



Transition to Adulthood

An Analysis of the National Youth in Transition Database Survey Data for Washington State

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To the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration, Barb Putnam, LICSW, Well-Being Unit Supervisor, Rick Butt, MSW, Independent Living Program Manager, Juliette Knight, Education and Training Voucher Program Manager

THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES' (DSHS) Children's Administration provides Independent Living Services for youth aged 15 to 21 years in foster care to assist the youth in making the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency. The services are provided in accordance with Public Law 106-169¹ which also mandates the states to survey the youth regarding six outcomes: financial self-sufficiency, experience with homelessness, educational attainment, positive connections with adults, high-risk behavior, and access to health insurance. The law, which went into effect on October 1, 2010, requires all fifty states and territories to report on Chafee Independent Living program services to the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). The states report on the type and quality of Independent Living Services every six months and submit survey data about a new cohort of 17-year old youth every three years. To participate in the survey, youth are or were in foster care for at least one day within 45 days of their 17th birthday. States are also required to follow-up with the baseline cohort at ages 19 and 21.

Children's Administration asked the DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division to analyze Washington state's first NYTD survey data. The analysis will help decision makers better understand how youth in foster care fare with regard to their education, sources of financial support, presence of trusted adults in their lives, and other risk and protective factors affecting their lives. The analysis will be used to establish a baseline for subsequent surveys of the youth. The DSHS Management Information and Survey Research staff that conducted the 2011 NYTD survey achieved an exceptionally high response rate of 92 percent, reaching 419 of 456 youth who were eligible. Note that results are based on perceptions of the youth.

Key Findings

A majority of the youth in foster care who participated in the NYTD survey go to school, live in a stable setting, have emotional and financial support, and can receive medical treatment as needed. However, some youth also report serious risk factors such as history of involvement with the criminal justice system, history of behavioral health problems, or housing instability. Females and non-Hispanic white youth tend to have more protective factors and face fewer risk factors than males and racial-ethnic minority youth.

- **Education.** 9 in 10 surveyed youth are currently enrolled in school, with 7 in 10 youth attending regular high school. Only one in 11 reported barriers to continuing their education.
- **Employment.** 10 percent are employed part- or full-time with only two of the 42 youth who work reporting having barriers to their education.
- **Financial Support.** Two in 10 surveyed youth reported getting public cash assistance, one in 10 get financial support from family or legal settlements, and 7 percent receive help specifically for educational expenses.

¹ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. "About NYTD." http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/systems/nytd/about_nytd.htm

- **Medical Coverage.** 9 in 10 surveyed youth have medical insurance coverage.
- **Behavioral Health.** One in 2 surveyed youth were receiving counseling for an emotional problem, and one in 3 has been referred for substance abuse assessment or treatment.
- **Living Arrangements.** While most of the youth resided with a foster family, a relative, or in a group home or institution at the time of the interview, only about two-thirds felt they could stay in this living arrangement indefinitely.
- **Housing Instability.** One in 3 surveyed youth have experienced instability in their living arrangements in the past two years, and one in 5 said they had been homeless during this period.
- **High Risk Behavior.** One in 2 surveyed youth have ever been arrested, convicted, or put in jail or prison. Males and non-Hispanic white youth have higher rates than females and racial or ethnic minority youth for arrests, convictions, and being confined in a jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility. However, Native American youth have the highest rates in every category than any racial or ethnic group. 4 percent of surveyed youth gave birth or fathered their own child.
- **Positive Connections with Adults.** 9 in 10 surveyed youth have a trusting relationship with an adult; eight in 10 feel close to someone in their biological family. Nearly one half feel that a lot has been done to help them maintain or strengthen these relationships since they have been in foster care.
- **Transition to Independence.** One in 2 surveyed youth have been involved in the development of their Independent Living Plan; 85 percent possess some type of identification; 30 percent have an open bank account.

Despite the very high response rate for this survey, it should be noted that 25 of the 37 youth who could not be reached for the survey were runaways or missing with whereabouts unknown. These youth may have more serious risk factors than those who could be located. It is important to note, therefore, that the results presented in this report provide information only about those who participated in the survey who may have somewhat less serious problems than those who did not participate.

DEMOGRAPHICS | As many females as males were interviewed, slightly more racial or ethnic minority youth than non-Hispanic white youth were interviewed

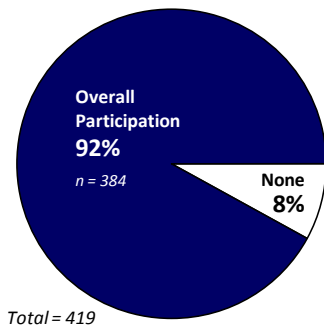
- **About the same number of females in foster care participated in the survey as did males:** 212 vs.207.
- **Fewer respondents were non-Hispanic white than from a minority group:** 48 percent being non-Hispanic white compared to 52 percent minority.
- **Females were more likely to be from a minority group than males.** Male respondents were divided equally between non-Hispanic whites (50 percent) and the minority category (50 percent). Among females, 46 percent were non-Hispanic white while 54 percent were from a racial or ethnic minority.
- **African-American youth represented the largest minority group.** 21 percent of all respondents were African American, 17 percent were Native American and 16 percent were Hispanic. Asian/Pacific Islander youth comprised the smallest share (6 percent).

	Female		Male		TOTAL	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
All Respondents	212	100%	207	100%	419	100%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	97	46%	104	50%	201	48%
Minority*	114	54%	103	50%	217	52%
African American	48	23%	42	20%	90	21%
American Indian	37	17%	36	17%	73	17%
Asian/Pacific Islander	14	7%	12	6%	26	6%
Hispanic	37	17%	28	14%	65	16%

*A client who self-identifies as a member of one or more minority groups is counted in each of those minority categories and is counted once in the "Minority" category.

EDUCATION | Nine in 10 surveyed youth are in school, one in 11 report barriers to continuing education

Overall Participation in Education or Vocational Curriculum



Total = 419

The large majority of DSHS youth in foster care are currently enrolled and attending regular high school, GED classes, alternative schools, post-high school vocational training, or college.

- As many females as males are enrolled overall.** A higher share of females attends regular high school (74 percent of the respondents) compared to males (68 percent). At the time of the survey, 16 youth—10 females and 6 males—had already received a high school diploma, GED, or vocational certificate.
- A higher share of males are enrolled in a GED or another alternative program** (30 percent) compared to females (22 percent).
- Non-Hispanic white youth and racial or ethnic minority youth are enrolled at similar rates:** 91-92 percent overall, 70-72 percent in regular high school. However, only 58 percent of Native American youth and 60 percent of African-American youth attend regular high school (see Technical Table detail). At the time of the survey, 9 non-Hispanic white youth and 7 racial or ethnic minority youth had already received a high school diploma, GED, or vocational certificate.
- One in 11 surveyed youth report barriers to continuing their education.** Of those, 25 respondents identified specific problems or issues, such as their poor health, death in the family, being pregnant, having to move from house to house a lot, and getting in trouble with the law in school or elsewhere. Administrative issues mentioned include lack of appropriate classes (“*Language course I need is not currently available*”) and restrictions on class load (“*They only let me go to 4 classes a day.*”) Five percent of survey participants noted a lack of a reliable means of transportation to school and/or work. The rate is higher for female and racial or ethnic minority youth (both at 7 percent).

Q. Currently are you enrolled in and attending high school, GED classes, post-high school vocational training, or college? This includes other adult education programs and alternative schools.

Group	n	Yes
All respondents	419	92%
Female	212	92%
Male	207	92%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	201	91%
Minority	217	92%

Q. In what type of school or educational program are you currently enrolled?

Group	n	Regular High School
All respondents	383	71%
Female	194	74%
Male	189	68%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	183	72%
Minority	199	70%

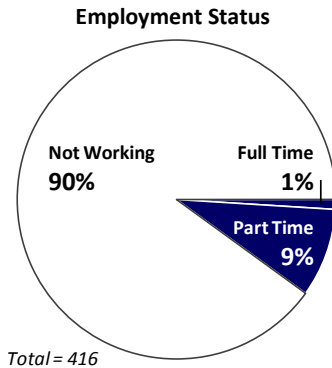
Q. Are there any barriers that are preventing you from continuing your education?

Group	n	Yes
All respondents	403	9%
Female	202	8%
Male	201	10%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	196	9%
Minority	206	9%

Q. Do you have a reliable means of transportation to school and/or work?

All respondents	n = 416	Yes	94%
Female	n = 211		92%
Male	n = 205		96%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 200		96%
Minority	n = 215		93%

EMPLOYMENT | One in 10 youth are employed, twice as many females as males.



One in ten survey participants are currently working, mostly part-time.

- **Twice as many females as males are currently working:** 13 percent and 7 percent, respectively.
- **Non-Hispanic white youth are employed at a higher rate:** 12 percent compared to 9 percent of racial or ethnic minority youth. The rate is lower for Native American youth (6 percent) and African-American youth (8 percent) (see Technical Table detail).
- **8 percent of surveyed youth are working at a paying job,** more females (10 percent) than males (6 percent).
- **17 percent of surveyed youth worked at a paying job in the past year,** more among males (20 percent) than females (14 percent). 15 percent of non-Hispanic white youth and 19 percent of minority youth worked at a paying job in the past year.
- **One in 3 youth ever worked at a paying job,** more among males (37 percent) than females (25 percent). One in 2 non-Hispanic white youth and one in 3 minority youth ever worked at a paying job.
- **Average hourly wages are just above Washington minimum wage:** around \$9 per hour. The rates are similar for the population subgroups.
- **Almost all currently employed youth are in school.** Despite a heavier load of responsibilities, only 2 currently employed respondents have identified a barrier to continuing their education.

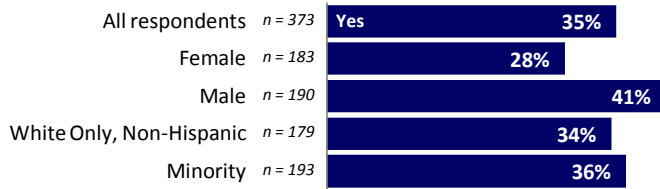
Q. Currently, are you employed either full-time or part-time?

All respondents	n = 416	Yes	10%
Female	n = 212		13%
Male	n = 204		7%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 200		12%
Minority	n = 215		9%

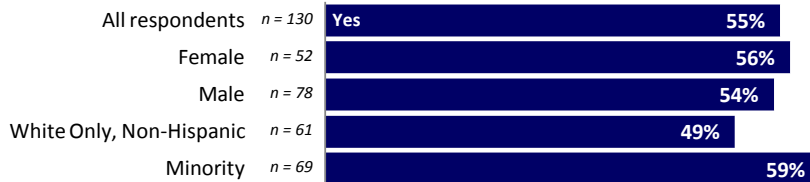
Q. What is your hourly pay?

All respondents	n = 42	Average Per Hour	\$8.81
Female	n = 28		\$9.02
Male	n = 14		\$8.42
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 21		\$8.99
Minority	n = 21		\$8.63

Q. Have you ever had a job for which you were paid?

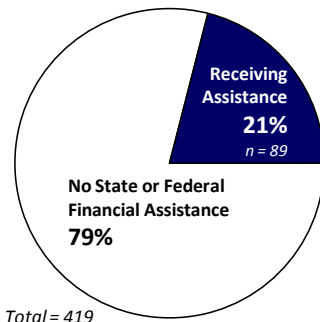


Q. Have you had a job for which you were paid at any time during the past year?



FINANCIAL SUPPORT | 21 percent of youth reported getting public cash assistance, 10 percent get financial support from family or legal settlements, and 7 percent receive help specifically for educational expenses

Receipt of SSI, SSDI, Dependent Payments or TANF



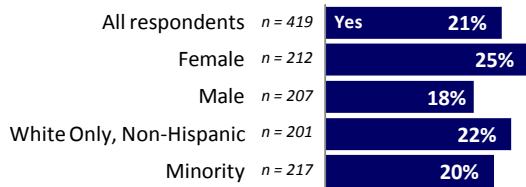
The youth reported financial support from a number of sources, including public assistance programs, family and legal settlements, educational scholarships and vouchers.

- **Overall, 21 percent reported getting help from a public cash assistance program:** 15 percent from Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or dependents' payments and 8 percent from Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF).
- **10 percent indicated that they receive significant financial assistance from other sources** such as other family members, child support, or legal settlements.
- **7 percent currently receive some financial support to help cover their education expenses** from such sources as scholarships, vouchers, or student loans.
- **Only 8 percent reported getting food assistance** which is roughly consistent with the proportion of youth saying that they received TANF benefits.
- **Females were somewhat more likely than males to report receiving most forms of assistance** except financial help from other family members, child support, or legal settlements where rates for males were slightly higher than those for females.
- **Differences between non-Hispanic, white only youth and those from minority groups were relatively minor.** Non-Hispanic whites were somewhat more likely to get assistance from disability-related programs but slightly less likely to get TANF, food assistance, or support from family members, child support or legal settlements compared to youth from minority backgrounds.

The accuracy of these self-reported rates of public assistance has not been verified with records of actual services received by these survey participants. Therefore, the rates of public assistance based on this self-reported data should be treated with caution since they could be affected by the youth's understanding of these complex systems of financial support and his/her willingness to disclose this information.

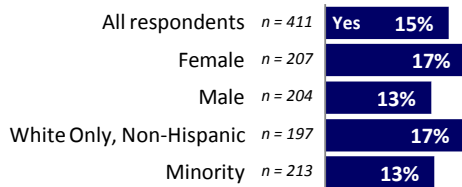
Q. Are you currently receiving SSI, SSDI, dependents' payments, or TANF?

Dependents' payments are Social Security benefits from a parent who is disabled or deceased.

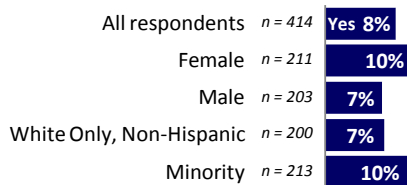


Q. Currently are you receiving social security payments (Supplemental Security Income [SSI], Social Security Disability Insurance [SSDI], or dependents' payments)?

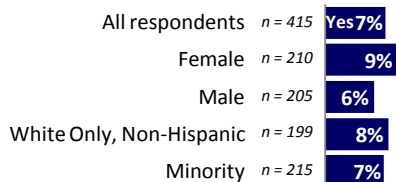
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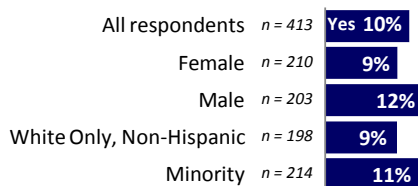
Q. Currently are you receiving ongoing welfare payments from the government [like TANF] to support your basic needs?



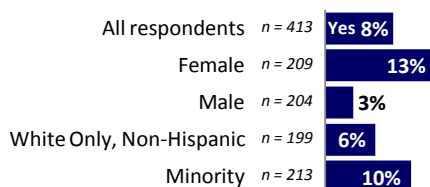
Q. Currently are you using a scholarship, grant, stipend, student loan, voucher, or other type of educational financial aid to cover any educational expenses?



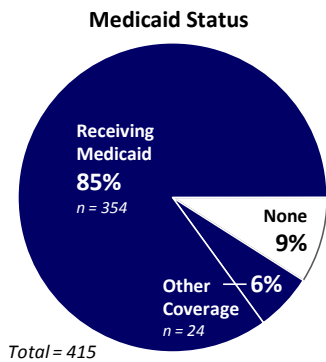
Q. Currently are you receiving any periodic and/or significant financial support from another source (a spouse/partner, a family member, child support, legal settlements)?



Q. Currently are you receiving public food assistance?



MEDICAL COVERAGE | Nine in 10 youth have medical insurance coverage, nearly one out of two are receiving counseling for an emotional problem, and one out of three has been referred for substance abuse assessment or treatment



Overall, 91 percent of surveyed youth are covered under Medicaid or another health insurance, such as their parents' insurance or the state children's health insurance program (SCHIP).

- **85 percent are covered by Medicaid alone or in combination** with some other form of health insurance and 6 percent are covered solely by something other than Medicaid.
- **Females are more likely to report having medical coverage** than males: 93 percent of females compared to only 89 percent of males indicated that they had medical coverage.
- **Non-Hispanic white youth in foster care are more likely to report having medical coverage** than minority youth: 93 percent of non-Hispanic white youth compared to only 89 percent of minority youth reported having Medicaid or other health insurance.

Q. *Currently are you on Medicaid [you may know this as a med coupon/services card or if over age 18 you may know this as Medicaid to 21]?*

Group	n	Medicaid	Other Coverage
All respondents	415	85%	6%
Female	211	87%	6%
Male	204	84%	5%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	199	87%	6%
Minority	215	84%	5%

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | Nearly one out of two youth were receiving counseling for an emotional problem, and one out of three has been referred for substance abuse assessment or treatment

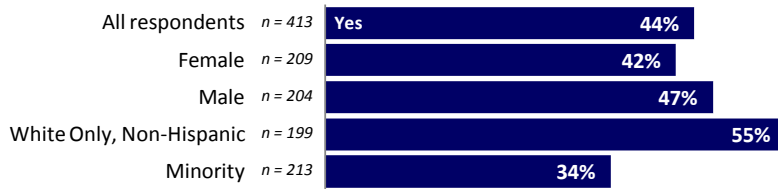
Mental Health Counseling

- **Nearly half—44 percent—** of survey participants were receiving counseling for a psychological or emotional problem at the time of their interview.
- **Males had a slightly higher rate than females:** 47 versus 42 percent.
- **Non-Hispanic white youth had much higher rates of mental health counseling** (55 percent) than minority youth (34 percent).

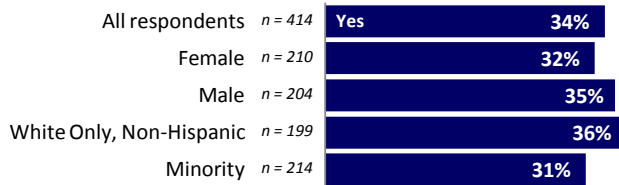
Substance Abuse Referrals and Treatment

- **One third of survey participants have been referred (or self-referred) for assessment or counseling for alcohol or other drug abuse problems** at some point in their lives.
- **Males have slightly higher rates of referral** (35 percent) than females (32 percent).
- 36 percent of non-Hispanic white youth have been referred for assessment or counseling for a substance abuse compared to only 31 percent of minority youth.
- **One in 9 respondents is currently receiving treatment** for an alcohol or substance abuse problem.
- **14 percent of males were in treatment for substance abuse** compared to 9 percent of females.
- **There was no appreciable difference in the proportion of non-Hispanic white youth and minority youth currently receiving treatment for dependency on alcohol or other drugs:** 12 versus 11 percent.

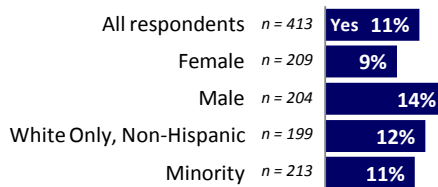
Q. Are you currently receiving counseling for a psychological or emotional problem?



Q. Have you ever referred yourself or has someone else referred you for an alcohol or drug abuse assessment or counseling?

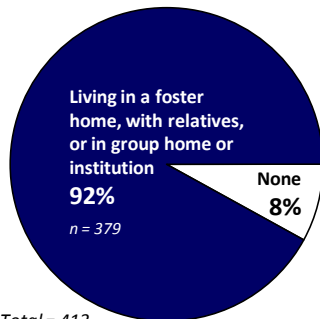


Q. Are you currently receiving treatment for an alcohol or substance abuse problem?



CURRENT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS | While most of the youth resided with a foster family, a relative, or in a group home or institution at the time of the interview, only about two-thirds felt they could stay in this living arrangement indefinitely.

In a Foster Home, with Relatives, or Group Home/Institution



At the time of their interview, 54 percent of the youth were living in a foster home, 21 percent were living with a relative, and 17 percent were in a group home or institution—resulting in 92 percent with one of these living arrangements. Most of the remaining 8 percent of youth reported living on their own, in a college dormitory, or with friends or roommates, while less than one percent indicated that they were homeless.

- Slightly over half of both males and females were living in a foster home at the time of the interview.
- Females were much more likely than males to be living with relatives: 26 versus 16 percent.
- Males were much more likely to be residing in group homes or an institution: 22 versus 12 percent.
- The current living situation of racial or ethnic minority youth, as a whole, was quite similar to that of non-Hispanic white youth. However, a few differences draw attention.
- Slightly less than two-thirds of the youth indicated that they could stay where they were currently living as long as they wanted to.
- Females were much more likely to say that they could stay where they are indefinitely with 69 percent of them expressing this opinion compared to only 53 percent of males. This difference may be understandable in light of the higher proportion of females who were living with relatives compared to the higher proportion of males living in institutions.

Q. Are you currently living in a foster home, with relatives, or in a group home or institution?

All respondents	n = 413	Foster Home	54%	Relatives	21%	GH/Inst	17%
Female	n = 210		53%		26%		12%
Male	n = 203		54%		16%		22%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 199		54%		20%		18%
Minority	n = 213		53%		22%		16%

Q. Can you stay where you are living now as long as you want to?

All respondents	n = 413	Yes	61%
Female	n = 209		69%
Male	n = 204		53%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 198		62%
Minority	n = 214		60%

HOUSING INSTABILITY | One in three youth have experienced instability in their living arrangements in the past two years, and one in five said they had been homeless during this period.

- Slightly over one-third of the surveyed youth said they had couch surfed or moved from house to house during the past two years because they didn't have a permanent place to stay. Females were as likely as males to report this experience.
- Rates of couch surfing or housing instability were the same for non-Hispanic white youth compared to minority youth (both at 37 percent).
- In the last two years, one in five youth had experienced at least one spell of homelessness of living in a car, on the street, or in a homeless or temporary shelter.
- Males were only slightly more likely to have been homeless in the past two years than females: 20 percent versus 17 percent.
- Rates of homelessness were similar for non-Hispanic white youth compared to minority youth (19 and 18 percent, respectively).
- Native Americans were more likely to report housing instability than other groups. 45 percent of Native Americans reported couch surfing and 25 percent homelessness (see Technical Table detail).

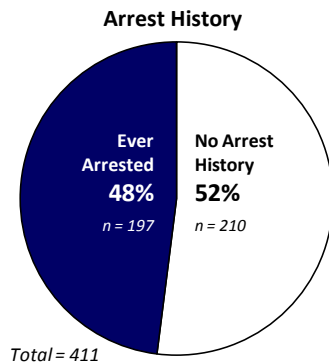
Q. Have you couch surfed or moved from house to house because you didn't have a permanent place to stay at any time during the past two years?

All respondents	n = 413	Yes	37%
Female	n = 209		37%
Male	n = 204		37%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 198		37%
Minority	n = 214		37%

Q. In the past two years, were you homeless at any time? This means that during this time you were living in a car, living on the street, staying in a homeless or temporary shelter.

All respondents	n = 409	Yes	19%
Female	n = 208		17%
Male	n = 201		20%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 196		19%
Minority	n = 212		18%

HIGH RISK BEHAVIOR | One in 2 surveyed youth have ever been arrested, convicted, or put in jail or prison, a few youth gave birth or fathered their own child.



Involvement with the Criminal Justice System. Just over one half of surveyed youth (55 percent) have had a history of involvement with the criminal justice system: they may have been arrested, and/or convicted of a crime, and/or confined in a jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility.

- **Nearly one half of survey participants were arrested** at some point in their lives.
- **A higher share of males have ever been arrested** (58 percent) than females (38 percent).
- **The ever-arrested rate is higher for non-Hispanic white youth** (50 percent) than racial or ethnic minority youth (46 percent). However, African-American and Native American youth have ever been arrested at a higher rate (53 and 54 percent, respectively) than other racial or ethnic groups (see Technical Table detail).
- **Four out of 10 survey participants were confined in a jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility, in connection with allegedly committing a crime at some point in their lives.**
- **A higher share of males have ever been in jail** (53 percent) than females (31 percent).
- **The ever-in-jail rate is higher for non-Hispanic white youth** (46 percent) than racial or ethnic minority youth (38 percent). However, the ever-in-jail rate for Native American youth (49 percent) is higher than for other racial or ethnic groups (see Technical Table detail).
- **One in 3 survey participants were convicted of a crime or adjudicated for a crime at some point in their lives.**
- **The conviction rate is twice as high for males as females:** 47 and 23 percent, respectively.
- **The conviction rate is higher for non-Hispanic white youth** (39 percent) than racial or ethnic minority youth (31 percent). However, the conviction rate for Native American youth (42 percent) is higher than for other racial or ethnic groups (see Technical Table detail).
- **Twice as many youth were convicted of violent crimes or property crimes than of drug related crimes** (38 percent, 37 percent, and 18 percent, respectively).

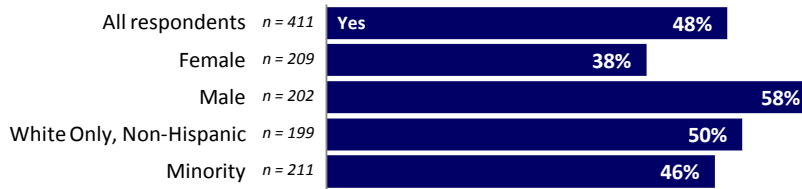
Violent crime conviction rate is higher for females than males (37 and 41 percent, respectively). Property crime conviction rate is higher for males than females (40 and 32 percent, respectively). Drug-related crime conviction rate is the same for males and females (18 and 17 percent, respectively).

Violent crime conviction rate and drug-related crime conviction rate are higher for racial or ethnic minority youth (40 and 23 percent) than non-Hispanic white youth (36 and 13 percent). Property crime conviction rate is higher for non-Hispanic white youth (44 percent) than racial or ethnic minority youth (31 percent).

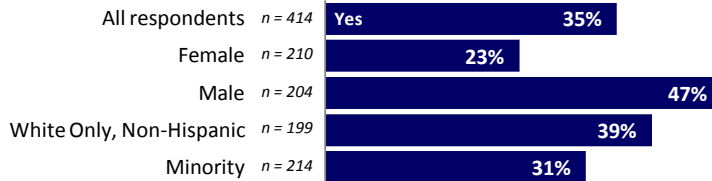
Teenage Parenthood. Being pregnant and having to take care of own child are among barriers to completing one’s education.

- **Four percent of survey participants have given birth or fathered children** that were born by the time they reached 17 years of age. The same number of males and females report having their own child. The rate is slightly higher for racial or ethnic minority youth than non-Hispanic white youth. However, given the small numbers, the difference in rates may not be significant.
- **None of the teen parents were married** to the child’s other parent at the time the child was born.

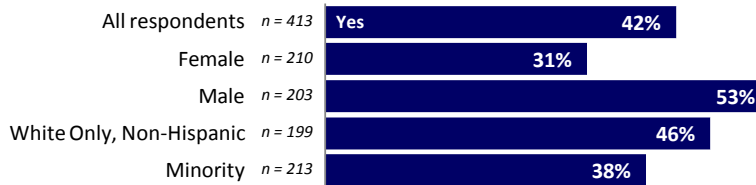
Q. Have you ever been arrested?



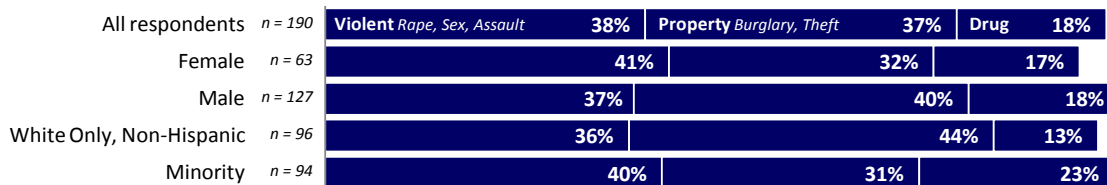
Q. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? Also answer "yes" if you were adjudicated for a crime.



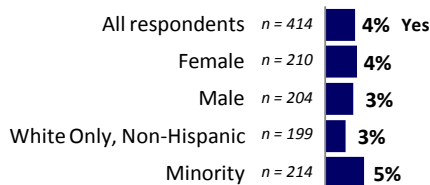
Q. Have you ever been confined in a jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility, in connection with allegedly committing a crime?



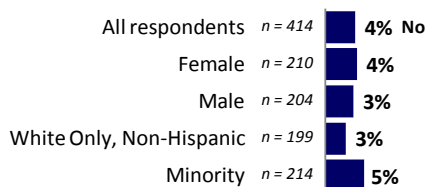
Q. For what type(s) of crime were you convicted? Select all that apply



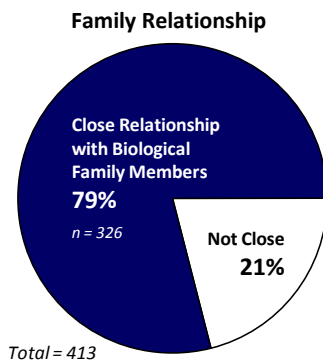
Q. Have you ever given birth or fathered any children that were born?



Q. Were you married to the child's other parent at the time each child was born?



POSITIVE CONNECTIONS WITH ADULTS | Nine in 10 surveyed youth have a trusting relationship with an adult, eight in 10 feel close to someone in their biological family



Close relationship with family. The surveyed youth have kept close relationships with members of their biological family, and nearly one half feel that a lot has been done to help maintain or strengthen these relationships since they have been in foster care.

- **Eight in 10 survey youth feel close to someone in their biological family.** The rate is the same for males and females. The rate is higher for racial or ethnic minority youth (82 percent) than for non-Hispanic white youth (75 percent). One half (47 percent) feel close to their siblings. One third (34 percent) feel close to their biological mothers. Close relationships exist with grandparents (29 percent) and aunts or uncles (26 percent). Only 17 percent report having close relationships with their biological father. 12 percent mention cousins.

- **A higher share of males report close relationships with adults in their biological family** (parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles). Males more often mention mothers (41 percent) and fathers (19 percent) compared to females (28 and 15 percent, respectively).
- **A higher share of females report close relationships with relatives of the same generation:** siblings (50 percent) and cousins (14 percent). For males, the numbers are 45 and 11 percent, respectively.
- **Nearly one half feel that a lot has been done** to help maintain or strengthen these relationships since they have been in foster care. However, one third of youth report that not enough has been done, and 20 percent of youth report that nothing has been done at all.
- **Males are more satisfied with how much has been done** than females: 52 percent of males and 41 percent of females chose “a lot” while 16 percent of males and 20 percent of females chose “nothing.”

Presence of trusted adults. The surveyed youth have adults in their lives with whom they have trusting, supportive, and unconditional relationships, and over one half feel that a lot has been done to help maintain or strengthen these relationships since they have been in foster care.

- **Nearly all surveyed youth have someone they can go to for advice or emotional support,** other than their caseworker (94 percent).
- **Nine in 10 surveyed youth have trusting, supportive and unconditional relationships** with at least one adult who will always be there for them.
- **As many males as females** report having trusted adults in their lives.
- **The same share of non-Hispanic white youth and minority youth** report having trusted adults in their lives.
- **Nearly one half chose a family member** (including adoptive parents) when asked to identify adults providing the closest trusting, supportive, and unconditional relationship. Family members were most often chosen by females and racial or ethnic minority youth (55 and 58 percent, respectively) than males and non-Hispanic white youth (51 and 49 percent, respectively).
- **One in 3 youth chose their foster parents** (current or former) or legal guardians. 9 percent chose their case worker, social worker, teacher, coach, mentor, or someone from a church or faith-based community. Another 9 percent chose a friend or a parent of a friend. Foster parents or case workers, teachers, mentors and so on were most often chosen by males and non-Hispanic white youth (40 and 42 percent, respectively) than females and racial or ethnic minority youth (36 and 34 percent, respectively).

- **Over one half feel that a lot has been done** to help maintain or strengthen close trusting, supportive, unconditional relationships with adults since they have been in foster care (53 percent). However, 21 percent of youth report that not enough has been done, and another 19 percent of youth report that nothing has been done at all to help them with these relationships.
- **Males are more satisfied with how much has been done** than females: 61 percent of males and 46 percent of females chose “a lot” while 16 percent of males and 23 percent of females chose “nothing.”

Q. Do you currently have a close relationship with any members of your biological family?

All respondents	n = 413	Yes	79%
Female	n = 210		79%
Male	n = 203		79%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 199		75%
Minority	n = 213		82%

Q. How much has been done since you have been in foster care to help you maintain or strengthen your relationships with the biological family members to whom you feel close?

All respondents	n = 326	A Lot	46%	Some	32%	Nothing	18%
Female	n = 166		41%		33%		20%
Male	n = 160		52%		31%		16%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 150		47%		31%		19%
Minority	n = 175		46%		33%		17%

Q. Currently is there at least one adult in your life, other than your caseworker, to whom you can go for advice or emotional support?

All respondents	n = 412	Yes	94%
Female	n = 209		92%
Male	n = 203		95%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 199		94%
Minority	n = 212		93%

Q. Do you currently have a relationship that is trusting, supportive, and unconditional with at least one adult who will always be there for you?

All respondents	n = 414	Yes	91%
Female	n = 210		91%
Male	n = 204		90%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 199		91%
Minority	n = 214		90%

Q. Which adults provide the closest trusting, supportive, and unconditional relationship?

Select only one.

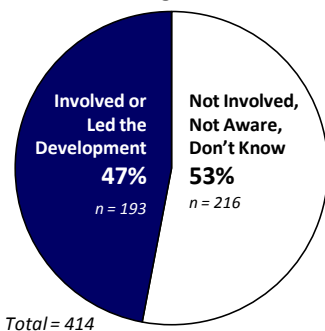
All respondents	n = 374	Family Member	Social Worker, Teacher, Mentor		
			F. Parent/Guardian	29%	9%
Female	n = 191				
Male	n = 183				
White Only, Non-Hispanic	n = 180				
Minority	n = 193				
			Friend or Friend's Parent		

Q. How much has been done since you have been in foster care to help you maintain or strengthen your relationship with the adults providing the closest trusting, supportive, and unconditional relationship?

	A Lot	Some	Nothing
All respondents n = 326	46%	32%	18%
Female n = 166	41%	33%	20%
Male n = 160	52%	31%	16%
White Only, Non-Hispanic n = 150	47%	31%	19%
Minority n = 175	46%	33%	17%

TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE | One in 2 surveyed youth have been involved in the development of their Independent Living Plan, 85 percent possess some type of identification, 30 percent have an open bank account.

Role in Developing Independent Living Plan

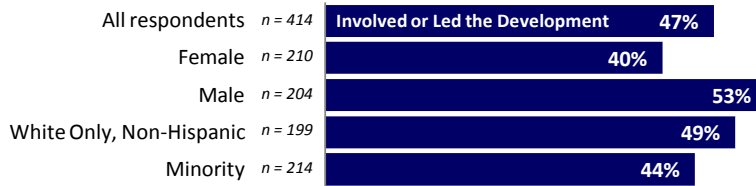


Independent Living Plan. Youth ages 15-21 who are or were in foster care for 30 days or longer can receive Independent Living Services from DSHS to help prepare them for independence in their transition to adulthood. The services are funded under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and require written transitional independent living plans based on the needs of each youth.²

- **47 percent have been involved in the development of their Independent Living Plan.** Of those, a quarter led the development of their plans and three quarters participated, but did not lead the development.
- **A higher share of males have been involved** in the development of their plans (53 percent) than females (40 percent). A higher share of females did not know about or were not aware of their Independent Living Plan (47 percent) than males (35 percent).
- **A higher share of non-Hispanic white youth have been involved in the development of their plans** (49 percent) than minority youth (44 percent). A higher share of minority youth did not know or were not aware of their Independent Living Plan (43 percent) than non-Hispanic white youth (38 percent).
- **75 percent possess legal documents** such as Social Security card, birth certificate, proof of citizenship or residency (Green card), or driver's license. Another 7 percent possess only unspecified "other state identification." Four percent possess only proof of immunization. Together, 85 percent of those surveyed report having some type of formal identification.
- **A higher share of females than males possess legal documents** in all categories except for proof of citizenship or residency or unspecified "other state identification."
- **A higher share of non-Hispanic white youth than minority youth possess legal documents** in all categories.
- **Three in 10 survey participants have an open bank account** such as checking or savings account. A slightly higher share of females than males have bank accounts (31 versus 29 percent). A slightly higher share of minority youth than non-Hispanic white youth have bank accounts (31 versus 29 percent).

²National Association of Counties. Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: Identifying Strategies and Best Practices, February 2008. <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/ca/YouthAgingoutofFoster.pdf>

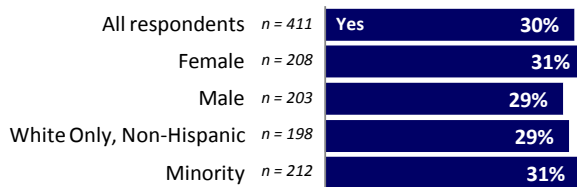
Q. How would you describe the role that you have played in the development of your independent living plan?



Q. Do you currently have either a Social Security card or birth certificate in your possession?



Q. Do you currently have an open bank account, such as a checking or savings account?



DATA SOURCES

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Survey

The DSHS Management Information and Survey Research staff conducted the survey from October 2010 through November 2011. All youth in foster care who turned 17 years of age during Federal Fiscal Year 2011 (October 1, 2010-September 30, 2011) were identified and contacted by the survey team within 45 days of their 17th birthday. To be invited to participate, the youth had to be in foster care for at least one day during the 45-day period since their 17th birthday. In other words, a person who entered foster care on the 44th day after his or her 17th birthday was still asked to participate in the survey. The table below describes participation by youth in foster care.

Total eligible youth	456
Youth declined	2
Runaway/missing youth	25
Unable to locate/invite	10
Youth participated	419
Survey Response Rate	91.9%

Gender and Race-Ethnicity Data

Individual youth responses were linked to information about client demographic characteristics (gender, race/ ethnicity) from DSHS Client Services Database (CSDB) maintained by DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division. CSDB race/ethnicity data is based on DSHS clients' self report. Clients can report more than one race. The current set of reporting categories are Non-Hispanic White (one race only), Any Minority, African-American, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Hispanic. A category labeled "other race" is collected as well, but it is not considered meaningful across DSHS data systems. Since the vast majority of clients reporting "other race" also choose another race category, this category was not included in analyses.

Technical Tables

A full set of tables providing responses to survey questions tabulated by gender and race/ethnicity, including detailed subcategories of persons in the minority category, is provided as a technical appendix to this report.

Copies of this paper may be obtained at www.dshs.wa.gov/rda/ or by calling DSHS' Research and Data Analysis Division at 360.902.0701. Please request REPORT NUMBER 7.104

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