

We can do better...We must do better

**AGING OUT
THE ROAD TOO OFTEN TRAVELED**

Steve to introduce training

There is a great deal of information regarding transition services and planning. This is not intended to cover all of the information. Additional information can be found on the hand outs and CRB and DHS websites. Net link trainings are on DHS website

2013 Citizen Review Board Annual Training Conference "Every Day Counts"

Presented by:

Carrie Van Dijk – ILP Youth Transition Specialist

Cheris Teal – Teen Transition Specialist

Steve Lindeman – CRB Field Manager

Christina Levesaue – CRB Field Manager

Steve then presenters introduce themselves?

Aging-Out Stats

For eight years, researchers have followed about 600 young adults who aged out of the child welfare systems in Iowa, Wisconsin and Illinois. The report finds that at age 23 and 24, former foster youth are more likely than their peers to be:

Carrie

Statistics

- **Unemployed** — Less than half were employed.
- **Homeless** — Almost 25 percent had been homeless since exiting foster care.
- **Pregnant** — More than 75 percent of young women had been pregnant since leaving foster care.

Carrie-

Statistics

- **Convicted of a crime** — Nearly 60 percent of young men had been convicted of a crime, and more than 80 percent had been arrested.
- **Uneducated** — Only 6 percent had a 2- or 4-year degree.

Carrie

Impacts of Foster Care on Education

Experienced 7 or more school changes from elementary through high school: **65%**

Completed high school (via a diploma or GED credential): **84.8%**

Obtained a GED credential: **28.5%**

Received some education beyond high school: **42.7%**

Completed any degree/certificate beyond high school: **20.6%**

Completed a Bachelor's degree: **1.8%**
(those 25 years +: **2.7%**)

Carrie:

Interesting stats about impacts of foster care on education...

Our youth in Oregon on completing high school or obtaining a GED credential are pretty close to the national statistics, but our youth are getting more GED's than high school diplomas... GEDs are not acceptable for general college/universities right out of high school, but fine for Community Colleges

Order:

Diploma

GED

Modified Diploma

Drop out

The effects carry through to postsecondary education as well. It is for these reasons that the ILP and the Chafee Education and Training Grant or ETG are so important.

These stats are from OSAC for the 2005-2006 academic year

These percentages are from the number of young people attending 4-year institutions

The overall graduation rates for the one cohort group of students we can measure at this point in time for 4-year institutions (4 year degrees)

The alumni rate for completing a bachelor's or higher degree (1.8%) was significantly lower than that of the general population (27.5% for 25- to 34-year-olds). For alumni ages 25 and older, the bachelor's completion rate was 2.7%.

Talk about programs like PCC Cascade's "Fostering Success"

Notice Completed HS/GED Stat vs. Completed Bachelor's Degree

BIG DROP IN NUMBERS!

Oregon Statistics/Studies

Recent NYTD Survey of 17 year olds:

275 youth responded to the NYTD Survey as follows:

- Employed full-time: No – 99.7%
- Employed part-time: No – 90%
- Apprenticeship or other on-the-job training: No – 75%
- Supportive Adult: YES - 98% (17% indicate FP, 13% Family Friend)

Carrie:

As you can see, pretty grim statistics nationally—we think that Oregon has fared much better although this is actually unknown—we haven't currently done a good job of tracking overall outcomes but that is about to change with the implementation of NYTD (National Youth in Transition Database).

Beginning in Oct. 2010, Oregon will be integrating the Federal NYTD requirement for each state to track services & survey youth to determine outcomes for foster teens and young adults. (via OR-KIDS).

Recent NYTD Survey of 17 year olds

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Apprenticeship or other on-the-job training: No – 75%

Supportive Adult: YES - 98% (17% indicate FP, 13% Family Friend)

Fostering Connections to Success

Title II- Improving Outcomes for Children in Foster Care

This Act supports what Oregon has already been doing since 2005

Option for states to extend care to young adults after the age of 18 up to age 21 (Section 201)

Provides guidelines for expectations of youth

Carrie

Full title: Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act 2008
Parallels our Comprehensive Transition Plan
Signed into law October 2008
Supports what Oregon has already been doing since 2005

1 *Option for states to extend care to young adults after the age of 18 (Section 201)

Extends federal support to states that extend foster care services 1-3 yrs for young people who turn 18 w/o a perm. family. Increases young person's opportunities to successfully transition to adulthood.

**Had previously been utilizing State General Funds, now this allows us to claim Title IV-E \$*

What this act does do though is:

2 Provides guidelines for expectations of youth

A youth who meets one of the following criteria:

- **Completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential;**
- **Enrolled in an institution which provides post-secondary or voc. education;**
- **Participating in a program or activity designed to promote, or remove barriers to employment;**
- **Employed at least 80 hrs per mo or**
- **Or if incapable of doing any of the activities described in (1-4) due to a medical condition, which incapability is supported by regularly updated info in the case plan of the child**

State Policy/Laws

2003 - SB 808 passes strengthening existing DHS policy and revised ORS 419B.343 (3):

Any Time after a child attains 14 years of age, if the department determines that it is appropriate, but in no case later than **the date the child attains 16 years of age**, the department shall ensure that the case planning addresses the child's **needs and goals for a successful transition to independent living** including...

Carrie:

DHS has had the requirement to document the services provided to help youth transition to independent living however ie: Johnny graduating in June is not a plan

which is one of the reasons why

In 2003 the Juvenile Rights Project attorneys created a bill. **Based on this, the Revised ORS 419B.343 *added teeth to an existing DHS policy* – not only does it require that a transition plan be crafted, it stipulated what domains were to be included in that plan...**

Comprehensive Transition Planning

- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Health (mental & physical)
- Community Connections & Supportive Relationships
- *Transportation
- Life Skills

Carrie: By assisting a youth to begin thinking about their education, future employment, where they want to live, how to handle an illness, or who to turn to for assistance and guidance, we hope to assist youth to leave the foster care system prepared and well on their way to a successful transition to adulthood

*A 7th domain was added which is “Transportation” highlighted in blue

Under Transportation domain- includes driver’s education. Stats show that there are *significantly lower accident rates & the accidents have not been as serious*, when youth go through a driver’s education course.

So DHS is partnering w/ODOT to help youth with the costs of the course (parent’s or individual’s cost= approx \$200-300).

http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/drivers_ed_providers.shtml

What the field needs to know is that there is \$ available to help pay for those driver’s education costs. **Youth just need to be ILP eligible, not necessarily enrolled.**

If youth does not pass the course or is 18+, there is a different fund of \$ to pay for that. At age 18 though, costs go up significantly.

An “IM” was issued on this through e-mail on 12/15/09

*The “miscellaneous” domain changed to “Life Skills” (name change)

Development of the Comprehensive Transition Plan

- Any child 16 years of age and in substitute care or any young adult; or
- Any child 14 years of age or older who has an APPLA permanency plan; or
- * A former foster child who has requested Services described in Child Welfare Policy, I-B.2.3.1, Family Support Services, OAR 413-030-0000 through 413-030-0030 and who would benefit from a comprehensive transition plan.

Carrie:

ORS 413-030-0445- Development of the CTP

The Dept/CW must initiate the development of the CTP for:

Note: In policy now but hasn't been

• Any child 16 years of age & in substitute care or any young adult; or

• ****Any child 14 years of age or older who has an APPLA permanency plan; or**

• A former foster child who has requested services-CW Policy, Family Support Services & who would benefit from a CTP

Development of the Comprehensive Transition Plan

The caseworker must ensure the CTP includes:

The completion of a life skills assessment which includes:

- Assessment of the child or young adult's skills & readiness through interviews with substitute caregiver, parent or legal guardian, and/or other significant adults: and
- Completion of a life skills assessment with a tool approved by the Department (**CLSA**)

Casey Life Skills Assessment (www.caseylifeskills.org)

Carrie:

The Dept/Caseworker must ensure the CTP includes: (read list)

The completion of a life skills assessment which includes:

1. Assessment of child or young adult's skills/*readiness* thru interviews with substitute caregiver, parent/legal guardian or other sig. adults &
2. Completion of a Life Skills Assessment with an approved tool from the Department--to help determine how well our youth are prepared, we use the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA), which is free

Now a DHS requirement

ACLSA training is underway with 12 trainers traveling the state to provide this training—must have Youth Transition Plans training as a pre-requisite

"Benchmark Review" of the Comprehensive Transition Plan

- Six months prior to a child's 18th birthday, the caseworker must convene a meeting for the purpose of a benchmark review of the CTP.
- Worker must invite the child, *and may include* child's parent or legal guardian, substitute caregiver, ILP provider, CASA, child's attorney, service providers, and others the child determines are important to the meeting.

Carrie:

A Benchmark **Review** is a meeting that the **caseworker must convene 6 months prior to a child's 18th birthday for the purpose of documenting that the youth & the Dept are ensuring that the youth has a plan for the adult decisions that need to be made after the "LEGAL" age of 18.**

"Our administrative rules require a BR at 180 days prior to age 18, & it is the Dept's expectation that the CTP (that was developed) ***will be reviewed at each 90 day case plan review***" & A **review** of the determinations & plans made during the Benchmark Review at the 180 day mark is **reviewed** again ***w/in the 90 day period prior to the child's 18th birthday.*** The caseworker will sit down with the child and review the progress made to date and make any necessary adjustments to the plan." **Don't need to have "2" BR's w/ written plan, just need to review the current CTP to see if on track for youth's transition to independence. For the BR need to put review dates on CTP doc and mark the Check Box as "Benchmark Review."**

Worker must include the child (plays central role in meeting appropriate to develop ability), **and may include** child's parent or legal guardian, substitute caregiver, ILP Provider, CASA, child's attorney, service providers, & others child determines important to meeting.

Also must use the "COMPLETE/LONG" T2 form for this

“Benchmark Review”

Determinations to be made prior to age of 18:

- Persons with decision-making authority for education services
- Persons who will provide supportive relationships
- Identification of community resources

Carrie:

At the meeting the determination (some are same as T2's, but there are differences—time to evaluate where we are & really get serious (consider it as a “check point” before turning 18) will be made re:

Persons w/ decision-making authority 4 education services—does the youth understand the role & responsibilities of a person w/decision making authority?

****Basically, need to discuss education options w/youth & help them identify further education plans**

- What are the youth's goals? How does that effect his/her education?
- Are there any special education needs to consider?
- Who will be in charge of the youth's records, **IEP's (can legally now take control over own IEP)**, etc? Help the youth determine who should be in charge...

Persons who will provide supportive relationships

- Who is/are the person/s the youth can call, spend holidays with or depend on? Help youth determine who will be there in the future
- Identification of community resources avail for special/unique needs of the child after child reaches 18...Finding/using local banks, how to get money orders, apply for food stamps, work w/housing authority, etc. If don't have a SS card, then need to get one. *If ?'s why we are doing this refer to Fostering Connections Act-req by Feds, all of these updates & policies based on best practices & evidence based***

As well as....

"Benchmark Review"

- Plan for employment / academic / or vocational education
- Person with decision-making authority for health/ mental health services & providers
- Plan to meet life skill development needs by age 18
- Transportation
- Sustainable housing (including college breaks, etc)

Carrie:

Plan for employment/academic/ vocational education (Youth should already have a goal—tracking where he/she is at w/it—opportunity to review & make sure he/she is on task)

- Does the youth know what career he/she is interested in pursuing?
- Does the youth require training?
- Does the youth have the essential docs to obtain legal employment? ie: SS card, birth certif, driver's license/Oregon ID

Person w/decision-making authority re: health mh & dental services & providers

• See handouts

Plan to meet LS develop needs by age 18

How is the youth going to learn the skills necess to become self-sufficient?

- What types of skills & abilities do they need to know as they transition to adulthood?
- If the youth not in an ILP program, who will be working w/the youth to gain necess life skills

Plan for transportation

How will the youth get to school, work, appts, etc?

- Is there a plan to obtain a driver's license? Driver's Ed? Does or will the youth own a car?
- If so, who will be responsible for the auto insurance?

***Sustainable/"suitable" housing** Ensure the youth understand the various housing options avail in their local community (See Housing Options Guide). What about time when youth on a break (including Christmas, Spring Break, etc)? OFYC= host homes program, Does the youth need any financial support for housing, etc.

CW must document determinations made at meeting on CTP (at min, must be signed by child & cw)

***Supervisor must review & acknowledge Benchmark Review of the CTP in Dept's info system**

***CW must provide copy of the CTP including documentation of the determinations made during the BR of the CTP to the court at the next scheduled permanency hearing & Juv. Court must review CTP/BR domains & determine if:**

The transition plan is adequate to ensure the child's successful transition to independent living,

- The Dept has offered appropriate services pursuant to the plan, & involved youth in development of it
- (this is not a new requirement for the courts- don't need to reflect specific findings in the court order. Court sends findings, but not necessary to request that-up to each individual court**

ORS 419B.337 Court may dismiss commitment of a ward if:

- (i) The department has provided case planning pursuant to ORS 419B.343
- (ii) The department has provided appropriate services pursuant to the case plan;
- (iii) The department has involved the ward in the development of the case plan and in the provision of appropriate services; and
- (iv) The ward has safe and stable housing and is unlikely to become homeless as a result of dismissal

Steve

Requirements at Independence

*At least 60 days prior to the date the Department requests to be relieved of legal custody, they must:

Inform child or young adult of:

- Date, time, location of hearing
- His/her right to attend hearing/importance of
- His/her right to request assistance with transportation

Carrie:

NEW RULE-

***At least 60 days prior to date Department requests to be relieved of legal custody of a child or young adult reaching independence, the Dept must inform child or young adult of:**

Date, time, location of hearing

His/her right to attend hearing/importance of

His/her right to request assistance w/transportation

Requirements at Independence

When the court relieves the Department of custody of a child or young adult, it must provide the child with information concerning child/young adult's case including the following:

- Basic Family Information & Placement History
- Health & Education records

Carrie:

As part of this new rule...

When court relieves Department of custody of **child or young adult reaching independence**, it must provide the youth with a "Transition Tool Kit/Exit Packet" which are:

***The essential documents, written records, and official forms that youth transitioning out of care need to have regarding their medical history, for employment purposes, or to continue their post-secondary education.**

It is important to sit down with the youth to go through the information and to be open to answering questions they may have.

Basic Family Information & Placement History

Like you are walking through a Life Story Book w/the youth~

*Information concerning child/young adult's case including family & placement history, location & status of each sibling, & contact info the child or young adult may use to seek additional info about his/her case or family history

Health & Immunization records

Educational summary & records (currently the 310 forms)

le: Medical Provider, Family Medical History like diabetes, etc

Requirements at Independence

Copies of the following & documentation in official form:

- Birth certificate
- Official proof of citizenship or resident status
- Social security card/*Number*
- Driver's license or other form of state identification
- *Chafee Medical Program & Health Care Representative*
- Where applicable, death certificate of parents; and
- Written verification of placement in substitute care
- Credit Report

Carrie:

"Transition Tool Kit" / "Exit Packet"

Most of these essential documents should already be in the case file. If they are not, then the caseworker should start to gather these at least 60 days prior to the court hearing (some will take longer to obtain, so it is a good idea to plan accordingly).

Refer to "Checklist" handout

- **Birth Certificate** *(the original should be given to the youth and a copy put in the case file as the majority of situations req a birth certif or ss card as documentation req the original)*
- **Official proof of citizenship or resident status** in a form acceptable to an employer required to verify immigration status *(if applic, contact the CAF Diversity & International Affairs Manager about the criteria for "Special Juvenile Immigrant Status" (SJIS))*
- **SS card (original) /SS Number**
- **DL or other state form of photo ID**
- **Where applicable, death certificate of parents**
- **Written verification of placement in substitute care b/w ages of 14-18**
- **Chafee Medical Program Information & Referral Form** *(18 or older, 1 page form/ Elig for OHP + (includes vision & dental))*

Written verification of placement in substitute care *(This information will assist a youth should s/he decide to move out-of-state and attempt to access Chafee ILP or ETG services. The ILP Desk has a letter for this)*

When the Dept is unable to provide the doc & info prior to the court order in which the Dept is relieved of legal custody of child/young adult the Dept must prepare written records & either deliver them to the child/young adult, or when whereabouts unknown, retain records in case file if request for those records made by the child/young adult at a later date

August Netlink Date for next Youth Transition Planning training- 8/15/13

General Resources and Supports for All Children/Young Adults

- T1/T2
- ILP
- DHS caseworker
- Foster parent
- CASA
- Mentor
- School/IEP/career counselor
- DD program/ISP

Carrie/Cheris:

Diligent Relative Search

- Must be updated every year
- Develop and maintain connections and support
- Include these individuals in planning and services

More Resources for Your Youth

- CW Procedure Manual, Chap. IV, Sect. 29
- Self Sufficiency for OHP
- Self Sufficiency for food stamps/WIC
- Public Health Department
- Mental Health Clinics
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Family Planning Clinics
- ILP until age 21 (voluntary services)



Just a final reminder that helping a youth plan for transition takes more than just ILP services. Don't forget about all those other youth serving agencies and community partners. The ILP an DHS cannot succeed if we work in a vacuum. Not only do we need to conduct outreach to these other programs; we must also show our youth how to access services in their community.

DHS Independent Living Program

The array of services that ILP can provide includes the following:

Daily Living Skills Training
Discretionary Funds
Education & Training Vouchers

Housing Stipends
Subsidy Program)
Chafee Housing

Carrie/Cheris:

There are several services included under the ILP umbrella...

We are going to begin with Daily Living Skills.

ILP Youth Transition Funds

- ETV
- Discretionary funds
- Driver's Education
- Subsidy
- Chafee
- One-time Housing

Cheris/Carrie:

All funds are available through 1 form

With the **CF78 (Youth Transition Funds Request form)**- you have access to the following:

Just talked about the ETV- (Post-Secondary, up to \$3,000)

Discretionary Funds are a small pot of funds that can assist a youth with items or services needed to achieve their goals for transition. *Disc. Funds have the same basic eligibility as for daily living skills – currently in foster care, age 14 or older. Or as a former foster youth, was dismissed from care at age 16 or older w/ at least 180 days of sub-care services after age 14.*

Each District has a small amount of ILP Discretionary funds-it may not be much and varies from district to district,

Can help purchase those items that may not be covered by any other funds. Districts have used the funds for Oregon ID's, housing start-up kits, special work clothes or tools,, the list goes on. **These funds are to be connected to the youth's transition plan –**

Driver's Education- give update

How many of you are aware of Discretionary funds? How many of you have actually accessed them? *Note: look at clock, stay to script or cut*

Show CF78 form (**now the Youth Transition Funds Request form**)



ILP Housing Services

- **Independent Living Housing Subsidy**
 - Currently in care and custody of DHS
 - age 16 or older (not yet 21)
 - Must have court approval
- **Chafee Housing Program**
 - Dismissed from care & custody at age 18 or older.
 - Must have at least 4 hours paid employment.
- **One-Time Housing funds**



Carrie/Cheris:

Two housing programs- DHS **does not have buildings** that these youth move to when they enter the ILP Housing programs – it is **financial support only...along with life skills training**. Youth must find their own residences – they could rent a room, find a roommate and share an apartment or home, they could live in the dorm or even rent from a former foster parent – FP must be willing to make shift to landlord

The programs are very similar as Chafee Housing was modeled after the Subsidy Program. Both programs provide **financial support** to assist a youth with their monthly living expenses. ***This can be any monthly expense related to housing.***

- 1) Subsidy – youth in care vs 2) Chafee Housing – former foster youth who aged out...

Which door a youth enters through will depend on their current foster care status. Important to note that the ***Subsidy Housing Program does not apply to tribal youth unless they are in DHS custody...but can access Chafee Programs...***

Both programs require:

- *40 hours of activity per week (work, education, or combination of the two)
- * Youth has at least one prior substitute care placement
- * Approval of the court to participate
- *If youth has not completed high school, must be actively working to complete high school or obtain a GED.
- *The youth to be **enrolled in ILP Skill Building Services**
- * Youth cannot live with biological or legal parent(s)

Both programs are intended to work in partnership with the ILP skill building services – youth must be enrolled for **Life Skills Training**.

➤ Both programs provide hands-on, real life experience,

➤ Both programs require youth to be not only eligible, but **appropriate** for the level of independence each program offers.

Both programs expect youth to be accountable for their decisions and actions (or inaction). Caseworkers must be willing to hold youth accountable – help them learn from mistakes and take steps to avoid similar mistakes.

These are **NOT entitlement programs**, I cannot stress that point strongly enough.

➤ Acceptance is a privilege not a right

ILP Housing Program Differences		
Category	IL Subsidy Housing	Chafee Housing
Minimum Age	16	18
DHS care & custody	Required	Prohibited - Foster Care must be terminated on or after 18 th birthday
Employment	Optional	Must be employed at least part-time
Medical Card	Provided by child welfare	No, youth must apply for OHP or Chafee Medical
Duration	12 month maximum	\$6,000 or age 21, whichever comes first
Monthly Expenses	Can pay for any monthly expense (transportation, etc)	Can only pay for room and board (rent, food, utilities)
ETV or ETG	OK to use simultaneously	No, if room and board included in cost of attendance
Funding Source	State General Funds	Federal Chafee ILP Grant Funds

Carrie/Cheris:

However you will note that there are also some unique differences between the two programs.

Subsidy serves those youth who are still in Care and Custody, Youth can receive **up to \$600 a mo** to live independ. for a max of **1 year** and is funded with State General Funds. Still get Med. cards Age 18 or older, but not yet 21

While Chafee Housing are federal dollars that serve youth who have aged out of a child welfare system – they must have left their placement on or after the age of 18 with at least 180 days (six months) of foster care placement services after age 14.

Although each has the req of 40 hours of activity per week (work, education, or combination of the two – Chafee must include at least 4 hours of paid employment)

Chafee covers only Room & Board & has a few other requirements. **Also cannot access Chafee ETG w/the Chafee Housing Program—“double-dipping” fed dollars.** However, youth on Subsidy **can** rcvve ETG

With Chafee youth may receive up to \$600 per month to live independently, for a maximum of \$6,000 or age 21, whichever comes first.

Note: Youth wanting Chafee Housing can come back on a Voluntary Services basis(complete a **CF 304 – Service Application**).

Please advise youth that Chafee Housing services vary from state to state. They should make certain to check with a state prior to moving.

Purpose of Housing Programs

Assist youth gain/practice following skills:

- Manage finances and live on a budget,
- Manage a household,
- Manage time,
- Manage life demands, and
- Accept responsibility for choices and decisions made.



Cheris/Carrie:

Engage in a **thorough planning** process **prior** to beginning an ILP housing program or requesting a one-time housing voucher for a youth. The planning process should reassesses safety, the youth's readiness for living independently, and a planned transition from daily adult supervision. This service is not intended to be an emergency move or placement. To plan properly and facilitate a smooth transition, this is typically a three- to six-month process working on skill building with an ILP Provider and involves reassessment of the youth's abilities in the following areas:

- a. The youth's Comprehensive Transition Plan and his or her goals for the future;
- b. School and employment arrangements;
- c. Capacity for self-care and demonstrated life skills;
- d. Budgeting skills and demonstrated money management abilities;
- e. Evidence of good decision-making skills;
- f. Evidence of supportive adults in the youth's life; and
- g. Ability to use and access transportation resources.

Each of these skills are important to a youth's success while on the housing program. The housing payment is paid directly to the youth – the youth is responsible for paying their own bills, buying their own groceries, cooking their own meals, cleaning their home, getting themselves up and ready for school or work, knowing how to talk to their landlord regarding needed repairs...they must be ready for the adult responsibilities that come with living on your own, or with a roommate.

Can't keep bailing them out- not teaching them anything, need to hold them accountable

The Tuition & Fee Waiver

Funding Stream	Application Required	Benefits
May use a student's Pell, FSEOG, Oregon Opportunity Grant, other federal aid, or institution aid (does not include the Chafee ETG).	Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) www.fafsa.gov	Tuition & fees waived for the equivalent of 4 years of undergraduate education at a public college or public university in Oregon . Eligible foster youth are also prioritized for the Oregon Opportunity Grant. <i>May use to complete a Certification Program, Associates Degree or Bachelors Degree.</i>

Carrie:

Too often the process of piecing together financial aid to meet these needs is full of roadblocks and delays that prevent foster youth from registering for classes. Tuition waivers for foster youth will guarantee that these students have access to Oregon community colleges and public universities. The Oregon Legislature passed this law effective the **2012-2013 academic year (depends on when the school or institution's terms or semesters start-summer or winter)** to address the unique needs of foster youth...they wanted to send a message to these young adults that funding should not be an barrier to going to Post-Secondary Education or Training...

Last dollar amount- uses a student's Pell, FSEOG, Oregon Opportunity Grant, other federal aid, or institution aid first before applying the waiver for tuition & mandatory fees (does not include the Chafee ETG).

Process starts with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

www.fafsa.gov

Tuition & fees waived for the equivalent of 4 years of undergraduate education at a **public college or public university in Oregon**. Eligible foster youth are also prioritized for the Oregon Opportunity Grant

May use to complete a Certification Program, Associates Degree or Bachelors Degree.

Eligibility Criteria

- 365 days of child welfare out-of-home care after age 16,
- Enroll at a post-secondary institution within 3 years of whichever comes first:
 - a)DHS or Tribal Wardship dismissed or
 - b) High school completion or equivalent (GED)
- Access the Waiver by age 25.
- Volunteer 30 hours per academic year once you begin receiving the waiver to maintain eligibility.

Carrie:

It is important to note that if the youth is on a trial home visit, this will “stop the clock” as they are out of sub-care placement...

When the youth went home, is when the 3 years (that is being referred to on the screen) starts.

Make sure to mention the DHS FAQ's on the Tuition & Fee Waiver on the new ILP website! (most up to date info)

Education & Training Grant/Voucher (ETG/ETV)

Provides up to *\$3,000 per academic year for cost of attendance:

- Tuition, Fees, Books, Supplies
- Room & Board
- Personal Expenses
- Travel/Transportation

Carrie/Cheris:

FEDERALLY FUNDED

Eligibility: (As of Sept. 1st)

Age 14 or older & in child welfare substitute care (DHS or tribal) **OR**

As a former foster youth, was dismissed from care at age 16 or older with 180 or more cumulative days of foster care placement services after age 14

Services: Provided by DHS in collaboration with the Oregon Student Assistance Commission (OSAC) **Education & Training Grant (ETG)**

Youth may receive up to *\$3,000 for the 2010-2011 academic year (so for some schools, will start summer term). Amount based on need

Youth must be accepted/enrolled in a postsecondary education or training program in order to receive funds

Youth must be on the program prior to age 21 All services end at age 21 – only exception is the ETG/ETV. (“ETV” term used more often)

If youth are receiving services at age 21, can continue to receive until 23rd birthday (only service can do this)

Chapin Hall Issue Brief Distinct Subgroups of Former Foster Youth during Young Adulthood

- analysis of data from the Midwest Study identified four distinct subgroups of youth about to make the transition from foster care to adulthood, groups whose dissimilar needs clearly call for distinct sets of services

Steve

Subgroups of foster youth

- *Accelerated Adults: 36.3%, Nearly two-thirds (63%) are female.*
- *Struggling Parents: 25.2%, Nearly three-quarters are female.*
- *Emerging Adults: 21.1%, Slightly over half of this group is male.*
- *Troubled and Troubling: 17.5%, The vast majority of this group is male.*

Steve:

Class 1, the largest class of former foster youths ($n = 222$; 36.3% of the sample), we refer to as *Accelerated Adults*. Nearly two-thirds (63%) are female. Members of this class are the most likely to live on their own in a fairly stable situation. Almost all have a high school diploma, over half have attended some college, and they are the most likely to have a college degree. Members of this class are also the most likely to be currently employed.

Class 2, making up about one-quarter of the Midwest Study sample at age 23 or 24 ($n = 147$; 25.2% of the sample), we refer to as *Struggling Parents*. Nearly three-quarters are female. Members of this class are more likely to be African American and less likely to be white than the sample as a whole. All but 2 percent of this group have a least one living child, nearly all have resident children, and relatively few have a nonresident child. This group is also the most likely to be married or cohabiting. About equal numbers have their own place or live with relatives, friends, or others. This group is the least likely to have finished high school, the least likely to have attended college, and the least likely to be currently enrolled in school. Only one-quarter is currently employed, the lowest rate of employment among the groups without a high level of institutionalization.

Class 3, making up about one-fifth of the former foster youth ($n = 123$; 21.1% of the sample), we refer to as *Emerging Adults*. Slightly over half of this group is male. All are living with friends, relatives, or in other settings that are not their own. The vast majority have finished high school and they have the second-highest rate of having at least some college. They also have the second-highest rate of current employment. They are least likely to have children (27%) and over two-thirds of those with children have nonresident children. This group has the lowest rate of criminal conviction.

Class 4, making up a bit less than one-fifth of the Midwest Study population at age 23 or 24 ($n = 102$; 17.5% of the sample), we refer to as *Troubled and Troubling*. The vast majority of this group is male. They are the most likely group by far to be currently incarcerated, otherwise institutionalized, homeless, and/or to have experienced high residential mobility. Two-fifths have not finished high school and only about one-tenth have any college. This group is least likely to be currently employed. Although nearly half have children, none are living with their children. Over four-fifths report a criminal conviction since age 18, a rate over five times that of any other group. In addition, this group is least likely to have felt prepared to be on their own at exit from care, most likely to report mental health and/or substance use problems, and most likely to have been homeless or couch surfed.

Three paths

- Young adults with ongoing mental health issues
- Young adults with poor academic performance and/or no high school completion or GED
- Young adults who are college bound

Steve:

Mental Health

- Often these are youth who have been in residential treatment or some form of group or proctor home and have significant mental health diagnosis
- Ongoing mental health issues starting from a young age
- Multiple placement changes and instability
- Lack of connections and support

Steve:

Specific Services, Case Planning and Supports

- “Mission Transition” Program-Marion County
- TAYIS Program-Washington County
- **Mosaic** program in Oregon City- helps young adults ages 17-24 who are transitioning from the children’s mental health system and need ongoing, intensive mental health treatment.

Mission Transition:

Mission: Transition is an intensive case management program with a Wraparound approach designed for transitional age young adults 16-22 who have a mental health diagnosis. They should want to engage in this process and want to develop goals surrounding their housing, mental health services and needs, social connections, education, and vocational needs. The Mission: Transition staff are focused on getting clients involved in planning their life and building natural supports to ensure they can maintain the same level of functioning on their own once paid supports step out of their lives.

Other criteria considered:

Those with multi-agency involvement i.e. DHS, Juvenile Department, or OYA care will be prioritized

Typical community based services have been unsuccessful

Have a history of psychiatric residential treatment, at risk for acute hospitalizations, history of emotional dysregulation.

Have limited natural supports and anticipated difficulty transitioning into independent living, limited independent living skills.

Required:

Is age 16-22, prefer them to begin in 17th year

Mental Health is primary focus of Treatment vs. Alcohol/Drug, DD, or conduct issues.

They are a BCN member/has a medical card

The young adult is willing to engage and is interested in the wraparound process

Transition Age Youth Intensive Services (TAYIS): Transition Age Youth Intensive Services (TAYIS) is a program designed for older adolescents and young adults who are moving out of the children’s mental health system and into adult mental health services. This program targets individuals with complex needs who may be transitioning out of the state hospital, residential treatment, juvenile correction facilities, intensive outpatient programs or local hospitals. The goal of the program is to assist individuals in becoming as independent as possible while reaching developmental milestones such as independent housing, education, employment and development of social relationships. This program follows an intensive case management model with a variety of team members who can provide specialized services. Services may be provided both in the community and at the office. Services are available to individuals who currently have:

* Oregon Health Plan with Washington County Health and Human Services as the Mental Health Organization

OR

* Individuals who are low income, reside in Washington County and either have Medicare or are uninsured.

In order to receive treatment, you must have a mental health disorder that is covered by the Oregon Health Plan and negatively impacts your ability to work, retain housing, or meet your basic needs.

Mosaic

Youth Villages Oregon’s Mosaic group home program in Oregon City helps young adults ages 17-24 who are transitioning from the children’s mental health system and need ongoing, intensive mental health treatment. The Mosaic staff helps residents build independent living skills and develop educational and employment plans.

Mental health continued

- Include the child's mental health therapist in transition planning
- Ensure that the youth is aware of their mental health issues and diagnosis
- Ensure that the youth is aware of the benefits and risks associated with their psychotropic medications and is able to give informed consent
- Ensure that the youth knows how to access mental health services on their own

Vocational

- These are youth who have struggled at school
- They may have an interest in a particular vocation such as culinary or mechanics
- They may be far behind on high school credits
- Youth who don't have any other financial supports/resources & don't think they can afford to go to school

Steve/Cheris:

Specific Services, Case Planning and Supports

- Vocational schools
- Military
- Job Corps
- Shorter College Certificate Programs

Steve/Cheris:

Shorter college certificate programs (9 mos/18 mos) at the end of the program receive a certificate ie: welding at a Community College

College

- These youth are getting good grades and on track to graduate from high school
- Express an interest in attending college
- Have shown maturity and responsible decision making

Carrie:

Description of:

*SAT

*FAFSA

*Study Skills classes

*Tuition & Fee Waiver/ETV

*College Tours

Example: WOU Study Group- not prepared for the differences that will occur ie: time, getting up to go to class, attending class, time for study, play, work, etc...

Specific Services, Case Planning and Supports

- Assistance/guidance with class selection in high school
- Participate in volunteer activities or work experience as an aid to getting accepted at a college or university
- Assistance with completing FASFA and accessing grants, scholarships and loans including Tuition and Fee Waiver

CRB's Role

- Determine if the T2, Comprehensive Transition Plan (or Benchmark Review) adequately meets the youth's needs.
- Determine if services provided are appropriate based on youth's needs and circumstances (path)
- Determine if youth's wishes have been included in planning process & transition goals set.
- Ensure that statutory and administrative rule requirements are met for a Benchmark review and prior to dismissal of wardship and custody.



Steve

Considerations for CRB review, findings and recommendations

- **3. DHS has ensured that appropriate services are in place to safeguard the child/ren's safety, health and well being.**
- **5. DHS made reasonable efforts in accordance with the case plan to place the child in a timely manner, and complete the steps necessary to finalize the permanent placement, including an interstate placement if appropriate.**

Steve:

The majority of information and findings regarding transitional planning and services falls under finding #3. This would include if there is a current T1 and T2, if they are adequate to meet the needs of the child and if the child was given an opportunity to participate in development of the plan. (same as the court required findings)

There is overlap with the reasonable efforts finding with regard to APPLA plans and services.

CRB Findings

- **8. DHS is in compliance with the case plan and court orders.**
- **10. There is a continuing need for placement.**



Pursuant to ORS 419B.343 all case plans must include the five domains and services and this would be addressed under finding #3 but would also be appropriate to note under finding #8 regarding compliance with the case plan.

ORS 419B.337 should be addressed under finding #10 regarding the youth not likely to be homeless and services having been provided.

CRB Recommendations

- DHS complete (or update) a T1 Transition Readiness Index for xxx within xxx days.
- DHS complete (or update) a T2 Comprehensive Transition Plan for xxx within xxx days.
- DHS provide additional services pursuant to the Transition Plan. (i.e. referral to the Independent Living Program, academic support, ILP Subsidy Program, etc.)

CRB Recommendations

- DHS modify the Transition Plan to ensure that it is adequate to meet the transition needs of the child.
- DHS/ILP ensure that the child has the opportunity to be involved in the development of the Transition Plan.
- DHS/ILP convene a Youth Decision Meeting to develop (or update) the Transition Plan.

CRB Recommendations

- DHS ensure that a Benchmark review of the Transition Plan occurs by xxx.
- DHS/Court ensure that there is an adequate Transition Plan and services in place for the young adult prior to dismissing wardship and custody.

Vignette Activity

- Please read the vignette on your table and make your findings and recommendations



Steve:

Discussion and Questions

Thank you for your work with
young adults aging out of
foster care and for
participating in this
training

- This power point and additional handouts and information will be available through the CRB website

Oregon Independent Living Program
List of Services and Eligibility Requirements

ILP Skill Building
(Federally Funded)

Eligibility:

- Age 14 or older and in substitute care (DHS or Tribal), OR
- A former foster child who left child welfare substitute care placement at age 16 or older, with at least 180 days (six months) of placement services after age 14.

Services: Contracted out to local non-profits, for-profits, or Tribes.

- Daily Living Skills such as: money management, household maintenance, transportation, legal issues, health, community resources, housing options, personal hygiene, employment readiness
- Educational Assistance such as: tutoring, homework/study groups, college tours, financial aid/scholarship applications

ILP Discretionary Funds
(Federally Funded)

Eligibility:

- Youth must be eligible for ILP skill building services and
- Have an open ILP Life Skills service (can be opened as non-paid if branch is providing services)
- Access using the Youth Transition Funds Request form (CE 78).

Services: Provided directly by DHS caseworkers

- Small amount of discretionary funds to assist a youth obtain items or services needed to meet his or her goals for transition.

Education and Training Vouchers (ETV)
(Federally Funded)

Eligibility:

- Age 14 or older and is in child welfare substitute care (DHS or Tribal), OR
- A former foster child who left a child welfare substitute care placement at age 16 or older, with at least 180 days (six months) of foster care placement services after age 14.
- Youth must be on the program prior to age 21
- If youth are receiving services at age 21, can continue to receive until 23rd birthday.

Services: Provided by DHS in collaboration with the Oregon Student Assistance Commission.

- Youth may receive up to \$3,000 per academic year. Amount is based on need.

Youth must be accepted/enrolled in a postsecondary education or training program in order to receive funds (application available at: <http://www.oregonstudentaid.gov/chafeeetv.aspx>)

Note: Youth may not access both the ETV funds and Chafee Housing funds at the same time. However, if Room & Board is not included in a school's cost of attendance, then the youth may be able to simultaneously access both programs.

IL Subsidy Program (ILSP)
(State General Funds, some federal/other)

Eligibility:

- Age 16 or older
- In DHS care and custody
- 40 hours of activity per week (work, education, or combination of the two)
- Has at least one prior substitute care placement
- Has approval of the court to participate
- If youth has not completed high school, must be actively working to complete high school or obtain a GED.
- Youth must be enrolled for ILP skill building services.
- Youth cannot live with biological or legal parent(s).

Services: Provided directly by DHS

- Youth may receive up to \$600 per month to live independently for a maximum of one year.

Chafee Housing Program

(Federally Funded)

Eligibility:

- Age 18 or older, but not yet 21
- A former foster child who left a child welfare substitute care placement at age 18 or older, with at least 180 days (six months) of foster care placement services after age 14.
- 40 hours of activity per week (work, education, or combination of the two – must include at least 4 hours of paid employment)
- If youth has not completed high school, must be actively working to complete high school or obtain a GED.
- Youth must be enrolled for ILP skill building services.
- Youth cannot live with biological or legal parent(s).

Services: Provided directly by DHS

- Youth may receive up to \$600 per month to live independently, for a maximum of \$6,000 or age 21, whichever comes first.
- Please advise youth that Chafee Housing services vary from state to state. They should make certain to check with a state prior to moving.

ILP services are available to former foster youth that were discharged from care at age 16 or older with at least 180 days (six months) of foster care placement services after age 14. Youth can be returned home, in a guardianship, or living independently and still retain eligibility for some ILP services. The ILP Housing services are the only ILP services a former foster youth will lose if discharged after age 16 and prior to age 18 (with 180 days of care).

To access services as a former foster youth, the youth will need to go to the local DHS child welfare office and request “voluntary services.” The youth will then go through the intake process. If the youth is under the age of 18, the parent(s) will need to sign the Voluntary Services request (form CF 304). If a young adult (age 18 – 20), the youth can sign for themselves. All services end at age 21 – ETV may be an exception.

For details about Youth Transitions and ILP services see the DHS Procedure Manual (Chapter 4, Sections 29 and 33) at:

http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety_model/procedure_manual/index.html &

New DHS Independent Living Program Website
http://cms.oregon.gov/dhs/children/fostercare/pages/ind_living/ilp.aspx*

Financial Aid for Foster Youth: Grants and Scholarships

Federal Pell Grant: *Foster youth are eligible for this grant as they have “independent” status. Accessed through <http://fafsa.ed.gov/>*
The following website provides solutions to the questions foster youth, adopted youth, or youth in a guardianship have regarding how to answer questions about family income: <http://www.nasfaa.org/annualpubs/FosterYouthFAFSA.pdf>

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG): *Foster youth are eligible for this grant as they have “exceptional financial need”. Access through www.fafsa.ed.gov*

Oregon Opportunity Grant: *Foster youth often receive this grant due to financial need. It can only be used by Oregon residents and at a nonprofit college or university in Oregon. Access through completing the FAFSA. To get more information go to www.oregonstudentaid.gov*

Education Training Voucher (ETV or ETG): *Funded through the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). This grant provides up to \$3,000.00 a year for youth who were in foster care (DHS or one of the federally recognized tribes) and dismissed from care at age 16 or older with 180 days of foster care placement services. If a youth is receiving these funds at age 21, s/he is eligible to apply for funding until age 23. Access application through www.oregonstudentaid.gov/chafeetv.aspx*

Although the Chafee ETV grant can be accessed year round through the ILP Desk, we encourage all youth to apply for their financial aid between January 1st and March 1st (FAFSA, OSAC & ETV applications) in order to obtain maximum funding for post secondary education.

“Foster Care to Success” (formerly Orphan Foundation of America) Scholarship Program: *Several scholarships are available through the Orphan Foundation of America including the Casey Family Scholarships. For more information go to www.orphan.org and click on ‘scholarships’.*

National Foster Parent Association Scholarships: *To get more information go to <http://www.nfpainc.org>. This website also lists a full scholarship for the University of Phoenix.*

Fostering A Future: Scholarship to benefit youth **adopted** from foster care after age 13. <http://www.childrensactionnetwork.org/scholarship.htm>

Financial Aid for Foster Youth: Grants and Scholarships

Oregon Student Access Commission: *Hundreds of scholarships are available through the Oregon Student Access Commission at www.oregonstudentaid.gov including:*

- **Irmgard Schultz Scholarship:** *This scholarship is privately funded and can be accessed through OSAC. Note: Foster youth are a secondary priority. First priority is to any graduate from Jackson County.*

- * **DREAM Scholarship for Foster Youth aka Former Foster Children Scholarship:** *This scholarship was initially funded by the Oregon Legislature but is now funded by private donations. This scholarship attempts to fill the gaps between the Chafee ETV (foster youth who did not receive Chafee funds before age 21, or are over age 23 and less than age 26), Oregon's Tuition & Fee Waiver, and to assist youth who are adopted from DHS child welfare between the ages of 14 ½ and 16; and have not yet completed their post-secondary education.*

To contribute to the DREAM Scholarship:

- <http://www.oregonstudentaid.gov/donate.aspx>
- *Make checks payable to: Oregon Student Assistance Commission*
- *Put Code 442 in the "memo" section of your check.*
- *Mail check to: Oregon Student Assistance Commission,
Grants and Scholarship Division,
1500 Valley River Drive, Suite 100,
Eugene, OR 97401.*

Oregon Tuition & Fee Waiver: To be eligible a youth must: **1)** have at least 365 days of **Oregon** child welfare care and custody after the age of 16. **2)** Must enroll at an Oregon public post-secondary institution within 3 years of wardship dismissal or completing high school/GED (whichever is earlier). **3)** Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). A student must complete 30 hours of volunteer activities to retain eligibility for year 2 and all subsequent years. Once enrolled and receiving the tuition waiver, the student is entitled to the equivalent of 4 years of undergraduate studies.

QUESTIONS?? Contact the ILP Desk

Sandy Raschko, ILP Fiscal Assistant
Rosemary Iavenditti, ILP Coordinator

Phone #: 503.945.6612
Phone #: 503.945.5688
Fax #: 503.945.6969

Foster Youth Tuition & Fee Waiver (HB3471)

Frequently Asked Questions as of November 2012

The following information has been created as a result of collaborations between the Department of Human Services, Department of Community Colleges & Workforce Development, Oregon Tribes, Oregon Student Access Commission, the Oregon University System and Oregon Health and Sciences University. We hope this document will assist you to determine a student's eligibility, enrollment options, and awards.

Eligibility:

1. What are the required qualifications that determine if a current or former foster youth is eligible for Oregon's Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: All current and former foster youth who have spent at least 365 days in substitute care after age 16, **AND** either left foster care (had wardship terminated) or completed high school/GED (whichever date is earliest) within the previous 3 years will qualify for this program. Students who left foster care or completed high school/GED (whichever date is earliest) more than 3 years prior to the start of the Waiver, are NOT included in the eligible population.

2. How do eligible students apply for the Tuition and Fee Waiver and is there a filing deadline?

Answer: Eligible applicants may submit a completed FAFSA (available at: www.fafsa.ed.gov) as early as January 1st each year. The deadline to submit a FAFSA is June 30 of the award year, or the student's last day of class for the academic year (whichever is earliest). The applicant must also apply and enroll at an eligible school within the 3-year eligibility period. Students who file their FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1 each year will maximize their federal, state, and private grants and scholarships.

3. When is the earliest a student could access or receive the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: The Tuition and Fee Waiver program begins with the 2012-2013 academic year. Oregon colleges and universities will designate the term in which they will begin awarding Tuition and Fee Waivers; for some it will begin summer term 2012, for others fall term 2012.

Foster Youth Tuition & Fee Waiver (HB3471)

Frequently Asked Questions as of November 2012

4. Who will notify the school of a student's eligibility for the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: DHS will work with the community colleges, OUS schools and OHSU to create a method of notification.

5. How long can a student be eligible for the tuition and fee waiver?

Answer: Eligible students may receive the Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver for up to 12 terms of full-time study or the equivalent. Less than full time enrollment would be prorated accordingly. Students may take a break from school, but must return prior to his or her 25th birthday in order to continue to eligibility and access the Tuition and Fee Waiver. After age 25, a student must remain enrolled at an eligible post-secondary institution until completion of their undergraduate studies. A student must remain in good standing and may not "stop out" of school after age 25 or they will lose their eligibility for the tuition and fee waiver.

6. What about the student who is eligible for Tuition and Fee Waiver but doesn't need it?

Answer: If a student meets all other criteria for eligibility, but does not have a need for a Tuition and Fee Waiver, the student shall remain eligible until the student receives the equivalent of 4 years of undergraduate education.

7. Is a current college student eligible for Tuition and Fee Waiver if the student meets the eligibility requirements and was enrolled sometime during the past 3 years?

Answer: Yes, as long as the student left foster care or completed high school/GED within the past 3 years (whichever comes first).

8. Can a youth transfer from a private or other school to an eligible school after the 3 years have passed and receive Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Yes, if all of the following conditions are met: 1) Student initially enrolled at a post-secondary institution within 3 years of completing high school or having wardship dismissed (whichever date

Foster Youth Tuition & Fee Waiver (HB3471)

Frequently Asked Questions as of November 2012

was earliest), 2) The transfer occurred prior to age 25, and 3) The student receives the Tuition and Fee Waiver prior to the age 25.

9. Can an eligible student begin at an Oregon community college and then transfer to a 4-year university and be eligible for the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Yes, as long as the university is part of the Oregon University System (OUS) or OHSU, and the student begins receiving the Tuition and Fee Waiver prior to the age of 25.

10. Can an Oregon foster youth who has been placed/residing in another state return to Oregon and be eligible for the tuition waiver?

Answer: To be eligible for the tuition and fee waiver, an Oregon foster youth must be deemed a resident of Oregon. See more details below, in question 11.

11. When an Oregon foster youth who has been residing in another state returns to Oregon and enrolls at an eligible institution, will the student have to pay out-of-state tuition?

Answer: Possibly. For all OUS and OHSU institutions, student residency is determined first at the campus level, following Oregon Administrative Rules, 580-010-0029 through 580-010-0047. A student should check with his/her campus to determine if he/she is considered a resident or not. If not, the student will be required to pay out-of-state tuition.

12. Does a youth in a voluntary placement qualify for the tuition and fee waiver?

Answer: No. A youth must be in the legal care and custody of DHS (or one of the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon) for at least 365 days between 16 and 20 years of age.

13. Does a youth who was adopted or entered a guardianship qualify for the tuition and fee waiver?

Answer: Yes, IF the youth was in the care and custody of DHS (or one of the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon) for at least 365 days after the youth's 16th birthday. Youth who were adopted or enter a

Foster Youth Tuition & Fee Waiver (HB3471)

Frequently Asked Questions as of November 2012

guardianship prior to the age of 17, or had less than 365 days of care after 16 years of age at the time of the adoption/guardianship, are NOT eligible.

14. May a student remain in foster care to age 21 and receive the tuition and fee waiver while in foster care?

Answer: Yes, as long as the youth enrolls at a post-secondary institution within 3 years of graduating from high school or receiving the equivalent of a high school diploma.

15. May a student receive a modified diploma and still qualify for the tuition and fee waiver?

Answer: Yes. However, the student must be taking credits/courses that will count towards an undergraduate certificate or degree.

16. Does a student who is in, or has been in, an Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) foster home qualify?

Answer: No, unless the student had been in Oregon DHS or Tribal care and custody for at least 365 days after the age of 16 and meets all other eligibility criteria.

Enrollment:

1. What is the definition of “enroll”?

Answer: A student is considered enrolled when they have applied and been admitted to a bachelor’s degree program at an Oregon University System campus or registered at an Oregon community college as an undergraduate student.

2. What is the definition of “must enroll within 3 years”?

Answer: A student must enroll for the term that is within 3 years of completing high school/GED or left care and legal wardship dismissed (whichever comes first). For example, a student who completes high school/GED by November 2011 would need to be enrolled by Fall Term (mid-September) 2014. If a student waited until Winter term (January) 2015, they would have exceeded 3 years.

Foster Youth Tuition & Fee Waiver (HB3471)

Frequently Asked Questions as of November 2012

3. Must an eligible student pay Advanced Tuition Deposits when requested by the school?

Answer: Yes. If the student is determined to be eligible for the tuition and fee waiver, the school will need to refund the amount of tuition deposit(s) paid. This would be determined at the time the school is finalizing a student's financial aid.

4. Can a student participate in Summer Term and receive the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Yes. The term will count toward the 4 year maximum.

Award:

1. Who determines the actual Tuition and Fee Waiver amount?

Answer: Each school will be responsible for packaging a youth's financial aid. The tuition and fee waiver will be a component of the financial aid process.

2. How does the tuition and fee waiver work?

Answer: A student's federal aid (Pell, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant), Oregon Opportunity Grant and any other institutional (school) aid will be used to cover the student's tuition and fees. Any amount of tuition and fees remaining after the Pell, FEOG, OOG and other school aid is applied will be waived.

3. Are Foster Youth guaranteed to receive an Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG)?

Answer: No. The Oregon Student Access Commission (OSAC) will be prioritizing current and former foster youth for the Oregon Opportunity Grant. However, there will be deadlines. At this time, a student must register for and attend Fall Term in order to be prioritized for the OOG.

4. Does the Chafee Education & Training Grant (ETG) lower the amount of a student's tuition and fee waiver?

Answer: No. The Chafee ETG is not to be considered when determining the amount of a student's tuition and fee waiver. In

Foster Youth Tuition & Fee Waiver (HB3471)

Frequently Asked Questions as of November 2012

addition, a student's private scholarships, grants and loans are NOT to be applied toward a student's tuition and fees.

5. What is included in the Tuition and Fees waived?

Answer: A qualified student for the Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver is entitled to a waiver of tuition and fees as follows: tuition for academic credit courses (at base or differential rates depending upon program to which student is admitted) but not for noncredit courses; Mandatory enrollment fees: building, incidental, health service, recreation center, or other mandatory fees that may be added from time to time; One-time fees: matriculation, transcript for life (OIT only); Fees required for instruction related services such as lab or course fees that are assessed upon registration for a particular course
Fees that are not covered under the tuition and fee waiver include, but are not limited to: books, supplies, parking, personal incidentals, fines, and room and board fees. Fees considered as "pass through" fees, paid to an outside provider, are exempt from the Tuition and Fee Waiver.

6. How are students notified of the Tuition and Fee Waiver amount?

Answer: The college or university the student has been accepted to attend will inform the student of the Tuition and Fee Waiver amount. The amount may be reflected on the student's financial aid award letter.

7. How are Independent Living Program (ILP) Providers notified of the student's Tuition and Fee Waiver and amount?

Answer: The student will need to inform the ILP Provider.

8. May a student use the Tuition and Fee Waiver for graduate school?

Answer: No. The Tuition and Fee Waiver may be used for an Associates degree, certificate programs, and a Bachelors degree, but does not continue beyond the level of an initial Bachelors degree.

9. May a student decline the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Yes. A student may decline the Tuition and Fee Waiver. The student must provide the school with a reason for the decision to decline the waiver.

Foster Youth Tuition & Fee Waiver (HB3471)

Frequently Asked Questions as of November 2012

10. If a student declines the Tuition and Fee Waiver, will they be able to receive the Tuition and Fee Waiver the next year?

Answer: Yes, if the student is continuing to work towards an undergraduate degree or certificate.

Volunteer Program:

The Oregon Tuition and Fee Waiver program requires students receiving a tuition and fee waiver to complete 30 hours of volunteer service each academic year.

1. How will students be made aware of potential volunteer opportunities?

Answer: The student will need to check with the school's Office of Student Affairs for further instructions. (The hope is the schools will post volunteer opportunities for students, as well as coordinate with the Oregon Foster Youth Connection (OFYC), and their local Independent Living Program (ILP) Provider for opportunities to volunteer.)

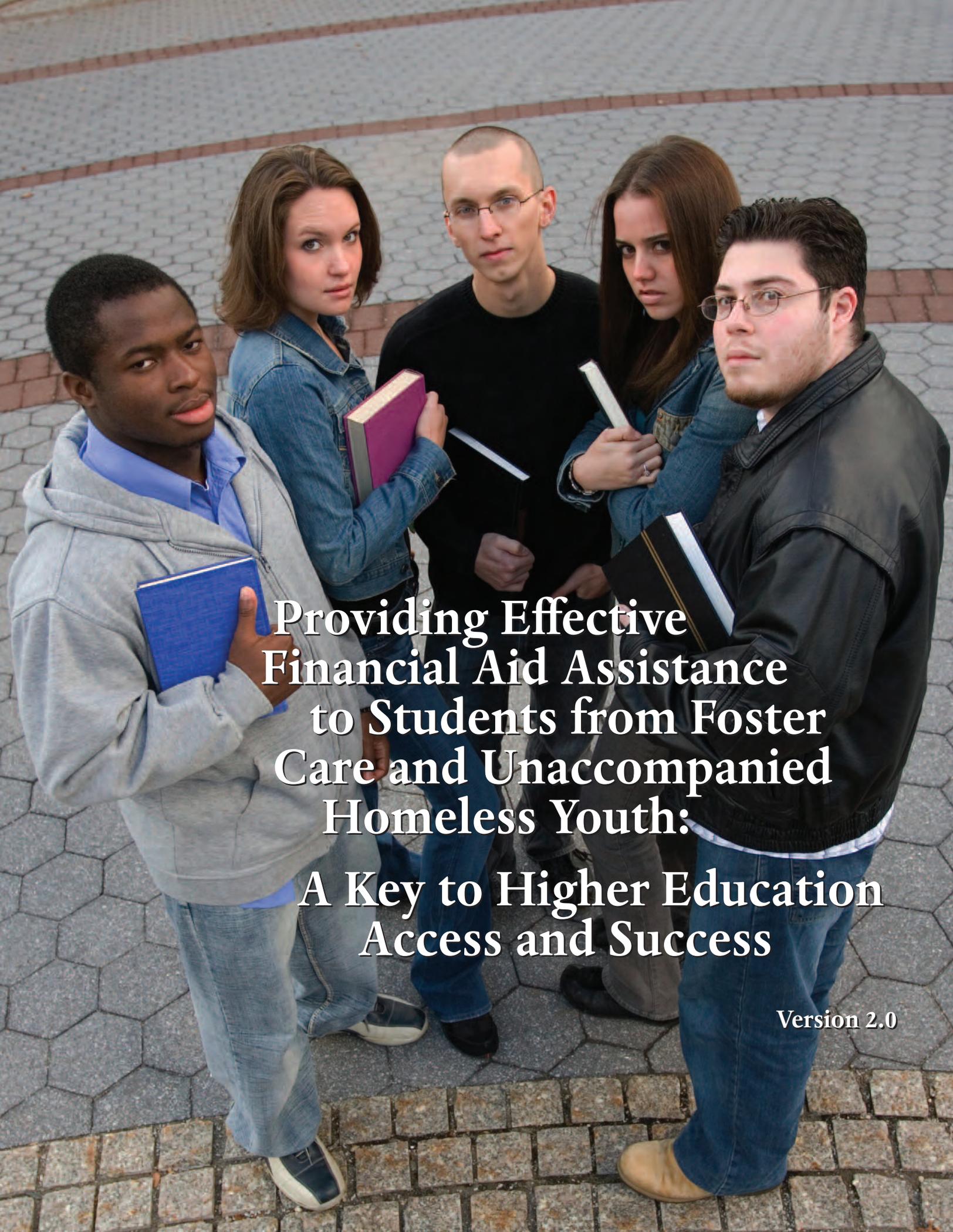
2. Who is monitoring a student's 30 hours of volunteer service?

Answer: It is the responsibility of the student receiving the waiver to document compliance with the 30-hour requirement to the satisfaction of the college or university. School's are currently in the process of creating a uniform tracking form for students to track volunteer hours.

3. Who monitors students for continued eligibility for the tuition and fee waiver?

Answer: Each school will be responsible for determining a process for confirming the 30 volunteer hours have been met prior to issuing a tuition and fee waiver in year 2 and all subsequent years. Schools are encouraged to create similar processes to allow students to transfer schools with minimal confusion regarding this requirement.

For additional questions, contact DHS at:
503-945-6612 or email: foster.care@state.or.us



**Providing Effective
Financial Aid Assistance
to Students from Foster
Care and Unaccompanied
Homeless Youth:
A Key to Higher Education
Access and Success**

Version 2.0

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Special thanks to Casey Family Programs for their generous contribution to the development and dissemination of this publication to the higher education community.

It is our collective hope that these tools will assist Financial Aid Administrators and other student advocates in helping unaccompanied homeless and foster youth pursue their postsecondary education dreams.

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Did you hear that student's story?

I didn't know what to say.

What am I supposed to say?

I didn't know what to do.

Who should I refer her to?

How do I help him?

Don't we just treat them like any other student?

These were comments and questions I had when I first started assisting students who are former foster youth. Looking back, my naivety about the world of former foster youth and their needs is somewhat embarrassing. Sadly, I now realize that I was not alone. I'm sure these are the same comments and questions many of you and your colleagues had or have now. The majority of higher education institutions in the United States do not have a systematic support system for students from foster care. Resources to provide staff with training or written materials in this highly sensitive area are minimal or nonexistent, and public exposure and support to help these students is few and far between. There are former foster youth in your classrooms now. They are in your offices waiting in line. They need financial support. They need guidance, emotional support, and morale boosters. Sometimes, they even need you to find them. They need to know that people on campus do care that they succeed. They are searching for ways to survive—not only to get through the semester but also to get through life. They need your help! This manual is a resource for helping you understand youth from foster care. We hope it will help you help them.

— Anonymous Financial Aid Director

Introduction

In 2006, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) recognized a significant number of youth from foster care were struggling to find needed support and assistance in obtaining financial aid. Acknowledging this need, CCCCCO sponsored a concerted effort called the Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI) to bring issues affecting these youth to the forefront and to improve their ability to access postsecondary education and benefit from the support services that are available but are often unknown to them.

CCCCO's vision and strong leadership sparked this statewide outreach and retention effort to better serve youth currently or formerly in foster care. The goals of this initiative are to improve:

- Access to student services and resources
- Access to academic support
- Retention
- Academic performance
- Completion of units
- Completion of programs and degree
- Transfer rates to baccalaureate institutions

In February 2007, CCCCCO launched FYSI with a three-day statewide training where over 100 college representatives were trained on how to work more sensitively with this unique student population. This kick-off also included national, state and local leaders from child welfare, probation, and public and private agencies who contributed to the overall success of this training. These trained college representatives volunteered to become the first foster youth liaisons at their colleges.

For other states interested in creating a similar statewide effort, kickoff trainings such as the one described above have proven to be invaluable in forging new cross sector partnerships that support students successfully transitioning into postsecondary education. Other states such as, Ohio, Washington, Connecticut, Texas, and North Carolina have all held their own statewide kickoff events that have proven beneficial. Today, an ever increasing number of postsecondary institutions across the nation have focused efforts to support this underrepresented student population. To learn more about these programs please review the suggested resources, readings, and tools located at the back of this publication.

Commitment, leadership, and vision are essential to starting an initiative which is evidenced by CCCCCO FYSI. FYSI is an unfunded, voluntary effort that continues to evolve, with a reported 6,685 students from foster care identified and served by California Community Colleges during the 2009-2010 school year.

Many California Community Colleges have reported providing the following services:

- Comprehensive guidance and assistance in completing financial aid and other college-related forms
- Personal guidance, counseling, and supplemental support
- Opportunities for youth to engage in college life and develop advocacy and leadership skills
- Transitional support for college entry and university transfer
- Transitional support for future employment
- Limited year-round housing and other basic needs, such as meals, transportation, and health insurance

“We don’t know how to identify ourselves after we leave foster care. I didn’t go to college for two years because I didn’t know anything about financial aid. All I wanted was to go to school. I just didn’t have any money.”

—Youth from foster care (formerly homeless), and
Humboldt State University Student of the Year

A Word to the User

Young people who have foster care or homelessness in their background often have no way of breaking free from the cycles of poverty except via success in postsecondary education or training. And yet, it is nearly impossible to secure that postsecondary education when life revolves around the struggle to survive. Rent and food will always take precedence over tuition and books.

Today, the FAFSA's definition of an 'independent student' makes it much easier for students without the support of their birth families to get the help they need to secure financial aid and pursue a postsecondary education.

This publication contains valuable information that will guide financial aid advisors, independent living coordinators, guidance counselors, social workers, and others nationwide in helping youth from foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth successfully complete the FAFSA.

This publication is not intended for youth themselves, although it lists resources that unaccompanied homeless youth or youth from foster care may find helpful.

Understanding Foster and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

In this section, an overview explaining the circumstances that have led over 1 million children and youth in the United States to becoming homeless, runaways, and/or being placed in the foster care system. Here, the foster care system is described clearing up misconceptions about foster care placements and also explains how a percentage of foster youth are in probation-supervised placements.

Next, is information on how youth transition out of foster care which includes clarifying the difference between civil emancipation and emancipation from the foster care system. It concludes with an explanation of the connection between homelessness and foster care and how legislative changes are reducing barriers effective with the 2011–2012 academic year.

FAFSA Dependency Status Questions

The heart of this publication is the detailed case examples provided for all six dependency questions. This section was designed with input from NASFAA and Financial Aid leaders who assisted in developing unique case scenarios in response to each question. Using the Application and Verification Guide (AVG), a definition of each potential student population these questions are referring to are listed.

There are two pages dedicated to each of these questions, one titled "Quick Reference" and the other "Case Scenarios". Both "Quick Reference" and "Case Scenarios" pages contain the same case examples. The difference between the two is that the "Quick Reference" includes information from the AVG that supports the suggested responses. The "Case Scenarios" provide guidance to those assisting students in answering these questions correctly.

Note: The numbering of the FAFSA questions will likely change every year. This publication is based on the 2011 – 2012 FAFSA. The dependency questions may be listed under different numbers in future editions of the FAFSA.

Sensitive Approaches to Communication

Students from foster care provided extensive input into developing this portion of this guide. Learn what students find helpful and how to create a more comfortable and welcoming environment when asking questions that may be highly sensitive to students from foster care. This section serves as a tool to help you get the answers you need from students, while asking in a sensitive and unobtrusive manner.

Real life reflections from students from care are provided to help you consider their personal perspectives as they navigate through the college experience. These are integrated throughout each section, helping us all to be considerate when guiding these students to success.

This publication concludes with a glossary of terms containing commonly used acronyms across the Financial Aid and Foster Care systems. Additionally, Casey Family Programs has provided a comprehensive list of recommended readings and resources on improving higher education outcomes for youth from foster care. If you are interested in learning more about the challenges these youth face, you will find a wealth of information in these resources.

The role one plays in assisting foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth in obtaining financial aid to continue their education beyond high school cannot be overlooked.

We are grateful for your attention to this information.

Sample Tools

We recommend checking to see if your state has tools available for financial aid administrators who are trying to help youth from foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth get financial aid. Several web-based tools are available in California. These may be helpful sources of information. They may also serve as models for those who wish to set up similar tools in other states.

Those of you outside of the financial aid field would also find these tools and resources to be invaluable in supporting your work with these students.

We also encourage you to explore resources and tools mentioned below that may exist at colleges, universities, and through national or statewide efforts tailored specifically for foster and unaccompanied homeless youth. For information on other efforts review our selected readings and resources listed at the end of this publication.

Take advantage of the tools and resources available on the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office website as these materials were uniquely designed to assist students being successful.

Below you will find information originally developed for the California Community College system to aid foster youth in their educational journey. However, much of the information is transferable to other states throughout the country.

CCCCO Website:

To navigate to this page, go to the California Community College Chancellor's Office website at www.cccco.edu and enter FYSI in the search box.

The FYSI webpage was established to serve as means for accessing information created to support college representatives and the many others working with foster youth; it provides the following information:

- 2008 FYSI Manual
- FYSI Resource Guide
- FYSI Student Success Orientation Framework Overview
- FYSI Toolkit
- FYSI Brochure
- FYSI Outreach PowerPoint
- Directory of all college FYSI Liaisons/contacts, listed by college and region

FYSI Listserv:

The **FYSI Partners listserv** is an open dialog, public, e-mail discussion list to be used by Foster Youth Success Initiative Liaisons, community partners, and youth from foster care. Please add the list address, FYSIPARTNERS@LISTSERV.CCCNEXT.NET, and the listserv administration address, LISTSERV@LISTSERV.CCCNEXT.NET, to your approved sender list.

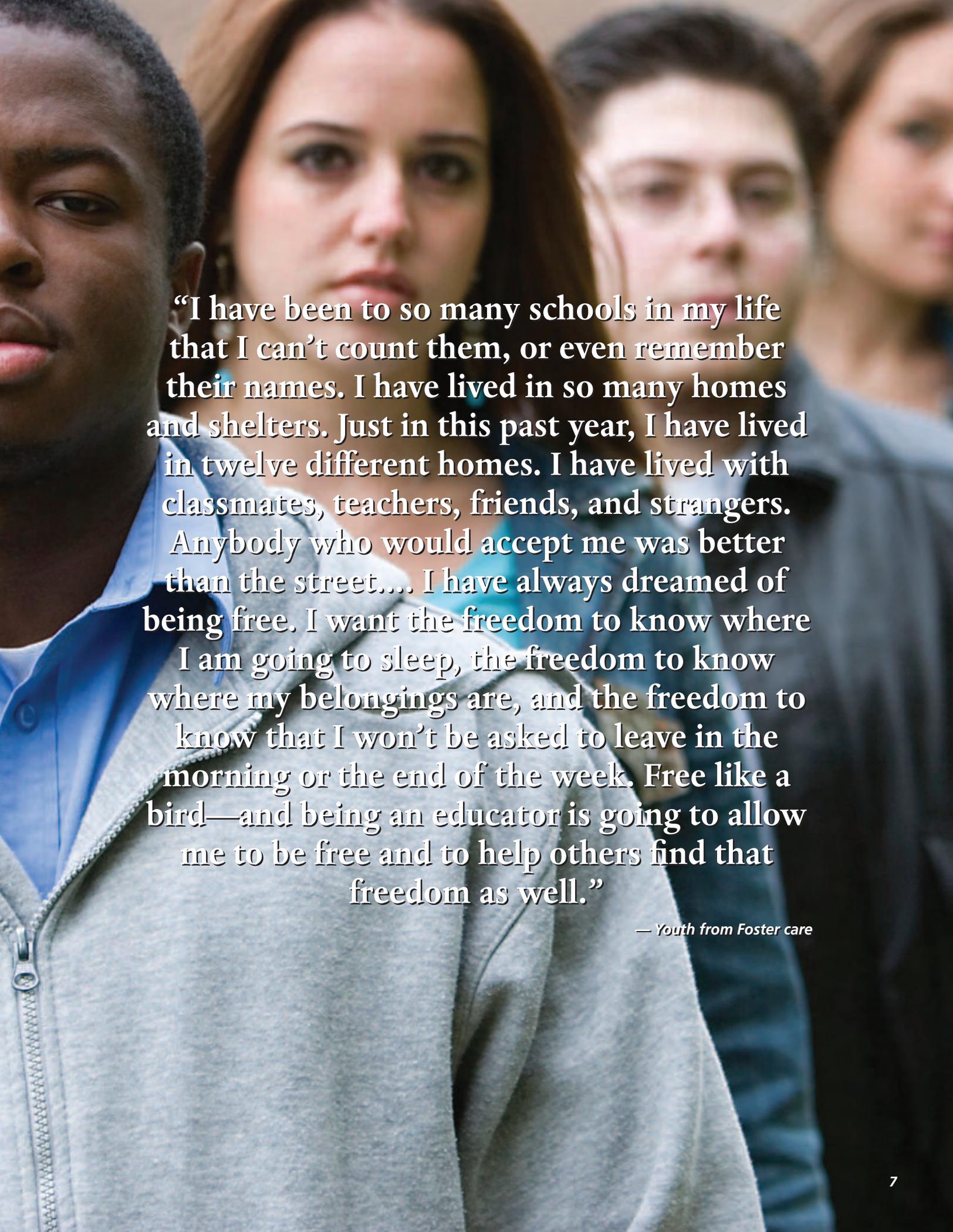
Please remember that this listserv is a two-way system, and when you reply to an e-mail, it goes to all subscribers. To send a message to everyone subscribed to the list, address an e-mail to FYSIPARTNERS@LISTSERV.CCCNEXT.NET

If you are not subscribed to the list, the FYSI Partners listserv will then send a confirmation request to the sender's e-mail address, usually a simple e-mail message with a link for confirmation. Follow the instructions in the e-mail to confirm the posting, and your original message will be sent to the list.

If you would like to subscribe to the listserv, send an e-mail to LISTSERV@LISTSERV.CCCNEXT.NET and put SUBSCRIBE FYSIPARTNERS in the body of a blank, non-HTML e-mail. No subject or signatures, please! The FYSI Listserv is available to anyone who is interested in joining.

“I think it’s mostly a matter of respect. That and financial aid staff being fully informed about what foster care means instead of only knowing vague bits and pieces of the system.”

—Youth from foster care

A group of diverse young people, including a Black man in the foreground and several white and Hispanic individuals behind him, all looking forward with serious expressions. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the text.

“I have been to so many schools in my life that I can’t count them, or even remember their names. I have lived in so many homes and shelters. Just in this past year, I have lived in twelve different homes. I have lived with classmates, teachers, friends, and strangers. Anybody who would accept me was better than the street... I have always dreamed of being free. I want the freedom to know where I am going to sleep, the freedom to know where my belongings are, and the freedom to know that I won’t be asked to leave in the morning or the end of the week. Free like a bird—and being an educator is going to allow me to be free and to help others find that freedom as well.”

— Youth from Foster care

Understanding Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Foster Youth

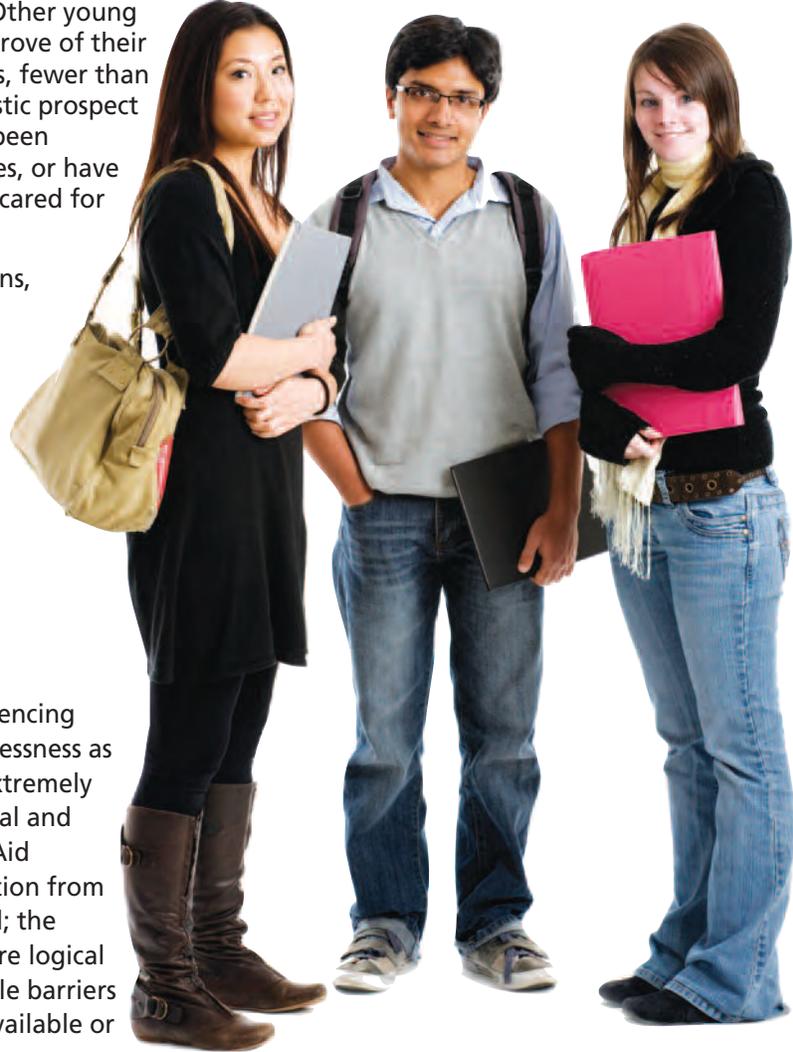
Unaccompanied Homeless and Foster Youth

Nationwide, between 1.6 and 1.7 million youth run away from their homes each year. Generally, youth leave home due to severe dysfunction in their families, including circumstances that put their safety and well-being at risk.¹ Other young people are forced out of their homes by parents who disapprove of their sexual orientation or pregnancy.² Due to their circumstances, fewer than half of unaccompanied youth are considered to have a realistic prospect of family reunification.³ These unaccompanied youth have been abandoned by their parents, have run away from their homes, or have been forced to leave their homes. They are no longer being cared for by their parents.

Unaccompanied youth live in a variety of temporary situations, including but not limited to:

- Shelters
- Homes of friends or relatives
- Cars
- Campgrounds
- Public parks
- Abandoned buildings
- Bus or train stations
- Motels

Postsecondary education and training offers students experiencing homelessness the best hope for escaping poverty and homelessness as adults. Due to their severe poverty, homeless students are extremely unlikely to be able to access higher education without federal and state student aid. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) requires most students to provide financial information from their parents in order to determine student eligibility for aid; the application also requires a parental signature. While these are logical requirements for most applicants, they create insurmountable barriers for unaccompanied homeless youth, whose parents are unavailable or are unwilling to provide this information.



¹ Toro, P., et al. (2007). "Homeless youth in the United States: Recent research findings and intervention approaches." *Toward Understanding Homelessness: The 2007 National Symposium on Homelessness Research*. Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services. Physical and sexual abuse in the home is common, as studies of unaccompanied homeless youth have found that 20 to 50% were sexually abused in their homes, while 40 to 60% were physically abused. Robertson, M. & Toro, P. (1999). "Homeless youth: Research, intervention, and policy." *Practical Lessons: The 1998 National Symposium on Homelessness Research*. Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. See also MacLean, M.G., Embry, L.E. & Cauce, A.M. (1999). Homeless adolescents' paths to separation from family: Comparison of family characteristics, psychological adjustment, and victimization. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 27(2), 179-187. Parental drug use or alcoholism and conflicts with stepparents or partners also provoke youth to run away from home. (Toro, 2007.) Over two-thirds of callers to Runaway Hotline report that at least one of their parents abuses drugs or alcohol. In a survey of unaccompanied homeless youth in California, over half felt that being homeless was as safe as or safer than being at home. Bernstein, N. & Foster, L.K. (2008). *Voices from the Street: A Survey of Homeless Youth by Their Peers*. Sacramento, CA: California Research Bureau.

² For example, 20 to 40% of homeless youth in one study identified themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender, compared to only 3-5% of the overall population. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Coalition for the Homeless (2007). *Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth: An epidemic of homelessness*. Washington DC: Authors. 10% of currently homeless female teenagers are pregnant. (Toro, 2007.) Over 50% of youth in shelters and on the streets have reported that their parents either told them to leave or knew they were leaving but did not care. Greene (1993).

³ Robertson & Toro, 1999.

The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA) of 2007 (P.L. 110-84), eliminated this barrier for unaccompanied homeless youth applying for aid. The CCRAA expanded the definition of “independent student” to include unaccompanied homeless youth and youth who are unaccompanied, at risk of homelessness, and self-supporting. Verification of the youth’s situation must be made by one of the following:

- A Financial Aid Administrator (FAA)
- A McKinney-Vento Act school district liaison⁴
- A U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development homeless assistance program director or their designee
- A Runaway and Homeless Youth Act program director or their designee

How Youth Enter the Foster Care/Dependency System

The story often begins with an anonymous call to a child-abuse hotline alleging mistreatment of a youth under age 18. A social worker or police officer is dispatched to investigate. If evidence of abuse, neglect, and/or abandonment is found, the state’s child welfare or child protective services agency may petition the juvenile court to authorize removing the youth from his/her home. This happens when the social worker feels the youth needs the protection of the court. (The name of the child welfare agency is different in each state.) Once the youth is declared a dependent of the court, parents have anywhere from 6 to 18 months to reunify with their youth in most situations. *Reunify* is the term used for a reuniting of the family.

Youth who are removed from their homes are under the care and custody of the state. They may be placed into any one of the following types of settings:

1. **The home of a noncustodial parent**
2. **The approved home of a relative**
3. **The approved home of a non-relative extended family member (such as a family friend)**
4. **A foster home**
5. **A group home**
6. **A tribal foster home or other placement under the federal Indian Child Welfare Act**

These are the typical circumstances through which a youth becomes a dependent of the court. The state then becomes legally responsible for the youth; the youth is said to be in foster care. In 2007, there were almost 500,000 children and youth in foster care nationwide at any given time; over 783,000 children and youth were served by the foster care system.⁵

Following is the federal definition of foster care provided in the Code of Federal Regulations at 45 CFR §1355.20:

Foster care means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes. A child is in foster care in accordance with this definition regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed and payments are made by the state or local agency for the care of the child, whether adoption subsidy payments are being made prior to the finalization of an adoption, or whether there is federal matching of any payments that are made.

⁴ Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools may disclose educational records for financial aid purposes without parental consent. 34 C.F.R. §99.31(a)(4). This includes verifying that a youth is homeless and unaccompanied.

⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. Trends in Foster Care and Adoption—FY 2002-FY 2007. Retrieved September 16, 2009, from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/trends.htm

“Youth living in our foster care system have the potential to triumph over difficult childhoods and become the community leaders of our future. They may invent the next Microsoft in someone's garage, find the cure for a terminal disease, or serve in the highest courts in our land—but none of this will be possible if they are at risk for educational failure. Foster youth deserve the best start in life that we can provide. To do less would be to turn our backs on the future and the young people who ask only for a chance to achieve their potential.”

*—Miriam Krinsky, Former Executive Director,
Children's Law Center of Los Angeles*



This federal regulation provides examples of some types of out-of-home placements that would qualify an applicant as a ward of the court for the purposes of the FAFSA and for receiving Federal Student Aid (FSA). Dependent or delinquent youth who are placed by the court into an out-of-home placement are considered “wards” for these purposes.

Youth who on or after age 13 were court dependents, and placed in out-of-home care as described in the federal definition of foster care, should mark “yes” on the FAFSA in answer to the question, “At any time since you turned age 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?”⁶

How Youth Enter the Probation/Delinquency System

Some states have statistics available on how many youth are in probation-supervised foster care placements. In California, for example, there were 86,000 youth in foster care in 2007, of whom 10,630 were in a probation-supervised foster care placement.⁷

Youth enter the delinquency system because they are alleged to have committed a criminal offense. After an arrest, youth may be referred for evaluation to determine whether the matter can be handled informally. If not, the matter will probably be referred to the District Attorney’s (DA) office. The youth may then have to go to Juvenile Court to face the allegations. If the Juvenile Court determines that the allegations are true, the court may place him or her on probation. Youth under the jurisdiction of probation are sometimes referred to as delinquent.

The majority of youth placed on probation remain in their homes under the care and custody of their parents. Sometimes, though, the court determines that the most appropriate way to hold the youth accountable for their crime and to prevent future violations of the law is to place the youth in an incarceration setting like Juvenile Hall, Juvenile Ranch, or Probation Camp.

Under certain circumstances, however, the court finds that a youth under the supervision of probation cannot be returned home because to do so would be contrary to the youth’s welfare. (The court may make similar findings for court dependents who may be subject to abuse or neglect.) If the crime does not warrant placing the youth

into an incarceration setting, then the youth may be under the jurisdiction of probation and placed in foster care or a group home.

As with youth in foster care, youth who are on probation and are placed in out-of-home care on or after their 13th birthday as described in the federal definition of foster care should mark “yes” on the FAFSA in answer to the question “At any time since you turned age 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?”

In some cases, a youth may appear to be both a dependent of the court and a delinquent under the applicable statutes. In these cases, the court may hold a hearing to decide which system should have primary responsibility for the youth’s care. Regardless of whether an applicant is a dependent, a delinquent, or a dual-status youth, the youth should answer “yes” to the ward of the court question on the FAFSA if, at or after age 13, he or she is in an out-of-home placement that falls within the federal definition of foster care, such as a foster home, group home, a relative’s home, etc.

Transition Out of Foster Care/ Termination of a Juvenile Court Case

A juvenile court case can be terminated in several ways. First, a foster youth may be returned to the custody of his or her parents or he or she may be adopted. If the youth was returned to the custody of his or her parents or legally adopted before age 13, the youth should answer “no” to the ward of the court question on the FAFSA and should provide financial information concerning his or her birth or adoptive parents.

Second, a foster youth may be placed in a legal guardianship, either with a relative or with a non-relative such as a foster parent or family friend. Some of these youth may still have an open case and a social worker; others’ cases may have been closed long ago. Regardless of whether the guardianship is with a relative or non-relative, or whether the child welfare case is open or closed, these youth should answer “yes” to the legal guardianship question on the FAFSA if they are in a legal guardianship or were in one when they reached the age of majority. (For youth who were living in a different state when they reached the age of majority, the guardianship would have to have been adjudicated by a court in the state they were legally residing in at that time.)

⁶ Question 52 in 2011-12 Free Application for Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education. (2011). Washington, DC: Author. P.5.

⁷ Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Shaw, T., Dawson, W., Piccus, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Smith, J., Dunn, A., Frerer, K., Putnam Hornstein, E., & Ataie, Y. (Jan. 2005). Probation Supervised Foster Care Highlights from CWS/CMS. Retrieved September 1, 2006, from http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Highlights/data/CWsupervisedFC_Q2_06.pdf

Third, a youth may remain in a foster home or group home until he or she “ages out” of foster care and the juvenile court case is closed, which may occur anytime the youth is between age 18 and 21. Nationwide, 20,000 youth or more age out of the foster care system every year.⁸ These youth should answer “yes” to the ward of the court question on the FAFSA because they were in foster care at or after the age of 13. It is of interest to note that, when foster youth exit the foster care system because they have reached legal age, it can be referred to as “emancipating” from the system. This is not to be confused with civil emancipation.

Defining Emancipation

Civil emancipation takes place when a person under age 18 voluntarily goes to court and is legally released from the custody and care of his or her parents. Civil emancipation is typically used by youth not in foster care who have moved out of their parents’ homes, have the skills to live on their own, have a job and an apartment, and want to be able to sign their own lease, car loan, etc. Child actor Macaulay Culkin brought national media attention to this issue by using civil emancipation to gain control of his own finances. Beginning with the 2009–2010 academic year, a question regarding [civil] emancipation was added to the FAFSA and is addressed in the FAFSA Dependency Questions section of this publication.

Homelessness and Foster Care: What’s the Connection?

Section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines a homeless child or youth as children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.⁹

The correlation between homelessness and foster care is overwhelming. Children and youth may enter the foster care system because the family is experiencing homelessness. However, the overlap does not stop there. All too often youth age out of foster care into homelessness, or may become homeless from running away from foster care placements. (The desire to reconnect with siblings and family is one possible motivation for running away from a foster care placement.)

Statistics reveal the following:

- Twenty-two percent of homeless children are put into foster care and stay in care longer.
- Thirty percent of children in foster care could return home if their parents had access to housing.
- Approximately 27 percent of homeless adults and 41 percent of homeless youth report a history of foster care.
- There is a lack of placements for older youth.
- Youth run away from placements to avoid the system.
- Twenty-five percent of youth “aging out” of foster care experience homelessness.¹⁰

Why is this important for Financial Aid Administrators? The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA) and the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) include a definition of homelessness that matches the definition of homelessness in McKinney-Vento. The independent student definition is expanded to include homeless youth. This change helps reduce barriers to higher education and thereby increases the chances for future success of these youth.

⁸ Gardner, D. (2008). Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: Identifying Strategies and Best Practices. Washington, DC: National Association of Counties. Retrieved September 19, 2009, from http://www.naco.org/Content/ContentGroups/Issue_Briefs/IB-YouthAgingoutofFoster-2008.pdf; Courtney, M. (2005). Youth Aging Out of Foster Care. (Policy Brief.) Philadelphia, PA: MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood and Public Policy. Retrieved September 19, 2009, from <http://www.transad.pop.upenn.edu/downloads/courtney--foster%20care.pdf>

⁹ 42 U.S.C. 1087vv(d)(1)(H).

¹⁰ Duffield, B. (2009). Why Are Youth Homeless and On Their Own? [unpublished PowerPoint slides].

FAFSA Dependency Status Questions

Questions 52-57 of the 2011-2012 FAFSA

The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA) of 2007 made significant changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Among other things, it improved access to financial aid for students who are orphans, in foster care, emancipated, in legal guardianship, and/or unaccompanied homeless youth. The FAFSA changes became effective in January 2009 for the 2009–10 award year. This section addresses the changes related to these student populations.

This publication provides several tools relating to these students. In addition to the section on understanding homeless and foster youth, Quick Reference pages and Case Scenarios appear below to provide guidance in a number of situations. There is also a section on sensitive communication.

The 2011-12 Application and Verification Guide (AVG), which is one volume of the Federal Student Aid (FSA) Handbook, provides the following definitions for the above mentioned student populations:

- Youth—A student who is 21 years old or younger, or still enrolled in high school as of the date he or she signs the FAFSA.
- Orphan—A student whose parents are both deceased.
- Foster Youth or Ward of the Court—A student who, at any time since the age of 13, was a foster child or a dependent/ward of the court.
- Emancipated—The status of a youth legally released from control of their parent or guardian by a court in their state of legal residence.
- Legal Guardianship—A legal relationship in which a student has a guardian that was appointed by the court in the student's state of legal residence.
- Homeless Youth
 - o At risk of being homeless—The term used when a student's housing may cease to be fixed, regular, and adequate.
 - o Homeless—The term used when a student lacks fixed, regular, and adequate housing.
 - o Self-supporting—The term used when a student pays for his own living expenses, including fixed, regular, and adequate housing.
 - o Unaccompanied—The term used when a student is not living in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian.¹¹
 - o Older than 21 but not yet 24—Students who are older than 21 but not yet 24 and who, if not for their age, would be considered an unaccompanied, self-supporting youth at risk of being homeless, might qualify for a dependency override under Professional Judgment.

The AVG states that a Financial Aid Administrator is “not required to verify the answers to the homeless youth questions unless you have conflicting information. A documented phone call with, or a written statement from, one of the relevant authorities is sufficient verification.”

As mentioned, this publication provides Quick Reference pages and Case Scenarios. These sections provide guidance for decision making in an easy-to-follow format.

1. Quick Reference: These tools are comprehensive. They include the related FAFSA question and question number for reference along with pertinent guidance or related instructions from the US Department of Education (ED), FAFSA, NASFAA, the Application and Verification Guide of the FSA Handbook, and HUD. The case examples used in the reference tools are also provided in the case scenario tools. The aim of the reference tools is to provide more comprehensive guidance to financial aid staff in relation to the questions referenced.

Green Text = Students who would answer “yes” to the related FAFSA question.

Red Text = Students who would answer “no” to the related FAFSA question.

2. Case Scenarios: These tools are brief. The aim of the case scenarios tool is to provide very brief guidance for staff in the financial aid office to use when assisting a student with the particular FAFSA question. They include only the pertinent FAFSA questions, related question numbers for reference with example situations. The case scenarios provide examples of situations as they relate to the FAFSA dependency status questions.

Green Text = Students who would answer “yes” to the related FAFSA question.

Red Text = Students who would answer “no” to the related FAFSA question.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Education. (2011). 2011-12 FSA Handbook Application and Verification Guide. Washington, DC: Author. P. 26.

Quick Reference:

At any time since you turned age 13, were both of your parents deceased, were you in foster care, or were you a dependent/ward of the Court?

Question #52 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

Part A: Deceased Parents Case Scenarios

According to the 2011-12 FSA Application and Verification Guide (AVG), a student age 13 or older who is or was an **orphan** (meaning both the student's parents are deceased) is independent for the purposes of Title IV financial aid, even if the student was subsequently adopted. Please note the condition "age 13 or older" now applies. Thus, if a student was orphaned but adopted prior to age 13, the student must answer "no" to question 52.

Scenario A

Caylee's parents died in a car accident when she was 9 years old. She went to live with her aunt. The aunt was granted guardianship of Caylee.

Caylee should answer "yes" because both of her parents are deceased and she has not been adopted.

Scenario B

Jon's parents died when he was 11. His grandparents adopted him at age 12.

John must answer "no" because, although his birth parents died, he was adopted before age 13. He is therefore a dependent of his adoptive parents.

Scenario C

Siesha's father died from an overdose when she was 2. Her mother passed away when she was 16. Siesha was then adopted by her aunt.

Siesha should answer "yes" because both parents are deceased and she was adopted after age 13.

Part B: Foster Care Case Scenarios

The 2011-12 FSA AVG indicates that a student who was at any time since the age of 13 a **foster child** or a **dependent/ward of the court** is independent, for the purposes of Title IV financial aid, even if her status changed later.¹² A foster parent or a legal guardian is not treated as a parent for FSA purposes.¹³ When a dependency court creates a guardianship over a dependent child and "closes the court case," the court still retains jurisdiction over the child. This is true even when the court-appointed legal guardian is not a relative. The child is therefore a ward of the court for purposes of the FAFSA. See CA Welfare and Institution Code §§ 366.3 and 366.4. Note: See your state welfare and institution's regulatory guidelines for applicable codes.

Scenario D

Scott lived with foster parents from age 8 until he was 18. He was kicked out after he graduated and went to live with his mother.

Scott should answer "yes" as he was still in foster care at age 13.

Scenario E

Tammy was abused by her father and placed in foster care, living in a group home from age 10 to 15. Then she went to live with her aunt and uncle.

Tammy should answer "yes" as she was still in foster care at age 13.

Scenario F

Carrie was in foster care from age 10 to 12. She reunified with her mother and lived with her since.

Carrie must answer "no" as she was not in foster care at age 13.

¹² U.S. Department of Education. (2011). 2011-12 FSA Handbook Application and Verification Guide. Washington, DC: Author. P 23.

¹³ U.S. Department of Education. (2011). 2011-12 FSA Handbook Application and Verification Guide. Washington, DC: Author. P 25.

Case Scenario:

At any time since you turned age 13, were both of your parents deceased, were you in foster care, or were you a dependent/ward of the Court?

Question #52 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

Question #52 covers two different types of students: orphans, and foster youth or wards of the court. As a result, this question and the corresponding guidance and case scenarios have been broken down into two parts. Part A addresses orphans and part B addresses foster youth. For further clarification, all case scenarios are color-coded as follows:

Green Text = Students who would be able to answer “yes” to the related FAFSA question. For question 52 Part B, Green also indicates students who are in foster care who would be able to answer “yes” to question 52.

Red Text = Students who would answer “no” to the related FAFSA question. For question 52 part B, red also indicates students who are on probation and should answer “no” to question 52.

Blue Text = Students who for purposes of question 52 part B have “dual status” meaning foster care and probation and should answer “yes” to question 52.

Both Parents Deceased Case Scenarios (Q #52 Part A)

Scenario A

Caylee’s parents died in a car accident when she was 9 years old. She went to live with her aunt. The aunt was granted guardianship of Caylee when she was 10 years old.

Caylee should answer “yes” because both of her parents are deceased and she has not been adopted.

Scenario B

Jon’s parents died when he was 11. His grandparents adopted him at age 12.

John must answer “no” because, although his birth parents died, he was adopted before age 13 and has adoptive parents.

Scenario C

Siesha’s father died from an overdose when she was 2. Her mother passed away when she was 16. Siesha was then adopted by her aunt.

Siesha should answer “yes” because both of her parents are deceased and she was adopted after age 13.

Scenario G

Peter was adopted as an infant. His adoptive parents died when he was 16.

Peter should answer “yes” because he is an orphan since both his adoptive parents are deceased.

Dependent/Ward (D/W) of the Court Case Scenarios (Q#52 Part B)

FOSTER YOUTH*

Scenario H
 Ana was in a foster home until she was adopted at age 8.
 She is NOT a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she was adopted before age 13.

Scenario I
 Beatrice was a dependent of the Court and adopted at age 15.
 She is a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she was still in foster care at age 13.

Scenario J
 Candace was in foster care from age 3 to 15, at which time she reunified with her parents.
 She is a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she was still in foster care at age 13.

DUAL STATUS

Scenario K
 Ernesto is in foster care. At age 16 he is arrested for vandalism at school. A delinquency petition is filed. Ernesto is placed in a group home but is also considered a delinquent youth and is on probation.
 He is therefore a D/W the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because he remains in foster care.

Scenario L
 Diane has been in foster care since she was 8 years old. At 15½ she damages foster home property and is arrested. On her release from Probation Camp, she is placed in a group home until her 19th birthday.
 She is a D/W the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she remains in foster care.

Scenario M
 Harry, age 16, lives at home with his mom and stepdad. Harry and his stepdad get in a fight. They call the police saying Harry attacked the stepdad, and Harry is taken to Juvenile Hall. On his release from Juvenile Hall he is placed on probation.
 His mother refuses to take him back and thus has abandoned him. There are no relatives or friends able to take him, so Harry is placed in a foster home.
 He is now a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because he is now in foster care.

YOUTH ON PROBATION

Scenario N
 Greg gets into a fight at school and hits a classmate. He is arrested and placed on probation. He remains at home with his mother.
 He is NOT a Ward of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because his parents retain custody.

Scenario O
 Fran, a 16-year-old living at home with her parents, commits an offense that causes the Juvenile Court to declare her a delinquent youth and place her on probation.
 The Court determines that it's contrary to Fran's interest to return home at this time and places her in a group home. She is now a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she is placed in a group home which is a type of foster care placement.

* In some jurisdictions, a ward of the court who is a youth under the care and custody of the child welfare system may be referred to as a "court dependent," while those under the jurisdiction of probation may be referred to as a "delinquent."

Quick Reference:

As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor?

Question #53 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

According to the 2011–12 FSA Application and Verification Guide (AVG), students are independent if they are, or were when they turned 18, emancipated minors (released from control of their parent or guardian).¹⁴ In addition the AVG states that if a student is living with grandparents or other relatives, their data should not be reported on the FAFSA as parental data unless they have legally adopted the student.¹⁵

U.S. Department of Education guidance indicates the student must have a court order from their state of legal residence stating they were emancipated before attaining the age of adulthood in their state.

Emancipated Minor Case Scenarios

Scenario P

At age 16, Treyshawn was living with friends and working at Target. He emancipated from his parents and has copies of the emancipation documents. At age 17 he went to live with his grandparents.

Treyshawn should answer “yes” because he has documentation that he was emancipated regardless of whom he lives with.

Scenario Q

Amber ran away from home when she was 17. She applied to emancipate and it was granted at a court in Illinois. She since moved to California.

Amber can answer “yes” because she emancipated in the state that was her legal state of residence at the time.

Scenario R

Zack applied to emancipate when he was 17. The Judge required him to get a job before he would approve the order. Zack failed to get a job before he turned 18.

Zack must answer “no” because the order was not yet in effect when he reached age 18.

Scenario S

Christina became pregnant at 16 and was kicked out of her house. She had the baby when she was 17. The baby’s father is supporting the baby. Christina applied for emancipation, and it was granted by the court.

Christina can answer “yes” if she has copies of her emancipation documents.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Education. (2011). 2011-12 FSA Handbook Application and Verification Guide. Washington, DC: Author. P 23.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Education. (2011). 2011-12 FSA Handbook Application and Verification Guide. Washington, DC: Author. P 25.

Case Scenarios:

As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor?

Question #53 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

Emancipated Minor Case Scenarios

Scenario P

At age 16, Treyshawn was living with friends and working at Target. He emancipated from his parents and has copies of the emancipation documents. At age 17 he went to live with his grandparents.

Treyshawn should answer "yes" because he has documentation that he was emancipated regardless of whom he lives with.

Scenario Q

Amber ran away from home when she was 17. She applied to emancipate and it was granted at a court in Illinois. She since moved to California.

Amber can answer "yes" because she emancipated in the state that was her legal state of residence at the time.

Scenario R

Zack applied to emancipate when he was 17. The Judge required him to get a job before he would approve the order. Zack failed to get a job before he turned 18.

Zack must answer "no" because the order was not yet in effect when he reached age 18.

Scenario S

Christina became pregnant at 16 and was kicked out of her house. She had the baby when she was 17. The baby's father is supporting the baby. Christina applied for emancipation, and it was granted by the court.

Christina can answer "yes" if she has copies of her emancipation documents from her legal state of residence.



Quick Reference:

As determined by a court in your legal state of residence, are you or were you in legal guardianship?

Question #54 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

According to the 2011–12 FSA Application and Verification Guide (AVG), a foster parent or a legal guardian is not treated as a parent for FSA purposes. In addition the AVG states, “If he is now, or was when he became an adult, an emancipated minor or in legal guardianship, he is independent.”¹⁶

U.S. Department of Education guidance indicates the student must have a copy of the guardianship court order from their state of legal residence. If the court order is at any time no longer in effect prior to the student reaching the age of majority in his or her state of legal residence, the student must apply as a dependent student. For example, the age of majority may differ by state; in California it is age 18.

Guardianship Case Scenarios

Scenario T

Alvin was removed from his parents’ home and placed in foster care when he was 5 years old due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment. He never reunifies with his parents and the Court creates a legal guardianship with his Aunt Tracy when Alvin turns 8. The court keeps Alvin’s court case open until his 19th birthday.

Alvin should answer “yes” because he remains under guardianship.

Scenario U

Carl was removed from his parents and placed with a non-relative caregiver (a family friend or foster parent). He doesn’t reunify with his parents. The court created a legal guardianship when Carl turned 16. The court kept Carl’s case open until his 19th birthday.

Carl should answer “yes” because he remains in guardianship.

Scenario V

When Donna was 16, her mother took a job in China for 2 years. Donna’s mother went to court to set up a guardianship so Donna could stay with her grandmother and the grandmother could make health and education decisions for Donna while the mother was living abroad. Donna’s mother provides financial support for her.

Donna would answer “yes” if the guardianship is still in force when she completes the FAFSA or if it was still in force when she reached the age of majority in her state.

Scenario W

The court removes Ray from the care of his parents when he was 9 years old due to neglect. The court takes custody of Ray. Ray’s parents fail to complete their case plan to reunify with him. The court grants Ray’s grandmother legal guardianship when he is 11. When Ray is 12, his mother gets her life together and petitions the court for custody. She wins and the guardianship is terminated.

Because Ray is back in his mother’s custody before age 13, he would answer “no.”

Scenario X

Elaine’s parents ask a family friend, to take care of her because both parents recently lost their jobs and are at risk of being homeless. Elaine goes to live with the family friend, and her parents provide a letter authorizing them to make health and education decisions for Elaine.

Since Elaine does not have a court order, she must answer “no.”

However, Elaine should be referred to the FAA. The FAA must make a determination. For this example, the FAA could make a determination the student is “at risk of being homeless.”

¹⁶ U.S. Department of Education. (2011). 2011-12 FSA Handbook Application and Verification Guide. Washington, DC: Author. P 23.

Case Scenarios:

As determined by a court in your legal state of residence, are you or were you in legal guardianship?

Question #54 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

Guardianship Case Scenarios

Scenario T

Alvin was removed from his parents' home and placed in foster care when he was 5 years old due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment. He never reunifies with his parents and the court creates a legal guardianship with his Aunt Tracy when Alvin turns 8. The court keeps Alvin's court case open until his 19th birthday.

Alvin should answer "yes" because he remains under guardianship until age 19.

Scenario U

Carl was removed from his parents and placed with a non-relative caregiver (a family friend or foster parent). He doesn't reunify with his parents. The court created a legal guardianship when Carl turned 16. The court kept Carl's case open until his 19th birthday.

Carl should answer "yes" because he remains in guardianship until his 19th birthday.

Scenario V

When Donna was 16, her mom took a job in China for 2 years. Donna's mother went to court to set up a guardianship so Donna could stay with her grandmother and the grandmother could make health and education decisions for Donna while the mother was living abroad. Donna's mother provides financial support for her.

Donna would answer "yes" if the guardianship is still in force when she completes the FAFSA or if it was still in force when she reached the age of majority in her state.

Scenario W

The court removes Ray from the care of his parents when he was 9 years old due to neglect. The court takes custody of Ray. Ray's parents fail to complete their case plan to reunify with him. The Court grants Ray's grandmother legal guardianship when he is 11. When Ray is 12, his mother gets her life together and petitions the court for custody. She wins and the guardianship is terminated.

Because Ray is back in his mother's custody would answer "no."

Scenario X

Elaine's parents ask a family friend, to take care of her because both parents recently lost their jobs and are at risk of being homeless. Elaine goes to live with the family friend, and her parents provide a letter authority to make health and education decisions for Elaine.

Elaine must answer "no" because she is not in a legal guardianship adjudicated by a court.

However, Elaine should be referred to the FAA. The FAA must make a determination. For this example, the FAA could make a determination the student is "at risk of being homeless."



Quick Reference:

At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did your high school or school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

Question #55 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

For questions 55 through 57, the U.S. Department of Education defines the following terms (as included in NASFAA guidance) for helping foster youth and wards of the court:

- **Youth**—A student age 21 or under or still enrolled in high school on the date he or she signs the FAFSA.
- **Unaccompanied**—The term used for a student who is not living in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
- **Homeless**—The term used for a student who lacks fixed, regular, and adequate housing. This includes living in shelters, motels, cars, or temporarily living with other people or in dorms when the student has nowhere else to go.

In addition, for Questions 55 through 57, the 2011–12 FSA Application and Verification Guide (AVG) states that, if a student reports he is homeless and no written documentation is available, a Financial Aid administrator (FAA) must make a determination whether or not the student is an unaccompanied youth who is either homeless or is self-supporting and at risk of being homeless. The FAA should conduct and document an in-person interview when making this determination. A tool to help the FAA make this determination (“Determining Eligibility for Rights and Services under the McKinney-Vento Act”) is available at http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/det_elig.pdf.

Note: Making such a determination is not considered a dependency override or an exercise of professional judgment.¹⁷

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Case Scenarios (High School)

Scenario Y

Brooke is kicked out of home at age 17 and stays with a friend. After several months, her friend’s mother informs the school. In September of 2010, the school counselor spoke with Brooke’s mom, who is not willing to let her come back home. The school determines Brooke is an unaccompanied youth.

Brooke may answer “yes” as the School District Homeless Liaison can verify she is an “unaccompanied” youth after July 1, 2010.

Scenario Z

Jarrett is age 16. He regularly gets into physical confrontations with his father. He leaves his home and starts sleeping on his older brother’s couch. He starts working at a Subway and continues to stay with his older brother until he graduates from high school. Neither of the young men speak to their parents nor asks anyone for help.

Jarrett does not have a determination from his school. He must technically answer “no” to question 58 because he does not have verification.

However, Jarrett should be referred to the FAA. The FAA must make a determination. In this example, the FAA could make a determination that the student is an unaccompanied youth who is either homeless or is “self-supporting and at risk of being homeless.”

Because Jarrett is still on the couch, the living situation is very possibly not fixed, regular, and adequate, even though he has been there for a while. If he is not on the lease, it would not necessarily be a stable situation.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Education. (2011). 2011-12 FSA Handbook Application and Verification Guide. Washington, DC: Author. Pp. 28-29

Case Scenarios:

At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did your high school or school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

Question #55 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Case Scenarios (High School)

Scenario Y

Brooke is kicked out of home at age 17 and stays with a friend. After several months, her friend's mother informs the school. In September of 2010, the school counselor spoke with Brooke's mom, who is not willing to let her come back home. The school determines Brooke is an unaccompanied youth.

Brooke may answer "yes" as the School District Homeless Liaison can verify she is an "unaccompanied" youth after July 1, 2010.

Scenario Z

Jarrett is age 16. He regularly gets into physical confrontations with his father. He leaves his home and starts sleeping on his older brother's couch. He starts working at a Subway and continues to stay with his older brother until he graduates from high school. Neither young man speaks to their parents and do not ask anyone for help.

Jarrett does not have a determination from his school. He must technically answer "no" because he doesn't have verification.

However, Jarrett should be referred to the FAA. The FAA must make a determination. In this example the FAA could make a determination that the student is an unaccompanied youth who is either homeless or is "self-supporting and at risk of being homeless." Because Jarrett is still on the couch, the living situation is very possibly not fixed, regular, and adequate, even though he has been there for a while. If he is not on the lease, it would not necessarily be a stable situation.

*If a student cannot provide documentation that he is an unaccompanied youth who is either homeless or is at risk of being homeless, a FAA must make a determination on a case by case based upon the information provided and document their decision. A tool to help the FAA make this determination is available at http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/det_elig.pdf ("Determining Eligibility for Rights and Services under the McKinney-Vento Act").

Quick Reference:

At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

Question #56 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

The following terms are defined on the HUD website¹⁸:

- **Emergency Shelter**—Any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary or transitional shelter for homeless persons in general or for specific populations of the homeless.
- **Transitional Housing**—Housing used to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing. Homeless persons may live in transitional housing for up to 24 months and receive supportive services that enable them to live more independently.
- **Funded by HUD**—HUD provides Emergency Shelter Grants to governmental agencies that in turn award them to public and private agencies.

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Case Scenarios (Shelter)

Scenario AA

Matt, age 17, lived with his mother. One day he came home to their apartment, and his mother and all of their belongings were gone. Matt had nowhere to go. He was eventually evicted for not paying rent. He stayed on the streets. There he learned of a place to stay and went to a shelter for 30 days and began working “the program” following all the rules and requirements set before him. The shelter staff helped him get an apartment and pay his rent.

Matt should answer “yes.” While Matt may not necessarily know the terminology, he is living in “transitional housing.”

Scenario BB

Maria’s father lost his job. He could not find work and the family was kicked out of their apartment. The family went to live at a local homeless shelter.

Maria should answer “no,” as she still resides with her parents, even though she’s staying in an emergency shelter.

Scenario CC

Missy’s mom passed away when she turned 16. She has no idea where her dad is. He left when she was very young. She has no other family. She learns of a girl’s shelter home and goes to stay there.

Missy thinks she should answer “yes” so she checks with the director of the girl’s home. She then learns that the girl’s home is funded by a private foundation, not HUD.

Missy must answer “no” to question # 59 because it is not a HUD-funded shelter.

However, she should be referred to the FAA, who must make a determination. In this example, Missy is an unaccompanied youth who is living in a privately funded shelter home. The case fits the definition of homeless, and she is unaccompanied, so this is not a possible at-risk situation. The FAA could accept as documentation a documented phone call with or a written statement from the shelter (even though it is not HUD-funded), or a documented interview with Missy.

¹⁸ US Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2009). HUDS Homeless Assistance Programs. Retrieved April 27, 2009, from <http://www.hud.gov>

Case Scenarios:

At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

Question #56 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Case Scenarios (Shelter)

Scenario AA

Matt, age 17, lived with his mother. One day he came home to their apartment and his mother and all of their belongings were gone. Matt had nowhere to go. He was eventually evicted for not paying rent. He stayed on the streets. There he learned of a place to stay and went to a shelter for 30 days and began working "the program" following all the rules and requirements set before him. The shelter staff helped him get an apartment and pay his rent.

Matt should answer "yes". While Matt may not necessarily know the terminology, he is living in "transitional housing."

Scenario BB

Maria's father lost his job. He could not find work and the family was kicked out of their apartment. The family went to live at a local homeless shelter.

Maria should answer "no," as she still resides with her parents, even though she's staying in an emergency shelter.

Scenario CC

Missy's mom passed away when she turned 16. She has no idea where her dad is. He left when she was very young. She has no other family. She learns of a girl's shelter home and goes to stay there.

Missy thinks she should answer "yes" so she checks with the director of the girl's home. She then learns that the girl's home is funded by a private foundation, not HUD.

Missy must answer "no" to Q # 59 because she is not in a HUD funded shelter.

However, she should be referred to the FAA who must make a determination. In this example, Missy is an unaccompanied youth who is living in a privately funded shelter home. The case fits the definition of homelessness, and she is unaccompanied, so this is not a possible at-risk situation. The FAA could accept as documentation a documented phone call with or a written statement from the shelter (even though not HUD funded), or a documented interview with Missy.



Quick Reference:

At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?

Question #57 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

- **Runaway or homeless basic center**—A community-based program for runaway and homeless adolescents, offering services such as temporary housing, crisis intervention, outreach, individual and family counseling, and case management.¹⁹
- **Transitional Living Program (TLP)**—A federal grant program whose grantees provide shelter, skills training, and support services to homeless youth age 16 to 21 for up to 18 months (with an additional 180 days allowed for youth younger than 18).²⁰
- **Independence Living Program (ILP)**—A State-grant program that prepares current and former foster youth to live independently. ILPs are in part supported by federal dollars as well as through the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. While the terms TLP and ILP may be used interchangeably in practice, they refer to separate federal grant programs.²¹

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Case Scenarios (At Risk)

Scenario DD

Miguel ran away after his mother's boyfriend beat him up. He had been "punished" like this since he was 14. CPS once investigated but did not open a case. Miguel stayed at a teen runaway shelter in July and August 2010. Shelter staff helped him get a job. He now lives with a buddy and pays rent.

Miguel would answer "yes" as he was in a runaway shelter after July 1, 2010.

Scenario EE

Sara was molested by an uncle for years. No one believed her. In July of 2010, after turning 16, she saw a sign at a local fire hall that said it was a "Safe Place." She told the fire captain she would not go home. A counselor was called and found a place for Sara to stay and get counseling. Sara confirmed the program is a Transitional Living Program (TLP) and asked the director for a determination that she is an unaccompanied youth.

She can answer "yes" as the director of the TLP determined that she was an unaccompanied youth.

Scenario FF

Al was living on the streets of Santa Cruz for a month. He found out about a place called Huckleberry House. He stayed there until June 2010, when he moved back home.

Al must answer "no" because he lived in a runaway shelter prior to July 1, 2010, and he has since returned home.

Scenario GG

Misha got pregnant and was kicked out of her parent's home in January 2011. She went to live at a home for unwed mothers. After checking with the director, she learns the home is considered a Transitional Living Program (TLP) funded by the government. The director determines she is an "unaccompanied" homeless youth.

Misha can answer "yes" because the program is a TLP and she was determined to be homeless/at risk after July 1, 2010.

¹⁹ Pollo D. E.; Thompson, S.; Tobias, L.; Reid, D.; Spitznagel, E. (2006). Longitudinal Outcomes for youth receiving runaway/homeless shelter services. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 35(5), pp. 852–859.

²⁰ Johnson, Bassin & Shaw (JBS), Inc.. (2006). Transitional Living Programs Move Homeless Youth Closer to Independence. The Exchange. Retrieved September 7, 2009, from <http://www.ncfy.com/publications/exchange/0603.htm>

²¹ JBS, Inc., 2006.

Case Scenarios:

At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?

Question #57 (for the 2011-2012 FAFSA)

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Case Scenarios (At Risk)

Scenario DD

Miguel ran away after his mother's boyfriend beat him up. He had been "punished" like this since he was 14. CPS once investigated but did not open a case. Miguel stayed at a teen runaway shelter in July and August 2010. Shelter staff helped him get a job. He now lives with a buddy and pays rent.

Miguel would answer "yes" as he was in a runaway shelter after July 1, 2010.

Scenario EE

Sara was molested by an uncle for years. No one believed her. In July of 2010, after turning 16, she saw a sign at a local fire hall that said it was a "Safe Place." She told the fire captain she would not go home. A counselor was called and found a place for Sara to stay and get counseling. Sara confirmed the program is a transitional living program (TLP) and asked the director for a determination that she is an unaccompanied youth.

She can answer "yes" as the director of the TLP determined that she was an unaccompanied youth.

Scenario FF

Al was living on the streets of Santa Cruz for a month. He would not tell anyone why. Then he found out about a place called Huckleberry House. He stayed there until June 2010, when he moved back home.

Al must answer "no" because he lived in a runaway shelter prior to July 1, 2010, and he has since returned home.

Scenario GG

Misha got pregnant and was kicked out of her parent's home in January 2011. She went to live at a home for unwed mothers. After checking with the director, she learns the home is considered a Transitional Living Program (TLP) funded by the government. The director determines she is an "unaccompanied" homeless youth.

Misha can answer "yes" because the program is a TLP and she was determined to be homeless/at risk after July 1, 2010.

NOTE: If a student cannot provide documentation that he is an unaccompanied youth who is either homeless or is at risk of being homeless, a FAA must make a determination on a case by case basis using the information provided and document their decision. A tool to help the FAA make this determination ("Determining Eligibility for Rights and Services under the McKinney-Vento Act") is available at http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/det_elig.pdf

Sensitive Approaches to Communication with Youth from Foster Care and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Asking for help is difficult for anyone, but for youth who are currently or formerly in foster care and for youth experiencing homelessness, it can be particularly daunting in view of their unique backgrounds and life stories. Many of these youth resist divulging details about their lives. Simply acknowledging that they were in foster care or homeless can be very difficult for these youth because of the stigma that surrounds the foster care system and homelessness. Although some spend only a short amount of time in foster care or without housing, many have been “raised” by the system and are tired of being labeled as “foster youth” or “homeless youth.” For most of their lives, being identified as such has led to negative consequences, stereotyping, and intrusive questions regarding how and why they entered the system or lost their housing. Helping youth from foster care and those experiencing homelessness to recognize that it is actually beneficial for them to self-identify to ensure access to available financial aid is one of the biggest roadblocks that professionals must overcome.

In doing so, it is very important to recognize that we all bring personal biases and preconceptions into our interactions. As the quote below shows, youth from foster care and those experiencing homelessness are very conscious of how they are spoken to, looked at, and treated. Thus, monitoring your body language and tone of voice and those of the student can help maximize the effectiveness of your interactions with these youth.

As Financial Aid Administrators (FAAs), you must elicit certain information in order to do your job and assist students in receiving as much financial aid as their eligibility allows. It is often necessary to dig deeper in order to gather information that the student may not volunteer or may not know he needs to provide in order for you to best serve him. There is a fine line, however, between “digging deeper” and asking for information that is not necessary when determining financial aid eligibility.

Before getting into the financial-aid-specific questions, it is very important for you to ask the youth questions about whether their basic needs are being met. Please keep in mind that these are very personal issues; ask yourself whether you would feel comfortable discussing this with a stranger. We encourage you to discuss them in a private setting. These are not questions that you would typically ask a student who walks into your office. If basic needs are unmet, however, it is hard for anyone to be able to focus on their education.

Some questions that you could ask include:

- Do you have safe and stable housing?
- Do you have enough food to eat?
- Do you have access to health care?
- Do you have reliable transportation?

“What could a Financial Aid staff member do or say in order to make me feel more comfortable or welcome in college?”

(Below are the top 3 responses from foster youth)

- 1. Bring me into a private office so I don't have to explain my background in front of other students.*
- 2. Spend time explaining the questions on the FAFSA and make sure that I understand them.*
- 3. Greet me and make eye contact with me when I walk into the Financial Aid office.*

The purpose is to provide suggestions on how to communicate with greater sensitivity when working with students.²² Several variations on what to say are provided below. We went straight to the source and asked alumni of foster care to help us compile the questions in the table below. Use your discretion in asking as many of these questions as you deem appropriate.

What Do Students Find Helpful?

1. Explain to the student that you are asking such personal questions because they may make the student eligible for more financial aid.
2. Bring the student into a private office or in a private area.
3. Avoid using the term “homeless”; it carries negative stereotypes and does not adequately express the breadth of the federal definition of homelessness.
4. Spend time explaining questions to the student and make sure they understand them.
5. Greet student and make eye contact with them.
6. Regularly check back with the student to ensure they understand what you are saying.
7. Towards the end of the conversation, walk them through next steps, such as, documents needed etc.
8. If possible, follow-up via email/text/phone call to make sure they completed all steps.
9. When making referrals on campus, walk the student there and introduce them to someone so they will feel comfortable.

²² With the assistance of former foster youth, a FYSI Foster Youth Higher Education Survey was developed specifically to gather the feedback of current and former foster youth for this effort. The survey was disseminated at the CYC conference, by members of the Orangewood Children's Foundation and by several other 2007 FYSI Taskforce members who work closely with current and former foster youth.

“In my opinion, most [college employees] simply **DON'T KNOW** what your history was like when they first meet you, which can lead to communication problems and misunderstandings of body language, personality, and behavior. For example, people who don't know me usually think that I'm mean looking, violent, too defensive, or just some lazy ghetto punk, which can lead to them treating me rudely when I go to the financial aid center. They may not provide me with help because they don't like me, or they may want to rush my turn in line just because I look like a mean b*@\$h. Basically, my life has hardened my appearance, and I don't look like a typically professional girl who came from a loving family. Most people can sense that I'm usually **NOT** treated respectfully, and therefore they automatically treat me that way too...like an annoying nobody who's just taking up space in line for the **REAL** college students. I really dislike having to put on a fake happy face or dress up in bright cute clothes just to be taken seriously, because that's fake and it's just not me.”

— *Youth from foster care*

How to Ask FAFSA Questions Sensitively

FAFSA Question	Information Financial Aid Administrator Needs to Know	How to Ask Students and Explain Questions	What to Avoid Saying
<p>Question 52 At any time since you turned age 13, were both of your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?</p>	<p>Whether the student is/was a ward of the court (for purposes of FAFSA) at the age of 13</p>	<p>Make sure you explain the ward-of-the-court definition to the student.</p> <p>Have you ever been, or are you currently, in the foster care system? If so, where?</p> <p>Until what age were you in foster care?</p> <p>Did you know that if you were a youth in out of home foster care, you are considered a ward of the court for the purposes of the FAFSA?</p> <p>If you were only under the supervision of probation (and not in foster care), you may not be considered a ward of the court for the FAFSA.</p>	<p>How could you not know that?</p> <p>How long were you in foster care?</p> <p>Why were you in the system?</p> <p>Do you still have to make court appearances?</p>
<p>Question 53 As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor?</p>	<p>Is the student an emancipated minor in their state of legal residence?</p>	<p>Do you have any documents from the court to show you're an emancipated minor?</p>	<p>Where is your proof of being an emancipated minor?</p>
<p>Question 54 As determined by a court in your legal state of residence, are you or were you in legal guardianship?</p>	<p>If a student states he or she is living with a friend or relative, is it a legal guardianship determined by a court in the student's state of legal residence?</p>	<p>Do you have any documents from the court to show who your guardian is?</p>	<p>Why aren't you living with your parents?</p>

All Students answering YES to questions 55–57 must be 21 years of age or younger, or still enrolled in high school at the time the FAFSA is completed.

FAFSA Question

Information FAA Needs to Know

How to Ask Students and Explain Questions

What to Avoid Saying

Question 55

At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did your high school or school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

Is the student homeless? Does/did the student's high school or school district homeless liaison determine they were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

What has your living situation been in the last year?

What is your living situation right now?

Examples: Living on someone's couch, staying in a car, in a placement, in a shelter, or in a hotel or motel.

Is your high school aware of your living/housing situation?

If the answer is yes, and your school's policy requires a letter, then ask the student if they can provide letter from the school.

- Please explain to student what needs to be in the letter and that the letter must be on official school letterhead.
- If possible, contact the high school counselor or district liaison yourself.

If the student says their school is not aware of their living situation, they should answer no to this question. Please review whether question 56 or 57 is applicable.

Why aren't you living with your parents?

Question 56

At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

Is the student homeless? Did the director of an emergency shelter or Transitional Housing Program (THP) funded by HUD determine that the student is an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

What has your living situation been in the last year?

What is your living situation right now?

Examples: Living in a THP, Girls Home, shelter, Group Home.

If the student answers yes (that they are living in any of the examples listed above) and if your school policy requires documentation, then ask the student to provide a letter from the homeless shelter.

- Please explain to student what needs to be in the letter and that the letter must be on official letterhead.

If possible, contact the homeless shelter yourself.

If the student says he is not living in a HUD funded homeless shelter, they should answer no to this question, and should be referred to question 57.

Why aren't you living with your parents?

FAFSA Question

Information FAA Needs to Know

How to Ask Students and Explain Questions

What to Avoid Saying

Question 57

At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?

Is the student homeless?
Did the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or Transitional Living Program (TLP) determine that the student is an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or self supporting and at risk of being homeless?

What has your living situation been in the last year?

What is your living situation right now?

Examples: Living in a TLP, THP, THPP, Girls Home, shelter, Group Home, frequently in/out of home, staying with friends, relatives, car, couch surfing.

If they answer yes to the examples listed above:

- Then the Financial Aid Administrator (FAA) must make a determination and document their decision.

Question 26

High School Completion Status

In order to determine whether the student is eligible for federal financial aid, find out whether the student has a high school diploma or equivalent.

If the student does not, you should refer him or her to the Testing / Assessment Center to take the Ability to Benefit (ATB) test.

1. Where did you graduate from high school?
2. Do you have a high school diploma or a high school certificate of completion?
3. (If applicable) Do you have a GED or did you pass high school equivalency exam?
4. The Financial Aid Administrator should review the student's records to determine if they are eligible for the ATB Waiver.

For more detail please see the Student Eligibility section of the FSA Handbook.

Why didn't you graduate from high school?

Chafee ETV

In order to determine Chafee eligibility, was the student in foster care between his or her 16th to 19th birthdays anywhere in the U.S. for more than one day.

Were you in foster care in the United States for at least one day between your 16th and 19th birthdays?

Are you/were you ILP eligible?

When were you in foster care?
Why only from that age?

Determining Dependency Status

Question from Foster Youth Liaison: As a youth from foster care, you are entitled to be considered an independent student, which may qualify you for additional financial aid. I wish I did not have to ask you this, but we need to show proof that you were in foster care so that you don't have to complete the parent income information on the FAFSA. Do you have or can you get some form of verification?

Student: How do I do that?

	Foster Youth Liaison Response	Student Response	Outcome
BEST	Let's go into my office together and figure out who we need to call. What county did you live in? I'll call the ILP coordinator from that county and explain what we need and then you can get on the phone and give your consent.	Student feels welcomed, comfortable, supported, and less overwhelmed than if he or she had to do this on his or her own.	School and student receive proper verification of dependency status.
BETTER	If you do not know your social worker, you can contact the county ILP / ILS office. Here is a list of contact names and numbers.	Student feels intimidated and does not feel supported since he or she has no idea what to say or how to ask for proof that they were in foster care.	(A) Student is too nervous, overwhelmed, or intimidated to call and does not return to school. (B) Student musters up the courage to call but becomes confused and frustrated trying to contact the right person and is not sure what to ask for. Consequently, he or she returns to the financial aid office with no documentation or incorrect documentation.
WORST	You need to contact your former social worker in the county in which you were in foster care.	Student feels overwhelmed, stupid, and left on his or her own to figure things out. Student has lost touch with social worker, does not remember the social worker's name, and has no idea how to get in touch with her or him. Student has no Internet access to look up this information, so he or she feels helpless and lost.	Student does not return to the Financial Aid Office nor seek any additional help from other Student Support Services.

NOTE: While most of you are aware of this, it is still important to note that the following information is NOT necessary to verify a student's foster care status and may unwittingly embarrass or alienate some youth who have emancipated from care. The following are actual questions that youth from foster care reported being asked that made them reconsider attending college.

- Why were you in foster care?
- What did your parents do to you?
- What was your foster care experience like?
- What did you do to get put in foster care?

Reporting FAFSA Parent Support Information

If a student is clearly independent, then there is no need to report information related to his or her parents. But if it is not clear that a student is independent, then it becomes necessary to determine if the student is being supported by adoptive or biological parents. The following patterns of response show likely outcomes in several cases.

	Foster Youth Liaison Response	Student Response	Outcome
1	Are you supported by your biological, adoptive, or foster parents?	I live with and am supported by my adoptive parents.	Student must report his or her adoptive parents' information on the FAFSA.
2	Are you supported by your biological, adoptive, or foster parents?	I have adoptive parents, but I do not live with them and they do not support me. (See example below.*)	Student must provide verification from a third party (such as a close friend, teacher, mentor, church member, etc.) who is familiar with the student's situation and knows that it is unsafe or otherwise unfeasible to contact the adoptive parents to get necessary information. You may consider using professional judgment and conducting a dependency override .
3	Are you supported by your biological, adoptive, or foster parents?	My foster parents support me.	Student does NOT need to report foster parents' information, but, depending on the level of support, this may be recorded under in-kind support.
4	Are you supported by your biological, adoptive, or foster parents?	I live with and am supported by my legal guardian.	Student does NOT need to report their legal guardian's information, but, depending on the level of support, this may be recorded under in-kind support.

Example: Fran explains to the Foster Youth Liaison that she was in foster care for three years (between age 2 and 5), then she was adopted. She goes on to explain that she was abandoned by her adoptive parents at age 14 and placed in a group home. In order to continue receiving government assistance through the Adoption Assistance Program (AAP), Fran's adoptive parents refused to relinquish parental rights and place her back into foster care. She is now 18, has not had any contact with her adoptive parents in 4 years, and explains that it would be detrimental to her health and well-being if she had to contact them for assistance or information. Fran is not eligible for any kind of assistance that a youth from foster care would be eligible for (ILP, Chafee, etc). This is an example of a situation where a dependency override should be considered.

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition	Acronym
Civil Emancipation	Legal process in which a person under 18 years voluntarily goes to court to be legally released from the custody and care of his/her parents.	Civil Emancipation
Cost of Attendance	The estimated total amount it should cost the student to go to school, including tuition and fees, room and board, allowances for books and supplies, transportation, and personal and incidental expenses. Loan fees, if applicable, may also be included in the COA. Child care and expenses for disabilities may also be included at the discretion of the financial aid administrator. ²³	COA
Disability Support Services	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1009 (Title II), protect students with disabilities, ensuring that appropriate academic adjustments are provided based on a student's disability and individual needs. ²⁴	DSS
Emancipation	The legal process by which a foster youth's court dependency status is relinquished by the state and the youth becomes legally independent for tax and financial aid purposes. Youth who are aging out of foster care at 18 years of age are often also referred to as "emancipating" out of foster care.	Emancipation
Expected Family Contribution	The amount of money that the family is expected to be able to contribute to the student's education, as determined by the Federal Methodology Need Analysis Formula approved by Congress. The EFC includes the parent contribution and the student contribution, and depends on the student's dependency status, family size, number of family members in school, taxable and nontaxable income, and assets. The difference between the COA and the EFC is the student's financial need. This figure is used in determining the student's eligibility for need-based financial aid. A financial aid administrator can adjust EFC and COA using professional judgment.	EFC
Federal Student Aid	Form used to apply for Pell Grants and all other need-based aid. As the name suggests, no fee is charged to file a FAFSA. See http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/ for more information.	FSA
Federal Work-Study	Any form of financial assistance given to college or vocational students that is provided by the federal government; most notably, the Pell Grant and Federal Work-Study. See http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp for more information.	FWS

²³ FinAid The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid. (n.d.) Glossary. Retrieved August 14, 2006, from <http://www.finaid.org/questions/glossary.phtml#c>

²⁴ Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities, First published July 2002. Reprinted May 2004. Revised September 2007. <http://www.ed.gov/about/ocr/transition.html>

Term	Definition	Acronym
Financial Aid Administrator	A college or university employee who is involved in the administration of financial aid. Some schools call FAAs "Financial Aid Advisors" or "Financial Aid Counselors."	FAA
Former Foster Youth	Youths or young adults who were in the legal guardianship or custody of a state, county, or private adoption or foster care agency.	FFY
Foster Youth Services	The California Department of Education Foster Youth Services (FYS) programs are education-based programs that provide support services to children age 0–21 in foster care who suffer the traumatic effects of displacement from family and schools and multiple placements in foster care by ensuring that health and school records are obtained to establish appropriate placements and coordinating instruction, counseling, tutoring, mentoring, vocational training, emancipation services, independent living training, and other related services. ²⁵ Form used to apply for Pell Grants and all other need-based aid. As the name suggests, no fee is charged to file a FAFSA. See http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/ for more information.	FYS
Free Application for Federal Student Aid	A program providing undergraduate and graduate students with part-time employment during the school year. The federal government pays a portion of the student's salary, making it cheaper for departments and businesses to hire the student. For this reason, work-study students often find it easier to get a part-time job. Eligibility for FWS is based on need. Money earned from a FWS job is not counted as income for the subsequent year's need analysis process.	FAFSA
Independent Living Programs/ Independent Living Skills Programs	Federally funded, county-administered programs throughout the country designed to assist current and former foster youth age 14–21 with life skills, emancipation preparation, and aftercare services.	ILP/ILSP
Institutional Student Information Record	A report that summarizes the information included on the FAFSA and is sent to the school's Financial Aid Office. It indicates if the student may be eligible for a Pell Grant and the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Schools receive the ISIR within 72 hours of the FAFSA being processed by the Central Processing System (CPS).	ISIR
Non-traditional Schools	Schools other than a traditional, comprehensive school, such as (but not limited to) alternative schools, non-public schools, private schools, and/or charter schools.	Non-traditional Schools

²⁵ California Department of Education (2006). Foster Youth Services. Retrieved September 25, 2006, from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/>

Term	Definition	Acronym
On-grounds Schools	Schools that are located on the grounds of group homes and emergency shelters.	On-grounds schools
Probation Department	The department in charge of supervising people who have been sentenced and placed on probation. People on probation have to follow certain rules that the judge gives them (like participating in a drug program or being home every night after 6 PM) and must stay within county limits until their probation is over. Probation officers manage probation cases, including keeping in contact with people on probation and administering court-ordered conditions of release. ²⁶	Probation
Professional Judgment	Used by FAAs to adjust some FAFSA data, adjust the COA, or change the dependency status (with documentation) when extenuating circumstances exist. For example, if a parent becomes unemployed, disabled, or deceased, the FAA can decide to use estimated income information for the award year instead of the actual income figures from the base year. This delegation of authority from the federal government to the financial aid administrator is called "professional judgment" (PJ).	PJ
Satisfactory Academic Progress	Each school develops its own standards for SAP. A student must make SAP in order to continue receiving federal aid. If a student fails to maintain an academic standing consistent with the school's SAP policy, the student is unlikely to meet the school's graduation requirements.	SAP
Student Aid Report	A report that summarizes the information included in the FAFSA and is sent to the student. The SAR also indicates if the student may be eligible for Pell Grant eligibility and the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Students should receive a copy of their SAR four to six weeks after they file a FAFSA.	SAR
Substitute Care Providers	A care provider associated with a placement home, e.g., a relative/non-relative extended family member, foster parent, or a non-relative guardian. An SCP is the person who is responsible for a child's day-to-day care while he or she is in out-of-home care. ²⁷	SCP
Transitional Living Program	Authorized by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act; provides grants to local community-based organizations to provide residential care, life skills training, vocational training, and other support services to homeless youth age 16–21. ²⁸	TLP

²⁶ DataCenter. (April 2003). It's Your Right to Know: A Research Guide on Juvenile Justice in California. Retrieved August 14, 2006, from <http://www.datacenter.org/research/cjca/cjca9.htm>

²⁷ California Department of Social Services. (2005). CWS/CMS for New Users Glossary. Retrieved October 2, 2006, from http://www.hwcws.cahwnet.gov/Training/curriculum/NewUser/_11_Glossary.doc

²⁸ Williams, C.W. (1999). Statement on Meeting the Needs of Older Youth in Foster Care before the House Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Human Resources. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved October 24, 2006, from <http://www.hhs.gov/asl/testify/t990309a.html>

Improving Higher Education Outcomes for Young Adults from Foster Care

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Tools and Resources

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Life in the Hood: Adulthood 101 – A Guide to Living, Studying and Working on Your Own (2007), Orphan Foundation of America, Sterling Virginia, 1-10 copies \$15.00/copy. www.orphan.org

Providing Effective Financial Aid Assistance to Students from Foster Care and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: A Key to Higher Education Access and Success (2009). Tracy Fried & Associates. www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ProvidingEffectiveFinancialAid.htm

Supporting success: Improving higher education outcomes for students from foster care – A Framework for Program Enhancement - Version 2.0 (2010). Casey Family Programs, Seattle, WA. www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/SupportingSuccess.htm

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College Support Program Websites

Community Colleges

- California Community College Chancellor's Office | Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI): www.cccco.edu/searchresults/tabid/137/default.aspx?search=FYSI
- Austin Community College www.austincc.edu/lfca
- City College of San Francisco: www.ccsf.edu/NEW/en/student-services/student-counseling/guardians-scholars-program.html
- Fullerton College: fosteryouth.fullcoll.edu/
- Los Angeles City College: www.lacitycollege.edu/services/guardianscholars/
- Seattle Central Community College: www.seattlecentral.org/collegesuccess/index.php
- Tallahassee Community College: www.tcc.fl.edu/about_tcc/student_affairs/departments/enrollment_services_and_student_success/li_am_al/foster_youth/fostering_achievement_fellowship_program

Four Year Colleges

- Ball State University and Ivy Tech Community College: cms.bsue.edu/Academics/CentersandInstitutes/SSRC/GuardianScholars.aspx
- California Polytechnic University, Pomona: dsa.csupomona.edu/rs/
- California State University, Fullerton: www.fullerton.edu/guardianscholars
- Colorado State University: www.today.colostate.edu/story.aspx?id=4999
- Miami University Regionals: www.regionals.muohio.edu/fostercare/
- Middle Tennessee State University: www.mtsu.edu/nextstep
- Northern Arizona University: www4.nau.edu/insidenau/bumps/2010/8_27_10/blavins.html
- Ohio University: www.ohio.edu/univcollege/fostercare/
- Sam Houston State University: www.shsu.edu/~forward/
- San Francisco State University: www.sfsu.edu/~eop/gs.html
- San Jose State University: www.sjsu.edu/cmecociety
- Seattle University: www.seattleu.edu/sas/fosteringscholars/default.aspx?id=32650
- UCLA: www.guardianscholars.ucla.edu/ & www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ftfq-AzwQ4Y&feature=youtu.be
- University of California East Bay's Renaissance Scholars Program: www20.csueastbay.edu/academic/academic-support/sas/renaissance/about.html
- University of Washington: depts.washington.edu/csfs/pages/champions.php
- Western Michigan University: www.wmich.edu/fyit

Contact: John Emerson

Postsecondary Education Advisor, Casey Family Programs
www.casey.org - (206) 270-4921 - jemerson@casey.org



This foster youth friendly logo was created to symbolize a safe and supportive environment or person, familiar with both the issues and challenges that youth from foster care face. College students who see this symbol will know that staff are equipped to assist them in higher education.

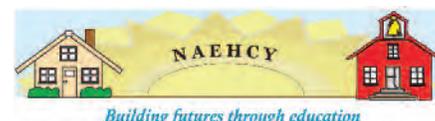
This logo was designed for the California Community College Chancellors Office with the creative assistance of All Student Loans. Guidance and input from current and former foster youth, college financial aid administrators, social workers, state leaders from post secondary education and Department of Social Services, County Independent Living Program personnel, and K-12 representatives was provided in the development of the graphic.

The focal point of the graphic is a larger heart wrapped around a smaller heart symbolizing the need for wrap-around services and support for youth from foster care in higher education. The left side of the hearts are larger and represents a need for the presence and permanency of caring and supportive adults in the lives of youth from foster care. Finally, and most importantly, the smaller right side of the heart symbolizes successful achievement of the youth's aspirations and dreams including their graduation from college symbolized by the mortarboard cap on the graduates head.

It is our sincere desire that other campuses across the nation will adopt this as the universal symbol of understanding and support for higher education students from foster care.

Those organizations that adopt the symbol do so in a shared commitment to actively support students from foster care accessing and successfully completing post secondary education. Organizations employing the use of the symbol should demonstrate through programs and services their understanding of the unique circumstances and challenges the youth are confronted with, while at the same time focusing on the achievement of their goals of education as an avenue to independence and self realization.

The organizations listed below support this publication as an important tool that will provide youth and those that serve them with the knowledge and skills to navigate the path to higher education success.



Post-Secondary Scholarship, Grant & Waiver Eligibility Matrix – DHS Child Welfare (CW) & Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Youth
Matrix is for the purpose of summarizing ELIGIBILITY only. For additional details see website links listed on page 2.

Youth's Age Range	Days in CW or ICW Out-of-Home Placement	Type of Out-of-Home Care or placement	CW or ICW Custody	Case Status	Tuition & Fee Waiver (HB3471)	ETG funds via OSAC Website	DREAM Scholarship for Foster Youth (OSAC app.)	Foster Care to Success	OSAC scholarships
14 – not yet 16	More than 180 days	Voluntary Placement Agreement (CF499)	Not in custody	Active/ Open	NO	Yes, if closed at age 16+	Yes (requires 180+ days)	NO	Yes
14 - 18	Less than 180 days	Voluntary Placement Agreement (CF499)	Not in custody	Closed	NO	NO	NO	NO	Yes
16 – 20	More than 180 days (6 months)	Voluntary Placement Agreement (CF499)	Not in custody	Closed age 16+	NO	Yes	NO	NO	Yes
17– 20	More than 365 days (1 year)	Voluntary Placement Agreement (CF499)	Not in custody	Closed age 17+	NO	Yes	NO	NO	Yes
23 – not yet 25	More than 365 days (1 year)	Voluntary Placement Agreement (CF499)	Not in custody	Closed age 17+	NO	NO (ends at age 23)	Yes – if funds available	NO	Yes
14 – not yet 16	More than 180 days	All other CW or ICW sub- care & Voluntary Custody - CF1005	In custody	Active/ Open	NO	Yes, if closed at age 16+	Yes (requires 180+ days)	NO	Yes
14 – not yet 18	Less than 180 days	All other CW or ICW sub- care & Voluntary Custody - CF1005	Was in custody	Closed	NO	NO	NO	NO	Yes
16 – 20	More than 180, Less than 365	All other CW or ICW sub- care & Voluntary Custody - CF1005	Was in custody	Closed age 17+	NO	Yes	NO	Yes (if aged out at 18)	Yes
16– 20	More than 365 days (1 year)	All other CW or ICW sub- care & Voluntary Custody - CF1005	Was in custody	Closed age 17+	Yes	Yes	NO	Yes (if aged out at 18)	Yes
23 – not yet 25	More than 365 days (1 year)	All other CW or ICW sub- care & Voluntary Custody - CF1005	Was in custody	Closed age 17+	Yes	NO (ends at age 23)	Yes – if funds available	Yes (if aged out at 18)	Yes
14 – not yet 16	More than 180 days	Guardianship or Adoption	Dismissed prior to age 16	Open or closed	NO	NO	Yes (requires 180+ days)	Yes, if a guardianship	Yes
16 – 18	More than 180, Less than 365	Guardianship or Adoption	Dismissed after the age of 16	Open or Closed	NO	Yes	NO	Yes, if a guardianship	Yes
17 or older	More than 365 days (1 year)	All other CW or ICW sub- care & Voluntary Custody - CF1005	Was in custody	Closed age 17+	Yes	Yes	NO	Yes, if a guardianship	Yes
23 – not yet 25	More than 365 days (1 year)	All other CW or ICW sub- care & Voluntary Custody - CF1005	Was in custody	Closed age 17+	Yes	NO (ends at age 23)	Yes – if funds available	Yes, if a guardianship	Yes

Scholarship/Grant Name & Funding Stream	Application Required	Eligibility Criteria	Benefits
<p>Oregon Foster Youth Tuition & Fee Waiver</p> <p>May use a student's Pell, FSEOG, Oregon Opportunity Grant, other federal aid, or institution aid (does not include the Chafee ETG).</p>	<p>Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</p> <p>www.fafsa.gov.edu</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 365 days of child welfare out-of-home care after age 16, Enroll at a post-secondary institution within 3 years of whichever comes first: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> DHS or Tribal Wardship dismissed or high school completion or equivalent (GED) Access the Waiver by age 25. Volunteer 30 hours per academic year once you begin receiving the waiver to maintain eligibility. 	<p>Tuition & fees waived for the equivalent of 4 years of undergraduate education at a public college or public university in Oregon. Eligible foster youth are also prioritized for the Oregon Opportunity Grant.</p> <p>May use to complete a Certification Program, Associates Degree or Bachelors Degree.</p>
<p>Chafee Education and Training Grant</p> <p>Federal Chafee Grant</p>	<p>Oregon Chafee ETG Application</p> <p>www.oregonstudentaid.gov/chafeeETV.aspx</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Be in DHS or Tribal out-of-home care until the age of 16 (or older), Have at least 180 days of sub-care placement services after age 14, Begin accessing the Chafee ETG prior to age 21. If making satisfactory progress after age 21, may continue to receive to the term in which student turns age 23. 	<p>National program. Oregon may provide up to \$3,000 per student, per academic year.</p> <p>If student attends an out-of-state school, must apply with State or County Chafee Agency where youth is attending school.</p>
<p>DREAM Scholarship for Foster Youth</p> <p>Private donations fund the program.</p>	<p>Universal Application</p> <p>https://secure.osac.state.or.us/</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Was in DHS or Tribal out-of-home care for 180 days or more. Entered a guardianship or was adopted between the ages of 14 – 15, or Was receiving the Chafee ETG, but turned age 23 or older, or Did not apply for Chafee ETG by age 21. 	<p>Awards vary between \$500 to \$2,000 per academic year. Amount of award and quantity of awards issued depends on amount of funds available.</p> <p>Program is funded solely through donations. For donation details go to: https://secure2.osac.state.or.us/CCOrders/Donations.aspx</p>
<p>Foster Care to Success (formerly Orphan Foundation of America)</p> <p>Non-profit Organization</p>	<p>OFA Application</p> <p>https://www.orphan.org/sch/</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have been in public or private foster care for a minimum of 12 consecutive months at the time of their 18th birthday; OR They must have been orphaned for at least one year at the time of their 18th birthday. Have been accepted into or expect to be accepted into an accredited, Pell-eligible college or other post-secondary school. Be under the age of 25 on March 31 of the year in which they first apply. Have been in foster care or orphaned while living in the United States. U.S. citizenship is not required. 	<p>National program. Foster Care to Success award about \$15 million private scholarships and government grants to more than 3,500 students each year.</p> <p>For more details go to: http://fc2success.org/</p>
<p>Oregon Student Access Commission</p> <p>Variety of funding streams</p>	<p>Universal Application</p> <p>https://secure.osac.state.or.us/</p>	<p>Eligibility criteria will vary based on scholarship or grant student is applying for. For more details go to: https://secure.osac.state.or.us/listScholarships.aspx</p>	<p>Oregon governmental agency. OSAC has over 400 scholarships available for Oregon students, including high school specific scholarships, gender based, athletics, career based, employees/dependents of specific organizations (i.e.: credit union/banks, trucking assoc., etc.). school type, type of student (single parent, re-starting college, etc.). OSAC has something for everyone!</p>

Healthy Kids

For: All children leaving foster care up to the age of 19;

- Leaving foster care and returning home, or
- Emancipation before 18th birthday, and
- Residing in Oregon.

All youth aging out of adoption assistance or guardianship assistance up to the age of 19.

The Healthy Kids legislation provides additional medical coverage for up to 12 months. Some key steps must be done by the local branch office and the parent(s) or youth to ensure the extended medical coverage continues:

- Caseworker must notify the Federal Revenue Specialist (FRS) when the child enters into the transition phase to return home (this includes return home to another parent).
- FRS must complete a Title XIX (medical) redetermination.
- Case Management Coordinator (CMC) or Payment Clerk must contact the FRS when the caseworker has notified them that the child has returned home.
- FRS must complete a Healthy Kids Referral (HB2116 form) and send it to the A-Team at Central Office.
- A-Team will review the form for accuracy and fax the HB2116 referral to Self-Sufficiency's Children's Medical Project Team and file the form appropriately.
- A notice and OHP packet is generated the next day and mailed to the address provided on the referral form.
- The parent(s) or youth must complete the OHP application and send it back to Self-Sufficiency to ensure maximum benefit of Healthy Kids.
- **NOTE: IF NO APPLICATION IS RECEIVED WITHIN 45 DAYS, THE MEDICAL WILL BE CLOSED.**

Chafee Medical Program

For: Youth aging out of foster care and residing in Oregon only.

- Youth must be 18 years or older when leaving foster care to be eligible for the Chafee Medical Program.

House Bill 3664 was signed March 18, 2010. The Chafee Medical Program becomes effective May 1, 2010.

The Chafee Medical Program will provide medical coverage to any youth who qualifies, up to his/her 21st birthday.

This program is different than Healthy Kids because this is an assumed eligible program, therefore, the youth does not have to complete an OHP application to maintain eligibility.

How to access the Chafee Medical Program:

- Chafee Medical Program Referral form will be added to the Transition Tool Kit check list.
- Caseworker and youth will complete as much of the Chafee Medical Program Referral form as possible and give to the FRS in their branch.
- FRS completes all other information and faxes the referral to the Children's Medical Project Team and files the form appropriately.

Healthy Kids and Chafee Medical Program



Department of Human Services
Children, Adults and Families
OPPR Federal Compliance Unit
Attn: A-Team
500 Summer St NE, E69
Salem OR 97301-1066
Fax: (503) 373-7032

For Child Welfare questions, please contact:
Iris Chacon, Program Coordinator
Phone: (503) 947-5023
Iris.m.chacon@state.or.us

What does it mean to Child Welfare?

Independent Living Program

Human Services Bldg
500 Summer St. NE – E76
Salem, OR 97301-1069
Fax# (503) 945-6969

Ever wonder who to call?

Rosemary lavenditti (503) 945-5688

Overall IL Program Information
Technical Assistance/ILP Training
State Advisory Committee (SAC)
Contracts, Budget Management
Oregon Foster Youth Connection liaison

Rosemary.lavenditti@state.or.us

Monday – Friday 8:00 – 5:00

Hayley Smith (503) 945-6619

Subsidy & Chafee Housing
Chafee Education and Training **Voucher** (ETV) Program
ILP Discretionary Funds

Hayley.B.Smith@state.or.us

Monday – Friday 7:30 – 4:00

Sandy Raschko (503) 945-6612

Match Claims
Chafee Education and Training **Grant** Program
Overall Fiscal Tracking

Sandra.Raschko@state.or.us

Monday – Thursday 9:30 – 2:30

Vacant/Luke Walls volunteer (503) 945-5684 Luke.Walls@state.or.us

Client Referral & Discharge Profiles
Client Invoices
ILP Discretionary Funds
SAC Meeting Preparation & Minutes
ILP Desk Mail/Resources/Training Materials

Monday – Friday 8:00 – 4:30

Carrie VanDijk (503) 945-5807

Technical Assistance and Training
State Advisory Committee
Oregon Foster Youth Connection liaison

Carrie.Vandijk@state.or.us

Monday – Friday 8:00 – 5:00

**For details about Youth Transitions and ILP services see the DHS
Procedure Manual (Chapter 4, Sections 29 and 33) at:**

http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety_model/procedure_manual/index.html &

New DHS Independent Living Program Website

http://cms.oregon.gov/dhs/children/fostercare/pages/ind_living/ilp.aspx*

2013 DHS Youth Transition Planning & Independent Living Program (ILP) Services Netlink Trainings

Sponsor: Child Welfare Training

To register for these Netlink trainings, please go to:

https://dhslearn.hr.state.or.us/kc/login/login.asp?kc_ident=kc0001&strUrl=https://dhslearn.hr.state.or.us/Default.asp

Upon registration, please visit the Notes & Assignment page to access additional information for these courses.

Netlink (at a computer near you): **DHS Youth Transition Planning**
Sponsor: Child Welfare Training

Do you have a youth age 14 or older on your caseload? The "Youth Transitions" NetLink will focus on the preparation for transition to adulthood and out of care. You will have an understanding of the Comprehensive Transition Plans, New Health Care policies/mandates, Credit Reports, vital documents, etc. This three-hour interactive training will help you to learn more about DHS requirements for assisting foster youth (age 16 or older) with creating a transition plan. Learn the role DHS must have in the planning process to help youth transition to adulthood.

Date	Time
01/31/2013- 01/31/2013	01:00 PM-04:30 PM
04/09/2013- 04/09/2013	01:00 PM-04:30 PM
08/15/2013- 08/15/2013	01:00 PM-04:30 PM
11/19/2013- 11/19/2013	01:00 PM-04:30 PM

Netlink (at a computer near you): **Independent Living Program (ILP) Services**
Sponsor: Child Welfare Training

Do you have a youth age 14 or older on your caseload? If so, the Independent Living Program (ILP) Services Netlink will help you understand the array of services available through ILP contractors. You will learn how to secure services, understand the eligibility criteria for Housing, Chafee Education, Tuition and Fee Waiver for foster youth, how to pay for driver's education and have a better idea of how to help youth who are not enrolled with an ILP Provider! The main goal of the ILP is to help youth transition into adulthood with knowledge and skills to be self-sufficient and contributing members of their community. By the end of this course, you will have an understanding of what ILP is and how it can benefit your youth.

Date	Time
02/21/2013-02/21/2013	01:00 PM-04:30 PM
05/21/2013-05/21/2013	01:00 PM-04:30 PM
09/12/2013-09/12/2013	01:00 PM-04:30 PM
12/03/2013-12/03/2013	01:00 PM-04:30 PM