

Successfully Transitioning Child SSI Recipients and Families to Adulthood



SSA POLICY, RESEARCH, AND DEMONSTRATIONS

Presentation for the Social Security Advisory Board

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What is Transition?

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- Transition is “the period of time when adolescents are moving into adulthood and are often concerned with planning for postsecondary education, careers, health care, financial benefits, housing, and more”¹⁶
- Transition age is variously defined, but often includes youths ages 14-25
 - 1,070,144 youths ages 14-25 receive SSI
 - ✦ Age 14: 96,431
 - ✦ Age 15: 92,386
 - ✦ Age 16: 90,763
 - ✦ Age 17: 86,637
 - ✦ Ages 18-21: 336,411
 - ✦ Ages 22-25: 367,516

Barriers to Successful Transition to Adulthood

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- **Personal/Family**

- Expectations
- Motivation/self-confidence
- Fear of benefit loss
- Insufficient advocacy
- Limited work experience
- Limited skills

- **Environmental**

- Inadequate services and supports
- Fragmented systems
- Program disincentives
- Employer attitudes
- Economic and labor market environment
- Societal perceptions

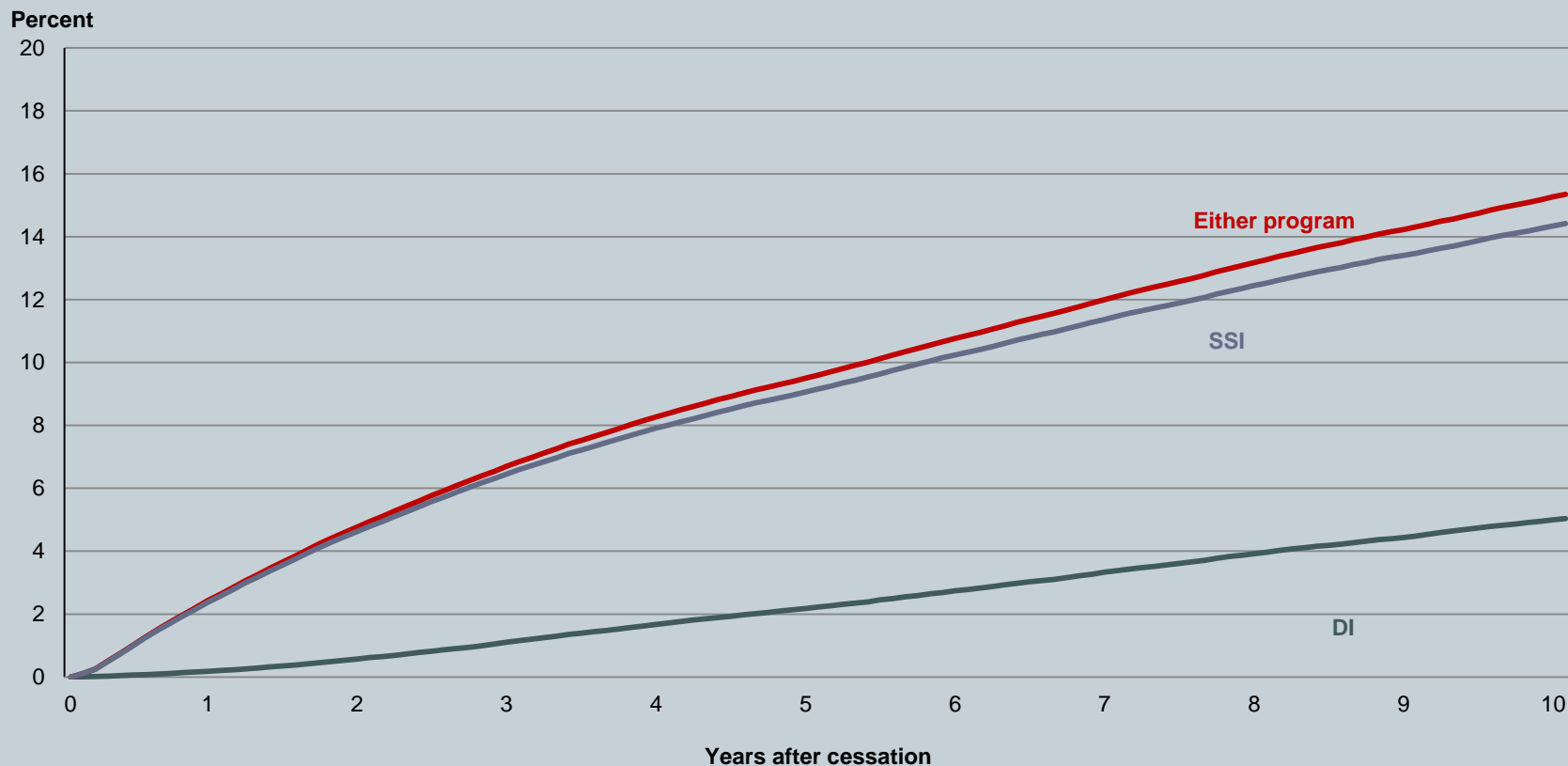
Age-18 redetermination

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- New medical decision at age 18
 - Listings differences between children and adults
 - Child disability definition:
 - ✦ Medically determinable physical or mental impairment that results in **marked and severe functional limitations** and can be expected to result in death or has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months
 - Adult disability definition:
 - ✦ Medically determinable physical or mental impairment that results in **the inability to do any substantial gainful activity** and can be expected to result in death or has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months
- About between 82,000 and 101,000 conducted each year between 2009 and 2013¹³
- Typically, 2/3 continue receiving SSI as adults¹³
 - Can continue payments if have a PASS plan, IEP, or working with VR or other program (Section 301)

Return to SSI After Age-18 Redetermination

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SOURCE: Authors' calculations using SSA administrative records.⁷

NOTE: Estimated program return rate for youths whose SSI eligibility was ceased in an age-18 redetermination decided during 1998-2008. Eligibility cessations in age-18 redeterminations decided 1998-2002 were followed for the full 10 years; those decided in later years were followed through 2012.

Pre-Transition Indicators

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- **Education characteristics and challenges⁸**
 - Special education: 75%
 - Expulsion or suspension: 32%

- **Employment and Training^{15,8}**
 - 11% earned >\$2,000 at age 17
 - 21% received vocational training
 - 11% had an Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan

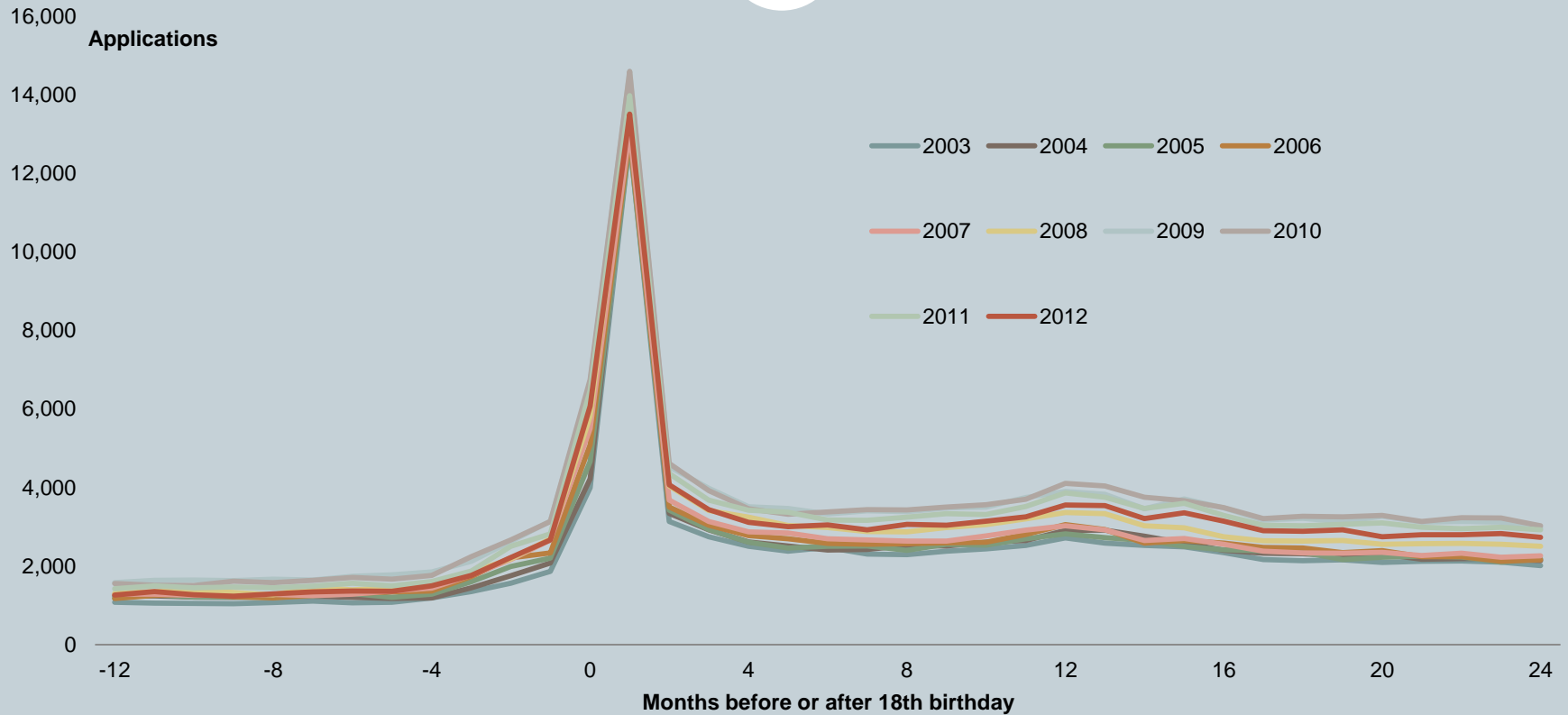
Transition Outcomes

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- Those off SSI at ages 19-24 are:¹¹
 - More likely to be employed
 - More likely to have been arrested or have dropped out of school
- Those on SSI at age 19 are:⁸
 - Less likely to have been employed or arrested by age 17
 - More likely to have had vocational training by age 17
- Earnings are generally low:³
 - In recent child award cohorts, less than 1/2 of individuals have earnings at ages 19-28
 - For those with earnings, average earnings ages 24-28 are around \$10,000 (2007\$)

Entry to SSI at Age 18

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SOURCE: Author's calculations using Social Security administrative records.⁹

NOTE: SSI applications for youths aged 17-19, by applicant age in months relative to 18th birthday: 2003-2012.

Existing Transition Services

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- **IDEA**
 - Not all SSI youth are eligible for services under IDEA
 - No existing data match
- **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)**
 - Many youth receive VR services
 - WIOA will likely increase this
- **Private Sector**
 - Project SEARCH
 - Marriott Foundation

SSI and other programs

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- **Low income children¹**
 - Below poverty level *with* benefits — 31.6%
 - Below poverty level *without* benefits — 58.0%
- **SNAP¹**
 - 3/5 of SSI children receive SNAP
- **TANF¹⁴**
 - SSI \$ > TANF \$
 - SSI # < TANF #
- **EITC**
 - Does not count as income for SSI eligibility
- **ABLE accounts**
 - Just beginning to start up
- **Medicaid**
 - Most SSI children receive Medicaid

Demonstrations-YTD

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- Random assignment study, ages 14-25
- Interventions implemented by six community-based organizations
- 5 waivers of program rules designed to allow youths to keep more of their earnings and encourage savings, and to encourage their continued education
- Mixed results⁶
 - Four projects had positive impacts on paid employment and/or earnings after 3 years
 - No impact on most other outcomes (e.g., education, self-determination)
- More employment service hours → better employment outcomes⁶

Demonstrations-PROMISE

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- 6 ED-funded projects in 11 states
- Largely uses existing state-level organizations to provide services and supports
- Random assignment study, ages 14-16 *plus families*

- SSA conducting national evaluation
 - Interim Services and Impact Report—2018
 - Final Long-Term Report—2022
- Additional project/state-conducted evaluations

SSA Policies and Activities to Help Transition

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- PASS Plans
- WIPA providers
- Section 301
- Student Earned Income Exclusion
- Advanced Foster Care filing¹⁰
- Red Book—Added resources for youth page
- New brochure and mailing
- IOM research
- Federal Partners in Transition

Newest Resources

RESOURCES TO ASSIST YOUTH WITH THE TRANSITION TO A SUCCESSFUL ADULTHOOD

Employment Supports/ National and Community Resources (Alphabetically Listed)	How These Resources Can Help You
Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Accounts	Do you have expenses related to blindness or disability that began prior to age 26? See <i>page 15</i>
AmeriCorps	Do you want to find a national volunteer opportunity based on your particular skills, interests, and circumstances?
American Job Centers	Are you looking for free education, employment, or training opportunities?



Social Security

What You Need To Know
About Your Supplemental
Security Income (SSI)
When You Turn 18

Open Questions

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- What services should be provided?
- Who should provide services?
- What is the role of WIOA?
- What new policies should be tested?
 - Early notification of potential cessation?
 - Not counting the earnings of minors at all?
 - Earlier medical redetermination, but not effectuated?
 - Ineligibility if not in school or working without medical reason?
 - Extend Ticket age to legal working age (16 in most states)?
- Where to get better information?

Contact Information

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