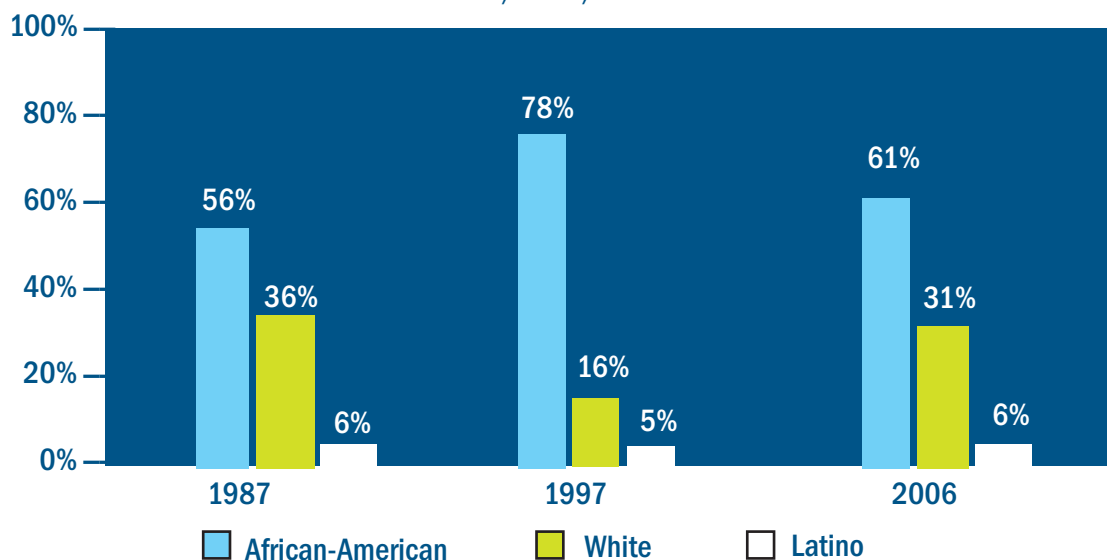




## African-American Children Disproportionately Represented in Illinois' Substitute Care System

According to a new Illinois Voices for Children index report, *Illinois Kids Count 2008*, the overall well-being of Illinois children has improved over the past two decades. However, the report highlights areas in which there is room for improvement. Among noteworthy accomplishments are increased preschool enrollment, prenatal care, and access to healthcare services and health insurance programs for low-income children. Additionally, as a result of policy changes and advocacy efforts in the area of guardianship, the number of children in foster care or other substitute care arrangements improved dramatically between 1997 and 2006, decreasing from more than 50,000 to fewer than 17,000 cases. The disproportionately high portion of African-American children in substitute care improved during this period, decreasing from 78% to 61% of all cases. However, given that African-American children have steadily represented just 18-19% of the general youth population for decades, the 2006 rate (61%) signifies the persistence of extreme overrepresentation.

Children in Substitute Care in Illinois by Race/Ethnicity:  
1987, 1997, and 2006



Source: Voices for Illinois Children. (2008). *Illinois Kids Count 2008* data book. Retrieved May 6, 2008, from [http://voices4kids.org/library/KC08\\_betterlives.html](http://voices4kids.org/library/KC08_betterlives.html).

Prepared by the Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) at TASC. CHJ works to build, enhance, and sustain strong and vibrant communities by promoting policies and practices that stop the cycle of drugs and crime. We conduct research and evaluations, and offer policy analysis, trainings, and technical assistance in the fields of health and justice. For more information, visit us online at [www.centerforhealthandjustice.org](http://www.centerforhealthandjustice.org).

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