

## **INFORMATION ON THE TEXAS YOUTH PERMANENCY STUDY FOR ADULTS INVOLVED IN THE YOUTH'S CASE**

The child protection court you are in has agreed to partner with The Texas Institute for Child and Family Wellbeing at The University of Texas at Austin to conduct research about how youth develop relationships regardless of their legal permanency outcome. We are recruiting 500 youth to participate in this study for the next 5 years. Participation involves an annual online survey, 3 quarterly contact surveys to update youth information and possibly, an annual interview if the youth is selected for a smaller qualitative sample.

As a CPS Caseworker, CASA, Attorney or Caregiver, you are an important person in a foster youth's life. We hope that you will take the time to understand this study and offer your opinion to the youth about whether they should participate. [DFPS has provided a letter of consent which is included in this packet.](#)

### **What is this study about?**

This research is being conducted by in order to learn how to better serve older youth in foster care by examining pre and post-permanency experiences and long-term developmental outcomes of older youth in foster care. Currently, there are things we do not know about this population, such as:

- What happens when older youth are adopted from foster care?
- What happens when older youth return home?
- How do the long-term outcomes of adopted and reunified youth compare to youth who age out of foster care?

Participation in this research will explore important elements of a youth's life during adolescence and into early adulthood. We want to understand how foster care experiences shape outcomes in early adulthood. We also want to learn how youth who are adopted, reunited with family, or age-out of care form relationships with caring adults as they age. Most importantly, we want to understand how these relationships impact developmental outcomes during adulthood. Right now, the research tells us that foster youth who age out of care have poor outcomes, but we do not know about the outcomes for other youth. This study will be one of the first to follow all youth as they achieve permanency.

### **What will the youth be asked to do?**

All youth who participate must provide assent that they agree to participate. They are eligible to remain in this study until the project concludes in 2023. However, youth have been informed as part of the assent process that they may withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason. Our research involves 4 electronic surveys per year, and some participants may be selected for an annual verbal interview that will be conducted using skype or similar electronic phone app. The youth involved in this study will be compensated for their participation. The youth will receive a \$15 gift card for each survey they complete. If they are selected for a verbal interview, they will receive an additional \$25 gift card.

### **Who will know about the youth's responses?**

We have a lot of protocols in place to protect confidentiality of youth. Their names and study identification numbers will be kept in an online file that is encrypted to prevent anyone other than two research team members from knowing both their name and id number. Thus, there is little opportunity to have the youth's survey responses linked to their name. Even if you asked us for this specific youth's information, we would not give it to you.

We will not maintain confidentiality if the youth tells us that they want to hurt themselves, someone is hurting them or they are running away. The youth assent form in this packet has a diagram explaining when we would break confidentiality.

## **How will you find the youth for follow-up?**

After youth complete every survey, we will ask them for their contact information. We will ask permission to contact their judge, attorney, CASA, caregiver or any other person who would know where they are living. If the youth gives us permission to contact people, we will ask for those people's contact information. The youth will be asked to take 1 long survey per year and 3 short surveys that simply ask where they are living.

## **What if I want more information?**

We have included additional documents in this packet including a letter from DFPS, the youth's assent form and a study flyer.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may share them with the judge presiding over the case. Or you may contact the Research Coordinator, Tymothy Belseth, via email at [tymothy.belseth@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:tymothy.belseth@austin.utexas.edu). We invite you to visit the website [www.utyps.org](http://www.utyps.org) to sign up for our listserve for more information about the study and study findings.