



Children in Need in England:

Preliminary results of a survey of activity and expenditure as reported by Local Authority Social Services' Children and Families Teams for a survey week in September/October 2001

Acknowledgement to Local Authority Children and Families Teams and Data management staff

As was the case for the first survey of Children in Need in February 2000, the collation of the data for the 2001 exercise involved significant additional workload for staff in Local Authority Children and Families teams. Department of Health would like to record again this year its appreciation to LA staff, both front line staff and data managers, in the work of collating the data and their efforts to ensure that the data reported was a true picture of services actually delivered.

CHILDREN IN NEED data collection: a summary of the results of a census of Local Authority Social Services in a week in September/October 2001

Introduction

- 1 This report summarises the results of a survey of Children in Need and the activity and expenditure reported by Social Services in respect of provision for Children in Need in a “typical” week in September/October 2001. This information is important for both Local Authorities and Central Government to measure progress towards the achievement of a number of the Government’s sub-objectives for children’s services.
- 2 The 2001 survey is the second comprehensive national survey covering all children in need: that is, children who are known to their Local Authority Social Services as requiring the provision of services – details of the first survey in February 2000 can be found on the DH website at <http://www.doh.gov.uk/cin/cin2000results.htm>
- 3 Prior to the Children in Need surveys, centrally held information only covered Children Looked After and children on the child protection register; other Children in Need were not included, and there was little information on expenditure, which meant that a significant but unknown proportion of Social Services activity and expenditure on children was omitted from the central returns.
- 4 The background to the survey, and comments on the quality and completeness of the data and their presentation, are given in technical annex A. The main results of the survey are given below.

Coverage of survey

- 5 The survey covered all Children in Need and all activity recorded in the census week in September/October 2001. This included all children in need who received services from Social Services in England – that is, Children in Need upon whom Local Authorities expended resources, either in terms of costed staff or centre time, or in terms of payments for placements or other services received by the child, including one-off payments. (further information on coverage is given in the technical annex).
- 6 All activity was costed and all expenditures made to or on behalf of the child in the census week were included. This was to ensure that the Children in Need census accounted for as much as possible of the total expenditure by the authority on children’s services as reported by finance officers in their annual financial returns.
- 7 As last time, the survey covered ALL provision paid for by Local Authority Social Services on behalf of Children in Need, whoever provided the service - whether directly by the Local Authority or by the private or voluntary sector under commissioning arrangements.

Grossing up of results

- 8 The 139 authorities that made complete returns between them account for 92% of the 0-17 age group in England, as at the latest date. The figures for England therefore have been derived by uprating by 8% the figures for the responding

authorities. This grossing up factor has been used to allow for all authorities not making a complete return.

MAIN RESULTS:

Key findings from 2001 census

Numbers of Children in Need

- There were approximately 376,000 Children in Need in England in 2001;
- 69,000 of them were Children Looked After and the remaining 307,000 were other Children in Need;
- Social Services are providing services for around 223,000 Children in Need in a typical week;
- 90% (62,300) of Children Looked After and 52% (160,700) of other Children in Need receive a service or have money spent on their behalf in a typical week (either in terms of staff/centre time or in terms of cost of the Local Authority paying for provision needed – e.g. residential costs).

Characteristics of Children in Need

- The single main need for social service intervention for children is cases of “abuse and neglect” which account for just over half (55%) of all Children Looked After and 26% of other Children in Need;
- About 13% of the Children in Need population are disabled, and they received 15% of gross expenditure on Children in Need;
- At least 17% (37,000) of Children in Need are from ethnic minorities (which is almost twice the figure for the under 18 population as a whole from the census).
- 6% (12,600) of Children in Need are asylum seeking children and 53% of these children are from ethnic minorities.

Costs and resources

- Services for Children in Need cost Social Services on average about £50m per week, £31m per week on Children Looked After, and £19m per week on other Children in Need;
- Nearly half of these Children’s costs are accounted for by regular payments (on residential/fostering/adoption costs) for Children Looked After;
- The average Child Looked After costs Social services £500 per week; and other Children in Need cost £120 per week.

Activity

- The average Child Looked After receives 3.4 hours per week of service from Social Work staff either in teams or centres, of which 0.2 hours is in group work;
- Other Children in Need receive on average about 2.4 hours per week of staff or centre time, of which 0.6 hours is group work.

Comparison with 2000 census

- The number of children receiving services during the census week decreased by 3%; the number of Children Looked After receiving services increased by 8%

but this was offset by a decrease of 6% in the numbers of children supported in their families and receiving a service.

- The cost of providing services to Children in Need increased by about 26% from £40.1m per week in February 2000 to £50.4m per week in September/October 2001;
- The average amount spent per child per week on Children in Need increased by 29%; the increase for Children Looked After was 15% from £435 per week to £500 per week, and for children supported in their families up 33% from £90 per week to £120 per week.

These comparisons are explained in more detail in paragraph 38.

Detailed findings

Numbers of Children in Need

- 9 The main findings are summarised in Tables 1-3. The first table, Table 1, gives the numbers of Children in Need “on the books” of Local Authority Social Services. This approximates to the number of open “Children in Need” cases at any one time. The table shows that, in the census week, there were 376,000 Children in Need known to Local Authorities as requiring some form of Social Services provision, about 2,500 per local authority. 18% of these Children in Need were Children Looked After (69,100), and the remaining 82%, nearly 307,000 children, were Children Supported in Families or Independently (CSF/I).
- 10 It should be noted that the figure of 376,000 Children in Need is subject to a number of caveats which are spelt out in technical annex A. These largely centre on LA practice on the recording of open cases, the coverage of Children in Need databases in a few authorities, and possible differences in reporting of numbers of cases between 2000 and 2001.

Numbers of children seen in the week

- 11 During the census week 223,000 children had active work undertaken on their behalf by Social Services or received some payment from their authority, for example in connection with residential, fostering or adoption placement. Of these 223,000 children, 62,300 children were Children Looked After and the remaining 160,700 were children supported in their families or independently (Tables 1 and 2).
- 12 The figure of 62,300 is higher than the figure of 58,900 (excluding respite care) for 31 March 2001 quoted in recent Statistical Bulletin: *Children Looked After in England 1999/2000*, which is based on the “CLA100” returns. This Bulletin is available on the DH Internet site at <http://www.doh.gov.uk/public/cla2001.htm>. See the technical Annex for a further discussion on the possible effect of respite care on these data.
- 13 The proportion of children receiving a service in the week was much higher for Children Looked After (90%) than children supported in their families or independently (52%) – Table 1. As stated in the 2000 CiN report, these figures need to be interpreted with caution in view of the caveats on reporting referred to above. As last time, it is reasonable to assume that the figure of 90% for Children Looked After is a much firmer figure than the 52% for other Children in Need.

- 14 The figures suggest that each of the 150 Local Authority Social Services Children and families teams expend resources on an average of about 1,500 children per week. **From this point on, the report refers only to the 223,000 children in need in receipt of services in the census week.**

Resources

- 15 Table 2 shows that Children Looked After accounted for 28% of all Children in Need receiving services. Another way of looking at this is that during the census week, for every three children looked after who received a service, seven other children supported in their families or independently were actively supported in some way.
- 16 The position with respect to expenditure is rather different. As Table 3 shows, Local Authority expenditure on Children Looked After was 62% of the total children's budget, mainly as a result of the high proportion of ongoing expenditures (principally residential or fostering payments) Social Services are incurring on behalf of Children Looked After.
- 17 By contrast, other Children in Need actively supported during the week accounted for 72% by number of all Children in Need (Table 2) but only 38% of Social Services expenditure on children (Table 3).

Costed Local Authority staff time

- 18 Table 4 gives an analysis of the total number of hours of service received by Children in Need, either from Social Work teams or at centres. This analysis is presented slightly differently from last time with a clearer distinction this time between group work and individual work. But this does mean that the measures of time on the two occasions are not directly comparable - see the technical annex for a further discussion on this point. The analysis shows that Children Looked After account for 36% of all Social Work staff and centre time, either individual work or group work.
- 19 On average, Children Looked After receive, either directly or indirectly, 3.4 hours of social services staff or centre time per week, virtually all of which was in individual work. Children supported in their families or independently received 2.4 hours of staff and centre time of which about a quarter was in group work

Expenditure accounted for by the survey

- 20 The CiN survey estimated that Social Service spent £50m on Children in Need in the week, equivalent to an annual spend of £2.6bn (Table 3). Of the total weekly expenditure of £50m, £23m per week (46%) was spent on costed staff and centre time, £26m per week (51%) on ongoing costs (mainly care and accommodation) and just over £1m (3%) per week on one-off (miscellaneous) expenditure.
- 21 The implied annual gross expenditure figure of £2.6bn is about 90% of the figure of £2.86bn reported by Local Authorities finance officers on their Social Services expenditure returns (form PSSEX1) for the previous financial year 2000-01. The difference may be explained by a number of factors:

- (i) The PSSEX1 data refer to the year before the CiN census;
- (ii) The CiN survey excludes expenditure that could not be allocated to individual children – for example expenditure on drop-in centres;
- (iii) It is possible also that some weeks have greater or lesser expenditure but overall have greater expenditures than in the census week

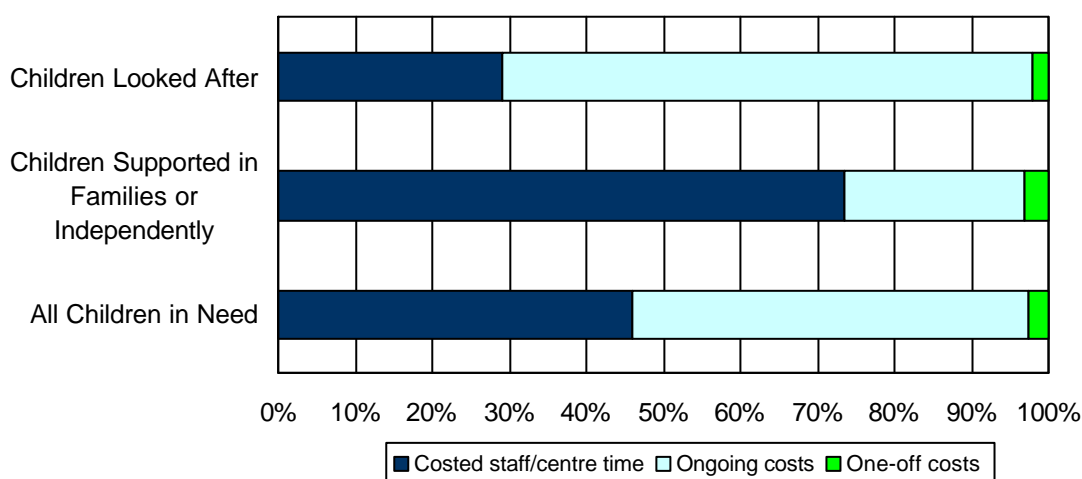
Average cost to Local Authorities of a Child in Need

22 Table 5 and Chart 1 show the average cost of Children in Need to a Local Authority. These averages have been calculated by taking total costs and averaging them out over all children in need receiving a service in the week. The details are given below:

- (a) *Children supported in their families or independently*: children in this category cost Local Authority Social Services an average of £120 per week, of which nearly three-quarters is costed staff and centre time;
- (b) *Children Looked After*: these cost their Social Services an average of £500 per week, about four times higher than children supported in their families or independently. Just over two thirds of the cost of Children Looked After goes on ongoing expenditure (residential, fostering and adoption costs);
- (c) *All Children in Need*: the average cost of a Child in Need is £225 per week, of which £105 is costed staff and centre time, £115 is ongoing expenditure, and £5 miscellaneous expenditure.

All these figures are significantly higher than recorded in the 2001 CiN census; this is discussed below and in the annex

Chart 1
Components of Total Expenditure by LAs on Children Looked After: % distribution



Intake/referral, initial and ongoing work

23 The Children in Need census 2001 allocated the activity on children according to three main categories which approximate to categories in the “Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (Department of Health et al, 2000)”:

- (i) intake/referral – broadly speaking activity in the first 24 hours of the case being referred;
- (ii) initial work – undertaken within seven working days of the case being referred;
- (iii) ongoing work – undertaken after seven working days of referral.

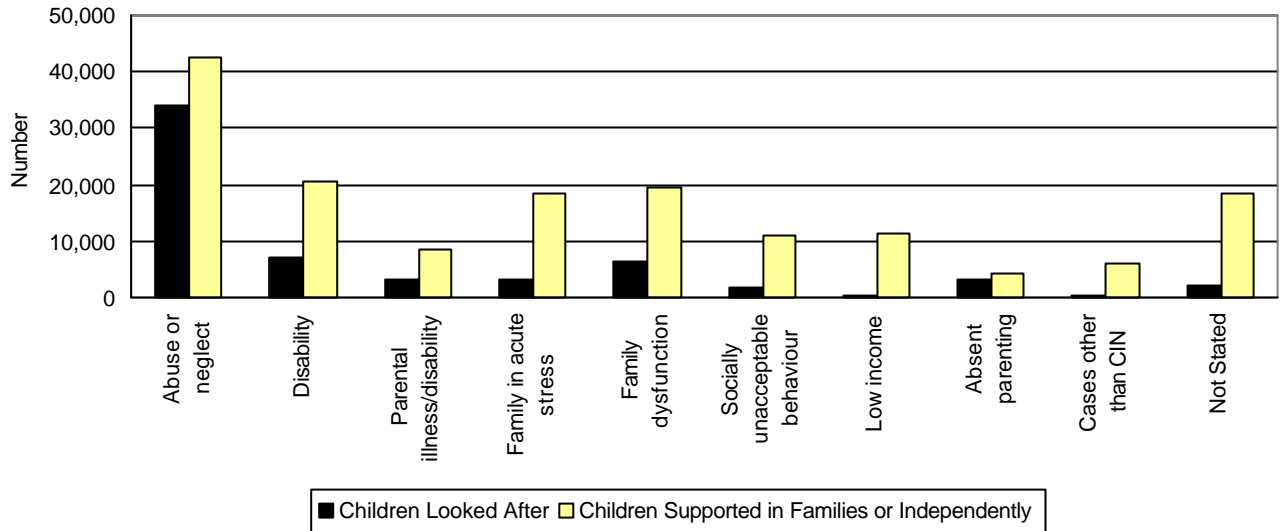
24 The analysis is given in Table 6. This shows that the vast majority of work is in the “ongoing” category. Averaged out over children in need actually seen in the week, intake/referral activity amounts to about 1.8 hours per week per child, rising to 2.3 hours per week for initial work and 3.3 hours per week for ongoing work. [NB: the averages in Table 6 are based on the numbers of children either actually seen, or in respect of whom administrative action was undertaken by social work staff, in each category and are therefore on a slightly different basis from those in Table 4, which includes all children receiving services]. The averages for Children Looked After are consistently higher than for children supported in their families or independently.

Analysis of numbers of children by need category

25 The Children in Need 2001 used the same set of categories as in the 2000 census for indicating the main reason for expenditure on children in need. These are defined in Annex C. The distribution of children by “Need” Code is shown in Table 7 and Chart 2. Table 7 shows clearly that the distribution of “Need” Codes is significantly different for Children Looked After than for children supported in their families or independently.

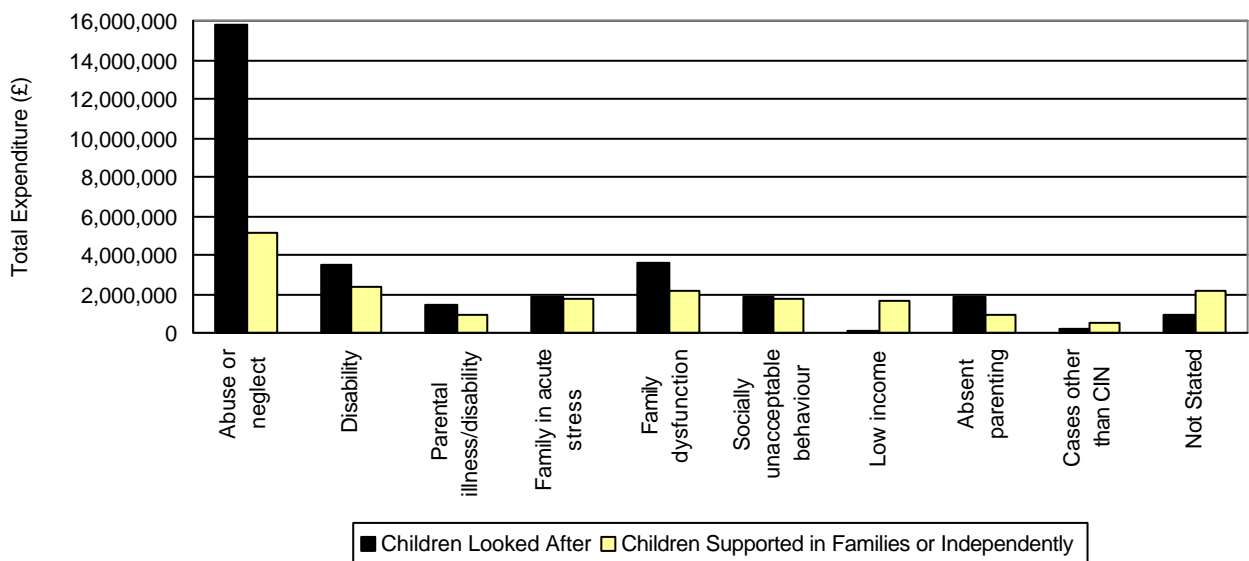
26 For example, the incidence of “abuse or neglect” for Children Looked After is nearly double that for children supported in families or independently (Table 7). But in absolute terms, there are significantly more children in the “abuse or neglect” category in the category of children supported in families or independently than there are in the Children Looked After group (Chart 2 below)

Chart 2
Numbers of Children Looked After and Children Supported in Families or Independently by Need Category



27 The expenditure profile (Table 8) shows a different pattern from that appearing in Table 7. The “abuse or neglect” category, accounted for 42% of expenditure (including care and accommodation: see Table 8), but in numbers terms this category accounted for 34% overall of the Children in Need population – Table 7. Chart 3 below shows the predominance in absolute terms of spending (£ per week) on the “abuse and neglect” category for Children Looked After.

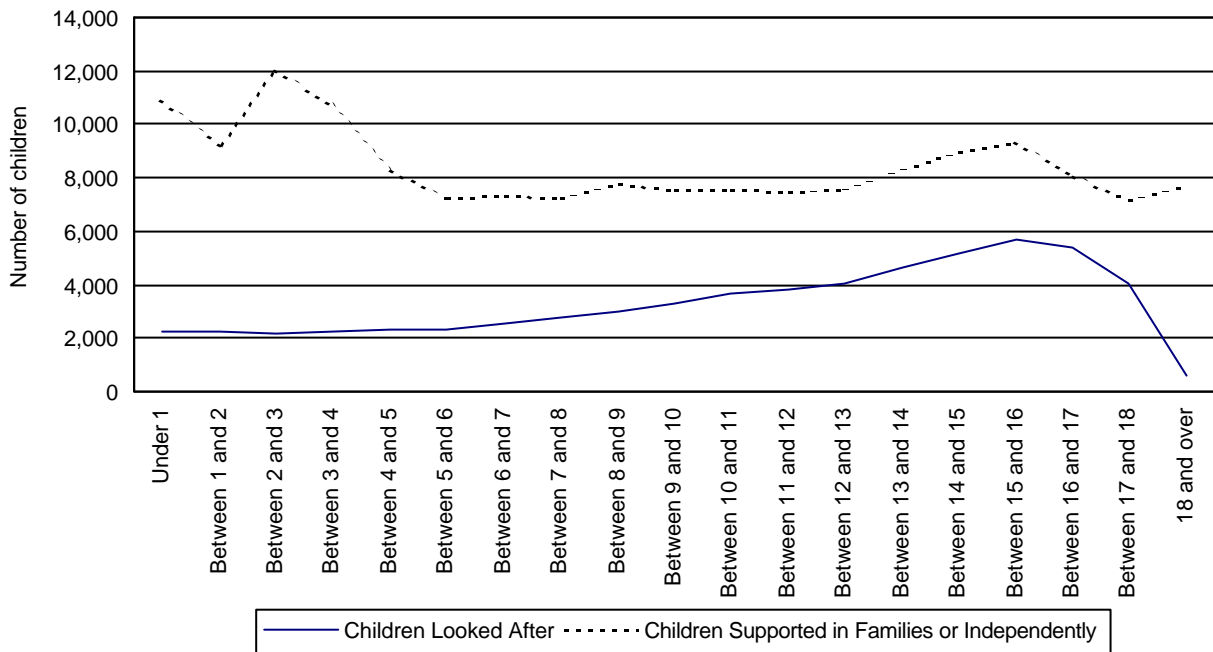
Chart 3
Cost profile of Children Looked After and Children Supported in Families or Independently



Age distribution of children in need

28 Table 9 and Chart 4 show the proportion of children receiving a service by age. As Chart 4 shows, the figures are remarkably uniform for the major part of childhood. For Children Looked After, the peak age groups are 13-18, which include about 40% of this group; for children supported in their families or independently, there is a marked peak for children aged 2-4 years and about 30% are under five. As in the 2000 CiN census, there are significant numbers of children supported in their families who are 18 and over.

Chart 4
Age distribution of Children in Need Receiving a Service



Ethnicity

29 The same ethnic categories – those used in the 2001 Census – were used in both the 2000 and 2001 CiN censuses. The distributions of children in need by their ethnicity were very similar on both occasions. As before, Local Authorities were able to classify nearly 90% of their children in need ethnically (Table 10).

30 Overall, at least 17% of the children in need are of ethnic identity other than white, or 14% if asylum seeking children are excluded (see para. 34). The size of the “not stated” category (11%) – see Table 10 – could mean that the overall figure of 17% is an underestimate (the size of the “not stated” category for asylum seeking children is much lower). These percentages compare with figures in the Census of the order of 10% of children whose ethnicity is other than white in the total 0-18 population. This means that, depending on the classification of the “not stated” category, the overall incidence of Children in Need in the category of “ethnicity other than white” is between 1.5 and 2.5 times the national average in the under 18 population as a whole. The “not stated” have not been apportioned between the other categories.

31 Table 11 gives the more detailed breakdown, for the individual ethnic categories. As can be seen from the table, only 2% of Children Looked After have ethnic category “not stated”. The figure for other Children in Need is much higher (14%)

Asylum seekers

32 The CiN 2001 census asked authorities for the first time to identify the number of children who were regarded by them as asylum seeking, whether in families or as unaccompanied children. The results are shown in Table 15. This shows numbers and amounts spent on such children. The analysis of these children is still a little tentative, but gives an idea of the orders of magnitude involved. The LA data has still to be analysed with individual LAs, but as might be expected, shows significant clustering of numbers.

33 The figures imply that 6% of Children in Need are asylum seekers, of whom the majority are children supported in their families. Expenditure on asylum seeking Children in Need amounts to 6% overall of all CiN expenditure. However, a far smaller proportion of asylum seeking children are looked after than is the case for Children in Need generally and this affects the per capita costs of asylum seeking children, both those looked after and those supported in their families. Overall the cost per child of asylum seeking children is 13% higher than for Children in Need generally.

34 The ethnic profile of asylum seeking Children in Need differs significantly from that of other Children in Need, as shown in Table 16. In the case of Children Looked After, nearly 60% of children have ethnicity other than white. The proportion of asylum seeking children whose ethnicity is “not stated” is low.

Disability

35 Data on children in need who are disabled are also available from the Children in Need census. In the Children in Need census, authorities were asked to identify those children who were disabled. This is a separate dimension of information describing the child, and quite distinct from disability as a “Need” Code. Overall, there were 29,700 disabled children receiving a service in the week, amounting to about 13% of all children in need (Table 12) and 15% of expenditure on Children in Need [Table 13].

36 Table 14 analyses disabled children by “Need” Code. It appears from the analysis that about 25-30% of disabled children require social services provision for some reason other than their disability.

37 It is noticeable from a comparison of Tables 7 and 14 that there are a significant number of children listed as having a “disability” “Need Code” but who are not listed as disabled in the census. Thus Table 7 gives a total in the disability “Need Code” of 27,500, whereas Table 14 gives a total of disabled children with disability as a need code of only 21,500. A similar disparity was a feature also of the 2000 CiN census and shows the problems staff have in distinguishing between disability as a condition of the child and disability giving rise to the need for services. It seems from the reporting of the data that this distinction is a borderline decision in a significant number of cases. There could be other factors:

- (i) continuing underreporting of disabled children; or
- (ii) uncertainty about the definitions; or
- (iii) instances of a child being counted by his/her authority as disabled because the child is in a family with a disabled sibling other than the child; or
- (iv) some children whom authorities consider as in need as a consequence of a health condition but who would not otherwise be (formally) categorized as disabled.

Further investigation is needed to shed more light on this disparity.

Detailed comparison with 2001 Census

38 Table 17 sets out the main data for the two censuses. The data in the original England report for 2000 at <http://www.doh.gov.uk/cin/cin2000results.htm> were updated by the inclusion of data for two authorities in the subsequent LA analysis of the figures at <http://www.doh.gov.uk/cin/cin2000latables.htm>. The latter figures for 2000 are used as the basis of comparison. There is a high degree of consistency in the reporting of data on the two occasions, but a number of key trends emerge:

- (i) the numbers of Children Looked After and receiving a service have increased – by 8% - compared with a smaller increase (1%) for the same category of children reported in the CLA 100/SSDA 903 report (see Annex A, paras. 13-17);
- (ii) the numbers of children supported in their families and receiving services has decreased sharply;
- (iii) the amounts spent by Social Services in England on Children in Need increased sharply between 2000 and 2001; average per capita expenditures also increased significantly;
- (iv) although there was a decrease in the number of children supported in their families the proportion of total expenditure accounted for by this group remained constant at 38%;
- (v) the proportion of Children Looked After who are in ethnic minorities increased significantly between the two dates. It is not possible to quantify the effect of asylum seekers in this comparison, as the 2000 census did not distinguish asylum seeking children.

Local data

39 Data for individual Local Authorities will be published in the autumn. As last time, authorities are being given time to check that they are content that their figures are a true reflection of the position in their authority.

40 Where discrepancies do exist, the figures will enable consistent comparisons of Local Authorities' individual patterns of service delivery against those of other authorities.

DH
July 2002

Annex A: Background on the survey and technical commentary

Background

Purpose of the 2001 collection

- 1 The Children Need data exercise collected information on how many children were known to be in need by Social Services, and the resources that were spent on such children in a “typical” week in September/October 2001.
- 2 The following paragraphs give further information on the 2001 census, with notes where appropriate on the comparison between the 2000 census and the 2001 census – there are some significant differences between the two as set out below.

Purpose of CiN surveys

- 3 The two CiN surveys have been designed to enable Local Authorities to collate information on all the children known to them (the “reference” data) and the activity and financial information collected from Children and Families teams and finance staff (the “census” data).
- 4 The survey covered ALL provision paid for on behalf of children in need, whoever provided the service - whether directly by the Local Authority or by the private or voluntary sector under commissioning arrangements. Returns therefore had to be made by these other agencies to the Social Services to ensure that all activity was accounted for.
- 5 There are two main categories of children covered by the surveys: all the Children in Need “on the books” of Social Services; and all Children in Need who received services from Social Services in England – that is, Children in Need upon whom Local Authorities expended resources, either in terms of costed staff or centre time, or in terms of payments for placements or other services received by the child, including one-off payments
- 6 In order to keep the amount of data to be collected to a manageable level, it was decided - as last time - to collect information for a “typical/ representative” week, on this occasion on a week in September /October 2001. Local Authorities were free to choose which week this was, for example by excluding any half term week in the month. It must be said that a “typical” week is unlikely to be entirely typical in terms of coverage, since almost any week will have at least one “atypical” feature for some element of service.

Basis of reporting

- 7 In the 2000 CiN census, Local Authorities were asked to provide summary data in a standard form. These summary reports formed the basis of the national and local comparative analyses. In the 2001 census, authorities were asked to provide a copy of their actual databases, with the individual (anonymized) records of children, on the understanding that the resulting mega-database for England would be used solely to derive aggregate figures to inform local and national planning.

8 The resulting database is the most comprehensive set of records yet achieved in this key area; and the information within the database will be capable of further analysis to illuminate the position on the provision of services to children, subject to the foregoing caveat.

Recording of open cases involving children in need

9 The figure of 376,000 Children in Need given in paragraph 8 of the main report includes all children “on the books” of Social Services, which in principal ought to include all Children in Need whether or not they received a service from the Local Authority in the week. In practice the position is more complicated than this, not least because Local Authority practices appear to vary in defining what constitutes an “open case”, and differences in reporting practice between the two dates as noted in the next paragraphs

Comparison of numbers between 2000 and 2001

10 In the CiN survey in 2000, there were a number of authorities whose overall figures of total children were subject to margins of error because of one or other of the following factors:

- (i) In many authorities there were a large number of files of cases which were inactive but had not formally been closed. Many authorities mounted a “spring clean” of their records to remove these cases, before the survey started. There were probably some dormant cases in the figures which ought to have been removed. This might have led to a slight overstatement of numbers in CiN 2000;
- (ii) In some other authorities, the Children in Need figures only include those children in need who actually received a service in the week. Local Authorities who adopted this approach did so because of resource constraints in their data management teams. This will have led to an understatement of numbers in the authorities concerned;
- (iii) Time between loading of data onto the Children in Need database and the survey census week which resulted in a large number of new cases of children which had to be added at a late stage, but for which much of the reference data was missing;
- (iv) The inclusion of cases that had been closed between the dataload on the database prior to the survey and the survey itself.

11 Of the above factors, (iii) and (iv) may still have had some effect in 2001, though it is probably much less marked this time round. Most authorities have now done major spring cleans of their records, so (i) is not likely to be as significant in CiN 2001, either. A scrutiny of the returns shows that there are apparently no authorities who have excluded from their CiN returns children who did not receive a service in the census week so the effect of (ii) is also not likely to be significant in 2001.

12 The inference is that the comparison of total Children in Need on the books of Social Services between 2000 and 2001 may have been influenced by reporting problems in 2000 which have now largely been rectified. A much better and more robust basis of comparison between 2000 and 2001 is to use the numbers of children receiving a service on the two occasions, and this is the basis of comparison used throughout the report.

Reconciliation of Children Looked After numbers and the effect of respite care

- 13 The Children Looked After Report for 31 March 2001 gives a figure of 58,900 Children Looked After at that date, and notes that, during the year 2000-01, there were 11,800 children who had been in respite care (short term placement) at any time during the year.
- 14 As noted in the technical annex to last year's Children in Need report, if one assumes that Children Looked After under respite agreements (legal status 44 and 45) receive their care in the same pattern as those whose care is recorded episode-by-episode, then the figure of 11,800 children recorded in the CLA census as being in respite care at some point in 2000-01 would imply a figure of about 2,400 Children Looked After receiving respite care in any given week. This may be an underestimate since it is believed that some authorities providing respite care to disabled children and their families do not regard the children concerned as being looked after despite the legal position.
- 15 Using these figures, the number of Children Looked After in a typical week including those in respite care is not likely to be less than 61,300 (=58,900+2,400).
- 16 The current Children in Need report quotes a figure of Children Looked After of 62,300, which is within 1,000 (or 2%) of the estimate in para. 15, if no allowance is made for the disparity in reporting dates for the two censuses.
- 17 On any examination of the figures, it is clear that the respite care is being provided to children and their families more frequently than was appreciated from the Children Looked After statistics, though the size of the disparity between the figure of 5,800 respite care cases in the Children in Need census and the figure of 2,400 for the same group implied by the CLA census (par. 15) is a little surprising. A comparison of the CLA figures from the two returns authority by authority may help to highlight where the reporting disparities are arising.

Coverage of activity

- 18 The activity recorded in the census week in CiN2000 and CiN 2001 includes *all* time spent by the child in Social Services provision – this includes time spent by a member of a Children and Families team or by a centre working on behalf of a child. This included not only direct work with the child but also travelling, record keeping and so forth.
- 19 It should be noted that both surveys measured the amount of time of service received by the child, rather than the amount of staff time involved. This distinction is important in the measurement of time spent in group work at centres, where children receiving, say, 1 hour in a group with other children would all count as having received one hour of service in that group in the survey week.

Individual work and group work

- 20 The 2001 census distinguishes between individual work (where an individual child is seen by one or more members of staff) and group work, (planned sessions where more than one child is together in a group with one or more members of staff).

- 21 In the 2000 census, there was no clear distinction between the two kinds of activity, which may have distorted slightly the amounts of time being reported by authorities with large numbers of family centres offering group work with children. It is possible that uncertainty about the basis of reporting in such cases may have had the effect of overstating the amount of hours of service time that children actually received in 2000.
- 22 The CiN2001 results are likely to be much more robust and a truer measure of the mix of services which children actually receive; but this does mean that it is not possible to compare directly the number of hours of service received by Children in Need on the two dates.
- 23 The following table illustrates:

	Children Looked After	Children supported in their families or independently	All Children in Need
Amounts of staff/centre Time (hours per week)			
CiN 2000	4.3	2.9	3.2
CiN2001			
Individual work	3.2	1.8	2.2
Group work	0.2	0.6	0.5
Total	3.4	2.4	2.7

- 24 For Children Looked After, the amount of group work reported in 2001 is small, so the inference appears to be that the amount of time spent on average by staff and in centres fell by about 20% in the 18 months between the two surveys. For children supported in their families, the proportion of time accounted for by group work is more significant, but is not inconsistent with a fall of about 15% in average time for this group as well. This may reflect a number of factors, including increasing workloads in more complex children related casework.

Intake/referral, initial work and ongoing work

- 25 In the 2000 CiN census, authorities were asked to report activity according to the three categories (i) intake/referral, (ii) initial work; and (iii) group work. In the 2001 census the allocation between the three categories was made automatically, using the start date for the current episode, according to whether the reported activity occurred (i) within 24 hours of the start date; (ii) within 7 days of the start date; (iii) outside this range.
- 26 The new method of classification implies figures of work on intake markedly higher than estimated by local authorities before. This particularly affects Children Looked After [NB: the averages in Table 6 are based on the numbers of children either actually seen, or in respect of whom administrative action was undertaken by social work staff, in each category and are therefore on a slightly different basis from those in Table 4 which include all children receiving services whether seen or not]. The following table demonstrates:

Average hours of work per child per week

	Intake/ referral	Initial Work	Ongoing work
CiN 2000			
Children Looked After	1.2	2.5	5.3
Children Supported in Families or Independently	1.0	1.8	3.3
All Children in Need	1.0	1.9	3.8
CiN 2001			
Children Looked After	3.5	4.1	4.4
Children supported in Families or Independently	1.7	2.1	2.9
All Children in Need	1.8	2.3	3.3

- 27 Further work will be needed to reconcile this reporting of the data. Prima facie, the original survey significantly underestimated the amount of staff time on intake/referral for Children Looked After.

Costs of services

- 28 Activity was costed using guidelines set out by the department. The CiN database calculated separate unit costs (per hour) for group work and individual work (as received by the children involved), using the figures reported in the census week. Costings were needed for all staff and centre time involved in seeing the children.
- 29 Local Authorities were asked to include all payments made to or on behalf of all Children in Need in the week, whether regular (ongoing) payments or not. This was to ensure that, so far as possible, the total expenditure by the authority on Children in Need in the week could be accounted for in terms of services to individual children. In the event, about 90% of Social Services expenditure on Children and Families could be accounted for via the CiN 2001 census.

- 30 The total expenditure in a week on Children and Families in England implied by CiN using the weekly figure of £50.4m from Table 3 - and grossing up for the 10% unattributable expenditure is £56m per week, equivalent to £2.9bn in a full year. The most recent expenditure return (PSS EX1) implies an annual figure for 2000-01 of £2.865bn. The CiN figure is therefore broadly equivalent to an increase of about 2% in Children and Families as a whole since 2000-01.

Costings guidance

- 31 The costings guidance used in the Children in Need 2001 exercise is based upon that in a document produced jointly by DH, Personal Social Services Research Unit at Kent University and Dartington Social Research Unit; "*Unit costs – not exactly child's play; a guide to estimating unit costs for children's social care*", some copies of which are still available on application to the department. The CiN guidance at <http://www.doh.gov.uk/cin/cin2001.htm> (chapter 9) gives further information on the way authorities were asked to put the costs together, for census purposes.
- 32 Some clarification of the costings guidance was made in 2001, to cover some points raised by authorities in the 2000 census, largely centring about the apportionment of certain overhead costs. It is possible that some authorities may have underestimated slightly the contribution of overheads in their figures in 2000. Given that overhead costs are thought to contribute to at least 10% of costs of services for children and families, it is essential that these costs are accounted for correctly, if comparable figures between authorities are to be achieved.

Asylum seeking children

- 33 In the 2001 CiN census, authorities were asked for the first time to identify their asylum seeking children in need. The census includes all such children, whether unaccompanied or not. It has been estimated that there are approximately 6,500 unaccompanied asylum seeking children, which is just over half of the figure reported in the CiN census.
- 34 The figures on numbers activity and cost for asylum seeking children are shown in Table 15 of the main report. Overall they account for about 6% of all Children in Need receiving a service in the week, and 6% of the cost. The CiN census shows that the average cost of an asylum seeking child in need is about 13% higher than for a non-asylum seeking child. The analysis in Table 15 shows that 12% of asylum seeking Children in Need are Children Looked After, compared with 29% for Children in Need as a whole (Table 2). Moreover:
- (i) the average cost of an asylum seeking child being looked after is on average about 45% higher other Children in Need;
 - (ii) the average cost of an asylum seeking child supported in his/her family or independently is about 65% higher than for other children supported in their families or independently.
 - (iii) on average asylum seeking children receive much less staff and centre time than other Children in Need.

Response rate and evaluation

- 35 Useable returns were received from 139 out of 150 authorities (see Annex B). 10 authorities did not make a return and a further 1 supplied information which cannot be used at present in the current England analysis because the figures only cover part of the authority.
- 36 The survey results to date are of national figures. Preliminary LA level analyses will be circulated to Local Authorities shortly to enable them to check their figures before publication of the LA analyses in the Autumn.

Annex B: The response

Returns were received from the following LAs:

Barking & Dagenham	Kensington & Chelsea	Southwark
Barnet	Kent	St Helens
Barnsley	Kingston upon Hull	Staffordshire
Bath & North East Somerset	Kingston upon Thames	Stockport
Bedfordshire	Kirklees	Stockton on Tees
Bexley	Knowsley	Stoke on Trent
Birmingham	Lambeth	Suffolk
Blackburn	Lancashire	Sunderland
Blackpool	Leeds	Surrey
Bolton	Leicester City	Sutton
Bournemouth	Leicestershire	Swindon
Bracknell Forest	Lewisham	Tameside
Bradford	Lincolnshire	Telford & Wrekin
Brighton & Hove	Liverpool	Thurrock
Bristol City	Luton	Torbay
Buckinghamshire	Manchester	Tower Hamlets
Bury	Medway Towns	Trafford
Calderdale	Merton	Wakefield
Cambridgeshire	Middlesbrough	Walsall
Camden	Newcastle upon Tyne	Waltham Forest
Cheshire	Newham	Wandsworth
City of London	Norfolk	Warrington
Cornwall	North East Lincolnshire	Warwickshire
Coventry	North Lincolnshire	West Berkshire
Croydon	North Somerset	Westminster
Cumbria	North Tyneside	West Sussex
Darlington	North Yorkshire	Wigan
Derby	Northamptonshire	Wiltshire
Derbyshire	Northumberland	Wirral
Devon	Nottingham City	Wolverhampton
Doncaster	Nottinghamshire	York
Dorset	Oldham	
Dudley	Oxfordshire	
Durham	Plymouth	
Ealing	Poole	
East Riding of Yorkshire	Portsmouth	
East Sussex	Reading	
Enfield	Redbridge	
Gateshead	Redcar & Cleveland	
Greenwich	Richmond upon Thames	
Hackney	Rochdale	
Halton	Rotherham	
Hammersmith & Fulham	Rutland	
Hampshire	Salford	
Haringey	Sandwell	
Harrow	Sefton	
Hartlepool	Sheffield	
Havering	Shropshire	
Herefordshire	Slough	
Hertfordshire	Solihull	
Hillingdon	Somerset	
Hounslow	South Gloucestershire	
Isle of Wight	Southampton	
Islington	Southend	

Returns were also received from the following LAs whose returns cannot be used at present:

Windsor & Maidenhead*

* = return does not cover all the authority, or does not include all teams (or both)

The following LAs did not submit returns from the survey. Two authorities declined to participate:

Brent	Milton Keynes
Bromley (declined)	Peterborough
Essex	South Tyneside
Gloucestershire	Wokingham (declined)
Isles of Scilly	Worcestershire

Note: in the proposed Local Authority analyses (to appear in the September), data will be included wherever possible for the authorities which made a partial return.

Annex C: “Need” Codes

The following list the “Need” Codes used in the Children in Need exercise. These are defined in terms of the need for Local Authority Social Services to spend money on these children. For the purposes of the survey, each child is assigned one and only one need category, indicating the main or principal reason for expenditures / resources being spent on the child. Further information on the “Need” Codes is given on the Children in Need website on DH Home Page of Internet in Chapter 3 of the CIN Guidance at <http://www.doh.gov.uk/cin/guidance3.pdf>

Definitions

1 - Abuse or Neglect

Children in need as a result of, or at risk of, abuse or neglect

2 – Disability*

Children and their families whose main need for services arises out of the children’s disabilities or intrinsic condition.

3 - Parental Illness/Disability

Children whose main need for services arises because the capacity of their parents or carers to care for them is impaired by disability, illness, mental

4 - Family in Acute Stress

Children whose needs arise from living in a family going through a crisis such that parenting capacity is diminished and some of the children’s needs are not being adequately met.

5 - Family Dysfunction

Children whose needs arise mainly out of their living in families where the parenting capacity is chronically inadequate.

6 - Socially Unacceptable Behaviour

Children and families whose need for services arise primarily out of their children’s behaviour impacting detrimentally on the community.

7 - Low Income

Children, living in families or independently, whose needs arise mainly from being dependant on an income below the standard state entitlements

8 - Absent Parenting

Children whose need for services arises mainly from having no parents available to provide for them.

9 – Cases Other than Children in Need

Casework which is required for legal and administrative reasons only and there is no child in the case who is in need.

* Note that not all disabled children in need have a “Need” Code of ‘disability’.

Table 1 Children reported on the CIN database based on a sample week in September/October 2001

	England						Numbers and Percentages	
	Children Looked After		Children Supported in		Total Children in Need			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
No activity in the census week	6,800	10	146,300	48	153,000	41		
Some activity in census week	62,300	90	160,700	52	223,000	59		
Total	69,100		306,900		376,000			

Table 2 Children reported on the CIN database: active and inactive cases based on a sample week in September/October 2001

	England						Numbers and Percentages	
	Activity in week		No activity in week		Total			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Children Looked After	62,300	28	6,800	4	69,100	18		
Children Supported in Families or Independently	160,700	72	146,300	96	306,900	82		
Total	223,000		153,000		376,000			

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 3 Total weekly costs as reported on the CIN database based on a sample week in September/October 2001

England		£ millions					
	Children Looked After		Children Supported in		Total Children in Need		
	Amount (£m)	%	Amount (£m)	%	Amount (£m)	%	
Costed staff / centre time	9.0	29	14.1	74	23.2	46	
Ongoing costs	21.5	69	4.5	23	25.9	51	
One-off costs	0.7	2	0.6	3	1.3	3	
Total costs	31.2		19.2		50.4		

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Analysis of Total Costs:

Total costs £50.4m of which:

Children Looked After £31.2m (62%)

Other Children in Need £19.2m (38%)

Table 4 Children in Need: Time spent with teams or at centres

England	Numbers and Hours		
	Children Looked After	Children Supported in	Total Children in Need
Number of children receiving services in week ⁽¹⁾	62,300	160,700	223,000
Number of children seen in week ⁽²⁾	48,900	139,300	188,200
Number of hours provided in week by teams/centres ⁽³⁾			
Individual Work	201,700	287,600	489,400
Group Work	15,100	101,700	116,800
<i>Average hours seen per week</i>			
Individual Work	3.2	1.8	2.2
Group Work	0.2	0.6	0.5

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

(1) This includes all services that involve expenditure (for example care and accommodation) whether or not the child's case was worked on by a field or centre worker

(2) The figures include children where administrative action occurred in the week.

(3) This includes fieldwork or centre staff time spent with a child or family, case planning, recording and administration on behalf of a child.

Analysis of total time (hours):

Children Looked After 216,800 (36%)

Other Children in Need 389,300 (64%)

Table 5 Average cost (£ per week) per child receiving a service based on a sample week in September/October 2001

England	£ per week		
	Children Looked After	Children Supported in	Total Children in Need
	Amount	Amount	Amount
Costed staff / centre time	145	90	105
Ongoing costs	345	30	115
One-off costs	10	5	5
Total costs	500	120	225

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 6 Intake/referral, Initial and Ongoing work for children seen in week

England		Numbers; Hours; Percentages					
	Intake / Referral		Initial Work		Ongoing Work		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Children ⁽¹⁾							
Children Looked After	900	6	1,500	10	47,200	29	
Children Supported in Families or Independently	14,700	94	13,000	90	116,100	71	
Total	15,600		14,500		163,300		
	Intake / Referral		Initial Work		Ongoing Work		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Staff / centre hours ⁽²⁾							
Children Looked After	3,000	11	6,100	18	207,700	38	
Children Supported in Families or Independently	24,400	89	27,900	82	337,000	62	
Total	27,400		34,000		544,700		
	Intake / Referral		Initial Work		Ongoing Work		
<i>Average hours of work per child per week</i>							
Children Looked After		3.5		4.1		4.4	
Children Supported in Families or Independently		1.7		2.1		2.9	
Total		1.8		2.3		3.3	

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

(1) A child may appear in more than one work type category during the week. The figures include children where administrative action occurred in the week.

(2) Includes staff and centre time where staff worked administratively on the child's case in the census but did not actually see the child in this period.

Table 7 Distribution of children by need code based on a sample week in September/October 2001

England		Numbers and Percentages					
Need code	Children Looked After		Children Supported in		Total Children in Need		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Abuse or neglect	34,100	55	42,600	26	76,600	34	
Disability	7,100	11	20,400	13	27,500	12	
Parental illness or disability	3,400	5	8,500	5	11,800	5	
Family in acute stress	3,300	5	18,600	12	21,800	10	
Family dysfunction	6,300	10	19,600	12	25,800	12	
Socially unacceptable behaviour	1,900	3	11,100	7	13,100	6	
Low income	200	0	11,300	7	11,500	5	
Absent parenting	3,300	5	4,400	3	7,700	3	
Cases other than CIN	500	1	6,000	4	6,500	3	
Not Stated	2,300	4	18,300	11	20,600	9	
Total	62,300		160,700		223,000		

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 8 Expenditure on children by need code based on a sample week in September/October 2001

England					£ millions
Need code	Costed staff /	Ongoing Costs	One-off costs	Total	%
Abuse or neglect	9.0	11.4	0.4	20.9	42
Disability	2.6	2.9	0.3	5.8	12
Parental illness or disability	1.3	1.0	0.1	2.4	5
Family in acute stress	2.0	1.5	0.1	3.6	7
Family dysfunction	2.7	2.9	0.1	5.7	11
Socially unacceptable behaviour	1.9	1.6	0.0	3.6	7
Low income	0.4	1.3	0.1	1.8	3
Absent parenting	1.1	1.6	0.1	2.8	6
Cases other than CIN	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.7	1
Not Stated	1.6	1.4	0.1	3.1	6
Total	23.2	25.9	1.3	50.4	

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 9 Age distribution of children served; based on a sample week in September/October 2001

England **Numbers and Percentages**

	Children Looked After		Children Supported in		Total Children in Need	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Under 1	2,300	4	11,000	7	13,200	6
Between 1 and 2	2,200	4	9,200	6	11,400	5
Between 2 and 3	2,200	3	12,100	8	14,200	6
Between 3 and 4	2,200	4	10,700	7	12,900	6
Between 4 and 5	2,400	4	8,300	5	10,600	5
Between 5 and 6	2,300	4	7,200	5	9,500	4
Between 6 and 7	2,600	4	7,300	5	9,900	4
Between 7 and 8	2,800	4	7,300	5	10,100	5
Between 8 and 9	3,000	5	7,800	5	10,800	5
Between 9 and 10	3,300	5	7,600	5	10,900	5
Between 10 and 11	3,700	6	7,600	5	11,200	5
Between 11 and 12	3,800	6	7,500	5	11,300	5
Between 12 and 13	4,100	7	7,600	5	11,600	5
Between 13 and 14	4,700	7	8,300	5	13,000	6
Between 14 and 15	5,100	8	9,000	6	14,100	6
Between 15 and 16	5,700	9	9,300	6	15,000	7
Between 16 and 17	5,400	9	8,100	5	13,400	6
Between 17 and 18	4,000	6	7,200	4	11,200	5
18 and over	600	1	7,700	5	8,400	4
Total	62,300		160,700		223,000	

*These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.
 Figures may not add due to rounding.*

Table 10 Summary distribution of children by ethnic category based on a sample week in September/October 2001

	England						Numbers and Percentages	
	Children Looked After		Children Supported in		Total Children in Need			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
White	50,400	81	111,700	70	162,000	73		
Minority ethnic	10,400	17	26,600	17	37,000	17		
Not Stated	1,500	2	22,400	14	24,000	11		
Total	62,300		160,700		223,000			

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 11 Ethnic distribution of children served; based on a sample week in September/October 2001

England **Numbers and Percentages**

	Children Looked After		Children Supported in		Total Children in Need	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
White British	48,100	77	102,900	64	151,000	68
White Irish	600	1	1,000	1	1,600	1
Other White	1,700	3	7,800	5	9,500	4
White and Black Caribbean	1,500	2	2,100	1	3,700	2
White and Black African	300	1	800	1	1,100	1
White and Asian	600	1	800	1	1,400	1
Other Mixed	1,500	2	2,200	1	3,700	2
Indian	300	0	1,300	1	1,600	1
Pakistani	500	1	2,700	2	3,200	1
Bangladeshi	200	0	1,000	1	1,200	1
Other Asian	300	1	1,500	1	1,800	1
Caribbean	1,500	2	2,800	2	4,300	2
African	1,400	2	4,500	3	6,000	3
Other Black	1,000	2	1,500	1	2,500	1
Chinese	100	0	300	0	400	0
Other Ethnic Group	1,200	2	4,900	3	6,100	3
Not Stated	1,500	2	22,400	14	24,000	11

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 12 Disabled children receiving a service based on a sample week in September/October 2001

England	Numbers and Percentages		
	Children Looked After	Children Supported in	Total Children in Need
	Number	Number	Number
Total children in need receiving services in week	62,300	160,700	223,000
Of which disabled children in need	9,900	19,800	29,700
% of disabled children in need	16	12	13

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 13 Comparative spend on disabled children based on a sample week in September/October 2001

England	£ millions		
	Total expenditure on	Expenditure on	% spent on disabled
	Amount	Amount	%
Costed staff / centre time	23.2	3.1	13
Ongoing costs	25.9	4.3	17
One-off costs	1.3	0.3	25
Total costs	50.4	7.8	15

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 14 **Distribution of disabled children by need code based on a sample week in September/October 2001**

England **Numbers and Percentages**

Need code	Disabled Children Looked		Disabled Children		Total Disabled Children in	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Abuse or neglect	2,400	24	1,500	7	3,900	13
Disability	6,200	62	15,300	78	21,500	73
Parental illness or disability	200	2	300	1	500	2
Family in acute stress	300	3	700	3	1,000	3
Family dysfunction	400	4	600	3	1,000	3
Socially unacceptable behaviour	200	2	500	3	700	2
Low income	0	0	100	0	100	0
Absent parenting	100	1	100	0	200	1
Cases other than CIN	0	0	200	1	200	1
Not Stated	100	1	600	3	800	3
Total	9,900		19,800		29,700	

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 15 Asylum seeking Children in Need receiving a service based on a sample week in September/October 2001

England **Numbers; £ millions; £; Hours**

	Children Looked After		Children Supported in Families or Independently		Total Children in Need	
		%		%		%
Numbers receiving a service						
Asylum seeking children	1,500	2	11,100	7	12,600	6
Non-asylum seeking children	60,800	98	149,500	93	210,300	94
All children	62,300		160,700		223,000	
Amounts spent (£millions per week)						
Asylum seeking children	1.1	3	2.1	11	3.2	6
Non-asylum seeking children	30.1	97	17.1	89	47.2	94
All children	31.2		19.2		50.4	
Average amounts spent on children receiving a service (£ per week)						
Asylum seeking children	720		190		255	
Non-asylum seeking children	495		115		225	
All children	500		120		225	
Average time spent with teams or at centres (hours per child)						
Asylum seeking children	1.9		0.5		0.7	
Non-asylum seeking children	3.5		2.6		2.8	
All children	3.5		2.4		2.7	

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 16 Asylum seeking Children in Need based on a sample week in September/October 2001, by ethnic category

	England												Numbers and Percentages			
	<u>Children Looked After</u>				<u>Children Supported in Families or Independently</u>				<u>Total Children in Need</u>							
	<u>Asylum seeking</u>		<u>Non-asylum seeking</u>		<u>Asylum seeking</u>		<u>Non-asylum seeking</u>		<u>Asylum seeking</u>		<u>Non-asylum seeking</u>					
	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>				
White	600	40	49,800	82	4,900	44	106,800	71	5,500	43	156,600	74				
Minority ethnic	900	59	9,500	16	5,800	52	20,800	14	6,700	53	30,300	14				
Not stated	20	1	1,500	2	500	5	21,900	15	500	4	23,400	11				
Total	1,500		60,800		11,100		149,500		12,600		210,300					

These figures are estimates based upon the actual figures received from 139 Local Authorities.

Figures may not add due to rounding.

Table 17 Comparison of key data in February 2000 and September/October 2001

	CiN 2000	CiN 2001	% change
Numbers receiving a service			
Children Looked After	57,900	62,300	+8%
Children Supported in Families or Independently	171,400	160,700	-6%
All Children in Need	229,300	223,000	-3%
Costs of provision (weekly, £ millions)			
Children Looked After	£25.0	£31.2	+25%
Children Supported in Families or Independently	£15.1	£19.2	+27%
All Children in Need	£40.1	£50.4	+26%
Cost (£) per child per week			
Children Looked After	£435	£500	+15%
Children Supported in Families or Independently	£90	£120	+33%
All Children in Need	£175	£225	+29%
Numbers of Children in Need who are disabled	29,000	29,700	+2%
Children in ethnic minorities			
Children Looked After	8,100	10,400	+28%
Children Supported in Families or Independently	28,800	26,600	-8%
All Children in Need	37,000	37,000	0%