

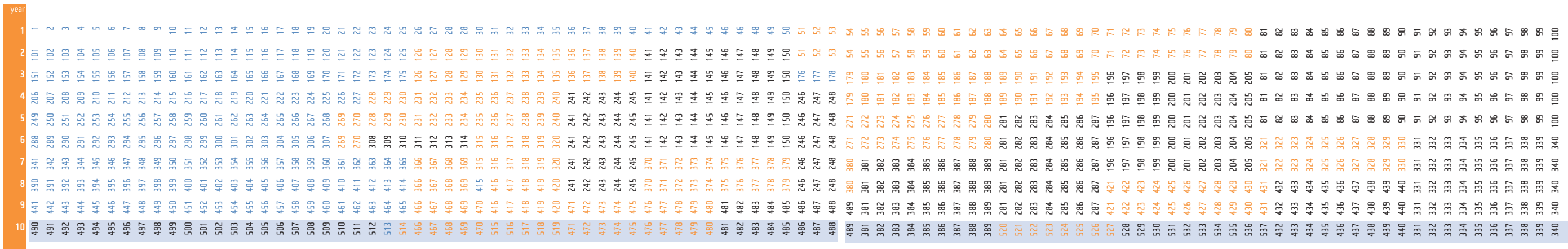
Comparing the snapshot and the movie

The example assumes that the service started from scratch in year one. Fifty newborns (cases 1-50 and coloured in blue) are admitted, followed by 30 one year olds (cases 51-80 coloured in orange) and 20 older children (cases 81-100 coloured in black). In year two, the places vacated by the children who complete the intervention are filled by new cases (101-150) at the same rate of newborns (blue), one year olds (orange) and older children (black). The pattern continues, until ten years after its inception 538 children have been served by the intervention. By counting the cases up by colour, it can be seen that just over half (50.5%) of the cases are newborns, slightly more than 30% (30.2%) are one year olds and the remaining 19.3% are older. This might be counted as the true representation of what the agency does.

Now consider the snapshot and movie sampling options. First, a snapshot is taken of all the children getting a service at a point in year ten, counting down the grey-tinted column from case 490, indicated by the grey band in the illustration. This produces the following picture:

	snapshot	true representation
newborns	24%	50.5%
one year olds	29	30.2
older children	47	19.3

Because the population of older children has been in receipt of the service for longer than the population of younger children, the snapshot encompasses many more older children (47%) than newborns (24%) – the reverse of what was considered to be the true representation.



Comparing the snapshot and the movie

Now take a movie picture of all the children who began the intervention in the last two years, that is, every case after number 440 – the last to receive an intervention in year 8 (indicated by the three grey tinted areas in the illustration).

	movie of last two years	true representation
newborns	50.5%	50.5%
one year olds	29.9	30.2
older children	19.6	19.3

Evidently, the movie picture is giving a picture of activity much closer to what was considered the true representation. Of course, an agency may have a particular interest in the older children, since they take so much longer to support – in which case it might make good sense to undertake both snapshot and movie exercises.

The illustrations give an indication of the different pictures that can be derived from snapshot and movie representations; many other hybrids might be explored. The goal is always to find a sample that is representative of whatever issue is being addressed.

