







Court Appointed Special Advocates
Guardians ad Litem
FOR CHILDREN



Presenter

Lisa Sewell

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- B.A. in Psychology, California State University Channel Islands
- M.S. in Counseling & Guidance, California Lutheran University
- 8+ years of career counseling experience in higher education and social services settings



Introductions

Please share...

- Your name
- How long you've been a CASA
- One challenge your older youth is facing
- One strength you've identified in your teen/young adult





Binder Contents



- ✓ Fostering Futures Guiding Principles & Terminology
- ✓ Fostering Futures Training Packet
- ✓ Permanency Options & Eligibility for Services Chart
- ✓ Laws Relevant to Older Youth
- ✓ Older Youth Resource Packet
- ✓ Resources for Teens in Foster Care Jasper County
- ✓ Career Exploration & Planning Worksheet
- ✓ Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth in Foster Care
- ✓ Casey Life Skills Questionnaire
- ✓ Assorted Resources (e.g., housing, mental health, etc.)



Aims of Fostering Futures

An advocacy and mentoring program for youth aged between 14-21. The program aims to:

- Identify supportive adult connections. Create a sense of permanence in which the youth is connected to at least one caring, committed adult who will be a long-term support.
- Develop specific **plans** for making a successful transition from foster care to becoming independent.
- Partner with the youth to empower them in decision making and planning for their future.





Statistics

- 25,000 young people exit foster care each year in the United States
- 58% had a high school degree at age 19, compared to
 87% of a national comparison group of non-foster youth
- Of youth who aged out of foster care, fewer than 3% earned their college degrees, compared with 28% of the general population
- 1 in 5 were homeless for one or more nights within a year after leaving foster care
- 1 in 4 are incarcerated within the first two years after they leave the system
- The rate of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among alumni is nearly 5x that of the general population



Jessica's Story







Activity



At your table, discuss:

- 1. What challenges did you hear Jessica mention in the podcast?
- 2. What challenges do you think are unique to her situation, and what challenges might be universal for youth who are aging out of foster care?
- 3. Based on Jessica's story and what you have observed on your own cases, what do you believe adolescents need the most in preparation for living independently?



What Is Our Focus?

To improve outcomes for older youth by:

- Setting goals with youth for their future
- Giving clear ideas on how to achieve those goals
- Empowering youth with practical knowledge and connecting them to resources
- Helping youth develop skills and social capital to successfully transition to adulthood
- Identifying a committed, caring adult to provide long-term support





Target Areas



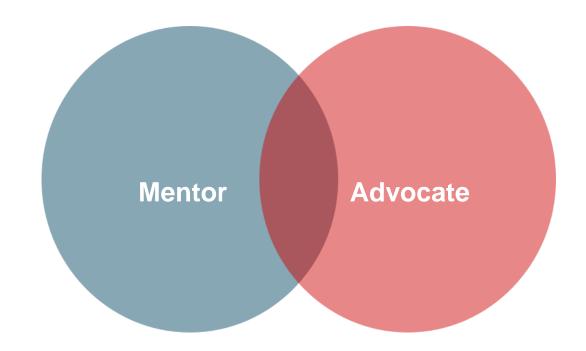
- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Life Skills
- Supportive Relationships/Community Resources
- Physical/Behavioral Health



"Do with them, not for them."



Mentor vs. Advocate



Permanency Options





Permanency Options



- Reunification, adoption, guardianship, APPLA
- APPLA = Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement
 - ✓ Case goal set by the court. For the court to order APPLA, the youth must be at least 16 years old and other permanency options are not possible.
 - ✓ Can remain in state custody until the age of 21
- Youth can choose to leave state custody at any time between 18 and 21



Permanency outcomes for older youth



- 27% of youth who are 14+ will find permanency through adoption
- Permanency is associated with better outcomes for health, academic performance and financial stability
- Explore every option for legal permanency
- If legal permanency is not possible, help youth explore relationship permanency (i.e., 1 consistent, trusted safe adult)
 - Some teens say relationship permanency is more important to them than legal permanency

Laws Impacting Older Youth





Fostering Connections to Success Act

https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/house-bill/6893

- Makes children who exit foster care for relative guardianship or adoption after age 16 eligible for independent living services and education and training vouchers under the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.
- Requires a case review system to include a procedure for assuring that a case worker aids and supports a child aging out of foster care in developing a personalized transition plan.
- Requires a state plan for foster care and adoption assistance to provide that, within 30 days after removal of a child from the parent's or parents' custody, the state shall exercise due diligence to identify and notify all the child's adult relatives of the removal, and: (1) explain the relative's options to participate in the child's care and placement; (2) describe the requirements to become a foster family home, and the additional services and supports available for children placed in such a home; and (3) explain the availability, if any, of kinship guardianship assistance payments.



John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood



- Foster Care Independence Act of 1999
- John H. Chafee was a United States Senator from Rhode Island who served from December 29, 1976 – October 24, 1999
- Sponsored legislation that increased funds to states to assist youth with making the transition from foster care to independent living and established accountability for states in implementing independent living programs
- https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/grant-funding/john-h-chafee-foster-care-independence-program

Older Youth Programs & Resources





Chafee Program



- Youth are eligible at the age of 14
- The caseworker must make the referral
- IAP = Individualized Action Plan
- A Chafee worker (or Youth Specialist) meets with the youth quarterly to help with education, employment, financial management, housing, emotional support, and more
- Financial assistance may be available for driver's education, graduation expenses, etc.
- Firefly Supported Living & Employment Services

 contracted Chafee provider for Southwest
 Missouri



Important documents

Youth in foster care have a right to their official documents:

- Original or certified copy of their birth certificate
- Original Social Security Card
- Driver's license or State ID Card
- Copy of medical records (e.g., immunizations, current medications, etc.)
- Health insurance information
- Educational records (e.g., diplomas, report cards/transcripts, IEP, list of schools attended)



ROYALS: Regional Older Youth Advancement of Life Skills

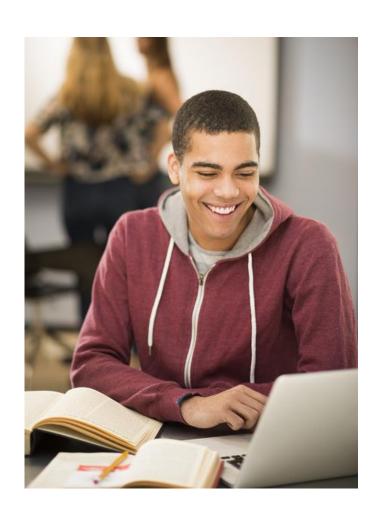




- Youth must be between 17 and 20 years old to be eligible
- ROYALS provides case management for older youth. The ROYALS worker visits the youth 2-4 times per month.
- The ROYALS worker focuses on:
 - ✓ Life skills (including budgeting, securing employment, accessing community resources, educational attainment, etc.)
 - ✓ Teaching youth how to advocate for themselves in court and how to run their Family Support Team meetings
 - ✓ Getting youth enrolled in driver's education
 - ✓ Connecting youth to housing options like transitional living/independent living

Resource Sheet for Teens in Foster Care in Jasper County





- Older Youth Programs
- Career & Internships
- Education
- Financial Literacy
- Housing
- Mental Health & Substance Abuse
- Pregnancy & STD Testing
- Teen Dating Violence
- Transportation
- And more!

Access on the Jasper County CASA website: https://jascocasa.org/volunteer-portal-resources/

Youth Development

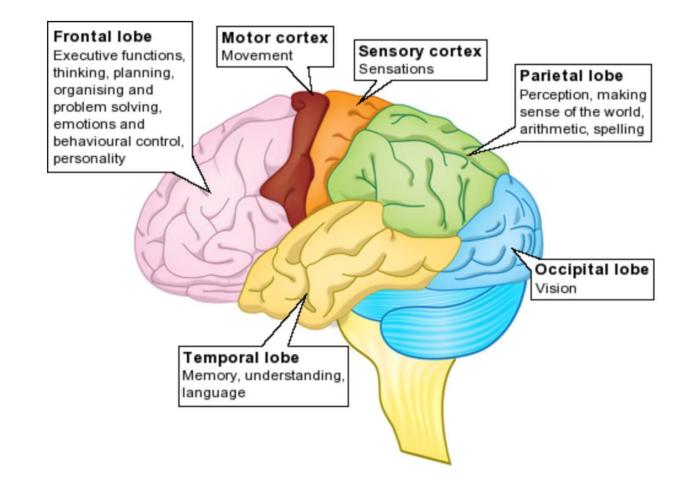




ADOLESCENT BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

The prefrontal cortex is not fully developed until the age of 25. That's the part of the brain that helps you to inhibit impulses and to plan and organize your behavior to reach a goal.

Childhood trauma can cause problems with prefrontal cortex function.







Erikson's Psychosocial Stages Summary Chart



Stage	Basic Conflict	Important Events	Key Questions to be answered	Outcome
Infancy (0 to 18 months)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Feeding/ Comfort	Is my world safe?	Children develop a sense of trust when caregivers provide reliability, care and affection. A lack of this will lead to mistrust.
Early Childhood (2 to 3)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Toilet Training/ Dressing	Can I do things by myself or need I always rely on others?	Children need to develop a sense of personal control over physical skills and a sense of independence. Success leads to feeling of autonomy, failure results in feelings of shame and doubt.
Preschool (3 to 5)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Exploration/ Play	Am I good or bad?	Children need to begin asserting control and power over the environment. Success in this state leads to a sense of purpose. Children who try to exert too much power experience disapproval, resulting in a sense of guilt.
School Age (6 to 11)	Industry vs. Inferiority	School/ Activities	How can I be good?	Children need to cope with new social and academic demands. Success leads to a sense of competence, while failure results in feeling of inferiority.
Adolescence (12 to 18)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Social Relationships/ Identity	Who am I and where am I going?	Teens need to develop a sense of self and personal identity. Success leads to an ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self.
Young Adult (19 to 40)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Intimate Relationships	Am I loved and wanted?	Young adults need to form intimate, loving relationships with other people. Success leads to strong relationships, while failure results in loneliness and isolation.
Middle Adulthood (40 to 65)	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Work and Parenthood	Will I provide something of real value?	Adults need to create or nurture things that will outlast them, often by having children or creating a positive change that benefits other people. Success leads to feelings of usefulness and accomplishment, while failure results in shallow involvement in the world.
Maturity (65 to death)	Ego Identity vs. Despair	Reflection on life	Have I lived a full life?	Older adults need to look back on life and feel a sense of fulfillment. Success at this state leads to a feeling of wisdom, while failure results in regret, bitterness, and despair.



Positive Youth Development

Using a positive youth development approach means viewing youth as a resource.

- Emphasize the strengths and capacities of youth
- Involve youth in every aspect of their care
- Allow for opportunities for youth to take on leadership and decision-making roles
- Recognize that adolescents are all in transition developmentally, whether they are in foster care or not





Tips for Volunteers

- Move planning discussions away from concern with temporary placement issues and behavior management of teens toward long-term planning for education and employment.
- Promote ways for foster parents, family members and service providers to support teens.
- Connect teens with a network of adults to help them with education and employment.
- Give family members and teens opportunities to build relationships by focusing together on the future.
- Integrate foster youth into the larger community.
- What ideas do you have? What have you tried on your cases that has worked well?

POSSIBLE SELVES





Overview of Possible Selves

- Possible selves allows youth to "try-on" potential futures (e.g., "Maybe I will be a teacher or a doctor.")
- Create a positive self-identity
- Map-out connections between the present and the future
- Connect current activities and behaviors with hopes and fears
- Serve as a positive motivator to reach goals





Possible Selves Model

Step 1: "What are my strengths and interests?

The goal of this question is to find an area in which the youth has had a positive experience. Ask them if they are willing to share that positive experience with you.

Step 2: "Who am I?

Have the youth think about his or her hopes for the future.

Step 3: "What am I like?"

Have the youth describe themselves as well as their hopes and fears for the future.

Step 4: "What can I be?"

This step provides an opportunity to evaluate conditions of the youth's current circumstance and set goals for their future.

Step 5: "How can I reach my goals?"

This is the planning stage. Set short-term goals to reach the larger goal and set a timeline to reach them.

Step 6: "How am I doing?"

This is the evaluation stage. Reflect on progress made so far and what needs to be adjusted, if anything.



Possible Selves Activity

Fill out the following documents in your binder:

- Fostering Futures Goal
 Setting Worksheet Who
 Am I?
- 2. "Sketch" of My Life &Possible Selves Reflection– What Can I Be?





Possible Selves Tree

Instructions: Sketch out this diagram for your Possible Self.

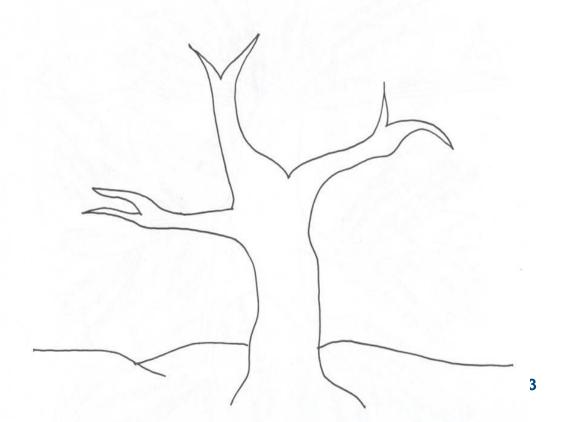
Trunk = You (the whole person)

Main Limbs = The three parts of the you who you hope to be in the future

Smaller Branches = Individual, smaller, shorter-term goals to keep that main limb growing

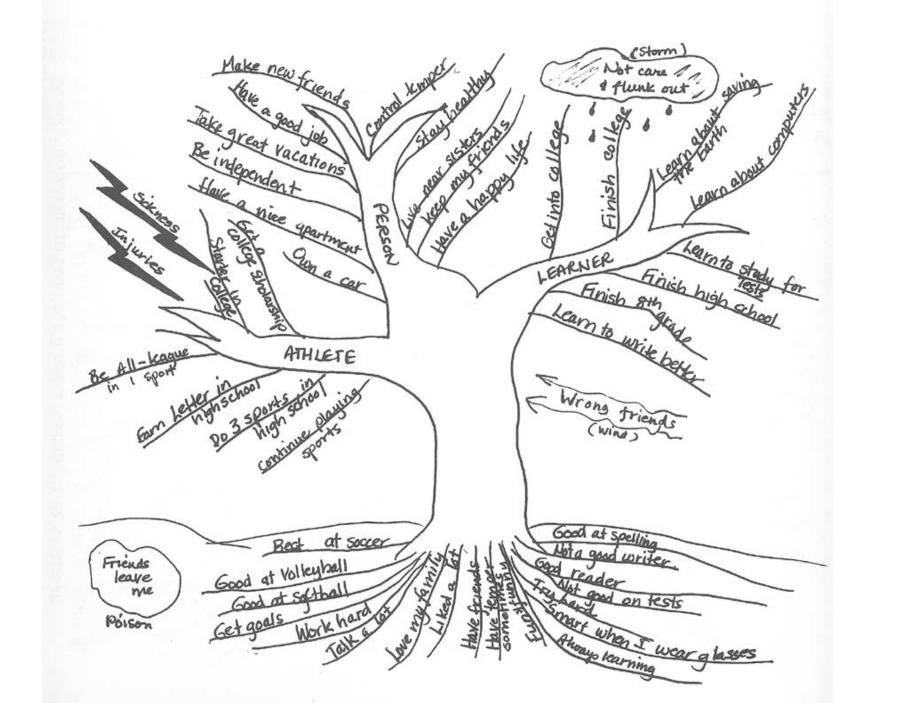
Roots = Descriptions or short phrases describing you now. Draw positive statements as long, thick roots and negative statements as short, thin roots

Dangers = Things you fear might disrupt your growth. These can be represented by lightening, wind, rocks, clouds, toxins in the soil, etc.





A Youth's Perspective



Supporting Career Development & Educational Attainment of Older Youth





Educational Advocacy

- Go to your teen's school to meet with their teachers and school counselors
 - ✓ Get updates before each court report is due. Find out if your teen is on track to graduate, and if not, what they need to do.
 - ✓ Be sure to ask about their strengths, too!
- Tutoring every Thursday night at the CASA house from 5-7 p.m.
- College preparation programs (e.g., Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound)
- Encourage career exploration before enrolling in college or selecting a vocational program





Career Support

- Self-Discovery Worksheet
 - *Includes online interest assessment and CliftonStrengths assessment
- Mock interviews
- Resume writing
- Job shadowing and informational interviews
- Internships (MOSO CAPS)
- Connect youth to the Missouri Job Center for one-on-one resume writing and job search support
 - *The Missouri Job Center offers free workshops
 - *Ask about the WIOA Youth Program & Jobs League





Contact

Media Inquiries

No Cost Workshops ¡IMPORTANTE! | WICHTIG! | 重要!

MoJobs Login

Sub

Google Translate English

Joplin Job Center

Main Office

730 S Wall Ave Joplin, MO 64801 United States

Hours

Sun: Closed

Mon - Thu: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Fri: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Sat: Closed

Contact Us

Phone:

417-629-3000

Toll-free:

1-888-728-5627

Fax:

417-629-3011

joplin@dhewd.mo.gov ☑



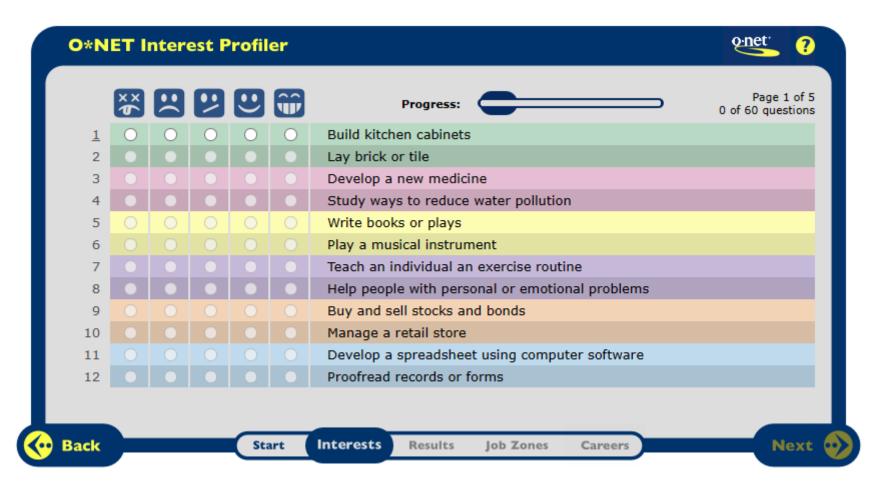
The Joplin Missouri Job Center's goal is to connect people to jobs, free of charge, and we accomplish this goal by working with both job seekers and employers to help bolster the local workforce through trainings, workshops, and job connections, as well as helping the workforce with career counseling, offering tools to make finding a job or advancing your career easier. Visit with our experienced staff who will work directly with you to meet work-related needs. Our services are designed to help workers find and keep quality jobs, as well as help businesses hire and retain quality workers.

Follow Us

Southwest Missouri Job Centers &



O*Net Interest Profiler



https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip



Postsecondary Education & Financial Aid



Educational Opportunity Center

- A trained advisor (Donna Clemens for Jasper & Newton County) can assist youth with researching college/vocational programs and completing the FAFSA (free application for federal student aid) to obtain funding
- https://www.crowder.edu/services/trio/eoc/eoc-office-locations/
- Missouri Reach Tuition Waiver
 - https://www.fc2sprograms.org/mo-reach/
- Education & Training Voucher
 - https://www.fc2sprograms.org/missouri/
 - https://dss.mo.gov/cd/older-youth-program/education.htm
- Scholarships
 - Ask each college's financial aid office if they offer scholarships specifically for foster youth
 - https://www.fastweb.com/college-scholarships

YOUTH IN COURT & FST MEETINGS





Supporting Youth Through Court Hearings



- Prepare ahead of time. Help the youth write down what they want to say during the hearing.
- If they are not comfortable speaking during the hearing or don't want to attend, they can also write a letter to the judge.
- If the youth would like to speak at the hearing, make sure they notify their attorney (GAL) and caseworker beforehand.
- Youth can request to speak with and/or meet with their GAL at any time.



Activity

- 1. What are the benefits of youth being in court
- 2. What concerns are there regarding youth attending court?
- 3. From your personal experience, what tips do you have to support youth before, during, and after hearings?



Family Support Team (FST) Meetings



- Tell the team that the youth wants to attend
- Have the youth write out a list of what they want to ask or share at the meeting
- They should be ready to provide updates (school, placement, visits with parents, etc.), goals, needs, and concerns
- If youth are at least 13 years old, they should be invited to attend FST meetings unless the team believes it would be problematic

Advocating for Youth in Residential Care





What to ask a residential care facility

- 1. Ask for the treatment plan (usually available after first 30 days at a facility). Treatment plan should include length of stay, goals they are working on with the client, objectives, what interventions are/will be used, and due dates for achieving these objectives.
- 2. Ask for a monthly update on the client's progress from their therapist and case manager/social worker at the facility.
- 3. Ask the staff how they're addressing the specific issues that brought the child into care. Ask if they have a program or curriculum for the specific behaviors.
- 4. When talking to staff, ask, "What will the client's day look like? What is the frequency of his/her individual and group therapy?" (weekly is good)
- 5. Find out what the educational/academic programming looks like
- 6. Ask for the rules regarding visitation (in person vs. phone calls vs. video calls)
- 7. If you send items or a care package, find out what the facility allows (e.g., shoes without laces, etc.)



How to Maintain a Connection with your Youth



- Send letters
- Mail care packages
- See if you can do video calls instead of just phone calls
- Want to visit your kiddo in person? Are they
 placed in a facility that is hours away? Ask
 your advocate supervisor about mileage
 reimbursement and money for a hotel.
- What have you tried on your cases to improve the long-distance relationship?

Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth





Statistics



- LGBTQ+ young people are overrepresented in foster care
- 30.4% of youth in foster care identify as LGBTQ+ compared to 11.2% of youth not in foster care
- Reports have found that around 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+
- 44% of LGBTQ+ youth in state custody report they were removed, ran away, or were thrown out of their home for reasons directly related to their identity
- Once in care, they have a higher risk of institutionalization, abuse, and are more likely to age out without achieving permanency



Kristopher's Story

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2935IE1CcE

- What barriers and challenges did you hear?
- What strengths enabled Kristopher to succeed?
- How could a CASA or just 1 caring, supportive adult have made a difference?



Local Resources for LGBTQ+ Youth

Jo Mo EQ: https://www.facebook.com/JoMoEq/

JOMO Pride: https://www.jomopride.org/



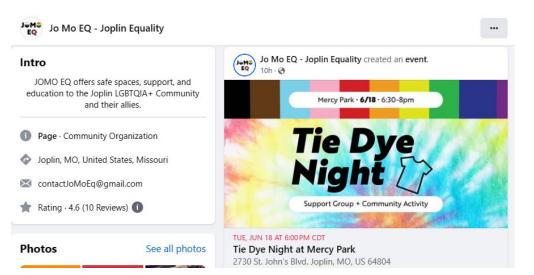
- -Transgender Support Group (available in person and online)
- -GLO Youth (for ages 12-17)
- -GLO Young Adults (for ages 18-25)

Northwest Arkansas Equality:

https://www.nwaequality.org/about-us/

Ozarks Inclusion Project:

https://ozarksinclusionproject.org/about-us/





National Resources for LGBTQ+ Youth

Human Rights Campaign: Resources for Youth Serving Professionals https://www.hrc.org/resources/resources-for-youth-serving-professionals

All Children - All Families: The State of LGBTQ+ Inclusion in Child Welfare - 2023 Report

https://www.hrc.org/resources/all-children-all-families-the-state-of-lgbtq-inclusion-in-child-welfare

Foster Club: https://www.fosterclub.com/lgbtq-and-two-spirit

The Trevor Project: https://www.thetrevorproject.org/

Laws & Legislation: Search by state
https://www.hrc.org/resources/laws-legislation?topic=state-local-policy

Corporate Equality Index: Leaders in LGBTQ+ Workplace Inclusion https://www.hrc.org/resources/cei-equality-100-award

ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN





Assessment

- Find the Older Youth Needs & Resource Assessment document.
- Review the types of questions in each section (e.g., education, employment, housing, life skills, supportive relationships/community resources, physical/behavioral health)
- Pick 1 section and answer the questions to the best of your ability for your teen.



CASA Action Plan

- You can use this document to outline your goals for working with your youth
- Review the list of important documents that the teen/young adult should request from their caseworker, especially if they are about to age out
- Provide quarterly updates on progress with your CASA Action Plan to your advocate supervisor
- If you need assistance accessing resources for your youth, ask your
 Advocate Supervisor or the Fostering Futures Coordinator for help!

SMART Goal





SMART GOAL

SMART-B

S Specific

M Measurable

A Attainable

R Relevant

T Time-bound

B Barriers & Benefits

Example: SMART goal for waking up earlier

Specific: I want to wake up earlier to have more time for my morning routine.

Measurable: I'll track how many times I snooze my alarm and when I finish my morning routine.

Attainable: My schedule allows me to go to sleep early, so I can still maintain at least eight hours of sleep.

Relevant: I feel rushed trying to get to work each day. Developing better sleep hygiene would help me feel calm.

Time-bound: In four weeks, I want to wake up two hours earlier than when I usually wake up now.

Next Steps





Engaging Older Youth



- With your teen's permission, help connect them to local professionals for job shadowing and informational interviews
- Facilitate a mock interview to help them practice before a job interview
- Cook a meal together at the CASA house
- Volunteer together at a non-profit
- Set up a time for them to meet with Jennifer Reeves to discuss financial literacy
- Take a tour of MSSU, Crowder, or Franklin Tech
- Help them practice new skills
- If your teen has a wish (e.g., music lessons, dance classes, etc.), ask CASA! We might be able to help with funding.



CASA TEEN TUESDAYS!

ACTIVITIES 2024

March 26th | 5pm - 7pm



SPA NIGHT

Stop by the CASA House for a minifacial or get your nails painted.

Hosted by CASA Staff and Blacklist Laser & Cosmetics.

May 14th | 4:30pm - 6:30pm



COOKING NIGHT

Stop by the CASA House and cook a meal from scratch.

Hosted by local chef, Mikel Clark.

July 16th | 5pm - 7pm



MOVIE NIGHT

Stop by the CASA House and enjoy an outdoor movie and cookout.

Hosted by CASA Staff.

September 3rd | 5pm - 7pm



ART NIGHT

Stop by the CASA House and join us for an art project.

Hosted by CASA Staff.

November 19th | 5pm - 7pm



TEENSGIVING

Stop by the CASA House for Thanksgiving food and games.

Hosted by CASA Staff.

Please RSVP to your advocate supervisor one week prior to the event so that we can plan accordingly for supplies!



Our goal for this next year is to provide some additional activities outside of our normal CASA Kids' events throughout the year. These activities will take place at the CASA House every other month and be geared for teens 12 years and up! We encourage that the CASA or Placement be present for these events.

We will still have our Easter party in March/April, backto-school bash in August, trunk-or-treat opportunities in October, and our Christmas party in December.



https://www.fosterclub.com/

Foster Parent / Caregiver Training Professionals + Foster Parents + Supporters (Friends) Log in \geq **FosterClub DONATE** Blog + Topics Campaigns Heln + Guides LEv Leaders Get Involved About Lived Experience Leadership We are the natio Meet Our LEx Leaders Youth Advisory Boards & Leadership Groups network for your AllStar Internship National Foster Care Youth & Alumni Policy people in foster Council Peer Navigators care. Outstanding Young Leader Award LEx Leader Portal



Continuing Education

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?



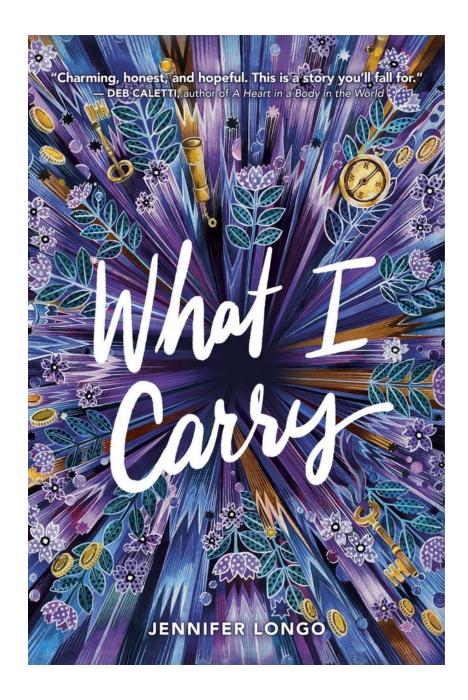
Human trafficking is the acquisition and exploitation of people, through means, such as force, fraud or deception. The practice ensnares millions of women and girls into modern-day slavery, many of whom are sexually exploited.

- 4 of 5 people who have been trafficked spent time in the child welfare system
- 12- to 14-year-olds are most often victims
- RISE Coalition: Human Trafficking Awareness & Prevention
 - Monday, June 3rd from 12-1 p.m. @ the CASA House





May 8th & June 12th from 12-1 p.m. @ the CASA House

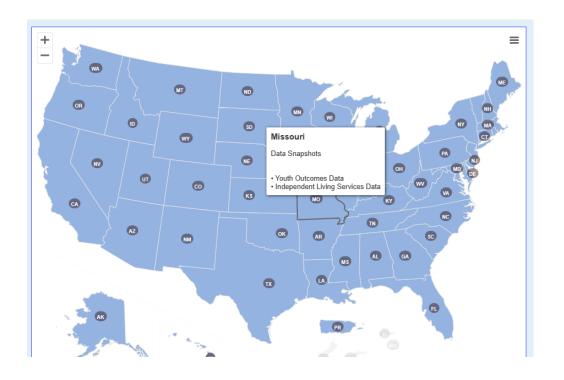


CASA Book Club



National Youth in Transition Database

The National Youth in Transition
Database (NYTD) collects information
and outcomes on youth and young
adults currently or formerly in foster
care who received independent living
services as a part of the Chafee
Program.



https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/data-research/data-and-statistics-nytd#MO_26606



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Questions?

