

VDSS Research Brief

Who Receives Independent Living Services in Virginia?

Context: Public Law 106-169 established the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) that gives states funding to develop programs for youth as they transition from foster care to self-sufficiency. In addition, the law requires the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to create a system for collecting information on independent living (IL) services and outcome measures for these programs.

ACF published a final rule in the Federal Register on February 26, 2008 for this regulation which creates the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). States must document demographic and service information for youth who receive independent living services that are paid for or provided by CFCIP agencies. Regardless of permanency goal, all youth ages 14 and older in foster care are eligible for independent living services in Virginia. Youth may continue to receive IL services between the ages of 18 and 21 if they meet certain criteria.¹ Independent living services provide the youth with concrete skills in accomplishing daily life tasks but also encourage resourcefulness. Put another way, IL services teach youth how to connect with others to meet their needs.

This research brief reports the results of Virginia’s initial NYTD independent living data collection effort for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2011. During this time period, a total of 1,959 youth were eligible to receive independent living services, and 85 percent received at least one service.

Objective: This analysis summarizes the results of the initial independent living services data collection for foster youth in Virginia between October 1, 2010 and September 30, 2011 and describes the receipt of services by age category and VDSS region.

Data Source: The data include the NYTD independent living service data for FFY 2011. These records were linked with Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data files for the same time period to provide additional demographic information.

Methods: Local agency workers documented independent living services provided to youth age 14 and older in the Online Automated Services Information System (OASIS) during FFY 2011. A total of 14 types of services were reported in the areas of: employment, education, independence preparation, interpersonal/health, and financial assistance. Youth may have received more than one type of service. This report provides information on the youth by age group: 14 to 15 years, 16 to 17 years, and 18 years and older as well as VDSS region.

¹ See Virginia Department of Social Services Child and Family Services Manual, Sections 11.2-11.4 (July 2011) for more information on eligibility for independent living services in Virginia.

Caveats: FFY 2011 was the initial year that local workers recorded independent living services for each youth in OASIS. Youth may have received services that were not recorded due to changes in the information system and reporting procedures.²

Key Findings: **The majority of youth (85%) received at least one independent living service during the reporting period (Table 1).** The most frequently received services were budget and financial management (41% of youth) and educational support (39%). Less than one third (28%) of youth had received an Independent Living Needs Assessment during the reporting period (Table 1). In general youth were most likely to receive services in the areas of household management and health education³ and least likely to receive financial assistance (Table 1).⁴

The likelihood of a youth receiving services varied substantially by region (Figure 1).

About half (49%) of youth in the Western region had no record of services in FFY 2011, more than twice as high as the rest of the state (Table 2). In almost every service category, Western region youth were half as likely to receive a service as their counterparts in the Central, Northern, and Piedmont regions (Figure 1 and Table 2). Youth in the Eastern region were much less likely to receive education (21%) and employment (24%) services than youth from the Central, Northern, and Piedmont regions (Figure 1).

The amount and type of services received varied by age (Figure 2). Youth aged 16 to 17 were less likely to receive services than older or younger youth (Figure 2). A number of 17 year old youth did not have a service recorded in OASIS (Table 1).⁵ Youth age 18 and over were much more likely than other age groups to receive financial assistance as well as more specialized services such as employment services/vocational training, post secondary educational support, and supervised independent living (Table 1).

With a few exceptions, demographic characteristics were similar across age groups for these youth (Table 3). About half (51%) of youth were female – this result was consistent across age groups. Over half (57%) of youth 18 and older were Black or African American. Youth between the ages of 14 and 17 were more likely to be White (57%) than older youth (45%). Younger youth were less likely to be Hispanic (5%) than middle and older youth (10%). Most youth (89%) did not have a diagnosed disability or medical condition, and youth aged 14 to 15 were most likely to have a disability documented in OASIS (Table 4).⁶

² OASIS data screens for the recording of independent living services were revised as of September 24, 2010 (version 3.07). Prior to this new version of OASIS, local agencies had not recorded these services in OASIS but had reported these data in aggregate to VDSS on a quarterly basis.

³ Services in these areas include: budget and financial management, housing education and home management training, independent living needs assessment, health education and risk prevention, mentoring, family support and Healthy Marriage Education.

⁴ Financial assistance could include room and board payments, educational assistance, and “other” payments made on behalf of the youth.

⁵ Because workers recorded NYTD outcome survey responses for 17 year old youth, workers may not have documented independent living services for these same youth.

⁶ Disability or medical condition status was not available for youth age 18 and over as they are not reported in AFCARS.

Close to half (44%) of youth eligible for independent living services were age 18 and older (Table 5). In contrast, only 12 percent of eligible youth were from the youngest age group (Table 5). However, the distribution of older youth varied by region. In the Western region only one quarter (24%) of youth were age 18 and older while over half (53%) of youth in the Central region were from the oldest age group (Table 5). Even though a number of youth in Virginia emancipate from foster care, many continue to receive independent living services after emancipation.⁷

⁷ In FFY 2010, 828 youth left foster care to emancipation (Virginia Child Welfare Outcomes Reporting System (VCWOR), "Annual Reports to Congress: Exits from Foster Care to Emancipation (3.4)").

Table 1: Independent Living Services Received by Youth by Age Category, Virginia FFY 2011

	Percent				Number			
	14 to 15	16 to 17	18 and Older	All Ages	14 to 15	16 to 17	18 and Older	All Ages
	(n=240)	(n=866)	(n=853)	(n=1,959)	(n=240)	(n=866)	(n=853)	(n=1,959)
Received No Service During FFY 2011	0%	33%	0%	15%	0	289	0	289
Employment	23%	27%	53%	38%	55	233	451	739
Career Preparation	14%	21%	40%	28%	33	180	345	558
Employment Programs or Vocational Training	10%	11%	27%	18%	25	95	234	354
Education	48%	33%	54%	44%	114	283	459	856
Academic Support	48%	31%	44%	39%	114	269	374	757
Post Secondary Academic Support	0%	3%	17%	9%	1	27	146	174
Independence Preparation	73%	47%	72%	61%	174	406	617	1197
Budget and Financial Management	35%	31%	52%	41%	85	265	446	796
Housing Education and Home Mgt Training	35%	23%	36%	30%	85	203	307	595
Independent Living Needs Assessment	39%	24%	29%	28%	93	206	245	544
Supervised Independent Living	2%	3%	21%	11%	4	30	175	209
Interpersonal/Health	59%	40%	49%	47%	142	351	419	912
Health Education and Risk Prevention	36%	25%	32%	29%	86	220	271	577
Mentoring	25%	17%	17%	18%	59	148	143	350
Family Support/Healthy Marriage Education	30%	16%	20%	19%	71	137	169	377
Financial Assistance	8%	8%	39%	21%	19	66	331	416
Other	3%	4%	15%	9%	8	33	129	170
Room and Board	4%	2%	15%	8%	9	19	126	154
Education	1%	3%	24%	12%	3	24	205	232

Note: Population includes all youth 14 and older in foster care and former foster youth 18 to 21 receiving independent living services. Youth may have received more than one type of service. Independence Preparation subtotal does not include Supervised Independent Living. Age is as of September 30, 2011.

Source: NYTD FFY 2011 Data Files

Figure 1: Percent of Youth Receiving at Least One Service by Region

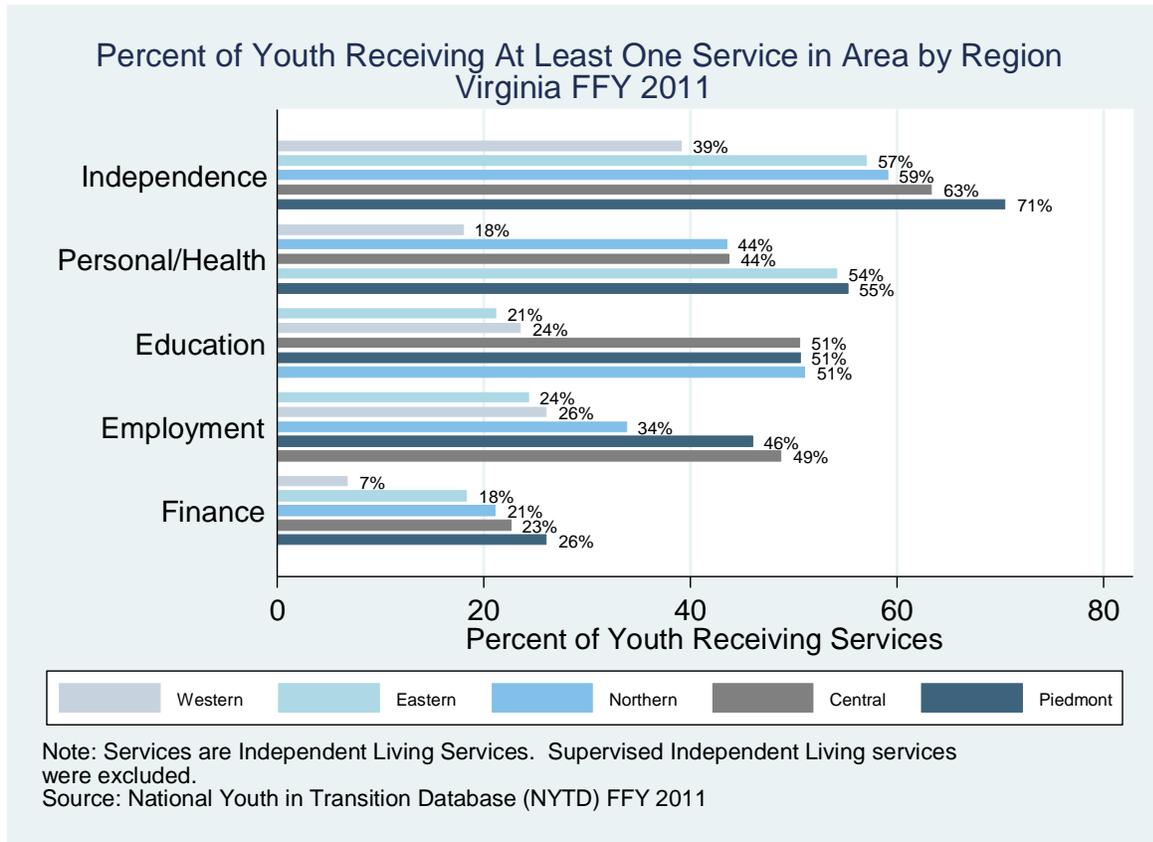


Table 2: Independent Living Services Received by Youth by Region, Virginia FFY 2011

	Percent					Number				
	Central (n=336)	Eastern (n=321)	Northern (n=577)	Piedmont (n=563)	Western (n=161)	Central (n=336)	Eastern (n=321)	Northern (n=577)	Piedmont (n=563)	Western (n=161)
Received No Service During FFY 2011	10%	27%	8%	7%	49%	32	88	48	41	79
Employment	49%	24%	34%	46%	26%	164	78	195	260	42
Career Preparation	33%	21%	27%	36%	15%	110	66	156	202	24
Employment Programs or Vocational Training	29%	8%	14%	22%	17%	96	27	78	125	28
Education	51%	21%	51%	51%	24%	170	68	295	285	38
Academic Support	47%	20%	42%	46%	21%	159	64	243	257	34
Post Secondary Academic Support	7%	2%	15%	9%	3%	23	7	87	52	5
Independence Preparation	63%	57%	59%	71%	39%	213	183	341	397	63
Budget and Financial Management	48%	29%	37%	51%	25%	160	92	215	288	41
Housing Education and Home Mgt Training	27%	32%	27%	40%	12%	91	103	158	223	20
Independent Living Needs Assessment	26%	28%	25%	33%	21%	88	91	147	184	34
Supervised Independent Living	15%	3%	13%	13%	3%	50	10	73	71	5
Interpersonal/Health	44%	54%	44%	55%	18%	147	174	252	311	28
Health Education and Risk Prevention	30%	25%	28%	39%	11%	101	81	160	218	17
Mentoring	12%	28%	18%	19%	6%	40	90	102	108	10
Family Support/Healthy Marriage Education	12%	29%	16%	26%	3%	39	93	91	149	5
Financial Assistance	23%	18%	21%	26%	7%	76	59	123	147	11
Other	8%	8%	8%	12%	3%	28	26	45	66	5
Room and Board	7%	7%	10%	8%	4%	24	21	60	43	6
Education	13%	8%	12%	16%	2%	45	25	69	89	4

Note: Population includes all youth 14 and older in foster care and former foster youth 18 to 21 receiving independent living services. Youth may have received more than one type of service. Independence Preparation subtotal does not include Supervised Independent Living.

Source: NYTD FFY 2011 Data Files

Figure 2: Percent of Youth Receiving At Least One Independent Living Service by Age Category

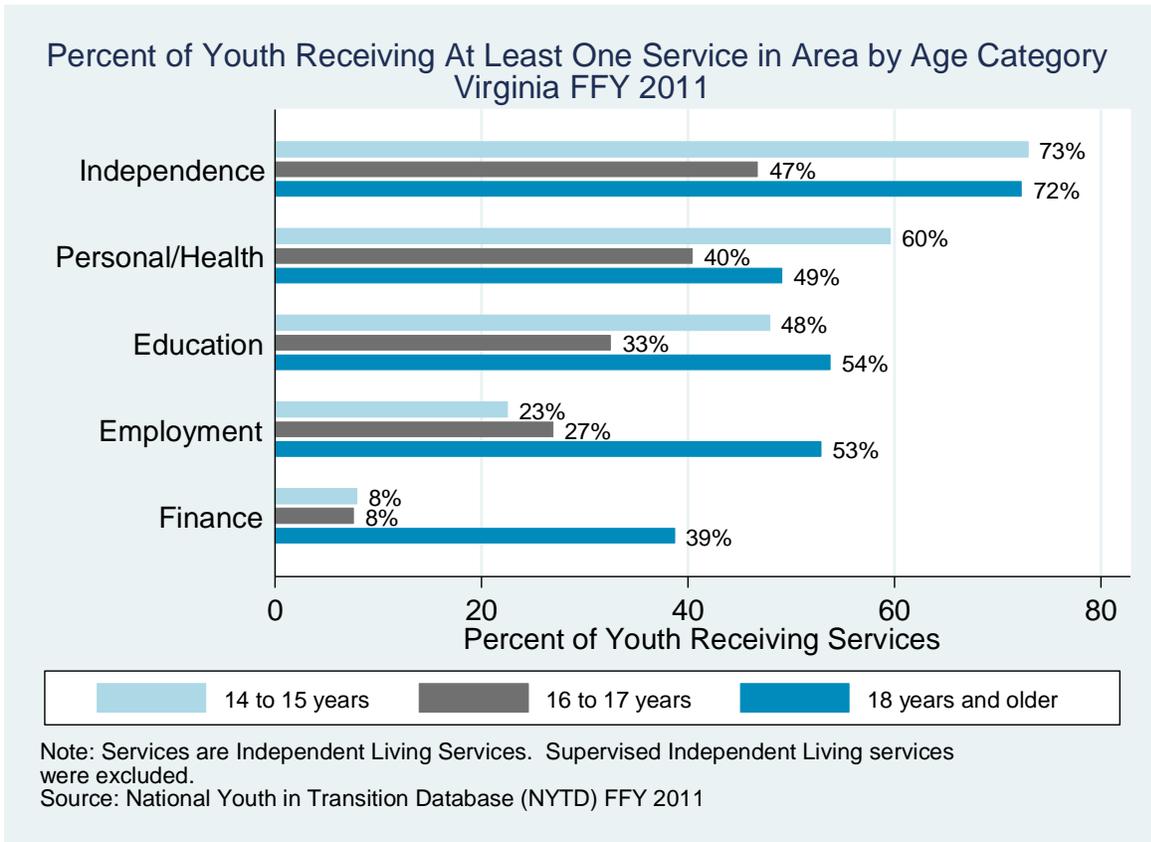


Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of Youth Eligible for Independent Living Services, Virginia FFY 2011

	Age Category							
	14 to 15 Years (n=240)		16 to 17 Years (n=866)		18 Years and Older (n=853)		All Ages (n=1,959)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Female	126	53%	433	50%	442	52%	1,001	51%
White	139	58%	482	56%	387	45%	1,008	51%
Black/African American	112	47%	389	45%	482	57%	983	50%
Asian	3	1%	15	2%	8	1%	26	1%
Other	4	2%	7	1%	8	1%	19	1%
Unknown	2	1%	15	2%	10	1%	27	1%
Hispanic/Latino	13	5%	86	10%	94	11%	193	10%

Note: More than one race could be selected for a youth. Hispanic/Latino includes youth of any race. Age is as of September 30, 2011.

Source: NYTD FFY 2011 Data Files

Table 4: Physical and Mental Health Characteristics of Youth Eligible for Independent Living Services, Virginia FFY 2011

	Age Category							
	14 to 15 Years (n=240)		16 to 17 Years (n=866)		18 Years and Older (n=853)		Age 14 to 17 Years (n=1,106)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Disability or Medical Condition	205	85%	775	89%	N/A	N/A	980	89%
Diagnosed Disability	35	15%	91	11%	N/A	N/A	126	11%
Mental Retardation	11	5%	20	2%	N/A	N/A	31	3%
Visually/Hearing Impaired	5	2%	5	1%	N/A	N/A	10	1%
Physically Disabled	2	1%	2	0%	N/A	N/A	4	0%
Emotionally Disturbed	25	10%	75	9%	N/A	N/A	100	9%
Other Medical Condition	18	8%	29	3%	N/A	N/A	47	4%

Note: Youth age 18 and older are not reported in AFCARS. Age is as of September 30, 2011.

Source: NYTD FFY 2011 Data Files; AFCARS FFY 2011 Data Files

Table 5: Youth Eligible for Independent Living Services by Region, Virginia FFY 2011

	Region											
	Central		Eastern		Northern		Piedmont		Western		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
14 to 15 Years	32	10%	44	14%	66	11%	80	14%	18	11%	240	12%
16 to 17 Years	125	37%	169	53%	236	41%	231	41%	104	65%	866	44%
18 Years and Older	179	53%	108	34%	275	48%	252	45%	39	24%	853	44%
Total	336	100%	321	100%	577	100%	563	100%	161	100%	1,959	100%
Mean Age (years)		18.3		17.7		18.1		17.9		17.5		18.0

Note: Age is as of September 30, 2011.

Source: NYTD FFY 2011 Data Files