






# Sub-strategy 1b: Safe and stable housing

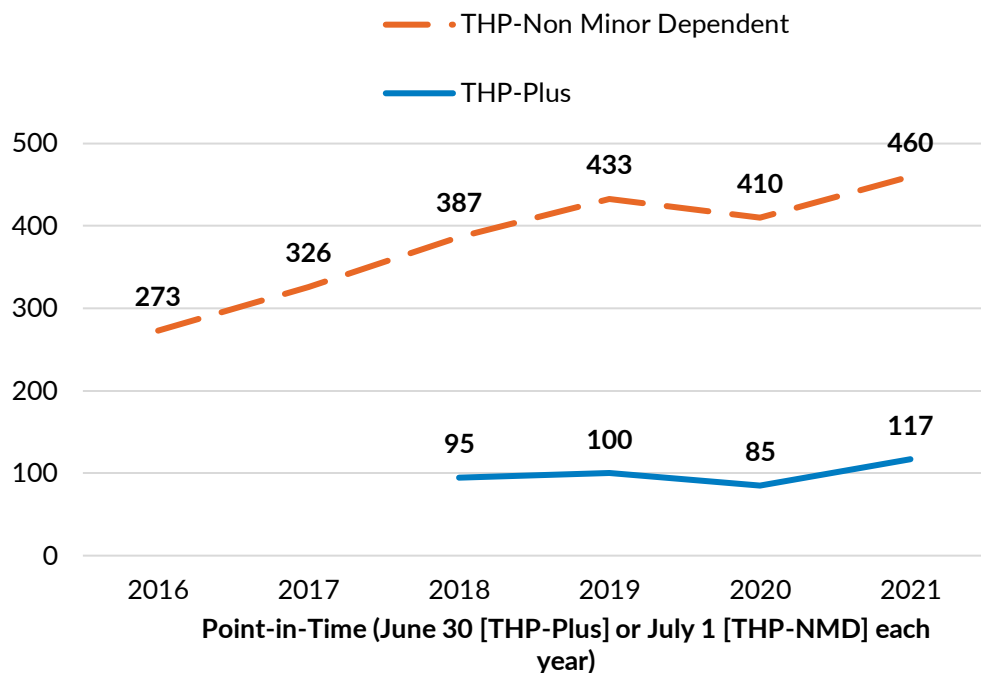
This snapshot accompanies Child Trends' [2022 Evaluation Report](#) for the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's [Foster Youth Initiative](#). It highlights a sample of the Foundation's grantees' efforts, key data points, and ongoing barriers to support foster youths' access to safe and stable housing in Los Angeles (LA) and New York City (NYC). Snapshots are available for each of the Initiative's sub-strategies focused on foster youth and caregivers.

## Los Angeles

### Highlights

	<p>SB 187, co-sponsored by <a href="#">John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY)</a>, passed in 2022 and expanded both funding and eligibility for Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus), a housing program for young people who exit foster care at or after age 18. Young people can now access THP-Plus through age 24 and for a maximum of 36 months. State investments in the Transitional Housing Program (THP) have increased from \$8 million to \$33.3 million.<sup>1</sup> The <a href="#">Coalition for Responsible Community Development</a> has been funded to make policy recommendations to improve access to housing through LA's Homeless Services Authority.</p>
	<p>Grantees and public agencies, with philanthropic support, worked together closely to ensure that youth ages 21 and older facing the "housing cliff" in December 2021 did not exit foster care to homelessness. Since that time, <a href="#">Safe Place for Youth's</a> Pod Share program has served young people exiting care without identified housing.</p>
	<p><a href="#">First Place for Youth</a> elevates youth voice in its advocacy on housing and other topics through its Youth Policy Leaders. Homelessness is one of three policy areas of focus prioritized by the LA County Youth Commission, which is comprised of young people with lived experience in foster care and/or the probation system.</p>
	<p><a href="#">Safe Place for Youth</a> and <a href="#">First Place for Youth</a> provide housing and other supportive services to parenting youth. Other grantees including <a href="#">Public Counsel</a>, <a href="#">Saving Innocence</a>, and <a href="#">Children's Law Center</a> advocate for individual youth, including youth who have been victims of exploitation, as they navigate housing resources.</p>
	<p>Grantees are supporting public agencies with data and evaluation. For example, <a href="#">The Center for Strategic Partnerships</a> will assist LA's child welfare agency in evaluating its new Supportive Housing Division.</p>

**Figure 1. Number of Youth in Transitional Housing, Los Angeles, 2016-2021**



LA has housed more young people in transitional housing over time, a number that is expected to continue increasing due to new public investments in 2022.


Sources: John Burton Advocates for Youth<sup>ii</sup> and California Child Welfare Indicators Project Reports<sup>iii</sup>

## Barriers





While several grantees provide direct services to young people to increase access to safe and stable housing and public investments have increased, several practical barriers remain. Foster youth face competition with other voucher holders, there is a lack of landlords for THP-Plus, and work remains to ensure that youth are prioritized in housing investments. Underpinning these challenges is the lack of affordable housing in LA. Subpopulations of young people in care face additional barriers, including racial discrimination, the criminalization of youth who are victims of exploitation, and the need for more housing that supports parenting youth and LGBTQ+ youth. LA lacks a complete picture of foster youth's experiences of homelessness, particularly after youth exit foster care and for the focal populations, which limits the ability to identify data-driven solutions. [California Policy Lab](#) is in the process of developing predictive models to better understand young people's experiences of homelessness but has faced challenges in data quality and availability.

## New York City

### Highlights

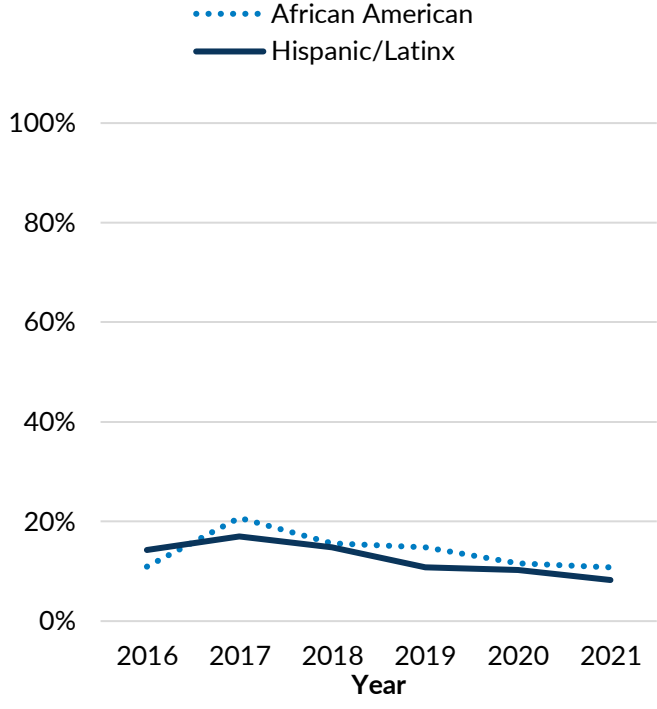
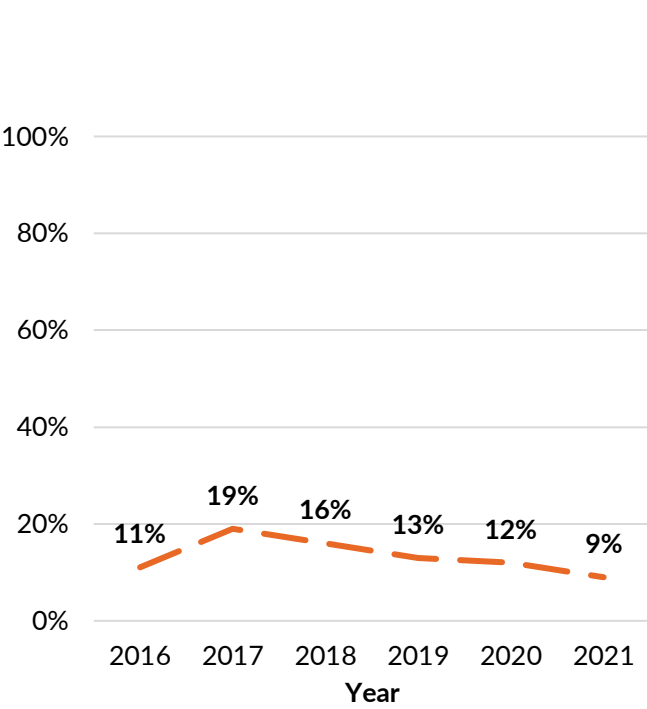
	<p>Vouchers are a newer resource for foster youth in NYC, who have traditionally been served through the NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) and supportive housing.<sup>1</sup> Youth may access Section 8 vouchers, City Family Homelessness &amp; Eviction Prevention Supplement (FHEPS) vouchers, and Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers. Emergency Housing Vouchers</p>
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<sup>1</sup> Supportive housing provides young people with a combination of affordable housing and social services.

	(EHV) became available to individuals and families during the pandemic but ended in September 2022.
	Grantees provide a range of housing supports to young people. For example, <b>City Living NY</b> provides household goods, comprehensive case management, and move-in financial support, while partnering closely with ACS and other organizations to support youth to secure housing with vouchers.
	<b>Fair Futures</b> is seen as a galvanizing force for youth engagement and has gotten young people excited about and connected to direct advocacy opportunities. The <b>Fair Futures</b> Youth Advisory Board has identified housing as its next advocacy focus, with priorities to be determined, and Foundation staff and grantees such as <b>City Living NY</b> , <b>New York Foundling</b> , and <b>Children’s Village</b> serve on the advocacy committee.
	<b>Good Shepherd Services</b> provides tailored support for young parents in its McLaughlin East Harlem Residence. Recognizing the unique needs of young parents, they provide group programming such as money management and parenting skills.
	<b>Children’s Defense Fund-NYC (CDF-NYC)</b> is evaluating the effects of a cash transfer pilot project on experiences of homelessness, interactions with the shelter system, and applications for/use of housing vouchers, among other outcomes.

**Figure 2.** Percent of youth aging out of care who received supportive housing, New York City, 2016-2021

**Figure 3.** Percent of youth aging out of care who received supportive housing, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, New York City, 2016-2021



Source: NYC Administration for Children’s Services’ Report on Youth in Foster Care<sup>iv, v, vi</sup>

While NYC provides supportive housing to a decreasing percentage of youth exiting care, the availability of vouchers has increased in recent years as an additional form of housing support. The trend lines for African American and Hispanic/Latinx young people exiting care largely mirror the trend line for all youth exiting care. African American youth received supportive housing at higher rates than their Hispanic/Latinx peers since 2017 (11 percent versus 8 percent in 2021).

## Barriers

Similar to LA, NYC faces significant barriers related to its lack of affordable housing. Most young people access housing through NYCHA, supportive housing, or vouchers; youth navigate barriers in each of those systems. For example, former foster youth cannot receive priority status for NYCHA if they apply after they exit care; supportive housing can be viewed as stigmatizing among young people; and variation exists across voucher types in access to navigation services, inclusion of broker fees, and the time period for which the voucher can be used.

The Initiative's focal populations continue to face challenges in accessing housing in NYC. For example, Black youth and young parents experiencing housing discrimination, and LGBTQ+ youth experience disproportionate rates of homelessness. Grantees also identified housing-related barriers faced by youth who have mental health needs. Services and supports designed to address the specific needs of these populations are needed. Grantees desire more data to inform their work and recommend looking at outcomes beyond the number of youth receiving supportive housing. Specifically, grantees are interested in knowing about the longer-term housing outcomes of young people, housing experiences of youth during the pandemic, and the mechanisms through which young people obtain housing.

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> JBAY (2022). 2022 implementation fact sheet: Expansion of transitional housing for former foster youth.

<https://jbay.org/resources/2022-fact-sheet-thp-thpplus/>.

<sup>ii</sup> THP-Plus data obtained through JBAY's survey of providers. "To ascertain information about the Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus), JBAY conducted a survey between September and October 2021 of all nonprofit organizations or county agencies that operated a THP-Plus program during FY2020-21. There was a 92% response rate among THP-Plus providers, who collectively provide 97% of the state's THP-Plus housing slots. Additional information was solicited from county child welfare agencies to ensure complete data was provided for numbers of youth served" (Source: John Burton Advocates for Youth (2021). 2020-21 Statewide Analysis of Supportive Housing for Former Foster Youth in California. <https://jbay.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/2020-21-Statewide-Analysis-of-Supportive-Housing-for-Former-Foster-Youth-in-CA.pdf>). The number of youth in THP-Plus settings exceeds the number of DCFS-contracted THP-Plus beds in certain years. This may be due to the inclusion of youth who were supervised by Probation and/or differences in data tracking between providers and DCFS. THP-Plus data include youth supervised by DCFS and probation.

<sup>iii</sup> THP-NMD data obtained through CCWIP Reports. CWS/CMS 2019 Quarter 2 Extract; 2020 Quarter 2 Extract; and 2021 Quarter 3 Extract. Data obtained from the University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project and provided to Child Trends by LA County Department of Children and Family Services on 02/03/21 and 04/11/22. THP-NMD data include youth supervised by DCFS and probation.

<sup>iv</sup> Among other data sources, this report uses Preparing Youth for Adulthood (PYA) data which are youth- or caseworker-reported and not verified with more complete administrative data. This data should be interpreted with caution. Source: New York City Administration for Children's Services. Report on Youth in Foster Care. (2021). <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/data-analysis/2021/ReportOnYouthInFC2021.pdf>. For 2016 through 2020 data, prior reports can be found here: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/reports-archive.page>.

<sup>v</sup> Among "youth between the ages of 18-20 that were discharged to self or reached the age of 21 in foster care. Housing assistance data are unduplicated, but youth may receive more than one type. For example, a youth approved for NYCHA would also receive an ACS housing subsidy, but they would only be counted in the NYCHA category." (Source: [ACS Report on Youth in Foster Care \(2021\)](#)).

<sup>vi</sup> Disaggregated data for White youth, Asian youth, and youth whose race/ethnicity is categorized as "other/unknown" are not shown as these subgroups included fewer than 30 foster youth.