

## Overview

- 1. Foster Progress
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- 3. Aging Out
- 4. Barriers to Success
- 5. Financial Aid & DCFS Programs
- 6. Trauma 101

## Foster Progress

Empowering youth who have experienced foster care to attain a college degree and transition into adulthood successfully through mentoring, advocacy, and educational opportunity.

Mentoring & Scholarships

Traverse

Training & Advocacy

Y-CAP

## Youth in Care College Advocate Program

Peer advocates on college campuses running supportive groups for youth who have experienced foster care

- University of Illinois at Chicago
- University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign
- Northern Illinois University
- Governors State University
- Harold Washington College
- Kishwaukee College

## Mentoring & Scholarship Program

- 1-on-1 College Educated Mentors paired with high school students
- Students earn \$100 each time they meet with their mentor
- In Chicagoland and expanding to other cities
- Mentors are trained and well supported



## Traverse

- Adventure Therapy
- Travel, hiking, camping, excursions
- Life skills journal
- International service trip to an orphanage



## Foster Care 101

### Illinois DCFS Overview

Who is the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)?

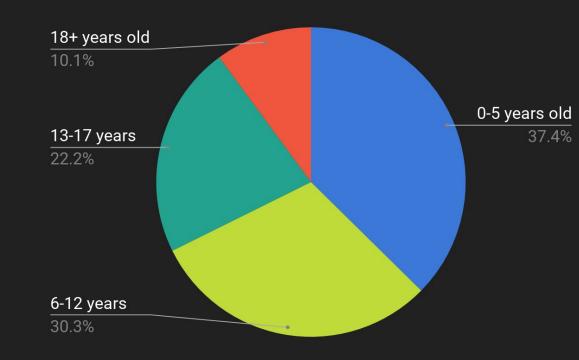
### Mission Statement

- Protect children who are reported to be abused or neglected and to increase their families' capacity to safely care for them
- Provide for the well-being of children in our care
- Provide appropriate, permanent families as quickly as possible for those children who cannot safely return home
- Support early intervention and child abuse prevention activities
- Work in partnerships with communities to fulfill this mission

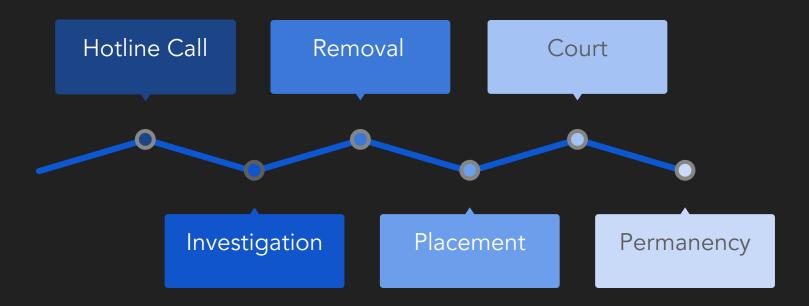
### Age Ranges

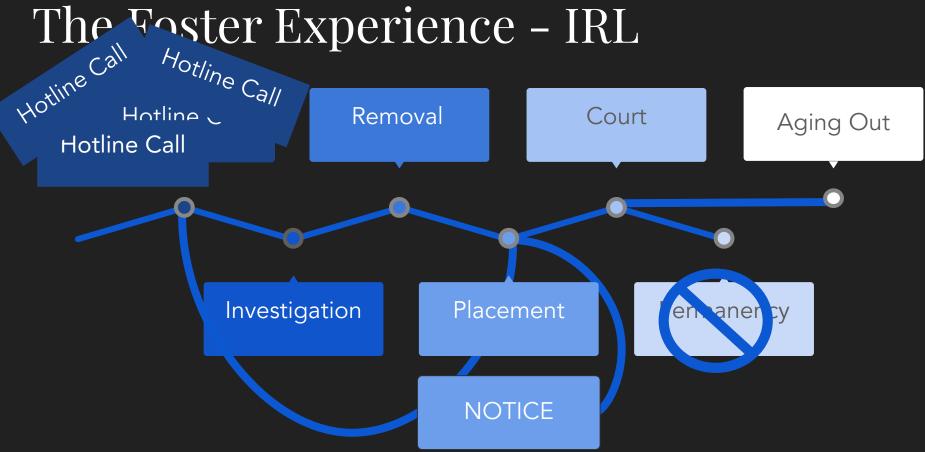
There are approximately 21,000 children in foster care in Illinois.

32.3% of them, or 6,783 youth, are teens and young adults.

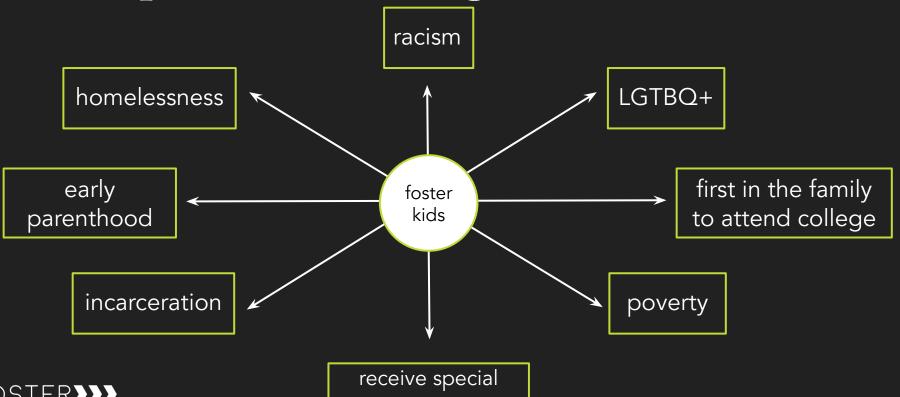


## The Foster Experience





## Multiple axes of marginalization





receive special education services

### Aging Out



28,000 youth "age-out" of foster care each year in the US between the ages of 18-21.

In 2011, Illinois had the third highest rate in the country of youth aging out.

In 2011, around 50% of youth in Illinois exited foster care via aging out.

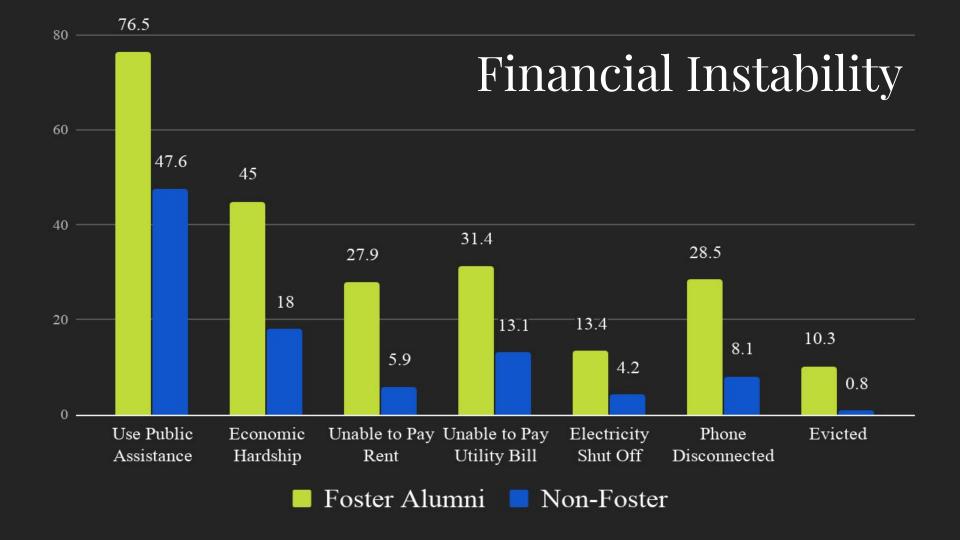
## Outcomes for youth aging out

Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Care Youth at age 26, 2011

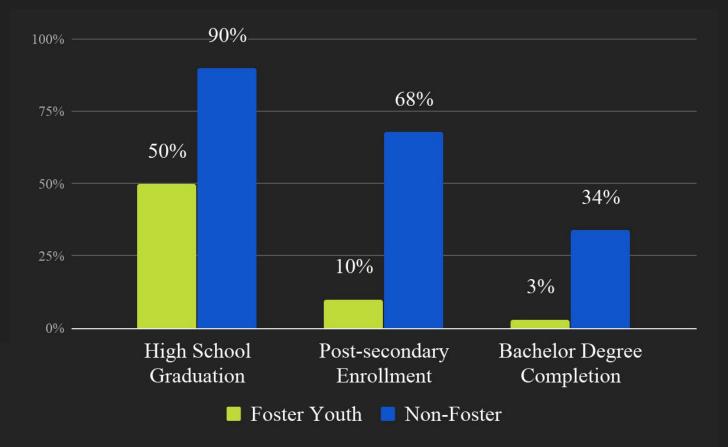
31% experience homelessness

50% experience unemployment

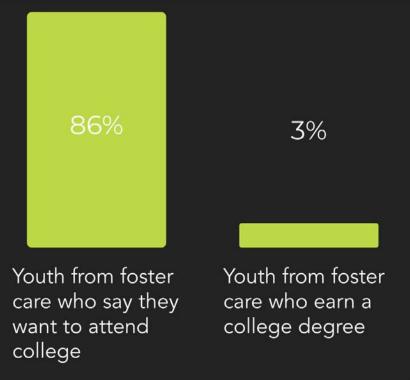
57% become incarcerated



### **Educational Attainment**



## Degree Attainment



## FAFSA, Enrollment, Completion

2,263

Youth from foster care filled out the FAFSA in Illinois in 2020

873

Youth from foster care enrolled in college and claimed the MAP Grant that they are entitled to

1,390

Either did not enroll, or did not claim all the financial aid available to them 405

Foster youth enrolled at a community college

281

Foster youth enrolled at a public university

180

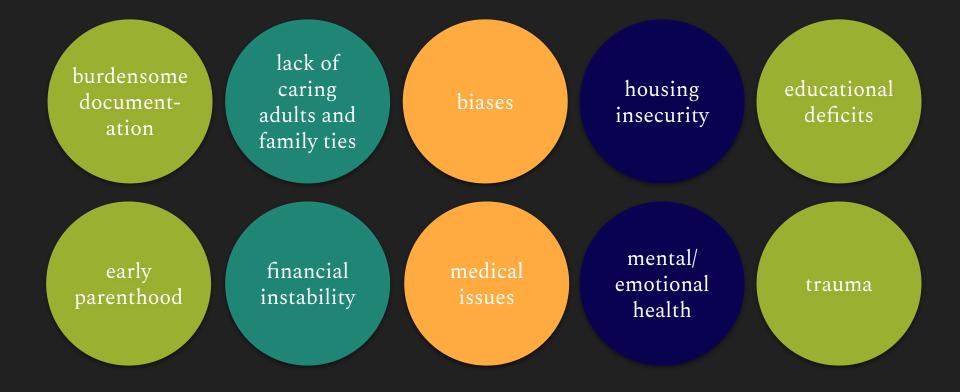
Foster youth enrolled a a private non-profit school

7

Foster youth enrolled at a proprietary school 57

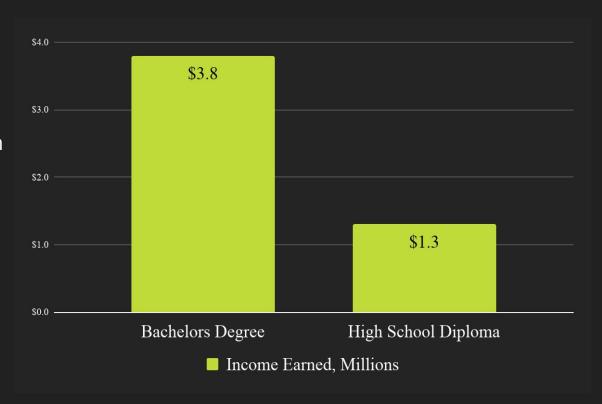
Are likely to graduate with a degree

## Barriers to youth pursuing higher ed

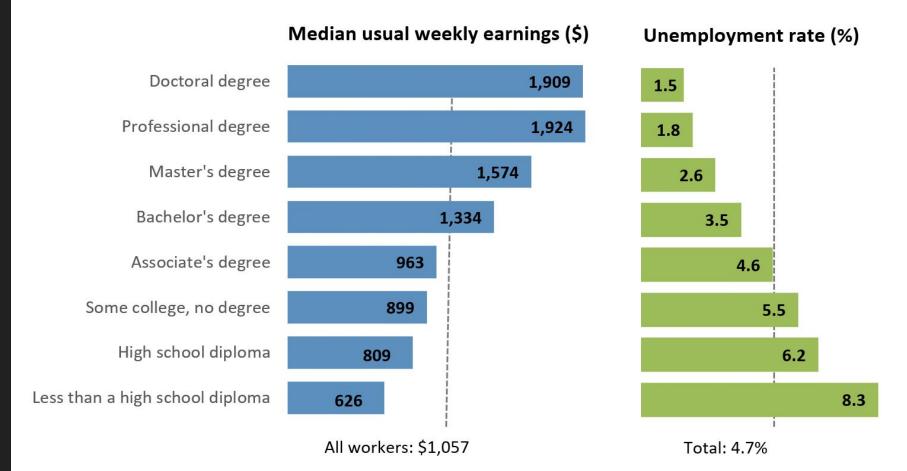


## Is college worth it?

An individual with a Bachelor's degree will earn 84% more than someone with a high school degree over their lifetime.

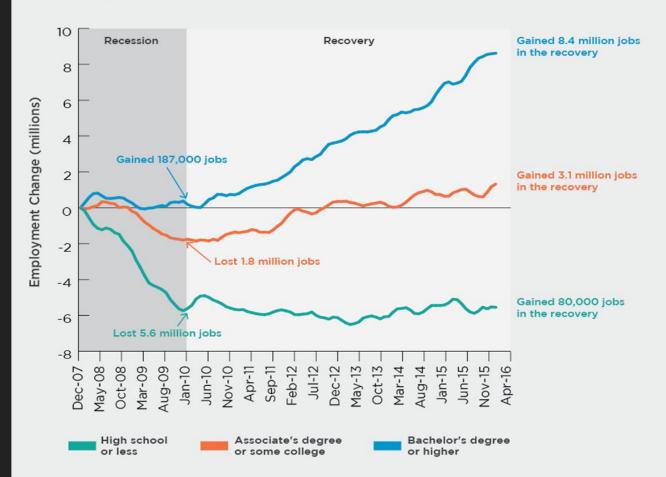


### Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment, 2021



## Is college worth it?

Figure I. Workers with a Bachelor's degree have added 8.4 million jobs in the recovery, but workers with high school diplomas or less added only 80,000 jobs after losing 5.6 million jobs in the recession.



## Research from Dr. Jennifer Geiger



### Creating Pathways to College for Youth in Care

- Providing information and connections to youth, their caregivers, and DCFS/child welfare workers EARLY and FREQUENTLY
- Creating a culture of postsecondary education and training and normalizing this experience
- Organizing documents, knowing options (schools/programs), financial aid, social supports, and living arrangements
- Developing a plan and executing it (know what's expected, what are deadlines)



### What Can Workers Do?

- You are the gatekeepers of opportunity! Don't be stingy!
- Have hope remember that youth may surprise you.
- Plant the seed of inspiration. Your words matter.
- Practicalities: Make sure youth have access to to their documents, write their letter documenting their status as youth in care, fill out appropriate applications in a timely way, etc.



# Financial Aid for Foster Youth

# Students who were in foster care after age 13 will fill out the FAFSA as <u>independents</u>.

This will give them maximum access to financial resources available, like Pell and MAP.

If students have been accepted but have not received financial aid letters, the school is waiting for additional documents.



Get the proof of wardship from the caseworker ASAP.

This has been a hold up for our students in the past!

- Proof of wardship
- IRS Verification of Non-filing letter



### Request for Transcript of Tax Return

Do not sign this form unless all applicable lines have been completed. ▶ Request may be rejected if the form is incomplete or illegible.

OMB No. 1545-1872

Department of the Treasury For more information about Form 4506-T, visit www.irs.gov/form4506t. Internal Revenue Service

Tip. Use Form 4506-T to order a transcript or other return information free of charge. See the product list below. You can quickly request transcripts by using our automated self-help service tools. Please visit us at IRS.opv and click on "Get a Tax Transcript..." under "Tools" or call 1-800-908-9946. If you need a copy of your return, use Form 4506, Request for Copy of Tax Return. There is a fee to get a copy of your return. 1a Name shown on tax return. If a joint return, enter the name 1b First social security number on tax return, individual taxpayer identification number, or employer identification number (see instructions) 2a. If a joint return, enter spouse's name shown on tax return. 2b Second social security number or individual taxpaver identification number if joint tax return

3 Current name, address (including apt., room, or suite no.), city, state, and ZIP code (see instructions)

4 Previous address shown on the last return filed if different from line 3 (see instructions)

5 If the transcript or tax information is to be mailed to a third party (such as a mortgage company), enter the third party's name, address and telephone number

Caution: If the tax transcript is being mailed to a third party, ensure that you have filled in lines 6 through 9 before signing. Sign and date the form once you have filled in these lines. Completing these steps helps to protect your privacy. Once the IRS discloses your tax transcript to the third party listed on line 5, the IRS has no control over what the third party does with the information. If you would like to limit the third party's authority to disclose your transcript information, you can specify this limitation in your written agreement with the third party.

Transcript requested. Enter the tax form number here (1040, 1065, 1120, etc.) and check the appropriate box below. Enter only one tax form number per request.

- a Return Transcript, which includes most of the line items of a tay return as filled with the IRS. A tay return transcript does not reflect changes made to the account after the return is processed. Transcripts are only available for the following returns: Form 1040 series, Form 1065, Form 1120, Form 1120-A, Form 1120-H, Form 1120-L, and Form 1120S. Return transcripts are available for the current year and returns processed during the prior 3 processing years. Most requests will be processed within 10 business days
- Account Transcript, which contains information on the financial status of the account, such as payments made on the account, penalty assessments, and adjustments made by you or the IRS after the return was filed. Return information is limited to items such as tax liability and estimated tax payments. Account transcripts are available for most returns. Most requests will be processed within 10 business days
- Record of Account, which provides the most detailed information as it is a combination of the Beturn Transcript and the Account Transcript. Available for current year and 3 prior tax years. Most requests will be processed within 10 business days
- Verification of Nonfiling, which is proof from the IRS that you did not file a return for the year. Current year requests are only available after June 15th. There are no availability restrictions on prior year requests. Most requests will be processed within 10 business days . . .
- Form W-2. Form 1099 series, Form 1098 series, or Form 5498 series transcript. The IRS can provide a transcript that includes data from these information returns. State or local information is not included with the Form W-2 information. The IRS may be able to provide this transcript information for up to 10 years. Information for the current year is generally not available until the year after it is filed with the IRS. For example, W-2 information for 2011, filed in 2012, will likely not be available from the IRS until 2013. If you need W-2 information for retirement

purposes, you should contact the Social Security Administration at 1-600-772-1213. Most requests will be processed within 10 business days . Caution: If you need a copy of Form W-2 or Form 1099, you should first contact the payer. To get a copy of the Form W-2 or Form 1099 filed with your return, you must use Form 4506 and request a copy of your return, which includes all attachments.

Year or period requested. Enter the ending date of the year or period, using the mm/dd/vvvv format. If you are requesting more than four years or periods, you must attach another Form 4506-T. For requests relating to quarterly tax returns, such as Form 941, you must enter each quarter or tax period separately

Caution: Do not sign this form unless all applicable lines have been completed

Signature of taxpayer(s). I declare that I am either the taxpayer whose name is shown on line 1a or 2a, or a person authorized to obtain the tax information requested. If the request applies to a joint return, at least one spouse must sign. If signed by a corporate officer, 1 percent or more shareholder, partner, managing member, guardian, tax matters partner, executor, receiver, administrator, trustee, or party other than the taxpayer, I certify that I have the authority to execute Form 4506-T on behalf of the taxpayer. Note: This form must be received by IRS within 120 days of the

	tory attests that he/she has read the attestation clause and upon so ne authority to sign the Form 4506-T. See instructions.	reading declares that he/she	Phone number of taxpayer on line 1a or 2a
Sign	Signature (see instructions)	Date	
Here	Title (if line 1a above is a corporation, partnership, estate, or trust)		
	Spouse's signature	Date	
For Privacy Act and Panerwork Reduction Act Notice see page 2		Cat No 37667N	Form 4506-T (Rev. 7-201)

## DCFS Postsecondary Programs



## DCFS Youth In Scholarship (YIS)

- This is actually a tuition waiver and it must be used at a public school in Illinois.
- It <u>does not cover</u> room and board.
- Does include a monthly stipend and medical insurance card. Students who go to private schools or out of state can get the stipend and not use to the tuition waiver.



## DCFS Tuition & Fee Waiver

- If the student is not selected for Youth in Scholarship, they are still able to take advantage of this tuition waiver.
- This must also be used at a public school in Illinois.
- It does not cover room and board.
- It does not include the monthly stipend or medical card.
- All youth who ever experienced foster care are eligible (except those returned home.)



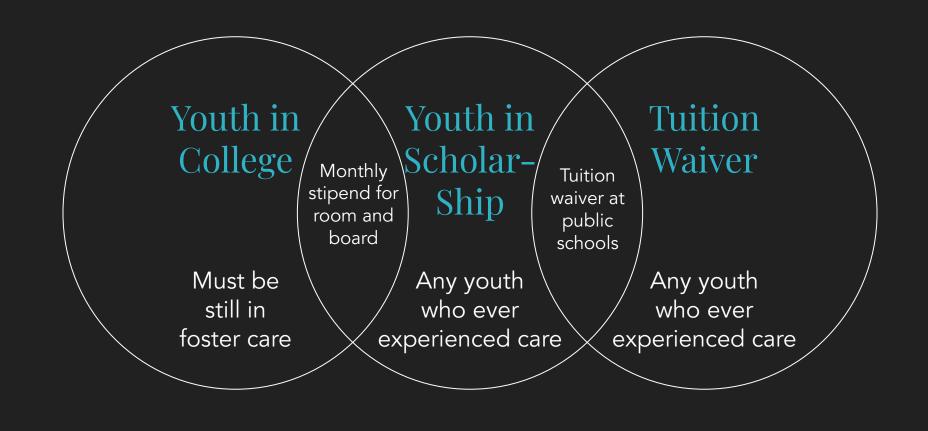
## ETV

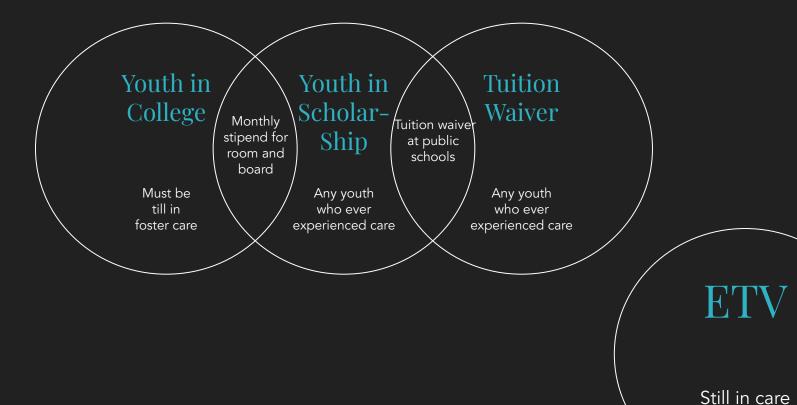
- Administered by Illinois DCFS but Federal program
- Up to \$5,000 per year, usually don't get that much
- Only for students who are still in care or left care after the age of 16



## **Youth in College**

- Considered a placement, meaning you must leave any previous placement to receive this benefit
- Monthly stipend
- You are expected to use this money toward room and board



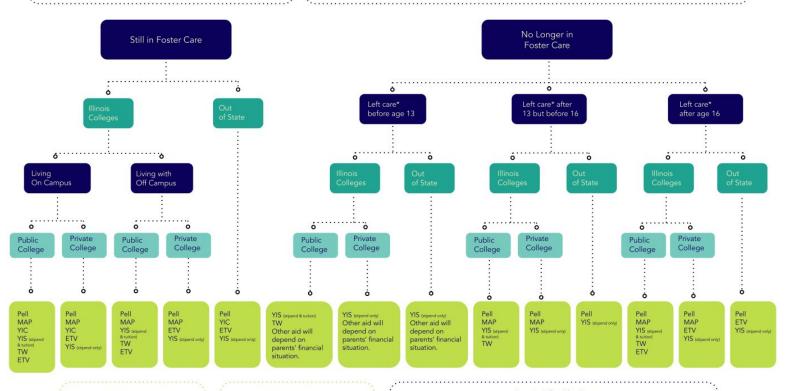


at age 16+



### College Programs and Financial Aid for Youth from Foster Care

In Illinois, if you experienced foster care, you can qualify for several programs and many thousands of dollars in federal and state financial aid for college, depending on your individual situation. Considerations include whether you are still in care, or at what age you exited care; whether you stay in Illinois or go to school out of state; and whether you attend a public or private school. Use this guide to help you determine which programs you might qualify for, and then... go get it!



### KEY - DCFS Programs

YIC ........ Youth in College Program
YIS ........ Youth in Scholarship Program
Keep in mind the scholarship program
is competitive! You must apply and be
accepted.

### KEY - Financial Aid

Pell ...... Federal Pell Grant
MAP ..... Illinois Monetary Award Program
TW ..... Tuition and Fee Waiver
ETV ..... Education and Training Voucher

### Important Considerations

- \*Left care via aging out, subsidized adoption, or subsidized guardianship
- Most aid and programs have applications and requirements such as good academic standing and full time status as a student.
- Most colleges will also offer need-based financial aid. You may also qualify for loans, which we have not included, and merit-based scholarships.

# 2023-2024 Annual College Cost Community Colleges & Illinois Public Universities

State Funded Schools		**Max MAP Grant	PELL	Balance after MAP & PELL to be waived	Room &	YIC Board Payment 12 months of \$1506	Room & Board after YIC
Community College (High Estimate)	\$7,978.00	\$1,600.00	\$7,395.00	(\$517.00)	N/A	\$18,072.00	
Chicago State University	\$15,726.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$69)	\$10,290.00	\$18,072.00	(\$8,272.00)
Eastern Illinois University	\$15,806.44	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$11.44)	\$10,862.00	\$18,072.00	(\$7,851.00)
Governors State University	\$13,696.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$2,099.00)	\$12,056.00	\$18,072.00	(\$8,115.00)
\$\$ Illinois State University	\$15,479.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$316)	\$11,584.00	\$18,072.00	(\$6,804.00)
Northeastern Illinois State University	\$12,838.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$2,957.00)	\$9,742.00	\$18,072.00	(\$11,287.00)
Northern Illinois University	\$12,700.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$3,095)	\$12,800.00	\$18,072.00	(\$8,367.00)
Southern Illinois University - Carbondale	\$14,690.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$1,105.00)	\$12,114.00	\$18,072.00	(\$7,063.00)
Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville	\$12,922.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$2,783.00)	\$10,271.00	\$18,072.00	(\$10,323.00)
\$\$ University of Illinois - Chicago*	\$12,470.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$3,325.00)	\$14,600.00	\$18,072.00	(\$6,797.00)
University of Illinois - Springfield	\$12,262.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$3,533.00)	\$12,088.00	\$18,072.00	(\$9,517.00)
\$\$ University of Illinois - Urbana Champaign	\$17,334.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$1,539.00)	\$13,938.00	\$18,072.00	(\$2,595.00)
Western Illinois University	\$17,442.00	\$8,400.00	\$7,395.00	(\$1,647.00)	\$11,640.00	\$18,072.00	(\$4,785.00)

<sup>\$\$ -</sup> These state funded universities have additional grant funding for youth with 'zero' EFC. UIUC has Illinois Promise funding, UIC has Access grants.

ISU has Access Grant. Other schools may have other funding. Contact FA Department at schools for information.

<sup>\*</sup>Tuition based on academic program - this figure uses lowest amount charged.

<sup>\*\*</sup> MAP used only towards tuition & mandatory fees, based on 15 CH per semester & current funding. - Note- MAP has early deadline - Can get '0'

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> PELL based on 12 CH per semester, current funding, & entitlement grants

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> ETV is used towards tuition and fees - housing costs if youth is receiving YIC or YIS are calculated after considering board payment amount

#### Resources for Workers, Youth, & Foster Parents

Financial Aid for Foster Youth: <a href="https://www.foster-progress.org/financial-aid/">www.foster-progress.org/financial-aid/</a>

College Checklist for Foster Youth: <a href="http://www.foster-progress.org/college-checklist/">http://www.foster-progress.org/college-checklist/</a>

Mentoring and Scholarship Program Application:

http://www.foster-progress.org/mentoring/

Explore colleges and find more scholarships:

www.collegescorecard.ed.gov

# Trauma 101

#### Trauma 101

"Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being."

SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



# Three Categories of Trauma



Acute: A single incident, like a car accident

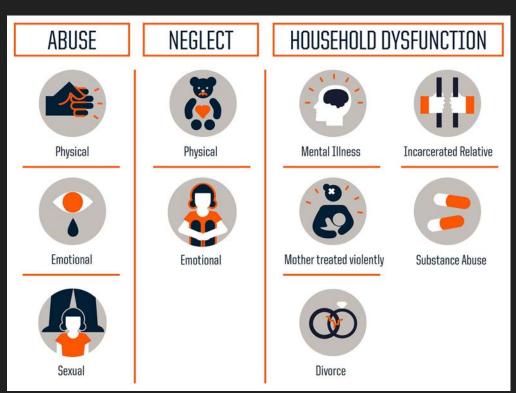


 Chronic: prolonged and repeated incident such as domestic violence, or childhood abuse.



Complex: Combination of varied incidents of trauma.

# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)



"Are potentially traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and well-being. These experiences range from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse to parental divorce or the incarceration of a parent or guardian."

https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Brief-adverse-childhood-experiences\_FINAL.pdf

# ACEs Assessment Example

Take a few moments to take the ACEs quiz. Keep in mind that it can be a heavy experience for some.

Spoiler alert: there's hope! Even when we experience a lot of ACEs, we may also have a lot of protective factors!



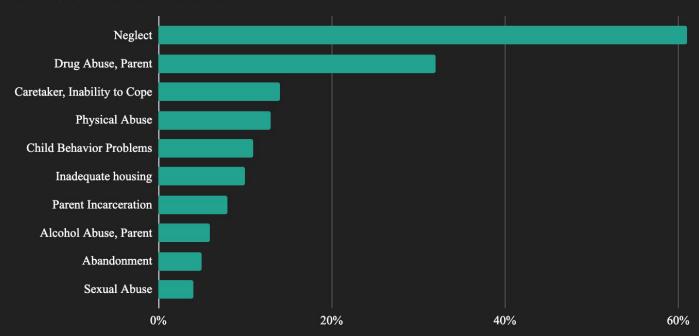
https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/03/02/387007941/take-the-ace-quiz-and-learn-what-it-does-and-doesnt-mean

## ACES Increase Health Risks



## ACES that Foster Youth Experience

#### Reasons Children Come into Care



80%

#### Protective Factors

"Protective factors are conditions or attributes in individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that mitigate or eliminate risk, thereby increasing the health and well-being of children and families."

What protective factors did you have in your own life?



## Protective Factors

Intrinsic vs External

- Individual
- Family
- Communities



## Individual and Family Protective Factors

#### Children who...

- have positive friendships and peer networks
- do well in school
- have caring adults outside the family who serve as mentors/role models

#### Families where...

- safe, stable, and nurturing relationships are created
- caregivers can meet basic needs of food, shelter, and health services for children
- caregivers have college degrees or higher
- caregivers have steady employment

- there are strong social support networks and positive relationships with the people around them
- caregivers engage in parental monitoring, supervision, and consistent enforcement of rules
- caregivers/adults work through conflicts peacefully
- caregivers help children work through problems
- engage in fun, positive activities together
- The importance of school is encouraged for children

# Community Protective Factors

Communities where families have access to....

- economic and financial help
- medical care and mental health services
- safe, stable housing
- nurturing and safe childcare
- high-quality preschool
- safe, engaging after school programs and activities

#### Communities where...

- adults have work opportunities with family-friendly policies
- strong partnerships exist between the community and business, health care, government, and other sectors
- residents feel connected to each other and are involved in the community
- violence is not tolerated or accepted

#### Resilience



*Definition:* the ability to mentally or emotionally cope with a crisis or to return to pre-crisis status quickly.

If despite our efforts we live in a world where youth can not be protected from life's traumas then we have a responsibility to help youth learn to live with and recover from these traumas.

# Reaching the goal of graduation

How can we mitigate risks by instilling protective factors?

Extrinsic (Support System)

- Mentors
- Community
- Financial support
- Health
- Safety

Intrinsic

(Social/Emotional

Development)

- Teaching
- Modeling
- Therapy



## Trauma Informed Care

- No "trauma tourism"
  - Ask yourself, why do I need to know?
  - Status is confidential
  - Reliving the past can be re-traumatizing
  - Know your role
- If students do share:
  - Acknowledging injustice, hardship without pity. "I'm sorry you had to go through that." or "You've been through a lot."
  - o Don't treat foster care like a "dirty word" that has to be whispered.
  - Ask for clarification. "What do you call your foster parent?" "Who should be involved...?"
  - Please don't make them jump through unnecessary hoops, verification, proof
  - o Don't make assumptions. Wide variety of experiences.

# Stay in Touch

- Refer students to our programs
- Become a mentor, spread the word
- Reach out for individual questions or coaching
- Schedule further webinars for trauma-informed practice or supporting the academic ambitions of foster youth

# 



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www.foster-progress.org



facebook.com/fosterprogress



twitter.com/fosterprogress



instagram.com/foster\_progress

# For Further Study

Trust Based Relational Intervention - TBRI for Teachers

What Happened to You? Dr Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey

SAMSHA's Trauma and Violence resources

CDC's ACES resources

Childwelfare.gov's resources