referral	52	38.0
Individual	17	12.4
School	*	2.9
Alcohol/ Drug Abuse Care Provider	*	2.2
Other Health Care Provider	*	2.2
Total Available Records	137	100

* < 5

¹² The term “subject” was used because some of the records occurred after cohort children became adults.

¹³ Based on records with unique combinations of admission dates and primary substance problems. Each cohort subject could have more than one admission record with DAODAS.

¹⁴ Based on available data for 100 cohort subjects who had at least one DAODAS admission record. The characteristics contained missing data. Calculation of percentage based on valid total numbers for each characteristic.

EDUCATION LEVEL AT ADMISSION

	Number of Admissions	Percent
Grade 6	5	3.6
Grade 8	10	7.3
Grade 9	26	19.0
Grade 10	28	20.4
Grade 11	37	27.0
Grade 12 or GED	29	21.2
1 st Year of College (Freshman)	*	1.5
Total Available Records	137	100

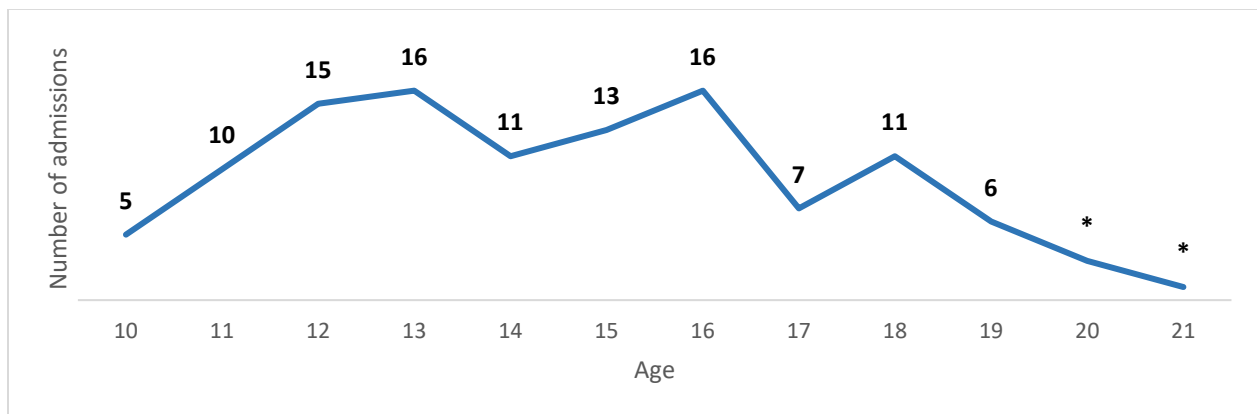
* < 5

PRIMARY SUBSTANCE PROBLEM

	Number of Admissions	Percent
Marijuana/Hashish	71	59.2
Methamphetamine/Speed	16	13.3
Alcohol	8	6.7
Other Opiates and Synthetics	7	5.8
Cocaine/Crack	6	5
Heroin	5	4.2
Benzodiazepine	*	3.3
Other drugs	*	1.7
Other Amphetamines	*	0.8
Total Available Records	120	100

* < 5

AGE OF FIRST USE OF PRIMARY SUBSTANCE (AVERAGE AGE: 15 YEARS OLD)



* < 5

TYPES OF TREATMENT SERVICE / SETTING

	Number of Admissions	Percent
Ambulatory - Non-intensive Outpatient	104	75.9
Ambulatory - Intensive Outpatient	28	20.4
Rehabilitation/Residential - Short-term (30 days or fewer)	*	1.5
Rehabilitation/Residential - Long-term (more than 30 days)	*	1.5
Detoxification, 24-hour Service, Hospital Inpatient	*	0.7
Total Available Records	137	100

* < 5

DATA SOURCES

1. Cohort data requested from the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office with data request applications approved by the South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS).
2. The use of DAODAS records in the preparation of this material is acknowledged, but it is not to be construed as implying official approval by DAODAS of the conclusions presented.

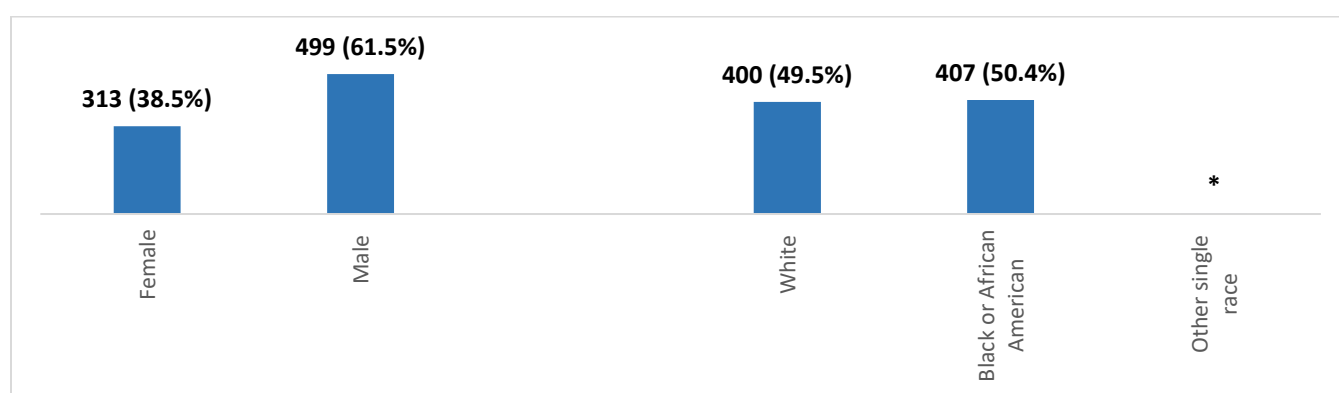
Cohort Records with the South Carolina State Law Enforcement Division (SLED)

(Available Data from 1996 through 2019)

SLED ARREST RECORDS

- **810** or **52.6%** of the 1,540 cohort subjects had at least one SLED arrest record.
- **3,306** arrest records¹⁵ were identified relating to the 810 cohort subjects. The average number of arrest records per subject was four, ranging from one to 28.
- **1,858** or **70.2%** of the offenses were misdemeanors, and **790** or **29.8%** were felonies.¹⁶

COHORT SUBJECTS WITH SLED ARREST RECORDS BY GENDER AND RACE¹⁷



* < 5

TOP TEN OFFENSES¹⁸

Rank	Offense Description	Number of Offenses	Percent
1	Shoplifting <\$2000	216	7.6
2	Possessing 28g or Less Marijuana/10g or Less Hash 1 st	150	5.3
3	Public Disorderly Conduct	126	4.4
4	Assault and Battery 3 rd Degree	124	4.3
5	Failure to Appear after Release for a Misdemeanor	87	3.0
6	Violation of Probation	72	2.5
7	Unlawful Carrying of Weapon	55	1.9
8	Driving under Suspension	54	1.9
9	Burglary 2 nd Degree	53	1.9
10	Breaking into Auto/Tanks Where Fuel Stored	50	1.8

¹⁵ Based on records with unique combinations of arrest dates and offense codes. Each cohort subject could have more than one arrest date and more than one offense code on the same arrest date.

¹⁶ Calculation of percentage based on valid total records: n=2,648 out of 3,306.

¹⁷ Based on available data for 810 cohort subjects who had at least one SLED arrest record. The characteristics contained missing data. Calculation of percentage based on valid total numbers for each characteristic.

¹⁸ Based on valid total records: n=2,858 out of 3,306.

DATA SOURCES

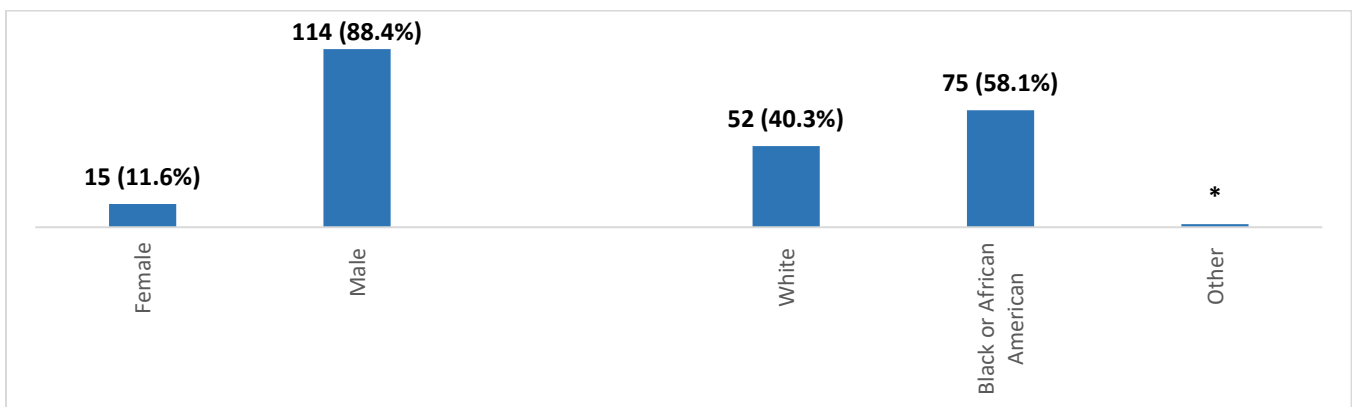
1. Cohort data requested from the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office with data request applications approved by SLED.
2. The use of SLED records in the preparation of this material is acknowledged, but it is not to be construed as implying official approval by SLED of the conclusions presented.

Cohort Records with the South Carolina Department of Corrections (DOC) (Available Data from 1996 through 2019)

DOC ADMISSION RECORDS

- **129** or **8.4%** of the 1,540 cohort subjects had at least one DOC admission record.
- **153** DOC admission records¹⁹ were identified relating to the 129 cohort subjects. The average number of admission records was one, ranging from one to four records per subject. The average age at admission was 19 years old, ranging from 17 to 22 years old.
- **119** or **77.8%** of the records were categorized as non-violent, and **34** or **22.2%** were violent.²⁰

COHORT SUBJECTS WITH DOC ADMISSION RECORDS BY GENDER AND RACE



* < 5

TOP TEN MOST SERIOUS OFFENSES²¹

Rank	Offense Description	Number of Offenses	Percent
1	Burglary-2 nd Degree/Non-Violent	22	14.4
2	Burglary-3 rd Degree	11	7.2
3	Strong Arm Robbery	10	6.5
4	Breaking into Motor Vehicle	9	5.9
5	Assault & Battery 1 st Degree	8	5.2
6	Burglary-2 nd Degree	8	5.2
7	Assault & Battery 2 nd Degree	6	3.9
8	Attempted Murder	5	3.3
9	Burglary-1 st Degree	5	3.3
10	Common Law Robbery	5	3.3

¹⁹ Each cohort subject could have more than one DOC admission record.

²⁰ Calculation of percentage based on valid total records: n= 2,648 out of 3,306.

²¹ Based on available records: n=2,858 out of 3,306 records.

TOTAL FULL SENTENCE IN YEARS

Sentence in Years	Number of Admissions	Percent
Under 1	20	13.1
1	*	2.6
2	6	3.9
3	16	10.5
4	63	41.2
5	9	5.9
6	6	3.9
7	*	2.6
8	6	3.9
10	7	4.6
12	*	0.7
15	*	0.7
17	*	0.7
19	*	0.7
20	5	3.3
25	*	0.7
45	*	0.7
55	*	0.7
Total	153	100

* < 5

DATA SOURCES

1. Cohort data requested from the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office with data request applications approved by DOC.
2. The use of DOC records in the preparation of this material is acknowledged, but it is not to be construed as implying official approval by DOC of the conclusions presented.

**Cohort Birth Records with the South Carolina
Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC)**
(Available Data from 1996 through 2019)

COHORT SUBJECTS GIVING BIRTH

- **319** or **41.9%** of the female cohort subjects gave birth to 494 children. The average age when giving birth was 19 years old, ranging from 13 to 22 years old.
- **120** or **15.7%** of the female cohort subjects gave birth to 140 children (or 43.9% of the total 494 births) when under the age of 18.

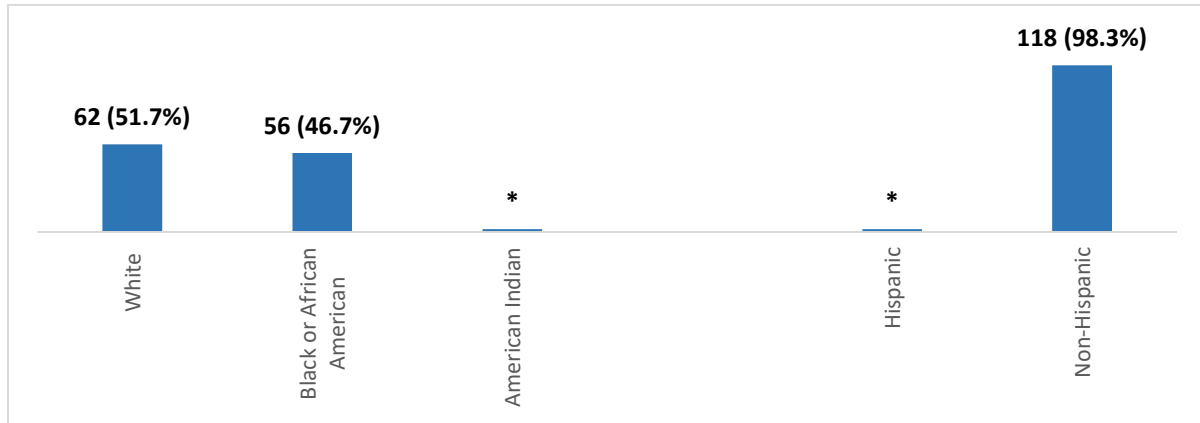
NUMBER OF BIRTHS BY COHORT SUBJECTS

Births	Number of Cohort Subjects	Percent
1	180	56.4
2	108	33.9
3	26	8.2
4	5	1.6
Total	319	100

SUBJECT AGE WHEN GIVING BIRTH

Subject Age When Giving Birth	Number of Births	Percent
13	5	1.0
14	6	1.2
15	31	6.3
16	41	8.3
17	57	11.5
18	92	18.6
19	96	19.4
20	93	18.8
21	58	11.7
22	15	3.0
Total	494	100

COHORT SUBJECTS GIVING BIRTH UNDER 18 YEARS OLD BY RACE AND ETHNICITY



* < 5

NUMBER OF BIRTHS BY COHORT SUBJECTS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD

Births	Number of Cohort Subjects	Percent
1	101	84.2
2	18	15.0
3	*	0.8
Total	120	100

* < 5

DATA SOURCES

1. Cohort data requested from the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office with data request applications approved by SCDHEC.
2. The use of SCDHEC records in the preparation of this material is acknowledged, but it is not to be construed as implying official approval by SCDHEC of the conclusions presented.

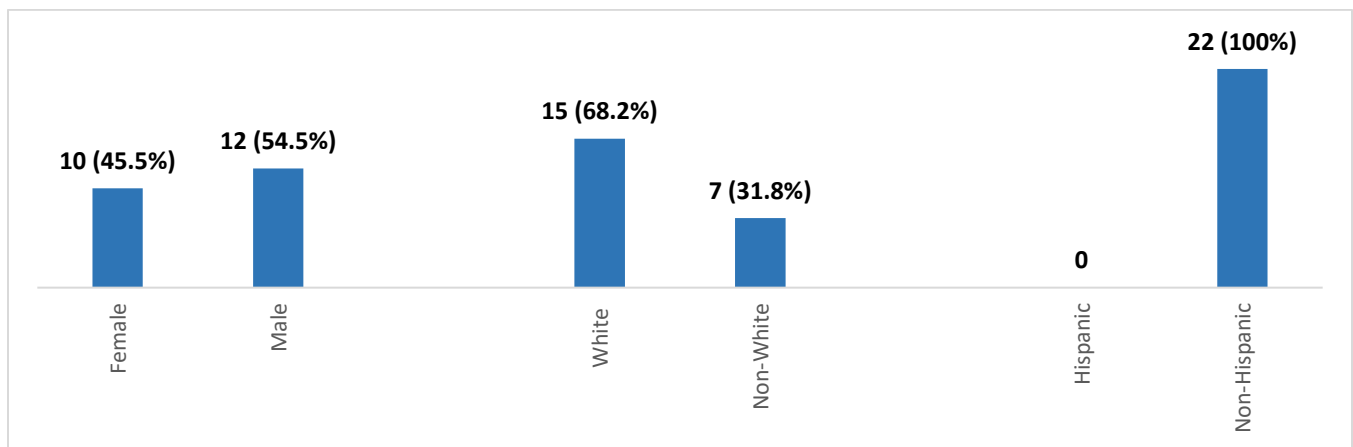
Cohort Death Records with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC)

(Available Data from 1996 through 2019)

DEATHS AMONG COHORT SUBJECTS

22 or **1.4%** of the 1,540 cohort subjects died. The average age of death was 19 years old, ranging from 17 to 21 years old.

DEATHS BY GENDER, RACE AND ETHNICITY



* < 5

DEATHS BY MANNER

	Number of Deaths	Percent
Accident	13	59.1
Homicide	5	22.7
Natural	*	4.5
Pending Investigation	*	4.5
Suicide	*	9.1
Total	22	100

* < 5

DATA SOURCES

1. Cohort data requested from the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office with data request applications approved by SCDHEC.
2. The use of SCDHEC records in the preparation of this material is acknowledged, but it is not to be construed as implying official approval by SCDHEC of the conclusions presented.