Trends in the Experiences of Youth With Emotional Disturbances Up to 6 Years After High School

Findings From the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)

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Data sources

- Parent telephone interviews
- Youth telephone interviews/survey
  - Wave 4, youth with ED had been out of high school from a few days up to 6 years
  - Ages 19 through 23
- NLTS Wave 1 (1986-87)

NLTS2 overview

- Nationally representative sample of 501 LEAs and 38 special schools, stratified by:
  - Geographic region
  - Enrollment size
  - District wealth
- 11,275 students across disability categories: 1,077 youth in the category of emotional disturbance (ED)
- Focuses on Youth, ages 13 to 16 at start of study
- Study began 2000–2001 school year
- Generalizes to Each disability category and age cohort
- Longitudinal 9 years
- 5 waves of data collection (wave 5 underway)

Today’s agenda

- Review trends in outcomes of youth/young adults with ED out of high school up to 6 years regarding:
  - High school completion
  - Postsecondary education
  - Employment
  - Participation in postsecondary school, work, or preparation for work
  - Independent living and childbearing or fathering
  - Criminal justice system involvement
- Compare with outcomes of same-age youth with ED in 1986-87
- Describe patterns of adult service and medication use by youth/young adults with ED out of high school up to 6 years

High School Completion

High school completion by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

- Out-of-high school youth who had finished high school

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Participation in high school equivalency programs by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years who left high school without finishing, by year

- 2003: 29%
- 2005: 59%
- 2007: 59%

74% of enrollees earned a certificate or diploma

Note: Data on enrollment not available for 2003.


Postsecondary Education, Work, and Preparation for Work

Postsecondary education enrollment by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

- 2003: 12%
- 2005: 21%
- 2007: 42%

Ever enrolled since high school

- 2003: 7%
- 2005: 4%
- 2007: 11%

At time of interview


Enrollment in postsecondary education by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year and type of school

- Vocational/technical/business school
- 2-year college
- 4-year college/university


Postsecondary program completion by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years ever enrolled, by type of school

- Any postsecondary school: 12%
- Vocational/technical/business school: 31%
- 2-year college: 10%
- 4-year college/university: 11%


Employment of youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

- 2003: 36%
- 2005: 63%
- 2007: 90%

Note: Data on enrollment not available for 2003.

Full-time work by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

Mean hourly wage of employed youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

Participation in postsecondary education, paid employment, or job training by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

Living arrangements and childbearing or fathering

Living arrangements of youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

Childbearing or fathering by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

**Notes:**
- Full-time work by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year:
  - Worked 35 hours per week or more

- Mean hourly wage of employed youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year:
  - Mean hourly wage

- Participation in postsecondary education, paid employment, or job training by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year:

- Living arrangements and childbearing or fathering:

- Living arrangements of youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year:

- Childbearing or fathering by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year:
Criminal Justice System Involvement

Youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years had health insurance, by year

Use of psychotropic medications by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

Youth with ED who had not received any services or supports up to 6 years after high school, by year
Receipt of mental health services by youth with ED out of high school up to 6 years, by year

69% of youth with ED had received mental health services while in high school.

32% of youth with ED had received social work services while in high school.

26% of youth with ED had received vocational services while in high school.

46% of youth with ED had received life skills training while in high school.

40% of youth with ED had received diagnostic medical services while in high school.

30% of youth with ED received financial supports while in high school.

What have we learned about outcomes?

- High school completion rate grew since mid-80's; boosted by many dropouts accessing and completing GED-like programs. Dropout rate still significant and higher than for all other disability categories.
- No significant increase over time in postsecondary education overall, but significant increase in 2-year college enrollment. Fewer than 1 in 10 attend 4-year college.
- Large majorities work after high school, but only about two-thirds were employed at a given time, with no increase with time since leaving high school.
- No wage growth since mid-1980s and no difference with time since leaving high school. Insufficient earnings for residential or financial independence.
- More than one-fifth of youth out of high school up to 6 years were parents.

What have we learned about supports and services after high school?

- Three-fourths of youth had transition plans with at least one service indicated as being needed after high school. Only one-fourth of youth with ED actually got any services in the early years after high school.
- Receipt/use of most supports and services dropped significantly after youth left high school, including:
  - Use of psychotropics
  - Health insurance coverage
  - Mental health services
  - Social work services
  - Life skills training
  - Diagnostic medical services
- Reduced service use was consistent with rates of services being indicated as needed on transition plans in high school.

For more information:

Full Reports | Fact Sheets & Data Briefs
Executive Summaries | Data Tables

www.nlts2.org