



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 383
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 893-2010

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

HILDA L. SOLIS

HOLLY J. MITCHELL

LINDSEY P. HORVATH

JANICE HAHN

KATHRYN BARGER

JUDGE MICHAEL NASH (RET.)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 23, 2024

To: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn

From: Judge Michael Nash (Ret.), Executive Director
Office of Child Protection

REPORT-BACK TO THE JUNE 25, 2024, BOARD MOTION—UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING ORIGIN AND OBSTACLES: ENDING INTERGENERATIONAL HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING INSECURITY, INCARCERATION, AND SYSTEMS INVOLVEMENT, AND ENSURING GENERATIONAL AND LIFE-LONG SUCCESS FOR TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH

On June 25, 2024, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion authored by Supervisors Solis and Horvath directing the Los Angeles County Children's System of Care (SOC), Prevention and Promotion Systems Governing Committee (PPSGC), and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)—in collaboration with the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Department of Mental Health (DMH), Probation Department, Chief Executive Office (CEO), and other relevant departments and stakeholders—to report back on a comprehensive approach to ensure life-long success for DCFS-involved transition-age youth (TAY). Specifically, your Board directed the relevant County departments to report back on the following:

1. Outline a comprehensive approach for the coordination of resources, opportunities, and care for TAY that will prevent negative outcomes and promote their success and ability to thrive in life, including addressing permanency for system-impacted children and youth. The approach should:
 - a) Prioritize prevention and permanency, and center around at-risk and systems-impacted DCFS TAY
 - b) Facilitate and sustain strategic alignment among County and non-County partners to ensure quality service delivery and support
 - c) Identify systems-level barriers and gaps, mission and scope drift, and opportunities for reducing duplication, redundancy, and competition

- d) Build on existing promising efforts to meet the needs of DCFS TAY more comprehensively
- e) Include robust and consistent assessments for the creation of tailored success planning, and comprehensive and frequent independent evaluations and audits of the DCFS TAY-oriented services, programs, and service providers—including, but not limited to, services that promote stable housing, educational achievement, workforce development, life-skills training, health and behavioral health supports, and mentoring—to ensure efficacy
- f) Identify successful outreach strategies and opportunities for improvement, including review of language inclusivity and cultural competency

The Board further directed DCFS, in partnership with the CEO and any other relevant partners, to:

2. Provide a detailed description of the planned specialized TAY section within DCFS, including:
 - a) The proposed organizational structure, roles and responsibilities, and proposed staffing plan
 - b) Identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership between the TAY section, existing DCFS programs and units, and County partner departments in the provision of services to TAY
 - c) Create a dynamic, public database, in consultation and partnership with the Chief Information Office (CIO), that shows, at minimum:
 - i) The number of TAY in County care
 - ii) The demographic breakdown of TAY, including sexual orientation, gender identification
 - iii) The number of TAY who have a history of homelessness and housing insecurity; incarceration and correctional supervision; and child welfare
 - iv) The number and type of services TAY is receiving

This report is a coordinated response on the above Board directives from the Office of Child Protection (OCP)—which provides backbone support for the SOC—that reflects work carried out by the PPSGC, SOC, OCP, and DCFS on Board Directive 1 and Directive 2c, as well as DCFS's response to Board Directives 2a and 2b.

A Comprehensive Approach to Improving Services and Outcomes for TAY Through a Youth Disconnection Framework

This report and the resulting work to address your Board's directives are contextualized within the frame of "youth disconnection" because this issue area interconnects the focal populations and goals of the SOC, PPSGC, and the overarching aims of this motion. (See Appendix A for PPSGC priorities.)

Youth disconnection, defined as when youth ages 16 to 24 are not in school/training or working/seeking employment, is associated with a host of negative outcomes across the life course¹. These youth are more likely to:

- Be a part of a generational poverty cycle
- Be unemployed/underemployed
- Have justice-system involvement
- Have behavioral health issues
- Experience housing insecurity and homelessness
- Experience poor health and early mortality

Youth involved with child welfare systems often experience high levels of youth disconnection. There are more than 143,000² disconnected youth in Los Angeles County. Although the precise number is unknown, current and former foster youth make up a significant percentage of young people experiencing disconnection and its associated life-spanning consequences. Therefore, addressing youth disconnection in Los Angeles County is critical to implementing a comprehensive approach to coordinating resources, opportunities, and care for TAY, including those involved with DCFS, that will prevent negative outcomes and promote their success.

Current State Analysis of Youth Disconnection in Los Angeles County

The PPSGC and the SOC, facilitated by the OCP, conducted a current-state analysis to understand the landscape of existing County and County-adjacent programs, services, and efforts that aim to address youth disconnection. As directed by your Board, the current-state analysis sought to identify systems-level opportunities to streamline and improve processes; opportunities for reducing duplication, redundancy, and competition; and existing areas to be built upon relative to youth disconnection, with special focus on current and former foster youth. The analysis included a review of relevant reports, research, Board motions, data, and findings from countywide stakeholder-engagement efforts, as well as a series of key-informant interviews with County and non-County subject-matter experts.

This analysis was limited to County and County-adjacent efforts and does not explore in great detail efforts that may be occurring outside of these parameters, such as efforts in

¹ Please note that TAY, as defined by DCFS, are youth ages 16 to 21.

² U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2021.

middle and high schools, and the post-secondary system. (See Appendix B for additional information regarding the analysis.)

Key Analysis Findings

- Individual-level factors contributing to youth disconnection are shaped by societal factors and include child-welfare and juvenile-justice system involvement, unresolved trauma, and a fractured sense of connection and belonging. For current and former foster youth, school instability resulting from placement instability is also a contributor.
- Societal and systems-level contributing factors include structural racism, inadequate support within the education system (particularly at vulnerable transition points between middle school and high school and after graduation), inadequate career pathways to living-wage employment, and a broad disconnection from opportunity.
- Homelessness and youth disconnection are interrelated and often co-occurring.
- There has been a significant focus on addressing contributing factors, with over 43 Board motions related to TAY approved since 2021 on educational attainment, workforce development, housing stability, mentorship, etc.
- Numerous efforts are underway countywide to address factors that contribute to youth disconnection. Many of these efforts genuinely center youth voice and there has been a marked shift towards creating specialized departments, units, and bodies—including the Los Angeles County Youth Commission, the Department of Youth Development (DYD), DCFS's Youth Engagement Section (YES) unit, and DMH's TAY programs—that are dedicated to meeting the needs of young people. Programs such as the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity's (DEO) Youth@Work redesign and modernization of America's Job Centers of California which will include an opportunity and foster youth center of excellence, Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective's Creative Wellbeing initiative, the DPSS + RightWay Foundation Project, the California Community Schools Initiative, and LA P3: Horizons 32K initiative are additional examples of efforts to improve outcomes for this population.

Despite bright spots, opportunities for improvement exist:

- The most prevalent theme to emerge from the analysis was the degree of strategic and functional alignment opportunities regarding youth disconnection among and within County departments and with non-County stakeholders. Many existing efforts are taking place independently. Improved Countywide coordination would help eliminate duplicative and disjointed efforts, identify gaps, and improve effectiveness. Improved coordination would also address some of the challenges young people experience in navigating County systems to access resources and opportunities.

- Information- and data-sharing is also a foundational need. Enhanced data-sharing and integration of systems could unlock greater capacity to identify at-risk youth and provide multiagency care coordination and support.
- Invaluable infrastructure to support youth during vulnerable educational transition points was curtailed during the COVID-19 pandemic and has not yet been fully restored.
- Insufficient funding is available for and allocated to addressing factors that contribute to youth disconnection at the individual, societal, and system levels. Even when funding may be available, opportunities exist to enhance the strategic maximization of available funding streams to overcome barriers and achieve greater impact.
- There is a need to further develop age-tiered and life phase–appropriate engagement strategies and to increase the availability of appropriate resources and opportunities for at-risk young adults, including trauma-informed career pathways to living-wage employment.
- Finally, building on the County's history of engaging stakeholders broadly in developing recommendations and plans, progress may be enhanced by prioritizing the full implementation of those recommendations. Once initiatives are implemented, they need to be funded over time for impact and evaluation purposes.

The analysis also highlighted additional opportunities and recommendations.

- Strengthen prevention early in life by implementing multigenerational models for disrupting factors that contribute to youth disconnection.
- Strengthen prevention early in life through fostering and leveraging school-based and community partnerships.
- Strengthen prevention and early intervention efforts for DCFS-involved youth specifically by reducing entries into and lengths of stay in foster care, and prioritizing permanency for TAY.
- Prioritize youth in foster care and other youth at risk of disconnection for services and supports.
- Maximize Medi-Cal and California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) funding streams and benefits to expand access to health and behavioral health services, as well as community supports to address social determinants of health. Access to CalAIM benefits would call for expanded efforts to offer TAY and disconnected youth enrollment into Medi-Cal managed care when they are eligible.
- Build community capacity by simplifying the County contracting process and making available technical assistance for funding alignment and innovation.

- Expand workforce pathways to County employment and leverage County influence to engage labor and industry leaders in co-developing career opportunities.
- Revisit and implement sound strategies already developed through prior stakeholder engagements and Board directives.

Overview of Structure and Process to Comprehensively Address TAY Services in Los Angeles County

TAY Table Overview

In September 2024, the TAY Table was established under the auspices of the SOC to effectively address your Board's directives, act on findings from the current-state analysis, and achieve the aligned aims of the PPSGC and SOC, with the overarching goal of developing a comprehensive approach for the coordination of services, resources, opportunities, and care for at-risk TAY.

The TAY Table is co-led by the PPSGC, OCP, and the Prevention and Promotion Coordination and Implementation Team (PPCIT), which was established by the Board through the July 2023 *Building Los Angeles County's Prevention Infrastructure* motion. DYD has also agreed to play an ongoing leading role in the TAY Table.

The TAY Table will ultimately take a collective-impact approach to bring together departmental stakeholders in three priority areas related to this issue: **education**, **employment**, and related **wraparound supports** that facilitate thriving in these areas, such as mental health care, concrete supports, housing support, mentoring, etc. It will serve as a vehicle for cross-sector planning, the coordination of continuous quality improvement, and action. The initial phase of the TAY Table will be internally focused, as improved interdepartmental strategic and functional alignment is a critical necessity in facilitating the County's ability to partner effectively with non-County stakeholders.

The TAY Table will include representatives from youth and young-adult-serving County departments who have both subject-matter expertise and the authority to carry forward objectives determined by the body. The TAY Table will meet regularly, on a schedule determined by the TAY Table Design Subcommittee (described below); SOC, PPSGC, and/or PPCIT structures will be leveraged whenever possible to minimize duplication and workload burden on departmental representatives.

Operationally, the TAY Table's initial focus will be on aligning and leveraging the multiple efforts across County departments to address areas of improvement related to education, workforce, and wraparound services. Its approach will promote integration, coordination, and shared impact to encourage youth connection and reduce disconnection. An accountability framework will help develop shared goals, and departments will select their own lead impact measures and associated performance-accountability activities that will contribute to achieving these goals and ultimately 'moving the needle' on youth disconnection. Planning for the launch of the TAY Table in the first quarter of 2025 is underway.

The TAY Table will also identify and sponsor pilots of discrete cross-system interventions, in coordination with the work of the other countywide bodies. One potential demonstration project involves testing strategies for enhanced cross-departmental coordination and collaboration to maximize Medi-Cal and CalAIM opportunities with at-risk and disconnected youth serving as a use case. This project can also ensure the County is optimizing Behavioral Health Services Act implementation to support at-risk and disconnected youth, particularly around advocacy with the state for the continuation of primary prevention programs currently funded through the Mental Health Services Act to ensure sustained support and impact for children and youth. The feasibility of this project was explored at the December 2024 PPSGC meeting.

As part of the design of the TAY Table, four time-limited subcommittees were established to run concurrently. TAY Table subcommittees are open to non-County stakeholders, including young people with lived experience, and include:

- ♦ TAY Table Design Team Subcommittee
- ♦ Data Subcommittee
- ♦ Assessments Subcommittee
- ♦ Engagement and Access Subcommittee

TAY Table Design Team Subcommittee

The TAY Table Design Team Subcommittee is co-chaired by the PPSGC, OCP, and PPCIT. The primary deliverable of this subcommittee is a structural and operational plan for the standing TAY Table. Ideally, this plan will articulate the TAY Table's structure across departments and reporting relationships; its scope, purview, and meeting cadence; and strategic priorities at a high level. The PPCIT was leveraged for the design of the TAY Table to maximize efficiency, minimize redundancies, and burdens on departmental operations. (See Appendix C for a listing of PPCIT Members/TAY Table Design Team participants.)

Data Subcommittee

To address the information- and data-sharing challenges identified by key stakeholders, PPSGC, OCP, and CIO are utilizing the PPCIT Data Workgroup as a TAY-focused Data Subcommittee. The TAY Data Subcommittee, co-chaired by OCP and CIO, focuses on resolving pressing data-sharing needs to improve service delivery and care coordination for TAY, including disconnected youth and those at risk of disconnection. Additionally, DCFS and CIO are leveraging this subcommittee to create a dynamic public database on TAY in County care, per Directive 2c of the June 25, 2024 Board motion as referenced above.

The TAY Data Subcommittee has spent significant time understanding what TAY data is currently available and can be leveraged, what quantitative and qualitative data are needed to engage meaningfully in this work to better coordinate care and improve outcomes for TAY, and what new efforts are needed to collect and consolidate that data. The TAY Data Subcommittee identified several requirements for collecting and sharing TAY-related data:

Identifying Data Points Needed and What is Already Available Specific metrics are needed to collect the identified database indicators (e.g., ‘number and type of services’). The subcommittee identified the need for continued discussions with all stakeholders regarding which data points are most important, what is already available and reliable, and what can be streamlined, and how to include both quantitative and qualitative data.

Common Definitions and Metrics County departments and other partners serving TAY use differing definitions of the age groups of TAY, and track many data measures for them. The subcommittee identified the need to develop common definitions and metrics that could be tracked across departments and various databases.

Linking Data Across Systems TAY information is available in different databases across County departments, but it is not consolidated or integrated across systems. The subcommittee identified the need to consider unique identifiers to join data; to consider applicable laws, rules, and agreements, and allow for consent where needed and appropriate; and to make sure that each system is collecting the data needed to enable this.

Improving Data Collection Quality Data collection and integration will require collaboration and coordination across departments and stakeholders. To enable this, the subcommittee identified the need to develop and share clear messaging about the purpose of the data collection and to identify champions to be engaged throughout the process. The subcommittee also identified the importance of ensuring that processes—particularly around collecting qualitative data from young people about their experiences and outcomes—are informed by trauma and resilience-building practices.

Leveraging Other TAY Data and Research Efforts In addition to leveraging the PPCIT Data Workgroup for this effort, OCP and CIO have also engaged other subject-matter experts and stakeholders, including the Children’s Data Network (CDN) and the California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP), to leverage relevant data and analysis. For example, CDN conducted a data analysis for the state System of Care partnership, linking client- and program-level data from 2021 for children and youth in foster care served across multiple state departments. This data can be disaggregated by county and provides critical information for capacity-building across SOC partners to better support our shared clients, including TAY. In addition, CCWIP, which provides child-welfare-specific data in publicly accessible dashboards, also runs the Transition-Age Youth Research and Evaluation Hub (TAY-Hub). The TAY Hub includes statewide and county-specific data on TAY demographics, employment outcomes including employment status and earnings, and education outcomes like post-secondary enrollment status.

DCFS TAY Database Per Board Directive 2c, DCFS, OCP, and CIO have been working to identify metrics and data sources for a public-facing TAY dashboard. DCFS, OCP, and CIO are exploring the inclusion of a point-in-time count of youth in foster care under DCFS jurisdiction, ages 16-21, along with demographic information including sexual orientation/gender identity and expression when available. DCFS, OCP, and CIO have identified a potential list of programs across departments to include for the number and

type of services TAY are receiving, but additional discussions with departments must define the data elements further. In addition, defining the data for 'history of other systems-involvement' (i.e., homelessness and incarceration/correctional supervision, per Directive 2c) for DCFS-involved TAY also requires more discussion with departments due to similar issues, especially around a lack of common definitions across systems and knowledge across departments on what TAY data is already available.

DCFS, OCP, and CIO will use the TAY Data Subcommittee to identify the additional metrics needed to meet the Board directive for the TAY dashboard, as well as develop an action plan to address TAY data needs more broadly to support the TAY Table in addressing youth disconnection. We anticipate having a prototype of the TAY dashboard by the end of the first quarter of 2025.

Next Steps—Building TAY Use Case(s) and Developing the DCFS TAY Dashboard

The TAY Data Subcommittee will convene regularly in the coming year to identify and define TAY use case(s), which will help the requirements identified above, as well as facilitate the sharing and integration of relevant data across departments to support the TAY Table's efforts to improve access to education, workforce, and wraparound supports for TAY. In addition, the TAY Data Subcommittee will continue to partner with DCFS to finalize the public-facing TAY database.

Assessments Subcommittee

In response to Board Directive 1e of the June 25, 2024 Board motion as referenced above, the current assessment tools used by County departments were examined, and tools from these departments were submitted for review and included:

- ♦ Child Support Services Department
- ♦ Department of Children and Family Services
- ♦ Department of Economic Opportunity
- ♦ Department of Health Services
- ♦ Department of Mental Health
- ♦ Department of Parks and Recreation
- ♦ Department of Public Health
- ♦ Department of Public Social Services
- ♦ Department of Youth Development
- ♦ Justice, Care, and Opportunities Department
- ♦ Los Angeles County Office of Education
- ♦ Probation Department

As expected, the review confirmed that although some common elements exist, departments use a wide array of distinct assessment tools designed to collect information to facilitate service provision from that specific department. Many departments also collect information about youths' comprehensive service needs that could be helpful for addressing their broader needs. Leveraging technology could streamline linkages to supportive resources. The breadth of assessments reviewed as part of this analysis also highlighted how challenging and overwhelming it may be for

TAY to navigate systems. Further, for some young people, retelling their stories repeatedly as part of organizational assessment/intake processes can be traumatizing. While some assessment and screening tools included in this review are required by statute or funding sources, tools developed by County departments present opportunities for enhanced and trauma-informed cross-departmental care coordination. In view of this, the Assessments Subcommittee is looking at developing a universal screening and assessment tool that can be used in a demonstration project with County and non-County partners to test the feasibility of creating and sustaining a 'no wrong door' approach to TAY services. Ideally, this demonstration project would also include shared case-planning tools to further diminish barriers to effective care coordination.

Engagement and Access Subcommittee

The Engagement and Access Subcommittee is co-chaired by the Youth Commission and DYD. Its focus is on addressing barriers to accessing resources, supports, and opportunities, as well as developing effective age-tiered engagement strategies for the 16- to 24-year-old age span of youth at risk of or experiencing disconnection.

One method of improving youth access to what they need is by developing a strengthened information and referral strategy that is more inclusive of technology and natural touchpoints in a young person's life, such as schools, medical providers, community partners, etc.

An early deliverable of this subcommittee may be a cross-departmental TAY-focused website that can serve as the County's official information hub for young people at risk of and/or experiencing disconnection to obtain information about available services, resources, and opportunities. This website may also serve as an information and referral system for a potential future demonstration project testing 'no wrong door' strategies for at-risk young people.

In November 2024, the Engagement and Access Subcommittee leadership met with the Internal Services Department's (ISD) Delete the Divide (DTD) initiative to assess the feasibility of leveraging and refining the [Youth Resources Application](#) recently developed by DTD interns in response to the November 2023 *Community Resources App for Youth* motion. It was determined that building on the ISD-developed application in this way was the most strategic path forward and a quick win to address a foundational access barrier.

Permanency and Education Efforts to Support Youth in Foster Care

Permanency

Promoting connection and preventing disconnection for young people begins early in life by promoting healthy and thriving families. For youth in foster care, this also requires achieving permanency as soon as possible—permanency meaning that no child leaves the system without a permanent family or a responsible, caring adult in his or her life. OCP partners with and supports the current efforts of DCFS, Probation, community and philanthropic partners, and others to provide services for parents seeking reunification, to increase the number of relative placements as well as adoptions and guardianships,

and to expand supports for all caregivers. OCP also has worked to concurrently focus on permanency for youth to decrease the number of young people aging out of the foster-care system, while also leading efforts to increase supports and services for TAY. Examples of the County's permanency efforts include:

- ♦ Expanding family finding and engagement services so that DCFS-involved children are placed with relatives as soon as they are removed from their homes, when safe and feasible
- ♦ Implementing a [multipronged approach](#) to increase permanency for foster and probation youth, and in turn decrease the number of youth who age out of the system without permanency
- ♦ Supporting knowledge and access to essential benefits that are available to youth and families involved in the foster-care system through an online [Benefits Eligibility Finder](#)
- ♦ Expanding DCFS's specialized placement stabilization services to support youth with complex unmet needs
- ♦ Enhancing efforts to keep families together through [providing free, community-based services to parents](#)

(See Appendix D for further details on the County's permanency efforts.)

Education

Efforts to promote educational success for youth in foster care and on probation are also underway through the [Education Coordinating Council](#) (ECC), which is housed under the OCP and was created by the Board of Supervisors in 2004 to improve education outcomes for youth involved in the child-welfare and juvenile-justice systems. Members of the ECC include DCFS, Probation, DYD, Arts and Culture, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), the Youth Commission, school districts, and child-welfare advocates.

In May 2024 the ECC adopted its new [five-year Strategic Plan](#), created after extensive listening sessions with 145 young people/adults with lived expertise and 39 systems partners. In these listening sessions, youth and system partners identified the need for support around college, trade and vocational schools, and workforce development. System partners also identified supports needed to ensure that youth successfully transition from high school to college, as many youth may apply and/or enroll in college but do not make it to the first day of classes. This is often referred to as the 'summer melt.'

As a result of these listening sessions, the ECC adopted *Post-Secondary Educational Achievement and Workforce Readiness* as one of the seven priority areas in the new Strategic Plan. Appendix D includes further details on this priority area's primary objectives and desired outcomes.

Conclusion

The PPSGC, SOC, OCP, and PPCIT, in partnership with DYD, will convene departments in early 2025 to launch the TAY Table and further develop or finalize the deliverables outlined above. We will also continue to engage with and align efforts with other key partners and initiatives, including LACOE's Community Schools Initiative and the Opportunity Youth Collaborative/LA P3 Horizons 32K initiative. Moreover, in partnership with DYD, the Youth Commission, and others, we will ensure that youth and young adults with lived experience guide the strategies of the TAY Table.

Through our regular reports and policy presentations, both the PPSGC and OCP (for System of Care) will continue to keep the Board apprised of TAY Table implementation efforts to address youth disconnection and institute a comprehensive countywide approach to supporting TAY, including those impacted by systems.

DCFS Report Back on Directives 2a and 2b of the June 25, 2024 Board motion, as referenced above

Directive 2a: Proposed organizational structure, roles and responsibilities, and a proposed staffing plan.

Proposed Organizational Structure

The DCFS Contract Services Bureau (CSB) will oversee the Authentic Youth Engagement (AYE) Program, which includes the Youth Engagement Section (YES). Designed as an enhanced AB 12 unit within DCFS, YES aims to provide high-touch support for AB 12 Non-Minor Dependents (NMDs), the population of TAY between the ages of 18 to 21. The program will initially launch in Service Planning Area (SPA) 6, which contains the Vermont Corridor, Compton-Carson, Wateridge, and Hawthorne DCFS offices, as these regions currently have the highest concentration of NMDs. YES staff will collaborate closely with existing DCFS programs, including the Supportive Housing Division (SHD), Youth Development Services Division (YDSD), and AB 12 units within each of the regional offices.

As a joint initiative, YES will also partner with key stakeholders such as the Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC). The program prioritizes holistic support for NMDs, addressing needs such as post-secondary education, employment, vocational training, mental and physical health, housing, financial stability, mentorship, and supportive relationships. This approach seeks to streamline access to resources, supplement support, and promote successful transitions into adulthood for NMDs in Extended Foster Care (EFC).

Roles/Responsibilities

- **Executive Sponsor, Angela Parks-Pyles, Deputy Director** | Responsible for overseeing the operations, strategy, and outcomes of YES
- **Executive Subject Matter Expert (SME), Ronique Ross, Executive Assistant to the Director** | Serves as SME guiding the development of YES and as a liaison to DCFS Director Brandon Nichols
- **Authentic Youth Engagement (AYE) Manager, Dr. Patrisha Taylor, Children Services Administrator III** | Accountable for managing YES and ensuring NMD voices influence decisions; duties include facilitating advisory meetings, leading stakeholder engagement, and serving as the primary contact for AYE and YES
- **(1) Children Services Administrator (CSA) II** | Responsible for overseeing YES operations, enhancing service delivery for NMDs and ensuring that program outcomes are data-driven. Duties include ensuring the completion of day-to-day work requirements in the ongoing delivery of services for YES as performed by the CSA I, AB 12 Supervising Children's Social Worker (SCSW), and six AB 12 Children's Social Workers (CSW). The CSA II will interface with the Dependency Court when required, and assist YES NMDs with the timely completion of their Transitional Independent Living Plans (TILPs), Six-Month and 90-Day Conferences,

and CalFresh applications. Responsibilities will also include overseeing the preparation and appropriate completion of tracking and outcome reports, attending monthly meetings with the Director's Youth Advisory Council (DYAC), the Los Angeles County Youth Commission, and other youth advisory boards. The YES CSA II will participate in and plan events and activities within DCFS and across the community such as resource fairs and conferences, assist in the design and implementation of YES, and support the timely and thorough completion of Departmental Assignment Control System (DACS) assignments and other reports.

- **(1) CSA I** | Supports the CSA II in AYE and YES program operations and reviews performance metrics. Duties include preparing tracking and outcome reports, attending monthly meetings with youth advisory boards, participating in NMD/AB 12 events and activities within DCFS and across the community, assisting in the review and identification of cases for selection into YES, completing DACS assignments and other reports as needed, responding to matters related to the AYE program and YES, assisting in developing workflow processes and improvements, and completing other day-to-day work requirements in the ongoing delivery of services for the AYE program and YES.
- **(1) YES SCSW** | Manage a team of six YES CSWs, ensuring personalized and high-touch assistance. Support the CSWs' engagement and collaboration with community and faith-based organizations, educational/vocational institutions, workforce development agencies, YDSD/Independent Living Program (ILP) Transition Coordinators, SHD, and Los Angeles County departments such as DMH, DPSS, and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to ensure that NMDs stably and successfully exit EFC.
- **(6) YES CSWs** | CSWs will be assigned as primary case-carrying workers, responsible for providing direct support to NMDs. CSWs will spend time building relationships with NMDs by engaging in conversations around their interests and needs and advocating for them to have the necessary support and access to opportunities of interest that the NMD prioritizes. CSW duties will also include assisting NMDs in the development and implementation of individualized TILPs to ensure that NMDs are provided holistic support throughout their transition through EFC into adulthood.
- **Support Staff: Secretary III and Intermediate Typist Clerk (ITC)** | Support staff handle the administrative needs of the YES unit

Directive 2b: Opportunities for collaboration and partnership between the NMD section, existing DCFS programs and units, and County partner departments in the provision of services to NMDs.

To ensure that NMDs have the necessary support for a successful transition into adulthood, partnerships must foster integrated services and coordinated efforts across various stakeholders. Below is a detailed breakdown of these opportunities:

Internal Collaboration: YES and DCFS Programs

1. YDSD

- ♦ Engaging YDSD to support NMDs with workforce development programs, career readiness workshops, and financial literacy training.

2. SHD

- ♦ Collaborating with SHD to address the housing needs and support of NMDs, including affordable housing programs and transitional housing placements.

3. DYAC

- ♦ Incorporating youth voices through DYAC to inform program planning and ensure services align with the actual needs of NMDs.

4. AB 12 Program Coordination

- ♦ Collaborating with regional AB12 units to support NMDs in EFC with access to essential life skills resources such as education, employment, housing, health, and mentorship.
- ♦ YES will be in ongoing communication with regional AB12 units, sharing resources and information through AB12 Champion Meetings, Regional Office General Staff Meetings, and providing ongoing updates to programs.

Collaboration with County Departments

Opportunities to establish or expand partnerships with County departments are critical for providing wraparound services for NMDs. Departments include:

1. DMH

- ♦ Joint efforts to support NMDs having access to mental health and crisis intervention services.

2. DPSS

- ♦ Coordinating access to CalWORKs, CalFresh, and Medi-Cal services to provide financial and nutritional stability.

3. LAHSA, Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA), Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), and Public Housing Authorities (PHA)

- ♦ Collaborating with SHD, LAHSA, LACDA, HACLA, and PHA to prioritize NMDs in housing programs and permanent supportive housing initiatives.

4. Juvenile Probation Department

- ♦ Assisting NMDs with criminal justice involvement by supporting their engagement with mental health services, substance abuse programs, educational opportunities, vocational programs, diversion resources, rehabilitation services.

5. DEO

- ♦ Working with YDSD and DEO to engage NMDs in workforce development opportunities such as apprenticeships, vocational training, and job placement tailored to NMDs needs.

6. OCP

- ♦ Aligning efforts with OCP and System of Care to promote cross-agency collaboration for preventive services.

7. CEO – Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI)

- ♦ Participating in the Youth Homeless Systems Improvement Initiative with the CEO-HI to improve cross-system partnership aimed at ending youth homelessness in LA County.

Collaboration with Countywide Initiatives and Other Agencies

Additional County programs and initiatives offer untapped opportunities for partnership:

1. Justice, Care, and Opportunities Department (JCOD)

- ♦ Working with JCOD to support pathways for justice-involved youth to receive services.

2. DYD

- ♦ Collaborating with DYD to support youth-focused programs that promote community engagement and life skills development.

3. 211 LA and I-Foster

- ♦ Collaborating with 211 LA and I-Foster as key resources for youth seeking housing, financial aid, and employment support.

4. Foster Care Ombudsman

- ♦ Providing NMDs with tools to navigate services and resolve concerns.

5. Los Angeles County Library and Department of Parks & Recreation

- ♦ Providing NMDs access to educational workshops, recreational programs, and community engagement events.

Community-Based Partnerships

Community organizations, nonprofits, and faith-based groups can complement County efforts by filling service gaps and expanding support for NMDs. Opportunities include:

1. Mentorship Programs

- ♦ Engaging local mentorship programs to build supportive relationships and provide guidance in education, career, and personal growth.

2. Workforce Development

- ♦ Collaborating with organizations that provide vocational training to equip NMDs with skills for in-demand industries.

3. Faith-Based Organizations

- ♦ Partnering with faith-based networks for community-driven programs such as counseling, tutoring, and life coaching.

4. Education

- ♦ Promoting access to post-secondary education through scholarships, college counseling, and tutoring services.

5. Employment

- ♦ Seeking opportunities for NMDs to obtain internships for NMDs, participate in job shadowing, and skills training programs to prepare youth for sustainable careers.

6. Mental and Physical Health

- ♦ Linking NMDs to health care services, including Medi-Cal, mental health, and wellness programs.

7. Housing

- ♦ Partnering with housing programs to help NMDs obtain and sustain housing through permanent supportive housing and foster youth-specific housing programs.

8. Financial Stability

- ♦ Teaching financial literacy and supporting NMDs in accessing public assistance programs to achieve independence.

Through these partnerships, YES and DCFS can strengthen its ability to provide comprehensive, equitable, and impactful services that help NMDS achieve independence and success.

Next Steps

Evaluation and Assessment

- **Staffing and Engagement**

- ♦ Onboarding of CSA II, CSA I, SCSW, six YES CSWs, Secretary III, and two ITCs

- **Implementation Timeline**

SPA 6 implementation will commence once YES staff have been onboarded and co-located partnerships have been established with DMH and DPSS.

Each Supervisor
December 23, 2024
Page 19


If you have any questions, please contact me at (213) 893-1152 or by email at mnash@ocp.lacounty.gov, or your staff may contact Minsun Meeker at (213) 952-6147 or by email at mmeeker@ocp.lacounty.gov.




MN: MM: eih

c: Chief Executive Office
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Aging & Disabilities Department
Child Support Services Department
Department of Children and Family Services
Department of Consumer and Business Affairs
Department of Economic Opportunity
Department of Health Services
Department of Human Resources
Department of Mental Health
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Public Health
Department of Public Social Services
Department of Youth Development
Internal Services Department
Justice, Care, and Opportunities Department
Library
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
Military and Veterans Affairs
Prevention and Promotion Systems Governing Committee
Probation Department
Public Defender

Appendix A

Los Angeles County Prevention and Promotion Systems Governing Committee Priorities



	Racial Equity and Justice		
	Economic Wellbeing (Stability, Mobility, and Empowerment)		
	Center Resident Voice and Choice		
Domain	Child Welfare & Family Well-Being 	Behavioral Health 	Homelessness & Housing 
Population	Families with Young Children, Ages 0-5	Youth and Young Adults, Ages 11-24	Systems-Impacted TAY*, Ages 18-24 Older Adults, Aged 60+
Outcome Goals	Increase social, emotional and physical well-being of families with children between the ages of 0-5 and reduce associated racial disparities	Increase social, emotional and mental well-being of youth and young adults between the ages of 11-24 and reduce associated racial disparities	Increase housing stability for County-systems impacted youth between ages 18-24 and older adults age 60+ and reduce associated racial disparities
Specific Areas of Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting economic well-being Promoting maternal and child health and well-being Preventing intimate partner violence, including focus on boys and men Mandated reporting reform Preventing child abuse and neglect Addressing associated racial disparities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventing youth disconnection Note: "Disconnected youth" are not in school, in training, or in the workforce Addressing associated racial disparities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting housing stability Addressing associated racial disparities

Understanding Our Current State: Promoting Youth/Young Adult Connection



Current-State Analysis

Process

- Reviewed relevant reports, research, analysis, Board motions, and data
- Reviewed findings from Countywide stakeholder engagement efforts
- Conducted key informant interviews with County and non-County subject matter experts

Caveats

- Promoting connection begins early in life; this analysis focuses on adolescence through young adulthood
- Limited to County and County-adjacent efforts
- Crosswalk and analysis of County-funded programs and services is pending completion of Prevention and Promotion Coordination Implementation Team (PPCIT) efforts
- Despite close relationship, does not explore TAY homelessness in great depth; focus of subsequent current state analysis
- Interviews with a few key stakeholders are pending

About Youth Disconnection

“Disconnected Youth”, also referred to as “Opportunity Youth” (OY), are young people between the ages of 16-24 who are not attending school/training, not working/seeking employment, and may be experiencing homelessness.

They include but are not limited to current and former foster and justice-impacted youth.

Youth disconnection is associated with significant costs across the life course.

Later in life, they are more likely to:

- Be a part of a generational poverty cycle
- Be unemployed/underemployed
- Experience housing instability/homelessness
- Have justice-system involvement
- Have behavioral health issues
- Experience poor health and early mortality

143,000

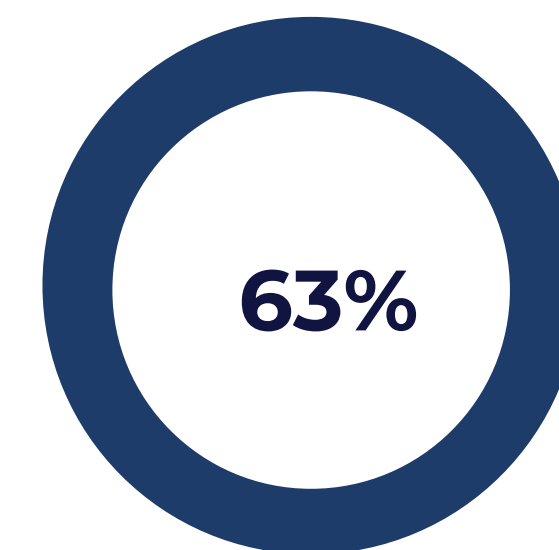
Opportunity Youth



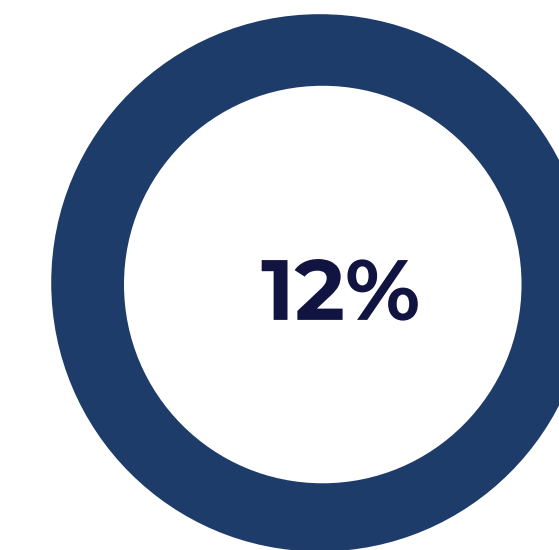
Ages 23 and 24

Black Young Men

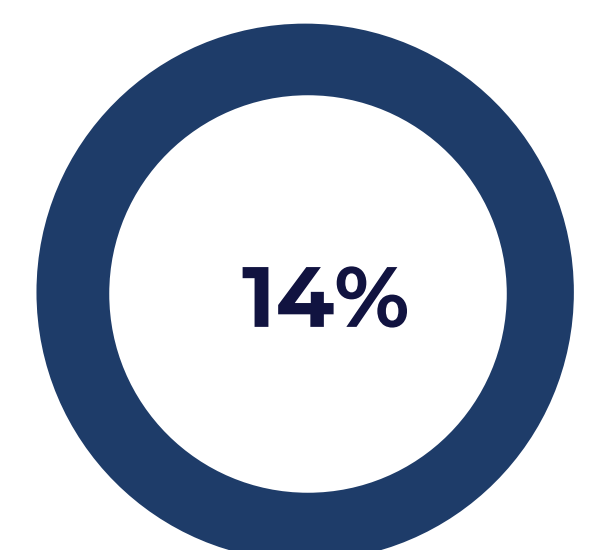
Latino Young Men



19-24 HS Diploma



19-24 PS Degree



CalWORKS Parents w/
children age 5 or under

Disconnection Occurs on a Continuum

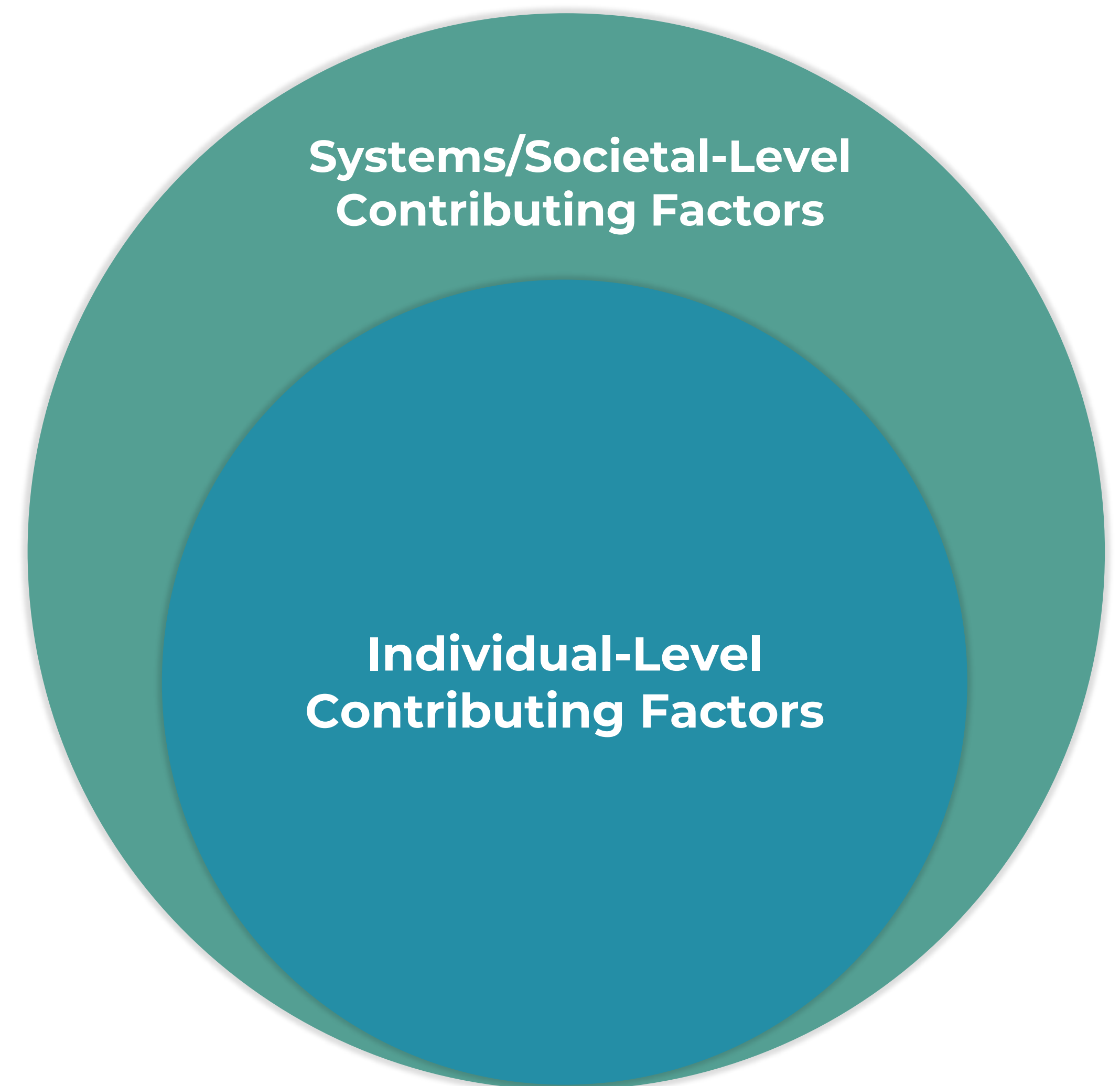
Connection ↔ Under-attached ↔ Disconnection

Individual-Level Contributing Factors

- Individual-level factors are shaped by societal and systems factors

Key individual-level factors include:

- Fractured social connections (family, peers, educators, etc.)
- Inadequate sense of belonging
- Unresolved trauma and associated behavioral health challenges
- Child welfare and justice system involvement
- Disabilities, including developmental delays and learning disabilities
- Housing instability/homelessness
- Inadequate access to opportunity broadly



Societal/Systems-Level Contributing Factors

Structural Racism

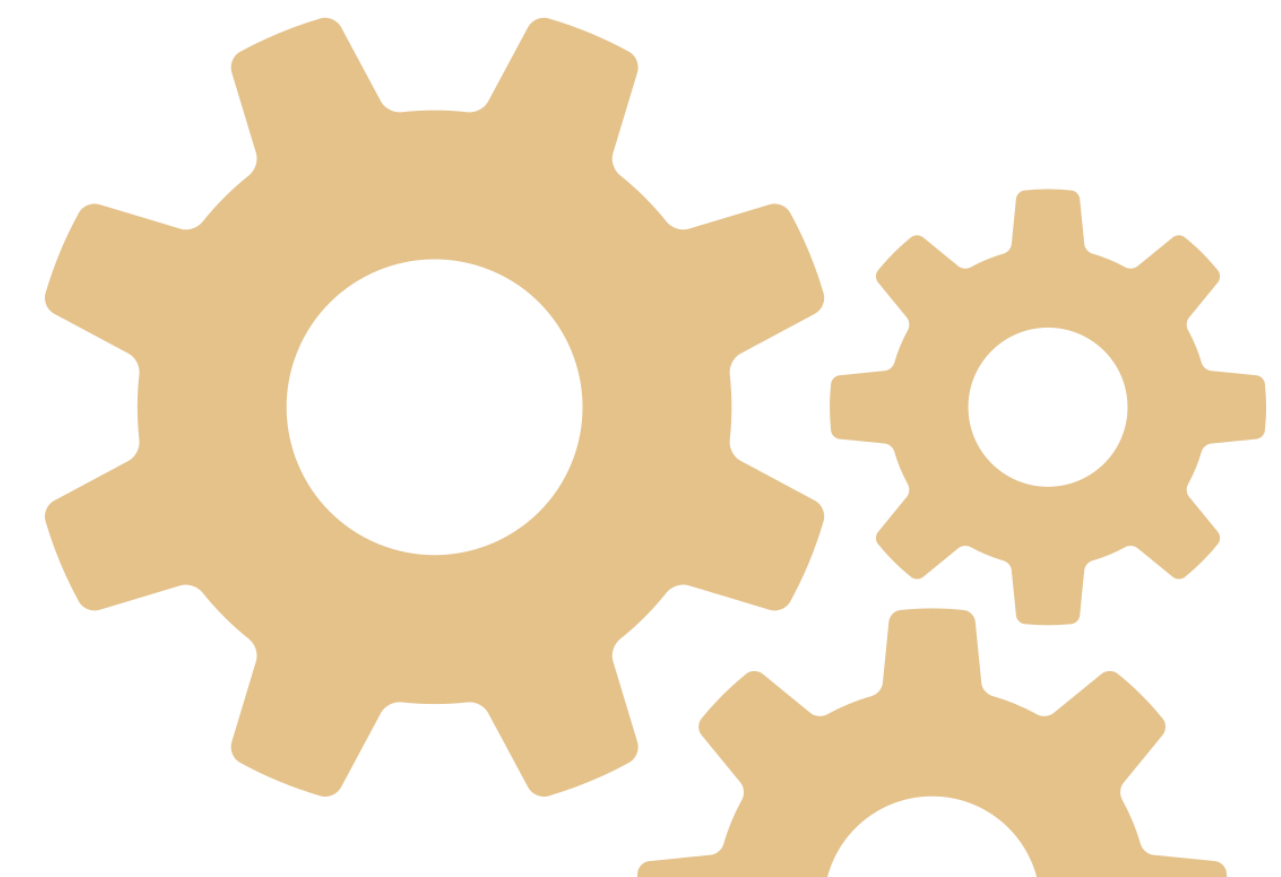
- Community disinvestment and concentrated disadvantage
 - Under-resourced schools, in particular
- Anti-Black racism
- Poverty
- Disconnection from opportunity broadly

Educational System

- Exclusionary practices, school suspensions, expulsions, push-out, etc.
- Inadequate student support, particularly during vulnerable transition from middle to high school

Labor Market

- Inadequate career pathways to living wage employment for this population
 - Including trauma-informed workforce and wraparound supports



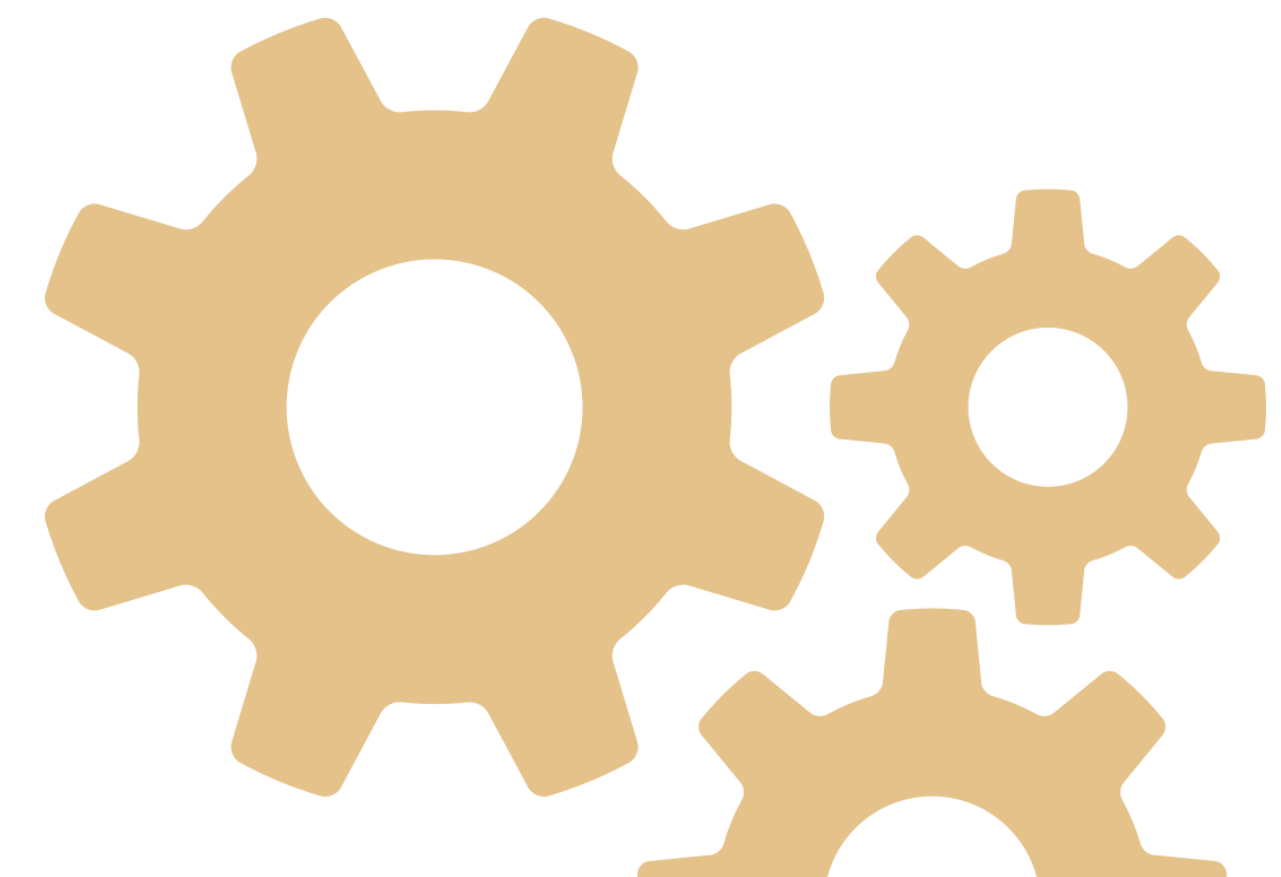
Societal/Systems-Level Contributing Factors

County Systems

- Strategic and functional misalignment
 - Lack of coordination, negatively impacts efforts and interventions

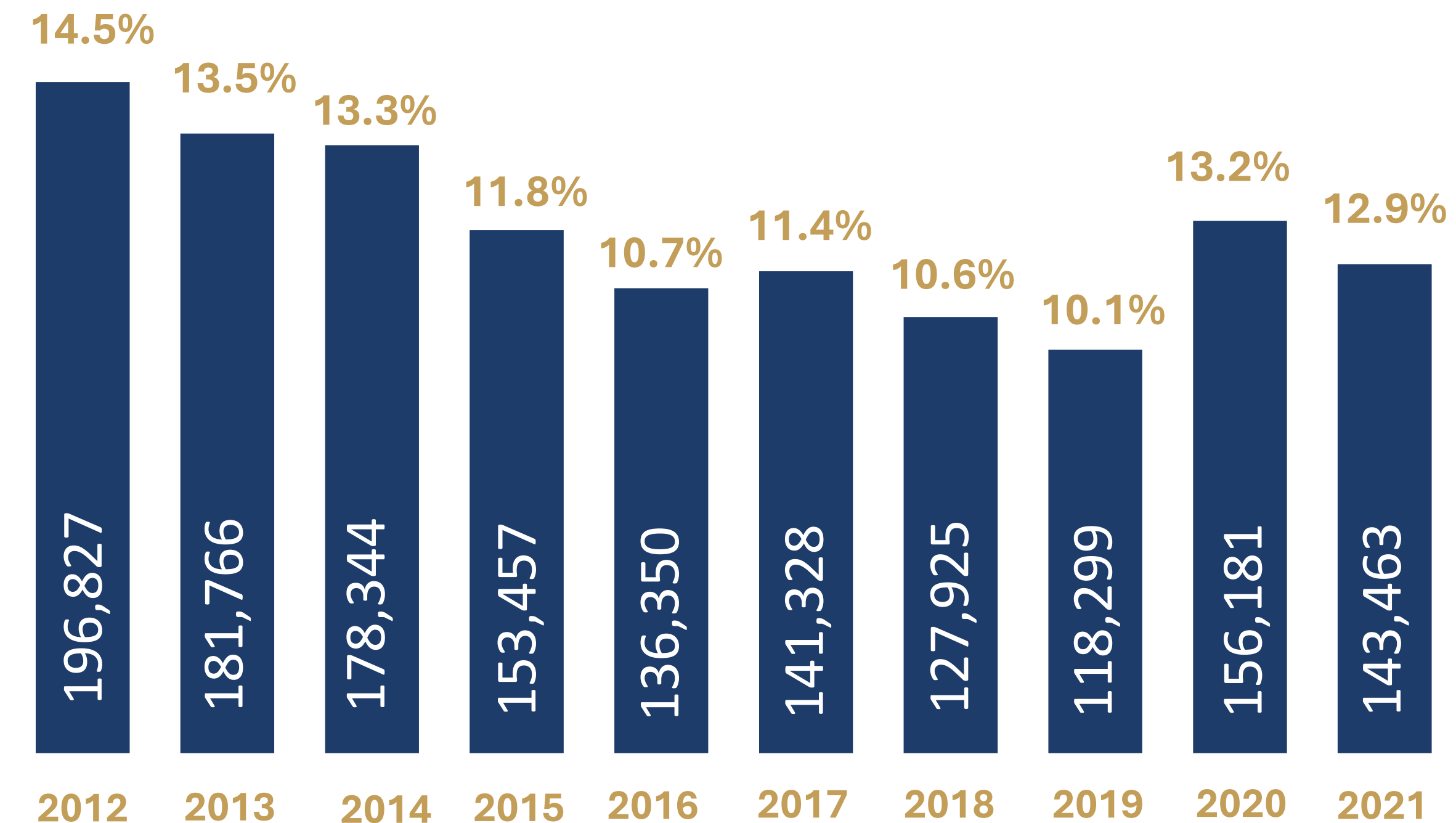
Fundamentally Flawed Premise

The notion that young adults raised by our systems should be “self-sufficient” at age 21 is a harmful narrative.



Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Decline in educational attainment and learning loss had greater impact on at risk/opportunity youth
- Pandemic-related social isolation created and exacerbated mental health challenges
- Significant losses of supportive infrastructure that prevented disconnection at vulnerable points and helped to identify and re-engaged young people



“Years of progress lost.”

Board Motions



2021 – 2024

Youth connection- and disconnection-related motions

- Educational attainment
- School climate
- Workforce training
- Career pathways
- Financial literacy
- Data integration
- Apps, websites, etc.
- Basic needs, including guaranteed income and homelessness
- Wraparound supports, including mentorship

Similarities in motion directives

Recent motions directed inclusion of youth voice


Most require cross-departmental planning to achieve motion aims

Differing constellations of departments leave no clear “captain”

Not always coordinated and mutually reinforcing

Current Efforts

	UNDERWAY	EFFICACY	SCALE/PIVOT
Education	✓	?	?
Workforce	✓	?	?
Basic Needs/Housing	✓	?	?
Behavioral Health	✓	?	?
Social Connections	✓	?	?
Specialized Depts/Units	✓	?	?
Collaboratives	✓	?	?



Numerous efforts are underway to address contributing factors

PPCIT-led inventory will provide more specificity

Likely that we don't know much about the efficacy of most efforts

Need to develop a “Measure, Scale, or Pivot” culture

Getting It Right

RIGHTEOUS INTENT

- Deepened desire to do what's right for young people
- Reflected in centering youth voice and collaborating in ways that are healing and empowering

RESHAPING COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR DEDICATED FOCUS ON TAY

Creation of the Youth Commission, Department of Youth Development, TAY units within DCFS and DMH, etc.

FOCUS ON ROOT CAUSES

- Increased efforts to address poverty, including various guaranteed income programs throughout the County
- Work of ARDI and all departments that have leaned into racial equity
- Use of mentoring and focus on permanency to address issues related to social connections and belonging

REPLICABLE APPROACHES TO EFFECTIVE CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

- Engagement and coordination for Youth Justice Reimagined
- Execution of the 2021 TAY Housing Cliff collective impact approach
- Community Schools Initiative

Gaps and Barriers

Youth/Young Adult Engagement

- Need to segment opportunity youth by age groups
- Need strategies for identifying and engaging “older” young people across the continuum
- Need more models/approaches that see and hear youth; authentic co-creation in this space

Access to Resources and Opportunities

- Need more trauma-informed career pathways, with wraparound supports
- Difficult for young people to navigate systems; desperate need for a “no wrong door” approach
- Need a “right care, right time, right place” approach for youth

Integrated Data Sharing

Limits our ability to identify at risk/opportunity youth, plan effectively, coordinate care and support

Gaps and Barriers

Funding

- Insufficient funding to address contributing factors that promote connections and prevent disconnection
 - Including limited funding for age-appropriate and culturally relevant, non-traditional healing centered services and supports
 - Funding streams for economic supports (TANF and WIOA) not facilitative of economic mobility
- Challenges with maximizing available funding
 - Uneven knowledge and awareness of underutilized funding streams
 - Difficulties getting funding to communities
 - Need technical assistance with braiding, blending, and aligned funding strategies across departments for shared populations (where possible); similar needs in communities
 - Our funding challenges are exacerbated by systems misalignment

Gaps and Barriers

Pervasive Systems-level Strategic and Functional Misalignment

- Within County departments, across County departments, with non-County partners, and among service providers
- Siloing and lack of coordination leads to disjointed, ineffective, and/or duplicative efforts
 - Contributes to young people's struggles with accessing resources and opportunities
- Rapid creation of departments, bodies, and initiatives with similar/overlapping focal populations and scope exacerbates issues with misalignment

Challenges with Staying the Course

Pattern of engaging stakeholders in development of recommendations and plans, and relatively quickly “going back to the drawing board” without full implementation

Increasing Risk Aversion

Can serve as a barrier to meeting the needs of young people and communities

(Additional) Opportunities

- Prioritize young people at risk of disconnection for County-funded services
- Increase focus on promotion of connection and preventing disconnection earlier in the life course
 - Implement multi-gen models to disrupt generational poverty
- Strengthen consistent departmental participation in regional approaches to promoting connection and preventing disconnection
- Maximize access to Medi-Cal and CalAIM benefits to support young people
 - Including innovating to support community capacity building
 - Including tapping into peer specialist training and programs, e.g., community health workers and wellness coaches
- Leverage County's resources and influence to promote young adult workforce connection
 - Strengthen pathways to County employment
 - Prioritize subsidization of living wage jobs
 - Bring labor and industry to planning and action table
- Implement existing recommendations and strategies

Appendix C
PPCIT Members/TAY Table Design Team Roster

Department/Agency	Name
Aging Department	Solomon Shibeshi
Chief Executive Office—Homeless Initiative	Ashlee Oh
Chief Executive Office—Homeless Initiative	Almas Sayeed
Chief Executive Office—Chief Information Office	Christopher Pailma
County Counsel	Parjack Ghaderi
County Counsel	Kristine Miles
Child Support Services Department	Genie Chough
Department of Consumer and Business Affairs	Joel Ayala
Department of Consumer and Business Affairs	Morine Merritt
Department of Children and Family Services	Veronica Pawlowski
Department of Children and Family Services	Robert Woolridge
Department of Economic Opportunity	Ellen Alty
Department of Economic Opportunity	Kelly LoBianco
Department of Human Resources	Rodney Collins
Department of Human Resources	Lisa Garrett
Department of Health Services	Aries Limbaga
Department of Mental Health	Robert Byrd
Department of Mental Health	Kanchana Tate
Department of Public Health	Priya Batra
Department of Public Social Services	Nick Ippolito
Department of Youth Development	David Carroll
Department of Youth Development	Danielle Vappie
Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors	Hanna Cheru
Internal Services Department	Sabra Johnson
Justice, Care, and Opportunities Department	Yvette Willock
Los Angeles County Development Authority	Tracie Mann
Los Angeles County Office of Education	Alicia Garoupa
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority	Avery Hufft
Military and Veterans Affairs	Zuleyda Santana
Office of Child Protection	Minsun Meeker
Public Defender	Bernie Dillon
Public Defender	Graciela Martinez
Public Defender	Jon Trochez
Department of Parks and Recreation	Alina Bokde
Probation Department	Sheila Williams

Appendix D

Los Angeles County's Permanency and Education Efforts for Youth in Foster Care

Permanency

Upfront Family Finding (UFF) | Family Finding and Engagement Program (FFEP)

OCP partnered with DCFS to establish DCFS's Upfront Family Finding (UFF) program—which works to place children with relatives as soon as they are removed from their homes—and to pilot and evaluate UFF, then encouraged its expansion to all DCFS regional offices. Now known as the Family Finding and Engagement Program (FFEP), it has been implemented countywide since July 2023. OCP continues to track data on FFEP to monitor program effectiveness, and year-to-date data for 2024 show that 79 percent of children who were the subjects of detention hearings in the 19 DCFS regional offices were initially placed with kin (i.e., nonoffending parents, relatives, and non-related extended family members) after removal from their families.

Permanency Recommendations In response to Board motions in 2017 and 2018 related to supporting the self-sufficiency goals of transition-age foster and probation youth at the earliest stage possible, OCP developed a plan to increase permanency for foster and probation youth and in turn decrease the number of youth who age out of the system without permanency. OCP's 2018 [Permanency Report for Los Angeles County Youth](#) presented a multi-pronged approach to increasing permanency, including expanding current permanency efforts like UFF/FFEP, increasing post-permanency services, targeting youth who had faced years of placement instability through services like the Placement Stability Team, and increasing permanency for older TAY by improving their knowledge of available benefits. OCP has led the OCP Permanency Workgroup since 2018 to track data on youth permanency and progress on the implementation of the strategies identified in the report. Notable accomplishments through the efforts of the Permanency Workgroup include the creation of the TAY Benefits Eligibility Finder and helping to address DCFS's adoptions backlog that resulted in part from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Looking forward, the OCP Permanency Workgroup will identify more best practices in achieving permanency for youth that can be scaled countywide. The workgroup has recently heard from Wendy's Wonderful Kids, Kidsave, RaiseAChild, and the Children's Law Center on their efforts to help youth achieve permanency. The message from all of these organizations is that they are able to handle even more referrals from DCFS for their permanency services. The workgroup will also be hearing updates from the DCFS Youth Permanency Units and the DCFS Reunification Support Demonstration Project in the DCFS Torrance regional office.

Benefits Eligibility Finder While essential benefits are available to youth and families involved in the foster-care system, identifying which opportunities are appropriate for each individual—and if they are eligible—is a crucial first step in accessing them. In 2021, OCP developed the Foster and Probation Youth Benefit and Entitlement Charts in partnership with the OCP Permanency Workgroup, stakeholders, and advocates. This resource is a compilation of all potential benefits to assist youth, caregivers, social workers, and probation officers in making permanency decisions. Following the Charts'

release, OCP continued to bring together partners to ensure that the resource was having the intended impact; in response to youth recommendations, OCP then partnered with the Alliance for Children's Rights and the Rotary Club of Los Angeles to fund and develop an interactive electronic [Benefits Eligibility Finder](#) in early 2023, and make it available on the DCFS website. During the first 30 days of its existence in March 2023, the website received nearly 1,000 hits. The information in the Finder is updated yearly to ensure its continued accuracy.

Placement Stabilization Team In 2016, OCP launched the Transitional Shelter Care pilot to increase permanency for children and youth at the highest risk of placement disruption and ongoing instability. The pilot paired social workers from DCFS's Accelerated Placement Team with DMH's Intensive Field-Capable Clinical Services Team members to stabilize placements for youth who have been in the system for multiple years, experienced multiple placement disruptions, and had chronic overstays in the 10-day transitional shelter care facilities (TSCFs). Through OCP's stewardship of this innovative approach, DCFS institutionalized the program as the Placement Stabilization Team (PST). Over the years, following multiple recommendations from OCP about the key role of PST in improving placement stability for youth with unmet complex needs, DCFS has expanded staffing and resources for the program. OCP continues to facilitate a multidisciplinary workgroup focused on youth served by PST and track data on the impact of the program. Data consistently show that, post-PST involvement, youth spend less time in TSCFs, and fewer return there as their placements are stabilized. Moreover, youth served by PST continue to exit congregate-care settings and enter more family settings or independent living program housing. The vast majority of youth/nonminor dependents served by PST remain more stable not only in their placements but also with their support teams, their engagement in mental health services, and in school/employment.

DCFS's Parent Support Services In order to enhance efforts to keep families together through family maintenance and family reunification services, the DCFS Director has identified providing free community-based services to parents as a priority. In the fall of 2023, the department established workgroups to focus on improving access to and funding for court-ordered services. Subsequently, Assembly Bill 954 (AB 954) was signed into law and became effective on January 1, 2024. AB 954 requires courts to inquire about a parent/guardian's ability to pay for court-ordered services and precludes the court from making certain legal findings if financial hardship prevents the parent/guardian from participating in court-ordered services. To effectuate both the Director's priority and AB 954, the department created a staff team focused on parent services: the Parent Services Implementation Team (PSIT). The PSIT's focus areas include exploring funding options to pay for parent services, accessing Medi-Cal, staffing in the Los Angeles County Superior Court's Juvenile Dependency Court to assist in the enrollment for services, discussing a centralized registry from a multi-system perspective, and bringing on a consultant to support implementation. DCFS recently submitted a [Board report-back](#) with updates on these topics.

Education

Under the priority area of *Post-Secondary Educational Achievement and Workforce Readiness* in the Education Coordinating Council's (ECC's) new [Strategic Plan](#), ECC identified the following primary objectives and desired outcomes:

- Primary Objectives
 - ♦ Increase direct college enrollment and completion rates.
 - ♦ Facilitate 'warm handoffs' between high schools and colleges to ensure that youth successfully transition to post-secondary education.
 - ♦ Support efforts to fully fund college for youth in foster care, including basic needs such as housing and food while they are attending.
 - ♦ Support efforts to connect youth with career and technical education programs.
- Desired Outcomes
 - ♦ Increase rates of college graduation by age 23 for youth involved in the child-welfare system from 10 to 36 percent (California's rate for non-foster youth).
 - ♦ Increase college-enrollment rates for high-school seniors involved in the child-welfare system from 29.2 (2021–2022) to 53 percent (California's rate for non-foster youth).
 - ♦ Attain a college persistence rate (the rate at which students return to college at any institution for their second year) for youth in foster care attending community colleges of 67 percent (the current rate for all community college students who persisted from fall to spring at any community college).
 - ♦ Work with Probation, LACOE, and post-secondary education partners to collect baseline data on the college graduation, college enrollment, and college-persistence rates of youth involved in the juvenile-justice system and work on increasing these rates.
 - ♦ Work with the LA Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC) to collect baseline data on the number of youth involved in the child-welfare and juvenile-justice systems enrolled in workforce and/or career training programs and work on increasing the number of youth involved in systems enrolled in these programs.

The John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) and OYC are leading efforts across Los Angeles County to achieve the outcomes above. Given this, and to not duplicate efforts, the ECC will participate in and support the efforts of the OYC's Foster Youth College Advancement Project (FYCAP) that is convened by JBAY.

The ECC and FYCAP have partnered together recently to work towards achieving our collective desired outcomes, including:

- ♦ JBAY, in partnership with DCFS and OCP, developed a Release of Information to facilitate foster youth seniors being connected earlier to post-secondary campus-based support programs (i.e. NextUp, Guardian Scholars) and address

the “summer melt” – when youth may apply and/or enroll in college but do not make it to their first day of classes.

- ♦ DCFS and Probation, in partnership with JBAY and OCP, updated policy and training for social workers and probation officers on the implementation of SB 12 provisions that mandates identification of the person or persons responsible for assisting the child or non-minor dependent with applications for postsecondary education and related financial aid.
- ♦ DCFS, in partnership with JBAY, launched a SB 12 compliance data dashboard and successfully increased compliance countywide from 5.7 percent in February 2024 to 42.4 percent in August 2024.
- ♦ In October 2024, Probation and United Friends of the Children signed an MOU to provide a Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Support Services Pilot to youth who are probation involved. The pilot program will provide a range of support services, activities, and guidance, focused on secondary and post-secondary educational attainment and access, to support the participants’ success. The pilot program will serve 20 youth ages 13 through 18 years old.

The ECC and FYCAP will continue to partner to achieve our collective primary outcomes and desired outcomes to strengthen Post-Secondary Educational Achievement and Workforce Readiness for youth involved in the child-welfare and juvenile-justice systems.