

# Updates & Errata

After publication of the report, *The Overlap Between the Child Welfare and Youth Criminal Justice Systems: Documenting “Cross-Over Kids” in Manitoba*, the following updates were required:

## June 2, 2020 - Erratum

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- **Page 34**

- Figures 3.16 and 3.17 were replaced

- **Page 88**

- Point 1 under The Importance of Supporting Children and Families should read:

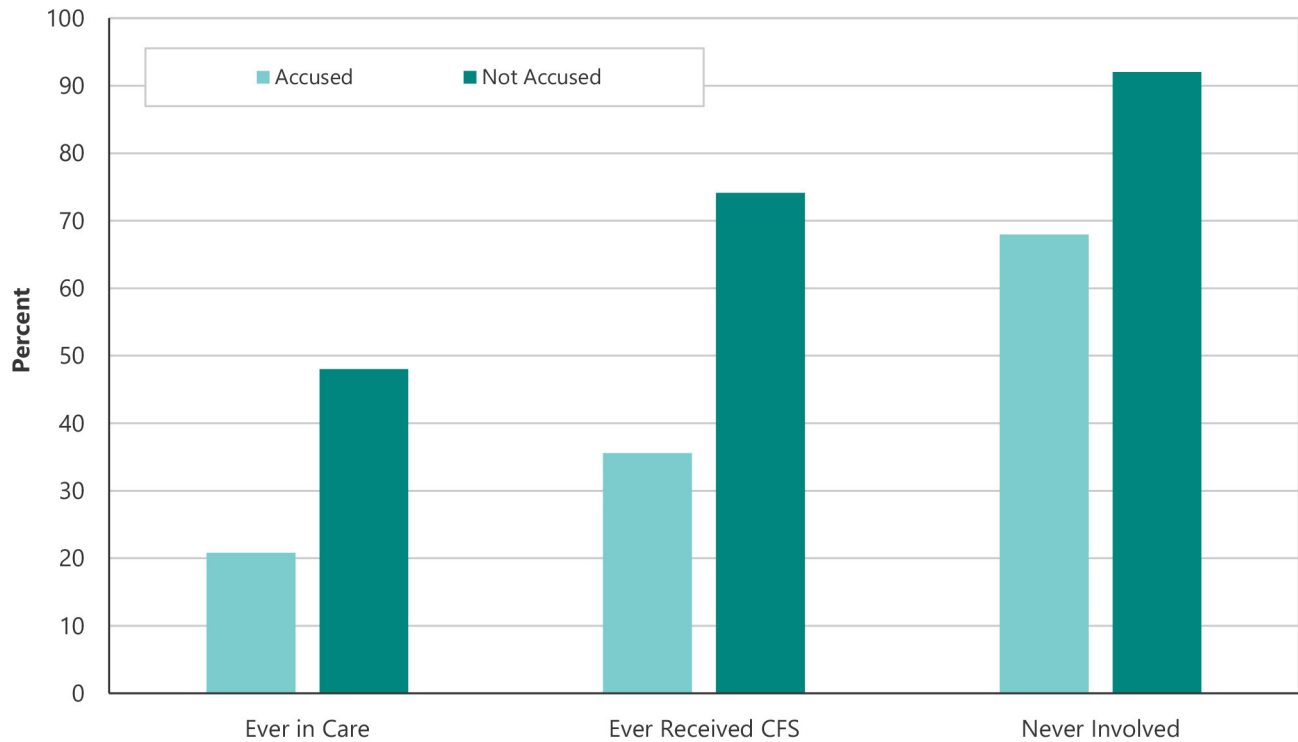
Families First Home Visiting Program (FFHV): FFHV offers intensive home visiting services to families with risk factors associated with child maltreatment. Trained para-professionals make regular visits during the first three years of a child’s life, focusing on strengthening parent-child relationships, guiding healthy child development and connecting families with health and social services. This program has been shown to decrease the child-maltreatment related hospitalizations and the number of children taken into care [29], and to increase connections to other services [30,31]. Despite the benefits associated with FFHV, more than half of the families eligible do not participate [29]. Amongst Indigenous families this could be due to experiences of racism in other systems that reduce their willingness to participate, along with fears that participation may result in having their children taken away. It may also be the case that the program is not culturally sensitive. Barriers to participation for both non-Indigenous and Indigenous families should be explored.

The web version of the report has been updated.

The updated pages follow.

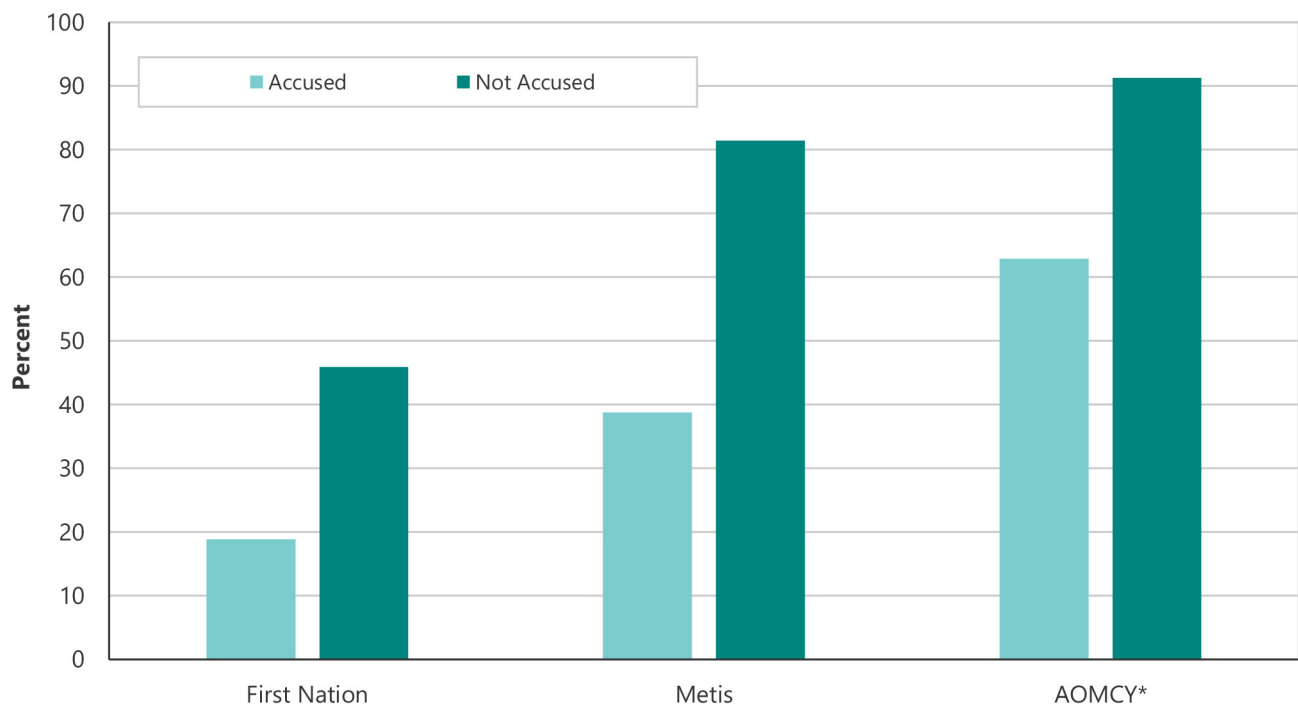
**Figure 3.16: Percent of Youth Graduating High School by Age 21, by Child Welfare System Involvement and Youth Justice System Involvement as an Accused**

1994 Cohort



**Figure 3.17: Percent of Youth Graduating High School by Age 21, by Indigenous Identity and Youth Justice System Involvement as an Accused**

1994 Cohort



\* All Other Manitoba Children and Youth

Note: Disaggregation of results by Indigenous identity is done to call to attention the impact of social forces such as colonialism, systemic racism, and structural violence on involvement in the child welfare system and youth justice system.

Over the past few decades, many reports, inquiries, commissions and committees have made individual recommendations with respect to each of the child welfare system, the youth criminal justice system and the over-representation of Indigenous children in both systems. Our approach is not to repeat all the recommendations made by other reports, but to highlight themes that have emerged from them that pertain to the findings in this report and to describe some promising directions for addressing the bleak statistics highlighted in our report. We recognize that these directions are steps toward better outcomes, but cannot take the place of tackling the systemic racism that leads to the high rates of child welfare and youth criminal justice involvement in Manitoba.

## Theme 1: Prevention, Prevention, Prevention

*“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”*  
– Benjamin Franklin

The importance of trying to prevent child welfare involvement and youth criminal justice involvement from happening in the first place cannot be stressed enough. Governments have an obligation to protect children from harm [16,17]. As noted in the report from the Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry [28], prevention is the first step in protecting our children. The most critical step in reducing the number of children in the child welfare and youth criminal justice systems in Manitoba is to recognize and address the structural and social determinants (predictors) of involvement in both systems, which have been identified in numerous reports. Systemic racism and structural violence lead to poverty, inadequate housing, food and water insecurity, unemployment, and mental disorders and addictions. If we know these factors predict child welfare and youth criminal justice system involvement then we know these are the factors that must be addressed to prevent involvement in these systems.

### The Importance of Supporting Children and Families

Families living with some or all of these challenges require support to provide safe and nurturing environments for their children. Given that over a third of children who are taken into care in Manitoba have their first episode of care before their first birthday [15], programs that focus on supporting new and expectant parents are crucial. There are several programs in Manitoba that show promise in this area:

1. *Families First Home Visiting Program (FFHV)*: FFHV offers intensive home visiting services to families with risk factors associated with child maltreatment. Trained para-professionals make regular visits during the first three years of a child’s life, focusing on strengthening parent-child relationships, guiding healthy child development and connecting families with health and social services. This program has been shown to decrease the child-maltreatment related hospitalizations and the number of children taken into care [29], and to increase connections to other services [30,31]. Despite the benefits associated with FFHV, more than half of the families eligible do not participate [29]. Amongst Indigenous families this could be due to experiences of racism in other systems that reduce their willingness to participate, along with fears that participation may result in having their children taken away. It may also be the case that the program is not culturally sensitive. Barriers to participation for both non-Indigenous and Indigenous families should be explored.
2. *Strengthening Families Maternal Child Health (SF-MCH)*: The FFHV program described above is a provincial program and is not available in First Nation communities. SF-MCH is a home visiting program similar to FFHV but aimed specifically at families with infants and young children aged 0 to 6 years in First Nation communities. Like the FFHV program, SF-MCH builds parenting and family skills to improve family relationships and child development, and assists families with gaining access to other community supports and health services. It is currently available in only 22 of 63 First Nation communities in Manitoba, providing an example of the inequitable funding for prevention services available to First Nation families on-reserve [8].
3. *Southern First Nations Network of Care Birth Helper Project: Restoring the Sacred Bond*. The curriculum for this project was incubated through the Winnipeg Boldness Project, in partnership with Mount Carmel Clinic and guided by Knowledge Keepers. The Knowledge Keepers taught that there has been so much disruption in the lives of Indigenous people that many ways have to be reclaimed and relearned to give a sense of belonging and pride. This project is designed to provide traditional, culturally appropriate birth and parenting support services to young Indigenous mothers who may be at risk of having their infants apprehended. The birth helper’s support starts during pregnancy with a goal of building stronger foundations for families. The project has developed plans for evaluating both short-term outcomes (e.g., reducing number of children taken into care) and longer-term outcomes (e.g., better health outcomes for mothers and babies).

It should be noted that in our study, the children in families receiving in-home services from CFS were less likely to be charged with a crime compared with children in care. Whether these two groups of children are fundamentally different, or whether this finding implies that when children