



Tips and Reminders

NYTD (National Youth in Transition Database)

PURPOSE: To provide direction regarding the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) data collection process and system.

BACKGROUND:

- In 1999, Congress established the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act (referred to as Chafee moving forward) requiring states to assist youth in transitioning from out-of-home care to self-sufficiency. This law provides states with flexible funding through a federal grant. With the money, states carry out life skills teaching to youth who are in foster care and those who are transitioning from foster care. As part of the requirement for receiving the funding, states must provide an annual report on how the funding is being used. In Missouri, the majority of the funds are used to support contracted agencies (Chafee and Transitional Living) in providing the life skills teaching. Older Youth Transition Specialists (OYTS) monitor the service provision under these contracts.
- As part of the Chafee law, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), our federal Child Welfare agency, is required to have a data collection system to track the life skills services provided to youth and to have an outcomes data collection process that measures states' success in preparing youth for the transition to independence. To meet this requirement, ACF created the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). The [Final Rule](#) (the policy to support the law) was published in February 2008 and states began the data collection known as NYTD in October 2010.
- There are two parts to NYTD – life skills **service** collection and reporting (what services are being provided to the youth while in care) AND life skills **outcomes** collection and reporting (what impact the services being provided or provided had on the youth).

Life Skills Services:

Life skills reporting occurs on all youth age 14 and older in foster care, adopted or obtained legal guardianship after 16 and opted to receive services, and youth who are receiving aftercare services and the Educational Training Voucher (ETV).

States collect and report basic demographic data on each youth and the life skills services provided to them in thirteen broad categories:

- independent living needs assessment
- academic support
- post-secondary educational support
- career preparation
- employment programs or vocational training
- housing education and home management training
- budget and financial management
- health education and risk prevention
- family support and healthy marriage education
- mentoring
- supervised independent living
- room and board financial assistance
- education financial assistance

Life skills services may be provided for collection and reporting in the following ways:

- the Chafee provider if the youth is enrolled.

- through the CD Contracted TLP provider if the youth is enrolled through CD.
- through the Children’s Service Worker if the youth is not enrolled.

Life skills are reported monthly via FACES under Case Management on the Individual Life Skills Progress Form (CD95).

Services reported include all life skills services regardless of who provided the services i.e. resource parent, Court Appointed Special Advocates, and other life skills teaching organizations.

Life Skills Outcomes:

States conduct a baseline survey of youth in foster care at age 17 and conduct a follow-up survey with these youth at ages 19 and 21 to collect and report information about youth outcomes. All States collect and report outcome information on a new cohort of youth every three years. This survey is what we typically think of when we refer to NYTD and we call this survey the NYTD survey. Information for the outcomes reporting – survey – is obtained directly from the youth and not from other agency databases. The survey results offer ACF, CD, and other state and local agencies the opportunity to obtain important information on how Missouri youth fare once they leave care. Each youth who completed at least one question on the NYTD Outcomes [Survey at age 17](#) is a participant in the NYTD Baseline Population. At ages 19 and 21, baseline participants become follow-up participants and are required to complete the NYTD Outcomes [Survey at age 19](#), and again at [age 21](#). Those who participated in the data collection at age 17 (baseline population), but not 19 (follow-up population) for a reason other than being deceased or incapacitated, remain part of the follow-up population at age 21.

There are 6 outcomes measured in the survey:

- financial self-sufficiency
- experience with homelessness
- educational attainment
- positive connections with adults
- high-risk behavior
- access to health insurance

By utilizing resources available through the Division, such as Chafee, MO HealthNet and the community, youth who are currently in out-of-home care or left the legal custody of the Division will be:

- better prepared to meet the challenges they face on their road to self-sufficiency and independence
- will understand the importance of their role and personal responsibility to self and community
- will be more aware of community resources and how to access them if needed
- will be able to develop their own support system to enable them to transition successfully to independence

COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING STANDARDS:

- To comply with NYTD standards, States’ data submissions must meet certain file format requirements and data accuracy standards. States must also meet a youth participation rate standard for the NYTD outcomes survey. States that do not comply with these data standards may be penalized between 1-5% of their annual Chafee allotment. The State agency must report outcome information on at least 80% of the youth who are in foster care and at least 60% of the youth who are not in foster care (discharged) on the date of outcomes data collection. These percentages apply to outcomes data collection for the follow-up population. States will also report financial and service assistance they provide, including assistance for education, room and board and other aid. Data on our state’s independent living services will be collected continuously. States report on two reporting periods based on the Federal Fiscal year: May 15th for the period of October 1-March 31 and November 14th for the period of April 1-September 30.
- Measures must be taken to ensure contact information is available for youth as they exit care and when changes occur. E-mail is the preferred method to distribute the survey for youth no longer in care so data collection can be automated as possible. Staff will need to assist youth in obtaining an e-mail address which can be obtained for free.
 - The CD-93, Older Youth Program referral form, includes a line for e-mail addresses of the worker and placement provider, information as to whether the youth is receiving adoption or guardianship subsidy, and

inner-transfer information to be used by the Older Youth Transition Specialists.

- The CD-94, Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, has a place for the e-mail address of the youth as well as reinforce contact information of three permanent connections for youth. **The youth with team members' assistance should identify at least 3 individuals who can be used as supports, mentors, and emergency contacts for permanent connections.** This is a mandatory field. Email addresses are to be listed on the address section for FST members. There is a section to list community and agency involvement for the youth.
- The youth's email address should be added on the Case Member screen.
- The CD-95, Individual Life Skills Progress Form, incorporates the NYTD service elements in a narrative fashion of the youth's Individualized Action Plan goals. The Likert Scale measures based on the three components of "Got it," "Working on it," and "Needs assistance." The form allows documentation of other services provided in addition to the youth's individual action plan goals.
- Update School Year information each year in September or as changes occur on the Education Screen for all youth. This is a requirement of the federal reporting and a penalty can be enforced if a certain percentage is not updated.
- Surveys must be completed within 45 days of the youth turning 17. A monthly listing will be sent out from Central Office via email of all youth turning 17 within the month to aid in survey completion. However, this listing may not be reflective of all youth coming into care or leaving care on or around their 17th birthday, therefore staff may **not rely** completely on this listing. Staff must be aware of youth they are working with eligible to complete the survey and use other means to track youth coming into care or exiting care in addition to the listing, such as the NYTD Survey Online Response Tracking Screen or Outlook Calendar. Staff will receive worker alerts.
- The NYTD Online Response Tracking screen will also track the reason for non-participation to assist with the monitoring of survey completion. Options for non-completion of the survey include: Parent Declined, Youth Incapacitated, Youth Incarcerated, Runaway/Missing, Unable to Locate, Declined, and Death. If the survey is not completed because of one of these options, information will need to be entered into the NYTD Survey Online Response Tracking Screen. If a youth is not willing to complete the survey, "Declined" must be entered for the youth on the NYTD Survey Online Response Tracking Screen from the dropdown menu. If the youth is unable to be located, "Unable to Locate" must be selected from the dropdown menu. For youth in care, information on non-survey completion will be the Children's Service Worker's responsibility. For youth no longer in care in the 19/21 year old cohort, this will be the OYTS responsibility. This information must be entered prior to the end of the reporting period.

TIPS ON ENGAGING YOUTH:

Early and ongoing engagement:

- while still in care is essential to provide ongoing independent living services and support as well as participation in the NYTD survey
- is a key to obtaining the “youth voice”, as youth are eager to tell their story and to be heard
- provides an opportunity for youth to provide feedback regarding key survey items
- allows CD to establish a positive relationship with the youth, which boosts future response rates and participation in services

Support youth engagement by:

- providing helpful and meaningful transition services prior to and after they age out of care
- minimizing agency staff turnover
- obtaining the most recent contact information
- connecting with youth through social media
- providing various methods for youth to contact you once they are no longer in care
- providing cell phones with texting capacity
- contacting youth at different times of day and weekends
- utilize reminder prompts to youth to complete the survey
- assisting youth in completing the survey
- showing respect for their views and keeping them engaged

Gather information prior to exit from care by:

- establishing rapport before youth exit from care
- guiding youth to think about where they might go and who they might stay in touch with by requesting names and contact information of biological parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, friends prior to exiting care
- combine with permanency or transition planning (Florida found 101 youth through contacts youth provided at exit interview)

When surveying youth, it is a great opportunity to not only inquire information but to share information about resources that the youth may be eligible for that may have come about after the youth left care or the youth may not have been made aware of them while in care such as the Educational Training Voucher Program or Mo Healthnet.

NOTE: The [NYTD exit handout](#) is part of the exit packet.

TALKING POINTS ON NYTD TO USE WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH YOUTH:

It is important to spend some time with the youth engaging him or her in the process of completing the survey and explaining the reason for it. This will assist with survey completion at age 19 and 21. An overview can be found [here](#) and in [CD10-18](#). Here are a few talking points:

- So, how **are you** doing? **Really**, how are you doing?
- Do you remember taking the NYTD Survey when you were 17? We are **asking all foster youth/ alumni youth who took the survey at age 17 to take it again** to update your information regarding some important areas, like school, employment, your support system, etc.
- The survey results become part of a **nation-wide information gathering project called National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) for all youth who were in foster care**. Across the country, information from young people is being gathered to see how child welfare can improve services.
- Also, the Children's Division wants to ensure that young people received life skills teaching/independent living services. The surveys will tell us if we need to do more and what we need to do to make our services better.
- The survey **does not ask about your parents or your family**. It doesn't ask why you went into foster care. It will ask about employment, school housing, and finances.
- The information is confidential and will be combined with answers from other young people around the country and looked at as a whole. Your personal information will not be studied separately.
- I will ask you the questions for the survey and help you with any questions if you need help.
- Children's Division will contact you **again when you are 19 and 21 through emails and those you list as a permanent contact** to ask you to fill out another survey. These surveys are to get an idea of how young people are doing once they have left the system.

PREPARING FOR NYTD:

- Participants in the NYTD at 19/21 Survey include only those youth who participated in the NYTD at 17 Survey. They are referenced as the "NYTD follow-up population".
- Surveys must be completed within the reporting period that the youth's 19th/21st birth date falls, which is either between October 1 – March 31 or April 1 – September 30.
- NYTD is not just data collection! Rather, NYTD serves as an opportunity to make sure every youth has what he or she needs to succeed as they transition to adulthood. Consider NYTD as an opportunity to stay connected with youth so no one falls through the cracks! Build Partnerships for the data collection effort. Partners include:
 - Youth
 - Child welfare agency workers/supervisors
 - Foster parents, kin and other associates
 - Court
 - Chafee
- Preparing partners:
 - Develop and disseminate information about NYTD
 - Present the information at meetings
 - Send a birthday card and brochure to youth 2 weeks before youth's birthday explaining NYTD and the importance of their participation
 - Use data to share the importance of the information – to be counted, you have to be counted!
- Think about how your agency will use the data collected. For example, share the findings with all stakeholders in the form of presentations and brief reports to strengthen programs.
- Identify cross-system implications and encourage collaboration with relevant agencies (e.g. mental health system, workforce development agency, etc.)

Maximizing Response Rates/Understanding Motivators for Youth Participation:

- Research on survey participation demonstrates that people are motivated to respond to surveys for three

primary reasons:

- **Altruism:** wanting to be helpful to the researcher or others who may benefit from the survey results
 - **Survey Related Reasons:** Interest in the topic, liking the interviewer or organization sponsoring the survey
 - **Egoistic:** Likes completing surveys
- Many 19/21-year-old former foster youth may be willing to participate in NYTD out of interest in seeing the survey help other foster youth and/or because they have an interest in hearing about the obstacles and successes of other youth from foster care. To the extent that agencies can communicate the importance of the NYTD survey in helping other youth and make the survey sound interesting, youth will be more likely to participate in baseline and follow-up surveys.

SURVEY REQUIREMENTS AND OPTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING:

Once a youth's name displays on the NYTD Survey Online Response Tracking Screen in FACES, a survey may be completed in a few ways:

At age 17:

- In person with the Children's Service Worker and entered by the Children's Service. The Children's Service Worker may enter the survey at the time of completion in FACES or upon return to the office or may submit the survey by mail to the FACES Help Desk.
- Completed electronically by the youth via a link in an email. If this option is utilized the youth's case manager should meet with the youth to discuss the purpose of the survey and answer questions. To send an email to the youth with the survey link, the case manager must add/verify the youth's email address on the Case Member screen. Once an email is added/verified to the case member screen, the email displays on the NYTD Survey Online Response Tracking (NYTD Tracking) screen next to the youth on the listing. The NYTD Tracking screen includes a 'Send Email' button. Once the case manager verifies the email is correct on the NYTD Tracking screen, the 'Send Email' button is selected to generate an email to both the youth and the case manager. The email is sent to the case manager as verification the email went through. However, if any individual accesses the NYTD Tracking screen and selects "Send Email" this action will send an email to the youth and the individual completing the action. The email contains a link that when selected will open up the NYTD Older Youth Online Survey specific to the youth. Once the youth completes the survey and clicks submit, the survey responses are saved.
- Surveys must be completed within 45 days of the youth's 17th birthday in order to be compliant.

At age 19 or 21:

- Completed electronically by the youth within the six month reporting period from web-based link sent to the youth's email account.
- Completed electronically by the youth within the six month reporting period from a letter sent to youth's last known address containing information on an electronic link to complete survey.
- Paper copy sent to youth and completed by the youth within the six month reporting period and sent to FACES Help Desk for entry in postage paid envelope. For Cohorts age 19 and 21, this is sent on the first day of the reporting period and will be resent every 30 days until a survey is entered into FACES or the end of the reporting period is reached. The survey is sent automatically to the address on the **Contact Screen** in FACES). The sent date is recorded in the paper copy sent category.
- Paper copy completed by youth during home/office visit and entered by youth Children's Service Worker.

Completed surveys may be mailed to:

Children's Division
FACES Help Desk
1621 E. Elm Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101

- If you are mailing the survey to FACES Help Desk to be entered into FACES, check to make sure the youth has signed and dated the survey on the day of completion.
- Surveys are not mailed to youth in 17 year old cohorts, as they will be surveyed in person by the Children's Service Worker.

A paper survey to be given to the youth can be printed [here](#) or from [e-forms](#) by searching "NYTD Older Youth Survey."

- If a youth completed the survey at age 17 they are then in the baseline population and will be surveyed again at age 19 and 21, regardless of legal status. If a survey was not completed at age 17, regardless of age, they will not be in the 19 year old or 21 year old cohort.
 - In a period in which 17 year olds are surveyed, the timeframe of survey completion is 45 days.
 - Youth being surveyed at age 19 or 21 may be surveyed anytime in the reporting period – do not have to wait until they turn 19 – but survey must actually be completed by the last day of the reporting period and not prior to the beginning of the reporting period to get credit and not get penalized.
 - For youth age 19 and 21, 60% of youth must be surveyed. Therefore, youth should be surveyed at the beginning of the survey period to ensure completion, especially if they are in care.
A penalty of up to 5% of our federal Chafee allotment can be received if we do not meet the percentages for completion.
- However, if it is confusing, just think in terms of it is best to get the survey completed within 45 days of the time that the youth displays on the NYTD Survey Online Tracking Screen, regardless of age or survey period. If you are unsure what age group is currently being surveyed, check the NYTD Survey Online Tracking Screen and the last group to display is the period we are in. If the youth did not have an email address or there is a change in the physical address, these can be updated and the resend button on the NYTD Survey Online Response Tracking Screen clicked. This will generate a paper survey.
- Supervisors and case managers can monitor through NYTD Survey Online Response Tracking Screen in FACES – case managers also receive an alert for youth needing to take the survey.
- If youth are on run, incapacitated, incarcerated, or deceased, this information must be entered on the NYTD Survey Online Response Tracking Screen.
- Case managers are responsible for ensuring surveys are completed and entered. Chafee specialists are not part of this process. OYTS will be assisting with locating youth no longer in care but will rely on assistance from case managers. It is vital that three permanent connections, youth's address, and e-mail address are entered correctly in FACES. Case managers should discuss completion of the NYTD survey with youth on home visits to ensure completion.

Plan on using a variety of methods to administer the survey. NYTD questions must be communicated verbatim as they appear on the survey. However the methodology can vary depending on what is most appropriate for the youth being surveyed. It is likely that accommodations for youth with special needs will be necessary.

Surveying incarcerated youth:

To the extent possible, CD needs to make arrangements with correctional facilities to survey youth ages 19 and 21 who participated in the NYTD baseline survey at age 17 as they remain in the survey population and their participation adds to the outcome information received giving a fuller picture of the data.

Surveying youth with special needs:

Some youth may have difficulty participating in the survey because of a disability. Youth with special needs include:

- Youth with visual impairments
- Youth with learning disabilities
- Youth with cognitive disabilities
- Youth with hearing impairments
- Youth with speech impairments
- Youth with physical disabilities that preclude writing and computer use

Youth with limited vision:

- may need copies of the survey in large print
- who cannot read even large print may need to have the survey administered by the Children’s Service Worker who can record their verbal answers

Youth with learning disabilities

- may have difficulty completing the NYTD survey, due to reading problems; however Children’s Service Workers can read the question, and have the youth complete the responses on his or her copy of the survey form
- most youth will be able to identify and check “yes” and “no” responses as the interviewer reads them aloud

Youth with severe cognitive disabilities

- may be unable to complete the survey but those with mild cognitive delay’s should be able to answer the questions successfully with assistance from the interviewer; explaining questions when needed
- if a youth has severe cognitive disabilities, the youth will not complete the survey and the NYTD Online Tracking Screen should be updated to reflect the youth’s reason for non-participation
- it is important that if a youth has severe cognitive disabilities, that this is indicated at age 17; there are few youth who are able at 17 to complete, and then at age 19 their cognitive level has changed to the point of not being able to complete the survey

Youth with hearing impairments

- may be able to complete the survey as a self-administered web or paper survey
- Text Telephones (TTY) could also be a resource
- to call a youth who is hard of hearing or deaf, the interviewer dials 711 to call the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), the TRS operator will type the interviewer’s questions which will appear on the youth’s TTY device, the TRS operator will then read the youth’s typed responses to the interviewer, TRS operators are legally and professionally bound to keep all information confidential

Youth with speech impairments

- may be able to self-administer the survey via web or paper surveys
- if administering the survey directly, the interviewer should feel comfortable asking the youth to repeat what he or she said or asking for clarification (e.g. “I’m sorry, I didn’t understand. Can you please repeat that?”)

Youth unable to read

- determining whether a youth can read the questions can be a simple matter
- one widely used approach is to tell the youth, “We often read these questions to youth taking the survey. Would you like me to read them to you or would you prefer to read them to yourself? I am going to have you mark your answers on this sheet.”
- this approach avoids asking the youth directly if she or he cannot read; which can be viewed as patronizing or stigmatizing

Other Modifications as needed

Modifications to keep the youth’s interest and attention may include:

- keeping the survey environment free of distractions (e.g. turning off the TV or conducting the interview in a room free of other activities)
- repeating the youth’s name often
- attentiveness to behaviors that suggest the youth needs a break (agitated or becoming distracted)

- youth with short attention spans or youth who become fatigued may need to have breaks or have interviews scheduled at a time when they are most alert and not, for example, at the end of a long school day
- give encouragement probes such as saying “Your answers are very helpful for this study” or “Take your time”
- youth who are physically limited in their ability to use a computer or a pen will need to have a caseworker administer the survey and record the youth’s verbal answers as the youth watches to see that his or her responses are being recorded accurately

Surveying youth with limited English proficiency

- youth with limited English proficiency often face discrimination based on misperceptions about their capabilities and interests
- providing appropriate accommodations allows these youth to participate in the youth outcome survey as fully as their peers
- use of an interpreter or someone fluent in the language should be considered, if necessary

STRATEGIES FOR LOCATING YOUTH:

One of the best ways to ensure that youth can be located is to have good information on how to contact them. Obtaining this information prior to the youth’s transition from foster care increases the chances of their participation in future surveys. This can be done through documentation on the Adolescent FST Guide screen, NYTD Permanent Contacts screen, the Healthcare for Former Foster Youth screen, and by conducting an exit interview at the time they leave care. Here are some other ways to locate youth once they have exited care:

- **Other identifying information** – this information includes but is not limited to: all e-mail addresses, nicknames, aliases, driver’s license or other identification number, public assistance ID, names and addresses of individuals the youth is close to etc., can be helpful in finding youth once they have left care
- **Case files and Court Records**
 - Case.net <https://www.courts.mo.gov/casenet/>
 - Missouri Department of Corrections <https://web.mo.gov/doc/offSearchWeb/>
 - Federal Prison <http://www.bop.gov/inmateloc/>
- **Relatives** – since youth stay in touch with relatives, reach out to parents, siblings, other relatives, former caregivers and friends; research/statistics show after leaving care:
 - 40% of youth are living with relatives at age 19
 - 60% of youth have contact with their biological mother at least once per month
 - 32% of youth have contact with their biological father at least once per month
 - 47% of youth have contact with siblings
 - 49% of youth have contact with grandparents
 - 62% of youth have contact with other relatives
- **Social Networking** – user name for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
- **People Finder Websites**
 - www.TruePeopleSearch.com
 - www.whitepages.com
- **Places the youth frequents** – community centers, churches, schools, gyms, other “hang outs” (restaurants, coffee shops, pool halls, video arcades, etc.
- **Update locating information** – when youth contact you for services (e.g. applying for ETV or Scholarship funds, referrals, etc.) make sure to get their latest contact information
- **Formulate agency procedures for updating youth information** – this can be helpful when agencies have high turnover of staff, making following up with youth difficult
- **Continue direct contact with youth** – suggested ways to engage youth and maintain contact include:

- send youth a reminder postcard or other special mailing (e.g. birthday cards, holiday cards) and specify “Return Service Requested” so that undelivered mail will be returned to the agency and noted the address is no longer current
- inserting a self-addressed postage-paid envelope and change of address form can also be effective
- send a newsletter that provides independent living tips and reminds them of NYTD follow-up surveys
- **Different databases (if consent has been signed)**
 - FAMIS screens (Medicaid, Temporary Assistance, Childcare Assistance, etc.)
 - ETV/MO Reach/CCE Application
 - Department of Motor Vehicles
- **Make multiple attempts to locate youth** – use different contact modes during different times of the day/days of the week.

IN ADDITION TO THE SURVEY:

- Update youth’s address, contact information, and permanent contact information on **Contact List Screen** each time youth moves and upon exit for all youth older youth. Refer to [CD10-100](#) and [CD13-13](#) for more information. This will prevent unnecessary delays in the survey being mailed to the youth as the address is obtained from the Contact Screen. It will also assist in locating the youth when the youth is no longer in care by having other contacts.
- Provide older youth with [NYTD brochure](#) as part of exit plan/packet or as a way to discuss the survey. Document date provided.
- Display [NYTD poster](#) in office and other places in community where youth will see. The poster was developed by the State Youth Advisory Board (SYAB).
- Life skills are reported every six months as part of NYTD. If a life skill is being provided outside of Chafee or a CD TLP, then it must be documented in FACES per [CD10-108](#). This could include school visits, assistance with ETV/Missouri Reach/CCE, and other assistance that falls within the NYTD Reporting Categories listed under the Older Youth Services Definition Screen which can be seen when in the NYTD - Older Youth Services and Financial Expenditures Screen.
- If contact is made during the survey process with a youth who is encountering difficulties, discuss available options for assistance with the youth such as [aftercare](#), [re-entry](#), or [resources](#).
- If needed, there are FACES instructions on the intranet for the following:
 - [Education Information](#)
 - [NYTD Older Youth Services and Financial Expenditures](#)
 - [NYTD Older Youth Survey](#)
 - [NYTD Survey Online Response Tracking](#)