SAFE PASSAGE FOR CHILDREN OF MINNESOTA

Child Fatalities Report

Secretaries' Innovation Group

July 11, 2023

Safe Passage Model: Connect Volunteers with their Elected Officials

They are constituents

They speak from the heart

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Purpose of the report

Understand how child welfare philosophy and practices contribute to child fatalities

Advocate for change

Fatalities Report Findings

Many of these deaths were preventable

But policies gave preference to interests of caregivers, goal of family preservation –

above all else

Result: child safety and well-being were compromised

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Fatalities Report Findings

Mission of child welfare is to protect children

But children left in situations of physical and sexual abuse – and sometimes torture – often over long periods

Too many professionals often knew about ongoing maltreatment, but failed to act

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How did we get to the point where child safety and well-being are lower priority than parent's rights and family preservation at all costs?

And… what do we do about it?

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What strategies can we develop for getting people to work across disciplines?

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Mismatches

System values not aligned with community

Relevant stakeholders not engaged

Parents get years to address issues – children need protection in their first 1,000 days

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The Team

- Archbishop Ireland Justice Fellow UST law school
- Four reader/coders
- Trusted Advisors
- Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

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Where we got the information

88 fatalities identified in media reports

Fatality reports from counties

Juvenile, family & criminal court records

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How could fatalities be made more visible in your state? What information is accessible?

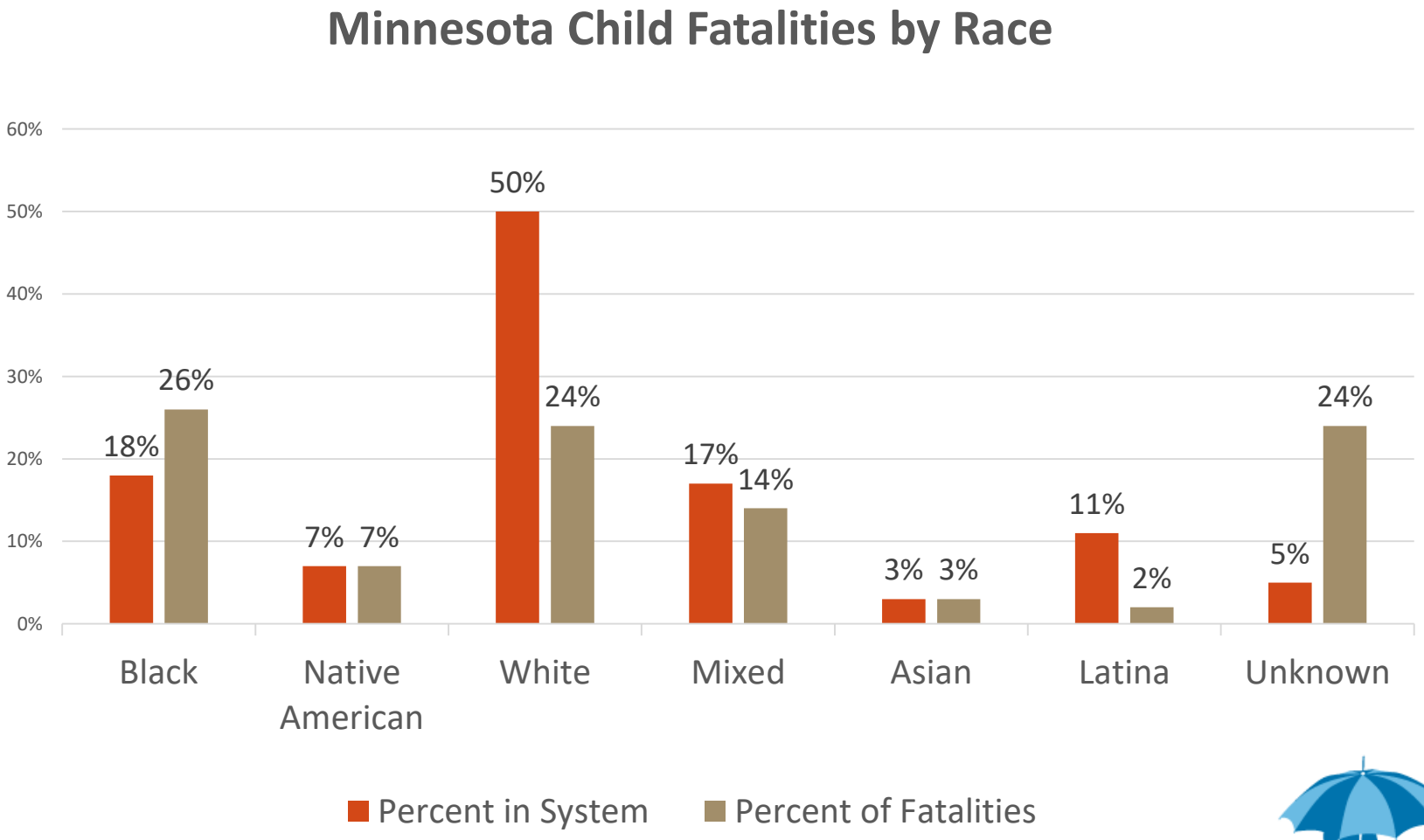
Structure of the report

Quantitative results

Twelve practice patterns

Illustrated with children's stories

Pattern - Racial Disparities



Patterns:

Racial Disparities

Chronic Multi-Type Maltreatment

Premature return from foster care

Tayvion Davis

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Pattern: Torture

Fourteen (16%) of cases with signs of torture

Autumn Hallow

Patterns:

Ineffectiveness of No-Contact Orders and Safety Plans

Misuse of Alternative Response

Anthony Herkal

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Pattern:

Seemingly Unlimited Chances to Address Substance Abuse

Aaliyah Goodwin

Patterns:

Returning Children to Parents with Ongoing Mental Health Issues

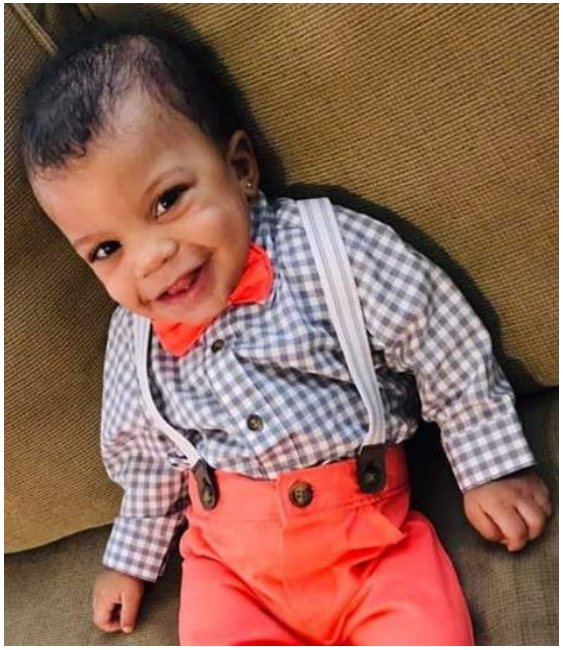
Role ambiguity in courts

Eli Hart

Pattern:

Red Flags Missed or Ignored by Medical Providers

Eli Hentges and Kamari Gholston



Pattern:

Lack of Due Diligence in Kinship Foster Placements

6 of 7 children killed in foster care were kinship placements

Layla Mary Ann Jackson

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Response – An Advocacy Agenda

Do everything possible to support families

But child safety and well-being is the priority

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Policies to Prevent Entry

Relieve stress of #1 risk factor: **poverty**

Have trusted institutions deliver services known to reduce maltreatment

Sometimes paying the phone bill isn't the right response

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What advocacy strategies would work in your state?

Family Preservation/Reunification Agenda

Early learning scholarships

Targeted home visiting

Actually accessible mental health and substance abuse services

Child Safety Agenda

- Change Philosophy!
- Stop using risky engagement practices
- Limit use of Alternative Response

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What advocacy strategies would work in your state?