

# Evaluation of North Carolina's Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration

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<http://www.unc.edu/~lynnu/waiver2001.pdf>

# Introduction

- IV-E waiver is an extension of the reform effort in North Carolina
- Special features of the evaluation
  - Self-evaluation strategy
  - Unique data resources

# Underlying theory of change

- Ability to use funds for preventive and post-reunification services will help:
  - Reduce entries to out-of-home care while maintaining safety
  - Shorten lengths of stay
  - Prevent re-entries to out-of-home care
  - Prevent re-abuse
- Change in fiscal policy is complement to explicit change in values associated with broader child welfare reform effort—“getting the incentives right” and moving beyond current bias toward out-of-home care

# Specific interventions

- Assisted guardianship
  - Children in safe and committed kinship care
  - Financial assistance beyond TANF
- Services to children not in out-of-home care (and their families)
- Flexible funds to meet individual needs

## Encourage self-evaluation by counties

- Feedback of information to all counties about baseline performance and changes in performance throughout the demonstration
- Premise is to achieve stronger interventions, reinforcing efforts that seem to yield desired results and moving away from efforts that do not appear to pay off
- Evaluation seeks to create flows of information rather than simply to produce an *post-hoc* report

# Evaluation Overview

- Process evaluation
  - Tracking changes in child welfare programs in 19 waiver counties using multiple sources of information
  - Seeking existing data that will characterize changes in service delivery in all 100 counties
- Outcome evaluation
  - Assess impact of program changes on outcomes for children
- Cost-Benefit analysis
  - Examines changes in cost patterns, tracking increases and decreases across counties and over time

## Outcome evaluation

- Quasi-experimental design with 19 comparison counties matched to the 19 waiver counties
  - Criteria for matching: expenditures, outcomes status, 'volunteer-like' status of county (reform-mindedness), FFK status
  - Pre-waiver years vs. Waiver years

# Multiple Statewide Initiatives Confound Impact of the Waiver

- Families for Kids
- Families for Kids 2
- Challenge for Children
- Family Group Conferencing
- Court Improvement Project
- TANF/Child Welfare reform project

## Outcome evaluation

- Quasi-experimental design with 19 comparison counties matched to the 19 waiver counties
  - Criteria for matching: expenditures, outcomes status, 'volunteer-like' status of county (reform-mindedness), FFK status
  - Pre-waiver vs. Waiver comparisons
- 100-county multivariate analysis supplements the basic design

# Multiple Sources of Data

- Individual child-level
  - Administrative data files linked together
    - Child abuse and neglect registry data
    - Placement data
    - Cost data
    - Services data
- County-level
  - Contextual data describing participation in other initiatives
  - Process evaluation data on county-level program changes

## Child-level data files are configured as initial entry cohorts

- Provide information on experiences in child welfare of all children
  - initially substantiated as abused or neglected since SFY9293 or
  - entering placement authority for the first time since SFY9293

Child-level abuse and neglect data are configured as cohorts of children initially substantiated as victims of abuse or neglect

Pre-waiver

- SFY93 19,427
- SFY94 19,238
- SFY95 20,267
- SFY96 20,292
- SFY97 21,107

Waiver

- 
- SFY98 22,685
  - SFY99 23,162

## Child-level placement data are configured as initial entry cohorts

Pre-waiver

- SFY93 4,778
  - SFY94 5,267
  - SFY95 5,236
  - SFY96 5,153
  - SFY97 5,267
- 

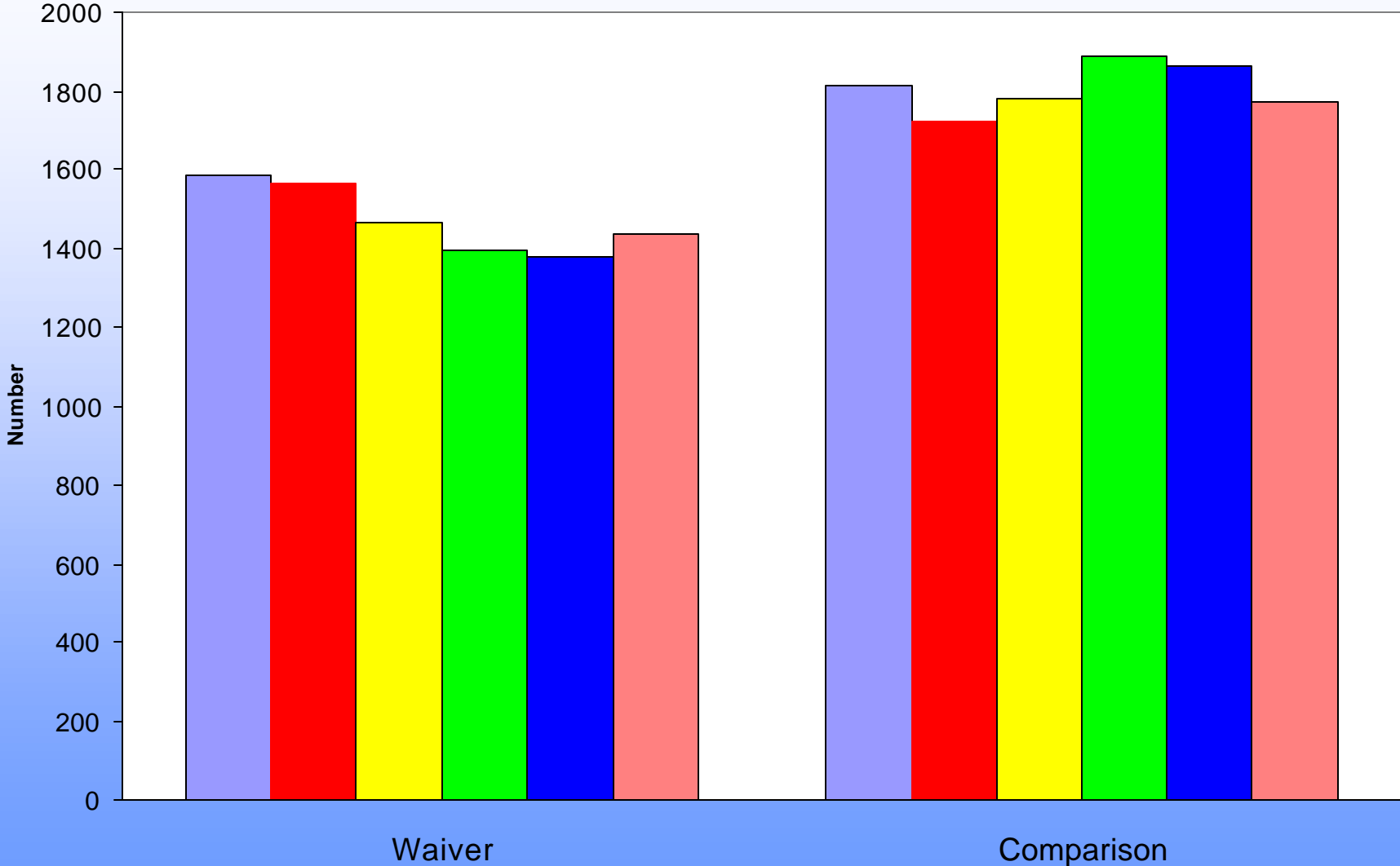
Waiver

- SFY98 5,275
- SFY99 5,193
- SFY00 5,109

# Measuring Outcomes

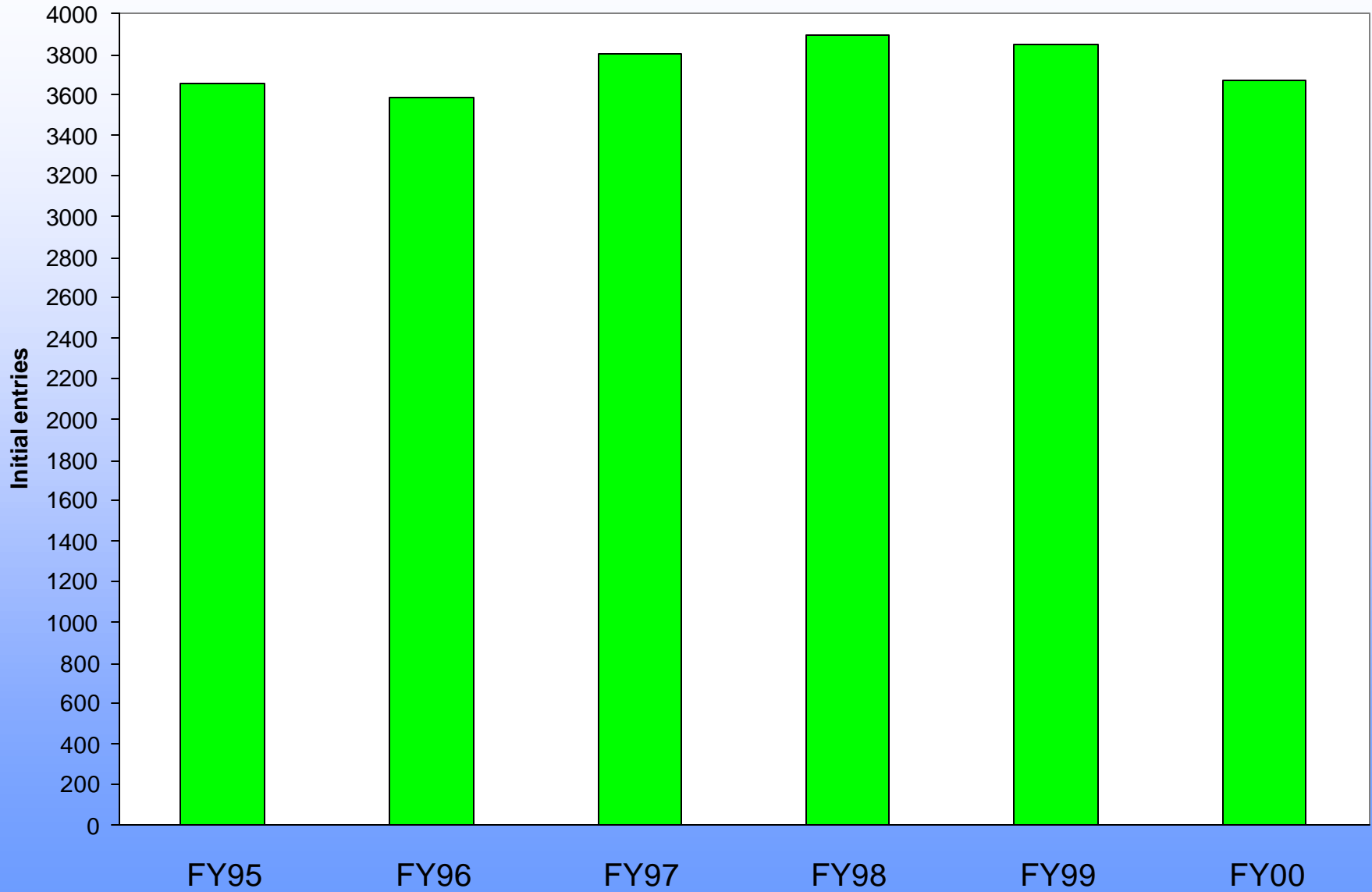
- *Reduce the number of children who must enter placement authority (PA)*
  - total number of children who initially enter PA during SFY
  - rate of entry to PA per 1000 children 0-17 years
  - probability of a child entering PA

# Total Number of Children Entering PA by SFY



FY95 FY96 FY97 FY98 FY99 FY00

## Total Number of Children entering PA in Non-Waiver Counties

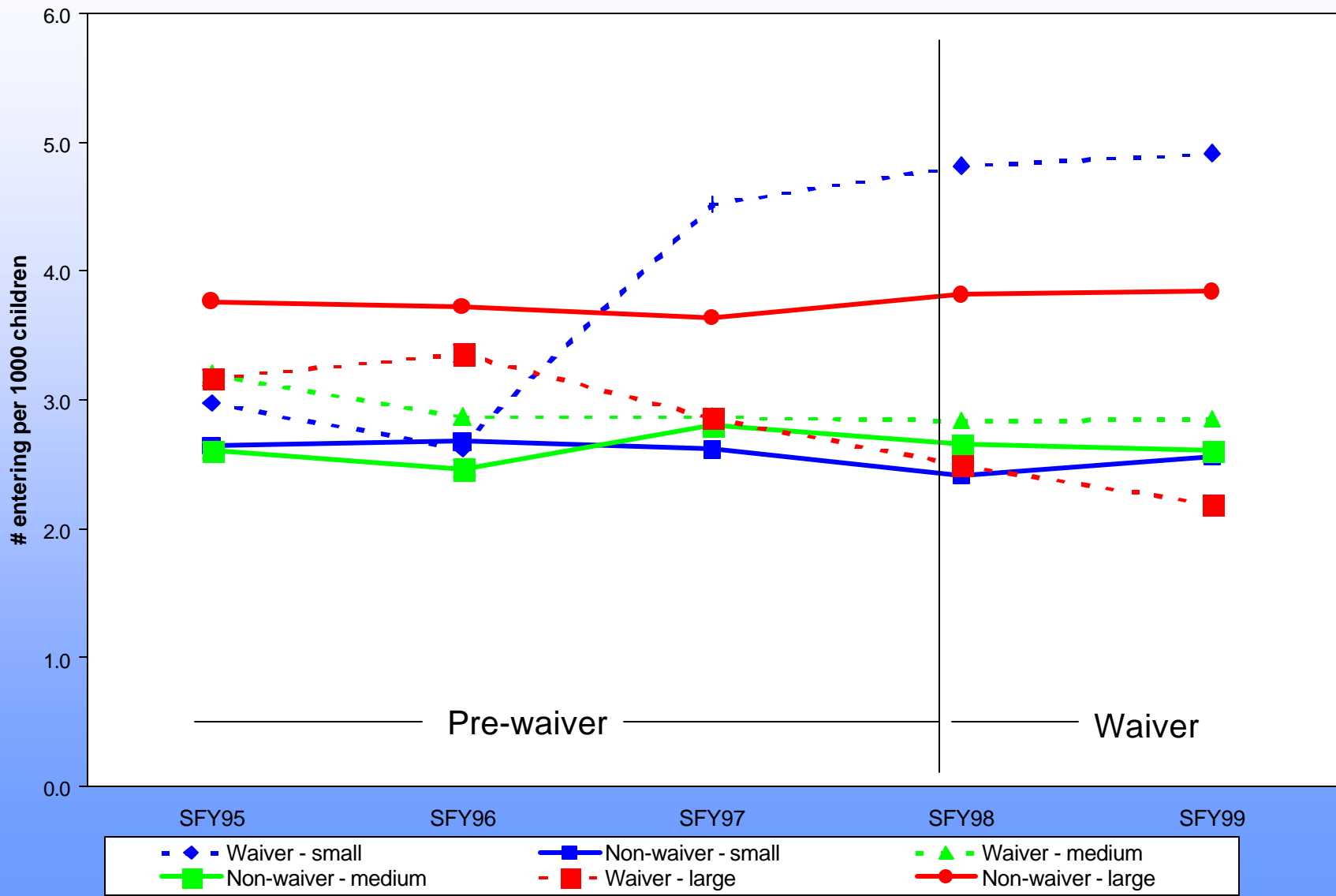


## Average Number of Placements into PA per 1,000 Children

		SFY95	SFY96	SFY97	SFY98	SFY99
	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Total	100	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.7
IV-E						
Waiver	19	3.2	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.0
Non-Waiver	81	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.7

Average Number of Placements into PA per 1,000 Children							
by County Characteristics							
			SFY95	SFY96	SFY97	SFY98	SFY99
Waiver x FFK		N	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Waiver	FFK original	4	4.8	3.7	2.9	3.3	2.9
	FFK , 2nd 12	8	2.9	2.7	3.0	2.8	2.9
	Non FFK	7	2.5	2.8	3.4	3.3	3.3
Non Waiver	FFK original	4	4.3	4.0	3.2	3.9	3.1
	FFK, 2nd 12	4	3.9	3.5	3.6	3.9	3.6
	Non FFK	73	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.6
			SFY95	SFY96	SFY97	SFY98	SFY99
DSS Level x Waiver		N	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Small	Waiver	3	3.0	2.6	4.5	4.8	4.9
	Non-waiver	48	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.6
Medium	Waiver	12	3.2	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8
	Non-waiver	27	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.7	2.6
Large	Waiver	4	3.2	3.4	2.9	2.5	2.2
	Non-waiver	6	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.8

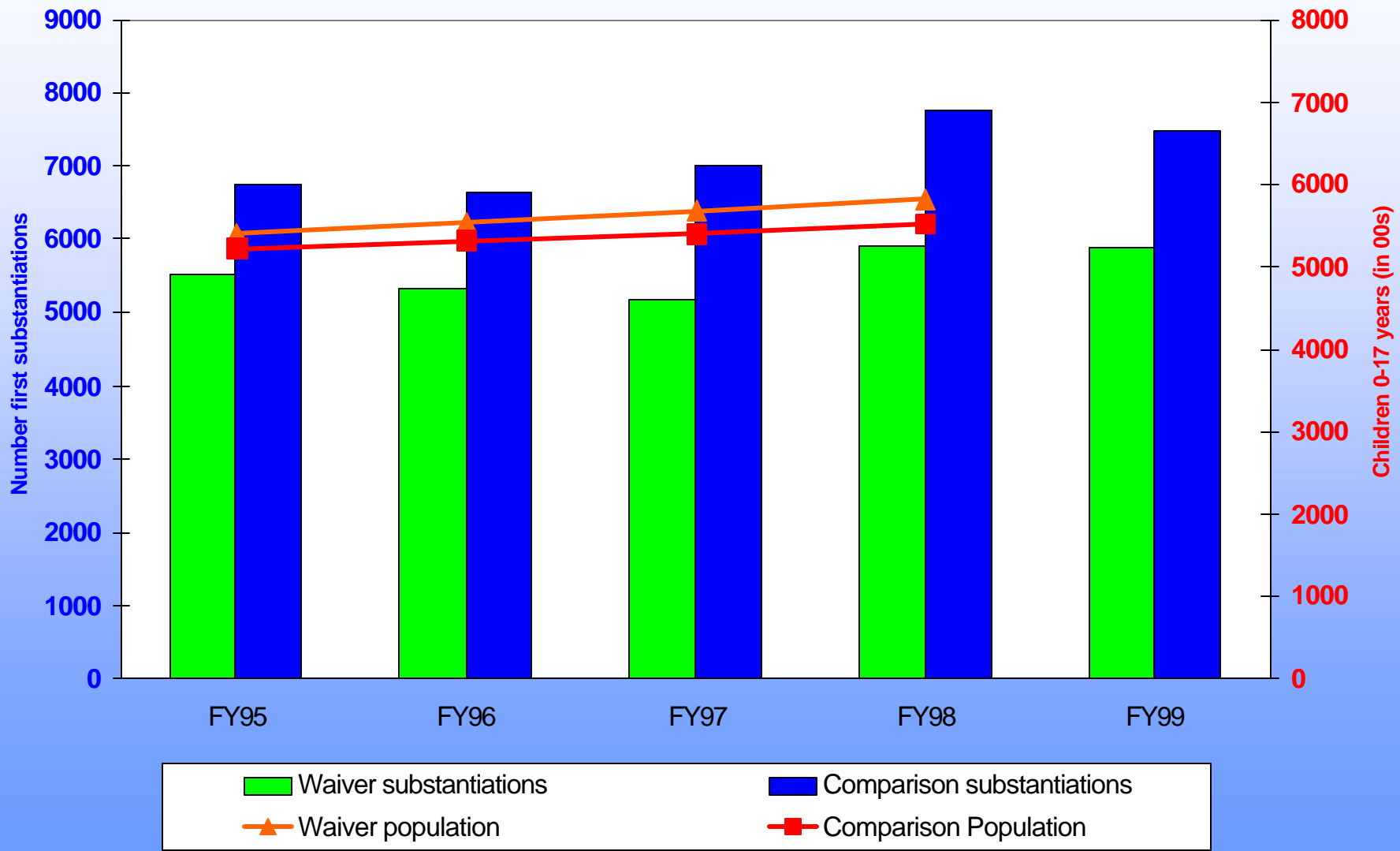
Number of PA Entries per 1000 Children by County Level and Waiver Status



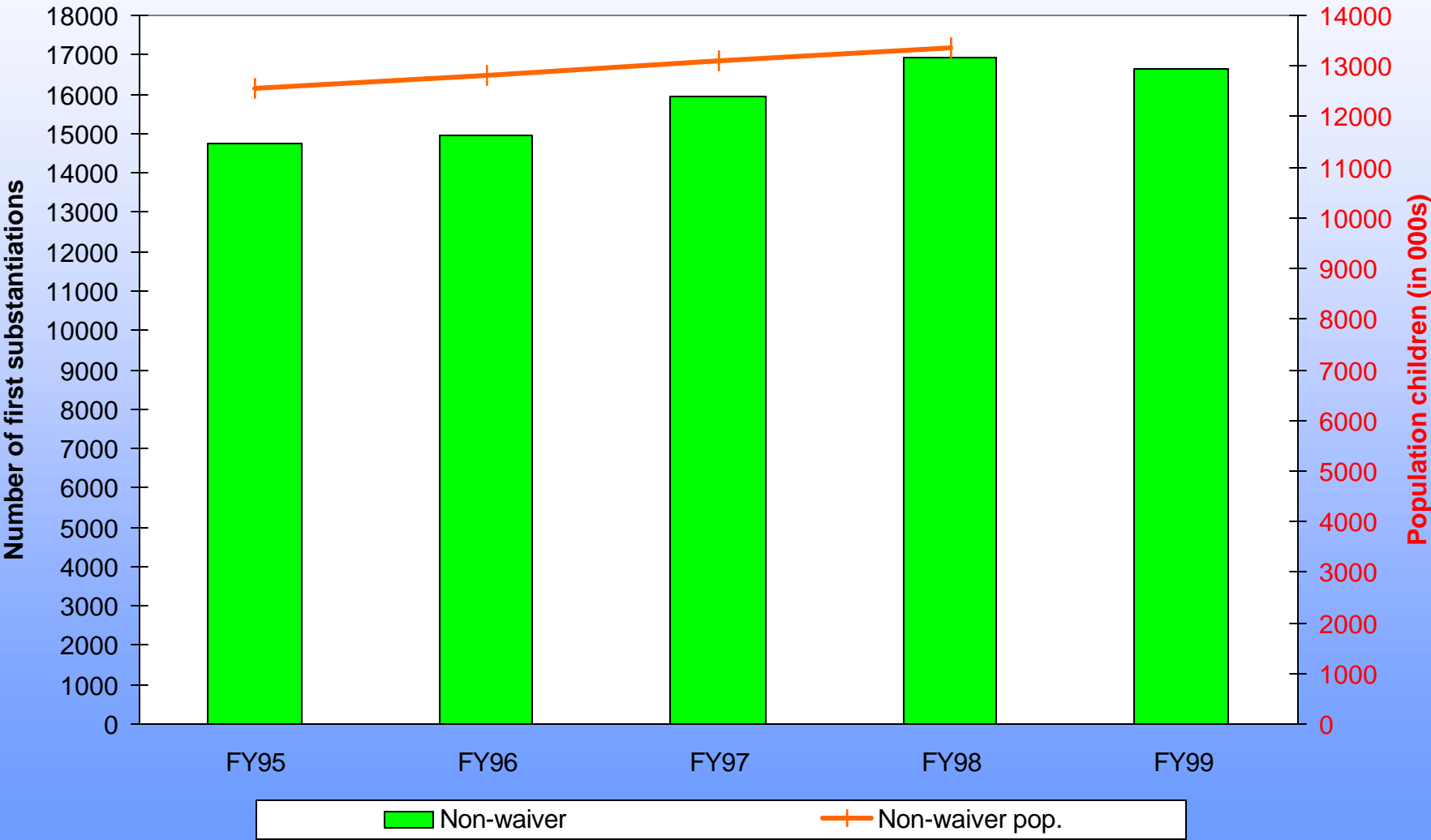
Child-level abuse and neglect data are configured as cohorts of children initially substantiated as victims of abuse or neglect

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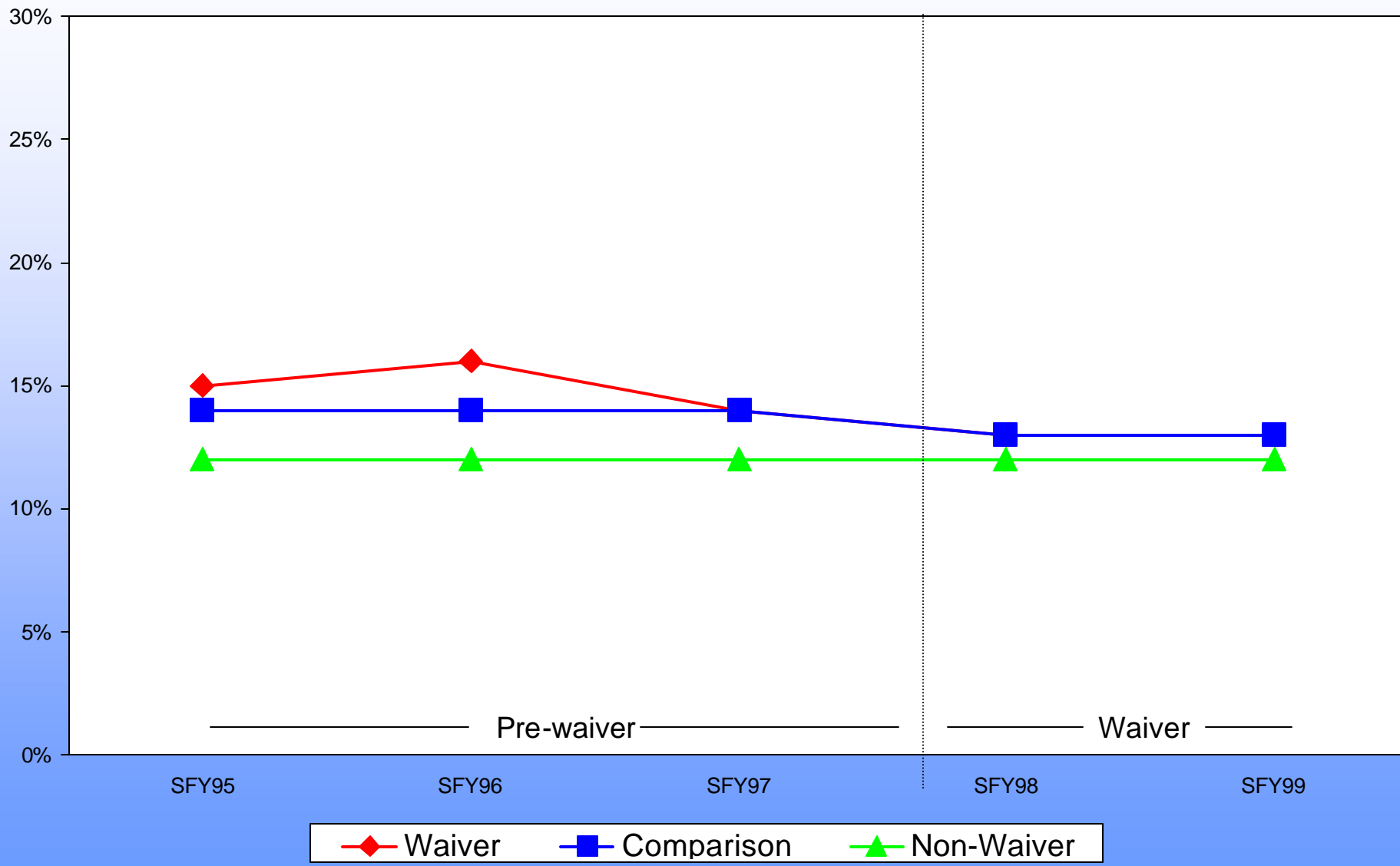
### Number of First Substantiations compared to Child Population (0-17 years)



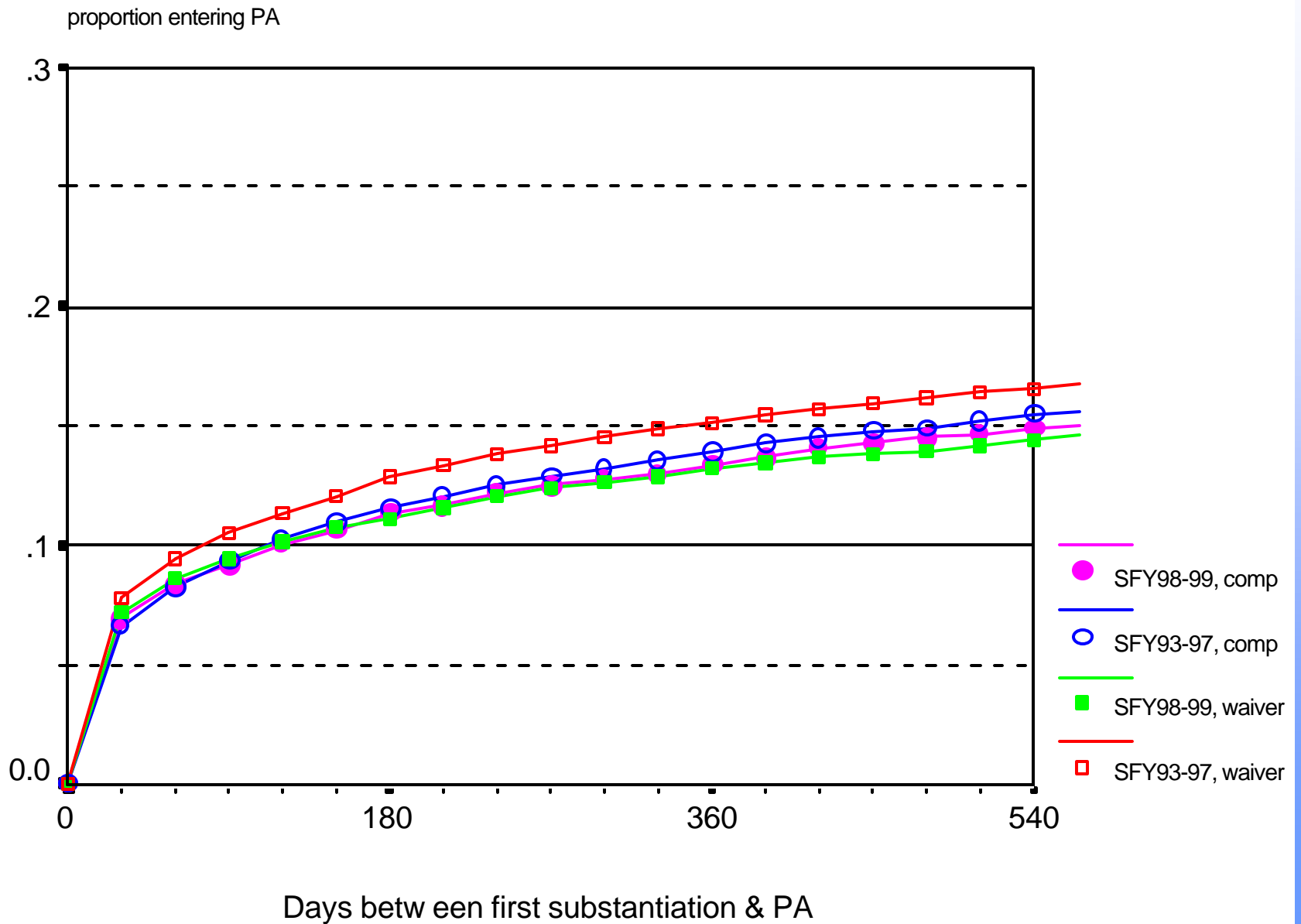
### Number of First Substantiations in All Non-Waiver Counties Compared to Population of Children (0-17 years)



### Probability of Entering PA within a year of Initial Substantiation, SFY95 - SFY99



# Probability of Entering Placement Authority



## Using Multivariate Models to Estimate Differences between Counties with Multiple Interventions

- Multivariate models can separate the effects of multiple interventions that are occurring simultaneously
- Can include in multivariate models other variables that may also impact on the outcome that we are analyzing

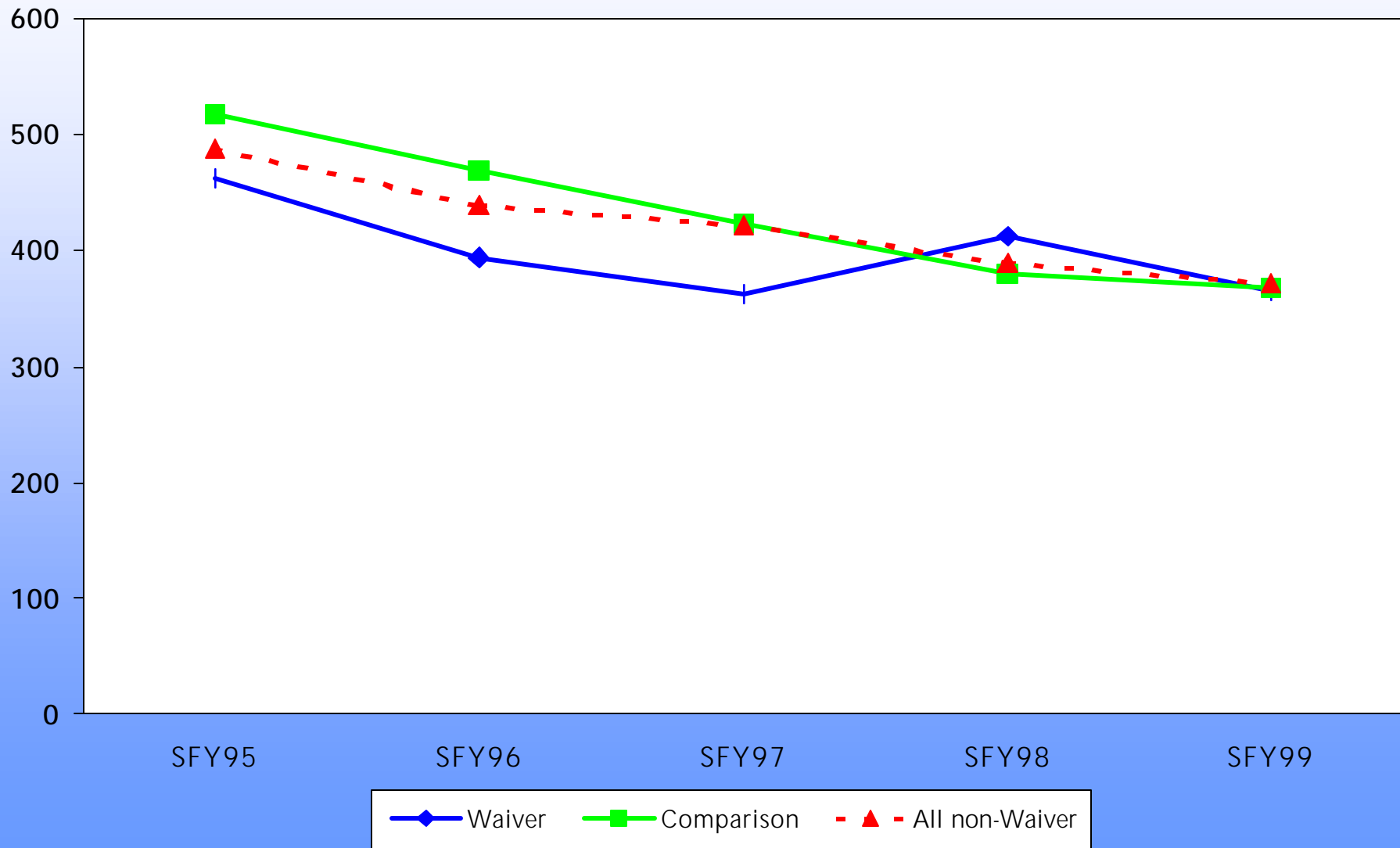
# Proportional Hazards Model

- Estimate comparative risk of entering PA relative to baseline group and year (i.e. SFY95, non-FFK or non-Waiver)
- Variables to test in model
  - FFK (original, phase 2, non-FFK)
  - Waiver (waiver, all non-waiver)
  - Other county characteristics (such as level)
  - Other child characteristics (such as race, age)
  - “Reform mindedness”

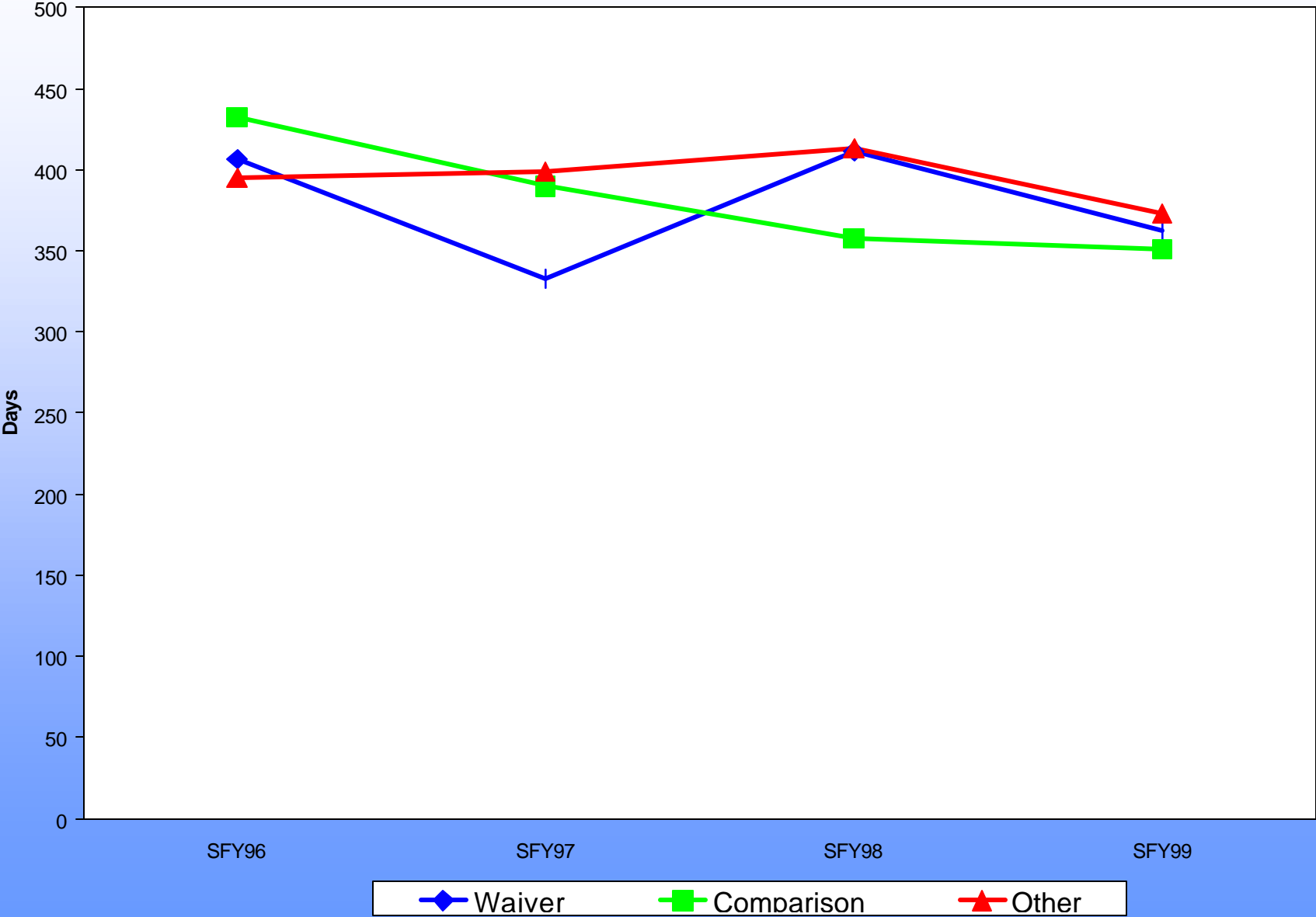
# Measuring Outcomes

- *Reduce the length of time that children remain in placement authority*
  - Median number of days that children remain in placement authority
  - Probability of remaining in placement authority at varying time points (e.g. 1 year; 15 months, 18 months, 3 years)

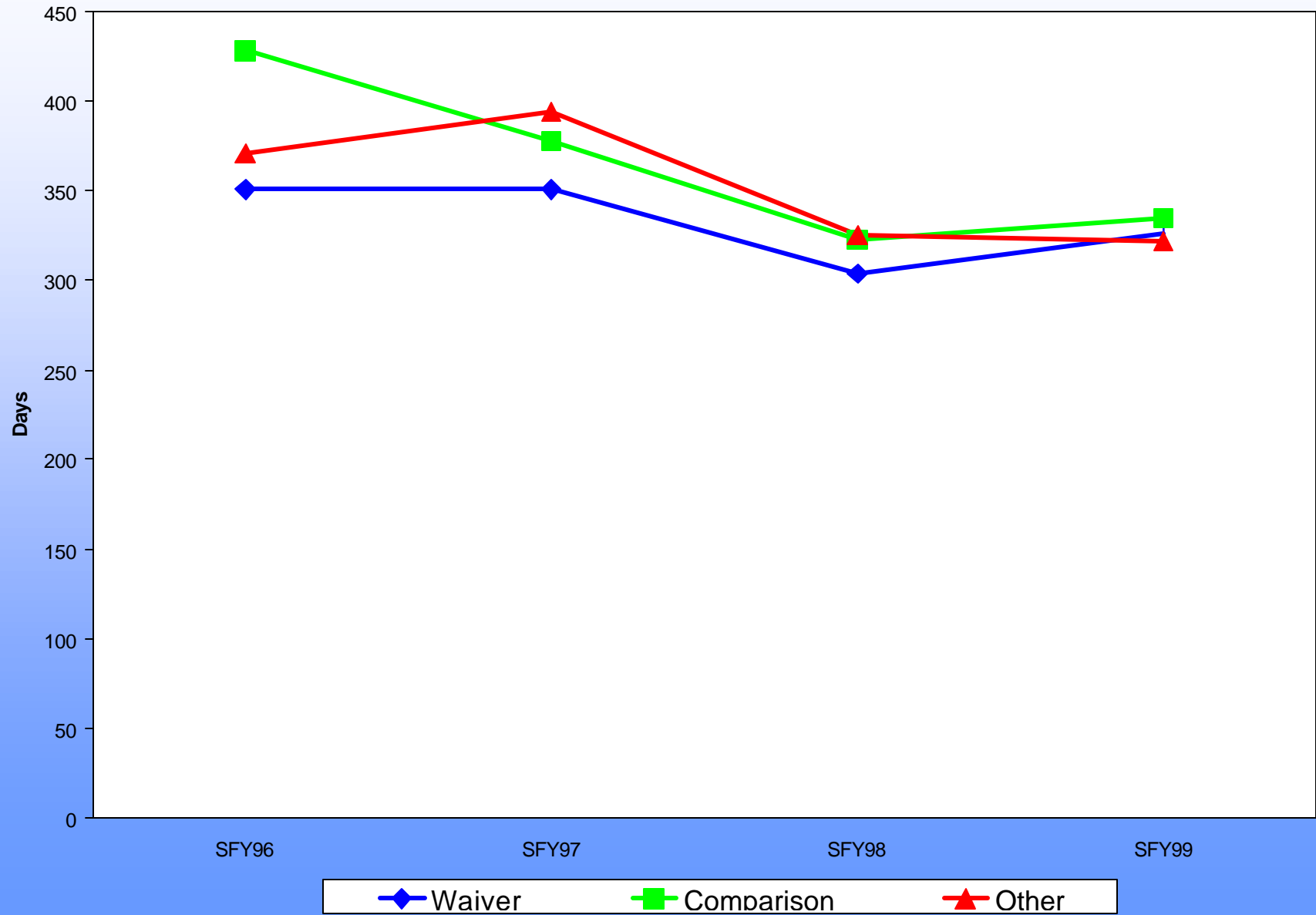
## Median Length of Stay by Waiver Status



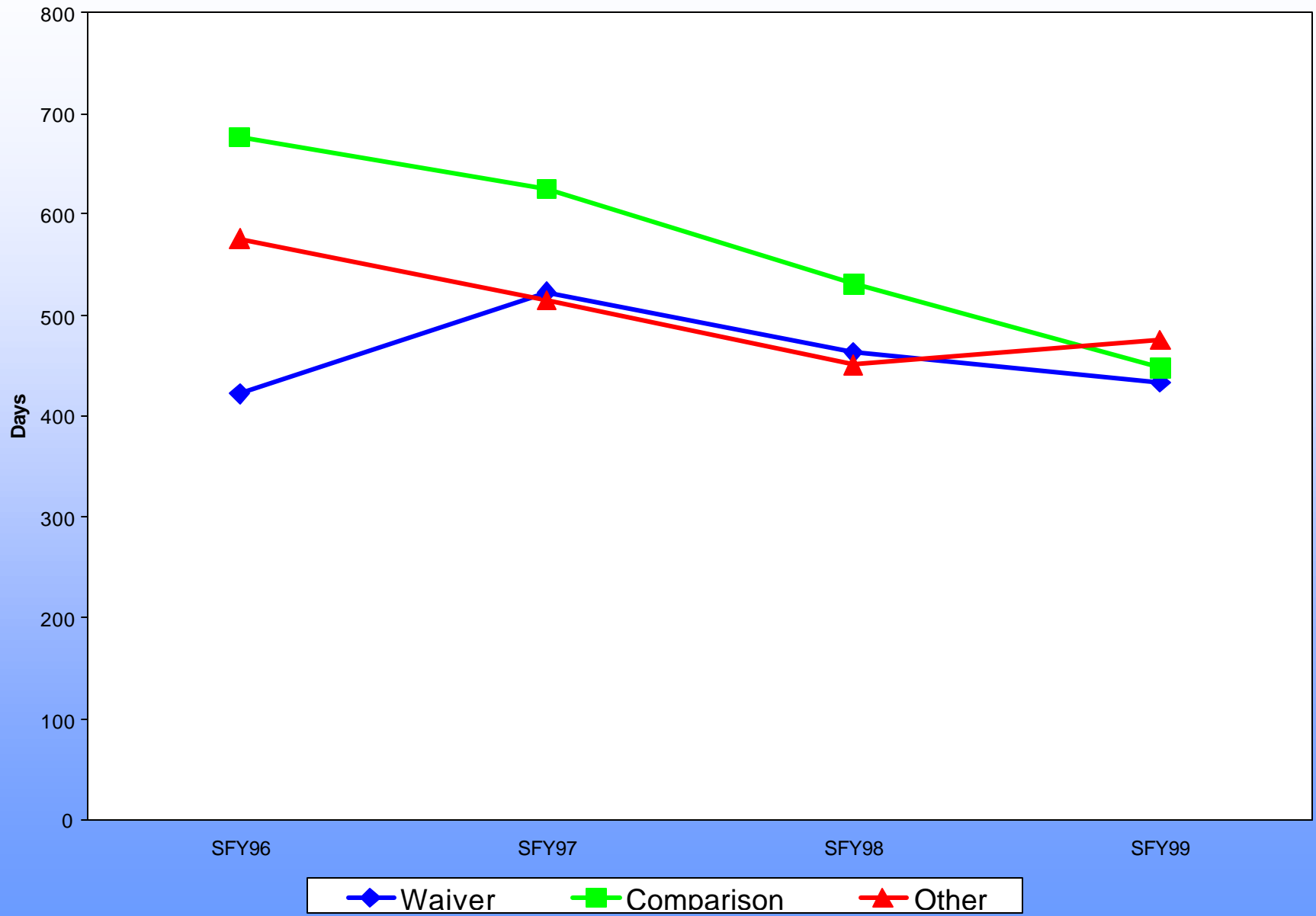
### Median Days in PA for Children Never Placed with a Relative



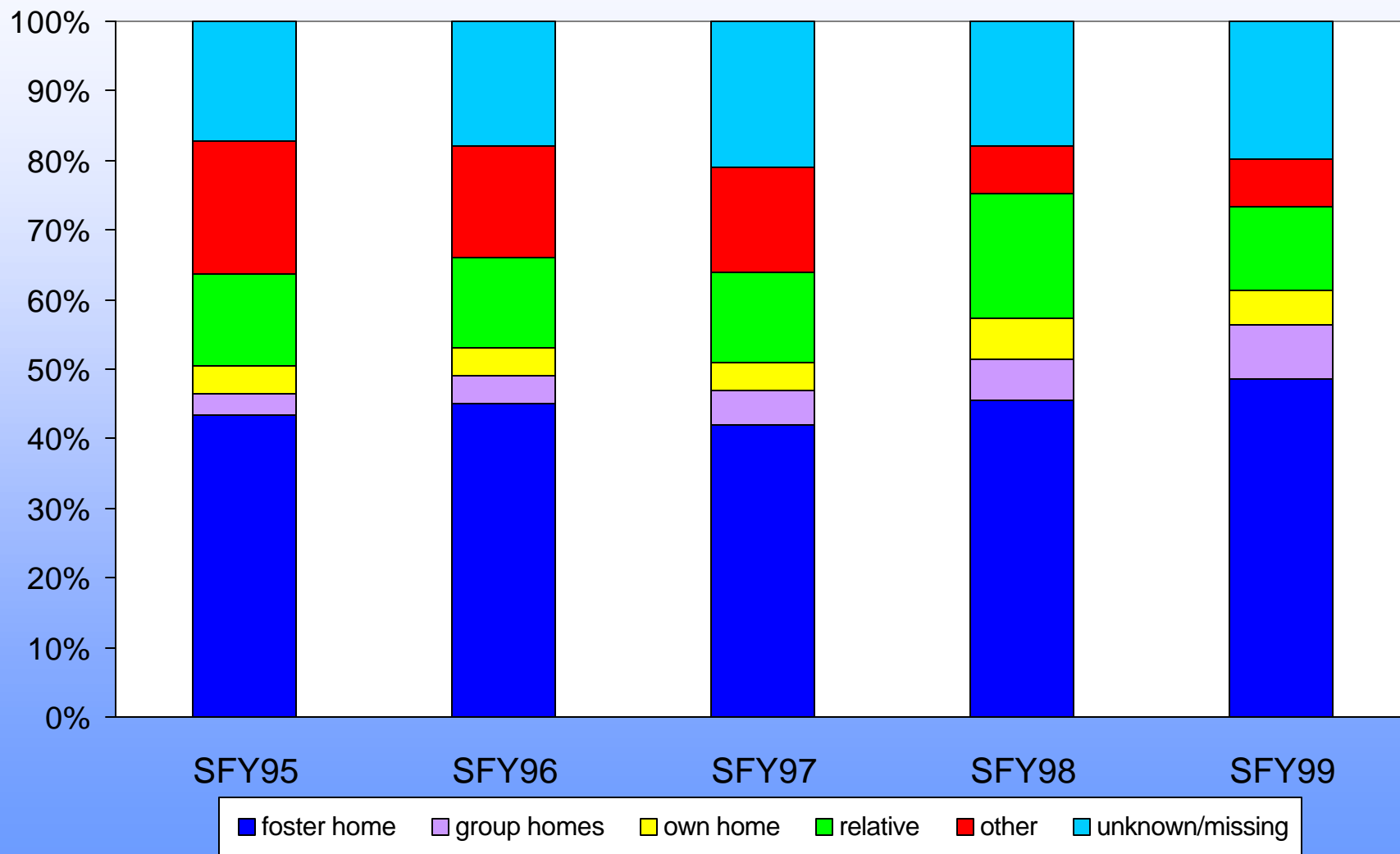
### Median Days in PA Children Initially Placed with a Relative



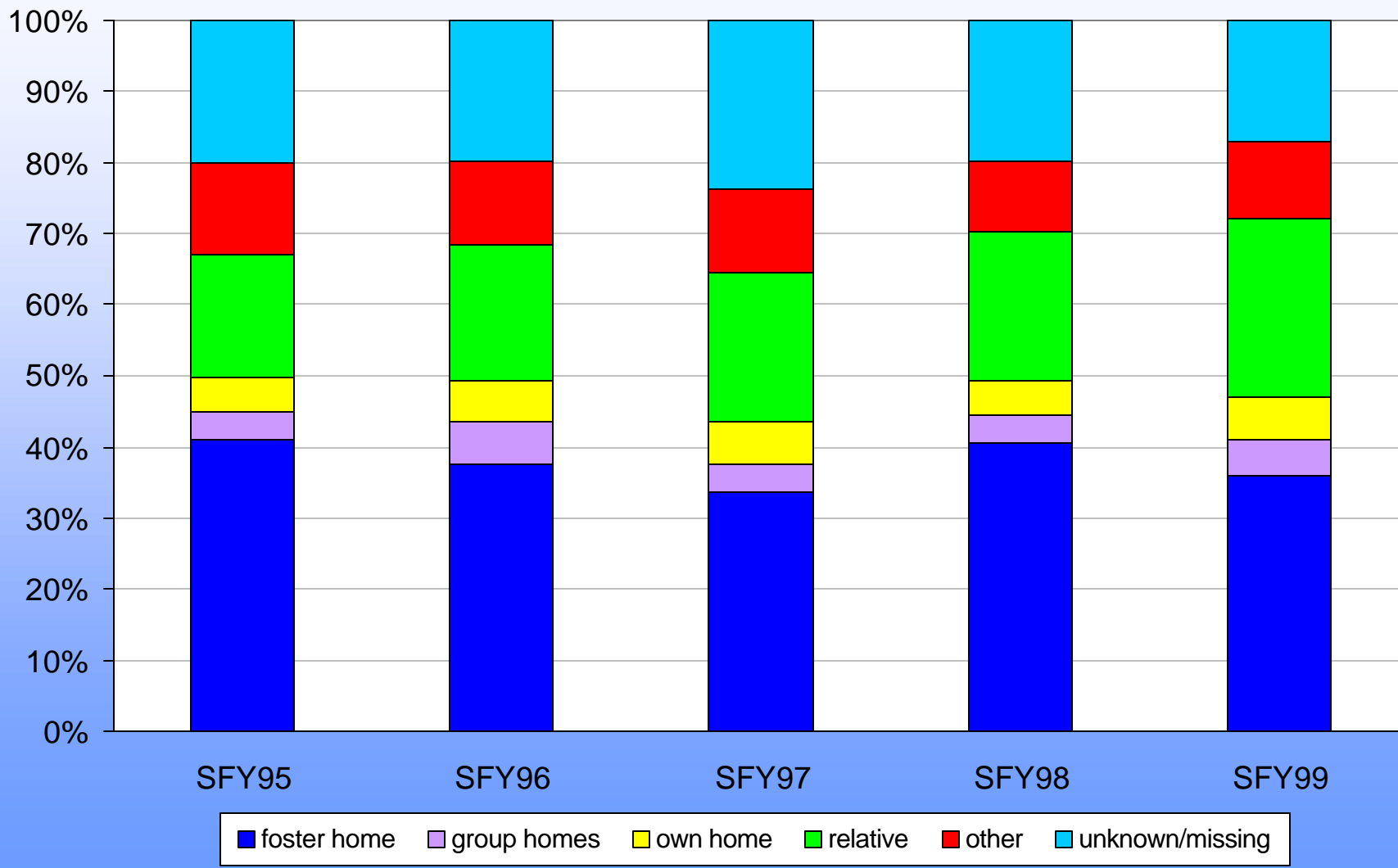
Median Day in PA for Children who are Subsequently Placed with a Relative



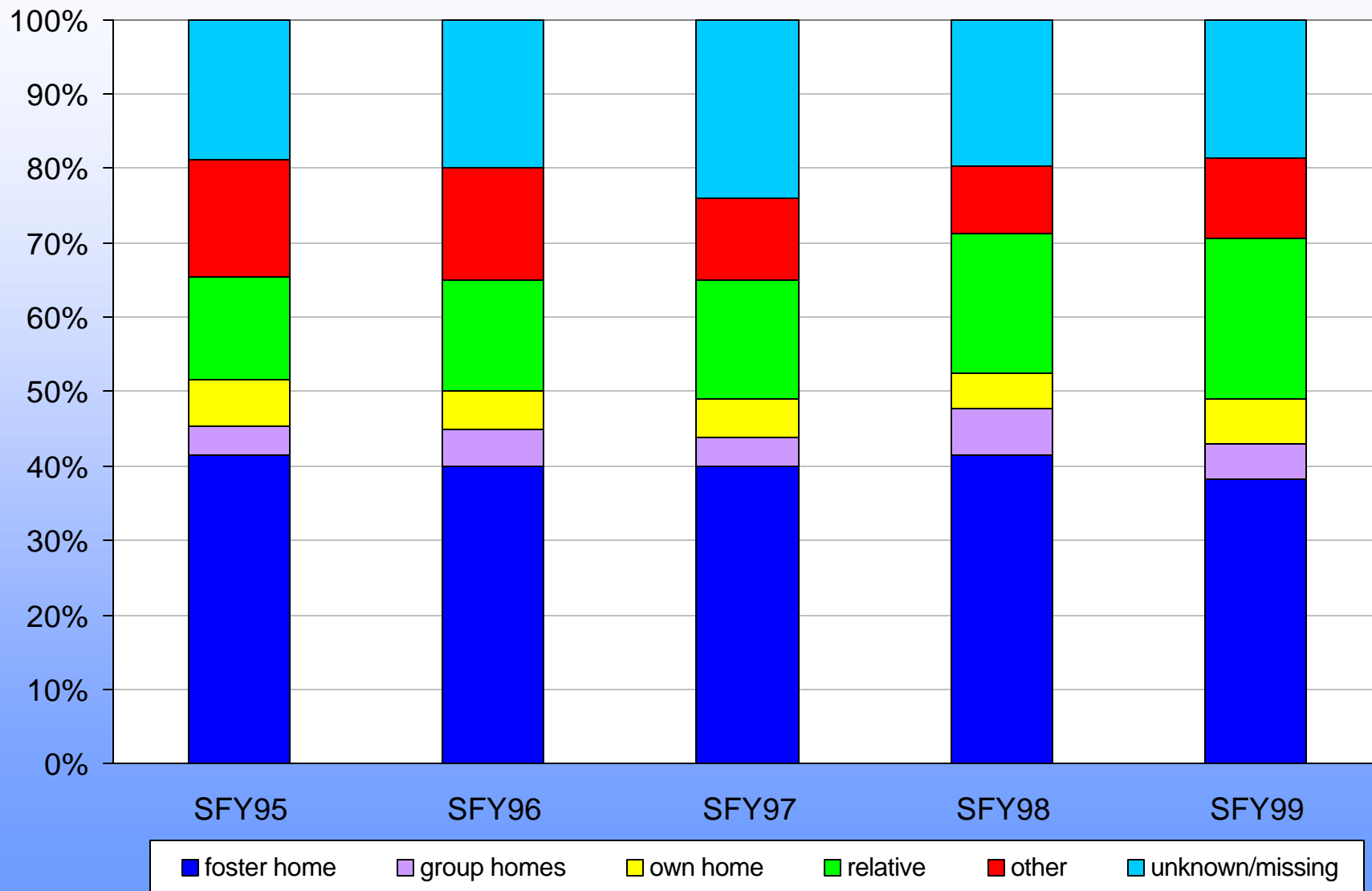
## Initial Placements in Waiver Counties



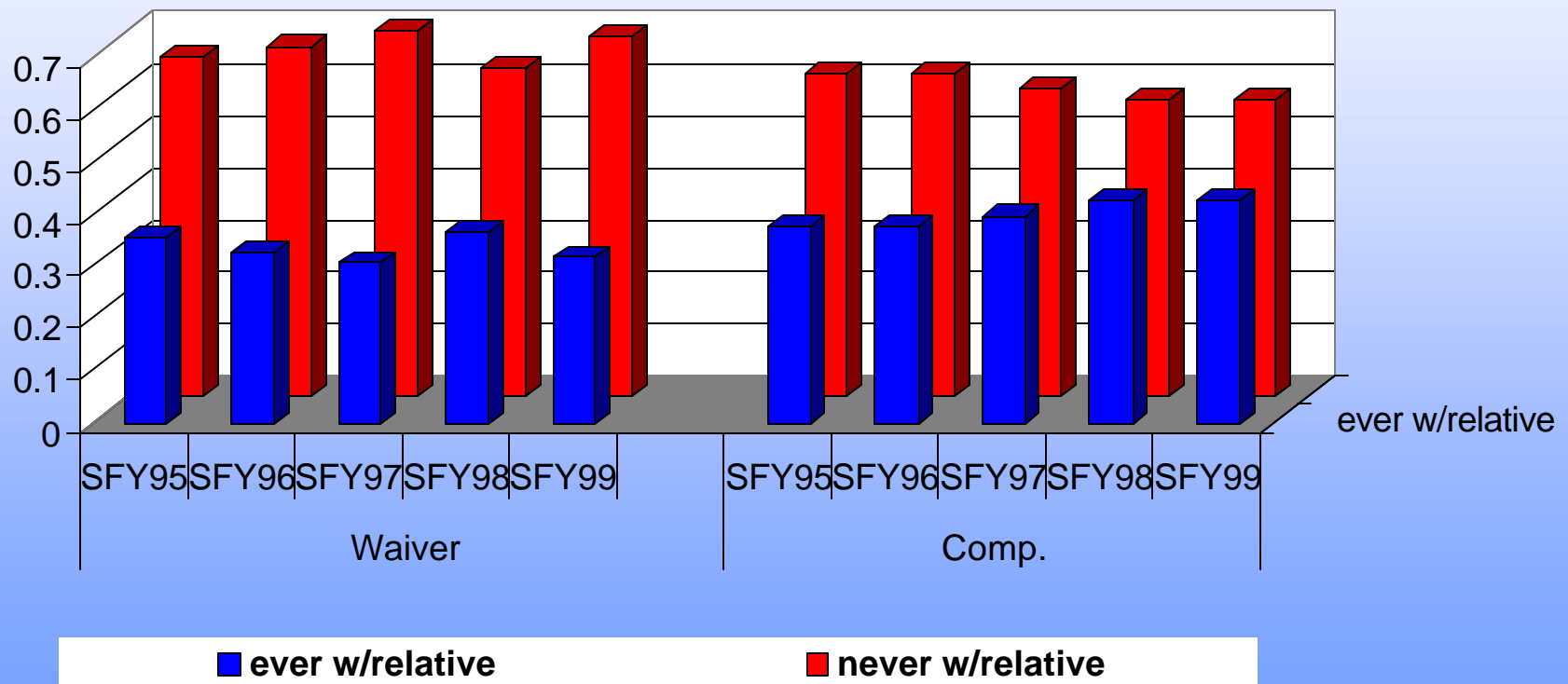
## Initial Placements in Comparison Counties



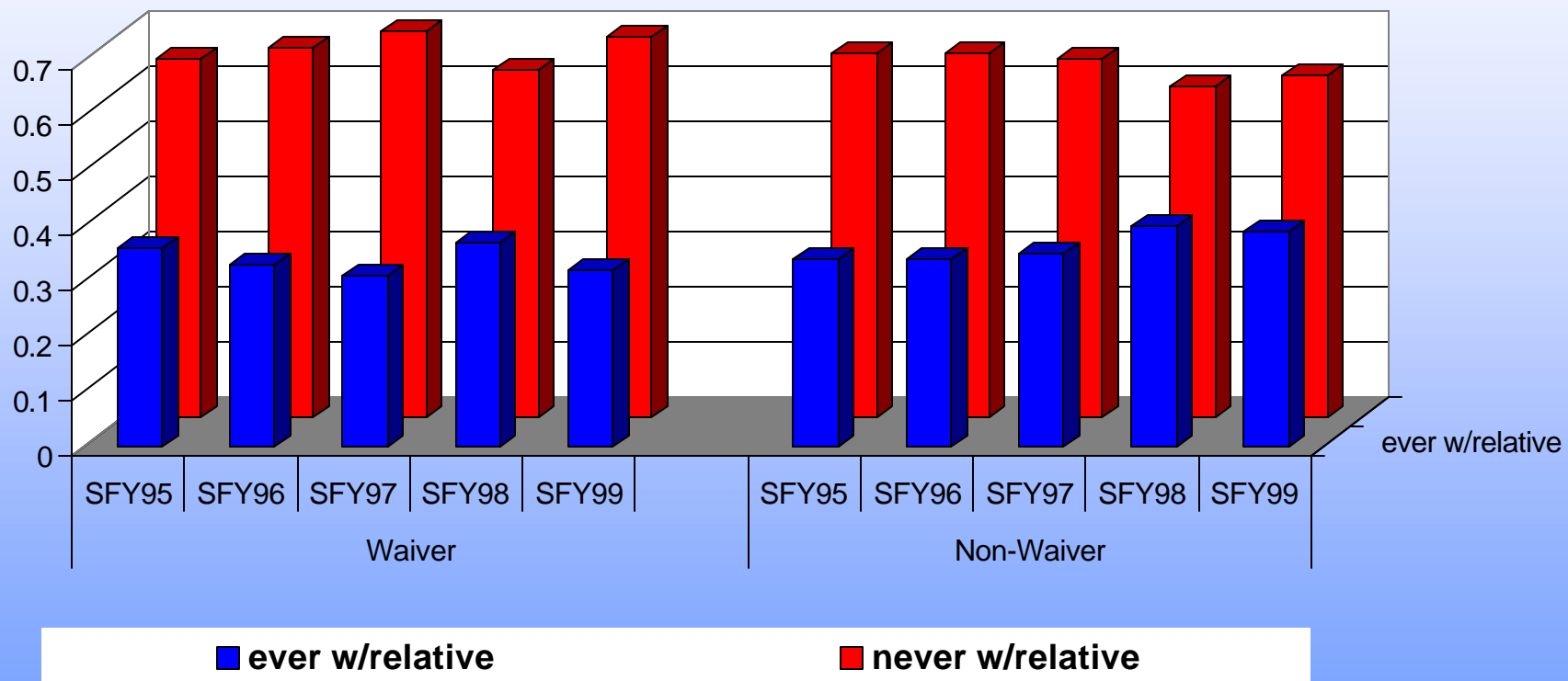
## Initial Placements in Non-Waiver Counties



## Waiver vs. Comparison Counties: Use of Relative Placements



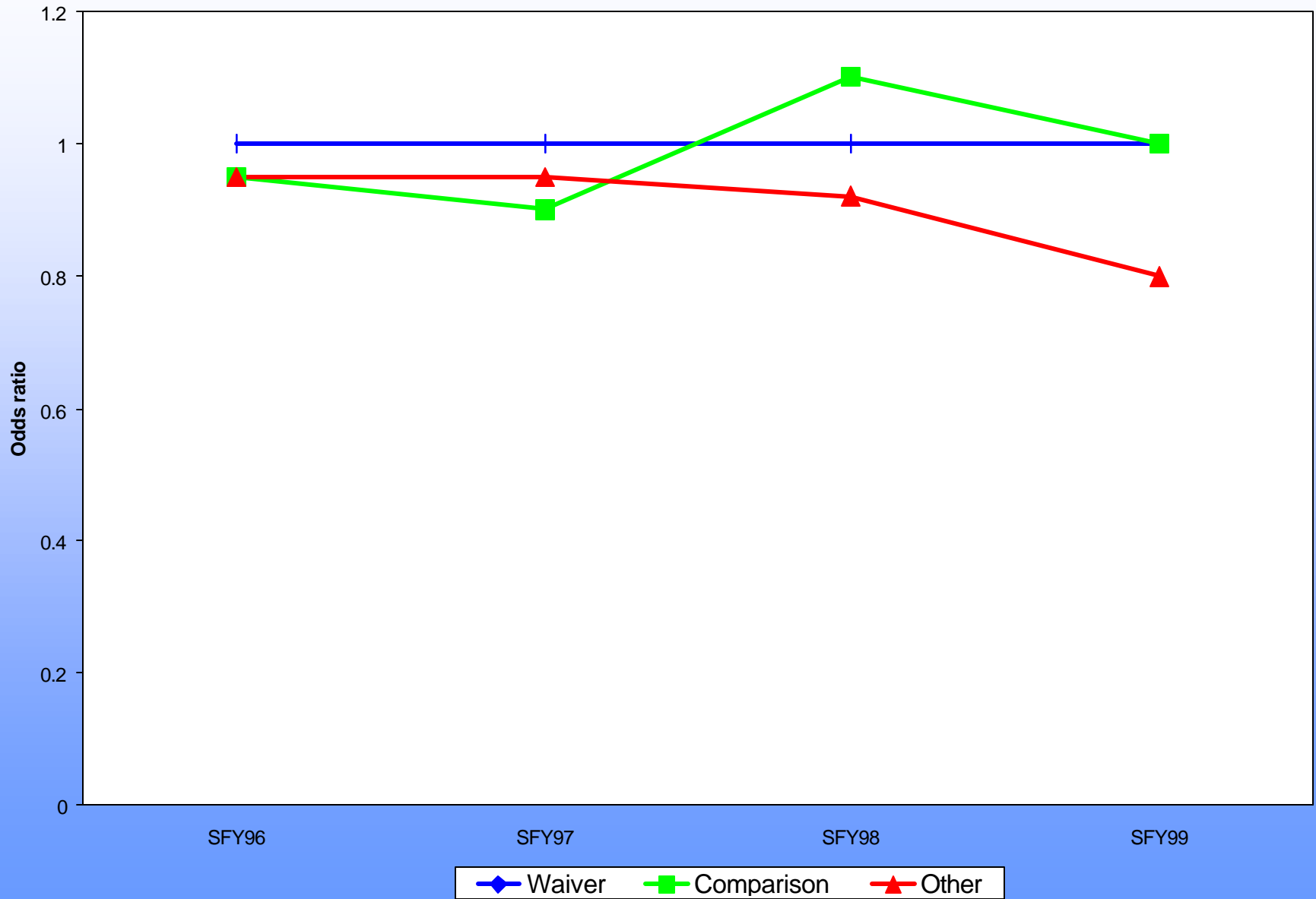
## Waiver vs. Non-Waiver Counties: Use of Relative Placements



# Proportional Hazards Model

- Outcome indicator: comparative likelihood of leaving PA for children with no relative care compared to baseline group
- Other variables to include in model
  - Waiver status
  - FFK status
  - Year entered care
  - Child characteristics such as race, age
  - County size (DSS level)

## Comparative Risk of Exiting PA Children Never Placed with a Relative



# Conclusions

- Premature to assess overall outcome of waiver demonstration in NC
  - Start-up was slow
  - Outcomes require sufficient follow-up time to reliably track
  - Continuing development of new data resources will provide better information for defining “the waiver”

## Conclusions (2)

- Preliminary findings suggest promising results in some areas
  - Number of children entering PA decreasing in most years even though population and substantiations are increasing
  - Rate of entry decreasing
  - Probability of entry to PA stable

## Conclusions (3)

- Difficult ***at this point*** in the evaluation to answer the question: *Are changes in outcomes due to the waiver?*
  - Length of stay decreasing statewide
  - Use of relative caregivers increasing statewide

# Next steps

- Link cost data and process data to outcome data and use it to better define IV-E waiver 'intervention' among waiver counties
- Continue to supplement county contextual data and try to identify potential confounders
- Multivariate modeling combining individual-level and county-level data to control for contextual confounders
- Use existing staff time data and cost data to identify changing patterns in service provision in counties
- Case studies of selected waiver counties
- Examine use of Assisted Guardianship and assess whether outcomes for children are different
- Continued analysis of the cost data