THE ROAD TO COLLEGE | TEXAS FOSTER YOUTH & POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

In 2017, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and Department of Family and Protective Services exchanged data for the first time on the outcomes in higher education of youth formerly in foster care. The Postsecondary Workgroup of the Foster Care & Education Committee of the Supreme Court of Texas Permanent Judicial Commission on Children, Youth and Families examined the higher education outcomes of **a cohort of 3,855 youth** formerly in foster care who turned 18.

The Sample:

All youth who had ever been in foster care in TX:

Study Cohort:
Turned 18 in 08'-09'
n= 3,855

All youth had been in foster care at some point during childhood. Of the youth, **38% aged out** of foster care meaning they turned 18 while in foster care; and **62%** of the youth had left foster care prior to turning 18 **due to reunification, adoption, or living with relatives**.

33% of youth have **enrolled** in **higher education** within 7 years of turning 18.

96.4% **have not** obtained A degree.

Higher Education refers to any public technical institute, public junior college, public senior college or university, medical or dental unit, public college, or agency of higher education as defined by Tex. Educ. Code Section 61.003.

1.5% of youth have a **bachelors degree**

0.5% of youth have an **associate degree**

1.5% of youth have a **certificate**

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH COHORT:

How Youth Exited Foster Care:

Youth who were adopted:

- **Enrolled:** 38.6%
- **Not Enrolled:** 61.4%

Youth who were reunified:

- **Enrolled:** 24.8%
- **Not Enrolled:** 75.2%

Youth who aged out:

- **Enrolled:** 42.1%
- **Not Enrolled:** 57.9%

Youth in kinship placement:

- **Enrolled:** 28.3%
- **Not Enrolled:** 71.7%

Services Received By Youth While in Care:

Youth who completed Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Life Skills Training:

- **Enrolled:** 50.5%
- **Not Enrolled:** 49.5%

Youth who have received Educational Training Vouchers (ETV):

- **Enrolled:** 92.7%
- **Not Enrolled:** 7.3%

Youth who were in care longer were more likely to enroll in higher education.

Of youth who have **enrolled** in higher education youth had an average of:

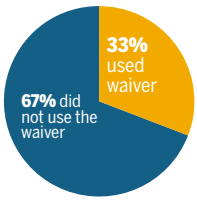
1,405.3 days in care
5.32 placement changes

Of youth who have **not enrolled** in higher education, youth had an average of:

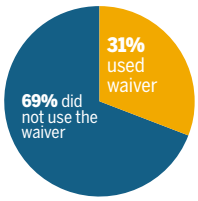
1,095.1 days in care
5.35 placement changes

Enrollment & Tuition Waiver Use for Youth Formerly in Foster Care:

"Traditional College Cohort:" Youth who graduated HS and enrolled in 2009



Youth who enrolled sometime after the Fall of 2009



*Not all who enrolled would have been eligible for waiver

The Supreme Court of Texas Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families ("Children's Commission") initiated a statewide effort to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in foster care in 2010. A postsecondary Workgroup, overseen by the Children's Commission, focuses efforts on understanding higher education attainment of foster youth in Texas.

In the Fall of 2016, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) identified 4,035 youth who had ever been in foster care and turned 18 years old between September 1, 2008 and August 31, 2009.

DFPS sent the data to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) who matched 3,855 youth to their higher education data. THECB produced descriptive analyses including t-tests and chi-square tests, as appropriate.

Note: A major data limitation of these analyses is the absence of an indicator of whether a youth was eligible to receive a tuition waiver. Additionally, analyses were not conducted to understand differences between youth who exited foster care through different permanency outcomes.

For questions or comments, please contact
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Distributed by:
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Texas Institute for Child & Family Wellbeing
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