Road to Independence Network

**Alisa West Cahill LSW-Admin**
Road to Independence  
Research Assistant  
Department of Human Services

**Susan Kee MSW**
Road to Independence  
Program Representative-Tulsa  
Department of Human Services

**Rachel Dorsett BSW**
Road to Independence  
Program Representative-OKC  
Department of Human Services
Foster Care Experience and Homelessness

Nationally, 3 out of 10 homeless adults report having foster care experience*

In Oklahoma City, 22% of unsheltered and chronically homeless adults report having foster care experience**

In Tulsa, 10% of homeless adults report having foster care experience***

* National Alliance to End Homelessness
** 2014 OKC Homeless Alliance Spring Registry
*** 2014 Tulsa City-County Point in Time Survey
Homelessness Among Oklahoma Youth with Foster Care Experience

Population of Focus

- Youth Who Aged Out 09-13: 1,639
- Youth Who Have Not Experienced Homelessness: 1,372
- Youth Who Have Experienced Homelessness: 267

Sources: KIDS, NYTD Cohort 1 Follow-up, AFS, YST
Research Questions

• What is the risk profile and demographic characteristics of youth leaving foster care without permanency?

• What are significant risk factors that predict homelessness among youth formerly placed in foster care?

• Do IL services in general reduce the risk of homelessness?

• Are there specific services within IL that are more effective than others in reducing homelessness?

• Does the availability of IL services match the need for services of youth most at risk of homelessness?
Data Sources

Quantitative:
• Department of Human Services
  – SACWIS (KIDS)/Chapin Hall
  – NYTD Cohort 1 at baseline & follow-up
  – Adult and Family Services
    • SNAP, Child Care Subsidies, TANF
  – Child Support Enforcement
• Office of Juvenile Affairs
• Department of Corrections
• Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
• Youth Services of Tulsa
  – Transitional Living Program, Emergency Shelter, Basic Center, Street Outreach, Drop-In

Qualitative:
• >80 Key Informant & Stakeholder interviews with 59 partners representing:
  – OKDHS, housing and homelessness services, other organizations/programs, and community members
• 13 focus groups with youth
  – 8 with youth currently living in congregate care
  – 3 with youth receiving ETV
  – 2 with youth in a TLP
• 234 child welfare worker surveys
Quantitative Data Analysis
Risk Factor Roadmap

• Midwest Study
  – At least 1 runaway episode from foster care
  – Each additional placement
  – Each additional delinquent behavior
  – Symptoms of a mental health disorder
  – Being male
  – Physical abuse prior to entry into care
Oklahoma Youth Leaving Foster Care by “Aging Out”

Source: KIDS
### OK Youth Who Exited Foster Care: Outcomes at 19 years of age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Connection to an Adult</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed HSD or GED</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Medicaid</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time or Full-time Employment</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in &amp; Attending School</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced Homelessness**</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received Employment Related Training*</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Public Food Assistance</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Financial Assistance for...</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Social Security Payments</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Public Housing Assistance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having Children**</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarceration**</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Referral**</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received a Vocational License or Certificate</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NYTD Cohort 1 Follow-up. * denotes within the last year; ** denotes within the last two years
Analysis of Foster Youth in Transition: Bivariate comparisons while in care

Independent samples tests show that the difference between groups for four of the above variables are statistically significant. * p<.05, ** p<.001
Analysis of Foster Youth in Transition: Bivariate comparisons after exiting care

Sample of 1,372 Aging Out Youth without a history of homelessness (Source: NYTD, AFS, CSE,...

Sample of 267 Aging Out Youth with Homelessness Experience (Source: NYTD Follow-up, AFS,...

Independent samples tests show that the difference between groups for two of the above variables are statistically significant. * p<.05, ** p<.001
The odds of becoming homeless are:

- 3 times higher for those who received some form of public aid than those who did not
- 2.5 times higher for those who exited care from a shelter compared to those in a traditional foster home
- 2 times higher for those who received IL services (Yes I Can/ETV) after exit than those who did not
- 1.5 times higher for those who had some form of juvenile justice exposure than those who did not
- 1.5 times higher for those who exited care from a moderate to high group home compared to those in a traditional foster home
Qualitative Data Analysis
### Youth Focus Groups

**What has been helpful in preparing you?**

- IL Seminars/Information
- Teen Conference
- Group Home IL Services
- Education Specialists
- Mentors
- Permanent Connections
# Youth Focus Groups

## What worries you most about turning 18?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not having someone to call if I need something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not having enough money for housing and food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowing enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not having a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having nowhere to go</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Youth Focus Groups

**What did you not receive that would have been helpful?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Options”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to practice Life Skills with practical application</td>
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<tr>
<td>Normalcy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More foster homes and placements for teens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving youth a voice in their case planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping youth get essential documents like Driver’s License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time with Child Welfare workers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Child Welfare Worker Survey

234 Child Welfare workers completed the survey.

Questions centered around:
- Worker demographics
- Experience working with youth
- Training
- Service utilization
- Worker’s perception about youth’s readiness to transition out of foster care

Workers were asked to rate how prepared they think youth are to achieve the outcomes outlined in the grant when they exit foster care.

60% of workers responded that youth are “unprepared” or “very unprepared” to secure safe and stable housing when exiting foster care.
What services and resources do you think would be helpful for **YOUTH** in foster care as they transition into adulthood?

1. More Life Skills Seminars (Money Management, Relationship Skills, etc.)
2. More housing and placement options
3. Mentoring
4. More partnership and community awareness about the needs of foster youth
Child Welfare Worker Survey

As a worker, what would help **YOU** be more successful in preparing youth for transition into adulthood?

1. Training
2. More time with youth
3. More knowledge about and access to available resources
4. IL specific workers/units
5. More housing and placement options for youth and young adults

**Other suggestions:** IL services beginning at a younger age, more IL activities in rural areas, addressing AWOL issues
Gaps in Services

• Poor discharge planning by DHS
• DHS practice not following policy
• Too many youth emancipating without achieving permanency
• Lack of knowledge about available community resources
• Youth exiting care are resistant to services from DHS
Gaps in Services

• Lack of supported housing options

• Lack of landlords who are willing to rent to young people exiting foster care

• Poor educational outcomes of youth

• Placement instability while in foster care

• Limitations of Yes-I-Can
Next Steps

• Further inclusion and breakdown of data
• Data analysis of youth 14-17 currently in care and young adults 18-21 who are currently homeless and have a history of foster care
• Development of strategic plan
• Assessment tool to determine youth most at-risk
• Community Readiness Assessment
• Decisions around outcome model
Next Steps: Title IV-E

- Investigating Title IV-E
- Cost analysis of extending versus not extending foster care to the community
- Legislation
- DHS IV-E plan
Contact Information

Rachel Dorsett, BSW
Road to Independence
Program Representative- Oklahoma City
(405) 522-3911
Rachel.Dorsett@okdhs.org

Susan Kee, MSW
Road to Independence
Program Field Representative- Tulsa
(918) 794-7502
Susan.Kee@okdhs.org

Alisa West Cahill, LSW-Admin
Road to Independence
Research Assistant
Alisa.Cahill@okdhs.org