

# 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**



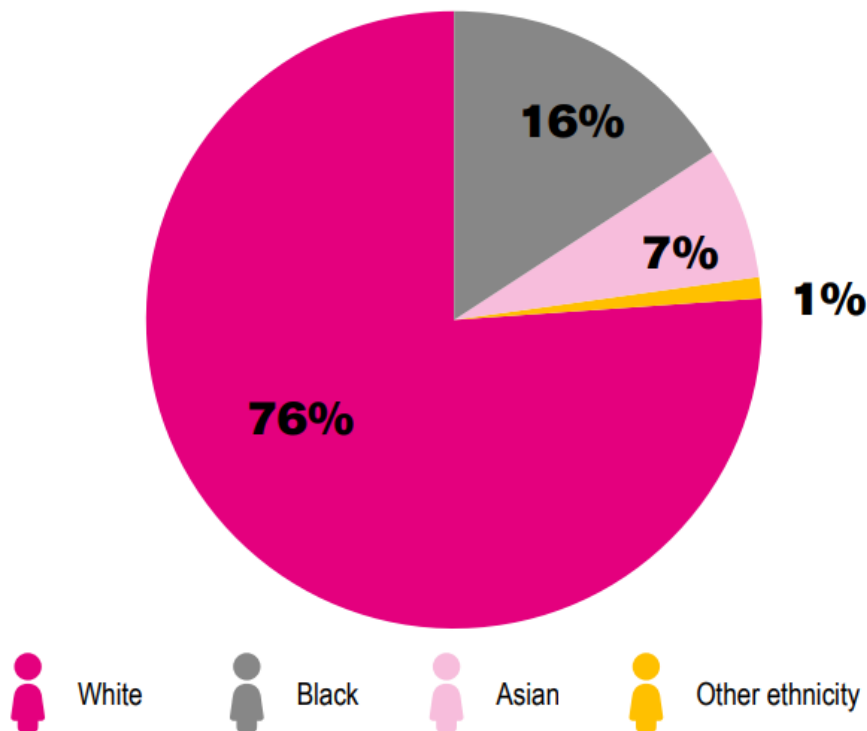
[www.missingpeople.org.uk](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk)

**missing  
people**

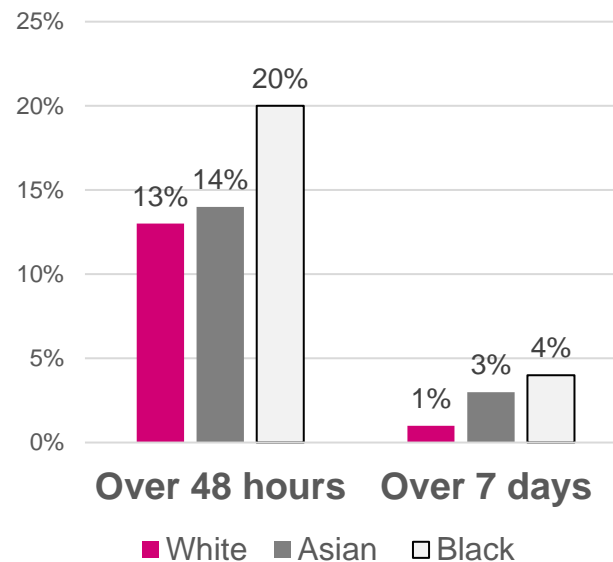
Registered Charity No. 1020419

# Key findings

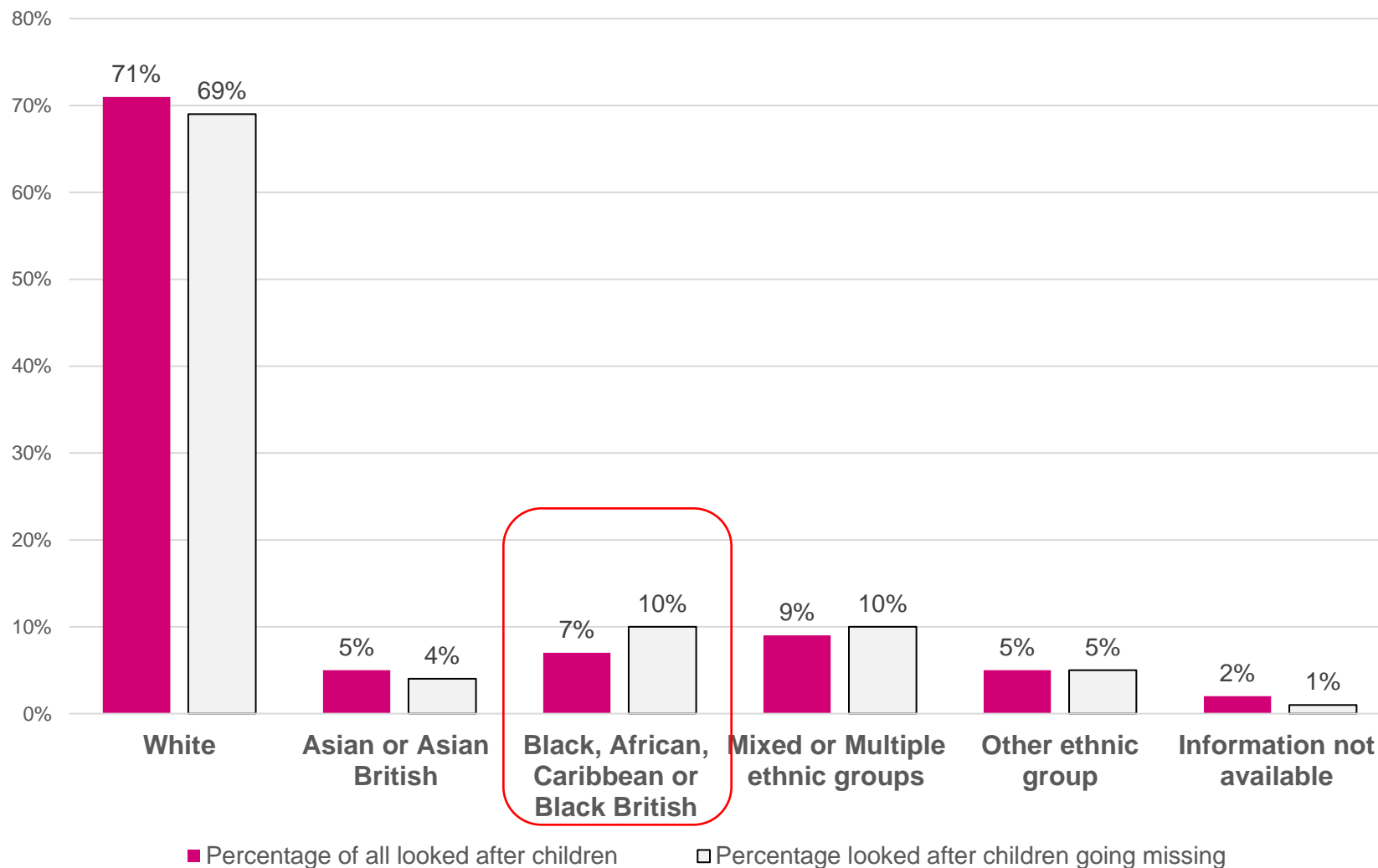
The ethnicity of missing children (aged 0 - 17)



Length of time missing (child incidents)

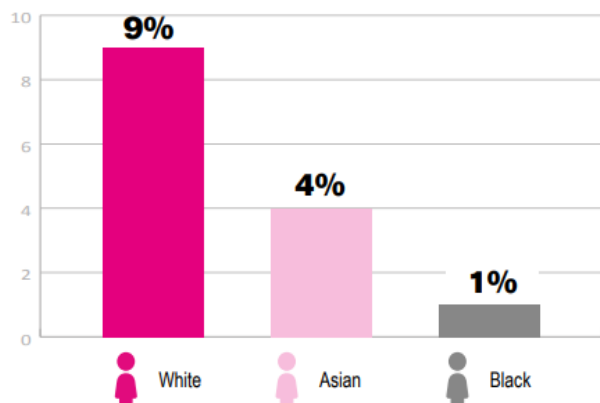


# Care experienced children

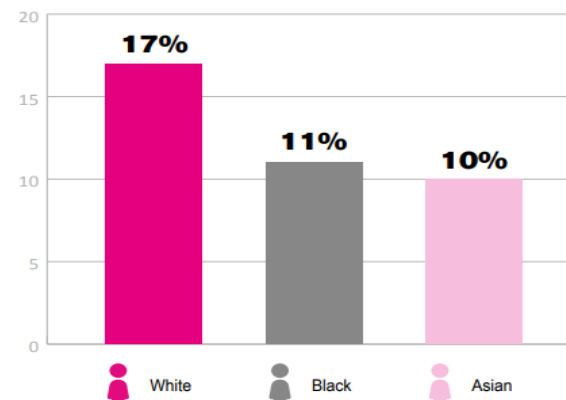


# Under-representation in risk markers

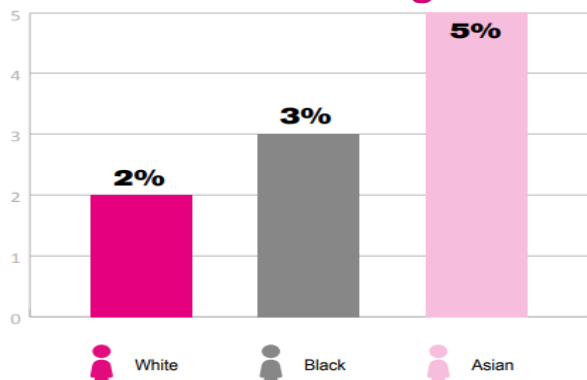
## Child mental health



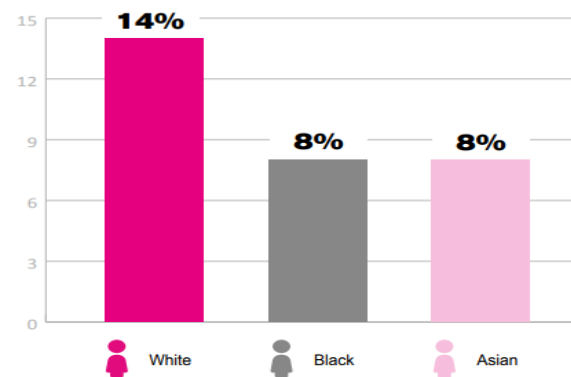
## CCE



## Child trafficking



## CSE



***“We’re told not to  
make everything  
about race, but it is  
about race.”***

**The experiences of Black missing children  
and their parents**

July 2024



**missing  
people**

Registered Charity in England and Wales (1020419)  
and in Scotland (SC247032)

[www.missingpeople.org.uk](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk)

**missing  
people**

Registered Charity No. 1020419

# Reasons for missing

- Home life, including family conflict and feeling unsafe at home
- Experiencing a lack of belonging, identity and acceptance
- Exploitation and risks outside the home

*“Black people are more marginalised therefore they struggle with finding good support systems that they can fully trust”*

*“May have stricter parents, they might tell you that you can’t do something so you might go missing so you can do this”*

*“I don’t think that Black children are given the space to be themselves in this society, in this culture”*



*“He’s looking, he’s just looking for somewhere to belong. And his crook friends make him feel like he belongs. And he hasn’t had that acceptance [anywhere else]”*

[professionals] *"They don't care as much... because most the time they're [Black people] seen as bad people... like most the time they're seen as doing bad things... It's racism"*

*'If Black young people hang round in groups, everyone assumes they're in a gang. Those kids are associated with being horrible. They just assume you've brought it on yourself.'*

*"We're overlooked. Basically.' Like, just...yeah, being overlooked, not being listened to, not being understood"*

*"Racial profiling, they might think that I'm just a thug or that I'm making it up for attention or to try and get away with something"*

*"They'd probably just say it's their fault for going to meet someone they don't know."*

## Racism



*"Like, if a white girl kicks off at school, she needs to be understood. If I kick off, I need to calm down. No-one's seeing it from my point of view. No-one's seeing this might be hard for me"*

# Recommendations

- 1. Listening to children and young people**
- 2. Equity and equality**
- 3. Better representation in the media**
  - Equal coverage
  - Held to account on poor reporting
- 4. Be child-first and child-centred**
- 5. Safe spaces for young people**
- 6. Representation matters: a diverse workforce**
- 7. Access to support for parents**
  - Peer support
  - Dedicated services
- 8. A whole family approach & better multi-agency working**