



# Children of Incarcerated Parents – An Idaho Perspective



# Today's Agenda

- Overview of National Statistics
- Idaho's Story
- Current Efforts
- Questions & Answers

# The Facts

- Children of offenders are five times more likely than their peers to end up in prison\*
- One in 10 will be incarcerated before reaching adulthood\*
- The number of women incarcerated has increased threefold in the last 10 years – convicted in large part for non-violent drug crimes\*

*\*Annie E Casey Foundation – “Family to Family, Tools for Rebuilding Foster Care”, 2008*

# The Facts

- About 1.5 million children nationwide have parents behind bars on any one day\*
- An estimated 10 million more have parents who have been imprisoned at some point during the child's life\*
- 75 percent of women in prison are mothers, typically of two or three children\*

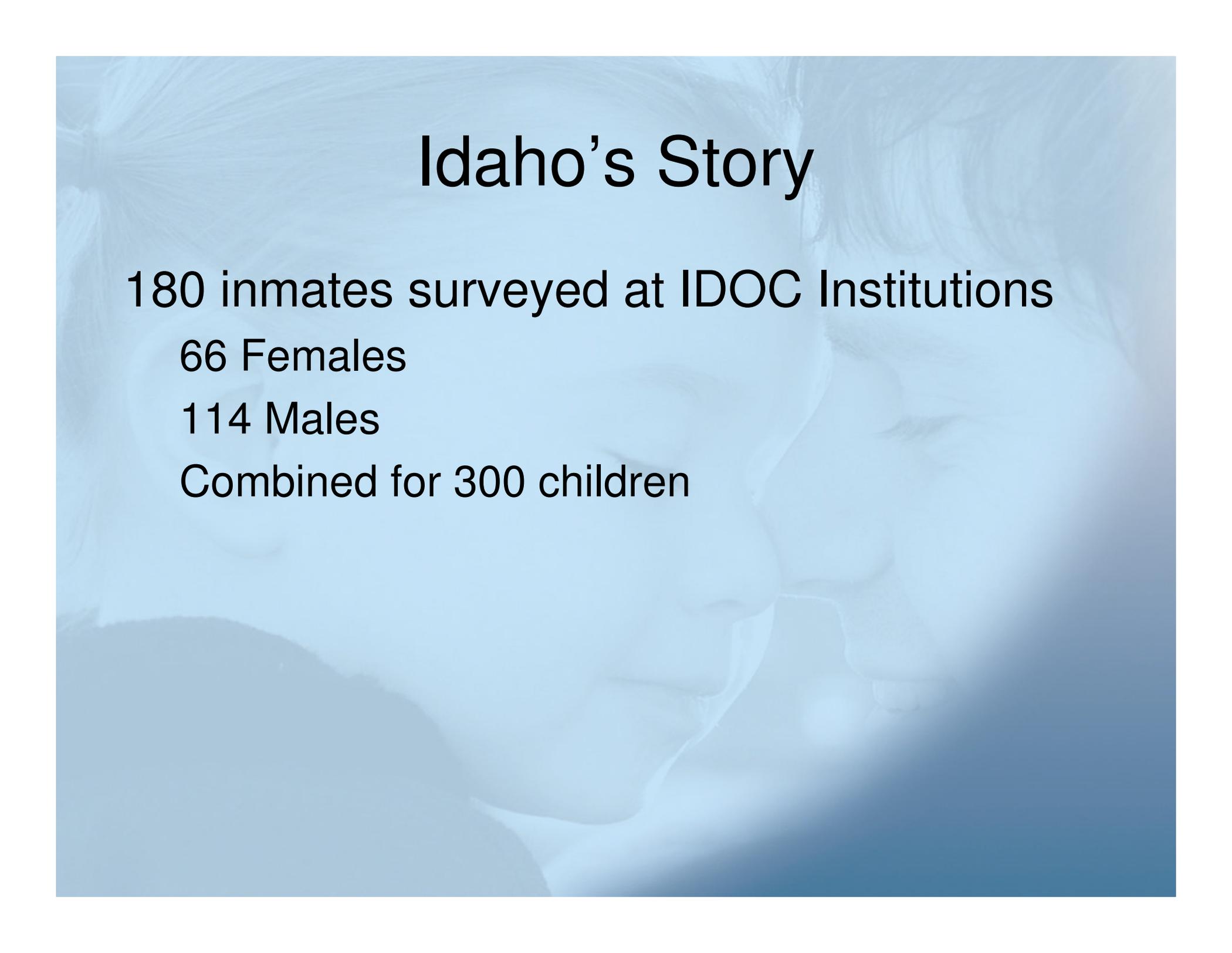
*\*Annie E Casey Foundation – “Family to Family, Tools for Rebuilding Foster Care”, 2008*

# Idaho's Story

An estimated 32,639 children in Idaho have a parent involved in the Criminal Justice System

- 3,400 have a parent in jail
- 8,732 have a parent in prison
- 20,504 have a parent under felony supervision

*\*Numbers based on a random survey of inmates at Ada County Jail and IDOC's facilities*



# Idaho's Story

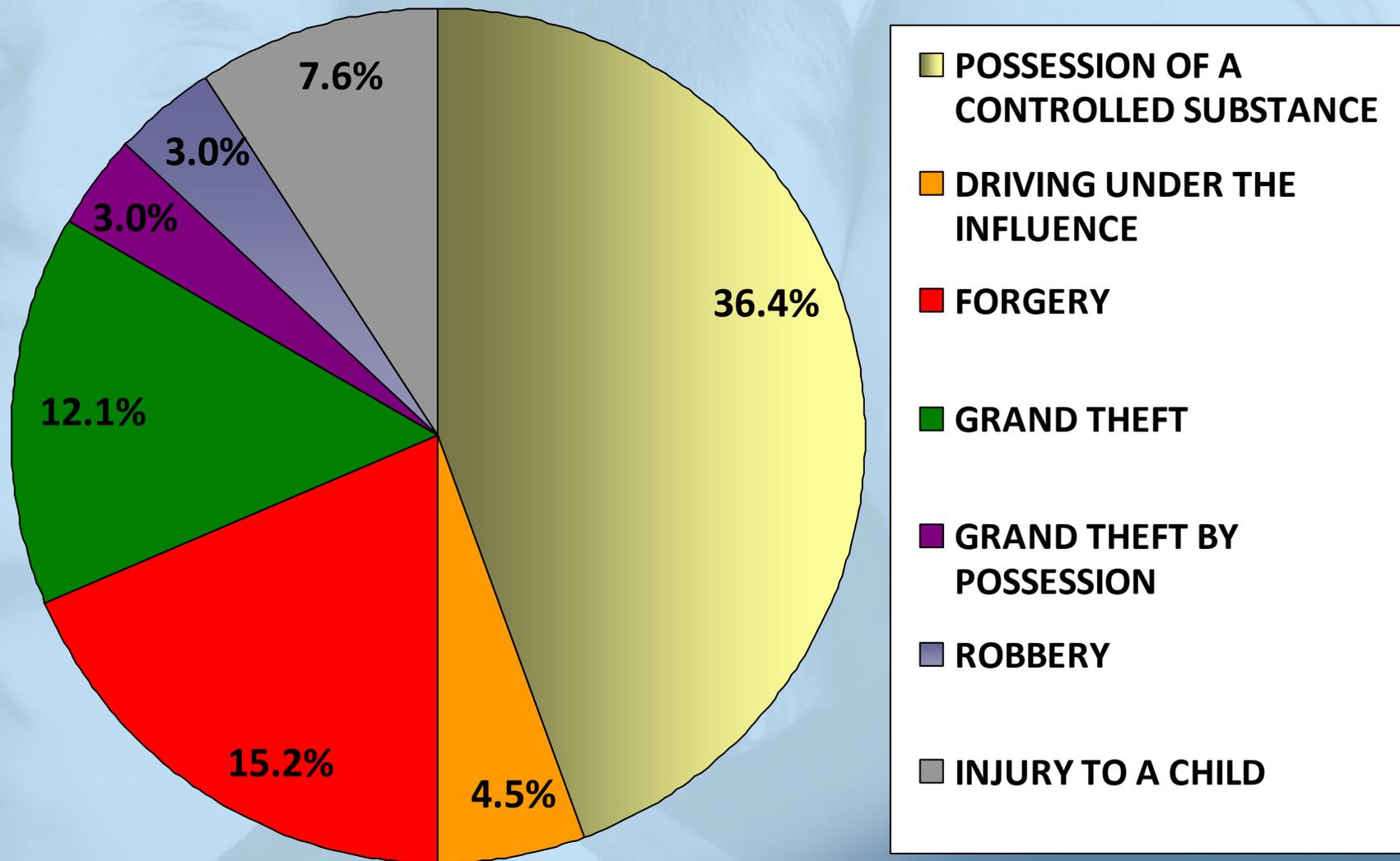
180 inmates surveyed at IDOC Institutions

66 Females

114 Males

Combined for 300 children

# Criminal Offenses of Mothers



# Mothers & Their Children

15 Percent of female offenders reported no children

21 Percent of female offenders reported one child

29 Percent of female offenders reported two children

20 Percent of female offenders reported three children

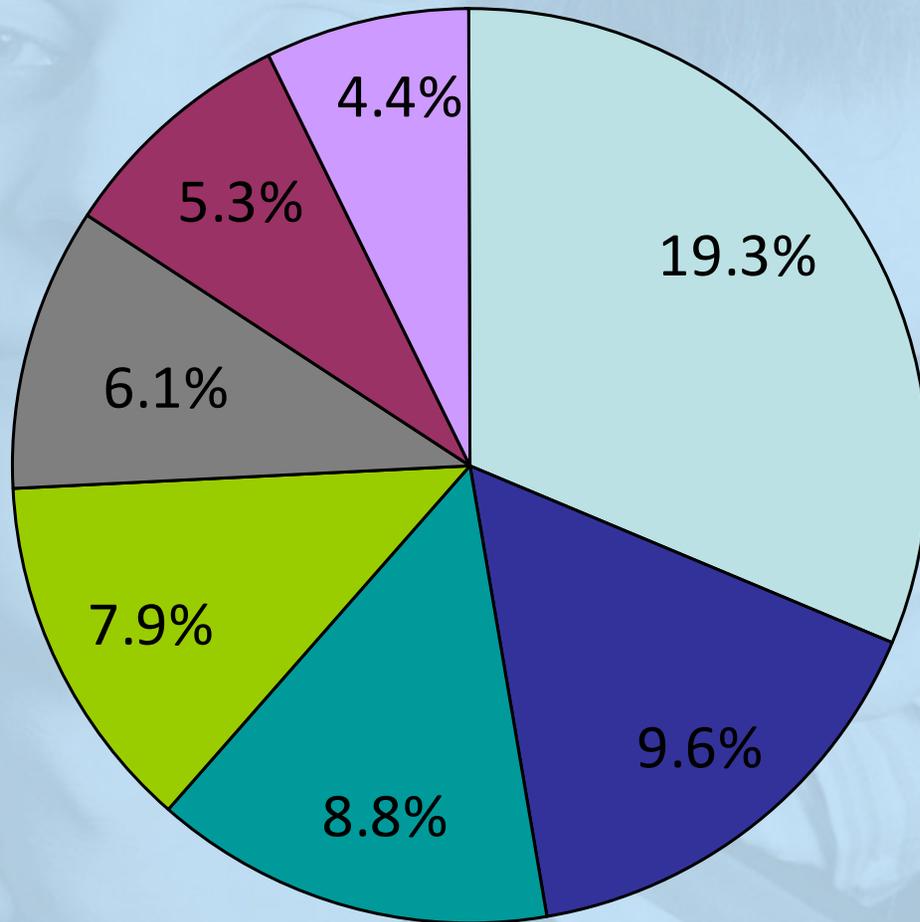
15 Percent of female offenders reported four or more children

***64 percent of mothers reported two or more children***

# Other Information on Mothers

- 50 percent of the women were employed at the time of their arrest making an average of \$8.81 per hour
- 77 percent were living with their children at the time of arrest
- 88 percent plan to live with their children upon release
- Average age at the time of the birth of first child was 20 (youngest was 14)

# Criminal Offenses of Fathers



- POSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE
- GRAND THEFT
- BURGLARY
- DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE
- AGGRAVATED BATTERY
- INJURY TO A CHILD
- LEWD & LASCIVIOUS CONDUCT W/MINOR UNDER 16

# Fathers & Their Children

10 Percent of male offenders reported no children

42 Percent of male offenders reported one child

25 Percent of male offenders reported two children

17 Percent of male offenders reported three children

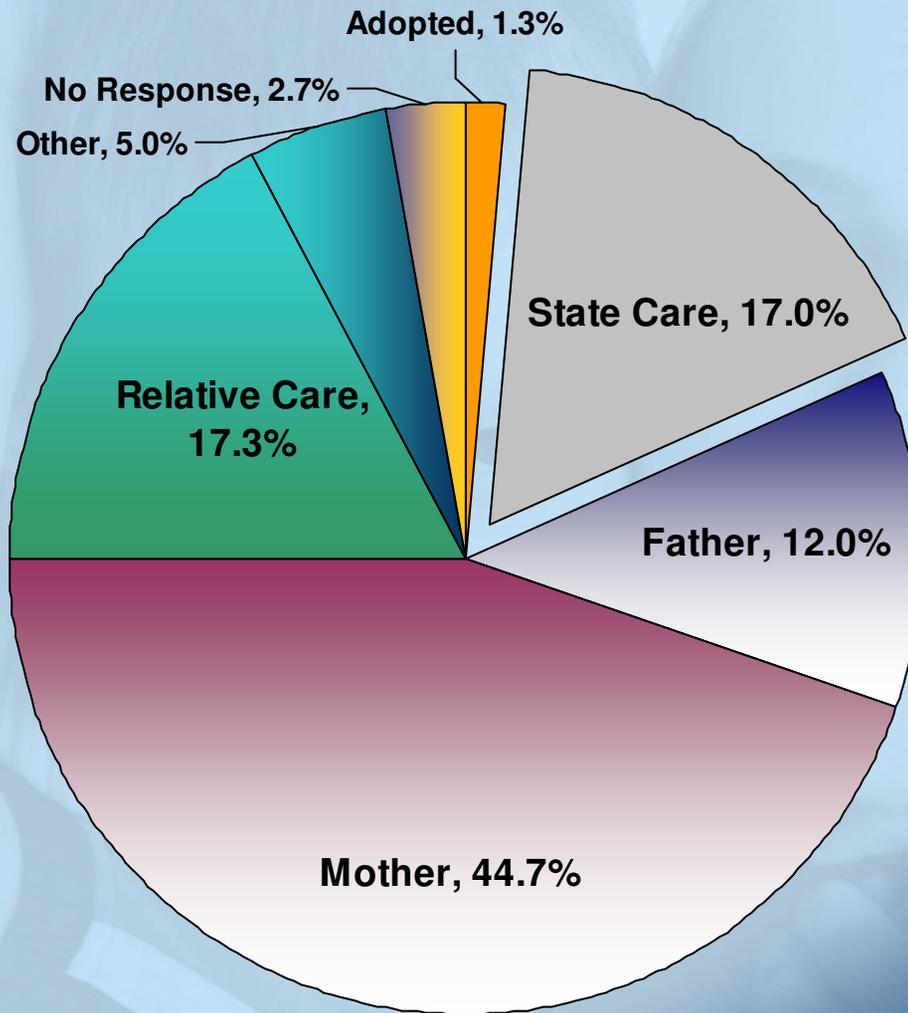
6 Percent of male offenders reported four or more children

***48 percent of fathers reported two or more children***

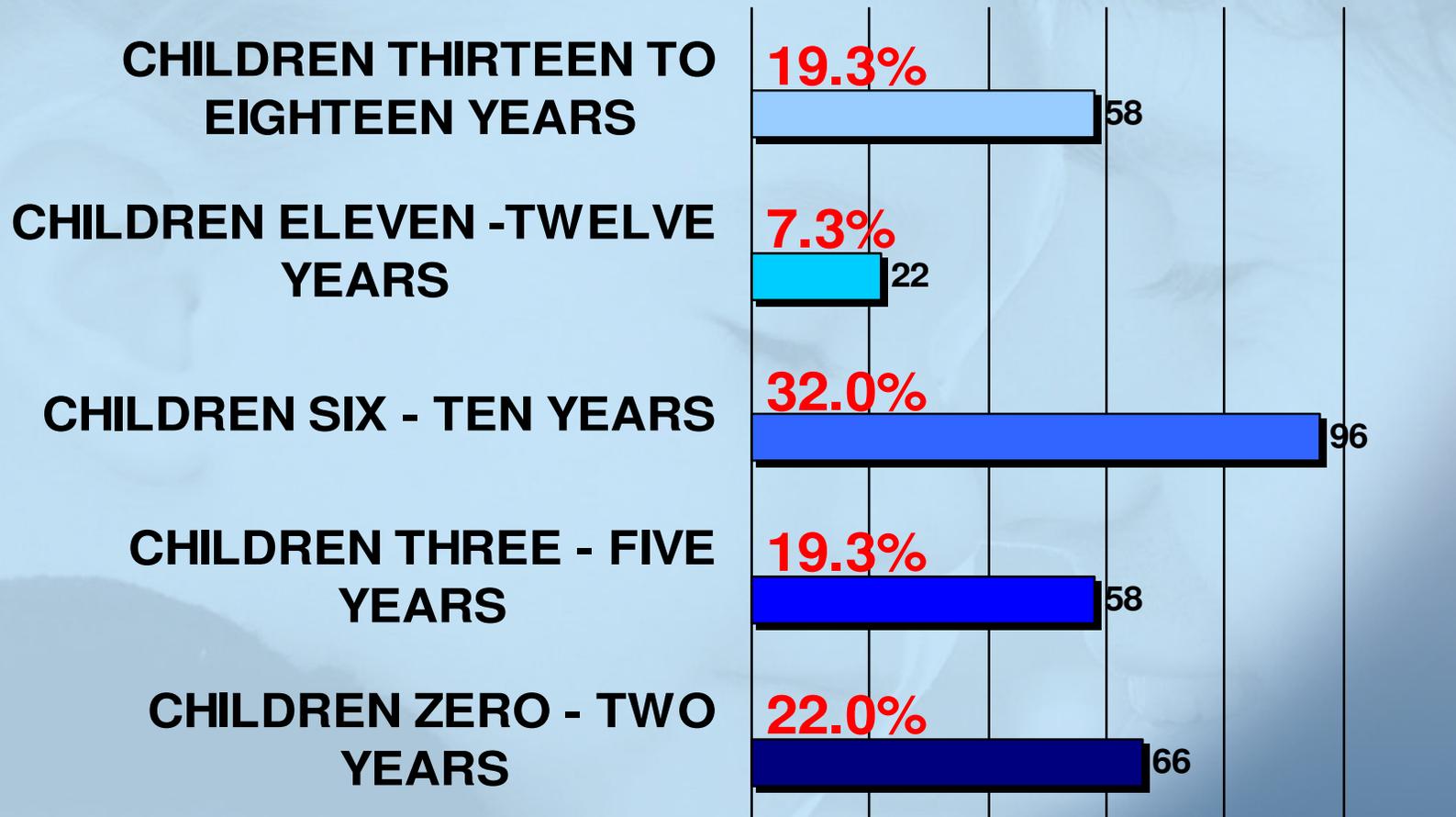
# Other Information on Fathers

- 48 percent of the men were employed at the time of their arrest making an average of \$11.57 per hour (35 men did not answer this question)
- 64 percent were living with their children at the time of arrest
- 96 percent plan to live with their children upon release
- Average age at the time of the birth of first child was 22 (youngest was 14)

# Custody Status of Children

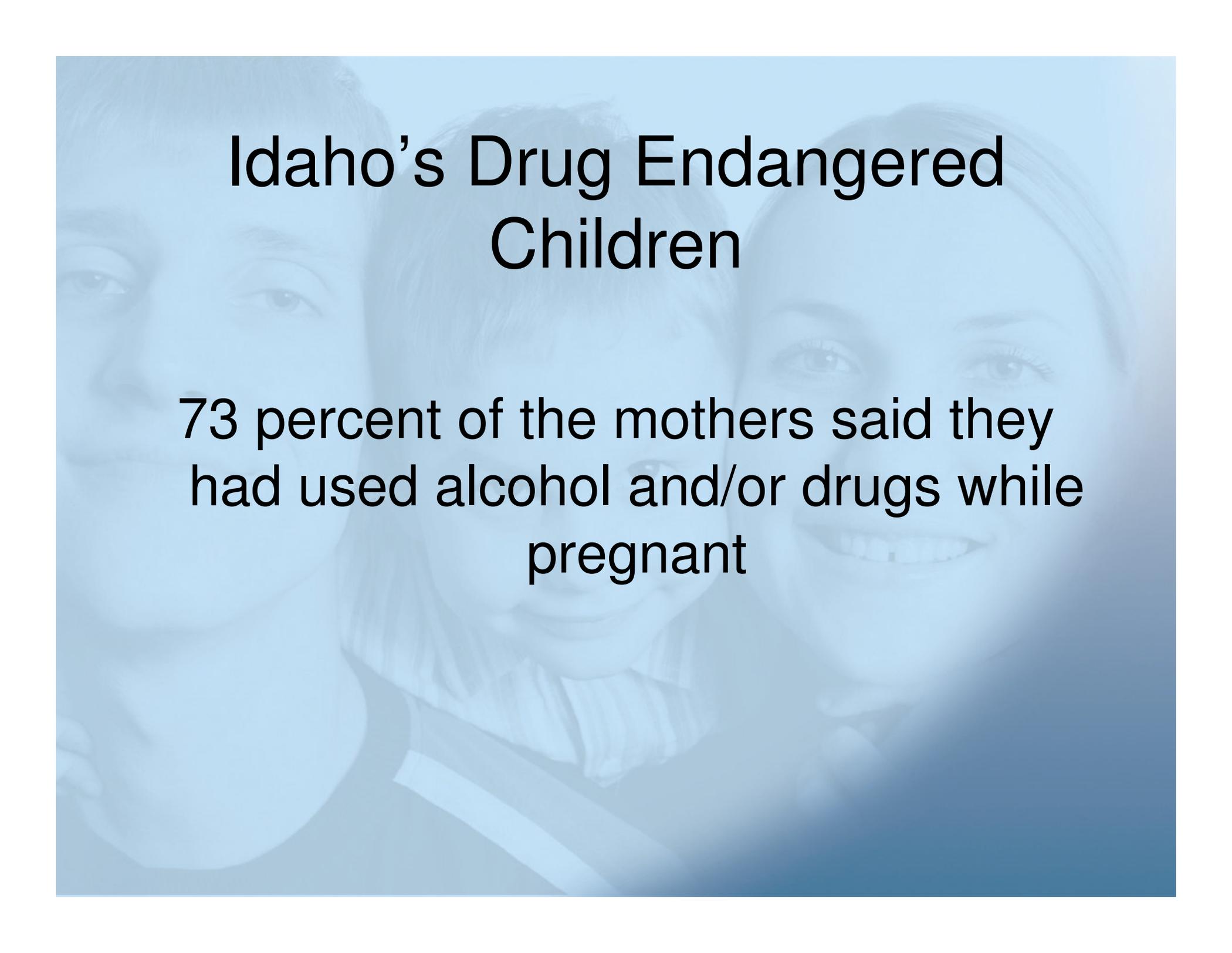


# Age Range of Children



# Benefits Received By Children

<b>Children's mental health services</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6.0%</b>
<b>Food stamps</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>86.3%</b>
<b>Medicaid/CHIP</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>71.7%</b>
<b>WIC</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>63.3%</b>
<b>Cash Assistance (TAFI)</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>31.3%</b>
<b>Infant Toddler Program services</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6.0%</b>



# Idaho's Drug Endangered Children

73 percent of the mothers said they had used alcohol and/or drugs while pregnant

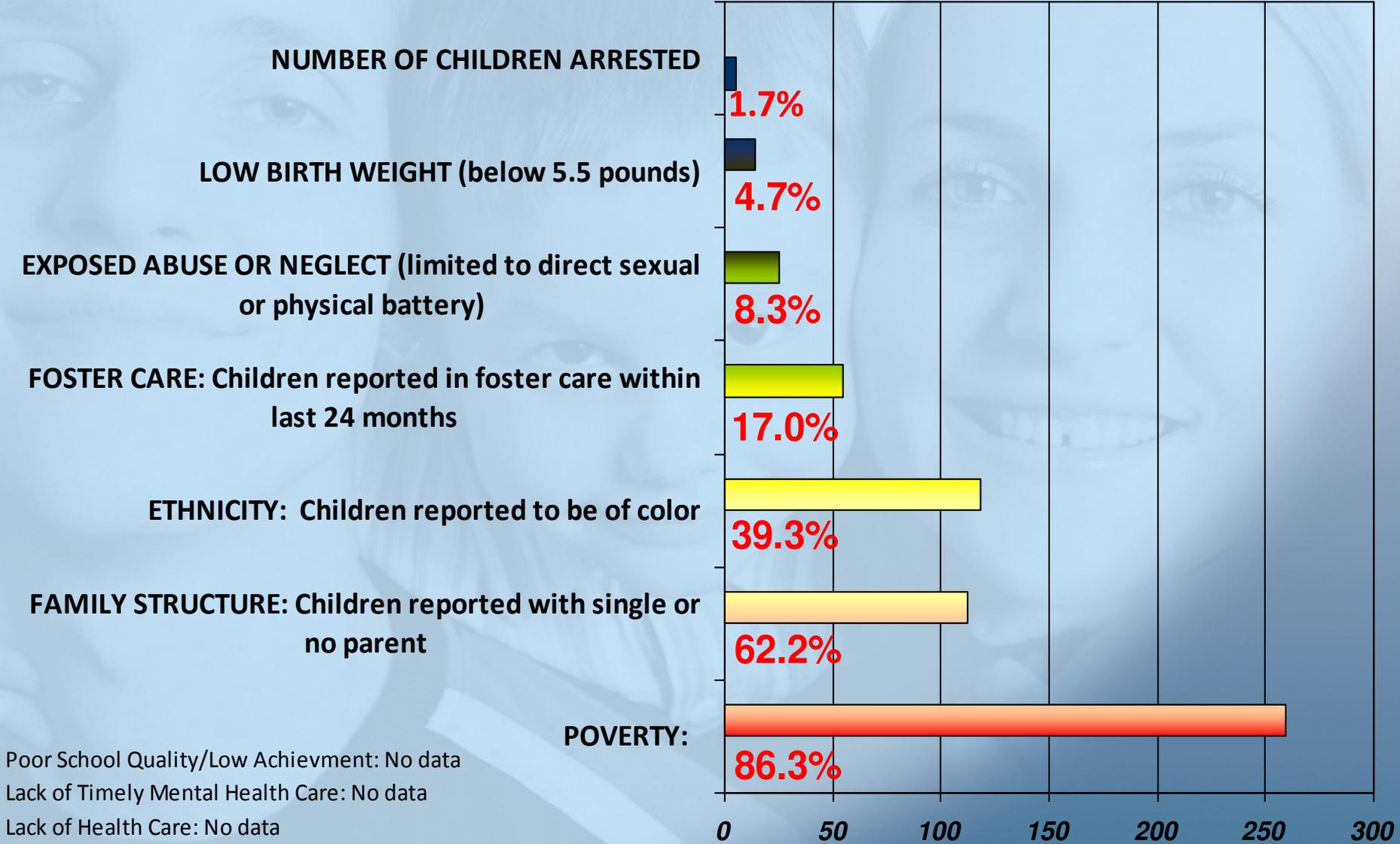
# Children's Risk Factors

Through the survey we measured the following risk factors:

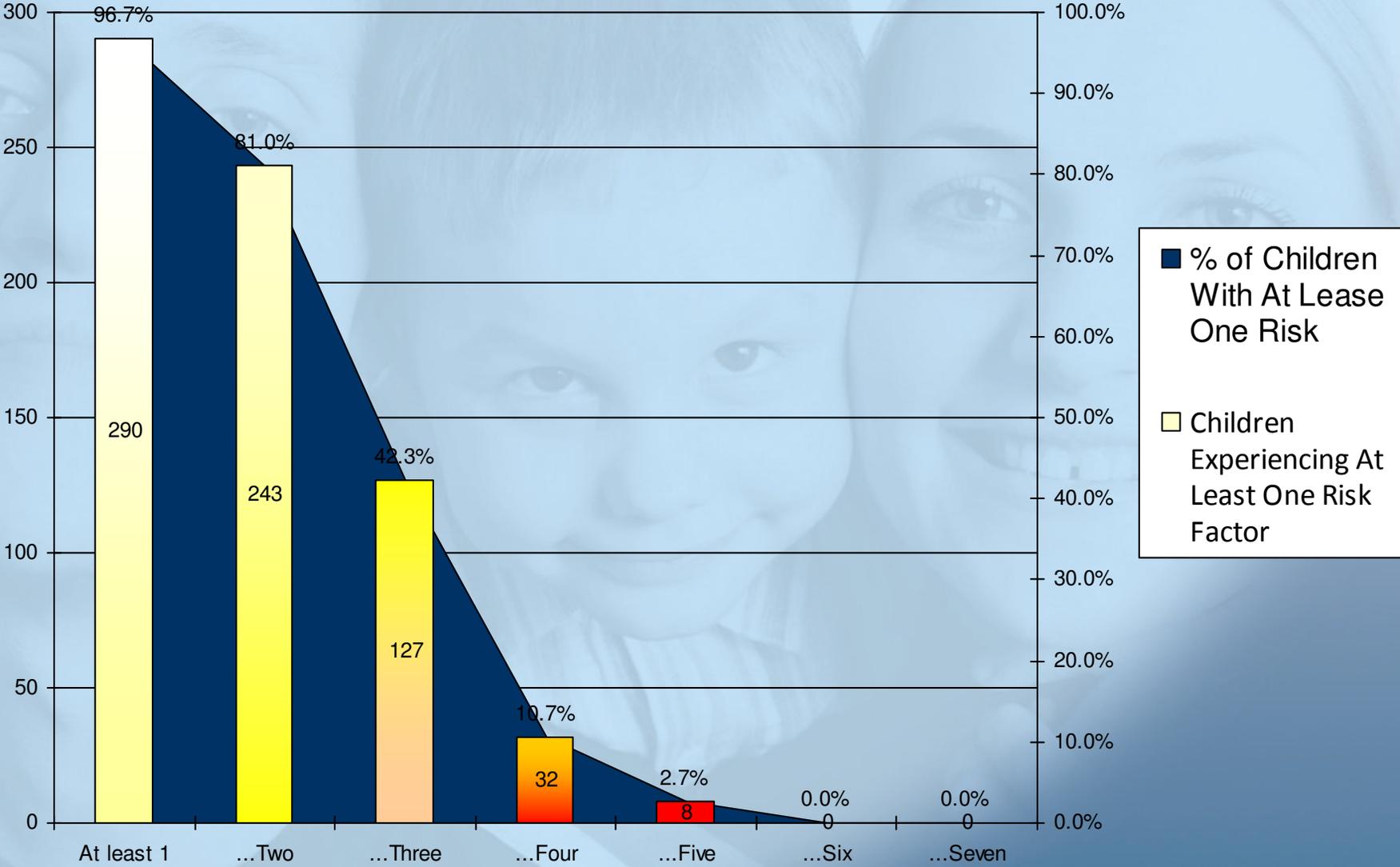
- 1- Poverty Status
- 2- Family Structure
- 3- Low Birth Weight
- 4- Abuse or Neglect
- 5- Foster Care Placement
- 6- Ethnicity
- 7- Juvenile Justice System Involvement

We were unable to determine lack of health care, lack of timely mental health care, poor school quality/low achievement

# Children's Risk Factors



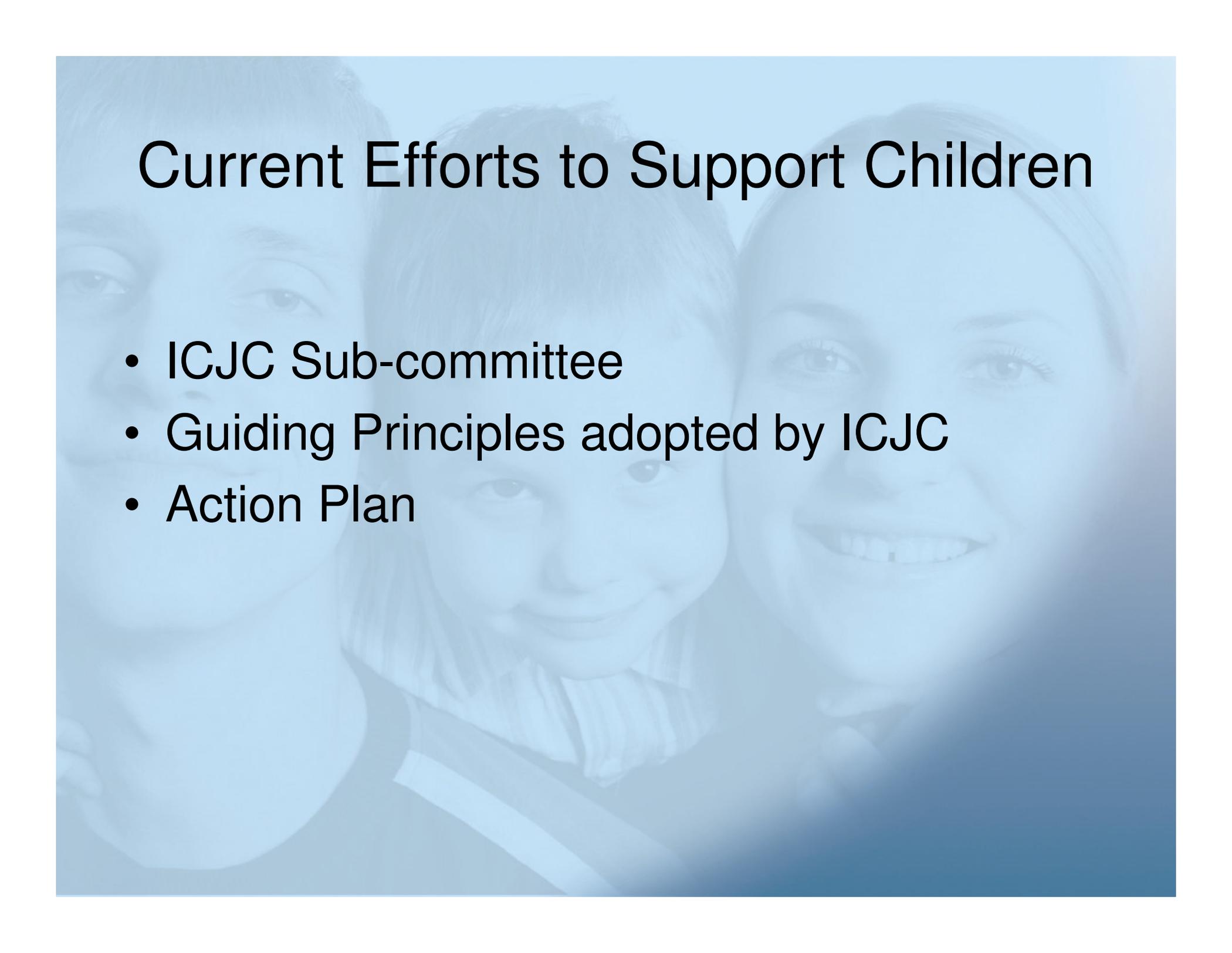
# Children's Risk Factors



# The Results

What we learned:

- The top three risk factors facing the children that we surveyed were ***poverty, family structure*** and ***children of color***
- Substance Abuse continues to be a major contributor to our prison population
- Almost two-thirds of mothers reported using alcohol or drugs while pregnant



# Current Efforts to Support Children

- ICJC Sub-committee
- Guiding Principles adopted by ICJC
- Action Plan

# Remember...

- Right or wrong – children love their parents
- Almost all offenders return to their communities and the majority regain custody or attempt to engage in a relationship with their children
- Action must be taken to break the generational cycle of incarceration
- The stigma of incarceration is profound to both the child and the parent
- We have an opportunity to evaluate our current policies and make changes that are sensible and can benefit children

# In Closing...

*Children and their incarcerated parents become clients of separate public agencies, often at odds and seldom partners in addressing the family's need for rebuilding and reunification. We should understand, as clearly and as deeply as we can, that the collateral damage of our war on crime and drugs is our most vulnerable children. These children lie at the intersection of educational, social service, correctional, family service and other agencies. Coordinated, specialized, and targeted intervention can break the cycle of generational imprisonment, but not without leadership and not without commitment*



# Questions?

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