



ON YOUR OWN BUT NOT ALONE

Annual Report to the  
Iowa Department of Human Services

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Prepared and Submitted by:



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**Iowa Aftercare Services Network -- Annual Outcomes Report**  
**July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The transition from adolescence to adulthood is often a challenging time for young people, but it can be especially daunting for youth who age out of foster care with limited or no family support. The Iowa Aftercare Services Network (IASN) is a collaborative of eleven human service agencies that provide services and support to help youth and young adults who exit foster care at or near the age of 18 navigate this transition successfully.

Youth and Shelter Services, Inc. (YSS), headquartered in Ames, holds the contract with the Iowa Department of Human Services and serves as the lead agency and fiscal agent for the Network. YSS, in addition to providing direct services through four of its central Iowa locations, subcontracts with ten 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)
- Boys and Girls Home and Family Services, Inc. (Sioux City)
- Children and Families of Iowa (Des Moines)
- 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)

YSS also subcontracts with the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa to provide statewide coordination, technical assistance, and evaluation services for the Network. For further information on these agencies and the counties they serve for the Aftercare Network, see the Network's website at [www.iowaaftercare.org](http://www.iowaaftercare.org).

The Network has provided aftercare services to Iowa's eligible foster care alumni since 2002 with funds allocated to the state from the federal Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. 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, means-tested financial support to qualifying youth who exit a state-paid foster care placement at age 18 or older as long as they are either enrolled in post-secondary education or training, are employed, or both. The IASN implements PAL as a component of Iowa's aftercare services for those eligible. Young people remain eligible for IASN services until they turn 21.

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 and is maintained by the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa for the IASN.

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### **Organization of the Report**

This report is organized into three parts. **Part I** provides two-year trend information from intake interviews with youth when they first access Aftercare services. This information is useful in understanding 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 788 participants who were served during SFY 2011. This part also summarizes the reasons youth exited the program during the year. **Part III** of the report examines outcomes of 186 participants who exited services during the year and did not return for services prior to June 30, 2011 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.

Aftercare and PAL are voluntary programs. Eligible young adults are free 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 entered by multiple interviewers 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 Iowa Aftercare Services Network increased slightly this year, from 771 youth in SFY 2010 to 788 youth served in SFY 2011. This included 284 youth who entered the program for the first time, and 337 who exited the program without returning prior to June 30, 2011.

On average, 465 young people participated in Aftercare each month during SFY 2011, of which an average of 305 were receiving PAL and 160 were participating in Aftercare without PAL.

Since SFY 2007, an average of 445 youth per year have aged out of Iowa foster care and an average of 286 youth per year have accessed Aftercare services.

**Intakes:** Young people enter Aftercare services with a variety of risk factors or potential barriers to a successful transition to adulthood. The following are characteristics of young people who accessed Aftercare for the first time in SFY 2011:

- A majority of youth report having mental health needs, including a significant number who have attempted suicide or inflicted self-harm;
- 22% of new intakes report having had an unintended pregnancy and 11% are parenting;
- More than a third had been incarcerated or detained in the previous two years prior to accessing Aftercare;

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- Only 65.5% of young people accessing Aftercare had their high school diploma or GED on intake;
- 40% were unemployed and less than 20% were working at least 25 hours a week;
- 8.45% described themselves as homeless at the time they accessed Aftercare.

**Outcomes:** The services and supports offered by the Iowa Aftercare Services Network 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 measures are used to assess progress in these outcome areas. In this year's analysis of outcomes, 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 2011 and did not return before July 1, 2011. This provides an unduplicated group of 186 youth on which data is reported for the year, including 151 PAL participants and 35 who did not receive PAL (referred to as Basic participants).

**Education:** Young people make considerable progress in the area of education while participating in Aftercare. More than 90% of youth exiting in SFY 2011 had earned either a high school diploma or GED, compared to 75% of these same youth at intake. A sizable number also complete some college while receiving services.

**Employment:** Just over half of participants exiting Aftercare in SFY 2011 were employed at both intake and exit. Of those working, however, there was an increase in full-time employment (defined as 25 or more hours per week) from 24.7% at intake to 36.0% at exit. At the same time there was an essentially equal drop in the number reporting part-time employment, suggesting that the increase in full-time employment was a result of those with jobs coming into aftercare working more hours, rather than those unemployed at intake finding jobs. The percentage of participants "unemployed" declined from 35.6% at intake to 21.5% at exit, but participants not in the workforce at all increased by a similar amount.

**Housing:** Finding affordable housing is often a major challenge for aftercare participants. As is true for many young adults, youth in Aftercare frequently rely on friends or family for a place to live or to share housing expenses. Compared to when they first access services, on exit more youth are assuming responsibility for the cost of housing (from 50.7% at intake to 66.9% at exit) and fewer are living in transitional facilities, shelters or other supported housing arrangements (from 11.3% to 2.2%).

**Health Insurance Coverage:** Establishment of the Medicaid for Independent Young Adults (MIYA) coverage group in 2006 for former foster youth up to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday has improved the rate of health insurance coverage for this population. Still, 8.1% of youth on exit have no medical insurance, and those with MIYA will lose that coverage when they turn 21.

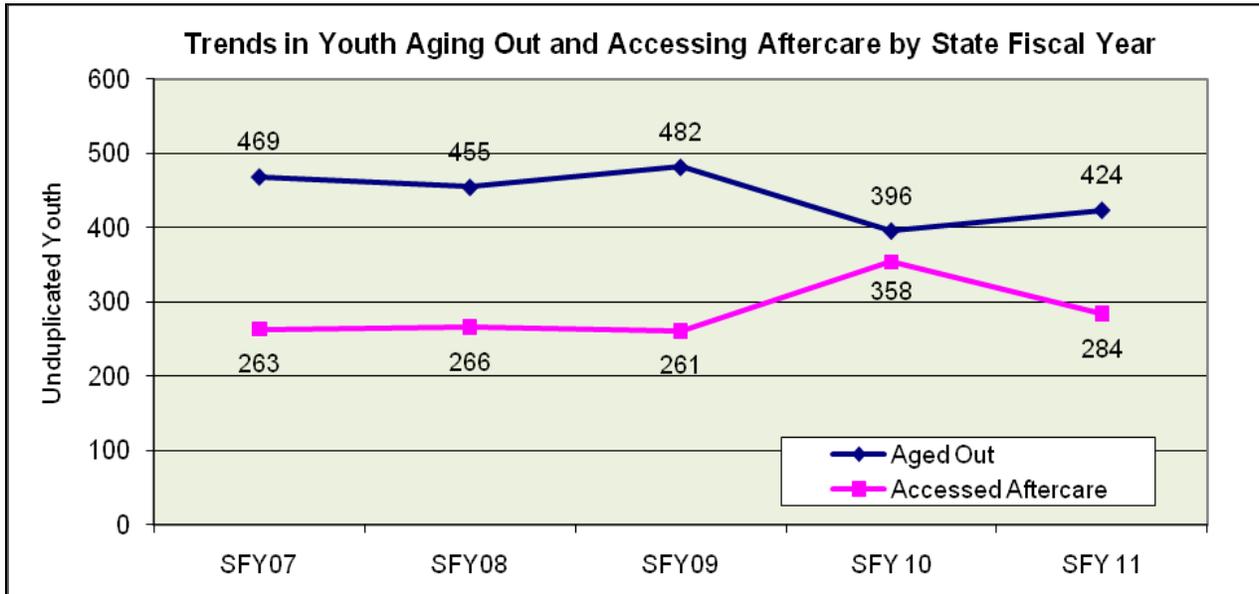
**Positive Relationships:** Social relationships and networks are essential to healthy development. The critical importance of a network of family and non-family adult supports for youth and young adults is well-documented. Most young people in Aftercare report that they do have supportive adults who they will *always* be able to turn to for support and guidance.

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**PART I: Characteristics of New Intakes in SFY 2010 and SFY 2011**

Of 771 and 788 unduplicated young adults served by the Aftercare Network in State Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011 respectively, 358 accessed services as a new intake in SFY 2010<sup>1</sup> and 284 received services for the first time in SFY 2011. This decrease in new clients occurred even though there was an increase in the number of youth who aged out of foster care in Iowa from 396 in SFY 2010 to 424 in SFY 2011. Since SFY 2007, an average of 445 youth per year have aged out of Iowa foster care and an average of 286 youth per year have accessed Aftercare services (see chart below). While young people do not necessarily access Aftercare the same year as they exit formal foster care, this demonstrates that approximately two-thirds of youth aging out of Iowa foster care have accessed Aftercare over the last five years.



Possible factors for this year's decline in new intakes include a potential lag time between when youth exit formal foster care and when they access aftercare services; changes in the transition process within the Department of Human Services resulting in fewer referrals to aftercare; or concern about a potential PAL waiting list that impacted decisions about encouraging youth to take advantage of the services. Regardless of the cause, these trends suggest that it is important to continue and strengthen awareness and outreach efforts to ensure that all youth who age out are informed of their opportunity to access Aftercare services and the supports that it can provide.

The following tables show characteristics of young people at the time they accessed services in the last two state fiscal years and the change between the two years.

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<sup>1</sup> Because of the upgrading of the IASN outcomes database in July 2009, some participants who returned for services in SFY 2010 may be included in the "new intakes" for that year if they were not a continuing participant on July 1, 2009, resulting in a somewhat inflated number of "new" participants reported for SFY 2010. The inclusion of these returning clients may also have some impact on some of the intake data reported in this part, particular in areas where an event (such as graduating from high school, getting essential documents, or opening a bank account) could have occurred after the original service episode began, but is now reported as a characteristic or condition at "intake."

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<b>RISK FACTORS/CHALLENGES PRESENTED AT INTAKE</b>			
<b>Percent responding “yes” they:</b>	<b>SFY 2010 (N=354)</b>	<b>SFY 2011 (N= 284)</b>	<b>Change</b>
Have been referred for or received a mental health assessment, counseling or therapy in the last year	51.68%	56.69%	+5.01
Have been referred for or received an alcohol or substance abuse assessment or counseling in the last year	18.99%	23.24%	+4.25
Have ever attempted suicide	26.26%	22.89%	-3.37
Have ever inflicted self-harm in other ways	31.01%	26.06%	-4.95
Have ever had an unintended pregnancy	22.07%	21.83%	-0.24
Are a parent	11.45%	11.27%	-0.18
Have been incarcerated or detained in the past two years	30.45%	34.15%	+3.7

Young people enter Aftercare services with a variety of risk factors to a smooth and successful transition to adulthood. As shown in the table above, a majority of youth report having some form of mental health needs, including a significant number who have attempted suicide or inflicted self-harm. About 22% of new intakes report having had an unintended pregnancy and 11% are parenting. More than a third had been incarcerated or detained in the previous two years. While these risks are not insurmountable, they do create additional challenges as Aftercare helps these young adults move toward self-sufficiency.

<b>EDUCATION</b>			
<b>Highest education credential received:</b>	<b>SFY 2010 (N=358)</b>	<b>SFY 2011 (N= 284)</b>	<b>Change</b>
High School Diploma	62.57%	55.63%	-6.94
GED	13.13%	9.86%	-3.27
Vocational certificate or license	0.56%	0.7%	+0.14%
None of the Above	23.74%	33.8%	+10.06

Iowa allows youth to continue in voluntary foster care through age 19 (or older if in special education) to complete high school. Regrettably, in SFY 2011, one-third of young people left foster care and accessed Aftercare without having earned their high school diploma or GED. Of the 96 youth who accessed Aftercare last year without a high school credential, 85 (88%) reported that they were continuing to work toward a high school diploma or GED at intake. Given the importance of a high school diploma, it is unfortunate that so many students are not taking advantage of voluntary foster care and suggests that further efforts are needed to support and encourage young people to stay in foster care while they complete high school.

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<b>EMPLOYMENT</b>			
Current employment status:	SFY 2010 (N=358)	SFY 2011 (N= 284)	Change
Employed (average 35+ hours per week)	8.10%	7.04%	-1.06
Employed (average 25-34 hours per week)	16.76%	10.92%	-5.84
Employed (less than 25 hours per week)	16.76%	19.01%	+2.25
Unemployed, actively seeking employment	40.22%	40.85%	+.63
Unemployed, long-term disability	1.12%	1.76%	+.64
Not in work force	15.36%	17.61%	+2.25
Other	1.68%	2.82%	+1.14

While finding and maintaining employment is frequently a challenge for former foster youth, the recession has taken an additional toll on young people's employment options, as seen in the decline in youth entering Aftercare who are working even part-time. Among youth accessing Aftercare in SFY 2011, 40% were unemployed and less than 20% were working at least 25 hours a week. In addition to the importance of having current income, early employment experience has long-term consequences. Studies have shown that cumulative work experience in the teen years has significant, positive impacts on employment, hourly wages, and earnings of young adults into their early to mid-20s.<sup>2</sup>

<b>MONTHLY INCOME</b>			
Gross monthly income w/out PAL:	SFY 2010 (N=358)	SFY 2011 (N= 284)	Change
\$0	57.82%	59.51%	+1.69
\$1 - \$799	33.23%	33.79%	+.53
\$800 - \$1,399	7.82%	5.28%	-2.54
\$1,400 or more	1.12%	1.4%	+.28

Limited employment among youth accessing Aftercare is evident in their reported income. Nearly 60% of former foster youth report \$0 income at intake, and all but a handful report less than \$800 a month. Considering that the poverty threshold for a single individual with no children in 2010 was \$11,344/year or \$945/month,<sup>3</sup> these young people have a long way to go to be able to support themselves with their earned income.

<sup>2</sup> Sum, Andrew and Sheila Palma, 2010, *Vanishing Work among U.S. Teens, 2000-10*, Paper prepared for Charles S. Mott Foundation, Flint, Michigan.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

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<b>BANKING</b>			
	SFY 2010 (N=358)	SFY 2011 (N= 284)	Change
Percent responding “yes” they have a:			
Checking or debit account	45.53%	42.25%	-3.28
Saving account	49.72%	40.49%	-9.23

Less than half of the youth exiting foster care and accessing Aftercare report having a checking or debit account. Similarly, less than half report having a savings account, suggesting that these youth have limited experience with mainstream banking, which is an important step to becoming financially capable and moving to self-sufficiency.

<b>PUBLIC BENEFIT PROGRAMS</b>			
	SFY 2010 (N=358)	SFY 2011 (N= 284)	Change
Percent responding they receive the following:			
Food Stamps	29.61%	27.46%	-2.15
SSI or SSDI	4.47%	8.8%	+4.33
FIP	0.84%	1.41%	+.57
Public Housing	1.4%	3.87%	+2.47
Child Care Subsidy	1.12%	2.82%	+1.7
Education Assistance	20.95%	14.44%	-6.51
Other public assistance	5.87%	3.87%	-2.0

Not surprisingly given their lack of earned income, a sizable percentage of youth report receiving some form of public assistance at the time they access Aftercare. In addition to programs listed in the table above, 90.22% in SFY 10 and 90.14% in SFY 11 indicated that they have Medicaid or MIYA (the coverage group specifically for youth who age out foster care).

<b>ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS</b>			
	SFY 2010 (N=358)	SFY 2011 (N= 284)	Change
Percent responding “yes” they have the following documents:			
Birth certificate	79.33%	77.82%	-1.51
Social Security Card	87.43%	84.86%	-2.57
Driver’s license	49.44%	47.54%	-1.9
State ID or passport	66.48%	62.68%	-3.8

Policies to ensure that young people have essential documents when they leave foster care have been enacted in Iowa over the last several years. While more than three-quarters of youth report having their birth certificate and Social Security Card, there is room for improvement in this area.

It is also interesting to note that less than half of the young people have a driver’s license at the time they access Aftercare. Because driving is an important milestone for teenagers and often essential to being able to hold a job or attend school, further exploration of barriers to drivers education and the ability of foster youth to get a drivers license is needed.

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<b>HOUSING</b>			
	SFY 2010 (N=358)	SFY 2011 (N= 284)	Change
Percent responding “yes” they:			
Are paying for housing	53.07%	49.65%	-3.42
Have name on a lease agreement	27.09%	25.35%	-1.74
Own basic household items	53.35%	50.35%	-3.0
Are moving next month	38.27%	34.15%	-4.12
Feel safe in my current living arrangement	94.69%	95.07%	+0.38
Are currently homeless	6.15%	8.45%	+2.3

Only about half of young people are paying anything for their housing and only a quarter have a lease of their own when they access Aftercare. A place to live is often in flux as young people age out of foster care, with a third planning to move within a month of beginning Aftercare services. Multiple moves by Aftercare participants are not uncommon. Moreover, 24 of the 284 young people entering services in SFY 2011 (8.45%) described themselves as homeless at the time they accessed Aftercare. Securing a safe and stable place to live is frequently a priority for this population.

<b>PERMANENCY – SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS</b>			
	SFY 2010 (N=354)	SFY 2011 (N= 284)	Change
Percent responding “yes” there is an:			
Adult family member who I will always be able to turn to for support...*	85.75%	76.41%	-9.34
Adult, non-family member, who I will always be able to turn to for support...	92.18%	90.85%	-1.33

\* Full question in the Core Client Outcomes interview is: *Do you have an adult in your family that you will always be able to turn to for support, advice, share or celebrate personal achievements, help solve problems (for example, birth or adoptive parent, spouse, adult sibling, extended family member, legal guardian)?* Similar wording is used for the question about an adult non-family member.

In SFY 2011, 76.41% of youth accessing Aftercare reported that they had a permanent, positive relationship with an adult family member and 90.58% reported that there was an adult, non-family member with whom they had such a relationship. Family members most frequently cited as who that person is include: birth parent (27%); extended family members (25%); and adult siblings (15%). Sadly, 24% of youth at intake said that there was no one in their family they could always turn to for support. Non-family members mentioned most frequently were: adult friend (36%); caseworker (21%); and foster parent (21%), with 9% indicating they had no non-family members that would always be there for them.

Given the critical importance of permanent, positive relationships as a predictor of a successful transition, the decrease from SFY 2010 to SFY 2011 in young people reporting a positive relationship with a family member is of concern. Each of the last two years, 72% of youth accessing Aftercare indicated that they had received help to maintain or strengthen personal relationships.

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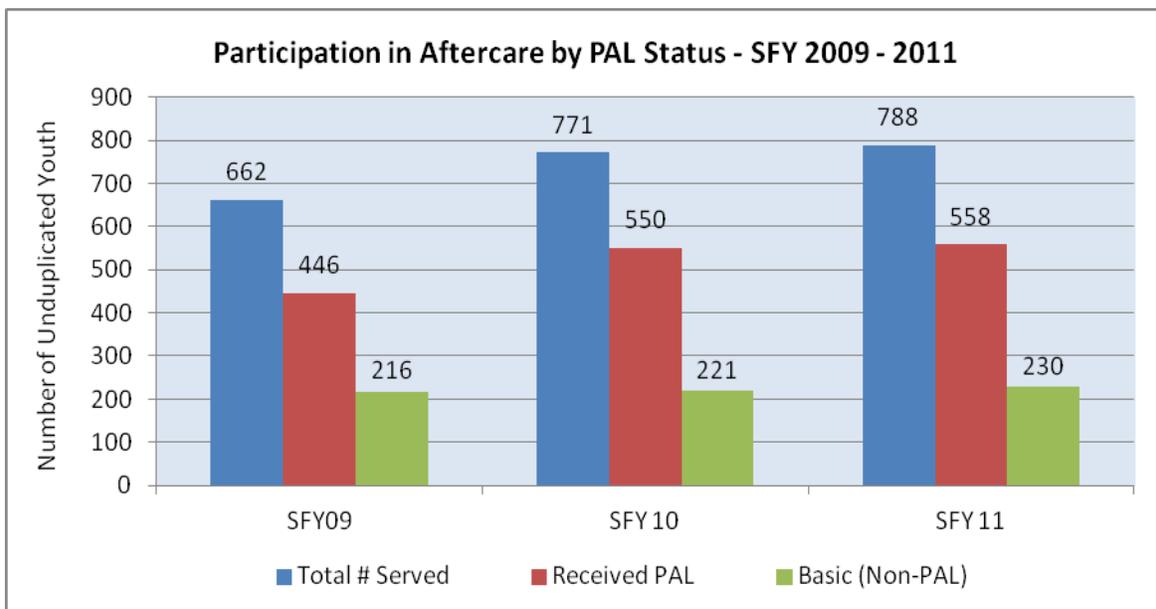
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**PART II – Characteristics of All Youth Served in SFY 2011**

**Unduplicated Number Served:** The total number of unduplicated participants served by the Iowa Aftercare Services Network increased slightly this year, from 771 youth in SFY 2010 to 788 youth served in SFY 2011. This included 284 youth who entered the program for the first time, and 337 who exited the program without returning prior to June 30, 2011.

Participation in Aftercare and PAL is voluntary and young people may choose to terminate services at their discretion. In other cases, young people are discharged from services for failing 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 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. In SFY 2011, 157 youth returned for services after a break in their participation.

**PAL Participation:** Of the 788 youth served in SFY 2011, 558 or 71.7% met requirements and received a PAL stipend for at least a portion of the time they participated; the remaining 230 youth did not receive PAL during the year. The proportion of youth receiving PAL among all youth served is virtually identical to the previous year, when 550 youth (71.3%) received a PAL stipend. *In the tables throughout this report, columns designated “Basic” refer to youth who did not receive a PAL stipend while participating in Aftercare services.*



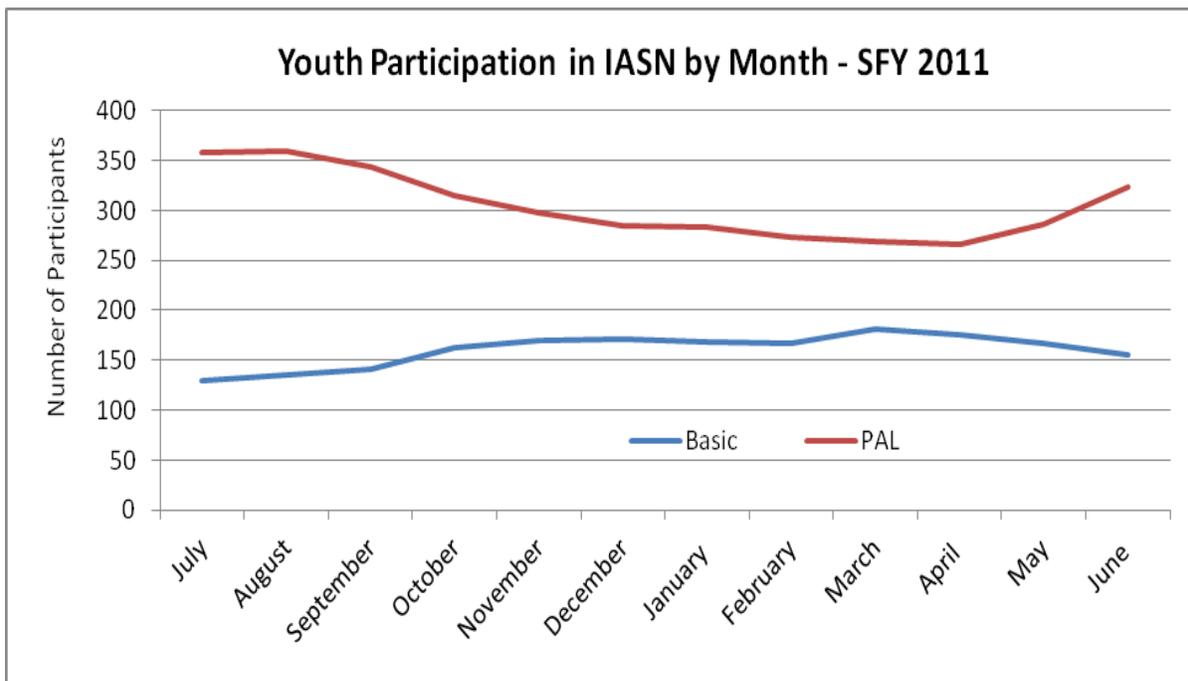
The broader eligibility criterion for just Aftercare (without PAL) allows some youth to qualify for general case management services and support but not the monthly financial assistance offered by the state-funded PAL program. The primary reason that youth are eligible **only** for Aftercare, rather than PAL, is that they did not leave state paid foster care on or after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or been in care for six of the twelve months prior to aging out. However, among the 230 youth not receiving PAL during SFY 2011, 103 met the age and foster care exit requirements but did not qualify for the PAL program because they were either still eligible for

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voluntary foster care (*e.g.*, they had not yet completed high school) or they were not meeting the education and employment requirements of PAL. Many of these youth may qualify for PAL at some point in the future as their circumstances change.

**Average Monthly Participation:** On average, 465 young people participated in Aftercare each month during SFY 2011, of which an average of 305 were receiving PAL and 160 were participating in Basic Aftercare. As shown in the graph below, the number of active participants changes monthly as youth access and exit services and shift between PAL and Basic. Monthly enrollment in PAL ranged from a low of 266 in April to a high of 359 in August. Monthly participation in Basic ranged from 129 in July to 181 in March.



Enrollment in PAL peaks in the summer months as new high school graduates leave foster care and access Aftercare for the first time. These youth may be “actively seeking” employment or planning to continue their education in the fall, making them eligible for PAL. As the fiscal year progresses, there is a gradual decline in the number of youth participating in PAL, while there is a corresponding increase in Basic services, as some participants lose eligibility for PAL for failing to meet education or employment requirements. This trend is similar to last year, when IASN served an average of 454 youth per month, including 307 PAL and 147 Basic.

**Serious Emotional Disorder:** Historically, 50 to 60 percent of youth accessing the Aftercare Network each year come to the program with a history of mental health assessment, diagnosis and treatment. In SFY 2011, 52.8% of the 788 youth served had been diagnosed with one or more Serious Emotional Disorders (SED) prior to leaving foster care. A breakdown of SED by PAL and Non-PAL (Basic) youth for SFY 2011 is shown in table below. Those youth not qualifying for the PAL component are more likely to have an SED than those who do receive PAL.

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	Total Served (N=788)		Received PAL (N=558)		Basic (N=230)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	416	53%	279	50%	137	60%
Non-SED	325	41%	246	44%	79	34%
Not Reported	47	6%	33	6%	14	6%

**Other Demographics—Gender and Race:** Other demographic data recorded from participants at the time of intake includes gender, age, race and ethnicity. The following tables show gender and race/ethnicity of the 788 youth served by the Aftercare Network in SFY 2011 overall and disaggregated by whether youth received PAL. As has historically been the case, more women than men utilize aftercare services. Young women are also more likely to qualify for PAL. The vast majority are White (83%), but a sizeable percentage identify themselves as African American (16%), Multi-racial (7%), or American Indian (6%). Minority participants are somewhat less likely to receive PAL than White participants. Of all youth served in SFY 2011, 10% identified themselves as Hispanic and 2.7% recognized themselves as a member of an Indian Tribe.

GENDER	Total Served (N=788)		Received PAL (N=558)		Basic (N=230)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	317	40%	212	38%	105	47%
Female	471	60%	346	62%	125	54%

RACE* / ETHNICITY	Total Served (N=788)		Received PAL (N=558)		Basic (N=230)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
White	655	83%	471	84%	184	80%
African American	129	16%	84	15%	45	20%
American Indian	48	6%	29	5%	19	8%
Asian	11	1%	6	1%	5	2%
Native Hawaiian	3	<1%	3	<1%	0	0%
Multi-Racial	59	7%	33	6%	26	11%
Race Not Reported	3	<1%	2	<1%	1	<1%
Ethnicity—Hispanic	76	10%	50	9%	26	12%

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

**Age:** Most youth first access Aftercare at age 18, but there are about an equal number of 18, 19 and 20 year olds participating in the program at any given time. In SFY 2010, the average age of new intakes was 18.5 years, with new intakes ranging in age from 18.0 to 20.9. More than 100 youth (38.4% of new intakes during the year) accessed services within a month of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Three quarters (78%) of new participants in SFY 2011 were age 18, while 16% were age 19, and 5% were age 20 when they accessed services.

Of 205 young people who completed an exit interview during the year, more than half (54%) were age 21, essentially aging out of Aftercare. Average age among youth exiting with an

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interview was 20.5. Approximately 20% of these youth were still 18, and 26% were 19 or 20, all of whom could potentially return for services. Youth who exited services without completing an exit interview were somewhat younger, with an average age of 19.5, suggesting that many may return for one or more additional episodes of service. Of the 132 youth who exited without an interview, 37% were age 18, 33% age 19, 24% age 20, and only 6% were age 21.

**Geographic Distribution:** The eleven agencies that comprise the Iowa Aftercare Services Network provide statewide coverage to ensure access to services by youth throughout the state. Over the years, youth in all 99 Iowa counties have been served. In SFY 2011, youth from 85 counties participated. Not surprisingly, urban counties account for the majority of youth served. Ten counties, each serving 20 or more youth during the year, accounted for more than half (57.7%) of the 788 youth served, with 130 youth (16.5%) being served in Polk County alone. Other counties serving large numbers of youth include: Woodbury (52), Linn (51), Black Hawk (48), and Pottawattamie (35). In 45 counties, 5 or fewer youth participated in Aftercare including 21 counties where only 1 youth received services.

**Foster Care History:** Beginning in SFY 2010, Aftercare has collected information on the foster care history of participating youth. As in past years, the vast majority of youth accessing Aftercare were in foster care for more than two years. Approximately two-thirds report having been in three or more placements during their time in foster care and about half spent most of their time in care with a non-relative foster family. Time in foster care and the last type of foster care placement reported by the youth is shown in table below, disaggregated by PAL status.

Time in Foster Care	Total Served (N=788)		Received PAL (N=558)		Basic (N=230)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 6 months	19	2%	6	1%	13	6%
6 months to a year	79	10%	52	9%	27	12%
1 to 2 years	125	16%	92	16%	33	14%
More than 2 years	559	71%	405	73%	154	67%
Not sure	6	1%	3	1%	3	1%
<b>Last Placement</b>						
Relative	42	5%	23	4%	19	8%
Foster Home (non-relative)	381	48%	299	54%	82	36%
Group Home or Shelter	150	19%	74	13%	76	33%
Other Institution	63	8%	42	8%	21	9%
Supervised Apartment Living	127	16%	106	19%	21	9%
Other	21	3%	11	2%	10	4%
Not Sure / Missing	4	.5%	3	.5%	1	.4%

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**Reasons for Exit:** When young people leave Aftercare services, their reason for exiting is recorded 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, 2011. Of these youth, 205 completed an exit interview. The remaining 132 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.

The most frequent reason for exit in SFY 2011 was that the participant was turning 21 and was no longer eligible for services. This was especially true among PAL participants (although they may not have been receiving PAL at the end of their participation). A substantial number of non-PAL participants were discharged from the program for failing to meet program requirements (primarily the expectation that they meet at least twice a month with their Advocate), which could also be interpreted as the youth voluntarily ending services.

Youth in this population tend to be very transient at this age and 15% of exits were the result of the participant moving out of the area where they were receiving services. Many of those transfer to another agency (those are not included in the exit data presented below as they reengaged with services with another IASN agency). In addition, approximately 9% voluntarily end their participation, and services were discontinued for 3.6% when participants were incarcerated. A small number of youth exit as the result of being institutionalized or hospitalized or because they join the military. While "achieved self-sufficiency" is among the options as a reason for exit, it is seldom selected by youth or Self-Sufficiency Advocates, reflecting the difficulty all young adults face in fully making it on their own by age 21 or younger.

	All Exits (N=337)		Received PAL (N=230)		Basic (N=107)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Turned 21 – end of eligibility	116	34.4%	107	46.5%	9	8.4%
Not meeting self-responsibility requirements	80	23.7%	38	16.5%	42	39.3%
Moved (including moving temporarily and potential transfers)	51	15.1%	35	15.2%	16	15.0%
Voluntarily chose to end services	31	9.2%	16	7.0%	15	14.0%
Incarcerated	12	3.6%	9	3.9%	3	2.8%
Institutionalized or hospitalized	3	<1%	2	<1%	1	<1%
Military	3	<1%	3	1.3%	0	0%
Achieved self-sufficiency	3	<1%	2	<1%	1	<1%
Other	9	2.7%	4	1.7%	5	4.7%
Unknown/Missing	29	8.6%	14	6.1%	15	14.0%

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*Youth with less than three months of service:* As has been discussed, because participation in Aftercare is voluntary young people can access and terminate services at their discretion. Many youth have multiple entries and exits from the program, and some do not fully engage in services the first or subsequent times they access services. In SFY 2011, 40 (12%) of the 336 exits from the program were of youth who participated for less than three months.

Undoubtedly a variety of factors influence whether a young person continues his or her participation in Aftercare. Compared to all participants, youth who exited services in SFY 2011 less than three months after intake (and who did not return prior to the end of the fiscal year) were more likely to be male (68%) and less likely to be receiving PAL (19%) than all participating youth. About half of these youth were identified as having an SED at intake, similar to the overall Aftercare population, and 38% had less than a high school education, somewhat higher than all intakes during the year.

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**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 make a successful transition to adulthood. The challenges facing this population are well-documented and outcomes for these youth are often less desirable than their peers who have not been in foster care. 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.

In this analysis of outcomes, 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 2011 and did not return before July 1, 2011. 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 205 young people who completed an exit interview with Aftercare staff during SFY 2011 and who did not return before the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2010). Of those exit interviews, 19 were with youth who participated for less than 90 days, never fully engaging in or benefiting from services. These 19 youth are excluded from this outcomes analysis to avoid diluting the results with data that would show essentially no change from entry to exit given the short time between the first and last data collection points. Original intake and SFY 2011 exit data on 186 Aftercare participants is presented in the tables below.

Specific questions from the Core Client Outcomes database are used to assess progress in nine outcome areas identified by the Department. A major upgrade to the Aftercare Core Client Outcomes data collection instruments was made in July 2009. This upgrade resulted in new questions being added and some questions being eliminated or revised significantly to provide better information and to be more consistent with requirements and questions of the National Youth in Transition Database. For this reason, original intake information on 114 youth included in this analysis who first accessed Aftercare services prior to July 1, 2009, is not identical to the exit data collected in SFY 2011. Where these differences in questions occur, they are noted in the data tables and analysis presented below.

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 186 total participants for whom data is reported, 151 (81%) are included in the PAL population, and 35 (19%) are in the Non-PAL (*i.e.*, Basic) grouping. Data is presented for all 186 youth combined, as well as for the 151 PAL participants and 35 Basic participants separately for each of the indicators.

The average age of these 186 youth was 18.5 at intake and 20.4 at exit. More than half (58.6%) 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 the SFY 2011 exit is just under two years, although this may include some interruptions of service over that timeframe. Approximately 42% of this population was involved with Aftercare for two and a half years or more.

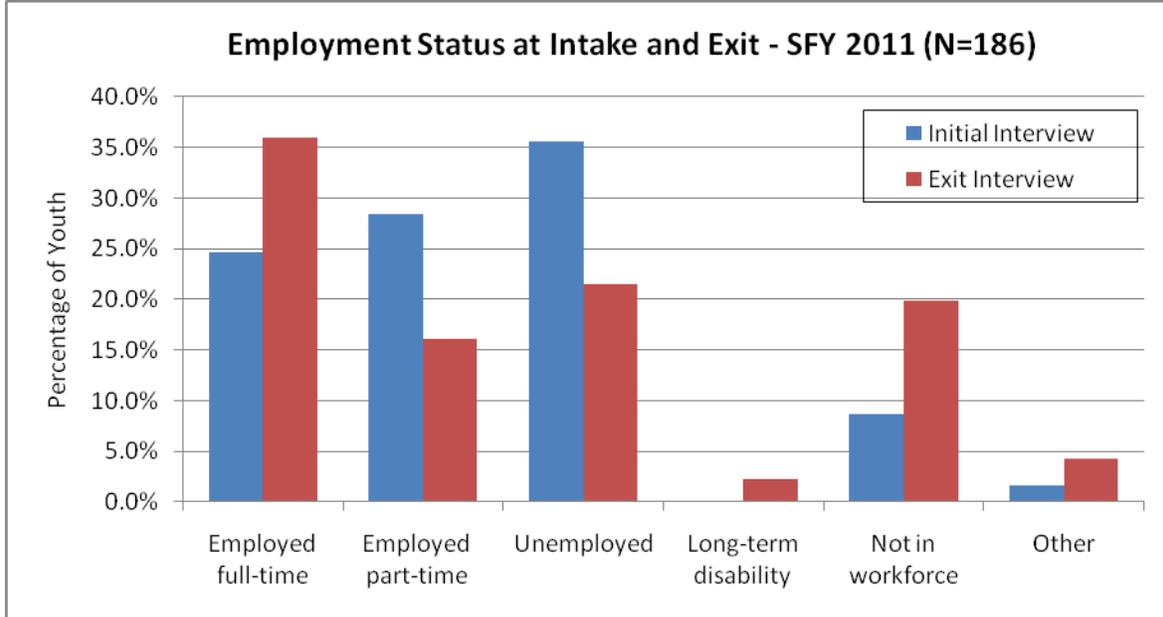
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**Employment:** Just over half of participants exiting Aftercare in SFY 2011 are employed at both intake and exit. Of those working, however, there was an increase in full-time employment (defined as 25 or more hours per week) from 24.7% at intake to 36.0% at exit. At the same time there was an essentially equal drop in the number reporting part-time employment, suggesting that the increase in full-time employment was a result of those with jobs coming into aftercare working more hours, rather than those unemployed at intake finding jobs.

The percentage of participants “unemployed” declined from 35.6% at intake to 21.5% at exit, but participants not in the workforce at all increased by a similar amount. While the rise in the percentage of participants not in the workforce at exit is troubling and raises questions about how these youth are supporting themselves, this population is similar to all youth. Labor force participation of all young people is at an historic low and unemployment among this age group remains high.<sup>4</sup>

Participants are likely becoming discouraged and dropping out of the labor market altogether as economic conditions continue to make it difficult to find work. Further, because attending post-secondary education or training, working or seeking work is a condition of eligibility for PAL, and fulfilling self-responsibility expectations is required of all Aftercare participants, those who have dropped out of the workforce may be discharged from services for failing to follow-through with employment/school expectations, impacting the results in this area. Finally, a few participants are not working at exit due to long-term disability, whereas none reported this status at the time of their initial interview.



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<sup>4</sup> Nationally, labor force participation of all youth (the proportion of the population ages 16 to 24 working or looking for work) dropped to 59.5% in July 2011, the lowest July rate on record. The youth unemployment rate was 18.1 percent nationally in July 2011, down from 19.1 percent in July 2010. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

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Specific percentages of employment status of exiting participants, and a breakdown by PAL and Basic participants, are shown in table below.<sup>5</sup> Labor force participation, in general, is higher at both intake and exit among PAL participants than Basic participants reflecting, in part, the requirements of the PAL program. PAL participants are also more likely to be employed full-time at both intake and exit.

	All (N=186)		PAL (N=151)		Basic (N=35)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Employed full-time*	24.7%	36.0%	27.8%	38.4%	11.4%	25.7%
Employed part-time*	28.4%	16.1%	28.5%	15.2%	28.8%	20.0%
Unemployed	35.6%	21.5%	35.8%	23.8%	40.0%	11.4%
Long-term disability	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	5.7%
Not in workforce	8.6%	19.9%	6.6%	16.6%	17.1%	34.3%
Other	1.61%	4.3%	1.3%	4.6%	2.9%	2.9%

\*The pre-2009 intake question regarding employment status categorized full-time employment as 30 or more hours per week and did not define part-time employment. Beginning in July 2009 the intake and exit interview question regarding employment included more specific options of “employed an average of 35 or more hours per week,” “employed an average of 25 to 34 hours per week,” and “employed for less than 25 hours per week.” In this table, responses of “employed 30 or more hours per week” from those that first accessed services prior to July 2009 are combined with responses of “employed 35 or more hours per week” and “employed 25 – 34 hours per week” from those accessing services after July 2009 and reported as employed full-time for initial interviews. Employed part-time includes those reporting “employed part-time” in the earlier data collection instrument with those reporting “employed less than 25 hours per week” in the newer version. Other options remained the same.

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<sup>5</sup> In this table, 25 or more hours of work per week is categorized as full-time employment, which is sufficient to qualify for PAL. In the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), full-time employment is defined as 35 or more hours per week. On exit, 17.7% of youth reported 35 or more hours per week employment. NYTD part-time employment is 1 to 34 hours per week; on exit 34.4% reported part-time employment using the NYTD definition.

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**Resources to Meet Living Expenses:** Self-sufficiency is the ultimate goal of Aftercare and PAL services, but few young people achieve full independence by the age of 21 and young people exiting Aftercare are no exception. The limited employment among participants reported above is reflected in the data on whether young people have adequate resources to meet their expenses, especially when considering “earned income alone.” However, on exit, 94.5% of participants report having enough money to cover their expenses when other assistance (including PAL when applicable) is counted. It is unclear how well these exiting participants will do when their PAL stipends are discontinued.

In related areas of managing money and having a bank account, participants demonstrate progress as shown in the table below; however, this data should be interpreted with caution because of changes in the wording of the questions.

<b>Resources – Pre-7/1/09 intake</b>	<b>Initial (N=114)</b>	<b>Exit</b>	<b>PAL Initial (N=103)</b>	<b>PAL Exit</b>	<b>Basic Initial (N=11)</b>	<b>Basic Exit</b>
Has a monthly budget to cover expenses?	36.0%	N/A	36.9%	N/A	27.3%	N/A
Has a bank account	74.6%	N/A	74.8%	N/A	72.7%	N/A
<b>Resources – Post 7/1/09 Intake</b>	<b>Initial (N=72)</b>	<b>Exit (N=186)</b>	<b>PAL Initial (N=48)</b>	<b>PAL Exit (N=151)</b>	<b>Basic Initial (N=24)</b>	<b>Basic Exit (N=35)</b>
Has enough money to cover needed expenses with earned income alone	9.7%	35.5%	6.3%	35.8%	16.7%	34.3%
Has enough money to cover needed expenses with income and other assistance	63.9%	91.9%	68.8%	94.7%	54.2%	80.0%
Can manage money responsibly	73.6%	87.1%	75.0%	88.1%	70.8%	82.9%
Has a checking account	48.6%	62.9%	56.3%	68.2%	33.3%	40.0%
Has a savings account	48.6%	60.8%	47.9%	62.9%	50.0%	51.4%

\*The question closest to measuring adequate resources in the pre-July 2009 interview was “Do you have a monthly budget to cover expenses?” with response options of “yes” or “no”. This table shows the percent who responded “yes” to the resource questions in older and newer versions of the interviews separately. Similarly, the question in the pre-2009 instrument regarding a bank account was revised to be more specific in the newer tool to identify the type of account(s) held by youth.

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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 in Aftercare frequently rely on friends or family for a place to live or to share housing expenses. Compared to when they first access services, on exit more youth are assuming some responsibility for the cost of housing (from 50.7% at intake to 76.9% at exit) and fewer are living in transitional facilities, shelters or other supported housing arrangements (from 11.3% to 2.2%). While a sizable portion of Aftercare participants are attending college, very few take advantage of university housing.

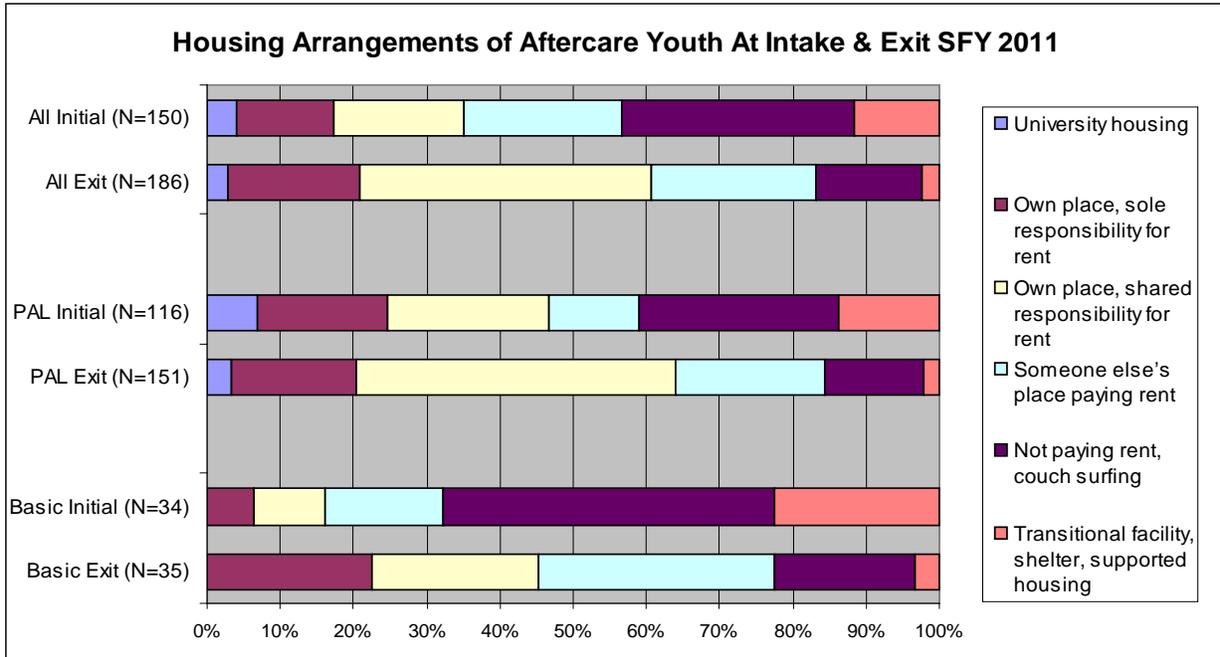
None of the exiting youth reported living “on the street or outdoors” at either the time of intake or exit, but 2.2% were living in transitional facilities and 14% were not paying anything for rent. Of exiting participants, 21.5% indicated that they had been homeless at some point in the last two years. Moreover, of youth planning to move within a month of exit, more than a third do not have a solid plan in place for that move.

For young people not receiving PAL, Aftercare provides access to a Rent Subsidy program administered by the Iowa Finance Authority with funding from DHS. In SFY 2011, an average of 19 youth a month received an IFA rent subsidy. The amount of the subsidy is the difference between the lesser of the actual rent or fair market rent and thirty percent of the youth’s monthly gross income, not to exceed \$350. In SFY 2011, the rent subsidy averaged \$284 per month.

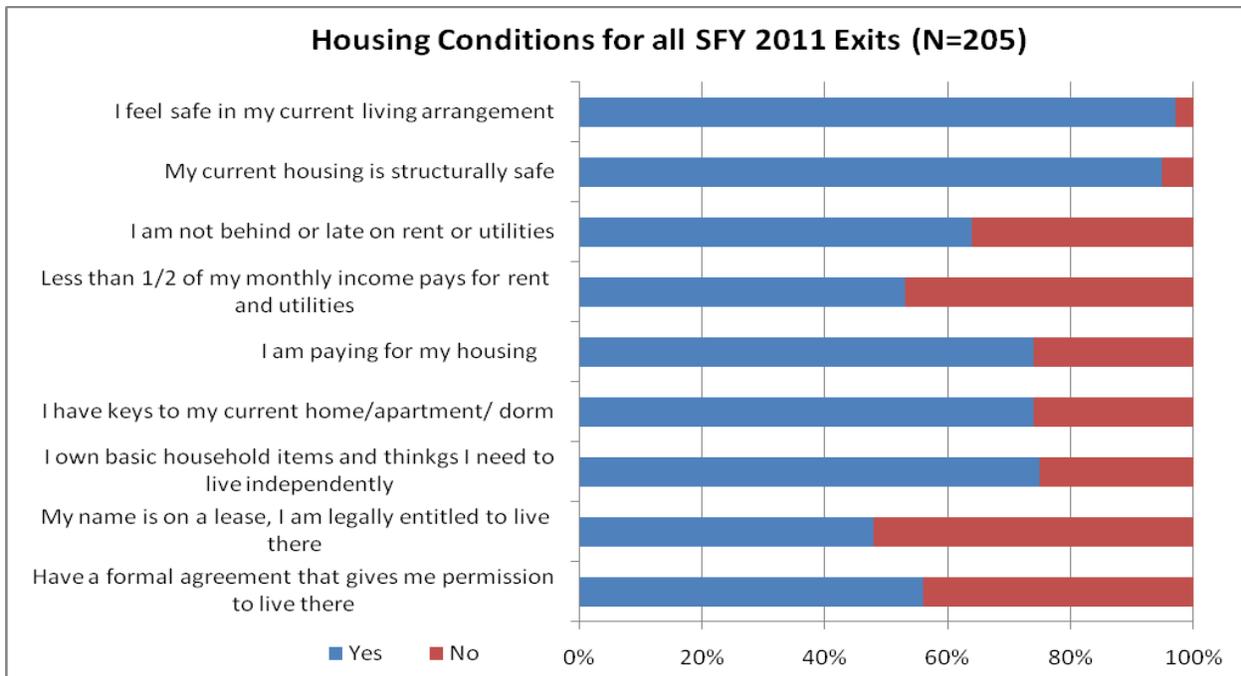
<b>Housing</b>	<b>All Initial (N=150)*</b>	<b>All Exit (N=186)</b>	<b>PAL Initial (N=116)*</b>	<b>PAL Exit (N=151)</b>	<b>Basic Initial (N=34)*</b>	<b>Basic Exit (N=35)</b>
University housing (residence hall, sorority/fraternity)	4.0%	2.7%	4.3%	3.3%	0%	0%
Apartment or house (sole responsibility for rent)	12.7%	17.2%	11.2%	16.6%	5.9%	20.0%
Apartment or house (shared responsibility for rent)	17.3%	38.2%	13.8%	42.4%	8.8%	20.0%
Someone else’s apt or house paying rent	20.7%	21.5%	7.8%	19.9%	14.7%	28.6%
Someone else’s apt or house, not paying rent or living expenses, couch surfing	30.7%	14.0%	17.2%	13.3%	41.2%	17.1%
Transitional facility, shelter, or other supported housing arrangement	11.3%	2.2%	8.6%	2.0%	20.6%	2.9%
Street/outdoors	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	3.3%	4.3%	1.7%	2.7%	8.8%	11.4%

\* Due to changes in interview questions beginning in July 2009, comparable intake data is not available on all exiting participants. The percentages for initial data are based on 150 participants for whom intake data is available, including 116 PAL participants and 34 Basic or Non-PAL participants.

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**Housing Stability:** Beginning in July 2009, a number of additional questions regarding safe and stable housing were added to the interview instrument. While there is insufficient intake data on these questions for comparison, the data collected from 205 exits on these questions is presented below. Young people generally feel safe in their living arrangement and more than two-thirds report that they own basic household items, are pay for their housing, and have keys to where they are living. Housing challenges remain for this population in terms of affordability of housing (just over half pay less than 50% of their income for rent and utilities and almost 40% have been behind on their rent or utility bills). Less than half have their name on a lease.



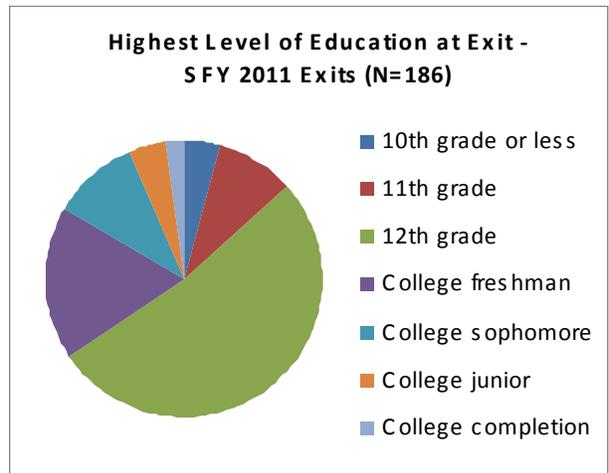
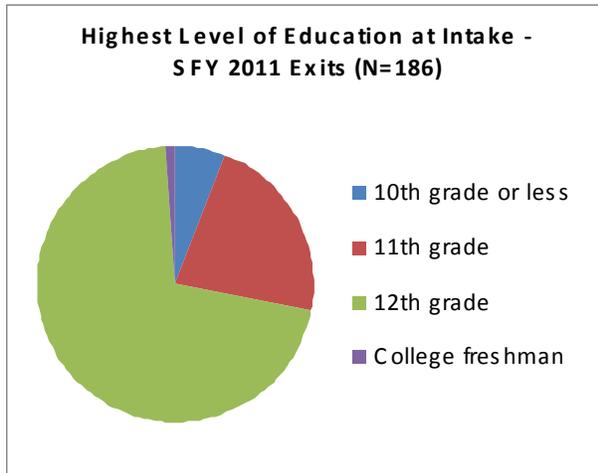
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**Education:** As shown in the table and charts below, young people make considerable progress in the area of education while participating in Aftercare. More than 90% of youth on exit have earned either a high school diploma or GED, compared to 75% of the same youth at intake. And more than one-third have been able to complete some college while receiving services. There are fewer youth attending school at exit than at intake, however, indicating that post-secondary education retention and success needs further attention.

	All (N=186)		PAL (N=151)		Basic (N=35)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
<b>% Attending School *</b>	40.9%	32.8%	40.4%	35.1%	42.9%	23.0%
<b>Highest level of education completed</b>						
10 <sup>th</sup> grade or less	5.9%	4.3%	2.7%	2.0%	20.0%	8.6%
11 <sup>th</sup> grade	22.4%	9.1%	18.5%	3.3%	37.1%	34.3%
12 <sup>th</sup> grade	71.0%	52.2%	77.5%	55.6%	42.9%	37.1%
College freshman	1.1%	17.7%	1.3%	19.9%	--	8.6%
College sophomore	--	10.2%	--	11.9%	--	2.9%
College junior	--	4.3%	--	4.6%	--	2.9%
College completion**	--	2.2%	--	2.7%	--	--
<b>Highest Credential Received</b>						
None	24.7%	9.7%	17.9%	2.0%	54.3%	42.9%
GED	8.6%	10.2%	9.3%	10.6%	5.7%	8.6%
High School Diploma	66.1%	74.7%	72.2%	80.8%	40.0%	48.6%
Vocational Certificate or license	0.5%	3.8%	0.7%	4.6%	--	--
AA degree	--	1.6%	--	2.0%	--	--
Bachelors Degree	--	--	--	--	--	--

\* Percent attending school includes youth who answered that they were enrolled full-time or part-time at intake in the pre-July 2009 interview instrument, as well as those responding that they were enrolled full-time (school only); employed and enrolled; or enrolled in career prep or internship on the new questions.

\*\* College completion may include community or junior college.



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**Positive Relationships:** Social relationships and networks are essential to healthy development, and the critical importance of a network of family and non-family adult supports for youth and young adults is well-documented. 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.

<b>Relationships – Pre-7/1/09 intake</b>	<b>All Initial (N=114)</b>	<b>All Exit</b>	<b>PAL Initial (N=103)</b>	<b>PAL Exit</b>	<b>Basic Initial (N=11)</b>	<b>Basic Exit</b>
<b>Has positive relationship with supportive adult for:</b>						
Emotional support	93.9%	N/A	94.2%	N/A	90.9%	N/A
Help in a crisis	95.6%	N/A	96.1%	N/A	90.9%	N/A
Job/school advice or guidance	95.6%	N/A	96.1%	N/A	90.9%	N/A
<b>Relationships – Post 7/1/09 Intake</b>	<b>Initial (N=72)</b>	<b>Exit (N=186)</b>	<b>PAL Initial (N=48)</b>	<b>PAL Exit (N=151)</b>	<b>Basic Initial (N=18)</b>	<b>Basic Exit (N=35)</b>
Has a positive relationship with supportive adult <b>family member</b>	79.2%	87.1%	81.3%	87.4%	75.0%	85.7%
Has a positive relationship with supportive <b>non-family adult</b>	93.1%	94.1%	97.9%	96.7%	83.3%	82.9%

The family members most often identified by youth at exit as providing that support are birth parents (38%); extended family members (22%); and adult siblings (17%). Non-family support is provided by adult friends (53%); former foster parents (17%); and caseworkers (13%). Of youth exiting Aftercare, 13.7% did not identify any family member who offered life-long support and 5.9% could not identify a non-family adult support person.

While the vast majority of youth report having positive relationships with adults, many recognize that they could still use more. The Aftercare Network poses the question: “*Do you have positive personal relationships with adults in the community?*” on semi-annual satisfaction surveys which are completed by active participants in the months of October and April. The table below shows the distribution of responses to this question in the surveys completed in SFY 2011.

<b>Do you have positive personal relationships with adults in the community?</b>	<b>October 2010 (N=382)</b>	<b>April 2011 (N=358)</b>
Yes, plenty	82.4%	78.9%
Some but not enough	13.6%	17.4%
No	4.0%	3.7%

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**Children and Parenting:** Early childbearing and parenting is relatively common among youth who age-out of foster care and much higher than their same age peers.<sup>6</sup> While less than 10% of youth enter Aftercare as parents, by the time they exit, 35% are parenting. Of exiting participants who are parents, three-quarters have their children living with them.

<b>Parenting</b>	<b>All Initial (N=186)</b>	<b>All Exit (N=186)</b>	<b>PAL Initial (N=151)</b>	<b>PAL Exit (N=151)</b>	<b>Basic Initial (N=35)</b>	<b>Basic Exit (N=35)</b>
Are you a parent? *	7.5%	35.0%	6.0%	37.1%	11.4%	25.7%
Are you currently pregnant, given birth or fathered a child in the last year?	9.7%	22.0%	9.9%	23.8%	8.6%	14.3%
Does your child live with you? (as a % of those who indicated they were a parent)	N/A	78.8% (N=66)	N/A	78.9% (N=57)	N/A	77.8% (N=9)

\* Includes those who responded that they were supporting one or more dependents on the pre July 2009 initial interview, as well as those who responded “yes” to the new interview question “Are you a parent,” beginning in July 2009.

**High Risk Behaviors:** The prevalence of selected high risk behaviors among Aftercare participants are presented in the tables below. Note that some of the questions changed beginning in July 2009 so strict comparison from initial to exit should not be made.

	<b>All (N=186)</b>		<b>PAL (N=151)</b>		<b>Basic (N=35)</b>	
<b>% responding “yes” to:</b>	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
<b>Suicide*</b>						
Made Plans to commit suicide	6.5%	7.0%	5.3%	6.6%	11.4%	8.6%
Attempted suicide	3.8%	4.3%	3.3%	4.0%	5.7%	5.7%
<b>Incarcerated or Detained in Jail or detention facility**</b>	24.2%	24.7%	20.5%	21.9%	40.0%	37.1%
<b>Homeless in last 2 years***</b>	15.6%	21.5%	12.6%	19.2%	28.6%	31.4%

\* Pre-2009 questions asked about suicide plans or attempts in the last six months, which were revised to questions asking about suicide plans or attempts the last year.

\*\* Pre-2009 question asked about incarceration/detention in last year, revised to ask about incarceration/detention in the last 2 years in new interview.

\*\*\* Pre-2009 question asked if the participant had been homeless since leaving foster care. The revised question asks if he/she has been homeless in the last two years.

<sup>6</sup> Courtney, M., Dworsky, A., et al. (2007) *Midwest evaluation of the adult functioning of former foster youth: Outcomes at age 21*. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

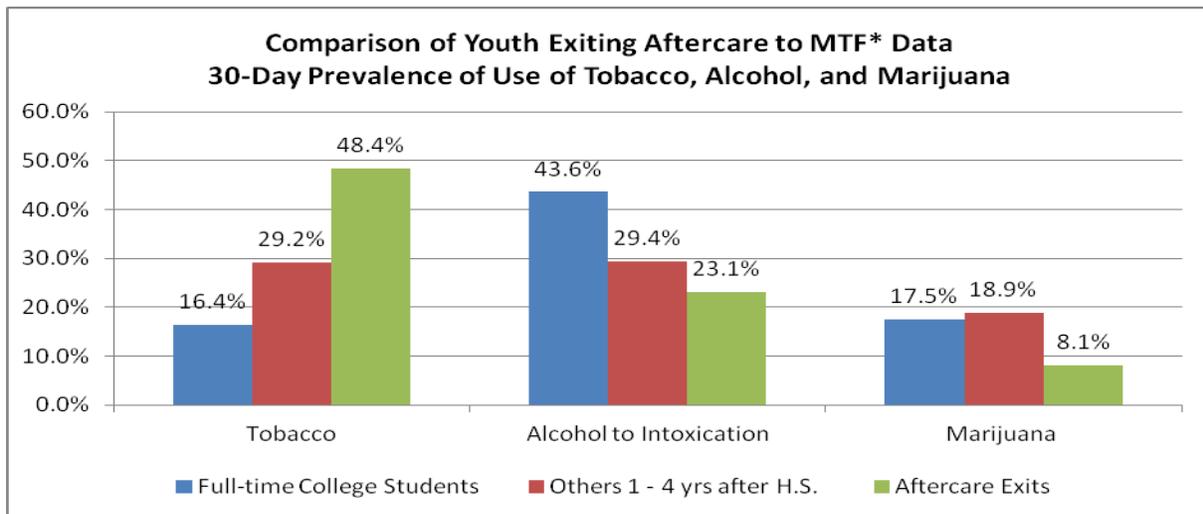
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While approximately 20% of exiting participants indicated that they had *ever* attempted suicide, only 7% indicated that they had made plans to commit suicide and fewer than 5% had attempted suicide *in the last year*.

Fully 25% of Aftercare participants have been incarcerated or detained in the last two years. Because Aftercare serves youth who have been adjudicated delinquent as well as those who entered foster care as a Child in Need of Assistance, many of these youth may have been detained as juveniles prior to accessing Aftercare. We currently do not have data to isolate the number of Aftercare clients who are incarcerated during or after receiving Aftercare services.

	All (N=186)		PAL (N=151)		Basic (N=35)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
<b>Substance Use in last 30 days</b>						
Tobacco	40.3%	48.4%	39.1%	49.7%	45.7%	42.9%
Alcohol to Intoxication	7.0%	23.1%	7.3%	27.2%	5.7%	5.7%
Marijuana	7.0%	8.1%	5.3%	8.0%	14.3%	8.6%

Tobacco, alcohol to intoxication, and marijuana use among this population is also relatively high, and as in previous years we see an increase in use from intake to exit. Compared to their peers, however, only tobacco use is significantly higher than other young adults of this age, while alcohol to intoxication and marijuana use is lower among exiting Aftercare participants than their peers.<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, PAL participants are less likely to engage in most of the high risk behaviors reported in this section, except for alcohol and tobacco use.



\* Data on full-time college students and others 1 – 4 years after high school is from the 2010 Monitoring the Future (MTF) study of drug use among adolescents and adults by the University of Michigan. MTF tobacco data is for cigarettes only, while Aftercare asks about any tobacco use.

<sup>7</sup> Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2011). *Monitoring the Future national survey results on drug use, 1975-2010. Volume II: College students and adults ages 19-50*, Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan, p 264.

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**Health Insurance Coverage:** Establishment of the Medicaid for Independent Young Adults (MIYA) coverage group in 2006 for former foster youth up to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday has improved the rate of health insurance coverage for this population. Still, 8.1% of youth on exit have no medical insurance, and those with MIYA will lose that coverage when they turn 21. A small number of youth exiting Aftercare have insurance other than Medicaid, including 4.3% who have employer provided insurance, 1.6% who are paying for their own insurance, and 3.2% with other insurance coverage. Data is not available on if youth have both Medicaid and other insurance.

	All (N=186)		PAL (N=151)		Basic (N=35)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Enrolled in Medicaid	93.5%	82.8%	95.4%	84.1%	85.7%	77.1%
Insured (other than Medicaid)	3.8%	9.1%	4.0%	9.9%	2.9%	5.8%
Employer provided	N/A	4.3%	N/A	4.6%	N/A	2.9%
Private pay/self-provided	N/A	1.6%	N/A	2.0%	N/A	0%
Other insurance	N/A	3.2%	N/A	3.3%	N/A	2.9%
No medical insurance	4.8%	8.1%	3.3%	9.3%	11.4%	2.9%

**Essential Documents:** Progress is demonstrated by Aftercare participants in the areas of knowing how to obtain essential documents as well as actually having those documents in their possession between accessing and exiting services, but there is still room for improvement – both before youth are discharged from foster care and while they participate in Aftercare.

	All (N=186)		PAL (N=151)		Basic (N=35)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
<b>% responding “yes”</b>						
<b>Knows how to obtain the following:</b>						
Birth certificate	84.4%	96.2%	87.4%	96.7%	71.4%	94.3%
Social Security card	89.8%	99.5%	92.7%	100%	77.1%	97.1%
Medical records	81.2%	93.6%	84.8%	95.4%	65.7%	85.7%
Educational records	91.9%	98.4%	95.4%	98.7%	77.1%	97.1%
<b>Has in their possession:</b>						
Birth certificate	78.0%	88.7%	79.5%	90.0%	71.4%	82.9%
Social Security card	87.1%	94.1%	89.4%	95.4%	77.1%	88.6%
Driver’s license	N/A	70.4%	N/A	77.5%	N/A	40.0%

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## **Conclusion**

The Iowa Aftercare Services Network has served more than 2,000 young people who age out of foster care and voluntarily access Aftercare services since the program began in 2002. As this year's outcomes report shows, these young people face numerous challenges and their journey to adulthood is often turbulent. With the services and support (both financial and emotional) from the Aftercare Network, that journey is made easier for hundreds of foster care alumni.

Positive outcomes achieved by the Aftercare Network in SFY 2011, as measured by progress made by 186 exiting participants, include:

- A 20% increase in participants with a high school credential (from 140 participants at intake to 168 at exit);
- 64 young people (34% of exiting participants) had completed at least one year of college;
- A 46% increase in full-time employment (from 46 participants at intake to 67 exit);
- 77% of participants had assumed sole or shared responsibility for the cost of housing by the time they exited, compared to 51% at intake;
- Across-the-board increases in young people who have essential documents (*e.g.*, birth certificate, Social Security card), driver's licenses, and bank accounts – important steps toward achieving self-sufficiency.

At the same time, current economic conditions have made this an especially difficult time for these young adults. There are areas where ongoing efforts are needed, including post-secondary education retention, sustaining steady employment and affordable housing, and maintaining health care coverage.

Moreover, it is unclear what will happen next when these young adults “age out” of Aftercare, as more than one hundred participants did this year. While most are more prepared to be independent and self-sufficient at age 21 than when they were 18, they still face formidable challenges. While continuing to address the immediate and often daily challenges youth have in living on their own, the Aftercare Network needs to also focus on helping participating young people develop the skills and relationships they will need for long-term success.

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