

CONNECTIONS FOR CHANGE



2016-2018 IMPACT REPORT



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
CHILD & ADOLESCENT DATA LAB
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



Historically, child welfare and juvenile justice systems have not relied on data or rigorous empirical evidence to drive decision-making or to inform public policy. We seek to change that.



CONTENT

- 03 DIRECTORS' MESSAGE
- 04 CHILD WELFARE
- 06 JUVENILE JUSTICE
- 08 EDUCATION
- 10 PUBLICATIONS
- 11 PARTNERS & SPONSORS



Brian Perron, PhD, Co-Director



Joseph Ryan, PhD, Co-Director

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The Data Lab is harnessing the power of existing data to address some of the most daunting problems in our communities.
 ”

Dear Friends,

This year marks the third anniversary of the Child and Adolescent Data Lab at the University of Michigan School of Social Work. We started with the idea that universities and public agencies could develop partnerships focused on using data as a way to help inform public policy in child welfare and juvenile justice. Some of you have been with us from the beginning and others have joined along the way.

In a relatively short period of time, the Data Lab has made tremendous progress advancing our mission. We view our accomplishments as just the start of something more inspiring and innovative here in Michigan.

The Data Lab has become a trustworthy partner with the State of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Children's Services Administration, the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) Trial Court Services and several other state and local governmental entities. Because of these relationships, we have been able to create data-sharing agreements across systems in order to provide useful and unique reports to the state.

We helped establish the Children's Data Cabinet, a group of leaders from the Children's Services Agency and SCAO that meets regularly to discuss complex problems in child welfare and determines research priorities for the Data Lab.

In 2017, Terri Gilbert, joined the Data Lab as its Project Manager. Gilbert has extensive knowledge from her many years of work in public and private human services organizations. Her perspective helps us to better understand and respond to the needs of practitioners in the field and to help these practitioners use data to solve problems.

From front-line workers to leadership, to the children and families themselves, we seek to provide information that is useful; information that can be used to change policies or to change intervention strategies. We aim to disseminate the information in a way that multiple stakeholders can easily consume it, either in the form of presentations, data visualizations, or academic papers. We are not abandoning the academic model, rather, we are enriching it to ensure the people who most need the information about child welfare and juvenile justice are able to access it and understand it.

Child welfare and juvenile justice systems have limited investments in data collection and data utilization. We seek to address these limitations by putting data to work.

Thanks to the generosity of our funders and partners, we are working to stop the recurrence of maltreatment, to understand how best to respond to parental substance abuse and to better understand juvenile justice in Michigan.

The Data Lab links data sources to understand the pathways children follow from foster care to juvenile justice to adult corrections. Understanding the pathways helps us to disrupt them, keeping children from eventually entering the correctional system.

Thank you to our generous funders and extraordinary partners who help us contribute to the most meaningful project of all: making a difference in the lives of vulnerable children and families.

Sincerely,

Brian Perron and Joseph Ryan

Data can help us make better decisions. The Data Lab represents a unique opportunity to address complex social problems, while at the same time evaluating policy and practice efforts with data provided by multiple systems of care.

THE OUTLOOK FOR CHILD WELFARE

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In 2016, 37,293 children were the victim of maltreatment, and 11,599 children were in the foster care system.
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The Data Lab's partnership with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Children's Services Administration is focused on helping the State reduce child abuse and neglect, reduce maltreatment in care, reduce the recurrence of maltreatment and improve safe and timely permanency for children who enter out of home care.

PROVIDING VALUABLE INSIGHTS THROUGH DATA REPORTING

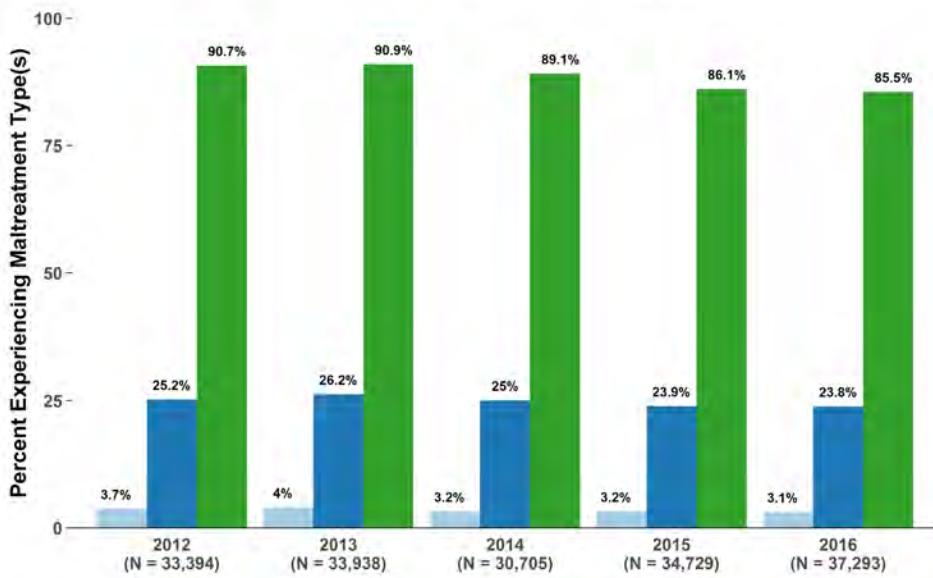
We began our relationship with MDHHS to help them comply with the requirements of the class action lawsuit brought against the state by Children's Rights, an advocacy group seeking to compel the state to make improvements in the child welfare system.

The Data Lab provides consultation to the DHHS Data Management Unit, reviewing the products and reports this unit sends to the federal monitors. Our work includes developing a

range of reports on the child welfare system that help MDHHS answer key questions about the functioning of the system. We have created a number of reports for the department that assist them to make improvements and more effectively target interventions.

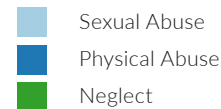
We create reports that provide DHHS with a better understanding of the volume of children entering and exiting care so they can plan for resource allocation. Our analysis also helps identify (1) which children are staying for long lengths of time in the foster care system, (2) characteristics of children who are at risk for repeated abuse or neglect, (3) estimate the rate of child maltreatment while children are in care and (4) determine which children are most affected by maltreatment.

Ultimately, our data analysis and reporting helps the State plan interventions to keep children safe and help them reunify with their families.



MALTREATMENT TYPE CONFIRMED FOR CHILD VICTIMS

The vast majority of substantiated claims of child maltreatment are cases of child neglect.



DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE METHODS FOR EXTRACTING ACTIONABLE DATA

Children associated with child welfare systems are at risk for experiencing repeated incidents of abuse and neglect. Termed “recurrence of maltreatment” in the child welfare literature, this circumstance is subject to federal review and all states must meet minimum thresholds to keep children safe from repeated abuse.

Caseworkers collect a lot of important data that are relevant for improving services. However, much of this data is unstructured text data, in the form of case notes and other text summaries.

The Data Lab is engaged in an innovative program to mine case worker records to help identify the children at greatest risk of recurrence and will assist MDHHS to understand patterns of substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence among families involved with child protective services. To complement this effort, we are conducting a comprehensive review of the literature to understand how other states have reduced the recurrence of maltreatment.

SUBSTANTIATING THE SUCCESS OF THE ILLINOIS ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM

Working with the State of Illinois, the Data Lab evaluated a prevention program focused on helping parents suffering from chronic substance abuse to keep their children safe at home and avoid prolonged placement in foster care.

Our evaluation demonstrated that using recovery coaches, who work directly with parents to help them maintain their recovery from substance abuse and stay clean, can significantly improve the number of families who are reunified with their children after out-of-home placement. The program also increased the long-term stability of the reunified family, allowing more children to stay at home and grow up in the context of their family.

The State of Illinois reported saving millions of dollars in child welfare expenditures by using the recovery coach model.

EVALUATING DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS IN MICHIGAN DESIGNED TO IMPROVE CHILD WELFARE

Protect MiFamily focuses on the use of evidence-based treatment to prevent young children (ages 0 – 5 years) from entering the foster care system in Macomb, Muskegon and Kalamazoo counties. The Data Lab is tracking the outcomes of this program to determine if the treatment intervention helped more children remain at home with their families.

Working with MDHHS along with private foster care and adoption agencies in Kent County, we are part of a team testing the cost savings and program effectiveness of contracting with private agencies based on those agencies’ performance on a set of foster care and adoptions outcomes.

Known as performance-based contracting, the idea is that agencies who perform well are a better value for the state’s investment and should be rewarded for their good performance.

Findings from both of these projects will be available in the coming year.

Because the juvenile justice system is decentralized and county-based, it is impossible to know how many young people are in or have been affected by the state's juvenile justice system.

THE CHALLENGES OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

■ ■
In 2016, over 6,500 youth were formally adjudicated into the Juvenile Justice system.

50% of formally adjudicated youth had previous involvement in the child welfare system.



Much of the data about juvenile justice in Michigan is missing or incomplete. The lack of consolidated data reporting makes it extremely difficult to understand how to best serve adolescent offenders in Michigan. The Data Lab is engaged in several initiatives to help address the need for data and more information on juveniles in the system.

USING LINKED DATA TO UNDERSTAND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Through our agreements with SCAO, MDHHS, the Michigan State Police and the Michigan Department of Corrections, we are beginning to develop an in-depth look at the trajectory of adjudicated youth in Michigan.

The Michigan Committee for Juvenile Justice (MCJJ), formed to advise the governor's office on policy and programmatic issues related to juvenile delinquency, provides funding to the Data Lab to research

and answer questions about juvenile justice. The information gained from our data analysis provides valuable insights to this committee and to the broader community of juvenile justice stakeholders.

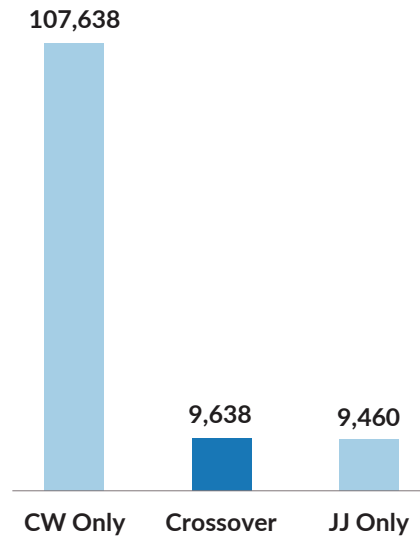
Our ability to link data across allied systems of care helps the state shed light on (1) which youth are at greatest risk of initial contact with the juvenile justice system, (2) which youth are most likely to continue offending into adulthood and (3) demonstrate how the state can use linked data to understand how to interrupt offending behaviors and help young adults make a successful transition to adulthood.

HELPING COURTS IMPROVE SERVICES TO JUVENILES

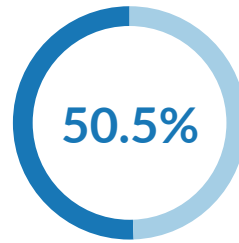
Diversion from formal processing represents a major innovation in juvenile justice; yet little is known about which diversion activities work best for which types of offenders. Our newest juvenile justice project is to assist

Youth Involved in Child Welfare (CW) and Juvenile Justice (JJ) Systems

Children born between 1997-1999

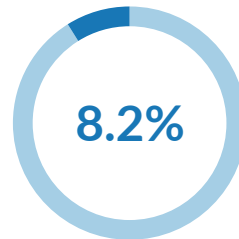


Single-system Involvement
Multi-system Involvement



Crossover youth in Juvenile Justice

50.5%* of youth involved with Juvenile Justice have also been involved with Child Welfare



Crossover youth in Child Welfare

8.2%* of youth involved with Child Welfare have also been involved with Juvenile Justice

*These estimates are based on youth who were born between 1997 and 1999, and who had contacts with the Juvenile Justice system or the Child Welfare system.

the 44th Circuit Court in Livingston County to determine the effectiveness of their community-based juvenile programs. By combining court data with the additional data we have available pertaining to adult arrest and incarceration, high school graduation and child welfare involvement, we can provide the court with a more thorough view of the juveniles being served in their programs. This will help the county focus their scarce resources on diversion programming that works for the youth they are serving.

EDUCATING PRACTITIONERS ABOUT THE IMPACTS OF SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT ON THE YOUTH THEY SERVE

The Data Lab is active in disseminating knowledge and educating stakeholders regarding what we know about juvenile justice in Michigan gained from our cross-systems reports. There is much we still need to know in order to deliver an effective system of care.

We have provided workshops for SCAO, The Michigan School - Justice Partnership, the Oakland County Bar Association, the MCJJ and the National Juvenile Defense Center. Through these presentations, we help practitioners understand important characteristics of the youth they serve, such as the relationship between child welfare involvement and juvenile justice and the impact of juvenile justice involvement on future outcomes.

PROVIDING A FORUM FOR YOUTH TO IMPACT POLICY DECISIONS IN JUVENILE JUSTICE

Through a grant from MCJJ, the Data Lab formed the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) as a pilot project to help elevate the voices of youth who have had contact with the juvenile justice system. YAB provides a forum for youth to discuss the impact that justice system involvement has on their lives.

YAB consisted of 10 youth who have had contact with the justice system, who met regularly to discuss current issues in juvenile justice and decide on advocacy efforts on behalf of all juveniles in the state.

Last year, their priority area was raising the age of criminal jurisdiction from 17 years old to 18 years old. The Data Lab supported their work by staffing the committee and assisting them in planning their advocacy efforts. After our successful pilot period, the Youth Advisory Board moved to a new home within the Dispute Resolution Center of Ann Arbor, where they will continue to provide advocacy and youth voice on state policy decisions.

By the time some Michigan third-graders take their standardized math and reading tests, they could already be academically disadvantaged—and schools might not even know it.

DISPARITIES IN EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Funded by a grant from the Kellogg Foundation, the Data Lab, in partnership with the Youth Policy Lab (a program of the Ford School of Public Policy), focused on investigating how issues like child maltreatment and juvenile justice involvement impact critical academic and educational outcomes. By linking allied data, we were able to make some startling discoveries.

DISCOVERING EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGES THROUGH LINKED DATA

In our most recent study of more than 700,000 elementary school students in Michigan, we found that roughly 18% of third-grade students have been subject to at least one formal investigation for child abuse or neglect. In some schools, more than 50% of students have experienced an investigation for maltreatment prior to reaching third grade.

Childhood maltreatment is much more common than many people suspect. Indeed, the estimates generated in our current study indicate that formal maltreatment investigations are more prevalent than child asthma (8.4%), child food allergies (7.6%),

child disabilities (5.2%) and even the combined rate of child and adolescent obesity (17%). Children with a history of maltreatment score significantly lower on standardized math and reading tests.

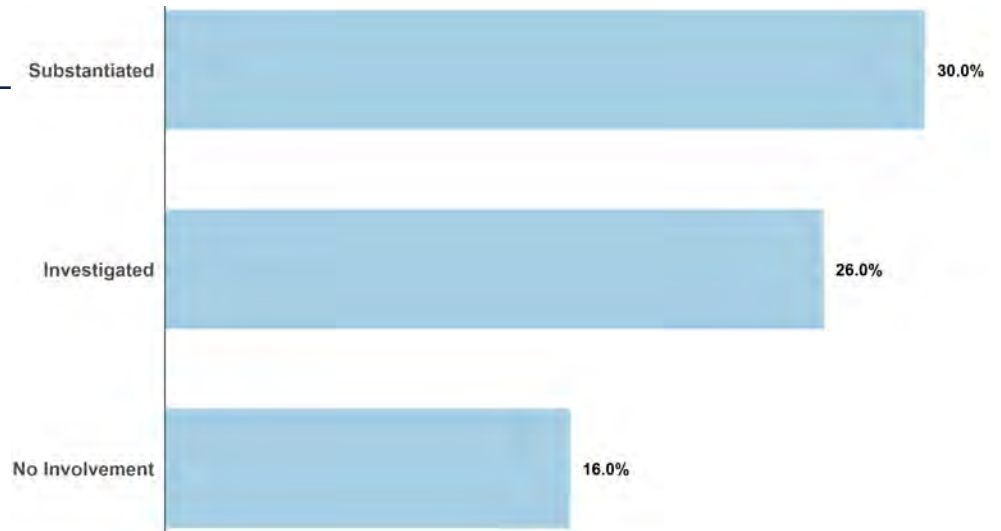
Moreover, while less than 12 percent of students who had no history of abuse were in special education, the special education rate was 19 percent for students who had been involved in a child welfare investigation and 21 percent for those whose investigation confirmed abuse or neglect. In addition, children with a history of child protective service referral are more likely to be held back a grade than their peers. Sixteen percent of third graders who have no involvement with CPS were held back in kindergarten, first, or second grade. In contrast, 23 percent of third graders with a maltreatment investigation were retained – a relative difference of almost 50 percent.

In short, these students are at a unique disadvantage from early on. In the coming year, we will investigate if these differences can be made up over time and, if so, how.

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1 in 5 children in Michigan public schools were involved in a child protective services report.
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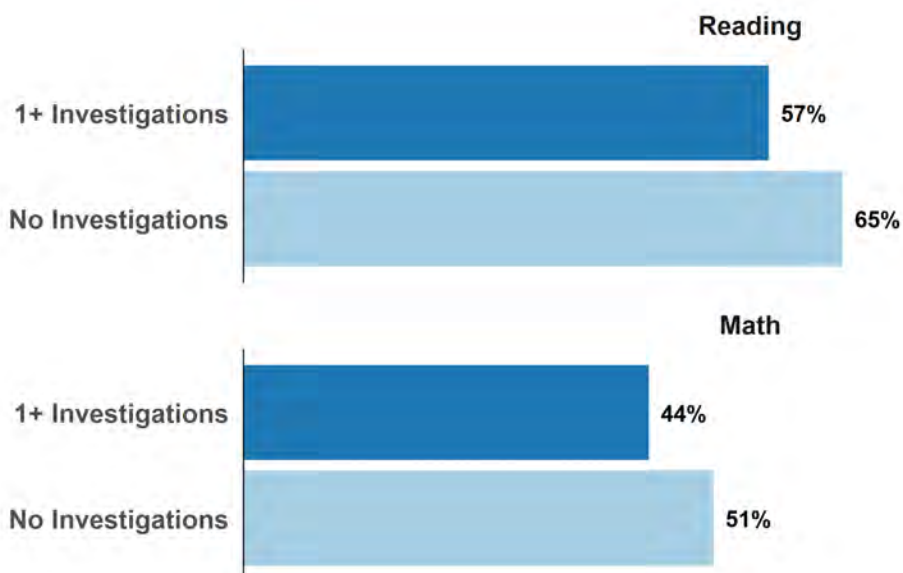
PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN REPEATING A GRADE

Children with no involvement in Child Protective Services (CPS) were much less likely to have repeated a grade before 3rd grade.



PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN REACHING 3RD GRADE PROFICIENCY

Children who have been the subject of a Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation by third grade perform below their peers on both math and reading tests.



OUR PUBLICATIONS

Since 2016, we have contributed 11 publications to highly respected journals in the social work field. Our publications cover a wide range of topics, including child welfare, child maltreatment, substance abuse, education outcomes and juvenile justice.

2018

CHILD MALTREATMENT Early exposure to child maltreatment and academic outcomes
Ryan J.P., Jacob B.A., Gross M., Perron B.E., Moore A., & Ferguson S.M. (in press)

JOURNAL OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE Identification of domestic violence service needs among child welfare-involved parents with substance use disorders: A gender-stratified analysis
Victor B.G., Resko, S.M., Ryan, J.P., & Perron, B.E.

EVIDENCE SPEAKS REPORT How life outside of school affects student performance in school
Jacob, B.A., & Ryan, J.P.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT Domestic violence, parental substance misuse and the decision to substantiate child maltreatment
Victor B.G., Grogan-Kaylor, A., Ryan, J.P., Perron, B.E., & Gilbert, T.T.

2017

SUBSTANCE USE & MISUSE In utero exposure to opioids: An observational study of mothers involved in the child welfare system
Bushman, G., Ryan, J.P., Victor, B.G., & Perron, B.E.

SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH Disparities at adjudication in the juvenile justice system: An examination of race, gender, and age
Evangelist, M., Ryan, J.P., Victor, B.G., Moore, A., & Perron, B.E.

JOURNAL OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN THE ADDICTIONS Parental substance use and foster care reentry
Mowbray, O., Victor, B.G., Ryan, J.P., Moore, A., & Perron, B.E.

JOURNAL OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT Timing matters: A randomized control trial of recovery coaches in foster care
Ryan, J.P., Perron, B.E., Moore, A., Victor, B.G., & Park, K.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES REVIEW Longitudinal trends in substance use and mental health service needs in child welfare
Mowbray, O., Ryan, J.P., Victor, B.G., Bushman, G., Yochum, C., & Perron, B.E.

2016

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES REVIEW Recovery coaches and the stability of reunification for substance abusing families in child welfare
Ryan, J.P., Victor, B.G., Moore, A., Mowbray, O., & Perron, B.E.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES REVIEW Foster home licensing and risk of reentry to out-of-home care following family reunification
Victor, B.G., Ryan, J.P., Moore, A., Mowbray, O., Evangelist, M., & Perron, B.E.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT Foster home placements and the probability of family reunification: Does licensing matter?
Ryan, J.P., Perron, B.E., Moore, A., Victor, B.G., & Evangelist, M.

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ABOUT THE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT DATA LAB

The Child and Adolescent Data Lab of the University of Michigan School of Social Work is an applied research center focused on using a data driven approach to inform policy and practice decisions in child welfare and juvenile justice.

SSW-DATALAB.ORG

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