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# **1 LAPTOP PROGRAM**

FOR FOSTER YOUTH

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## **EVALUATION REPORT**

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**2016**

Completed by  
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University of Southern California

# 1 Laptop Program



*"I greatly appreciate Foster Care Counts; through their generosity our foster youth are equipped with the essential technology they need to be successful in college."  
~ Philip L. Browning*

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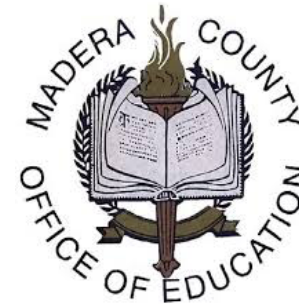
## 1 Laptop Program Partners



# FOSTER CARE COUNTS



County of Los Angeles  
Department of Children and Family Service



# Executive Summary

The purpose of this paper is to summarize a series of 3 studies conducted on 730 youth in California from 2013 - 2015 to assess access levels to computers at home, and evaluate the impact that having access to a computer at home has on 3 key measures: academic performance, social connectiveness, and life satisfaction.

In California, there were 62,148<sup>1</sup> children and youth in the foster care system as of the end of 2015. Of these, 14,234, or 23% are transition age youth (TAY) between the ages of 16 – 21 years, most of who will “age out” from the system and be forced to survive on their own.<sup>2</sup>

These transition-age foster youth have the worst outcomes of any at-risk population. A staggering 8% will drop out of high school versus 3% of the statewide population and 3-5% of other at-risk groups. Less than 50% will pass California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) versus 76% of the statewide population and 66% for low socio-economic students. Fewer than 3% will achieve a bachelor’s degree.<sup>3</sup>

Their ability to successfully transition to adulthood and become independent adults is hampered by low college success rates and

high unemployment. Fully 66% will be unemployed with only 5% achieving more than 20 hours of work per week.<sup>4</sup>

To make matters worse, emancipating foster youth lack the social connections and support networks to help them succeed. Over 60% lack the desired connection with their biological family, and 40% lack sufficient support networks to help them emotionally and financially. As a result, 41% have contemplated suicide, and 24% have attempted it.<sup>3</sup>

In order to identify the resource gaps that contribute to this deficit in academic performance, social connectiveness and life satisfaction, iFoster regularly polls its community of over 30,000 members representing agencies, caregivers and youth in the child welfare system nationwide. Over the course of the 5 years these polls have been conducted, the most commonly requested resource, across all geographies and member types, has been access to computers with the productivity software children and youth need to succeed in school and prepare for careers.

To address this need, iFoster and its partners have funded and distributed 7,803 refurbished business laptops (as of April 30,2016) with donated Microsoft Windows® & Microsoft Office® software, and 900 internet hot-spots, to youth in foster care across 48 states. For study purposes, 3,063 laptops were provided to foster youth in college, or college bound high school students, in 4 counties in California. Studies were conducted on 730 youth across urban, suburban and rural communities who received these computers.



1 CWS/CMS 2015 Quarter 4 Extract

2 CWS/CMS 2015 Quarter 4 Extract

3 The Invisible Achievement Gap: Education Outcomes of Students in Foster Care in California’s Public Schools. Vanessa X. Barrat, BethAnn Berliner. 2013.

4 Findings from the California Youth Transition to Adulthood Study (CaYouth): Conditions of Foster Youth at Age 17. ChapinHall at the University of Chicago. 2014

To evaluate this program, one of the program's leading funders, Foster Care Counts, contracted with an independent evaluator, Dr. Jeremy T. Goldbach, Ph.D., LMSW of the University of California, and C.A.R.E. Consulting Group, to assess the results from 2 previous studies in Placer and Madera / Fresno Counties, as well as conduct a series of 3 longitudinal studies on foster youth in Los Angeles County.

Results from these 3 studies found:

1. Youth in foster care had significantly lower access to computers at home than other youth. While 90% of youth in the U.S., and 79% of low-income youth have access to a computer at home<sup>5</sup>; only 5% of rural foster youth, and 21% of urban foster youth reported access to a computer at home.
2. When provided with a computer, 98% of foster youth reported using their computer on a daily or weekly basis.
3. Providing access to a computer at home resulted in measurable improvements in each of the 3 study dimensions: academic performance, social connectiveness, and life satisfaction.

Academic performance – significant improvements were found in: grades; missed days of school and work; and increased pursuit of college and employment.

Social Connectiveness – significant improvements were found in: relationships with biological families; relationships with foster families; connections with family and friends; job searching; communicating with teachers and employers; seeking learning opportunities; and communications with lawyers, caseworkers and employers.

Life Satisfaction – significant improvements were found in: life satisfaction and self-esteem; and reduced depression and suicidality.



5 Pew Research Center's Teens Relationships Survey, Sept. 25-Oct. 9, 2014 and Feb. 10-Mar. 16, 2015. <http://pewrsr.ch/1TC9I6M>

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## Program Overview

iFoster launched its “1-Laptop Per Foster Youth” program in 2012 to address the most frequently requested need by the iFoster community, access to computers with the productivity software children and youth need to succeed at school as well as in the work force. iFoster members reported not having computers in their homes for foster youth to access, and could not afford to purchase computers at retail prices. Many caregivers also expressed anxiety related to not knowing enough about computers and the necessary software to make informed decisions.

Five major factors were taken into consideration when designing the 1-Laptop solution. First, computers needed to be low-cost in order to make them affordable. Second, computers needed to have a Windows operating system to be able to function effectively “off-line” since they would frequently be used in environments without Internet access. Third, tech support needed to be provided to ensure the computers remained operational. Fourth, computers needed to be delivered on a one-by-one basis to youth throughout the country; bulk purchasing and shipping was not a viable option. Fifth, the process to select and order computers needed to be simple and efficient. Caregivers and social workers wanted a variety of options to best fit their youth, but also sought guidance on what hardware and software were optimal for each case.

The 1-Laptop program met the hardware and software requirements by partnering with the MAR (Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher) program to access low cost and durable, business-class laptops and free productivity software (Microsoft Windows and Office). iFoster also provided in-house Tier 1

tech support and program management, and worked to design a seamless order to drop-ship delivery process which was flexible enough to accommodate youth placement changes. To minimize complexity and increase adoption by customers, an optimal subset of computer models and price points were selected.

Two funding models were adopted. Individuals (youth, caregivers, agencies) were able to purchase computers as needed via iFoster's portal. Various models were offered, both laptops and desktops, with varying price points and technical specifications, ranging in price from \$160 to \$310. Due to limited and fixed budgets, pricing needed to be all-in so the price presented to the consumer was the final price, inclusive of the computer, software, shipping, taxes, tech support and a 90-day full replacement warranty. Since many youth and caregivers could not afford to purchase computers, a second model was adopted in which funders could make computers available to youth based on specific eligibility requirements and iFoster would manage application, approval, distribution and ongoing tech support processes. Social workers were made aware of the funded computer program, and could submit applications on behalf of youth. Of the 7,803 computers distributed to date, 60% have been purchased by individuals, and 40% have been purchased by funders or agencies for their youth clients.

Additional software offerings have been included and have been adopted into curricula provided by other non-profits who offer literacy and computer skills training to foster youth. These additions include Career Cruising (career and college prep), Method Test Prep (SAT/ACT test prep), and Reading Plus (reading comprehension improvement) licenses.

In 2014, the LA County Department of Children and Family Services decided to provide ILP-eligible youth in college with iFoster laptops along with \$300 towards college expenses on an ongoing basis. Other government child welfare agencies have also followed suit providing their ILP-eligible youth in high school and in college with laptops including: Madera County, Orange County,

Placer County, Santa Barbara County, Santa Clara County, Santa Cruz County, and Tulare County on an ongoing basis. Additionally, the States of Alaska, Colorado, and Montana, as well as Contra Costa, Fresno, Riverside, San Francisco, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties in California, and a variety of transition-age youth serving agencies acquire iFoster laptops for high school graduations or for specific events on a periodic basis.

Based on the success of the "1-Laptop Per Foster Youth" program, as well as the sobering findings from the studies conducted on access levels, and the benefits of providing computers to youth in foster care, a task force has been created in California with a goal of providing a laptop to every youth aged 16 – 21 in California. The desired outcome of this is that a methodology and mandate is developed that can be sustained in California, and replicated in other states, that ensures this critical resource is provided to all youth in the foster care system, nationwide, giving them the same opportunities to succeed as children and youth being raised in biological environments.





# Placer County 1 Laptop Program Report

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This project was a collaboration between the Placer Community Foundation, Placer County Children’s System of Care, and iFoster. The purpose of the study was to measure the impact that having consistent access to a computer would have on academic performance and social connectiveness. Over the course of 2013 – 2015, a total of 300 laptops were provided to foster youth, with 152 youth surveyed.

## PROGRAM RESULTS

All of the surveyed youth reported the laptop helped them significantly with school. Approximately 80% said having a laptop enabled them to stay connected with family, friends and other supportive adults despite placement changes.

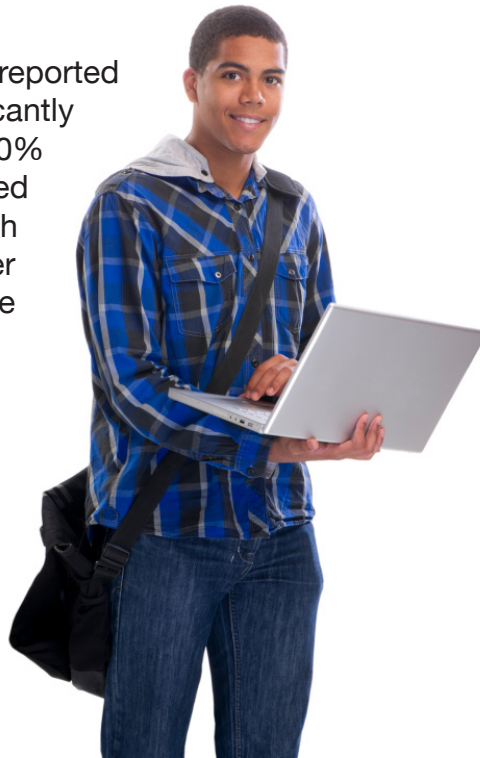


Figure 1: Grade (Question 1)

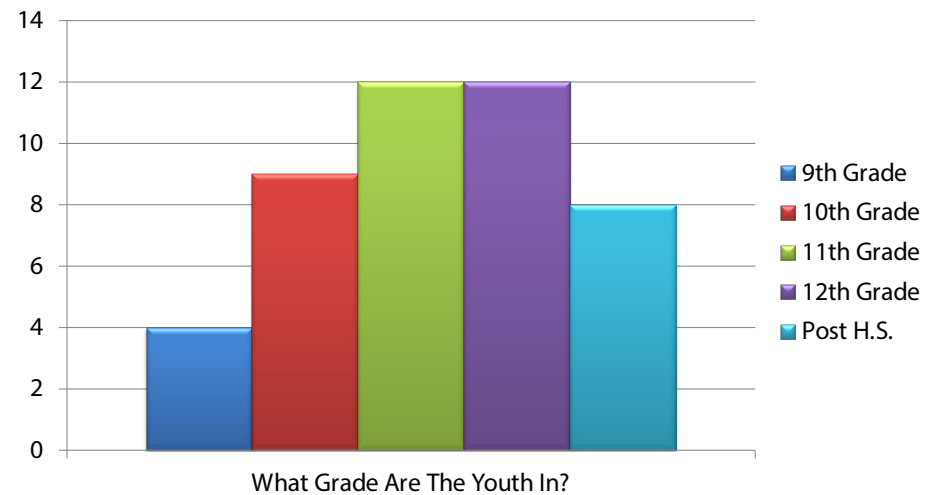
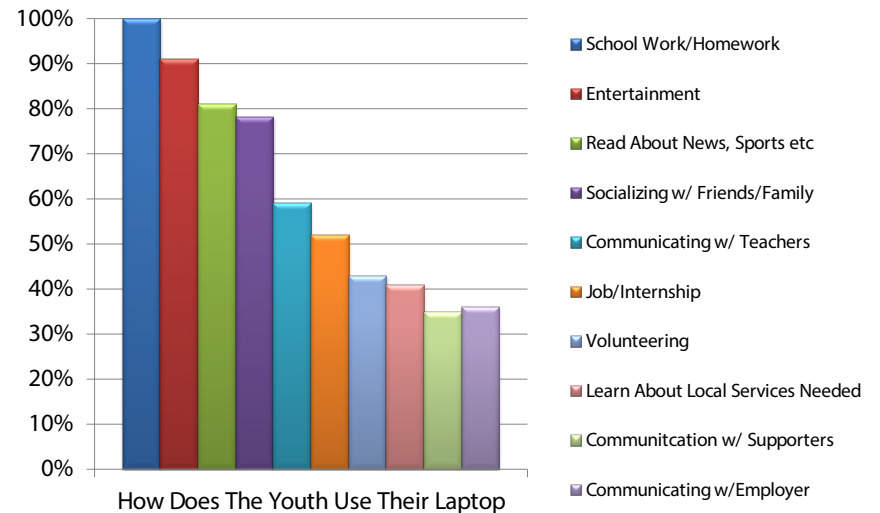
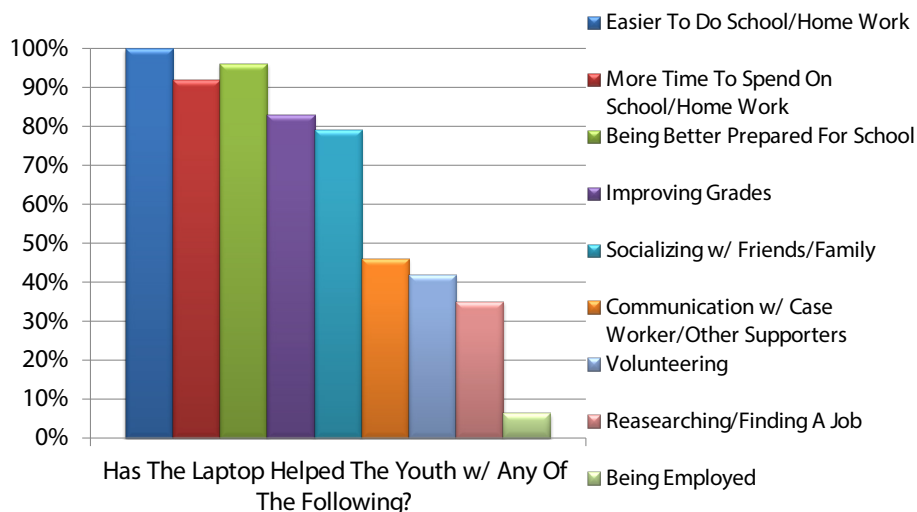


Figure 2: How The Youth Use Their Laptop (Question 2)



**Figure 3: How The Laptop Helped The Youth** (Question 3)



\*\*\*Youth saw grade improvements not only overall, but major grade improvements in their English, Chemistry, and History Classes and winning awards for essays

# Madera County 1 Laptop Program Report

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

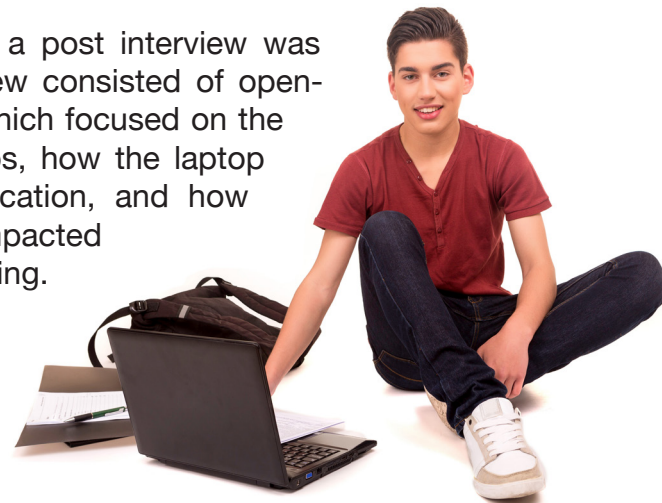
In Madera County it was found that out of the 400+ children that were in out of home placement (as of August 2014) only 5% of them had access to computers or laptops in their placement. For those with access, frequently there were restrictions and timeframes that surround their ability to use the technology. Those

youths who did not have access to computers had to go through several approval levels before they could stay after school, go to the public library, or to a friend's house to access a computer or laptop/mobile device.

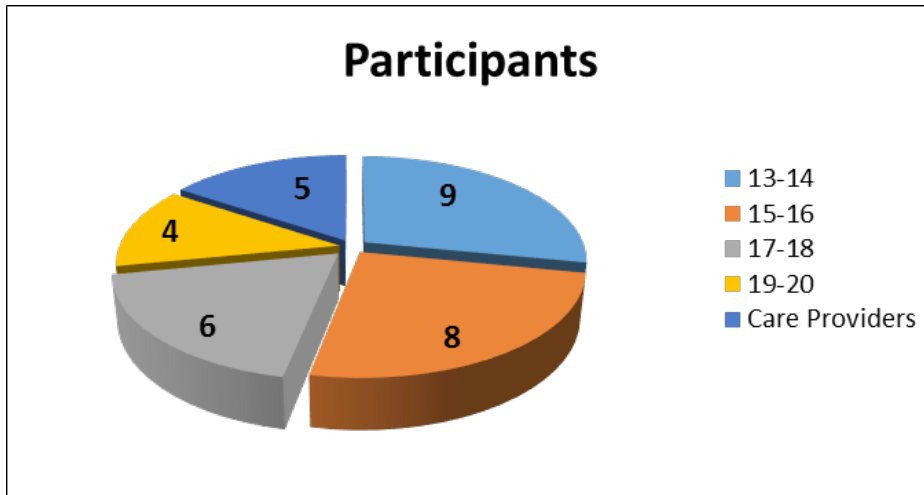
In January 2013, a collaboration between Madera Department of Social Services, Madera County Office of Education, California State University, Fresno Social Work Department, and iFoster provided laptops to a cohort of 60 out of home placement youth ages 13-20. In an effort to ensure that care providers were aware and in support of this project, it was presented at the Quality Parenting Initiative meetings. The information gathered from the care providers (concerns and question) as well as lessons learned from Fresno County were included as part the rules developed in order for the youth to obtain the laptop.

In June 2014, Madera County Department of Social Services acquired 60 laptops and 60 FreedomPop mobile Internet devices from iFoster, with distribution beginning in August 2014. At the distribution meeting foster youth, foster parents and assigned social workers were advised of the rules, instructed on how to set up their laptops, and signed agreements to ensure that computers were being used appropriately for school and work activities. Madera County Office of Education also provided computer training for students.

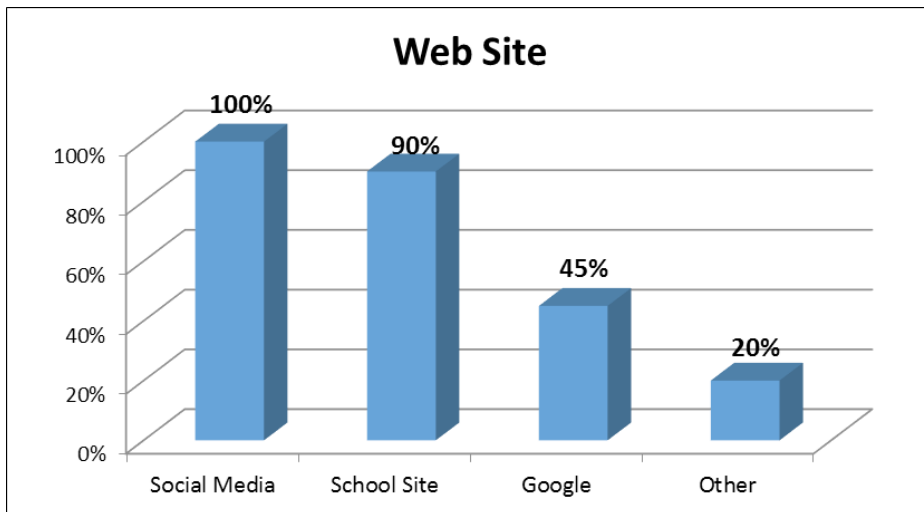
In January 2015, a post interview was issued. This interview consisted of open-ended questions, which focused on the usage of the laptops, how the laptop impacted their education, and how the laptops impacted their social well-being. Twenty-seven of the 60 youth, and 5 foster parents participated in the interviews.



**Figure 1: Participants**



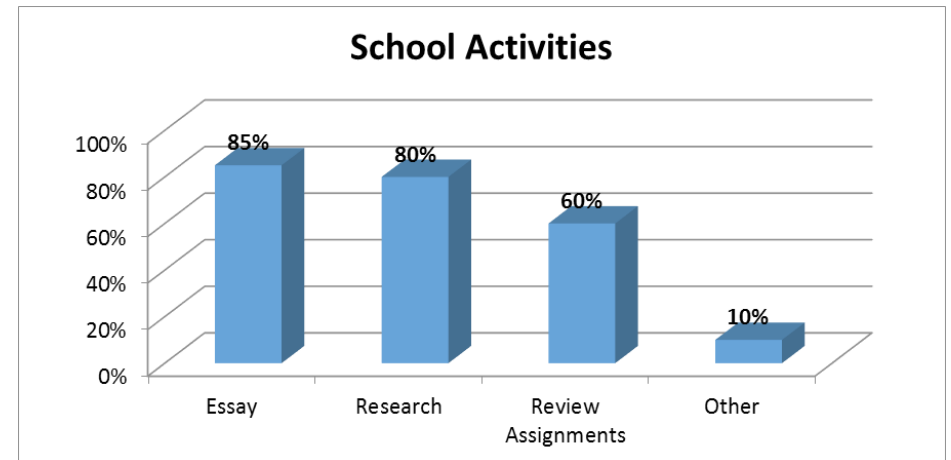
**Figure 2: Internet Use**



Every participant indicated they use their laptop daily to at least once a week. As it pertains to websites, 100% youth indicated they go on social media sites primarily Facebook. Ninety percent indicated using their laptop to go on their school site for

assignments, check grades or provide feedback to teacher. Forty-five percent of youth indicated they used Google to conduct searches, and 20% indicated using other websites such as YouTube, Yahoo, Web Advisor, Job Search, Tutoring, and Game Sites. All participants indicated they used all sites in combination from time to time; however, school was their primary focus when using their laptop based on their statements.

**Figure 3: Impact On Education**

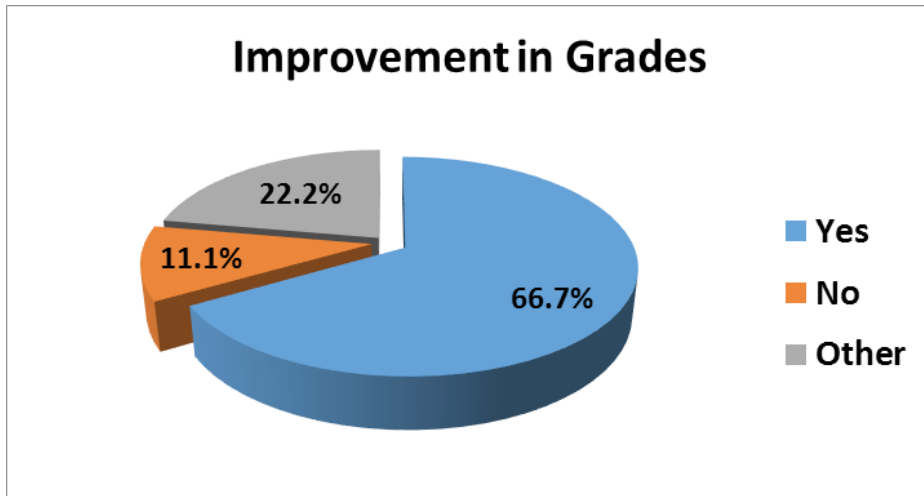


The majority of participants indicated their primary use was for typing essays and researching and reviewing assignments as it relates to school projects. Other usage included tutoring, definitions, and tracking of assignment and progress in class. All participants indicated having the laptop helped in the completion of school assignments. As part of the agreement with iFoster, youth had access to Power Reading which is an on-line tutorial service.

Three participants indicated their school district requires them to do on-line assignments and email teachers, and the laptop helped them get their work done. One participant indicated the foster parent provided a computer for the house; however, that computer is shared amongst 5 other people. Having a laptop

has reduced the amount of time spent searching and waiting to complete assignments.

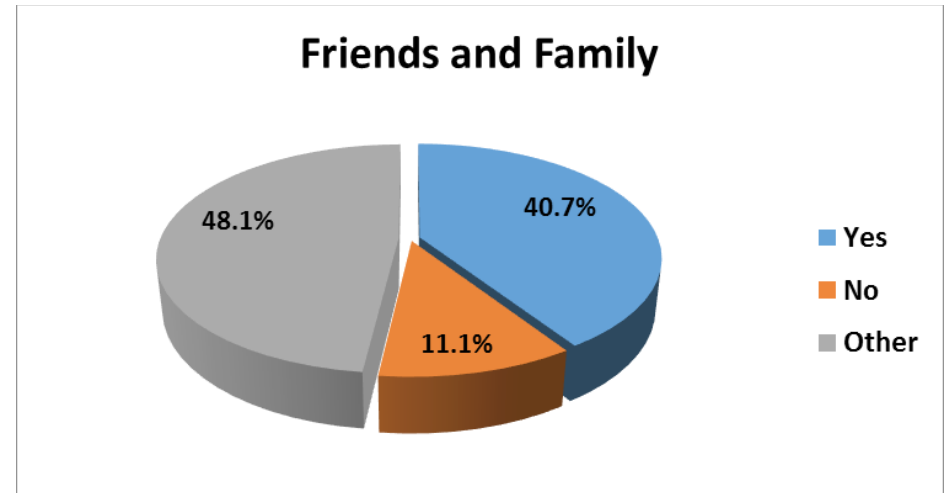
**Figure 4: Improvements In Grades**



The majority of the participants indicated the laptop was the reason they were doing well in school and 66% reported it helped to improve their grades. The participants that did not show improvement in grades indicated there were other factors (i.e. placement disruption, forgot assignment, etc.) that impacted their school work not related to the laptop.



**Figure 5: Social Well Being**



Almost 41% of the participants indicate they use their laptop to email friends and family. Eleven percent of participants indicate they did not use their laptop to contact friends or family due to lack of internet. Just over 48% of the participants indicated they used other mobile technology to stay connected with friends and family. Participants indicated they mostly used their cell phone to message, text, call, or go on Facebook to stay connected with their friends and family if they had the tool or used friends.

## FOSTER PARENT FEEDBACK

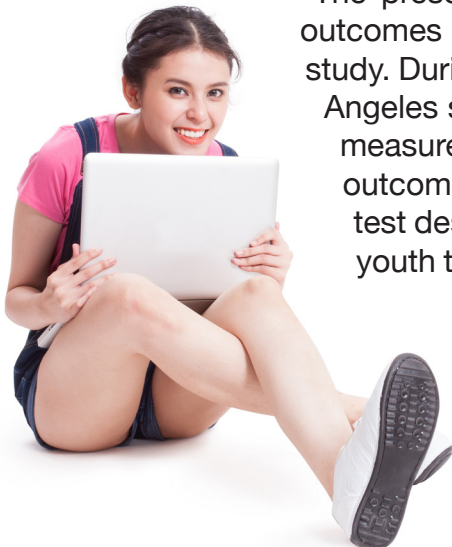
Four out of 5 participants believed a laptop helped the youth. These participants indicated having the laptop allowed the youth to complete their homework and/or research. One participant indicted the laptop became a problem, as they were not able to access the laptop due to viruses.

## DISCOVERY ISSUES

During the interview process youth participants reported that their laptops were slow, downloaded viruses, and had to be restored to factory settings. This indicates a need to instruct youth on the safe use of the Internet, as well as procedures for removing viruses and malware. Youth participants struggled to connect to the Internet and often had to rely on WI-Fi from the foster home or other sources to connect on-line. Youth also indicated the lack of having a printer and/or USB drive to save work was a barrier they had to overcome.

# Los Angeles County Phase I Evaluation Study Findings

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW



The present paper reports on the evaluation outcomes of Phase I of a 3-phase Los Angeles study. During the first phase of the 3 phase Los Angeles stud, 1) a series of empirically based measures related to health and wellness outcomes were identified; and 2) a pre/post-test design was used with a subset of foster youth that had received laptops through the program

This phase began in October, 2013. During this phase, a pre-experimental pre and post-test

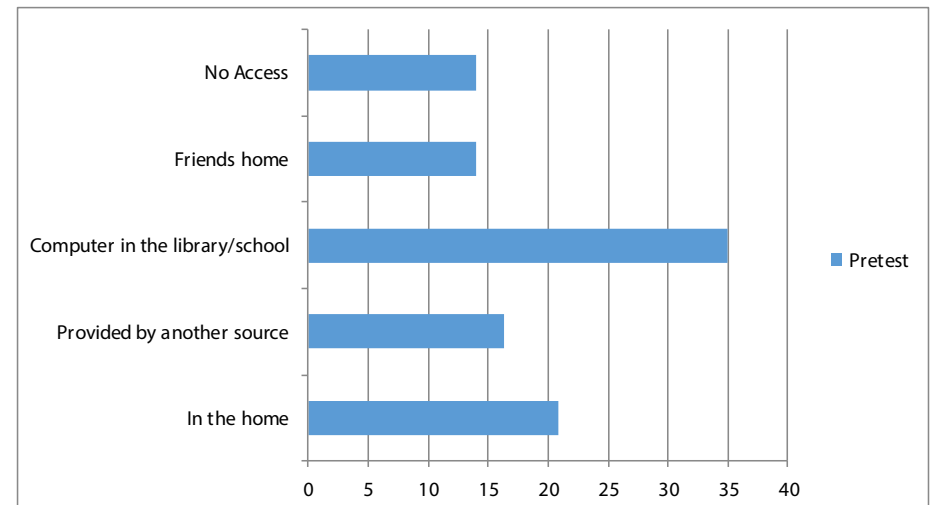
design was implemented with 1 group. In total, 51 youth were surveyed prior to receiving their laptops (baseline; Time 1) and at approximately 1 month later these youths were surveyed again (post-test; Time 2).

## PARTICIPANTS

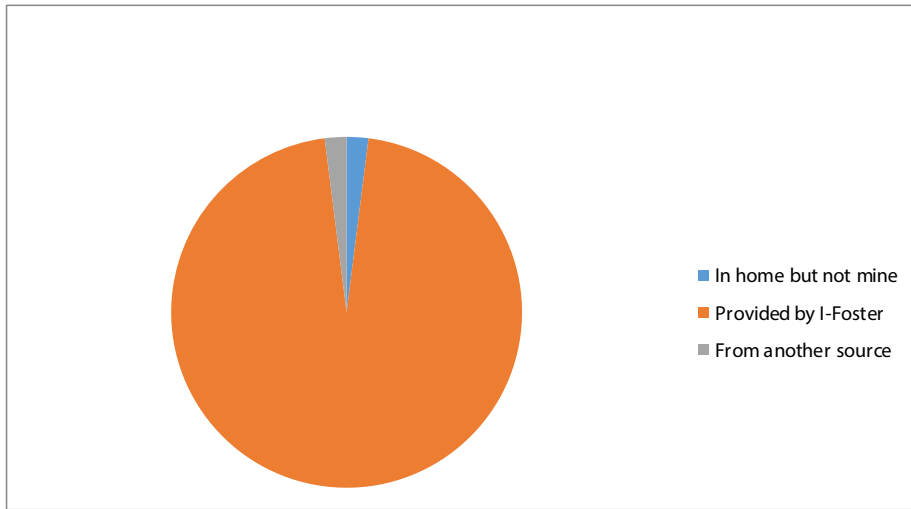
The average age was 18 years old, with slightly more participants being female (64%). Sixty percent of participants were Hispanic, followed by Black (24%), Multi-racial (8%), Asian (4%) and White (2%). Approximately half of the sample (51%) were in High School, with 22% in college. Most lived with foster parents (42.9%) or on their own (18%).

These figures report how participants assessed computers before and after the intervention. Most of the participants used public spaces (35%) or their Friends homes (14%), while at post-test nearly all (97%) used the computers provided by iFoster.

Figure 1: Pre-Test: How Computers Were Accessed



**Figure 2: Post-Test: How Computers Were Accessed**



**Figure 3: Frequency Of Internet Use**

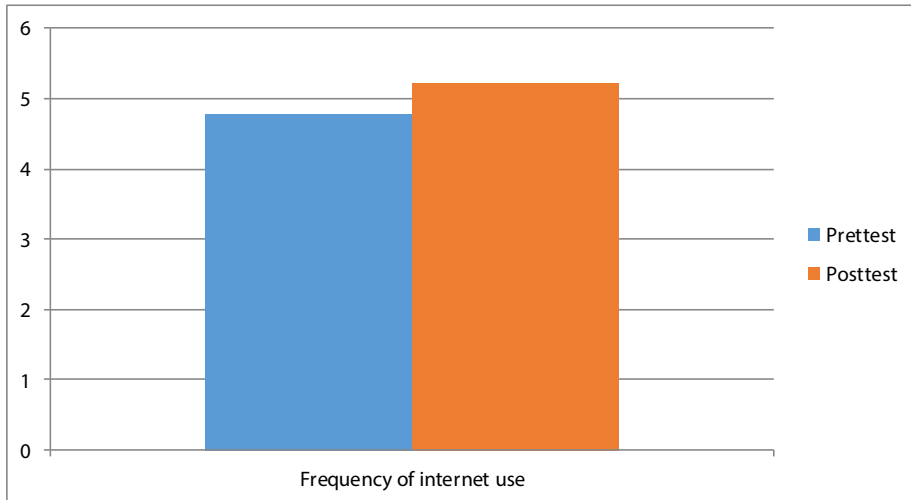


Table 1 below shows participants were more likely to have contact with their biological family members at post-test than prior, though their contact with foster family and other important adults appears to have decreased (though not statistically significant).

**Table 1: Relationship Quality Pre And Post-Test**

VARIABLE	PRE-TEST Mean (standard deviation) /N	POST-TEST Mean (standard deviation) /N
Biological mother	3.52 (1.35)/44	3.60 (1.32)/45
Biological father	2.62 (1.57)/34	2.66 (1.38)/32
Biological siblings	4.08 (1.02)/48	4.18 (0.82)/50
Foster or adoptive mother	3.80 (1.36)/35	3.81 (1.36)/36
Foster or adoptive extended family	3.71 (1.32)/31	3.75 (1.27)/32
Social worker	3.73 (1.16)/44	3.67 (1.26)/43

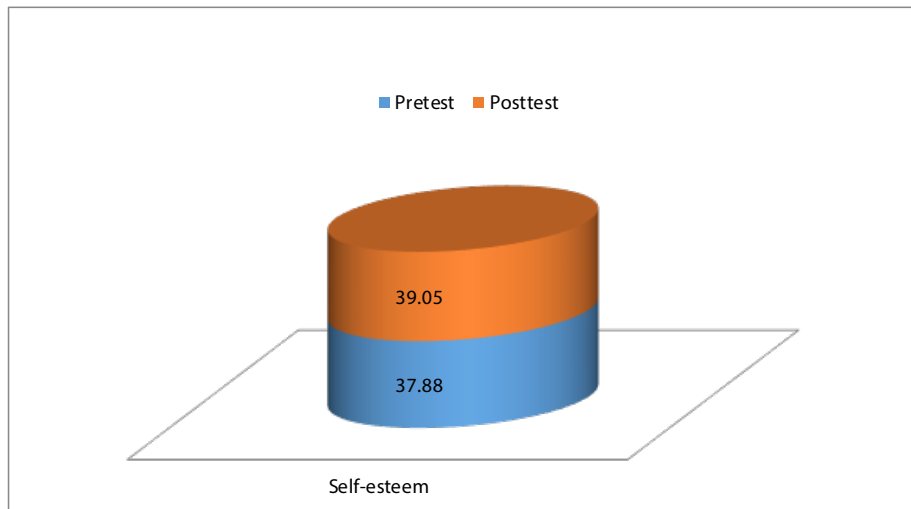
Note: Scale is 1=very poor, 2= poor, 3= okay, 4= good, and 5= very good

**Table 2: Future Beliefs**

VARIABLE	PRE-TEST (A= .82) Mean (standard deviation)	POST-TEST (A=.88) Mean (standard deviation)	P-Value
Freedom in my life	3.65 (.955)	3.73 (1.10)	.455
I fit in	4.00 (.715)	4.04 (.713)	.728
I will be wealth someday	4.27 (.836)	4.31 (.940)	.761

Scale is 1-5; 1= strongly disagree, 2=agree, 3= neutral, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree

**Figure 4: Youth Self-Esteem Pre-Test / Post-Test**



Participants showed a number of changes in their quality of life experiences, however only 2 were significant (Planning for college, planning to get a job).

**Table 3: How Accurate Are The Following Statements:**

VARIABLE	PRE-TEST Mean (standard deviation) /N	POST-TEST Mean (standard deviation) /N
I have participated in activities I enjoy	4.04 (1.05)	4.22 (1.19)
I have participated in sports	2.90 (1.64)	3.04 (1.65)
I have started planning for college	3.45 (1.92)	4.08 (1.49)
I have started planning to get a job	3.06 (1.76)	3.73 (1.56)
I feel ready to attend college	3.37 (1.80)	3.71 (1.61)
I feel ready to get a job	3.24 (1.67)	3.74 (1.46)
My current work situation is stable	2.27 (2.04)	2.41 (1.87)

Scale is 1-5; 1= strongly disagree, 2=agree, 3= neutral, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree

As shown in Table 4, participants were significantly more likely to use their computer for entertainment and social networking at post-test.

**Table 4: In The Past Month, I Have Used The Computer For:**

VARIABLE	PRE-TEST Mean (standard deviation) /N	POST-TEST Mean (standard deviation) /N
School and homework	4.30 (1.11)	4.38 (.805)
Connecting with friends	3.70 (1.19)	4.00 (.926)
Connecting with family	3.80 (1.16)	4.02 (1.01)
Searching for a job	3.66 (1.34)	3.70 (1.19)
Job assistance	3.59 (1.29)	3.67 (1.17)
Connecting with caseworker	3.04 (1.31)	3.16 (1.18)
Communicating with teachers	3.64 (1.25)	3.96 (.925)
Communicating with employers	3.02 (1.36)	3.22 (1.19)
Entertainment	3.64 (1.10)	4.06 (.935)
Social networking	3.62 (1.08)	3.94 (1.03)
Learning about services	4.04 (1.06)	4.18 (.727)
Connecting with my lawyer	2.98 (1.23)	3.12 (1.27)

Responses include 1= strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3= neither agree or disagree, 4= agree, and 5= strongly agree



# Los Angeles County Phase II Evaluation Study Findings

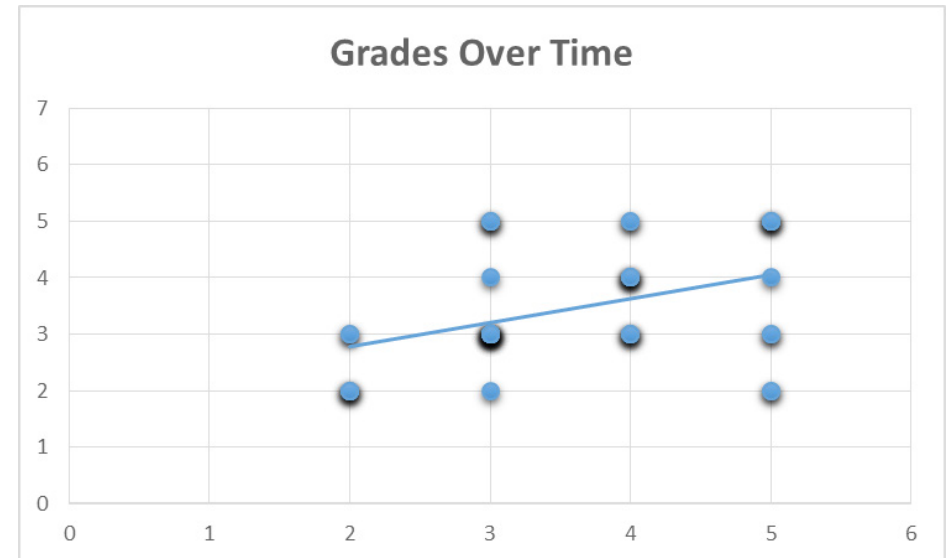
Phase II results include a 3rd time point with those youths engaged in Phase I.

## GENERAL TRENDS IN LIFE DOMAINS

### GRADES IN SCHOOL

Grades in school were related to each other over time within individuals. For instance, the grades participants reported at time 1 related to grades at time 2 ( $r(41) = .41, p < .01$ ) and grades at time 2 related to grades at time 3 ( $r(39) = .32, p < .05$ ).

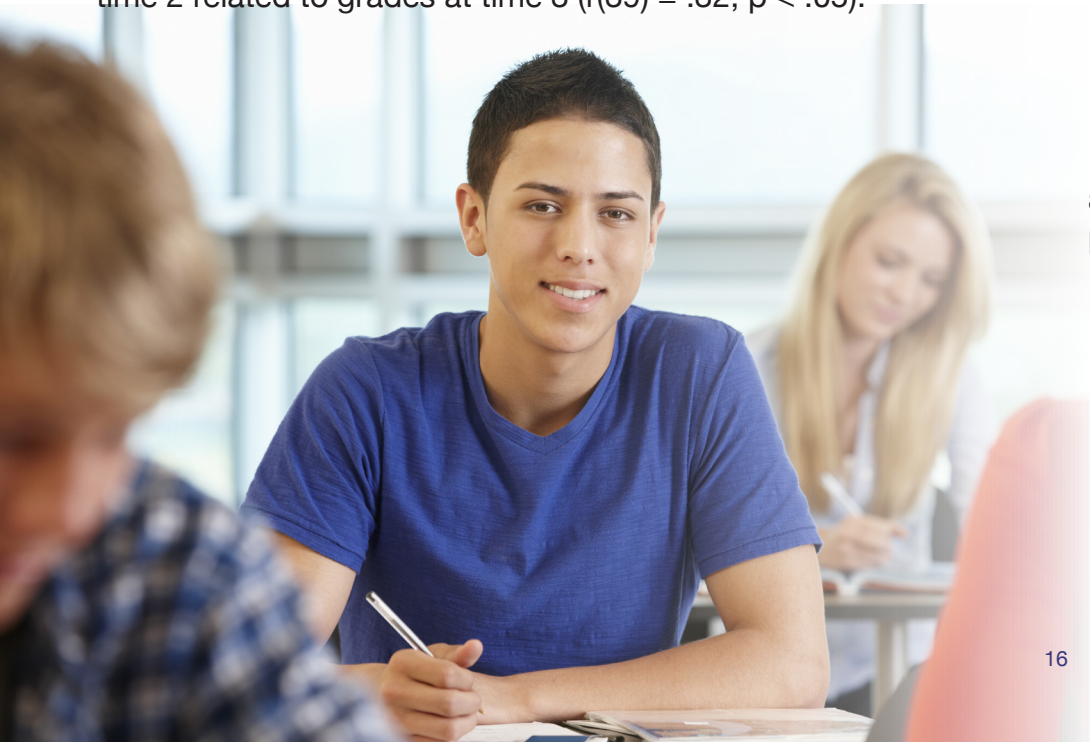
Figure 1: Grades Over Time



Youth reporting a program laptop at time 2 reported better grades in school than youth who had computer access from another source ( $t(48) = -2.40, p < .05$ ).

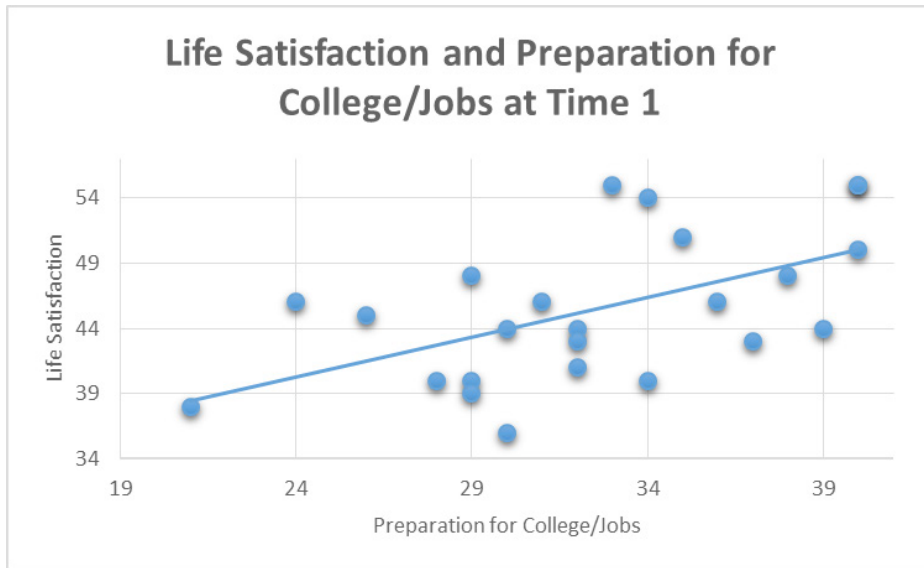
### PREPARATION FOR COLLEGE/JOBS

Preparation for jobs/college was related to life satisfaction at several waves. For instance at time 1, life satisfaction was positively related to college/job preparation ( $r(24) = .56, p < .01$ ).



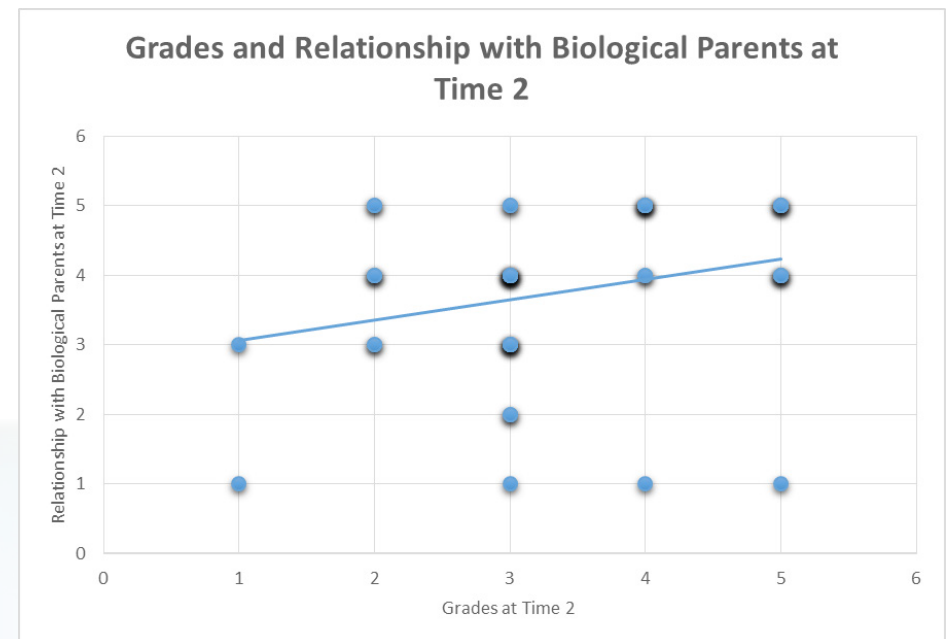


**Figure 2: Life Satisfaction And Preparation For College/Jobs At Time 1**



**PARENT-CHILD RELATIONS (AS REPORTED BY CHILD)**

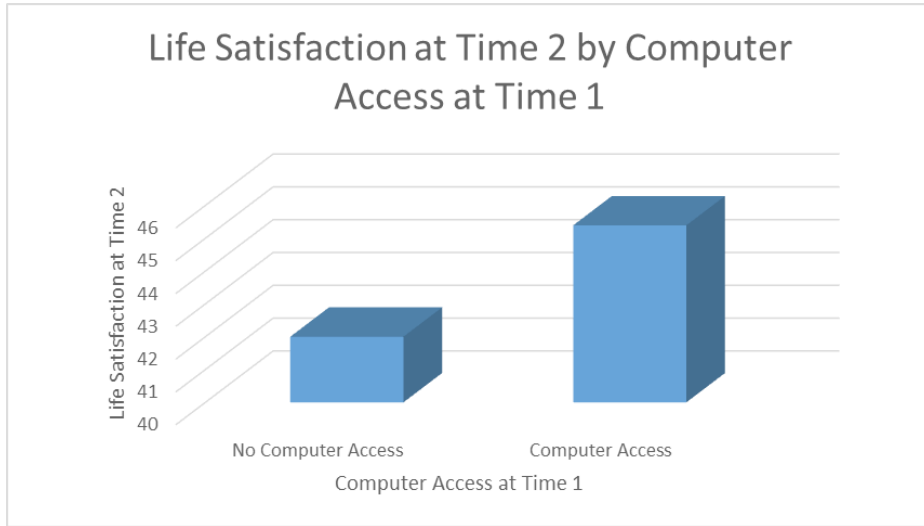
**Figure 3: Grades And Relationship With Biological Parents At Time 2**



**LIFE SATISFACTION**

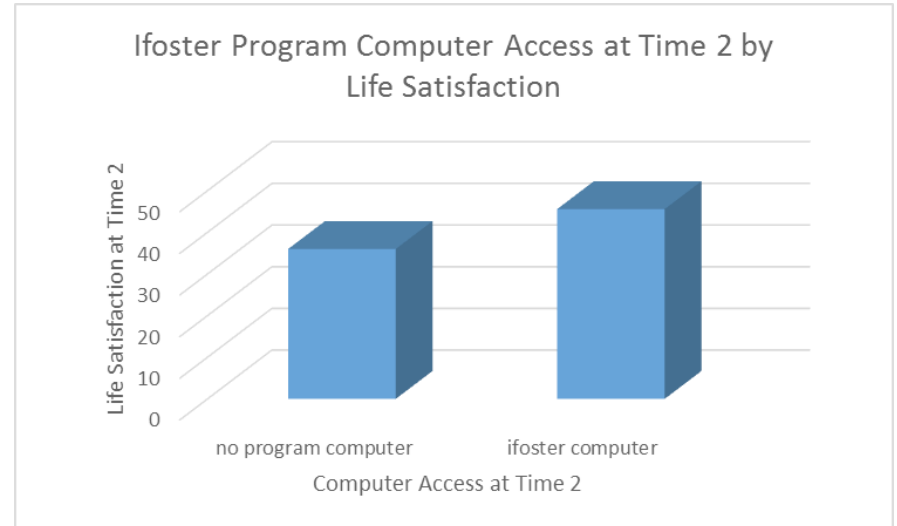
Individuals who had computer access at time 1 (compared to those who did not) differed on a) life satisfaction at time 2 ( $t(34.68) = -2.57, p < .05$ ).

**Figure 4: Life Satisfaction At Time 2 By Computer Access At Time 1**



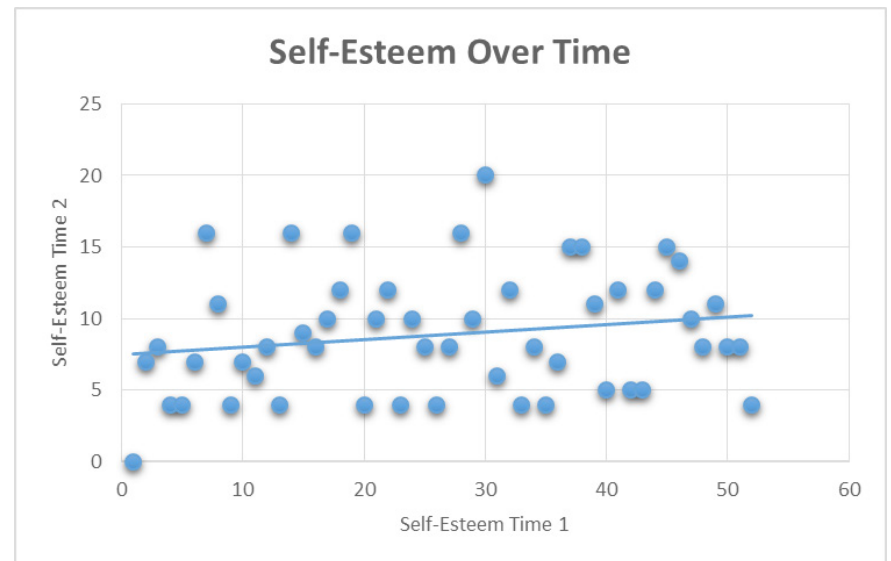
Life satisfaction differed at time 2 such that people who reported a program laptop reported significantly higher life satisfaction than those who did not report having a laptop from the program yet ( $t(44) = -2.20, p < .05$ ).

**Figure 5: iFoster Program Computer Access At Time 2 By Life Satisfaction**



## SELF-ESTEEM

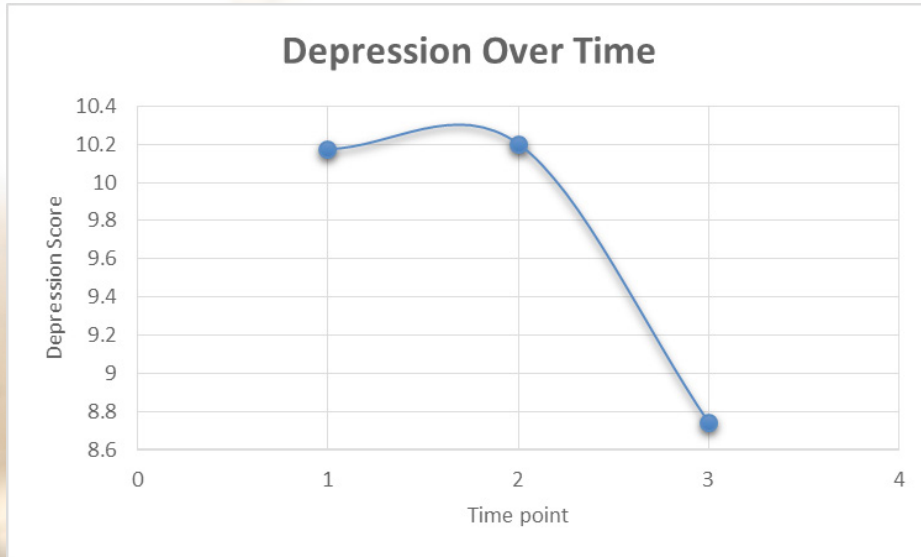
**Figure 6: Self-Esteem Over Time**



All the major study variables differed over the 3 time points, using hierarchical modeling (latent growth curves).

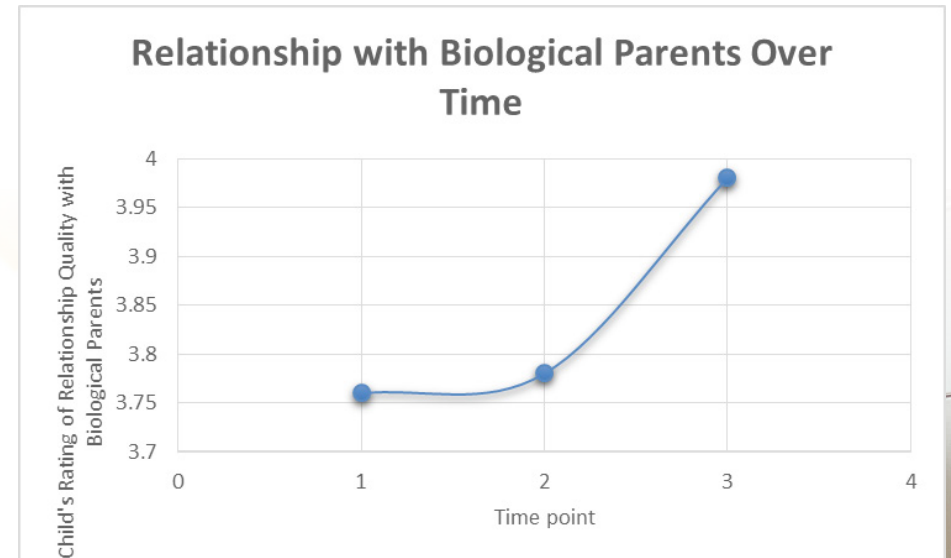
Depression ( $t(44) = 9.62, p < .001$ ; indicating depression went down over time).

**Figure 7: Depression Over Time**



Quality of Relationship with Biological Parent ( $t(42) = -2.50, p < .05$ ; indicating relationship quality went up over time).

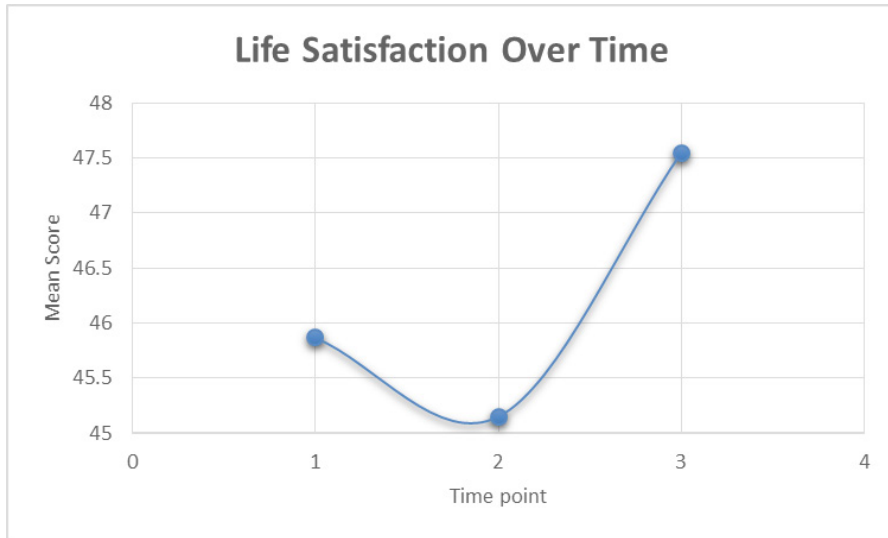
**Figure 8: Relationship With Biological Parents Over Time**



Life satisfaction ( $t(41) = -5.11, p < .001$ ; indicating life satisfaction went up over time).

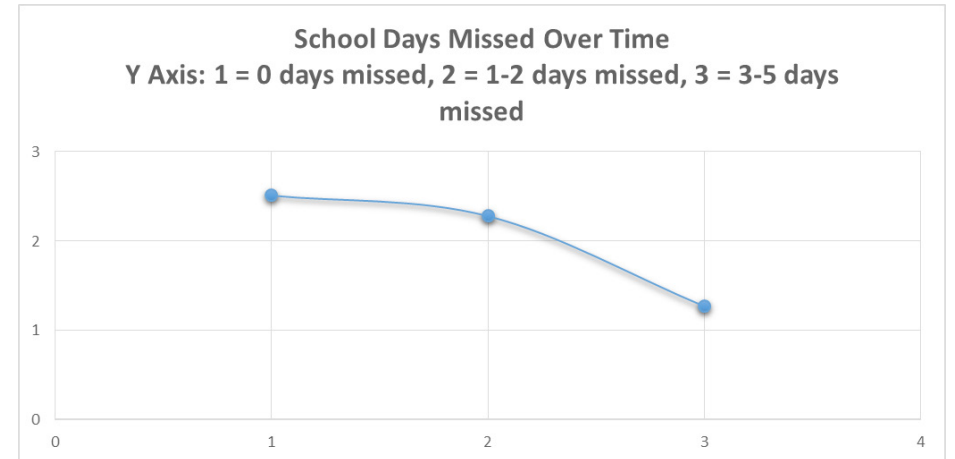


**Figure 9: Life Satisfaction Over Time**



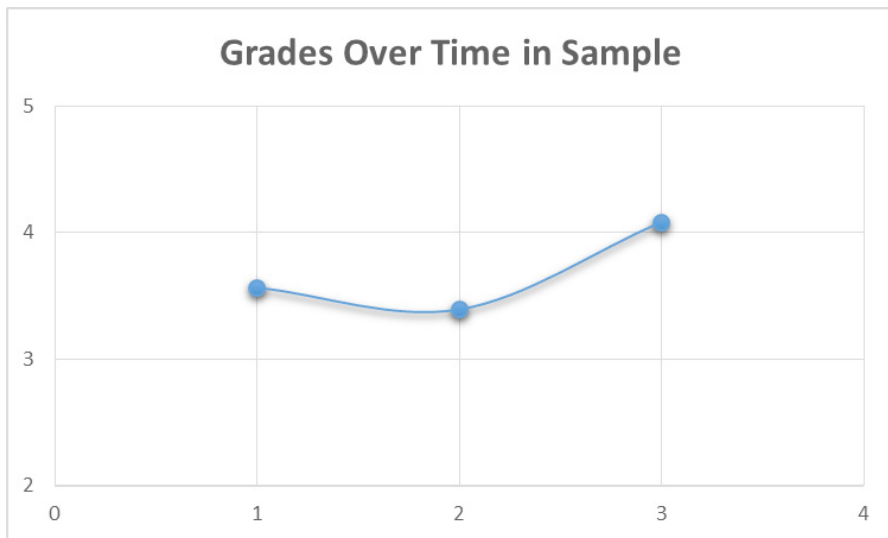
## SCHOOL-WORK DAYS MISSED OVER TIME

**Figure 11: School Days Missed Over Time**

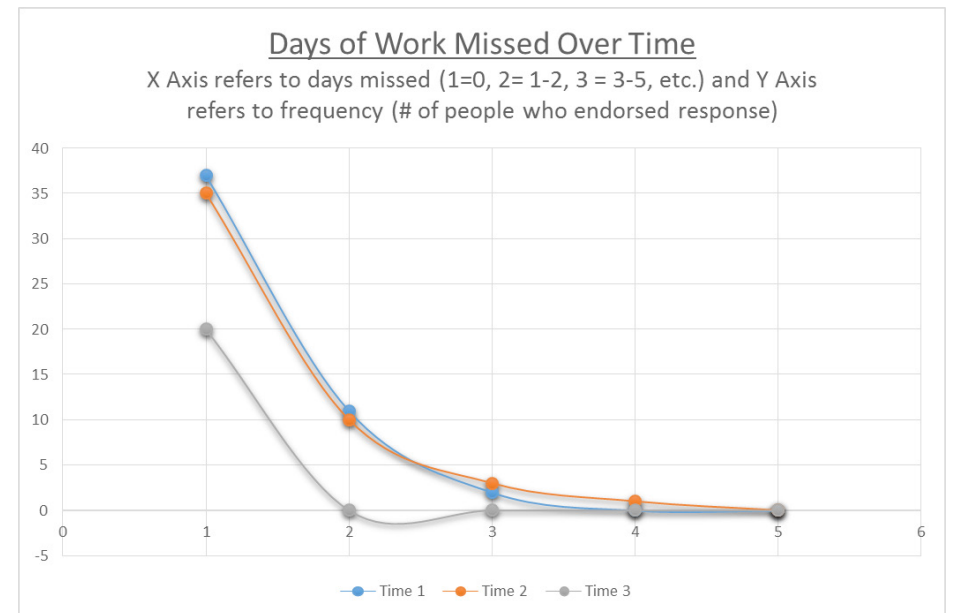


## GRADES OVER TIME

**Figure 10: Grades By Time**



**Figure 12: Days Of Work Missed Over Time**



# Los Angeles County Phase III Evaluation Study Findings

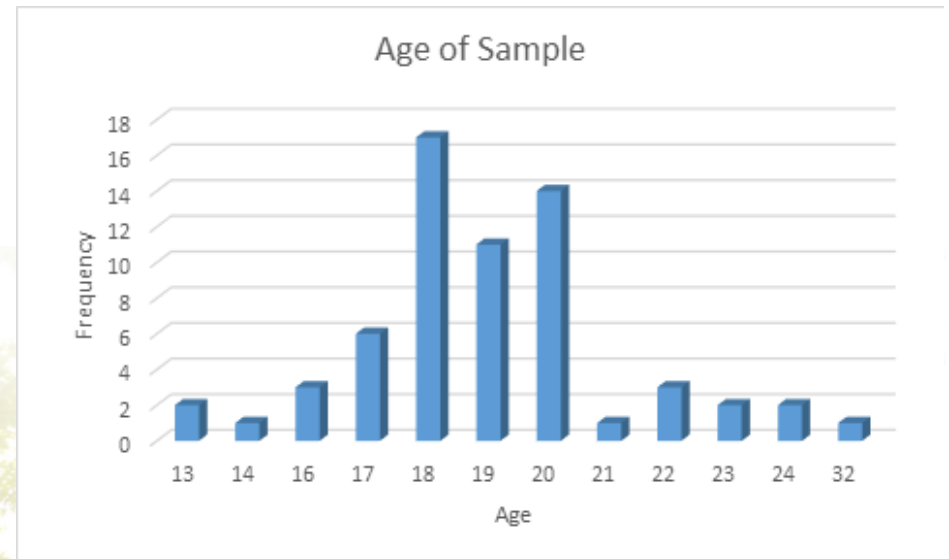
## OVERVIEW

Phase III of the Los Angeles project followed 63 participants at Pre- and Post-test. As youth applications were received, program staff asked if they wanted to participate in a survey opportunity. The eligibility criteria to receive a laptop were: identifying as college-bound, in college, or graduated high school, and; working, seeking work, in vocational training. The majority of participants were 17 years of age or older.

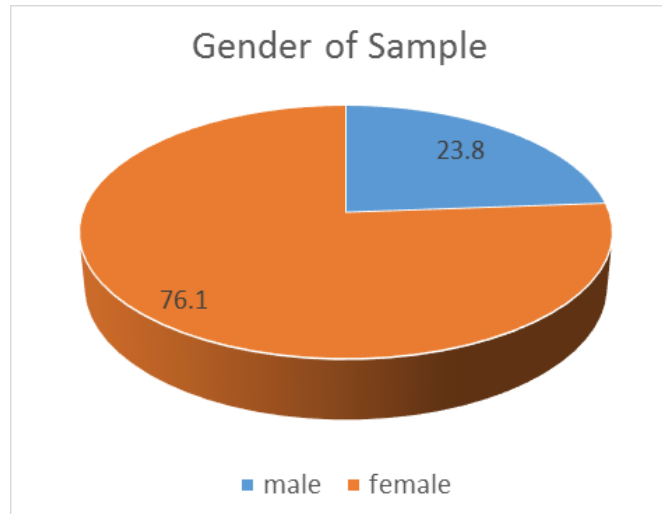
## PARTICIPANTS

The 63 participating individuals consisted of 15 males and 48 females.

Figure 1: Age Of Sample

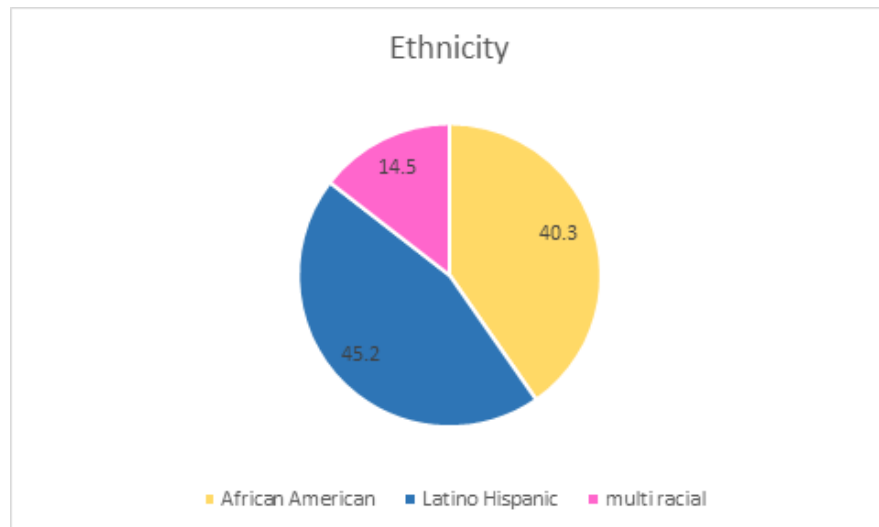


**Figure 2: Gender Of Sample**



The sample was ethnically diverse; adolescents' and emerging adults' self-identification of ethnicity was 45.2% Latino/Hispanic, 40.3% African-American, and 14.5% multi-ethnic.

**Figure 3: Ethnicity**



## STUDY MEASURES

Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression (Radloff, 1977) – This measure of 20 items asked participants about symptoms relating to depression. Reliability at wave 1 was good ( $\alpha = .93$ ).

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) – This scale asked about positive self-worth. There were 10 items used to make up this questionnaire. The reliability of this measure was .89.

Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003) – This scale assessed participants subjective self-report of flexibility and resilience to change through 10 items. The reliability of this measure was .91.

General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) – This scale measures participants' ability to believe in themselves through 10 questions. The measure demonstrated strong internal reliability ( $\alpha = .94$ ).

Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (Cohen & Hoberman, 1983; Cohen et al., 1985) – This questionnaire assesses personal coping strategies and types of support received through 40 questions. This scale achieved a reliability of .93.

## ANALYTIC PLAN

All analyses were conducted in SPSS 19. The data was reviewed to see how many participants had completed study measures across 3 time points. Because only 7 individuals completed the measure over 3 time points, researchers elected to use t-tests to indicate pre versus post-test score changes in the data.

T-tests (paired and independent samples) were run on the data to examine questions such as “do students at this time point one vary from students at time two on ‘x’ domain?” Pearson’s correlations were used to investigate questions such as “what is

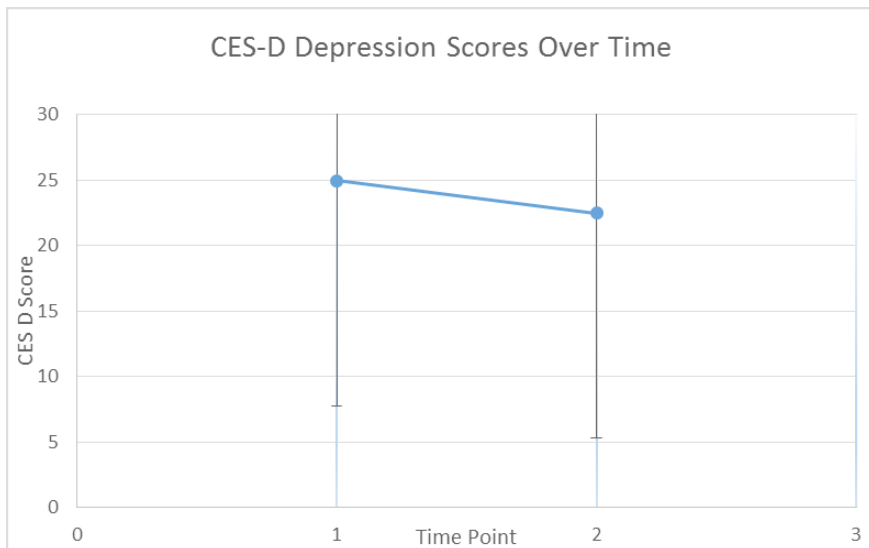
the relationship between one variable and another variable at time one?”

All missing data (system missing or participant skipped) was treated as missing for the present analyses. Because only 7 individuals have data at time 3, analyses over time (longitudinal analyses) could not be run for this dataset. Thus, this report focuses on time points 1 and 2. Two respondents were removed from the dataset for answering inconsistently to demographic questions across the time points. If degrees of freedom for quantitative analyses dropped below 10, results were not reported.

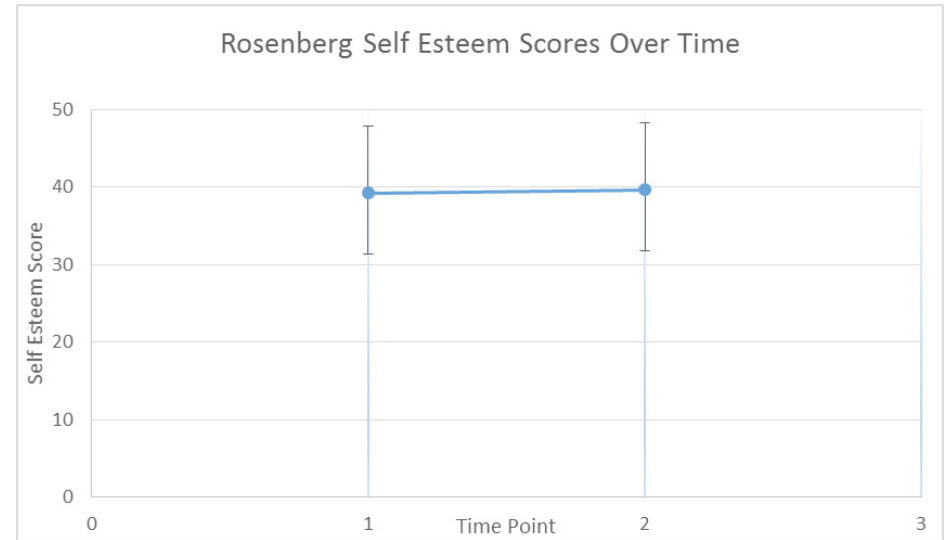
## RESULTS

Paired samples t-tests were conducted on 7 key study outcomes to look at changes between time 1 and 2. These measures included: length of time in current living situation; grades; depression score; self-esteem score; self-efficacy score; resilience score; and interpersonal support score.

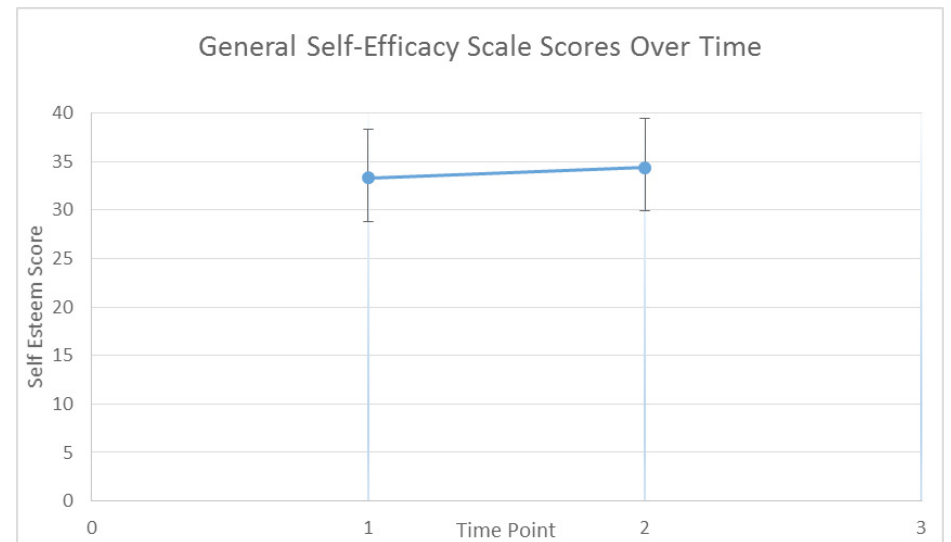
**Figure 4: CES-D Depression Scores Over Time**



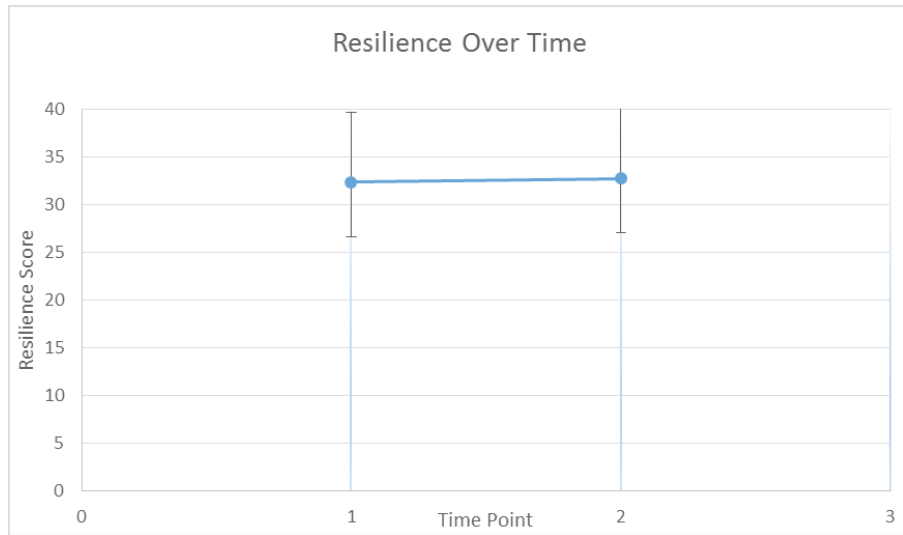
**Figure 5: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scores Over Time**



**Figure 6: General Self-Efficacy Scale Over Time**

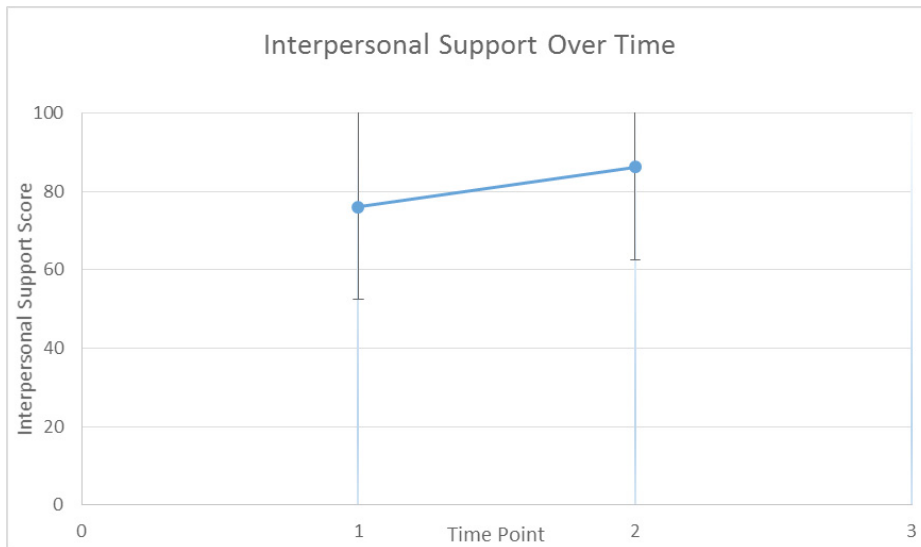


**Figure 7: Resilience Over Time**



## DEPRESSION

**Figure 8: Interpersonal Support Over Time**



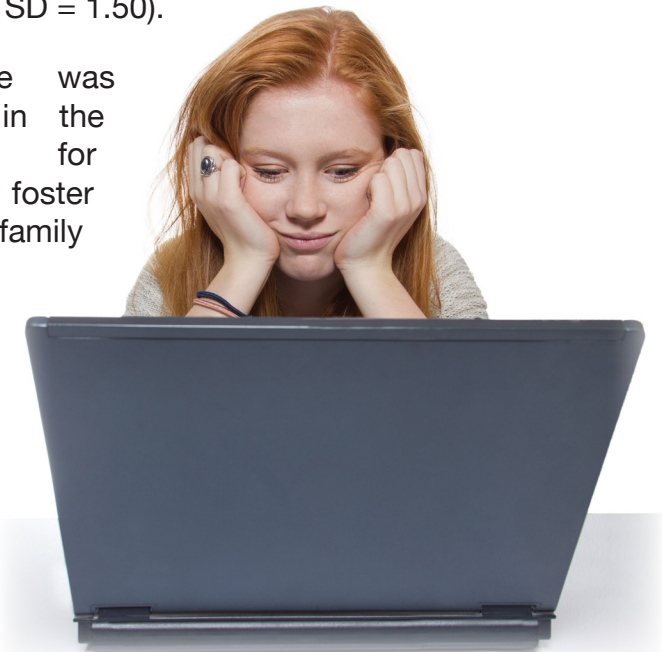
There was a trend towards higher relationship scores for participants and their social or case worker over time (time 1,  $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ , time 2,  $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = 1.46$ ).

There was a trend towards increases in the relationship score from participants towards their lawyer or legal representative over time (time 1,  $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ , time 2,  $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = 1.46$ ).

There was a trend towards an increase in ratings in the relationship score for participants and their teachers or professors between time 1 ( $M = 4.70$ ,  $SD = .48$ ) and time 2 ( $M = 4.80$ ,  $SD = .42$ ).

There was a positive trend towards an increase in scores in the relationship score for participants and their foster or adoptive mother between time 1 ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ) and time 2 ( $M = 4.29$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ). A similar trend was found in the stated relationship scores for participants towards their foster/adoptive father between time 1 ( $M = 3.80$ ,  $SD = 1.64$ ) and time 2 ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $SD = 1.30$ ), biological father between time 1 ( $M = 2.11$ ,  $SD = 1.69$ ) and time 2 ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ), and foster siblings (time 1,  $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 2.00$ , and time 2,  $M = 4.25$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ ).

Additionally, there was an upward trend in the relationship score for participants and their foster or adoptive extended family between time 1 ( $M = 3.86$ ,  $SD = 1.68$ ) and time 2 ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ).





# In Their Own Words Qualitative Findings from 1 Laptop Program

The following 3 major themes were seen in the youth comments: academic performance, social connectiveness, and life satisfaction. The following quotes are examples of each of those themes:

## ACADEMIC

- I would like to thank you for the computer. I really appreciate it. I am very blessed to have received one. I will use it to my best ability; it has helped me with my school work and will help me in the future when I go to college. I know that the computer was not promised, but I am much honored to be chosen to receive one.

- Prior to receiving her refurbished laptop from iFoster, one young lady and her CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) worker spent time at the local library on a weekly basis completing her research and homework on one of the library computers. Library policy only allowed her use a library computer for one hour each session. She is now happily completing her homework without the weekly trips to the library and is very appreciative of having her own laptop.
- One young man was receiving C's in his civics class because he had no access to a computer or the Internet to do the necessary research for his papers. When he received his laptop, he was able to not only complete his research, but his essay on the CA government was so well done, that his teacher submitted it to a statewide competition. He won the statewide essay competition and received a scholarship. He called the staff at iFoster to let everyone know how thankful he was and that "he was going nowhere, but now he has a scholarship and he wants to go to college."
- One young man was placed with his grandfather in one of the more remote areas of the county. The grandfather did not have a computer in his home, nor could he afford to purchase one for his grandson to use to complete his high school homework regardless of how much he wanted his grandson to excel in his schooling. Trips into Auburn to utilize the library computers were very limited. Receiving the refurbished laptop opened up a world of research and social media to the youth and allowed him the opportunity to focus more on his school work. Both were very appreciative and the grandfather stated he never would have been able to personally provide his grandson with a laptop. His gratitude was apparent in the crackle of his voice when he said "Thank you so very much for what you are doing for us."



- I would like to notify you that I have recently received my new Dell® laptop, I am happy to announce that I am very excited to be composing homework assignments as well as performing research through this new laptop. I would like to say thank you for making my educational life easier to manage due to the fact that I will not have to make anymore long trips to Starbucks® or possibly to McDonald's® for simply using the wi-fi. You have made this Christmas very memorable for me and I thank you for this joy as well as pleasant experience with regards to receiving my new laptop.
- This laptop will be the greatest gift i could ever get and i will use it for School Family and Work but the most important reason is for School and to get my work completed ! Once again, thank you for this help.
- I'm a senior in HS right now and will be graduating in couple weeks from today! I am very proud that I can achieve my goal because I honestly thought I would never be able to get my diploma but I pushed myself to do my work and look now, I'm almost done and excited to head to college this year! I already signed up myself for college for the summer/spring semester 2014 as a freshman and got a response back from them saying that I got accepted into the school and have orientation in June coming up! I will be studying Business trying my hardest to earn a major. I'm glad I never gave up on school and I wish I had my parents here to see me graduate and start college.
- This laptop will be the greatest gift I could ever get and I will use it for School Family and Work but the most important reason is for School and to get my work completed! Once again, thank you for this help.
- The laptop has help me so much to research school and fill put application for employment. As well as I'm ready to do my FASFA, and I don't have to stress on finding a computer now that I have my own.
- (Having a laptop) it has improved my reading and writing and I think it's important for other kids in the system to have the same opportunity that I was able to have through this program.
- Yes, for school work, my foster parents have their own but I wasn't able to use it because they use it a lot.
- Instead of being able to finish an assignments in a day, it would take me days to complete it because i would have to use the computers at school, and I wouldn't have enough time to finish them.



- I had to go to the library a lot and there were times that I couldn't go or it wasn't open. Sometimes there was a long line to access the computers at the library when I needed to use them.
- (Having a laptop makes me feel) Less stressed about completing assignments.

## SOCIAL CONNECTIVENESS

- Receiving a laptop has helped me in school, applying for jobs, connecting with relatives, socializing, staying abreast on current news and politics and allowing me to sharpen my skills in areas like Microsoft word®, Powerpoint® and Excel®.
- Some foster youth don't have access to use computers. With a computer on them they can do research, homework and resumes. They can also communicate with family and friends.



- Yes! I'm so excited to have a computer for my first time and it will REALLY help me out in so many ways! Ever since I was put in foster care, I always wanted a computer to reach out to my family and friends I had lost contact with in my past years since I been moved from home to home and barely got the chance to communicate with them. My 3 siblings are almost 21 years of age and will be thrown out the system no longer living with me therefore I will be by myself. Recently when I had court couple weeks ago , my lawyer introduced me to a AB12 peer advocate and she had told me about iFoster which no one has ever told me about and I couldn't believe the support they offer to us foster youth. Immediately I applied once I got the chance to go to the library in order for some support.
- (Having a laptop) Makes me feel motivated It makes me feel like I am more independent I don't have to ask other people to use theirs. I can also interact with people about stuff. It makes me feel like I can do anything now that I have a computer.
- I feel more connected to other people too. More prepared, like other youth and way less stressed.
- It makes everyday life easier because i know I can go home and do whatever assignment I get, less stressed, more prepared for school, able to complete assignments without waiting to use the other computer in the house.
- After receiving my laptop I was able to do all my projects at home and keep in touch with my old friends. I was able to ask for letters of recommendation and would not have been able to apply to colleges without my laptop.
- It has helped me because before when I didn't have a laptop I didn't have any one to talk to or share my feelings with. I got the laptop my whole life changed. I am able to contact family and friends, acquaintance, I am to talk to them and let them know. It helps with school and look up

answers to my homework. This is me having my first my own computer and I haven't had one before. I also let my family use the computer and I am really thankful that you guys sent it to me.

- I used my laptop to enroll into college and to keep myself updated with everything I had to do in order to begin college without a problem. I've also been using it to look up information for homework and to email my professors. It has been very helpful.
- It has become very handy in school work, and with locating jobs. It has also helped me improve my social life with friends and reconnecting with others.
- It is very helpful especially for high school students when everything you need to do is on computer's also it opens communication with family and friends so you don't feel so alone and distant sometimes, you are in touch with those you want to contact. The laptop makes me feel more successful as it is my own laptop and I don't need to ask "Mom" or go to the library to use one, I feel grateful I can just open up my own to use when I need to. Love my music on it also while I do homework!!
- I think a laptop will be useful for other teens in foster care because not everybody has a chance to have a laptop and we are given one. We own it was given to us. You can use it for lots of things like searching how to cook and research. It will help a lot it has helped me.
- To help them look for a job, help with school and homework. It will also help anyone who wants to find their families.
- I think will be helpful to other youth just in case the person in care doesn't have a phone or computer they will be able to contact their friends and family. It would be really great to give them a computer like me so they are able to talk to their family and friends and will help with school and work. The computer may cause a miracle in their life because of

this. It might even help them with getting back with their family to make things better and they can work it all out and it will be better for them.

- It will help them with homework and class work assignments. It will also keep them occupied so they won't get in trouble.

## LIFE SATISFACTION

- It makes everyday life easier because I know I can go home and do whatever assignment I get, less stressed, more prepared for school, able to complete assignments without waiting to use the other computer in the house.
- (Having a laptop makes me feel) Good, more prepared, like other youth less stressed more connect and Independent.
- It makes me feel independent and prepared because I now how something that I can do my stuff on.



- More mature, makes me feel more prepared for life.
- It makes me feel more prepared and is useful for me. Makes me feel more independent because I don't have to rely on others.
- Like I am rich.
- The laptop I received has helped me with researching a lot of things. Whenever I need help I can Google it and will find the answer. I like to watch movies about learning how to interview. It helps with work and school. It has helped me with a lot.
- The laptop has helped me connect with my professors. It has also helped me complete my on-line homework for school. It has made it easier searching for jobs. It has made life in general easier.
- I have used my laptop to Google information about my daughter, price match, job resources, and other General info. I have also used it to write papers, make resume, store pictures, download music and go on social media sites.
- Its helped me a lot with homework, looking for jobs, or career i want, It has helped with looking for college and schools for my son. Places to go to take my son out or if I want to go eat somewhere.
- There are many manners in which my new Dell laptop that was provided to me by iFoster has tremendously assisted me in achieving daily educational tasks such as accomplishing essay assignments, applying for a variety of scholarships, browsing for new educational opportunities,



searching for jobs related to my career of interest, or simply reading web articles in relation to recent occurring events. The laptop that was provided to me has also permitted me to chat with distant and local family relatives for longer amount of time which is something that I am truly thankful.

- The laptop has been of great service to me because it helps me do my homework or it also helps me to keep me up beat and cheerful. It helps me to be stable and to do the things that I want to and need to do to accomplish life.
- (A laptop would be helpful for other youth because) It will allow foster youth to have something many of us are not fortunate to have. It also will give us a reason to still believe and keep moving forward within school with furthering our education as well as finding a job.
- Foster youths are usually controlled by their foster parents and social workers on everything they can and cannot do so having their own laptop extends their freedom just a little. It also helps with trying to get a job and helps in school.
- It will be helpful for other students to get a laptop. It's really needed. It stress free, no stressing on over-thinking on how you're going to get a computer.
- (Having a laptop) Makes me happy and excited
- Gives me more freedom

- Makes me feel older
- Glad to have something that is mine
- More prepared for life
- Like other youth

- I feel more empowered, I am able to do what I need to do and want to do because I own a laptop.
- Definitely more prepared I can access what I need to with having a laptop right in front of me.
- More independent

