

NYTD FAQ

For a more comprehensive list of NYTD Question and Answers, please refer to [NYTD Questions and Answers](#).

Reporting Requirements

1. Regarding independent living services, do you have any examples of what "other financial assistance" (data element 33) would include?

Other financial assistance" includes any payments made or provided by the County agency to help the youth live independently (other than educational or room and board financial assistance). The definition in the regulation is minimal because we do not believe we could provide an exhaustive list; however, such assistance may include payments for household expenses, subsidized transportation, or payments for business attire for job or college interviews.

2. Please clarify how to report service activities for shared/JPO cases.

Understanding that youth transition in and out of various systems during their time in care, including the juvenile justice system, counties should report all Independent Living services it paid for or provided during the reporting period.

3. Can counties conduct surveys for youth who may be incarcerated?

Yes, ACF wants to know about the "Risk Behaviors" foster care youth are experiencing. Working with corrections treatment staff may be beneficial in getting surveys completed. Completed surveys from incarcerated youth can only help the county/state participation rate.

4. What approach can be used to get surveys completed when youth express feeling overwhelmed by the survey?

The best approach is to get the youth to complete as many questions as they are comfortable and capable of answering. If the youth completing the survey is not possible and an IL Coordinators/staff have a conversation with the youth, they can complete the survey based on what answers IL Coordinators/staff were able to obtain from the youth. ACF does give credit for partially completed surveys.

5. Is it acceptable for the County to "correct" or "clean up" a youth's survey responses before reporting NYTD data to ACF in order to avoid logical inconsistencies in the data file? For example, if a youth answers "no" for element 52 (children) and "no" for element 53 (marriage at child's birth), then can the State report "not applicable" instead for element 53 in the data file?

No. The goal of the youth outcome survey is to collect information that represents the youth's understanding of his/her circumstances and experiences as a whole. To achieve this goal and to preserve the integrity of NYTD survey data, the County may not alter the youth's responses and presume that the youth's response to one question is "correct" and the youth's response to a subsequent question is

"incorrect". Consequently, States may not alter a youth's survey responses without consulting the youth.

6. What is the best approach to getting surveys completed when a youth enters care within a few days of the 45-day window closing?

When preparing for intake of a youth after their 17th birthday and with little time remaining in the 45-day window, it is suggested that the intake process could include the baseline survey. ACF does not offer any leniency regarding the baseline survey timeline.

7. What is the best approach to getting surveys completed when a youth is leaving care within a few days of the 45-day window closing?

When preparing for the discharge of a youth after their 17th birthday and within a short period of time remaining in the 45-day window, it is suggested that the discharge process could include the baseline survey. ACF does not offer any leniency regarding the baseline survey timeline.

8. What is the best approach to getting surveys completed if a youth does not have an MCI#?

A hardcopy survey can be completed for a youth even if an MCI# is not readily available. The focus should be on getting the survey completed timely. The administrative processes of securing an MCI# and/or getting the survey into the system should be a secondary consideration that can be coordinated with appropriate county staff and/or the Help Desk at getnytdpa.org as needed.

9. Over this process, are we producing six reports or 10 reports (two each for 17-, 19-, and 21-year-old) or do we also have to report on youth at ages 18 and 20?

A State is to submit a single data file to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) semiannually comprised of data on all youth in the served population, and if applicable, youth in the baseline or follow-up population. In a year in which data collection is not required on the baseline or follow-up populations (i.e., FY 2012 when the youth in the initial baseline population are 18 years of age), a State must still submit to ACF a data file comprised of youth of any age who are in the served population for a report period.

10. The file is submitted twice in the year. Do we submit information on youth who turn age 17 in the file for the reporting period in which they turn 17 only, or do we submit information on such a youth in both files for that year?

We understand this question to be referring to youth in the baseline population who are being reported for their outcomes in a year in which such data is required. A State is required to collect outcomes data on each 17-year-old youth in foster care within 45 days following the youth's birthday, but not before that birthday. The State must submit this data for the reporting period in which the data was collected and not in both files.

11. Are there youth in the served population who are not (and never were) in foster care?

It depends. Since the served population includes youth who receive independent living services that are paid for or provided by the County agency, the extent to which the served population includes youth who were never in foster care will depend on how States have structured their independent living services programs. For example, a County agency that pays for independent living services to youth in detention, or

a youth in the placement and care responsibility of an Indian tribe, but who were never in the County's foster care system, would be in the served population according to the definition.

12. Are we to collect data only on Independent Living Programs/Services paid by Chafee?

No. A State must collect data on youth who receive independent living service that are paid for, or provided by the County agency for a report period, rather than limiting reporting to those services paid for with Chafee funds. In addition, the State is to collect outcomes data on youth in the baseline or follow-up reporting population regardless of whether such a youth receives independent living services from any source.

13. If a State is not passing Chafee money to Juvenile Justice Services (JJS), but by definition of foster care those youth are part of the foster care population, should those JJS youth who are receiving independent living services through JJS be included?

In general, if the youth is receiving an independent living service that is paid for or provided by the County agency in a six-month report period, the youth is in the served reporting population and the State is required to collect and report information to ACF on those services. The State must report information on the served population regardless of the agency responsible for delivering the service, whether the youth meets the definition of foster care, or whether the service is paid for with Chafee funds specifically.

14. How long do youth need to be in independent living services to be included in the sample?

Every youth who receives at least one independent living service that is paid for or provided by the County agency in a report period is included in the served population; there is no minimum time that a youth must be receiving an independent living service to be included in the served population. Youth who are in the baseline or follow-up populations do not need to be receiving independent living services at any time to be included in these populations. Statistical sampling may not be used to collect data for either the served population or the baseline population. However, at State option, sampling, may be used to determine the follow-up population after the State has surveyed the entire baseline population.

15. How long do youth need to be in foster care to be included in the baseline population?

There is no minimum time that a youth has to be in foster care in order to be part of the baseline population. However, the youth must be in foster care at some point during the 45 days following their 17th birthday, as described in 45 CFR 1356.81(b), to be included in the baseline population.

16. Is a youth who enters care after his/her 17th birthday in the baseline population? If yes, do we have 45 days to collect these data? When does the 45-day timeframe start and stop?

If the youth enters foster care within 45 days following his or her 17th birthday in a year in which data collection is required on the baseline population, the youth is in the baseline population (45 CFR 1356.81(b) and 1356.83(a)(2)). The 45 days start on the youth's 17th birthday; therefore, the data must be collected within 45 days after the youth's 17th birthday.

17. Is a youth who exits care prior to his/her 17th birthday, but turns 17 during the Federal fiscal year (FFY) part of the baseline population?

No. To be included in the baseline population, a youth must have been in foster care at some point during the 45 day period following his/her 17th birthday during the specified reporting year.

18. What do we do with youth who enters care at age 17 years, 30 days, and exits care at age 17 years, 32 days, (in care for 2 days during the 45-day window)?

This youth, as described, is a part of the baseline population if he or she was in foster care at some point during the 45 days after his/her 17th birthday in a specified year, regardless of the amount of time the youth spends in foster care. The State must attempt to collect the required data during the time the youth is in foster care.

19. Does the youth have to be in foster care when they receive an independent living service?

No. For NYTD data collection purposes, the served population includes any youth who receives at least one independent living service during a reporting period regardless of foster care status.

20. How do we determine what age groups should be considered in the served population? Do we determine the served population as those defined as eligible for services under Chafee?

For NYTD, the State does not determine the served population based on youth age or eligibility for Chafee services. Rather, the served population includes any youth who receives at least one independent living service during a reporting period regardless of any other characteristic. We acknowledge that States may restrict eligibility for independent living services to particular age groups. For the purposes of collecting data on the served population, however, we do not make a distinction between a youth that is eligible or ineligible for a State's Chafee services.

21. Please clarify what constitutes a "service." If a foster parent helps a youth write a resume, would that count as providing the independent living service "career preparation" (data element 23)? Would it make a difference whether a foster parent spent two minutes explaining the purpose of a resume or three hours helping a youth write a resume? Does the service have to be curriculum-based?

Each State determines what services are included in their Independent Living Program and we have not regulated a minimum timeframe or curriculum-basis for reporting a service to NYTD. Therefore, to the extent that foster parents, as agents of the County agency, provide training or other services described in the independent living services data elements (data elements 20-33), regardless of whether these services are curriculum-based or simply provided in the home by a foster parent, States may report "yes" for data elements 20-33 as appropriate.

22. If a youth receives independent living services paid for or provided by a County agency, and then moves to another State and receives independent living services from that State's CFCIP agency, during the same reporting period, which State reports on this youth?

Both. A youth is in the served population if he/she receives an independent living service paid for or provided by the County agency during the reporting period. If two States served a particular youth during the same reporting period, they both would report on all the relevant data elements for the particular youth including basic demographics, characteristics, and independent living services received as appropriate. It is possible for a single youth to be in more than one State's served population.

23. How would a State report on youth who move from their home State after being counted in the home State's baseline population?

The home State is responsible for administering the youth outcomes survey to youth in the follow-up population regardless of where the youth resides. We anticipate offering technical assistance on strategies States may employ to assist in locating youth after they leave foster care.

24. If a youth in foster care exits to adoption after the State has included that youth in outcomes data collection as a member of the baseline population, then does that State need to survey the youth again? Is the youth included in the follow-up population?

Yes, a youth that participates in outcomes data collection as a member of the baseline population will be a member of the follow-up population, regardless of foster care status. The follow-up population is not limited to youth who are still in foster care, or who are receiving independent living services in the State at ages 19 or 21. A State must collect outcomes data from a youth in the follow-up population during the reporting period in which the youth turns age 19 and 21.

25. If a State is unable to survey a youth in the baseline population within 45 days of the youth's 17th birthday, but the State still collects and reports outcomes data to ACF, does that youth become a part of the follow-up population?

No. The definition of the follow-up population only includes 19- and 21-year-old youth who participated in outcomes data collection as members of the baseline population. Because such a youth would not be a member of the follow-up population, the State is not required to report further outcomes information on the youth to the NYTD.

Data Elements

1. Since age is a primary variable determining the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) reporting populations, what is the implication of an incorrect date of birth (data element 4) that, once corrected, would include or exclude a child from one of the reporting populations? How would this impact data element 35?

A State that reports an incorrect date of birth for a youth risks committing errors in the State's data file submission and, consequently, could be subject to penalties for noncompliance.

2. If a youth in the served population was an adjudicated delinquent (data element 17) during the reporting period, but not at the time the data was captured, is that youth classified as delinquent?

Yes. States report in data element 17 whether or not a youth in the served population has ever been an adjudicated delinquent by a State or Federal court of competent jurisdiction.

3. For data element 21 (academic support), does it count as a "service" every time a foster parent helps a youth with homework?

Yes. If a foster parent provides academic support as described in data element 21 to assist a youth in completing high school or obtaining a GED during the reporting period, a State may indicate "yes" for data element 21.

4. Regarding data element 24 (employment programs or vocational training), I understand that we are only to report on the job programs that the County agency places/finds for a youth, but doesn't this preclude any data on those youth who find work on their own? Without also tracking this, we cannot relate their positive outcomes to these jobs.

Data element 24—employment programs and vocational training—captures information on the County agency's efforts to build a youth's skills for a specific trade, vocation, or career through classes or on-site training. This includes employment programs a County identifies for the youth such as apprenticeships, internships, or summer employment programs. Jobs secured by the youth alone are not included in the data element definition because they are not part of a service provided by the County agency. The youth outcomes survey, however, does capture information on a youth's employment status (data elements 37 and 38) regardless of whether the County agency has assisted the youth in preparing for or securing employment.

5. If a caseworker talks to a youth about college, does this count as the independent living service "post-secondary education support" (data element 22)?

It depends. Post-secondary educational support must involve a service aimed at assisting a youth to enter or complete college. To the extent that a caseworker's conversation with a youth involves assisting that youth to enter or complete college, a State may indicate "yes" for data element 22.

6. Regarding data element 49 and the definition of homelessness, what is an "adequate" place to live?

We define "homeless" as having "no regular or adequate place to live." This definition includes situations where the youth is living in a car, on the street, or staying in a homeless shelter.

7. For data element 51 (incarceration), should we ask if the youth was ever convicted?

No. Data element 51 indicates whether the youth in the baseline population has ever been confined in a jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility in connection with allegedly committing a misdemeanor or felony regardless of conviction. The youth's conviction is beyond the scope of this data collection.

8. For element 55 (other health insurance coverage), what is the meaning of the response option "not applicable"? What specifically is the distinction between the meanings of response options "no" and "not applicable" for data element 55 for a youth that reports that he/she is receiving Medicaid (data element 54)?

We erred in listing "not applicable" as a valid response option for data element 55. In the regulation, we explained that a response option of "not applicable" for data element 55 (health insurance type - medical) meant a youth was participating in Medicaid and no other third party pays coverage for health insurance. We believe that if a youth reports "yes" for the survey question related to data element 54 (Medicaid) and "no" for data element 55 (health insurance type - medical), then this is sufficient information to identify youth who solely participate in Medicaid for health insurance coverage. The valid response options for data element 55 are "yes," "no," "don't know," or "declined."

9. For elements 56 through 58, what does the response option "not applicable" mean?

Like all the youth outcome survey questions, the State will report the youth's response to the question relevant to data elements 56 (health insurance type - medical), 57 (health insurance type - mental health) and 58 (health insurance type - prescription drugs). For these elements, "not applicable" means that the youth did not indicate having health insurance coverage in data element 55 (other health insurance coverage).

10. What is the difference between the response options "college" and "post-secondary education or training" for data element 18 (educational level)?

"Postsecondary education or training" refers to any post-secondary education or training, other than an education pursued at a college or university. "College" refers to completing at least a semester of study at a college or university.

11. If a youth agrees to complete the NYTD survey but then ends up declining to answer every question, should the State report "youth declined" or "youth participated" for data element 34 (outcomes reporting status)?

A youth in the baseline or follow-up population who does not provide a valid answer to at least one NYTD survey question is not considered to have "participated" in outcomes data collection. A State is to report "youth declined" for data element 34 (outcomes reporting status) in this scenario.