

**The Nebraska
Foster Care Review Office
B2i Case Review Report**

October 1, 2016 - March 31, 2017



Prepared May 24, 2017

Overview

Nebraska's Bridge to Independence Program (B2i) was designed to maximize opportunities and supports for the young adult ages 19 and 20 as they transition from foster care to adulthood. DHHS started serving young adults in the B2i program in October of 2014.

The Foster Care Review Office (FCRO) was given the responsibility of oversight by the Legislature to ensure that the B2i program is meeting the needs of young adults who are enrolled. The FCRO began work immediately on the case review tools and development of the process for reviews. Along the way the FCRO consulted with young adults, DHHS, the Children's Commission, and B2i committees to ensure that the case review process, data collection tools, and data to be collected were aligned with the program's goals.

DHHS Independence Coordinators (ICs) have been working individually with the young adults enrolled in the program since October 2014. The Young Adult (YA) and their IC develop a plan and then work on the goals they have outlined. The IC assists the young adult through "authentic engagement". This ultimately means that the young adult is the decision maker and the IC provides adult counsel and guidance. This ensures that the young adult is taking ownership for their choices and decisions while they have the support of their IC.

Starting in February 2015 the Foster Care Review Office began case reviews with young adults that had been enrolled in the B2i program for at least 4 months, with the goal of reviewing the cases of young adults every 6 months thereafter, until they age

out of the program at 21. Starting in September 2015 the FCRO began second case reviews of those enrolled in the program. As of April 2017 the FCRO has conducted 229 first reviews, 110 second reviews, 22 third reviews, and 2 fourth reviews for a total of 363 reviews. This report will provide snapshot data on the young adults reviewed since the publication of our last report.

As part of the case review process, the FCRO Program Coordinator notifies DHHS IC Supervisors and the IC of the young adult's cases that are eligible for review during the next two months. The IC notifies the young adult and a time is scheduled that best accommodates the young adult. The Program Coordinator prepares for the review with the YA by first reviewing NFOCUS and JUSTICE. During the review the Program Coordinator gathers information and insight as to how the program is working from the IC and the YA's perspective.

Initially cases were being reviewed "face to face" in a place of the young adult's choosing. However, conference calls became the standard vehicle for case reviews with the young adult due to scheduling conflicts with the young adult, distance and the need to be flexible in order to meet with the young adult at a time that best met their work and school schedules. The FCRO is currently implementing a paper-only review for the young adults who are unable to schedule a conference call in order to increase the number of reviews completed. The final case review report is submitted to the court, the YA's attorney if one has been appointed, the IC, and the YA.

Review Results

Between October 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017, the FCRO conducted 102 reviews for 95 young adults.

Total Reviews

1st Review	49
2nd Review	43
3rd Review	8
4th Review	2
Grand Total	102

For the 7 young adults reviewed twice during this time period, the results from their most recent reviews will be reported. The majority, 89 (93.7%) of those reviews were conducted by phone with the young adult present. The remaining 6 (6.3%) were completed through file review and discussions with the ICs.

Of the 95 young adults reviewed from October 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017:

Demographics

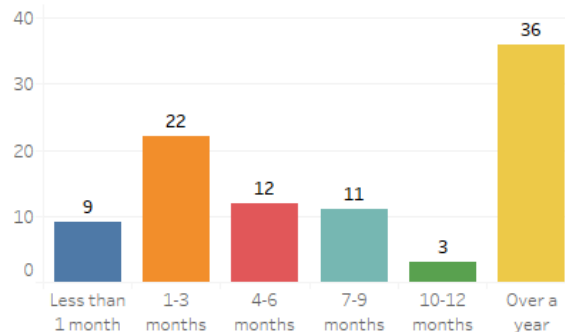
- 67 (70.5%) are female and 28 (29.5%) are male.
- Race
 - White 68 (71.6%)
 - Black 18 (19.0%)
 - American Indian 3 (3.2%)
 - Two or More Races 3 (3.2%)
 - Other 2 (2.1%)
 - Asian 1 (1.1%)
- Ethnicity
 - Non-Hispanic 80 (84.2%)
 - Hispanic 14 (14.7%)
 - Unknown 1 (1.1%)

- Service Area
 - Eastern 48 (50.5%)
 - Southeast 19 (20.0%)
 - Northern 11 (11.6%)
 - Central 10 (10.5%)
 - Western 7 (7.4%)

Housing

- More than half of the young adults were currently living in either independent (39, 41.1%) or shared housing (13, 13.7%). The next largest group was living with a relative (15, 15.8%) or parent (7, 7.4%). Additional living arrangements include:
 - Couch surfing 6 (6.3%)
 - Dorm/campus housing 4 (4.2%)
 - Group home 4 (4.2%)
 - Host home/DD foster care 3 (3.2%)
 - Foster home 2 (2.1%)
 - Transitional housing 2 (2.1%)
- Over a third of the young adults reviewed (36, 37.9%) had lived in their current housing for over a year.

Length of Current Housing



- 34 (35.8%) of the young adults reviewed have a housing service need that should be addressed prior to turning 21.

Family Status

- 92 of the young people reviewed were single, 2 married, and one divorced.
- Of the reviewed young people, 22 (23.2%) were parenting. Of those 22:
 - 16 were parenting 1 child
 - 5 were parenting 2 children
 - 1 was parenting 3 children.
- Of the women reviewed (67), 6 (9.0%) were pregnant.

Program Eligibility

- The program eligibility for the young adults at the most recent review was:
 - Employed 80 hours/Month 56
 - Special Programs/Barriers 29
 - Enrolled in school 23
 - Medically or DD Incapable 2

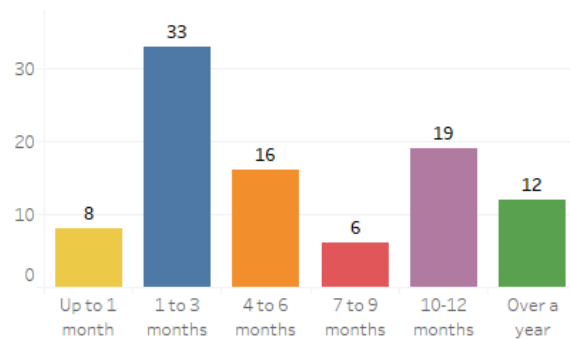
**14 young adults are dually eligible through employment and schooling. 1 young adult is dually eligible through employment and medical/dd.*
- 12 (12.6%) of the reviewed cases were IV-E eligible.

Employment

- Most of the young adults are working either part time 36 (37.9%) or full time 24 (25.3%). 25 were seeking employment (26.3%), while 10 (10.5%) were not seeking employment.
 - Of the 10 not seeking employment, 5 were in school full time and 3 were in school part time.
- For approximately 1/3 of the young people reviewed, their longest stretch of employment was 1 to 3 months (33, 34.7%). 31 (32.6%) of the young adults

had a longest single employment of at least 10 months.

Months of Longest Employment



- 41 (43.2%) of the young adults reviewed have an employment service need that should be addressed prior to turning 21.

School

- 39 (41.1%) of the young adults were enrolled in school.
 - 17 were pursuing post-secondary education
 - 6 were enrolled in high school
 - 6 were enrolled in a specialty school.
- 54 (56.8%) of the young adults reviewed have an education service need that should be addressed prior to turning 21.

Relationships

- 93 of the 95 reviewed young adults had a plan for maintaining permanent relationships.
 - Of the 93 young adults with siblings, 64 (68.8%) have maintained a relationship with their siblings. 12 (12.9%) did not maintain the relationship, for 16 (17.2%) the relationship status with siblings was unknown, and 1

reported their sibling(s) refused to maintain the relationship.

- Relationships with mothers were maintained by 48 (50.5%) of the young adults, 36 (3.8%) were not maintaining the relationship, and for 5 (5.2%) young adults it was not in their best interest. This question was not applicable for 4 young adults whose mothers were deceased or lost rights, and information on relationship with mother was not available for 2 young adults.
- Relationships with fathers were maintained for 34 (35.8%) of the young adults, 45 (47.4%) were not maintaining the relationship, and for 4 (4.2%) young adults it was not in their best interest. This question was not applicable for 4 of the reviewed young adults, and information on relationship with father was not available for 8 young adults.
- The majority of young adults, 65 (68.4%), were maintaining a relationship with a family member other than a parent or sibling. The remainder were either not maintaining this relationship (23, 24.2%), it was not in their best interest (1, 1.1%), or this information was not available (6, 6.3%).
- All 95 youth were maintaining at least one non-relative relationship.

Records

- Of the young adults reviewed, 90 (94.7%) had a copy of their birth certificate, 4 (4.2%) were in the process

of getting it. This information was unknown for one young adult.

- 61 (64.2%) had a driver's license, 32 (33.7%) had a state ID. The remaining 2 did not have either.
- 85 (89.5%) of the young adults have their Proof of Ward letter, 8 (8.4%) were in the process of getting it. This information was unknown for 2 young adults.
- 88 (92.6%) of the young adults had a health insurance card; 4 (4.2%) did not and 3 (3.2%) were in the process of obtaining one.
- 78 (82.1%) of the young adults received information on designating a healthcare decision-maker in case of incapacitation. 10 (9.5%) were either unable to recall if they received this information or documentation was unavailable, and 7 (7.4%) were in the process of obtaining this information.
- 87 (91.6%) of the young adults received a copy of their healthcare records, 5 (5.3%) were in the process of obtaining them.
- Similarly, 87 (91.6%) had received their education records, and 4 (4.2%) were in the process of obtaining them.

Court Information

- 2 young adults have a CASA and 2 young adults have a GAL.
- Of the young adults reviewed, 32 (33.7%) have a court-appointed attorney.

- All young adults were notified of their right to have an attorney.
- A future permanency hearing was set for 74 (77.9%) of the young adults in B2i.
 - 10 (9.5%) will not schedule another hearing prior to aging out.
 - 11 (11.6%) did not have a future permanency hearing set, and it was unclear if they would schedule a future hearing.

Service Needs

- Of the young adults reviewed, 82 (86.3%) had a need for services prior to turning 21. These needs include:
 - Education 54 (56.8%)
 - Employment 41 (43.2%)
 - Transportation 37 (38.9%)
 - Transition planning 35 (36.7%)
 - Housing 34 (35.7%)
 - Money management 31 (32.6%)
 - Mental health 30 (31.2%)
 - Other life skills 25 (26.3%)
 - Financial support 19 (20%)
 - Dev. disability 11 (11.6%)
 - Physical health 11 (11.6%)
 - Legal service 8 (8.4%)
 - Credit report 4 (4.2%)
 - Health insurance 2 (2.1%)

Future Analysis

As more young adults engage in second, third, and even fourth case reviews during their time in the B2i program, the FCRO will be able to utilize a more longitudinal approach in analyzing our data. This will allow us to see changes for youth during their time in the program.

The FCRO is engaging in internal and external discussions regarding the best way to assess changes that may occur during a

young adult's time in the program. For example, instability in a housing situation may represent a negative change related to difficulties paying rent or a positive change in addressing and removing oneself from a negative housing environment.

It is also envisioned that by looking at areas that the young adult is working on during the ages of 19-20 may lead to the re-examination of the programs and services for youth ages 14 through 18 that are in the foster care system to ensure that those services are developmentally appropriate and aligned with the needs and interests of the youth to better prepare them for their transition to adulthood.