

Data Walk: Sedgwick County FOSTER CARE



Accessible Version

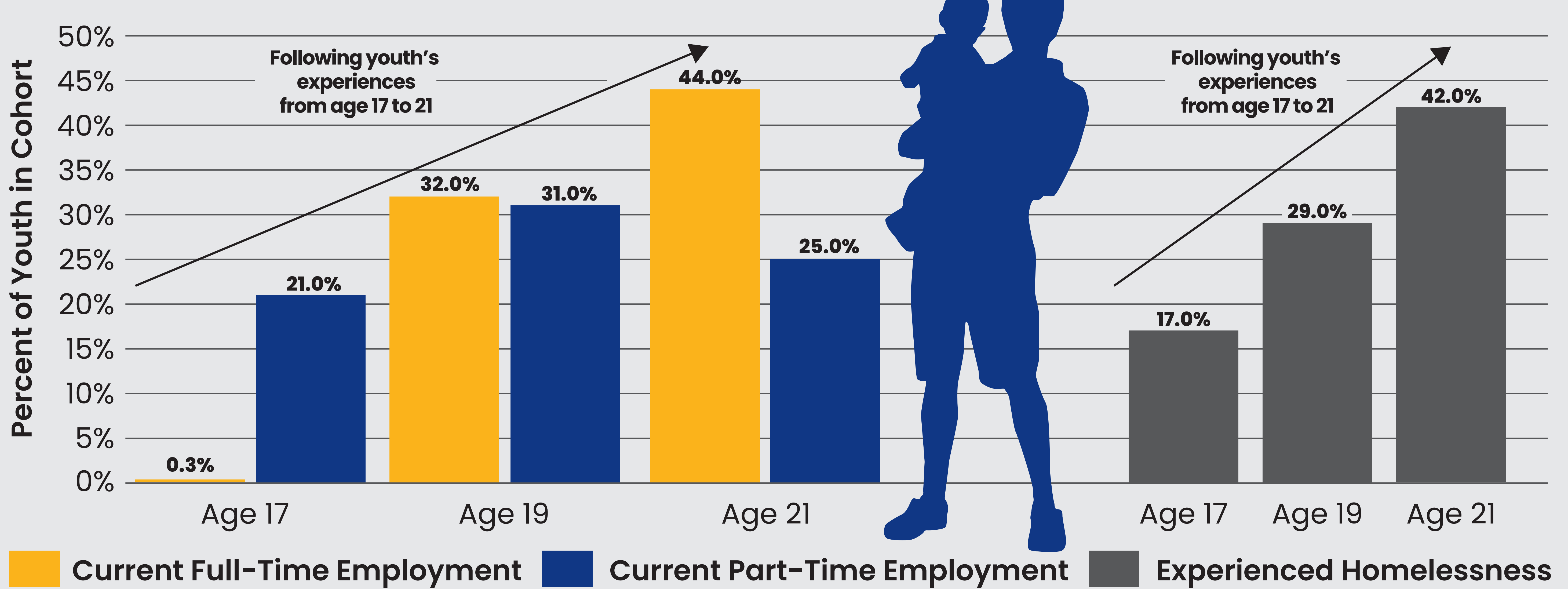
What This Measures:

Experiences of employment and homelessness following a cohort of the same youth who transitioned out of foster care at age 17, 19 and 21.

Experiences of homelessness doubled from age 17 to 21

Although the percentage of Kansas youth who had transitioned out of foster care reporting full-time employment increased from age 17 (0.3%) to age 21 (44.0%), the percent of youth reporting homelessness in the past two years doubled from age 17 (17.0%) to age 21 (42.0%).

Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care Reporting Outcomes in the Past Two Years by Age, FY 2017–2021



Note: This snapshot includes information about all Kansas youth who were eligible to take the National Youth Transition Database (NYTD) survey, starting in 2017 at age 17 and following up every two years at ages 19 and 21, ending in 2021. The number of participants for age 17 = 372, age 19=219, age 21=206. "Participated" includes youth who were reported to have provided at least one valid response to a survey question. For these outcomes, the baseline cohort is surveyed on their occurrence during their lifetime. At follow up, the cohort is surveyed on the occurrence of these outcomes in the past two years. Data collected related to employment and homelessness experiences are collected from separate survey questions and are not intended to sum to 100 percent.

Source: National Youth Transition Database, Outcomes Data Snapshot: Kansas, FY 2017–2021.

Why this is important: Children who age out of the foster care system can face many challenges during their transition to adulthood. They may have **more limited work histories or job training opportunities** than their peers and are less likely to graduate high school or continue on to post-secondary education. Additionally, trauma from their experiences may have **limited opportunities to develop the skills and healthy behaviors needed for maintaining employment.** Young adults who were previously in foster care **are also more likely to experience homelessness** than their peers. Homelessness can include sleeping in parks and on sidewalks, in shelters or even "couch-surfing" between temporary living situations. **Not all foster youth** will experience housing instability. Youth who experience homelessness more often identify as LGBTQ, Black, multiracial or Hispanic. Additionally, those without a high school diploma or GED and who are single parents are more likely to experience homelessness. Homelessness can result in **greater interaction with the criminal justice system, poor mental health, substance use disorders and experiences of physical or sexual violence.**

(Source: U.S. Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, Healthy People 2030, Annie E. Casey Foundation)

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