

Transition from youth care into adult care: an American perspective

2ÈME CONGRES JAEL – GEF SUISSE ROMANDE ET TESSIN
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KEMPE CENTER FOR THE
PREVENTION & TREATMENT OF
CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

John D Fluke, PhD

Kempe Center

- Department of Pediatrics, University of Colorado School of Medicine
- Founded by Henry C. Kempe (1972)
 - Originated the battered child syndrome (1962)
 - Major influence in development of child protection as a nation and international concern



Kempe Center

The Kempe Center is a world leader in the child protection movement:

- ❖ Evaluating and diagnosing children
- ❖ Providing treatment and therapy
- ❖ Developing and testing new programs
- ❖ Training professionals
- ❖ Conducting studies that assist in program development and public policy making.



Topics for Discussion

- ☐ Child Welfare in the US
- ☐ Youth in Transition Policy
- ☐ National Youth in Transition Data Base
- ☐ Some Data
- ☐ Other Resources



Brief US Context

Child maltreatment is considered primarily a social service issue, not a health issue or legal issue

Child welfare is both a Federal and a State responsibility

- State governments run/operate the programs
- Federal government pays significant portion of foster care costs through one program; CPS funding is more diverse
- Community standards are important

The federal government has funded states mostly through cost sharing per diem for children in out of home care, but other “incentives” are offered to states

Legal system is highly involved particularly for children in care



US Policy - Youth in Transition

1980's studies found major problems with the US foster care system

- very poor prospects for children emancipating/aging out of care
 - Homelessness
 - unemployment,
 - victimization
 - dependence on public assistance.

1986 US Public Law 99–272

- Provided funding for foster children up to age 21
- Not well implemented
 - Children had to turn 18 to be eligible
 - Funding was very low



US Policy - Youth in Transition

(cont.)

1999 US Public Law 106–169

- established the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP)
- Greater funding and flexibility
- Authorized independent living funds for children expected to be in care until 18
- Required states to provide services up to age 21

2001 US Public Law 107–133

- Funded education and training vouchers for CFCIP youth



US Data - Youth in Transition

1999 Act required states to collect data

- track the independent living services
- Develop outcome measures
- First rules and requirements published in 2006
- All states required to submit data to federal government

National Youth in Transition Data Base (NYTD)

- Initiated in 2010, first submission 2011
- Outcome data
 - Baseline survey of 17 year olds
 - Follow up sample of 19 and 21 year olds



A few Statistics: 2016

US in care profile Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System Data (AFCARS):

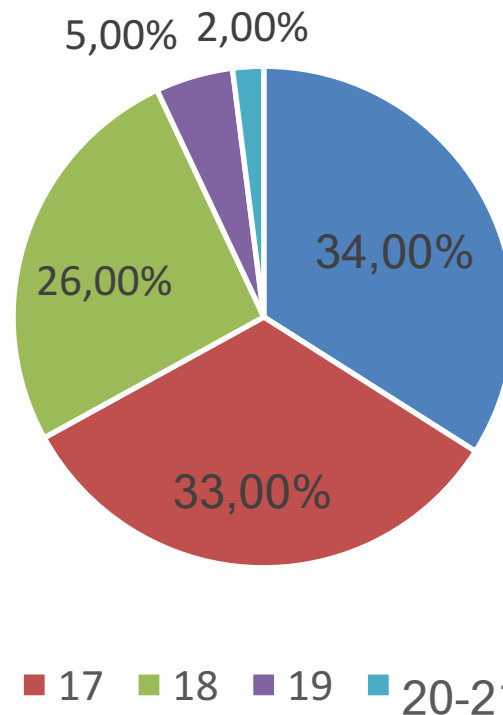
- 437,465 children in foster care
- 12% in residential care
- 77% in family or kinship care
- 20,000 children were emancipated



National Youth in Transition Data Base

112,132 youth receiving Independent Living Services

Receiving Independent Living Services: Youth Age
NYTD 2011 - 2015



National Youth in Transition Data Base

Independent Living Services (NYTD data)

- 112,132 youth receiving Independent Living Services
- Placement
- 1 or 2: 45% 3 or 4: 21% 5 or more: 33%
- Education Supports
 - Academic support: 48%
 - Post-secondary Education Support: 26%
- Employment and Career Support
 - Career Preparation: 26%
 - Vocational Training: 38%
- Other Housing and Financial Supports: >50%



NYTD Data

Outcomes

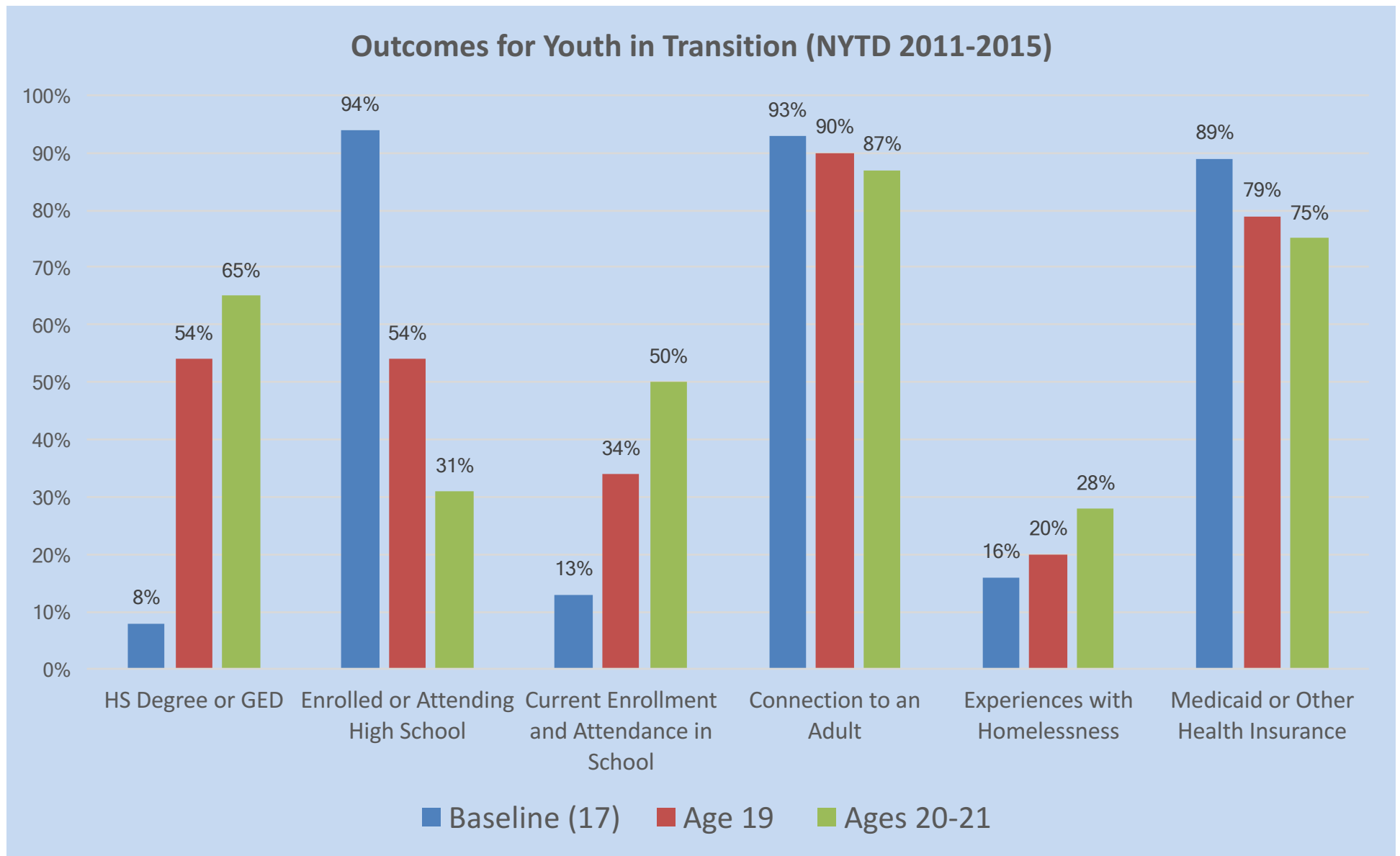
- financial self-sufficiency
- experience with homelessness
- educational attainment
- positive connections with adults
- high-risk behavior
- access to health insurance

Survey Participation (2011-2015) – eligible participants

- 17 year olds: Mean 53% (range 12% - 100%)
- 19 year olds: Mean 69% (range 0% - 96%)
- 21 year olds: Mean 62% (range 0% - 91%)



National Youth in Transition Data Base - Outcomes



Some Other Key Resources

NYTD data are available from National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect

- Data dictionary
- Procedures for working with the data
- Data collection is ongoing

Casey Alumni Study (PI – Peter Pecora, Casey Family Programs)

- Children served by Casey from 1968 and 1998
- 1609 alumni (1087 interviewed)



Some Other Key Resources (cont.)

Midwest Area Study (PI - Mark Courtney, University of Chicago)

- Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin
- Sample of 722 17 year olds enrolled
- Initiated 2002 and 2003
- Uses a range of measures to assess concrete and well being outcomes

European Scientific Association for Residential and Family Care (EUSARF)

- Opportunity to network with other researchers working in this area
- EUSARF conference convenes next week in Porto



Concluding Thoughts

Youth in transition are a critical high risk child welfare population

It is not clear that policies in the US have improved outcomes for emancipated youth

Opportunities to use the available US data to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services will continue to emerge

It is at least a bit encouraging national and local attention and resources are being directed at the this population



Contact Information

John Fluke:

John.Fluke@ucdenver.edu

