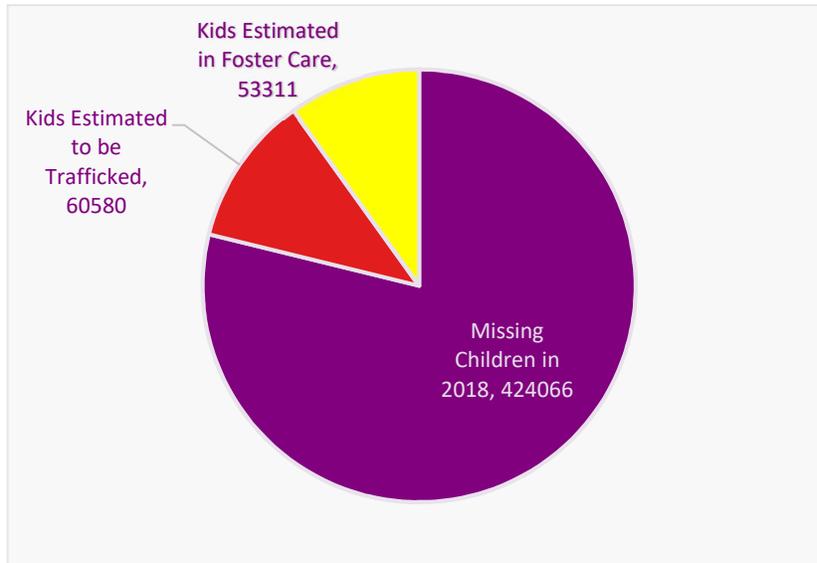
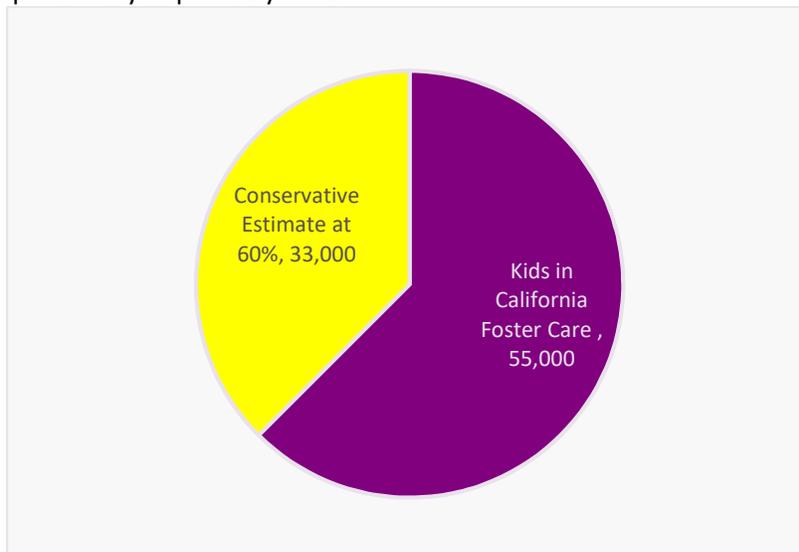


Potential Foster Care Impacted Youth in the US

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Youth there were 424,066 youth reported missing in 2018. They estimate 1 in 7 children reported missing are trafficked and 88% of those children are in Foster Care.¹ We can generalize that 60,580 kids reported missing were estimated to be trafficked in 2018. We can further surmise 53,311 represent the 88% of those youth in the Foster Care System.



According to the California Child and Families Bureau there are over 55,000 kids in the State Foster Care System.² If we assume the lowest number of 60% of kids in foster care have a correlation to trafficking that is over 33,000 potentially impacted youth.



¹ <http://www.missingkids.com/home>

² <https://www.adoptuskids.org/adoption-and-foster-care/how-to-adopt-and-foster/state-information/california>

National Survivor Network data:

The National Survivor Network inquired of membership specific asks around ages of being trafficked and if they received foster care. Albeit, the sampling was small it raised some curious questions that will require additional study.



The mean age, of those who identified trafficking experiences from ages 0-5, was 2 years old. With knowledge of early development and memory, we recognize that children up to 3 years of age don't have the vocabulary or categorization skills to identify or disclose that experienced trauma equates to trafficking. When you factor in abuse related dissociation and amnesia, children may not recall traumatic memories before the age of 7 and even beyond.³ It would not be possible to differentiate whether trauma-related development regression, psychologically-based loss of functioning or acting out was related to physical or sexual abuse or trafficking specifically. Trauma informed care creates appropriate response protocols so that foster impacted youth are connected to the appropriate therapeutic settings where abuse can be identified, understood and treated.

All participants between the ages of 0-5 were trafficked by family members; immediate family or close relatives. One participant was displaced from family and in unstable shelter, while four were placed in foster care after their experiences. One foster impacted participant was 14 years old and therefore not included on this chart. That participant and two others were foreign nationals placed into foster care by the Office of Refugee Resettlement in the unaccompanied minor program. Several participants were threatened with foster care placement as part of the coercion that occurred with their trafficking experiences. We can also not negate there is a prevalence for labor trafficking survivors who are unaccompanied minors being placed into foster care systems.

This brief survey highlights how little we know about trafficking of pre-adolescents. Further analysis and study is needed to incorporate data from known cases of trafficking of pre-adolescents and find correlations to apply in trafficking prevention efforts with this demographic.

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24236647>