

YOUTH IMPACT

A LEARNS Resource

VOLUME 1

SUPPORTING POSITIVE YOUTH OUTCOMES



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LEARNS provides training and technical assistance to Corporation-funded programs serving youth. LEARNS is a partnership of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory and the Bank Street College of Education. Call or e-mail to find out how we can help you:

- Locate resources
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- Brainstorm solutions
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Without a Net: Helping Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

Tony was only seven when it happened, but 10 years later it still haunts his dreams. He has had the same nightmare three times this week. In the dream it happens much as he remembers it. In the middle of the night he can hear his father's angry voice in the other room. His father is often angry, and Tony rarely knows why. He listens to his father's voice get louder, the words harsher. Suddenly, his father bursts into the room and drags him and his younger brother out of their beds. Then they are in a car, speeding toward their Uncle Rocky's house. Once they are inside, everything becomes a blur. There is blood on the couch and all over the living room floor and his father is screaming at his uncle, and again Tony does not know why. His brother starts screaming, too, and Tony wants to tell him it will be alright but his lips won't form the words.

Tony bolts upright in bed, covered in sweat, his heart pounding. Again, he thinks, again. The rest of the night he lies awake, wondering if any of his roommates are also awake, staring at the ceiling in the darkness,

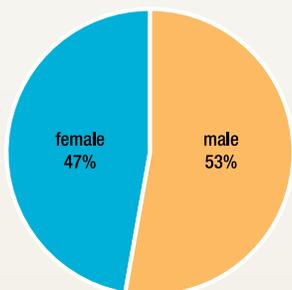
There had been incidents before, but that night at his Uncle Rocky's was the beginning of the roller coaster ride... Not long after the incident, the police removed Tony and his brother from their home. Eventually, they were also separated from each other. In the 10 years since, Tony has lived in three foster homes and four group homes. He has attended eight different schools. And he has had some version of this nightmare hundreds of times. He's about to turn 18, and the future scares him almost as much as the past.

Turning 18 is a thrilling time for most youth. With the assistance and support of family and friends, many will graduate from high school and head to college or into new careers. Most have high hopes for the future. But for youth like Tony, the reality is different.

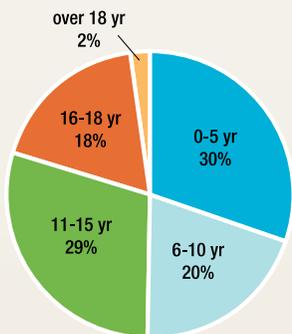
Imagine how difficult it might have been to graduate from high school if you had changed schools as many times as Tony. Imagine how hard it might have been to trust an adult if you had been moved from one foster home to another. Now you're 18 and considered an adult under the law. You're expected to find a job and a place to live. You have no loving family to fall back on for emotional and financial support. The support system you did have is suddenly pulled out from under you. Would you be scared? Where would you find the support and guidance you needed to make the right life decisions?

Who are youth in foster care?

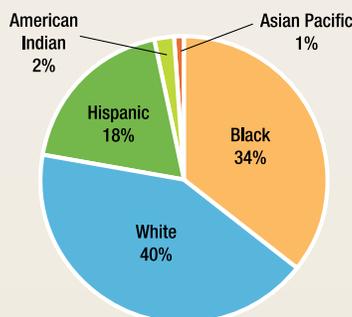
The following is a snapshot of the 518,000 children who were in foster care in 2004, according to the Child Welfare League of America's National Data Analysis System:



Gender



Age



Race

This is the reality for the thousands of youth that “age out” of foster care every year. For these kids, what should be a time of great hope and excitement is more often filled with anxiety, self-doubt, and despair.

What are the unique needs of these youth, such as Tony, who are aging out of the foster care system? And what can we do to help? This edition of *Youth Impact* provides more information about these young people and offers appropriate and effective strategies that can help you and your volunteers make a difference in their lives.

Who Are the Youth Aging Out of Foster Care?

Tony's experience of abuse and neglect, trauma, separation from family members, and numerous moves and school changes is commonplace for the thousands of children who enter foster care each day in this country. According to the Child Welfare League of America's National Data Analysis System (NDAS), there are approximately 500,000 children in the United States who are in foster care each year, mostly as the result of abuse and neglect. Of those half million children, 20,000–25,000 age out of the system each year, many with little or no family or economic support.¹

What Happens to Youth Who Age Out of Foster Care?

We can only imagine what life will be like for Tony once he turns 18 and is expected to survive on his own with no family involvement and few supports or role models. Many studies of foster youth who age out have shown that they face an uphill battle to become successful adults. These studies indicate that only 54 percent of youth who age out of foster care earn high school diplomas (see table), compared to an average rate of 70 percent for all youth. Far fewer foster youth attend college than their non-foster youth peers (approximately 20 percent compared to nearly 60 percent in the general population), and a mere 2 percent earn a BA or higher. These young adults also struggle with homelessness (25 percent), lack of health insurance (30 percent), and unemployment (51 percent). Youth like Tony, who come from congregate living situations, also known as “group homes” (for definitions of these and other terms, see the glossary on page 13-14), are at the greatest risk. According to Mark Courtney, writing in *Network on Transitions to Adulthood Policy Brief*, “Youth in these settings are least likely to form lasting relationships with responsible adults that will help them move toward independence; given that [group homes] are typically staffed by young shift workers with high turnover” (Courtney, 2005).

¹ National Data Analysis System from <http://ndas.cwla.org>

While 18 years is the legal age of “adulthood,” many young people choose to live with their parents or a family member well into their twenties. Even if they are able to live more independently, many young adults go home for the

| Outcomes of foster care alumni according to the Child Welfare League of America (Sept. 2004) ² | |
|---|-----|
| Earned a high school diploma | 54% |
| Obtained BA or higher | 2% |
| Were unemployed | 51% |
| Had no health insurance (unable to obtain health care because they lacked health insurance or sufficient money) | 30% |
| Had been homeless | 25% |
| Receiving public assistance | 30% |

holidays, live at home during the summer, borrow money, rely on parents to help pay for college, and frequently call home for advice. Approximately 95 percent of typical American youth are at least 25 years old before living totally independently, and only 10 percent of 18-year-olds live on their own.³

Youth aging out of foster care don’t have as many options. What Tony’s story did not mention is that he’s only months away from finishing high school. While children in stable homes will typically stay with their families until graduation and often beyond, at age 18, Tony must find his own housing and means of support. As a result, finishing high school—for him and many like him—is often not a high priority.

So what happens to these young adults? The most important positive influences on a young adult’s life are strong adult relationships and role models, as well as the support systems and resources available to them in places of worship, schools, and youth groups. These influences are often not available to kids who age out of foster care.

According to the Pew Charitable Trust’s “Time for Reform: Aging Out and on Their Own” (May 2007), children who remain in foster care until they age out are in the system for an average of five years and leave without ever having a permanent placement. Thirty-three percent of foster care alumni deal with alcohol and drug abuse and with mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder and depression. Pair these issues with a lack of positive and consistent adult influences or other external supports, and the challenges facing these young adults become starkly apparent.



Types of Foster Care Placements

There are a number of different types of foster care settings in which a child may be placed, depending upon individual needs.

- **Standard foster care:** In this placement—the most common—a youth is placed with a family or organization that has undergone a training and application process and is licensed by the state to provide a temporary home for children in foster care or to operate a group home.
- **Therapeutic or specialized care** is a foster-care or pre-adoptive placement for youth who need a higher level of care due to mental illness, developmental delays, or disabilities. These placements may be in individual foster homes or group homes.
- **Kinship care** is a temporary placement with a relative other than a birth parent.
- **Respite care** is temporary relief or assistance for foster-care or pre-adoptive youth needing time to rest and restore or who are in crisis.
- **Adoption** is placement of a youth with a family who has completed an adoption application and home-study process. This is a permanent placement.

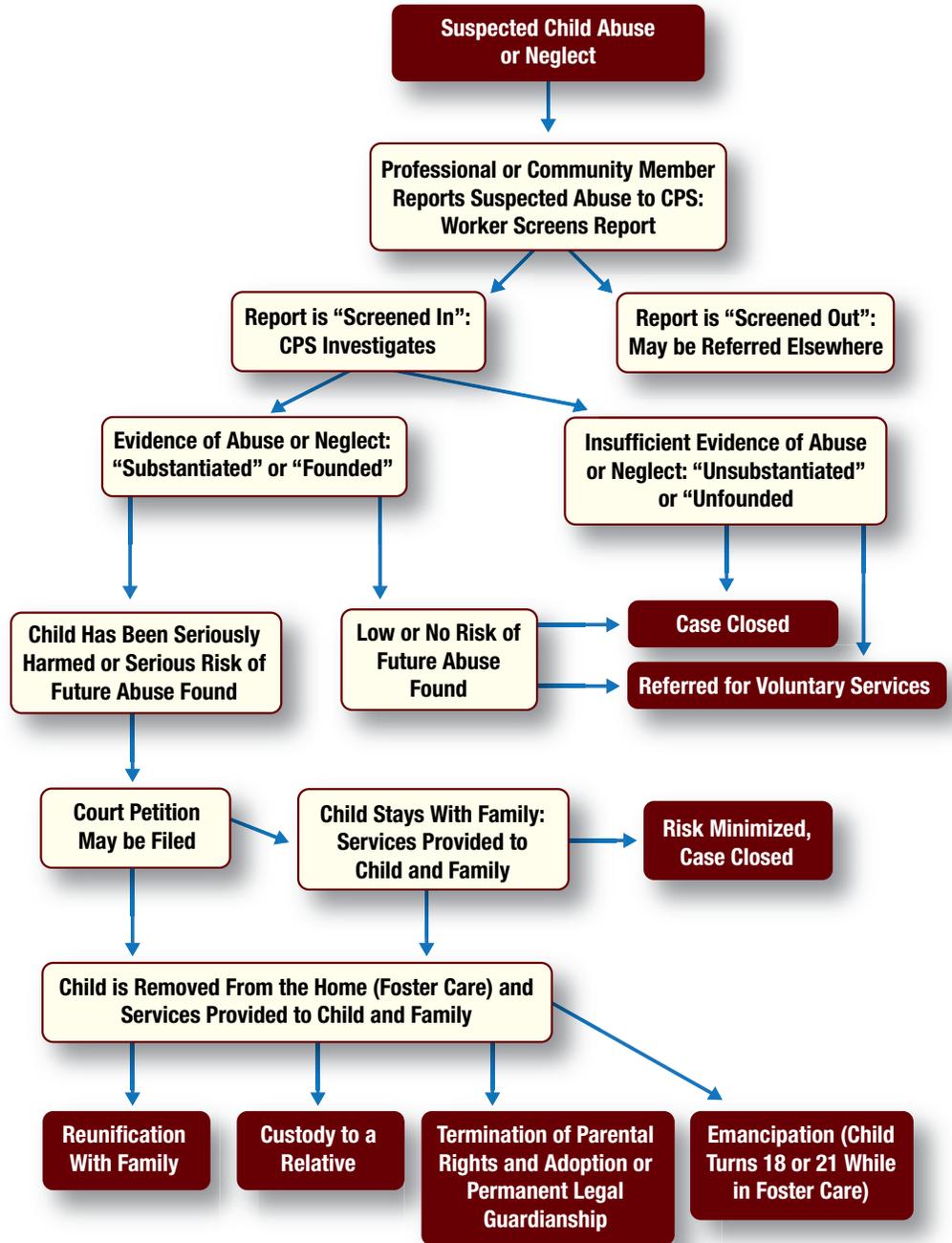
² Child Welfare League of America. (n.d.). *Quick facts about foster care*. Arlington, VA: Author. Retrieved May 19, 2008, from www.cwla.org/programs/fostercare/factsheet.htm

³ National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth, Institute for Educational Leadership. (n.d.) *Negotiating the curves toward employment: A guide about youth involved in the foster care system*. Retrieved June 2, 2008, from http://www.ncwd-youth.info/assets/guides/foster_care/Foster_Care_Guide_complete.pdf

A Roadmap to the Foster Care System

“Part of being independent is surrounding yourself with a supportive web of people who can help you when you’re in trouble.”

—Ja’nelle E.



The graphic above illustrates a typical journey through the foster care system. Every young person’s individual experience is unique.

What Is Being Done To Help Youth Aging Out of Foster Care Lead Happy, Productive Lives?

The basic needs of foster youth aging out of the system are similar to those of typical youth. Like all young adults, they need a safe place to live, employment, educational opportunities, food and clothing, health care, and opportunities that will help them lead meaningful lives. Because of the issues described above, foster care alumni face many obstacles to becoming self-sufficient adults, and little support to overcome those obstacles.

Recognizing the challenges youth face as they leave foster care, in 1999 Congress passed the Foster Care Independent Living Act and funded the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). The Act and the CFCIP were created to provide additional grant funding to states and territories for the purpose of addressing issues of self-sufficiency with youth aging out of foster care.

All states and territories currently receive CFCIP funding. Each has an independent living program director or state coordinator. Based on specific criteria outlined by CFCIP, each state also individually creates its own services and programs and decides who is eligible. Therefore, no two states' services look exactly the same. For example, some states start working with youth as young as 13 and continue to provide services up to age 25. Most states serve youth between the ages of 14 and 17 who are currently in foster care and will remain in foster care until age 18. Some also serve youth who are 18 to 21 years old and have aged out of the system but still need some assistance to become self-sufficient.

Though different in specific practices, all state CFCIP programs address similar program areas and strive to reach the same outcomes. All states are required to submit written individual transitional living plans that are specific to the needs of youth receiving services. Common service areas addressed include budgeting and financial literacy, vocational training and/or higher education, job development, housing, daily living skills, health education, and mentoring. Also available through the CFCIP is the Educational Training Voucher (ETV), which offers up to \$5,000 per year to help pay for college or vocational school. Although the passage of this act has created many more opportunities for young people in foster care, there is still a lot to be done. (For state CFCIP program specifics including contact information, visit www.nrcys.ou.edu/yd/state_pages.html.)

How Can National Service Programs Help?

National service programs already serve foster youth through a variety of programs, including mentoring, homework help, life-skills acquisition, and others. Thanks to the Corporation for National and Community Service's strategic initiatives focusing on youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, many more organizations are seeking to engage this population.

“Living on your own is serious. If you're not prepared for it, going out on your own can cause more harm than good.”

—Tanya S.

“Succeeding after care comes down to what you do at night when you’re all alone and lonely or when you’re depressed, and how you deal with that.”

—Gessy N.

Youth aging out of foster care have many needs that cross over a number of service delivery areas, such as housing, mental health, employment, and education. That crossover creates many opportunities for national service programs to get involved. However, because most states have already developed programs and services to assist these youth, it’s important to know what is already in place in your state and local community. National service program directors or coordinators can start by contacting the state or county entity in charge of foster care independent living programs to gather information, such as:

- Who is providing services to youth aging out of foster care in your state and local area?
- What kinds of specific services are provided and for how long?
- How successful are the programs that are currently being provided?
- What needs are not being met due to limited capacity?
- Are national service volunteers or other types of volunteers currently being utilized in this work, and if so, how?

As you speak with these entities, tell them about the activities your own program is currently involved with, and share information with them about the opportunities and benefits of national service programs. You might also:

- Find out how familiar they are with AmeriCorps/AmeriCorps*VISTA/Senior Corps. (Bring marketing material and be prepared to do some educating about your program, as some contacts will be more informed than others.)
- Offer examples of how other national service projects are partnering or providing services to youth in transition
- Discuss how national service volunteers could provide assistance to them
- Find out who is working with foster youth in transition in your local area so that you can discuss local needs and possible partnerships

Such conversations can lead to new partnerships with state or local entities. Those partnerships help national service programs identify how their current mix of services can be expanded to meet the specific needs of youth aging out of foster care.

How Can National Service Members Engage Youth Who Are Aging Out?

There are a number of ways that national service members and volunteers can help guide youth aging out of foster care to self-sufficiency. These might range from setting up a life-skills training program to mentoring a child in foster care. According to Jeff DeMario at Vita Nova of Renaissance Village, “While there are programs already out there trying to address these issues, this is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. What works for one child may not work for

another, so there is always room for a variety of programs and new ideas.” The following examples illustrate some of the ways national service programs are currently involved with these youth:

- Ellie Morfenski is a VISTA member serving at Child to Family Connections (CFC) in Meadville, Pennsylvania, where she is developing a transitional program for youth in foster care who are getting ready to age out. Ellie has set up an after-school program to teach independent living skills at the high school and has recruited numerous community volunteers as instructors.
- Carol Childers oversees the Foster Grandparent program through Volunteer Services at the California State University, Chico Research Foundation. While her Foster Grandparents don't focus exclusively on children in foster care, many of the youth served are in the system. In addition to one-on-one mentoring, youth have access to group activities that strive to boost self-esteem, promote problem solving, and improve social skills. Many of the Foster Grandparents have been matched with the same children since the program's start eight years ago, making them a stable adult presence throughout these important years of transition. The program reports a significant increase in school attendance and a decrease in behavioral problems in the classroom.
- Jan Lecture runs Youth.com in rural Colville, Washington. Youth.com serves youth ages 12 to 18 who are runaways, homeless, or have other risk factors. The program works through local schools to provide counseling, mentoring, and recreational opportunities. VISTA members perform a variety of capacity-building tasks related to fund raising, community outreach, and development. According to Lecture, the VISTAs have been invaluable, as the systems they created will continue well beyond their service.
- Jeff DeMario works for Vita Nova of Renaissance Village, located in Palm Beach County, Florida. Vita Nova serves youth 18 to 25 years old who have exited the foster care program. The youth live in apartments and go to school and work with the support of team members who provide moral support and advocacy and teach independent-living skills. DeMario has had the assistance of numerous VISTA members in a variety of positions throughout the years; they have helped develop new programs, coordinated teams of volunteers, and served as mentors to youth in the program.



Whether you are an AmeriCorps*VISTA member building the capacity of your organization to serve youth aging out more effectively; a Foster Grandparent Program coordinator matching volunteers with young people; an RSVP director looking to partner with stations that serve youth aging out; or an AmeriCorps program director whose members serve youth directly, there are a number of ways you and your members and volunteers can help:

Capacity building

- Creating a database of local employees who can engage youth in job shadows
- Mobilizing local resources and fund raising
- Building technology infrastructure, such as database and Web site design
- Developing program curriculum
- Mapping community assets
- Coordinating marketing and media campaigns
- Collecting data on the number of youth in transition accessing homeless shelters

Connecting youth to services

- Serving as bridges to link youth with other services and resources in the community
- Connecting youth with service programs, internships, or career development opportunities
- Helping youth identify local youth groups or clubs, such as recreational activities (team sports, gyms), book clubs, and others
- Acting as advocates for youth, which can include helping youth learn about and take advantage of housing credits, tuition vouchers, monthly stipends, and other federal and state resources that may be available to them
- Helping youth apply to colleges or vocational schools, which might include visiting local campuses together, helping youth conduct research on schools online, and helping them fill out applications and access financial aid
- Helping youth find apartments, open checking accounts, look for jobs, and hone their job interviewing skills
- Assisting youth in becoming AmeriCorps*State or National, AmeriCorps*NCCC, or AmeriCorps*VISTA members

Mentoring, tutoring, and other direct services

- Assisting with homework or school projects
- Helping youth prepare for and acquire a GED
- Teaching—or finding volunteers to teach—life skills such as budgeting, paying bills, cooking, and doing laundry
- Being a mentor, whether formally through a mentoring program or as an informal confidante that youth feel safe talking to and working through their problems with
- Partnering with and mentoring through other national service project sites

- Partnering with youth or staff to help maintain group homes (for example, painting, lawn care, yard care/gardening, and carpentry)

Special Considerations for Mentoring Foster Youth and Youth Aging Out

Many national service programs include mentoring in the services they provide to youth aging out of foster care. Mentors can help these youth by developing positive relationships that extend beyond the foster care experience and offering guidance and support as youth make the transition into independent living. Mentoring may be even more effective for younger children in the foster care system, helping them build assets that will lay the groundwork for success when the transition to independence comes.

Most mentoring programs serve youth who have emotional, developmental, or educational needs. However, the unique needs of foster care youth—and their placement in the foster care system itself—lead to some special considerations:

- **Consistency is essential**—Foster youth have likely been hurt by some past relationships with adults. This history, combined with the frequent movement of adults in and out of their lives, may leave them hesitant to form close relationships. If mentors are to be a constant, caring support for the youth, they must commit to regular meetings and be dependable.
- **Mentors need the right skills and temperament**—This is true of all mentors, but it is especially so when mentoring foster youth. Mentors must be patient, flexible, and resilient, as they may encounter challenges while forming relationships with youth and while working with other services youth are receiving.
- **Delivering services can be challenging**—The unfortunate reality is that foster youth and youth aging out are highly transitory. They may move frequently from placement to placement, which can make meeting difficult and can challenge support and monitoring systems. The ability to plan around uncertainty is essential.
- **Mentoring should connect with clinical support**—Mentoring is most effective when carried out in conjunction with other services (Jekielek, Moore, & Hair, 2002; Kuperminc et al., 2005). Because foster youth have unique needs, effective mentoring for them will be part of a coordinated treatment plan, designed by, or in partnership with, a clinician—someone with extensive experience working with foster

“Although I wanted so badly to be independent, I still wanted someone there to fall back on. How would I survive all alone in a strange place? Could I make it as a college student? Would I fail or drop out?”

—Tamecka C.

youth in a professional context. Clinicians can help a program address special needs, share valuable information with mentors that can help the match succeed, provide access to additional resources, and enhance training of volunteers (North & Ingram, 2003).

- **Natural mentors should be cultivated**—Research has shown that the mentoring relationships developed informally through youth’s existing social networks may be more influential than formal models. Programs could support such relationships by providing training and assistance for youth and adults who are identified as potential mentors (Ahrens, Dubois, Richardson, Fan, & Lozana, 2008), or by asking youth to identify potential mentors that are already active in their lives.

Many resources are available to help national service members and volunteers build quality mentoring programs for youth in care or for those aging out. These include guidance on such critical components as volunteer recruitment, screening, and management; mentor training; and relationship development. See the list on page 13 for more information on these resources.

Training Volunteers To Work With Teens and Young Adults

One of the biggest deficits in the lives of youth aging out of foster care is the lack of strong adult relationships. Whether your program provides direct service (e.g., mentoring), or engages in capacity-building activities (e.g., connecting youth to other services or resources), your success will be determined in large part by the ability of staff and volunteers to build trusting relationships with the young people you serve. As you train members and volunteers to work with youth aging out, emphasize developmental approaches like those listed below to help them succeed:

- **Recognize strengths and help build on them.** Find out what’s *right with them*. Understand that for youth in foster care much of their treatment was based on their problems and issues. All human beings have unique strengths and capacities and you are in a rare position as a volunteer to help them identify those strengths and work on goals that make use of their unique gifts.
- **Allow youth to be in the driver’s seat** when it comes to determining what they want to work on and how it will be accomplished. For years, these youth have had people (sometimes teams of people) telling them how their life will be lived. Ask them what they want the end goal to be, then make suggestions or brainstorm with them the number of different ways that goal can be accomplished. Allow them to choose which strategy to employ.

- **Find ways to apply life-skills learning to real and practical activities** that build on their experiences. Often independent living skills are taught in a classroom with little or no input from the students. This strategy works fine for some kids, but not at all for others. Recognize that these youth have experienced and survived a lot in their young lives and may know better than anyone what their needs are. Use this knowledge to help develop a strategy that will work for the individual. For example, if a youth wants to learn about checking accounts, instead of learning about them in the classroom, they may benefit from actually opening an account at the bank and learning how to monitor their account balance. Such an approach accomplishes four things: the youth has interacted with a bank teller, has learned how to open an account, has actually opened a checking account, and has learned how to maintain it. According to Paul Pitcoff, “Students will actively engage when the learning relates to their life experiences. This engagement heightens when the learning supports one of their specific goals” (Krebs & Pitcoff, 2006).
- **Be an equal partner.** Treat youth with the same patience and respect you would a friend. Allow them to make mistakes without judging them. Instead, help them think through their decisions and the resulting consequences. According to Jeff DeMario at Vita Nova of Renaissance Village, “Some of our greatest successes have been with kids who left the program early and against the advice of their team only to return because they realized they needed more help and support than the community could provide.” DeMario believes that the experience of leaving and coming back enabled them to successfully meet their goals in a way that probably wouldn’t have happened if they were either forced to stay or not allowed to return once they had left.

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Young people aging out of foster care need support to deal with the practical and emotional challenges of living on their own. Meaningful relationships with stable adults they can rely on, as well as access to quality services, help provide a safety net for these youth. National service programs can leverage volunteers’ skills and passion in collaboration with foster-care coordinators and clinicians to mentor, train, and support foster-care youth as they make the transition to their adult lives.

“It’s still amazing to me how a piece of paper makes you feel more important, more a part of this world. Getting that diploma means that people have to see me as a young man who is trying to move on with his life. People will respect me more because I now see what life is really about.”

—Griffin K.

Additional Resources on Foster Youth

- Assessing the Effects of Foster Care: Early Results From the Casey National Alumni Study
www.casey.org
- Child Welfare League of America
www.cwla.org
- Connected by 25: Financing Workforce Development Programs for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care
www.financeproject.org/Publications/Workforce_SB.pdf
- Evaluation Management and Training (EMT)
www.emt.org/publications
- Independent Living Resources, Inc.
www.ilrinc.com
- National Resource Center for Youth Services
www.nrcys.ou.edu
- National Youth Development Information Center
www.nydic.org
- Youth Communication: True Stories by Teens
www.youthcomm.org

Federal Programs That May Benefit Youth Aging Out

- **AmeriCorps*NCCC**
AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) is a full-time, team-based, residential program for men and women ages 18–24. Members live on one of four campuses, located in Denver, Colorado; Sacramento, California; Perry Point, Maryland; and Vinton, Iowa.
www.americorps.gov/about/programs/nccc.asp
- **GEAR UP**
Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP funds are also used to provide college scholarships to low-income students.
www.ed.gov/programs/gearup
- **Job Corps**
Job Corps is a no-cost education and vocational training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young people ages 16 through 24 get a better job, make more money, and take control of their lives.
<http://jobcorps.dol.gov/about.htm>

- **Upward Bound**
Upward Bound provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. The program provides opportunities for participants to succeed in their precollege performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits. Upward Bound serves high school students from low-income families; high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor’s degree; and low-income, first-generation military veterans who are preparing to enter postsecondary education.
www.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound
- **YouthBuild U.S.A.**
YouthBuild is a youth and community development program that simultaneously addresses core issues facing low-income communities: housing, education, employment, crime prevention, and leadership development. In YouthBuild programs, low-income young people ages 16–24 work toward their GED or high school diploma, learn job skills, serve their communities by building affordable housing, and transform their own lives and roles in society.
www.youthbuild.org

Resources for Mentors and Mentoring Programs

- The National Mentoring Center
www.nwrel.org/mentoring
- Mentoring Children in Foster Care: Considerations and Partnership Strategies for Senior Corps Directors
http://nationalserviceresources.org/filemanager/download/learns/Mentoring_Children_in_Foster_Care_Final_Revised.pdf
- Foundations of Successful Youth Mentoring: A Guidebook for Program Development (National Mentoring Center)
www.nwrel.org/mentoring/pdf/foundations.pdf
- When Stakes Are High: Research-Based Mentoring for Youth With Multiple Risk Factors
www.emt.org/userfiles/whenstakesarehigh.pdf

Glossary

Aging out: When a youth leaves foster care because he or she has reached age 18 (or 21 in some states) or has finished high school (whichever comes last) without returning home or being adopted.

Independent living: A type of placement that provides life-skills training to youth to help them acquire the skills they will need to live independently as adults. The program is designed for children who are “aging out” of foster care and for whom there is no other permanency plan.

Individual Transitional Living Plan: An individualized, written plan that assesses and addresses a youth’s needs and strengths to successfully transition into independence.

Caseworker: A professional, usually a social worker, who works with youth and their families to provide services and support, with the goal of permanent placement for the youth.

Concurrent planning: A process in which child welfare staff work toward family reunification and, at the same time, develop an alternative permanency plan for the child (such as permanent placement with a relative, or adoption) should family reunification efforts fail.

Congregate living situation: Group home (see below).

Guardian: Person who fulfills some of the responsibilities of the legal parent role, although the courts or birth parents may continue to hold some jurisdiction over the child.

Group home: A home that cares for many foster youth, often using social workers, rather than foster parents, for supervision.

Kinship care: Provision of care by blood relatives other than parents.

Life skills: A large group of psychosocial and interpersonal skills that can help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively, and develop coping and self-management skills that may help them lead a healthy and productive life.

Self-sufficiency: The capacity to manage one's own affairs, make one's own judgments, and provide for oneself.

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We're Here to Help

For youth-serving projects, LEARNS provides training and technical assistance. Call or e-mail us to find out how we can help you.

800-361-7890, learns@nwrel.org
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