

# Supporting Young People Transitioning from Foster Care: Findings from a National Survey

**Child Trends**

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# Executive Summary

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The transition from adolescence to adulthood is a time full of excitement, growth, and change. Critical brain development occurs during adolescence and early adulthood, and can be supported by strong and stable connections with family, friends, and community. With these supportive connections, young people can grow into healthy adults. Youth and young adults with foster care experience often miss out on some of the key resources needed during this time, reducing their chances to locate safe and stable housing, find steady and meaningful employment, and build strong and positive relationships with members of their social networks. They are more likely to experience homelessness and involvement with the justice system and less likely to graduate from high school or college.

Child Trends conducted a national survey of state independent living coordinators (*Survey on Services and Supports for Young People Transitioning from Foster Care*). Survey findings, collected in 2016, are based on responses by Independent Living Coordinators from 47 of 52 states and territories contacted. They describe the array and availability of services and supports for youth and young adults who have experienced foster care, highlighting state trends and examples of innovation in six major service areas: 1) post-secondary education; 2) employment and career development; 3) financial capability; 4) safe, stable, and affordable housing; 5) health and mental health care; and 6) permanent relationships with supportive adults. Several key findings stand out as particularly critical:

- **Although foster care is almost always available in some form to youth over age 18, three quarters of states report that most young people leave foster care before the maximum age permitted.** Nearly every state reported that foster care can be extended beyond age 18, with 40 of the 47 states that responded to the survey reporting that it is available to at least some young people up to age 21. However, in 27 states that extend foster care to age 21 or older, young people typically leave at age 18. This is concerning because research has shown that young people who remain in care to age 21 are less likely to experience homelessness or become pregnant before age 21, and are more likely to be employed and attend college compared with those who leave care at age 18.<sup>1,2,3</sup>
- **Across every category, the service array is similar for youth ages 18 to 21 in foster care and those 18 to 21 who have left foster care.** This means that states have very similar services and supports available (or in some cases, not available) regardless of whether a youth is in foster care or has left

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<sup>1</sup> Courtney, M.E., Dworsky, A., Cusick, G.R., Havlicek, J. Perez, A., Keller, T. Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 21. Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, (2007). Available at: <http://www-news.uchicago.edu/releases/07/pdf/071212.foster.study.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Dworsky, A., & Courtney, M.E. Assessing the Impact of Extending Care beyond Age 18 on Homelessness: Emerging Findings from the Midwest Study. Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, (2010). Available at: <http://www.chapinhall.org/research/brief/assessing-impact-extending-care-beyond-age-18-homelessness-emerging-findings-midwest>

<sup>3</sup> Dworsky, A. & Courtney, M. E. Does Extending Foster Care beyond Age 18 Promote Postsecondary Educational Attainment? Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, (2010). Available at: <http://www.chapinhall.org/research/brief/does-extending-foster-care-beyond-age-18-promote-postsecondary-educational-attainment>

foster care. However, we do not know the utilization rates or how these services are operationalized in each state.

- **There is a steep drop off in available services and supports as soon as young people reach age 21, the age of legal majority in most states.** However, most states continue to provide at least some opportunities for this population, especially in post-secondary education, employment and career development, and accessing and managing health and mental health care. Overall, states typically offer these services to those who are under 21 as well (in or out of care).
- **Partnerships with other agencies are a key part of supporting this population.** Independent Living Coordinators from child welfare state agencies reported that they work with several other state agencies to develop and deliver services for transition-age youth. Specifically, the juvenile justice agency, the state agency that provides workforce trainings and supports, the state agency that manages services and assistance for adults with disabilities, the state's housing agency, and schools all help child welfare agencies as they work with this population. Some states find that having an official interagency work group helps them streamline services and supports more efficiently.
- **Many states are adopting evidence-based or evidence-informed programs or practices, but there is much room for growth.** Overall, states report similar numbers of such programs and practices in each of the service areas, ranging from 19 states with evidence-based or -informed permanency supports to 11 states with such physical health supports. However, 11 states reported no such programs or policies in *any* of the six service categories. Using evidence-based or evidence-informed programs and practices means that states are implementing strategies that have been shown effectiveness or promise in other locations.
- **Housing was the area most commonly reported as being in need of improvement.** States were asked to report a primary area of strength and a primary area in which they could do better in supporting young people transitioning from foster care. Twenty-one states responded that housing was a primary area in need of improvement or an area in which their state is actively working to improve, specifically through providing transitional and/or affordable housing. Without stable housing, young people face challenges staying in school, gaining employment, accessing physical and mental health services, and reaching self-sufficiency.

States offer a wide range of services and supports to youth who are in foster care or have recently aged out of foster care. While we do not know how many young people are taking advantage of these services and supports, we hope these findings will spark further innovation and additional strategies to ensure that all youth have a safe and healthy transition to adulthood.

# Introduction

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Young adults from every background face challenges as they move from adolescence to healthy, productive, and happy adulthood. Critical brain development occurs during this time, and strong and stable connections with family, friends, and their community support positive development.<sup>4</sup> With these resources, young people can grow into healthy adults.

Due to their lack of consistent and supportive relationships, youth and young adults who are or have been in foster care are at heightened risk for hardship during this time of critical growth. Young people in care frequently lack a close relationship with an adult due to placement in a group home or strained relationships with their foster or birth families. Young adults who have recently aged out of foster care may struggle with additional stress such as unstable or unsafe housing, lost connections with a foster family or caseworker, and challenges finding employment or paying for school. However, research has found that young people who remain in foster care to age 21 are less likely to experience homelessness or become pregnant before age 21, and are more likely to be employed and attend college compared with those who leave care at age 18.<sup>5,6,7</sup>

It is important to understand how state child welfare agencies around the United States are working with young people transitioning to adulthood. When policymakers, agency administrators, advocacy groups, and practitioners understand the strategies states are using to address the needs of their most vulnerable children and youth, and the challenges they face in doing so, they can create policies and services that better serve this population. To understand the full array of these services and supports, Child Trends developed a survey (with support from the Better Housing Coalition and Children’s Home Society of Virginia), that was sent to Independent Living Coordinators in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico in late 2015. We received responses from 45 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, for a total of 47 participating “states.”<sup>8</sup> Throughout this report, we rely solely on the responses of the Independent Living Coordinators, so there may be additional services and supports in the state that the respondent was unaware of.

This report summarizes key findings from the survey, which focused on services and supports provided by states to young people ages 18 and older who are transitioning from foster care to adulthood, also referred to in this report as “transition-age youth.” This report highlights how each service area (e.g., post-secondary education, financial capability) aligns with an area of need, state trends, examples of innovation and success in

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<sup>4</sup>The Adolescent Brain: New Research and its Implications for Young People from Foster Care, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, (2011). Available at: [http://www.iimcaseyouth.org/sites/default/files/documents/The%20Adolescent%20Brain\\_prepress\\_proof%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.iimcaseyouth.org/sites/default/files/documents/The%20Adolescent%20Brain_prepress_proof%5B1%5D.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Courtney, M.E., Dworsky, A., Cusick, G.R., Havlicek, J. Perez, A., Keller, T. Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 21. Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, (2007). Available at: <http://www-news.uchicago.edu/releases/07/pdf/071212.foster.study.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Dworsky, A., & Courtney, M.E. Assessing the Impact of Extending Care beyond Age 18 on Homelessness: Emerging Findings from the Midwest Study. Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, (2010). Available at: <http://www.chapinhall.org/research/brief/assessing-impact-extending-care-beyond-age-18-homelessness-emerging-findings-midwest>

<sup>7</sup> Dworsky, A. & Courtney, M. E. Does Extending Foster Care beyond Age 18 Promote Postsecondary Educational Attainment? Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, (2010). Available at: <http://www.chapinhall.org/research/brief/does-extending-foster-care-beyond-age-18-promote-postsecondary-educational-attainment>

<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of the survey, D.C. and Puerto Rico are considered “states” and referred to as such throughout this report.

each major service area and, whenever possible, detail regarding state variation. This report also identifies opportunities for improvement and growth in the supports provided to transition-age youth.

**Overview of the survey:** The survey included eight major sections, with the first section asking about: (1) the maximum age young people can stay in foster care; (2) the age young people typically leave foster care; and (3) any additional information about extended foster care policies. After this section, the survey primarily focused on six service area/domains critical to successful transitions to adulthood: (1) post-secondary education; (2) employment and career development; (3) financial capability; (4) securing safe, stable, and affordable housing; (5) accessing and managing health and mental health care; and (6) establishing permanent relationships with supportive adults. Within these domains, we asked states to report: (a) whether particular services or supports are provided to transition-age youth; and if so, (b) to which group of young people (i.e., 18 and older who are in foster care, 18-21 who are no longer in foster care (due to emancipating, “aging out” or “opting out” of extended foster care), and/or those who are 21 and older; and (c) geographic availability (i.e., statewide vs. only in certain areas of the state). Information on eligible populations and geographic service availability helps paint a more complete picture of the current support systems and structures available to young people as they exit the foster care system. Additionally, states were asked whether they are using/implementing any research-based programs or practices in each domain (e.g., post-secondary education), and if so, to provide information about these program and practices. In the final and eighth section, states were asked for additional information about supporting young people (i.e., youth engagement, special populations, staff and others working with transition-age youth, and transition planning and post-transition communication). This report highlights findings from the survey.

## 1: Extended Foster Care

Exiting the child welfare system because of age (also known as “aging out” of foster care), rather than with a legal, permanent family such as through reunification with birth parents, adoption, or legal guardianship, frequently brings a host of challenges and hardships to young people. Research finds that youth with foster care experience face worse outcomes, on average, than their peers.

**Table 1: Outcomes of young people with foster care experience, compared to the general population<sup>9,10</sup>**

Life outcomes	Youth involved with foster care	General population <sup>11</sup>
<b>Graduate high school by age 19.</b>	58 percent	87 percent
<b>Earn a college degree by age 25.</b>	<3 percent	28 percent
<b>Employed at age 26.</b>	46 percent	80 percent
<b>Eligible for employer-provided health insurance (pre-ACA and of those employed at age 26).</b>	51 percent	79 percent
<b>26-year-olds who earned any income from employment during the previous year.</b>	70 percent	94 percent

<sup>9</sup> Cost Avoidance: The Business Case for Investing In Youth Aging Out of Foster Care. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, (2013). Available at: <http://www.aecf.org/resources/cost-avoidance-the-business-case-for-investing-in-youth-aging-out-of-foster/>

<sup>10</sup> Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 26. Chapin Hall, (2011). Available at: [https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Midwest%20Evaluation\\_Report\\_4\\_10\\_12.pdf](https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Midwest%20Evaluation_Report_4_10_12.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> General population figures come from the same sources the youth involved with foster care figures come from, and are based off the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health).

Life outcomes	Youth involved with foster care	General population <sup>11</sup>
Have their own residence at age 26.	9 percent	30 percent
Experience at least one economic hardship, such as not enough money to pay rent, utility bills, or phone bills.	45 percent	18 percent
Women who reported that they had ever been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection (STI) by age 26.	44 percent	23 percent
Men who reported that they had ever been diagnosed with a STI by age 26.	18 percent	11 percent
Females who had been arrested since age 18 by age 26.	42 percent	5 percent
Males who had been arrested since age 18 by age 26.	68 percent	22 percent
Females who had been convicted of a crime since age 18 by age 26.	22 percent	3 percent
Males who had been convicted of a crime since age 18 by age 26.	48 percent	11 percent
Females who had been incarcerated for a crime since age 18 by age 26.	33 percent	3 percent
Males who had been incarcerated for a crime since age 18 by age 26.	64 percent	9 percent
Average earnings of employed 26-year-olds.	\$13,989	\$32,312

Additionally, among young people who experienced foster care in their teen years:

- More than one in five become homeless after age 18.
- Nearly three quarters (71 percent) of young women become pregnant by age 21.
- One quarter will be involved in the criminal justice system within two years of leaving the foster care system.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the hardships experienced by many of these young people, such outcomes are also financially costly to society – with increased costs incurred for incarceration and social programs such as welfare and Medicaid.<sup>13</sup>

One way that many states can address these elevated challenges is through offering wraparound services and additional support to young people *beyond* age 18 – through extended foster care or other programs. The parameters and practices around extended foster care vary drastically by state. For example, some states make extended care available to all young people in foster care upon turning 18, while others limit eligibility to those who are enrolled in school or employed. Some states automatically extend foster care when a youth turns 18, while others require youth to complete an enrollment process to remain in care. Further, states have the option to receive federal funds for the extension of care through the Title IV-E program, though not all states with extended care do so. It should be noted that in many states, services associated with extended foster care are increasingly provided by non-profit organizations that contract with the state/county.

Because of the complexities and variations in how states implement extended care, we asked states to report: 1) the maximum age young people can stay in foster care; 2) the age young people typically leave foster care; and 3) additional information about extended foster care policies. **We found that most states offer extended foster care to young people beyond age 18, though a handful of states do not.** The map below (Figure 1)

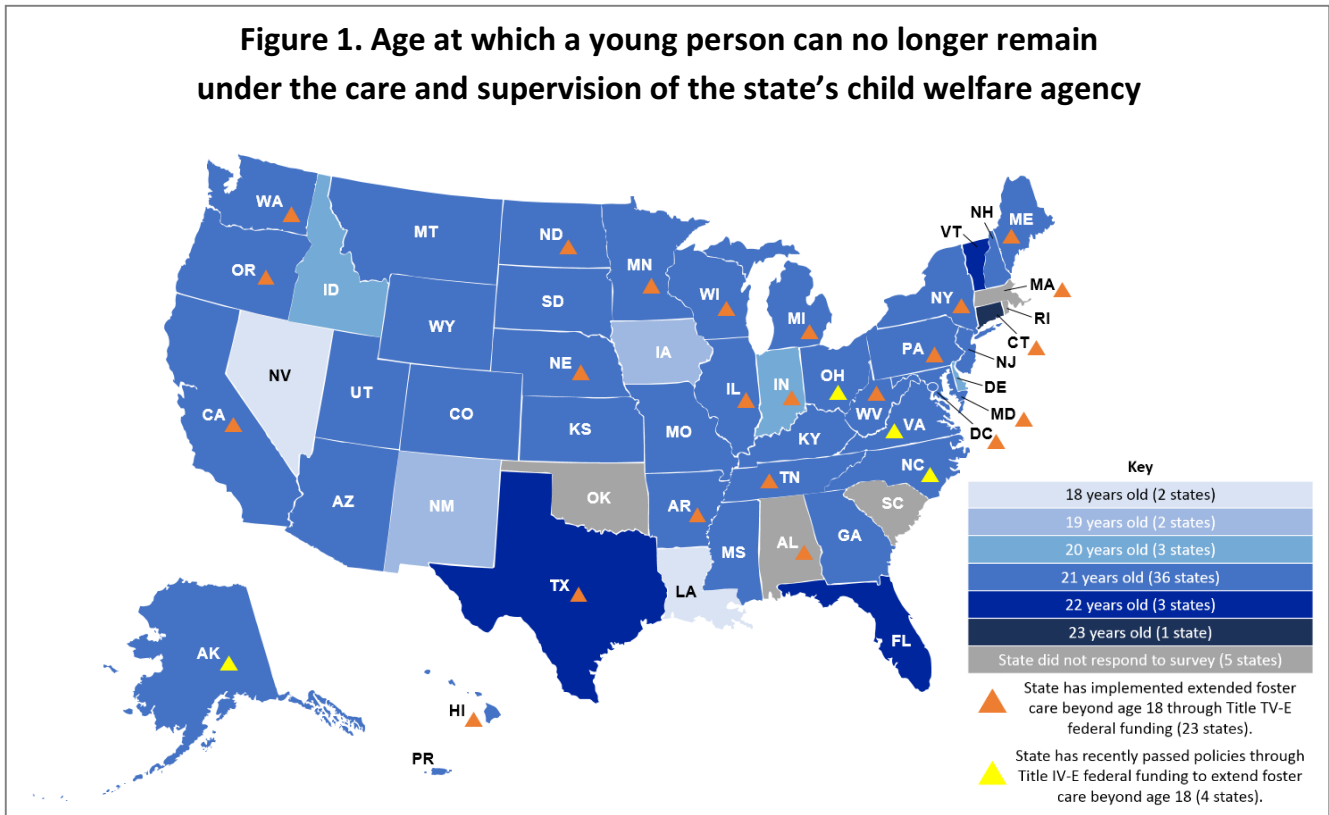
<sup>12</sup> Cost Avoidance: The Business Case for Investing In Youth Aging Out of Foster Care. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, (2013). Available at: <http://www.aecf.org/resources/cost-avoidance-the-business-case-for-investing-in-youth-aging-out-of-foster/>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.



illustrates the age at which a young person must leave the care and supervision of the state’s child welfare agency.

**Figure 1. Age at which a young person can no longer remain under the care and supervision of the state’s child welfare agency**



**Notes:** Child Trends made attempts to confirm with each participating state their maximum age for foster care, given some indications that the question wording on the survey may have been confusing (e.g., asking for the maximum age a young person can be in, and still remain under, the care and supervision of the child welfare agency, as opposed to the emancipation/“aging out” age). However, not all states responded to our follow up efforts. Florida and Idaho did not respond to our inquiry to confirm the age they reported. The responses from Arizona, Louisiana, and Mississippi were changed to reflect information the states provided to our follow-up inquiry. Information about the states’ IV-E status (orange and yellow triangles) is based off a November 2016 report from the Congressional Research Service.<sup>14</sup> The four states with yellow triangles (Alaska, North Carolina, Ohio, and Virginia) had their blue background color updated to reflect their states’ updated responses; however, their responses throughout the survey have not been changed to reflect their new policies.

As depicted above, in most states (40) young people can remain in care until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday under certain circumstances, with three of the 40 permitting youth to remain until they turn 22 and one state until they turn 23. Two states (Nevada and Louisiana) currently do not extend foster care beyond the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

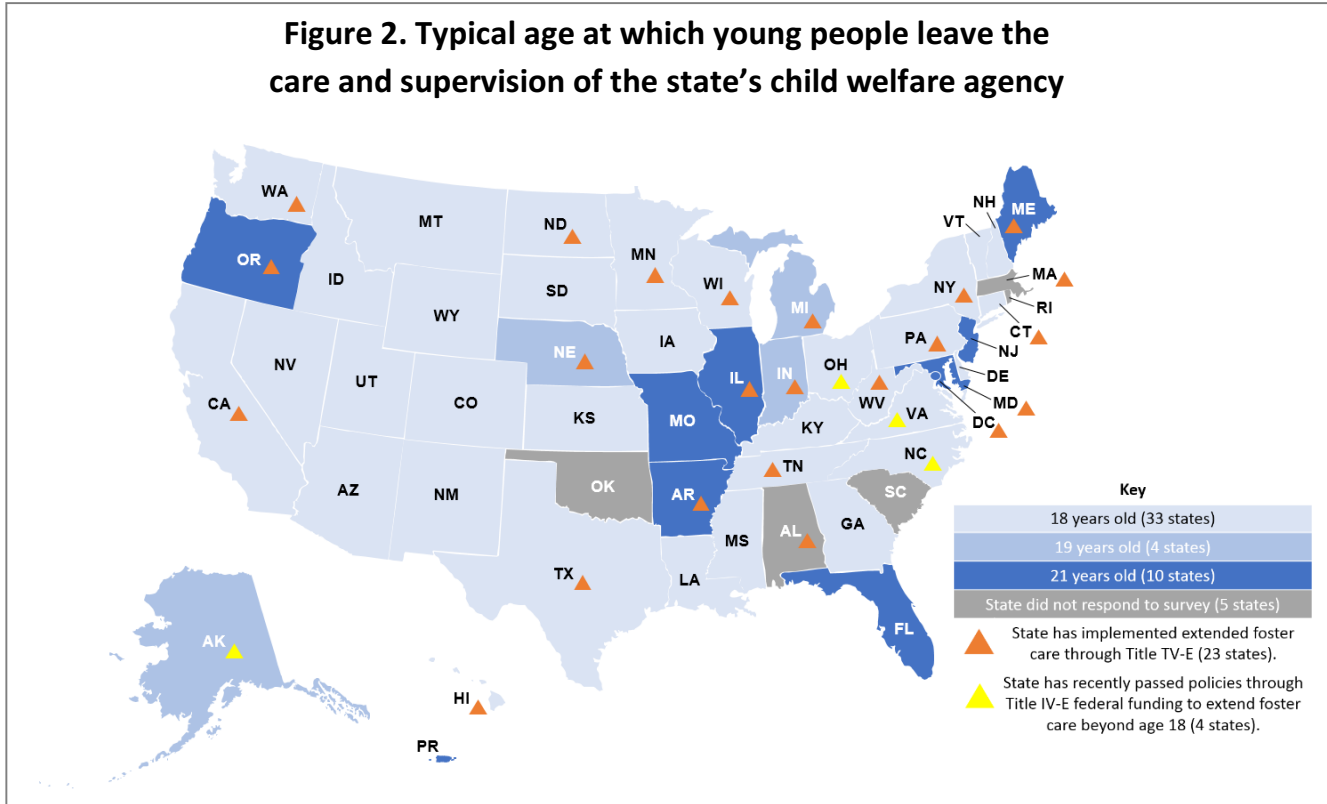
We also asked states to report the age that young people *typically* leave care in their state—in other words, when young people emancipate or “age out” of foster care in the absence of special or exceptional circumstances that might allow youth to remain in care longer (e.g., a disability, completing high school).

**Nearly every state (77 percent or 36 states of those responding) reported the typical “aging out” age in the state was less than the maximum aging out age by at least one year – with 89 percent of those states (32) reporting a difference of two years or more.** For example, over half of the states (27) reported that while

<sup>14</sup> Fernandes-Alcantara, A.L. Youth Transitioning from Foster Care: Background and Federal Programs. Congressional Research Service, (November 2016). Available at: <http://greenbook.waysandmeans.house.gov/sites/greenbook.waysandmeans.house.gov/files/RL34499%20-%20Youth%20Transitioning%20from%20Foster%20Care%20-%20Background%20and%20Federal%20Programs.pdf>

young people can age out at 21 years old or older, it is typical for them to age out at 18 years old. The map below displays state responses to the question about the typical age when a young person leaves foster care.

**Figure 2. Typical age at which young people leave the care and supervision of the state’s child welfare agency**



**Notes:** While the age of majority in most states is age 18, in Alabama and Nebraska it is 19 years old, and it is age 21 in Colorado, Mississippi, and Puerto Rico. However, in most instances young people can petition to emancipate at an earlier age in all states.<sup>15</sup> Information about the states’ IV-E status (orange and yellow triangles) is based off a November 2016 report from the Congressional Research Service.<sup>16</sup> The four states with yellow triangles (Alaska, North Carolina, Ohio, and Virginia) had their blue background color updated to reflect their states’ updated responses; however, their responses throughout the survey have not been changed to reflect their new policies.

Looking at the two maps together, we see that in 77 percent of states (36 of 47 responding states), young people typically leave the care and supervision of the child welfare agency *earlier than the maximum age* for foster care in their state by one to three years. When asked for additional information about the foster care age limit in their state, respondents described several policies that may help explain why young people leave foster care before the maximum age. For example, some states have a consent or application process that a young person must complete upon his/her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday to remain in care. Others only allow certain groups of young people to remain in care, such as those still in school, those who are employed, or those who have a disability. Such policies limit the number of young people who remain in foster care beyond their 18<sup>th</sup> birthdays. There may also be differences within states themselves, as placement options and services can differ based on location.

One example of this comes from **California**, where Assembly Bill 12 (creating an extended foster care program called the After 18 program and described in more detail below) is being evaluated by Mark

<sup>15</sup> State Legal Ages Laws. FindLaw. Available at: <http://statelaws.findlaw.com/family-laws/legal-ages.html>

<sup>16</sup> Fernandes-Alcantara, A.L. Youth Transitioning from Foster Care: Background and Federal Programs. Congressional Research Service, (November 2016). Available at: <http://greenbook.waysandmeans.house.gov/sites/greenbook.waysandmeans.house.gov/files/RL34499%20-%20Youth%20Transitioning%20from%20Foster%20Care%20-%20Background%20and%20Federal%20Programs.pdf>

Courtney of Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. Current data show roughly 85% of eligible youth are choosing to participate in EFC, and exit outcomes for these youth are slowly improving over those youth who exit foster care when they turn 18.

## 2: Post-Secondary Education

### Why does post-secondary education matter?

Education plays a critical role in young people's ability to support themselves and their families, in attaining and maintaining a fulfilling career, and in building a strong social network. Research shows that young people who have experienced foster care have, on average, poorer educational outcomes than their peers. For example, at ages 25-26, only 8 percent of young adults with foster care experience have a post-secondary degree, compared to 46 percent of young adults in the general population ages 25-26.<sup>17</sup> One cost analysis of youth transitioning from foster care found that if they graduated from high school at the same rate as the general population of young people, the more than 7,000 additional graduates would earn over \$1.8 billion more during their working lifetimes, and contribute \$430 million in additional taxes.<sup>18</sup> In terms of post-secondary education, research has found that less than three percent of young people involved in foster care will earn a college degree by age 25 (compared to 28 percent of all 25-year-olds).<sup>19</sup> Within the general population, young people ages 25 to 32 with a college degree are significantly less likely to be unemployed, at 3.8 percent, compared to those with only a high school degree, at 12.2 percent.<sup>20</sup> With that disparity in mind, we explored the offerings and services in place to support transition-age youth achieve post-secondary educational success.

The federal **John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program** aims to support youth who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18, youth ages 18 to 21 who have aged out of foster care, and youth who were in foster care after age 16 and left due to adoption or guardianship. Through Chafee, the Educational and Training Vouchers Program (ETV) provides up to \$5,000 a year to qualifying youth for post-secondary education and training.<sup>21</sup>

### What types of services are offered across states?

States were asked to report whether, to whom, and where within their state they provided five specific post-secondary supports/services to transition-age youth. Figure 3 illustrates the availability and provision of these state offered services.

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<sup>17</sup> Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 26. Chapin Hall, (2011). p. 20-21. Available at: [https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Midwest%20Evaluation\\_Report\\_4\\_10\\_12.pdf](https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Midwest%20Evaluation_Report_4_10_12.pdf)

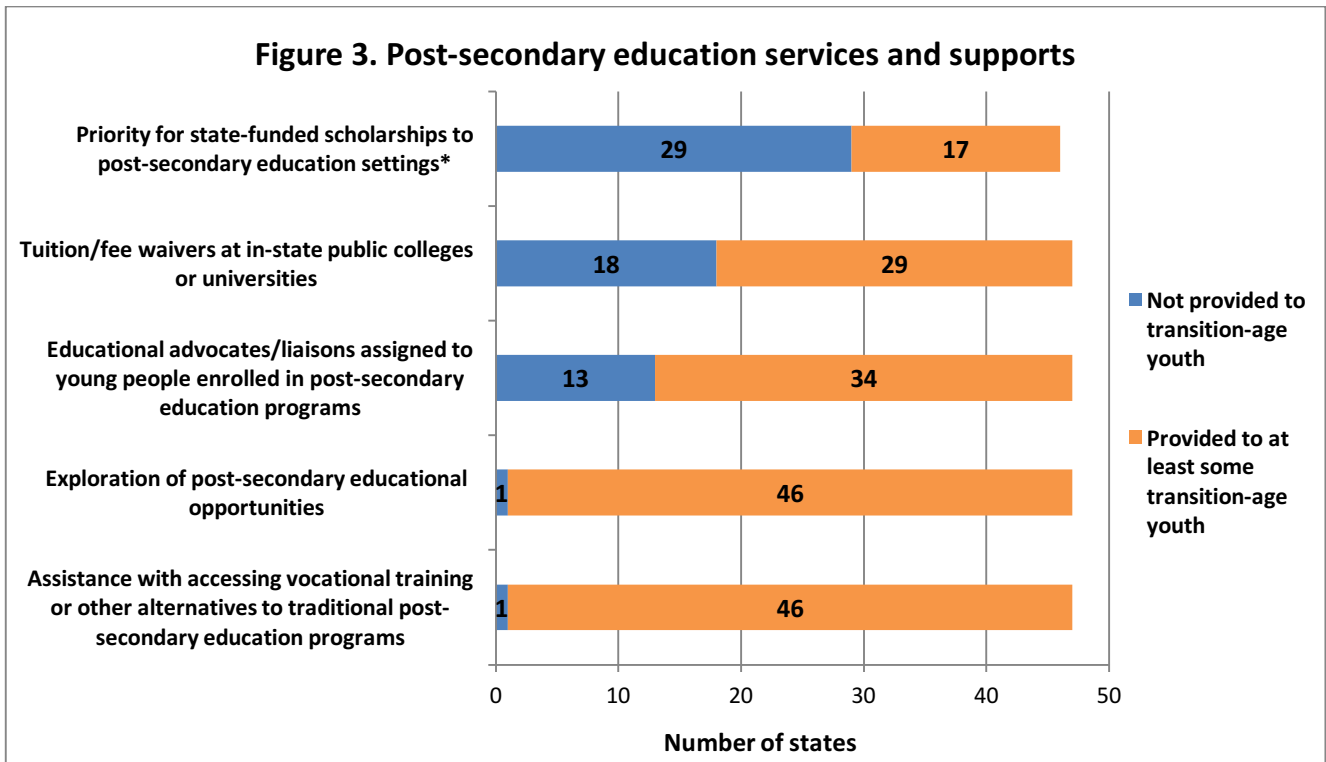
<sup>18</sup> Cost Avoidance: The Business Case for Investing In Youth Aging Out of Foster Care. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, (2013). Available at: <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/JCYOI-CostAvoidance-2013.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> The Rising Cost of Not Going to College. Per Research Center, (2014). Available at: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/02/11/the-rising-cost-of-not-going-to-college/>

<sup>21</sup> John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. Children's Bureau, (2012). Available at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/chafee-foster-care-program>

**Figure 3. Post-secondary education services and supports**



\*One state did not respond to this part of the question.

As the figure shows, the post-secondary supports most commonly offered to at least some transition-age youth are: (1) exploration of post-secondary educational opportunities (e.g., college immersion programs, college workshops, campus tours); and (2) assistance accessing vocational training or other alternatives to traditional post-secondary education programs. Nearly all states offer these services to at least some transition-age youth. The educational service *least* frequently offered is giving young people in foster care priority for state-funded scholarships to post-secondary education settings, with only 17 states reporting that they provide this assistance. Across most categories of post-secondary educational services and supports, there was little differentiation in provision of services to young people ages 18 and older in foster care as compared to those ages 18-21 who are no longer in foster care. About half of states taper off these services at age 21. [Appendix A provides a more detailed breakdown of the sub-groups that are offered the specific types of services and supports for each of the six major domains covered on the survey.]

Overall, states offer these services statewide. The exception is with educational advocates/liaisons, with only 20 of the 34 states providing this service statewide, and the remainder providing the service only in certain areas.

### What are some examples from states?

Many states shared areas of innovation and success in their post-secondary educational strategies. Most strategies fall into three main areas:

- 1) **Recruitment and retention supports specifically created for transition-age youth.** For example, **Arizona's Bridging Success** is an on-campus recruitment and retention program for foster care alumni, in a partnership with ASU and the Maricopa Community Colleges. In **Michigan**, there are 13

institutions of higher education providing on-campus supports to foster youth and alumni. **California** also reports an extensive network of post-secondary resources, such as providing a support person for transition-age youth in every community college. **Virginia's Great Expectations** program is a nationally recognized program that helps Virginia's foster youth earn post-secondary credentials. It supports foster youth as they complete high school, gain access to a community college education, and transition successfully from the foster care system to living independently. It is available at 18 out of 23 Virginia Community Colleges.

- 2) **Supporting youth in planning for post-secondary success.** For example, in **Connecticut**, social workers assist youth in creating a post-secondary education plan starting in the 8th grade. These plans are monitored throughout the youth's educational career and reviewed every 6 months. In **Washington State**, the Supplemental Educational Transition Planning (SETuP) Program provides foster youth ages 14-18 with educational planning, information, and connections to other services/programs. It provides coordination between high school counselors and foster youth to ensure they have an educational transition plan.
- 3) **Funding or scholarship supports.** For example, in **Delaware**, an arrangement with Delaware State University allows two students per year to attend with year-round housing and financial supports that should equate to minimal costs for their college completion. This program also includes university supports to assist youth in their acclimation to college life. **Nevada** also offers a scholarship to in-state colleges or universities for youth who aged out of foster care and maintain a 2.0 GPA.

### What research-informed strategies are being used?

Sixteen states (one-third of responding states) reported using research-based programs or practices (defined in the survey as including a spectrum of evidence-based, evidence-informed, "promising," or "emerging" practices) to support post-secondary education efforts with transition-age youth. For example, **Colorado** is adapting an evidence-informed model called *Colorado Challenge* to provide wraparound services and supplemental advising to ensure students are on the path to success. This program currently provides services to low-income, first generation students at seven institutions of higher education and will be expanding in 2016. In addition, the Division of Child Welfare is preparing to provide educational navigator services in the Department of Higher Education. This program will provide supplemental advising, support, and referrals for students receiving Educational and Training Vouchers. The program will also provide training and support to adults working with transition-age youth across the state.

### How many states excel or face particular challenges in their post-secondary education work?

Overall, nine states mentioned post-secondary work on the survey as a primary area in which they are doing well, typically around access or scholarships, while seven states described it as a primary area where they could do better, especially related to staying in school (e.g., better educational preparation and goal setting for the transition, transportation, and funding).

## 3: Employment and Career Development

### Why does employment and career development matter?

Steady and meaningful employment is a key aspect of a healthy and productive adulthood, providing financial security as well as a sense of purpose. Finding and keeping a job is often a challenge for transition-age youth. One study, looking at one point in time, found that by age 24 only half of youth formerly in foster care were employed. Of those not employed, the majority were looking for work. Even those who are employed face challenges making ends meet: researchers estimate that nearly a quarter of employed young people who experienced foster care lack the earning power to rise out of poverty.<sup>22</sup> By age 26, 46 percent are employed, compared to 80 percent of 26-year-olds in the general population. Half (51 percent) of those employed are eligible for employer-provided health insurance, compared to 70 percent of their peers, and they earn an average of \$13,989 a year compared to \$32,312. Without enough income, youth who have been in foster care are 45 percent more likely to have experienced at least one economic hardship (e.g., not enough money to pay rent, utility bills, or phone bills) compared to 18 percent of young people age 26 in the general population.<sup>23</sup> Beyond simply securing employment, engaging in a career that is meaningful is an important aspect of adulthood and well-being.

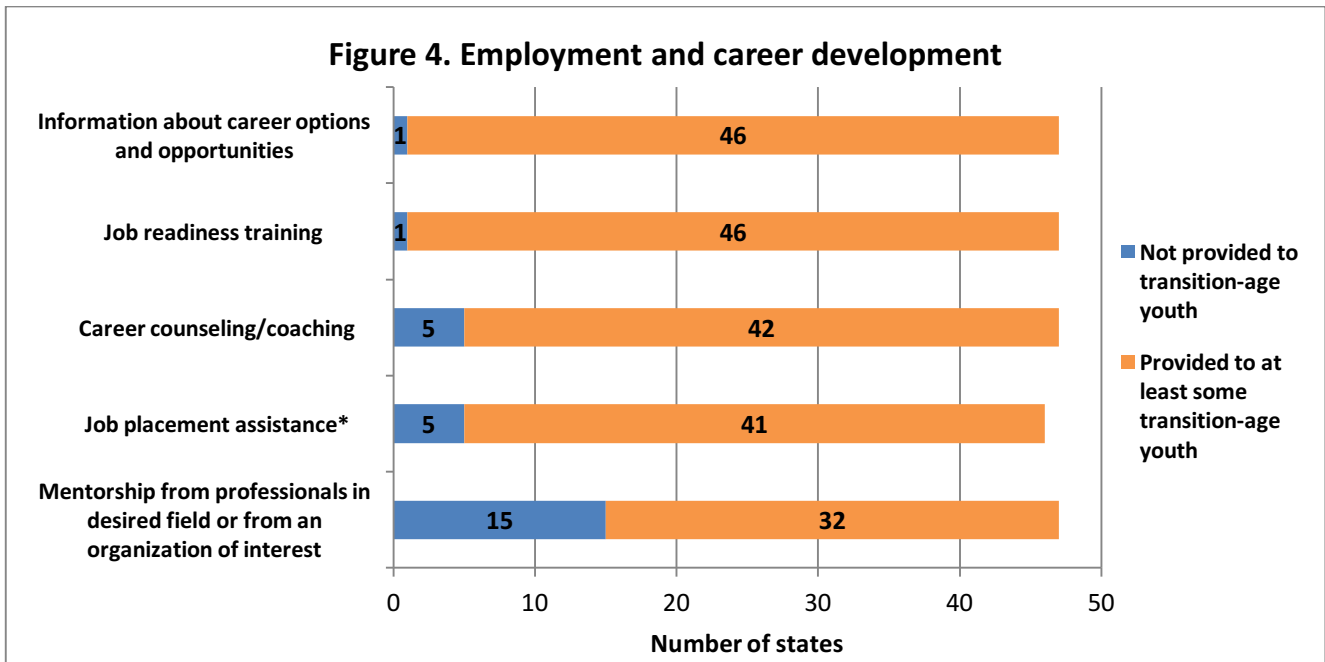
### What types of services are offered across states?

Our survey sought to learn more about how states are promoting employment and career development for current and former foster youth. States were asked whether (and to whom) they provided five employment and career development supports/services for transition-age youth. Figure 4 illustrates the availability and provision of these services across states.

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<sup>22</sup> Employment of Former Foster Youth as Young Adults: Evidence from the Midwest Study. Chapin Hall, (2010). Available at: [http://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/publications/Midwest\\_IB3\\_Employment.pdf](http://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/publications/Midwest_IB3_Employment.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 26. Chapin Hall, (2011). Available at: [https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Midwest%20Evaluation\\_Report\\_4\\_10\\_12.pdf](https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Midwest%20Evaluation_Report_4_10_12.pdf)



\*One state did not respond to this part of the question.

As shown in Figure 4, nearly every state provides information about career opportunities and job readiness training to at least some transition-age youth. The service *least* frequently provided is mentorship from professionals (with roughly one-third of responding states reporting they do not provide this service). Across all employment and career development services, there was little differentiation in the provision of services to young people ages 18 and older in foster care as those ages 18-21 who are no longer in foster care. About half of states taper off these services at age 21.

Overall, most states offer information about career opportunities (43), career counseling/coaching (36), and job readiness training (39) statewide. However, fewer states offer job placement assistance (26) or mentorship (13) statewide, with 15 and 19 states, respectively, offering those services only in parts of the state.

### What are some examples from states?

Many states shared areas of innovation and success in their employment and career development strategies. Most of the strategies fall into three main categories:

- 1) **Creating and continuing partnerships and collaborations with other employment assistance agencies.** Sixteen states described partnerships with WIOA (Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act) agencies or other employment and career development agencies. In **Ohio**, the Office for Families and Children partnered with the Office of Workforce Development to launch the *Connecting the Dots – from foster care to employment and independent living* initiative that provides educational supports, career training and job placement, and mentoring (<http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/Initiatives/ConnectingTheDots.stm>).
- 2) **Providing internships and job mentoring opportunities.** For example, **Arizona** Friends of Foster Care administers a job development program providing internships, job shadowing, and job mentoring. In **Maryland**, life skills classes focus on job searching, successful interviewing, resume development, and understanding the skills needed to maintain employment. Youth have the option of utilizing one-on-one



career/workforce development planning and consultations with their Independent Living Coordinator or caseworker.

- 3) **Facilitating summer employment.** For example, the **Maine** Youth Transition Collaborative provides supported summer employment for youth in or formerly in foster care. In **Washington State**, independent living providers offer employment services all year, with an additional emphasis on hiring during school breaks near the end of the school year, in the summer, and over holidays.

### What research-informed strategies are being used?

Fourteen states (nearly one-third of responding states) reported evidence-based, evidence-informed, promising, or emerging programs or practices to support employment and career development efforts with transition-age youth. For example, in **Tennessee**, *YVLifeSet* underwent a randomized controlled study that showed several benefits to transition-age youth. The voluntary program consists of frequent meetings between participants and specialists, available 24 hours a day, to support youth in critical steps to adulthood, including finding and maintaining employment, locating housing, and learning money management skills.

<http://www.youthvillages.org/what-we-do/yvlifaset/about-yvlifaset.aspx#sthash.Zigxmbhy.dpbs>

### How many states excel or face particular challenges in their employment and career development work?

On the survey, three states mentioned employment and career development as a primary area in which they are doing well in supporting transition-age youth, while six states described this as a primary area where they could do better for this population, especially around access.

## 4: Financial Capability

### Why does financial capability matter?

Financial capability refers to a person's ability to manage his or her budget and achieve his or her financial goals. Young people who have experienced foster care often lack exposure to financial experiences such as banking and budgeting habits, and have less adult support than their peers in learning budgeting or money management skills. They may also face issues related to their credit, with one study suggesting that five to 10 percent of youth in foster care are dealing with credit issues caused by creditor error in billing amounts (e.g., from hospitals wrongly billing the youth), mixed identity (e.g., confusion between Sr. and Jr.), incorrect use of a young person's name or Social Security Number on delinquent account, or identity theft and fraud.<sup>24</sup>

Additionally, young people may face challenges accessing Medicaid insurance if they move across state lines.<sup>25</sup> Without health insurance, they may face credit problems related to unpaid medical bills.

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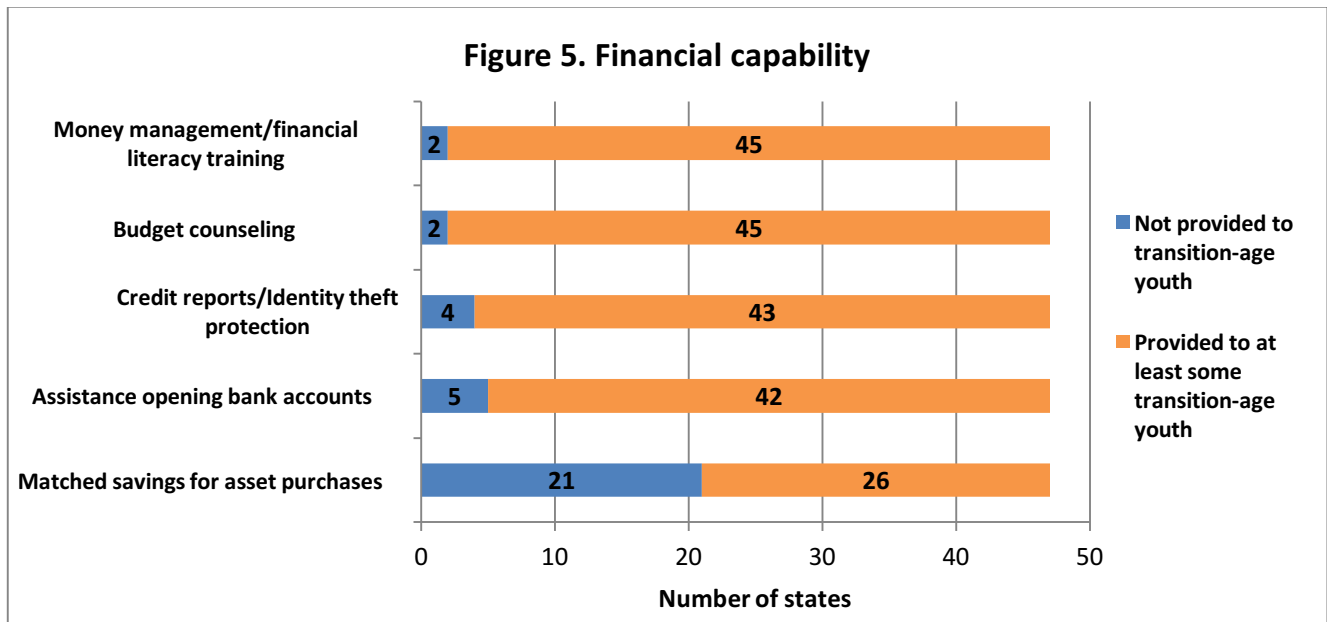
<sup>24</sup> GoldberBelle, S. and Chenven, S. Accessing Credit Reports for Foster Youth A Reference Guide for Child Welfare Agencies. Credit Builders Alliance, (2013). Available at: <http://www.aecf.org/m/blogdoc/aecf-AccessingCreditReportsforFosterYouth-2013.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Medicaid and CHIP Eligibility, Enrollment, Renewal, and Cost-Sharing Policies as of January 2017: Findings from a 50-State Survey. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, (2017). Available at: <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Report-Medicaid-and-CHIP-Eligibility-as-of-Jan-2017-1.pdf>



## What types of services are offered across states?

States were asked whether they provided (and to whom) five financial capability supports/services to transition-age youth. Figure 5 illustrates responses regarding the availability and provision of these services across states.



As shown above, nearly all states reported training young people around money management/financial literacy and providing budget counseling, closely followed by credit reports/identity theft protection and assistance opening bank accounts. The service *least* commonly provided is matched savings for asset purchases (through Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) or other means), with 21 states reporting that this service is not available.

Generally, the same number of states offer services to young people ages 18 and older in foster care as young people ages 18-21 who are no longer in foster care, with the exception of credit reports and identity theft protection, which is available to more 18-21 year olds in foster care 18-21 year olds *no longer* in foster care (see Appendix A for additional information). This may be a result of requirements built into the federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act (P.L. 112-34) in 2011 and Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-34) in 2014 requiring public child welfare agencies to provide credit reports to youth in foster care at age 14 and older.<sup>26</sup> As with other service categories, about half of states taper off these services at age 21. Most states offering these supports do so statewide, with the exception of matched savings accounts for asset purchases (only 12 states offer such accounts statewide).

## What are some examples from states?

Many states shared areas of innovation and success in their financial capability strategies. Below we provide examples in three overarching categories:

<sup>26</sup> The Credit Check Requirement for Youth in Foster Care: Q&A on Implementation. Child Focus Partners, (2015). Available at: [http://childfocuspartners.com/wp-content/uploads/Child-Focus-YCC-Toolkit-QA\\_Web.pdf](http://childfocuspartners.com/wp-content/uploads/Child-Focus-YCC-Toolkit-QA_Web.pdf)

- 1) **Trainings to support financial literacy.** For example, in **Colorado**, budgeting and financial literacy education is required for all youth 14 and older while in foster care. Additional programs in the state provide supplemental financial literacy groups and individualized budgeting support, financial management practice, and assistance accessing financial products. In **Illinois**, the agency contracts with the Economic Awareness Council (EAC) for technical assistance, training, and a financial literacy curriculum. It provides *Get Real: Financial Decisions in the Real World*, a 9-module curriculum delivered to all youth prior to exiting care at 21 before receiving their emancipation funds. (<http://www.econcouncil.org/>).
- 2) **Supporting credit building and repair.** States reported different strategies for helping their youth review and understand their credit reports. For example, **Delaware** collaborates with a state program called *Stand By Me*, which obtains the credit reports and assists in rectifying inaccuracies. It also provides credit counseling and financial literacy training to youth, in addition to the training available on the MoneySkills.org website. In **Maryland**, every youth in foster care has an annual free credit report and credit consultation, including a discussion about the purpose of the credit report; as well as assistance with removal of any derogatory remarks.
- 3) **Implementation of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative.** Ten states reported partnering with the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative to provide financial capability education and access to matched savings.<sup>27, 28</sup> (For more information, please see: <http://www.aecf.org/work/child-welfare/jim-casey-youth-opportunities-initiative>)

### What research-informed strategies are being used?

Fourteen states reported using evidence-based, evidence-informed, promising, or emerging programs or practices to support their financial capability efforts. For example, several states reported offering *Opportunity Passport™*, a key component of the work of the Jim Casey Initiative, consisting of financial capability classes and an opportunity to participate in a matched savings account for qualifying asset purchases.

### Which states excel or face particular challenges in their financial capability work?

Few states describe financial capability work as an area of great success or particular challenge on the survey; however, **Ohio** mentioned financial management as an area of strength, and **Missouri** described financial capability as a challenging area.

## 5: Securing Safe, Stable, and Affordable housing

### Why does safe, stable, and affordable housing matter?

Housing instability and homelessness are significant challenges faced by former foster youth. Various studies report between 11 and 36 percent of young people who age out of foster care become homeless.<sup>29</sup> One study

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<sup>27</sup> The Jim Casey Initiative is available in other areas of the country as well, but was not reported by all eligible individuals completing the survey.

<sup>28</sup> Child Trends serves as the data and evaluation partner to the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative.

<sup>29</sup> Housing for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care. Mathematica Policy Research, (2015). Available at: [http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/~media/publications/pdfs/family\\_support/youthaging\\_fostercare\\_ifbrief.pdf](http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/~media/publications/pdfs/family_support/youthaging_fostercare_ifbrief.pdf)

found that at age 26, youth who had been in foster care experienced multiple instances of homelessness and “couch surfing,” often times for at least a month. While most reported living with relatives at one or more times since they exited foster care, such an arrangement does not ensure a supportive relationship or a long-term housing situation.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, “the few studies that have looked at the well-being of young people who became homeless after aging out of foster care suggest that these young people are more likely to suffer from mental health problems, experience physical and sexual victimization, and lack access to health care than their peers who aged out of foster care but did not become homeless.”<sup>31</sup>

The stability of a home can function as a “platform” that promotes positive life outcomes across domains like education, employment, and physical and mental health, while living in unsafe or unstable housing can be a significant obstacle to positive life outcomes and impede important efforts to become self-sufficient. As one researcher found, “unstable housing can create a negative feedback loop. Unstable housing can compromise physical and mental health; poor physical and mental health can limit labor market participation, and limited employment can lead to housing instability.”<sup>32</sup> Without stable housing, young people face enormous challenges staying in school, gaining employment, accessing physical and mental health services, and reaching self-sufficiency.<sup>33</sup>

### What types of housing services are offered across states?

States were asked whether they provided (and to whom) seven specific housing-related supports/services for transition-age youth. Figure 6 illustrates responses regarding the availability and provision of these services across states.

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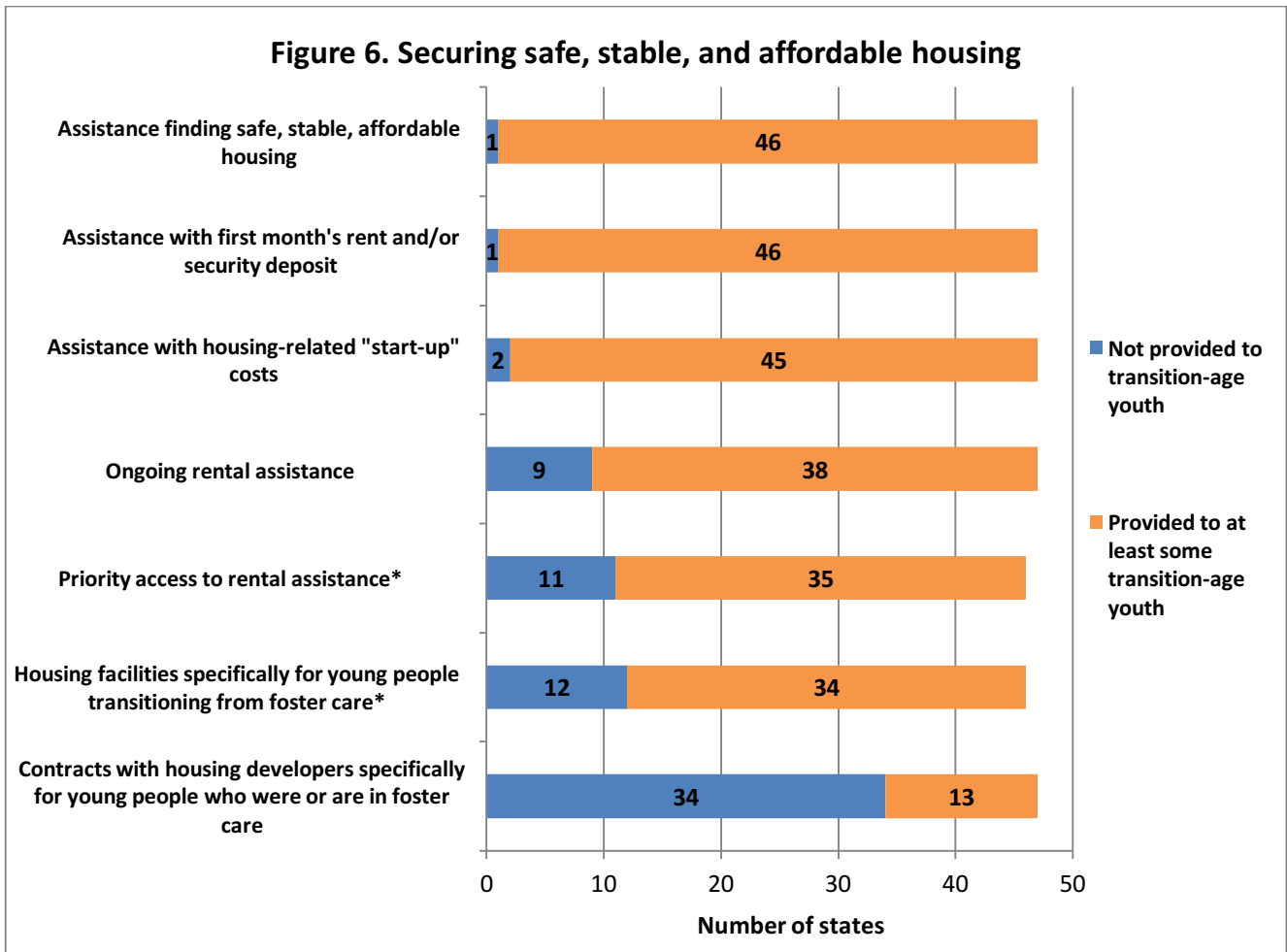
<sup>30</sup> Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 26. Chapin Hall, (2011). Available at: [https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Midwest%20Evaluation\\_Report\\_4\\_10\\_12.pdf](https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Midwest%20Evaluation_Report_4_10_12.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> Housing for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: A Review of the Literature and Program Typology. US HUD Office of Policy Development & Research, (2012). Available at: [https://www.huduser.gov/publications/pdf/housingfostercare\\_literaturereview\\_0412\\_v2.pdf](https://www.huduser.gov/publications/pdf/housingfostercare_literaturereview_0412_v2.pdf).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Dion, R. Housing for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care. Mathematica Policy Research, (2015). Available at: [http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/~media/publications/pdfs/family\\_support/youthaging\\_fostercare\\_ifbrief.pdf](http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/~media/publications/pdfs/family_support/youthaging_fostercare_ifbrief.pdf)

**Figure 6. Securing safe, stable, and affordable housing**



\*One state did not respond to this part of the question.

As shown in the figure, nearly all states provide at least some young people: 1) general housing assistance, 2) first month’s rent and/or security deposit, and 3) housing-related start-up costs. The least common supports are contracts with housing developers to guarantee a certain percentage of clients are young people who are or were in foster care, with only 13 states reporting this service. As with post-secondary educational supports, about twice as many states offer services for those young people ages 18-21, whether in or out of foster care, than those for ages 21 and older.

Most states that offer assistance locating housing, the first month’s rent, ongoing rental assistance, or assistance with “start-up” costs, offer the supports statewide. However, the remaining services are less likely to be offered statewide: priority access to rental assistance (only 11 states offer statewide), contracts with housing developers (3 states), and housing facilities specifically for this population (9 states).

### What are some examples from states?

Many states shared examples of innovation and success in their housing strategies. Below we provide examples in three areas:

- 1) **Financial assistance for housing.** **New Mexico** provides a monthly Independent Living maintenance check of approximately \$630 a month to youth who aged out of foster care. Youth have to work or attend school,

refrain from illegal activity, and meet with their Youth Transition Specialist monthly. This is available until a youth turns 21. The state also works with community partners to furnish youth residences, including a free new mattress and bed frame and kitchen furnishings. Several states also mentioned coordinating with their state or local housing agency to secure Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers for young people transitioning from foster care.

- 2) **Housing designed to support current or former foster youth.** In **California**, the state legislature passed Assembly Bill 12 in 2010, creating an extended foster care (EFC) program called the *After 18* program. This law creates two types of placements: Transitional Housing Placement Plus Foster Care (THP+FC) and Supervised Independent Living Placements (SILPs). THP+FC includes three housing models allowing youth to live with a host family or in an apartment or other type of housing owned or leased by the provider either in a complex with other foster youth or in a “remote site.” In a SILP, youth who are assessed as ready for this level of independence can live on their own and receive their foster care payment directly (<http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG2902.htm>). **Kansas** has two housing programs designed to serve this population: *Spero House* which provides housing and other supports to youth ages 18 to 22 who have recently left foster care (<http://www.youthrive.org/spero-house/>) and *Hope House* which provides housing for young women ages 18-27 who have aged out of foster care and/or are homeless (<http://www.hopehouseks.org/>). **Illinois** has a Youth Housing Assistance Program that provides cash assistance for housing and housing-related expenses for current and former foster youth (<https://www.illinois.gov/dcf/brighterfutures/independence/Housing/Pages/Cash.aspx>).
- 3) **Housing for pregnant and parenting youth.** Several states provide specialized housing programs specifically for pregnant and/or parenting youth in foster care, including **Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Ohio.**

### What research-informed strategies are being used?

Fifteen states reported using evidence-based, evidence-informed, promising, or emerging programs or practices to support their housing efforts. In **Ohio**, Lighthouse Youth Services in Cincinnati is the lead agency for the Youth at Risk of Homelessness (YARH) Planning Grant (funded by the Administration for Children and Families). The project’s goal is to prevent homelessness for youth in the child welfare system. The target populations include: youth entering foster care between ages 14-17; youth aging out of foster care; and youth who are currently homeless (up to age 21). The grant focuses on improving outcomes for the youth in four core areas: social and emotional well-being; permanent connections; stable housing; and education and employment. YARH has chosen the University of Cincinnati as the program evaluator and plans to use evidenced-based interventions, including Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and Structured Sensory Interventions for Traumatized Children, Adolescents and Parents (SITCAP).

### Which states excel or face particular challenges in their housing work?

Only eight states reported housing supports as a primary area in which they are doing well in supporting transition-age youth. **Notably, housing was the most commonly reported area in need of improvements by responding states, especially related to transitional and affordable housing (21 states).**

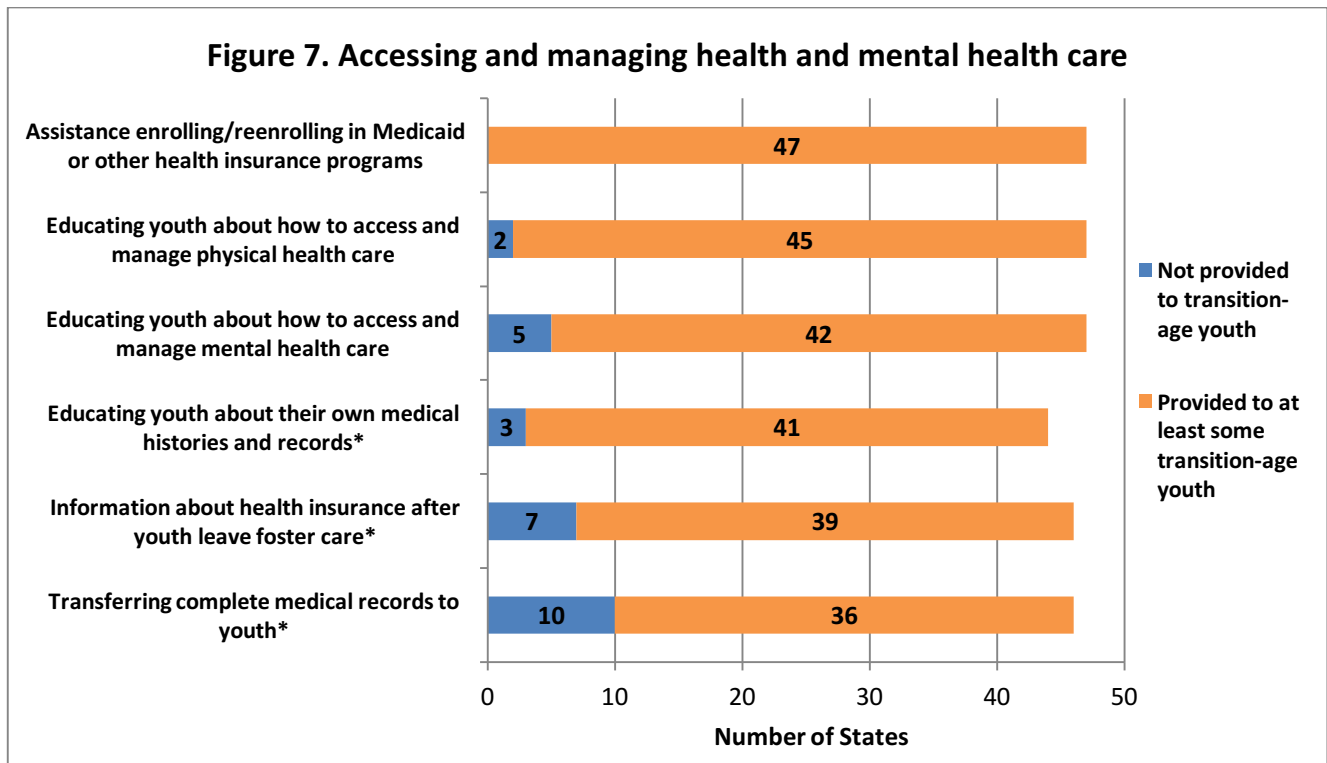
## 6: Accessing and Managing Health and Mental Health Care

### Why do physical and mental health care matter?

Youth in foster care and young people with foster care experience face higher rates of mental and physical health challenges than their peers who do not experience foster care. For example, one study found that between 35 and 60 percent of youth entering foster care have at least one chronic or acute health condition that needs treatment, and 50 to 75 percent of foster youth exhibit behavioral or social competency issues that may require treatment.<sup>34</sup> Youth in foster care and those who have aged out need access to appropriate and continuous health care (that will support both physical and mental well-being) during their transition to adulthood.

### What types of services are offered across states?

States were asked whether they provided (and to whom) six specific health-related supports/services for transition-age youth. Figure 7 illustrates responses regarding the availability and provision of these services across states.



\*One state did not respond to this part of the question.

As shown, all states provide assistance to some transition-age youth with enrolling or reenrolling in Medicaid or other health insurance programs. Most states reported that they are educating youth about accessing and managing both physical and mental health services, as well as their own medical histories and records. Fewer

<sup>34</sup> The Affordable Care Act and Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: New Opportunities and Strategies for Action. State Policy Advocacy and Reform Center (SPARC), (2014). Available at: <http://www.childwelfareparc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/3-The-Affordable-Care-Act-and-Youth-Aging-Out-of-Foster-Care.pdf>

states assist with the transfer of medical records to youth (10 states reported they do not). Nearly all states reported that they provide the services statewide.

### What are some examples from states?

Many states shared examples of innovation and success in their mental and physical health strategies. They primarily fell into the following three categories:

- 1) **Providing services for transition-age youth.** For example, **California** passed the Mental Health Services Act in 2004, which provides additional funding for mental health services in the state, including services geared toward transition-age youth. Counties are also working to access Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) funds to deliver more intensive mental health services to youth in extended foster care. One example is a partnership between Transitional Housing Placement Plus Foster Care (THP+FC) provider, First Place for Youth, and Seneca Family of Agencies, an organization which utilizes county EPSDT funds to offer intensive mental health services to the youth placed with First Place for Youth.
- 2) **Supporting access to mental and physical health care.** Young adults in **Arizona** who aged out of foster care at age 18 and are under age 26 may qualify for a special health insurance program called Young Adult Transitional Insurance (YATI). YATI health insurance is provided through Arizona's Medicaid program. This insurance gives young people access to low or no-cost medical checkups, prescription medicines, medical specialists, and doctors' visits when they are sick. In an effort to help community providers and outreach workers ensure young adults who have aged out of foster care in Arizona become aware of the health care benefits available to them, Children's Action Alliance has developed a Health Care Toolkit. See more at: <http://azchildren.org/help-for-youth-aging-out-of-foster-care#sthash.WQarB05n.dpuf>.
- 3) **Preparing youth to access physical and mental health care upon exit from foster care.** The Youth Advisory Council in **Hawai'i** implemented a statewide campaign to inform young people and other child welfare stakeholders about the need to transfer and provide access to medical records. **Tennessee** provides trainings for transition-age youth on how to access and manage physical health care and mental health care.

### What research-informed strategies are being used?

Eleven states reported using evidence-based, evidence-informed, promising, or emerging programs or practices to support their physical health efforts and seventeen states reported the same for their mental health efforts. In **Ohio**, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) in partnership with Ohio Family and Children First received a four-year System of Care Expansion Implementation Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) called *ENGAGE (Engaging the New Generation to Achieve their Goals through Empowerment)*. ENGAGE will expand the system of care framework statewide targeting Ohio's youth and young adults, ages 14-21 years, with serious emotional disturbances, including co-occurring disorders and multi-system needs. The grant began in July 2013 and will end in June 2017. The primary focus of the grant is to reduce expenditures and improve outcomes related to health, education, employment, and living stability for high-risk youth and young adults through statewide System of Care expansion of the evidence-supported, research-based, high-fidelity wraparound practice. Communities in

**Colorado** and **Maine** provide access to the *Transition to Independence Process (TIP)*, an evidence-supported practice targeted at transition-age youth with mental health challenges.

### Which states excel or face particular challenges in their physical and mental health care work?

Two states (**New Jersey and Ohio**) reported health as an area in which they are doing well supporting transition-age youth, and two others (**Delaware and Oregon**) described it as an area where they could do better.

## 7: Establishing Permanent Relationships With Supportive Adults

### Why do permanent relationships matter?

There are three types of permanency that affect young people aging out of foster care: legal (including a permanent, legal connection to a family, such as reunification or legal guardianship), physical (a home or place to live), and relational (a relationship or connection with a caring adult). Researchers have found that most young people in foster care believe that **relational permanence** is the most important type. When they have relational permanence, there are adults who provide lifelong support that can help young people transition to adulthood, and may become a legal permanent option.<sup>35</sup>

### What types of services are offered across states?

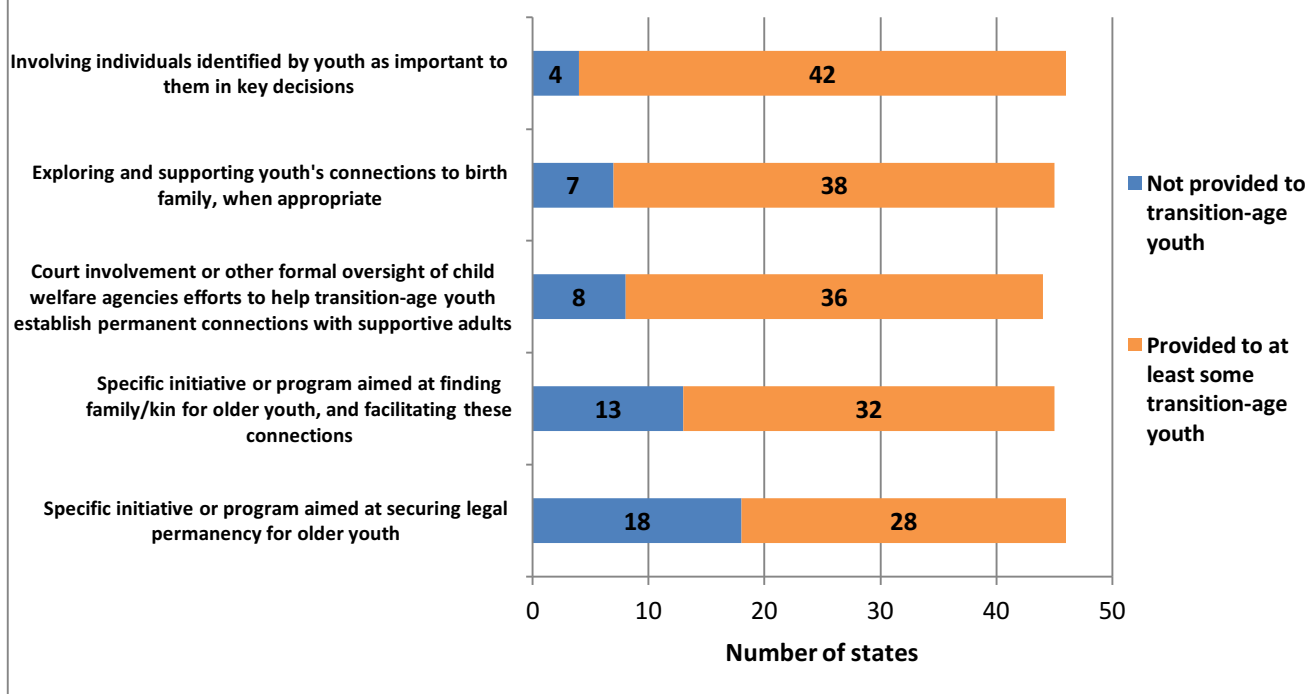
Our survey asked states about the services and supports they provide to help transition-age youth who are or were in foster care establish permanent relationships with supportive adults. States were asked to report whether they provided (and to whom) five specific relationship-related supports/services for transition-age youth. Figure 8 illustrates responses from states regarding the availability and provision of these services in their state.

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<sup>35</sup> Enhancing Permanency for Youth in Out-of-Home-Care. Children's Bureau, Child Welfare Information Gateway, (2013). Available at: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/enhancing.pdf>



**Figure 8. Establishing permanent relationships with supportive adults\***



\* One state did not respond to this part of the question One state had a conflicting response to one question, which was not included in the count.

As shown in Figure 8, the most commonly reported permanency support is “involving individuals identified by youth as important to them in key decisions.” Least common are specific initiatives or programs aimed at securing legal permanency—almost one-third of states do not provide these services. Understandably, states are most likely to provide permanency programs and supports to young people *still in foster care*, with fewer states offering services for young adults ages 18-21 who are not in care, and even fewer states offering services for those 21 and older who experienced foster care. Most states reported they provide the services statewide.

### What are some examples from states?

Many states shared examples of innovation and success around relationship-building for transition-age youth. Most of the strategies fall into three main categories:

- 1) **Empowering youth during transition planning.** In Hawai'i, the *E Makua Ana Youth Circle Program* gives current and former foster youth the opportunity to celebrate their emancipation from foster care and to assist them in planning for their independence.<sup>36</sup> **Colorado** provides Youth-Centered Permanency Round Tables throughout the state with young people who are in care, including young people who remain in care after age 18. The state is also testing a new Community Round Table process for youth receiving services through Runaway and Homeless Youth Providers in five communities as part of the state's Youth At Risk of Homelessness grant (Pathways to Success).

<sup>36</sup> E Makua Ana Youth Circle. Epic 'Ohana. Available at: <http://www.epicohana.info/youthcircle.aspx>

- 2) **Reaching out to extended family and ensuring families are part of the planning process** through initiatives like Family Finding and Permanency Round Tables. In **New Hampshire**, the agency uses the Casey Family Services *Belonging and Emotional Security Tool (BEST)*<sup>37</sup> to determine the solidity of a youth's connection to a caring adult. They also use the FosterClub permanency pact<sup>38</sup> to identify the level of commitment that the members of a youth's network of support are willing to provide after the youth's transition from care.
- 3) **Several states described mentoring programs**, including **Michigan, Missouri, and New Mexico**. **North Carolina** uses Chafee funds to help establish and maintain permanent relationships with supportive adults such as mentors, coaches, and family members who are involved in the youth's transition by using funds to support activities between the youth and the supportive adults.

### What research-informed strategies are being used?

Nineteen states reported using evidence-based, evidence-informed, promising, or emerging programs or practices to support permanency efforts. For example, states are using family team meetings or permanency roundtables (eight states), family finding (five states), the *3-5-7 Model*<sup>©</sup> (one state), and *Wendy's Wonderful Kids* (one state) to help youth find and connect with potential permanent connections.

### Which states excel or face challenges in their work to support permanent relationships?

On the survey, eight states reported relational and/or legal permanency is an area in which they are doing well in supporting transition-age youth, while five states reported that they could do better in this area.

## 8: Cross-State Findings

The sections above describe national findings from our survey, revealing the numbers of states providing services and supports for young people as they transition from foster care into adulthood, and offering state examples. In this section, we present findings related to variations in service provision *across* states, assessing whether the service arrays are similar across states, or if there are groups of states that offer particularly wide or particularly narrow service portfolios. A few key themes arose from this analysis:

- **The service array for transition-age youth ages 18-21 varies widely across states.** We found great variation in the service array among states where young people can stay in care after 18. Some states offer multiple services in *each* major category (e.g., post-secondary education) and others offer few services in *any* category. Rather than seeing pockets of states with few or many services offered, most states reported variation within their state within at least one strong service category, (i.e., most states provided all or nearly all the specific services listed in at least one of the major service categories), but few states reported a comprehensive service array across all categories.

For example, in each major service category, between four and twenty states provide every service or support listed in that category to young people age 18 and older in foster care and to those ages 18 to 21 no longer in care (some statewide and some in only certain areas). For example, all seven housing

<sup>37</sup> Belonging and Emotional Security Tool (BEST). The Annie E. Casey Foundation/Casey Family Services, (2009). Available at [http://calswec.berkeley.edu/files/uploads/pdf/CalSWEC/08h\\_PP\\_Casey\\_Best\\_v2.1.pdf](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/files/uploads/pdf/CalSWEC/08h_PP_Casey_Best_v2.1.pdf)

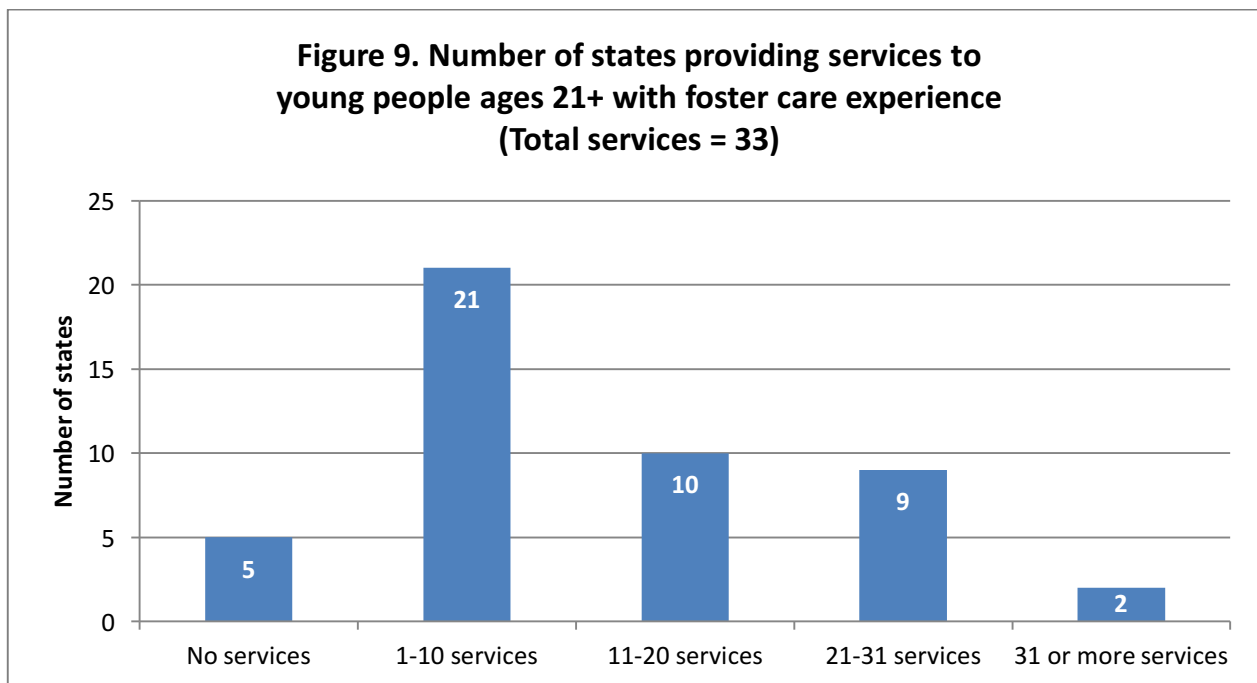
<sup>38</sup> Permanency Pact. FosterClub. Available at: <https://www.fosterclub.com/transition/article/permanency-pact>

services were offered to young people ages 18 to 21 in only four states, whereas, all five employment services were provided to the same group of young people by 20 states.

- **Most states that offer services for youth 18 and older in foster care offer the same services for 18-21-year-olds no longer in foster care.** States usually offer services and supports to all young people 18-21, regardless of foster care status, or to all transition-age youth regardless of age. For example, of the 46 states providing exploration of post-secondary educational opportunities to transition-age youth, 35 states offer it to youth 18-21 whether or not they are in foster care. The figures in Appendix A illustrate a similar breakdown for each of the services and supports.

Although states usually reported providing similar services to 18-21 year olds regardless of whether or not they remain in foster care, there are exceptions, particularly in financial capability, access to mental and physical health care, and permanency supports:

- Credit reports/identity theft protection available only to 18-21 year olds still in foster care (16 states).
  - Educating youth about their own medical histories and records available only for 18-21 year olds still in foster care (12 states).
  - Specific initiative or program aimed at securing legal permanency for older youth (including those 18 or older) available only to 18-21 year olds still in foster care (16 states)
- **Vast majority of states are providing some services to young adults ages 21 and older who have experienced foster care.** Overall, 42 states offer services to young people 21 and older in at least one of the main service categories. Looking across states, Figure 9 below shows the number of states providing services (and how many) to the 21+ population (out of the 33 specific services/supports asked about on the survey):

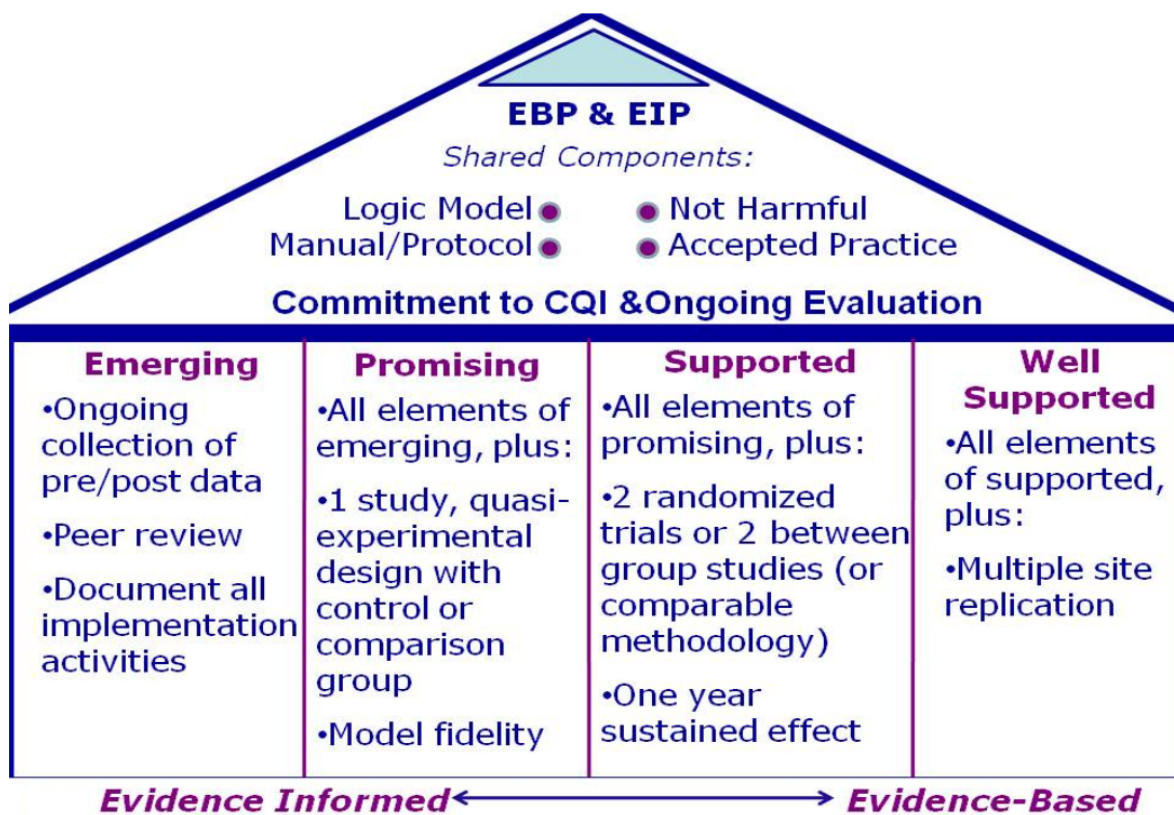


As the graph illustrates, the largest number of states (21) provide between 1 and 10 of the specific services to former foster youth 21 and older. Two states, Maryland and Virginia, are providing 31 and 33 services, respectively, to this population. Only Alaska, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin did not report providing services in any of the service categories to young adults 21 and older. Additional services may be available, but were not reported on the survey.

One area where states seem particularly supportive of this older population is in priority access to rental assistance: 12 states provide some type of rental assistance for all transition-age youth, including those ages 21 and up, and 12 states provide this *only* for young people ages 21 and up.

## 9: Research-Informed Programs and Practices

As public policy requirements shift to emphasize funding programs and practices that we know work for their intended recipients, we asked states on the survey if they were using or implementing any evidenced-based or evidence-informed programs or practices for each of the six service categories described above (post-secondary education, employment/career development, financial capability, housing, mental and physical health, permanent relationships). To help respondents define these terms, we included the graphic below from the Family Resource Information, Education, and Network Development Service (FRIENDS) National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) as a guide:



Note: This image was retrieved from FRIENDS National Center for CBCAP's website in November 2015. Since then, the organization has updated its website and the old image is no longer available. However, they have reformatted this image and included the supportive information on a new web page, which can be found here: <https://friendsnrc.org/evidence-based-practice-in-cbcap>.

State responses varied as to whether they provide research-based programs and practices. For example:

- Eleven states reported not providing any such programs or practices in any of the service categories.
- Four states reported implementing such programs or practices in all service categories.
- One state did not know if it provides any research-based programs and practices in any of the service categories.
- The remaining 31 states reported a mixture of ‘Yes’, ‘No’, and ‘Don’t know’ responses across the service categories.

Looking across the service domains, interesting patterns arise with regard to the use of evidence-based/informed supports:

- ***Few states describe programs that have been evaluated specifically for this population.*** However, some notable programs have been evaluated for transition-age youth. The *Youth Thrive* framework is used in **Georgia, Kansas, and New Jersey**, infusing research on youth resilience, social connections, adolescent development, concrete support, and social-emotional competence into the entire child welfare system.<sup>39</sup> *YVLifeSet* in **Tennessee** provides intensive, individualized, and clinically-focused case management, support, and counseling to transition-age youth, and participated in a random assignment evaluation that found positive effects for youth.<sup>40</sup> However, this level of evidence-based programming is only described by a few states.

Several states also describe permanence strategies, such as *Wendy’s Wonderful Kids*,<sup>41, 42</sup> that have an expanding evidence base but may not be specifically designed to support the transition-age youth population, or are being used by the child welfare agency generally and not being implemented *specifically* for this population.

- ***A few states use programs and practices that have an evidence base with other populations with transition-age youth.*** Services that have successfully supported low-income adults or other groups of vulnerable youth are being adopted by states and implemented with transition-age youth. For example, the *Transition to Independence Process (TIP) model™*, an evidence-supported practice based on published studies that demonstrate improvements in real-life outcomes for youth and young adults with emotional/behavioral difficulties,<sup>43</sup> is being used in **Colorado** and **Maine** for transition-age youth. **Colorado** is also adapting an evidence-informed model called *Colorado Challenge* to provide wraparound services and supplemental advising to ensure students are on the path to success. This program provides services to low-income, first generation students at seven institutions of higher education and will be expanding in 2016. **New York’s** Office of Children and Family Services is currently working with the Workplace Center at Columbia University to implement their workplace readiness curriculum for youth in care, which was in place as of July 2017. Although these programs and

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<sup>39</sup> Youth Thrive. Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP). Available at: <http://www.cssp.org/reform/child-welfare/youththrive/about>

<sup>40</sup> Becoming Adults: One-Year Impact Findings from the Youth Villages Transitional Living Evaluation. MDRC, (2015). Available at: <http://www.mdrc.org/publication/becoming-adults>

<sup>41</sup> Foster Care Adoption Attitudes Research. Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. Available at: <https://davethomasfoundation.org/learn/research/>

<sup>42</sup> Child Trends serves as the data partner for the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, and has conducted evaluations of Wendy’s Wonderful Kids.

<sup>43</sup> Transition to Independence Process (TIP) Model™. TIP Stars. Available at: <http://www.tipstars.org/>

practices may address the needs of transition-age youth, it is important to note that their effectiveness has not been assessed with this unique population.

- ***Although not formally evaluated, some states are infusing research-based concepts into their service array.*** *Opportunity Passport™* is a unique matched savings program that helps young people improve their financial capability when transitioning from foster care or navigating other youth-serving systems, and is grounded in research on adolescent brain development, trauma, and youth engagement.<sup>44</sup> Some states (**Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia**) are using what is known about post-secondary educational challenges for youth and their need for close social connections and employing Educational Liaisons to assist young people in their transition to post-secondary education. For example, **Virginia's Great Expectations** program, available at 18 of Virginia's Community Colleges, supports foster youth as they complete high school, gain access to a community college education, and transition successfully from the foster care system to living independently. Some states are infusing research on trauma-informed care into their mental and physical health programs (**Missouri, New Hampshire, and North Dakota**). For example, in **New Hampshire** the *Partners for Change Project* is a Collaborative Trauma-Informed Child Welfare System between the Division of Children, Youth, and Families and the Dartmouth Trauma Interventions Research Center. The goal of this five-year project is to increase the availability and quality of evidence-based trauma and mental health screening, assessment, and interventions for youth in the child welfare system.

## 10: Youth Engagement

Youth engagement is important when designing a practice or policy that will touch the lives of young people.<sup>45</sup> By engaging youth in the design and development of practices and policies, states can tailor supports to fit the needs of their young people. On our survey, states reported several different ways that they engage transition-age youth—both in program and policy development and in planning for their own futures.

### Youth-led transition planning

A transition plan is created to facilitate a conversation and document what will happen once a young person ages out of foster care, and what plans are in place to prepare a young person for that transition. For example, it may outline steps that a young person needs to take to secure housing, maintain schooling, or find a job. Engaging young people in creating their transition plans is a critical way to ensure the plan aligns with their own interests and goals. It also helps build their capacity to plan for their futures and understand the steps they need to take to achieve their goals. Recent federal legislation, the Fostering Connections Act and the

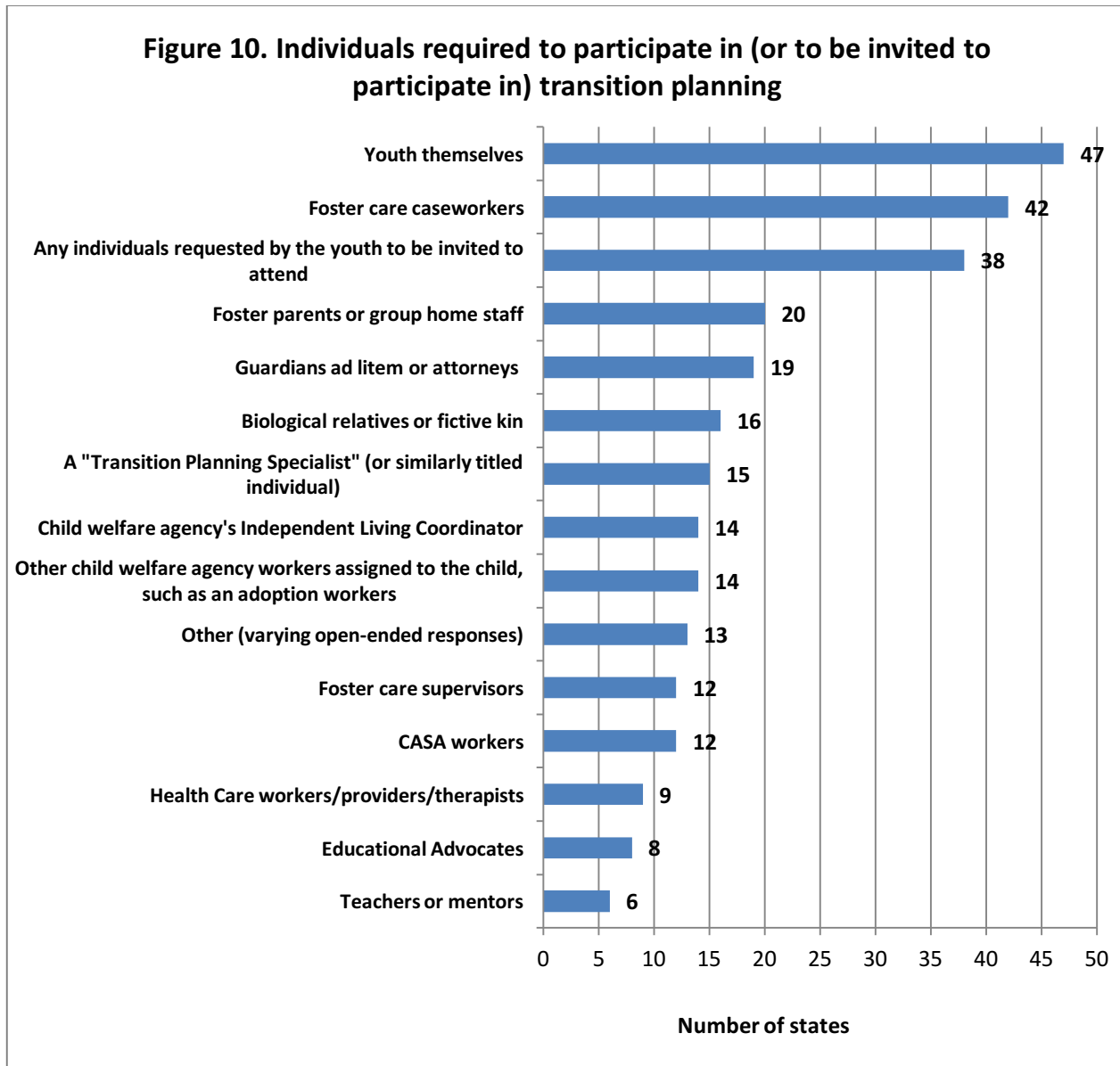
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<sup>44</sup> Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative: Opportunity Passport™. Annie E. Casey Foundation. Available at: <http://www.aecf.org/work/child-welfare/jim-casey-youth-opportunities-initiative/areas-of-expertise/opportunity-passport/>

<sup>45</sup> Charting a Better Future for Transitioning Foster Youth: Report from a National Summit on the Fostering Connections to Success Act. American Bar Association, (2010). Available at: [http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/center\\_on\\_children\\_and\\_the\\_law/youth\\_at\\_risk/transitioning\\_foster\\_youth\\_report.authcheckdam.pdf](http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/center_on_children_and_the_law/youth_at_risk/transitioning_foster_youth_report.authcheckdam.pdf)

Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, require a role for young people in foster care age 14 and older in the development of their own transition planning for a successful adulthood.<sup>46, 47</sup>

Figure 10 below shows the number of states requiring specific individuals to participate (or are required to be invited to participate) in the development of a transition plan.



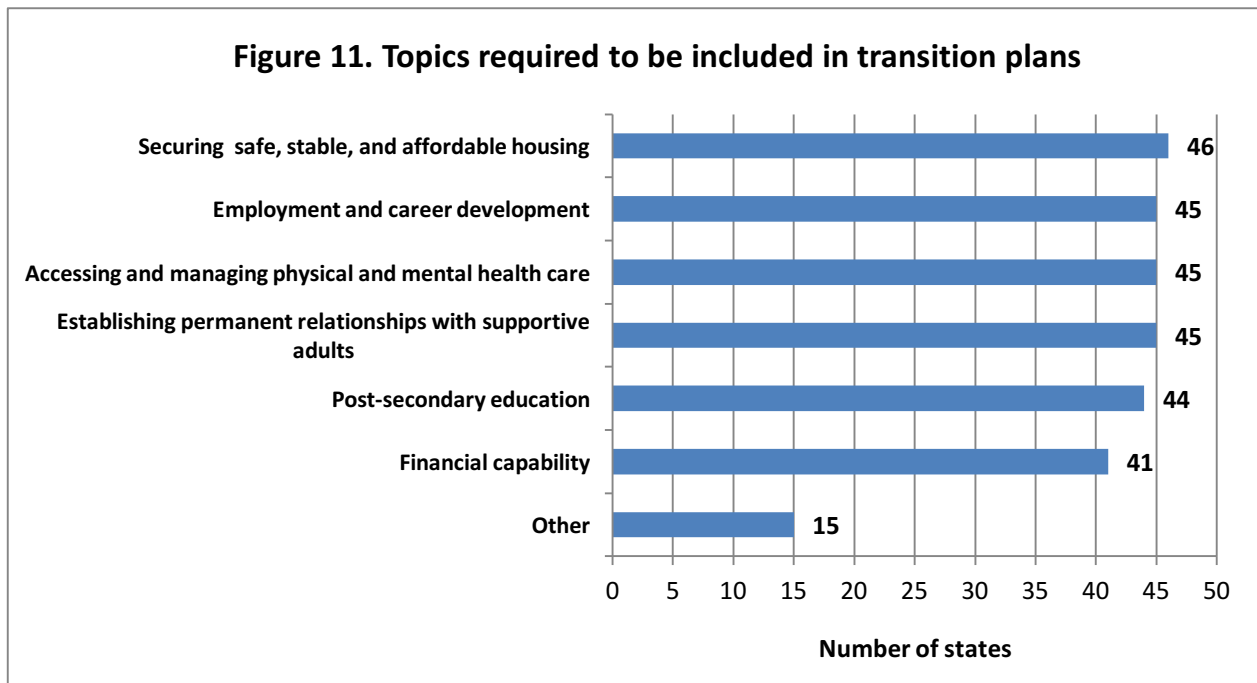
All responding states (47) require youth to participate (or be invited to participate), and most states (42) require foster care caseworkers (42) and any individuals requested by the youth (38) participate or be invited to participate.

<sup>46</sup> Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014, P.L. 113-183/H.R. 4980. Available at: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/4980/text>

<sup>47</sup> Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014. National Conference of State Legislatures. Available at: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/preventing-sex-trafficking-and-strengthening-families-act-of-2014.aspx>



Figure 11 below illustrates states' requirements for transition plan topics, as reported on our survey:



As shown in the figure, the majority of states require that youth transition plans include all six service categories discussed in this report. This may be in part due to the transition plan requirements in the Fostering Connections Act and the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act.

### Youth engagement in service and policy planning/development

In addition to planning for their own futures (i.e., transition plans), states frequently incorporate the youth voice into policy and practice planning. Thirty-nine states reported on our survey that young people are or were a part of developing or designing the states' services and supports. States most frequently reported youth involvement in the development or design of **post-secondary educational services** (33 states), and least frequently in developing or designing services to promote financial capability (23 states).

States shared strategies for engaging young people in policy and practice improvements, including:

- **Creating and supporting youth advisory boards or councils, comprised of current or former foster youth** (33 states). In **Connecticut**, there are six Regional Youth Advisory Boards and one Statewide Youth Advisory Board. Through these boards, youth make recommendations for new policies, suggest revisions of current policies, and are asked to provide feedback on policies that affect them. Members were actively involved with the review of the newly revised Adolescent Services Policy and Practice Guide, and many of their recommendations were included. In **Missouri**, the State Youth Advisory Board meets quarterly and has been in place since 1992, routinely providing input on policies pertaining to youth. They have looked at materials such as the NYTD survey and the transition plan, providing ideas for inclusion and thoughts on format. The Board has also provided input on processes such as the clothing voucher and worker visitation.



- ***Soliciting input from young people on specific policies or practices*** (23 states). In **Colorado**, youth and young adults who have participated in the Pathways to Success grant have provided guidance on the programs and services they need in each of the key outcome areas of Permanency, Health and Wellness, Housing, Education, and, Employment. The Pathways grant engages a group of young people who call themselves "The Masterminds" to provide guidance to the grant. In addition, one young person is a permanent member of the grant's project management team. Young people now have positions on Colorado's Child Welfare Leadership Team and on the Supreme Court's Court Improvement Committee. Youth have been included on the hiring committees for all major positions in the Youth Services Unit at the Division of Child Welfare. In **New Hampshire**, the state's youth advisory board came up with the idea for their tuition waiver program. They worked with a legislator to craft the language of the bill and then testified on its behalf, securing successful passage.
- ***Creating tools and materials for other foster youth*** (16 states). **Louisiana's** Youth Leadership Advisory Council (LYLAC) assisted with the design of fliers relevant to youth who are aging out of foster care, such as a flier about the Education and Training Voucher program. In **New Jersey**, the new website for the youth advisory board, containing information and resources for current and former foster youth, was informed and designed by youth ([www.njyrs.org](http://www.njyrs.org)). Youth also participated in and helped create two videos on education and keeping their cases open (<http://www.njyrs.org/videos>).
- ***Presenting at conferences or training others about being in foster care as an adolescent*** (7 states). The Fostering Pathways to Success conference is an annual event co-sponsored by the **Ohio** Department of Job and Family Services and Ohio Reach for the purpose of helping emancipated youth and youth transitioning out of foster care who are between the ages of 14 and 21 successfully prepare for vocational training or college, work, healthy relationships, and independent living. The conference offers dynamic keynote speakers; workshops for both youth and adult professionals in the field; apprenticeship demonstrations; professional clothing for sale; and kiosks with information on universities and colleges, Medicaid, ETV, and the Nationwide Children's Hospital Fostering Connections Clinic. The Youth Advisory Boards also co-facilitate workshops with adult professionals. The **Pennsylvania** Child Welfare Resource Center, which is funded by the PA Department of Human Services, hires former foster youth who serve as youth ambassadors. The Youth Ambassadors participate in various state-level meetings on policy and practice and provide training to caseworkers, foster parents, and others at various training venues, including meetings and conferences. **Hawai'i's** EPIC's E Makua Ana Youth Circle Program serves current and former foster youth in Hawai'i who are transitioning out of the foster care system, providing a group process for youth to celebrate their emancipation from foster care and to assist them in planning for their independence (<http://www.epicohana.info/youthcircle.aspx>).

## 11: Vulnerable Populations

Certain groups of young people in foster care or with foster care experience may face additional challenges, above and beyond those described throughout this report. Specifically, we asked states about initiatives or supports for the following populations: pregnant and parenting youth; youth identifying as lesbian, gay,

bisexual, transgender or questioning/queer (LGBTQ); youth involved with both the child welfare agency and juvenile justice agency; and youth with disabilities. We believe states may have had challenges interpreting and answering the question on the survey (particularly around what was meant by a support or initiative “specifically designed” for young people in these populations); thus, we are unable to share specific numbers of states where such services are available. However, several states shared innovative strategies for each population, and we highlight them here:

### Pregnant and parenting youth

Several states provide specialized housing programs specifically for pregnant and/or parenting youth in foster care, including **Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Ohio**. In **New Hampshire**, youth who are pregnant or parenting have a specifically designed case plan created to meet their needs as a parent. The plan may include placement in a residential program focused specifically on this population. In **Washington State**, special independent living providers, who understand the needs of the population and the available services in the community, are assigned to pregnant and parenting youth.

### Youth identifying as LGBTQ

A few states described specific services or support for youth identifying as LGBTQ. In **Ohio**, Lighthouse Youth Services in Cincinnati received one of only two federal grants offered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to implement *Safe and Supported*, which is a pilot program aimed at preventing homelessness in the LGBTQ community. Lighthouse Youth Services has a committee called Lighthouse Youth Advisory Committee (LYAC). The youth on LYAC are current and former foster youth, many who have also experienced homelessness. LYAC meets monthly and is also present at the Youth at Risk of Homelessness (YARH) monthly planning meetings and quarterly Steering Committee. The youth provide feedback on proposed activities, programs, and services. These youth all provide first-hand, personal examples to guide decision making; perspective on youth culture to ensure that strategies align with the realities of youth; and contribute clarifying questions that help the committee members engage with discussion topics. **New Mexico** has a housing program, Casa Q, specifically for young people who identify as LGBTQ.<sup>48</sup>

### Youth involved with both the child welfare agency and juvenile justice agency

Several states noted frequent coordination between the child welfare agency and the juvenile justice agency (**Hawai'i, Louisiana, Missouri, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Texas**). Specifically in **Texas**, youth over age 16 involved with both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems have coordinated case planning and transition planning, as well as joint monthly meetings between the two agencies to review cases. In **Illinois**, youth involved in both systems receive services through two pilot projects called *Regenerations* and *Pay for Success*. These pilots provide intense mentoring as well as community services that specifically work to integrate the youth within the community/family and also address any therapeutic needs.

### Youth with disabilities

As with coordination between child welfare and juvenile justice, six states noted partnering with other agencies that serve adults with disabilities to smooth the transition to adulthood for youth with a disability and foster care experience (**Delaware, Hawai'i, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, and Texas**).

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<sup>48</sup> Home. Casa Q. Available at: <http://www.casaq.org/>

# Conclusion

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States and communities need to support youth who are in foster care or who have recently transitioned out of foster care as they enter adulthood. Indeed, a wide variety of services and supports are available to transition-age youth—those in foster care as well as those who have aged out.

However, there is much work to be done. Exiting foster care and facing adulthood without strong connections to families, school, employment, and communities places young people at risk in both the short and long term. High rates of housing instability and homelessness exacerbate the problems, creating significant obstacles to healthy development and self-sufficiency in education, employment, and physical and mental health. We know that youth who are in foster care beyond age 18 do better than those who leave foster care at 18. While we learned through this survey that the service array is similar for youth in or out of care, more research is needed to understand the relationship between staying in care and improved outcomes. For example, we need to know more about the quality of services, and whether that quality varies based on location or whether a young person is in foster care. We also need to know if young people in foster care access services at the same rate as those not in foster care, and ensure that any barriers to service use are removed.

Having services and supports is not enough: states need to make sure that those services are firmly grounded in evidence, and produce the desired outcomes for young people with foster care experience. In addition to expanding the number of evidence-based programs for this population, that research must be infused in the service array. Although a majority of states report having evidence-based or evidence-informed programs or practices for at least one type of service or support, 11 states report that they have no research-based programs or practices for this population. Further exploration and understanding of why so many states lack such programs, and how to overcome those barriers, is needed.

Extending foster care beyond age 18 is one of the key strategies used by states to support transition-age youth. Emerging research shows some positive outcomes for youth who stay in foster care beyond age 18, compared to their peers who leave foster care at age 18.<sup>49</sup> But young people are not accessing extended care as much as they could: the majority of states (77 percent) reported that young people leave extended foster care at least one year before the maximum age they *can* remain in care.

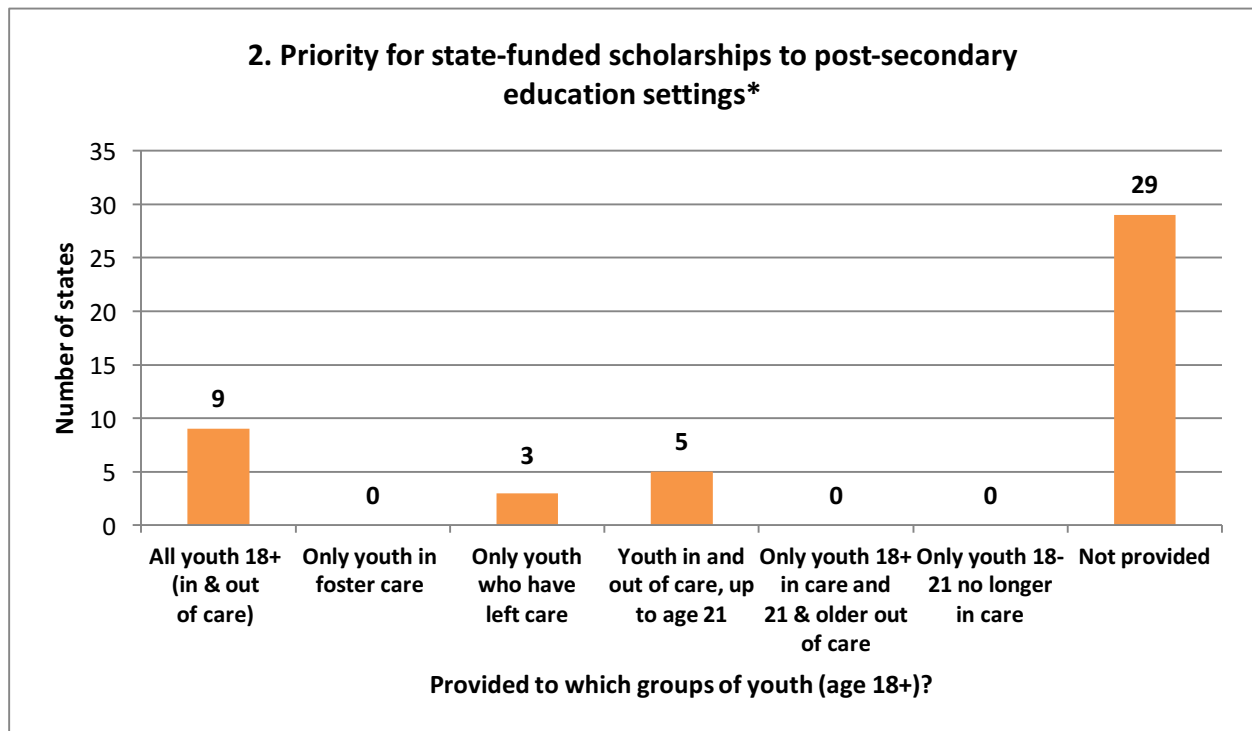
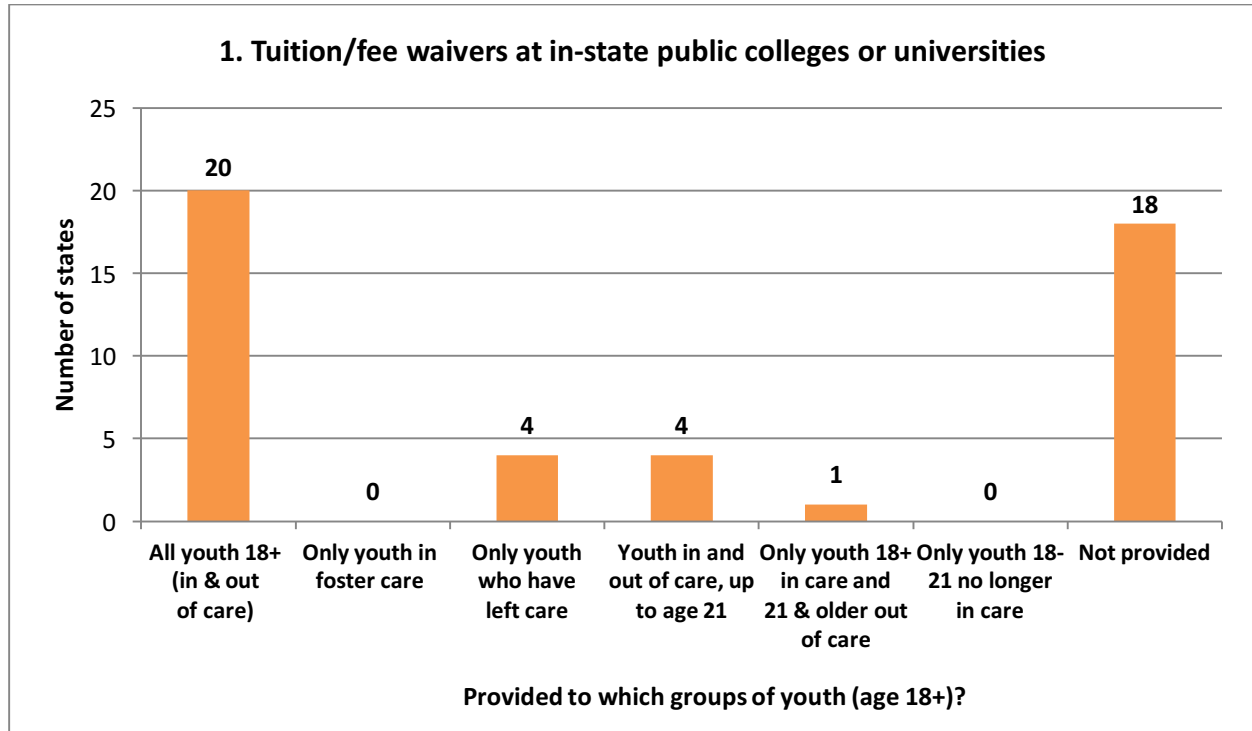
Individuals who have recently transitioned from foster care to independence, or who are approaching that milestone, are among the most vulnerable young people in the country. This survey underscores a troubling reality: while existing state services and supports are important to their well-being, much work remains to connect young people with the kinds of tangible and intangible supports that millions of families across the country provide to their adolescent and young adult children every day.

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<sup>49</sup> Courtney, M.E., and Okpych, N.J. Memo from CalYOUTH: Early Findings on the Relationship between Extended Foster Care and Youths' Outcomes at Age 19. Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, (2017). Available at: [http://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/CY\\_EF\\_IB0317.pdf](http://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/CY_EF_IB0317.pdf)

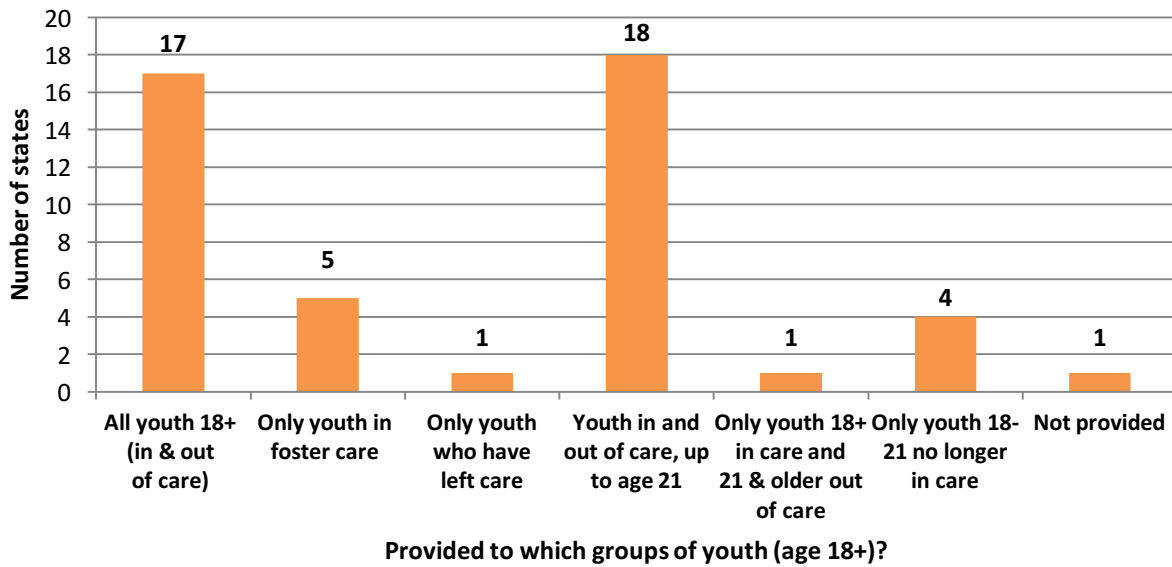
## Appendix: Detailed survey data for the six major domains

### Post-secondary education

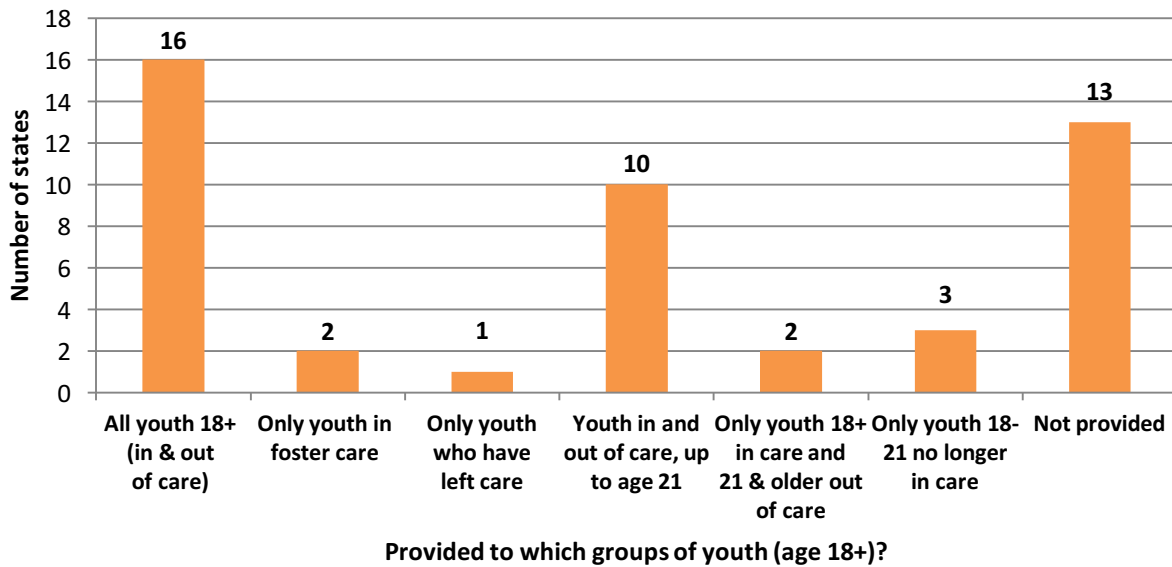


\*One state did not respond to this part of the question.

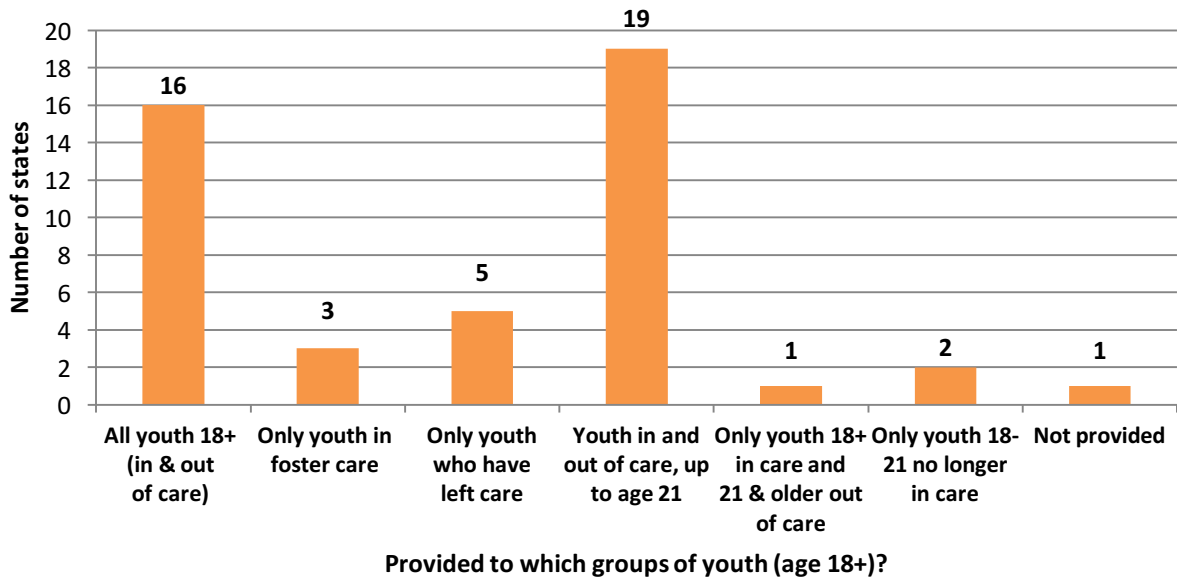
**3. Exploration of post-secondary educational opportunities  
(e.g., college immersion programs, college workshops, campus tours)**



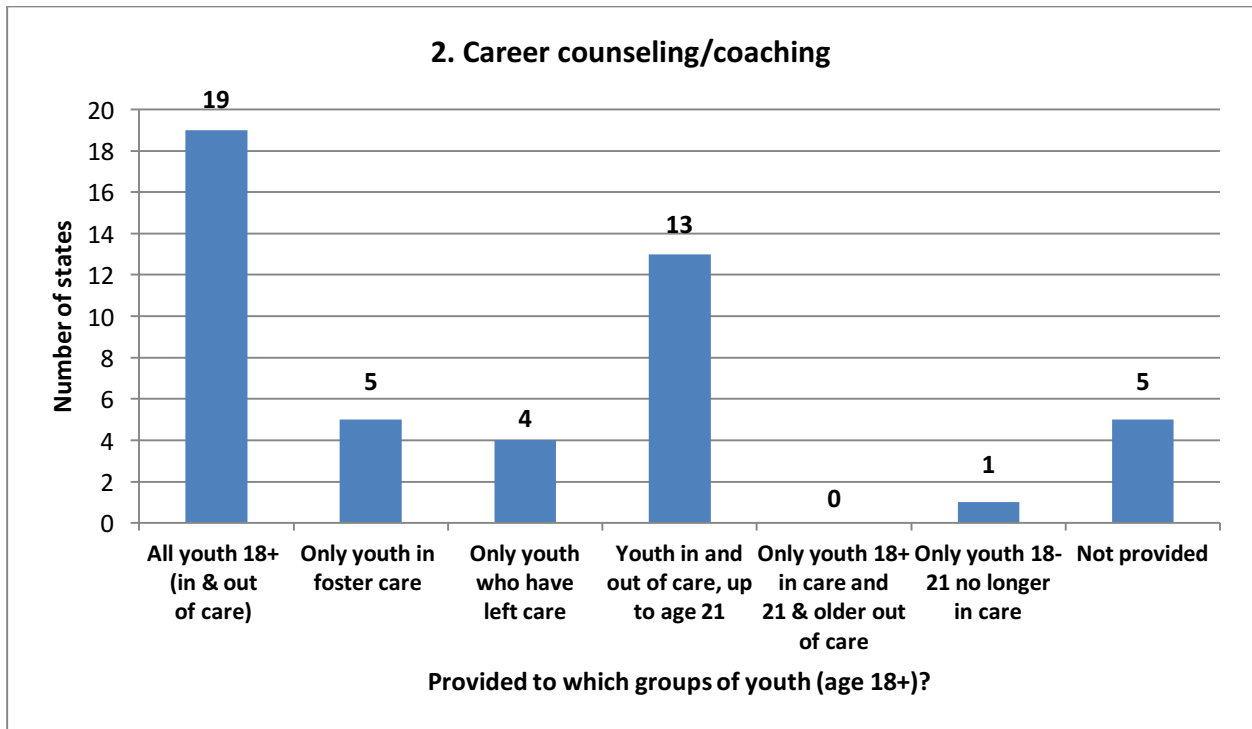
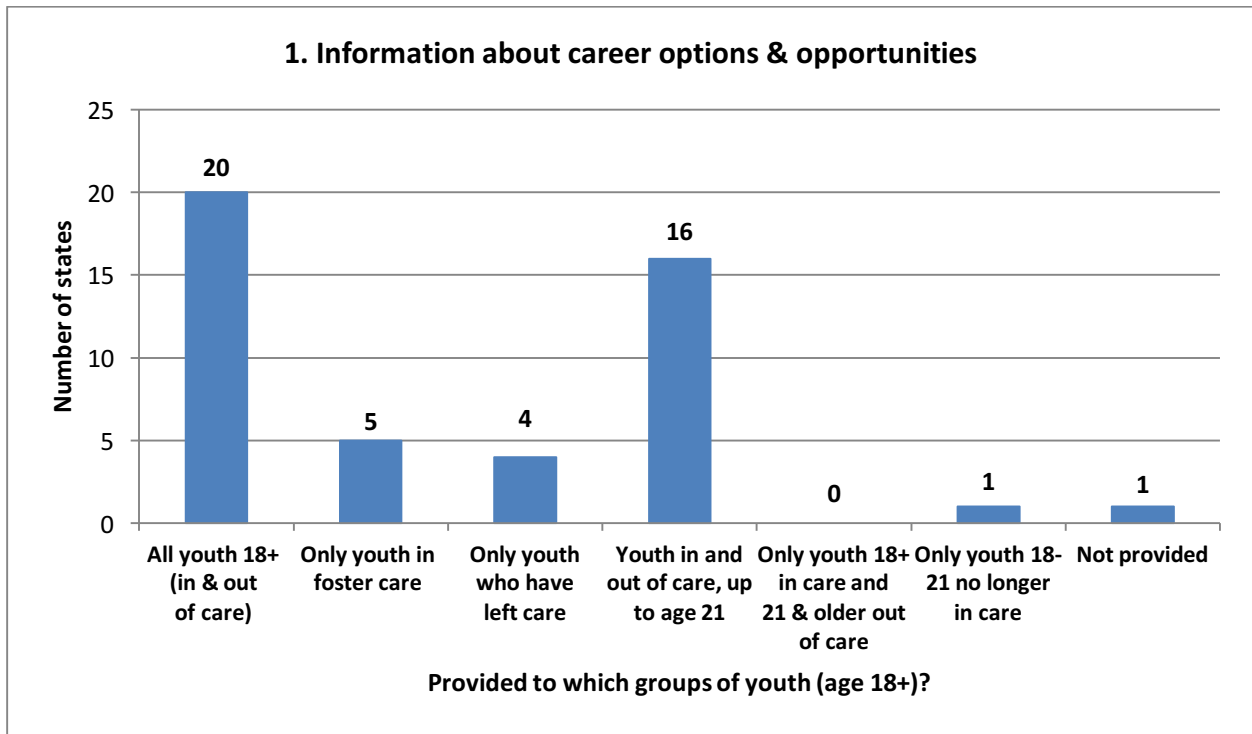
**4. Educational advocates/liasons assigned to young people enrolled in post-secondary education programs**

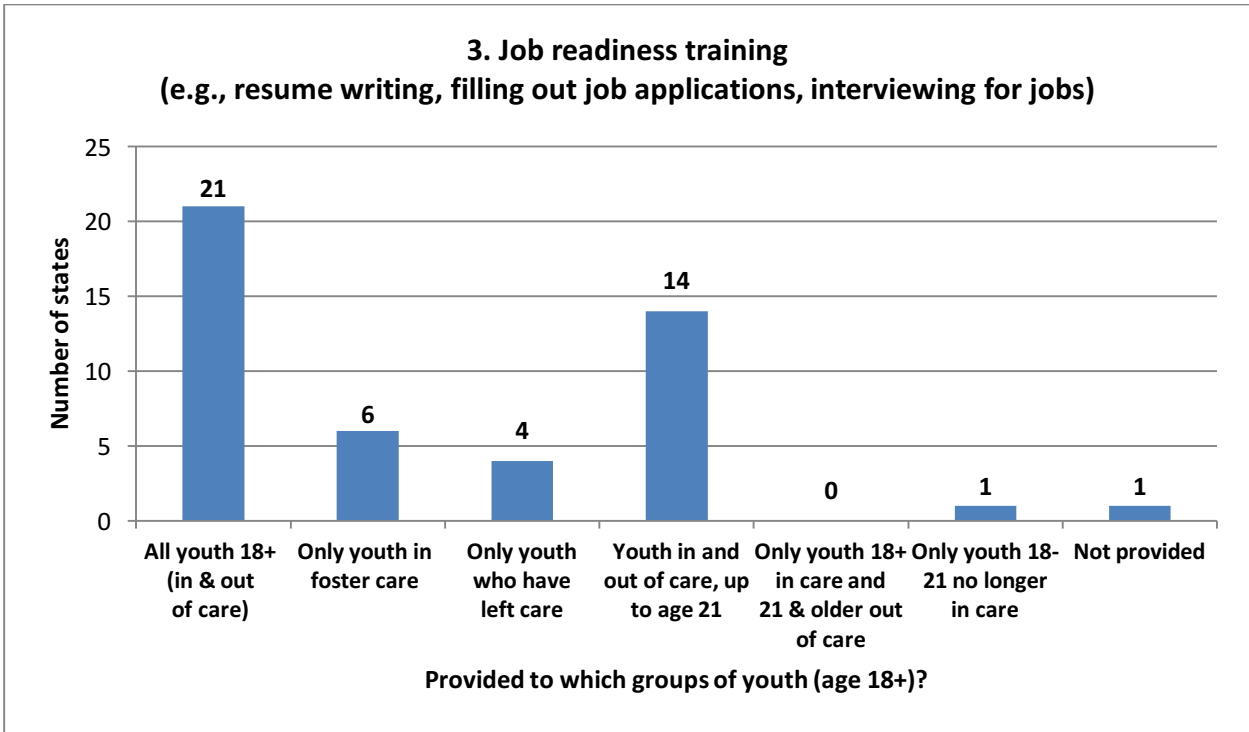


**5. Assistance with accessing vocational training or other alternatives to traditional postsecondary educational programs**



# Employment and career development

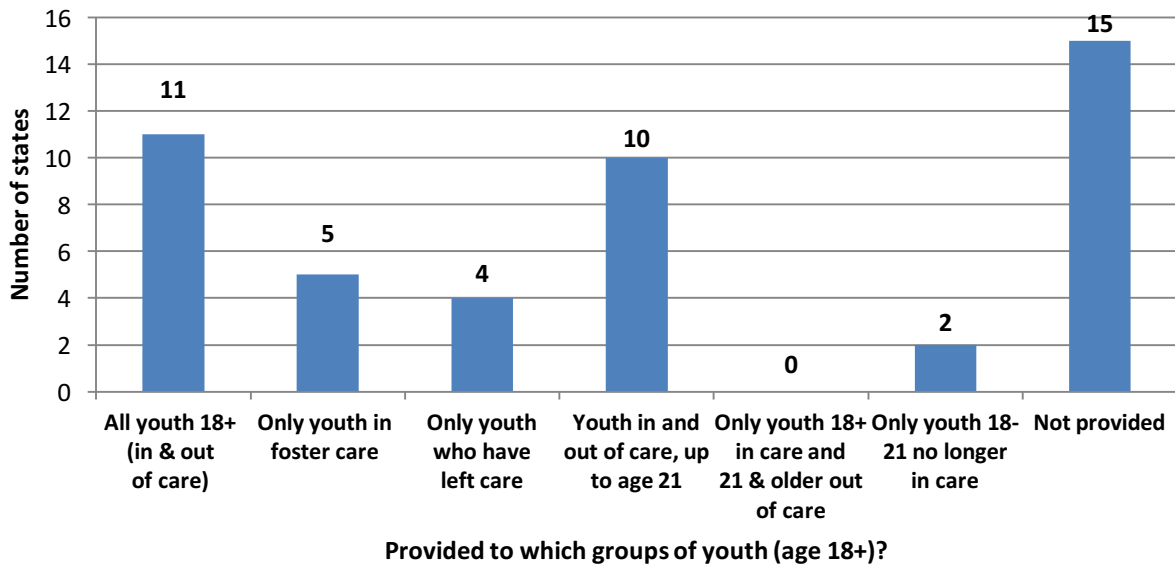




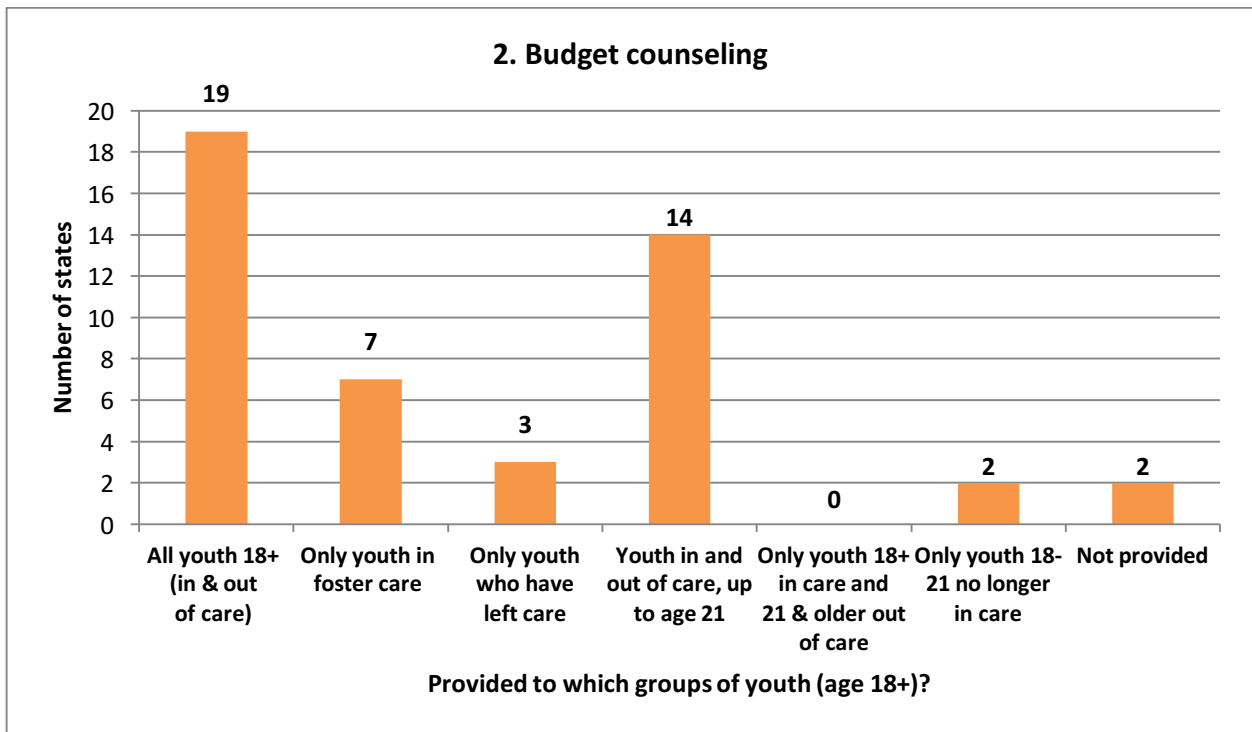
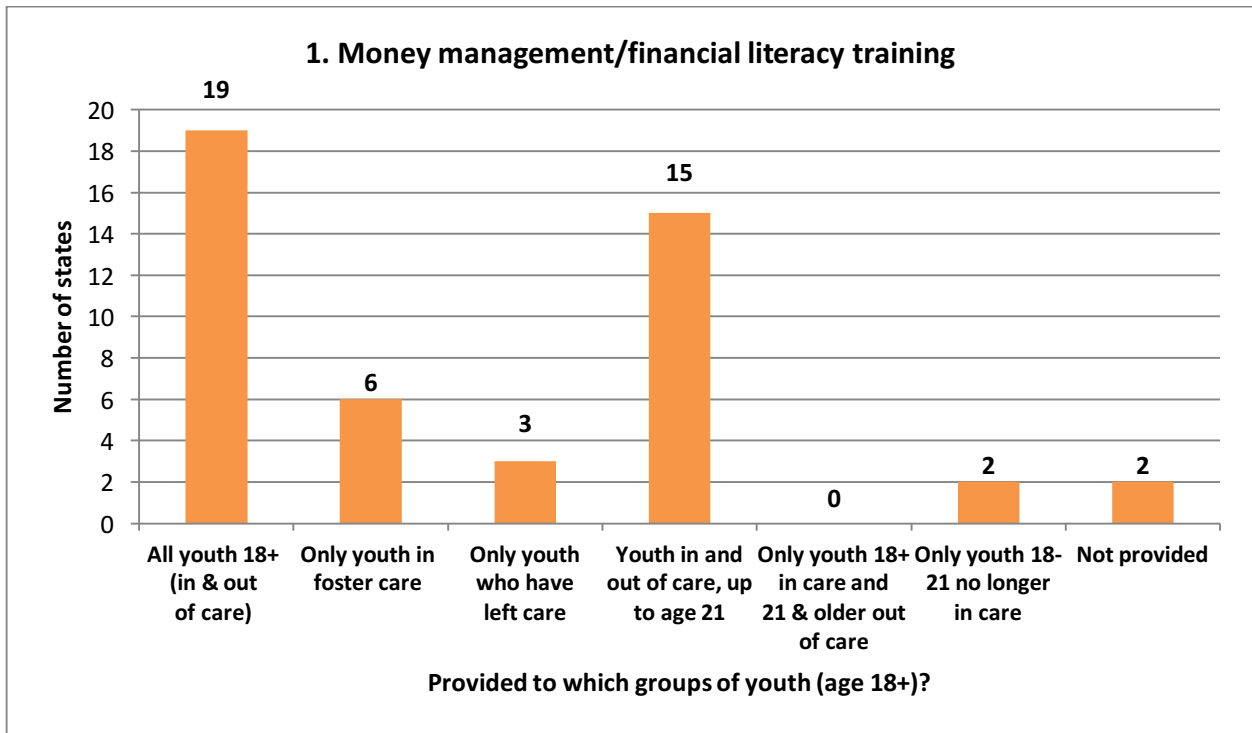
\* One state did not respond to this part of the question.



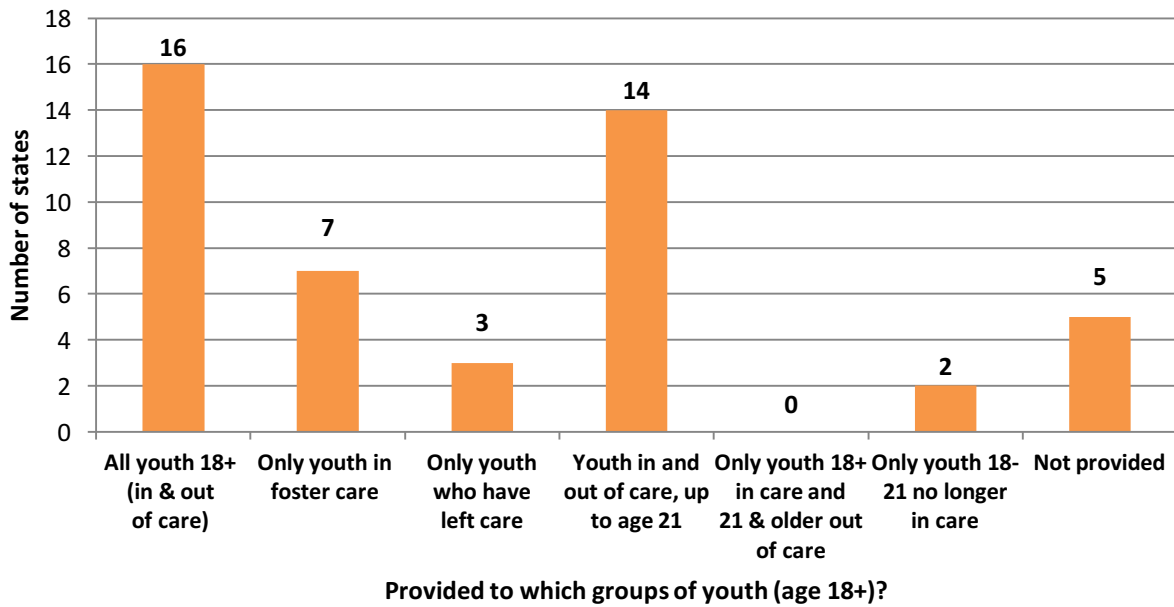
### 5. Mentorship from professionals in desired field or from an organization of interest



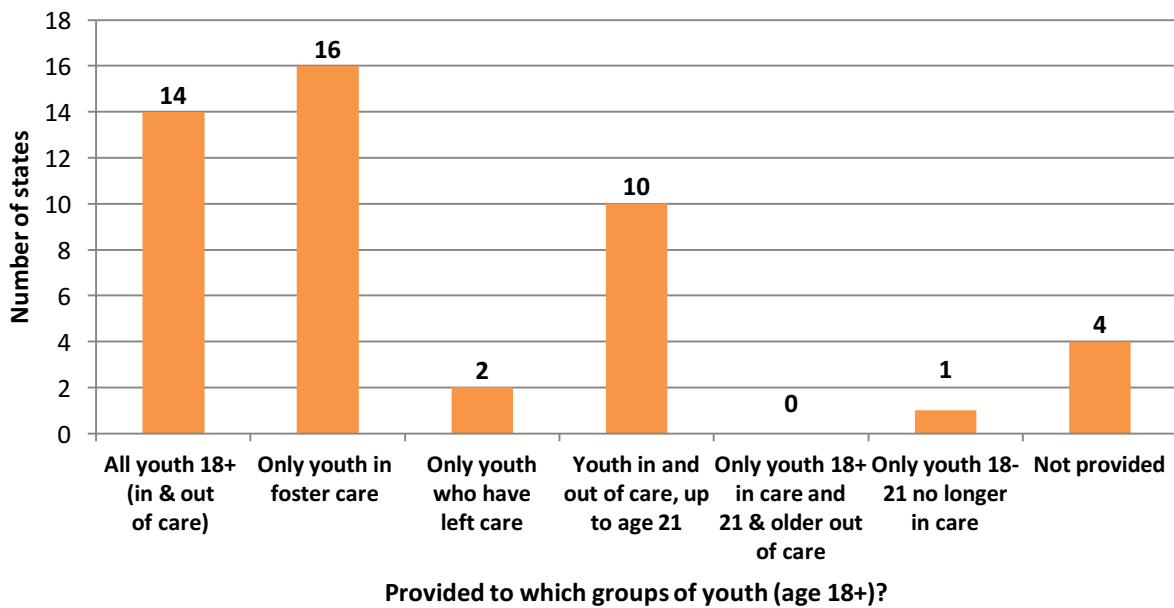
# Financial capability



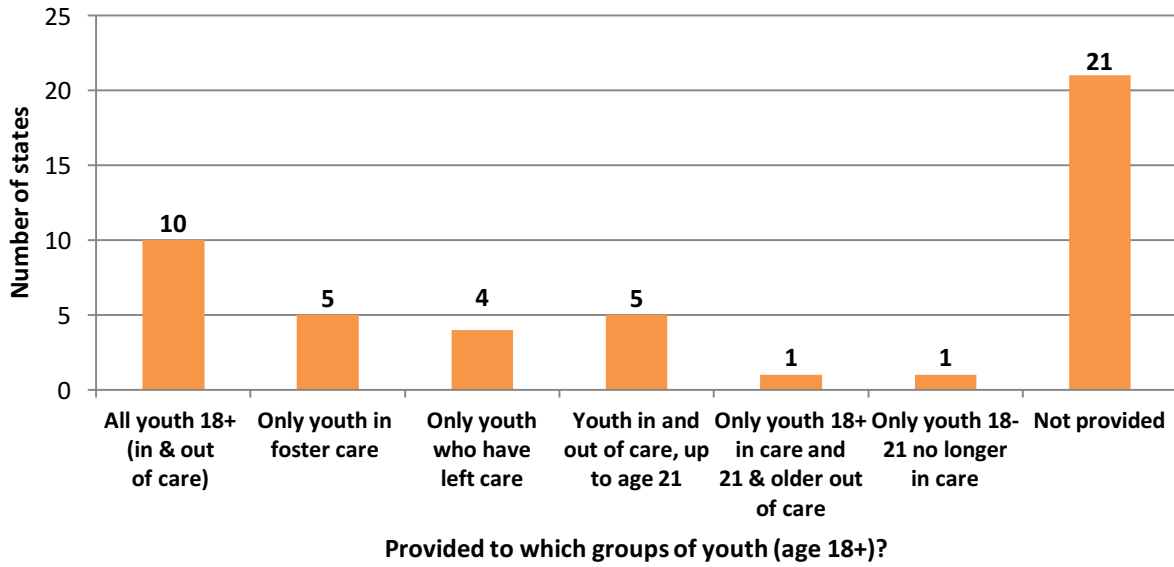
### 3. Assistance opening bank accounts



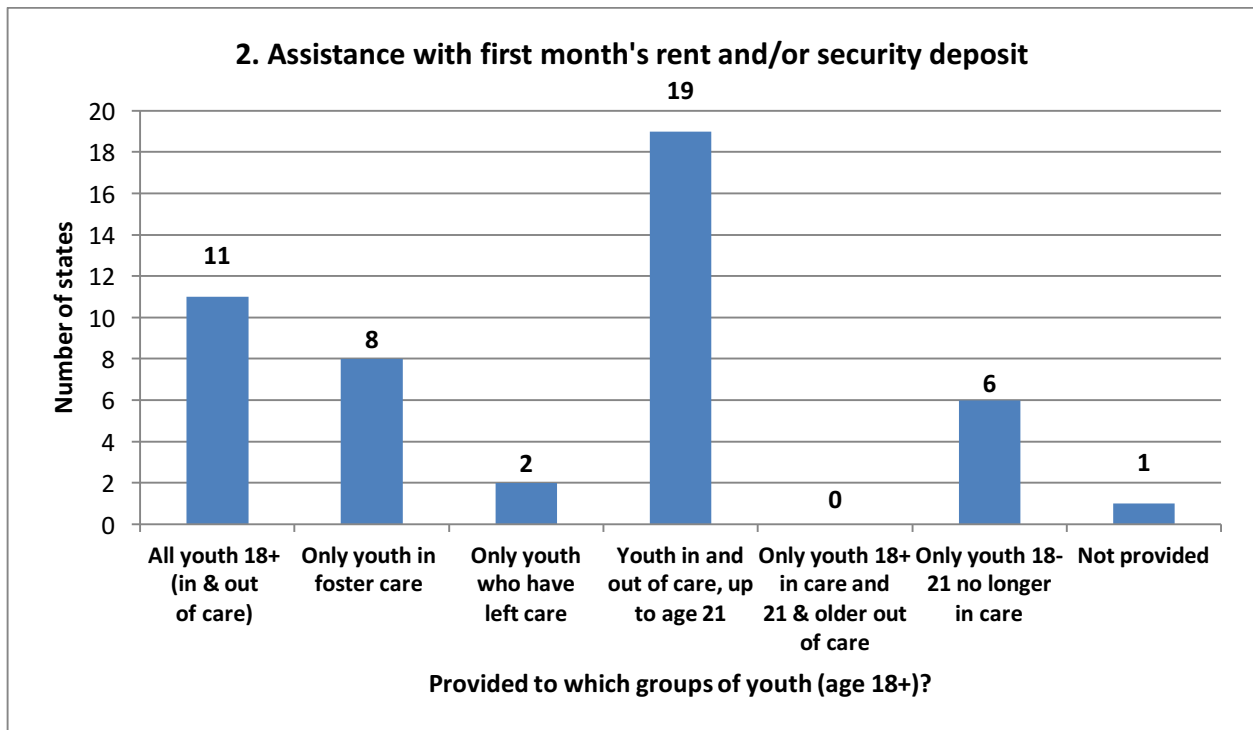
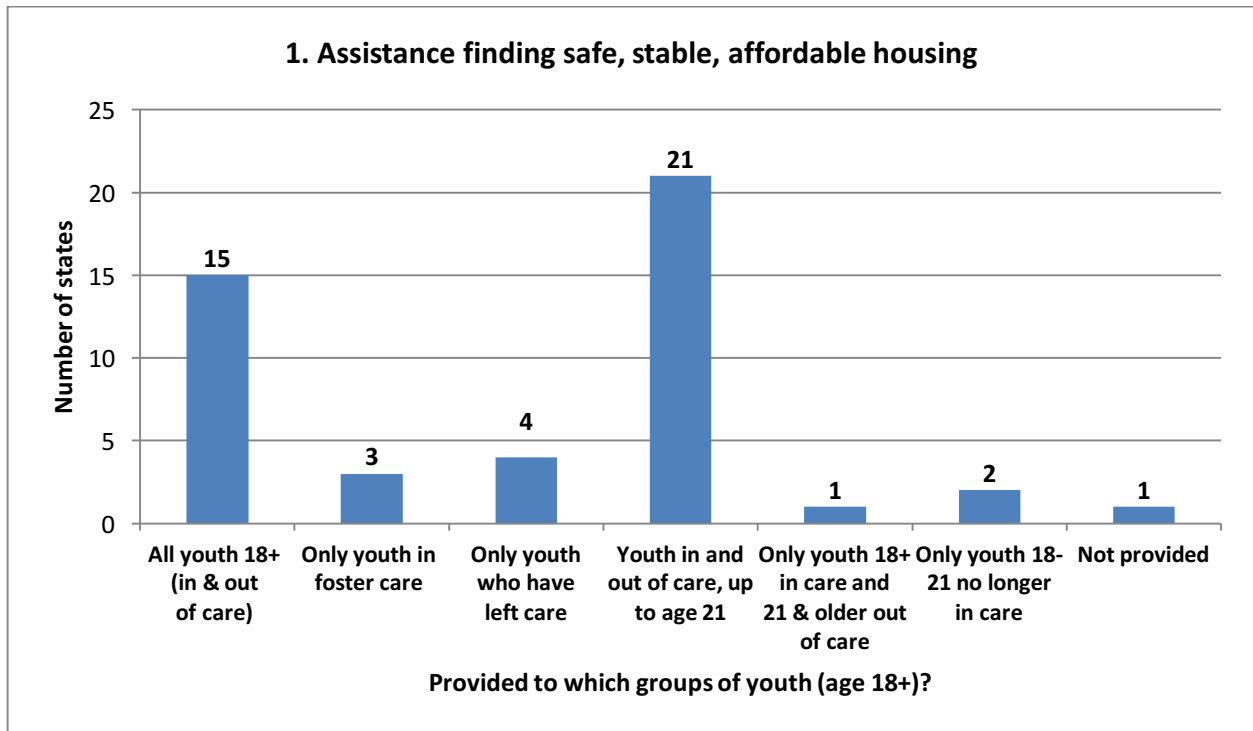
### 4. Credit reports/Identity theft protection



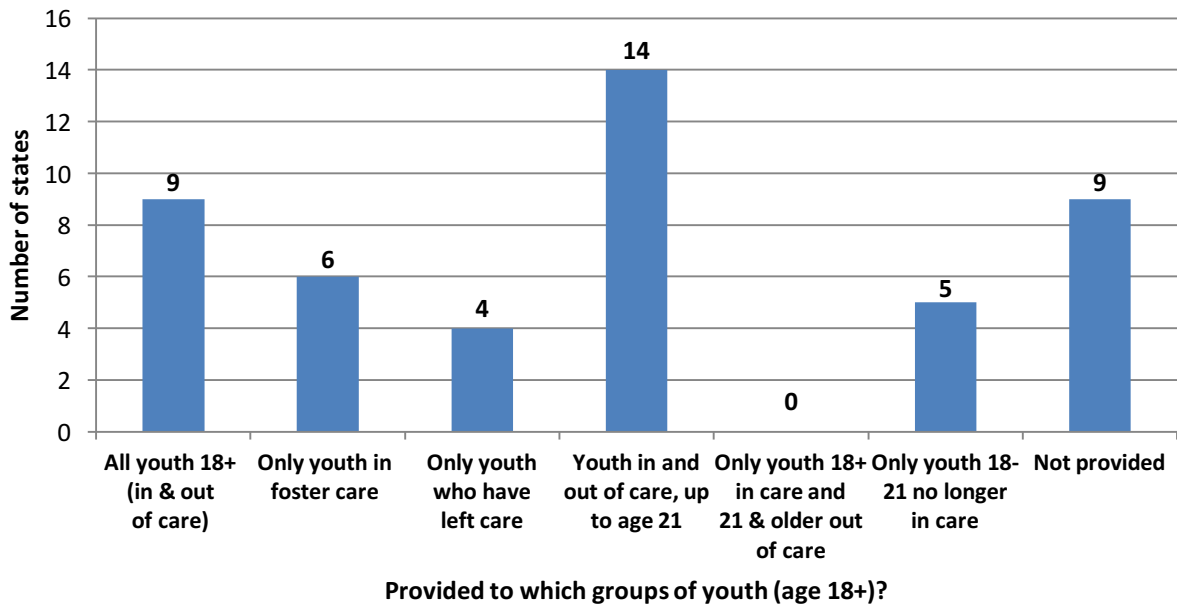
**5. Matched savings for asset purchases, through individual development accounts (IDAs) or other means**



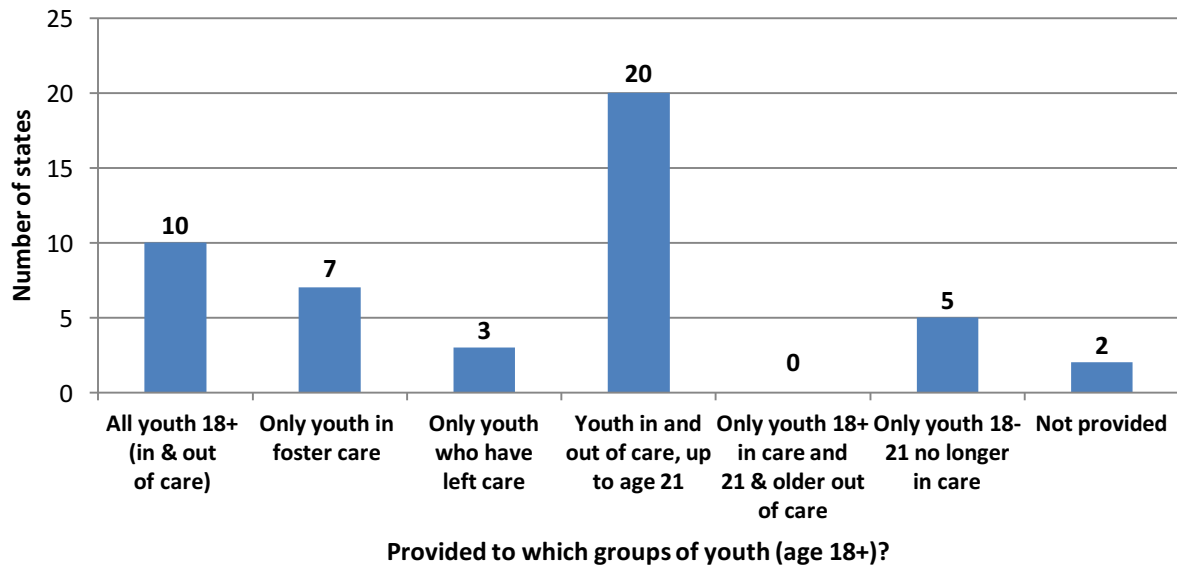
## Securing safe, stable, and affordable housing



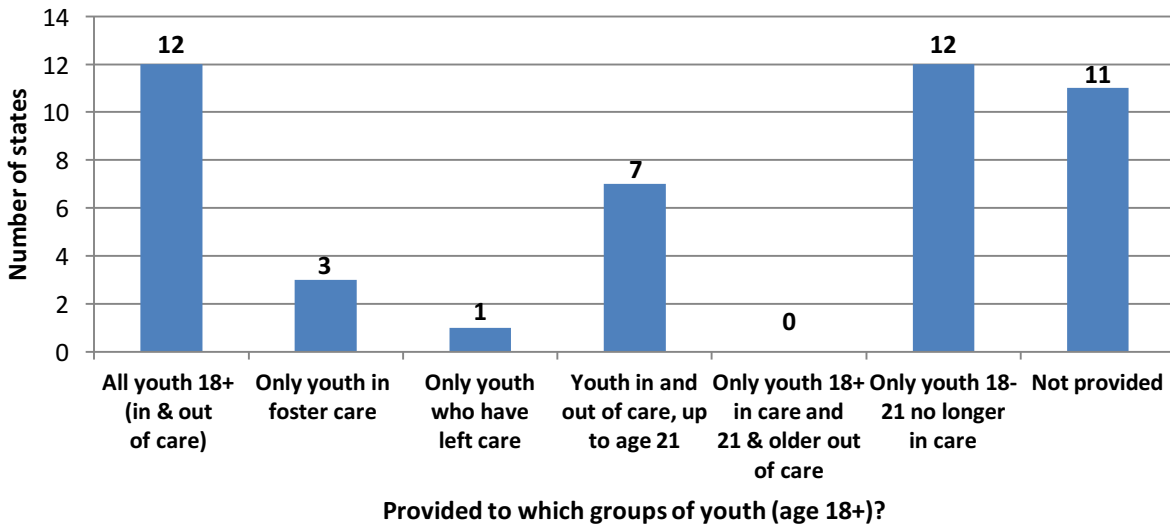
### 3. Ongoing rental assistance



### 4. Assistance with housing-related "start-up" costs (e.g., furnishing, housewares)

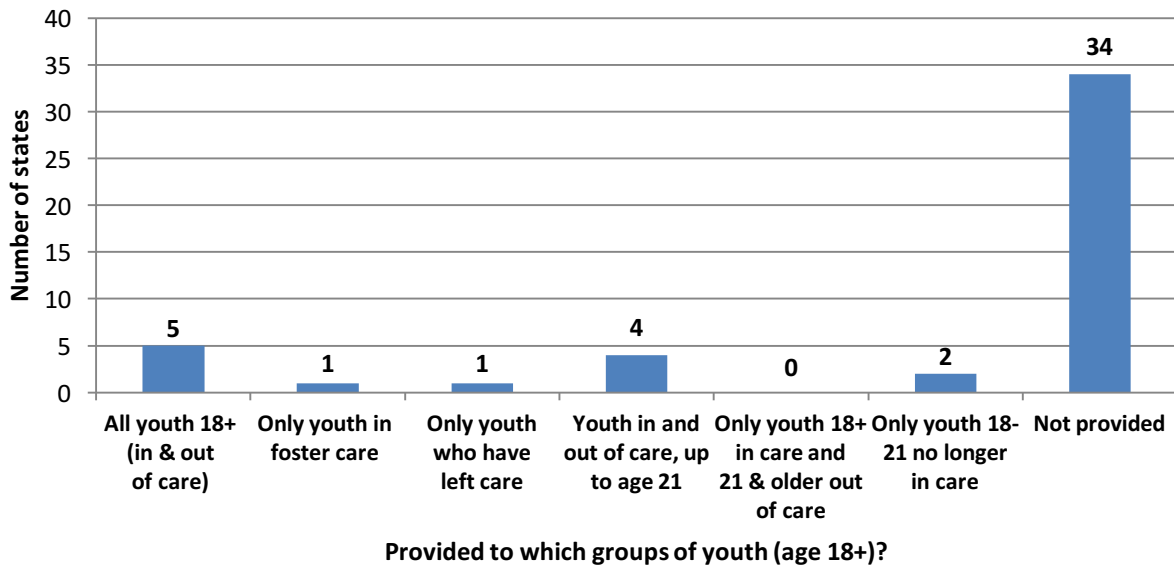


**5. Priority access to rental assistance  
(e.g., through Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers,  
Housing Choice/Section 8 vouchers, public housing)\***

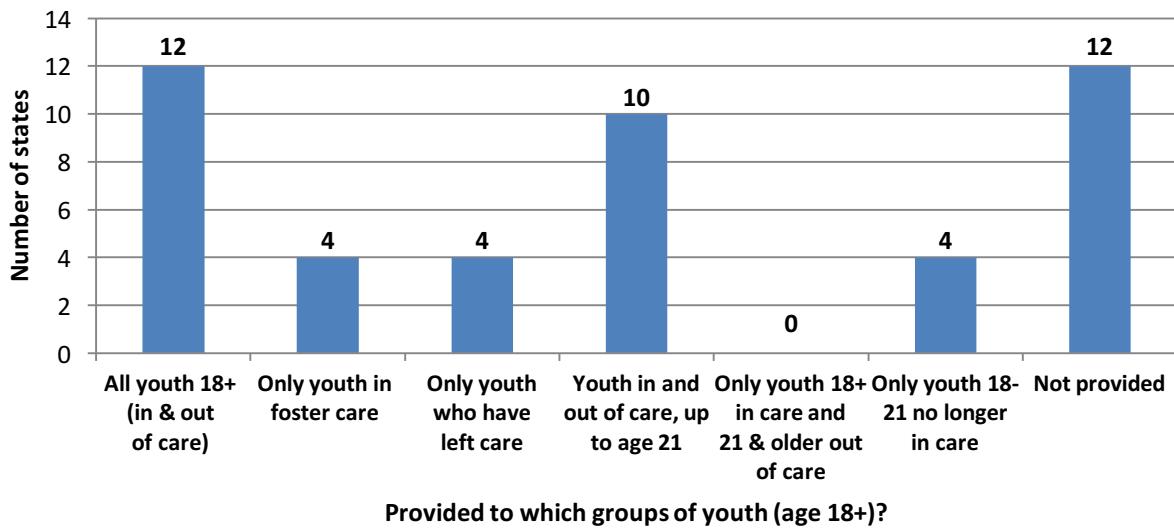


\* One state did not respond to this part of the question.

**6. Contracts with housing developers to guarantee certain percentage of clients are young people who were or are in foster care**



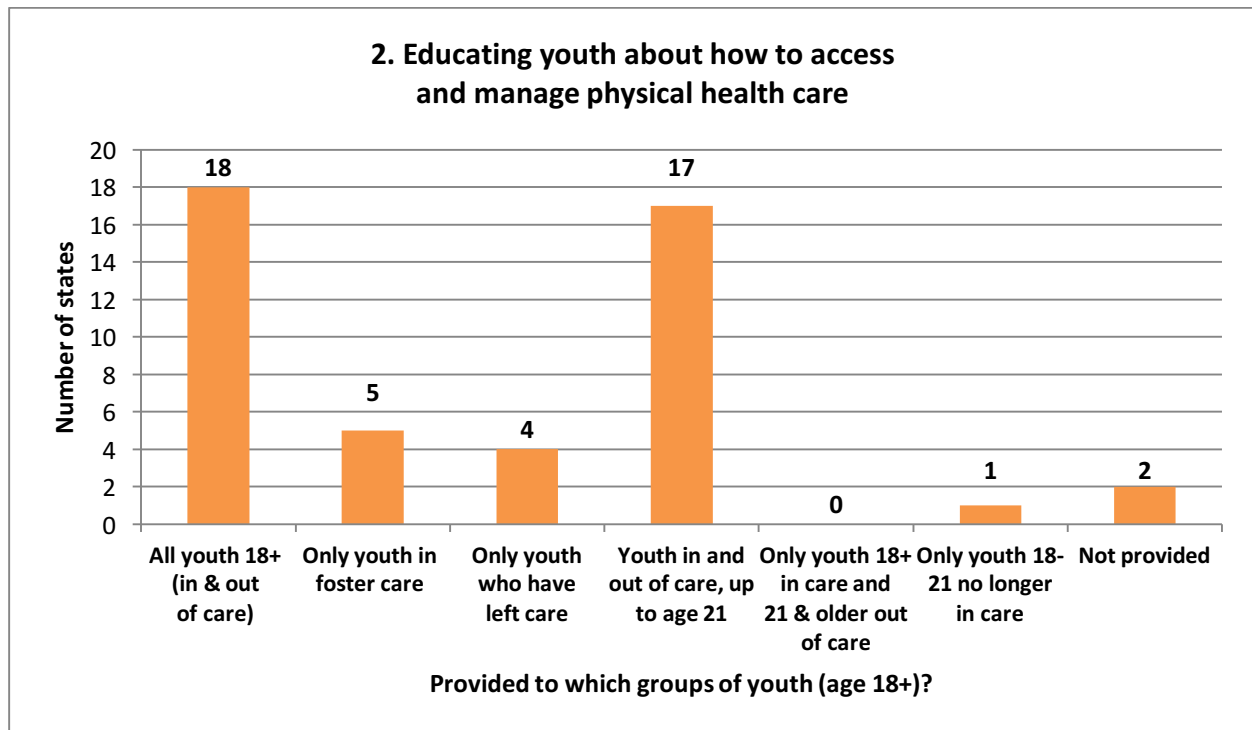
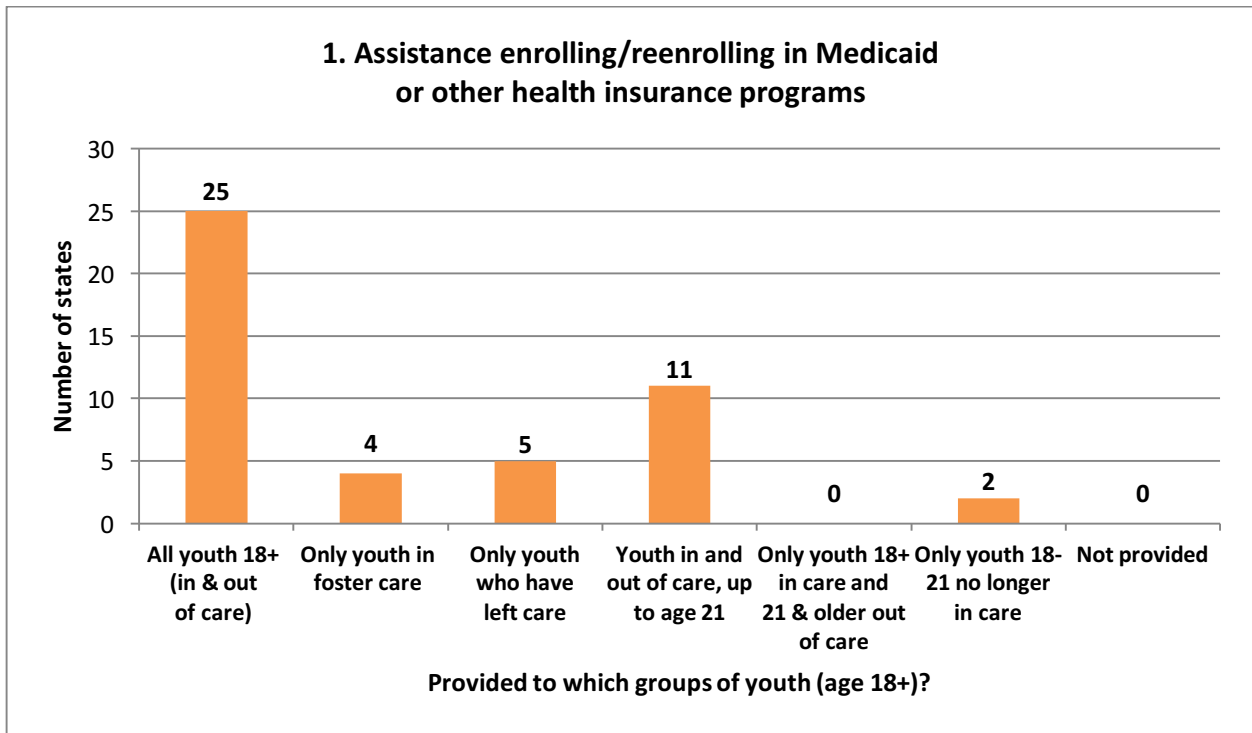
### 7. Housing facilities specifically for young people transitioning from foster care\*



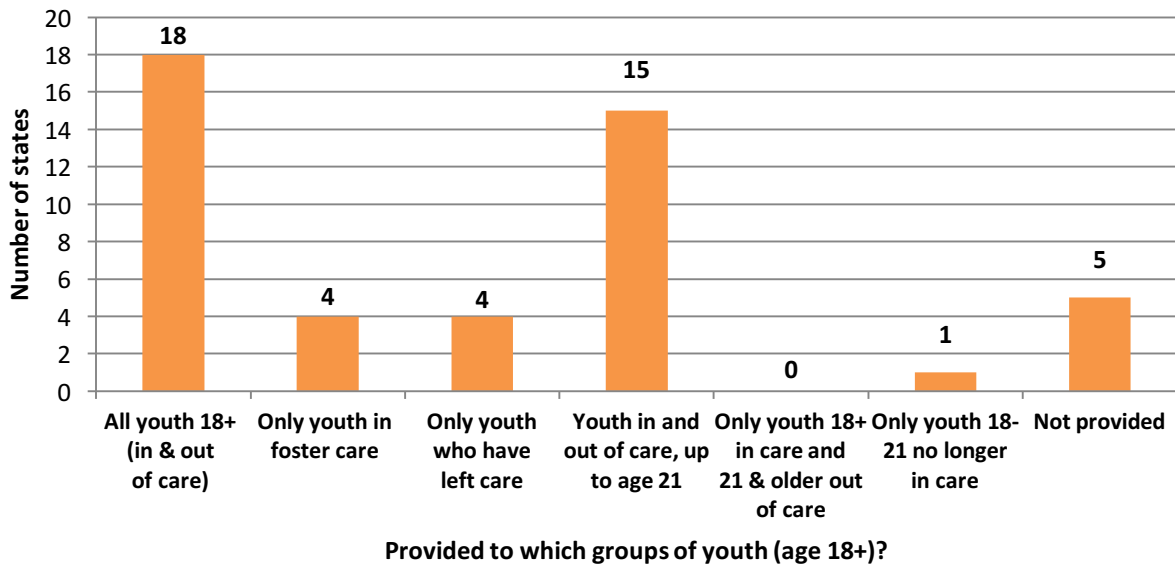
\* One state did not respond to this part of the question.



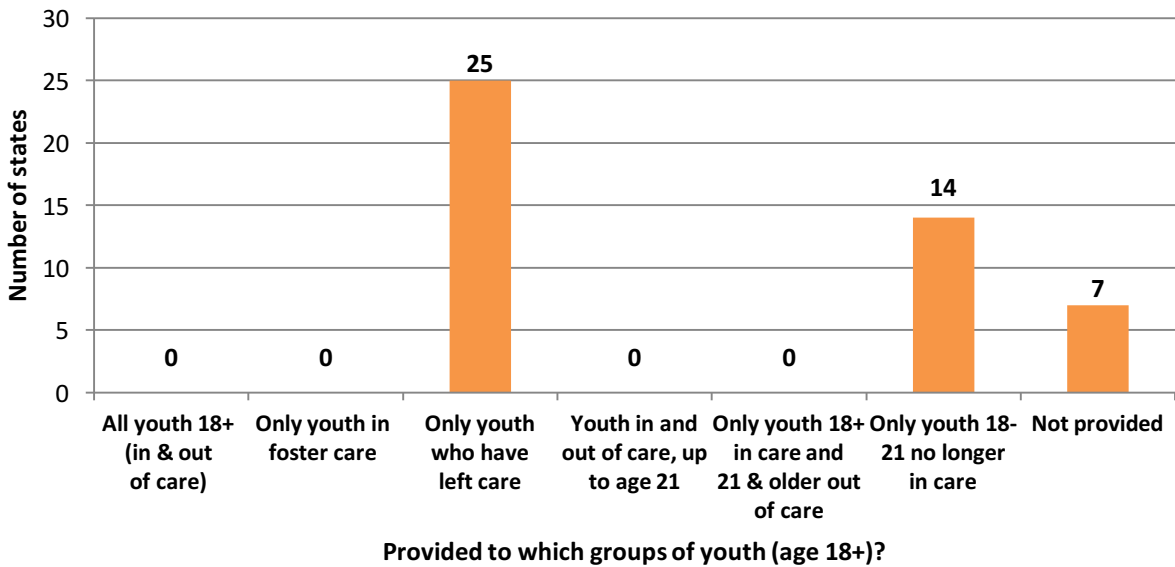
## Accessing and managing health and mental health care



### 3. Educating youth about how to access and manage mental health care

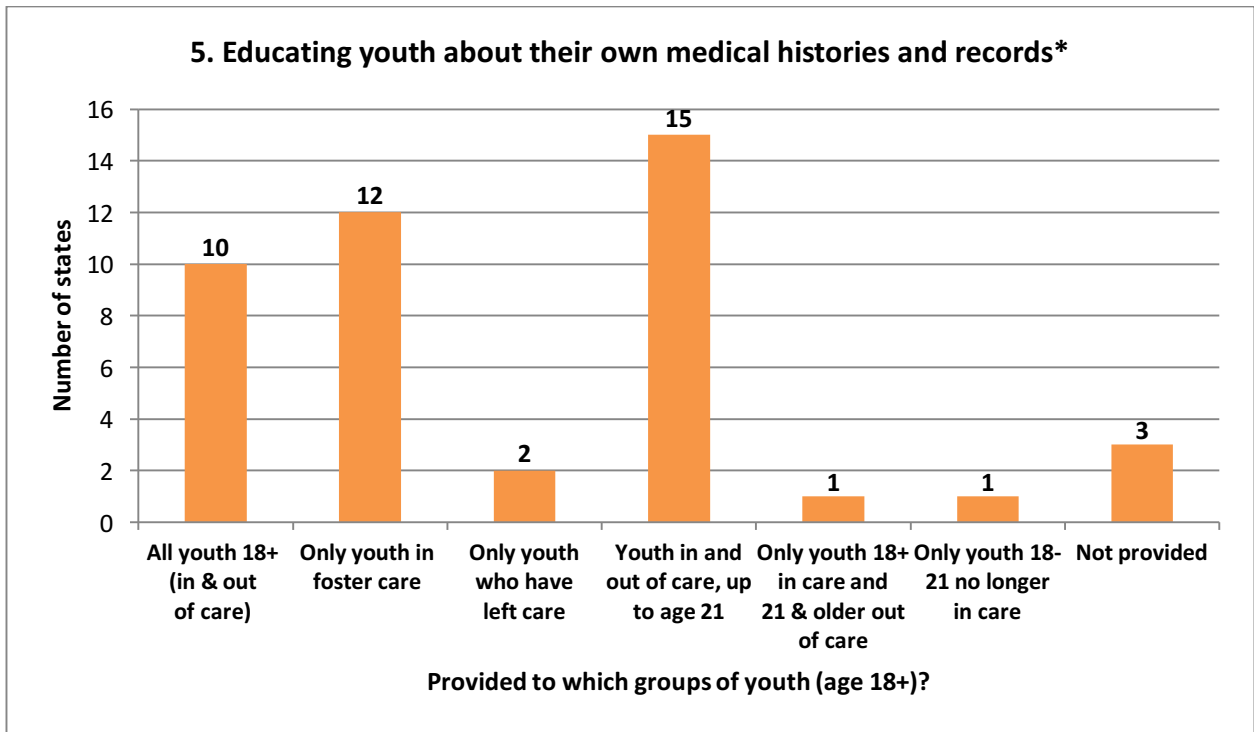


### 4. Information about health insurance via materials or communications from child welfare agency staff after youth leave foster care\*, ^

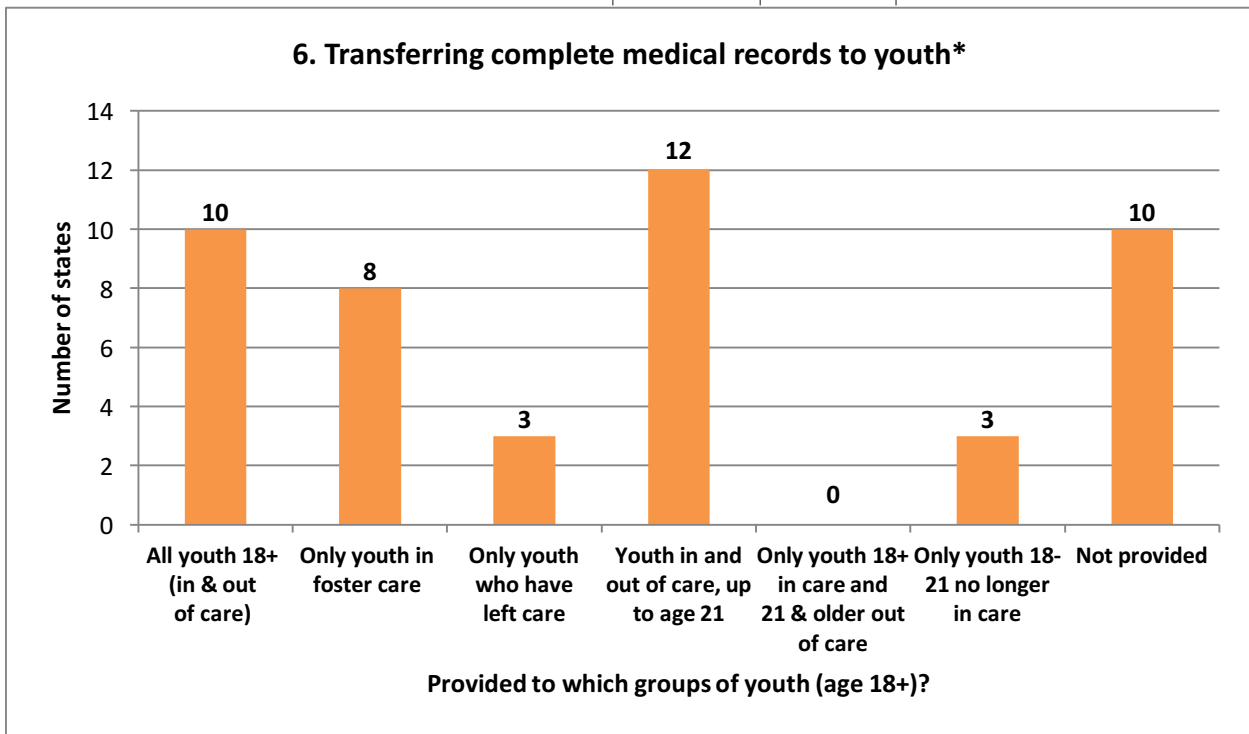


\* One state did not respond to this part of the question.

^ Since this question only asked about youth after they leave foster care we did not count the responses that included youth in foster care.

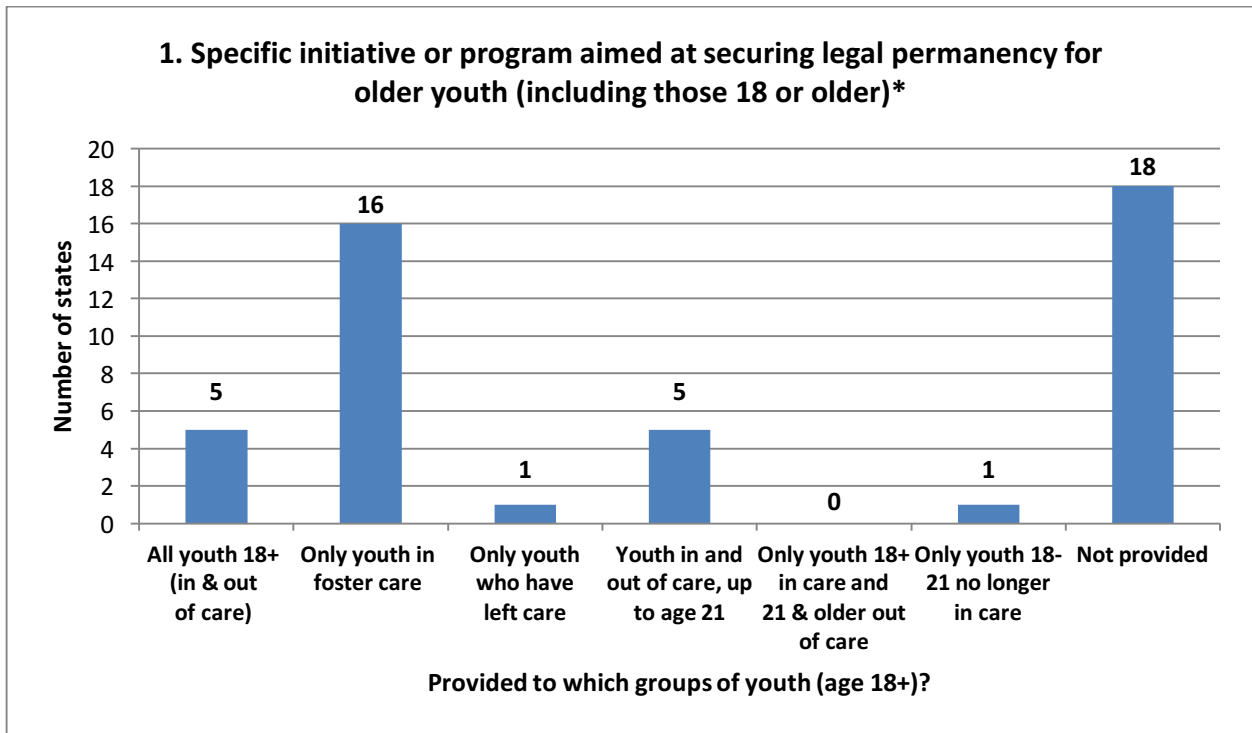


Three states did not respond to this part of the question.

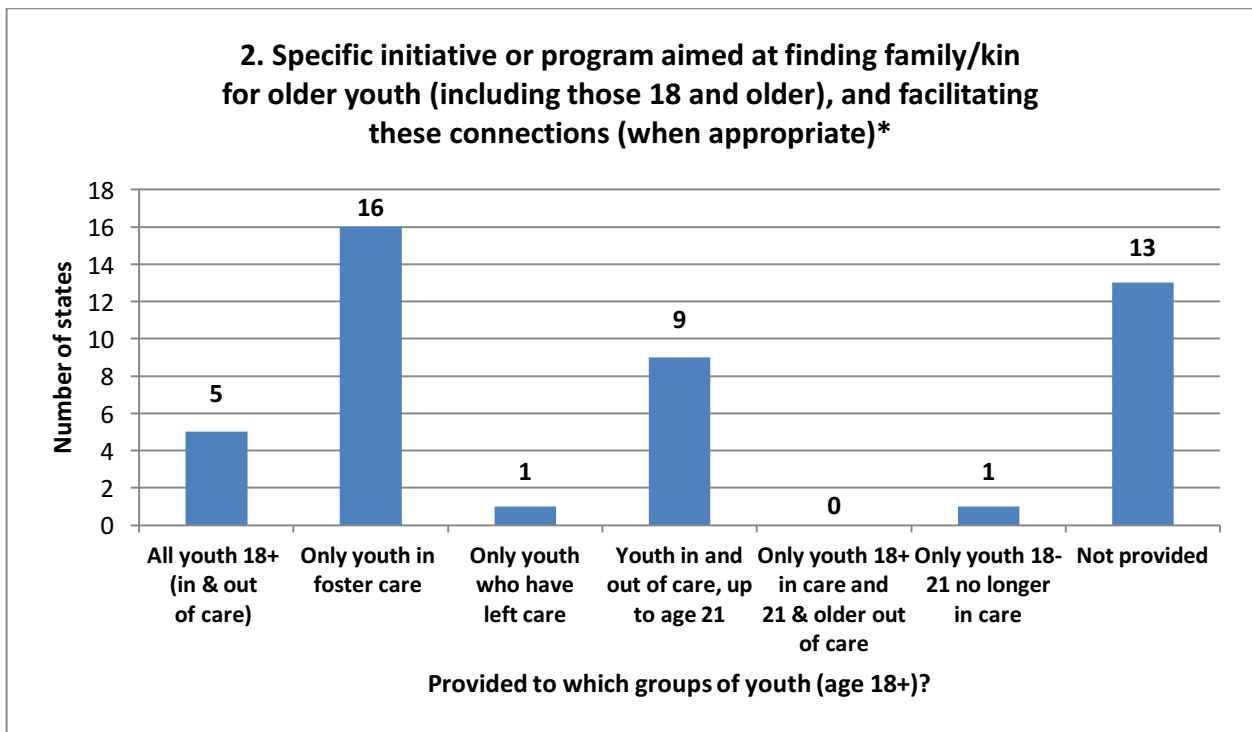


\* One state did not respond to this part of the question.

## Establishing permanent relationships with supportive adults

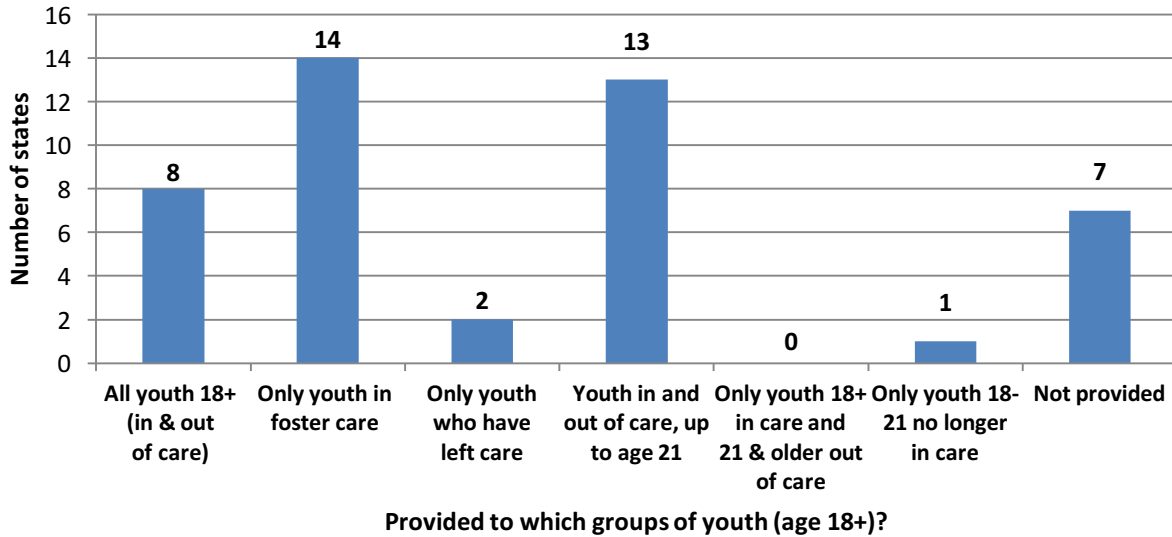


\* One state did not respond to this part of the question.



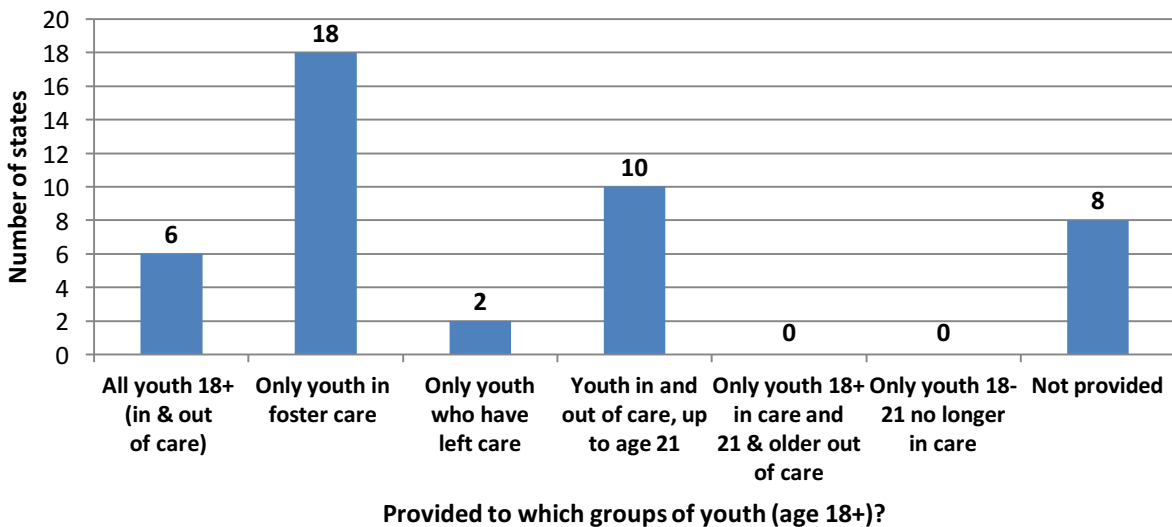
\* Two states did not respond to this part of the question.

**3. Exploring and supporting youth’s connections to birth family, when appropriate (e.g., providing older youth with information and skills to establish safe, adult, nondependent relationships with family, or considering restoring parental rights)\***



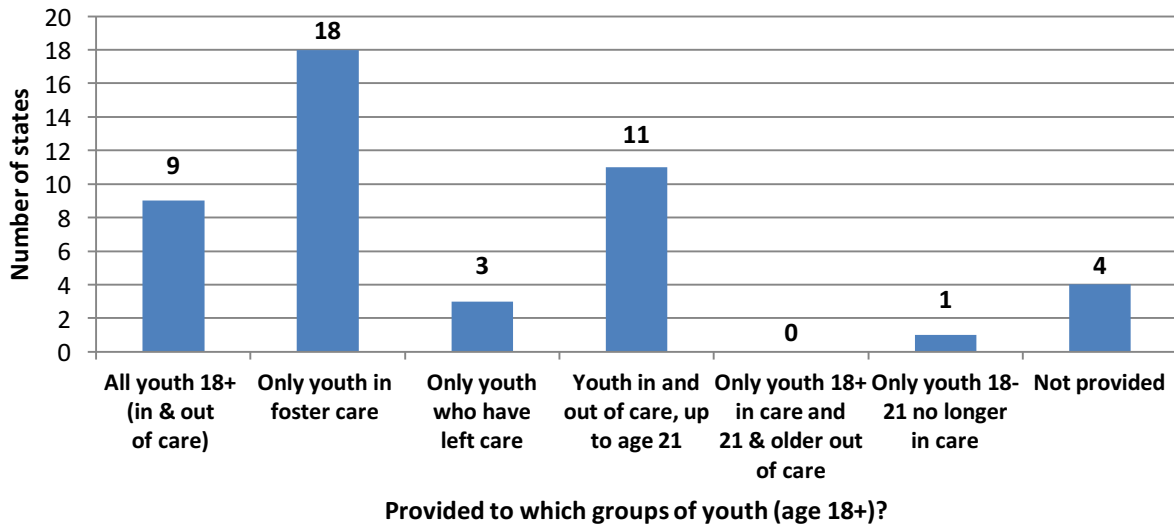
\* Two states did not respond to this part of the question.

**4. Court involvement or other formal oversight to ensure child welfare agencies make reasonable efforts to help transition-age youth establish permanent connections with supportive adults\***



\* Two states did not respond to this part of the question.  
One state had conflicting responses that were not included in this count.

**5. Involving individuals identified by youth as important to them (e.g., mentors, relatives, coaches) in key decisions (e.g., through team decision-making)\***



\* One state did not respond to this part of the question.