



## MY-CIL Practice Brief #10

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### Trends in How Youth and Young Adults Received Services from Centers for Independent Living After the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014

**In this brief:** Services from Centers for Independent Living (CIL) can help youth as they transition into adulthood. Transition-age youth are the focus of new requirements described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA). Among other things, WIOA addressed the way young adults with disabilities lose easy access to some of their supports when they leave public schools. This brief examines the extent to which CILs increased services to youth and young adults from all backgrounds in the four years after WIOA became law.

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**About the MY-CIL project.** MY-CIL is a collaboration between Hunter College; the Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York; Independent Living Research Utilization; 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 from minority backgrounds who have completed or left high school. MY-CIL seeks to produce and share knowledge that helps CILs improve outcomes for out-of-school youth from minority backgrounds.

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### Data and methods

For this brief, we used data from the Administration for Community Living’s Annual Program Performance Report (PPR) from 2015 to 2018. We analyzed CILs that appeared in the PPR all four years (N = 332). The PPR includes demographic information about customers of individual CILs in each year. It also includes information about services provided and their costs. We estimated annual numbers and shares of customers who were youth and young adults and who received transition services to identify changes in the four years after WIOA became law.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Minority Youth and Centers for Independent Living (MY-CIL) project focuses on out-of-school youth from minority backgrounds, we cannot examine trends in service use within this group because the publicly available PPR files do not contain information on individual customers. Instead, they contain counts of customers who have certain demographic

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<sup>1</sup> The Administration for Community Living’s instructions to CILs for completing the PPR contains a definition of transition services. It defines transition services as “any service that develops skills specifically designed for youth with significant disabilities between the ages of 14 and 24 to promote self-awareness and esteem, develop advocacy and self-empowerment skills, and the exploration of career options, including the transition from school to post school activities such as postsecondary education, vocational training, employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.” Instructions for completing the PPR are available at <https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/about-acl/2018-10/CIL%20PPR%20%20Instructions.pdf>.

characteristics and service needs. The PPR files do include the numbers of customers who received specific services, but these data do not report the share of customers who could use transition services according to WIOA. They also do not enable us to explore service receipt among minority customers. Instead, we explored the trend in the number and share of customers who were ages 5 to 24 and the number and share who requested and received transition services.

## **How did WIOA affect CILs?**

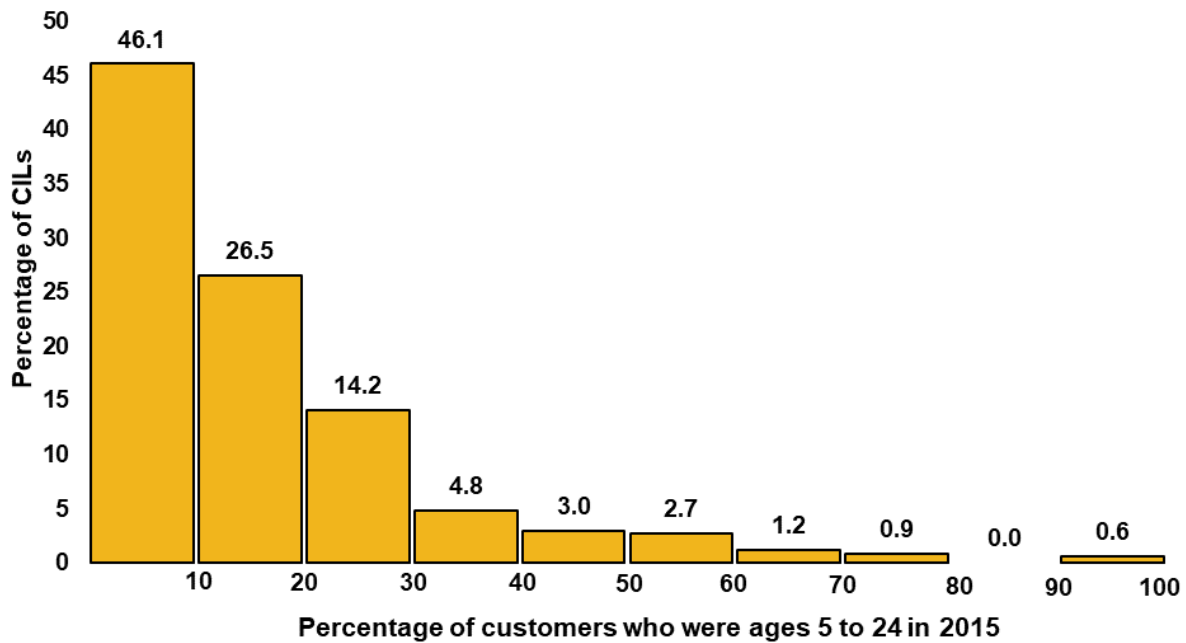
Parts of WIOA changed the core service requirements for CILs (Administration for Community Living 2017). Specifically, WIOA requires that CILs provide transition services to youth with significant disabilities who no longer go to school. This rule focuses on youth ages 14 to 24 who (1) have completed postsecondary education or (2) are otherwise finished with school and were eligible for an individualized education program while they were in school. While in school, youth with disabilities can access various school-based services. But when they leave school, the employment and transition support service environment is less centralized (Shogren and Wittenburg 2020). CILs can fill this service gap.

## **Has the number of customers eligible for and receiving transition services increased since WIOA passed?**

In the year after WIOA passed, services to youth varied widely across CILs (Figure 1). Among almost half of CILs (46.1 percent), the percentage of CIL customers younger than age 24 in 2015 was less than 10 percent, while among other CILs the percentage was higher.

Customers who were ages 5 to 24 increased by 5,374 from 2015 to 2018 (Figure 2). They represented 18.2 percent of total customers, up from 16.1 percent in 2015. CILs serving the lowest portions of youth in 2015 saw their share of customers ages 5 to 24 increase most. Their share of customers in this group increased 33.3 percent. Among all CILs, the average increase was just 12.8 percent.

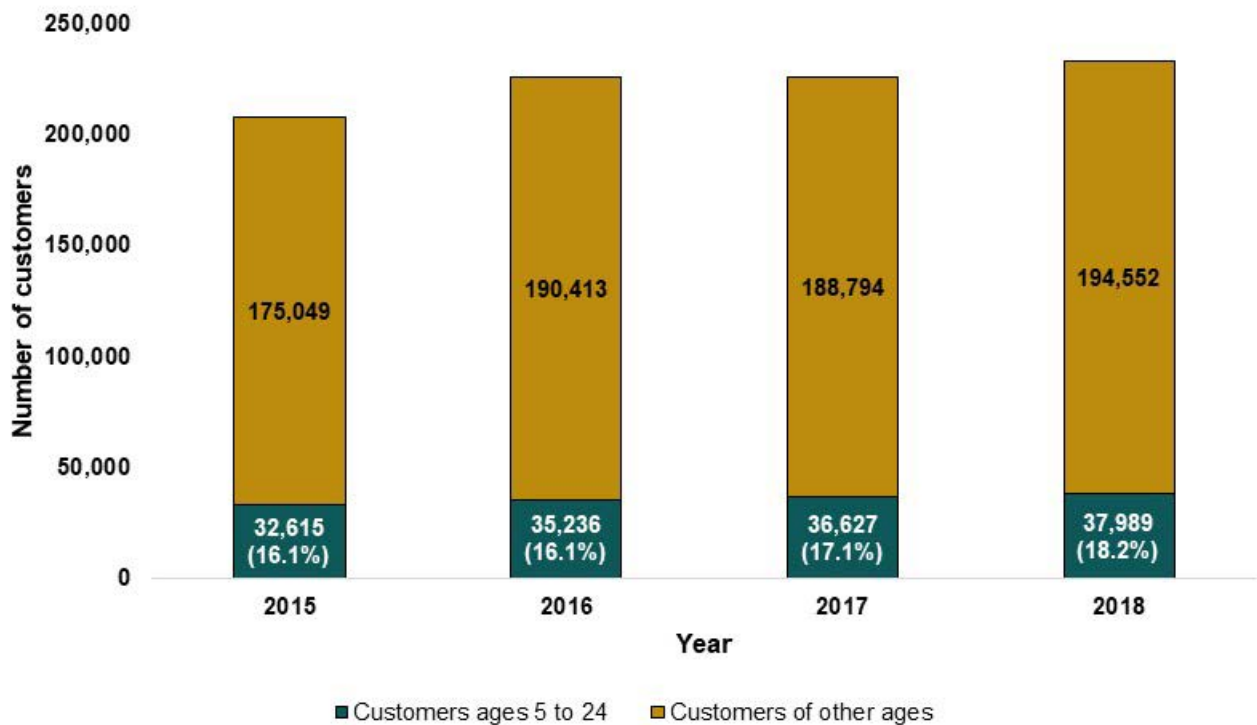
**Figure 1. Distribution of CILs by share of customers who were ages 5 to 24 in 2015**



Source: Centers for Independent Living Annual Program Performance Report, 2015.

N = 332 CILs.

**Figure 2. Total number of customers served by individual CILs, by age group and year**

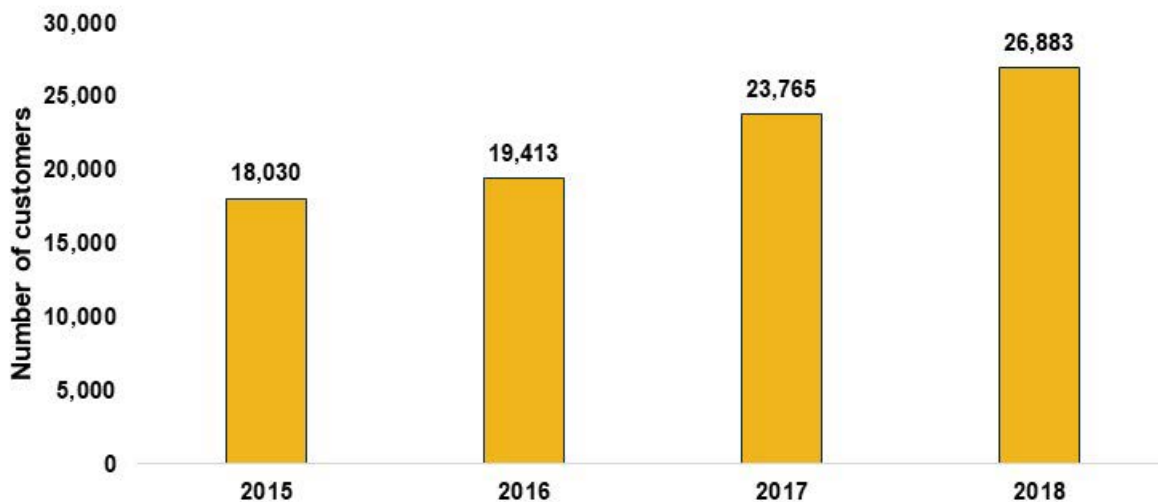


Source: Centers for Independent Living Annual Program Performance Report, 2015 to 2018.

N = 332 CILs.

Finally, the total number of customers who received transition services increased from 18,030 in 2015 to 26,883 in 2018. This was a 49 percent increase (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Total number of customers who received transition services, by year**



Source: Centers for Independent Living Annual Program Performance Report, 2015 to 2018.  
N = 332 CILs.

## **Discussion**

Youth and young adults with disabilities face a new service system after leaving school that might have fewer supports, but CILs can help. WIOA increased the availability of CIL services to youth and young adults, and since WIOA passed, CILs have served more transition-age customers and provided more transition services than before. This increase occurred mostly among CILs that had provided transition services at a low rate. This suggests WIOA led local CILs to address unmet needs for transition-age customers.

The modest increase in young customers suggests transition-age youth might be unaware of CILs. It might also suggest youth need more help connecting with CILs than older adults. CILs should consider expanding outreach to this group to increase its representation in customer pools. Outreach at schools, community-based organizations, or vocational rehabilitation agencies could increase youths' awareness of CIL services. Finally, given the disparities in transition related experiences and outcomes for minority youth, we recommend that ACL or CILs report data disaggregated by race to more fully explore the impact of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act on different demographic groups.

**To learn more about MY-CIL**

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

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## References

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Shogren, Karrie A., and David Wittenburg. "Improving Outcomes of Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities: A Life Course Perspective." *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2020, pp. 18–28.