



# Achieving higher education goals

## Resources for youth in and from foster care

Attaining a higher education degree from a technical college, community college or four-year institution can play a pivotal role in providing personal and professional opportunities for all individuals. For young people leaving foster care, the daily struggle with adult responsibilities often makes it difficult to plan for the future and pursue higher education or training.

Numerous groups offer scholarships and related supports for youth who have been adopted, or who are or were in foster care. This fact sheet provides an overview of information that can help youth continue their education.

### General information

In [Improving Higher Education Outcomes for Young Adults in Foster Care](#), you will find a comprehensive list of readings and resources available to students in and from foster care. In addition to statewide approaches, it provides a sampling of colleges and universities that offer on-campus support programs to youth from or in foster care. The document is available at <http://www.casey.org/media/improving-higher-ed.pdf>.

Voice for Adoption provides a helpful list of financial aid resources, which can be accessed at: [http://voice-for-adoption.org/sites/default/files/VFA\\_Financial%20Aid%20Resource%20Sheet%20Updated\\_Feb2015.pdf](http://voice-for-adoption.org/sites/default/files/VFA_Financial%20Aid%20Resource%20Sheet%20Updated_Feb2015.pdf).

A Foster Care Transition Toolkit, published by the U.S. Department of Education and available at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/foster-care/youth-transition-toolkit.pdf>, includes tips and resources to help foster youth access and navigate social, emotional, educational and skills barriers as they transition into adulthood.

### Scholarships

Many foundations, individuals and states provide scholarships. Because each organization may use different eligibility criteria, identifying relevant scholarships can require significant legwork. The following resources provide helpful methods and information:

- Foster Care to Success: <http://www.fc2success.org/programs/scholarships-and-grants/>
- Umps Care Charities: <http://umpscare.com/AllStarScholarship.html>
- National Foster Parent Association: <http://nfpaonline.org/nfpascholarship>
- Fastweb: <http://fastweb.com>
- National Scholarship Providers Association: <http://scholarshipproviders.org>
- FinAid: <http://finaid.org/scholarships/other.phtml>
- College Board: <http://collegeboard.com/?student>
- Youth.gov: <http://youth.gov/shared-resources/college-scholarships>

## Tuition waivers

Many states now provide tuition waivers for youth who have received or are receiving services through a state child welfare agency or other organization. At the time of publication, 22 states had tuition waivers in place for youth who are or were in foster care. These waivers exempt them from paying tuition-related expenses at state universities.

The Children's Bureau has compiled a list of these states, which is available here:

[http://www.tipwaynestate.org/uploads/1/3/8/9/13898085/state\\_etv\\_tuition\\_waiver\\_revised\\_11.18.2015.pdf](http://www.tipwaynestate.org/uploads/1/3/8/9/13898085/state_etv_tuition_waiver_revised_11.18.2015.pdf).

## Financial aid

The Office of Federal Student Aid provides publications, fact sheets, online tools and other resources to help you prepare and pay for college or career school: [http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student\\_guide/index.html](http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student_guide/index.html).

FinAid provides comprehensive information on student financial aid information, advice and tools:

<http://www.finaid.org>.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available here: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

## Education training vouchers

The Education Training Voucher (ETV) program is a federally funded, state-administered initiative to provide funding and support for post-secondary education. Eligible students may receive grants up to \$5,000 per year for up to five years or until their 23rd birthday. ETV funds can be combined with other grants and scholarships to minimize or eliminate the need for student loans.

Links to state-specific information about ETV funds can be found here:

<http://www.fc2sprograms.org/about-etv/>.

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/foster-youth-vouchers.pdf>.

## U.S. Department of Education: Students in Foster Care

This section of the U.S. Department of Education website provides information about policy, practice and advocacy advances that address the education barriers and supports needed for students who are in or have been in foster care. Links to information about some of these advances can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/foster-care/index.html>.

## More information

Foster Care to Success, the oldest and largest national nonprofit organization working solely with college-bound foster youth, offers information and resources on its website: <http://www.fc2success.org/>.