

# **Interface of Child Welfare with Public Mental Health System**

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# Background

- Considerable mental health problems among children in out-of-home care
- Child welfare involvement as a gateway into mental health services
- While it's clear that out-of-home care is a risk factor for mental health need and service use, the converse has not been examined

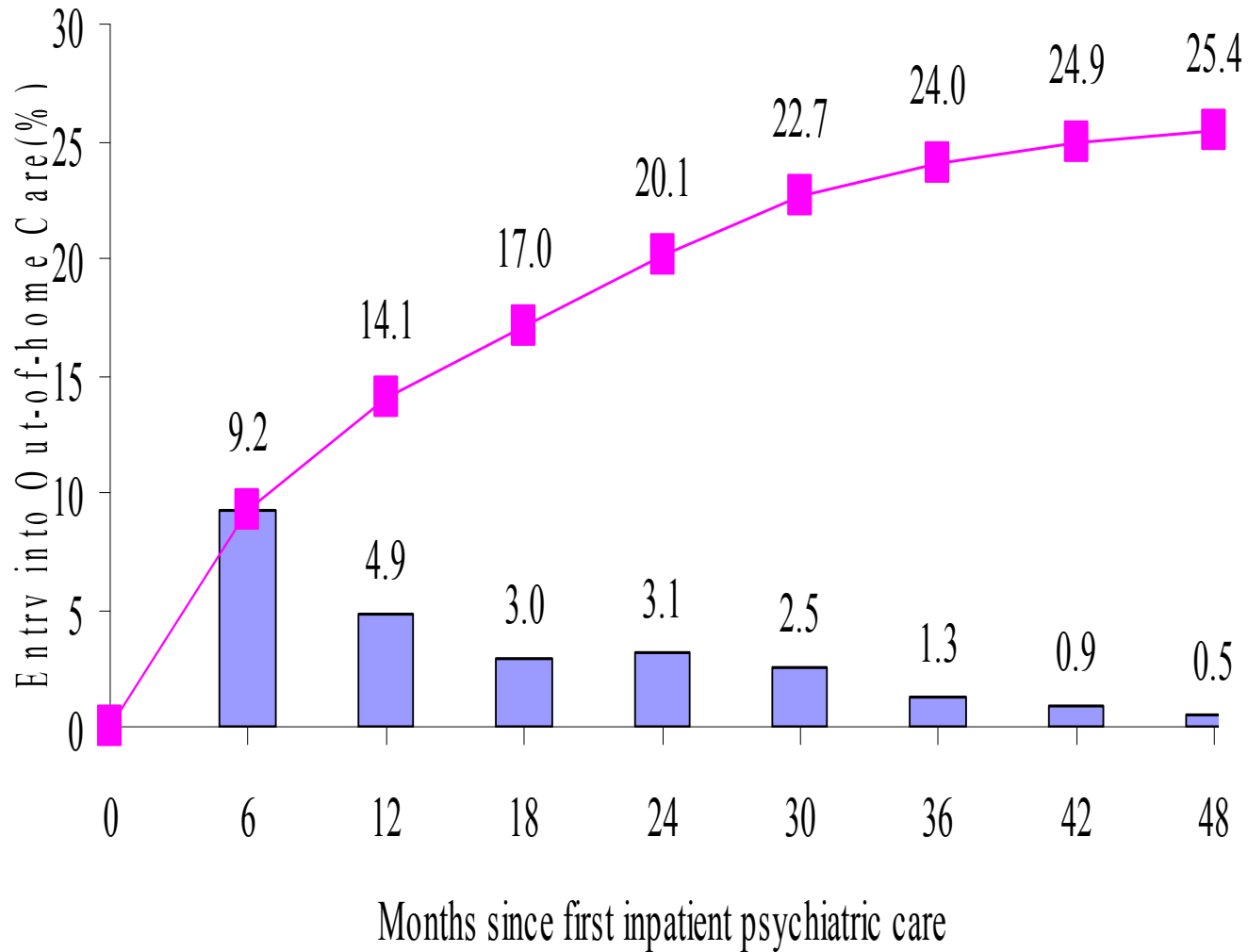
# Objectives

- Examine the extent and risk factors of child welfare involvement among children with mental health issues
- Examine outcomes in child welfare by mental health conditions
- Integration of longitudinal administrative records

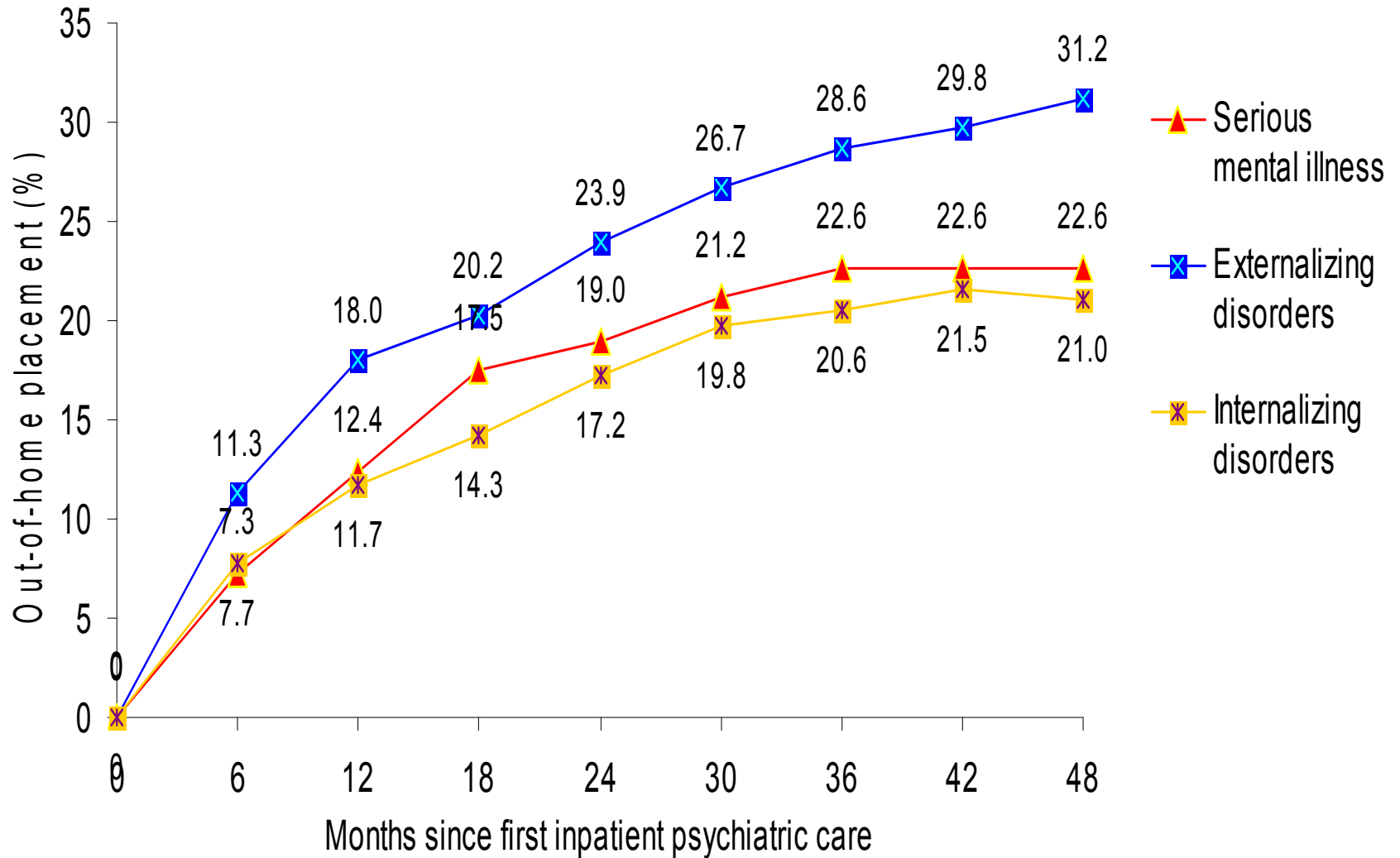
# Entry into Out-of-home Care among Children in Inpatient Psychiatric Care

- Data from Philadelphia
- 1,890 children:
  - Between 6 and 15 years
  - Eligible for Medicaid
  - No history of child welfare involvement
  - Had a psychiatric hospitalization for the first time between 1999-2001

# Rate of out-of-home placement: Overall



# Rate of out-of-home placement by diagnosis



# Summary

- About 1 in 4 children in inpatient psychiatric care will have a subsequent placement within 3 years
- Predictors
  - Externalizing disorders
  - Older age
  - African-American and Hispanic

# Implications

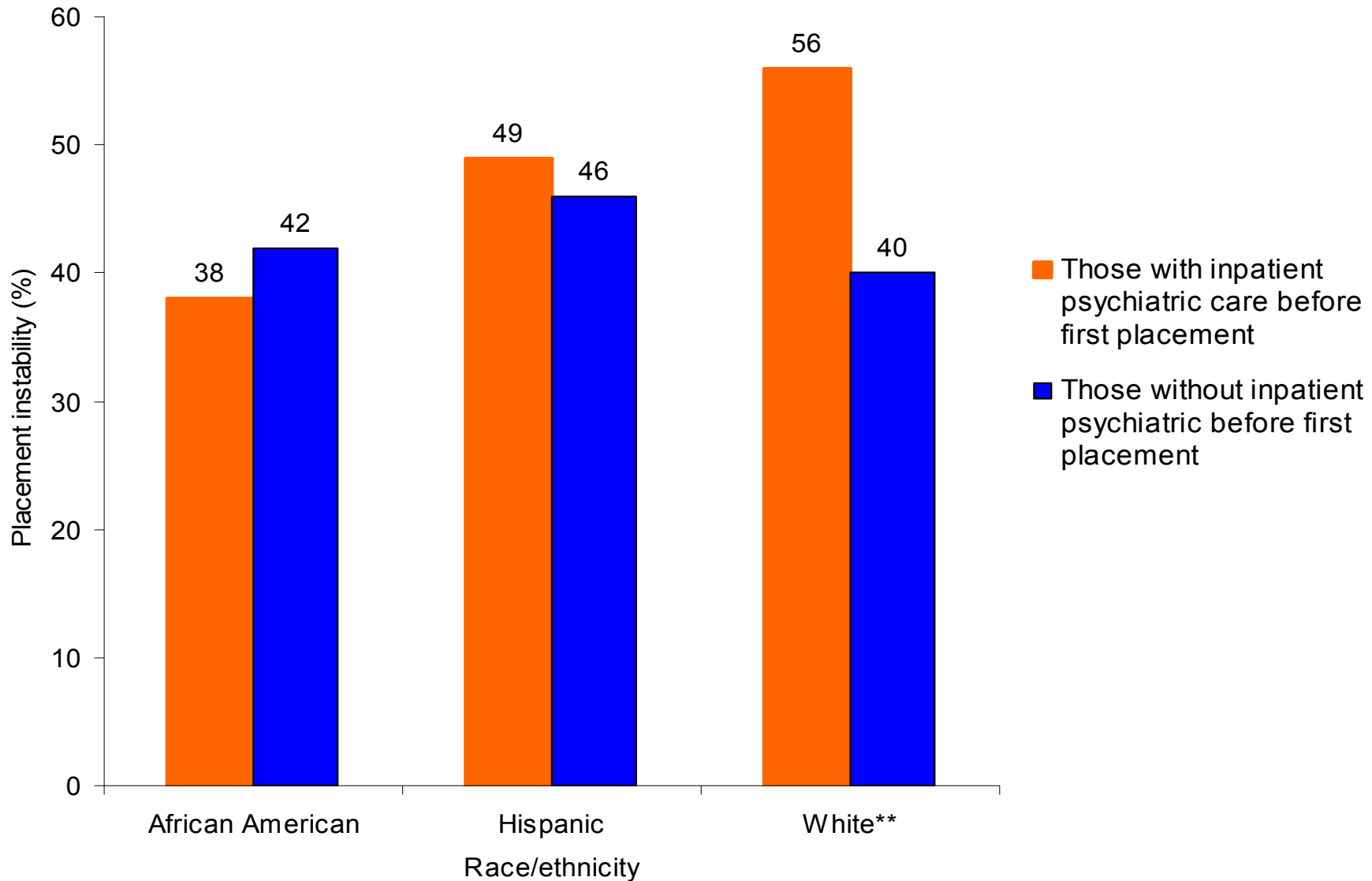
- Need for coordination between inpatient settings and child welfare
- Identification of an important point of intervention for diversion from out-of-home placement
- Benefits of continued follow-up and referrals to community-based treatment and support services



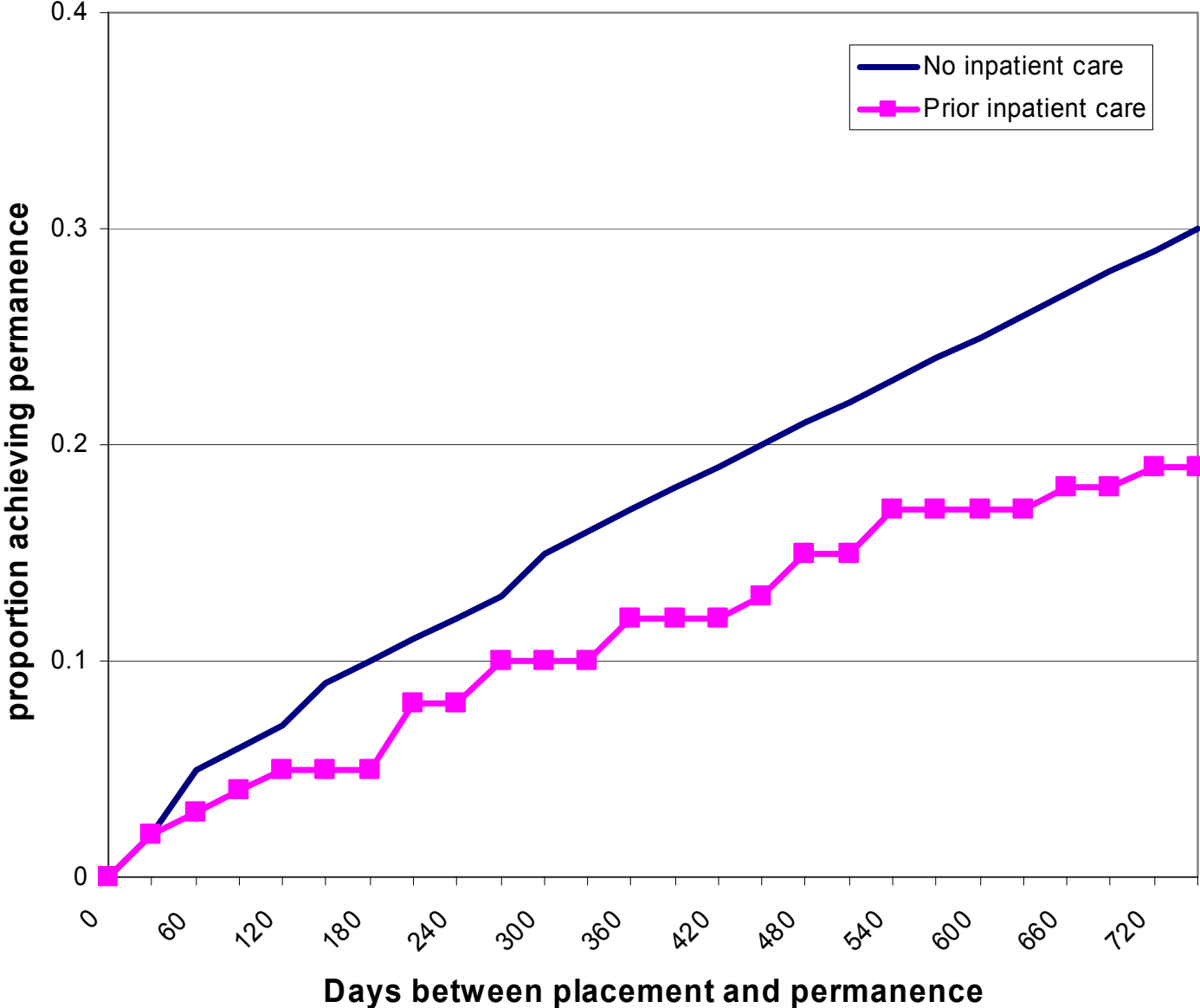
# Child Welfare Outcomes by History of Inpatient Psychiatric Care

- Data from DCFS and Medicaid
- 5,978 children and adolescents:
  - Placed in out-of-home care between 1997 and 2001
  - between the ages of 3 and 18
  - Tracked until 2005
- Placement instability & Permanence

# Placement instability by history of inpatient care across racial/ethnic groups



# Life table for African American youth: Permanence by inpatient care history



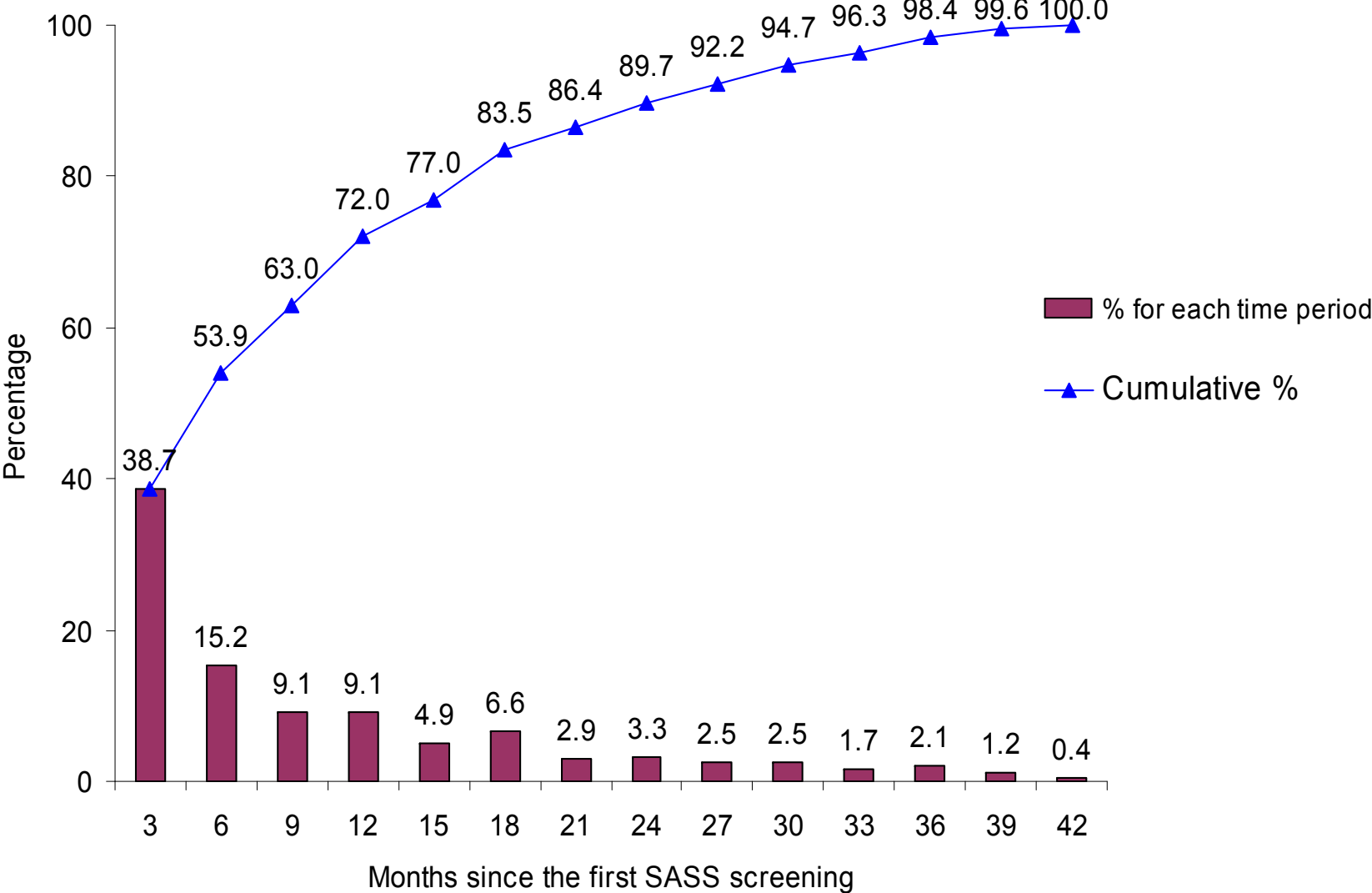
# Summary

- Prior inpatient psychiatric care as a predictor of placement disruptions and failure of permanence
- Other associated factors
  - Older age
  - Residential care as the first placement
  - Runaway history

# Entry into Residential Care among Youth in State Custody

- Data from DCFS and the Screening, Assessment and Supportive Services (SASS) program
- 672 youth
  - Screened by SASS for the first time between 2001 and 2003
  - No history of residential care at time of first SASS episode.

# Rates of Entry into Residential Care



# Findings

- **36% of the sample were subsequently placed in residential care.**
- **Predictors:**
  - **Inpatient care following SASS screening**
  - **Older Age**
  - **Kinship care (vs. Non-kinship care)**