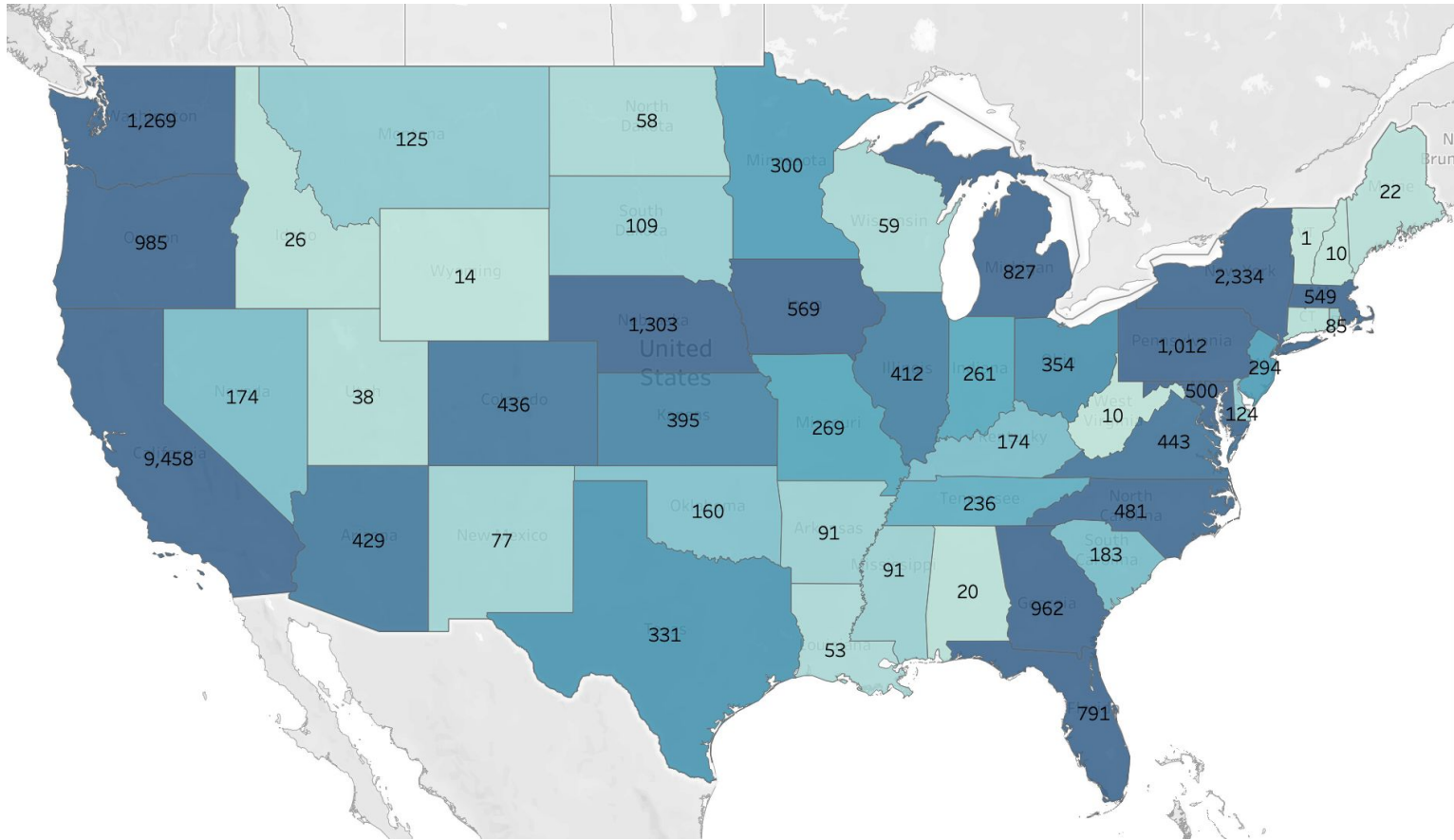




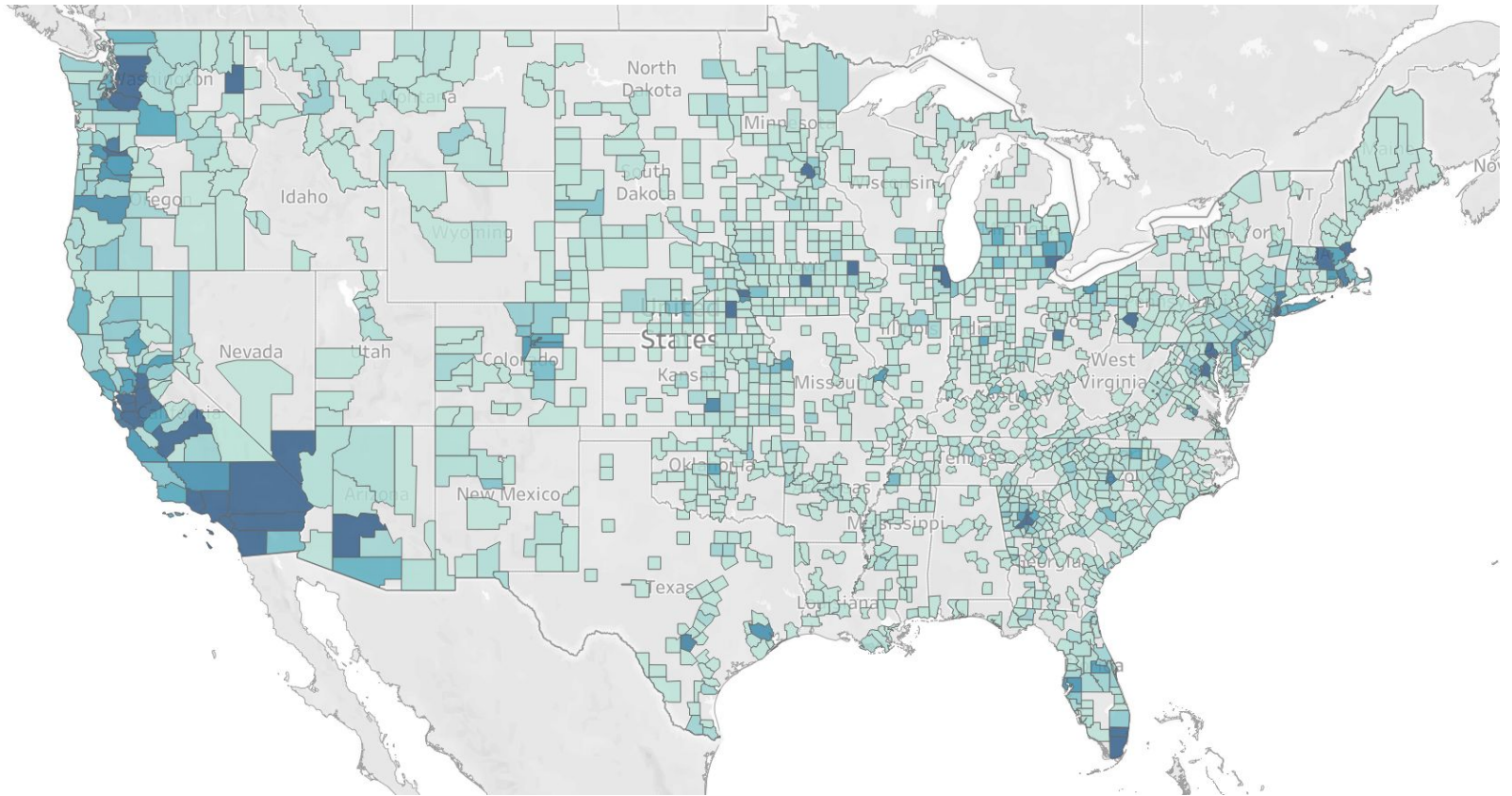
think of us

LEVERAGING INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY
TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF YOUTH
AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE

Where do the 27,000+ current and former foster youth live?



Where do they live?



Demographics

Table 2: Summary of Gender

Gender	Number of Respondents	Share of Respondents
Female ¹	15,166	61.4%
Male ²	7,778	31.5%
Other ³	292	1.2%
Unknown	1,459	5.9%
Total	24,695	100.0%

Note: (1) Includes cisgender female and trans female.

(2) Includes cisgender male and trans male.

(3) Includes two spirit, non-binary and gender fluid.

Demographics

A. Who are the Respondents? As shown in Tables 1-4 below, most respondents are between the ages of 18 to 21 years old (49.7%), identify as female (61.4%),^[1] and are Black or African American (33.4%). In addition, 19.8% of the respondents are LGBTQA+.^[2]

Table 1: Summary of Age Groups

Age	Number of Respondents	Share of Respondents
From 14 to 17 years old	5,188.00	21.0%
From 18 to 21 years old	12,274.00	49.7%
From 22 to 23 years old	3,334.00	13.5%
From 24 to 27 years old	3,899.00	15.8%
Total	24,695	100.0%

^[1] Includes cisgender and trans women.

^[2] Percentage is calculated by summing from Table 3: Female and LGBQA+, Male and LGBQA+, Trans female, Trans male and Other LGBQA+ (4,897) divided by the total number of respondents (24,695).

What are their self-stated needs?

Table 4: Top 5 Needs		
Question	Word	Number of times the word was used
What do you need money for?	car	5,535
	bills	4,568
	school	4,309
	food	4,081
	clothes	3,269
Besides money, what do you feel is your next biggest need that you could use support on?	school	2,840
	housing	2,157
	food	1,673
	car	1,653
	college	1,554

Current and Former Foster Youth Connections

A. What did youth tell us about the connections in their life? Respondents were asked about their community connection and access to social support:

- Nearly **50% of respondents reported that they had a personal connection** that they could rely on for advice and support (like an aunt, uncle, teach, coach, neighbor, or pastor)
- **40.1% report having a friend they can rely upon for advice and support**, indicating that most respondents have found one or more sources of community support, though not necessarily directly through their interaction with the foster care system.
- **12.8% of them responding that they wished they had more connections** to help them through the pandemic

What are their self-stated needs?

Table 6: Respondents' Requests

Race	Number of Respondents	Share of Respondents
Need support being <u>connected</u> to professional in the career I want to work in	9,436	38.2%
Need help creating a budget	9,125	37.0%
Need professional interview clothes	7,044	28.5%
Help applying for Food Stamps	6,308	25.5%
Need help writing a resume	4,212	17.1%
Someone to help me fill out my housing application	4,161	16.8%
Need a bank account	3,990	16.2%
Need help preparing for a job interview	3,701	15.0%
Need support applying for public assistance	3,656	14.8%
Need support applying for unemployment	2,768	11.2%
Need help paying for a therapist	2,165	8.8%
Need help finding a doctor	1,797	7.3%
Need help getting incurrence (sic)	1,490	6.0%

What are their self-stated needs in LA?

Table Requested Assistance

Total_requests_submitted_to_thinkofus	variable	count	percent
3851	Need support being connected to professional in the career I want to work in	1612	41.9%
3851	Need professional interview clothes	1351	35.1%
3851	Need help creating a budget	1344	34.9%
3851	Speak with someone to express myself	1193	31.0%
3851	Provide tips on coping with my situation	1131	29.4%
3851	Help applying for Food Stamps	1030	26.7%
3851	Video chat with someone a tiny bit older to get tips and advise	761	19.8%
3851	Text mental health coach	755	19.6%
3851	Need help writing a resume	752	19.5%
3851	Need help preparing for a job interview	738	19.2%
3851	Someone to help me fill out my housing application	730	19.0%

Project Leapfrog: Thriving Out of Foster Care

Youth Network Maps




Analysis of common themes in foster youth drawings that represent the people in their lives.

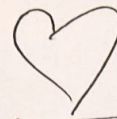
Context: During participatory research workshops with foster youth, participants were asked to draw the people in their lives. As a follow up, they were later tasked to identify in green people that they trusted, and in yellow people they could ask for help.

THEME 1



MENTAL MODELS OF “CLOSENESS”

While the network maps varied hugely with regards to the number and type of people foster youth considered to be in their lives, it was relatively easy for youth to determine which of those people were “closer” to them than others. They were either able to prioritize or rank the different sub-groups of people they identified, or excluded anyone that was not a part of their “inner circle” (however way they called it).


— Jose M.   




1st

— Tempest  

Work


— Suana 






— Kristy 





8th

— Allen 

— Malysia  

— Asunte 



2nd

— Bong  

— Sage

Family
Foster Family

This youth established a clear ranking (from first to fourth) of the different sub-groups of people in their life (in order: romantic partner, friends, co-workers, foster family).

—  Kim ~~the~~ 

2th

Close Friends



People I know (others)



Me



This youth differentiated between their "close friends" and "others."

Family ^{mom/dad}



A Boy friend



THEME 2

DEFINITION OF “FAMILY” FOR PAID STAFF

It was very evident that, though they were not blood relatives, some of the paid staff foster youth encountered in their lives meant so much to them that they considered them to be “like family.” This poses an interesting challenge when it comes to aging out foster youth, as the purview of paid staff comes to an end.

Family

1

Friends

Fernando
(Brother)

~~John~~
(ILP
Case Manager)

Rosie
(Best friend)

~~Francisco~~
(Dad)

Francisco
(Brother)



SARAH (ILP)

COMMUNITY



Story. N
WHITE
95127

The most prominent relationship this youth highlighted is the one with their ILP case manager.

her family!

BSF

Lauren

(Friend)



DAD

MOM

Little



THEME 3

IMPORTANCE OF PEERS AND SIBLINGS

Asking youth to identify “the people in their lives” was intentionally broad so as not to focus only on adults. As a matter of facts, many youth disclosed having their closest relationships with siblings, friends, and/or significant others. When talking about the need for foster youth to have a “significant adult connection,” the role that these peers (and siblings if they are still minors) can play may be overlooked.

Bola

A great friend of mine that always look out for me

Blane

Older brother makes me motivated to complete my goals as a musician



Ifra

A put 100% trust because he was around for every emergency I had in NY

This youth's network map is comprised solely of two friends and a sibling.