

2023 MASSACHUSETTS PROFILE

TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

The transition from adolescence to adulthood is a pivotal developmental stage as young people learn the skills needed to be healthy and productive adults. This process can be complicated for youth with foster care experience. Here's what we know about the experiences of these youth in Massachusetts.



147,143 or 24%

of United States' foster care population was ages 14+ in 2021

Down from 34% in 2006



3,836 or 28%

of Massachusetts's foster care population was ages 14+ in 2021

Down from 48% in 2006

Youth in Foster Care by Race/Ethnicity

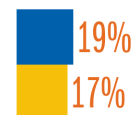
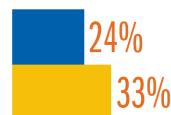
■ 2006 ■ 2021

White

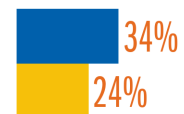
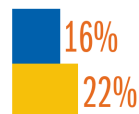
Hispanic/Latino

Black

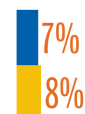
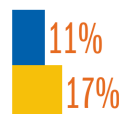
MASSACHUSETTS
Foster Care
Population



UNITED STATES
Foster Care
Population



MASSACHUSETTS
General
Population

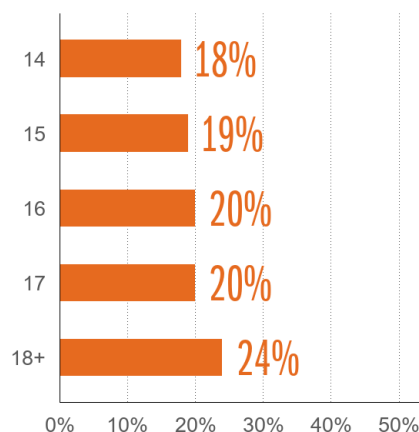
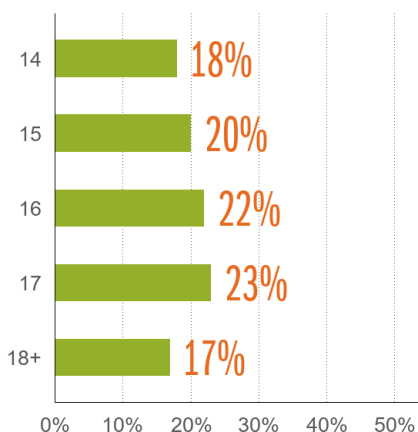


Above charts are based on the three largest racial and ethnic groups in this state in foster care. For additional data, please visit the KIDS COUNT Data Center, <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>. Additional detail on all data in the state profiles can be found in *Fostering Youth Transitions: Source Notes*.

Youth in Foster Care by Age, 2021

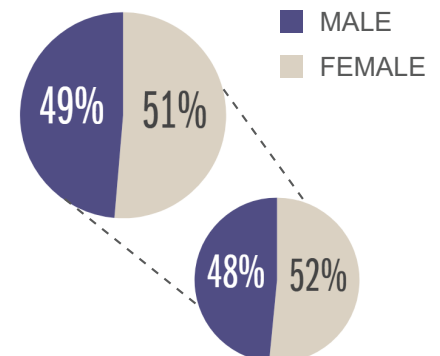
MASSACHUSETTS

UNITED STATES



Youth in Foster Care by Sex*

MASSACHUSETTS

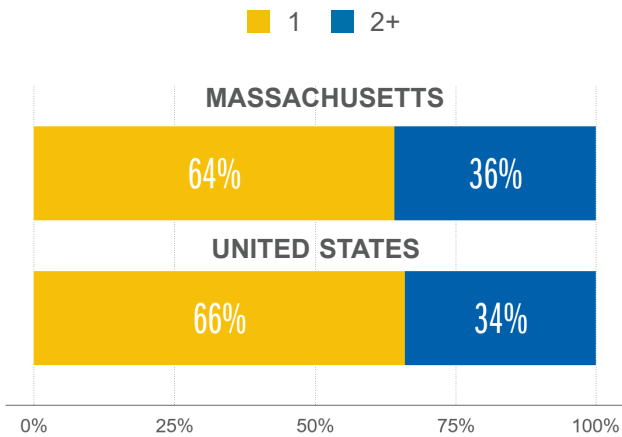


UNITED STATES

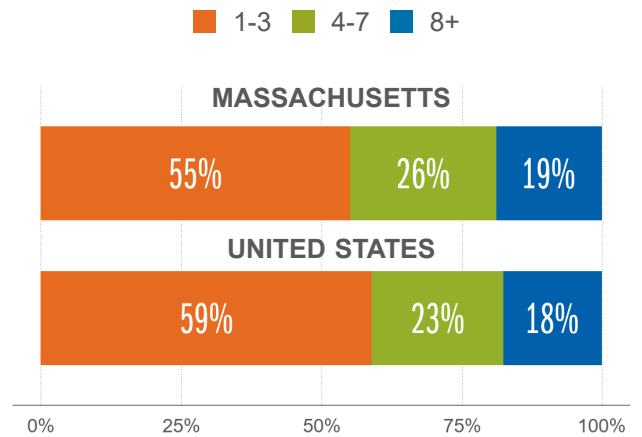
*Sex is based on gender at birth.

Removing a child from home to a foster care placement is reported as an episode. Multiple episodes — and placement changes during an episode — can lead to poor outcomes for youth.

Number of Episodes in Foster Care, 2021



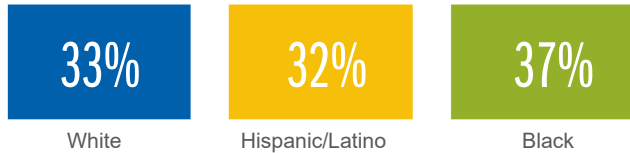
Number of Placements During Most Recent Foster Care Episode, 2021



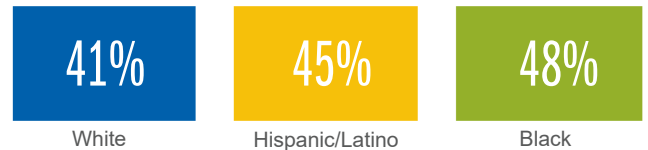
MASSACHUSETTS 2+ Foster Care Episodes



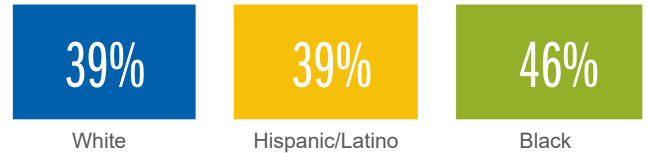
UNITED STATES 2+ Foster Care Episodes



MASSACHUSETTS 4+ Foster Care Placements



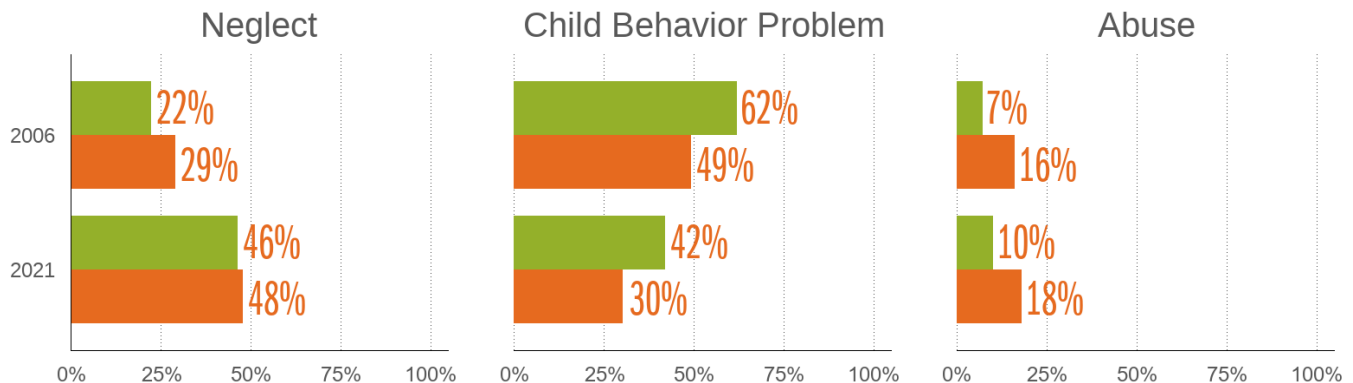
UNITED STATES 4+ Foster Care Placements



Percentage of young people in each racial/ethnic group who have experienced multiple foster care episodes and placements.

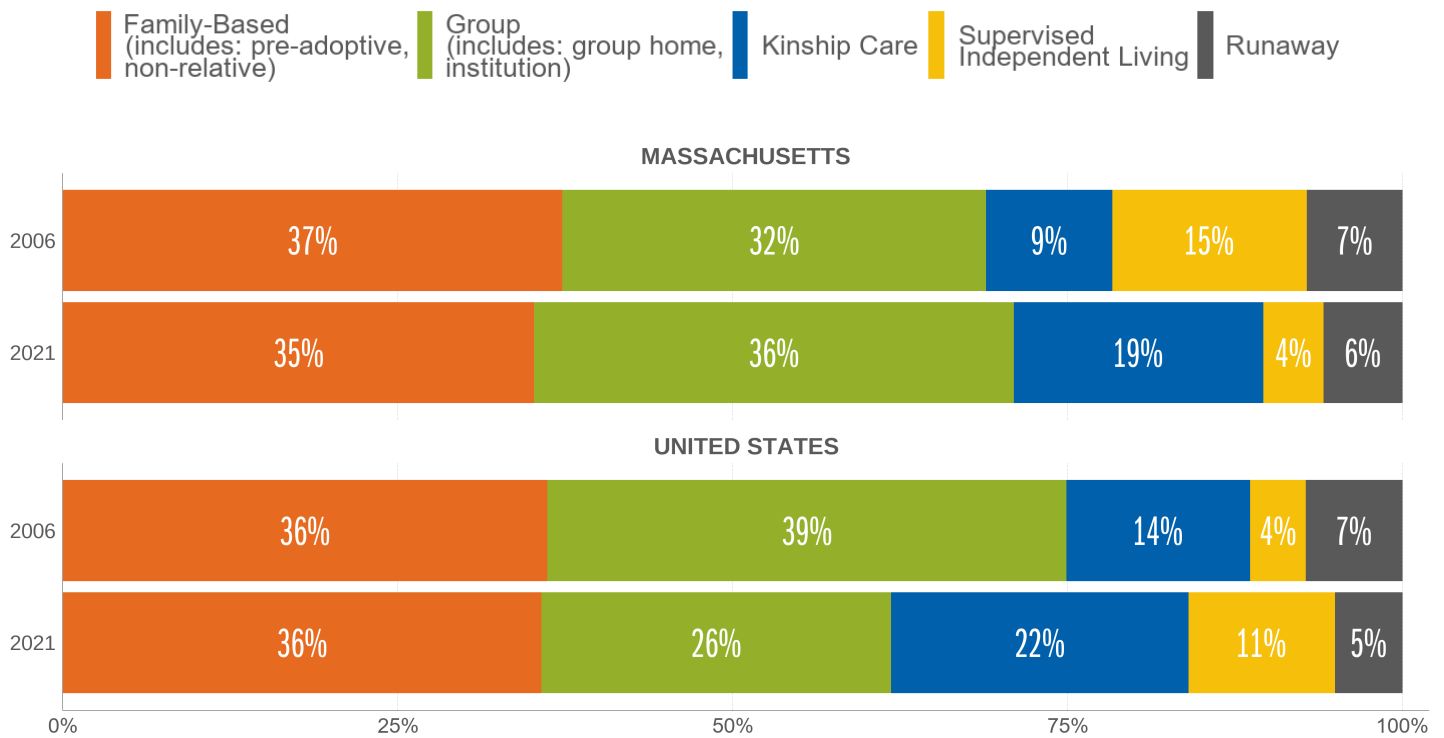
Entry Reasons*

UNITED STATES (Orange) MASSACHUSETTS (Green)



*A young person may have more than one entry reason. The entry reason "Abuse" combines data on physical and sexual abuse.

Placement Type

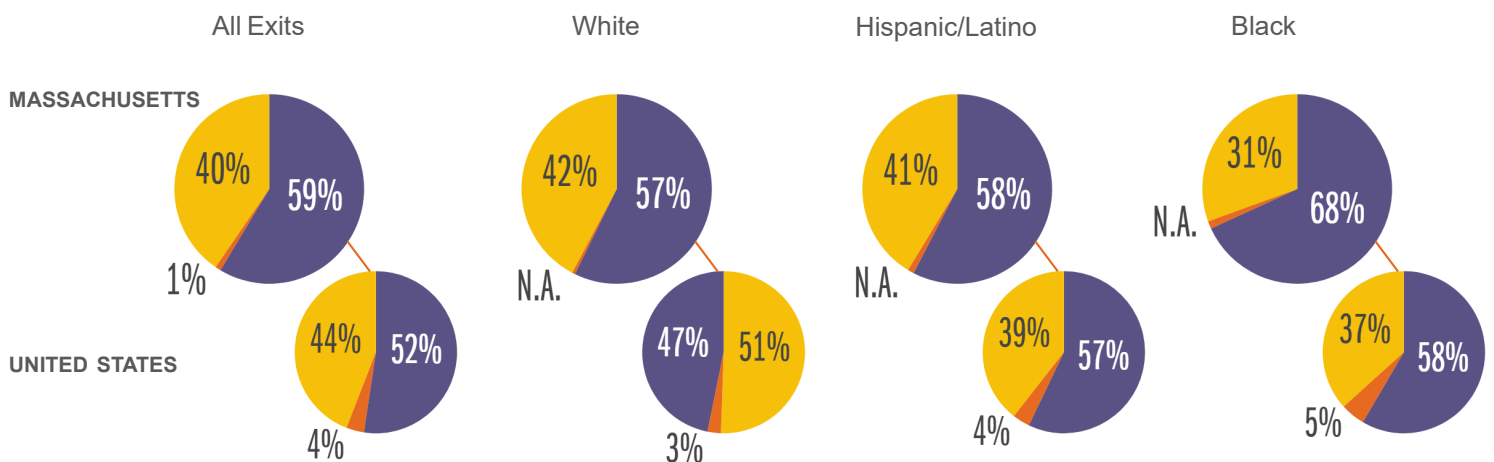


Due to spacing, labels are not shown for data smaller than 3%. Please refer to *Fostering Youth Transitions: Data Tables* for detail.

Exit Reasons

Many young people who leave foster care without permanent, legal connections to family or caregivers are exposed to risks including homelessness and economic instability.

PERMANENCE | EMANCIPATION/AGING OUT (NON-PERMANENCE) | OTHER

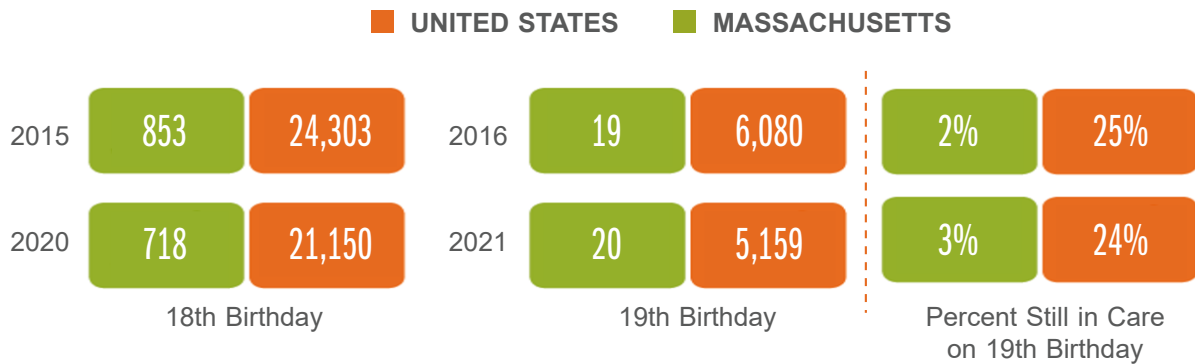


The above charts represent young people ages 16+ who exited foster care in 2021. Due to rounding, some charts may not equal 100 percent. Permanence includes adoption, reunification with birth families, living with a relative and guardianship. When fewer than 10 young people are reported in data, this brief uses N.A. Please see Source Notes for additional detail.

Extended Foster Care

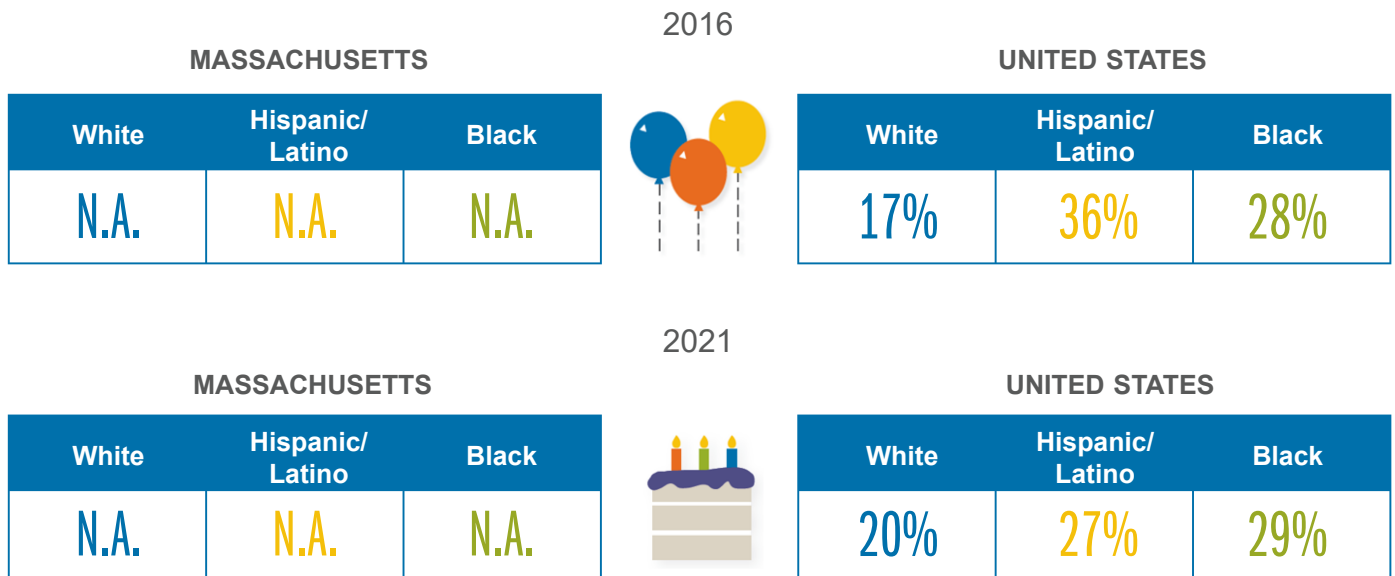
Nearly all states allow young people to stay in foster care between the ages of 18 and 21. Young people who spend time in extended foster care experience better outcomes than those who age out and live on their own. The benefits of extended foster care can include stability for young people while they finish school or find employment.

Young People in Foster Care on Their 18th and 19th Birthdays



This table represents the number of young people in foster care on their 18th birthday and the number and percent still in foster care on their 19th birthday. When fewer than 10 young people are reported in data, this brief uses N.A. When no young people are reported in the data, this brief uses zero.

Young People in Foster Care on Their 19th Birthday, by Race



When fewer than 10 young people are reported in data, this brief uses N.A. Please see Source Notes for additional detail.

Transition Services

Transition services, such as vocational training and housing assistance, are designed to help young people with foster care experience transition to adulthood. Participation in federally funded transition services provides a window into how well young people are being equipped for employment, education and housing.



210,539 or 47%

of the United States' foster care population received a service at any point between ages 14-21*



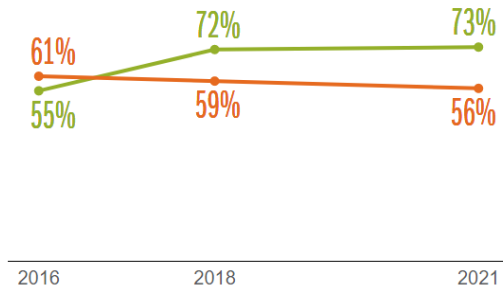
10,138 or 78%

of Massachusetts's foster care population received a service at any point between ages 14-21*

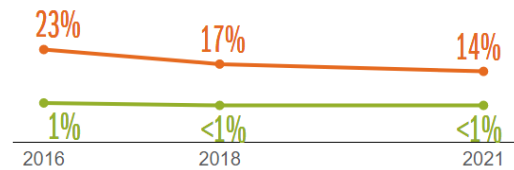
UNITED STATES

MASSACHUSETTS

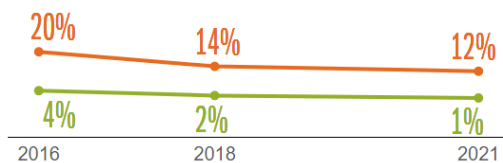
Life Skills Training



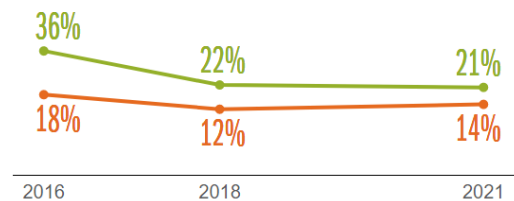
Employment Programs/Vocational Training



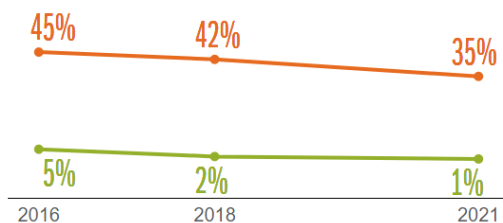
Educational Financial Assistance



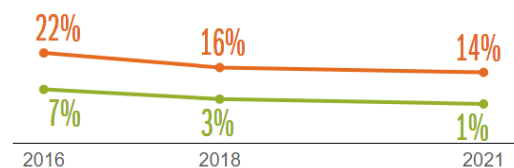
Room and Board Assistance



Academic Support, K-12



Mentoring



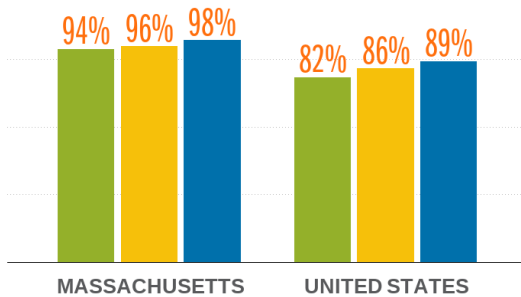
*This is calculated using data from FY 2013-2021.

Young Adult Outcomes by Age 21*

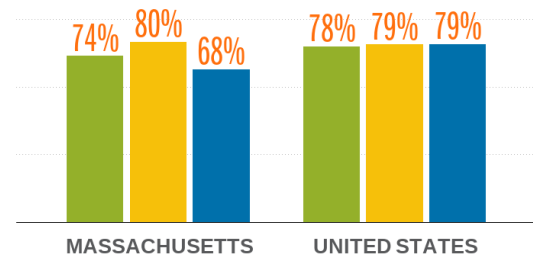
Research shows that young people who have experienced foster care have worse outcomes than their peers in the general population across a variety of service categories — from education and employment to housing and early parenthood. Examining data on these outcomes in Massachusetts is important in efforts to improve the practices, programs and policies that help ensure these young people have the relationships, resources and opportunities they need for well-being and success.

■ Age 21 in 2015 ■ Age 21 in 2018 ■ Age 21 in 2021

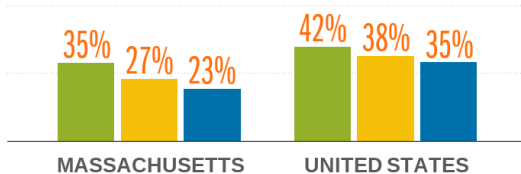
Health Insurance



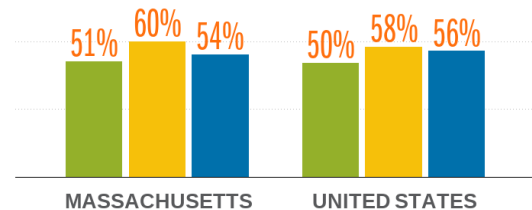
High School Diploma/GED+



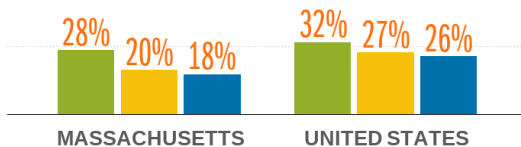
Incarceration



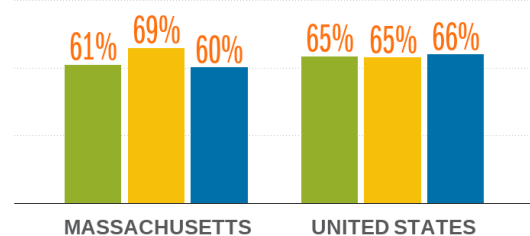
Employment (Part-Time or Full-Time)



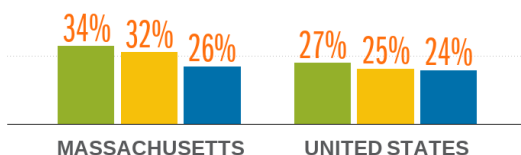
Young Parents



Stable Housing



Postsecondary Enrollment



*Outcomes data are from surveys of three groups of young people who experienced foster care. The groups reached age 21 in 2015, 2018 and 2021. When fewer than 10 youth are reported in a category, N.A. is used. See *Fostering Youth Transitions: Source Notes* for additional detail. *Fostering Youth Transitions* data analysis was provided by Child Trends.



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