



# **Independent Living Services**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

Department of Children and Families

Office of Child Welfare

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Mike Carroll

Secretary

Rick Scott

Governor

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# Table of Contents

Purpose .....	3
Introduction .....	3
Independent Living Services .....	3
Outcome Measures and Oversight Activities.....	7
1. System-Driven Data.....	7
2. Self-Report Surveys.....	10
3. Contract Oversight .....	11
4. Financial Accountability .....	12
Rule Promulgation .....	124
Other Activities .....	14
Conclusion.....	15

## *Attachments:*

Appendix A.....Number of Youth Turning 18 in Out-of-Home Care by State Fiscal Year and Community Based-Care (CBC) Lead Agency

Appendix B.....Number of 16 and 17 year olds Discharged to Adoption or Guardianship by State Fiscal Year and CBC

Appendix C.....Number of Youth in the Legal Custody of the Department Discharged to Age of Majority by State Fiscal Year and CBC

Appendix D .....Number of Young Adults Receiving Independent Living Services by Program Type, State Fiscal Year, and CBC

Appendix E.....Number of Young Adults Receiving Independent Living Services by Educational Status, State Fiscal Year, and CBC

Appendix F.....Employment Status of Young Adults Receiving Independent Living Services by State Fiscal Year and CBC

Appendices G and H.....Independent Living Services Expenditures by Program Type, State Fiscal Year, and CBC

## Purpose

Section 39.6251, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and s. 409.1451, F.S., require the Department of Children and Families (Department) to administer an array of independent living services to eligible young adults ages 18-22 (not yet 23), including supports in making the transition to self-sufficiency. Independent living services are designed to assist young adults in the following outcomes: increasing financial self-sufficiency, improving educational attainment, increasing connections to caring adults, reducing homelessness, reducing high-risk behavior, and improving access to health insurance. Through the delivery of services, young adults should be empowered to seek a quality of life appropriate for their skills and abilities and to assume personal responsibility for becoming self-sufficient adults.

This report provides information required in s. 409.1451(6), F.S., as follows:

1. An analysis of performance on the outcome measures developed under this section reported for each Community-Based Care lead agency (CBC).
2. A description of the Department's oversight of the program, including by lead agency, any programmatic or fiscal deficiencies found, corrective actions required, and current status of compliance.
3. Any rules adopted or proposed under this section since the last report.

## Introduction

For the past decade, the Department has submitted this legislatively mandated report primarily focusing on data and oversight activities, providing indicators as to Florida's performance on delivering quality independent living services. The 2017 Independent Living Services annual report highlights the relevant data available and activities that occurred during State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2016-17, providing a general description as to the outcomes and administration of the programs designed for former foster youth.

## Independent Living Services

The brief descriptions of independent living services available to former foster youth are not intended to detail all eligibility criteria for each program. Rather, the intent of each summary is to give a better understanding of each program's nuances for reaching self-sufficiency.

### ***Extended Foster Care (EFC)***

EFC became law effective January 1, 2014, giving eligible young adults the option of remaining in foster care until the age of 21 or until the age of 22 if they have a disability. During SFY 2015-16, Florida Administrative Code was promulgated, providing direction for agencies implementing continuing care for young adults, including the application process for those reentering care. Although Florida adopted the federal recommendation to extend foster care eligibility, which allows for a more structured system of transition services for the young person entering adulthood, the state does not utilize Title IV-E federal funds to implement the program. Instead, state funds pay room and board and may pay for other allowable expenses such as child care for young adults who are parenting, clothing for work or school, computer and other school supplies, and other essential services needed to support the young adult's transition. Young adults participating may decide to remain in their licensed foster homes or choose other supportive living environments with approval of their CBC while finishing secondary school or adult

education, or entering the workforce. Eligible young adults may also choose this option while pursuing postsecondary education. While in EFC, young adults receive standard case management visits, case planning, transition planning, monitoring of life skills development, and judicial oversight as required.

### ***Postsecondary Education Services and Support (PESS)***

Eligible young adults 18-22 (not yet 23) years of age in PESS receive \$1,256 per month and other supports necessary to become self-sufficient. After the initial application process, eligibility requires that these students are enrolled in nine credit hours or the vocational equivalent; and if they meet academic progress according to the Florida Bright Futures educational institution, the students may continue to receive the assistance. Some exceptions to credit hours and progress may apply for those students with a diagnosed disability or other recognized challenging circumstance. Of the three independent living services categories, PESS is the only program that affords youth who are adopted or placed with court-approved dependency guardians after the age of 16 with the opportunity to participate. The law requires those youth to have spent at least six months in licensed care within the 12 months immediately preceding such placement or adoption. Federal Education and Training Voucher and Chafee Foster Care Independence Program funds, as well as state funds cover room and board and other expenses necessary to pay the cost of attendance.

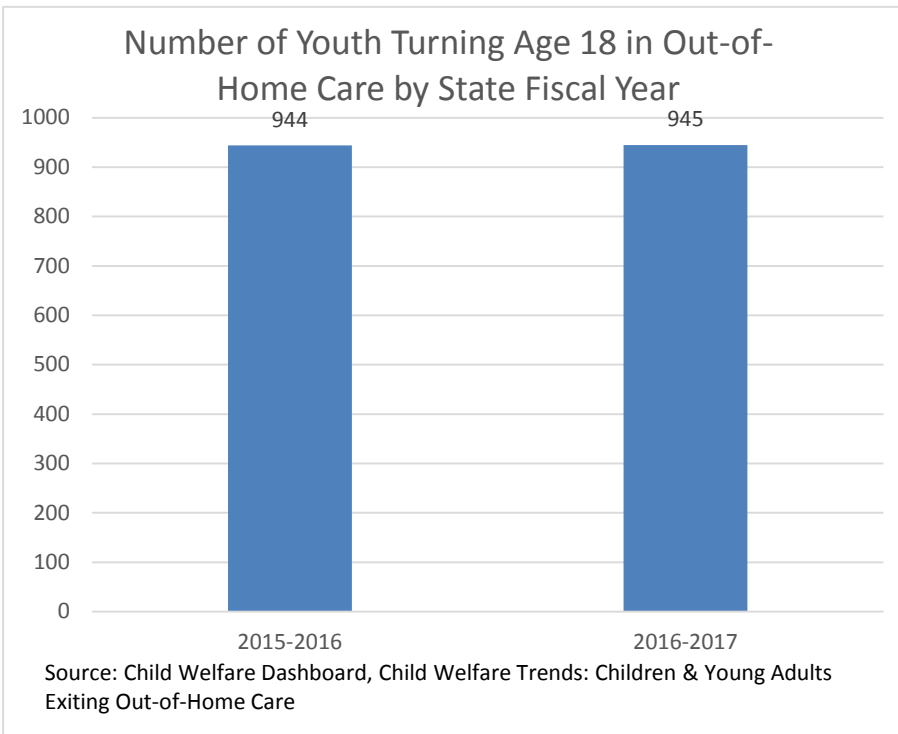
### ***Aftercare Services***

To be eligible for Aftercare Services, a young adult must have reached the age of 18 while in the legal custody of the Department, but not yet have turned 23 years of age. Aftercare Services are intended to be temporary in nature or used as a bridge into or between EFC and PESS. Services may include mentoring, tutoring, mental health, substance abuse, counseling, and financial assistance. Both federal and state funds are available to pay for allowable expenses.

### ***Road to Independence (RTI)***

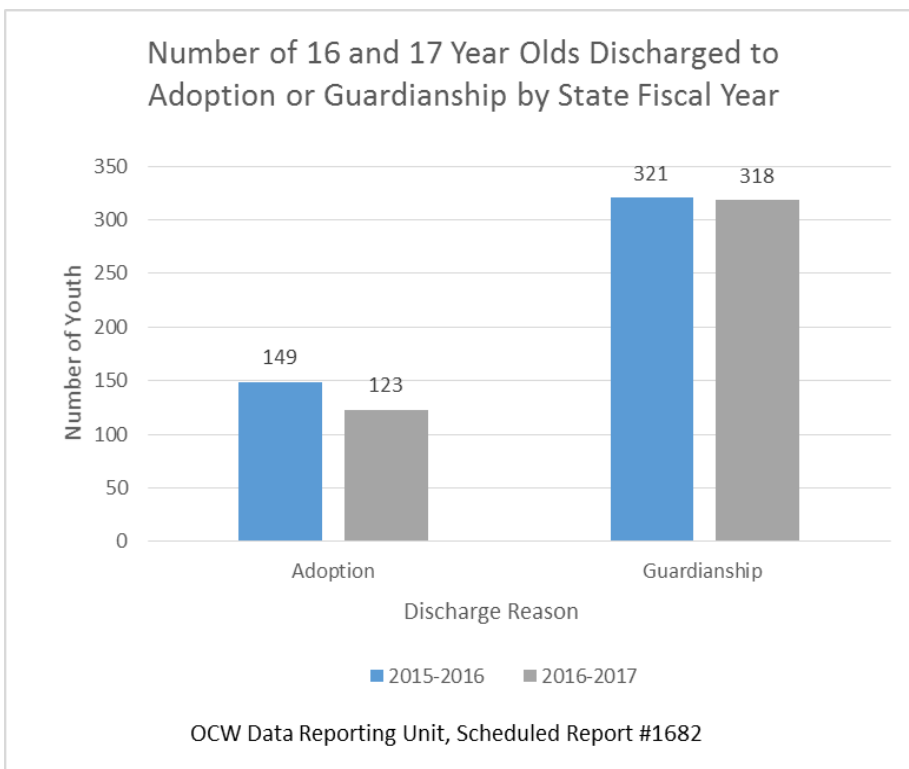
Although this program has not been available to new applicants since legislative changes in 2014, there still remains a small population of approximately 25 young adults served through RTI who were grandfathered into the program. These youth will continue to be assessed at each renewal period until they are no longer eligible. PESS effectively replaced the former RTI program, as authorized in s. 409.1451, F.S., but the statutory reference still retains the heading.

## Youth Exiting Out-of-Home Care at age 18



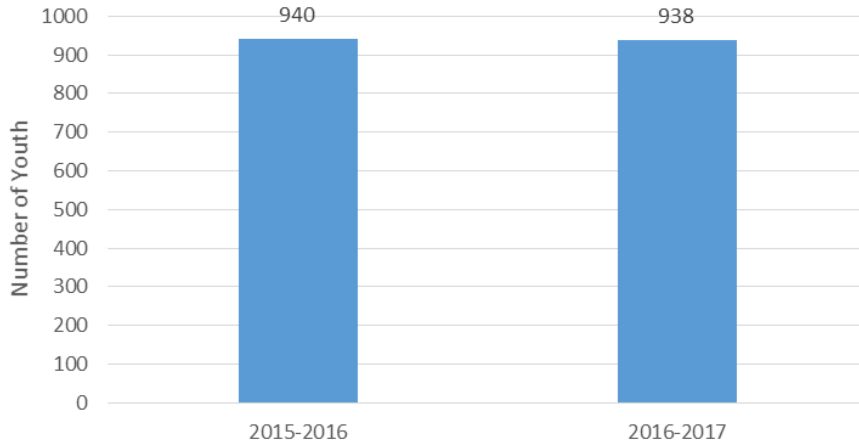
The chart to the left depicts the number of youth turning 18 years old in out-of-home care in SFY 2015-16 and 2016-17 without taking into account the placement type or the youth's legal custody status at the time of discharge. As shown, the number of youth exiting out-of-home care has increased by one (See Appendix A for CBC level data).

## Youth Potentially Eligible for Independent Living Service



The chart to the left depicts the number of youth that became potentially eligible for PESS based on their discharge from care at ages 16 and 17 to Adoption or Guardianship and having lived in licensed care for at least six months within the 12 months preceding their placement or adoption over the last two SFYs. This year's report totals for this category reflect a method of calculation that represents only those youth assigned to a CBC. This change accounts for any variation in data previously published. Since SFY 2015-16, there has been a decrease in potentially eligible 16 and 17-year-old youth adopted or discharged to permanent guardianship (See Appendix B for CBC level data).

### Number of Youth in the Legal Custody of the Department Discharged to Age of Majority by State Fiscal Year



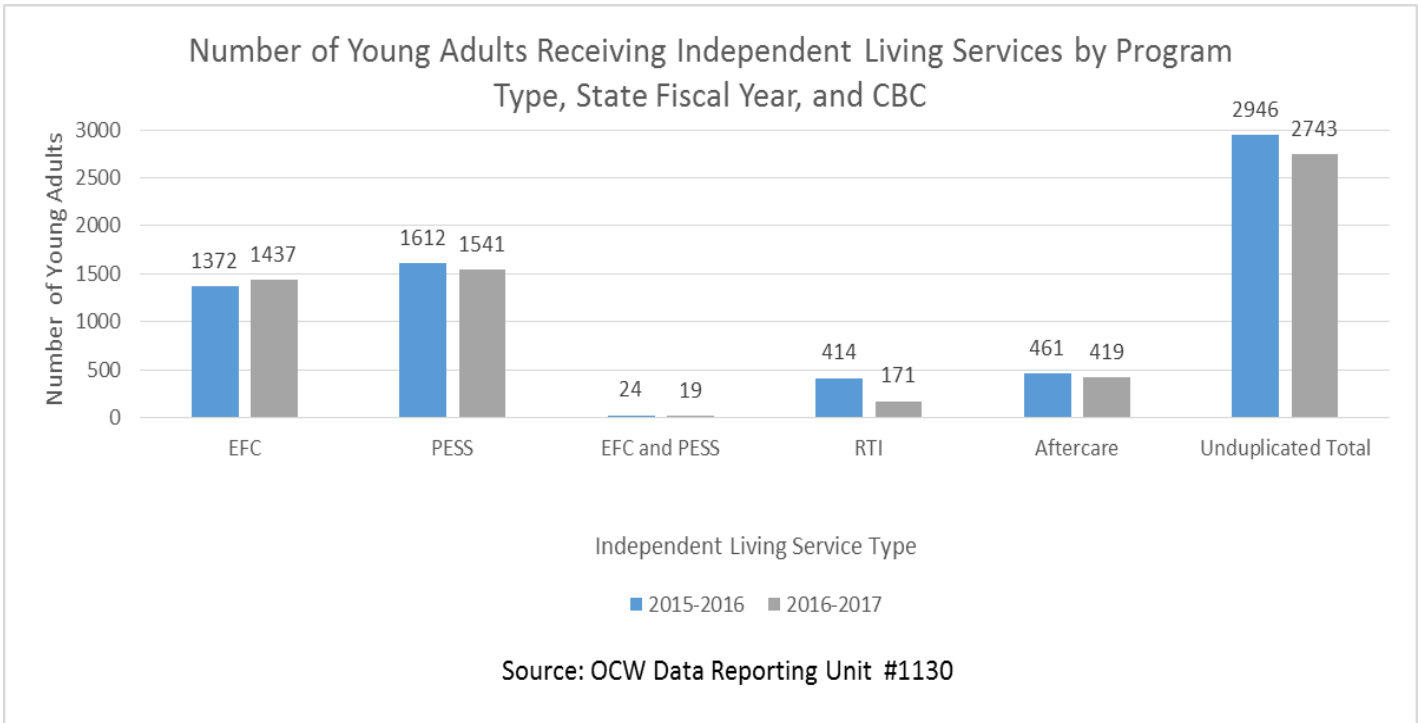
Source: OCW Data Reporting Unit, Scheduled Report #1682

The number of youth in the chart to the left represents those that aged out in the legal custody of the Department. This year's report totals for this category reflect a method of calculation that represents only those youth assigned to a CBC. This change accounts for any variation in data previously published. All of the youth in the count would be eligible for Aftercare Services and initially eligible for EFC. However, since each program is unique in its eligibility criteria, youth aging out may not remain eligible for EFC if the youth does not choose to engage in a qualifying activity and agree to a supervised living arrangement. In some circumstances, youth may meet the eligibility requirement for Aftercare Services and EFC but not PESS. For example, PESS not only requires enrollment in a

postsecondary institution, but also requires youth to have spent six months in licensed care in addition to aging out in the legal custody of the Department (See Appendix C for CBC level data).

### ***Young Adults Receiving Independent Living Services***

The chart on the next page illustrates the number of young adults who received an independent living service, by program, and in total, during the SFY reporting periods. To be counted in this report, a young adult must have received an independent living service payment generated through Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN), the statewide automated child welfare information system. This category reflects counts for SFY 2015-16 from a different report source from last year's report, which accounts for the increase in numbers of young adults receiving services for SFY 2015-16 in the 2016 Annual Report published. Some young adults may have been served in more than one program and/or received more than one service payment within a program during the year; therefore, a count reflecting an unduplicated total is also shown to better gauge the total number of young adults served. While there is an overall decrease in young adults served across programs, there was a five percent increase in EFC. As projected, there was a decrease in RTI recipients as those numbers will decline through attrition (See Appendix D for CBC level data).



## Outcome Measures and Oversight Activities

The CBCs' contracts include expectations to administer all services in accordance with federal guidelines, Florida Statutes, and Florida Administrative Code. Florida has highly structured statutory requirements for EFC, PESS, RTI, and Aftercare Services around establishing client eligibility, standards of progress, payment disbursement, and payment amounts, as well as due process and appeals. Requirements in Florida Administrative Code further detail the framework for how the array of independent living services is administered, including: application and discharge procedures, transition planning and documentation requirements. The performance or outcome measures on program activity are evaluated through four main areas: system-driven data, self-report surveys, contract oversight unit monitoring, and fiscal oversight.

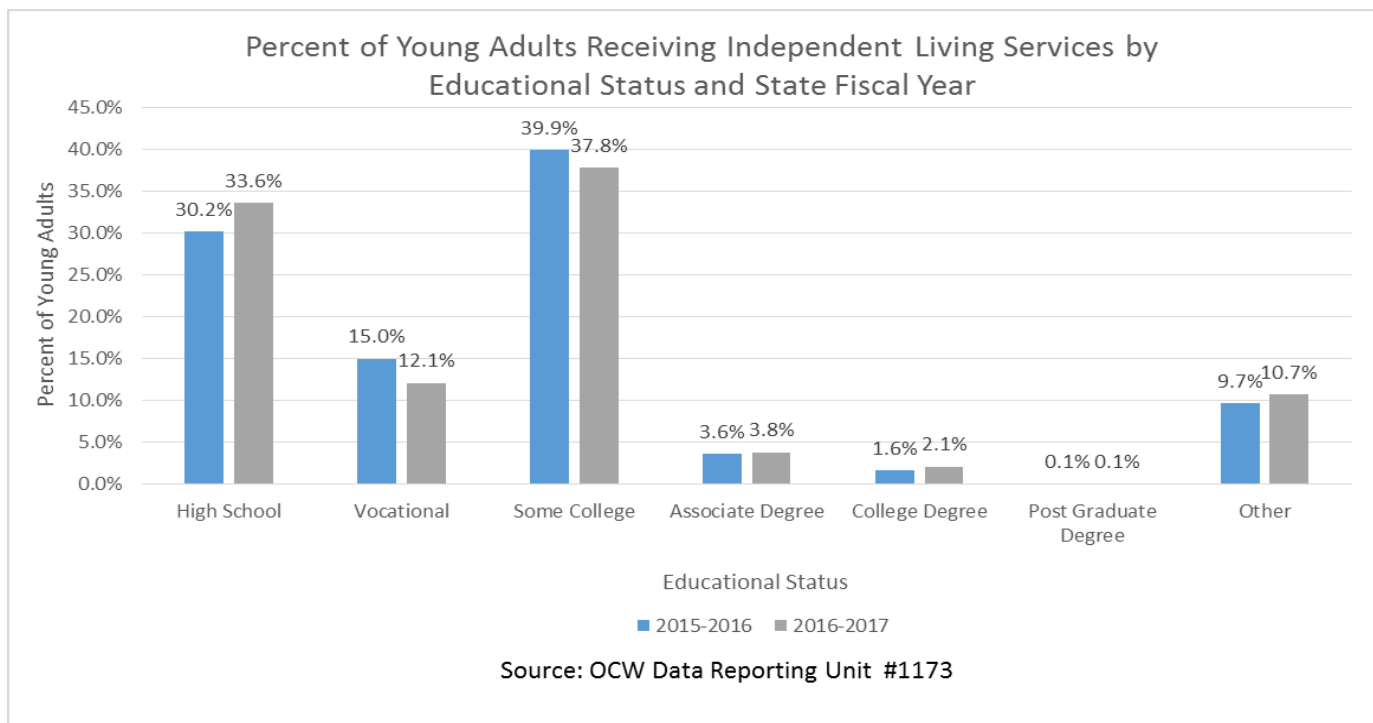
### 1. System-Driven Data

Gathering facts and statistics around Florida's young adults participating in services is critical in determining program effectiveness and measuring outcomes. To maintain data accuracy, the Department and CBCs monitor relevant independent living services data elements by accessing reports in FSFN. The Office of Child Welfare Data Reporting Unit develops reports to assist in monitoring such focus areas as: education, employment, and housing. Data integrity checks are completed by the CBC staff responsible for managing independent living services. In September 2016, a revision of the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) FSFN Desk Reference was published emphasizing the essential data elements for reporting outcome data that may be used to evaluate the effectiveness of services. A copy of the desk reference can be found on the FSFN Report, Information, and Resources page in Guidance Documents at: <http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/FSFN.shtml>.

## Education

Improving educational (academic or vocational) attainment is one of the six outcome areas tracked by the federal Administration for Children & Families (ACF) through NYTD. The Department complies with federal regulations related to education assistance to former foster youth and transmits the relevant data to NYTD from FSFN. Although educational attainment is a general goal for all young adults receiving independent living services, PESS is the only program that requires enrollment and academic progress as a condition for continued eligibility. EFC allows young adults to choose a qualifying activity other than obtaining an education. Only two of the five qualifying activities for EFC require young adults to be enrolled in school. Aftercare Services do not require school enrollment nor any qualifying activity.

The chart below illustrates the percentage of young adults who received funding for an independent living service and their highest recorded educational achievement during the reporting period. The Other Category represents those young adults whose education entries reflected None, Non-Graded, Not Applicable, Special Education, Secondary, or Unknown.

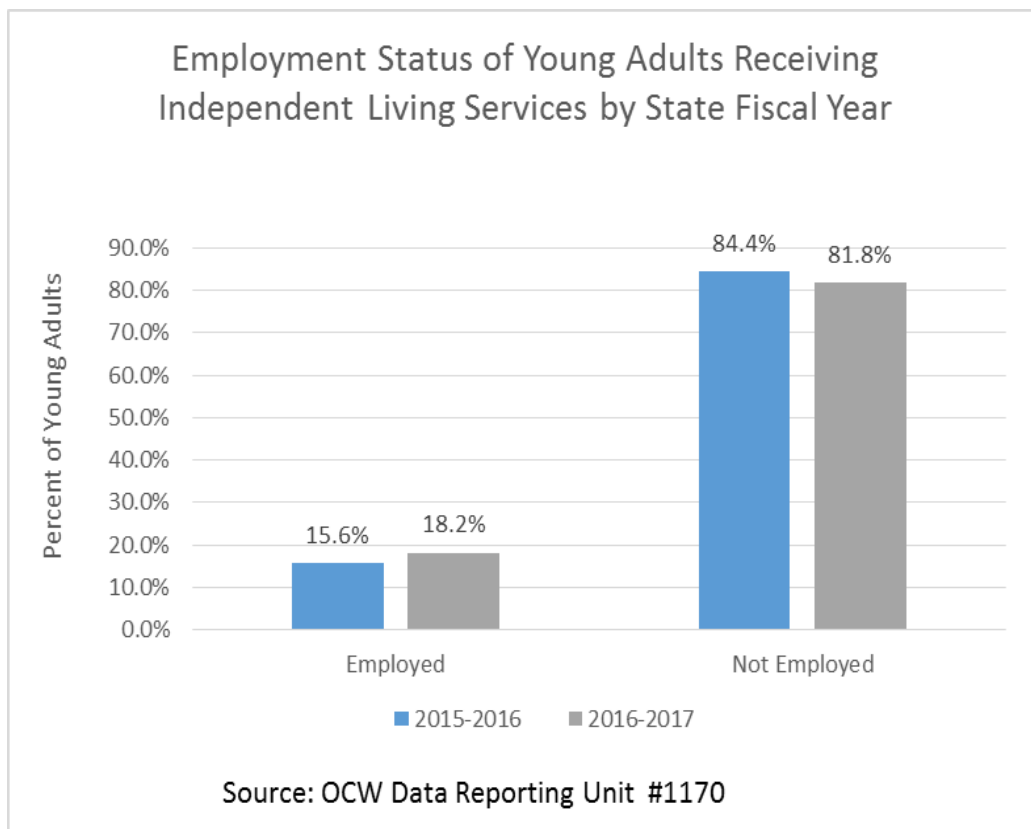


## Employment

Increasing financial self-sufficiency is another outcome area tracked by ACF through NYTD. Financial self-sufficiency can be achieved by taking steps to create a stable income, building a savings account, and staying out of debt. Employment is one step toward increasing self-sufficiency and is a qualifying option for eligibility in EFC. The Department supports employment for all transitioning youth and encourages employment and career opportunities as appropriate, based on the skills and abilities of each young adult. The Department acknowledges that there are multiple pathways to success and allowing young adults to choose work or school or a combination of both potentially allows for a more natural transition to adulthood as their non-former foster youth peers. The following chart portrays an increase in percentage of young



adults who had received an independent living service and had a recorded period of employment entered in FSFN during SFY 2015-16 and 2016-17 (See Appendix F for CBC level data).



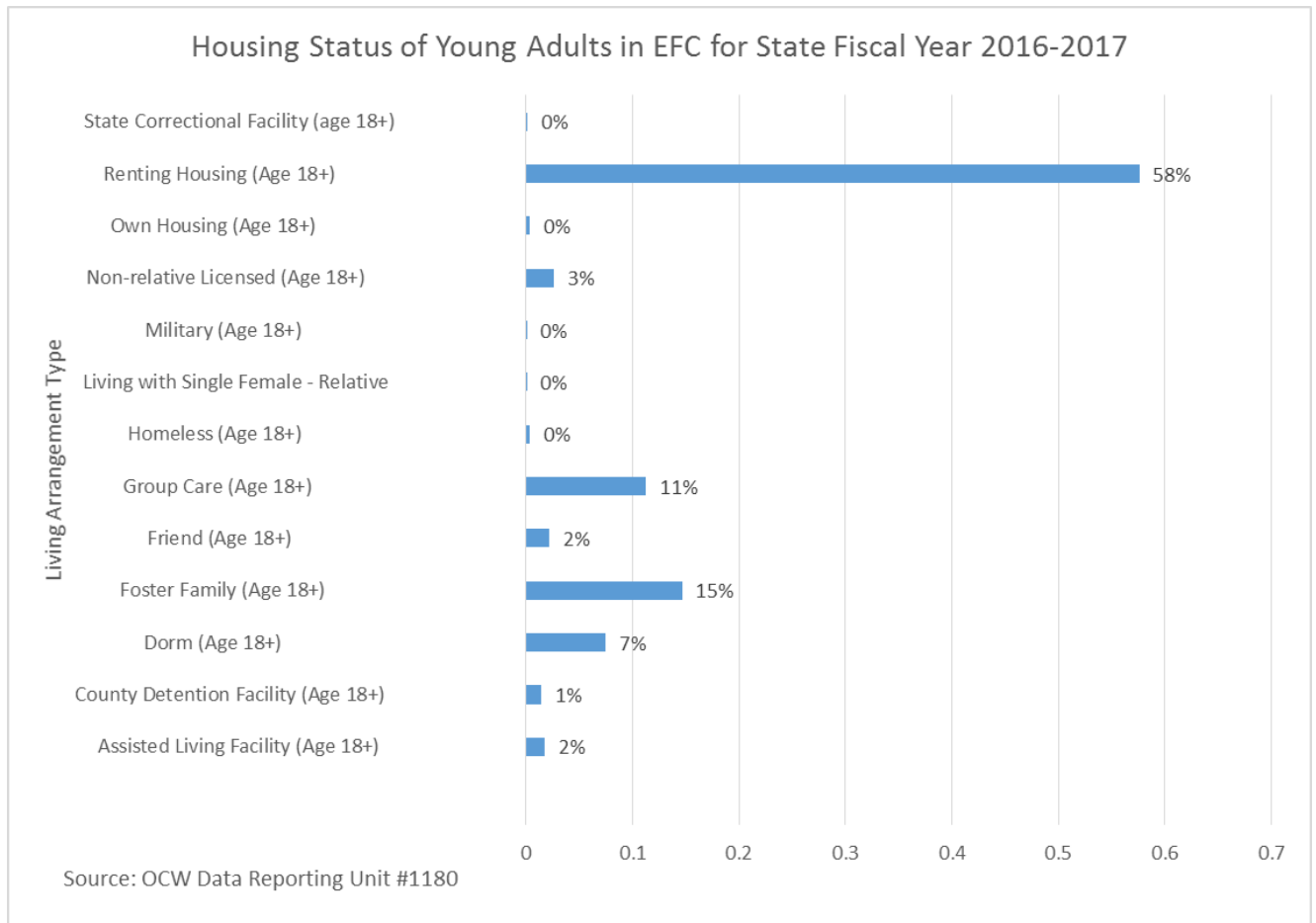
### ***Housing (Living Arrangements)***

Reducing homelessness of former foster youth is another outcome area tracked by ACF through NYTD. The Department and the CBCs also track and monitor the data relevant to housing for young adults receiving independent living services. The Department and the CBCs strive to ensure that every young adult served has an appropriate living arrangement and the necessary supports needed for the young adult to become successful. EFC is the only service category that requires an assessment of the young adult’s living environment as an eligibility factor. Assessment of each young adult’s life skills and abilities helps CBCs determine what level of supervision is needed.

FSFN currently offers a multitude of different living arrangement documentation options. Living arrangements range from a less restrictive setting like Own Housing to a more restrictive setting like Assisted Living Facility or State Correctional Facility. A FSFN Living Arrangement Guide provides direction to CBCs for selecting the appropriate documentation option. For example, the Renting Housing (Age 18+) documentation option is used when a young adult is renting a home, apartment, or room. The Foster Family (Age 18+) option is chosen when a young adult is living in a “host home” or unlicensed foster home while the Non-relative Licensed (Age 18+) denotes a home with a licensed foster parent. The Dorm (Age 18+) represents both a dorm

living environment as well as a transitional living program and Group Care (Age 18+) signifies an actual licensed group home. The Friend (Age 18+) selection is used when a young adult is living in a home with a friend but is not paying rent.

As depicted in the chart below, just over half (58 percent) of young adults in EFC are reported as renting housing while approximately 14 percent are in licensed placement settings. All living arrangement types showing zero percent reflects each having four or less reported entries.



## 2. Self-Report Surveys

### ***Florida NYTD Surveys***

Self-report questionnaires provided to young adults receiving independent living services are another way to evaluate program effectiveness. Survey response data may be used to further assess areas for gaps or trends. Opportunities for improvement are either addressed through technical assistance or statewide training. The Department contracts with Cby25® Initiative to administer the surveys and report the results. At the close of each survey period, a report is provided to the Department to publish.

Beginning in August 2016, the Office of Child Welfare (OCW) began a comprehensive review of the administration of Florida's surveys. After an initial assessment, the Department began

efforts to revamp and administer a more user-friendly survey, one that will not only appropriately capture the voice of the foster youth, but inform the Department on opportunities for improvement in service delivery. In the first phase, OCW eliminated questions that were either no longer applicable or had provided information that could be gathered utilizing another data source. In addition, OCW facilitated a workgroup with pertinent stakeholders and gathered critical feedback and recommendations. Efforts are still underway to revamp survey administration and tools.

During SFY 2016-17, the Florida NYTD survey administration was from April 15 - June 17, 2017. The results revealed that approximately 20 percent of young adults surveyed reported having an instance of homelessness in the last two years and 18 percent reported having given birth or fathered a child in the last two years. More information on the reported survey results, along with prior year's reports, are available on the Department's website at the following link: <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/independent-living/reports>.

### ***NYTD Surveys***

Since 2011, ACF requires states to survey a cohort of transitioning young people at ages 17, 19, and 21 for a longitudinal study. In contrast to the Florida NYTD, the ACF utilizes a cohort for research that not only includes youth placed in licensed foster care but also those placed with relative and non-relative caregivers. Therefore, a percentage of the cohort may or may not be eligible for Florida's independent living programs. In October 2016, the Department began a new baseline year in which all youth turning 17 years of age in out-of-home care during the 2016-17 federal fiscal year were invited to take a voluntary survey comprised of 20-22 federally mandated questions pertaining to areas such as: employment, education, homelessness, high risk activities, adult connections, and health insurance. Those 17 year olds surveyed will become Cohort 3 and will be surveyed again at 19 and 21 years of age. In November 2016, ACF published findings from the first completed cohort. Those national results can be found at: [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/nytd\\_data\\_brief\\_5.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/nytd_data_brief_5.pdf). Although state level data is not discussed in the document, some results shared by ACF indicate that 83 percent of the Florida young people surveyed received a high school diploma or GED, 43 percent reported having at least one experience of homelessness, and 36 percent reported having given birth to or fathering a child at age 17, 19, or 21.

### **3. Contract Oversight**

During SFY 2016-17, the Office of Contracted Client Services, through the CBC Contract Oversight Unit (COU), developed a new method for monitoring the service delivery of CBC providers. The monitoring process now requires an in-depth assessment of the system of care in seven critical areas of operation. Through guidance and recommendations from the contract oversight advisory committee, which includes a wide variety of child welfare experts representing the Department, CBCs, and Case Management Organizations (CMOs), the following seven critical areas of operation were identified. These include:

- Leadership and Governance
- Workforce Management
- Quality Management and Performance Improvement
- Placement Resources and Processes
- Practice

- Partner Relationships
- Community Relationships

On-site monitoring is conducted by a team, led by two representatives from the COU and supported by two other representatives from the Department to include region and headquarter staff and two representatives from peer CBCs. Prior to the on-site monitoring, the COU members conduct an analysis of the CBC's performance and quality measures, as well as provide a summary of the CBC and the community the CBC serves. Once the team is on-site, they conduct interviews with CBC and CMO staff to gather information in the seven critical areas.

Each critical area has subcategories that build the framework for the system analysis process used to evaluate whether a CBC is meeting the terms of the contract and meeting safety, permanency, and well-being goals for the children and young adults they serve.

For example, a question such as "What independent living placements with supportive programs have been developed?" may be asked of the CBC's leadership during the interview process. Other relevant independent living elements are also incorporated into the conversation to elicit information as to the effectiveness of the services and program administration. These elements include but are not limited to:

- Housing
- Mentoring and lifelong connections
- Education
- Employment
- Financial management
- Behavioral health
- Transition

A key piece of the system evaluation is the information gathered surrounding a CBC's internal performance improvement strategy, which evaluates how they use performance and quality data internally to develop improvement strategies. This includes how they evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their family support services programs, their safety management programs and their safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.

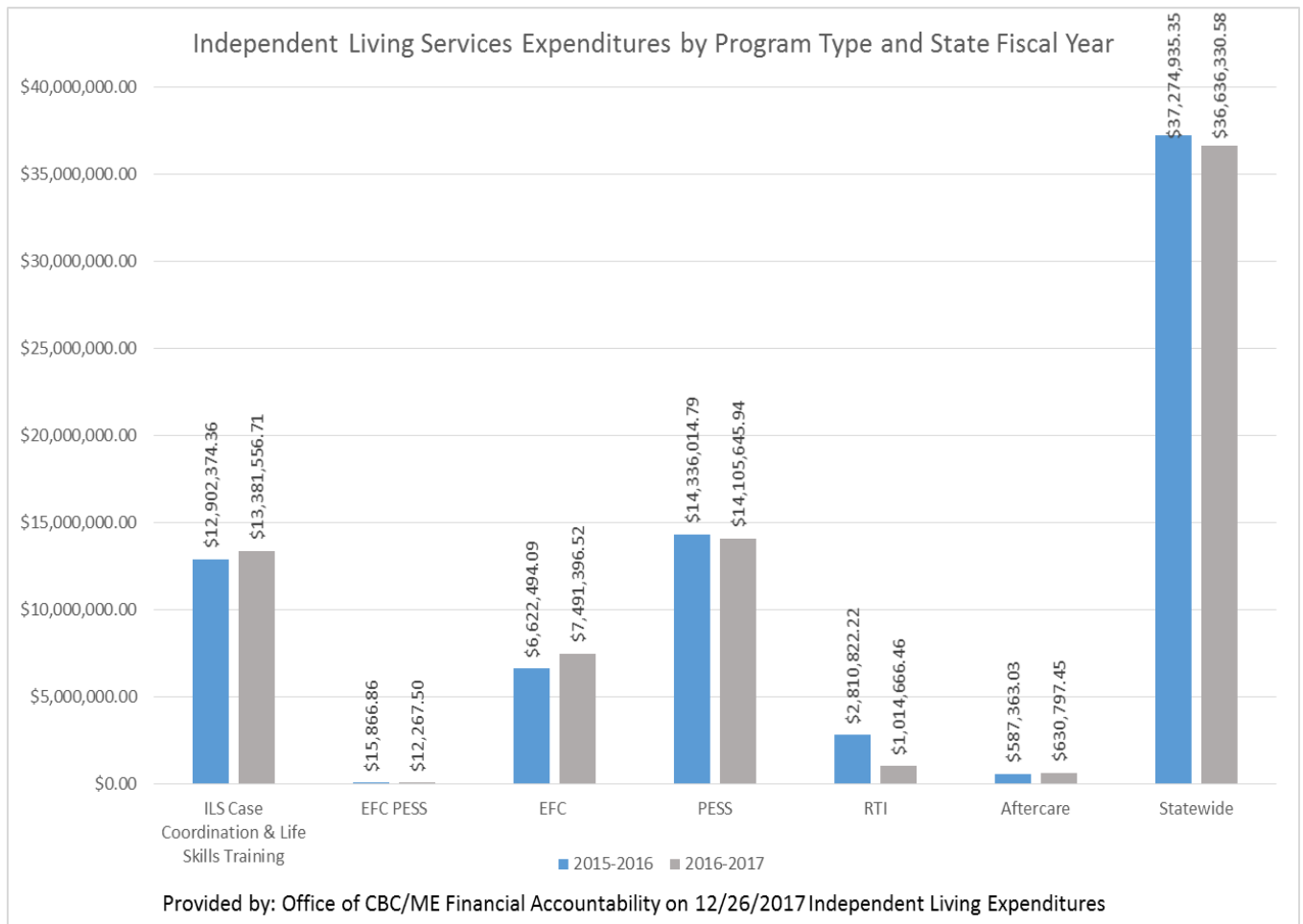
After an on-site monitoring, the information provided in the monitoring report drives the development of corrective action plans to address areas where the CBC needs improvement.

#### **4. Financial Accountability**

During SFY 2016-17, the Department's Office of CBC/Managing Entity Financial Accountability provided technical assistance and oversight to Department contract managers and CBC financial staff throughout the state to ensure payments were recorded accurately in FSFN. Independent living services payments were reviewed monthly for the following: payment amounts adhere to the amounts pursuant to Florida Statutes and Florida Administrative Code, young adult's eligibility within each program is appropriately documented in FSFN, and federal and state funds are paid only to eligible young adults based on age for the program in which the young adults have been approved. In addition to the technical assistance provided and monthly payment reviews, quarterly reviews were performed by selecting payment records for each CBC

where the CBC provides all supporting documentation used to populate eligibility information in FSFN and the amount of financial assistance determined by the CBC to ensure the correct application of eligibility and financial requirements were completed; thereby, ensuring the payments made were allowable. At the beginning of the SFY, each CBC was evaluated for its agency's financial accountability of the funds provided by the Department, including actual expenditures recorded for the prior SFY, any carry forward funds available, as well as the agency's submitted Cost Allocation Plan. The Cost Allocation Plan identifies how the funds for each program will be spent during the year by the CBC and is reviewed and approved by the Department. As needed, any identified fiscal issues are discussed with the CBC.

The Florida Legislature appropriates approximately \$29 million each SFY for independent living services. The total appropriation includes the cost of the case management associated with the delivery of services to young adults as well as the supplemental room and board payment to foster care parents for providing independent life skills and normalcy supports to youth ages 13 through 17. The chart below displays the actual amount spent in each program by SFY. As indicated on the SFY 2016-17 statewide bar, total expenditures have exceeded the amount appropriated by over \$7 million (See Appendices G and H for CBC level data and total expenditures).



## Rule Promulgation

Provisions impacting the delivery of independent living services are included in multiple chapters of Florida Administrative Code. The following rules were adopted during SFY 2016-17:

- Chapter 65C-14, Child-Caring Agency Licensing, which provides requirements for agencies licensed by the Department that provide group care. The rule has been substantially modified since the rule was last promulgated in 1988 and was most recently amended October 20, 2016.
- Chapter 65C-15, Child-Placing Agencies, which provides requirements to agencies that provide placement services. The rule was amended November 14, 2016.

## Other Activities

### ***Independent Living Services Advisory Council (ILSAC)***

The ILSAC was created in 2002 by the Florida Legislature and is codified in s. 409.1451(7), F.S. The ILSAC has the responsibility for reviewing and making recommendations concerning the implementation and operation of independent living services, including barriers and successes. The 2017 report to the Florida Legislature and the Department includes several legislative recommendations for the Department. The full annual report and the Department's response are located on the Department's Independent Living Services internet site, <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/independent-living>.

ILSAC membership consists of representatives from the Department's headquarters and region offices, CBCs, Department of Education, Agency for Health Care Administration, State Young Adults Advisory Board, Career Source Florida, Inc., Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office, foster parents, recipients of the RTI Program, and other advocates for youth in foster care. Other appointed members include representatives from faith-based and community-based organizations, mentoring programs, higher education, and the judicial system.

### ***Appeals***

A young adult applying for or receiving independent living services has the right to receive notice of adverse action and to resolve issues of eligibility through the fair hearing process. Title 45, section 205.10 of the Code of Federal Regulations provides for fair hearings, which are used to challenge or appeal actions relating to federally funded services. Sections 39.6251(9) and 409.1451(4), F.S., provide for an appeal, which can be provided by a fair hearing. The Office of Appeal Hearings is part of the Office of Inspector General within the Department. The office manages all requests and data pertinent to Independent Living Fair Hearings.

The Office of Appeal Hearings provided data for SFY 2016-17, portraying a 37 percent increase in cases received compared to the data from SFY 2015-16. Although the number of cases increased, there was no percent change in the number of appeals granted. In SFY 2016-17, there were just four appeals granted. In most of the cases, the outcome of the appeal was either withdrawn or abandoned.

## ***Positive Pathways Program (PPP)***

During SFY 2016-17, the Department contracted with Educate Tomorrow Corporation, a 501(c)(3) organization, for the purposes of purchasing services to coordinate, develop, and maintain a network of postsecondary supports in efforts to improve outcomes and career transitions for former foster youth eligible for the Department's tuition and fee exemption. There are approximately 66,211 former foster youth that have not yet reached 28 years of age that are potentially eligible based on the eligibility criteria set forth in s. 1009.25, F.S. This work is a continuation of support, networking, and collective impact that began in 2013 with the establishment of Florida Reach and in response to s. 409.1452, F.S., relevant to the collaboration with the State University System (SUS), Florida College System (FCS), and Department of Education.

Although there are designated foster care liaisons at every SUS and FCS campus, there are very few dedicated campus coaches. One of PPP's main objectives to date is to identify the colleges and universities where there is not only a need for dedicated coaches, but also for campus-based coaching programs due to higher attendance of former foster youth. Through identification, research, technical assistance, and training, PPP hopes to establish a Florida model of postsecondary supports and advising for this student population, one that could be easily replicated at all educational institutions.

## **Conclusion**

The Department recognizes the overall decline in young adults served through independent living programs in SFY 2016-17 and is reviewing methods to better engage youth in out-of-home care and former foster youth, encouraging them to take full advantage of the services available. Although there is a decline in participation, more young adults in SFY 2016-17 were reported as employed and having graduated high school. Additionally, more young adults are exercising their right to appeal eligibility decisions. It is anticipated with the Department's continued efforts to improve the analysis of CBC's performance, requiring better data quality, and conducting thorough oversight activities, young adults participating in independent living programs will have service continuity, assisting them in advancing their financial independence, improving their educational attainment, increasing their connections to supportive adults, reducing instances of homelessness, decreasing their high-risk behavior, and will continue to seek access to the health insurance available through Medicaid. By strengthening the Department's oversight, collaboration, and clearly communicated expectations, eligible former foster youth will have the opportunity to thrive in adulthood.

## Appendix A

<b>Number of Youth Turning Age 18 in Out-of-Home Care by State Fiscal Year and CBC</b>		
<b>CBC</b>	<b>State Fiscal Year</b>	
	2015-2016	2016-2017
Big Bend CBC	26	33
Brevard Family Partnership	29	29
ChildNet-Broward	107	111
ChildNet-Palm Beach	66	62
Childrens Network of SW Florida	50	70
Community Based Care of Central Fla	63	49
Community Based Care of Central Fla (Seminole)	14	16
Community Partnership for Children	34	30
Devereux CBC	25	40
Eckerd Community Alternatives	69	81
Eckerd Community Hillsborough	83	71
Families First Network	44	54
Family Integrity Program	14	4
Family Support Services of North Fla	33	32
Heartland for Children	44	25
Kids Central, Inc.	41	54
Kids First of Florida, Inc.	8	7
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc	148	135
Partnership for Strong Families	20	19
Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition	26	23
Statewide	944	945
Source: Child Welfare Dashboard, Child Welfare Trends: Children & Young Adults Exiting Out-of-Home Care		



## Appendix B

Number of 16 and 17 Year Olds Discharged to Adoption or Guardianship by State Fiscal Year and CBC				
CBC	Adoption		Guardianship	
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2015-2016	2016-2017
Big Bend CBC	18	14	12	4
Brevard Family Partnership	1	2	3	8
ChildNet-Broward	11	7	22	24
ChildNet-Palm Beach	9	11	18	15
Childrens Network of SW Florida	8	4	17	16
Community Based Care of Central Fla	3	4	22	16
Community Based Care of Central Fla (Seminole)	3	1	5	13
Community Partnership for Children	5	12	16	13
Devereux CBC	4	4	5	8
Eckerd Community Alternatives	7	14	37	36
Eckerd Community Hillsborough	25	15	19	24
Families First Network	15	3	16	6
Family Integrity Program	1	0	4	8
Family Support Services of North Fla	12	3	12	5
Heartland for Children	2	7	16	23
Kids Central, Inc.	3	7	20	25
Kids First of Florida, Inc.	2	1	4	5
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc	10	8	41	27
Partnership for Strong Families	5	5	19	20
Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition	5	1	13	22
Statewide	149	123	321	318
Source: OCW Data Reporting Unit, Scheduled Report #1682				

## Appendix C

<b>Number of Youth in the Legal Custody of the Department Discharged to Age of Majority by State Fiscal Year and CBC</b>		
<b>CBC</b>	<b>State Fiscal Year</b>	
	2015-2016	2016-2017
Big Bend CBC	24	33
Brevard Family Partnership	30	30
ChildNet-Broward	109	109
ChildNet-Palm Beach	68	61
Childrens Network of SW Florida	49	68
Community Based Care of Central Fla	64	48
Community Based Care of Central Fla (Seminole)	14	16
Community Partnership for Children	34	32
Devereux CBC	25	41
Eckerd Community Alternatives	68	76
Eckerd Community Hillsborough	85	72
Families First Network	45	55
Family Integrity Program	14	4
Family Support Services of North Fla	33	32
Heartland for Children	44	25
Kids Central, Inc.	38	52
Kids First of Florida, Inc.	8	8
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc	142	135
Partnership for Strong Families	20	19
Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition	26	22
Statewide	940	938
Source: OCW Data Reporting Unit, Scheduled Report #1682		

## Appendix D

Number of Young Adults Receiving Independent Living Services by Program Type, State Fiscal Year, and CBC

CBC	2015-2016						2016-2017					
	EFC	PESS	EFC and PESS	RTI	Aftercare	Unduplicated Total	EFC	PESS	EFC and PESS	RTI	Aftercare	Unduplicated Total
Big Bend CBC	53	75	0	14	22	125	57	68	0	5	16	117
Brevard Family Partnership	52	36	1	6	15	84	52	39	0	6	17	79
ChildNet-Broward	183	199	2	42	27	356	211	176	1	23	28	343
ChildNet-Palm Beach	168	133	0	26	39	261	174	128	0	13	31	260
Childrens Network of SW Florida	63	77	0	23	1	131	70	84	0	12	1	137
Community Based Care of Central Fla	80	126	0	33	49	205	67	108	0	8	42	167
Community Based Care of Central Fla (Seminole)	18	32	0	3	3	48	23	21	0	1	8	40
Community Partnership for Children	41	82	1	16	27	122	32	64	0	11	17	104
Devereux CBC	32	38	0	7	13	72	43	43	4	2	12	76
Eckerd Community Alternatives	72	95	12	31	53	186	81	107	5	9	58	172
Eckerd Community Hillsborough	79	117	0	18	76	213	93	134	0	6	77	215
Families First Network	80	81	2	20	14	152	97	66	4	10	15	153
Family Integrity Program	7	12	0	9	0	19	8	8	0	4	1	15
Family Support Services of North Fla	61	82	0	22	43	157	52	81	1	3	37	129
Heartland for Children	76	58	1	24	13	136	72	60	0	8	23	109
Kids Central, Inc.	39	60	3	8	7	90	37	55	3	3	5	89
Kids First of Florida, Inc.	12	21	0	5	11	36	9	19	0	3	6	31
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc	200	215	1	79	27	431	222	222	1	36	10	411
Partnership for Strong Families	17	33	0	24	6	54	11	27	0	8	7	42
Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition	39	40	1	4	15	68	26	31	0	0	8	54
Statewide	1372	1612	24	414	461	2946	1437	1541	19	171	419	2743

Source: OCW Data Reporting Unit #1130

## Appendix E

Number of Young Adults Receiving Independent Living Services by Educational Status, State Fiscal Year, and CBC																
CBC	2015-2016								2016-2017							
	High School	Vocational	Some College	Associate Degree	College Degree	Post Graduate Degree	Other	Total	High School	Vocational	Some College	Associate Degree	College Degree	Post Graduate Degree	Other	Total
Big Bend CBC	19	25	57	0	4	0	14	119	24	23	48	2	4	0	10	111
Brevard Family Partnership	21	2	42	3	0	0	8	76	33	3	35	2	0	0	4	77
ChildNet-Broward	93	65	128	9	10	0	40	345	105	47	125	7	7	0	34	325
ChildNet-Palm Beach	86	27	113	2	3	0	16	247	117	21	96	2	2	0	10	248
Childrens Network of SW Florida	43	9	60	0	2	0	15	129	59	6	50	2	2	0	14	133
Community Based Care of Central Fla	60	41	62	1	0	0	45	209	40	41	24	3	0	0	61	169
Community Based Care of Central Fla (Seminole)	11	7	20	5	1	0	4	48	10	2	20	2	0	0	6	40
Community Partnership for Children	40	13	14	42	2	0	4	115	42	9	11	33	3	0	3	101
Devereux CBC	30	3	28	2	0	0	6	69	22	2	37	4	1	0	4	70
Eckerd Community Alternatives	58	26	90	0	0	0	4	178	61	17	85	0	0	0	9	172
Eckerd Community Hillsborough	68	24	110	0	0	0	8	210	85	13	116	1	0	0	12	227
Families First Network	51	22	67	2	0	0	7	149	59	11	64	2	0	0	8	144
Family Integrity Program	2	4	8	0	2	0	3	19	4	2	4	0	1	0	3	14
Family Support Services of North Fla	38	21	68	5	3	0	21	156	37	14	55	4	3	0	17	130
Heartland for Children	53	10	45	2	4	0	17	131	55	3	31	0	3	0	14	106
Kids Central, Inc.	14	25	38	2	1	0	9	89	18	15	33	4	4	0	9	83
Kids First of Florida, Inc.	4	3	18	2	0	0	7	34	3	2	18	2	0	0	3	28
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc	105	97	149	16	9	2	39	417	84	84	138	16	25	2	54	403
Partnership for Strong Families	35	3	6	3	1	1	4	53	12	3	11	11	0	1	4	42
Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition	31	2	17	6	3	0	6	65	28	3	10	4	2	0	6	53
Statewide	862	429	1140	102	45	3	277	2858	898	321	1011	101	57	3	285	2676

Source: OCW Data Reporting Unit #1173

## Appendix F

Employment Status of Young Adults Receiving Independent Living Services by State Fiscal Year and CBC						
CBC	2015-2016			2016-2017		
	Employed	Not Employed	Total	Employed	Not Employed	Total
Big Bend CBC	12	115	127	19	102	121
Brevard Family Partnership	15	71	86	18	61	79
ChildNet-Broward	23	340	363	27	319	346
ChildNet-Palm Beach	12	250	262	15	250	265
Childrens Network of SW Florida	23	119	142	29	118	147
Community Based Care of Central Fla	18	198	216	29	152	181
Community Based Care of Central Fla (Seminole)	8	41	49	11	36	47
Community Partnership for Children	11	116	127	13	99	112
Devereux CBC	12	63	75	13	66	79
Eckerd Community Alternatives	73	152	225	52	133	185
Eckerd Community Hillsborough	66	180	246	48	196	244
Families First Network	44	130	174	52	128	180
Family Integrity Program	2	18	20	7	10	17
Family Support Services of North Fla	56	132	188	48	109	157
Heartland for Children	5	130	135	5	104	109
Kids Central, Inc.	20	79	99	27	73	100
Kids First of Florida, Inc.	11	28	39	15	23	38
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc	61	381	442	95	356	451
Partnership for Strong Families	2	51	53	3	40	43
Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition	17	55	72	14	45	59
Statewide	491	2649	3140	540	2420	2960

Source: OCW Data Reporting Unit #1170

## Appendix G

Independent Living Expenditures by Program Type, State Fiscal Year 2015-1016, and CBC							
Independent Living Services (ILS)	Aftercare Total	EFC PESS Total	EFC Total	PESS Total	RTI Total	ILS Case Coordination & Life Skills Training Total	SFY15-16 ILS Subtotal
Lakeview (dba Families First Network)	11,957.80	5,024.00	367,346.26	831,387.99	207,240.00	551,978.03	1,974,934.08
Big Bend CBC	21,079.47	0.00	234,169.09	730,335.62	78,335.68	510,587.31	1,574,507.17
Community Partnership for Children	18,039.32	3,768.00	266,400.38	631,768.00	148,773.62	427,825.12	1,496,574.44
Partnership for Strong Families	8,097.00	0.00	95,183.59	230,746.00	162,962.00	514,432.66	1,011,421.25
Family Support Services of North Florida	23,106.38	0.00	193,724.90	703,249.31	106,379.64	852,386.95	1,878,847.18
Kids First of Florida	7,308.00	0.00	40,157.74	189,656.00	63,219.87	114,240.86	414,582.47
St Johns County (Family Integrity Program)	0.00	0.00	20,868.39	81,072.29	48,013.44	66,115.71	216,069.83
Children's Network of SW Florida	650.00	0.00	346,519.19	668,072.77	177,889.00	507,172.95	1,700,303.91
Sarasota Family YMCA	12,180.53	0.00	172,383.17	352,389.49	19,825.00	219,252.84	776,031.03
Eckerd (Pasco-Pinellas)	54,908.00	2,238.00	309,044.36	656,639.00	331,429.40	803,833.70	2,158,092.46
Eckerd (Hillsborough)	110,418.18	0.00	342,987.07	927,537.00	123,958.00	850,605.72	2,355,505.97
CBC of Central Florida (Orange-Osceola)	149,122.48	0.00	549,949.08	1,185,146.47	211,008.00	529,588.69	2,624,814.72
CBC of Brevard (dba Brevard Family Partnerships)	22,214.10	0.00	199,014.37	331,584.00	41,448.00	294,346.40	888,606.87
CBC of Central Florida (Seminole)	12,847.00	0.00	117,495.55	253,764.70	15,464.00	126,923.64	526,494.89
Kids Central	5,553.00	616.00	152,433.97	548,044.43	67,793.00	583,684.14	1,358,124.54
Heartland for Children	13,076.88	262.76	360,420.69	474,183.09	162,514.50	116,583.34	1,127,041.26
Devereux	17,200.05	0.00	215,183.46	371,978.47	30,057.00	365,981.18	1,000,400.16
Childnet (Palm Beach)	57,320.49	0.00	979,669.75	1,239,773.05	149,785.67	631,234.53	3,057,783.49
Childnet (Broward)	17,004.24	3,378.00	710,858.28	1,755,302.58	285,277.30	638,593.24	3,410,413.64
Our Kids of Miami-Dade & Monroe	25,280.11	580.10	948,684.80	2,173,384.53	379,449.10	4,197,007.35	7,724,385.99
	<b>587,363.03</b>	<b>15,866.86</b>	<b>6,622,494.09</b>	<b>14,336,014.79</b>	<b>2,810,822.22</b>	<b>12,902,374.36</b>	<b>37,274,935.35</b>
Provided by: Office of CBC/ME Financial Accountability on 12/26/2017 for Independent Living Expenditures							

**Appendix H**

<b>Independent Living Expenditures by Program Type, State Fiscal Year 2016-1017, and CBC</b>							
<b>Independent Living Services (ILS)</b>	<b>Aftercare Total</b>	<b>EFC PESS Total</b>	<b>EFC Total</b>	<b>PESS Total</b>	<b>RTI Total</b>	<b>ILS Case Coordination &amp; Life Skills Training Total</b>	<b>SFY16-17 ILS Subtotal</b>
Lakeview (dba Families First Network)	28,813.82	1,715.83	515,121.67	627,250.00	61,544.00	572,774.25	<b>1,807,219.57</b>
Big Bend CBC	19,292.84	0.00	243,596.31	632,942.97	22,248.50	608,799.01	<b>1,526,879.63</b>
Community Partnership for Children	10,678.02	0.00	151,919.32	769,928.00	80,907.44	439,550.29	<b>1,452,983.07</b>
Partnership for Strong Families	10,129.30	0.00	151,301.28	264,123.00	56,297.55	454,987.40	<b>936,838.53</b>
Family Support Services of North Florida	15,502.16	0.00	235,185.94	645,472.92	28,578.67	531,512.10	<b>1,456,251.79</b>
Kids First of Florida	2,018.00	0.00	81,265.36	177,096.00	31,602.58	101,571.97	<b>393,553.91</b>
St Johns County (Family Integrity Program)	4,957.33	0.00	34,294.59	53,069.34	31,400.00	73,201.11	<b>196,922.37</b>
Children's Network of SW Florida	1,730.00	0.00	380,404.60	777,151.88	94,015.27	491,157.10	<b>1,744,458.85</b>
Sarasota Family YMCA	16,181.39	0.00	186,672.51	293,782.45	0.00	229,923.11	<b>726,559.46</b>
Eckerd (Pasco-Pinellas)	115,535.94	(1,008.00)	292,283.68	884,669.00	51,636.00	729,263.25	<b>2,072,379.87</b>
Eckerd (Hillsborough)	113,618.07	0.00	376,717.42	1,107,796.00	55,416.00	878,302.67	<b>2,531,850.16</b>
CBC of Central Florida (Orange-Osceola)	93,047.18	0.00	579,642.03	950,695.68	42,704.00	1,182,549.92	<b>2,848,638.81</b>
CBC of Brevard (dba Brevard Family Partnerships)	34,383.22	0.00	318,120.84	356,704.00	3,768.00	228,367.28	<b>941,343.34</b>
CBC of Central Florida (Seminole)	3,031.00	0.00	33,370.00	51,496.00	2,088.00	57,873.62	<b>147,858.62</b>
Kids Central	5,718.03	5,534.50	164,937.98	477,435.57	10,341.00	658,505.66	<b>1,322,472.74</b>
Heartland for Children	42,948.20	0.00	288,091.67	494,348.17	43,026.01	416,529.68	<b>1,284,943.73</b>
Devereux	12,917.63	5,556.17	294,607.68	433,739.70	8,059.00	376,133.24	<b>1,131,013.42</b>
Childnet (Palm Beach)	44,234.58	0.00	968,207.25	1,079,150.14	74,719.00	664,959.62	<b>2,831,270.59</b>
Childnet (Broward)	19,085.15	469.00	878,533.24	1,626,759.94	137,806.00	603,076.96	<b>3,265,730.29</b>
Our Kids of Miami-Dade & Monroe	36,975.59	0.00	1,317,123.15	2,402,035.18	178,509.44	4,082,518.47	<b>8,017,161.83</b>
	<b>630,797.45</b>	<b>12,267.50</b>	<b>7,491,396.52</b>	<b>14,105,645.94</b>	<b>1,014,666.46</b>	<b>13,381,556.71</b>	<b>36,636,330.58</b>

Provided by: Office of CBC/ME Financial Accountability on 12/26/2017 for Independent Living Expenditures

## LEGISLATIVELY MANDATED REPORT – STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

REPORT TITLE	STATUTORY REFERENCE	SPECIFICATIONS
2017 Independent Living Services Annual Report.	s. 409.1451(6), F.S.,	<p><b>409.1451(6), Independent living transition services Accountability.</b> --</p> <p>The Department shall prepare a report on the outcome measures and the Department's oversight activities and submit the report to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the committees with jurisdiction over issues relating to children and families in the Senate and the House of Representatives no later than January 31 of each year. The report must include:</p> <p>(a) An analysis of performance on the outcome measures developed under this section reported for each community-based care lead agency and compared with the performance of the Department on the same measures.</p> <p>(b) A description of the Department's oversight of the program, including, by lead agency, any programmatic or fiscal deficiencies found, corrective actions required and current status of compliance.</p> <p>(c) Any rules adopted or proposed under this section since the last report. For the purposes of the first report, any rules adopted or proposed under this section must be included.</p>



## NOTICE OF FILING

<b>Reporting Agency:</b>	Department of Children and Families
<b>Recipient Agency:</b>	Governor Speaker of the House of Representatives President of the Senate
<b>Subject:</b>	2017 Independent Living Services Annual Report
<b>Report Due Date:</b>	January 31, 2018
<b>Statutory Requirement:</b>	s. 409.1451(6), F.S.
<b>Abstract:</b>  This report provides information outcome measure and oversight activities related to the Independent Living Services Program for the calendar year 2017.  Performance outcome measures continued to be evaluated for validity and effectiveness.  Contract oversight and fiscal monitoring of community-based care lead agencies remained ongoing	
Copies of this report may be obtained by contacting Traci Leavine at (850) 922-2298 or Traci.Leavine@myflfamilies.com. Lawful recipients will not be charged for copies. Charges for copies requested by others will conform to requirements of Department of Children and Families CFOP 15-9, Requests for Public Records.	

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# **Department of Children and Families Response to the Independent Living Services Advisory Council 2018 Annual Report**

December 31, 2018

Rebecca Kapusta  
Interim Secretary



Rick Scott  
Governor

## **INTRODUCTION**

Since the establishment of the Independent Living Services Advisory Council (the council) by the 2002 Legislature, the Council has provided recommendations concerning the implementation and operation of independent living services as part of a comprehensive report. As required in s. 409.1451(7), Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Department of Children and Families' (department) is submitting the Independent Living Services Advisory Council 2018 Annual Report, along with the department's responses to each of the recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SERVICES & SUPPORT (PESS)**

1. \$1256 STIPEND: The council has determined the following recommendation for the PESS stipend be adopted. Modify s. 409.1451(2)(B)(1),(3), & (5), F.S., to read "the amount is Florida minimum wage multiplied by 40 hours per week." The set amount of \$1256 is to be stricken from the language. With a set dollar amount written in the statute, a legislative change would be needed each time the amount is changed. With the language stating that the stipend will be calculated by multiplying the Florida minimum wage by 40 hours per week, the amount can be adjusted with the minimum wage adjustment without needing a legislative change each time.

2. FORMALIZED BUDGETING PLAN: Community-Based Care Lead Agencies (CBCs) and case management organizations should be working with young adults on budgeting and ensuring the young adult is financially savvy. A formal, statewide budgeting plan should be developed and used with all young adults transitioning to Independent Living that is evidence-based or has an evidence-informed curriculum.

## **DEPARTMENT RESPONSE**

The department will explore revisions to s. 409.1451, F.S., regarding the amount of financial assistance for young adults participating in PESS. Before reaching a decision as to whether the department will recommend a statutory change to the legislature, consideration must be given to the total federal and state appropriation needed to implement all of Florida's independent living services. For Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-2019, the legislature appropriated approximately \$37 million, an increase of more than \$7.5 million from FY 2017-2018, for the implementation of PESS, Extended Foster Care (EFC), and Aftercare Services. The implementation of Title IV-E EFC will enable the state to draw down Title IV-E dollars to help fund EFC. It is anticipated that \$7.5 million will be made available to help fund Florida's independent living services. An analysis is needed to determine the effects if a specific financial increase is given to assist young adults in PESS. The analysis needs to include the impact on existing EFC and Aftercare Services program funding, and to include consideration of the overall fiscal impact affecting all of Florida's citizens and stakeholders.

The department supports CBCs and their subcontracted direct service providers implementing a budget tool or plan as they work with youth and young adults on becoming financially literate during their transition to independence. Currently, youth under the department's protective supervision are required to receive information offered by the Department of Financial Services (DFS) on a financial literacy curriculum called "Finance Your Future" when they turn 16- and 17-years-old. The curriculum provides core lessons covering subjects such as Budgeting, Saving, Credit Cards, Banking, debt,

and numerous other important areas to maintain a young person's financial health. CBCs and their providers should leverage existing mandates and explore methods for working with young adults in PESS. DFS and the Division of Consumer Services have dedicated a website to providing all Floridians with the resources and information needed to assist in money management:

<https://www.myfloridacfo.com/Ymm/default.aspx>. The department looks forward to working with CBCs on this initiative.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GUARDIAN AD LITEMS REMAINING ON CASES**

1. The Guardian ad Litem Program should remain on cases where young adults have aged out and the court has retained jurisdiction, if the young adult still wants guardian ad litem assigned to them.
2. The Guardian ad Litem Program should be available for appointment on cases where a young adult does not currently have a guardian ad litem and the young adult requests guardian ad litem to be appointed for them, as long as the court retains jurisdiction.
3. The Legislature should provide adequate funding to the Guardian ad Litem Program to be able to fulfill this function in addition to its best interest advocacy work on behalf of children under 18 years of age.

## **DEPARTMENT RESPONSE**

The department supports Guardian ad Litem (GAL) assignments for youth and young adults in transition. Supportive adults such as GAL volunteers are essential in an effective transition to independence. The GALs often fulfill a role of mentor, friend, teacher, and coach. Most importantly, the GALs are a positive connection and an effective voice when youth and young adults may not be able to vocalize their needs. Additionally, young adults who readmit to EFC should be provided the opportunity to have a GAL appointed if agreed upon by the young adult. The department is willing to work with the Florida Guardian ad Litem Program to explore the additional resources needed to better bolster and advocate for transitioning youth and young adults under the juvenile court's jurisdiction pursuant to s.39.013, F.S.