

ABSTRACT

SERVICES THAT AFFECT THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF  
FORMER FOSTER YOUTH

By

Dorian Truong

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The purpose of this study was to examine various services offered to former and current foster youth and the effect on their educational attainment. Secondary Data from the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) was used to look at these services. Chi-Square analysis was used to examine significant relationship between educational attainment and the variables collected. This study examined the following services: academic support; post-secondary education support; educational financial assistance; room and board financial assistance; other financial assistance; career preparation; employment programs or vocational training; independent living needs assessment; budget and financial management; housing and education and home management; supervised independent living; and mentoring. The study found all variables to be statistically significant when compared to educational attainment.













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Furthermore, some foster youth stay longer in college. When their grants and financial aid are exhausted, many do not know how to continue to pay for their education and housing.

### Adults in life

Many foster youth lack positive role models and post-care support, including accommodation, money and social support (Tilbury et al., 2011). One way to have supporting adults in foster youth's lives is mentors. Mentors can play a role in providing both academic and emotional support to foster youth (Hernandez & Naccarato, 2010). According to Kaplan, Skolnik, and Turnbull (2009), mentoring programs provide foster youth with long-term relationships with mentors who function as guidance counselors, role models and friends. The goals of mentors for foster youth include improving independent living skills, social skills, and academic functioning; increase positive connections to the community; facilitating connections to social services; and reducing juvenile crime and substance abuse (Kaplan, 2009). Foster youth who feel like they have social support in their first year of college are more likely to return for their sophomore year (Tinto, 1996). Duration of relationship with mentors plays a significant role in the lives of youth in foster care. Foster youth who had relationships with mentors for over a year experienced significant improvements in feelings of self-worth, perceived social acceptance, perceived academic competence, and placed value on education (Spencer, Collins, Ward, & Smashnaya, 2010). A successful mentorship can also help foster youth to be able to express their feelings and emotions, developing a healthy self-esteem (Kaplan, 2009). However, mentorship of a foster youth may be detrimental to their personal growth if relationship is ended prematurely (Spencer et al., 2010).























## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### Summary Findings

This study analyzed the educational attainment between former and current foster youth that received education support, financial assistance, employment support, and independent support services. The study found statistically significant relationship in former and current foster youth that received academic support; post-secondary education support; career preparation; employment programs; independent living needs assessment; budget and financial management; housing education and home management; mentoring; supervised independent living; room and board financial assistance; or other financial assistance when compared to those who had at most a high school diploma. Although the mentioned services played a significant role in helping foster youth earn a high school diploma, a great majority of youth did so without utilizing them.

The study also found statistically significant relationship in former and current foster youth that received post-secondary education support; career preparation; employment programs; financial aid; budget and financial management; housing education and home management; mentoring; supervised independent living; or other financial assistance when compared to those who received post-secondary education or training. Within foster youth who received some post-secondary education or training, the education financial aid was the only variable where more youth received aid than not.





























