

**Update on the Use of
Psychotropic
Medications for
Children in Texas
Foster Care: State
Fiscal Years 2002-2019
Data Report**



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

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1. Introduction

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) have coordinated since state fiscal year (SFY) 2004 to assess and monitor prescribing of psychotropic medications to children in foster care and to implement strategies to assist healthcare providers in prescribing psychotropic medications appropriately.

This update on the use of psychotropic medications in children in Texas foster care is based on those efforts and focuses on the following five measures:

1. Prescription of any psychotropic medication.
2. Prescription of a psychotropic medication for 60 days or more (since most prescriptions are for 30 days, a second refill is an indicator that a medication is being used as an ongoing therapy).

These three polypharmacy measures are all based on overlapping prescriptions for 60 days or more:

1. Prescribing two or more medications from the same drug class concurrently.
2. Four or more psychotropic medications prescribed concurrently (added in SFY 2014).
3. Five or more psychotropic medications prescribed concurrently (the initial measure).

2. Background

In March of 2004, HHSC and DFPS convened the DFPS Advisory Committee on Psychotropic Medications, which issued a report and recommendations. These recommendations included the establishment of a statewide clinical consultation and monitoring system.

Subsequently, an interagency group, consisting of HHSC and DFPS staff members, University and Medical School faculty, community psychiatrists and others, developed and released Psychotropic Medication Utilization Parameters for Foster Children (published February 2005 and updated it in 2007, 2010, 2013 and 2016). The most recent update, published in June 2019, is available at: <https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/facilities-regulation/psychiatric/psychotropic-medication-utilization-parameters.pdf>.

These best practice Parameters were first distributed statewide for implementation in February 2005. In June 2006, a report was released by DFPS and HHSC titled the *Use of Psychoactive Medication in Texas Foster Children in FY 2005* (available at: https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Medical_Services/documents/reports/2006-06_Use_of_Psychotropic_Medications_in_Foster_Child.pdf). This report concluded that the overall use of psychotropic medications and polypharmacy in children in foster care declined after the release of the best practice Parameters.

3. Summary of Results

Psychotropic prescribing of all types has substantially decreased since the release of the parameters in February 2005 both in terms of the percentage of foster care children receiving them and in the overall percentage of children receiving medication regimens outside of the recommended criteria of the best practice parameters. The SFY 2019 results show a small increase in the percent of clients prescribed psychotropic medications compared to SFY 2018 (less than 1 percentage point for all parameters) but the current rates are still substantially below the rates of 5, 10 or 15 years ago, indicating sustained long term decreases in psychotropic prescriptions for children in foster care.

The following two graphs provide an overview of the SFY 2002-2019 trends that are detailed in the tables provided in Section 4. Data Tables by State Fiscal Year.

Graph 1: Number of Children in Texas Foster Care enrolled and receiving psychotropic medications by measure

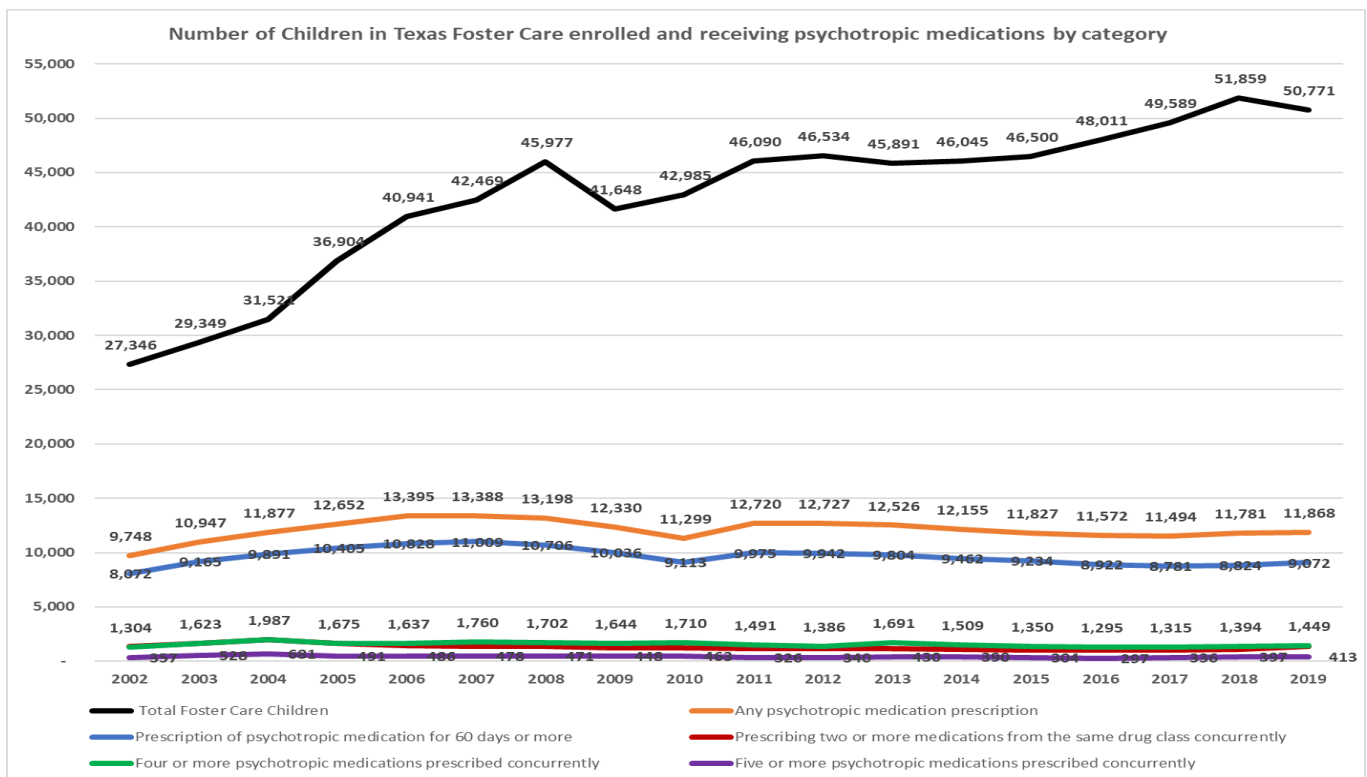
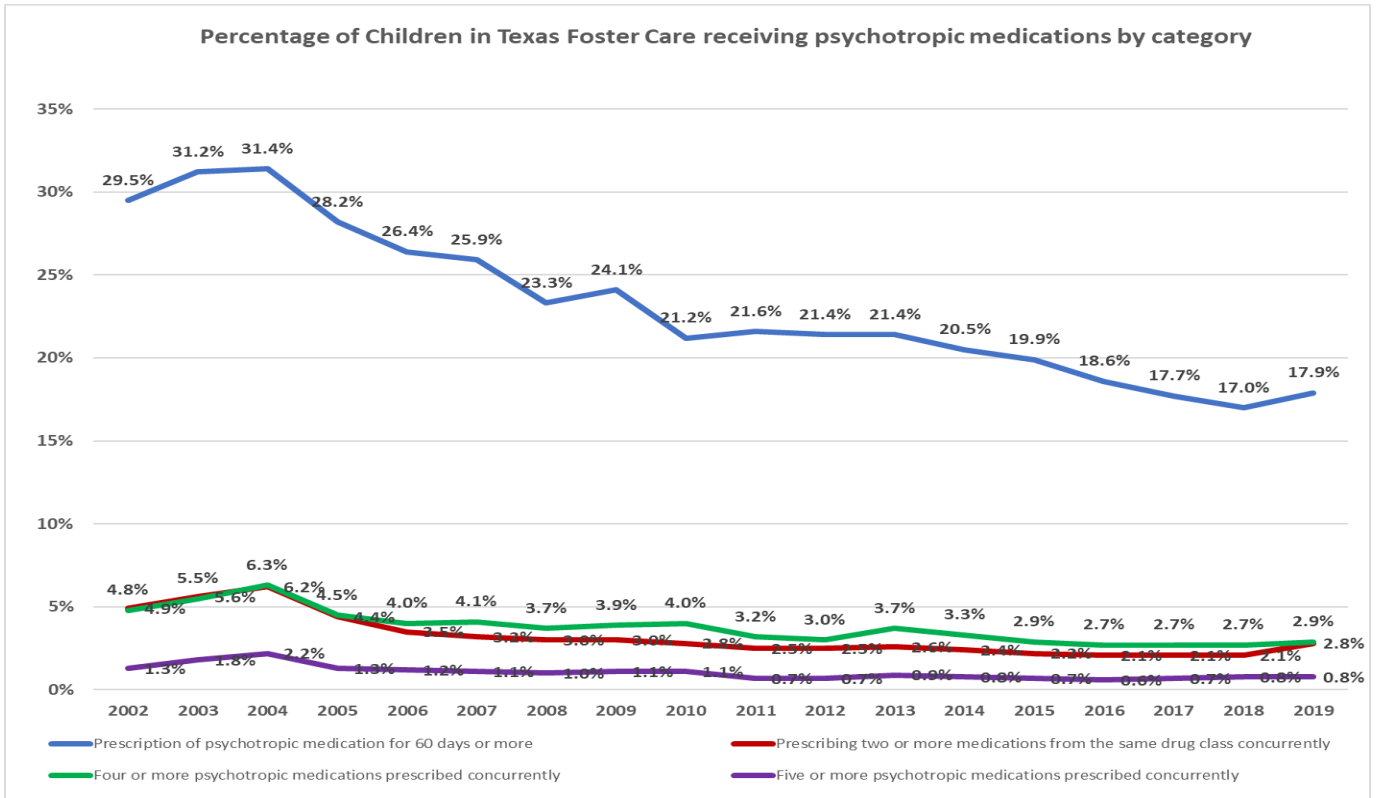


Table 2: Percentage of Children in Texas Foster Care receiving psychotropic medications by measure



4. Data Tables by State Fiscal Year (oldest to newest)

The first row displays the total number of foster children in each age group. All percentages are the percent of children within a specific age group (calculated down the age group columns based on the number in that age group).

SFY 2002

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 % | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 (%) | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-----------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 7,083 | | 1,556 | | 2,678 | | 8,652 | | 7,377 | | 27,346 | |
| Got psych meds² | 211 | 3.0% | 189 | 12.1% | 725 | 27.1% | 4,486 | 51.8% | 4,137 | 56.1% | 9,748 | 35.6% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 127 | 1.8% | 120 | 7.7% | 527 | 19.7% | 3,795 | 43.9% | 3,503 | 47.5% | 8,072 | 29.5% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 5 | 0.1% | 4 | 0.3% | 28 | 1.0% | 548 | 6.3% | 757 | 10.3% | 1,342 | 4.9% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | - | 0.0% | 5 | 0.3% | 43 | 1.6% | 717 | 8.3% | 539 | 7.3% | 1,304 | 4.8% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | - | 0.0% | 1 | 0.1% | 8 | 0.3% | 189 | 2.2% | 159 | 2.2% | 357 | 1.3% |

SFY 2003

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 7,850 | | 1,715 | | 2,929 | | 9,028 | | 7,827 | | 29,349 | |
| Got psych meds² | 350 | 4.5% | 246 | 14.3% | 838 | 28.6% | 4,853 | 53.8% | 4,660 | 59.5% | 10,947 | 37.3% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 200 | 2.5% | 174 | 10.1% | 643 | 22.0% | 4,167 | 46.2% | 3,981 | 50.9% | 9,165 | 31.2% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 19 | 0.2% | 10 | 0.6% | 44 | 1.5% | 640 | 7.1% | 918 | 11.7% | 1,631 | 5.6% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 5 | 0.1% | 7 | 0.4% | 57 | 1.9% | 854 | 9.5% | 700 | 8.9% | 1,623 | 5.5% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | 3 | 0.0% | 3 | 0.2% | 19 | 0.6% | 277 | 3.1% | 226 | 2.9% | 528 | 1.8% |

SFY 2004

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 (%) | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-----------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 8,560 | | 1,892 | | 3,225 | | 9,361 | | 8,483 | | 31,521 | |
| Got psych meds² | 361 | 4.2% | 300 | 15.9% | 1,020 | 31.6% | 5,079 | 54.3% | 5,117 | 60.3% | 11,877 | 37.7% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 222 | 2.6% | 222 | 11.7% | 766 | 23.8% | 4,321 | 46.2% | 4,360 | 51.4% | 9,891 | 31.4% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 15 | 0.2% | 20 | 1.1% | 54 | 1.7% | 803 | 8.6% | 1,073 | 12.6% | 1,965 | 6.2% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 4 | 0.0% | 11 | 0.6% | 64 | 2.0% | 986 | 10.5% | 922 | 10.9% | 1,987 | 6.3% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | - | 0.0% | 3 | 0.2% | 13 | 0.4% | 357 | 3.8% | 308 | 3.6% | 681 | 2.2% |

SFY 2005

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 (%) | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|-----------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 10,525 | | 2,351 | | 3,962 | | 10,830 | | 9,236 | | 36,904 | |
| Got psych meds² | 382 | 3.6% | 323 | 13.7% | 1,095 | 27.6% | 5,503 | 50.8% | 5,349 | 57.9% | 12,652 | 34.3% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 227 | 2.2% | 234 | 10.0% | 816 | 20.6% | 4,613 | 42.6% | 4,515 | 48.9% | 10,405 | 28.2% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 12 | 0.1% | 10 | 0.4% | 61 | 1.5% | 594 | 5.5% | 942 | 10.2% | 1,619 | 4.4% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 3 | 0.0% | 6 | 0.3% | 58 | 1.5% | 794 | 7.3% | 814 | 8.8% | 1,675 | 4.5% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 16 | 0.4% | 225 | 2.1% | 248 | 2.7% | 491 | 1.3% |

SFY 2006

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 11,730 | | 2,740 | | 4,559 | | 12,205 | | 9,707 | | 40,941 | |
| Got psych meds² | 356 | 3.0% | 383 | 14.0% | 1,205 | 26.4% | 5,927 | 48.6% | 5,524 | 56.9% | 13,395 | 32.7% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 205 | 1.7% | 251 | 9.2% | 906 | 19.9% | 4,890 | 40.1% | 4,576 | 47.1% | 10,828 | 26.4% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 10 | 0.1% | 11 | 0.4% | 47 | 1.0% | 547 | 4.5% | 818 | 8.4% | 1,433 | 3.5% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 1 | 0.0% | 7 | 0.3% | 53 | 1.2% | 766 | 6.3% | 810 | 8.3% | 1,637 | 4.0% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 11 | 0.2% | 225 | 1.8% | 248 | 2.6% | 486 | 1.2% |

SFY 2007

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 (%) | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|-----------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 12,270 | | 2,735 | | 4,941 | | 12,884 | | 9,639 | | 42,469 | |
| Got psych meds² | 347 | 2.8% | 335 | 12.2% | 1,275 | 25.8% | 6,013 | 46.7% | 5,418 | 56.2% | 13,388 | 31.5% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 219 | 1.8% | 233 | 8.5% | 975 | 19.7% | 5,007 | 38.9% | 4,575 | 47.5% | 11,009 | 25.9% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 5 | 0.0% | 9 | 0.3% | 64 | 1.3% | 525 | 4.1% | 775 | 8.0% | 1,378 | 3.2% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 1 | 0.0% | 8 | 0.3% | 66 | 1.3% | 845 | 6.6% | 840 | 8.7% | 1,760 | 4.1% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 20 | 0.4% | 218 | 1.7% | 238 | 2.5% | 478 | 1.1% |

SFY 2008

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 13,323 | | 3,271 | | 5,458 | | 13,871 | | 10,054 | | 45,977 | |
| Got psych meds² | 325 | 2.4% | 321 | 9.8% | 1,240 | 22.7% | 6,021 | 43.4% | 5,291 | 52.6% | 13,198 | 28.7% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 176 | 1.3% | 203 | 6.2% | 933 | 17.1% | 5,004 | 36.1% | 4,390 | 43.7% | 10,706 | 23.3% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 9 | 0.1% | 9 | 0.3% | 55 | 1.0% | 562 | 4.1% | 733 | 7.3% | 1,368 | 3.0% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 4 | 0.0% | 9 | 0.3% | 63 | 1.2% | 820 | 5.9% | 806 | 8.0% | 1,702 | 3.7% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | - | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 9 | 0.2% | 233 | 1.7% | 228 | 2.3% | 471 | 1.0% |

SFY 2009

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 12,593 | | 2,874 | | 4,928 | | 12,627 | | 8,626 | | 41,648 | |
| Got psych meds² | 348 | 2.8% | 276 | 9.6% | 1,129 | 22.9% | 5,688 | 45.0% | 4,889 | 56.7% | 12,330 | 29.6% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 204 | 1.6% | 172 | 6.0% | 839 | 17.0% | 4,741 | 37.5% | 4,080 | 47.3% | 10,036 | 24.1% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 13 | 0.1% | 4 | 0.1% | 42 | 0.9% | 484 | 3.8% | 689 | 8.0% | 1,232 | 3.0% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 5 | 0.0% | 2 | 0.1% | 48 | 1.0% | 823 | 6.5% | 766 | 8.9% | 1,644 | 3.9% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | 2 | 0.0% | - | 0.0% | 7 | 0.1% | 203 | 1.6% | 236 | 2.7% | 448 | 1.1% |

SFY 2010

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 13,428 | | 3,139 | | 5,104 | | 12,766 | | 8,548 | | 42,985 | |
| Got psych meds² | 310 | 2.3% | 269 | 8.6% | 1,067 | 20.9% | 5,052 | 39.6% | 4,601 | 53.8% | 11,299 | 26.3% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 174 | 1.3% | 165 | 5.3% | 795 | 15.6% | 4,151 | 32.5% | 3,828 | 44.8% | 9,113 | 21.2% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 7 | 0.1% | 7 | 0.2% | 40 | 0.8% | 477 | 3.7% | 679 | 7.9% | 1,210 | 2.8% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 1 | 0.0% | 9 | 0.3% | 61 | 1.2% | 813 | 6.4% | 826 | 9.7% | 1,710 | 4.0% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | - | 0.0% | - | 0.0% | 12 | 0.2% | 230 | 1.8% | 221 | 2.6% | 463 | 1.1% |

SFY 2011

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 14,372 | | 3,575 | | 5,811 | | 13,759 | | 8,573 | | 46,090 | |
| Got psych meds² | 353 | 2.5% | 310 | 8.7% | 1,264 | 21.8% | 5,837 | 42.4% | 4,956 | 57.8% | 12,720 | 27.6% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 195 | 1.4% | 205 | 5.7% | 899 | 15.5% | 4,617 | 33.6% | 4,059 | 47.3% | 9,975 | 21.6% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 6 | 0.0% | 6 | 0.2% | 37 | 0.6% | 452 | 3.3% | 639 | 7.5% | 1,140 | 2.5% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 1 | 0.0% | 5 | 0.1% | 45 | 0.8% | 721 | 5.2% | 719 | 8.4% | 1,491 | 3.2% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | - | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 7 | 0.1% | 159 | 1.2% | 159 | 1.9% | 326 | 0.7% |

SFY 2012

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 14,177 | | 3,602 | | 6,127 | | 14,102 | | 8,526 | | 46,534 | |
| Got psych meds² | 359 | 2.5% | 299 | 8.3% | 1,322 | 21.6% | 5,812 | 41.2% | 4,935 | 57.9% | 12,727 | 27.3% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 210 | 1.5% | 173 | 4.8% | 915 | 14.9% | 4,529 | 32.1% | 4,115 | 48.3% | 9,942 | 21.4% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 9 | 0.1% | 2 | 0.1% | 28 | 0.5% | 405 | 2.9% | 721 | 8.5% | 1,165 | 2.5% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 42 | 0.7% | 618 | 4.4% | 724 | 8.5% | 1,386 | 3.0% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | - | 0.0% | - | 0.0% | 2 | 0.0% | 152 | 1.1% | 186 | 2.2% | 340 | 0.7% |

SFY 2013

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 13,703 | | 3,420 | | 6,070 | | 14,260 | | 8,438 | | 45,891 | |
| Got psych meds² | 355 | 2.6% | 284 | 8.3% | 1,269 | 20.9% | 5,773 | 40.5% | 4,845 | 57.4% | 12,526 | 27.3% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 192 | 1.4% | 184 | 5.4% | 898 | 14.8% | 4,526 | 31.7% | 4,004 | 47.5% | 9,804 | 21.4% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 7 | 0.1% | 7 | 0.2% | 32 | 0.5% | 405 | 2.8% | 725 | 8.6% | 1,176 | 2.6% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 4 | 0.0% | 4 | 0.1% | 52 | 0.9% | 748 | 5.2% | 883 | 10.5% | 1,691 | 3.7% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | 2 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 10 | 0.2% | 181 | 1.3% | 236 | 2.8% | 430 | 0.9% |

SFY 2014

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 13,838 | | 3,329 | | 6,038 | | 14,455 | | 8,385 | | 46,045 | |
| Got psych meds² | 319 | 2.3% | 211 | 6.3% | 1,147 | 19.0% | 5,772 | 39.9% | 4,706 | 56.1% | 12,155 | 26.4% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 178 | 1.3% | 134 | 4.0% | 834 | 13.8% | 4,463 | 30.9% | 3,853 | 46.0% | 9,462 | 20.5% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 9 | 0.1% | 10 | 0.3% | 33 | 0.5% | 350 | 2.4% | 681 | 8.1% | 1,083 | 2.4% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 2 | 0.0% | 2 | 0.1% | 44 | 0.7% | 665 | 4.6% | 796 | 9.5% | 1,509 | 3.3% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | - | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 8 | 0.1% | 151 | 1.0% | 230 | 2.7% | 390 | 0.8% |

SFY 2015

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 14,179 | | 3,256 | | 5,815 | | 14,902 | | 8,348 | | 46,500 | |
| Got psych meds² | 308 | 2.2% | 163 | 5.0% | 1,051 | 18.1% | 5,655 | 37.9% | 4,650 | 55.7% | 11,827 | 25.4% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 199 | 1.4% | 105 | 3.2% | 733 | 12.6% | 4,423 | 29.7% | 3,774 | 45.2% | 9,234 | 19.9% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 5 | 0.0% | 4 | 0.1% | 32 | 0.6% | 316 | 2.1% | 650 | 7.8% | 1,007 | 2.2% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 2 | 0.0% | 2 | 0.1% | 25 | 0.4% | 585 | 3.9% | 736 | 8.8% | 1,350 | 2.9% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | - | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 5 | 0.1% | 125 | 0.8% | 173 | 2.1% | 304 | 0.7% |

SFY 2016

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 15,131 | | 3,407 | | 5,829 | | 15,198 | | 8,446 | | 48,011 | |
| Got psych meds² | 303 | 2.0% | 186 | 5.5% | 935 | 16.0% | 5,536 | 36.4% | 4,612 | 54.6% | 11,572 | 24.1% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 178 | 1.2% | 111 | 3.3% | 642 | 11.0% | 4,269 | 28.1% | 3,722 | 44.1% | 8,922 | 18.6% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 9 | 0.1% | 6 | 0.2% | 33 | 0.6% | 324 | 2.1% | 638 | 7.6% | 1,010 | 2.1% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 2 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 28 | 0.5% | 599 | 3.9% | 665 | 7.9% | 1,295 | 2.7% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | - | 0.0% | - | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 123 | 0.8% | 173 | 2.0% | 297 | 0.6% |

SFY 2017

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 16,139 | | 3,510 | | 5,957 | | 15,465 | | 8,518 | | 49,589 | |
| Got psych meds² | 316 | 2.0% | 164 | 4.7% | 895 | 15.0% | 5,542 | 35.8% | 4,577 | 53.7% | 11,494 | 23.2% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 182 | 1.1% | 99 | 2.8% | 618 | 10.4% | 4,225 | 27.3% | 3,657 | 42.9% | 8,781 | 17.7% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 11 | 0.1% | 8 | 0.2% | 23 | 0.4% | 332 | 2.1% | 679 | 8.0% | 1,053 | 2.1% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 6 | 0.0% | 2 | 0.1% | 13 | 0.2% | 618 | 4.0% | 676 | 7.9% | 1,315 | 2.7% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | 1 | 0.0% | - | 0.0% | - | 0.0% | 143 | 0.9% | 192 | 2.3% | 336 | 0.7% |

SFY 2018

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 17,017 | | 3,724 | | 6,305 | | 16,102 | | 8,711 | | 51,859 | |
| Got psych meds² | 295 | 1.7% | 194 | 5.2% | 945 | 15.0% | 5,695 | 35.4% | 4,652 | 53.4% | 11,781 | 22.7% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 161 | 0.9% | 121 | 3.2% | 602 | 9.5% | 4,287 | 26.6% | 3,653 | 41.9% | 8,824 | 17.0% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 11 | 0.1% | 10 | 0.3% | 22 | 0.3% | 359 | 2.2% | 712 | 8.2% | 1,114 | 2.1% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 5 | 0.0% | 5 | 0.1% | 14 | 0.2% | 630 | 3.9% | 740 | 8.5% | 1,394 | 2.7% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | 3 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 179 | 1.1% | 213 | 2.4% | 397 | 0.8% |

SFY 2019

| Age group | 0-2 | 0-2 %* | 3 | 3 % | 4-5 | 4-5 % | 6-12 | 6-12 % | 13-17 | 13-17 % | 0-17 | 0-17 % |
|--|------------|---------------|----------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| Total Foster children¹ | 16,440 | | 3,710 | | 6,262 | | 15,544 | | 8,815 | | 50,771 | |
| Got psych meds² | 312 | 1.9% | 189 | 5.1% | 983 | 15.7% | 5,609 | 36.1% | 4,775 | 54.2% | 11,868 | 23.4% |
| Got meds ≥ 60 days³ | 189 | 1.1% | 97 | 2.6% | 663 | 10.6% | 4,289 | 27.6% | 3,834 | 43.5% | 9,072 | 17.9% |
| Class polypharmacy⁴ | 18 | 0.1% | 8 | 0.2% | 38 | 0.6% | 534 | 3.4% | 800 | 9.1% | 1,398 | 2.8% |
| ≥4 psych meds⁵ | 6 | 0.0% | 7 | 0.2% | 20 | 0.3% | 665 | 4.3% | 751 | 8.5% | 1,449 | 2.9% |
| ≥5 psych meds⁶ | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 4 | 0.1% | 168 | 1.1% | 239 | 2.7% | 413 | 0.8% |

5. Data Table Notes

Table Notes. In 2020, all foster care prescription data from SFY 2002 to 2019 was rerun using the new psychotropic drug list and other methodological changes to provide a single consistent historical timeline. Previous versions of this report incorporated changes as they occurred. Due to programming code changes, additional data becoming available, and additional drugs being added to the list of psychotropic medications as described under #2 below, the data has changed from previous versions of the report.

¹ Total children for each state fiscal year is taken from the finalized eight-month eligibility file(s). For SFY 2002 to 4/1/2008 children in foster care were defined as Medicaid type programs 8, 9 and 10. After 4/1/2008 children in foster care were defined as children enrolled in STAR Health. This report includes children under the age of 18. Age of the child is determined by their age during their first month in foster care during a fiscal year. Age 0-2 includes up through the end of the 35th month after birth.

² A child was considered to have gotten a psychotropic medication if any medication on the psychotropic drug list was prescribed (filled and paid) at any time the child was in foster care during the year in question. The methodology section of the June 2006 report at https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Medical_Services/documents/reports/2006-06_Use_of_Psychotropic_Medications_in_Foster_Child.pdf provides details of the method. In 2020 the list of psychotropic drugs was revised to include only drugs that were categorized as psychotropic by two independent drug classification systems, the American Hospital Formulary System (AHFS) and First Data Bank (FDB); the specific categories were selected by Medicaid.

The 2020 psychotropic drug list includes more drugs than the legacy Department of State Health Services Mental Health Formulary which was used from SFY 2002 to 2015. But the revised 2020 list contains fewer drugs than using the AHFS categories alone (SFY 2015 to 2017) because analgesics, treatments for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, anti-vertigo and other medications that are indirectly related to mental health are excluded by adding the FDB categories. The major categories that account for about 90% of psychotropic medications are antipsychotics, antidepressants, anticonvulsants, anxiolytics, and stimulant type drugs. Some drugs included in the psychotropic drug list are dual use drugs, such

as anticonvulsants which are also used for seizures. Therefore, some prescriptions, particularly among very young children, may not be prescribed for mental health purposes.

³ Because many times psychotropic medications are prescribed very short term for medical illnesses (e.g., when undergoing an outpatient surgical procedure) or mental health problems (e.g., after a traumatic experience), or for psychiatric diagnoses for which they are found to be ineffective, data for children who received prescriptions for a psychotropic medication that lasted at least 60 days is examined separately. While this may seem long, it is important to remember that prescribers tend to write 30 day or longer prescriptions even at first diagnosis. Analysis of prescription data comes with no guarantee that individuals are taking the drugs they were prescribed. Many times, these medications are not taken past a few days due to ineffectiveness, side effects, or failure to adhere to the prescribed regimen. Therefore, it makes sense to concentrate monitoring efforts on those children who most likely were actually taking medications past an initial 30 day prescription for at least 60 days.

⁴ Polypharmacy is defined as sustained simultaneous metabolic availability of two or more drugs. Class polypharmacy is operationally defined as the concurrent prescription for 60 days or longer of two unique medications from the same class. In the case of the class of mood stabilizers, where the evidence base supports the use of two medications concurrently, class polypharmacy is defined as the concurrent prescription of three or more drugs for 60 days or longer. See note #3 for an explanation of the 60-day qualifier.

⁵ The prescription of four or more medications concurrently is defined as any four psychotropic medications prescribed at the same time for 60 days or longer. This is a different type of polypharmacy from class polypharmacy in #4 above and was implemented in the parameters during SFY 2014.

⁶ The prescription of five or more medications concurrently is defined as any five psychotropic medications prescribed at the same time for 60 days or longer. This is a different type of polypharmacy from class polypharmacy in #4 above and was one of the original criteria from the Parameters that were initially implemented in March 2005.

List of Acronyms

| Acronym | Full Name |
|----------------|--|
| AHFS | American Hospital Formulary System |
| DFPS | Department of Family and Protective Services |
| FDB | First Data Bank |
| HHSC | Health and Human Services Commission |
| SFY | State Fiscal Year |