

# GET INVOLVED

CHANGE A LIFETIME  
FOSTER ADOPTION AWARENESS

## Mental Health and Wellness Volume 5

### CASA

#### Court Appointed Special Advocates

- The National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association, together with its state and local member programs, supports and promotes court-appointed volunteer advocacy so every abused or neglected child in the United States can be safe, have a permanent home and the opportunity to thrive
- CASA/GAL volunteers are appointed by judges to watch over and advocate for abused and neglected children, to make sure they don't get lost in the overburdened legal and social service system or languish in inappropriate group or foster homes. Volunteers stay with each case until it is closed and the child is placed in a safe, permanent home. For many abused children, their CASA/GAL volunteer will be the one constant adult presence in their lives.

### AB167/216

*Students in foster care move schools at least **once** or **twice** a year, and by the time they age out of the system, over one third will have experienced five or more school moves.*

#### Who qualifies:

Any youth in foster care or on probation who is either removed from their home under WIC § 309 or subject to a petition under WIC § 300 or § 602, regardless of where they live.

#### Transfer of schools after second year:

Must have completed two years of high school and cannot be considered until the second year is complete.

Length of eligibility: Once a youth is found eligible, they remain eligible, even if they transfer schools again, return to their biological parents' care, or their court case closes.

**Reconsideration:** If a youth is found ineligible when they transfer schools, they may request a re-evaluation.

**Who decides:** Only the holder of Ed Rights or a youth who is over 18 can determine whether graduating under AB 167 /216 is in the youth's best interest.

#### Must meet state graduation requirements:

English - 30 Credits

Math - 20 Credits

•Algebra - 10 Credits

•Other Math - 10 Credits

Science - 20 Credits

•Biological Science -10 Credits

•Physical Science - 10 Credits

•Biological Science -10 Credits

•Physical Science - 10 Credits

Social Studies - 30 Credits

•World History- 10 Credits

•US History - 10 Credits

•American Government/Civics - 5 Credits

•Economics -5 Credits

Visual or Performing Arts, Foreign

Language, or career Technical

Education -10 Credits

Physical Education -20 Credits

Electives - 0 Credits

**TOTAL: 130 Credits**

## Become a Volunteer Today

#### What Do CASA Volunteers Do?

Volunteers get to know the child by talking with everyone in that child's life: parents and relatives, foster parents, teachers, medical professionals, attorneys, social workers and others. They use the information they gather to inform judges and others of what the child needs and what will be the best permanent home for them.

#### Who Can Be a Volunteer?

You do not have to be a lawyer or a social worker to be a volunteer. We welcome people from all walks of life. We are simply looking for people who care about children and have common sense. As a volunteer, you will be thoroughly trained and well supported by professional staff to help you through each case.

# INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Eligibility is determined by county social workers/probation officers. Youth are eligible for ILP services at age 16 up to their 21st birthday provided one of the following criteria is met:

- Youth are/were a dependent or ward in foster care at any time between their 16th and 19th birthdays.
- Youth placed in out-of-home care by a tribe or tribal organization between their 16th and 19th birthdays.
- Youth is/was a former dependent who entered into a kinship guardianship at any age and received a Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment (Kin-GAP) after the age of 16.
- Youth is/was a former dependent who entered into a non-related legal guardianship after attaining age 8 and is receiving permanent placement services.

## HOW TO REQUEST SERVICES?

For current foster youth, the youth's social worker or probation officer will refer them to the county ILP coordinator. Former foster youth can contact the child welfare or probation office in the county they are residing in, the county they exited from or the CDSS Transitional Age Youth Policy Unit at TAYPolicy@dss.ca.gov or (916) 651-7465 for assistance.

## 5 Tips for Teachers

1. Normalize foster care in your classroom
2. Build relationships
3. Be patient but consistent
4. Explore the Student's Academic History
5. Respect the child's right to privacy.

## SERVICES OFFERED

The core services are based on the youth's individual needs and goals as described in their Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP). Services are designed to assist youth with: education, career development, financial budgeting skills, health, safety, housing and permanency.

## EXAMPLES OF SERVICES PROVIDED

Daily living skills, Money management, Decision making, Safety Skills, Career Development, Employment resources, Medical, Mental Health, Educational Resources, Help with accessing financial assistance for college or vocational schools, Housing referrals

## Resources

For Parents:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercarremonth/resources/parents/>  
<https://adoptuskids.org/adoption-and-foster-care/how-to-adopt-and-foster/getting-started>

For Parents:

<https://kids-alliance.org/>  
<http://www.cfyetf.org/publications.html>

For students:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercarremonth/resources/foryouth/>

## STATISTICS

According to Research studies, statewide:

- 75% of students in foster care are performing below grade level.
- By third grade 80% have had to repeat a grade.
- Over 1/3 of foster youth earn neither a high school diploma or GED
- Fewer than 1/2 were employed 12 to 18 months after aging out
- 1/3 who age out evidence mental health problems (PTSD, substance abuse, major depression)
- About 1/4 will be incarcerated within the 1st 2 years after they leave the system
- Almost 1/4 reported to be homeless at least once since leaving the system
- Teen girls in foster care are 2.5 times more likely to become pregnant by age 19.
- 75% of young women in foster care report at least one pregnancy by age 21, compared to only one third of their peers who are not in foster care.

School is a great place to reach out for help

You may want to reach out to someone to talk to if you're being bullied or to get advice on how to help your friend. Consider talking to a:

School Psychologist, School Nurse, Student Advisor, Teacher, or Coach