



Supporting Transition Age Foster Youth (TAY): Challenges and Opportunities

Today's Presenters

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Goals for Today

- The Purpose of the workshop is to...
 - Outline services and supports available to TAY aged 16-24 years old
 - Familiarize attendees with the ins and outs of extended foster care (AB12)

THE NEXTSTEP PROGRAM

An introduction to our program and our population.

Who we serve

- Current and former foster and probation youth ages 14-24



The Next Step Program

- Legal Advocacy
- Training and Outreach
- Connection to Resources
- Mentoring
- Youth Council

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Housing, services and support.

What is the Independent Living Program (ILP)

- Funding and supports through Chafee dollars that is dispersed through Child Welfare and are available until the youth's 21st birthday.
- Examples of supports:
 - Education resources and funding
 - Employment resources
 - Housing
 - Connections to supportive adults and resources
- Every county handles their ILP program differently. Some offer life skills classes others offer 1:1 support. Some have staff dedicated to supporting this age group, they can be called Transition Coordinators.

Independent Living Program Eligibility

- Were/are in foster care (including Probation youth in suitable placement) at any time from their 16th to their 19th birthday.
 - Does not include youth placed in detention facilities, locked facilities, forestry camps, training schools, facilities that are primarily for the detention of youth who are adjudicated, delinquent, medical and psychiatric facilities, voluntary placements, wraparound program participants, youth placed pursuant to an individualized education program and guardianship placements in which the youth is not a dependent or ward of the court.
- Were/are 16 years of age up to 18 years of age and in receipt of the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program (KinGap) assistance.
- Were/are in a non-related legal guardianship with dependency court jurisdiction terminated after the age of 8.

Independent Living Program Housing

- Each county handles housing resources differently.
- All have different requirements for consideration but most require youth to either be in school or employed with the priority usually being to save as much money as possible.
- All programs have rules about guests, cleanliness, saving and curfews.
- Youth can usually live in the housing programs for up to 36 months, but again that varies by location and provider.
- The goal is to build self sufficiency. They have supportive adults to help with life skills.
 - **Transitional Housing Program Placement. (THPP)**
 - For youth 16-18.
 - **Transitional Housing Program (THP)**
 - For youth ages 18-21.
 - Typically with a closed dependency case.
 - Some offer 1 youth per bedroom others have youth share a bedroom, like a dorm room.
 - **Transitional Housing Program Plus (THP+)**
 - For youth ages 18-24.
 - Optional, not all counties have this housing program available.

Education Challenges

- Like all students youth need to maintain a 2.0 GPA to remain eligible for Federal Student Aid.
- TAY have to juggle employment, school, and often partake in other activities to remain in their housing programs.
 - They struggle with time management so this presents a challenge.
 - They also rely on public transportation which can also be unreliable and not readily available depending on where they live.
 - Most resources and supports offered to TAY have an age limit of 21 giving youth a limited amount of time to access the necessary resources.

Education Resources

- Education Financial Support
 - High school completion, such as diploma plus, HiSET (formerly known as the GED) prep and test
 - Vocational education, such as tuition, tools, uniforms, dues
 - College
 - Board of Governor's Tuition Waiver for community college (including trade programs) This is statewide and not only available for foster youth.
 - "Unmet need" after financial aid determination for college or vocational school
 - This will vary by county and budget, some counties can pay for an unmet need in a student's financial aid package if they have tried accessing all other types of funding
 - Good post-secondary resource: www.cacollegepathways.org
 - Youth can also apply for the Chafee Grant and receive up to \$5000 a year for school. Eligibility requirements and the application can be found here: <https://www.chafee.csac.ca.gov/>

Employment Challenges

- Not all counties prioritize employment opportunities for foster youth.
- Youth don't always have access to vital docs needed to be hired such as:
 - Government issued ID
 - Birth Certificate
 - Social Security Card
- Transportation can be an issue if the county the youth resides in doesn't have funding for bus passes or tokens.
- Youth don't always have the support or tools needed to be successful employees.

Employment Resources

- WIOA Youth Programs
 - Serve disconnected youth ages 16-24, this is a statewide resource.
 - Prioritize employment opportunities and prepare youth through various workshops and 1:1 support.
 - Waiver available to serve foster youth even if they aren't disconnected.
 - http://www.servicelocator.org/program_search.asp?prgcat=1&officeType_1=0
 - other names for these programs are:
 - Work Source Centers
 - Youth Source Centers
 - America's Job Centers

EXTENDED FOSTER CARE/AB12

Not just a rent check.

Extended Foster Care Goals

- Help youth establish lifelong connections to caring adults before transitioning to full independence
- Create a collaborative youth-centered environment
- Work proactively with youth in developing and reaching their independent living goals
- Allow youth to gain real life experience with independence and allow them to learn from their mistakes
- Provide a safety net for the most vulnerable youth so they can be successful as independent adults
- Promotes permanency for foster youth

Acronyms

- EFC: Extended Foster Care
- NMD: Non-minor Dependent
- MA: Mutual Agreement
- VRA: Voluntary Reentry Agreement
- TILP: Transitional Independent Living Plan
- THP+FC: Transitional Housing Program Plus Foster Care
- SILP: Supervised Independent Living Placement

What is Extended Foster Care?

- In brief:
 - Youth with an order for foster care placement on their 18th birthday can chose to stay in care until 21 yrs.
 - After 18, youth can leave care and re-enter as many times as needed until 21 yrs.
 - What youth gets:
 - Housing
 - Supportive services
 - Education vouchers
 - MediCal until age 26
 - Some independent living program (ILP) services

Eligibility Requirements for EFC

- Have an order for foster care placement at age 18
- Satisfy one participation requirement
- Sign a mutual agreement with the county
- Agree to meet in person with Social Worker or Probation Officer every month; every other visit in placement
- Agree to work on transitional independent living skills
- Live in a licensed or approved setting
- Have 6 month court review hearings

What Must a NMD Do To Stay Eligible?

One of the following:

1. Be enrolled in high school or equivalent program or
2. Be enrolled in college/vocational school or
3. Work at least 80 hours/month or
4. Participate in a program/activity that helps youth find a job or removes barriers to employment or
5. Be unable to do one of the above because of a medical or mental health condition.

Who May Re-enter?

- If a meets the definition of NMD, they may re-enter foster care foster care until their 21st birthday
- Youth may be eligible for re-entry:
 - Relative guardian or adoptive parent (created after age 16) passes away before youth turns 21.
 - AB2454 – no support by guardian or adoptive parent after youth turns 18 but before turns 21.
- Youth not eligible for re-entry:
 - In juvenile camp on their 18th birthday
 - Home of Parent/Probation before 18
 - Emancipated before 18

Expectant and Parenting NMDs

- EPY supports
 - Supportive housing for parent and non-detained child
 - EPY conferences connecting parent to community supports
 - Infant supplement in any placement (\$411)
 - Parenting support agreement in SILP (\$200)

www.teenparent.net

SUPPORTIVE EFC HOUSING

Housing while in care.

BUILDING THE BRIDGE TO INDEPENDENT LIVING

Relative Caregiver Home

County Foster Home

Foster Family Agency Home

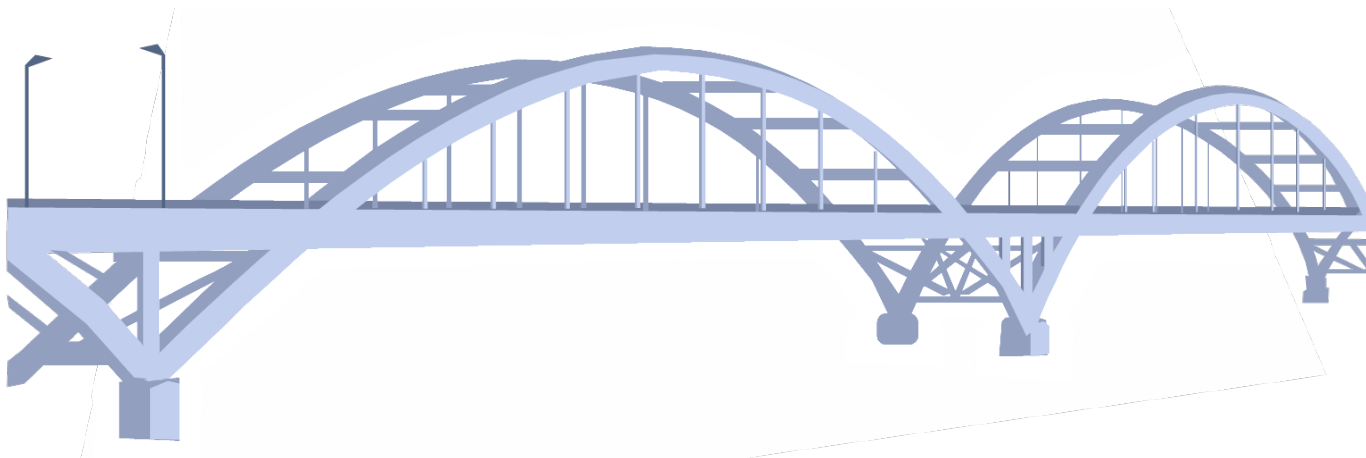
Group Home (with limits)

THP+FC

- Host Family
- Apartment
- Roommates

SILP

- Mentor home
- Room & Board
- Apartment
- Roommates
- College Dorms
- Other as approved by County



THP+ Foster Care

- Transitional housing program only for NMDs
- Modeled after existing THPP programs
- Housing and supportive services
- Semi-supervised setting
- Single site (campus), scattered/remote site (apartments throughout LA), or host family (like a foster family)
- Ideal for NMD unable to reside in foster home but not yet ready for SILP

SILP Overview

- Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP) settings may include but not limited to:
 - Apartment living
 - Renting a room (***including w/ a relative-except bio parents***)
 - Shared roommate settings
 - Dorms
 - Living situations with adult siblings, appropriate extended family members, tribal members, NREFM or mentors should be explored

Debunking Common Misconceptions

- Many youth think that once they are eligible for AB 12, they are automatically entitled to SILP and an \$858 payment.
- That isn't how it works!
- SILPs are just one *possible* placement under extended foster care!
- In order to qualify, youth must pass a readiness assessment and the placement itself must pass an inspection.

Readiness Assessment

- Required for all NMDs in SILPs *except* those in student approved housing/dormitories
- NMD & SW/PO should work together to assess readiness
- Some SILP types require more independence than others

Purpose and Components

To assess whether NMD has a feasible financial plan

- can afford identified housing
- has stable income

To assess whether NMD has knowledge of financial skills

- e.g budgeting, managing money, banking

To assess whether NMD is developmentally ready to handle daily tasks on their own

- e.g grocery shopping, preparing meals, self care, paying bills, transportation, etc.

To assess whether NMD has the ability to handle independence

- e.g. waking up in time for work or school, stress/anger management, decision-making

Readiness Assessment Denials

Examples
of
reasons
for
denial:

- Rent & utilities exceed income
- Unstable income
- No knowledge of how to manage money
- Unable to care for self without assistance due to a medical or mental health condition