

# THE ETHNICITY OF MISSING PEOPLE

Findings from police and local authority  
data, 2021-22

**missing  
people**

Registered charity in England and Wales (1020419)  
and in Scotland (SC047419)

**A lifeline when someone disappears**



### ABOUT MISSING PEOPLE

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Missing People is the only charity in the UK which is dedicated to supporting those affected by missing. The charity provides specialist support to people who are at risk of missing, those who are missing, and the families and friends left behind. The charity runs a free, confidential helpline that is available by phone, text and email to support missing children and adults, and their loved ones, as well as other front-line services to support anyone affected by missing.

Missing People can be contacted by phoning or texting 116 000, or by e-mailing [116000@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:116000@missingpeople.org.uk).

Understanding the reasons why people go missing and the impact on families left behind enables Missing People and our partners to provide better services. Missing People's research team conducts research and evaluation projects on a range of topics, and recent research can be found at <https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/for-professionals/information-and-policy/information-and-research>.

### ABOUT LISTEN UP

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Listen Up is a national research and training organisation established to amplify the experiences of lesser heard children, in child protection research, policy and practice. It is the leading organisation increasing awareness about adultification bias and its implications to child protection.

<https://www.listenupresearch.org>.

### AUTHORS

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thanks to Listen Up for supporting this project and for sharing their expertise and comments throughout.

Thanks to colleagues across Missing People, particularly members of the Race Equality Working Group, and the Policy and Research team for your insights, comments, and feedback on this work.

We would like to thank the many people who have given us their valuable feedback about this report and recommendations. This includes:

- Dominic Norton, founder of Missing Black People
- Gian Power, CEO and Founder of TLC Lions
- Chief Inspector Alan Rhees-Cooper, Staff Officer to DCC Catherine Hankinson, NPCC Lead for Missing People
- Louise Newell, Operations Manager, UK Missing Persons Unit
- Representatives from the IOPC Race Discrimination National Advisory Group
- Representatives from Missing People's Trustee Board
- Others who have given their time and expertise to review the report

We are especially grateful for the feedback from families with experience of having a child go missing. Your insight has been invaluable, and we hope that this research will be the start of meaningful change in the experiences of and response to people from minority ethnic groups going missing.

# FOREWORD

“ This research is much needed. We have known for years that Black people are over-represented in missing statistics, but we have had no more detail about how the unique identities and experiences of different ethnic communities intersect with their experiences of going missing. Without understanding what is happening we can't ensure that professionals are providing the right response, and that people are getting the support they need.

These findings should raise serious concern for all of us who work with missing children or adults, and, more importantly, that concern should trigger action.

The disparities that have been identified are concerning and we need to understand what is driving them. We don't have all the answers yet, but we know these findings paint a worrying picture for Black and Asian missing people which we must address urgently.

This report will be hard for many to read, but can be a moment for change if we deliver a national, multi-agency commitment to understanding the experiences of people from minority ethnic groups who go missing or have a loved one go missing, and to ending any discrimination in the response to those missing reports. This work could help to build trust within Black and other ethnic minority communities, ensure communities receive an equitable response, and potentially reduce harm experienced by missing people.

Missing People will continue to work with experts by experience, experts in safeguarding and intersectionality, police forces, local authorities, governments, charities to ensure an equitable response every time someone is missing and in crisis. We are especially grateful for the support of Listen Up with this research, and for their leadership of forthcoming research into Black young people's experiences of missing. ”

*Jo Youle, CEO of Missing People*

“ The findings of this research raise significant concerns and urgent questions about the identification and responses to missing Black children and adults, including those from other racialised communities. The statistics are alarming and highlight several issues which must be addressed. Given the findings, racial bias and wider forms of intersecting discrimination cannot be discounted as one of the underlying issues for such disparities to exist.

Individuals and agencies must be willing to ask confronting questions 'what does vulnerability look like? Does it have an image? A race and ethnicity?' As this data suggests that if you are a White child and missing, you are more likely be acknowledged as in need of help. That is unacceptable.

All children deserve the right to be protected and supported at their most vulnerable. Parents and carers should also feel confident that if there is ever a time when the unthinkable happens and their child goes missing, they feel assured agencies will provide a response which is of care, compassion and concern. This data does not provide that assurance.

This is a child protection issue. This is not just a matter for the police, it is the responsibility of all safeguarding partners, including those within and outside of statutory agencies. ”

*Jahnine Davis, CEO of Listen Up*

# HOW MISSING PEOPLE CAN HELP YOU

If you have experience of being missing or of reporting someone missing and you feel like you have not received the right response from the police, the local authority, or from other people involved in your or your loved one's missing experience, you can contact Missing People.

Our free, anonymous, confidential helpline is contactable via phone or text on **116 000** or e-mail [116000@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:116000@missingpeople.org.uk). We can listen and support you emotionally, or we can advocate on your behalf.

If you have been affected by the findings in this report and would like some support, please also contact Missing People.

## CONTENTS PAGE

<b>Research aims</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Key findings</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Background and methodology</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Research findings</b>	<b>23</b>
- Missing individuals and incidents	24
- Missing children	26
- Risk factor flags	29
- Where people go missing from	36
- Length of time missing	37
- How missing people return	39
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Appendixes</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Data tables</b>	<b>54</b>

# RESEARCH AIMS

Someone is reported missing every 90 seconds in the UK, yet very little is currently known about the ethnicity of those being reported missing. In this research Missing People aims to:

- Begin to understand more about the ethnicity of missing people, and how ethnicity intersects with missing
- Explore whether the data suggests any variation within different ethnic communities' experiences of being missing and the response that they may receive

This is the first time that data of this nature has been collected and published. While this report presents data on the ethnicity of missing people and various aspects of their missing experiences, the analysis of what that data means, and wider conclusions are limited: statistics can tell only a part of the story.

Further qualitative research is needed, with a focus on specific ethnic communities, to further understand what is happening and why this disparity exists. The hope is that this research is a call to action for all agencies to better understand the experiences of minority ethnic communities' and the many issues linked to going missing.

**SOMEONE IS REPORTED MISSING EVERY 90 SECONDS IN THE UK, YET VERY LITTLE IS CURRENTLY KNOWN ABOUT THE ETHNICITY OF THOSE BEING REPORTED MISSING.**

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# KEY FINDINGS

This report presents findings from two freedom of information requests to local authorities and police forces about the ethnicity of people who are reported missing. The data shows some key differences for different ethnic groups in terms of the likelihood of being reported missing, of being reported missing more than once, as well as the risks that are recorded for those missing people, and how long they are likely to be missing for.

The data in this report is presented either at an individual or an incident level:

- Missing individuals refers to the number of individual people reported missing during the year.
- Missing incidents refer to the total number of reported missing episodes for all missing people. The number of missing incidents is much higher than the number of missing individuals because many people will be reported missing more than once (so one person can have multiple missing incidents). Much of the data we have requested is only available at an incident level

The report shows significant differences in the proportions of children and adults from different ethnicities who are reported missing. These disproportionalities are likely to be linked to systemic issues including differential access to health services, support services and employment, as well as disparities in rates of school exclusion, and care experience which all link to the likelihood of someone being in a crisis that leads to them going missing. However, this report does not answer the question of why this disproportionality exists.

In terms of the missing incident itself, the data linked to recorded risk factors, length of time missing, and how people are found or return highlights disparities in the response people from different communities may receive when individuals are reported missing.

This report mainly focuses on differences between missing people from Black, Asian and White ethnic groups. Together, these ethnicity categories make up over 90% of all missing incidents and are where the greatest disparities lie. However, where there are clear disparities for other ethnic groups including people defined as mixed or multiple ethnicities, those are also included. It is also important to note that we have used police and local authority defined ethnicity categories for this report, which are slightly different to census data categories. This is because police data has been used for all sections of the report.

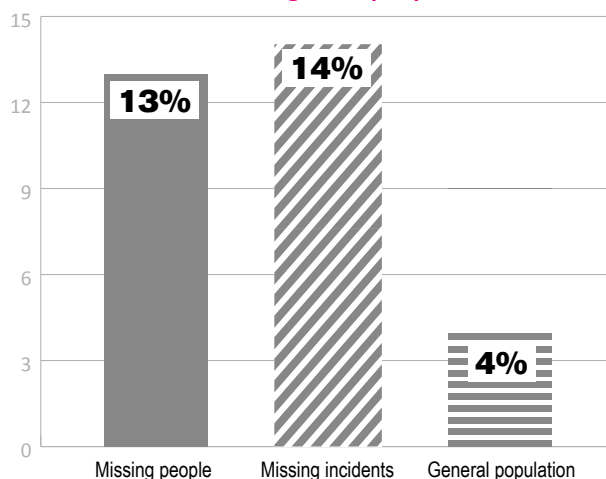
## MISSING INDIVIDUALS<sup>1</sup> AND INCIDENTS<sup>2</sup>

Black people are **over-represented** both as missing individuals and missing incidents

13% of individual people reported to the police as missing are Black, and 14% of all incidents relate to Black people going missing. In comparison, Black people make up 4% of the general population<sup>3</sup>



Missing Black people

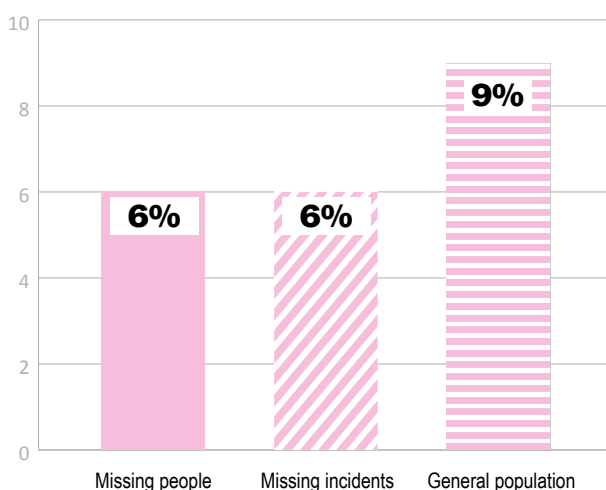


Asian people are **under-represented** in both missing individuals and missing incidents reports

6% of missing people are Asian, and 6% of all incidents relate to Asian people going missing, compared to Asian people making up 9% of the general population



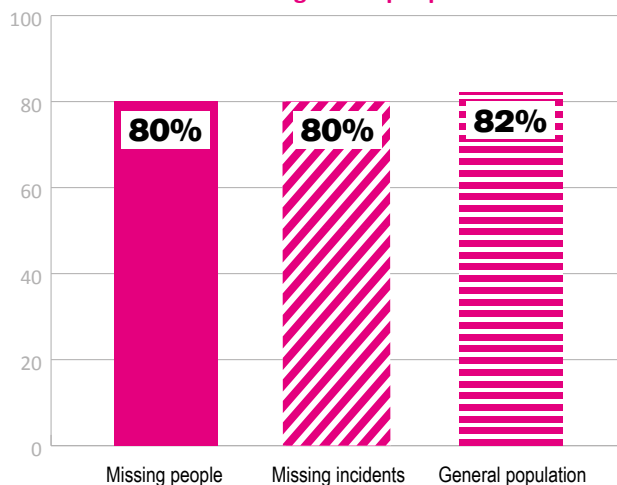
Missing Asian people



80% of missing people are White, and 80% of all incidents relate to White people going missing, and White people make up 82% of the general population.



Missing White people



<sup>1</sup> 27 forces shared this data

<sup>2</sup> 30 forces shared this data

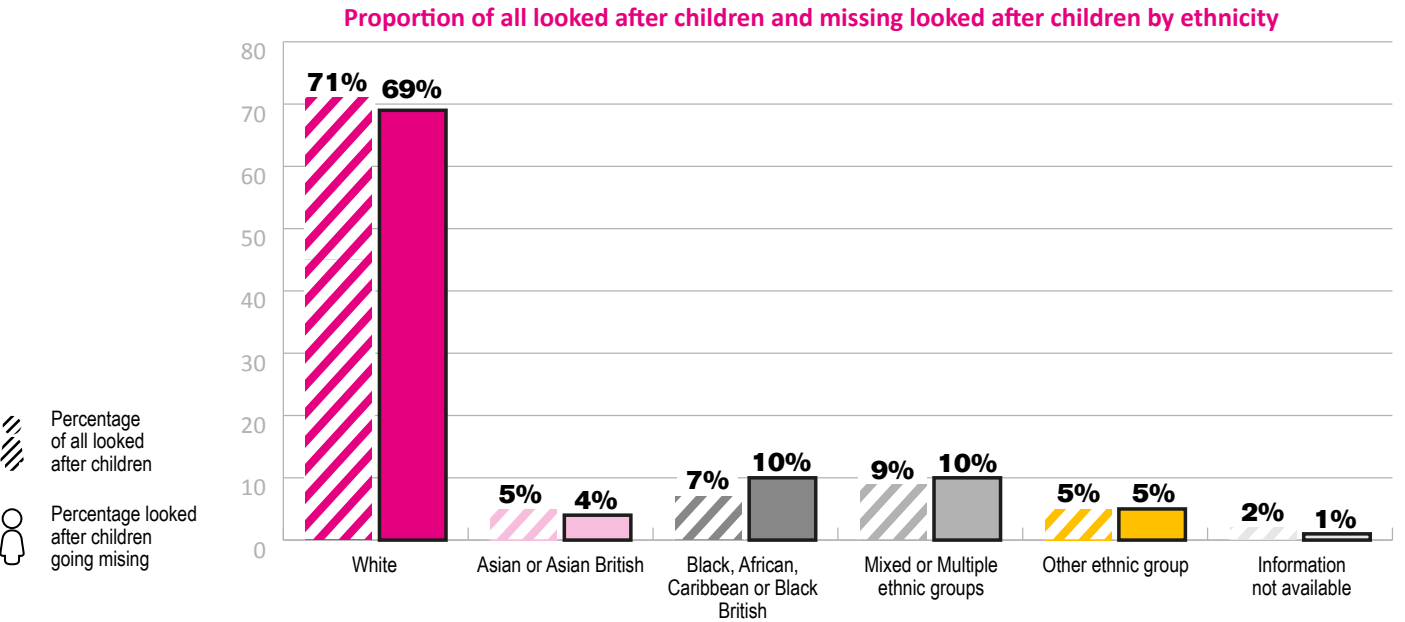
<sup>3</sup> Data on the General Population comes from the 2021 Census – noting that published data is only currently available for England and Wales.  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021>

MISSING CHILDREN

MISSING CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER<sup>4</sup>

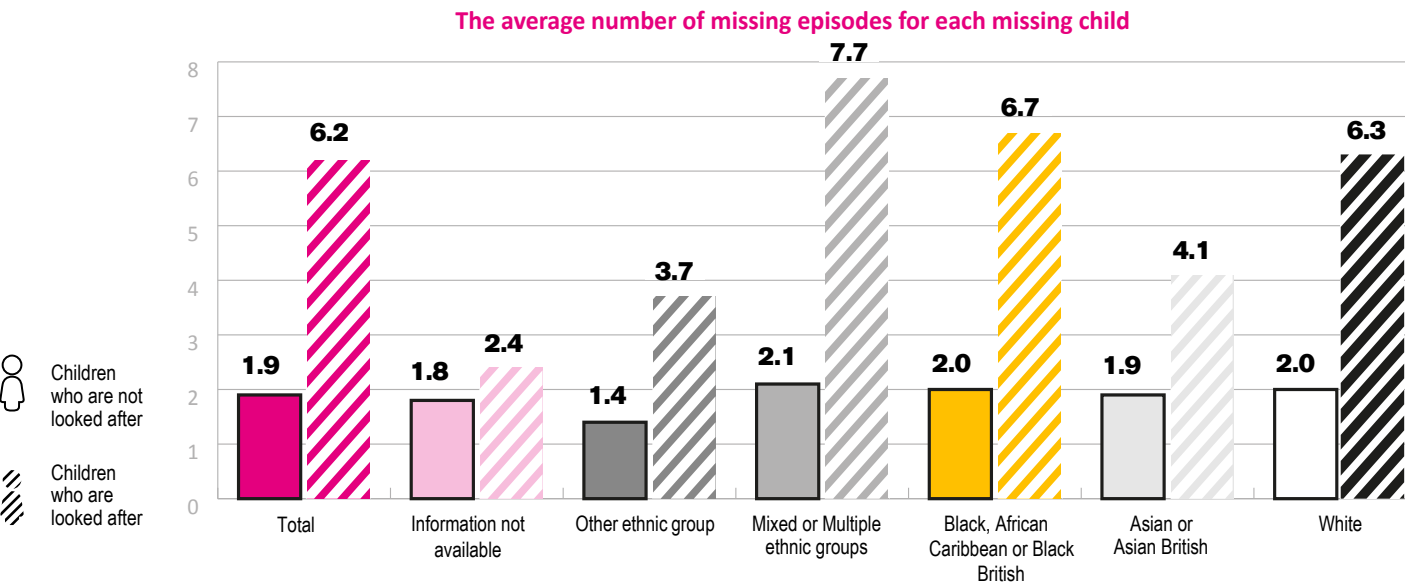
Black looked after children are over-represented in missing reports<sup>5</sup>

While 7% of looked after children are Black, 10% of all children who are looked after and go missing are Black.



Looked after children from Black and mixed ethnicities are likely to have higher numbers of missing incidents than other looked after children

Looked after children went missing on average 6.2 times in a year, compared to 1.9 times for all children.<sup>6</sup> Children who are looked after and of mixed or multiple ethnicities went missing the most frequently, at 7.7 times per year, followed by Black children who went missing on average 6.7 times each in a year.<sup>7</sup>



<sup>4</sup> In this report the term ‘looked after children’ is used throughout. This is to ensure clarity in how this data is presented. This was also the language used in the FOI request and is the language used by the police and local authorities to refer to children who are in care. However, previous consultation has found that children who have been or are looked after by the local authority prefer the term ‘care experienced’ to ‘looked after child.’

<sup>5</sup> 152 local authorities shared this data

<sup>6</sup> 151 local authorities shared this data

<sup>7</sup> More exploration about these groups would be beneficial, as there are issues with homogenising groups. The data shared does not enable analysis in more detail of the ethnicity make up of children who are of ‘mixed or multiple ethnicities.’



## CHILDREN'S RISK FACTORS

**Missing children from Black or Asian communities are less likely to be recorded as being at risk due to their mental health or being at risk of exploitation than White missing children. This suggests that risks may be being under-identified for children from Black and Asian communities**

There were significant differences between police forces in terms of the prevalence for risk flags for children of different ethnicities. It is therefore crucial that individual forces review their own data against this data, noting any significant differences and what might be causing those.

### Mental health flag<sup>8</sup>

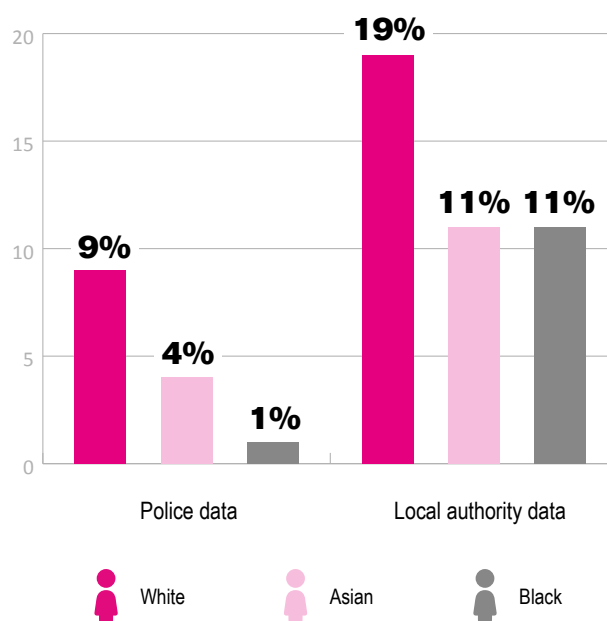
Mental health issues are linked to a significant number of missing incidents for children, and some evidence shows that this number is growing. Police and local authorities therefore will “flag” on their systems whether a missing child is known to be at risk linked to their mental health.

White children were more likely to have a mental health flag assigned to their missing incident: in police data 9% of incidents related to White children going missing had a mental health flag.

This compares to 4% of incidents related to Asian children and only 1% of incidents related to Black children.

In local authority data, 19% of missing incidents related to White children had a mental health flag, compared to around 11% for both Asian and Black children.

Prevalence of mental health risk flags (incident level)



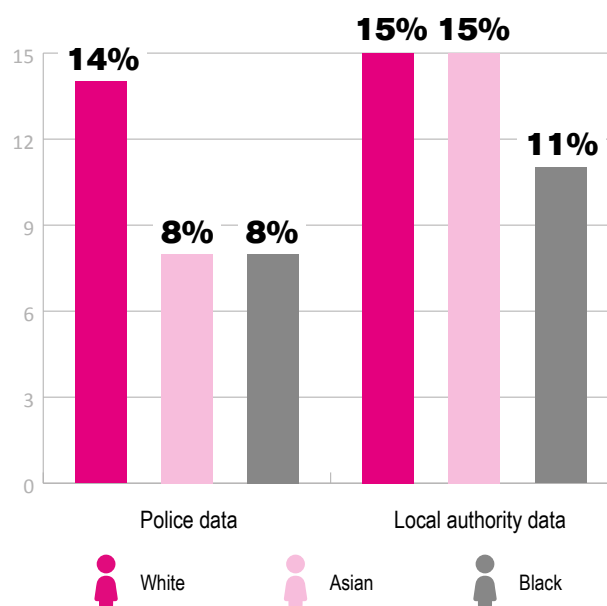
### Child sexual exploitation flag<sup>9</sup>

There are strong links between child sexual exploitation and missing – with one study showing that 70% of sexually exploited children had been reported missing<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, police forces and local authorities will flag on their data systems if a missing child is at risk of child sexual exploitation

In police data 14% of incidents related to White children going missing had a CSE flag, compared to around 8% for both Black and Asian children.

In local authority data, incidents related to Black children going missing were less likely to have a CSE flag: only 11% of cases, compared to around 15% for all other ethnicities.

Prevalence of CSE risk flags (incident level)



<sup>8</sup> 59 local authorities shared this data; 13 police forces shared this data

<sup>9</sup> 83 local authorities shared this data; 16 police forces shared this data. Child sexual exploitation “is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited they’re given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities.” “What is child sexual exploitation?”, NSPCC, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/child-sexual-exploitation/>.

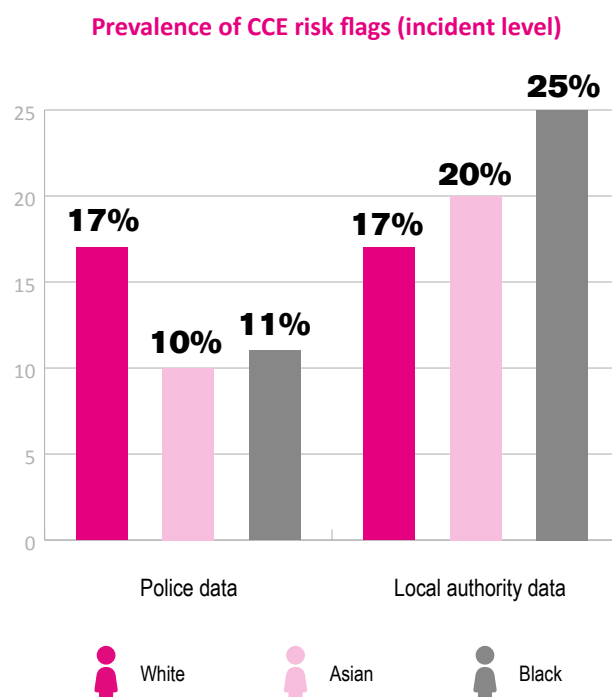
<sup>10</sup> “I thought I was the only one in the world”: Inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups, Children’s Commissioner, November 2012. <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/report/i-thought-i-was-the-only-one-in-the-world/>

## Child criminal exploitation (CCE)<sup>11</sup>

Criminal exploitation is “child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes”<sup>12</sup> and is understood as a significant factor linked to children going missing. Criminal exploitation puts young people at significant risk of serious harm. Therefore, police and local authorities record risk of CCE on their missing databases.

In police data, White children (17%) who went missing were more likely to be marked with a flag showing they were at risk of child criminal exploitation (‘CCE’) than Black children (11%) or Asian children (10%).

However, the prevalence of CCE markers in local authority data was much higher for incidents related to Black children going missing (25%) compared to White children (17%) and Asian children (20%)



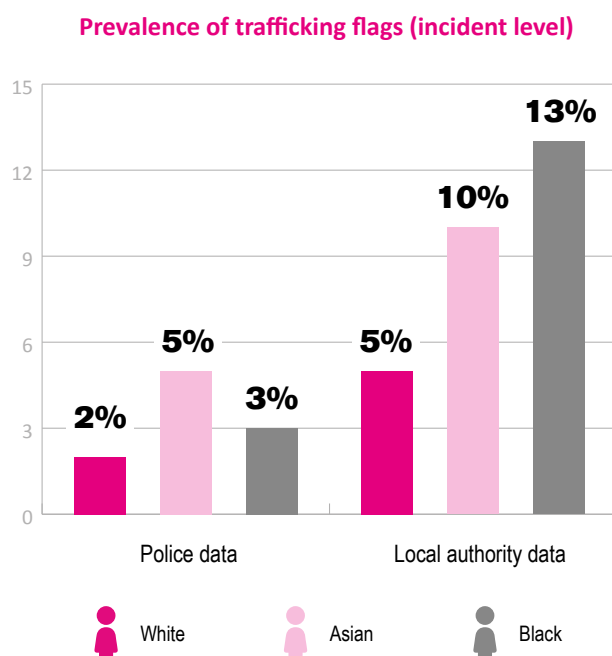
## Trafficking<sup>13</sup>

Child trafficking is “where children and young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.” Previous research by Missing People and ECPAT UK has shown that trafficked children are more likely than any other group to be reported missing.<sup>14</sup>

In police data, there was a higher prevalence of trafficking markers in cases related to Asian children going missing (5%) compared to Black children (3%) and White children (2%).

However, the prevalence of trafficking markers in local authority data was higher for incidents related to Black children going missing (13%) compared to White children (5%), Asian children (10%) and mixed or multiple ethnicities (9%).

For looked after children, there was a higher prevalence of trafficking markers for incidents related to Asian children (16%) than other ethnicities.



<sup>11</sup> 83 local authorities shared this data; 10 police forces shared this data. Child criminal exploitation is “child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.” ‘What is criminal exploitation?’, NSPCC, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/gangs-criminal-exploitation/>.

<sup>12</sup> ‘What is criminal exploitation?’, NSPCC, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/gangs-criminal-exploitation/>.

<sup>13</sup> 56 local authorities shared this data; 8 police forces shared this data. ‘What is child trafficking?’, NSPCC, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/child-trafficking/>.

<sup>14</sup> When harm remains: An update report on trafficked and unaccompanied children going missing from care in the UK, Missing People and ECPAT UK, April 2022, [https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/ECP04-A9-SIHW-report\\_AW7.pdf](https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/ECP04-A9-SIHW-report_AW7.pdf)

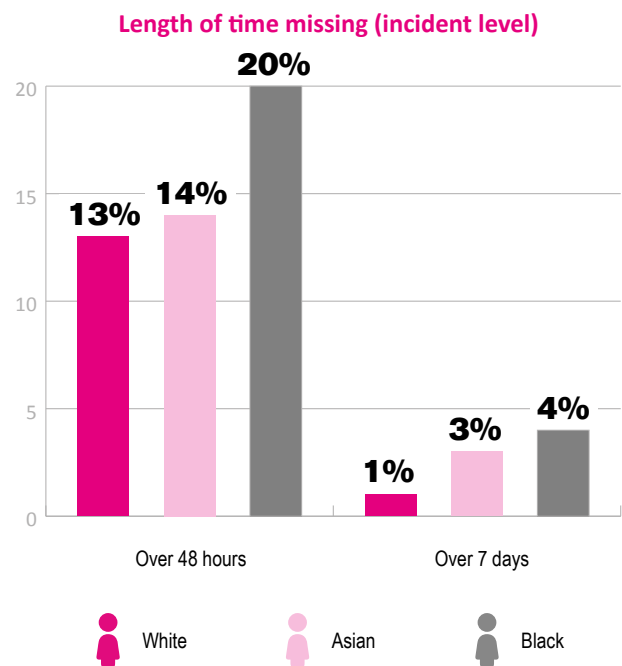
# HOW LONG CHILDREN ARE MISSING FOR

## Black children were the most likely to be missing for over 48 hours and over 7 days

The amount of time a child is missing matters, because the longer a child is missing, the longer they are at risk of harm, and unable to access help to stay safe.

20% of incidents related to Black children were for longer than 48 hours, compared to 14% of incidents related to Asian children and 13% of incidents related to White children.

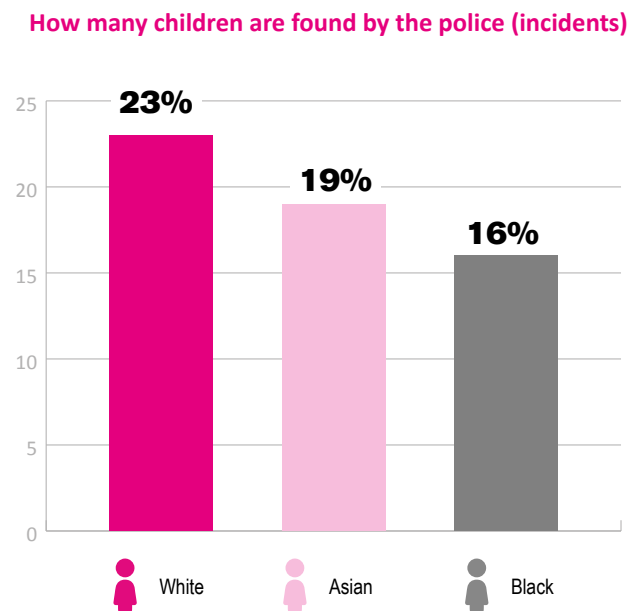
And for cases lasting longer than a week: 4% of incidents related to Black children were for longer than 7 days, compared to 3% of incidents related to Asian children and just 1% of incidents related to White children.



# HOW CHILDREN ARE FOUND / RETURN

## Black children are less likely to be found by the police

A lower proportion of missing incidents related to Black children were resolved by the person being found by the police than incidents related to White and Asian children: only 16% of cases compared to 19% of incidents related to Asian children and 23% of incidents related to White children.



## MISSING ADULTS

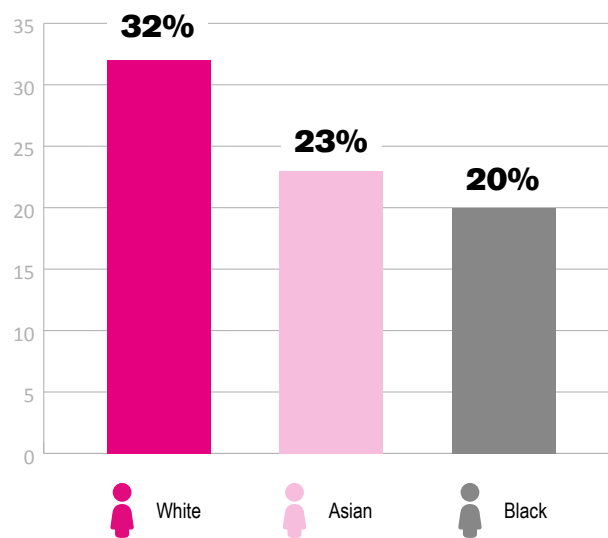
### ADULT RISK FACTORS

**Differences in the likelihood of mental health risk being recorded on a missing persons record suggest that mental health risk may be being under-identified for adults from Black and Asian communities**

Mental health issues are the most common cause for adults to be reported missing with studies showing that up to 80% of missing adults have a diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health issue.<sup>15</sup>

In police data, cases relating to White adults going missing were much more likely to have a mental health flag: 1 in 3 (32%) of cases had a mental health marker, compared to 23% of incidents relating to Asian adults going missing and just 20% of cases relating to Black adults going missing.

Prevalence of mental health flag (adult incidents)



### HOW LONG ADULTS ARE MISSING FOR

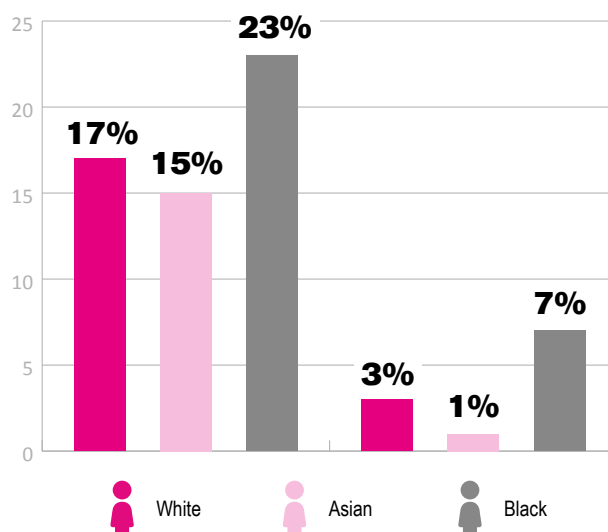
**Black adults were the most likely to be missing for over 48 hours and over 7 days**

23% of incidents related to Black adults were for longer than 48 hours, compared to 15% of incidents related to Asian adults and 17% of incidents related to White adults.

And for cases lasting longer than a week: 7% of incidents related to Black adults were for longer than 7 days, compared to 1% of incidents related to Asian adults and 3% of incidents related to White adults.

As with children, the longer an adult is missing, the longer they are at risk of harm. Missing People's research into the harm experienced by missing adults found that around 3/4 of adults come to harm while missing.<sup>16</sup>

Length of time missing (adult incidents)



<sup>15</sup> "My world was falling apart": The nature and scale of harm experienced by missing adults in the UK, Missing People, 2022: <https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/for-professionals/policy-and-research/information-and-research/research-about-missing/missing-adults-research>

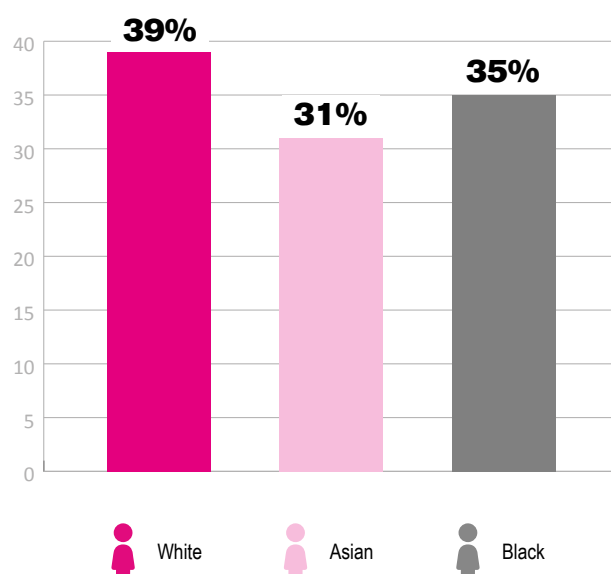
<sup>16</sup> "My world was falling apart": The nature and scale of harm experienced by missing adults in the UK, Missing People, 2022: <https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/for-professionals/policy-and-research/information-and-research/research-about-missing/missing-adults-research>

## HOW ADULTS ARE FOUND / RETURN

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A higher proportion of incidents related to White missing adults (39%) were resolved by the person being found by the police than Asian (35%) or Black missing adult incidents (31%).

How many adults are found by the police (incidents)



This data raises many more questions than it answers, including:

- Why are Black children and adults over-represented in the population of people going missing? And why are Asian people under-represented in that population?
- Why are Black and Asian people less likely to be identified as experiencing risks including mental health and sexual exploitation?
- Why are Black people more likely to be missing for longer than White people?
- Why are Black people less likely to return by being found by the police?

The data in this report cannot tell us what is causing these differences, but it does indicate that Black and Asian children and adults receive a different response than White children and adults.

Further research is required to fully explore this, alongside police forces and local authorities reviewing their own practice in responding to missing people, particularly those from Black and minority ethnic communities. Further research is also needed into any differences between reporting of risk factors for different ethnic groups to the police, and to understand the impact of any differences on missing investigations.

It is crucial that police forces and local authorities better understand what is happening in their areas in terms of people from different ethnic communities going missing. Capturing and reviewing this data ensures that local areas can identify any disparities and must take steps to understand why these exist, and to ensure that individuals are not being treated differently due to their ethnicity. This research has been carried out at a time when pressure on public services is high. Police forces and local authorities' resources are increasingly stretched, and at the same time, the number of people reaching crisis and going missing is set to increase linked to growing financial pressures and increases in mental health issues.

Work to better understand and respond to ethnic disparities in missing must be a priority, because of the strong links between people going missing and coming to harm.

Furthermore, this work will help police forces, local authorities and other agencies to build trust with minority ethnic communities, and identify steps that could reduce people going missing repeatedly, and therefore reduce pressure on the police and other agencies in responding to and searching for missing people.

***“ The legitimacy and effectiveness of UK policing is built on relationships between the police and the public, but there are longstanding challenges in our relationship with Black communities. Without the trust and confidence of Black communities, policing is less effective at protecting all communities. ”***

The draft College  
of Policing Police Race Action Plan, 2022

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## DATA RECORDING AND SCRUTINY

- Data on ethnicity and missing should be collected and analysed nationally on an annual basis. This data should include individual and incident level data, as well as data about risks, length of time missing, how missing people are found / return, and should be presented broken down by age and gender if possible. This should be done through a formal process, managed by the National Crime Agency's Missing Person Unit, that currently has responsibility for the annual national police missing persons data report. This data should be reviewed in order to ensure a better understanding of how missing and ethnicity are linked and how incidents are responded to.
- The Department for Education should collect statistics in relation to children who are looked after going missing broken down by ethnicity following the publication of this report and at least annually thereafter.
- All police forces and local authorities should review their own data in order to identify disproportionality and potential discriminatory practice in their area.
  - » This should include a review of missing incidents and individuals broken down by ethnicity, and also a review of the ethnicity of missing people broken down by risk levels, outcomes, length of time missing, and who finds the missing person.
  - » The review should also involve a deep dive into case records to explore any reasons for disparity in the data. Within the review, a particular focus should be given to risk identification and recording, with senior leaders considering whether any bias, adultification or other discrimination is indicated. In order to maintain objectivity, this should be done alongside external agencies, which could include Missing People and Listen Up.
- » All local authorities and police forces should use their local area findings to develop a publicly accessible, actions-based plan in response to their review and deep dive. Specific actions to counter any disproportionality or discrimination should be included in any published plan.
- » Local partnerships should work together to understand the picture of risk facing individuals or whole communities in their area, and how this may relate to ethnicity, ensuring that there is a common understanding of risk that is consistent across multi-agency systems.
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) should consider any impact that ethnicity has on missing investigations within their existing inspection frameworks. During Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspections, force data on ethnicity and missing should be reviewed and inspectors should check that forces themselves are doing annual reviews and reports.
- Ofsted should consider how local authorities review and report on any differences in risk, reporting and response for missing children of different ethnicities through their existing frameworks for local authority Children's Services.
- The National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel should ensure that the response to children going missing related to child protection issues considers whether the child's ethnicity impacted on their safeguarding and the response they received while missing.

## IDENTIFICATION OF RISK AND BUILDING TRUST

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- Police forces, local authorities, and other agencies who play a role in the response to missing people should ensure that there are routes for engagement and consultation with diverse communities in their area.
- » Community groups, scrutiny panels, or other lived-experience groups representing diverse ethnic communities should be asked to consider the response to missing people and there should be a proactive effort to include those with experience of going missing or reporting someone as missing.
- » There should be continuous scrutiny and monitoring through these groups considering disproportionality and discrimination. Where changes are made as a result of this engagement, this should be fed back to those groups, and they should be able to directly inform Police Crime Commissioner and local safeguarding plans.

## FUTURE WORK

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- This research should act as a catalyst for a much bigger focus on people from different ethnicities' experiences of, and reasons for, missing. This includes a focus on qualitative research exploring lived experience, to add depth and understanding to the data presented in this report, as well as research into reporting people missing and whether there are differences in terms of risk reporting. Academics, the third sector, and other agencies should be conducting more research into this. Research funders should be open to funding this currently drastically under-researched area.
- There will be a myriad of experiences within the broader ethnic communities considered in this report, with different ethnic communities not being singular homogenous groups. New research should focus on the experiences of specific communities as much as possible, exploring these issues with consideration of intersecting issues including age and gender.
- Police ethnicity categories are inconsistent with ONS ethnicity categories used in the census, and there should be consideration about amending the police categories to match the self-identified categories used by the ONS.
- Training for police officers on ethnicity and missing should be reviewed and updated as outlined in the NPCC's draft Race Action Plan, while also considering missing people from all ethnic minority communities<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> "The NPCC and the College, working alongside the NBPA and Black communities, will review current APP, training and CPD to ensure that staff have the knowledge, understanding and awareness to recognise and intervene when a Black person is reported missing"; "forces will work alongside their local BPA, Race Equality Network and external partners to review local policies, guidance and training delivery, to ensure that police personnel have the knowledge, understanding and awareness to deliver the most appropriate care to missing people from the Black community."



# BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

## THE ETHNICITY OF MISSING PEOPLE: CURRENT STATISTICS

Currently, little is known about ethnicity and missing. National statistics about missing people are collected by the National Crime Agency and are published in an annual statistical report.<sup>18</sup> Within these data returns, police forces are asked about the ethnicity of those going missing in their area and that data is presented at an incident level.

**Missing incidents compared with census ethnicity data (incidents in which the ethnicity is unknown have been removed)**

Ethnicity	Missing incidents 2019-20 (NCA data)	Missing incidents 2020-21 (NCA data)	Census data (2021)
White	80.0%	81.6%	81.7%
Black	13.6%	12.2%	4.0%
Asian	5.3%	5.3%	9.3%
Middle Eastern	1.1%	0.9%	Data not captured in this way

As shown in the table above, where incidents in which the ethnicity of the missing person is unknown are removed, there is a clear over-representation of Black people in the missing statistics, as compared to the national census data: while 4% of the population is Black, in both 2019-20 and 2020-21 Black people represented over 12% of missing incidents where ethnicity was known and recorded. In 2019-20, 13.6% of missing episodes related to Black people going missing, and in 2020-21, 12.2% of missing episodes related to Black people going missing.<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, Asian people are under-represented in the missing statistics. While 9.3% of the population is Asian, in both 2019-20 and 2020-21 only 5.3% of missing episodes related to Asian people going missing. For White people, the proportion of missing people roughly reflects the overall population. Census data shows that 81.7% of the population is White, only 80% of incidents in 2019-20 and 81.6% in 2020-21 related to White people going missing.

While it is helpful for the NCA to collect and share this top-line data, there are limitations to having only total incident level data. To better understand the links between ethnicity and missing incidents there is a need for data broken down by age group and a range of other factors.

## WHAT ELSE IS KNOWN ABOUT ETHNICITY AND MISSING

Data alone will not give a full picture of the links between missing and ethnicity. There is currently very little qualitative research about the experiences that Black and other minority ethnic people may have while missing, and of the support that they may receive while missing or on return. It is vital that more research is done in this area to ensure a better understanding of unique challenges or barriers that people from minority ethnic groups may face, or of any specific support that may be needed to prevent people from going missing and reduce the harm experienced if they do.

However, in light of the dearth of missing-specific research, it is helpful to view the data within the context of wider research about the links between ethnicity and issues which intersect with missing.

<sup>18</sup> *Missing Person Statistical Bulletins*, National Crime Agency, UK Missing Persons Unit, <https://missingpersons.police.uk/en-gb/resources/downloads/missing-persons-statistical-bulletins>.

<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that this data excludes missing incidents when the ethnicity is not known. Where these incidents are included, the over- and under-representation still exists. 9.3% of incidents relate to Black people going missing and 4% relate to Asian people going missing. In 23.7% of missing incidents, the ethnicity of the missing person is unknown.

Going missing has been closely linked to mental health issues, with up to 8 in 10 missing adults experiencing a diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health concern.<sup>20</sup>

More broadly research has shown that people from some Black and other minority ethnic communities are at increased risk of some mental health issues, and can face barriers to accessing appropriate care.<sup>21</sup> Racism, social and economic inequality and mental health stigma can also affect the mental health and wellbeing of Black and other minority communities,<sup>22</sup> all of which may result in an increased risk of going missing.

The criminal justice response to people from minority ethnic groups may have an impact on relationships and interactions between communities and the police: *“people from BAME communities are over-represented at almost all stages of the criminal justice process, disproportionately targeted by the police, more likely to be imprisoned for longer than white British people.”*<sup>23</sup>

Research has also highlighted that Adulthood Bias<sup>24</sup> impacts how professionals and agencies respond to children at risk of or experiencing harm. Evidence shows that Black children are most likely to experience this form of bias, where they are seen as less vulnerable and innocent in comparison to their peers. Adulthood bias can result in risk being overlooked or under-estimated and signs of exploitation and other harms being missed<sup>25</sup>.

These are just a few of the issues that have been linked to people’s race and ethnicity that may in turn intersect with risks of going missing and the experiences of those who go missing or have a loved one go missing.

The newly published draft of the Police Race Action Plan sets out a vision *“for a police service that is anti-racist and trusted by Black people.”*<sup>26</sup> It acknowledges longstanding challenges in the police’s relationships with Black communities, and as consequence, the poorer levels of trust and confidence amongst those communities. While the Plan focusses specifically on Black people, it also references the need to widen any work towards anti-racism to include all minority ethnic communities.

The Plan, for the first time at a national level, also sets out the specific need to consider the impact of ethnicity on risks of going missing, and on the response that people receive when they do. A key aim included in the plan is to *“Improve the police response and effectiveness in supporting missing persons from Black communities.”* We are aware that the National Police Chiefs Council lead for missing persons is developing a strategy to take forward the Plan’s priorities for missing persons and we hope this report is helpful for guiding that work.

It is vital that more is done to understand disproportionality and how to better meet the needs of communities who are at increased risk. Further research will be needed to fully explore either, but Missing People hopes this will be the start of much needed exploration of different communities’ experiences of missing.

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20 “My world was falling apart”: The nature and scale of harm experienced by missing adults in the UK, Missing People, 2022: <https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/for-professionals/policy-and-research/information-and-research/research-about-missing/missing-adults-research>

21 Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities, The Mental Health Foundation, <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-bame-communities>.

22 Racial disparities in mental health: literature and evidence review, Race Equality Foundation, 2020.

23 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic disproportionality in the Criminal Justice System in England and Wales, The Ministry of Justice, 2016: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/639261/bame-disproportionality-in-the-cjs.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/639261/bame-disproportionality-in-the-cjs.pdf)

24 Listen Up: <https://listenupresearch.org/about-us/our-approach/>

25 J.Davis: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2022/06/Academic-Insights-Adulthood-bias-within-child-protection-and-safeguarding.pdf>

26 Police Race Action Plan: Improving policing for Black People, National Police Chiefs’ Council and the College of Policing, <https://assets.college.police.uk/s3fs-public/Police-Race-Action-Plan.pdf>

***“ The availability of multi-agency support is vital if we hope to address the reasons why people go missing, provide the necessary help when it is needed, and reduce the likelihood of future missing episodes.***

***Without this, people who are vulnerable, struggling with their mental health, and often in crisis, will be unable to access adequate support.***

***Returning from missing can be difficult, frightening and isolating: without an improved response tens of thousands of people are left to face this alone. ”***

APPG Inquiry into safeguarding missing adults who have mental health issues, July 2018

## **MISSING IN THE UK: A MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY**

While the immediate response to someone being reported missing falls to the police, it is crucial that the wider response to missing is seen as every agency's responsibility. People go missing because of a myriad of reasons, and all professionals who have contact with anyone at risk of going missing can play a role in prevention, in helping to ensure people who go missing are found safely, and in supporting people on their return.

Missing may be an indicator of a range of risks and harms in a person's life that could require involvement from a wide variety of agencies. Such agencies include those working in health, social care, local authorities and education.

Responsibility for the necessary support and response should be shared between all professionals working with people who are vulnerable or at risk of going missing.

It is also important to note that different areas will have different processes, procedures and responses when someone goes missing. Some of those will reflect the local context of missing, and some may be due to differences in available services, resources and variation in decision making in different areas.

Regarding missing adults, the need for local multi-agency protocols and processes has been recognised by the APPG for Runaway and Missing Children and Adults in their 2018 inquiry into safeguarding missing adults who have mental health issues.<sup>27</sup> A good practice framework has also been developed for local areas to use to develop when an adult goes missing from a health or care setting.<sup>28</sup>

Regarding children, the Department for Education's 'statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care' sets out the expectation for a multi-agency response when a child or young person goes missing.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Inquiry into safeguarding missing adults who have mental health issues, APPG for Runaway and Missing Children and Adults, July 2018: <https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/APPG-for-runaway-and-missing-children-and-adults.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> The multi-agency response for adults missing from health and care settings, A national framework for England, The Home Office, the NPCC and Missing People, October 2020: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1032588/The\\_multi-agency\\_response\\_for\\_adults\\_missing\\_from\\_health\\_and\\_care\\_settings\\_A\\_national\\_framework\\_for\\_England.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1032588/The_multi-agency_response_for_adults_missing_from_health_and_care_settings_A_national_framework_for_England.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care, The Department for Education, July 2014: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/307867/Statutory\\_Guidance\\_-\\_Missing\\_from\\_care\\_3\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_3_.pdf)

The importance of multi-agency working for investigations and supporting those who go missing has also been highlighted in a range of research reports and guidance including the Children who go Missing from Care Framework, research into return interviews,<sup>30</sup> transitional safeguarding<sup>31</sup> and exploitation.

Consultation with previously missing young people themselves has further shown the need for agencies to work together with professionals taking a child-centred approach, supporting each young person through the most appropriate services based on their individual circumstances.<sup>32</sup>

Previous research has also found that police cuts have had an impact on responses to missing. There is a lack of training around missing persons investigations, demand outstrips resources consistently, and limited capacity mean forces do not have enough resources to be proactive and to focus on early identification and intervention with vulnerable people.<sup>33</sup>

***“ Everyone is different so don’t treat us all the same, we do things for different reasons, you need to know us. ”***

*Children’s views on being reported missing from care, Missing People, April 2021*

***“ The local authority and police should work together to risk assess cases of children missing from home or care and to analyse data for patterns that indicate particular concerns and risks. ”***

*Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care, The Department for Education, July 2014*

<sup>30</sup> A safer return, Missing People, June 2019, [https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/A\\_Safer\\_Return-full.pdf](https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/A_Safer_Return-full.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> The response to missing young people during the transition from childhood to adulthood: a survey exploring challenges and good practice in supporting this group, Missing People, the NPCC and the National Working Group, October 2022: <https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Transitional-safeguarding-and-missing-young-people.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Children’s views on being reported missing from care, Missing People, April 2021, [https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Childrens\\_views\\_on\\_being\\_reported\\_missing\\_from\\_care.pdf](https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Childrens_views_on_being_reported_missing_from_care.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> M. Greenhalgh and K. Shalev Greene, *Impact of police cuts on missing persons investigations*, University of Portsmouth Centre for the Study of Missing Persons, July 2021.

## METHODOLOGY

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Missing People sent out two freedom of information requests:<sup>34</sup>

1. The first was sent to every local authority in the UK
2. The second was sent to every territorial police force in the UK

The data requested was for the year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

For each request the data was requested broken down by ethnicity categories used most commonly by each agency. For the police data the categories were taken from the NCA Missing Persons Unit Data Reports, and for the local authority data the categories were taken from the Department for Education's statistics on looked after children.

### LOCAL AUTHORITY FOI

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The FOI that was sent to all local authorities requested data on:

- The total number of looked after children in their area, how many had been reported missing, and in how many incidents
- How many children in total were reported missing and in how many incidents
- How many of those incidents had a
  - » Sexual exploitation marker
  - » Mental health marker
  - » Criminal exploitation marker
  - » Trafficking marker

All of the above data was requested broken down by the following ethnicities:

- White
- Asian or Asian British
- Black, African, Caribbean or Black British
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Other ethnic group
- Information not available

## POLICE FORCE FOI

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The FOI that was sent to all police forces across the UK requested the following data:

- How many individuals were reported missing broken down by age and in how many incidents
- How many missing investigations had the following markers, broken down by children and adults
  - » Sexual exploitation marker
  - » Mental health marker
  - » Criminal exploitation marker
  - » Trafficking marker
- The location people were reported missing from
- The length of time people were missing for

All of the above data was requested broken down by the following ethnicities, which are the ethnicity groupings used by the police in their reporting to the NCA:

- White – North European
- White – South European
- Black
- Asian
- Chinese, Japanese & South East Asian
- Middle Eastern
- Other / unknown

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<sup>34</sup> Both requests can be seen at Appendix A of this report

## APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

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While the original FOIs were sent to all local authorities and all police forces, the data received varied greatly from local authority to local authority and police force to police force. Some were able to share the majority of the data requested, and some were able to share little to none. In the following report each data table will make clear how many local authorities or police forces were able to share the relevant data.

In order to undertake the analysis in a meaningful way, some pragmatic decisions were made about the coding and analysis of the data shared, particularly in relation to police data.

While the data was requested in a particular format, some police forces responded using slightly different ethnicity groupings. Where this was the case this data was re-categorised by Missing People into the groupings used in the FOI request.

A number of police responses provided more detailed data than requested. Because of that, three additional groups were used to code and analyse the data shared:

- Mixed race – Black and White
- Mixed race – Asian and White
- Traveller, Gypsy, Roma

In presenting the data in the body of the report, the police ethnicity groupings have been combined. Although it is often unhelpful to combine different ethnic groups who will have very different experiences, this was identified as necessary for two reasons: the small numbers in some groups would otherwise have prevented meaningful analysis; and this allowed for the most consistency as some responses had already combined these groups. Because of this, the data is presented as:

- White: this combines ‘White – North European’ and ‘White – South European’
- Black
- Asian: this combines ‘Asian’ and ‘Chinese, Japanese and South East Asian’
- Other ethnicity: this combines ‘Middle Eastern,’ ‘Mixed race – Black and White,’ ‘Mixed Race – Asian and White’ and ‘Traveller, Gypsy, Roma’

In the main, ‘Other / unknown’ has been excluded from the analysis of police data presented here, with the majority of the analysis being presented as ‘where ethnicity is known and recorded.’ This is due to the relatively high proportion of ‘Other / unknown’ in police data, and the skew that resulted in when considering overall numbers in comparison to ONS population data.

The full data tables are included at the bottom of this report.

This report presents the data at a UK-wide level.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations in the data including that we cannot confirm that people’s ethnicity was recorded as they would self-identify, and that some different ethnic groups will have been combined which means we cannot fully explore the diversity of experiences that will be happening across different ethnic groups.



# RESEARCH FINDINGS

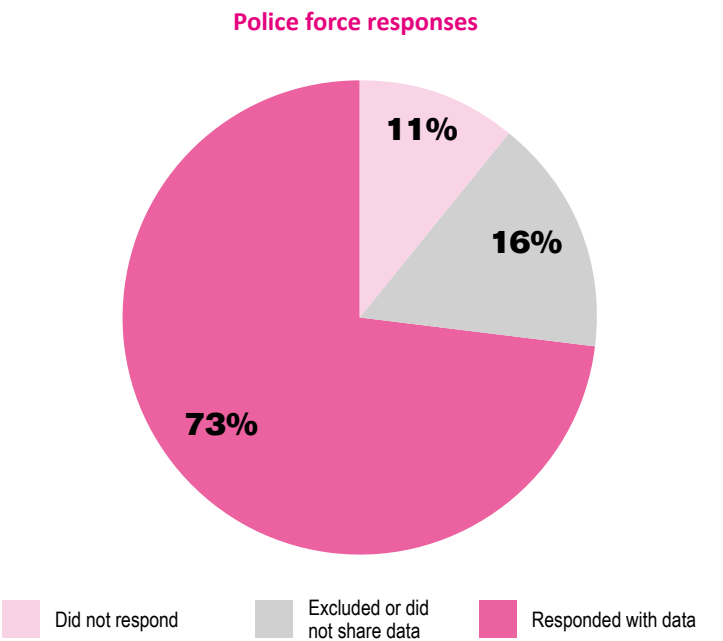
## RESPONSE RATES: POLICE FORCES

Of the 45 police forces in the UK, responses were received from 40 (89%).

Of those that did respond, a small number were able to provide all data (8 of 45), most were able to share some of the data requested (24 of 45), and a small number refused to give any data (7 of 45).

One police force response was excluded because they did not share any of the data broken down by ethnicity.

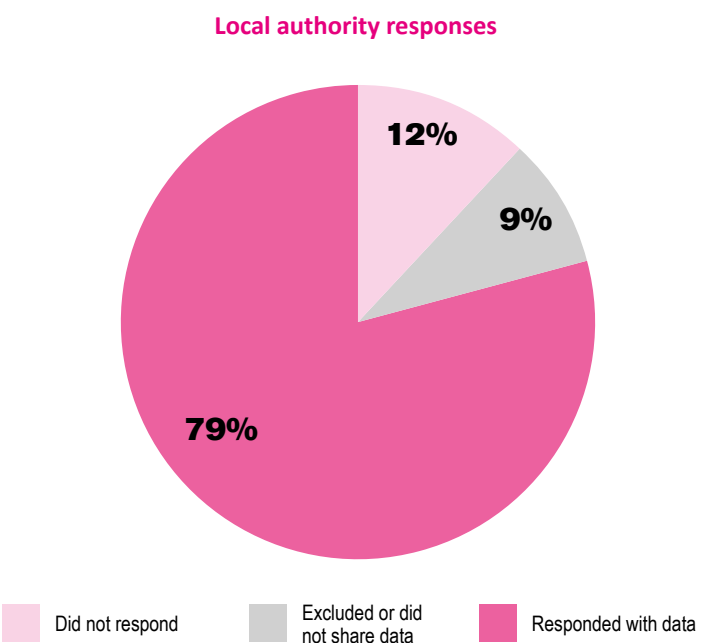
Police forces were able to share different levels of data: each chart and table in this report includes information about how many police forces the data relates to.



## RESPONSE RATES: LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Of the 212 local authorities in the UK, responses were received from 185 (87%).

Of those that did respond, most were able to share some of the data requested (168 of 212; 79%) and the analysis conducted therefore covers 168 local authorities in the UK, although because not all local authorities were able to provide all data different questions are presented with the number of local authorities that data relates to.



## MISSING INDIVIDUALS AND INCIDENTS: POLICE DATA

### KEY FINDINGS (2021-22 DATA)

- Black people are over-represented in both missing individuals and missing incidents: while 4% of the population is Black, Black people represent 13% of missing individuals and 14% of missing incidents
- Asian people are under-represented in both missing individuals and missing incidents: while 9% of the population is Asian, Asian people represent only 6% of missing individuals and only 6% of missing incidents

Police forces were asked to share data on the number of individuals reported missing in their area, as well as the number of missing incidents, broken down by both age and ethnicity. 27 police forces shared data relating to missing individuals and 30 police forces shared data related to missing incidents.

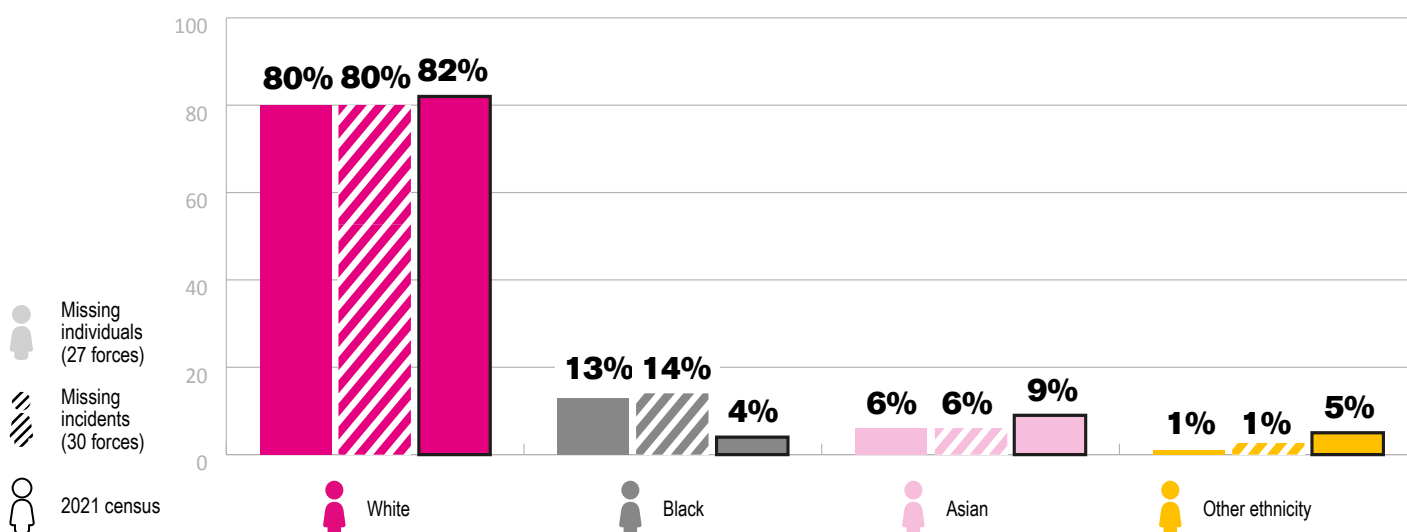
When considering all ages, the ethnicity of missing individuals and incidents can be seen in the chart below. Please note that incidents in which ethnicity is unknown have been removed from this analysis.

These figures are very similar to those shared by the NCA, with the data showing that just over 80% of those who are reported missing being White, 13% being Black, 6% being Asian, and less than 1% being another ethnicity.

When considering the 2021 census data, there is a clear over-representation and under-representation of some ethnicities within the missing data.<sup>35</sup> The clearest over-representation is of individuals who are Black. While 4% of the population is Black, according to the 2021 census data, Black people represent 13% of missing individuals. The over-representation can also be seen when considering missing incidents: 13.6% of missing incidents in 2021-22 related to Black people going missing.

On the other hand, both Asian and White people are under-represented in the missing statistics. While 9.3% of the population is Asian, only 6.5% of those reported missing are Asian and only 5.6% of incidents relate to Asian people going missing. And while 81.7% of the population is White, only 80.1% of individuals going missing are White, and only 80.1% of missing incidents in 2021-22 related to White people going missing.

Missing individuals and incidents compared to 2021 census data



<sup>35</sup> Please note that the ethnicity groupings are slightly different in the census data when compared to police data.



## MISSING INDIVIDUALS BY AGE

While the data shared with us was broken down into a number of different age categories, for the purposes of this report the data has been combined to present:

- The ethnicity of missing children (those aged 0 to 17 years)
- The ethnicity of missing young adults aged 18 to 25 years
- The ethnicity of missing adults (those aged over 25 years)

We have included the 18-25 age group to enable consideration of young people going missing at a stage of transition to adulthood. Although young people are legally adults at this age there is growing recognition that this can be a particularly challenging age for young people as they transition from childhood to adulthood, and where some services may drop away.<sup>36</sup> Young people who have been looked after and are care experienced are also entitled to some support provision up to the age of 25.

27 forces were able to share this data.

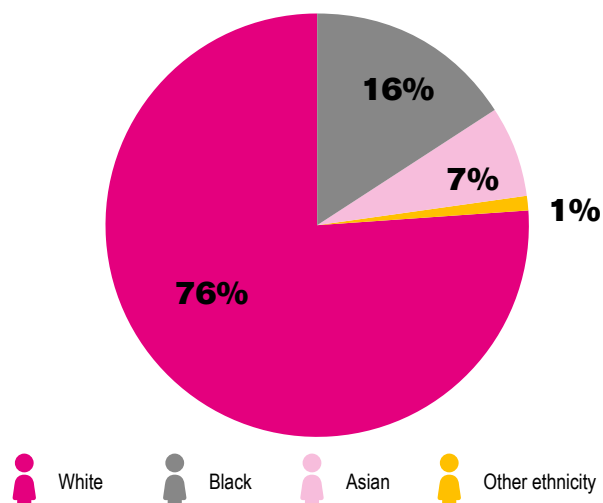
There are some differences in terms of the proportion of different ethnicities in the missing population.

The over-representation of Black people in the numbers of those going missing exists across all age groups. However, it is most prominent for under 18-year-olds: more than 16% of individuals going missing in that age group are Black.

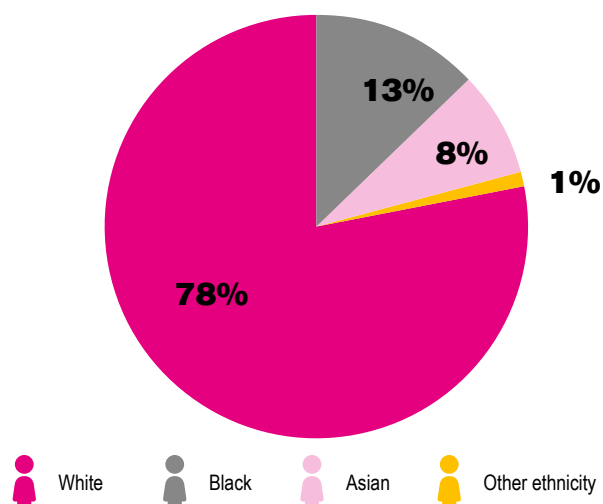
These disproportionate numbers should raise real concerns as they suggest that across all age groups, Black people are at higher risk of going missing, and therefore of experiencing the range of harms that are known to be associated with going missing, including self-harm, physical and sexual harm, and exploitation.

There is clearly a need to identify better preventative measures, keeping people safe from going missing in the first place, that specifically consider the needs of Black communities, and to ensure culturally appropriate support for those who do go. Having acknowledged a community is at greater risk of going missing we must now find ways to reduce those risks.

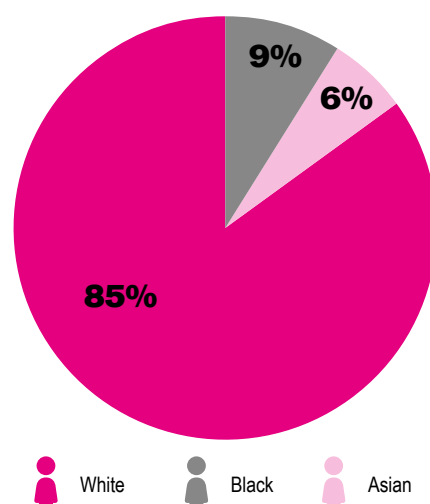
The ethnicity of missing children (aged 0 - 17)



The ethnicity of missing people aged 18 to 25



The ethnicity of missing people aged over 25



<sup>36</sup> Please note that in Scotland child and adult services are designed differently to those in England and Wales, including different age ranges.

MISSING CHILDREN AS A PROPORTION OF ALL CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER: LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA

KEY FINDINGS

- Black children who are looked after at most risk of being reported missing: 15% of Black children who are looked after were reported missing in 2021-22, compared to between 9% and 12% for other ethnicities
- Black children are also over-represented in the missing looked after children statistics: while 7% of all children who are looked after are Black, 10% of looked after children who go missing are Black
- Asian children are under-represented in the missing looked after children statistics: while 5% of all children who are looked after are Asian, only 4% of looked after children who go missing are Asian

Official statistics and previous research show that children who are looked after are at much higher risk of going missing than children who are not looked after.

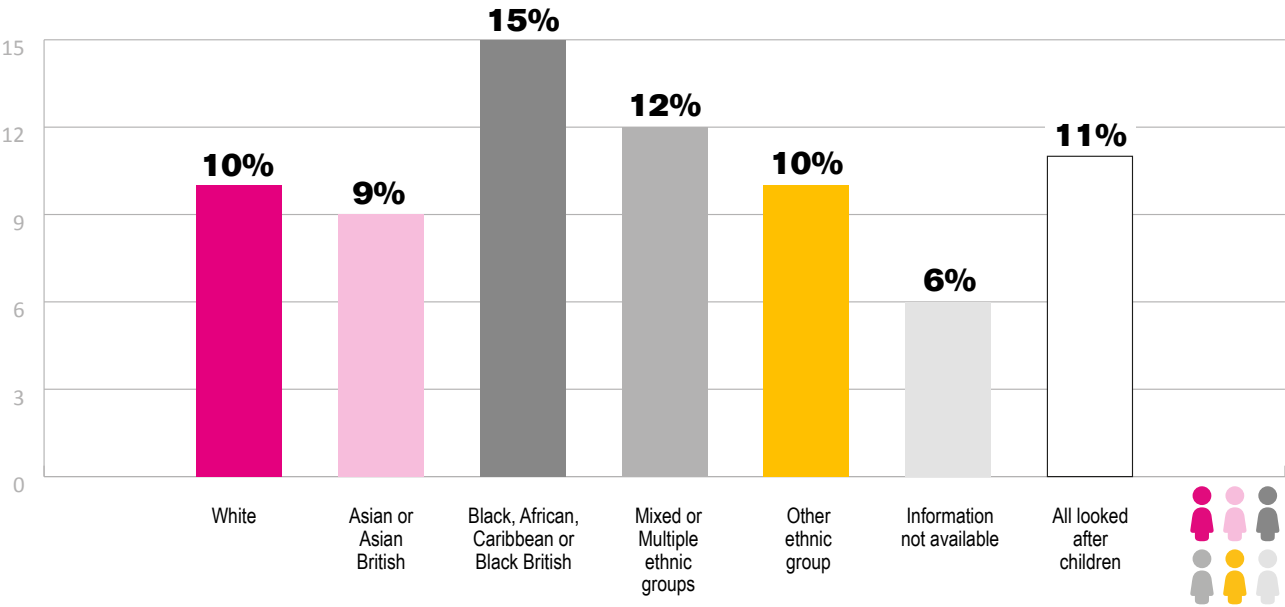
According to the Department for Education, 1 in every 10 child who is looked after will be reported missing each year. However, there are currently no official statistics in terms of the ethnicity of these children.

Local authorities were asked how many children were looked after in their area, broken down by ethnicity, and how many children had been reported missing:

	Number of looked after children	Number of missing looked after children
White	73259	7560
Asian or Asian British	5393	490
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	7752	1140
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	9430	1089
Other ethnic group	5412	547
Information not available	1635	94
Total	102881	10920

The chart below shows the proportion of looked after children who were reported missing based on numbers from the table above:

Percentage of looked after children of each ethnic group going missing



Overall this is consistent with the Department for Education statistics, with roughly 1 in 10 looked after children being reported missing. However, within these statistics the above chart clearly shows an over-representation of some ethnicities and an under-representation of others.

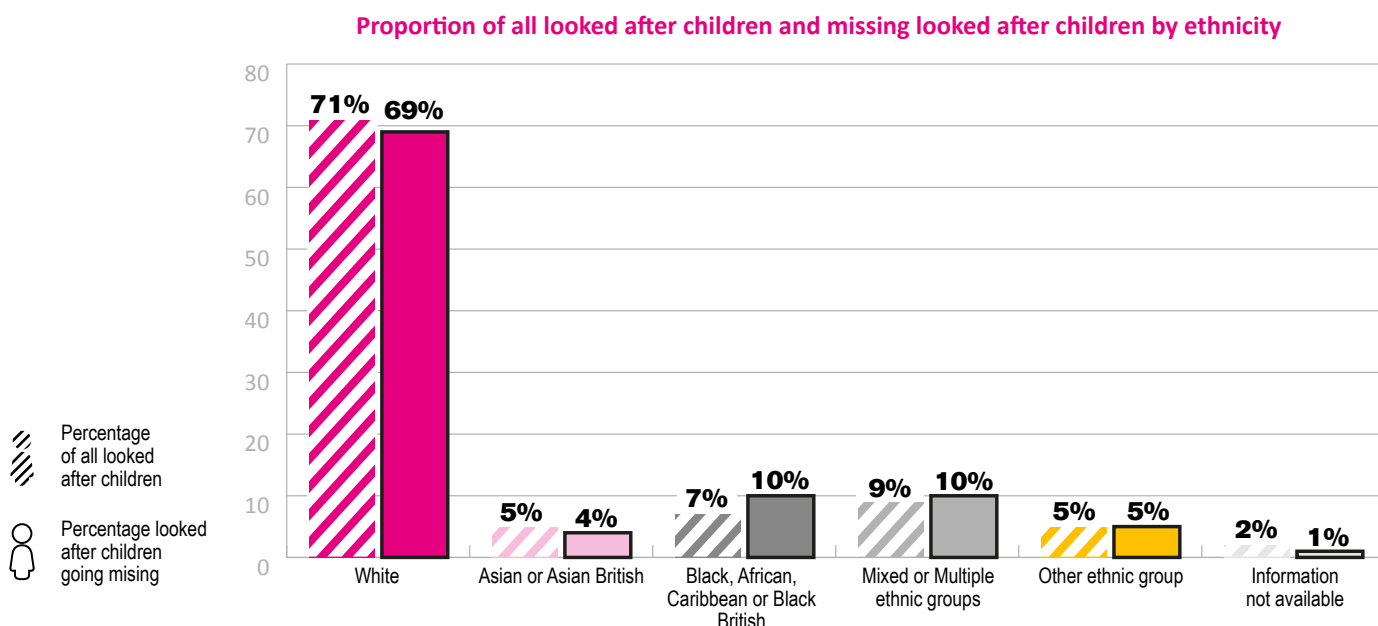
While both Asian and White missing children are under-represented, there is a slight over-representation for those who are of mixed or multiple ethnicities and a more notable over-representation for Black missing children.

When considering the overall population of looked after children and those who go missing, this over- and under-representation can again be seen clearly.

The chart below shows that while White children represent 71% of the looked after children population, they only represent 69% of those who go missing. Similarly for Asian children, they represent 5% of the total looked after population but only 4% of the missing population.

On the other hand, Black children represent 7% of the total looked after child population but over 10% of the missing population. And those of mixed or multiple ethnicities represent 9% of the looked after child population but 10% of the missing population.

Again, this data does not tell us why that over-representation exists, but that further exploration is needed.



## REPEAT MISSING: LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA

Existing statistics also show that children who are looked after go missing more frequently than children who are not looked after, with each child going missing on average 6 times per year.

Again, however, there are no existing statistics in relation to ethnicity and repeat missing.

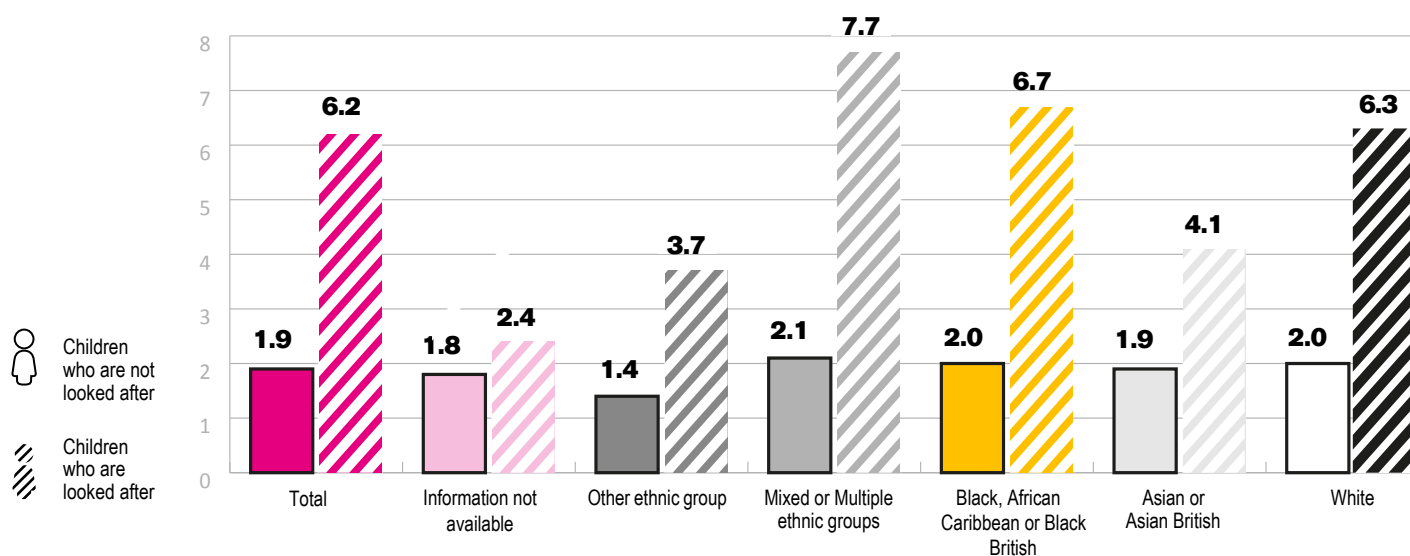
Local authorities were asked for this data, both for children who were looked after and for those who were not.

As can be seen below, children who are looked after went missing much more frequently than all children, but within the population of looked after children there is significant variation when considering different ethnicities.

On the other hand, White and Asian missing children went missing less frequently than the average. Again, these figures do not explain why this disparity exists, but there should be significant concern that some children are going missing much more frequently than others.

While on average each child was reported missing 6.2 times, those from 'Mixed or multiple' ethnic groups and Black children went missing more frequently than that.

The average number of missing episodes for each missing child



## THE PREVALENCE OF RISK FACTOR FLAGS: CHILDREN

Risk factor	Number of police forces able to provide data	Number of local authorities able to provide data on all children	Number of local authorities able to provide data on looked after children
Mental health	13	53	59
Child sexual exploitation	16	83	92
Child criminal exploitation	10	76	83
Trafficking	8	52	56

## KEY FINDINGS

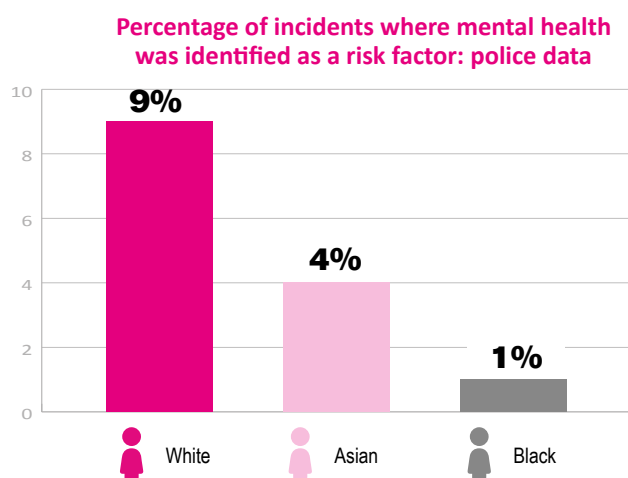
- There is significant disparity in the prevalence of risk factor flags depending on the ethnicity of missing children. The reasons for this issue are unclear, however it is important to consider how vulnerabilities and risk factors are acknowledged for children from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds. This data raises significant concerns regarding adultification bias and how it can inform child protection responses.
  - There is a much higher prevalence of mental health flags in incidents in which White children went missing compared to incidents in which Black or Asian children went missing
  - There is a lower prevalence of CSE flags in incidents in which Black children went missing in both police and local authority data
  - In police data, there was a higher prevalence of CCE risk markers in cases related to White children going missing. However, in local authority data there was a higher prevalence of CCE risk markers in cases related to Black children going missing
  - In terms of trafficking, in police data there was a higher prevalence of incidents in which Asian children had gone missing. In local authority data, the prevalence was highest for Black children going missing
- Police forces and local authorities were asked for data on the prevalence of four risk factor flags for incidents where children were reported missing. Not all were able to share this data, so each risk factor flag is in relation to missing incidents from a different number of police force and local authority areas:

## MENTAL HEALTH

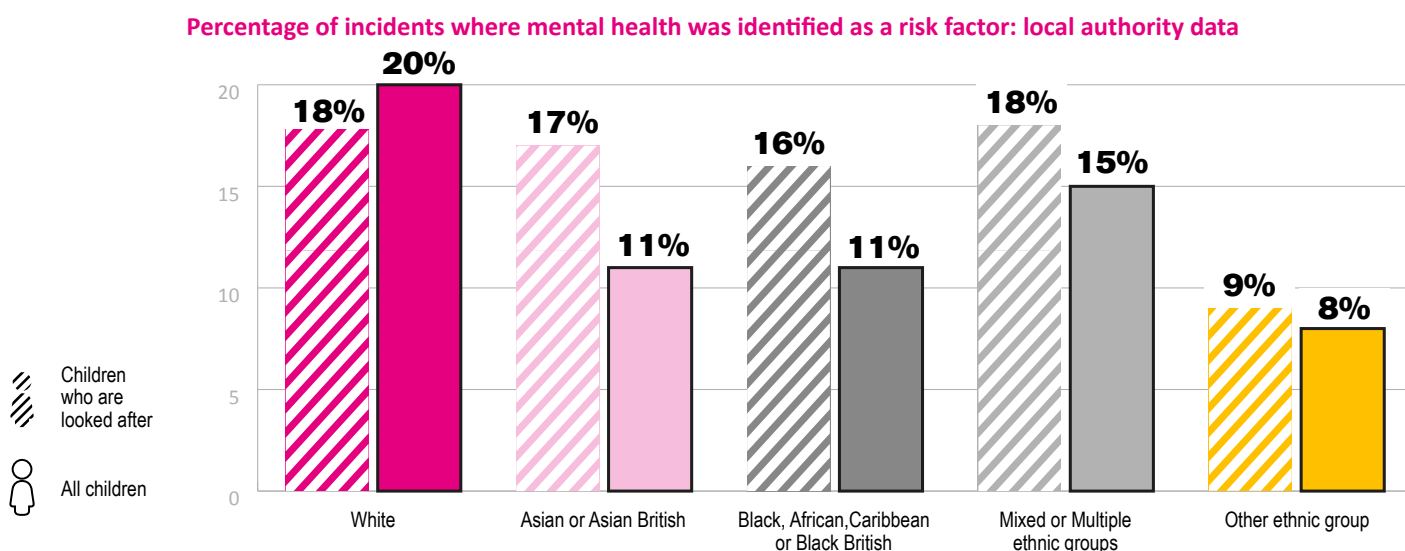
The 13 police forces able to share data on mental health flags represented 51,047 child missing incidents in total, 6.6% (3,353) of which had been flagged with a mental health marker.

The chart shows the percentage of cases *related to each ethnicity* that have been flagged with these risk factors.

The chart below shows a clear disparity between ethnic groups, with 9% of incidents relating to White missing children being flagged with a mental health marker, compared to 4% of incidents relating to Asian missing children, and only 1% of incidents relating to Black missing children.



Local authorities also shared data on the prevalence of mental health risk factors for missing children in their area. The 59 local authorities able to share data on mental health flags for children who are looked after represented 24,064 child missing incidents in total, 18% (4,269) of which had been flagged with a mental health marker.



53 local authorities were able to share information about mental health flags for all children, representing 51,027 missing incidents, 17% (8,451) of which had been flagged with a mental health marker.

Similarly to the police data, local authority data shows a disparity for those from different ethnic groups, with a lower prevalence of episodes related to Black missing children having a mental health marker than for other groups. The chart below also shows a disparity between children who are looked after compared to all children. In all ethnicities except White a higher percentage of incidents had a mental health risk factor flag for children who are looked after than for all children.

Previous research has demonstrated that many people who go missing will be experiencing diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health concerns, and in NCA statistics 7% of cases give mental health as the primary reason for children going missing.

It is unclear in this data whether the difference in rates of mental health flags is because the prevalence of mental health issues within the Asian and Black communities is less than the in the White population, or whether the identification, reporting and recording of this information means it is not captured.<sup>37</sup>

However, a lower rate of mental health markers against the records of people from minority ethnic groups in the data therefore suggests that there may be issues in the identification or reporting of mental health issues for children in these communities. This may in part be due to stigma about sharing concerns about mental health, as well as to adultification, which will be explored in more detail at the end of this section.

<sup>37</sup> 'Stigma and 'one-size-fits all approach' create barriers for South Asians seeking mental health help, say experts, Aisha Zahid, Sky News, <https://news.sky.com/story/stigma-and-one-size-fits-all-approach-create-barriers-for-south-asians-seeking-mental-health-help-experts-12352542>; Black, Asian and Minority Mental Health, Mental Health UK, <https://mentalhealth-uk.org/black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-bame-mental-health/>

## CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION ('CSE')

The 13 police forces able to share data on CSE flags represented 60,600 child missing incidents in total, 12.4% (7,501) of which had been flagged with a CSE marker.

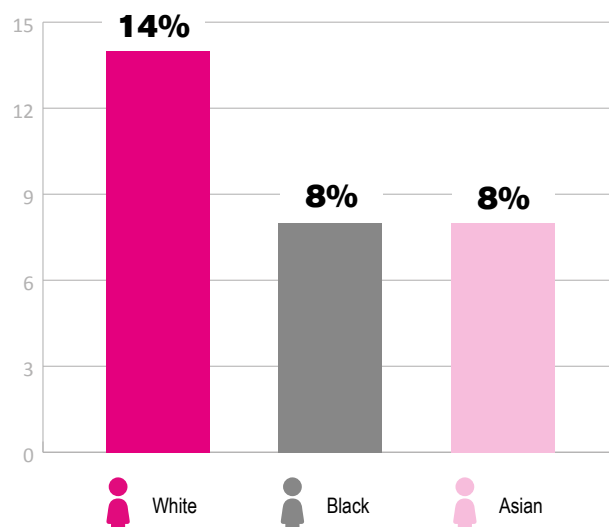
Incidents relating to White children going missing were more likely to be flagged with a CSE marker than incidents relating to Black or Asian children.

Local authorities also shared data on the prevalence of CSE risk factors for missing children in their area. The 92 local authorities able to share data on CSE flags for children who are looked after represented 41,061 child missing incidents in total, 17% (6,806) of which had been flagged with a CSE marker. 83 local authorities were able to share information about CSE flags for all children, representing 80,667 missing incidents, 14% (11,286) of which had been flagged with a CSE marker.

As with the mental health risk flags, children who are looked after had a higher prevalence of CSE risk markers than all children for every ethnicity except for 'other ethnic group.' And missing incidents related to 'mixed or multiple ethnic groups' and 'White' missing child incidents had a higher prevalence of CSE risk factor flags than other ethnic groups.

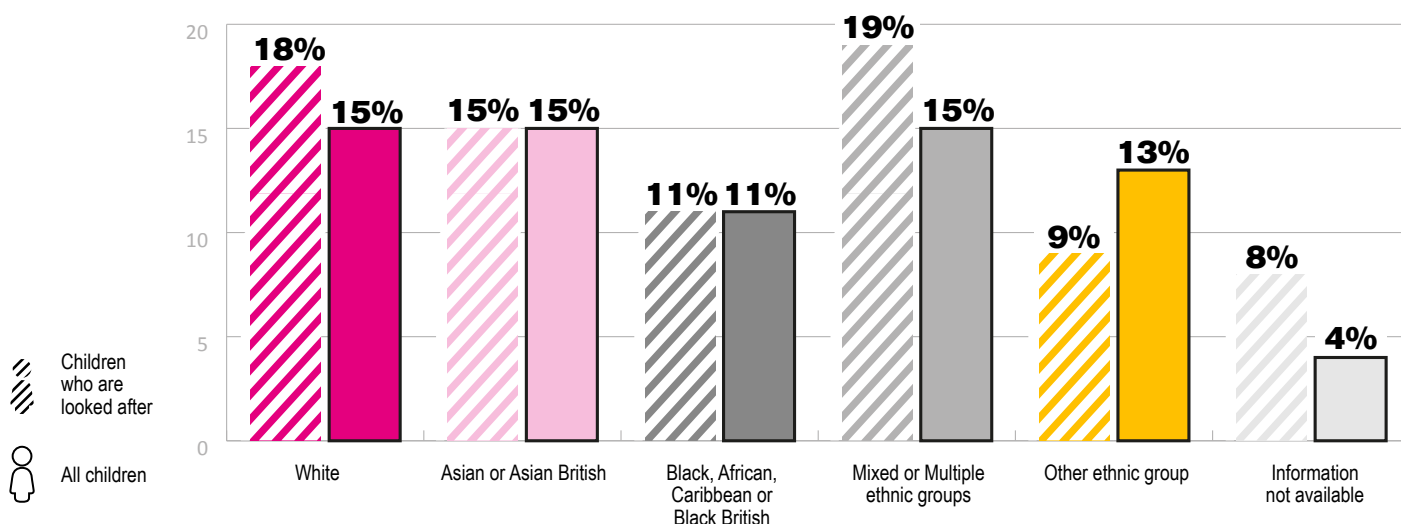
There are known links between child sexual exploitation and missing, and going missing can be a key early warning sign of exploitation, as well as being a consequence of being exploited.

CSE risk factor flag prevalence missing child incidents: police data



Again, it is not clear to what extent the difference in prevalence of CSE risk flags is due to lower identification and recording of CSE among Asian, Black and children of other ethnicities, or the extent to which they may be at lower risk of CSE than white children. However, previous research has shown that children from minority ethnic groups are routinely not identified as victims of exploitation<sup>38</sup> suggesting that risks and experiences of harm may be being missed for this group. If a child is being exploited and that is not identified or recorded, this will potentially lead to a lower risk assessment grading for the missing incident, and fewer resources committed to finding the child.

Percentage of incidents where CSE was identified as a risk factor: local authority data



<sup>38</sup> See, for example, *Supporting Black and minority ethnic children and young people experiencing child sexual exploitation*, The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/21458/view/NAP000038.pdf>



TRAFFICKING

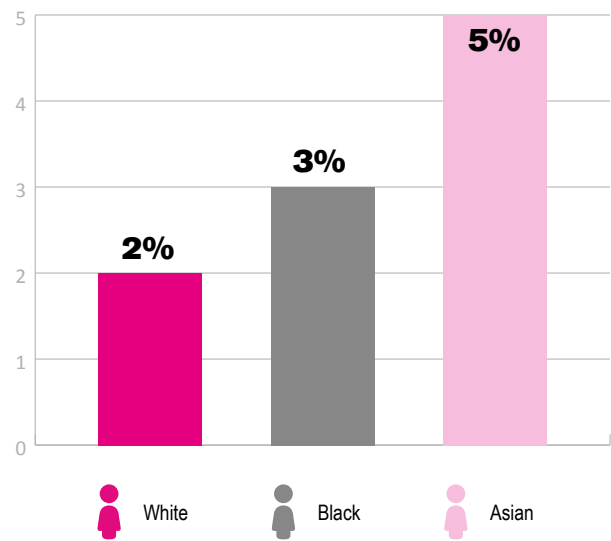
The 8 police forces able to share data on trafficking flags represented only 16,576 child missing incidents in total, 2% (333) of which had been flagged with a trafficking marker. The relatively small sample size means these findings should be treated with some caution.

The prevalence of trafficking risk factor flags are much lower than other risk factors. It is notable that missing incidents related to Asian children with a trafficking flag had a much higher prevalence than missing episodes relating to White and Black children going missing.

The same can be seen in the data shared by local authorities in the chart below. The 56 local authorities able to share data on trafficking flags for children who are looked after represented 23,941 child missing incidents in total, 8% (1,819) of which had been flagged with a trafficking marker. 52 local authorities were able to share information about trafficking flags for all children, representing 50,149 missing incidents, 6% (2,899) of which had been flagged with a trafficking marker.

As can be seen in the chart below, there is disparity both in terms of ethnicity of missing children, but also in terms of children who are in care compared to all children. Regarding all children, 13% of cases relating to Black children going missing had a trafficking flag, compared with 9% to 10% for all other ethnicities except for incidents relating to White children going missing, in which only 5% of incidents had a trafficking flag. However,

Trafficking risk factor flag prevalence missing child incidents: police data



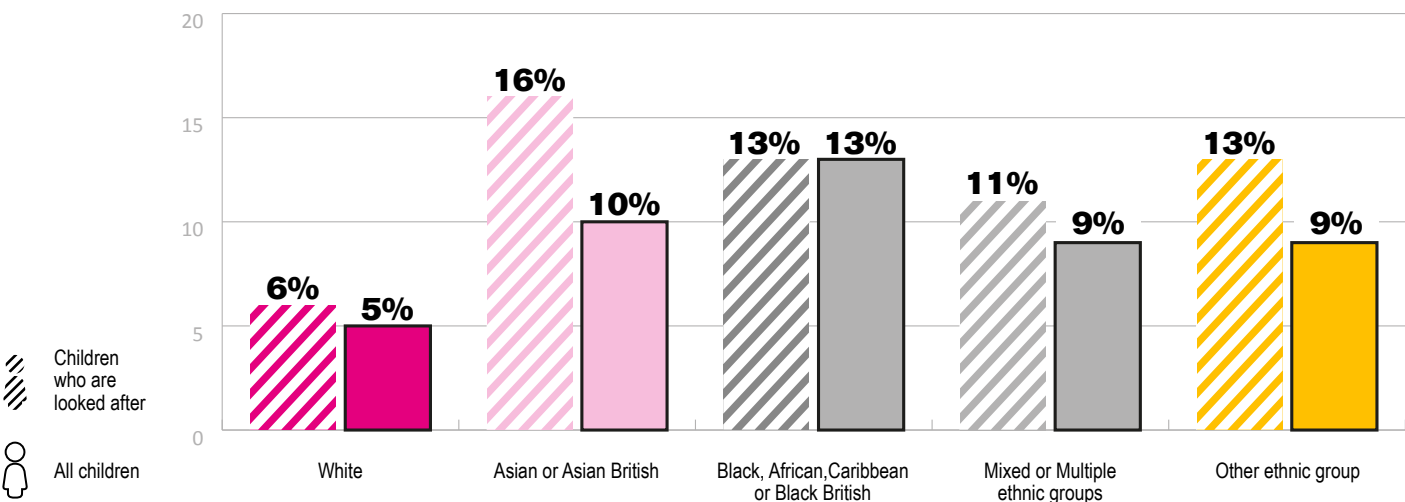
for children who are looked after, the highest prevalence of trafficking flags is in relation to Asian children going missing.

Trafficking flags may be used inconsistently as some victims are identified as exploited rather than trafficked, even when they are victims of both.

Historically trafficking has more often been associated with international movement, rather than something that happens to UK-born children.

Many unaccompanied asylum-seeking children will be identified as at risk of trafficking if they go missing which may to some extent explain the higher proportion of Asian and Black children with a trafficking flag than White children than in the responses to the other risk marker questions.

Percentage of cases where trafficking was identified as a risk factor: local authority data





## CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION ('CCE')

The 10 police forces able to share data on child criminal exploitation ('CCE') flags represented 46,408 child missing incidents in total, 15% (6,801) of which had been flagged with a CCE marker.

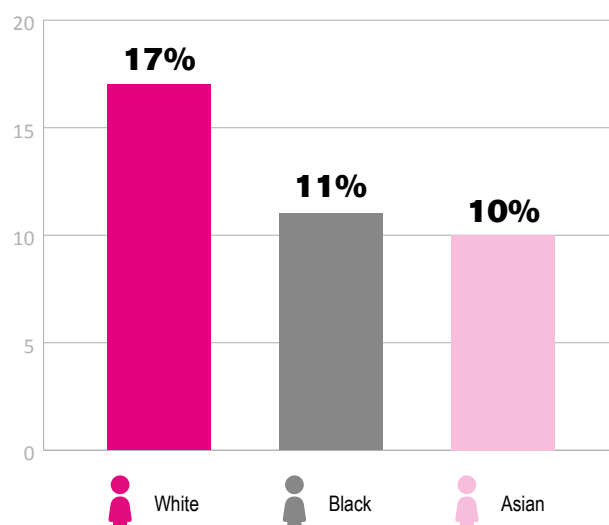
The main notable difference in terms of CCE is a much higher proportion of incidents relating to White children were flagged with a CCE flag than for Black child incidents or Asian child incidents.

Local authorities also shared data on the prevalence of CCE risk factors for missing children in their area. The 83 local authorities able to share data on CCE flags for children who are looked after represented 67,221 child missing incidents in total, 10% (6,626) of which had been flagged with a CCE marker. 76 local authorities were able to share information about CCE flags for all children, representing 76,114 missing incidents, 16% (12,549) of which had been flagged with a CCE marker.

Incidents related to children who are not looked after had much higher prevalence rates of CCE marker flags than incidents relating to children who are looked after going missing. The prevalence rates are particularly high for Asian and Black children going missing. It is notable as well that the prevalence of CCE risk factor flags are much higher in the data shared by local authorities than in the data shared by police forces.

Previous research has found links between exploitation and missing, with research conducted by Missing People and ECPAT UK finding that 48% of children who were looked after and identified as being exploited had also been reported missing from care.<sup>39</sup> Missing episodes can be both key indicators of exploitation and common consequences of exploitation.

CCE risk factor flag prevalence missing child incidents: police data



However, there are no reliable statistics on the ethnicity of children being criminally exploited, so we cannot say how much of an over or under-representation these statistics show. Previous research has shown that poverty can be a driver of vulnerability to exploitation,<sup>40</sup> and that exclusions from schools are often part of the experience of exploited children.<sup>41</sup> The Lammy Review report found that children from Black backgrounds are more likely to experience both.<sup>42</sup>

Previous research has also found that young people who are exploited, particularly in criminal exploitation, are not always recognised as victims but can instead receive a criminal justice response.<sup>43</sup> Some literature has also suggested that Black boys are less likely to receive a child welfare response as a result of adultification bias.<sup>44</sup> And according to Ministry of Justice data, people from a Black, Asian, 'Mixed,' or 'Chinese and other' background are over-represented in the criminal justice system.<sup>45</sup> So, while the data does not show why Black and Asian children are less likely to be

<sup>39</sup> *Away and at risk: the scale of exploited children going missing from care in the UK, 2018 – 2020*, Missing People and ECPAT UK, <https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Exploitation-report-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> *Complexity and challenge: a triennial analysis of SCRs 2014-2017*, Department for Education, 2020: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/869586/TRIENNIAL\\_SCR\\_REPORT\\_2014\\_to\\_2017.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/869586/TRIENNIAL_SCR_REPORT_2014_to_2017.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> *Excluded, exploited, forgotten: Childhood criminal exploitation and school exclusions*, Just for Kids Law, August 2020, [https://www.justforkidslaw.org/sites/default/files/fields/download/JfKL%20school%20exclusion%20and%20CCE\\_2.pdf](https://www.justforkidslaw.org/sites/default/files/fields/download/JfKL%20school%20exclusion%20and%20CCE_2.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> *The Lammy review: An independent review into the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the Criminal Justice System*, September 2017, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> See for example, *Exploited and criminalised*, Barnardo's, October 2021: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-10/Exploited%20and%20Criminalised%20report.pdf>

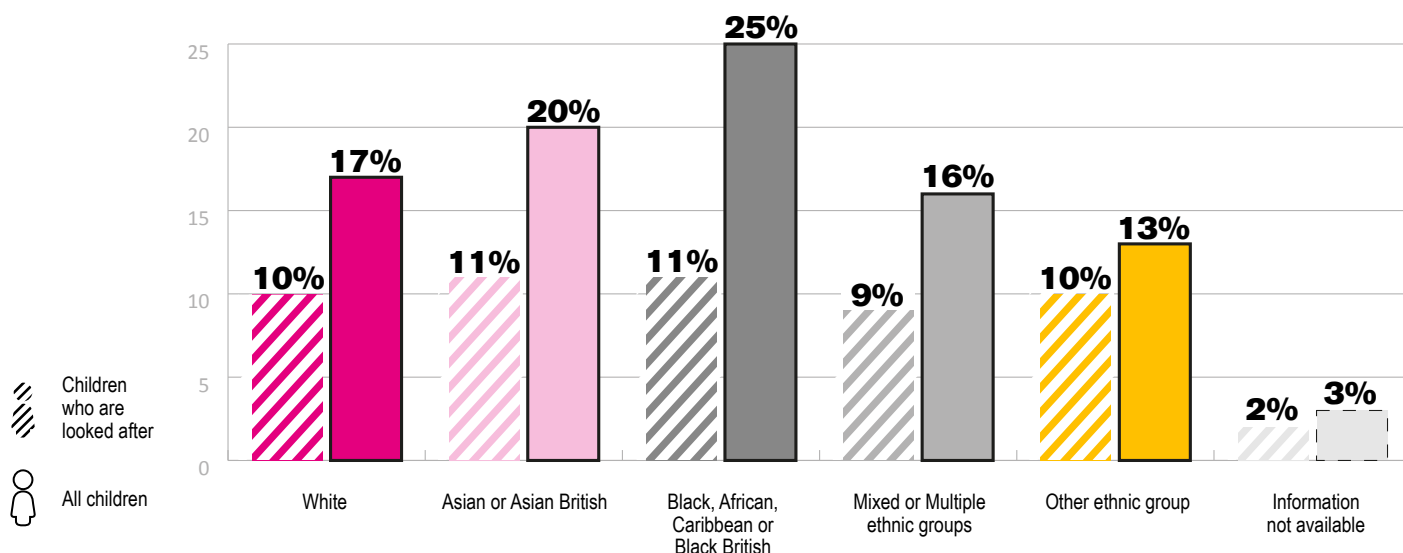
<sup>44</sup> Davis, J. and Marsh, N. (2020). 'Boys to men: the cost of 'adultification' in safeguarding responses to Black boys', *Critical and Radical Social Work*, 8(2), pp. 255-259.

<sup>45</sup> House of commons library, *Ethnicity and the criminal justice system: what does recent data say on over-representation*, October 2020, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/ethnicity-and-the-criminal-justice-system-what-does-recent-data-say/>

flagged as being at risk of CCE, the figures do cause some concern about the identification of these groups as potential victims of CCE by the police in particular. It may mean that the risk is not being identified, and that the child is at a greater risk of criminalisation. It may also mean that if the child is

being exploited and that exploitation has not been identified and recorded, the police may assess the risk the child faces as lower than it is, which could affect the resources committed to their missing investigation.

Percentage of cases where CCE was identified as a risk factor, local authority data



## ADULTIFICATION<sup>46</sup>

Adultification is a form of bias where children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities are perceived as being more 'grown up' or able to look after themselves, less innocent and less vulnerable than other children. This particularly affects Black children. When adultification is happening, professionals may perceive children as more responsible for the situation they are facing, regardless of the circumstances, and may be less likely to identify risks or harm.

Adultification puts children from Black and other minority ethnic communities at serious risk because they can be left without the safeguarding response and support that they need to stay safe.

The under-use of risk markers on missing incidents for Black and Asian children may indicate that professionals are failing to identify mental health issues and warning signs of exploitation within these communities. It is possible that this is in part because of adultification, or other discriminatory attitudes.

It is also possible that poor relationships that may exist between Black and other minority communities and the police make it less likely that children or reporting people will disclose risks while reporting or on return. It is also possible that experiences of stop and search, over-surveillance and other issues, impacts perceptions of police and the extent to which Black and minority communities perceive them as a safe space to report concerns. This may affect the ability of police to accurately reflect and record the risks that child may be experiencing or have been exposed to while missing.

<sup>46</sup> Listen Up have developed a professional inter-adultification model, which is found in Appendix B of this report.

## THE PREVALENCE OF RISK FACTOR FLAGS: ADULTS

### KEY FINDING

- 1 in 3 incidents for White missing adults had a mental health flag, compared to around 1 in 5 for Black missing adults and 1 in 4 for Asian missing adults

Police forces were also asked to share data about risk factor flags for adults who were reported missing: sexual exploitation, mental health, criminal exploitation and trafficking. The numbers for sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and trafficking were extremely low so the data has not been presented here.

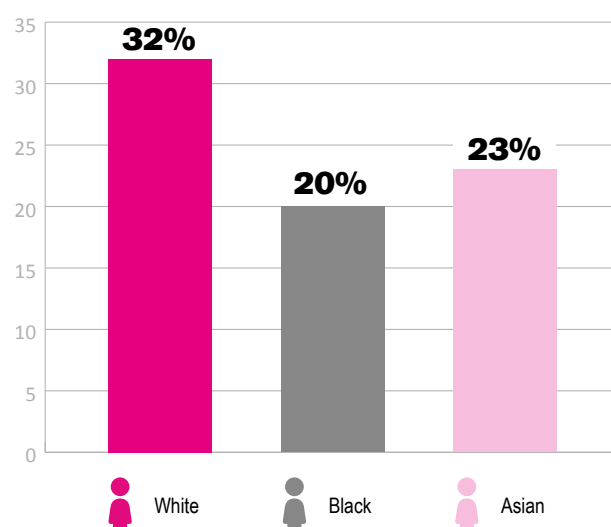
The data for mental health flag was shared by 13 police forces, representing 37,580 incidents, of which 23% (8,669) were flagged with a mental health risk factor.

Previous research has shown that up to 80% of adults will be experiencing diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health concerns, and in NCA statistics mental health is the most commonly identified reason for adults going missing: where a reason for missing was disclosed, in 25.5% of cases the reason was due to mental health. In recent research conducted by Missing People, 94% (60 of 64) said that they were influenced to leave due to their own feelings or mental health.<sup>47</sup>

The chart above shows that the percentages are lower for all ethnic groups than we might expect from other research. This may be due to people not disclosing mental health concerns to the police, or due to issues with recording.

However, despite the overall under-representation, there was a notably higher prevalence of mental health flags in relation to White people going missing when compared to Black or adults.

Mental health flag prevalence for adults



Similarly to the risk factor flags in relation to children, this data alone does not show the extent to which this is due to the prevalence of mental health being different or whether identification, reporting and recording of this information means it is not captured.

However, when the wider context is considered, with research finding that Black people are disproportionately represented in the statistics of those detained under the Mental Health Act; that rates of mental health problems can be higher for some Black and minority ethnic groups than for white people,<sup>48</sup> for example Black men are more likely to have experienced a psychotic disorder than white men, and older South Asian women are at increased risk of suicide than those from other ethnic groups in the same age bracket.

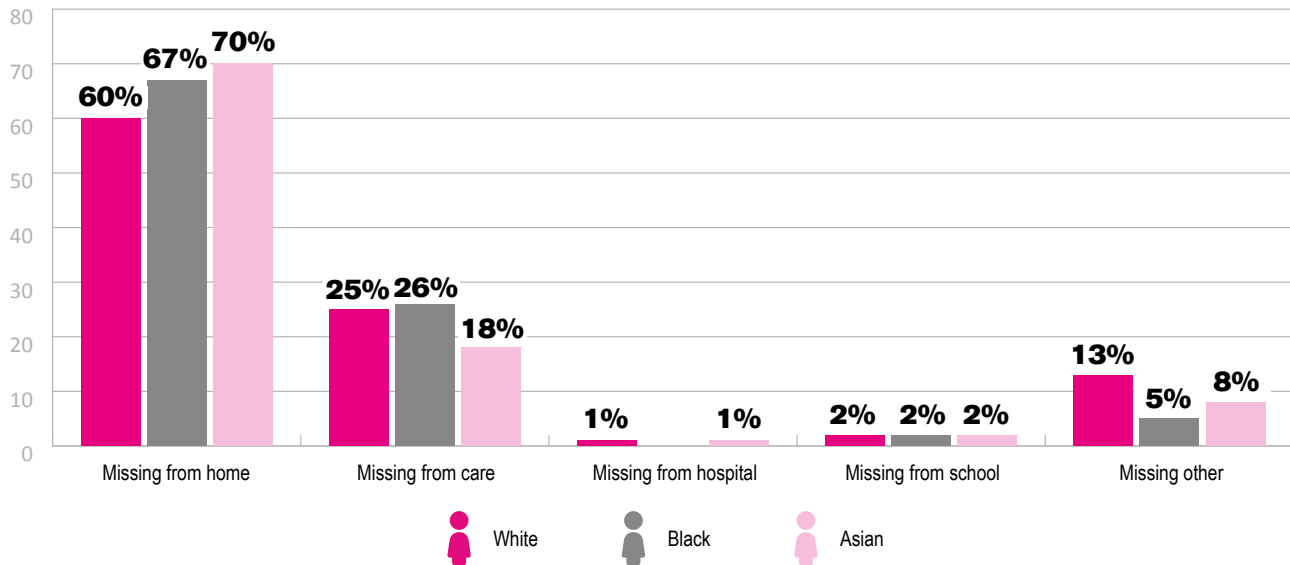
When considering all of this, and that racism, social and economic inequality and mental health stigma can also affect the mental health and wellbeing of Black and ethnic minority communities, it is concerning that Black and Asian missing people are less likely to be identified as at risk because of their mental health.

<sup>47</sup> "My world was falling apart": the nature and scale of harm experienced by missing adults in the UK, Missing People, May 2022: <https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/for-professionals/policy-and-research/information-and-research/research-about-missing/missing-adults-research>

<sup>48</sup> Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities, The Mental Health Foundation, <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-bame-communities>

## WHERE PEOPLE GO MISSING FROM

Where children go missing from



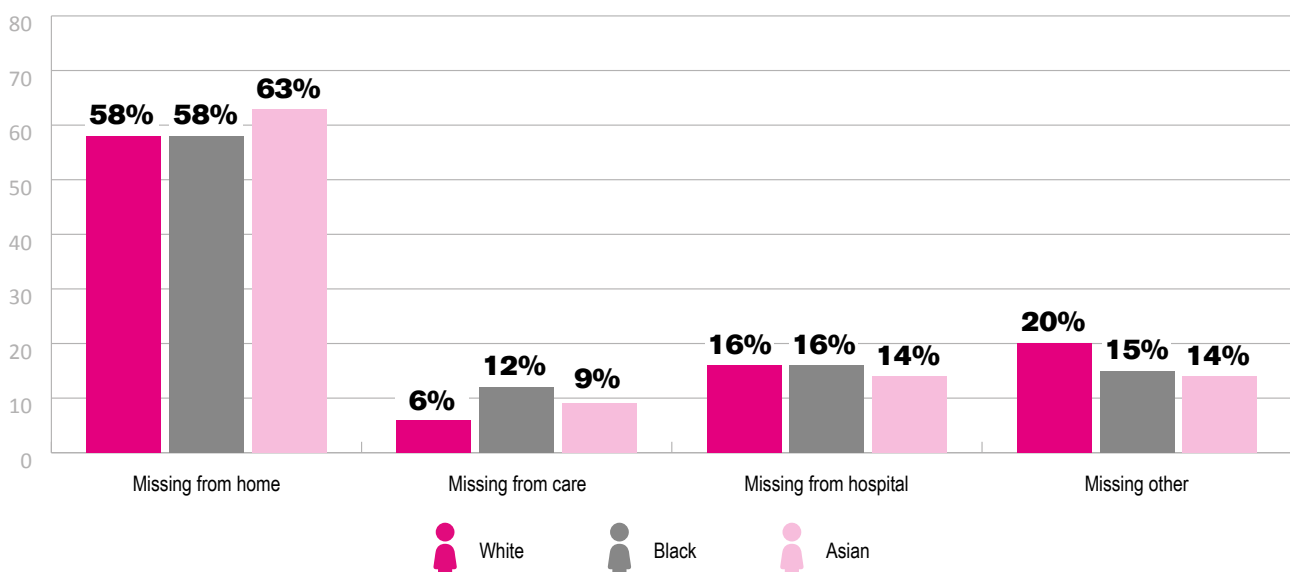
Police forces were asked for data regarding where people had been reported missing from. This data was requested at an incident level. 17 police forces shared this data, representing 66,027 missing child incidents and 52,89 adult incidents.

There is a clear over-representation of looked after children in this data: while between 18% and 26% of incidents relate to children going missing from care, less than 1% (0.7%) of children in the UK are in care. This over-representation is demonstrated in Department for Education data, and disparities in terms of ethnicity have been discussed in this report above.

In terms of locations, a higher prevalence of Asian children and adults go missing from home than White and Black children and adults. On the other hand, there is a lower prevalence of Asian children going missing from care. In terms of adults, 12% of missing incidents related to Black adults going missing are from care, compared to 9% of Asian adults and 6% of White adults.

The data does not explain why there are differences in terms of the location people go missing from. Again, more exploration of this is needed.

Where adults go missing from



## LENGTH OF TIME MISSING

The majority of people will return home within a few days of being reported missing. The most recent NCA statistics show that over 80% of adults and over 85% of children in England and Wales will return or be found within 48 hours, and in Northern Ireland and Scotland an even larger percentage of cases will be resolved within that time.

However, as with all of the data above, the previously available statistics are not broken down by ethnicity. The below chart shows the percentage of cases in which the person was missing for over 48 hours and then over 7 days, based on the data collected in this FOI.

21 police forces were able to share this data, representing 169,909 incidents:

- 96,913 incidents related to children going missing
- 72,996 incidents related to adults going missing

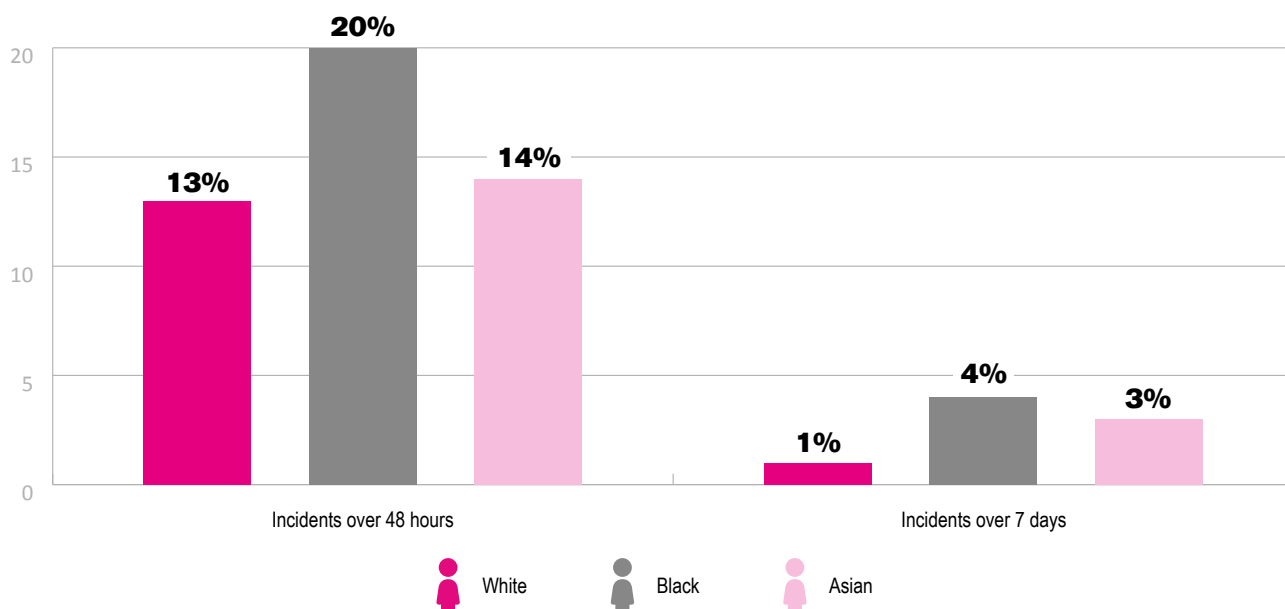
## CHILDREN

In total, 14% of cases were for longer than 48 hours and 2% were for longer than 7 days, however the data shows huge variation depending on ethnicity. As can be seen, a much smaller proportion of incidents where White children had been reported missing were unresolved after 48 hours and 7 days, while a bigger proportion for both Asian and Black children can be seen.

This is particularly stark for Black children: in 1 in 5 episodes where a Black child had been reported missing they were still missing after 2 days. This compares to around 1 in 8 incidents where a White child has been reported missing.

The same is true for episodes which remain unresolved after 7 days: while in around 1 in 70 incidents where a White child has been reported missing they will still be missing after 7 days, this is the case in around 1 in every 25 incidents where a Black child has gone missing.

Percentage of incidents in which a child is missing for longer than 48 hours and longer than 7 days



## ADULTS

Similarly to missing children, there was variation depending on ethnicity in terms of the length of missing episodes for adults. 23% episodes in which a Black adult had been reported missing were for longer than 48 hours compared to 17% of cases in which a White adult had been reported missing and 15% of cases in which an Asian adult had been reported missing.

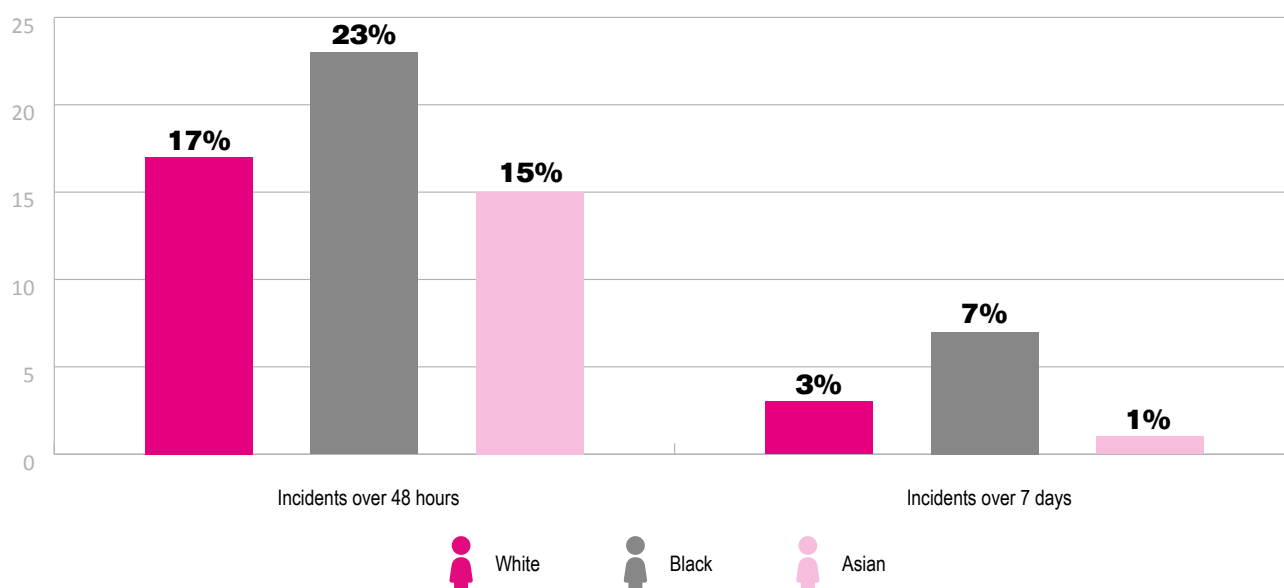
For episodes which remain unresolved after 7 days: 7% of episodes in which a Black adult had been reported missing were for longer than a week, compared to 3% of cases in which a White adult had been reported missing and 1% of cases in which an Asian adult had been reported missing.

What the data does not show is why the numbers are so stark. Are Black children and adults less likely to be recorded as at high risk of harm which means the missing investigation will likely be less well resourced? Are they less likely to try to get help while missing? Are there differences in the factors causing missing incidents that tend to mean people are missing for longer?

This data does not shed light on these questions but shows that this issue requires further exploration. The longer someone is away from a safe place the more exposed they will be to risk of harm.

There is a significant gap in understanding relating to why Black people are staying missing for longer, and how they can be found safely much faster. This should be a priority for all agencies involved in responding to missing incidents.

Percentage of incidents in which an adult is missing for longer than 48 hours and longer than 7 days



## HOW MISSING PEOPLE RETURN

### CHILDREN

The majority of missing people are found or return. The most recent NCA statistics show how children return, although note that the most recent figures relate to 2020-21 and may have been affected by responses to the covid-19 pandemic:

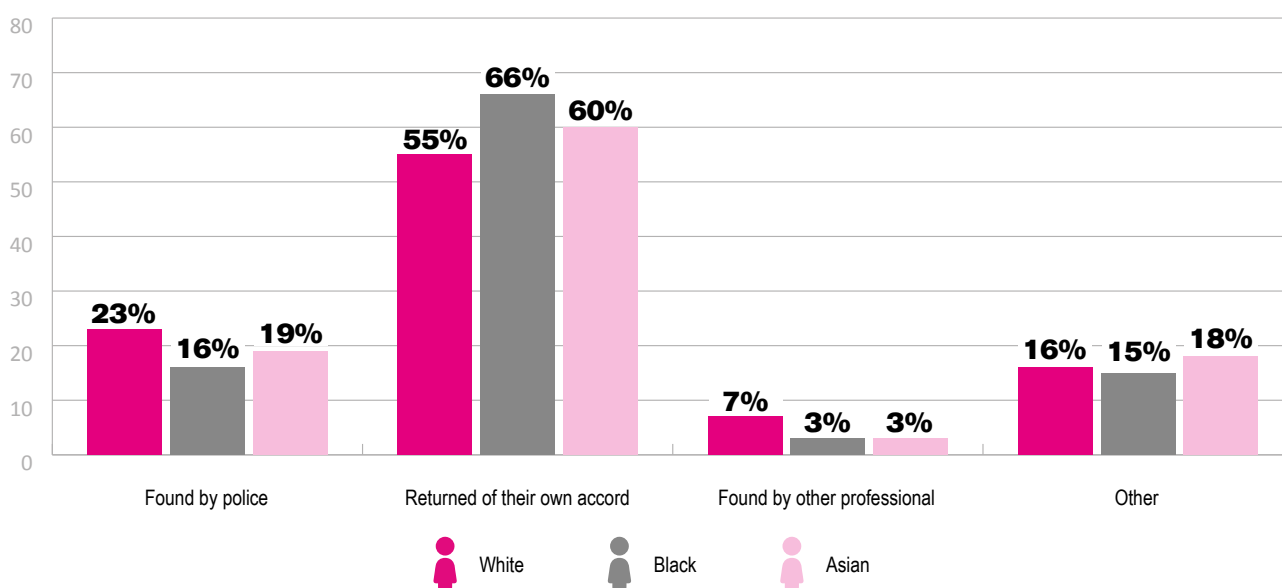
NCA 2020-21 statistics		
Who finds missing children (incidents)	England and Wales	Scotland
Family (including foster carer / guardian)	9.4%	5.7%
Police	30.2%	57.2%
Carer / local authority	7.3%	4.1%
Returned of own free will	44.2%	30.6%
Friend / acquaintance	1.6%	2.1%
Other	7.4%	0.2%

A key thing to note here is the disparity in the proportions of people found by the police as compared to returning home of their own accord.

While 23% of incidents related to White children going missing are resolved by the person being found by the police, this is the case for only 19% of missing Asian child incidents and only 16% of missing incidents related to Black children.

And while 66% of incidents related to Black children going missing are resolved by the person returning of their own accord, this is the case for a much smaller proportion of incidents related to White children going missing (55%) and Asian children going missing (60%).

How children were found or returned (incidents)



## ADULTS

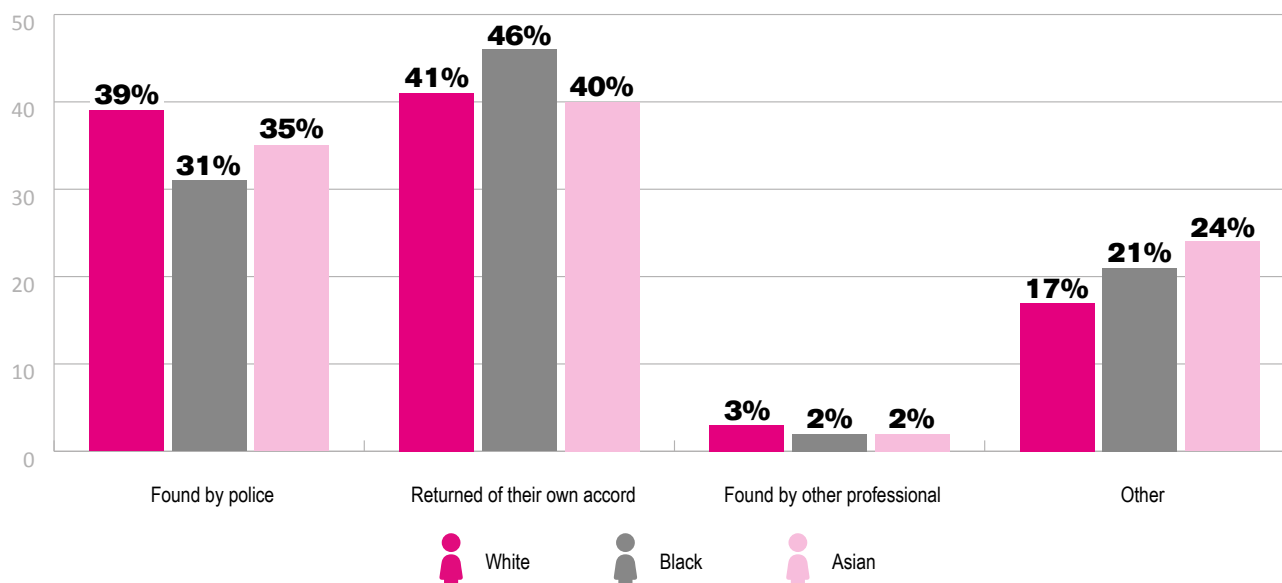
The most recent NCA statistics show how adults return, although note that the most recent figures relate to 2020-21 and may have been affected by responses to the covid-19 pandemic:

NCA 2020-21 statistics		
Who finds missing children (incidents)	England and Wales	Scotland
Family (including foster carer / guardian)	6.6%	5.0%
Police	43.4%	65.3%
Carer / local authority	2.6%	2.9%
Returned of own free will	32.6%	22.4%
Friend / acquaintance	1.6%	2.8%
Other	13.3%	1.6%

Similarly to children, incidents related to Black adults being missing are less likely to be resolved by the person being found by the police (31% of cases compared to 35% of incidents related to Asian adults and 39% of cases related to White adults).

The data does not provide insights as to why this is, but it should be concerning that less Black adults are found by police, particularly in the context that they are also more likely to be missing for longer than White and Asian adults.

How adults were found or returned (incidents)





# CONCLUSION

This data presents a stark picture, and one that should concern all agencies involved in supporting people at risk of going missing and responding if and when they do go missing.

The data clearly shows that there is disproportionality in terms of the number of people from Black and Asian communities going missing.

It also shows a worrying picture in terms of the reporting and identification of risk, the length of time people are missing for, and how missing people return or are found. As stated already, many questions are left unanswered as a result of this research.

It is hoped that police forces and local authorities will take this opportunity to seriously and meaningfully consider what the data shows in their local area. Does the data suggest disparity of treatment? Bias? Even discrimination?

And it is hoped that meaningful action will be taken as a result of these findings. More needs to be done to explore why the data shows what it does, and what can be done to improve the response to missing people and their families.

**DOES THE DATA  
SUGGEST DISPARITY  
OF TREATMENT? BIAS?  
EVEN DISCRIMINATION?**

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**AS STATED ALREADY, MANY  
QUESTIONS ARE LEFT UNANSWERED  
AS A RESULT OF THIS RESEARCH.**

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**MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE TO EXPLORE  
WHY THE DATA SHOWS WHAT IT DOES,  
AND WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE  
THE RESPONSE TO MISSING PEOPLE  
AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

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# RECOMMENDATIONS

## DATA RECORDING AND SCRUTINY

- Data on ethnicity and missing should be collected and analysed nationally on an annual basis. This data should include individual and incident level data, as well as data about risks, length of time missing, how missing people are found / return, and should be presented broken down by age and gender if possible. This should be done through a formal process, managed by the National Crime Agency's Missing Person Unit, that currently has responsibility for the annual national police missing persons data report. This data should be reviewed in order to ensure a better understanding of how missing and ethnicity are linked and how incidents are responded to.
- The Department for Education should collect statistics in relation to children who are looked after going missing broken down by ethnicity following the publication of this report and at least annually thereafter.
- All police forces and local authorities should review their own data in order to identify disproportionality and potential discriminatory practice in their area.
  - » This should include a review of missing incidents and individuals broken down by ethnicity, and also a review of the ethnicity of missing people broken down by risk levels, outcomes, length of missing, and who finds the missing person.
  - » The review should also involve a deep dive into case records to explore any reasons for disparity in the data. Within the review, a particular focus should be given to risk identification and recording, with senior leaders considering whether any bias, adultification or other discrimination is indicated. In order to maintain objectivity, this should be done alongside external agencies, which could include Missing People and Listen Up.
- » All local authorities and police forces should use their local area findings to develop a publicly accessible, actions-based plan in response to their review and deep dive. Specific actions to counter any disproportionality or discrimination should be included in any published plan.
- » Local partnerships should work together to understand the picture of risk facing individuals or whole communities in their area, and how this may relate to ethnicity, ensuring that there is a common understanding of risk that is consistent across multi-agency systems.
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) should consider any impact that ethnicity has on missing investigations within their existing inspection frameworks. During Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspections, force data on ethnicity and missing should be reviewed and inspectors should check that forces themselves are doing annual reviews and reports.
- Ofsted should consider how local authorities review and report on any differences in risk, reporting and response for missing children of different ethnicities through their existing frameworks for local authority Children's Services.
- The National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel should ensure that the response to children going missing related to child protection related issues considers whether the child's ethnicity impacted on their safeguarding and the response they received while missing.

## IDENTIFICATION OF RISK AND BUILDING TRUST

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- Police forces, local authorities, and other agencies who play a role in the response to missing people should ensure that there are routes for engagement and consultation with diverse communities in their area.
- » Community groups, scrutiny panels, or other lived-experience groups representing diverse ethnic communities should be asked to consider the response to missing people and there should be a proactive effort to include those with experience of going missing or reporting someone as missing.
- » There should be continuous scrutiny and monitoring through these groups considering disproportionality and discrimination. Where changes are made as a result of this engagement, this should be fed back to those groups, and they should be able to directly inform Police Crime Commissioner and local safeguarding plans.

## FUTURE WORK

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- This research should act as a catalyst for a much bigger focus on people from different ethnicities' experiences of, and reasons for, missing. This includes a focus on qualitative research exploring lived experience, to add depth and understanding to the data presented in this report, as well as research into reporting people missing and whether there are differences in terms of risk reporting. Academics, the third sector, and other agencies should be conducting more research into this. Research funders should be open to funding this currently drastically under-researched area.
- There will be a myriad of experiences within the broader ethnic communities considered in this report, with different ethnic communities not being singular homogenous groups. New research should focus on the experiences of

specific communities as much as possible, exploring these issues with consideration of intersecting issues including age and gender.

- Police ethnicity categories are inconsistent with ONS ethnicity categories used in the census, and there should be consideration about amending the police categories to match the self-identified categories used by the ONS.
- Training for police officers on ethnicity and missing should be reviewed and updated as outlined in the NPCC's draft Race Action Plan, while also considering missing people from all ethnic minority communities<sup>49</sup>
- Data on ethnicity and missing should be collected nationally on an annual basis. This data should include individual and incident level data, as well as data about risks, length of time missing, how missing people are found / return, and should be presented broken down by age and gender if possible. This should be done through a formal process, managed by the National Crime Agency's Missing Person Unit, that currently has responsibility for the annual national police missing persons data report. This data should be reviewed in order to ensure a better understanding of how missing and ethnicity are linked and how incidents are responded to.
- The Department for Education should collect statistics in relation to children who are looked after going missing broken down by ethnicity following the publication of this report and at least annually thereafter.
- All police forces and local authorities should review their own data in order to identify disproportionality and potential discriminatory practice in their area.
- » This should include a review of missing incidents and individuals broken down by ethnicity, and also a review of the ethnicity of missing people broken down by risk levels, outcomes, length of missing, who finds the missing person and repeat incidents.

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<sup>49</sup> "The NPCC and the College, working alongside the NBPA and Black communities, will review current APP, training and CPD to ensure that staff have the knowledge, understanding and awareness to recognise and intervene when a Black person is reported missing"; "forces will work alongside their local BPA, Race Equality Network and external partners to review local policies, guidance and training delivery, to ensure that police personnel have the knowledge, understanding and awareness to deliver the most appropriate care to missing people from the Black community."

- » The review should also involve a deep dive into case records to explore any reasons for disparity in the data. Within the review, a particular focus should be given to risk identification and recording, with senior leaders considering whether any bias, adultification or discrimination is indicated. In order to maintain objectivity, this should be done alongside external agencies, which could include Missing People and Listen Up.
- » All local authorities and police forces should use their local area findings to develop a publicly accessible, actions-based plan in response to their review and deep dive. Specific actions to counter any disproportionality or discrimination should be included in any published plan.
- » Local partnerships should work together to understand the picture of risk facing individuals or whole communities in their area, and how this may relate to ethnicity, ensuring that there is a common understanding of risk that is consistent across multi-agency systems.
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) should consider any impact that ethnicity has on missing investigations and the subsequent response within their existing inspection frameworks. During Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspections, force data on ethnicity and missing should be reviewed and inspectors should check that forces themselves are doing annual reviews and reports.
- Ofsted should consider any impact that ethnicity has on missing investigations and the subsequent response within their existing inspection frameworks.

## APPENDIXES

### A: Freedom of information requests

#### Police freedom of information request

##### Introduction

We are carrying out research to better understand the impact of ethnicity on the risk of going missing. This is in light of the disproportionate representation of Black people in national missing statistics, and the possibility of increased risk amongst this community and for other people of colour.

The ethnicity categories in the tables have been chosen to reflect those used in national statistics provided in the UK Missing Persons Unit data report.

#### We are seeking data held in your force's Case Management System.

1. How many people in your area went missing between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022? Please provide the numbers broken down by ethnicity and by age in the following table. In this question we are asking for the number of individuals, not total incidents/investigations:

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
0-11yrs							
12-17yrs							
18-25yrs							
26-39yrs							
40-59yrs							
60+yrs							
Unknown							

2. How many total missing investigations were there between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022? Please provide the numbers broken down by ethnicity and by age in the following table:

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
0-11yrs							
12-17yrs							
18-25yrs							
26-39yrs							
40-59yrs							
60+yrs							
Unknown							

3. Please provide a breakdown of the outcomes of missing investigations for **children** between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, broken down by ethnicity.

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Found by police							
Returned of their own accord							
Found by another professional							
Other							

4. Please provide a breakdown of the outcomes of missing investigations for **adults** between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, broken down by ethnicity.

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Found by police							
Returned of their own accord							
Found by another professional							
Other							

**5.** How many missing investigations for **children** between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, broken down by ethnicity, had a:

- a.** Sexual Exploitation marker      **c.** Criminal Exploitation marker  
**b.** Mental health marker      **d.** Trafficking marker

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Sexual exploitation marker							
Mental health marker							
Criminal exploitation marker							
Trafficking marker							

**6.** How many missing investigations for **adults** between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, broken down by ethnicity, had a:

- a.** Sexual Exploitation marker      **c.** Criminal Exploitation marker  
**b.** Mental health marker      **d.** Trafficking marker

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Sexual exploitation marker							
Mental health marker							
Criminal exploitation marker							
Trafficking marker							



7. Please provide the types of location from which the missing investigations for **children** were reported between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, broken down by ethnicity.

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Home							
Care							
Hospital or healthcare setting							
School or education setting							
Other							

8. Please provide the types of location from which the missing investigations for **adults** were reported between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, broken down by ethnicity.

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Home							
Care							
Hospital or healthcare setting							
School or education setting							
Other							

9. Please provide the number of missing investigations for **children** between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 which lasted more than 48 hours, broken down by ethnicity.

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Number of incidents lasting more than 48 hours							

**10.** Please provide the number of missing investigations for **adults** between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 which lasted more than 48 hours, broken down by ethnicity.

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Number of incidents lasting more than 48 hours							

**11.** Please provide the number of missing investigations for **children** between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 which lasted more than 7 days, broken down by ethnicity.

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Number of incidents lasting more than 7 days							

**12.** Please provide the number of missing investigations for **adults** between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 which lasted more than 7 days, broken down by ethnicity.

	White – North European	White – South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other / unknown
Number of incidents lasting more than 7 days							

## Local Authority freedom of information request

### Introduction

We are carrying out research to better understand the impact of ethnicity on the risk of going missing. This is in light of the disproportionate representation of Black people in national missing statistics, and the possibility of increased risk amongst this community and for other people of colour.

The ethnicity categories in the tables have been chosen to reflect those used in national statistics provided in the UK Missing Persons Unit data report.

This request is being submitted by Josie Allan, Senior Policy & Partnerships Manager at Missing People.

1. How many Looked After Children were there in your area between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022?  
Please provide the number broken down by ethnicity.

	White	Asian or Asian British	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	Other ethnic group	Information not available
Number of children looked after in your area						

2. How many of those Looked After Children went missing between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022?  
Please provide the numbers broken down by ethnicity.

	White	Asian or Asian British	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	Other ethnic group	Information not available
Number of looked after children in your area who went missing						

3. How many **incidents** of Looked After Children going missing were there between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022? Please provide the numbers broken down by ethnicity.

	White	Asian or Asian British	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	Other ethnic group	Information not available
Number of missing <b>incidents</b> of looked after children in your area						

4. How many of those incidents, broken down by ethnicity, had a:

- a.** Sexual Exploitation marker      **c.** Criminal Exploitation marker  
**b.** Mental health marker      **d.** Trafficking marker

	White	Asian or Asian British	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	Other ethnic group	Information not available
Sexual exploitation marker						
Mental health marker						
Criminal exploitation marker						
Trafficking marker						

5. How many children in total (not just LAC) in your area went missing between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022? Please provide the numbers broken down by ethnicity.

	White	Asian or Asian British	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	Other ethnic group	Information not available
Number of children in your area who went missing						

6. How many **incidents** of children (not just LAC) going missing were there between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022? Please provide the numbers broken down by ethnicity.

	White	Asian or Asian British	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	Other ethnic group	Information not available
Number of missing <b>incidents</b> of looked after children in your area						

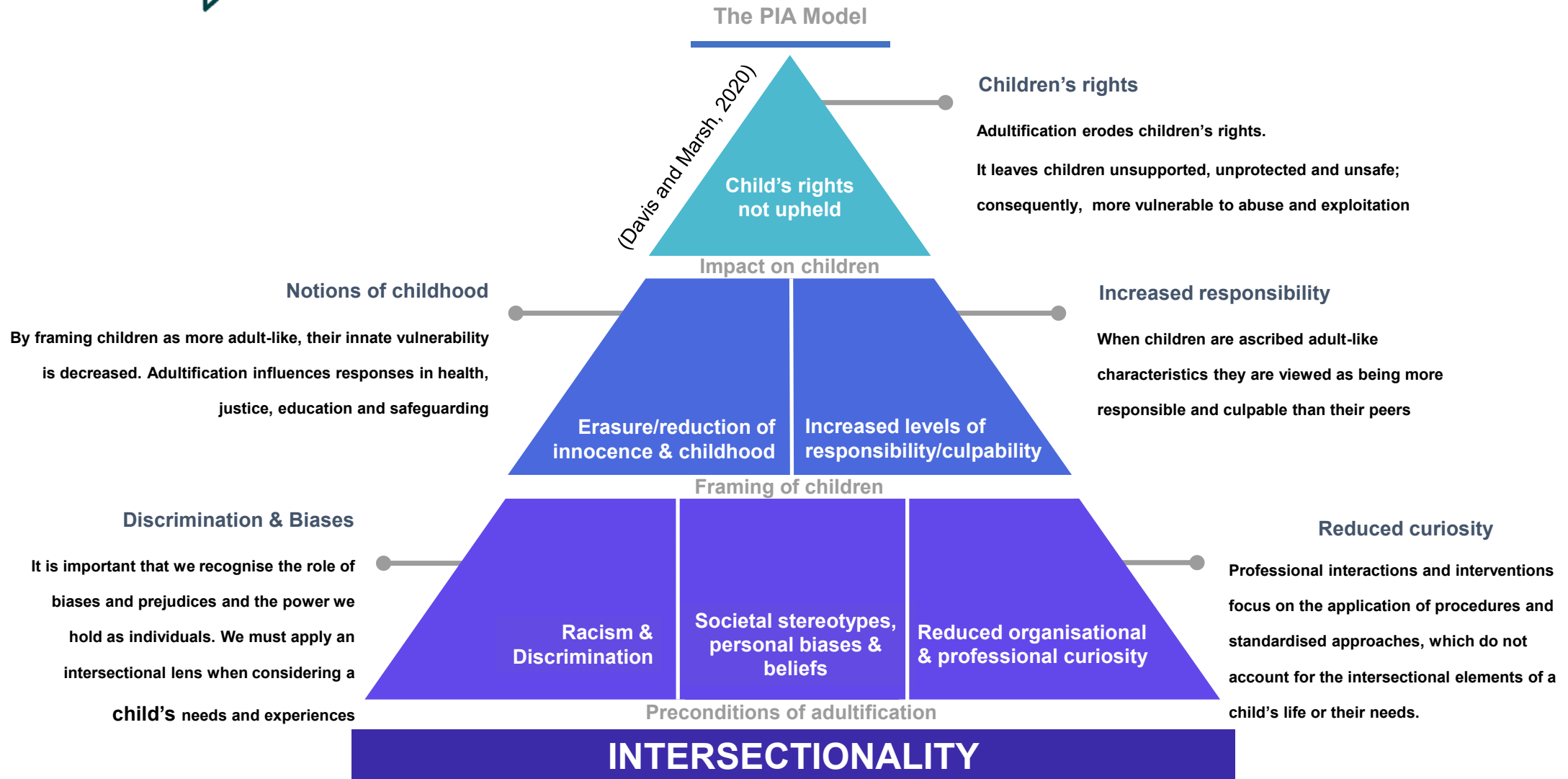
**7.** How many of those incidents, broken down by ethnicity, had a:

- a.** Sexual Exploitation marker      **c.** Criminal Exploitation marker  
**b.** Mental health marker      **d.** Trafficking marker

	White	Asian or Asian British	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	Other ethnic group	Information not available
Sexual exploitation marker						
Mental health marker						
Criminal exploitation marker						
Trafficking marker						



# Professional Inter-Adultification



## Appendix C: Data tables

### Police data

#### Individual and incident data

Age and ethnicity of missing individuals								
<b>What does this table show</b>		<p>This table shows the number of missing individuals broken down by ethnicity and age group. The percentages show the percentage of <b>total</b> individuals within that age range by ethnicity. So, for example, 74.9% of all missing individuals under the age of 18 were 'White – North European'.</p> <p>Please note that individuals where ethnicity was unknown have been removed from this table.</p>						
<b>Number of police forces this data represents</b>		27						
Ethnicity	Total individuals	Individuals aged 0 - 17	Percentage of individuals aged 0 – 17 by ethnicity	Individuals aged 18 to 25	Percentage of individuals aged 18 to 25 by ethnicity	Individuals aged over 25	Percentage of individuals aged over 25	Percentage of all individuals by ethnicity
White – North European	54916	21422	74.9%	7175	76.8%	26319	84.0%	79.3%
White – South European	586	265	0.9%	94	1.0%	227	0.7%	0.8%
Black	8783	4713	16.5%	1258	13.5%	2812	9.0%	12.7%
Asian	4320	1858	6.5%	705	7.5%	1757	5.6%	6.2%
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	175	56	0.2%	31	0.3%	88	0.3%	0.3%
Middle Eastern	260	167	0.6%	37	0.4%	56	0.2%	0.4%



<b>Mixed race - Black and White</b>	138	86	0.3%	25	0.3%	27	0.1%	0.2%
<b>Mixed race Asian and White</b>	55	31	0.1%	8	0.1%	16	0.1%	0.1%
<b>Traveller, Gypsy, Roma</b>	38	16	0.1%	7	0.1%	15	0.0%	0.1%
<b>Total (unknown removed)</b>	69271	28614		9340		31317		

### Age and ethnicity of missing incidents

<b>What does this table show</b>		<p>This table shows the number of missing incidents broken down by ethnicity and age group. The percentages show the percentage of <b>total</b> incidents within that age range by ethnicity. So, for example, 74.9% of all missing incidents under the age of 18 were in relation to 'White – North European' people going missing.</p> <p>Please note that incidents where ethnicity was unknown have been removed from this table.</p>						
<b>Number of police forces this data represents</b>		30						
Ethnicity	Total incidents	Incidents aged 0 - 17	Percentage of incidents related to people aged 0 – 17 by ethnicity	Incidents aged 18 to 25	Percentage of incidents related to people aged 18 to 25 by ethnicity	Incidents aged over 25	Percentage of incidents related to people aged over 25	Percentage of all incidents by ethnicity
White – North European	151150	87339	76.7%	15802	78.7%	48009	84.7%	79.3%
White – South European	1822	1240	1.1%	162	0.8%	420	0.7%	1.0%
Black	25445	18285	16.1%	2360	11.7%	4800	8.5%	13.3%
Asian	10612	5954	5.2%	1573	7.8%	3085	5.4%	5.6%
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	324	121	0.1%	54	0.3%	149	0.3%	0.2%
Middle Eastern	850	642	0.6%	81	0.4%	127	0.2%	0.4%
Mixed race - Black and White	231	168	0.1%	32	0.2%	31	0.1%	0.1%
Mixed race Asian and White	84	49	0.0%	15	0.1%	20	0.0%	0.0%

<b>Traveller, Gypsy, Roma</b>	101	76	0.1%	8	0.0%	17	0.0%	0.1%
<b>Total (unknown removed)</b>	190619	113874		20087		56658		

## Risk data

Child Sexual Exploitation risk (child incidents)			
What does this table show	This table shows the number of missing incidents in which a CSE marker was recorded. The number of total incidents relate to those forces also able to provide data on CSE risk markers.		
Number of police forces this data represents	16		
Ethnicity (children)	Total incidents for the forces able to share CSE data	Total incidents in which a CSE marker was recorded	Percentage of incidents with CSE marker
White – North European	43564	5980	13.7%
White – South European	660	148	22.4%
Black	12848	1085	8.4%
Asian	3125	253	8.1%
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	38	0	0.0%
Middle Eastern	181	8	4.4%
Other / unknown	12919	1456	11.3%
Mixed race - Black and White	76	10	13.2%
Mixed race Asian and White	32	9	28.1%
Traveller, Gypsy, Roma	76	8	10.5%
Total	73519	8957	12.2%

<b>Mental health risk (child incidents)</b>			
<b>What does this table show</b>	This table shows the number of missing child incidents in which a mental health marker was recorded. The number of total incidents relate to those forces also able to provide data on mental health risk markers.		
<b>Number of police forces this data represents</b>	13		
<b>Ethnicity (children)</b>	<b>Total incidents for the forces able to share mental health data</b>	<b>Total incidents in which a mental health marker was recorded</b>	<b>Percentage of incidents with mental health marker</b>
<b>White – North European</b>	34800	2981	8.6%
<b>White – South European</b>	676	59	8.7%
<b>Black</b>	12405	177	1.4%
<b>Asian</b>	2988	131	4.4%
<b>Chinese, Japanese &amp; SE Asian</b>	10	0	0.0%
<b>Middle Eastern</b>	141	4	2.8%
<b>Other / unknown</b>	12952	959	7.4%
<b>Mixed race - Black and White</b>	13	1	7.7%
<b>Mixed race Asian and White</b>	14	0	0.0%
<b>Traveller, Gypsy, Roma</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	63999	4312	6.7%

### Child criminal exploitation risk (child incidents)

<b>What does this table show</b>	This table shows the number of missing child incidents in which a CCE marker was recorded. The number of total incidents relate to those forces also able to provide data on CCE risk markers.		
<b>Number of police forces this data represents</b>	10		
<b>Ethnicity (children)</b>	<b>Total incidents for the forces able to share CCE data</b>	<b>Total incidents in which a CCE marker was recorded</b>	<b>Percentage of incidents with CCE marker</b>
White – North European	30160	5042	16.7%
White – South European	600	39	6.5%
Black	12520	1365	10.9%
Asian	2877	297	10.3%
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	28	0	0.0%
Middle Eastern	120	5	4.2%
Other / unknown	13606	850	6.2%
Mixed race - Black and White	74	43	58.1%
Mixed race Asian and White	28	10	35.7%
Traveller, Gypsy, Roma	1	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60014</b>	<b>7651</b>	<b>12.7%</b>

Trafficking risk (child incidents)			
What does this table show	This table shows the number of missing child incidents in which a trafficking marker was recorded. The number of total incidents relate to those forces also able to provide data on trafficking risk markers.		
Number of police forces this data represents	8		
Ethnicity (children)	Total incidents for the forces able to share trafficking data	Total incidents in which a trafficking marker was recorded	Percentage of incidents with trafficking marker
White – North European	30160	5042	16.7%
White – South European	600	39	6.5%
Black	12520	1365	10.9%
Asian	2877	297	10.3%
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	28	0	0.0%
Middle Eastern	120	5	4.2%
Other / unknown	13606	850	6.2%
Mixed race - Black and White	74	43	58.1%
Mixed race Asian and White	28	10	35.7%
Traveller, Gypsy, Roma	1	0	0.0%
Total	60014	7651	12.7%



Mental health risk (adult)			
What does this table show	This table shows the number of missing adult incidents in which a mental health marker was recorded. The number of total incidents relate to those forces also able to provide data on mental health risk markers.		
Number of police forces this data represents	13		
Ethnicity (children)	Total incidents for the forces able to share mental health data	Total incidents in which a mental health marker was recorded	Percentage of incidents with mental health marker
White – North European	22126	7173	32.4%
White – South European	211	72	34.1%
Black	4378	884	20.2%
Asian	10314	503	4.9%
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	107	12	11.2%
Middle Eastern	381	23	6.0%
Other / unknown	7638	2014	26.4%
Mixed race - Black and White	34	2	5.9%
Mixed race Asian and White	20	0	0.0%
Traveller, Gypsy, Roma	9	0	0.0%
Total	45218	10683	23.6%

## Missing from data

Missing from (children)											
<b>What does this table show</b>		<p>This table shows the location children were reported missing from, broken down by ethnicity. The percentages show the proportion of missing incidents from each location within each ethnicity, e.g., 60% of missing incidents relating to 'White – North European Children' going missing were children going missing from home.</p> <p>Please note that incidents where ethnicity was unknown have been removed from this table.</p>									
<b>Number of police forces this data represents</b>		17									
<b>Ethnicity (children)</b>	<b>Total incidents</b>	<b>Missing from home</b>	<b>Percentage missing from home</b>	<b>Missing from care</b>	<b>Percentage missing from care</b>	<b>Missing from hospital or healthcare</b>	<b>Percentage missing from hospital</b>	<b>Missing from school or education setting</b>	<b>Percentage missing from school</b>	<b>Missing from other</b>	<b>Percentage missing other</b>
<b>White – North European</b>	46037	27644	60.0%	11336	24.6%	289	0.6%	893	1.9%	5875	12.8%
<b>White – South European</b>	837	569	68.0%	170	20.3%	13	1.6%	22	2.6%	63	7.5%
<b>Black</b>	4913	3295	67.1%	1274	25.9%	12	0.2%	84	1.7%	248	5.0%
<b>Asian</b>	2507	1754	70.0%	471	18.8%	17	0.7%	56	2.2%	209	8.3%
<b>Chinese, Japanese &amp; SE Asian</b>	75	59	78.7%	5	6.7%	1	1.3%	7	9.3%	3	4.0%
<b>Middle Eastern</b>	442	341	77.1%	77	17.4%	3	0.7%	6	1.4%	15	3.4%
<b>Mixed race - Black and White</b>	71	38	53.5%	20	28.2%	1	1.4%	1	1.4%	11	15.5%
<b>Mixed race Asian and White</b>	14	13	92.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	7.1%
<b>Traveller, Gypsy, Roma</b>	33	1	3.0%	32	97.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	54929	33714	61.4%	13385	24.4%	336	0.6%	1069	1.9%	6425	11.7%

### Missing from (adults)

<p><b>What does this table show</b></p>	<p>This table shows the location children were reported missing from, broken down by ethnicity. The percentages show the proportion of missing incidents from each location within each ethnicity, e.g., 57.6% of missing incidents relating to 'White – North European' adults going missing were adults going missing from home.</p> <p>Please note that incidents where ethnicity was unknown have been removed from this table.</p>								
<p><b>Number of police forces this data represents</b></p>	<p>17</p>								
<p><b>Ethnicity (adults)</b></p>	<p><b>Total incidents</b></p>	<p><b>Missing from home</b></p>	<p><b>Percentage missing from home</b></p>	<p><b>Missing from care</b></p>	<p><b>Percentage missing from care</b></p>	<p><b>Missing from hospital or healthcare</b></p>	<p><b>Percentage missing from hospital</b></p>	<p><b>Missing from other</b></p>	<p><b>Percentage missing other</b></p>
<p><b>White – North European</b></p>	<p>38271</p>	<p>22048</p>	<p>57.6%</p>	<p>2254</p>	<p>5.9%</p>	<p>6192</p>	<p>16.2%</p>	<p>7777</p>	<p>20.3%</p>
<p><b>White – South European</b></p>	<p>411</p>	<p>307</p>	<p>74.7%</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>3.4%</p>	<p>39</p>	<p>9.5%</p>	<p>51</p>	<p>12.4%</p>
<p><b>Black</b></p>	<p>2405</p>	<p>1389</p>	<p>57.8%</p>	<p>288</p>	<p>12.0%</p>	<p>377</p>	<p>15.7%</p>	<p>351</p>	<p>14.6%</p>
<p><b>Asian</b></p>	<p>2277</p>	<p>1405</p>	<p>61.7%</p>	<p>208</p>	<p>9.1%</p>	<p>334</p>	<p>14.7%</p>	<p>330</p>	<p>14.5%</p>
<p><b>Chinese, Japanese &amp; SE Asian</b></p>	<p>115</p>	<p>92</p>	<p>80.0%</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>2.6%</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>7.0%</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>10.4%</p>
<p><b>Middle Eastern</b></p>	<p>143</p>	<p>101</p>	<p>70.6%</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>1.4%</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>13.3%</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>14.7%</p>
<p><b>Mixed race - Black and White</b></p>	<p>23</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>47.8%</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>8.7%</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>26.1%</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>17.4%</p>
<p><b>Mixed race Asian and White</b></p>	<p>13</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>69.2%</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0.0%</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>23.1%</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>7.7%</p>
<p><b>Traveller, Gypsy, Roma</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>100.0%</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0.0%</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0.0%</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0.0%</p>
<p><b>Total</b></p>	<p>43660</p>	<p>29900</p>	<p>68.5%</p>	<p>3379</p>	<p>7.7%</p>	<p>8194</p>	<p>18.8%</p>	<p>11417</p>	<p>26.1%</p>

## Length of time missing

Length of time missing (children)					
<b>What does this table show</b>	<p>This table shows the number and percentage of missing incidents that were longer than 48 hours and longer than 7 days, broken down by ethnicity, e.g., 12.6% of missing incidents relating to 'White – North European' children going missing were for longer than 48 hours.</p> <p>Please note that incidents where ethnicity was unknown have been removed from this table.</p>				
<b>Number of police forces this data represents</b>	21				
Ethnicity (children)	Total incidents where length of time was reported	Incidents over 48 hours	Percentage of incidents over 48 hours	Incidents over 7 days	Percentage of incidents over 7 days
White – North European	58108	7342	12.6%	848	1.5%
White – South European	1062	100	9.4%	25	2.4%
Black	15743	3189	20.3%	684	4.3%
Asian	4376	611	14.0%	148	3.4%
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	95	17	17.9%	7	7.4%
Middle Eastern	450	65	14.4%	15	3.3%
Mixed race - White and Black	76	50	65.8%	2	2.6%
Mixed race White and Asian	32	10	31.3%	2	6.3%
Traveller, Gypsy, Roma	76	8	10.5%	5	6.6%
Total	80018	11392	14.2%	1736	2.2%

Length of time missing (adults)					
What does this table show	This table shows the number and percentage of missing incidents that were longer than 48 hours and longer than 7 days, broken down by ethnicity, e.g., 17.2% of missing incidents relating to 'White – North European' adults going missing were for longer than 48 hours.				
	Please note that incidents where ethnicity was unknown have been removed from this table.				
Number of police forces this data represents	21				
Ethnicity (adults)	Total incidents where length of time was reported	Adults over 48 hours	Percentage of incidents over 48 hours	Adults over 7 days	Percentage of incidents over 7 days
White – North European	39964	6867	17.2%	1292	3.2%
White – South European	454	76	16.7%	22	4.8%
Black	5411	1237	22.9%	398	7.4%
Asian	14762	33	0.2%	141	1.0%
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	493	32	6.5%	14	2.8%
Middle Eastern	1197	503	42.0%	12	1.0%
Mixed race - White and Black	183	11	6.0%	1	0.5%
Mixed race White and Asian	36	9	25.0%	0	0.0%
Traveller, Gypsy, Roma	39	5	12.8%	2	5.1%
Total	80018	11392	14.2%	1736	2.2%

## How people are found or return

How children are found or return									
<b>What does this table show</b>		This table shows how children were found / returned, broken down by ethnicity, e.g., 25.2% of missing incidents relating to 'White – North European' children being missing are resolved by the child being found by the police. Please note that this data is at an incident level.  Please note that incidents where ethnicity was unknown have been removed from this table.							
<b>Number of police forces this data represents</b>		15							
<b>Ethnicity (children)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Found by police</b>	<b>Percent found by police</b>	<b>Returned of their own accord</b>	<b>Percent returned of their own accord</b>	<b>Found by other professionals</b>	<b>Percent found by other professional</b>	<b>Found other</b>	<b>Percent other</b>
<b>White – North European</b>	41520	10459	25.2%	21276	51.2%	3272	7.9%	6513	15.7%
<b>White – South European</b>	828	245	29.6%	322	38.9%	105	12.7%	156	18.8%
<b>Black</b>	15303	2421	15.8%	10107	66.0%	490	3.2%	2285	14.9%
<b>Asian</b>	4320	835	19.3%	2580	59.7%	146	3.4%	759	17.6%
<b>Chinese, Japanese &amp; SE Asian</b>	89	19	21.3%	45	50.6%	4	4.5%	21	23.6%
<b>Middle Eastern</b>	385	108	28.1%	185	48.1%	31	8.1%	61	15.8%
<b>Mixed race - Black and White</b>	64	22	34.4%	18	28.1%	14	21.9%	10	15.6%
<b>Mixed race Asian and White</b>	21	4	19.0%	8	38.1%	3	14.3%	6	28.6%
<b>Traveller, Gypsy, Roma</b>	1	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Total	62531	14114	22.6%	34541	55.2%	4065	6.5%	9811	15.7%
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### How adults are found or return

<b>What does this table show</b>		<p>This table shows how adults were found / returned, broken down by ethnicity, e.g., 40.3% of missing incidents relating to 'White – North European' adults being missing are resolved by the adult being found by the police. Please note that this data is at an incident level.</p> <p>Please note that incidents where ethnicity was unknown have been removed from this table.</p>							
<b>Number of police forces this data represents</b>		15							
<b>Ethnicity (adults)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Found by police</b>	<b>Percent found by police</b>	<b>Returned of their own accord</b>	<b>Percent returned of their own accord</b>	<b>Found by other professionals</b>	<b>Percent found by other professional</b>	<b>Found other</b>	<b>Percent other</b>
White – North European	35377	14263	40.3%	14459	40.9%	954	2.7%	5701	16.1%
White – South European	373	168	45.0%	96	25.7%	26	7.0%	83	22.3%
Black	6072	1889	31.1%	2773	45.7%	116	1.9%	1294	21.3%
Asian	3553	1240	34.9%	1414	39.8%	58	1.6%	841	23.7%
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	88	35	39.8%	32	36.4%	6	6.8%	15	17.0%
Middle Eastern	128	46	35.9%	45	35.2%	11	8.6%	26	20.3%
Mixed race - Black and White	28	10	35.7%	6	21.4%	8	28.6%	4	14.3%
Mixed race Asian and White	14	8	57.1%	2	14.3%	1	7.1%	3	21.4%
Traveller, Gypsy, Roma	2	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>45635</b>	<b>17660</b>	<b>38.7%</b>	<b>18828</b>	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>1180</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>7967</b>	<b>17.5%</b>

## Local Authority data

### Missing individuals and incidents

Number of looked after children broken down by ethnicity PLUS number of missing looked after children broken down by ethnicity				
What does this table show	This table shows the number of children who are looked after broken down by ethnicity, and of those children how many were reported missing. It also shows what percentage of children who are looked after are of different ethnicities, as well as the percentage of total children who are looked after going missing. So, for example, 71.2% of all children who are looked after are White, but only 69.2% of children who are looked after and reported missing are white.			
Number of local authorities this data represents	152			
Ethnicity	Number of looked after children total	Percentage of looked after children total	Number of missing looked after children	Percentage of looked after children missing
White	73259	71.2%	7560	69.2%
Asian or Asian British	5393	5.2%	490	4.5%
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	7752	7.5%	1140	10.4%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	9430	9.2%	1089	10.0%
Another ethnic group	5412	5.3%	547	5.0%
Information not available	1635	1.6%	94	0.9%
Total	102881		10920	10.6%

### Missing incidents broken down by ethnicity for looked after children

<b>What does this table show</b>	<p>This table shows the number of missing children who are looked after broken down by ethnicity, and the number of missing incidents broken down by ethnicity. The percentages show how many looked after children who go missing are of each ethnicity, and how many missing incidents relate to each ethnicity. The table also shows how many incidents on average each missing child will have. So, for example, 69.2% of children who are looked after and reported missing are White; 70.1% of missing incidents relate to White children who are looked after going missing; and each White looked after child was reported missing on average 6.3 times.</p> <p>Please note that this data only represents those local authorities able to share both individual missing children and missing incident data by ethnicity for children who are looked after.</p>				
<b>Number of local authorities this data represents</b>	151				
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of looked after children missing children</b>	<b>Percentage missing looked after children</b>	<b>Number of looked after children missing incidents</b>	<b>Percentage incidents</b>	<b>Average number of incidents per missing child</b>
White	7447	69.2%	47097	70.1%	6.3
Asian or Asian British	490	4.6%	1989	3.0%	4.1
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	1140	10.6%	7620	11.3%	6.7
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	1089	10.1%	8398	12.5%	7.7
Another ethnic group	547	5.1%	2000	3.0%	3.7
Information not available	49	0.5%	117	0.2%	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>10762</b>		<b>67221</b>		<b>6.2</b>

### Missing incidents broken down by ethnicity for all children

<b>What does this table show</b>	<p>This table shows the total number of missing children broken down by ethnicity, and the number of missing incidents broken down by ethnicity. The percentages show how many children who go missing are of each ethnicity, and how many missing incidents relate to each ethnicity. The table also shows how many incidents on average each missing child will have. So, for example, 67% of children who are reported missing are White; 68.7% of missing incidents relate to White children going missing; and each White child was reported missing on average 3 times.</p> <p>Please note that this data only represents those local authorities able to share the totals of both individual missing children and missing incident data by ethnicity.</p>				
<b>Number of local authorities this data represents</b>	<p>Missing children individuals: 136</p> <p>Missing children incidents: 135</p>				
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of missing children total</b>	<b>Percent of missing children</b>	<b>Number of missing incidents</b>	<b>Percentage of missing incidents</b>	<b>Average number of incidents per child</b>
<b>White</b>	31246	67.0%	93990	68.7%	3.0
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	1731	3.7%	4399	3.2%	2.5
<b>Black, African, Caribbean or Black British</b>	3316	7.1%	11934	8.7%	3.6
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	3523	7.6%	13482	9.9%	3.8
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	1321	2.8%	3070	2.2%	2.3
<b>Information not available</b>	5525	11.8%	9964	7.3%	1.8
<b>Total</b>	46662		136839		

## Risk data

Child sexual exploitation risk flags (looked after children)					
What does this table show	This table shows the number and percentage of incidents where looked after children have gone missing and the incident has been flagged as having a CSE marker.				
Number of local authorities this data represents	92				
Ethnicity	Number of looked after children missing incidents where CSE data was available	Percentage looked after children	Number of looked after children CSE incidents	Percentage missing looked after children	Percentage of cases where CSE risk flagged
White	29209	71.1%	5105	75.0%	17.5%
Asian or Asian British	1191	2.9%	177	2.6%	14.9%
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	4036	9.8%	447	6.6%	11.1%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	5084	12.4%	938	13.8%	18.5%
Other ethnic group	1492	3.6%	135	2.0%	9.0%
Information not available	49	0.1%	4	0.1%	8.2%
Total	41061		6806		

Child sexual exploitation risk flags (all children)					
What does this table show	This table shows the number and percentage of incidents where any children have gone missing and the incident has been flagged as having a CSE marker.				
Number of local authorities this data represents	83				
Ethnicity	Number of total missing incidents where CSE data was available	Percentage of missing incidents	Number of CSE incidents	Percentage CSE incidents	Percentage of cases where CSE risk flagged
White	55180	68.4%	8466	75.0%	15.3%
Asian or Asian British	2555	3.2%	377	3.3%	14.8%
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	7153	8.9%	777	6.9%	10.9%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	7830	9.7%	1201	10.6%	15.3%
Other ethnic group	1962	2.4%	248	2.2%	12.6%
Information not available	5987	7.4%	217	1.9%	3.6%
Total	80667		11286		

Mental health risk flags (looked after children)					
What does this table show	This table shows the number and percentage of incidents where any children have gone missing and the incident has been flagged as having a mental health marker.				
Number of local authorities this data represents	59				
Ethnicity	Number of looked after children missing incidents where mental health data was available	Percentage looked after children	Number of looked after children mental health incidents	Percentage missing looked after children	Percentage of cases with mental health flag
White	17791	73.9%	3264	76.5%	18.3%
Asian or Asian British	530	2.2%	90	2.1%	17.0%
Black , African, Caribbean or Black British	2141	8.9%	347	8.1%	16.2%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	2730	11.3%	488	11.4%	17.9%
Other ethnic group	866	3.6%	75	1.8%	8.7%
Information not available	6	0.0%	5	0.1%	83.3%
Total	24064		4269		

Mental health risk flags (all children)					
What does this table show	This table shows the number and percentage of incidents where any children have gone missing and the incident has been flagged as having a mental health marker.				
Number of local authorities this data represents	53				
Ethnicity	Number of total missing incidents where mental health data was available	Percentage of missing incidents	Number of mental health incidents	Percentage mental health incidents	Percentage of cases where mental health risk flagged
White	34631	67.9%	6785	80.3%	19.6%
Asian or Asian British	1428	2.8%	157	1.9%	11.0%
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	4996	9.8%	561	6.6%	11.2%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	4792	9.4%	724	8.6%	15.1%
Other ethnic group	1411	2.8%	115	1.4%	8.2%
Information not available	3769	7.4%	109	1.3%	2.9%
Total	51027		8451		



<b>Criminal exploitation risk flags (looked after children)</b>					
<b>What does this table show</b>	This table shows the number and percentage of incidents where looked after children have gone missing and the incident has been flagged as having a CCE marker.				
<b>Number of local authorities this data represents</b>	83				
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of looked after children missing incidents where criminal exploitation data was available</b>	<b>Percentage looked after children</b>	<b>Number of looked after children criminal exploitation incidents</b>	<b>Percentage missing looked after children</b>	<b>Percentage of cases with child criminal exploitation flag</b>
<b>White</b>	47097	70.1%	4676	70.6%	9.9%
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	1989	3.0%	212	3.2%	10.7%
<b>Black, African, Caribbean or Black British</b>	7620	11.3%	807	12.2%	10.6%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	8398	12.5%	729	11.0%	8.7%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	2000	3.0%	200	3.0%	10.0%
<b>Information not available</b>	117	0.2%	2	0.0%	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	67221		6626		9.9%

### Criminal exploitation risk flags (all children)

<b>What does this table show</b>	This table shows the number and percentage of incidents where any children have gone missing and the incident has been flagged as having a CCE marker.				
<b>Number of local authorities this data represents</b>	76				
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of total missing incidents where criminal exploitation data was available</b>	<b>Percentage of missing incidents</b>	<b>Number of criminal exploitation incidents</b>	<b>Percentage of all criminal exploitation incidents</b>	<b>Percentage of cases where criminal exploitation risk flagged</b>
<b>White</b>	52482	69.0%	8979	71.6%	17.1%
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	2501	3.3%	488	3.9%	19.5%
<b>Black, African, Caribbean or Black British</b>	6079	8.0%	1490	11.9%	24.5%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	7158	9.4%	1172	9.3%	16.4%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	1911	2.5%	238	1.9%	12.5%
<b>Information not available</b>	5983	7.9%	182	1.5%	3.0%
<b>Total</b>	76114		12549		

Trafficking risk flags (looked after children)					
<b>What does this table show</b>	This table shows the number and percentage of incidents where looked after children have gone missing and the incident has been flagged as having a trafficking marker.				
<b>Number of local authorities this data represents</b>	56				
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of looked after children missing incidents where trafficking data was available</b>	<b>Percentage of looked after children incidents</b>	<b>Number of looked after children trafficking incidents</b>	<b>Percentage missing looked after children</b>	<b>Percentage of cases with trafficking marker</b>
<b>White</b>	17648	73.7%	1038	57.1%	5.9%
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	524	2.2%	85	4.7%	16.2%
<b>Black, African, Caribbean or Black British</b>	2200	9.2%	283	15.6%	12.9%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	2572	10.7%	289	15.9%	11.2%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	988	4.1%	124	6.8%	12.6%
<b>Information not available</b>	9	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	23941		1819		

### Trafficking risk flags (all children)

<b>What does this table show</b>	This table shows the number and percentage of incidents where any children have gone missing and the incident has been flagged as having a trafficking marker.				
<b>Number of local authorities this data represents</b>	52				
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of total missing incidents where trafficking data was available</b>	<b>Percentage of missing incidents</b>	<b>Number of trafficking incidents</b>	<b>Percentage trafficking incidents</b>	<b>Percentage of cases where trafficking risk flagged</b>
<b>White</b>	35338	70.5%	1706	58.8%	4.8%
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	1435	2.9%	147	5.1%	10.2%
<b>Black, African, Caribbean or Black British</b>	3616	7.2%	459	15.8%	12.7%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	4390	8.8%	407	14.0%	9.3%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	1301	2.6%	113	3.9%	8.7%
<b>Information not available</b>	4069	8.1%	67	2.3%	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	50149		2899		