

# RESOURCES FOR YOUTH TRANSITIONING FROM FOSTER CARE TO ADULTHOOD

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(Facilitator's Guide)

## **Introduction:**

Iowa youth exiting foster care at age 18 or older have more resources and opportunities for support today than ever before. With implementation of the new Medicaid for Independent Young Adults (MIYA) the addition of Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) stipend to the Aftercare program, the development of Elevate Chapters across the state, the ability of Service Area Managers to waive continual placement of foster care allowing youth to re-enter care (via Supervised Apartment Living--SAL) to complete high school, and other resources such as the Education & Training Voucher (ETV), the Department has a variety of tools to assist youth as they transition to adulthood. This workshop highlights important resources workers can help youth in care access. Supervisors' knowledge of these available resources, and understanding of how and when to access them will increase the potential for caseworkers to be more effective as they work with youth in the development of a plan that maximizes the opportunity for achieving better outcomes transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

## **Course Objectives:**

1. To increase supervisor knowledge of available planning resources for youth to develop meaningful transition plans.
2. To increase supervisor awareness of opportunities for youth.
3. To demonstrate the supervisory role in helping workers identify and access resources for effective transition plans as part of the DHS Case Permanency Plan.
4. To promote stability for youth through the supervision of effective planning.
5. To demonstrate the TPS role in helping workers and youth develop the youth's transition plan.

## **Supervisor Competencies:**

1. Advocates for/allocates resources, which respect the diverse needs of youth.
2. Uses supervision to assure culturally competent practice with youth.
3. Ensures that DHS is an effective partner on the Transition Committee.
4. Develops and sustains collaborative community partnerships that support youth in transition.
5. Recognizes indicators of mental illness and developmental disabilities and provides consultation to workers.
6. Supervises worker in implementing policy and programs relevant to adolescents in transition.

## RESOURCES FOR YOUTH TRANSITIONING FROM FOSTER CARE TO ADULTHOOD

**Transition Planning** is a process not a one-time event. Youth in foster care learn life skills at different rates. Many have often had their development and learning life skills interrupted by moves and changes in their lives.



### **Desired outcomes for youth in out of home placement include:**

- **Life skills**  
Demonstrates experience and competence in basic study skills, work skills, money management, social development, self-care and practical daily living skills.
- **Education**  
Acquire sufficient education, training and opportunities that provide them with choices to pursue post-secondary education and/or the means to obtain and retain steady employment.
- **Physical & Mental Health**  
Have sufficient and affordable health insurance for both physical and mental health. Have made/are making peace with the past (separation and loss) and developing a healthy identity.
- **Employment**  
Generate a sufficient income to support themselves by obtaining and retaining steady employment leading to a viable career path.
- **Housing**  
Have access to safe, stable, appropriate, affordable housing in the community that is near public transportation, work or school.
- **Documents**  
Have the skills, information and assistance to access essential legal documents pertaining to their personal, family, medical and educational histories.
- **Supportive Relationships & Community Connections**  
Have in place many supportive relationships, able to access services in the community to achieve their personal goals, and are supported in their efforts to contribute to their communities.

## **Wrap-Around Model of Social Work Practice**

Borrowing from the wrap-around model of social work practice, adolescents in foster care will need formal and informal supports to help them transition from foster care into the adult world. Caseworkers perceive their supervisors as resources, or people they can go to seek out information and help them make better decisions. This workshop appreciates that relationship, and encourages supervisors to use the information provided here as a way to think through the contingencies of youths' plans and to help workers plot out the resources the plans require.



There are five major areas that youth need formal supports for their transition plan:

1. Education
2. Health and Mental Health Care
3. Employment
4. Housing
5. Access to legal documents

This curriculum focuses on these five areas and provides tools and tips for knowing how and when to access these formal supports for youth. Some of these resources put youth on a certain “track”, which eliminates them from other sources of formal supports. The Transition Planning Specialists are the State’s designated “experts” for transitioning youth from foster care into adulthood. Their role is to help supervisors and workers navigate through the complexity of the rules, policy, and practice of developing the transition plan, and to facilitate the implementation of that plan.

### **(REVIEW RESOURCES BY TOPIC AREA)**

## Listing of Transition Resources by Topic Area

### Transition Planning

**ACLSA Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment** & resources online at [www.caseylifeskills.org](http://www.caseylifeskills.org). The [Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment](#) is a free evaluation of youth life skills. The assessment is completed online and scored automatically. Supplemental assessments are available for: Parenting of Infants or Young Children, Pregnancy, American Indian, Homeless, GLBYQ, and Values. There are additional Education Supplements as well. This site also provides resources to help prepare youths for living on their own.

**Elevate** -information on what it is and how to find a local Chapter near you is found at [www.elevate2inspire.com](http://www.elevate2inspire.com). *Elevate* is a group of current and former foster/adoptive youth who seek to inspire others to new levels of understanding & compassion to the life connection needs of foster care & adoptive teens by sharing their personal stories of hope. Tammy Mahan at Children & Families of Iowa, 1111 University Avenue, Des Moines IA 50314, and phone 515-288-1981 ext 303 is the contact person. *Elevate* has already changed how DHS cares for youth including laws in Iowa with PAL, MIYA and the latest Sibling Bill.

**Iowa Friends of Foster Children Foundation** (for youth in foster family care only) application is available at [www.ifapa.org](http://www.ifapa.org). The *Iowa Friends of Foster Children Foundation* is a nonprofit, which was established in 1991 to provide funds for items that benefit foster children, but are not covered by the state's foster care or medical programs. The Friends Foundation was started by and continues to be run by volunteers. It has no paid staff, so all funds received go directly towards the foster children grants. A grant committee, made up of Friends Foundation Board members, reviews applications. There is a limit of \$200.00 per child, per year. If only half of the 4,000 foster children in Iowa were awarded a full grant, it would cost \$400,000. On an average year, the foundation has been able to offer assistance to 208 children. Every item or opportunity that is granted is meant for the youth, and must be taken by the youth when they leave their placement. Requests that qualify for grant dollars include items such as senior pictures, class rings, summer camp, etc. The amount of the request needs to be detailed and itemized including vendor information. To be considered for a Friends Foundation grant, please complete the application on the IFAPA website. Note: Grant applications are reviewed once a month. Please allow time for the grant to be reviewed when considering the date for your grant request. The Board of Directors will notify you in writing of the decision. Decisions will be made on an individual basis. If you have questions concerning an application, please contact Phyllis at 800-277-8145, Ext 165

**IYCC-Iowa Youth Connection Council** booklet for teens called "Now I Know...Youth Putting Together the Pieces. The IYCC is no longer active but did create this helpful booklet that explains foster care from a youth's perspective.

**Permanency Partnership Pact** at [www.fosterclub.com/pdfs/PermPact.pdf](http://www.fosterclub.com/pdfs/PermPact.pdf). A PPP is a pledge by a supportive adult to provide specific supports to a young person in foster care with a goal of establishing a lifelong, kin-like relationship. 45 suggested supports are listed, and it is a great tool to get youth thinking about whom they could call when they need help in each of those different areas.

**Resource Matrix** of community services, by county, was developed by the eight DHS Transition Planning Specialists. Resources include Employment, Housing, Education, Medical, Food, Transportation, & Misc.

\* **TIP-Transition Information Packet** (3 ring binder/spiral bound) with resource pages is for youth in foster care placement. TIP is organized into ten sections: Documents, Education, Employment, Money Management, Housing, Home Management, Health, Transportation, Resources, and Misc. Specific storage areas are located at the end of each section to help youth keep copies of important documents such as Driver's License, photo ID, Social Security card, birth certificate, immunization record, insurance, and many other personal records.

\* **TPS-Transition Planning Specialist** is available to DHS workers as they assist youth in transition from foster care to adulthood. TPS's are available to ensure continued connections to resources up to age 21 years old, per Federal law. There are 8 TPS's around the state. The counties they cover do not coordinate with Judicial Districts or Service Delivery Areas but work is evenly distributed.

\* **Transition Planning Staffing or Meeting** is done differently in each SDA-Service Delivery Area by the assigned TPS-Transition Planning Specialist. The Social Worker coordinates a meeting via Family Team Meeting, IEP meeting, or directly with the youth and involved parties. The meeting can include parents, foster care providers, any supportive person, school personnel, AEA staff, County CPC, MHDD adult provider, IVRS, WIA, GAL, etc. The purpose of the staffing/meeting is to review the transition plan found in Section C of the Case Perm Plan. Discussion covers life skills, education, health, employment, housing, important documents, and a support system for after the youth is out of foster care. This is an opportunity to discuss IASN Iowa Aftercare Services Network and PAL Preparation for adult living as well as MIYA—Medicaid for Young Adults.

## **Education**

**Area Education Agency:** Youth who receive Special Education services through school have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The IEP addresses transition issues. If a youth has an IEP or 504 accommodations that go through their senior year then can then apply for similar supports in college. Consult with the local AEA for more information or at [www.iowaaea.org](http://www.iowaaea.org).

**Community Colleges:** Provide continuing education, occupational training, high school diplomas, and GED testing. Guidance in educational and vocational opportunities is also provided. An office of career planning and job placement may be of use to attending youth. Tutoring and other assistance can be provided to students who have received special education services or meet other requirements. Applications are available at Admissions.

- **ACT-**If youth can't afford the registration fee for the ACT or ACT Plus Writing, they may be eligible for a fee waiver. To be eligible, youth must meet all three of the following requirements: 1) currently attend high school as a junior or senior. 2) meet at least one indicator of economic need (information about these indicators and how to request fee waiver forms is in the high school counseling office). 3) register only once with an ACT fee waiver. Fee waivers cover *only* the basic registration fee for either the ACT (No Writing) or the ACT Plus Writing, including up to *four* valid college choices (listed at the time of registration). Waivers do not cover test date changes, test center changes, or any other fees. ACT testing can also be funded via enrollment in area Education Talent Search programs.
- **College Planning Center** is a state-wide resource for any youth living in Iowa. This resource is especially helpful to youth in out-of-home care. They assist career exploration, financial aid paperwork, and over post-secondary education planning. They have a website at [www.icansucceed.org](http://www.icansucceed.org), or they can be contacted by calling:

**West Des Moines:**

160 S. 68th Street, Suite 1101  
West Des Moines, IA 50266

**Cedar Rapids:**

1100 Blairs Ferry Road N.E., Suite 104  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

- **FAFSA-Free Application for Federal Student Aid-**Complete the FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible of the youth's senior year. The FAFSA forms are available at all high school guidance offices, and are also found on-line at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Youth in foster care can check "yes" to ward of the court question. This information is important as it alerts financial aid officials to look at only the youth's income and assets when determining the award amount. No parental or foster parent financial information is necessary due to you being considered independent. If the financial aid processor requests additional information to process your application, submit it promptly. A copy of the court order may be required.
- **ETV-Education & Training Voucher** for post-secondary education-application at [www.iowacollegeaid.org](http://www.iowacollegeaid.org). The ETV grant is part of the Chafee federally funded program that provides college scholarships to youth who have aged out of foster care. The ETV program is funneled through the Iowa Department of Human Services and administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission. Eligibility includes: Youth must have a high school diploma or a GED. Youth must EITHER: Age out of care (remained in court ordered out-of-home placement to within 30 days of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or later), or be adopted from

foster care after the age of 16. Youth must be under the age of 21 the first time they apply for ETV. Funding can continue until the age of 23. **Students graduating from the State Training School and Iowa Juvenile Home do not meet the definition of 'foster care' and are not considered eligible for ETV funds.** The maximum annual ETV award is \$5,000. The grant may be renewable, up to a bachelor's degree. Students must reapply each year and are required to meet the academic progress standards of the college/university or make satisfactory progress towards completion of the training program to renew this grant. The ETV grant may assist with expenses associated with attending an approved education or training program. This includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, day care, transportation, and housing costs.

- **All Iowa Opportunities Foster Care Grant** for post-secondary application as [www.iowacollegeaid.org](http://www.iowacollegeaid.org). This is BRAND NEW in 2007. **Youth who age out from the State Training School and Iowa Juvenile Home are eligible for these educational funds.** As of July 31, the rules were still process and were not definitive.
- **OFA-Orphan Foundation of America Scholarship** can be found at [www.orphan.org](http://www.orphan.org). 2008-2009 applications will be available between January 1 and March 31, 2008. Applicants must: 1) Have been in foster care for one consecutive year at the time of their 18th birthday or high school graduation OR Have been adopted or taken into legal guardianship out of foster care after their 16th birthday OR Have lost both parents to death before the age of 18 and not been subsequently adopted. In this instance, copies of the death certificates must be provided. 2) Be accepted into or enrolled in an accredited post-secondary program (university, college, community college or vocational/technical institute). 3) Be under the age of 25 on March 31, 2008.
- **Horatio Alger Scholarship** can be found at [www.horatioalger.com](http://www.horatioalger.com). The Horatio Alger Association seeks to assist students who have: demonstrated integrity and perseverance in overcoming adversity, strength of character, financial need, a good academic record, commitment to pursue a college education; and a desire to contribute to society. The eligibility criteria to be considered for National Scholarships, National Scholarship Finalist Awards, and Horatio Alger State Scholarship Programs are as follows: 1) enrollment full time as a high school senior, progressing normally toward graduation in the Spring/Summer 2007, with plans to enter college no later than the fall following graduation; 2) a strong commitment to pursuing a bachelor's degree at an accredited institution (students may start their studies at a two-year institution and then transfer to a four-year institution. 3) critical financial need (\$50,000 or less adjusted gross income per family is preferred, if higher explanation must be provided); 4) involvement in co-curricular and community activities; 5) demonstrated integrity and perseverance in overcoming adversity 6) a minimum GPA of 2.0; and 7) United States citizenship or permanent resident. Applicants must reside in the United States.

- **National Foster Parent Association- Benjamin Eaton Scholarship.** Foster parents must belong to the National Association. Applications are due the end of March each year. Information is available at [www.nfpainc.org](http://www.nfpainc.org). A completed application form must be submitted in senior year.
  - A minimum of two (2) letters of recommendation from: foster parent(s), social worker(s), residential center, principal/teacher/guidance counselor, employer, etc. will be required with each application.
  - A typewritten statement in 300-500 words on "Why I want to further my education and why I should be..."

**Student Financial Aid Offices:** (located at each college or university) Provides advice, references, and forms for student loans, grants, or work-study arrangements. Also, contact the high school guidance counselor where the student is attending to get the FAFSA-Free Application for Federal Student Aid forms and other information regarding college financial aid. Youth will have to show proof of foster care status for financial aid purposes by getting a certified copy of a Court order stating care and custody with DHS or contact a TPS for assistance.

**TRIO Programs:** Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, and Educational Opportunity Center are federally funded programs designed to encourage students to seek higher education. Services may include career exploration, choosing a college, financial aid, and support to increase success in college. Your local college should be able to give you the contact person for the TRIO program in your area.

## Employment

**Iowa Workforce Development Center:** Has listings of statewide job openings, unemployment services, employment services, resume services, and testing available. There are no charges to employers or people seeking employment. Located throughout the state and also found at [www.iowaworkforce.org](http://www.iowaworkforce.org) or at 1-800-562-4692. Some have programs that specialize in working with youth that have mild disabilities.

**IVRS-Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services:** Mission is to work for and with individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment, independence, and economic goals. Economic independence and exploring better jobs are how they assist Iowans with disabilities. Voc Rehab can be found at [www.ivrs.iowa.gov](http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov). Referrals may be made to this agency to assist youth with special needs in receiving career assessment and training. If a youth is in Special Education or diagnosed with a disability, consider making a referral during their junior year of high school.

**Job Corps:** This is the nation's largest and most comprehensive Federal residential, education, and job training program for at-risk youth between the ages of 16 and 24. They offer a variety of training programs at over 110 centers. Youth must be from a

home that is considered low income and be able to benefit from and complete the training. A single parent program is also available. The Job Corp Center in Iowa is located in Denison center. For more information, call 712 263-4192 or 1-800-733-5627, or check out their website at <http://jobcorps.dol.gov/>

**Welfare to Work:** Provides career assessment, employment opportunities that include work experience and on-the-job training, and a variety of support services including emergency housing, child care, transportation, and clothing assistance. Youth ages 18 to 24 that have aged out of foster care are eligible and may be referred to this program prior to turning 18.

**WIA-Workforce Investment Act** services, formerly JTPA, is for youth ages 14-21 years old. Information is found at the following web site [www.iowaworkforce.org/region14/youth.htm](http://www.iowaworkforce.org/region14/youth.htm). Federal legislation specifies foster care placement as an eligibility factor. Provides career guidance and counseling, basic and occupational skills training, work experience, mentoring, and leadership development activities for youth.

### **Health and Mental Health Care**

**Central Point of Coordination (CPC):** Located in each county. The county funds services for adults with mental retardation and mental health needs who meet the eligibility requirements of the county plan. Ideally, the CPC Administrator should be notified around the time the youth reaches age 16 in order to facilitate planning for adult needs. Code 232.2 and DHS manual, 18-A, pages 93-94 and 13-J, page 26, stipulates that for youth in foster care, age 16 and older, who will need adult disability services, the needs assessment and plan of services **MUST BE** developed with the funder for adult services when youth is an adult and out of foster care system. CPC contact information along with county plans can be accessed through the DHS web site at <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/mhdd/>.

**Community Mental Health Centers:** Provide support for persons with mental health or psychological problems. Usually services are provided on a sliding fee scale according to income or T19 medical card.

**Department of Public Health:** Provide free health care for low-income citizens. This may be where a youth's immunization records are located and worth checking on or at <http://www.idph.state.ia.us>.

**Domestic Violence Services:** Provide telephone counseling and other support, which may include a shelter for women and their children if they have been physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, 1-800-942-0333.

**Food Assistance Program**, young adults can apply by calling 1-877-937-3663 when they exit foster care to see if they qualify for the EBT, which is like a debit card & is reloaded monthly.

**\* MAXIMUS:**

SSI advocacy project is being handled through MAXIMUS in Des Moines. MAXIMUS determines medical eligibility for youth in foster care for the State of Iowa and acts as the liaison between DHS and Social Security Administration and Department of Disability Services. For youth transitioning out of care, MAXIMUS will notify staff when foster care youth on their caseload approach the age of 17+ and are potentially eligible, but not yet receiving SSI.

If the child's cost of care and IVE eligibility appears to be an impediment to a positive SSI determination, MAXIMUS will call IVE-IM staff to arrange for IVE to be "switched off" for the month of application, so as to secure SSI eligibility that will benefit the child who ages out of care.

Any child who appears to meet criteria on the SSI Desk Guide and not currently receiving SSI should be referred for a disability determination, regardless of other income as this can provide a more seamless transition when the age out of care. Initial Referral form 470-3361 can be found in Outlook/State Approved Forms or in Employees Manual 18-Appendix. MAXIMUS can be reached at E-mail address [iowassi@maximus.com](mailto:iowassi@maximus.com) and Fax 515-284-8854.

**\* Medicaid** Title19 continuation through MIYA-Medicaid for Independent Young Adults. Youth aging out of foster care will likely remain eligible for medical coverage under one of several Medicaid programs. It is very important that the DHS worker informs the IVE worker of the youth's address and income information when they close the case in FACS. This allows the IVE worker to ensure that medical coverage continues after the case closes. The social worker needs to complete and submit the IVE Change form 470-3918. MIYA eligibility:

- Effective July 1, 2006 for youth that age out after May 1, 2006
- No longer in an Iowa paid foster care placement
- Left State paid foster care on or after 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
- Countable income is under 200% Federal Poverty Level
- Resident of Iowa
- U.S. citizen or a qualified alien
- Participation in Aftercare/PAL not required

**Social Security Administration:** Youth with disabilities may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Even if the youth is currently SSI eligible, they will have eligibility re-determined for adult SSI. When a youth leaves foster care, a request for a change of payee must be made to change the benefactor of the funds from the State of Iowa to the youth or another designated payee. Refer potentially eligible youth in foster care to Maximus who will assist with the application process. All others can

apply at their local Social Security Administration office, call 1-800-772-1813 or checkout their website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

## **Housing**

**HUD** Section 8 low-income housing-apply when turn 18 years old. The Family Unity Program can provide former foster youth ages 18 to 21 with Section 8 rental assistance. It's not necessary for them to be parenting. Contact your local Public Housing Authority for more information and to get on the waiting list.

**IASN-Iowa Aftercare Services Network** information-online at [www.ypii.org](http://www.ypii.org). Iowa Aftercare Services Network started its fourth year of providing services to youth who have aged out of Iowa's foster care system. Over 500 individual youth have participated in the program since April 2002. Iowa Aftercare Services is for all former foster youth who have the goal and ability to achieve self-sufficiency. The program is available state-wide in Iowa. The 24 hour contact number is run through Iowa Extension (Teen Hotline) and they can give a direct number to the Iowa Aftercare Service Network agency that will serve the youth in the county the youth resides. That number is **1-800-443-8336**. Eligibility for IASN includes:

- No longer in a foster care placement
- Exited foster care between ages 17 ½ and 18 and was in care for at least 6 months at the time of exit, or left care at age 18 or older
- Includes court-ordered relative and suitable person placement
- At least 18 years old, but less than 21 years old
- Resident of Iowa
- Actively participate in the development and execution of a self-sufficiency plan
- Services are voluntary

### **\* PAL-Preparation for Adult Living-(monthly stipend)**

- Effective July 1, 2006 for youth that age out after May 1, 2006
- Participation in IASN (aftercare) is required
- Exhausted eligibility for all voluntary foster care
- Left state-paid foster care on or after 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and have been in foster care for at least 6 of the previous 12 months
- Attend college, job training, or work full-time (at least 25 hours per week)
- Live in an approved living arrangement other than the parental home
- Pre-PAL services are available for up to 10 hours prior to DHS case closure for those youth most likely to be eligible for PAL. This does not take the place of required transition planning

**Transitional Living Programs (TLP):** These programs are funded by federal government grants to provide housing and services to homeless youth between the ages of 16 and 21. They are structured to help homeless youth achieve self-sufficiency.

These are the current programs in Iowa: Foundation 2 in Cedar Rapids, UAY in Iowa City, House of Mercy in Des Moines and Youth & Shelter Services in Ames.

### **Access to Legal Documents**

**Conservator:** Provides guardianship, conservatorship, or payee services to persons with disabilities that affect their decision-making regarding personal and financial matters. This service may be located in the community or part of MHDD office.

**Department of Transportation:** Administer both the written and driving tests for driver's license or permit. You can also get a photo identification card.

**Motor Vehicle Information Center:** handles questions on driver's license, vehicle registration, handicap parking permits, and truck driving information in Des Moines, 1-800-532-1121 or <http://www.idph.state.ia.us>.

**Iowa Legal Aid:** Provides free civil legal services related to family law, child support, consumer law, landlord/tenant issues, and custody. This is a statewide service on the web at [www.iowalegalaid.org](http://www.iowalegalaid.org) or 1-800-332-0419.

### **\* Documents**

Birth Certificate-Every youth age 16 or older should have access to their certified birth certificate. . In Iowa go to <http://www.idph.state.ia.us> for general application process. This is difficult to obtain if the person requesting is not the parent/guardian. DHS may request one certificate for "department use only" at no charge. Youth in care often need their own certified copy (i.e. driver's permit), and we cannot release our DHS copy. In those instances, the department must pay for the certificate. When this situation occurs, please send the Application for a Search of an Iowa Vital Record form and note the cost codes (fund, agency, org and object code) to be used for payment on a sheet of paper to:

**Tetyana Quinn  
DHS Central Office  
Purchasing, Payments & Receipts**

To pay for an out of state Birth Certificate: When prepayment is required, please obtain a letter or invoice from the office where the certificate request has been made. The letter/invoice must include:

- 1) The cost of the certificate and
- 2) A statement that prepayment is required.
- 3) The federal tax identification of the vendor from whom we are requesting the certificate.

When this invoice/letter has been received, the original should be attached to and submitted with a completed **GENERAL ACCOUNTING EXPENDITURE (GAX)** form to the Bureau of Purchasing, Payments, & Receipts. Submit the original GAX and

invoice and two photocopies of both documents. The GAX form can be found in “Outlook, Public Folders, All Public Folders, State Approved Forms, Administrative, General Accounting Expenditure”.

The GAX will be processed and a state warrant will be mailed to the office of certificate request. A copy of the GAX will be included when the warrant is mailed so be sure to include specific instructions for delivery of the certificate in the “description field” of the voucher.

- Social Security card-easy to get and is free by taking documentation to the local Social Security office. For more information, check out [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)
- Photo ID, Driver’s Permit or License-Iowa DOT follows their rules very strictly. A youth must have their birth certificate, social security card, and permission form signed by their parent or whoever the legal guardian is. Foster parents cannot be the legal signature, unless a court order allows.
- School ID-Another good source of identification. Some youth may have missed the opportunity to get one. When this happens, it’s good practice to have them obtain a State of Iowa photo ID at the DOT.
- Diploma or GED-is a must for youth aging out of foster care and should be encouraged
- Immunization Card-can usually be found in the youth’s cumulative folder at school, at last known doctor, or possibly at Iowa Public Health
- Library Card-is free and easy to get, very useful and another form of identification
- Selective Service System registration (males) can register at the Post Office or on line at [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov) anytime after they turn 17 years old and it must be done 30 days after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- INS Documentation (Green Card, Naturalization, and Citizenship)

## Alphabetical Listing of Transition Resources

\* **ACLSA Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment** & resources online at [www.caseylifeskills.org](http://www.caseylifeskills.org). The [Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment](http://www.caseylifeskills.org) is a free evaluation of youth life skills. The assessment is completed online and scored automatically. Supplemental assessments are available for: Parenting of Infants or Young Children, Pregnancy, American Indian, Homeless, GLBYQ, and Values. There are additional Education Supplements as well. This site also provides resources to help prepare youths for living on their own.

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**Motor Vehicle Information Center:** handles questions on driver's license, vehicle registration, handicap parking permits, and truck driving information in Des Moines, 1-800-532-1121 or <http://www.idph.state.ia.us>.

**\* Documents**

Birth Certificate-Every youth age 16 or older should have access to their certified birth certificate. . In Iowa go to <http://www.idph.state.ia.us> for general application process. This is difficult to obtain if the person requesting is not the parent/guardian. DHS may request one certificate for "department use only" at no charge. Youth in care often need their own certified copy (i.e. driver's permit), and we cannot release our DHS copy. In those instances, the department must pay for the certificate. When this situation occurs, please send the Application for a Search of an Iowa Vital Record form and note the cost codes (fund, agency, org and object code) to be used for payment on a sheet of paper to:

**Tetyana Quinn  
DHS Central Office  
Purchasing, Payments & Receipts**

To pay for an out of state Birth Certificate: When prepayment is required, please obtain a letter or invoice from the office where the certificate request has been made. The letter/invoice must include:

- The cost of the certificate and
- A statement that prepayment is required.
- The federal tax identification of the vendor from whom we are requesting the certificate.

When this invoice/letter has been received, the original should be attached to and submitted with a completed **GENERAL ACCOUNTING EXPENDITURE** (GAX) form to the Bureau of Purchasing, Payments, & Receipts. Submit the original GAX and invoice and two photocopies of both documents. The GAX form can be found in "Outlook, Public Folders, All Public Folders, State Approved Forms, Administrative, General Accounting Expenditure".

The GAX will be processed and a state warrant will be mailed to the office of certificate request. A copy of the GAX will be included when the warrant is mailed so be sure to include specific instructions for delivery of the certificate in the "description field" of the voucher.

- Social Security card-easy to get and is free by taking documentation to the local Social Security office. For more information, check out [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)
- Photo ID, Driver's Permit or License-Iowa DOT follows their rules very strictly. A youth must have their birth certificate, social security card, and permission form

signed by their parent or whoever the legal guardian is. Foster parents cannot be the legal signature, unless a court order allows.

- School ID-Another good source of identification. Some youth may have missed the opportunity to get one. When this happens, it's good practice to have them obtain a State of Iowa photo ID at the DOT.
- Diploma or GED-is a must for youth aging out of foster care and should be encouraged
- Immunization Card-can usually be found in the youth's cumulative folder at school, at last known doctor, or possibly at Iowa Public Health
- Library Card-is free and easy to get, very useful and another form of identification
- Selective Service System registration (males) can register at the Post Office or on line at [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov) anytime after they turn 17 years old and it must be done 30 days after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- INS Documentation (Green Card, Naturalization, and Citizenship)

**Domestic Violence Services:** Provide telephone counseling and other support, which may include a shelter for women and their children if they have been physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, 1-800-942-0333.

**Elevate** -information on what it is and how to find a local Chapter near you is found at [www.elevate2inspire.com](http://www.elevate2inspire.com). *Elevate* is a group of current and former foster/adoptive youth who seek to inspire others to new levels of understanding & compassion to the life connection needs of foster care & adoptive teens by sharing their personal stories of hope. Tammy Mahan at Children & Families of Iowa, 1111 University Avenue, Des Moines IA 50314, and phone 515-288-1981 ext 303 is the contact person. *Elevate* has already changed how DHS cares for youth including laws in Iowa with PAL, MIYA and the latest Sibling Bill.

#### **Financial Aid for Educational Expenses:**

- **ACT**-If youth can't afford the registration fee for the ACT or ACT Plus Writing, they may be eligible for a fee waiver. To be eligible, youth must meet all three of the following requirements: 1) currently attend high school as a junior or senior. 2) meet at least one indicator of economic need (information about these indicators and how to request fee waiver forms is in the high school counseling office). 3) register only once with an ACT fee waiver. Fee waivers cover *only* the basic registration fee for either the ACT (No Writing) or the ACT Plus Writing, including up to *four* valid college choices (listed at the time of registration). Waivers do not cover test date changes, test center changes, or any other fees. ACT testing can also be funded via enrollment in area Education Talent Search programs.
- **College Planning Center** is a state-wide resource for any youth living in Iowa. This resource is especially helpful to youth in out-of-home care. They assist career exploration, financial aid paperwork, and over post-secondary education planning. They have a website at [www.icansucceed.org](http://www.icansucceed.org), or they can be contacted by calling:

**West Des Moines:**

160 S. 68th Street, Suite 1101  
West Des Moines, IA 50266

**Cedar Rapids:**

1100 Blairs Ferry Road N.E., Suite 104  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

- **FAFSA-Free Application for Federal Student Aid**-Complete the FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible of the youth's senior year. The FAFSA forms are available at all high school guidance offices, and are also found on-line at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Youth in foster care can check "yes" to ward of the court question. This information is important as it alerts financial aid officials to look at only the youth's income and assets when determining the award amount. No parental or foster parent financial information is necessary due to you being considered independent. If the financial aid processor requests additional information to process your application, submit it promptly. A copy of the court order may be required.
- **ETV-Education & Training Voucher** for post-secondary education-application at [www.iowacollegeaid.org](http://www.iowacollegeaid.org). The ETV grant is part of the Chafee federally funded program that provides college scholarships to youth who have aged out of foster care. The ETV program is funneled through the Iowa Department of Human Services and administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission. Eligibility includes: Youth must have a high school diploma or a GED. Youth must EITHER: Age out of care (remained in court ordered out-of-home placement to within 30 days of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or later), or be adopted from foster care after the age of 16. Youth must be under the age of 21 the first time they apply for ETV. Funding can continue until the age of 23. **Students graduating from the State Training School and Iowa Juvenile Home do not meet the definition of 'foster care' and are not considered eligible for ETV funds.** The maximum annual ETV award is \$5,000. The grant may be renewable, up to a bachelor's degree. Students must reapply each year and are required to meet the academic progress standards of the college/university or make satisfactory progress towards completion of the training program to renew this grant. The ETV grant may assist with expenses associated with attending an approved education or training program. This includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, day care, transportation, and housing costs.
- **All Iowa Opportunities Foster Care Grant** for post-secondary application as [www.iowacollegeaid.org](http://www.iowacollegeaid.org). This is BRAND NEW in 2007. **Youth who age out from the State Training School and Iowa Juvenile Home are eligible for these educational funds.** As of July 31, the rules were still process and were not definitive.
- **OFA-Orphan Foundation of America Scholarship** can be found at [www.orphan.org](http://www.orphan.org). 2008-2009 applications will be available between January 1 and March 31, 2008. Applicants must: 1) Have been in foster care for one consecutive year at the time of their 18th birthday or high school graduation OR

Have been adopted or taken into legal guardianship out of foster care after their 16th birthday OR Have lost both parents to death before the age of 18 and not been subsequently adopted. In this instance, copies of the death certificates must be provided. 2) Be accepted into or enrolled in an accredited post-secondary program (university, college, community college or vocational/technical institute). 3) Be under the age of 25 on March 31, 2008.

- **Horatio Alger Scholarship** can be found at [www.horatioalger.com](http://www.horatioalger.com). The Horatio Alger Association seeks to assist students who have: demonstrated integrity and perseverance in overcoming adversity, strength of character, financial need, a good academic record, commitment to pursue a college education; and a desire to contribute to society. The eligibility criteria to be considered for National Scholarships, National Scholarship Finalist Awards, and Horatio Alger State Scholarship Programs are as follows: 1) enrollment full time as a high school senior, progressing normally toward graduation in the Spring/Summer 2007, with plans to enter college no later than the fall following graduation; 2) a strong commitment to pursuing a bachelor's degree at an accredited institution (students may start their studies at a two-year institution and then transfer to a four-year institution. 3) critical financial need (\$50,000 or less adjusted gross income per family is preferred, if higher explanation must be provided); 4) involvement in co-curricular and community activities; 5) demonstrated integrity and perseverance in overcoming adversity 6) a minimum GPA of 2.0; and 7) United States citizenship or permanent resident. Applicants must reside in the United States.
- **National Foster Parent Association- Benjamin Eaton Scholarship.** Foster parents must belong to the National Association. Applications are due the end of March each year. Information is available at [www.nfpainc.org](http://www.nfpainc.org). A completed application form must be submitted in senior year.
  - A minimum of two (2) letters of recommendation from: foster parent(s), social worker(s), residential center, principal/teacher/guidance counselor, employer, etc. will be required with each application.
  - A typewritten statement in 300-500 words on "Why I want to further my education and why I should be..."

**Food Assistance Program**, young adults can apply by calling 1-877-937-3663 when they exit foster care to see if they qualify for the EBT, which is like a debit card & is reloaded monthly.

**HUD** Section 8 low-income housing-apply when turn 18 years old. The Family Unity Program can provide former foster youth ages 18 to 21 with Section 8 rental assistance. It's not necessary for them to be parenting. Contact your local Public Housing Authority for more information and to get on the waiting list.

**IASN-Iowa Aftercare Services Network** information-online at [www.ypii.org](http://www.ypii.org). Iowa Aftercare Services Network started its fourth year of providing services to youth who have aged out of Iowa's foster care system. Over 500 individual youth have participated in the program since April 2002. Iowa Aftercare Services is for all former foster youth who have the goal and ability to achieve self-sufficiency. The program is available state-wide in Iowa. The 24 hour contact number is run through Iowa Extension (Teen Hotline) and they can give a direct number to the Iowa Aftercare Service Network agency that will serve the youth in the county the youth resides. That number is **1-800-443-8336**. Eligibility for IASN includes:

- No longer in a foster care placement
- Exited foster care between ages 17 ½ and 18 and was in care for at least 6 months at the time of exit, or left care at age 18 or older
- Includes court-ordered relative and suitable person placement
- At least 18 years old, but less than 21 years old
- Resident of Iowa
- Actively participate in the development and execution of a self-sufficiency plan
- Services are voluntary

**\* PAL-Preparation for Adult Living**-(monthly stipend)

- Effective July 1, 2006 for youth that age out after May 1, 2006
- Participation in IASN (aftercare) is required
- Exhausted eligibility for all voluntary foster care
- Left state-paid foster care on or after 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and have been in foster care for at least 6 of the previous 12 months
- Attend college, job training, or work full-time (at least 25 hours per week)
- Live in an approved living arrangement other than the parental home
- Pre-PAL services are available for up to 10 hours prior to DHS case closure for those youth most likely to be eligible for PAL. This does not take the place of required transition planning

**Iowa Friends of Foster Children Foundation** (for youth in foster family care only) application is available at [www.ifapa.org](http://www.ifapa.org). The *Iowa Friends of Foster Children Foundation* is a nonprofit, which was established in 1991 to provide funds for items that benefit foster children, but are not covered by the state's foster care or medical programs. The Friends Foundation was started by and continues to be run by volunteers. It has no paid staff, so all funds received go directly towards the foster children grants. A grant committee, made up of Friends Foundation Board members, reviews applications. There is a limit of \$200.00 per child, per year. If only half of the 4,000 foster children in Iowa were awarded a full grant, it would cost \$400,000. On an average year, the foundation has been able to offer assistance to 208 children. Every item or opportunity that is granted is meant for the youth, and must be taken by the youth when they leave their placement. Requests that qualify for grant dollars include items such as senior pictures, class rings, summer camp, etc. The amount of the request needs to be detailed and itemized including vendor information. To be considered for a Friends Foundation grant, please complete the application on the

IFAPA website. Note: Grant applications are reviewed once a month. Please allow time for the grant to be reviewed when considering the date for your grant request. The Board of Directors will notify you in writing of the decision. Decisions will be made on an individual basis. If you have questions concerning an application, please contact Phyllis at 800-277-8145, Ext 165

**Iowa Legal Aid:** Provides free civil legal services related to family law, child support, consumer law, landlord/tenant issues, and custody. This is a statewide service on the web at [www.iowalegalaid.org](http://www.iowalegalaid.org) or 1-800-332-0419.

**Iowa Workforce Development Center:** Has listings of statewide job openings, unemployment services, employment services, resume services, and testing available. There are no charges to employers or people seeking employment. Located throughout the state and also found at [www.iowaworkforce.org](http://www.iowaworkforce.org) or at 1-800-562-4692. Some have programs that specialize in working with youth that have mild disabilities.

**IVRS-Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services:** Mission is to work for and with individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment, independence, and economic goals. Economic independence and exploring better jobs are how they assist Iowans with disabilities. Voc Rehab can be found at [www.ivrs.iowa.gov](http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov). Referrals may be made to this agency to assist youth with special needs in receiving career assessment and training. If a youth is in Special Education or diagnosed with a disability, consider making a referral during their junior year of high school.

**IYCC-Iowa Youth Connection Council** booklet for teens called “Now I Know...Youth Putting Together the Pieces. The IYCC is no longer active but did create this helpful booklet that explains foster care from a youth’s perspective.

**Job Corps:** This is the nation’s largest and most comprehensive Federal residential, education, and job training program for at-risk youth between the ages of 16 and 24. They offer a variety of training programs at over 110 centers. Youth must be from a home that is considered low income and be able to benefit from and complete the training. A single parent program is also available. The Job Corp Center in Iowa is located in Denison center. For more information, call 712 263-4192 or 1-800-733-5627, or check out their website at <http://jobcorps.dol.gov/>

**\* MAXIMUS:**

SSI advocacy project is being handled through MAXIMUS in Des Moines. MAXIMUS determines medical eligibility for youth in foster care for the State of Iowa and acts as the liaison between DHS and Social Security Administration and Department of Disability Services. For youth transitioning out of care, MAXIMUS will notify staff when foster care youth on their caseload approach the age of 17+ and are potentially eligible, but not yet receiving SSI.

If the child's cost of care and IVE eligibility appears to be an impediment to a positive SSI determination, MAXIMUS will call IVE-IM staff to arrange for IVE to be "switched off" for the month of application, so as to secure SSI eligibility that will benefit the child who ages out of care.

Any child who appears to meet criteria on the SSI Desk Guide and not currently receiving SSI should be referred for a disability determination, regardless of other income as this can provide a more seamless transition when the age out of care. Initial Referral form 470-3361 can be found in Outlook/State Approved Forms or in Employees Manual 18-Appendix. MAXIMUS can be reached at E-mail address [iowassi@maximus.com](mailto:iowassi@maximus.com) and Fax 515-284-8854.

\* **Medicaid** Title19 continuation through MIYA-Medicaid for Independent Young Adults. Youth aging out of foster care will likely remain eligible for medical coverage under one of several Medicaid programs. It is very important that the DHS worker informs the IVE worker of the youth's address and income information when they close the case in FACS. This allows the IVE worker to ensure that medical coverage continues after the case closes. The social worker needs to complete and submit the IVE Change form 470-3918. MIYA eligibility:

- Effective July 1, 2006 for youth that age out after May 1, 2006
- No longer in an Iowa paid foster care placement
- Left State paid foster care on or after 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
- Countable income is under 200% Federal Poverty Level
- Resident of Iowa
- U.S. citizen or a qualified alien
- Participation in Aftercare/PAL not required

**Permanency Partnership Pact** at [www.fosterclub.com/pdfs/PermPact.pdf](http://www.fosterclub.com/pdfs/PermPact.pdf). A PPP is a pledge by a supportive adult to provide specific supports to a young person in foster care with a goal of establishing a lifelong, kin-like relationship. 45 suggested supports are listed, and it is a great tool to get youth thinking about whom they could call when they need help in each of those different areas.

**Resource Matrix** of community services, by county, was developed by the eight DHS Transition Planning Specialists. Resources include Employment, Housing, Education, Medical, Food, Transportation, & Misc.

**Social Security Administration:** Youth with disabilities may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Even if the youth is currently SSI eligible, they will have eligibility re-determined for adult SSI. When a youth leaves foster care, a request for a change of payee must be made to change the benefactor of the funds from the State of Iowa to the youth or another designated payee. Refer potentially eligible youth in foster care to Maximus who will assist with the application process. All others can apply at their local Social Security Administration office, call 1-800-772-1813 or checkout their website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

**Student Financial Aid Offices:** (located at each college or university) Provides advice, references, and forms for student loans, grants, or work-study arrangements. Also, contact the high school guidance counselor where the student is attending to get the FAFSA-Free Application for Federal Student Aid forms and other information regarding college financial aid. Youth will have to show proof of foster care status for financial aid purposes by getting a certified copy of a Court order stating care and custody with DHS or contact a TPS for assistance.

\* **TIP-Transition Information Packet** (3 ring binder/spiral bound) with resource pages is for youth in foster care placement. TIP is organized into ten sections: Documents, Education, Employment, Money Management, Housing, Home Management, Health, Transportation, Resources, and Misc. Specific storage areas are located at the end of each section to help youth keep copies of important documents such as Driver's License, photo ID, Social Security card, birth certificate, immunization record, insurance, and many other personal records.

\* **TPS-Transition Planning Specialist** is available to DHS workers as they assist youth in transition from foster care to adulthood. TPS's are available to ensure continued connections to resources up to age 21 years old, per Federal law. There are 8 TPS's around the state. The counties they cover do not coordinate with Judicial Districts or Service Delivery Areas but work is evenly distributed.

**Transitional Living Programs (TLP):** These programs are funded by federal government grants to provide housing and services to homeless youth between the ages of 16 and 21. They are structured to help homeless youth achieve self-sufficiency. These are the current programs in Iowa: Foundation 2 in Cedar Rapids, UAY in Iowa City, House of Mercy in Des Moines and Youth & Shelter Services in Ames.

\* **Transition Planning Staffing or Meeting** is done differently in each SDA-Service Delivery Area by the assigned TPS-Transition Planning Specialist. The Social Worker coordinates a meeting via Family Team Meeting, IEP meeting, or directly with the youth and involved parties. The meeting can include parents, foster care providers, any supportive person, school personnel, AEA staff, County CPC, MHDD adult provider, IVRS, WIA, GAL, etc. The purpose of the staffing/meeting is to review the transition plan found in Section C of the Case Perm Plan. Discussion covers life skills, education, health, employment, housing, important documents, and a support system for after the youth is out of foster care. This is an opportunity to discuss IASN Iowa Aftercare Services Network and PAL Preparation for adult living as well as MIYA—Medicaid for Young Adults.

**TRIO Programs:** Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, and Educational Opportunity Center are federally funded programs designed to encourage students to seek higher education. Services may include career exploration, choosing a college, financial aid, and support to increase success in college. Your local college should be able to give you the contact person for the TRIO program in your area.

**Welfare to Work:** Provides career assessment, employment opportunities that include work experience and on-the-job training, and a variety of support services including emergency housing, child care, transportation, and clothing assistance. Youth ages 18 to 24 that have aged out of foster care are eligible and may be referred to this program prior to turning 18.

**WIA-Workforce Investment Act** services, formerly JTPA, is for youth ages 14-21 years old. Information is found at the following web site [www.iowaworkforce.org/region14/youth.htm](http://www.iowaworkforce.org/region14/youth.htm). Federal legislation specifies foster care placement as an eligibility factor. Provides career guidance and counseling, basic and occupational skills training, work experience, mentoring, and leadership development activities for youth.