

# APPENDIX

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# APPENDIX A - Transitional Housing, Operating and Rent (THOR) Program

## Introduction

Codified in 2008 (RCW.185C.210-215), the Transitional Housing, Operating and Rent (THOR) program assists individuals and families who are homeless or who are at risk of becoming homeless to secure and retain safe, decent, and affordable housing.

This is a status report on how Commerce is implementing the THOR program. The report contains data pertinent to the performance measures for THOR as specified by legislation.

## Performance Measurement

RCW 43.185C.210 established new performance measures for the THOR program in the following issue areas:

- Number of households served;
- Transition to permanent affordable housing;
- Achievement of, or increases in, self-sufficiency;
- Financial performance;
- Washington Homeless Management Information System (HMIS); and
- Household satisfaction.

Detail for each issue area is provided below.

### *Number of Households Served*

For the period July 1, 2009, to June 30, 2010 (SFY 2010) the THOR program served 1,559.

New with this report is the use of the state Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to obtain most of the data used throughout this report. The Department of Commerce eliminated paper reporting for THOR in mid-2010. THOR contractors were asked to input all program data for the last half of state fiscal year 2010 (6/1/2010 – 6/30/2010) into the state HMIS via direct data entry or data integration. We continue to address data quality issues on an ongoing basis with grantees, and expect that the next several annual reports will be a reflection of that ongoing work.

Eleven percent of households served were individuals or families without children. Eighty-nine percent of households served were families with children.

Approximately 26 percent of new households have an adult member with a mental health, chemical dependency, or co-occurring disorder, or whose residence prior to entry was “jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility.”

The total number of households served in SFY 2010 includes carry-over households (those households that enrolled prior to June 30, 2009 and continued in the program in the new fiscal year) and new households. The following table shows the number of *new* households served in SFY 2010 broken out by eligibility characteristics.

**Number of New Households Served by THOR in SFY 2010**

	Families with children	Adults only, no children	Unaccompanied single adult	Total Households
Adult member with a mental health disorder	30	0	10	40
Adult member with a chemical dependency disorder	80	0	17	97
Adult member with a co-occurring disorder	28	0	10	38
Residence prior to program entry was "jail, prison or juvenile detention facility"	3	0	5	8
All other households	460	10	55	525
Total	601	10	97	708

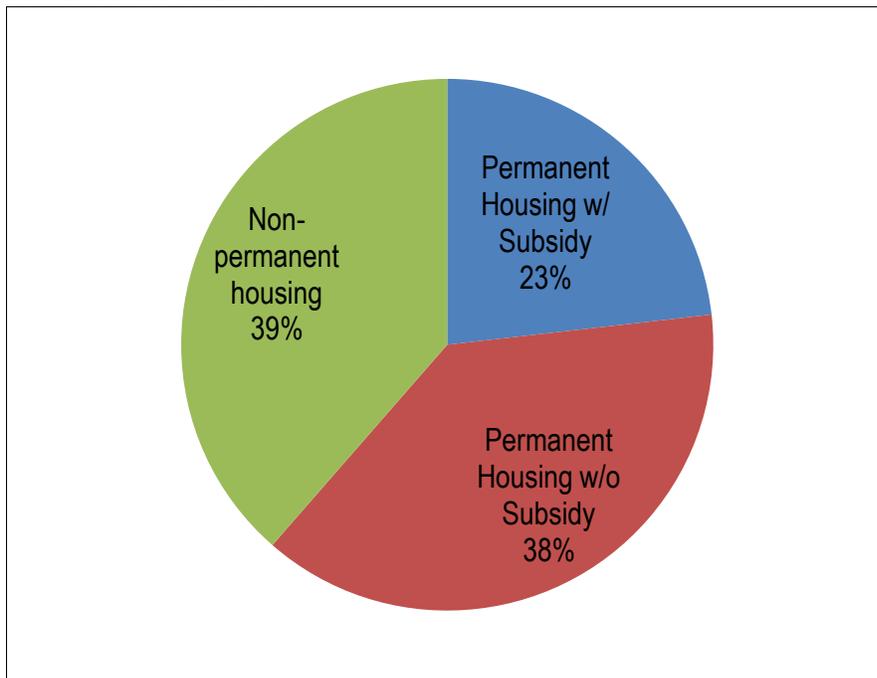
\*On previous annual THOR reports, the number of new THOR households that were also receiving services under the Juvenile Court Act Chapter-Dependency and Termination of Parent-child Relationship (RCW 13.34) was reported. This will be reported on subsequent annual THOR reports as the data sharing agreement between Commerce and DSHS becomes more robust.

### ***Transition to Permanent Affordable Housing***

Of the 539 households exiting THOR 61 percent or 331 households moved to permanent housing, exceeding the goal of 40 percent

The housing status for each household is documented at exit from the program. The number and percentage of exits to permanent housing and, within the permanent housing category, the proportion that is subsidized or unsubsidized are also tracked. The following chart adds detail on the breakdown of subsidized and unsubsidized units of permanent housing for the state as a whole.

#### **SFY 2010 THOR Exits**



Exit category definitions:

- Permanent unsubsidized housing includes homeownership, rental without subsidy, and moving in with a family member or friend on a permanent basis.
- Permanent subsidized housing includes Section 8, Shelter Plus Care, public housing, and other ownership or rental with subsidy, or Safe Havens.
- Non-permanent housing means the participant could not be located or the client exited to emergency shelter, another transitional housing facility, a psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility, a substance abuse treatment center, a hospital, jail, prison, a juvenile detention facility, a family member or friend's residence on a temporary basis, a hotel or motel paid for without an emergency shelter voucher, a foster care home or group home, or a place not meant for human habitation.

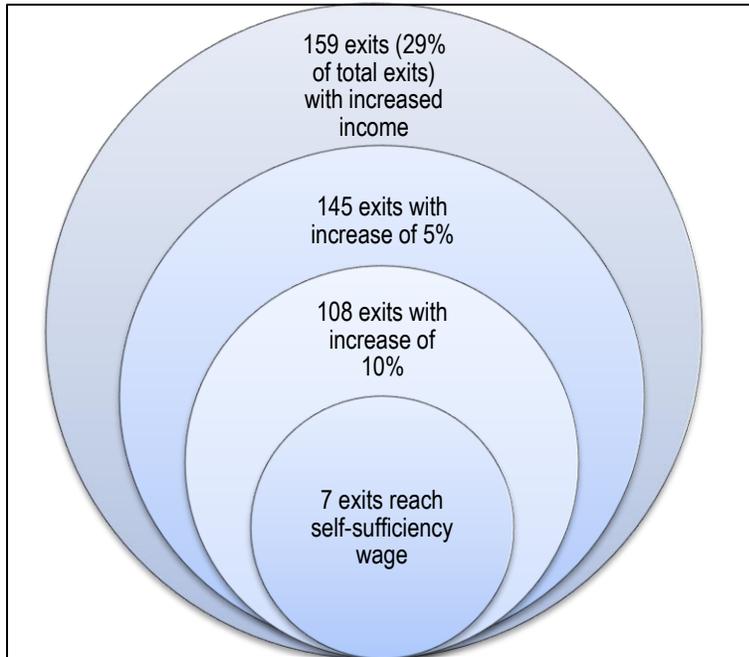
### *Achievement of, or Increases in, Self-Sufficiency*

Twenty nine percent (159 of all households) exiting the program increased their income from entry to exit in the THOR program in SFY 2010.

Seven households out of the 539 households that exited during the fiscal year achieved “self sufficiency” at exit. This is a rate of 1 percent. During the first half of the fiscal year, self-sufficiency is measured in economic terms using the Washington State Self-Sufficiency Calculator. This calculator is based on the Self-Sufficiency Standard, which measures how much income is needed for a family of a given composition, in a given place, to adequately meet its basic needs without any public or private assistance.

Self-sufficiency is calculated according to the circumstances and location of each unique household rather than extrapolated from generalized data for a single individual or two adults and one preschool-aged child. A [report on the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Washington State](#) is available at [seakingwdc.org](http://seakingwdc.org). Beginning in the second half of 2011 Commerce will use the household income as compared to the federal poverty level. Any income over 200 percent of the federal poverty level will be considered “self-sufficient.” THOR grantees still have the ability to track income as compared to the self-sufficiency standard for Washington State, but analysis of achievement of, or increases in, self-sufficiency will be measured against the federal poverty level.

## SFY 2009 Increases in Household Income



This diagram illustrates the number of exiting households with any level of increased income, those with increases of at least five and ten percent of the households' income at entry, and those reaching their full self-sufficiency wage. Wages are measured either against the Washington State Self-sufficiency Standard (for the first half of the fiscal year) and against the federal poverty level (for the second half of the fiscal year).

Economic self-sufficiency alone may be an inadequate or inappropriate measure for some populations due to their inability to increase their income. For example, an individual with a mental health disorder may receive SSI for an indeterminate period of time so their income would not increase much. Commerce staff will research tools that can effectively measure self-sufficiency in other domains such as the Arizona self-sufficiency matrix that addresses these situations.

### ***Financial Performance***

Commerce expended \$142,279 or 4.7 percent of total expenditures to administer the THOR program. The average cost per household reported by grantees statewide was \$1,844. At the grantee level, expenditures are collected monthly and include actual expenditures for each grantee and any subgrantees. See THOR Cost per Household for expenditures information by county. The cost per household varies widely due to a number of factors including households served, family size, housing location, complexity of need, and type of assistance (rental assistance versus housing in a unit that receives operating subsidies).

### ***Washington Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)***

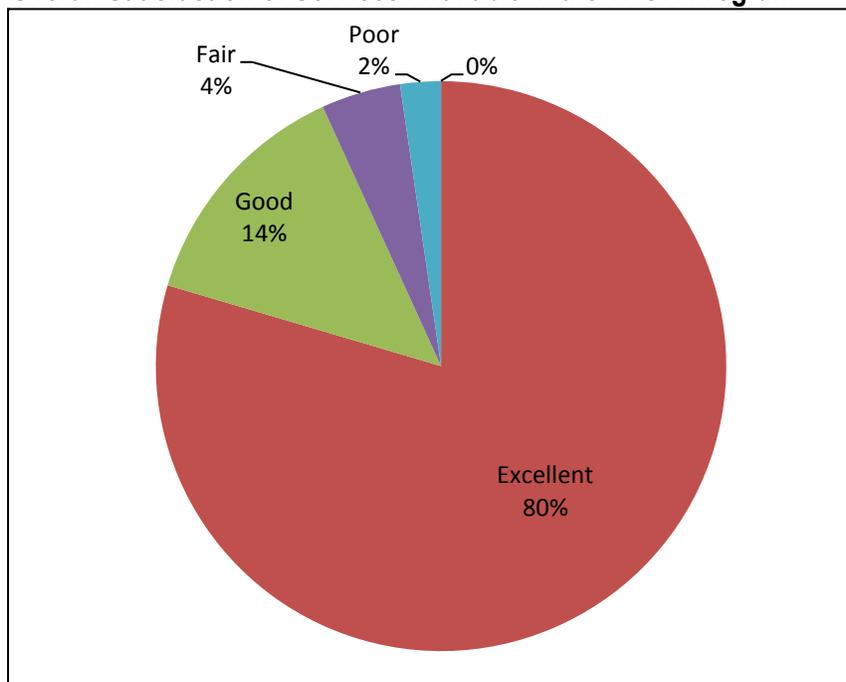
Of the 29 THOR grantees, 28 are actively entering data to satisfy both this annual THOR report requirement and the quarterly GMAP reporting requirement. All grantees are reporting THOR data in HMIS as of the end of 2010.

The Commerce team monitors monthly THOR invoices to ensure data quality on HMIS, and provides technical assistance to any agency experiencing data quality or compliance issues. The final non-participating THOR grantee, Washington Gorge Action Programs in Klickitat County, is transitioning from their local software system to the state's system. We expect to have Klickitat data in HMIS before the end of calendar year 2010. Klickitat's service delivery and outcome data are only included in reported information for the first half of the 2010 state fiscal year.

### ***Household Satisfaction***

Eighty percent of respondents rated the overall services available through the program as excellent.

**Overall Satisfaction of Services Available in the THOR Program**



Commerce received 44 responses to the web-based exiting household satisfaction survey.. Households could complete the survey either on line or using a hard copy.

Seventy-five percent of respondents were very satisfied with the rental assistance received and 61 percent were very satisfied with case management services. The survey inquires about how well the services helped the household meet their housing stability goals. Eighty percent of

respondents felt rental assistance helped them achieve their goals very well and 80 percent thought case management services helped them achieve their goals very well. Forty-one percent of the households met all of their goals, while 59 percent met some of their goals.

## THOR Exits to Permanent Housing

County	Grantee	Exiting Households			% Permanent	Total
		To permanent housing with subsidy	To permanent housing without subsidy	To any other non-permanent housing type (including "Don't Know" and "Refused")		
Adams	County not served by THOR					
Asotin	County not served by THOR					
Benton	Benton Franklin CAC		4	1	80%	5
Chelan	Chelan-Douglas CAC	4	8	5	71%	17
Clallam	Serenity House		10	1	91%	11
Clark	Share	7	13	6	77%	26
Columbia	Blue Mountain AC (see data below)					
Cowlitz	Longview HA	-	-	1	0%	1
Douglas	Chelan-Douglas CAC (see data above)					
Ferry	Joint Republic-Ferry County HA		1	1	50%	2
Franklin	Benton Franklin CAC (see data above)					
Garfield	Blue Mountain AC (see data below)					
Grant	County not served by THOR					
Grays Harbor	Coastal CAP	1	4		100%	5
Island	Island County HA				0%	0
Jefferson	Olympic CAP		1	2	33%	3
King	King County	78	47	44	74%	169
Kitsap	Kitsap Community Resources	6	15	12	64%	33
Kittitas	HopeSource		1	3	25%	4
Klickitat	Washington Gorge Action Programs			2	0%	2
Lewis	Lewis County Shelter				0%	0
Lincoln	Family Resource Center			1	0%	1
Mason	Mason County Shelter	1	2	3	50%	6
Okanogan	Okanogan County CAC	1	3	3	57%	7
Pacific	County not served by THOR					
Pend Oreille	Family Crisis Network		2		100%	2
Pierce	Pierce County	2	19	24	47%	45
San Juan	County not served by THOR					
Skagit	Skagit County CAA		5	1	83%	6
Skamania	Washington Gorge Action Programs (see data above)					
Snohomish	Snohomish County	1	1	16	11%	18
Spokane	City of Spokane	9	52	35	64%	96
Stevens	Rural Resources	1			0%	1
Thurston	HA of Thurston County	1	1	1	67%	3
Wahkiakum	Wahkiakum County	4	2		100%	6
Walla Walla	Blue Mountain	1	2	1	75%	4
Whatcom	Opportunity Council	6	7	8	62%	21
Whitman	Community Action Center	1		2	33%	3
Yakima	Triumph Treatment Services	1	6	35	17%	42
<b>Total</b>		<b>125</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>539</b>

## THOR Costs per Household

County	THOR Lead Agency	Expenditures	Number of Households Served	Cost per Household
Adams	County Not Served by THOR			
Asotin	County Not Served by THOR			
Benton	Benton Franklin CAC	\$65,463	16	\$4,091
Chelan	Chelan-Douglas CAC	\$36,511	67	\$545
Clallam	Serenity House	\$21,852	24	\$911
Clark	Share	\$96,238	65	\$1,481
Columbia	Blue Mountain AC (see data below)			
Cowlitz	Longview HA	\$20,821	9	\$2,313
Douglas	Chelan-Douglas CAC (see data above)			
Ferry	Joint Republic-Ferry Co HA	\$16,764	6	\$2,794
Franklin	Benton Franklin CAC (see data above)			
Garfield	Blue Mountain AC (see data below)			
Grant	County Not Served by THOR			
Grays Harbor	Coastal CAP	\$31,154	9	\$3,462
Island	Island County HA	\$19,485	4	\$4,871
Jefferson	Olympic CAP	\$17,421	14	\$1,244
King	King County	\$982,700	592	\$1,660
Kitsap	Kitsap Community Resources	\$60,881	76	\$801
Kittitas	HopeSource	\$19,795	15	\$1,320
Klickitat	Washington Gorge Action Programs	\$31,960	5	\$6,392
Lewis	Lewis County Shelter	\$22,905	4	\$5,726
Lincoln	Family Resource Center	\$16,875	4	\$4,219
Mason	Mason County Shelter	\$25,357	13	\$1,951
Okanogan	Okanogan County CAC	\$18,424	11	\$1,675
Pacific	County Not Served by THOR			
Pend Oreille	Family Crisis Network	\$15,044	6	\$2,507
Pierce	Pierce County	\$361,066	133	\$2,715
San Juan	County Not Served by THOR			
Skagit	Skagit County CAA	\$38,064	9	\$4,229
Skamania	Washington Gorge Action Programs (see data above)			
Snohomish	Snohomish County	\$254,240	49	\$5,189
Spokane	City of Spokane	\$390,576	215	\$1,817
Stevens	Rural Resources CA	\$19,831	5	\$3,966
Thurston	HA of Thurston County	\$48,977	11	\$4,452
Wahkiakum	Wahkiakum County	\$11,362	9	\$1,262
Walla Walla	Blue Mountain AC	\$72,977	21	\$3,475
Whatcom	Opportunity Council	\$46,250	52	\$889
Whitman	Community Action Center	\$26,732	6	\$4,455
Yakima	Triumph Treatment Services	\$85,818	109	\$787
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$2,875,543</b>	<b>1,559</b>	<b>\$1,844</b>

## Demographics

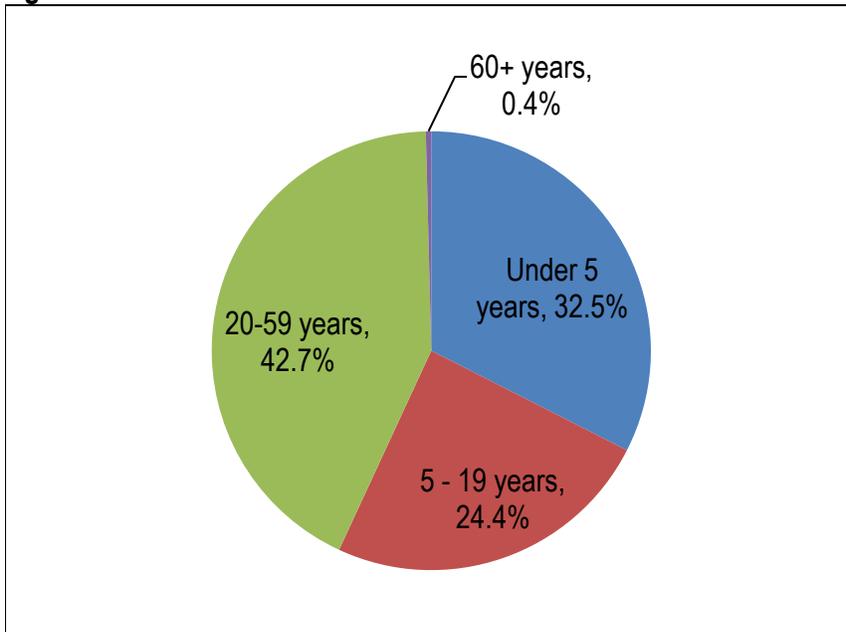
The following demographics are produced solely on data obtained during the last half of the fiscal year (1/1/2010 – 6/30/2010). They are compared with general population demographics for Washington State as reported on the [US Census website](#).

### THOR Demographic Detail

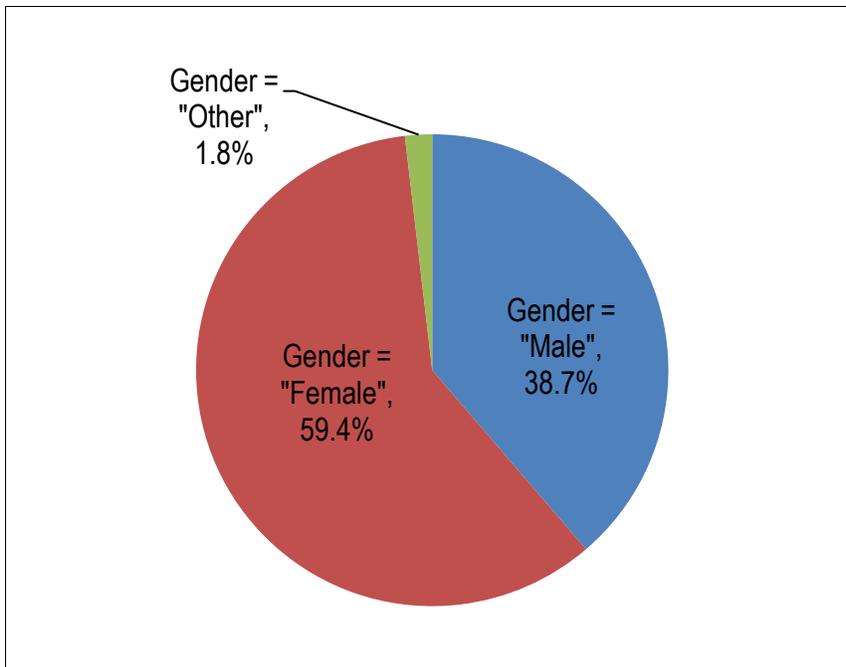
	THOR HMIS Data	US Census for Washington State
Male		49.9%
Female	59.4%	50.1%
Other gender	1.8%	N/A
Under 5 years	32.5%	6.8%
5 – 19 years	24.4%	19.2%
20 – 59 years	42.7%	56.2%
60 + years	0.4%	17.4%
Median Age	15	36.9
Hispanic	22.9%	10.3%
Non-Hispanic	75.0%	89.7%
Other Ethnicity (Don't Know/Refused)	2.1%	N/A
Alaskan Native/American Indian	4%	1.3%
Asian	1%	6.6%
Black/African American	10%	3.4%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	1%	0.4%
White	68%	80.2%
Multi-racial	8%	4.3%
Other Race (Don't Know/Refused)	8%	N/A

**THOR Demographics:**

**Age**

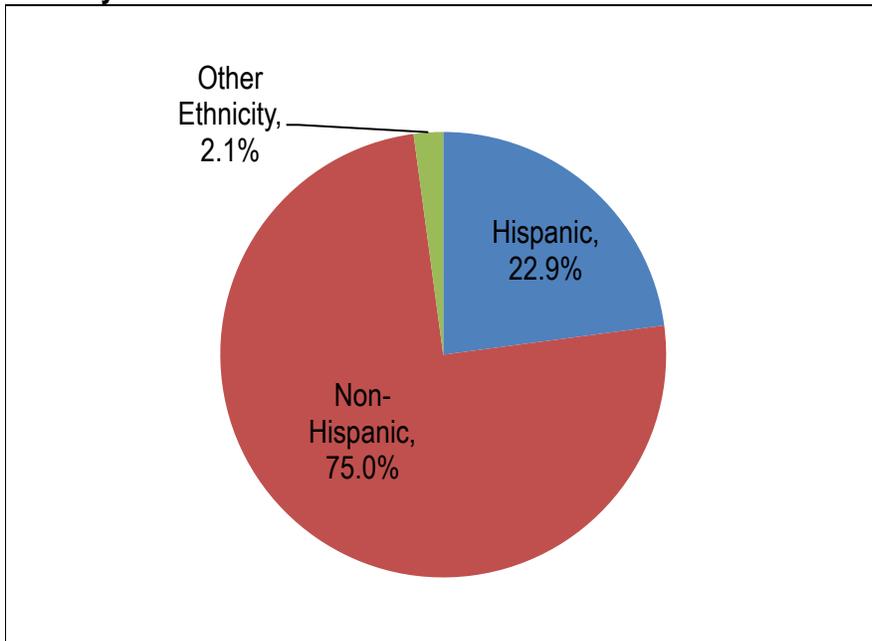


**Gender**

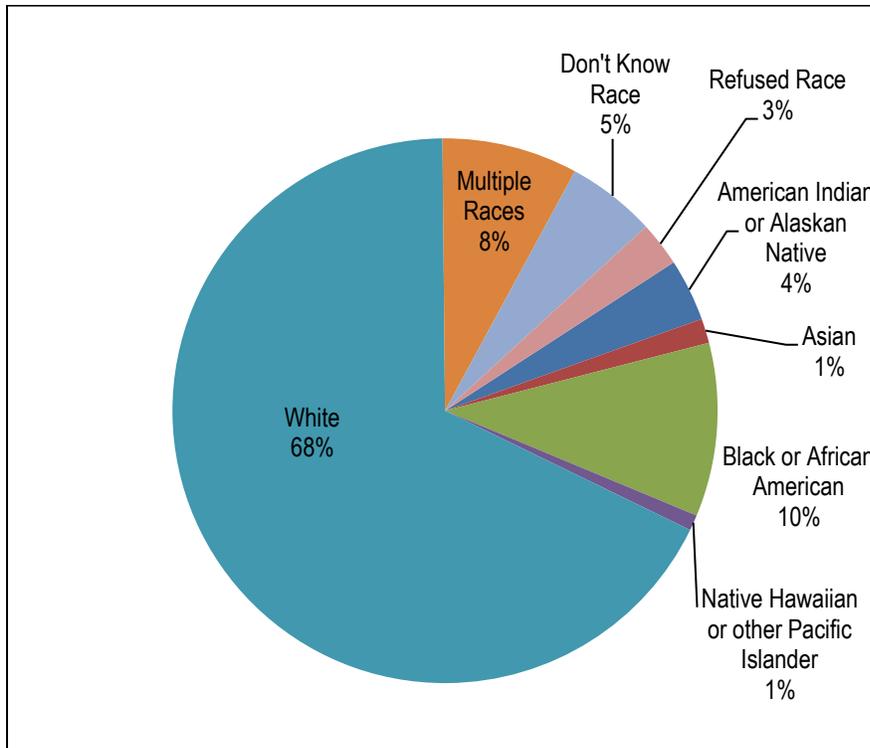


**THOR Demographics Continued:**

**Ethnicity**



**Race**



## **Appendix B - Independent Youth Housing Program**

### **Introduction**

Codified in 2007 (RCW 43.63A.305), the Independent Youth Housing Program (IYHP) provides rental assistance and case management to youth, ages 18 to 23, who have exited the state dependency system.

During SFY 2010 Commerce held grants with five agencies to provide program services; Catholic Family and Child Service (CFCS) serving Benton, Franklin, and Yakima Counties, Community Youth Services (CYS) serving Lewis and Thurston Counties, Pierce County Alliance (PCA) serving Pierce County, Volunteers of America (VOA) serving Spokane County, and YMCA of Greater Seattle (YMCA) serving King County.

This is the annual report on IYHP for the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. The report contains data pertinent to the performance measures for IYHP as specified by legislation. IYHP is specifically referenced under the *Transitional Subsidized Housing and Services* strategy in the State Homeless Plan and Report.

New with this report is the use of the state homeless management information system (HMIS) to obtain most of the data used throughout this report. The Department of Commerce eliminated paper reporting for IYHP in late 2009. IYHP grantees were required to input all program data for SFY 2010 (7/1/2009 – 6/30/2010) into the state HMIS via direct data entry or data integration. We continue to address data quality issues on an ongoing basis with grantees, and expect that future annual reports will reflect increased accuracy and completeness of data.

### **Performance Measurement**

RCW 43.63A.311 established performance measures for the IYHP which pertain to the following issue areas:

- Enrollment levels;
- Housing stability;
- Economic self-sufficiency;
- Independent living skills;
- Education and job training attainment;
- Use of state-funded services over time; and
- Percentage of youths aging out of the state dependency system each year who are eligible for state assistance.

### ***Enrollment Levels***

Grantees reported serving 99 youths during SFY 2010, which includes 32 youth carried over from the previous year. Of all the youths served in SFY 2010 (including those still enrolled at the end of the fiscal year), the average length of program participation is 276 days or ~10 months. Of all the youths exited in SFY 2010, the average length of stay is 373 days or ~12 months.

### **Youth Served, Length of Participation, Exits, and Length of Stay by Service Area:**

	King County	Pierce County	Spokane County	Thurston County	Yakima County
Number of youth served	21	24	10	28	16
Average length of program participation	108 days	370 days	163 days	340 days	328 days
Number of youth exited	0	8	0	14	5
Average length of stay	NA	444 days	NA	370 days	268 days

All five grantees have the ability to serve clients in multiple counties as specified in their applications. Only CYS and CFCS reported serving clients in more than one county. CYS served a client in Lewis County, and CFCS served a client in Benton County. Due to the reporting capabilities of HMIS, this report will examine data by the office location of the grantee, not by the county in which the client was served.

### ***Housing Stability***

In SFY 2010, 27 youth exited the program; 17 (62 percent) of these youth exited to permanent housing.

### **Numbers enrolled and exits by Grantee:**

County	Number Enrolled During Program Year	Number Exited	Number Exited to Permanent Housing		Exit to Other Locations*	Number Enrolled at End of Program Year
			Subsidized	Unsubsidized		
King	21	0	0	0	0	21
Pierce	12	8	0	8	0	16
Spokane	10	0	0	0	0	10
Thurston	13	14	2	3	9	14
Yakima	6	5	0	4	1	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>72</b>

Housing categories:

- Permanent unsubsidized housing includes homeownership, rental without subsidy, and moving in with a family member or friend on a permanent basis.
- Permanent subsidized housing includes Section 8, Shelter Plus Care, public housing, and other ownership or rental with subsidy, or Safe Havens.
- Other locations means the participant could not be located or the client exited to emergency shelter, another transitional housing facility, a psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility, a substance abuse treatment center, a hospital, jail, prison, a juvenile detention facility, a family member or friend's residence on a temporary basis, a hotel or motel paid for without an emergency shelter voucher, a foster care home or group home, or a place not meant for human habitation.

### ***Economic Self-Sufficiency***

Of the 27 youths who exited the program, 7 percent (2 youth) attained an increase income from entry to exit. One of the youths met their self-sufficiency wage at exit.

Currently economic self-sufficiency is primarily measured by using the Washington State Self-Sufficiency Calculator. The calculator (based on the Self-Sufficiency Standard) measures how much income is needed for a family of a given composition in a given place to adequately meet its basic needs without public or private assistance. Increases in income in general and in relationship to Area Median Income are also tracked.

### ***Independent Living Skills***

Eleven percent (3 youth) of the 26 youth participating in IYHP for twelve months showed an increase of at least five percent on their Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) raw score.

The IYHP uses the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) to evaluate progress in participants' independent living skills. Based on the entrance date of each participating youth, the assessment is completed annually. Although the Ansell-Casey Assessment is widely used in the child welfare field and includes a number of supplemental assessments for particular populations of youth, IYHP grantees have indicated a number of issues with the tool that they feel have influenced the outcomes thus far. These issues include:

- Completion of the assessment is subjective and dependent on the mood of participant;
- Often youth start the program thinking they know everything and score themselves high on the initial assessment. Over time and through case management however, they figure out they have a lot to learn and as a result score themselves lower on subsequent assessments;
- Using the assessment as the only measure of life skills can have inaccurate results that may simply be inherent in a computer-based assessment. It is hard to know if people are being honest, are distracted, or just not amenable to this type of "test-taking;"

- If a youth rates himself or herself higher than 95 percent the first time, the score cannot increase the score by five percent;
- The assessment is cumbersome. If the youth are taking it seriously, it is so long that they lose interest by the end of it; and
- Grantees lack training in how to interpret the results so it is hard to use the information to everyone's advantage.

In consideration of these concerns, Commerce staff is working with grantees to determine the suitability of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix to measure increases in independent living skills as well as other components of self-sufficiency.

### *Education and Job Training Attainment*

#### **Employment at Entry**

County	Employed at Entry	Unemployed at Entry	Don't Know/Refused/Missing
King	6	8	7
Pierce	0	0	12
Spokane	0	1	9
Thurston	1	9	3
Yakima	3	0	3
Total	10	18	34

#### **Employment at Exit**

County	Employed at Exit		Unemployed at Exit	Don't Know/Refused/Missing
	Employed at entry	Unemployed at entry		
King	0	0	0	0
Pierce	0	0	1	8
Spokane	0	0	0	0
Thurston	1	2	7	3
Yakima	2	2	1	0
Total	3	4	9	11

#### **Education at Entry**

County	Degree at entry	No degree at entry
King	14	7
Pierce	1	11
Spokane	4	6
Thurston	8	5
Yakima	3	3
Total	30	32

**Education at Exit**

County	HS Diploma, GED or Post Secondary degree at Exit		No degree or certificate at exit	Refused Don't Know or NULL at exit
	Degree at entry	No degree at entry		
King	0	0	0	0
Pierce	0	0	0	8
Spokane	0	0	0	0
Thurston	3	4	4	3
Yakima	1	3	1	0
Total	7	7	5	11

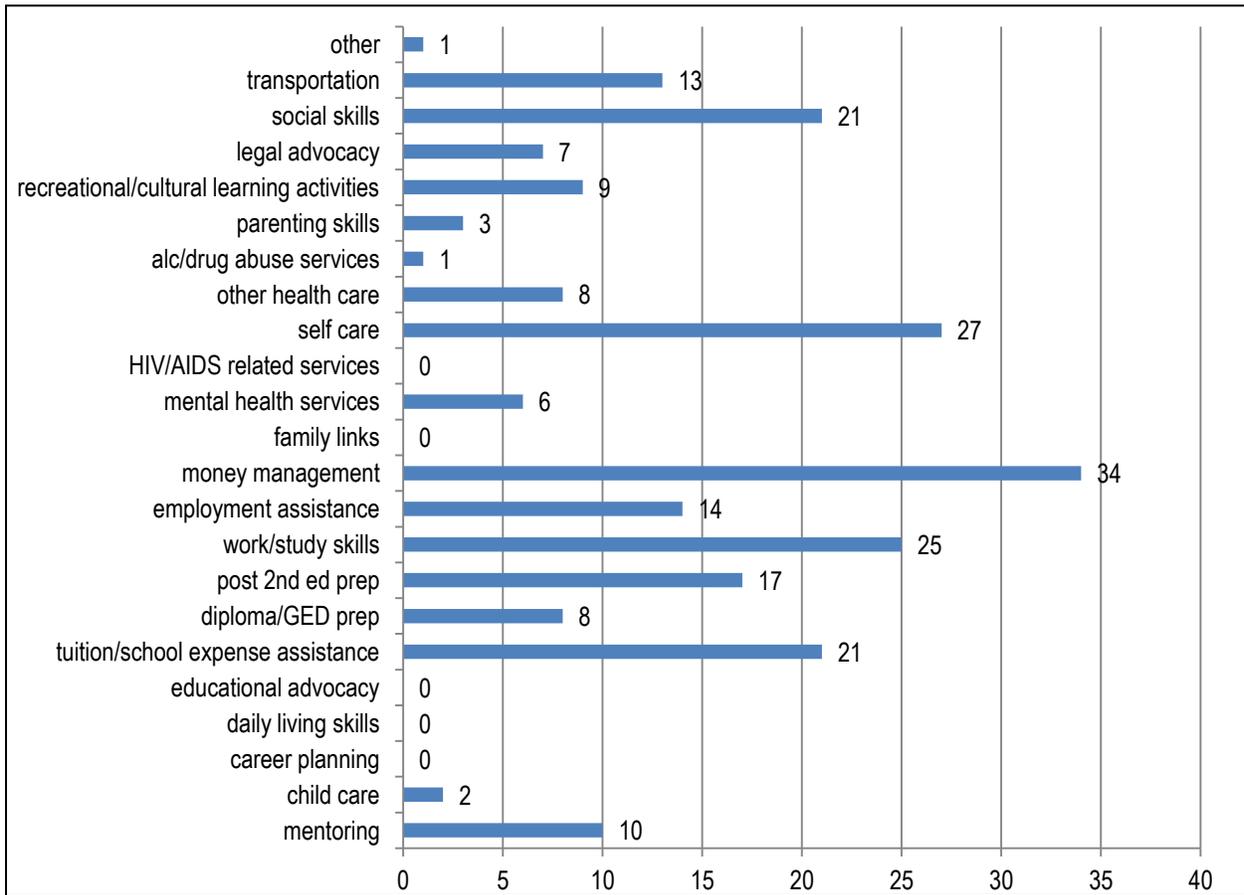
**Training and School Enrollment**

County	Enrolled in school at entry, reassessment or exit	HS Diploma, GED or post-secondary degree earned while enrolled	Vocational training certificate earned while enrolled
King	14	0	0
Pierce	0	0	0
Spokane	0	0	0
Thurston	13	4	0
Yakima	10	3	0
Total	37	7	0

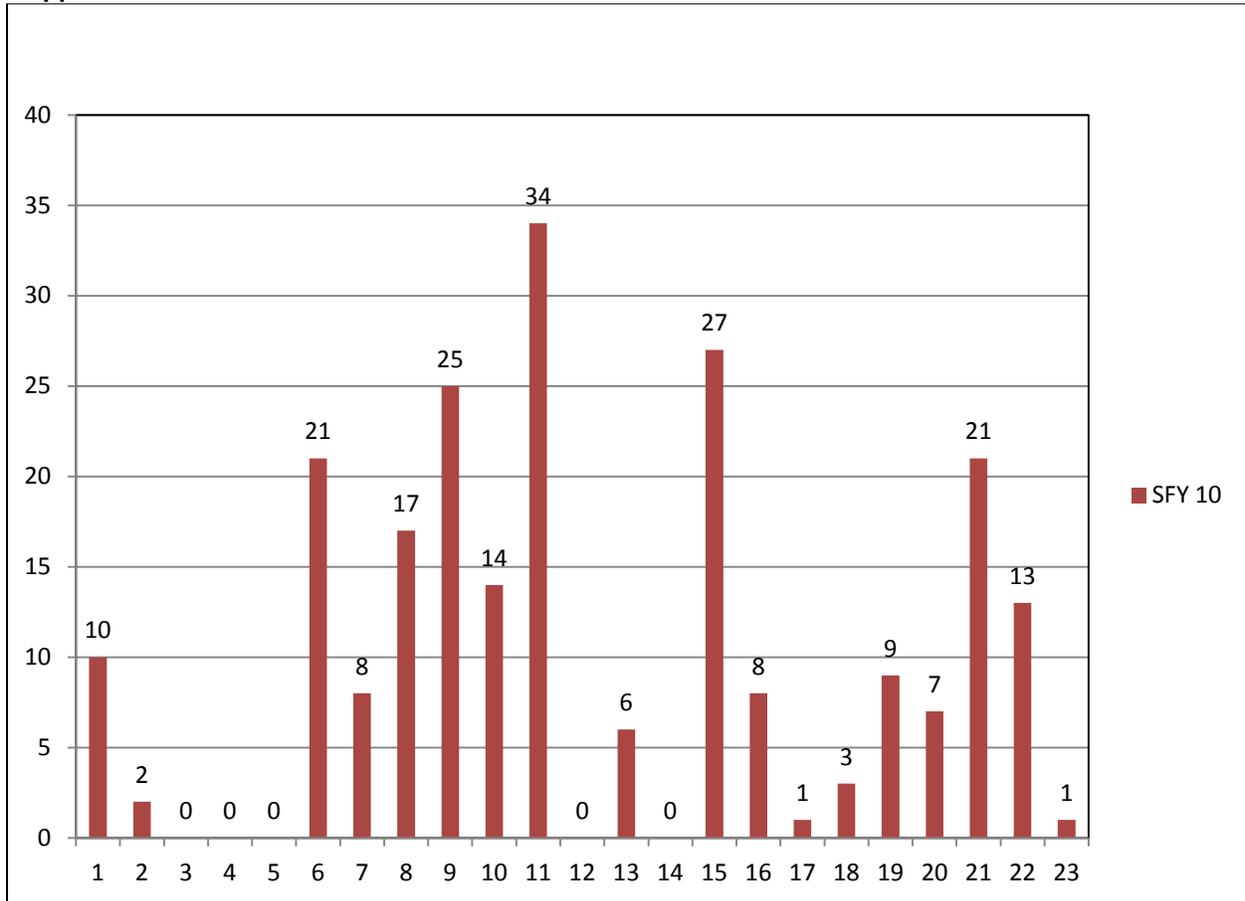
***Use of all State-funded Services over Time***

Of the 99 youth served in SFY 10, 50 received supportive services. Eighty percent of youth received services that were paid for entirely or in part by state funds.

## Number of Youth



### Supportive Services Provided in SFY 2010



### *Percentage of Youths Aging out of the State Dependency System each Year who are Eligible for State Assistance*

To identify a baseline to measure youth development and stability after aging out of foster care, DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division (RDA) studied youth who aged out of foster care and identified some of the services they had received. This analysis specifically looks at Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug treatment (AOD), Homelessness, and Arrests.

The comparison populations were:

1. Youth turning 18 in foster care in 2003 (N=519).
2. Youth turning 18 in 2003 in families where the children (only) were receiving Medicaid (N=19,790).
3. Youth turning 18 receiving TANF-related family medical coverage (N=7,917).

The rationale for using these comparison groups:

- The Medicaid families are as close to the general population that DSHS has data available.
- TANF families are more likely to be struggling with similar issues to the foster care population, related to resources and stability, and may provide an additional comparison related to independence.

The most prevalent trend to emerge from looking at the three groups is:

- Children entering the adult world from foster care have significantly higher needs than those leaving from their families.
- Children entering adulthood from foster care have a greater need for services to support them in transitioning to adulthood.
- Children in foster care continue to have a higher need for mental health services and a higher diagnosis of a drug use disorder.

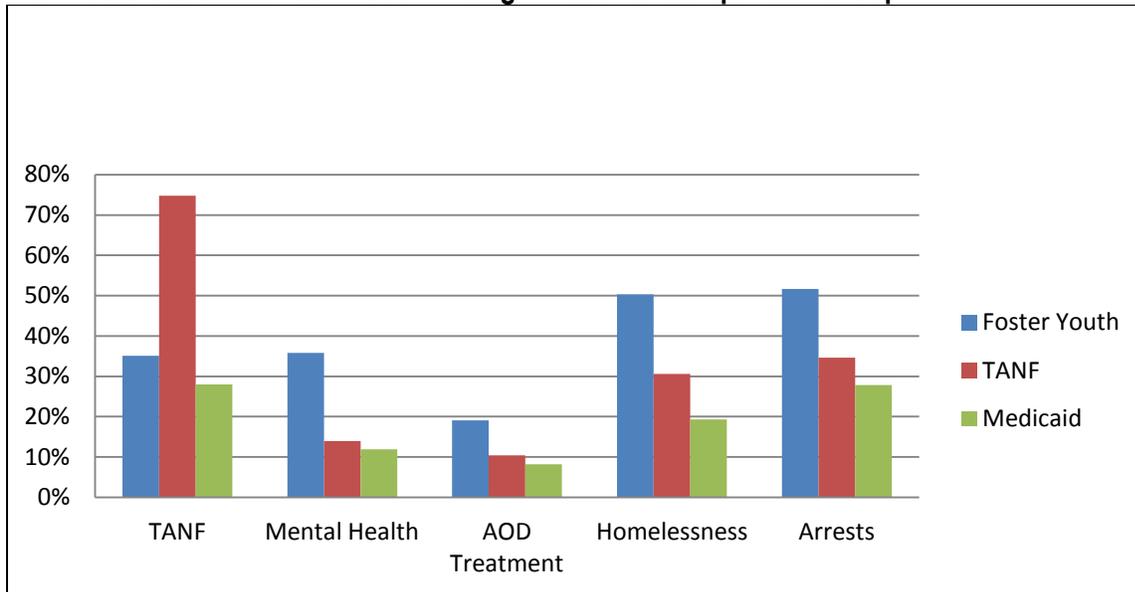
In the comparison of these three groups the data shows that risk factors are more prevalent for emancipating foster youth than for those youth "aging out" of Medicaid coverage. Data shows that youth who exited foster care in 2003 are very likely to become homeless and have at least one arrest from the time of emancipation.

- Fifty percent of former foster youth were homeless at one point or another compared to 35 percent of TANF youth in the same age group.
- Forty one percent of these foster youth have an alcohol/drug treatment need, and about half have a mental health diagnosis, an arrest, or experienced homelessness. The data shows that those needs frequently follow them into adult life and are exacerbated by the absence of family to fall back on.

The challenges faced by youth leaving foster care are many. For most youth, families are there to support the first tentative steps toward independence. Youth who enter adulthood from foster care are unlikely to have family members who can act as a safety net.

The percentage of each comparison group facing each specific risk factor five and six years after emancipation is displayed in the chart below. This chart is a comparison analysis of risk factors and outcomes for foster care children emancipated in calendar year 2003, and shows that a greater percentage of foster youth are facing mental health, alcohol and other drug treatment, homelessness, and arrest than the comparison groups, with TANF being the most prevalent.

### Risk Factors & Outcomes - Youth Exiting in 2003 vs. Comparison Group

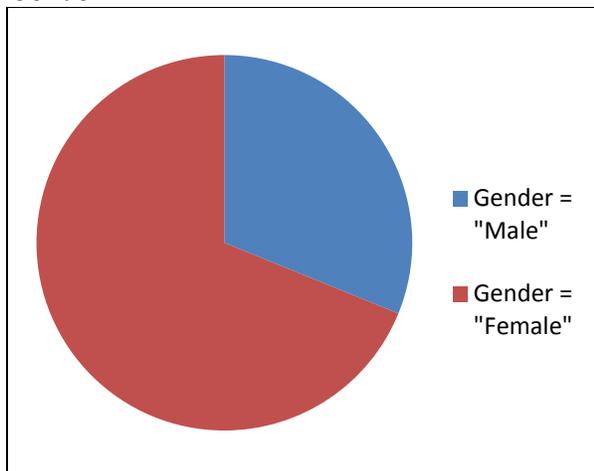


### Profile of Program Participants

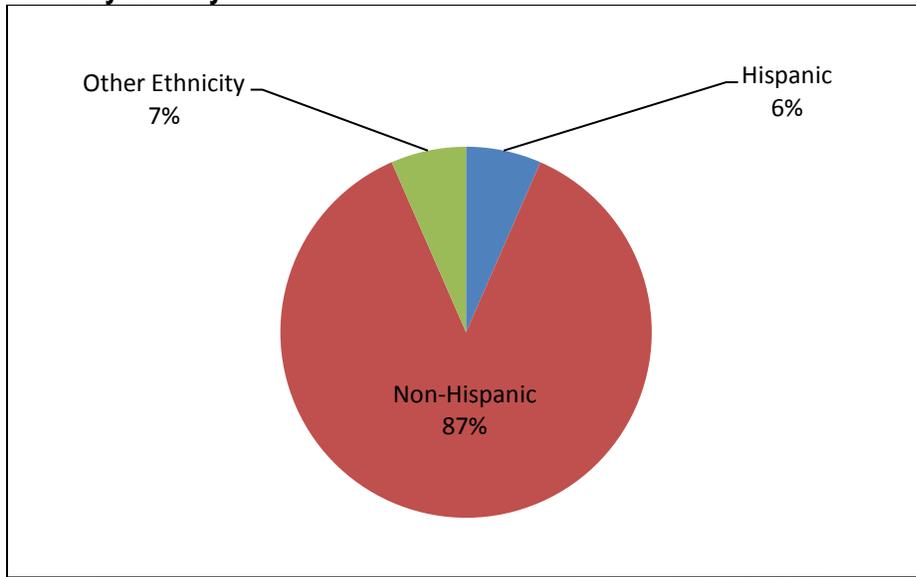
**Client Population.** The average age at time of entry to the program was 19.72 years. Twelve youths entered the program directly from foster care.

Most of the youths are young women (69 percent). Eleven percent of the participants have one or more children.

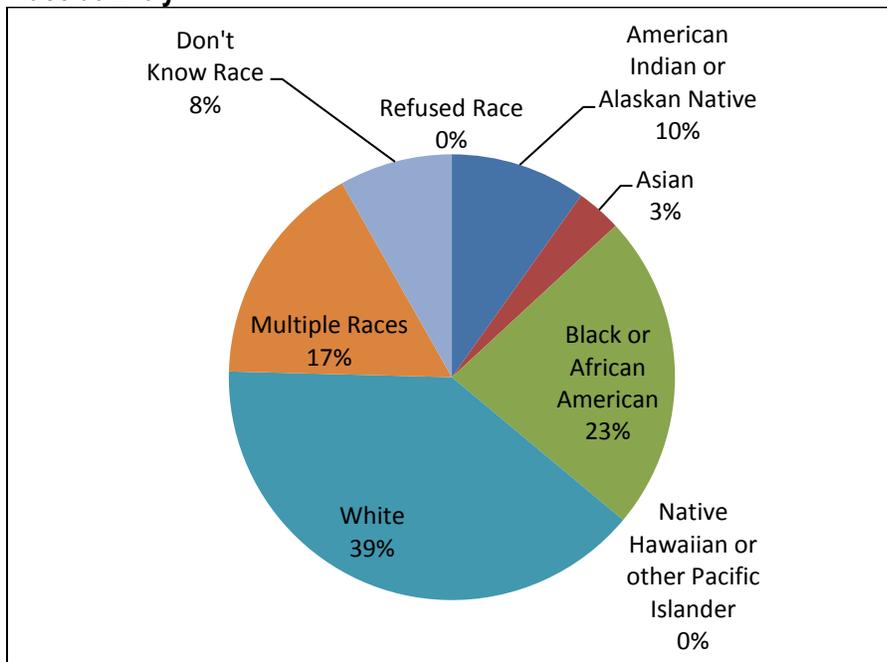
### Gender



### Ethnicity at Entry



### Race at Entry



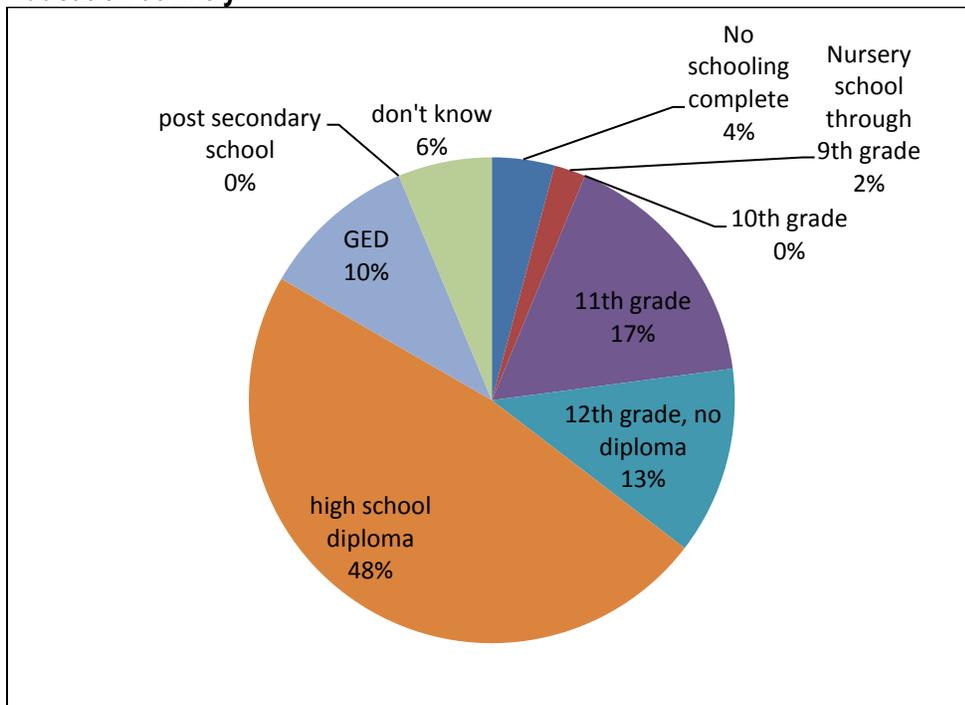
**Income.** The following table describes youth income at entry relative to Area Median Income (AMI) and the average youth income by county. Households earning less than 30 percent of the AMI are considered extremely low-income. As indicated by the table, most IYHP participants were extremely low-income.

**Youth Income at Entry Relative to Area Median Income (AMI) And Average Youth Income**

County	Percent of AMI			Average Monthly Household Income
	≤30%	31-50%	Missing Data	
King	19	0	2	\$119.63
Pierce	2	0	10	\$0.00
Spokane	5	3	1	\$1,844.33
Thurston	13	0	0	\$387.89
Yakima	4	2	0	\$783.98
Total	43	5	13	

**Educational Level.** The graph below represents the educational level completed at time of entry for participating youth. Sixty-seven percent (42 youth) had obtained a high school diploma or GED, received a vocational certificate, or had some college prior to entering the program; although for true economic self-sufficiency, further education or work training would be highly desirable and essential.

**Education at Entry**



## **Recommendations**

The legislation calls for recommendations on program improvements and strategies that might assist the state in reaching its goals of ensuring that all youths aging out of the state dependency system have access to a decent, appropriate, and affordable home in a healthy, safe environment to prevent such youths from experiencing homelessness (RCW 43.63A.311).

The Department of Social and Health Services recommends that the legislatively mandated outcome be evaluated as to whether a decrease in state assistance is an accurate and desirable measure of youth functioning in the years following their exit from foster care. In 2007, the legislature expanded medical coverage to age 21 for youth exiting from foster care, which appears to be establishing a different direction than the outcome currently being measured.

On the six-year outlook of the “Analysis of Risk Factors and Outcomes for Foster Care Children Emancipated in CY 2003”, this statutory outcome is most closely aligned with the measure of the “*Number receiving medical coverage across any of the specified coverage types (Unduplicated)*”. The legislative outcome is related to youth receiving state assistance and this measure only addresses medical assistance and does not include financial or food assistance.

- There were 131 youth receiving medical coverage in 2003 compared to 225 in 2009, which appears to be the opposite outcome the legislature expected from the program.

By contrast, the “Analysis of Risk Factors and Outcomes for Foster Care Children Emancipated in CY 2003”, indicates that on the measure of the “*Number with an indicated of Need for AOD Treatment*” there has been improvement since 2003, more consistent with the legislative intent.

- There were 120 youth receiving alcohol and drug treatment in 2003, decreasing to only 76 in 2009.

Many new state and federal programs have been implemented since 2003. Areas of program focus include: education, employment, supportive relationships and community connections, housing, life skills, health, and cultural and personal identity. However, it should be noted that in an effort to adequately prepare youth for transition to adulthood DSHD Children’s Administration actively plans with the youth for their transition from care and educates youth on state and federal resources available to them.