BREAKING BARRIERS: A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TRANSITIONING FOSTER

YOUTH

By

Tylor Dawn Davis

A Thesis Project Presented to

The Faculty of California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

Committee Membership

Dr. David Adams, Committee Chair

Amanda Dinscore, Committee Member

Sasheen Shaileen Raymond, Committee Member

Dr. Marisol Ruiz, Program Graduate Coordinator

July 2024

Abstract

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This project aims to address the challenges faced by transitioning foster youth in
California, including those with disabilities, by creating an accessible resource for
transitioning foster youth. The introduction highlights the concerning statistics regarding
foster youth outcomes and the lack of preparation they often have for adulthood. The
literature review explores federal initiatives to improve outcomes for transitioning foster
youth, efforts in California to support these youth, the specific challenges they face, and
the educational disparities they experience. It also delves into the challenges faced by
foster youth with disabilities.

The design of the project is a one-page, visually engaging brochure created using
a free online platform. The brochure prioritizes readily available statewide resources for
college or vocational training. The implementation plan aims to target high schools,
social workers, community health centers, mental health support centers, Family
Resource Centers, and tribal offices. The evaluation plan includes an anonymous online
survey and tracking of brochure distribution.

This project aims to empower transitioning foster youth in California by
equipping them with the knowledge and resources they need to navigate their journeys

beyond foster care. The accessible design and clear content aim to bridge the gap between available resources and the youth who need them.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to those who have played a significant role in shaping me into the person I am today. First and foremost, I pay tribute to the memory of my late mother, Shannon Melissa Davis. Though she is no longer with us, her presence remains a constant source of strength and inspiration. I will forever cherish the love, support, and guidance she provided, particularly in the latter part of our relationship. May she rest in peace. I extend my sincere appreciation to my partner, Jose Ramon Leon Tafolla, whose unconditional love and support are a constant source of strength, I love you. To our baby kitty Freddie, thank you for keeping me sane. I am forever grateful to Maria Tafolla, your warmth, love, and generosity have embraced me for who I am. You have been there for every important life milestone of mine, thank you for everything.

To my siblings, Louis Mitchell, Stephanie Johnson, and Daniel Bleecker, I express my heartfelt gratitude. Your presence in my life has allowed me to be the resilient, loving, carefree person I am today. Finally, I am deeply indebted to my incredible (hilarious) group of friends, Christine Duvall, Marina Moran, and Aleshia Mackey. Your unwavering friendship has been a lifeline, buoying me through life's challenges. This path has not been without its obstacles, but I have persevered, drawing strength from the love and support of you remarkable individuals. I am eternally grateful to be on this journey called life with such beautiful people. Thank you all.

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Introduction

California houses over 45,000 youth in foster care, according to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System, of those youth, 27% are teenagers between the ages of 18 to 21 and will soon reach the age of transition (Yu, 2010). According to this data, approximately 18,500 youth transitioned, or *aged out*, of foster care in 2022. While the mission of foster care is only intended to provide a temporary stay for youth, that is not always the case as a large number of foster youth remain in the system until they legally reach adulthood (21 years of age) without finding a permanent home (Courtney, 2009; Jones, 2019; Yu, 2010). Research following foster youth into adulthood has shown they generally fare much worse than their same age peers in terms of educational attainment, employment and earnings, homelessness and economic hardships (Benbenishty et al., 2018; Courtney, et al., 2011; Courtney, 2009; Jones, 2019). This lack of a stable, supportive environment puts this population at high risk for negative outcomes as they navigate the challenges of emerging adulthood.

The transition to adulthood presents unique challenges for foster youth compared to their peers in the general population as they grapple with a double transition (Avery & Freundlich, 2011). The first, common to all adolescents, involves navigating the complexities of emerging adulthood. The second, specific to foster youth, entails exiting the foster care system and establishing independent living. Furthermore, foster youth with disabilities (FYD) face unique challenges in under/over-identification, receiving support services, and experiencing multiple placements (California Department of Education, 2018; Slayter, 2016).

This topic holds particular significance for myself, a former foster youth having experienced placement disruption at age 18, immediately following high school graduation. The after-effects of abuse, mental health challenges, and the lack of permanent housing during the summer before college significantly complicated my journey to postsecondary education. Similar to the experiences discussed in the research above, this personal narrative reflects the challenges often faced by transitioning foster youth including financial difficulties, job insecurity, transportation barriers, and the absence of a supportive adult network. These experiences further highlight the crucial need for access to resources, guidance, and stable housing for this vulnerable population.

Drawing on my unique experiences of successfully navigating difficult transitions myself, including graduating with a Bachelor's in Psychology and pursuing a Special Education Teaching Credential and Master's in Education (expected completion summer 2024), I am deeply passionate about creating an accessible resource specifically for foster youth including those with disabilities. These challenges faced firsthand fuel the desire to empower others on a similar journey.

Literature Review

This literature review delves into the challenges faced by foster youth transitioning to adulthood in the United States, with a particular focus on the state of California. Starting out, the section will examine federal efforts to improve outcomes for transitioning foster youth. It will begin by tracing the evolution of federal involvement in child welfare, highlighting landmark legislation. Following this, the literature review shifts focus to California's efforts to support transitioning foster youth. Next, it will explore the specific challenges faced by foster youth as they age out of the system, particularly on the well-being of youth who leave foster care without a permanent placement (Courtney & Hook, 2017; Jones, 2019). Shifting focus, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the educational disparities and the relationship between postsecondary education and foster youth, this literature review will also analyze relevant literature on these topics. Finally, the literature review will pivot its focus to the specific challenges faced by foster youth with disabilities within addressing needs, transition to adulthood, postsecondary education, and supports currently available. This review seeks to advocate for improved support and increased accessibility to resources to empower youth to succeed and reach their personal goals.

Federal Initiatives to Improve Outcomes for Transitioning Foster Youth

In 1875, founded in New York, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NYSPCC) became the first non-profit public organization dedicated to protecting children from cruelty (Wills, 2022). The NYSPCC served as a model for child protection efforts around the world and subsequently, in 1912, the federal government

established the U.S. Children's Bureau creating programs focused on health, education, and overall welfare (Bradburry, 2012). This marked a significant shift in the way the government approached child welfare as previous, child protection efforts were primarily undertaken by organizations like the NYSPCC (Wills, 2022). The creation of the Children's Bureau reflected a growing belief that the government had a responsibility to invest in the well-being of all children in the nation (Bradburry, 2012). However, it was not until 1974 that the federal government would enact the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA; Public Law 93-247). This landmark legislation established the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, a central hub for collecting data on child abuse and neglect cases. Prior to 1974, there was no dedicated federal agency focused on child abuse (93rd Congress, 1974). The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act also aimed to raise public awareness about child abuse and the resources available to prevent and treat it (CAPTA; Public Law 93-247). This data-driven approach helped to understand the true extent of the challenges faced by children in care.

In 1980, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act was enacted and provided financial assistance to families who took in a foster child to promote stable and nurturing home environments until the age of 18 (Corman, 1980). This lack of financial support after the age of 18 may have forced foster parents to no longer be able to care for the foster youth, leaving them at risk of losing their stable home environment (Corman, 1980). Consequently, research following these foster youth into adulthood revealed that they generally fared much worse than their same age peers, including lower educational attainment and difficulty finding stable employment (Collins, 1999; Roman & Wolfe,

1995). While the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act provided financial support for foster families, it did not address the crucial need to prepare youth for independence. This lack of preparation and access to resources leaves them vulnerable when they age out of the system, as highlighted by the data above on their struggles in adulthood.

In 1983, in response to foster youth who aged out of the system at 18 (later changed to 21) facing struggles in adulthood (i.e., lower educational attainment, difficulty locating stable employment), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a Request for Proposals (Jones, 2019). A Request for Proposals is essentially a formal document outlining a specific need or problem. In this case, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services were seeking solutions to address the many challenges faced by foster youth aging out of the system (Jones, 2019). Following this review in 1986, the Independent Living Program Act (Public Law 99-272) began providing services for foster youth aged 16 and older to promote self-sufficiency and help transition from foster care (California Department of Social Services, 2004). Interestingly, this was the first time that the federal government publicly acknowledged a need for preparation before youth exit foster care (Courtney, 2009). This recognition would lead to more comprehensive approaches and further legislative efforts emerged in the following years.

In 1999 the Foster Care Independence Act (Public Law 109-1690), a landmark piece of legislation, emerged for transitioning foster youth aged 16 to 21 years of age. This legislation aimed to bridge the gap between foster care and adulthood by financing independent living programs, increasing access to important supports up to the age of 21 (previously 18 years of age), and allowed families to receive financial compensation to

continue supporting youth (Jones, 2019). These programs continue to equip transitioning youth with essential life skills including: financial guidance, community resources, transitional housing, educational support to assist with enrolling in programs for GED, college, or vocational training, employment skills and more (Independent Living Program, 2023).

To access these programs, the youth's social worker or probation officer will refer them to their county's independent living program coordinator (Marinescu et al., 2023; Morton, 2015). While referring youth to resources is a start, findings suggest the need for additional support, as some eligible young adults who don't age out might still be unaware of available programs (Hanson, et al., 2022). Without a comprehensive list of all the programs designed to meet their needs, many may remain unaware of the full spectrum of available support. This lack of awareness can create a significant barrier to accessing the resources they truly need (Marinescu et al., 2023). To bridge this gap between available resources, referrals, and individual youth goals, a clear, accessible, and user-friendly resource guide is essential for transitioning foster youth.

Addressing the Needs of Transitioning Youth in California Foster Care

In 1992, the Little Hoover Commission, an independent government oversight organization, conducted a review of California's Child Welfare Services Program. Their investigation revealed critical shortcomings across several key areas including family preservation, foster parent support and training, state oversight, and coordinated services (Shapell & Terzian, 1992). These findings painted a disheartening picture of a system struggling to meet the needs of vulnerable children. Notably, the Commission

emphasized the urgent need for improved interagency coordination to create a more effective and supportive environment for youth in foster care (Shapell & Terzian, 1992). The Little Hoover Commission's report served as a catalyst for reform.

In response to the Little Hoover Commission findings, the following decade witnessed an influx of legislative activity aimed at bolstering the system for transitioning youth. From 1992 to 2002, fourteen bills and acts were passed, increasing funding for crucial areas including: family support programs to help prevent multiple placements, family preservation services to keep families together, group home reforms to ensure safe and supportive environments, independent living skills programs for preparing transitioning youth, and extending Medicaid coverage for foster youth up to age 21 to provide essential healthcare (Laws and Policies, 2004). While increased funding addressed some areas, a 2002 federal review exposed significant problems in California's child welfare services as California remained out of compliance with five out of seven key federal child welfare standards (Laws and Policies, 2004; Reed & Karpilow, 2009). This finding underscores the significant challenges associated with translating legislative intent into tangible improvements at the state level within a complex system like child welfare.

Furthering progress for California's transitioning youth includes the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, established in 2008. This foundational program offers financial assistance to states that extend foster care beyond the traditional age of 18 (42 U.S. Code 677, 2024). Due to the increase in funding, California's Extended Foster Care program was launched and implemented in 2012, allowing eligible youth to remain

in the foster care system until age 21 (Extended Foster Care, 2019). These programs offer a lifeline to young adults, granting them valuable additional time to develop essential life skills, pursue education or job training, and most importantly, secure stable housing. The flexibility to re-enter care under California's Extended Care provides an additional layer of security, acknowledging the unforeseen difficulties young adults might encounter as they navigate the complexities of independent living (Gardner, 2008). By offering both financial support and extended placement options, these policies aim to empower transitioning foster youth and increase their chances of achieving self-sufficiency in adulthood.

From Foster Care to Adulthood

The U.S. government's Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data reports that there are 370,000 youth in foster care in 2022, as compared to around 430,000 youth in foster care in 2018. Although rates of foster care appear to be declining nationwide, California has the highest rates of foster youth in the United States (USAFacts, 2023). As these young people approach adulthood and independence, the critical need for support becomes starkly evident in the face of their predicted negative outcomes.

A California study found that over a quarter (24%) of young adults who were in foster care at 17 experienced homelessness by age 21. Additionally, 36% reported couch surfing during this time (Broslawsky, 2020). Cutler's (2009) work in the previous decade further underscores and expands on this finding. There is a prevalence of foster youth across various social service systems including mental health, substance abuse, homeless

services, employment services and criminal justice systems (Cutler, 2009). These findings underscore the concerning outcomes faced by transitioning foster youth, particularly considering California's growing housing crisis.

With the state of California boasting the highest rates of unhoused individuals at around 180,000 (a 6% increase from 2022-2023), and housing costs skyrocketing beyond wage growth since 2020, the need for accessible and affordable housing resources has never been more critical (de Sousa et al., 2023; Uhler, 2024). For foster youth, exiting the system and establishing independent living is compounded by the lack of permanent housing, familial relationships, stable adults, and more (Avery & Freundlich, 2011). This lack of preparedness can lead to feelings of isolation, anxiety, and despair as they attempt to navigate the complexities of adulthood without a strong support system.

Educational Disparities

The educational well-being of foster youth is far inferior in comparison to their peers with many youth experiencing lower levels of (self-reported) academic achievement and more negative experiences in school compared to peers (Benbenishty et al., 2018). In 2022-2023 about 60% of foster youth graduated high school as compared to about 87% of non-foster youth (California Department of Education, 2024). Foster youth also experience more disciplinary referrals, are twice as likely to be suspended, and are three times more likely to be expelled from school (Courtney et al., 2004). In addition, foster youths enrolled in undergraduate programs have lower graduation rates than those of their peers according to the University of California Office of the President's Institutional Research and Academic Planning unit (University of California, Los

Angeles, 2020). These educational challenges can have profound and long-lasting

consequences on many different areas of a young adult's life.

Many former foster youth cite lack of educational attainment as a common barrier

for employment and financial stability (Lee et al., 2016; Kim, et al., 2019). Academic

success increases the likelihood of youth achieving independence and developing positive

outlooks on life as they transition into adulthood (Sullivan et al., 2010). However, a lack

of educational attainment can create a significant roadblock to their path to a secure and

fulfilling future. For example, youth who graduate from high school have greater

employment opportunities, higher paying jobs, better health, and decreased participation

in criminal activity compared to those without a high school diploma (Campbell, 2015;

Hass & Graydon, 2009; Lee et al., 2016). Furthermore, access to post-secondary

education is often a key to future success by increasing opportunities for meaningful,

stable employment and increased income (U.S. Department of Education & National

Center for Education Statistics, 2008; Kirk & Day, 2011).

Many programs, laws, and bills have been implemented to support foster youth

transitioning into college. These initiatives include allowing foster youth to remain in

care past the age of 18, providing vouchers for educational programs and training, and

offering campus support programs specifically designed for foster youth on college

campuses (Okpych, et al., 2020). Educational training vouchers first emerged in the early

2000's and were the first of their kind to provide financial support for foster youth to put

towards tuition, fees, or other college-related costs (Chafee Educational and Training

Vouchers Program, n.d.). Educational Training Vouchers represent a significant step

forward in supporting foster youth in their pursuit of higher education, however, a 2007
report recommended enhancing outreach for the program (Hanson, 2022).

Campus-based support programs can provide academic advising, mentorship
opportunities, and social support networks, all of which are essential for foster youth
navigating the complexities of college life (Okpych, et al., 2020). The program provides
up to $5,000 per year for post-secondary education and training; although limited,
existing studies on the effectiveness of these programs show promising results (Okpych,
et al., 2020). Youths who receive Educational Training Vouchers and participate in
Campus-Based Support Programs demonstrate a higher likelihood of graduating than
those who do not utilize these programs (Okpych, et al., 2020). While these programs
show promise, further research is needed to determine their long-term impact on overall
success; increasing awareness of the support programs offered by college campuses can
lead to greater utilization of these resources by foster youth.

Foster Youth and Post-Secondary Education

A strong correlation exists between college attendance by foster youth and the
presence of supportive adult relationships (Okpych & Courtney, 2017). These
relationships can play a crucial role in connecting young people in foster care with the
knowledge and resources necessary to navigate the college application and enrollment
process. Fortunately in California, university campuses offer safe spaces with supportive
adults specifically designed for foster youth through campus based support programs.
According to the California State University website, these programs provide
"unconditional support and guidance" (CSU, 2024). Non-familial relationships can be a

powerful force in motivating and supporting foster youth on their path to post-secondary education. Raising awareness surrounding these programs readily available in colleges and universities can significantly increase enrollment rates. Increased enrollment, in turn, can boost confidence and motivation to graduate, fostering a sense of accomplishment (Skobba, et al., 2018).

While financial aid programs and academic support services address practical hurdles, fostering non-familial relationships provides the crucial elements of motivation, guidance, and a sense of belonging. These campus-based support programs connect youth with others who have also experienced foster care, potentially creating long-lasting connections and fostering a sense of community.

Universities and colleges, including the California State University (CSU) system and UC campuses like UC Santa Barbara, UC Berkeley, and UCLA, offer application fee waivers through these programs. Although these waivers have limitations, these programs are a valuable step in breaking down financial barriers for foster youth seeking higher education. College is not only a beneficial pathway for foster youth, but earning a college credential can lead to greater financial security in the future, provide housing options through dormitories, and create professional connections that can benefit them throughout their careers (Okpych & Courtney, 2014).

Foster Youth with Disabilities

While the foster care system aims to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children, foster youth with disabilities (FYD) face a complex set of challenges. Estimates suggest that between 13% and 31% of foster youth have a disability (California

Department of Education, 2018; Slayter, 2016). The wide range in estimates of FYD

prevalence stems, in part, from the distinction between having a disability and

requiring/qualifying for an Individualized Education Program (IEP), or special education

services, in school. Not all students with disabilities qualify, or have a need for, an IEP

requiring special education services, leading to potential under-identification of FYD

within the foster care system. However, being identified as having a need for an IEP may

create a dual stigma, marking them as both foster youth and individuals with a disability

(Harwick, et al., 2017). This can lead to marginalization within the very systems designed

to support them, further hindering their already precarious transition to adulthood.

Studies show FYD tend to face further exclusion, marginalization, more frequent

placement changes than their peers and are at a larger risk for negative outcomes across

their lifetimes (Slayter, 2016; Pecora, et al., 2007). Frequent changes in foster homes can

disrupt their education, especially for those with an IEP. The constant upheaval makes it

difficult for them to receive the consistent support their IEPs require (Harwick, et al.,

2020; Shae, et al., 2024). Many studies demonstrate the extreme difficulties for FYD to

transition into adulthood, with homelessness continuing to be a recurring theme

(Harwick, et al., 2020; Lee, et al., 2018; Powers, et al., 2012). Understanding these

challenges is crucial for developing effective interventions to help FYD succeed in

school, prepare for adulthood, and maintain supportive permanent housing.

Fortunately, with the right support systems in place, FYD can overcome these

challenges and thrive in postsecondary education (Cheatham, 2020). Perceived value of

college and motivation are factors that contribute to the likelihood of FYD enrollment in

postsecondary education, however access to available supports continues to remain a topic of concern especially for FYD (Tobolowsky, et al., 2019). There are many campus-based support programs that can bridge this gap, but awareness of these programs may be lacking. Many foster youth may simply not be aware of all of the opportunities and supports available to them.

Design

This brochure was created using Canva, a free online design platform, making it easily accessible for anyone to replicate or adapt for further distribution. The design incorporates a "resistance" aesthetic – a theme of empowerment and resilience. This is reflected through the use of bold colors, impactful fonts, and images that aim to evoke strength and determination (think raised fists, graduation caps soaring through the air, students marching together).

This primary resource will be a brief one-page, front and back informational brochure. Keeping the resource to a single page will allow the information to be concise, making it clear for the reader to understand. A visually engaging and colorful design will grab attention and make the resource more inviting, especially for younger audiences.

The brochure will prioritize readily available statewide resources to ensure consistent information across California. The information on programs will include: financial support programs, transition youth rights, transitional housing options, CSU accessibility supports, CSU support groups, financial aid resources, and more as it relates to transitioning youth rights, needs, and or goals. For easy access to all the program links and further exploration, a QR code will be included linking to the online version of this brochure. This allows individuals to research deeper and access the resources directly.

The brochure will include my Cal Poly Humboldt email and brief information about myself as the author for anyone who may have questions, concerns, feedback, advice, or for restocking, reproduction, or further recommendations. By focusing on accessibility, clear content, and user-friendly design, this project aims to empower

transitioning foster youth in California by equipping them with the knowledge and resources they need to navigate their journeys beyond foster care.

Plan for Implementation

Through collaboration with curriculum specialists and approval of administrators at school districts, the primary target locations for this project are high schools and middle schools. This will pave the way for official inclusion in informational sections near nurses' offices, alongside other relevant brochures. Reaching out to schools requesting brief (5-minute) staff meeting presentations can raise awareness among teachers, counselors, and special educators who directly interact with foster youth. Securing grant money would allow for wider distribution through physical copies of the brochures.

Expanding beyond schools, partnerships with county social workers, community health centers with open-door policies, Family Resource Centers, and focus psychologists'/counselors' offices will create additional distribution points. Tribal offices and community-based schools can also serve as valuable dissemination partners.

By partnering with these diverse organizations, the reach of the brochure can be significantly amplified. Social workers and counselors can directly provide the resource to foster youth under their care. Community centers can include the brochure in their information packets or displays. Tribal offices can distribute them to their communities, ensuring culturally relevant outreach.

Plan for Evaluation

To assess the success of this resource guide in empowering transitioning foster youth in California, a multi-pronged evaluation plan will be implemented. The online brochure will include a link to an anonymous Google Forms survey. The survey will ask questions about the brochure's helpfulness, information usefulness, and opportunities for improvement. Additionally, there will be a Google Form for educators to complete to gain better understanding of student reactions, user friendliness, and thoughts on further expansion to support student needs. It will also include an optional question to identify if the respondent is or was a former foster youth. This will allow survey responses to be analyzed through graphs to understand the overall user experience. Respondent data analysis can be conducted on open-ended questions to identify specific areas of value and areas for improvement. The number of brochures distributed through each partnering organization (schools, social services, etc.) can be tracked along with their locations. The data will allow assessment of the reach of the program across different communities and counties.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this project aims to bridge the gap between available resources and the transitioning foster youth who need them most. The accessible, one-page brochure prioritizes readily available statewide resources and utilizes a visually engaging design to empower youth. By implementing a multidimensional distribution plan through schools, social service agencies, and community centers, the brochure can reach a wide range of transitioning foster youth across California. The evaluation plan, consisting of anonymous surveys and eventual tracking of distribution, will measure the effectiveness of the resource guide in empowering transitioning foster youth on their journeys beyond foster care.

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Appendix A

FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT!

- Did you know you can use your financial aid towards trade school?
- Don't be afraid to ask questions about your placement.
- Always talk to someone you trust, you aren't alone.
- You are never a bother, you matter, you are important, and what you want MATTERS!

DISABILITY SUPPORT IN COLLEGE

All about equity and making sure any student can reach their full potential. This assists students with disabilities so they have equal access to all educational programs and activities on campus.

YOUR RIGHTS!!

The Foster Youth Bill of Rights applies to you if you are in foster care, if you are on probation and in out-of-home care, and/or if you live in any licensed or certified children's facility or home in California.

HOUSING SUPPORT

Programs provide semi-independent housing and a wide range of supportive services, including case management, job training, educational support, and counseling.

You can't control where you came from, only where you are destined to go.

MAP OUT YOUR PATH

CONTACT

Created by
Former Foster Youth
Tylor Dawn Davis (She/Her)

EMAIL
- Tdd109@humboldt.edu

CAL POLY HUMBOLDT GRADUATE
- Bachelors in Psychology (2019)
- Education Specialist Credential Program*
- Masters of Arts in Education*

*Expected completion July 2024

BREAKING BARRIERS

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TRANSITIONING FOSTER YOUTH

BREAKING BARRIERS

Hey There! Are you a transitioning foster youth looking for resources? Do you need help to achieve your goals and build a brighter future?

This resource guide is to help YOU navigate YOUR goals

EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS

This guide will provide accessible links, information, and empowerment to attend college

Scan this QR code to click on these links and learn more!
All hyper-links are underlined

Student Feedback Form

Educator Feedback Form

PLANTING SEEDS FOR SUCCESS

College can be challenging, but it's an incredible journey you deserve to be on! Campus Based Support Programs offer resources like housing, meal plans, and financial aid to help you succeed. Let's explore your options together!

4 Year University Support
- Financial Aid Filing Support
  - In person and Virtual Filing Support
- Application Fee Waivers
- Education Training Vouchers
- Chaffee Grant
- California Grants A & B
  - Must be enrolled full time to be eligible
  - Take more classes, get more money
- Campus Based Support Programs (CSU)
- Campus Based Support Programs (UC)
- California College Pathways

Community College Support
- Free Community College
- California College Pathways
- Resources (i.e. childcare, counseling, transportation assistance, and more)

BUILDING UPON YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

The path you choose is yours to define. There are many ways to achieve financial security, and a degree is just one option. Here's a breakdown of trade schools and support.

AUTOMOTIVE TECH
Learn the in-demand skills to diagnose, repair, and maintain vehicles. Graduates can find jobs as auto mechanics, technicians, or service advisors.

CONSTRUCTION TRADES
Programs in carpentry, electrical work, plumbing, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) prepare you for careers in building and maintaining structures.

COSMETOLOGY
Train for a career in hair styling, skincare, and other beauty services. Cosmetologists can work in salons, spas, or even run their own business.

CULINARY ARTS
If you have a passion for cooking, you can learn professional culinary skills and become a chef, baker, or restaurant manager.

HEALTHCARE
Train for a variety of healthcare support roles, such as medical assistant, dental hygienist, or licensed vocational nurse.

INFORMATION TECH (IT)
Develop the skills to design, install, and maintain computer networks and systems. IT professionals are in high demand across all industries.

WELDING
Learn a valuable skill used in manufacturing, construction, and other industries. Welders can specialize in different areas like pipe welding or structural welding.

Appendix B

ABSTRACT

The focus of this project is on Transitioning Foster Youth
- Accessible Resource Guide
- Concerning outcomes for transitioning foster youth
- Policies try to support this transition period
- Lack of awareness surrounding policies available

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INTRODUCTION

- I am a Former Foster Youth
- First Generation Graduate
- Experienced Homelessness at 18
- Lack of support/guidance
- Financial insecurity

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LITERARY REVIEW

Research following foster youth into adulthood has shown they generally fare much worse than their same age peers in terms of educational attainment, employment and earnings, homelessness and economic hardships (Benbenishty et al., 2018; Courtney, et al., 2011; Courtney, 2009; Jones, 2019).

Low Gradaution Rates

In 2022-2023 about 60% of foster youth graduated high school as compared to about 87% non-foster youth (California Department of Education, 2024)

High homelessness

A California study found that over a quarter (24%) of young adults who were in foster care at 17 experienced homelessness by age 21. Additionally, 36% reported couch surfing during this time (Courtney et al., 2018).

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LITERARY REVIEW

1 It was not until **1974** that the federal government would enact the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA; Public Law 93-247). Aimed to raise public awareness about child abuse and the resources available to prevent and treat it (CAPTA; Public Law 93-247).

2 In 1999 the Foster Care Independence Act (Public Law 109-1690), forever changed and increased benefits for transitioning foster youth. **Created Campus Based Support programs, Educational Training Vouchers, Grant funding specifically for transitioning youth**

3 Youths are referred by county coordinator to programs, however, **research suggests referral alone may not be enough** as there is a lack of access and use of these programs (Hanson, et al., 2020).

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DESIGN

- **Readily available statewide resources**
- **Financial support programs**
- **Transition youth rights**
- **Transitional housing options**
- **CSU accessibility supports**
- **CSU support groups**
- **Financial aid resources**
- **+ More as it relates to transitioning youth rights, needs, and or goals**
- **For easy access to all the program links and further exploration, a QR code will be included linking to the online version of this brochure.**
- **This allows individuals to research deeper and access the resources directly.**

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IMPLEMENTATION

BREAKING BARRIERS: A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TRANSITIONING FOSTER YOUTH

Click here

Educator Feedback Form

Presented By : Tylor Davis

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Scan Here

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EVALUATION

- **Google Forms for Students**
- **Google Forms for Educators**

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Appendix C

Student Feedback Form

Thank you for completing this survey!!! I'd like to gather information on how helpful this resource was for you, or maybe ways it can be improved to better fit your needs/ goals. This resource will be updated as changes are needed and your honest feedback is sincerely appreciate. Feedback also helps others in similar situations!

tdd109@humboldt.edu Switch account

Not shared

The guide was well-organized and easy to navigate.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Really	○	○	○	○	○	Definitely

The resources provided in this guide were relevant to my needs.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Really	○	○	○	○	○	Definitely

The content in this guide helped me achieve my goals.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Really	○	○	○	○	○	Definitely

I was able to find the information I needed quickly and easily.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Really	○	○	○	○	○	Definitely

I would recommend this resource guide to others.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Really	○	○	○	○	○	Definitely

Additional feedback you think could be beneficial to this resource guide?
- What you found useful
-What could be added (or taken out)
-Overall suggestions for improvement

Your answer

Are you or were you a foster youth?

○ Yes

○ No

○ No, but I need these services and benefit from them.

Submit   Clear form

Educator Feedback

This anonymous form is for educators, social workers, therapists, counselors, etc., to provide feedback on the Breaking Barriers Resource Guide. Your responses go towards improvements and needed additions to meet the needs of all of our students!!

tdd109@humboldt.edu Switch account

Not shared

* Indicates required question

How relevant is the content of this guide for your students?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Needs Improvement	○	○	○	○	○	Exceeds expectations

How easy was it for students to find the information they were looking for?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Needs improvement	○	○	○	○	○	Exceeds Expectations

How well-organized is the information in this guide?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Needs improvement	○	○	○	○	○	Exceeds Expectations

Was the information helpful for your students?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Needs improvement	○	○	○	○	○	Exceeds Expectations

Is the language used in this guide clear and concise?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Needs improvement	○	○	○	○	○	Exceeds Expectations

Do you have any suggestions for this resource guide?
-Thoughts on accessibility
-Thoughts on use and resourcefulness (or lack thereof)
-Ways to improve this resource

Your answer

What general area do you teach? *

○ Humboldt County

○ Bay Area (Hayward, SF, Oakland)

○ Other:

Submit   Clear form