California State Customized Spell File and Web Tool
https://fcda.chapinhall.org

Key Terms, Variable Names, and Codes

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KEY TERMS

Event
Events either begin or end a child's placement in a foster care setting; therefore, an event can either be a **placement event** or an **exit event**.

Entries into foster care are placement events because they represent the child's first placement upon entering care. Placement moves are also placement events because they represent the beginning of a new placement.

Discharges from foster care are exit events because they represent the end of a foster care spell.

Spell
A **spell** is a continuous period of time that a child spends in foster care. A placement event starts a spell; an exit event ends a spell. A child can have more than one spell in foster care; this is the case when a child re-enters foster care after a prior discharge. In this database, the following rules apply to the definition of a foster care spell:

- All spells are retained regardless of duration.
- There is no bridging of spells.
- Spells are only included if the child's age at the beginning of the spell is between 0 and less than or equal to 17 for first spells.
- For reentries, spells are only included if the child's age is between 0 and 20.
- Spells are forced to exit to reach majority (XRM) at when a child reaches age 21.
- If a spell shows an exit to runaway (XRY) and the child's age at exit is less than 0, the exit code is changed to "other" (XOT).
- If a spell shows an exit to reach majority (XRM) and the child's age at exit is less than 13, the exit code is changed to "other" (XOT).

Censor date
The **censor date** is the calendar day as of which the database is updated. Therefore, a child's experience in foster care can only be observed as of the censor date.

Censored spells   When a child placed in foster care is still in care as of the censor date, the child's placement history is incomplete. In this situation, we say that the spell is **censored**.

For example, assume that the censor date is December 31, 2011. If a child enters foster care on January 1, 2011 and exits care on June 30, 2011, we can determine that the length of that child's foster care spell was six months. However, if a child who entered care on January 1, 2011 was still in care on December 31, 2011—the censor date—we cannot determine the child's length of stay because we do not yet know whether or when after December 31, 2011 the child exited foster care.

VARIABLE NAMES AND CODES

The **All Spells** page of the web tool allows you to pull up the foster care spell records that comprise the database off of which the automated analyses are run. The records contain a number of variables pertaining to the child and his/her experience in foster care.

Clicking **List Records** produces the spell records that match your selection criteria in your browser at the bottom of the All Spells page. The List Records function displays a maximum of 500 records. Clicking **Download Data** produces a .csv file containing all of the spell records that match your selection criteria.

The table below shows the variable name as it appears in the List Records output, the variable name as it appears in the Download Data output, the definition of the variable, and the way in which the variable is coded (if applicable).

List Records Variable Name	Download Data Variable Name	Description	Codes (if applicable)
Child ID	CHILDID	Child ID	
State	STATE	State	CA

County	CNTYNAME	County name for the spell in question	
			Alameda
			Alpine
			Amador
			Butte
			Calaveras
			Colusa
			Contra Costa
			Del Norte
			El Dorado
			Fresno
			Glenn
			Humboldt
			Imperial
			Inyo
			Kern
			Kings
			Lake
			Lassen
			Los Angeles
			Madera
			Marin
			Mariposa
			Mendocino
			Merced
			Modoc
			Mono
			Monterey
			Napa
			Nevada
			Orange
			Placer
			Plumas
			Riverside
			Sacramento
			San Benito
			San Bernardino
			San Diego
			San Francisco
			San Joaquin
			San Luis Obispo
			San Mateo
			Santa Barbara
			Santa Clara
			Santa Cruz
			Shasta

List Records Variable Name	Download Data Variable Name	Description	Codes (if applicable)	
			Sierra Siskiyou Solano Sonoma Stanislaus Sutter Tehama Trinity Tulare Tuolumne Unknown Ventura Yolo Yuba	
Gender	GENDER	Child gender	F M U	= Female = Male = Unknown
Race/ethnicity	ETHNIC	Child race/ethnicity	AN AS BL HI OT UK WH	= Native American = Asian/Pacific = Non-Hispanic African American = Hispanic = Other Category = Unknown = Non-Hispanic White
Date of Birth	DOB	Child date of birth		
Age at First Placement	STARTAGE	Child's age at first ever entry into foster care		
Age at Spell Start	SPELLAGE	Child's age at entry into the foster care spell in question. For children who are in their first ever foster care spell (SPELLONE = 1), STARTAGE = SPELLAGE.		
Age at Spell End	EXITAGE	Child's age at end of the foster care spell in question or at the censoring date.		
Date Child Turns 21	AGEOUT	Date the child turns 21		
Age Group (1)	AGECAT2	Variable categorizing the variable STARTAGE into two age groups	1 2	= 0 to 4 years old = 5 to 17 years old

List Records Variable Name	Download Data Variable Name	Description	Codes (if applicable)	
Age Group (2)	AGECAT4	Variable categorizing the variable STARTAGE into four age groups	1 2 3 4	= under 1 year old = 1 to 5 years old = 6 to 12 years old = 13 to 17 years old
Year of Original Entry	INYEAR	Year of child's first ever entry into foster care		
Spell Type	JDFLAG_NAME	Reason for placement	CAN NONCAN MIXED	= Abuse neglect only = All non-abuse neglect = Mix of CAN/NONCAN placements
Spell County	SP_COUNTY	County of removal at the beginning of the spell		

Spell County Name	SP_CNTYNAME	County name of removal at the beginning of the spell		Alameda Alpine Amador Butte Calaveras Colusa Contra Costa Del Norte El Dorado Fresno Glenn Humboldt Imperial Inyo Kern Kings Lake Lassen Los Angeles Madera Marin Mariposa Mendocino Merced Modoc Mono Monterey Napa Nevada Orange Placer Plumas Riverside Sacramento San Benito San Bernardino San Diego San Francisco San Joaquin San Luis Obispo San Mateo Santa Barbara Santa Clara Santa Cruz Shasta

List Records Variable Name	Download Data Variable Name	Description	Codes (if applicable)	
			Sierra Siskiyou Solano Sonoma Stanislaus Sutter Tehama Trinity Tulare Tuolumne Unknown Ventura Yolo Yuba	
Spell Number	SPELL	The ordinal number of the foster care spell in question. For example, a value of 3 indicates the foster care spell in question is a re-entry after two previous foster care spells.		
Spell Start Date	SP_START	The start date of the foster care spell in question		
Spell Start Year	SP_START_YEAR	The start year of the foster care spell in question		
Spell End Date	SP_STOP	The end date of the foster care spell in question		
Admission Type	SPELLONE	Indicates whether the spell in question is the child's first ever foster care spell.	0 1	= Not child's first spell = Child's first spell
Predominant placement type	TYPE	The type of placement in which the child spent more than 50% of the foster care spell in question. If there is no one type of care in which the child spent 50% or more of his/her spell, TYPE = mixed (MX).	AD AF CF CC HO KC MX OT RL RY	= Preadoptive = Foster Home Certified by Foster Family Agency spell = Licensed Foster Family Home = Congregate Care = Trial Home Visit = Kinship Foster Care = Mixed = Other Placement = Unlicensed Relative Care/Fictive Kin Care = Runaway

List Records Variable Name	Download Data Variable Name	Description	Codes (if applicable)	
First Placement Type	PLACE1	The first placement type of the spell in question.	PAD PAF PCF PCC PHO PKC POT PRL PRY	= Preadoptive = Foster Home Certified by Foster Family Agency spell = Licensed Foster Family Home = Congregate Care = Trial Home Visit = Kinship Foster Care = Other Placement = Unlicensed Relative Care/Fictive Kin Care = Runaway
Second Placement Type	PLACE2	The second placement type of the spell in question. If the child did not experience a second placement, this field is blank.	PAD PAF PCF PCC PHO PKC POT PRL PRY	= Preadoptive = Foster Home Certified by Foster Family Agency spell = Licensed Foster Family Home = Congregate Care = Trial Home Visit = Kinship Foster Care = Other Placement = Unlicensed Relative Care/Fictive Kin Care = Runaway
Second Placement Start Date	PLACE2_DATE	The start date of the second placement during the spell in question. If the child did not experience a second placement, this field is blank.		
Last Placement Type	LASTPLAC_TYPE	The last placement type of the spell in question. For children who have exited the spell as of the censor date, this is the placement type just prior to exit. For children whose spell is still open as of the censor date, this is the placement type as of the censor date.	PAD PAF PCF PCC PHO PKC POT PRL PRY	= Preadoptive = Foster Home Certified by Foster Family Agency spell = Licensed Foster Family Home = Congregate Care = Trial Home Visit = Kinship Foster Care = Other Placement = Unlicensed Relative Care/Fictive Kin Care = Runaway

List Records Variable Name	Download Data Variable Name	Description	Codes (if applicable)	
Number of Placements	NPLACES	Number of placements the child had during the spell in question. For children who have exited the spell as of the censor date, this is the number of placements during the spell. For children whose spell is still open as of the censor date, this is the number of placements as of the censor date.		
Re-entry after current spell	REENTER	Indicates whether the child re-entered foster care after discharge from the spell in question. If the spell in question is still open as of the censor date, this value is 0.	0 1	= Child has not re-entered as of the censor date OR spell is censored = Child re-entered care after being discharged from this spell
Duration of Spell (days)	DURAT	Duration in days of the spell in question (either as of spell end date or as of the censor date)		
Duration Category	DURCAT	Categories of spell duration (DURAT)	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	= 0 days = 1 to 29 days = 30 to 89 days = 90 to 179 days = 180 to 364 days = 365 to 544 days = 545 to 1094 days = 1095 days or more
Time to Re-entry	TIMER	Time in days from the date of discharge to the date of re-entry to foster care. If the spell is still open (EXIT = ZTC) as of the censor date, this value is zero. For all other spell exit types, if the child did not re-enter as of the censor date, this value is the number of days between discharge and the censor date.		

List Records Variable Name	Download Data Variable Name	Description	Codes (if applicable)	
Time to Re-entry Category	RECAT	Categories of Time to Re-entry (TIMER)	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	= 0 days = 1 to 29 days = 30 to 89 days = 90 to 179 days = 180 to 364 days = 365 to 544 days = 545 to 1094 days = 1095 days or more
Spell Exit Type	EXIT	Type of exit from the spell in question	XCA XGS XKG XOT XRF XRM XRY ZTC	= Completed Adoption = Other Guardianship = Kin Guardianship = Other/Unknown = Reunite with Family = Reach Majority/Adulthood = Run away = Still in Care
Proportion Preadoptive	P_AD	Proportion of spell in adoptive home		
Proportion Certified Foster Home	P_AF	Proportion of spell in foster family agency certified foster home		
Proportion Congregate Care	P_CC	Proportion of spell in congregate care placement		
Proportion Licenses Foster Family Home	P_CF	Proportion of spell in licensed family foster home		

List Records Variable Name	Download Data Variable Name	Description	Codes (if applicable)	
Proportion Trial Home Visit	P_HO	Proportion of spell in trial home visit		
Proportion Kinship Care	P_KC	Proportion of spell in kinship care placement		
Proportion Runaway	P_RY	Proportion of spell in runaway status		
Proportion Other Care	P_OT	Proportion of spell in other care type		
Placement Level Change	LEVELCHG	Indicates whether the child ever changed placement types during the spell in question	0	= All placements during the spell were the same as the first placement type (PLACE1)
			1	= At least one placement during the spell was different from the first placement type (PLACE1)