

National Youth in Transition Database Resource Guide

What is the National Youth in Transition Database?

States are required to track independent living services provided to youth to develop outcome measures that track state performance in preparing youth for the transition to adulthood. The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is the data reporting system that is used to determine the relationship between the types and intensity of services and the outcomes achieved.

States are required to engage in two types of data collection and reporting activities, as follows.

Served Population

The state collects and reports basic data on each youth and independent living services provided to those youths. This is the served population. Data collected on this population includes demographic and services data, as outlined in the table below.

Demographic Data Collected	Services Data Collected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name / Unique Identifier (CNDS ID) • Gender • Race / Ethnicity • Date of Birth • Date of Entry into Foster Care (most recent episode) • Whether or not the youth is a member of a Federally recognized tribe • Marital Status • Number of children parented by this individual • Last grade completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 130 - Independent Living Needs Assessment • 131 - Supervised Independent Living • 156 - Academic Support • 157 - Post-Secondary Educational Support • 158 - Education Financial Assistance • 160 - Career Preparation • 161 - Employment Programs/Vocational Training • 162 - Budget and Financial Management • 163 - Housing Education and Home Management • 164 - Health Education and Risk Prevention • 166 - Mentoring • 167 - Room and Board Financial Assistance • 168 - Other Financial Assistance

Procedures for Served Population Data Collection

Demographic Data

Demographic data is collected through the Child Placement and Payment System (CPPS) and NC FAST. The Child Placement and Payment System is to collect information about all children who are in the legal custody of county departments of social services or who are

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in foster care pursuant to a Voluntary Placement Agreement. This data is entered into the system based on what is provided on the DSS-5094 Child Placement and Payment Report.

Service Data

Service data is collected through the Services Information System (SIS). Every county must have a standard operating procedure that identifies who is responsible for tracking, capturing and closing service codes into SIS. As a young person's plan changes, they achieve permanency, or they reconnect to independent living services, codes must be reviewed to ensure accuracy and reporting of services provided. An independent living service code should reflect services that are directly delivered by agency staff. This can also include contracted services from an agency, including a foster parent, group home staff, childcare institution staff or program, such as SaySo, Youth Village's LifeSet, or ETV/NC Reach.

Service codes should be opened as services are provided. For services that will be ongoing, it is best these remain open. An example is: a young adult in Foster Care 18-21 receives the room and board payment directly. As Budget and Financial Management (162) must be discussed as a goal on the Transitional Living Plan, leaving service code 162 open for the duration of the case is allowable.

Completion and regular updates to the DSS-5027 are essential to ensuring accurate services data is reported to the federal government. Entries must follow the instructions of the SIS manual. As such, if a service code is entered and closed on the same day, this is interpreted as service that could not be provided at all. Additional information regarding SIS can be found at <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional-nz/social-services/services-information-system-sis/>.

Outcome Population

The second population that NYTD tracks can be referred to as the "outcomes" population. Outcome data is collected through the administration of a survey. Surveys cannot be completed by anyone other than the youth, although someone may help by reading the questions aloud and helping with comprehension of survey questions. Outcome data is collected on a group of youth in foster care, with a new group beginning every three years. Each group consists of the following populations:

- **Baseline Population** – All youth that are in foster care and reach their 17th birthday during the Federal Fiscal Year 2011 or in every 3rd year thereafter (ex. 2014, 2017, 2020, etc.) regardless of whether the youth receives any independent living services. Youth in the Baseline Population may receive a \$100 incentive for completing the survey. The survey must be completed on or within 45 days AFTER their 17th birthday. Surveys completed outside of that window will not be accepted and an incentive will not be provided.
- **Follow-Up Population** – The same youth surveyed in the baseline population are surveyed again at ages 19 and 21. Young adults may receive \$150 at 19 for completing the survey and \$200 at 21 for completing the survey. Surveys can be completed anytime within the cohort, including after a youth's 21st birthday.

Baseline Population Procedures for Data Collection

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Counties are provided notice at the start of a cohort who is being surveyed. In every third fiscal year, a new cohort will begin. Counties are ultimately responsible for identifying and surveying all eligible 17-year-olds during baseline years. Within the first month of every third fiscal year cohort, the listed contacts in the LINKS Coordinator Contact List will receive notice via email of any applicable youth that will turn 17 within the next six months, their birthdays, the 45-day window in which they must complete the survey, and the electronic survey link. An updated list of eligible youth will be distributed at the beginning of every month. **As the data reporting from county to state to county is on a delay, counties must be aware and mindful when a youth enters custody whose 17th birthday is approaching or has occurred in the last 45 days.** Surveys are completed online via a survey link distributed by Division staff. Reminder emails are sent to counties if an applicable survey is not received in the first 30 days of eligibility. A youth who completed a survey can receive a \$100 incentive through LINKS Transitional Funds. These funds are not separate and are considered a part of a youth's annual funding in LINKS Transitional Funds.

Follow Up Population Procedures for Data Collection

Within the first three weeks of each cohort, the listed contacts on the LINKS Coordinator Contact List receive an email notifying them of young adults connected to their county eligible to complete the survey. Surveys are completed online via a survey link distributed by Division staff. Reminder emails are sent to counties weekly thereafter, with the names of those who have completed the survey removed. If a name was listed one week and it was not listed the next, that person's survey was received and accepted by Division staff. Counties are reminded monthly during the LINK Up call to ensure surveys are completed. All surveys must be submitted prior to the last day of the cohort so Division staff can compile the data to send to federal partners.

19 year-olds who complete the survey may receive a \$150 incentive, and 21 year-olds who complete the survey may receive a \$200 incentive. For 21 year-olds who complete the survey, the survey and incentive can be provided after their 21st birthday. However, for young adults who will turn 21 during the cohort and are actively in Foster Care 18-21 at any time during the reporting period, it is strongly recommended they complete the survey while in Foster Care 18-21. For tips on how to connect with 21 year olds, check out [NYTD Technical Assistance Brief No. 13](#).

Strategies for Engaging Youth in the NYTD Survey

- ***Connect with Youth Still in Care:*** Building connections with young people while they are in foster care can ensure they are willing to participate in the survey and remain connected after they exit care.
- ***Collect Personal Information and Maintaining Contact Information:*** Youth may be reluctant to provide contact information or wary about how it will be used. Sometimes they don't want other people "in their business." Creating procedures and tools will help address youth misgivings, such as standardized letters or informational materials that provide the facts about what the survey is and how the survey information will be used.
- ***Collect Information on Friends and Family:*** Advise young people that it is best for the agency to have contact information for at least five people that will be able to reach the young person in the future. Keep in mind that identifying personal contacts may be difficult for young people and this should be handled with sensitivity and discretion.

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- **Maintain Contact with Youth:** Try to establish and maintain telephone and/or face-to-face contact with youth on an informal, friendly basis. Make calls during holidays or on birthdays to see how they are doing and remind them about follow-up surveys. Consider creating a newsletter that would appeal to young adults that have aged out of foster care regarding independent living issues.
- **Provide Incentives for Participation:** Youth that fall into the Baseline Population are eligible for a \$100 incentive for their completion of the survey. Youth that fall into the Follow-Up Population are eligible for a \$150 incentive at 19 and a \$200 incentive for their completion of the survey.
- **Advise Youth of Future Contact Efforts:** Remind youth that after they leave foster care, they may be contacted to participate in the follow-up survey.
- **Show Appreciation for Youth Involvement:** Sending thank you notes to youth immediately after the initial survey is administered demonstrates professional courtesy and establishes informal contact for future interactions.
- **Tips for Using Social Media to Locate & Engage Young People in the NYTD Survey:** For more information on how to use social media to locate, check out [NYTD in Practice](#).

Additional Information and Resources

- For more information about NYTD, check out [National Youth in Transition Database](#)
- [Introduction to the National Youth in Transition Database Video Series](#) is a great reference to learn about NYTD from start to finish.
- [National & State Service Snapshot & Outcomes](#)
- For more information on the questions in the NYTD surveys, check out [NYTD Technical Assistance Brief NYTD Survey Questions](#).