

Dear

ATISN 27502 – Children Entering Care

Thank you for your request to Welsh Government for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) received on 11 September relating to looked after children entering the care system. You requested the following:

1. *For each year from 2010 to the latest year for which information is available, how many children in Wales became looked after for the first time?*
2. *Of those children, how many were living immediately before becoming looked after:*
 - *with a lone mother;*
 - *with a lone father;*
 - *with two parents;*
 - *with another relative or carer;*
 - *in another household arrangement?*
3. *If Welsh Government does not hold this information in exactly this form, please confirm whether information about the child's household/family structure is collected by local authorities or within the Children Receiving Care and Support Census or Children Looked After Census.*
4. *If this information is collected but is not routinely published, please explain why it is not published*
5. *Please provide any available statistics showing the number of children entering care from lone-parent households, broken down by:*
 - *year;*
 - *local authority;*
 - *child's age;*
 - *gender;*
 - *primary reason recorded for the child's involvement with children's social services.*
6. *Please provide the numbers and percentages of children entering care from lone-parent households where the recorded primary reason or parental-capacity factor involved:*
 - *abuse or neglect;*
 - *domestic abuse;*
 - *parental physical illness;*
 - *parental mental ill health;*
 - *parental disability or learning disability;*
 - *parental substance or alcohol misuse;*
 - *family dysfunction;*
 - *family stress*
 - *any other recorded parental-capacity factor.*

7. *Please provide the equivalent information specifically for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough, where available.*
8. *Please confirm whether Welsh Government has ever commissioned, conducted, received or reviewed research examining whether children from lone-parent households are disproportionately represented among children entering care in Wales.*
9. *Please provide copies or links to any such research, analysis, internal reports, briefing papers or statistical work.*
10. *If the requested information is not held centrally by Welsh Government but is held by individual local authorities, please identify which relevant information Welsh Government knows to be held at local-authority level.*

Our Response

1. This information is publicly available from the CLA Census and is published on StatsWales: [Children starting to be looked after during year by need for care | StatsWales](#).

Data is for children starting to be looked after for the first time, or who had previously ceased to be looked after, and have started to be looked after again. Data is reported for each year from 1 April to 31 March with the latest published data for year ending 31 March 2025. Data is rounded to the nearest five. Data is broken down by the category of need most relevant at the time the current period of being looked after began. Further information can be found in the data collection guidance: [Data collection: local authority social services | GOV.WALES](#)

2. The Welsh Government does not hold this information, as we do not collect information on the household structure of children immediately before becoming looked after either in the CLA Census or the CRCS Census.
3. The Welsh Government does not hold this information, you may wish to contact local authorities, which may hold this information.
4. The Welsh Government does not hold this information.
5. The Welsh Government does not hold this information.
6. The Welsh Government does not hold this information.
7. See response for part 6 above.
8. The Welsh Government has not commissioned research or collected data on children from lone-parent households entering care in Wales and is not aware of any such research commissioned or data held by local authorities.
9. See response for part 8 above.

10. See response for part 8 above.

Next Steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff

CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,