

Appendix A. Data and Methods

Data Collection

Phone Interviews

We conducted 60-minute phone interviews with leadership and staff from the 25 programs in our national scan. For all interviews, we first obtained oral consent to participate in and record the conversation. We spoke with one or two program directors and/or managers (i.e., mid-level administrators) from each program. We developed a semistructured interview guide according to our research questions that asked staff about

- background on the program and the organization in which it may be nested;
- eligibility criteria, capacity, characteristics of program participants (e.g., foster care history, parenting status, educational status, etc.);
- housing and supportive services offered;
- evaluation readiness; and
- staff reflections on the programs.

Nineteen programs were identified as fitting the PSH model, regardless of whether they specifically targeted young people formerly in foster care. After conducting an initial scan, we narrowed our focus to conduct full site visits to 8 out of the 19 programs that fit the PSH model. Below we describe the selection criteria used to choose these 8 programs. We aimed to select programs that demonstrated variation in these criteria to capture the different ways PSH programs can function.

Strategy and Sampling Criteria for Site Visit Selection

- **Local housing affordability.** A reoccurring theme we heard during our phone interviews was that it is difficult for young adults to transition out of PSH programs because housing costs are too high. In some places, especially urban coastal cities, it is much cheaper and appealing for young people to stay in their (subsidized) units for many years rather than move out on their own, even if they no longer need the supportive services.
- **Housing type.** PSH programs vary in the type of housing they provide. Some offer clustered housing (i.e., young people live in a single-site housing complex or campus), while others offer scattered-site housing (i.e., young people live in individual apartment buildings throughout the jurisdiction).

- **Fidelity to PSH model.** Programs vary in how closely they follow the PSH model.
- **Connection to the child welfare system.** Programs may be operated by a child welfare agency, receive referrals directly from a child welfare agency, or have no connection to a child welfare agency.
- **Coordinated entry versus open referrals.** Programs receive youth referrals from various sources. Some are required to use coordinated entry systems, while others use open referral systems. We explored whether the coordinated entry system affects a PSH program model.
- **Location.** We selected programs in the Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Midwest, and West for geographic diversity. This offered a mix of economic and political contexts in which programs operate.

Full Site Visits

We conducted full site visits from March 2020 through April 2021 with eight programs (table A.1). During the visits, we conducted 60-minute interviews with key staff, including program directors and/or managers; case workers; employment, education, or other program specialists; and data managers (if applicable). We also held 90-minute focus groups with youth participants at each program ($N = 35$ young people). For all interviews and focus groups, we first obtained oral consent to participate in and record the conversations. Young people were compensated for their time. We completed one of the visits in-person, before COVID-19 pandemic-related travel restrictions were in place, and conducted subsequent site visits using the video-conferencing platform Zoom. The in-person site visit was conducted across a few days, whereas virtual site visits were conducted across several weeks. It is possible that the different modes of site visits affected data collection. One example is that it may have been more difficult to recruit young people for virtual focus groups than in-person focus groups. We discuss other potential effects in the limitations section.

We used the same semistructured interview guides as in our phone interviews. Although we discussed most program features in our guide with each staff member interviewed, we also targeted questions to staff that were most relevant to their position. For example, we targeted questions about program participant needs and engagement to case managers and questions about any data-tracking systems to data managers.

We developed and used semistructured focus group guides to ask young people about their experience applying to and enrolling in the program, the types of supportive services the program offers and their experience with these services, their relationship with program staff, and their overall experience with and thoughts on the program.

TABLE A.1

Programs in Our Full Site Visits (N = 8)

Program	Location
ACENDA	New Jersey
CHRIS 180	Atlanta, Georgia
First Place for Youth	San Francisco, California
Independence Place	Cleveland, Ohio
Louis Nine House	Bronx, New York
PATHS	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
SCO Family of Services	Queens, New York
Transitions	Albuquerque, New Mexico

Note: Click program links for more information.

Analysis

Coding and Analytic Approach

Interviews and focus groups with program staff and participants were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using NVivo software. We used the interview and focus group guides to develop *a priori* codes that guided analysis and identified emergent themes. The codes were used to organize data into key features that described the programs (e.g., housing type, type of supportive services offered). During our descriptive analysis, themes emerged from narratives around consistent topics among respondents and several different staff positions and programs.