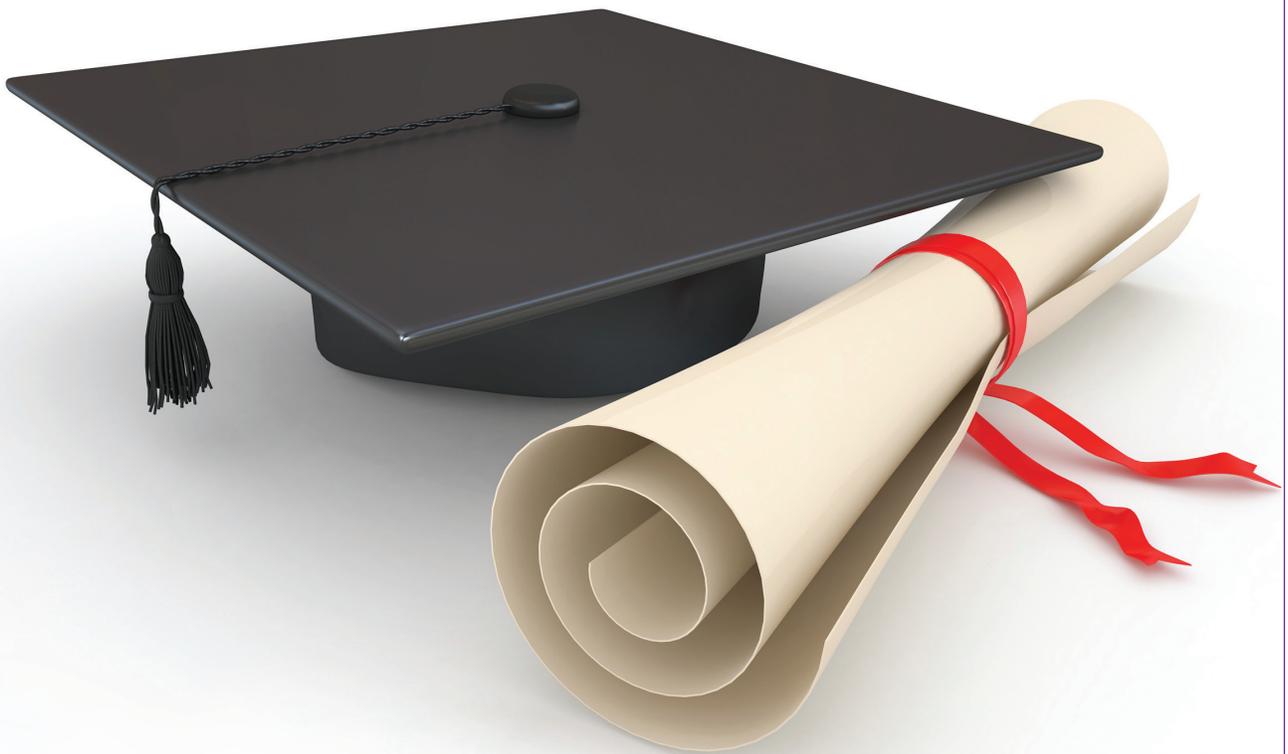


Outline to Improve the Postsecondary Educational Outcomes of Students from Foster Care



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By:

Foster Care to Success

Maria Garin Jones, MSW





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SECTION ONE: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Young people that have been involved with the child welfare system face significant challenges as they transition to adulthood. They experience homelessness, incarceration, dependence on public assistance, unemployment, and out-of-wedlock parenthood at disproportionately higher rates than their same-age peers (Courtney, 2009; Courtney and Dworsky, 2006; Cook, Fleischman, and Grimes, 1991). A recent study found that one out of every four teens in care gives birth before age 20 and as many as 40 percent have a second child during their teen years (Putnam-Hornstein, Cederbaum, King & Needell, 2013). Many foster youth also suffer from complex trauma and such trauma has a serious impact on executive function and the ability to learn; these effects often continue well into adulthood (van der Kolk, 2005). Their rates of high school graduation and college completion lag behind their non-foster care peers and this lack of postsecondary education and credentials undermines their ability to adapt and compete in a changing economy. Despite their best efforts to move towards productive adulthood, they encounter numerous barriers to self-sufficiency and are clearly among America's most vulnerable citizens.

These dismal life outcomes are well-documented for youth from foster care; however, interventions are emerging at the program, practice and policy levels aimed at changing the trajectory of their lives and breaking the cycles of poverty and system involvement (Fostering Success in Education: National Fact-sheet on the Educational Outcomes of Children in Foster Care, 2014). Foster youth need every advantage as they transition to adulthood. Because it has been well-established that postsecondary education and training are essential to economic mobility, providing support and resources to encourage the completion of such programs is one strategy to facilitate entry into career-focused employment.



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In recent years, the efforts of policymakers and advocates have resulted in the passage of legislation at the federal and state levels designed to significantly improve the outcomes of this population. The Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program (ETV) in 2001 and the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 established federal support for addressing the educational needs of children and youth in foster care. However, their impact has yet to be fully captured and quantified.

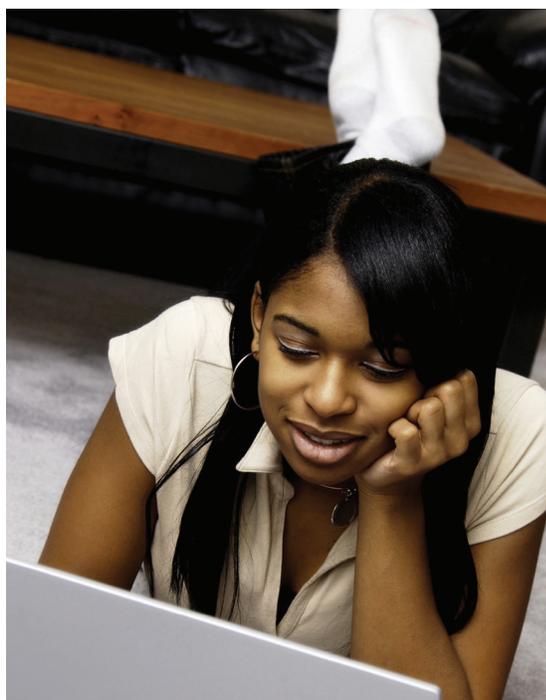
Similarly, statewide efforts, such as those in California, Washington State, Ohio, Texas, Virginia, North Carolina, Michigan, and Arizona have actively engaged broad groups of stakeholders and young people in comprehensive planning and cross-systems collaboration to address the disparities which exist between foster youth and their non-system peers (Gonzalves, 2013).

Of particular note are the efforts currently underway in California. Through a partnership between the California Departments of Education and Social Services, a linkage was created between each system's datasets to facilitate information sharing and inform the landmark study, *Invisible Achievement Gap*. Through this data-sharing effort, researchers examined the state's entire K -12 population of students in foster care. They unequivocally documented their poor educational outcomes as well as the clear need to identify students in foster care as a distinct sub-group. To ensure the academic success of all students from foster care in California, *Education Equals Partnership*, an initiative of the Stuart Foundation, was created to improve their educational outcomes across the education continuum.

Washington's *Passport to College* Program has documented success among program participants with regards to retention and completion through its focus on pre-college preparation for high school-age foster youth, a scholarship for students attending in-state schools, and both academic and support services at participating colleges. (Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2012).

Ohio Reach provides support services through foster care liaisons available at state universities and community colleges. They also encourage cross-systems collaboration by providing information and resources to both education and child welfare professionals.

In Michigan, the state-wide initiative, *Fostering Success Michigan* (FSM) is focused on increasing awareness, access and success in postsecondary education for foster youth between the ages of 12 and 25. The FSM website provides youth with information and resources across multiple life domains.





The mission of *Education Reach for Texans* is to support postsecondary success for youth in foster care and eliminate barriers facing this group. Through their state-wide conferences, they bring professionals from child welfare and higher education together to promote the exchange of ideas, networking and the development of campus-based support programs.

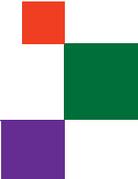
North Carolina Reach is a state-funded scholarship offered to youth who were adopted after age 12 or aged out of foster care at age 18, for up to four years of undergraduate study at North Carolina public colleges and universities. NC Reach provides

comprehensive student support, including mentors, care packages and internships. Students remain eligible until their 26th birthday.

The *Great Expectations* program supports Virginia's foster youth as they make the transition from high school to community college and from foster care to living on their own. Coaches provide support services designed to improve educational success and help youth overcome obstacles.

The *Arizona Tuition Waiver Program*, launched as a five year pilot program in 2013, covers tuition for qualifying students attending universities under the jurisdiction of the Arizona Board of Regents and community colleges. Administered by Foster Care to Success, the tuition waiver program is managed in concert with the AZ ETV program, which allows for coordination of federal and state resources. Through this partnership between higher education and child welfare, student outcomes will be tracked and evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the program.

This **Outline** provides an overview of what we know about the barriers young people from foster care experience in postsecondary education, and sheds light on why they fare so poorly. Furthermore, it provides a series of recommendations about what the fields of child welfare and higher education need to do *differently* to change the educational trajectories of this vulnerable group and advance a national movement that prioritizes the improvement of postsecondary educational outcomes for youth in foster care. This outline will be elaborated in the full Call to Action.



SECTION TWO: WHY DO YOUNG PEOPLE IN FOSTER CARE FARE POORLY IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION?

The journey to adulthood for young people in our society involves a series of transitions during which they take on more responsibility, make choices, and learn from mistakes. Typically, motivated teens in high school are able to identify their strengths and interests and explore the possibilities of the future through family conversations as well as through college preparation and career technical programs. Foster youth are often denied these opportunities.

Indeed, a “curious reality” is evident when we examine the transition experiences of youth who “age out” of foster care (Blome, 1997). Despite the experiences of abuse and neglect, limited opportunities to engage in the application of critical life skills such as money management and career planning, and the absence of caring and consistent relationships, these youth are expected to be self-sufficient at a time in their lives when their non-foster care peers have continued parental support and enjoy the luxury of a financial as well as an emotional safety net. For young adults from foster care, this journey is arduous, stressful, and beset with challenges that threaten their ability to pursue higher education and access opportunities that will lead to career success and productive adulthood.

THE ISSUE: The vast majority of youth in foster care are not college ready.

Overwhelmingly, youth from foster care aspire to attend college although their rates of actual enrollment and completion are not commensurate with their stated intent (Courtney, et al., 2004; McMillan et al., 2003). Eighty-five percent of foster youth say that they want to go to college, but only half of them graduate from high school and a mere 20 percent start a postsecondary program (Fostering Success in Education: National Factsheet on the Educational Outcomes of Children in Foster Care, 2014). *The issue is not lack of desire on the part of these students but rather lack of preparation and readiness to take on the challenges of higher education.*

Placement instability, school transience, and high rates of absenteeism are well-documented barriers to K-12 educational achievement (Snodgrass 2010). Academic deficits and lack of preparedness to take on the rigors of college-level coursework persist for students in foster care and significantly impede their ability to be successful at the postsecondary level. On average, high school seniors in foster care read at a seventh grade level (Fostering Success in Education: National Factsheet on the Educational Outcomes of Children in Foster Care, 2014). In California, statewide testing clearly documents an achievement gap for students in foster care, which becomes most significant in the upper grade levels (Wiegmann, W., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Barrat, V.X., Magruder, J. & Needell, B. 2014).



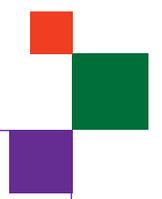
Students in foster care may also experience school behavior problems that impact attendance and achievement. The Midwest Study found that 17- and 18-year-old participants were more than twice as likely to report having been given out-of-school suspension and more than three times as likely to report having been expelled as a nationally representative sample of their peers (Courtney et al., 2004).

In addition, young people from foster care suffer from mental health conditions at a higher rate than the general population (Courtney and Dworsky 2006; McMillen et al. 2005, Pecora et al. 2005). As they transition out of care, foster youth often struggle to obtain and maintain affordable medical insurance and many may be dealing with physical and/or mental health issues that are going untreated. Although foster youth now may be eligible for Medicaid until the age of 26 through the Affordable Care Act of 2010, access is not automatic and navigating a dense state bureaucracy may impede their uninterrupted coverage (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2013).

Despite increased attention in recent years to the educational plight of children in foster care, there remains a disconnect in the field about how to implement policies, programs, and practices that prioritize education. While in elementary and secondary school, young people must be able to access and participate in opportunities that promote achievement and address areas of remediation. They need a strong academic and personal foundation that puts them on a path to completion of a postsecondary program, resulting in a certificate or credential and successful entry into the workforce. Unfortunately, too many students from foster care encounter barriers that keep them focused on their day-to-day survival rather than being able to envision and achieve a positive future.

THE SOLUTION: Make high school count for students from foster care.

To achieve successful outcomes in postsecondary education, students must be college-ready; they need to understand that earning a certificate or degree requires commitment and sustained hard work over time. Young people need information about the availability of educational opportunities and concrete guidance to maximize their high school years and the accompanying opportunities available to them. Youth must attend school regularly, get good grades, participate in college preparation programs, and take ACT and SAT tests. They have to be able to read, write, compute, analyze, and synthesize information, but they also need to be able to manage their time efficiently. They must learn to balance multiple and often competing responsibilities, and work well and interact appropriately with peers and instructors. If foster youth are faced with obstacles that interfere with their ability to do any of these tasks, then, together, the caregivers and professionals working with them need to address those challenges in a timely manner. Interactions and interventions with youth must lay the groundwork for their future success so they can develop the academic, personal, and social competencies needed for productive and happy adulthood.



THE ISSUE: Youth in foster care may not connect postsecondary education and training programs with successful entry into the workforce and self-sufficient adulthood.

Historically, the child welfare system was designed to assume responsibility for children and youth that could not be cared for by their own families. The resulting system identifies sources of familial dysfunction and confers diagnoses; practitioners are not trained to facilitate the educational transitions of young people leaving care. Child welfare is often oriented towards the deficits of the individual and family. Efforts by these agencies to identify interests and aptitudes and connect teens with educational opportunities and career pathways may not be consistent. Such conversations may take second place to conversations around the realities of transitioning to independence.

THE SOLUTION: Connect youth with opportunities to identify strengths, talents, and interests while they are in high school.

Young people from foster care must embark on their postsecondary educational journey with a strong sense of what their interests and talents are, and how they might translate into a fulfilling career. While they are in high school, they need to have access to opportunities that will help identify aptitudes and show how these might translate into a career.



Secondary education must be a meaningful experience; one in which they are able to “connect the dots” between higher education and having the life they envision for themselves. In 1964, the federally-funded Upward Bound Program was created to support low-income high school and first generation college students. Seven additional programs, supporting students, training educators and providing incentives to institutions, have been added under the umbrella name TRIO. Students from foster care are eligible to participate in all of these opportunities; however, they are not always included in outreach and engagement efforts.

While college provides many opportunities for personal exploration and growth, most students from foster care do not enjoy the luxury of time when it comes to deciding on a major and specific career focus. With time-limited financial resources and programmatic supports, it is imperative that they understand their options and make educational choices that will move them forward and enable them to successfully enter the workforce. They need to be informed about postsecondary pitfalls such as dropping or failing classes, repeated transfers to new schools, multiple changes of major, dropping out of school, delayed entry into postsecondary study, and accumulating student loan debt. These mistakes come at a high cost; they waste valuable time and money, and significantly impede the ability of these students to achieve self-sufficient adulthood.



THE ISSUE: There is federal, state, and local funding available to help foster youth. However, understanding eligibility, gaining access to and using existing resources to meet educational, housing, and personal needs is often challenging for youth, caregivers, and professionals.

There are multiple resources at the federal and state levels, such as Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs), federal Pell grants, and independent and transitional living programs that can provide assistance to foster youth. However, to ensure that young people will participate, they need to be informed about how these types of federal and state programs can help them achieve their goals. Without a clear understanding of their value, or the expectations for their participation, many youth are not willing to stay in foster care to access services.

Retaining eligibility and remaining involved are also not always easy for this age group as they strive for independence. Because the child welfare system was designed to protect and care for children, it is not particularly flexible or nimble. Consider the numbers of youth who leave care at the age of 18, despite the option they are offered to receive continued support from the child welfare system. Due to their experiences in foster care, a desire to reunite with biological family, or perhaps, a belief in their own ability to “make it” without outside assistance, they may turn away from funding and supports that can provide them with the stability and security that they need to be able to complete postsecondary education and training programs. While developmentally appropriate program models for this age group are emerging, it remains challenging to maintain meaningful youth engagement when youth do not make the connection between their active participation in such programs and the potential pay-off for their futures.

The availability of state and local resources also varies greatly depending on location. Currently, 21 states offer some form of tuition waiver for students that have been in foster care and each state has its own policy and process for accessing the waivers. Some states provide additional stipends, grants, or scholarships to students from foster care, but to take advantage of the various forms of support youth must be able to successfully navigate complex systems and complete multiple applications.

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In addition to finding resources for which they are eligible and then completing the required applications, they must also understand how funds are disbursed and what they have to do to maintain their funding. Not all sources of support are given directly to young people – funds may be paid to their school to cover tuition and fees or be applied to housing costs, and youth may not be aware of the way in which these resources are allocated on their behalf. Weaving together this patchwork of resources makes it exceedingly complicated for youth, as well as their caregivers and the professionals working with them, to cobble together a plan for covering their educational, housing, and personal expenses as they transition to young adulthood.

Furthermore, monies may be delayed due to bureaucracy or faulty system processes. Such delays impact students from foster care in many ways - they may not be able to register for classes, purchase books, or cover essential living expenses. Delays in funding may cause youth to accept student loans that they would not have needed had their funding been disbursed on time. Creating a realistic budget to identify spending, saving, and potential shortfalls remains a significant challenge, particularly when youth do not know if funding will be available, or if it is, whether it will arrive on time. Unfortunately, students from foster care are often forced to focus on their short-term survival instead of planning for their long-term financial well-being, because they are tasked with figuring out how to pay for education and training while mired in the bureaucracy of multiple systems.



THE SOLUTION: Work with young people to help them fully understand and manage their resources.

For foster youth who have had extremely limited opportunities to manage their own money, figuring out how to pay for school, live independently, and manage expenses with minimal assistance are not developmentally appropriate expectations. However, this is the all too common reality facing most students from foster care, with whom conversations about the strategic management of their resources are not likely to occur.

Students need to be able to maximize the resources at their disposal, because funding is time-limited and tied to continuous progress toward a degree or certificate. Youth, as well as those supporting them, need to understand the services and supports for which they are eligible so that they can evaluate them and make informed decisions about participating.

Furthermore, financial education must capture the full spectrum of resources available to young people in the present time, as well as what they need to do to ensure a stable and prosperous future for themselves. Youth, in partnership with their caregivers and the professionals working with them, need a mechanism to quantify funds available to the student directly, as well as those paid on their behalf. Only then will they be able to understand their true financial reality and create a plan for addressing shortfalls. Effective resource management is an essential skill, particularly for young people who have no financial safety net.

THE ISSUE: Youth from foster care need more than money to be successful in college.

Davis (2006) noted that the provision of financial support in isolation is insufficient to promote improved postsecondary outcomes for students from foster care. Dworsky and Perez (2010) found that students participating in campus support programs in the states of Washington and California valued the academic guidance and opportunities for mentoring and leadership they received, as much as they valued housing and financial aid assistance. One finding of particular significance was that the students in these programs were likely to report gaining a sense of “belonging” to the program rather than just focusing on the financial incentives for participating. In short, programs that simply provide financial assistance do not meet young people’s need for developmentally appropriate supports and opportunities, or their need for a sense of community.

Foster youth must manage multiple and often competing practical life responsibilities that can impede their ability to enroll, attend, persist, and complete postsecondary programs. Because foster youth cannot rely on the support of family for necessities such as housing and financial help after high school, they are faced with the challenges of independent adulthood before they are ready. In addition to limited financial resources, barriers to postsecondary education may include a lack of housing, the need for full-time employment, unreliable transportation, or parenting responsibilities (Courtney, Dworsky, Lee

& Raap, 2010). If left unaddressed, these nonacademic obstacles can derail a student’s academic career.



One of the most difficult barriers facing college students from foster care is finding safe, stable and affordable housing that is conducive to attending school. While many students live in dorms while in classes are in session, they struggle to find housing while on breaks. For students attending community colleges or technical/vocational programs, dorms are generally not available and they report challenges with securing off-campus housing. Some states, such as California, have good transitional housing programs, but youth need to be in care in order to access them.

Transportation is also an issue for many students. Seventeen states do not allow foster youth to obtain a driver’s license, and even in those states which do, the process may be difficult if not impossible for youth without a stable placement and the assistance of supportive adults. Many students from care have to rely on inefficient



public transportation or others to drive them to and from school, work and home. They may have to walk long distances or wait extended periods for the bus, and due to lack of planning or delays, they may arrive late or miss classes altogether. Youth with cars do not always fare better. Car payments, and costs associated with car maintenance, gasoline and insurance may further strain already limited resources. In a recent survey of students, 61% rated unreliable transportation as one of their top three barriers to educational success (FC2S survey, October 2013).

Parenting students also experience their own unique set of challenges. In addition to balancing their personal, work and school demands, they have the added responsibility of caring for their child(ren). Finding and keeping affordable, reliable daycare is of primary concern to these students. Single mothers may not receive the child support they are due and obtaining the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid can be a long, arduous process. In short, these students are plagued by the same problems faced by their non-parenting peers, further compounded by the responsibilities of parenthood.

THE SOLUTION: Blend financial, social, and strategic supports to help young people resolve barriers to their success.

Unrau et al. (2011) found that students from foster care have a more favorable perception of college and are more receptive to student supports in academics, personal counseling, and social enrichment than their non-foster care peers. However, despite their reported levels of positive engagement in college, good intentions and a sense of hopefulness about the future do not necessarily translate into having the competencies needed to persist and graduate. This “perfect storm” of factors described by Unrau is likely to lead to academic failure and college drop out.

Young people need a range of supports to be successful in college. Certainly, financial assistance is critically important, particularly for students who are struggling to meet their own basic needs. However, as Dworsky and Perez (2010) pointed out, students need more than just money, and place great value on the interpersonal and emotional supports that they receive as a result of participating in a campus-based program. Opportunities to experience a sense of connection to others through involvement in other campus activities, clubs and related programs are important as well. Students may also require more strategic supports depending on their individual needs or situation. These supports may take the form of information, specialized academic assistance, or programming designed for a particular group of students such as those who are parenting.



SECTION THREE: RECOMMENDATIONS

In recent years, the issues confronting young people transitioning out of foster care have been at the forefront of policy, program and practice improvements. There has been significant movement in the fields of child welfare and education to acknowledge the unique challenges encountered by this population, as well as to develop strategies for improving their educational and life outcomes. However, despite increased focus on the realities facing foster youth, efforts to implement change at the national, state, and local levels have been sporadic, inconsistent, limited and underfunded. Access to information, resources, and developmentally appropriate services remains largely dependent upon the jurisdiction in which the young person was in care as well as on the ability of that young person to successfully navigate complex systems in order to utilize all available resources.

The time for action is now. Young people from foster care have the same hopes, fears, and desires for a happy and productive adulthood as their non-system involved peers. However, their ability to achieve the future they envision for themselves is limited by the inadequacy of the preparation they have received, and constrained by the siloed efforts of large bureaucratic systems to promote self-sufficiency by addressing specific problem areas in isolation from each other. As advocates, higher education and child welfare professionals, caregivers, and volunteers, we need to ask ourselves *what do our young people need to thrive in postsecondary education and training programs and leave ready to enter the workforce?*

Simply put, they need:

- Cross-systems collaboration between child welfare and education that facilitates information and data-sharing and open communication, and promotes positive experiences across the education continuum;
- Participation in programs that provide evidence-based interventions to help them explore their options, build skills and competencies, and access resources that support academic, personal, social, and emotional development; and
- Connections to caring adults who will value their unique strengths and talents, meaningfully engage them in planning for their futures, and provide them with the strategic, motivational, and emotional support and resources needed for productive adulthood.

Considering the wealth of knowledge about what youth need to be successful in postsecondary education, as well as the considerable interest and synergy in the fields of child welfare and higher education, large scale, systemic change is possible. Together, we can change the life trajectories of youth from foster care by making postsecondary success an achievable reality.

The following recommendations for the fields of child welfare and higher education reflect the input of attendees at the National Convening on Foster Youth and Higher Education in October of 2013 (Foster Care to Success, 2014).

**Recommendation One:
Establish a national coalition
focused solely on higher education
and foster youth.**

A review of the literature found multiple reports and initiatives that identify a series of recommendations and action steps for improving the educational success of children and youth in foster care. Of particular note for their comprehensive coverage of the issues and the identification of strategies to promote achievement are the *Blueprint for Change* (Legal Center for Foster Care and Education, 2008) and *Research Highlights on Education and Foster Care* (2014) compiled by the National Working Group on Foster Care and Education. Practice, program, and policy recommendations specific to postsecondary education are also well articulated in multiple publications including *It's My Life: Postsecondary Education and Training* (Casey Family Programs, 2006), *College Access, Financial Aid, and College Success for Undergraduates from Foster Care* (Davis, 2006) and *Higher Education Opportunities for Foster Youth: A Primer for Policymakers* (Wolanin, 2005). The issue is not a dearth of knowledge about what needs to change in order to improve outcomes; strategies and plans have been discussed and agreed upon for years. The issue, instead, is that we must create a vehicle that will facilitate transformational, systemic change by engaging a diverse group of partners driving such change across systems. The formation of a national coalition focused on the postsecondary outcomes of youth in foster care must represent organizations from the fields of child welfare and education coming together in agreement about the problems, and working together to solve them systematically on the local, state, and national levels.



“ Together, we can change the life trajectories of youth from foster care by making postsecondary success an achievable reality .”

Recommendation Two:

Articulate a shared agenda for advancing a national and coordinated strategy to improve the educational outcomes of foster youth.

A national agenda would define a shared vision, goals and strategy for addressing the problem of improving educational attainment and increasing successful entry into the workforce among youth and alumni from foster care. There has been significant interest and commitment at the federal, state, and local levels in recent years to support educational success for students from foster care. In May of 2014, the U.S. Department of Education issued guidance on the implementation of the Uninterrupted Scholars Act (P.L. 112-278), which permits the sharing of personally identifiable information on foster youth if they need to change schools at the primary or secondary level, enabling a smooth transition, and reaffirmed its commitment to interagency collaboration to ensure access to services for children in foster care. The passage of tuition waiver legislation in 21 states also suggests acknowledgement of the unique needs of and financial barriers encountered by this population as they access higher education. Noteworthy efforts at the state level in California, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, Virginia and Washington promote collaboration and intervention across the educational continuum to ensure that



children and youth in foster care gain the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to succeed in K-12, enroll, persist and graduate from post-secondary programs, and join the workforce. Efforts are emerging in a number of other states, including New York's College Success Initiative, Dade County, Florida's Educate Tomorrow Program, and Georgia Embark, a campus-based program for foster and homeless youth.

All of these policies, initiatives, and programs showcase the commitment of policymakers and state legislatures to support the educational aspirations of foster youth; however each one exists in a vacuum in the absence of a mutually agreed upon understanding of the issues, scope of the problem and shared vision for success. The development of a shared agenda, in concert with the formation of a national coalition, would advance the implementation of a coordinated set of strategies, interventions, and reforms with the potential to dramatically improve the educational outcomes of foster youth.



Recommendation Three:

Build capacity for the consistent and uniform collection of data and the sharing of student-specific information across the child welfare and education systems.

Currently, there is no national standard for the tracking of educational outcomes for foster youth. Neither child welfare nor higher education are able to consistently collect, monitor, measure, analyze or report on student progress or the impact of program interventions, nor is there sharing across systems about what data is collected. The Fostering Connection to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (P.L. 110-351) and the Uninterrupted Scholars Act mandated collaboration between child welfare and education on the primary and secondary levels; however, the postsecondary realm is only starting to follow suit.

The development of a national strategy around data would promote the consistent collection, monitoring and comparison of program and outcome information. Cross system partnerships that result in the sharing of datasets between departments of social services and education will facilitate substantive communication about student experiences and outcomes. Furthermore, this data can be used to inform decisions regarding programming, practice, and policy, as well as future investments in child welfare and education.

Recommendation Four:

Develop national standards for the provision of services promoting successful educational attainment for foster youth.

The development of national standards for the provision of educational supports and opportunities must be directly informed by data collection efforts. Best practice guidelines can define success beyond the bare minimum, capture evidence-based interventions, and articulate outcomes that capture educational achievement leading to career pathways. National standards will “raise the bar” on expectations for this population and include goals that are both measurable and time-bound. These standards must articulate the full range of options available to foster youth as well as the need for assessment of strengths, aptitude and interests to help youth make informed decisions about postsecondary education. High school and postsecondary students must be provided the developmentally appropriate support that will enable them to safely reach for independence, grow as individuals and citizens, successfully enter the workforce, and thrive as adults.

The four recommendations listed here—establishing a national coalition of stakeholders, creating an agenda for change, building capacity for the collection and sharing of data, and developing national standards for the provision of services promoting educational attainment—will further the common goal of helping foster youth achieve successful adulthood.



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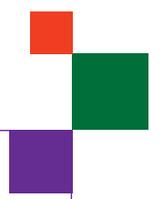
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The four recommendations listed here—
establishing a national coalition of
stakeholders, creating an agenda for change,
building capacity for the collection and
sharing of data, and developing national
standards for the provision of services
promoting educational attainment—
will further the common goal of helping
foster youth achieve successful adulthood.”

