



Youth Policy Institute of Iowa Releases Annual Outcomes for Iowa Aftercare Participants

Des Moines, Iowa – October 9, 2014 – The [Youth Policy Institute of Iowa](http://www.ypii.org) has released its annual report on the outcomes of services provided by the [Iowa Aftercare Services Network](http://www.iasn.org) (IASN). The Network has offered individualized services and financial support to young people who age-out of Iowa’s foster care system since 2002.

Without positive family and adult supports, these emerging adults frequently struggle to find a place to live, to continue their education, or to find a job and start a career. Past trauma, continuing mental and physical health challenges, interruptions in education and lack of opportunities to develop basic life skills create barriers to a successful transition to adulthood. The Iowa Aftercare Services Network provides services and supports on a voluntary basis to approximately 700 of these young adults each year.

“Many of these young adults lack the support of a stable family or social network, and are often ill-equipped to handle the everyday challenges of adult life on their own,” says Joanie Havel, Iowa Aftercare Services Network Statewide Coordinator. “Unfortunately, even the most capable of these young adults are still extremely vulnerable to poor outcomes.”

Of the 151 young people served by the Aftercare Services Network in SFY 2014 who exited services and completed an exit interview, two-thirds were age 21, and therefore no longer eligible for support. On average, exiting youth participated in services for just over two years. During this time, the participants showed the following progress:

- Among exiting participants, 93.4% had earned at least a high school diploma or its equivalent, compared to 74.8% of the same youth at intake.
- Full-time employment increased from 23.8% at intake to 39.1% at exit among these youth. The percentage of participants unemployed declined from 39.1% at intake to 15.2% at exit.
- In terms of housing, the proportion of participants who have their name on a lease more than doubles, from 21.2% at intake to 49.7% at exit. Participants are accumulating basic household items needed to live independently while in Aftercare (from 54.4% at intake to 82.8% at exit).
- On exit, 90.7% have maintained their Medicaid coverage and only 4.6% are uninsured.
- Among exiting youth, 85% have both their birth certificate and social security card, compared to 75% at the time of their intake.
- The vast majority of young people in Aftercare report that they have supportive adults who they will always be able to turn to for support and guidance.

These participants continue to face challenges after exiting Aftercare. Post-secondary retention and success remains elusive for most of these young adults. Earnings alone, while improved, remain far below a sustainable income for many; more than a quarter of the exiting participants report not having enough resources (even including public or other assistance) to meet their monthly expenses. Housing costs continue to take more than half of the income of a third of the exiting participants. And, many are already parents themselves.

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Funded by the Iowa Department of Human Services using a combination of state and federal funding sources, the Aftercare Network provided services to 699 young adults in SFY 2014. Outcomes of 151 of those young people who exited Aftercare services during the year are summarized in the [Youth Policy Institute of Iowa report](#).

[About Youth Policy Institute of Iowa](#)

About the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa: Founded in 2000, the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa (YPII) works to expand and improve the delivery of services and supports for Iowa youth by partnering with public and private entities throughout the state. YPII is involved in a wide range of initiatives, but specializes in policies and programs affecting youth transitioning from adolescence to adulthood, particularly those who have been involved in child welfare (foster care) or juvenile justice systems.