



# Ohio Reach Postsecondary Designation Virtual Overview Conference



**Department of  
Higher Education**

Ohio Reach Postsecondary Designation

**Ohio**

**Children's**

**Alliance**

*Leading change for child  
and family service providers*





Ohio Reach, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) and The Ohio Children’s Alliance (OCA), is accepting applications from accredited colleges, universities, and Ohio Technical Centers to provide supportive services to students with a history in foster care, kinship care, or out-of-home placement. The purpose of this directive is to establish supportive criteria, hereafter named the “Ohio Reach Postsecondary” Designation, necessary for Ohio’s public and independent colleges and universities and technical centers to be recognized as being supportive and inclusive of foster care-connected students. The Ohio Reach Designation Advisory Committee will evaluate applications and recommend institutions in Ohio to earn the Ohio Reach Designation.

- Designations are awarded for a three-year period.
- Designated institutions become eligible for micro-grants, free training series, and a support network.
- Ohio Reach and ODHE market designated institutions and provide materials to students who are making decisions regarding postsecondary options.

# Outcomes surrounding critical life domains for Ohio's Former Foster Youth



## 2023 OHIO PROFILE TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

The transition from adolescence to adulthood is a pivotal developmental stage as young people learn the skills needed to be healthy and productive adults. This process can be complicated for youth with foster care experience. Here's what we know about the experiences of these youth in Ohio.



**147,143 or 24%**  
of United States' foster care population was ages 14+ in 2021  
Down from **34%** in 2006



**7,389 or 29%**  
of Ohio's foster care population was ages 14+ in 2021  
Down from **35%** in 2006

Fostering Youth Transitions 2023, The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Multiple recent studies demonstrate the challenges that youth face after leaving foster care, with specific data showing that Ohio youth are facing outcomes worse than their peers in many states. Ohio ranks in the bottom 10% of the U.S. for Former Foster Youth who are employed, enrolled in school, or have obtained a high school diploma/GED.

Ohio ranks in the bottom 10% of the U.S. in child welfare outcomes		
	OH	US
Those who attained a High School Diploma/GED	60%	70%
Those who were employed	46%	57%
Those who were enrolled in school	12%	28%
Those who experienced incarceration	37%	19%
Bottom 20%		
Those who experienced homelessness	37%	29%
Those who have a connection to an adult	81%	87%

Measuring Transformation, Children's Defense Fund Ohio and The Annie E. Casey Foundation, April 2022

# Outcomes surrounding critical life domains for Ohio's Former Foster Youth

THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

## Young Adult Outcomes by Age 21\*

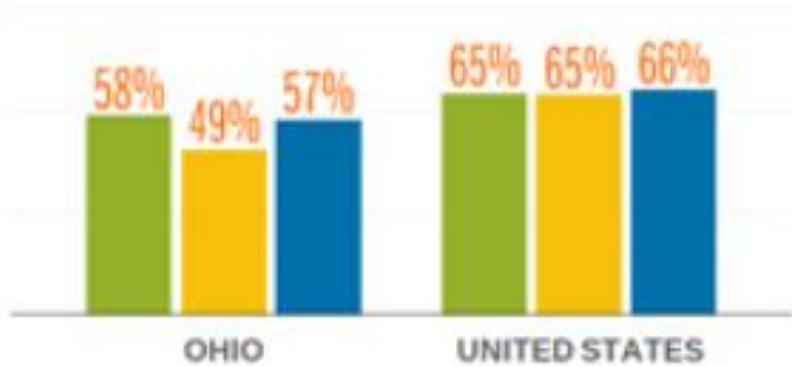
Research shows that young people who have experienced foster care have worse outcomes than their peers in the general population across a variety of service categories — from education and employment to housing and early parenthood. Examining data on these outcomes in Ohio is important in efforts to improve the practices, programs and policies that help ensure these young people have the relationships, resources and opportunities they need for well-being and success.

■ Age 21 in 2015   ■ Age 21 in 2018   ■ Age 21 in 2021

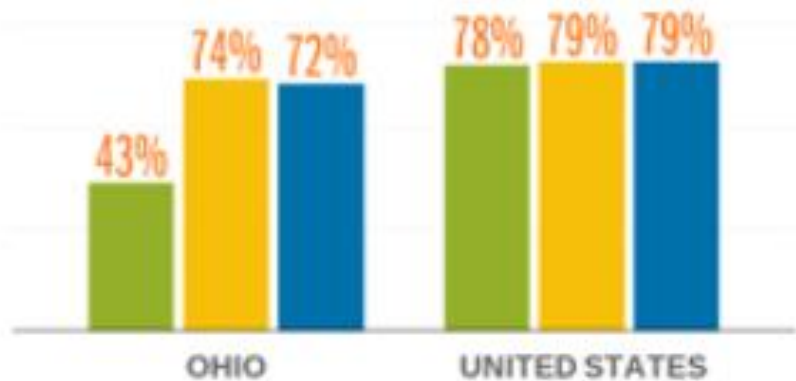
Postsecondary Enrollment



Stable Housing



High School Diploma/GED+



\*Outcomes data are from surveys of three groups of young people who experienced foster care. The groups reached age 21 in 2015, 2018 and 2021. When fewer than 10 youth are reported in a category, N.A. is used. See *Fostering Youth Transitions: Source Notes* for additional detail. *Fostering Youth Transitions* data analysis was provided by Child Trends.



THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION  
www.aecf.org

Fostering Youth Transitions 2023, research conducted by The Annie E. Casey Foundation revealed that in 2021, only 4% of Ohio youth were receiving financial assistance for their education.

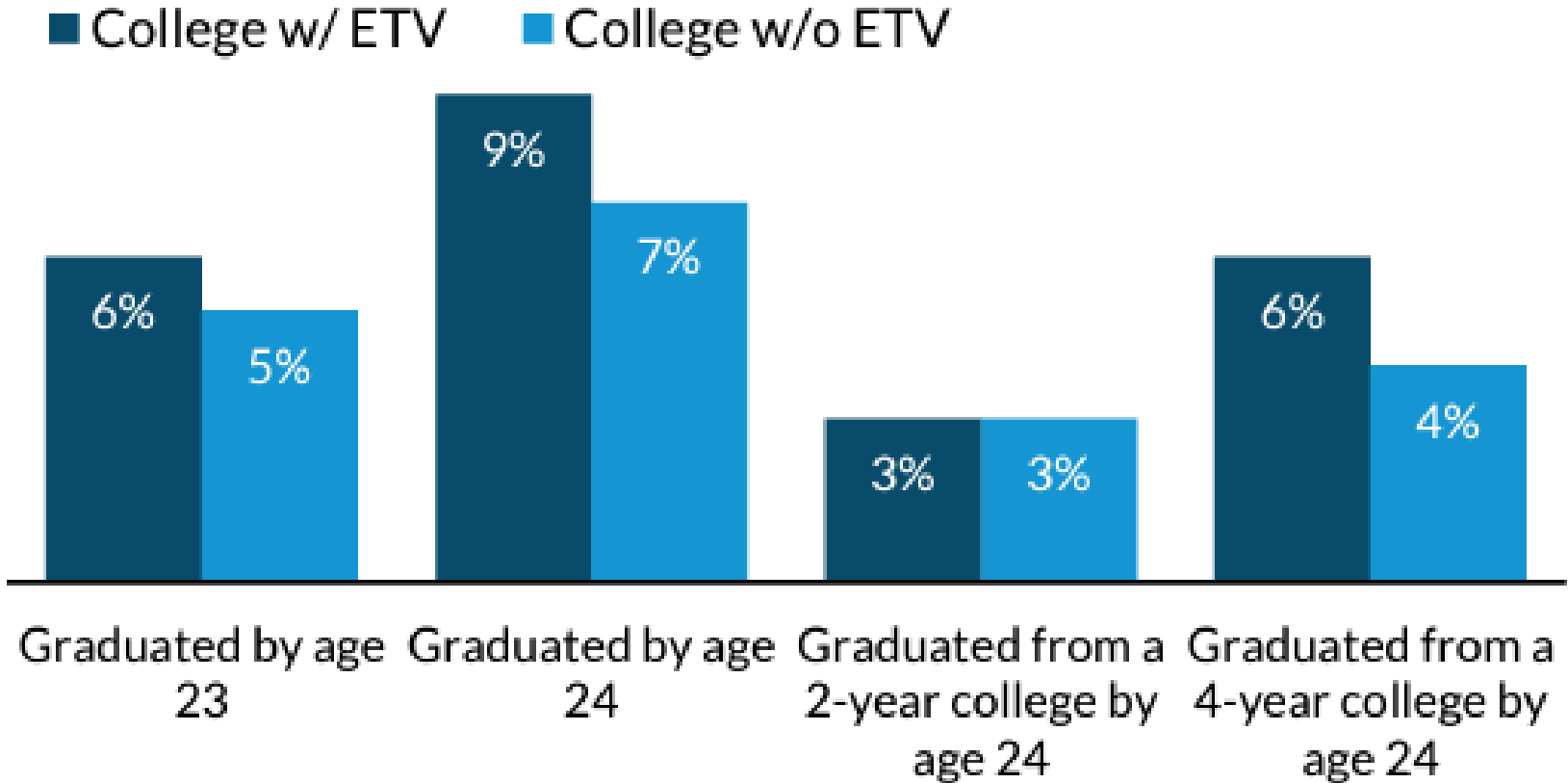
In both 2018 and 2021 research showed that 12% of former foster youth were enrolled in postsecondary education at the age of 21.

Additional research shows that, when surveyed, the majority of teens in foster care want to attend postsecondary education, though few succeed.

# Outcomes surrounding critical life domains for Ohio's Former Foster Youth

FIGURE 4

Graduation Rates for Young People Eligible for ETVs



URBAN INSTITUTE

Research by the Urban Institute revealed graduation rates for Ohio former foster youth who were attending college. Even amongst students who do enroll in postsecondary education, graduation rates are still low.

Our goal with this Designation is to make postsecondary education more accessible to students and to change these outcomes.

# Designation - Campus Structure



## Required:

- Designated Liaison/Point of Contact
- "Champions" in Various Campus Departments
- Ability to connect students to resources (community and campus)
- Community Building Opportunities for Students
- Targeted Outreach
- Expanding the eligibility of on-campus resources
- Staff training on working with former foster youth
- Succession/Transition Planning (For Liaisons)
- Data collection
- Mentorship Program

## Not Required, but Encouraged:

- Year-Round Housing
- Career Counseling (In addition to regular offerings)
- Cohort Structure
- Tutoring Resources Specifically for FFY
- Community Leadership Opportunities
- Life Skills Learning Opportunities
- Transition Services

# Designated Liaison



Each institution must determine a designated Single Point of Contact for foster care-connected students. The Campus Liaison will serve as the institution representative for all Ohio Reach initiatives. This is the most important person for an Ohio Reach program, they serve as the main contact both for students and other organizations. Depending on work loads, institutions are also able to use a committee structure or use student interns to help with planning.

# Campus Champions



Institutions must identify Champions in a minimum of three campus departments. Campus Champions will serve as the main Point of Contact within their department. Recommended departments include: Academic Advising, Housing, Financial Aid, Student Support Services, etc.



# Community Resources



The Designated Campus Liaison must have the ability to connect students to resources, both on-campus and community. These resources should include: ETV Funding, Bridges, housing resources, and food and other community resources. To best provide these resources, the Liaison should maintain or have access to a local resource guide. Liaisons should use these resources to ensure that all foster care-connected students have their basic needs, including food and housing, met. The Designated Campus Liaison should strive to provide a “warm hand-off” to both on- and off-campus resources to support students.

# Community Building Opportunities



Community building opportunities must be offered to students. This can include social dinners, “Lunch N Learn” opportunities, group outings, study groups, life skills trainings, etc. Students report that they often feel alone when starting postsecondary education. These community building opportunities allow them to feel supported and to build their own family.



# Targeted Outreach

Institutions must engage in targeted outreach to students, with efforts made to identify and support them.

Targeted outreach can include:

- on-campus marketing
- financial aid outreach
- partnerships with local child welfare agencies
- application questions
- speaking in classes



# Expanding the Eligibility of On-Campus Resources

Many universities offer a variety of resources for students, including, but not limited to: group counseling, additional tutoring services, career counseling, and mentorship. Efforts should be made to expand the eligibility of restricted programs to include foster care-connected students, or to connect Ohio Reach students with these resources.

# Staff Training



Ohio Reach will offer free, online training and resources to Campus Liaisons. These trainings will cover topics from working with alumni of foster care to best practices for on-campus resources. Each designated Campus Liaison must commit to attending at least one virtual meeting per quarter, to total four per year. These trainings will also be open to other institutional staff or to institutions who are interested in applying for the Ohio Reach Designation in the future.

# Succession/Transition Planning



Each Institution must have a transition plan in place for the Campus Liaison, to ensure continuity of services for students if the role is vacated. In addition, as Campus Champions transition, the Liaison should work within the departments to find suitable replacements.

# Data Collection



Campus Liaisons must collect non-identifying student data. A form will be provided to each Liaison for data collection. Liaisons will be required to submit the completed data form, with non-identifying student information at the close of each semester.

Student Demographics						Outcomes				
Semester	Non-Identifying Student ID	Birth Month & Year	Gender	Ethnicity	Race	Continuing enrollment	Dropped Out	Graduating at semester end	GPA	Accessed additional resources during semester
Semester, Year	XXXXX	MM/YYYY	Drop Down: Female/Male/Nonbinary/Not Listed/Prefer Not to Disclose	Drop Down: Hispanic/Not Hispanic	Drop Down: Alaskan Native or Native American/Asian/Black/ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander/ Multiracial/ White/Other/Prefer Not to Disclose	Drop Down: Yes/No/Other	Drop Down: Yes/No/Other	Drop Down: Yes/No/Other		Drop Down: Yes/No/Other
Fall 22	11111	06/2001	Female	Hispanic	Multiracial	Yes	No	No	3.85	Yes
Fall 22	11112	04/1999	Male	Not Hispanic	Black	Yes	No	No	2.6	No
Fall 22	11113	10/2004	Prefer not to disclose	Not Hispanic	White	Yes	No	No	1.4	No
Fall 22	11114	08/1990	Nonbinary	Not Hispanic	Black	No	No	Yes	4	Yes



# Mentorship

Each university program must offer a Mentorship program to Ohio Reach students. Like Community Building Opportunities, Ohio Reach students report that Mentorship is one of the most important resources, giving them the support and feeling of security that they need.

There are many different mentorship models, and institutions are encouraged to find the best fit for them and their students.

- group mentorship
- family style mentorship
- peer mentorship
- regular check-ins
- referrals to existing mentorship programs



# Additional Program Elements



Not Required, but Encouraged:

- Year-Round Housing
- Career Counseling (In addition to regular offerings)
- Cohort Structure
- Tutoring Resources Specifically for FFY
- Community Leadership Opportunities
- Life Skills Learning Opportunities
- Transition Services

# Meeting the Criteria



These 10 criteria are designed to provide effective support to students, while allowing institutions to design programs that fit student needs and institutional capacity.

Ohio Reach is looking forward to seeing the different ways that institutions are able to offer services to students, and encourages institutions to develop unique programming. Institutions are able to form or expand on partnerships with community organizations, multiple campus departments, or other student support programs.

# Regional Campuses



Many institutions operate regional campuses or programs. Institutions are able to either apply as one entity, or separately per campus. If completing an application including multiple campuses, students in all campus locations must be able to access comprehensive resources that meet all 10 criteria. All funding awarded will be awarded to the main campus, to be distributed to regional campuses as needed.

# Funding



As part of the Ohio Reach Designation, institutions are being offered awards to support programming. Funding will be awarded with the Designation and paid out April-June 2024.

Awarded funds are for the full, three-year period.

Awarded funds can be used for program expenses, materials, and events.

At this time, our goal is to award Designations to as many eligible institutions as possible. Awards will be a minimum of \$2,000 per institution.

Questions?



# Thank you!



[OhioReach@ohiochildrensalliance.org](mailto:OhioReach@ohiochildrensalliance.org)

<https://ohioreach.org/>

<https://highered.ohio.gov/educators/grant-resources/ohioreach>