

Study Summary: The Impact of Parents Anonymous® on Child Safety and Permanency



Background

Parents Anonymous® was founded in 1969 based on the belief that parents are in the best position to help other parents through their shared experiences. Offered internationally through nonprofit and government program affiliates, Parents Anonymous® groups help parents build on their strengths to address emotional concerns, develop leadership skills, and create a community for mutual support that enhances personal growth and leads to improved family well-being. A recent National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) study found some encouraging reductions in child abuse and maltreatment outcomes for Parents Anonymous® participants. The study was the first experimental test of the effect of Parents Anonymous® using data from the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System.

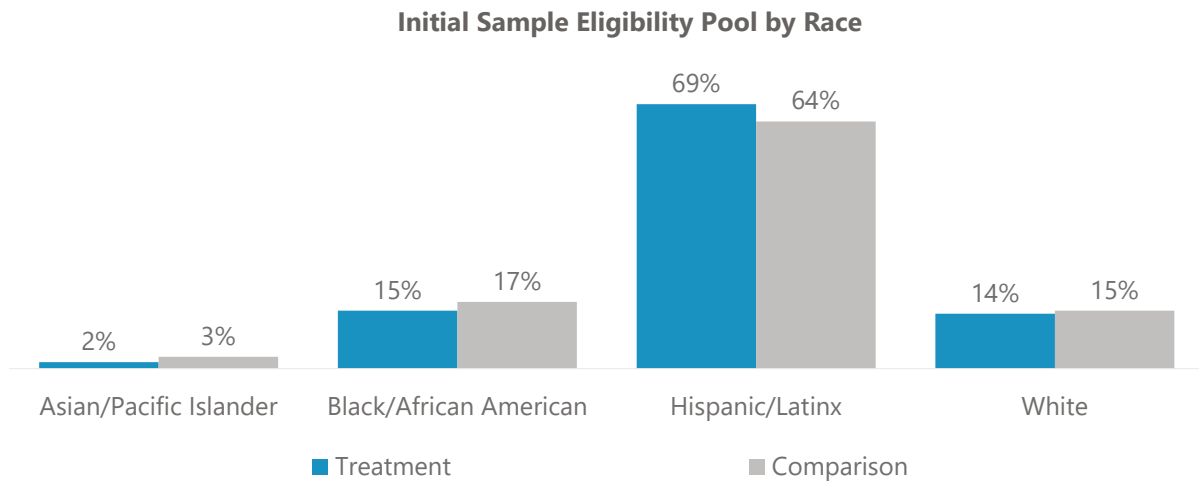
Data Used

The study collected data between 2015 and 2018 from 49 Parents Anonymous® groups and from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System from two large California counties.

Research Methods

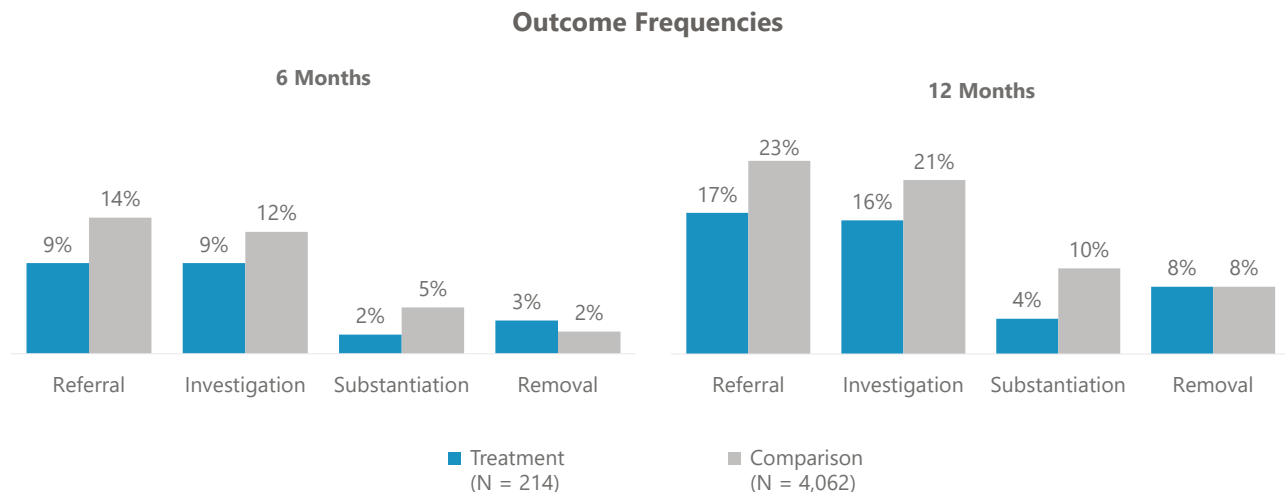
NCCD used an exact match methodology. Exact matching finds one or more cases in the comparison group with the exact same combination of values for the variables being matched as a case in the treatment group. In this study, parents who participated in Parents Anonymous® were matched to those who did not participate but had the exact same combination of values, such as race/ethnicity and prior child welfare history.

Compared with the comparison group, Parents Anonymous® proportionally serves parents of all race/ethnicities.



Findings

- Parents involved in Parents Anonymous® were more likely to have known risk factors associated with subsequent child welfare involvement (i.e., prior child welfare investigation or child removal) compared with parents who did not receive group services.
- Participants in Parents Anonymous® were significantly *less likely* to have a subsequent child maltreatment *referral* and have a *substantiated maltreatment* finding at the 12-month follow-up period compared with parents who did not participate.
- Substantiations decreased by half for parents who participated in Parents Anonymous®.



Find Out More

To learn more about NCCD's focus areas and work, visit www.nccdglobal.org or contact NCCD at info@nccdglobal.org or (800) 306-6223.