

Transitional Planning

WHAT WENT WELL/WHAT WAS HELPFUL

MYOI has been the most important part of my foster care because they have been family, support, and community resources that have allowed for certain levels of success that I wouldn't have had otherwise.

ETV, TIP, YVAC, IDA Matches

ETV and MET

I found that the services I was provided with my last year in high school were amazing, such as billing.com

MYOI, YIT, financial literacy training, young adults voluntary foster care

Family team meetings, figure out what needs I had.

YIT funds for my computer (I got it as a 10th grader) have been super helpful for me. I'm a senior in high school now and papers never go away and assignments never go away. Education is the key to success and the money we get to help pay for these education tools is so important.

Car money has been extremely helpful because transportation is getting more expensive and it will never go away. Plus, car repairs and maintenance is very expensive so the YIT funds for that will do wonders for me I'm sure.

Financial and budget management

GAPS

Gap between youth failing out of college and finding housing when they have nowhere to go!

Residential facilities are over-utilized and they do not prepare youth to be adults

Worker accessibility

Adults sitting down with youth before the 90-day discharge to explain what the meeting will be about so the youth will feel comfortable asking questions.

The process of how foster youth get funds

Courts/case managers recommend dismissing jurisdiction before 18th birthday (but close) making them ineligible to utilize YAVFC. They don't realize it cuts them off from this.

Need quick, easy to read, concise handouts to give youth about resources available.

Service providers not available to provide SIL and IL services in rural counties.

I was never spoken to or given any walk-through with my life (fostering connections to success and increasing Adoptions Act of 2008)

If you're homeless you can't receive services

I understand on preparing for the future but we need to make clear that they are kids they are scared.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Let youth be aware of who to talk about education, housing, etc. before they age out of the system or even turn 17

Big Brother/Big Sister, allow a person who has successfully “aged out” to become a “big” sibling to younger foster youth who are afraid of their new placement.

Make the semi-annual transition plan more youth friendly

Have emergency funding ready for homeless youth i.e: hotel nights until shelter has opening

Help youth obtain driving hours, otherwise, how are they supposed to earn them?

Build special IL housing in every county.

Every continuum of care group working on housing should have foster care representatives.

Exit plan has to include housing

Match Week!! A week dedicated to helping youth make matches MYOI

Follow up with youth even after aged out

MYOI in every county

Who MYOI supports and provides resources for should be extended to at-risk teens instead of just foster youth.

Transitional housing, from FC home to independent living in small group home environment that has a structured support and referred services that teach independent living skills, budgeting, career supports

Keep track after guardianship after aging out

Youth runaway programs – there are problems with those programs! They do not help truly homeless youth in transition. In-office/school advocate, FC/DHHS staff office.

MYOI board voice your concern!

Education is a huge factor, make consumers math a core class.

Awareness of what services are offered.

Emergency shelters for homeless foster youth who have aged out and decided not to go to college

Eligibility for services needs to include owning your own business!

Planning for success.

Focus on helping youth leaders develop a plan for taking over leadership and driving policy.

Political candidate development for experienced MYOI youth

Teach youth how to advocate for themselves as a part of Life Skills.

YIT Funds

Offer the youth more people to communicate with about YIT funds

More county YIT funds.

Accessing YIT funds is confusing and complex. Need clear guidelines on how to request funds (what documents are submitted, how, etc.) always get returned.

School Stability

WHAT WENT WELL/WHAT IS HELPFUL

Campus coaches, WMU

School stability, able to stay in my high school after I moved and I received gas cards.

TIP/ETV is extremely helpful

TIP extension time for youth who haven't had Medicaid for 2 years.

GAPS

School counselors and teachers need to realize that foster care kids do not approach things the same. Foster care kids do need to be treated fairly and correctly.

If a foster care youth is not comfortable with the school they are in, let them switch.

College funds--I'm so scared of debt.

Foster care youth should not lose credit for missing a certain amount of days within reason. Yes I know it's up to the school, but it is a thought.

Is there funding for private schooling?

We need a solution for transportation

Can residential youth pick their school, even if it goes against placement recommendations?

Transportation, communication with teachers. It's hard to explain your foster care situation to teachers.

If your school is far and you're doing it online, but do not understand the work and e-mailing your teacher.

Find a way to inform any high school or younger aware that a student who is in foster care education is a little different.

Following through with youth that do not know how to communicate well

Following through with youth that are unpredictable, in need, insecure about services, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

More education planners or advocates—each youth in care should have one no matter what age!

MYOI should collaborate with local college campus support coordinators

Moving around a lot and changing schools effects the child's academic path. If you notice this, provide tutoring services, the appropriate mentor, etc.

ETV and YIT needs to be extended until the end of college. I still have two years left but I ran out of funding

More support on educational transitions and preparing

Inform the different opportunities in a foster care/adopted child's education.

Solution to scholarship opportunities: limit amount of time on a health insurance like Medicaid, In my case I did not receive insurance until a year after I entered in the foster care, so I missed one year of Medicaid and could have qualified for the scholarship earlier.

Make sure that youth in resident homes have all the educational information they need!

Inform scholarship opportunities to foster kids: how to access, where to go to have help, provide sheets of scholarship opportunities.

Make communication between DHHS workers and school mandatory at time of placement, even if there is no school change! Emotional upset/trauma still impacts education.

Policy seat waiver for FC youth who don't attend school of origin.

Credit recovery form residential faculty with seat waiver.

DHHS should train school counselors and administration (2 hours)

Advocate for yourself, inform school of FC status

Solution/Need: Mandatory youth-driven trainings regarding policy, etc. so youth voice is heard, for DHHS workers

To department of Education: There are problems with getting IEP services after high school.

How can we make sure special education accommodations follow into postsecondary education?

Educators need training on what it means to be in foster care, who is involved, how decisions are made, how placements are made, challenges students face...

Stronger enforcement of education requirements and education stability in DHHS FC

Extension of Foster Care

GAPS

Think about it...No support → support → no support after 18. 18 doesn't mean we don't need anyone.

Making youth ineligible for services because they are adopted before a certain age. Adoption is not a magic word for fixing trauma.

Language barriers.

Training in empathy skills for social workers, DHS workers, mentors, etc.

Why 21? An 18 year old may take 4-5 years for education, depending on program and prerequisites.

Youth in residentials don't get quality treatment, are in too long, aren't transported to MYOI, social skills aren't improved.

Some kind of help in grad school would be nice.

More services for foster youth that were adopted, youth board for adopted foster youth.

Re-entering foster care, seeing gap in providing support and services to youth wanting to return who are in crisis, no caseworker assigned

RECOMMENDATIONS

Extend the age for young adults voluntary foster care until 24

Extend adoption support, shouldn't be ineligible if adopted before 16.

16 and 17-year-old foster children having or given the opportunity to become emancipated but continue to have supports. We're underestimated and abandoned.

Extend adoption support, shouldn't be ineligible if adopted before 16.

YVAC requirements based on need instead of age (17-year-old case closed and lost/missed out on resources)

Having the option to get back in and get more support.

Mentoring programs for you that don't qualify for YVAC

YVAC coordinators (similar to MYOI) in every county

YVAC specialized caseworker gets all cases for every county

Keep it open until you are 25 years' old

Services for teens who've exited foster care between ages 14-18 who still struggle with home life. Just because our case closes doesn't mean we should lose all supports until we're 18

Possible Changes for Case Workers/Professionals in the Field/Foster Parents/Supportive Adults

This is case workers that work with foster care kids. No matter the age, if they know right from wrong, let them have a say!

Boundaries

Foster care cases should have 2 workers each. One focused on parent services and one for the children. Workers are under pressure by court to focus attention on parents with complex issues (sub. Abuse, DV) and youth needs and transition planning get overlooked until there is a crisis.

Joint leadership development for youth and workers.

Stereotypes, quick to make wrong judgment.

MYOI panel at PRIDE training so foster parents can be education on resources for youth 14-24

The workers need a voice.

Confidentiality, past experience: I cried to a case worker when sister moved out and she told foster parent who verbally lashed out at me for crying.

Case worker becomes a friend after 4-5 years. Transitioning to a new case worker is difficult. Establishing relationships matter.

Educate FIS/ES workers to ask the question "have you ever been in foster care?"

A "type" of youth can have a case worker trained specific for that "type"

Services received shouldn't depend on the worker

Need consistent training.

Better communication e.g. emails-respond within 48 hours, texts-respond within 24 hours

Training in empathy skills

Lack of compassion, genuine and care in some social workers.

Worker accountability

Less kids for one caseworker. Improve communication and voices can be heard and better partnership understanding kids' needs.

Foster care staff not well trained on services for older youth (YIT, YAVFC, MYOI) some don't even know what it is.

Get youth familiarized with foster care terms/resources

Foster parents should attend classes on the behaviors of foster children, trauma, PTSD, depression, homesick, anxiety, problems at school and home.

Foster care case workers need to listen to the foster kids and believe them if bullying went on in their school. I experienced case workers not listening.

Being a case worker for a foster care youth, don't judge the student for bad grades. Try and help get their grades up without discrimination.

Young adults need to be seen as good kids, not what their files say.

Education the (all) workers further on the importance of FTM, resources, etc., Trainings, training the foster youth (and foster parents) of meetings, goals, resources, etc.

Technology and Resources

Not every kid in the foster system always has a way to contact families/foster parents/caseworker.
Solution: is there a possibility foster children receive a phone system? Partner up with a phone company or cell company to provide phone system to foster children.

App? Hotline?

Check out foster success app from Indiana

Create a website where foster children can voice their concern, ask questions, etc.

Online account showing progress, important documents (birth certificate, etc.) services out there and resources. Keep track of competencies and skills.

Finances and Employment

Mandatory employment or stability 1 year/90 days until youth ages out.

Down payment assistance to buy a car with a stable job.

Down payment assistance to purchase a home with a stable job.

Increase money available for YIT for a car, so I can get a more reliable vehicle.

Health/Mental Health/Trauma

For children addressing trauma, learning what their traumas are.

Help youth understand it's okay to receive services for mental health counseling, and know its available.

Trauma services and trauma training for foster parents and anyone who would like to be involved.

Mental health services, repression of unwanted memories.

Everyone says your childhood is supposed to be the best part in the time of your lives, but more than 80% of foster youth had experienced the traumatic events in those times. We want acknowledgement, awareness, and mainly empathy instead of "if only." It's not just an event, it's a memory.

ALATEEN

Foster care kids should not have to go to counseling unless they want to. If they feel they don't need it don't make them

Supportive Relationships

Allow those who have been adopted to visit siblings who aren't adopted. Why take away the only family

What Would You Like from the Summit?

A little more structure in the break-outs to allow more youth to talk. Make it a little more clear to workers that the summit is about youth voices. Maybe upfront giving workers a non-vocal option after sharing ideas.

Thank you thank you thank you the youth who attended with me today came away more knowledgeable and fired up.

In breakout sessions the adults talked too much and didn't really allow the youth to advocate (particularly in school stability)

Please make the NYTD Slide "Elements" available to print off

Please allow the NYTD Power Point to be printed.

We see that you say "oh yes we hear your voices," what we need is action.

What can we do to help develop a better understanding of the importance of survey participation?

Educational institutions with FC programs develop a consistent and uniform orientation that includes why surveys are important and how to take them, as well as what they are used for. Helping other youth through funding and services.

Let those who are taking the survey be aware that they actually look through the survey in a strong detailed consideration.

Have other youth leaders speak to kids about the importance of the survey.

The importance of survey participation is for policymakers to know what is working and to know what needs to be changed. As well as a chance to vie your opinion on programs and policies in place.

Increase (or establish) your presence on social media. You can pull from your listservs to "friend," "follow," or link to the people in your target audience. This way, you have a wider platform to get the word out about an entire range of things in an engaging and creative way. You can post periodically about your surveys to increase participation.

How do you get youth to understand the importance of a survey? Every time a youth uses a service, let them know how the survey helps/can improve that service

Announce on how taking the surveys is of importance because it helps give a better understanding on what will or will not work for you.

Youth are the best resources...recruit, spread the word, extend your opportunities.

What can we do to increase survey participation?

Incentives

Give incentive for taking the survey: Meijer card, Cold Stone card

I personally was unaware of this survey-maybe press/advertise it on a higher level.

Host a movie night and invite the youth who haven't taken the survey. It doesn't have to be a movie night but you should definitely consider hosting an engaging activity to get everyone in one place to increase the likelihood of your surveys being completed.

Caseworker evaluations every 6 months-1 year. Kids write about their workers (surveys). Professionals evaluate what the kids write (surveys) and the workers progress with the kids.

We shouldn't have to offer gift cards to get the youth involved. Educate them on why it is important.

Find different platforms to advertise

Help youth complete the survey.

Transition Planning Whiteboard

What could have been improved?

Sit down with youth prior to meeting (knowledge, informing)
Visibility of services
More training for caseworkers about importance of FTM, etc.
Stay connected with students
Contacts—who can the youth go to?
More explanations about what we are signing
More outreach to youth in residential placements
Connection to GALs ASAP

Positive Experiences

Preparation for court
Lets you get to know people you're working with
Discussion of placement and stability
Communication—creative sharing
Goal Setting

Ideal Services/Supports

Emergency hotline
Open table discussions
Connecting to youth with mentor in community to be involved
Annual/semi-annual collective meetings/student panel to hear from youth
Manual of caseworker responsibilities/duties
Develop app with resources
30, 60, or 90 day follow up to review initial plan/reevaluate.
When assigned a caseworker youth should be given a list of important contacts (supervisor, MYOI, chain of command)

Magic Wand

Extend services to 25 years
Training for workers in residential placements about case requirements
Collaboration between DHHS workers and residential caseworkers
Even after age limit, keep one person designated to help you
Free state IDs
One simple form of youth rights and mandated CASA worker/advocate to be with youth during FTM to help youth voice be heard
Phone call or face-to-face with GAL prior to first court appearance.

Extension of Foster Care White Board

Grace period of 30 days
Follow-up services
Budgeting/financial literacy training

Resource website, all youth get e-mail
Worker/youth accountability
Housing
Job
School
YVAC case worker
Stability in housing
Housing vouchers and food assistance
Eligibility before 16-18
Connecting departments
Accountability
Team effort, advocacy
More visits, getting to know each other
Guidance counselor
More sabas
Start-up goods
Expand YVAF
Money handling training
Hands on training
More communication between worker and youth
First month rent and deposit, expand it to use more than one time

School Stability Whiteboard

Advocate
Education planner
Reach out
Support in your corner
Youth advocacy classes
Rights awareness
Credit recovery
Residential credit transfer
Foster care children being put in special education classes that are not necessary
Extracurricular activities
Education staff needs to be trained
Education specialists provide support
Transportation
Cyber Education Center
Michigan.gov/FYIT
Seat waiver time
Electronic backpack
Expelled youth in care should get second chance for enrollment after entering foster care
A foster adult who trains workers in the fundamentals of our voices and situation of a foster youth to better improve the understanding of difficult situations and to create a solution
Transportation

Someone you trust

Teachers/counselors

Public bus transport

Subway

Family/friends

Credit recovery, provide support and programs that help the students keep/get those credits (IEP and 504)

Youth informing teachers about the difference in education with DHHS staff and any other additional support (group for educational change)

Collaboration

Communication

Teamwork!

Community/team support

Proactive, positive meetings

Make a universal credit system for credits to transfer seamlessly

Learning how to articulate yourself when needed, don't depend on anybody