

Child Welfare Transition Resources

There are resources available at the federal, state, and local levels. This is not an exhaustive list but we hope that it gives you a place to start.

Independent Living/Transition Plans

A specific plan is required by statute for both current and some former foster youth. The plan must be developed with the youth and other appropriate parties, and be related to vocational, educational, social, or maturational needs, and, to the extent funds are available, shall ensure that foster care, housing, or counseling benefits are tied to the plan.

Social service agencies are required to develop an Independent Living Skills Plan for youth in care who are 16 or older. Additionally, state and federal law require them to develop transition plans for youth age 17 or older in out-of-home placement at least 90 days prior to discharge. The transition plan must be detailed and personalized at the direction of the child. It must include options on housing, health insurance, education, mentors, support services, work force supports, employment services, and contact information if the youth needs help dealing with crisis situations through age 21.

Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally Program (SELF)

SELF is a state and federally funded program that aims to prevent homelessness and welfare dependency among youth in out-of-home placement.

SELF funds are distributed by DHS through county, tribal, and some nonprofit agencies. They may be used to:

- support group or one-on-one independent living training and support (including academic and employment support, budgeting and financial management, housing and home management, health and health insurance, relationships, communication and parenting skills, assistance with post-secondary and financial aid applications, registration for Selective Service, and collection of vital documents),
- help with transportation costs, (ie: drivers education, gas cards, mileage reimbursement, bus fare, etc.),
- support education (tutors, test fees, applications) and employment goals
- create permanent connections, and
- room and board assistance (damage deposits, short-term rent, household goods).

Contact:

Your home county SELF Coordinator
Ramsey County Adolescent Living Skills Program, 651-266-4080
Minnesota Department of Human Services Adolescent Services at (651) 215-1832.

Health Care

Minnesota allows youth aging out of foster care to remain covered for Medicaid in three ways: (1) youth, including those who aged out of foster care, can maintain their standard Medicaid coverage through age 18 if their net income is at or below 150% of the FPL; (2) youth, including those who aged out of foster care, can maintain their standard Medicaid coverage if they are age 19 to 21 and have a net income at or below 100% of the FPL; (3) youth can be covered using the state's 1115 waiver program, MinnesotaCare. Youth are entitled to be covered up to age 21 if they have a net income up to 275% of the FPL, but would be required to pay a premium on a sliding scale.

To apply for Medical Assistance in Ramsey County: 651-266-4444

Medical Assistance office in your home county

Education and Training Vouchers

The Educational and Training Voucher Program (ETV) provides funds to help current and former foster care and adoptive youth attend colleges, universities, vocational or technical programs. Eligible youth can receive up to \$5,000 per school year to pay for tuition, fees books, housing, transportation and other school-related costs and living expenses. ETV funds are to complement the student's own efforts to secure financial assistance to attend post-secondary school. The program is administered by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) through contracts with Ramsey County, Hennepin County, and Lutheran Social Services (LSS) – Willmar to coordinate the program in their assigned areas.

Youth with a Ramsey County social worker: Contact Jenny Mateer, jenny.mateer@co.ramsey.mn.us or (651) 266-4080.

All other youth: Send an e-mail to DHS.ETVcoordinator@state.mn.us or call (651) 431-4663.

FosterClub

FosterClub is the national network for young people in foster care. FosterClub helps open the way for these young people to transform their lives and provides a forum to raise their voice. Members engage with peers and regain control over their situation through support, skill building, and healing opportunities.

Contact: <http://www.fosterclub.com/states/minnesota>

Foster Care Alumni of America

The mission of Foster Care Alumni of America is to connect the alumni community and to transform policy and practice, ensuring opportunity for people in and from foster care.

Contact: <http://fostercarealumni.org/>

Foster care to Success: America's College Fund for Foster Youth (formerly Orphan Foundation of America)

Foster Care to Success helps former foster children become successful adults. Specifically, FCS provides:

- **SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS** FCS is the largest and oldest national nonprofit dedicated exclusively to promoting success through higher education for foster youth. We award about \$15 million private scholarships and government grants to more than 3,500 students each year.
- **MENTORING AND MORAL SUPPORT** Our skilled staff and national network of trained volunteers provide one-on-one support to help students adapt, stay on track, overcome obstacles, and graduate.
- **INTERNSHIPS** Every summer, FCS brings students to Washington DC to work with legislators, nongovernmental agencies, nonprofit organizations and major corporations and facilitates internships for students in other cities across the country.
- **ADVOCACY** FCS advocates for legislation benefitting the 25,000 young people who age out of foster care each year, and provides opportunities for businesses and civic organizations to support foster youth in communities across the country.

Contact: <http://fc2success.org/>