

## YOU'RE A YOUNG PERSON IN TRANSIT FROM YOUTHDOM TO ADULTHOOD.

For most youth in foster care, these are uncertain times. Today more than ever, if you want to travel successfully (and safely) to life on your own, you need a plan for your trip. Welcome to FosterClub's Transition Toolkit, designed to help you and your team of adult supporters take inventory of your current assets, identify your resources, and map out a plan for the challenges after foster care. It's your life — so take control and let the journey begin!

*FosterClub's*

# TRANSITION

[ in collaboration with FosteringConnections.org ]

*toolkit*

a free tool for developing a youth-driven transition plan with a team approach



the national network for young people in foster care | [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)



## a message TO SUPPORTIVE ADULTS...

*Thank you for being a supportive adult for a young person transitioning from foster care. Your role is may be more important than you — or the youth — knows. Our experience at FosterClub tells us having committed and reliable supportive adults are the number one indicator of success for young person transitioning from foster care.*

*Strengthen your role by:*

- *Read the information in this toolkit and visit [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org) for more tools to help youth prepare for life after foster care.*
- *Visit [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org) to learn more about the Fostering Connections Act.*
- *Help the youth identify their strengths AND needs.*
- *Make it clear how you are willing to support the youth.*
- *Help keep the youth on track.*
- *Celebrate success.*
- *Remember that it's the youth's life — and it's their transition plan. Mentor away, but keep in mind that ultimately, they will be the ones living out the plan.*





## YOUNG PEOPLE WHO “AGE OUT” OF FOSTER CARE — OR TURN TOO OLD TO receive FOSTER care services — OFTEN FACE THE CHALLENGES OF ADULTHOOD WITHOUT MUCH SUPPORT.

Suddenly, a young person who ages out is confronted with a daunting number of adult decisions to make, from finding safe, affordable housing to setting up utilities to securing health insurance.

The fact is, most young adults in America rely on parents to help with some of this support into their late 20s. But as a young person in foster care, it's quite possible that you aren't able to rely on that type of parental support. So it becomes critical that you develop a good plan and prepare for adulthood, including accessing as many resources as possible that can improve your odds for success.

A transition planning tool, such as this FosterClub Transition Toolkit, can help you and the adults supporting you develop a comprehensive transition plan.

A recent federal law requires that all states, during the 90 day period before a youth leaves foster care at age 18, 19, 20 or 21, must develop a transition plan for the foster youth. The plan must be individual to the young person and developed with the young person. Among the issues to be addressed are specific options on housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors, and workforce supports and employment services.

The good part about this new law is that the Government states clearly that foster youth must be directly involved in their own transition plan. But 90 days to develop a plan for life? At FosterClub we believe that, as a young person in care, you owe it to yourself to get the facts and start working on your transition plans as early as you can. The sooner you can start, the more control you'll have. You've dreamed about the day you'll be on your own. Now with the FosterClub Transition Toolkit you can do something about it.

After all, it's your life. So, get ready — and take charge. This tool is designed for you by the members of FosterClub who have hands-on experience about transitioning. Be sure to visit us online at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org), where you'll find even more information, resources and support from your peers. Continue with us at FosterClub as you make the journey from your youth to adulthood and don't forget, we welcome your input anytime.

## more ABOUT THE FOSTERING CONNECTIONS TO SUCCESS AND INCREASED ADOPTIONS ACT OF 2008 LAW (Public Law 110-351)

The new Fostering Connections law made major improvements to programs and policies related to older youth in foster care. Some parts of the new law require that states make changes, while some parts of the law offers options for states to consider adding to their foster care programs.

Specifically, Fostering Connections provides new supports and services to promote permanency and the improved wellbeing of older youth in foster care. These include foster care, adoption, or guardianship assistance payments to children after the age of 18; a requirement that personal transition plans for youth aging out are developed within 90 days prior to youth exiting foster care; extending eligibility for Independent Living Program services to children adopted or placed in kinship guardianship at age 16 or older; and extending eligibility for education and training vouchers to children who exit foster care to kinship guardianship at age 16 or older (those adopted after age 16 were already eligible).

For those who want to know exactly what the new law has to say regarding transition plans for older youth, here you go:

Section 475(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 675) now reads in part:

“during the 90-day period immediately prior to the date on which the child will attain 18 years of age, or such greater age as the State may elect under paragraph (8)(B)(iii), whether during that period foster care maintenance payments are being made on the child's behalf or the child is receiving benefits or services under section 477, a caseworker on the staff of the State agency, and, as appropriate, other representatives of the child provide the child with assistance and support in developing a transition plan that is personalized at the direction of the child, includes specific options on housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors and continuing support services, and work force supports and employment services, and is as detailed as the child may elect.”



*Center serves as a library of child welfare information and resources to help states and tribes in their efforts to implement Fostering Connections.*

*For more information about the Fostering Connections law, visit The Fostering Connections Resource Center at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org). The Resource*



# WHAT'S a Transition PLAN?

A transition plan is an investment in the future – your future. It includes an overview of the skills, knowledge and resources you'll need to prepare for life on your own as a young adult. FosterClub's Transition Plan also provides a space to write down and keep track of all the resources that are available for you. In addition, the Plan reveals the secrets to setting clear goals custom designed for your life, along with step-by-step plans for achieving them.

The FosterClub Transition Toolkit puts you in the driver's seat. —It is designed BY young adults recently transitioned from foster care FOR young people beginning the journey. They think of the Toolkit as your map to adult life on your own. You're in charge. This Toolkit is your guide. It's time to take a big step towards the adventure of your life!

The FosterClub Transition Toolkit is built around ten different domains (or topics). Each one will be part of your transition plan.

finances + money management

job + career \*

life skills

identity

permanence

education

self care + health \*

housing \*

transportation

community, culture & social life \*

In this Toolkit, each of these domains is shown as a line on a subway map, see the next page. The “subway” map will give you a look at everything you'll need to plan for on your way to successful life on your own.

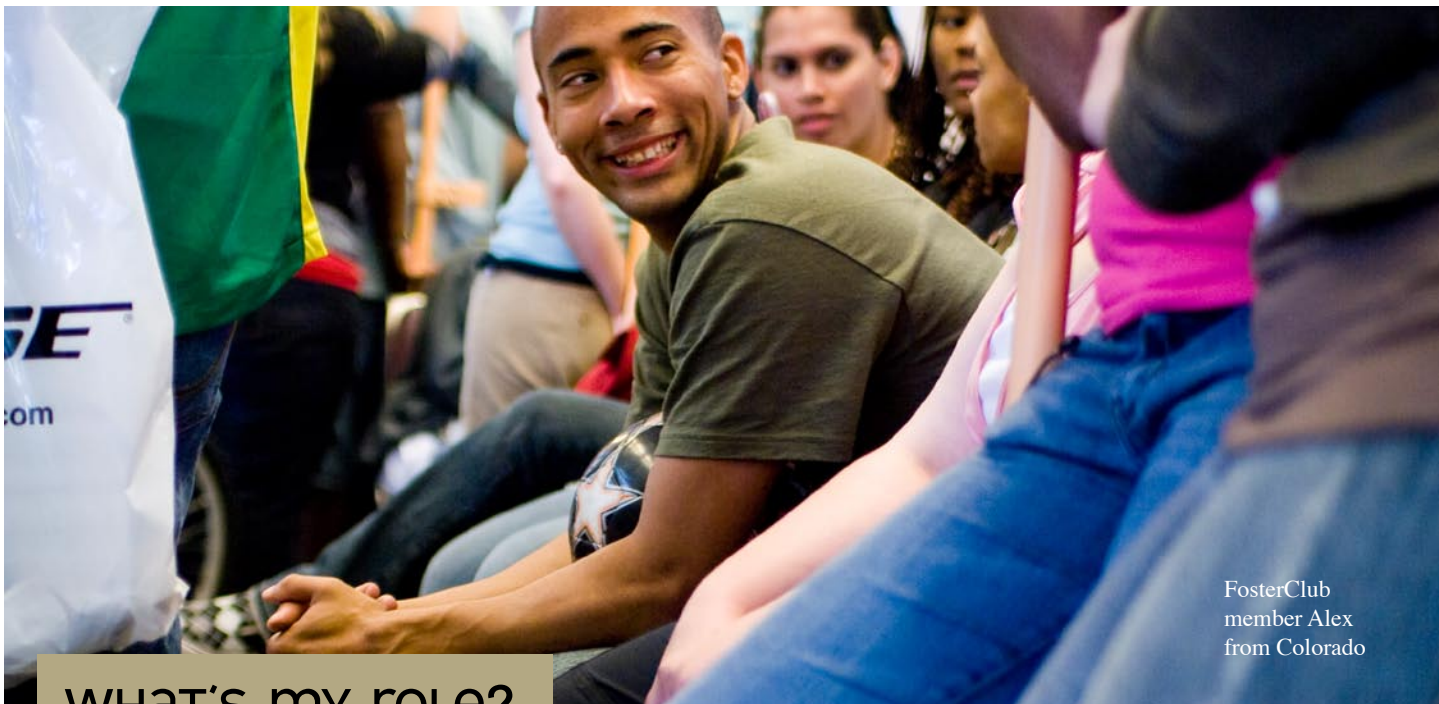
What will success look like? That's up to you to define!

\* Complete these items to comply with requirements of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increased Adoptions Act of 2008.

# WHERE TO START?

That's up to you. This map provides a quick overview of the ten different domains you'll want to check out. Just as a subway line contains many stops where you can get out and look around, each "domain line" contains several stops to explore. You'll notice assets and skills you'll want to pick up at each stop as you journey on your transition to adulthood.





FosterClub  
member Alex  
from Colorado

## WHAT'S MY ROLE?

This is your life. As you approach adulthood, you will have more and more control over decisions that affect you.

Your participation in the planning process is the best way to guarantee that your voice is heard and that the plan reflects what you want for your life.

If, at any time, you feel that you are not being provided with a voice or the support you need to create and carry out your transition plan, make sure you let someone know.

Don't miss any opportunities to speak in court or with a judge before you transition out of foster care, as the judge holds the real power to get you the resources and services you need. Your transition plan will most likely be reviewed by the court — so make sure you are there to answer any questions the judge might have and to speak up for what's important to you.

*You don't have to do it alone:*

## GET YOUR OWN PERSONAL GPS: a Transition Team

Planning for your transition to adulthood can be a little daunting. But don't worry — you can get your very own GPS system to guide you. By pulling together a team of people — called your Transition Team — you'll have access to guides who have already made the journey to adulthood. They can help show you the way and equip you with information, advice, access to resources. They can help you stay on track and will be by your side to celebrate as you achieve your goals.

Who will be on your Transition Team? Well, that's up to you. Your caseworker will certainly be involved, but you can help put your Transition Team together by identifying positive adults who have been supportive of you. Consider:

- Foster Parents or Guardians
- Teachers
- Coaches
- Mentors
- Church members or pastors
- Your CASA, Attorney or Guardian Ad Litem
- Employers
- Relatives

Remember — every successful adult has a team of supportive people behind them (just ask someone you know who's successful), so identify your team and be ready to accept some assistance along the way.



# IN THIS TOOLKIT...

## overview & detail maps

Use these maps to guide you in thinking about the things you'll need to think about as you map out your transition plan.

## transition planning worksheets

These transition planning templates are designed to help you create a plan. Each of the templates has four parts:

**What I Have.** These are the assets that you already possess that will help you with the transition to adulthood. Only list items in this section that you ALREADY have.

**Resources Available to Me.** Use this section to document resources that are available from your foster care agency or other community resource.

**This is My Plan.** What do you want to accomplish? Use this section to document your goals and the steps you will take to get there.

**Readiness Scale.** Work with your Transition Team to score your readiness within each domain. Read more on the following page.

## GET THE FASTPASS

The Transition Planning Worksheets in this toolkit are available online as a Microsoft Word document. You can type directly into the forms, which have fields that are expandable to accommodate longer answers.

*Download at*

**WWW.FOSTERCLUB.ORG**



## TIPS FOR transition planning...

### **Keep your transition plan in a safe place.**

Some of the information you document may be personal. Protect yourself from identity theft by keeping your information in a safe place.

### **Ask for info and advice.**

The adults in your life have already made the transition to adulthood. Make use of what they know... ask adults you respect for information and advice.

### **Revisit & revise.**

Creating a transition plan shouldn't be a one-time event. Make time to check your progress, see how your readiness improves, and update your goals at least every 6 months.

### **Jump in and learn more!**

Go to [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org) to find resources for foster youth. Learn from your peers who are also making the transition from foster care to adulthood.





FosterClub  
member Jojo from  
California

## Tracking Your Progress

At the bottom of each Planning Worksheet is a “Readiness Scale.” You and your team can rate how ready you are on a scale from 1 (not ready at all) to 10 (completely ready) for each of the domains. Once you’ve completed a plan for all 10 domains, you can add up all of scores to get a total score.

By keeping track of your total score, you and your transition team (caseworker, foster parent, judge, CASA, attorney, review board, mentor, etc.) can measure your progress over time as you prepare for the transition from care.

You’ll notice there isn’t a chart that tells what your total score means, or whether or not you’re ready for the transition. There is not a “perfect” or “exceptional” score. Just because you have reached a specific score level, it doesn’t mean you are guaranteed a successful transition. Instead, this chart is to track your score over time to mark your improvement. A higher score shows your achievements, increases in scores show improvement. Your score is only part of the story of your readiness to make a successful transition to life on your own.

The planning worksheets may be used by any age teen in care or older, but it is expected that a 14-year old would not be able to (and should not be expected to) get many of the items listed on the worksheets.

A lack of points in one domain does not mean failure. It just means that it might be smart for you to get an advantage in another area. For example, if you lack readiness in the Transportation Domain, you may want to make sure you have established Permanence or Community Connections.

The use of the scoring system is completely optional (some young people like to use scores, others rather not). It is OK to use the planning tools without using the scoring system.

Talk with your Transition Team, set goals for yourself, and track your progress over time.

## GET STARTED!

On the following page, complete the top half of the Overview Worksheet. As you complete the other Planning Worksheets, you can log your Transition Readiness Scores on the Overview Worksheet.

# Transition Plan overview worksheet

<b>Youth Information</b>	First Name and Initial	Last Name	
	Case Number	Independent Living Provider or Case Manager	
	Date Plan Completed	Six month follow-up due	Projected emancipation date
	Birth date (mm/dd/yy)	Current age	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female

<b>Transition Domains</b> Indicate the domains included in this transition plan, along with the Readiness Score (optional)	Completed domains	Date of 1st score	Date of 2nd score	Date of 3rd score
	<input type="checkbox"/> Finances & Money Management <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Job & Career <input type="checkbox"/> Permanence <input type="checkbox"/> Life Skills <input type="checkbox"/> Community, Culture, & Social Life <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Identity <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Self Care & Health <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list):			
	Total Readiness Score:			

<b>Additional Plans</b>	Have other community partners crafted a plan on behalf of the youth? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, consider including as part of this transition plan in order to reduce redundant planning and improve agency collaboration in serving the youth:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ansell-Casey Life Skills Plan ( <a href="http://www.caseylifeskills.org">www.caseylifeskills.org</a> ) <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Education Plan (IEP) <input type="checkbox"/> Person Centered Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Treatment Plan and Discharge Plan (D&A, Residential, Mental Health, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Voc Rehab/IPE (Individual Plan for Employment) <input type="checkbox"/> Development Disabilities Individual Support Plan (DD ISP) <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF/JOBS) <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Investment Act (WIA) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list):

## Transition Team Attach additional sheets as necessary

Name	Role	Phone Number	e-Mail
Name	Role	Phone Number	e-Mail
Name	Role	Phone Number	e-Mail

I participated in creating and approve of this Transition Plan. Youth's Signature:

Visit [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org) for more federal and state information regarding the Fostering Connections to Success and Increased Adoptions Act



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*While planning for your financial future, think about these stops along the way ... check off each stop as you 'explore it' it by doing research, asking questions, and documenting information*

☐ CHECKING ACCOUNT.

Getting one can be more difficult than you might think. Banks often require two pieces of official ID to open a new account. Open an account before you leave foster care. List the bank name for your account.

☐ SAVING ACCOUNT.

Include accounts where youth has direct access to funds.  
List the bank name.

☐ SOURCE OF INCOME

List income the youth receives (besides income from job). Social security, disability income, Chafee housing support may all be listed here. A separate sheet should be attached detailing the amount and frequency of the income, the duration that the youth will continue to receive money, the contact names and phone numbers to the agency/individual providing the support.

☐ MONTHLY BUDGET

Will you have enough money coming in to pay the bills? A monthly budget outlines all of your expenses and helps you see exactly what you'll need to cover your living expenses.

☐ CREDIT CHECKED

Do you know what your credit looks like?  
Has anyone stolen your identity and damaged your credit (it is not uncommon for foster youth to have had biological family members use their credit)?

☐ BUILD YOUR MONEY MANAGEMENT SKILLS.

List any independent living courses relating to money management that the youth has taken. Also

☐ list skills acquired in the home or at school. Skills might include credit, budgeting, balancing checkbooks/accounts, consumer skills, etc.

**SAVINGS FOR LEAVING FOSTER CARE**

Set a goal to save a specific amount of money by their emancipation date. Savings may be used to rent an apartment, for transportation, or as a slush fund for emergencies. List your current savings balance to gauge progress toward the savings goal.





## WHAT I HAVE

Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Bank account status: <input type="checkbox"/> Checking account open <input type="checkbox"/> Savings Account open <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Bank name:
--	------------

Savings for leaving foster care: Goal: \$                      Amount currently saved: \$	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly budget created
--	---

Regular sources of income (description):	Monthly Amount
	\$
	\$
	\$

Demonstrated money management skills (list):		<input type="checkbox"/> Credit checked (for identity theft)
<input type="checkbox"/> Taxes <input type="checkbox"/> Banking <input type="checkbox"/> Saving/Investing	<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting <input type="checkbox"/> Lending / Financing <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency money matters	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME

Find 'em at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org)

Assistance type	Eligibility (what I need to qualify)	Who I contact (and how to apply)

## THIS IS MY PLAN

Get ideas about how to make a plan at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Short term (1 year) goals	Steps & services (and who will help me)	Progress

Plan immediately after I leave foster care:

--

Long term goals (five years from now, my financial goal is):

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## READINESS SCALE

Needs work ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 Prepared



*Explore these ideas  
as you build a plan to  
make housing happen...*



**WHAT I HAVE**

 Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Where I live now:	Planned end date:
Housing after foster care (leave blank until arranged):	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample rental application completed
Rental <input type="checkbox"/> reference, or <input type="checkbox"/> co-signer Name:	Phone and/or email:
Back up plan (in case of emergency, this is where I'll go):	

**RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME**

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Assistance type	Eligibility (what I need to qualify)	Who I contact (and how to apply)

**THIS IS MY PLAN**

 Get ideas about how to make a plan at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Short term (1 year) goals	Steps & services (and who will help me)	Progress

Plan immediately after I leave foster care:

Long term goals (five years from now, my housing goal is):

**READINESS SCALE**

 Needs work ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 Prepared





*During the transition to adulthood, surprises about the costs of health and self care often take young people by surprise. Plan for a safe journey!*

#### HEALTH insurance

Know what type of health insurance you have access to after you leave care. Find out what you need to do to maintain eligibility for health coverage. Research what it will cost if you have to pay for your own health care. List the Medical Insurance provider and the youth's identification or client number.

#### HEALTH care PROVIDER

List your most current doctor, even if you no longer have health insurance. Compile medical records if multiple doctors/providers have been used. Confirm that your immunizations are up-to-date. Complete a comprehensive exam before leaving foster care, if possible.

#### mental HEALTH insurance

Know what type of health insurance you have access to after you leave care. Find out what you need to do to maintain eligibility for health coverage. Research what it will cost if you have to pay for your own health care. List the Medical Insurance provider and the youth's identification or client number.

#### mental HEALTH care PROVIDER

List your most current doctor, even if you no longer have health insurance. Compile medical records if multiple doctors/providers have been used. Confirm that your immunizations are up-to-date.

- ☐ **FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU'LL NEED**  
Identify ongoing need for physical health, mental health and substance abuse services (arranged comprehensive screenings, provided physical, dental and vision examinations, along with developmental and mental health screenings)
- ☐ **Prescriptions**  
Make a list of current prescriptions. Find out if health insurance will continue to cover the cost (and for how long). Determine what the prescriptions will cost if you have to pay for them on your own. Learn about the side effects of stopping prescriptions. Figure out how to keep prescriptions in a safe place.
- ☐ **HEALTH SUPPORT**  
Identify supportive individuals who can help you stay healthy, including someone who would be willing to attend medical appointments and advise you in accessing resources.
- ☐ **HEALTH EDUCATION**  
Prepare yourself with health education, including healthy sexual decision making, awareness of birth family's physical and mental health history, prevention and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, effects of trauma, substance abuse issues, constructive methods for coping with stress, addressing social and relational problems, anxiety, depression and other mental health issues.

#### Dental

Schedule a complete dental checkup and take care of any dental issues before leaving care, if possible. Identify a Dentist that you will continue to use and determine if coverage is available or what the cost will be if you have to pay

#### Vision

Arrange a comprehensive vision examination, determine a plan for meeting future vision needs (like glasses or contact lenses)

**WHAT I HAVE** Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Current <b>HEALTH</b> insurance coverage (name of company/plan):		Policy #:
Does current plan continue after leaving foster care?: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure		Anticipated end date of coverage:
Current Primary Doctor:	Clinic or Hospital:	Phone #
Health issues:		Prescriptions:

Current <b>MENTAL HEALTH</b> insurance coverage (name of company/plan):		Policy #:
Does current plan continue after leaving foster care?: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure		Anticipated end date of coverage:
Current Therapist:	Clinic or Hospital:	Phone #
Mental health issues:		Prescriptions:

Current <b>DENTAL</b> insurance coverage (name of company/plan):		Policy #:
Does current plan continue after leaving foster care?: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure		Anticipated end date of coverage:
Current Dentist:	Clinic or Hospital:	Phone #
Dental issues:		Prescriptions:

<b>VISION</b> needs:	Prescriptions:
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Health education:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Substance abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Healthy relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> Fitness	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Coping with stress	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy prevention	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/> Prevention of STDs	<input type="checkbox"/> Health self-advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

**RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME** Find 'em at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org)

Assistance type	Eligibility (what I need to qualify)	Who I contact (and how to apply)

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## THIS IS MY PLAN

Get ideas about how to make a plan at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Short term (1 year) goals	Steps & services (and who will help me)	Progress

Plan immediately after I leave foster care:

Long term goals (five years from now, my health, mental health, vision and dental goal is):

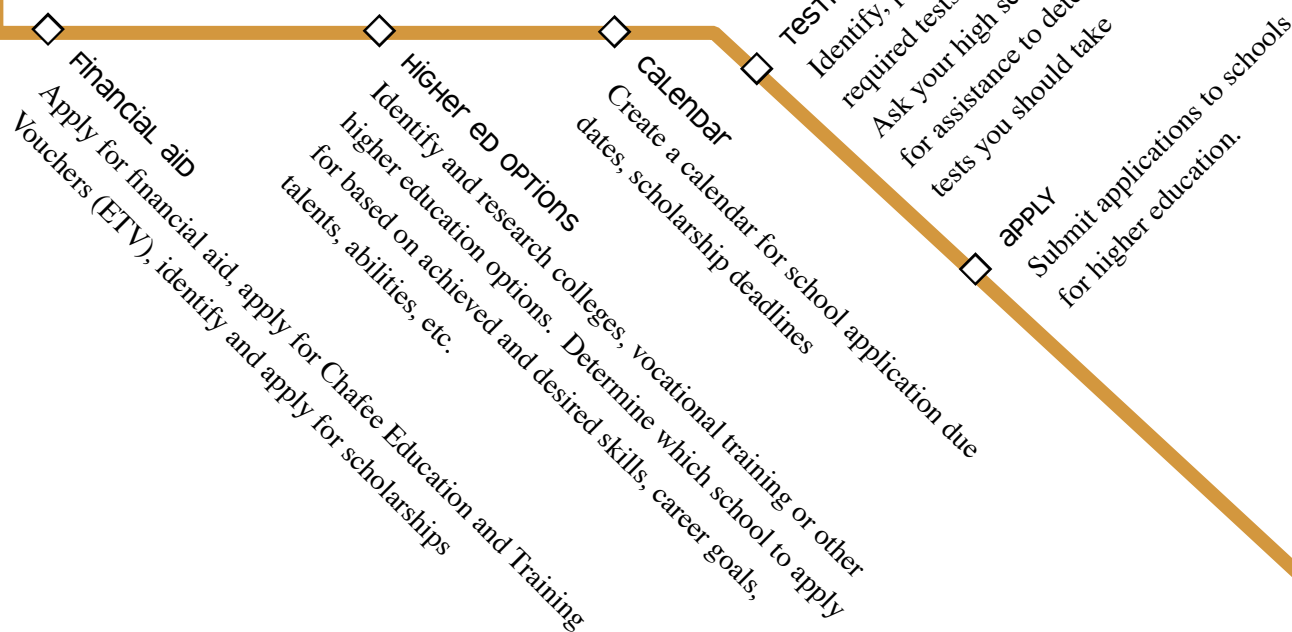
## READINESS SCALE

Needs work ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 Prepared



- ☐ **SCHOOL RECORDS**  
Collect a copy of your school records. Make sure you have records from schools attend (middle and high school) if you had multiple moves
- ☐ **SCHOOL CREDITS**  
Evaluate current school credits and determine if you are on track to graduate (if you are behind, create plan to make up missed credits or advocate for credit recovery for classes missed due to moves)
- ☐ **II.E.P. = INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN**  
If you have had an IEP, make sure you have a copy of your plan, understand the resources that are available to you, and find out how the plan might carry over to higher education
- ☐ **FINISH HIGH SCHOOL**  
Complete GED, high school or training program.  
If you won't complete these until after your 18th birthday, talk to your caseworker about remaining in care so that you have the support you need to finish

*How will you ride the education line?*



## EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Current educational status: <input type="checkbox"/> Attending full time <input type="checkbox"/> Attending part time <input type="checkbox"/> Not attending			Last grade level completed:	
Most recent school attended:			G.P.A.:	
On track to earn: <input type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> GED or modified diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Other:			Anticipated completion date:	
Math Skills:	Reading Skills:	Writing Skills:	IEP?: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure	
Previous school:			Last grade level completed:	
Previous school:			Last grade level completed:	

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME

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Assistance type	Eligibility (what I need to qualify)	Who I contact (and how to apply)

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Short term (1 year) goals	Steps & services (and who will help me)	Progress

Plan immediately after I leave foster care:

--

Long term goals (five years from now, my educational goal is):

--

## READINESS SCALE

Needs work ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 Prepared



*Got skills? There are a lot of life skills that you can (and should!) practice **BEFORE** you leave foster care.*

☐ **LIFE SKILLS SUPPORT**  
One of the most important things you can do for yourself in developing your lifeskills is to identify one or more mentaors who you can rely on to help you learn how to do some of the things listed here.

☐ **Take THE ACSLA**  
Really test your lifeskills knowledge by taking the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment at [www.caseylifeskills.com](http://www.caseylifeskills.com)

☐ **GROCERY SHOPPING**

☐ **recreation + Leisure activities**

☐ **cooking**

☐ **cleaning**

☐ **PERSONAL HYGIENE**

☐ **communication**

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

*There are lots of life skills you can learn and practice. We've listed some here, but we've left space for you to list others, too. We suggest you really check your knowledge by ataking the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment at [www.caseylifeskills.com](http://www.caseylifeskills.com)*



**WHAT I HAVE**Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment		<input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not completed	
Demonstrated knowledge of life skills:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Laundry	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation/leisure	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Hygiene	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Home safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Grocery shopping	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Legal issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Cooking	<input type="checkbox"/> ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Etiquette	<input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/> ?	

**RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME**Find 'em at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org)

Assistance type	Eligibility (what I need to qualify)	Who I contact (and how to apply)

**THIS IS MY PLAN**Get ideas about how to make a plan at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Short term (1 year) goals	Steps & services (and who will help me)	Progress

Plan after I leave foster care:

--

Long term goals (five years from now, my life skills goals include):

--

**READINESS SCALE**Needs work ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 Prepared



*How will you get  
around to accomplish  
all you've got planned?*

☐ **determine needs**  
Determine what type  
of transportation needs  
you will have for school,  
employment, medical, and  
other appointments, and  
to maintain connections  
to family and community  
(including family visits,  
church, recreation, etc.)

☐ **driver's permit.** Study and apply

☐ **driver's ed**

Ask if there is assistance from the foster care agency or  
Chafee Independent Living Program for driver's education  
classes and/or other transportation expenses

☐ **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

Research and practice using the metro, bus, train or other  
public transportation, if available in your area

☐ **insurance**

Research auto insurance rates. Find out how rates are impacted  
by where you live, what you drive, your age, and your driving  
record. Learn if there is a discount for new drivers who complete  
driver's education classes or for students with strong grades.  
Determine what the up-front insurance costs are.

☐ **compare options**

Complete a cost-comparison of your transportation options. Compare  
the costs of owning a vehicle with public transportation

☐ **emergency transportation**

Identify emergency transportation options in case of medical  
emergency or if your first plan for transportation fails

☐ **map navigation**

Practice map reading skills or learn to use online resources to retrieve directions

WHAT I HAVE

Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

My current mode(s) of transportation:

☐ my vehicle   ☐ friend/family provides   ☐ public transportation   ☐ bicycle   ☐ walk   ☐ other:

Transportation needed for (school, employment, recreation, etc.):

Driver's license status:   ☐ have license   ☐ have permit   ☐ do not have

Date obtained:

Auto insurance (company name):

Policy number:

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME

Find 'em at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org)

Assistance type

Eligibility (what I need to qualify)

Who I contact (and how to apply)


THIS IS MY PLAN

Get ideas about how to make a plan at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Short term (1 year) goals

Steps & services (and who will help me)

Progress


Plan after I leave foster care:

Long term goals (five years from now, my transportation goal is):

READINESS SCALE

Needs work   ☐1   ☐2   ☐3   ☐4   ☐5   ☐6   ☐7   ☐8   ☐9   ☐10   Prepared



*Ensure you have all of your personal documents BEFORE you leave care (it's much harder to get some of these items after you exit the system)*

#### GET STATE-ISSUED OFFICIAL PHOTO ID

Photo identification is required on many occasions. Obtaining state-issued photo ID before you leave foster care (it's something your caseworker should help you do).

#### DOCUMENTATION THAT YOU WERE IN FOSTER CARE

This may become important in qualifying for benefits, including financial aid for higher education.

- ☐ OBTAIN AN ORIGINAL COPY OF YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD  
Information about obtaining a replacement card can be obtained from [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov). Understand the importance of guarding their social security number to protect against identity theft.
- ☐ OBTAIN A COPY OF YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE  
It should be a certified, or official, copy. Learn how to replace it should it become lost.
- ☐ CITIZENSHIP DOCUMENTS
- ☐ If you were born in a country other than the United States, make sure you have a copy of all of your citizenship papers and understand completely what your citizenship rights and responsibilities are.
- ☐ CHECK YOUR CREDIT  
Ask to have a credit report run based on your social security number prior to leaving foster care. It is not unusual for young people from foster care to discover their credit has been damaged when relatives have "borrowed" their identity to turn on utilities or get credit cards.

#### ESTABLISH A PERSONAL FILING SYSTEM

Young people should establish a method of keeping track of important documents. Methods could include a designated box, an FYI Binder (visit [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org) for information), a 3-ring notebook, a filing cabinet or a file-size expandable envelope. Understand the importance of keeping personal documents safe and secure.

#### REGISTER TO VOTE

Starting at 18, register to become active in local, state and national elections and issues.

#### REGISTER FOR SELECTIVE SERVICE

If you are a male age 18 to 26, register for the selective service.



**WHAT I HAVE** Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Personal documents (description):	Status	Possession (who has them)
Birth certificate	<input type="checkbox"/> Have <input type="checkbox"/> Applied for <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have	
State-issued picture identification	<input type="checkbox"/> Have <input type="checkbox"/> Applied for <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have	
Social Security Card	<input type="checkbox"/> Have <input type="checkbox"/> Applied for <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have	
Citizen / immigration documents (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Have <input type="checkbox"/> Applied for <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have	
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Have <input type="checkbox"/> Applied for <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have	

☐ Safe personal filing system in place

☐ I know I may request a copy of my foster care case file

**RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME** Find 'em at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org)

Assistance type	Eligibility (what I need to qualify)	Who I contact (and how to apply)

**THIS IS MY PLAN** Get ideas about how to make a plan at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Short term (1 year) goals	Steps & services (and who will help me)	Progress

Plan after I leave foster care:

Long term goals (five years from now, my housing goal is):

**READINESS SCALE** Needs work ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 Prepared



*Permanence is often cited as the most important factor for ensuring a young person's successful transition to adulthood.*

☐ **understand permanence**

Learn about the various types of permanence (including adoption, reunification, guardianship and kinship care) and the differences between each. Understand how these types of permanence are different than permanent foster care, emancipation or aging out.

☐ **know your permanency plan**

Every young person in foster care should have a permanency plan. Ask your caseworker or Judge to tell you what your permanency plan is.

☐ **identify supportive adults**

Adult as their role usually decreases after the youth has emancipated from care.

☐ **identify the kinds of supports needed**

What kinds of support from adults will be helpful as you move into adulthood — and for the rest of your life? Find a list of 45 different supports in FosterClub's Permanency Pact ([www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)).

☐ **create permanency pact**

This tool may also be used to define, substantiate and verbalize a lifelong commitment an adult has made toward supporting a young person.

☐ **establish permanence**

Young people who have a permanent family connection generally fare better in their transitioning years. Find out how you can make your voice heard about your own wishes for permanence.

☐ **sibling relationships**

A relationship with a brother or sister is often cited as the single most important relationship by young people in foster care. If you were separated from siblings while in foster care, ask for assistance in reconnecting before you leave the system.

☐ **Bio-Family relationships**

Relationships with biological family members can run the range from wonderful to stressful to supportive to destructive. But in nearly all cases, relationships with family members is emotional charged for most young people from foster care. Be prepared — you may want to seek help from a therapist to work through these relationships.

**WHAT I HAVE** Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

My current permanency plan:

☐ Reunification ☐ Adoption ☐ Kinship (live with relative) ☐ Guardianship ☐ APPLA ☐ Not sure

If permanence has been achieved, who with? Name(s):

Phone:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

E-mail:

**OTHER SUPPORTIVE ADULTS**

Name(s):

Phone:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

E-mail:

Relationship &amp; supports provided:

☐ Permanency Pact  
completed

Name(s):

Phone:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

E-mail:

Relationship &amp; supports provided:

☐ Permanency Pact  
completed

Name(s):

Phone:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

E-mail:

Relationship &amp; supports provided:

☐ Permanency Pact  
completed

**RELATIONSHIP WITH BIOLOGICAL RELATIVES**

Biological relatives (including siblings):

Relationship (parent, aunt, etc.)

Status


**RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME**Find 'em at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org)

Assistance type

Eligibility (what I need to qualify)

Who I contact (and how to apply)


**THIS IS MY PLAN**Get ideas about how to make a plan at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Short term (1 year) goals

Steps &amp; services (and who will help me)

Progress


Plan after I leave foster care:

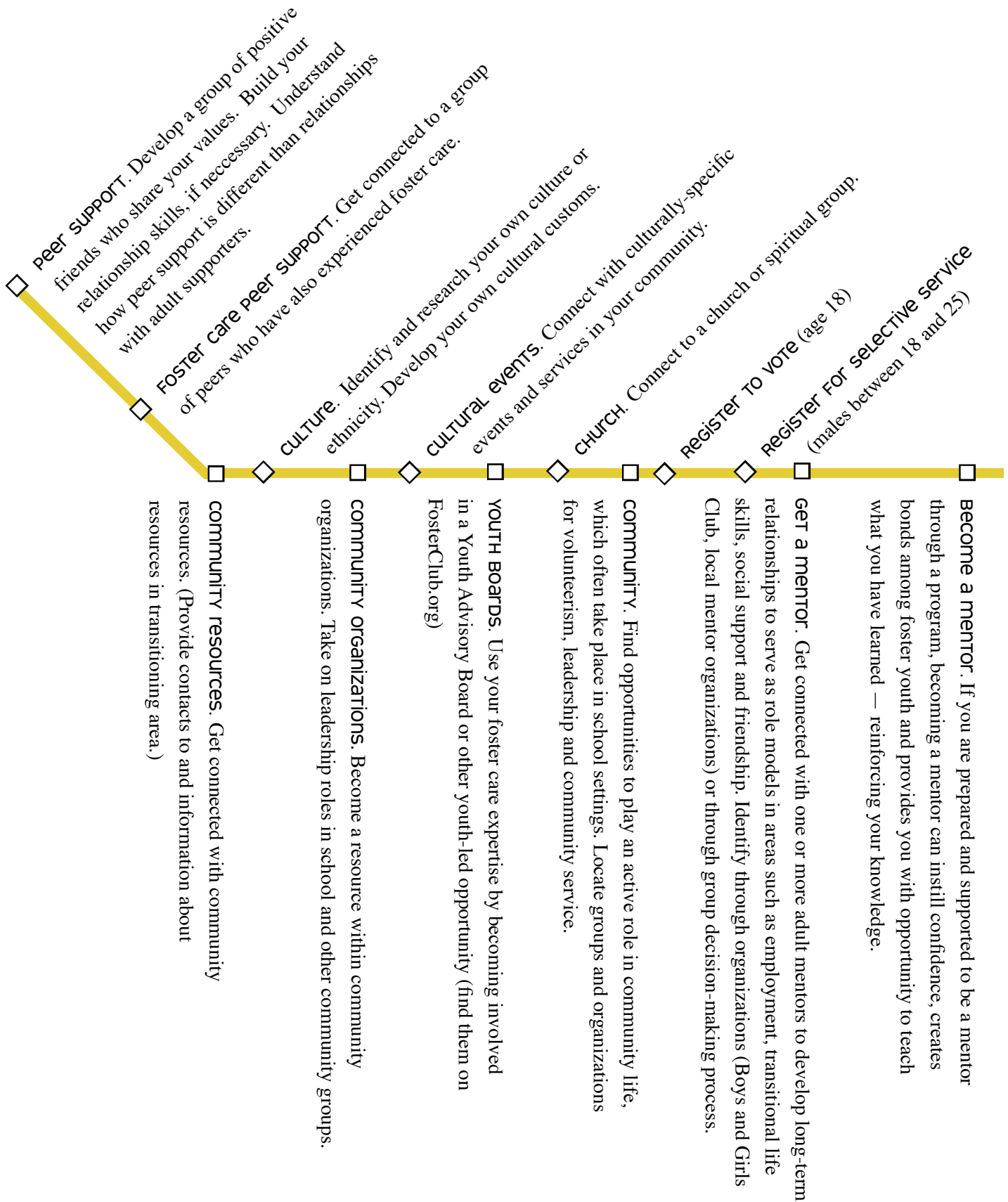
--

Long term goals (five years from now, my housing goal is):

--

**READINESS SCALE**Needs work ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 Prepared







## WHAT I HAVE

Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Community Connections (social groups, activities, volunteerism)	Contact person	Phone

Spiritual support / church:	Contact person:
-----------------------------	-----------------

Peer Circle (Names)	Length of time known	Phone

My ethnic heritage: <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/> Registered to vote
List:	<input type="checkbox"/> Registered for draft (if male)

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME

Find 'em at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org)

Assistance type	Eligibility (what I need to qualify)	Who I contact (and how to apply)

## THIS IS MY PLAN

Get ideas about how to make a plan at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Short term (1 year) goals	Steps & services (and who will help me)	Progress

Plan immediately after I leave foster care:

--

Long term goals (five years from now, my community, culture, and social life goal is):

--

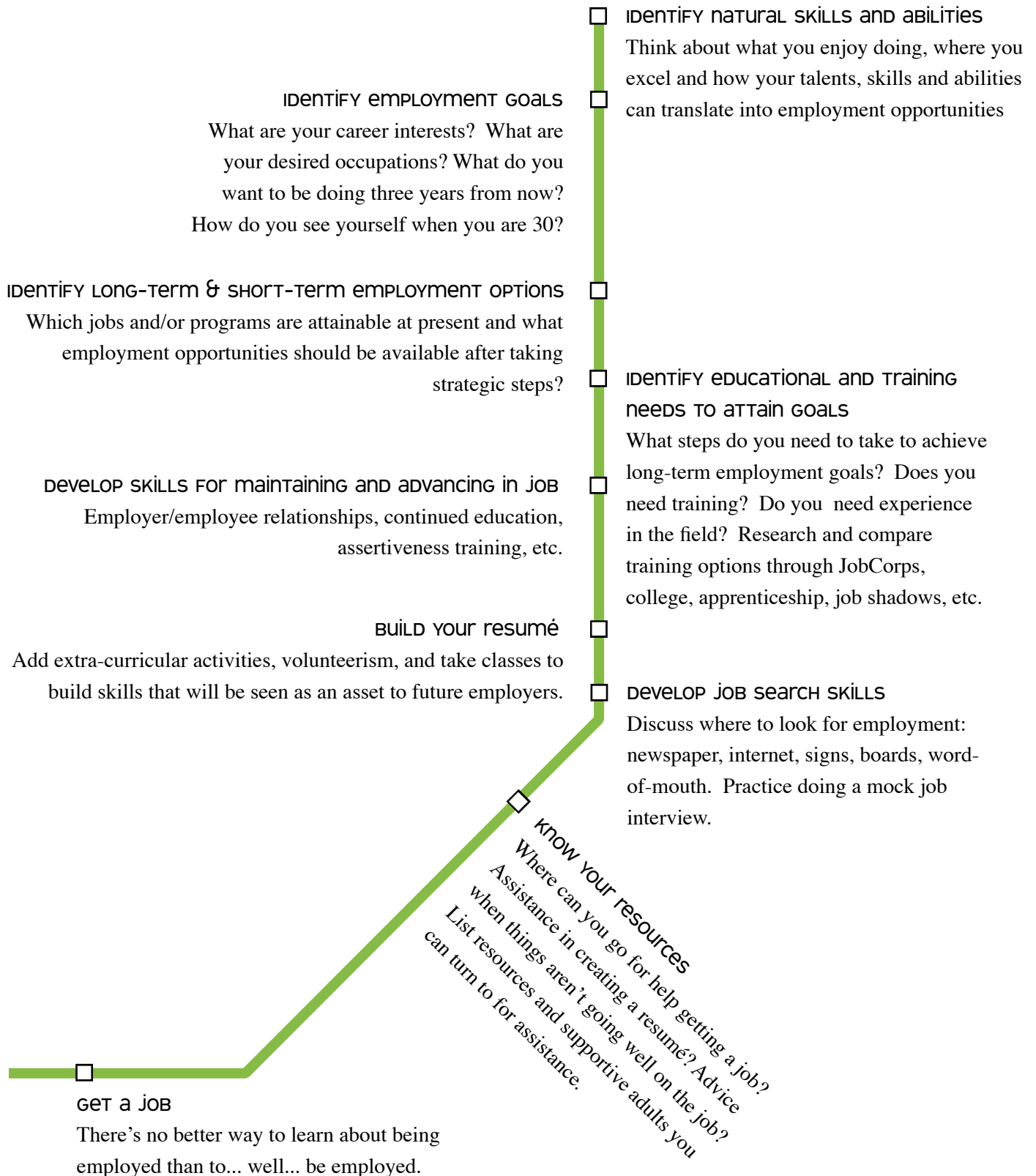
## READINESS SCALE

Needs work ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 Prepared

Visit [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org) for more federal and state information regarding the Fostering Connections to Success and Increased Adoptions Act



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**EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE**Looking for instructions? Download at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Current employment status: <input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time (Hours per week: _____ )		Position:	Pay rate:
Employer:		Phone:	
Address:		City, State, Zip:	

**PAST EMPLOYMENT**☐ Résumé completed    ☐ Sample employment application completed

Employer		Phone:	
Address:		City, State, Zip:	
Position:	Dates of employment: to	Reason for leaving:	
Employer		Phone:	
Address:		City, State, Zip:	
Position:	Dates of employment: to	Reason for leaving:	
Employer		Phone:	
Address:		City, State, Zip:	
Position:	Dates of employment: to	Reason for leaving:	
Employment Skills:			
Special Certifications :			

**RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME**Find 'em at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org)

Assistance type	Eligibility (what I need to qualify)	Who I contact (and how to apply)

Visit [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org) for more federal and state information regarding the Fostering Connections to Success and Increased Adoptions ActFrom the FosterClub Transition Toolkit, copyright © 2010 FosterClub, Inc. and FosteringConnections.org. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 United States License. Permission granted to copy, adapt, distribute and transmit this work so long as not used for commercial purposes, work is attributed, and this notice remains intact. For more information, contact FosterClub at 503-717-1552 or visit [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org) and [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org).



**THIS IS MY PLAN**Get ideas about how to make a plan at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)

Short term (1 year) goals	Steps & services (and who will help me)	Progress

Plan immediately after I leave foster care:

Long term goals (five years from now, my job and career goal is):

**READINESS SCALE**Needs work ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 Prepared



## making THE exit From care even more DIFFICULT...

Listed here are just a selection of challenges that can make the journey to adulthood more difficult. If have one or more of these challenges, it does not mean that you won't be successful as you transition out of foster care. But it does mean that you might need to do some additional planning to overcome the challenges.

Some of these challenges have to do with things you may have control over (like becoming a smoker or young parent), and others you may have no control over (like a physical disability).

Think about how you might be able to improve your odds — or your Readiness Score — by preparing even more in other areas (for example, increase your education or life skills training).

*Age.* It is almost always a disadvantage to leave foster care too young. Grant additional points as a youth is able to develop, mature and age out of the system with the support of caring adults.

*Substance abuse and addiction.* A high percentage of youth in care have parents with drug or alcohol dependency problems, which may contribute to a genetic tendency toward addiction. Youth transitioning out of care should take conscious steps to avoid the dangerous pitfalls of alcohol and drug abuse.

*Smoking.* Smoking is a high-risk activity that can cause significant health problems.

*Incarceration or criminal record.* Youth who avoid illegal behavior are more likely to stay safe and succeed as adults. Felony crimes make it very difficult to rent an apartment or obtain employment, which may need to be taken into consideration when rating your readiness.

*Young parent.* Teens and young adults who have become young parents often face tremendous challenges. Youth should understand that it is highly advantageous to establish oneself with education, housing, career, finances etc. before becoming a parent. If a youth is a teen parent, it's very important they work to gain an advantage in other areas if possible.

*Disability.* Young people who have physical, developmental, learning, or mental health disabilities may have additional difficulties transitioning to adulthood. Look for additional resources that might be available to assist young people with disabilities.

# Warning!

## Before You Leave Foster Care...

Most young people know that it's important to have a plan before leaving foster care. But each year, FosterClub hears from youth who have left foster care and lost out BIG... and regret that they didn't have the information they needed to make an informed decision. Don't let it happen to you. At the very least, make sure you've checked into these four items and know what you're getting into to by getting out of foster care...

1

Find out if you'll lose benefits — including money to help you succeed — if you leave foster care before turning 18, fail to complete applications,

2

Check if you can come back to foster care if you want or need help. Ask your caseworker or judge.

# Before

3

Have at least one “go-to” person. It should be someone that is willing to mentor you through tough situations and will provide you with a way to contact them 24/7 in case of an emergency.

# YOU GO

4

Check FosterClub's 21 THINGS checklist — things you should have *before* you leave foster care (at the very least, you'll know what your missing!). [www.fosterclub.org/21things](http://www.fosterclub.org/21things)

*But if you are **Really serious** about making a successful transition to adulthood, you'll need a complete transition plan to prepare you for the journey... this Transition Toolkit can help you map a plan for your future.*





[www.fosterclub.com](http://www.fosterclub.com)

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