



Annual Outcomes Report for State Fiscal Year 2015

Prepared and Submitted by:



Carol Behrer, Executive Director
with Steve Elfvin of Rocket Science, Ltd.

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Iowa Aftercare Services Network -- Annual Outcomes Report
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INTRODUCTION

The Iowa Aftercare Services Network (IASN) provides services and support to help youth and young adults who exit foster care at or near the age of 18 make a successful transition to adulthood. Since 2002, IASN has assisted more than 3,000 young people with this transition.

Youth and Shelter Services, Inc. (YSS) holds the contract with the Iowa Department of Human Services to provide services for this population and has served as the lead agency and fiscal agent for the Network since it was initiated in 2002. In addition to providing direct services through four of its central Iowa locations, YSS subcontracts with eight other youth-serving agencies to provide aftercare services to eligible youth throughout the state. In addition to YSS, the agencies in the Network and the location of their primary offices are:

- American Home Finding Association (Ottumwa)
- Children's Square USA (Council Bluffs)
- Family Resources, Inc. (Davenport)
- Francis Lauer Youth Services, Inc. (Mason City)
- Foundation 2 (Cedar Rapids)
- Four Oaks (Cedar Rapids)
- Young House Family Services (Burlington)
- Youth Homes of Mid-America (Des Moines)

For further information on these agencies and the counties they serve for the Aftercare Network, see the Network's website at www.iowaaftercare.org. YSS also subcontracts with the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa (YPII) to provide statewide coordination, policy development, quality assurance, and evaluation services for the Network. One of YPII's responsibilities is the analysis of Aftercare data and the submission of this required annual report on the performance of the Network and the outcomes achieved.

Funding for aftercare services in Iowa comes from federal and state sources. Since 2002, a portion of the state's federal Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (Chafee funding) has been designated to serve 18 to 21 year olds who age out of foster care. Beginning in 2006, the Iowa Legislature authorized additional support for these youth and appropriated state funding to create the Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program. The PAL program provides monthly financial support to qualifying youth who exit a state-paid foster care placement at age 18 or older as long as the young person is either enrolled in post-secondary education or training, is employed, or both. Beginning with SFY 2015, the Iowa Legislature made youth aging out of the Boys State Training School and detention facilities eligible for aftercare and PAL services and provided a third funding stream to ensure that these youth could also receive assistance as they transition to adulthood. These three funding streams are combined in the DHS contract.

The DHS aftercare contract to YSS requires annual reporting on the services provided and outcomes of the youth and young adults who participate in Aftercare and PAL programs. This information is used both to assess the impact of the services being delivered to eligible youth and to fulfill state and federal reporting requirements. Data presented in this annual report are primarily drawn from an on-line data collection system that was designed specifically for the IASN and is maintained by the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa with the assistance of Steve Elfvin of Rocket Science, Ltd.

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Organization of the Report

This report is organized into four parts and is similar to previous years' reports to facilitate year-to-year comparison.

Part I provides three-year trend information from intake interviews with youth when they first access Aftercare services. This information is provided to help readers understand the characteristics of youth as they leave formal foster care and begin aftercare services.

Part II of the report looks at demographic and other characteristics of all 760 participants who were served during SFY 2015. In addition, this part includes a brief summary of data on "services provided" that is collected by IASN as part of the state's obligation to report this information for the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). This part also summarizes the reasons youth exited the program during the year.

Part III of the report examines outcomes of 156 participants who exited services during the year and did not return for services prior to June 30, 2015 and for whom we have complete exit data. Data on outcomes in the areas of employment, resources, housing, education, relationships, parenting, high risk behaviors, health care coverage, and essential documents are presented as required by the DHS contract. The outcomes reported do not include any youth from the STS or detention that may have exited during the year.

Part IV of the report is a new section summarizing the first year of Aftercare services to youth who aged out of the State Training School and detention centers in the state. Fifty-four youth from these settings entered Aftercare in SFY 2015 and most were continuing to receive services at the end of the year. Descriptive data, rather than outcomes, is presented for the inaugural year of Aftercare services to this population.

Aftercare and PAL are voluntary programs. Eligible young adults are allowed to initiate and discontinue services as they choose, and it is possible for youth to have multiple entries and exits from the program. Data is collected through individual interviews with the participants each time they enter or exit IASN services. To assess outcomes, data from the very first interview with the youth is compared with their last exit interview during the fiscal year for which this report is generated. Outcomes are only reported for youth who did not return to services prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Efforts are made to ensure the accuracy of the data, but because the information is based largely on self-reports by youth and many of the topics covered in the participant interviews are sensitive, some young people may not provide truthful, consistent or accurate answers. Although aggregate data is quite consistent year-to-year, the data should be interpreted with caution especially on questions related to risky behaviors and other sensitive topics. Further, data is entered by multiple interviewers and there may be some data entry errors that are not detected, resulting in some margin of error in the results presented in this report.

Key Data and Findings

The total number of unduplicated participants served by the Aftercare Network increased this year to 760 youth, from 699 served in SFY 2014. This increase includes 54 participants from the newly eligible

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population of youth exiting the State Training School (STS) or a detention facility as their last placement prior to aging out. This year's increase reverses a trend of serving fewer youth each year since participation peaked in SFY 2011 when 788 youth were served.

Of the 760 young people served this year, 310 entered the program for the first time, including 256 from foster care placements and 54 from the STS/detention. This is an increase from the 244 new intakes in SFY 2014, also reversing a four-year downward trend of first-time participants in Aftercare that has paralleled a similar decline in the number of youth who have age out of care each year in Iowa.

Young people participate in the voluntary program for an average of just over two years. The Network's statewide coverage afforded young people from 87 counties the opportunity to participate, with a majority of those in urban areas.

On average, 453 young people participated in Aftercare each month during SFY 2015. Among these youth, an average of 271 were receiving PAL, 156 were participating in Aftercare without PAL, and 26 had exited the STS or detention (11 in Aftercare only and 15 who received PAL).

Intakes: Young people enter Aftercare services with a variety of risk factors or potential barriers to a successful transition to adulthood. Highlights from intake interviews with the 256 young people who accessed Aftercare **from a foster care or relative/other suitable placement** for the first time in SFY 2015 include:

- The average age of new participants was 18.4 years, with youth ranging in age from 18.0 to 20.7 when they first accessed services. Among new participants, 85% first came to Aftercare at age 18, including 75% who accessed services within six months of their 18th birthday.
- There was an increase in the proportion of referrals from Juvenile Court Services from 23% of all new intakes in SFY 2014 to 31% of all intakes in SFY 2015 (not including those referred from the STS or detention).
- 10 percent of youth entered Aftercare as parents;
- One-fifth reported having been homeless sometime in the last two years;
- 63.3% of new participants had a high school diploma (an increase from 58.6% the previous year) and 5.1% had an equivalent (GED or HiSET) (a decrease from 9.8% last year);
- More than half of youth entered Aftercare without jobs;
- 62.1% of youth reported that they had been referred for or received a mental health assessment, counseling or therapy in the year prior to accessing Aftercare, and 60.2% had been prescribed medication for the ongoing maintenance of physical or mental health.
- A significant number of these young adults have attempted suicide or inflicted self-harm. Of new participants, 28.5% reported a previous suicide attempt and 34.4% reported other self-harming behavior.

Outcomes: Aftercare services are designed to help young adults move toward stability and self-sufficiency in five key areas: education, employment, housing, health, and relationships. A variety of

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measures are used to assess progress in these outcome areas. Outcomes are analyzed by comparing the original intake data collected when youth first accessed services with the last exit interview data for those youth who exited during state fiscal year 2015 and did not return before July 1, 2015. Note, that youth served by Aftercare from the STS or detention as their last placement are not included in this year's outcome analysis. This provides an unduplicated group of **156 youth** on which data is reported for the year, including **122 PAL** participants and **34** young people who did not receive PAL (referred to as **AC only** participants). Highlights from the SFY 2015 outcomes include:

- The percentage of youth working at least 25 hours a week nearly doubled from 25.6% at intake to 48.1% at exit.
- The percentage of participants with \$400 or more in monthly earned income (before public assistance) increased from 29.5% at intake to 54.5% at exit.
- 86.5% of Aftercare participants had earned at least a high school diploma or its equivalent, compared to only 75% of the same youth at intake.
- At exit, all but 14.7% of participants are contributing toward their housing costs; compared to 37.2% who were not paying for housing at intake.
- More than 95% have retained their health care coverage under Medicaid or other insurance.

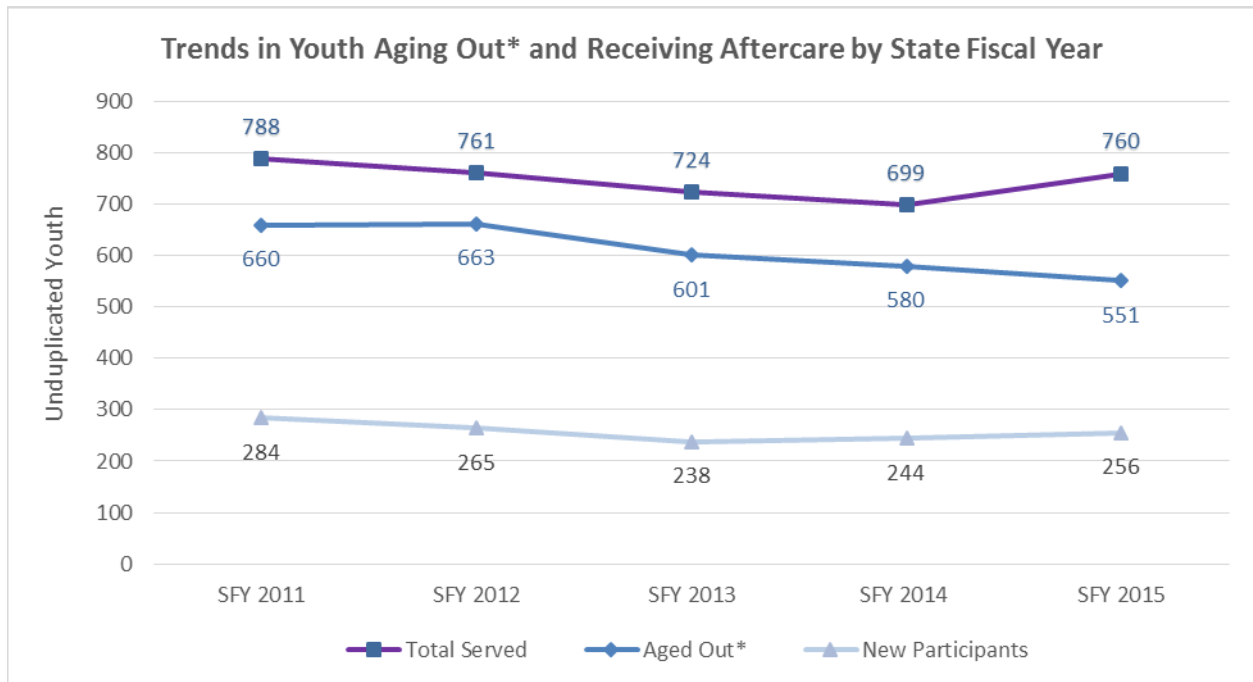
The remainder of this SFY 2015 Annual Outcomes Report shares further information and data about the characteristics and outcomes of the young adults who voluntarily participate in Aftercare Services in Iowa. For further information, readers are invited to contact the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa.

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PART I: Characteristics of New Intakes

A total of 760 young adults were served by the Aftercare Network in State Fiscal Year 2015, reversing a gradual decline in the total number served over the previous five years. Of the 760 youth served, 256 accessed services for the first time during the fiscal year, which was a slight increase from the previous year's intakes of 244.

Based on data from the Iowa Department of Human Services, over the last five year an average of 611 youth per year have exited Iowa foster care at age 17.5 or older making them "age-eligible" for Aftercare services.¹ Over the same timeframe, on average, 257 youth per year have accessed Aftercare services. A number of other variables affect a young person's eligibility for Aftercare and PAL, so not all youth who leave foster care at age 17.5 or older are eligible. Conversely, youth adopted from foster care after age 16 may also be eligible for Aftercare, but may not be reflected in this data. Further, young people do not necessarily access Aftercare the same year as they age out. In the chart below, the two trends provide a general indication of the proportion of eligible youth accessing Aftercare services.



The remainder of this part highlights characteristics of young people at the time they accessed Aftercare services over the last three state fiscal years. This trend data is helpful in understanding the circumstances of youth as they emancipate from foster care in Iowa, typically at age 18. To be consistent with previous year's data, the SFY 2015 numbers do NOT include newly eligible youth whose

¹ The DHS data provided this year and the "aged out" numbers presented in the accompanying chart take into account only age at exit from placement to estimate the number of older youth exiting foster care who become eligible for Aftercare by fiscal year. While this data provides a proxy for the number of youth who age out, there are several additional variables that affect eligibility for Aftercare services that are not reflected in this data. This graph should therefore be interpreted with caution.

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last placement was the State Training School or detention. Similar characteristics of this subpopulation is presented in Part IV of this report.

Age at Intake: Most youth first access Aftercare at age 18 soon after exiting foster care. In SFY 2015, the average age of new intakes was 18.4 years, with youth ranging in age from 18.0 to 20.7 at intake. As was the case the previous year, among new participants in SFY 2015, 85% first came to Aftercare at age 18, including 75% who accessed services within six months of their 18th birthday. At the same time, young people do access Aftercare any time before their 21st birthday. During the most recent fiscal year, 83% of new participants began receiving services within three months of exiting formal foster care, although young people may access Aftercare any time before their 21st birthday. In SFY 2015, twenty-five 19-year olds accessed services for the first time and eleven first received services at age 20. For 7% of new participants last year, more than one year had lapsed between their exit from foster care and their intake into Aftercare.

Case Management while in Foster Care: In Iowa, young people may be placed in foster care as a result of a delinquency proceeding, as well as those who enter foster care as a Child in Need of Assistance (CINA). If placed in care because of delinquency, a young person’s case is most often managed by a Juvenile Court Officer rather than a DHS Social Worker. Regardless, youth are eligible for Aftercare if all other eligibility criteria are met. There was an increase in the proportion of youth accessing Aftercare from Juvenile Court Services in SFY 2015 to 31%. In previous years, approximately three-fourths of youth accessing Aftercare services had a DHS Social Worker as their primary case manager; while about one-fourth had a Juvenile Court Officer managing their case.

FOSTER CARE CASE MANAGEMENT			
While in foster care, primary case management was provided by a:	SFY 2013 (N=229)*	SFY 2014 (N=244)*	SFY 2015 (N=256)
DHS Social Worker	77.3%	71.3%	62.1%
Juvenile Court Officer	22.7%	23.3%	31.3%
Both DHS and JCO involvement	N/A	5.4%	5.9%

*Case worker information was missing or unknown for a small number of participants. Dually-managed cases (*i.e.*, both DHS and JCO involvement) were not identified in SFY 2013.

Risk Factors: Young people enter Aftercare services with a variety of self-reported behaviors or characteristics that place them at risk of poor outcomes as young adults. While these risks are not insurmountable, they do create challenges for these emerging adults. Because of the sensitive nature of many of these questions and the possibility of untruthful answers from youth, particularly when services are just beginning and participants have not yet established a trusting relationship with their Self-Sufficiency Advocate, results should be interpreted with caution.

Consistently, more than half of the young people participating in Aftercare have mental health issues and a quarter have some history of alcohol or substance abuse. In SFY 2015, more than three-fifths of youth (62.1%) reported that they have been referred for or received a mental health assessment, counseling or therapy in the last year, and 46.3% have been prescribed medication for the ongoing maintenance of physical or mental health.

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Among the other challenges and high-risk behaviors reported at intake by new participants in SFY 2015 were the following:

- 10 percent of youth entered Aftercare as parents;
- One-fifth reported having been homeless sometime in the last two years;
- Reported illegal behaviors included stealing (29.6%); selling drugs (16.7%); and gang involvement (11%).

RISK FACTORS/CHALLENGES PRESENTED AT INTAKE			
Percent responding “yes” they:	SFY 2013 (N=238)	SFY 2014 (N=244)	SFY 2015 (N=256)
Have been referred for or received a mental health assessment, counseling or therapy in the last year	56.72%	59.43%	62.11%
Have been referred for or received an alcohol or substance abuse assessment or counseling in the last year	25.21%	22.95%	17.19%
Have ever attempted suicide	23.53%	25.41%	28.52%
Have ever inflicted self-harm in other ways	28.99%	29.92%	32.42%
Have ever had an unintended pregnancy (females only – N=131 in SFY 2015)	29.1%	20.8%	19.08%
Are a parent	10.92%	6.56%	10.55%
Have been homeless in the past two years	17.99%	18.44%	20.31%
Have been incarcerated or detained in the past two years	35.71%	37.3%	37.50%
Have been hit, punched, shoved, or hurt by partner in the past two years	14.29%	10.66%	11.72%

Education: Iowa allows youth to continue in voluntary foster care through age 19 to complete high school. For a variety of reasons, however, many youth do not take advantage of that option. While about the same number of youth entered Aftercare with a high school credential in SFY 2015 compared to SFY 2014, the proportion with a regular high school diploma increased to 63.28% and those with a equivalency decreased to 5.08%. Again in SFY 2015, just under one-third of young people entered Aftercare without a high school credential. Many of these youth continue pursuing a high school diploma or equivalent while in Aftercare.

EDUCATION			
Highest education credential received:	SFY 2013 (N=238)	SFY 2014 (N=244)	SFY 2015 (N=256)
High School Diploma	60.92%	58.61%	63.28%
H.S. Equivalency (GED or HiSET)	14.29%	9.84%	5.08%
Vocational certificate or license	0.42%	0.41%	0.39%
None of the Above	24.37%	31.15%	31.25%

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Employment and Income: Among youth accessing Aftercare in SFY 2014, a little under half (45.7%) are employed at least part-time at the time they started receiving services. Conversely, more than half (53.1%) of youth report having \$0 monthly earned income when they first begin services.

EMPLOYMENT			
Current employment status:	SFY 2013 (N=238)	SFY 2014 (N=244)	SFY 2015 (N=256)
Employed (average 35+ hours per week)	5.88%	9.02%	10.94%
Employed (average 25-34 hours per week)	14.29%	14.34%	13.67%
Employed (less than 25 hours per week)	19.75%	18.44%	21.09%
Unemployed, actively seeking employment	35.29%	35.25%	28.91%
Unemployed, long-term disability	0.42%	1.64%	1.17%
Not in work force	21.85%	18.44%	23.05%
Other	2.52%	2.87%	1.17%
MONTHLY INCOME			
Gross monthly income w/out PAL:	SFY 2013 (N=238)	SFY 2014 (N=244)	SFY 2015 (N=256)
\$0	56.30%	56.97%	53.13%
\$1 - \$799	39.92%	33.62%	36.72%
\$800 - \$1,199	2.52%	5.33%	7.03%
\$1,200 or more	1.26%	4.10%	2.73%

Banking and Credit: In SFY 2015, slightly over half of the youth exiting foster care and accessing Aftercare report having a checking or debit account and 55% report having a savings account. While an improvement over previous years, young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood generally have limited experience with mainstream banking. Being “unbanked” has been identified as a common problem for low-income people and a barrier to self-sufficiency. Very few (less than 10 percent) have ever received their credit report.

BANKING and CREDIT			
Percent responding “yes” they have:	SFY 2013 (N=238)	SFY 2014 (N=244)	SFY 2015 (N=256)
A Checking or debit account	47.9%	45.9%	52.3%
A Savings account	41.6%	47.95%	55.1%
Received their credit report	N/A	N/A	8.2%

Essential Documents: As in past years, the majority of young people accessing Aftercare have many of the documents essential to being independent. In SFY 2015, 80.5% had their birth certificate and 85.6% had their Social Security Card, although this was a slight decrease in the percentage of youth who reported having these essential documents in the prior year. Fewer than half, however, have a driver’s license at intake into Aftercare, reflecting the difficulty young people have in obtaining a driver’s license while in care, and only two-thirds have a state ID.

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ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS			
Percent responding “yes” they have the following documents:	SFY 2013 (N=238)	SFY 2014 (N=244)	SFY 2015 (N=256)
Birth certificate	78.99%	84.02%	80.47%
Social Security Card	86.13%	88.52%	85.55%
Driver’s license	46.22%	42.62%	45.31%
State ID or passport	67.23%	70.9%	67.97%

Health: Automatic enrollment to continue Medicaid coverage for youth aging out of foster care in Iowa has been largely successful, as more than 90% of young people accessing Aftercare over the last three years report that they have Medicaid. Health insurance is critical as three-fifths of young people accessing Aftercare have been prescribed medication for ongoing maintenance of physical or mental health, in addition to other typical health care needs. Challenges of maintaining that coverage remain, however, even though this population is eligible up to the age of 26. Tobacco use remains disproportionately high among this population.

HEALTH			
Percent responding “yes”:	SFY 2013 (N=238)	SFY 2014 (N=244)	SFY 2015 (N=256)
Have a primary care physician	72.27%	63.93%	69.92%
Have Medicaid	91.6%	92.21%	94.92%
Had been prescribed medication for ongoing maintenance of physical or mental health within the last year	52.52%	57.79%	60.16%
Had used tobacco in the last 30 days	45.8%	44.26%	40.23%
Had used alcohol to intoxication in the last 30 days	10.5%	9.84%	7.42%

Housing: Overall young people accessing Aftercare feel safe in their current housing and only a small percentage (5.1% in SFY 2015) report being “homeless” when entering services. But housing is less than stable, as more than a third indicated that they plan to move within a month.

HOUSING			
Percent responding “yes” they:	SFY 2013 (N=238)	SFY 2014 (N=244)	SFY 2015 (N=256)
Are paying for housing	57.13%	57.79%	55.86%
Have name on a lease agreement	23.95%	21.31%	22.66%
Are moving next month	39.08%	34.84%	37.50%
Are currently homeless	5.88%	5.74%	5.08%

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Permanency: Even though Aftercare participants have aged out of foster care, they have maintained connections to family and other supportive adults. As shown in the table below, young people overwhelmingly report having at least one person (either in their family or a non-family member) who will always be available to them. Having and strengthening these relationships is key to their long-term success.

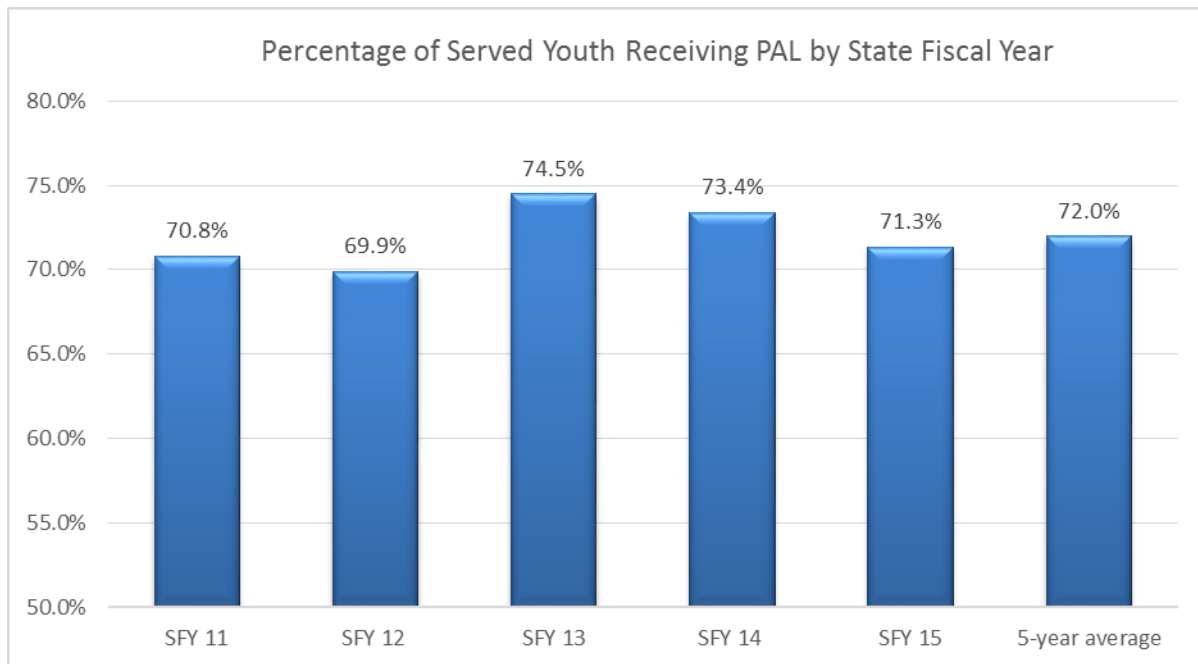
PERMANENCY – SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS			
Percent responding “yes” there is an:	SFY 2013 (N=238)	SFY 2014 (N=244)	SFY 2015 (N=256)
Adult family member who I will always be able to turn to for support...	86.97%	85.25%	83.20%
Adult, non-family member, who I will always be able to turn to for support...	94.54%	92.62%	92.97%

PART II – Characteristics of All Youth Served in SFY 2015

Unduplicated Number Served: A total of 760 young people were served by IASN during SFY 2015, reversing a gradual decline in the number of participants served. Among the total number served, 310 accessed services for the first time during state fiscal year 2015, including 54 who aged out of the State Training School (STS) or a detention center who were eligible for the first time. At the close of the fiscal year, 502 youth had open aftercare cases, including 42 from the STS population.

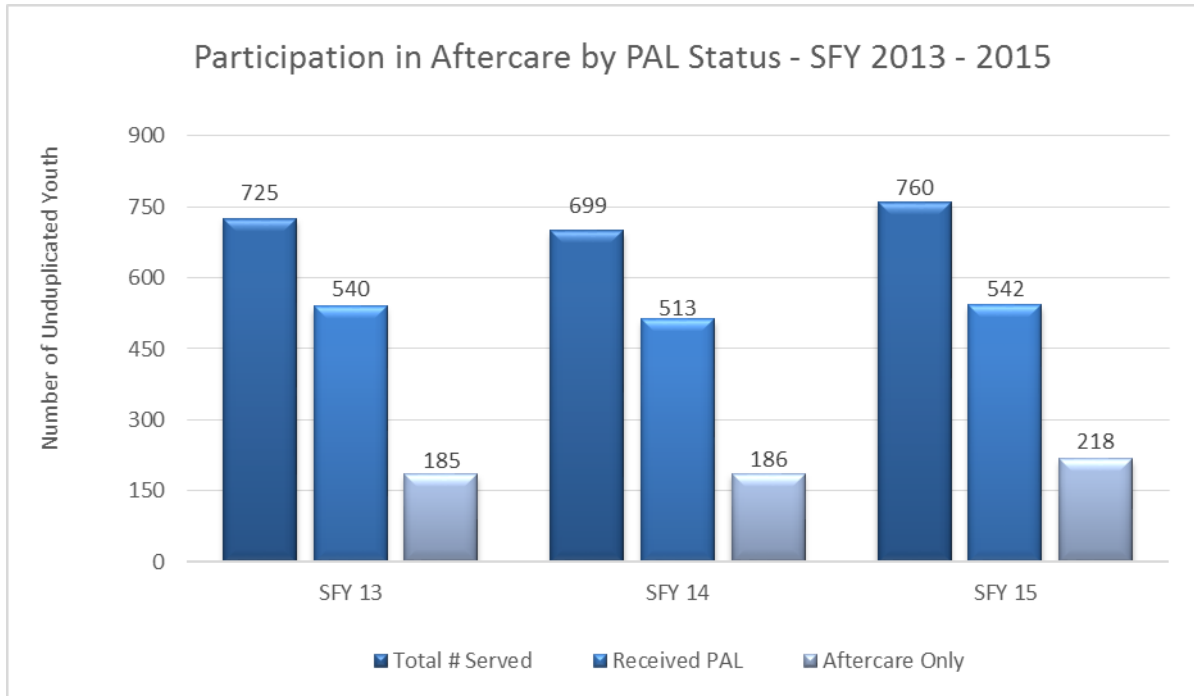
Aftercare and PAL are voluntary programs, and eligible young adults are able to initiate and discontinue services as they choose. In a small number of instances, agencies will discontinue services for young people who fail to meet the requirements and self-responsibility expectations of the program. In either case, young people may re-enter services when they are ready. This leads to a fair amount of turnover in program participation as youth may enter and exit services multiple times before their 21st birthday. In SFY 2015, 147 youth returned for services after a break in their participation.

PAL Participation: The proportion of the served population in Aftercare that receives a PAL stipend for at least a portion of the time they participate has remained fairly steady over the last several years, averaging 72% over the last five state fiscal years. Of the 760 youth served in SFY 2015, 542 or 71.3% met requirements and received a PAL stipend for at least a portion of the time they participated; the remaining 218 youth did not receive PAL during the year.



In the tables and charts throughout this report, columns designated "Aftercare Only" or "AC Only" refer to youth who did not receive a PAL stipend while participating in Aftercare services during the report year.

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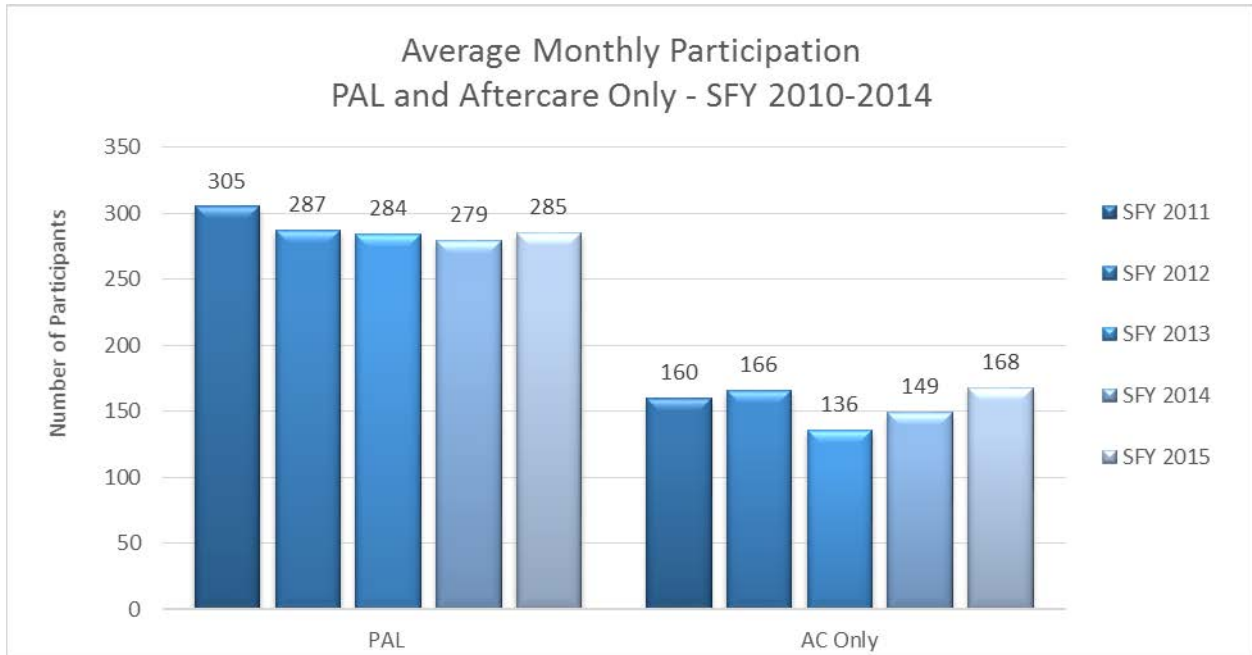


Eligibility criterion for just Aftercare (without PAL) allows some youth to qualify for general case management services and support but not the monthly financial assistance offered by the PAL program. Among the 218 youth served by IASN in SFY 2015 who did not receive PAL during the year, 97 were eligible **only** for Aftercare Basic. Of those, 71 left state-paid foster or STS before their 18th birthday or had not been in placement for six of the twelve months prior to aging out; 19 aged out of a non-licensed relative care placement; and 7 were adopted or placed in guardianship after the age of 16.

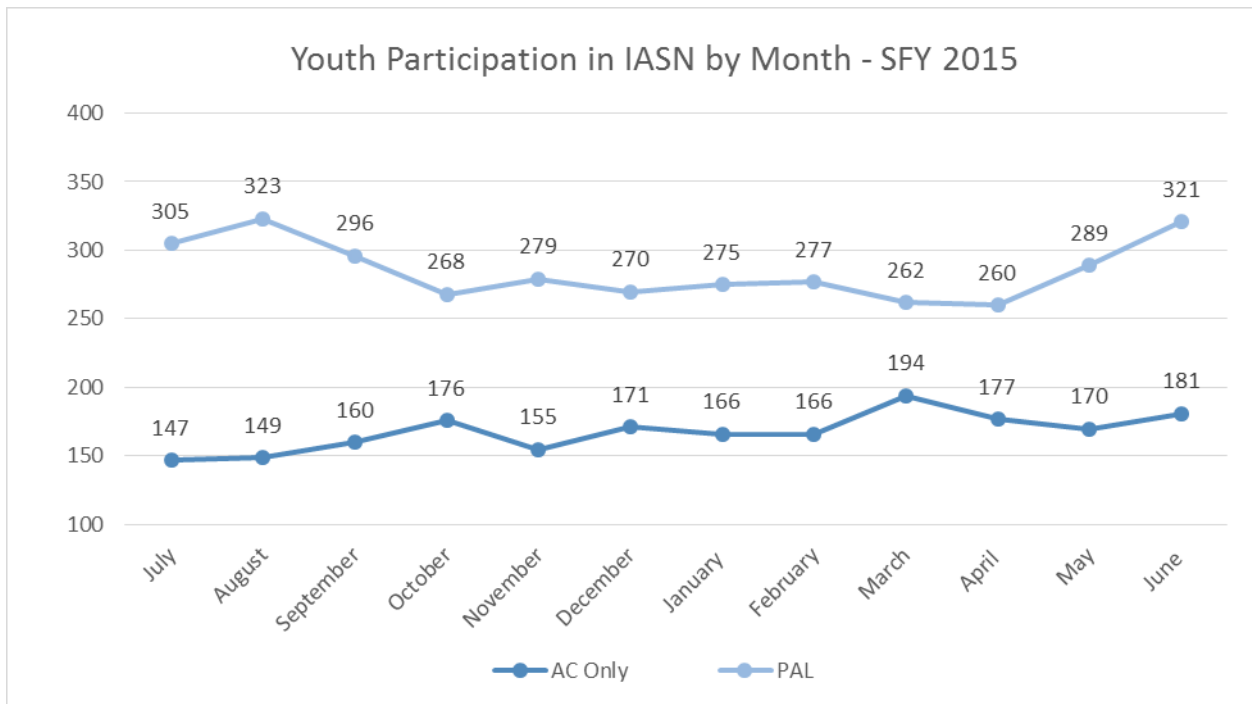
The remaining 121 youth receiving Aftercare Only during the year met the age and foster care exit requirements for PAL, but did not qualify for the PAL program because they were either still eligible for voluntary foster care (*e.g.*, they had not yet completed high school and were under age 20); they were not meeting the education and employment requirements of PAL; or their income (earned or unearned) was too high to qualify for the needs-based PAL stipend. Many of these youth may qualify for PAL at some point in the future as their circumstances change. Similar to previous years, of all young people served in SFY 2015, 87% met the foster care exit age and placement requirements for PAL, while 71.3% actually received PAL for at least one month.

Average Monthly Participation: On average, 453 young people participated in Aftercare each month during SFY 2015, an increase of 25 youth on average from the previous year. Of those, an average of 285 received PAL and 168 received Aftercare only (*i.e.*, did not receive a PAL stipend). Some of the increase from the previous year, including all and more of the increase in average PAL participation, is the result of the new eligibility group from the STS and detention.

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The number being served in Aftercare and PAL changes monthly as young adults access and exit services and shift between PAL and Aftercare Only. In SFY 2015, monthly enrollment in PAL ranged from a low of 260 in April 2015 to a high of 323 in August 2014. Participation in Aftercare Only services ranged from a low of 147 in July 2014 to a high of 181 in June 2015. Monthly participation trends, which are shown in the chart below, were impacted this year by the gradual start-up and increasing participation of the STS/detention eligible population.



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Gender and Race: Demographic data recorded from participants at the time of intake includes gender, age, race and ethnicity. Shown below are the gender and race/ethnicity of the 760 youth served by the Aftercare Network in SFY 2015 and disaggregated by whether youth received PAL. In SFY 2015 the proportion of males receiving services increased given the eligibility of youth from the STS/detention that are predominantly males. This year, nearly an equal number of males and females utilized aftercare services, although females were more likely to receive PAL.

The majority of participating youth are White (78.6%), a slight decrease from the previous year when 82% of participants were White. A sizeable percentage identify themselves as African American (21.6%), Multi-racial (11.8%), or American Indian (5%). Of all youth served in SFY 2015, 92 (12.1% of all participants) identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. Although 5% identified as American Indian, only 1.8% knew that they were a member of a federally recognized tribe, while 2.2% did not know.

GENDER	Total Served (N=760)		Received PAL (N=542)		AC Only (N=218)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	372	49%	254	47%	118	54%
Female	388	51%	288	53%	100	46%
RACE* / ETHNICITY						
	N	%	N	%	N	%
White	597	79%	429	79%	168	77%
African American	164	22%	117	22%	47	22%
American Indian	38	5%	29	5%	9	4%
Asian	7	1%	5	1%	2	1%
Native Hawaiian	6	1%	5	1%	1	.5%
Multi-Racial	90	12%	70	13%	20	9%
Unknown/Declined	9	1%	5	1%	4	2%
Ethnicity – Latino/Hispanic	92	12%	74	14%	18	8%

* Youth can identify with more than one race, therefore, percentages will not add up to 100%.

Age: As described above, most youth first access Aftercare at age 18 soon after exiting foster care. In SFY 2015, the average age of new intakes was 18.4 years, with youth ranging in age from 18.0 to 20.7 at intake. As was the case the previous year, among new participants in SFY 2015, 85% first came to Aftercare at age 18, including 75% who accessed services within six months of their 18th birthday. In SFY 2015, twenty-five 19-year olds accessed services for the first time and eleven first received services at age 20. At any given time, about an equal number of 18, 19 and 20 year olds are participating in Aftercare.

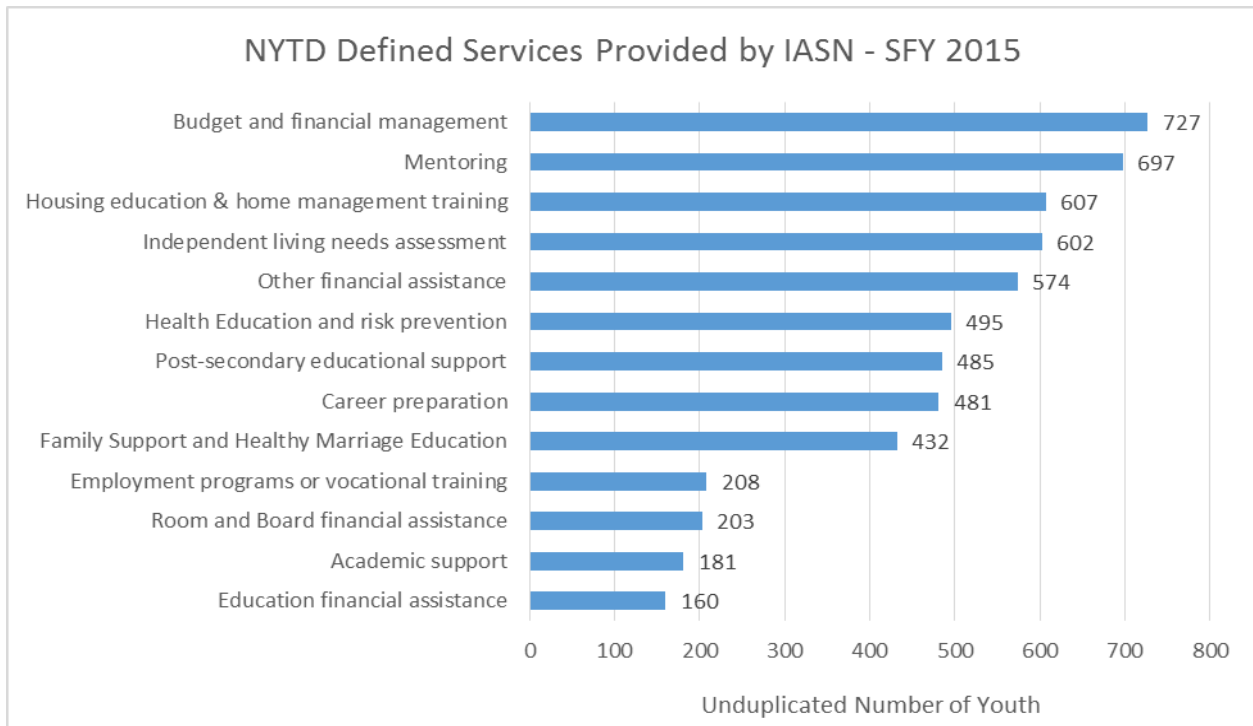
The average age of exiting participants was 20.6. Of 156 young people who completed an exit interview during the year, 115 (74%) were age 21 (or within two months of turning 21), essentially aging out of Aftercare. Among the exiting youth who completed an exit interview, 10.3% were still 18 years old, and 16.7% were 19 to 20.7, all of whom could potentially return for services before their 21st birthday. Youth who exited services without completing an exit interview were somewhat younger, with an average age of 19.7. Nearly three-quarters of these youth (73.3%) were under the age of 20.5, suggesting that many may return for one or more additional episodes of service.

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Serious Emotional Disorder: Historically, more than half of all youth accessing the Aftercare Network each year come to the program with a history of mental health assessment, diagnosis and treatment. In SFY 2015, 59% of the 760 youth served had been diagnosed with one or more Serious Emotional Disorders (SED) prior to leaving foster care (see table below). More than one-third of the 447 participants in Aftercare with a reported mental health disorder had more than one DSM-IV-TR Diagnosis; while 25% were diagnosed with Depression (or other Depressive or Mood disorder); 23% had Behavior Disorders (including ADHD); and 10% had PTSD or Acute Stress/Anxiety disorders.

	Total Served (N=760)		Received PAL (N=542)		AC Only (N=218)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	447	59%	316	58%	131	60%
Non-SED	272	36%	198	37%	74	34%
Not Reported	41	5%	28	5%	13	6%

Services Provided: Each young person participating in Aftercare works individually with a Self-Sufficiency Advocate. These Advocates meet with participating youth face-to-face a minimum of twice a month (often much more frequently), assessing needs and helping youth set goals, identify action steps, and assist youth in achieving those goals. Advocates offer support, guidance, and provide a range of information and services to each youth depending on their unique needs and interests. Beginning in SFY 2011, the Network began recording the types of services provided to individual youth to satisfy reporting requirements for the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). IASN uses definitions established by NYTD to document the services that are provided to individual youth, and transmits that data to DHS monthly. The graph below shows the total number of youth during the year who received each NYTD service at least once.



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Of the 760 youth participating in Aftercare in SFY 2015, 96% received budget and financial management services and 92% received mentoring services. Similar percentages of youth in Aftercare received these same two services last year, reflecting the emphasis on financial management in the program and the mentoring relationship Aftercare Advocates establish with participating youth. In addition to assessing and helping youth meet basic needs with financial assistance, advocates also work with youth on housing, health, post-secondary education, career preparation and family support issues. Any participant receiving a PAL stipend or Aftercare vendor payment is recorded as receiving “other financial assistance.” “Room and board financial assistance” includes vendor payments used specifically for housing and the Chafee-funded rent subsidy program.

Reasons for Exit: When young people leave Aftercare services, their reason for exiting is documented by the Self-Sufficiency Advocate who has been working with the youth. The table below shows the circumstances for all youth who exited Aftercare during the year and did not return prior to July 1, 2015 (N=260). Of these youth, 176 completed an exit interview. The remaining 84 exiting youth discontinued services without an interview. In these cases, the reason for exit is based on the Self-Sufficiency Advocates’ knowledge of the youth’s last circumstances. Many of these youth remain age-eligible and may return for services. The average duration of participation for all youth exiting services (with or without an interview) was 1.6 years, although this may include some disruptions in participation.

The most prevalent reason for discontinuing services in SFY 2015 was that the participant was turning 21 and was no longer eligible for services (this is especially true of PAL participants). Nearly half (46.2%) of all exits were the result of the young person turning 21. Voluntarily discontinuing services while still eligible are moving are other common reasons that young people are exited from services.

Reason for exit	All Exits (N=260)		Received PAL (N=184)		AC Only (N=76)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Turned 21 – end of eligibility	120	46.2%	99	53.8%	21	27.6%
Not meeting self-responsibility requirements	34	13.1%	21	11.4%	13	17.1%
Moved (including moving temporarily and potential transfers)	34	13.1%	24	13.0%	10	13.2%
Voluntarily chose to end services	24	9.2%	11	6.0%	13	17.1%
Incarcerated	4	1.5%	4	2.2%	0	0%
Achieved self-sufficiency	2	0.8%	1	0.5%	1	1.3%
Joined Military	2	0.8%	2	1.1%	0	0%
Died	1	0.4%	1	0.5%	0	0%
Other	14	5.4%	8	4.4%	6	7.9%
Unknown/Missing	25	9.6%	13	7.1%	12	15.8%

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Among Aftercare Only participants, 27.6% “aged out” of Aftercare. Other common reasons for those participants not receiving PAL to be discharged from the program was for failing to meet self-responsibility requirements and voluntarily ending services, which were each cited by 17.1% of exiting Aftercare Only participants. The expectation to meet at least twice a month with their Advocate is typically the self-responsibility requirement that youth fail to meet, which could also be interpreted as voluntarily choosing to end services. These young people may return for services if they have not reached age 21. See table above for additional details.

Youth with less than three months of service: While many youth have multiple entries and exits from services, a smaller number never seem to fully engage with the program. In SFY 2015, 30 (11.5%) of the 260 exits from the program were of youth who participated for less than three months and did not return before the end of the fiscal year. Many of these young people may re-enter services at a later date. *These youth, even if they completed an exit interview, are excluded from the following outcomes analysis.*

PART III – Outcomes of Youth Exiting Aftercare

The overall purpose of Iowa’s Aftercare and PAL programs is to assist young people who age out of foster care or other court-ordered placement make a successful transition to adulthood. The challenges facing this population, as well as poor outcomes among those who do not receive continued support, are well-documented. The services and supports offered by the Iowa Aftercare Services Network are designed to help these young adults move toward stability and self-sufficiency in five key areas: education, employment, housing, health, and relationships. A variety of measures are used to assess progress in these outcome areas.

As in past years’ outcomes analyses, we compare the original intake data collected when youth first accessed services with the last exit interview data for those youth who exited during State Fiscal Year 2015 after at least three months of participation and who did not return before July 1, 2015. This provides an unduplicated group of youth on which data is reported for the year. It should be noted that some of the youth included in this analysis may have already returned for services after the close of the fiscal year or could yet return if they are not yet age 21. Exit data is available for 156 young people who completed an exit interview with Aftercare staff during SFY 2015 and who did not return before the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2015). Note, that this analysis does not include youth who aged out of the State Training School (STS) or a detention center. Outcomes for this population of youth will be included in future years. See Part IV for additional information on the characteristics of these youth.

The average age of these 156 youth was 18.5 at intake and 20.6 at exit. Of the young people completing exit interviews, 72.4% were age 21 at exit and are no longer eligible for services. The average length of time between when this population first accessed services and their SFY 2015 exit is just over two years. Of the youth exiting services and on which data is included in this Part, 65% were involved with Aftercare over a period of two years or more, and 50% were involved over a period of at least 2.5 years, although this may include some interruptions of service prior to their last exit.

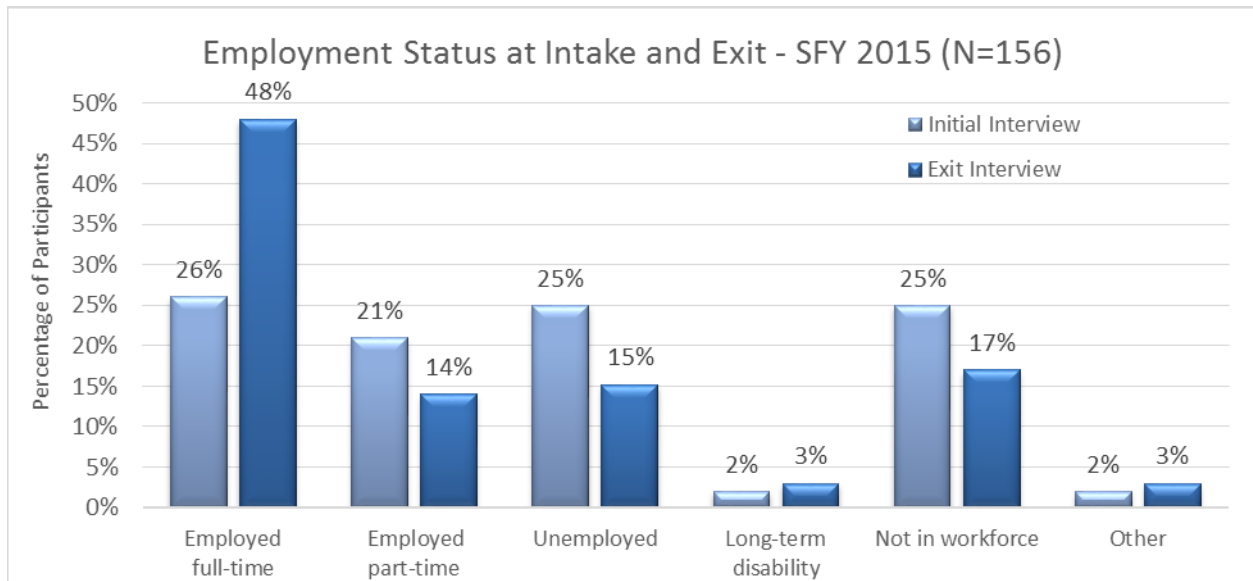
Specific questions from the Core Client Outcomes database are used to assess progress in nine outcome areas identified by the Department. For purposes of this analysis and report, we define those youth who met the qualifications and received a PAL stipend for at least one month as a PAL participant. Of the 156 total participants for whom data is reported, 122 (78%) are included in the PAL population, and 34 (22%) are in the Non-PAL (*i.e.*, Aftercare (AC) Only) grouping. Data is presented for all 156 youth combined, as well as for the 122 PAL participants and 34 AC Only participants separately for each of the indicators.

Outcome data on the following measures are presented in the following tables and charts:

- Employment
- Resources to meet living expenses
- Monthly Income
- Housing
- Safe and Stable Housing
- Housing Security
- Education
- Positive Relationships
- Children and Parenting
- High Risk Behaviors
- Health Insurance Coverage
- Essential Documents

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Employment: Aftercare participants have benefited from the continuing recovery of the overall economy, with employment gains from intake to exit better than recent years. Among the participants that exited services in SFY 2015, 25.6% were employed full-time when they first accessed services. At exit, 48.1% of participants were employed full-time (at least 25 hours per week), and another 14.1% were employed less than 25 hours per week. The percentage of participants “unemployed” declined from 25% at intake to 15.4% at exit in SFY 2015. Those not in the workforce (which may include full-time students) decreased from 25% at intake to 17.3% at exit. Specific percentages of exiting participants by employment status, and a breakdown by PAL and AC Only participants, are shown in chart and table below. Labor force participation, in general, is higher at both intake and exit among PAL participants than AC Only participants which may largely be the result of the requirements of the PAL program to be either working or enrolled in school.



Employment	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		Basic (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Employed full-time*	25.6%	48.1%	27.1%	54.1%	20.6%	26.5%
Employed part-time*	20.5%	14.1%	24.6%	13.1%	5.9%	17.7%
Unemployed	25.0%	15.4%	26.2%	14.7%	20.6%	17.7%
Long-term disability	1.9%	2.6%	0%	0%	8.9%	11.8%
Not in workforce	25.0%	17.3%	19.7%	14.8%	44.1%	26.5%
Other	1.9%	2.6%	2.5%	3.3%	0%	0%

* Full time employment is defined as employed 25 or more hours per week. Employed part-time represents those employed less than 25 hours per week.

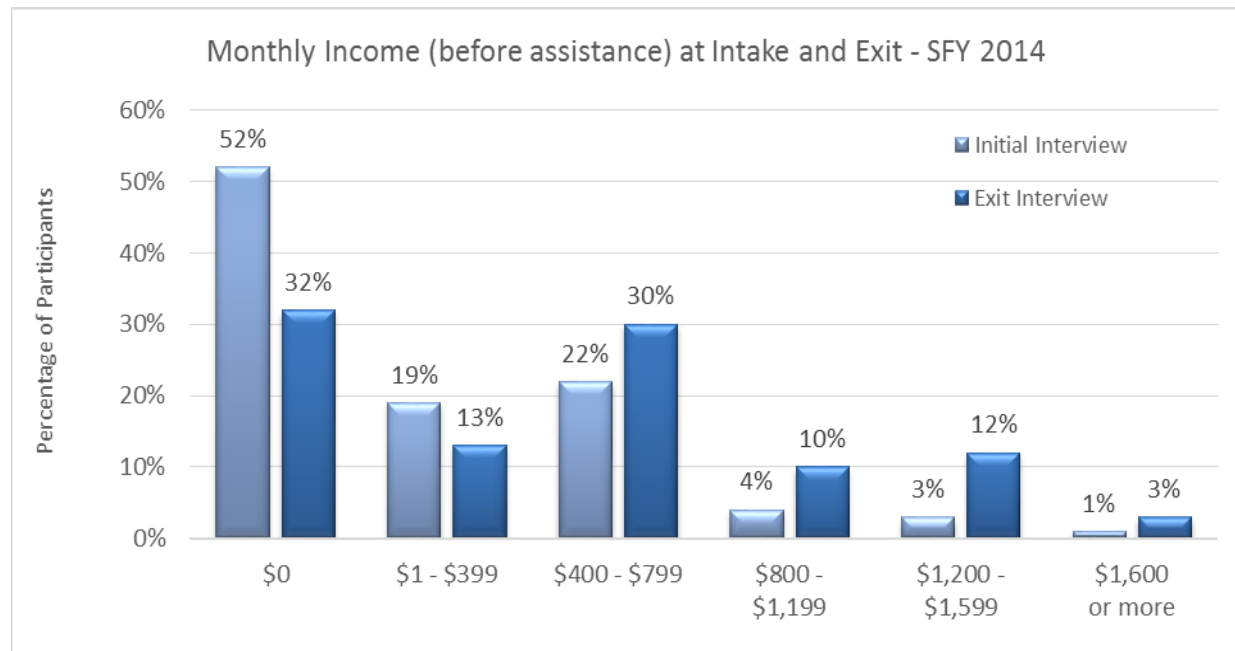
Two new questions related to employment were added to the Aftercare database/interview protocol in SFY 2015. While intake data on these questions is not yet available to assess change, the exit interviews show that more than 57% of exiting participants had been continuously employed for at least six months at some point in their lives, including 41% who had been continuously employed for one year or more. The majority of these young people (52.7%) have worked in four or more places by the time they exit Aftercare.

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Resources to Meet Living Expenses: Achieving full economic self-sufficiency by age 21 is difficult for all young people, and especially so for those without family support. While making progress toward economic self-sufficiency, fewer than half of young adults exiting Aftercare report having enough money to cover their expenses when considering their earned income alone. For these reasons, a major task of Aftercare is to assist participants in accessing the public assistance and other resources for which they are eligible. When taking into consideration income and other assistance, this percentage increases to 71.8% of all exiting participants. The gains from intake to exit is particularly dramatic for Aftercare Only participants.

Resources	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		AC Only (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Has enough money to cover needed expenses with earned income alone	16.7%	48.1%	16.4%	50.0%	17.7%	41.2%
Has enough money to cover needed expenses with income and other assistance	53.9%	71.8%	63.9%	74.6%	17.7%	61.8%

Monthly Income: More than half (52%) of young people enter Aftercare with \$0 monthly income (before counting any public assistance that they may be receiving). While having enough income to be fully self-sufficient by the time they exit services is frequently beyond the reach of these young adults, participants demonstrate substantial increases in their earnings. The percentage of participants with \$400 or more in monthly earned income (before public assistance) increases from 29.5% at intake to 54.5% at exit, while those with no earned income (which may include full-time students) decreases from 52% to 32% from intake to exit.



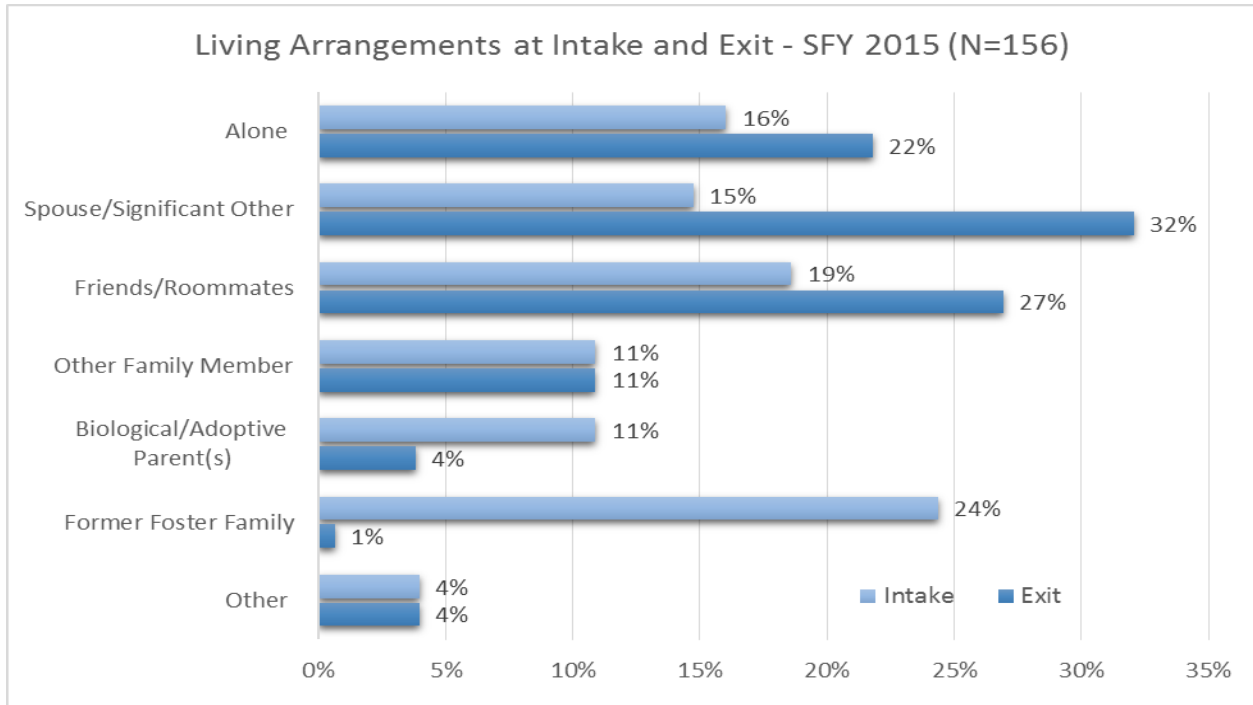
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Safe and Stable Housing: With limited income, finding affordable housing is often a major challenge for Aftercare participants. As is true for many young adults, youth who age out of foster care frequently rely on friends or family for a place to live or to share housing expenses. The most common housing arrangements at intake are living in someone else’s apartment or house and paying rent (39.1%) or living with someone else but not contributing toward rent or living expenses (23.7%). By the time they exit services, there is an increase in the number of young people who have more formal agreements and have sole responsibility (23.1%) or shared responsibility (40.4%) for rent.

Housing	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		AC Only (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
University housing (residence hall, sorority/fraternity)	3.2%	3.2%	4.1%	4.1%	0%	0%
Apartment or house (sole responsibility for rent)	15.4%	23.1%	17.2%	21.3%	8.8%	29.4%
Apartment or house (shared responsibility for rent)	11.5%	40.4%	10.7%	42.6%	14.7%	32.3%
Someone else’s apt or house paying rent	39.1%	18.0%	40.2%	18.0%	35.3%	17.7%
Someone else’s apt or house, not paying rent or living expenses, couch surfing	23.7%	9.0%	23.8%	9.0%	23.5%	8.8%
Couch surfing (moving from house to house)*	N/A	3.2%	N/A	3.3%	N/A	2.9%
Transitional facility, shelter, or other supported housing arrangement	2.6%	1.9%	0.8%	0.8%	8.8%	5.9%
Street/outdoors	0%	0.6%	0%	0%	0%	2.9%
Other	4.5%	0.6%	3.3%	0.8%	8.8%	0%

When entering Aftercare care, 24.4% of these youth reported that they were currently living with a former foster family; 18.6% are living with friends or roommates; 14.7% were living with a boyfriend/girlfriend; and 16% were living alone. At exit, fewer young people live with former foster families (less than 1%) or biological/adoptive parents (3.9%). More were living with a spouse or significant other (32%); with friends/roommates (26.9%); or were living alone (21.8%) at exit. See chart below for additional details.

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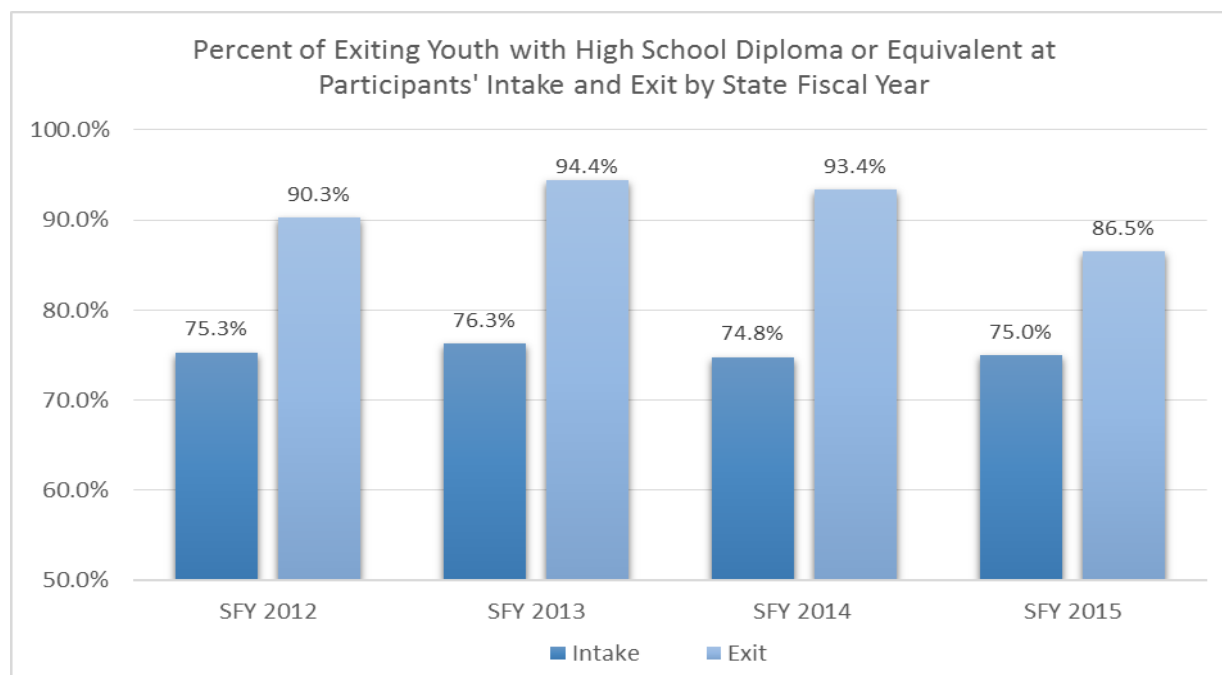
Housing Security: Housing security among Aftercare participants increases from intake to exit. Overall, young people feel safe in their living arrangement – 97% of young people report feeling safe in their living arrangement when first accessing Aftercare and when exiting. Similarly, about 97% of participants report that their housing is structurally safe at both intake and exit.

In other housing areas, there is more significant change from intake to exit. The proportion of participants who have their name on a lease more than doubles, from 23.1% at intake to 62.2% at exit. Having keys to their current home also increases dramatically, from 53.2% at intake to 82.7% at exit. While in Aftercare, participants are accumulating basic household items needed to live independently (from 55.8% at intake to 86.5% at exit).

At exit, all but 14.7% of participants are contributing toward their housing costs; compared to 37.2% who were not paying for housing at intake. At exit, the median amount participants are paying toward housing is around \$350 a month, although 20% are paying more than \$500 per month for rent/housing. Affordable housing remains a challenge for many participants, with 37.8% reporting that more than half of their income goes toward rent and utilities at exit and 28.2% reporting that they are behind on their rent or utility bills.

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Education: Youth in foster care or other out-of-home placements often struggle academically, and many are behind in school for a variety of reasons. When turning 18, youth may sign a voluntary placement agreement to stay in foster care to complete high school. Many, however, do not take advantage of that option, and about 25% of youth enter aftercare without a high school diploma or equivalent. Over the last four years (see chart below), young people have consistently demonstrated considerable progress in the area of education while in Aftercare.



In SFY 2015, on exit, 86.5% of Aftercare participants had earned at least a high school diploma or its equivalent. The drop in high school completion rate by exiting participants from the previous years may be at least partially attributable to the change from the GED test to the HiSET, which tends to be more difficult to pass. Many Aftercare participants also complete some college while receiving services, although college retention and success remains very challenging for many youth exiting foster care.

Education	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		AC Only (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
% Attending School *	30.8%	28.8%	33.6%	28.7%	20.6%	29.4%
Highest level of education completed						
10 th grade or less	4.5%	2.6%	2.5%	0.8%	11.8%	8.8%
11 th grade	21.8%	10.3%	13.9%	4.1%	50.0%	32.4%
12 th grade	72.4%	52.6%	82.8%	56.6%	35.3%	38.2%
College freshman	1.3%	17.3%	0.8%	18.9%	2.9%	11.8%
College sophomore	--	15.4%	--	17.2%	--	8.8%
College junior	--	1.9%	--	2.5%	--	--
College completion**	--	--	--	--	--	--

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Highest Credential Received						
None	25.0%	13.5%	14.7%	5.7%	61.8%	41.2%
GED or HiSET	9.6%	8.3%	12.3%	10.7%	--	--
High School Diploma	65.4%	70.5%	73.0%	77.1%	38.2%	47.1%
Vocational Cert or license	--	2.6%	--	1.6%	--	5.9%
AA degree	--	5.1%	--	4.9%	--	5.9%

* Percent attending school includes youth who responded that they were enrolled full-time (school only); employed and enrolled; or enrolled in career prep or internship.

** College completion may include community or junior college.

Positive Relationships: Having positive social relationships and networks that support the healthy development of young people is critical during adolescence and early adulthood. Most young people in Aftercare report that they do have supportive adults who they will *always* be able to turn to for support and guidance. In periodic surveys of all participants in Aftercare, many participants recognize that they could use more supportive adults in their lives.

% responding "yes"	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		AC Only (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Has a positive relationship with supportive adult family member	88.5%	86.5%	89.3%	94.3%	85.3%	88.2%
Has a positive relationship with supportive non-family adult	93.6%	94.9%	86.1%	95.9%	91.2%	91.2%

Children and Parenting: Early childbearing and parenting are relatively common among youth who age-out of foster care. While just under 10% of youth entered Aftercare as parents, by the time they exited, 32.1% are parenting. Working with participants on healthy relationships and parenting are key activities of Aftercare Self-Sufficiency Advocates. At exit, 88.5% of the parenting participants have their children living with them.

% responding "yes"	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		AC Only (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Are you a parent?	9.6%	32.1%	10.7%	34.4%	5.9%	23.5%
Are you currently pregnant, given birth or fathered a child in the last year?	11.5%	24.4%	9.0%	25.4%	20.6%	20.6%
Does your child live with you or have joint custody? (as a % of those who indicated they were a parent)	78.6% (N=14)	88.5% (N=52)	75.0% (N=12)	88.4% (N=43)	100% (N=2)	88.9% (N=9)

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High Risk Behaviors: The prevalence of selected high risk behaviors among Aftercare participants are presented in the tables below. Given the sensitive nature of many of the risk behavior questions on which young people are asked to self-report, caution should be used in interpreting and drawing conclusions from this data.

% responding "yes"	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		AC Only (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Suicide*						
Made Plans to commit suicide past 12 months	7.7%	5.1%	4.9%	4.1%	17.7%	8.8%
Attempted suicide past 12 months	5.1%	3.2%	2.7%	2.7%	14.7%	5.9%
Incarcerated or Detained in Jail or detention facility last 2 years	27.6%	19.9%	24.6%	17.2%	38.2%	29.4%
Homeless in last 2 years	10.3%	18.6%	9.8%	17.2%	11.8%	23.5%

*One youth at intake and two at exit declined to answer questions related to suicide.

% responding "yes"	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		AC Only (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Substance Use in last 30 days						
Tobacco	41.0%	44.9%	41.8%	47.5%	38.2%	35.3%
Alcohol to Intoxication	10.9%	14.1%	12.3%	17.2%	5.9%	2.9%
Marijuana	7.7%	7.1%	8.2%	8.2%	5.9%	2.9%

Tobacco use, in particular, is high among the population of young people served by Aftercare, with nearly half of participants indicating that they use tobacco, which is substantially higher than their same-age peers. Self-reported use of alcohol to intoxication and marijuana use among this population is lower among Aftercare participants than their same age peers.²

Health Insurance Coverage: Most young people in Aftercare rely on Medicaid for their health insurance coverage. A small number of youth exiting Aftercare have insurance other than Medicaid, including 1.3% who have employer provided insurance, 1.9% who report that they are paying for their own insurance, and 6.4% who report other insurance coverage. Among exiting participants, 3.2% report that they do not have health insurance.

² For comparison data see, for example, the Monitoring the Future national survey results from the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan for prevalence of use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana among the overall population of young adults.

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Beginning in 2014 as a result of provisions in the Affordable Care Act, youth who age out of foster care remain eligible for Medicaid until age 26. This provision extends to those young adults who aged out prior to 2014 and are not yet 26. This change is important for the many young people who previously lost their Medicaid coverage at age 21. Young people who age out of foster care may also be eligible for other Medicaid coverage groups or government health insurance programs.

Health Insurance	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		AC Only (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Enrolled in Medicaid	92.3%	95.5%	94.3%	96.7%	85.3%	91.2%
Insured (other than Medicaid)						
Employer provided	0%	1.3%	--	0.8%	--	2.9%
Private pay/self-provided	0.6%	1.9%	0.8%	0.8%	--	5.9%
Other insurance	5.1%	6.4%	4.9%	1.6%	5.9%	11.8%
No medical insurance	4.5%	3.2%	3.2%	4.8%	2.9%	8.8%

Essential Documents: While participating in Aftercare, young people show improvement in both their knowledge of how to obtain important documents, as well as actually having essential documents in their possession. Getting and maintaining a valid driver’s license remains a challenge for many of these young adults.

% responding “yes”	All (N=156)		PAL (N=122)		AC Only (N=34)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Knows how to obtain:						
Birth certificate	81.4%	94.2%	85.3%	95.9%	67.7%	88.2%
Social Security card	84.6%	95.5%	88.5%	97.5%	70.6%	88.2%
Medical records	71.2%	94.9%	73.8%	96.7%	61.8%	88.2%
Education records	80.8%	96.2%	85.3%	99.2%	64.7%	85.3%
Has in their possession:						
Birth certificate	83.3%	86.5%	86.9%	88.5%	70.6%	79.4%
Social Security card	90.4%	94.2%	93.4%	94.3%	79.4%	94.1%
Driver’s license	53.9%	68.6%	58.2%	73.0%	38.2%	52.9%

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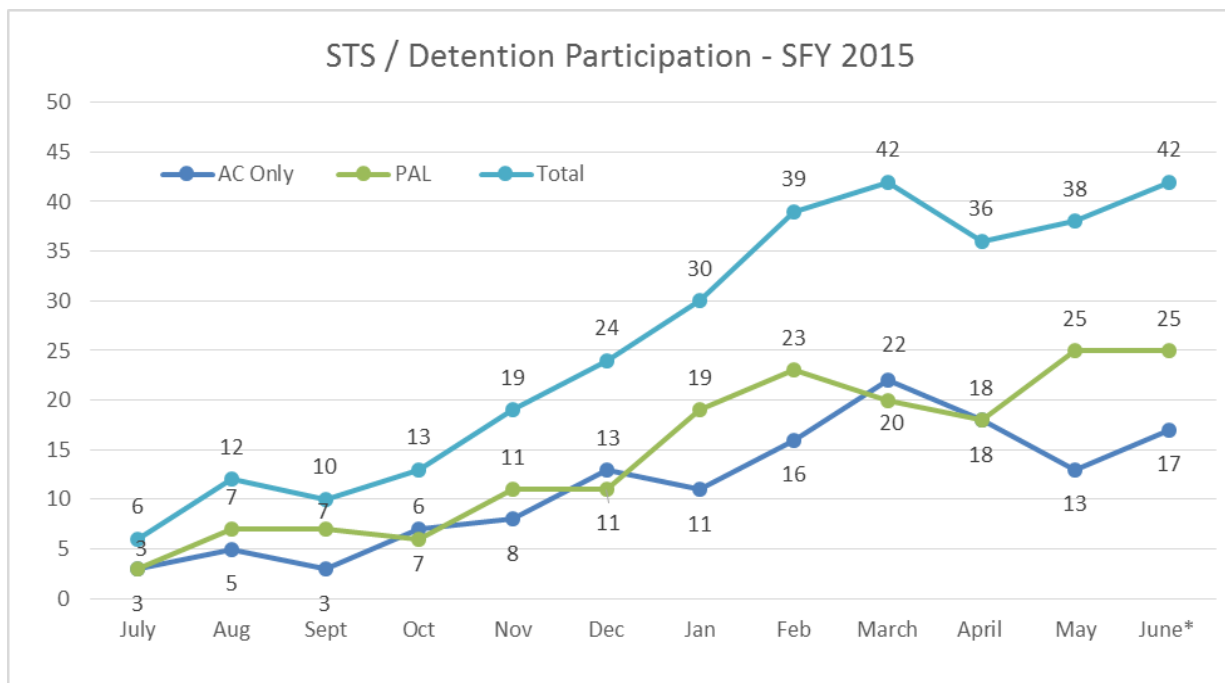
Part IV: State Training School and Detention Center

As a result of legislation enacted in the spring of 2014, SFY 2015 marked the first year that statewide, comprehensive aftercare services were available to youth who aged out of the State Training School (STS) or detention centers. This part of the report summarizes the first year of Aftercare services to this population as they returned to their communities.

The intent of the Iowa Legislature and the Department of Human Services (DHS) was that young people aging out of the State Training School or a detention center would have access to follow-up services essentially the same as those for youth exiting a foster care or other suitable placement at or near age 18. For this reason, DHS elected to utilize the Iowa Aftercare Services Network infrastructure to provide services to this population, amending the contract to Youth and Shelter Services accordingly.

The Iowa Aftercare Services Network responded quickly to incorporate this new population of eligible young people into its services. Outcome to Juvenile Court Officers, the State Training School, and detention centers was initiated almost immediately to ensure that the availability of aftercare services was widely known. More importantly, working closely with DHS and the STS, Youth and Shelter Services was able to hire and place a full-time employee on site at the STS to identify and inform students there about Aftercare and make referrals to local Self-Sufficiency Advocates in the communities where the students would be returning. To be eligible, youth from these placements need to meet all other eligibility criteria for Aftercare Only or the Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program.

Making the connection between the exiting students and an Aftercare Advocate prior to students discharge from the STS has been largely successful. During SFY 2015, 75 youth from the STS were referred and 72% of those accessed Aftercare services. As with any new program, participation of a new group begins slowly and builds through the course of the year as shown in the chart below.



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Of the 310 new intakes into Aftercare during SFY 2015, forty-nine (49) were transitioning from the State Training School and five (5) were last placed in a detention center prior to accessing Aftercare. As is the case with the existing Aftercare/PAL program, youth may choose to start and discontinue services on a voluntary basis, creating a certain amount of turnover in participation. Of the fifty-four youth who accessed services from these placements, forty-two (80.8%) were continuing to receive services at the end of the fiscal year.

Given the new eligibility of this population for Aftercare services, descriptive information, rather than outcome data, is presented for the inaugural year of Aftercare services for these participants. All data presented in the following tables is based on Initial intakes into Aftercare during SFY 2015. The tables below present characteristics of Aftercare intakes from the STS/Detention in comparison to the SFY 2015 intake information from the previously eligible population of young people who age out of foster care or other court-ordered placements. Some data on all youth served in SFY 2015 is also presented for comparison purposes.

Gender and Race: The STS only serves boys, so participants accessing Aftercare from the STS are all male. The last placement of two females accessing Aftercare in SFY 2015 was a detention center. In addition to being predominantly male, participants from the STS/Detention were somewhat more likely to be youth of color (see table below for more detail).

	STS Detention Intakes (N=54)		Foster Care Intakes (N=256)		Total Served SFY 15 (N=760)	
GENDER	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	52	96%	127	50%	372	49%
Female	2	4%	129	50%	388	51%
RACE* / ETHNICITY	N	%	N	%	N	%
White	36	67%	195	76%	597	79%
African American	16	30%	60	23%	164	22%
American Indian	2	4%	16	6%	38	5%
Asian	--	--	5	2%	7	1%
Native Hawaiian	--	--	2	1%	6	1%
Multi-Racial	5	9%	35	14%	90	12%
Unknown/Declined	1	2%	1	<1%	9	1%
Ethnicity – Latino/Hispanic	9	17%	34	13%	92	12%

* Youth can identify with more than one race, therefore, percentages will not add up to 100%.

Mental Health: Historically, more than half of participants in Aftercare have been diagnosed with a Serious Emotional Disorder (SED) while in placement. Similarly, half of youth accessing Aftercare from the STS/detention population had a mental health diagnosis. Youth from STS/detention were somewhat more likely to have been diagnosed with ADHD or other behavior disorders (35% among STS youth versus 23% among youth from a foster care

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placement), and less likely to have a diagnosis of depression or other depressive/mood disorder (9% among STS youth; 27% among foster care youth).

	STS Detention Intakes (N=54)		Foster Care Intakes (N=256)		Total Served SFY 15 (N=760)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mental Health						
SED	27	50%	158	62%	447	59%
Non-SED	25	46%	85	33%	272	36%
Undisclosed	2	4%	13	5%	41	5%

Placement Experience: Most young men placed at the State Training School have had prior placements, either as a result of delinquency or child in need of assistance, and those accessing Aftercare have a similar pattern in the number and duration of placement. The majority of both populations reported being in care or placement for more than two years; and from 1 to 5 placements.

Two-thirds of the youth accessing Aftercare from the STS/detention reported that they spent most of their time while in placement at the STS; another 17% indicated that most of their time in placement was in a group home and 7% indicated detention.

	STS Detention Intakes (N=54)		Foster Care Intakes (N=256)		Total Served SFY 15 (N=760)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
How Long in Placement						
Less than 6 months	1	2%	8	3%	25	3%
6 months to a year	9	17%	32	13%	94	12%
1 to 2 years	12	22%	52	20%	150	20%
More than 2 years	29	54%	162	63%	483	64%
Not sure	3	6%	2	1%	8	1%
How Many Placements						
1 or 2	16	30%	83	32%	266	35%
3 to 5	25	46%	94	37%	275	36%
6 to 10	8	15%	47	18%	137	18%
10 or more	2	4%	30	12%	68	9%
Not sure	3	6%	2	1%	14	2%

The following tables compare the characteristics of youth accessing Aftercare in SFY 2015 from the State Training School with those of transitioning from a foster care placement. Similar, three-year trend data is reported on the foster care youth in Part I of this report.

Risk Factors: While the STS/detention population is similar to other young people who have aged out of foster care or other placement, there are some distinct differences when it comes to risky behaviors or risk factors (see table on next page).

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By definition, almost all of the STS/detention intakes reported having been incarcerated in the previous two years, compared to 37.5% of other youth at intake. Among STS/detention youth, 11.11% reported involvement in gang activity in the past two years, compared to less than 5% of other youth at intake.

Similar proportions of the STS/detention intakes had been referred for or received a mental health assessment, counseling or therapy in the last year as youth from other placements, but they were significantly more likely to have been referred for or received an alcohol or substance abuse assessment or counseling in the last year than other Aftercare intakes.

Fewer than 10% of youth accessing Aftercare from the STS/detention reported having ever attempted suicide (compared to 28.52% of intakes from foster care placements); and even fewer had ever inflicted self-harm in other ways (compared to nearly a third of the foster care population at intake). Similar percentages of STS/Detention intakes reported being a parent, or having been homeless.

RISK FACTORS		
Percent responding "yes" they:	STS/Detention Intakes (N=54)	Foster Care Intakes (N=256)
Have been referred for or received a mental health assessment, counseling or therapy in the last year	61.11%	62.11%
Have been referred for or received an alcohol or substance abuse assessment or counseling in the last year	51.85%	17.19%
Have ever attempted suicide	9.26%	28.52%
Have ever inflicted self-harm in other ways	3.7%	32.42%
Are a parent	12.96%	10.55%
Have been homeless in the past two years	18.52%	20.31%
Have been incarcerated or detained in the past two years	96.3%	37.50%
Involved in gang activity in the past two years	11.11%	4.69%
Have been hit, punched, shoved, or hurt by partner in the past two years	5.56%	11.72%

Education: As shown in the table below, almost 75% of young people accessing Aftercare from a placement at the STS or in detention have a high school credential, somewhat more than those exiting other foster care placements. Of these youth, just over half have earned a high school diploma, while 18.52% have an equivalency credential (either a GED or HiSED). A lower percentage overall of youth from foster care placements have completed high school at the time they access Aftercare, but they are more likely to have a traditional diploma (63.28%) than its equivalent (5.08%).

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EDUCATION		
Highest education credential received:	STS/Detention Intakes (N=54)	Foster Care Intakes (N=256)
High School Diploma	53.7%	63.28%
H.S. Equivalency (GED or HiSET)	18.52%	5.08%
Vocational certificate or license	1.85%	0.39%
None of the Above	25.93%	31.25%

Employment and Earnings: Nearly two-thirds of youth exiting the STS/detention are unemployed and actively seeking work, compared to less than one-third of youth from other placements, and more than 80% report \$0 of monthly earned income when accessing Aftercare. With a juvenile record, these young adults have an additional barrier to employment. Only a small minority of these youth have established a bank account.

EMPLOYMENT		
Current employment status:	STS/Detention Intakes (N=54)	Foster Care Intakes (N=256)
Employed (average 35+ hours per week)	11.11%	10.94%
Employed (average 25-34 hours per week)	1.25%	13.67%
Employed (less than 25 hours per week)	3.7%	21.09%
Unemployed, actively seeking employment	64.81%	28.91%
Unemployed, long-term disability	--	1.17%
Not in work force	14.81%	23.05%
Other	3.7%	1.17%
MONTHLY INCOME		
Gross monthly income w/out PAL:	STS/Detention Intakes (N=54)	Foster Care Intakes (N=256)
\$0	81.48%	53.13%
\$1 - \$799	9.26%	36.72%
\$800 - \$1,199	7.41%	7.03%
\$1,200 or more	1.85%	2.73%
BANKING and CREDIT		
Percent responding "yes" they have:	STS/Detention Intakes (N=54)	Foster Care Intakes (N=256)
Checking or debit account	16.67%	52.3%
Savings account	22.22%	55.1%
Received their credit report	5.56%	8.2%

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Essential Documents: Similar percentages of Aftercare intakes of youth from the STS/detention and other foster care placements have their birth certificates, social security cards, and/or a state ID. However, very few (only 14.81%) youth exiting the STS/detention have a driver's license, suggesting that transportation will likely be a major challenge as they make the transition to adulthood.

ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS		
Percent responding "yes" they have the following documents:	STS/Detention Intakes (N=54)	Foster Care Intakes (N=256)
Birth certificate	79.63%	80.47%
Social Security Card	85.19%	85.55%
Driver's license	14.81%	45.31%
State ID or passport	66.67%	67.97%

Health Care: Not having immediate access to Medicaid (or other health insurance) emerged as a major challenge for young people exiting the State Training School during the first year of Aftercare services for this population. Just over one-third of youth accessing Aftercare from the STS/detention report having Medicaid (compared to nearly all of the youth transitioning from a foster care placement. Many youth are taking prescription medications while in placement, and leave the STS with a very limited supply of medication. Not being able to schedule appointments with physicians and not having insurance to help pay for medications can become a significant problem for many of these youth and barrier to a smooth transition.

HEALTH		
Percent responding "yes":	STS/Detention Intakes (N=54)	Foster Care Intakes (N=256)
Have a primary care physician	62.96%	69.92%
Have Medicaid	35.19%	94.92%
Had been prescribed medication for ongoing maintenance of physical or mental health within the last year	46.3%	60.16%
Had used tobacco in the last 30 days	46.3%	40.23%
Had used alcohol to intoxication in the last 30 days	12.96%	7.42%

Housing: Youth returning to their communities from the STS or detention are more likely to be living with their parents or other family members than youth who are transitioning from a foster care placement. They are less likely to be paying for housing or to even have a key to their current home. Forty percent of these youth expect to move within a month, but of those very few have a solid plan on where they will be moving.

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HOUSING		
Percent responding “yes” they:	STS/Detention Intakes (N=54)	Foster Care Intakes (N=256)
Are paying for housing	40.74%	55.86%
Have name on a lease agreement	14.81%	22.66%
Have keys to my current home	33.33%	59.38%
Are moving next month	40.74%	37.50%
Are currently homeless	3.7%	5.08%
Living Arrangement – Percent living with:		
Alone (no other adults)	5.56%	12.89%
Parent(s) (biological or adoptive)	35.18%	14.06%
Other family	25.92%	19.14%
Former foster family	--	15.63%
Friends/roommates	12.96%	26.56%
Significant Other (boyfriend/girlfriend)	9.26%	8.2%
Other	11.11%	3.52%

Supportive Relationships: Having positive, adult relationships is a major protective factor for all youth and young adults. While more youth from the STS/detention report a family member is available to support them than their foster care peers; fewer report having positive relationships with non-family members in the community.

SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS		
Percent responding “yes” there is an:	STS/Detention Intakes (N=54)	Foster Care Intakes (N=256)
Adult family member who I will always be able to turn to for support...	90.74%	83.20%
Adult, non-family member, who I will always be able to turn to for support...	83.33%	92.97%

Conclusion

The Iowa Aftercare Services Network provides services and supports to some of the most vulnerable young people in our state – those who have been involved in the child welfare or juvenile justice system and have aged out around the age of 18. Successfully navigating the transition to adulthood can be challenging for all young people, but it is even more overwhelming for those who have limited, if any, family support and numerous other barriers to a secure and stable future.

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Over the last thirteen years, Iowa Aftercare Services have evolved to offer an effective model to address both the immediate needs and long-term goals and aspirations of the young adults it serves. Beyond simple case management, individually tailored Aftercare services provided by dedicated, caring Self-Sufficiency Advocates support these emerging adults by:

- Ensuring that their basic needs are met
- Providing social and emotional support and connections
- Working with them to establish goals and develop action plans; and
- Helping them develop the knowledge and skills necessary to become competent adults.

The efforts of the Aftercare Network pay-off in improved results among the participating youth. Many young people take advantage of this support until they are no longer eligible for services at age 21. Again in SFY 2015, outcomes among exiting youth show significant improvement in a variety of areas. Highlights include:

- The percentage of youth working at least 25 hours a week nearly doubled from 25.6% at intake to 48.1% at exit.
- The percentage of participants with \$400 or more in monthly earned income (before public assistance) increases from 29.5% at intake to 54.5% at exit.
- 86.5% of Aftercare participants had earned at least a high school diploma or its equivalent, compared to only 75% of the same youth at intake.
- At exit, all but 14.7% of participants are contributing toward their housing costs; compared to 37.2% who were not paying for housing at intake.
- More than 95% have retained their health care coverage under Medicaid or other insurance.

While the emerging adults who participate in Aftercare will continue to face challenges as they make their own way, the support they received while in Aftercare has positioned them for a more successful future.

About the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa: Founded in 2000, the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa (YPPI) works to expand and improve the delivery of services and supports for Iowa youth by partnering with public and private entities throughout the state. YPPI is involved in a wide range of initiatives, but specializes in policies and programs affecting youth transitioning from adolescence to adulthood, particularly those who have been involved in child welfare (foster care) or juvenile justice systems. See www.ypii.org for more information.

For Further Information:

The Youth Policy Institute of Iowa
6200 Aurora Avenue, Suite 206E
Des Moines, IA 50322
Phone: 515-727-4220
www.ypii.org and www.iowaaftercare.org