Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions

NDACAN Dataset Number 261
USER'S GUIDE

National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect

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PREFACE

The data for *Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions* have been given to the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN) for public distribution by Nancy Rolock, Kevin White, Heather Ringeisen, Rose Domanico, Rong Bai, and Leyla Stambaugh. Funding for the project was provided by Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Award Number(s): HHSP233201500039I).

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Authors should acknowledge the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN) and the original collector(s) of the data when publishing manuscripts that use data provided by the Archive. Users of these data are urged to follow some adaptation of the statement below.

The data used in this publication were made available by the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, and have been used with permission. Data from *Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions* were originally collected by Nancy Rolock, Kevin White, Heather Ringeisen, Rose Domanico, Rong Bai, and Leyla Stambaugh. Funding for the project was provided by Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Award Number(s): HHSP233201500039I). The collector(s) of the original data, the funder(s), NDACAN, Cornell University and their agents or employees bear no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

The bibliographic citation for this data collection is:

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PUBLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT

In accordance with the terms of the *Data License* for this dataset, users of these data are required to notify the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect of any published work or report based wholly or in part on these data. A copy of any completed manuscript, thesis abstract, or reprint should be emailed to NDACANsupport@cornell.edu . Such copies will be used to provide our funding agency with essential information about the use of NDACAN resources and to facilitate the exchange of information about research activities among data users and contributors.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the Understanding Post Adoption and Guardianship Instability for Children and Youth Who Exit Foster Care project is to examine rates of instability, factors associated with instability, and the supports and resources that promote post-permanency stability. Ultimately, the project aims to support efforts to build the capacity of federal, state, and local agencies to get accurate information about instability for children who exit foster care to adoption or guardianship. In order to examine these issues, two separate studies were conducted 1.) The Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions Study and 2.) The Survey of National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW) Adopted Youth, Young Adults, Adults, and Adoptive Parents. This dataset contains data from The Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions Study.

The Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions Study (hereafter referred to as "The Contact After Adoption or Guardianship Study") seeks to understand child welfare agency processes and procedures to help obtain better information on post adoption and post-guardianship instability. The study explores the intentional and unintentional ways public child welfare agencies contact or receive information about the well-being of children and youth (and in particular, their experiences of instability) who have exited the foster care system through adoption or guardianship. Additionally, this study investigates how child welfare agencies track children and youth who exit the foster care system to adoption or guardianship and what information they collect. The study used two web-based surveys of adoption program managers (APMs) in all 50-states. One web survey focused on adoption practices, which all AMPs received, and one focused on guardianship practices. Only APMs from the 38 states that have a federally subsidized guardianship program (i.e., Kin-GAP) were asked to complete the separate guardianship survey. Seventy-two percent of the 50 APMs responded to the adoption survey and 63% of the 38 guardianship APMs responded to the guardianship survey.

STUDY OVERVIEW

Study Identification

Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions

Principal Investigator(s):

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Funded By:
Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Award Number(s):
HHSP233201500039I

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the Understanding Post Adoption and Guardianship Instability for Children and Youth Who Exit Foster Care project is to examine rates of instability, factors associated with instability, and the supports and resources that promote post-permanency stability. Ultimately, the project aims to support efforts to build the capacity of federal, state, and local agencies to get accurate information about instability for children who exit foster care to adoption or guardianship. In order to examine these issues, two separate studies were conducted 1.) The Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions Study and 2.) The Survey of National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW) Adopted

Youth, Young Adults, Adults, and Adoptive Parents. This dataset contains data from The Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions Study.

Study Design

The study team and the Children's Bureau identified the adoption program managers (APMs) from all 50 states who would receive the study invitation with the web survey link(s). The Children's Bureau sent the initial outreach email that explained the study goals and parameters. A second email message to participants came from a member of the study team and included a link to the web survey(s), the consent process, and contact information for any questions or concerns. The AMPs had a total of nine weeks to complete the survey(s). During this time, follow-up reminder emails and phone calls were made to non-responders to encourage survey completion. It is important that research in this area address potential variations in post adoption versus post guardianship practices among state agencies. Child welfare agency contact with families who have adopted may be different from contact with families who have assumed guardianship. For example, the rules and procedures for adjusting an adoption versus a guardianship subsidy, and the services available to adoptive versus guardianship families, are different. Recognizing these differences, this study conducted two separate surveys—one focused on adoption practices and one focused on guardianship practices. APMs in states with approved guardianship program received two links: one for an adoption survey and a second for a guardianship survey. The surveys asked similar questions, but participants reported separately about their interactions with families formed through adoption and families formed through guardianship. To avoid participant confusion or misunderstanding, the PAGI project defined guardianship at the beginning of the web survey.

Date(s) of Data Collection

4/13/2021 - 6/10/2021

Geographic Area

United States of America's 50 states.

Unit of Observation

State-Level Adoption Programs

Sample

The Contact after Adoption or Guardianship Study used two web-based surveys of adoption program managers (APMs) in all 50-states. One web survey focused on adoption practices, which all APMs received, and one focused on guardianship practices. Only APMs from the 38 states that have a federally subsidized guardianship program (i.e., Kin-GAP) were asked to complete the separate guardianship survey.

Data Collection Procedures

Two web surveys were developed for this study: the Agency Web Survey on Adoption and the Agency Web Survey on Guardianship. Both web surveys were developed to gather information about child welfare agency operations and protocols related to their interactions with adoptive and/or guardianship families. The study team developed the surveys specifically for this project, based on discussions with current APMs and other key stakeholders. The surveys covered the following topics: Agency-initiated contact with families after adoption and guardianship (e.g., newsletters, well-being letters, agency follow-ups after service completion or subsidy change); Family-initiated contact with agencies after adoption and guardianship (e.g., helplines, phone calls to adoption or guardianship staff members at the agency, walk ins or office visits); Out of home or instability events after adoption (e.g., homelessness, run away, foster care re-entry); and The ability of child welfare agencies to link information on adoptive and guardianship families with existing child welfare administrative data systems. The participants accessed the web survey(s) through a unique link which was available for a total of nine weeks. The web survey(s) could be accessed at any time during those nine weeks, allowing the respondent flexibility to complete the survey at their convenience. Among those who fully completed the survey, on average, it took 21.55 minutes (SD = 20.44 minutes) to complete the adoption web survey and 10.84 minutes (SD = 10.32 minutes) to complete the guardianship web survey. The Agency Web Survey on Adoption was more extensive and included more items than the Agency Web Survey on Guardianship; consequently, several tables in Section 3 reflect only results from the Agency Web Survey on Adoption. We have inserted a N/A in the tables where questions were not asked in the guardianship survey.

Response Rates

For the adoption survey, a 72% response rate; for the guardianship survey a 63% response rate.

Sources of Information

Primary data collection.

Type of Data Collected

Survey

Measures

Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions: Adoption

The types of questions asked included the nature of contact between child welfare agency and adoptive families (e.g., do families call a general hotline or call a specific type of worker?). It was also asked whether if the child welfare agency regularly contacts families (e.g., through newsletters or mailings). Finally, it was also asked whether the child welfare agency tracks any information about children who exit foster care to adoption, including information about children

who reenter foster care after adoption. In sum, the goal was to try to understand both the nature of contact between adoptive families and child welfare agency and the tracking systems (if any) associated with this contact.

Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions: Guardianship

The types of questions asked included the nature of contact between the child welfare agency and adoptive or guardianship families (e.g., do families call a general hotline or call a specific type of worker?). It was also asked whether the child welfare agency regularly contacts families (e.g., through newsletters or mailings). Finally, it was also asked whether the child welfare agency tracks any information about children who exit foster care to adoption or guardianship, including information about children who reenter foster care after adoption or guardianship. In sum, the goal was to try to understand both the nature of contact between adoptive and guardianship families and child welfare agency, and the tracking systems (if any) associated with this contact.

Related Publications and Final Reports

Users are strongly encouraged to review published works, based upon these data, before doing analyses. To view a complete list of publications for this dataset, please visit our online citations collection called "canDL" at: or go to the child abuse and neglect Digital Library (canDL) NDACAN webpage: https://www.ndacan.acf.hhs.gov/candl/candl.cfm.

Analytic Considerations

Analysts should note that the states sampled were deidentified, though observations are linkable between the Adoption and Guardian files with CASEID. Note, at the time of the survey only 38 states had a federally subsidized guardianship program (i.e. Kin-GAP); these 38 states were asked to complete the separate guardianship survey.

Confidentiality Protection

This dataset has been de-identified by the data contributor, in consultation with NDACAN, prior to archiving. All primary identifiers have been removed and secondary identifiers have also been deleted or recoded to significantly reduce or eliminate disclosure risk. Site identifiers have been removed from the dataset. Users of this dataset are prohibited from attempting to re-identify any site.

Extent of Collection

This dataset contains a User's Guide, Codebook, survey instruments, and two datasets named "agency_adopt_prod" and "agency_guardian_prod" in file formats native to SPSS (.sav), Stata (.dta), and SAS (.sas7bdat). There are also import program files for SAS (.sas), SPSS (.sps), and Stata (.do) to read in the text (.dat) data file, and comma-delimited (.csv) data file for use with spreadsheet programs.

Extent of Processing

The data contributor conducted all data recodes and deletions prior to depositing the data with NDACAN. NDACAN created the User's Guide, Codebook, and data files formatted for SAS, SPSS, Stata, and a text and a comma-delimited data file.

DATA FILE INFORMATION

File Specifications

There are two sets of data: the Adoption file contains 130 variables and 50 records. The Guardian file contains 73 variables and 38 records.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APM – Adoption program manager

KinGAP - The Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program

PAGI – Post Adoption and Guardianship Instability

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Rolock, N., White, K., Bai, R., Ringeisen, H., Domanico, R., Stambaugh, L., Flanigan, C. (2021). Contact After Adoption or Guardianship: Child Welfare Agency and Family Interactions, OPRE Report # 2022-135. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/contact-after-adoption-or-guardianship-child-welfare-agency-and-family-interactions

Technical support for this dataset is provided by NDACAN.

Please send your inquiries to NDACANsupport@cornell.edu

Visit the User Support page of the NDACAN website for help documents and videos ((https://www.ndacan.acf.hhs.gov/user-support/user-support.cfm).