

Involuntary Examinations for Children Reported by Age Groups with a Focus on the Tampa Bay Area

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I. Introduction

The Baker Act (Chapter 394, Part I, Florida Statutes) is Florida's law governing mental health treatment. The Baker Act Reporting Center at the de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute receives processes and analyzes certain data related to involuntary examinations initiated under the Baker Act. The Baker Act specifies that these data are to be submitted to the Florida Department of Children and Families. The Baker Act Reporting Center receives these data on behalf of the DCF.

The Baker Act Reporting Center has received and entered data from over 2 million paper involuntary examination forms into an electronic database since 1997. These include BA52 forms for involuntary examinations initiated by law enforcement officials and mental health professionals, as well as ex-parte court orders for involuntary examinations based on sworn testimony. More specifics about data reporting requirements within the Baker Act and the Baker Act data can be found at the Baker Act Reporting Center website (<http://www.usf.edu/cbcs/baker-act/>).

It is important to understand that not all involuntary examinations result in admissions. Data in this report only include involuntary Baker Act examinations and do not include counts of involuntary or voluntary admissions and should NOT be construed as admission data but, rather, involuntary examination data.

When interpreting these results it is also important to understand some of the complexities related to the location and availability of Baker Act receiving facilities and the services they offer. This is a complicated issue that is beyond a full discussion in this brief report and that analyses of the Baker Act data alone cannot fully address. Readers of this report are cautioned *not to over interpret* the counts presented and to understand that high versus low counts of involuntary examinations are not in and of themselves representative of "good" or "bad" policy decisions. Often, more information is needed about a particular community, one or more laws/policies/regulations, as well as the funding environment for multiple systems to accurately interpret the numbers in reports from these data.

II. Method

Statewide data for involuntary examinations for July 2012 through June 2017 were used for these analyses. County of residence as reported on the Cover Sheet (form MH-3118) was used to categorize involuntary examinations by county. Note that counts in this report are not of *children*, but of *involuntary (Baker Act) examinations* of children.

Redaction: Small cell sizes (25 or less) were redacted from this report. The purpose of this redaction is to prevent identification of people. Redaction should be approached contextually, in that smaller and/or more geographically limited populations need to have counts redacted at higher numbers in order to address concerns about identifying individuals. There is no definitive source on redaction. Baker Act Reporting Center staff will provide additional information about redaction, upon request.

This report was created to address a request from Katie LaGrone, Florida Investigative Correspondent, The E.W. Scrips Company (ABC Action News, WPTV5 and Fox4).

Results

I. Statewide

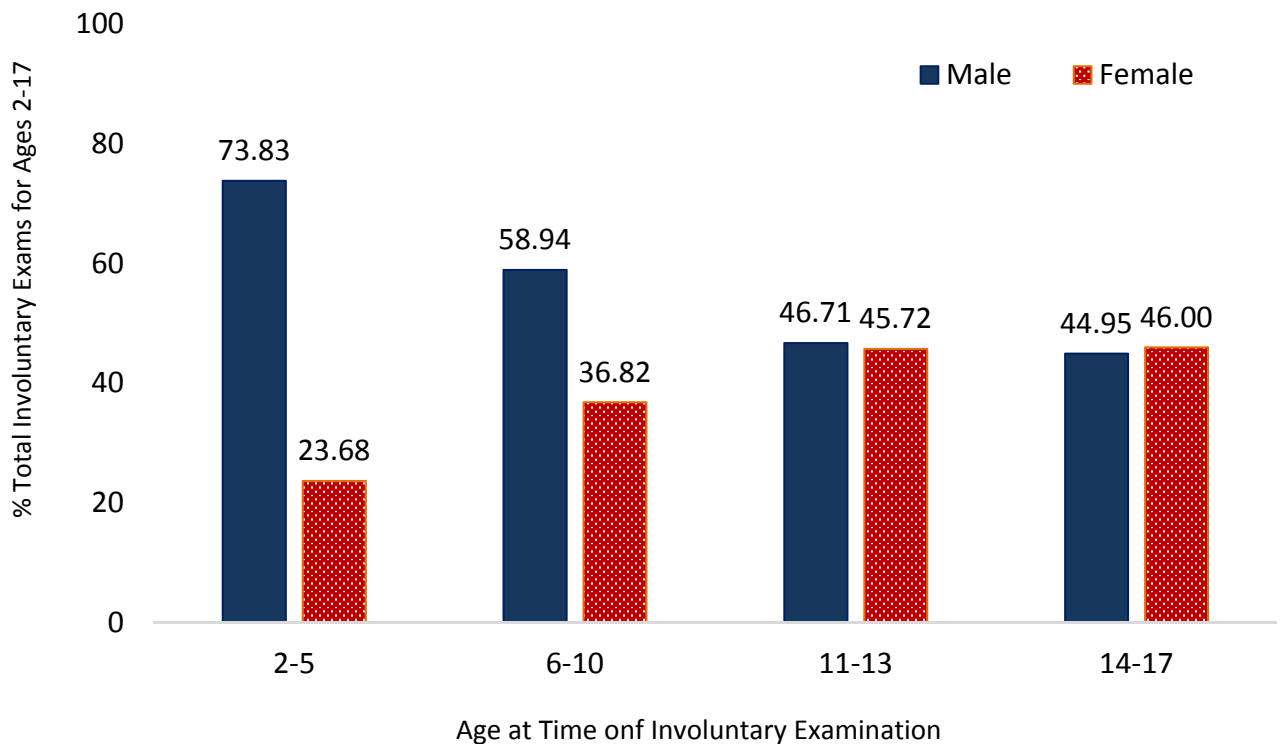
Counts of involuntary examinations by age groups for five fiscal years are reported in Table 1. The percent change from FY12/13 to FY16/17 is also reported.

Table 1: Involuntary Examinations by Age Groups for Five Fiscal Years

Fiscal Year	Age Groups				Total 2-17
	2-5	6-10	11-13	14-17	
12/13	126	1,608	7,539	17,558	26,831
13/14	83	1,743	8,430	20,107	30,363
14/15	105	2,026	9,009	21,490	32,630
15/16	117	2,047	9,220	21,147	32,531
16/17	114	2,227	9,640	20,776	32,757
% Change FY 12/13 to 16/17	-9.52	38.50	27.87	18.33	22.09

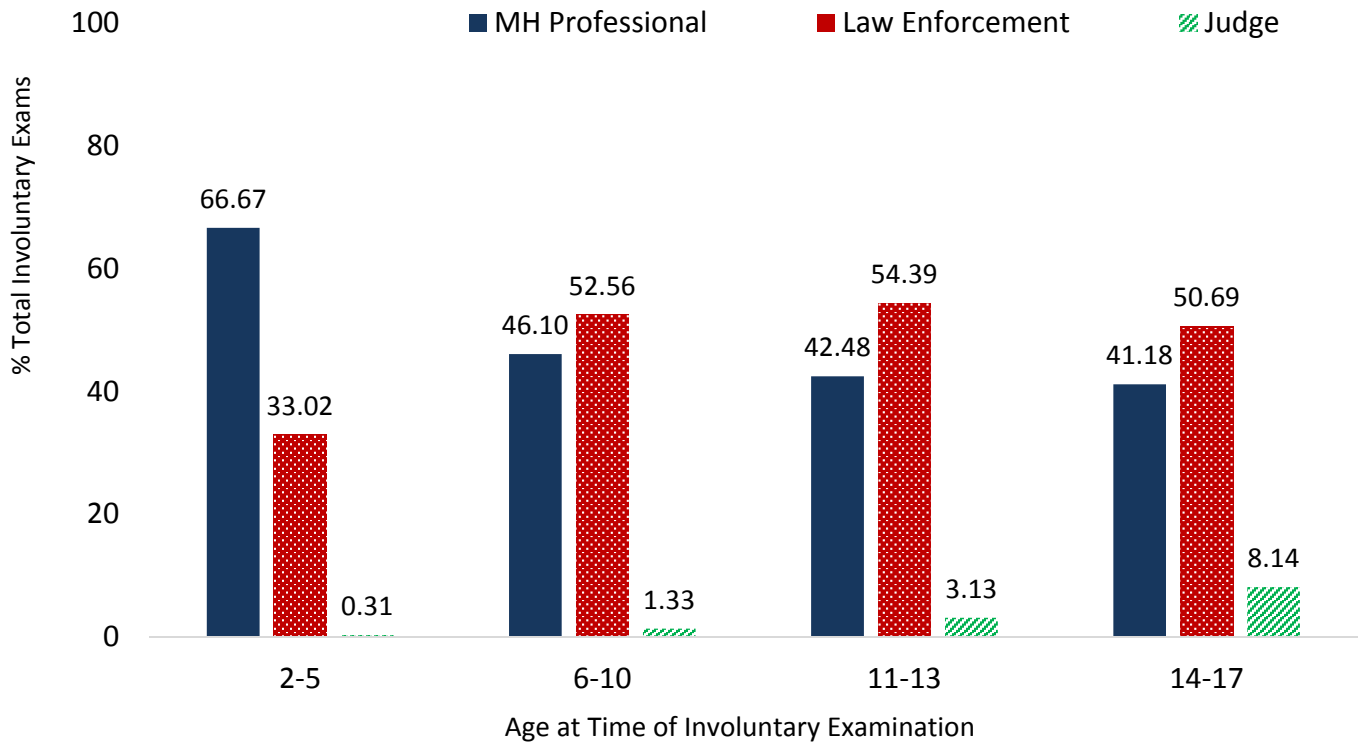
The distribution of gender by age group is shown in Figure 1. A small percentage of forms did not report gender, such that percentages of males added to females in each age group do not sum to 100.

Figure 1: Gender by Age Group



The distribution of initiator type by age group is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Initiator Type by Age Group



II. Counties in Three Florida Regions

Counts of involuntary examinations for residents aged 2-17 of three areas in Florida are summarized in Tables 2, 3, and 4. Counts are reported for children ages 2-5, 6-9, 10-13 and 14-17, but are not reported for each county for ages under 6 because of low cell sizes. Rather, counts of involuntary examinations for people under 6 are pooled for each group of counties.

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Table 2: Involuntary Examinations for Residents of Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota Counties by Age Group

Age 2-17						
County of Residence	FY12/13	FY13/14	FY14/15	FY15/16	FY16/17	% Change FY 12/13 to 16/17*
Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk & Sarasota	557	620	689	679	696	24.96
Age 2-5						
Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk & Sarasota	51	33	33	31	33	-35.29
Age 6-9						
Hernando	**	**	**	27	34	100.00
Hillsborough	120	131	183	220	207	72.50
Manatee	**	34	47	52	45	114.29
Pasco	60	55	57	70	95	58.33
Pinellas	176	201	177	170	157	-10.80
Polk	81	84	132	119	126	55.56
Sarasota	42	32	34	34	57	35.71
<i>Total</i>	<i>517</i>	<i>556</i>	<i>646</i>	<i>692</i>	<i>721</i>	<i>39.46</i>
Age 10-13						
Hernando	85	99	105	85	133	56.47
Hillsborough	706	711	861	905	824	16.71
Manatee	67	120	148	166	177	164.18
Pasco	243	249	307	396	348	43.21
Pinellas	564	613	634	563	647	14.72
Polk	392	537	595	567	451	15.05
Sarasota	153	171	159	192	162	5.88
<i>Total</i>	<i>2,210</i>	<i>2,500</i>	<i>2,809</i>	<i>2,874</i>	<i>2,742</i>	<i>24.07</i>
Age 14-17						
Hernando	199	228	273	218	208	4.52
Hillsborough	1,436	1,638	1,863	1,784	1,758	22.42
Manatee	240	313	342	306	299	24.58
Pasco	617	690	812	788	796	29.01
Pinellas	1,184	1,352	1,436	1,320	1,397	17.99
Polk	748	1,089	1,119	1,038	893	19.39
Sarasota	359	416	492	451	473	31.75
<i>Total</i>	<i>4,783</i>	<i>5,726</i>	<i>6,337</i>	<i>5,905</i>	<i>5,824</i>	<i>21.76</i>

Percent change for smaller counts needs to be interpreted with caution because of the impact small changes in number have on a percent change when the original starting number is small. Percent change is not reported for certain rows because the percentage does not provide useful information. For example, this applies to counts for Hernando and Manatee counties in Table 2.

** Counts below 25 were redacted from this report.

Table 3: Involuntary Examinations for Residents of Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie Counties by Age Group

Age 2-17						
County of Residence	FY12/13	FY13/14	FY14/15	FY15/16	FY16/17	% Change FY 12/13 to 16/17*
Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach & St. Lucie Counties	2,229	2,311	2,468	2,377	6,343	-26.87
Age 2-5						
Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach & St. Lucie Counties	**	**	**	**	**	-18.18
Age 6-9						
Indian River	**	**	**	**	**	*
Martin	**	**	**	**	**	*
Okeechobee	**	**	**	**	**	*
Palm Beach	51	52	78	65	80	56.86
St. Lucie	**	**	33	35	43	*
<i>Total</i>	<i>88</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>132</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>151</i>	<i>71.59</i>
Age 10-13						
Indian River	52	70	48	54	46	-11.54
Martin	29	**	26	36	33	13.79
Okeechobee	**	**	**	37	44	*
Palm Beach	392	389	406	393	442	12.76
St. Lucie	119	120	146	137	151	26.89
<i>Total</i>	<i>598</i>	<i>607</i>	<i>635</i>	<i>657</i>	<i>716</i>	<i>19.73</i>
Age 14-17						
Indian River	145	125	119	106	102	-29.66
Martin	70	89	118	77	104	48.57
Okeechobee	51	76	62	62	60	17.65
Palm Beach	951	986	1,089	1,083	1,083	13.88
St. Lucie	315	316	306	265	281	-10.79
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,531</i>	<i>1,592</i>	<i>1,694</i>	<i>1,593</i>	<i>1,630</i>	<i>6.40</i>

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Table 4: Involuntary Examinations for Residents of Charlotte, Collier, Hendry, and Lee Counties by Age Group

Age 2-5						
County of Residence	FY12/13	FY13/14	FY14/15	FY15/16	FY16/17	% Change FY 12/13 to 16/17*
Charlotte, Collier, Hendry & Lee Counties	1,461	1,608	1,891	2,029	2,032	39.08
Age 2-5						
Charlotte, Collier, Hendry & Lee Counties	**	**	**	**	**	*
Age 6-9						
Charlotte	15	20	22	23	26	73.33
Collier	**	**	29	**	**	*
Hendry	**	**	**	**	**	*
103132	30	50	53	61	95	216.67
<i>Total</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>141</i>	<i>120.31</i>
Age 10-13						
Charlotte	48	55	89	76	102	112.50
Collier	76	88	140	109	97	27.63
Hendry	**	**	29	40	**	50.00
Lee	280	289	319	319	326	16.43
<i>Total</i>	<i>412</i>	<i>453</i>	<i>577</i>	<i>544</i>	<i>537</i>	<i>30.34</i>
Age 14-17						
Charlotte	118	159	212	242	217	83.90
Collier	171	214	221	335	313	83.04
Hendry	**	30	33	48	29	93.33
Lee	677	664	735	745	792	16.99
<i>Total</i>	<i>981</i>	<i>1,067</i>	<i>1,201</i>	<i>1,370</i>	<i>1,351</i>	<i>37.72</i>

Percent change for smaller counts needs to be interpreted with caution because of the impact small changes in number have on a percent change when the original starting number is small. Percent change is not reported for certain rows because the percentage does not provide useful information.

** Counts below 25 were redacted from this report.