

# OPPORTUNITY YOUTH

with DSHS Service Histories

Opportunity Youth face a complex set of current barriers and past difficulties. These youth also have strengths, and there are numerous opportunities for reengagement.

## Road Blocks

*Current Challenges*



**1 in 3** have children

Nearly **1 in 3** face a current spell of homelessness



**16%** have a disability

## Opportunity!

*Moving Forward*



**44%** have work experience

**1 in 3** have accessed college in the past



**3 in 4** receive Basic Food, a qualifier for the Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program

## Speed Bumps

*Past Difficulties*

**70%** are without a high school diploma



**41%** have a history of mental health needs

**1 in 4** have a history of substance use



**41%** have an arrest or conviction history



# More about the Road Map Project

## Implications for Opportunity Youth

- Opportunity youth have interacted with multiple systems, including criminal justice, behavioral health, and public assistance.
- Opportunity youth need supports such as child care assistance, supported employment, and housing stabilization in order to productively engage in either work or school.
- There are opportunities to better connect the systems that touch opportunity youth to education and the workforce so that at-risk students are supported and those who do become opportunity youth are provided pathways to reengagement.

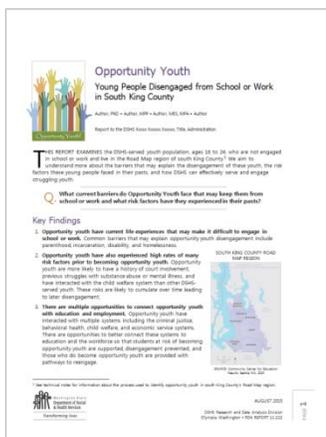
### South King County Road Map Region



SOURCE:  
Community Center  
for Education Results  
Seattle WA

*“Reaching and serving these youth is vital to the Department of Social and Health Services’ mission to transform lives and the Economic Services Administration’s commitment to a two-generation approach to moving families out of poverty and into a brighter future. We have begun the work to develop a pilot that will better serve this priority population. This will include taking steps to better align services and systems.”*

— **David Stillman, Assistant Secretary**  
DSHS Economic Services Administration



### ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

The DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division has based these findings on a subset of Opportunity Youth who received DSHS services between 2000 and 2012. Youth included here were 16 to 24 and not enrolled in school or work during academic year 2011-12. Additional findings about these youth are available on the website provided below. The Road Map Project region encompasses seven school districts: Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle (South Seattle only) and Tukwila.

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