

# Time to Exit during the Transition to Adulthood: Who Stays and Who Leaves?

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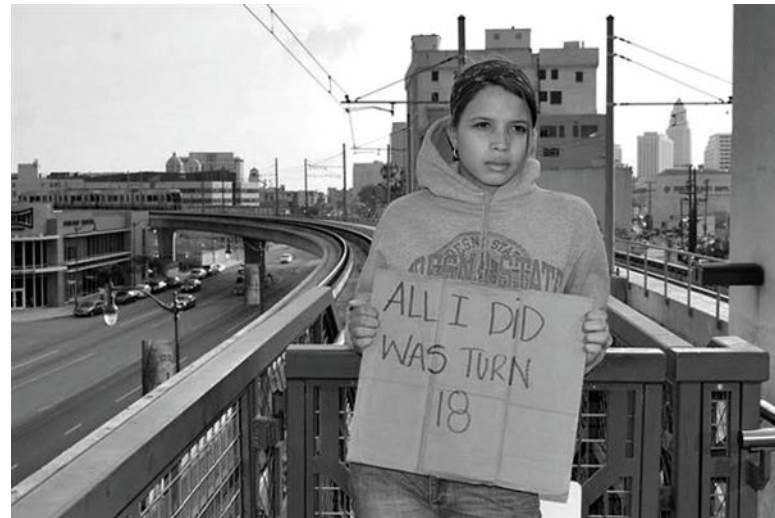
University of Missouri-Columbia

*Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work & Research*

*January 17, 2014*

# 'Aging Out' of Foster Care

- Each year 25,000-30,000 foster youth turn 18 in foster care and “age out” to adulthood <sup>1</sup>
- Research finds many will face significant challenges in adulthood <sup>2-4</sup>
- Federal legislation entitles foster youth 14 to 21 to services
- Many do not receive services <sup>5</sup>
- Among those that do, the evidence base supporting effectiveness is limited <sup>6-7</sup>



# U.S. Law has Recognized Needs

Year	Policy	
1986	Independent Living Program	States received funds to provide youth with independent living services.
1999	Foster Care Independence Act	Funds increased and age range expanded for eligible services, including the option to extend Medicaid to youth to age 21.
2003	Education and Training Vouchers	Amendments added funding for vouchers for post-secondary education and training.
2008	Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act	Extends the age of eligibility for foster care from 18 to 21 and provides states partial reimbursement.

# Age of Foster Care Eligibility

## 2002

- 3 states/jurisdictions allowed youth to remain in foster care to age 21
- IL, NY, D.C.

## 2013

- 20 states have an approved or pending Title IV-E plan amendment to extend federally funded foster care to youths beyond age 18<sup>8</sup>
- AL, AR, CA, D.C., IL, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, NE, NY, OR, PA, TN, TX, WA, WV

# Benefits of Extended Foster Care?

- Emerging evidence from the Midwest study suggests that remaining in care past age 18 decreases risks of:
  - First episode of Homelessness between 17/18 & 23/24 <sup>9</sup>
  - Legal System Involvement at age 24 <sup>10</sup>
  - Pregnancy between 17/18 and 19 <sup>13</sup>
- And increases rates of:
  - Health Insurance at age 24<sup>12</sup>
  - Fathering at age 26 <sup>11</sup>
  - Employment and wages at age 24 <sup>14</sup>

# Not Everyone Stays in Care

- In Illinois, 80% of foster youth in Cook County stay in care to age 19 whereas fewer than 54% outside of Cook remain in care<sup>15</sup>
- Potential reasons: Selection, court advocacy, caseworker knowledge and attitudes, availability of services, etc.

# Current Study & Empirical Concerns

- 1) What is the time to exit from foster care among youth aging out of foster care in Illinois?
- 2) What individual and out of home care variables are related to time to exit from care?

# Data

- ▶ Drawn from administrative data in Illinois
  - ▶ A cohort of 782 foster youth who turned 18 in foster care during fiscal years 2008-2009 was selected based on the following criteria:
    - In care at age 17;
    - In care for child abuse and/or neglect
    - In care for at least one year
    - Not in a permanent placement at age 18



# Analytic Technique

- Event history models were used to examine the time to exit from 18 to age 21
- The event of interest is leaving care before age 21
- The estimated hazard is the instantaneous risk of experiencing an exit at time  $t$ , given that an exit has not already occurred prior in time
- $t=0$  represents age 18
- Observations were treated as right censored at age 21 if an individual did not exit care between age 18 and 20

# Cox Proportional Hazard Equation

$$h_i(t) = \lambda_0(t)e^{x^TB}$$

$\lambda_0(t)$  = unspecified function of time

$e^{x^TB}$  = log linear function of set of fixed covariates

# Measures

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables
Exit from foster care	Demographic and control variables
	Male
	Black
	Cook
	Substantiated Sexual abuse
	- Physical abuse
	- Neglect
	Age at 1 <sup>st</sup> entry (late vs. early)
	Re-entry (2+ spells vs. 1 spell)
	# Moves (last entry to 17)
	Any detention (at 17)
	Any run (at 17)
	Any hospital

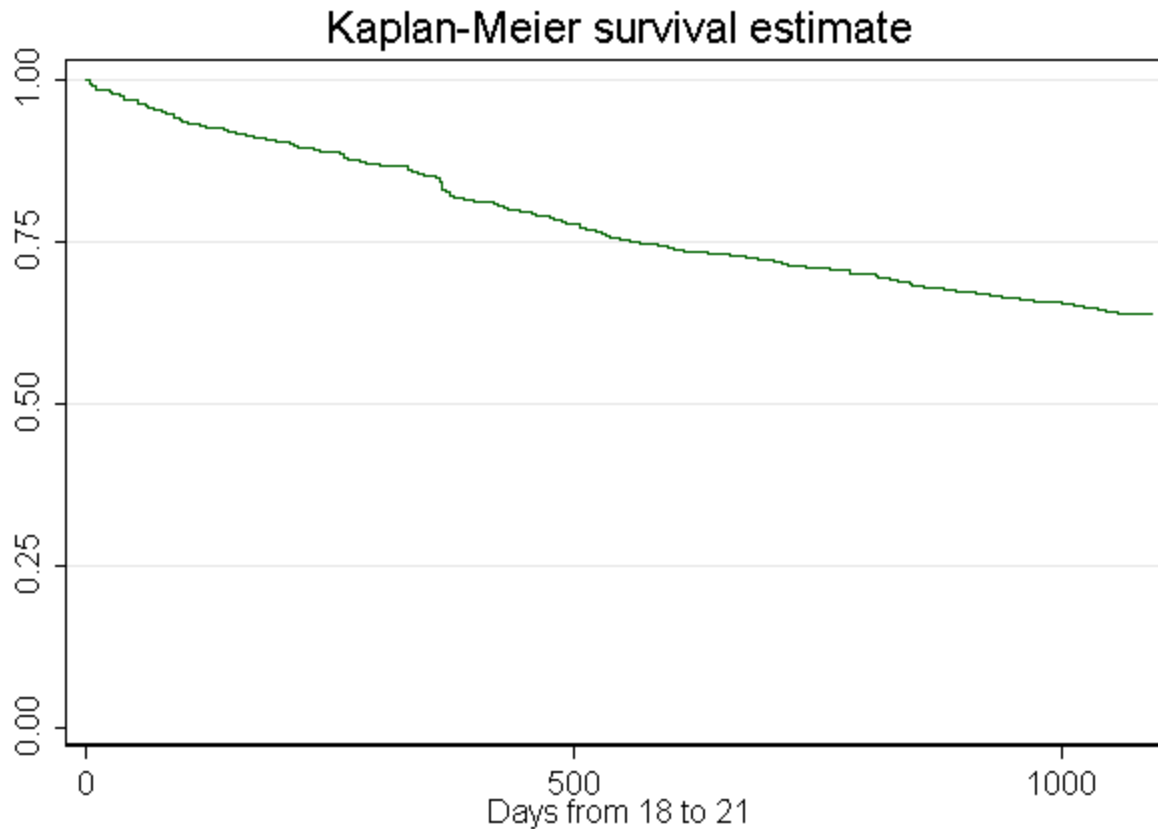
# Results

- More males (56.1%) than females (43.9%)
- Predominantly African American (71.9%)
- Almost two-thirds (63.6%) reside in Cook County
- Mean age at first entry is 8.6 years
- Over one-quarter have 2+ entries (28%)
- The mean number of placements from last entry to age 17 is 9.6
- At age 17: 21.5% placed in detention, 38.3% ran, and 14.3% hospitalized

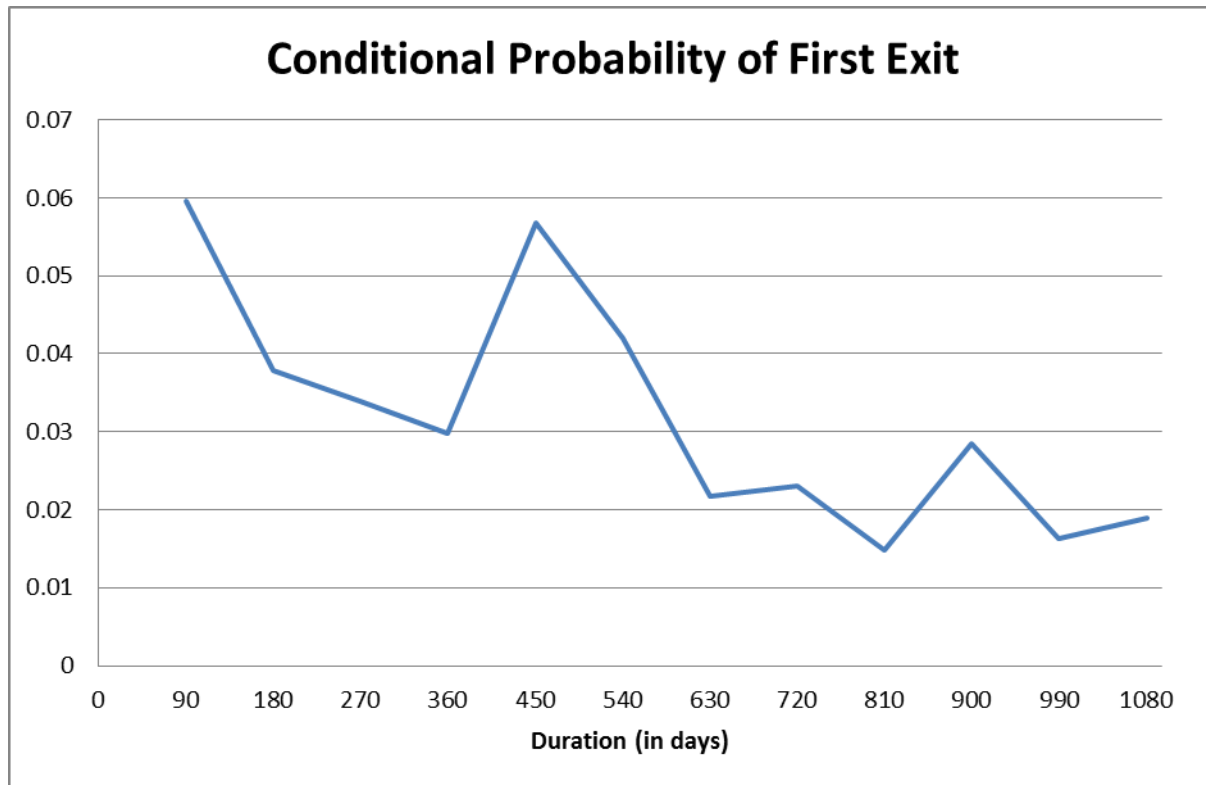
# Conditional Hazard Probabilities

- Between ages 18 and 20, 36.2% exited foster care.
- The mean time to exit among those exiting was 434.75 days or approximately 1.2 years
- The median time to first exit among those experiencing an exit was 376 days or just over one year 1-year

# Kaplan-Meier Survival Curve of Estimates for First Exit between 18 and 21



# Conditional Probability of Exit



# Hazard Ratio

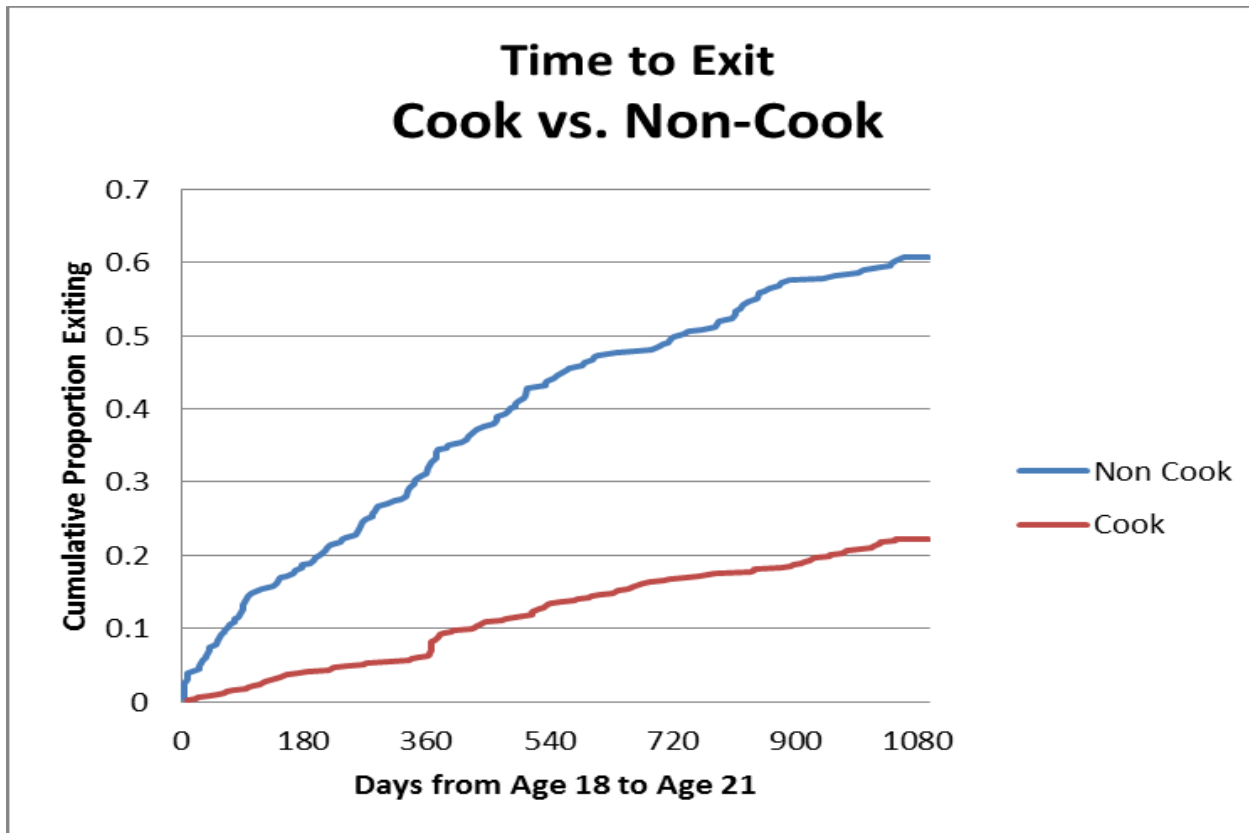
- Hazard or risk ratios indicate how the risk of exit varied with a change in the value of a covariate relative to the reference value
  - Values over 1 = Increased hazard (decrease in time to exit)
  - Values under 1 = decrease hazard (increase in time to exit)
- If 1 is subtracted from the hazard ratio and the remainder is multiplied by 100, the result is equal to the % change in the hazard of exit



# Multivariate Results

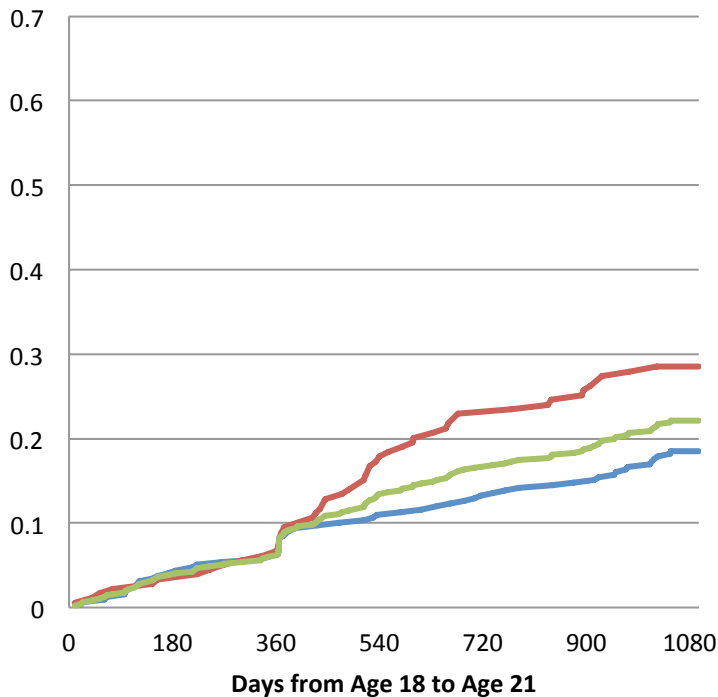
	Hazard Ratio
<b><u>Demographics</u></b>	
Male	1.09
Black	0.89
Cook	0.60***
<b><u>Substantiated Maltreatment</u></b>	
Sexual Abuse	1.12
Physical Abuse	0.99
Neglect	0.98
<b><u>Out of Home care</u></b>	
12+ at First Entry	1.06
2+ entries	0.99
# moves (entry to 17)	
<b><u>Adverse Events at age 17</u></b>	
Any detention	1.11
Any hospitalization	0.99

# Cumulative Proportion Exiting Care: Cook vs. Non-Cook



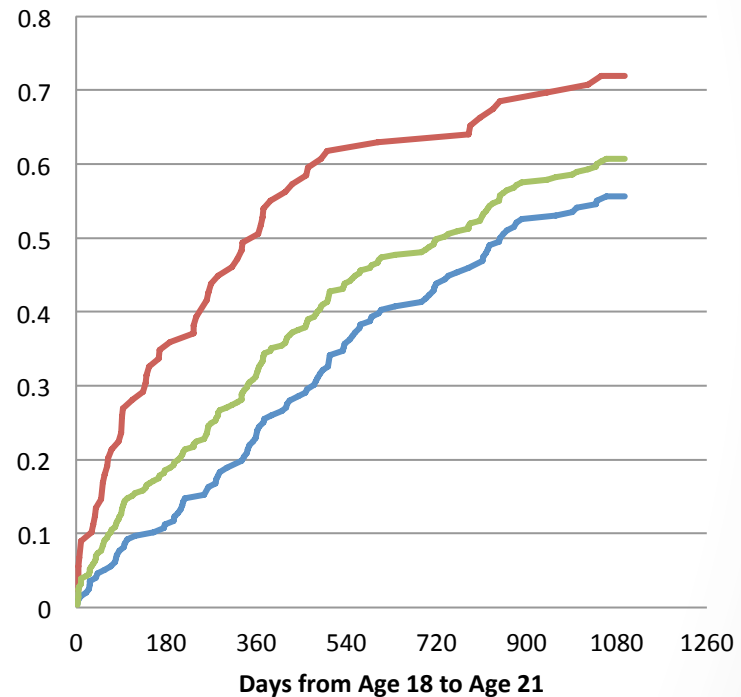
# Cumulative Proportion Exiting Care: Running Away at 17

## Cook



— No Run 17 — Run 17 — Cook

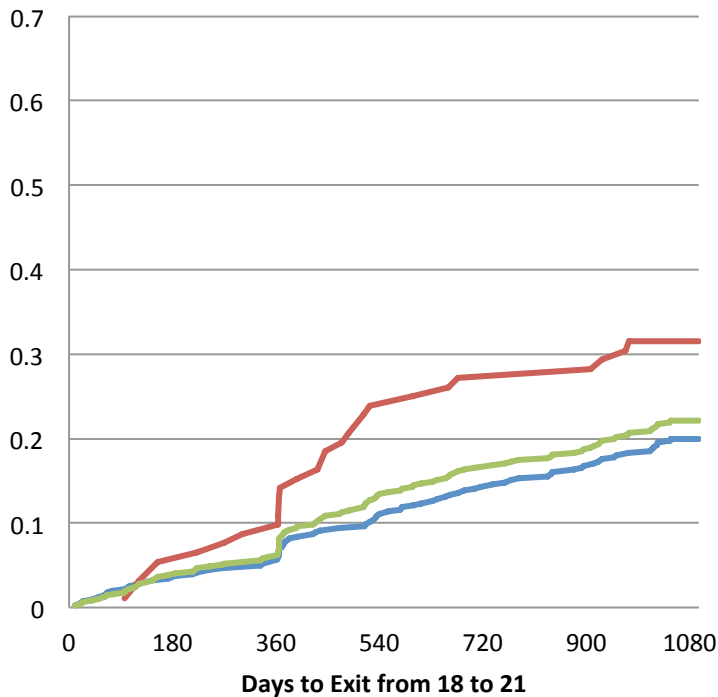
## Non-Cook



— No Run17 — Run17 — Non Cook

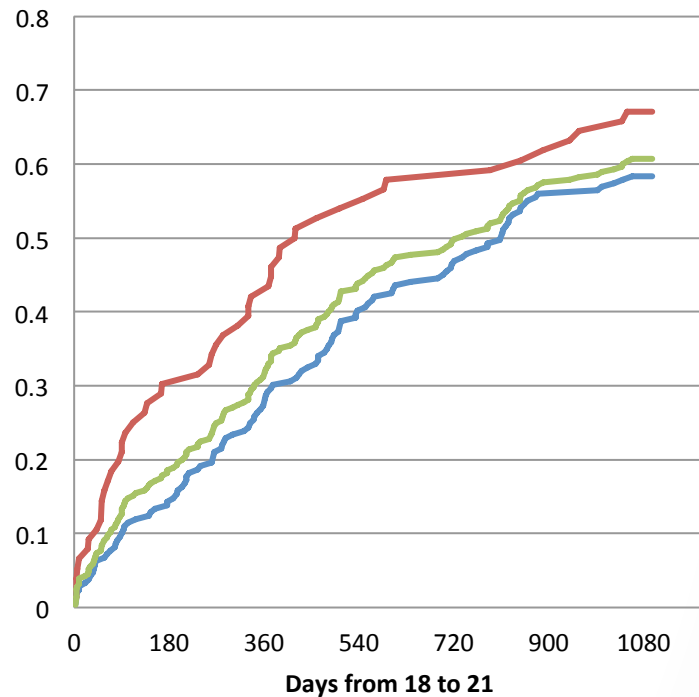
# Cumulative Proportion Exiting Care: Detention at 17

## Cook



— No Detention — 1+ Detention — Cook

## Non-Cook



— 0 Detention — 1+ Detention — Non Cook

# Discussion

- Data indicate that earlier exit from foster care remains more common for youth aging out of foster care outside of Cook County
- Graphs hint at something that is potentially protective in Cook County among at-risk youth during the first year after reaching 18 in foster care
- Understanding what factors keep youth in care among those that are arguably most at risk for leaving early might have important implications for improving rates of retention in foster care outside of Cook county

# Thoughts and Questions

# Acknowledgements

- This study was supported by funding from the Marjorie M. Monkman award. Thank you!
- We also thank Andrew Zinn, Ph.D. for his help in interpreting the results and Hui Huang, Ph.D. for research assistance on earlier stages of this project

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Thank you!