

Arizona Department of Child Safety Young Adult Program

Department has implemented some extended foster care success coaching program requirements but needs to improve its program planning and contractor monitoring; and has not consistently developed youth transition plans or systematically evaluated the young adult program's performance, limiting its ability to ensure youth successfully transition to adulthood

Audit purpose

To assess the Department's implementation of extended foster care (EFC) success coaching program requirements outlined in Laws 2023, Ch. 141, and determine whether it developed required transition plans for youth in foster care and tracked and evaluated its young adult programming's performance consistent with recommended practices.

Key findings

The Department:

- Has implemented or begun to implement several EFC success coaching program requirements, including meeting deadlines to contract for success coaches and developing success coach training, but needs to improve its program planning and contractor monitoring to help ensure all eligible youth are referred to the success coaching program and that contractors hire sufficient coaches to provide services and meet contractual and EFC success coaching program requirements.
- Did not develop federally required transition plans for 11 of 15 youths we reviewed, and the 4 plans it developed were untimely and did not identify available resources or achievable short-term goals, potentially impacting youths' ability to secure employment or housing, pursue higher education, or maintain family connections as adults.
- Has tracked some young adult program performance measures but has not developed a process to systematically and comprehensively evaluate if its young adult programming is helping foster youth obtain the skills, education, and competencies necessary to successfully transition to adulthood.

Key recommendations

The Department should develop and implement:

- An implementation plan for the EFC success coaching program.
- Written procedures for overseeing and monitoring success coaching contractors.
- A written action plan to ensure Department staff timely develop transition plans for youth that identify available resources and achievable short-term goals.
- A comprehensive performance measurement system for its young adult programming, including processes for tracking relevant performance measures and outcomes.