



AMP Final Progress Report Covering July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

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INTRODUCTION

AMP (Achieving Maximum Potential) is a youth engagement program for current and former foster and adoptive youth summarized by the motto “Nothing about us, without us.” AMP serves as Iowa’s Foster Care Youth Council through a contract from the Iowa Department of Human Services to YSS. The primary purpose of AMP is to empower young people to become advocates for themselves and give them a voice in system-level improvements in child welfare policies and practices. When supported through productive partnerships with adults, youth can be authoritative advocates for making the foster care system more responsive and effective.

AMP offers leadership opportunities, service learning projects, speaking opportunities, and educational/vocational assistance to youth ages 13 and older who have been involved in foster care, adoption, or other out-of-home placements. AMP also offers participating youth opportunities to learn life skills and shares resources available to them as they transition from foster care to adulthood.

Eight private, non-profit youth-serving agencies, led by YSS, comprise a statewide collaboration known as the Partnership of Iowa Foster Care Youth Councils. Through the contract with DHS, these eight agencies supported sixteen AMP Youth Councils during the report period of July 1, 2018 through July 30, 2019. The eight partner agencies and the locations of the councils they support are:

- YSS (Ames, Davenport¹, Des Moines, Eldora-STC (State Training School), Marshalltown, Mason City², Carroll/Denison and Mobile)
- American Home Finding Association (Ottumwa)
- Children’s Square USA (Council Bluffs and Sioux City)
- Foundation 2 (Cedar Rapids)
- Four Oaks (Waterloo)
- Hillcrest Family Services (Dubuque)
- Youth Shelter Care of North Central Iowa (Fort Dodge)
- Young House (Burlington/Mt. Pleasant)

The Partnership has links to three consulting agencies, ISU – RISE (Research Institute for Studies in Education) to conduct program assessments; the Child and Family Policy Center (CFPC) for legislative advocacy; and the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa (YPII) for data collection and reporting assistance. In addition, AMP networks with a variety of other stakeholders including, but not limited to, the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parent Association, Four Oaks and LSI Fostering Connections, the Iowa Aftercare Services Network, and group homes/PMICS and shelters.

The DHS Foster Care Youth Council contract with YSS is in the second year of a five-year contract. As required by the contract, this report provides information on membership and activities of AMP during the period of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

¹ YSS has hired a facilitator for the Davenport; meetings will begin in July 2019. No council data has been collected during the grant period.

² Mason City council closed in December 2018. Council data has been collected via the online meeting summary form and the online member information form, but not the satisfaction survey or the attendance logs.

DATA COLLECTION

Beginning July 1, 2016, YSS entered into an agreement with the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa (YPII) to collect, analyze, and report information related to AMP membership, participation, local activities, and the annual member satisfaction survey.

To gather consistent information from local councils, YPII developed two online data collection instruments: meeting summary form and member information form³. Council facilitators completed a total of 243 meeting summaries during the report period, including 88 meetings at Eldora-STS⁴. Facilitators collected information and completed member information forms from 677 individual AMP members during the report period.

Additionally, YPII collects attendance records from each council. Council facilitators track the attendance of individual youth from meeting to meeting during the year. This provides a more reliable method to gauge involvement over time, as opposed to the self-report, static question on satisfaction surveys or member information. It also may indicate if members are reengaging after missing a few meetings, although some youth may participate before and/or after the state fiscal year covered by this report.

Finally, YPII develops an annual youth satisfaction survey⁵. The purpose of the survey is to solicit feedback from a representative sample of AMP members; therefore, facilitators administer the survey at just one of their regular meetings with the youth present at that time. Eleven councils AMP participated in the annual satisfaction survey during February and March 2019, and 123 youth completed the survey.

MEMBER CHARACTERISTICS

Facilitators collect member information from as many participating youth as possible on an annual basis, starting in July for the current fiscal year. Member demographic information was completed for 677 youth (521 from community-based councils; 156 from Eldora-STS).

Age

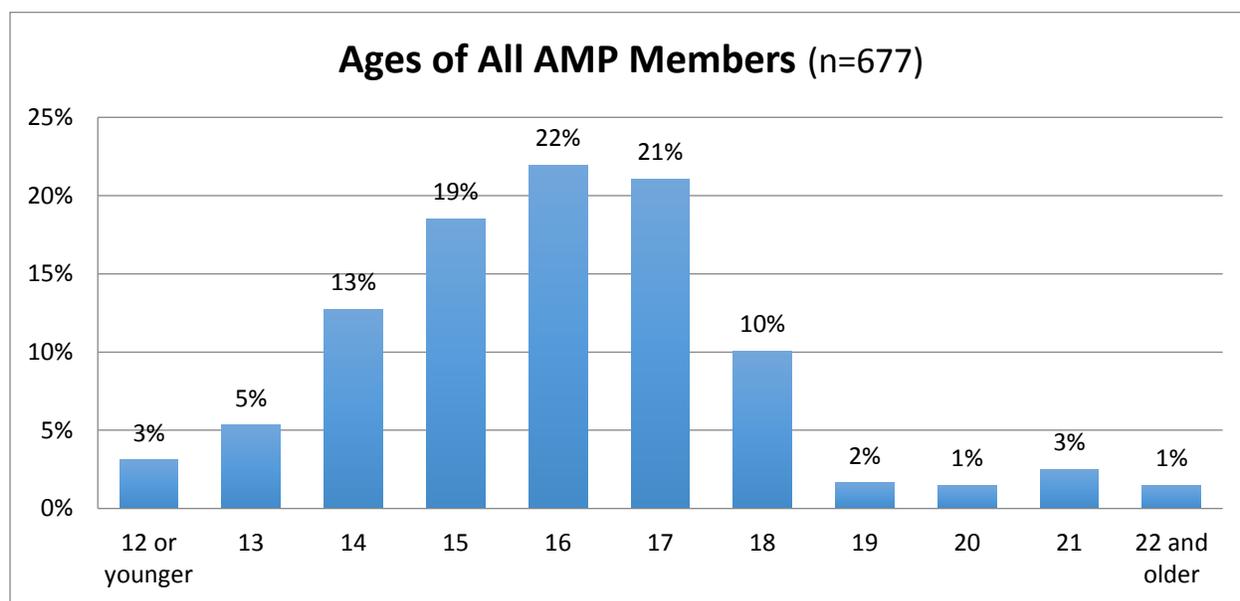
Ages reported by members range from less than 12 years old, to 22 or older; 4% fall outside of the intended range of 13-21 years old. Most AMP members are under 18, with 61% between the ages of 15 and 17.

Because of the age restrictions at the state training school, 86% of the youth at the Eldora-STS council are between the ages of 16-18. A much wider range of ages exists within the community-based councils, where only 43% of the youth are between the ages of 16-18.

³ See Appendix for copies of these instruments.

⁴ Meetings at Eldora-STS are offered twice a month at each cottage. In some months during the report period, data was entered for each cottage's meeting, while some data was aggregated for the month before entering. Going forward, data will be aggregated each month.

⁵ See Appendix for a copy of this instrument.



Race and Ethnicity

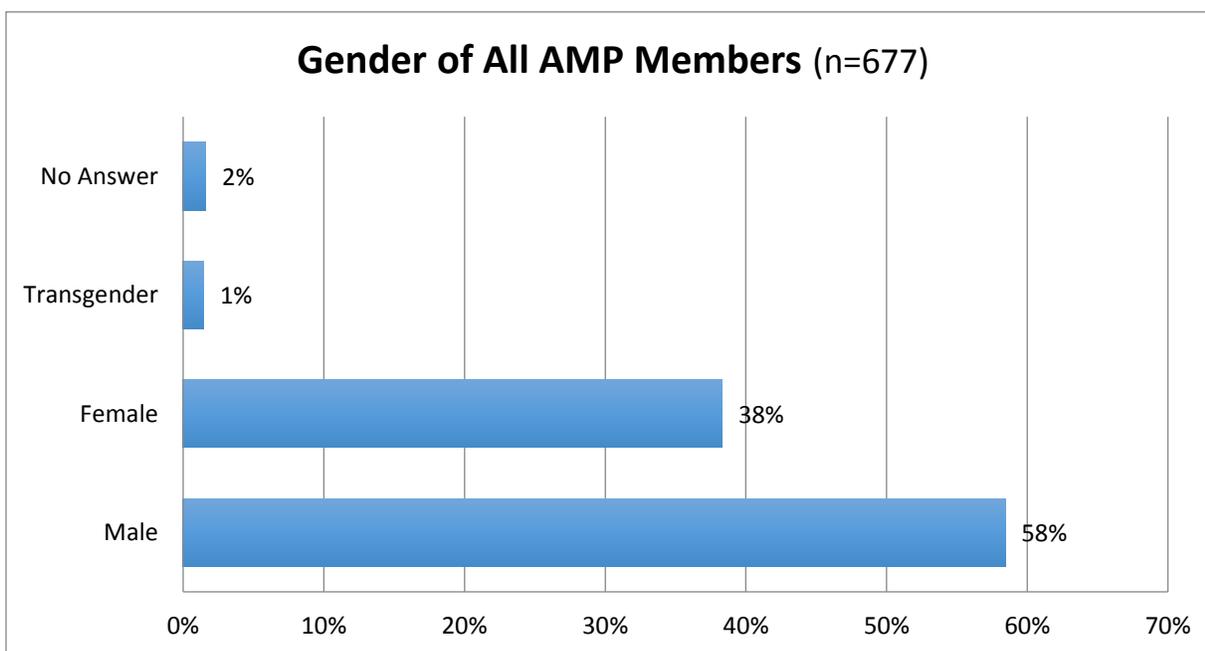
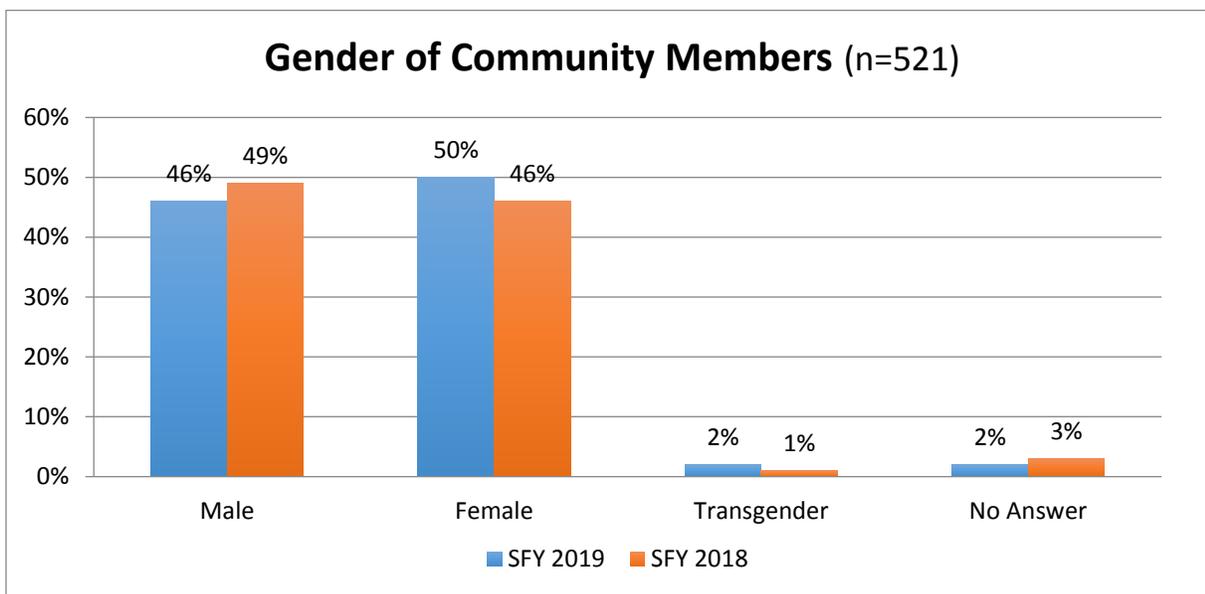
AMP membership is generally representative of the foster care population in Iowa. Race and ethnicity in AMP is somewhat skewed as a result of the proportion of youth of color at the Eldora-STS council. While the majority of AMP members identified as White, the proportion is much higher in community-based councils (66%, versus 41% of Eldora-STS). A greater proportion of Eldora-STS members identified themselves as African American or Black compared to the rest of the statewide councils.

	All Members n=677	Community Councils n=521	Eldora-STS n=156
White	60%	66%	41%
African American or Black	25%	18%	50%
Hispanic or Latino	9%	9%	9%
Multiracial	6%	7%	0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	3%	3%	<1%
Asian	1%	1%	0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	1%	0%

Note: Youth were instructed to select the one race or ethnicity they *most closely* identify with. Some selected more than one race or ethnicity, thus some totals do not add to 100%.

Gender

Compared to previous reports, the gender breakdown of community council members in SFY 2019 is well-balanced in the community-based councils. Half (50%) of the community council members identify as female, and just under half identify as male (46%). All the Eldora-STS members identify as male. With those members included in the analysis, the total AMP membership is 58% male and 38% female.



Placement Type

The great majority of AMP members (80%) live in a congregate foster care setting (e.g., state training school, shelter, residential treatment, or PMIC). Eight percent are not in foster care or another out-of-home placement. Another 6% are living in family-like settings. Many AMP councils hold monthly meetings on-site at a residential or shelter facility, which largely explains the high frequency of youth in these placement types. Compared to SFY 2018, substantially more AMP members are currently in residential treatment and fewer are not in foster care.

	SFY 2019 (n=669)	SFY 2018 (n=442)
Residential treatment	32%	19%
State training school	23%	23%
Shelter	20%	20%
Not in foster care or placement	8%	19%
Other	7%	5%
Adopted (or with adoptive family)	3%	3%
Foster family	3%	5%
PMIC	5%	5%
Relative foster family (kinship care)	<1%	1%

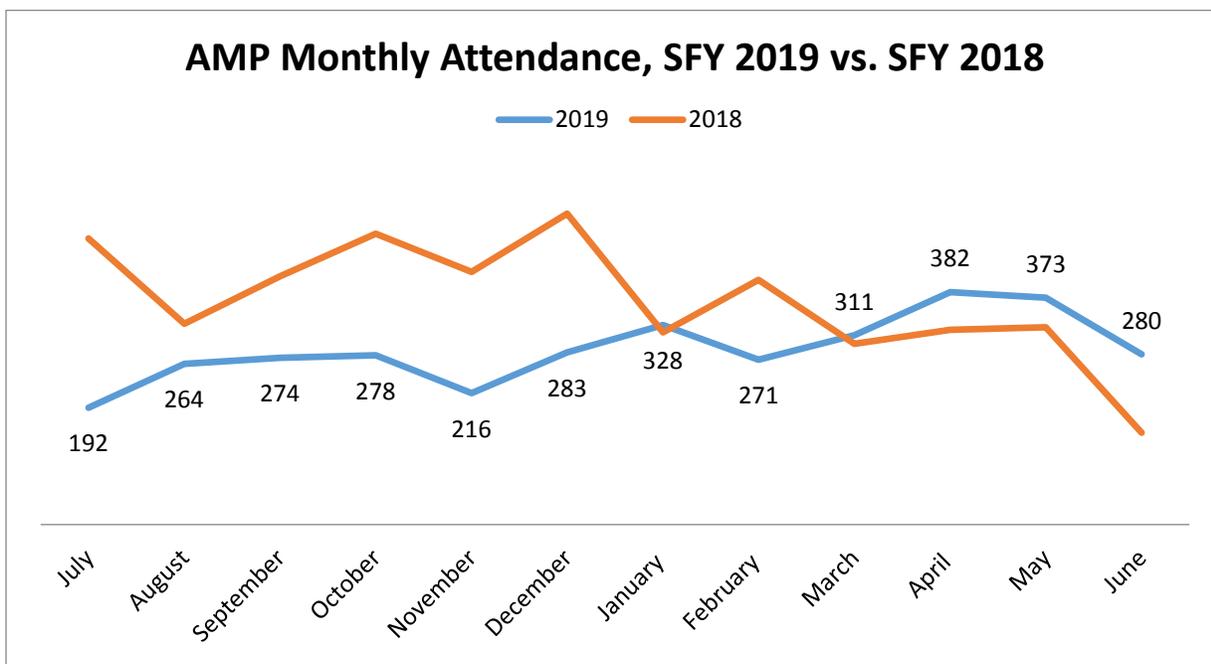
Note: Remaining entries in the "Other" category include Juvenile Court Services, court-ordered day program, Job Corps, and those who did not provide an answer.

COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PARTICIPATION

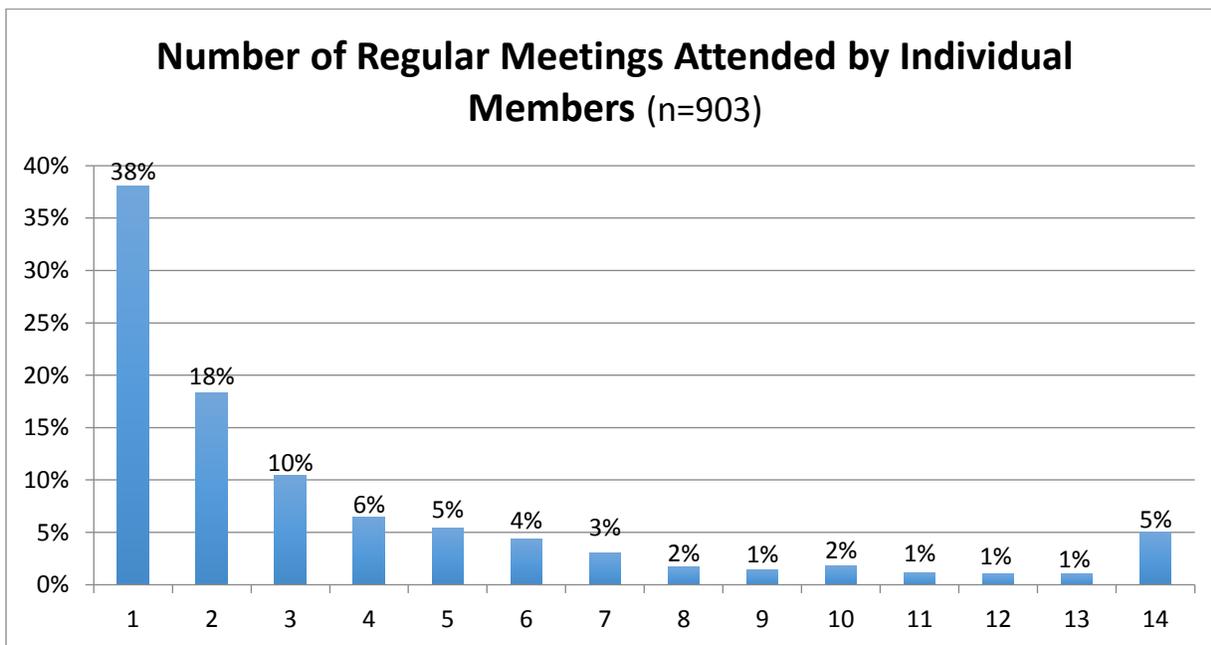
From July 2018-June 2019, 243⁶ meetings held across the state were recorded using the meeting summary. According to council attendance logs, 903 young people attended AMP meetings for 3,452 points of contact over the report period. Average attendance at meetings is 11 youth (compared to 18 youth per meeting in SFY 2018).

Although overall meeting attendance remains lower than in the previous year, meeting attendance for SFY 2019 has increased over the year; there was a decline in attendance in SFY 2018. This may be for a few reasons. First, the largest council, Eldora-STS, did not have meetings during July and early August, due to a new facilitator being trained. Second, there are fewer councils during the current report period, as the councils in Mason City and Davenport were not having meetings. Finally, some councils experienced abnormally adverse weather during the winter of 2019, so meeting occurrence and meeting attendance in February are lower than normal. Looking at both SFY 2018 and SFY 2019, it appears that summer months may be difficult for member attendance and retention.

⁶ An additional eight meeting summaries were entered for meetings that were either cancelled because of the weather or had no youth show up. Only meetings that had youth in attendance are included in the analysis.



Nearly 40% of all members have attended just one meeting during the report period. Another 41% have attended between two and five meetings, and the remaining 20% of members have attended six or more meetings. The large number of participants that are in congregate care settings, such as shelter and residential treatment which are often short-term placements, may partially account for the substantial number of youth attending only one meeting.



It is important to note that individuals are tracked by council and are not added to a master list; thus, youth who have attended or are attending meetings and events at more than one council are not easily cross-referenced between councils. In addition, facilitators use a variety of ways to identify youth (e.g.,

first and last name, first name and last initial) when submitting attendance sheets. While this helps protect confidentiality, there is potential for errors based on incomplete or incorrect identifying information and overlooking previous participation as facilitators track individual youth.

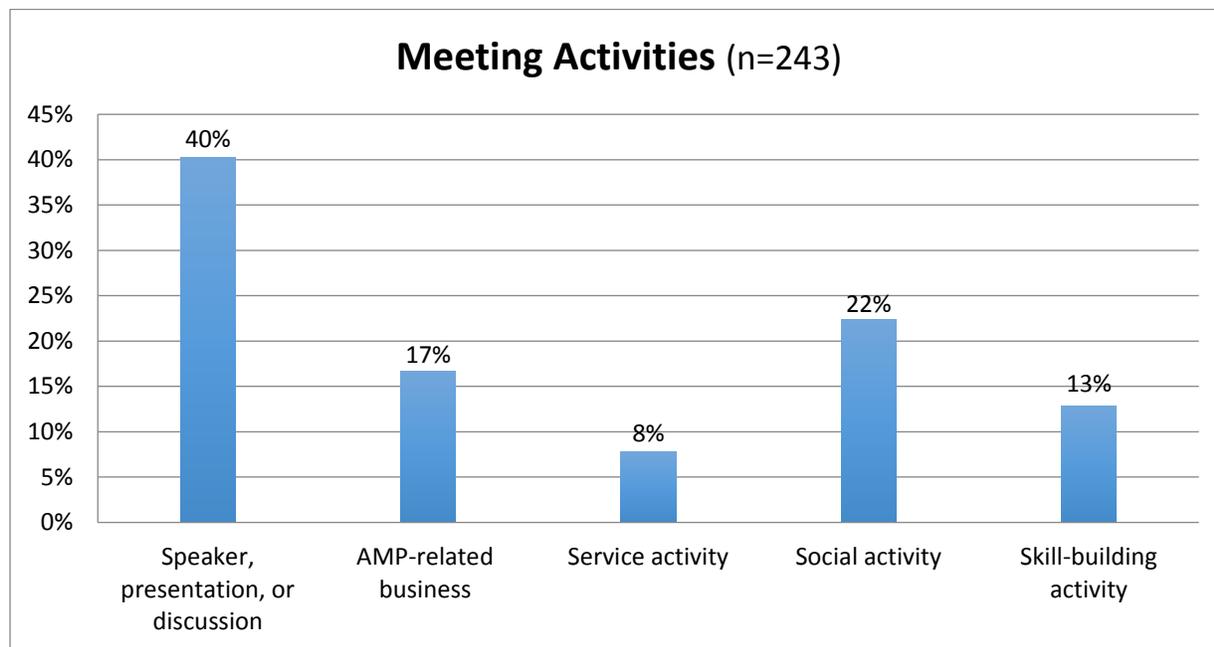
Meetings

Facilitators have been encouraged to make their councils mobile; meetings were designated as either stationary or mobile in the meeting summaries. This year, 25% of the summaries entered were for a mobile meeting from July to June, a substantial increase from 6% in SFY 2018. Mobile meetings were held by councils across the state, averaging 8 youth per meeting. Stationary meetings averaged 11 youth per meeting.

The following charts and tables provide information on the types of activities, topics, and partners involved in the numerous meetings across the state. All councils are represented with at least one meeting entry. Most councils submitted more than fifteen meeting summaries. Three councils submitted fewer than ten meeting summaries over the report period (Carroll/Denison: 3 meetings⁷, Dubuque: 4 meetings, Sioux City: 8 meetings).

Activities

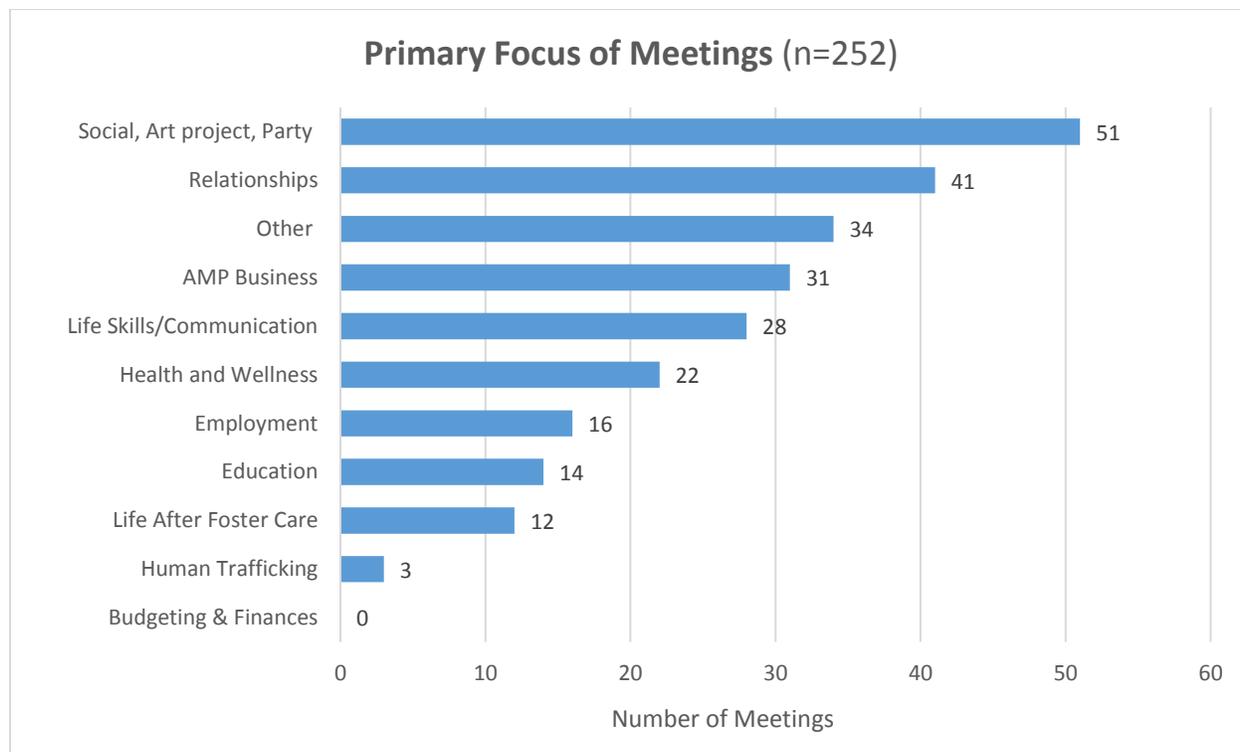
Many AMP meetings involve more than one activity, as indicated by the chart below. Speakers and specific discussions occur the most often, followed by social activities, AMP-related business, and skill-building activities. Service activities occurred the least often.



⁷ Meetings started in April; one meeting had no youth attend.

Topics Addressed

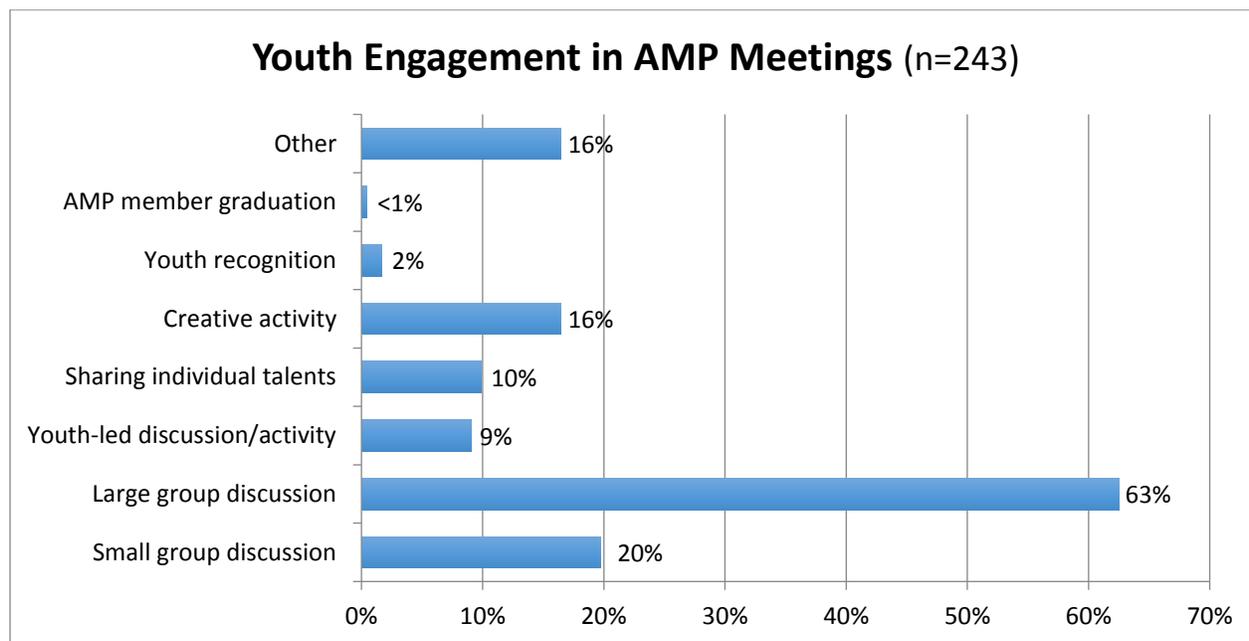
Providing youth an opportunity to socialize with their peers remains an important function of AMP, as evidenced by the focus of many council meetings. The information-sharing and skill-building functions of AMP are partially met through presentations, activities and discussions on various topics during regular AMP meetings. When asked to select the PRIMARY aspect of the meeting, facilitators most often reported “Social, Art project, Party” (20%), or Relationships (16%). Within the “Other” category, the majority of the topics reported by facilitators were related to service projects and volunteerism.



Conducting AMP-related business during Council meetings provides opportunities for youth to practice communication, decision-making and advocacy skills and reinforces AMP’s commitment to a youth-driven approach. When AMP-related business was included as part of the meeting, facilitators identified the AMP-related topic(s) discussed at the meetings, as shown in the table below.

AMP-related business/activity	n=76
AMP Camp	11%
Day on the Hill	30%
Legislative agenda	32%
New member training/What is AMP	22%
Planning for other AMP or council events	20%
Satisfaction survey	13%
Preparing or supporting AMP youth speaking at event	11%

AMP facilitators understand the importance of engaging youth in multiple ways for positive youth development and relationship-building. Over 60% of meetings included a large group discussion, 20% included breaking into small groups for discussion, and another 16% included a creative activity (like art, music, or writing). Other opportunities for youth to engage with adults and their peers in meaningful ways included sharing individual talents, youth-led discussion and recognizing youth in front of the council.



Eldora-State Training School

Because of the unique nature of the Eldora-State Training School Council, those AMP youth are unable to participate in statewide AMP events, such as the AMP Camp or Day on the Hill. However, the facilitator has implemented a number of programs to keep youth engaged outside of the council meetings, including:

- **Upside Down Café** – Twenty-two youth have been employed over the year, with an average of length of employment of 3 months. The café allows AMP youth to gain work experience that they can list on their resumes and job applications. Twice, the facilitator has been contacted as a reference for an AMP youth.
- **One-on-One Engagement** – The facilitator is on-site with the youth and engages with individuals when they need some extra connection. They discuss the same issues as those in the meetings (*e.g.*, employment, life skills, relationships), but are able to delve into issues a little deeper and in private.
- **Clothing Closet** – When a youth is discharging from State Training School, they can access the clothing closet and put together a duffle bag filled with a blanket, towel and washcloth, socks, t-shirt, underwear, and toiletries. Thirty-five youth have accessed the closet.

- Garden – Eight AMP youth have made raised garden beds, spread soil, and planted seeds and plants. The youth work on the garden twice a week and water as needed. They will also harvest the produce and make meals with what they have grown.

SUMMARY of MAJOR PROJECTS

The statewide Partnership seeks to unleash the full potential for personal growth among foster and adoptive youth in Iowa. AMP pursues this goal through regular meetings, special events and major projects. Youth train to become advocates for themselves and others and participate in valuable leadership opportunities. Among the most important benefits of participation in AMP is the chance for youth to build social capital. Youth share their stories with each other, provide understanding and support for one another, gain life skills necessary to become healthy, independent adults, and build partnerships with adults in the community. This section of the report summarizes major activities conducted by AMP during the report period.

Variety AMP Camp

Variety AMP Camp was held June 18-24, 2019. It is a key tool to help foster and adoptive youth to become successful. More importantly, it also allows campers to become close with their mentors and close with each other. Many youth share similar life experiences and have met previously in placements around the state.

This year, there was a smaller group than usual: 29 youth and 7 mentors. However, this was an advantage as the youth focused quickly on leadership, healing, advocacy and community skill building. Activities included: touring Job Corps and creating a meal with a chef, touring Indian Hills Community College, archery, art projects, tie-dye shirts, nature hike, lake fun, campfires, movies and board games, dance parties, and a transition obstacle course.

In the obstacle course, two youth raced to see who could finish first. Some youth were hindered by a heavy backpack (past trauma), scene distortive glasses (substance usage), or feet tied together (struggling); some had the gift of a supportive adult. Campers picked up books (education), folded towels (household chores), picked up a birth certificate/social security card, put on an apron with spatula (job flipping burgers), put monopoly money in a card board bank (money management), rode a scooter (learn to drive), and searched for a house key buried in a 5 gallon bucket of popcorn kernels (search for housing).

A number of guest speakers presented to the campers, specifically:

- Krista McCally from Iowa Total Care explained how to obtain and use the benefits of Medicaid insurance.
- Angelica Cardenas from Child & Family Policy Center presented on the Family First Act and the 2019 AMP Legislative Agenda. Two AMP youth who had participated in the Casey Cohort assisted Angelica in challenging the youth to reach out to legislators using their personal stories to drive legislation.

- Taylor Barry from NYTD reviewed the Talking Wall.
- A panel of juvenile court officers and a DHS transitional planning specialist answered questions and provided insight on how system-involved youth feel when coming to court and on working with families.
- Words Taylor and his wife Melody taught the youth to find their talent through of making a film. As they processed the experience, Words reminded them they should search for a career that uses their natural skills, but also understand that every career may call for skills outside their comfort zone.

Informing Public Policy – AMP Day on the Hill and Foster Youth in Action

The annual AMP Day on the Hill was on April 8, 2019, with over 50 youth attending. Each year AMP members, guided by AMP staff and partners, develop a legislative agenda through an iterative process of brainstorming, reviewing, and prioritizing issues of importance to youth in foster care. The process culminates in a legislative agenda⁸ that is shared with Legislators during the Day on the Hill event.

This year, AMP partnered with the Child & Family Policy Center to create a legislative cohort sponsored by a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Five youth attended a legislative training on March 30, 2019 to learn about the Families First Act and how Iowa is planning to implement it. Angelica Cardenas from CFPC traveled to four AMP councils to educate AMP members on advocacy and AMP's legislative priorities, and to gather personal stories to support the NYTD data as a means to educate legislators. Three of these youth delivered speeches at AMP Day on the Hill and will write articles for their local newspapers. Youth also plan to reach out to key legislators this session by phone and email in support of current pending legislation.

Plaques were presented to State Senator Herman Quirnbach and State Representative Bill Kressig for their continued support of youth in the foster care system. The press conference was filmed to be shared with youth who were not able to attend.

To date, the bills and ideas AMP has advocated for have been progressing through the legislative process. Three bills that AMP has supported passed this year and are becoming new laws. The State's commitment to Subsidized Guardianship has been very reassuring to AMP youth who have worked on this for four years. DHS has reported it will be piloted beginning July 1, 2019.

Annual Foster Care Youth Conference – Rise Up!

The 4th Annual AMP Conference took place on April 6, 2019 at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) in Ankeny and Des Moines, Iowa. AMP facilitators collaborated with the college to provide a venue for youth to learn about the college experience. Sixty youth from seven different councils participated in this event.

⁸ See Appendix for Legislative Agenda.

The morning session took place at the Ankeny campus and featured hands-on experiences with a wide range of academic programs. The enrollment team discussed DMACC and the steps to enroll in any college, and a student panel answered questions from the youth. Following the panel, the youth had the opportunity to attend the DMACC faculty and staff program fair and get a campus tour.

The afternoon session was held at the Des Moines campus for the keynote speaker, Kameron Middlebrooks, head of the NAACP of Iowa. There was another panel with Urban Campus students, and then the youth split up into groups for breakout sessions. The different sessions included a campus tour of the urban campus, The Career Journey, Dominos Activity, and Be You.

Mini-Camps & Mini-Conferences

Beginning last year, AMP began implementing both mini-camps and mini-conferences to draw youth into AMP and to link them with opportunities in higher education. The pared down version is a smaller commitment for foster families, and allows community colleges and programs to have face-to-face interactions with youth who may not be able to attend the statewide camp or conference.

Forrest Lake Ottumwa Camp Reunion

The AMP Camp Reunion was held at Forrest Lake Camp in Bloomfield in October 2018. Twenty youth and several staff who had participated in the summer 2018 AMP Camp were able to return to Forrest Lake for a weekend adventure. Two full days of activities and guest speakers were planned around the theme of DOWN TIME, teaching youth to decompress and recharge themselves. Activities were provided by the Des Moines Art Center, and guest speaker JCO Secalee Comstock lead the youth in a session on “working through trauma.”

Southeastern Community College (SCC) Mini-Conference

The second AMP mini-conference at the Burlington council was held at Southeastern Community College (SCC) on March 2, 2019. Approximately 40 youth attended the mini conference. The theme for the mini-conference was DEFY GRAVITY, and the entire day was designed to encourage the youth to rise to their potential, prepare for their future, and learn about college. Speakers included Dr. Michael Ash, welcoming the student to SCC, and Paisley, an energetic and upbeat a local DJ. Paisley also did some team building exercises with the youth.

State Training School Mini-Conference

The second AMP mini-conference at the Eldora-STS council was held on April 13, 2019. It is estimated that forty-five students attended the event. There were two breakout sessions for youth to attend: “Transition 101” and “How to get a Job” presented by Marshalltown Workforce. The keynote speaker was Robert Robertson, who was a student at STS twice in his teen years and served two prison sentences before changing his life. Robert now operates a community center that focuses on men in addiction in Newton, with the support of the Newton Police Department. Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC), Aftercare Services, Hawkeye Community College and Iowa Finance Authority had booths at this event.

Tootsie & Murphy’s Sibling Summer Camp

To honor a sibling that has passed away, an YSS board member has donated funds for a one day sibling camp, scheduled for July 20, 2019. This camp will allow siblings who live apart to come together for a day of camp activities, art project, and swimming. Space for up to 50 youth is available.

Ames Mini-camp

The Ames mini-camp will be held July 28, 2019. Plans are to visit the Science Center of Iowa and attend an Iowa Cubs game. Details about the mini-camp will be provided in the AMP Year-End Report for SFY 2020.

WEBSITE and COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

AMP maintains a website, www.ampiowa.org, which serves to share information about AMP councils, statewide activities, and original work of its members. The website has an updated resource section that contains videos, created in collaboration with Iowa Department of Public Health and Juvenile Justice, that feature AMP youth sharing their experiences transitioning to adulthood. The website also includes personal journeys written by AMP teens and nearly 100 poems submitted by youth.

Facebook is an additional communication channel AMP uses to connect with young people. At last count, there were 316 friends of the “Achieving Maximum Potential – Group” Facebook page. Facilitators and youth use Facebook to show other teens what happened at their AMP council meeting or advertise an event. Resources, contests, scholarships and information are posted to the page.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

AMP has an on-going relationship with Variety, The Children’s Charity in Iowa. For the past eight years, they have funded Variety AMP Camp and more recently the AMP Camp reunion. Many youth have attended and learned multiple skills during the week at camp.

Across the state, AMP councils regularly seek out and maintain partnerships with local or regional partners in various capacities. In February 2019, a joint council began in Carroll and Denison. This council engaged not only the foster care population in the area, but the Job Corp youth in Denison as well.

AMP is working with Buena Vista University in Marshalltown, Southeastern Community College in Burlington, and DMACC in Ankeny. In the next fiscal year, AMP will outreach to five more community colleges to host mini-conferences in hopes of encouraging youth to put college on their life-path. To our knowledge, AMP is the only foster youth program in the nation reaching out to multiple educational facilities to connect to our youth. The purpose of this is to address one negative outcome identified by Aftercare youth: fear of college and not understanding resources.

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

AMP continually works to be accessible and inviting to all eligible youth. Local councils and state leadership are involved in ongoing recruitment efforts to ensure that young people are aware of AMP opportunities. Each partner agency promotes AMP within their organization and in their respective communities. Many youths attend AMP because of their involvement with one of the partner agencies. Other strategies include:

- Hosting mobile meetings
- Outreach to DHS Transition Planning Specialists and Aftercare Self-Sufficiency Advocates to promote AMP with their clients

- Provide educational materials through Aftercare and Fo\$ter Fund\$
- Utilize radio, television, and print-media, including IFAPA’s Weekly Word and quarterly newsletter

AMP finished filming six new videos under the title “AMP Promise.” These videos will be released in July 2019 to TV and radio stations statewide in hopes of recruiting not only AMP members but also new foster homes for teens. The videos focus on a youth’s journey, someone who believed in them, and the successful person they are today. Subjects include:

- A former drug abuser who is now in nursing school
- A trouble maker is now pursuing a career in law enforcement
- A youth with a behavior problem plans to be a robotic engineer

QUALITY ASSURANCE EFFORTS

AMP has multiple levels of quality assurance (QA) checkpoints. The youth satisfaction survey provides a snapshot of the youths’ perspectives. The PAAT study garners feedback from youth, staff, and community members. Regular meetings and trainings for facilitators also provide opportunities for feedback and identifying concerns. Feedback forms are collected after a guest speaker to provide the facilitator instant feedback.

Additionally, YSS has quality improvement (QI) and QA teams that include AMP staff to make sure AMP policies and programs meet CARF certification. In March 2018, AMP received a three-year CARF certification.

Youth Satisfaction Survey

Across age and race/ethnicity, the youth who completed the satisfaction survey are representative of AMP’s total membership. Despite the large group of survey participants from Eldora-STs, the proportion of males who completed the survey (56.9%) is slightly less than of the total membership (62.1%).

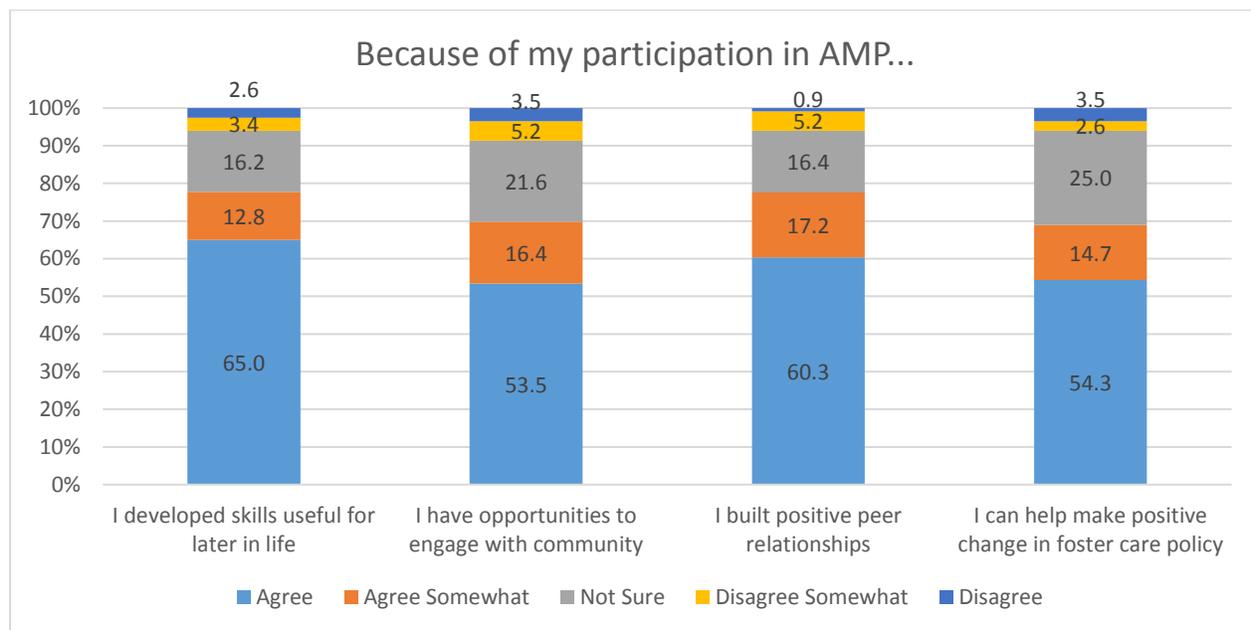
Although the highest percentage of youth reported attending their first meeting, over 50% of youth have been attending AMP meetings for more than 2 months. Of the 123 youth who completed the survey, 41 youth (33.3%) have participated in at least one AMP event, including AMP Day on the Hill, Variety AMP Camp, and an AMP service activity⁹.

Length of involvement	SFY 2019	SFY 2018
First meeting	29.8%	20.3%
Less than 2 months	14.1%	16.3%
Between 2 and 6 months	19.0%	22.2%
Between 6 and 12 months	9.1%	14.4%
Between 1 and 2 years	8.2%	11.8%
More than 2 years	19.8%	15.0%

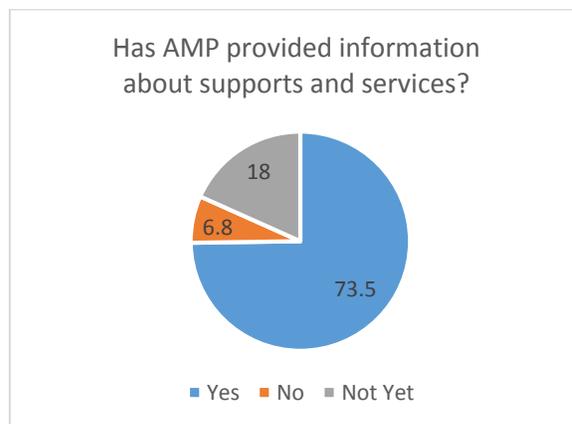
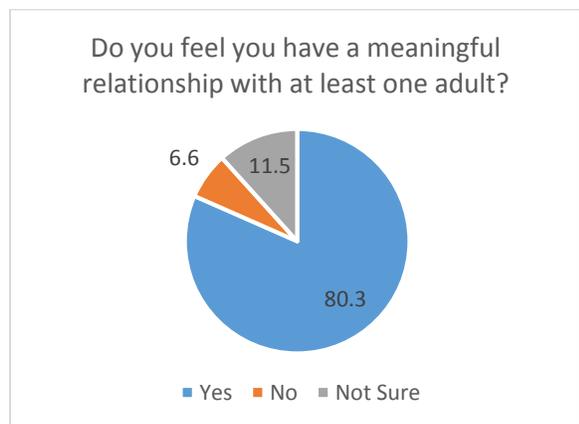
AMP appears to have had a slightly greater impact on youth personal development and immediate relationships with peers than with the larger community or the foster care system, although overall the

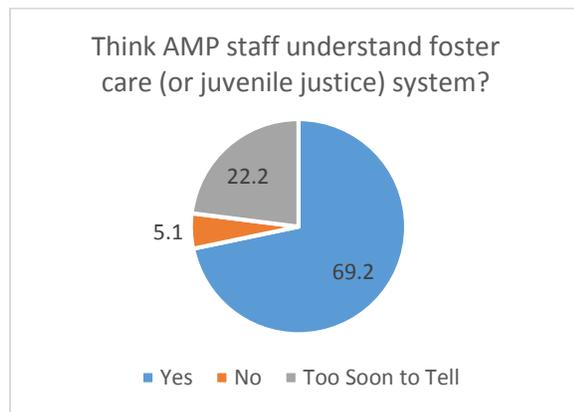
⁹ Eldora-STs youth have limited opportunity to attend other AMP events.

feedback is positive. Nearly 80% of youth agree or somewhat agree that because of AMP, they have positive relationships with peers (77.9%) and have developed skills for later in life (77.8%). Fewer youth agree or somewhat agree that because of their participation in AMP, they have been able to engage with their community (69.9%) and make positive change in foster care policy (69%).



Four contract-required questions were asked of youth, who were given options to respond with “Yes”, “No”, “Not sure/Too soon to tell/Not yet”, or “Decline”. Those who responded with “Decline” were excluded from the percentages.





Complete survey results for SFY 2019 are presented in the Appendix.

Program and Activity Assessment Tool (PAAT)

The Research Institute for Studies in Education (RISE) at Iowa State University completed a quality assessment of the AMP Councils using the Program and Activity Assessment Tool (PAAT) again this year. This tool measures how much and how well a program provides its members a learning experience that promotes positive youth development.

The PAAT tool, modified for AMP, consists of 43 items that measure critical aspects of youth development programming. Each item on the assessment uses a six-point agree-disagree Likert-type scale. The process involves surveying a small number of participants, staff, and volunteers at each site. The PAAT assessment was most recently completed by twelve AMP Councils in February 2019. Each AMP facilitator recruits six respondents from their council: two AMP youth, two facilitator or support persons, and two volunteers or community members to complete the on-line survey.

Overall, results were very positive. A total of 92 people responded in the most recent assessment – 43 youth; 24 facilitators/support person; and 25 volunteers/community members. Staff discuss the results of the PAAT assessments during face-to-face meetings, and use the results to improve the quality of programming. The full PAAT report is shared with DHS.

Facilitator Meetings and Training

Each new facilitator is required to attend a minimum of ten hours of training when they begin working with AMP. Facilitators must complete the required training with YSS, where they are oriented to YSS policy, AMP policy, and program expectations. Facilitator training is focused on the website, so each council can manage their own page on the AMP website. Follow up training can be requested available on any topic.

Each subcontracting agency may have additional training requirements for facilitators. YSS invites all AMP Facilitators to any YSS hosted training offered throughout the year. Mental Health First Aid for youth and Human Trafficking Awareness have been two popular trainings for facilitators to attend. YSS asks facilitators to have CPR/First Aid and general safety classes completed by all direct line workers.

In June, Doug Wolfe and Terri Johanson trained on the Family First Act and how it will directly impact AMP. Since this training, facilitators and staff have been modifying recruitment efforts to reach the youth that qualify for AMP based on the law definitions and the intent of Iowa to reach them. Also, with this training, facilitators will be able to provide youth greater clarity when asked about system changes due to Family First.

STAFF AND COUNCIL CHANGES

AMP had some significant changes in council status during the report period:

- The Eldora-STS facilitator started in August 2018. After training was completed, meetings with youth began in late August.
- The Mason City council closed in December 2018. The facilitator resigned and YSS Leadership decided to re-evaluate programming based on youth needs. There were no community youth attending meetings, and staff were concerned that topics were too repetitive to require programming.
- A joint council opened in Carroll and Denison. Two part-time facilitators have been hired. They began work in March 2019 and began hosting meetings in April. This is an area of Iowa AMP has never reached before.
- A new facilitator has been hired for the Davenport/Clinton area. Meetings will begin in both locations in July 2019.

APPENDIX

AMP Council Meeting Summary Form

AMP Member Information Form

2019 Satisfaction Survey

2019 Satisfaction Survey Results

AMP 2019 Legislative Agenda

AMP Council Meeting Summary Form

- Stationary meeting (regular location) Mobile meeting (facilitator went to youth)
-

Check if any of the following occurred during the meeting, and comment more specific detail if you wish.

- | | | |
|---|--|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaker, presentation, or topic discussion | <input type="checkbox"/> Social activity, party, or game | Comment: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AMP-related business or information | <input type="checkbox"/> Skill-building activity | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service activity | | |
-

What was the primary subject area for the meeting? Check the box of the closest subject area and comment more specific detail if you wish.

- | | | |
|--|--|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Life skills | Comment: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health or mental health | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human trafficking | | |
-

Name and organization of presenter or guest speaker, if applicable:

If you selected AMP-related business, check any of the following that occurred or were discussed, or write in another answer.

- | | | |
|--|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AMP Camp | <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfaction survey | Comment: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day on the Hill | <input type="checkbox"/> Preparing or supporting AMP youth speaking at event (foster parent class, community meeting, etc.) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative agenda | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New member training/What is AMP | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning for other AMP/council events | | |
-

How many youth attended?

How many community members or volunteers attended?

Check any positive youth development practices incorporated during the meeting, or write in another answer.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Break into small groups for discussion | <input type="checkbox"/> Creative activity (art, music, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Large group discussion | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition of youth, award |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth led a discussion or activity | <input type="checkbox"/> AMP member graduation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing individual talents | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
-

Additional information about the meeting, activities or occurred?

AMP Member Information Form

How old are you? Circle one: ≤12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 ≥22

What is your gender? Female Male Transgender Prefer not to answer Other

What do you consider to be your race? Check all that apply.

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> African American or Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino | <input type="checkbox"/> White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | |
-

How have you heard or learned about AMP? Check any of the following that apply.

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aftercare worker | <input type="checkbox"/> DHS worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AMP facilitator or volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member | <input type="checkbox"/> JCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AMP website | <input type="checkbox"/> Facility staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Judge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brochure or flyer | <input type="checkbox"/> Foster family | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
-

About how long have you been involved with AMP, at this council or another?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> This is one of my first meetings ever | <input type="checkbox"/> About six months to a year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than six months | <input type="checkbox"/> More than a year |
-

Have you attended any of the following in the past year? Check any that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting at another council location | <input type="checkbox"/> Plugged In and Charging conference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other AMP event (conference, service project, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> I spoke or presented somewhere (community meeting, foster parent class, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day on the Hill | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>None of the above</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AMP Camp | |
-

What is your current placement type? Select one.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted or with adoptive family | <input type="checkbox"/> Relative foster family (kinship) | <input type="checkbox"/> STS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foster family | <input type="checkbox"/> Residential treatment | <input type="checkbox"/> Not currently in foster care (<i>on your own, living with family, etc.</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PMIC | <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
-

Check if any of the following have ever applied to you:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aged out of foster care | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>None of the above</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Returned to biological family (reunified) | |

2019 Satisfaction Survey

Please feel free to skip any questions that you are not comfortable with or ready to answer.

Council Location: _____

Your Age: _____

Gender: _____ Female _____ Male _____ Other

Which race or ethnicity do you most closely identify with? (Choose one)

_____ African American or Black _____ American Indian
 _____ Asian _____ Hispanic or Latino _____ Multiracial
 _____ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander _____ White

About how long have you been involved with AMP?

_____ More than 2 years
 _____ Between 1 and 2 years
 _____ Between 6 and 12 months
 _____ Between 2 and 6 months
 _____ Less than 2 months
 _____ This is my first meeting/event

In addition to Council meetings, what other AMP events have you attended? (Check all that apply)

_____ Variety AMP Camp _____ Local Mini Camp
 _____ Rise Up Annual Conference
 _____ Mini Conference _____ AMP Day on the Hill
 _____ Visit government officials (local or state)
 _____ AMP Service Activity _____ AMP Suitcases

Because of my participation in AMP...	Agree	Somewhat agree	Not sure	Somewhat disagree	Disagree
...I have had a chance to develop skills that may be useful later in life. <i>(Like cooking, banking, getting a job)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...I have had new opportunities to engage with my community. <i>(Like community service, speaking events)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...I have built some positive relationships with my peers or made new friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...I can help make positive change in foster care policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Do you feel like you have a meaningful relationship with at least one adult you can really count on? *(Like AMP staff, parent, mentor, foster parent, facility staff, counselor, teacher, etc.)*

Yes No Decline Not sure

Has AMP provided you information about supports and services available to you? *(Like Aftercare, Transition planning, health insurance)*

Yes No Decline Not Yet

Do you think AMP staff understand the foster care system (or juvenile justice system)?

Yes No Decline Too soon to tell

Have you had at least one experience in the past year where you practiced leadership in AMP? *(Like lead part of a meeting, volunteer to speak, help set up a meeting)*

Yes No Decline Not Yet

2019 Satisfaction Survey Results

Average age of respondents: 16.4

Council	# of responses
Ames	20
Burlington	12
Cedar Rapids	15
Council Bluffs	7
Des Moines	3
Dubuque	12
Eldora STS	16
Fort Dodge	7
Marshalltown	6
Ottumwa	14
Sioux City	0
Waterloo	12
	123

Gender	
Male	70
Female	52
Other	1
	123

Race/ethnicity	
African American or Black	27
American Indian	4
Asian	1
Hispanic or Latino	10
Multiracial	13
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0
White	67
	121

Length of participation	
More than 2 years	24
Between 1 and 2 years	10
Between 6 and 12 months	11
Between 2 and 6 months	23
Less than 2 months	17
First meeting	36
	121

In addition to council meetings, what other AMP events have you attended?	
Variety AMP Camp	18
Local Mini Camp	14
Rise Up Annual Conference	11
Mini Conference	17
AMP Day on the Hill	19
Visit government officials	10
AMP Service Activity	18
AMP Suitcases	8
	41
<i>Note: Youth may have attended more than one event, so the total number of events is more than the number of respondents (n=41).</i>	

Because of my participating in AMP, I...	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Not Sure	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	# of responses
Have had a change to develop skills that may be useful later in life.	76	15	19	4	3	117
Have had new opportunities to engage with my community.	62	19	25	6	4	116
Have built some positive relationships with my peers or made new friends.	70	20	19	6	1	116
Can help make positive change in foster care policy.	63	17	29	3	4	116

	Yes	No	Decline	Not Sure/ Not Yet/ Too Soon to Tell	# of responses
Do you feel like you have a meaningful relationship with at least one adult?	98	8	2	14	122
Has AMP provided you information about supports and services available to you?	86	8	2	21	117
Do you think AMP staff understand the foster care system or juvenile justice system?	81	6	4	26	117
Have you had at least one experience in the past year where you practiced leadership in AMP?	57	18	6	37	118

AMP 2019 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Collected from all 14 AMP Foster Care Youth Councils: Ames, Burlington/Mt. Pleasant, Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Des Moines/Des Moines Mobile, Dubuque, Eldora State Training School, Fort Dodge, Marshalltown, Mason City, Ottumwa, Sioux City and Waterloo

STATE OF IOWA LEGISLATION

1. AMP youth request more foster homes for teens.

- + Youth deserve to grow up in a family. Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) will restructure child welfare to decrease congregate care. Family foster homes are not prepared for the high level of care needed, Resource families need specialized training (basic, therapeutic, enhanced) to match youth's needs.
- + Recruit more resource families willing to commit to teens.

2. AMP youth request safe and affordable housing for youth adults aging out of the foster care system.

- + Tax incentives/tax breaks for landlords who rent to transitioning youth.

3. AMP youth request when a youth adult turns 18, they need contact information for their adopted siblings.

- + Education adoptive parents on the value of sibling contacts.
- + Consider cooperative adoption for youth adopted out of Iowa's child welfare system.

4. AMP youth request that each judge ask a youth age 12 and older if they want to have their own legal representation (in addition to their Guardian ad Litem – GAL).

- + The youth can waive this if not needed.
- + It tends to be needed when the perception of "best interest" varies.

5. AMP youth request to get their driver's license before they age out of care.

- + Work with insurance companies to decrease liability for the person signing for the license.
- + Underwrite state liability insurance for these situations.

LEGISLATION FROM LAST YEAR

1. AMP youth request additional specialized housing options be available for youth; for minors with mental health needs and for all youth transitioning out of foster care. This would include:

- + Emergency shelters are not staffed or trained as treatment centers, creating risky situations for youth with, and without, extreme mental health issues who reside in shelter care. AMP youth request safety, protection and continued family and community connections in our shelters while our peers who need mental health services get their services at treatment facilities with trained staff.
- + Independent housing options for youth, age 18-24, who would benefit from structure and supervision to further prepare them for adulthood.

2. AMP youth request that all youth in the state of Iowa, who are educated in their homes, be dual-enrolled in a local community school for at least physical education or extra-curricular activities. This is for safety.

- + Education Oversight/Regulation for all educational settings.