



23-1835

DATE: February 6, 2024 (Item No. 25)

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Daniel Little, Director, Social Services Agency

SUBJECT: Transition Age Youth Annual Report Fiscal Year 2022-2023

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive Transition Age Youth Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 from the Social Services Agency, Department of Family and Children's Services.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no fiscal implications associated with receiving this report.

CONTRACT HISTORY

The County of Santa Clara's (County) Social Services Agency (SSA), Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) has contracts with the following agencies in support of transition age youth (TAY) services and programs:

Transitional Housing Options:

- DFCS has memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the Bill Wilson Center (BWC) to provide Transitional Housing Placement Programs (THPP), which provide placement opportunities for current foster youth, ages 16 and 17, to transition to independence in safe environments. The BWC has been allocated the 29 slots.
- Programs licensed by the state include (1) the BWC, and (2) First Place for Youth to provide Transitional Housing Placement Plus Foster Care (THP+NMD), which is a program to help non-minor dependents (NMD), ages 18 through 20 years, to transition into independence through education and employment training opportunities while maintaining a safety net of support while in secure housing. There are 91 slots allocated.
- MOUs with (1) the BWC and (2) First Place for Youth, to provide Transitional Housing Placement Plus (THP-Plus), including two to three years of supportive housing and case management for emancipated foster youth, ages 18 through 25. There are 154 slots allocated, which includes 109 to BWC and 45 to First Place for Youth.
- DFCS has memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the Housing Community Development (HCD), California Department of Social Services to add 12 additional THP-Plus housing slots to serve parenting foster youth and their families. The

participants are provided a monthly supplemental allowance to support imminent needs such as fees for school, transportation, employment, food, and other supports. The HCD also provides a Housing Navigator co-located at the Hub serving NMDs ages 18-24. The Housing Navigator Program helps NMDs and former foster youth identify housing and supportive services. The HCD also subsidized and leveraged housing rates amongst THP-Plus providers to afford adequate housing for participants. Participants received an increased housing rate from \$2,400 to \$3,789 while parenting received \$2,800 to \$4,619.

Independent Living Program (ILP):

- Operational agreement with the BWC to provide ILP case management services including day-to-day operations of the Hub, ILP wellness, and therapeutic supports for current and former foster youth, ages 16 to 21, who were in out-of-home placements between their 16th and 19th birthdays, or in a legal guardianship established with relatives at any age, or with non-relatives after age eight.

Education Services and Programs:

- Agreements with Law Foundation of Silicon Valley and Morrissey-Compton Educational Center to provide the Educational Rights Project (ERP) for dependent youth. The mission of ERP is to ensure foster youth are in appropriate educational placements and receive appropriate support to maximize their academic potential.
- MOU with the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) provides high school foster youth with the Education Focused Child Family Team Meetings, which seek to improve their educational outcomes, as well as the NMD Youth Education Scholars (YES) Scholarship Program aimed at supporting NMDs with completing their post-secondary education.
- MOU with SCCOE and the Juvenile Probation Department (JPD) to utilize the FosterVision database in order to access educational progress and placement information for foster youth.
- MOU with SCCOE Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP) to expand the Educational Services Unit to include six education managers aimed at providing comprehensive educational support to foster youth and children ages 0-21.
- MOU with HopSkipDrive, a transportation company aimed at transporting children and youth to their school of origin, summer activities, and visitation.
- MOU with iFoster to provide transition age foster youth ages 18 through 24 the opportunity to serve as AmeriCorps members providing service to their peer current and former foster youth ages 16 through 24 in the areas of high school/college attainment, workforce development, and food security. The AmeriCorps program provides income to the peer supporters in the form of service stipends for education and earns them valuable service experience.

Co-located Partners at The Hub Youth Center:

- Interagency Agreement (IA) with Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital System (SCVHHS) Ambulatory and Community Health Services to provide medical mobile-health services program for foster youth.
- IA with SCVHHS Behavioral Health Services Department (BHSD) through a contract with the BWC to provide drop-in and outpatient treatment counseling service at The Hub.
- IA with SCVHHS Behavioral Health and the Office of Supportive Housing (OSH) to provide Uplift bus passes to homeless youth.
- Operational Agreement with Teen Success to provide reproductive health and information.
- Agreement with Law Foundation of Silicon Valley relating to Legal Advocates for Children and Youth (LACY) to provide legal advocacy and preventative identity theft services.
- MOU with Opportunity Youth Academy (OYA) to provide high school education services at The Hub.
- MOU with Pacific Art League to provide free visual, writing, and performative art opportunities and instruction.
- MOU with the California Youth Connection (CYC) to provide youth with opportunities to become involved in legislative change and gain leadership skills.

LGBTQ Services:

- MOU with Family Builders, Youth Acceptance Project, to provide LGBTQ support to children, youth, and families participating in child welfare services.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION AND BACKGROUND

The attached annual report provides an overview of programs and services delivered to TAY foster youth and young adults ages 16 through 25 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023. The goal of these programs and services is to assist TAY in achieving self-sufficiency through training in independent skills.

This report was originally scheduled for presentation to the Children, Seniors, and Families Committee in December.

Report Highlights

- During FY 2022-2023, 53 TAY exited the Extended Foster Care (EFC) program when they turned age 21. There were demonstrated measures of success for this group in achieving goals towards independence: 89% earned an education diploma or certificate; 92% had secured a stable housing arrangement; 81% had some means of financial support through work or other assistance; 100% had health care insurance; and 85% were connected to family, friends, or mentors.
- DFCS continues its partnership with the SSA's Department of Employment Benefits and Services (DEBS) and the Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) to provide year-round employment opportunities for foster youth ages 16 through 24 through the Intern & Earn Program. The Intern & Earn Program 1.0 afforded 118 TAY job

positions to learn and demonstrate employment skills.

- DFCS continues to partner with DEBS and ORE to launch the Intern & Earn Program 2.0, a six-month internship for foster youth ages 18-24 who have exited foster care. The program served two cohorts with 15 young adults and each participant was placed in the private business sector, the County, or non-profit employers in positions that matched their career paths. The fourth cohort took place from August 2022 through January 2023 followed by the fifth cohort from January 2023 through June 2023. The program aims to increase the potential of foster youth by improving employment readiness, developing soft skills and exploring career interest aligned with their post-secondary education.
- DFCS held its sixth annual secondary and post-secondary graduation celebration for foster youth. This event was another success with 62 youth recognized for achieving an important milestone. It was hosted by DFCS, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Silicon Valley, BWC, Pivotal, and SCCOE. The celebration was held at Great America and graduates received a special gift bag from a community partner.
- Transitional Housing Placement Programs continues to provide TAY with stable housing. Community agency housing providers reported an average monthly participation of 27 TAY ages 16 and 17, and 290 TAY ages 18 through 25.
- DFCS, together with OSH and the Santa Clara County Housing Authority, received 25 Housing Choice Vouchers for the Foster Youth to Independence Initiative (FYI). In FY 2022-2023, 53 additional vouchers were awarded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Youth eligible for a voucher were identified through the County's coordinated assessment system. The initiative is based on the Home, Together: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness by funding for targeted populations, such as foster youth ages 18-24.
- BWC was selected as the contracted provider of ILP. During FY 2022-2023, 283 TAY participated in the program using referral services for housing, employment, and health and wellness programs. Approximately 70% of eligible youth are participating in services.
- DFCS continued its collaboration with the Office of the County Executive and ORE, to support the Guaranteed Basic Income Program for former foster youth aged 24. Fifty young adults were identified to participate in the second cohort. DFCS supported efforts to locate these young adults and determine eligibility. These former foster youth receive \$1,200 monthly for one year.
- DFCS, in partnership with SCCOE continues to provide six co-located education managers assigned to children and youth 0-5 and K-12 to ensure their academic and special education needs are met. In FY 2022-2023, the education managers served a total of 450 unduplicated children and youth with the completion of an Education Tier Assessment. The assessment is a multi-dimensional tool that compiles information regarding school mobility, academics, engagement, and behavior. The compilation of the assessment categorizes the student's needs into a tier level which assists in

determining the level of interventions the student may receive.

- The Hub, in partnership with John Burton Advocates for Youth, LACY, volunteers, BWC, and a certified Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) provider, supported TAY youth with filing taxes and claiming the California Earned Income Tax Credit. The program aimed to support tax returns to current and former foster youth. The VITA program has proven to be a success and has evolved into a model program adopted by child welfare agencies in the state of California. The California legislature also established a refundable Foster Youth Income Tax Credit of up to \$1,000 for current and former foster youth ages 18-25.
- DFCS continues to meet with OSH, Facilities and Fleet Department (FAF), Central Services, and staff from the Hub site developer Abode Housing Development to finalize programmatic plans for the new Hub to be located at 1510-1540 Parkmoor Avenue in San Jose. A series of five-part workshops dedicated to foster youth began on July 13, 2022 and ended on November 16, 2022. The goal of the workshops was to receive input pertaining to the Hub exterior design, and interior including amenities and activities.
- The expected date of completion for the new Hub is set for 2025; the Hub transition and relocation process will begin September 2024.

CHILD IMPACT

The recommended action will have a positive impact on the **Safe and Stable Families** and the **Youth Feel Valued in the Community** indicators by providing the Children, Seniors, and Families Committee (CSFC) with an annual report update relating to the services provided to foster care TAY aimed at enhancing well-being and permanency while assisting them with developing daily living skills to achieve self-sufficiency prior to aging out of foster care.

SENIOR IMPACT

The recommended action will have no/neutral impact on seniors.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The recommended action will have no/neutral sustainability implications.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

The FY 2022-2023 annual report relating to TAY will not be received as a consequence of negative action.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

The Clerk of the Board will follow the usual process for this type of legislative file.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Transition Age Youth Annual Report FY 22-23
- Transition Age Youth Annual Report Presentation