

Educational Outcomes of Young Children and Teens Involved in Child Protection:

Room for Improvement, Reasons for Optimism,
Opportunities for Change

“Connections Matter”
CJI Child Protection Conference

Anita M. Larson, Timothy B. Zuel, LICSW
University of Minnesota School of Social Work

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Why We care about School Attendance

- Poor attendance is predictive of maladjustment (Reid, 1984) *Social Engagement*
- Poor academic performance and school dropout (Kandel, et al, 1984; Wehlage, et al, 1986) *Inability to succeed*
- Substance abuse (Hallfors, et al, 2002) *Free time and lack of supervision*
- Delinquency (Dryfoos, 1990; Rohrman, 1993; Kaplan, et al, 1994; Bell, et al, 1994; Garry, 1996; Baker, 2000) *Non-conformity, excess free time*

Affects persist into adulthood

- Predicting poor adult outcomes:
 - Criminality
 - Increased violence
 - Marital instability
 - Job instability
 - Incarceration

(Robins & Ratcliff, 1978; Dryfoos, 1990; Snyder & Sickmund, 1995; Catalano, et AL, 1998)

Young children and absenteeism

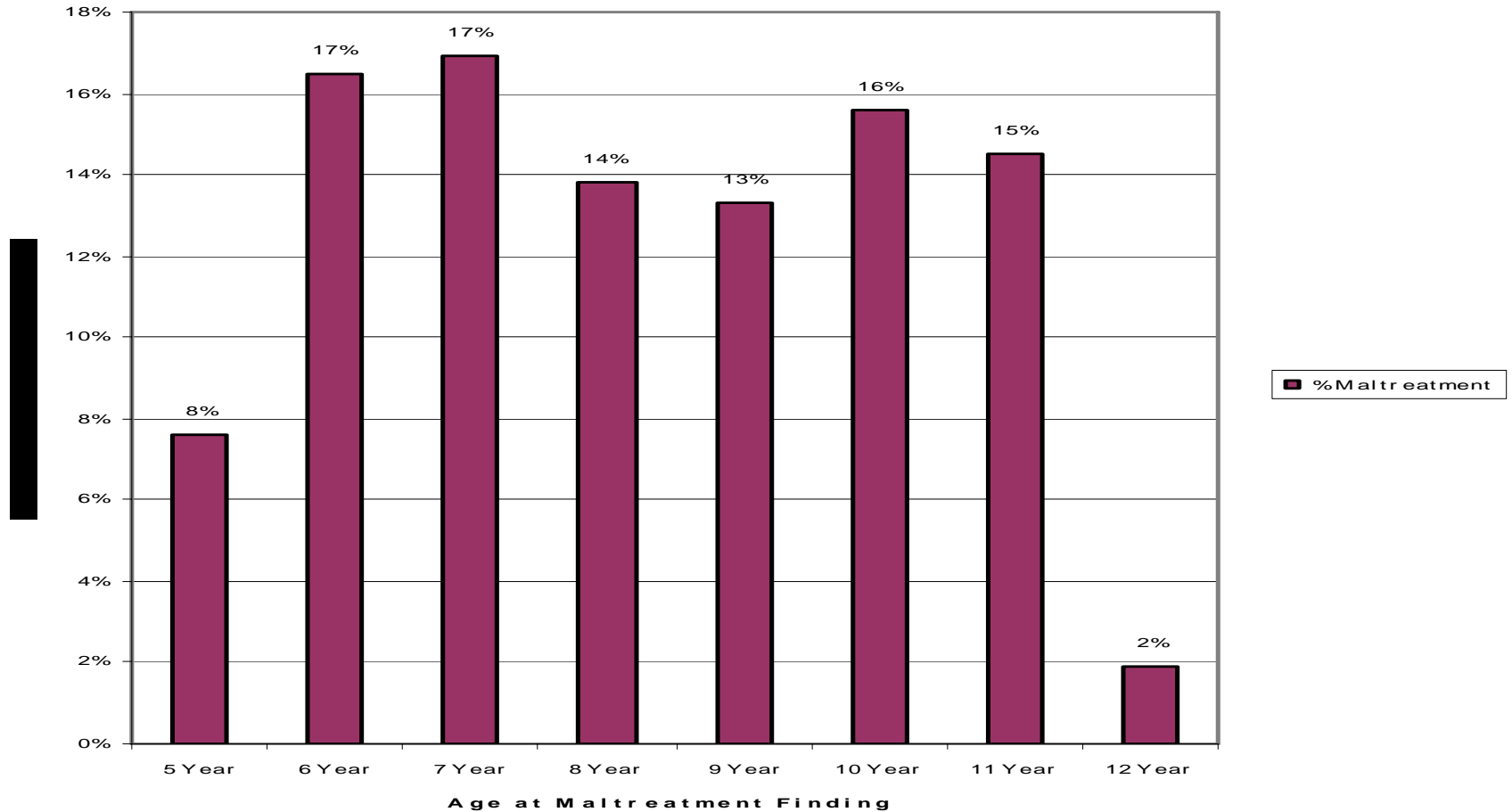
- Retrospective study showed patterns of school drop outs having higher absent rates as early as 1st grade compared to graduates (Barrington & Hendricks, 1998)
- Lehr, et al (2004) suggest a spiral effect where drop outs had twice the absences in 5th grade and three times the absences in 9th grade compared to graduates
- 70% predictive accuracy of drop outs when using attendance data, teacher comments, and achievement scores (Lehr, et all, 2004)

Educational Neglect and CP Intervention

- 2005 Paper: Does CP intervention affect attendance?
- Took all educational neglect maltreatment reports off SSIS in 2000/2001 school year State wide
- Linked these students with MDE attendance records in same year
- Compared the attendance records of same cohort the following year 2001/2002

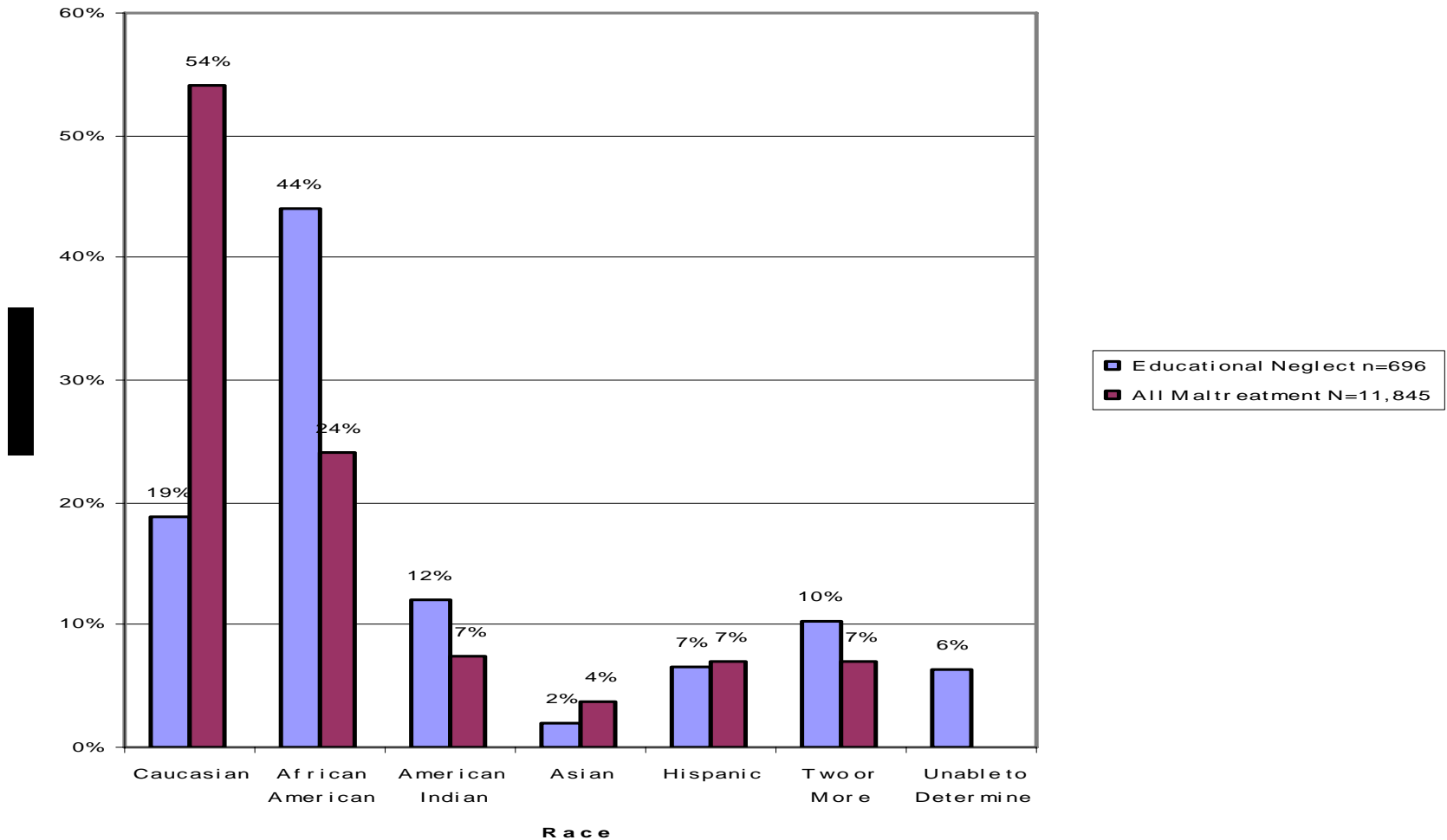
Educational Neglect and CP

Age at Maltreatment Determination 9/ 2000 - 6/ 2001
State Wide N=696



Educational Neglect and CP

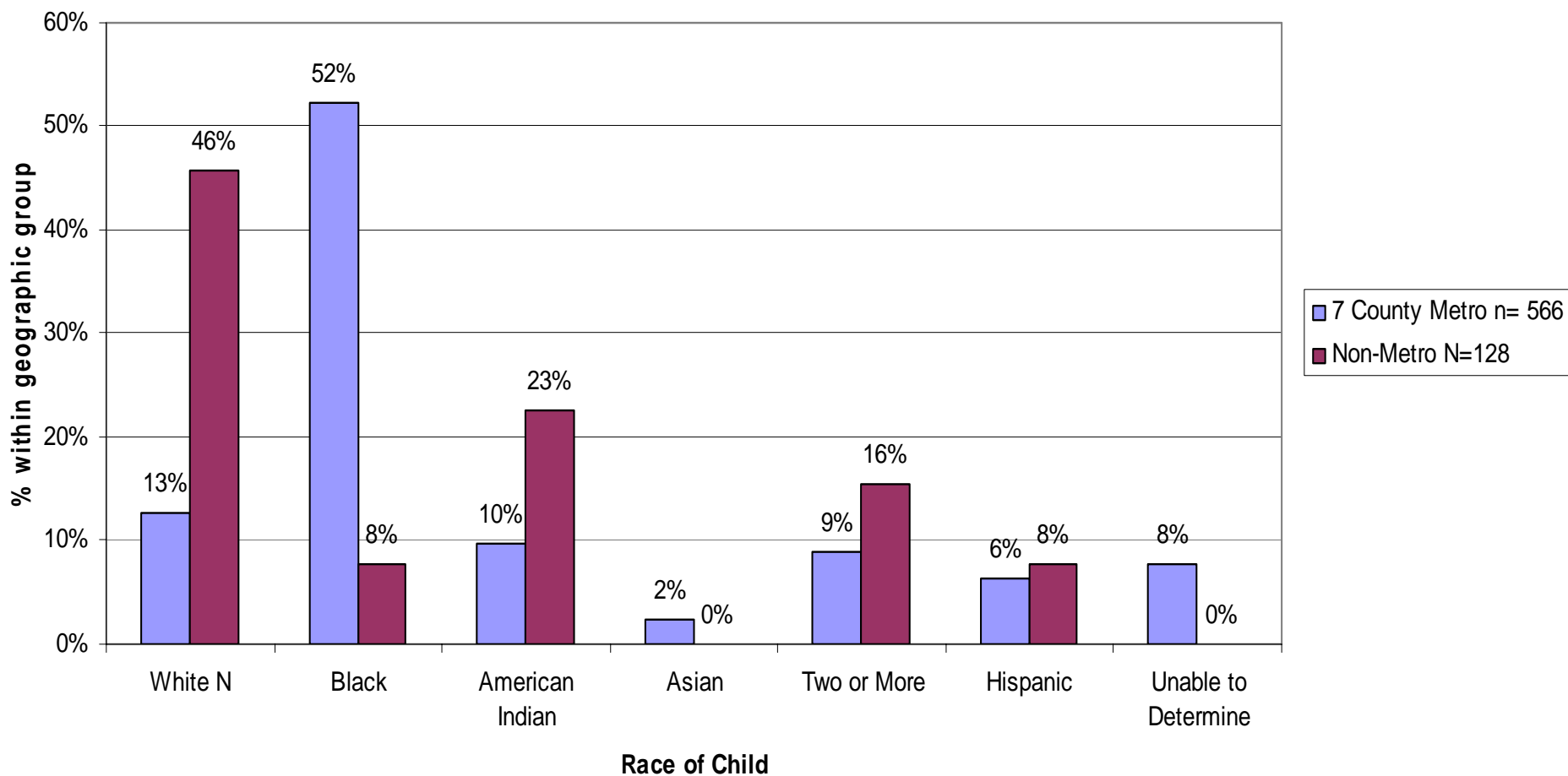
Maltreatment by Race/Ethnicity: Educational Neglect Compared to all Maltreatment in Minnesota year 2000



Educational Neglect and CP

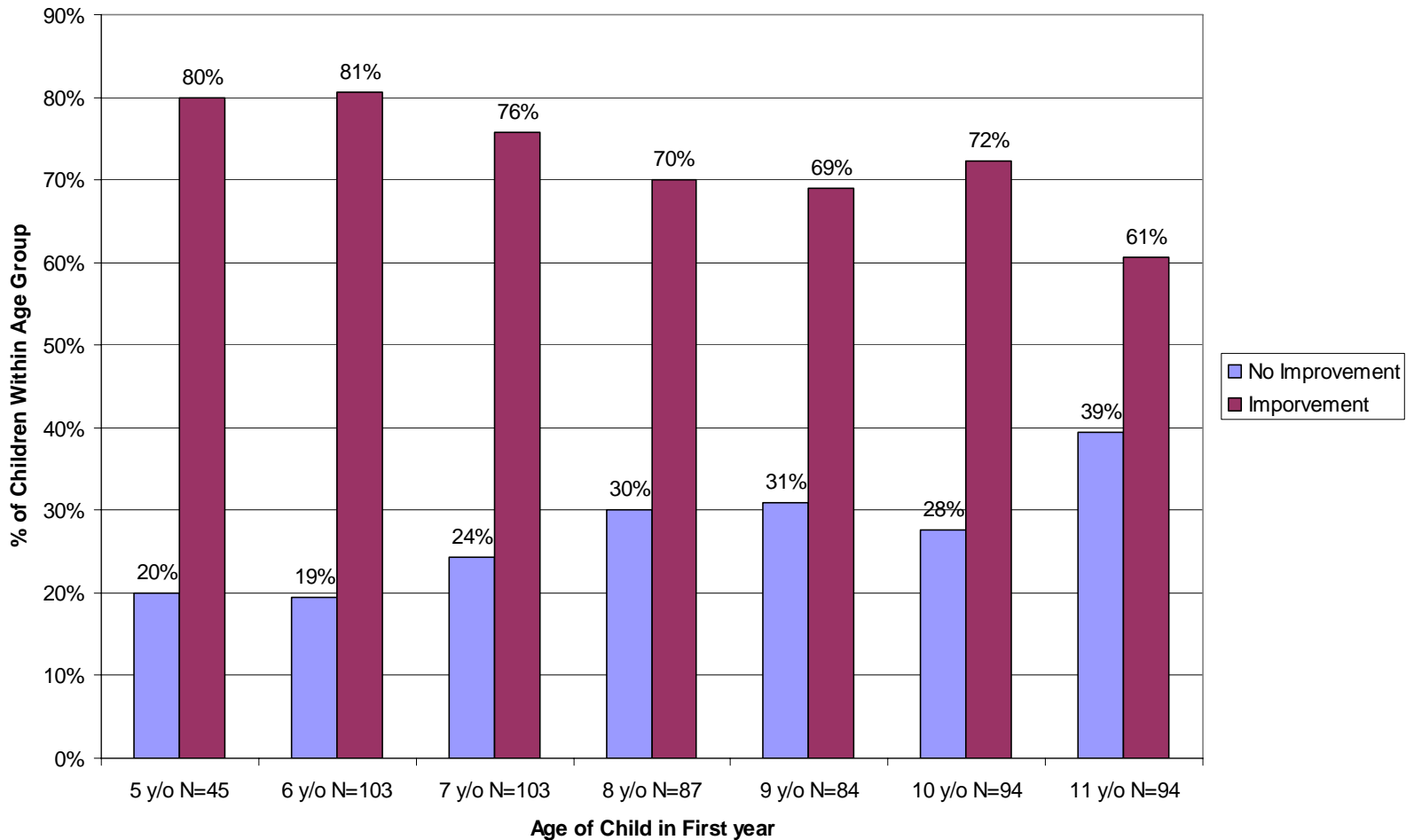
Maltreatment Determination by Race and Geographic Location

9/2000 - 6/2001: N=696



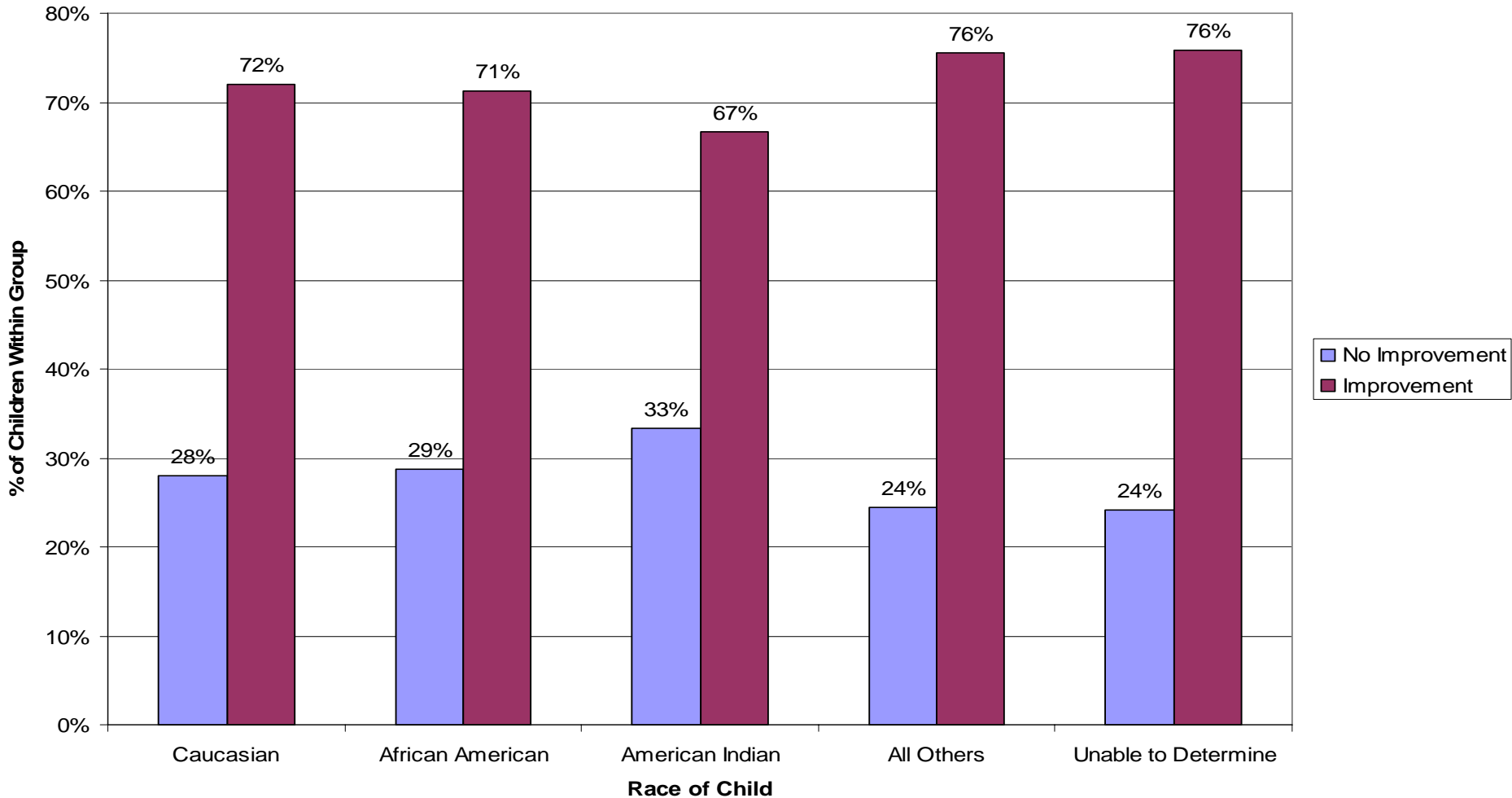
Educational Neglect and CP Results

Attendance Change by Age
N=610



Educational Neglect and CP Results

Attendance Change by Race



Study conclusions

- Evidence suggests that CP Intervention does positively affect attendance (70% improvement)
- Disparity in race with maltreatment findings disappears in improvement outcomes (both AF and AI)
 - Either race is a factor in reporting or a factor in maltreatment determination (or both)
- Age improvement declines as cohort reaches 11 years of age (conforms with practice knowledge)

Study Implications

■ Policy

- MDE and schools need to collect better attendance data
- DHS needs to differentiate and focus more on educational neglect maltreatment in annual reports

■ Practice

- Schools and CPS agencies need better cooperative relationships
- Models of effective intervention outside the CP realm
- Better training on educational neglect (only 50% of counties reported)

Adolescents

- Life stage where connections to school are critical.
- Education is a protective factor (Wall, 1996, Jozefowicz-Simbeni, 2002, World Health Organization, 2005, Kirby & others, 2005).
- High School Retention is a Priority in MN
 - One example: National Dropout Prevention, Retention & Graduation Initiative
 - *MN is one of two states receiving federal grant*
 - *Built upon models from Clemson University*
 - *Uses ten strategies*
 - *Seven sites in MN are participating*

Adolescents and CP – Outcomes

- Adolescents involved with child protection (foster care in particular) have poor outcomes
 - Homelessness (Owen, 2003)
 - Criminal activity (Barth, 1990; Wertheimer, 2002; Courtney, 2001).
 - Mental and emotional health (Wertheimer, 2002).

Adolescents and CP – Young Adult Outcomes

(Education & Employment)

Former foster care youth graduation rates are relatively low, between 45-50% (Barth, 1990; Casey Family Foundation, 2001).

- High School Graduation is a critical foundation for future employment and earnings potential.

- Dropouts

 - Work less

 - Earn less

than those who graduate from high school. (Doland, 2001; Baker, 2001, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2001; Donahoe & others, 2000; Rouse, 2005).

- Global Economy: earnings losses are greater for American non-graduates in the global economy when compared to 21 other nations (OECD, 2006).

Minnesota Adolescents involved in CP and HS graduation – One Cohort

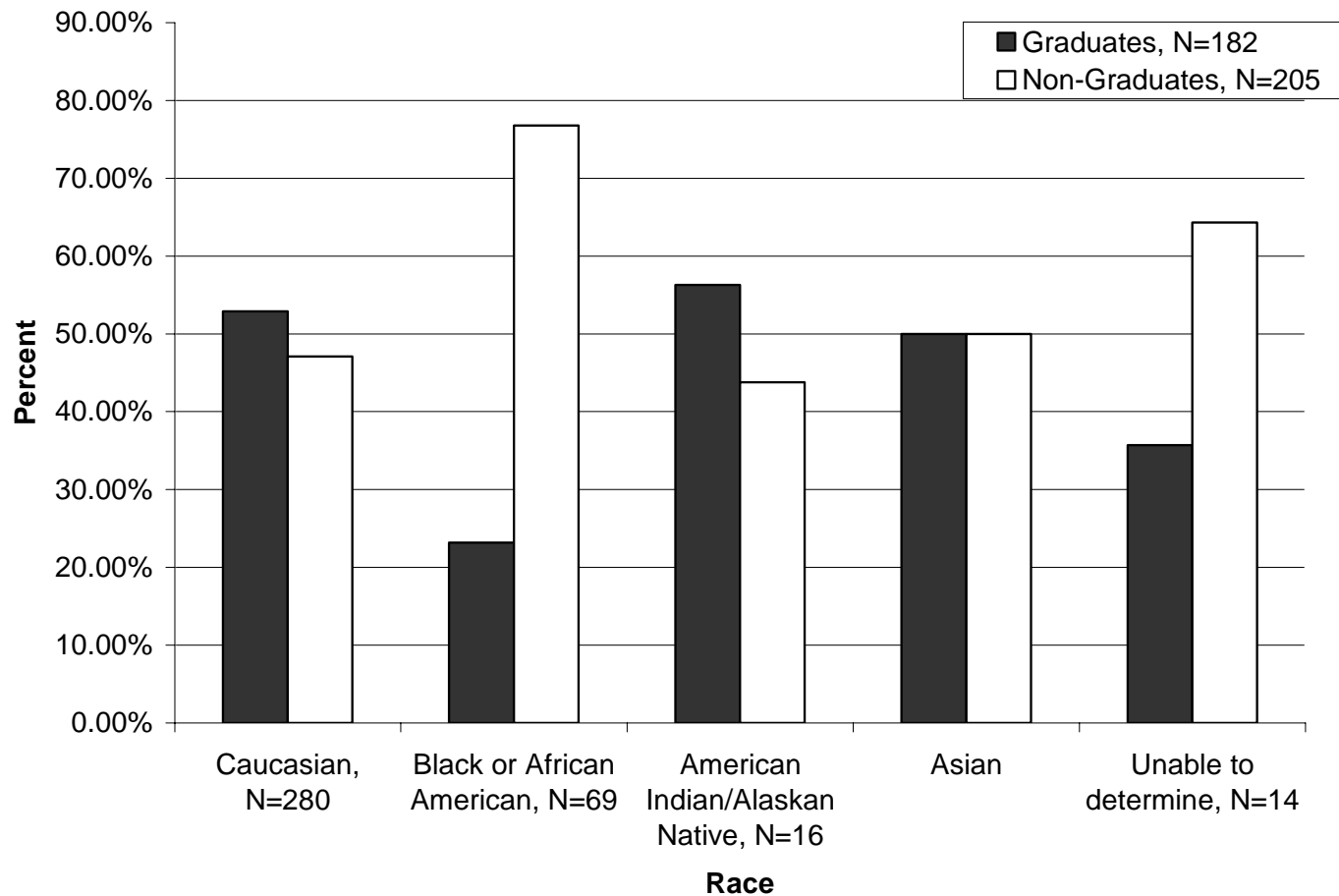
- Began with MN child protection system data and selected 999 adolescents
 - with substantiated maltreatment findings,
 - projected to be near or at graduation age during the 2002-2003 school year.
- Matched these teens to education records for public schools in Minnesota
- 387 were in 12th grade.
 - **Graduation rate for this cohort was 47%**
 - (a ratio of those students who began 12th grade that fall who graduated over those who did not).

High School Cohort Results (*con't*)

- Graduation varied by
 - Race
 - Geography
 - Gifted and Talented Status
 - Those who did not graduate were more likely to be
 - Non-Caucasian
 - Special Education participants
 - Have lower incomes
- than those who did graduate or all other Minnesota high school seniors that same year.

Race

Chart 1. Race of 12th Grade Graduates and Non-Graduates of the Child Welfare Adolescent Group



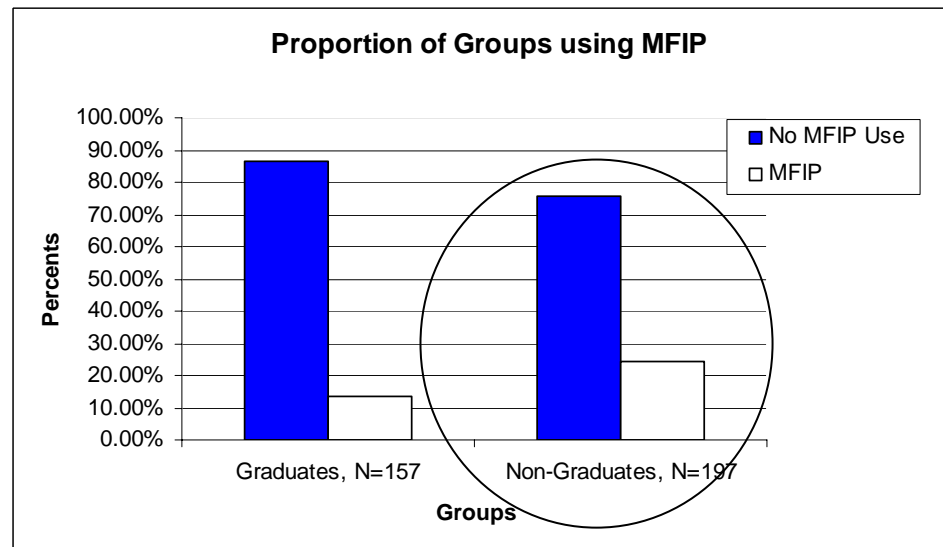
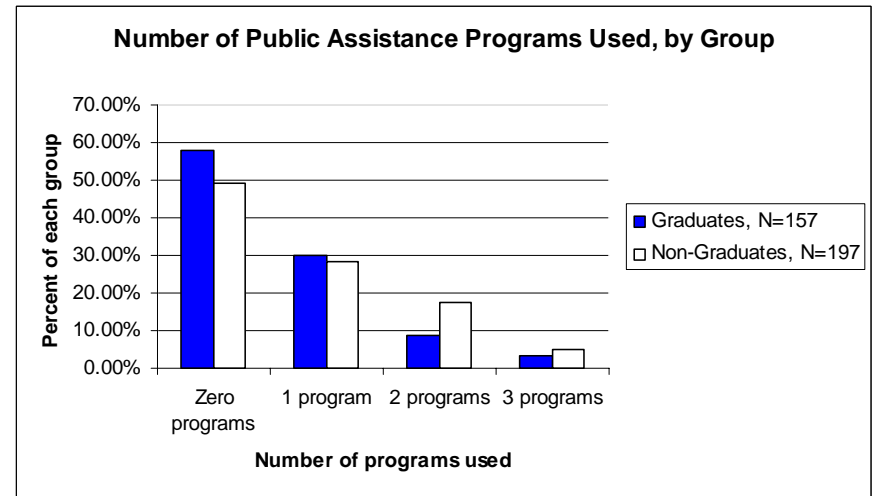
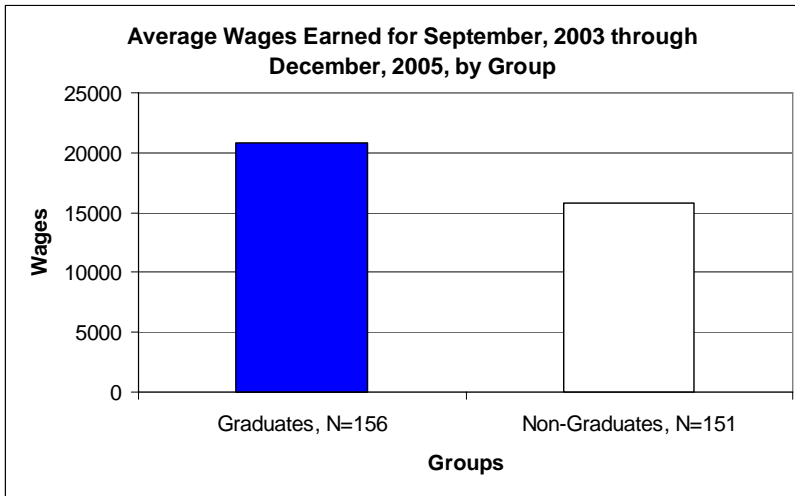
Special Education

Special Education Receipt	Graduates		Non-Graduates		Total
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	
No	136	49.1%	141	50.9%	277
Yes	46	41.8%	64	58.2%	110
Total	182		205		387

Economic Outcomes of Former High School Seniors from Study – Two year follow-up

- Re-examined the 387 former high school seniors two years after high school for outcomes related to
 - Wages
 - Work hours
 - Use of public assistance
- Non-graduates
 - Had fewer calendar quarters of work
 - Worker fewer hours
 - Earned lower average wagescompared to graduates (differences were statistically significant)
- Public assistance program use was not significantly different for the two groups with the exception of MFIP use with non-graduates having significantly more use of this program.

Economic Outcomes & Graduation



Non-Graduate MFIP Users

- Tended to be female
- Were eligible for MFIP because of childbirth
- Investigated the timing of births to these young women:
 - 19: Left school before becoming pregnant
 - 11: Left school after giving birth
 - 9: Left school during pregnancy
- These constitute a new generation of potentially at-risk children.

Room for Improvement

- In spite of historically high overall high school graduation rates, Minnesota's adolescents with multiple challenges graduate as infrequently as those in other states.
- When adolescents are involved with Child Protection, responsibility for educational outcomes is unclear.

Room for Improvement (con't)

- High school disconnection and drop-out may precede early motherhood for some adolescents.
- If adolescents with child protection history graduate from high school, they are much better prepared economically when compared to their peers who do not.

Reasons for Optimism

- We know enough to predict and identify high risk kids
- Though lacking solid research on much of educational neglect, we know the essential elements of intervention must include families, communities, and individuals
- Both Ramsey and Dakota counties have specialized educational neglect intervention models
- Evidence that high school graduation is protective factor as young people reach adulthood
- Paying close attention to school connection can make a significant impact on drop-outs and teen pregnancy

Opportunities for Change

■ Practice Implications:

- It's time for substantive, joint agency responsibility for educational outcomes of children prior to involvement with child protection
 - With and without active case plans
 - Schools and counties need more cooperative practice, if not joint practice

Opportunities for Change (con't)

■ Policy Implications:

- A strong public message needs to be made to the citizens of Minnesota that school attendance is critical
 - Currently, the strength of the attendance message varies by school district
 - Many parents don't fully understand the laws
 - Specific State funding and/or grant support for early intervention in school attendance and engagement

Opportunities for Change (con't)

■ Research Implications:

- Robust data access is needed to continually evaluate interventions
- Agency partnerships are essential

Thank you!

- **Tim Zuel, LICSW**

*Hennepin County Child Protection
tim.zuel@co.hennepin.mn.us*

- **Anita Larson, Research Fellow**

*Minn-Link Project, Center for Advanced Studies in Child
Welfare, University of Minnesota
amlarson@umn.edu*