

Transition Age Youth Data and Research

Population Size

- Number of transition aged youth in the child welfare system nationally
 - Total: 171,162ⁱ
 - Percentage of child welfare population: 25%ⁱⁱ
- Number of youth in extended care at age 18: 24,797
- Number of youth in extended care at age 19: 6,489

Extended Care Programs in the States

- Number of states with extended care: 45ⁱⁱⁱ
- Number of states drawing down IV-E for extended care: 26 states and 6 federal tribes^{iv}
- Range of IV-E Penetration Rate: 4% in WI, 13% in MD, 76% in VA^v
- Number of states that include juvenile justice in their extended care program: 3^{vi}
- Number of states that allow re-entry into care: 38^{vii}

Permanency Plans and Outcomes

Permanency Plans Assigned by Age^{viii}

	16-17	18-21
Adoption	10%	4%
Emancipation	12%	50%
Guardianship of live w/relatives	11%	7%
Long term foster care	10%	14%
Reunification	50%	23%

Discharge Reasons^{ix}

	16-17	18-21
Adoption	7%	<1%
Emancipation	4%	85%
Guardianship or live w/relatives	16%	2%
Transferred to another agency	7%	2%
Reunification	64%	10%

- Percentage of youth who discharge to permanency: 43%^x
- Percentage of youth who age out to non-permanency: 56%^{xi}

Connections with Family

Based on data from the Midwest Study:

- almost two-thirds of youth approaching age 18 reported feeling very close or somewhat close to their biological mothers,
- over two-fifths of youth reported feeling very close to grandparents, and
- two-thirds reported feeling very close to siblings.
- respondents reported a median of 15 visits in the previous year with their birth mothers and 12 visits with their grandparent(s).^{xii}

- **Placement Data**

	Ages 16-17	Ages 18-21 ^{xiii}
Group Home or Institution	40%	29%
Foster Home	29%	29%
Relative Foster Home	13%	8%
Supervised Independent Living	1%	22%
Trial Home Visit	10%	5%

Placement type for youth 18-21 in states with IV-E approved Extended Care^{xiv}

- Foster or kinship: 38%
- SIL: 34%
- Group home or institution: 17%
- Other: 11%

Outcome Data

- **Improved outcomes nationally:**
 - Extended foster care is associated with better young adult outcomes. Older youth in extended foster care at ages 19 and 21 experience better outcomes than older youth not in extended foster care.
 - Even a small dose of extended foster care is associated with better outcomes. Older youth in care at age 19 but not at age 21 experienced better outcomes at age 21 in employment, high school diploma/GED completion, educational aid, homelessness, and young parenthood compared to their peers not in care at age 19.
 - Extended foster care is associated with receipt of independent living services.
 - Extended foster care does not appear to increase or decrease permanency rates and cannot replace a permanent, loving family.^{xv}
- **Improved outcomes from being in extended care in CA:**
 - Doubled the odds that they would be working or in high school at 19.
 - Were twice as likely to have completed at least one year of college by age 21.
 - Doubled the percentage of youth remaining in care until 21 who earned a college degree.
 - Reduced by 38 percent the incidence of pregnancy among young women in care before age 20.^{xvi}

Cost Data

- **National cost estimate of poor outcomes through not extending care:** \$8 billion for each cohort nationally (or \$300,000 per youth)^{xvii}
- **Cost savings of extended care in California^{xviii}**
 - \$72,000 estimated increase in per-person lifetime earnings by extending foster care
 - \$481,000 more in projected earnings over their work life for former foster youth with a college degree compared to those with only a high school diploma.
 - \$2.40 return on each dollar spent on extended foster care with the attainment of a bachelor's degree, according to a cost-benefit analysis conducted in California.

Data on the Transition to Adulthood

- The brains of young adults are still developing in their early 20s. They continue to need a mixture of support, guidance, and freedom to optimally develop.^{xix}

- On average, most youth make the transition to adulthood between the ages 25 and 27.^{xx}
- Most youth rely on parents for a significant amount of material and non-material support as they make the transition to adulthood, amounting to, on average, \$38,000 between the time a young person is 18 and 34 and about 367 hours of family help per year.^{xxi}

ⁱ [Fostering Youth Transitions: Using Data to Drive Policy and Practice Decisions](#) (Annie E. Casey 2018).

ⁱⁱ [Fostering Youth Transitions: Using Data to Drive Policy and Practice Decisions](#) (Annie E. Casey 2018).

ⁱⁱⁱ [Transition -Age Youth in Foster Care in the U.S.](#) (ChildTrends 2017). This data is from AFCARS in 2015.

^{iv} [States With Approval to Extend Care Provide Independent Living Options for Youth up to Age 21](#) 28 (GAO Report May 2019). This data includes only states with IV-E approved plans for extended care and was based on data for 2017.

^v [States With Approval to Extend Care Provide Independent Living Options for Youth up to Age 21](#) 28 (GAO Report May 2019). This data element describes the percentage of IV-E eligible youth in the state who are in efc. This Report revealed that most states that are drawing down IV-E for efc have fairly low rates of IV-E eligibility. There may be some changes in the design of their programs that could increase this number.

^{vi} CA, VA, IN; NM plans to include juvenile justice youth in the coming year.

^{vii} Juvenile Law Center, [Extended Foster Care Review](#).

^{viii} [Transition -Age Youth in Foster Care in the U.S.](#) (ChildTrends 2017). Note that long term foster care and emancipation are **not** permanency plans. These are terms that remain in AFCARS. Together these numbers approximate the number of youth with plans of APPLA.

^{ix} [Transition -Age Youth in Foster Care in the U.S.](#) (ChildTrends 2017).

^x [Fostering Youth Transitions: Using Data to Drive Policy and Practice Decisions](#) (Annie E. Casey 2018).

^{xi} [Fostering Youth Transitions: Using Data to Drive Policy and Practice Decisions](#) (Annie E. Casey 2018).

^{xii} [Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Conditions of Youth Preparing to Leave State Care Executive Summary](#) 4-5 (Chapin Hall 2004).

^{xiii} [Transition -Age Youth in Foster Care in the U.S.](#) (ChildTrends 2017).

^{xiv} [States With Approval to Extend Care Provide Independent Living Options for Youth up to Age 21](#) 39 (GAO Report May 2019).

Helpful placement data can also be found in [Transition -Age Youth in Foster Care in the U.S.](#) (ChildTrends 2017). This includes youth 16 and older.

^{xv} The data in this section is from: [Supporting Older Youth Beyond Age 18: Examining Data and Trends in Extended Foster Care](#) (Child Trends June 2019)

^{xvi} The data in this section is from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH). Reports at Age 19 can be found [here](#) and for 21, [here](#).

^{xvii} [Issue Brief: Cost Avoidance—The Business Case for Investing in Youth Aging Out of Foster Care](#) 5 (Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative May 2013).

^{xviii} Mark E. Courtney et al., [California's Fostering Connections to Success Act and the Costs and Benefits of Extending Foster Care to 21](#) (Partners for Our Children 2009).

^{xix} [The Adolescent Brain: New Research and Its Implications for Young People Transitioning from Foster Care](#) (Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative 2011).

^{xx} John Schulenberg & Ingrid Schoon, The Transition to Adulthood Across Time and Space: Overview of Special Section, 3 (2) Longitudinal Life Course Studies 164 (October 13, 2012).

^{xxi} [Family Support During the Transition To Adulthood](#), Policy Brief, National Poverty Center (August 2014).