

Homelessness Among Youth Exiting Systems of Care in Washington State

MARCH 2024

About this Report

This report provides information on the housing status of a cohort of youth (ages 12 to 17) and young adults (ages 18 to 24) exiting Washington State inpatient behavioral health, foster care, and criminal legal systems from January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021. Youth and young adults aging out of foster care, discharged from publicly funded inpatient mental health or substance use disorder treatment, or released from Juvenile Rehabilitation institutions or Department of Corrections facilities are followed over a 12-month period post-release using state administrative data. Administrative information on housing status is used to estimate homelessness rates within 12 months of discharge/release. A profile of youth exiters—as well as county-level breakdowns—are also provided and disaggregated by homelessness status post-exit.

Note that the data and methods used to estimate homelessness are subject to change. The results presented here are based on the most up-to-date methods and data and should not be compared to previous editions of this report.

Youth Populations

Three populations are examined: 1) youth and young adults who exited publicly funded inpatient treatment for mental health or substance use; 2) young adults (ages 18 to 21) who exited foster care; and 3) youth and young adults released from state Juvenile Rehabilitation institutions and young adults released from state Department of Corrections facilities.

Homelessness

Youth and young adults are determined to be homeless if they 1) are identified as homeless based on living arrangement or address information in the Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES); 2) received a housing service targeting homeless individuals that was recorded in the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS); or 3) were identified as homeless based on ProviderOne Medical claims data.

These measures were produced by the DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division in collaboration with the Washington State Department of Commerce

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NOTE: This report replaces the "Housing Status of Youth Exiting Foster Care, Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Systems" (Report 11.240) previously produced by RDA.

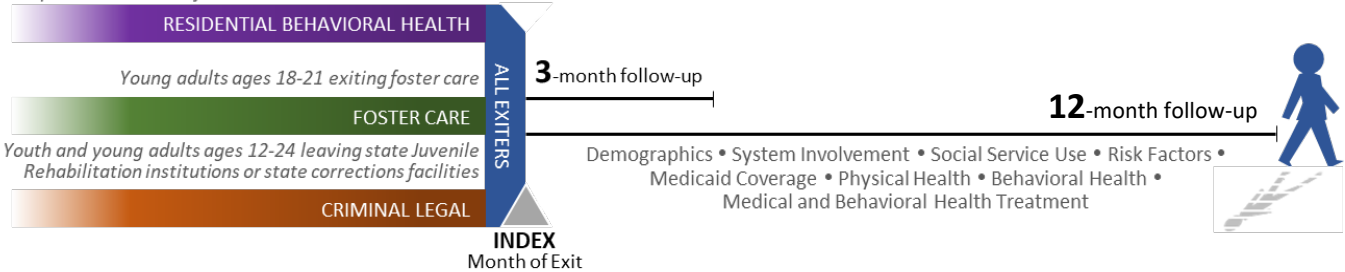
RDA Report Number 11.254

Youth and Young Adult Homelessness At-a-Glance

Calendar Year 2021

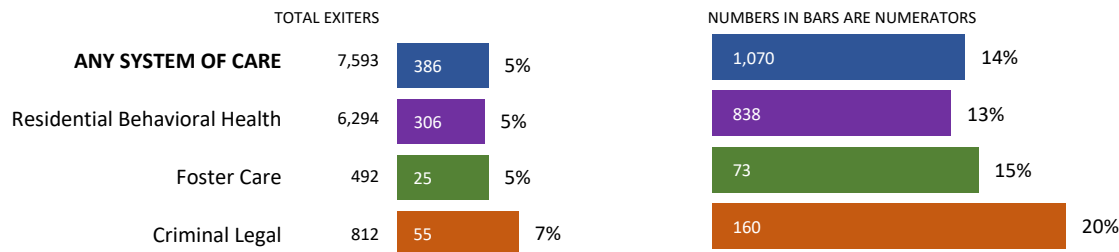
Three study populations are followed for 12 months after program exit . . .

Youth and young adults ages 12-24 exiting publicly funded inpatient treatment for mental health or substance use

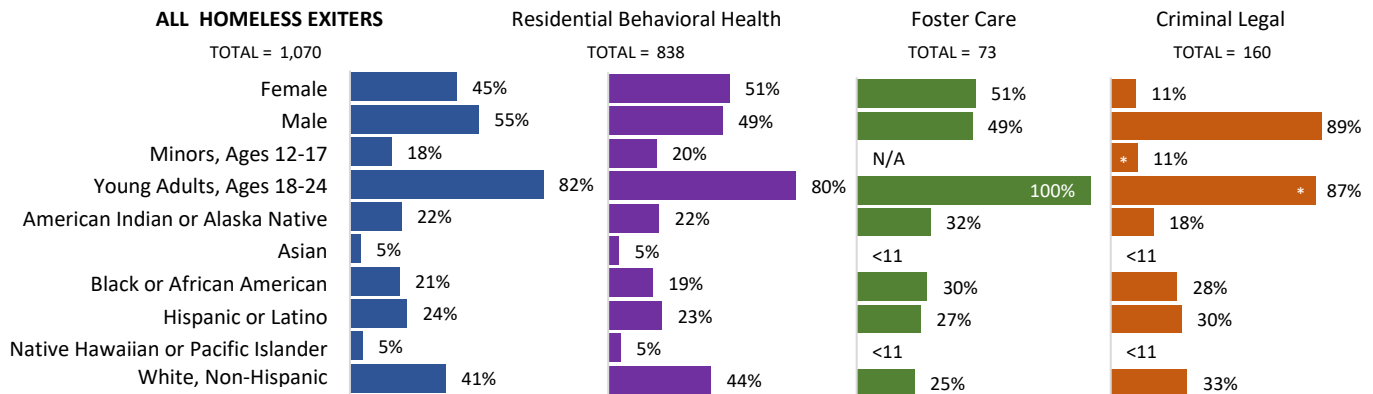


Percent who were homeless within 3 months after exit . . .

within 12 months after exit . . .

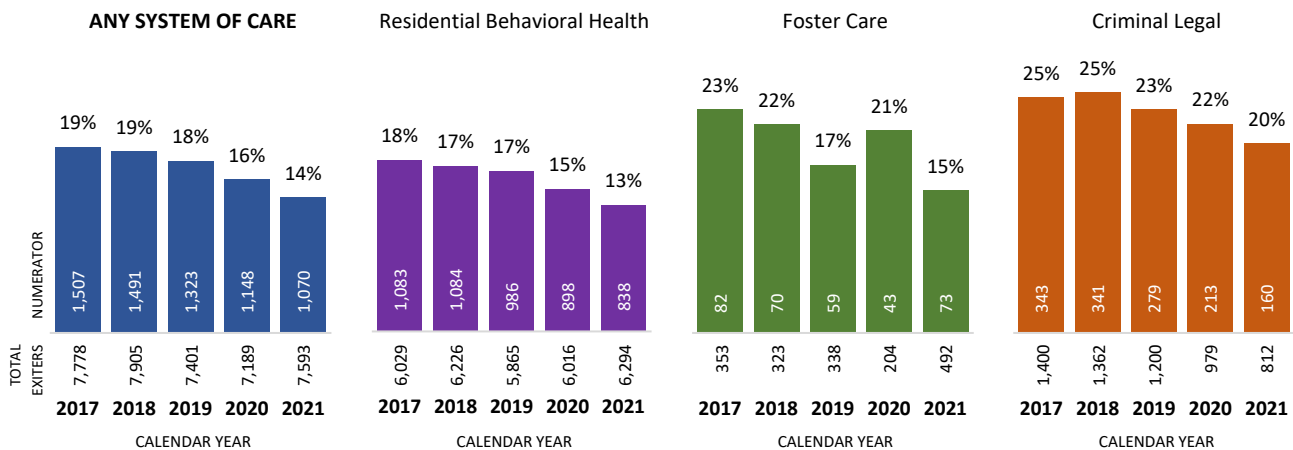


Demographic characteristics of homeless exiters by system of care . . .



*Age unknown = 2%

5-year trend in homelessness by system of care . . .



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Youth and Young Adults Exiting State Systems of Care by Housing Status

Calendar Year 2021

Exiters Who Were Not Homeless in Follow-Up Period						
Exiters Who Were Homeless in Follow-Up Period						
	All Exiters					
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Population Size	7,593		1,070		6,523	
Demographics						
Minors, Ages 12 - 17	2,639	35%	189	18%	2,450	38%
Young Adults, Ages 18 - 24	4,947	65%	878	82%	4,069	62%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,256	17%	233	22%	1,023	16%
Asian	420	6%	49	5%	371	6%
Black or African American	1,261	17%	225	21%	1,036	16%
Hispanic or Latino	1,946	26%	259	24%	1,687	26%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	370	5%	57	5%	313	5%
White, Non-Hispanic	3,361	44%	435	41%	2,926	45%
Missing Race/Ethnicity	69	1%	< 11	—	67	1%
Female	3,932	52%	485	45%	3,447	53%
Male	3,661	48%	585	55%	3,076	47%
System Involvement, CY 2021						
Child Welfare (DCYF)	2,754	36%	439	41%	2,315	35%
Foster Care (DCYF)	801	11%	128	12%	673	10%
Received Behavior Rehabilitation Services (DCYF)	123	2%	31	3%	92	1%
Detained in a Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility (DCYF)	467	6%	74	7%	393	6%
Detained in an Adult Correctional Facility or Jail	540	7%	124	12%	416	6%
Any Psychiatric Inpatient Services (HCA, DSHS)	2,198	31%	349	35%	1,849	30%
Any Substance Use Disorder Inpatient Services (HCA)	1,285	18%	309	31%	976	16%
Engaged with 2+ Systems of Care	646	9%	157	15%	489	7%
Readmitted to Any State System of Care	1,720	23%	360	34%	1,360	21%
Social Services, 24 Months Prior to Exit						
Any State or Federal Cash/Food Assistance (DSHS)	5,257	69%	880	82%	4,377	67%
Basic Food	4,304	57%	778	73%	3,526	54%
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)	816	11%	171	16%	645	10%
Housing and Essential Needs (HEN)	64	1%	28	3%	36	1%
Medicaid Coverage, 24 Months Prior to Exit						
Any Medical Assistance	7,085	93%	1,001	94%	6,084	93%
Medical History - Physical Health, 24 Months Prior to Exit of Those with Medical Assistance						
Emergency Department Outpatient Visits (1 or more)	4,974	70%	798	80%	4,176	69%
Emergency Department Outpatient Visits (4 or more)	1,884	27%	395	39%	1,489	24%
Any Inpatient Hospitalization in a General Medical Setting	2,674	38%	457	46%	2,217	36%
Any Admission to a Medical Detoxification Facility	531	7%	139	14%	392	6%
Medical History - Behavioral Health, 24 Months Prior to Exit of Those with Medical Assistance						
Any Indication of a Mental Health Condition	5,937	84%	873	87%	5,064	83%
Any Indication of a Substance Use Disorder (SUD)	3,483	49%	710	71%	2,773	46%
Any Indication of a Co-Occurring Mental Health Condition & SUD	3,138	44%	646	65%	2,492	41%
Risk Factors						
Any Indication of Neglect or Abuse Prior to Exit	4,475	59%	739	69%	3,736	57%
Any Indication of Homelessness Prior to Exit	3,353	44%	739	69%	2,614	40%
Ever Arrested or Charged for a Crime	3,622	48%	746	70%	2,876	44%
Never Employed in CY 2021, <i>of those 18 and older</i>	1,848	37%	365	41%	1,483	36%

Youth and Young Adults Exiting a State System of Care by County and Housing Status

Calendar Year 2021

	All Youth and Young Adults, Ages 12-24 Unduplicated		Counties with Percent of Homeless Exiters Less than 15%
WASHINGTON			
Adams	16	< 11	✓
Asotin	36	< 11	✓
Benton	207	31	✓
Chelan	85	< 11	✓
Clallam	95	19	
Clark	512	67	✓
Columbia	< 11	0	✓
Cowlitz	162	21	✓
Douglas	45	< 11	
Ferry	11	< 11	
Franklin	72	< 11	✓
Garfield	< 11	< 11	
Grant	104	16	
Grays Harbor	132	18	✓
Island	69	< 11	✓
Jefferson	26	< 11	✓
King	1,316	168	✓
Kitsap	235	41	
Kittitas	72	< 11	✓
Klickitat	28	< 11	✓
Lewis	144	28	
Lincoln	16	< 11	
Mason	80	15	
Okanogan	42	11	
Pacific	28	< 11	✓
Pend Oreille	23	< 11	✓
Pierce	872	144	
San Juan	< 11	0	✓
Skagit	156	26	
Skamania	18	< 11	
Snohomish	708	88	✓
Spokane	1,051	131	✓
Stevens	66	< 11	✓
Thurston	389	41	✓
Wahkiakum	< 11	< 11	
Walla Walla	64	11	
Whatcom	220	37	
Whitman	35	< 11	
Yakima	417	86	
Unknown	19	0	✓

TECHNICAL NOTES

Data Sources: Identification of the study population, system involvement, information on inpatient services, homelessness, and incarceration records are based on information from the Integrated Client Databases (ICDB). The ICDB was developed and is maintained by RDA. The ICDB combines measures derived from the following administrative systems, among others: ProviderOne (medical claims, diagnoses, and behavioral health inpatient admissions), FamLink (foster care), Automated Client Tracking (juvenile rehabilitation institutions and community facilities), the Behavioral Health Data System (behavioral health inpatient admissions), the Automated Client Eligibility System (economic services and homelessness), and the Homeless Management Information System (housing services and homelessness).

Population: Youth and young adults who exited from any of the following state systems in calendar year (CY) 2021.

1. **Foster Care:** Young adults who exited a foster care placement, were 18 to 21 years of age at the time of exit, and did not return to foster care.
2. **State-Operated Correctional Facility:** Youth ages 12 and older who exited a Juvenile Rehabilitation institution or community placement facility or young adults ages 18 to 24 exiting a Department of Corrections facility.
3. **Inpatient Behavioral Health:** Youth or young adults ages 12 to 24 who received state or federally funded treatment in an inpatient psychiatric facility (i.e., community mental health hospitals, evaluation and treatment facilities, the Children's Long-Term Inpatient Program, the Child Study and Treatment Center, or the state hospitals), inpatient substance use disorder treatment setting, or medical detoxification facility and exited this setting during CY 2020.

Multiple System Involvement: In situations where a youth or young adult exited multiple state systems of care, they were attributed to the last system of care that they were affiliated with during that year.

NOTE: A value of "< 11" indicates that the contents of a cell have been suppressed in accordance with the Health Care Authority's suppression rules because the total youth or young adult count in that cell was less than or equal to 10.

NOTE: Currently, state data systems do not systematically collect information on all gender identities. Only male and female gender categories are provided in this report.

NOTE: Young adults 21 and older who exited Extended Foster Care from March 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023, were eligible for monthly supplemental payments of \$850 that were intended to support housing stability and promote access to other essential resources. The payments were disbursed from April 2022 through June 2023 and may have contributed to lower rates of homelessness among young adults who exited foster care in the latter portion of 2021.

MEASUREMENT PERIODS

The month in which a youth or young adult is released or discharged from a facility or ages out of foster care is the reference month (Month 0). Housing status is reported for Month +1 through Month +3 (i.e., Homeless within 3 months) and for Month +1 through Month +12 (i.e., Homeless within 12 months). Demographic information is reported as of the reference month. Case history lookback windows begin in the month prior to the reference month (Month -1) and go back through Month - 24 (e.g., mental health treatment need), or over a youth's entire history (e.g., maltreatment history).

MEASURES

Homeless Status: This is determined based on the following: 1) client living arrangement (Homeless without Housing, Emergency Shelter, Battered Spouse Shelter, Inappropriate Living Situation) from the Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES); 2) address information in ACES indicating that a youth or young adult was listed as homeless (e.g., a youth's or young adult's address was "homeless"); 3) housing service information recorded in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS); or 4) information from ProviderOne medical claims data. Youth and young adults were identified as homeless if they experienced a homeless spell in the 12 months following exit from a state system of care.

Foster Care and Child Welfare Involvement: Foster care placement includes out-of-home placements with kinship, congregate, or foster caregivers; supervised independent living placements; and temporary placement events, such as on-the-run and hospital events, but does not include placement in juvenile detention or rehabilitation centers or trial return home periods. Child welfare involvement includes the receipt of any Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) child welfare system services or case management.

Readmitted: Youth are considered readmitted if they return to any institutional setting (residential/inpatient treatment for mental health or substance use; Juvenile Rehabilitation institution/community facility or adult correctional facility; or foster care) at any time during the 12-month follow-up period. Youth may count as readmitted and homeless if both conditions apply during the follow-up period.

County: Assigned as of the last month that a youth or young adult exited any state system of care.