

SUMMARY

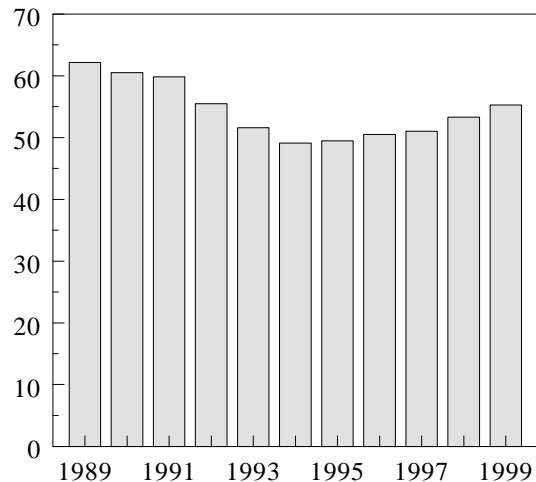
The main findings for children looked after in England are as follows:

Children looked after at 31 March 1999

- estimated number - 55,300 children, 4% higher than a year earlier (53,300) and 11% higher than in 1995 (49,500)
- legal status - 62% under care orders, 34% under single voluntary agreements
- placement - 65% in foster placements, 9% in community homes, 11% placed with parents
- 19% had experienced 3 or more placements during the year (indicator A1 of the Performance Assessment Framework)

Number of children looked after at 31 March

thousands of children



Children who started to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 1999

- estimated number - 28,400 (29,700 a year earlier)
- 67% started under single voluntary agreements, down from 78% in 1994/5. 12% started under interim care orders, up from 7% in 1994/5
- 29% had been or were at risk of being abused or neglected, up from 19% in 1994/95

Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 1999

- estimated number - 27,200 (29,300 a year earlier)
- the number of 16 year old care leavers - 3,400 in 1999, (this has remained fairly constant for the past four years); the number leaving care on their 18th birthday - 2,200 (down from 3,800 in 1994/5)
- number adopted – 2,200 (compared with 2,100 in 1997/8) or 4% of children looked after at 31 March 1999 (indicator C23 of the Performance Assessment Framework)

Children looked after at any time during the year ending 31 March 1999

- estimated total number - 90,100 (80 per 10,000 children aged under 18)

- of these 10,100 (11%) were looked after under one or more series of short term placements

Days of care provided during the year ending 31 March 1999

- social service departments in England provided a total of almost 20 million days of care to looked after children, 12% more than during 1994/95
- the total number of days care provided by foster carers increased by 16% between 1995 and 1999