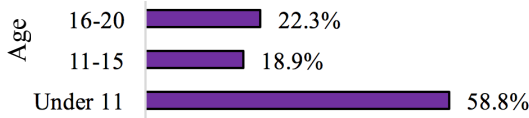


# Data Snapshot of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Needs of Youth in Foster Care in Los Angeles County

## DEMOGRAPHICS

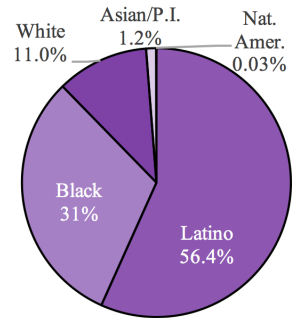
As of October 1, 2017, there were **35,659 youth in Los Angeles County's foster care system**.<sup>1</sup>

Nearly one-fifth (18.9%) of foster youth in Los Angeles County are between the ages of eleven and fifteen, and about **22% are sixteen or older**.<sup>2</sup> Over half of Los Angeles's foster youth are Latino (56.3%). Most of the remaining youth are white (11%) or black (30.8%).<sup>3</sup>

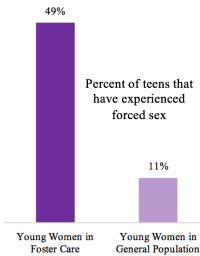


Nearly one-fifth (18%) of foster youth in Los Angeles County indicated that they were attracted to people of the same sex.<sup>4</sup>

Over half (57%) of nineteen-year-olds in foster care in Los Angeles have lived in a group home. Of those, **60% have been placed in two or more group homes**.<sup>5</sup>



## EXPERIENCE OF SEXUAL ASSAULT



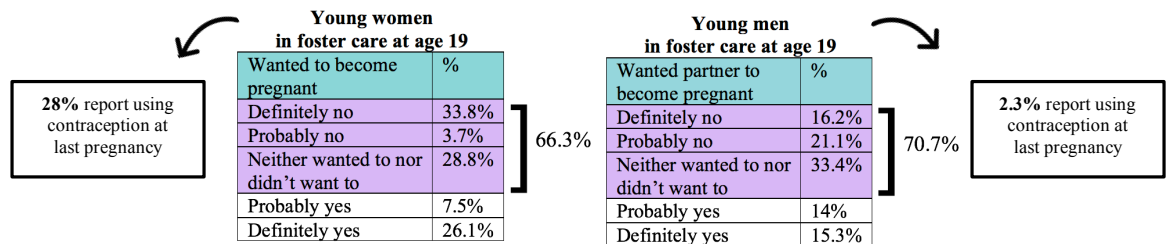
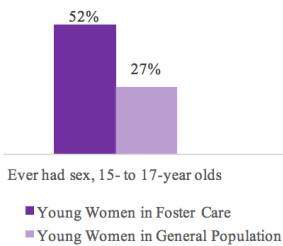
Female teens who have been in foster care are **more than four times as likely to have ever experienced forced sex** than those who have never been in foster care.<sup>6</sup> In Los Angeles, among youth who had experienced sex by age 19, about 25% reported first having sexual intercourse when they were 13 years old or younger.<sup>7</sup>

**More than 30% of female foster youth in Los Angeles were raped** before they entered care, and about 45% were sexually molested. Youth also experience sexual abuse while in foster care. In Los Angeles, 10% of young adults were raped and **20% of young people were sexually molested while in foster care**.<sup>8</sup>

## SEXUAL ACTIVITY AND CONTRACEPTION USE

Nationally, young women in the foster care system are **almost twice as likely to have engaged in sexual activity** as their same-aged peers in the general population.<sup>9</sup> By age 19, over four-fifths of foster youth in Los Angeles reported ever having sexual intercourse.

About **two-thirds of California foster and former foster youth interviewed about their most recent pregnancy did not describe the pregnancy as wanted**, and yet less than a third of youth were using contraception at the time of conception.<sup>10</sup> Among sexually active 19-year-old foster youth in Los Angeles, over **one-third report not using any form of birth control during sex**.<sup>11</sup>

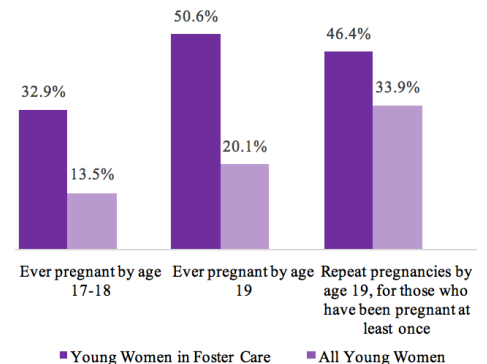


## UNPLANNED PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

Young women in foster care and those who have "aged out" of foster care are **more than twice as likely to have experienced teen pregnancy** than their peers not in care.<sup>12</sup> Foster youth are also more likely to become pregnant more than once.<sup>13</sup> By age 19, **nearly 60% of female foster youth in Los Angeles reported ever being pregnant**.<sup>14</sup>

Of California foster youth who were pregnant by age 17, **over 20% did not receive any prenatal care**.<sup>15</sup> Over 40% of California foster youth teen pregnancies ended in a stillbirth or miscarriage.<sup>16</sup> Nationally, only 14.3% of teen pregnancies end in a stillbirth or miscarriage.<sup>17</sup>

By age 21, **more than a third of young women who grew up in foster care are mothers in California**.<sup>18</sup>



Visit [www.fosterreprohealth.org](http://www.fosterreprohealth.org) to learn more about the systemic barriers that foster youth face in accessing sexual and reproductive health care and **how to get involved in our efforts to improve health outcomes for foster youth!**

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<sup>1</sup> Webster, D., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Wiegmann, W., Saika, G., Eyre, M., Chambers, J., Min, S., Randhawa, P., Sandoval, A., Yee, H., Tran, M., Benton, C., White, J., & Cotto, H. (2018). *CCWIP reports*. Retrieved 3/28/2018, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL: <[http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb\\_childwelfare](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare)>.

<sup>2</sup> Foster Care, by Age, 2015. As cited on [www.kidsdata.org](http://www.kidsdata.org), a program of the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health. Retrieved on March 2, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Courtney, M.E. Harty, J., Kindle, B., Dennis, K., Okpych, N.J., & Torres García, A. (2017). *Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Conditions of Youth at Age 19: Los Angeles County Report*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Manlove, J. (2011). *Teen Parents in Foster Care: Risk Factors and Outcomes for Teens and Their Children*, Washington DC: Child Trends, [http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Child\\_Trends-2011\\_11\\_01\\_RB\\_TeenParentsFC.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Child_Trends-2011_11_01_RB_TeenParentsFC.pdf) (citing Perper, K. (unpublished). *Child Trends' original analyses of the Add Health survey Waves I – III*).

<sup>7</sup> Courtney, M.E., et al., *supra* note 3.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> Ng, A.S., & Kaye, K. (2013). *Why It Matters: Teen Childbearing and Child Welfare*. Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

<sup>10</sup> Courtney, M. E., Okpych, N. J., Charles, P., Mikell, D., Stevenson, B., Park, K., Kindle, B., Harty, J., & Feng, H. (2016). *Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Conditions of Youth at Age 19*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> Dworsky, A. & Courtney, M.E. (2010). *The risk of teenage pregnancy among transitioning foster youth: implications for extending state care beyond age 18*. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(10).

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

<sup>14</sup> Courtney, M.E., et al., *supra* note 3.

<sup>15</sup> Courtney, M. E., Charles, P., Okpych, N. J., Napolitano, L., & Halsted, K. (2014). *Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Conditions of foster youth at age 17*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

<sup>17</sup> Kost, K., Maddow-Zimet, I., *U.S. Teenage Pregnancies, Births and Abortions, 2011: National Trends by Age, Race and Ethnicity*, Guttmacher Institute, April 2016, [https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/report\\_pdf/us-teen-pregnancy-trends-2011\\_0.pdf](https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/us-teen-pregnancy-trends-2011_0.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Putnam-Hornstein, E. Cedarbaum, J., King, B., and Needell, B. (2013). *California's Most Vulnerable Parents: When Maltreated Children Have Children*. Agoura Hills, CA: Conrad Hilton Foundation.