

DCS Young Adult Program and Transition Planning

Services and Supports

Objectives

Understanding the “why” of Transition Planning

- What is Transition Planning
- Purpose of Transition Age Services
- Federal Requirements for Transition Planning
- Tools and Guides- making sense of Transition Planning

Young Adult Program (Y.A.P.) Services

- Successful Transition into Adulthood
- Youth Villages LifeSet
- DCS Driving Program
- Youth Advocacy Specialists
- Youth Empowerment Council (YEC)

Extended Foster Care Success Coaching Program

After-care services (TILP)

What is a Transition Plan

“Transition Planning” refers to the process of ensuring that youth in foster care are **preparing** for the transition from foster care to a successful adulthood; from youth to adult. Federal law requires transition planning to begin no later than age 14. There are several procedures outlined in state and federal law to ensure that transition planning is taking place.

Empowering young people to solve problems and make informed decisions are crucial to being successful adults and productive citizens. Teens with strong life skills can communicate effectively and build healthy relationships. They learn to manage their emotions and adapt to new situations—an essential strength in this time of transition.

Normalcy- The “Why”

- Public Law 113-183, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, was passed in 2014. This law requires states to implement a Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard to support normalcy for children in care.
- DCS Policy: Chapter 4 Section 15
- The RPPS is defined as careful and sensible decisions that maintain a child’s health, safety, and best interests while at the same time encouraging their emotional and developmental growth. These decisions are made by an out-of-home caregiver when determining whether to allow a child in the Department’s care and custody to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.



Purpose of Transition Age Services

To support all youth who have experienced foster care at age 14 or older in their transition to adulthood.

Supportive services can be delivered through the following avenues:

- Caregivers: Caregivers are the preferred method of support to young people in foster care, as it replicates the experiences and opportunities that their non-foster care peers are experiencing.
- School and community programs: school extracurricular classes/activities are a great way for young people to naturally learn about important transitional skills.
- DCS funded programs: life skills contract and supports like Fostering Sustainable Connections can support young people in the items they need to successfully transition to adulthood.
- Behavioral health: behavioral health providers can offer a variety of opportunities for youth to learn and practice skills.

Transition Planning

Ideally, transition planning begins the moment a young person enters foster care.

Transition Plans as part of the case plan that are youth-centered and youth-driven and provide services and opportunities to support all youth to make sound life decisions and develop a sense of achievement, usefulness, belonging, and empowerment.

Most systems require transition plans, it's imperative that all systems supporting a young person are discussing transitions.

During the 90-day period prior to the foster youth's 18th birthday or when they exit foster care, the plan needs to address Federal requirements of providing youth with information on Advance Directives and Health Care Directives at Life Care Planning.

Arizona Young Adult Program

Eligibility:

- Youth ages 14+
- In the care and custody of the Department
- Reside in out of home care
- Residents in Arizona



Transition planning:

- All youth 14+ in foster care are required to have a transition plan.
- If the youth entered foster care within 90 days of their 18th birthday, transition planning occurs within 10 working days.

Successful Transition to Adulthood

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

Successful Transition to Adulthood (STA) provides an opportunity for young people experiencing foster care to develop and enhance their protective and promotive factors: Youth Resilience, Knowledge of Adolescent Brain Development, Social Connections, Concrete Support in Times of Need, and Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competency. Young people will also receive support and resources to increase their ability to live successfully outside of the foster care system.

Build upon a young person's protective and promotive factors, which may include:

- Cultural and personal identity
- Education
- Employment & career planning
- Health and wellness
- Housing
- Personal finance
- Personal safety
- Positive parenting
- Relationships & community support



**Anything STA related please email
STA_referral@azdcs.gov**

LifeSet

The purpose of the LifeSet program is to provide support to foster youth age 16 and older. The young people participating in LifeSet have been identified as needing intensive support due to complex needs that might negatively impact a successful transition to adulthood.

LifeSet will provide outcome-focused and comprehensive services to young people identified by the DCS Specialists and the Permanency and Youth Services Unit (PYS). The program will provide **intensive**, individualized, evidence-informed, and community-based programming that acts as a bridge from foster care to successful adulthood for young people.

The program will provide positive and sustainable outcomes focused on relational permanency, housing, mental and physical health, career and employment, life skills, and education.



STOP and GO Driving Program

Purpose: To support young people in foster care with learning how to drive and obtaining their driver's permit or driver's license.

*Expectations: Transition plans should reflect driving education goal.



Expectations

- Caregiver and youth agree youth is ready for the responsibility of driving.
- Driving supports young adult's transition to adulthood goals.
- Young adult feels additional support will increase their driving confidence
- Young adult understand the driving laws and consequences while on the road

What To Expect

- 4 hours of classroom time to prepare for written test
- Being taken to the MVD to take the written permit test
- 10 hours of total driving time with the instructor, broken up into four 2 1/2 hour drives.
- 4th driving lesson will be a road test with instructor
- Instructor will transport youth to MVD to obtain their driver's license.

Eligibility

- Permit Requirements
 - ▶ Must be at least 15 years and 6 months old.
 - ▶ Must pass written and vision tests
- Driver License
 - ▶ Must be at least 16 years old.
 - ▶ Must hold an Arizona drivers permit for at least six months. (If enrolling in the driving program, they require young adults to take written permit test even after 18 years old)

Legal Requirements

Youth under 18: The application for an instruction permit or driver license must be signed by at least one adult 18 and older

- ▶ Living in a foster home, Foster Parent must be in agreement to sign for the young person. Foster parent will bring notice to provider to MVD when obtaining permit.

The adult will be responsible for any negligence or willful misconduct when the teen is driving.

- ▶ Youth Living in a group home: Only the Parents can sign.

Remember: DCS employees, Group Home Staff or contractors are unable to sign for permits and drivers license.

Vital Documents Needed

- Original or certified copied of birth certificate
- Social security number
- Two documents that prove Arizona residency.
- For questions about missing documents, follow up with DCS to complete voucher process with ADOT prior to completing the Driving Program referral.

Education

Education Tuition Voucher (ETV)

ETV provides funding for eligible post-secondary education and training programs (college/university, culinary arts, and other vocational based institutions). Eligible students may receive up to \$5,000 per year, not to exceed the total cost of attendance.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Current or former foster youth on or after their 16th birthday
- U.S. citizen or qualified non-citizen
- Resident of Arizona
- Has accessed ETV funding less than the 5-year limit
- If they are in good standing and progressing towards earning a credential, they remain eligible for funding until their 26th birthday.

Pell Grant:

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Youth who were in foster care, adopted or entered a permanent guardianship on or after their 13th birthday do not count parental income for determining college financial aid (including the Pell Grant) on FAFSA.

Arizona tuition waiver:

The Arizona Tuition Waiver is available to foster youth and former foster youth attending public Arizona State Community Colleges, and Universities. Young Adults can apply for the Tuition Wavier as they apply for ETV at www.statevoucher.org.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Must be a current or former foster youth who:
- Was in foster care on or after their 14th birthday
- Is a U.S. citizen or qualified non-citizen
- Personal assets (bank account, car, home, etc.) cannot be over \$10,000
- If they are in good standing and progressing towards earning a credential, they remain eligible for funding until their 23rd birthday.



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DCS Education
Specialists

Youth Advocacy Specialists (YAS)

- Former foster youth with lived expertise
- Advocate with and for foster youth ages 14 until their 21st birthday
- Transition planning
- Statewide service
- Attends our Youth Empowerment Council (YEC)

- Questions and referrals : Youthservices@azdcs.gov



Arizona DCS Youth Empowerment Council (YEC)

Mission:

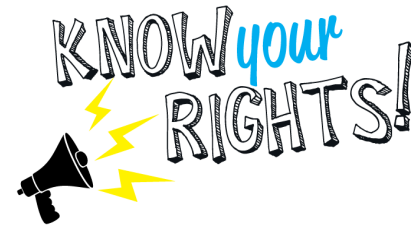
- Improve the Experience of Foster Care for Youth
- Inform youth in congregate care of their rights and opportunities made available by the Department
- Reduce the number of failed adoptions and guardianships

Eligibility:

- All youth must be at least age 14 but not older than 23
- Must reside in the State of Arizona to join the council

Location:

- Currently in Maricopa and Pima regions



If you know of any interested youth, please have them contact DCSYEC@AZDCS.gov.

Follow: @AZ_YEC on Instagram

Introduction to EFC Success Coaching Program

The EFC “Success Coaching Program” is a CONTRACTED service which is replacing standard DCS Case Management for Young Adults 18+ and will:

- § Support and prepare young adults at 17.5 years of age
 - ∅ EFC Success Coach will be assigned to youth who are identified as likely to reach the age of 18 in out of home care at age 17.5 or older;
- § Engage in the preparation for adulthood and provide young adults with intensive (as required), “coach-like” case management at 18 & older;
- § Ensure permanent connections to caring adults, cognitive and social-emotional competencies (life skills), opportunities for educational programming and person-centered transition planning;
- § Provide young adults the opportunity to prepare and achieve outcomes equal to or better than non-Foster Care experienced young adults.

Extended Foster Care (EFC)

Expectations:

- Supports the young adult after their 18th birthday until their 21st birthday
- Housing, education, employment, parenting/family support
- Voluntary program
 - Meet with EFC Coach once a month to check in
 - EFC Reviews every 6 months to ensure services and supports are in place to help the young adult move towards permanency and a successful transition to adulthood

Can leave the program at any time after 18 years old, but should be a planned transition out of the program

Requirements:

- Has signed the Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement
- Is 18, 19, or 20 years old
- **Where can they live?** They can participate in EFC if they live in an approved living arrangement.
 - Living on their own
 - Living with a roommate
 - Cannot live with the parent of removal
- Has an individualized case plan that outlines their successful transition into adulthood
- Is ONE of the following:
 - Completing secondary education or GED or enrolled in postsecondary or vocational education
 - Employed at least 80 hours a month (part time)
 - Participating in a program that promotes employment or removes barriers to employment (KTS, AZCA ILS) and/or
 - Unable to be a full-time student or employed because of a documented medical condition

What is Transitional Independent Living Program (TILP)

SERVICE ELIGIBILITY

- Resident of Arizona
- Young person ages 18 through 20.
- Previously in the care and custody of any state foster care or federally recognized Tribal Foster Care Program at age sixteen (16) or older.

SUPPORT OFFERED THROUGH THIS SERVICE:

Navigation support for one-on-one assistance towards goals related to:

- Employment
- Locating housing
- Keys to Financial Future Curriculum
- Educational and/or vocational support
- Medical and Behavioral Health support and enrollment in YATI for eligible youth.
- Funding assistance may be available toward transition to adulthood goals.
- Assistance securing education funding through the Pell Grant and Arizona Tuition Waiver.

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Joie Hudson, Permanency and Youth Services Coordinator: Joie.Hudson@azdcs.gov

PYS unit: youthservices@azdcs.gov

- Young adult program general questions
- Youth Advocacy Specialist referrals
- Life Set referrals

DCS Driving Program: drivingprogram@AZDCS.gov

Youth Empowerment: DCSYEC@azdcs.gov

STA: STA_referral@azdcs.gov

- STA referrals
- Transitional Independent Living program (TILP) referrals

Education: educationspecialist@AZDCS.gov

EFC Success coaching program: ExtendedFosterCareReview@AZDCS.gov

PYS contact information:

