



MY-CIL Practice Brief #3

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To what extent are CILs serving out-of-school youth from minority backgrounds?

In this brief: This brief includes selected findings from a MY-CIL survey that collected information on CIL services for out-of-school youth (OSY) with disabilities from minority backgrounds. The survey was completed by 218 federally funded CILs in 2020 and provided information on the characteristics of OSY that they served, the breadth of services they provided, services they deemed most effective, and challenges CILs faced in increasing and improving services for this population. In this brief, we share findings on the prevalence of OSY among CIL consumers, and the racial, ethnic, and gender composition of their OSY consumers. Overall, we found that all CILs are serving OSY, though to varying degrees. CILs reported that minority youth comprised a large share of OSY consumers for some CILs and much smaller for others. In subsequent briefs, we will share findings from the survey on specific services that CILs reported providing to OSY and on the services CILs deemed most effective. The next briefs will also highlight challenges CILs face in increasing and improving services for this population.

About the MY-CIL Project: Minority Youth and Centers for Independent Living (MY-CIL) is a collaborative effort of Hunter College, the Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY), Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU), and Mathematica. The National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research and the Office of Independent Living Programs at the Administration for Community Living funded MY-CIL to improve outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities who have minority backgrounds and have completed or otherwise left secondary education. MY-CIL seeks to produce and share knowledge that empowers Centers for Independent Living (CILs) to improve outcomes for OSY from minority backgrounds.

Clarifying terms:

“Youth from minority backgrounds”: MY-CIL uses the term youth from minority backgrounds to refer to transition aged youth and young adults (ages 14-24) from nationally recognized racial and ethnic minority groups.

“Out-of-school youth with disabilities (OSY)”: MY-CIL uses the term OSY to refer to transition aged youth and young adults (ages 14-24) who have completed or otherwise left secondary education.

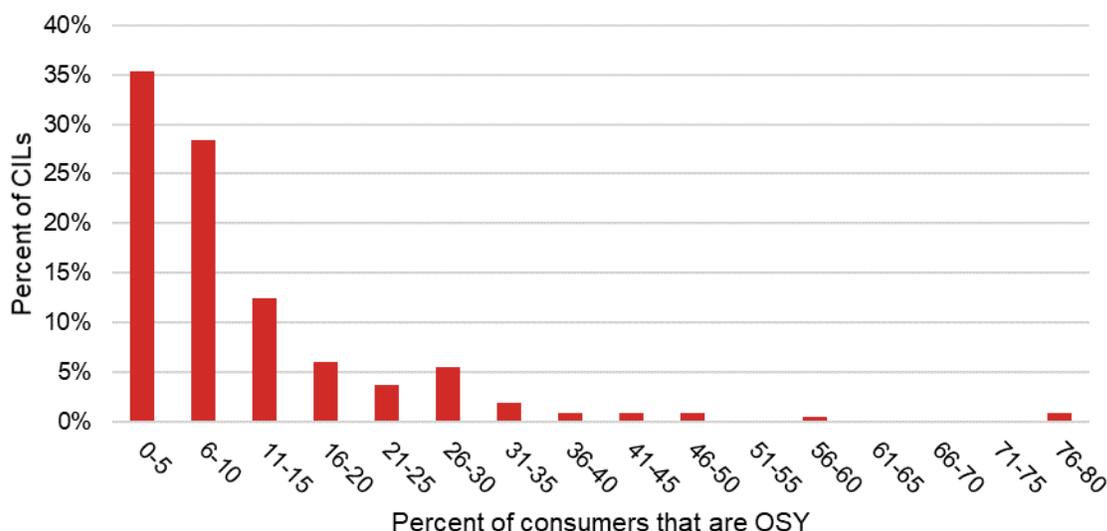
To what extent are CILs providing services to OSY?

All CILs reported serving OSY, though the share of consumers that were OSY varied (Figure 1). For example, only 3 CILs (about 1 percent of respondents) reported that OSY made up greater than half of their consumers and 25 CILs (11 percent) reported that they comprised 25 percent or more of their consumers. A larger percentage, roughly 65 percent of CILs, reported that OSY were less than 10 percent of their consumers.

For comparison, OSY were 2.8 percent of individuals with disabilities ages 14 to 64 in 2018 (IPUMS, 2021), and OSY and in-school youth and young

adults comprised 18 percent of all CIL consumers in 2019 (Hocker, 2020).¹

Figure 1. Percent of CIL consumers that are OSY, distribution across surveyed CILs (N = 212 CILs surveyed)



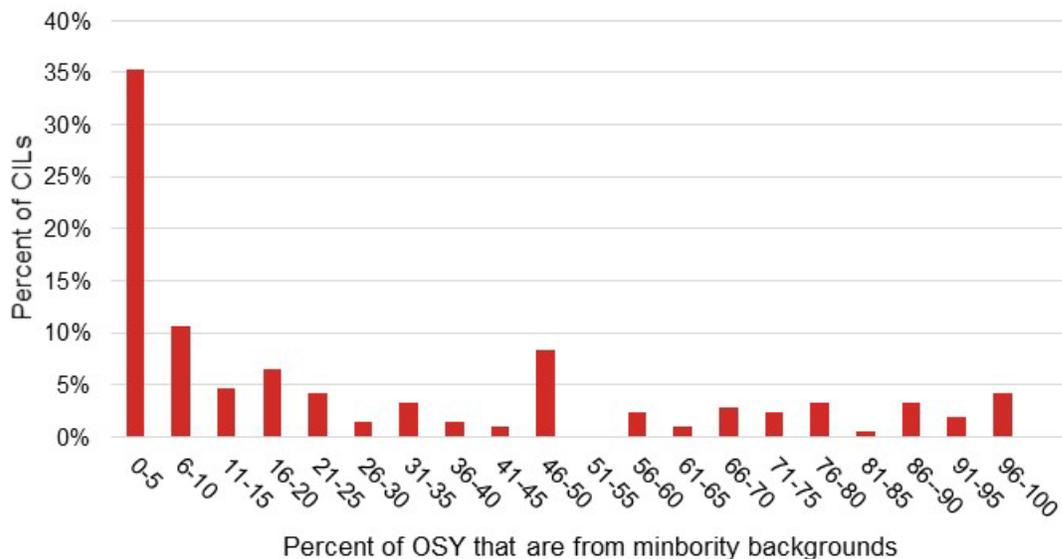
While many CILs include few OSY among their consumers, this rate could be expected to increase over time. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 required CILs to assist OSY with transition, as a core CIL service. While many CILs have offered services to youth with disabilities for decades, WIOA elevated OSY as a target population and transition as a core service for CILs. Many CILs are working to expand their capacity to provide transition services and to reach and serve OSY in particular.

What is the racial, ethnic, and gender composition of OSY consumers?

For a moderate number of CILs (46 CILs, or 21 percent of respondents), OSY consumers were a “majority-minority” – that is, over 50 percent of the OSY consumers are racial or ethnic minorities (Figure 2). However, this rate varied substantially across CILs (Figure 2). For 77 CILs, or 35 percent of respondents, less than five percent of OSY consumers were from minority backgrounds. The distribution across CILs was highly skewed; this is not surprising given that CILs are located across the country in urban, suburban, and rural areas, across which the race and ethnicity of populations varies substantially. CIL directors may find it helpful to compare statistics on the presence of OSY from various racial and ethnic groups in their CIL’s community to their representation among their consumers. MY-CIL is producing these statistics and will provide this information to CILs in forthcoming data briefs.

¹ Please note that data on the prevalence of OSY with disabilities may not fully represent the extent to which OSY exist in the United States, as it is difficult to collect data on disconnected youth. About one in nine people ages 16 to 24 in the United States is currently disconnected from school, employment, and possibly also other systems (Mendelson et al., 2018).

Figure 2. Percent of OSY consumers that are from minority backgrounds, distribution across surveyed CILs (N = 212 CILs surveyed)



OSY consumers come from a range of racial, ethnic, and language backgrounds, with the composition varying substantially across CILs. To convey this range succinctly, we present several statistics for broad categories of race, ethnicity, and language: the average (mean), 25th percentile, 50th percentile (median), and 75th percentile (Table 1). The rate of OSY consumers who identified as Black/African American varied across CILs, ranging from less than 5 percent to 39 percent or higher. Similarly, the share of OSY consumers that identified as more than one race or was of Hispanic or Latinx ethnicity, varied substantially across CILs. A small share of CILs had OSY consumers that were American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. These CILs were in parts of the country with a larger number of people from these backgrounds. These statistics show that across all CILs, consumers come from a diverse range of racial and ethnic backgrounds but that the specific makeup of consumers at a specific CIL also reflects the local population.

Many OSY consumers speak a primary language other than English. On average across CILs, 19 percent of their OSY consumers spoke a primary language other than English. Importantly, CILs also reported having staff that spoke languages other than English. On average, CILs reported having staff with fluency across three languages (not shown).

Table 1. Race and ethnicity of OSY consumers

	Average (Mean)	25th percentile	50th percentile (median)	75th percentile
Race				
White	56.9	27.6	50.0	76.9
Black or African American	29.3	4.9	21.4	39.2
American Indian or Alaska Native	3.6	0.0	0.0	2.5
Asian	3.1	0.0	0.0	4.2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Two or more races	10.8	0.0	3.8	15.2
Ethnicity				
Hispanic or Latinx	20.7	3.6	12.9	30.4
Language				
Primary language other than English	19.2	0.0	9.1	25.0

Gender and gender identity may be an important aspect for CILs to consider as they expand outreach to OSY. A small number of CILs reported serving OSY that identified as non-binary or other gender. Non-binary or other gender could be unspoken identities for many OSY; they may also face additional barriers in the community. A higher share of OSY consumers identify as male relative to female or non-binary and other gender. This is consistent with the gender composition of OSY nationally (IPUMS, 2021).

Table 2. Gender of OSY consumers

	Mean	25th percentile	50th percentile (median)	75th percentile
Male	54.7	41.7	50.0	61.5
Female	45.4	33.3	45.7	52.0
Non-binary and other gender	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

Discussion

Consistent with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, all CILs report serving OSY consumers. While OSY represent a small share of CIL consumers for many CILs, overall the share is larger than their representation among the population of people with disabilities. In addition, the need for CIL services by OSY may rise in coming years, with the disruption in schooling, accommodations, and transition services during the COVID-19 pandemic (Belsha 2021) and a growing mental health crisis among youth and young adults (Murthy 2021).

Among consumers that are OSY, the share that are from any or specific racial and ethnic minority groups varies substantially across CILs. While some of the variation in race and

ethnicity likely reflects racial and ethnic differences across the country, individual CILs may consider ways to increase outreach and engagement of OSY, including those from minority backgrounds. Outreach efforts could begin with obtaining data on the prevalence and characteristics of OSY with disabilities in their communities. MY-CIL will provide this information to CILs in forthcoming data briefs in Spring 2022. This information could help CILs develop customized strategies to increase awareness in the community of the services the CIL offers and to build their capacity to serve OSY. As described in [the first MY-CIL practice brief](#), one promising practice includes developing collaborative partnership with agencies and other community-based organizations, such as those within specific racial or ethnic communities, community centers, or faith-based organizations. A second promising practice includes investments in cultural competence of staff and making cultural adaptations to programs.

MY-CIL training and technical assistance to increase and improve services to OSY

MY-CIL offers CILs support to increase and improve services to OSY from minority backgrounds, through a series of learning collaboratives and through one-on-one support to develop and test pilot programs.

Learning collaboratives. The MY-CIL Learning Collaborative involves much more than training. During the second Learning Collaborative, convened from April 2021 to November 2021, facilitators have worked with a dedicated group of six CILs to support one another as they plan to create or expand programs and services for youth and young adults with disabilities who are out of postsecondary school, with an emphasis on racial and ethnic minority groups. The first Learning Collaborative was convened from August 2020 to March 2021. During each collaborative, participants have access to:

- Leaders who are well-versed in working with youth with disabilities who are out of postsecondary school and from racial and ethnic minority groups
- Opportunities to learn, share promising practices, and brainstorm solutions to challenges with CIL peers
- Monthly meetings and additional workshops and coaching sessions
- Resources to help with goal setting and organizational planning

Stay tuned for the next practice briefs:

Upcoming practice briefs will describe services that CILs have provided to OSY from minority backgrounds, services staff identified as most critical for independent living, and barriers CILs have identified to serving this consumer group. MY-CIL will also be sharing data briefs customized to each CIL on the characteristics of OSY in the counties they serve.

To learn about participation in the next learning collaborative, contact Joey Vega at Jose.Vega@memorialhermann.org or 832-454-1057.

Customized development of pilot programs. MY-CIL also offers more intensive, one-on-one support. MY-CIL advisors facilitate activities to help CIL staff build capacity and develop pilot strategies to increase and improve services for OSY with disabilities from minority backgrounds. Collaboratively with staff, we identify problems, analyze root causes, develop strategies, and road-test potential interventions. In the months ahead, MY-CIL will continue with one-on-one learning to assist CILs in assessing the feasibility and benefit of new pilot interventions. If your CIL is interested in participating in future pilot program activities, contact Frank Martin at fmartin@mathematica-mpr.com or 202-484-4684.

To learn more about MY-CIL

To learn more about MY-CIL, please visit: <https://minorityyouthcil.com/>

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