

California Youth Connection

Meeting the Needs of Children and Youth in Care: A Lived Experience Perspective on Mental Health

www.calyouthconn.org



Presented By : Galilea Carrasco,
CYC Orange County Chapter Chair



Mission & Vision

The MISSION of California Youth Connection (CYC), a youth-led organization, is to develop leaders who empower each other and their communities to transform the foster care system through legislative, policy, and practice change.

Our VISION is that all youth will be equal partners in contributing to all policies and decisions made in their lives. All youth in foster care will have their needs met and the support to grow into healthy and vibrant adults.

Today's Agenda

COVID-19 Impact

10 Point Vision Plan

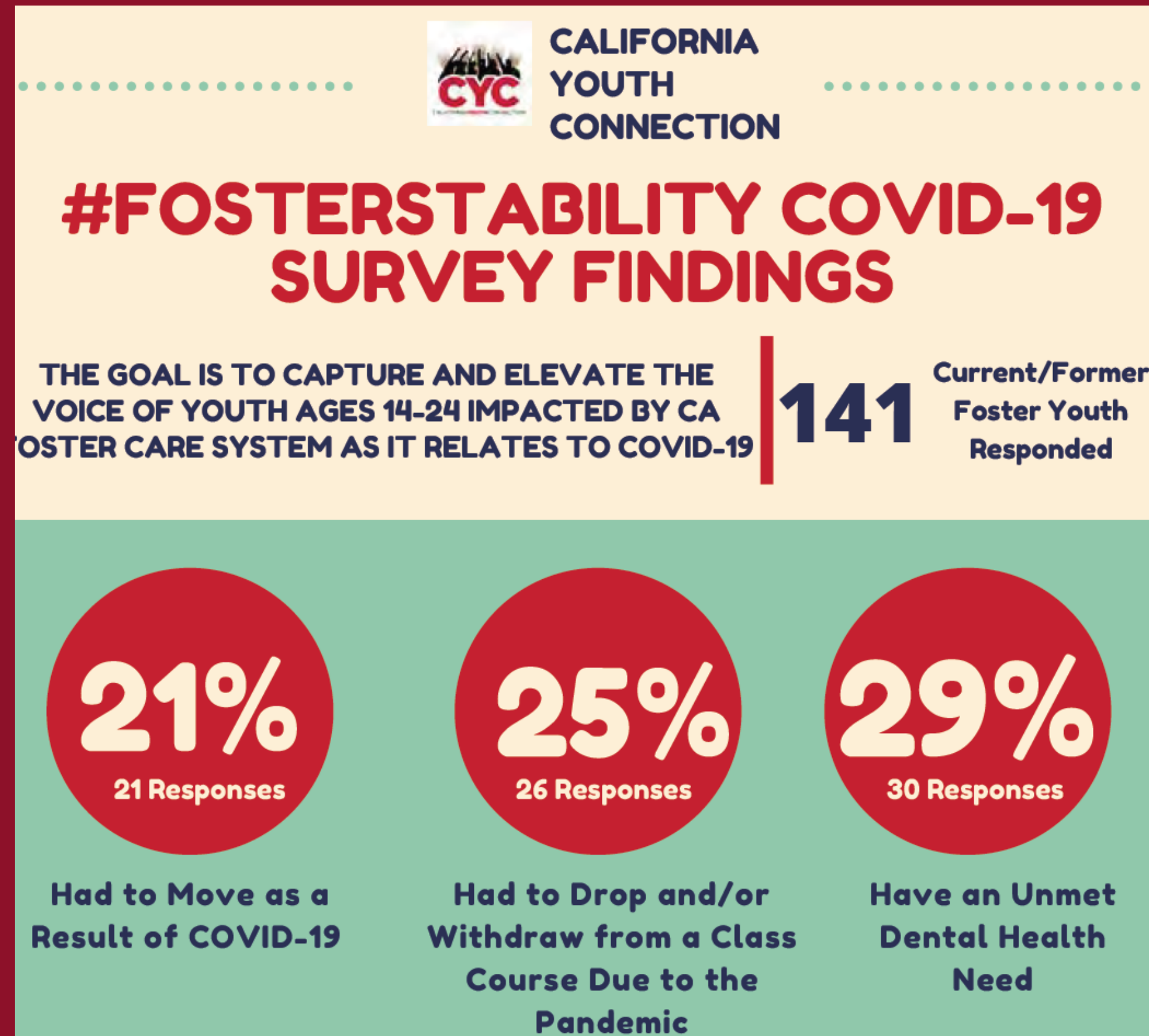
**Gaps in Accessing
Mental Health
Services**

**Recommendations
from
Lived-Experience**

COVID-19 Task Force

In the start of the state's stay at home order, CYC Members formed a COVID-19 Task Force. They collaborated with current and former foster youth to inform decision-makers and voice the needs and demands of youth impacted by California's foster care system.

The Task Force launched a #FosterStability COVID-19 Survey with the goal of capturing and elevating the foster youth experiences as they relate to the impact of the pandemic. Results were shared and shaped by the COVID-19 Task Force to lead CYC's continued work on uplifting the lived-experience in care.



10 Point Vision Plan

- A process to connect with mental health care providers authentically.
- Education and access to available mental health services within our communities.
- An immediate end of overmedication to youth in the foster care system.
- Access to holistic and alternative treatments from medication and talk therapy.
- An immediate stop of case-overload of providers serving youth in foster care.
- Access to specialized treatment that may not be billable to medicaid.
- The right to voice what services/treatment we want and not be forced.
- Hotlines for support instead of calling 911.
- An immediate end of misdiagnosis in order to receive support and services
- Remove policies that label self care as a liability.



Current Gaps in Mental Health Support for Youth



**Youth Receiving Rushed
or Premature Diagnoses**



**Barriers to Access
Funding for Alternative-
Care & Mental Health
Support**



**Displacement of Services
When Moving from
County to County**

Recommendations

These are recommendations that CYC Members have elevated for years to promote accessibility to services and support that are holistic and authentically meet the needs of young people.

Foster Youth Enrichment Stipend Pilot Program

Establish a county based Stipend Pilot Program to be funded by available state funds.

Eliminate the Need of a Diagnosis to Receive Care

The need of a diagnosis should not be a barrier to receiving the care and services that youth are entitled to.

Access to Alternative Treatment

Many youth in foster care are not receiving the services or treatment they feel would be most beneficial.

Right to Request a Reevaluation of Diagnosis

Youth should have the right to request a reevaluation of their diagnosis for whatever the cause may be. Youth should also be made aware of that right.

Stay in Touch!



CALIFORNIA **YOUTH** CONNECTION

Contact us to get more info

 Galilea@calyouthconn.org

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