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EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FOSTER YOUTH INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Ingrid Flores

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EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FOSTER YOUTH
INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
(Ingrid Flores)
(May 2025)

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ABSTRACT

Foster youth transitioning into adulthood often confront a myriad of challenges stemming from limited social capital and unstable support systems. The transition out of foster care, particularly for Transitional Age Youth (TAY), is fraught with barriers including disconnection from familial ties, inadequate knowledge regarding higher education, financial instability, unemployment, and housing insecurity. In 2021, approximately 4,920 foster children aged out of the system, facing the option to participate in extended care programs designed to facilitate their transition into independent living. Despite these programs, many youths struggle to achieve self-sufficiency. Key legislation, including the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, and the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act, which established frameworks for support services tailored to the needs of TAY.

The theoretical frameworks guiding this research include trauma-informed and ecological systems theories, highlighting the need for a nuanced understanding of the trauma experienced by foster youth and the influence of various environmental systems on their development. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Independent Living Programs (ILPs) in California, identifying strengths and weaknesses within these services and their impact on the transition to independent living for former foster youth. Additionally, this research seeks to contribute valuable insights that could inform policy and practice, ultimately enhancing support for this vulnerable population.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to start by acknowledging my brain for not giving up. It went from dropping out in kinder garden, repeating first grade to achieving higher education in a completely different language and culture. I also want to acknowledge every single teacher and professor that has been part of my academic journey and have led me to achieve my two master's degrees.

DEDICATION

Le dedico este logro a mis padres, los seres mas bellos, amorosos y humildes y que a pesar de las abversidades nunca han dejado de ser optimistas. Las palabras se quedan cortas al describir lo dichosa que me siento al tenerlos en mi vida. Ustedes are always cheering me up and encouraging me to flourish no matter what. To my sisters and brother que me apoyan incondicionalmete en todas mis ocurrencias. Los amo familia <3

To my friends and all those that fed me, encouraged me and heard my ugly cries and laughs. You all have a special place in my heart.

Last but not least, my dog Kiwi that came to change my life forever!!! And always receives with a smile in his cute lil face, y se desvelo hacienda tarea conmigo.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
CHAPTER ONE: PROBLEM FORMULATION	1
Introduction of the Problem.....	1
Foster Youth Statistics	1
Academic Challenges, Housing Instability, and Social Support	2
Policy Practice.....	3
Theories Guiding Conceptualization	5
Findings Contribution and Research Question.....	6
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
Introduction	7
Independent Living Programs Background	7
State Level Implementation Guidelines	9
Independent Living Program Services and Eligibility Criteria	11
Education	11
Housing.....	13
Independent Living Skills Services.....	14
Limitations in literature	15
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS	17
Study design	17
Sampling.....	18
Data Collection and Instruments.....	19

Procedures	20
Protection of Human Subjects	21
Data Analysis.....	22
Summary.....	22
APPENDIX A: Data Collection and Extraction Sheet.....	24
REFERENCES	26

CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM FORMULATION

Introduction of the Problem

Foster youth frequently leaves the state's care with very little social capital. When transitioning into adulthood, young individuals aging out of foster care face many challenges in their transition to independent living (youh.gov, n.d.). Many of those youth are disconnected from their families, lack knowledge about higher education, financial resources, face unemployment, and housing issues (Yang & Bechtold, 2022). Due to the complexity of their barriers, adjustment to independent transitional living can be challenging for transitional age youth (TAY). They have to learn a new set of skills while navigating adulthood.

Foster Youth Statistics

In 2021, 4,920 of foster children were transitioning out of the foster care system nationwide (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2022). Those youth after their 18th birthday, have the option to participate in extended care programs. Such services include foster care, a supervised independent living arrangement, or the provision of transitional living services while working on their personal goals (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2022). However, participation in those programs does not warrant self-sufficiency once transitioning out of the foster care system.

Academic Challenges, Housing Instability, and Social Support

Moving through multiple placements in foster care can also imply changing schools throughout the school year. The inconsistency in placement can disrupt academic learning, causing foster youth to increase their absence, suspension, drop out of school at higher rates, and lower graduation rates (Burns et al., 2022). This can set the tone for the educational knowledge that foster youth acquire and apply after foster care. Yang and Bechtold (2022) identified structural barriers that prevent foster youth from enrolling in higher education.

Some of those barriers were obtaining information about college, financial instability, lack of knowledge about financial aid, and housing. Structural barriers are more prominent after youth exit foster care and graduate from high school or completion of their general education development (GED). Another factor that adds to the academic challenges is the developmental status of transitional-age youth. The emerging adulthood stage is different for most foster youth since they have to navigate this stage by themselves. It is here where they start exploring their educational and professional aspirations, and personal relationships; however, “logistical concerns like needing to find housing or pay one’s bills took priority” (Yang & Bechtold, 2022, pg. 501). Foster youth also face stereotypes such as not having expectations of attending higher education but facing homelessness, incarceration, and poverty after they are emancipated from care (Moyer & Goldberg, 2020).

Social support is essential in each developmental stage of an individual. Research shows that youth with supportive relationships exhibit positive development outcomes which is the foundation for “positive academic, behavioral, and psychological outcomes” (Varga & Zaff, 2018, pg. 1). However, the social web support of transitional-age youth is built differently throughout their lifespan. Foster youths experience frequent moves in placement, which makes it challenging to build strong relationships lacking personal and institutional support (Tobolowsky et al., 2019).

The importance of social capital that foster youth have prior to and during their independent living is detrimental. For foster youth, the level of social support is affected by the multiple placements, which result in lower levels of social connections during their adulthood. Zinn et al., 2017 found in their study that foster youth's social connection declined over time, especially after they exit foster care. This is because, through their childhood, they have relied on adults who provide professional support, and once they exit the system, that support is no longer there. Also, there has been reports on a disparity in perceived social support between genders. Female foster youths report having a stronger social capital than male foster youths (Courtney et al., 2018).

Policy Practice

Many foster youths remain under the care of the system until they emancipate or their 18th birthday. In the past four decades, there have been laws enacted to address and improve the outcomes of TAY transitioning out of foster

care (Jones, 2019). In 1974, the federal government enacted the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which establish national guidelines to report child abuse and neglect, data collection, and technical assistance. It also allocated fundings to support state-level programs and agencies dedicated to providing services related to child abuse prevention and treatment (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2019). In 1997, the Adoption and Safe Families Act was introduced which required for children 16 and over a “written description of the programs and services” that will prepare them to transition out of the foster care (Carrasco, 2023, pg. 5).

Both laws did not address the needs of TAY foster after leaving the state care since they were considered adults. To assist the emancipation and continuity of services of TAY fosters, the federal government introduced the Title IV-E Independent Living Initiative (Carrasco, 2023). This paved the way to the Foster Care Independence Act (Chafee) which was enacted in 1999. This legislation seeks to increase flexible funding to the states through title IV-E for children who remained in foster care at their 18th birthday. The main focus of this law is to provide support to former foster youth transitioning into independent living until they turn 21-years-old (Overview of Federal and State Child Welfare Legislation, 2019). Even though the Chaffee Act extended the length of services and years of participation in the social welfare system for foster youth, it also outlined specific eligibility criteria that left some out of the loop.

The state of California passed in 2010 the Assembly Bill 12 (AB12): the California Fostering Connections to Success Act. This allows the state of California to access federal aid for foster care services to non-minors in the child welfare and juvenal system until age of 21 (California Fostering Connections to Success Act, AB 12 / 212, 2010 & rev. 2011). The goal of this bill is to allow illegible foster youth to gradually develop the needed skills to become self-sufficient and independent adults. The objective of AB12 is to create a personalized independent living plan that cover the areas of housing, education, professional development, employment, develop permanent connections to supportive adults (Carrasco, 2023).

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

Social workers utilize theoretical frameworks to guide their practice at micro and macro levels. The theoretical conceptualizations that will guide this study are trauma-informed and ecological theory. Most foster TAYs come from environments where they have been neglected and exposed to traumatic situations. The trauma-informed approach accounts for the traumatic experiences that children might be exposed through their lifespan and emphasizes how those experiences impact the delivery of services (Mau & Menschner, 2016, pg.1). It also accounts for a person's trauma-related behaviors as a way of resilience, coping and adaptative strategies in some areas of life (Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, 2014, pg. 13). When working with

former foster youth, social workers should be mindful of the past experiences affecting this population, as it can create long-lasting physical and mental effects.

Another theory that will guide the research is the ecological system theory. This framework emphasizes human interaction with different environmental systems. This theory was developed by Bronfenbrenner (1986), who sought to explain the influence that family, home, classroom, cultural experiences, etc. (systems) influence human development and behavior (pg. 3). According to Moyer and Goldberg, “Individuals are impacted by direct (i.e., microsystem) and indirect (e.g., mesosystem) contact with their environment” (pg. 126). Applying the ecological system theory can help social workers better understand the TAY development and foster support in different settings. This also applies when providing services, creating programs, and developing policies that assist this population.

Findings Contribution and Research Question

Social workers practice in the foster care field can be challenging since this population faces unique barriers. The finding of this research seeks to contribute to the improvement of the ILP services within the state of California. Likewise, identifying areas that can be strengthened to increase TAY independent living skill once exited from transitional housing programs. Therefore, the research question of this study is: How effective the implementation of ILP at State level, and how effective are its results

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In the context of this research, this chapter will explore relevant literature about foster care Independent Living Programs (ILP). Also, chapter two discusses the history and laws that were created at the federal and state level to provide ILP services. Likewise, it will dive into the services that agencies in the State of California are allowed to provide, and how effective those services have been after former foster youth participated in the ILP.

Independent Living Programs Background

Foster youth face many challenges when transitioning into adulthood. Navigating this stage can be conflicting and confusing for most foster transitional age youth (TAY) because they have to take over a new set of responsibilities in a short period of time. Similarly, they have to develop independent living skills without guidance or healthy role models. The deficiency in knowledge and information about higher education, and deprivation of financial resources impede foster TAY from a successfully transitioning into adulthood (Yang & Bechtold, 2022). Independent Living Program (ILP) was created to address those gaps that foster youth face once transitioning out from foster care into living independently.

To reduce the breach in obstacles encountered while transitioning into adulthood among former foster youth, the federal government amend the Social

Security Act. In 1999 the federal government took steps into the matter by launching the Federal John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act (Carrasco, 2023 pg. 6). This consisted of an amendment on the section E, Tittle IV, in the Social Security Act which increased local states' fundings to invest in the creation of supportive services for children that were part of the foster care system. The law mandated the states a continuing of services when efforts of reunification or adoption were not possible (Public Law 106-169, 1999, pg. 1823). It also allowed states to administer and distribute funding, as well as it gave "States individual flexibility to determine age eligibility for ILP services and to implement programs" designed to assist foster TAY successfully transition into adulthood (pg. 1).

This landmark changed the fate of many foster youth and took a different approach on services and support that were provided at local counties. The Chafee Act gave the opportunity to TAY to continue participating in supportive services as non-minor dependents after their 18th birthday, "Until the young adults emancipated from foster care, establish independence or reach 21 years of age." (Public Law 106-169, 1999, pg. 1823). Additionally, Chafee paved the way for the Educational and Training Voucher Program (ETV) which allowed additional grants to the states to support with financial resources TAY (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Children's Bureau, 2012).

State Level Implementation Guidelines

In the state of California, counties and local welfare agencies serving youth are giving the autonomy to formulate specific benefits and personalized support to the individual needs of foster TAY. In All County Letter NO. 00-854, the Department of Social Services (2000) explained to all counties the guidelines to implement Chafee bill in their local jurisdictions. As a guiding element, the Department of Social services made reference to the Early Start to Emancipation Preparation (ESTEP) program as an example of similitude in ILP services. ESTEP was a tutoring program intended to enhance the academic outcomes of foster youth through tutoring. Likewise, this program envisioned connecting foster youth with mentorship and independent living workshops. The program goal was to improve foster youth academic achievement outcomes and prepare them in their transition to adulthood. Nevertheless, in a later study directed by Courtney et. al, (2008) they stated that ESTEP services did not make a significant difference or had a beneficial outcome in foster youth preparation for emancipation.

In 2010, California approved the Fostering Connections to Success Act (SB12), which gave local counties a clearer framework for extended foster care services and programs. This law extended federal programs and funding for certain nonminors under the juvenile court and adopted children (Foster and Kinship Connections Court Procedures Manual, 2010). It also created two new foster care placements for nonminor dependents (NMD): the Supervised

Independent Living Placement (SILP) and the Transitional Housing Program-Plus-Foster Care (THP- Plus-FC) (California Department of Social Services, n.d.). SB12 established extended foster care (EFC) participation regulations for NMD such as the completion of elementary education, enrollment in postsecondary education or trade school, engaging in career training programs to eliminate employment barriers, working a minimum of 80 hours per month, and have a voluntary mutual agreement before participating in EFC. Additionally, SB12 approved the monthly allowance assistance for nonminors in no-related legal guardianship (EFC Program Fact Sheet, 2021).

Currently, Assembly member Rick Chavez introduced AB-369 Foster care: independent living. This bill seeks to extend the age limitation of ILP from 21 to 23 by June 30th, 2025. In accordance with federal law, this bill would eliminate the monetary value cap, allowing the NMD to keep their assets and it would not be disqualified to maintain their foster care maintenance payments and eligibility of services (Foster care: independent living Assembly Bill No. 369, 2023). Additionally, AB-369 will require the State to “upgrade curriculum to facilitate successful transitions to adulthood” and “ensure the curriculum is trauma informed and culturally relevant,” while allowing some flexibility in services and supports provided to former transitional age foster youth (California State Legislature, 2023).

Independent Living Program Services and Eligibility Criteria

Birthdays mark the celebration of a clean start for most young adults. However, for transitional age youth celebrating their 18th or 21st birthday means emancipating from the care of the state. The ILP provides vocational training, transitional housing, transportation allowances, health services, educational services, case management, and everyday life skills. The goal is to help NMD to become self-sufficient before they leave the care system. In addition, NMD work alongside their social worker on a monthly basis to develop their Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) which is updated every six months (California Department of Social Services, 2011). The purpose of TILP is to ensure NMD develop permanent connections and engage in gradual decision making to ensure a successful transition into independent living. To access ILP services, the youth have to be referred by their social worker or probation officer and they are not required to remain in the foster care system by their 18th birthday. Welfare agencies and local non-profit agencies are the source of those support services (California Department of Social Services, 2011).

Education

The Educational and Training Voucher Program (ETV) provides yearly financial assistance of up to \$5,000 to “cover the unmet needs of the student’s cost of attendance at a post-secondary institution” to qualified young adults (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Children's Bureau, n.d.). To qualify for the ETV program, former foster youth

must submit an application through the Chafee Grant Application portal to verify their eligibility before their 22nd birthday (California Department of Social Services, 2024). Although educational funding is available for NMD, other life circumstances hold them back from completing post-secondary education. In a study conducted by Tobolowsky et al., 2019, they investigated the opportunities and challenges that transitional-age youth experience in college. The authors found that former and current foster individuals saw obtaining a college degree as a pathway to better their lives. However, many former foster youths drop out of college to come back later in life and complete their degree.

Foster children who leave the foster care system frequently do not have the fundamental life skills required for academic success. When leaving foster care, many youths are disconnected from stable financial resources and lack the knowledge about higher education and financial aid (Yang & Bechtold, 2022). Those challenges affect foster youth's success in their higher educational goals. Watt and Kim (2019) conducted research utilizing the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). They investigated the educational achievements, employment status, experiences of homelessness, and involvement in the criminal justice system among emancipated young adults from different races and ethnicities. The regional data is drawn from the 50 states, including the territory of Puerto Rico (which data was excluded). Their independent variable was race and ethnicity, and their dependent variables were education, demographics, and services provided at the state level. Watt and Kim (2019)

found different outcomes in the race and ethnicity of foster youth after emancipation. African-Americans were more likely to enroll in college, not be employed, and face incarceration than their white counterparts. For Hispanics, there were no significantly different encounters among racial groups other than lower rates of homelessness. Emancipated foster youth face the same disadvantages that children of color experience through unstable families, resource-poor environments, and structural inequalities.

Housing

One of the major components of the ILP program is the provision of housing. Through ILP, counties are allowed to use thirty percent of their designated funding in allocation of housing to foster TAY. The three main housing programs covered through ILP funding are Transitional Housing Placement Program for Non-Minor Dependent (THPP NMD), Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP- Plus) and Supervised Independent Living Program (SILP).

The THPP NMD (previously THP+FC) offers housing solutions for non-minor dependents in extended foster care. Supportive assistance and transitional housing are offered by this placement option in accordance with the Transitional Independent Living Plan. This kind of placement aims to provide supporting services to non-minor dependents while they build the skills required to transition to independent living. The THP-Plus is a transitional housing program for youth who have left foster care (comprising youth involved in Juvenile Probation) prior to or on their 18th birthday.

These programs provide accommodation and services for a total of three years or until the youth reach the age of 25, whichever happens first. This type of housing and assistances provided are comparable to the ones provided by THPP; however, the program's restrictions will be age appropriate for young adults. The SILP provides a flexible, unlicensed foster care placement alternative for non- minor dependents (NMDs) enrolled in the Extended Foster Care Program. With SILP, foster care payments and supportive transition services can be received while NMDs live in a highly autonomous environment. SILP placements are for NMDs that are mentally and physically ready to live independently and in a less restricted setting (Transitional Housing Programs 2024). All of these housing models are intended to provide foster TAY with safe and stable housing, while assisting them to gain the needed life skills required to live independently.

Independent Living Skills Services

While participating in the ILP program, former foster youth are provided with a wide range of core services, as stated in the statement of work provided by each county contract. Such services include daily living skills, money management, decision-making, self-esteem, financial assistance with college or vocational schools, educational resources, and employment. Every month, foster TAY are mandated to take part in a minimum of four hours in workshops divided in four different subjects a month. ILP THP participants receive a monthly allowance from which the agency holds \$75 in an interest-accumulative savings

account. Those funds are readily available upon the participant's discharge from the program. Likewise, the agencies provide workshops about money management and budgeting to cover services, in which they teach foster TAYs about personal finance skills.

Among the independent living skills workshops, training about maintenance of personal items, nutrition and food storage, emergency preparedness, individual rights, education and career development, transportation, and access to mental and health care services are included. Case managers at the agency level also assist ILP participants with referrals to programs that help with job readiness opportunities and build participants' resumes and job searches (Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, n.d.).

Limitations in Literature

There is limited literature and research done about the effectiveness of the ILP program. Since most of these ILP programs are run by agencies across the State, the main focus is to fulfill the current needs of foster TAYs, neglecting to follow up on them once discharged from the program. This creates a limitation on the information collected on the lives of former foster youth after they participate in these programs. Additionally, most research uses secondhand data corresponding from the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) and the Midwest Study to generalize findings. Further investigation needs to explore and evaluate the effectiveness of the impact that ILP programs have on former foster

youth. Therefore, this study tackles the limitation in the current literature available on the efficacy of ILP programs in emancipated foster youth in the state of California.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Independent Living Programs (ILP) follow national federal guidelines; however, their implementation varies across States and Counties within the United States. In this chapter, the methods selected to expand knowledge about ILP programs will be explained. This research will utilize a literature review to analyze and synthesize different studies that have been previously conducted on ILP. The goal of this research project is to increase knowledge about the implementation of ILP and what components make some ILP programs more effective than others in the United States

Study Design

This descriptive study intends to identify service components that promote the successful transition of foster transitional age youth (TAY) from the foster care system to adult independent living. It also aims to explore gaps in literature that need further investigation. Likewise, it seeks to identify key service components that need improvement. This is also an explanatory research project that will utilize a literature review to investigate, evaluate, and synthesize existing literature on evidence-based practices implemented in ILP. For this research purpose, a Literature review is also selected as the method for the research analysts. This analysis method will allow the compilation of several types of qualitative and quantitative studies for the examination.

One strength of the literature review is that data will be collected and systematically examined by the researchers; therefore, time and monetary resources will not be needed. Thus, no human subjects will be required.

Likewise, data will be collected on foster care ILP programs at a national scale funded by government agencies. Usually, the data is collected by agencies that are currently providing ILP services. Thus, the expertise level of already published reports on foster care programs, that describe and explain how ILP programs have been implemented and developed over the years, is done by experts in the social welfare field.

A limitation of the utilization of a literature review in this research project is that no specific information may be available to answer the research question. Another limitation of this study is how well the researchers collected and manipulated data. Therefore, it will be important to have clear criteria for selecting articles to reduce biased results. Lack of time to access and analyze data is another limitation that will be considered in this study, as the goal is to collect as much relevant information from recent years as possible.

Sampling

Data from peer-reviewed publications discussing the success of the ILP program in the State of California will be utilized in this investigation. Among the inclusion criteria are peer review articles, academic works that are published in English, and studies done outside of California. Additionally, publications easily accessible through databases such as Google Scholar, One Search, JSTOR,

PsychINFO, SAGE Journals Online, EBSCOhost, free-to-access articles, and publications published between 2015 and 2024. The study will explore evidence-based services provided to support foster TAY during their participation in the ILP program. Additionally, it explores data that shows outcome of foster youth after their discharge from the ILP programs. Non-peer reviewed studies including research studies published in non-English languages published abroad, investigations carried out outside of California, gray literature, unpublished literature, articles not easily accessible through searching the databases Google Scholar, One Search, JSTOR, PsychINFO, SAGE Journals Online, EBSCOhost, articles that need to be paid for, or publications from prior to 2015 are among the exclusionary criteria.

Data Collection and Instruments

A secondary data analysis tool of existing literature on ILP will be used to evaluate peer-reviewed articles. Using inclusion and exclusion keywords, academic publications were searched in order to perform a thorough search for secondary data from peer-reviewed and empirical investigations, which provided the data for this study. To provide the data for this investigation, the data was collected from articles existing in the library databases of California State University, San Bernardino which included Google Scholar, JSTOR, Psych INFO OneSearch, SAGE Journals Online, EBSCOhost. Next, using specific information such the publication year, author/authors, county or state of origin, objective of the study, population and size of the study, methodology, type of services,

conclusions, and findings that are relevant to this research question. The chosen articles will be plotted in a diagram descriptive format. Consequently, this study will not identify any independent or dependent variables. Furthermore, no qualitative questions will be used in the study through surveys, questionnaires, or interviews. Preliminary results from the electronic search showed which articles had the inclusion keywords utilized in this study

After thoroughly searching relevant literature for this study, a selection process is going to be performed to define the eligibility criteria. The research reviewer is going to select the articles through analyzing the titles, abstracts and conclusions to see if they meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The research reviewer is going to analyze the entire article, looking for including and excluding criteria to determine the eligibility of articles. The duplicate literature publications no fulfilling the requirements will be omitted. The remaining articles will be selected for the literature review based on the eligibility criteria and consultation of the research supervisor. An excel spreadsheet will be generated and used as a data storage tool for organizing information from eligible research. Due to the nature of this research study, a specific tool is not required for data collection or for assessing the validity and reliability of the findings.

Procedures

To gather relevant research for this study, precise keywords were used in an internet search of peer-reviewed publications. The keywords included were the following: foster care, former foster youth, independent living services,

independent living programs, former foster youth, foster care and education, academic achievement, foster youth housing programs, former TAY and housing, foster youth, and homelessness. The California State University, San Bernardino library search engine databases, consultations with the university librarian, and Google Scholar will be used to search for the above-mentioned key terms. The following inclusion criteria will be applied in order to choose pertinent research to be included in this study: peer-reviewed, empirical, English-language research that is easily accessible via Google Scholar or the CSUSB library that were published between 2015 and 2024, investigations having to do with foster care youth involved in the ILP programs, the research must address evidence-based program services and support, mentorship, and articles published and studies conducted in the United States. Furthermore, some exclusion criteria that will be applied are articles that are not original research, blog publication, specialized programs, mental health issues, and people with disabilities. The researcher will ensure that the data collected for this study is from online databases from January 2015 to February 2025.

Protection of Human Subjects

This research project will not involve human subjects' participation since the data will be obtained through the collection of literature by utilizing published articles from various scholastic databases. However, IRB approval will be obtained to ensure that research protocols adhere to ethical standards and guidelines. This research project will be subjected to a preliminary IRB

assessment under the Collaborative Institutional Assessment Board Training Initiative (CITI).

Data Analysis

Utilizing a variety of databases, a thorough search will be done for articles pertinent to this topic. Next, potential studies will be chosen per this study's inclusion and exclusion criteria. The researcher will examine the articles and full texts of the publications found for possibly pertinent peer-reviewed studies to promote uniformity, analyze the findings and abstracts, and assess article titles. Data will be gathered on ILP program population characteristics (e.g., number of participants, ages, ethnicity, race, and gender), services provided characteristics (e.g., educational services, housing services, independent living skills, program participation length), methodological characteristics of the study (e.g., setting, recruitment and research sources, the purpose of the study, measurement of outcomes, publication year, study design, geographical location). Moreover, the chosen articles will be analyzed, and the findings will be shown in an Excel table to describe the type of research study, research design, kind of services, target population, and efficacy.

Summary

This research study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of ILP programs in the State of California in meeting the needs of foster youth during their transition from foster care to independent living as an adult. This study will

explore available articles on evidence-based practices in ILP programs and their outcomes. Assessing the effectiveness of ILP programs' services can help agencies better support foster youth transitioning out of foster care. Likewise, it will enable social workers to apply best practices when providing services to foster TAY in their transition into adulthood and self-sufficiency.

APPENDIX A
DATA COLLECTION AND EXTRACTION SHEET

Data Collection and Extraction Sheet	
Data Charting	
EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FOSTER YOUTH INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA	
Data Extraction Tool	
Demographic Characteristics:	
Age, Gender, Ethnicity	
Bibliographical Data:	
Articles' publication year	
State where study was conducted	
County where the study was conducted	
Methodology Utilized	
Type of research method	
purpose of the study	
Population Characteristic	
Sample size	
Inclusion criteria	
Exclusion criteria	
Type of services provided	
Independent living courses	
Health services	
Mental health services	
Educational services	
Housing services	
Financial literacy services	
Results	
what were the outcomes/findings of each research	
Keyfindings	
what were the key finding related to the literature review	

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