

BACKGROUND

Children in foster care have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), including abuse and neglect, and these ACEs place them at higher risk of lifelong mental health issues, behavioral problems, and teen pregnancy. In addition, their children are more likely to be placed into foster care than the general population.

In Texas, limited data exists about the rate of foster care alumni's children placed into care, though anecdotally, it seems that many caregivers report having grown up in foster care when our clinical team is evaluating their child for abuse or neglect concerns.

PURPOSE

Determine the prevalence of parental history of foster care placement in children undergoing an evaluation for child abuse and neglect at Texas Children's.

METHODS

- Retrospective observational study
- Reviewed charts of children admitted to Texas Children's Hospital and evaluated by the Child Protection Team (CPT) over a three year period between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2018.
- In total, 640 records were reviewed for demographic characteristics of caregivers/children, parental histories, and patient's ultimate CPT diagnosis and discharge disposition.

Caregiver History

Definition

Foster care involvement in childhood	Any caregiver-reported history of being placed in a ward, group home, or private home of a state-certified caregiver at less than 18 years old
CPS involvement in childhood	Any caregiver-reported previous CPS cases while any caregiver was less than 18 years old
Kinship placement in childhood	Any caregiver-reported history of being placed with a family member/friend per CPS/court order (formal) or being raised primarily by someone other than a parent (informal)

Fig 1: Variables of interest

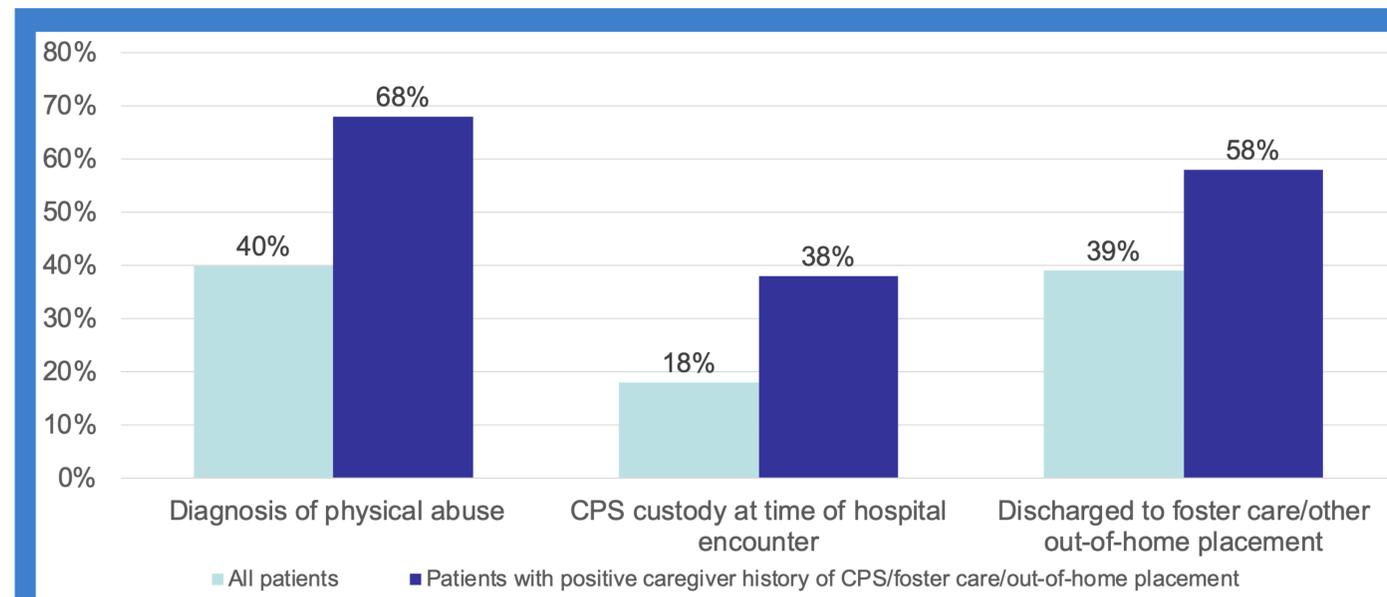


Fig 2: Selected patient characteristics in respect to caregiver history

RESULTS

- Only 5% of patients had caregivers whose childhood foster care involvement was clearly documented in the CPT and/or social work assessments.
- The patients whose caregivers reported a childhood history of foster care, CPS involvement, and/or other out-of-home placement were overall more likely to:
 - have a positive diagnosis of physical abuse at encounter,
 - be taken into CPS custody
 - be discharged to a non-parent than the overall sample population.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, more information is needed in order to accurately quantify the true prevalence of intergenerational foster care in this population.

A prospective study is to follow, which will include changing the way in which caregiver childhood history is collected and documented in our EHR to more clearly document intergenerational child welfare and foster care experiences

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