

AT A GLANCE: EXPERIENCES OF LOCAL YOUTH WITH GOVERNMENT CARE EXPERIENCE

This fact sheet uses **Surrey data** from three waves of the BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS; 2008, 2013, and 2018), and a longitudinal survey of local youth transitioning out of care (YTOCS; 2019–2022).

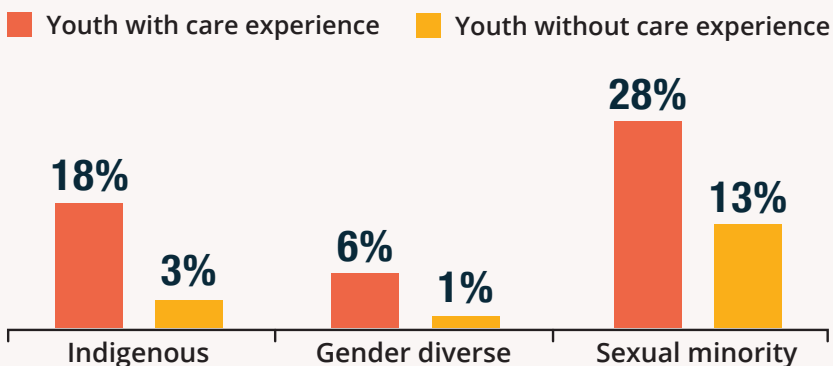
Data in this fact sheet is from the BC AHS unless otherwise stated. To view the full report, visit: mcs.bc.ca/sprc_yic_2023_report.

The term **“government care”** is used to refer to having ever been in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development, or a delegated agency or in an alternative to care, such as on a Youth Agreement.

3%

of youth (aged 12–19) in Surrey had experienced at least one type of government care in 2018.

Surrey youth more likely to have care experience included those who identified as Indigenous, gender diverse, or a sexual minority.



COMPARED TO YOUTH WHO HAD NEVER BEEN IN CARE, THOSE WITH CARE EXPERIENCE WERE **MORE** LIKELY TO:



Go to bed hungry due to a lack of money for food (30% vs. 7% never in care).

Miss out on needed medical help (16% vs. 8%).



Miss out on needed mental health services (32% vs. 17%).

Experience barriers to participating in extracurricular activities, such as transportation challenges (32% vs. 16%) and not being able to afford to participate (23% vs. 10%).



COMPARED TO YOUTH WHO HAD NEVER BEEN IN CARE, THOSE WITH CARE EXPERIENCE WERE **LESS** LIKELY TO:



Have three or more close in-person friends (70% vs. 82% never in care).

Feel their ideas were listened to and valued (36% vs. 45%).



Feel like a part of their school (50% vs. 64%).

Feel like a part of their community (31% vs. 41%).



THERE HAVE BEEN SOME **IMPROVEMENTS** OVER TIME. IN COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS YEARS, YOUTH WITH CARE EXPERIENCE WERE:

- ➔ **Less** likely to have run away from home in the past 12 months (21% in 2018 vs. 43% in 2008).
- ➔ **Less** likely to have missed out on needed medical care (16% vs. 40% in 2008).
- ➔ **More** likely to plan to attend post-secondary education.



AMONG YOUTH WHO HAD RECENTLY TRANSITIONED OUT OF CARE (YTOCS):



YOUTH WHO HAD RECENTLY TRANSITIONED OUT OF CARE EXPERIENCED **BARRIERS** TO PARTICIPATING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT (YTOCS).

- ➔ **Barriers to graduating high school** included mental health or substance use challenges (63%); not getting enough support outside of school (57%) and within school (43%); bullying victimization (27%); changing schools (20%); and health issues (23%).
- ➔ **Barriers to getting a job** included mental health, substance use, or other health challenges (40%); school, childcare, or other commitments (40%); a lack of transportation (32%); and poor pay (28%).

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES THEY FACE, YOUTH WITH CARE EXPERIENCE ARE SKILLED AND RESILIENT, AND COULD IDENTIFY **THINGS THEY ARE PROUD OF:**

"I am most proud of how far I have come, considering the way I grew up and the people I have lost in my life impacting my mental health."

"Graduating from high school."

"Being able to keep my job."

"My persistence and resilience."

"Having friends who do care for me."

YOUTH WHO HAD TRANSITIONED OUT OF CARE HAD A NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS ON **HOW THEY CAN BE BETTER SUPPORTED** (YTOCS):

"Being able to have the adult support, whether it be a Counsellor, youth worker, social worker, etc. Being able to have access to mental/physical health treatment and appointments as necessary, and financial support (for example, PWD)."

"More connection between pre-transition and afterwards. Example, being able to keep the same youth worker for 6 months after aging out. Also, more support in everyday tasks such as making appointments. There is support but they mostly do it for you, so more independent support if that makes sense."

"To still have a support worker on call. For transportation, food bank access, after school programs to help with work load."

"I think a better understanding of how the real-world works. Things like banking information and budgeting skills would be really helpful."

Any youth between the ages of 18 and 24 who wish to participate in the YTOCS can learn more at mcs.bc.ca or contact yicstudy@mcs.bc.ca.