

# Who is Placed in the Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP)?

By Amy Lemley, Policy Director

## Background

On January 1, 2012, the State of California implemented extended foster care, which increased the upper age until which eligible youth could remain in the foster care system from 18 to 21. This policy also created two new placement options, Transitional Housing Placement Program Plus Foster Care (THP+FC) and the Supervised Independent Living Placement. Both new placement options were intended to offer young adults who elected to remain in foster care with a higher level of self-sufficiency and autonomy, while still complying with federal IV-E eligibility requirements for foster care placements. AB 12 also specified that youth in the juvenile probation system are eligible for care to age 21, either within the juvenile probation system or the child welfare system, and are eligible for both of the new placements created by AB 12.

## Basic Information about the SILP

In the continuum of placement options for nonminor dependents (NMDs), the SILP offers the highest level of independence. California Department of Social Services (CDSS) All County Letter 11-51 describes who is intended to be placed in a SILP, "The SILP placements are for NMDs who are developmentally ready to live independently or in a less restrictive environment (such as renting a room) with less intensive services from a case manager or caregiver. There is no caregiver or provider to assist the NMDs as with other placement types; therefore, it is important to ensure the NMDs are ready for this type of placement"

Unlike other foster care placements, the NMD is responsible for finding his or her own SILP unit, which may be a variety of different settings, including their own apartment, a shared apartment, a dorm room, or a room in the home of a person other than a biological parent, such as an extended family member, a friend or a former foster parent. To ensure this readiness, CDSS requires all youth who would like to be placed in a SILP be assessed to determine whether or not, "the NMD has knowledge of financial skills and is developmentally ready (both mentally and emotionally) to handle daily tasks on their own such as: grocery shopping, preparing meals, budgeting, managing money, paying bills, etc." The CDSS ALC states that, "indicators that NMDs are not ready for a SILP placement may include, but are not limited to rent and utilities exceed income; unstable income; no knowledge of how to count money, budget, or pay bills; or unable to care for self without assistance due to a serious medical or mental health condition."

Youth who are placed in a SILP may receive their foster care payment directly, which is equivalent to the foster care basic rate, which is \$799 per month. Youth living in a SILP are eligible to receive a monthly infant supplement if they are custodial parents and education transportation assistance, but are not eligible to receive a specialized care increment, offered by most counties to caregivers to meet the additional daily care needs of a child who has a health and/or behavior problem.

## Status of SILP Placements as of January, 2013

In November, 2012, the California's statewide child welfare database was updated to include the SILP, providing the first-ever look at who is being placed in this new placement. This on-line system is managed by the California Child Welfare Performance Project at UC Berkeley and led by Professor Barbara Needell. The project is funded cooperatively by CDSS, and the Stuart Foundation. Provided in this analysis is a summary of the status of SILPs as of January 1, 2013, including the prevalence of the

placement overall and by county as well as information about the NMDs placed in SILPs, including their ethnicity, age and length of time in foster care using data from this system.

### Number of Youth Placed in SILP and Prevalence

As of January 1, 2013, a total of 884 youth in the child welfare system were placed in a SILP, making it the most common placement for non-minor dependents, followed by a relative caregiver (kin), a Foster Family Agency foster home, and a group home. In the juvenile probation system, 127 youth were placed in a SILP as of January 1, 2013. By far the most common placement in that system is group homes, followed by youth on runaway status and then the SILP.

Placement Type, Youth Age 18 to 20 as of January 1, 2013	Child Welfare	Juvenile Probation
Supervised Independent Living Placement	21.1%	13.3%
Kin	20.9%	6.5%
FFA Foster Family Home	18.1%	1.3%
Court Specified Home	9.5%	4.3%
Group Home	8.1%	33.7%
County Foster Family Home	5.5%	.6%
Runaway	3.6%	17.6%
Transitional Housing	2.9%	1.3%
Other or Missing	10.3%	21.4

### Gender of Youth Placed in SILPs

Overall, more young women are being placed in the SILP than young men. The difference in the child welfare system is most notable, with a full 62% of youth placed being young women as compared to 38% young men, a 40% difference. This is greater than the proportion of youth age 18 to 20 who are young women in child welfare, which is 54 percent as of January 1, 2013.

The figures differ for youth in juvenile probation, reflecting the different gender composition of that system. Of those youth placed by juvenile probation, 27 percent of those placed in a SILP are young women, as compared to 73 percent are young men. However, like the child welfare system, the number of young women placed in the SILP is disproportionate to their rates in the population of 18 to 20 year-olds in the juvenile probation system, which is 22 percent.

Gender of Youth Placed in a SILP as of January 1, 2013	Child Welfare	Juvenile Probation	Total
Young women	549 (62%)	34 (27%)	583
Young men	335 (38%)	93 (73%)	428
	884	127	1,011

### Ethnicity of Youth Placed in SILPs

The ethnicity of youth placed in a SILP closely mirrors the larger population of youth age 18 to 20 in the child welfare system as well as within the juvenile probation system. The most prevalent ethnic group among 18 to 20 years-olds in both systems is Latino youth, followed by African American youth, White youth, Asian Pacific Islander, Native American and Missing or Other.

<b>CHILD WELFARE</b>	SILP Participants, 18 to 20	All youth, 18 to 20
Black	32%	33%
White	20%	21%
Latino	41%	41%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5%	3%
Native America	1%	1%
Missing or Other	0%	1%

<b>JUVENILE PROBATION</b>	SILP Participants, 18 to 20	All youth, 18 to 20
Black	32%	27%
White	20%	24%
Latino	41%	43%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5%	3%
Native America	1%	1%
Missing or Other	0%	2%

#### **Exit Outcomes of Youth Placed in SILPs**

Since implementation of extended care on January 1, 2013, dependents have exited foster care and the juvenile probation system. A total of 53 youth have exited foster care from a SILP placement, 39 from the child welfare system and 14 from the juvenile probation system. The most common type of exit in both systems is emancipation, followed by family reunification and other.

	Child Welfare	Juvenile Probation	Total
Emancipated	36	7	43
Reunified	3	5	8
Other	0	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>53</b>

#### **Length of Time in Care of Youth Placed in SILPs**

The length of time in foster care of youth placed in SILPs closely mirrors the general population of youth, age 18 to 20 in foster care. A full 45 percent of youth placed in a SILP have been in foster care for five years or more, as compared to 49 percent of youth in foster care age 18 to 20.

<b>CHILD WELFARE</b>	SILP Participants, 18 to 20	All youth, 18 to 20
<12 months	11%	8%
12 to 23 months	11%	11%
24 to 35 months	13%	13%
36 to 47 months	11%	10%
48 to 59 months	10%	8%
60+ months	45%	49%

Like the child welfare system, the experience of youth placed in a SILP parallels the larger population of youth age 18 to 20 in the juvenile probation system, with slight exceptions. Of those juvenile probation youth placed in a SILP, the most prevalent length of time in care was 12 to 23 months as compared to

the general population of youth in juvenile probation age 18 to 20, which was a full two years longer, 26 to 47 months.

<b>JUVENILE PROBATION</b>	<b>SILP Participants, 18 to 20</b>	<b>All youth, 18 to 20</b>
<12 months	22%	13%
12 to 23 months	29%	19%
24 to 35 months	23%	20%
36 to 47 months	14%	25%
48 to 59 months	8%	14%
60+ months	5%	9%

### **Utilization of SILP by County**

As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 32 of California's 58 counties had at least one non-minor dependent placed in a SILP. There is wide variation in the frequency of SILP utilization. Among the nine "large counties" six have above-average utilization of the SILP and 3 have below-average utilization of the SILP. For the purpose of this analysis large counties are those that have at least 150 youth in foster care, age 18 to 20. Those counties that are utilizing SILPs at above the state average include Alameda, Fresno, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego and San Francisco. The large counties that are utilizing the SILP at below the state average include Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino.

<b>As of January 1, 2013</b>			
<b>County</b>	<b># of youth in SILP</b>	<b># of 18 to 20 years olds in placement</b>	<b>% of 18 to 20 year- olds placed in SILP</b>
Alameda	80	299	26.8%
Contra Costa	29	90	32.3%
Fresno	36	150	24.0%
Imperial	2	7	28.6%
Kern	12	105	11.4%
Lassen	1	6	16.7%
Los Angeles	253	1721	14.7%
Madera	1	14	7.0%
Marin	1	5	20.0%
Mariposa	1	4	25.0%
Mendocino	3	23	13.0%
Napa	2	5	40.0%
Nevada	2	7	28.6%
Orange	60	186	32.3%
Placer	1	16	6.3%
Riverside	29	259	11.2%
Sacramento	106	274	38.7%
San Bernardino	28	269	10.4%
San Diego	109	263	41.4%

San Francisco	36	166	21.7%
San Joaquin	11	69	15.9%
San Luis Obispo	2	20	10.0%
San Mateo	22	54	40.7%
Santa Barbara	11	28	39.3%
Santa Clara	8	136	5.9%
Santa Cruz	2	19	10.5%
Shasta	12	24	50.0%
Sonoma	6	52	11.5%
Stanislaus	9	43	20.9%
Tuolumne	2	5	40.0%
Yolo	4	19	21.1%
Yuba	3	11	27.3%

### Discussion of Results

- The SILP is being utilized:** It is clear from the data, that the SILP is being utilized in many counties in California. As of January 1, 2013 it is the more prevalent placement for 18 to 20 year- olds in foster care, serving as the placement of 1 in 5 19 to 20 year-olds. Six of the nine large counties are utilizing the SILP at a rate above the state average, while three of the large counties are not. There is no clear reason for this disparate rate of utilization, which ranges in large counties from 41.4 percent of 18 to 20 year-olds in San Diego to 10.4 percent in San Bernardino.
- Young women are utilizing the SILP disproportionately:** One difference between youth utilizing the SILP and the larger population of 18 to 20 year-olds in foster care is that more SILP participants are female. Of those youth in the child welfare system, a full 63 percent of SILP participants are female, as compared to 54 percent in the general population of foster youth, age 18 to 20. This difference may reflect the utilization of SILPs for custodial parents, who are in most circumstances young women. Placement options for young parents have long been a challenge and the SILP may be addressing this need. However, the utilization of the SILP for young parents in foster care also raises concerns because of the only supportive service provided to youth placed in the SILP is a monthly social worker visit.
- Other than gender, youth in SILPs appear to mirror general population of 18 to 20 year-olds:** In both the child welfare system and the juvenile probation system, there does not appear to be significant differences between NMDs who are placed in a SILP and the general population of 18 to 20 year-olds in foster care in terms of ethnicity or length of time in foster care.
- More information required about the “kind” of SILP:** Data provided by the California Child Welfare Performance Project provides aggregate information about how many youth are placed in SILPs, but we do not know if these are independent apartments, dorm rooms, private rooms in a home or rooms in a Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotel. Understanding more about the nature of the SILPs is important if we are to determine whether or not SILPs are being utilized appropriately, namely for those youth who are ready to live independently, or if they are being used due to a lack of other placement options.