CHAPTER 3:
PARTICIPANT OUTCOME ANALYSIS

I. OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANT OUTCOME ANALYSIS

This first year report is a progress report of the assessment of available administrative data for the participant outcome evaluation. The model and the depth of analysis will be enhanced each year as the project team incorporates the Family and Children Services Information System (FACSIS) and local data into the analysis.

The purpose of the Participant Outcome Analysis (POA) is to examine the impact of "ProtectOhio" on the children and families served by the child welfare system. The design requires that measurable outcomes be defined for consumers served by the system. Outcomes for children and families in the demonstration and comparison groups will be compared over a 5-year period.

The team is using two strategies: (1) a secondary analysis of FACSIS, the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), and relevant county-systems data on all families in 14 demonstration and 14 comparison counties and (2) an in-person interview of a sample of families in five demonstration counties and their matched comparison sites.

A. Research Questions

The POA will test whether changes in the basis of payment and in service system responsibilities improve the way counties manage the public child welfare system and, as a result, improve the outcomes for children and families at risk. The following research questions will be answered using secondary data during the 5-year evaluation:

- Does the demonstration result in an increased use of prevention services by families?
- Does the demonstration reduce the rate of recidivism of children and families for incidents of child abuse and neglect?
- Does the demonstration reduce the use of out-of-home care?
- Does the demonstration increase the number of voluntary cases where children remain with their families or extended family?
- Does the demonstration reduce the number of dependency cases entering the child protective system?
- Does the demonstration expedite the permanency planning process for children?

- Does the demonstration result in increased use of permanent custody and alternative permanent placements for children who cannot return safely to the home of origin?

- Does the demonstration reduce the rate of children returning to out-of-home care?

The information presented in this report will identify baseline data to begin to answer these questions. In addition, the team will address the following research questions using data collected from the in-person interviews of families in year five of the evaluation in conjunction with secondary data:

- Does the demonstration result in increased availability of wraparound services based on a set of specific outcome measures?

- Does managed care technology increase the level and quality of services provided to children and families?

- Does the demonstration result in more at-risk families being redirected from the child protective system to service systems that can more appropriately serve the families' needs?

- What are the key factors in implementation that relate to appropriate outcomes for children and families?

- What effect do differences in organizational and service aspects among the demonstration and comparison sites have on client outcomes such as child safety, recidivism, and continued out-of-home placement?

- What differences in access to services exist for families in the demonstration sites versus comparison sites?

- Does the well-being of children and families improve during the demonstration? What are the differences in changes in well-being for demonstration and comparison counties?

B. Five-Year Strategy

The POA assesses how restructuring the system affects children and families. Outcome measures from secondary data include both length and type of intervention with the child welfare system. The strategy centers on the conventional wisdom, consistent with state and Federal law, that the avoidance of foster care placement, the minimization of days in foster care, and the use of least restrictive environments is best for children and their families. Westat is collecting secondary data to assess whether children experience fewer out-of-home days in the demonstration counties and a higher mix of in-home versus out-of-home services, whether there has been an increase in recidivism of placement, and whether there has been an increase in

abuse/neglect for these children and families. The stability of placement is measured by collecting data on the number and type of foster care placements.

The appropriate and effective use of secondary data requires a sensitive understanding of the access, availability, and working definitions of the available information. Staff have conducted several visits during the first year of the contract and have made telephone and written contact with administrative and systems staff to: (1) review FACSIS data, (2) identify alternative available state and local systems, (3) review and understand "working" definitions of system variables, and (4) obtain an understanding of the perceived integrity and reliability of each system and data element as well as access issues, such as the length of time it takes to enter data into the system (data lag).

This review will continue into year two. The Ohio Department of Human Services (ODHS) will provide additional data from FACSIS (including the Child Protection Oversight and Evaluation (CPOE) Quality Assurance Program and Federal Title IV-E eligibility information) for examination. During the second year, the team will develop outcome measures for ProtectOhio and identify new data sources at the state or local level. After finalizing the data model and access to the data systems in this first year, the team will capture administrative data for each demonstration and control county. The initial data capture contained the records of all children served through September 1998. This report examines the records of children who were receiving services from October 1, 1995, through September 30, 1997, to establish a baseline. Subsequent file extracts will be captured annually throughout the study.

C. Survey in 5th Year

To assess child and family outcomes in the areas of well-being, client satisfaction, and access to services, an in-person interview of caregivers (birth parent, guardian, or in some cases, foster parent) was proposed for year five of the study. In year four, the team will develop criteria using the results of the prior years' implementation visits to identify counties with distinguishing managed care models or those that are conducting initiatives with special populations, such as parents with substance abuse, parents with emotional disturbances, or children with deep-end service needs. At least one of the case study sites in the fiscal analysis (see Chapin Hall, Chapter 4) will be included, if possible. Five of the demonstration counties will also be chosen for the family interviews and their five matched comparison counties will be selected. Project staff will interview a sample of 100 families in each county during October and November 2002, during year five.

The family sample will be a controlled probability sample. Thus, it will be possible to generalize survey results to all county families, even though the survey will not be designed to be representative of Ohio counties. The sample in each county will be customized according to the focus of efforts in the particular county. For example, one county might be focusing its demonstration project on substance abuse. All service statuses are eligible for sample selection: in-home services, cases of termination of parental rights (TPR), reunified families, kinship care, and short- and long-term foster care. The sample will be selected from children who are receiving county services or who have left the system during a fixed time interval (such as between October 1997 and December 1999). The analysis of family surveys in paired counties

will allow us to examine the impact of a specialized service model, rather than an overall impact of ProtectOhio.

II. PARTICIPANT OUTCOME ANALYSIS: BASELINE

A. Source of Data for This Report

To provide outcome data for the evaluation, this report relies primarily on the electronic administrative data systems available through ODHS and county systems. The report uses FACSIS data provided from state administrative data and data entered by individual counties. In October, 1998, Westat received FACSIS data regarding child welfare activity through September of that year. The electronic files provided to the project were secondary analysis files created by ODHS. The layout and the limitations of these secondary files are described in Section IIB. Since some counties identified data entry lag, the analysis used the data to reflect activities only through June, 1998.

Our team has several concerns when it comes to the use of administrative data. First, using administrative data to identify special populations for the survey in the fifth year using ODHS definitions requires that regional and local differences in data be understood. This includes variation in procedure, reasons for missing data, and data lags. The team will work with ODHS and county Public Children Services Agencies (PCSAs) staff to clarify concerns with variation.

Procedures, staff resources, and organizational culture influence data entry into administrative databases. In some states, there are delays of up to 6 months, for example, for a foster care discharge to be entered into the database. An understanding of "how long to wait" for up-to-date data from each source system will ensure that the research team is not missing activities that have occurred but have not yet been recorded into the systems.

To begin to identify and understand these data management differences, Westat conducted two telephone interviews with all 28 demonstration and comparison counties from October 1998-January 1999 to gather information and recommendations on the following topics:

- How does each county use and administer FACSIS?
- What other electronic data systems does each county system maintain, and how can they be used?
- How do data flow through a county's automated system in relation to how the children and families (and cases) enter and use its services?
- What data do each county rely on for an accurate and complete picture of services to clients in order to make program policy and fiscal decisions?

The team identified a contact for child welfare administrative data resources in each county and contacted these individuals and asked them to participate in a 30- to 60-minute telephone interview (See Appendix III, Exhibit 1). The objective was to identify administrative data

sources that are used in each county. The team questioned counties that used automated systems other than FACSIS. In some cases, these systems simply supplemented FACSIS, but in other cases, whole systems were used in place of FACSIS software. Many of the questions asked for information on the assignment of identification numbers to clients, on foster care and contracted services billing and payments, and on opinions about what information was accurate and readily available in county and state systems. The team made followup calls as necessary to clarify information.

In addition, the team met with ODHS staff regarding FACSIS, other data sources, and CPOE. The team also participated in meetings with the Consortium data committee.

A.1. Description of FACSIS and Micro-FACSIS

FACSIS software is designed to collect information on children and families receiving services in the State of Ohio. Micro-FACSIS is the county version of the FACSIS system. Data are collected by counties and entered into each county's own Micro-FACSIS system. Then, the information is sent electronically to the state's FACSIS system.

FACSIS version 4.0, currently under development and pilot, will be an integral part of the new SACWIS. These system changes will re-engineer the entire child welfare process in Ohio. Currently, the front-end of the FACSIS application is being tested. This includes the case plan, risk assessment, person, incident, and family modules. The development of FACSIS 4.0 continues at the state level to prepare for the back-end pilot. The back-end contains activities that happen behind the scenes such as Title IV-E payment processing, foster care licensing, Central Registry, Ohio Adoption Photo Listing, Benefits Issuance, and reporting capabilities. Statewide roll-out for FACSIS 4.0 is expected in the summer of 1999.

A SACWIS Request for Proposal (RFP) was released in the summer of 1998 through the Department of Administrative Services. ODHS has received five proposals for planning, development, and implementation of Ohio's SACWIS project. An evaluation committee composed of county and state representatives focused on the integration of the program and technical perspectives is reviewing and rating the proposals. The department expects to have a SACWIS vendor chosen in the summer of 1999.

Most counties in Ohio have their own Micro-FACSIS software with which to record data. Only three counties in this evaluation (Franklin, Hamilton, and Summit) have their own unique software separate from Micro-FACSIS with which to collect data. According to the counties, the information from these individual systems is sent to the state electronically, similarly to how other county data are delivered, and then converted into FACSIS data by the state.

A.2. Results of County Interviews

Many important issues surfaced as a result of the interviews with the 28 demonstration and comparison counties. From these interviews, our team identified many factors that will complicate the use of state FACSIS data for participant outcome analysis, including:

- ID duplication and changes;
- Duplication of cases among counties;
- Purging of data;
- Variations in definitions by county;
- Kinship issues;
- Data quality assurance;
- Screening out cases;
- County-defined values;
- County events;
- Transmittal problems;
- County-specific systems;
- Time lags in entering data;
- Differences in procedures;
- Local opinions of FACSIS; and
- Limited state support of FACSIS.

A brief description of each issue follows.

ID Duplication and Changes. Each individual in a child welfare incident, whether that person is a parent, a child, a relative, or a perpetrator, is given a unique ID number. Each individual should never receive an additional ID number. He or she should keep the same ID, regardless of whether he or she exits and re-enters the system. However, we found from our interviews that in some cases, individual ID numbers are being altered or changed and that some individuals may have multiple IDs. To demonstrate, four counties explained that any person who belonged to more than one family in their system could accumulate multiple ID numbers, one for each family of which he/she is a member. In situations where a man is the father in more than one family or where a young woman was a client in the system as a child and then later re-enters as a parent, more than one ID number may be assigned.

In addition, three counties said that it was possible for certain children in the system to have their ID number changed. For instance, in the case of a disrupted adoption, a child's ID number may need to be changed. When an adoption is interrupted, the child is re-entering the system but no longer can have any ties to his/her birth parents. Therefore, a new ID number must be created for these children because their former number would link them with their birth parents.

Duplication of Cases Among Counties. Another issue of concern is the possible duplication of cases across counties. When registering a new case, several county representatives were uncertain about whether a family that moved to a new county and was identified in a new incident or requested new services would become a new case number. Our investigations showed that counties have the ability to discover if a family has been involved with another agency. However, the counties do not use this capability because it is not considered user friendly. When a child abuse and neglect case is entered into FACSIS, the system searches for a match. The system creates a match list that needs to be downloaded by the operator who entered the case. The counties do not generally use these lists and do not attempt to download them. The lack of information on what cases are in other county systems could lead to the assignment of multiple ID numbers to clients if they have been involved in more than one system. One county complained, "We can't track I and R's [intake and referrals] . . . to other counties." CPOE and most state data analyses are done at the county level. However, when county data are aggregated, the duplication issue must be addressed.

Purging of Data. All 28 of the counties that we interviewed stated that they did not purge any data from their systems. Some claimed that the State did all editing and purging of their data, while their local systems were left unaltered. The State reports that only abuse and neglect reports are purged from its system. The identifying information is removed and the events remain, so that the information can be used for statistical purposes. The timeframes are as follows: Substantiated reports are expunged 10 years from the date of the disposition; indicated reports are expunged 5 years from the date of disposition; and unsubstantiated reports are expunged 3 months from the date of the disposition, unless subsequent reports are received. In the event that subsequent reports are received, reports are linked and maintained in accordance with the longest retention timeframe.

The expunction issue is being debated presently in relation to the design of FACSIS 4.0 and SACWIS. Legally, ODHS cannot hold information on an individual in an information system that can be used for screening without due process or expunction, based on language in the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Expunction is the process of removing all information that might serve to identify any principal of the case from the central registry and has been the practiced choice of ODHS since the formation of the FACSIS system.

Variations in Definitions by County. One important issue that was addressed in our interviews with the counties was the possibility of differences in definitions between county systems and the FACSIS statewide system. Several counties mentioned examples of differences between how the state is defining information in the system compared with their own understanding of the data. One county representative said, "The state does not provide complete definitions, so a lot of counties do things differently." Overall, counties mentioned discrepancies between the way their county and the state were defining items in the FACSIS system.

Another county mentioned that some codes in FACSIS are open to interpretation, which can lead to differences in how items are defined and then perceived by the state. An example was offered of an indicator in FACSIS used to identify multiple removals of a child from his/her home. In some cases, however, a child may have run away from several foster homes, but the situation still is being recorded as if the child was being removed several times from his/her birth parents.

Another situation which was mentioned multiple times during our interviews was the reliability of county data after they have been transmitted to the state. One county stated that "There is a problem with the data extraction [electronic transmittal of data from the county to the state] being done by the state." It appears that the extraction program used by the state does not always absorb all the information from the counties' databases. Another county discovered that certain information would not appear in the state FACSIS system, even though it was being entered by their county and appeared in their local Micro-FACSIS system.

Also, four counties complained that the state had instructed counties to change certain codes, but then the state did not record the changes itself. To demonstrate, the state changed the case plan event number to 220; therefore, counties began to record their case plans under the 220 event number instead of the former code. Later, the counties began to receive error reports informing them that they were missing several case plan events under the old code. The state has been made aware of the situation and is making efforts to remedy it.

Kinship Issues. The team conducted an additional interview to collect more information on how counties handle cases involving relatives and relative placements. It became apparent from the interviews that many counties followed their own unique system for identifying and recording similar information. Most counties only record a relative placement in FACSIS if the county has custody; however, several counties revealed that they rarely take custody and always make attempts to give custody to a relative. In addition, some counties will license relatives as foster homes and then are unable to track relative foster homes separately from regular foster homes. Unfortunately, these issues could pose problems for our study because we will be unable to capture a complete picture of the number of children in a relative's care.

Data Quality Assurance. Administrative data in state systems are easily influenced by human factors. It is important to understand staff resources for entering data, decision points for when data entry is required, and quality assurance for data entry. Are error reports or edit checks produced for all staff to see missing or incomplete data? Do staff see summary reports of their data entered and do eligibility and caseworkers see caseload reports? All this serves as effective data quality assurance. Variables that go unchecked or do not give feedback to users often are "weak" data for analysis. For example, in most service systems, "religion" is not a factor in service decisions, and therefore, "religion" as a data element is often left as "missing" or "unknown."

One of the most fundamental forms of quality assurance for FACSIS is achieved through CPOE. CPOE comprises an ongoing and continual set of onsite activities conducted by PCSAs and ODHS to promote the effective and efficient service delivery of child protection services in the State of Ohio. CPOE provides the county PCSA with documentation for use in local planning

and quality assurance activities through the use of state outcome indicators. It also is used to inform ODHS administrators regarding child protective services and practice for use in statewide planning and policy development and for addressing technical assistance needs.

CPOE's onsite process includes identifying data system strengths and weaknesses through a data validation process. The counties send the state a backup tape each month to be used in the data validation process. The data from FACSIS and from each county's tape are downloaded for comparison. An exception report of noncompatible data is run on an ODHS-developed program to locate any data that are in FACSIS but not in Micro-FACSIS, data that are in Micro-FACSIS but not in FACSIS, and data that are matched in both. In addition to this procedure, a validation comparison between a selected case sample and the local Micro-FACSIS system occurs on 10 chosen events. Validation is accepted if the match is 90 percent or greater per review item. Any discrepancies are noted and discussed.

A CPOE Stage Report is then sent to each county describing the strengths and weaknesses of the PCSA's process of entering information from the case record into FACSIS. The report describes the issues so that any necessary steps can be taken to remedy the discrepancy and/or prevent such occurrences in the future. Recommendations to improve the data entry process are included in the CPOE Stage Report. The county's use of these CPOE reports is briefly explored in Chapter 2.

Screening Out Cases. A referral for service, usually a call or request for service, precipitates most activities for a child in each county. Incidents of child abuse are the primary entrance into the child welfare system in each county. In FACSIS, the state requires only a registration of screened child abuse and neglect incidents. Low-priority cases (called Priority IV report) are not required to be recorded. Interviews have shown that counties are documenting these low-priority cases in different ways or not at all in FACSIS. Belmont County is documenting "community response cases" as a county event. Fairfield County is using the case registration, case status screen, to document low-risk cases that the agency still plans to monitor.

Other cases, including those of families requesting services and other non-child-abuse/neglect assessment reports, are required to be registered as client or family in FACSIS but not as an incident. These cases will appear as case open (if services are provided) or later as abuse/neglect incidents if evidence of abuse or neglect is discovered. Some counties have added information and referral to their county events. Further clarification of each county's practice is necessary before the complete case flow can be documented in detail in each county.

County-Defined Values. Some supporting information for casework activity in FACSIS is not required by the state but does reside on each county's Micro-FACSIS system. These events in FACSIS are designated as county-defined. In later discussions with counties, we have identified information not residing on the state file that should be explored for additional information. For example, the reason for initial case registration is a county-defined event. This reason, called case status, appears to be the first documentation in the system of dependency and other types of cases that do not go through the primary path of incident and investigation. In followup with several counties, our team learned that there is some variation in the values for these data. The

values and accompanying data will have to be collected on the county level and reviewed for possible use and analysis, especially in the understanding of case flow.

County Events. A majority of the counties participating in our evaluation have their own county events which were individually designed to fit the data needs of each county. These events are added by the counties to their own system and are recorded by the counties in addition to the required events recorded for the state. The state does not request the counties to send it data on these local events; therefore, they are not included in the state's FACSIS system. Nineteen of the 25 counties in our evaluation that use Micro-FACSIS systems described local events which had been added to their automated system.

In some cases, counties developed events to collect information that the state system did not include. For instance, health events, such as medical or dental visits, psychological assessments, and HIV testing were added to many local county systems. Also, the results of a risk assessment, completed parenting classes, the due date of family case plans, and the school district a child belongs to were also FACSIS events used to supplement local systems.

In other instances, counties developed their own events similar to already existing state events in Micro-FACSIS because they wanted to add more detail than the existing state event offered. For example, the reason for a case closing or the status of a case was developed as a local event in some counties because the counties want more options with more detail than the state version of case closings. These counties would then use both the state- and county-developed events to collect information on clients, but more detail would be contained in the county version of the event.

Transmittal Problems. Some counties expressed concerns that the transmission process, which takes data from the counties and enters them into the state system, is inadequate. A few counties described long-standing problems with the state's data extracting program. In Ohio, counties send their Micro-FACSIS data electronically to the state, generally once a day, and the state system updates its files with the new information as it is received. The state, however, has contacted some counties, with error reports, to inform them that data on the county are missing from the state system. In each case, when the county Micro-FACSIS operators examined their own systems, they found the data had, in fact, been entered. It is possible, therefore, that information is missing from the state system even though it has been entered into FACSIS at the county level. An additional problem is the perception by the county staff that ODHS on the state level does not have an accurate data "picture" of the child welfare activity on the local level.

County-Specific Systems. Three counties that are participating in this study do not use the Micro-FACSIS system to record data. Each of these three counties has its own system that it designed to capture information on children and families in the county. Two of the systems operated by these counties were designed many years before the Micro-FACSIS system was created. Also, these counties have the highest populations out of the 28 counties in the study and, therefore, may need to rely on a system that is more uniquely designed to the needs of their counties than Micro-FACSIS.

Franklin County's system, KIDS KIDS, is more than 15 years old. It is set up similarly to FACSIS, but it can collect a higher level of detail for management use. Hamilton County has its own database system as well, named CYRUS. Hamilton has operated this system for approximately 20 years. While FACSIS focuses on children in the state's custody, CYRUS collects information on all children who are receiving services from the county. Lastly, Summit County's system is called KIDS 2100 (Knowledge in Delivering Services in the Twenty-first Century). To create the KIDS 2100 system, Summit County used the FACSIS state requirements as a foundation and then added events that it felt Summit County needed to be able to track. The system is user friendly and accessible by all levels of staff.

For the state to be able to collect information from these counties, an extraction system was designed to be compatible with each of the three systems. The counties send their data electronically to the state, as do the other counties in Ohio, then the state removes the information that is relevant to it from each unique system and converts the information into FACSIS data.

Although the state has tried to make these unique systems compatible with the FACSIS system, we discovered some issues which may make examining these data difficult. First, the way in which ID numbers are created and recorded can be different from how other counties produce them. Counties that use the Micro-FACSIS system assign 7-digit numbers to each of their clients. The ID number consists of a 5-digit family ID which all members of the family share in common, and then a 2-digit individual ID is added to create one unique number for that individual. In Franklin County, however, a client's ID number is 11-digits long and is created with a totally different method. In Hamilton County, a client's ID number is 9-digits long. In Summit County, ID's are assigned sequentially, so the length of an ID number can vary and there is no system for assigning numbers; therefore, two members of the same family could have totally different numbers with no part of the ID linking them together as a family. Once the data are sent to the state FACSIS system, the family and individual IDs are added to a 3-digit county identifier to form FACSIS client identification numbers (cnref). While all the other counties in our evaluations have 10-digit cnref numbers, Franklin and Hamilton counties have a total of 14 digits in their cnref, and Summit County has a 15-digit cnref. These varying methods for assigning ID numbers could potentially interfere with the ability to track families through the system over time.

In addition, there may be problems with how the state is extracting and converting information from these counties and then absorbing the information into FACSIS. The project team is still investigating how this process takes place and whether information is altered in the process.

Time Lags in Entering Data. Counties were asked to name which data in their Micro-FACSIS system has the longest and shortest time lags. Each county had its own answer to this question. One county said that its list of unsubstantiated cases could be 8-9 months behind in being entered into Micro-FACSIS. Another county, however, had no problems with unsubstantiated cases but was several months behind in entering court dispositions. Yet another county was not up-to-date in case closings, and a fourth county believed that its case plans and court reviews and hearings had delays in being entered. Therefore, each county might have different data events missing from the state system at any one time.

Differences in Procedures. Frequently, a situation can arise which does not fit easily into the categories created by the Micro-FACSIS system. In these circumstances, counties must decide how they are going to interpret special cases and where in Micro-FACSIS the information should go. These complicated situations can then lead to different counties' adopting different methods for dealing with unusual data.

To demonstrate, counties were asked, "If a child was living with a relative at the time of initial placement, how do you know from FACSIS data if that child is returned to that relative after placement? Would this be recorded as a custody termination reason of 'Reunification achieved' or 'Custody to other relative?'" Answers to this question varied, but it was clear that a method for dealing with these types of cases has been decided upon individually by each of the counties. Some counties explained that any time a child is returned to the person from whom he/she had been removed, it is considered "reunification." However, other counties were steadfast in explaining that only when a child is returned to a parent can the event be recorded as "reunification."

Local Opinions of FACSIS. Questions pertaining to the counties' views on Micro-FACSIS and FACSIS were very telling of the reliability of the state's system. Some counties claimed to have no major problems with FACSIS, but far more expressed negative opinions of FACSIS. When asked, "Which event data in FACSIS would you trust?" respondents noted the following:

- There are major problems with all of (the data).
- I don't think the data in the state FACSIS system would be correct.
- A lot of the information is accurate at the county level, but some of our data at the state level is simply missing.
- We've had to fight with the report generator. It's just not useful.

Some comments were more pointed, describing specific kinds of data the county does not believe are reliable. For instance:

- (I) don't trust intake and investigation activities.
- (I) don't trust case openings—the state doesn't have as much information as (our county) on case openings.
- Our case plan and service data can be outdated.

Overall, interviews indicated that counties seemed to favor the data in their local Micro-FACSIS systems over the statewide FACSIS system. They expressed more confidence in the fact that they know that they have entered the data correctly and that they know how to interpret what data are already in the system. The counties seem to have their own procedures for dealing with the data that may or may not mirror the state's guidelines for data collection.

Limited State Support of FACSIS. Many of the counties interviewed felt that they were not receiving adequate support from the state in order to make FACSIS useful for their county. One county had one computer on which to record FACSIS data, and it stopped working. The state provided the county with a new computer, but then waited several months before hooking up the computer to the FACSIS system. Therefore, the county was several months behind in data collection and had to scramble to enter past data into the system. In addition, our team has had difficulty gaining information from ODHS; it could not get a full set of FACSIS data in the first year of the evaluation. The state appears to be understaffed with regard to providing support for the counties and for providing information for this evaluation.

A summary of the interview data is provided in Appendix III, Exhibit 2.

B. Definition of Baseline

A core strategy for understanding the changes in the Ohio child welfare service delivery system affected by the Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project, ProtectOhio, is the analysis of data on cases, clients, and children served in the child welfare systems as contained in ODHS' FACSIS. Statistical data on services to children in the period of time 2 years prior to the beginning of the project are presented in this report as the baseline data. The baseline data provide a statistical description of child welfare performance indicators and caseloads prior to the beginning of the project. These data will be the basis for the definition of outcome measures to measure changes on children and families during the evaluation period. The team will compare the baseline performance indicators and caseloads to these same indicators developed from data compiled after the project began and for the duration of the project. The comparison between pre-project data and post-project data will be used to identify and analyze the effects and changes that may have occurred due to the changes in service delivery as a result of the implementation of the waiver.

The timeframe of the baseline data is October 1, 1995 to September 30, 1997, the 2-year period prior to October 1, 1997, the beginning of the ProtectOhio demonstrations. Data are presented based on the entire scope of the baseline. This 2-year period was chosen so that the baseline data would be current enough to reflect the child welfare environment just prior to the start of the demonstration projects yet not incorporate too many old policies and procedures. The baseline data are derived from the state's centralized administrative data system, FACSIS, for both the 14 demonstration and the 14 comparison counties.

All children and all cases recorded on FACSIS as being served during the baseline by the ODHS PCSAs in the 28 counties participating in the evaluation are included. In order for a child and family to be included in the baseline: (1) an incident of child abuse/neglect had to have been reported within the baseline dates, (2) a person had to be a victim, perpetrator, or caretaker in a child abuse and neglect incident reported within the baseline dates, (3) a case (family member or child) had to have been open for services beyond an investigation of abuse and neglect within the baseline, or (4) a child had to have been in placement or custody within the baseline dates. In order to maintain the historical data on all children and cases that met any one of these criteria, their service history for all time prior to October 1, 1995, as recorded on FACSIS is pulled into the baseline data files. This enables the evaluation to include children who have been in long-

term placement, families with a long history of reported abuse and neglect, and children and families being served for reasons other than involvement in an incident of abuse or neglect. This will allow for the classification of families and children served based on their historical service patterns over time, from entry into the child welfare system until leaving the system, their possible return to the system, and in the development of performance indicators and service outcomes.

Examples of performance indicators requiring long-term historical data are recidivism in abuse and neglect, length of time in foster care placement for children leaving the system, and length of time to achieve adoption. The historical data on service patterns will allow evaluation of the re-entry of families into the system, how they are classified, and what circumstances lead to placement and/or permanent custody and long-term foster care. The expectation is that the waiver demonstrations will change these patterns of service delivery, and in future project reports, these service patterns will be examined and compared between baseline and post-waiver demonstration startup.

The baseline data files were created from 27 CPOE files extracted from the FACSIS database. The 27 files contained data on clients served by all counties in the state since the beginning of data recording on FACSIS up to data inputted as of September 30, 1998. The files contain the data variables recorded on FACSIS that provide the demographic profiles of clients served; the information about abuse and neglect incidents, victims, perpetrators, and caretaker; the information on case openings and closures for ongoing services; the information on out-of-home placements, goals, long-term care, adoption, placement resources and facility licensing; and information about court-related activity such as custody, custody appeals, adjudication, dispositional and shelter care hearings, reasonable efforts, and protective supervision.

Westat created a database containing data on both baseline clients and clients receiving services after October 1, 1997, as well as their service history. The data were analyzed using the statistical software, SAS. The FACSIS identification number "cnref" is used in the baseline files as the unique identifier for each client. Each unique client ID in the case file, placement file, and the custody file have been flagged using the following criteria:

- **NEW95** – client's first case opening date, placement date, or custody start date was between October 1, 1995, and September 30, 1997, with no client record found in the file prior to October 1, 1995;

- **REOPEN95** – client was in a case that had closed prior to October 1, 1995, and reappeared in a re-opened case between October 1, 1995, and September 30, 1997;

- **ACTIVE95** – client was in a case that opened prior to October 1, 1995, and has remained open after October 1, 1995;

- **NEW97** – client's first case opening date, placement date, or first custody date was on or after October 1, 1997, and no client record is in the file prior to October 1, 1997;

- **REOPEN97** – client was in a case that had closed prior to October 1, 1997, and reappeared in a re-opened case after October 1, 1997**.**

- **ACTIVE97** – client was in a case that opened prior to October 1, 1997, and has remained open after October 1, 1997.

Clients who meet the baseline date criteria as well as the demonstration date criteria will be tracked in both client populations. The services they received prior to October 1, 1997, will be attributed to the baseline, and services received after October 1, 1997, will be attributed to the demonstration period for comparison in the evaluation of performance indicators, caseloads, and outcomes. The baseline population totals are listed in Table III-1. Table III-2 provides the baseline populations in the case file, placement file, and custody file by the flags in each file: Active95, Reopen95, or New95, as defined above for the counties in both demonstration and comparison groups. Both tables are located in Appendix III.

In the next section, FACSIS data are used to describe baseline caseloads in the 14 demonstration and 14 comparison counties.

C. Description of Baseline Caseloads

This section uses FACSIS administrative data to describe service caseloads during the baseline (October 1, 1995 – September 30, 1997) in each of the comparison and demonstration counties. Data are presented for the baseline period for major decision points in FACSIS child service flow. Data are presented for the areas of child abuse and neglect (CAN) incidents, ongoing cases for service, court activity and placements. The statistics reported are listed in Exhibit 1.

These are preliminary data. They are presented for two purposes. First, they are a tool for the evaluation team to use with the 28 counties to understand how counties interpret specific FACSIS data elements when data are entered.[1] Secondly, the aggregated county data for the baseline highlight the service caseload trends and problems which are described above in Chapter 2. The interplay of the data will be explored more fully as the evaluation proceeds.

In this section, most data are presented in groups. The 28 counties are divided into four groups based on 1995 population of children under 18, with the exception of Portage and Greene Counties. Greene County is assigned to Group 2 and Portage County to Group 3 to keep them with their assigned comparison counties (see Chapter 2 for discussion of the matching process). The groups are shown in Table 1.

Tables are also presented with totals for the 14 demonstration and 14 comparison counties. Most tables are presented in alphabetical order by group, allowing easy identification of particular counties. Data are presented in counts of raw data or in percentage of total for each county, as well as totals for 14 demonstration (D) and 14 comparison (C) counties. Data are presented unweighted, to allow for an easier comparison with other state and county data.

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[1] CPOE data were to be included for this activity. The CPOE definitions were not provided to the evaluation team in electronic format. This would have allowed the team to compare preliminary data with corresponding CPOE values. Since this activity could not be conducted, instead validation of data will be conducted directly with the 28 counties in year two. Interpretation of data is considered preliminary until that review is completed.

Table 1. County by presentation group, CPOE cluster, and population in 1995 of children under 18

Group	County	CPOE Cluster*	Demo/Comp	PCSAO 1995 children<18**
GROUP 1	Ashtabula	Large	D	27,318
	Belmont	Medium	D	16,846
	Crawford	Medium	D	9,679
	Hancock	Medium	C	17,642
	Hocking	Small	C	6,793
	Miami	Large	C	24,992
	Muskingum	Large	D	21,921
	Scioto	Large	C	21,500
GROUP 2	Allen	Large	C	30,066
	Columbiana	Large	C	28,805
	Fairfield	Large	D	27,994
	Greene	Large	D	35,128
	Medina	Large	D	34,867
	Richland	Large	D	32,961
	Warren	Large	C	30,656
	Wood	Large	C	27,577
GROUP 3	Butler	Large	C	80,095
	Clark	Large	D	37,924
	Clermont	Large	C	44,046
	Lorain	Large	D	74,416
	Mahoning	Large	C	64,919
	Portage	Large	D	34,973
	Stark	Large	D	92,446
	Trumbull	Large	C	57,397
GROUP 4	Franklin	Metro	D	236,766
	Hamilton	Metro	D	224,930
	Montgomery	Metro	C	142,640
	Summit	Metro	C	125,789
TOTAL	Demonstration		D	908,169
	Comparison		C	577,128

*CPOE cluster information is taken from March 1998 CPOE indicator reports, released June 1998.

**Child population information is taken from PCSAO: A Factbook: 1996-1997.

Exhibit 1. Caseload statistics reported

Baseline Caseload Statistics

Child Abuse and Neglect Caseload

- Number of incidents of child abuse or neglect
- Number of incidents per child
- Outcome of investigation for children in incidents
- Age of children in incidents
- Race of children in incidents

Ongoing Services Caseloads

- Number of open cases at the end of quarter
- Caseload by new, active, and reopened status (case mix)
- Use of case types

Court Results and Custody Caseloads

- Adjudication results
- Dispositional hearing outcomes
- Initial custody types for children
- Use of custody types
- Number of children in custody at the end of quarter

Placement Caseload

- Use of placement settings (types)
- Number of children in placement at the end of quarter
- Race of children in placement
- Placement days
- Placement days used by new, active, and readmitted status (placement mix)
- First setting (types) for initial placements
- Age at placement for initial placements
- Reason for initial placements by age

C.1. Child Abuse and Neglect Reports

The primary entrance into the child welfare system is a report of child abuse and neglect. A majority of cases that open for service result from a report of an incident of abuse or neglect. In Ohio, all allegation reports of child abuse and neglect are recorded in FACSIS. The only exceptions are low priority (priority IV) incidents unless they are later reassigned to a higher priority. Priority IV cases are not required to be entered into FACSIS.

C.1.a. Number of Incidents of Child Abuse or Neglect

In FACSIS, each specific incident of alleged child abuse or neglect is treated as an event or activity. Each is identified in FACSIS with a unique 7-digit identification number. An incident date is recorded along with names of associated victims, alleged perpetrators, caretakers, and other involved persons. If the person is both a caretaker and perpetrator, he or she is listed as perpetrator. [Data on other involved persons were not provided by ODHS for this analysis]. Incidents can involve more than one child, and a child can be listed in more than one incident during the baseline period.

The following table (Table 2) shows the number of incidents each quarter during the baseline for each demonstration (D) and comparison (C) county. In addition, a monthly average is shown for the combined two-year period for each county. The demonstration group monthly average is 38 percent greater per month than the comparison counties. The demonstration counties' children's population, using the 1995 data, is 57 percent higher than the comparison group. This suggests either a difference in incidence of reporting of child abuse and neglect or systematic differences in screening.

The Group 4 (Metro) counties account for a majority of the incident activity in both demonstration and comparison groups. Using the monthly average, Franklin and Hamilton account for 59 percent of total incidents of the 14 demonstration counties, while Montgomery and Summit account for 55 percent of the comparison group. This will echo in most of the data presented in Sections C and D.

Table 2. Number of CAN incidents by group, county, and quarter

Group 1										
County	Group	Q1 Oct-Dec 95	Q2 Jan-Mar 96	Q3 Apr-Jun 96	Q4 Jul-Sep 96	Q5 Oct-Dec 96	Q6 Jan-Mar 97	Q7 Apr-Jun 97	Q8 Jul-Sep 97	Monthly Avg
Ashtabula	D	75	86	95	68	54	69	70	40	23
Belmont	D	134	145	162	138	132	99	67	83	40
Crawford	D	126	111	135	139	129	130	117	105	41
Hancock	C	82	92	97	134	97	103	109	104	34
Hocking	C	80	83	89	99	82	76	96	96	29
Miami	C	84	81	132	163	118	116	91	85	36
Muskingum	D	257	296	264	270	208	251	187	226	82
Scioto	C	197	193	166	161	113	115	181	158	54
Group 2										
County	Group	Q1 Oct-Dec 95	Q2 Jan-Mar 96	Q3 Apr-Jun 96	Q4 Jul-Sep 96	Q5 Oct-Dec 96	Q6 Jan-Mar 97	Q7 Apr-Jun 97	Q8 Jul-Sep 97	Monthly Avg
Allen	C	176	231	263	322	234	253	258	257	83
Columbiana	C	68	49	55	73	87	94	79	57	23
Fairfield	D	182	181	202	151	133	131	181	174	56
Greene	D	262	307	321	282	255	242	186	213	86
Medina	D	149	174	144	162	155	152	148	101	49
Richland	D	220	263	262	197	173	217	236	214	74
Warren	C	115	128	154	150	118	125	155	101	44
Wood	C	111	99	99	92	86	96	99	143	34
Group 3										
County	Group	Q1 Oct-Dec 95	Q2 Jan-Mar 96	Q3 Apr-Jun 96	Q4 Jul-Sep 96	Q5 Oct-Dec 96	Q6 Jan-Mar 97	Q7 Apr-Jun 97	Q8 Jul-Sep 97	Monthly Avg
Butler	C	432	420	455	375	373	381	411	351	133
Clark	D	234	230	269	238	281	261	231	170	80
Clermont	C	525	569	592	584	538	545	492	517	182
Lorain	D	309	323	344	323	275	298	228	143	93
Mahoning	C	240	262	309	300	294	356	424	404	108
Portage	D	254	308	285	336	328	366	310	270	102
Stark	D	879	989	946	935	837	748	702	686	280
Trumbull	C	194	178	161	145	167	131	138	155	53
Group 4 (Metro)										
County	Group	Q1 Oct-Dec 95	Q2 Jan-Mar 96	Q3 Apr-Jun 96	Q4 Jul-Sep 96	Q5 Oct-Dec 96	Q6 Jan-Mar 97	Q7 Apr-Jun 97	Q8 Jul-Sep 97	Monthly Avg
Franklin	D	2,047	2,259	2,447	2,359	2,102	2,278	2,220	1,985	737
Hamilton	D	1,919	1,977	2,391	2,374	2,059	2,236	2,260	2,325	731
Montgomery	C	922	1,076	1,024	1,028	1,255	1,225	1,126	1,027	362
Summit	C	1,469	1,941	2,017	2,198	1,811	1,856	1,755	1,891	622
TOTAL										
		Q1 Oct-Dec 95	Q2 Jan-Mar 96	Q3 Apr-Jun 96	Q4 Jul-Sep 96	Q5 Oct-Dec 96	Q6 Jan-Mar 97	Q7 Apr-Jun 97	Q8 Jul-Sep 97	Monthly Avg
Demonstration Group		7,047	7,649	8,267	7,972	7,121	7,478	7,143	6,735	2,474
Comparison Group		4,695	5,402	5,613	5,824	5,373	5,472	5,414	5,346	1,797

Figure 1 shows the average number of incidents by county during the baseline. Counties are shown in ascending order by the population of children in each county in 1995. During the baseline certain counties showed variations within each group. For example, in Group 1, Ashtabula, the largest county by child population, had the fewest average number of incidents, while Muskingum had the highest. In Group 2, both Medina and Warren, comparatively larger counties, had fewer number of incidents than the smaller counties of Allen and Richland.

In Group 4, Montgomery County, larger in child population, has a lower monthly average than Summit County. Our team will investigate to determine if this is the result of data entry, changes in the size and profile of children in the county over the 2 years, preferred use of non-abuse/neglect services, or differences in incidence of reporting of abuse and neglect.

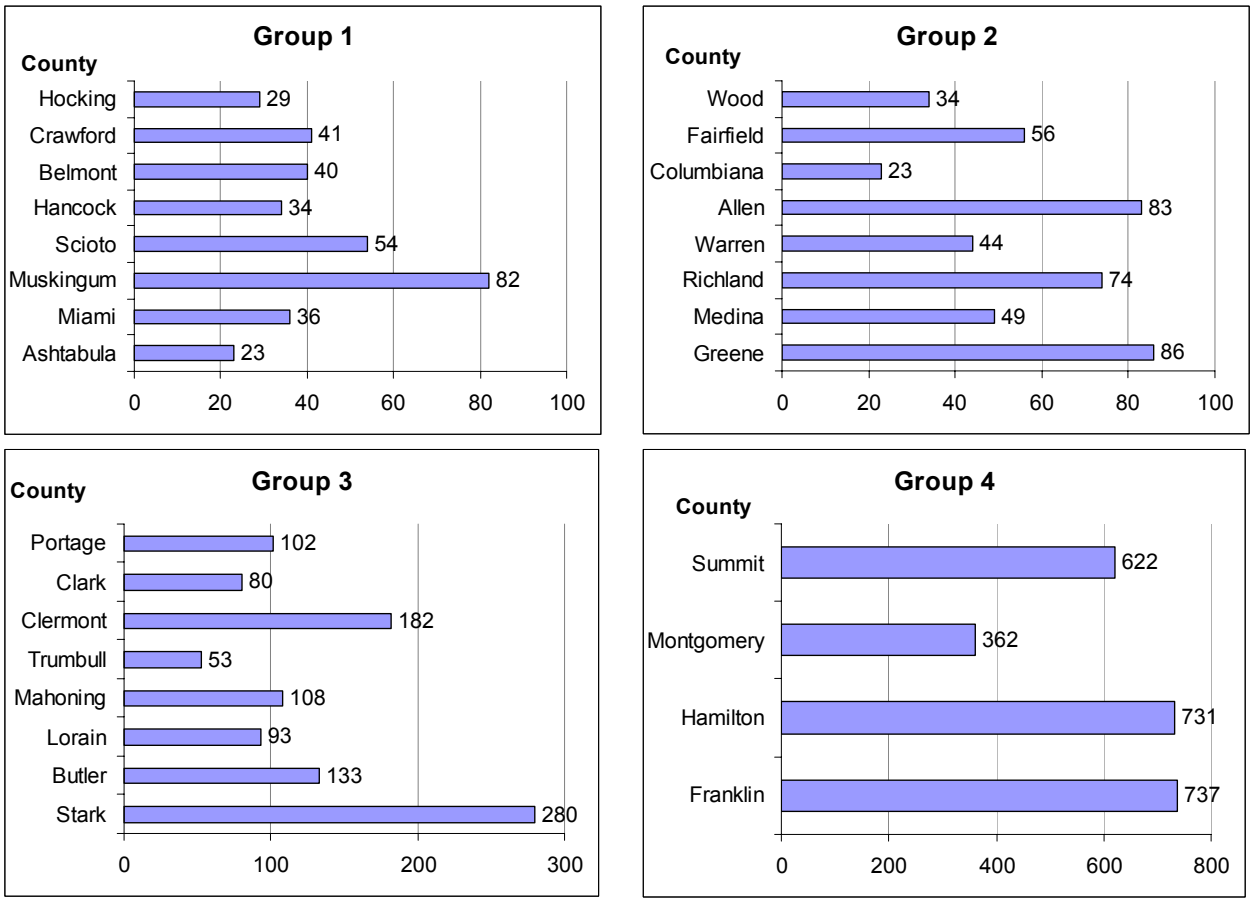

Figure 1. Monthly average number of child abuse/neglect incidents by county by group

C.1.b. Number of Incidents per Child

The frequency with which children appear in incidents can greatly affect caseloads in each county. A child can be listed a victim in a single incident of child abuse or neglect or a series of incidents over a period of time. For each victim, our team counted, by unique ID number within a county, the number of times a child appeared in an incident that was reported during the baseline. This includes all incidents reported, investigated or not.[2]

Incidents with duplicate information were removed from the analysis. Summit County had many duplicate records, probably due to a problem transferring information from its separate system to FACSIS. Incidents with separate dates were left in as unique incidents. Summit County showed the lowest percentage (65%) of children with a single incident during the baseline. Summit also had the largest percentage of children (4%) with five or more incidents during baseline. This finding suggests that our team should research transmission error further, before examining any unique county practice that might result in multiple investigations of children.

Overall, demonstration totals are similar to those of the comparison group (Table 3). Both had 76 percent of children with single incidents. Both groups have similar percentages for children with two reports, 17 percent in demonstration counties and 16 percent in comparison counties. In the demonstration group, 8 percent of victims were in three or more incidents during the baseline compared to 9 percent in the comparison group.

There appear to be fewer incidents per child in the non-Metro counties. While all Metro counties had under 80 percent of children with a single incident in the baseline, there were several counties in the three non-Metro groups that had over 80 percent. In Group 1, Ashtabula had the highest percentage (90%). In Group 2, Columbiana had 93 percent; and in Group 3, Butler is highest with 87 percent. Children seem to be involved in a greater number of incidents in Metro counties. This could be a result of a greater number of social service agencies and closer proximity of children to mandated reporters, resulting in greater number of reports.

[2] Incidents that have been purged according to state guidelines are included.

Table 3. Distribution of children in incidents by county and number of incidents

County	Demo/ Comp	N	1 Incident (%)	2 Incidents (%)	3 Incidents (%)	4 Incidents (%)	5 or more Incidents (%)
Group 1							
Ashtabula	D	680	90	8	1	0	0
Belmont	D	1,227	80	14	5	1	0
Crawford	D	1,066	72	19	7	2	1
Hancock	C	920	83	12	3	1	0
Hocking	C	1,018	81	15	3	1	1
Miami	C	934	83	14	2	1	0
Muskingum	D	2,329	74	18	6	2	1
Scioto	C	1,593	78	14	4	3	2
Group 2							
Allen	C	2,381	77	17	5	1	0
Columbiana	C	694	93	6	1	0	0
Fairfield	D	1,473	79	16	4	1	0
Greene	D	2,374	79	15	3	1	0
Medina	D	1,385	81	14	3	1	1
Richland	D	2,111	78	16	5	1	1
Warren	C	1,372	86	12	2	0	0
Wood	C	999	83	13	3	1	0
Group 3							
Butler	C	4,254	87	12	2	0	0
Clark	D	2,097	83	14	3	1	0
Clermont	C	4,593	72	18	6	3	2
Lorain	D	3,019	85	12	2	1	0
Mahoning	C	3,673	77	17	4	2	0
Portage	D	3,023	80	14	4	1	0
Stark	D	8,495	76	17	5	1	0
Trumbull	C	1,547	88	10	1	0	0
Group 4							
Franklin	D	21,484	77	16	5	1	1
Hamilton	D	20,279	72	18	6	2	1
Montgomery	C	10,666	79	15	4	1	0
Summit	C	14,710	65	19	8	3	4
Total							
Demonstration Totals		71,042	76	17	5	2	1
Comparison Totals		49,354	76	16	5	2	2

C.1.c. Outcome of Investigation for Children in Incidents

At the completion of an investigation for an abuse neglect incident, a worker must indicate a finding for each incident allegation and for each victim. The worker can designate two findings. The first must respond to the original allegation made; a second responds to any other type of abuse/neglect discovered during the investigation. The following categories of abuse/neglect are designated in FACSIS: Abuse, Neglect, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Maltreatment, and Baby Doe (Infant—Withholding Attention). The worker chooses from these categories for the original and possible secondary allegation for each incident. For this, the maximal severity for each victim was used.

For the outcome, the worker can designate one of four dispositions for each type of allegation. They include[3], in descending order of severity:

- Substantiated: A report in which there is an admission of child abuse or neglect; an adjudication or other form of confirmation or professional judgment that the child has been abused or neglected.
- Indicated: A report in which there is circumstantial, medical or other indicators of child abuse or neglect, but which is lacking confirmation.
- Unsubstantiated, Cannot locate: A report in which the investigation is not initiated, because the family moved or an inability to locate the family.
- Unsubstantiated, No evidence: A report in which the investigation determined no occurrence of child abuse or neglect.

A new designation, "case resolution completed," was added in July 1997 for the implementation of risk assessment. Eight counties used it during the baseline period, and these cases are included in this analysis.[4] This includes three counties in the demonstration (Greene, Muskingum, and Stark) and five in the comparison group (Allen, Hancock, Miami, Scioto, and Summit).

After the investigation, counties are asked to record the setting of the alleged abuse and/or neglect as determined during the investigation. For a foster care or daycare location, counties are also required to enter the name and address of the facility. In all 28 counties, home and relative's home comprise over 80 percent of settings for investigated incidents. There is some variation among counties between own home and relative home. This could be due to worker practice, differences in data definitions, or actual incidence. If a child is residing with a relative, is it his/her own home, or a relative's home? Does that change if there is a custodial or noncustodial placement within that home by the county?

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[3] FACSIS Usage Document, (Draft) Revised 8/98, page 12.

[4] As the use of "case resolution completed" is used more thoroughly state-wide, ODHS will have to devise a methodology to make inclusion/substantiation rate comparable to other states.

Table 4 summarizes the outcomes of investigations completed and recorded in FACSIS during the baseline period. While the state is beginning to use a risk assessment model for assessing risk and the service needs of families, the process had only partially been implemented during the baseline. The rate of cases indicated or substantiated is presented here as a caseload indicator of cases requiring extensive services by the county. Specifically, because children in unsubstantiated cases are unlikely to be placed in foster care, the indication/substantiation rate identifies the relative size of the pool of children most likely to be considered for placement after investigation.

The disposition (of indicated or substantiated cases) cannot be used as an indicator of severity of family or child problems in each county because further information[5] is needed to understand county criteria for screening out cases and for source and extent of non-abuse/neglect service referrals. The disposition is recorded in FACSIS for each victim in an incident, as well as for the incident. Child-specific data is reported in this section.

Overall, demonstration and comparison groups have similar indication/substantiation rates during the baseline: 40 percent (16% indicated; 24% substantiated) for the demonstration counties and 42 percent (21% indicated; 21% substantiated) for the comparison counties. This aggregate is heavily weighted by the Group 4 (Metro) counties. For the non-Metro counties, several have indication/substantiation rates higher than 50 percent. These include Ashtabula (53%) in Group 1; Columbiana (52%), Richland (53%), Warren (57%) and Wood (59%) in Group 2; and Trumbull (61%) in Group 3. In addition, Montgomery in Group 4 has a 52 percent indication/substantiation rate.

The low rate for the three Group 4 (Metro) counties is consistent with the high number of incidents per child. Children could appear several times in incidents, until there is adequate evidence for substantiation or indication. The converse interpretation can apply to the non-Metro counties. Ashtabula and Columbiana, which have a high percentage of children appearing in a single incident during the baseline, have high indication/substantiation rates. Understandably, these differences will be made clearer in year two of the evaluation, when more information is collected for an analysis of service patterns.

[5] Sources for this information will be explored in the second year of the evaluation.

Table 4. Distribution of outcome of investigation during baseline by county

County	Unsubstantiated – No Evidence/ No Other (%)	Unsubstantiated – Cannot Locate (%)	Indicated (%)	Substantiated (%)	Case Resolution Completed (%)	N	Missing
Group 1							
Ashtabula	46	1	25	28	0	557	0
Belmont	60	2	23	15	0	954	6
Hancock	60	1	9	22	8	818	0
Hocking	74	7	9	11	0	699	2
Miami	54	1	18	20	7	847	23
Muskingum	65	4	11	13	8	1,931	28
Scioto	76	1	7	12	3	1,284	0
Group 2							
Allen	51	2	10	27	9	1,989	5
Columbiana	36	2	38	24	0	434	128
Fairfield	75	3	10	12	0	1,335	0
Greene	65	1	17	13	4	2,068	0
Medina	59	1	21	19	0	1,140	45
Richland	45	2	23	30	0	1,767	15
Warren	42	1	32	25	0	1,002	44
Wood	40	1	30	29	0	822	3
Group 3							
Butler	64	3	16	17	0	3,166	32
Clark	51	3	23	22	0	1,908	6
Clermont	67	2	16	15	0	4,334	28
Lorain	60	2	21	17	0	2,243	0
Mahoning	61	4	19	16	0	2,541	48
Portage	55	6	19	20	0	2,444	13
Stark	50	2	20	27	1	6,721	1
Trumbull	38	0	37	24	0	1,269	0
Group 4							
Franklin	55	3	16	26	0	17,620	77
Hamilton	62	1	10	27	0	17,373	168
Montgomery	45	3	28	24	0	8,275	408
Summit	56	0	21	21	1	14,345	593
Total							
Demonstration Total	57	2	16	24	1	58,606	806
Comparison Total	55	2	21	21	1	41,825	1,314

Note: Percentages do not include "Missing" cases. Crawford County is not shown in table due to excessive missing data (45% of 545).

C.1.d. Age and Race of Children in CAN Reports at First Incident in Baseline

Tables 5 and 6 show the demographics of children being served in the child protective system. Included are all victims (children) in incidents in each of the participating counties where a report date occurred during the baseline period. To keep the count unduplicated, the age and race at the time of the earliest incident in the baseline is used. The data by percentage of children in four age brackets—0-2, 3-5, 6-12, and 13 and older (13+) years of age—are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Distribution of age of children in abuse/neglect incidents by group and county

County*	Demo/ Comp	0-2 years old (%)	3-5 years old (%)	6-12 years old (%)	13+ years old (%)	N	Missing or Not Available
Group 1							
Ashtabula	D	21	20	38	22	617	63
Belmont	D	19	19	38	24	1,210	17
Crawford	D	18	21	40	21	904	162
Hancock	C	20	24	37	19	817	103
Miami	C	18	23	35	24	852	82
Scioto	C	19	20	37	24	1,350	243
Group 2							
Allen	C	22	24	36	18	2,268	113
Columbiana	C	20	20	36	25	681	13
Fairfield	D	19	22	36	23	1,225	248
Greene	D	17	20	36	28	2,312	62
Medina	D	18	21	36	25	1,263	122
Richland	D	19	22	39	19	2,008	103
Warren	C	18	24	40	19	1,345	27
Wood	C	15	20	39	26	976	23
Group 3							
Butler	C	20	21	40	20	4,030	224
Clark	D	21	23	38	19	2,092	5
Clermont	C	18	21	39	22	4,433	160
Lorain	D	23	22	37	18	2,920	99
Mahoning	C	21	23	39	17	3,649	24
Portage	D	19	19	41	22	2,828	195
Stark	D	19	21	38	22	8,477	18
Trumbull	C	20	22	38	21	1,536	11
Group 4							
Franklin	D	22	22	38	19	21,362	122
Hamilton	D	20	21	40	19	19,343	936
Montgomery	C	20	22	38	21	10,515	151
Summit	C	20	21	39	20	14,136	574
Demonstration Totals		20	21	39	20	66,561	2,152
Comparison Totals		20	21	39	21	46,588	1,748

* Hocking and Muskingum are excluded from groups and totals because of excessive missing data. Percentage might not total to 100% because of rounding.

Overall, demonstration counties and comparison counties served similar age groups in incidents during the baseline: 20 percent of children ages 0-2 years of age; 21 percent, ages 3-5; 39 percent, ages 6-12 in both groups, and both groups approximately 20 percent of children for ages 13 or older. Over the baseline, counties in both demonstration and comparison groups are seeing similar age groups of children at their child protective "front door."

Race/Ethnicity. Counties vary greatly in the distribution of racial/ethnic groups. There is a national concern about the higher prevalence of minority children in the child welfare system. This incidence analysis is best viewed from an entry cohort approach for each county. This comparative analysis will be conducted in year two of the evaluation. The distribution of race/ethnicity for children identified in incidents during the baseline is shown in Table 6. Race/ethnicity will also be presented for children in placement during the baseline in Section C-4.

Table 6. Distribution of race/ethnicity of children in incidents during baseline by county

County	Demo/ Comp	N	White (%)	African - American (%)	Hispanic (%)	Other (%)	Missing
Group 1							
Belmont	D	1,225	94.3	3.9	0.2	1.6	2
Crawford	D	1,058	97.8	0.7	0.4	1.1	8
Hancock	C	864	93.5	1.0	3.6	1.9	56
Hocking	C	1,017	99.9	0.1	0	0	1
Miami	C	929	93.8	3.4	0.8	2.0	5
Muskingum	D	2,216	94.4	3.5	0	2.1	113
Group 2							
Allen	C	2,223	69.1	24.8	1.2	4.9	158
Columbiana	C	648	95.7	2.3	0.3	1.7	46
Greene	D	2,359	84.6	9.5	0.9	5.0	15
Medina	D	1,321	94.8	1.8	0.2	3.2	64
Richland	D	1,945	79.0	17.6	0.3	3.1	166
Warren	C	1,357	98.9	0.5	0.4	0.1	15
Wood	C	988	90.8	1.8	6.6	0.8	11
Group 3							
Clermont	C	4,448	97.9	1.4	0.2	0.5	148
Lorain	D	2,725	64.3	18.8	6.8	10.1	294
Mahoning	C	3,516	49.2	44.1	3.5	3.3	157
Portage	D	2,826	90.4	6.7	0.2	2.7	197
Stark	D	8,489	77.9	17.9	0.5	3.6	6
Trumbull	C	1,533	80.1	15.1	0.1	4.6	14
Group 4							
Franklin	D	21,378	55.9	37.2	0.9	6.0	106
Montgomery	C	10,603	58.1	40.2	0.2	1.4	63
Summit	C	14,294	62.5	32.7	0.4	4.4	416
Demonstration Totals		45,542	70.1	23.9	1.0	4.9	971
Comparison Totals		42,420	69.5	26.9	0.8	2.7	1,090

Note: "Other" in the table above includes Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan, bi-racial, multi-racial, and FACSIS "other" category. Ashtabula, Butler, Clark, Fairfield, and Scioto Counties are excluded due to missing data. Hamilton County is excluded because of high percentage of data (59%) listed as "other."

C.2. Caseload for Ongoing Services

After an investigation of child abuse or neglect or an assessment of non-child abuse/neglect case, a child (or family) case can be opened for ongoing services. In FACSIS, an initial case type assignment would be made.

The size and characteristics of each county's ongoing caseload are important. This section of the report examines three aspects of ongoing caseload during the baseline: number of open cases at the end of each quarter; caseload by new, active, and reopened status (case mix); and use of case type during the baseline.

C.2.a. Number of Clients in Open Cases at the End of Each Quarter

Counties open a case in FACSIS for each child and family. Each client in the family is identified with that case. The count of active cases at a point in time indicates the active workload for child welfare staff in each county office. This section presents caseloads by clients receiving ongoing services. Data are presented by quarter starting with the active caseload on the first day of the baseline, October 1, 1995, then presenting caseload on the last day of each quarter, ending with September 30, 1997, the day prior to the start of the ProtectOhio demonstration period. The demonstration group's total caseload is consistently 50 percent higher at the end of each quarter than the comparison group. The ratio drops just below 50 percent at the end of Q3 (June 30, 1996). This trend and each quarter total are affected greatly by the Group 4 (Metro) counties. Franklin and Hamilton account for almost two-thirds (62%) of the demonstration group total average, while Montgomery and Summit Counties account for about half (53%) of the comparison total (see Table 7).

Table 7. Number of clients in ongoing cases at end of quarter by group and county

County	Demo/ Comp	Start of Baseline (10/1/95)	Q1 (12/31/95)	Q2 3/31/96)	Q3 (6/30/96)	Q4 (9/30/96)	Q5 (12/31/96)	Q6 (3/31/97)	Q7 (6/30/97)	Q8 (9/30/97)	Average
Group 1											
Ashtabula	D	409	381	357	374	383	384	370	382	376	380
Belmont	D	246	250	244	265	294	300	288	299	296	276
Crawford	D	110	116	122	117	118	129	122	119	121	119
Hancock	C	89	95	96	99	96	95	107	109	119	101
Hocking	C	171	159	172	169	144	148	137	132	158	154
Miami	C	252	252	253	244	237	247	243	220	222	241
Muskingum	D	701	678	634	629	621	564	552	511	492	598
Scioto	C	183	164	173	189	173	150	170	206	181	177
Group 2											
Allen	C	505	511	509	458	480	476	462	421	378	467
Columbiana	C	174	185	190	202	190	184	180	183	193	187
Fairfield	D	388	422	399	349	353	379	400	382	393	385
Greene	D	628	601	636	645	646	595	580	585	544	607
Medina	D	198	198	166	167	167	168	178	174	170	176
Richland	D	695	710	717	740	742	745	739	755	766	734
Warren	C	255	264	276	262	246	263	268	269	255	262
Wood	C	200	185	200	193	183	179	172	166	170	183
Group 3											
Butler	C	1,552	1,611	1,639	1,643	1,619	1,628	1,646	1,640	1,692	1,630
Clark	D	1,010	995	949	1,025	987	989	978	914	764	957
Clermont	C	439	434	418	455	465	475	515	490	479	463
Lorain	D	1,095	1,165	1,133	1,095	1,108	1,032	940	917	829	1,035
Mahoning	C	1,098	1,100	1,118	1,199	1,223	1,183	1,282	1,273	1,307	1,198
Portage	D	381	350	334	354	368	384	381	423	429	378
Stark	D	1,961	2,028	2,151	2,221	2,304	2,358	2,291	2,182	2,061	2,173
Trumbull	C	1,541	1,579	1,534	1,467	1,327	1,278	1,254	1,206	1,188	1,375
Group 4											
Franklin	D	7,036	6,971	7,168	6,904	6,904	7,186	7,644	7,540	7,418	7,197
Hamilton	D	5,353	5,215	5,118	5,299	5,433	5,724	5,959	6,091	6,136	5,592
Montgomery	C	4,321	4,167	4,103	4,101	4,060	4,168	4,332	4,486	4,414	4,239
Summit	C	1,665	1,593	2,477	3,220	3,283	3,297	3,389	3,465	3,487	2,875
Total											
Demonstration Totals		20,211	20,080	20,128	20,184	20,428	20,937	21,422	21,274	20,795	20,607
Comparison Totals		12,445	12,299	13,158	13,901	13,726	13,771	14,157	14,266	14,243	13,552

C.2.b. Ongoing Caseload by New, Active, and Reopened Status

There is a presumption that children in new child welfare cases demand extra time and attention from child welfare workers. Relationships must be established with child and family members, and assessments and much paperwork must be completed—all of which are tasks that require extra caseworker time. Therefore, many practitioners try to balance their caseloads between new and known cases. From an aggregate view, cases already active can linger in the system, creating a "backlog" or buildup of old cases. As a preliminary view of this case duration issue, FACSIS data are used to look at the case mix during the baseline period. The clients in ongoing cases during the baseline were sorted into three groups: those clients with first case opening in ongoing service during the baseline, those clients who were active in a case at the start of the baseline, and those clients who were attached to a case previous to the baseline which closed prior to the baseline and then was reopened during the baseline. These data are presented in Table 8.

The demonstration and comparison groups, aggregated, showed similar case mixes during the baseline. Sixty-four percent of clients in cases in the demonstration group were new or reopened compared to 66 percent in the comparison group (50% new and 16% reopened). In one demonstration county, Crawford, over half (54%) of the cases were new clients. Similarly, four counties in the comparison group, Hancock (51%), Hocking (51%), Scioto (53%), and Warren (54%), had a high percentage of new cases.

Looking at new and reopened cases together also highlights one comparison county, Summit, which served two-thirds (67%) of the clients in new or reopened cases. More qualitative understanding of county practice and caseload assignment is necessary before this can be interpreted as a difference in types of cases served, including less use of substitute care services, or differences in county case flow.

Table 8. Ongoing caseload by new, active, and reopened status of clients during baseline by group and county

County	Demo/ Comp	N	New During Period (%)	Active During Period (%)	Reopen During Period (%)
Group 1					
Ashtabula	D	792	32	51	16
Belmont	D	529	43	47	10
Crawford	D	261	54	42	4
Hancock	C	260	51	34	15
Hocking	C	418	51	41	8
Miami	C	443	38	57	5
Muskingum	D	1,245	34	56	10
Scioto	C	468	53	39	8
Group 2					
Allen	C	901	34	56	10
Columbiana	C	319	41	55	4
Fairfield	D	678	36	57	7
Greene	D	1,324	41	47	12
Medina	D	418	44	48	8
Richland	D	1,848	42	39	20
Warren	C	658	54	39	7
Wood	C	315	34	63	3
Group 3					
Butler	C	3,011	42	52	6
Clark	D	1,684	34	60	6
Clermont	C	897	42	50	8
Lorain	D	1,962	39	56	5
Mahoning	C	2,655	42	41	16
Portage	D	751	40	51	9
Stark	D	3,644	37	54	9
Trumbull	C	2,911	37	53	10
Group 4					
Franklin	D	16,280	40	43	16
Hamilton	D	13,255	41	46	13
Montgomery	C	9,743	41	44	15
Summit	C	6,577	47	33	20
Demonstration Totals		44,671	40	47	13
Comparison Totals		29,576	42	44	14

C.2.c. Use of Case Types

Each time a client is offered ongoing services, a case type is assigned in FACSIS. Services can include temporary or long-term substitute care and require agency custody. If the child can be maintained safely in his or her own home (or that of a relative), ongoing services are provided at home. Services can be provided voluntarily to family (voluntary) or as a protective measure (protective services or protective supervision order). Other special cases can be assigned for postadoptive services, child of IV-E parent, interstate county supervision for placements, and private agency services (adoption services or purchase of service). Some counties also have agreements with ODHS to open custody cases on behalf of the court (court custody and court custody with PCSA involvement). The total number of case type designations is presented in Table 9, by distribution of each. It is not child-specific. If a child switches from one case type to another both are included in the total count. Case type is related to the services provided to each child in the family but is a client event in FACSIS. Family members in a case can have different case types.

Protective services is the most frequently used case type overall in both the demonstration and comparison groups: 51 percent in the demonstration group and 45 percent in the comparison group. According to counties interviewed, protective services are typically provided following an investigation of an abuse/neglect incident. They also might be used after a child is returned home after a custody case closes. One director suggested that protective services is used, sometimes extensively, while waiting for a court date.

Conversely, some counties in each of the groups used protective services infrequently. One director felt that he did not need to use it because the court responded quickly with court-ordered PSO or custody, without any delay. These infrequent users included, in Group 1: Crawford (7%) and Miami (4%); Allen (6%), Columbiana (11%), and Wood (7%) in Group 2, and Portage County (16%) in Group 3. All of the Group 4 (Metro) counties used this case type more frequently than any other categories.

Custody is used with similar frequency as a case type in both the demonstration (for 25% of all case types) and comparison (for 27% of all case types) groups. In several counties, custody is the most frequently used case type. In Group 1, this includes two demonstration counties: Belmont (38%) and Crawford (55%), and two comparison counties, Miami (43%) and Scioto (47%). In Group 2, two comparison counties, Columbiana (38%) and Wood (43%), and in Group 3, two demonstration counties, Portage (41%) and Stark (38%), used custody most frequently as a case type during the baseline.

Voluntary services, as a case type, are rarely used by most demonstration counties. Overall, 3 percent of case types for demonstration counties are voluntary services, compared to 11 percent overall in the comparison group. Fairfield (15%), Hamilton (9%), and Portage (7%) Counties were the only occasional users of this case type in the demonstration group. In the comparison group, three counties, Allen (45%), Mahoning (44%), and Trumbull (44%), used voluntary services most frequently as a case type.

The project team will investigate if counties that rarely use voluntary services screen out these cases as referrals to other systems or services or prefer to make them other types of cases where PCSA has more clout (protective service or PSO). The case type can be used to describe a county's preference for type of service or it could indicate the effects of external influences on decisions made in child welfare, such as backlogged courts. Court outcome will be examined next.

Table 9. Distribution of case types used during baseline by group and county

County	Demo/ Comp	N	Voluntary Services (%)	Protective Services (%)	Protective Supervision Order (%)	Custody (%)	Post Adoptive (%)	Interstate Courtesy Supervision (%)	Child in Court Custody (%)	Missing
Group 1										
Ashtabula	D	3,228	0	68	10	19	3	0	0	16
Belmont	D	1,497	0	37	19	38	6	0	0	10
Crawford	D	673	2	7	30	55	6	0	0	32
Hancock	C	665	0	62	15	17	6	0	0	0
Hocking	C	1,132	0	26	36	33	4	0	0	4
Miami	C	1,045	9	4	39	43	4	0	0	31
Muskingum	D	3,848	0	64	16	17	3	0	0	11
Scioto	C	1,027	9	22	17	47	4	0	0	51
Group 2										
Allen	C	2,511	45	6	16	28	4	0	0	27
Columbiana	C	635	5	11	25	38	18	1	0	17
Fairfield	D	1,174	15	49	4	23	9	1	0	42
Greene	D	3,325	0	58	19	20	2	0	0	4
Medina	D	856	2	39	20	30	8	0	0	23
Richland	D	6,449	3	61	9	21	4	0	0	495
Warren	C	1,318	3	60	10	23	4	0	0	2
Wood	C	708	2	7	39	43	8	0	0	3
Group 3										
Butler	C	5,892	12	41	2	38	7	0	0	89
Clark	D	4,053	3	55	10	26	5	1	0	20
Clermont	C	2,534	1	51	14	27	6	1	0	209
Lorain	D	4,804	0	57	10	25	6	1	0	49
Mahoning	C	7,043	44	25	7	18	5	1	0	58
Portage	D	1,886	7	16	31	41	6	0	0	16
Stark	D	9,508	1	28	25	38	7	1	0	175
Trumbull	C	6,929	44	25	13	15	4	0	0	11
Group 4										
Franklin	D	65,602	0	49	23	26	2	0	0	125
Hamilton	D	34,675	9	60	8	18	3	0	1	1,238
Montgomery	C	25,395	1	65	10	20	5	0	0	49
Summit	C	16,435	0	46	11	38	4	1	0	3,845
Total										
Demonstration Totals		141,578	3	51	17	25	3	<1	<1	2,256
Comparison Totals		73,269	11	45	11	27	5	<1	0	4,396

Note: Percentages sometimes do not total to 100 because of rounding. Private agency adoption assistance and child in court custody with PCSA involvement contained trivial values and are excluded from this table.

C.3. Court Results and Custody Caseloads

Complaints to court are filed for children when the county PCSA requests custody or a petition for protective supervision of a child. Children in indicated or substantiated abuse or neglect reports are represented in these client events. Since the court must be involved in these critical decisions, outcomes of the hearings reflect the court's preferences for the type of ordered services.

Understanding the impact of court decisions on child welfare is central to assessing the child welfare caseloads in each county. Because the court is the gateway to the PSCA for children with delinquency and unruly conduct complaints, the data should document how these cases enter ongoing caseloads and county custody placements. Some state officials expressed concern about the quality of FACSIS court data. Our team will review with counties the data presented to validate data availability and accuracy. Data are presented as adjudication results, outcomes of dispositional hearings, first custody types for children, and overall use of custody types during the baseline period.

C.3.a. Adjudication Results in Baseline

Table 10 presents a count of results of adjudication hearings as recorded in FACSIS. The count excludes dismissals. The outcomes give a reflection of court caseload characteristics and preferences. Data quality is clearly the cause of some of the variance among counties. This count is not child-specific but includes all adjudications recorded during the baseline. Children who appear twice or more for adjudication during the baseline are counted multiple times.

Overall, in the comparison group adjudication resulted in dependency more frequently (69%) than in the demonstration group (58%). Conversely, delinquency and unruly/status offender was a more frequent result in the demonstration group (18%) versus the comparison group (4%).

Dependency is the major type of adjudication in these county counts. In Groups 1, 2, and 3, dependency accounts for nearly all of the adjudication outcomes in some counties. For these counties that is a major proportion of the hearing results. For the Metro counties, there is more balance with abuse /neglect and dependency cases.

The child welfare system is also used for adjudication of delinquency and unruly/status offenders in participating counties. Scioto[6] and Crawford mentioned that the juvenile courts place juvenile delinquents with the county child welfare agencies. Scioto explained that the lack of facilities for runaways and juvenile delinquents cause them to be placed with the child welfare agency. Crawford has a strong child services board and juvenile court which leads to differences of opinion between the two agencies as to how to deal with unruly and delinquent youth.

[6] Data for Scioto County during the baseline showed no use of delinquency as adjudication type. Followup with the county will be made during the collection of additional data.

Table 10. Percentage of adjudication results during baseline by group and county

County	Demo/ Comp	N	Dependency (%)	Abuse (%)	Neglect (%)	Delinquency (%)	Unruly/Status Offender (%)
Group 1							
Ashtabula	D	126	83	2	13	1	1
Belmont	D	177	74	3	2	18	3
Crawford	D	45	7	0	16	42	36
Hancock	C	46	59	15	26	0	0
Hocking	C	185	60	10	7	17	6
Miami	C	108	60	8	24	3	5
Muskingum	D	226	31	13	56	0	0
Scioto	C	3	33	0	67	0	0
Group 2							
Allen	C	176	100	0	0	0	0
Columbiana	C	102	56	9	29	1	5
Fairfield	D	82	96	0	4	0	0
Greene	D	236	93	3	3	1	0
Medina	D	85	79	11	11	0	0
Richland	D	855	82	7	5	3	2
Warren	C	64	48	19	33	0	0
Wood	C	109	58	14	17	12	0
Group 3							
Butler	C	818	65	11	21	2	1
Clark	D	371	89	0	0	8	3
Clermont	C	415	69	3	8	20	1
Lorain	D	245	49	16	35	0	0
Mahoning	C	547	99	0	0	1	0
Portage	D	311	87	6	5	3	0
Stark	D	1,135	48	13	38	1	0
Trumbull	C	581	91	4	4	0	0
Group 4							
Franklin	D	4,813	46	4	15	29	6
Hamilton	D	1,665	68	9	22	1	0
Montgomery	C	1,889	63	5	31	1	0
Summit	C	1,590	59	8	32	0	0
Total							
Demonstration Totals		10,372	58	6	18	15	3
Comparison Totals		6,633	69	6	22	3	1

Note: Dismissed cases are excluded from total. 0% and 100% can result from rounding.

C.3.b. Dispositional Hearings Outcomes

Dispositional hearing outcomes reflect each county court's preference for custody or alternatives to custody. When looking at outcomes of dispositional hearings, the demonstration counties had twice as many outcomes when contrasted with the comparison counties. This situation is expected when considering that the demonstration counties have a cumulative population that is twice the population of the comparison counties.

Upon examining the outcomes of the dispositional hearings, differences become apparent between the ways demonstration and comparison counties handle children. Although the percentage of custodies awarded to the county are similar in both sets of counties (47% and 43%), the percentage of custodies awarded to relatives, whether with or without protective supervision, are much higher in the comparison counties (34%) than in the demonstration counties (16%). This situation may be the result of how counties are treating the use of relatives for placements.[7]

In addition, the dispositions of some courts tend to result in custody to the county over custody to a relative. The data shows that the counties where custody tended to be the primary outcome were almost all demonstration counties. In Group 1, Ashtabula (71%) and Crawford (82%); in Group 2, Fairfield (74%) and Richland (63%); in Group 3, Clark (56%), Lorain (52%), and Stark; and in Group 4, Hamilton (68%) had over 50 percent of their dispositional hearing outcomes awarding custody to the county. Only two comparison counties had a similar pattern, Scioto (73%) in Group 1 and Butler (75%) in Group 3.

[7] This issue is discussed in Chapter Two, as well as in this chapter (II.A.2), and will be explored more in future years.

Table 11. Distribution of outcomes of dispositional hearings by group and county

County	Demo/ Comp	N	Custody Award (%)	Custody to Relative (%)	Custody to Relative/Agency Protective Supervision (%)	Custody to Non-Relative (%)	Custody to Non-Relative/ Agency Protective Supervision (%)	Custody to Another Agency (%)	Protective Supervision (%)
Group 1									
Ashtabula	D	311	71	1	0	0	0	1	28
Belmont	D	254	52	14	1	0	0	2	32
Crawford	D	33	82	15	0	0	0	0	3
Hancock	C	71	28	7	13	0	0	0	52
Hocking	C	170	13	9	32	1	0	2	43
Miami	C	225	45	8	11	1	1	0	33
Muskingum	D	455	31	6	14	0	0	0	49
Scioto	C	22	73	9	5	0	0	0	14
Group 2									
Allen	C	341	36	12	1	1	0	0	50
Columbiana	C	163	39	12	9	2	1	2	36
Fairfield	D	102	74	2	1	1	0	1	22
Greene	D	484	29	7	13	1	1	1	48
Medina	D	141	46	6	3	2	1	1	41
Richland	D	945	63	9	3	1	0	0	24
Warren	C	200	34	31	14	6	0	2	16
Wood	C	199	45	1	8	1	0	0	46
Group 3									
Butler	C	1,035	75	19	1	1	0	1	3
Clark	D	503	56	10	0	0	0	2	32
Clermont	C	643	37	36	3	3	0	0	20
Lorain	D	674	52	8	15	1	1	0	23
Mahoning	C	757	36	29	1	4	0	0	30
Portage	D	1,348	41	12	7	0	0	0	39
Stark	D	1,201	52	3	12	0	1	0	31
Trumbull	C	881	25	15	15	1	1	0	42
Group 4									
Franklin	D	9,033	31	13	9	1	1	1	44
Hamilton	D	5,670	68	9	1	1	0	2	18
Montgomery	C	3,755	40	31	14	2	0	0	13
Summit	C	2,103	49	18	8	1	0	1	23
Total									
Demonstration Totals		21,154	47	10	6	1	0	1	34
Comparison Totals		10,565	43	24	10	2	0	0	21

Note: Dismissals, extensions of placement and annual court reviews are excluded from total.

C.3.c. First Custody Type of Children in Baseline by County

The way in which different counties bring children into custody varies. For Table 12, our team examined all children who entered custody during the baseline and focused on their first type of custody. Overall there were some notable findings. The comparison counties tended to favor using officer acceptance in contrast to the demonstration counties. The use of ex parte, however, was similar for the demonstration and comparison counties. Ashtabula (96%) was one of a small handful of counties that relied heavily on ex parte. In Scioto, 85 percent of the first type of custodies were temporary court ordered.

Additionally, when looking at agreements for temporary custody (voluntary custodies), the demonstration counties had a much higher percentage when contrasted with the comparison counties. This is significant because in the process evaluation interviews, several counties expressed concern over the excessive use of voluntary placements. Fairfield (44%) and Mahoning (46%) used this custody type often. Many other demonstration counties tended to rely on this custody type for a significant portion of children in the system. This becomes more obvious when looking at the total use of custody types during the baseline discussed in Section C.3.d, which follows.

C.3.d. Use of Custody Types

When examining all custody types for each child who had a period of custody during the baseline, the differences in how counties bring children into custody become more clear. Table 13 shows that the comparison counties favored the use of officer acceptance more often than the demonstration counties (18% compared to 7%). In contrast, the demonstration counties used agreement for temporary custody (voluntary placements) more often than the comparison counties (13% versus 3%). Figure 2 shows that the percentage of custody types that were agreements for temporary custody was rather high in some counties. In Group 1, Belmont (18%) and Miami (14%) had high percentages of voluntary placements. Similarly, in Group 2, Fairfield (17%) and Richland (25%) had high percentages of voluntary placements. The same situation occurred in Mahoning (22%), Lorain (18%), and Trumbull (13%) in Group 3, and in Franklin (15%) and Hamilton (17%) in Group 4.

Table 12. First custody types for children entering custody by group and county

County	Demo/ Comp	N	Officer Acceptance %	Temporary Commitment %	Agreement for TC (30) %	Temporary Court Order %	Agency Authority %	Ex Parte %	Court Custody %	Other (%)
Group 1										
Ashtabula	D	206	0	0	0	4	0	96	0	0
Belmont	D	161	0	29	27	9	35	0	0	1
Crawford	D	141	16	46	13	0	2	22	0	1
Hancock	C	64	33	11	6	23	0	27	0	0
Hocking	C	148	0	18	10	0	0	70	1	1
Miami	C	174	0	17	31	9	0	39	0	5
Muskingum	D	213	15	19	6	44	16	0	0	0
Scioto	C	247	0	1	4	85	2	8	0	0
Group 2										
Allen	C	156	0	3	6	24	0	67	0	0
Columbiana	C	99	0	9	13	37	0	39	0	1
Fairfield	D	140	0	11	44	29	0	14	0	1
Greene	D	241	0	10	17	11	0	58	4	0
Medina	D	92	47	4	20	27	0	1	0	1
Richland	D	502	0	14	39	3	0	44	0	1
Warren	C	83	0	18	5	37	0	40	0	0
Wood	C	69	0	16	1	25	10	48	0	0
Group 3										
Butler	C	851	30	10	3	7	0	49	0	1
Clark	D	326	30	25	9	17	0	19	0	0
Clermont	C	286	40	34	1	24	1	0	0	0
Lorain	D	338	0	28	39	1	0	32	0	0
Mahoning	C	388	42	3	46	1	0	7	0	0
Portage	D	270	50	6	13	19	11	0	0	0
Stark	D	1,133	31	11	0	59	0	0	0	0
Trumbull	C	297	32	11	33	0	0	25	0	0
Group 4										
Franklin	D	5,366	26	7	21	27	0	18	0	0
Hamilton	D	2,402	0	16	42	23	1	4	14	0
Montgomery	C	1,610	55	2	0	13	13	17	0	0
Summit	C	2,224	69	3	1	27	0	0	0	0
Demonstration Total			18	12	24	26	2	16	3	0
Comparison Total			46	7	6	19	3	18	0	0

Note: "Other" includes permanent commitment, permanent surrender, and any term foster care and agreement for temporary custody (60 days).

Table 13. Percentage of custody types during baseline by county

County	Demo/ Comp	N	Officer Acceptance (%)	Temporary Commitment (%)	Permanent Commitment (%)	Permanent Surrender (%)	Agreement for TC (30) (%)	Temporary Court Order (%)	Agency Authority (%)	Ex Parte (%)	Long Term Foster Care (%)	Agreement for TC (60) (%)	Court Custody (%)
Group 1													
Ashtabula	D	691	0	27	8	0	0	30	0	29	5	0	0
Belmont	D	426	0	33	15	2	18	15	13	0	3	0	0
Crawford	D	320	8	45	4	2	10	12	1	14	4	1	0
Hancock	C	106	20	25	6	4	6	24	0	16	0	0	0
Hocking	C	246	0	42	5	0	7	0	0	43	2	0	0
Miami	C	424	0	34	10	4	14	9	0	16	12	0	0
Muskingum	D	450	7	29	12	1	3	36	8	0	5	0	0
Scioto	C	353	0	1	6	0	3	80	1	8	0	0	0
Group 2													
Allen	C	557	0	30	10	0	3	30	0	19	8	0	0
Columbiana	C	192	0	13	11	10	7	33	0	22	3	1	0
Fairfield	D	410	0	34	11	1	17	24	0	6	6	1	0
Greene	D	592	0	27	4	0	12	27	0	24	4	0	2
Medina	D	281	15	31	7	2	7	29	0	2	6	0	0
Richland	D	1,429	0	29	5	0	25	17	0	16	7	0	0
Warren	C	225	0	34	9	0	2	32	0	15	8	0	0
Wood	C	271	0	33	14	1	0	21	3	13	15	0	0
Group 3													
Butler	C	2,644	10	26	10	1	1	19	0	25	8	0	0
Clark	D	938	11	36	11	1	5	17	0	9	9	0	0
Clermont	C	823	16	40	7	2	2	27	0	0	6	0	0
Lorain	D	1,092	0	39	10	0	18	2	0	16	14	0	0
Mahoning	C	1,188	15	27	10	1	22	10	0	12	3	0	0
Portage	D	867	16	38	7	2	6	23	4	0	5	0	0
Stark	D	3,121	11	33	13	0	0	34	0	0	9	0	0
Trumbull	C	890	11	37	12	2	13	0	0	21	5	0	0
Group 4													
Franklin	D	12,381	11	30	6	0	15	20	0	15	2	1	0
Hamilton	D	6,418	0	32	8	0	17	25	0	1	10	0	5
Montgomery	C	4,872	18	24	8	0	0	33	4	6	7	0	0
Summit	C	5,301	31	24	6	0	0	34	0	0	4	0	0
Total													
Demonstration Totals		29,416	7	32	8	0	13	22	1	10	6	0	1
Comparison Totals		18,092	18	26	8	1	3	27	1	10	6	0	0

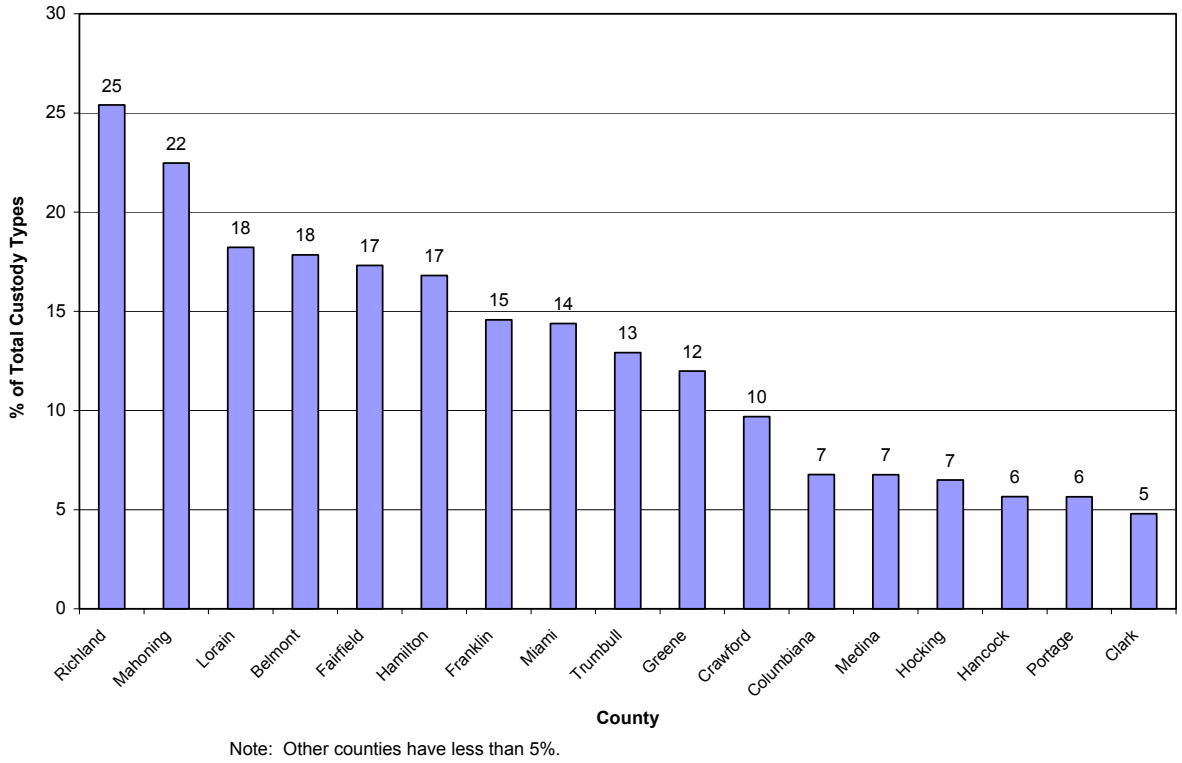

Figure 2. Agreements for temporary custody as percentage of total custody types during baseline

C.3.e. Number of Children in Custody at the End of Quarter

Counties have legal responsibility for children in their custody. The caseload of children in custody was identified in FACSIS, looking at all children with open custody episodes at the end of each quarter during the baseline. The summary of totals for each county in groups is presented in Table III-3 in the Appendix. The table presents data from October 1, 1995 and then for the end of each quarter through September 30, 1997. Figure 3 below highlights the contrasts in these data.

The number of children in custody in the demonstration group is consistently around two-thirds higher than the comparison group. The demonstration group starts the baseline with 6,441 children in custody. The count increases through March 1997 (Q5) with 5 percent increase to 6,745 children. By the end of the baseline, it has leveled off near the starting level, 6,470 children. The comparison group increases slowly over the baseline from 3,966 children in custody on October 1, 1995 and ending with 4,306 children on September 30, 1997 (9% increase). Much of this difference can be attributed to Summit County, in the comparison group, where the number of children in custody increased from 898 on October 1, 1995 to 1,285 on September 30, 1997, a 43 percent increase.

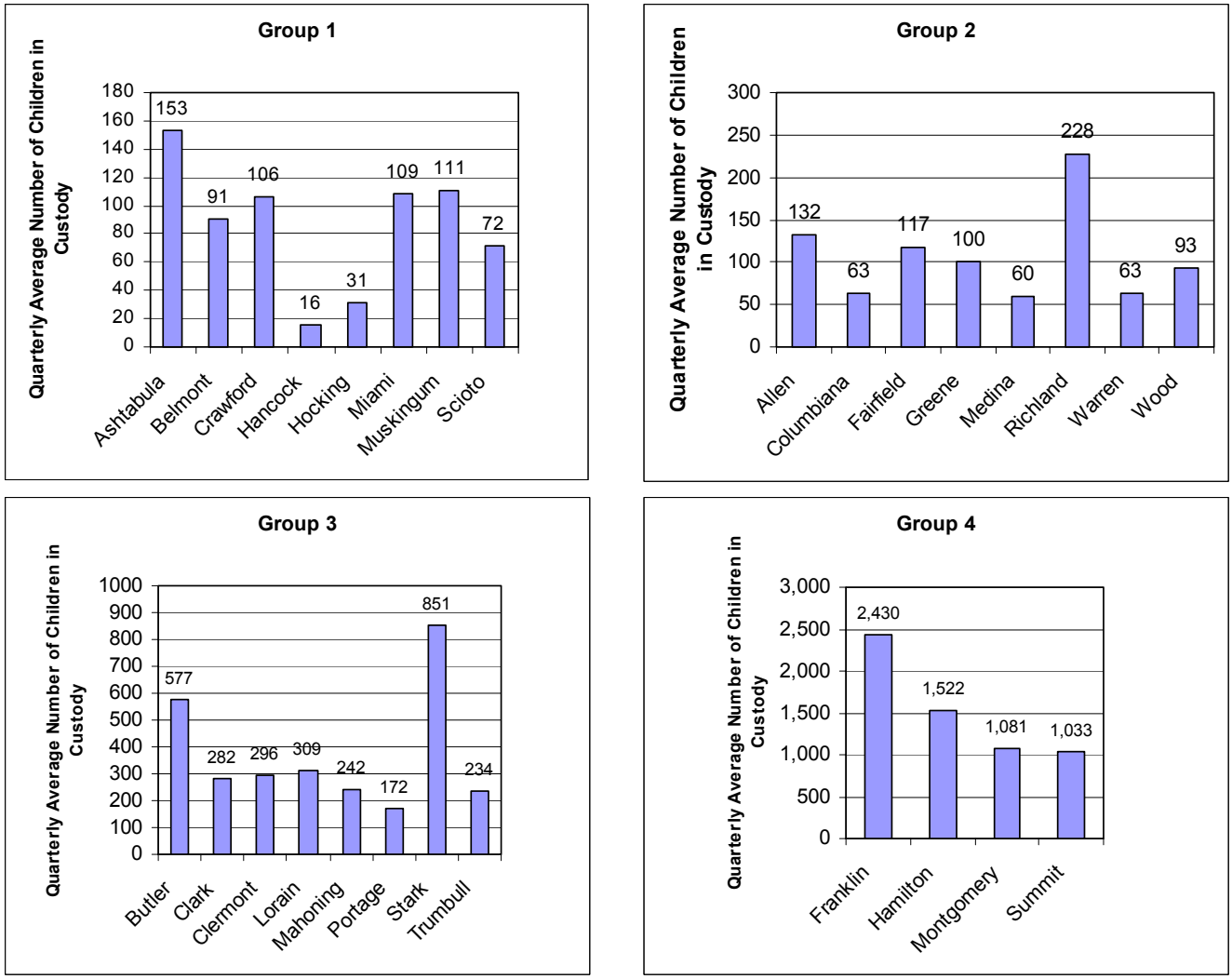

Figure 3. Quarterly average number of children in custody by group and county

C.4. Placement Caseload

In describing placement for a child during the baseline, the FACSIS data file is constructed to follow each through each episode. An episode, using Ohio's CPOE terminology[8] is a full stay in substitute care from the time (date) the child is removed from his/her home to the time (date) the child returns home or other final discharge out of substitute care (finalized adoption, reaching age of majority, etc.). In between these two dates, the child might stay in the same particular facility or switch from one setting to another. In this section, episodes and settings will be considered.

Because of the interest in excessive non-abuse/neglect placements, often described as "dumping," (see Chapter 2), several caseload indicators about new placements are offered. They

[8] In much of the child welfare literature this is called a "spell".

include first setting for initial placements, age at initial placement, and reason for placement by age. These nine caseload indicators should comprehensively describe the placement caseload from three perspectives: how many children are in placement, who the new children coming into placement are, and how days are being used.

C.4.a. Use of Placement Settings (Types)

A child requiring substitute care is placed into a facility with a specified level of services and staff. The type of facility a child enters during an episode depends on factors including: availability; professional judgment, especially of casework staff; judges involved in the custody decisions, and the child's adjustment and willingness (especially for older children)[9]. A count of all placement types used during the baseline presents a picture of each county's likelihood to use each type. If a child begins an episode in a foster home and moves to a group home, the count would include two types (1 foster home, 1 group home). For this presentation, types have been aggregated into the following categories: foster homes, non-licensed relative homes, non-licensed non-relative homes, adoptive homes, group homes, certified residential centers (CRCs), and independent living. Total placement (types) are listed in Table 14 along with the distribution in percentages by placement type. The population used to provide the percentage of children in placement by resource type is the number of children in placement anytime during the baseline timeframe. The children were in placement on October 1, 1995, or were placed after October 1, 1995.

The demonstration counties and comparison counties differ modestly in the use of foster homes, with comparison counties utilizing foster homes in 59 percent of the placements and demonstration counties utilizing foster homes 50 percent of the time. Demonstration counties utilize non-licensed relative homes 5 percent more than do comparison counties and group homes 3 percent less.

CRCs. The demonstration group was a bigger user of group homes and CRC types (22%) compared to 16 percent for the comparison group in total. These overall totals mask some of the group and county variations. For Group 1, Crawford and Ashtabula, both demonstration counties, were more frequent users of CRCs, the most expensive and restrictive level of care; 33 percent and 21 percent, respectively, of their total placement. Allen (14%), Columbiana (15%), and Wood (12%), all comparison counties, were the most frequent users in Group 2; similar were Clark (11%) and Portage (14%), both demonstration counties, in Group 3. All the Group 4 counties, with the exception of Montgomery, were frequent users of CRCs. Summit had almost a quarter (23%) of its placements in CRCs during the baseline.

Conversely, there are several counties that rarely use the more expensive group home or CRC types. These include Hancock (3%) and Hocking (2%) Counties in Group 1, and Fairfield (3%) in Group 2.

[9] A further discussion of factors influencing placement decisions is included in Chapter 2.