

Child Welfare Service Performance Indicators – Peel Children’s Aid

Well-Being Outcome - The Quality of the Caregiver and Youth Relationship

DEFINITION

The average score for children in care (aged 10-17) from a standard scale that measures a young person’s perception of the quality of the relationship with their primary caregiver. This eight-point scale measures the child/youth in care’s response to the following four questions:

- *How well do you feel your caregiver understands you?*
- *How much fairness do you receive from your caregiver?*
- *How much affection do you receive from them?*
- *Overall, how would you describe your relationship with them?*

Each of these four items is rated from 0 to 2, yielding a composite score with a minimum of 0, and a maximum of 8.

WHY IS THIS MEASURE IMPORTANT?

The quality of the caregiver-youth relationship is at the heart of service to children in care. Research demonstrates that a young person’s perception of the quality of their relationship with their caregiver predicts the following: current happiness; self-esteem; positive behaviour; and placement satisfaction and stability. As scores increase on the quality of the caregiver relationship scale, so do positive outcomes across each of these areas (e.g. higher self-esteem).

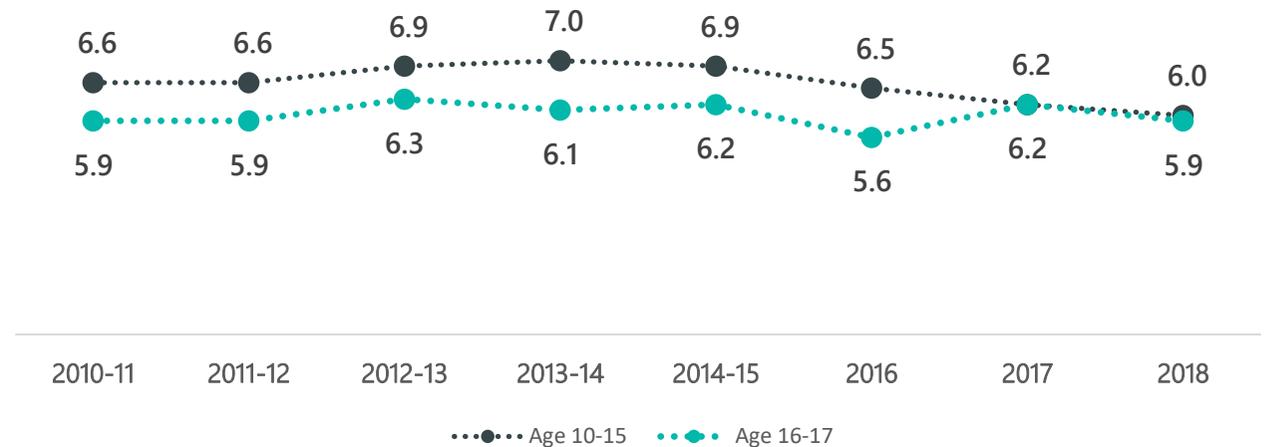
LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA

These data form part of the Ontario Looking After Children assessment, which is completed annually for all children who have been in the care of a Children’s Aid Society for at least one year. A very small number of children who should have completed this assessment are not assessed within the required timeframes. Therefore, their data are not included in these results. Child protection workers ask children to provide responses verbally with the caregiver present and the child’s responses may be influenced by this approach. Children usually respond to the 4 questions based on how they are feeling that day, not necessarily how they have felt over the past year.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The key influencing factors in measuring the quality of the caregiver and youth relationship include the age of the youth, the type of placement, gender, and the length of the placement.

Average Score out of 8 Measuring the Quality of the Caregiver and Youth Relationship



RESULTS

Children in care between ages 10 to 15 have scored the quality of their relationship with their caregiver higher (6.2-7.0 out of 8) than youth aged 16 and 17 who scored the quality of their relationship with their caregiver 5.6-6.3 out of 8.

ABOUT THE DATA

These data are compiled and analyzed by the University of Ottawa, Centre for Research from completed OnLAC Action and Assessment Records.

Only children and youth aged 10 to 17 years old and in care for more than a year are included in this data set.