Foster Youth in Higher Education

Presented by:

Leticia Siegel - Financial Aid Specialist
Mayra Diaz - Student Success Coordinator
Rayven Arzola – Advising Specialist, YESS
Mission is to present information on services offered for current or former foster youth that will support with their success in higher education.

Information presented will include:
- An overview of the challenges foster youth face in college
- Programs available to advocate for foster youth
- Who is considered a foster youth?
- Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success
- Financial Aid resources
- Student Success Program
- A Meaningful Move-In Day Video
- Questions
Foster Youth Statistics:

• In the 2014-15 school year, 1368 foster children were enrolled in Tulare County School District. There were 109 12th graders and 149 11th graders.

• Only 50% of current and former foster youth will receive a high school diploma.

• Only 10% of current former foster youth will attend college, and of that 10%, only 3% will graduate.
Many youth leaving foster care and transitioning into adulthood experience low academic achievement and dismal life outcomes (Dion et al., 2014, Dworsky & Courtney, 2010a; Hook & Courtney, 2011; Osgood, Foster, and Courtney, 2010).

Poor educational outcomes make it difficult for many foster youth to secure gainful employment and provide for their basic needs.

Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, June 2016
Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS) Program
YESS Services

• Our program has partnered with Tulare County Child Welfare Services’ Independent Living Program to provide daily living skills classes to our current and former foster youth.

• Students are given the opportunity to learn life skills to assist with their transition into adulthood. The topics we cover include:
  • How to get a job, cooking basics, financial literacy, First Aid and CPR, and a few other topics.
Our program also serves foster youth who are planning to attend COS or any college. The YESS Program offers the following:

- Assistance and guidance with applying to college
- Assistance with class registration
- Scheduling counselor meetings
- Applying and Renewing FASFA (financial aid)
- Referrals to on-campus support services (Student Success, EOPS, tutoring etc.)
- Assistance with Transitional Housing, County Services, Employment
- Access to Advising Specialist Rayven Arzola
YESS Perks

- Drop-in Center
- Computer Lab & Free Printing
- School & Toiletry Supplies
- Food Pantry/Kitchen
- Food Vouchers
- Textbook Assistance
Eligibility

- Current and former foster youth to age 21
- Independent Living Program eligible
- AB 12 Youth
WHO IS CONSIDERED FOSTER YOUTH OR WARD OF THE COURT FOR FINANCIAL AID PURPOSES?
“At any time since you turned age 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?”
Answering yes to this question will make you an Independent student.

Being incarcerated doesn’t make one a ward or dependent of the court and the student should not answer yes if that is the case UNLESS they were placed into foster care after their release.
Scenario A
Scott lived with foster parents from age 8 until he was 18. He was kicked out after he graduated and went to live with his mother. Scott should answer “yes” as he was still in foster care at age 13.

Scenario B
Tammy was abused by her father and placed in foster care, living in a group home from age 10 to 15. Then she went to live with her aunt and uncle. Tammy should answer “yes” as she was still in foster care at age 13.

Scenario C
Beatrice was a dependent of the Court and adopted at age 15. She is a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she was still in foster care at age 13.

Scenario D
Candace was in foster care from age 3 to 15, at which time she reunified with her parents. She is a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she was still in foster care at age 13.

Scenario E
Ernesto is in foster care. At age 16 he is arrested for vandalism at school. A delinquency petition is filed. Ernesto is placed in a group home but is also considered a delinquent youth and is on probation. He is therefore a D/W the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because he remains in foster care.

Scenario F
Diane has been in foster care since she was 8 years old. At 15½ she damages foster home property and is arrested. On her release from Probation Camp, she is placed in a group home until her 19th birthday. She is a D/W the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she remains in foster care.

Scenario G
Harry, age 16, lives at home with his mom and stepdad. Harry and his stepdad get in a fight. They call the police saying Harry attacked the stepdad, and Harry is taken to Juvenile Hall. On his release from Juvenile Hall he is placed on probation. His mother refuses to take him back and thus has abandoned him. There are no relatives or friends able to take him, so Harry is placed in a foster home. He is now a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because he is now in foster care.

Scenario H
Carrie was in foster care from age 10 to 12. She reunified with her mother and lived with her since. Carrie must answer “no” as she was not in foster care at age 13.

Scenario I
Ana was in a foster home until she was adopted at age 8. She is NOT a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she was adopted before age 13.

Scenario J
Greg gets into a fight at school and hits a classmate. He is arrested and placed on probation. He remains at home with his mother. He is NOT a Ward of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because his parents retain custody.

Scenario K
Fran, a 16-year-old living at home with her parents, commits an offense that causes the Juvenile Court to declare her a delinquent youth and place her on probation. The Court determines that it’s contrary to Fran’s interest to return home at this time and places her in a group home. She is now a D/W of the Court for the purposes of FAFSA because she is placed in a group home which is a type of foster care placement.
DETERMINING HOMELESSNESS AND UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH
McKinney-Vento Act

• Definition of Homeless Students-(42 U.S.C.§11434A(2)(B)(i)
• Individuals whose nighttime residence is NOT:
  • Fixed—stationary, permanent, and not subject to change
  • Regular—used on a predictable, routine, or consistent basis
  • Adequate—sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in the home

Can the student go to the SAME PLACE (fixed) EVERY NIGHT (regular) to sleep in a SAFE AND SUFFICIENT SPACE (adequate)?
Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

• Definition of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY)
• Unaccompanied = not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian; in practical terms, this means the youth does not live with the parent or guardian

• 2-Step Process:
  • Does the student’s living arrangement meet the McKinney-Vento Act’s definition of homeless?
  • Once homelessness is determined, is the student unaccompanied?
Who can determine UHY

- Unaccompanied homeless youth (independent student) determinations under the HEA can be made by:
  - A local homeless education liaison
  - The director of a Runaway and Homeless Youth Act-funded shelter or transitional living program (or his/her designee)
  - The director of a HUD-funded shelter or transitional housing program (or his/her designee)
  - A financial aid administrator
• Beginning with the **2018-2019 FAFSA**, the definition of “youth” will be removed from the FAFSA.
• These changes will allow some homeless students aged 22 or 23 access to a more streamlined process for determining their independent status.
• All students who indicate they are homeless, regardless of age, will be able to indicate they have received an unaccompanied homeless youth determination.
FINANCIAL AID APPLICATIONS AND PROCESSES
Where to Apply

FAFSA.ed.gov

dream.csac.ca.gov
What does completing a FAFSA do for me?

Students who are U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents submit a FAFSA

**FAFSA**
Oct. 1st- March 2nd

- **Pell Grant**
  - $5,920
  - 3.76%

- **Stafford Loan**
  - Varies on hours worked

- **Institutional Aid**
  - $3,500-$6,000

- **Work Study**
  - Cal A, B, C-$547-$12,294

- **BOG Waiver**
  - Pays unit fees

- **Middle Class Scholarship**
  - Cal Grants
  - 2.0 or 3.0 GPA

- **Foster Youth**
  - have priority registration

Families earning $100,000-$156,000
Pays 10%-40% tuition

Students who are U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents submit a FAFSA
FSA ID Requirements for Students

• Social Security Number
• **Name exactly as it appears on SS card**
• Email Address other than school’s email address

Two last names without a hyphen

Two last names with a hyphen

Garcia is last name for application

Smith-Garcia is last name for application
Student Info Needed To Complete FAFSA Application

- FSA ID
  - [https://fsaid.ed.gov](https://fsaid.ed.gov)
- Accurate Address
- Driver’s License
- SSN
- Alien Registration Number
- Student 2015 Income Information
  - 2015 Taxes
  - Last Pay Stub of 2015 or W-2
- List of colleges you are interested in attending
What does completing a Dream Act Application do for me?

Completed By non-citizens and non-residents who:

- Graduated or will graduate from a CA high school
- Has or will have attended a CA high school for at least 3 years or equivalency
- Has attended total of 3 years at CA elementary, secondary, or high school and earned credits in CA from a CA HS equivalent to 3 years

Dream Act Application
Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>- March 2nd

- **Cal Grants**
- **Middle Class Scholarship**
- **Institutional Aid**
- **Dream Loan (UC and CSU Only)**
- **BOG Waiver**

$4,000 per year or $20,000 lifetime

3.76% APR
OTHER GRANTS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR FOSTER YOUTH
CHAFEE GRANT FOR FOSTER YOUTH

- Separate application from the FAFSA and Dream Act but must have completed either one of those applications to apply for Chafee Grant
- You only complete it once. California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) will automatically roll it over until you age out.
- Only for students in foster care between the ages of 16-18
- Must have not reached their 22\textsuperscript{nd} birthday as of July 1 of the award year
- California Department of Social Services must confirm foster youth eligibility
- Must have financial need
- Must be enrolled in a school that participates in the Pell Grant program
- Enrolled at least half time (6 or more units)
- Enrolled in a program of at least one academic year in length
- Must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress
- Can be eligible to receive up to $5000 for the year
Students are not required to:
• Have a social security number
• Meet Selective Service requirements
• Be clear of loan default or grant over award
• Be a California resident or go to a California school
• Not all foster youth are awarded
• Former recipients are awarded first and then it is determined by application date
• CSAC runs their awards through batches throughout the year to determine awarding
• Eligibility can be lost for this grant if the student fails to meet the requirements
• Must be enrolled in 6 units or more at a California college or university
• Must have been in foster care after the age of 13
• No age limitation
• Does not have to be maintaining SAP
• Can only be approved once a year
• Can only be used for textbooks
• Cannot be used for clickers
• School assigned Burton Book Fund Administrator has to submit your application
• Student can apply until the funds are run out for the academic year
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENROLLED</th>
<th>BOOK VOUCHER AMOUNT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5 UNITS</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 UNITS</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-11 UNITS</td>
<td>$175</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 OR MORE UNITS</td>
<td>$250</td>
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• EXTENDED OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (EOPS) LOCATED IN SEQUOIA BLDG ROOM 108

• COOPERATIVE AGENCIES RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION (CARE) LOCATED IN SEQUOIA BLDG ROOM 108

These programs offer academic, financial and program support to students
Scholarships

• [http://www.collegescholarships.org/scholarships/foster.htm](http://www.collegescholarships.org/scholarships/foster.htm)

• National Foster Parent Association

• Foster Care to Success
  
  Administers the Casey Family Program and the Orphan Foundation of America

• Darko Rapotez Memorial College Scholarship Fund for Aged out Foster Youth
• Have cumulative 2.0 GPA ("C" grade or better)
• Complete 67% of the cumulative units that attempted (PACE)
  EXAMPLE:
  Enrolled in 12 units must complete 9 of those units to remain in good standing. NO F’S OR W’S.
• Degree Earned (once a degree is earned student is no longer meeting SAP)
• Maximum Attempted Unit Timeframe (usually 90 attempted units for most majors) at a two year college
Tips that foster youth should know before starting the application
Reporting Income for Foster Youth/Ward of the Court

Student should not report TANF or welfare benefits, SNAP (food stamps) or ILP benefits as income amounts if they receive these benefits or if someone else receives it for the student. They will just report that they receive those benefits. But you will not report the amounts.
Selective Service Registration Required for Males

AGENCY MISSIONS

"...To furnish manpower to the Defense Department during a national emergency, to manage alternative service for men classified as conscientious objectors, and to register, with only a few exceptions, all male U.S. citizens and male immigrants residing in the United States who are ages 18 through 25..."
Reminders to the student

• Apply by March 2\textsuperscript{nd}
• They need to check their email often for messages from colleges!
• Look out for the refund selection kit (COS) and get a government ID card
• Stay in class and pass your classes with a “C” or better
Questions?

Leticia Siegel
Financial Aid Specialist
leticias@cos.edu
(559) 737-6229
General Financial Aid Line & Email
(559) 730-3747
financialaid@cos.edu
If youth from foster care are fortunate enough to attend college, there are still many challenges that make earning a degree very difficult. Many foster youth students lack financial resources, are academically underprepared, struggle with mental health issues, and often lack the emotional support of a caring adult.

(Children’s Advocacy Institute, 2010; Courtney and Dworksy, 2006; Osgood, Foster, & Courtney, 2010).
Student Success is a district wide program which fosters a learning environment that provides all students with equitable resources necessary to succeed in their academic endeavors. The goal is to ensure that students are prepared with the necessary tools to follow and complete their educational plans.
The Student Success Program provides services to assist students in meeting their educational goals through:

- Academic support
- Career advising
- Mentoring
- Workshops
- Individual and group support meetings.
- Book vouchers
- Gas cards
- Meal vouchers (foster youth)
- Testing supplies
- Lap top checkout
- Textbook checkout
- Printing access
- Free snacks
- University field trips
Student Success Centers

- Sycamore Center, Room 107
- Kern Center, Room 733
- Morro Center, Room 112
- Tulare Center, Building B, 214
- Hanford Center– Education Bldg, E65
### Program Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Director</th>
<th><strong>Juan Vazquez</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Success Counselors</td>
<td><strong>Belinda Aguilar-Jones</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Deysi Sanchez</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Success Coordinators</td>
<td><strong>Susana Perez – Basic Skills, Veterans</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Elise Garcia – Basic Skills, FYE contact</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Mayra Diaz – ESL, Foster Youth</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Kenney Jackson – Student-Athletes</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Ernest P. Lopez – Hanford Ed. Center</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Scott Rogers - Tulare College Center</strong></td>
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### Mayra Diaz - Student Success Coordinator

- The Student Success Program will work with all students that have ever been in foster care regardless of the age limit criteria's.
- Meets with students throughout the semester.
- Assist students with academic challenges.
- Follow up with their current semester progress.
- Connect them with tutoring and other resources that they might benefit from.
- Assist with study skills, time management, and organization strategies
- Office: COS Visalia, Kern 733
- Office Phone: 559-737-6287
- Email: mayrad@cos.edu
Student Responsibilities

- Attend the Student Success Orientation.
- Complete the Student Success Program Mutual Responsibility Agreement.
- Meet with a Student Success Counselor at least 1 time per semester.
- Meet with a Student Success Coordinator at least 6 times per semester or the designated amount on your Mutual Responsibility Agreement.
Student Support Services

❖ Student Success Program
   Sycamore 109
   Monday - Friday
   8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

❖ Math Lab
   Monday - Thursday
   8:00 AM - 7:30 PM
   Friday
   8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
   Saturday
   10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

❖ Writing Center
   Monday – Thursday
   8:00 AM - 4:00PM
   *Summer Hours
   cos.mywconline.com

❖ General Tutorial Services
   Various Subjects
   Monday - Thursday
   8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
   Friday
   8:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Spring 2016 Educational Mentor Panel
Fall 2017 UCLA Field Trip
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UlK9kN8hdHU
California College Pathways

http://www.cacollegepathways.org/

- Find Campus Support Programs Tab-
University Foster Youth Contacts
Questions?