

Q&A Session for Extending Foster Care to Age 21: Benefits, Costs, and Opportunities for States

Wednesday, July 15, 2009

Jody Becker-Green

Do you know when the federal rules will come out concerning fostering connections?

Mark Courtney

We don't know yet.-

Liz Quinn

What percentage of youth in Illinois actually stay in care past their 18th birthday?

Mark Courtney

About 4/5 through age 19 and about half through age 20.-

Amy Dworsky

It actually varies across the state. In Cook County, most youth stay until age 21. Outside of Cook County, the percentages are much lower.

Kkayla Celata

Could the age be extended on a case by case basis for medically needy foster children?

Jody Grutza

States will have to determine how their programs will be set up but if they want to take up the federal IV-E subsidy, they will have to follow the provisions laid out in Fostering Connections.

Colleen Ammerman

It appears that out of the total cost to support youth to stay in care until age 21, the federal portion is 37.5%. Is 37.5% of the total costs, the maximum amount that the federal government will contribute?

Amy Dworsky

It would depend on the state's Title IV-E reimbursement rate. My example assumed a rate of 50%---which is the minimum-

Anthony Bernier

There seem to be many other factors that would require examining before assessing that the concept of LSTs have no impact (such as qualitative data taken from youth and instructors, critical examination of the "classroom" model for instruction, and others

Mark Courtney

Yes, the nature of instruction ought to have impact implications. Still, given that youth report getting life skills help from other sources--the sources that youth not in care rely on--we need to provide impact evidence supporting IL "programs."-

Cindy Perry

Why does staying in care > likelihood of college attendance? What are the specific influencers?

Amy Dworsky

There are probably a number of factors. One might be that youth who stay in care have someone to help them navigate the college application and final aid application processes. Another is that youth who stay in care may be more likely to know about the ETV.

Stacie Buchanan

How is the Court involved when foster care is extended beyond age 18? Is there Dependency?

Mary Gambon

In Massachusetts, judicial oversight in CPS cases ends at 18. Youth remain in our care through a voluntary placement agreement.

Jody Grutza

This varies on a state by state basis currently. The Fostering Connections Act is not clear whether or not this will be a requirement for extending care up to 21. That is a current requirement of claiming IV-E.

Chapin Hall

Please see the Chapin Hall report Continuing in Foster Care Beyond Age 18: How Courts Can Help at <http://www.chapinhall.org/research/brief/continuing-foster-care-beyond-age-18>

Stacie Buchanan

What factors contribute to the increase in college attendance for those staying in foster care? More stable housing? Personal connections?

Amy Dworsky

It is not entirely clear. It may be that youth who stay in care may have someone to help them navigate the college and financial aid application process. They may also be more likely to know about the ETV.-

Kelly Parker

What is the name of the study and where can I read the full report?

Mark Courtney

Answers to questions about the nature of the LST and ESTEP interventions and the evaluation findings can be found at the ACF website:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/abuse_neglect/chafee/index.html

Tom Neeb

Many people are aware that California's budget is in absolute shambles. Are you hearing anything positive out of CA regarding future commitment for funding services in CA?

Amy Dworsky

Legislation was introduced this spring to extend care to age 21.

Lisa Burke

Has there been any research done on overall permanency rates in relation to increases in services for children 18+?

Mark Courtney

Not that I know of

Debra Bogan

Do you use IVE for independent living housing and is it licensed by the same folks who oversee licensed foster care.

Mary Gambon

In Massachusetts, independent living programs are licensed by another state agency. The standards for foster care licensing and ILPs are different.

Jody Grutza

If this question lies within the Fostering Connections Act, the federal government has yet to release the regulations regarding placements that will qualify as child caring institutions under IV-E.

Jefty Prather

As Chafee seems to require life skills training, what would you recommend?

Mark Courtney

Chafee requires youth be helped to acquire life skills, but is vague regarding how to do that. Examining how young people generally acquire life skills and replicating those experiences as much as possible for foster youth (i.e., normalize!) makes sense.

Tobin Marsh

In the Midwest Study, did postsecondary education include apprenticeship, the military, or special programs like Job Corps?

Amy Dworsky

We do have data on those outcomes, but they are not included in the percentages I reported.

Elissa Stone

Could the panelists comment on whether the court is involved in reviews for youth who continue in care after age 18 and whether they continue to have legal representation?

Mary Gambon

Massachusetts currently claims for youth up to the age of 19 that are completing high school without judicial oversight. That is, if an annual reasonable efforts was due between 18 and 19 it has not been required to claim for that time period. Our General Counsel interprets this as change in the fostering connections simply expands that same funding and process until 21.

Chapin Hall

Please see the Chapin Hall report Continuing in Foster Care Beyond Age 18: How Courts Can Help at <http://www.chapinhall.org/research/brief/continuing-foster-care-beyond-age-18>

Tobin Marsh

Would you please let me know the types of jobs the youth held in the Midwest Study and in Massachusetts' experience? Were resources from the Workforce Investment Act accessed?

Mary Gambon

In Massachusetts, a wide range of worksites were utilized including public and private sector. Sites included state agencies, hospitals, gas stations, child care agencies, attorney's offices, computer companies, insurance office, computer graphics and design. WIA resources were accessed when appropriate.

Zanny Marsh

Did the data in the initial slide outcomes adjust for race, ethnicity, gender or economic status?

Amy Dworsky

No. Those are just the raw percentages.-

Janna Perry-Holloway

Is there action being taken to aid those children who already aged out? Or did they miss the boat?

Mary Gambon

In Massachusetts, youth who exited care may return and request voluntary services up to age 22.

Kelly Parker

What was the name of the site that has Fostering Connection by state?

Jody Grutza

It is on the website for the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA) -

Lara Holtzman

For counties under a Title IVE Waiver, is there a need to renegotiate the Waiver to benefit from the Fostering Connections Act?

Jody Grutza

Each county or state with a waiver is working with their regional office to determine how this will affect the waivers.

Lisa Burke

I would also like to ask in terms of the programs identified what role the Court plays in services to youth 18+. Thank you.

Chapin Hall

Please see the Chapin Hall report Continuing in Foster Care Beyond Age 18: How Courts Can Help at <http://www.chapinhall.org/research/brief/continuing-foster-care-beyond-age-18>

Anthony Bernier

What about promoting less academic-based post-secondary options such as the trades... the pro-higher ed bias is quite evident here

Amy Dworsky

ETV funds can be used to pay for vocational training.-

Janna Perry-Holloway

At is stands now children who are placed in guardianship are not eligible for chafee funding. What is out there to help them?

Mark Courtney

The new law allows youth in guardianship placements to access Chafee-funded services.

Erik Pitchal

What importance would you place on there being a lawyer (either the one who represented the youth while in the dependency ct or a new one) to work with the youth, advocating for appropriate services?

Jody Grutza

All children have representation in a juvenile courts throughout their child welfare case. Many states are doing work to improve the level of advocacy and engagement of the youth in courts.

Dee Alexander

Should HHS start considering longer placements in foster care for older youth (over 18) as a positive?

Mary Gambon

I would suggest reunification or establishing other permanent connections after 18 be considered by HHS as positive.

Mark Courtney

The experience in Illinois would suggest that legal advocacy on behalf of individual foster youth has quite a bit to do with the likelihood that the public agency will provide support post 18.

Keith Jones

Kentucky already has the option for youth to extend their commitment up to age 21, for educational purposes. We also have the Kentucky Tuition Waiver for Foster Youth and Adoptive Youth.

Jody Grutza

Your state will have to make that determination based on the resources it has available to take up the optional provisions under Fostering Connections.

Stacie Buchanan

Are there options for youth who are married or have children of their own eligible for extended care services?

Mary Gambon

In Massachusetts, for married no; for young parents yes.

Dee Alexander

Our concerns stem from the federal Child and Family Services review mandate that children should be placed in shorter lengths of stay. Foster youth staying in care from 18 - 21 years would be viewed in a CFSR review as lengthening of their stay in care.

Mark Courtney

There are many problems with the CFSR measures; sounds like you have identified yet another!

Jonathan Morancy

You mentioned that states are putting together plans to take advantage of the new ability to receive federal funds for people until age 21. But do you have a sense regarding how many states are planning to take advantage of this?

Jody Grutza

That is addressed in the implementation reports that NACPWA has done. They are available on their website.-

Jackie Rutheiser

Do you have a time estimate of when the HHS will release the regulations to clarify the implementation of Fostering Connections increasing the age to 21?

Jody Grutza

No, we are not aware of any ETA at this time.-
