

Children's Services

Key Points

- In 2000/01 children's services accounted for 17.8% (£83million) of Trusts total expenditure on PSS.
- Per Capita expenditure on children's services by Trusts was £179.7 in 2000/01.
- In 2000/01 children's services accounted for 12% (£165 million) of Boards total expenditure on PSS.
- Per capita expenditure on Children's Services by Boards was £357.6 in 2000/01
- During 2000/01, there were 24,265 referrals to social services which accounted for 16,037 children. The main reasons for social services involvement were:
 - Child protection (30.9%)
 - Childcare issues (43.1%)
 - Children with a disability (8.9%)
 - Children likely to experience emotional, physical or developmental impairment as a result of family breakdown (3.9%)
 - Children whose wellbeing is prejudiced as a result of their disturbance (7.5%)
- Ulster Community & Hospitals had the highest rate of children referred per 10,000-population aged under 18 (423.5) and Down Lisburn the lowest (263.7).
- Over 60% of children referred to social services in 2000/01, had or were receiving a service at 31 March 2001.
- At 31 March 2001, there were 2,414 children being looked after in Northern Ireland, an increase of 3.9% since 1999 (2,324).
- Over 6 in 10 (63.3%) children looked after in 2001 were placed in foster care, 11.3% in residential accommodation, 22% with parents and 3.4% in other placements.
- Just over half (55.5%) of looked after children who were discharged from care at 31 March 2001, had been looked after for less than 3 months, 4.5% for 3 to 6 months, 7.5% for 6 months to 1 year, 11% for 1 to 3 years and 21.4% for 3 years or more.
- There were 2,360 child protection investigations carried out in 2000/01, a rate of 51.2 investigations per 10,000-population aged under 18.
- At 31 March 2001, there were 1,414 children on the child protection register, a rate of 30.7 children per 10,000-population aged under 18.
- The rate of children on the child protection register per 10,000-population aged under 18 was highest in North & West Belfast (57.2) and lowest in Craigavon & Banbridge (3.5).

CHAPTER 1: Children's Services

The Family & Childcare programme of care provides services for children aged under 18 and their families. The services provided by the Family & Childcare programme of care include: child protection, care of looked after children (including fostering and residential care services), family support services, adoption services, children in need and day care facilities for children.

This chapter presents information on service provision for the last 3 years, where available.

SECTION 1: POPULATION AND EXPENDITURE

In 2000, the mid-year estimate for the under 18 population was 460,484 children (27.1% of NI population). Mid-year estimates for age groups are not available below Health & Social Services Board level, therefore 1991 Census figures are used to provide details on population at HSS Trust level, and in the calculation of all key indicators where a population base is required.

Table 1.1: Under 18 Population by Age Group and Trust (1991 Census)

Trust	Age Groups				Under 18	% of pop under 18
	0-4	5-11	12-15	16&17		
North & West Belfast	29.6	40.2	20.1	10.1	44,590	29.6
South & East Belfast	30.0	38.5	20.7	10.9	42,090	22.3
Ulster Community & Hosp.	26.0	39.5	22.8	11.7	35,633	26.1
Down Lisburn	28.4	40.5	20.8	10.2	47,181	30.0
Eastern	28.6	39.7	21.0	10.7	169,494	26.7
Causeway	27.5	39.1	21.7	11.6	25,438	28.4
Homefirst	27.6	39.1	21.8	11.5	87,298	28.6
Northern	27.6	39.1	21.8	11.5	112,736	28.6
Armagh & Dungannon	26.9	39.6	22.2	11.3	31,246	32.1
Craigavon & Banbridge	28.4	39.7	21.1	10.8	31,716	29.3
Newry & Mourne	27.3	40.2	21.6	10.9	27,522	33.2
Southern	27.5	39.8	21.6	11.0	90,484	31.3
Foyle	27.6	39.9	21.6	10.9	51,686	34.7
Sperrin Lakeland	26.0	40.7	22.1	11.2	36,138	32.2
Western	26.9	40.2	21.8	11.0	87,824	33.6
Northern Ireland	27.8	39.7	21.5	11.0	460,538	29.2

In 1991, almost 30% of the total population in Northern Ireland were aged under 18. Across Trusts, the proportion of children aged under 18 ranged from 22.3% in South & East Belfast to 34.7% in Foyle. The proportion of children in the various age groups varied slightly across Trusts. Children aged under 5, as a proportion of the total under 18 population, was lowest in Ulster Community & Hospitals (26.0%) and Sperrin Lakeland (26.0%), and highest in South & East Belfast (30.0%). The highest proportion of the under 18 population was in the 5-11 age group (39.7%).

Comparison at HSS Board level, between 1991 population census figures and 2000 mid-year estimates, shows a decrease in the proportion of the total population aged under 18 (29.2% in 1991 to 27.1% in 2000).

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Across the 4 HSS Boards the pattern is similar to 1991, with the Eastern Board recording the lowest proportion of their total population aged under 18 (25.8%), whilst the Western Board had the highest (30.1%) (Tables 1.1 and 1.2).

Table 1.2 : Mid-Year Estimates by Age Group and Health Board (2000)

Health Board	Age Groups									
	0-4		5-11		12-15		16-17		Age under 18	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	% ⁽¹⁾
Eastern	44,564	25.7	69,036	39.8	40,549	23.4	19,261	11.1	173,410	25.8
Northern	29,172	26.0	44,296	39.4	26,282	23.4	12,627	11.2	112,377	26.1
Southern	23,410	26.2	35,25	39.3	20,785	23.2	10,331	11.5	89,787	28.8
Western	21,518	25.3	32,728	38.5	20,380	24.0	10,284	12.1	84,910	30.1
Northern Ireland	118,664	25.8	181,311	39.4	108,006	23.5	52,503	11.4	460,484	27.1

Socio-Economic indicators

In Northern Ireland, when presenting PSS activity in the 11 Health & Social Services Trusts, it is necessary to take account the different characteristics of the population across the Trusts. Demographic and socio-economic indicators help to set Trusts service provision and expenditure in context.

The socio-economic profiles of Trusts vary significantly, both within Boards and across Northern Ireland. The level of dependence on social services also shows some variability across Trusts. It is important to note that the socio-economic profiles presented do not attempt to establish a link between the socio-economic indicators and the service provision indicators, but are presented to highlight the importance of co-variants.

Social Security Benefit Data

Up-to-date information, which gives an indication of the relative dependence on benefits at Trust level is available through Social Security Benefit data. Although, information relating to child dependents is not available, information on claimants and their dependents can be provided by partner and dependents. Whilst the vast majority of these dependents are children, a very small number are not.

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SN45 *Percentage of children who are dependent of claimants of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or Income Support (IS)*

SN46 *Percentage of children who are dependents of claimants of Family Credit*

Table 1.3 Social Security Benefit Indicators (2001) ⁽¹⁾

Trust	SN45	SN46
North & West Belfast	47.1	20.1
South & East Belfast	20.2	13.8
Ulster Community & Hosp.	12.4	15.4
Down Lisburn	22.5	16.0
Eastern	26.3	16.4
Causeway	20.2	21.3
Homefirst	16.8	18.6
Northern	17.6	19.2
Armagh & Dungannon	20.1	19.4
Craigavon & Banbridge	19.3	19.0
Newry & Mourne	26.7	19.7
Southern	21.8	19.4
Foyle	33.4	19.3
Sperrin Lakeland	20.8	20.0
Western	28.2	19.6
Northern Ireland	24.0	18.6
England	18.3	11.3

(1) GB excludes dependents of contribution based on JSA claimants.
SOURCE : Social Security Statistics Branch, DSD.

Children who are Dependents of JSA/IS Claimants and Family Credit

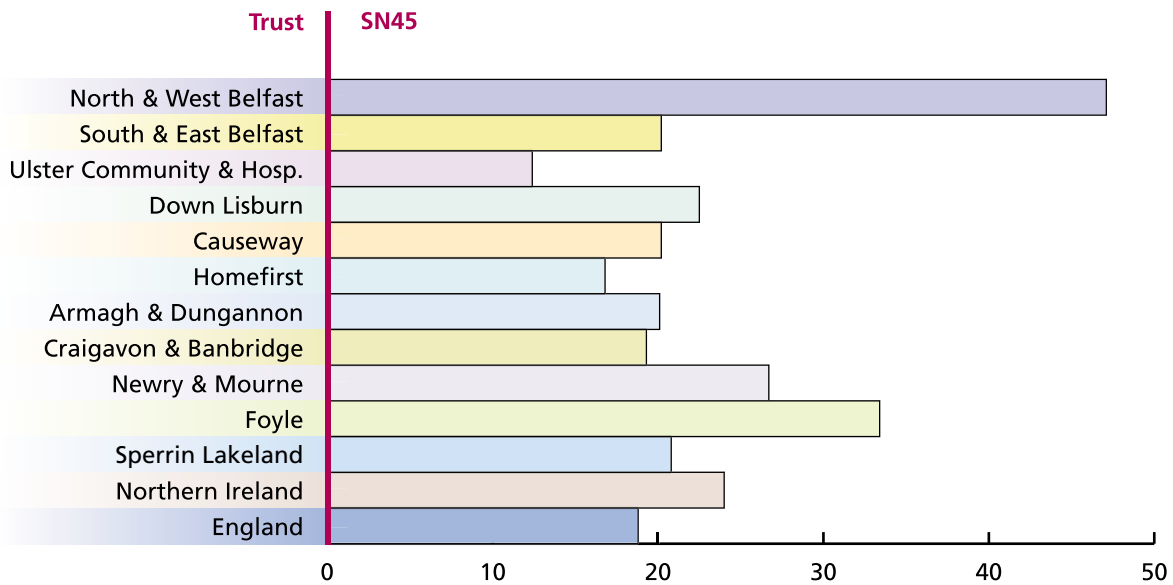
Almost half of all children in North & West Belfast (47.1%) were dependents of claimants of either Income Support or Job seekers Allowance, almost twice the proportion for Northern Ireland (24.0%). Ulster Community & Hospitals (12.4%), had the lowest level of dependence on IS/JSA, whilst Foyle (33.4%) and Newry & Mourne (26.7%) had relatively high levels of dependence. The level of dependence on JSA/IS in Northern Ireland was slightly higher in 2000/01 than the corresponding figure for England (18.3%).

Family Credit is paid to families with low income and may also be considered as an indicator of social deprivation. At 31 March 2001, the proportion of children who were dependents of claimants of Family Credit in Northern Ireland was 18.6%, a significant increase over the last three years. Across Trusts, this ranged from 13.8% in South & East Belfast to 21.3% in Causeway.

Overall, the Western Board had the highest proportion of 'child dependents' on JSA/IS, and had the highest proportion of children who were dependents of claimants of Family Credit (28.2% and 19.6% respectively) (Table 1.3 and Figure 1.1).

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Figure 1.1 : Percentage of Children aged under 18 who are Dependents of Claimants of Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance (2000/01)



Expenditure on Family & Childcare by Trusts

The information on socio-economic circumstances presented above, highlight significant differences in a number of indicators of deprivation across the 11 Health & Social Services Trusts. Whilst there is no attempt made here to establish a link between social deprivation and social services provision and expenditure, information provided on key indicators within Trusts should, to some degree, take account of the demographic and socio-economic conditions that prevail in each Trust.

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EX12 *Percentage of expenditure by Trusts on Family & Childcare POC (%)*

EX61 *Per Capita expenditure by Trusts on Family & Childcare POC (£)*

Table 1.4 ■ **Per Capita Expenditure and Percentage of PSS Expenditure on Family and Childcare POC (1998/99-2000/01)**

Trust	EX12			EX61		
	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01
North & West Belfast	20.6	20.3	21.1	230.8	241.6	273.7
South & East Belfast	13.9	14.3	15.8	207.1	223.1	254.3
Ulster Community & Hosp.	20.6	20.1	21.4	209.1	218.6	248.1
Down Lisburn	16.9	16.9	17.7	139.5	142.7	157.4
Eastern	17.6	17.6	18.7	194.9	204.7	231.1
Causeway	13.5	15.3	16.6	107.0	127.9	157.9
Homefirst	15.0	15.9	16.5	107.3	125.5	144.1
Northern	14.6	15.7	16.5	107.2	126.0	147.2
Armagh & Dungannon	12.2	12.9	14.7	86.9	101.6	128.5
Craigavon & Banbridge	13.4	15.5	15.6	105.7	137.8	151.9
Newry & Mourne	11.3	11.9	14.6	81.2	96.8	126.8
Southern	12.4	13.6	15.0	91.7	112.8	136.2
Foyle	23.9	24.0	23.6	158.8	175.8	188.0
Sperrin Lakeland	15.1	15.4	15.3	118.0	133.6	137.3
Western	19.9	20.1	19.9	142.0	158.5	167.2
Northern Ireland	16.5	16.9	17.8	143.1	158.6	179.7
England	22.7	23.3	22.3	218.2	248.2	254.0

Source: Annual FR22 forms submitted by Trusts to the department.

Almost £83 million was spent on Family & Childcare services by Trusts in 2000/01, an increase of 25.6% (£17 million) since 1998/99.

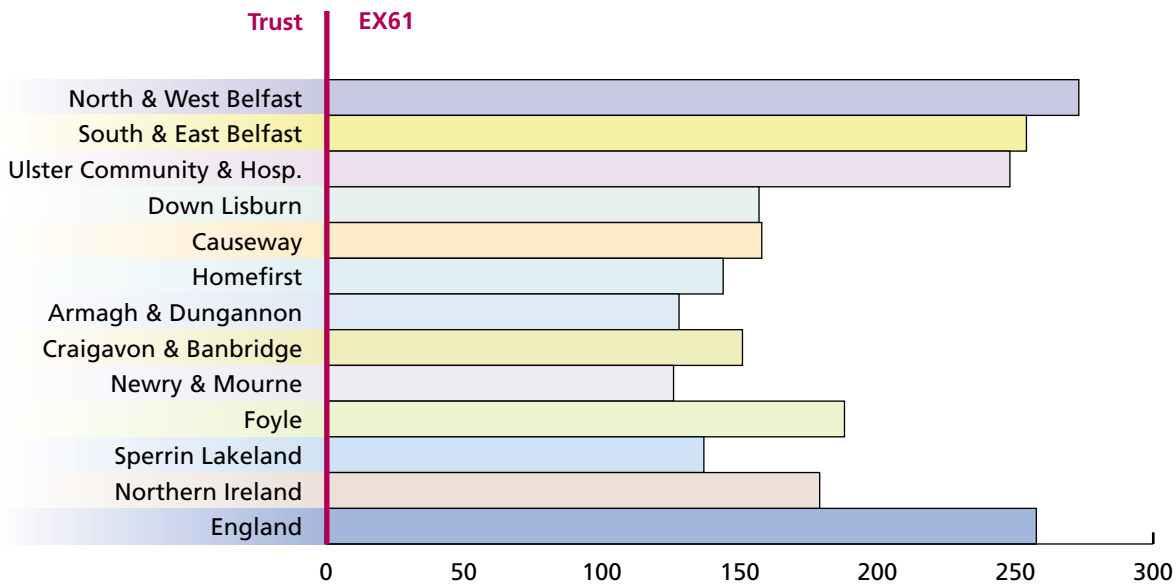
During 2000/01, family & childcare services accounted for almost 20% of PSS expenditure in Trusts. Across Trusts, the proportion of expenditure on family & childcare services ranged from 14.6% in Newry & Mourne to 23.6% in Foyle.

Over the last three years, per capita expenditure by Trusts on family & childcare has increased from £143.1 in 1998/99 to £179.7 in 2000/01. Across Trusts, per capita expenditure on family & childcare ranged from £126.8 in Newry & Mourne to £273.7 in North & West Belfast (Table 1.4 and Figure 1.2).

In 2000/01, Northern Ireland had a much lower per capita spend on family & childcare than England (£179.7 in NI and £254.0 in England).

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Figure 1.2 ■ Family & Childcare POC - Per Capita Expenditure by Trusts (2000/01)



Expenditure on Family & Childcare by Boards

EX12b *Percentage of expenditure by Boards on Family & Childcare POC (%)*

EX61b *Per Capita expenditure by Boards on Family & Childcare POC (£)*

Table 1.5 ■ Per Capita Expenditure and Percentage of PSS on Family & Childcare POC By Boards (1998/99-2000/01)

HSS Board	EX12b (%)	EX61b (£)
Eastern	12.3	406.7
Northern	11.2	318.6
Southern	10.7	299.1
Western	13.8	370.9
Northern Ireland	12.0	357.6

Source: Information taken from FR24 forms submitted by Boards to the department.

During 2000/01, almost £165 million was spent on family & childcare services by HSS Boards in Northern Ireland, accounting for 12% of the total expenditure on PSS by Boards.

Per capita expenditure by Boards on family & childcare was £357.6 in 2000/01, almost double the per capita expenditure by Trusts on the same POC (£179.7). The Eastern Board (£406.7) had the highest per capita expenditure on family & childcare, whilst the Southern Board had the lowest (£299.1) (Table 1.5).

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SECTION 2: Referrals to Social Services

Children's Services

The information provided below is taken from the central returns completed by HSS Trusts, and returned to the Department annually, where information is available for 3 years on a comparative basis, it has been included.

Children Referred to Social Services

Referral information presented below relates to all children who have been referred to social services during the year. These include new referrals (i.e. first time) and existing clients who are re-referred for a new service. A new set of annual returns was introduced in 1998/99, collecting more detailed information on children referred to social services and reasons for referral. As a result, additional information is available and some definitions have been changed.

CHR1 Referrals to social services during year ended 31 March per 10,000-population aged under 18

CHR2 Children referred to social services during year ended 31 March per 10,000-population aged under 18

CHR3 Number of episodes of involvement for children referred to social services during year ended 31 March

Table 2.1 Children Referred to Social Services (1998/99 - 2000/01)

Trust	CHR1			CHR2			CHR3		
	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01
North & West Belfast	502.6	479.5	485.5	432.8	401.4	413.8	1,819	1,698	1,748
South & East Belfast	574.7	909.7	900.7	354.0	344.7	288.2	1,216	959	712
Ulster Community & Hosp.	435.0	446.8	528.2	345.7	376.9	423.5	1,073	1,266	1,484
Down Lisburn	396.6	368.8	383.0	352.5	281.7	263.7	1,306	1,129	1,138
Eastern	476.8	548.6	569.0	372.6	348.9	342.8	5,414	5,052	5,082
Causeway	483.9	679.7	618.0	338.1	467.8	420.6	897	1,265	1,113
Homefirst	551.9	506.8	538.4	384.1	365.4	374.9	3,555	3,366	3,599
Northern	536.6	545.8	556.3	373.7	388.5	385.2	4,452	4,631	4,712
Armagh & Dungannon	323.2	376.7	460.9	238.1	266.6	282.0	589	632	566
Craigavon & Banbridge	419.7	508.9	497.5	320.3	383.1	377.7	953	1,149	1,090
Newry & Mourne	457.1	378.6	347.7	269.6	270.3	268.5	754	732	714
Southern	397.7	423.6	439.3	276.5	308.6	311.4	2,296	2,513	2,370
Foyle	425.1	446.5	430.3	328.5	327.6	304.9	1,395	1,429	1,240
Sperrin Lakeland	527.2	552.6	594.7	383.3	408.4	412.0	1,192	1,337	1,246
Western	467.1	490.2	497.9	351.0	360.8	349.0	2,587	2,766	2,486
Northern Ireland	474.0	512.2	526.9	349.9	352.9	348.2	14,749	14,962	14,650



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During 2000/01, there were 24,265 referrals and 16,037 children referred to social services. This compares to 21,831 referrals and 16,113 children referred during 1998/99, representing an 11% increase in the number of referrals and a slight decrease in the number of children referred. In 2000/01, there were 14,650 episodes of involvement for children referred to social services, slightly lower than in 1998/99 (14,749) (Table 2.1).

An episode of involvement includes children who:

- are referred for the first time;
- were previously known to social services and whose cases have been closed, but who are subsequently referred to social services. Cases may be opened and closed for the same child several times during the course of the year, i.e. there may be several episodes of involvement for a child during the course of the year. Also where an episode of involvement commences in one year and closes in the next, the episode will be counted in the year in which the case opened.

Across Trusts, South & East Belfast had the highest rate of referrals (900.7 per 10,000 children aged under 18), whilst Newry & Mourne had the lowest rate (347.7 per 10,000 children aged under 18). Since 1998/99, the rate of referrals to social services in South & East Belfast has almost double from 574.7 per 10,000 children aged under 18 in 1998/99 to 900.7 in 2000/01.

In terms of children referred to social services Ulster Community & Hospitals had the highest (423.5 per 10,000-population aged under 18), compared with 263.7 in Down Lisburn in 2000/01.

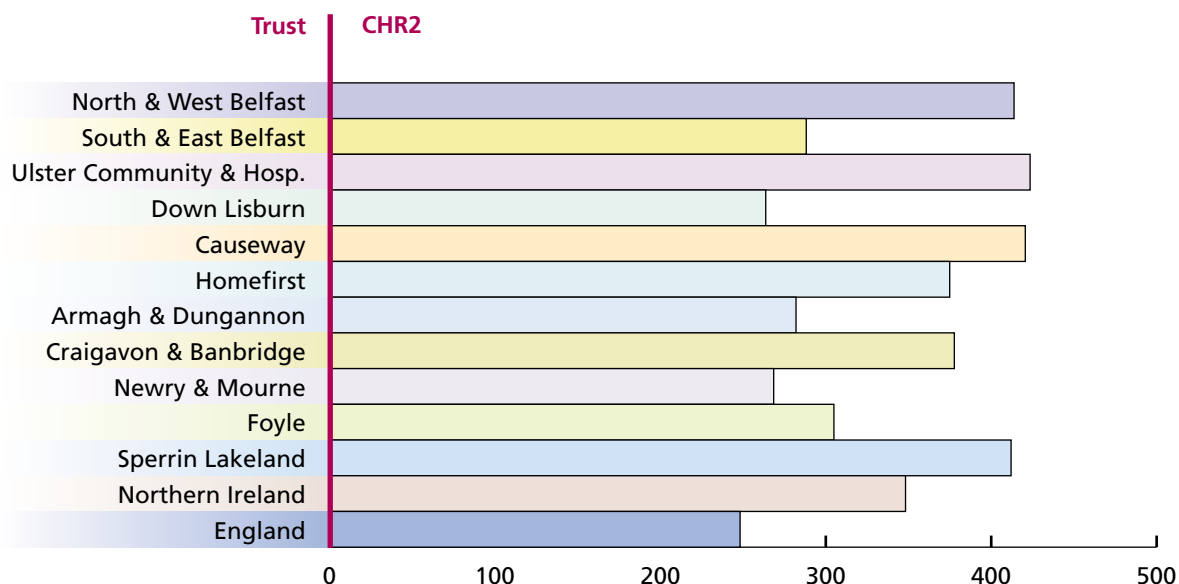
Since 1998/99, the rate of children referred to social services has increased in five Trusts. A similar pattern was evident for the rate of referrals per 10,000-population aged under 18. The large increases evident in some of the Trusts may in part be due to the introduction of the new annual returns, which requested more detailed information.

Homefirst recorded the highest number of episodes of involvement by social services during 2000/01 (3,599), almost one quarter of all episodes. The lowest number of episodes of involvement by social services was in Armagh & Dungannon (566).

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Across HSS Boards, the Eastern Board had the highest number of episodes of involvement by social services (5,082), whilst the Southern Board had the lowest number (2,370) (Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 : Children referred to Social Services during year ended 31 March 2001 per 10,000-population aged under 18



Age Profile of Children Referred

During 2000/01, over one quarter (25.4%) of children referred to social services were aged under 5, 33% were aged 5–11 years, 30% were aged 12-15 and 11% were aged 16 & over.

Figure 2.2 : Age Profile of Children Referred to Social Services during 2000/01

Trust	Under 5	5-11yrs	12-15yrs	16+yrs
North & West Belfast	29.1	36.3	23.4	10.7
South & East Belfast	27.3	34.6	27.0	11.1
Ulster Community & Hosp.	28.0	36.5	24.1	11.2
Down Lisburn	30.2	34.9	25.0	9.7
Eastern	28.7	35.7	24.7	10.7
Causeway	13.3	25.9	47.1	13.4
Homefirst	16.9	28.4	38.6	15.4
Northern	16.0	27.8	40.7	14.9
Armagh & Dungannon	32.1	37.3	23.3	7.3
Craigavon & Banbridge	27.3	36.4	27.5	8.8
Newry & Mourne	30.0	28.1	27.7	13.8
Southern	29.5	34.5	26.2	9.7
Foyle	31.0	36.4	24.4	8.2
Sperrin Lakeland	26.5	34.5	30.4	8.6
Western	28.8	35.5	27.3	8.4
Northern Ireland	25.4	33.3	29.8	11.2

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Reasons for Social Services Involvement

- CHR4** *Episodes of involvement with social services for child protection investigations as a percentage of all episodes*
- CHR5** *Episodes of involvement with social services for child care issues as a percentage of all episodes*
- CHR6** *Episodes of involvement with social services for children with a disability as a percentage of all episodes*
- CHR6a** *Episodes of involvement with social services for children likely to experience emotional, physical or developmental impairment due to family breakdown as a percentage of all episodes*
- CHR6b** *Episodes of involvement with social services for children whose well being is prejudiced as a result of their disturbance as a percentage of all episodes*

Table 2.2 : Episodes of Involvement with Social Services during 1998/99 & 1999/00 (Presenting category) (%)

Trust	CHR4			CHR5			CHR6			CHR6a			CHR6b		
	98/99	99/00	00/01	98/99	99/00	00/01	98/99	99/00	00/01	98/99	99/00	00/01	98/99	99/00	00/01
North & West Belfast	33.8	38.9	23.9	58.8	41.3	51.0	0.9	0.2	0.1	1.9	1.4	2.2	1.3	15.2	20.4
South & East Belfast	43.9	45.7	39.3	44.9	39.4	36.2	6.3	12.7	18.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.6	1.7
Ulster Community & Hosp.	60.4	51.3	42.0	20.8	29.8	46.1	11.7	11.7	10.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	4.9	0.0
Down Lisburn	80.9	60.1	60.1	5.5	16.2	18.3	12.0	16.5	18.3	0.6	1.5	0.9	0.0	1.0	0.3
Eastern	42.6	45.4	33.6	48.0	34.9	44.1	3.8	6.5	6.5	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.1	9.1	12.0
Causeway	59.8	90.2	56.8	11.0	4.9	29.5	6.3	1.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	1.1	4.7	1.0	4.2
Homefirst	19.0	18.8	26.8	42.6	40.0	35.1	15.3	17.2	21.9	6.0	6.1	1.8	12.3	9.5	6.9
Northern	22.8	25.3	30.3	39.7	36.8	34.4	14.4	15.7	19.6	5.4	5.5	1.7	11.6	8.7	6.6
Armagh & Dungannon	62.5	75.2	74.5	8.3	0.8	2.1	29.2	20.7	22.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	1.1
Craigavon & Banbridge	25.3	16.6	13.5	55.6	62.4	60.7	10.5	5.3	5.5	2.8	5.0	13.6	3.5	4.5	4.7
Newry & Mourne	36.3	35.8	39.9	13.5	19.0	12.4	11.7	10.8	4.7	4.4	9.4	9.5	2.1	3.1	2.9
Southern	34.2	27.7	25.4	32.0	44.2	42.3	13.1	8.3	6.3	3.2	5.8	11.5	2.5	3.9	4.0
Foyle	58.3	39.1	36.5	29.1	47.7	49.1	3.1	5.9	10.6	2.7	1.0	0.0	3.6	4.2	2.3
Sperrin Lakeland	46.7	31.6	24.3	32.0	52.4	49.2	4.8	3.7	8.9	7.2	3.3	2.6	3.5	1.9	1.6
Western	54.5	37.2	32.6	30.1	48.9	49.1	3.6	5.3	10.0	4.1	1.6	0.8	3.5	3.6	2.1
Northern Ireland	39.2	35.8	30.9	40.4	40.1	43.1	7.4	8.5	8.9	3.0	3.1	3.9	4.1	6.8	7.5

The information collected, is based on the reason for social services involvement and illustrates the type of cases that social work staff are involved in throughout the year. Reasons for social services involvement include: Child Protection Investigations, Childcare Issues, Children with a disability, Children likely to experience emotional, physical or developmental impairment due to family breakdown and Children whose well being is prejudiced as a result of their disturbance.

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In 2000/01, the main reasons for social services involvement were:

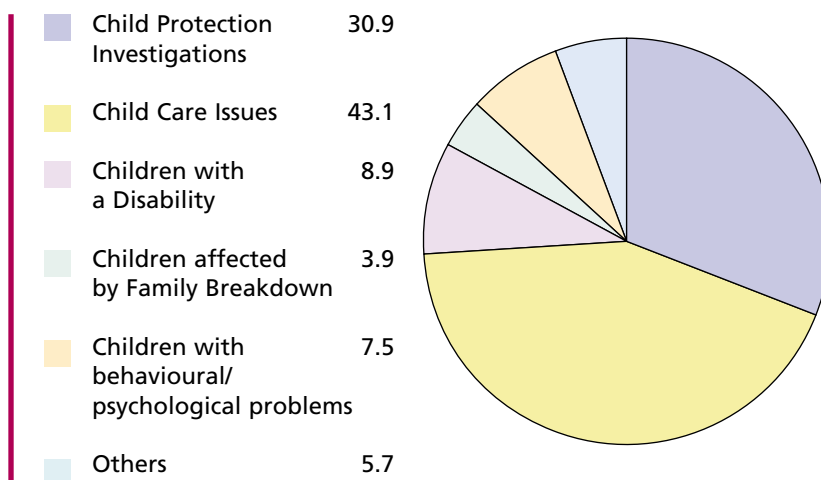
- Child Care issues (43.1%);
- Child Protection Investigations (30.9%);
- Children with a Disability requiring social services (8.9%);
- Children whose well-being is likely to be prejudiced as a result of their behavioural, emotional, psychiatric or psychological disturbance and may require social services (7.5%);
- Children likely to experience significant emotional, physical, or developmental impairment as a result of family breakdown without the provision of social services (3.9%).

Reasons for involvement varied significantly across Trusts. Child protection investigations was cited as the main reason for involvement by social services in five Trusts. The proportion of episodes of social services involvement due to child protection investigations was highest in Armagh & Dungannon (74.5%), whilst the lowest proportion was in Craigavon & Banbridge (13.5%).

Childcare issues was cited as the main reason of involvement by social services in six Trusts. In Newry & Mourne, just over 6 in 10 episodes of involvement by social services were as a result of childcare issues, compared with 2% in Armagh & Dungannon (Table 2.2 and Figure 2.3).

The remaining reasons of involvement by social services accounted for only small proportions of all episodes.

Figure 2.3 : Reasons for Social Services Involvement during year ended 31 March 2001 (Main Presenting Categories)



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Children Referred during Year – Status at 31 March

- CHR7** *Inappropriate referral as a percentage of all children referred*
- CHR8** *Query dealt with at referral stage as a percentage of all children referred*
- CHR9** *Unable to meet need as percentage of all children referred*
- CHR10** *Allocated for service provision/assessment as a percentage of all children referred*
- CHR11** *Others (including pending cases) as a percentage of all children referred*

Table 2.3 Reason for Social Services Involvement during year ended 31 March (Main Presenting Categories) (1998/99 - 2000/01)

Trust	CHR7			CHR8			CHR9			CHR10			CHR11		
	98/99	99/00	00/01	98/99	99/00	00/01	98/99	99/00	00/01	98/99	99/00	00/01	98/99	99/00	00/01
North & West Belfast	0.2	0.1	0.1	19.5	22.0	16.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	65.4	58.9	64.0	14.1	19.1	19.3
South & East Belfast	0.5	0.1	0.1	16.8	13.6	7.6	0.1	0.6	3.3	78.6	77.4	83.2	4.3	8.3	5.9
Ulster Community & Hosp. Down Lisburn	1.2	0.5	0.4	10.7	16.2	5.8	0.2	0.0	0.5	57.5	59.9	72.4	30.2	23.4	20.7
Eastern	0.6	0.2	0.2	17.2	16.6	11.6	0.0	0.2	0.9	67.5	67.2	72.0	14.5	15.9	15.0
Causeway	0.9	0.3	0.7	57.7	63.7	63.7	0.0	0.1	0.1	28.4	26.1	23.6	12.9	9.4	11.5
Homefirst	0.6	0.8	0.3	44.6	45.1	45.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	49.9	48.5	48.9	5.0	5.2	4.9
Northern	0.6	0.7	0.4	47.3	50.2	49.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	45.5	42.4	42.7	6.6	6.3	6.5
Armagh & Dungannon	2.6	1.2	1.0	9.3	4.1	5.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	59.8	54.7	64.2	27.7	40.0	28.9
Craigavon & Banbridge	1.2	0.2	0.3	34.7	24.5	22.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.9	57.4	58.7	13.2	17.9	18.8
Newry & Mourne	2.6	3.9	3.7	17.4	24.7	11.0	0.1	1.5	2.8	65.0	55.5	69.1	15.0	14.4	13.1
Southern	2.0	1.5	1.4	22.0	18.5	14.1	0.0	0.4	0.7	57.7	56.1	63.2	18.0	23.6	20.5
Foyle	0.2	0.0	0.1	3.6	3.1	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	89.4	88.7	77.5	6.8	8.2	16.3
Sperrin Lakeland	0.3	0.5	0.0	16.7	17.1	16.7	0.0	1.9	0.1	77.2	65.7	73.1	5.8	14.8	10.2
Western	0.2	0.3	0.0	9.5	9.6	11.3	0.0	0.9	0.0	83.9	77.9	75.3	6.4	11.3	13.3
Northern Ireland	0.7	0.6	0.5	24.3	24.6	22.3	0.0	0.3	0.5	63.4	60.7	63.1	11.4	13.7	13.4

At 31 March 2001, over 60% (10,127) of children referred to social services were allocated for assessment or service provision, 22.3% (3,581) of initial referrals were dealt with at referral stage, 13.4% (2,141) were referred to as 'others' (including pending cases). Only 0.5% (73) of initial referrals were found to be inappropriate referrals.

There were slight variations across Trusts. In Causeway, 63.7% of all initial referrals were dealt with at referral stage, resulting in no further action, compared with 5.8% in Ulster Community & Hospitals and Armagh & Dungannon. Armagh & Dungannon (28.9%) and Ulster Community & Hospitals (20.7%) had relatively high proportions of initial referrals recorded as 'others'.

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Across Boards, over three quarters (75.3%) of children referred to social services in the Western Board were allocated for assessment at 31 March 2001, compared with 42.7% in the Northern Board. The proportions of each category of referral remained relatively constant over the last three years (Table 2.3 and Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4 : Status of Children Referred to Social Services during 2000/01

Trust	CHR7	CHR8	CHR9	CHR10	CHR11
North & West Belfast	0.1	16.0	0.0	64.0	19.3
South & East Belfast	0.1	7.6	3.3	83.2	5.9
Ulster Community & Hosp.	0.4	5.8	0.5	72.4	20.7
Down Lisburn	0.3	16.0	0.3	72.7	10.5
Eastern	0.2	11.6	0.9	72.0	15.0
Causeway	0.7	63.7	0.1	23.6	11.5
Homefirst	0.3	45.2	0.0	48.9	4.9
Northern	0.4	49.8	0.0	42.7	6.5
Armagh & Dungannon	1.0	5.8	0.0	64.2	28.9
Craigavon & Banbridge	0.3	22.2	0.0	58.7	18.8
Newry & Mourne	3.7	11.0	2.8	69.1	13.1
Southern	1.4	14.1	0.7	63.2	20.5
Foyle	0.1	6.3	0.0	77.5	16.3
Sperrin Lakeland	0.0	16.7	0.1	73.1	10.2
Western	0.0	11.3	0.0	75.3	13.3
Northern Ireland	0.5	22.3	0.5	63.1	13.4

Children with a Disability Referred to Social Services

Table 2.4 : Children with a Disability Referred to Social Services (1998/99-2000/01)
(Category of Disability)

Trust	Visually Impaired			Hearing Impaired			Physically Disabled		
	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01
North & West Belfast	12.3	4.2	2.7	21.9	16.8	16.1	39.5	49.5	46.4
South & East Belfast	10.9	6.0	20.7	23.6	3.6	13.8	36.4	33.3	31.0
Ulster Community & Hosp.	9.6	16.9	5.4	25.0	26.2	13.8	21.2	27.7	70.0
Down Lisburn	4.6	12.7	9.6	3.1	1.3	4.1	40.0	30.4	28.8
Eastern	9.8	9.3	7.8	18.5	11.5	12.6	35.7	36.2	48.8
Causeway	0.0	8.3	3.1	16.7	11.1	15.6	23.3	44.4	28.1
Homefirst	9.8	14.3	10.9	9.8	11.4	27.2	30.4	28.6	17.4
Northern	7.7	12.3	8.9	11.3	11.3	24.2	28.9	34.0	20.2
Armagh & Dungannon	4.9	2.7	25.0	17.1	29.7	31.3	68.3	59.5	37.5
Craigavon & Banbridge	8.7	2.5	4.5	4.3	5.0	11.9	28.3	51.3	28.4
Newry & Mourne	8.3	23.3	5.0	12.5	13.3	10.0	29.2	40.0	30.0
Southern	7.2	6.8	7.8	10.8	12.9	14.6	43.2	51.0	30.1
Foyle	19.1	19.6	21.2	20.2	15.0	9.6	28.1	30.8	36.5
Sperrin Lakeland	12.3	3.1	10.7	7.5	4.1	6.7	39.7	37.8	36.2
Western	14.9	11.7	15.0	12.3	9.8	7.9	35.3	34.1	36.4
Northern Ireland	10.6	9.9	10.1	14.2	11.3	13.1	35.4	38.2	38.7

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**Table 2.4 (contd) : Children with a Disability Referred to Social Services (1989/99 - 2000/01)
(Category of Disability)**

Trust	Learning Disabled			Mental Health		
	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01
North & West Belfast	22.8	26.3	33.0	3.5	3.2	1.8
South & East Belfast	21.8	53.6	34.5	7.3	3.6	0.0
Ulster Community & Hosp.	11.5	13.8	3.8	32.7	15.4	6.9
Down Lisburn	50.8	54.4	57.5	1.5	1.3	0.0
Eastern	26.9	37.8	27.9	9.1	5.3	2.9
Causeway	60.0	36.1	53.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Homefirst	50.0	45.7	43.5	0.0	0.0	1.1
Northern	52.1	42.5	46.0	0.0	0.0	0.8
Armagh & Dungannon	9.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.1	6.3
Craigavon & Banbridge	54.3	41.3	55.2	4.3	0.0	0.0
Newry & Mourne	45.8	23.3	55.0	4.2	0.0	0.0
Southern	36.0	27.2	46.6	2.7	2.0	1.0
Foyle	32.6	34.6	32.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sperrin Lakeland	39.7	55.1	46.3	0.7	0.0	0.0
Western	37.0	44.4	40.7	0.4	0.0	0.0
Northern Ireland	35.9	38.2	36.6	3.9	2.6	1.5

During 2000/01, a total of 853 children with a disability were referred to social services, a rate of 18.5 children per 10,000-population aged under 18. Of those children with a disability referred to social services, 38.7% (330) had a physical disability, 36.6% (312) had a learning disability, 13.1% (112) had a hearing impairment, 10.1% (86) had a visual impairment and 1.5% (13) had mental health needs.

The proportions of children with a disability referred to social services varied across Trusts and disability type in 2000/01. Children with mental health needs referred to social services was highest in Ulster Community & Hospitals (6.9%), whilst 7 Trusts did not have any referrals.

Children with learning difficulties referred to social services, was highest in Down Lisburn (57.5%), whilst in Armagh & Dungannon no children with learning difficulties were referred. Across Boards, the proportion of children with learning difficulties was highest in the Northern (46.0%) and Southern (46.6%) Boards and lowest in the Eastern Board (27.9%).

The proportion of children with a physical disability referred to social services, was highest in Ulster Community & Hospitals (70.0%), and lowest in Homefirst (17.4%). Since 1998/99, the proportion of children with a physical disability referred to social services in Ulster Community & Hospitals has increased from 21.2% in 1998/99 to 70.0% in 2000/01 (Table 2.4).