

# FOSTER YOUTH

Going through the foster care system can make life a struggle for youth. Frequent placement changes can lead to poor educational and financial outcomes, and foster youth are often unprepared for emancipation, leading to high levels of homelessness, incarceration, and mental health problems in early adulthood.

In 2010, there were an estimated

**408,425** U.S. children in foster care

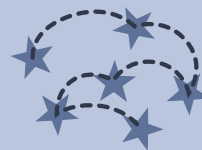
**27,854** of these youth were emancipated, or "aged out," of the foster care system, whether or not they were prepared to transition into adulthood

## POOR EDUCATION

More than one-third of foster youth



have 5 or more school changes.



Youth with one fewer placement change per year



are almost twice as likely to graduate high school before leaving care.



Foster youth repeat a grade twice as often as their peers,



and only 1.8% of foster youth will go on to complete a bachelor's degree,



compared to 24% among the general population.



Unfortunately, poor education is just the beginning. Alumni of the foster care system face several troubling odds.

## HOMELESS

65% of youth leaving foster care need immediate housing upon release,



and 22.2% experience homelessness after age 18.



## NOMONEY

33.2% of foster alumni have household incomes at or below the poverty line.



## IN PRISON

Foster youth are 5 to 10 times more likely to enter the juvenile justice system,



and 25% are incarcerated within the first two years of emancipation.



## MENTAL HEALTH

25.2% of foster alumni are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder,



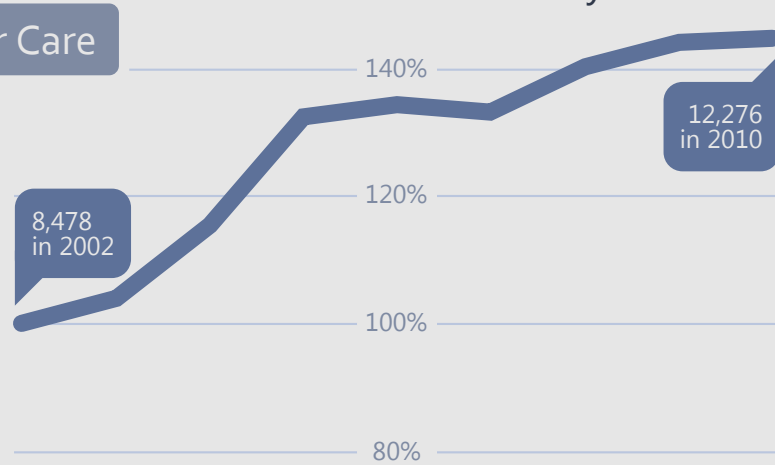
which is nearly double the rate of U.S. war veterans.

Foster care numbers in the U.S. have fallen 21.8% since 2002.

But in Indiana, children in foster care have increased by 44.8%.



Youth in Foster Care



### Sources:

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May 2012