About Aftercare

The Iowa Aftercare Services Network (IASN) provides services statewide to eligible youth ages 18 to 21 who have aged out of foster care or other court-ordered placements. Young people participate voluntarily. Aftercare is designed to help participants make the connections and develop the skills they need to successfully transition to adulthood. Aftercare’s Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) component provides monthly financial support to qualifying youth who are working or pursuing education or training.

Key Indicators

The Aftercare Network monitors and is held accountable to achieving three important performance measures. The results shown below are based on a Participant Survey of 389 Aftercare participants conducted in April 2019, one method used by Aftercare to monitor outcomes.

New Participants by County

Young people accessed Aftercare services in 66 counties in SFY 2019. Five counties had 10 or more new participants, representing 44% of the young people who were served for the first time during the year, while 31 counties had just one new participant.

Key Indicators:

- **Supportive Relationships**: 99.5%
  - Participants surveyed report having positive personal relationships with adults in their community.
- **Stable Housing**: 97.9%
  - Survey results demonstrate youth have a safe and stable place to live.
- **Sufficient Resources**: 73.3%
  - Youth report having enough resources for living expenses.
This summary highlights the outcomes demonstrated from intake to exit by 184 foster youth who participated in Aftercare and ended services during the year. Gains in education attainment, employment, secure housing, and assuming adult responsibilities reflect important steps in their transition to adulthood. Yet, despite significant progress, these young adults continue to lag behind their non-foster care peers in several important respects.

### Education
Youth who enter Aftercare without a high school credential are likely to earn one while receiving services. Fewer than 5%, however, complete a post-secondary degree or certificate program by the time they exit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intake</th>
<th>Exit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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**High School Credential**
While Aftercare youth show academic gains, they still fall short of the Iowa 5-year graduation rate of 93%.

### Postsecondary Enrollment
At both intake and exit, roughly one in four participants were enrolled in school (secondary or postsecondary). At exit, a much higher percentage of young women (27%) were enrolled than young men (18%).

### Housing
When home is disrupted, one’s foundation of safety and security is disrupted, and everything else becomes more difficult to maintain. Finding affordable housing is a challenge for many youth.

#### Pays for Housing
As they seek greater independence, youth become more responsible for their housing costs.

- **Intake**: 57%
- **Exit**: 77%

#### Homelessness
One in four (26%) reported an episode of homelessness in the two years prior to their exit from Aftercare.

#### Uncertainties
43% of participants reported at exit they are spending at least half of their income on rent and utilities.

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**760** young people served in 2019  
**269** young people accessed Aftercare for the first time  
**16** median days between exit from last placement and entry to Aftercare
502 participants received a PAL stipend at least once

469 young people served per month on average

Employment
Employment gains from intake to exit are significant, including a tripling in full-time (35+ hours per week) employment (9% to 29%). But exiting participants are less likely to be working than other young adults in Iowa.

Full Time or Part Time Employment
Of all Iowans ages 20-24, 75% are employed. (BLS, 2018)

39% Intake
63% Exit

Earnings & Savings
Despite the increase in employment from intake to exit, only 37% of participants were earning $800 or more per month at exit and only 44% report having money saved for emergencies.

Adult Responsibilities
IASN participants, like other young adults, take on more personal responsibility as they transition to adulthood. These milestones show they are making headway toward independence.

Has health insurance
Intake 98%
Exit 99%

Owns basic household items
Intake 53%
Exit 87%

Has name on lease
Intake 29%
Exit 58%

Has a Driver’s License
Intake 36%
Exit 64%

Is a parent
Intake 5%
Exit 22%

The efforts of participants and of the Aftercare Advocates who work with them result in meaningful movement towards self-sufficiency. Young people who age-out of foster care without a permanent family and support network, however, continue to face challenges as they navigate the transition to adulthood. While we celebrate their hard-earned achievements, we also acknowledge that their journey toward economic security and well-being is just beginning.
Investing in their future

State appropriations and a portion of the state’s federal Chafee allotment are contracted by the Iowa Department of Human Services for the IASN to operate the Aftercare program statewide.

Aftercare provides an array of supports and services as it works individually with each participant as they transition to adulthood. Aftercare served 760 young people in SFY 2019.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th># served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting &amp; Money Management</td>
<td>719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing &amp; Education</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Living Needs Assessment</td>
<td>534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment &amp; Career Preparation</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Education &amp; Risk Prevention</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice with Healthy Relationships</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary Education &amp; Support</td>
<td>358</td>
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</tbody>
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This Summary was prepared by the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa (YPII). YPII provides policy development, coordination, quality assurance, marketing and evaluation services for the IASN. Visit iowaaftercare.org/ProgramResults to access the 2019 Annual Outcomes Report or call 515.727.4220 for more information.

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