

California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CaLYOUTH): 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
CaYOUTH
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

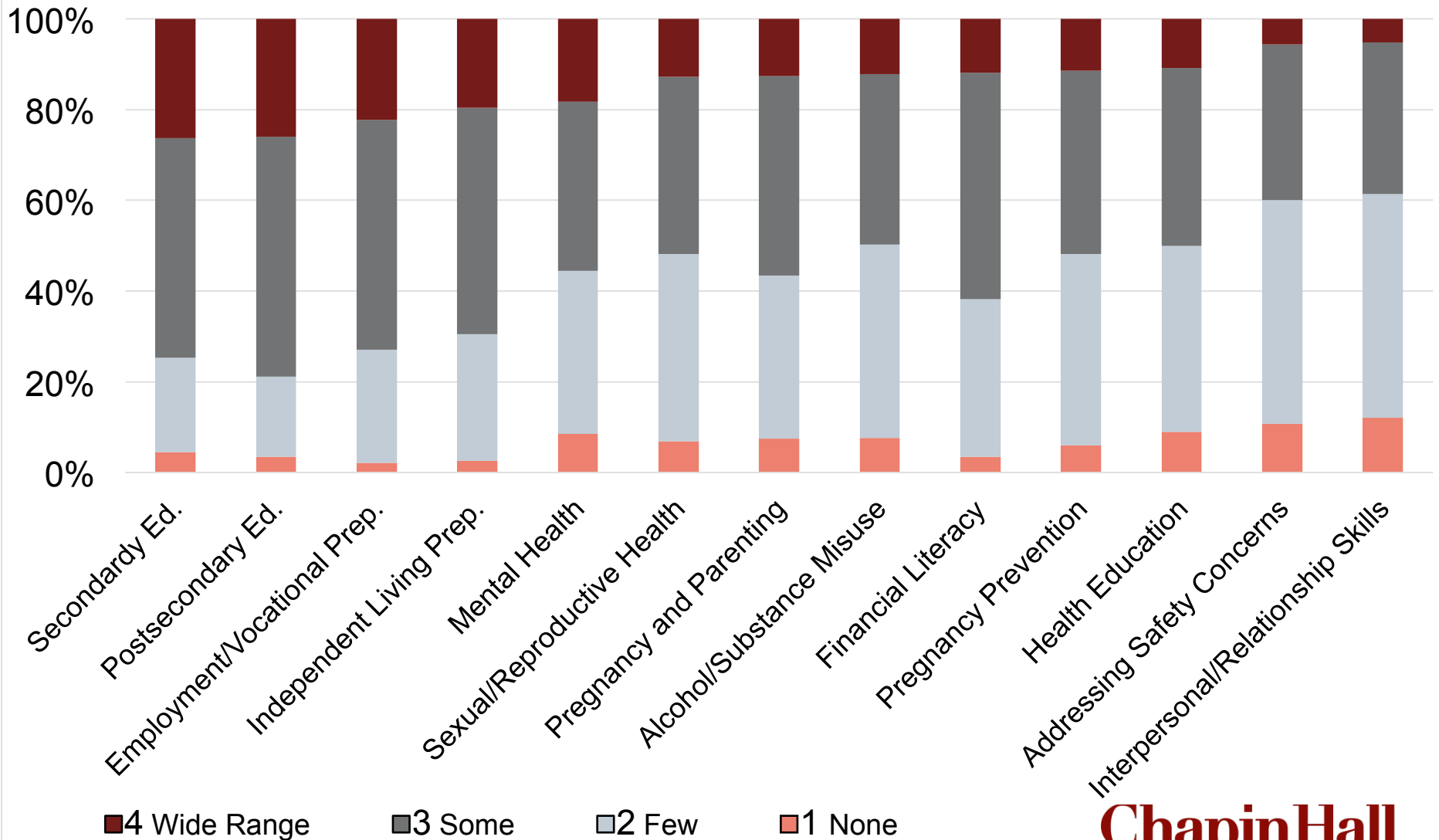
- Had to have one young person on caseload who turned 18 during previous 6-month period
- If eligible, was asked to:

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

(and if only one person turned 18 on caseload)

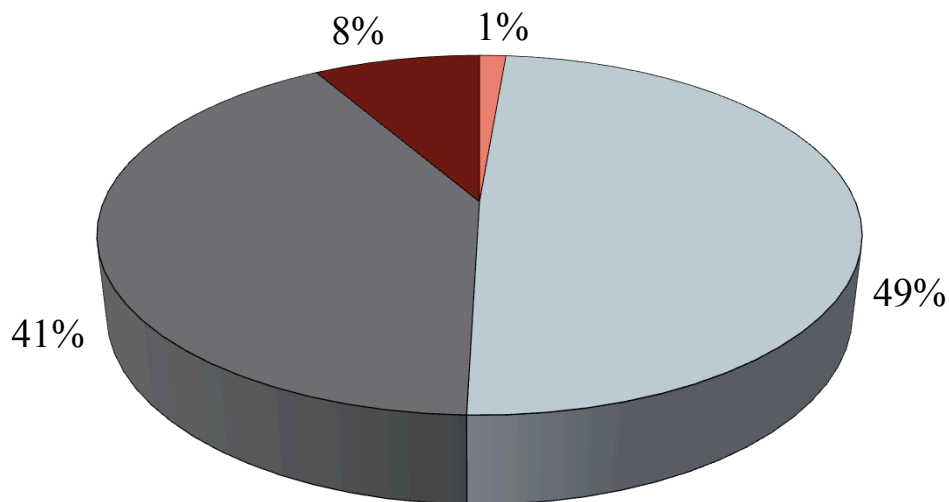
“...think of that youth.”

Availability of Trainings/Services



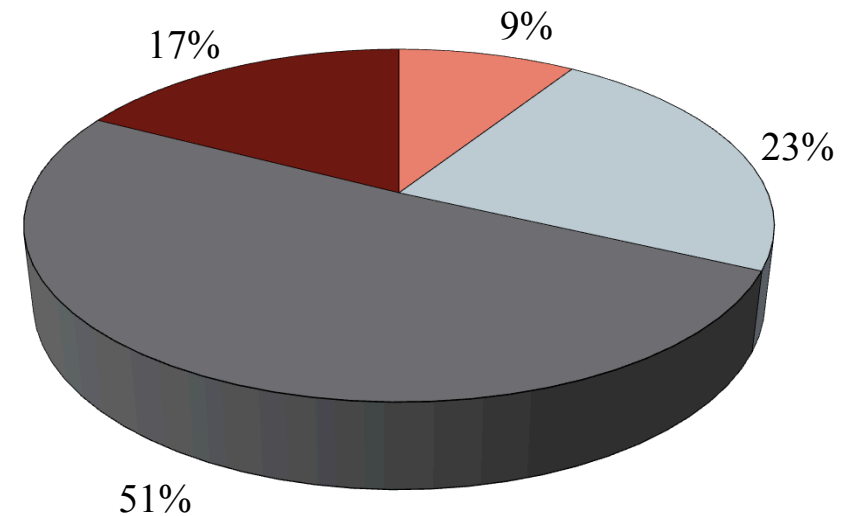
Availability & Appropriateness of Housing Options

Availability



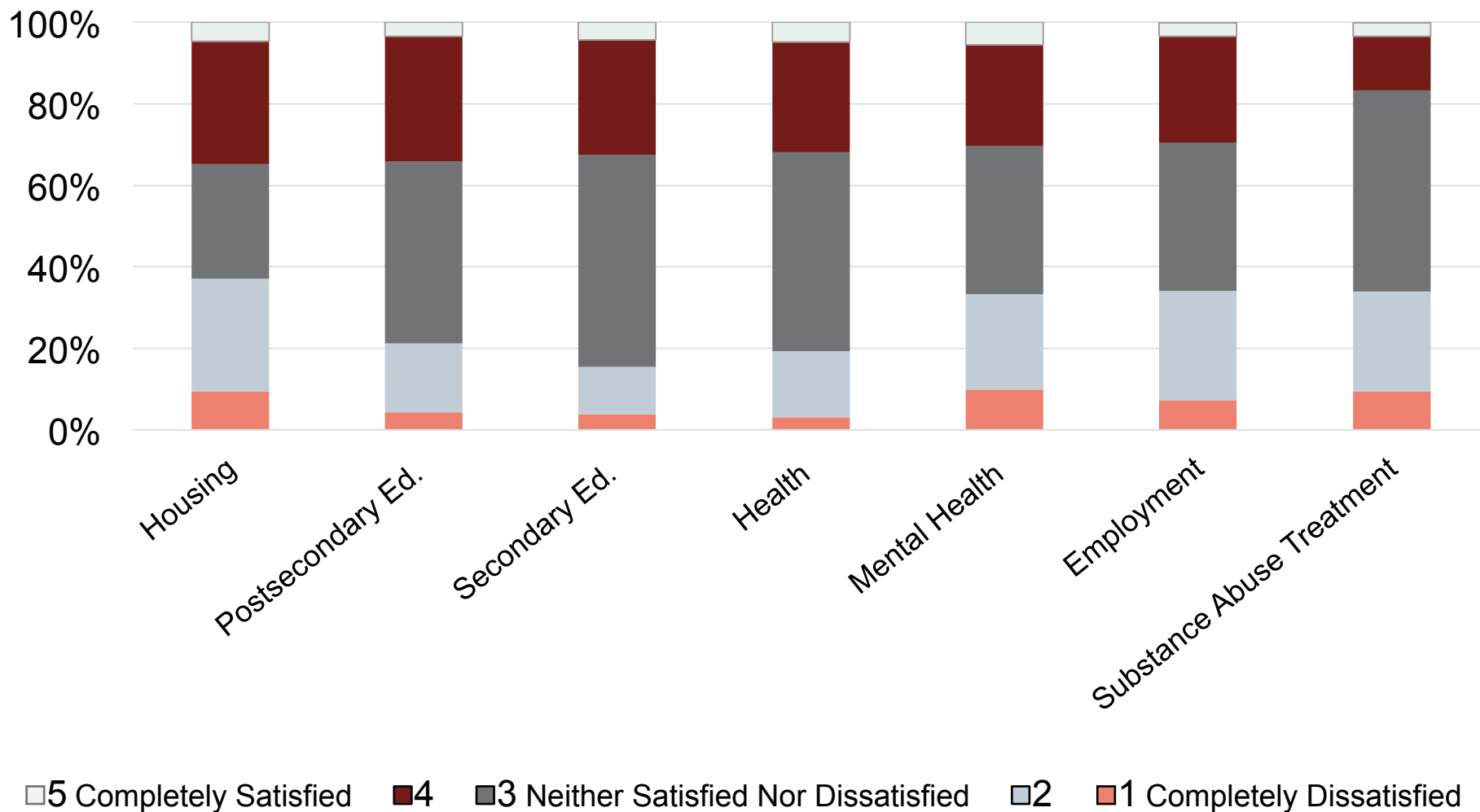
- None
- Few
- Some
- Wide Range

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

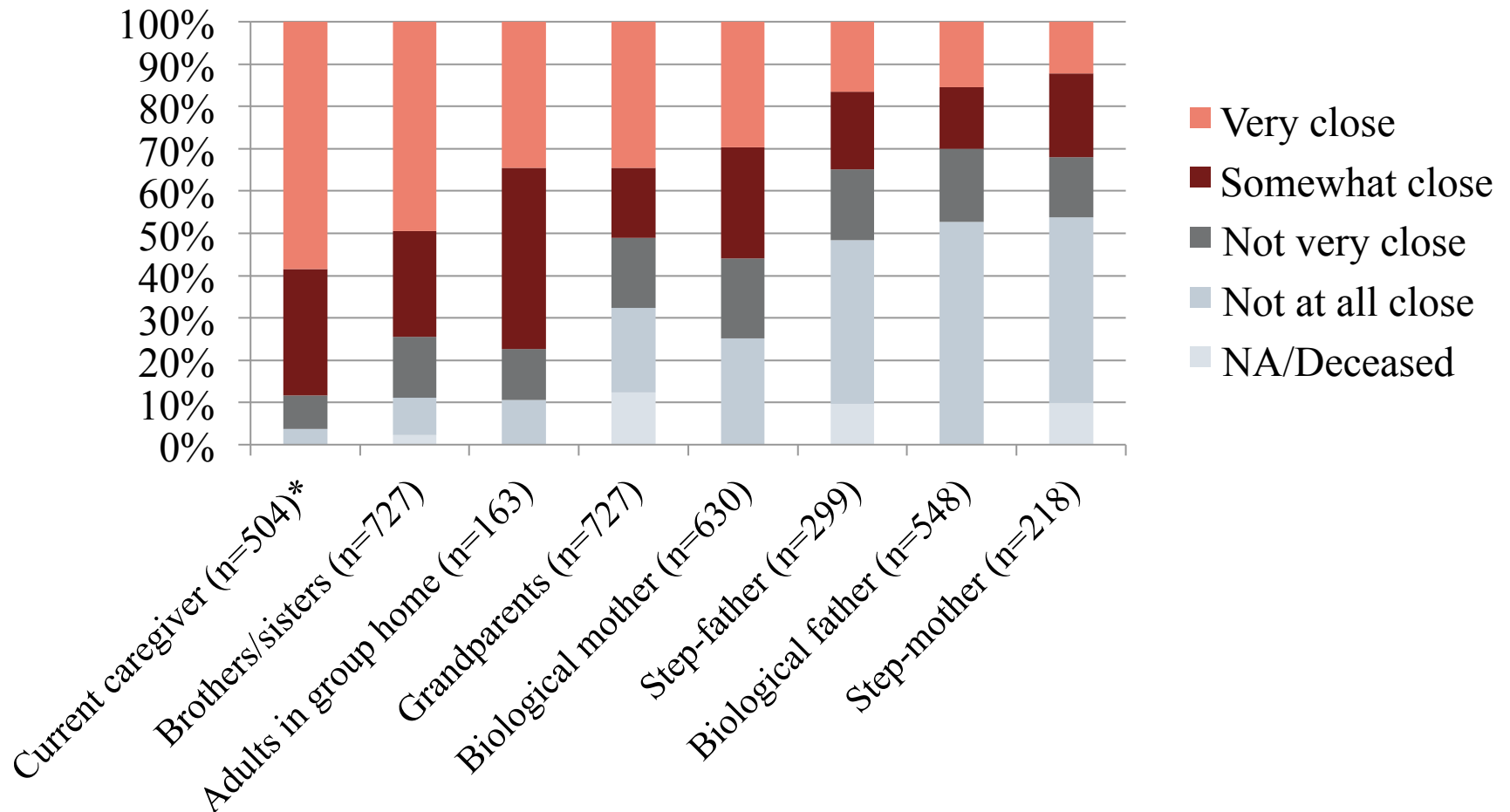
- Survey period for in-person interviews:
4/15/13 – 10/11/13
- 51 counties included in final sample*
- Fielded cases $N = 763$
- Completed interviews $N = 727$
- **Response rate: $727 / 763 = 95.3\%$**

* 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



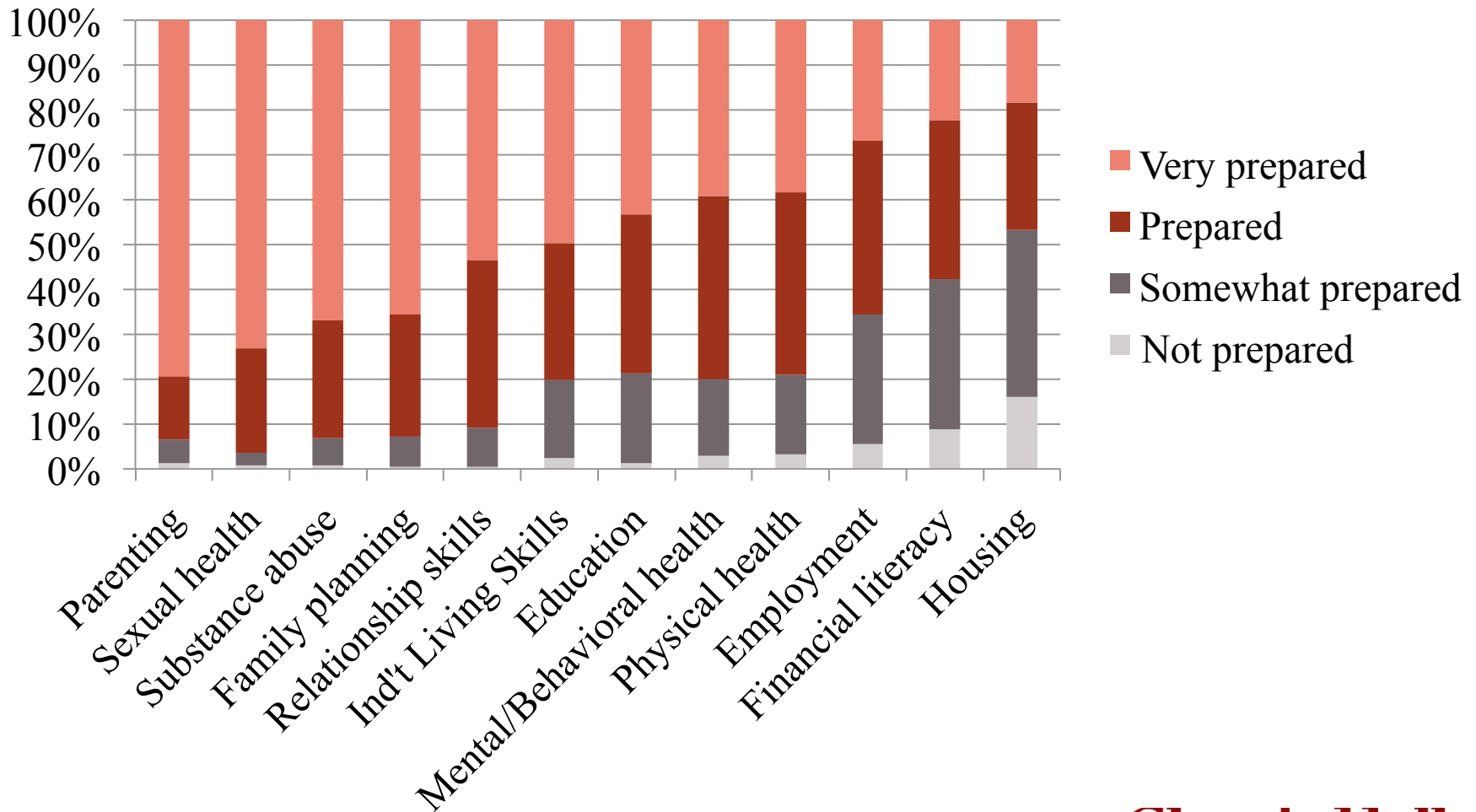
*Current foster parent(s), guardian(s), adoptive parents(s), adult relatives(s) youth lives with

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



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 (positive diagnosis)		
Major Depressive Episode (current, past, and/or recurrent)	152	21
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	56	8
Social Phobia	42	6
Alcohol Abuse or Dependence	103	12
Substance Abuse or Dependence	164	21
Oppositional Defiant Disorder and/or Conduct Disorder	87	12

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
Aspire to graduate from college or beyond	578	79.8

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

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	--	--

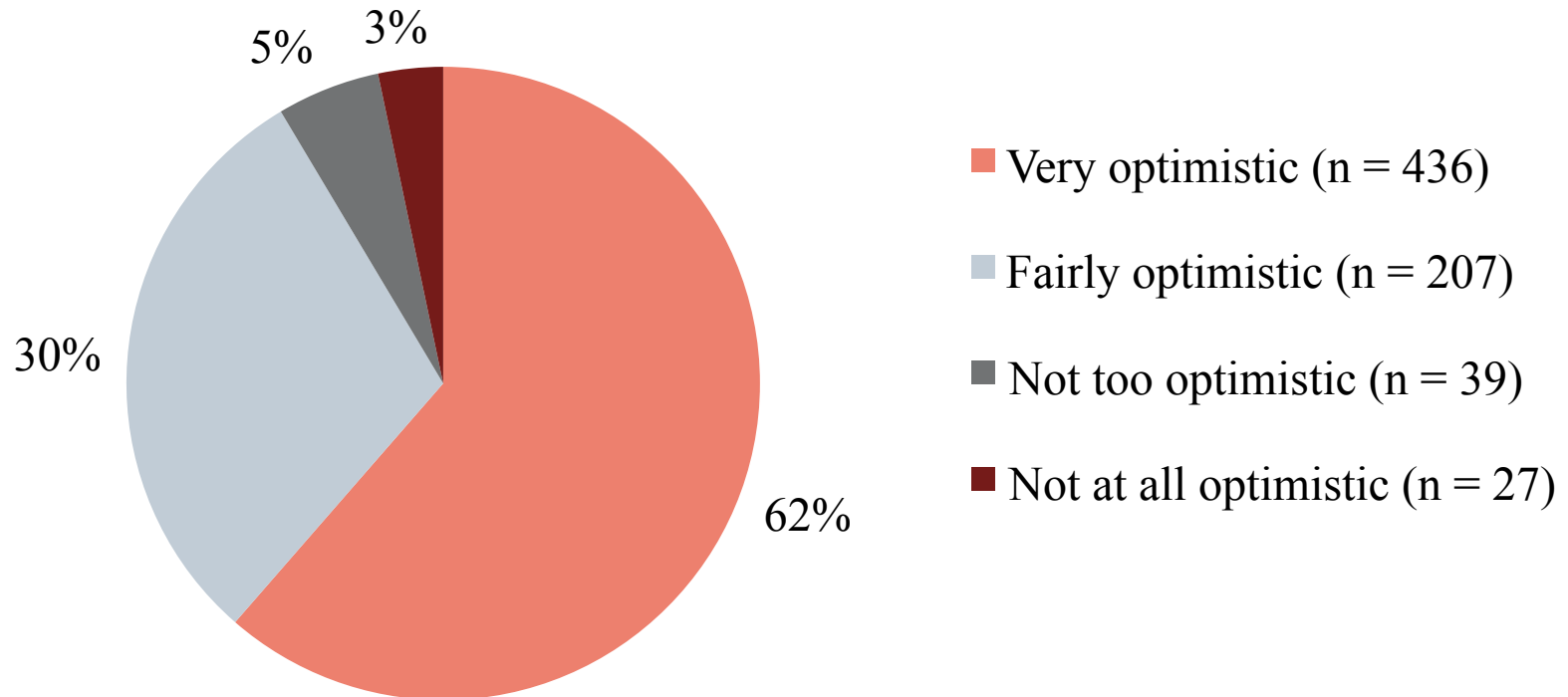
*** $p < .001$

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



Next Steps

- Release worker and youth survey reports and qualitative study of youths' living arrangements
- Develop and release issue briefs on:
 - Mental and physical health needs of transition age foster youth
 - 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