



THE DIRECT SERVICE AGENCY OF  
THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

# Voice

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## *Growing a National Movement: Families for Youth in Foster Care*

*National Convening on Youth  
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after 30 Years in the Field*



## Resources to Find Families and Prepare Foster Youth for Adulthood

# View from Washington



by Robin Nixon, Executive Director, National Foster Care Coalition

I frequently am asked to comment on the quality of independent-living or transition services in the United States. Many times, service providers are looking for model programs and services, or are wondering how their state's services compare to other states. Reporters always want to know which states have the "best" services, and which states have the "worst."

My usual response, which often doesn't make anyone happy, is that great practices and programs can be found in almost every state, but that no state really has an ideal program, or one that provides a comprehensive, seamless set of services, supports, and opportunities for young people making the transition from foster care to adulthood.

Our collective efforts, as a field and as a nation, are an ever-changing work-in-progress when it comes to transition services. I am happy to report, however, that this is a work-in-progress that continues to garner a huge amount of attention – both in the field of child welfare and in communities that are genuinely concerned about the well-being and future prospects of our older youth in foster care.

This attention has resulted in the creation of numerous innovative partnerships and programs designed to enhance permanency efforts for older youth, to promote better educational outcomes, increase resources for post-secondary education, ensure safe and stable housing, extend foster care support

beyond age 18, and engage youth and foster care alumni as partners and leaders in advocacy, training, and service delivery.

Attention to this issue across the country is heard loud and clear in Washington. There are numbers of ongoing discussions in Congress and in the Department of Health and Human Services regarding strategies for improving the outcomes of young people who have left the foster care system. Efforts include bringing youth onto the federal teams conducting Child and Family Service Reviews in the states, implementation of a National Youth in Transition Database to measure state performance in implementing the Chafee Program, and new legislation to extend Title IV-E funding to age 21 nationally. It's an exciting time. Advocates, young people, service providers, and other stakeholders should be staying on top of discussions about foster youth transition at the community and state levels, as well as here in Washington. The more information we share, the more momentum we can build for positive changes.

To that end, here are links to some of the existing programs that support and prepare youth as they get on the road to adulthood.

### *Permanence for older youth*

California Permanency for Youth Project  
[www.cpyy.org](http://www.cpyy.org)

National Permanency for Youth Convening  
[http://www.caseyfamilyservices.org/pr\\_nc\\_covening\\_home.html](http://www.caseyfamilyservices.org/pr_nc_covening_home.html)

Call to Action: An Integrated Approach to Permanency and Preparation for Adulthood  
<http://www.caseyfamilyservices.org>

### *Extending foster care supports beyond age 18*

Iowa:  
<http://www.jimcaseyyouth.org/whatsnew/spotlight/spotlight24.htm>

California:  
<http://www.calyouthissues.org/sites/cyclsection.php?id=6>

<http://www.calyouthissues.org/sites/cyclsection.php?id=338>

American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law  
<http://www.abanet.org/child/transitioning.pdf>

### *Youth and foster care alumni as leaders and partners*

California Youth Connection  
[www.calyouthissues.org](http://www.calyouthissues.org)

Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute  
[www.ccaainstitute.org](http://www.ccaainstitute.org)

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative  
[www.jimcaseyyouth.org](http://www.jimcaseyyouth.org)

Foster Care Alumni of America  
[www.fostercarealumni.org](http://www.fostercarealumni.org)

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

Maine's Youth Leadership Advisory Team  
<http://www.ylat.org>

*The National Foster Care Coalition is a diverse group of national organizations working in collaboration to raise public awareness, coordinate advocacy efforts, and build alliances that strengthen foster care and community supports for children, youth, and families. More information is available at [www.fostercarealumni.org](http://www.fostercarealumni.org).*