



Child Separation among Families Experiencing Homelessness

Douglas Walton, Michelle Wood, and Lauren Dunton



About the Family Options Study

This research brief takes advantage of data collected for the Family Options Study, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The study involves 2,282 homeless families with children who entered shelter between late 2010 and early 2012 in one of twelve communities across the country chosen based on willingness to participate and ability to provide a sufficient sample size and range of interventions: Alameda County, CA; Atlanta, GA; Baltimore, MD; Boston, MA; Bridgeport and New Haven, CT; Denver, CO; Honolulu, HI; Kansas City, MO; Louisville, KY; Minneapolis, MN; Phoenix, AZ; and Salt Lake City, UT. At the time they were recruited to participate in the study, each family had spent at least a week in an emergency shelter. The Family Options Study's main purpose is to determine whether the offer of a particular type of housing program—a short-term rent subsidy, a long-term rent subsidy, or a stay in a facility-based transitional program with intensive services—helps a homeless family achieve housing stability and other positive outcomes for family well-being. To provide the strongest possible evidence of the effects of the housing and services interventions, the study uses an experimental research design with random assignment of families to one of the types of housing programs or to a control group of “usual care” families that were left to find their own way out of shelter. For more information, see [Gubits et al., 2015](#) and [Gubits et al., 2016](#).

The study collected data from the families at the time they were recruited in emergency shelters, revealing that these are very poor families with significant levels of housing instability, weak work histories, and disabilities affecting both parents and children. The median age of the adults who responded to the survey was 29. Most had either one or two children with them in shelter. Seventy percent included only one adult, almost always the mother.

While the Family Options Study sample is not nationally representative, it has broad geographic coverage; and study families are similar in age and gender of parents, number and ages of children, and race and ethnicity to nationally representative samples of sheltered homeless families. Therefore, it is a good sample for studying the experience of families that have an episode of homelessness.

The study followed the families over the next 37 months and surveyed them again 20 and 37 months after random assignment, collecting a rich set of information about changes to the family's composition, sources of income, use of benefit programs, and further episodes of homelessness. The 20- and 37-month surveys also measured indicators of well-being such as the health and mental health of adults and children.

This is the seventh in a [series of research briefs](#) commissioned by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that draws on the Family Options Study to inform HHS and HHS grantees as they carry out their special responsibilities for preventing and ending the homelessness of families, children, and youth. Topics of briefs already published include connections of homeless families to [social service programs](#), the well-being of [young children](#) and [adolescents](#) following an episode of sheltered homelessness, and [family transitions](#) during and after a stay in shelter.

Highlights:

- One-third of children in families who experienced homelessness were separated from the family at the time of the shelter stay or had been separated at some time in the past.
- A majority of those separated at the time of shelter stay had been separated from the family for 18 months or more. Most of these separated children were staying with their other parent (44 percent), with a grandparent (25 percent) or with other relatives (22 percent).
- Separations continued in the three years after a shelter stay. Although overall rates of separation remained fairly constant, families experienced churning, with both separations and reunifications occurring throughout the period.
- Children with prior separations were more likely to become separated again. Among children who were with the family in shelter and had no previous separation prior to entering shelter, seven percent were not with the family three years later. In contrast, among children who were with the family in shelter but were previously separated prior to shelter entry, 17 percent were separated from the family three years later.
- Children who were separated from their family three years after the initial stay in shelter were more likely to be from families who experienced continued housing instability after the initial shelter stay. Thirty-seven percent of children who were separated at that time were from families that experienced at least one night homeless during the prior six months, compared to only 13 percent of children who were not separated.
- About a quarter of families with separated children as of three years after the shelter stay reported that not having a place to live or enough space were factors that made it difficult for their children to live with them.

The analysis conducted for this brief does not use the experimental design of the Family Options Study. Instead, the brief explores the extent to which children in homeless families were separated from their parents before, during, and after a stay in emergency shelter, regardless of the intervention to which their families were randomly assigned. The brief describes both voluntary and involuntary child separations among the 5,397 children in 2,282 families who were either with their family in emergency shelter or were separated from their family at shelter entry. The brief also describes the subsequent separation and reunification experiences of children in the 1,857 families who responded to the 20-month survey and the 1,784 families who responded to the 37-month survey.

Introduction

Families who use emergency shelters are more likely than poor, housed families to experience separations between children and their custodial parents (Cowan et al., 2002). Family composition may change over time. For example, a parent may send his or her children to live in what he or she perceives to be a safer environment with relatives or family friends rather than subjecting children to the experience of a shelter. In other cases, child welfare agencies may have removed children from their parent's custodial care. Compared with housed families in the same city, children who enter emergency shelter are more likely to have a subsequent out-of-family placement (Park et al., 2004; Cowan et al., 2002; Hayes, Zonneville and Bassuk, 2013).

A [previous brief](#) in this series found that in 24 percent of families staying in shelter, at least one child was separated from the family (Walton, Dunton and Groves, 2017). This brief provides a more detailed examination of these families and their children before and after the initial shelter stay, revealing more extensive and persistent levels of child separation. It gives detailed characteristics of separated children and examines whether future child separation after a shelter stay is related to either housing instability or previous separations.

Nearly 40 percent of families in emergency shelter reported a separated child before or during their shelter stay

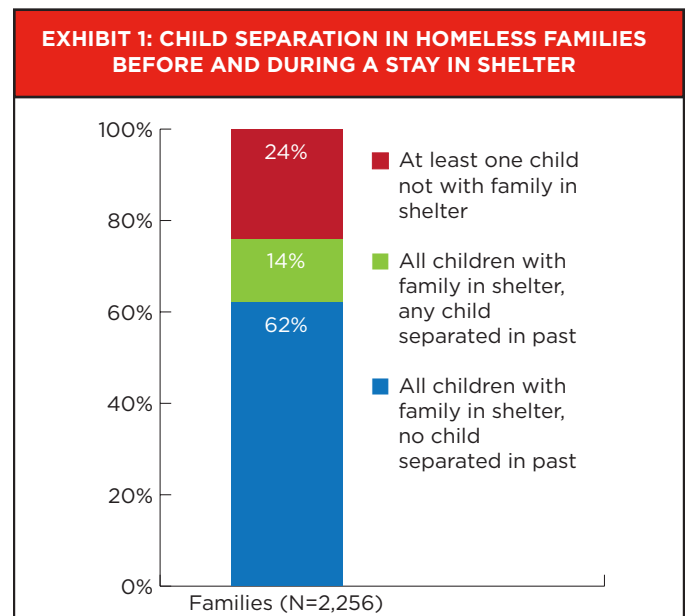
Most families (76 percent) who were staying in emergency shelter reported that all of their children were present with them in shelter.¹ Twenty-four percent of families reported that at least one child was not with them in shelter, either voluntarily or involuntarily.² In addition, some families with all children present had experienced prior periods of child separation. In 14 percent of all families in shelter, a child had been separated at some time in the past even though all children were present in shelter. Taken together, about 38 percent of families reported a separated child before or during their shelter stay (Exhibit 1).

About 30 percent of all children had been separated from their family at some point

Since many families in shelter had more than one child, we can explore the experience of all children in those families to understand the extent to which children themselves face separations. During the initial stay in shelter, 895 children were not with their families, constituting 17 percent of all the children in these families. Another 13 percent (692 children) were with their families in shelter but had been separated at some time in the past.³ Thus, nearly one-third (30 percent) of all children in families that stayed in emergency shelter had been separated at some time either before or during the shelter stay.

Children separated from their families during a shelter stay were older than other children

Separated children tended to be older than children who were with their families in shelter – the average age of separated children was 10 years, compared to an average age of 6 years for children with their families during the shelter stay (Exhibit 2). Only eight percent of separated children were less than two years of age, whereas nearly one-third of children who were with their parents were younger than two. About 22 percent of separated children were 15 years old or older, compared with 6 percent of children in families where all children were present.



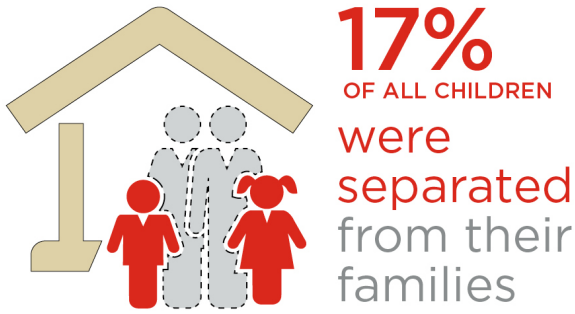
Source: Family Options Study baseline survey

¹ To be eligible to participate in the study, a family had to have stayed in the shelter for at least 7 days. On average, two children were with each family.

² Parents were not asked whether their children were separated voluntarily or involuntarily, so we do not distinguish between the two. Further, parents were not asked about the legal custody of their children. Throughout this brief, we consider "separated children" to include all children who are not living with the family, regardless of legal custody and the nature of the separation.

³ For all children present with the family in shelter, the adult respondent was asked whether there was ever a time when the child did not live with the parent. The data do not provide exact timing of separations, but instead provide an indicator of whether or not the child was present with the family during the survey and an indication of whether a separation had occurred in the past.

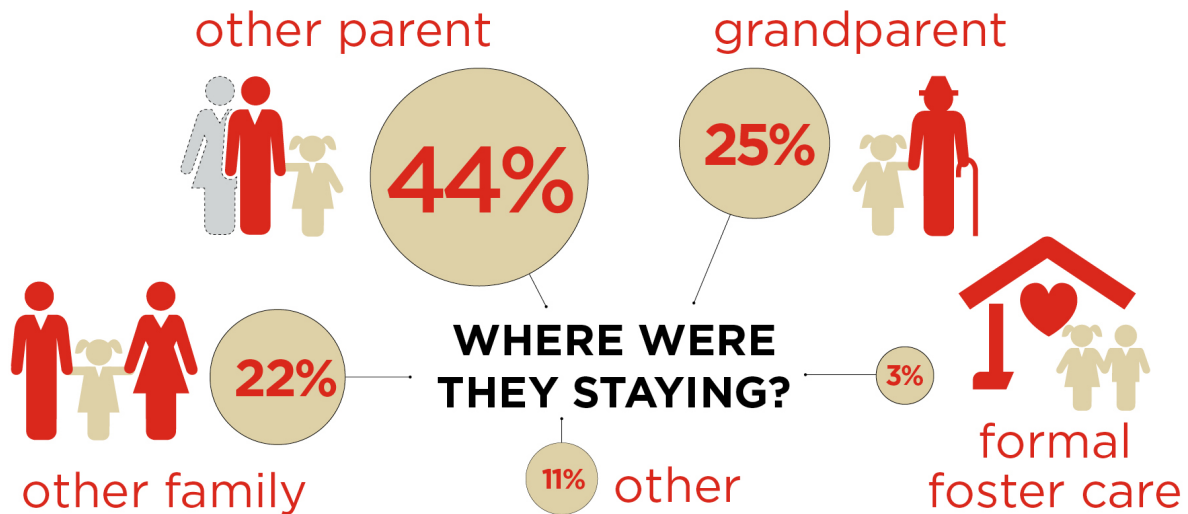
DURING FAMILIES' STAY IN SHELTER:



PROFILE OF SEPARATED CHILDREN:



HOW LONG HAD THEY BEEN SEPARATED?



NOTE: Families could report multiple options about where they were staying, so the sum exceeds 100%.

Source: Family Options Study baseline survey

Children separated from their families in shelter overwhelmingly stayed with the other parent or relatives

Parents in shelter were asked about where their children stayed when they were not with the family.⁴ At the time of the shelter stay, most separated children were staying with their other parent (44 percent), with a grandparent (25 percent) or with other relatives (22 percent). Similarly, children who were with their family in shelter but had been separated in the past primarily lived with their other parent or with family members during that prior separation.

Formal foster care placements arranged by child welfare agencies were rare among these children (3 percent), but time in foster care for these children was relatively long. Among children reported to be in foster care at the time of their family's shelter stay (N=22), the average length of time in these arrangements was 33 months.⁵ While only three percent of currently separated children were in formal foster care, 19 percent of children who were separated previously but with the family in shelter were in foster care placements during their separation.

About 11 percent of separated children were reported to be living in some other situation – such as adoption placements or with godparents.

The typical child separated during a shelter stay had been away from his or her family for 18 months

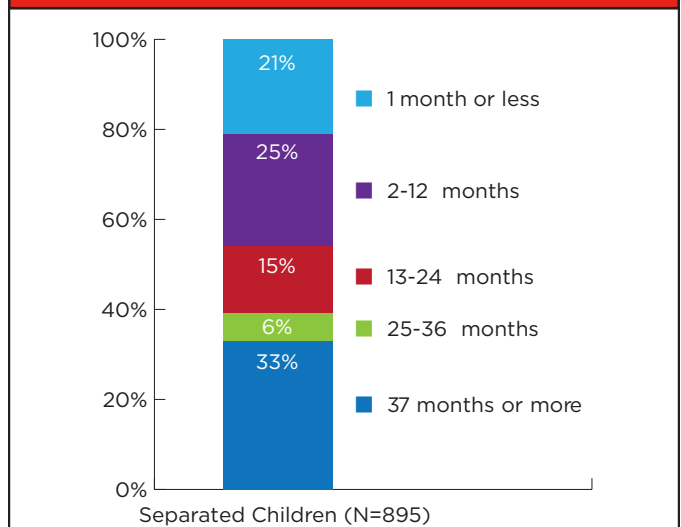
Parents reported during their shelter stays that it had been a median of 18 months since their separated child lived with the family (Exhibit 3). This suggests that, for a majority of separated children, entering shelter did not trigger the separation from family, as they had already been away from the family for many months.

On the other hand, separation from their families coincided more closely with shelter entry for about one-fifth of children, those who had been separated for one month or less at the time of the shelter stay. Children experiencing these short-duration separations tended to be slightly younger than other separated children (36 percent of children separated for a month or less were age 5 or under, while only 20 percent of children separated for longer than one month were age 5 or under). Similar to all separated children, there were slightly more separated boys (53 percent) than girls among children separated for a month or less. It seems plausible that these shorter-duration separations that began fairly close to the time of the shelter stay might have been prompted by the episode of homelessness, shelter occupancy rules, or housing arrangements immediately prior to shelter entrance.

Nearly one-half of families said they were living with friends or relatives immediately before the shelter stay. The type of housing that families were residing in immediately prior to entering shelter did not differ between families with separated children in shelter and families with no separated children in shelter.

Separations that started more than one year before a shelter stay were common, and might reflect ongoing family instability rather than separation associated with this particular episode of homelessness. For more than one-half of children not staying with their families in emergency shelter (54 percent), parents said that the child had been separated for more than one year. For a third of the children, the separation had lasted more than three years.

EXHIBIT 3: DURATION OF SEPARATION AT SHELTER ENTRY, AMONG CHILDREN SEPARATED FROM THEIR FAMILY



Source: Family Options Study baseline survey

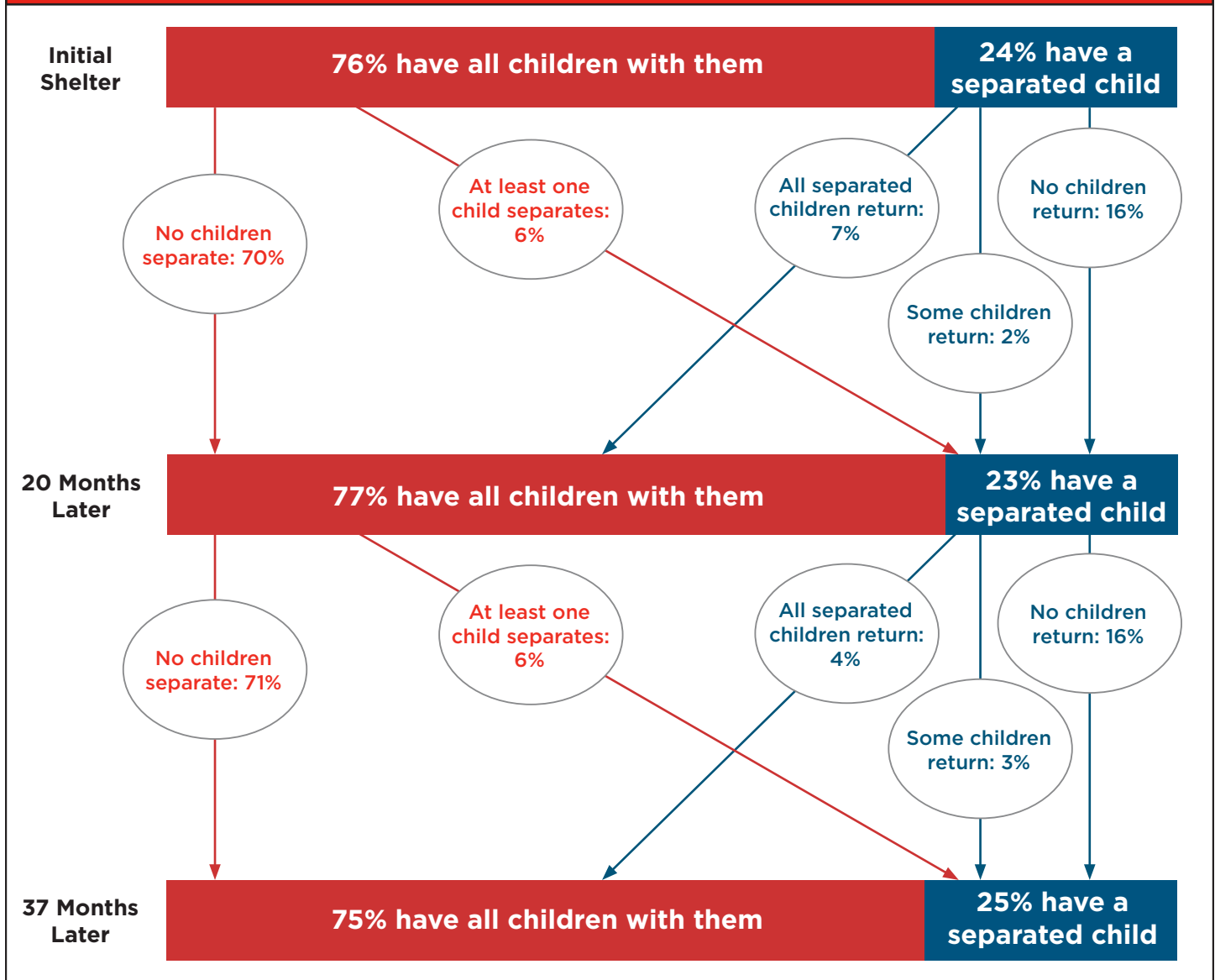
Child separations continued at similar rates three years after the initial shelter stay

Child separations continued following the initial stay in shelter. Three years later, the share of families with a separated child was similar to the share with a separated child during their initial shelter stay. However, despite the similar overall rate of separation, families experienced substantial churning, with both separations and reunifications throughout that period. Exhibit 4 shows the proportion of families for whom all children were present and for whom any child was separated at three points in time: during the initial shelter stay, 20 months later, and 37 months later. Although the proportions are similar at each point (about three-quarters of families had all children present at each point), the composition of families in each situation changed over time. Some separated children were reunited over time, while other children who had not been separated were living

⁴ Families could select more than one response to this question.

⁵ It may also be the case that families under-reported the rate of formal foster care placements. Particularly in cases where a relative is also a foster parent, families might not consider this a formal foster-care placement.

EXHIBIT 4: FAMILY-LEVEL CHILD SEPARATIONS AND REUNIFICATIONS, AT 20 AND 37 MONTHS AFTER SHELTER



Source: Family Options Study baseline survey, 20-month follow-up survey, and 37-month follow-up survey

Note: Flows may not sum to totals due to rounding. Sample restricted to 1,621 families who responded to both the 20- and 37-month surveys.

apart from their families. Children were slightly more likely to be reunified after the first 20 months (7 percent) than in the approximately year and a half after that (4 percent).

Children who had been separated from their families before or during a shelter stay were more likely to be separated afterwards

More than 90 percent of children with the family both before and during the shelter stay were still with the family 20 months and 37 months later (Exhibit 5).⁶ These children with no history of separation at shelter entry appear to constitute a fairly stable group, with a low incidence of future separations. In contrast, children with a separation prior to the family’s stay in shelter were more likely to become separated again in the future. Among children with the family in shelter but who had been previously separated, 17 percent were again separated from the family 37 months after the shelter stay. Another 5 percent were separated 20 months after being in emergency shelter, but returned to the family by 37 months. This suggests that separations may be a recurring phenomenon – children who were previously separated seem to be more likely to separate again, even after they return to their families.⁷

⁶ Separation from the family is measured at specific points in time, at approximately 20 months and 37 months following the initial stay in shelter. We do not assess whether children were with the family between these time points.

⁷ The share of children separated at 37 months varies significantly by separation status before and during shelter at the .01 level.

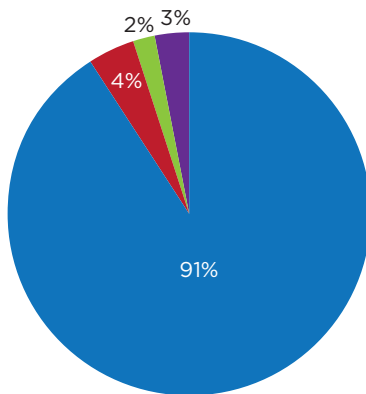
For children who were not with their families during the shelter stay, separation appears to be persistent and recurring. More than half (62 percent) of children not with the family in shelter were also separated from their families 20 and 37 months later. Another 18 percent of children not with their families during the shelter stay were separated at one of those two points in time, while 20 percent reunified with the family at both 20 months and 37 months.

Housing instability, both before and after the initial shelter stay, is associated with child separations

Since both housing instability and child separations can be disruptive to families, and since programs that provide services to families must consider both challenges, it may be instructive to understand whether the two are related.⁸ Here, we present an exploratory analysis that examines whether some relationship might exist. First, we look at whether families that experienced a prior episode of homelessness before the shelter stay were more likely to have separated children during and after a shelter stay. Then, we examine whether children who were separated from the family three years following a stay in shelter are more likely to come from families who experience another period of homelessness after the stay in shelter.

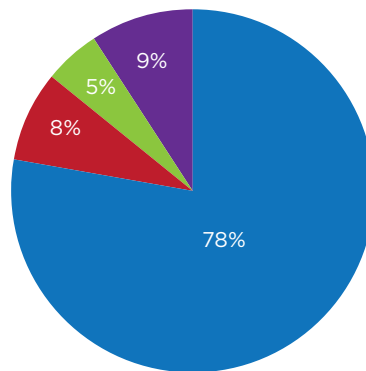
EXHIBIT 5: FUTURE SEPARATIONS OF CHILDREN, BY SEPARATION STATUS BEFORE AND DURING SHELTER

EXHIBIT 5A:
Future separations for children present with family in shelter, no previous separation before shelter



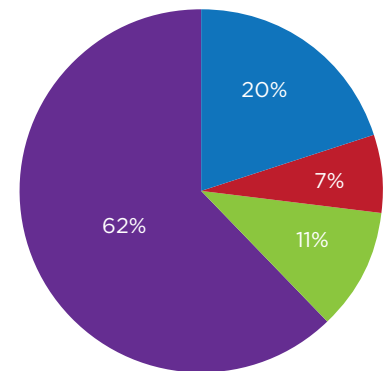
Note: Sample includes children present with the family in shelter, with no separation before shelter, in families who responded to both the 20 month and 37 month surveys (N=2,656)

EXHIBIT 5B:
Future separations for children present with family in shelter, with previous separation before shelter



Note: Sample includes children present with the family in shelter, with previous separation before shelter, in families who responded to both the 20 month and 37 month surveys (N=449)

EXHIBIT 5C:
Future separations for children not with family in shelter



Note: Sample includes children not with the family in shelter, in families who responded to both the 20 month and 37 month surveys (N=598)

- With family 20 months and 37 months later
- With family 20 months later, not with family 37 months later
- Not with family 20 months later, with family 37 months later
- Not with family 20 months or 37 months later

Source: Family Options Study baseline survey, 20-month follow-up survey, and 37-month follow-up survey

Note: The share of children separated at 37 months varies significantly by separation status before and during shelter at the .01 level.

⁸ The Family Options Study was designed to experimentally test whether priority access to one of three housing interventions led to impacts on housing and family instability. The study was not designed to test whether there is a causal relationship between child separations and housing instability—whether one leads to the other, or if other factors affect both. This section presents an exploratory, non-causal analysis of the relationship between housing instability and child separations.

Families with a prior episode of homelessness are somewhat more likely to be separated from their children

Children who were separated from the family both during the initial stay in shelter and 37 months later were more likely to come from families with prior experience of homelessness before the shelter stay compared to those who were not separated (Exhibit 6). Altogether, 75 percent of children not with the family both while in emergency shelter and 37 months later are from families who reported a prior homelessness experience before the shelter stay, compared to about 63 percent of children who were with the family at some point during that period.

Children who were separated from the family in the 3 years after shelter were more likely to belong to families with higher rates of homelessness following the initial stay in shelter

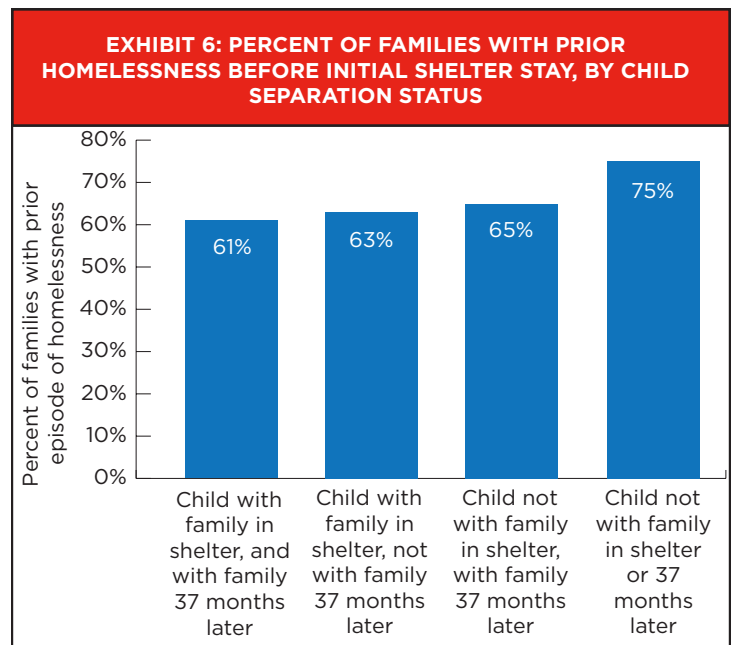
Among the children with the family in shelter during the initial stay, those who were separated from the family 37 months later were more likely to be in families with higher rates of continued homelessness or doubling up than the families of children who were not separated (Exhibit 7). Thirty seven months after the initial shelter stay, more than a third (37 percent) of families of children who were separated reported spending at least one night homeless in the previous six months, compared to 13 percent of families of children who were not separated from the family. Moreover, 45 percent of families of separated children report spending at least one night doubled up in the past six months, compared to 22 percent of families that had no child separations. Thirty seven months after the initial shelter stay, more than half of families of separated children (54 percent) had been either homeless or doubled up in the past six months, compared to 28 percent of families of children who did not separate.

Housing and other factors made it difficult for separated children to live with their families

While housing may not be the only reason for these separations, families with children who were separated from them three years after an initial shelter stay identified aspects of their housing situations that made it difficult for their child to live with the family (Exhibit 8):⁹

- About one-quarter of children who were separated from their families 37 months after a stay in emergency shelter came from families who reported not having a place to live, or not having a big enough place to live, as a reason for the child not living with the family.

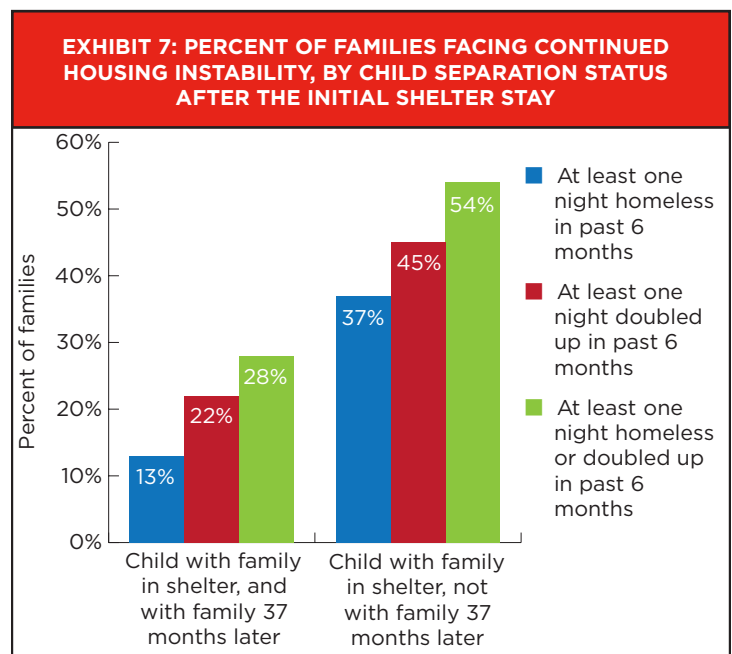
⁹ This is based on responses to the 37-month follow-up survey, which asked family heads detailed questions about family members who were with the family during the previous interview but not with the family at 37 months. For this survey item family heads were asked, “Is there anything about your current housing situation that makes it difficult for {name of family member} to live with you?” and were prompted with various response categories related to housing. Respondents could select more than one option and they could provide additional detail, which might not relate to housing.



Source: Family Options Study baseline survey and 37-month follow-up survey

Note: Prior homelessness for the “child not with family in shelter or 37 months later” group is statistically significantly different from the each of the other three groups at the .01 level.

Sample size is 4,181 children in families who responded to the 37-month follow-up survey.



Source: Family Options Study baseline survey and 37-month follow-up survey

Note: Statistical tests were run to assess whether each of the three measures of housing instability differed significantly between the two groups of families. For each of the three measures of housing instability, families with a separated child 37 months later have a significantly higher level of instability than families without a separated child 37 months later, at the .01 level of significance.

Sample size is 3,517 children in families who responded to the 37-month follow-up survey.

- About one-third of families reported that some other factor made it difficult for the child to live with the family. When prompted to elaborate, respondents gave a variety of responses, including that some children were staying with other family members, living in foster/adoption placements, or living elsewhere to attend school. Some families reported mental or physical health challenges or behavioral issues that prevented the child from living with the family.

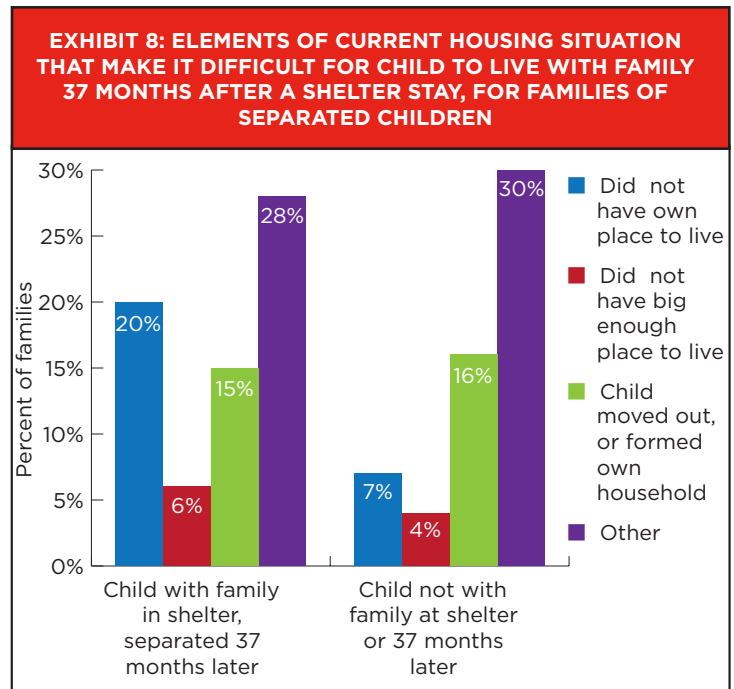
While this may seem to suggest that housing is a major factor in driving child separations, it is important to note that families were asked specifically whether their housing situation made it difficult for the child to live with the family. Families were not asked directly about non-housing factors that contributed to the separation.

Receipt of family reunification services was not associated with child reunifications

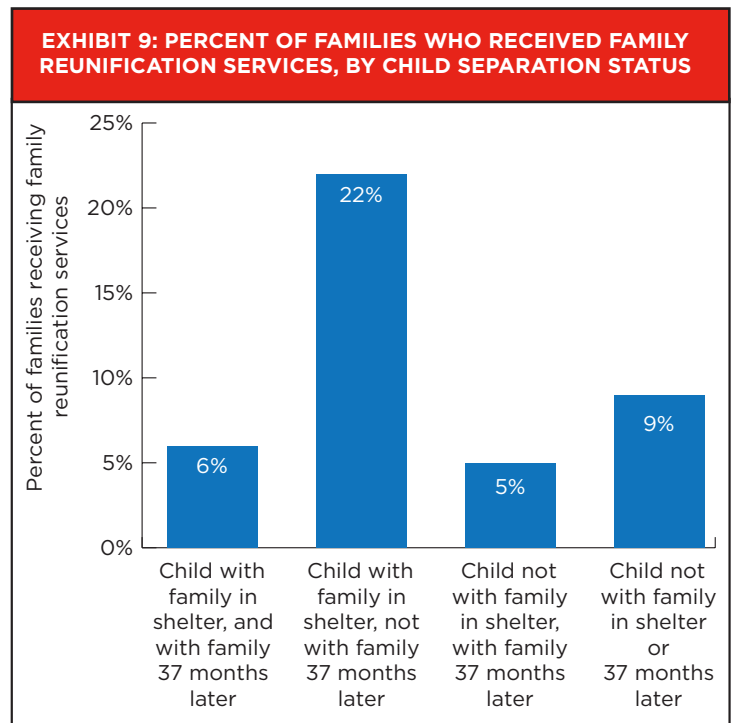
Families were also asked about their use of various social services that they received from agencies or programs they participated in.¹⁰ Three years after a shelter stay, reported receipt of family reunification services (help having children reunited with the parent) was low, with only about eight percent of all families reporting that they had received such services.¹¹ We might expect reported receipt of these services to be higher among families whose children were reunited with them. Instead, receipt of these services was actually highest among families of children who were separated as of 3 years after the shelter stay (Exhibit 9). This somewhat counter-intuitive finding suggests that families who experience instability and separations—families with greater fragility—may be more likely to access family reunification services. In addition, we find that families with a child in foster care while in shelter were more likely to receive family reunification services than families without a child in foster care (33 percent versus 7 percent). This suggests that the child welfare system may increase such support for families with a child in formal foster care, although such families may be required to participate in reunification services. Families were not asked for any details about the family reunification services they received, so we cannot tell exactly what services were offered or used, nor whether the services were voluntary or required.

Conclusion

This brief provides a detailed look at the characteristics of children separated from their family when the family enters emergency shelter and patterns of separation over the following three years. Findings from this analysis suggests that a complex relationship exists between housing and family instability.



Source: Family Options Study baseline survey and 37-month follow-up survey. Sample size is 843 children in families who responded to the 37-month follow-up survey.



Source: Family Options Study baseline survey and 37-month follow-up survey

Note: Receipt of family reunification services for the “child with family in shelter, not with family 37 months later” group is statistically significantly different from the other three groups at the .01 level.

Sample Size is 4,181 children in families who responded to the 37-month follow-up survey.

¹⁰ Families were only asked whether they used various services; the study did not measure whether the services were actually available to families. Further, families were not asked whether their use of services was voluntary or required.

¹¹ Based on responses to the 37-month follow-up survey, which asked family heads whether they had received various types of services from an agency or through a program they participated in. For this survey item, family heads were prompted to report whether they received “family reunification services (help getting your kids back).”

Nearly 40 percent of families in shelter had a child living away from them, either before or during their shelter stay. The vast majority of separated children were staying with other parents or relatives, suggesting that serving these families is a complex task that family homelessness and social service programs should consider.

For many of the families in this study, the immediate housing crisis that led to their stay in shelter does not appear to be the “shock” that drove child separations. A majority of children who were not with the family in shelter had been apart from the family for 18 months or longer, and additional children separated in the three years following the shelter stay. Separations were recurring. Among children who were with the family in shelter, those who previously separated from the family were more likely to be separated in the three years after the stay in shelter than those who were not previously separated.

The study did not determine whether children were separated voluntarily or involuntarily, or the legal custody of children living away from their family in shelter. The prevalence of long-term and recurring separations may suggest instability, but it also could be evidence of family resilience – families facing homelessness may have managed to provide alternative living arrangements for their children. In most cases, separated children were staying with family members, potentially providing stability for children. Future research could seek to better understand the nature of these separations, and try to determine whether separated children were in stable living environments.

There appears to be a relationship between housing instability and child separations. Children who were separated as of 3 years after the stay in shelter were more likely to be from families who had a prior history of homelessness before entering shelter. They were also more likely to be from families who experienced additional bouts of homelessness after the initial shelter stay. Families reported that not having a place to live, or a large enough place to live, were contributing factors to children not living with the family.

These are exploratory, non-experimental results, so causality cannot be determined (i.e., whether housing instability itself causes child separations whether child separations may lead to housing instability, or whether some other underlying factor may be driving both housing instability and child separations), but the results suggest a relationship that could help provide insight to agencies providing services to families experiencing homelessness and other fragile families. Future research might build on this study to develop rigorous tests of the relationship between child separations and housing instability.

Understanding the nature of child separation among homeless families may help encourage coordination between homeless assistance providers who address housing needs and child welfare providers focused on safeguarding children and strengthening and reunifying families. This collaboration could help with service provision as well as better targeting of services to families and children.

In particular, the fact that many of these separations are long-term separations – one-third of separated children had been away from their family for over three years – may influence the type of services provided. Additionally, agencies could also help identify and target services toward children who are at high risk of separation, which this brief suggests should include those previously separated and families with previous episodes of homelessness.

Finally, the results suggest that receipt of family reunification services was low and that families who received these supports still faced high rates of child separations. It may be the case that these services were rarely available and were only offered to families with the greatest risk of child separation. Perhaps such services could be improved, expanded, or better targeted to families at risk of separations. Better data would improve our understanding of which services families currently receive these services and whether they are successful.

References

- Burt, M., Aron, L. Y., Douglas, T., Valente, J., Lee, E., & Iwen, B. (1999). Homelessness: Programs and the people they serve. Urban Institute. Findings of the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients.
- Cowal, K., Shinn, M., Weitzman, B. C., Stojanovic, D., & Labay, L. (2002). Mother-child separations among homeless and housed families receiving public assistance in New York City, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 30 (5): 711-730.
- Gubits, D., Shinn, M., Bell, S., Wood, M., Dastrup, S., Solari, C., Brown, S. R., McInnis, D., McCall, T., & Kattel, U. (2016). Family Options Study: Long-term impacts of housing and service interventions for homeless families, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Gubits, D., Shinn, M., Bell, S., Wood, M., Dastrup, S., Solari, C., D., Brown, S. R., Brown, S., Dunton, L., Lin, W., McInnis, D., Rodriguez, J., Savidge, G., & Spellman, B. E. (2015). Family Options Study: Short-term impacts of housing and services interventions for homeless families. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Hayes, M. A., Zonneville, M., & Bassuk, E.L. (2013). The SHIFT study: Final report. Waltham, MA: The National Center on Family Homelessness.
- Mayberry, L.S., Shinn, M., Benton, J.S., & Wise, J. (2014). "Families experiencing housing instability: The effects of housing programs on family routines and rituals," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 84 (1): 95-109.
- Park, J.M., Mettraux, S., Broadbar, G., & Culhane, D.P. (2004). Child welfare involvement among children in homeless families. *Child Welfare* 83: 423-436.
- Rog, Debra J., & John C. Buckner, J. C. 2007. Toward understanding homelessness: The 2007 national symposium on homelessness research. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research.
- Spellman, B., Khadduri, J., Sokol, B., & Leopold, J. Costs associated with first-time homelessness for families and individuals. Bethesda: MD: Abt Associates. Prepared for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, and Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs.
- Walton, D., Dunton, L., and Groves, L. (2017). Child and Partner Transitions Among Families Experiencing Homelessness, OPRE Report 2017-26. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

***Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), Administration for Children and Families,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services***

The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) studies Administration for Children and Families (ACF) programs and the populations they serve through rigorous research and evaluation projects. These include evaluations of existing programs, evaluations of innovative approaches to helping low-income children and families, research syntheses and descriptive and exploratory studies. www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre



PROJECT OFFICER:
Carli Wulff, OPRE, ACF

REVIEWERS:
Amanda Benton, ASPE, HHS
Kathleen Moore, OPRE, ACF

PROJECT DIRECTOR:
Lauren Dunton, Abt Associates

CONTRACT NO:
HHSP23320095624WC



**BOLD
THINKERS
DRIVING
REAL-WORLD
IMPACT**

4550 Montgomery Avenue
Suite 800 North
Bethesda, MD 20814-3343

ABOUT ABT ASSOCIATES

Abt Associates is a mission-driven, global leader in research, evaluation and implementing programs in the fields of health, social and environmental policy, and international development. Known for its rigorous approach to solving complex challenges, Abt Associates is regularly ranked as one of the top 20 global research firms and one of the top 40 international development innovators. The company has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in more than 40 countries.