Treehouse is committed to becoming an anti-racist, trauma-informed organization. We commit to long-term sustained action to transform systems and remove the barriers that disproportionately impact our youth.
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The 2020-2021 school year was a year like no other. The pandemic brought unforeseen challenges to our work to ensure every child who has experienced foster care has the opportunities and support they need to pursue their dreams and launch successfully into independence. In the face of so much disruption, it became eminently clear that supporting the 7000+ youth experiencing foster care in Washington State became more important than ever.

A COVID-19 impact survey we conducted at the start of the school year found that 44% of Pre-K-12 students needed academic remediation, tutoring or homework assistance, and 36% of foster and kinship caregivers needed more help to meet the educational needs of the youth and young adults in their care.

I am grateful for the way our community has rallied to support our agency and our participants so that we could overcome these barriers, and I am so proud of how Treehouse as an organization used this as an opportunity to adapt and innovate to meet the needs of our youth.

• Since the pandemic hit in March 2020, Treehouse has committed to maintaining the same level of service to youth and young adults, pivoting to deliver our programs remotely and with more flexibility. Treehouse assisted youth and caregivers in navigating school requirements during remote learning and implemented online ordering at the Treehouse Store to ensure youth throughout the state could have access to clothing and supplies.

• To address the educational and social emotional impacts of COVID-19, the Treehouse CARES Project was created to pay for tutoring and eliminate financial barriers to success in school for youth in foster care across Washington State. Caregivers shared that academic success and the well-being of youth improved with the funded tutoring and extracurricular activities. This project is supported by $1.345 million federal CARES dollars through December 2021.

• Treehouse secured an additional $4.89 million from the Washington State Legislature to complete our Graduation Success statewide expansion over the next two years. This is a critical step in our vision to build on the 1,300 youth we currently serve annually and bring Graduation Success to the remaining 600 high-school students in foster care statewide by 2023. This ambitious growth requires Treehouse to raise an additional $1m to match the state investment.

Seeing the Class of 2021 reach graduation was particularly poignant this year. We are thrilled for this year’s 159 Graduation Success participants who completed high school! We look forward to continuing to follow them on their journeys and supporting them through our Launch Success program as they navigate the unique challenges of adulthood and independence, particularly during a pandemic.

I am excited about the journey ahead for Treehouse—and invite you to join us as we strive engage with youth and caregivers in more meaningful ways and tackle the work needed to make systemic change at the root level. We appreciate your partnership and support on the path ahead.

With gratitude,

Lisa Chin, CEO
6,623 youth & young adults received academic and other essential support needed to succeed in school and in life.

**Essentials & Experiences**

- **2,461** youth received clothing, school supplies, and financial assistance for academic and extracurricular activities.
- **4,493** youth enjoyed a meaningful gift through our Holiday Magic program to brighten their holiday season.

**Fostering Futures**

- **1,193** youth received assistance navigating academic barriers through our Educational Advocacy program.
- **1,287** youth worked with Graduation Success staff to set and achieve academic goals and create plans for their future.
- **292** young adults were provided coaching and financial and material support to ensure a successful transition to independence after high school.
At Treehouse, we envision – and strive to create – a world where every child that has experienced foster care has the opportunities and support they need to pursue their dreams and launch successfully into independence.

Treehouse offers programs for children, youth and young adults ages 0-26 across Washington State. Youth are referred to our services in a variety of different ways, most often through their Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) caseworker or case manager. Once a youth reaches high school, they remain eligible for some of our services regardless of their foster care status.

*The data on this page includes youth served by our programs excluding Holiday Magic. (N = 3,729)*

**Legal Status**
- 80% Washington State Foster Care
- 15% Other (Parental or Third-Party Custody, Adopted, Aged Out, Unknown)
- 3% Federal/ Private Agency Foster Care
- 3% Tribal Jurisdiction

**Age**
- 12% Age 0-5
- 20% Age 6-10
- 12% Age 11-13
- 28% Age 14-17
- 24% Age 18-21
- 3% Age 22+

**Primary Race**
- 35% White
- 21% Multi-Racial
- 16% African or African American
- 10% Hispanic or Latino
- 9% Native American
- 6% Unknown
- 4% Asian or Pacific Islander

**Gender**
- 47% Female
- 47% Male
- 5% Undisclosed
- 1% Transgender
Graduates of 2021 persevered through a challenging year. Treehouse partners with students as they work towards completing high school with a plan for their future. We are thrilled for these seniors as they take the next step in their journey!

**Post-Secondary Plans**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undecided/Unknown</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Year College</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Year College</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical/Vocational School</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career/Employment</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>1%</td>
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Thanks to the investments made by our generous community, dedicated Treehouse staff—and the incredible resilience and determination of our youth—159 students served in Graduation Success completed high school in 2021.
**Class of 2021: Why is Graduating Important?**

**Abbie, Roosevelt High School:** “Graduating is important to me because I can move forward in my life. In 10 years, I see myself as a commercial pilot. One word that describes how graduating makes me feel is ‘proud.’”

**Aeirieck, Dolan Academy High School:** “Graduating is important to me because it gives me opportunities. One thing I’m excited about after graduating is I get to support myself and my family. How I feel about that is I’m enthusiastic!”

**Alexis, Mountain View High School:** “Graduating is important to me because I’ve spent so much time working to be able to graduate, and I’m really glad that I finally get to. In 10 years, I see myself working as a taxidermist doing my own private thing. And one word to describe how graduating makes me feel is ‘elated.’”

**Cynthia, Ferris High School:** “Graduating is important to me because I’ll be the first one to graduate high school and go straight to college. In 10 years, I see myself—actually, I don’t really know what I see myself doing, but I know I’ll be helping people. One word to describe how graduation makes me feel—kind of stressed, but actually really happy that my dream is coming true.”

**Anai, Marysville Pilchuck High School:** “Graduating is very important to me because I have worked really hard to be where I am now. In 10 years, I see myself becoming a veterinarian and helping all the animals that I can. One word to describe how graduating makes me feel is ‘very accomplished.’”

**Brayan, Cleveland STEM High School:** “Graduating is important to me because it’s the next big step in life where my decisions determine whether I succeed or fail as I become more independent. In 10 years, I see myself working as a dentist. One word to describe how I feel about graduating is ‘excited.’”

**Ali, Shorecrest High School:** “I’d say graduating is important to me because I feel like my diploma will give me an answer every time I look at it and wonder why you did that for four years. One word to describe how I’m feeling is ‘excited.’ In 10 years, I see myself doing good.”

**Daniel, Franklin High School:** “Graduation is important to me because I think I worked really hard this last year to get my diploma and finally getting into college. I see myself in 10 years as a social worker helping other kids that are in the same situation.”
2021 Legislative Wins

- Treehouse secured an additional $4.89 million to complete our Graduation Success statewide expansion over the next two years. This is the culmination of a dream we launched in 2011 and is one critical step toward bringing Graduation Success to the remaining 600 high-school students in foster care statewide by 2023.

- All of our current state funding for Graduation Success, Educational Advocacy and Driver's Assistance was renewed for the 2021 – 2023 biennium.

- Senate Bill 5184 requires each K-12 public school to establish a school building point of contact for students in foster care- a huge step towards coordinating services between OSPI, DCYF and Treehouse.

- While 45% of youth in foster care are placed with relatives, their caregivers cannot receive financial support and services without becoming licensed foster parents. Senate Bill 5151 creates a streamlined, child-specific foster parent licensing process, improving relatives' access to monthly foster care stipends, training and support.

- Approximately 40% of youth in Washington's juvenile rehabilitation facilities have experienced foster care and many meet criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder. The legislature made significant investments to address trauma, access to behavioral therapy and substance abuse treatment, and improve reentry options and aftercare supports.
Support During COVID-19

Educational Impact of COVID-19
At the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, Treehouse surveyed staff about the impacts of COVID-19 on Pre-K-12 students in our programs who have experienced foster care. We learned that:

- **44%** Needed academic remediation, tutoring or homework assistance.
- **36%** Of foster and relative caregivers need more support in meeting their youth's educational needs.

Treehouse Support
- Since the pandemic hit in March 2020, Treehouse is committed to providing the services youth and young adults need to overcome challenges caused by the pandemic. We have pivoted to deliver our programs remotely and with more flexibility.
- We assisted youth and caregivers in navigating school expectations and requirements during remote learning.
- We offered online ordering through the Treehouse Store with no contact pick-up and delivery, and organized multiple pop-up shops.
- We provided increased support and resource navigation for caregivers.
- We hosted a second annual virtual summer experience series for youth and young adults, featuring topics on careers, post-secondary education and life skills.

COVID-19 Relief Dollars
Treehouse's Policy and Strategy Team shared our survey findings with the Governor's Office, OSPI, state legislators and school district superintendents and encouraged them to deploy federal emergency relief funds to specifically support the students we serve.

This advocacy resulted in **$1.345 million for the Treehouse CARES Project**, providing time limited support for tutoring and barrier removal to address the educational and social emotional impacts of the pandemic.

In addition, Treehouse began the process of distributing **$1.65 million in pandemic aid** to young adult alumni of foster care ages 23–26. We are proud to be a trusted partner of DCYF in addressing the impacts of the pandemic.
To address the educational and social emotional impacts of COVID-19, the Treehouse CARES Project was created to pay for tutoring and eliminate financial barriers to success in school for youth in foster care and young adults in Extended Foster Care (EFC) across Washington State. This project is funded with $1.345 million federal CARES dollars through December 2021.

Request Categories

- Paid Tutoring | 36%
- Academic/Career Goals | 16%
  - Learning Tools
  - School Supplies & Fees
  - Technological Devices
  - Incentives
- Identity Development | 47%
  - Extracurricular Activities
  - Experiences

Why was tutoring needed?

- Grade Improvement: 106 youth
- Learning Study Skills: 74 youth
- Subject Mastery: 73 youth
- Exam Prep: 28 youth

Who received funding support so far?

- 272 Youth & Young Adults
- 4-21 Age Range
- 62% Youth of Color
- 11% Extended Foster Care

Feedback

- Caregivers have reported youth passing their classes after receiving tutoring funded through the CARES Project.
- Caregivers appreciate that we can pay for extracurricular activities because they contribute to youths’ physical well-being and mental health.

What We’re Learning

- After receiving multiple tutoring requests for the same youth and young adults, we removed the 12-session limit for requests. Families are now encouraged to save time and request as many sessions as needed.
- Verifying eligibility on an individual basis caused significant delays so we worked with DCYF to establish a new process, allowing us to verify eligibility for multiple youth at a time.
- Processing delays caused by limited business hours or missing vendor payment information were mitigated by offering direct payment options for caregivers and youth in EFC.
- Many who have received funding stated that they wish Treehouse could continue offering these services, specifically paid tutoring beyond December 2021 when our CARES funding ends.
## Essentials & Experiences

### Achievements

- Holiday Magic was able to fulfill every special needs request and ship almost every single gift on time. Thank you to all of our partners and volunteers for making this happen during a very unique holiday season.

- In addition to processing Just-in-Time Funding requests, our team mobilized to distribute COVID-19 relief funds through the CARES Project and pandemic aid payments.

- The Treehouse Store developed a new model for outdoor pop-up shops in order to provide youth and families with the opportunity to safely shop in person.

- Thanks to various lobbyists, advocates and legislators, Treehouse received an additional $500,000 for Driver’s Assistance over the next program year, which will allow auto insurance funding for more youth and young adults.

### Driver’s Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Youth Served</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Driver’s Ed Classes Funded</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Auto Insurance Payments</td>
<td>1,073</td>
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### Holiday Magic

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Youth Served</td>
<td>4,493</td>
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### Just-in-Time Funding

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<tr>
<td>Number of Youth Served</td>
<td>1,215</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Requests Funded</td>
<td>3,669</td>
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### Treehouse Store

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Youth Served</td>
<td>1,497</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Store Visits</td>
<td>2,954</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Items Distributed</td>
<td>50,277</td>
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</table>
One of the Graduation Success participants had their Treehouse Education Specialist submit a Driver’s Assistance request for driver’s education courses. Our team was able to process a payment of over $500 to start their traffic safety courses. When the request was approved the Education Specialist shared: “This opportunity is really and seriously, potentially LIFE CHANGING for this youth! LIFE CHANGING! Thank you! ❤️”

A caregiver submitted a taekwondo request for a youth and shared this: “[Youth] struggles with body awareness and PTSD symptoms. As part of her therapy, she has mentioned the dream of being able to defend herself against the people who have hurt her in the past. We would love to help her accomplish the goal of empowerment and help improve the above symptoms and have fun.”

Our staff get excited when we find the perfect item for a child. A caregiver reached out via email after receiving a package from the Store. She said: “I can’t even begin to describe how perfect the items are that were picked out for her. Even with just a short description, they really got it right. The amazing books on her Native American culture will be treasured forever. Thank you all so much for being so thoughtful and caring during this scary time!”

A caregiver called us to make a special Holiday Magic request. The youth has to make lots of trips to Seattle Children’s, and she was hoping to get him a LeapFrog Learning System to keep him entertained in the car and help make sure he keeps up in school. She was thrilled that we were able to send one over and is confident he will love the gift.
By the Numbers

- Number of Youth: 1,193
- Number of Caregivers, Social Workers, Community Providers and School Personnel Trained: 600+
- Number of Schools: 700+

Expected Outcomes & Indicators

The outcomes below contribute to the long-term impacts of removing major educational barriers and increasing the likelihood of youth reaching high school graduation.

- Supportive relationships with adults who can advocate for them.
- Receiving relevant academic support.
- Increased school stability and reduced absences.

Achievements

- Remote learning and the transition back to school presented many unique challenges for students and their families. Education Advocates collaborated with their networks—from school staff, caregivers, DCYF, transportation departments, foster care liaisons, and daycare staff—to center each youth’s unique situation and work together for a solution.
- Education Advocates increased their communication with and direct support for caregivers, including providing assistance in resource navigation and ensuring caregivers felt empowered to advocate for their youth.

What We’re Learning

- In addition to direct service, we are actively working at a systems level to reduce the need for Educational Advocacy by ensuring school staff are equipped with the knowledge and resources to support youth, and strengthening collaboration between the systems that impact the lives of youth in foster care.
- Our work to become an anti-racist and trauma-informed organization is leading to deeper examination and discussions around the inequities and racism that youth are experiencing. Along with strategizing ways to better address the situations youth face, Education Advocates seek to utilize their role at the intersection of the foster care and education systems to encourage conversations and action.
By the Numbers

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Youth</td>
<td>1,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Schools</td>
<td>300+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of School Districts</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access to Resources

Youth received material and resource support to explore interests, engage in their communities and remove barriers to their success.

More than 2,282 Just-in-Time Funding requests were provided for 689 youth in Graduation Success.

Types of Funding

- Academic & Career Goals
- Emergent Needs (basic needs, housing, transportation, etc.)
- Experiences & Identity Development

Goal Setting & Skill Building

88% of youth set personally meaningful goals as they worked toward high school completion and beyond. Youth made progress on 3,538 goals.

Youth Wellbeing

Nearly half of the youth in Graduation Success were identified as having a mental health need. Education Specialists focused on supporting the social and emotional needs of youth and assisted youth in connecting to resources for mental health issues that have been exacerbated during these times.

Educational Advocacy

There were more than 16,000 interventions related to addressing education barriers like school transitions, special education needs, disciplinary actions and credit retrieval.

Partnering with Support Networks

More than 16,900 interventions were provided in direct communication with a social worker, caregiver, school personnel or other service provider.

Achievements

- Treehouse secured an additional $4.89 million to complete our statewide expansion over the next two years. Our Graduation Success leadership team has been hard at work making plans to bring Graduation Success to the remaining 600 high school students in foster care statewide by 2023.
- Our Education Specialists have formed deeper partnerships with school staff. Collaboration and compassion are key elements of how our staff are navigating COVID-19 with our partners and youth.
- The flexible nature of Graduation Success allowed our staff members to adapt their services during the pandemic to each youth and family's unique needs and goals.

What We’re Learning

- While our staff found creative, unique ways to meet youths’ needs remotely, we are aware of how important in-person learning and interactions are to the educational success and well-being of many youth.
- We reinforced our program supports in areas we are currently serving and are working to build a strong foundation for our future growth to the rest of the state.
By the Numbers

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Young Adults</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Young Adults Who Received Resource Funding</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Resource Requests Funded</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Types of Funding

- Academic & Career Goals
- Emergent Needs (basic needs, housing, transportation, etc.)
- Experiences & Identity Development

Stories to Inspire

**Mariah** has been working toward her bachelor’s degree for several years now, and was a little nervous when she decided to take a quarter off in the spring. She knew it was best for her physical, mental and emotional health after all the challenges of the pandemic, but she did not want to get off track from her goal. After connecting with her Launch Success Coach about her concerns, Mariah and her Coach took action together— they reached out to the Financial Aid Office and Passport staff at the college, created a plan for a truly rejuvenating time off, and identified some incentives and timelines to re-enroll. After some much needed rest, she was ready to return back to school for Summer 2021!

**Cali** has been making great strides towards independence lately. She is just about ready to take her Driver’s License test after nine months of study and practice. She also just got her first job and opened her first bank account. With the support of her Launch Success Coach, social worker and Independent Living Specialist, she continues to set goals and achieve them…next stop: college!

Achievements

- Using a racial equity and trauma-informed lens, Launch Success Coaches supported participants as they navigated the unique challenges of adulthood during a pandemic. Coaches provided resource navigation and a safe space for participants to have critical conversations related to current events.
- Treehouse began distributing $1.65 million in pandemic aid to young adult alumni of foster care in mid-July 2021. Launch Success participants, who received up to $1,000 payments each, expressed gratitude for the direct cash assistance that they can use for their individual needs.

What We’re Learning

- In addition to providing funding for future goals, emergent needs and identity development, Coaches are working with participants to boost their financial literacy and budgeting skills.
- We have been working on program improvements and refining our program model by incorporating input from staff based on their experiences supporting young adults and direct feedback from participants.
- Recognizing the need to amplify the voices of young adults, Launch Success Coaches are encouraging participants to take part in various media, advocacy and feedback opportunities.