



How Foster Parents Can Help Youth Transition to Adulthood

As a foster parent, you are in a unique position to help youth in your care prepare for a successful future. You can support the development of the youth’s transition plan, and you can aid in activities that build skills and knowledge that can improve the youth’s ability to carry out his or her plan. In addition, you can encourage a young adult’s growing independence and guide safe exploration of new experiences while also providing a cushion of support.

Foster parents have several vital roles in helping youth transition to adulthood (Zanghi, Detgen, Jordan, Ansell, & Kesler, 2003):



- **Coach:** Listen, advise, and provide youth with opportunities to learn and practice new skills
- **Advocate:** Learn about and support youth’s rights as they relate to education, health and mental health care, court proceedings, and case practices
- **Networker:** Help cultivate supports for the youth
- **Facilitator of relationships:** Help establish lifelong connections for youth

This section describes concrete ways you can support youth in foster care to help them build positive relationships, manage money, pursue additional education, find a job, secure housing, maintain their health and wellness, and develop additional life skills.

The following are general suggestions for assisting youth in any of these areas:

- **Empower youth to make decisions.** Youth in foster care often have been left out of critical decisions

about their lives. It’s important to let the young person take charge of his or her own future while you listen, guide, and provide support. During daily life, provide youth with frequent opportunities to make decisions and learn from the consequences, both positive and negative.

- **Communicate high expectations.** All too often, youth in care have heard more about their limitations than about what they can achieve. Send positive messages about future possibilities. Weave forward-looking comments, such as “when you go on to college...” or “when you start your own business...,” into everyday conversations.

- **Start early.** Preparing for adulthood does not occur overnight. Don’t wait until youth are nearing the date they leave foster care. Find ways to introduce important concepts to younger youth. For example, talk with a preteen about the value of saving money for long-term goals.
- **Recognize success.** Celebrate youths’ achievements and milestones on the path to adulthood (e.g., having a special dinner after the youth in your care obtains his driver’s license, attending a graduation ceremony, providing praise).

To read this full fact sheet for families with more resources and information on how to support foster youth as they transition to adulthood, visit www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/youth_transition.pdf or scan the QR code.



Foster Parent Electronic Communication

LCFS desires to provide timely, consistent and relevant communication with all of our foster parents. To this end, the agency is moving toward more digital and electronic forms of communication in 2022, including transitioning LCFS' Foster Parent Newsletter to an electronic medium. If you'd like to receive electronic communications from LCFS via email and/or text messages, in regards to your role as a foster parent, please scan the below QR code and complete the opt-in form. Thank you.



Foster Hope.
Foster Love.
Foster a Child.

Foster Parents Make a Difference

Help us Recruit Foster Families

All types of people make good foster parents as we all have our own special talents. As a foster parent, you know better than anyone what it takes to answer this call. **So we need your help.**

Please consider referring individuals or families who you feel could do this important work. If you refer someone to become a licensed foster parent(s), and they complete the licensing process, you'll receive a **\$50 referral bonus**. Talk to your licensing representative or call your local office and speak to someone in foster home licensing.

Anyone interested in learning more about the benefits and challenges of being a foster parent can attend a virtual informational meeting or have a one-on-one meeting with an LCFS licensing representative.

Your Insight is Needed

Dear Valued Foster Parent(s):

The Council on Accreditation (COA) is conducting an accreditation review of Lutheran Child and Family Services of IL (LCFS) and seeks your assistance. COA is a national organization that sets and evaluates standards for quality service. They are seeking information from our organization's staff, Board, individuals served, and community partners to help them gain an understanding of our organization and assess our organization's implementation of COA's standards.

To share your insight, please scan the QR code provided below or type in the entire URL into your browser's address bar and press Enter:
https://coa.formassembly.com/232187?tfa_38=aOr1T00000pBFH2QAO

If you would like to speak directly with a member of the COA Review Team, please indicate this on the survey and provide your contact information. The information you provide is confidential and will go directly to COA. Our organization will not see your responses to this survey.



Thank you for your valuable input.

You Are
Appreciated



To show our gratitude for all you do, LCFS is planning some **Foster Parent Appreciation Celebrations** in May.



Details will be shared in the beginning of April.