

Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency  
2016 Housing Summit  
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Oklahoma Department of Human Services:  
Office of Planning, Research and Statistics  
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# Youth Transition in Foster Care

**CHILD WELFARE SERVICES**

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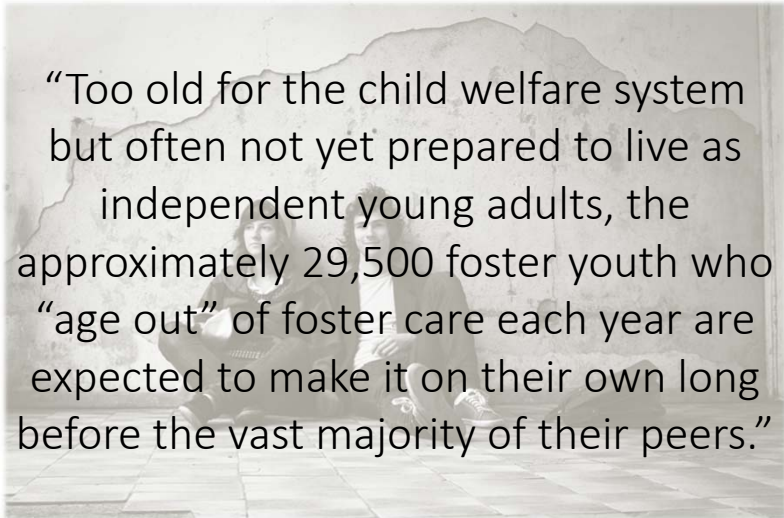
## Background



The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 created the John Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP), giving states more funding and greater flexibility in providing support to youth making the transition to independent living.

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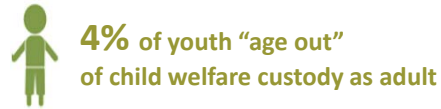
## Midwest Study: Outcomes at 21



“Too old for the child welfare system but often not yet prepared to live as independent young adults, the approximately 29,500 foster youth who “age out” of foster care each year are expected to make it on their own long before the vast majority of their peers.”

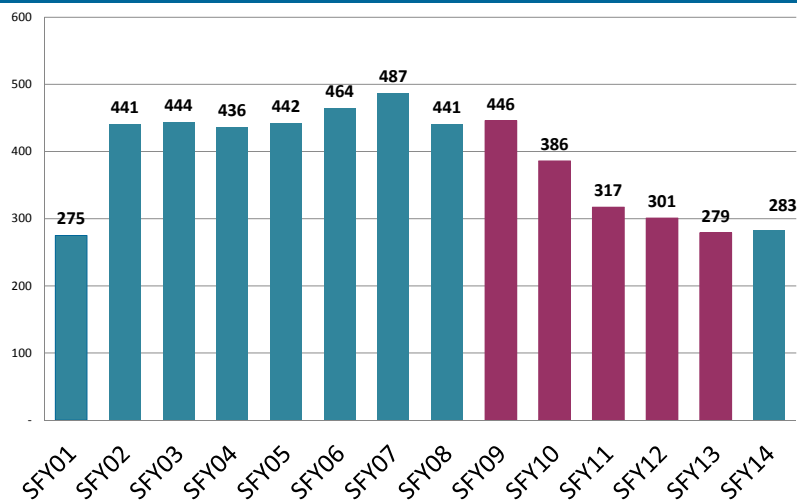
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## Child Welfare Exits in Oklahoma



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## Trends: Number of Youth Aging out of Child Welfare Custody in Oklahoma



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## Oklahoma: Foster Care and Homelessness

- In **Oklahoma** 30% of 19 year-olds who had exited foster care reported having been homeless at least once within the last two years (NYTD 2013).
- In **OKC**, 22% of homeless adults report having foster care experience (Point in Time Data 2014).
- In **Tulsa**, 10% of homeless adults report having foster care experience (Point in Time Data 2014).



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## Oklahoma: Foster Care and Other Outcomes at 19 (NYTD 2013)

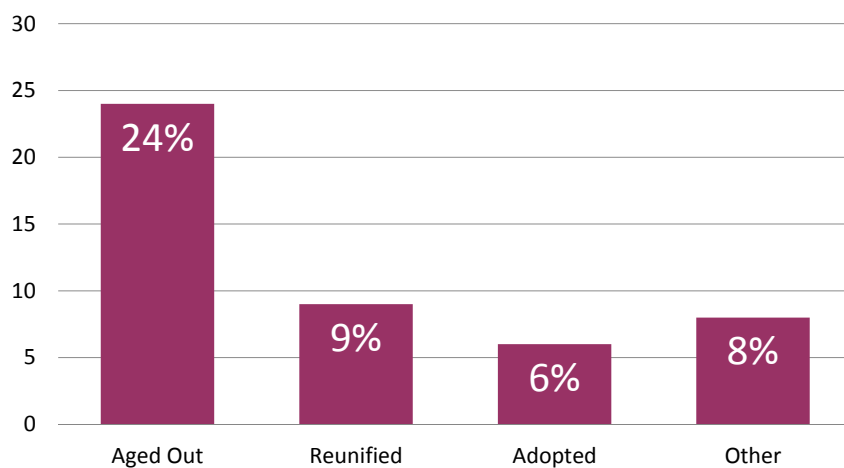
- **Education:**
  - 30% have not completed a HSD/GED
- **Employment:**
  - 47% were not working PTE or FTE
- **Healthy Connections:**
  - 8% did not report a current positive connection to an adult
- **Social and Emotional Well-being (last two years):**
  - 8% report having children
  - 7% report having been incarcerated
  - 6% report a substance abuse referral

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## How the profile of youth who have experienced homelessness is different from those who have not

- 1,639 youth exited Oklahoma child welfare system from 2009 through 2013 without permanency.
- Through various administrative data sources we were able to identify 415 youth who experienced homelessness (25.3% of the 1,639) after they exited foster care.
- In this section we will **first** review the profile of the youth who experienced homelessness (n1=415) and will **then** do a comparative analysis of these youth with a group of the 1,639 youth who, according to our records, have not experienced homelessness (n2=677).

## Sample II Cont.: Homelessness by Exit Type



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## Stakeholder Informed Approach

**Strengths**

**Gaps and Barriers**

**Recommendations**

**Spring-Fall 2014**

- >80 Key Informant & Stakeholder interviews with 59 partners representing:
  - OKDHS
  - Housing and homelessness services
  - Youth serving organizations/programs
  - Community members

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## Key Informant Interviews

**Strengths**

**Gaps and Barriers**

- DHS/IL services/NRCYS/Yes I Can
- Homeless services and youth services available in the community
- Community awareness and collaborative efforts to address homelessness
- Higher education funding and support
- Homeless Services Coordinator in Public Schools

- Lack of consistent IL and transition services
- Lack of permanency/placement stability
- Deficiencies with DHS policy and practice
- Lack of housing options after exiting child welfare
- Community services not designed for transition age youth
- Poor education outcomes

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## Recommendations

Housing

- Create a continuum of housing options including transitional and permanent supportive housing
- Utilize housing resources, such as Section 8 and Youth Housing Subsidy
- Increase number of private landlords willing to rent to youth
- Support community in developing emergency shelter and drop-in services for youth and young adults
- Develop housing options for young adults attending college during college breaks and holidays

Education

- Address barriers to high school graduation or GED completion
- Increase access to and create partnerships with vocational schools
- Support young adults to succeed in post-secondary education

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## Recommendations

Employment

- Support young adults to succeed in post-secondary education
- Develop paid internship program
- Develop partnership with Workforce and Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)
- Develop relationships with local businesses to provide employment based mentoring

Well-Being

- Increase collaboration with the Oklahoma Healthy Transitions Initiative/Systems of Care
- Develop programs that are attractive to youth and include youth in decisions about mental health care
- Target recruitment of placements willing to foster and/or adopt transition age youth
- Connect young adults to the adult mental health system

Healthy Connections

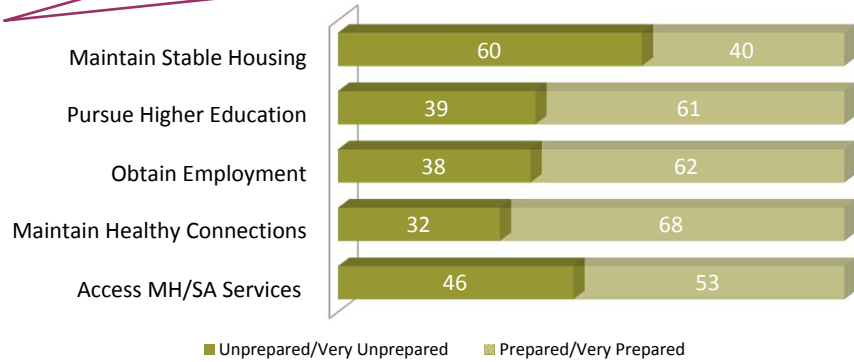
- Create opportunities for youth to connect with family members, positive adults, and peers
- Increase access to mentoring programs
- Develop peer support services

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# Child Welfare Worker Survey

234 child welfare permanency planning workers

How prepared do you believe youth who “age out” of the foster care system are to.....?



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## Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

DHS AGING SERVICES

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## Grandfamilies.org

- One of the most critical access issues for grandparents and other relatives and the children they raise is the lack of affordable housing.

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Although housing is an issue for many Americans, grandparent and other relative caregivers face certain unique barriers:

- They frequently take on caregiving responsibilities with absolutely no warning, let alone with 9 months to plan.
- Many of these caregivers live on fixed incomes and/or in small apartments and houses that are not suitable for children.
- They may no longer be able to afford their apartments or houses after assuming the extra expenses of raising children.
- Many caregivers are physically unable to walk stairs with children and strollers.

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Although housing is an issue for many Americans, grandparent and other relative caregivers face certain unique barriers:

- If they live in senior housing where children are often not allowed, they may be subject to eviction if the children are discovered.
- The presence of additional children may violate their private lease agreements.
- If they do not have legal custody of the children, they are frequently unable to convince the housing authorities to recognize their need for larger apartments.

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## Grandfamilies: Dorchester

- In 1998, the first housing program for grandparents raising grandchildren, known as GrandFamilies House, opened in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Many lessons were learned from this pioneer and seven years later, in 2005, the first new ground-up construction for grandparents raising grandchildren started serving families in the South Bronx, New York.

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## Grandfamilies: the Bronx

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## GrandParent Family Apartments

- 50 apartments (40 two-bedroom and 10 three-bedroom) in a six-story, 66,470 square-foot building.
- The apartments and building are designed to respond to the needs of older caregivers, youth, and children.
- Design elements include
  - wide hallways,
  - emergency buzzers in each unit,
  - handrails in the bathrooms and hallways,
  - laundry facilities on each floor, and
  - extensive community space with separate rooms for caregivers, youth, and young children.

Comprehensive on-site services are available, including educational before- and after-school activities, support groups, and case management.

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## Demonstration Projects

- In December 2008, two demonstration grants were awarded to expand “intergenerational” housing for grandparents or other relatives aged 62 or more who are raising child(ren).
- The age limitation exists because these grant funds are available under the federal elderly housing program, known as section 202.
- HUD awarded a total of \$3,906,964 to a demonstration project in urban Chicago and another in rural Tennessee.

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## Demonstration Projects

- The Chicago development opened during the fall of 2011 and has 10 units consisting of three and four bedrooms that can serve up to 34 residents.
- The Smithville, TN development opened in the spring of 2011 and has nine two-bedroom units plus a manager’s unit for up to 20 residents.
- Both projects provide a range of supportive services on site that are tailored to meet the needs of seniors, children, and the families as a whole.

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## Demonstration Projects

- What about Oklahoma?

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