

The Independent Living Program Survey of Youth in Foster Care

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Overview

- Objective of Survey
- Methodology
- Key Findings
- How Issues are being Addressed

Objective of Survey

To learn about youth's:

- rate of participation in the Independent Living Program (ILP)
- barriers to participation in ILP
- interest in learning life skills
- plans for life after foster care

Survey instrument and administration

The survey:

- contained 86 questions
- took 20-30 minutes to complete
- was administered via telephone by QSS staff and MSW Interns between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. Mon-Fri and weekends if needed

Methodology (continued)

Target population

Youth who were:

- between 16 and 18 years old
- dependents of San Bernardino County
- in an out-of-home placement (in county, out of county, or out of state)

(i.e., youth eligible for ILP, excluding Kin-Gap)

Methodology (continued)

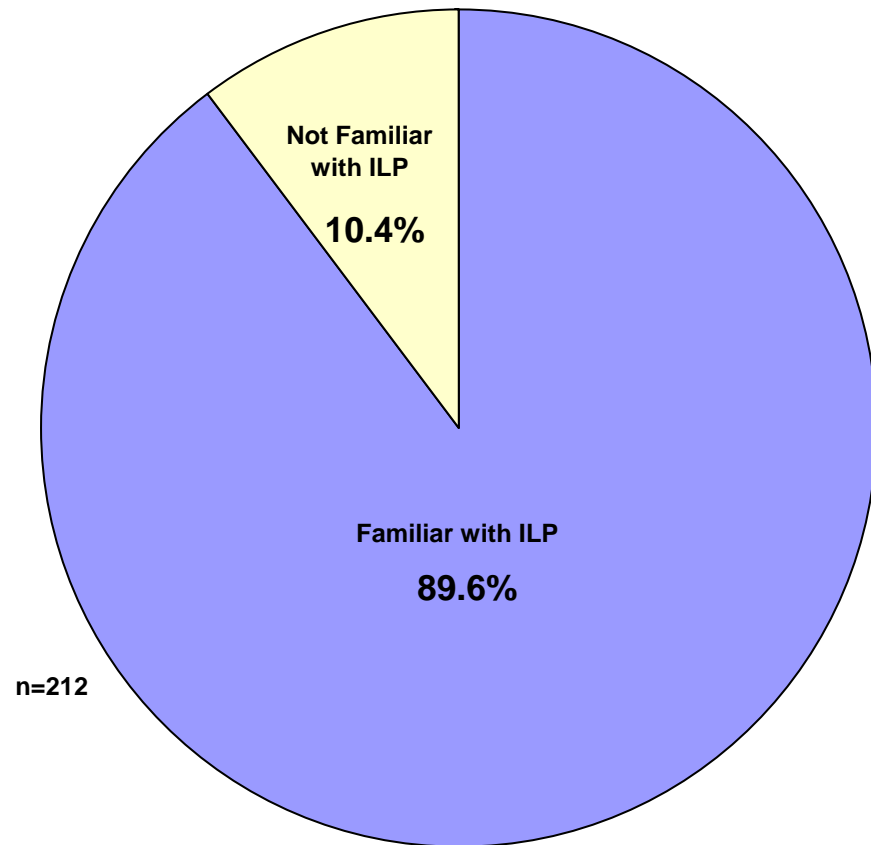
Sampling and response rate

- Approximately 550 youth were eligible for ILP during the study period (Nov 2007-May 2008) of which 302 were randomly selected to take the survey
- 212 completed the survey resulting in a response rate of 71%
- +/- 5% margin of error

Key Findings

Knowledge of ILP

The vast majority of youth were familiar with or had heard of ILP.



Key Findings (continued)

Knowledge of ILP

There were significant differences between groups on their familiarity with ILP.

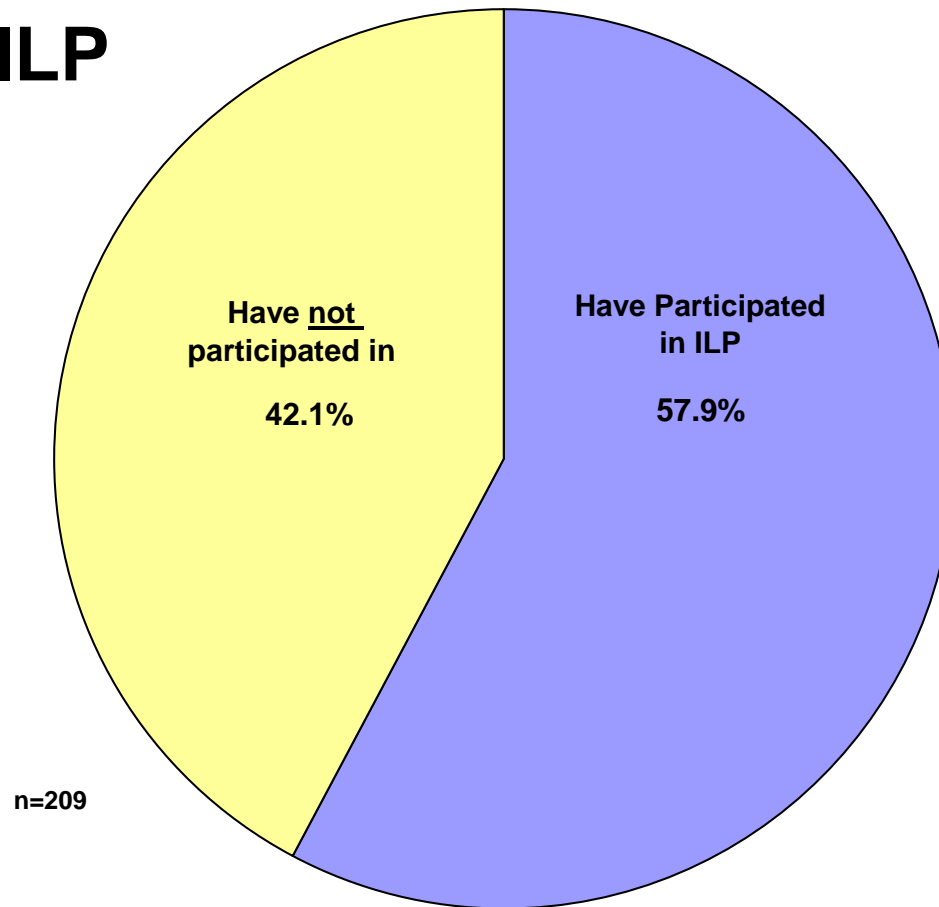
**Groups least likely to be familiar with ILP.*

<i>Groups</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>County of Residence</i>		
San Bernardino County (n=152)	146	96.1%
<i>*Out of county (n=60)</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>73.3%</i>
<i>Type of Placement</i>		
FFH (n=15)	15	100.0%
FFA (n=84)	81	96.0%
<i>*Relative/NREFM (n=64)</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>85.9%</i>
<i>*Group Homes (n=48)</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>81.3%</i>
<i>Age (years)</i>		
18 (n=26)	25	96.2%
17 (n=91)	87	95.6%
<i>*16 (n=92)</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>81.5%</i>

Key Findings (continued)

Participation in ILP

The majority of youth had participated in at least one ILP activity or class.



Key Findings (continued)

Participation in ILP

There were significant differences between groups' participation rates.

**Groups least likely to participate in ILP.*

<i>Groups</i>	#	%
<i>County of Placement</i>		
San Bernardino County (n=152)	100	65.8%
<i>*Out of county (n=60)</i>	21	35.0%
<i>Type of Placement</i>		
FFH (n=15)	12	80.0%
Group Homes (n=45)	28	62.2%
FFA (n=84)	56	66.6%
<i>*Relative/NREFM (n=64)</i>	25	39.1%
<i>Age (years)</i>		
18 (n=26)	20	76.9%
17 (n=91)	62	68.1%
<i>*16 (n=92)</i>	37	40.2%

Key Findings (continued)

Barriers to ILP (reasons for not participating)

- Lacked knowledge of ILP (47.4%)
- Wanted to participate in ILP but could not (43.4%)
 - Did not have time / school or work interfered with ILP (22.4%)
 - Did not have transportation (10.5%)
 - Other (10.5%)
- Did not want to participate in ILP (9.2%)

Key Findings (continued)

Alternatives to ILP classes

Youth were interested in learning living skills by:

- Practicing skills at place of residence (58.0%)
- Receiving incentives for working (41.0%)
- Taking on-line tutorials/activities (30.2%)

Key Findings (continued)

How prepared are youth for living independently after leaving foster care? (Self-Report Measure)

- Youth responded using a scale ranging from 1 (Not at all prepared) to 10 (Very prepared).
- Majority (65.0%) of youth reported a rating of 6 or higher, with a mean of 6.4, indicating that most youth believe that they are prepared to live on their own.

Key Findings (continued)

Services and skills youth want to learn

The majority of youth want to learn how to:

- Find resources to help pay for house or rent
- Find educational options after high school
- Find tuition assistance
- Find a place to live
- Develop and follow a budget
- Develop employment skills
- Apply for Food Stamps, WIC and Medicaid
- Use a computer
- Obtain transportation assistance
- Find child care

Key Findings (continued)

Services and skills youth want to learn (*group differences*)

Youth *most* likely to be interested in:

Emotional/behavioral counseling

- Live outside San Bernardino County
- Are female

Reproductive healthcare

- Are female
- Are 16 years of age

Alcohol/drug counseling

- Live outside San Bernardino County
- Are female
- Are 16 years of age

Key Findings (continued)

Services/skills youth did not know

The majority of youth did not know how to:

- Obtain income tax forms
- Understand a rental lease
- Apply for food stamps, WIC or Medicaid
- Apply for school financial aid

Key Findings (continued)

Services/skills youth did not know (*group differences*)

Youth *least* likely to know how to obtain income tax forms, get a driver's license, understand a rental lease, or apply for financial assistance for school:

- Live in group homes
- Are 16 years of age

Youth *least* likely to know how to obtain a copy of their birth certificate, obtain a social security card, or open a checking account:

- Are 16 years of age

Key Findings (continued)

Housing options after foster care

- About half (50.7%) of the youth were aware of housing options after foster care.

- There were significant differences across groups.

Group	#	%
<i>Type of Placement</i>		
FFH (n=15)	11	73.3%
FFA (n=81)	50	61.7%
*Relative/NREFM (n=64)	26	40.6%
*Group Homes (n=48)	19	39.6%
<i>Age (years)</i>		
*16 (n=90)	35	38.9%
17 (n=90)	50	55.6%
18 (n=26)	20	76.9%

**Groups least likely to be aware of housing options.*

Key Findings (continued)

Obstacles after foster care

Obstacles youth believe they will face after leaving foster care:

- Having a place to live (43.4%)
- Having a car (42.9%)
- Having money (40.1%)
- Finding a job (37.3%)
- Finishing school (30.7%)
- Getting car insurance (30.2%)
- Getting health insurance (29.7%)
- Being alone (25.9%)
- Getting a driver's license (24.5%)

Key Findings (continued)

Advice and emotional support

- The majority (89.3%) of youth said they could identify an adult that they can *currently* go to for advice and support.
- Slightly less youth (88.8%) could identify an adult that they can go to for advice and support *after* they leave foster care.

Key Findings (continued)

Advice and emotional support

There were significant differences across groups.

**Groups least likely to have an adult for advice and support.*

<i>Group</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Type of Placement</i>		
FFH (n=15)	15	100.0%
FFA (n=82)	74	90.2%
Relative/NREFM (n=64)	60	93.8%
*Group Homes (n=45)	35	77.8%
<i>Age (years)</i>		
16 (n=90)	84	93.3%
*17 (n=89)	73	82.0%
18 (n=25)	25	100.0%

Key Findings (continued)

Summary of findings

A greater number of Xs indicates a greater need for outreach and services.

	Characteristics of Youth				
	Lives Out of County	16 years old	17 years old	Lives in Group Home	Lives with Relative/NREFM
Youth least likely to...					
be familiar with ILP	X	X		X	X
participate in ILP	X	X			X
have adult to provide support and advice			X	X	
know how to obtain income tax forms, get a driver's license, understand rental lease, apply for financial assistance for school		X		X	
know how to get a copy of birth certificate, get a social security card, or open a checking account		X			
know about housing options after foster care		X		X	X

Key Findings (continued)

Summary of findings

	Characteristics of Youth		
	Lives Out of County	16 years old	Female
Youth most likely to want...			
Emotional/behavioral counseling	X		X
Alcohol/drug counseling	X	X	X
Reproductive health services		X	X

How Issues are being Addressed

Increase participation in ILP

- Outreach to out-of-county youth is being conducted by ILP social worker:
 - Makes sure that youth living out of county have TILP
 - Connects youth to other county's ILP liaison
- Outreach to youth in group homes is being conducted by ILP staff:
 - Increased communication with group home providers and youth.
 - Attended group home providers meeting
 - Will continue to inform group home providers that they are expected to provide transportation to ILP.

How Issues are being Addressed (continued)

Increase participation in ILP

- An Expanded Specialized Care Rate (SCR+; Tier 2 or 3) is being offered to caregivers (FFH and relative/NREFM only) to teach and allow youth to practice independent living skills at home and provide transportation to out-of-home ILP activities.
- An on-line ILP tutorial is in development.

How Issues are being Addressed (continued)

Help youth overcome obstacles they may face after leaving foster care

- Submitting RFP for the Transitional Housing Program Plus (THPP+) to expand services from 36 to a max of 55 young adults.
- Submitting grant proposal for ILP Vocational Support Project to provide support to 25-30 young adults (18-24 years) for two years while they complete a vocational program related to employment in hospital setting.

How Issues are being Addressed (continued)

Assure that new TILP is being used

- QSS will be reviewing randomly selected cases of children who are 16 years or older who should have a TILP (see attached case review tool).

How Issues are being Addressed (continued)

Other things to consider:

- Provide incentives for having a job
- Start TILP/ILP at a younger age
- Address specific needs of female youth
- Inform youth about skills needed to live independently (*note: survey results revealed that the majority of youth felt that they were prepared to live independently*)