



State Approaches to Extending Chafee Services to Age 23

Insights to Inform a Learning Agenda

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For the past two decades, states have been able to access federal funds to support young adults leaving foster care up to their 21st birthday. Yet studies of young people formerly in foster care have found that they continue to face challenges well after turning 21 (Courtney et al. 2011; 2020). A recent federal policy, the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) of 2018,¹ responds to this need by giving states the option to extend Chafee-funded services to age 23. This brief explores why and how states have chosen to implement this new federal policy, as part of an effort to develop a learning agenda focused on supporting the Chafee-eligible population.

The FFPSA allows states to extend eligibility for Chafee-funded services up to age 23 under the renamed “John H. Chafee Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood.” All states with extended federal foster care (EFFC) are eligible to submit a request to extend Chafee services to age 23 to the Children’s Bureau for approval. States without EFFC, but who currently use state or other funds to provide comparable services, may also submit a request to the Children’s Bureau in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to extend Chafee services to age 23. The FFPSA also allows states to extend the age limit for Chafee Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) from age 23 to 26.

The Chafee program legislation requires ACF to evaluate programs that support young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Prior Chafee-related studies have not included young people ages 21 to 23 who were receiving Chafee-funded services. Hence, the extension of Chafee-

¹ Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-123, 132 Stat. 64, <https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ123/PLAW-115publ123.htm>.

funded services to age 23 can be informed by the development of a learning agenda focused on supporting the population of young people served through the Chafee extension.

The goal of this brief is to use information from interviews with independent living (IL) coordinators to inform potential directions and identify questions for a learning agenda. A learning agenda is an evidence-building plan that can inform an organization's decisionmaking (Newcomer, Olejniczak, and Hart. 2021). It typically includes three components: (1) a prioritized list of research questions; (2) the activities that will be done to answer the questions; and (3) the products that will communicate what was learned to stakeholders (Nightingale, Fudge, and Schupmann 2018). A learning agenda focused on the extended Chafee population would provide a strategic roadmap to incorporate this new population in future Chafee-focused studies.

When we began our research in early 2020, we were interested in learning about how early adopters implemented the extension, understanding why some eligible states did not seek approval to extend Chafee services to age 23, and identifying common challenges and solutions in supporting older young adults. Thus, we set out to address the following research questions:

- What influences states' decisions to take up the extension or not?
- What does eligibility for services look like under the extension?
- What does the funding allocation look like under the extension?
- What are the primary service needs of young adults ages 21 to 23 that the extension can help states address?
- How and to what extent have states planned for and progressed toward implementation?
- What are the early successes of and challenges with serving young adults up to age 23, and what are the proposed solutions to the challenges?

Answers to these questions may help policymakers and other stakeholders better understand why states have or have not chosen to extend Chafee services and how states with approved requests are implementing the extension. Additionally, states still considering whether to extend may find it helpful to learn how some of their peers have approached the extension. Finally, ACF and other stakeholders can use this information to set research priorities and develop future policies to meet the needs of young adults who benefit from the extension of Chafee-funded services to age 23.

BOX 1

The Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood

Young people transitioning out of foster care and into adulthood need many supports to navigate the challenges they face. Over the past two decades, federal child welfare policy has significantly increased the availability of those supports. In 1999, the Foster Care Independence Act amended Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to create the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (the Chafee Program), the primary source of federal funding for services to support young people in foster care during their

transition to adulthood. The Family First Prevention Services Act renamed the program in 2018; it is now the Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood.

The Foster Care Independence Act requires that a small percentage of Chafee Program funding be used to rigorously evaluate independent living programs that are “innovative or of potential national significance.” In 2003, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) contracted the Urban Institute and its partners, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and the National Opinion Research Center, to conduct the Multi-Site Evaluation of Foster Youth Programs.³ Of the four programs evaluated using a randomized controlled design, only one had a statistically significant effect on youth outcomes.

Two decades after the Chafee Program was created, we still know little about which programs for young people transitioning out of foster care are effective and which program components are essential to their effectiveness. To continue building an evidence base for programs that serve young people transitioning out of foster care and into adulthood, ACF’s Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) contracted with the Urban Institute to conduct evaluation activities for implementing a “Next Generation” learning agenda for the Chafee Program. This brief describes interviews with state administrators conducted as part of an effort to develop a learning agenda focused on the extension of Chafee-funded services to age 23.

³ OPRE (Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation), ACF (Administration for Children and Families), HHS (US Department of Health and Human Services), “Multi-Site Evaluation of Foster Youth Programs (Chafee Independent Living Evaluation Project) 2001–2010,” (Washington, DC: OPRE, ACF, HHS, 2010), <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/multi-site-evaluation-of-foster-youth-programs-chafee-independent-living>.

Methods

How We Identified States

In early 2020, we identified states with approved requests to extend Chafee-funded services to age 23 using a list provided by ACF as of December 2019. At that time, 14 of the 30 states (including Washington, DC) with EFFC, plus an additional 5 states without EFFC but with state-funded extended foster care, were approved to extend Chafee-funded services to age 23.² We interviewed representatives from 9 states that extended Chafee services and 9 states (including Washington, DC) with extended federal foster care that did not extend Chafee services as of December 2019. We purposefully selected states to reflect a mix of (1) county versus state-administered child welfare systems; (2) child welfare systems with public versus privatized independent living case management services; and (3) small versus large foster care populations as measured by each state’s FY 2019 Chafee allocation.

² Information in this report reflects the approval of Chafee-funded services to age 23 as of December 2019, as reported to the research team by ACF. As of December 2020, ACF reported 22 states had approval to extend Chafee-funded services to age 23.

TABLE 1

States Interviewed

Extending states	Nonextending states
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Colorado ■ Florida ■ Illinois ■ Iowa ■ Maryland ■ Minnesota ■ Missouri ■ Oregon ■ Vermont 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Arkansas ■ California ■ District of Columbia ■ Hawai'i ■ Maine ■ Ohio ■ Rhode Island ■ Tennessee ■ Wisconsin

Notes: This list reflects the approval of Chafee-funded services to age 23 as of December 2019. Nonextending states may use state funds to serve young people beyond age 21.

Who We Contacted

Starting in April 2020, we reached out via email to each state’s independent living (IL) coordinator and requested a telephone interview with the person most familiar with the state’s application and plans for extending eligibility for Chafee-funded services (in extending states) or most knowledgeable about the state’s decision not to extend eligibility for Chafee-funded services (in nonextending states). For the majority of states, the IL coordinator was identified as the best person to speak with regarding our questions. For others, the IL coordinator invited additional staff, such as division directors, program managers, and policy specialists, to take part in the interview. Interviews were conducted from April to August 2020.

Findings

Below we summarize the key findings from our interviews with state IL coordinators and other relevant child welfare agency staff by research question.

Why States Extended Their Chafee Services to Age 23

The extending states generally acknowledged that young people continue to struggle while transitioning to adulthood and need help past age 21. States wanted to continue supporting young adults and create a gradual transition to independence, and they believed extending eligibility for Chafee-funded services was the “right thing to do.” Stakeholder advocacy also played a role in the decision to extend eligibility for Chafee-funded services to age 23. Four states mentioned support for the extension among youth advisory councils and local community partners who work closely with young people as a key reason why they chose to extend eligibility for Chafee-funded services. Extending eligibility also gave some states additional flexibility in how they use funds (mentioned by five states as a benefit of extending). This was especially true for states that previously used state or county funds to offer supports to young people ages 21 and older. One state, where the child welfare system is county-administered, noted that the extension gives counties the flexibility to respond to local needs, such as

affordable housing or workforce and apprenticeship programs. Two states noted the extension was anticipated to have minimal or no impact on their agency budgets, and this allowed them to garner support to expand the population of young people eligible for services. All but one Chafee-extending state opted to also extend the age of eligibility for ETVs from 23 to 26.

One state extended eligibility for Chafee-funded services to take advantage of the Family Unification Program housing vouchers. The Family Unification Program (FUP) and the similar Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program provide housing vouchers to young adults with histories of child welfare involvement through partnerships between local public housing authorities and public child welfare agencies. Under these programs, child welfare agencies must provide 18 months of supportive services such as basic life skills training, education and job training, employment services, and housing counseling. The Chafee extension allowed this state to use Chafee funds to provide the supportive services required to participate in FUP.

Why States Did Not Extend Their Chafee Services to Age 23

Six states cited funding constraints as a major reason for not extending eligibility for Chafee-funded services to age 23. The extension does not come with additional funding, and these states indicated it would be difficult for them to serve a larger population with the same amount of funds. This was especially true for states that already exhausted their Chafee funds supporting young people under age 21. One state chose not to extend eligibility for services to age 23 because it wanted to focus on improving current services for young people under age 21 first. One state was still meeting with stakeholders to make a final decision about whether to extend or not. Overall, four of the nonextending states received approval to extend ETV to age 26.

Interestingly, five of the nonextending states noted that they used state funds to serve young people beyond age 21. We asked these states why they chose not to apply for the extension as their programs already serve part of this population. The primary reason these states did not apply for the extension was that they would not receive additional funding.

Responses from two states indicated that confusion regarding what was required for the extension may have influenced their decision not to request an extension. One of these states thought the extension required states to extend Chafee to age 23 and ETV to age 26. This state indicated near the end of the interview that it would likely apply to extend Chafee services to age 23 but not ETV to age 26. The other state assumed it had previously applied for the extension because their aftercare program has been serving young people beyond age 21 for some time. This state planned to ask their ACF regional liaison about the application's status. By the end of 2020, one of these states had been approved to extend their Chafee services to age 23.

How States Decided to Extend or Not Extend Their Chafee Services to Age 23

Ten states used a decisionmaking process in which only public child welfare agency (PCWA) staff participated. The number of PCWA staff involved varied but included state child welfare directors,

county child welfare administrators, IL and ETV coordinators, Chafee workgroups, and finance or policy administrators. Five states included representatives from other agencies, such as service providers or other public agencies, in addition to PCWA staff in their decisionmaking process. Six states included other stakeholders such as youth advisory council members, local and community partners who do not provide contracted services, or members of other advisory bodies in the process. States that chose to extend Chafee services tended to have a more inclusive process than states that chose not to extend. Five out of the nine extending states involved non-PCWA agencies and stakeholders in their decisionmaking process compared with only three of the nine states that chose not to extend.

Eligibility

Five extending states raised the age limit for accessing Chafee-funded services without changing any other eligibility criteria, including criteria related to time in care, exit type or age at exit, or enrollment in education or training programs. However, three extending states have imposed eligibility criteria that only apply to young people ages 21 to 23. In two states, young people are eligible for Chafee-funded services until age 23 if they remain in foster care until age 21 or if they participate in state services after age 18. One state limited eligibility for extended Chafee services to young people who had been referred for a federal housing voucher. One state was still determining the eligibility criteria.

Services

Five states that have extended eligibility for Chafee-funded services offer young people ages 21 to 23 the same types of supports they offer young people under age 21. These include housing, education, employment, and other services geared toward promoting independent living. Two states developed a tiered or step-down model where services for young people ages 21 to 23 are lower in intensity and have fewer requirements than Chafee-funded services for young people under age 21. These states offered a gradual step-down in support to balance service provision with promoting independence while remaining budget neutral. Examples include reducing or eliminating required contact with caseworkers or reducing the amount and/or frequency of stipends. Two extending states only offered housing support or crisis-oriented services to young people ages 21 to 23. Another state was still determining what services would be offered to these young adults. For the nonextending states that offered services beyond age 21, two offered the same services as young people under age 21, one offered only postsecondary educational support, one offered a transitional living program, and in one state the services available varied by county.

Funding Allocation

None of the nine extending states planned to change their structure to allocate a specific share of Chafee service funds or housing funds specifically for young people ages 21 to 23 under the extension. All extending states reported spending less than the 30 percent maximum allowed for room and board and tended to rely primarily on Title IV-E or other state and program funds to cover housing expenses. Two of these states expected to increase the share of Chafee funds they used for room and board to

cover housing expenses for young people ages 21 to 23. A few states already used state funds or blended several funding sources to cover housing expenses for young people ages 21 to 23.

Implementation

Implementation of extended Chafee services varied among states. Two extending states developed formal implementation task groups and planning teams specifically focused on the extension of Chafee services to age 23. These teams typically included representation from the PCWA and youth advisory boards and were charged with drafting policy changes and providing input on extension services. The remainder of the extending states did not develop formal implementation plans, primarily because for most of them the only change was extending the age limit for Chafee-funded services. Thus, most of the immediate implementation efforts were focused on communicating the change to young adults, service providers, and staff. Some communicated the extension of services through targeted outreach to newly eligible young adults (e.g., emails, social media, etc.) and involved their youth advisory councils in their outreach efforts.

Six of the nine extending states incorporated the extension of Chafee-funded services in their existing processes for gathering stakeholder input on improving Chafee services overall. These existing processes included regular meetings with contracted service providers and community partners as well as youth advisory boards, surveys, or workgroups. Through these processes, stakeholders provide input to the PCWA regarding Chafee-funded services and policies.

Outcome Tracking

How states tracked the outcomes of young people ages 21 to 23 also varied widely. States indicated that their primary source for outcome data for transition-age young adults came from the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). However, NYTD outcomes data collection ends at age 21. Six states that had a formal data tracking system for young people ages 18 to 20 included, or had plans to include, the ability to track young people to age 23 in the same system. Another six states indicated that data come from various reporting mechanisms such as on paper from county agencies, site visits to providers, or regular performance management reports from contracted providers.

Challenges to Serving 21- to 23-Year-Olds

A major challenge to serving 21- to 23-year-olds reported by both extending and nonextending states was sustaining youth engagement. A couple of states specifically noted that many young people do not fully engage in services designed to help them but instead do the minimum work required to receive financial supports. Maintaining youth engagement was especially a challenge for the one state that limited eligibility for Chafee-funded services between ages 21 and 23 to young people who have been referred for a federal housing voucher. Referrals for vouchers cannot be made earlier than 90 days

before a young adult exits foster care.³ However, it can take months for a referred young person to go through the voucher application process and find housing. During this time, the young person has already exited foster care and may experience homelessness. For this state, maintaining contact and engagement with young people who experience homelessness was a challenge.

Extending states also struggled with developing age-appropriate supports for young people ages 21 to 23. For example, states noted that finding a balance between providing services to support these young adults while also promoting their eventual independence and connection to adult-serving systems was a challenge. Finally, a couple of extending states noted the lack of additional Chafee funding for serving young people ages 21 to 23 as a challenge.

Topics States Want to Learn More About

States identified various topics related to extending eligibility for Chafee-funded services that they would like to learn more about. Six states wanted to learn more about various funding strategies that could be used to meet the needs of older young adults because Chafee funding alone was often not enough. A few states specifically mentioned wanting to learn more about how to leverage or coordinate with FUP and other voucher programs to cover housing costs for young people. Other funding-related topics included the ability to use FFPSA prevention money, coordination with adult-serving programs, and possibilities for increasing Chafee or ETV allocations.

States also wanted to learn more about how to address challenges in serving 21- to 23-year-olds, especially sustaining engagement in services (mentioned by seven) and developing age-appropriate supports (mentioned by three). A few states also wanted to learn more about effective services for older young adults, mentioning topics such as learning about evidence-based or innovative programs, providing trauma-informed support, and offering specialized training for staff who work with young people.

Influence of the COVID-19 Pandemic

In March 2020, states began issuing lockdowns and stay-at-home orders in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The timing of recruitment and interviews for this project occurred early in the pandemic. During this time, child welfare agencies were trying to safely meet the needs of young adults impacted by the pandemic through loss of housing and employment, school closures, and the mental health effects of social isolation. It was not uncommon during interviews to need to ask IL coordinators to clarify if they were describing their Chafee extension or temporary COVID-19 responses. Some states acknowledged that aspects of their extension plans were put on hold to respond to more immediate needs related to the pandemic.

³ The 90-day referral window for FUP and FYI was temporarily expanded to 120 days in July 2020 and expired in June 2021.

The Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic Act (Division X of Pub. L. No. 116-260),⁴ enacted in December 2020, included additional funding and program flexibility to support young adults who had spent time in foster care. Division X prohibited states from requiring young people to leave foster care and allowed those who had, or would have, been required to leave care from January 2020 through September 2021 to voluntarily remain in or reenter care. States could use their Chafee funds to offset the costs associated with the temporary extension of foster care.

In addition, through September 30, 2021, Division X

- extended eligibility for Chafee-funded services and ETVs up to age 27;
- allowed states to spend more than 30 percent of their Chafee funds on room and board payments;
- allowed young people to receive up to \$4,000 in transportation assistance, such as insurance payments or obtaining a driver's license; and
- suspended ETV enrollment and satisfactory progress requirements if young people could not meet them because of the pandemic.

States were automatically able to take advantage of these changes; they did not need to submit a request to ACF. Although these changes expire in September 2021, states have until the end of September 2022 to spend the additional Chafee funds awarded by Division X.

Although Division X was not in effect when we spoke to IL coordinators, the information they provided may have changed in response to its provisions. Extending states may have delayed fully implementing their plans for serving young people ages 21 to 23 as the pandemic continued. Going forward, states may also alter their plans and approaches based on their experiences serving young people up to age 27 as permitted by Division X.

Developing a Chafee-to-23 Learning Agenda

The information gathered through our interviews with state IL coordinators suggests several lines of inquiry for a learning agenda focused on the needs of young people served by the extension of eligibility for Chafee-funded services. Potential directions for a learning agenda could include an exploration of the outcomes targeted by extending Chafee, developmentally appropriate service models for young adults ages 21 to 23, the improvement of collection and managing data on young adults transitioning out of foster care, and the ways states implement federal child welfare policies. We explore these topics in greater detail below.

⁴ Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic Act, Pub. L. No. 116-260, Division X (2020), <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr133/BILLS-116hr133enr.pdf>.

Outcomes Targeted by Extending Chafee

Interviews revealed that states have structured their services in various ways to meet the needs of young adults after age 21. Some treated them no differently than young adults under age 21 while others restricted the services available in some way. Developing a learning agenda on this topic could include questions about the purpose of the Chafee extension:

- What are the purposes of providing Chafee-funded services up to age 23?
- Should Chafee-funded services for young adults ages 21 and older differ from those provided to young adults younger than age 21?
- How do young adults benefit from the extension of eligibility for Chafee-funded services?
- What key outcomes should the extension of eligibility for Chafee-funded services target?

These questions could be answered by convening government stakeholders, young adults, advocates, and practitioners to participate in facilitated discussions.

Developmentally Appropriate Service Models

Most of the IL coordinators we spoke with, regardless of whether their state extended Chafee, acknowledged that young adults transitioning out of foster care often need support beyond age 21. They noted that many of these young adults may not have had the same developmental opportunities as their peers not involved in child welfare, may face unique challenges because of the impact of trauma they have experienced, and may also need different services than young adults still in foster care. Some states implemented a tiered or step-down service model with their extension, creating an “off ramp” rather than a “cliff” from the child welfare system. In addition, states noted that coordination between the child welfare agency and adult-serving systems could expand the array of developmentally appropriate supports for young adults while also ensuring connections to supports after child welfare services end. A learning agenda may seek to address questions related to providing developmentally appropriate services for young adults ages 21 to 23, including the following:

- What policies can support young people with previous foster care experience transitioning into early adulthood when their brains are still developing?
 - › How can policy be responsive to the impact of prior experiences with trauma on the development of young adults?
- What supports and experiences do young adults need at this stage?
 - › How are those similar to or different from the services and supports that young adults under age 21 need?
 - › What services best help young adults mitigate the impact of trauma?
- How are tiered or step-down models beneficial for preparing young adults for independence?

- What factors should agencies consider when developing tiered step-down service models (i.e., structure, resources, and supports)?
- What are some challenges in implementing and tracking services for young people in a tiered or step-down model?
- How should programs address young people whose service needs vary over time? What is the importance of allowing for this flexibility in a service model?
- How might coordination with adult-serving systems and programs help meet the needs of young adults transitioning out of foster care?

Multiple methods could be used to answer these questions, such as interviews with experts in brain development or trauma, a scan of programs aimed at assisting young people with trauma in the transition to adulthood, an evaluation of different supportive service model structures (e.g., tiered or step-down models) and their success in supporting transition-age young adults, improved data collection on the needs and outcomes of young adults after age 21, interviews with young adults regarding the services and supports they deem most beneficial during their transition, and an exploration of coordination efforts between the child welfare system and other adult-serving systems.

Collecting Data on Young Adults Transitioning Out of Foster Care

What we know about young adult outcomes comes from a handful of longitudinal studies focused on young people in specific states, and NYTD, which is limited to young people ages 17 to 21. Evaluating Chafee-funded service programs has also been a challenge because many programs are not yet ready for rigorous impact evaluation (Courtney et al. 2017). The Evidence Act of 2018 encourages federal agencies to use data already collected by the government to support evidence-building activities.⁵ A learning agenda may seek to address questions related to improving the collection and management of data on young adults leaving foster care:

- What data collection efforts are needed to demonstrate success in supporting this population?
- How can prior efforts to use data sources beyond NYTD help inform the development of methods of measuring outcomes for young adults formerly in foster care?
- What existing data sources could be leveraged?
- What improvements to those sources would be required?
- What new data sources are needed?
- Who would need to be involved in developing these sources?
- What buy-in or support is needed to create new or improve existing data systems?

⁵ Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-435, 132 Stat. 5529, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4174>.

- What current procedures restrict the implementation of data systems?
- What new policies and procedures would need to be in place?
- What resources (i.e., funding, staffing) are needed to develop and implement these systems?

Methods that could be used to answer these questions are convenings with data experts from relevant government and public child welfare agencies, formative or implementation evaluations of jurisdictions that have implemented integrated data systems, interviews with experts in data systems development, and convenings with policymakers and other state leaders to discuss contextual factors that may impact the adoption of new policies and procedures.

State Implementation of Federal Policy

States have discretion in whether and how they implement certain federal child welfare policies, and not all states have opted to extend eligibility for Chafee-funded services. Moreover, those that have extended eligibility for Chafee-funded services are doing so in various ways. A learning agenda may help stakeholders understand better the ways states implement federal child welfare policies by delving deeper into states' extensions of Chafee:

- What is the role of funding in implementing federal child welfare policies?
- What funding sources do jurisdictions use?
- How should federal child welfare policy changes be communicated to all stakeholders (staff, providers, young people)?
- How can jurisdictions ensure consistency across the state in access to services?
- Who should be involved in the implementation of federal policies and how?
- What other factors besides funding are considered when implementing federal child welfare policies?
- How do these factors impact states' decisions or plans to implement certain policies?
- How should systems respond to the additional burden or demand service providers experience with the extension of eligibility for Chafee-funded services?
- What lessons from the extension of Chafee to age 23 and the temporary extension to age 27 under Division X could be applied if policies continue to move in the direction of extending services to older young adults?

A series of discussions with relevant stakeholders could be used to answer these questions. Possible stakeholders include public child welfare agency staff, policymakers, advocates, staff from nonprofit or other private service providers, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) staff, and implementation science experts. Implementation evaluations in a few extending states may also help address these questions.

Conclusion

The extension of Chafee services included in the FFPSA and the temporary extensions provided by Division X recognize that young adults leaving foster care, like many of their peers not involved in child welfare, continue to need supports as they transition to adulthood. The states that have opted to extend eligibility for their Chafee-funded services are trying to meet this need without additional funding, leading to variation in the amount of support young adults may receive. IL coordinators we spoke with consistently mentioned ensuring housing for young people as a service need, and a few noted that their state's extension of Chafee will help address this need. Coordination with housing voucher programs may provide a way for states to leverage Chafee funding to meet this need while connecting young adults to other adult-serving systems.

The extensions to Chafee provided by the FFPSA and Division X are part of a shift in child welfare policy toward serving older young adults. Answering questions as part of a learning agenda focused on Chafee extension may lead to a better understanding of how states can best meet the needs of young adults as they leave foster care. It may also better prepare the child welfare field to respond should future policies continue to raise the age limit for services. As more states extend services to young adults beyond age 21—whether through Chafee or other funding sources—this knowledge will help more young adults successfully transition out of public child welfare systems.

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