

The Nebraska
Foster Care Review Office
B2i Case Review Report

July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017



Prepared October 5, 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 June 2017 the FCRO has conducted 262 first reviews, 123 second reviews, 24 third reviews, and 2 fourth reviews for a total of 411 reviews. This report covers the 2016-17 fiscal year and comparison data between the first and second reviews.

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. Starting March 2017, the FCRO began conducting paper reviews when contact with the YA had not been possible. To supplement these paper reviews and include YA voice in the review process, the FCRO has developed a survey for the young adults to complete. This survey is available on the FCRO website, but has not yet been utilized. 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

During State Fiscal Year 2016-17, the FCRO conducted 200 reviews for 163 young adults.

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| 1st Review | 105 |
| 2nd Review | 71 |
| 3rd Review | 22 |
| 4th Review | 2 |
| Grand Total | 200 |

The majority, 156 (78.0%) of those reviews were conducted by phone with the young adult present. The remaining 44 (22.0%) were completed through file review and discussions with the ICs.

For the 47 young adults reviewed more than once during this time period, the results from their most recent reviews will be reported. Of the 163 young adults reviewed from October 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017:

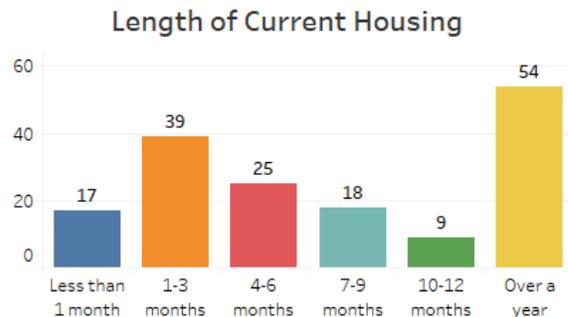
Demographics

- 101 (62.0%) are female and 62 (38.0%) are male.
- Race
 - White 112 (68.7%)
 - Black 35 (21.5%)
 - Two or More Races 7 (4.3%)
 - American Indian 4 (2.5%)
 - Other 4 (2.5%)
 - Asian 1 (.6%)
- Ethnicity
 - Non-Hispanic 138 (84.6%)
 - Hispanic 22 (13.5%)
 - Unknown 3 (1.8%)

- Service Area
 - Eastern 82 (50.3%)
 - Southeast 34 (20.9%)
 - Northern 15 (9.2%)
 - Central 21 (12.9%)
 - Western 11 (6.8%)

Housing

- More than half of the young adults were currently living in either independent (68, 41.7%) or shared housing (29, 17.8%). The next largest group was living with a relative (22, 13.58%). Additional living arrangements include:
 - Couch surfing 9 (5.5%)
 - With Parent/Guardian 9 (5.5%)
 - Dorm/campus housing 6 (3.7%)
 - Foster home 6 (3.7%)
 - Group home 5 (3.1%)
 - Host home/DD foster care 3 (1.8%)
 - Transitional housing 2 (1.2%)
 - Jail 2 (1.2%)
 - Other 2 (1.2%)
- One third of the young adults reviewed (54, 33.1%) had lived in their current housing for over a year.



- 55 (33.7%) of the young adults reviewed have a housing service need that should be addressed prior to turning 18.

Family Status

- 157 of the young people reviewed were single, 5 married, and 1 divorced.
- Of the reviewed young people, 38 (23.3%) were parenting. Of those 38:
 - 28 were parenting 1 child
 - 8 were parenting 2 children
 - 2 were parenting 3 children.
- Of the women reviewed (101), 11 (10.9%) were pregnant.

Program Eligibility

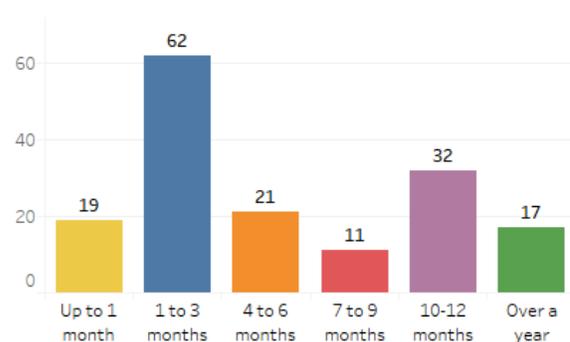
- The program eligibility for the young adults at the most recent review was:
 - Employed 80 hours/Month 111
 - Enrolled in school 44
 - Special Programs/Barriers 36
 - Medically or DD Incapable 4

**31 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 68 (41.7%) or full time 37 (22.7%). 42 (25.8%) were seeking employment, while 16 (9.8%) were not seeking employment.
 - Of the 16 not seeking employment, 8 were in school full time and 4 were in school part time.
- For over 1/3 of the young people reviewed, their longest stretch of employment was 1 to 3 months (62, 38.0%). 49 (30.1%) of the young adults

had a longest single employment of at least 10 months.



- 65 (39.9%) of the young adults reviewed have an employment service need that should be addressed prior to turning 21.

School

- 68 (41.7%) of the young adults were enrolled in school.
 - 35 were pursuing post-secondary education
 - 23 were enrolled in high school
 - 10 were enrolled in a specialty school.
- 93 (57.1%) of the young adults reviewed have an education service need that should be addressed prior to turning 21.

Relationships

- 158 of the 163 reviewed young adults had a plan for maintaining permanent relationships.
 - Of the 160 young adults with siblings, 105 (65.6%) have maintained a relationship with their siblings. 22 (13.8%) did not maintain the relationship, for 32 (20.0%) the relationship status with siblings was unknown, and 1 reported their sibling(s) refused to maintain the relationship.

- Relationships with mothers were maintained by 73 (44.8%) of the young adults, 55 (33.7%) were not maintaining the relationship, and for 7 (4.3%) young adults it was not in their best interest. This question was not applicable for 10 young adults whose mothers were deceased or lost rights, and information on relationship with mother was not available for 18 young adults.
- Relationships with fathers were maintained for 46 (28.2%) of the young adults, 75 (46.0%) were not maintaining the relationship, and for 4 (2.5%) young adults it was not in their best interest. This question was not applicable for 10 of the reviewed young adults, and information on relationship with father was not available for 28 young adults.
- The majority of young adults, 110 (67.5%), were maintaining a relationship with a family member other than a parent or sibling. The remainder were either not maintaining this relationship (33, 20.2%), it was not in their best interest (1, 0.1%), or this information was not available (19, 6.3%).
- The vast majority (159, 97.5%) of the young adults were maintaining at least one non-relative relationship. This information was unknown for 3 young adults, and one young adult was not maintaining a non-relative permanent relationship.

Records

- Of the young adults reviewed, 153 (93.9%) had a copy of their birth certificate, 6 (3.7%) were in the process of getting it. This information was unknown for 3 young adults; one young adult did not have a birth certificate and was not in the process of getting it.
- 97 (59.5%) had a driver's license, 59 (36.2%) had a state ID. 6 did not have either form of ID, and this information was unknown for 1.
- 141 (86.5%) of the young adults have their Proof of Ward letter, 14 (8.6%) were in the process of getting it. This information was unknown for 7 young adults, and 1 did not have it and was not in the process of getting it.
- 148 (90.7%) of the young adults had a health insurance card; 9 (5.5%) did not and 6 (3.7%) were in the process of obtaining one.
- 133 (81.6%) of the young adults received information on designating a healthcare decision-maker in case of incapacitation. 21 (12.9%) were either unable to recall if they received this information or documentation was unavailable, and 9 (5.5%) were in the process of obtaining this information.
- 147 (90.1%) of the young adults received a copy of their healthcare records, 7 (4.3%) were in the process of obtaining them. This information was unknown for 8 young adults and 1 did not have their healthcare records and was not in the process of getting them.

- Similarly, 149 (91.4%) had received their education records, and 6 (3.7%) were in the process of obtaining them. This information was unknown for 7 young adults and 1 did not have their education records and was not in the process of getting them.

- Health insurance 6 (3.7%)
- Credit report 5 (3.1%)

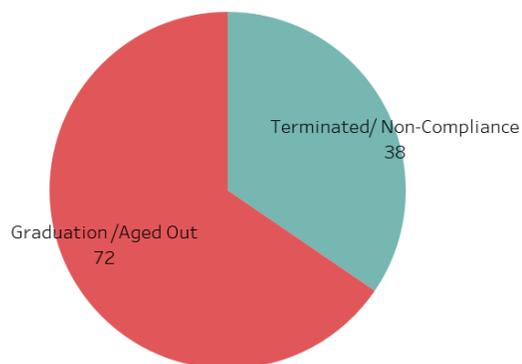
Court Information

- 7 young adults have a CASA and 5 young adults have a GAL.
- Of the young adults reviewed, 53 (32.5%) have a court-appointed attorney.
 - All young adults were notified of their right to have an attorney.
- A future permanency hearing was set for 115 (70.1%) of the young adults in B2i.
 - 32 (19.6%) will not schedule another hearing prior to aging out.
 - 16 (9.8%) 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, 136 (83.4%) had a need for services prior to turning 21. These needs include:
 - Education 93 (57.1%)
 - Transportation 67 (41.1%)
 - Employment 65 (39.9%)
 - Money management 59 (36.2%)
 - Housing 55 (33.7%)
 - Transition planning 52 (31.9%)
 - Mental health 45 (27.6%)
 - Other life skills 41 (25.2%)
 - Financial support 28 (17.2%)
 - Dev. disability 17 (10.4%)
 - Legal service 17 (10.4%)
 - Physical health 16 (9.8%)

Program Exit



During the 2016-17 fiscal year, 110 young adults exited the B2i program. 38 (34.5%) were terminated for non-compliance or chose to leave the program. Nearly twice as many, 72 (65.5%), graduated or aged-out of the program.

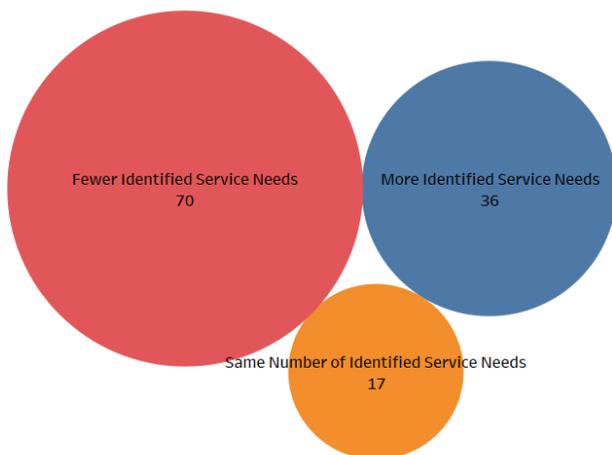
Service Needs Changes

The final section of this report looks at all YAs who have had a first and second review since joining B2i. The FCRO has conducted at least two reviews on 123 young adults in the B2i program. The following information compares the changes in service needs between the first and the second reviews.

During the first review, the 123 young adults averaged 4.2 service needs each. During the second review, that number dropped to an average of 3.4. The reduction in service needs could be explained in one of two ways. First, as young adults progress in the program, their needs are addressed and services are no longer required. Second, YAs and their ICs

may start to focus on particular needs at different stages of the program. For example, a YA may begin the program with an identified education need because of an intention to begin a college program. After six months, the young adult may decide they no longer want to attend college, and so that need is no longer necessary. When interpreting this information, it is also important to understand how a need is identified in a B2i Review by the FCRO. A service need is identified if it is a part of the current program goals or a YA specifically mentions the need during the interviews. If a need is present, but not documented in NFOCUS or mentioned during the review, it will not be included in the data.

Looking more closely at service need changes for the young adults in B2i, the majority of young adults (70, 56.9%) had fewer service needs at the second review, nearly 1/3 (36, 29.2%) had more identified service needs, and the remaining 17 (13.8%) had the same number of identified service needs.



The final table examines the specific service need changes for the young adults in B2i. Each service need is broken down

into three categories: present at both reviews, present only during the first review, and present only during the second review.

| Service Need | 1 st and 2 nd Review | 1 st Review Only | 2 nd Review Only |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Education (n=105) | 61 (58.1%) | 20 (19.0%) | 24 (22.9%) |
| Employment (n=64) | 20 (31.3%) | 25 (39.7%) | 19 (29.7%) |
| Housing (n=50) | 9 (18.0%) | 22 (44.0%) | 19 (38.0%) |
| Mental Health (n=44) | 14 (31.8%) | 17 (38.6%) | 13 (29.5%) |
| Physical Health (n=29) | 2 (6.9%) | 17 (68.6%) | 10 (34.5%) |
| Developmental Disability (n=11) | 10 (90.9%) | 1 (9.1%) | |
| Transportation (n=72) | 36 (50.0%) | 7 (9.7%) | 29 (40.3%) |
| Financial Support (n=38) | 7 (18.4%) | 16 (42.1%) | 15 (39.5%) |
| Legal (n=13) | 2 (15.4%) | 4 (30.8%) | 7 (53.8%) |
| Money Mngmnt (n=66) | 18 (27.3%) | 31 (47.0%) | 17 (25.8%) |
| Other Life Skills (n=47) | 9 (19.1%) | 29 (61.7%) | 9 (19.1%) |
| Transition Planning (n=58) | 7 (12.1%) | 29 (50.0%) | 22 (37.9%) |
| Documents (n=28) | 6 (21.4%) | 20 (71.4%) | 2 (7.1%) |
| Credit Report (n=23) | 1 (4.3%) | 16 (69.6%) | 6 (26.1%) |
| Health Insurance (n=6) | 2 (33.3%) | 3 (50.0%) | 1 (16.7%) |
| Other Services* (n=58) | 17 (29.3%) | 16 (27.6%) | 25 (43.1%) |

*Changes in "Other Services" should be interpreted with caution, as they may be two different services in the first and second review.

The highlighted cells indicate the most frequently occurring category. Education, developmental disability, and transportation needs were most likely to be identified during both reviews. Employment, housing, mental health, physical health, financial support, money management, other life skills, transition

planning, documents assistance, credit report, and health insurance service needs were most likely to be identified during the 1st review. Legal and other services were more likely to be identified during the second review.

Limitations

Equating changes in service needs with program success would be premature. The removal of a service need from the first review to the second review could mean the need was remediated, but it could also represent a change in goals of the young adult and IC, or a lack of documentation about a goal. Similarly, the presence of a service need at both the first and second review does not indicate that the young adult has not made progress on said goal.

Indicators of progress during the program and outcomes after the program are not available via the current data tracking mechanisms.