

California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CaYOUTH): Highlights of the Child Welfare Worker and Youth Surveys

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Policy research that benefits children, families, and their communities

Background

- Evaluation of the impact of California Fostering Connections to Success Act (AB 12) on outcomes for foster youth
- Study includes:
 - Collection of data from transition-age foster youth and child welfare workers
 - Analysis of administrative program data
 - Qualitative research on living arrangements
- Surveys were stratified by county

Purpose of Child Welfare Worker Survey

- Obtain perceptions of service delivery context
 - County level availability of and need for services
 - Coordination of services with other service systems
 - Attitudes of caseworker, county court personnel and youth toward extended care

CALIFORNIA
YOUTH TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD STUDY
CaIYOUTH
Child Welfare Worker Survey
August 2013

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Data Collection and Response Rate

- Survey period: 9/27/13 – 11/27/13
- Online survey platform (Qualtrics)
- Sample
 - 50 counties participated
 - 262 caseworkers received survey
 - 235 eligible caseworkers completed survey
 - **89.7% response rate**

Eligibility Criteria

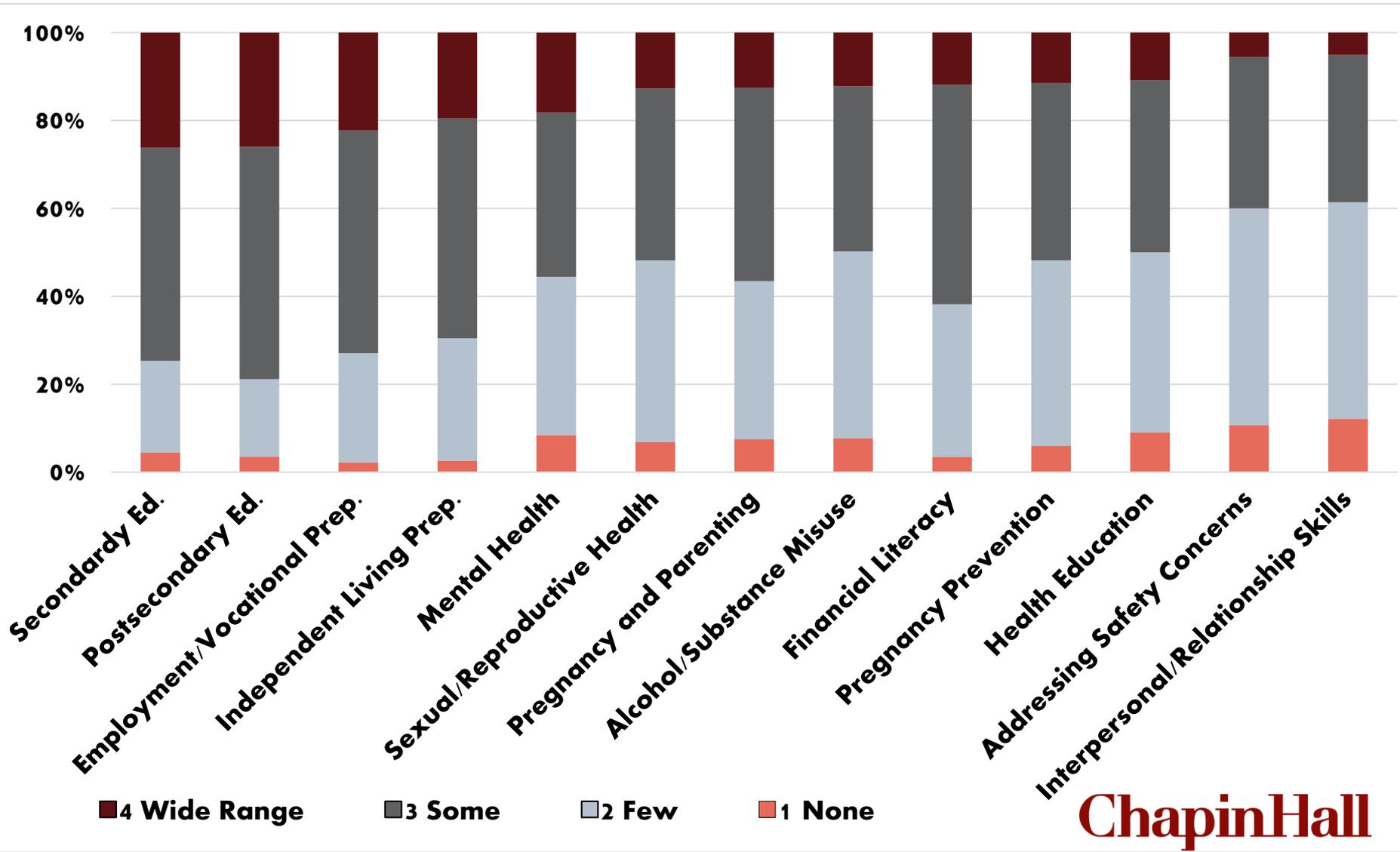
- Had to have one young person on caseload who turned 18 during previous 6-month period
- If eligible, was asked to:

“...think of the youth who most recently turned 18 while on your caseload”

(and if only one person turned 18 on caseload)

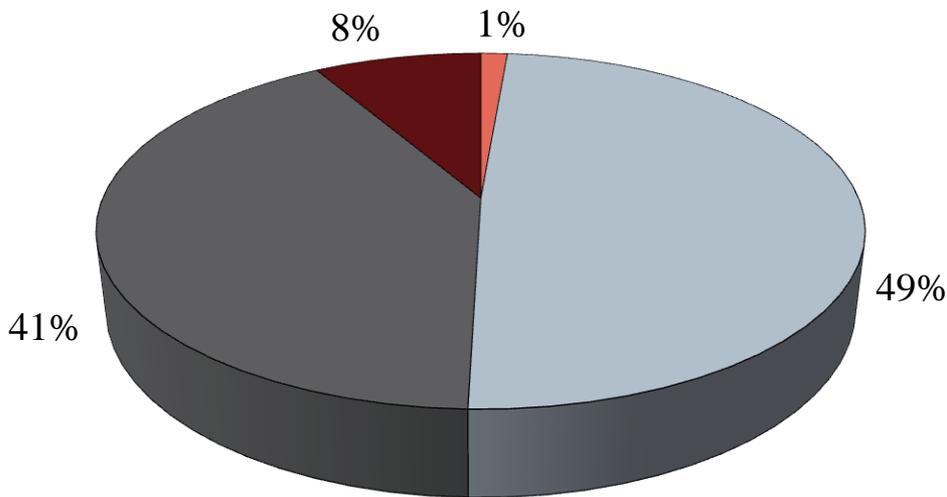
“...think of that youth.”

Availability of Trainings/Services



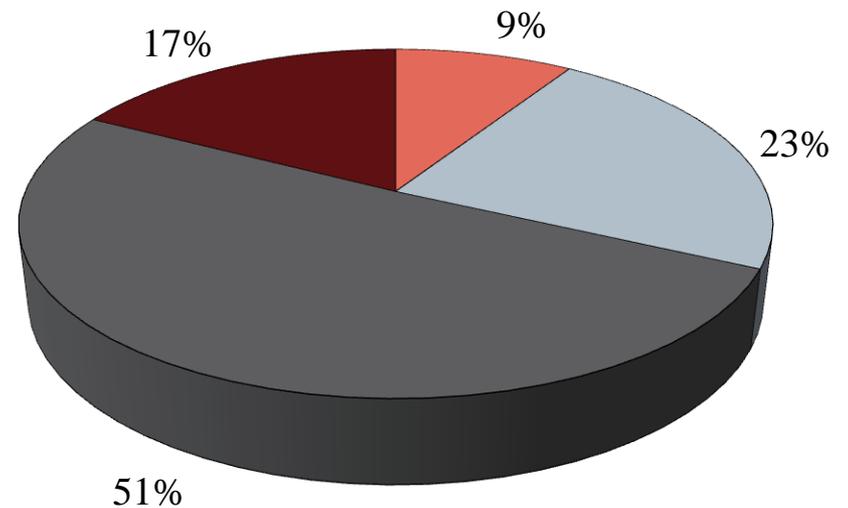
Availability & Appropriateness of Housing Options

Availability



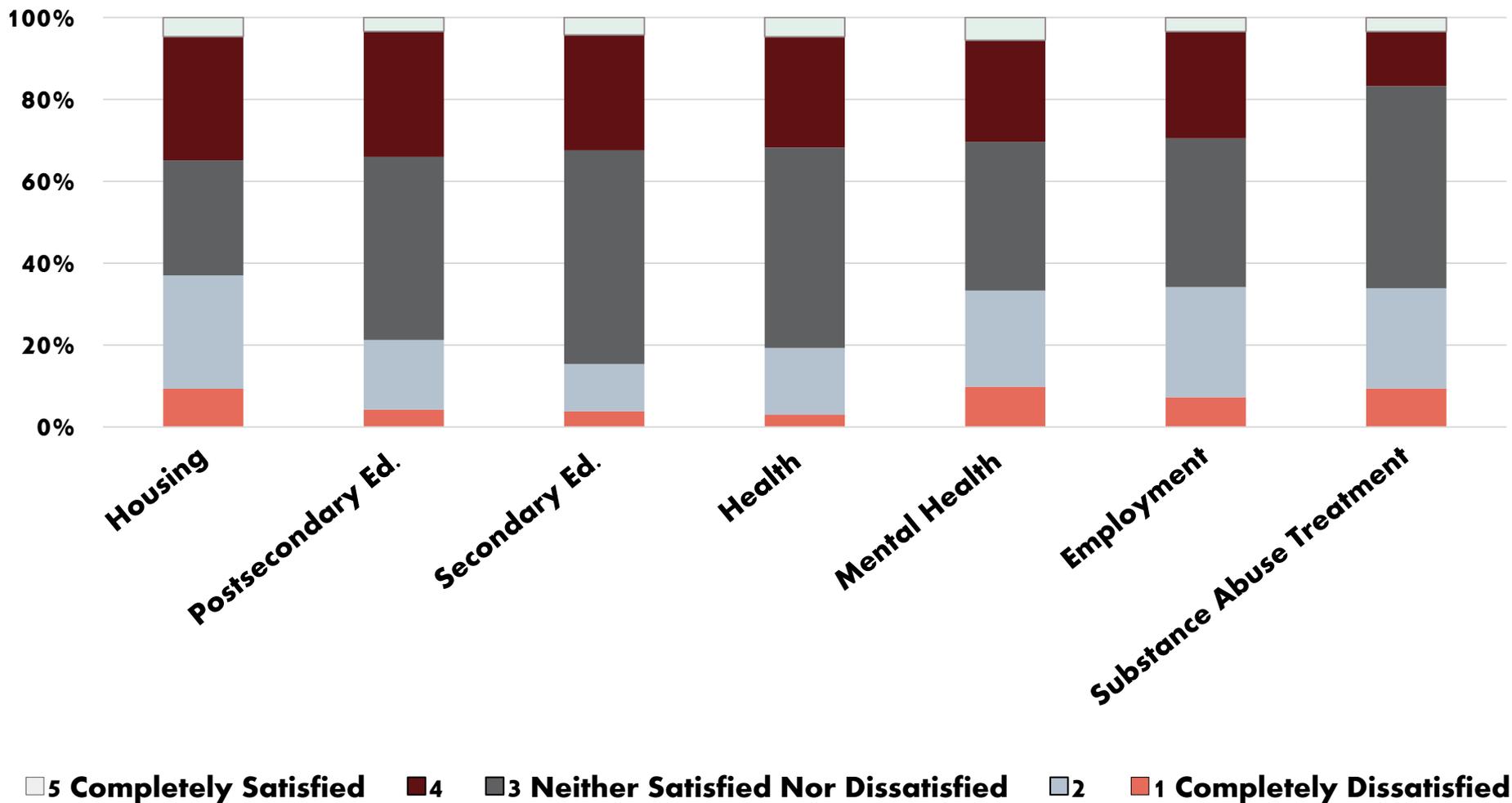
- None
- Few
- Some
- Wide Range

Appropriateness



- Mostly Not Appropriate
- Slightly Appropriate
- Somewhat Appropriate
- Very Appropriate

Satisfaction with Collaboration with Other Systems



Challenges to Effective AB12 Implementation

Extent to which each is a challenge (5-point scale: 1=not a challenge, 5=a great challenge)	% (4 or 5)
Not enough placement options	81
Not enough services	66
Lack of clarity in policies and procedures of extended care	59
Lack of coordination between county CW agencies and other systems (e.g., education, housing, employment, health)	48
Available services are not appropriate to needs of county's youth	46
Lack of support by foster care providers	38
Lack of support by county administrators	25
Lack of interest from youth approaching age 18	25
Lack of support by court personnel	15
Lack of support by county caseworkers	12

Purpose of Youth Survey

- Obtain information about a broad range of life experiences & young adult outcomes
 - Foster care placement
 - Service utilization & preparation
 - Knowledge of extended care
 - Education and employment
 - Health and development
 - Social support
 - Delinquency
 - Pregnancy and children

CALIFORNIA
YOUTH TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD STUDY
CalYOUTH
Study Questionnaire: Wave I

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Sample

- Eligible youth between 16^{3/4} and 17^{3/4} years of age
- In care at least 6 months
- Sample
 - Drawn from CDSS administrative data records
 - Stratified by county based on number of eligible youth in each county

Data Collection and Response Rate

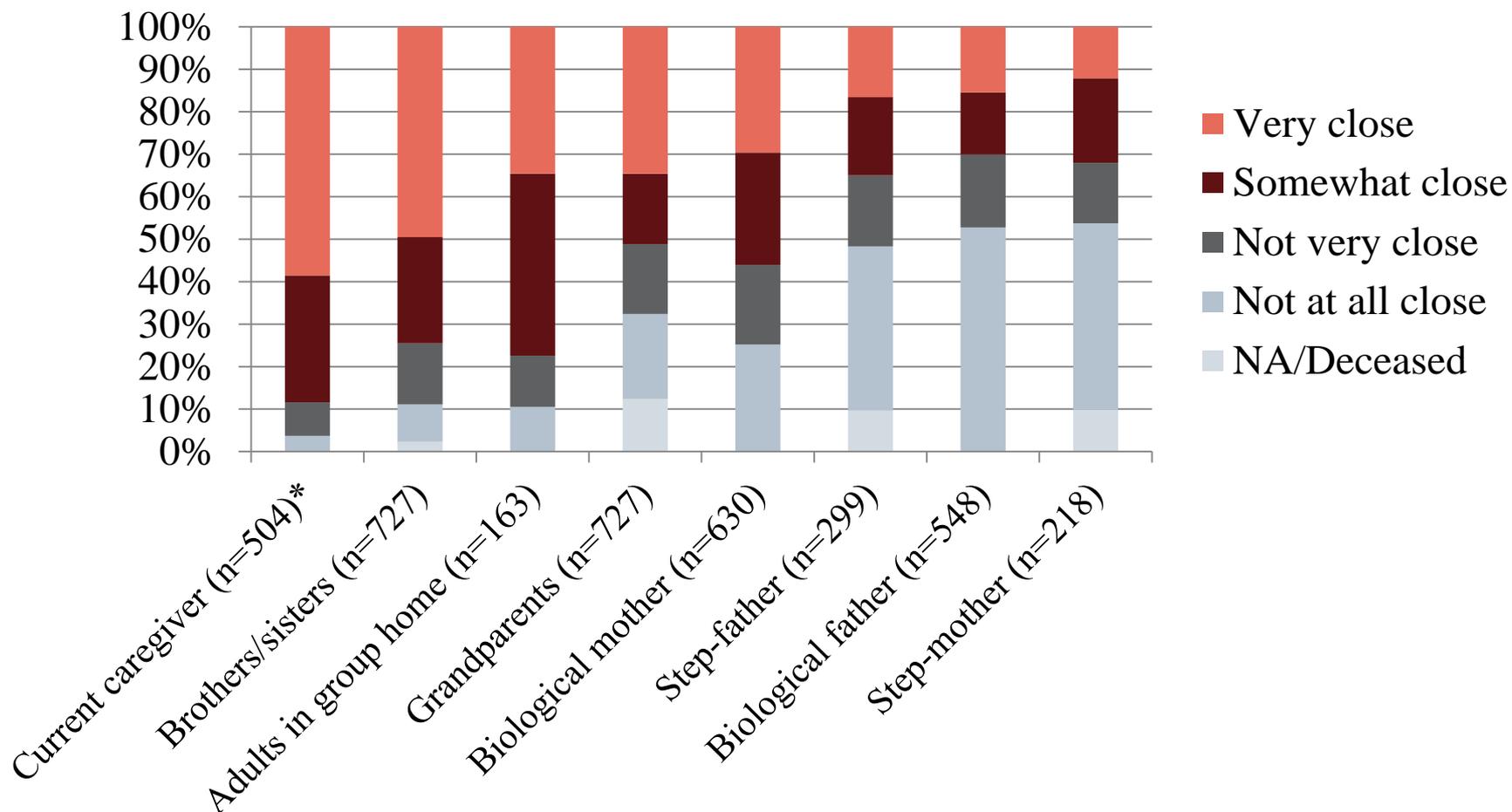
- Survey period for in-person interviews:
4/15/13 – 10/11/13
- 51 counties included in final sample*
- Fielded cases $N = 763$
- Completed interviews $N = 727$
- **Response rate: $727 / 763 = 95.3\%$**

* 7 counties had zero youth who met inclusion criteria

Current Living Situation

	#	%
Foster home without relatives	337	44.3
Group care or residential treatment facility	164	24.1
Foster home with an adult relative	125	18.2
Legal guardianship arrangement	43	6.3
Independent living arrangement	26	2.5
Other	17	2.5
Adoptive home	14	1.9

Closeness to Others



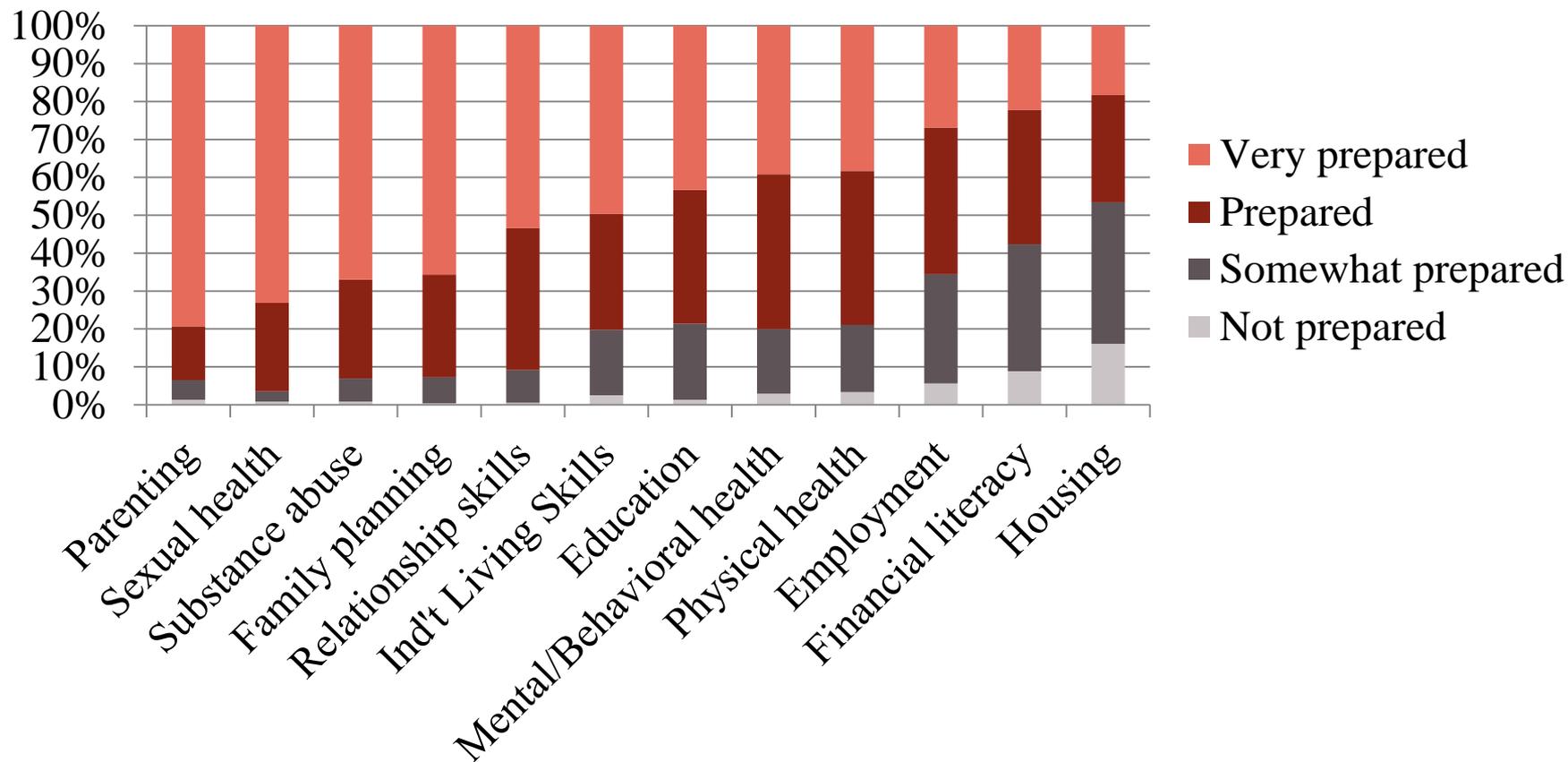
*Current foster parent(s), guardian(s), adoptive parents(s), adult relatives(s) youth lives with

Social Support

Number of Available Supports		
	Median	Mean (SD)
Emotional	4	5.6 (6.6)
Tangible	3	3.9 (6.2)
Advice/Guidance	3	4.6 (9.2)

Adequacy of Amount of Support						
	Enough		Too Few		No One	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Emotional	497	65.1	206	31.4	23	3.3
Tangible	443	59.5	266	37.8	18	2.8
Advice/Guidance	542	71.8	172	26.3	13	1.9

Perception of Preparation



Over 3/5 of caseworkers reported that the youth they served had a “moderate” or “high” need for services to complete high school or pursue higher education

Mental Health Status

	#	%
During past year...		
Received psychological or emotional counseling	406	54
Psychiatric hospitalization	71	10
Attended drug or alcohol abuse treatment program	124	19
Received medication for emotional problems	220	29
MINI (current positive diagnosis)		
All youth	404	53.0
Females	255	57.5
Males	149	46.9
Past suicide attempt		
Females	137	29.9
Males	47	14.0

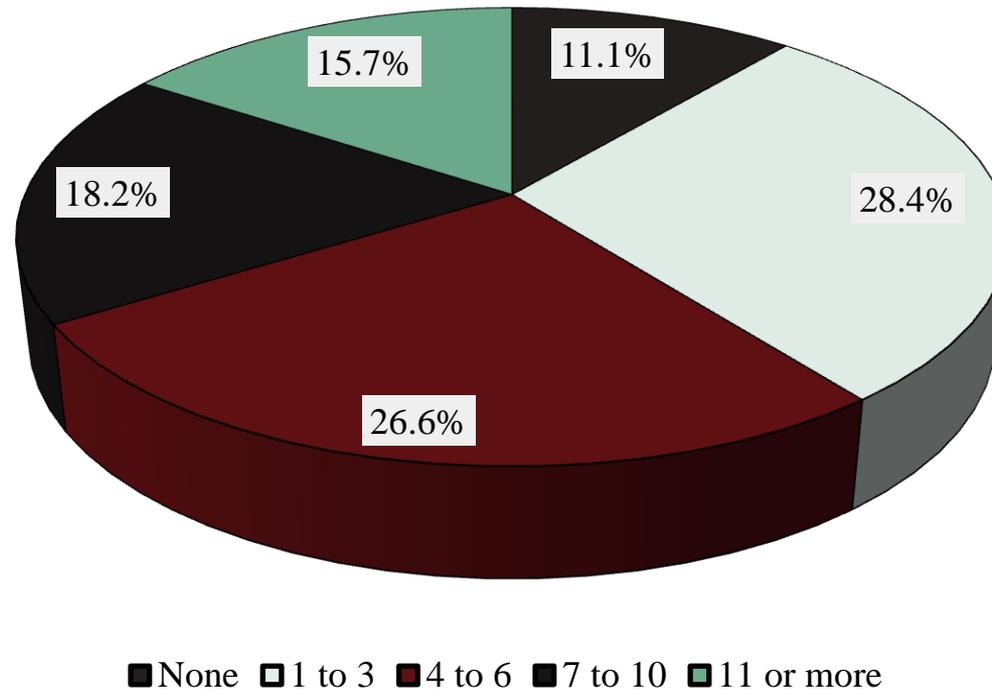
Education

	#	%
Currently enrolled in school	653	89.9
Type of school		
High school	590	80.6
GED classes	3	0.2
Vocational school	3	0.4
2-year community college	25	3.7
4-year college	4	0.3
Other	96	14.7
Ever placed in special education classroom	257	33.6
Repeated or been held back a grade	248	33.3
8 th grade or less reading level [^]	376	51.3

[^]Based on assessment from the Wide Range Achievement Test: 4th Edition

Education

Number of School Changes because Family Moved or Changed Foster Care Placements



Education

	%
Want a college degree or more education	83.1%
Expect to obtain a college degree or higher	78.6%
Obtain “a lot” or “some” encouragement for their education from...	
School Staff	87.8%
Family	82.8%
Foster Care System	90.2%
Who provided the most help preparing you for your education goals?	
Foster parent(s)/Group home staff/ILP staff	41.8
Biological parents/Siblings/Relatives	18.7
CASA/Wraparound/Other SS Worker	10.0
School staff/School program	7.6
Myself	6.7

Employment

	#	%
Currently employed full-time	12	1.7
Currently employed part-time	102	13.0

	CalYOUTH		Add Health	
	#	%	#	%
During last four weeks, worked - for pay -for anyone outside home	249	32.1	1157	71.4***

*** $p < .001$

Criminal Justice System Involvement

	#	%
Ever been arrested	283	39.2
Ever been convicted of a crime	150	21.3
Ever been confined in jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility, in connection with allegedly committing a crime	178	25.0

Pregnancy and Children

	CalYOUTH		Add Health	
	#	%	#	%
Females...				
Ever got pregnant ($n = 426$)	104	26.0	94	9.6***
Gave birth to any children ($n = 104$)	39	35.7	--	--
Males...				
Ever got a female pregnant ($n = 294$)	29	9.3	--	--
Fathered children that were born ($n = 151$)	22	13.5	--	--

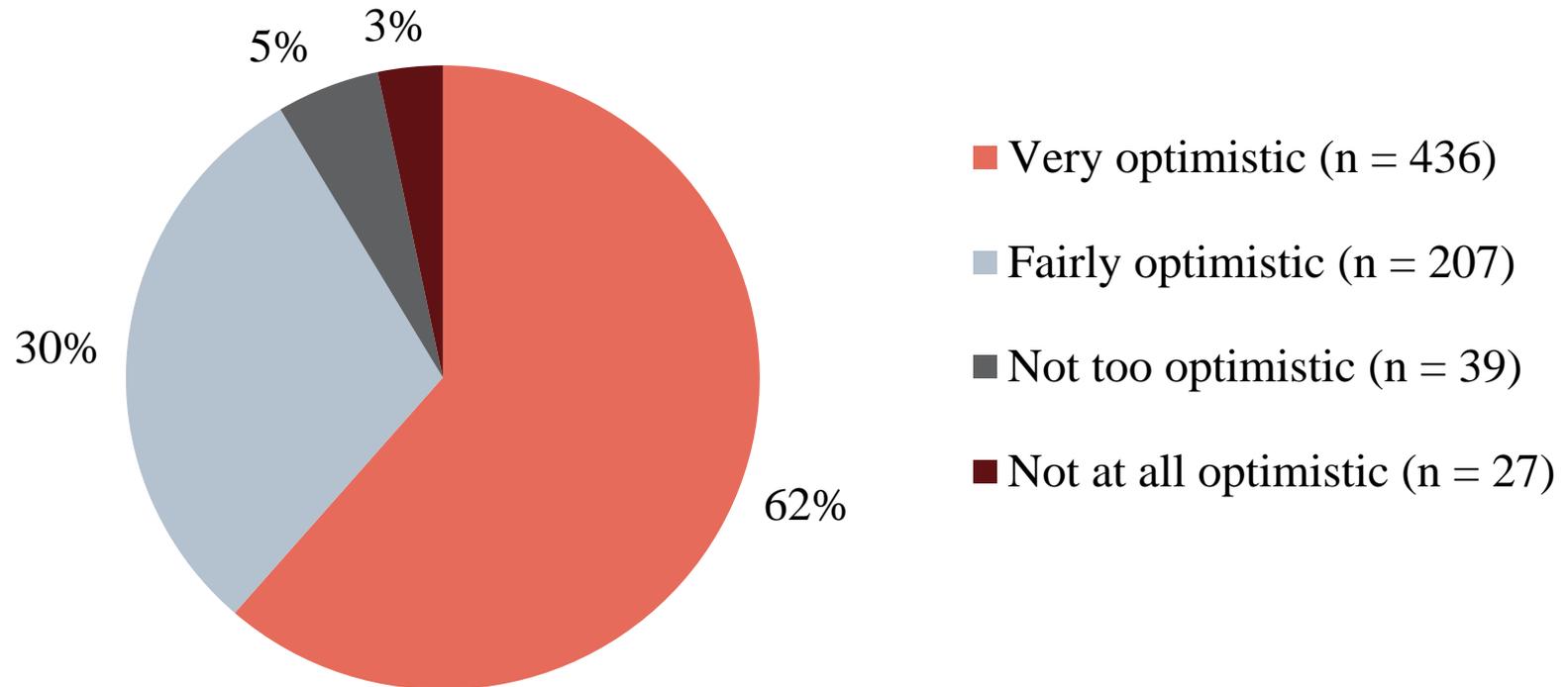
*** $p < .001$

Desire to Stay in Care

	#	%
Want to stay in foster care after age 18 (yes) (n=727)	475	67.4
Top 3 most cited reasons for <u>NOT WANTING</u> to stay in care after age 18:		
Wants to be on own and have more freedom	103	38.6
Does not want to deal with social workers anymore	36	15.0
Wants to live with biological parents	23	9.3
Top 3 most cited reasons for <u>WANTING</u> to stay in care after age 18:		
Wants help achieving educational goals	217	45.6
Wants to continue receiving housing and other material support	190	37.1
Is happy in current foster care placement	51	8.8

Optimism about the Future

Extent to which youth is optimistic when asked to think about personal hopes and goals for the future



CalYOUTH Activities

- Released worker and youth survey reports and qualitative study of youths' living arrangements
- Developing issue briefs on:
 - Mental and health needs and service receipt
 - Youth attitudes toward the foster care system, knowledge of AB 12 and desire to stay in care
 - Education
- Administrative data analyses of extended care and:
 - Legal permanency
 - Post-secondary education
- Carry out interviews with youth at age 19 in 2015

CalYOUTH Connect

Who:

- **Chapin Hall** and **i.e. communications** in partnership with **youth-serving organizations**

What:

- Create a feedback loop between young people in foster care and those working with them

Why:

- Increase engagement with young people
- Identify best methods of communications for continuous feedback
- Get recommendations for how to meet youths' needs
- Determine youth perception of survey results

How:

- Share the findings of the **California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH)** and test various communications methods (texting, Facebook, Instagram, etc.)

