

**OUR GOAL:**  
Help families  
and communities  
improve the  
well-being of  
children in their  
own homes and  
in out-of-home  
care

As a newborn, Treana spent six months withdrawing from a prenatal addiction to heroin. As a toddler, she was permanently removed from her mother's custody. As a child, she moved with her grandparents 14 times in as many years while they struggled with money management and evictions. As a high school student, she received straight A's in Advanced Placement courses while playing sports and working on the school newspaper.

Treana was awarded the Governor's Scholarship for foster youth in 2002, amongst other scholarships and student loans. She attended the University of Puget Sound and graduated in May of 2006 with a double major in English Literature and Politics & Government.

Treana's resiliency, determination, and hopeful spirit allowed her to rise above a difficult upbringing to become a college graduate. Finding a stable, supportive home at the age of 16 with her aunt and uncle and receiving Independent Living Services (ILS) and Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) from the Children's Administration helped too.

Treana worked nearly full-time as a nanny to support herself while carrying a full load of college classes. She barely made enough to scrape by, and could not depend on financial assistance from parents as most students do. Treana credits the ILS and ETV programs with giving her, "the freedom to feel like I wasn't just treading water...like I had the breathing room to go out to dinner with friends once in awhile."

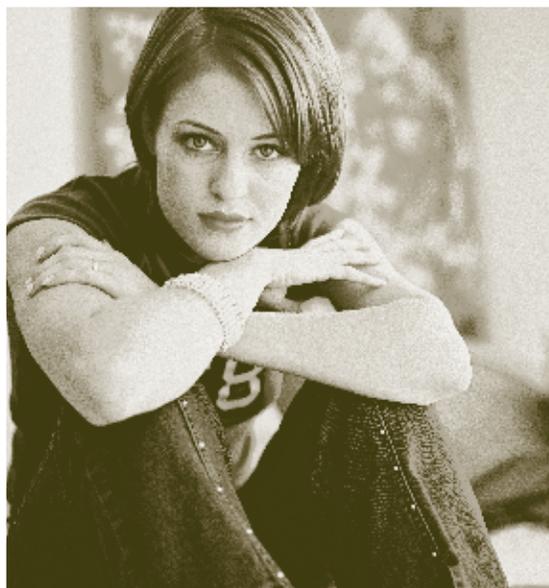
**Treana's resiliency, determination, and hopeful spirit allowed her to rise above a difficult upbringing to become a college graduate.**

Throughout her college career, Treana received financial assistance from the ILS and ETV programs for things like groceries, home supplies, toiletries, school clothes, textbooks, a computer, and rent.

Without help from these services, Treana says she couldn't have afforded a high-quality education at a small college, and couldn't have moved out of the dorms after two years like most students. Above all, without the ETV program to assist with plane tickets, she couldn't have studied abroad in Australia, "which was an incredible experience."

Treana will be returning to the University of Puget Sound in the summer of 2007 to pursue her Master's in Teaching degree. After graduate school, she plans to teach high school English. Having already contributed to the "Success Stories Of Youth In Care" video\* for foster parent training, Treana plans to continue advocating for kids in out-of-home care to ensure that they receive the same support and opportunities she has had, and more.

\*Treana's story is one of several "Success Stories of Youth In Care." This video was produced by the Children's Administration in cooperation with the Department of Information Services, and can be viewed at [www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/onGoingVd.asp](http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/onGoingVd.asp)



It is important to provide services to meet the medical, educational, emotional, and developmental needs of children so they can grow into healthy, well-adjusted adults. The Children’s Administration assesses these needs shortly after children enter care, using the Child Health and Education Track screening tool.

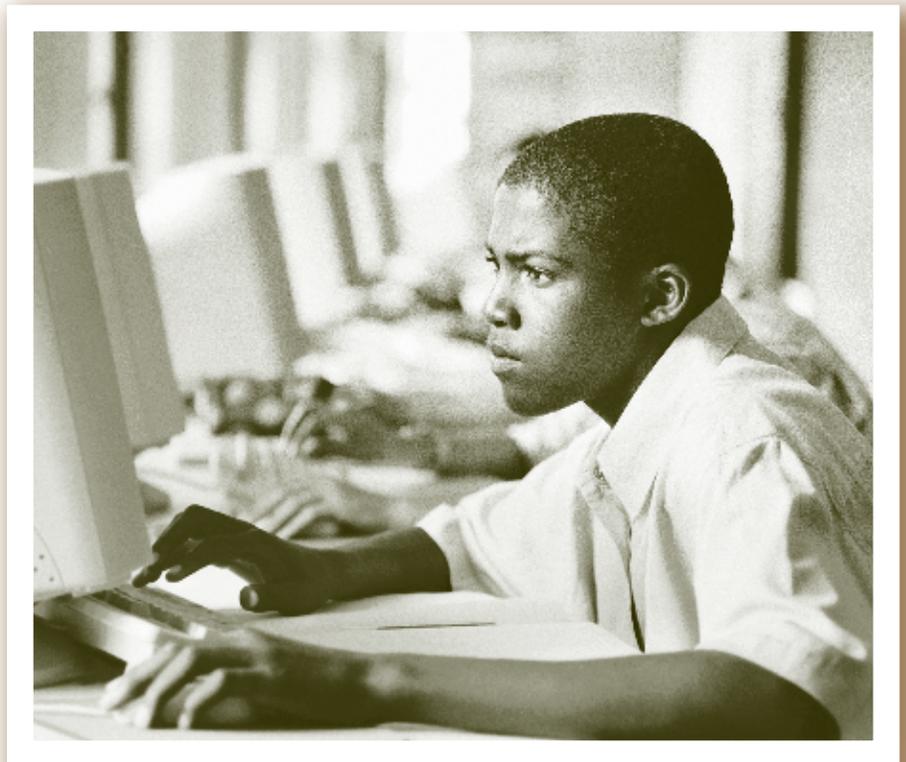
The administration provides Independent Living Services (ILS), Responsible Living Skills, Transition to Independence, and Education and Training Voucher programs to support both current and former foster children in achieving their educational goals and becoming self-sufficient adults. These programs focus on educating, training, and supporting foster youth in areas such as:

- Educational stability and achievement.
- Vocational training.
- Career exploration and applying for and retaining employment.
- Applying for housing and paying rent, deposits, and utility bills.
- Daily living skills (for example, money management and meal preparation).
- Avoiding high risk behavior.

Data from the Case and Management Information System (CAMIS) and case review is used to monitor the

well-being objectives of increasing worker visits with children and supporting children in placement in age-appropriate educational and developmental programs. The administration monitors these objectives through the following performance measures:

- Children visited every 90 days by their social worker.
- High school diploma, General Equivalency Development diploma, or educational or vocational enrollment.
- Youth in care who receive Independent Living Services (ILS).



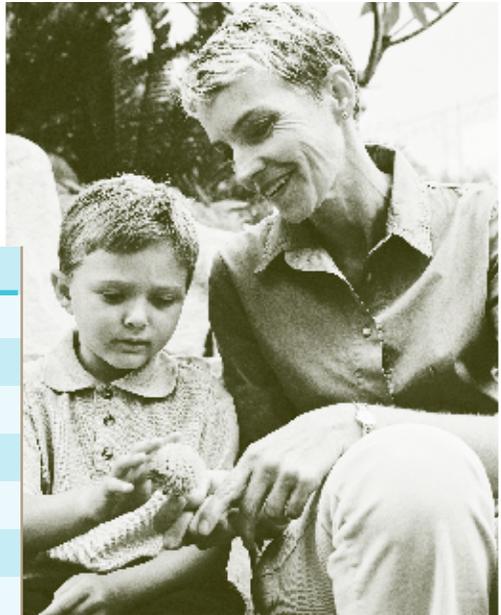
**OBJECTIVE:** Increase worker visits with children  
**MEASURED BY:** Children visited every 90 days by their social worker

In order to monitor the health and safety of children in out-of-home care, social workers must make contact with children on a regular basis.

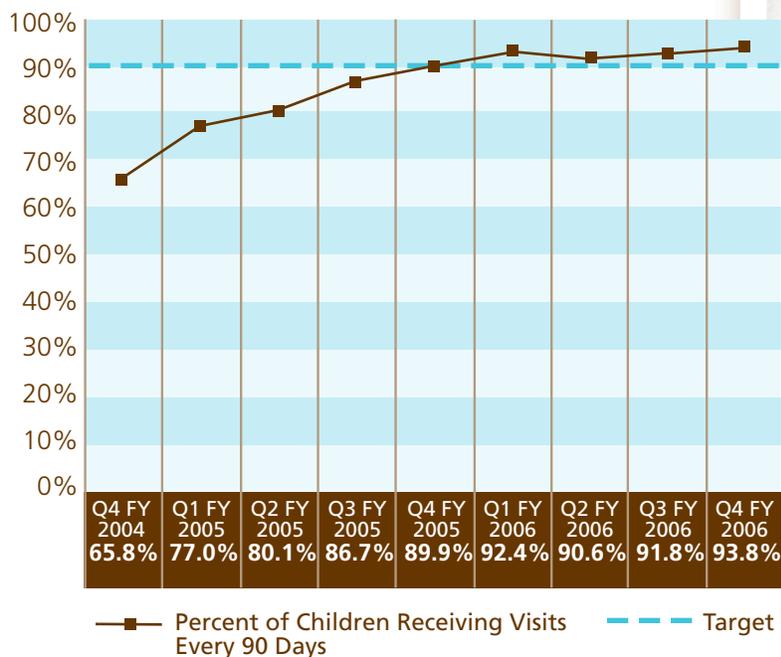
Social workers interact with children on their caseloads through telephone contact, attendance at meetings, and appointments related to a child's case. In addition, social workers are required to visit each child in person at the child's out-of-home placement a minimum of once every 90 days. These visits allow the social worker to assess the child's physical surroundings, as well as the child's adjustment to his or her placement, and to determine whether or not the placement is meeting the child's needs.

We are in the process of hiring and training additional social workers as part of our phase-in plan to increase the requirement for these visits to once every 30 days for all children. We have begun by focusing on our most vulnerable children, and now require 30-day visits for children who are dependents of the state, but are living with their parents. The administration's compliance with this new requirement increased from 32.3 to 56.4 percent between March 2006 and September 2006.

The initial target for this measure is that 90 percent of children in care be visited in their placement every 90 days. The administration has demonstrated significant progress on this measure, improving from 65.8 percent in the last quarter of Fiscal Year 2004 to exceeding the 90 percent target throughout Fiscal Year 2006.



**Social Worker Visits with Children in Out-of-Home Care\***



\*Percent of children in out-of-home placement who were seen face-to-face by their social worker in their caregiver's home at least once within the last 90 days. Source: July 2006 CAMIS download.

**OBJECTIVE:** Children in placement are supported in age-appropriate educational and developmental programs

**MEASURED BY:** High school diploma, General Equivalency Development diploma or educational or vocational enrollment

Children who have been removed from their families due to abuse or neglect may experience more difficulty in achieving success in a variety of life's domains than their peers in stable families. School achievement is often impacted when a child's home life is traumatic, or when there is transition from one home to another.

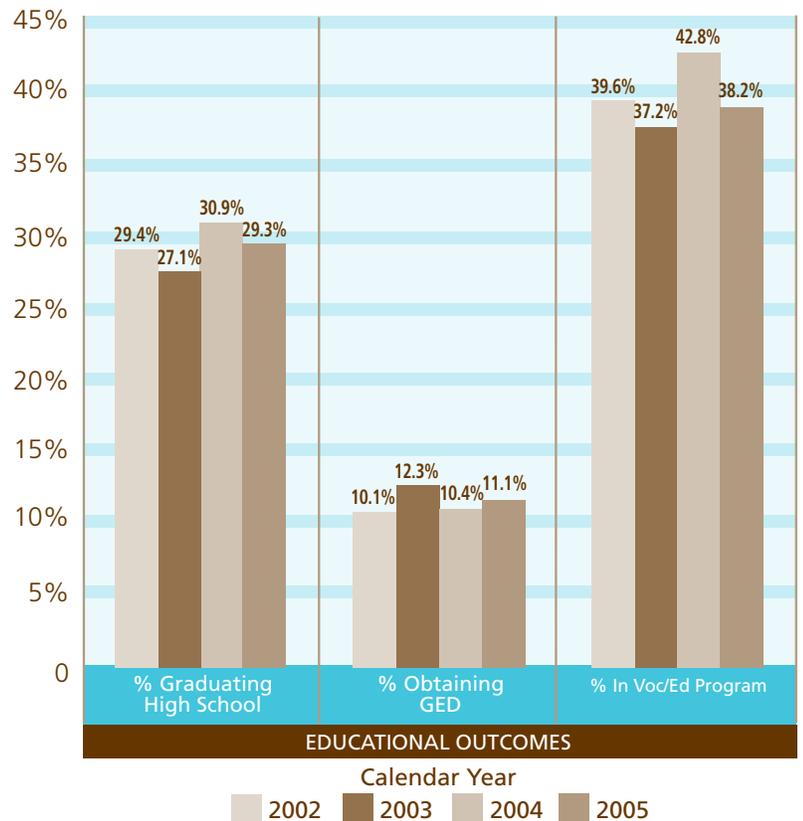
Educational achievement is one means by which a child's or youth's well-being can be assessed. The administration strives to support children and youth in out-of-home care in achieving concrete educational goals. The administration also tracks which youth transitioning into adulthood from out-of-home care received special education services during their time in care, and how many youth exiting care have aspirations for higher education.

In February 2006, Children's Administration launched a groundbreaking Education Advocacy Program in collaboration with Treehouse, a King County non-profit organization. Funding to place Education Advocacy Coordinators (EACs) in each of the six regions across the state has been provided by the Legislature. This statewide effort is intended to help more youth in foster care graduate from high school by supporting students' educational needs and guiding the advocacy process for foster youth. Nearly 500 children were referred to this program between February and June of 2006.

In Calendar Year 2005, 29.3 percent of youth turning 18 in foster care received a high school diploma, a slight decrease over the previous reporting period. Youth obtaining their GED increased from 10.4 percent in Calendar Year 2004 to 11.1 percent in 2005. Enrollment in an educational or vocational program enrollment decreased from 42.8 percent in Calendar Year 2004 to 38.2 percent in 2005.

Of those youth exiting care in 2005, 31.7 percent had received some type of special education services during their time in out-of-home care. In addition 34.4 percent had plans to pursue higher education after transitioning into independence.

**Youth Turning 18 in Foster Care Who Graduated from High School, Obtained a GED, or Were Enrolled in an Educational or Vocational Program at Time of Exit\***



\*Percent of youth age 18 or older who have been in care for at least one year and who left care without being placed into a permanent home, or are in a guardianship and receiving services from the administration, for whom educational outcomes could be obtained through records or self report. Source: Calendar year data from Educational Outcomes Surveys 2002 through 2005.

**OBJECTIVE:** Children in placement are supported in age-appropriate educational and developmental programs

**MEASURED BY:** Youth in care who receive Independent Living Services (ILS)

Youth who reach the age of majority in foster care often begin adulthood at a disadvantage. When questioned, many report feeling unprepared for the responsibility that their newfound independence requires. They lack the family supports that most young adults take for granted. As a result, former foster youth nationwide make up disproportionately high numbers of the population who have unplanned pregnancies and who become homeless, jobless, or incarcerated.

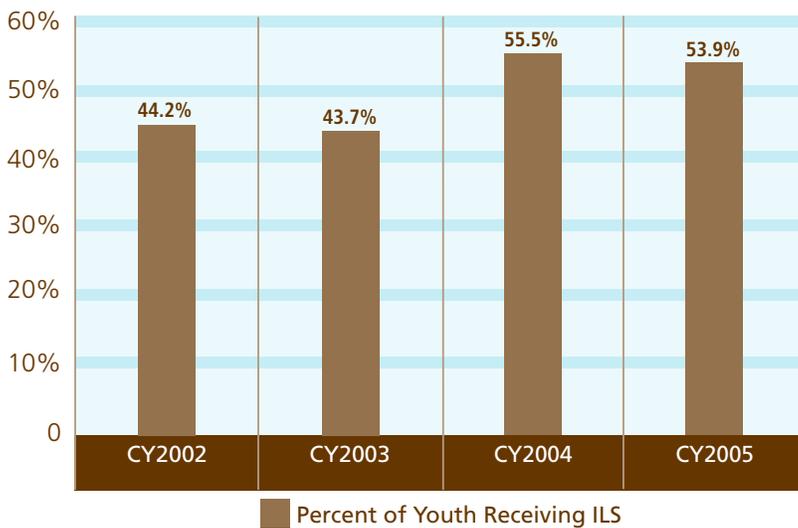
The federal Chafee Foster Care Independence Act, passed in 1999, provides funding to states to support young people transitioning out of foster care. Washington State utilizes Chafee funding to contract with community-based Independent Living Services (ILS) program providers in an effort to reach young people in their own communities.

The Children’s Administration begins offering voluntary ILS through contracted providers to youth as young as 15 years of age. Those who have left state care can continue receiving services until they are 21. The administration uses the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment as a tool to provide a baseline evaluation of independent living skills and to create an independent living learning plan to help youth develop the skills necessary for becoming self-sufficient adults.

In Calendar Year 2005, 69.2 percent of eligible youth had ILS written into their Individual Safety and Service Plan, and a survey of social workers reported that 53.9 percent of youth exiting care were able to benefit from a contracted ILS program. As a

part of a comprehensive contract review process, the administration restructured its ILS contracts with providers in January 2006. This has enabled providers to serve more youth, with ILS contractors reporting a near 50 percent increase in ILS participation for youth ages 15 to 21 between Fiscal Years 2005 and 2006.

**Youth Exiting Care After Age 18 Who Received Independent Living Services (ILS) While in Care\***



\*Percent of youth exiting care after age 18 who received ILS while still in out-of-home care. Source: Calendar year data from Educational Outcomes Surveys 2002 through 2005.