

# DISADVANTAGED YOUTH: ONGOING PROGRAM EVALUATION EFFORTS

The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation at DHHS' Administration for Children and Families studies human services programs, many of which serve disadvantaged youth. We are implementing rigorous research and evaluation projects to better understand how to serve youth.

## TEEN RELATIONSHIPS, PREGNANCY AND PARENTHOOD

- We are supporting grantees in evaluating innovative approaches to decreasing homelessness for youth with foster care experience. For more information on evaluations related to decreasing youth homelessness, [click here](#).
- We are evaluating the effectiveness of programs that provide education and services to support healthy relationships for high school aged youth. Learn more about the programs on our [project page](#).
- We're evaluating the effectiveness programs that aim to reduce teen pregnancy rates, including programs to reduce repeat pregnancies for teen mothers. Programs provide education on both abstinence and contraceptive use, and educate youth on topics to prepare them for adulthood. Learn more about the teen pregnancy prevention efforts on our [project page](#).
- We're examining the impact and implementation of evidence-based home visiting programs funded by the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, many of which primarily serve young pregnant women and mothers (ages 15-25). Learn more about the project on our [project page](#).



**In 2013, there were  
over 270,000 births  
to teens ages 15-19  
in the  
United States.<sup>2</sup>**

## CHILD WELFARE 1

- We're planning a second round of evaluations of programs that aim to improve outcomes for youth who age out of the foster care system using rigorous, random assignment designs. Learn more about the evaluations on our [project page](#).

### Percentage of Children in Foster Care over the Age of 10

46% of children in foster care are ages 10+.  
This equals 180,000 youth.



Source: Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2015). Foster Care Statistics 2013. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau.

- We are supporting evaluations of innovative programs to decrease youths' long-term foster care involvement. The project integrates implementation science and rigorous evaluation to build an evidence base for child welfare policy and practice. Learn more about the project on our [project page](#).
- We are identifying research gaps in understanding how to serve LGBT youth and parents in the child welfare system. For a brief on this issue, [click here](#).

## EMPLOYMENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

- We are investigating the effectiveness of a job training and internship program for disadvantaged and at risk youth. These programs recognize a vital need for skilled workers in the economy and offer these youth the opportunity to obtain occupational and other skills. To learn more, view an implementation report on our [project page](#).
- As part of an evaluation of subsidized and transitional employment approaches for low-income populations, we are assessing whether a cognitive behavioral approach improves outcomes for youth being released from juvenile justice facilities in Chicago. Learn more about how cognitive behavioral approaches impact you by visiting our [project page](#).
- We're disseminating information on what we know about the effectiveness of programs that assist youth who are aging out of the foster care system to find employment and further their education through internships. Learn more about efforts to assist these youth on our [project page](#).

**In 2011, 1.48 million youth ages 12-29 received TANF benefits. <sup>1</sup>**

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- We are analyzing how toxic stress impacts youth development and outcomes. Through this work, we've published four reports proposing a self-regulation framework, examining the relationship between stress and self-regulation, reviewing the strength of the evidence for interventions that promote self-regulation, and translating the evidence base for programs and practice. Learn more about the impact of toxic stress on youth on our [project page](#).
- We have compiled research on the unique human service needs of LGBT youth, and identified next steps in research. In particular, we examined homelessness and sexual risk behavior among LGBT or questioning youth, youths' service preferences and experiences in runaway and homeless programs or sexual health programs, and strategies for providing services to LGBT youth. Learn more about the unique needs of LGBT youth on our [project page](#).
- We have developed a programmatic framework to support disadvantaged youth on their trajectory to self-sufficient adulthood and to avoid long term dependence on government assistance. The development of this conceptual framework could be applied to existing or new ACF programs to improve the well-being of at-risk youth and increase their ability to become self-sufficient adults and avoid long-term reliance on public assistance. Learn more about the project on our [project page](#).

Self-Identified Sexual Orientation of Homeless Youth per YouthCount! Survey



Source: Mary Cunningham, "Homeless LGBTQ Youth." (2014)

**In 2014, 9% of youth ages 16-19 were disconnected from education and the work force.<sup>3</sup>**

**For more-detailed information, please visit:**

[acf.hhs.gov/opre](http://acf.hhs.gov/opre)

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Sources:

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ofa/10th\\_tanf\\_report\\_congress\\_appendix.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ofa/10th_tanf_report_congress_appendix.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr63/nvsr63\\_02.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr63/nvsr63_02.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/tables/ed5c.asp?popup=true>