

Understanding Support for Foster Alumni: Financial Aid, Enrollment Process & Campus Support

June 21, 2021
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Presentation

Presenters:

- ❖ **Sharee Hamlin** - Department of Family and Protective Services, Transitional Living Services
Lead Program Specialist
- ❖ **Brandi Purswell** – BCFS Health and Human Services, ETV Specialist
- ❖ **Ed Kerestly** - Angelo State University, Financial Aid Director
- ❖ **Todd Serpico** - Department of Family and Protective Services, State Office PAL Program
Specialist
- ❖ **Dr. Javier Flores** - Angelo State University, Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment
Management and Foster Care Alumni Liaison

What does the data tell us?





Identifying Foster Care Alumni

SHAREE HAMLIN

*Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Transitional Living Services
State Office PAL Program Specialist*

IDENTIFYING FORMER FOSTER YOUTH



WHY?



HOW?

Issues Facing Current and Former Students in Foster Care

Students aging out of foster care and wanting to pursue post secondary education often struggle with the following:

- Choosing an educational program: Tech. / Voc school, Community College, 4 year schools
- How to get and use financial aid: grants, scholarships, and loans
- Understanding the real costs: tuition, fees, school supplies, transportation, and living expenses
- How to access resources in their community
- Career Planning
- Academic support to help them succeed
- Developing and maintaining a budget
- Balancing life and taking care of their emotional and physical health



WHY???

- Support – Working with a population that are trying to maneuver without the support of parents/family.
- Hope- When a youth learns and understands their educational benefits, it removes much of the worry and anxiety about being able to meet educational goals.
- Outcomes- Connection to benefits and resources lead to better outcomes.

HIGHER EDUCATION OUTCOMES: TEXAS FOSTER CARE ALUMNI

Few receive a degree or certificate:

- 1.5% will attain a Bachelor's degree by age 24, compared to 33% in the general population
- 2% obtain an Associate degree or vocational certificate



NATIONAL FOSTER CARE OUTCOMES

Outcomes during transition from care to adulthood	National data
Earned a high school diploma	50%
Obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher	2%
Became a parent	84%
Were unemployed	51%
Had no health insurance	30%
Had been homeless	25%
Were receiving public assistance	30%



HIGHER EDUCATION OUTCOMES: TEXAS FOSTER CARE ALUMNI

With support, success in higher education is possible.

- **Foster care alumni who access the waiver are 3.5 times more likely to receive a bachelor's degree than enrolled foster care alumni who qualify for the waiver but do not use it.**

The waiver is under-utilized.

- **40% of foster care alumni who enroll in higher education and qualify for the waiver, do not use it.**

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION LEGISLATION 85TH SESSION

HB 1702

Requires an institution of higher education to at least annually obtain the names of current and incoming students currently or formerly in DFPS conservatorship and provide that information to the institution's liaison officer responsible for assisting these students.

- Allows the liaison to attend trainings at the institution of higher education
- Requires the institution to publicize (website, social media, mail, etc.) the liaison's name and contact information and available support services.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION LEGISLATION

85TH SESSION

HB 3808

- Requires each institution of higher education designate at least one employee to provide students with comprehensive information including resources to access medical and behavioral health coverage, public benefit program case management and counseling, parenting and child care resources, employment assistance, financial counseling/tax preparation, transportation assistance, student academic success strategies and any other resources offered by the institution. Institutions can use the liaison officer that serves youth who were in foster care to serve all students.
- Creates a new program designed to employ students while they are in college in an area of the students long term career interests.

APPLYTEXAS (FORMERLY TX COMMON APP)

Indicator box on the application for former foster youth.

Youth in high school encouraged to check this box to ensure they are connected to the benefits offered by the school they have applied to.

MOVING FORWARD





Education and Training Voucher (ETV)

Brandi Purswell

BCFS Health and Human Services

ETV Specialist



Health and Human Services • Est. 1944

Education and Training Voucher (ETV)

Federal need-based benefit for current and former foster youth to complete their post-secondary education

Students must apply

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/handbooks/CPS/Files/CPS_pg_x10300.asp#CPS_10320

What Does ETV Do?



Eligible students can receive up to **\$12,000** per school year to pay for

- Housing *1st priority
- Utilities
- Tuition & fees – if applicable
- Vocational training
- Personal living expenses
- Transportation
- Childcare
- Books and school supplies
- Computer (1)

***Temporary change due to COVID

ETV Eligibility 21-22

Who is eligible to receive ETV funds?

Youth who are 16 – 24 years old and:

- Have aged out of foster care
- Are in extended foster care
- Were adopted after turning 16

***Temporary change due to COVID



*Can only be used for a total of 15 semesters, ends the month of the student's 25th birthday.

What Can ETV Help With?

ETV can help pay for:

- Dual credit in high school
- Associate's degree*
- Bachelor's degree*
- Graduate degree programs*
- Licensed career schools
- Technical/Vocational training
 - Dental assistants
 - Vet Techs
 - Chefs & head cooks
 - Petroleum engineers
 - Nurses
 - Plumbers
 - Heating & AC installers



* Must be taking at least 6 semester hours

Tuition Waiver vs. ETV

Tuition Waiver	ETV
State law	Need-based federal funds
Only state-supported colleges/universities	Post-secondary education institutions
Waives tuition/fees	Up to \$12,000 /school year
Lifetime	16- 24 years old
Must access before 25	Ends the month of 25th birthday
No grade requirement	Has to make SAP

*** The Tuition/Fee Waiver and the ETV program can be used together at state-supported colleges/universities**

Visit TexasETV.com for:

- Applications (online and downloadable)
- Important dates
- Eligibility guidelines
- Needed documents
- Allowable expenses
- **Space for trusted adults**
- Success stories
- Frequently asked questions
- Tutoring services
- And more!



Chat with us!
Look for the "CHAT"
icon on the bottom
right hand side of our
website.



Application Reminders

***We are now accepting Summer applications through 7/31/21
and Fall applications through 10/31/21.***



Application Deadlines

Fall

Oct. 1

Spring

March 1

Summer

July 1

Technical school deadlines may vary, talk with your ETV Coordinator.



**Deadlines are only for a completed application,
not for other documents.**

**Speak with a coordinator if it is past the deadline,
*There are always extensions!***

Texas Education and Training Voucher



ETV Program

1 (877) 268-4063

(Mon-Fri, 8:30 am - 5:30 pm)

4346 NW Loop 410,

San Antonio, TX 78229

Apply at : www.TexasETV.com

ETV Coordinators

Regions 1, 2, 9, 10, & 11

Diana Pollan

210-240-6573

DP0219@bcfs.net

Regions 3 & 8 (Mo-Z)

Sarah Christopher

210-449-8458

SH1216@BCFS.net

ETV Coordinators (continued)

Regions 4, 5, 6, & URM

Elizabeth Solis

469-834-6858

ES0912@BCFS.net

Regions 7 & 8 (A-Mi)

Leah Cross

210-332-8521

LC2090@BCFs.net

ETV Specialists



Drew Melton

210-294-0497

DM1117@BCFS.net

Brandi Purswell

210-284-9704

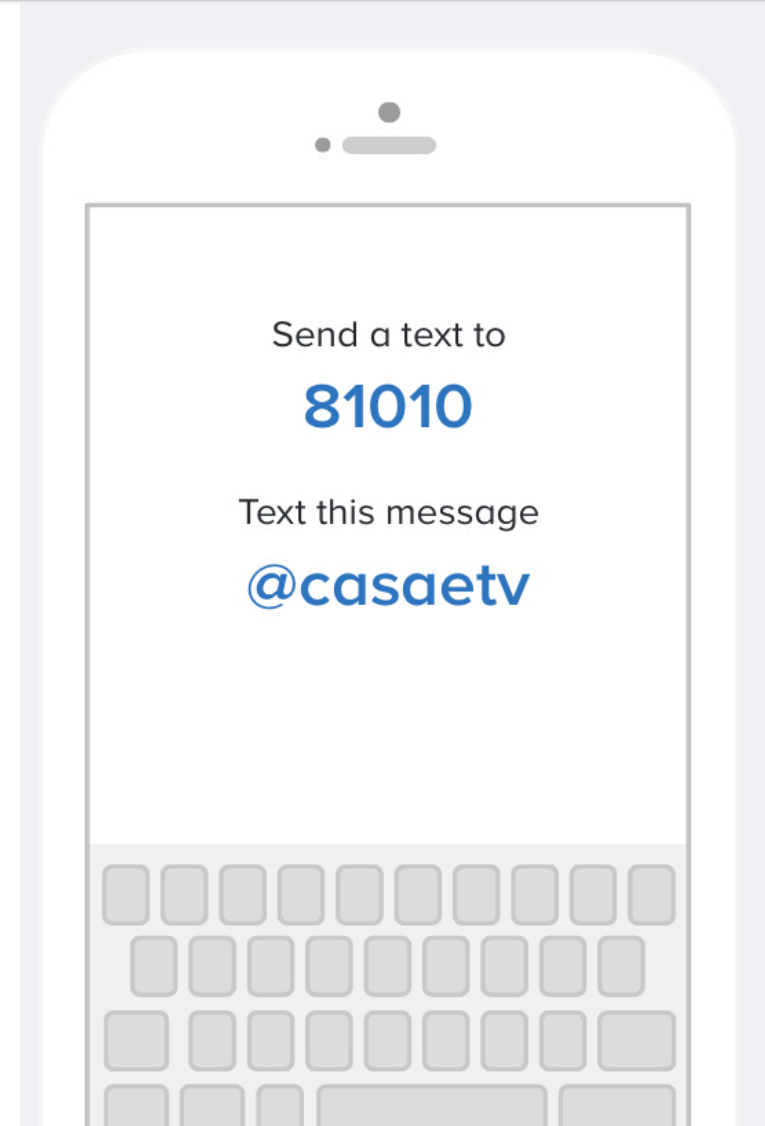
BP0317@BCFS.net

Email if you would like a copy of this presentation!

Remind for CASA



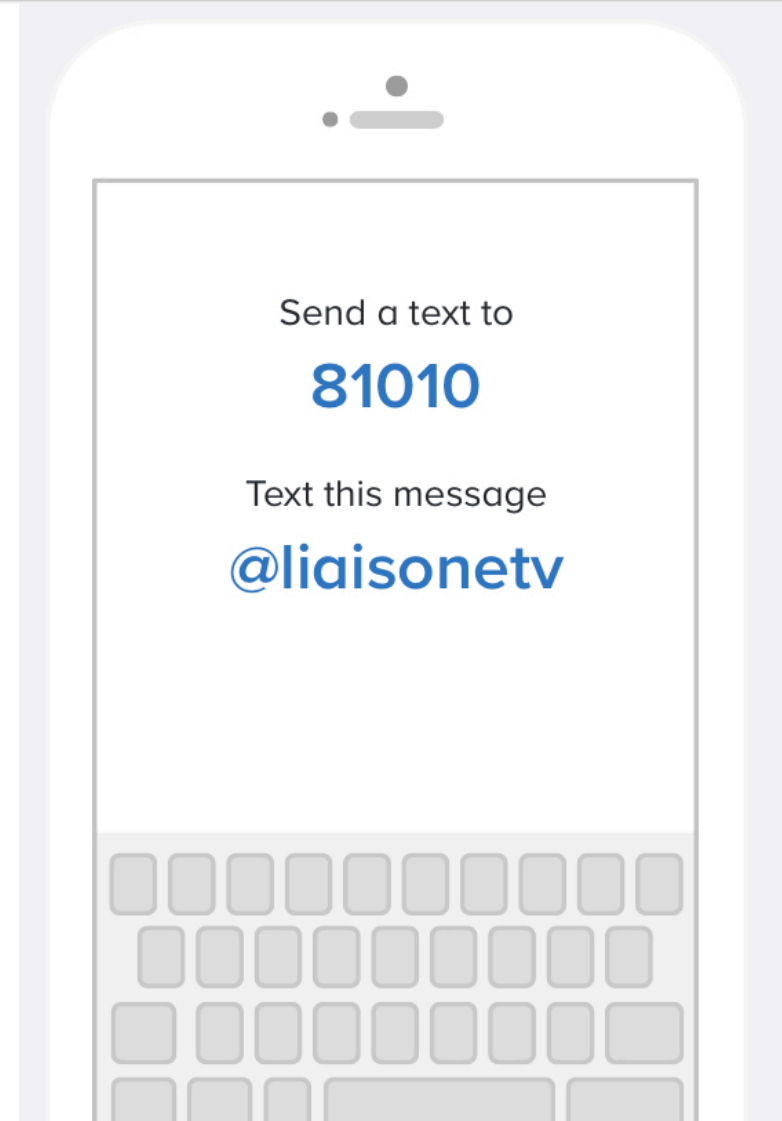
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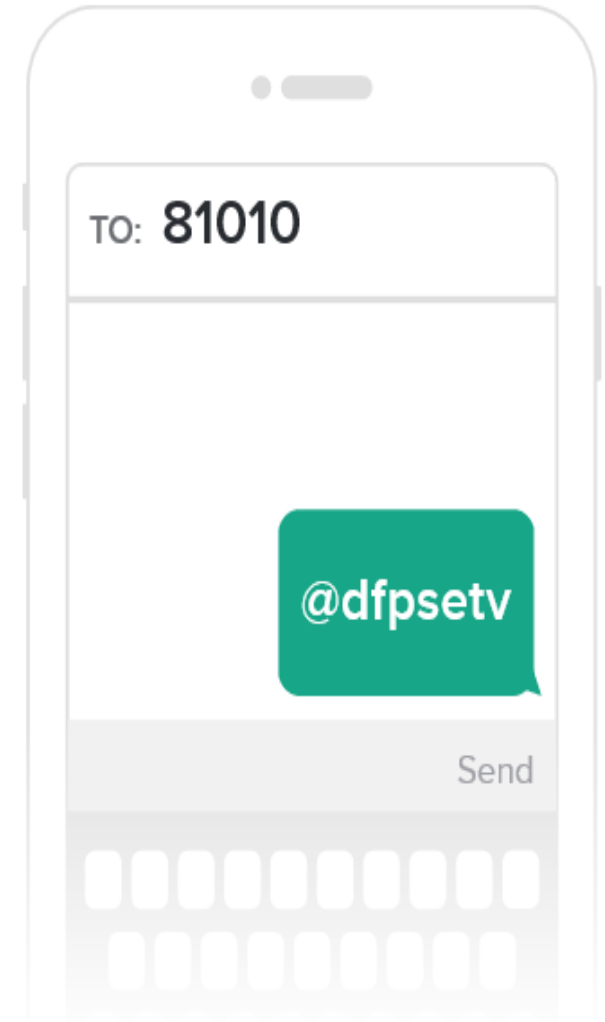
Visit

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<https://www.remind.com/join/dfpsetv>

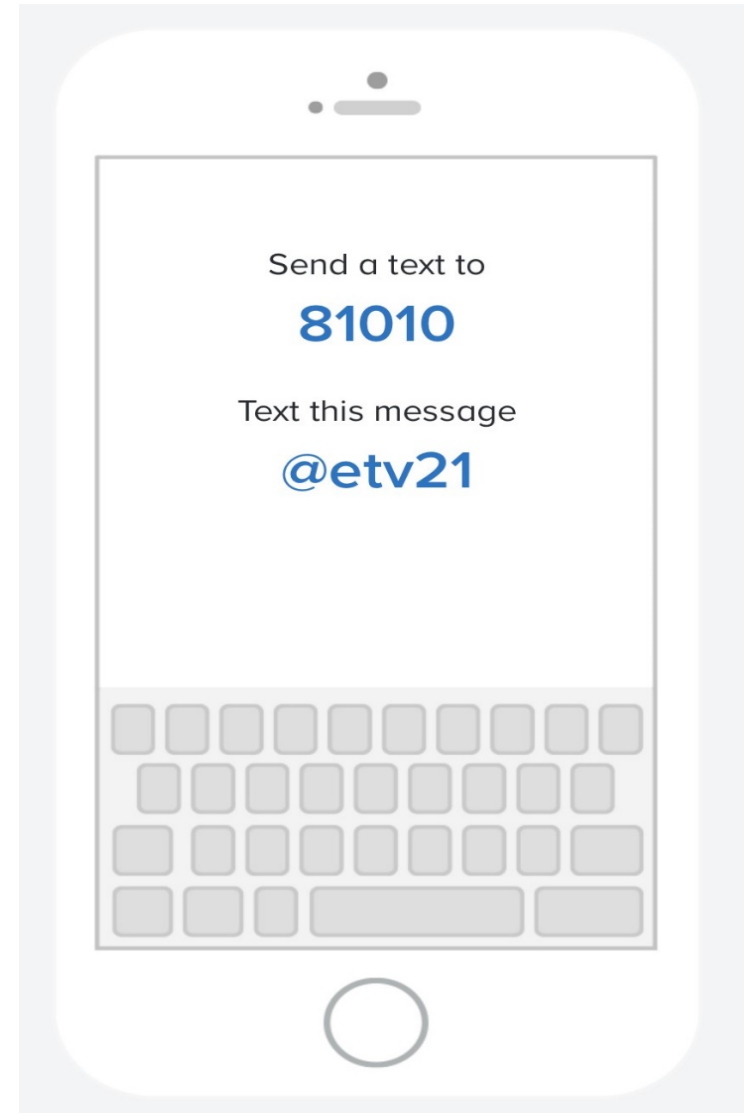
or



Remind for Students



Visit
Remind.com
and join class
ETV21
or



Facebook



Visit <https://www.facebook.com/TexasETV> for:

- Current events - ETV, educational, and community
- Reminders – ETV and educational
- Freebies for students
- Information on Texas schools
- Student discounts
- Scholarships
- Who's hiring
- Community resources
- National celebration days
- Success stories
- Life hacks
- Natural disaster preparation



Types of Financial Aid

Ed Kerestly

*Angelo State University
Financial Aid Director*

Paying for college is a **PARTNERSHIP**

Student

Parent

Federal Government

State Government

College

Other



Steps to Student Receiving Financial Aid

Complete Admission Application process at all schools being considered

Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Respond to any request for additional information

Contact the Financial Aid Office directly to alert them to your status as a Foster Care Alumni

Timing Matters

Role of Financial Aid

To assist students in identifying and securing funds to cover their educational costs

To evaluate the student's ability to pay for college

To assure funds are provided to eligible students based on regulations and policies specific to the aid program

To coordinate receipt of funds from various sources

To distribute limited resources in an equitable manner

Sources of Financial Assistance



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- Pell Grant
- Supplemental Grant
- TEACH Grant
- Direct Loan



STATE OF TEXAS

- Need-Based Grants
 - Public
 - Private
- Work Study
- Cosigned student loan



COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

- Scholarships
- Grants
- Loans
- Work



PRIVATE

- Community Foundations
- Fortune 500 Companies
- Non-Profit Agencies
- Civic Groups

Cost of Attendance (COA)



Estimate of a student's costs for a specified period



Major component of determining a student's financial need



Includes direct and indirect costs

- Tuition and Fees
- Room and board
- Books and supplies
- Transportation
- Misc. personal expenses

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

Is a measure of a student's financial strength and is calculated according to a formula established by federal law

Uses the information reported on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Stays the same regardless of college cost.

Eligibility for Need Based Aid

Cost of Attendance(COA)

- Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

= Eligibility for Aid (Need)



Dependency Status Questions on the 2021-22 FAFSA® Form

Were you born before Jan. 1, 1998?	Yes	No
As of today, are you married? (Also answer "Yes" if you are separated but not divorced.)	Yes	No
At the beginning of the 2021–22 school year, will you be working on a master's or doctorate program (such as an M.A., MBA, M.D., J.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., graduate certificate, etc.)?	Yes	No
Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces for purposes other than training? (If you are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee, are you on active duty for other than state or training purposes?)	Yes	No
Are you a veteran of the U.S. armed forces?*	Yes	No
Do you now have—or will you have—children who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022 [during the award year]?	Yes	No
Do you have dependents (other than your children or spouse) who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you, now and through June 30, 2022?	Yes	No

Dependency Status Questions on the 2021-22 FAFSA® Form

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? Yes No

Has it been determined by a court in your state of legal residence that you are an emancipated minor or that someone other than your parent or stepparent has legal guardianship of you? (You also should answer "Yes" if you are now an adult but were in legal guardianship or were an emancipated minor immediately before you reached the age of being an adult in your state. Answer "No" if the court papers say "custody" rather than "guardianship.") Yes No

At any time on or after July 1, 2020, were you determined to be an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless, as determined by (a) your high school or district homeless liaison, (b) the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, or (c) the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program? Yes No

Average Cost of Attendance for a Texas Public University

Tuition and Fees (30 hrs.)	\$ 9,844
Room and Board	\$ 9,862
Books and Supplies	\$ 1,242
Transportation	\$ 2,322
Miscellaneous	<u>\$ 2,356</u>
Total	\$25,626

Financial Aid Offer

Cost of Attendance (COA) \$25,626
Expected Family Contribution (EFC) 0

Federal Pell Grant	\$ 6,495
TEXAS Grant	\$ 5,000
University Scholarship	\$ 1,500
Federal Direct Loan	<u>\$ 12,500</u>
Total Financial Aid Offer	\$ 25,495
Unmet Need/COA	\$ 131

Financial Aid Offer

Cost of Attendance (COA) \$25,626
Expected Family Contribution (EFC) 0

Foster Care Exemption **\$ 9,844**


Federal Pell Grant	\$ 6,495
TEXAS Grant	\$ 5,000
University Scholarship	\$ 1,500
Federal Direct Loan	<u>\$ 2,656</u>
Total Financial Aid Offer	\$25,626
Unmet Need/COA	\$ 0

Challenges in Financial Aid when working with Youth in or Formerly in Foster Care

- EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND METHOD TO TRACK
- DIFFERENT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
- DEPENDENCY STATUS DOCUMENTATION
- AWARENESS AND TIMING OF OTHER RESOURCES

Financial Aid Challenges for Youth formerly in Foster Care

- HAVING TO NAVIGATE THE PROCESS WITHOUT PARENTAL SUPPORT
- MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY WHILE STILL COMMUNICATING THEIR STATUS
- UNDERSTANDING AND COMPLETING THE VARIOUS APPLICATION PROCESSES
- KNOWING AND MEETING THE RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DIFFERENT PROGRAMS
- KNOWING WHAT OFFICE TO CONTACT REGARDING DIFFERENT PROGRAMS



Who is Who? Supports for students, and common issues

Todd Serpico

*Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Transitional Living Services
State Office PAL Program Specialist*



DFPS Transitional Living Services



DFPS Transitional Living Services include benefits, supports, and resources for youth and young adults currently or formerly in foster care.



DFPS Transitional Living Services Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Program



The Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program assists older youth in foster care prepare for their departure and transition to a successful adulthood.



College Tuition and Fee Waiver (TFW)



- ▶ The college tuition and fee waiver provides exemptions from payment of tuition and fees at a Texas state supported college or university to individuals formerly in Texas state foster care and adopted youth.
- ▶ To be exempt from the payment of tuition and fees, youth or young adults must have been in DFPS conservatorship.

TFW: Age related concerns

- ▶ The requirement to “activate” a Tuition Waiver by enrolling prior to age 25 does NOT apply to young adults whose eligibility is due to having been adopted.
- ▶ If a young adult enrolls in any qualifying public college or university prior to 25, then their Tuition Waiver is locked in for all qualifying institutions.

TFW: SAP requirements for persons with foster care based Tuition Waivers

- ▶ Texas Education Code (TEC) section 54.2001 (a)(1) requires students to maintain a grade point average that satisfies the university's satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirement in order for the student to continue to receive a waiver. HOWEVER, section (g) of this law specially exempts students from this requirement if they are receiving a waiver associated with foster care, which are sections 54.366 and 54.367.

Contacts for Tuition Waiver

- ▶ **Adopted Youth/Young Adults**

- ▶ **Latasha Henry**—State Office Adoption Assistance Program Specialist
Latasha.Henry@dfps.Texas.gov (512) 994-9418

- ▶ **All other Youth/Young Adults**

- ▶ **Todd Serpico**—State Office Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Program Specialist
Todd.Serpico@dfps.Texas.gov (512) 460-7394



DFPS Transitional Living Services Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Program



- ▶ PAL services include:
 - ▶ Life Skills assessment
 - ▶ Life Skills training
 - ▶ Transitional Living Allowance (maximum total allowance of either \$500 or \$1000 dependent on the circumstance)
 - ▶ Supportive Financial Assistance for senior expenses, driver's education, dorm room deposits, metro cards, etc.
 - ▶ Case management to help with self-sufficiency and resource coordination.
 - ▶ Aftercare Room and Board assistance (up to \$500 per month/\$3000 maximum total allowance)
 - ▶ State and Regional conferences and events

DFPS Extended Foster Care

A young adult can voluntarily choose to remain in care after age 18, up to age 21 if the young adult:

- ▶ Attends high school or a program leading to a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate (GED);
- ▶ Attends college or other institutions of higher learning;
- ▶ Participates in a program or activity that promotes or removes barriers to employment;
- ▶ Is employed for at least 80 hours a month; or
- ▶ Is incapable of doing any of the above activities due to a documented medical condition.



DFPS Supervised Independent Living



Placements:

- ▶ Apartments
- ▶ Non-College residence halls
- ▶ College residence halls
- ▶ Shared Housing
- ▶ Host Homes

DFPS website:

- ▶ https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Youth_and_Young_Adults/Transitional_Living/Extended_Foster_Care/supervised_independent_living.asp.

DFPS Transitional Living Services Benefits and Resource Information

For more information about Transitional Living Services available benefits and supports, visit

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Youth_and_Young_Adults/Transitional_Living/default.asp.

Or contract the Preparation for Adult Living Staff in your area of the state, visit

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Youth_and_Young_Adults/Preparation_For_Adult_Living/PAL_coordinators.asp

DFPS Transitional Living Services

State Office Program Contacts

- ▶ **Sharee Hamlin**-Transitional Living Services-Team Program Lead
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- ▶ **Todd Serpico**–State Office Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Program Specialist
Todd.Serpicio@dfps.Texas.gov (512) 460-7394
- ▶ **Ophelia Jaushlin**-Extended Foster Care, Supervised Independent Living (SIL) Program Lead
Ophelia.Jaushlin@dfps.Texas.gov (512) 568-9527
- ▶ **Gaye Vopat** – Youth Employment Program Specialist
Gaye.Vopat@dfps.Texas.gov (512) 663-8615
- ▶ **Jim Currier** – Youth Housing Specialist
Jim.Currier@dfps.Texas.gov (512) 944-4186
- ▶ **Kaylah Topasna** - Youth Specialist/ETV
Kaylah.Topasna@dfps.Texas.gov (210) 337-3468
- ▶ **Brittany Danford** -Youth Specialist
Brittany.Danford@dfps.Texas.gov (713) 454-9652

Campus Based Supports

- ▶ Foster Care Liaisons

- ▶ Foster Care Support Programs

- ▶ List of current liaisons:

- <https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/roster>



Campus Supports

Dr. Javier Flores

Angelo State University

*Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment
Management, Foster Care Alumni Liaison*

Creating Systems of Support

Campus support programs and liaisons offer young adults who have experienced foster care with instrumental support.





Wrap around services available on campus

Pre-enrollment advising for high school students

Financial Aid (FAFSA) application completion

Orientation programs

Academic advising

Life Skills Coaching

Living Learning Communities

Student support groups



Creating Systems of Support

Research on Campus Support Programs reveals:

- Youth who experience foster care can succeed in higher education with sufficient support.
- There is a higher persistence rate for youth who access campus support programs for foster care alumni.
- Some campuses with support programs have documented graduation rates comparable to the general student population.
- Engage begins at the recruitment/admission funnel and making students aware of support programs on campus.

Panel Discussion

Moderator:

- ❖ **Dr. Javier Flores** - Angelo State University, Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and Foster Care Alumni Liaison

Presenters:

- ❖ **Christine Norton, PhD, LCSW** – Texas State University, Professor & Foster Care Liaison
- ❖ **Belinda Peña** - Austin Community College, Work-study/Outreach Coordinator for Financial Aid Officer
- ❖ **Ed Kerestly** - Angelo State University, Financial Aid Director
- ❖ **Todd Serpico** - Department of Family and Protective Services, State Office PAL Program Specialist
- ❖ **Brandi Purswell** – BCFS Health and Human Services, ETV Specialist

Contacts

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- Belinda Peña - Austin Community College
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- Brandi Purswell - Baptist Child & Family Services
 - bp0317@bcfs.net
- Todd Serpico - Department of Family and Protective Services
 - Todd.Serpico@dfps.texas.gov
- Aimee Corbin - Supreme Court of Texas Children's Commission
 - aimee.corbin@txcourts.gov



Thank You for Attending
Today's Webinar