

NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION DATABASE  
(NYTD)

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OUTCOMES FILE  
USER'S GUIDE

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OUTCOMES COHORT #2  
WAVE 1: BASELINE SURVEY

*NDACAN DATASET #198*

*Revised April 1, 2016*



NATIONAL DATA ARCHIVE ON  
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

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NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION DATABASE  
(NYTD)

**OUTCOMES FILE**  
**COHORT #2**  
**NDACAN DATASET #198**

***DATA PROVIDED BY***

CHILDREN'S BUREAU  
ADMINISTRATION ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES  
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## ABSTRACT

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The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) was initiated in an effort to improve outcomes for youth in foster care who are likely to reach their 18th birthday without having found a permanent home. The program provides funding to states to develop and administer programs designed to help ease the transition from foster care to independence.

The law that created CFCIP also required states to develop 1) a system for tracking the services provided through CFCIP, and 2) a method for collecting outcome measures so that the effectiveness of the program can be assessed.

These two components together form the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). The files contain data from all 50 states, as well as from the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

The Services component contains cross-sectional information on the services provided by states under CFCIP and the youth who receive those services. Data are submitted by the states every 6 months on a continuing basis.

The Outcomes component contains the results of surveys conducted with youth to examine certain well-being, financial, and educational outcomes as they get older. The Outcomes File is available from NDACAN as a separate dataset. See our web site for details on the Outcomes File.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SOURCE

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Authors should acknowledge the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect and the Children's Bureau when they publish manuscripts that use data provided by the Archive. Users of these data are urged to follow some adaptation of the statement below.

*The data used in this publication were made available by the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, and have been used with permission. Data from the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) were originally collected by the states and provided to the Children's Bureau. Funding for the project was provided by the Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The collector of the original data, the funder, the Archive, Cornell University and their agents or employees bear no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.*

## PUBLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT

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In accordance with the *Terms of Use Agreement* for these datasets, users of these data are required to provide citations for any published work or report based wholly or in part on these data with the Archive.

# OVERVIEW OF NYTD

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## PURPOSE

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The optimal outcome for children in foster care is permanency – a permanent home, either by reunification with the parents or adoption to a loving family. Some children, especially those who enter foster care when they are older, never find a permanent home. Each year, about 10% of children who exit foster care are discharged due to having reached the state’s age limit for eligibility. These children are at particular risk for negative outcomes. Emancipated foster care youth encounter homelessness, incarceration, poor educational outcomes, lack of health insurance, unemployment, unplanned parenthood, and poverty at much higher rates than other children.

In 1999, the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act (42 USC § 677) was enacted. The goal of the Chafee Act is to support such youth by providing states with flexible funding for the design and administration of programs that will:

- (1) identify children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age and to help these children make the transition to self-sufficiency by providing services such as assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention, training in daily living skills, training in budgeting and financial management skills, substance abuse prevention, and preventive health activities (including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention);
- (2) help children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment;
- (3) help children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age prepare for and enter postsecondary training and education institutions;
- (4) provide personal and emotional support to children aging out of foster care, through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults;
- (5) provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition from adolescence to adulthood;
- (6) make available vouchers for education and training, including postsecondary training and education, to youths who have aged out of foster care; and
- (7) provide the services referred to in this subsection to children who, after attaining 16 years of age, have left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption.

The act also requires the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to collect two kinds of data:

- (1) Information about services and those who receive them, including “the number and characteristics of children receiving services”, and “the type and quantity of services being provided.”
- (2) Outcome data, including “measures of educational attainment, high school diploma, employment, avoidance of dependency, homelessness, nonmarital childbirth, incarceration, and high-risk behaviors.”

These two datasets together constitute the National Youth in Transition Database.

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## GEOGRAPHIC AREA

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NYTD data come from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. However, due to confidentiality issues, Connecticut data are not currently available to the research community.

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## NYTD FILES

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There are two NYTD datasets, one of all youth who receive independent living services using funds provided through the Chaffee Act, and the other for the results of a periodic survey of youth who turn 17 in certain years, along with follow-up surveys at ages 19 and 21.

Data from both populations are collected by the states and submitted to the Children’s Bureau. Although there is some overlap, the two sets of data differ in the number and identity of the cases they cover, and the variables they contain. The number of youth who receive services (Services Population) is much larger than the number eligible to take the Outcomes Survey (Outcomes Population). Only 5% of those who received services are in the Outcomes Population.

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## CONFIDENTIALITY PROTECTIONS

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Because the same youth may appear in NYTD and the AFCARS Foster Care file, and the files can be linked, the same confidentiality protections used in AFCARS are applied to the NYTD files. These are:

- The county FIPS code for the children from counties with fewer than 1,000 records in the AFCARS Foster Care file are recoded to 8 to indicate *not provided for reasons of confidentiality*. This adjustment applies to NYTD element #15, *LCLFIPSSV*, which appears only in the Services file.
- The child’s day of birth (DOB) is recoded to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. This adjustment applies to NYTD element #4, *DOB*.

# THE OUTCOMES FILE

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## COHORTS

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Starting with the 2011 federal fiscal year, and every three years thereafter, all youth who reach their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday in the fiscal year and are in foster care within the 45-day period following their birthday (73 FR 10342) will be eligible for the outcomes survey. Youth who complete the survey will be followed-up two and four years later – at ages 19 and 21 -- with the same survey. Below is the schedule for outcomes data collection through the year 2020.

Fiscal Year	Cohort	Wave	Data Collected
2011	#1	1	Baseline Outcomes Survey (Age 17 in FC)
2012	-		
2013	#1	2	Age 19 Follow-up Survey
2014	#2	1	Baseline Outcomes Survey (Age 17 in FC)
2015	#1	3	Age 21 Follow-up Survey
2016	#2	2	Age 19 Follow-up Survey
2017	#3	1	Baseline Outcomes Survey (Age 17 in FC)
2018	#2	3	Age 21 Follow-up Survey
2019	#3	2	Age 19 Follow-up Survey
2020	#4	1	Baseline Outcomes Survey (Age 17 in FC)

## THE THREE WAVES

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### WAVE 1 BASELINE POPULATION AND COHORT:

**Baseline Population.** All foster care youth who turn 17 in the baseline year are in the baseline population. All youth in the baseline population are required to be contacted and asked to complete the NYTD outcomes survey. Demographic data for all baseline youth will be recorded in the Wave 1 file, regardless of whether they respond to the survey. This allows comparison of demographics of responders to non-responders.

**Cohort.** The Cohort is a subset of the Baseline Population. To be in the Cohort, a youth must meet the following conditions:

- a) Youth is in the Baseline Population
- b) Youth is in foster care on the day of the survey
- c) Youth participated in the survey
- d) Youth completed the survey within 45 days of her/his 17th birthday
- e) At least one answer to Elements 37-58 is a valid answer other than "declined" or "not applicable" or all values are missing

All youth in the cohort are eligible for the age 19 followup.

### WAVE 2: TWO-YEAR FOLLOW-UP.

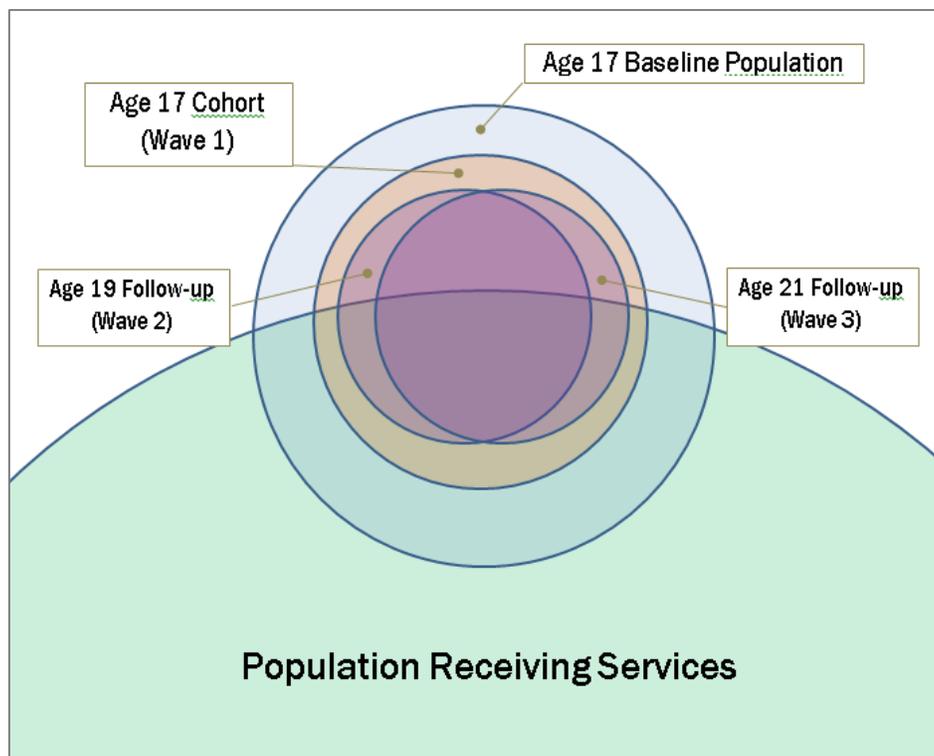
Youth in the cohort receive a follow-up survey during the 6-month reporting period that contains their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. For the FY2011 cohort, this survey was conducted in FY2013, and the results are included in this version of the dataset.

**Sample States.** For the 2 and 4-year followup surveys, states are allowed to survey a random sample of the wave 1 cohort. States that take this option have a value of 1 for the variable *SampleState*. Youth who are in the sample are denoted as such in the variable *InSample*. Only youth in the sample – and all those from non-sample states – are eligible for the age 19 followup survey (*Elig19*=1).

### WAVE 3: FOUR-YEAR FOLLOW-UP.

Youth in the cohort receive a second follow-up survey during the 6-month reporting period that contains their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. The survey questions are the same for both follow-ups. Youth who were eligible for the Wave 2 survey at age 19 are eligible for the Wave 3 survey, even if they did not respond to the Wave 2 survey.

**FIGURE 1: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN WAVES:**



## DATA COLLECTION

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For the Baseline survey, results are reported to the Children’s Bureau at 6-month intervals. The “A” period covers the first 6 months of the fiscal year (October through March); the “B” period covers the second 6 months (April through September). The Baseline Survey is administered during the 45-day period following the youth’s 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. If a child’s birthday occurs during the last 45 days of the “B” period, the state still has 45 days to collect the data. If the survey is administered after the end of the fiscal year, the data will be reported along with the “A” period data for the following year. This means that the full complement of baseline data will not be complete until after the May 15 deadline for submission of the “A” period file for the following fiscal year.

## SAMPLING

For the Baseline population, no sampling is done. The Baseline population consists of *all* youth in foster care at any point during the 45-day period beginning on their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The Cohort is a self-selected, non-probabilistic sample of youth in the baseline population. Because youth are not selected randomly, there is no guarantee that the Cohort is representative of the Baseline population (i.e. 17-year-old kids in foster care).

Once the Cohort is selected, probabilistic sampling *may* be used to determine the two follow-up populations (at 19 and 21 years of age). Sampling is done once, and the same sample is used for both follow-up surveys.

The NYTD regulations specify the following regarding the sampling frame, sampling method, and sample size (73 FR 10371 §1356.84):

*(b) The State agency must select the follow-up sample using simple random sampling procedures based on random numbers generated by a computer program, unless ACF approves another sampling procedure. The sampling universe consists of youth in the baseline population consistent with 45 CFR 1356.81(b) who participated in the State agency's data collection at age 17.*

*(c) The sample size is based on the number of youth in the baseline population who participated in the State agency's data collection at age 17.*

*(1) If the number of youth in the baseline population who participated in the outcome data collection at age 17 is 5,000 or less, the State agency must calculate the sample size using the formula in appendix C of this part, with the Finite Population Correction (FPC). The State agency must increase the resulting number by 30 percent to allow for attrition, but the sample size may not be larger than the number of youth who participated in data collection at age 17.*

*(2) If the number of youth in the baseline population who participated in the outcome data collection at age 17 is greater than 5,000, the State agency must calculate the sample size using the formula in appendix C of this part, without the FPC. The State agency must increase the resulting number by 30 percent to allow for attrition, but the sample size must not be larger than the number of youth who participated in data collection at age 17.*

Appendix C can be found at <http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/45/1356/appendix-C>.

No state had more than 5000 youth in their cohort, so the Finite Population Correction (FPC) applies to all states.

## SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Under NYTD rules, states have the discretion to choose the methods used to administer the outcomes survey to youth (e.g., in person, via the Internet or over the phone) provided that the survey is administered to the person directly. No one can answer for the youth, nor can data from other sources be used to answer questions. Participation in the survey is completely voluntary on the part of the youth.

## RESPONSE RATES

The overall response rate (the number of youth who completed the survey divided by the number in the baseline population) for the Cohort 2 (FY2014) baseline survey was 69%. This is a significant improvement over the 54% response rate for the Cohort 1 baseline survey. Response rates varied dramatically by state, perhaps reflecting variations in data collection procedures.

For Wave 1, the response rate is the number of youth in the Cohort divided by the number in the Baseline Population.

**TABLE 1: RESPONSE RATES BY STATE: COHORT 2, WAVE 1**

StFIPS	State	In Cohort	In Baseline	Response Rate
1	Alabama	220	358	61%
2	Alaska	49	65	75%
4	Arizona	87	616	14%
5	Arkansas	141	211	67%
6	California	2,461	4,130	60%
8	Colorado	261	365	72%
9	Connecticut	275	331	83%
10	Delaware	67	84	80%
11	District of Columbia	56	85	66%
12	Florida	498	799	62%
13	Georgia	487	626	78%
15	Hawaii	43	59	73%
16	Idaho	47	63	75%
17	Illinois	495	784	63%
18	Indiana	440	523	84%
19	Iowa	394	438	90%
20	Kansas	384	470	82%
21	Kentucky	511	619	83%
22	Louisiana	276	300	92%
23	Maine	51	67	76%
24	Maryland	392	431	91%
25	Massachusetts	666	816	82%
26	Michigan	568	698	81%
27	Minnesota	174	314	55%
28	Mississippi	88	163	54%
29	Missouri	417	677	62%
30	Montana	52	76	68%
31	Nebraska	202	236	86%
32	Nevada	132	167	79%
33	New Hampshire	54	90	60%
34	New Jersey	223	328	68%
35	New Mexico	44	57	77%
36	New York	498	931	53%
37	North Carolina	165	536	31%
38	North Dakota	60	114	53%
39	Ohio	442	1,010	44%
40	Oklahoma	249	287	87%
41	Oregon	249	370	67%
42	Pennsylvania	752	752	100%
72	Puerto Rico	242	257	94%
44	Rhode Island	113	170	66%

StFIPS	State	In Cohort	In Baseline	Response Rate
45	South Carolina	194	237	82%
46	South Dakota	52	57	91%
47	Tennessee	500	589	85%
48	Texas	1,117	1,384	81%
49	Utah	226	281	80%
50	Vermont	41	55	75%
51	Virginia	238	413	58%
53	Washington	349	414	84%
54	West Virginia	317	368	86%
55	Wisconsin	344	427	81%
56	Wyoming	67	77	87%
<b>Avg Across Cases:</b>		<b>16,470</b>	<b>23,775</b>	<b>69%</b>
<b>Avg Across States:</b>				<b>73%</b>

## ANALYTIC CONSIDERATIONS

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*RecNumbr* is the encrypted child identifier. This ID is only guaranteed to be unique within a state, so *RecNumbr* must always be used in combination with the state ID when counting or otherwise analyzing particular children.

To facilitate working with *St-RecNumbrs*, NDACAN added the derived variable *StFCID* to the dataset. *StFCID* is the concatenation of *St* and *RecNumbr*. For example, when *St* = “CA” and *RecNumbr* = “123456789012”, then *StFCID* would be “CA123456789012”.

A *StFCID* is unique within a wave. A *StFCID -Wave* combination is unique in the entire longitudinal file. The current file has only the first wave. The final file will have three.

Another advantage of using *StFCID* is that it is present in each of the four linkable files listed below, and with the same name.

### LINKING TO OTHER FILES.

The variable *RecNumbr* is an encrypted version of the child’s unique identifier used by the state agency. The ID may go by different names in the various linkable files. These are:

- NYTD Outcomes File: *RecNumbr*
- AFCARS Foster Care File: *RecNumbr*
- AFCARS Adoption File: *RecNum*
- NCANDS Child File: *AFCARSID*

The child identifier is encrypted for all these datasets, but is but is consistent across datasets, so it serves as an indicator of the same child across datasets and across years. Be careful, though. These commonalities are generally reliable, but are not applicable to all states in all years. Contact NDACAN Support for further information regarding which states can be linked across which years.

## DATA FILE INFORMATION

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NDACAN Dataset #198 contains data for the first waves of outcome data for the FY2014 Cohort (Cohort 2). The variable “Wave” distinguishes between the waves. Wave 1 (Wave=1) includes all youth in the baseline population, regardless of whether they responded to the survey. Waves 2 and 3 will include only youth who were in the FY2014 cohort and were eligible for the follow-up.

### SEE THE NYTD CODE BOOK FOR VARIABLE INFORMATION

Technical support for this dataset is provided by NDACAN. Send inquiries to [NDACANSupport@cornell.edu](mailto:NDACANSupport@cornell.edu)