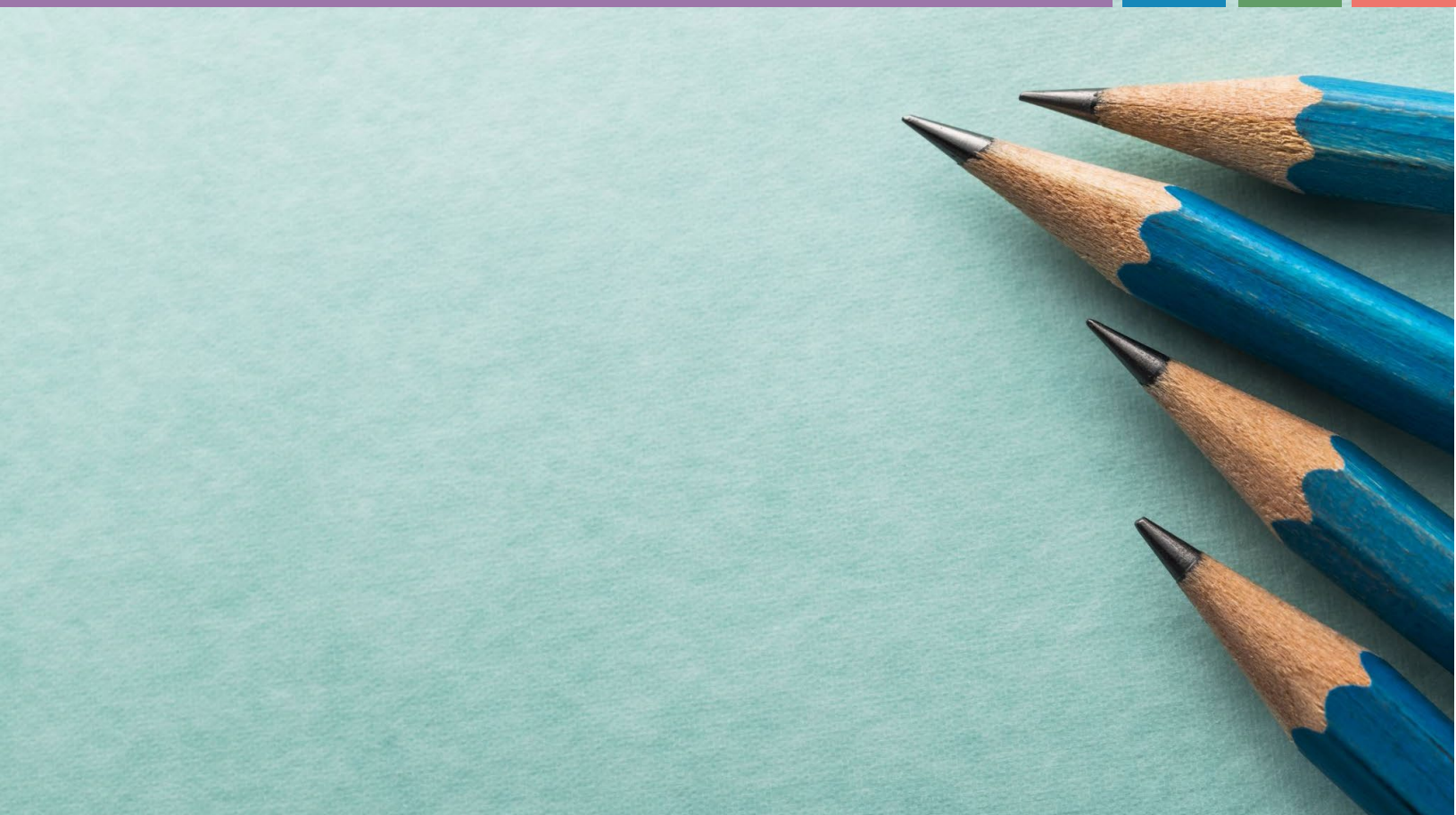




Education and Workforce Outcomes for Children and Youth in Foster Care

2021 Report



Education Research and Data Center

Forecasting and Research

Office of Financial Management



Authors

Vivien W. Chen, Ph.D.

George C. Hough Jr., Ph.D.

About the ERDC

The research presented here uses data from the Education Research and Data Center, located in the Washington Office of Financial Management. ERDC works with partner agencies to conduct powerful analyses of learning that can help inform the decision-making of Washington legislators, parents, and education providers. ERDC's data system is a statewide longitudinal data system that includes de-identified data about people's preschool, educational and workforce experiences.

Address

Education Research and Data Center
106 11th Ave SW, Suite 2200
PO Box 43124
Olympia, WA 98504-3113

Phone

360-902-0599

Fax

360-725-5174

Email

erdc@ofm.wa.gov

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Executive Summary

The 2020 Washington State Legislature directed the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) with SHB 2711 to prepare a report on educational progress and outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness or in foster care in 2021, 2022, and 2023 and a final report in 2024.

The ERDC completed the 2021 analysis with findings for children and youth in foster care between 2012 and 2020 summarized below.

Here are the most important takeaways from this study:

1. The gaps between foster and non-foster students in every measure of educational progression and achievements persisted from 2015 to 2020.
2. Compared to their peers not in foster care, students in foster care experienced higher school mobility, a higher risk of being absent and they were more likely to experience school disciplinary action during their middle and high school years.
 - Students in foster care were more likely to change schools during high school, especially in 9th and 10th grade. They were more likely to be absent in 11th and 12th grade.
 - Through their K-12 experience, students in foster care had a higher proportion of school disciplinary action during middle school and their freshman year in high school.
3. Young adults who were in foster care had an increased workforce participation rate compared to their non-foster peers between 2015 and 2019. However, the median earnings gap expanded over the same time. Those who were not in foster care earned higher median earnings and experienced a higher rate of increase over time.

Background

The 2020 Washington State Legislature directed the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) to provide annual reports on the educational outcomes of students in foster care and students who had experienced homelessness, compared to their general peers¹. The budget bill identified several indicators to be reported, including kindergarten readiness, early grade reading and math, ninth-grade students on track to graduate, high school completion, postsecondary enrollment, postsecondary completion, school attendance, school mobility, special education status, and school discipline. To observe racial/ethnic disparities, the Legislature further requested analyzing these indicators by race/ethnicity. Additionally, the Project Education Impact (PEI) workgroup recommended examining the workforce outcomes for students as they transitioned into adulthood. This report specifically presents the findings for children and youth in foster care².

¹ Substitute House Bill 2711, Chapter 233, Law of 2020.

² For findings from homeless analysis, see Chen, V. W. and Hough, G. C. (2021) *Education and Workforce Outcomes for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness*. Olympia, WA: Education Research and Data Center, Office of Financial Management.

Data and analytical approach

This study employed data from WA P-20 Data Warehouse (WA P-20 DW) housed at ERDC, merged with foster care data from the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), to track children or youth over time³. For the indicators representing only the K-12 sector, this study specifically utilizes data extracted from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction State Report Card ([OSPI-SRC](#)).

The study includes children and youth who enrolled in WA public K-12 schools and public postsecondary institutions at any point of time between 2012 and 2020 school years. The focus of the analysis is to descriptively compare the education and workforce outcomes between students in foster care any time between 2012 and 2020 to their peers that were not in foster care.

This study utilizes descriptive analysis to measure changes in disparities over time. The table below describes the six student samples used for different analytical purposes⁴. Cross-sectional samples depicted the trend of educational and workforce gaps between foster and non-foster students in Washington from 2015 to 2020. Alternatively, longitudinal samples allowed for identifying gaps between the foster care and non-foster care youth, as well as identifying the direction of changes by following up the same group of students for nine years. The latter is crucial for evaluating policy intervention.

Table 1: Study Samples

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Study samples									
Cross-sectional									
All K-12				K-G12	K-G12	K-G12	K-G12	K-G12	K-G12
All HSG				HSG	HSG	HSG	HSG	HSG	
All adult age 18+				Age 18+	Age 18+	Age 18+	Age 18+	Age 18+	
Longitudinal									
2012 Kindergarten	K	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8
2012 8 th grade	G8	G9	G10	G11	G12	PS1	PS2	PS3	PS4
2012 Adult	Age 18+	Age 19+	Age 20+	Age 21+	Age 22+	Age 23+	Age 24+	Age 25+	

Note: K: kindergarten; G: grade level; HSG: high school graduate; PS: postsecondary education.

³ See Technical Notes in Appendix A for details about data resources.

⁴ The sample selection is based on data availability and quality. Details about data, measurements, and samples are available in Appendix A.

What are the educational outcomes for students in foster care over the past 5 years?

Cross-Sectional Analysis of Education Outcomes

This section summarizes the key takeaways from the cross-sectional analysis. Cross-sectional samples depict the trend of educational gaps between foster and non-foster students. Detailed tables that support corresponding findings can be found in Appendix B.

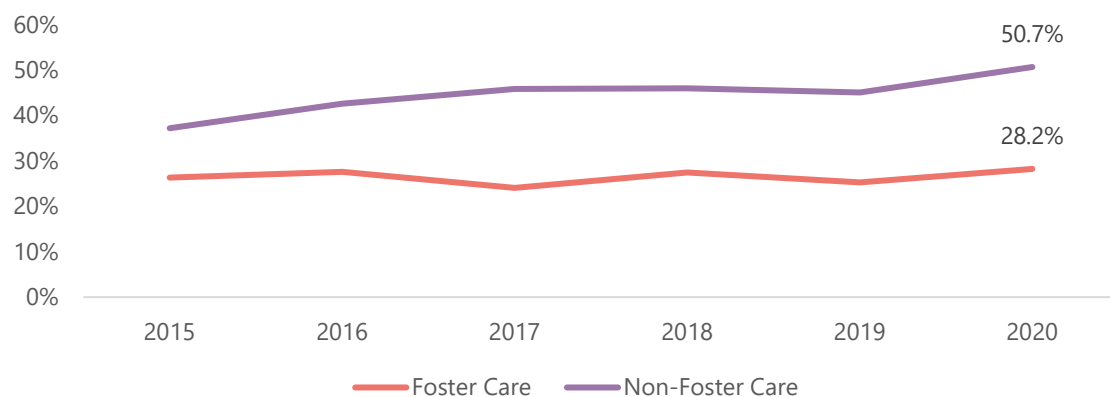
Key Finding

The gaps between foster and non-foster students in every measure of educational progression and achievements persisted from 2015 to 2020.

Kindergarten readiness

Students in foster care were less likely to meet kindergarten readiness standards compared to their non-foster peers in 2015 to 2020. Figure 1-1 indicates that the percentage of students meeting kindergarten readiness standards has been increasing for non-foster students since 2015, whereas the percentage of students in foster care that meet kindergarten readiness has remained stagnant during that same period. This leads to an expanding kindergarten readiness gap over time.

Figure 1-1. Percent of Students Kindergarten Ready in 6 Assessment Domains, by Foster Care Status for 2015-2020.

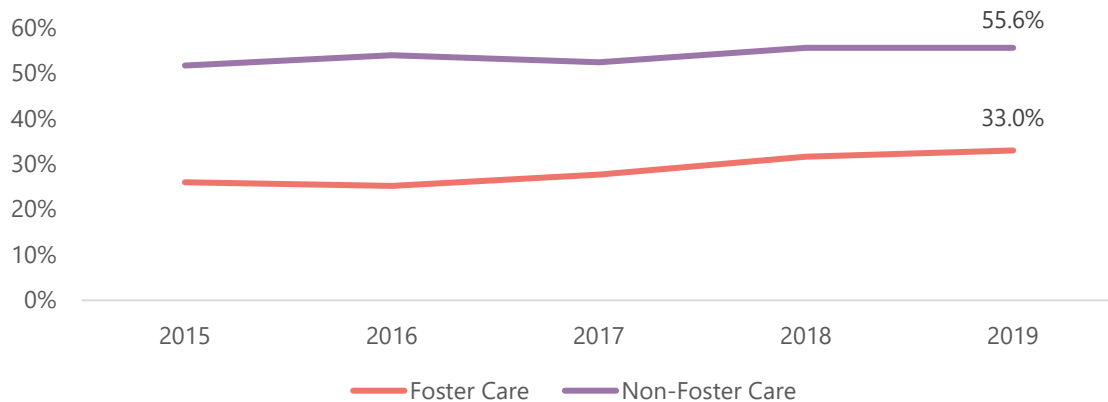


Data source: OSPI-SRC. The 2020 data is impacted by Covid-19, which only reflects the records collected from September of 2019 to February of 2020, not the whole year. See Table 1 in Appendix B for detail table.

Early grade academic achievement: ELA & Math

Students in foster care were less likely to meet 3rd grade English Language Arts (ELA) standards than their non-foster peers in 2015 to 2019 (Figure 1-2). The trend of the gap in meeting ELA standards has been slightly decreasing.

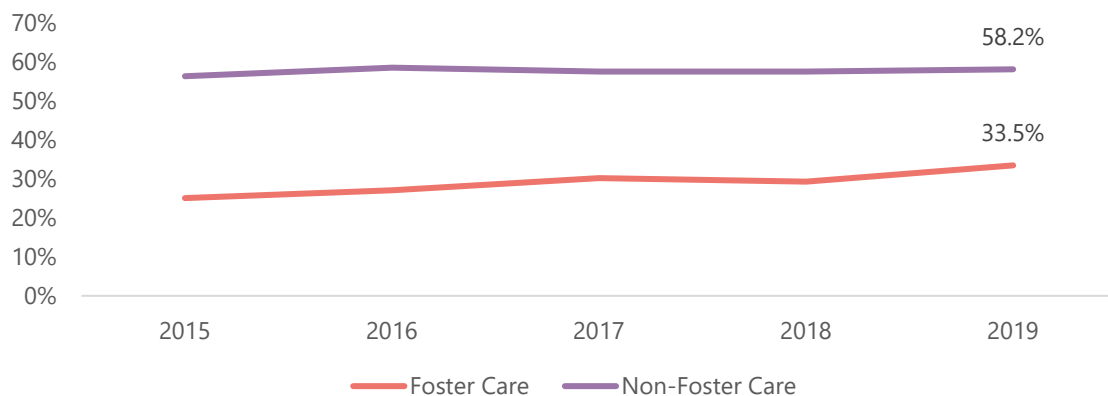
Figure 1-2. Percent of Students Meeting 3rd Grade English Language Arts Standard, by Foster Care Status for 2015-2019



Data source: OSPI-SRC. See also Table 1 in Appendix B for details.

Figure 1-3 finds that the percentage of students in foster care meeting 3rd grade Math standards has increased more rapidly compared to the non-foster group. The gap between the two student groups reduced from 31 percentage points to 25 points over the time period examined. However, foster care students still lag behind the non-foster group in meeting the standards.

Figure 1-3. Percent of students Meeting 3rd Grade Mathematics Standard, by Foster Care Status for 2015-2019

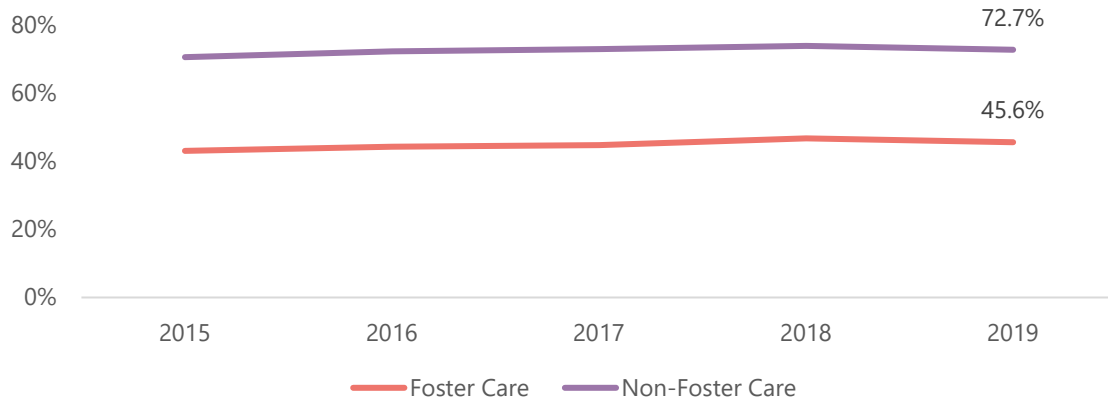


Data source: OSPI-SRC. See also Table 1 in Appendix B for details.

Ninth grade on-track to graduate

Less than half of students in foster care were on track to graduate in 9th grade. The percentage of students in foster care on track to graduate was consistently 25 or more percentage points lower than the non-foster care group in each year examined (Figure 1-4).

Figure 1-4. Percent of Students 9th Grade On-Track, by Foster Care Status for 2015-2019.

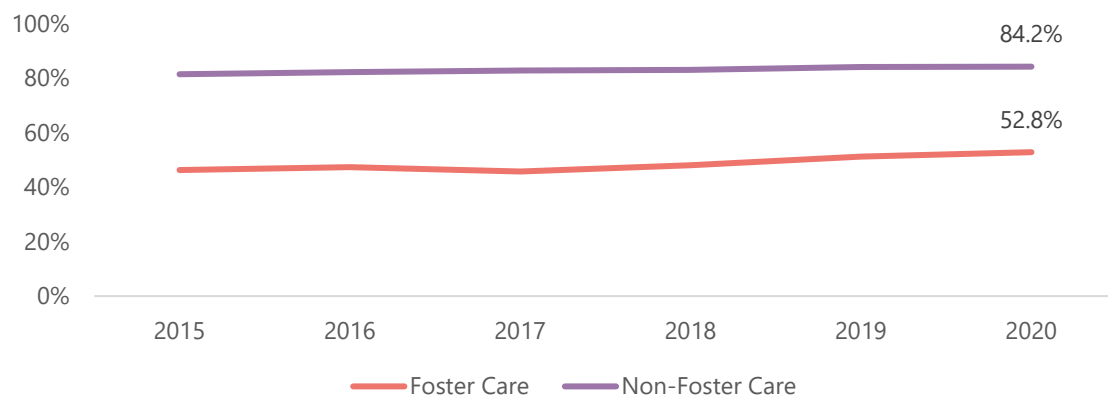


Data source: OSPI-SRC. See also Table 1-4 in Appendix B for details.

Five-year graduation rates

Figure 1-5 indicates that the five-year graduation rate for students in foster care has improved since 2015. However, it is still much lower than the graduation rate of students not in foster care. The gap has gradually closed, from a 35-percentage point difference in 2015 to 31 percentage points in 2020.

Figure 1-5. Percent of Students Graduating in 5 Years, by Foster Care Status for 2015-2020.

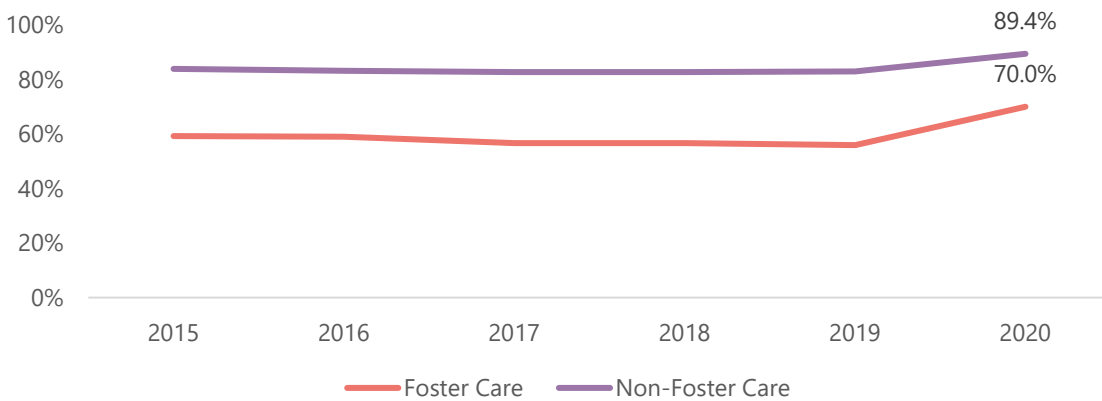


Data source: OSPI-SRC. The 2020 data is impacted by Covid-19, which only reflects the records collected from September of 2019 to February of 2020, not the whole year. See also Table 1 in Appendix B for details.

School attendance

Students not in foster care had better school attendance than students in foster care. There is little change in attendance rate over time within each student group (Figure 1-6). As of 2019, the difference in attendance rates over time widened slightly from 25 to 27%, favoring students not in foster care.

Figure 1-6. Percent of Students with Regular Attendance, by Foster Care Status for 2015-2020.

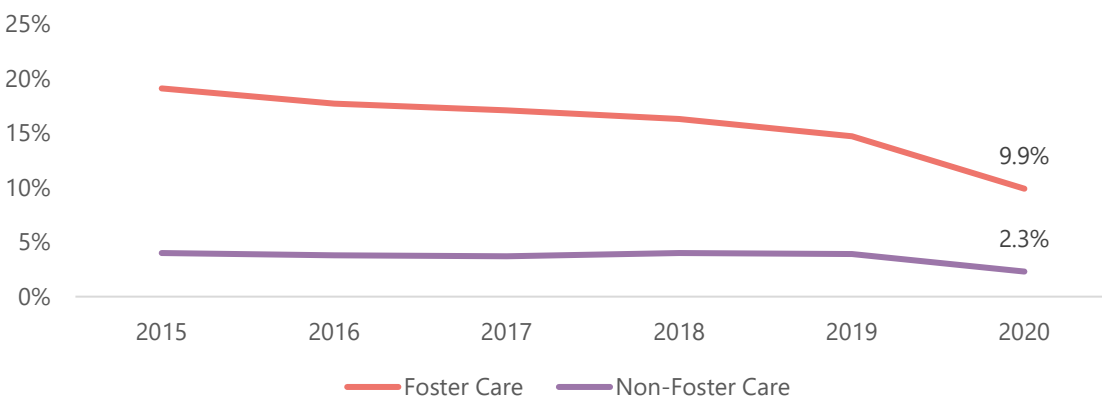


Data source: OSPI-SRC. The 2020 data is impacted by Covid-19, which only reflects the records collected from September of 2019 to February of 2020, not the whole year. See also Table 1 in Appendix B for details.

School discipline

A higher percentage of students in foster care experienced disciplinary action compared to their peers. The discipline rates for students in foster care declined from 19% to 15% between 2015 and 2019 (Figure 1-7). The gap in discipline rates narrowed over time due to more rapid decline for students in foster care while rates for non-foster peers remained constant.

Figure 1-7. Percent of Students with Disciplinary Action, by Foster Care Status for 2015-2020.

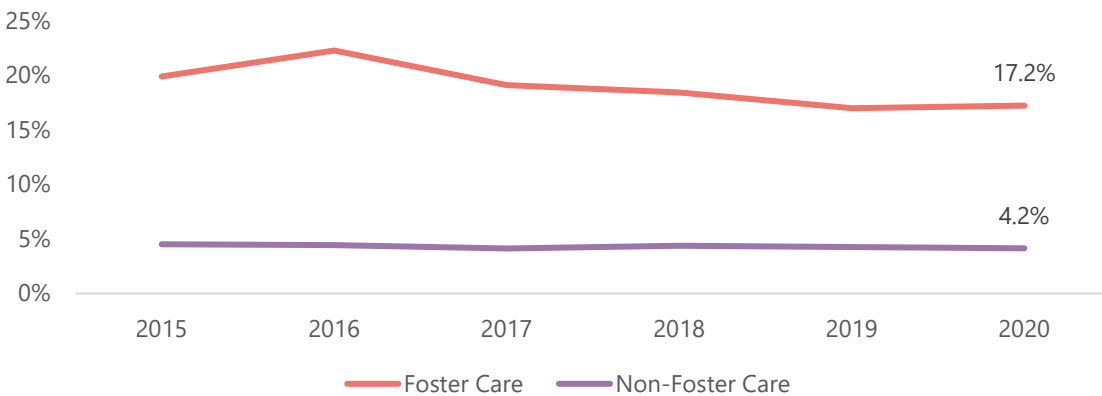


Data source: OSPI-SRC. The 2020 data is impacted by Covid-19, which only reflects the records collected from September of 2019 to February of 2020, not the whole year. See also Table 1 in Appendix B for details.

School mobility

Students in foster care were more likely to change schools compared to their non-foster care peers. School mobility rates declined from 20 to 17% for students in foster care, while the rates remained the same for the non-foster students (Figure 1-8).

Figure 1-8. Percent of Students with Mobility, by Foster Care Status for 2015-2020.

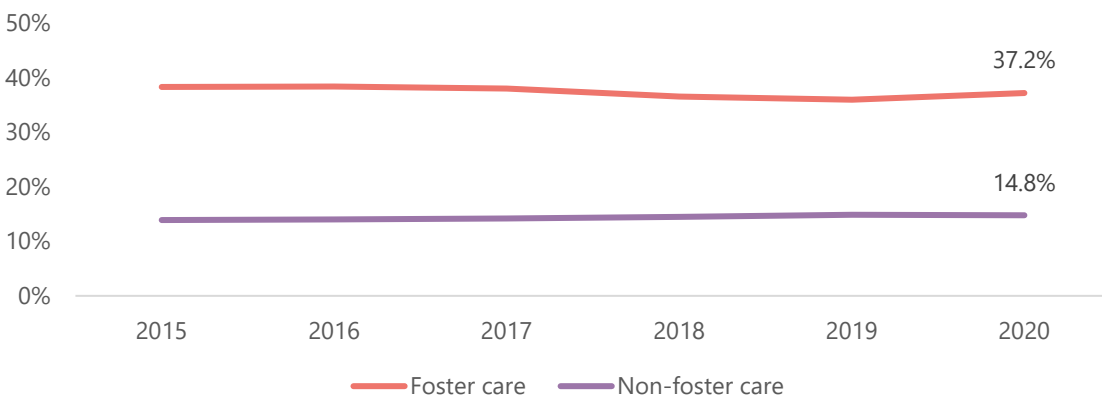


Data source: OSPI-SRC. The 2020 data is impacted by Covid-19, which only reflects the records collected from September of 2019 to February of 2020, not the whole year. See also Table 1 in Appendix B for details.

Students with disabilities

Figure 1-9 indicates that students in foster care displayed a higher rate of disability status. The trend shows a slight decline over time, whereas the trend for non-foster care students shows a slight increase. A slightly narrowed gap in disability rates from 24 to 21 percentage points was observed across the time period for this study.

Figure 1-9. Percent of Students with Disability, by Foster Care Status for 2015-2020.

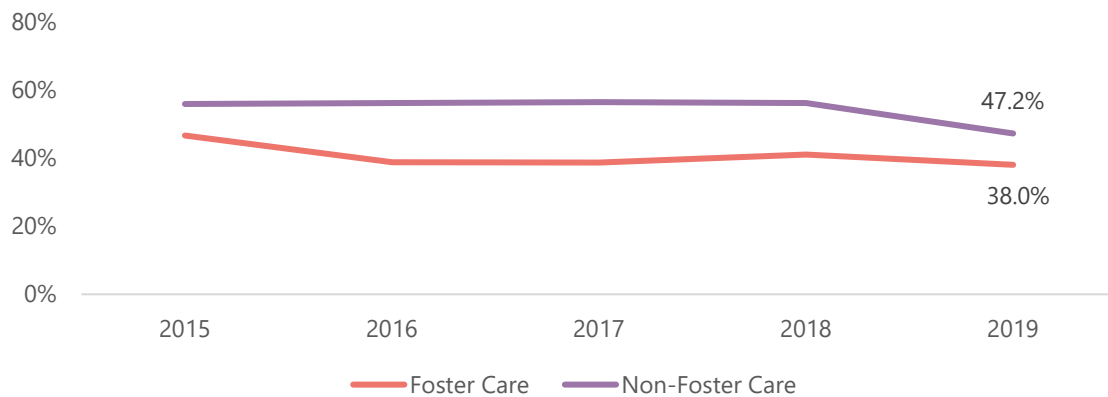


Data source: OSPI-SRC. The 2020 data is impacted by Covid-19, which only reflects the records collected from September of 2019 to February of 2020, not the whole year. See also Table 1 in Appendix B for details.

College going rate

College going rate refers to postsecondary enrollment one year after a student graduates from high school. Figure 1-10 demonstrates high school graduates' college going rate. A higher percentage of students not in foster care go to college compared to the percentage of students in foster care. The rate for students in foster care dropped by 8% for the Class of 2016, compared to Class of 2015. This decline thus increased the gap between foster and non-foster students. The gap in college going rate between these two groups persisted through the Class of 2018. In 2019, there was the lowest college going rate for both groups, which resulted in a smaller gap, though not a positive outcome for improving student access to higher education.

Figure 1-10. College Going Rate in One Year after High School Graduation, by Foster Care Status for Graduation Class of 2015 to 2019



Data source: ERDC's analysis using data from CEDARS, DCYF, PCHEES, and SBCTC. The analysis for the Class of 2019 includes 2020 college enrollment data which was impacted by COVID-19. The result is recommended to be interpreted with caution. See also Table 1 in Appendix B for details.

What are the educational outcomes for a group of students that experienced foster care over time?

Longitudinal Analysis of Education Outcomes

In a prior report⁵, ERDC researchers found racial/ethnic disparities in K-12 educational achievement between students in foster care and their non-foster peers. To shed light on identifying the mechanisms associated with achievement gaps, this study further examined the racial/ethnic disparities of three risk factors addressed in SHB 2711: student mobility, chronic absenteeism, and school discipline.

This section summarizes the key takeaways from the longitudinal analysis of education outcomes. Detailed tables that support corresponding findings can be found in Appendix B.

Rather than reporting on a snapshot in time, a longitudinal analysis allows observers to follow a cohort of students over time. The analysis on longitudinal cohorts follows the same group of individuals enrolled in the 2011-12 school year over nine years. This type of analysis helps investigate when and whether there is cumulative impact of these factors on achievements and gaps over time⁶.

Key Finding

Compared to their non-foster peers, students in foster care experienced higher school mobility, were at a higher risk of being absent, and were more likely to experience school disciplinary exclusions during their middle and high school years.

Frequency of school enrollments from 1st to 12th grade

The 2012 kindergartener cohort in foster care enrolled in more schools each school year than their non-foster peers through elementary to middle school. However, the gap almost disappeared by 8th grade⁷ (Figure 2-1). By contrast, the 2012 8th grade cohort in foster care were more likely to change schools especially in 9th and 10th grade (Figure 2-2). The gap in school mobility between foster and non-foster students dropped by the senior year of high school. During the high school years, students identifying as American Indian/ Native American were

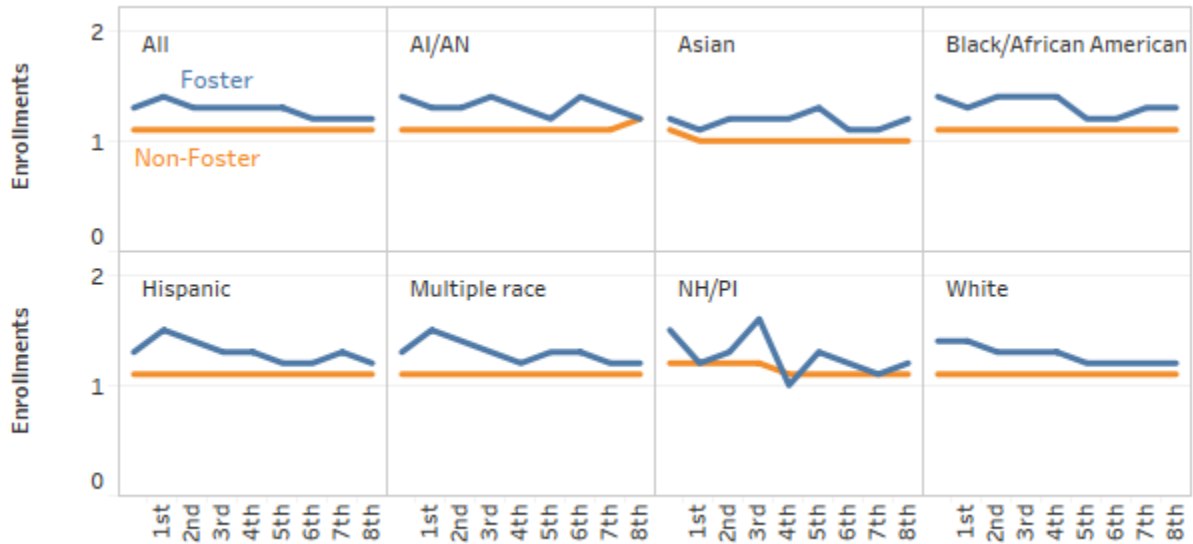
⁵ Chen, V., Pyle, K., and Aldrich, T. (2020). *Educational Outcomes for Children and Youth Experiencing Foster Care*. Olympia, WA: Education Research and Data Center, Office of Financial Management.

⁶ The findings presented here focus on the overall patterns and less on discussions about racial/ethnic disparity, due to small sample size for students in foster care after desegregating by race/ethnicity. It is required that ERDC reports need to follow the [data privacy regulations](#) to suppress records with sample size less than 10.

⁷ However, the result might suffer from high attrition rate after following up 2012 cohort for 9 years.

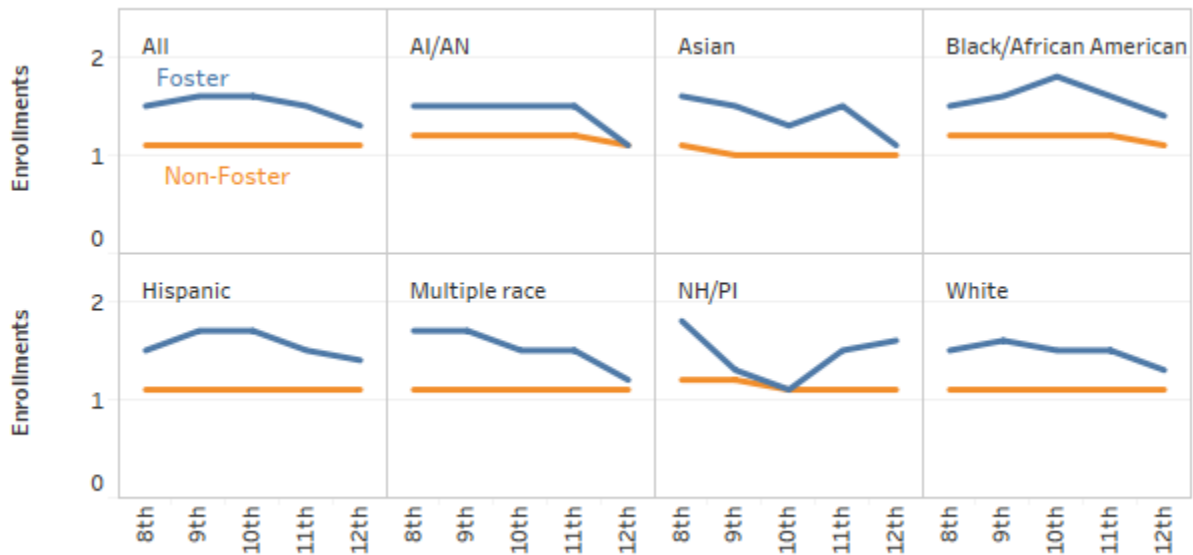
less likely to change schools. This racial group also displayed a lower gap between foster and non-foster students.

Figure 2-1. Average Number of School Enrollments for 2012 *Kindergarteners* from kindergarten to 8th grade (2012 to 2020), by Foster Care Status and Race/Ethnicity



Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. The 8th grade result is from 2020 enrollment data which was impacted by COVID-19. See Table 2-1 in Appendix B for details.

Figure 2-2. Average Number of School Enrollments for 2012 8th Graders from 8th to 12th grade (2012 to 2016), by Foster Care Status and Race/Ethnicity

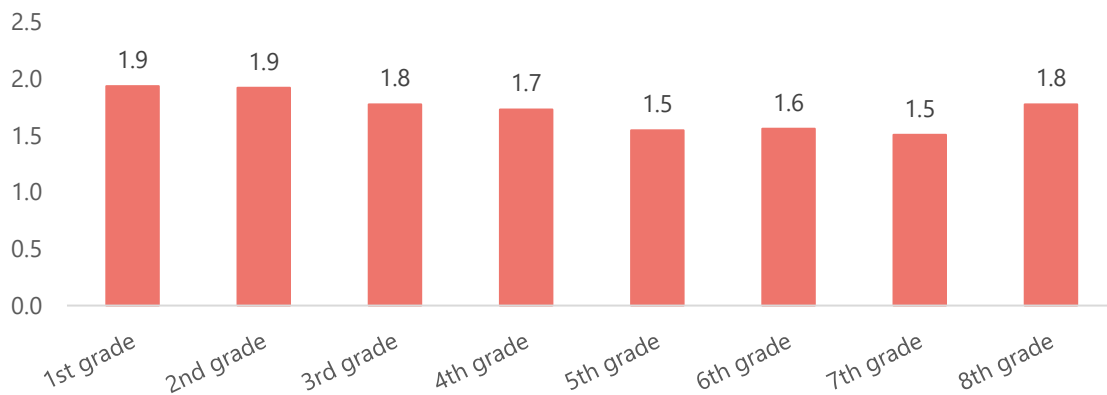


Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. See Table 2-2 in Appendix B for details.

Chronic absenteeism⁸ over time

Figure 2-3 presents the odds ratio of being chronically absent from school for the 2012 kindergartener cohort in foster care compared to their general peers. Foster care students were about 2 times more likely to experience chronic absenteeism in the 1st grade. The odds decline to about 1.5 times as likely in 7th grade⁹.

Figure 2-3. Odds of Chronic Absenteeism between Foster and Non-Foster over Grade Level (2013-2020), for 2012 Kindergarteners



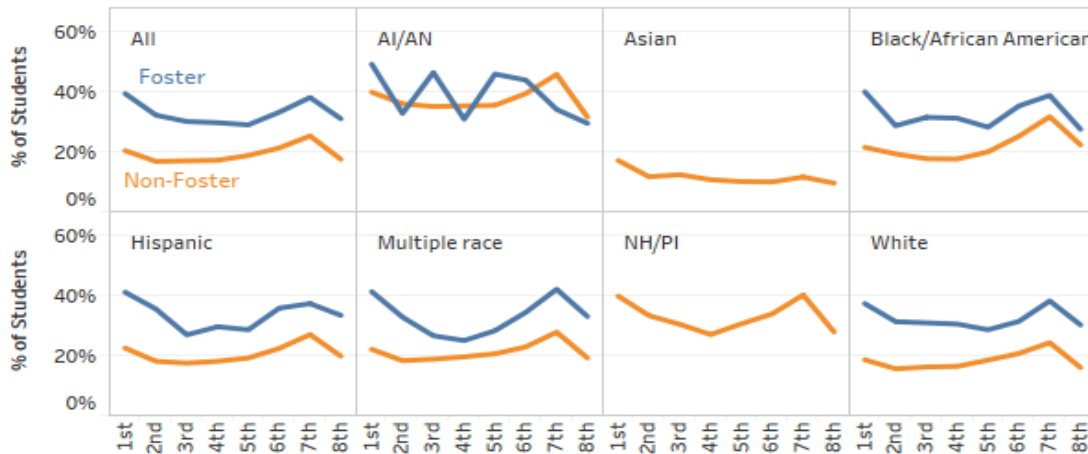
Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. The 8th grade result is from 2020 enrollment data which was impacted by COVID-19. See Table 2-3 in Appendix B for details.

⁸ Chronic absenteeism is defined as a student being absent from school for 15 or more days within a school year. (<https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html>)

⁹ The increase in 8th grade may be due to inconsistent data collection in 2020 during COVID-19.

Figure 2-4 shows the percent for chronic absenteeism disaggregated by race. American Indian/Alaskan Native and Pacific Islander students were more likely to be absent than other racial/ethnic groups, whereas Asian American students have the lowest rates of chronic absenteeism. Within racial/ethnic group, the gap in chronic absenteeism between foster and non-foster students are found the smallest among American Indians/Alaskan Natives.

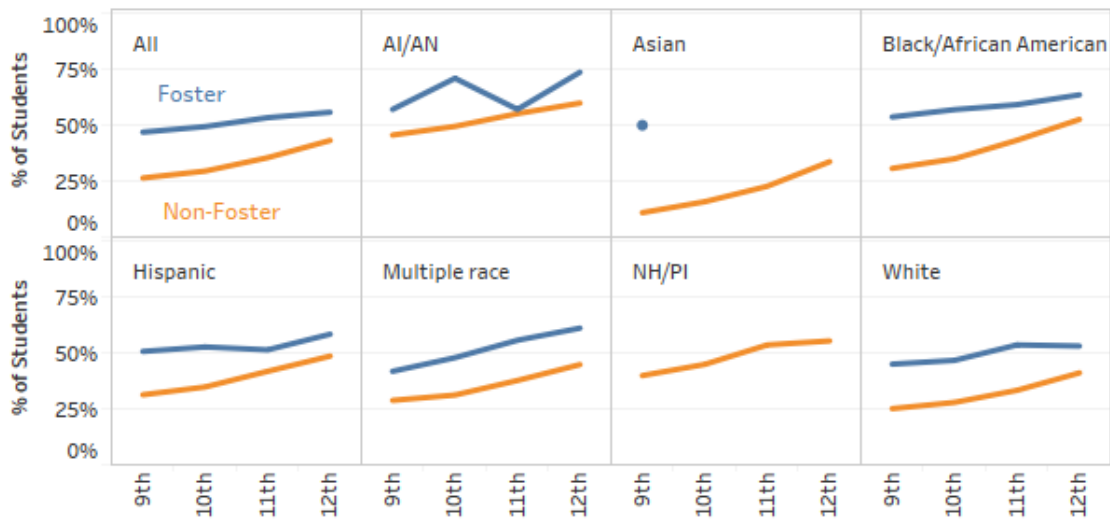
Figure 2-4. Percent Chronic Absenteeism between Foster and Non-Foster over Grade Level for 2012 Kindergarteners, by Race/Ethnicity



Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. The 8th grade result is from 2020 enrollment data which was impacted by COVID-19. Blank trends refer to data with sample size < 10, which need to be suppressed in the report. See Table 2-3 in Appendix B for details.

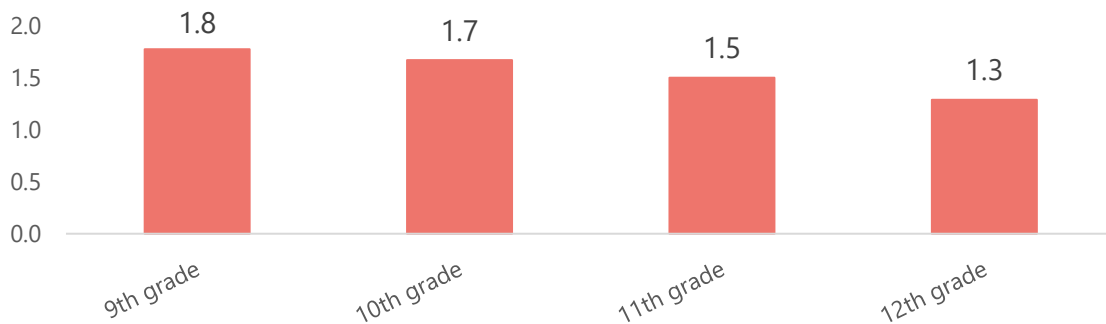
For the 2012 8th grader cohort the chronic absenteeism rate increased during high school (see “All” panel in Figure 2-5). However, the gap in chronic absenteeism between students in foster care and their non-foster peers decreased from 9th to 12th grade (Figure 2-6). This suggests that chronic absenteeism grows regardless of a student’s foster status, but students in foster care are still at a greater risk of being chronically absent.

Figure 2-5. Percent Chronic Absenteeism between Foster and Non-Foster Students over High School (2013-2016) for 2012 8th graders, by Race/Ethnicity



Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. Blank trends refer to data with sample size <10, which need to be suppressed in the report. See Table 2-4 in Appendix B for details.

Figure 2-6. Odds of Chronic Absenteeism between Foster and non-Foster over High School (2013-2016), for 2012 8th Graders

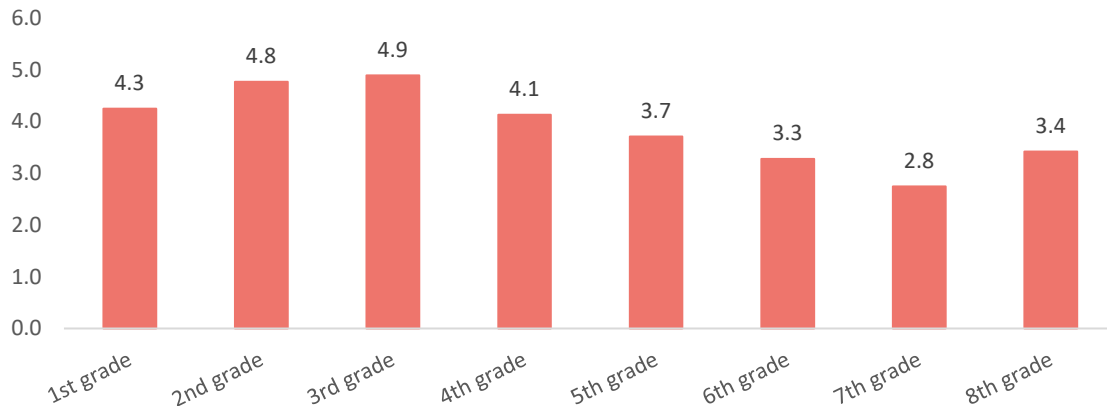


Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. See Table 2-4 in Appendix B for details.

School disciplinary exclusion over time

Among the 2012 kindergarten cohort, students in foster care were more likely to experience school disciplinary exclusion than their non-foster peers by 4 to 5 times through 3rd grade. After 4th grade the rate started to decline for several years, with an increase in the final year (8th grade). (Figure 2-7).

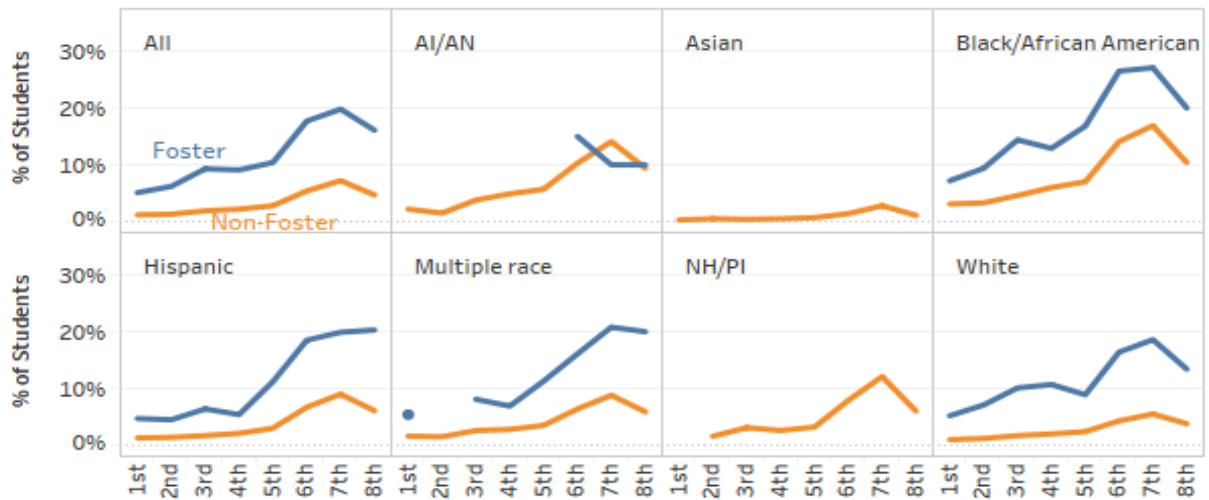
Figure 2-7. Odds of School Disciplinary Exclusion between Foster and non-Foster over Grade Level (2013-2020), for 2012 Kindergarteners



Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. The 8th grade result is from 2020 enrollment data which was impacted by COVID-19. See Table 2-5 in Appendix B for details.

Students were more likely to experience school disciplinary exclusion especially when they proceeded to middle school (Figure 2-8). The gap between foster care students and non-foster care students experiencing disciplinary exclusion increased as they aged up, with the greatest gap occurring in Grade 7. Regardless of race, students in foster care experience higher rates of disciplinary exclusion. In middle school, students of color in the foster care system receive the highest rates of exclusion, particularly Black/African American students, Hispanic/Latino students, and students of multiple races. The gap in school exclusion rates between foster and non-foster students were highest among White students.

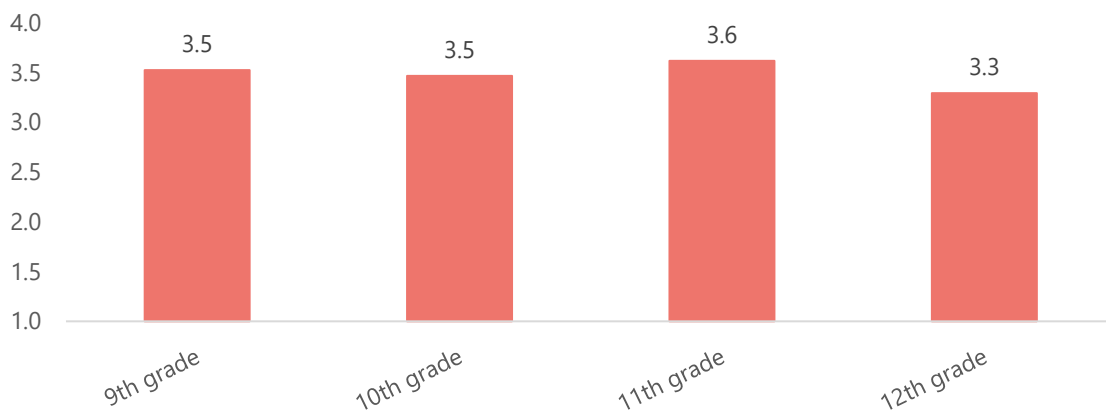
Figure 2-8. Percent Experiencing School Disciplinary Action between Foster and Non-Foster over Grade Level (2013-2020) for 2012 kindergarteners, by Race/Ethnicity



Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. The 8th grade result is from 2020 enrollment data which was impacted by COVID-19. Blank trend refers to no data or cell size < 10, which need to be suppressed in the report See Table 2-5 in Appendix B for details.

For the 2012 8th grade cohort, students in foster care were about 3.5 times more likely to experience school disciplinary exclusion from 9th to 11th grade. The gap dropped slightly in 12th grade (Figure 2-9).

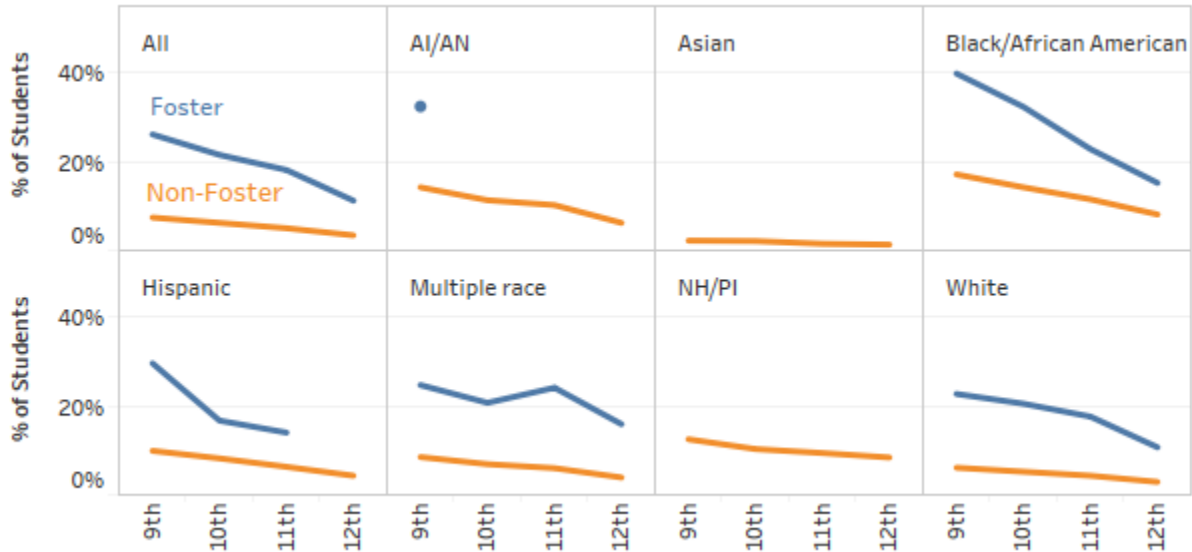
Figure 2-9. Odds of School Disciplinary Exclusion between Foster and non-Foster over High School, for 2012 8th Graders



Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. See Table 2-6 in Appendix B for details.

Students in foster care experienced higher rates of exclusion than their non-foster care peers. This was especially pronounced for students of color in the foster care system. For example, Black/African American students in foster care had a higher disciplinary rate than the average for all foster care students for all four years (Figure 2-10). However, all racial/ethnic groups saw a decline over their high school career.

Figure 2-10. Percent School Disciplinary Exclusion for 2012 8th Graders over High School (2013-2016), by Foster Care and Race/Ethnicity



Data source: ERDC analysis using OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. Blank trend refers to no data or cell size < 10. See Table 2-6 in Appendix B for details.

What are the employment outcomes for young adults that were in foster care over the past 5 years?

Cross-sectional Analysis of Employment Outcomes

This section summarizes the key takeaways from the cross-sector analysis. Cross-sectional samples depict the trend of employment gaps between foster and non-foster students. Detailed tables that support corresponding findings can be found in Appendix B. All the data related to workforce outcomes are for young adults that were employed in Washington state (see Table A in Appendix A for age distribution of these young adults in the study sample).

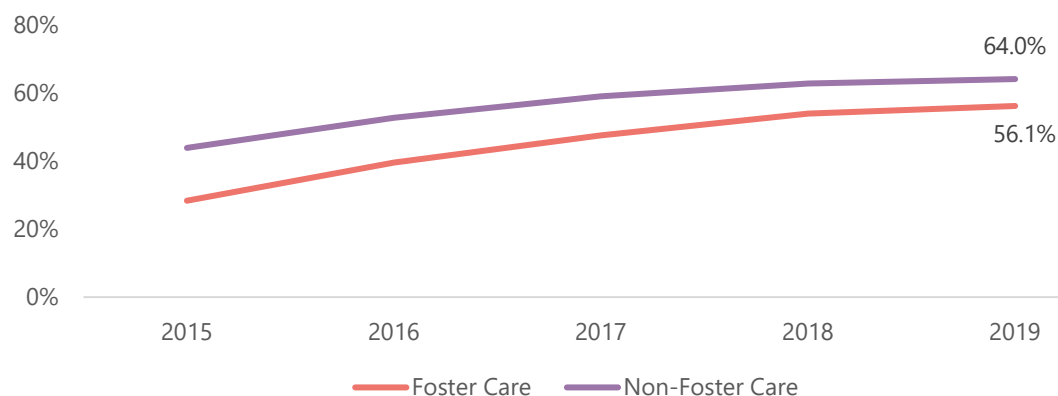
Key Finding

Employment outcomes for students that never experienced foster care are more positive. Young adults not in foster care have a higher percentage of employment, work more hours, and have a higher median wage. The employment gap between these groups decreased between 2015 and 2019, while the median earnings gap expanded over the same time.

Employment rate

The percentage of employment increased for all young adults who were age 18 or older between 2015 and 2019, as they aged and gained more education and work experience. However, there is still a higher rate of employment for young adults that did not experience in foster care. Figure 3-1 indicates that employment for young adults with experience in the foster care system is increasing at a more rapid pace than employment rates than their non-foster peers. This contributes to a slightly narrowing gap in employment status between these two groups.

Figure 3-1. Percent Employed for Young Adults Age 18 or Older, by Foster Care Status for 2015 to 2019

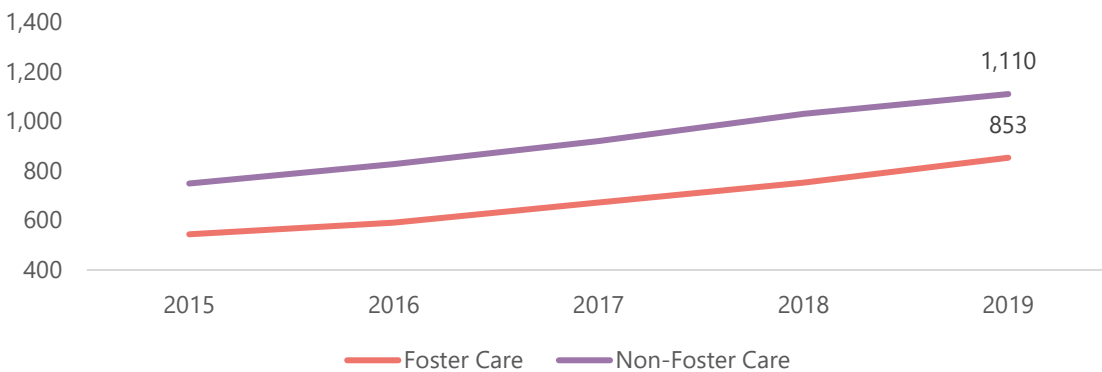


Data source: ERDC's analysis with foster care data from DCYF and UI Wage data from the Employment Security Department. See also Table 3 in Appendix B for details.

Work Hours

In addition to a higher rate of employment, young adults that had never experienced foster care received a higher average number of work hours each year compared to young adults that were in foster care. Both groups are increasing the average number of hours worked each year at a similar pace. Therefore, between 2015 and 2019, the gap in annual work hours (Figure 3-2), remained stagnant.

Figure 3-2. Average Annual Work Hours for Young Adults Age 18 or Older, by Foster Care Status from 2015 to 2019

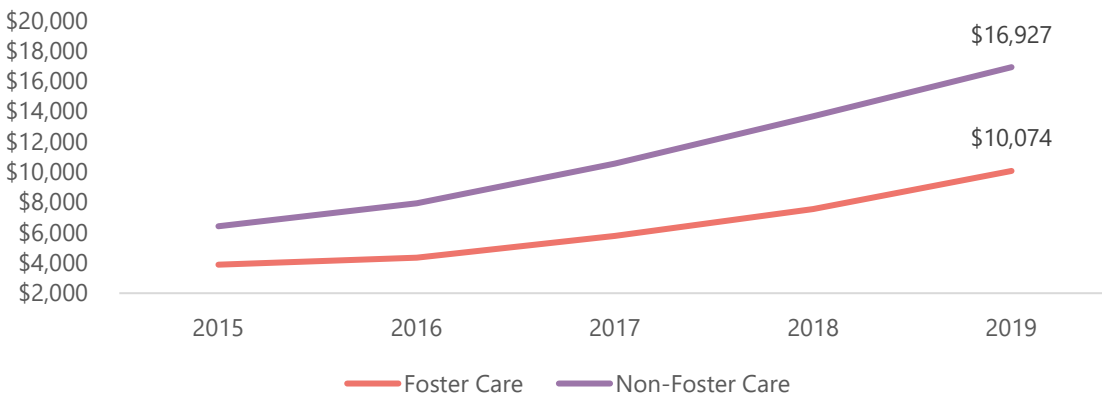


Data source: ERDC's analysis with foster care data from DCYF and UI Wage data from the Employment Security Department. See also Table 2 in Appendix B for details.

Annual Earnings

Finally, young adults that had never experienced foster care have higher median annual earnings compared to young adults that were in foster care. The gap in median annual earnings has expanded over time (Figure 3-3).

Figure 3-3. Median Annual Earnings for Young Adults Age 18 or Older, by foster care status from 2015 to 2019



Data source: ERDC's analysis with foster care data from DCYF and UI Wage data from the Employment Security Department. See also Table 3 in Appendix B for details. Earnings are adjusted to 2019 Consumer Price Index (CPI)

What are the educational outcomes for a group of young adults that experienced foster care over time?

Longitudinal Analysis of Employment Outcomes

This section summarizes the key takeaways from the longitudinal analysis of employment outcomes. Detailed tables that support corresponding findings can be found in Appendix B. The analysis on longitudinal cohorts follows the same group of individuals enrolled in the 2011-12 school year over nine years. Again, the data related to workforce outcomes are for young adults that remain employed in Washington state.

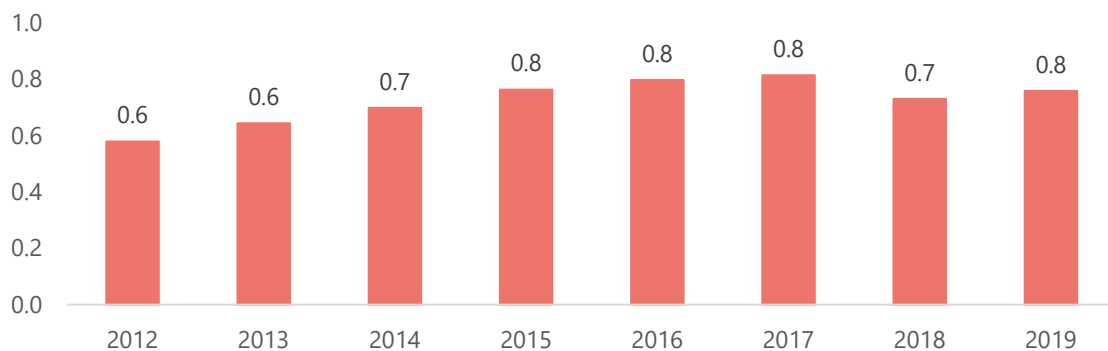
It is worth noticing that the employment analysis suffered from relatively few foster care young adults in the sample. Some outliers, thus, may contribute to the spiking trend for some racial/ethnic group which couldn't be comprehensively interpreted.

Finding #4

The gap in the employment rate decreased as young adults who were in foster care increased workforce participation at a higher rate than their non-foster peers from 2012 to 2019. However, gaps in work hours and median earnings gradually expanded over the same time, with young adults not in foster care earning more.

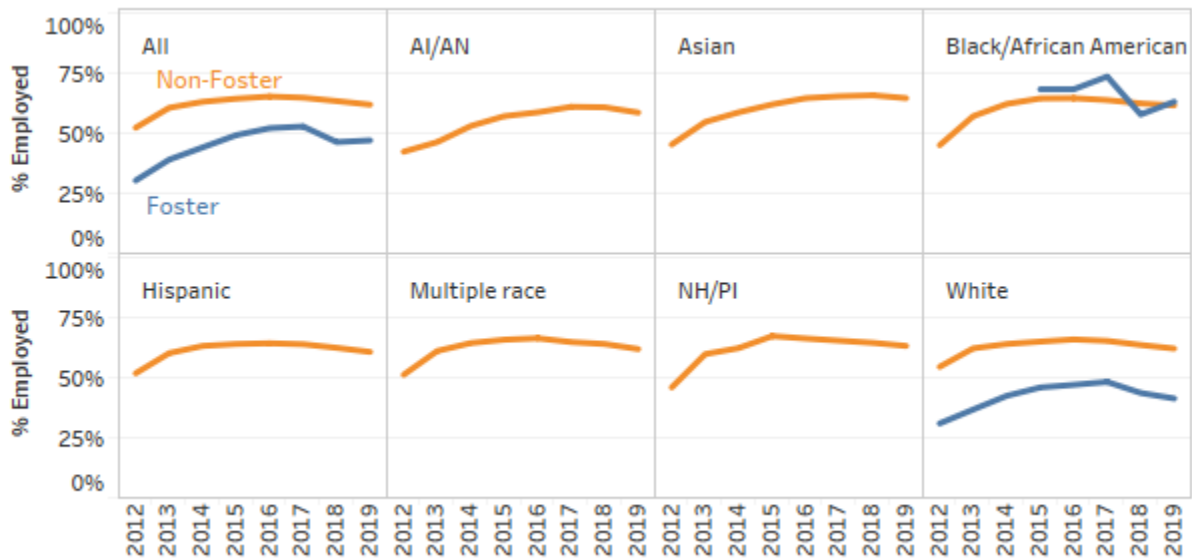
Figures 4-1 and 4-2 indicate that the employment in Washington steadily improved over time as these young adults earned more education and work experience. Young adults who were ever in foster care had lower employment rate than their non-foster peers. The employment gap, represented by odds of percent employed, between these two groups gradually closed by 2017, but reversed slightly in 2018.

Figure 4-1. Odds of Employed between Foster and non-Foster from 2012-2019, for 2012 Age Group 18+



Data source: ERDC analysis using UI Wage data from ESD and foster care data from DCYF. Odds ratio=(percent employed of Foster Care)/(percent employed of non-Foster Care). See Table 4-1 in Appendix B for details.

Figure 4-2. Percent Employed for 2012 18+ Age Group from 2012 to 2019, by Foster Care and Race/Ethnicity

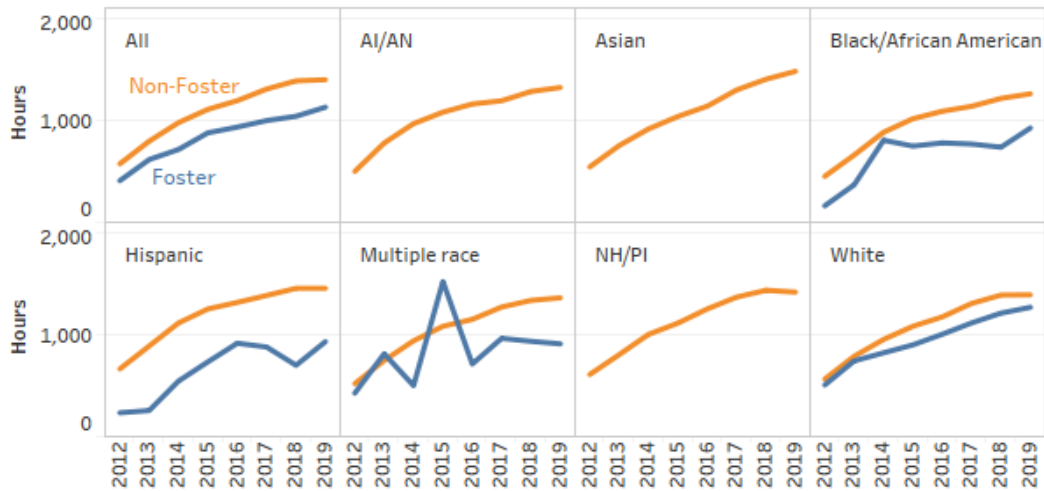


Data source: ERDC analysis using UI Wage data from ESD and foster care data from DCYF. Blank trend refers to no data or cell size < 10. See Table 4-1 in Appendix B for details.

Similar to the results from the cross-sectional analysis, young adults who were ever in foster care worked fewer hours and earned lower median earnings than their non-foster peers (Figures 4-3 and 4-4). However, unlike the employment gap previously shown, the gaps in work hours and median earnings increased over time for the same cohort of young adults in the longitudinal analysis.

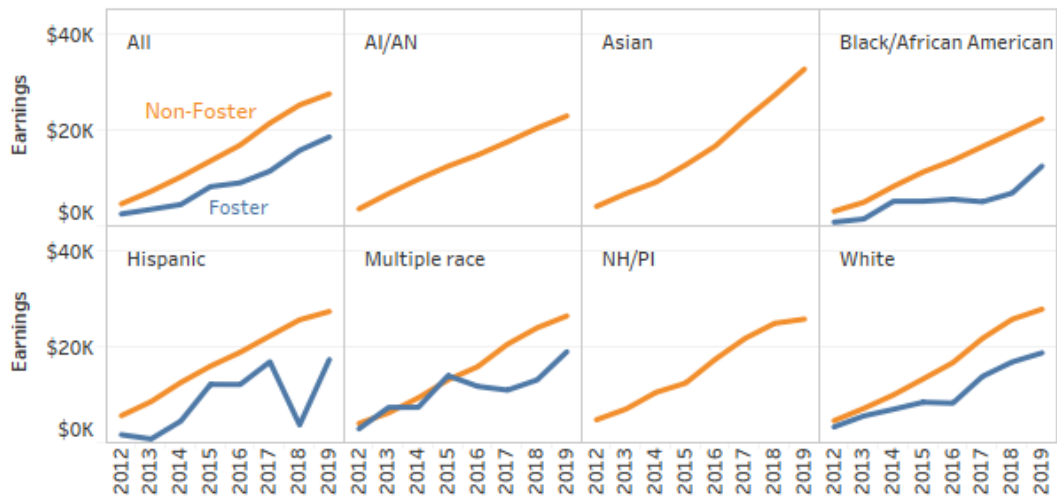
For analysis comparing racial/ethnic differences, this study suffers from small sample size. The gaps in employment outcomes by race/ethnicity needs further study with more workforce data not limited to only Washington employment.

Figure 4-3. Average Annual Work Hours for 2012 18+ Age Group from 2012-2019, by Foster Care and Race/Ethnicity



Note: Blank trend refers to no data or cell size < 10. See Table 4-2 in Appendix B for details.

Figure 4-4. Median Earnings for 2012 18+ Age Group from 2012-2019, by Foster Care and Race/Ethnicity



Note: Blank trend refers to no data or cell size < 10. See Table 4-3 in Appendix B for details.

Conclusion

Using both cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses, this study highlights persistent gaps in educational and employment outcomes between students in foster care and students that had no experience in the foster care system. The trends in this report illuminate potential areas for educators and policymakers to focus on to improve the Washington education system's ability to serve students in foster care.

Gaps in academic outcomes between the two groups in either perpetuated or slightly narrowed from 2015 to 2020. During the same time, gaps in measures of risk factors associated with negative academic outcomes declined but remained. While employment among young adults improved over time, earnings disparities continued to expand. The extent to which risky behaviors contribute to foster and non-foster gaps in academic outcomes, and thus impact employment outcomes is unknown and requires further analysis.

To lay the groundwork for future research explaining the outcome disparities, this study tracked the same student cohorts over nine years to portray gaps in risk factors. The findings indicate that risk factors were more profound during high school years, while school mobility slowed down. Whether these patterns impact post-secondary employment and educational outcomes goes beyond the scope of this study.

There were a few data limitations that impacted this study. First, the educational outcome measures are only representative for students enrolled in Washington public K-12 schools or higher education institutions. The outcomes from private sector or out-of-state schools were not accessible. Also, unemployment insurance records used in the employment analysis offered a limited amount of information about the Washington workforce. Finally, the findings of racial/ethnic disparity are mixed and are highly limited by data constraints. The overall population of Washington students in foster care is low, therefore some racial groups had very small sample sizes. The result is that the trends for students in foster care for some racial groups were highly impacted by a few outliers. Findings are thus less generalizable to the overall foster care student population. These limitations need to be taken into consideration while interpreting the findings.

Future research

This 2021 study provides a fundamental understanding of education and workforce outcomes for students in foster care and their general peers. However, it also posed the needs for deeper analysis. ERDC has worked with the PEI workgroup and identified several research priorities including: (1) an analysis of the correlation between foster care placement type, placement stability, and outcomes¹⁰; (2) disparity in life-long outcomes for youth in foster care experiencing various post-secondary education pathways; (3) the impact of extended foster care¹¹, and (4)

¹⁰ Clemens, E. V., Klopfenstein, K., Lalonde, T. L., and Tis, M. (2018). The Effects of Placement and School Stability on Academic Growth Trajectories of Students in Foster Care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, Volume 87: 86-94.

¹¹ Miller, M., Bales, D., & Hirsch, M. (2020). Extended Foster Care in Washington State: Final Report. (Document Number 20-05-3201). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

identification of districts that successfully improve education outcomes or closing the opportunity gap for students in foster care. Moving forward, ERDC will continue the partnership with the workgroup to provide data-driven evidence for policy aiming to improve lifelong outcomes for students in foster care.

Appendix A. Technical Notes

Data

Three data sources contributed to this study:

1. The Department of Children, Youth, and Family provided foster care data for all children and youth who were in DCFS placement care and authority, age 3-21, in an open removal episode anytime between 01/01/2012 and 05/01/2021.
2. The WA P-20 Data Warehouse maintained by ERDC provides administrative records about public K-12 enrollment, assessment outcomes, high school graduation, school disciplinary exclusion, absence, enrollment in public institutions, hours employed, and wage in Washington. It also provides demographic characteristics. Data sources include the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) Data Warehouse from the WA SBCTC, the Public Centralized Higher Education Enrollment System (PCHEES) housed at the Office of Financial Management (OFM), and Unemployment Insurance wage from Washington's Employment Security Department (ESD).
3. OSPI provided aggregated data from the OSPI State Report Card (OSPI-SRC) for the trend analysis.

The annual records used in this study summarize record-level data by screening enrollment, progression, achievement, and employment outcomes by time sequence in each year. Foster care flag is matched to WA-P20 data through identity matching operated at ERDC.

Table A. Number of Young Adults Employed in Washington from 2015 to 2019, by Age

Age as of Jan 1	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cross-sectional: All Adult age 18+								
18				12,334	24,522	40,274	53,580	60,074
19				23,469	39,332	52,566	60,256	60,822
20				36,987	51,314	58,904	60,100	59,800
21				48,253	58,200	58,969	58,605	58,757
22				53,612	57,282	58,239	58,310	57,839
23				51,119	53,303	55,511	57,017	56,349
24				46,342	48,595	50,562	52,596	53,851
25				24,462	25,644	26,619	27,593	29,059
26				5,320	5,575	5,733	5,933	6,258
27				1,753	1,826	1,850	1,934	2,082
28				327	341	355	372	395
Total				303,978	365,934	409,582	436,296	445,286
Longitudinal: 2012 Adult age 18+								
18	24,631	28,548	29,581	30,160	30,626	30,491	29,831	29,059
19	5,127	5,953	6,380	6,569	6,615	6,521	6,376	6,258
20	1,833	2,076	2,172	2,203	2,235	2,156	2,114	2,082
21	363	419	425	427	415	413	407	395
Total	31,954	36,996	38,558	39,359	39,891	39,581	38,728	37,794

Data source: ERDC's analysis of UI Wage data. Earnings are adjusted to 2019 Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Sample includes only those who ever enrolled in Washington public schools between 2012 and 2020.

Glossary

Chronic absenteeism refers to a student being absent from school for 15 or more days within a school year.

College going rate is calculated by $(\text{total number of the graduation class enrolling in WA public institutions in one year after high school graduation}) / (\text{total number of the graduation class})$

Early grade academic achievements are presented by whether a student met 3rd-grade assessment standard in English Language Art or in Math.

Employment outcomes refer to employment status, average annual work hours, and median annual earnings calculated from the Unemployment Insurance Wage records.

Five-year graduation rate refers to the percent of the first-time ninth graders who stayed in high school and graduated in five years.

Foster care flag refers to an individual who ever was in DCYF's out-of-home placement care and authority any point of time between 2012 and 2020.

Kindergarten readiness is a flag identifying whether a kindergartener met the WAKIDs assessment standard in six domain areas – Social emotional, physical, cognitive, language, literacy, mathematics.

Ninth-grade on track is defined as first time ninth graders who passed all credits they attempted in their ninth grade year.

Number of school enrollment is a measure of school mobility directly calculated from CEDARS enrollment file. It indicates the total number of enrollments in that school year.

Odds ratios demonstrated in some figures are calculated by $(\text{percent of indicator for Foster Care}) / (\text{percent of indicator for non-Foster Care})$

Race/ethnicity is a categorical measure for seven categories from CEDARS.

School discipline is a flag to identify whether a student experiencing disciplinary action in school.

School disciplinary exclusion refers to the status that a student being excluded from school due to disciplinary action.

School mobility is defined as changing schools at least one time during the school year. Non-mobile students are students enrolled on October 1st of the school year and are continuously enrolled in the same school for 150 days in the school year. Mobile students enroll with inverse pattern.

Young adults refer to those who were age 18 or older as of January 1 in the year.

Appendix B. Supplemental Tables

Table 1. Ten Project Education Impact (PEI) Disparity Indicators for Foster Care Students

	School Year					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Percent Ready in 6 Assessment Domains						
All Students	37.2%	42.6%	45.7%	45.9%	44.9%	50.6%
Foster Care	26.3%	27.6%	24.1%	27.4%	25.3%	28.2%
Non-Foster Care	37.2%	42.6%	45.9%	46.0%	45.1%	50.7%
Percent Meeting 3rd grade English Language Arts standard						
All Students	51.7%	54.0%	52.4%	55.6%	55.4%	
Foster Care	26.0%	25.2%	27.7%	31.6%	33.0%	
Non-Foster Care	51.7%	54.0%	52.4%	55.6%	55.6%	
Percent Meeting 3rd grade Mathematics standard						
All Students	56.4%	58.6%	57.6%	57.6%	58.0%	
Foster Care	25.1%	27.1%	30.2%	29.3%	33.5%	
Non-Foster Care	56.4%	58.6%	57.6%	57.6%	58.2%	
Percent 9th grade on-track						
All Students	70.4%	72.1%	72.7%	73.7%	72.5%	77.7%
Foster Care	43.0%	44.3%	44.7%	46.7%	45.6%	51.5%
Non-Foster Care	70.5%	72.2%	72.9%	73.8%	72.7%	77.8%
Percent Graduating in 5 years						
All Students	81.1%	81.9%	82.4%	82.7%	83.8%	83.9%
Foster Care	46.2%	47.3%	45.7%	48.0%	51.2%	52.8%
Non-Foster Care	81.4%	82.2%	82.7%	83.0%	84.1%	84.2%
Percent with Regular Attendance						
All Students	83.9%	83.1%	82.7%	82.7%	82.9%	89.4%
Foster Care	59.3%	59.0%	56.7%	56.7%	55.9%	70.0%
Non-Foster Care	84.0%	83.2%	82.7%	82.8%	82.9%	89.4%
Percent with Disciplinary Action						
All Students	4.1%	3.8%	3.8%	4.1%	4.0%	2.4%
Foster Care	19.1%	17.7%	17.1%	16.3%	14.7%	9.9%
Non-Foster Care	4.0%	3.8%	3.7%	4.0%	3.9%	2.3%

Table 1. Ten Project Education Impact (PEI) Disparity Indicators for Foster Care Students (Continued)

	School Year					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Percent with mobility						
All Students	4.6%	4.5%	4.2%	4.4%	4.3%	4.2%
Foster Care	19.9%	22.3%	19.1%	18.4%	17.0%	17.2%
Non-Foster Care	4.5%	4.4%	4.1%	4.4%	4.2%	4.2%
Percent with disability						
All Students	14.0%	14.1%	14.3%	14.6%	15.0%	14.9%
Foster care	38.3%	38.4%	38.0%	36.5%	36.0%	37.2%
Non-foster care	13.9%	14.0%	14.2%	14.5%	14.9%	14.8%
College Going Rate						
	Graduation Class					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Enroll in WA public institution one year after graduation						
Total	37,878	38,698	39,611	41,058	34,418	
	55.8%	56.0%	56.3%	56.0%	47.1%	
Foster care	159	148	179	208	232	
	46.6%	38.8%	38.7%	41.0%	38.0%	
Non-foster care	37,719	38,550	39,432	40,850	34,186	
	55.9%	56.1%	56.4%	56.1%	47.2%	

(Data source for top 9 indicators on the table: OSPI-SRC. The 2020 data is impacted by Covid-19, which only reflects the records collected from September of 2019 to February of 2020, not the whole year. Therefore, the 2020 result needs to be used with caution. See <https://www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-displays> for details. Data source for college going rate comes from PCHEES and SBCTC.)

Table 2-1. Average Number of School Enrollments for 2012 Kindergarteners from kindergarten to 8th grade (2012 to 2020), by Foster Care Status and Race/Ethnicity

	Kindergarten	1 st grade	2 nd grade	Grade Level				7 th grade	8 th grade
				3 rd grade	4 th grade	5 th grade	6 th grade		
Total									
Foster	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Total	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
American Indian/Alaska Native									
Foster	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.2
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2
Total	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2
Asian									
Foster	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.2
Non-Foster	1.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	1.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Black/African American									
Foster	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Total	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Hispanic/Latino									
Foster	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Total	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander									
Foster	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.6	1	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.2
Non-Foster	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Total	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Multiple race									
Foster	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Total	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
White									
Foster	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Total	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1

(Data source: OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data. The 8th-grade (2020) data is impacted by Covid-19, which only reflects the records collected from September of 2019 to February of 2020, not the whole year. Therefore, the 2020 result needs to be used with caution. See <https://www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-displays> for details.)

Table 2-2. Average Number of School Enrollments for 2012 8th Graders from 8th to 12th grade (2012 to 2016), by Foster Care Status and Race/Ethnicity

	8 th grade	9 th grade	Grade Level 10 th grade	11 th grade	12 th grade
All race/ethnicity					
Total	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Foster	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.3
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
American Indian/Alaska Native					
Foster	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.1
Non-Foster	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1
Asian					
Foster	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.1
Non-Foster	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Black/African American					
Foster	1.5	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.4
Non-Foster	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1
Hispanic					
Foster	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.4
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander					
Foster	1.8	1.3	1.1	1.5	1.6
Non-Foster	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1
Multiple race					
Foster	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.2
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
White					
Foster	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.3
Non-Foster	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1

(Data source: OSPI CEDARS and DCYF Foster Care data.)

Table 2-3. Percent Chronic Absenteeism for 2012 Kindergarteners from 1ST to 8th grade (2013-2020), by Foster Care Status and Race/Ethnicity

	Grade Level							
	1 st grade	2 nd grade	3 rd grade	4 th grade	5 th grade	6 th grade	7 th grade	8 th grade
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
All race/ethnicity								
Foster	657 39.3%	493 32.1%	477 30.0%	453 29.6%	431 28.9%	482 33.1%	546 38.0%	416 30.9%
Non-Foster	14,141 20.3%	10,977 16.7%	11,101 16.9%	10,986 17.1%	11,895 18.7%	13,297 21.2%	15,652 25.2%	10,208 17.4%
American Indian/Alaska Native								
Foster	28 49.1%	17 32.7%	25 46.3%	16 30.8%	22 45.8%	21 43.8%	18 34.0%	15 29.4%
Non-Foster	362 39.8%	313 35.9%	316 35.0%	322 35.2%	308 35.4%	355 39.3%	405 45.7%	253 31.5%
Asian								
Foster	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	712 17.0%	458 11.6%	477 12.3%	394 10.6%	365 10.0%	345 9.9%	408 11.5%	306 9.5%
Black/African American								
Foster	59 39.9%	40 28.6%	43 31.4%	41 31.1%	36 28.1%	43 35.2%	48 38.7%	31 27.4%
Non-Foster	618 21.4%	516 19.2%	464 17.6%	451 17.5%	503 19.9%	613 25.1%	762 31.6%	500 22.2%
Hispanic								
Foster	134 41.0%	108 35.4%	84 26.8%	85 29.5%	80 28.5%	100 35.7%	106 37.2%	88 33.3%
Non-Foster	3,896 22.4%	2,986 18.0%	2,886 17.4%	2,912 18.0%	3,116 19.1%	3,595 22.3%	4,302 26.9%	3,005 19.7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander								
Foster	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	277 39.7%	215 33.2%	198 30.3%	170 26.9%	190 30.5%	204 33.8%	238 40.1%	159 27.8%
Multiple race								
Foster	80 41.2%	56 32.7%	49 26.5%	44 24.9%	48 28.2%	59 34.3%	68 42.0%	50 32.9%
Non-Foster	1,314 22.0%	1,009 18.2%	1,049 18.7%	1,076 19.5%	1,118 20.5%	1,218 22.8%	1,472 27.7%	963 19.1%
White								
Foster	338 37.2%	260 31.2%	266 30.8%	256 30.4%	235 28.5%	249 31.3%	295 38.1%	220 30.1%
Non-Foster	6,960 18.5%	5,479 15.5%	5,708 16.1%	5,661 16.3%	6,293 18.4%	6,964 20.6%	8,063 24.2%	5,021 15.9%

Note: N/A refers to sample size <10, which needs to be suppressed in the report. The 8th-grade (2020) data is impacted by Covid-19. Therefore, the 2020 result needs to be used with caution.

Table 2-4. Chronic Absenteeism for 2012 8th Graders from 9th to 12th grade (2013-2016), by Foster Care Status and Race/Ethnicity

	Grade Level			
	9 th grade	10 th grade	11 th grade	12 th grade
	N %	N %	N %	N %
All race/ethnicity				
Foster	396 46.9%	391 49.4%	374 53.4%	309 55.8%
Non-Foster	18,390 26.4%	20,091 29.5%	22,237 35.5%	25,038 43.2%
American Indian/Alaska Native				
Foster	16 57.1%	22 71.0%	16 57.1%	14 73.7%
Non-Foster	527 45.6%	545 49.5%	566 55.2%	531 59.9%
Asian				
Foster	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	476 10.9%	707 15.8%	967 22.7%	1,419 33.7%
Black/African American				
Foster	44 53.7%	45 57.0%	42 59.2%	35 63.6%
Non-Foster	954 30.7%	1,057 35.0%	1,233 43.3%	1,399 52.6%
Hispanic				
Foster	71 50.7%	69 52.7%	55 51.4%	52 58.4%
Non-Foster	4,224 31.3%	4,597 34.8%	5,142 41.8%	5,527 48.6%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander				
Foster	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	239 39.9%	253 44.9%	289 53.6%	271 55.4%
Multiple race				
Foster	33 41.8%	35 47.9%	39 55.7%	33 61.1%
Non-Foster	1,215 28.8%	1,264 31.2%	1,446 37.7%	1,588 44.8%
White				
Foster	218 45.0%	209 46.7%	214 53.6%	169 53.1%
Non-Foster	10,748 25.1%	11,654 27.9%	12,585 33.3%	14,295 41.1%

Note: N/A refers to sample size < 10 or there is complementary suppression.

Table 2-5. School Disciplinary Exclusion 2012 Kindergarteners from 1ST to 8th grade (2013-2020), by Foster Care Status and Race/Ethnicity

	Grade Level							
	1 st grade	2 nd grade	3 rd grade	4 th grade	5 th grade	6 th grade	7 th grade	8 th grade
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
All race/ethnicity								
Foster	90 5.1%	106 6.2%	156 9.3%	148 9.1%	166 10.4%	275 17.7%	303 19.8%	242 16.1%
Non-Foster	911 1.2%	947 1.3%	1,323 1.9%	1,527 2.2%	1,898 2.8%	3,651 5.4%	4,783 7.2%	3,117 4.7%
American Indian/Alaska Native								
Foster	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	15 27.8%	10 18.5%	10 18.9%
Non-Foster	22 2.2%	15 1.5%	37 3.8%	47 4.9%	54 5.7%	96 10.3%	131 14.1%	85 9.4%
Asian								
Foster	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	N/A N/A	22 0.5%	18 0.4%	22 0.5%	32 0.7%	59 1.4%	119 2.8%	48 1.1%
Black/African American								
Foster	11 7.2%	14 9.4%	21 14.4%	18 12.9%	23 16.8%	35 26.5%	35 27.1%	25 20.0%
Non-Foster	97 3.1%	99 3.3%	131 4.6%	167 6.0%	190 7.0%	374 14.1%	439 16.9%	266 10.4%
Hispanic								
Foster	16 4.7%	15 4.5%	21 6.4%	17 5.4%	34 11.2%	55 18.5%	60 19.9%	60 20.3%
Non-Foster	245 1.3%	246 1.4%	301 1.7%	370 2.1%	517 3.0%	1,168 6.7%	1,548 9.0%	1,031 6.1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander								
Foster	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	N/A N/A	11 1.6%	21 3.1%	17 2.6%	21 3.2%	50 7.9%	75 12.1%	37 6.0%
Multiple race								
Foster	11 5.4%	N/A N/A	16 8.1%	13 6.9%	21 11.3%	29 16.1%	37 20.8%	34 20.0%
Non-Foster	102 1.6%	94 1.5%	155 2.6%	166 2.8%	203 3.5%	365 6.4%	498 8.8%	329 5.9%
White								
Foster	50 5.2%	65 7.1%	92 10.1%	95 10.7%	77 8.9%	139 16.4%	155 18.6%	110 13.4%
Non-Foster	423 1.0%	460 1.2%	660 1.7%	738 2.0%	881 2.4%	1,538 4.3%	1,973 5.5%	1,321 3.8%

Note: N/A refers to sample size < 10 or there is complementary suppression.

Table 2-6. School Disciplinary Exclusion for 2012 8th Graders over High School (2013-2016), by Foster Care Status and Race/Ethnicity

	Grade Level			
	9 th grade	10 th grade	11 th grade	12 th grade
	N %	N %	N %	N %
All race/ethnicity				
Foster	241 26.1%	192 21.5%	154 18.1%	83 11.2%
Non-Foster	5,672 7.4%	4,583 6.2%	3,682 5.0%	2,392 3.4%
American Indian/Alaska Native				
Foster	11 32.4%	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	181 14.2%	140 11.3%	120 10.2%	65 6.2%
Asian				
Foster	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	122 2.2%	110 2.1%	76 1.5%	65 1.3%
Black/African American				
Foster	37 39.8%	31 32.3%	21 22.8%	12 15.2%
Non-Foster	589 17.1%	462 14.2%	367 11.5%	244 8.1%
Hispanic				
Foster	45 29.6%	24 16.7%	19 14.0%	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	1,450 9.9%	1,157 8.2%	869 6.3%	561 4.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander				
Foster	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Non-Foster	80 12.5%	62 10.3%	55 9.4%	47 8.4%
Multiple race				
Foster	21 24.7%	17 20.7%	19 24.1%	11 15.9%
Non-Foster	394 8.5%	306 6.9%	262 6.0%	166 3.9%
White				
Foster	119 22.7%	103 20.5%	84 17.6%	46 10.7%
Non-Foster	2,853 6.1%	2,342 5.2%	1,931 4.3%	1,244 2.9%

Note: N/A refers to sample size < 10, which needs to be suppressed in the report.

Table 3. Employment outcomes for young adults age 18 or older by foster care status, 2015 to 2019

		Employment Year				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Percent employed						
Foster	N	1,756	2,449	2,940	3,342	3,473
(N=6,195)	%	28.3%	39.5%	47.5%	53.9%	56.1%
Non-Foster	N	302,222	363,485	406,642	432,954	441,813
(N=690,650)	%	43.8%	52.6%	58.9%	62.7%	64.0%
Average work hours						
Foster	Mean	544	591	672	753	853
Non-Foster	Mean	749	827	920	1,030	1,110
Median earnings						
Foster	Median	\$3,884	\$4,342	\$5,776	\$7,552	\$10,074
Non-Foster	Median	\$6,421	\$7,942	\$10,551	\$13,694	\$16,927

Note: Earnings are adjusted to 2019 Consumer Price Index (CPI)

Table 4-1. Employment for 2012 18+ Age Group from 2012 to 2019, by Foster Care and Race/Ethnicity

	Work Year							
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
All Employed	61,011	61,011	61,011	61,011	61,011	61,011	61,011	61,011
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	31,954	36,996	38,558	39,359	39,891	39,581	38,728	37,794
	52.4%	60.6%	63.2%	64.5%	65.4%	64.9%	63.5%	61.9%
Foster	42	54	61	68	72	73	64	65
	30.4%	39.1%	44.2%	49.3%	52.2%	52.9%	46.4%	47.1%
Non-Foster	31,912	36,942	38,497	39,291	39,819	39,508	38,664	37,729
	52.4%	60.7%	63.2%	64.5%	65.4%	64.9%	63.5%	62.0%
American Indian/Alaska Native								
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Foster	556	609	697	751	772	802	799	770
	42.4%	46.4%	53.1%	57.2%	58.8%	61.1%	60.9%	58.7%
Asian								
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Foster	1,886	2,276	2,442	2,576	2,686	2,720	2,735	2,686
	45.4%	54.8%	58.8%	62.1%	64.7%	65.5%	65.9%	64.7%
Black/African American								
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	13	13	14	11	12
	N/A	N/A	N/A	68.4%	68.4%	73.7%	57.9%	63.2%
Non-Foster	1,651	2,094	2,279	2,366	2,369	2,339	2,288	2,257
	45.1%	57.2%	62.3%	64.6%	64.7%	63.9%	62.5%	61.7%
Hispanic								
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Foster	6,118	7,112	7,456	7,560	7,595	7,538	7,367	7,168
	51.9%	60.3%	63.3%	64.1%	64.4%	64.0%	62.5%	60.8%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander								
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Foster	257	335	349	377	371	366	361	354
	46.0%	59.9%	62.4%	67.4%	66.4%	65.5%	64.6%	63.3%
Multiple race								
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Foster	1,367	1,630	1,718	1,754	1,771	1,729	1,708	1,651
	51.3%	61.2%	64.5%	65.9%	66.5%	64.9%	64.1%	62.0%
White								
Foster	27	32	37	40	41	42	38	36
	31.0%	36.8%	42.5%	46.0%	47.1%	48.3%	43.7%	41.4%
Non-Foster	20,073	22,881	23,552	23,904	24,252	24,010	23,403	22,840
	54.6%	62.3%	64.1%	65.1%	66.0%	65.4%	63.7%	62.2%

Note: Employment records are only available for those worked in WA. N/A refers to sample size <10, which needs to be suppressed in the report.

Table 4-2. Average Annual Work Hours for 2012 18+ Age Group from 2012-2019, by Foster Care and Race/Ethnicity

	Work year							
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
All race/ethnicity								
Foster	407	614	713	876	932	996	1,038	1,127
Non-Foster	572	794	976	1,106	1,191	1,305	1,385	1,396
American Indian/Alaska Native								
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Foster	498	776	966	1,078	1,158	1,190	1,281	1,320
Asian								
Foster	-	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Foster	542	751	914	1,036	1,137	1,296	1,401	1,478
Black/African American								
Foster	161	366	803	746	777	766	735	923
Non-Foster	450	658	881	1,014	1,087	1,136	1,213	1,258
Hispanic								
Foster	233	255	544	732	914	877	698	930
Non-Foster	662	887	1,113	1,250	1,314	1,382	1,452	1,452
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander								
Foster	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Foster	608	802	1,001	1,111	1,250	1,366	1,433	1,415
Multiple race								
Foster	425	811	499	1,519	711	962	933	908
Non-Foster	518	745	938	1,080	1,148	1,269	1,334	1,359
White								
Foster	505	741	820	898	1,002	1,113	1,209	1,266
Non-Foster	563	786	951	1,080	1,172	1,304	1,386	1,388

Note: N/A refers to sample size < 10, so averages were not included in report; Blank cells refer to no record.

Table 4-3. Median Earnings for 2012 18+ Age Group from 2012-2019, by Foster Care and Race/Ethnicity

	Work year							
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
All race/ethnicity								
Foster	\$2,511	\$3,470	\$4,477	\$8,218	\$9,021	\$11,468	\$15,805	\$18,612
Non-Foster	\$4,622	\$7,248	\$10,273	\$13,608	\$16,927	\$21,516	\$25,304	\$27,623
American Indian/Alaska Native								
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Foster	\$3,569	\$6,781	\$9,762	\$12,500	\$14,852	\$17,580	\$20,466	\$23,006
Asian								
Foster			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Foster	\$4,084	\$6,809	\$9,148	\$12,767	\$16,703	\$22,291	\$27,372	\$32,815
Black/African American								
Non-Foster	\$3,075	\$4,946	\$8,275	\$11,294	\$13,700	\$16,614	\$19,487	\$22,405
Foster	\$789	\$1,453	\$5,155	\$5,161	\$5,571	\$5,059	\$6,877	\$12,519
Hispanic								
Foster	\$1,669	\$774	\$4,519	\$12,199	\$12,173	\$16,924	\$3,710	\$17,387
Non-Foster	\$5,654	\$8,600	\$12,595	\$16,018	\$18,918	\$22,344	\$25,708	\$27,445
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander								
Foster								
Non-Foster	\$4,802	\$7,064	\$10,527	\$12,472	\$17,458	\$21,814	\$24,980	\$25,851
Multiple race								
Foster	\$2,911	\$7,385	\$7,410	\$14,026	\$11,783	\$10,998	\$13,134	\$19,029
Non-Foster	\$4,034	\$6,252	\$9,386	\$13,157	\$15,910	\$20,603	\$24,038	\$26,513
White								
Foster	\$3,305	\$5,595	\$6,992	\$8,465	\$8,276	\$13,878	\$16,892	\$18,786
Non-Foster	\$4,602	\$7,170	\$9,997	\$13,342	\$16,745	\$21,841	\$25,826	\$27,924

Note: Earnings are adjusted to 2019 Consumer Price Index (CPI) and are available for those who were employed in WA only. N/A refers to sample size < 10, so averages were not included in report; Blank cells refer to no record.