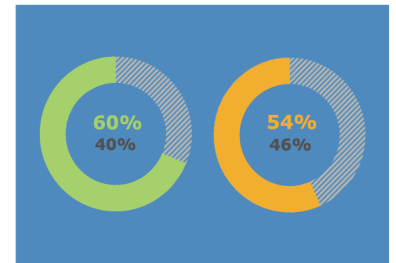
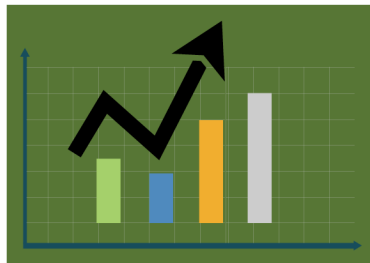




State Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Outcomes Report

prepared by Youth Policy Institute of Iowa



September 2019

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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 (near or after the age of 18) make a successful transition to adulthood. The IASN (“the Aftercare Network”, “the Network”) focuses on helping youth reach their personal goals for education, employment, housing, health, life skills, and relationships.

Eligibility criteria for IASN services are established by Iowa Administrative Code 441.187 which states that “Foster care may include, but is not limited to, placement in a foster family home, a foster care group home, an emergency shelter, a preadoptive home, the home of a relative or suitable person, or a Psychiatric Medical Institution for Children (PMIC).” Throughout this report, the term “foster care” refers to all of these placement types. Youth aging out of the Boys State Training School and detention facilities are also eligible for IASN services.

YSS of Ames holds the contract with the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to support this population and has served as the lead agency and fiscal agent for IASN since its inception in 2002. In addition to providing direct services through five of its central Iowa locations, YSS subcontracts with seven other youth-serving agencies to provide aftercare services to eligible youth throughout the state. In addition to YSS, participating IASN agencies (and the location of the primary offices) are as follows:

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

For further information on these agencies and the counties they serve for the Network, see www.iowaaftercare.org. YSS 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 data and the submission of this annual report on the performance and outcomes achieved by the Network.

The DHS contract combines funding from federal and state sources for the IASN:

- Since State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2002, DHS has designated a portion of Iowa’s federal Chafee Foster Care Independence Program funding to serve 18 to 21 year olds who age out of foster care.
- Since SFY 2006, the Iowa Legislature has appropriated state funding for the Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program, which provides monthly financial support to qualifying youth who exit a state-paid foster care placement at age 18 or older as long as they are enrolled in postsecondary education or training, employed, or both.
- Since SFY 2015, the Iowa Legislature has provided additional funding so that youth aging out of the Boys State Training School and detention facilities can access IASN services as they transition to adulthood.

Reporting Responsibilities: The IASN contract requires an annual report on the services provided and outcomes of the youth and young adults who participate in IASN services. This information is used to assess the impact of the services being delivered to eligible youth, to inform quality improvement

efforts, and to fulfill state and federal reporting requirements. Data presented in this annual report are primarily drawn from an online data collection system that was designed specifically for the IASN and is maintained by YPII with the assistance of Steve Elfvin of Rocket Science, Ltd.

Organization of the Report: This report is organized into three parts and is similar to previous years' reports to facilitate year-to-year comparison:

Part I of the report provides information from intake interviews with youth when they initially access services. This information is provided to help readers understand the characteristics of youth as they leave the formal child welfare or juvenile justice systems and begin working with IASN agencies. Five-year trends (SFYs 2015-2019) and notable differences between subpopulations (*e.g.* gender) are highlighted.

Part II of the report provides demographic information and other characteristics of all 760 participants who were served by IASN during SFY 2019. This part also 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). Finally, this part summarizes the reasons youth exited the program during the year, the duration of their involvement, and their rate of participation in the exit interview process. Again, five-year trends are provided when applicable.

Part III of the report examines outcomes of 184 participants who exited services during the year, did not return to services prior to June 30, 2019, and for whom the Network has complete exit data as reported by the participant in an exit interview. 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. For select outcomes, recent data from the National Youth in Transition Database is presented for comparison.

Methodology: The IASN's programs are voluntary. Eligible young adults may 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 participants each time they enter or exit 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 reported for youth who did not return to services prior to the end of the fiscal year, as long as they participated for at least three months before exiting. All exiting youth meeting these criteria, regardless of their last placement prior to receiving IASN services, are included in the SFY 2019 outcomes (N=184).

Efforts are made to ensure the accuracy of the data. Although aggregate data is quite consistent year-to-year, the data should be interpreted with caution. Because the information is based largely on self-reports by youth, and many of the topics covered in the participant interviews are sensitive (*e.g.* high-risk behaviors), some young people may not provide truthful, consistent or accurate answers. Participants may also decline to answer certain questions altogether. Additionally, data is collected and entered by multiple interviewers; manual data entry creates a margin of human error in the results presented in this report.

Appendices: Two appendices contain additional information as required by the DHS contract. The information in the appendices has already been provided to DHS.

Appendix One presents the results of the annual participant survey. The survey was completed by 389 active participants in April 2019. The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback from participants on their satisfaction with IASN agency services and to collect a point-in-time snapshot of how participating youth are doing on key performance measures related to economic security, stable housing, and relationships. Results are used to inform quality improvement efforts and policy development.

Appendix Two is a summary of the Network’s performance according to specific measures for which the Contractor is held accountable and receives an incentive payment if met. Data from the participant satisfaction survey and exit interviews are used for this purpose.

State Fiscal Year 2019 Summary

New Intakes

In SFY 2019, 269 young people accessed IASN services for the first time. This is a 7.2% increase from SFY 2018, but still fewer than the high of 317 new intakes in SFY 2016. New participants in SFY 2019 included 44 youth discharged from STS/detention. The following excerpts highlight this group's experiences in state-paid care, summarize their demographic make-up in relation to the overall participant population, and assess where they are in their transition to adulthood as of their initial participation with an IASN agency. More details are provided in Part I of this report.

- Iowa youth exiting foster care are successfully being enrolled in Medicaid -- 93.7% of new intakes reported Medicaid coverage. Because a majority (52.0%) of new intakes are prescribed medication for physical or mental health issues, continuous and reliable health insurance coverage is critical for this population. The rate of Medicaid participation has increased steadily over the past five years (84.5% in SFY 2015).
- Many new participants initiate services at a point of transition in their living situations -- 37.9% of them reported plans to move in the month following their initial interview. At the time of their initial interview, 6.3% of new participants reported being homeless.
- Fewer youth began IASN services with a high school diploma or equivalent (GED or HiSED) in SFY 2019 (66.5%) compared to the prior year (70.9%). Similar to SFY 2018, 26.0% of new intakes were enrolled in high school or an equivalency program at the time they accessed services
- The median lapse between exit from a formal placement and intake was just 16 days. This short lapse is the result of efforts by DHS caseworkers, Juvenile Court Officers, and others to ease the transition to adulthood by connecting young people to available services. Among new intakes, 87.4% initiated services by age 19. The average age of new participants was 18.4.
- After four consecutive years in which roughly 60% of new intakes were male, just 51.8% of all new intakes in SFY 2019 identified as male. Females had a DHS worker at more than twice the rate of males (76.7% vs. 35.5%). Males had a JCO at more than three times the rate of females (54.0% vs. 15.5%).
- New intakes identified as "White or Caucasian" at a rate lower than that of the overall participant population for SFY 2019 (69.1% vs. 74.6%). Instead, higher rates of new intakes identified as "Black or African American" (31.6% vs. 24.9%) and "American Indian or Alaskan Native" (8.6% vs. 5.4%).

All Participants Served

In SFY 2019, IASN agencies served 760 young people, a 4.8% decrease from the previous year. On average, 469 young people participated each month. Of those, an average of 237 received a PAL stipend and 166 received Aftercare case management without a stipend. The State Training School or a detention center ("STS/detention") was the last placement of 118 participants in SFY 2019 (15.5%). On average, 66 of these individuals participated each month. The following excerpts highlight demographics, PAL participation, and services received for the overall population of participants. More details are provided in Part II of this report.

- Among all participants served, 46.6% of participants were female, 52.9% were male, and 0.5% identified as transgender.
- The majority of participants identified as “White or Caucasian” (74.6%). This includes those who identify as both White alone as well as White and one or more other races. A sizeable percentage identify themselves as “Black or African American” (24.9%), “Multiracial” (13.3%), and “American Indian or Alaska Native” (5.4%). Of all youth served, 14.1% identify as Hispanic or Latino (regardless of racial identity).
- Just over half (51.8%) of the 760 youth served had been diagnosed with one or more Serious Emotional Disturbances (SED) prior to leaving foster care.
- 502 out of 660 potential PAL stipend recipients (76.1%) earned a stipend for at least one month during the year.
- Nearly all participants 94.6% received budget and financial management services (94.6%) and mentoring services (91.8%). This reflects the emphasis on budgeting and financial issues in the program and the mentoring relationship SSAs work to establish with participants.
- The average duration of participation for all youth exiting services (with or without an interview) was 628 days (1.7 years).

Participant Outcomes

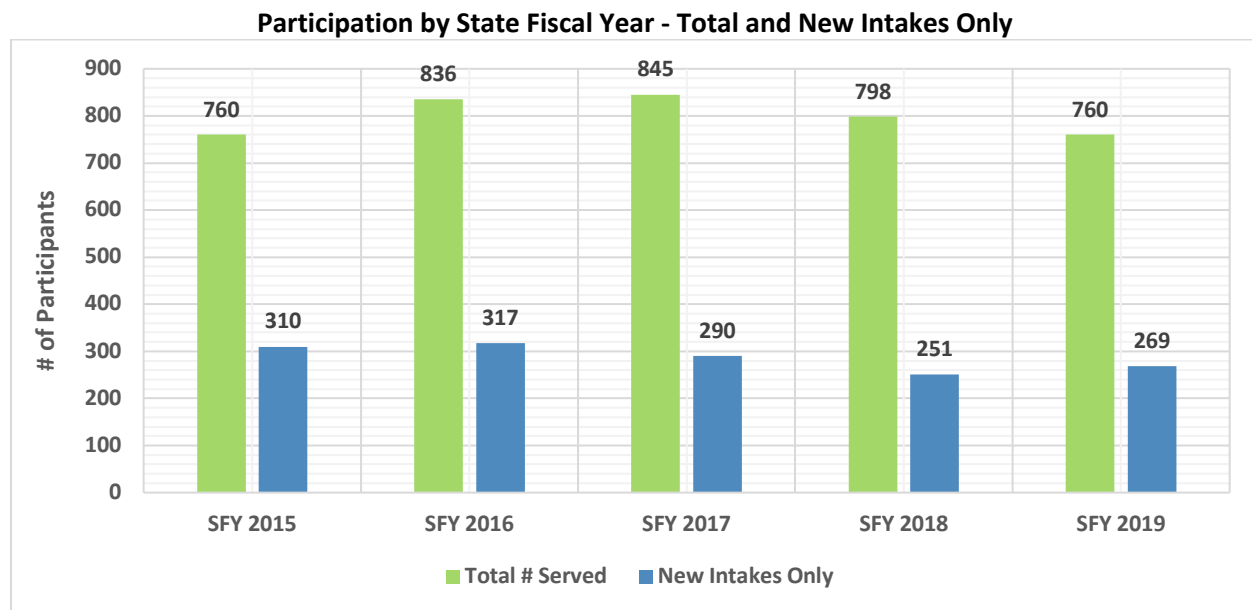
Participant outcomes for SFY 2019 are assessed by comparing the original intake data collected when participants first accessed services with their last exit interview data. In order to more accurately measure the impact of IASN agency services, outcomes analysis focuses on youth who exited after at least three months of participation and did not return before July 1, 2019. This group of 184 participants is referred to as the “outcomes group” in Part III of the report. The following excerpts highlight their progress in terms of education, employment, housing, health, and relationships.

- Just over two-thirds (69.0%) of the outcomes group earned a high school diploma or equivalent (*e.g.*, HISED) prior to initiating services with an IASN agency. At exit, 84.8% had earned a diploma/HISED or more.
- At both intake and exit, the outcomes group had the lowest level of education attainment of the past five years. However, the percentage that earned a credential during their time with an IASN agency (15.8%) was the highest of the past five years.
- Participants in the outcomes group show significant gains in employment. At the time of their exit, 62.5% reported employment of any kind. This includes a tripling of reported full-time employment (35+ hours per week) from intake to exit (9.2% to 28.8%).
- Participants reported increased monthly earnings from intake to exit. Not only does the percentage reporting zero monthly income drop significantly (63.6% to 37.0%), the percentage of participants earning \$800 or more per month more than triples (10.9% to 37.0%).

- Participants made major strides in terms of stable housing. Less than half as many participants reported living in someone else's house or apartment (63.6% to 31.0%) from intake to exit. The percentage of participants living in an apartment or house with a formal housing agreement more than doubled (20.7% to 53.8%).
- Very few young people report living "on the street" at the time of intake or exit from the Network. However, a substantial amount of participants reported an episode of homelessness in the past two years at both intake (22.3%) and exit (25.5%).
- When first accessing IASN agency services, 5.4% of this year's outcomes group were parents. This increased to 21.7% at exit. Of these parents, 74.4% reported having at least partial custody of their child(ren).
- At exit, 89.1% of the outcomes group reported having at least one adult family member and 92.9% reported having at least one non-family adult to turn to for support. This suggests that increased permanency may be attainable for older youth in foster care if efforts are made to further engage supportive adults in their lives.

PART I: Characteristics of New Participants

A total of 760 young adults received services from IASN between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. Of these, 269 accessed services for the first time during the year. Relative to SFY 2018, this represents a slight decrease in total participants and a slight increase in new intakes. Over the last five years the Network has served an average of 800 young people per year, and an average of 287 of these participants have been new intakes each year. The recent downturn in participation mirrors the declining number of older youth in foster care in Iowa over the last few years.



The reach of IASN services can be assessed to some extent by comparing the number of new intakes to the number of older youth who are discharged from foster care during the year. Based on Iowa DHS data for SFY 2019, 313 youth exited Iowa foster care or juvenile justice placements with a discharge reason of emancipation (or “aged out”), while a total of 487 foster care cases involving youth ages 17.5 and older were closed with the youth being discharged for any reason, including emancipation, reunification, adoption or guardianship.¹

This part of the report highlights characteristics of young people at the time they first accessed IASN services, including trends for the previous five state fiscal years. Although not all youth are eligible access IASN services, this data helps illustrate the circumstances of Iowa youth as they age out of foster care or other court-ordered placement.

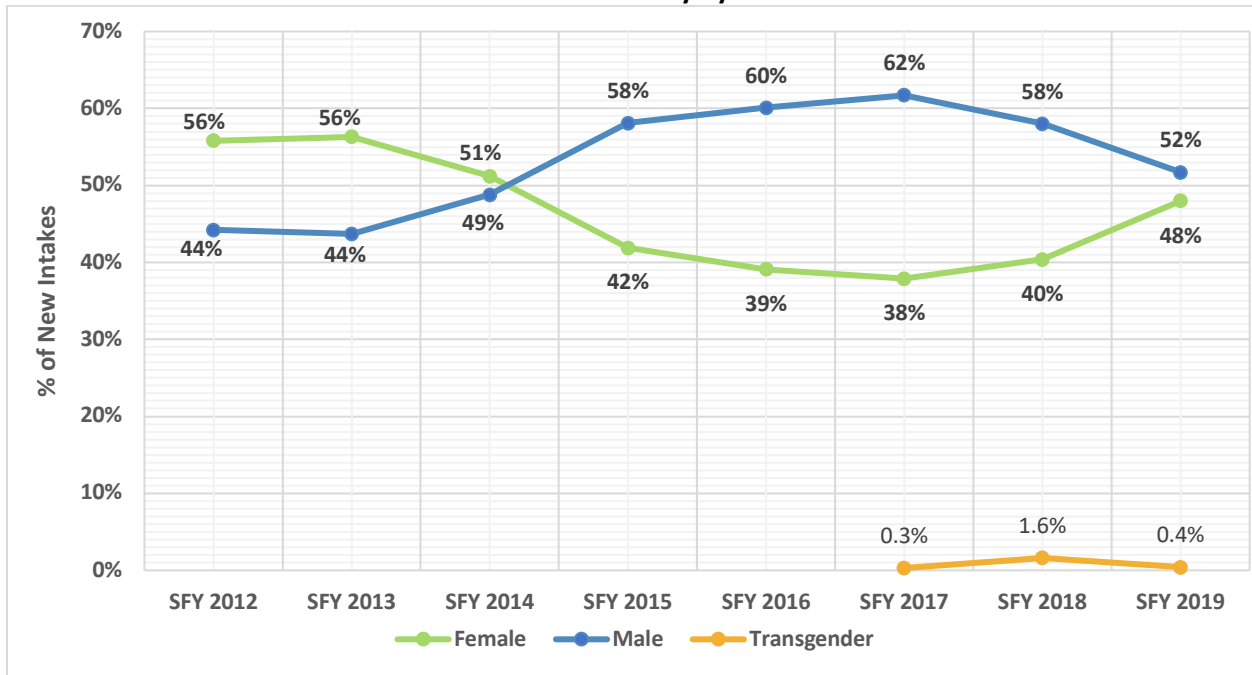
New Participant Demographics: Participants are able to access IASN services at any time between the ages of 18 and 21. Ages of first-time participants in SFY 2019 ranged from 18.0 to 20.6 years old. Most young people, however, begin services shortly after exiting foster care (around age 18 or when they graduate from high school). In SFY 2019, 87.4% of new participants initiated services by age 19. The average age of new participants was 18.4.

¹ IASN eligibility is based on the age and placement history of youth at the time they exit care, not by the reason given for their discharge, so the precise number of youth becoming eligible for services is difficult to pinpoint. A discharge reason of “emancipation” is most often used for youth who do not have a stable family to return to at discharge, typically around age 18, but does not represent all youth who are eligible for IASN services.

Prior to SFY 2015, more females than males accessed and continued with voluntary IASN services. This balance shifted when the predominantly male STS/detention population became eligible. However, after four years in which roughly 60% of new intakes were male, just 51.8% of all new intakes in SFY 2019 identified as male. Why this return to gender parity took place is unclear; future years will determine whether SFY 2019 is an anomaly or the beginning of a new pattern.

Beginning in SFY 2017, “Transgender”, “Other”, and “Not Sure” were added as options to accommodate all participants’ gender identities. One young person (0.4%) initiating services in SFY 2019 identified as transgender.

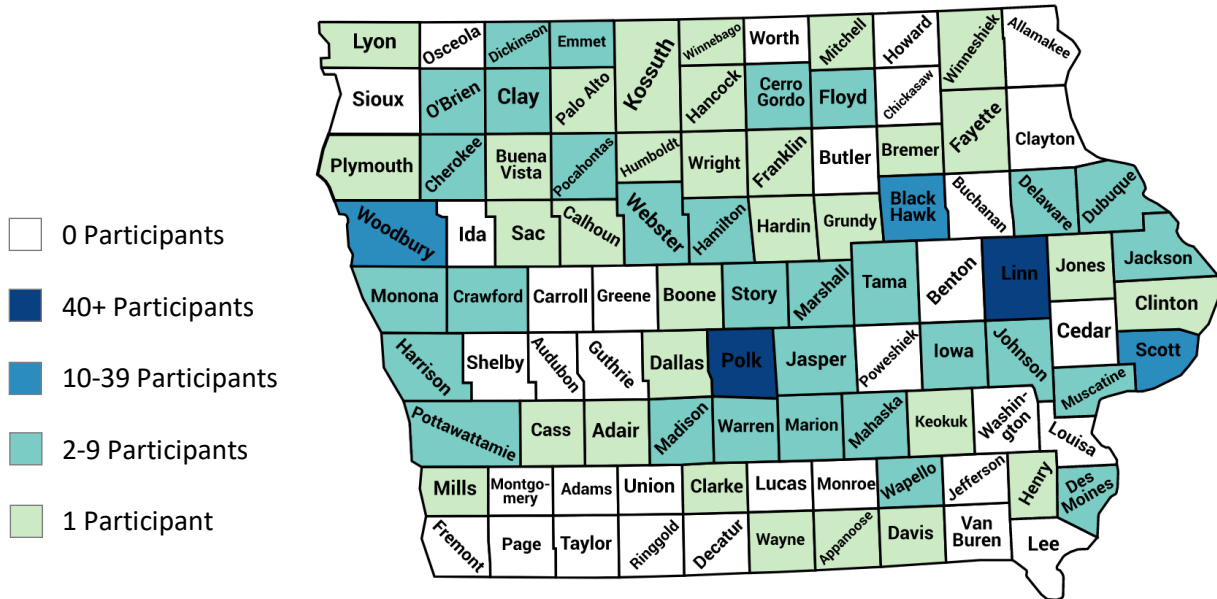
New Intakes - Gender Identity by State Fiscal Year



New intakes identified as “White or Caucasian” at a rate lower than that of the overall participant population for SFY 2019 (69.1% vs. 74.6%). Instead, higher rates of new intakes identified as “Black or African American” (31.6% vs. 24.9%) and “American Indian or Alaskan Native” (8.6% vs. 5.4%).

IASN services are available statewide; young people entering the Network in SFY 2019 accessed services in 66 of Iowa’s 99 counties. Five counties had 10 or more new intakes served during SFY 2019: Polk (51), Linn (41), Woodbury (16), Black Hawk (10), and Scott (10). This represents 118 of the 269 new intakes (43.9%). Similar to previous years, 31 counties had just one new participant access services in SFY 2019. This reflects Iowa’s overall population distribution.

New Intakes - County of Residence

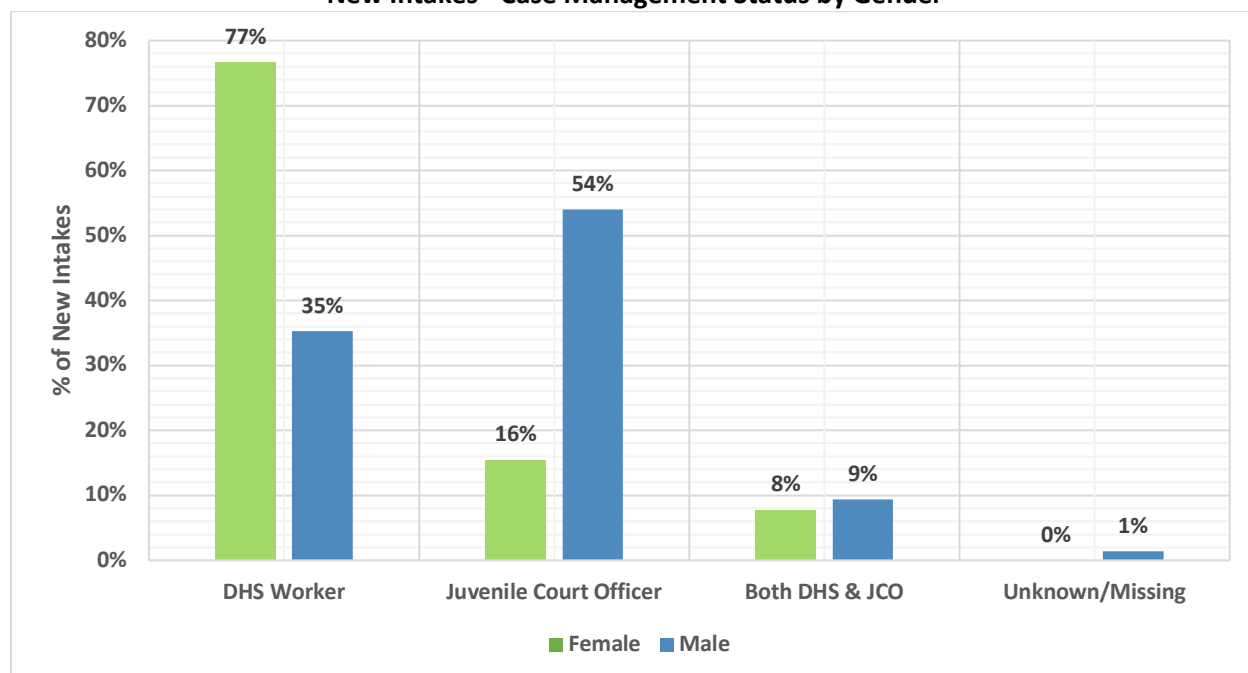


Characteristics of Placement: To facilitate the transition from the formal child welfare or juvenile justice systems to voluntary services available after age 18, IASN staff (Advocates) may meet with youth up to a year prior to the estimated date of their formal discharge from foster care. These “Pre-Aftercare” services provide an opportunity for Advocates to establish a relationship with soon-to-be eligible young people and help with their transition from placement to adulthood.

In SFY 2019, 82.5% of new participants completed an intake into the Network within 100 days of being discharged from their last placement in foster care or STS/detention. The median lapse between exit from a formal placement and intake in SFY 2019 was just 16 days. This short lapse is the result of efforts by DHS caseworkers, JCOs and others to ease the transition to adulthood by connecting young people to the Network. Only 17 of 269 new participants (6.3%) accessed services more than a year after exiting foster care or other placement; this includes a small number of individuals who were adopted after age 16 but did not become eligible for services until they turned 18.

Children are placed in foster care for a number of reasons. DHS workers provide case management for those who have been placed in foster care for any circumstance that designates them as a Child in Need of Assistance (CINA). If delinquency was the cause of placement, a Juvenile Court Officer (JCO) generally handles the case. In SFY 2019, 55.4% of new intakes had a DHS social worker during their placement, 35.3% had a JCO, and 8.6% had both a DHS worker and a JCO. Females had a DHS worker at more than twice the rate of males (76.7% vs. 35.5%). Males had a JCO at more than three times the rate of females (54.0% vs. 15.5%). This is partially due to the inclusion of participants whose last placement was STS/detention who are almost exclusively male (STS is a male-only facility).

New Intakes - Case Management Status by Gender



Many young people accessing IASN services experienced lengthy stays in foster care, as well as frequent placement changes. In terms of duration, 53.5% of new participants in SFY 2019 reported spending two or more years in placement. In terms of multiple placements, 21.6% of intakes in SFY 2019 reported experiencing six or more placements prior to aging out.

Five-year trends show the consistent distribution of new intakes' last placements. In SFY 2019, 39.4% of these youth were in a family-like setting ("Family foster home [non-relative]", "Relative", "Adoption, or "Suitable other placement") when they were discharged. Last placements of the remaining youth included: 17.8% in Supervised Apartment Living (SAL), 24.9% in group homes, shelters, or PMICs, and 17.8% in STS/detention.

New Intakes - Last Placement Type by State Fiscal Year

	SFY 2015 (N=310)	SFY 2016 (N=317)	SFY 2017 (N=290)	SFY 2018 (N=251)	SFY 2019 (N=269)
Family foster home (non-relative)	26.8%	23.7%	24.5%	28.4%	29.7%
Relative	4.5%	1.9%	5.2%	4.0%	6.3%
Adoption	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.8%	1.1%
Suitable other placement	2.6%	1.3%	3.5%	3.2%	2.2%
Supervised Apartment Living (SAL)	18.4%	18.6%	18.6%	19.2%	17.8%
Group home	20.1%	26.5%	20.0%	15.2%	17.1%
State Training School (STS)	15.2%	18.6%	16.9%	16.4%	15.2%
Detention	1.6%	0.6%	1.4%	1.2%	2.6%
Shelter	8.1%	7.6%	7.6%	11.6%	7.1%
Psychiatric Medical Institutions for Children (PMIC)	1.9%	1.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.7%

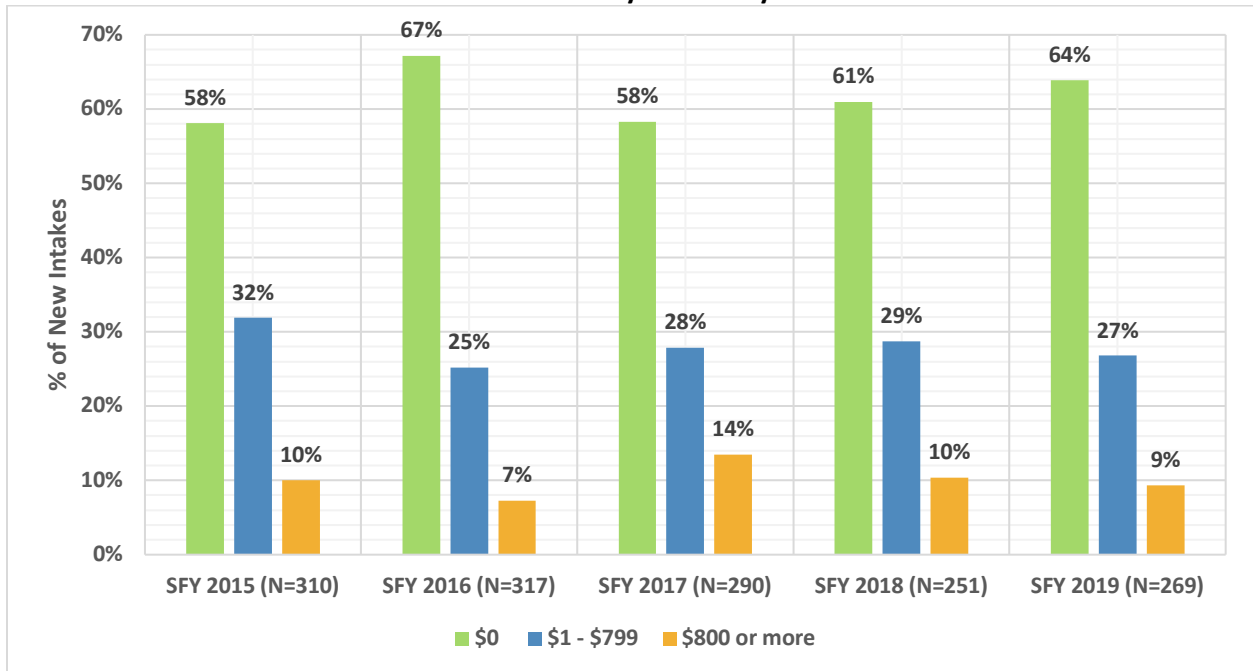
Employment and Finances: A majority of youth are not employed when they initiate IASN services. At intake, 39.8% of new participants in SFY 2019 reported employment of any kind. This is a slight increase from the prior year (38.2%). The rate of youth who reported being unemployed but looking for work dropped significantly from the prior year (41.0% to 34.6%). Those who reported they were not in the work force (*i.e.* not seeking work) increased in concert (20.3% to 24.5%).

New Intakes - Employment Status by State Fiscal Year

	SFY 2015 (N=310)	SFY 2016 (N=317)	SFY 2017 (N=290)	SFY 2018 (N=251)	SFY 2019 (N=269)
Employed (35+ hours per week)	11.0%	6.6%	9.3%	8.0%	8.2%
Employed (25-34 hours per week)	11.7%	10.7%	15.2%	15.9%	14.5%
Employed (less than 25 hours per week)	17.8%	17.4%	16.9%	14.3%	17.1%
Unemployed, actively seeking employment	35.3%	45.1%	35.9%	41.0%	34.6%
Unemployed, long-term disability	1.0%	1.3%	1.0%	--	0.7%
Not in work force	21.7%	16.4%	17.6%	20.3%	24.5%
Other	1.6%	2.2%	3.8%	0.4%	0.4%

New participants' self-reported income reflects their employment status. Whereas 60.2% reported being unemployed, not in the work force, or "other," 63.9% reported zero gross monthly income. Similar to recent years, 26.8% of participants reported \$1-\$799 in gross monthly income and the remaining 9.3% reported \$800 or more.

New Intakes - Gross Monthly Income by State Fiscal Year



A large number of young people aging out of care do not have experience with mainstream financial institutions. In a decrease from the prior year, 45.4% of new participants in SFY 2019 reported having a savings account. However, 54.3% reported having a checking or debit account and 29.4% indicated they have money set aside for emergencies. Both of these rates are modest increases from the prior year, but remain well below the overall U.S. rates for their age group.²

New Intakes - Bank Account Status by State Fiscal Year

	SFY 2015 (N=310)	SFY 2016 (N=317)	SFY 2017 (N=290)	SFY 2018 (N=251)	SFY 2019 (N=269)
Checking or debit account	46.1%	41.3%	44.8%	51.8%	54.3%
Savings account	49.4%	43.5%	41.0%	49.4%	45.4%
Money saved for emergencies	23.2%	25.9%	22.1%	27.1%	29.4%

Similar to previous years, many youth had their essential personal documents when they first accessed IASN services in SFY 2019. A large majority reported possessing a birth certificate (82.5%), Social Security card (84.4%), and State ID or passport (75.5%). However, just 36.4% reported having a Driver's License. All these rates have held steady in recent years.

Housing: Finding and maintaining safe and affordable housing is a challenge for those who age out of placement without family support. Similar to recent years, 50.9% of new intakes in SFY 2019 are paying for their housing, but roughly half as many (24.5%) actually have their name on a lease agreement. Additionally, many new participants initiate services at a point of transition in their living situations; in SFY 2019, 37.9% of them reported plans to move in the month following their initial interview. A more direct measure of housing transition is homelessness; 6.3% of new participants in SFY 2019 reported being homeless at the time of their interview.

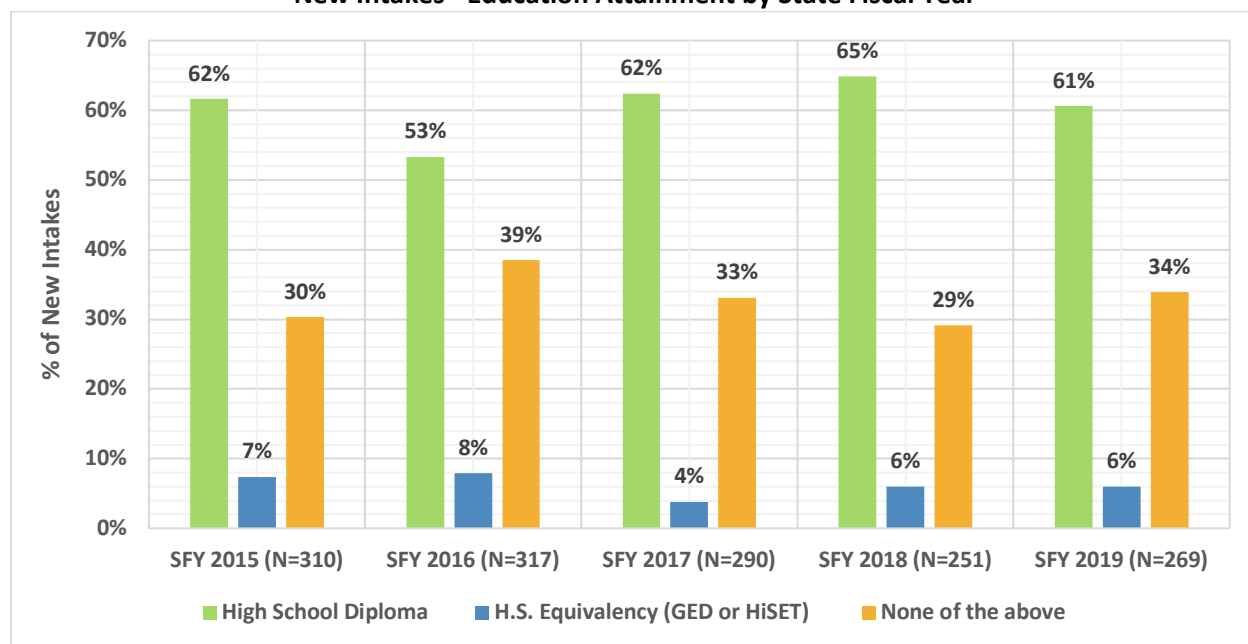
New Intakes - Housing Status by State Fiscal Year

	SFY 2015 (N=310)	SFY 2016 (N=317)	SFY 2017 (N=290)	SFY 2018 (N=251)	SFY 2019 (N=269)
Paying for housing	53.2%	52.7%	54.5%	54.6%	50.9%
Name on a lease agreement	21.3%	29.7%	22.4%	28.3%	24.5%
Moving in next month	38.1%	30.6%	37.6%	29.9%	37.9%
Currently homeless	4.8%	6.3%	9.7%	6.4%	6.3%

Education: Iowa allows youth to continue in voluntary foster care through age 19 in order to graduate from high school. For a variety of reasons, however, many youth do not take advantage of that option. Fewer youth began IASN services with a high school diploma or equivalent (GED or HiSED) in SFY 2019 (66.5%) compared to the prior year (70.9%). Similar to SFY 2018, 26.0% of new intakes were enrolled in high school or an equivalency program at the time they accessed services in SFY 2019.

² In a 2017 household survey, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) found that just 10.0% of 15-24 year-olds reported not having a bank account of any kind. Of all survey respondents (regardless of age), 57.8% reported having saved money for emergencies in the 12 months prior ([fdic.gov/householdsurvey/2017/](https://www.fdic.gov/householdsurvey/2017/)).

New Intakes - Education Attainment by State Fiscal Year



Supportive Relationships: Having positive connections to supportive adults is critical to a successful transition to adulthood. Although youth aging out of the system are not being discharged to permanency, they still feel connected to their families and other important adults in their lives. In SFY2019, 86.6% of new participants cited at least one family member they “will always be able to turn to for support, advice, [to] share or celebrate personal achievements, [or to] help solve problems.” The supportive family member types most often mentioned are birth parents (35.7%), extended family members (28.6%), adoptive parents (10.8%), and adult siblings (9.3%). Beyond biological ties, 90.7% of youth report having a non-family member who will support them.

New Intakes - Supportive Adults by State Fiscal Year

	SFY 2015 (N=310)	SFY 2016 (N=317)	SFY 2017 (N=290)	SFY 2018 (N=251)	SFY 2019 (N=269)
Adult family member I will always be able to turn to for support...	84.5%	86.1%	86.2%	86.5%	86.6%
Adult, non-family member, I will always be able to turn to for support...	91.3%	89.6%	91.4%	92.0%	90.7%

Adverse Experiences: Young people exiting foster care or other placements frequently report mental health struggles, “high-risk” behaviors, and other challenges that can complicate the transition to adulthood. Although these difficulties are not insurmountable, they can greatly impact the abilities of young people to secure employment, maintain safe housing, or complete postsecondary education. When participants access services, Advocates conduct initial interviews in person and ask the participant to self-report their wellbeing through a variety of specific questions. Because some of the topics may be perceived as sensitive, participants may misrepresent the actual instances of mental health issues, high-risk behaviors, and other challenges. As such, the data presented below should be interpreted with caution.

New Intakes - Adverse Experiences by State Fiscal Year

	SFY 2015 (N=310)	SFY 2016 (N=317)	SFY 2017 (N=290)	SFY 2018 (N=251)	SFY 2019 (N=269)
Past-year mental health assessment (referred or received)	62.1%	63.7%	64.8%	64.5%	62.8%
Past-year substance abuse assessment (referred or received)	23.3%	32.8%	26.2%	20.7%	21.6%
Ever attempted suicide	25.2%	24.0%	29.0%	27.5%	27.5%
Ever inflicted self-harm (non-suicide)	27.5%	28.7%	32.8%	30.3%	32.3%
Past two years homeless	20.0%	21.1%	21.0%	19.1%	23.4%
Past two years incarcerated or detained	37.3%	47.7%	48.9%	46.6%	45.7%
Past two years hurt by significant other	10.7%	10.7%	12.9%	12.0%	12.6%

There are significant differences between females and males in the risk factors reported by new participants in SFY 2019. For example, females reported having attempted suicide at nearly three times the rate of males (41.1% vs. 15.1%). Males, on the other hand, reported receiving (or at least being referred for) a substance abuse assessment considerably more often than females (26.6% vs. 15.5%). Males also reported being incarcerated or detained at over twice the rate of females (61.9% vs. 28.7%). As for the latter, the incarceration rate for this population is impacted by the blended child welfare and juvenile justice system in Iowa and the inclusion of the STS/detention population in the program; a significant portion of older youth in foster care, particularly males, are placed as a result of juvenile delinquency.

New Intakes - Adverse Experiences by Gender

	Female (n=129)	Male (n=139)
Past-year mental health assessment (referred or received)	69.0%	56.8%
Past-year substance abuse assessment (referred or received)	15.5%	26.6%
Ever attempted suicide	41.1%	15.1%
Ever inflicted self-harm (non-suicide)	48.1%	18.0%
Past two years homeless	23.0%	24.0%
Past two years incarcerated or detained	28.7%	61.9%
Past two years hurt by significant other	20.2%	5.8%

Health: Iowa youth exiting foster care are successfully being enrolled in Medicaid; 93.7% of new intakes in SFY 2019 reported Medicaid coverage. Because a majority of participants are prescribed medication for physical or mental health issues (52.0% of new intakes in SFY 2019), continuous and reliable health insurance coverage is critical for this population. The rate of Medicaid participation has increased steadily over the past five years (84.5% in SFY 2015). However, the percentage who report having a primary care physician is much lower (62.5% in SFY 2019) and has not increased in concert with Medicaid participation.

A promising health-related trend is the consistent decrease in reports of tobacco use. Just over one-third (35.7%) of new intakes reported having used tobacco in the prior 30 days. This has steadily decreased since SFY 2016 (42.6%). Another (perhaps less positive) finding of note is an increase in the percentage of new participants reporting the recent use of alcohol to intoxication (past 30 days, five or more drinks in one sitting). Whereas this rate had hovered between 8.0% and 11% in recent years, it jumped to 14.5% in SFY 2019. This change does not represent a prolonged upward trend, but is worth monitoring.

New Intakes - Health Factors by State Fiscal Year

	SFY 2015 (N=310)	SFY 2016 (N=317)	SFY 2017 (N=290)	SFY 2018 (N=251)	SFY 2019 (N=269)
Primary care physician	64.2%	63.7%	56.2%	64.1%	62.5%
Enrolled in Medicaid	84.5%	87.4%	90.3%	92.0%	93.7%
Past year prescription (physical or mental health)	57.7%	60.9%	62.1%	56.6%	52.0%
Past 30 days tobacco	41.3%	42.6%	40.3%	37.5%	35.7%
Past 30 days alcohol to intoxication	8.4%	10.4%	10.7%	8.8%	14.5%

In SFY 2019, 9.7% of all new intakes initiated services as parents. As is the case with adverse experiences, gender disparities are significant in terms of reproductive health among new intakes. Females were more than twice as likely as males to experience being pressured into unsafe sex (55.0% vs. 23.0%) and more than three times as likely to have engaged in “survival sex” in the past two years (10.9% vs. 2.9%). Males were more likely than females to report they “never” use birth control (20.1% vs. 14.0%).

New Intakes - Reproductive Health Factors by Gender

	Female (n=129)	Male (n=139)
Are a parent	10.9%	8.6%
Ever had unintended pregnancy	24.0%	N/A
Never use birth control	14.0%	20.1%
Ever pressured into unsafe sex	55.0%	23.0%
Past two years survival sex	10.9%	2.9%

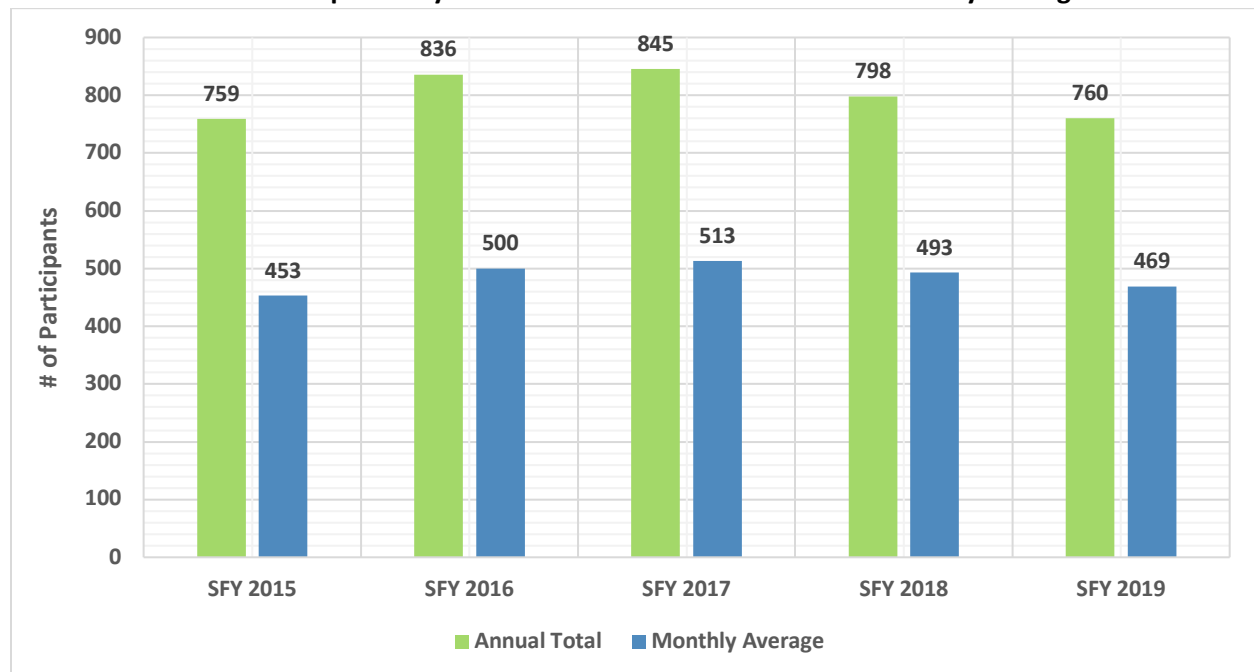
PART II: Characteristics of All Participants Served

A total of 760 young people were served by IASN agencies during SFY 2019, a 4.8% decrease from the previous year. As discussed in Part I, 269 of these participants accessed services for the first time during SFY 2019. On average, 469 young people participated each month.

STS/detention was the last placement of 118 participants (15.5%) served in SFY 2019. On average, 66 of these individuals participated each month.

Aftercare and PAL are voluntary programs, so eligible young adults are able to initiate and discontinue services as they choose. As they move around the state, they may also transfer from one IASN agency to another. For these reasons, young people may have periodic lapses in their participation. Additionally, in a small number of instances, IASN agencies may discontinue services for young people who fail to meet the participant responsibilities established by the program. These young people may re-enter services when they are ready.

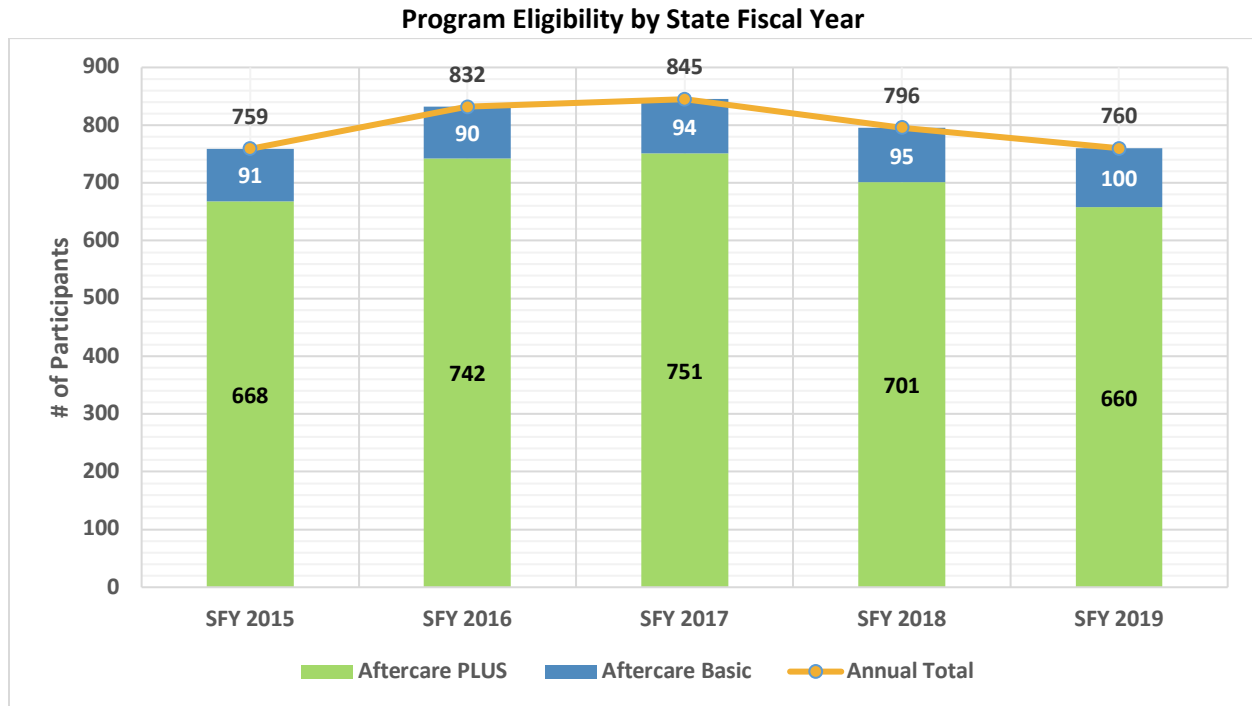
Total Participation by State Fiscal Year - Annual Total vs. Monthly Average



Eligibility Status vs. Participation: IASN categorizes participants as having either “Aftercare Basic” or “Aftercare Plus” status as determined by program eligibility criteria. Because PAL eligibility requirements are more stringent than Aftercare requirements, some participants are eligible for Aftercare but ineligible for PAL. These participants have Aftercare Basic status. This status allows those who will never qualify for PAL benefits (*i.e.* monthly stipend) to receive general Aftercare case management services and support, as well as limited, short-term financial assistance in the form of vendor payments.

Of the 760 participants in SFY 2019, 100 (13.2%) were eligible for Aftercare Basic only. The reasons these individuals were ineligible for Aftercare Plus, and the percentage of participants that account for each reason, are as follows:

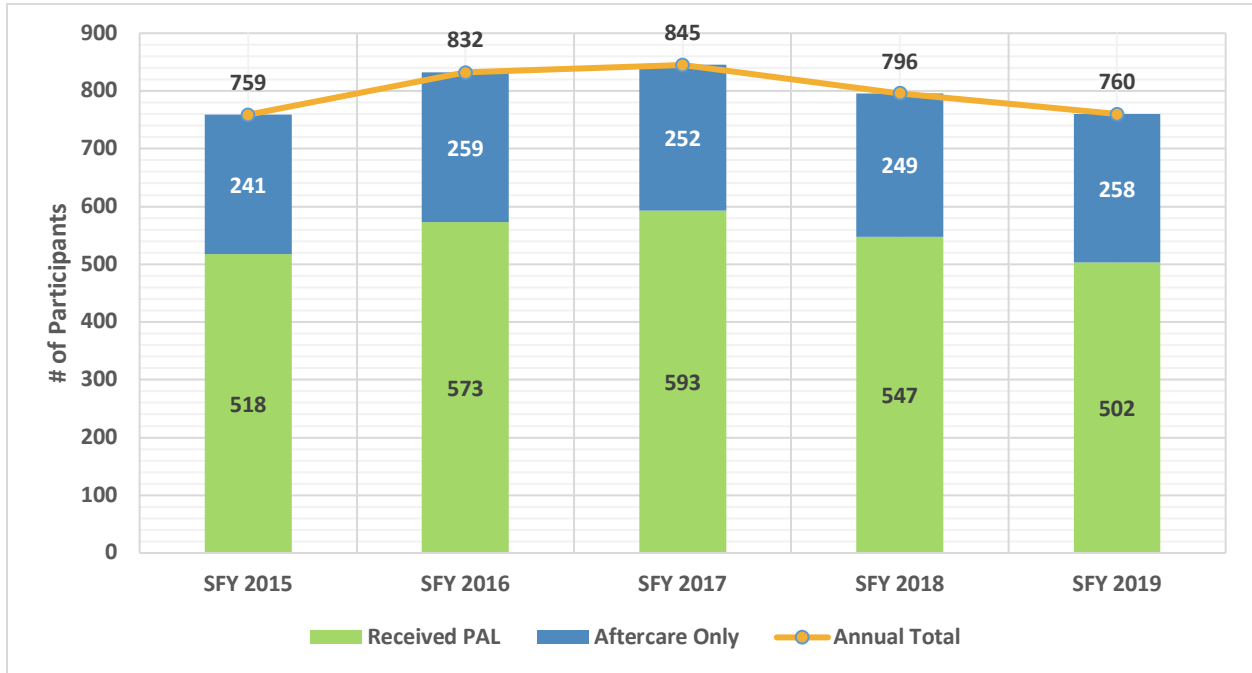
- Left state-paid foster care or STS/detention before their 18th birthday or had not been in placement for six of the twelve months prior to aging out (58.0%)
- Aged out of a “non-licensed relative care” placement (34.0%)
- Were adopted or placed in guardianship after the age of 16 (8.0%)



In total, 258 participants (33.9%) did not receive a PAL stipend for any month during SFY 2019. In addition to the 100 Aftercare Basic participants, this includes 158 individuals who *could* have earned PAL stipends (*i.e.* they met the basic age and foster care exit requirements) but did not because a) they were still eligible for voluntary foster care (under age 20 and have not yet completed high school), b) they were not meeting PAL education, employment, or housing requirements, or c) their income (earned and unearned) was too high to qualify for the needs-based stipend. Many of these youth may qualify for PAL at some point in the future as their circumstances change.

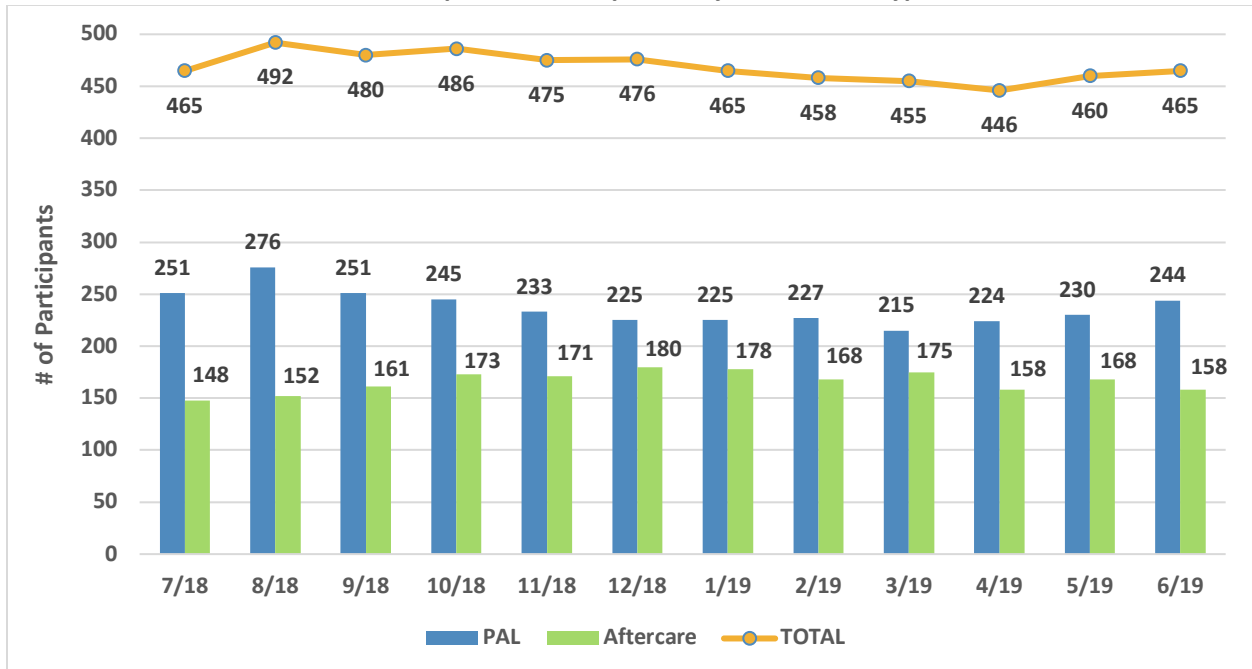
The remaining 502 participants (66.1%) received a PAL stipend for at least one month during SFY 2019. To summarize in another way, 502 out of 660 *potential* PAL stipend recipients (76.1%) earned a stipend for at least one month during the year. Throughout this report, the term “Aftercare only” refers to those who did not earn a PAL stipend. In this part of the report, which shows participation specific to individual years, those who did not earn a PAL stipend are listed as Aftercare only whether or not they had received a stipend in a prior year. In Part III, which shows outcomes for exiting participants, only those who *never* earned a PAL stipend are listed as Aftercare only. In other words, a longtime participant who earned a PAL stipend in SFY 2018 but not SFY 2019 is still included in the PAL group for outcomes analysis.

PAL Recipients by State Fiscal Year



Average Monthly Participation: On average, 469 young people participated in IASN services each month during SFY 2019. Of those, an average of 237 received PAL stipends and 166 received Aftercare only. Average monthly participation in SFY 2019 includes 66 youth from STS/detention (an average of 38 who received PAL and 27 who received Aftercare only). The number being served as Aftercare only versus PAL changes monthly as participants shift between the two.

All Participants - Participation by Month and Type



Participant Demographics: Demographic data recorded from participants at the time of intake includes age, gender, and race/ethnicity. As previously mentioned, most youth first participate at age 18 soon after exiting foster care. At any given time, a roughly equal number of 18, 19 and 20 year olds were participating.

In SFY 2019 61.2% of participants who exited and did not return prior to June 30, 2019, were 21 years old, 15.8% were 20 years old, 17.5% were 19, and the remaining 5.5% were still 18 at their time of exit. Given the voluntary nature of participation, the ability to reinstate services, and historical data, it is likely that many of these 18 to 20-year-olds (38.8% of all exits) will return for services prior to their eligibility ending.

The gender distribution of participation has remained steady since the SFY 2015 shift brought about by the new eligibility of the (predominantly male) STS/detention population. In SFY 2019, 46.6% of participants were female, 52.9% were male, and 0.5% identified as transgender. As mentioned in Part I, the proportion of females initiating services has increased the past two years; if this continues, the overall participant population could reach a female majority for the first time since SYF 2015.

All Participants - Gender Identity

	Total Served (N=760)		Received PAL (n=502)		Aftercare Only (n=258)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Female	354	46.6%	233	46.4%	121	46.9%
Male	402	52.9%	266	53.0%	136	52.7%
Transgender	4	0.5%	3	0.6%	1	0.4%

As in previous years, the majority of participants identified as “White or Caucasian” (74.6%). This includes those who identify as both White alone as well as White and one or more other races. A sizeable percentage identify themselves as “Black or African American” (24.9%), “Multiracial” (13.3%), and “American Indian or Alaska Native” (5.4%). Of all youth served in SFY 2019, 14.1% identified as Hispanic or Latino.

Part I of this report summarizes the racial/ethnic distribution of new intakes in SFY 2019. Altogether, these new intakes identified as “White or Caucasian” at a rate lower than that of the overall participant population (69.1% vs. 74.6%). Instead, higher rates of new intakes identified as “Black or African American” (31.6% vs. 24.9%) and “American Indian or Alaskan Native” (8.6% vs. 5.4%). The questions of whether this increased diversity is a persistent trend, and the degree to which it correlates with the overall population in foster care in Iowa, are worth monitoring.

All Participants - Racial/Ethnic Identity

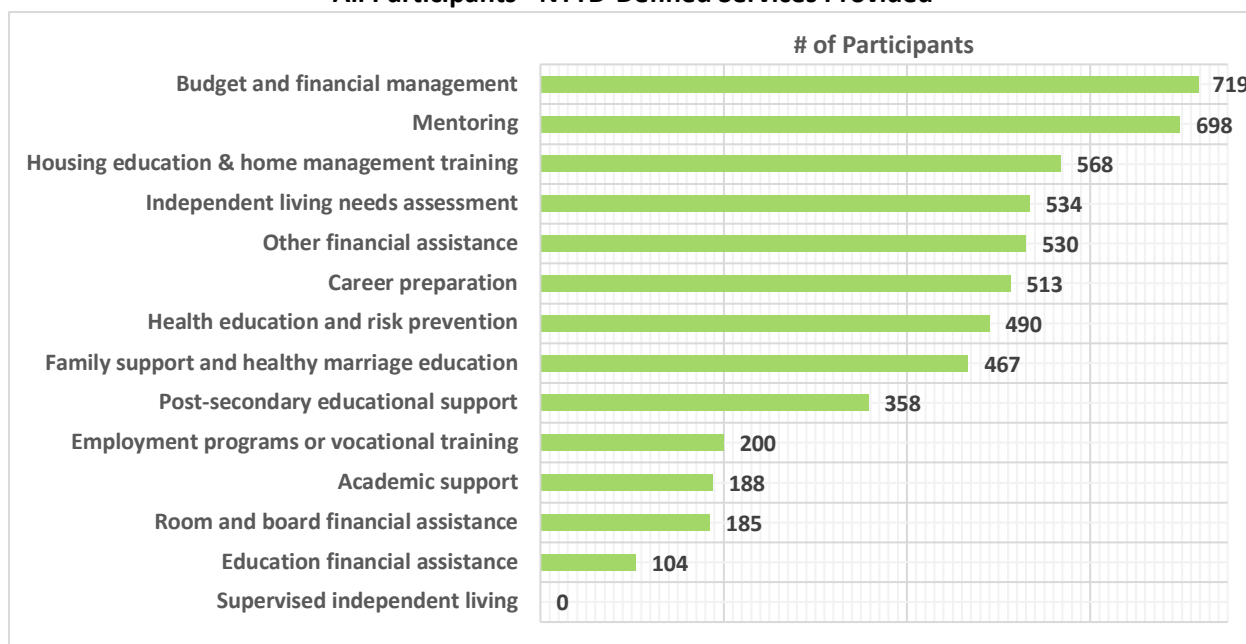
Race	Total Served (N=760)		Received PAL (n=502)		Aftercare Only (n=258)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
American Indian or Alaska Native	41	5.4%	19	3.8%	22	8.5%
Asian	6	0.8%	2	0.4%	4	1.6%
Black or African American	189	24.9%	114	22.7%	75	29.1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	7	0.9%	5	1.0%	2	0.8%
White or Caucasian	567	74.6%	377	75.1%	190	73.6%
Multiracial	101	13.3%	58	11.6%	43	16.7%
Unknown/Declined	10	1.2%	7	1.4%	3	1.2%
Ethnicity						
Hispanic or Latino	107	14.1%	79	15.7%	28	10.9%
Not Hispanic or Latino	640	84.2%	414	82.5%	226	87.6%
Unknown/Declined	13	1.7%	9	1.8%	4	1.6%

Note: because participants can identify with more than one race, total percentages exceed 100%.

Services Provided: Each participant works individually with a Self-Sufficiency Advocate (SSA) that is assigned to them by their IASN agency. These SSAs meet in person with participants (ideally at least twice per month) to assess their needs, help them set goals, identify action steps, and persist until they achieve those goals. SSAs offer support, guidance, and provide a range of information and services according to participants’ unique needs and interests.

IASN tracks the types of services provided to participants to comply with the state’s reporting requirements for the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), and submits monthly reports to DHS detailing services provided based on the NYTD categories. The figure below shows the unduplicated number of youth during the year who received each of the NYTD-defined services at least once.

All Participants - NYTD-Defined Services Provided



Of the 760 youth participating in the Network at any time in SFY 2019, 94.6% received budget and financial management services and 91.8% received mentoring services. This reflects the emphasis on budgeting and financial issues in the program and the mentoring relationship SSAs work to establish with participants. In addition to assessing and helping youth meet basic needs with financial assistance, SSAs also work with youth on housing, health, postsecondary 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. Because NYTD service definitions are very specific, this data may not capture all of the services provided by SSAs.

Mental Health: In SFY 2019, 51.8% of the 760 youth served had been diagnosed with one or more Serious Emotional Disturbances (SED) prior to leaving state-paid care. Of the 394 participants with a reported Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) diagnosis, 41.4% were diagnosed with “Depression or other Depressive disorder”, 39.1% with “Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder”, and 26.7% with “PTSD or Acute Stress Disorder”.

All Participants - SED Status

	Total Served (N=760)		Received PAL (n=502)		Aftercare Only (n=258)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
SED	394	51.8%	256	51.0%	138	53.5%
Non-SED	329	43.3%	221	44.0%	108	41.9%
Unknown	37	4.9%	25	5.0%	12	4.7%

Participants with SEDs by DSM Diagnosis

	Total SED Population (N=394)	
	#	%
Mood Disorders		
Depression or other Depressive Disorder	163	41.4%
Bipolar Disorders	40	10.2%
Other type Mood Disorders	32	8.1%
Anxiety Disorders		
PTSD or Acute Stress Disorder	105	26.7%
Other type Anxiety Disorder	81	20.6%
Behavior Disorders		
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder	154	39.1%
Oppositional Defiant Disorder	69	17.5%
Other type Behavior Disorder	39	9.9%
Miscellaneous		
Personality Disorders	19	4.8%
Eating Disorders	2	0.5%
Dual diagnosis (substance abuse & mental health)	24	6.1%
More than one mental health diagnosis or Other	4	1.0%
Other	80	20.3%

Note: because participants can identify more than one diagnosis, total percentages exceed 100%.

Rent Subsidy: Through a collaboration of the IASN, Iowa DHS, and Iowa Finance Authority, participants are able to access financial assistance through a Rent Subsidy program. The program is designed to help Aftercare participants who are not receiving a PAL stipend meet the cost of housing (see Iowa Administrative Code 265, Chapter 22 for details).

In SFY 2019, an average of 44.5 participants utilized the Rent Subsidy program each month. A total of \$187,852.76 was distributed during the year, or an average of \$15,654.40 a month. Although the majority of Aftercare rent subsidy recipients resided in Polk County (58.0% to 78.4%, depending on the month), young people in 22 counties benefited from the program in SFY 2019.

Participant Exits: As a voluntary program, young people are able to initiate and discontinue IASN services as long as they were between the ages of 18 and 21 and met other eligibility requirements. The transient nature of this population also creates disruptions in services, and many participants enter and exit multiple times. The average duration of participation for all youth exiting services (with or without an interview) in SFY 2019 was 628 days (1.7 years). Because duration is measured as the length between a participant's initial entrance and their most recent exit, the total duration can include lapses in participation.

SSAs work hard to keep participants engaged as long as services are needed, but not all young people accept the services or comply with the requirements of the program. When young people discontinue services, their reason for exiting is documented by their SSA. Exiting participants are asked to complete an exit interview at that time, but not all youth are available or willing to do so.

In SFY 2019, 318 young people exited Aftercare during the year and did not return prior to July 1, 2019. Of these youth, 200 (62.9%) completed an exit interview with an SSA. The remaining 118 (37.1%) exiting youth discontinued services without an interview ("No Interview Exits", or NIX). This represents an increase in the NIX rate from the five-year low of 27.4% in SFY 2018. In the case of NIXs, the reason for exit is documented based on the SSA's knowledge of the participant's circumstances.

The most prevalent reason for discontinuing services in SFY 2019 was participants turning 21 and therefore becoming ineligible for services (37.4%). One in nine exiting participants (11.0%) were exited from services for failing to meet requirements, most frequently due to failing to meet regularly with an SSA or actively work toward self-sufficiency. Another 10.7% of participants voluntarily chose to end services, 6.0% reported moving with plans to transfer to another IASN agency after relocating, and 9.7% reported moving with no agency transfer plans.

PAL participants cited turning 21 as the reason for exit at nearly double the rate of Aftercare only participants (42.7% vs. 21.5%). Conversely, Aftercare only participants were more likely to cite the following as their reason for exit: "Voluntarily exited" (19.0% of Aftercare only vs. 7.9% of PAL), "Didn't meet self-responsibility requirements" (16.5% vs. 9.2%), and "Unknown" (15.2% vs. 6.3%).

All Participants - Exits by Reason

	All Exits (N=318)		PAL Exits (n=239)		Aftercare Only Exits (n=79)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Reached self-sufficiency	7	2.2%	7	2.9%	0	0.0%
Voluntarily exited	34	10.7%	19	7.9%	15	19.0%
Turned 21	119	37.4%	102	42.7%	17	21.5%
Didn't meet self-responsibility requirements	35	11.0%	22	9.2%	13	16.5%
Declined Service, refused exit interview	8	2.5%	6	2.5%	2	2.5%
Moved (non-transfer)	31	9.7%	25	10.5%	6	7.6%
Moved (pending transfer)	19	6.0%	16	6.7%	3	3.8%
Incarcerated	24	7.5%	18	7.5%	6	7.6%
Institutionalized or hospitalized	3	0.9%	3	1.3%	0	0.0%
Joined military	2	0.6%	2	0.8%	0	0.0%
Other	4	1.3%	2	0.8%	2	2.5%
Unknown	27	8.5%	15	6.3%	12	15.2%

While many participants have multiple entries and exits from services, a smaller number never seem to fully engage with the program. In SFY 2019, 27 individuals exited after less than three months of participation and did not return before the end of the fiscal year. This represents 13.5% of all SFY 2019 exits, and just 3.6% of SFY 2019 participants overall. Many of these young people remain eligible to re-enter services. With such a short duration of involvement with an IASN agency, this group of 27 is excluded from the outcomes analysis presented in Part III of this report.

PART III: Participant Outcomes

Iowa's Aftercare and PAL programs were established to assist young people who age out of child welfare or juvenile justice placements 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 IASN 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 intake and discharge interview questions are used to assess participants' progress in these outcome areas.

Several questions from IASN's Core Client Outcomes database provide information organized by outcome area. SFY 2019 data in the following twelve areas (and five-year trend data on select measures) are presented in this part:

- Employment
- Resources to Meet Living Expenses
- Monthly Income
- Financial Capability
- Essential Documents
- Safe and Stable Housing
- Housing Security
- Education
- Positive Relationships
- Children and Parenting
- High Risk Behaviors
- Access to Health Care/Health Insurance Coverage

As in prior years' outcomes analyses, this report compares the original intake data collected when youth first accessed services with the last exit interview data for those youth who exited during SFY 2019 after at least three months of participation and did not return before July 1, 2019. This provides an unduplicated group of 184 young people on whom data is reported for the year. It should be noted that some of the participants included in this analysis may have already returned for services after the close of the fiscal year, or could return if they remain eligible. The report presents aggregate data on all participants meeting these parameters regardless of their last placement, including youth who aged out of STS/detention. This group of 184 participants is referred to as the "outcomes group" in the remainder of the report.

For purposes of this part, PAL participants are those who met PAL eligibility requirements and earned a PAL stipend at any point during their participation. Of the outcomes group, 157 (85.3%) earned a PAL stipend for at least one month while involved in Aftercare. Data is presented for all 184 participants combined, as well as for the 157 PAL participants and 27 Aftercare only participants separately for each of the indicators. Because the Aftercare only sample is quite small, results for this subpopulation may be less reliable and should be interpreted with caution.

Demographics: The average age of the outcomes group was 18.3 at intake and 20.5 at exit. At the time of discharge, 61.2% had reached age 21 and were no longer eligible for services. Just over half (51.5%) identified as male, 48.0% identified as female, and 0.5% as transgender. Of the outcomes group, 56.5% identified as White (Non-Hispanic), 13.6% identified as African American or Black (Non-Hispanic), and 21.7% identified with multiple races. In total, 15.2% identified with Hispanic or Latino ethnicity (regardless of their racial identity).

Duration of Participation: The SFY 2019 outcomes group had an average duration of 804 days (2.2 years) of IASN program involvement. Similar to previous years, 48.6% of this group participated over a period of at least 2.5 years and 67.2% were involved over a period of at least two years. Because duration is measured as the length between a participant’s initial entrance and their most recent exit, the total length can include lapses in participation.

Employment & Finances: The purpose of IASN services is to help participants move toward stability and self-sufficiency as they transition to adulthood. Although there are many moving parts in every young person’s transition to self-sufficiency, regular employment is often a foundational one. With this in mind, it is promising that participants in the SFY 2019 outcomes group showed significant gains in employment. Just 38.6% of the outcomes group reported employment (part-time or full-time) at the time of their initial intake, and 42.9% reported being “unemployed [but] actively seeking employment”. Another 16.3% reported not being in the workforce.

At the time of their exit, 62.5% reported employment of any kind. This includes a tripling of reported employment of 35 or more hours per week from intake to exit (9.2% to 28.8%). As employment increases, the percentage of participants “actively seeking employment” drops (from 42.9% to 17.4%). As was the case at intake, 16.3% still reported not being in the workforce.

Outcomes Group - Employment Status by Interview Type

	All (N=184)		PAL (n=157)		Aftercare Only (n=27)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Employed full-time (35+ hours*)	9.2%	28.8%	10.2%	30.6%	3.7%	18.5%
Employed part-time (25-34 hours)	16.9%	18.5%	17.8%	20.4%	11.1%	7.4%
Employed part-time (1-25 hours)	12.5%	15.2%	12.7%	15.3%	11.1%	14.8%
Unemployed, seeking work	42.9%	17.4%	42.7%	27.0%	44.4%	18.5%
Unemployed, long-term disability	0.5%	1.6%	0.6%	1.3%	0.0%	3.7%
Not in workforce	16.3%	16.3%	14.0%	13.4%	29.6%	33.3%
Other	1.6%	1.6%	1.9%	1.3%	0.0%	3.7%

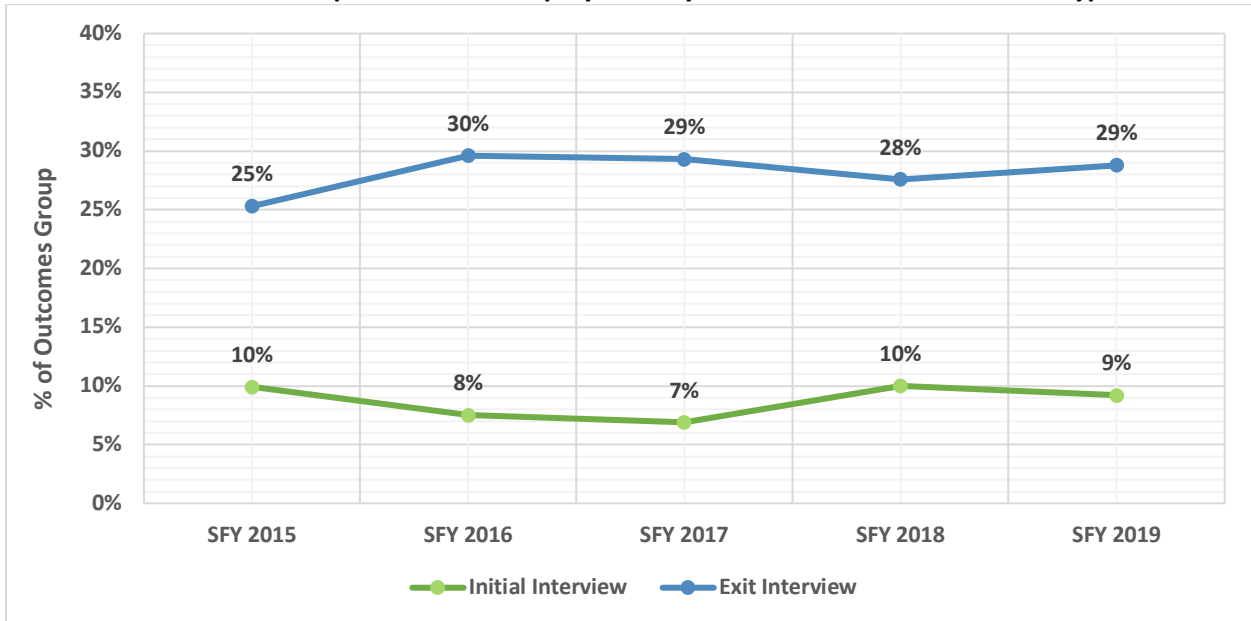
* Employment is measured by respondents’ self-reported average number of hours per week

The tripling of full-time (*i.e.*, 35+ hours per week) employment is consistent over recent years. For the five-year period from SFY 2015-2019, the average rate of full-time employment increased from 8.7% at intake to 28.1% at exit. This has clear implications for economic security as participants transition into adulthood.

The IASN outcomes data compares favorably to national data on employment among youth who have experienced foster care. Nationally, of young adults who were in foster care at age 17, 40% are employed (either full- or part-time) at age 19, and 57% are employed at age 21,³ compared to 62.5% of the FY 2019 outcomes group who were employed full- or part-time at exit from IASN services at or prior to age 21.

³ National Youth in Transition Database, Cohort 2 Outcomes Surveys for FFY 2018 (age 19) and FFY 2018 (age 21), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children’s Bureau. acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/nytd-services-and-outcomes-reports

Outcomes Group - Full-Time* Employment by State Fiscal Year & Interview Type



*Full-time employment is defined here as averaging 35 or more hours per week

Consistently, the majority of new intakes report zero monthly income (not including any public assistance they may be receiving). Nearly two-thirds (63.6%) of new intakes in SFY 2019 reported zero earned income when they first accessed services. Although it is still difficult for many participants to meet their expenses (with earned income alone) by the time they exit, they do report increased monthly earnings. Not only does the proportion of participants with zero monthly income drop significantly (63.6% to 37.0%), participants earning \$800 or more per month more than triples (10.9% to 37.0%).

Outcomes Group - Gross Monthly Income by Interview Type



Despite the gains in employment and income, only 44.0% of exiting participants report having money saved for emergencies. This is an increase from that reported at intake (32.1%), but a much more modest one compared to the gains in employment and monthly income. As for saving money going forward, many exiting participants have the basic tools to do so. At the time of their exit interview, 78.3% had a debit or checking account, 73.4% had a savings account, 63.6% had a Driver’s License, and 42.4% knew their credit score.

As in past years, participants show improvement in both their knowledge of how to obtain important documents and actually having them in their possession. Although the percentage with a Driver’s License increases from intake to exit (36.4% to 63.6%), getting and maintaining a valid driver’s license remains a challenge for many participants. This can be a significant barrier to their educational and employment pursuits, particularly in more rural areas.

Housing: As is true for many young adults, youth who age out of foster care have limited income and rely on friends or family for a place to live until they are able to afford a more independent housing arrangement. As of their initial interview, 63.6% of this year’s outcomes group were living in someone else’s house or apartment and paying “rent or living expenses” unofficially (*i.e.* not on lease); 20.7% of participants either had sole responsibility, or were sharing responsibility, for rent in a house or apartment.

As of their exit interview this group showed major strides in stable housing in terms of being listed on leases or having other “formal housing agreements.” Less than half as many participants reported living in someone else’s house or apartment (63.6% to 31.0%). Participants living in an apartment or house with a formal housing agreement more than doubled (20.7% to 53.8%) from intake to exit.

Outcomes Group - Housing Status by Interview Type

	All (N=184)		PAL (n=157)		Aftercare Only (n=27)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
University housing	3.8%	2.7%	4.5%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Apartment or house (sole responsibility)	9.8%	20.7%	10.2%	21.7%	7.4%	14.8%
Apartment or house (shared responsibility)	10.9%	33.2%	10.8%	35.7%	11.1%	18.5%
Someone else’s apartment or house (paying)	29.9%	18.5%	31.9%	17.2%	18.5%	25.9%
Someone else’s apartment or house (not paying)	33.7%	12.5%	33.1%	12.1%	37.0%	14.8%
Couch surfing (no fixed address)	1.6%	2.2%	1.9%	1.9%	0.0%	3.7%
Transitional facility, shelter, or other supported housing	9.2%	5.4%	6.4%	3.2%	25.9%	18.5%
Street/outdoors	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	1.1%	4.4%	1.3%	4.5%	0.0%	3.7%

Most IASN participants are living with other people, and who they are living with follows similar patterns from year-to-year. At their initial interview, 47.3% of the outcomes group reported living with family members (biological, adoptive, foster, or “other family”); 26.1% reported living with friends or roommates; 7.6% reported living with a spouse or significant other; and 12.5% reported living with no other adults (alone or with child[ren] only).

Consistent with previous years, the number of participants living alone or with a spouse/significant other both increased from intake to exit. Living with family became significantly less common as young people received services and sought greater independence. The percentage of participants living with friends or roommates remained steady; roughly a quarter reported this type of household at both intake and exit (26.1% and 27.2%).

Outcomes Group - Household Status by Interview Type

	All (N=184)		PAL (n=157)		Aftercare Only (n=27)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Former foster family	8.7%	1.1%	10.2%	1.3%	7.4%	0.0%
Adoptive parent/guardian	2.7%	1.1%	1.9%	0.6%	18.5%	3.7%
Biological parent	12.0%	11.4%	10.8%	11.5%	25.9%	11.1%
Other biological family	17.4%	9.8%	15.9%	9.6%	0.0%	11.1%
Other family	6.5%	3.8%	7.6%	3.8%	11.1%	3.7%
Spouse	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0
Significant other	7.6%	22.8%	7.0%	24.2%	11.1%	14.8%
Friends/roommates	26.1%	27.2%	27.4%	25.5%	18.5%	37.0%
Alone/no other adults	12.5%	16.9%	12.7%	17.2%	11.1%	14.8%
Other/Unknown	6.5%	3.8%	6.3%	3.8%	7.4%	3.7%

Several questions are included in exit interviews to assess housing security among participants. Overall, young people report having “safe” housing. At both intake and exit, between 95-100% of participants reported feeling safe in their living arrangement and having a structurally sound home. In other housing areas, there is substantial improvement from intake to exit. For example, the proportion of participants who have their name on a lease nearly doubles from intake to exit (29.4% to 57.6%). Possession of basic household items also increased significantly from intake to exit (53.3% to 87.0%).

Outcomes Group - Housing Factors by Interview Type

	Initial Interview	Exit Interview
Formal housing agreement	41.9%	71.2%
Name on lease	29.4%	57.6%
Owens household items	53.3%	87.0%
Owens keys to home	57.1%	78.8%
Paying for housing	57.1%	76.6%
Less than half of income to rent and utilities	44.6%	57.1%
Up to date with rent and utility payments	52.7%	59.2%
Structurally safe housing	97.8%	97.8%
Feel safe in living arrangement	96.7%	95.1%
Plan to move within a month	37.0%	23.4%

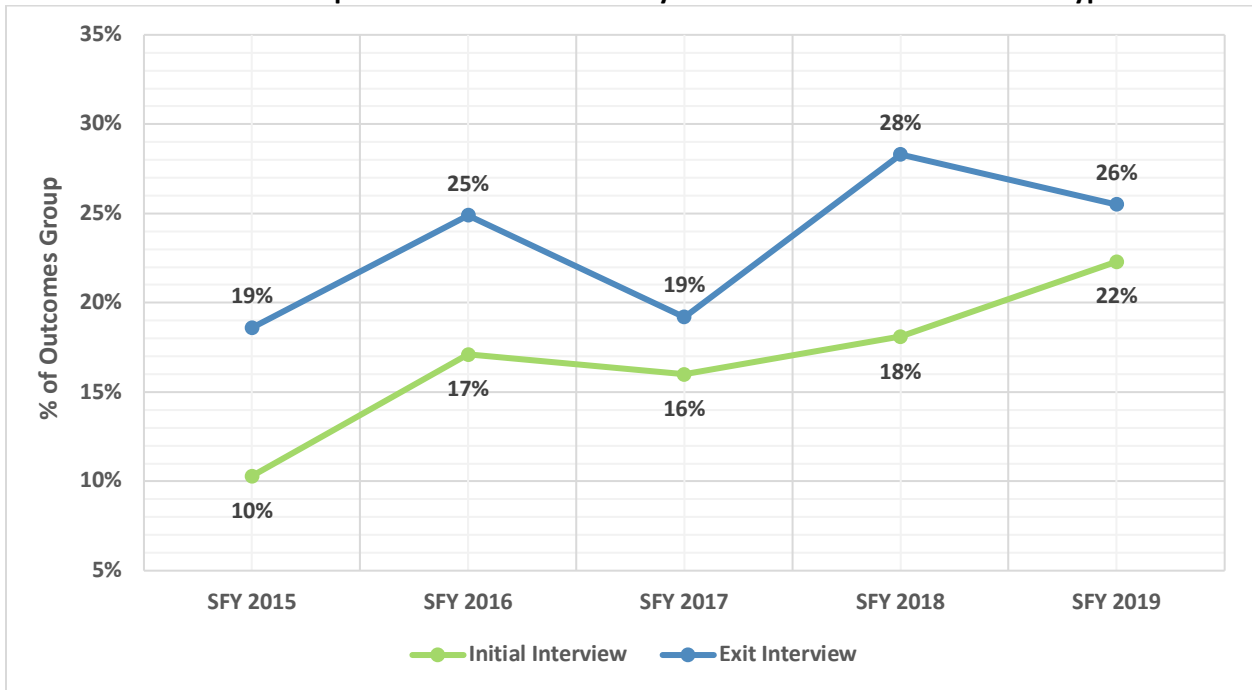
Participants also show gains in their responsibility to pay for housing. From intake to exit, the number of participants reporting no monthly rent responsibility dropped significantly and those reporting \$1 to \$299 dropped slightly. The percentages of those reporting \$300 to \$599 increased substantially (30.4% to 41.9%) and those paying \$600 or more tripled (5.4% to 16.3%).

Outcomes Group - Monthly Rent by Interview Type

	Initial Interview	Exit Interview
\$0	40.2%	20.1%
\$1 to \$299	25.9%	21.2%
\$300 to \$599	30.4%	41.9%
\$600 or more	5.4%	16.3%

Unfortunately, episodes of homelessness are not uncommon among youth who have experienced foster care. While very few young people report living “on the street” at the time of intake or exit from aftercare services, a substantial number of participants reported an episode of homelessness in the past two years at both intake (22.3%) and exit (25.5%). Nationally, 29% of 21-year olds responding to the NYTD survey in FFY 2018 report having been homeless in the prior two years. There are multiple factors contributing to homelessness among this population including economic hardship, family conflict, and systemic barriers to safe and affordable housing.

Outcomes Group - Recent Homelessness by State Fiscal Year and Interview Type



Education: Of the SFY 2019 outcomes group, 69.0% had earned a high school diploma or HiSED prior to initiating services with IASN; 26.1% were attending school (either high school or college) at intake, and their efforts resulted in a significant increase in education attainment. At exit, 84.8% had earned a diploma/HiSED or more. Although both PAL and Aftercare Only participants made gains, Aftercare Only participants lagged behind, at both intake and exit, in terms of both attendance and completion rates.

Participants’ high school/HiSED completion (84.8%) compares favorably to both state and national NYTD survey results. At age 21, 75% of the Iowa sample who responded to the NYTD survey had earned a High School Diploma or equivalent; and 70% of the national NYTD 21-year old sample reported the same (FFY 2018).

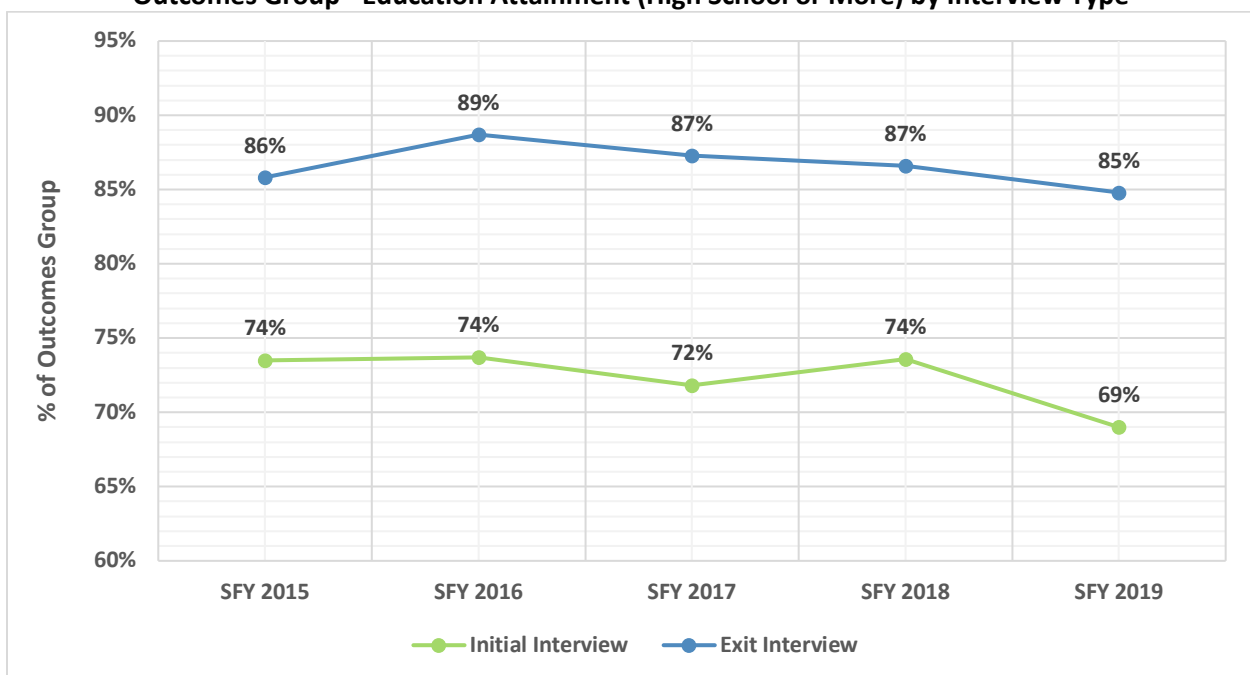
Outcomes Group - Education Attainment by Interview Type

	All (N=184)		PAL (n=157)		Aftercare Only (n=27)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Attending school*	26.1%	21.7%	26.1%	22.3%	25.9%	18.5%
Highest level of education completed						
11 th grade or less	30.4%	14.1%	23.6%	9.6%	70.4%	40.7%
12 th grade	68.5%	62.5%	75.2%	64.3%	29.6%	51.9%
College freshman	0.5%	13.6%	0.6%	15.9%	0.0%	0.0%
College sophomore	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%	6.4%	0.0%	7.4%
College junior	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%
College senior	0.5%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Highest credential earned						
None	31.0%	15.2%	23.6%	10.8%	74.1%	40.7%
GED/HiSED	5.4%	3.8%	5.1%	3.2%	7.4%	7.4%
High School Diploma	63.6%	77.7%	71.3%	82.8%	18.5%	48.2%
Vocational certificate or license	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Associate's Degree	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	3.7%
Bachelor's Degree	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

*Attending school here includes high school/HiSED and postsecondary enrollment combined

At both intake and exit, the SFY 2019 outcomes group had the lowest level of education attainment of the past five years. However, the percentage that earned a credential during their time with an IASN agency (15.8%) was the highest of the past five years. Additionally, because 21.7% of participants were enrolled in school at exit, more education attainment gains may be demonstrated by this group.

Outcomes Group - Education Attainment (High School or More) by Interview Type



Supportive Relationships: Most participants report that they have supportive adults they “will always be able to turn to for support” and guidance at both intake and exit. At exit, 89.1% of the outcomes group reported having at least one adult family member and 92.9% reported having at least one non-family adult to turn to. This suggests that increased permanency may be attainable for former foster care youth if efforts are made to further engage supportive adults in their lives. Aftercare only participants are less likely than PAL participants to have supportive relationships with adults at intake, but also show a larger gain in non-family support by the time they exit (88.9% up to 96.3%).

Outcomes Group - Supportive Adults by Interview Type

	All (N=184)		PAL (n=127)		Aftercare Only (n=27)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Adult family member I will always be able to turn to for support...	84.2%	89.1%	84.7%	91.1%	81.5%	77.8%
Adult, non-family member, I will always be able to turn to for support...	92.4%	92.9%	93.0%	92.4%	88.9%	96.3%

Parenting: When first accessing IASN agency services, 5.4% of this year’s outcomes group were parents. This increased to 21.7% at exit. Despite this significant increase, the percentage at exit is similar to both statewide and nationwide NYTD findings. Among respondents to the FFY 2018 NYTD survey, 27% in Iowa and 23% nationally reported having children at age 21.

Among exiting parents, 74.4% reported having at least partial custody of their child(ren). Throughout the duration of parents’ participation, many Advocates focus on supporting healthy relationships and parenting skill development.

Outcomes Group - Parent Status by Interview Type

	All (N=184)		PAL (n=157)		Aftercare Only (n=27)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Are a parent	5.4%	21.7%	5.1%	21.7%	7.4%	22.2%
Past year birth (self or partner) or currently pregnant	4.4%	16.9%	4.5%	15.9%	3.7%	22.2%
Parents	N=13	N=43	n=11	n=37	n=2	n=6
At least partial custody	53.8%	74.4%	54.6%	73.0%	50.0%	83.3%

High-Risk Behaviors: The prevalence of high-risk behaviors among participants provides insight into their often tumultuous transition to adulthood. However, given the sensitive nature of many of the behaviors they are asked to self-report, caution should be used when interpreting and drawing conclusions from this data.

Along with referrals for mental health assessment and other measures, suicidal ideation rates shed light on the mental health support participants need. At exit, 10.9% of the outcomes group reported having “made plans to commit suicide” in the year prior; 3.8% reported attempting suicide over the same time period.

Tobacco use is persistently high among participants, with 39.1% of the outcomes group indicating past-month use at exit. Alcohol and marijuana use increased significantly from intake to exit. Given the cultural norms around the use of these substances in young adulthood, however, these increases are not unusual for this age group.⁴

Nearly one-third (33.2%) of the outcomes group was incarcerated or detained in the two years prior to their exit. This overall rate is likely inflated by participants whose last placement was STS/detention; even with recidivism set aside, some participants may have simply exited from IASN services within two years of the event that led to their juvenile justice placement. It should also be noted that the related interview question asks whether participants were detained, not whether they were charged or convicted of any crimes. Nonetheless, involvement of this many young people in the criminal justice system is a cause for concern. Further analysis of the circumstances and consequences of this involvement is warranted.

Outcomes Group - High-Risk Behaviors by Interview Type

	All (N=184)		PAL (n=157)		Aftercare Only (n=27)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Suicide						
Past year made plans to commit suicide	9.8%	10.9%	8.3%	10.2%	18.5%	14.8%
Past year attempted suicide	5.4%	3.8%	5.1%	3.2%	7.4%	7.4%
Past 30 day substance use						
Tobacco	37.5%	39.1%	35.0%	40.1%	51.9%	33.3%
Alcohol to Intoxication	8.7%	21.7%	8.9%	21.7%	7.4%	22.2%
Marijuana	10.3%	23.9%	10.8%	24.2%	7.4%	22.2%
Past two years incarcerated or detained	41.9%	33.2%	40.8%	31.2%	48.2%	44.4%

Health Care Coverage: Nearly all participants have health insurance when they exit services. Most participants (97.8%) rely on Medicaid, which is available to youth who age out of foster care until age 26. These young people may also be eligible under other Medicaid coverage groups or government health insurance programs. For example, those that were not in state-paid foster care at the age of 18 do not qualify for the foster care coverage, but may be eligible under other coverage groups.

Outcomes Group - Health Insurance Coverage by Interview Type

	All (N=184)		PAL (n=157)		Aftercare Only (n=27)	
	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit	Initial	Exit
Enrolled in Medicaid	92.9%	97.8%	92.4%	97.5%	96.3%	100.0%
Non-Medicaid Insurance						
Employer provided	0.5%	2.7%	0.6%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Private pay	1.6%	0.5%	1.3%	0.6%	3.7%	0.0%
Other insurance	2.7%	1.6%	1.9%	0.6%	7.4%	7.4%
Uninsured	2.2%	1.1%	2.6%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%

⁴ See National Survey on Drug Use and Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/nationwide-trends>

Conclusion

The story of the Iowa Aftercare Services Network, eighteen years since its inception, and the young adults it has the privilege to serve can be told in three parts. First, IASN participants initiate services as young adults with unique life experiences and often with significant challenges. Many have spent years in a foster care placement, and some have transitioned between multiple placements. They have experienced trauma, including their removal from home itself, and are in various stages in the healing process. Compared to their non-foster care peers, they lag behind in education, employment, and stable housing.

The second part of the story is one of resilience and steady progress of the young adults served by IASN. For instance, with the support of IASN Advocates, many participants stay in school to earn education credentials, and others return to take care of unfinished business. They gain employment experience, increase their hours, and bolster their income. Many earn Driver's Licenses, sign leases, and maintain their health insurance coverage – all milestones in the transition to adulthood. Hundreds of participants engage with their Self-Sufficiency Advocate each month, taking advantage of the support and resources available to this population. They also largely report having supportive adults that will remain in their lives long after their eligibility for IASN services end. These successes are real and worth celebrating -- among participants, IASN staff members and partners, policy makers, and Iowans as a whole.

The third part of the story is that there is work left to do. Too many participants struggle to find and maintain jobs with livable wages. A fair number of them are pursuing higher education, but the vast majority have yet to secure the credentials that will unlock long-term career opportunities. Many struggle to make ends meet and, as of their exit, no longer have supplemental funds (*e.g.* PAL stipends) to help them do so. These stressors are both causes and effects of mental health struggles, substance abuse, unstable housing or intermittent homelessness, and other obstacles to a successful transition. Thankfully, participants' resilience is often as pronounced as the challenges they face.

Cognizant of both the successes and ongoing challenges of this population, in 2019 DHS initiated a revision of the rules that guide the work of IASN to incorporate the knowledge gained through research and program experience over the last several years. The changes, which will be implemented in SFY 2020, provide for a gradual reduction in the monthly financial support available to participants between the ages of 18.5 and 20 to encourage greater self-reliance. At the same time, there will be an opportunity for young people to receive continued support from IASN beyond their 21st birthday if they need it.

About the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa

The Youth Policy Institute of Iowa is a non-profit intermediary that concentrates on improving policies, programs and practices affecting young people transitioning from adolescence to adulthood, especially those who have been involved in Iowa's child welfare or juvenile justice systems. Founded in 2000, YPII embraces the principles of youth engagement, research and data-informed decision-making, and equity and inclusion. Since 2002, YPII has provided policy development, coordination, quality assurance and evaluation support for Iowa's Aftercare Services Network, which serves young adults ages 18-21 who have aged out of foster care or juvenile justice placements.

For More Information:

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6200 Aurora Avenue, Suite 206E
Des Moines, IA 50322
Phone: 515-727-4220

www.ypii.org

www.iowaaftercare.org

Appendix One

Participant Survey Results – SFY 2019

April 2019 (N=389; 93.7% of active participants)



Agency providing services	Percent	Number
American Home Finding Association	3.34%	13
Children's Square	14.40%	56
Family Resources	3.60%	14
Foundation 2	11.57%	45
Four Oaks	16.97%	66
Young House Family Services	2.31%	9
Youth Homes of Mid-America	1.54%	6
YSS – Ames	5.91%	23
YSS – Francis Lauer	5.66%	22
YSS – Hamilton	9.77%	38
YSS – Marshall	6.17%	24
YSS - IHYC	18.77%	73
	<i>answered question</i>	389
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

Participant Characteristics

Gender	Percent	Number
Female	47.99%	179
Male	51.21%	191
Other	0.00%	0
Prefer not to answer	0.80%	3
	<i>answered question</i>	373
	<i>skipped question</i>	16

LGBT+? Orientation	Percent	Number
Yes	11.35%	42
No	84.32%	312
Prefer not to answer	4.32%	16
	<i>answered question</i>	370
	<i>skipped question</i>	19

Iowa Aftercare Services Network – Annual Outcomes Report
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Age	Percent	Number
18	31.00%	115
19	29.38%	109
20	38.27%	142
21*	1.35%	5
<i>answered question</i>		371
<i>skipped question</i>		18

*Eligibility for Aftercare ends at age 21, but active participants who turn 21 and are in the process of exiting services the month of the survey is administered are invited to complete the survey.

Race (multiple selections allowed)	Percent	Number
African American or Black	19.41%	72
Asian	0.54%	2
Hispanic or Latino	8.89%	33
Native American or American Indian	1.35%	5
Pacific Islander	0.54%	2
White	63.07%	234
Multiracial	4.04%	15
Prefer not to answer	0.81%	3
Other (please specify)	1.35%	5
<i>answered question</i>		371
<i>kipped question</i>		18

*Other races identified: African American and Native American/American Indian; Darken White; Italian; and White.

Last placement was State Training School or Detention	Percent	Number
Yes	14.99%	58
No	85.01%	329
<i>answered question</i>		387
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Employment and Education Status

Current Employment Status	Percent	Number
Working 25 or more hours a week	45.84%	171
Working less than 25 hours a week	22.52%	84
Not working - full time student	14.48%	54
Not working or going to school	17.16%	64
	<i>answered question</i>	373
	<i>kipped question</i>	16

Current Enrollment Status	Percent	Number
High School or HS completion program	45.84%	171
College (2- or 4- year degree program)	22.52%	84
Career, trade, technical or certificate program	14.48%	54
Not currently enrolled in education	17.16%	64
	<i>answered question</i>	373
	<i>kipped question</i>	16

Outcome Questions

Last month, did you have enough money and other resources to cover your expenses? (Including earnings, money from PAL, vendor payments, and any other assistance.)	Percent	Number
Yes	77.27%	289
No	19.25%	72
Not sure	3.48%	13
	<i>answered question</i>	374
	<i>skipped question</i>	15

Do you have a safe and stable place to live?	Percent	Number
Yes	97.86%	366
No	2.14%	8
	<i>answered question</i>	374
	<i>skipped question</i>	15

Do you have positive personal relationships with at least one adult in the community?	Percent	Number
Yes	99.47%	372
No	0.53%	2
	<i>answered question</i>	374
	<i>skipped question</i>	15

Self-Sufficiency Advocate Performance

Overall, how helpful are meetings with your current Advocate to you? Rate on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not helpful and 10 being extremely helpful to you.	Percent	Number
1	0	0
2	.27%	1
3	.27%	1
4	.27%	1
5	1.34%	5
6	1.88%	7
7	6.45%	24
8	10.75%	40
9	15.05%	56
10	63.71%	237
average rating		9.24
<i>answered question</i>		372
<i>skipped question</i>		17

Overall, how helpful is Aftercare to you? Rate on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being not helpful at all and 10 being extremely helpful to you.	Percent	Number
1	1.08%	4
2	.27%	1
3	0	0
4	.27%	1
5	1.62%	6
6	2.43%	9
7	5.66%	21
8	8.89%	33
9	11.05%	41
10	68.73%	255
average rating		9.23
<i>answered question</i>		371
<i>skipped question</i>		18

Does meeting with or talking to your current Advocate help you feel hopeful (or more hopeful) about your future?	Percent	Number
Almost always	77.27%	289
Sometimes	21.66%	81
Not really	1.07%	4
<i>answered question</i>		374
<i>skipped question</i>		15

Appendix Two

SFY 2019 Required Performance Measures Originally Submitted to Iowa DHS July 13, 2018

Section 1.3.4.2 of the Department of Human Services contract for the Iowa Aftercare Services Network establishes an incentive plan based on outcomes achieved. This section reads, in part, as follows:

The Contractor's achievement of performance measures will be a factor of compensation, via potential annual performance payments. An amount equal to 3% of the annual direct services budget (Aftercare Program budget excluding direct payments to Participants and administrative costs), is payable at Agency discretion annually after the Agency confirms the Contractor's successful completion and reporting of performance measures in Section 1.3.2.1 Performance Measures.

a. Outcomes Achieved:

- i. At least 65 percent of participants will have resources to meet their living expenses.*
- ii. At least 80 percent of participants will have a safe and stable place to live.*
- iii. At least 90 percent of participants will, by self-report, have positive personal relationships with at least one adult in the community.*

The primary source of data to determine if these performance measures were met is the participant satisfaction survey that is completed by all active participants in April. The survey, which includes questions specific to the performance measures, was completed by 389 youth in April 2019, representing 93.7% of active participants that month. The results of the FY 2019 survey are presented below.

Outcomes Achieved	
Do you have enough resources to meet your living expenses?	
YES – Target 65%	77.3%
No	19.3%
Not sure	3.5%
Do you have a safe and stable place to live?	
YES – Target 80%	97.9%
No	2.1%
Do you have positive personal relationships with adults in the community?	
YES – Target 90%	99.5%
No	0.5%

Based on the satisfaction surveys completed during the fiscal year, the Network achieved the desired performance based on this data source, which represents the conditions while youth are receiving services from the Network.

In addition, the outcomes achieved for the incentive performance measures are confirmed by examining data from interviews with participants who exited the program during the fiscal year and completed an exit interview after at least three months of service and did not return to services prior to the end of the

fiscal year. In SFY 2019, there were 182 youth that met these criteria⁵. The following three questions are used to assess the achievement of the exit outcomes:

1. Do you have enough money to cover your needed expenses with your income and other assistance? (Response Options - Yes or No)
2. Where are you living? (Multiple response options, with university housing or any of three options where youth is paying rent or living with someone else considered as meeting the safely housed performance measure)
3. Do you have an adult other than a family member that you will always be able to turn to for support, advice, share or celebrate personal achievements, help solve problems? (Response Options - Yes or No)

Responses to these questions on 182 exit interviews between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019 are shown in the table below:

Outcomes Achieved	Number	Percent
Do you have enough money to cover your needed expenses with your income and other assistance?		
YES – Target 65%	128	70.3%
No	53	29.1%
Where are you living?		
University housing	5	2.8%
Apartment or house – sole responsibility for rent	38	20.9%
Apartment or house – shared responsibility for rent	60	33.0%
Living in someone else’s home (may or may not be contributing to rent or expenses)	56	30.8%
SUBTOTAL – SAFELY HOUSED – Target 80%	159	87.4%
Couch surfing or moving from house to house	4	2.2%
Transitional facility, shelter, or other supported housing	10	5.5%
Other	8	4.4%
Do you have an adult other than a family member that you will always be able to turn to for support, advice, share or celebrate personal achievements, help solve problems?		
YES – Target 90%	170	93.4%
No	11	6.0%

Based on this analysis, the exit interviews also show that minimum thresholds on all three performance measures were exceeded by the Network in SFY 2019.

⁵ Unlike the rest of the annual report, SFY 2019 outcome data in this Appendix is preliminary due to its prior submission to Iowa DHS.