


# OPPORTUNITY YOUTH

with DSHS Service Histories

Opportunity Youth face a complex set of current barriers and past difficulties. These youth also have strengths, and there are numerous opportunities for reengagement.

## Road Blocks

*Current Challenges*

 **1 in 3** have children

Nearly **1 in 3** face a current spell of homelessness



 **16%** have a disability


## Opportunity!

*Moving Forward*

 **44%** have work experience

**1 in 3** have accessed college in the past




 **3 in 4** receive Basic Food, a qualifier for the Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program

## Speed Bumps

*Past Difficulties*

**70%** are without a high school credential



 **41%** have a history of mental health needs

**1 in 4** have a history of substance use



 **41%** have an arrest or conviction history

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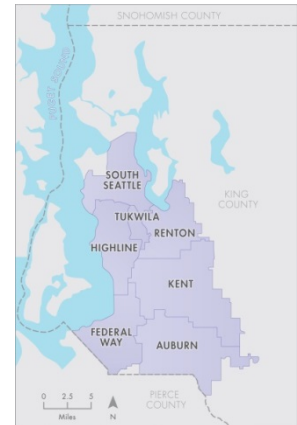


# More about the Road Map Project

## Implications for Opportunity Youth

- Opportunity youth have interacted with multiple systems, including criminal justice, behavioral health, and public assistance.
- Opportunity youth need supports such as child care assistance, supported employment, and housing stabilization in order to productively engage in either work or school.
- There are opportunities to better connect the systems that touch opportunity youth to education and the workforce so that at-risk students are supported and those who do become Opportunity Youth are provided pathways to reengagement.

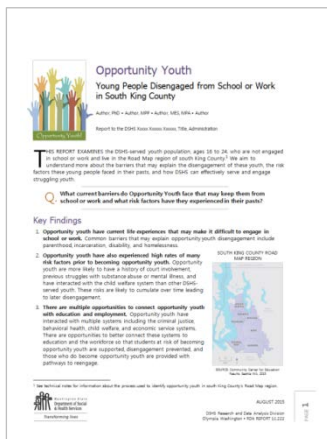
**South King County Road Map Region**



SOURCE:  
Community Center  
for Education Results  
Seattle WA

*“Reaching and serving these youth is vital to the Department of Social and Health Services’ mission to transform lives and the Economic Services Administration’s commitment to a two-generation approach to moving families out of poverty and into a brighter future. We have begun the work to develop a pilot that will better serve this priority population. This will include taking steps to better align services and systems.”*

— **David Stillman, Assistant Secretary**  
DSHS Economic Services Division



## ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

DSHS’ Research and Data Analysis Division has based these findings on a subset of Opportunity Youth who received DSHS services between 2000 and 2012. Youth included here were 16 to 24 and not enrolled in school or work during academic year 2012. Additional findings about these youth are available on the website provided below. The Road Map Project region encompasses seven school districts: Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle (South Seattle only) and Tukwila.

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Patton • Ford Shah • Liu • Felver • Lucenko • Huber

