AB 995: Reducing Homelessness Among Former Foster Youth

March 5, 2019
Agenda

• Introductions
• Prevalence of Homelessness Among Former Foster Youth
• Transitional Housing Program for Former Foster Youth (THP-Plus)
• AB 995 Provisions & Companion Budget Proposal
• How You Can Help
• Q & A
Today’s Presenters

• Amy Lemley
  Executive Director at John Burton Advocates for Youth
• Alexis Barries
  Youth Advocate at John Burton Advocates for Youth
• Wes Saver
  Policy Advocate at John Burton Advocates for Youth
• Jane Schroeder
  Policy Manager at First Place for Youth

Tara Gamboa-Eastman
  Office of Assemblymember Phil Ting
Extended foster care has improved outcomes for older youth in California

Each additional year in extended foster care...

**Increased the Odds of:**
- Completing school completion by 8%
- Enrolling in college by 10-11%
- Having money in their bank account
- Being employed

**Decreased the Odds of:**
- Being homelessness or couch surfing by 28%
- Being arrested by 41%
- Being convicted by 40%
- Experiencing an economic hardship by 12%
- Becoming pregnant by 28%

Source: CalYOUTH Study at age 21
Yet, homeless remains a serious issue

Age 17-19: 1 in 7 youth
13.6% experienced an episode of homelessness between age 17 and 19.

Age 19-21: 1 in 5 youth
18.9% experienced an episode of homelessness between age 19 and 21

Former foster: 1 in 3 youth
36% have experienced an episode of homelessness prior to entering a transitional housing program (THP-Plus)

Sources: Cal YOUTH Study at age 19 and 21; Annual Report for THP+FC & THP-Plus
A Youth’s Perspective

Alexis Barries, former foster youth and current member of California’s Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council
THP-Plus

• Est. 2001 through AB 427, implemented in 2005; sponsored by California Youth Connection

• Only housing program for former foster youth

• Can access for up to 24 months or 36 months in some counties if enrolled in school

• 54 THP-Plus Providers
• Operatizing 75 programs in
• 47 counties
THP-Plus provides a wide range of services

- Safe, Affordable Housing
- Tenancy & Independent Living Skills
- Educational Advocacy and Support
- Physical and Mental Health
- Job Readiness
THP-Plus provides these services in three different settings:

- **Scattered Site**: 71%
- **Single Site**: 17%
- **Host Family**: 12%
Who is eligible for THP-Plus?

- Former foster youth between age 18 to 24
- Must have been in foster care on or after their 18th birthday
- Can access for up to 24 months
- In 27 counties, youth can access an additional 12 months or up to age 25 if they are enrolled in school (SB 1252)

List of 27 counties: https://www.jbaforyouth.org/thp-plus-extension/
How many former foster youth are assisted by THP-Plus?

In FY2017-18, THP-Plus provided housing and supportive services to **1,946 youth** and their **498 children**.

Demographics of THP-Plus Participants:

- **Gender**:
  - Male: 36%
  - Female: 64%

- **Ages**:
  - Ages 18-20: 7%
  - Ages 21-24: 93%

- **Ethnicity** (9% of the total):
  - Hispanic: 45%
  - Multi-racial: 37%
  - Black: 33%
  - White: 27%
  - Native American: 2%
  - Asian: 1%

Source: 2017-18 THP+FC/Plus Annual Report
THP-Plus serves particularly vulnerable youth

- Youth who Don’t Qualify for Extended Foster Care: 7%
- Custodial Parents: 39%
- Individuals with Disabilities: 20%
- Youth from Juvenile Probation System: 6%

Source: 2017-18 THP+FC/Plus Annual Report; Cal YOUTH Study at age 19
How is THP-Plus funded?

$34.9 million annual budget

Like all child welfare programs, THP-Plus was part of 2011 Realignment

All 58 counties have an allocation

Source: CDSS CFL 11/12-18, page 25.
How is THP-Plus administered?

Most counties contract with a non-profit service provider; THP-Plus rate is included in contract.

County contracts with provider → Provider services to youth → Provider invoices county → County submits claims to CDSS

For a full list of providers by county, follow this link:
https://www.jbaforyouth.org/thp-plus/

For a full list of rates by county, follow this link:
THP-Plus has consistently helped youth achieve positive outcomes

- Monthly income by **23%**
- Employment rate by **14%**
- Access and utilization of public benefits by **17%**
- Reduction in homelessness:
  - **36%** of youth experience homelessness prior to entering THP-Plus
  - **6%** of youth exit THP-Plus from homelessness or unstable housing

Source: 2017-18 THP+FC/Plus Annual Report
Bill Author & Budget Champion: Assemblymember Phil Ting

- Represents the 19th District (Westside of San Francisco, Broadmoor, Colma, Daly City and South San Francisco)
- Four decades of public service
- Distinguished legislative track record:
  - Help thousands more students obtain Cal Grants to attend college
  - Increase assistance provided to pregnant and parenting foster youth
  - Increase healthy food access through expanding urban agriculture and food stamp use at farmers’ markets
  - Ensure safe and equal restroom access and tax fairness for the LGBT community
  - Protect the voting rights of people living with disabilities

- Thank you Assemblymember Phil Ting!
AB 995 Provisions

- Expand the existing THP-Plus program
- Close an eligibility loophole that bars youth from accessing THP-Plus services
- Foster collaboration between THP-Plus and the local homeless response system
Provision 1: Expand THP-Plus

Currently: $34.9 Million Budget

Proposed: + 5M $39.9 Million Budget
Why propose to expand THP Plus?

Rent for average two-bedroom apartment in California


$1,595 $2,400

50% increase

During this same time, the budget for THP-Plus has remained unchanged
Failure to keep pace with costs has resulted in unmet need

Over half of the THP-Plus programs (66%) that maintain a waiting list had youth waiting for housing;

417 youth and their 104 children were on waiting lists for THP-Plus as of 6/30/18

Source: 2017-18 THP+FC/Plus Annual Report
Youth were unable to access THP-Plus across the state

- **50+ Youth**
  - Los Angeles
  - San Diego
  - Butte

- **20 to 49**
  - Alameda
  - Fresno
  - Kern
  - San Mateo
  - Santa Clara

- **Under 20**
  - Contra Costa
  - Humboldt
  - Imperial
  - Madera
  - Marin
  - Mariposa
  - Merced
  - Nevada
  - San Bernardino
  - San Francisco
  - Solano
  - Stanislaus
  - Tehama

- Remaining counties did not maintain a waitlist or did not have a waitlist.

Source: 207-18 THP+FC/Plus Annual Report
This is particularly true in certain parts of the state, namely Los Angeles County.

Eligible Population

- **2,627** NMDs in Los Angeles County of 7/1/18
- **31.4%** of total NMDs in CA

Available Funding

- **$2,165,106Y** in THP-Plus funding allocated to Los Angeles County
- **6.2%** of state THP-Plus budget

Source: Child Welfare Indicators Project; CFL 11/12-18.
Provision 2: Close an eligibility loophole that bars youth from accessing THP-Plus services

Currently:
18-24 year old former foster youth are eligible if they were in foster care at age 18 or older

Proposed:
18-24 year old former foster youth are eligible if they were in foster care at age 16 or older
Why change the age of eligibility for THP-Plus from age 18 to 16?

- Recognition that legal permanence does not equal housing stability
- Remove disincentive to permanence
- Alignment with state and federal programs
Eligibility for THP-Plus should be changed to align with other transition-age youth programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program for Transition-Age Foster Youth</th>
<th>Age in foster care to qualify</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chafee Education and Training Voucher</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent student status (financial aid)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Adoption Assistance Program</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardianship Assistance Program</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Living Skills Program</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Next Up</td>
<td>16</td>
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*Other than extended foster care, THP-Plus is the only program that requires a youth to be in foster care at age 18*
Youth who achieved permanence between 16 and 18 are unable to access THP-Plus

48% of THP-Plus programs reported that they were unable to serve youth who achieved permanence at 16 or 17

104 homeless former youth and their estimated 27 children

Source: 2017-18 THP+FC/Plus Annual Report
Provision 3: Foster collaboration between THP-Plus and the local homeless response system

Currently:

Proposed:
Continuum of Care (CoCs) & HUDs

Continuum of Care (CoC) Basics

- Administrative entity that receives and administers HUD funding
- Local or regional system – not county-based
- 44 CoCs in California
- Primary vehicle for helping people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness

U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

- Largest funder of homeless assistance programs in the country
How does funding flow from HUD to housing and service providers?

California received over $381 million in HUD funding in 2018
## HUD Housing Administered by Continuums of Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter</td>
<td>A facility where the primary purpose is to provide temporary shelter typically for up to 90 days or until specific goals are accomplished by client</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transitional Housing</td>
<td>Time limited (up 24 months) supportive housing used to facilitate the movement of individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rapid Rehousing</td>
<td>Places priority on moving a family or individual experiencing homelessness into permanent housing as quickly as possible through financial assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Supportive Housing</td>
<td>Combination of long-term housing and intensive (voluntary) services designed for people with disabilities who need support to live stably in their communities</td>
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AB 995 would require an MOU between the County and the CoC

MOU would specify three things:

1. Eligibility Screening
2. Referral Process
3. Intervals of Communication
Budget Proposal: $8 Million (General Fund)

- Expansion of THP-Plus
  - $5 million
- Closing eligibility loophole
  - $3 million
THP-Plus Provider Perspective

Jane Schroeder, Policy Manager at First Place for Youth
AB 995 & budget proposal face considerable challenges

- Instability at the federal creates uncertainty at the state level
- Worthy, competing priorities
- AB 995 will require a budget allocation
Legislative Timeline for AB 995

- Feb 21: AB 995 introduced
- May 31: Last Day for Assembly to pass bills
- Sept 13: Last Day for Senate to pass bills
- October 13: Last Day for Governor to sign or veto
- Bill goes to Governor
- If not vetoed, bill becomes law effective January 1, 2020
Timeline for Budget Process

- Coalition-building and education: March
- Budget Subcommittees: April
- Full Budget Committee: May
- Budget Passage & Implementation: June
How can you help make AB 995 & the companion budget proposal a reality?

• Send in a support letter
• Add your organization’s name to the budget support letter
  • https://form.jotform.com/90525477565163
• Attend and testify at committee hearings in Sacramento
• Meet with legislators in the district
• Encourage foster youth to get involved
• Stay tuned for more work over the spring and summer
Questions or Comments?

To submit live questions, click on the “Questions” panel, type your question, and click “Send”

Contact information:
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