A Youth Evaluation of the SCDSS Chafee Independent Living Program in South Carolina

An analysis of the National Youth in Transition Database in South Carolina and the Voices and Visions of SC Youth in Transition Research Study (FY 2014)

Monique B. Mitchell, PhD
Louisa H. Vann, MPH, CHES
Toni M. Jones, MSW

A partnership between
The Center for Child and Family Studies, University of South Carolina and the Department of Social Services
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Submitted to the South Carolina Department of Social Services, Chafee Independent Living Program Supervisor, and SCDSS Independent Living Program
Acknowledgements

The SC NYTD team would like to extend a warm thank you to all the youth who shared their ideas and experiences about independent living services and their preparation for the transition out of foster care. We would also like to express appreciation to the many community partners (e.g. the South Carolina Foster Parent Association, the Palmetto Association for Children and Families, and all the caseworkers, foster parents, and group home staff) who supported our efforts and who work daily to enhance the wellbeing of South Carolina’s youth. Their valuable partnership has ensured that this research study is truly youth-centered and meaningful.
INTRODUCTION

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
In 1999, the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act (PL 106-169) was passed in response to the alarmingly high rates of homelessness, unemployment, and other negative well-being outcomes experienced by youth who had transitioned out of foster care (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Many youth who were aging out of care did not have the practical skills and training for a successful transition into adulthood. The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) was established to provide states with financial assistance to develop programs, training, and services to assist youth in developing much-needed independent living skills as they prepared to transition out of the foster care system. On October 1, 2010, the federal government launched a nationwide longitudinal data collection, the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), to evaluate the service delivery and program effectiveness of the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.

The National Youth in Transition Database
The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is a federally mandated data collection that evaluates the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. All states are required to track, monitor, and report the independent living services received and identified by youth as having been received as they transition out of foster care. Federal law requires every state to gather information from all eligible youth in foster care at the age of 17 and then again at 19 and 21 years of age. Currently, there are two cohorts of youth in the NYTD data collection: the first cohort of youth turned 17 between October 1, 2010 and September 30, 2011, and the second cohort of youth turned 17 between October 1, 2013 and September 30, 2014. Federal law requires all states to collect the outcomes data within 45 days of a youth’s 17th birthday and within six months of a youth’s 19th and 21st birthday. Public Law 106-169 at section 477 states that if a State fails to comply with the reporting requirements, a penalty of 1-5% will be applied to the State’s annual Chafee Foster Care Independence Program allotment for each reporting period.

Voices and Visions of SC Youth in Transition
Voices and Visions of SC Youth in Transition is a research study being conducted at the University of South Carolina that includes the federally mandated NYTD questions as well as questions specific to South Carolina, which ask youth about their experiences and thoughts of independent living services and the transition out of foster care. In South Carolina, the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) has partnered with The Center for Child and Family Studies (CCFS) at the University of South Carolina (UofSC) in this exciting project to learn more about the experiences of youth in foster care.
Despite the very high response rate for this survey, it should be noted that 14 youth were runaways or missing with whereabouts unknown and could not be reached for the survey. In addition, four youth were unable to be located or invited for the survey; 12 youth declined to participate and 12 youth were determined to be incapacitated and therefore unable to take the survey. These youth may have more serious risk factors than those who could be located or participated in the study. Therefore, the results presented in this report provide information only about those who participated in the survey and who may have different outcomes (e.g. less serious risk factors) than those who did not participate.

It is important to note that the findings in this report are reflective of the youth’s perceptions of independent living services they have received and may differ from what is documented in SCDSS case files. This discrepancy could be for a variety of reasons: some youth may have been hesitant to share particular information or may have differing perceptions of what services were offered to them. Please note that the information shared by youth in their surveys should not be used to correct any information that has been recorded in state files. Rather, this information should be taken under advisement and can be used to consider the efficient implementation of policy and effectiveness of practice.

These findings provide a valuable opportunity for the South Carolina Department of Social Services to assist youth in better understanding the independent living services available to them and engage in dialogue with youth about their transition plan and goals for their future. The information in this report may be useful for engaging in meaningful dialogue with youth about their perceptions and experiences of independent living services and ways to assist them in moving forward and accessing the services that they need to become successful, independent young adults.
No surveyed youth reported being employed full time.  
27% of surveyed youth reported completing an apprenticeship, internship, or other on-the-job training (either paid or unpaid) in the last year.  
Less than 10% of surveyed youth indicated that they were currently receiving social security payments (Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability Insurance, or dependents’ payments).  
2% of surveyed youth indicated they were currently using a scholarship, grant, stipend, student loan, voucher, or other type of educational financial aid to cover any educational expenses.  
26% of surveyed youth stated they were receiving periodic and/or significant financial resources or support from another source not previously indicated and excluding paid employment.  
92% of surveyed youth were attending high school, GED classes, post-high school vocational training, or college.

The only concern I have is finding a job.  
Will there be someone to help me get the financial aid support I need?  
I expect to graduate next year if possible but if I don’t make it and plans don’t go as planned I’ll probably take my GED.  
Will they help me go to college?
RELATIONAL CONNECTIONS & PERMANENCY

"Sometimes it’s hard and it’s like I wanna just get a GED or something or drop out and I just need someone like help you know...being positive in my life and helping me."

"Who do I go to or get into contact with when I need help."

- 85% of surveyed youth had at least one adult in their life, other than their case worker, that they could go to for advice or emotional support.

HOMELESSNESS

"Like a lot of people that leave foster care end up homeless and if I do leave I might not have anywhere else to go if I fall down and...and...I don’t know I’m just worried that I’m not gonna be that secure after I leave."

- Females reported experiencing homelessness at some point in their lives more often than did males.

HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS

- 19% of surveyed youth had referred themselves or been referred for an alcohol or drug abuse assessment or counseling at some point in their life.
- 31% of surveyed youth had been confined in a jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility, in connection with allegedly committing a crime at some point in their life. Males reported being confined in a jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility, in connection with allegedly committing a crime at some point in their life more often than did females.
- 7% of surveyed youth reported giving birth or fathering children in their life. The majority of these youth were not married to the child’s other parent at the time the child was born.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Enrolled in Medicaid

- 82%

- 10% of surveyed youth indicated that they had health insurance other than Medicaid.

"Well one thing I’m concerned about is leaving foster care...like Medicaid. ‘Cause I know that the whole reason I have Medicaid right now is because I’m in DSS custody. So that’s like one of the things I’m worried about...it’s like if I get sick or something how am I gonna pay for it."
8% reported that their health insurance included coverage for medical services; 6% reported that their health insurance included coverage for mental health services; and 7% reported that their health insurance included coverage for prescription drugs.

34% of surveyed youth did not know if they had health insurance other than Medicaid.

**TRANSITION PLANNING**

“My biggest concern right now is the transitional planning because it’s like...I was supposed to know this. I’m already seventeen and yeah...just like gettin’ case workers to really get on that. I know they got a lot of cases but you never really know if somebody is going to be in here until they sign their self out of foster care so that would be nice to know ...They say that the transitional planning is supposed to talk about your future and all this stuff and like here where I’m at we get an independent living book and it tells you a lot of things that DSS does but you know it’d be better coming from your caseworker and not a book. ”

“73% Not aware or did not know the role they played in the development of their transition plan

17% Involved but did not lead

6% Led the development of their transition plan

4% Were not involved

I haven’t had mine yet but I probably won’t lead it.
No one advocates for me.

A transition plan has not been brought to my attention.

**TRANSITION CONCERNS**

“I guess I don’t want to be dropped all of a sudden.”

“I don’t think I am ready to be that responsible yet.”

“What is life after foster care like?”

“It makes me nervous leaving foster care because I’m scared I’m not gonna know what to do like when I leave ‘cause I’ve been in here so long...like I’ve been here like four or six years.”

“Am I gonna have a job, where’s my money gonna come from, where I’m gonna stay at ‘cause as far as right now I don’t got nothing.”

“Since I have no family to go to when I turn 18, will foster care be there to support me physically and emotionally?”

“What will become of me? Where will I go?”
PERSONAL GOALS

Most frequently cited goals:

Graduating high school and pursuing a post-high school education

Finding a Job

Having a Home

Getting a Car

Having a Loving Relationship and family

### Comparison of Cohort 1 (2010-2011) and Cohort 2 (2013-2014) findings from 17-year-old youth in foster care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cohort 1, Wave 1 (FFY 2011) n=294</th>
<th>Cohort 2, Wave 1 (FFY 2014) n=196</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part Time Employment</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Training</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(paid or unpaid)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Social</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Payments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Educational</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Periodic Financial</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources/Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed High School or GED</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently Enrolled in School</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Support</td>
<td>Most commonly reported relationships that provide emotional support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth parent</td>
<td>Foster parent/former foster parent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parent/former foster parent</td>
<td>Birth parent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibling</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness (at any point in time)</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referred for Substance Abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment/Counseling</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confined in a Jail, Prison,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctional Facility, or Juvenile or Community Detention Facility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthed or Fathered a Child</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid</td>
<td>Enrolled in Medicaid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not know Medicaid status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has other Health Insurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not know other health insurance status</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS
& APPLICATIONS
What are the implications of the research findings for policy and practice? How can these findings be useful to those working directly with youth? In this section we highlight a few of the key findings from this study (e.g., emotional support, transition planning, employment, education, and health care) and discuss their implications as well as practical approaches to engaging in meaningful dialogue with youth to promote successful outcomes. It should be noted that although we have highlighted some of the implications and applications of these findings, we have not addressed the countless ways to interpret and apply these results. As such, we encourage case managers, care providers, policymakers, and DSS partners to consider the relevant policies, programs, and practices that inform their work and how these findings can be used meaningfully to enhance the lives of youth transitioning out of foster care.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY & PRACTICE

Relational Connections/Permanency. Emotional support has been considered one of the most deficient supports for youth in foster care. In 2010-2011, when 17-year-old youth in foster care in South Carolina were asked if there was at least one adult in their life, other than their caseworker, to whom they could go for advice or emotional support, 94% responded “yes.” Less than five years later, the next cohort of 17-year-old youth (2013-2014) were asked the same question and only 85% responded “yes.” It is already troubling that not all youth could identify at least one person in their life to whom they could go for emotional support; after all, every person deserves to have an interpersonal connection on which they can rely. It is even more disconcerting that the number of youth who can identify having this critical connection has decreased by nearly 10% within five years. These findings suggest that greater efforts should be made in practice toward assisting youth in developing meaningful and trusting connections with adults on whom they can depend and rely on both in times of emotional distress and elation.

Having a permanent connection is a basic requirement for children in foster care (SCDSS Foster Care Policy Manual, Section 810). There are many policies that provide additional procedures to ensure an adult with whom the child has, or will have, a permanent relationship has been identified. For example, SCDSS Foster Care Policy 819.01.02, Well Being: Education, states that an adult should be identified for any youth in foster care over age 16 with whom the child will have a permanent relationship. Policy 852 requires that youth aged 13-21 complete an annual life skills assessment which should include an assessment of youth’s permanent adult connections and social skills. The assessment can serve as an opportunity for a caseworker and/or provider to facilitate a discussion with a youth about having a permanent adult in their life that the youth selects. Furthermore, Foster Club, a national organization, has developed a resource called Permanent Community Pact that can be used between an adult and youth to “formally” commit to establishing a permanent connection. This resource could serve as a companion to case plans, transition plans, and discussions between a caseworker and/or provider and a youth after a youth completes their annual life skills assessment. It is important to note that each youth who participated in the Cohort 2, Wave 1 Voices & Visions of Youth in Transition research study received a copy of the Permanent Community Pact as well as Getting Solid, a chapter book by Foster Club which was written for youth about making permanent connections. The SCDSS Child and Family Services Plan for FFY 2015-FFY 2019 states that Independent Living services should assist youth with identifying dedicated adults to serve as a youth’s ongoing connection, especially as they transition out of care. The plan sets a goal of matching each youth in transition with a mentor for FFY 2015-2019; therefore, it is hoped that in the upcoming years there will be an increase in the number of youth transitioning out of foster care who can identify an adult they can rely on.

Homelessness. One in five youth in Cohort 1 reported having been homeless while one in three youth in Cohort 2 reported having experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. The incidence of homelessness among 17-year-olds has increased over the years. The concerning increase in the number of 17-year-olds reporting homelessness since 2010-2011 highlights the need for enhanced policies and programs addressing homelessness and the related need for stable, affordable housing.

Purpose 5 of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) includes providing youth with housing support and services, especially to youth between 18 and 21 years of age. Housing expenses covered by Chafee funds require that a youth is employed and/or enrolled in school. The majority (89%) of youth in the population indicated on the survey that they were unemployed when they took the survey at 17; therefore, unless the youth’s plan is to enroll in school or become employed before transitioning out of foster care, and is successful in doing so, housing assistance may not be provided and these youth could be at high risk for homelessness. During a youth’s transition planning meetings, case plan assessments, monthly face-to-face visits with their caseworkers, and through information conversations with providers well before a youth turns 18, discussions should occur with the youth to discuss their plan for living arrangements after emancipation. According to SCDSS Policy 832.01.01, Permanency: Continuity of Family Relationships and Connections, further planning and emphasis on housing should take place during a youth’s exit interview. There are many policies, forms, and opportunities for planning that could prepare youth for stable housing upon exiting the foster care system; however, findings from the Cohort 1, Wave 2 (19-year-old) SC NYTD Survey suggest there may be a disconnect between policy and practice as in 4 in 5 youth had experienced homelessness within two years of their 17th birthday.
Transition Planning. SCDSS Policy 832.01.01, Transition Planning Prior to Emancipation, states that every youth in foster care is required to receive a personalized transition plan “within 90 days of a youth’s 17th birthday” and then “reviewed and updated, with input from the youth, during the 90 days immediately prior to the youth’s 18th birthday.” It would be expected then that most of these youth would be familiar with their transition plan, or their upcoming transition planning meeting, at the time of survey administration (i.e., within 45 days of the 17th birthday). Contrary to this expectation, the survey findings reveal that most youth were either not aware of their transition plan or did not know the role they played in the development of their transition plan. These findings suggest that youth are not receiving a vital component of their case plan that not only has the potential to considerably enhance their wellbeing as they transition out the foster care system but also is required in policy.

In summary, transition planning, having a permanent connection to an adult, and a sustainable housing plan could assist youth in gaining employment and completing their education. Providing mentorship to youth with emphasis on gaining employment prior to their turning 18, may further alleviate some of the challenges faced by youth during the transition. Youth indicated throughout the survey that some of their biggest challenges and fears are related to having reliable people and places to live. These findings raise concern as youth who have not yet transitioned out of foster care are expressing concerns about matters that should be adequately addressed in practice at this age. In other words, because policies exist to address and attend to matters such as permanency, housing, employment, education, and so forth, we would expect that youth would not be struggling with matters such as these. Unfortunately, our findings suggest that what is documented in policy is not necessarily consistent with what is occurring in practice.
Research Finding

Homelessness: One in three surveyed youth had experienced homelessness at some point in their life. (14% increase from Cohort 1)

Policy

1. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Purpose 5
2. SCDSs Policy 832.01.01, Transition Planning Prior to Emancipation
   a. Number 5, “The youth is contacted monthly for a minimum of six months after discharge from care to provide transition support. In addition, the worker must make monthly face-to-face contact with all youth who exit care and continue to receive any IL funding with the following exception: face-to-face contact can be quarterly for youth who are living in college housing with telephone contact monthly.”
3. SCDSs Foster Care Policy 832.01.01, Items 5-6c, Permanency: Continuity of Family Relationships and Connections
4. SCDSs Child and Family Services Plan for FFY 2015-2019, Chapter 7, Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, Purpose 5 (pg. 162)

Resources

1. Life Skills Assessment (annually) with supplement on Homelessness
2. SCDSS Form 30206 (5), Housing
3. 2013 Independent Living NYTD Services Booklet
4. DSS Booklet 30208, Pathways to Success: The South Carolina Chafee Independent Living Program and Educational and Training Voucher Program Guidelines for Services (Adult and Youth versions)
5. SCDSs Chafee Independent Living Program Training Manual

Settings of Implementation

1. Case plan meetings
2. Transition planning meetings, especially 90 days before the youth turns 18
3. Monthly face-to-face meetings
4. Exit Checklist dialogue

Research Finding

Transition Planning: 73% of youth were either not aware of their transition plan or did not know the role they played in the development of their transition plan.

Policy

1. SCDSs Policy 832.01.01, Transition Planning Prior to Emancipation
   a. Number 4, “Progress is evaluated and the transition plan is updated monthly with input from the youth. Services are added, if needed, until the youth exits care.”

Resources

1. SCDSS Form 30206, P.A.T.T.Y. – Providing Assistance to Transitioning Youth Program
2. SCDSs Policy 832.02, Checklist for Teens Exiting From Foster Care System
3. SCDSS Form 30163, SCDSs Children and Youth in Foster Care Bill of Rights

Settings of Implementation

1. Case plan meetings
2. Transition planning meetings, especially 90 days before the youth turns 18
3. Monthly face-to-face meetings
4. Exit Checklist dialogue
TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

Dear Care Provider,

If you have a youth on your caseload or in your home who turned 17 between October 1, 2013 and September 30, 2014 and was in foster care at the time, then it is likely that he or she contributed to the findings in this report. It is helpful for us to know what youth had to say about their perceptions of the independent living (IL) services they have received. You may notice that some of the youth’s responses on the SC NYTD survey differ from what is documented in their case file or from your perceptions. This could be due to various reasons such as the youth being hesitant to share this information or the youth having differing perceptions of what services have been offered to them.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO CASE MANAGERS: Please note that a youth’s responses to the NYTD federal questions are shared with case managers and this information can be found in the CAPPS system. Please refer to CAPPS for the survey questions as we do not list them in this document to maintain the integrity of the survey instrument. While reviewing youth’s responses to these questions, it is important to note the following:

• The information youth have shared in the surveys should not be compared with what is documented in dictation to verify if the youth’s responses are “correct.”

• It is not necessary to correct any information that is provided by the youth that may contradict what is stated in your files or in your personal perception of the youth’s experiences.

Rather, the SC NYTD survey provides a valuable opportunity for caseworkers and care providers to understand youth’s perceptions of the experiences, assist youth in better understanding the services available to them, and engage in dialogue with youth about their transition plan and goals for their future. Therefore, the information provided by youth in their surveys can serve as a guide to engage in meaningful dialogue about how youth think and experience IL services and ways to assist them in moving forward and accessing services that they need to become successful, independent adults.

SC NYTD SURVEY: QUESTIONS FOR MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE

There are five main outcomes covered by the NYTD federal data collection that we have highlighted to lend to meaningful, engaging conversations with youth. The topics presented below draw from the federal NYTD survey. In addition to these topics, the SC NYTD survey addresses other topics that contribute to meaningful discussions with youth as they transition out of foster care such as transition concerns and personal goals. Please refer to “Implications for Policy and Practice” for further considerations.

Before having a discussion with youth about their NYTD responses, please be sure to remind the youth there were two types of questions on the survey: federal and state questions. Please read the following statement aloud to the youth:

“Although caseworkers are able to view youths’ answers to the federal questions, all answers to the state questions remain confidential and are not provided to caseworkers.”

[It is important to emphasize this information to youth because they will be required to complete another survey when they turn 19 and 21, and they need to know their information on the NYTD state survey remains confidential.]

[Employment/Job Training]

If a youth responded “no” to these questions, you may choose to discuss possible goals to assist the youth with job preparation and finding a part-time job. Remember, at the age of 17, education is the first priority so make sure a youth’s educational level is in good standing before you suggest finding part-time employment. This being said, it’s important for youth to have employment experience prior to the age of 19 to contribute to their future careers. Ideas to consider are internships, job-training, resume writing, and career preparation.

[Education]

If a youth responded “no” to this question, please identify why the youth is not enrolled in an educational program. Determine why the youth is not pursing his/her education and, if appropriate, consider potential ways and services to assist a youth in returning to school to pursue his/her education. A potential question to pose to youth is: Would you find a tutor or education coach helpful to your studies? Remember, Chafee Funds will pay for tutoring!

[Connection to an Adult]

If a youth responded “no” to this question, gently address this topic with the youth. Assist the youth in considering if there are any adults in his/her life that provide emotional support. Suggest individuals such as teachers, coaches, foster parents, community leaders, older siblings, group home staff, etc. If a youth is still unable to identify an adult who plays this role, consider ways to introduce new adult role models into the youth’s life (e.g. Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Mentor program, etc.).

[Medicaid]

If a youth responded “no” to this question, review the youth’s file and determine if the youth is eligible for Medicaid. Unless the youth was incarcerated at the time of their 18th birthday or is not a legal citizen, all youth are entitled to Medicaid coverage. If the youth is entitled to Medicaid coverage, revisit this topic with the...
youth and remind the youth that he/she is covered by Medicaid. Also let the youth know that he/she is covered by Medicaid until his/her 26th birthday if they remained in foster care until age 18, regardless of foster care status. Very importantly, please assist the youth in extending their Medicaid enrollment before they exit care because this extension is not automatic, and youth may need some guidance and support to navigate the Medicaid extension process.

Care providers are key partners in making SC NYTD a success. Your assistance in providing constructive feedback to youth about their perceptions regarding the IL services they receive is critical to assisting youth as they prepare for their transition out of foster care. Providing practical solutions to existing challenges and reminding youth that they have caring adults in their lives who will assist them with their transition planning are critical strategies to prepare youth as they transition into young adulthood. Most importantly, we want to provide a foundation where youth can recognize their self-empowerment and pursue their dreams and goals with optimism, encouragement, and hope.

The SC NYTD Team thanks you for your devotion to the youth you serve, the attention you invest towards their unique needs, and your commitment to being a trustworthy, supportive adult in their lives. Beginning October 1, 2015, we will continue surveying our youth in the baseline when they turn 19. The federal government requires that we follow these youth as they turn 19 and 21 to determine the services available and accessed by youth as they move into adulthood. We look forward to staying connected with you and keeping you informed of youth findings from the SC NYTD surveys. Should you have any questions about the SC NYTD surveys and respective findings, you are welcome to contact the SC NYTD Research Director at monique.mitchell@sc.edu or 803-777-9406.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

This report summarizes the findings from the FFY2014 data collection. Specific recommendations regarding these findings are provided to SCDSS through consultation and advisory meetings. For any questions regarding the research methodology or recommendations for policy/practice, please contact the SC NYTD Research Director.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

For more information on the SC NYTD survey or the Voices and Visions of SC Youth in Transition research study, contact the SC NYTD Research Director:

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College of Social Work
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208
Phone: 803.777.9406
Email: monique.mitchell@sc.edu

For information about Independent Living (IL) or IL/NYTD services, please contact the Chafee Independent Living Program at the South Carolina Department of Social Services via email at independentliving@dss.sc.gov