

# TRANSITION PLANNING FOR OLDER YOUTH



## A GUIDE FOR LOCAL TEAMS

The suggestions below are intended for teams to consider when addressing the issues of older youth in their court system. The relevance of the sections may vary by area, and teams are not expected to cover all sections but instead are encouraged to select specific areas of focus.

1. Get informed about the needs of older youth and transition planning requirements
  - a. Read the Project Everlast Permanency Report and its recommendations:  
⇒ [http://www.nebraskachildren.org/impact\\_areas/project\\_everlast/summit.html](http://www.nebraskachildren.org/impact_areas/project_everlast/summit.html)
  - b. Review the Nebraska Statute requiring transition planning for older youth. See Appendix A. (stating in part that all youth over the age of 16 must have a written independent living transition proposal)
  - c. Read Nebraska Appleseed's Transition Planning Policy Brief:  
⇒ <http://neappleseed.org/downloads299>

### 2. Find out what the problems are

- a. Case File Review: Non-judge team members do case file reviews of a select number of cases involving youth over 16 (consider partnership with Foster Care Review Office) and report summarized non-identifying results to teams
- b. Invite youth formerly in foster care to your team meeting and ask for their suggestions on systemic changes; or, reach out to the local Project Everlast council. (Call 877-476-8003 for closest council)

### 3. Implement best practices and statutory requirements into court cases.

- a. Older youth attend review hearings if they choose. If not possible, then youth should complete the Youth Court Questionnaire: <http://www.throughtheeyes.org/resources/index2.php>. Teams should develop a process for ensuring youth receive Youth Court Questionnaires.
- b. A transition team helps the youth develop and update his/her written independent living transition proposal (i.e., transition plan) required under N.R.S. 43-1311.03 (see Appendix A). The team includes the youth, the caseworker, the GAL, individuals selected by the youth and individuals with knowledge about services to the youth. Teams should also include those who play a key role in the youth's life (e.g., foster parents, biological parents, relatives, supportive adults, etc.) – especially those who have made a commitment to continue their relationship with the youth after the case is closed. The youth should have the final say about who is included on this team.
- c. A written transition plan that is individualized and youth-directed is submitted to the court and all parties when the youth turns 16 years of age. The plan is regularly updated until the case is closed or the youth ages out. All youth, including those in group homes and those with a plan of reunification (or adoption/guardianship), must have a plan. Any supporting documentation, like a PALS report, completed Youth Inventory (see Appendix E), or Transition Proposal Checklist (see Appendix D), should be attached to the transition plan. See Appendix B for a sample of a good transition plan.
- d. The guardian ad litem reviews the transition plan with the youth and makes sure the youth helped create it, and understands and agrees with the plan. If applicable, the GAL should request changes at the hearing.

## TRANSITION PLANNING FOR OLDER YOUTH (PAGE 2)

3. (cont.) Implement best practices and requirements under state law into court cases
  - e. The judge asks questions at Review and Permanency Hearings to ensure proper transition planning is occurring and the youth is involved in planning for his/her future. Suggested questions are in Appendix C.
  - f. Before closing the case, all required paperwork and applications have been completed. See Transition Planning Checklist in Appendix D, which includes:
    - i. Former Ward and/or the extended services and support program
    - ii. Education and Training Vouchers
    - iii. Referral to adult services
    - iv. Critical documents (including Social Security card, birth certificate, driver's license and health records) (see Youth Inventory in Appendix E)
  - g. The transition plan is continually updated and reviewed at every Review or Permanency Hearing.
  - h. Case professionals inform the youth of new opportunities for youth who age out of foster care, including the new provision from the Affordable Care Act that, effective January 2014, will provide Medicaid coverage to age 26: (<http://neappleseed.org/downloads668>) and the newly passed Young Adult Voluntary Services and Support Act, which will extend voluntary services and support to age 21: (<http://neappleseed.org/downloads667>).

4. Invite the DHHS Service Area Administrator to a team meeting to discuss any systemic barriers your team cannot resolve.

### Appendices:

- A. N.R.S. 43-1311.03
- B. Sample Transition Plan
- C. Questions about Transition Planning Judges Should Ask at Review Hearings of Youth 16+
- D. Transition Proposal Checklist (pdf)
- E. Youth Inventory (pdf)
- F. Permanency Pact

5. Research more resources for ideas
  - Project Everlast Nebraska Permanency Plan:  
⇒ [http://www.nebraskachildren.org/impact\\_areas/project\\_everlast/summit.html](http://www.nebraskachildren.org/impact_areas/project_everlast/summit.html)
  - Foster Club's Transition Toolkit:  
⇒ [http://www.fosterclub.com/files/transition\\_toolkit\\_v3.pdf](http://www.fosterclub.com/files/transition_toolkit_v3.pdf)
  - Judicial Guide to Implementing Fostering Connections, Pages 20-23:  
⇒ [http://www2.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/JudicialGuidetoFosteringConnections2011\[1\].pdf](http://www2.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/JudicialGuidetoFosteringConnections2011[1].pdf)
  - Teens Aging out of Foster Care in Oregon: A Guide to Transition Planning for Caseworkers, Judges and Advocates:  
⇒ <http://www.irplaw.org/Documents/Teens%20Aging%20Out%20of%20Foster%20Care%20in%20Oregon.pdf>
  - Foster Club's Permanency Pact:  
⇒ <http://www.nrcyd.ou.edu/publication-db/documents/permanency-pact.pdf>
  - Nebraska Appleseed's Transition Planning Resources:  
⇒ <http://neappleseed.org/children#transition>

2013 EDITION

A partnership of the Through the Eyes of the Child Initiative, Project Everlast, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, and Nebraska DHHS



# TRANSITION PLANNING FOR OLDER YOUTH

## APPENDIX A: NRS: 43-1311.03

### **Written independent living transition proposal; development; contents; transition team; department; duties; information regarding Young Adult Voluntary Services and Support Act; notice; contents.**

(1) When a child placed in foster care turns sixteen years of age or enters foster care and is at least sixteen years of age, a written independent living transition proposal shall be developed by the Department of Health and Human Services at the direction and involvement of the child to prepare for the transition from foster care to adulthood. The transition proposal shall be personalized based on the child's needs. The transition proposal shall include, but not be limited to, the following needs:

- (a) Education;
- (b) Employment services and other workforce support;
- (c) Health and health care coverage, including the child's potential eligibility for medicaid coverage under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, 42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(10)(A)(i)(IX), as such act and section existed on January 1, 2013;
- (d) Financial assistance, including education on credit card financing, banking, and other services;
- (e) Housing;
- (f) Relationship development; and
- (g) Adult services, if the needs assessment indicates that the child is reasonably likely to need or be eligible for services or other support from the adult services system.

(2) The transition proposal shall be developed and frequently reviewed by the department in collaboration with the child's transition team. The transition team shall be comprised of the child, the child's caseworker, the child's guardian ad litem, individuals selected by the child, and individuals who have knowledge of services available to the child.

(3) The transition proposal shall be considered a working document and shall be, at the least, updated for and reviewed at every permanency or review hearing by the court.

(4) The final transition proposal prior to the child's leaving foster care shall specifically identify how the need for housing will be addressed.

(5) If the child is interested in pursuing higher education, the transition proposal shall provide for the process in applying for any applicable state, federal, or private aid.

(6) A child adjudicated to be a juvenile described in subdivision (3)(a) of section [43-247](#) and who is in an out-of-home placement shall receive information regarding the Young Adult Voluntary Services and Support Act and the extended services and support available under the act. The department shall create a clear and developmentally appropriate written notice discussing the rights of eligible young adults to receive extended services and support. The notice shall include information about eligibility and requirements to receive extended services and support, the extended services and support that young adults are eligible to receive, and how young adults can access the extended services and support. The notice shall also include information about the young adult's right to request a client-directed attorney to represent the young adult pursuant to section [43-4510](#) and the benefits and role of an attorney. The department shall disseminate this information to all children who were adjudicated to be a juvenile described in subdivision (3)(a) of section [43-247](#) and who are in an out-of-home placement at sixteen years of age and yearly thereafter until nineteen years of age, and not later than ninety days prior to the child's last court review before attaining nineteen years of age or being discharged from foster care to independent living. In addition to providing the written notice, not later than ninety days prior to the child's last court review before attaining nineteen years of age or being discharged from foster care to independent living, a representative of the department shall explain the information contained in the notice to the child in person and the timeline necessary to avoid a lapse in services and support.

(7) On or before the date the child reaches nineteen years of age, the department shall provide the child with (a) a certified copy of the child's birth certificate and facilitate securing a federal social security card when the child is eligible for such card and (b) all documentation required for enrollment in medicaid coverage for former foster care children as available under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, 42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(10)(A)(i)(IX), as such act and section existed on January 1, 2013. All fees associated with securing the certified copy of the child's birth certificate shall be waived by the state.

**INDEPENDENT LIVING TRANSITION PROPOSAL/PLAN**  
(FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY – EXAMPLE OF NDHHS N-FOCUS DOCUMENT)

**NAME:** Lisa Jensen

**PERSON NUMBER:** 123456

**DATE OF BIRTH:** 07-06-1997

**PLAN BEGIN DATE:** 07-11-2013

**PLAN END DATE:**

**CURRENT DATE:**

**PLAN PARTICIPANTS:** 08-15-2013

**NAME:**

Lisa Jensen

**END DATE:**

*(Training Instruction) All of these areas are important, but not all of them will need to be addressed for each youth or at the same time. The youth, the transition team, and the results of assessments will determine which areas should be addressed, and in what order.*

**AREA/CATEGORY:** Independent Living Needs Assessment

**Target Date:**10-31-2013

**Status Date:**07-11-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will understand her strengths and needs as she prepares for Independent Living.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will meet with the PALS Specialist in her area to complete the Casey Life Skills Assessment.
2. Upon completion of the assessment Lisa will meet with her PALS Specialist and CFS Specialist to discuss her needs as she prepares for transitional living.
3. If available through her school, Lisa will participate in career assessment testing to determine areas of employment interests.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa met with Amber Kelly her PALS Specialist on 07-23-2013. Lisa completed the Casey Life Skills assessment on 07-25-2013. Copies of the results for the assessment were given to Lisa, Amber and this worker. A team meeting is scheduled for 08-23-2013 to discuss the results.

**AREA/CATEGORY:** Academic Support

**Target Date:**05-10-2014

**Status Date:**07-11-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will be academically successful in school by working to the best of her abilities, establishing good study habits and asking for additional help when needed.

**Transitional Living Proposal/Independent Living Example**  
Developed for Training Nebraska Child and Family Services Specialists

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will attend a study skills session offered through her school or other community agency.
2. Lisa will establish a study routine that works for her and prepares her for classroom assignments and assessments.
3. Lisa will ask for help from her high school teachers when she does not understand a direction or concept.
4. Lisa will discuss educational concerns with her school counselor and develop a plan to handle any problems.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa is enrolled in the study group offered through the local community college. It will meet four consecutive Saturdays, starting 09-15-2013. Lisa is on summer vacation from school, but advises that it is her intent to bring her GPA up so that she would be eligible for academic scholarships for college.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Post-Secondary Educational Support**

**Target Date:**04-01-2013

**Status Date:** 08-15-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will be prepared for attending college at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln as evidenced by receiving an ACT score that allows college entry and being financially prepared for tuition and room and boarding costs.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will take an ACT preparation course offered through her high school.
2. Lisa will take an ACT test in the Fall of 2013
3. Lisa will meet with her school counselor to research scholarships available and how to apply for them.
4. Lisa and her PALS Specialist or foster parents will fill out the FAFSA for the 2014-2015 school year.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa did take her ACT in the spring of 2013 and received a 24. Lisa's plan is to complete an ACT preparation class and retake the ACT in hopes of a higher score, which would hopefully result in academic scholarships. Once in her senior year, Lisa advised that she will meet with the school counselor about other scholarships.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Career Preparation**

**Target Date:**03-15-2014

**Status Date:**07-11-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Based on Lisa's career assessments and her own interest, Lisa will pursue employment opportunities which allow her to explore her interest in accounting.

**Transitional Living Proposal/Independent Living Example**  
Developed for Training Nebraska Child and Family Services Specialists

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will identify and apply for jobs which match her interest and in which she meets the jobs qualifications.
2. Lisa, along with her PALS Specialist will develop a resume documenting her positive school performance and current work experience.
3. Lisa will develop interviewing skills by role playing job interviews with her foster parent or PALS Specialist.
4. Lisa will seek assistance in the completion of job applications from her foster parents.
5. Lisa will continue to demonstrate workplace values by her timeliness to work and positive customer service skills.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa currently works for Pizza Hut as wait staff. Her supervisor reports that Lisa is always at work on time and her customer service is always positive. Lisa has reported that she has talked to her store manager about a shift manager position which would allow her to manage other wait staff but also be responsible for reconciling the cash drawer.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Employment Programs or Vocational Training**

**Target Date:** 05-14-2014

**Status Date:** 08-15-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will pursue her interest in nursing by identifying CNA positions in her area and apply for those employment opportunities. Upon employment, Lisa will utilize skills learned.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will complete a CNA training offered by Central Community College in the fall.
2. Lisa will apply for positions available within the CNA field.
3. Once employed, Lisa will work with nursing staff to learn additional care skills.
4. Lisa will discuss with her foster family, once job experience is obtained, her continued interest in the nursing program.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa has signed up for CNA classes beginning in September of 2013. No other progress has been made on this goal.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Budget and Financial Management**

**Target Date:** 05-14-2014

**Status Date:** 07-11-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will live within a budget by identifying sources of income and expenditures and determine means to monitor and document those transactions.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will meet with her PALS Specialist and her foster parents to develop a budget, considering her employment at Pizza Hut and general living expenses.

**Transitional Living Proposal/Independent Living Example**  
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2. Lisa will check online at the UNL website to determine room and board costs.
3. Lisa will continue to balance her checkbook, keeping an accurate history of expenses.
4. When available, Lisa will fill out the FAFSA form for the 2014-2015 academic school year.
5. Lisa and her CFS Specialist will obtain a consumer credit report and discuss its contents and how it will impact her.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa works at Pizza Hut approximately twenty hours a week. Currently Lisa is responsible for all needs other than room and board, medical and some clothing. Lisa does have a checking account and also maintains a savings account.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Housing Education and Home Management Training**

**Target Date:**08-01-2014

**Status Date:** 07-11-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will locate and maintain housing for herself; understanding and handling all additional costs to include utilities, laundry, and knowledge of reading a lease agreement and what is considered a safe and healthy living environment.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will look online and in the newspaper to know what housing is available and the costs.
2. Starting in May, Lisa, along with her foster parent will visit some of the housing available and when meeting with the landlord ask about utility costs, security deposits, and expectations of the rental agreement.
3. Lisa will work with her foster parent on home management and meal preparation to include housekeeping standards, laundry needs, grocery expenses, grocery shopping and the preparation of nutritious meals.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa is working with her foster parents to prepare nutritious and cost effective meals for one person. Lisa has been responsible for doing her own laundry since she was twelve years old, but has recently gone to a laundry mat and is able to advise this worker of laundry costs to include the purchasing of laundry detergent.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Health Education and Risk Prevention**

**Target Date:**01-31-2014

**Status Date:** 07-11-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will be knowledgeable in all her medical and mental health needs by understanding the importance of fitness and nutrition and knowing what health care resources are available to her.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will meet with her CFS Specialist and obtain medical and immunization records for which Lisa will maintain in her Transitioning Into Adulthood Packet.
2. Lisa will discuss with her foster parents the importance of a routine that includes nutritious

**Transitional Living Proposal/Independent Living Example**  
Developed for Training Nebraska Child and Family Services Specialists

meals, exercise and sleep schedule.

3. Lisa will discuss with her worker Nebraska Medicaid eligibility requirements and services payable through Medicaid.
4. Lisa will understand her physical and sexual health care needs by meeting with her foster parents or an approved adult and discuss any health concern or question she has.
5. Lisa will obtain a copy of the Readiness Checklist from her CFS Specialist, which outlines important documents provided to her.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa and her foster parents discuss on an ongoing basis the importance of proper nutrition and sleep. Lisa has discussed some health care needs and sex education concerns with her foster parents, to which Lisa has been referred to her physician about any additional questions.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Family Support and Healthy Marriage Education**

**Target Date:** 03-15-2014

**Status Date:**08-15-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will understand what healthy and safe communication is within a relationship and recognize when any relationship affects her physical, mental or emotional health.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will discuss with her therapist healthy ways of communicating within any relationship.
2. Lisa will attend the "Understanding Abusive Relationships" course offered through the Crisis Center in Grand Island.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

This goal has been difficult for Lisa to address as she was removed from an extremely violent household. Lisa is attending counseling with Melissa Smith of Mid Plains Behavioral Services on a weekly basis. Lisa has not signed up for the "Understanding Abusive Relationship" course, but will do so at the next offering.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Mentoring**

**Target Date:**05-30-2014

**Status Date:**08-15-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will utilize her relationship with her foster parents, Shelly and Bill White, as a support when she prepares for independent living and enters into such.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will contact Shelly and Bill White when she is in need of information or emotional support as she enters and maintains her independent living.
2. Lisa will continue to involve herself in family celebrations with the White's as she feels needed and the White's feel comfortable.
3. Lisa will review with her foster parents the Permanency Pact available from FosterClub, a national network for youth in care



**Transitional Living Proposal/Independent Living Example**  
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4. Lisa will identify other positive relationships that she will use as additional supports.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa and the White family have established a relationship that provides much support. The foster parents have advised of their intent to continue to be a support for Lisa. Lisa advises that holidays will be spent with the Whites.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Supervised Independent Living**

**Target Date:**08-26-2014

**Status Date:**09-15-2013

**Status:** In progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will participate and be successful in the supervised independent living program offered through Maryland Living Center in Hastings, Nebraska, as evidenced by showing increased responsibilities with independent living skills.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will follow the rules within the living accommodations of the Maryland Living Center (MLC).
2. Lisa will work with MLC staff to develop and demonstrate independent living skills in the area of budgeting, educational, career and job skills, housing and home management, and family support and mentoring.
3. Lisa will use support staff at MLC to identify and be linked to additional services for mental health and advocacy services.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 09-15-2013

Lisa was accepted at the Maryland Living Center in Hastings, Nebraska on August 26, 2014. In the month that Lisa has been in residence, staff has indicated that Lisa fits in well with other youth within the program. Lisa is attending classes at Hastings Community College, concentrating on getting through her general education requirements. Lisa is responsible for meal preparation. Lisa's car did break down one week ago; she was able to get the vehicle repaired with referrals from MLC.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Room and Board Financial Assistance**

**Target Date:**06-01-2014

**Status Date:**07-15-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will be financially able to provide for her food and shelter needs by utilizing supports provided by the State of Nebraska when she attends college in the Fall of 2014.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa and her CFS Specialist will discuss financial assistance available to her while attending college.
2. Ninety days prior to entrance into college or discharge as a HHS ward, Lisa will meet with her income maintenance foster care worker to begin the process of the applying for the former ward program.
3. Lisa will meet with her PALS Specialist to understand additional funding available to former wards.

**Transitional Living Proposal/Independent Living Example**  
Developed for Training Nebraska Child and Family Services Specialists

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 07-15-2013

CFS Specialist has met with Lisa on a few occasions and discussed some of the services available to include assistance for room and board, rent deposits, utilities and other household start-up expenses.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Education Financial Assistance**

**Target Date:**05-01-2014

**Status Date:**08-15-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will develop and implement an education and/or training budget that will assist her transition to self-sufficiency.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa and her PALS Specialist or CFS Specialist will discuss the availability of financial assistance for educational supplies such as textbooks, uniforms, computers and other needed items.
2. Lisa and her CFS Specialist will discuss the eligibility criteria for the Education and Training voucher program.
3. Lisa and her CFS Specialist will discuss what services are available through Central Plains for independent living.
4. If eligible, Lisa will access and fill out the necessary forms by accessing the website [www.central-plains.org](http://www.central-plains.org) or calling Central Plains at 308-872-6176.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 08-15-2013

Lisa and I have met to discuss her eligibility for the Education and Training Voucher.

**AREA/CATEGORY: Other Financial Assistance**

**Target Date:** 05-14-2014

**Status Date:** 09-15-2013

**Status:** In Progress

**GOAL:**

Lisa will be aware of other financial assistance available through the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services that will help her live independently.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Lisa will discuss with her CFS Specialist the eligibility requirements for additional services such as Food Stamps and how her former ward financial grant affects that service.
2. Lisa will discuss with her CFS Specialist the procedure for applying for additional services both financial and medical.

**PROGRESS NOTES:**

**Date:** 09-15-2013

Lisa and I have met to discuss other financial assistance programs that she may be eligible for while in the former ward program. Lisa is aware that any grant she receives from that program affects her for food stamps.

**Transitional Living Proposal/Independent Living Example**  
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(based on identified goals, update monthly)

<b>PROVIDED SERVICES</b>	<b>MONTH/YEAR</b>
Career Preparation	07/2013
Career Preparation	08/2013
Budget and Financial Management	08/2013
Post-Secondary Education Support	08/2013

(based on identified goals, update monthly)

**PROVIDED SERVICES NARRATIVE:**

**Date:** 07-25-2013

Lisa's PALS Specialist, Amber Kelly, has met with Lisa twice this month. According to verbal reports from Ms. Kelly, Lisa has been very interested in creating her resume.

**Date:** 08-31-2013

Ms. Kelly from the PALS program has met with Lisa twice this month and has helped with budgeting, and did discuss with her how FAFSA works. Lisa's foster parents report that they helped Lisa role play a job interview as Lisa believes a shift manager position will become available in the near future.

**Date:**

**Date:**

**Date:**

**Date:**

**Date:**

**Date:**

**Date:**

# TRANSITION PLANNING FOR OLDER YOUTH

## Appendix C: Questions about Transition Planning that Judges Should Ask At Review Hearings of Youth 16+

### AGE 16

1. Creation of Transition Plan
  - a. Were you involved in making the plan? How were you involved?
  - b. When did the planning begin?
  - c. Who else has participated and how?
2. Education
  - a. How are you doing in school? How are your grades? Do you need help? Are you on target with credits? Have there been any problems at school?
  - b. What do you want to do after high school? Have you thought about college, community college, technical, or trade school? What steps are you taking to move toward those goals? Has anyone helped you with this?
3. Employment services and other workforce support
  - a. Do you have a part-time job? How many hours? How is your work environment? Are the employees positive individuals?
4. Health and health care coverage
  - a. Do you have a regular doctor? Do you have any health needs right now? Do you understand what medications you're taking and do you have any concerns?
  - b. Are you addressing your reproductive health needs?
  - c. How are you staying active? Are you eating healthy meals? Do you smoke? What do you do in your free time?
  - d. Do you have access to the behavioral and mental health services that you need?
5. Financial assistance
  - a. Have you been saving money? What are you saving for? Who is helping you with this?
  - b. Do you have a checking or savings account and know how to use it?
  - c. Do you know how credit cards and debit cards work?
  - d. Do you know how to budget?
6. Relationship Development
  - a. Who are your role models?
  - b. Do you have (non-paid professional) adults you feel connected to and who are supportive of you? Who are they? Are these people part of your transition planning team?
  - c. How is your relationship with your siblings and other family members? What kind of connection do you want? If in separate placements: Are you having regular visits with your siblings?
  - d. Have you had an opportunity to participate in a group with other youth in foster care? If not, is this something you're interested in?

# TRANSITION PLANNING FOR OLDER YOUTH

## Appendix C: Questions about Transition Planning that Judges Should Ask At Review Hearings of Youth 16+

### AGE 17

1. Updating Transition Plan
  - a. When was the plan last updated? How were you involved?
  - b. Who else has participated and how?
2. Education
  - a. How are you doing in school? How are your grades? Are you on target with credits? What activities have you been involved in? Have there been any behavioral problems?
  - b. Have you made a decision on what you want to do after high school?
  - c. What are you doing to accomplish that (ex: taking specific classes, taking SATs/ACTs, filling out a FAFSA form, visiting schools, applying for financial aid)? Who is helping you? If applicable, has someone assisted you in visiting colleges/technical programs?
3. Employment services and other workforce support
  - a. Do you have a part-time job? How many hours? Does it interfere with school or other parts of your life? How is your work environment? Are the employees positive individuals?
  - b. Do you have a driver's license?
4. Health and health care coverage
  - a. Have you stayed with the same doctor? Do you have a regular dentist? Do you have any health issues right now? Do you understand what medications you're taking and do you have any concerns?
  - b. Are you addressing your reproductive health needs?
  - c. How are you staying active? Do you know how to buy and cook healthy meals? Do you smoke? What do you do in your free time?
  - d. Do you have access to the behavioral and mental health services that you need?
5. Financial assistance
  - a. Have you been saving money? What are you saving for? How far have you moved toward your goal?
  - b. Do you have a checking or savings account and do you know how to use it?
  - c. Are you receiving SSI? Is an application pending?
  - d. Have you considered enrolling in the Extended Services to 21 program?
6. Housing
  - a. Have you thought about where and with whom you'd like to live after leaving foster care? What are you doing to pursue that? Who is helping you?
7. Transportation
  - a. Do you have a driver's license? Do you have car insurance?
  - b. How do you get to your job, school or other places you need to go?
  - c. Have you saved any money toward buying a car? Do you understand how to buy/maintain a car?
8. Relationship Development
  - a. Who are your role models? Are these people part of your transition planning team?
  - b. Do you have (non-paid professional) adults you feel connected to and who are supportive of you? Who are they? Are these people part of your transition planning team?
  - c. How is your relationship with your siblings and other family members? What kind of connection do you want? If in separate placements: Are you having regular visits with your siblings?
  - d. Have you had an opportunity to participate in a group with other youth in foster care? If not, is this something you're interested in?

# TRANSITION PLANNING FOR OLDER YOUTH

## Appendix C: Questions about Transition Planning that Judges Should Ask At Review Hearings of Youth 16+

### AGE 18

1. Updating Transition Plan
  - a. When was the plan last updated? How were you involved?
  - b. Who else has participated and how?
2. Extended Services to 21
  - a. Will you be enrolling in the Extended Services to 21 program?
3. Education
  - a. When will you be graduating? What are you doing after you graduate? What are you doing the summer after you graduate? Is everything in place?
  - b. If not graduating, what are the issues? What will it take for you to graduate? When could that happen? What do you need to do?
  - c. If you want to attend college or vocational school, do you have everything you need? Have you completed your application for Former Ward, ETV, Pell grant and other scholarships? Has someone assisted you in visiting colleges/technical programs? What do you want to do for a career and how will your studies help you get there?
  - d. If you don't want to attend college or vocational school, what is your career plan?
4. Employment services and other workforce support
  - a. What are your summer work plans after graduation? What about after that?
  - b. Do you think this is the kind of work you would like to do as a career?
  - c. Have you been searching for jobs and preparing a resume?
  - d. Do you have a social security card, photo ID and copy of your birth certificate?
5. Health and health care coverage
  - a. Are you ready to make health care and other decisions? If not, how is this being addressed? Is a legal decision-maker needed?
  - b. What health care coverage will you have after you leave foster care? Do you understand how health care coverage works?
  - c. Will you keep the same doctor and dentist after leaving foster care?
  - d. Are you arranging your own medical and dental appointments? Are you prepared to manage your medications? Do you have any concerns?
  - e. Do you know community resources that could assist you?
  - f. Do you have access to the behavioral and mental health services that you need?
6. Financial assistance
  - a. Has your credit history been checked as required by Federal law? See DHHS Admin Memo: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/children\\_family\\_services/Documents/202012CreditReport.pdf](http://dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Documents/202012CreditReport.pdf)
  - b. Do you have a credit card and/or debit card?
  - c. Do you know how to budget? Do you have a set budget for when you begin living on your own? Do you have a plan for saving money for a car, apartment, and other big items? Do you know how much money you will be able to spend on things like food, transportation, housing and entertainment each month? Do you have a plan to save for unexpected expenses?
  - d. How have you been doing with saving money?
  - e. Who will be able to help you with money management after you leave foster care?
  - f. Who can you call if a financial emergency arises?

# TRANSITION PLANNING FOR OLDER YOUTH

## Appendix C: Questions about Transition Planning that Judges Should Ask At Review Hearings of Youth 16+

### AGE 18 (cont.)

#### 7. Housing

- a. Where will you live after you leave foster care? Who will live with you? Do you feel prepared? What are your plans for getting furniture and other items? Who is helping you? Do you understand how to sign a lease?
- b. If you will be living in a college dorm, where will you live when the dorms are closed?
- c. Have you calculated the costs of housing, like rent, gas, electric, water, etc.? Does your income cover these costs?

#### 8. Transportation

- a. How do you get to your job, school or other places you need to go?
- b. Have you saved any money toward buying a car? Do you understand how to buy/maintain a car?

#### 9. Relationship Development

- a. Who are your role models? Are these people part of your transition planning team?
- b. Do you have (non-paid professional) adults you feel connected to and who are supportive of you? Who are they? Are these people part of your transition planning team?
- c. Who will be a permanent person in your life after you leave foster care? Have you completed a Permanency Pact (see Appendix F)? Where will you spend holidays?
- d. How is your relationship with your siblings and other family members? What kind of connection do you want? If in separate placements: Are you having regular visits with your siblings?
- e. Have you had an opportunity to participate in a group with other youth in foster care? If not, is this something you're interested in?

#### 10. Adult Services

- a. Will you continue Aftercare Services through NFC, PALS or another organization?
- b. Will there be a continuation through the behavioral health Region or Development Disabilities (DD)? If so, has the paperwork been completed? See Admin Memo: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/children\\_family\\_services/Documents/AM172012.pdf](http://dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Documents/AM172012.pdf)

# TRANSITION PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

To be completed with the youth as part of the transition planning process

\* NOTE: This checklist is meant to accompany – not replace – the written transition proposal

Date checklist completed (month, day, year)	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> 6-month update <input type="checkbox"/> 90 day final plan
---	---

## Youth Information

First name and middle initial	Last name	Case number	
Projected date youth will leave care (month, day, year)	Date of birth (month, day, year)	Current age	Gender
Case Life Skills assessment completed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Date assessment completed OR projected date assessment will be completed (month, day, year)	

## Transition Teams should assist youth with the following needs (including the completion of necessary applications) prior to case closure:

### Education

#### If workforce bound:

- School/educational records/transcripts
- Updated copy of the youth's Individual Education Plan (if applicable)
- High school or GED diploma
- Aptitude/vocational interest assessments to help determine career path of interest
- Certificates of competency/training certificates
- Applications to vocational/trade school
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### If college bound:

- School/educational records
- Updated copy of youth's Individual Education Plan (if applicable) to be provided to the college/university
- High school or GED diploma
- Aptitude/vocational interest assessments to help determine career path of interest
- ACT/SAT prep and testing times and places
- College visits
- College applications
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application: [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)
- Education and Training Voucher program application: [www.central-plains.org/forms/prog\\_educ\\_trn\\_forms.pdf](http://www.central-plains.org/forms/prog_educ_trn_forms.pdf)
- Former Ward program application and/or voluntary services and support agreement
- Applications for other available grants, scholarships, and tuition waiver programs
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Employment

- Resume (including both work and volunteer experience and contact information of at least three references)
- Sample job application
- Professional interview outfit
- Mock job interview
- Job or career fair
- Information about job placement agencies (e.g. Job Corps, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Conservation Corps)
- Job shadowing opportunities, mentorships, internships, employment training programs, etc.
- Juvenile record expunged/sealed
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



### Health and Health Care Coverage

- Information about the Affordable Care Act and the category providing youth who age out of foster care with coverage until 26, including contact information and details about how to access this coverage
- Comprehensive physical, dental, vision, and hearing screenings before leaving care
- Updated health records, including:
  - ✓ Medical records
  - ✓ Dental records
  - ✓ Vision records
  - ✓ Mental health records/past evaluations
  - ✓ Immunization records
  - ✓ Diagnosis confirmation
  - ✓ List of current medication/prescriptions
  - ✓ Any other documents related to medical history
- Adequate supply of all prescribed medications, including instructions on how to access refills
- Health insurance/Medicaid card
- Application for Medicaid or other type of health, dental, and vision insurance
- Authorization to remain with the same medical professionals OR a plan to switch care providers
- Contact information (names, telephone numbers, and addresses) of medical, dental, and mental health providers
- Resource list (with contact information) of various local free and/or sliding scale health clinics and medication assistance programs
- Information about services to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (e.g. Planned Parenthood)
- If needed, a plan for a designated adult to make health care or other decisions on behalf of the youth (may require court involvement)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Financial Assistance

- Checking account
- Savings account
- Education about the risks of credit cards and the difference between credit and debit cards
- Stable source of income (job, public assistance, etc.)
- Money management/budgeting skills
- Monthly budget (including a long-term savings plan)
- Credit report check
- Education about the risks of identity theft
- Education on writing checks and balancing checkbooks
- Education on reading a paycheck stub
- Education on taxes (e.g. [irs.gov/app/understandingTaxes/student](https://www.irs.gov/app/understandingTaxes/student))
- Information about resources for free tax and Earned Income Tax (EITC) preparation
- Resource list (with contact information) of other available services (e.g. Opportunity Passport in Omaha, ACCESSNebraska, Aid to Dependent Children [ADC] program, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, etc.)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) application
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Housing

- Housing plan (specific housing options, housing budget, furnishings needed, etc.)
- Back-up housing plan (other than staying at a homeless shelter)
- Housekeeping skills: cleaning, minor household repairs, grocery shopping, etc.
- References and/or co-signer
- Sample lease and rental application
- Public Housing and/or Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) application
- Resource list (with contact information) of services to assist with housing supplies/furnishings or rent/housing (e.g. Public housing, Section 8 vouchers, subsidized housing, Family Unification Program vouchers [if available], Transitional Living Programs under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act)
- Education on rights as a tenant
- Education on local homeless shelters (how to access services, contact information, visit/tour, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship Development**

**Lifelong connections to caring adults:**

- Permanency plan (continued exploration of the possibility of adoption, guardianship, and/or reunification)
- Connections to birth family members with whom youth can maintain a safe and appropriate relationship (including siblings)
- Contact information (names, telephone numbers, and addresses) of siblings (particularly if siblings are still in foster care)
- Contact information (names, telephone numbers, addresses, and relations) of all known relatives (with permission)
- Contact information of agencies offering Family Finding services
- Connections to other significant adults committed to providing ongoing support
- Completed Permanency Pacts with as many supportive adults as possible: [www.fosterclub.com/files/PermPact.pdf](http://www.fosterclub.com/files/PermPact.pdf)
- Contact information (names, telephone numbers, and addresses) of supportive adults to turn to in crisis situations (e.g. youth is lost, scared, depressed, anxious, sick, injured, out of food and money, utilities disconnected, heat goes out, etc.)
- Updated Life Book
- Compilation of personal history and photographs
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Connections to the community:**

- Resource list (with contact information) of local support groups, mentoring programs, or other supportive services (e.g. Project Everlast)
- General community resource list (with contact information) of local services (e.g. health clinics, employment agencies, public assistance services, housing agencies, homeless shelters, etc.)
- Connections to peer-to-peer websites, such as:
  - ✓ [www.teenvoices.com](http://www.teenvoices.com)– For teen and young adult women.
  - ✓ [www.fosterclub.com](http://www.fosterclub.com)– A national network for young people with foster care experience.
  - ✓ [www.fosteryouthaction.org](http://www.fosteryouthaction.org)– The national foster youth action network.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Adult Services**

- DHHS “Application for Benefits” form or ACCESSNebraska application: [dhs-access-neb-apply.ne.gov/AccessNebraskaApplication/](http://dhs-access-neb-apply.ne.gov/AccessNebraskaApplication/)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) application (if not already included in ACCESSNebraska application)
- Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) application (if youth is a parent and if not already included in ACCESSNebraska application)
- Medicaid application (if not already included in ACCESSNebraska application)
- Public Housing and/or Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) application
- Education on and applications for other forms of public assistance (Emergency Cash Assistance Program, Low Income Energy Assistance Program, Employment First, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**If youth has special needs:**

- Consult with Adult Services about eligibility upon leaving care (including Group Residential Housing)
- Screen for disabilities to determine Supplemental Security Income (SSI) eligibility – ideally at age 16/17
- SSI application
- Assistance to the Aged, Blind, or Disabled (AABD) application
- Disability insurance application
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Other**

**Transportation:**

- Education on AND experience driving and maintaining a car
- Education on AND experience using public transportation
- Bus cards
- Driver’s license
- Driver Education classes
- Car insurance (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Life skills:**

- Connections to independent living services (e.g. Branching Out, PALS, Project Everlast, etc.) and classes that will assist after leaving care
- Connections to free online resources, such as:
  - ✓ [www.casey.org/youth/resources.htm](http://www.casey.org/youth/resources.htm) – Offers various online resources youth can download, including *I Know Where I’m Going (But Will My Cash Keep Up?)*, a workbook focused on money management, and *I’m Getting Ready. I CAN DO IT!*, an interactive workbook addressing many topics, including legal issues, safety, searching for an apartment, nutrition, home and money management, and goal setting.
  - ✓ [www.onyourway.org](http://www.onyourway.org)– Youth can create a profile and learn about various topics that will help youth create a life plan, access education, and achieve employment.
  - ✓ [www.transition.fosterclub.com](http://www.transition.fosterclub.com)– Connects youth to various resources, including the Permanency Pact, 21 things youth should not leave foster care without, information on how to access higher education, and other publications designed to assist youth become independent.
  - ✓ [www.youthhood.org](http://www.youthhood.org)– Offers information for youth about education, positive choices, youths’ rights, health, independence, and self-advocacy.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**The Young Adult Voluntary Services and Support Act:**

- If potentially eligible, information about the extended services program, including details about eligibility and other requirements, the services and support young adults can receive, how to access the program (including contact information), and how to prevent a lapse in services and support
- If eligible for extended adoption/guardianship subsidies, information about how to access services (including contact information)
- If eligible for the state extended guardianship assistance program, information on how to access services (including contact information)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
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**Signatures of Transition Team Members**

Signature of youth	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature of DHHS/NFC caseworker	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature of guardian ad litem	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature and role	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature and role	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature and role	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)

# YOUTH INVENTORY

To be completed with the youth as part of the transition planning process

Date inventory completed (month, day, year)	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> 6-month update <input type="checkbox"/> 90 day final plan
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## Youth Information

First name and middle initial	Last name	Case number	
Projected date youth will leave care (month, day, year)	Date of birth (month, day, year)	Current age	Gender

## Personal Documents

- Original social security card
- Original or certified copy of birth certificate
- Driver's license or state identification card
- Immigration/citizenship documents, green card, and/or school visa (if youth is not a U.S. citizen)
- School records (including high school diploma/GED diploma and an updated copy of the youth's Individual Education Plan, if applicable)
- Resume (including both work and volunteer experience and contact information of at least three references)
- Health insurance/Medicaid card
- Medical records (including dental and vision records, immunization records, diagnosis confirmation, a list of current medications, etc.)
- Mental health records (including past mental health evaluations)
- Copy of credit report check
- Documentation of Social Security or other benefits, if applicable
- Certified copy of death certificate(s) of deceased parent(s), if applicable
- List of supportive adults to contact in crisis situations
- Contact information of all known relatives (with permission)
- Contact information of siblings (particularly if siblings are still in foster care)
- Life Book or a compilation of personal history and photographs
- If male, registered for the Selective Service
- Voter registration form or card
- Copy of final court order and/or a letter on DHHS letterhead indicating the youth was a state ward and date of discharge
- Information on how to access or obtain a copy of the youth's foster care case file
- Information on how to access or obtain a copy of the youth's court file
- Copy of completed Case Life Skills assessment
- Copy of written independent living transition proposal and Transition Proposal Checklist
- Signed copy of Youth Inventory
- Copy of signed voluntary services and support agreement or information on how to access the extended services program before age 21
- Personal filing system (lock box, file folder, or other way to organize and save these documents)

### If eligible for public assistance:

- Copy of completed DHHS "Application for Benefits" form or ACCESSNebraska confirmation number (be sure to apply for all relevant programs: Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance [SNAP], Aid to Dependent Children [ADC], etc.)
- Copy of completed application for the Public Housing and/or Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) programs
- Copy of completed application for the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program (if applicable)
- Copies of other applications for public assistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### If college bound:

- Copy of completed Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program application
- Copy of completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application
- Copy of completed Former Ward application and/or voluntary services and support agreement
- Copies of other financial aid applications: \_\_\_\_\_

## Signatures of Transition Team Members

Signature of youth	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature of DHHS/NFC caseworker	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature of guardian ad litem	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature and role	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature and role	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)
Signature and role	Email	Phone number	Date (month, day, year)

# PERMANENCY PACT

In an effort to substantiate and sustain an on-going connection between a youth and a supportive adult,

\_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORTIVE ADULT

pledges to provide specific support to, and has been accepted as a provider of such support by,

\_\_\_\_\_ YOUTH

confirmed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
DAY MONTH YEAR

as witnessed by \_\_\_\_\_ FACILITATOR

*FosterClub's Permanency Pact documents a life-long, kin-like commitment to a relationship between a youth and a supportive adult.*

the national network for young people in foster care | [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)



- A Home For The Holidays
- A Place To Do Laundry
- Emergency Place To Stay
- Food/Occasional Meals
- Care Packages At College
- Employment Opportunity
- Job Search Assistance
- Career Counseling
- Housing Hunt
- Recreational Activities
- Mentor
- Educational Assistance
- Relationship/Marriage/Parenting
- Transportation
- Assistance With Medical Appts
- Storage
- Motivation
- Someone To Talk To/Discuss Problems
- A Phone To Use
- A Computer To Use
- Clothing
- Spiritual Support
- Legal Troubles
- Cultural Experience
- Apartment Move-in
- Cooking Lessons/Assistance
- Regular Check-in
- Bills & Money Management Assistance
- Drug And Alcohol Addiction Help
- Mental Health Support
- Co-Signer
- Help Reading Forms, Complex Docs
- Mechanical/Building Projects
- Housekeeping
- Home Decorating
- Voting
- Volunteerism
- Finding Community Resources
- Safety And Personal Security
- Babysitting
- Emergency Cash
- Social Circle/Community Activities
- Advocacy
- Reference
- Adoption
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# 45 Suggested Supports...

*...that a Supportive Adult might offer to a youth transitioning from care*

## □ **A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS**

Spending the holidays without a family and with nowhere to go is a significant issue cited by young people who have transitioned out of foster care. Extending an invitation to holiday celebrations, or birthdays can help a youth fend off the depression that usually sets in around these important times of year.

## □ **A PLACE TO DO LAUNDRY**

Many adults can look back at the times they returned home as a youth with bags loaded with dirty clothes to wash. The offer to use laundry facilities can be a great way to keep a regular connection with a youth and provide them with a way to maintain pride in their appearance, regardless of an unstable housing situation.

## □ **EMERGENCY PLACE TO STAY**

Statistics show 25% of young persons will spend at least one night homeless within the first 2-4 years of leaving foster care. The offer of an emergency couch to sleep on or a guest bedroom to stay in can reduce anxiety and keep young people safe during hardships. Supportive adults may want to specify limits in time or expectations (help with housework, etc.) as a condition of this offer.

## □ **FOOD/OCCASIONAL MEALS**

A friendly, family-style meal every thursday evening or an invitation to Sunday brunch or a monthly lunch can provide a youth with a healthy alternative to the fast-food that often composes a youth's diet. It also provides a chance to connect and to role-model family life. An open invite to "raid the pantry" can be very comforting to young students or those on a limited budget and will help to ensure that the youth's health isn't jeopardized when funds are low.

## □ **CARE PACKAGES AT COLLEGE**

Students regularly receive boxes of homemade cookies, a phone card or photos from their parents when away at college. A regular package to a foster youth who has transitioned from care reminds them of connections "back home", and allows them to fit in with their peers.

## □ **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

An employer or person in a position to hire, can help by providing special consideration when hiring for a new position. A phone call to the youth inviting them to apply, help with a written application, coaching for a job interview are all ways to help. Supportive adults can offer a youth the chance to help with yard work, housecleaning, babysitting, etc. in order to earn extra money and to establish a work reference.

## □ **JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE**

Finding a job can be a daunting task for anyone. Advice, help filling out applications or creating a resumé, rehearsal of interview questions, transportation to interviews, preparation of appropriate clothing, discussion of workplace behavior, and just plain cheering on can help a youth successfully land a job.

## □ **CAREER COUNSELING**

An adult working in the youth's field of interest can offer advice which could launch a youth's career. Youth particularly benefit from connections and introductions which lead to apprenticeships, job shadows, or other real-world experience. Supportive adults can help the transitioning youth make these contacts.

## □ **HOUSING HUNT**

Securing a first apartment is a rite of passage to adulthood. But without guidance, finding housing can turn into an overwhelming experience. Youth leaving care often lack references or a co-signer which a supportive adult may be able to offer. Former foster youth may have opportunities for financial assistance, but may need help locating it or applying for it. Also, supportive adults can utilize apartment hunting as an opportunity to discuss other daily living challenges, like roommates, utilities, selecting a neighborhood, transportation to job and needed services, etc.

## □ **RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Extending an invitation to a youth to go bike riding, go bowling, shoot some hoops or to simply take a walk can promote health, relieve anxiety, and provide a comfortable way to connect. Recreational activities like cooking, woodworking, painting or playing guitar can provide an outlet for youth and help to develop skills. Other activities include going to a movie, playing cards or chess or Monopoly, taking photographs, going shopping or taking a short trip.

## □ **MENTOR**

Mentors have proven to be an effective influence on youth. Whether a formal or informal mentor to a youth in care, the supportive adult can be a role-model, coach and a friend.

## □ **TRANSPORTATION**

Youth often need help with transportation and may have no one to turn to. A supportive adult can be a transportation resource, specifying the limits of the offer, i.e. for school, to find employment, for medical appointments, to visit relatives, etc. Youth can often use help to figure out how to use public transportation.



## □ EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

According to statistics, only 50% of foster youth will graduate from high school. These shocking statistics show that many youth in care struggle through school against terrible odds including multiple moves, learning disabilities, lack of parental support and missed time in class. A supportive adult can help by becoming a tutor, an educational advocate, or by simply providing advice when needed. Youth planning to attend college can use help with college applications, finding financial aid, and visits to perspective college campuses.

## □ RELATIONSHIP/MARRIAGE/PARENTING COUNSELING

Youth coming out of foster care often lack the skill to cultivate and maintain lasting personal relationships. In many cases, role-modeled relationships for the youth have included biological parents with dysfunctional relationships and paid caretakers from group homes or facilities. Supportive adults can provide frank discussions about relationships, marriage, the role of a spouse and how to be a good parent when the time comes.

## □ ASSISTANCE WITH MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS/ CHAPERONE

It can be scary attending a medical appointment all alone. A supportive adult can accompany a youth to a medical appointment or rehearse what questions to ask, interpret a doctor's instructions, or provide advice about obtaining a second opinion.

## □ STORAGE

Sometimes the life of a youth can be transient, moving from location to location before getting settled. The supportive adult can provide a safe place to store valuables and help ensure that the youth doesn't lose track of valuables, including photo albums, family keepsakes, and records.

## □ MOTIVATION

Everyone does better with a personal cheering section. The supportive adult may be the only one to offer encouraging words to a youth.

## □ SOMEONE TO TALK TO/DISCUSS PROBLEMS

When a youth transitions out of care, there are often moments of insecurity, loneliness and anxiety. The supportive adult can provide a listening ear for a youth to vent, offer advice and wisdom, or be a sounding board for ideas. It may be wise to establish "calling hours" to avoid late night or early morning calls, if that is a concern.

## □ A PHONE TO USE

Sometimes a phone is simply not an affordable luxury for a youth starting out on their own. A supportive adult could provide use of their phone as a message phone for the youth's prospective employers or landlords. Use of the phone can be helpful to keep in touch with caseworkers, siblings, parents, former foster parents, or to access resources in the community.

## □ A COMPUTER TO USE

Access to a computer is a valuable tool for a youth for school work, employment or housing search, or contact with siblings or other relatives. A supportive adult can provide this access from a computer at work or at home, and may want to establish limits in time, websites visited, or downloads that are acceptable.

## □ CLOTHING

A youth may need assistance and/or advise in purchasing or preparing clothing for events like a job interview, weddings or special occasions, or graduation. Sometimes special opportunities need special gear, like a school ski trip, a costume party, etc. A supportive adult can assist with laundry, ironing, mending, shopping for new clothes, or occasionally purchasing a new item. Improving a youth's personal appearance can boost self confidence.

## □ SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

Youth often develop the same spiritual beliefs as their parents. Youth coming from care may have lacked this spiritual guidance. A supportive adult can invite a youth to join them as they search for their own spiritual path. The adult can offer to explore religion with the youth and invite them to participate in church or other spiritual activities.

## □ LEGAL TROUBLES

A youth emerging from care who gets into legal trouble usually cannot afford legal advice. When youth have a tangle with the law, they often land in deeper trouble because of their lack of experience and resources in navigating the legal system. A supportive adult can assist by connecting youth to needed legal services. The supporter may also wish to provide preventative advice to the youth who may be headed for legal entanglement.



JJ from Michigan,  
FosterClub All-Star

"Permanency is a feeling that is different for everyone, it is not bound by time nor can it be measured. It has to be discovered and often times it has to be tested, and rejected more than once before permanency can be established. Permanency is so hard to understand because it is a conceptual idea of an emotion and is received on both ends very differently for every person. There is no straight "by the book" definition of permanency because the emotions I feel cannot be felt by anyone else, and that's the great thing about it."

## □ CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Supportive adults who share a cultural background with a youth may wish to engage them in cultural activities. Even if the cultural backgrounds are different, the youth can be motivated to participate in cultural events. Support can be given to examine cultural traditions and beliefs and encouragement given to take pride in their cultural identity.

## □ APARTMENT MOVE-IN

Moving is so much easier with the support of friends, from packing, to manpower, a truck to move, to help setting up the new apartment. The supportive adult can also invite the youth to scout through their garage or storage area for extra furniture or household items that might be useful.





**COOKING LESSONS/ASSISTANCE**

Many times youth coming out of care have not had the opportunity to practice cooking on their own. Meal preparation is often a natural way to engage in meaningful conversation and build a relationship. The supportive adult may decide to take a youth grocery shopping, or help stock the youth's first kitchen with a starter supply of utensils, spices, cleaning supplies and food.

**REGULAR CHECK-IN (DAILY, WEEKLY OR MONTHLY)**

Simply knowing that someone will be aware that you are missing, hurt or in trouble is important. A supportive adult can instigate regular check-in's with a youth transitioning out of care, easing feelings of anxiety and building confidence that someone is concerned about their safety.

**BILLS AND MONEY MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE**

Sorting through bills and balancing a checkbook can be a particularly daunting task for a youth with a learning disability, deficient math skills or experience. Understanding how to maintain and obtain credit, deciphering loan applications, and budgeting are some of the items where a supportive adult can lend help.

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADDICTION HELP**

A high percentage of youth in care have parents who had drug or alcohol dependency problems. Working with young people transitioning out of care to avoid these dangerous pitfalls and offering support if a problem should develop could help break a familial cycle of addiction.

**HELP WITH READING FORMS, DOCUMENTS, AND COMPLEX MAIL**

Many youth in care have learning disabilities which may make complicated reading assignments all the more difficult. The supportive adult can make arrangements for a youth to collect materials for review on a weekly basis or to give a call on an as-needed basis.

**MECHANICAL AND/OR BUILDING PROJECTS**

Youth may need help keeping an automobile in good repair. Teaching a youth about the care of their car can help them build self-confidence and skills that can last a lifetime. Helping a youth fix up their apartment or a rented home, or asking for their assistance in projects around your home, can teach new skills which may be put to use throughout life.

**HOUSEKEEPING**

Some youth, particularly those who have lived in a residential facility or restrictive environment, may not have had real-life experience in keeping a home clean. The supportive adult can discuss cleaning supplies to use for particular household chores, how to avoid disease, and organization of clutter once a youth has transitioned to their own home.

**HOME DECORATING**

Helping a youth decorate their home can be a fun and rewarding way to contribute to the youth's sense of pride and self esteem.

**VOTING**

Youth in our society often form their first political impressions based on their parents' political beliefs. Youth in care often do not receive this role modeling. A supportive adult may wish to discuss current local, state and national issues, help a youth register to vote or take a youth to the polling location to vote.

**VOLUNTEERISM**

Volunteering to help others or for a worthy cause is an excellent way to build self-esteem. Supporters can offer to engage a youth in their own good work or embark on a new volunteer effort together.

**FINDING COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Navigating through the maze of government agencies and myriad of social service programs is difficult at best even for a resourceful adult. The supportive adult can help the youth make a list of useful resources in the community and offer to visit them together.

**SAFETY AND PERSONAL SECURITY**

The youth transitioning from care needs to take charge of their own personal safety. The supportive adult can encourage them to take a self-defense class, get CPR certified, get current on health and safety issues. The adult can take a tour of the youth's apartment and make suggestions regarding home safety, can help develop an evacuation plan, and make plans with the youth on what to do in an emergency situation. The supportive adult can offer to be called when something goes wrong, and offer to be listed as "person to contact in an emergency" on business forms.



*Sharde from Indiana, FosterClub All-Star*

"Permanency is important because if you spend your entire life moving around it doesn't give you a chance to get close to anyone, and you don't learn how to build those essential relationships you will need later in life. Moving around also influences you to run away from your problems."

**MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

Some youth in care suffer from mental health challenges. Depression, attention-deficit disorder, eating disorders, and other illness may afflict the youth. It is suggested that the supportive adult educate themselves about any mental health disorders that are at issue.

**CO-SIGNER**

Many times youth need co-signers to acquire housing, car loans, or bank accounts (particularly when the youth is under 18 years old). Consider the financial liability if the youth were to miss payments or not fulfill the financial agreement. It is suggested that an adult who acts as a co-signer closely supervise the arrangement until the youth has established a consistent pattern of responsibility.





☐ **BABYSITTING**

If the youth is a parent, babysitting services can be the relief that is needed to keep a young family intact. In addition to providing a time-out, the offer to watch a child while the young parent gets other chores around the house accomplished (laundry, cleaning, etc.), provides an excellent opportunity to role-model good parenting skills.

☐ **EMERGENCY CASH**

Most of us have experienced a cash shortage at one time or another as a youth. Youth coming from care usually lack this important "safety net". The supportive adult may wish to discuss up front their comfort level in supplying financial assistance. They would discuss what constitutes an emergency (not enough to cover rent? a medical emergency? cash for a date? gas money?).

☐ **REFERENCE**

Many applications, including those for college, housing and jobs, require a list of references be provided by the applicant. If the supportive adult is able to give a positive reference for a youth, they should make sure a youth has their current contact information so that the supporter can be included on their list of references.

☐ **ADVOCACY**

Sometimes youth have a difficult time speaking up for themselves in court, at school, with government systems, etc. Supportive adults can help a youth organize their thoughts, speak on their behalf, or assist in writing letters.

☐ **INCLUSION IN SOCIAL CIRCLE/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Often youth in care have difficulty forming new friendships and relationships when they leave care. A supportive adult can extend regular invitations to the youth to attend social and community gatherings as an opportunity to form new friendships and make connections with people. Good opportunities to make new friends include family weddings, hiking trips, garden clubs, community service projects and volunteer opportunities, dances, sporting events, debate groups, community college classes, etc.

☐ **ADOPTION**

Even for many older youth, including those over the age of 18, adoption remains a dream. An adult who is able to offer this ultimate permanent connection for a youth may make an initial offer to adopt through a Permanency Pact. Often youth may have fears about adoption, interpreting adoption to mean loss of contact with bio parents or siblings (this should be taken into consideration when discussing this option). Youth who once declined to be adopted often change their minds, so an adult may want to renew the offer from time to time.

## About FosterClub



*FosterClub is the national network for young people in foster care.*

**Every 2 minutes**, a child's life changes as they enter the foster care system. There are more than 513,000 young people living in foster care across the country, and FosterClub *is their club* — a place to turn for advice, information, and hope. Our peer support network gives kids in foster care **a new spin on life**.

At FosterClub's **web sites**, kids are asking questions and getting answers: [www.fosterclub.com](http://www.fosterclub.com) is for young people and [www.fyi3.com](http://www.fyi3.com) is designed for youth transitioning from care. FosterClub's gateway for adults who support young people in foster care is [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org). Our **publications** supply youth with tools for success and also provide inspiration and perspective from their peers who have successfully emerged from foster care. FosterClub's **training and events** are held across the country and feature a dynamic group of young foster care alumni called the FosterClub All-Stars. **Outreach tools** designed to improve communication with young people in care and engage them in achieving their own personal success.

The members of FosterClub are resilient young people determined to build a better future for themselves and for other kids coming up through the system behind them. Their success depends on the generosity of concerned individuals and collaborations with partner organizations. If you would like to learn more about FosterClub or how you can support young people in foster care, visit [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org) or call 503-717-1552. FosterClub is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. EIN 93-1287234.



The pinwheel is an enduring symbol of the happy, carefree childhood all kids deserve. For more than 513,000 youth living in the U.S. foster care system, childhood has been interrupted by abuse, neglect or abandonment. FosterClub's peer support network gives kids in foster care a new spin on life by providing information, resources, encouragement and hope.

*the national network for young people in foster care*

FOSTERCLUB

