



Presentation to Florida PTA December 2020

Contact information:

Pathways@EducateTomorrow.org

(305) 374-3751

One Student's Experience



Tracy Harris, who spent years in foster care, was a student at Miami Dade College who is studying microbiology at the University of Florida and plans to attend medical school. She works with the Voices for Children Foundation in Miami. She is a mother of two and caretaker to her four siblings, who attend public school in Miami.

She has been helped by a number of organizations that are part of the Positive Pathways Network, including the following....

[\(678\) Educate Tomorrow
Community - YouTube](#)



Program Highlights

- Unique state-level program aimed at increasing post-secondary educational success among college students who lived in foster care in Florida
- Created in 2015 and is funded by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), in response to a Florida law requiring collaboration between DCF and the Florida Department of Education
- Administered by Educate Tomorrow, a non-profit organization
- Maintains and expands a network of members
- Strong partnerships with Guardian ad Litem, Florida College Access Network, Florida College System, State University System





Our Mission

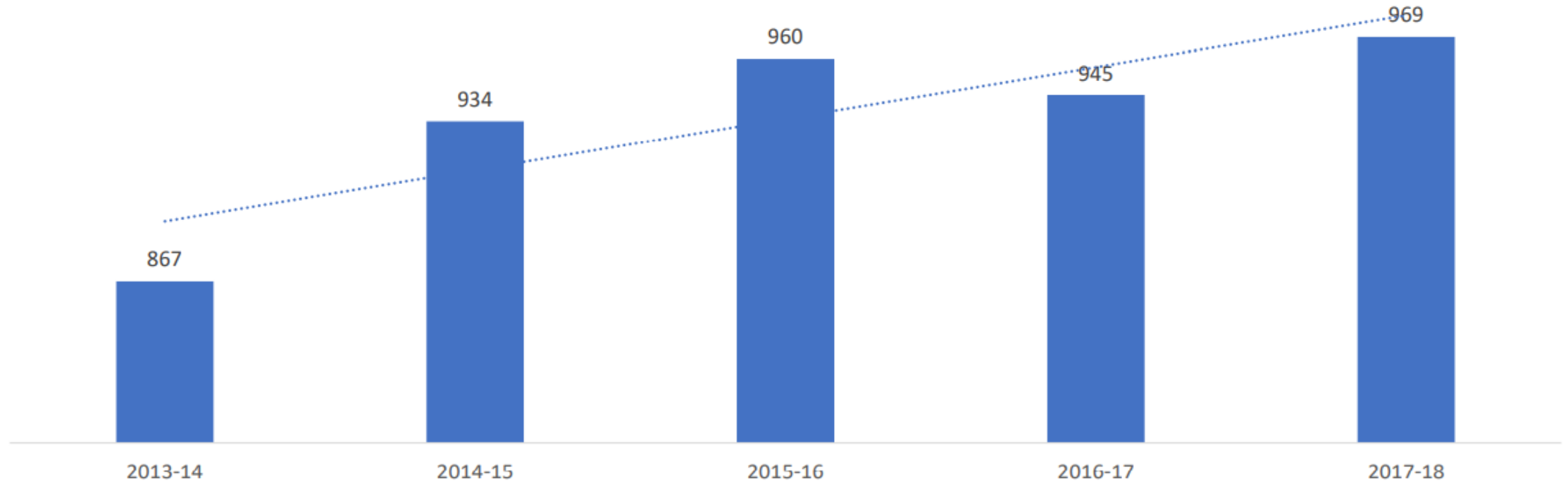
Positive Pathways supports campus-based and community-based child welfare and education professionals who work with students from foster care and homeless backgrounds.

Our Vision

That all students who have experienced foster care or homelessness will have the chance to reach their full potential through education and community support.

Growth in Number of Foster Youth Turning Age 18 2013-14 to 2017-18

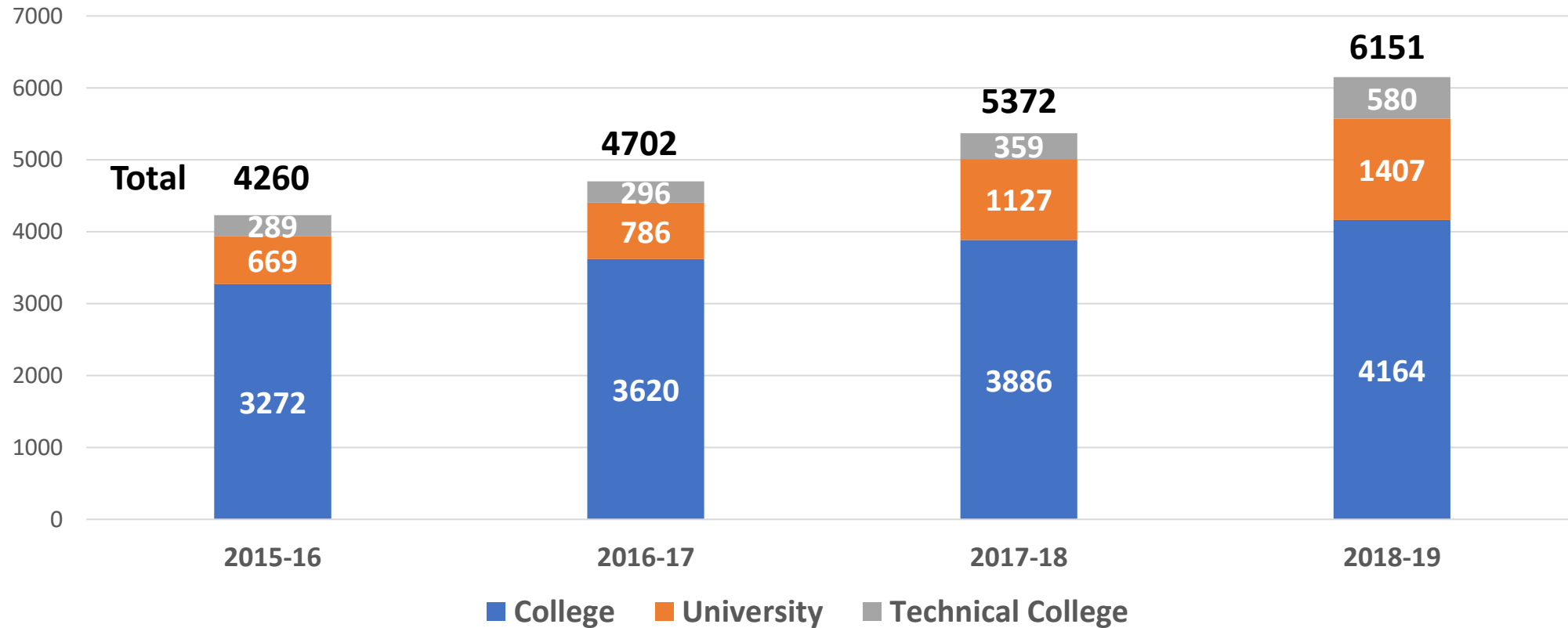
12% increase
2013-14 to 2017-18



Source: Florida Department of Children and Families



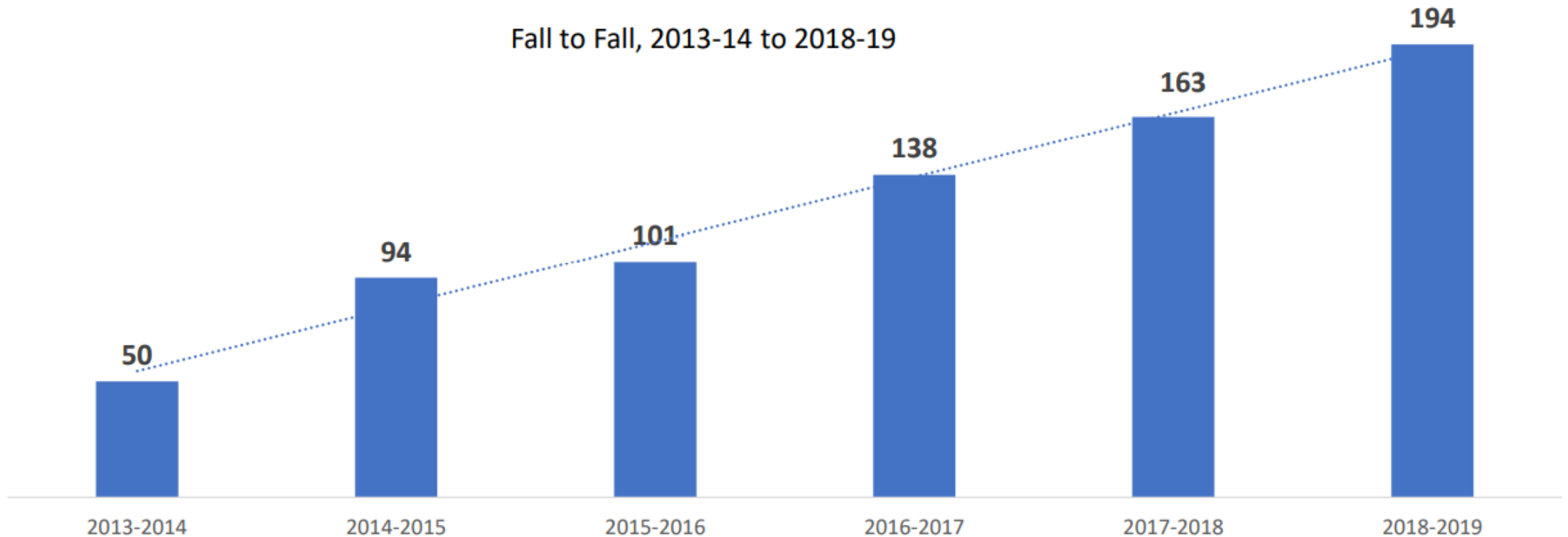
**Students Using the DCF Tuition and Fee Exemption at
Florida's Public Post-Secondary Institutions
2015-16 to 2018-19**





Number of Public University Students that Graduated using Florida Department of Children and Families Tuition and Fee Exemptions

Fall to Fall, 2013-14 to 2018-19



Source: BOG ODA analysis of State University System Database (SUDS)

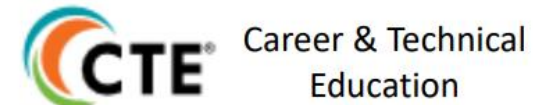
A Guiding Quote

“Foster youth need every advantage as they transition to adulthood. Because it has been well-established that postsecondary education and training are essential to economic mobility, providing supports and resources to encourage the completion of such programs is one strategy to facilitate entry into career-focused employment.”

Legislative Mandate for Our Work



- In 2014, the Florida Legislature directed DCF to work in collaboration with the State University System Board of Governors (SUS BOG), the Florida College System (FCS), and the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to help address the need for a comprehensive support structure in the academic arena to assist young adults who have been or remain in the foster care system” Chapter 409.1452
- Positive Pathways is the program DCF set up to accomplish that collaboration.



Educational Campus Coaching

In 2014 the state passed legislation, (F.S. 409.1452):

The State University System of Florida and the Florida College System shall provide postsecondary educational campus coaching positions that will be integrated Florida College System institutions' and university institutions general support services structure to provide current and former foster care children and young adults with dedicated, on campus support.



- This legislation resulted in on campus foster care liaisons or coaches being appointed.
- All 28 colleges and all 12 universities have a designated person.
- 7 colleges and universities have a dedicated staff person.

The hidden truth of AGING OUT

of the Foster Care System



54%

Will earn a High School Diploma



1 in 5

Will be homeless within one year



1 in 4

Will be incarcerated within two years



71%

Of women will be pregnant by age 21



Less than 3%

Will earn a bachelor's degree



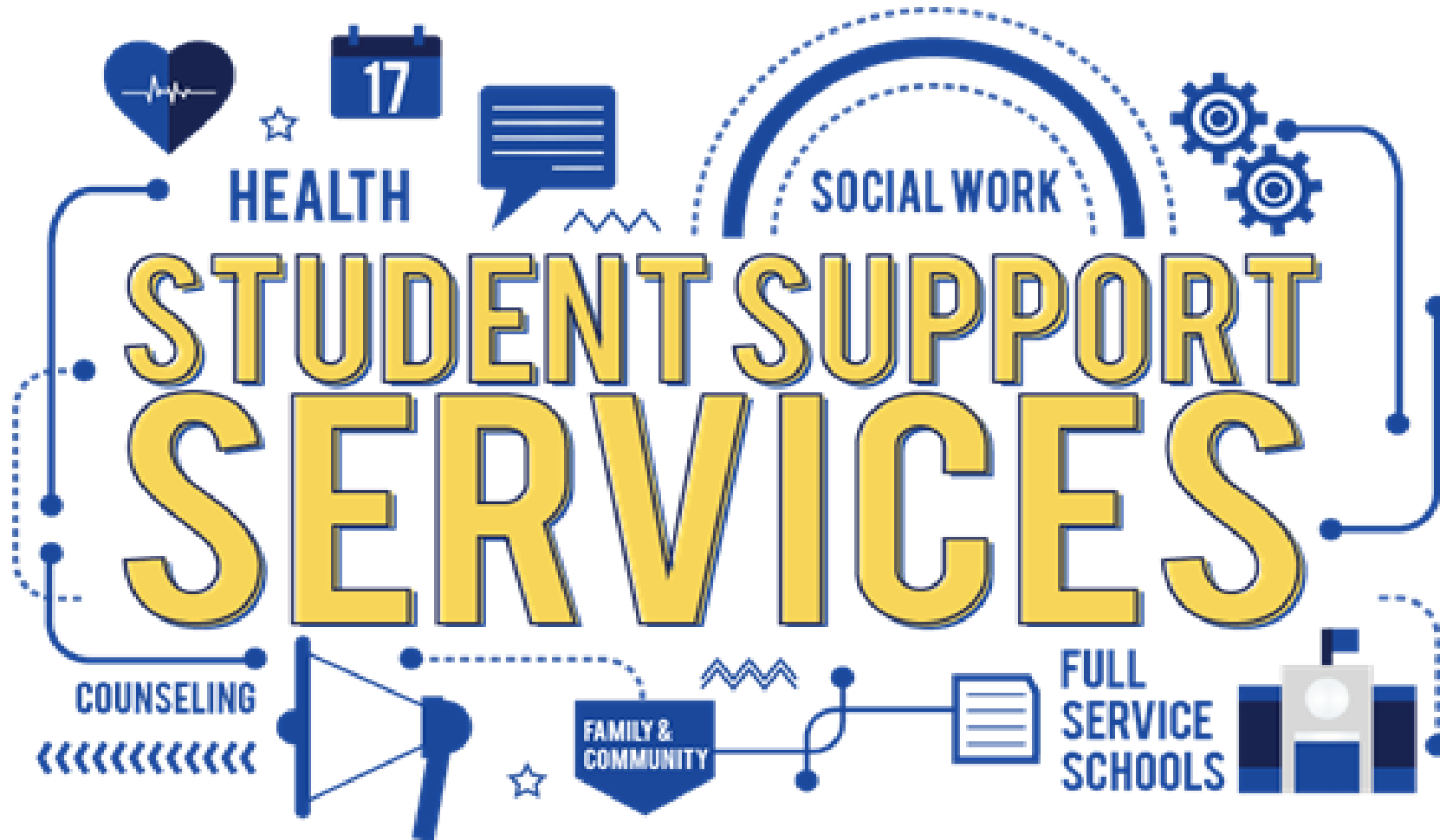
50%

Will be unemployed by age 24

Source: <https://cronkitenews.azpbs.org/2015/12/04/arizona-tuition-program-enables-foster-youth-to-earn-college-degree>

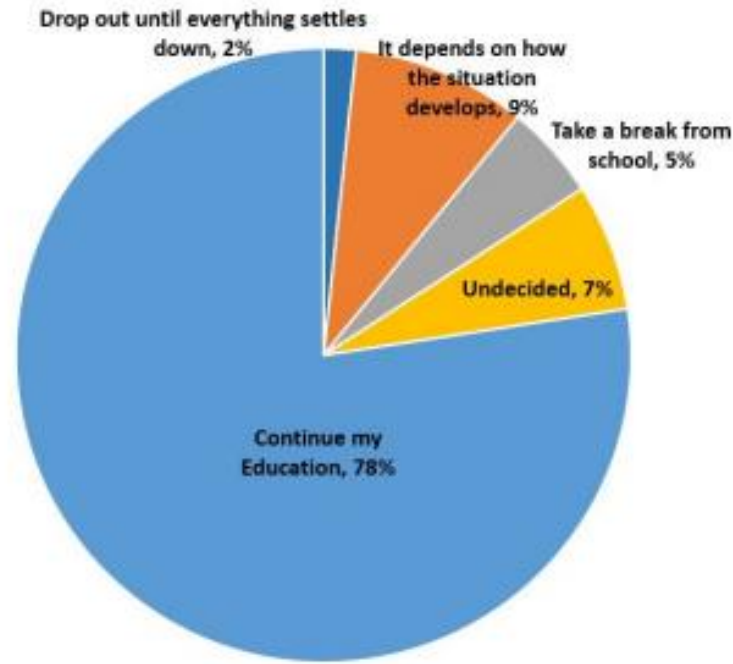
More students are attending college but the challenge to graduate remains.

With support, students can succeed!



Results of Recent Statewide Survey of Students Using Waiver

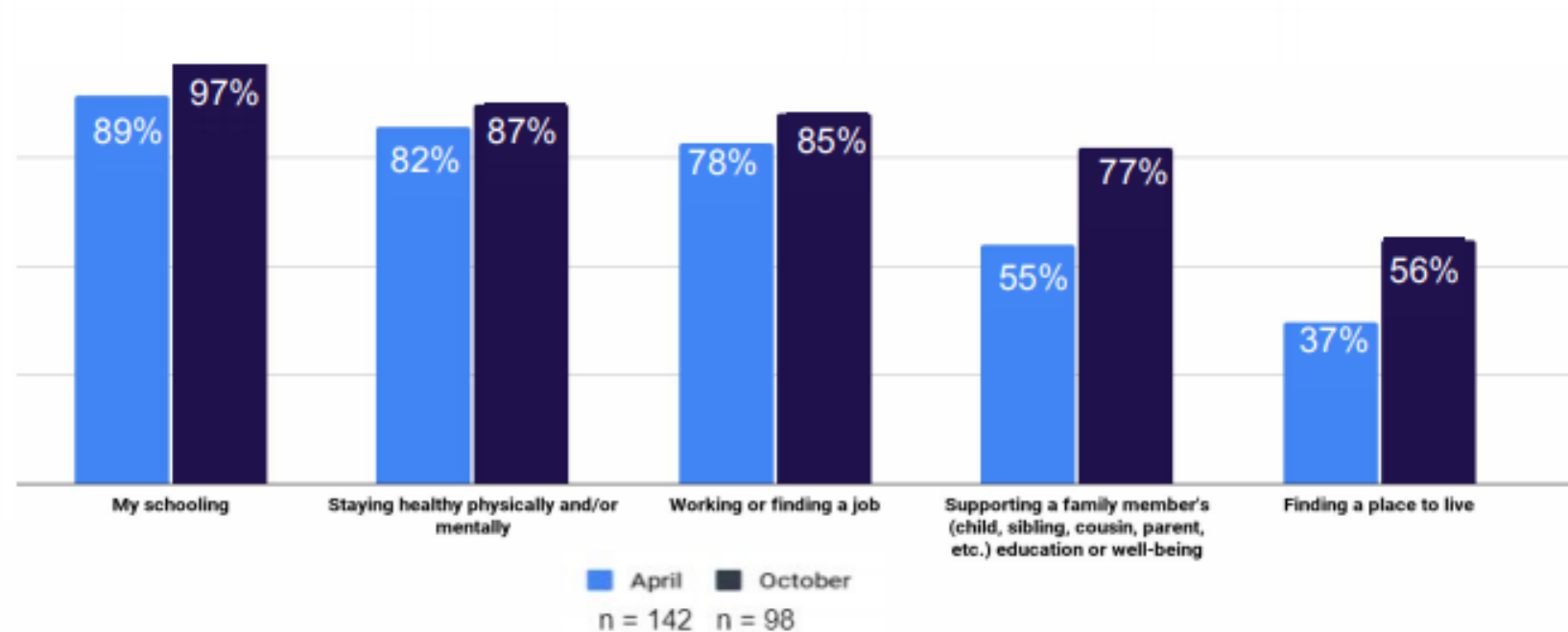
What are your plans regarding your education?



October, 2020
N = 98

Key Takeaway: A high percentage (78%) of the students indicate they plan to continue their education. However, a sizeable percent are not that sure. These results, combined with other information in this report, indicate students' urgent ongoing need for support and guidance.

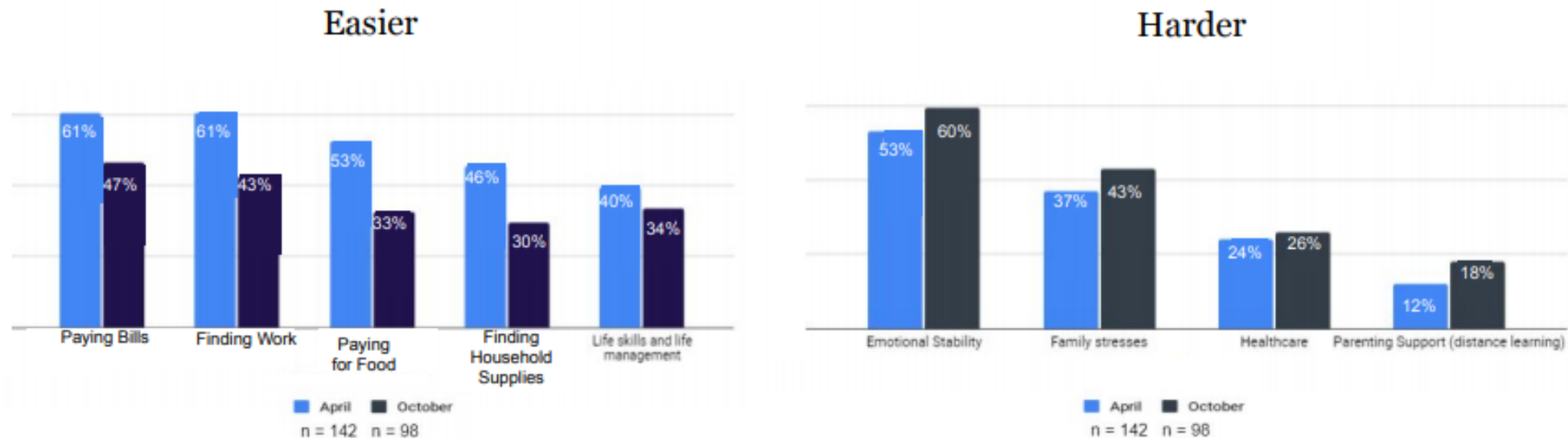
What are your highest priorities?



Key Takeaways: Nearly 100% of the students say that their schooling is an urgent of high priority. The urgency of students' priorities has increased, specifically supporting a family member's education or well-being, and finding housing.

Areas of need: financial, guidance, wrap around support, employment, housing, mental health (all trauma-informed)

What has become easier or harder for you since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic?



Key Takeaways: Students involved with Educate Tomorrow and the AOK Scholars Foundation are finding it easier to meet basic needs and more difficult to meet less tangible needs, such as dealing with their emotions, family stresses, and their health. Parenting youth are finding it more difficult to help their students with distance learning.

Programs and Opportunities for Florida Youth Transitioning from Foster Care

Youth and Young Adult Outcomes

- Increase financial self-sufficiency
- Improve educational (academic or vocational) attainment
- Increase connections with supportive adults
- Reduce homelessness
- Reduce high-risk behavior
- Improve access to health insurance



Postsecondary Educational Services and Supports (PESS)

Eligibility Overview

- 18 but not yet 23 years of age
- Living in legal custody of the Department on 18th birthday AND spent a total of 6 months in licensed care prior to aging out
- OR was at least 16 and was adopted or placed with court-approved dependency guardian after spending 6 months in licensed care within the 12 months immediately preceding such placement or adoption
 - AND earned a high school diploma or its equivalent
 - AND has been admitted for enrollment full-time (9 credit hours) in Florida Bright Futures eligible postsecondary educational institution

PESS Aims and Benefits

- * The young adult will gain skills, education and support to become self sufficient and have lifelong connections to supportive adults.
- * The program provides the young adult monthly financial assistance while attending a Florida Bright Futures postsecondary educational institution.
- * The monthly payment is determined by the minimal wage amount and is currently \$1256.00.
- * The monthly payment is to secure housing and utilities with the balance going directly to the young adult.

Other Benefits and Supports



Medicaid



State College Liaisons and Coaches



State College Liaisons

Type something in the input field to search the table for first names, last names or emails:

The following is the list of State College Liaisons

Firstname	Lastname	University	City	position	Email	Phone
Anelle	Moss	Broward College (Central)	Davie	Coordinator, Student Success	amoss3@broward.edu	954-201-4659
Roslyn	Bailey-Oddman	Broward College	Davie	Coordinator, Student Success	rbailey2@broward.edu	954-201-8407

Existing Campus-Based Programs



[Educate Tomorrow@
Miami-Dade College Single Stop](#)



[TCC Fostering Academic
Achievement Fellows](#)



[Educate Tomorrow @ Florida
Atlantic University](#)



[Florida International
University Fostering
Panther Pride](#)



[Unconquered
Scholars Program](#)



[University of Central
Florida Knight
Alliance Network](#)



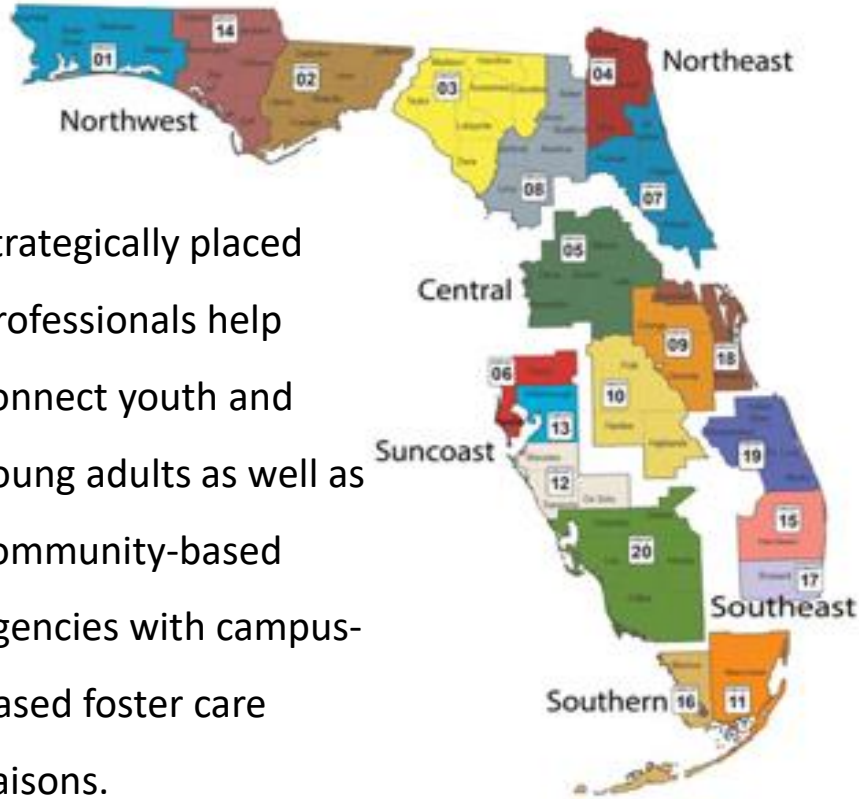
[Machen Florida
Opportunity Scholars
Program](#)

Newly Developed or Strengthened Initiatives

 <p>BROWARD COLLEGE</p> <p>Roslyn Bailey-Oddman Coordinator Student Success RBailey2@broward.edu (954) 201-8407</p>	 <p>DAYTONA STATE COLLEGE</p> <p>Terrance Singleton Academic Advisor terrance.singleton@daytonastate.edu</p>	 <p>FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY</p> <p>Dr. Daniel Hoover Assistant Dean Student Care Services Dhoover@fgcu.edu (239) 590-1866</p>
 <p>FSCJ Florida State College at Jacksonville</p> <p>Denise Giarusso Associate Director, Student Support Services Denise.Giarusso@fscj.edu (904) 361-6216</p>	 <p>SPC St. Petersburg College</p> <p>Dr. Cheryl Kerr Program Director Human Services Kerr.Cheryl@spcollege.edu (727) 341-3738</p>	 <p>UNF UNIVERSITY of NORTH FLORIDA.</p> <p>Katherine Kambach Assistant Director Dean of Students Office Katherine.Kambach@UNF.edu (904) 620-1491</p>

Positive Pathways Regional Points of Contact

DCF Regions



Strategically placed professionals help connect youth and young adults as well as community-based agencies with campus-based foster care liaisons.

Region / Circuit	Contact	Contact
Northwest Region Circuits 1, 2, 14	Christine Stillwell Program Director AOK Scholars Foundation (321) 231-0587 christine@lewff.org	
Northeast Region Circuits 3, 4, 7, 8	James Minter Transition Support Coordinator Family Services of North Florida (904) 418-5831 james.minter@fssnf.org	
Central Region Circuits 5, 9, 10, 18	Circuits 5, 9, 18 Dr. Cookie Schultz Education Manager, Youth Services Embrace Families (407) 716-9730 cookie.schultz@cbccfl.org	Circuit 10 Marquina Butts-Fisher Independent Living Coordinator Heartland for Children (863) 519-8900 x 238 Mbutts@HeartlandforChildren.org

Positive Pathways Regional Points of Contact

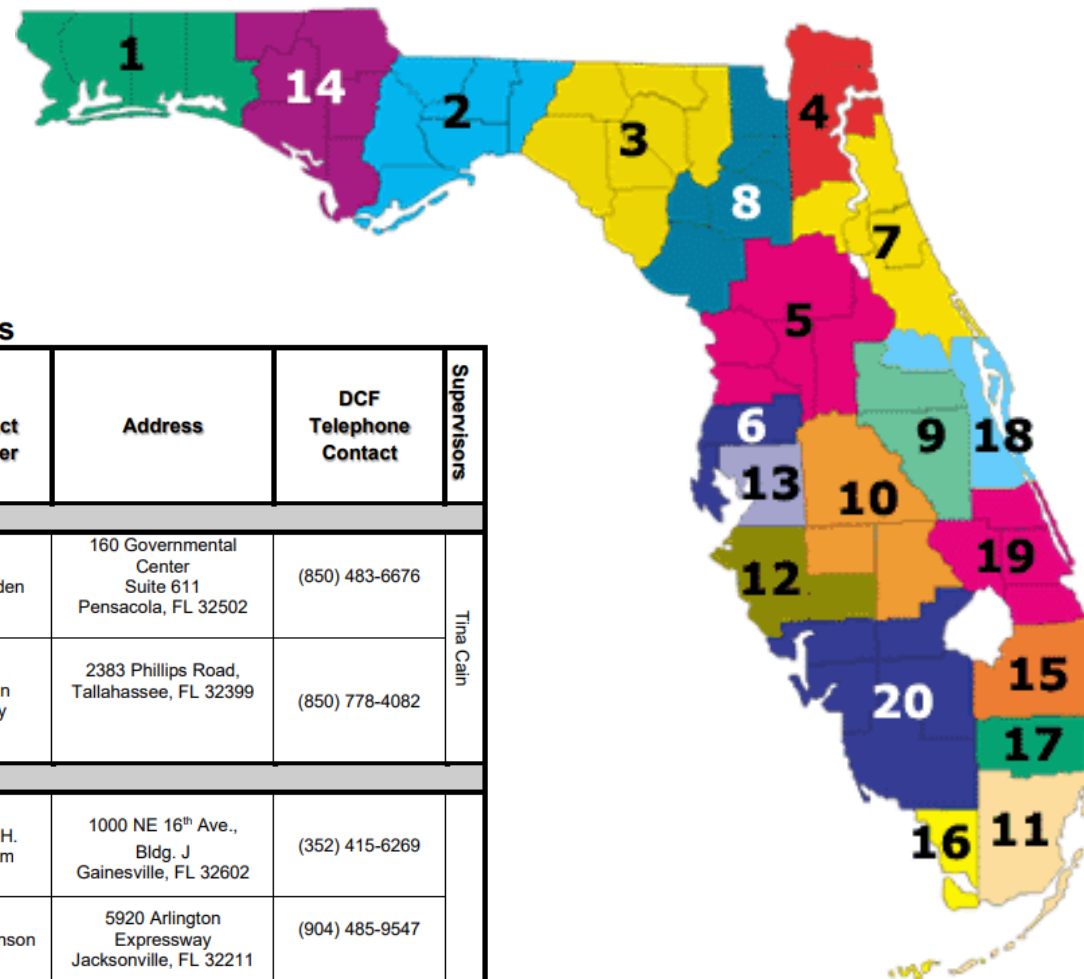
DCF Regions



Region / Circuit	Contact	Contact	Contact
Suncoast Region Circuits 6, 12, 13, 20	Althea K. Blake, EdD. Founder, Higher Agency (813) 580-7874 akblake@higheragency.org	Jamie Bennett, LMSW, ACC Co-founder, Cetera, Inc. (269) 271-1608 jamie@jlbtraining.com	
Southeast Region Circuits 15, 17, 19	Circuit 15 Sabrina Scott Director of Independent Living Vita Nova (561) 689.0035 sscott@vitanovainc.org	Circuit 15 Joe Murray Assistant Dean Student Advising Services Florida Atlantic University MurrayJ@fau.edu	Circuit 17 Tricia Cepeda Educational Coordinator FLITE Center (Broward) (954) 625-5401 Tricia@flitecenter.org
Southern Region Circuits 11, 16	Varzi Jean-Baptiste Program Director and Care Coordinator Educate Tomorrow (786) 223-7541 Varzi@educatetomorrow.org		

Community-Based Care Agencies by County

The community-based care initiative negotiates and contracts with respected local, non-profit agencies to provide child welfare services in local communities for children who have been abused, neglected and/or abandoned.



Community-Based Care Lead Agencies and Contract Managers Contacts

Contract	Region (Circuit)	Lead Agency	Contact Person For Lead Agency	Address	Lead Agency Phone Contact	DCF Contract Manager	Address	DCF Telephone Contact	Supervisors
Northwest									
Services Contract AJ495 SOC	1	Lakeview Center, Families First Network	Mark Jones, Director Mark.Jones@bhcpns.org	1221 West Avery St., Building B Pensacola, FL 32501-1836	(850) 453-7745	Lisa Carden	160 Governmental Center Suite 611 Pensacola, FL 32502	(850) 483-6676	Tina Cain
Services Contract BJ101 SOC	2/14	Big Bend Community Based Care, Inc.	Mike Watkins, CEO Mwatkins@bigbendcbc.org	525 North Martin Luther King Boulevard Tallahassee, FL 32301	(850) 410-1020	Charlton Bradley	2383 Phillips Road, Tallahassee, FL 32399	(850) 778-4082	
Northeast									
Services Contract CJ149 SOC	3&8	Partnership for Strong Families, Inc.	Stephen Pennypacker CEO/President Stephen.pennypacker@pfsf.org	5950 NW 1st Place Gainesville, FL 32607	(352) 359-0157	Melissa H. Trentham	1000 NE 16 th Ave., Bldg. J Gainesville, FL 32602	(352) 415-6269	Tina Cain
Services Contract DJ038	4 Duval/Nassau	Family Support Services of North Florida Inc.	Bob Miller, CEO Bob.miller@fssnf.org	1300 Riverplace Blvd., Suite 700 Jacksonville, FL 32207	(904) 421-5800	Paula Johnson	5920 Arlington Expressway Jacksonville, FL 32211	(904) 485-9547	

Call to Action

- If any of your members have an interest in working with Positive Pathways to increase the number of students in high school, from foster care, who go to college, reach out to us for potential partnerships.
- Consider reaching out to the local foster parent association in your area, they may have special projects like food drives or Holiday gift drives that you can help support
- Help us reach the guardians or foster parents of students in high school in foster care so that they know college is possible and there are supports available.
- Connect counselors and school leadership to the Positive Pathways Program either through Pathways@EducateTomorrow.org or through regional point of contact in your area.
- Make sure your PTA knows about the special resources available for foster youth.

Partners

Potential Future Partner?



Florida PTA[®]
everychild.one voice.[®]

Questions and Comments

How to Reach Us

-  Phone: (786) 223-6884 or (305) 374-3751
-  Email: pathways@educatetomorrow.org
-  Website: www.positivepathwaysflorida.org
-  <https://twitter.com/FloridaReach>
-  www.facebook.com/groups/floridareach